



***Wimba PowerLink  
for Blackboard LS (WebCT) Vista 3***

Version 1.5

**User Guide**

<b>Wimba Powerlink for Vista 3 User Guide</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Getting Started</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction	1
<b>Adding a Tool to a Section</b>	<b>2</b>
Live Classroom Creation	2
Voice Board Creation	4
Voice Direct Creation	4
Voice Email Creation	5
Voice Recorder Creation	5
<b>Modifying the Tools, Adding Content &amp; Scheduling</b>	<b>6</b>
Live Classroom (if link leads to a Room or Archive)	6
Live Classroom (if link leads to a List of Rooms and Archives)	7
Voice Board	7
Voice Direct	8
Voice Email	8
Voice Recorder	8
<b>Basic Administration</b>	<b>9</b>
Enabling and Disabling the Wimba Tools	9
<b>Best Practices</b>	<b>10</b>
Sections that Link to Multiple Live Classrooms	10
Customizing Icons for the Wimba Tools	10
<b>Disclaimer</b>	<b>11</b>

# Wimba Powerlink for Vista 3

## User Guide

### Getting Started

#### Introduction

Blackboard's PowerLink program enables institutions to easily enhance their courses by allowing seamless access to complementary applications. Wimba's PowerLink allows instructors and students to access up to five tools from within the Vista environment:

- **Live Classroom:** a live virtual classroom supporting multi-way audio, video, application sharing, polling and content display
- **Voice Board:** a threaded, voice-based discussion board that can also be used for one to one vocal exercises
- **Voice Direct:** a live voice and chat application
- **Voice Email:** an e-mail with standard text, plus a vocal element
- **Voice Recorder:** a recorded message that a user can play back anytime, usually accompanying content within a web page.

The Wimba PowerLink features:

- **Single Sign On:** Students and instructors seamlessly access the Wimba tools from Vista course sections. They do not need to log in again or type a URL
- **Integrated creation and management of Wimba tools:** Instructors can easily create and manage their tools using the Vista interface. There is no need to access and learn a new administration interface.
- **Consistent look and feel and navigation:** Wimba tools look like, and can be used as, any other Vista tool. Consequently there is almost no learning curve.
- **Calendar integration:** Calendar entries can be created for Live Classroom and/or Voice Tools, enabling direct access from the calendar to the tool.
- **Content Push:** Files stored within File Manager can easily be transferred to Live Classroom.

In order to access these tools, Blackboard Administrators will first need to install and configure the Wimba PowerLink on your Vista server. Refer to the "Installation and Configuration Guide" for information on installing the PowerLink and setting up access for courses on the Vista server.

The different roles and permissions that you must possess within Vista will determine which of these groups of actions you will be able to perform. These necessary roles are defined at the beginning of each chapter below.

Documentation of all Wimba products is available on Wimba's website: <http://www.wimba.com/support>

# Adding a Tool to a Section

## Audience

Section Designers

Keep the following in mind:

- Only Section Designers\* can add the Wimba Tools to Sections.
- All Tools (Live Classroom and Voice Tools) can be added to Sections.

**\*Note:** Section Instructors may be allowed to build new Live Classrooms. For more information, refer to Chapter 3 - Modifying the Tools, Adding Content & Scheduling – Live Classroom (if link leads to a Room or Archive).

## To add a tool

1. Log-in to your Institution.
2. Select the Section you wish to modify from the **Course List**.
3. If necessary, click the **Build** tab. Navigate to the area where you wish to add the Tool. Tools may be added to an Organizer Page (such as Course Content Home) or within a Learning Module.
4. From the **Add to Home Page** menu, click the **More Tools** link.
5. The tools you have purchased from Wimba will appear in the list. They may include: **Live Classroom, Voice Board, Voice Direct, Voice Email**, and/or **Voice Recorder**. Click the link for the tool of your choice.
6. Click the **Create** button to build a new Tool. Enter a **Title** for the Tool and click the **Continue** button.

