Social Learning Tools Release Notes: Dec 2012

Release Information

Original Launch: December 28, 2012

Requirements: Community Engagement License, Service Pack (SP) 10 or later

Supported Platforms

The Social Profiles and Tools Building Block is supported on the following platforms with the Community Engagement license:

- Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP 10 (Build: 9.1.100401.0)
- Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP 11 (Build: 9.1.110082.0)

ⓘ *The Social Profiles and Tools Building Block requires these prerequisites to operate.*

- Software Updates version 2.1.7 or later

    1. To check the version you have installed, navigate to the **System Admin** page.
    2. Under the **Cloud Management** panel, click **Software Updates**.
    3. Verify version 2.1.7 or higher is installed.

- Cloud Profiles Building Block version 1.1.8 or later

    1. To update the Cloud Profiles Building Block, navigate to the **System Admin** page.
    2. Under the **Software Updates** panel, click **Building Block Updates Available**.
    3. Click **New Update Available** next to the Cloud Profiles.
    4. Click **Install from the Building Blocks Details** page.
    5. Verify version 1.1.8 or higher is installed.

Release Highlights

The new social learning features of Blackboard Learn require the Community Engagement license. Social learning features are cloud-based. Social learning features are not part of the local Blackboard Learn instance. Because these features exist outside of the Blackboard Learn system, the System Administrator has to opt-in to enable these features in their institution's Blackboard Learn platform.

The key features that make up the social learning feature-set are:

- Establishing a true Blackboard Learn cross-institution Global Learning Network.

- Enhancement of Profiles, Profile Cards, and People tools to incorporate social functionality, such as a Profile Wall for communication and Following to build one's personal network.

- Spaces, a new feature to facilitate peer-to-peer learning by allowing any user to create a "Space" as needed for communication and collaboration within the institution or across institutions.

- Messages, a new feature to facilitate user-to-user communication within the institution or across institutions.

- Updates to My Blackboard to integrate the new social tools into existing My Blackboard features. For example, the Posts tool will aggregate wall posts from Spaces one is a member of and wall posts of Profiles one is following.

Profile – With SP 10, the profile tool only provides the user with access to edit their profile. When the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block is enabled, the profile tool in My Blackboard gives the user access to view as well as edit a full profile page, with a profile wall.

Overview – The Overview section aggregates information from all of the other sections and tools of My Blackboard into a single view. The overview appears only if the new Calendar Building Block is installed or the Social Profiles and Tools are enabled.

Posts – The Posts section aggregates posts and comments from collaborative tools, including blogs, journals, wikis and the Discussion Boards in courses. With the Social Profiles and Tools enabled, the overview also includes posts and comments from the profile walls of followed users and posts and comments from spaces.

Messages – The Messages section provides access to the user-to-user messages that are part of the new social learning features. NOTE: this is separate from and does not aggregate messages from the Course Messages tool. Messages requires a Community Engagement license as well as the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block enabled).

People – The People section provides access to a user's personal learning network, as well as the ability to discover other users. The People tool is enhanced to provide additional learning network information and capabilities, enhanced discovery, and the ability to discover users across Blackboard Learn institutions, not just within the user's own institution.

Spaces – The Spaces section provides access to the spaces a user is a member of as well as the ability to discover and join other spaces within the institution and spaces established at other Blackboard Learn institutions. Spaces requires a Community Engagement license as well as the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block enabled.

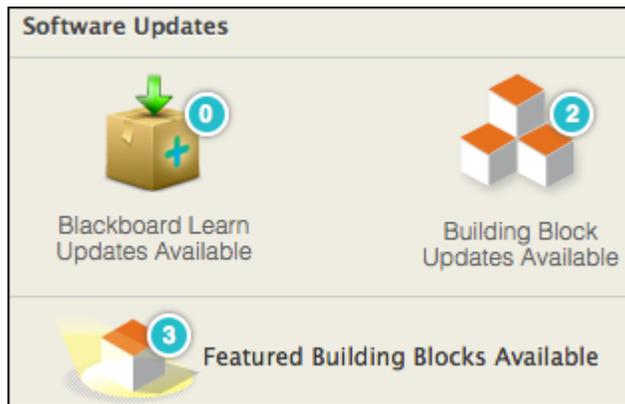| Feature	Cloud Off	Cloud On	Community Engagement license and Cloud On and Social enabled
Login Overlay	Available	Enhanced. Includes prompting to create profile from the overlay. Option to start creating	No further enhancements

