Club Promotion

There are many ways a metal detecting club can promote itself in the community and in this article I will only provide you with a couple of club promotional ideas.

Why promote your club's existences at all? First and foremost is to grow your membership from the few to many. Second it affords people interested in metal detecting an outlet for friendship, detecting partners and for the club to promote / sponsor responsible metal detecting.

One step a club can take to develop its presence is to appoint a club member to be its club Promotional Chairman. His / her role can be to identify club promotional opportunities and develop programs.

A club's promotional programs can take TWO directions first by promoting the club to its current membership base. This can be done by having interactive & special topic meetings that include guest speakers and / or members that have a special interest to share.

Second promote your club to the community at large. This is the area I will address in this short article.

The simplest and least expensive way a club can promote itself is to create a club business card. This card can be provided to local area businesses / merchants that are associated with the hobby such as: prospecting, metal detecting, coin, bottle & glass, rock & mineral retail stores and other clubs, etc. These businesses can make your club's business card available to their customers. The result is a rapid exposure of your clubs existence in the local community.

Here is a sample of a club business card's layout and content

Your club's business card can also be printed on the back side with a Code of Metal Detecting Ethics or a short and precise permission to hunt agreement or what ever you may want to place on the back.

Next, I would like to turn your attention to the creation of a club web-site. Today, many people use the internet to research their interested and metal detecting is one of those interest frequently researched. The subject of metal detecting is available on the internet in club web-sites and personal web-pages, special metal detecting forums, and companies selling metal detecting wares.

Metal detecting club web-sites are either a single web-page description of a specific club or a club web-site with many pages, photos, newsletters and in some cases much more. Today 50% of the FMDAC member metal detecting clubs have a web-site with more sites appearing ever month. If you do not have a member in your club with the skill to create a club web-page or site it is still possible for your club to have a web-page.

Why should a club consider a web-page?

- ➢ Communicate the clubs existence
- ➢ Gain new members through the internet
- ➢ Provide a public service for lost items and evidence searches
- ➢ Achieve local and national recognition
- ➢ Use the web-hosting service's email capability for internal member communication
- ➢ Post club events on the web-page rather than use USPS

The first thing you need for the creation of a web-page is a web-site hosting service provider. There are many available and a quick search on the web will provide you a list. Most web-hosting providers' starting price will be under six dollars per month and should come with some of the following benefits:

- ➢ Free E-mail Accounts **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Free Site Builder **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Free Web-Page Templates **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Free 24/7 Web-Site Support (High Want)
- ➢ Free Domain Registration **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Ad free site-no advertising **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Visitor unlimited access **(A MUST)**
- ➢ Front Page Extensions (Nice, but not Necessary)
- ➢ 100-400 or More of GB Web Space **(A MUST)**

A club member with no pervious web design experience can build a web-page by using the web-hosting service's *web-site builder* and *pre-formatted templates*. All you need to do is follow their instructions and select a template then change the templates written content to your club written content with its attributes and presto you have a club web-page. Follow the instructions of the service provider and publish your web-page. It's really that easy.

So to recap here are seven steps to follow in designing the web-page:
1) First layout your web-page content on standard paper.
2) Find a web-hosting service provider.
3) Define your site access user name. This should be the club name or the club's initials.
4) Sign-up with the provider; keep it under $6 a month.
5) Use one of web-hosting templates for you web-page.
6) Replace the sample texts with your clubs text.
7) Publish your clubs web-page.

Sample of a simple web-page and content

As you gain experience you can add more pages to your web-site. I highly recommend that every club have a web-page with an e-mail address. Your club will be surprised at the response to the web-page by seeing new visitors to your meetings, request for help in finding lost items, and many other requests for information from the club.