You may also select a Tool (or group of Tools) from the **Inventory** -- a listing of Tools that have already been created -- and click the **Add Selected** button.

## Live Classroom Creation

Choose from the five options – Link to a New Room, Link to List of Rooms and Archives, Link to Section Default Room, Link to Existing Room, or Link to Existing Archive.

1. Choose **Link to a New Room** to build a new Live Classroom, and click the **Continue** button.
  - a. **Settings**
    1. Type a **Description** of the Live Classroom. This will appear on the Live Classroom launcher page and will be visible to students.
    2. Select a Room **Type**:
      - Choose **Lecture Room** if you would like only Section Designers, Section Instructors, and Teaching Assistants to be able to present in Live Classroom.
      - Choose **Discussion Room** to enable any user associated with your course (Section Designers, Section Instructors, Teaching Assistants, Students, and Auditors) to present in Live Classroom.

- b. **Media Settings**  
(*Note: for this, and all settings below, click the arrow icon to the left of each heading to reveal options*)
1. **Student Privileges**
    - **Enable students to speak by default:** controls whether student microphones are turned on when they enter the Live Classroom.
    - **Enable students to show their video by default:** controls whether students may broadcast video when they enter the Live Classroom
    - **Enable students to use the phone:** controls students' use of the phone simulcast option
  2. **Video Bandwidth:** determines the necessary bandwidth to view/share video, as well as set a ceiling at which participants and presenters can broadcast video.
- c. **Room Features**
1. **Status Indicators:**
    - **Enable User Status Indicators:** allows users to select Status Indicator emoticons during a live presentation
    - **User Status updates appear in chat:** controls whether a textual message appears whenever user status changes occur
  2. **Lecture Rooms** (only applicable if this option is selected in the **Type** setting above):
    - **Enable students to use the eBoard by default:** controls student access to the eBoard (virtual white board) when they enter Live Classroom
    - **Enable Breakout Rooms:** provides access to separate rooms to which instructors may distribute students for group work and practice
    - **Students can see content created in other Breakout Rooms:** grants students the ability to view content created in other Breakout Rooms, from the time they are distributed
    - **Students in Breakout Rooms can see Main Room folders:** provides students in Breakout Rooms access to Main Room content
  3. **Discussion Rooms** (only applicable if this option is selected in the **Type** setting above):
    - **Enable Archiving:** allows anyone who enters the room to create a recording of session media and material
    - **Enable Appshare:** allows anyone who enters the room to use the Application Sharing feature
    - **Enable On-The-Fly PowerPoint Import:** allows anyone who enters the room to upload PowerPoint Presentations
- d. **Chat Settings:** these options control how students use the different forms of text chat (only applies to **Lecture Rooms**)
- e. **Access Settings**
1. **Maximum Users:** places a limit on the amount of users (including the instructor) who can enter the room

2. **Guest access:** allows this Live Classroom to be accessible external to your Vista server (recommended for guest lecturers, or to extend access to individuals without Vista access)
2. Choose **Link to List of Rooms and Archives** to build a link to a list of all the Live Classrooms and Archives associated with this Section.
3. Select **Link to Section Default Room** to use a default classroom, named after your Section.
4. Choose **Link to Existing Room** if you wish to link to a Live Classroom that has already been created.
5. Choose **Link to Existing Archive** if you would like to link to one Archive (an Archive is a previously recorded Live Classroom event or class). This option is only available once you have created at least one Archive.
6. Click the **Create room** button.

