



# FIVE KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL TEAM WEBSITE

# 1

## ESTABLISH INSPIRED BRANDING

**Let this next statement sink in for a moment: for online visitors, your website represents the quality and integrity of your organization.**

Research has shown that it takes less than 1/20th of a second for visitors to formulate their first impression of a website and the organization that it represents... so don't overlook the value of great design.

Professional design and branding will successfully communicate the quality of your organization to your membership, potential members and prospective sponsors.



**5 Keys to a Successful Team Website**

A Guide by Sport Ngin

# 2

## DOMINATE THE HOMEPAGE

It is common knowledge that your website is the official communication clearinghouse for your organization. When someone is seeking information, they hop online and head straight to your website homepage.

**But once they arrive on your homepage, how easy is it for a visitor to find the content they're looking for?**

Many website managers try to accomplish too much with their homepage, which in many cases creates an overwhelming and unusable mess of disconnected content. With homepage design, less is definitely more. To accomplish this, think of your homepage as an easily scannable teaser that directs site visitors to more immersive and in-depth information located deeper within your website.

To determine what to highlight on your site's homepage, ask yourself one extremely important question: What content is most important to most visitors? Try and limit your response to 5-10 timely content areas.

**Use this list of effective homepage content areas to help determine what to include on your team's homepage:**

- Recent news and announcement teasers (and a link to view all news and announcements)
- Recent, in-progress and upcoming programs (and a link to view your entire schedule)
- Current events (and a link to view complete event details)
- Calls to action (such as registration, donations or joining a mailing list)
- Current promotions (link to more information)
- Shortcuts (link to the most frequently requested pieces of content)
- Social network connections (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Ustream, etc.)
- Multimedia previews (link to recent photos and video)



# 3

## EMPLOY SIMPLE NAVIGATION

**Navigation offers structure, sense of location, and physicality to an otherwise abstract online location.**

Poor website navigation is the single largest contributor to visitor frustration. If your visitors can't easily figure out how your content is organized, they are more likely to give up on your site. A clean, consistent navigation design will help your users find what they are looking for, while giving them a clear understanding of their current location within your website hierarchy.

### **Navigation Tips:**

- While general site content has a lifespan that can extend for multiple years, consider organizing newsletters, announcements, events and projects by the season in which they occur. Grouping this content by a specific window of time helps organize otherwise complicated data and works well as a historical archiving mechanism.
- Often overlooked, text links drastically improve the chance that site visitors will find what they are looking for. Work hard to include links within website content wherever possible. If you mention a specific page within text on your website, be sure that the page name is a link that will take users directly to the mentioned page.



# 4

## UTILIZE ONLINE TOOLS

Your website houses a plethora of information and daunting amounts of data.

**Look for ways to automatically leverage this data with web-based applications and tools that can introduce powerful time-saving functionality to your website.**

Online tools provide real value to website administrators by automating many mundane tasks such as data entry and website management.

**Handy tools and functionality that help enhance team websites:**

- Content Management System (or CMS)
- Automatic RSS and iCal feed publishing
- Page permissions
- News and event tagging
- Online registration
- Contact forms
- Volunteer management
- Commenting moderation
- Schedule import/export
- Internal messaging



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# 5

## BUILD COMMUNITY

**Make sure that your team's website is more than just a one-way broadcasting device.**

Leverage the nature of the web to give site visitors and your membership a vehicle to interact with your organization (and each other) online. Make your site the common hub for club experiences.

**Practical ways to encourage online community:**

- Maintain consistent and up-to-date content. Build trust in the website's accuracy to ensure members will return.
- Encourage participation in maintaining content with an easy-to-use CMS.
- Engage your members with real-time game results and streaming video.
- Create a Twitter account or Facebook page specific to your organization. Include interactive widgets from these services on your website.
- Facilitate conversation by adding commenting functionality to your website pages, news articles or blog posts.
- For internal conversation, create a private "members only" message wall that keeps everyone in the loop.



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Sport Ngin (pronounced “engine”) is a powerful, beautifully designed sports platform used by thousands of teams, leagues and organizations around the world.

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