How To Configure and Maintain Ghost from the Command Line

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How To Control the Ghost Service

The Ghost application is implemented on a daemon on our server instance. This means that we can start, stop and restart it easily using Ubuntu's `service` command.

We can control the Ghost service like any other service:

Start Ghost:

```
sudo service ghost start
```

Stop Ghost:

```
sudo service ghost stop
```

Restart Ghost:

```
sudo service ghost restart
```

Sometimes, after we've made changes to our configuration, it may also be helpful to restart nginx (our web server) as well:

```
sudo service nginx restart
```

You shouldn't have to use these commands often, but they are helpful to know if you are not too familiar with a Linux environment.

How To Back Up Ghost

Backing up Ghost is trivial, so you should do it often.

Ghost stores most of its data in a database called `ghost.db`.

If you would like to copy this directly, you can do so, but you should stop the Ghost service first:

```
sudo service ghost stop
```

You can copy this to your own computer by typing into your local terminal:

```
scp root@your_ghost_IP_address:/var/www/ghost/content/data/ghost.db .
```

This will copy it into your current local directory.

To copy themes, issue this command:

```
ssh -n root@your_ghost_IP_address 'tar zcvf - -C /var/www/ghost/content/themes
.' | cat - > ghost_themes.tar.gz
```

This will create an archive file called `ghost_themes.tar.gz` with all of your themes in your current local directory.

To back up your images, you can run a similar command, which will create a file called `ghost_images.tar.gz`:

```
ssh -n root@your_ghost_IP_address 'tar zcvf - -C /var/www/ghost/content/images
.' | cat - > ghost_images.tar.gz
```

Don't forget to restart Ghost after you've downloaded the data:

```
sudo service ghost start
```

Perhaps an easier way of doing this is through the web interface by visiting this page of your site:

```
domain_name/ghost/debug
```

You can click the "Export" button to download a copy of your blog content and settings:

If you need to redeploy, you can always visit this page again and import the data file you just downloaded.

How To Upgrade Ghost

It is important to keep your Ghost installation up-to-date in order to keep yourself secure.

When a new version is released, you can get it from the Ghost website. You will probably have to create an account or sign in.

Search for a download link to the latest version and copy the link by right-clicking or control-clicking on the "Download Now" button and selecting "Copy Link Address" or "Copy Link Location".

Currently, the URL for the latest version is always here, although that may change in the future:

```
http://ghost.org/zip/ghost-latest.zip
```

Log into your Ghost panel as root. Before upgrading, back up the database to your home computer as we discussed above.

We will also want to stop the Ghost service before upgrading the files, so that no processes are modifying files as they are being overwritten:

```
service ghost stop
```

Change to the web root directory:

```
cd /var/www/
```

Type `wget` followed by the URL for the latest version of Ghost. If you copied the link location, you can paste that here:

```
wget url_to_ghost_download
```

Extract the files to the correct location to update the Ghost installation:

```
unzip -uo ghost*.zip -d ghost
```

The "-uo" options extract newer versions of files and create new files where necessary. DO NOT forget them or you may wipe out your information!

Next, you have to give control over the files to the Ghost process. You can do that by typing:

```
chown -R ghost:ghost ghost/*
```

We will get new dependencies by changing into our ghost directory and using the `npm` command:

```
cd /var/www/ghost npm install
```

To implement your changes, restart the Ghost service:

```
service ghost start
```

How To Test Ghost Configuration Changes

Ghost executes using a number of pre-configured "environments". Environments dictate which database to use, which URLs to respond to, and how to talk to the back-end server.

We usually run our instance of Ghost in the "production" environment. This is, for the most part, configured correctly to serve your blog on a public-facing site.

If we wish to experiment with some of the settings, we can do so safely by creating a new environment, and then specifying those environments while starting Ghost.

