

Bowls in Australia BowlsLink Websites

As part of the BowlsLink project Bowls Australia (BA) and the State and Territory Associations (STA's) are providing clubs, districts, associations, regions and zones a basic website. These sites will be limited to ten pages and built in Wordpress, an easy to use website Content Management Systems (CMS).

Before you begin laying out your website it is important to think about who will be administering your site, and how to ensure the club will be able to access Wordpress. To gain access the club will need to register an email address. We would recommend using a generic club email e.g. clubnameweb@gmail.com so that access to the site is related to the club rather than a specific individual.

Before you start there are a number of things to consider about your page within this system:

General Design

1. Choose a Goal(s)

Goals clarify the purpose of the site. Establish a goal(s) and continue to refer to it. If the content, image or video doesn't assist with the goal(s) then why we use it? Ensure your goals are specific, measurable and realistic.

2. Visitors should find information with ease

Websites are designed to be used. They should be clear and easy to follow. Visitors shouldn't need an IT degree to navigate your site. The more intuitive the site, the better people will be able to use it. Ensure your menus reflect the content.

3. Too Much is Too Much.

Most people browse websites, they don't necessarily spend time reading content. Ensure that you put up only the essentials to achieve your goals. You may not need your clubs honour board history on the site to attract social members to your club.

4. Under 60 seconds.

Your site should be able to convey your goals in under 1 minute. With the information and choices available on the internet (in particular on mobile devices) in today's society, people won't spend time looking at your site if they believe it won't meet their needs. Research suggests visitors only stay longer than a minute if they can find what they want.

Content

What to write

Your writing should be about what your club offers your audience. Put yourself in your audience's shoes. What do they want? What do they need? Do you offer cheap meals? Family friendly environment? Social events in the evening? Sports on TV? Venue Hire? Coaching and assistance for juniors? Community meeting space? Make sure these align with your goal(s)

WHAT DO YOU NEED ON YOUR WEBSITE?

There is no definitive list of content to put on your site. The content should continue to go back to your goals for the site. Is what you are producing in line with your goal(s)?

HOW TO WRITE

People don't read websites, they scan websites. So use formatting to break up walls of text:

- Use headings and subheadings
- Use lists
- Emphasize important points in paragraphs

Pictures

People **scan** websites. So when possible, show your visitors— don't tell them. The best way to show your visitors? Relevant images.

Photos help to sell your services as they provide prospective customers with a realistic view of what they can expect your club to provide. When using photos, it is very important that the image quality is high, meaning it isn't blurry or grainy. To avoid this, we recommend using a camera with a megapixel of 12 or higher.

You also need to make sure your photos are relevant. If you are looking to attract barefoot bowlers, you should use images of people enjoying and using the greens socially in bare feet. If you are trying to attract people to hire the venue, use pictures of the venue decorated and ready for a function, as well as correct contact information.

YOUR WEBSITE DOESN'T NEED TO BE READ

Make your website scannable: highlight words (using font size and typeface), break up paragraphs and use lists and images when possible.

- A good idea: keep one idea per paragraph.
- Highlight features to sell your club to your audience.
- Ensure everything is relevant to your goals(s).

MAKE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OBVIOUS

Visitors can't use something they can't find. Critical elements should be consistent and obvious. Never make a visitor search for important elements.

CHECK BEFORE AND AFTER PUBLISHING

Different people use different browsers or devices to view websites. Ensure that you check your website in at least two browsers (Google Chrome, Internet Explorer/Edge, Mozilla Firefox or Safari) as well as on phones and tablets if possible. This will ensure continuity.

Glossary of Terms

Wordpress: A website platform that is utilised by more than 60 Million websites and 30% of the top 10 million websites.

Content Management System: something that allows a user or administrator to put data onto a website that the public will see.

Navigate: to find different pages within your website.

Mobile devices: tablets and mobile phones that can display content from the internet.

Browser: a program used to view pages on the internet.

Content: data on your website, this may be in the form of pictures, text, video or links to other sites.