

National Council Web Site Update

1/10/2008

On January 14th, National's Web Site <http://www.scouting.org> will move into a new publishing platform. You will see the benefits in enhanced navigation and search, e-mail and subscription services for every page, and a consistent look and feel throughout the site.

The biggest change to Scouting.org will appear in the way that URL's are handled. For example, the URL for the Boy Scouts program on Scouting.org has previously looked something like <http://www.scouting.org/nav/enter.jsp?s=by> whereas the new URL for the Boy Scouts program will be <http://www.scouting.org/boyscouts.aspx>. This new URL handling system will provide more intuitive URL's and make it easier for councils and others to provide links back to Scouting.org.

Issues to consider:

.Links to Scouting.org may not work.

One issue that will arise from this new URL system is some URLs will not match the URLs found on Scouting.org in the past, which will cause problems for any website that has links to pages deep within Scouting.org. Many council, district, unit, and other Web Sites link to resources within the Scouting.org site, and we have promoted and encouraged this practice in the past, so this will affect a significant number of sites.

The 'top level' URL will remain the same (e.g., <http://www.scouting.org>) but direct links to pages will change. To address this issue and to allow for any links that currently exist to continue to work, we have setup an archived version of scouting.org that will remain active for 90 days. This archived version can be found at <http://old.scouting.org>.

Webmasters can change all links from "[http://www.scouting.org/..](http://www.scouting.org/)" to "[http://old.scouting.org/...](http://old.scouting.org/)" so that their links will not break. It should be feasible for Webmasters to do a "find and replace" in all their Web pages, as a batch, to effect this change.

Once the site has been migrated, we should be able to provide an Excel spreadsheet that provides the new address of any document that has been moved to a different URL (two columns: old address, new address) so that they may update the links in their site. Since we expect most Webmasters will have to make these updates one by one, it could require significant time for the majority of Scout Webmasters to accomplish this task (hence the 90-day transition period).

We will continue to monitor traffic on the old server to determine when it is relatively safe to remove the old content, as well as to track which third-party sites are still linking to the Scouting.org site.

If you would like to receive these update announcements regularly and are not already doing so, you can subscribe to the Scout Webmasters' Mailing List at www.scouting.org/webmasters/newsletter