		profile with information from Facebook and Twitter profiles.	
Global Navigation	Available	Enhanced. Includes Profile and People in the menu.	Enhanced further to include the Messages and Spaces icons in the menu.
My Blackboard	Available	Enhanced. Includes Profile and People in the menu.	Enhanced further to include the Messages and Spaces icons.
My Blackboard Profile	Not Available	Available. Profile includes picture, name, area of study / focus, about me description, and primary email address.	Enhanced to include the "full" Profile with Profile Wall, following and followers, social media integrations, and so on.
Profile Cards	Not Available	Available. Profile Cards show picture, name, area of study / focus, about me description, and ability to report inappropriate content.	Enhanced to show Avatar, Name, About Me, View Profile, Message, Follow, Block, Report.
My Blackboard Posts	Available	Enhanced. Includes profile cards with posts.	Enhanced further to include posts/comments from Spaces and followed Profile Walls.
My Blackboard Grades	Available	Available	Available
My Blackboard Messages	Not Available	Not Available	Available
My Blackboard People	Not Available	Available. Ability to view my learning network and search institution-wide.	Enhanced to include cross-institution Profile discovery, Learning Networks that include followed users Spaces, search against full Profiles, and so on.
My Blackboard Spaces	Not Available	Not Available	Available
My Blackboard Updates	Available	Available	Available

How to Install and Activate the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block

You can use Software Updates to install the Social Profiles and Tools building block directly from the System Admin panel. Alternatively, you can visit Behind the Blackboard Downloads and find the Social Profiles and Tools building block, download and install manually.

Software Updates

Software Updates is located on the System Admin panel. When a new Building Block is available or has been updated, you are notified by a change in the icons. Simply click the **Feature Building Blocks Available** icon and locate the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block. Click **Install**. You will need to make the Building Block available once it has installed.

Behind the Blackboard Downloads

Download the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block from Behind the Blackboard Downloads home, located under Feature Building Blocks for Learn. Save the `.war` file on a local drive.

1. Navigate to the System Admin panel. Click **Building Blocks**.

2. Click **Installed Tools**.

3. Click **Upload Building Blocks** from the action bar.

4. Browse for the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block `.war` file.

5. Click **Submit**.

6. You will get a success message when the building block is installed. Set the building block to **Active** and click **Approve**.

How to Make the Social Profiles and Tools Building Block Available

Once installed, you must make the Social Profiles and Tools available in Learn.

1. From the **System Admin** page, click **Cloud Profiles and Tools** from the **Cloud Management** panel.

2. Locate **Social Profiles and Tools** click the Off icon to switch it to On.

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Important Notes

Connecting to the Cloud: Bidirectional communication to the Cloud Services is required. If you are running Blackboard from behind a firewall as a test server or for security reasons, you will need to open the firewall to use these features. To open bidirectional communication to Cloud Services, you must configure your firewall to allow responses from the following API hosts:

- https://connect.cloud.bb

- https://softwareupdates.cloud.bb

- https://api.cloud.bb

- https://ui.cloud.bb Port 443

Learn User Sync Background Task: Once the "Social Profiles and Tools" have been turned on, the Learn users must sync to the Cloud indicating that the users now have access to these additional Social Learning tools. Therefore, if a Learn user has not logged out and logged back into the Learn instance, other users may not be able to immediately use Social features with that user, such as follow them or invite them to a Space. Once the background sync task has completed, even users that have not logged in will be able to be followed and invited.

Resolved Issues

- On the profile card, Twitter and Facebook icon only appear for the user and not others.

- "Profile Not Found" errors.

- "Unauthorized" message when editing cloud profile in Learn Windows instances with network-shared file systems.

- Infinite recursion in the Cloud Sync task in certain cases causes threads to block and site to crash.

Known Issues

- Cloud Management and Software Updates modules on the System Admin page are displaying for Administrators without the System Administrator system role. Users see the module and receive and "Access Denied" error, when the module should actually not display at all. Workaround: Modify the availability of the module to a specific Institution Role that would need to be added as a secondary role for System Administrators.

- Cloud locale does not change immediately when the Learn locale is changed. Workaround: user should log out of Learn and log back in to see the locale change.

- When Social Profiles and Tools is set to "On", some text on the Welcome Overlay page displays in US English only. This Welcome Overlay page with untranslated text displays to users when they first log

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into Learn after Social Profiles and Tools setting is turned "On", and if they have already seen the Welcome Overlay page after Cloud Profiles and Tools was turned on.