



Web Site Development Handout for District Deputy Training and Breakfast

at Masonic Temple on the corner
of 5th and Warren in Bremerton,
Washington

Saturday, October 25, 2008

Time: 8:15 AM - 10:15 AM pst

Lodge Web Site Development Presentation for Lodge Officers

By WB Lance Otis Oct 25, 2008

Opening Remarks

As lodge officers, your responsibility includes communicating with, and linking to, Brothers and the community at large. A web site provides a unique opportunity to provide a positive view of your lodge to the public and a means for rapid communication of events notices and charitable activities. It can be used as a **tool for education, advertising your temple's facilities, and getting new members.**

To effectively delegate your web site development and maintenance, you must understand some of the details of what goes into the creation and update of a web site. The creation takes a short time, however keeping your web site up-to-date is a continuing process and will extend over multiple Worshipful Masters. **There is nothing worse than an out-dated web site,** you send a negative message the viewer. Accordingly, choose your webmaster carefully. Then assure responsibilities and procedures are documented so that loss of your webmaster does not mean loss of your ability to manage your lodge web site. A well designed web site should consider ease of update as one of the most important web site planning steps.

What follows will speak to you as if you are the webmaster. As officers, this is info that you need to converse effectively to those who are webmasters. Some of you are probably already webmasters. If this is so, your comments can add to the quality of this presentation.

This discussion presumes that you have a Microsoft Windows operating system on your machine: XP sp2 or Vista. Much of this presentation will use the high-speed internet connections at the Victory Memorial Masonic Temple in Bremerton. So this hard copy will only be an overview of the actual demonstration of the available capabilities and methods.

You should take notes, but this handout summarizes what we discuss today. We also refer to several websites. These are listed in the handout and at the site:

www.whupton206.org/webdevresources.php .

Appendix A consists of guidance prepared by WB Jim Kendall for you to use to get a website for your Lodge with a website template for your update and use. Further info is available at www.bluelodge-wa.org/Docs.html.

Appendix B provides web site design information, if you plan to extend the sample template or develop your own web site.

Appendix C is the 2008 Web Site Check List that you can use to grade the quality of your Lodge's web site.

Appendix D provides a full list of web page editors and their attributes in a separate file (on-line).

What Is a website?

A website is basically a bunch of html pages and images linked together. These sit on a hosting server which is basically a computer which can be accessed over the internet through a domain name (e.g. www.bluelodge-wa.org). Web sites are identified by site addresses that

start with “http://“. A site consists of one or more web pages with a means of navigation from one page to another. Easy navigation is essential; this is done by using link identifiers that point to the place you want to go. These pages are served to the user’s web browser. The opening web page is traditionally named “index.html”.

What is a web page?

A HTML (HyperText Markup Language) page consisting of a tagged set of objects that define the format and content of the page and defines links to other pages, images, and/or documents. Page files usually end with an “.html” but can be other file types recognized by the server.

How do I download a page to update it?

You must download it from the server site to your computer using File Transfer Protocol (FTP) software. To do this you must have a User ID and a password that allows you to access the server’s FTP site where the web page files are located. FTP sites are identified by site addresses that start with ftp://. The handout explains how you get a user ID and password from WB Jim Kendall.

FTP Software:

Free:

- FileZilla version 3.1.3.1 or later
- Core FTP LE
- Many others are available

Not Free:

- **RECOMMENDED: WS_FTP Home, free for 30 days then \$40.**
- Many others are available

You can download software from these trusted sites: www.download.com, SourceForge.net, and Tucows.com.

Setting up a directory on your computer for your web site files

You should have a working set of pages that you edit and a backup directory of good pages that you do not edit. The backup is updated when you have tested a page online and are assured that it works correctly. You may want two backup directories, in case you find that your edited and tested backed up page is found to be faulty later. Then you can go back to a previous backup. Here is a typical directory structure on your local computer:

C:/.... /WebDev

C:/.... /WebDev/Backup1

C:/.... /WebDev/Backup2

C:/.... /WebDev/TestDebug Files

C:/.... /WebDev/Working Files

How do I edit a page I have downloaded?

