Area 70 Web Site Policy

I.   Introduction and current status

        In September of 1998, an ad hoc committee of Area 70 created a proposal that was subsequently adopted (FAA, December 1998) as the first Area 70 web site. The web site committee was created as a permanent subcommittee of the Public Information (PI) committee. The web servant is appointed by the Area chair.

        Today, the web site has three principal functions. First, it contains information about Alcoholics Anonymous and links to the AA.org web site. Second, it is an index of AA meetings in the Area Third, the site now contains an index, or calendar, of Area 70, Northeast Regional and General Service Office events relevant to service work in Area 70. This calendar contains the links to Area 70 service flyers and, when possible, links to other entities registration forms and information.
        Leadership for the committee has been provided by the PI/CPC chair when possible, and alternately, by the web servant.

        The technical design and maintenance of the web site has been, and remains, a web committee decision. These responsibilities include updating information on the site, maintaining liaison with other committees, regularly registering the web site name, and monitoring the use of the web site to prevent an excess of bandwidth use[1]. The web site name ("domain") registration includes privacy services that prevent any individual's name or contact information from appearing in the publicly available web site ownership information.

        One noteworthy design specification of the web site is simplicity. The site is designed to deliver basic information about AA in Area 70. This can be accomplished by using simple, industry standard, and universally implemented techniques. The technical expertise of the web servant will vary[2], as will the tools available to those servants. A simple site ensures the continuity of maintenance regardless of the web servants' expertise. A discussion of the web site design appears later in this document.

     Finally, GSO resources on web site design and implementation provide direction for the Area 70 site. Currently, this means that the web site uses an "exit statement" when linking to any other site (including GSO), does not contain any advertising and collects no personal user statistics.

II.   Structure and role of the web site subcommittee

   1) The web site committee should remain a permanent subcommittee of the PI committee.
   2) The PI chair will serve as the web site subcommittee chairperson. The subcommittee will consist of at least one web servant and any interested and willing AA members.
        a. The web servant is appointed by the Area chair. The position of web servant does entitle the web servant to a vote on the PI/CPC committee or the website subcommittee.
        b. The web servant should have the technical skills and equipment required to update AA information, meeting information and area events.

       c. T h e web servant should provide a computer and Internet access for use in maintaining the web site – these are not provided by the Area.
       d. I t is suggested that the web servant have a minimum of two or three years continuous sobriety and some service experience at the group or district level.

  3) Reports to the Area about the activity of the web site committee will be made by the Public Information committee chair.

III. <u>Role and operation of the web site subcommittee</u>

  1) The web site subcommittee is responsible to the Area:
      a. To maintain correct and accurate information on the site
      b. To protect the privacy of site visitors
      c. To uphold the spirit of Tradition Six, the committee:
          c.i.   will not allow advertising, and;
          c.ii.   will not endorse any other web site or entity, and;
          c.iii.   will clearly inform site users that the appearance of any corporate logos does not constitute endorsement, and;
          c.iv.   will inform users when linking outside the Area 70 domain.

  2) All funding for the web site is provided in Area 70's budget as a line item. The Area 70 treasurer will be listed as the billing contact for renewal of hosting and domain renewals.

  3) The PI chair and the Area chair should have all the credentials needed to access (as administrator) all the functions of the web site, including domain registration, hosting service log-in, ftp log-in, and email log-in.

  4) The web site subcommittee will seek guidance from the PI committee and the Area Committee on the particulars of the content and functions of the web site.

  5) Working with the Meeting List chair, the web servant will publish meeting list changes.

IV. <u>Content of the web site</u>

  1) The web site will contain the Preamble, Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, the Responsibility pledge, "How it Works", the promises[3] and the Serenity prayer. All references will be properly cited. 2) The web site will contain the GSO mailing address, links to AA.org and Grapevine.org, the Area mailing address, and if available, the Area telephone number.

  3) The web site will contain an index of AA meetings in the Area. This index may include links to District web sites within the Area.

  4) The web site will contain a list of Area, regional and national service events..

  5) All links to external web sites will require visitors to acknowledge that they are leaving the Area 70 web site. This includes GSO and Grapevine sites and District web sites.

  6) Any corporate logos or names that cannot be removed for technical or ethical reasons (for example, on street maps of directions to events) should be accompanied by an equally prominent note that Area 70 does not endorse any entity and does not accept any consideration, financial or otherwise, from any entity other than AA groups. This is in keeping with the non-endorsement spirit of Tradition Six.

  7) If a committee wants to put content on the web site, a motion must be made and approved at the Area committee meeting.

  8) The web site will not include any "private" password protected, or otherwise restricted

content. All site content will be available to all site visitors. This is in keeping with the spirit of Tradition Five to make sure the web site is a tool to carry the Area's message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

9). the web site will not include widgets, gadgets, buttons or other distracting objects. The site will not contain links to so-called "social networking" sites.

10) AA anonymity, web site security and bandwidth use[4] are considerations equal to content. Tradition Eleven is a guiding principle at this public level equal to "press, radio, and film".

V. Simplicity of web site design

The requirement for simplicity of the web site design ensures that the site can be maintained by a succession of web servants with little concern for the expertise and tools available to any particular incumbent. Practically speaking, this specification requires that:

1. The site is written in HTML, using text editing software, and that;
2. The site can be navigated by any HTML version 3 compliant browser, and that;
3. The least amount of client-side script is used, and the pages that use such scripts can deliver the information without the scripts, and the scripts are written in languages that can be interpreted by any compliant browser and that;
4. Server-side scripts are restricted to those that are provided by the hosting provider[5], and that;
5. Any special tools that might be needed are available as free software. These include graphic design tools to create buttons, and tools to edit portable document format (pdf) files.

Footnotes

[1] Monitoring is needed because excess bandwidth use can indicate an improper use of the site or a poorly designed site (overly detailed graphics files that are larger than required, as an example, and can result in the site being shut down.

[2] For example, while the use of cascading style sheet (css) files is a standard in industry, due to the variable expertise of the web servants, such use should be restricted to simple text formatting. Further, all code and related documents in the web site should contain internal comments documenting the intended function of, and any special notes about, the code.

[3] Permission from A.A. World Services, Inc. (AAWS) has never been given to "title" the promises or to use them out of context. If used they should be attributed to A.A. World Services, Inc. (AAWS) as an excerpt from PP 83-84 of the book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

[4] Anonymity, security and bandwidth considerations and the principles guiding them:
   - The domain registration includes privacy services that prevent any individual's name or contact information from appearing in the publicly available web site ownership information. (Tradition XI)
   - The web site will be designed so that automated indexing programs spiders" or "bots") do not traverse the web site and so consume bandwidth. (Bandwidth, Security)
   - Graphics used on the site should be of low quality and small size. (Bandwidth)
   - Lines drawn on the site should make use of single pixel graphics that are re-sized in the browser. (Bandwidth)
   - Out of date events should be removed, and any associated links should be removed, when the event ends. (Bandwidth)
   - Submitters of events should redact corporate logos or provide disclaimers on the event notice. (Tradition VI)
   - No personally identifying names, street addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other identifiers of AA members (hash tags, screen names and the like) can be included on an event announcement. If the event document contains such information, it will be redacted before the document is made public. (Tradition XI)

[5] Any functions that depend on these scripts must be carefully considered, as the availability of similar scripts at other providers (should a new provider be deemed necessary) are not guaranteed.

Approved by Full Area Assembly on December 9, 2012