



Communications Initiatives



<http://cmea-agmc.ca>



Communications Initiatives

- ◆ CMEA Website Project Phase 1
- ◆ Website Statistics
- ◆ CMEA Newsbrief
- ◆ Future Plans
- ◆ Questions and Comments



Project Planning:

- The SoR was put out in the fall of 2013 and contract awarded in early 2014 for the initial design, development and launch of our website.

Project Launch:

- The negotiated cost was \$9700 with an annual maintenance cost of \$1080. The site was launched in the summer of 2014. A few tweaks have been completed over the past year or so.

Features:

News and Events

Chapter Pages

- Slow start due to learning curve
- Ottawa Chapter has taken full advantage using online payments

Heritage

- Engineer Heritage Moments (20 so far, many more to come)
- This Day in history (to be enhanced)
- Publications and Reading lists

Last Posts and Retirement Pages

Online Payments

- Approximately 500 years worth of memberships have been paid online
- About 100 new members joined using online feature



Most Used Features

Key features include:

- ◆ Online payments
- ◆ CMEA Newsbrief.
- ◆ Bilingual Format News and Events
- ◆ Workopolis Niche Market Site

Most Used Features

Key features include:

Online payments. Using PayPal, we have collected nearly \$12,000 in dues from members. We have also collected a significant sum in Conference fees.

CMEA Newsbrief: When our site was initially envisioned, a mass mailing feature was selected as a prime way to distribute information to the widest audience. Early in our development phase, Dave Carney hit upon Multibriefs leading to the publication of the weekly CMEA NewsBrief. So long as this avenue exists, our mass mailing feature is on hold, at least insofar as spreading the news is concerned. We have a circulation of a little over 2200.

Bilingual Format: We strive to post everything on the site in both languages. For that we extend our thanks to the Branch Adjt who has been able to meet our needs for the translation of official and semi-official publications. However, there are many posts that have not been translated and we have no capability to meet that need.

News and Events: This is the most used feature on our site. Most of our news is posted in the form of CHIMO Communiqués in both languages. The next most popular feature is CME Family Last Post.

Workopolis Niche Market Site. Again, kudos to Dave Carney for launching this initiative and to Steve Kelly of the Kingston Branch for doing the leg work. This feature, only available to members, has already met with some success in posting appropriate jobs for retiring and retired engineers. The feature also provides a modest source of revenue for the Association.



There are a number of pages on the site that do not attract a lot of attention. Most of these are of historic interest and are maintained as a repository for our stories and heritage.

We are not concerned they are not at the top of everyone's hit list.

The most under used part of the site are the Chapter pages. Any ideas members have to increase the usefulness of these pages will be welcomed.



Newsbriefs

The sad reality about the Newsbriefs is we have no paying sponsors as yet. The company has been patient but we are dreading the day when they cut us off. At that point, we will rely on the website and the mass mailing feature it includes.

Last Post Enhancement Project

Our Last Post feature covers the period 2001 to the present. When we opened the site, there were approximately 600 Last Post entries. None of these had any images attached, neither a photo nor an appropriate hat badge.

Gilles Dubois initiated a project to first ensure we captured the passing of every engineer and second to attach an appropriate photo to each entry. To date our research has uncovered about 150 deaths we had not reported earlier. Moreover we have been able to attach a photo to the majority of our entries. Most photos were found simply by searching the Internet for obituaries. Many were extracted from the Books of Remembrance published by the Royal Canadian Legion. A few were submitted by friends and families. A good number of these photos need considerable 'PhotoShop' effort, but the results are good. The project is an ongoing effort with the next step being extending the 2001 cut-off date to earlier times.

CHIMO Communiques

Due to changes in NDHQ networking security policies, our Website is now the only source of communiques. Our site has over 600 Chimos going back to the year 2000. So far, this year has had the largest number of CHIMOs ever – 55 so far. Units are making good use of this feature to report their accomplishments and activities.

CHIMOs are initially distributed as PDF documents. We have chosen to convert these into HTML documents so they display better on our site. PDF versions are easily downloaded. The biggest advantage of HTML is facilitating Google searches. By publishing in HTML, the entire text, rather than the PDF document title is searched.