Environments are configured in the `config.js` file in the document root. Open this file with your text editor:

```
nano /var/www/ghost/config.js
```

Inside, you will see some code that looks like this:

```
var path = require('path'), config; config = { development: { . . . . . },
production: { . . . . . }, otherEnvironments: { . . . . . } }
```

Each of the section titles in red defines an environment. If we want to test changes in a new environment, we can copy the "production" environment and make our modifications there.

To do this, we would copy everything between:

```
production: {
```

And the matching closing bracket (prior to the start of the next "testing" environment):

```
},
```

Directly under the production block that we just copied, we can paste the chunk.

```
production: { . . . . . }, production: { . . . . . },
```

Next, change the second "production" to the name of our temporary environment. We will use `temporary`.

```
production: { . . . . . }, temporary: { . . . . . },
```

Now, we have a new block to experiment with. You can adjust the settings here without worrying about messing up your regular site.

When you are done, save and close the file.

After we are done modifying the "temporary" block, we need to tell Ghost to use this new block. We will do this by adjusting the value in the init script that starts Ghost.

Open the Ghost init script by typing:

```
nano /etc/init.d/ghost
```

Find the line that specifies the production environment:

```
export NODE_ENV=production
```

Change this to reference your new "temporary" environment:

```
export NODE_ENV=temporary
```

Save and close the file.

Now, we can restart Ghost to use our new settings:

```
service ghost restart
```

Depending on the changes that you used, you may have to restart nginx as well:

```
service nginx restart
```

When you have thoroughly tested your new configuration, you should move your changes from your temporary environment into your production environment.

After that, re-open the init script and change the environment rule back to "production":

```
nano /etc/init.d/ghost
```

```
export NODE_ENV=production
```

Again, restart Ghost:

```
service ghost restart
```

How To Configure Email for Ghost

Ghost doesn't use email for very many things. At the time of this writing, it only uses it to send password reset emails. However, without this configured, you will see an annoying banner:

We need to configure email to get this to go away.

First, we can choose a provider. You can use a number of different email services. Check here for a list of well-known email services that work with Ghost's emailing system.

It is recommended that you create a new email address associated with the blog. You need to find the SMTP settings for your service. Use google to search:

```
your email choice SMTP
```

Some services have different login names and passwords for SMTP than for their regular services. Make sure you find out the information you need. For a Gmail account, for instance, you can use your normal login credentials.

Open the `config.js` file to input your mail settings:

```
nano /var/www/ghost/config.js
```

You need to find the line in the "production" section that deals with mail:

```
. . . production: { url: 'http://example.com', mail: {}, database: { . . .
```

Between the open bracket { and the closing bracket } of the mail line, you need to enter the following information:

```
mail: { transport: 'SMTP',options: {service: '',auth: {user: '',pass: ''}}},
```

Now, you need to fill in the `service`, `user`, and `pass` fields with the appropriate values. For the `service`, use the name as it is referred to here.

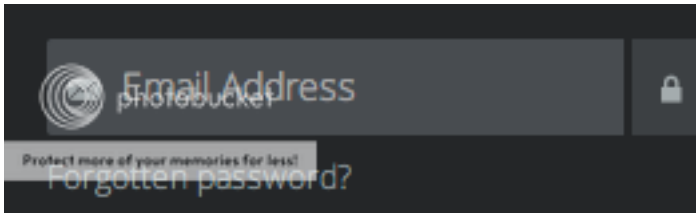
```
mail: { transport: 'SMTP', options: { service: 'service_name', auth: { user:
'SMTP_login_name', pass: 'SMTP_password' } } },
```

Save and close the file.

Restart Ghost to implement your changes:

```
service ghost restart
```

Now, if you log out and click the "forgot password" link, an email will be sent from the SMTP email you just configured to your account email.



Conclusion

By now, you should have a pretty good grasp on how to do some behind-the-scenes configuration and maintenance for Ghost. You will only have to complete some of these steps once, while others (like backing up) should be run regularly.