

SAC awards

Nominations for the 2011 Society of Adventist Communicators awards

Each year, 150-200 of our church's current and prospective communication professionals gather at the annual SAC convention. This year we will meet October 20-22 in Chicago, Ill. Our gala Saturday evening Awards Banquet will highlight several select communicators—and we don't want even one deserving individual to be missed as we consider these honors.

Letter to the editor

Dear George,

The article on marketing strategies was very informative and something I am currently relating to with Houston for Christ. We do have all these flyers and brochures which I am sure go into the trash! This is the age of technology and even the young adults, although up to date with technology, are not at all motivated with Houston For Christ! It is the same format!! As stated we have to boost up technology.

Just to let you know, you are doing a fantastic job!

God bless!
Shareen A. Williams

That's why we're inviting your special input. If you know of an outstanding Adventist communication professional within your circle of influence, we hope you will nominate them for one of our SAC Awards summarized here.

1. **Lifetime Achievement Award**—honoring those professionals who have worked in communication for at least 25 years and have made a substantial contribution to the field.
2. **Award of Excellence**—recognizing communication professionals for outstanding communication projects.
3. **Young Professional**—recognizing young talent in the communication field. Nominees must be 35 years old or younger with strong communication skills and

significant contributions to the field.

4. **Student Award**—recognizing communication students who have demonstrated excellence not only in the classroom, but on the job as well.

Deadline for nominations is June 15. You can find submission guidelines at www.adventistcommunicator.org/awards. Feel free to email us if you have further questions.

Thank you for helping us honor and encourage Adventist communicators who model excellence in their commitment to the mission of our church.

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Each month, *Practicing Communicating* is put on the Society of Adventist Communicator's Web site in pdf form. You can find it at www.adventistcommunicator.org. Click on "News" tab at top of page.

Past issues are also available in an 8 1/2 x 11 or 11 x 17 pdf format.

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Practicing Communicating

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Web site checklist

9 things your site should include

by Greg Kihlström



1. **Identification**—Place your church, school or ministry logo in a prominent place—usually the top left side of each page. Also, publish a couple of sentences about your organization in a prominent location on the home page. Briefly describe who you are and what you do. Most likely, this will link to an "About" page with additional information.
2. **Branding**—As part of your organization's outreach and marketing efforts, it's important that the same "look" you use on print brochures, advertisements or business cards be carried over to your Web site.
3. **Contact Information**—Keep in mind that many users' primary reason for visiting your site might be to find the address quickly on their way to see you. Put your organization's address and phone number in a prominent location at the top or bottom of each page. You may also want to offer a mobile version of your site (think smartphones) with

a simple way to locate your contact information. Offering a link to email (beware of spam!) or a contact form is also a good idea.

4. **Mobility**—Your primary navigation "tabs," usually located at the top of the page, should include prominent links to all major sections, or pages, of the site. Then, when a visitor clicks on a specific page, that page's tab should be differentiated from the others; for instance, it could be larger or bolder. Your site may also include "breadcrumb navigation," which is a quick way to trace your steps back to the home page. This is really helpful when you are deep within a large Web site. It is usually located at the top of a page under the primary navigation and may look something like: Home > About > Mission.
5. **Site Map**—A site map is a page with a listing of all the pages on your site. This is especially helpful for larger

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sites, but has many other benefits, including helping Search Engines “crawl” your site. If you have a large site, you will probably want to consider alternative methods of navigation, including a site search as well.

6. **Current Information**—The best way to get return visitors to an informational Web site is to keep it up-to-date. Put current news or upcoming events in a noticeable place on your home page with links for more information.
7. **Social Media**—A great way to show how active your organization is in the community or among constituents is to integrate your Web site with your social media channels, such as a Twitter feed or a Facebook “Like” button. Twitter offers a basic version of a widget that shows the latest posts on a specific topic.
8. **Lots of Photos**—There’s one thing that is almost always true, people like to see pictures of themselves, their friends and their family. Consider spicing up your Web site with photos from recent events and get togethers. Keep the photos current!
9. **Blogs**—A blog is a great way to share timely, relevant messages with your target audience or members. It can also attract new visitors who are drawn to thoughts you share on current events. Blogs are a great way to start conversations that result in long-term relationships,

so make sure you keep the messages meaningful, relevant and current, and try to engage in conversations when people leave comments.

This article first appeared in the January 2011 issue of the Columbia Union *Visitor*. Used by permission.

Greg Kihlström is chief creative officer at Carousel30 Interactive in Alexandria, Va., a digital agency specializing in website design and development, online marketing and advertising.



You may remember Chip Dizard from the monthly “TechTalk” technology Web show and showcase at the annual SAC Convention. Well, Chip wants to share free webinars (for the month of March) with you about YouTube for ministry.

Chip has more than 10 years of Web and video experience working with churches and ministries to enhance their Web presence.

Each webinar is approximately 15 minutes and online registration is required. Webinars are available (on demand) beginning every **Tuesday at 12 midnight** and are available for one week only!

March 1, Part 1

How to Launch & Customize Your YouTube Channel

March 8, Part 2

Getting Subscribers and Promoting Your Ministry

March 15, Part 3

YouTube Channel Design & Social Media Integration

March 22, Part 4

Your YouTube Questions Answered

March 29, Part 5

YouTube for Pastors and Ministry Leaders

Note: You must register to take part in this webinar series. To register, go to <http://www.webvideochefs.com/join-today>.

To write news, first identify it

How to see beyond the façade

by Ansel Oliver

I’ve never seen headlines that read:

Red Socks Play Yankees

or

Court Hands Down Ruling

These ineffective headlines report meetings. Effective headlines report results:

Sox’s 9th-inning Homer

Beats Yankees

or

Smith Found Guilty

Meetings and speeches are the façades of news. They may seem worth reporting, but they are only a front for issues. Certainly, news can be found at meetings and speeches, but effective reporting leads with the issues or results—either what was voted at the meeting or what was said during a speech.

Consider the following ineffective lead:

On April 14, thousands gathered at the Southern Judea Conference retreat center to hear Jesus of Nazareth speak on the weekend’s theme “Sermon on the Mount.”

He spoke on topics of spiritual weakness, grieving people, and salt.

“This was a great speech, all of us were truly blessed,” said Saul Cohen, SJ Conference president.

Suggestions:

Delay the date. This ineffective lead begins with the date and the meeting. To better see beyond the



meeting façade, lead with Who or What instead of When or Where. Ex: <http://pacificunionrecorder.adventistfaith.org/issue/48/5/653>.

Who’s that? The subject’s name isn’t as important as who he is—offer a title or some context first. Ex: <http://news.adventist.org/2010/06/session-press-confer.html>.

What did they say? Most importantly, report the answers given instead of just the topics or questions asked. Ex: <http://news.adventist.org/2010/05/in-east-central-afri.html>.

Whom to quote. Quote the speaker after you’ve introduced their main point. Ex: <http://news.adventist.org/2010/05/local-pastors-shape.html>. Also, get reaction quotes from audience members besides the obvious conference official.

Now, see how cutting through the façade of a meeting allows you to identify the real news with a more effective lead:

A Nazarene carpenter claiming to be the messiah is turning religious tradition on its head by accusing leaders of worshiping rules instead of the loving Creator behind them.

Jesus of Nazareth blessed the mentally weak and grieving at the Southern Judea Conference retreat center on April 14, saying they, not religious zealots, would inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Happy reporting.

Ansel Oliver is editor of the Adventist News Network. More tutorials at news.adventist.org, click on “Resources.” Write him at OliverA@gc.adventist.org.

