

Getting Started Guide for the new Commander Owners Group Conferencing Software, vBulletin

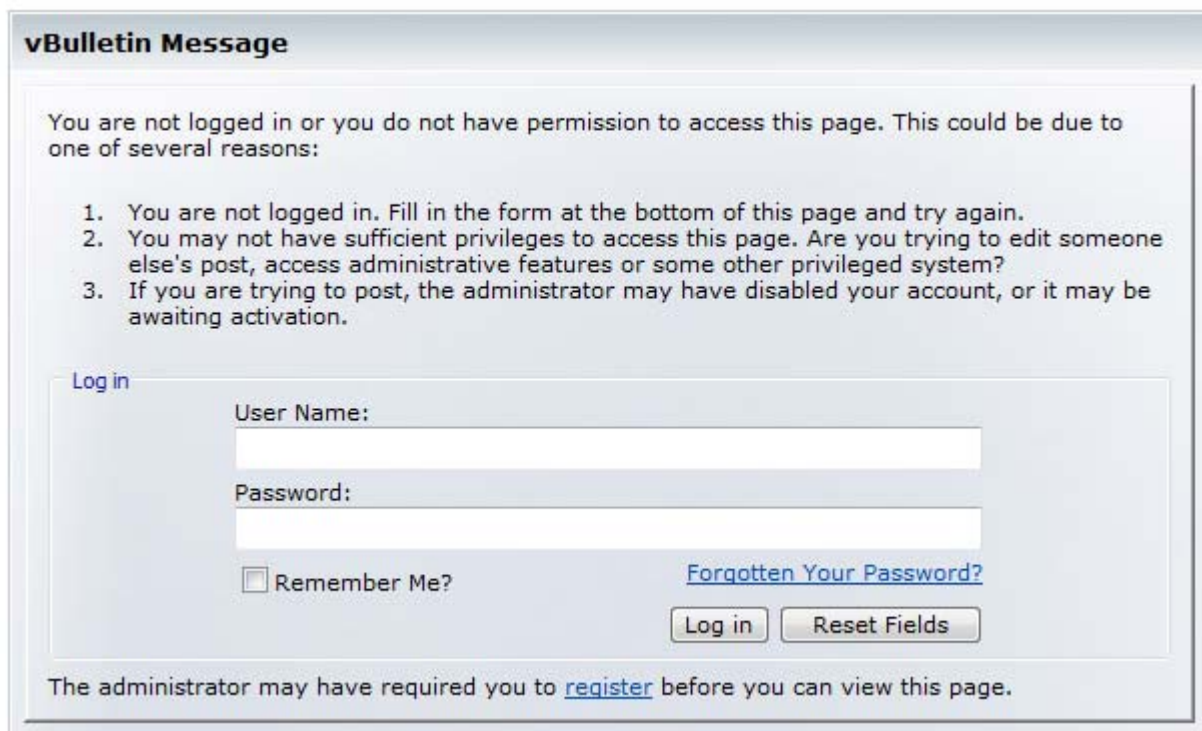
For many years the COG used conferencing software from Akiva called WebBoard. However, in later years it became apparent that Akiva was no longer capable of supporting the product and fixing numerous bugs and problem that arose. Accordingly the COG management decided to switch to another solution and we selected vBulletin which is the most popular conferencing software package available on the Internet and widely regarded as the best in terms of features and performance.

While all conferencing software is similar in operation, this guide will give you a few tips to get started if you've never used vBulletin before. To make the transition easy, **we've created the same conference names as appeared on the old board and all user accounts and passwords have been migrated.**

Logging In to vBulletin

The easiest way to log in to the conferencing system is to click the link from the COG homepage. So open a browser and enter www.commander.org then click on the link on the left page called [Commander Forum](#). Note that if you have an old saved favorite, you'll need to update it.

You'll now find yourself at the login page.



vBulletin Message

You are not logged in or you do not have permission to access this page. This could be due to one of several reasons:

1. You are not logged in. Fill in the form at the bottom of this page and try again.
2. You may not have sufficient privileges to access this page. Are you trying to edit someone else's post, access administrative features or some other privileged system?
3. If you are trying to post, the administrator may have disabled your account, or it may be awaiting activation.

