

## Start a Metal Detecting Club

By Lee Wiese

### How Does Someone Get a Metal Detecting Club Started?

If one searches the internet there are a number of sites that provide an article or outline on what and how to start a club. Rather than cover old ground, this article will try to look at a new approach to starting a club.

Today the internet is probably the most important tool that can be used to start a metal detecting club. More and more people are developing their capabilities to use email and various internet search tools to pursue their hobbies. This new found internet interest and capability are the attributes that need to be capitalized on in creating a metal detecting club.

Below are some internet networking tools that can be leveraged into developing a metal detecting club membership. More comments will be made on these social networking tools as the article progresses.

- 1) Create a Club Webpage
- 2) Setup a Meetup Webpage
- 3) Put notification of a New Club on Metal Detecting Forums (there are many)
- 4) Create a Club Facebook Page
- 5) Create a Club YouTube Video
- 6) Place Notification on Craigslist

The first action is to establish a club name (avoid using the words Treasure Hunting in the name, since it may involve a negative public image about the club), once the name is identified take the first letter of each word in the name to create the internet domain name. An example: (this web site's name is *Metal Detecting Hobby Talk* the domain name is: *mdhtalk.org*) in this case the last word or the site name is part of the domain name rather than just the first letter. Once you have identified the domain name there needs to be a domain name search to determine if the domain name is available to be acquired for the club. The Go Daddy web site is a good place to go for a domain name search.

The next step is to establish the metal detecting club's existence on the web and can be accomplished in a couple of ways. The first approach may be to create a metal detecting club webpage. After a brief time the various search engines will make the clubs webpage available for all to find and see on the web. A short and concise webpage with the club name, club location, (state, city, meeting place if there is one) and contact information (email and phone number) can rapidly bring members into the club. On the web page there must also be an explanation as to what the club will be all about.

There are many website hosting companies that offer low cost hosting services. To start a website the cost should be less than \$5.00 per month and the hosting company will have all the tools required to accomplish the task. Most hosting services provide templates to get started - just select a template that fits your need and replace the template's text with the club's information. Then publish the club web site to the internet.

Another approach to a club webpage is to use a social network tool called Meetup. This network tool will rapidly allow you to setup almost everything that could be put on a webpage plus more in some cases. Again, what is important is to identify the club name, location, and meeting place. I suggest you pick a name & location to start the club off, contact information, purpose and objective. This social networking group software is not free but can

be very effective in starting a club and drawing in potential new members. There are a couple Meetup examples listed in the attachment.

Another approach is to visit some of the metal detecting web based forums and putting information about your new club in one of the sub-forums. Some of the sub-forums are there for just that purpose. This may not be the best tool to use since your targeted community on a forum will be U.S. wide. Just the same there is significant interest in the hobby with many internet users daily visiting these forums so there is the chance that someone from your area may see the ad.

Many clubs in the U.S. are turning to Facebook to bring attention to their organization, to locate new members and to use as a communication tool with the current membership. To setup a Facebook page is pretty straight forward and there is no cost involved. Use a similar approach as outlined in the Meetup section.

Creating a short YouTube video about the club's existence can also be a way to identify new members. If this approach is used then the club name, city, and the state must be in the video title. The reason for this approach in the title is that if someone is doing a YouTube search on your location the video will be easily found with the search tool. Just type in "metal detecting clubs" in the YouTube search tool the result will provide many ideas for a video.

Craigslist is a very good way to make the general public aware of a new club. Find the Craigslist location for your area. Place an ad or notification in any of the Craigslist sections such as: Community groups, events or local news. Select the sub-group based on how it may be used in the local area.

Here are a few traditional things that can be used to enhance the membership search results.

- Consider placing an ad in the local newspaper. Usually there is one day a week when the newspaper will offer free or for a small fee notification about clubs and organization.
- Identify the local hobby businesses and ask to place a pamphlet or flyer in their business concerning the new club. This flyer should have the same information that has been placed on a website. The contact information is extremely important so a potential new member knows who to contact and where to go.
- Occasionally a local newspaper will do public interest articles and place them in the local news section. Contact the newspaper to find out if there is any interest to do such an article concerning a new metal detecting club in the area.
- The local radio station may have a human interest hour and the station might be willing to highlight the new metal detecting club on one of its programs.

