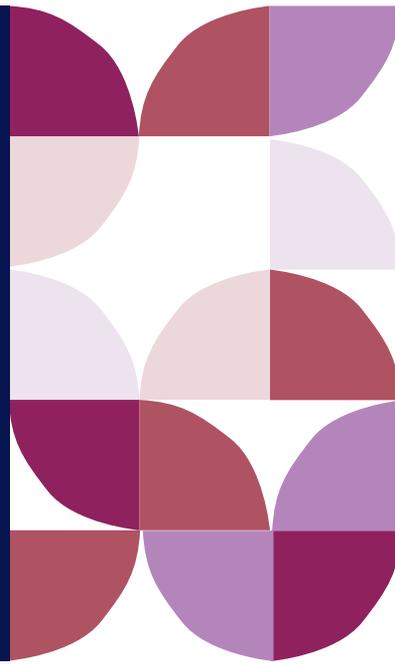


Club Communications

GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS



OUR MISSION: The General Federation of Women's Clubs is an international women's organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service.

It's been 10 minutes, and somehow a number of your members are already talking about an event that you haven't officially announced. *How is that?* There is a flood of new content constantly available since there are so many ways to instantly self-publish digitally. And the speed at which information is available is only projected to get *faster!* On top of that, there is rising anxiety to keep information confidential and protect technological property.

Here are some ways for your club to manage its image by keeping pace.

YOUR CLUB'S WEBSITE IS ITS HOME

Treat your club's website as you would your home. Clean all of the rooms, repair the structure when needed, replace worn furniture, and personalize it with artwork and other décor.

TAKE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

When installing a home security system, you are protecting much more than the structure and contents inside. You are preserving all kinds of memories with family and friends which laid the foundation of who you are today. Your home is also where some of the most exciting life plans are first announced. Whatever the news, immediate family is often the first to know, then extended



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family and friends ... until everyone you want to know has the details *as you want to share* with them. But if a burglar breaks into your home undetected, all the gifts and mementos symbolizing those memories will be damaged or stolen. Bypassing cars and pedestrians will see a ransacked home, not the pristine dwelling that you have taken so much pride in preserving for years. Neighbors may wonder if their streets are safe, which could weaken community ties.

All of the same principles apply to your club's website, which should be the first place all members think to look for any news or historic information. Members need assurance that visiting your club's website will not make their computer, smartphone, email account, or social media page susceptible to hackers. Member prospects and the general public, especially younger generations, assume that if your club's website doesn't show up in Google, or via other search engines, that the content is not relevant to them.



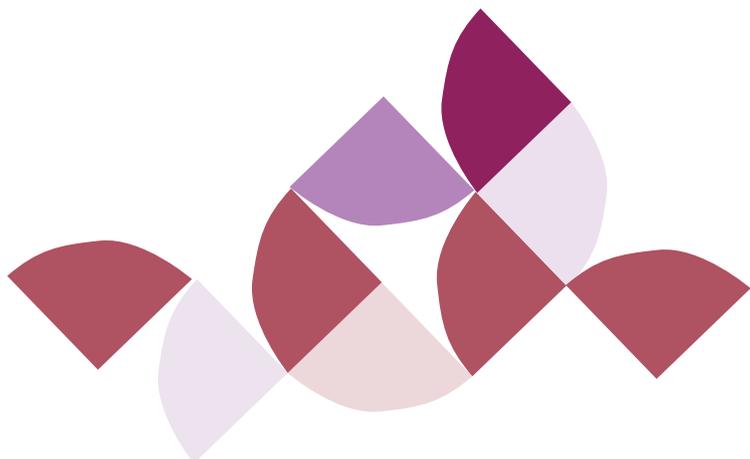
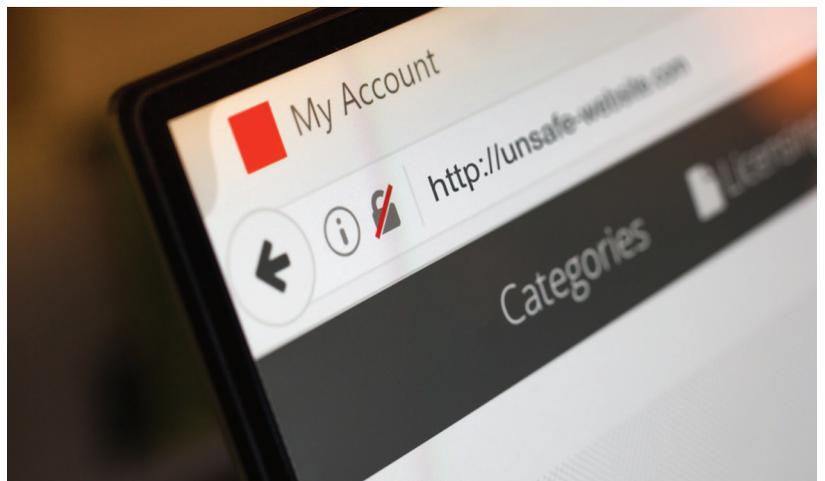
A website shows up in all relevant searches as soon as it goes live, right?
Unfortunately, that's not the case.