Log in

User Name:

Password:

Remember Me? [Forgotten Your Password?](#)

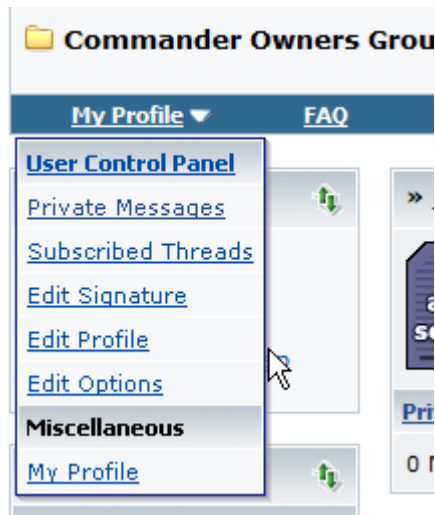
The administrator may have required you to [register](#) before you can view this page.

Enter your login and password – these are the same as on the old system! If you can't remember your password simply click on the **[Forgotten Your Password?](#)** link and it will be emailed to you. If you can't remember your account and you're a paid COG member, send an email to webmaster@commander.org and we'll send you the information. If you're not a paid member and only had guest-level access and can't remember your account, simply set up a new account by clicking on the [register](#) link. Remember to click the 'Remember Me?' box in order to store your login information on your computer, otherwise you'll be asked for it each time to visit.

Main Forum Page

If you've successfully logged in, you'll find yourself at the Main Forum Page. This is a jumping off point for the many things you can do in vBulletin and also a quick summary of recent activity in the conferences. For example, note on the left there's a box that shows which users are currently online. And in the center is a summary of recently posted messages. You should take some time to explore, but for the purposes of this guide we'll focus on a few options to get you started.

The first task you should undertake is to update your profile information to make sure your basic information is correct. From the main forum page click on the *My Profile* link in the upper left. This in turn drops down a little menu. Select **Edit Profile**:

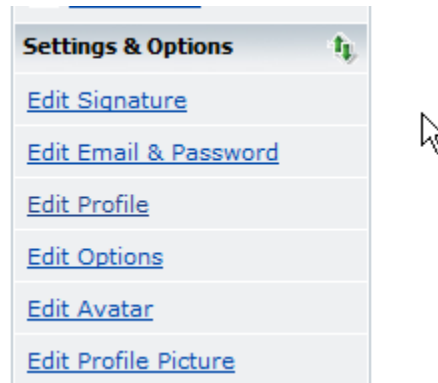


Note that when you initially logged in, if you didn't check the 'Remember Me?' box, you'll be asked again for your account and password. Now you see the three windows marked *Registration Required*, *Optional*, and *Additional*. Correct any of the information that is incorrect or missing. If optional items don't apply simply leave them blank. Please make sure you select your aircraft type in the last section:

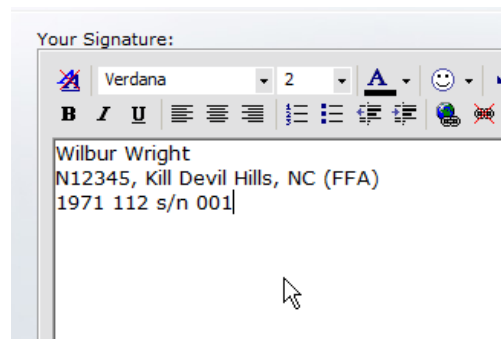


Click *Save Changes* when you're done.

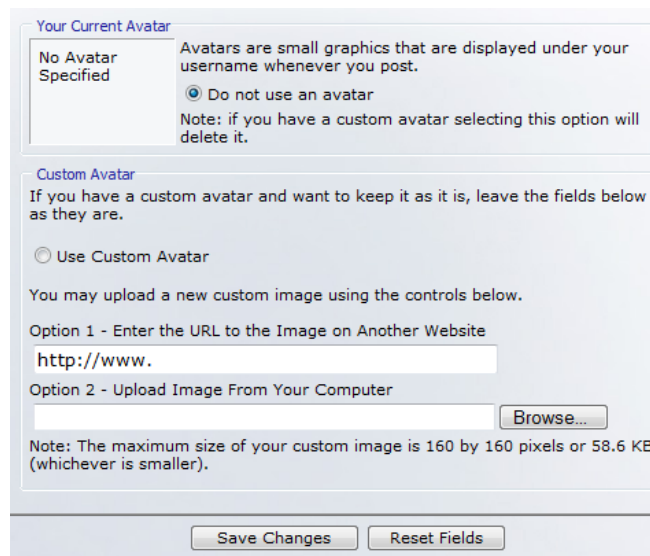
Next, create a custom signature. This will appear in each message and let others know who you are, your aircraft type and serial number, location, etc. From the **Edit Profile** page you should still be on if you're following along with this guide, click **Edit Signature** on the left under the *Settings and Options* heading:



Note that you have formatting tools available if you want to get fancy. At a minimum we suggest you include your name, N-number, home field, year, model, and serial number of your aircraft. This information will help others respond to your posts effectively.



