



Intranet vs Extranet perspectives: Who can see who?

The Intranet was created to centralise workforce services and boost engagement between employees.

Two user perspectives within this exist - Intranet and Extranet users.

Intranet users (also called Primary area users) will always be in use on your site, whereas extranet users are completely optional and usually reserved as profiles for suppliers, stakeholders, contractors etc.

The content each can see will be for your teams to decide and configure using permissions, however, fundamentally the other users each type can see within the site cannot be changed.

Use this guide to understand whether setting up Extranets will fulfil your use case or not.

Your requirements will need to fit or be tweaked to fall in line with these principles as they are the system's capabilities:

- Intranet users (Primary area users) will always be able to see all other users, including those in all extranets.
- Users in the same extranet can see each other and all Intranet users (those in the Primary area)
- The only users who are hidden from each other are those in different extranets.

The Claromentis support team are on hand to answer any questions about functionality or ways you need to modify your Intranet so please raise a [support ticket](#) if you wish to discuss your circumstances further.

The Primary area

When a site is installed there is one location users can be created - the 'Primary area'.

This is the main Intranet area and generally, this is going to be full of employees of the company that has purchased the Intranet.

Name	Description	Read only	Logo
Primary Area (Intranet)			[None]
ExamplePartner	Extranet for business partner		[None]
OtherPartner	A separate extranet for a separate business partner		[None]

The Primary area has no restriction on users viewing other users, as it should be acceptable and expected for anyone in this area to see and communicate with all other profiles.

A full list of profiles will appear to them if they navigate to the front-end of the People application.

In line with the permissions that have been set across application content Primary area users will be able to see and interact with other user profiles in areas they may appear e.g. searches, Discussion posts & replies, direct messages, comments on News articles, Birthday component lists etc.

An Intranet can exist perfectly with users in the Primary area only as the Intranet is an employee hub that facilitates their work and gives a central location for them to interact with colleagues they potentially have never met due to location, company size etc.

This is why extranets are completely optional, they are an add-on in terms of functionality that is not always required for the company that purchased the Intranet.

Extranets

Where this can change is if your Intranet is not only going to be for employees and instead you wish for external contractors, suppliers, partners etc to be able to log in as well.

In these situations, it is likely not appropriate for these external users to see the same content as employees, or each other's profiles.

The solution here is to create Extranets.

We do not want suppliers/contractors to see each other, but we do want them to see company employees (who are in the Primary area)

This is the fundamental logic extranets work with and it is not something that can be changed.

Extranets, just like the Primary area, are hypothetical 'areas' of an Intranet that holds users.

Realistically this is just a way to ringfence users under the same banner and enable different permissions to be set for them.

As standard, an 'extranet' doesn't really exist as a separate entity it is instead a perspective built within the Intranet that has pared down content and allows external users to log in.

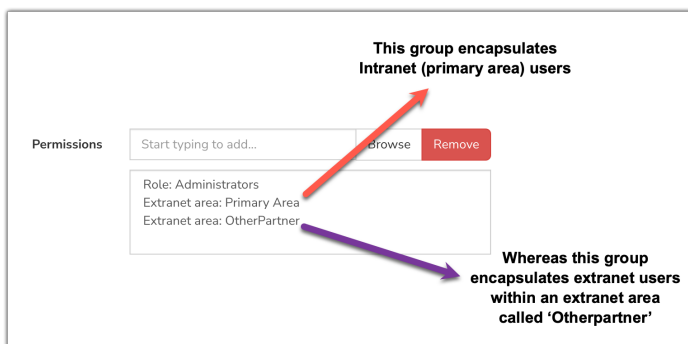
Name	Description	Read only	Logo
Primary Area (Intranet)			[None]
ExamplePartner	Extranet for business partner		[None]
OtherPartner	A separate extranet for a separate business partner		[None]

What can an Extranet user see?

Once an extranet is created, users can be placed into it.

