

# COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Sarah Holland, PAC-911 Workshop, 12.04.2010

# Introduction

- What do we communicate? What do we want people to do as a result?
  - ▣ info – minutes, reports, agendas
  - ▣ Actions required – volunteers, wanted, events, meeting attendance
  - ▣ Just feel informed about what is going on
  - ▣ So parents know how to get more information – means and people
- ▣ Different methods – try as many as possible
- ▣ Different schools will look different – Giscombe (21) vs. Heather Park (693) or PGSS (1,639)

# The Major Questions

- How can we communicate both OUT and IN?
- How do we make this as simple as possible for our volunteers?
- How do we make it as reasonably priced as possible?
- How can we make sure communications is a priority?
- How do we keep from being seen as a clique?

# You Can't Please Everyone!



- ❑ Some people will always complain, no matter what
- ❑ Accept this and move on

# Important considerations

- Difficulty in doing
- Effectiveness
- Volunteer hours
- Time to maintain
- Pull communication vs. push
- Asynchronous vs. synchronous
- Cooperation with school
- Control of content – if school distributes, school approves of content

# Communicating OUT

- Face to face
- Meetings
- Signage & posters
- Phone calls and trees
- Newsletters – paper, email
- **Websites**
- Social media – facebook, twitter, etc

# People and Posters

- Face to Face – we all do this
- Meetings
  - ▣ Don't mistake parents who don't come for parents who aren't interested
  - ▣ Parents who go to meetings are the strange ones
- Signage and Posters
  - ▣ Bus issues!
  - ▣ Useful, but limited
- Phone Calls and Trees
  - ▣ Works better in smaller schools

# Newsletters

- Most traditional method of communications
- Plus
  - ▣ Expected
  - ▣ some people need paper
- Minus
  - ▣ Teacher time
  - ▣ Bottom of backpack
  - ▣ siblings
  - ▣ Environmentally friendly
- Talk to school – publish in conjunction?

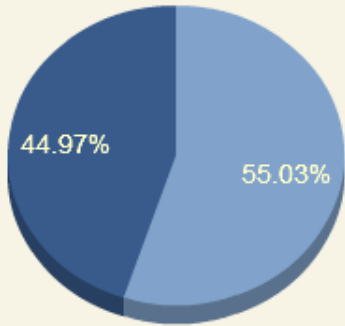


# Emails out

- Different methods – CC (bad!), BCC, merge, constant contact, mailchimp
- Where to get emails, how to maintain, confidentiality
- Constant contact and mailchimp – see who opened, what got attention
- RSS to email – feedburner, mailchimp
- Subject lines
  - ▣ Newsletters vs. volunteer requests
  - ▣ ACTION WANTED
- Google groups
- Mailing lists

# Mail Chimp Report

[print report](#) | 
 [share report](#) | 
 [? about stats updates](#)



**149**  
 messages sent  
 11/26/10 3:00PM

[download to excel](#)

opened	82	55.0%	47.1% list avg 25.2% industry avg
bounced	0	0.0%	0.7% list avg 5.8% industry avg
unopened	67	45.0%	52.2% list avg 69.0% industry avg
click rate	43.6%		29.1% list avg 9.1% industry avg

my industry Education and Training [edit](#)

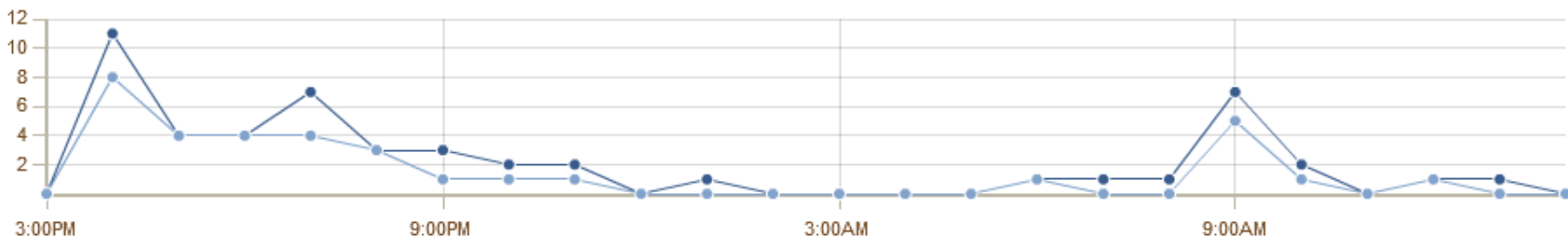
[view all industry stats](#)

0 complaints

[view complaints](#)

Total Recipients	149
Successful Deliveries	149
Times Forwarded	0
Forwarded Opens	0
Recipients <a href="#">Who Opened</a>	(55.0%) 82
Total Times Opened	160
Last Open Date	12/1/10 7:26AM
Recipients Who Clicked	(43.6%) 66
Clicks / Unique Open	79.3%
Total <a href="#">Clicks</a>	97
Last Click Date	11/30/10 9:51PM
Total <a href="#">Unsubs</a>	0
Recipients <a href="#">Who Liked on Facebook</a>	0

## Opens & Clicks Over Time



# Websites

## □ Plus

- Easier to maintain and publish
- Environmentally friendly
- Anyone can access
- The new expected

## □ Minus

- Not all parents have internet access
- Some are on dialup
- Need some tech ability to setup and maintain

# Technical Definitions

- Domain name
  - ▣ The address – SD57Dpac.ca, HeatherParkPAC.info, google.com, etc.
- Web hosting
  - ▣ Where your website lives - stores the files and data on the website
  - ▣ Choices between paid and free services (blogger, weebly)
- Domain name points to the web host – if you own your own domain name, you can change which web host you use without any problems
- Blog – “web log” - type of website
  - ▣ regular entries , commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order
  - ▣ most blogs are interactive

# How to keep track of updates on a website?

- **Old** method - bookmark websites in your browser, manually return to them on a regular basis to see what had been added
  - Gets complicated, miss information, keep seeing same info
- **New** Method – RSS - “Real Simple Syndication”
  - Have website let you know everytime it updates
  - Use RSS reader or use RSS email update service
- Use Feedburner or Mailchimp to automagically send out RSS updates through email!

