



Historian's Web Page

Municipal Website

Most muni's have a website. Look under the list of departments to determine:

- ◆ Whether the historian already as a page
- ◆ If there is one, what it contains.

Choosing Content for Your Pages

Think about what you want the world to know about you and your office.

Consider:

- ◆ Introducing yourself, perhaps with a photo
- ◆ Posting your office location and hours
- ◆ Listing the types of information in your office
- ◆ Providing a sample of what can be researched there
- ◆ Including an introduction to your muni's history
- ◆ Showing some historical photos
- ◆ Including photos of local landmarks
- ◆ Providing a brief timeline of major events within the muni
- ◆ Including PDFs of your annual reports
- ◆ Including PDFs of articles you've written
- ◆ Providing answers to common questions (FAQs).

Updating Page Content

If you are unfamiliar with updating web pages, ask your municipality's Information Technology (IT) department:

- ◆ If someone is assigned to set up and update the muni's web pages
- ◆ If not, whether there is someone who can show you how to do it.

Begin by selecting information for your page that does not need frequent updating until you learn how to make the changes.

Look at the web pages of these New York State historians for ideas:

- ◆ Town of Victor <http://www.victorny.org/index.aspx?nid=109>
- ◆ Town of Ithaca <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/historian/ithaca>
- ◆ City of Rochester <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/historian/>
- ◆ Orange County <http://www.co.orange.ny.us/content/124/1338/>
- ◆ Town of Vestal <http://vestalny.com/departments/vestahistorian.php>
- ◆ Town of Southold <http://www.southoldtownny.gov/index.aspx?nid=234>

Web Page Terminology

If you are unfamiliar with creating web pages, ask someone in your IT department to get you started or take a mini course either online or through your local library.

These common terms are associated with web pages:

- ◆ Home Page—the first of a group of pages, the introductory page.
- ◆ Static Page—a page containing information that you as the “web master” can update
- ◆ Blog—an online journal or diary, an interactive page or section of a page when you and those viewing your page can post comments.
- ◆ WordPress—a common program used to create a web page.
- ◆ Header—the absolute top of your page—usually a graphic
- ◆ Banner—space used for an ad or graphic
- ◆ Tab Bar—a row of tabs containing words that, when clicked, link you to another page.
- ◆ Left Navigation Bar—a list of words down the left side of the page that link you to another page. Another option to having a tab bar.
- ◆ Scrolling—when you have to scroll down to see the remaining content on the page.
- ◆ Navigation—how the person using your pages moves through them.
- ◆ GIF or JPG—two types of images used on web pages.
- ◆ White space—areas of the page that do not contain content.
- ◆ Link—an address that takes you to another location on the page, to a different page or opens another website.
- ◆ Typeface—a style of type (Arial, Times New Roman, etc.)
- ◆ Font—variations within a typeface such as bold, light, narrow or wide letters.

This is a small sampling and does not cover terminology for selling on a website, providing event calendars, or other tools.

Social Media

The popularity of social media as a tool to get your message out to everyone has worked well for many historians. It becomes a vehicle for answering questions, posting photos, posting a newsletter, and announcing presentations or events you are holding or participating in.



Facebook™ (FB) is one type of broadly used social media. While this is a good way to interact with current and former muni residents, as well as authors and students, it can be very time consuming.

Facebook groups can be open or closed. In an:

- ◆ **Open group**, anyone can view and post to the group. You, the group administrator, must monitor posts added to the group to prevent non-relevant topics, offensive posts, or unwanted ads from appearing.
- ◆ **Closed group**, users who want to view and post to the group must first ask to join the group. A closed group is easier for an administrator to manage. An administrator can block or refuse access to users.

Recommendation: Before creating a social media presence, take some time to determine what you need to do as Historian and estimate how much time it will take you to complete these tasks before deciding to increase your workload.

Consider:

- ◆ The time you have to devote to posting material and answering questions.
- ◆ Whether this additional time outweighs placing the same types of information on your web pages on the municipal site.
- ◆ Your skill level handling a FB group.

Meanwhile, consider pointing to your web page on the municipal site as the source of information.