## Voice Board Creation

1. **Description:** Text entered here will appear below the Title and above the Voice Board.
2. **Audio Quality:** Adjust the quality of recording depending on the environment in which the Voice Board will be used. The higher the quality is set, the more bandwidth that will be required. This setting can be changed at any time but messages that have already been posted will play in their original encoding. The default setting of *Standard Quality (12.8 kbits/s)* works well for most situations.
3. **Max message length:** Adjust the maximum recording length allowed for users to post messages.
4. **Display short message titles:** When checked, the Voice Board will give less information in the title of the messages (length of the audio message, date of the posting...) making the display more compact.
5. **Display messages in chronological order:** When checked, the Voice Board displays the oldest messages first (at the top).
6. **Allow students to forward a message:** When checked, students will be able to forward messages from the Voice Board via email. The Voice Board will only accept addresses external to Vista.
7. **Allow students to start a new thread:** When checked, students will be able to start a new thread (a series of messages) on the Voice Board. Otherwise, only the instructor can start a new thread.
8. **Make discussion threads private:** When checked, students cannot view each other's threads. The instructor can still view all threads. This is a powerful tool for creating private exercises, assessments, and other types of one-on-one exchanges between instructors and students.

Click the **Continue** button, once you have modified these settings as desired, to create this Tool.

## Voice Direct Creation

1. **Description:** Text entered here will appear below the Title and above the Voice Direct conference.
2. **Audio Quality:** Adjust the quality of recording depending on the environment in which the Voice Direct conference will be used. The higher the quality is set, the more bandwidth that will be required. This setting can be changed at any time (archives that have already been recorded will be preserved in their original encoding). The default setting of *Standard Quality (12.8 kbits/s)* works well for most situations.
3. **Archives:** If checked, archiving will be enabled upon entry into the Voice Direct conference. If unchecked, the Archive will need to be started manually within the conference by an instructor.

Click the **Continue** button, once you have modified these settings as desired, to create this Tool.

## Voice Email Creation

1. **Description:** Text entered here will appear below the Title and above the Voice Email form.
2. **Audio Quality:** Adjust the quality of recording depending on the environment in which Voice Email will be used. The higher the quality is set, the more bandwidth that will be required. This setting can be changed at any time (messages that have already been recorded will be preserved within the archives in their original encoding. The default setting of *Standard Quality (12.8 kbits/s)* works well for most situations.
3. **Max message length:** Adjust the maximum recording length allowed for users to record messages.
4. **Reply Links:** If selected (Show), students may reply to Voice Emails by sending another Voice Email. If Hide is selected, Voice Email recipients may only respond via standard email.

Click the **Continue** button, once you have modified these settings as desired, to create this Tool.

## Voice Recorder Creation

1. **Description:** Text entered here will appear below the Title and above the Voice Recorder applet.
2. **Audio Quality:** Adjust the quality of recording depending on the environment in which Voice Recorder will be used. The higher the quality is set, the more bandwidth that will be required. This setting can be changed at any time but messages that have already been recorded will play in their original encoding. The default setting of *Standard Quality (12.8 kbits/s)* works well for most situations.
3. **Max message length:** Adjust the maximum recording length allowed for users (Section Designers, Section Instructors, or Teaching Assistants associated with this Section) to record messages.

Click the **Continue** button, once you have modified these settings as desired, to create this Tool.

# Modifying the Tools, Adding Content & Scheduling

## Audience

*Section Designers and Section Instructors*

1. Log-in to your Institution
2. Select the Section you wish to modify from the **Course List**
3. Navigate to the area where your Tool is located
4. If you are a Section Instructor, click the link for the Tool of your choice. If you are a Section Designer, click the arrow (to the right of a tool's icon), followed by **Preview**.

## Live Classroom (if link leads to a Room or Archive)

A launcher page will appear, displaying a number of options (described below). This page may also contain Phone-Only User dial-in and PIN information.

A Guest Access Link will appear only to Section Designers and Section Instructors, if this feature has been enabled in the room settings.

1. **Enter this Room/Archive:** Click here to launch the room/archive in a new window, test your room content, and actually conduct your class.
2. **Open/Close this Room/Archive:** If this is set to Closed, the link to the Room/Archive will still show up in the Section, but students will be unable to enter. This also controls whether the Room/Archive will display in the List of Rooms and Archives.

You may also click the circular status icon -- green for open, red for closed -- located to the left of the room/archive name to open/close it.

