Website Creation

What You'll Need

A Website Host

For a site to be accessible, a server has to have all of the necessary files and be connected to the internet. This is technically complicated and requires infrastructure so there are companies that do this for you. For most lodges, the best option for a website host would also be one that has a website builder integrated. Here are some easy to implement options:

Wordpress.com – WordPress is behind nearly one-third of the internet and is easy to setup and use. The WordPress platform is secure and always kept up to date. There are also a wide variety of resources and tutorials available to help you learn the platform and tailor it to fit your lodge's needs.

Squarespace – This service is incredibly easy to use and includes a visual editor to make building your website easy. This service is also incredibly secure and has a multitude of existing templates to give your lodge website a great appearance. Squarespace is a bit more expensive than Wordpress.com.

There are a wide variety of other website content management systems or CMS available for free so long as you pay for a web hosting platform to put them on. The NCC recommends Wordpress and Squarespace because they combine web hosting and a CMS into one easy to setup solution.

A Domain Name

For people to find your website it has to have a domain name that can be searched for or entered as a URL. Here are some examples of domain names, Google.com, oa-bsa.org, wsj.com. The easiest way to acquire a domain name is to add it on when setting up your website through one of the aforementioned platforms. This should cost an additional $12-20 per year to own a domain name.

When choosing a domain name you want something relevant to your lodge. This could be your lodge name if easy enough to spell or your lodge's number (if it has one). Here are some examples of domain names used by lodges: muscogeelodge.org, lodge70.org, tkopekwiskwis.org. The NCC recommends picking a domain name with a .org or .com extension as these are what people typically expect and trust.
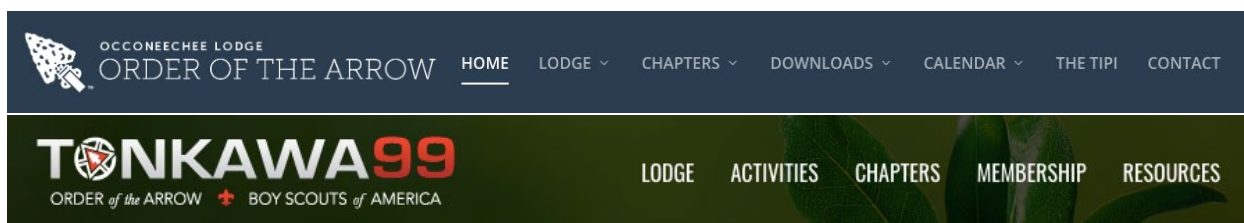
Important Content

Your lodge website should serve the following purposes:

1. Inform parents and new members about what your lodge is and what it does
2. Provide information for current members on events and registration
3. Provide current members with information on lodge structure, chapter information, and ways to stay up to date on the lodge

Website Structure

It's important to effectively organize your website to make finding information as easy as possible. The longer it takes for someone to find what they are looking for on a website, the more likely they are to give up. At the top of your website you should have a menu with high level topics. Here are a few examples of navigation menus:
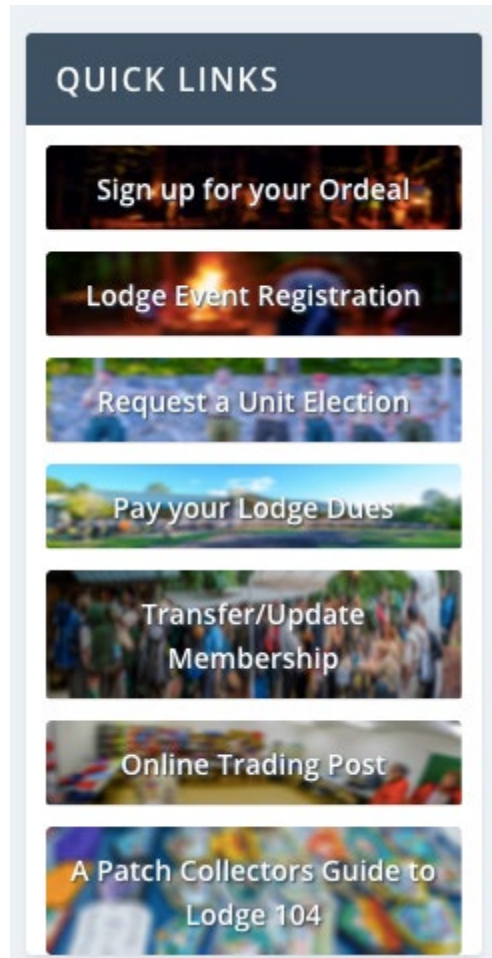

You can structure your website's menu in a way that is most relevant to your lodge but there are some things that it should probably contain. Below is a sample organization tree for your website menus. Each of these links should go to a page with helpful information on that topic.

- Lodge
  - About Us
  - Leadership
  - History
  - Request a Unit Election
- Events
  - Fall Fellowship
  - Spring Fellowship
  - Spring Trade-o-Ree
  - Winter Banquet
- Chapters
  - Chapter A
  - Chapter B
  - Chapter C
- Resources
  - New Member Information
  - Brotherhood Conversion
  - Lodge Newsletter
  -
- Calendar

- Membership
  - Paying your Dues
  - Membership Levels
  - Awards & Recognition

A large percentage of people visiting your website for the first time will be parents of Scouts that have been called-out or recently inducted. On your home page include information or links to pages that specifically discuss next steps after a call-out or after the induction process. You could use an image slider on the home page or a sidebar to highlight this information.

QUICK LINKS

Sign up for your Ordeal

Lodge Event Registration

Request a Unit Election

Pay your Lodge Dues

Transfer/Update Membership

Online Trading Post

A Patch Collectors Guide to Lodge 104

Website Examples

Lodge Websites		Section Websites	
Occoneechee Lodge	lodge104.net	NE-6A	ne6a.org
Tonkawa Lodge	tonkawa99.org	W-3N	sectionc3a.org
Wahissa Lodge	wahissa.org	SR-7A	sectionw3n.org
Tsisquan Lodge	tsisquan.org	C-3A	sr7a.org