

Texas Trails Council

Web Site Policies

Council Web Site Hosting

Council Web site must be hosted off-site at a hosting facility and may not be connected in any way to the local council's internal network.

- The server space should either be owned by the council or secured with a written service contract between the council and the Internet service provider that hosts the site. This contract should clearly indicate the council owns its own Web site content. Such clauses are common in commercial hosting arrangements, and are essential to maintaining reliable control over the council's Web presence.

Council Web Site Administration

The council must have direct control over the content of its official Web site.

- Domain name: The "registrant" on file with the (<http://www.intemic.net>) shall be the council. At the very least, the "administrative contact" designated during domain registration should be an employee of the council.
- Administrative components of the web site administration shall be administered by the Scout Executive at the direction of the Executive Board.
- The council's Web site to be governed by a committee including both volunteer and professional Scouters, this committee defines goals of the Web site and determines the content and resources that will be published in pursuit of those goals. All materials destined for the council Web site should be reviewed and approved by the top council professional staff before they are published

Council Web Site Content

- The content of the site must be owned by the council and must display a copyright notice. The council may reproduce with permission material from other sources with proper citation, but the site itself must be owned by the council.
- The content of the council site must be appropriate to the Scouting movement.
- The council site cannot contain links to any sites that contain material that is not appropriate to the Scouting movement.
- The council site cannot contain any advertisements or commercial endorsements. While it is common practice for volunteers to develop files and programs for the council Web site, a professional employee of the council should control the content of the Web site by maintaining sole access (FTP, telnet, etc.) to the files on the Web server as well as to any programmatic interface that provides the ability to add or edit content on the site and its ancillary services.
- Due to the world-wide reach of the Internet, a local council can interact with the members of other councils and with the public outside its geographic domain. Communication across those boundaries could create or worsen problems between councils. We shall avoid Web site content and Internet communication that might affect another council adversely, such as taking resources (sales, financial or volunteer support) from other councils or "seeding" volunteer/professional disagreements over interpretation of council policies or practices that differ.

- Chat, guest books, and bulletin boards and other such forms of interactivity are generally inadvisable for council web sites because they require dedicated resources to monitor and control them sufficiently.
- While it is permissible, by the guidelines, to provide links to sites that provide content that is appropriate to the Scouting movement, it is especially important to clarify (perhaps through an explicit disclaimer) when linking to Scouting-oriented sites that units as well as youth and adult members do not represent or serve as agents of the Boy Scouts of America when disseminating information over the Internet.

Guidelines for district and unit sites, and the decision as to whether districts units may maintain officially representative sites at all, are completely at the discretion of the council. If these sites are permitted, and especially if the council site provides links to them, it is highly recommended the council provide guidelines for these sites and to recognize and link only to those sites that meet the council's guidelines.

- **District Sites/Camp/OA.** The council shall provide districts "directory-level" Web sites (<http://www.council.org/district>) so that districts may have a self-contained module of information that suits the needs and goals of the district, but enables the council to control the information published by its districts just as closely as any other information on the council site. The council will maintain portions of the council web site that will contain standard district information such as calendars, events, contacts, etc. this portion of the web site will maintain the design properties of the council web site. If the district wishes to expand on the information offered by the council or develop its own personality they will be welcome on supplemental pages to the council maintained pages. The supplemental pages will be on council operated servers. FTP access may be granted to the directory designated strictly for that district's pages.
- **Unit Sites.** It is not recommended that councils acknowledge "official" sites for units. It would be difficult for the council to allocate sufficient resources to monitor all the various sites developed by units in its area. Furthermore, since most units lack adequate resources to develop respectable and safe sites, a vast majority of unit sites are wrought with safety and liability issues that could become problems for the council were the sites endorsed as officially representative.
- The safest course of action would be for the council to remain completely uninvolved in and, in as-much as possible, unaware of any Internet publication produced by any group or individual not authorized to serve as a representative of the council or the Boy Scouts of America in the online medium.
- Should the council provide links they will be only to those unit web sites that comply with all council web content rules and guidelines, the council cannot compel any unit to comply by any means other than withholding such links.
- It is worth noting that there are a number of services that offer "free" site hosting, but require sites they host to display banners and/or contain links to other member sites, whether within a page or in a separate window that pops open when the site is visited. Units using such services will not receive links from the council web site.

The council site cannot replicate any BSA publication currently for sale through the Supply Division.

- Council may reproduce the content of any BSA "bin resources" publication we feel is appropriate for our sites' audiences. However, we may not replicate any part of any publication currently for sale through the Supply Division. The difference between "bin" and "supply"

items is that the item numbers of "bin" items have five-digit numbers separated with a hyphen (00-000) whereas Supply Division items have four or five digits that are not separated by a hyphen (0000 or 00000).

- Specific exception to this rule have been made so that approved council web sites can link to certain Supply Division forms (medical forms, tour permits, certain applications, etc.) that are posted on a hidden location on the National Council site. Likewise, the guide to Safe Scouting, a supply Division item, has approved for approved council Web site links.
- Content of Boys Life and Scouting magazines may not be reproduced without permission the Magazine Division. It is permissible to link to these resources if they are available on National's web site.

Electronic Commerce

National prohibits local councils from engaging in the sale of BSA Supply Division merchandise or competing products via the Internet. Local councils are not prevented from promoting their Scout shops or the merchandise they sell, but the actual purchase should take place off-line.

Legal/Safety

Council site must abide by all laws regarding copyrights, trademarks, and other intellectual property, and by those pertaining to the Internet.

Council sites must consider the safety and privacy of their members and participants by obtaining the necessary permissions to release information about or images of any individual.

- When collecting information from the web site the information must be used only for the purpose for which it was given.
- Information shall be collected only when necessary to accomplish the user goals. (i.e.: to sign up for a camporee, camp, etc...never just to read information that is on the site.)
- Contact information for youth shall never be provided on the council web site.
- E-mail addresses for volunteers that are provided on the web site should be accounts set up specifically for that purpose, it is unwise to use office e-mail accounts.
- The National Council has chosen not to provide contact information on its Web site because usually it is more appropriate for people to contact their local council rather than the National Council. Exceptions are made very rarely, on individual pages where under normal circumstances the content makes it appropriate for individuals to contact the National Council directly.

Districts/Camping/OA

- District/Camping/OA Web Sites, must be hosted on the Council's web space in their own directories (www.texasrtailsbsa/oa.org).
- Content reviewed by District Chairman, District Executive, Scout Executive, and Executive Committee, or agents thereof.
- Content approved by Scout Executive and Executive Committee, or agents thereof.