



Webinar

Developing a Club Website

OCTOBER 2010

Best Practices for Rotary Club Websites

1. Build your website with public relations in mind, for the non-Rotary audience. Your club's online presence can directly affect your club's public image. A visit to your site must not only meet your club members' expectations but also offer something of interest for the general public, including prospective members or other community groups wishing to partner with your club. Show them what the power of Rotary can do both in your community and around the world. What are you doing to get people to return to your site?

Some questions to consider:

- Who is your target audience?
- What are the objectives of your website?
- What should a visitor expect from your site?
- What do you want the visitor to leave with?

Resources to help support your club in this area:

- RI has preproduced videos at youtube.com/rotaryinternational and <http://vimeo.com/rotary> that you can easily embed on your club's website.
 - Add Rotary [public service announcements](#) including [Internet banners](#) to your site. Download these at rotary.org/humanityinmotion.
2. Provide accurate contact information and an easy way for prospective members to express interest in your club and learn more about joining. Provide more than one way to be contacted, such as a phone number *and* an e-mail address.
 3. Keep all your information current: Update your meeting place and time information as needed, keep your calendar of events and list of speakers up to date, and feature the current year's RI theme logo. (Or use just the Rotary emblem, which supports better brand identity and is easier to maintain.)
 4. In all electronic communications, readers should immediately recognize who is publishing the material and why.
 - Make sure the Rotary emblem, the name of your club and location (including country and state, if appropriate), when and where your club meets, district number, and a descriptive title are placed prominently at the top of your website.
 - When you use the Rotary emblem or other Rotary Marks, your club name must appear in close proximity and be given equal prominence.
 - Make sure that your domain name complies with Rotary International's rules for the use of the Rotary name. See more information in the [Rotary Code of Policies](#).
 - Make sure you use the Rotary emblem correctly. [Download RI's free emblems](#).

5. Keep your design clean and simple with one consistent navigation scheme throughout the site. Tap into members' knowledge of web development and design. However, don't rely too heavily on one expert who might create a site that only he or she can maintain.
 - Keep navigation items to a minimum.
 - Consider how people are interacting with the site. What information are they looking for most frequently? Can they find it easily?
 - Stay away from metaphorical navigation (e.g., don't make people spin a Rotary emblem).
 - Use standard fonts. Limit the use of multiple fonts and colors. Avoid full justification of text.
 - When using photos, music, or videos on your site, make sure you have the permission from the copyright owner and give credit to the creators of such works. Consider using photographs from [Rotary Images](#).
 - Obtain releases from your club speakers before posting their photographs, videos, or speeches to your club's website. Make sure your fellow club members agree to the use of their image on the club's website.
 - Don't use a company's logo unless you have permission from the company.
 - When linking to non-Rotary websites, have the link open in a new window.
6. Link to www.rotary.org and use Rotary's [RSS feed](#) for an easy source of free content and to improve your search engine rankings.
7. Include links to your club's social media sites or to RI's [social networking pages](#).
8. Use simple analytic tools to learn how people are using your site. What information do they seek? Can they find it easily? Does your site serve both club members and prospective members?
9. Before publishing your content, test it in as many browsers as possible. Not all browsers display information in the same way.
10. Know your limitations. It's better to have a simple, up-to-date site than one that's difficult to maintain.