If you are a programmer, you can edit the HTML directly, however there is great value in being able to see how the web page looks as you edit it. This approach is called “What You See Is What You Get” (WYSIWYG) or Wizzywig. Good editors also have a built-in capability to upload your edited files to the website.

WYSIWYG HTML editing software:

Free:

- **RECOMMENDED: Kompozer version 0.7.10 or later**
- WebDwarf V2 uses project files, hard to learn, hard to remove from computer.
- NotePad++ V4.7.5 or later, good, but not WYSIWYG
- Many others are available, see App. D.
www.whupton206.org/webdevresources.php

Not Free:

- Adobe DreamWeaver \$400 – best there is
- CoffeeCup \$50
- WebEasy7 - \$19
- Many others are available, see App. D.

You can download software from these trusted sites: www.download.com, SourceForge.net, and Tucows.com. Amazon.com, [Staples](http://Staples.com) and [Office Depot](http://Office Depot.com) stock some of these items.

Where can I get Standard Images and Documents?

Common document files and graphics are located in public directories available for read-only use. The images are located at:

<http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/images/>

Standard documents are located at:

<http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/documents/>

Standard icons are available at:

<http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/icons/>

These images and documents can be accessed via a link to the appropriate object in the standard files. To add to this library of documents or images, contact the Webnerd (that would be Jim Kendall at webnerd@bluelodge-wa.org) to arrange to have them added to the common files.

Resources for Working with HTML

HTML is only one of the languages used for web pages. This discussion does not touch on XML, PHP, JavaScript, CSS, or Flash, but most modern web pages depend on these and other language capabilities to present sophisticated and attractive web sites. Fortunately, there are standards organizations that aim at enforcing compliance and provide online

education and reference works for the developer. A full list of web development resources used to create the Upton 206 web site is available at:

<http://www.whupton206.org/webdevresources.php> .

Validating your HTML code

You will probably run into errors on your pages as you develop them. There are on line services that can verify compliance with the standards for HTML and Style Sheets. Size and speed checks can also be performed. A full list of web development resources used to create the Upton 206 web site is available at:

www.whupton206.org/webdevresources.php

How do I upload my page to the Internet?

Basically, you upload the same way you download by using the FTP software or the HTML editor. Good editors have a built-in capability to upload, or Publish, your edited files to the website.

Web Site Design: Appendix B lists some of the steps you should consider when developing or updating your web site.

In addition to those general remarks, one specific recommendation needs to be addressed: it has been recommended that valid e-mail addresses not be listed on web pages as text strings or link addresses with the @ in them – they become targets of spammer search bots. There are ways to overcome this problem, such as showing links by use of an image file. Specific HTML code tricks are also available that split up the email address and hide the @ sign in links.

Note that most servers treat upper case, mixed case, and lower case names of files and web addresses as different objects.

Example Web Sites

Some Lodge web sites you may want to visit at GL website: <http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/>. are listed below. A site URL would be <http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/upton206> for example.

Site [Lodge+No]	Complexity	Comments
upton206	High	http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/upton206
hda314	High	http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/hda314
whidbey15	Low	
fernhill80	Low+	
sequim213	Low	
uc27	Low	
dist11	Medium	
arl129	Medium	
tyler290	Low	
kelso94	Low	

unity198	Medium	
morton209	Low	
burl93	Medium	
sol60	??	Under construction
damasc	High	Damascus 199 http://www.bluelodge-wa.org/damasc
dist21	Low	
d3and12	??	Under construction
coulee120	Low	

Some good lodge web sites on other servers:

Site [Lodge+No]	Complexity	Comments
Almira 127	Low	http://wamasoncam.com/almira/
Steilacoom 2	High	http://www.steilacoomlodge2.org/Main.htm
St. Johns 9	High	http://www.seattlemasons.org/
Myrtle 108	High	http://www.myrtlelodge108.org/index.htm
Bremerton 117	High	http://www.lodgesite.com/~Bremerton117
Daylight 232	High	http://www.daylightmasons.org/
Yelm 244	High	http://www.yelmfreemasons.org/
Krucible UD	High	https://www.kruciblelodgeud.org/
Eureka 20	High	http://www.eurekamasons.org/
Spokane 34	High	http://www.spokane34.org/
Fidalgo 77	High	http://anacortesmasons.com/
University 141	High	http://www.universitylodge141.org/
Westgate 128	High	http://www.westgatelodge.org/
Mt. Hood 32	High	http://www.lodge32.com/

Demo, Discussion, and Questions

Appendix A: Guidance for Getting a Blue Lodge Web Site Blue Lodges of Washington Web Server by WB Jim Kendall

Getting Started

The “Blue Lodges” web server was created to provide a place for the constituent lodges of the MW Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington to host their web sites. It provides a means whereby the Technology Committee can provide information, a starter website, and a resource for lodge Webmasters and Lodge Officers to enhance their lodge’s public profile. It has been noted that several lodges that actively use the internet, and especially a website, have been doing a “land office business” with new members and public awareness. Properly used, the web site becomes a powerful tool for imparting information to the members of the lodge as well as the general public. The specific goal of this web server/web site is especially to provide novice web masters with resources to publish, maintain and improve web sites for their individual lodges. This service should also be a valuable asset to more seasoned web masters. To this end, the Technology Committee is pre-configuring a basic website that meets the minimum specifications desired in a Lodge Website. Further, this allows us to use common files and common directories, which allows us to provide very simple instructions for novice webmasters to follow. For more information, or to open an account, call 360-613-5220 and ask for the grand lodge website package, or email info @ bluelodge-wa.org.

Information needed

Lodge Name, Number, mailing address, billing contact and address (service cost is \$10/mo. or \$120/year), contact (Webmaster or other), phone number, email address, any existing domain names, desired domain name(s), whether this is to be a hosted website or a virtual server (uses your domain name) and any other pertinent information.

Downloading the sample website

A basic website has been created as an example/template for the lodge Webmaster to edit if so desired. It has been created to reflect the criteria used to judge lodge websites for recognition at the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge.

The sample website is plain and simple. It will serve nicely for a new website for a lodge needing to create a web presence, and can be embellished as desired (within the published guidelines posted elsewhere).

Using an FTP (File Transport Protocol) program of your choice, connect to www.bluelodge-wa.org using the username and password provided when your account was created. Download to a directory you created specifically to contain the working files for your website, including any graphics and documents. If you are truly paranoid (and I recommend you be so) you will want to create a second directory in which you store the last known “good” version of your website, including ALL files. You will want to select a naming convention and location that will be as distinct as possible to avoid confusion. Use the working files to update and upload your website. Once you have tested to ensure the website works the way it is

supposed to do, COPY ALL THE FILES TO THE BACKUP DIRECTORY. That way, if you have an “oops” you can restore that last “good” website from your archive and try again.

Editing the sample website

The sample website has been created with simplicity in mind. Remember that HTML (HyperText Markup Language) is essentially a text file with either the .htm or .html file-type identifier. You can edit the website using Microsoft Office Word, MS Wordpad, MS Notepad, Frontpage, or pretty much any text editor or website authoring software. By keeping the website simple, we intend for you to be able to use MS Wordpad or a similar text editor and simply “search and replace” to perform the initial editing. With the above in mind, once you have downloaded the website, open each html page one at a time. Edit the pages as each is opened, one at a time. Finish each page before proceeding to the next. Save the page before going on to the next. *Remember to save the page as file type “text.”* It must have the .htm or .html extender/file identifier. Before you open a page to edit it, it might be helpful to open it in your web browser and print it out so you can keep track of what information you want to change. For example, when editing the “officer” page, you will select (in MS Wordpad) on the menu bar at the top, “edit,” then “replace.” A window will open. In the “find” box, type in the information to be replaced (“WB John Doe” for example). Type it exactly as it appears in the document. In the “replace” box, type in the information exactly as you want it to appear on the website (“WB John Henry Hancock XI, PM” for example). Go to the next item, which would be the Senior Warden. Continue until done. Save the document. (If you want to be really-really-really paranoid/safe, save the document after a few changes.) Save and close the document and go to the next. Use the same technique as described here. Copy the completed files to the “archive” directory as recommended. When done upload the files to replace the original files (which still reside on the website).

