KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Likes, Views and Reply Counters in Discussions



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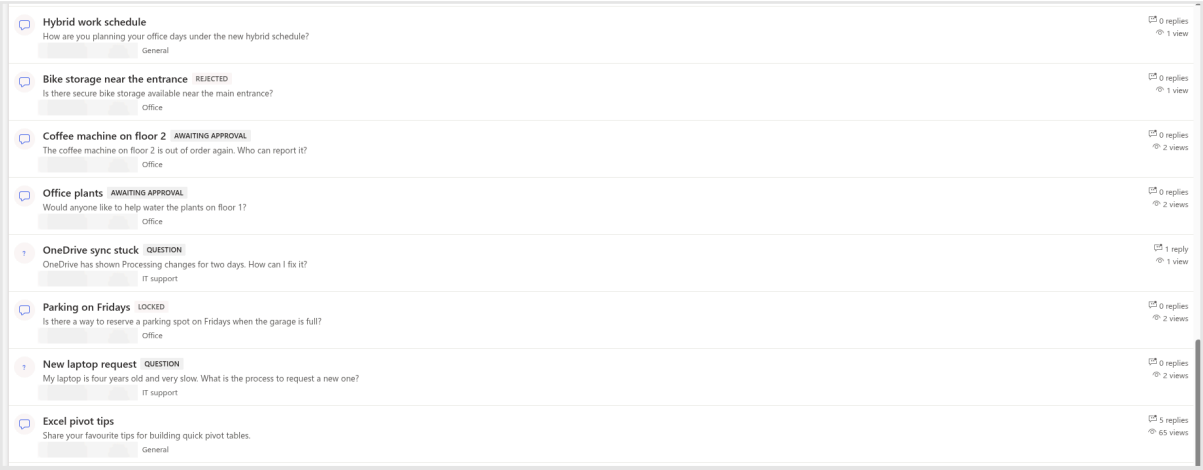
Overview

Every topic in Discussions carries three numbers: how many people liked it, how many times it was opened and how many replies it has received. Each reply carries a like counter of its own. The numbers are stored in the lists of your **site** next to the content, and the **web part** updates them in the browser of the person who likes, opens or replies. This article explains where each counter is shown, when it changes, who can influence it and why a number may occasionally lag behind - so that you know what the counters mean and what they do not.

Where the counters appear

Place	What is shown
list	On the right of every row: *N replies* and *N views*. The column is shown when **counters** in the **Appearance** group of the property pane is on (the default).
Topic page	The line under the title shows the author, when the topic was created, its category and *N views*. The **Like** button of the topic shows its count as *Like (3)*; the heading above the thread shows *N replies*.
Each reply	A **Like** button with the count of that reply.
Discussions Activity web part	*N replies* next to every topic in the feed.

Likes are not shown in the topic list - only on the topic page and on the replies.

