

The Sysadmin's Daily Grind: PHP Directory Index

Looking Good

It doesn't hurt to pay attention to appearances. Viewed from the administrator's perspective, pepping up the boring directory lists served up by an Apache Web server is simply a question of style. **BY CHARLY KÜHNAST**

Now I'm not a vain person. After all, I don't work in the fashion trade. However, from time to time I do look in the mirror and decide it's time to head downtown and treat myself to a new outfit.

A strangely similar thing happens when I view the directory listings in a browser (see Figure 1). For this year's *Spring Collection*, I went in for the PHP Directory Indexer [1]. Check out Figure 2 – neat, huh? The package works with Apache 1.3 and 2.0, and only requires mod_php4. The key is the *DirectoryIndex* statement in your Apache *httpd.conf*:

```
DirectoryIndex index.php
index.html index.htm
```

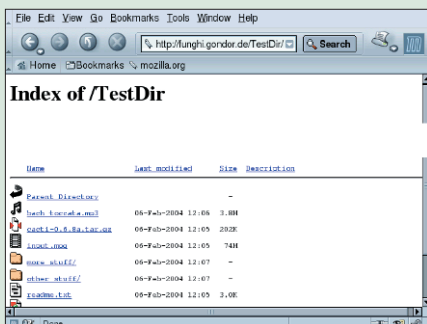


Figure 1: The Apache directory listing is very dreary.

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When users navigate to a directory containing one of these index files, they get to see that file. If the directory does not have an index file, Apache serves up a directory listing like the one shown in Figure 1.

The PHP Directory Indexer is not difficult to install. Unpacking the archive file reveals the *docs* and *icons* directories, and two files called *inc_indexer.php* and *indexer.php*. The *docs* directory contains pretty much what you might expect, installation guides in English and Portuguese. *icons* has a few sets of new pictographs, which I then copied into my Apache *icons* directory using the following command:

```
cp -r /usr/local/indexer/*
icons/* /srv/www/icons/
```

Of course your Apache will need read access to these files – my Apache uses the *nobody* account.

Modifying the DocumentRoot

The next step is to copy the two PHP files to your Apache directory. The *DocumentRoot* line in your *httpd.conf* will tell you which directory this is. In

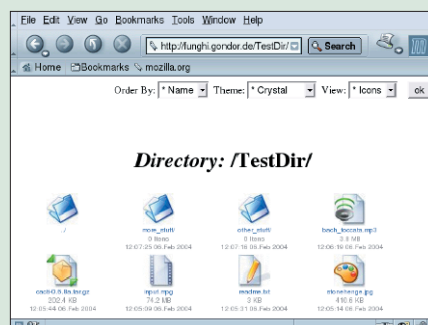


Figure 2: Add PHP Directory Indexer to your site for a touch of elegance.



my case the line is *DocumentRoot* *"/srv/www/htdocs"*. I then entered

```
cp /usr/local/indexer/*.php
/srv/www/htdocs/
```

to copy the files to the appropriate directory. Now I can modify the *DirectoryIndex* line in *httpd.conf*:

```
DirectoryIndex index.php index
.html index.htm /indexer.php
```

Don't forget the forward slash, as the file resides in the Web Server's root directory. Finished! The indexer goes to work after re-launching the Apache server. If you want to enhance your Apache's new look, check out *inc_indexer.php* for more details.

INFO

[1] PHP Directory Indexer: <http://indexer.adamastor.org/?cat=menu>

THE AUTHOR

Charly Kühnast is a Unix System Manager at the data-center in Moers, near Germany's famous River Rhine. His tasks include ensuring firewall security and availability and taking care of the DMZ (demilitarized zone).