Uploading Files

Uploading files is very much like the reverse of downloading files. Use the FTP (file transport protocol) software of your choice. Simply upload the files after you have edited them. If you have created subdirectories on the server for documents such as your Trestleboard, you will want to make sure that the appropriate files go into the appropriate directory. Once you have uploaded your files, go to the website and make sure it is working the way you intended!

Further guidance is located at: www.bluelodge-wa.org/Docs.html

Appendix B Web site Design

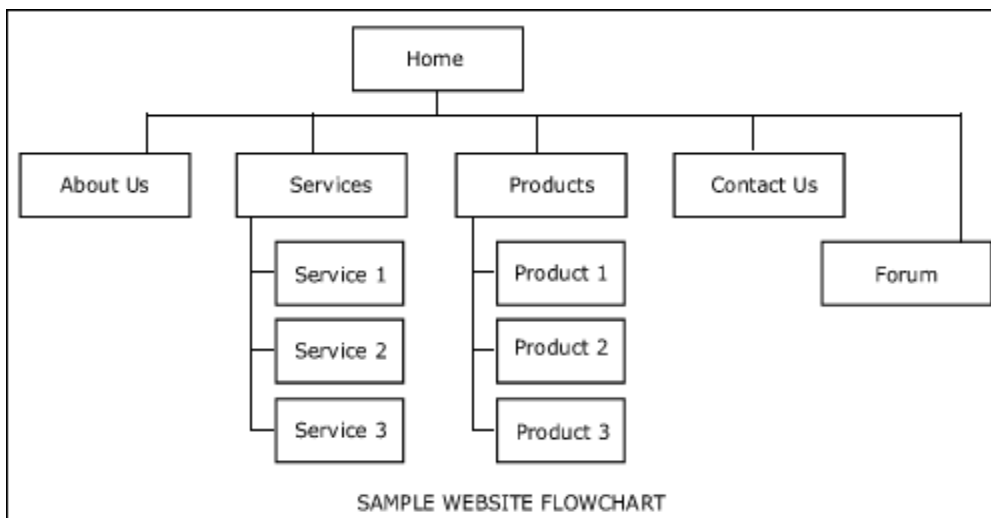
To be successful a website must get many visitors. This is possible if the site comes up in the top search results of search engines like Google when a potential visitor types in keywords related to the website's content. To get this end result sites need to be built, content needs to be written and website promotion needs to be done keeping the search engines in mind.

Plan the Site

Now you'd ready to start working on your website. To begin with you will need to design what you want on your website. Sketch it out on paper in a flowchart. Usually there will be a 'home' page, a 'contact' page, an 'about us' page and other content pages. Do you want to incorporate any additional features like forums, guest books, blogs etc?

Another way of designing your flowchart is by using post-it notes. Every time you think of something you want to incorporate into your site, note it down on a post-it. Once you're done, find a wall or large surface and arrange each item in a logical and intuitive flow. Keep rearranging till you're satisfied.

Determine a site plan that will be easy to navigate and will allow visitors to find what they need quickly and easily. One of the HTML pages at your site should be a site directory based on your site plan.



Website Usability Tips

What is website usability? Website usability is about making your website easy to use for your visitor. Things to watch out for are:

- Avoid clutter.
- Group related stuff together.

- Ensure that the user knows where he/she is. Each page should have the website ID (logo) and page heading.
- Create clear, simple navigation.
- Provide a way to search your site.
- Make sure links look like links, e.g. underlined

A great book to learn more about website usability is "Don't Make Me Think" by Steve Krug.