Programming Changes (Developer):

Improving the overall look and feel of the site, focusing first on the Front Page

We want to redesign the layout of the first page so as to make it a landing spot for browsers. The main new feature will be a 'What's New' feature that will list the most recent entries on the site – Chimos, news and events, Last Posts, retirements, articles, new publications, etc.

More Functional Membership Management:

Contact details, date paid, paid until, amount paid, payment method, are kept in our online database. Because of design and data integrity failures, the Registrar still maintains these records manually. We are aiming to eliminate this duplication, but this is proving to be a much greater challenge than initially thought. Complicating factors result from incomplete legacy membership lists, membership being initiated or renewed either online or by paper, dues payments made by cheque, online or through pay assignments, members changing their email addresses and members being posted and changing Chapters.

The Phase 2 process will be to upload an accurate and verified membership list, and develop methods whereby these profiles are maintained so that membership management can be based totally on a single database.

Improved Image Display:

Drupal, which is the foundation upon which the site has been built, has its strength in managing content in a structured and consistent manner. This is required across the platforms currently used to access the site (PCs, tablets and phones).

Each website entry is a 'node' and each node is built on the same template. The current template allows one image only which meets 95% of our needs. A webmaster with HTML skills can use a work around to get two or more images in an article, but the task is arduous. A more flexible, but still stable node template is required that will not affect the presentation of the current content.

Improving site search capabilities

Our current search capability is pretty rudimentary, leaving a lot to be desired. For example, if a researcher wants to research a particular subject or person, they will need to look in the retirement database, the Last Post database, news and events database, maybe the publications list – all as separate operations. The likelihood of finding what is needed is slim to none unless the key word is part of the title of an entry. Phase II includes the installation of a site search engine that will allow users to search the entire site on any keyword, not unlike Google.

Changing to a more readable Font

There is no doubt our site has a unique font. Unfortunately, the nature of our content uses a lot of numbers which are not always clearly represented on the site. This will be changed.

Content Changes (Contributors):

Award Citations

We have attempted to list contemporary awards, but do not have attached citations. We want to address that issue as well as to go back in time and post older awards and citations. The first step will likely be MCs and MMs, DSOs and DSMs for WWII and Korea. We will expand from there.

HTML-ize PDF files and Articles

The majority of our legacy publications are available for download in PDF format. This is a good way to get information, but only if you can find appropriate articles. Google indexes PDF documents primarily by title. So if you want to know about the 16th Fd Coy in Normandy, you will not find any PDFs unless 16th Fd Coy is in the title. For example, we have articles about Sappers receiving the Legion of Honour who served in 16th Fd Coy. Since the article is likely titled 'Legion of Honour' rather than 16th Fd Coy, you will not find it. If we convert the PDFs to HTML, Google will go deeper and develop a wider index, making the article findable.

The process is not difficult, but it is labour intensive. We need volunteers.

Build on Our Legacy

Like the Award citation effort, we want to go back before the CMEA (pre-2000) and add Last Posts and Retirement postings, as well as significant news items and stories

Continuing and strengthening the bilingual nature of our site

We have endeavoured to make the site bilingual. So far we have been relatively successful primarily due to the efforts of our CME Adj. There are two issues that bother me:

- The Adj. may lose his translation resource except for 'official publications'
- We have legacy materials that need translation

Providing selected Executive and committee members new functional abilities

I spoke of the efforts we are making in support of automating membership management. Other initiatives we are considering is online storage for corporate documentation, financial records, and working documents. We also want to make the site more supportive of Chapter needs. Part of this is a training issue, and part is finding what is needed and will be used.

Develop an 'Engineers in Action' photo gallery

We are building a huge collection of photos from war and peace operations we want to make readily available to researchers as well as casual browsers. We are hoping to develop capabilities that will make these easy to find, view and download. Once we set up the feature, we will be looking for volunteers to help maintain it.

Increasing the visibility of our sponsors

Sponsors are a key source of revenue. Currently we successfully have TD Monnex and Workopolis represented on our site. Finding additional sponsors and ensure they too get their money's worth is another pursuit of Phase II.