In October 2017, Google rolled out its first phase of forcing websites to take additional security measures. When someone using Google as their browser tries to access a website lacking the prefix <https://>, the user receives a pop up box or landing page warning that the content about to be accessed *might* be unsecure. And those warnings are only getting harsher as you are reading this. Sometime in July, that tentative *might* language will be escalated to "not secure." It's also believed that Google may start to more heavily penalize websites in search results that do not contain the <https://> prefix. As GFWC Headquarters has already experienced, www.gfwc.org *instantly* appeared higher up in various keyword search results when its SSL certificate was applied—not just in Google but other search engines as well.

WHAT SHOULD MY CLUB DO?

Don't risk driving visitors away from your website when there is a remedy.

Contact your technology provider about installing an SSL certificate. How extensive the process will be depends on many factors including: which content management system you're using to post content, the age of your website (back-end preparation is generally less extensive on newer sites), and any third-party platforms or customized modules embedded into your site. Your website technology provider will be best positioned to advise you on how to proceed regarding your club website's specific configurations.



CUSTOMIZE TO REACH MORE PEOPLE

When entertaining visitors at home, you don't always congregate in the same room, serve the same refreshments, or do the same things every time. Think of your club's website the same way.

- Ensure each piece of content is available through a page-level search or linked to at least three ways on your site. Not everyone will look for information the same way you do, especially if users are a different generation than you.
- Users expect web contact to be updated regularly as opposed to a brochure which is static. If you haven't updated a web page in at least three months, the information is stale ... just like week-old leftovers.
- Know what's on users' minds at a given time and put that information front and center. Announcements or breaking news should appear on the home page and that information should change at least monthly.

STRENGTHEN MEMBER RELATIONS THROUGH NEWSLETTERS

It's important to communicate regularly with members between meetings, especially since most clubs only meet once a month. One of the most effective ways to keep membership enthusiastic and involved is through a newsletter! Digital newsletters are free, convenient, and get the latest information to your club members quickly and efficiently.

Newsletters are valuable for updating current members, but you want to make sure they get the most up-to-date and relevant information. While print newsletters limit your ability to stay up to speed, digital newsletters make it simple to keep up with the pace at which information is shared these days. It will ensure that your club not only gets timely information but that they get it at the snap of a finger! Plus you can include links in a digital newsletter, driving members to your website and other web pages for information already available to save you time. More importantly, an e-newsletter promotes immediate action. Encourage members to register for your next charity walk before the deadline or sign up for what item they're bringing to a community potluck so everyone can prepare. An online newsletter puts everything at their fingertips, and you can get answers right away. Through digital newsletters, members can get information on the go! If they're out of town or on vacation that doesn't mean they lose touch with the club, its activities, or what they may have missed at last month's meeting.

Newsletters are also great tools for engaging with prospective members. A digital newsletter makes it easy to add prospective



members to an email list! You can bring a sign-up sheet to your events, and the next newsletter can find its way to their inbox while the club is still fresh in their mind. It gives member prospects a glimpse of how active and exciting your club is and provides them with information about your ongoing projects or the next event they might attend. While it's helpful to provide them with handouts in person, those can always get lost or set aside and forgotten.

A digital newsletter is the best way to stay on the radar of members and prospects.



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BUILD COMMUNITIES WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is like a dinner party: everyone is gathered to make connections, discuss similar interests, and have a good time. If you want people to come to your dinner party, and to come back the next time they're invited, good promotion and presentation are key. The same can be said about your social media accounts. Make sure you throw a party worth talking about! Create exposure for your club and engage with club members and the public alike by using social media. Facebook is the most popular social channel among GFWC membership, one of the most effective for engagement purposes.

Recommended Facebook To-Dos

- **Create Your Club's Page.**
 1. You must have a personal account to set up a Facebook page. If your club doesn't have a profile, create one.
 2. After you have an account to link it with, go to <https://www.facebook.com/pages/create>.
 3. Click Community or Public Figure. Name your page and choose a Category—like Community Service.
 4. Choose a profile picture and cover photo to make your page eye-catching.
- **Engage in GFWC Content.** Like and share the pages and posts of GFWC and State Federation pages to spread the word about how clubwomen are making communities stronger every day. The more engagement an organization page or post receives, the more visible it becomes to others.
- **Upload photos.** To upload a photo, go to the page profile and click the "Photo/Video" option listed under the "Write a post..." section at the top of the page. Choose the photo you want to share and don't forget to caption it! Posting photos from your recent meeting or project will help put faces to the club name and give member prospects a real look at the wonderful work you do—and remind current members why they belong to GFWC.
- **Share a post.** Did the GFWC page post a link you want everyone to see? Share photos and posts on Facebook with ease, which makes it easy to spread information. Shareable posts have a "Share" button on the bottom right of a post. Click it and choose "Share to a Page." You can even add your own commentary at the top!

BUT WHAT ABOUT PRINT?

Printed brochures, books, and flyers are undoubtedly still important to club communications but their role has changed. Back in the day, print magazines and newspapers broke the news and brochures introduced new products, programs, and initiatives. Websites, e-newsletters, and social media have assumed this role today.

GFWC wants you to be prepared for any developments affecting your club. Membership quarterly is therefore moving to a digital publication and this will be the last printed issue.

ALREADY GOT THE BASICS DOWN?

Create Events

Creating a public event on your GFWC Facebook page is as quick as clicking on your profile, selecting "Events," and then "Create Event!" Promote your event and draw in a crowd by encouraging club members to share the event on their personal pages. If someone selects that they are interested in attending an event, Facebook sends reminders so attendees remember that the event is coming up. You can publish updates prior to the event or photos to get people excited. Interested attendees can also post questions!