

Unit Web Site Status April 25, 2015

Development on the web site has slowed down significantly. We can now host articles, photos, and videos, along with the standard fare of unit activities, information on the unit, application forms, and the more sensitive material such as Trillium issues and financial reports.

However, submission of articles and event coupons to post on the web site is sketchy at best. The Webmaster(s) should not have to chase after these documents. After all, our web site is the face of the unit to the world.

Looking to the future, several enhancements can be seen.

1. Classified Ads.

There is an option (plugin) to add a classified ads section to the web site. We don't know what the setup and full implications of this option are, but could see it as being basically self regulated. Anyone who visits the web site could brows the ads and contact the seller for information/purchase. There could be some control on who can post an ad and how long the ad would be active for with some other controls as well. This option would have to have the Electronic Communications Committee (ECC) install it. This option would be ideal for a member to take on as a responsibility (Ad Master?).

2. Member access (interactive) to the web site.

In this case, unit members could request a user id/password to log on to the site. Certain hidden options would then be available to them.

The first would be an option to access the documents that are currently available in the "Members Only" section. A non-member in viewing the site would not see a "Members Only" menu item, and could not access any of those documents. This would improve security for the unit's sensitive documents.

Secondly, members could request a certain role be available to them when they log in. The roles would be:

Subscriber: View all of the content of the site. This is the standard role.

Contributor: All of the rights of the subscriber plus the ability to create posts and make comments on others' posts.

Editor: All of the rights and capabilities of the above with the responsibility to edit/approve submissions from contributors before they are posted on the site.

Author: Like a contributor but can control and approve their own submissions.

Admin: Controls the whole site.

Some members have expressed interest in adding content (articles, photos, reviews) to the web site. This feature would provide the opportunity for them to do so.

In addition interested members could take over responsibility for sections such as Photos or Videos.

Currently, addition of users to the site is the sole responsibility of the ECC. And the ability to comment on posts is blocked.

3. RSS.

RSS or “Really Simple Syndication” provides a feed of notifications on changes or additions to the site to the member's desktop, smart-phone, and tablet without having to access the site.

If the member subscribes to the service, they will have an entry on their browser window that when accessed provides a list of the latest changes to the web site. This could be coupled with an option (plugin) which would send an email about the site changes to those members who wish the email notification service.

All of the above changes/improvements will require buy-in from the ECC, so support from the unit (executive and membership) is vital in getting them approved. I don't think any other unit has made these kind of requests, but I think these changes will add a great amount of value to membership in our unit.

Respectfully submitted.

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