PES Seattle Chapter Website

Dr. Eric Sortomme
Agenda

- Design History
- Webmaster Acknowledgement
- Current Website Overview
- Website functionality
- Plugins
Thanks to a very competent Webmaster

- Darrell Ross – Milsoft Utility Solutions
- "I have been the ‘tech guy’ for a lot of groups over the years, sometimes doubling as the general manager (for bands, social clubs, etc). Doing the webmaster part for PES Seattle is where I prefer to be - behind the scenes.”
- Can help some other chapters with setting up their sites.
Website Goal

• The website helps us connect better with our members,
  – especially the newer generations who have grown up with the internet
  – they expect any modern group to have a website and they expect a certain level of interaction.

• Since a major goal expressed by the EXCOM was to connect with the younger generations, we have focused on making the website as modern as possible in that regard.
Initial Design

• Initially a static page made by a past chapter chair
  – Home
  – Officers
  – Students
  – Resources

• Webmaster looked at two other websites to initially get an idea for what to add:
  – IEEE Seattle Section: http://ieee-seattle.org/
  – IEEE PES Boston Chapter: http://www.ieeepesboston.org/
Design Requests

- Initially, the EXCOM tasked him with a few specific items:
  - Calendar with events
  - Facebook page
  - LinkedIn - would be nice but was decided it takes more effort and time than we have right now.
- After we had events up, the chair asked about automated RSVPs
- With RSVPs working, Darrell offered to add the automated email signup since we already had a similar functionality.
- With Facebook running and reviewing analytics, we found a traffic spike with users looking at images
  - We decided to begin posting images and small reports about every event to further encourage that traffic
  - It is working as desired so far.
- The newest addition was polls which we have yet to use.
Current Website

Welcome to the IEEE PES Seattle Chapter Website!
The Seattle PES Chapter is a chapter of the IEEE Power & Energy Society which covers western Washington. Our approximately 500 members are industry leaders, practitioners, students and academics with a common professional interest in electric power and energy. The Chapter holds numerous events throughout the year, including speakers and tours. To join the IEEE and the PES, click here.

IEEE Power & Energy Society
The IEEE Power & Energy Society is a worldwide, non-profit association of more than 30,000 individuals engaged in the electric power energy industry. Our mission is to be the leading provider of scientific information on electric power and energy for the betterment of society and the preferred professional development source for our members. PES members are involved in the planning, research, development, construction, installation, and operation of equipment and systems for the safe, reliable, and economic generation, transmission, distribution, measurement, and control of electric energy.

PES Mission
To be the leading provider of scientific and engineering information on electric power and energy for the betterment of society, and the preferred professional development source for our members.
Pages

• Home
• News
• Calendar
• Officers
• Meeting Minutes
• Students
• Resources
• Archives
Home Page

• Upcoming Events
• Overview
News

- Posts about past events
- Changes to the website
- Award Recognitions
- Any additional news items
Calendar

• Calendar of events
Officers

- List of the current Seattle Chapter officers
Meeting Minutes

- List of the minutes from the past meetings
Students

- Internship information
- Scholarship Information
- About PES membership for students
Resources

- Academia
- Government
- IEEE
Archives

- Archives of past events
Website Main Functionality

- Events
- Linked Calendar
- General Information
- RSVP
- Email List
- Archives and News
- Analytics
- Polls
Events

• Each event has a calendar entry.
  – This makes it show up on the sidebar of every page we have
  – Adds the event to the calendar page
  – Creates its own event page to which the webmaster attaches the event flier PDF

• At least 50% of our web traffic is for events
  – probably more like 75%.

• Events which have passed get an entry in the Archives page.
  – This is only because the calendar plugin we use doesn't allow for a simple way to list past events.
  – If it did, everything would be linked to them.

• Once an event post is created, we also post it to the Facebook page.
A Sample Event Page

CENTRALIA POWER PLANT TOUR

WHEN: July 10, 2014 @ 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm
WHERE: Centralia Power Plant
913 Big Hanaford Road
Centralia, WA 98531
USA
COST: Free
CONTACT: Marcelo Elizado
206-528-3363
Email

Topic: Centralia Power Plant Tour
Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014
Time: 12:30 - 4:30pm
Place: Centralia Power Plant, 913 Big Hanaford Road Centralia, WA 98531
Linked Calendar

• Our calendar is actually linked to the IEEE Seattle Section calendar so that any event they create appears on our calendar as well.