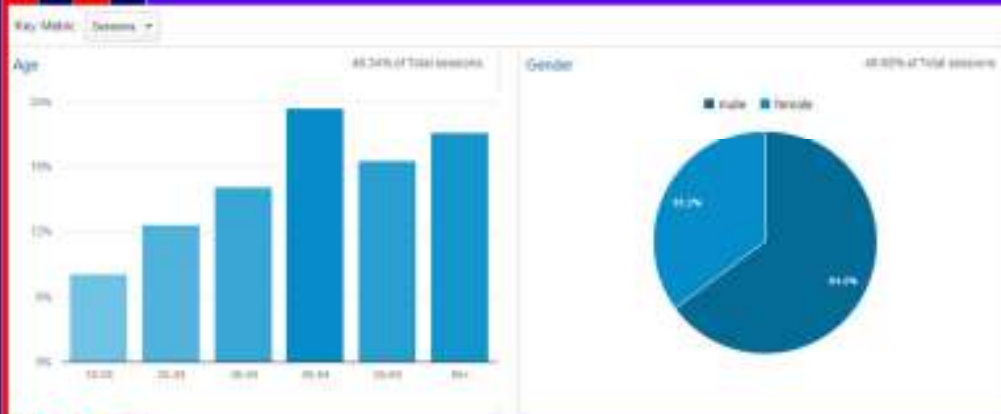
GOOGLE Analytics Overview





GOOGLE Analytics

Demographics





GOOGLE Analytics offers opportunity to measure activity and patterns. This comparison was intended simply to develop an overview/impression of the interests of visitors. Accordingly, have chosen to compare where the visitor first landed on the site.

Landing Pages are a mixture of Header Pages and sub-pages.

Extensive comparisons of the numbers are not warranted as this is strictly an 'overview'. For example, LAST POST may draw a high number of visits – but that may be largely attributed to the number of such postings. A more valid 'comparison may be "Visits per Article" during a similar time period.

The various pages have been grouped into an arbitrary set of Topic Areas that appeared reasonable and would serve the purposes of this initial analysis.

Line items have been discounted (lined through) where there is uncertainty. Last Post for Smith is ignored as hits are hugely out-of-order due to consequence of FaceBook coverage.

An average view time of over a minute among more than 100K pages suggests a very attentive audience

Last Post	200-390 per article. Examination of relative attention paid to the 'archive' items will help with considerations of The Way Ahead here.
CMEA	Encouraging to see this level of interest in 'learning more' about the association.
CHIMO!	200-375 visits per article
Retirements	A good degree of interest here. Perhaps reflected of the effort being put into this area by CME production of good/interesting BIOs. 'Minimum work' required by CMEA here and the attention is providing very good material for CME Museum to collate in their Personality Files and dBase.
News/Events	More popular items are drawing 250-725 visits. Separate analysis of this category is warranted to see if there are areas that deserve more attention and to determine a good working relationship with NewsBrief items.
Chapters	Visits to (more frequently visited) pages of individual chapters vary 200-375. Expanding the use of this area would likely draw more visits across the site.
CME	Pleasantly surprised at the large number of visits to the Personality Info on Snr CME Appointments. Perhaps expansion of this material could be considered.
History & Heritage	Will need to drill-down this area to guide future development of the Heritage Moment feature. Good interest may suggest expansion into areas like National Monuments
Hons & Awards	A good level of interest. Although focus is on national Level Honours and awards, consideration should be given to encouraging units to take advantage of CMEA site to increase recognition of Honours/Awards/Recognition that are 'sub-national' in nature. Might also predict good response to a feature based on Award Citations
Cbt Divers	The Combat Diver items were extracted from the mainstream CHIMO and News/Events categories to illustrate the impact the site can have when a particular area is emphasized
Lost Trails & Military Records	Quite a high number of visits but little evidence of follow-through. Some consideration warranted.
Red Book	Subsequent look can examine the relative frequency that individual chapters are consulted
Jobs	We receive separate reports from Workopolis on stats.on niche site



Concluding Statements

- ◆ Your views of the efficacy of the site, feature by feature;
- ◆ Ideas as to how Chapters can better use the Website; and
- ◆ Get more volunteers to assist in our efforts:
 - Contributors
 - Editors
 - Proofreaders
 - Chapter Webmasters
- ◆ More ideas for Phase 2



The End

Thank you