Next you may optionally add an Avatar to your profile – click on the **Edit Avatar** link under the *Settings and Options* section. An Avatar is a small picture that is associated with your profile and will appear with each post you make. If you have a picture of your aircraft that would be perfect.



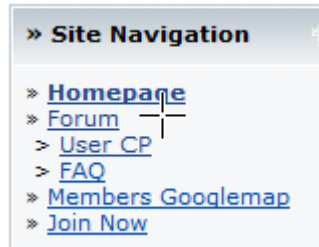
Simply use the *Browse* button on the bottom of the page to locate the picture on your computer that you'd like to use. **Note that the size can be a maximum of 160x160 pixels.** Click *Save Changes* when you're done.


Navigating the Conferences

You should now be ready to post and respond to messages, so let's go!

To return to the Main Forum Page, click on the **Commander Owners Group Forum** link in the lower right of any screen.

To see the listing of all conferences available to you, from the Main Forum Page click on **Forum** link under **Site Navigation**:









 Note: paid members have access to a large number of members-only forums. If you're not a paid member we invite you to join! You don't need to already have a Commander to become a member. If you're researching Commanders in anticipation of purchasing or simply are a Commander fan, you're welcome! Simply click on the **Join Now** link (above) and you can complete the registration process, pay your yearly dues, and gain instant access to the members-only forums.

You'll now see a listing of all the forums you have access to:

Commander Owners Group Forum

Welcome, test.
You last visited: 23 Hours Ago at 06:57 AM
[Private Messages](#): Unread 0, Total 0.

[My Profile](#) ▾ [FAQ](#) [VB Image Host](#) ▾ [Members List](#) [Calendar](#) [New Posts](#) [Search](#) ▾ [Quick Links](#) ▾ [Log Out](#)

Forum	Last Post	Threads	Posts
Public Forums Commander Owner Groups Public Forums			
 Announcements Announcements	Never	0	0
 VBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's VBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's	 Googlemap by rotarur 3 Weeks Ago ▶	3	9
 2008 Fly-in News 2008 Fly-in News	Never	0	0
 Fly-Ins/Outs - General Fly-Ins/Outs - General	 Reading Aero Club celebrates... by ... 4 Weeks Ago ▶	1	1

The *Forum Name* describes the topic of the particular forum. *Threads* refers to each unique topic in that forum. The dark blue bar across the top has several useful hyperlinks and pull-down menus and we'll discuss using some of those in a minute.

To go into a forum and read messages, simply click on the Forum Name and that forum will open. For example, if you click on [vBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's](#), you would see the following:

[Commander Owners Group Forum](#) > [Public Forums](#)
vBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's

Welcome, test.
 You last visited: 23 Hours Ago at 06:57 AM
[Private Messages](#): Unread 0, Total 0.

My Profile ▾
FAQ
VB Image Host ▾
Members List
Calendar
New Posts
Search ▾
Quick Links ▾
Log Out

New Thread

Threads in Forum : vBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's		Forum Tools ▾	Search this Forum ▾		
	Thread / Thread Starter	Rating	Last Post ▾	Replies	Views
	Sticky: vBulletin enhanced FAQ and User Guide rotarur	★	4 Weeks Ago by rotarur ▶	0	129
	▼ Googlemap rotarur		3 Weeks Ago by rotarur ▶	6	233
	Poll: VB styles rotarur		4 Weeks Ago by rotarur ▶	0	157

New Thread

To read any individual thread, simply click on the thread title. So to check out what the thread [Googlemap](#) is all about, click on it and you'll see the following:

[Commander Owners Group Forum](#) > [Public Forums](#) > [vBulletin Forums Tips and How-to's](#)
Googlemap

Welcome, test.
 You last visited: 23 Hours Ago at 06:57 AM
[Private Messages](#): Unread 0, Total 0.