Create the Web Pages as Per the Site Plan

Depending on the site builder you are using, it is time now to create the individual pages that make up your website. The content of your site is what will draw visitors to your site. Articles are a great way to get targeted visitors to your site. Make sure your content is targeted to your audience. There are various tools to help you do this.

Once you create the pages, you will need to insert the following into each page:

- page heading
- textual content
- images and other media assets, if any
- meta data - page titles, keywords and descriptions
- any special navigational elements related to that particular page e.g. 'you are here', sub-menu etc.

If you are using Dreamweaver, once you have an HTML template for the site ready you can begin creating your site pages. Create an html page based on the HTML template for each item in the flowchart of your site plan. Give each page a file name e.g. about.htm. Avoid using spaces and special characters (except underscore _ or hyphen -) in the file names.

Kompozer also provides useful tools to help you develop and edit your pages.

Appendix C: Web Site Check List 2008

The following items will be checked when reviewing a Lodge's Web Site/page.

Web Site URL: _____.

- 1) Is the Web Site current? Yes ___ No ___ .
- 2) Is this Web Site linked from the Grand Lodge Web Site? Yes___ No___
- 3) Is there a link to the Grand Lodge Web Site? Yes___ No___ .
- 4) Is there a current list of officers on the site? Yes___ No___ .
- 5) Is there a list of meeting dates? (Lodge year calendar or/and complete list with actual dates – 5 points, Partial list only for current Lodge year or mentions such as 'meets 2nd Tuesday' – 3 points) Points ____
- 6) Are the Lodge Trestleboards on the site? Yes ___No ___.
- 7) Is this Web Site one page with lots of scrolling? Yes ___ No ___ .
- 8) If this Web Site has multiple pages, is it easy to navigate? Yes ___ No ___
- 9) Does the Site advertise Lodge involvement in community activities and charitable works (associations, bikes for books, CHIPs, etc.)? (articles showing presentations, etc. – 5 points, mention of activities and works – 3 points) Points ____
- 10) Does the Site list which community activities and charitable works the Lodge is involved with (associations, bikes for books, CHIPs, etc.)? Yes ___ No ___.
- 11) Does the Site advertise the Lodge activities other than Stated Communications? (degrees, fellowship events, etc) Yes ___No ___
- 12) Does the Site list the dates of Lodge activities other than Stated Communications? (degrees, fellowship events, etc.) Yes ___ No ___
- 13) Is there an obvious way to ask to become a member of the Fraternity on the Web Site? Points ____
- 14) Is there an obvious way stated to contact the Lodge and receive a response in a timely manner via telephone or e-mail? (Within 24 hours)?Yes ___ No ___
- 15) Are there obvious spelling errors? Points ____
- 16) Is there useful fraternal information and Masonic education contained on the Web Site? Yes No .
- 17) Rate the amount of useful fraternal information and Masonic educational material on a scale of 1 to 10 with one being not much and ten being a lot. ____
- 18) Please rate the Web Site in its overall appearance and performance.

From 1 to 10, with 1 being low (it's unattractive, hard to navigate, and useless) to 10 high (it is nice looking, easy to navigate, and useful). ____

Total points for this Web Site: _____ out of 100 .

Notes:

- Correct answers = 5 points.
- Question #5 is 5, 3, or 0 points
- Answer to #7 should be No and all other yes/no questions should be yes
- Question #9 is 5, 3, or 0 points
- Question #13 should be 5 points for easily seen, 3 points for having to look for the link, and 0 points for no mention.
- Questions #17 and #18 get from 1 to 10 points based on your review of the Web Site.

Spelling errors in written articles should not happen on a public document. Spelling 'Chaplain' as 'Chaplin' or 'Marshal' as 'Marshall' or like errors in written pages should result in one point off of the maximum five points for each error to a maximum of five making the item zero points. Scanned pictures of articles with spelling errors are no penalty. Spelling in copied articles should conform to the original spelling – many words are British spelling such as 'labour' or Old English and, as copies of printed works, incur no penalty.

Total possible points: 100

[Appendix D: Web Editors General information (See separate file online at www.whupton206.org/webdevresources.php)]