

SUPSI

Access and management information for a SUPSI web hosting

Web server specifications

The web server is a Linux 64 bit system using the following software:

- Apache 2.x.x
- PHP 7.x.x
- MySQL 8.x.x
- Perl 5.x.x

The web space on the server's filesystem

On the web server all the files are stored in a directory whose name is an abbreviation of the site's URL. The directory name is communicated to the requestor by email when the site is created.

The site directory has a predefined structure described later in this document. In order to have write access i.e., upload, remove or edit files, you can use any software that supports FTPS protocol, such as FileZilla (www.filezilla-project.org) or WinSCP (winscp.net).

The secure SFTP protocol ensures that all data transmitted to the server, including login credentials, are encrypted before being placed on the network, protecting them from a safety perspective.

The hostname to be referenced for the connection is:

web1.supsi.ch with Windows credentials for institutional sites

name of the site itself with NetID credential for non-institutional sites.

To get access to the site directory you must be the site responsible or webmaster (to be requested when the site is created in SI).

The web filesystem structure

The site directory is composed of the following subdirectories:

- /cgi-bin
service directory, used by Apache's php wrapper, no files have to be stored here
- /conf
contains configuration file, e.g.:
 - php.ini: personalized PHP settings
 - MySQL.account_info: contains DB(s) access' credentials docs
 - setperm.conf.d: contains special permissions for directories and files

Other site's configuration files inaccessible from the web, can be put here (e.g. DB's Password file)

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- docs/
root directory (from now called “webroot”)
files in this directory are public, they are served to users connecting to the web site
- docs-archive/
service directory, can be used to archive webroot copies
files in this directory are hidden from the web
- site-data/
usable by PHP (e.g., to store uploaded files)
files in this directory are not directly accessible from the web
- lib/
contains any needed site's library
files in this directory are not directly accessible from the web
- logs/
contains access and error logs for the site
- tmp/
contains any temporary file generated by the site
it's strongly discouraged to store files here

The behavior of PHP scripts

PHP scripts are executed by Apache via a CGI call. The user who runs the script, for security reasons, is a user related to the site. To allow PHP to write inside the webroot (docs/), “Public” or “Other” permissions have to be changed from RX (Read-Execute) to RWX (Read-Write-Execute) for the file or directory, i.e., changing from the default 575 to 577 (for more information on how permissions work: <https://www.linux.com/training-tutorials/understanding-linux-file-permissions/>)

Automatic permissions set on files and directories

Every night an automated job reset ownership and permissions on every file and directory of the site, with the following predefined schema:

- the owner of every file in the webroot is set to “nobody”
- group ownership of every file is reset to the site manager group
- the access permission is reset to 575, i.e.:
 - 5: RX, readable by the owner (irrelevant)
 - 7: RWX, read and write permissions for the group's members
 - 5: RX, readable by everyone (Apache and FTP included)

Temporary permission modifications can be set using the FTP client.

Permanent permission modifications can be set using a (new) file in the directory: conf/setperm.local.d, as stated as an example in the sample.cfg file.

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Database access

Along with the site, a MySQL database/username/password is also automatically created. The access credential can be found in the `conf/dbname.mysql` file (*dbname* is the name of database and the password `s` inside the file).

The DB can be managed visiting the URL: <https://phpmyadmin-sql1.supsi.ch>

Backup policies

All files and DBs are backed up every night. Restores can be requested with a TICKET at SI including:

- files list to restore with path
- in case database name if is needed
- referenced date of the files or DB to restore

Note: only elements created prior than 24 hours can be restored. Elements created and removed in the same day, can't be restored.

Support and special requests

For any support request, or for specific requests, you can always write to SI on the TICKETING SYSTEM (helpit@supsi.ch).