3. **Live Classrooms:** Click this link in the top left corner of the screen to access a list of all Live Classrooms and Archives associated with this Section. Many functions are accessible from this page: Room Creation, Entering Rooms/Archives, Opening/Closing Rooms/Archives or Deleting Rooms/Archives.
4. **Add to Calendar:** Live Classroom can be added to the Calendar the same way as any other content. However, if you wish to schedule recurrence, you must first add Live Classroom to the Calendar, and then add recurrence within the Calendar itself.
5. **Add & Manage Content:**
  - a. **Add File Manager Content to the room:** You have the ability to upload (or move) content from your File Manager directly into a Live Classroom. This content can then be used as slides in your Live Classroom presentation.

- Click **Add Vista Content to the room**
- Use the folders in the left frame to find the content in your File Manager that you would like to import.
- Select the Live Classroom folder to which to add your content. You have the option to add it to an existing folder or a new folder. Use the **Delete folder content** option if you wish to overwrite a file (or set of files) within the folder.

- b. **Add & Manage Room Content:** Clicking this link will produce a new browser window. From this window, you may use more advanced tools for managing Live Classroom content. Refer to Live Classroom Documentation for additional details.
6. **Edit Settings:** These settings are detailed in *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Live Classroom Creation*.

This **Modify Live Classroom** page features the addition of an **Advanced Settings** button at the bottom. Click this button to access the following two links:

- **Room: Advanced Room Settings**
- **Room: Advanced Media Settings**

These links provide more in-depth room options not available on the **Modify Live Classroom** page.

7. **View Records:**
  - a. **Poll Results:** Click this link to view the results of any Live Classroom polls that were published in this Room or Archive. Refer to Live Classroom Documentation for additional details.
  - b. **Tracking:** Click this link to view attendance data for this Room or Archive.

## Live Classroom (if link leads to a List of Rooms and Archives)

1. Click the name of a Room/Archive to access its particular settings, as detailed above in *Live Classroom (if link leads to a Room or Archive)*.
2. Click the circular **Status** icon (in the **Access** column) to make that Room/Archive unavailable or available. If the icon is red, the link to the Room/Archive will still show up in the Section, but students will be unable to enter. This also controls whether the Room will be visible to students in this List of Rooms and Archives.
3. Rooms and Archives can be removed by clicking the **Delete** icon next to the appropriate item.
4. A new Live Classroom can be created by clicking the **Create Room** button. This room will initially be available only from this List of Rooms and Archives, but can be added elsewhere from the **Inventory**.

**Note:** This button may be available to Section Instructors, if permission for these users to build rooms is enabled for your Institution.

## Voice Board

1. **Launch Voice Board:** Click here to launch and add content to the Voice Board. Refer to Voice Tools Documentation for additional details.
2. **Add to Calendar:** Voice Boards can be added to the Calendar the same way as any other content. However, if you wish to schedule recurrence, you must first add a Voice Board to the Calendar, and then add recurrence within the Calendar itself.
3. **Edit Settings:** These settings are the same ones detailed in *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Voice Board Creation*.

## Voice Direct

1. **Launch Voice Direct:** Click here to launch Voice Direct (chat and speak with your students synchronously). Refer to Voice Tools Documentation for additional details.
2. **Add to Calendar:** Voice Direct conferences can be added to the Calendar the same way as any other content. However, if you wish to schedule recurrence, you must first add Voice Direct to the Calendar, and then add recurrence within the Calendar itself.
3. **Edit Settings:** These settings are the same ones detailed in *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Voice Direct Creation*.

## Voice Email

1. **Launch Voice Email:** Select the recipients for your Voice Email message. Click the **Continue** button to launch and compose your Voice Email. Refer to Voice Tools Documentation for additional details.
2. **Add to Calendar:** Voice Email can be added to the Calendar the same way as any other content. However, if you wish to schedule recurrence, you must first add Voice Email to the Calendar, and then add recurrence within the Calendar itself.
3. **Edit Settings:** These settings are the same ones detailed in *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Voice Email Creation*.