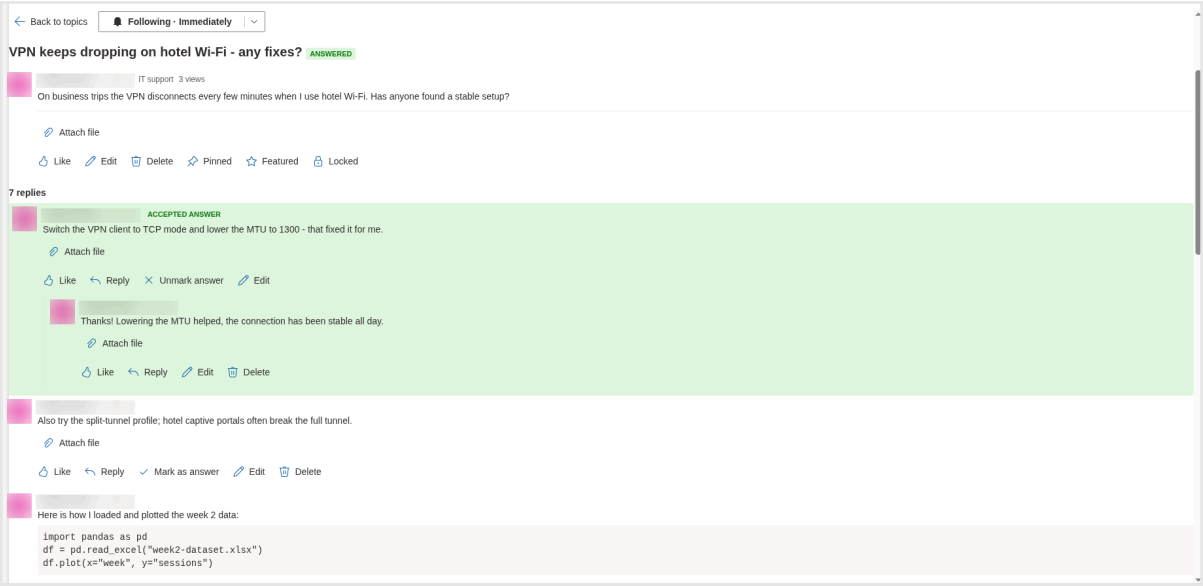


Reply and view counters in the topic list

Likes

A like is a simple vote of appreciation for a topic or a reply.

- **Who can like.** Anyone who can post on the board - users with the **Add items** permission on the site (the **Contribute** and **Edit** levels). The web part does not stop you from liking your own post.
- **How it works.** Click **Like** under the topic or under a reply. The icon fills, the number next to the label increases by one and the button stays highlighted for you. Click **Like** again to take the like back. Each person can like an item once; there is no "dislike".
- **What is stored.** Two columns: **Liked by** (`VtxLikedBy`), the list of people who liked the item, and **Likes** (`VtxLikeCount`), the number. Both are updated in one request when you click; the loaded count increases or decreases by one; it is not recalculated from the list of people.
- **What likes do not do.** Likes do not change the order of topics or replies, do not move a topic to the top of the **Recent** view and do not trigger notifications. The views of the topic list cannot be sorted by likes.



Like buttons on a topic and on a reply

Views

The view counter tells how many times the topic page was opened in the web part.

- A view is counted **once per browser session** - the first time the topic is opened from the topic list, from a link with `?topic=` (see KB10407. Sharing a Link to a Topic in Discussions (Deep Links)) or from the Discussions Activity web part. The counter is increased by one right after the topic has loaded.
- The web part remembers the topics already opened in the session storage of the browser tab. Going back to the list and opening the same topic again, or refreshing the page, does not add a view; opening the topic in another tab or window, or after the browser was closed, counts again.
- Views are **not de-duplicated per person** beyond that: the same user opening a topic in two sessions adds two views, and the author's own visits count as well.
- A view is recorded only for users who are allowed to write to the lists. For a visitor with **Read** permission **SharePoint** refuses the update; the web part ignores the refusal silently and shows the topic as usual.
- The number is stored in the **Views** column (`VtxViewCount`) of the topic.

Note

Because views are recorded in the browser of the person opening the topic, the counter is an indicator of interest rather than an audit figure: readers without write permission are never counted, repeated visits in one session count once, and a visit that is interrupted before the topic has loaded is not counted either.

Replies

The reply counter of a topic counts **all approved replies in the thread, at every level of nesting** - a reply to a reply counts as much as a reply to the topic. The number is stored in the **Replies** column (`VtxReplyCount`) of the topic and changes as follows:

Event	Effect on the counter
A reply is posted and is immediately approved (the board does not require approval, or the author is a moderator)	+1
A reply is posted on a board that requires approval and waits for a moderator	no change - the reply is *Awaiting approval* and is not counted yet
A moderator approves a pending or rejected reply	+1
A moderator rejects a pending reply	no change
A moderator rejects a reply that was already approved (from the **Reported replies** section of the queue)	−1
An approved reply is deleted by its author or a moderator	−1
A reply is edited	no change

A moderator sees pending replies in the thread with the *Awaiting approval* badge, but the heading *N replies* counts only the approved ones. The author of a pending reply sees the reply as well, with the message *Thank you. Your post will be visible after a moderator approves it.*; a rejected reply likewise stays visible to its author, with the *Rejected* badge, and is not counted.

