

Virginia LMSC Webmaster Report

Submitted by Chris Stevenson, 10/25/14

The LMSC webmaster has the following duties.

- To maintain and update the LMSC website, www.vaswim.org, and re-design it when necessary.

The LMSC website has used the Wordpress platform since Jan, 2011.

- To post submitted information to the website in a timely manner.

Time-sensitive information include items such as meet entry forms, results, and registration forms.

- To maintain and update the LMSC Flickr Pro account that is used to store user-submitted photos.

There are currently over 1429 photos in 54 albums (each album is associated with a particular event). In the past 12 months 124 user-submitted photos were added to seven new photo albums.

- To maintain the LMSC facebook page, www.facebook.com/vaswim.

Posts to the LMSC website are automatically linked to our Facebook page, and so they are posted to the timeline of anyone who 'likes' the page. There are currently 272 likes, up from 236 from last year.

- To compile a list of addresses of LMSC members who have opted to receive a physical copy of the newsletter, *The Wet Gazette*, and send it to the printer every month.

This includes removing the 'opt outs' from the list of LMSC members. See below for more information about opt-outs.

- To maintain the LMSC email list and to send out a monthly email to the LMSC membership notifying when the *The Wet Gazette* has been published on the website in electronic form.

The LMSC has an account with Constant Contact to send out emails. The email database also includes club information so that clubs can request that emails be sent out to their members. Currently 98.8% of members provide an email address when they register for USMS. More information about email communication is provided below.

Newsletter Opt Out Program

In 2011-2012, opt-outs were processed on an individual basis: members needed to email the webmaster in order to remove their name from the list of people who received the paper newsletter. Only about 165 (15%) of our members did so.

53% of members opted out of receiving paper newsletter

Last year for the first time we allowed members to opt out during the registration process by checking a box, and the response was unexpected: over 810 (71%) of our membership opted out.

This year USMS switched to an in-house registration system and we had to tweak our opt out program. The opt-out rate dropped to about 53% for reasons that are not clear. Each newsletter costs about \$1 to send, so the savings of the opt-out this year amount to about \$ 5000. I also identify families so that only a single newsletter is sent to a given address to save the LMSC a little extra money.

One final note: I attended a Newsletter Editor peer-to-peer teleconference this year and discovered that it is very unusual to send out a monthly print newsletter. Virginia may well be the only LMSC that does this.

Email Newsletters

Constant contact provides reports for each email campaign. They can track how many recipients open their message and how many click on a link contained in the email. Since the link to the current issue of *The Wet Gazette* is included in every message, this gives some idea how many people read the newsletter. Of course, members can also visit the website directly and click on the newsletter link. Some aggregate statistics (since Feb, 2013):

Overall click rate was 19%

- the open rate is 47% and 40% of these people click on a link, for an **overall click rate of 19%**;
- there are 15-20 bounced email messages every month;
- every month 0-4 people 'unsubscribe' from the monthly emails, and there have been 4 'spam' reports filed in the past 12 months.

The click/open rate are high for our industry, but still we are not close to 'reaching' everyone in the LMSC. The spam report rate is very low.

Website Traffic

In past years, I provided a considerable amount of swim- and fitness-related content to the website, roughly at a rate of 2-3 posts per week. Due to other demands on my time I was unable to do so this year and it impacted our website traffic. The next figure shows our visits since the Wordpress site went live; daily visits decreased an average of 20% over the past 12 months compared to last year.

Website visits down 20%

Posting most swimming-related content may boost visits and bring in visitors from outside our LMSC to our website. Training and (especially) technique posts tend to get the most hits. It is unlikely that I will have the spare time to create these, others would need to contribute these articles to the website.

LMSC Website Traffic