## Voice Recorder

1. **Launch Voice Recorder:** Click here to launch and record a message. Upon launch, the applet will load, displaying the following controls:
  - a. Click the **Record** button (circle icon) and speak into a headset or microphone connected to your computer to record your message
  - b. Click **Pause** (two bars icon) to pause recording. Click this button again to resume recording your message
  - c. Click **Stop** (square icon) when you have completed your message
  - d. Click **Play** (triangle icon) to listen to your message. Click Record to re-record the message
2. **Add to Calendar:** A Voice Recorder message can be added to the Calendar the same way as any other content. However, if you wish to schedule recurrence, you must first add the Voice Recorder message to the Calendar, and then add recurrence within the Calendar itself.
3. **Edit Settings:** These settings are the same ones detailed in *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Voice Recorder Creation*.

# Basic Administration

## Audience

All Administrators, All Learning Context Managers

## Enabling and Disabling the Wimba Tools

Enabling/disabling the Wimba tools will affect all users at the Context Level (Institution, Division, Group, Course, or Section) where that change was made, as well as all users at lower Context Levels.

If the Tools are disabled, links to create the Tools will no longer display in the **More Tools** menu on Section **Build** pages (Organizer Pages and Learning Modules). Also, any Wimba Tools previously added to Sections will be hidden until the Tools are re-enabled.

1. Log-in to Vista
2. From the **Course List**, click the link for the Context Level you wish to modify
3. Click the **Settings** tab
4. Within the **Tools** column, click the link for the Tool of your choice. Options may include: **Live Classroom**, **Voice Board**, **Voice Direct**, **Voice Email**, and/or **Voice Recorder**.
5. Next to **Enable Tool**, select *true* or *false* to enable or disable the Tool.
  - If you would like your settings to be editable at lower Context Levels, place a check in the **Apply to child contexts** box.
  - If you would like your settings to be locked (so they cannot be modified) at lower Context Levels, place a check in the **Lock This Setting** box.
  - If you would like to freeze all settings in their current state in lower Context Levels, only place a check in the **Lock This Setting** box.
6. Click the **Save Values** button.

# Best Practices

## Sections that Link to Multiple Live Classrooms

If you wish to create more than one Live Classroom within your Section, we recommend using the **List of Rooms and Archives** option.

Placing this link in your Section will allow your students to access all Live Classrooms and Archives associated with the Section from one convenient location. Refer to *Chapter 2 - Adding a Tool to a Section – Live Classroom Creation* for more details.

## Customizing Icons for the Wimba Tools

### Audience

*Section Designers, Section Instructors, Teaching Assistants*

Wimba provides a set of custom icons that can be used to represent its Tools within Vista. To replace the default Vista icons with these custom icons (recommended,) follow the directions below:

1. Log-in to your Institution.
2. Select the Section you wish to modify from the **Course List**.
3. Click the **Course Customizations** icon.
4. Click the **Icon Sets** button.
5. At the top of the page (you may need to scroll to the right), click the arrow below the Tool icon you wish to change (**Live Classroom**, **Voice Board**, **Voice Direct**, **Voice Email**, or **Voice Recorder**), followed by **Preview**
6. Click **Replace Icon**.
7. A File Browser window will pop-up
  - a. If the Wimba icons have already been uploaded to your File Manager, browse for the appropriate files through the File Browser window. Select the new icon file and click **OK**.
  - b. If the Wimba icons have not been uploaded to your File Manager, click **My Computer** and browse your hard drive for the icon files. Click **Open** to add the icon.
8. Repeat steps 5 - 7 to replace additional icons
9. Click the **Apply** button in the lower left-hand corner of the screen to save these changes.

**Note:** *This customization will only affect the particular Section you are modifying. At this time, there is no mechanism for changing the Icons Sets of multiple Sections.*

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