Last activity

Together with the reply counter, the web part records **when** the last reply was posted and **who** posted it: the **Last activity** (`VtxLastActivity`) and **Last reply by** (`VtxLastReplyBy`) columns. **Last activity** is set when the topic is created and is moved forward each time a reply is posted or approved. When a moderator approves a reply from the queue, **Last reply by** records the author of the reply, not the moderator.

The **Recent** view sorts topics by this value, pinned topics first, so a topic rises to the top of the board whenever it receives an approved reply.

Warning

Likes, views, edits of the topic or of its replies and marking the best answer do **not** change **Last activity**. A topic that is being discussed through edits only stays where it is in the **Recent** view.

What readers see

Users who have only the **Read** permission on the site see every counter - replies, views and likes - exactly as everyone else, but cannot change them: the **Like** button is shown disabled, their visits are not counted as views and they cannot reply. Guests who were given access to the site follow the same rule according to their **permission level**. See KB10408. Permissions in Discussions: Who Can Read, Post and Moderate.

Why a counter may lag

The counters are stored as plain number columns and are updated by the browser of the person who acts, on a best-effort basis:

- When you post a reply, the reply is saved first and the counters of the topic are updated second. If the second request fails - a network problem, a lost session - the reply exists, but the counter and **Last activity** stay as they were. The web part never discards a reply because a counter could not be updated.
- Each update adds one to the value that was loaded when the page was opened. If two people reply or like at the same moment, one of the increments can be overwritten by the other.
- For likes, **Liked by** stores the recorded voters, but concurrent updates can overwrite changes to this column as well as to the count. Neither value is a complete audit trail.
- Boards imported from a classic SharePoint Discussion Board get their counters during the last phase of the import, *Updating counters and answers*; see KB10418. What the Importer Copies and How It Rebuilds Reply Threads.

A moderator can correct a number by opening the **Discussions Topics** list (the **Open List** link in the **Board** group of the property pane) and editing the item. How to diagnose a counter that looks wrong is described in KB10432. Counters, Last Activity or Best Answer Look Wrong.

Tip

For reporting, do not rely on the denormalised columns: count the items of the **Discussions Posts** list grouped by the **Topic** lookup - in a list view, in Excel or in **Power BI**. Filter to approved replies when comparing this count with the reply counter.

Columns reference

Counter	Column (display name)	Internal name	List
Likes of a topic	**Likes**, **Liked by**	`VtxLikeCount`, `VtxLikedBy`	Discussions Topics
Likes of a reply	**Likes**, **Liked by**	`VtxLikeCount`, `VtxLikedBy`	Discussions Posts
Views	**Views**	`VtxViewCount`	Discussions Topics
Replies	**Replies**	`VtxReplyCount`	Discussions Topics
Last activity	**Last activity**, **Last reply by**	`VtxLastActivity`, `VtxLastReplyBy`	Discussions Topics
Topics of a board	**Topics**	`VtxTopicCount`	Discussions Boards

The board item carries one more counter, **Topics**: it is increased when a topic is created on the board and decreased when a topic is deleted from the web part, on the same best-effort basis as the others. The web part does not display it in this version.

All columns live in the lists of your own site; nothing is sent elsewhere - see KB10363. Where Vitextra Products Store Your Data: Privacy, Data Residency and GDPR. The full schema is in KB10426. Discussions Lists and Columns Reference.

Terms

Permission Level
A permission level is a named set of permissions, such as Read, Edit, or Full Control, that can be assigned to users and groups on a SharePoint site, list, library, or item.

Power BI
Microsoft Power BI is a business analytics tool that enables users to visualize data and share insights across their organization or embed them in an app or website. It allows users to connect to various data sources, transform raw data into interactive dashboards and reports, and analyze data using intuitive drag-and-drop features.

SharePoint
SharePoint is a web-based collaboration platform that provides content management, document management, workflow applications, search, and other tools that empower employees and teams to work together. SharePoint is also a secure place to store, organize, and access shared information.

Site
A SharePoint site is a container for information within the SharePoint platform. Sites typically offer features such as document libraries, lists, calendars, discussion boards, and workflows, facilitating collaboration, communication, and document management within teams or across departments. Sites can be customized and configured to suit the specific needs and workflows of an organization.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.