

Your Club's Web Site: An Outline

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<http://www.community/activedayton.com/groups/district13h/>

- 1. The Web can be one of your most powerful PR tools. You can:**
 - Recruit members
 - Educate people about your causes
 - Increase between-meeting communication among members
 - Inform a member who cannot attend a meeting due to sickness or vacation
 - Save money on postage and printing
 - File forms online
- 2. Think Big—Start Small.** Don't just leave it to the computer "experts."
- 3. Rule #1 for developing a Web site:**
 - Think about **who** your audience will be and plan everything to meet the **needs and expectations** of those very important people.
- 4. Your audiences will likely include:**
 - Potential new members
 - Your present members
 - General public—local, national, international
 - Members of other Lions Clubs
 - **The media**
- 5. Looks aren't everything. Before you consider what your site will look like:**
 - Think about what **information** the site should have
 - Think about how people will **navigate** through it
 - **Organize** on paper where the content will go on the site
- 6. Basic information to start with:**
 - Complete contact information for key members (or all members—even better)
 - About us (don't get carried away here)
 - Regularly updated calendar
 - Description of current projects and/or causes you support
 - Information on how to join
 - Time, date and location of regular meetings
 - Links to www.lionsclubs.org, www.ohiolions.org, district Web sites and other appropriate Lions' sites
- 7. Extra content to consider adding:**
 - Message board (either open to all or only to members)
 - Photos of events or members
 - Meeting minutes
 - Text of speeches by recent guests
 - Newsletters
 - "Brag area" about your members (Did a member recently win an award, get a promotion, have a baby, etc?)
 - Conduct fund raising activities
 - Photo albums
 - Feature pages on outstanding members or interesting people in your club

(Continued...)

8. Getting started...Determine who will:

- Develop the club Web site
 - A member?
 - An outside company or individual?
- Maintain the club Web site
 - A member?
 - An outside company or individual?

9. Advantages of hiring outside firm:

- You can have a slick, professional appearance
- Members do not need to learn how to create Web pages

10. Disadvantages of hiring outside firm:

- Usually expensive
- May mean less control over content

11. If the club does it themselves...

- Purchase Web site management software
- Get training if needed
- Find a service to host your site
- Make sure more than one person in your club is trained to update the site

12. OK, now you can design—Top design tips:

- Readers skim Web pages, so don't fill your site with gobs of text. Keep it as simple as possible
- Don't go for flash, go for substance
- Keep the contrast high between your background and your text
- Use animations sparingly, if at all. Definitely don't use multiple animations that never stop.
- Check your links regularly to make sure they still work.
- Don't put too much information on one page. Think about how the information should be divided.
- Don't put too many graphics on one page, as this will slow down the download time.
- Make sure your graphics have ALT tags—these are computer codes that help people with vision problems use your Web site.
- Look at your Web site in both Netscape and Microsoft Explorer to make sure the pages display correctly.
- DON'T PUT YOUR TEXT IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. THIS IS DIFFICULT TO READ IN LARGE BLOCKS.
- Use italics sparingly and don't underline text that is not a hyperlink.

13. A last bit of advice:

- Don't ever build more than you can maintain.
- Reward your Webmasters regularly. These volunteers are doing a tremendous service for your club.

14. Create your site:

- All Lions Clubs: <http://www.lionwap.org/index.php>
- Southwest Ohio: <http://www.activedayton.com/shared/groups/steps.html>