Ushahidi v2.X Users Guide

This is the user guide for someone who's been added to an Ushahidi instance but doesn't know where to start. Other guides available include:

- Installation Guide - how to download and install an Ushahidi instance on your system
- Adminstrators Guide - how to manage an Ushahidi instance (you'll need to be an admin to do most of these)
- Developers' Guide - how to modify and add to Ushahidi code

Getting Started on an Ushahidi Instance

So you've created an account (or had one created for you) on an Ushahidi instance? Now what do you do? Read this...

- Log in - there's a button marked "log in" in the top right-hand corner of the Ushahidi display. Click on it, and put in your username and password. This should take you to http://yoursitename/members/dashboard, which we'll call the "dashboard". If you're a site administrator, you'll see a slightly different dashboard - this is explained over in the Ushahidi v2.X Administrators Guide.

- Change your profile - Click on "edit" next to "My Profile" in the dashboard. This takes you to a page where you can change your name, password, email, picture, notification settings, profile url and color.
    - Setting "Public profile" to "on" makes your profile (photo, username, reports etc) visible to anyone on the web via the list at http://yoursitename/profile - this is a great way to show off the work you're doing, but think very hard about whether you should do this if you're working with controversial data.
    - The profile URL changes the address of the page that other users can check your details on from something anonymous like "1503429913" to something you'd prefer, like "SaraTerp". If you don't set "public profile" to "off", your profile page is visible even to people who aren't logged into the site, so be very careful about what you use for both this and your username.
    - Setting "receive notifications" to "yes" means the site will send you an email when new reports arrive etc. Whilst this is very useful on a low-traffic site, it can also badly spam your inbox if the site is very busy, so think about this before using.
    - Don't forget to click "save settings" after you edit your profile information, or your changes won't be saved.

- View your public profile - click on your name (top right-hand corner of page) then "view public profile". Note that any reports you add to the system won't appear on your public profile until they've been approved by a site administrator.

Looking at Maps and Data on an Ushahidi Site

- Filter what you see on the map - there are three sets of filters on a 'standard' Ushahidi site... on http://yoursitename/ you'll see a set above the map: news, pictures, video; a set right of the map: categories, and a time-slider below the map.   Click on any of these (each category name is clickable) to see only the reports with those characteristics or category on the map.

- Use the site's API - if you can see http://yoursitename/api, it has an API. The instructions for using it are here: Ushahidi Public API

Adding to an Ushahidi Site

- Add a report - click on the "Submit a report" button: this will take you to http://yoursitename/reports/submit.   From the top left corner to bottom right corner of this page:
    - "Select a form type": Some Ushahidi sites have more than one report type - if you're on one of those sites, you'll see a "select a form type" box at the top of the form. Use this to find the type of form that you want to fill in.
    - "Report Title": this is the short description that appears in lists of reports. You must fill this in (or you won't be able to save your report), and it must be between 3 and 200 characters long.
    - "Description": text associated with the report. You must fill this in, or your report won't save. There is no minimum limit on the text that you enter into this box.
    - "Date & Time": the time/date relevant to the report (either the time that you filled it in, or the time of the incident you're describing). This is automatically filled in with the current date/time when you create the report - the "Modify Date" button lets you change date and time if you need to.
    - "Categories": the admin-defined categories for this map. You must choose at least one category for your report, but there is no top limit on how many category boxes you can choose for it.
    - "First name", "Last name", "Email": your personal details so the site admins know who to contact about this report.
    - Map, "City, State and/or Country", "Location Name": Use these to enter the location associated with this report. If you type a location name or lat/long into the "City, State and/or Country" box, the Ushahidi site will attempt to find the lat/long for that location,

add it to the map and add its full address to the "Location name" box. You can also move the red pointer (diamond-shaped thingy) to the right location, by left-clicking on it, holding down the mouse button and moving the pointer to the place you need it to be (note that this won't fill out or correct the "Location Name" box for you). The only one of these boxes that's mandatory is the "Location Name" one - if you don't have a valid location in it, your report won't save.

- "News Source Link": a URL (e.g. http://thissite.com/) to a news article related to this report. You can add multiple links here, by pressing the "+" button right of each link. If you put in too many boxes for this, you can remove them using the "-" button next to them.
- "External Video Link": a URL to a video related to this report. The "+" and "-" buttons work the same as for the "News Source Link".
- "Upload Photos": Click "Choose File" to add a photo from your computer to this report. Unlike videos and news sources, photos that you upload are stored on the Ushahidi site. You can add more photos using the "+" button, as before.
- Other boxes: Some website admins provide customised forms... if they have, you'll see more boxes on this page than described above. Fill them in as directed (e.g. some will be mandatory, some won't).
- "Submit": click this button to send your newly-competed form to Ushahidi. The only fields that you have to fill in are report title, description, category and location name: if you've missed one of these (or have the wrong-length title), Ushahidi will show you a red error box, explaining what's wrong.

- Send a private message to another site user

Other Things You Can Do

- Embedding an Ushahidi map into another website
- Help! I can't get into Ushahidi Platform (V2)
- Receiving alerts with Ushahidi