### *The Next Step.*

By using some of the suggested ways mentioned the assumption is that people with a similar interest have come forward and are interested in the new club. The next step is to hold the first meeting with the interested parties. The suggestion is that this meeting be very informal. The major objective of the first meeting should be to get to know one another. The way to accomplish this is to have each person wear a "stick on" name tag and fill out the sign in sheet before the start of the meeting. Start the meeting by having each person provide a self-introduction. The introduction should reveal some back ground information on themselves (do they metal detect, detector type, what

skills might they have to support the club, etc). Once the introductions are over it is time to develop the direction of the club.

The first action: Is there enough interest in the group to develop the club further?

If the answer is yes, with member involvement set out to identify what the new club structure should be and how the membership would like the club to support the hobby. In future club meetings the more difficult action items and assignments can take place. Remember to keep the first meeting light and friendly and not overburden the new members with responsibilities and duties. The objective is to have fun and establish a rapport with the members.

Here are some first & second meeting topic suggestions:

- Identify and Elect Officials (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President)
- Set future Meeting Dates
- Identify Future Meeting Place
- Establish Membership Dues
  - Is the Club to have Formal Name tags?
- Establish a Meeting Agenda
- Determine the Meeting Structure and Format (Informal or Format)
- Is the Club to:
  - have Bylaws?
  - be a Non-profit Organization?
  - have Monthly Show & Tell of Members Finds?
  - have a Monthly Coin and 50/50 Raffles to raise funds?
  - have Speakers from Related Hobbies?
  - have Meeting Refreshments?
- Identify Chairperson Positions if any?
- Identify an Outing Chairperson
  - Establish a Date & Place for the Clubs First Outing / Hunt
- Determined the Club Objective and Mission Statement
  - Is the Club Involved in the Community? (Evidence Search, Park Involvement, etc.)
  - Is the Club Involved in Local & National Metal Detecting Politics?
- Will the Club use the Internet (Website, Meetup, Social Tools, etc)

From this list the group can easily create the next steps for the club. Remember to keep advertizing the club to identify more individuals with similar interest. Never lose sight of the need to have fun in the club and have different type of outings for the membership.

**Attachment:****Other web pages on the Metal Detecting Hobby Talk site that Support this Article are:**

**Metal Detecting Club Bylaws:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/articles/bylaws/bylaws.htm>

**Metal Detecting Ethics:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/ethics/ethics.htm>

**Club Evidence Search Team:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/articles/evidence-search/club-evidence-search.htm>

**Metal Detecting Organization Description:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/articles/club-organization/organization.htm>

**Metal Detecting Club Promotion:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/articles/club-promotion/club-promotion.htm>

**Club's Community Service:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/articles/community-service/community-service.htm>

**Club Meeting Agenda:** <http://www.mdhtalk.org/forms/agenda/agenda.htm>

This is a list of **Metal Detecting Forums** that should be able to support messages about a new metal detecting club. Many of the forums require a user name and password and I suggest using the same user name and password for all of the forums you join and visit. These forums have many sub-forums specializing in very specific hobby related topics.

- Find's Treasure - 46 Sub-Forums <http://www.findmall.com/>
- Friendly Metal Detecting - 20 Sub-Forums <http://metaldetectingforum.com/>
- Treasure Net - 113 Sub-Forums <http://forum.treasurenet.com/>
- Treasure Quest - 36 Sub-Forums <http://www.treasurequestxlt.com/community/>

**Social Internet Networking Tools**

- Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/>
- YouTube Video <http://www.youtube.com/>
- Meetup <http://www.meetup.com/>
- Craigslist <http://www.craigslist.org/about/sites>

**Web Site Hosting Companies**

- Consumer Ranking of Hosting Sites @ <http://www.consumer-rankings.com/hosting/>

**Low Cost Website Hosting Companies**

- Ipage <http://www.ipage.com/ipage/index.html>
- Fat Cow <http://www.fatcow.com/>
- Just Host <http://www.justhost.com/>
- InMotion <http://www.inmotionhosting.com/>
- Host Gator <http://www.hostgator.com/>
- Go Daddy <http://www.godaddy.com/>
- StartLogic <http://www.startlogic.com/>
- Register.com <http://www.register.com/>
- Best Web Hosting Services <https://websitesetup.org/best-web-hosting-sites/>