Off the bat, these users will be able to see content on your site where 'All registered' has been used, as this hardcoded group includes every user profile created on a site, which will include any extranet users.

If it's not appropriate for extranet users to see the content where 'all registered' has been used, before adding extranet users, permissions can be sorted out ahead of time by your administrative team



e.g. Wherever 'All registered' has been used on your site, will allow extranet users. If this is not appropriate your team needs to swap out this for the Primary area or extranet-specific groups instead to ensure only those users can access that content rather than everyone.

[Read our essential guide to assist with configuring extranets and content for them here](#)

What is important to note, with one extranet the only benefit is being able to create a separate homepage, theme, pages, and content geared towards the users in it, so they can feel like they are logging into a separate 'portal' (if you decide to create lots of content for them) OR just that they have a destined place to log in to perform tasks, communicate with you, log tickets etc.

Their experience is essentially what your Intranet management team makes it.

What is crucial though, is that user perspectives do not change at all with only one Extranet.

A user in an extranet can see all users in the primary area and everyone in their own extranet.

This means every user can still see and interact with every registered profile on the site (depending on permissions they have to reach certain pages etc to have those interactions) despite what 'area' they are in.

The reason for this is due to the original use cases the Intranet was built to support.

Even though an extranet may have been created for external suppliers etc it should still be acceptable and expected for these users to see and (potentially) interact with your own employees who are in the primary area.

It is possible to hide some of the communication features in Claramentis, however, this will never prevent it in totality as the Intranet was not created with this use case in mind; currently, if users can see each other, it is ok for them to communicate.

The bottom line here is that any extranet user will see all primary area users listed in People, as well as those in the same extranet as them.

Multiple Extranets

Only when a second (or third, fourth, fifth etc) extranet area is created does a change in user perspective take place.

A user in 'Extranet 1' will never see any users in 'Extranet 2' and vice versa.

This is the only perspective change that is achievable in Claramentis and it requires multiple extranets.

Imagine you have 3 external suppliers you wish to access the Intranet. You create an extranet for each and put the corresponding users into them.

Now because of the perspective changes this facilitates, users between the extranets will never see each other and have been hidden from each other.

Users in Extranet 1, will see Extranet 1 and Primary area users listed in People but never those in Extranet 2, 3...

Users in Extranet 2, will see Extranet 2 and Primary area users listed in People but never those in Extranet 1, 3...

Users in Extranet 3, will see Extranet 3 and Primary area users listed in People but never those in Extranet 1, 2...

This also applies to any application content extranet users may be able to reach based on how your team sets up their permissions, the system will never show them the name or activity of a user in a different extranet to them.

Remember:

Everyone in the primary area can always see everyone across all extranets.

Primary area users will see other primary area users, Extranet 1 users, Extranet 2 users, Extranet 3 users etc in the People application.

As they are the 'employees' of the Intranet it should be appropriate and acceptable for primary area users to see everyone in all extranet areas.

If it is **NOT** appropriate then follow the fundamental rules for hiding users - they will need to be put into an extranet instead and will see only fellow extranet users and those in the primary area rather than everyone.

Hidden Users

Users are only hidden from each other when they are in different extranets.

For this to be achieved your site will need to have more than one extranet in existence with users across them.

A rule of thumb - Any user that should be able to see everyone goes in the primary area, anyone you wish to be hidden from another should be in separate extranets from each other.

This is not a behaviour that can be changed, if you want to hide users, you need multiple extranets and to split users between them, then they won't see each other.

Management over time

It's important that your Intranet management team are aware of any extranets on your site if they are in use and how these work.

Permissions across the site need to be maintained to include/exclude extranet users where appropriate, as well as considering this when creating new content.

It is vital your team understands how all the parts fit together to create an overall user perspective of the Intranet from their 'area' and be able to tweak this as required.

Our [essential guide](#) on creating extranets outlines how best to manage this and continue testing when changes occur.

Tags: extranet, intranet, primary area, user, extranets