• This helps drive traffic between us and helps our page look more busy.
General Information

• This includes the:
  – Landing page
  – Officers
  – Meeting minutes
  – Students
  – Resources

• The secretary uploads meeting minutes
  – Delegation like this is important so that it is not just the webmaster doing everything
  – This is especially helpful when some users want things to happen quicker
RSVP

• We were having a difficult time juggling our event RSVPs which sometimes came in at a rate of 80 per hour.
• Our webmaster was able to leverage a plugin called GravityForms for tracking RSVPs.
• It is configured to send a form-email to the event contact
  – It also sends a confirmation email to the attendee
• This system has numerous benefits:
  – made us more consistent with our RSVP responses.
  – shows the younger generation that we are more modern with automated systems.
  – maintains a list of attendees and their email addresses of all past events on our website - which can be useful for future contact and for record keeping.
  – the plugin allows us to pre-schedule RSVP forms to become active at a specific date and time and to disable them at a specific date and time.
  – on delegation – our chair has a login and is able to create these forms himself if he wants them up sooner.
RSVP Page
Email List

• We recently leveraged the GavityForms plugin to add a email list request button.
• This allows us to automate to some extent adding people to our email list.
Archives and News

• A recent pattern we follow for events is
  – Mark the event as archived so it shows up so on the calendar
  – List the event on the Archives page along with any slides or additional news pages created about it.
  – Add a post about the event with photos and attendance data.
  – Add the photos of the event to a new photo album on the Facebook page.
  – The photos seem to be particularly popular and help drive traffic back to the site.
    • Since we are consistent about the photos, over time we expect people to more regularly return to the site to check out photos after an event they have attended.
An Event Followup Post

FOLLOWUP: POWERSIMULATOR SYSTEM OPERATOR TRAINING

The PowerSimulator System Operator Training was held on June 28, 2014.

- RSVPs: 19 (all attended)
- Additional Attendees: 1
- Total Attendance: 20

This half-day workshop was hosted at Seattle University. The participants learned basics of system operation, and simulated a power system in real-time, responding to outages, sabotage and voltage collapse.
Analytics

• Using Google's Analytics, we are able to see how people utilize the website.
  – For instance, we found that after emails go out about events, there is always a spike in visits to the RSVP page and that 90% of visitors to the RSVP page leave when they are done.

• We have a plan to change the RSVP response to be a page.
  – It currently just says something like "thank you".
  – The page will provide the user with resources and encourage them to do a few things listed below.
    • Get a IEEE PES Membership
    • See other events.
    • Join the email list.
Polls

• The newest addition to the website is polls.
  – So new we haven't really used it yet.
• Polls allow us to poll our users from the website.
• Our plan is to come up with a poll to attach to the bottom of our event emails.
• To fill out the poll, users will be directed to our website where they will also see the upcoming events listed on the left column.
Plugins

- Custom CSS Manager
- All-in-One Event Calendar by Time.ly
- Bad Behavior
- Google Analyticator
- Gravity Forms
- IEEE SSO sign in
- NextGEN Gallery by Photocrati
- Polldaddy Polls & Ratings
Custom CSS Manager

• There is a feature of our web host which creates some issues.
  – For security reasons, we do not have access to editing the files for our website nor for adding or updating plugins.
  – This means that any bug in the theme must be fixed through other means.
  – The Custom CSS Manager allows us to change the colors and to have some layout control over the site.

• Things I have done with it:
  – Added the pretty background image to the header.
  – Added the white IEEE logo over the header (the default is black and not visible on dark images)
  – Added code from Steven Matarazzo to fix bugs related to mobile devices.
  – Hid the carousel bug which appears on news pages if any images are added.
  – Adjusted the menu to allow more entries and span based on page width instead of a static width
  – Adjusted our Gravity Forms to have backgrounds so that they look cleaner. This helps facilitate our tendency to put more than one on a page which we do so that we can use a single RSVP page.
All-in-One Event Calendar by Time.ly

- This provides the sidebar on the left, the events posts with automatically embedded Google Maps and contact header information, and the linking of the calendar feed to IEEE Seattle Section's events
Bad Behavior

• This helps stop spambots from commenting
Google Analyticator

• The Entity web hosting theme provides an option for Google Analytics - something we didn't actually notice before enabling this one.

• This is how we are able to get data about visits to our page.
Gravity Forms

• All form functionality is handled via Gravity Forms. This includes:
  – RSVP
  – Email List Signup.

• Note that we are using the free version.
  – Gravity Forms is not that pricey for a single site (around $40 for a license) and has lots of additional support and such.
IEEE SSO sign in

- This is actually a plugin which we do not take advantage of.
- It allows us to get the user ID and email of anyone who is logged into their IEEE page.
- We can also get other information about their membership.
- We may attempt to leverage this at some point but have not so far.
NextGEN Gallery by Photocrati

• We use this for photos which we post after events have happened.
Polldaddy Polls & Ratings

• We use this for polls.
• It requires that someone create an account at Polldaddy.com and link to it but then everything can be managed from the website.
Thank you

• Questions