

A Practical Way To Support Your Clubs

In mid to late July, Area Directors will be visiting their clubs and completing the evaluation on the Visit Form. This is a great way to give your clubs an outside view of the meeting, but this is a suggestion on how you can answer the question “What can the District do to help?”

There is something practical you can do – review the club’s media presence. Show them what the public sees. This is not “Why didn’t you post to Facebook last week?”. Its more basic, such as “Your website on the TI Club Finder returns a ‘Not found’ error.” Another conversation: “Your FreeToastHost site shows a last update date of 2014”. “Club: “What is FreeToastHost?”. You will probably have those conversations.

Please keep in mind that this isn’t because an officer hasn’t been doing their role. Its simply that we are better at adding to the web than we are at updating, and much better at that than deleting!

For each club in your area, I’d suggest:

- A Google search for the club, using the name from the TI Club Finder. You may need to put “nz” at the end as clubs in different countries can have the same name. See what you can find in the first six or so pages; there are sometimes community boards the club has forgotten about, and they are likely to give old information
- Review of the TI Find A Club Information – meeting venue, and a check of the links. Is the phone number current, how do Facebook and website present the club?
- Does the information show how they meet – online, hybrid, etc? How do guests join online meetings?
- If there a FreeToastHost website and is it up to date?
- If you turn your phone’s location on, stand outside the venue and Google “toastmasters” – just the one word – does the club come up on the first page?
- Does the club appear on Google Maps?
- Is it registered with Google Business?
- What social media is seen by the public– Facebook, LinkedIn, Meetup, YouTube?

The key point is that you don’t need technical skills to do this, because your best tool is Google and your focus is public information. Unfortunately, I’m surprised how many clubs assume that what the public sees is correct and current.

Please review the results with your clubs as part of their Club Success Plan. You may like to raise this at Area Council so clubs can compare notes and maybe help each other. Finally, emphasise that filling the gaps is great material for the “Build a Social Media Presence” Pathways project!

Sometimes, you just need a starting point for some of this. For help with that, you can always ask webmaster@d112tm.org.nz. Please remember – its hard to boost a Facebook presence that isn’t there in the first place....