



Website Development Guidelines

Hosting

- Attach the website to an organization, not to an individual.
- Reserve a domain name related to your chapter, for example www.beta-beta.org or www.zotke.org. You can often do this through a hosting service. If the university provides web space to its Greek organizations, you can use that but link to your own site that you pay for yourself.

Contents

...for a site aimed at prospects, parents, and the general public including other Greeks

- Description of typical chapter activities, with photographs (see comments on photographs)
- Whom to contact for information about the Chapter – officers at least
- Recruiting/Pledge program calendar with contact information for anyone who wants to know about Rush
- Chapter History
- List of actives and pledges
- Facilities if you have a house – photos and descriptions
- Scroll
- Recent news of Chapter successes, with photographs if possible
- Information on upcoming events of interest to alumni – tailgating, Homecoming, Greek Week events, etc.
- Ability to run simple queries on the alumni database
- Links to pages including: the local college/university, the college's alumni association and athletic department, the National site, the national charity site, and the Chapter alumni association site

...for a site aimed at alumni

- Ability to submit updates to the alumni database
- Discussion board or forum
- Ability to subscribe to various mailing lists
- Detailed calendar of Chapter events

Photographs

The Web is a visual channel. Use it effectively by providing the best images you can!

- Every picture should tell a story. A photo of a bunch of guys sitting around on couches with cups in their hands – this says nothing. However, if the room is packed and all their eyes are glued to the TV set then it becomes an illustration of all the brothers watching the final game of the ACC tournament, which is worth showing.

- A bunch of guys standing around raising their cups/bottles/glasses in the air and yelling, some of them with crazy looks on their faces – this is cliché and it doesn't say a thing that can't be said about most groups of college guys.
- Fill the site with photographs of the Chapter's triumphs, the more dramatic the better. If the Chapter is an intramural powerhouse, photographs of great catches or brothers crossing the goal line or crossing home plate would be great. If the Chapter wins the annual tug of war, represent that (<http://www.betapitke.org/events.html>). If the Chapter wins the scholarship trophy habitually, feature a picture of the Prytanis accepting the award.
- If you have photos of brothers and their dates from a recent formal, put one up.
- *Don't* put a picture up that documents anything illegal and it is best not to feature alcohol prominently even if it is legal.

Technical

- Some people do not have Flash so either do not use it or do insert code in the main page to detect that the user does not have Flash and redirect to a "flat" site. You may also give the user a link to such a site.
- Reference a single style sheet and strive for a uniform "look and feel".
- Do not use dark, richly textured backgrounds that distract from the text. Background should be background. It is best to stick with light backgrounds and dark letters.

Matters of Taste

In general, if you try to give the impression that you are a "badass" by having an website full of intimidating sounds or images, you are just going to come across as a kid trying to look like a badass.

- Music sounds OK the first time the page appears but can easily become annoying later. Best to not use it. Especially refrain from using "Oh Fortuna" from Carmina Burana by Carl Orff. ☺
- Moving images such as dancing flames, lightning flashes, or rotating skulls – like music they look OK the *first* time ... maybe.
- There is no excuse for spelling or grammatical errors. Have somebody unfamiliar with the content read over it thoroughly.
- There are plenty of excellently designed sites in the Web, the result of thousands of hours of education and experience in graphic design. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Consider modeling your site on one of those that you can find at sites such as <http://www.webbyawards.com/main/>.