My Profile ▾
FAQ
VB Image Host ▾
Members List
Calendar
New Posts
Search ▾
Quick Links ▾
Log Out

Post Reply

View First Unread ▾
Thread Tools ▾
Search this Thread ▾
Display Modes ▾

3 Weeks Ago
#1

[rotarur](#)
Webmaster

Join Date: Mar 2008
 Location: Massachusetts
 Posts: 92

Googlemap

There is a new link in the "Site Navigation" applet on the main page, it reads "Members Googlemap", check it out. You will need to add yourself to the map, if you want to.

Radu
 N1239J, 112A
 Taunton, MA (KTAN)

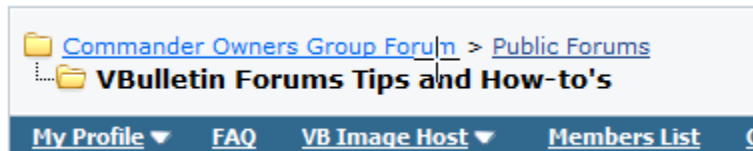
Quote
Quote +

You'll note that the individual who posted the message and their Avatar are shown in the upper left of the message box, message details are in the upper right, and the poster's signature is below the message body.

- Any replies appear below the message in chronological order so you can simply scroll down to read the discussion about the topic. Note that there can be multiple pages for many threads and there are page forward/back controls in the upper right and lower right of each page.
- To read the next thread in a forum, at the very bottom of the thread click Next or Previous links.

« [Previous Thread](#) | [Next Thread](#) »

- To go back up to the main forum page, click on **Commander Owners Group Forum** in the navigation tree in the upper left of all the forum screens:

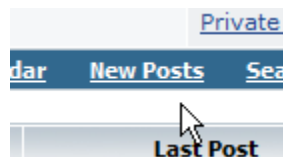


Advanced Navigation

Most users typically visit the forums, read messages, and then when they come back, they only wish to see new messages posted since they have last visited. This is easy to do in vBulletin.

vBulletin will automatically electronically mark a message as read any time it is displayed on your screen. So in the above example where you clicked on the **Googlemap** thread, all the messages in that thread (at least the first 15 since vBulletin displays 15 messages per page) were marked as read even if you did not actually look at each one.

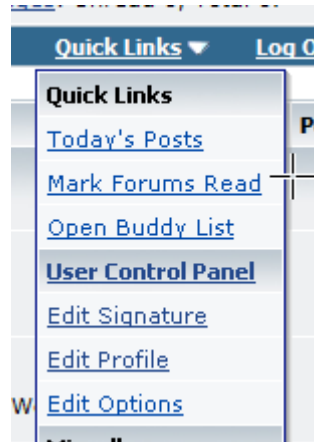
So if you clicked on all existing threads so they were displayed on your screen, you would have effectively marked them all as read. Now say you come back tomorrow and only want to look at new messages. From the main forum page, go to the blue bar at the top of the screen and click on **New Posts**



This will display only threads with new content. You can read the new content and if you have a question about a previous post in a thread, they are all still there – simply scroll up to look at previously read material.

So after you finish reading one new post, simply click on **New Posts** again and you can read the next new posting. Continue on this way until there are no new posts left and you've read everything.

Note that if you want to simply mark everything read without looking at each thread, that's easy too. In the blue menu bar, click on **Quick Links** and a menu appears. Select **Mark All Read**



Posting in an Existing Thread

If you want to reply to a thread, it's easy. Below the very last message in a thread is a box marked **Quick Reply**. Simply start typing your message in the box and when you're ready to post, hit *Post Quick Reply*.

A screenshot of the "Quick Reply" form in a forum. The form has a title bar that says "Quick Reply". Below the title bar is a "Message:" label followed by a rich text editor toolbar. The toolbar includes icons for undo, bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, link, unlink, and a "Show Signature" checkbox. Below the toolbar is a large text input area. Underneath the input area is an "Options" section with a checkbox for "Quote message in reply?" and a checked checkbox for "Show your signature". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Post Quick Reply" and "Go Advanced".

If you click on *Go Advanced*, you'll find additional options for formatting your message and using other custom features.

Getting More Help

The best way to become comfortable with vBulletin is to spend some time navigating around the system. Get a cool beverage and block out 30-45 minutes and try navigating around, reading messages, and checking out what's in the various menus and screens. Specifically, we would point you at the **FAQ** which is a link in the blue menu bar. There are many tips located there to help you effectively use vBulletin. Also, if you have a question post it and another member may be able to help you out.

We look forward to 'talking' with you in the forums soon!