# Example Websites

- Blogger
  - AustinRoadPac.info
  - chaffeyburkepac.blogspot.com
- WordPress
  - HeatherRoadPac.info
  - Sd57dpac.ca
- Weebly
  - Sprucecityskating.com

# Register name

- Namecheap.com, godaddy.com, 1 and 1.com
- DNS takes a few hours to propagate (update across the internet)
- Pick a name people can type
  - Ecoleheatherparkelementaryschoolparentadvisorycouncil.com wouldn't be good
  - Would EHPE.com work?
- Choice of TLD (top level domain)
  - .com, .info, .ca, .org, .net – your choice
  - Some are more expensive than others
  - Can grab more than one and forward it

# GoDaddy – Hosted Site

The screenshot shows the GoDaddy Domain Manager interface for the domain HEATHERPARKPAC.INFO. The page is organized into several sections:

- Navigation:** Includes a search bar for the domain, a 'Go' button, and view options (Advanced View, Quick View, Diagnostic View).
- Notification:** A yellow banner at the top states: "Great news! The new DNS Manager is live. Look for Premium DNS coming soon."
- Tools Bar:** A row of icons for various actions: Organize, Locking, Cash in, Upgrade, Renew, Forward, Contact, Nameservers, Account Change, and Delete Selected.
- Domain Status Summary:** A grid of key information including:
  - Locked: Locked (Manage)
  - Expires On: 9/30/2012 (Renew Now)
  - Auto Renew: On (Manage)
  - Status: Active (Refresh Page)
  - Authorization Code: (Send by Email)
  - Forwarding: Off (Manage)
  - Domain Ownership Protection: Off (Learn More/Add)
  - Certified Domain: No certification. (Learn More/Add)
  - Domain Appraisals: No appraisals. (Learn More/Add)
  - CashParking: Disabled (Learn More/Add)
  - Business Registration: Off (Learn More/Add)
  - Twitter: (Check for Username)
  - SmartSpace®: Off (Learn More/Add)
  - Email Accounts: No email accounts. (Manage)
  - Domain Starter Page: No starter page. (Manage)
  - Domain Variations Bundle: Options available (Learn More/Add)
- Nameservers:** Lists three nameservers: NS1.DREAMHOST.COM, NS2.DREAMHOST.COM, and NS3.DREAMHOST.COM. Includes a "Set Nameservers" link.
- DNS Manager:** Shows "DNS Manager: (Not hosted here)".
- TLD Specific:** Shows "Not Applicable".
- Contacts:** A table with four columns: Registrant, Administrative, Technical, and Billing. All contact information is identical for each role.
- Footer:** Includes "Forward Subdomains: 90 Available Add", "What's New", and "Search for a New Domain".



# GoDaddy – Advanced DNS

GoDaddy Domain Manager > DNS MANAGER Welcome: sholland47 Log Out My Account GoDaddy.com Register Domains Feedback

Home Template Reports Admin Help

Dashboard Zone File Editor Advanced Settings

## Zone File Editor

AUSTINROADPAC.INFO

**i** Standard DNS supports up to 40 records. Users with greater than 40 records can upgrade to [Premium DNS](#) - coming soon.

### austinroadpac.info

(Last saved 11/28/2010 10:28:47 AM MST)

**21 records exist in your zone file.**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Host	Points to	TTL
<input type="checkbox"/>	@	216.239.32.21	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	@	216.239.34.21	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	@	216.239.36.21	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	@	216.239.38.21	1 Hour

#### CNAME (Alias) [What is this?](#)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Host	Points to	TTL
<input type="checkbox"/>	calendar	ghs.google.com	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	docs	ghs.google.com	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	e	email.secureserver.net	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	email	email.secureserver.net	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	ftp	@	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	googleffffff...	google.com	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	mail	ghs.google.com	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	sites	ghs.google.com	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	webmail	webmail.secureserver.net	1 Hour
<input type="checkbox"/>	www	ghs.google.com	1 Hour

#### MX (Mail Exchanger) [What is this?](#)

- CNAME (Alias)
- MX (Mail Exchanger)
- TXT (Text)
- SRV (Service)
- AAAA (IPv6 Host)
- NS (Name Server)

#### Answer Center

- [What are zone files and zone records?](#)
- [Checking Your Domain Name's Zone File Records](#)
- [Deleting Records from Zone Files](#)
- [Restoring Zone File Records](#)
- [Managing a Domain Name's Subdomains](#)

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# Hosting

- Free – blogger, weebly
- Paid – dreamhost.com, Bluehost.com, HostGator.com, Canadianwebhosting.com
  - ▣ DreamHost - discount code - sign up for 2 years of service, use the code 222 gives you 70% off and bring the per-month cost down to \$2.69
- Choice of how to manage content – wordpress, joomla, etc.

# WordPress



WordPress 3.0.2 is available! [Please update now.](#)

Screen Options Help

Dashboard

Posts

Posts

**Add New**

Categories

Post Tags

Media

Links

Pages

Comments

Appearance

Plugins 3

Users

Tools

Settings

Polls

## Add New Post

Enter title here

Upload/Insert

Visual HTML



Path: p

Word count: 0

Graphene post-specific options

Excerpt

Send Trackbacks

Custom Fields

Discussion

- Allow comments.
- Allow [trackbacks and pingbacks](#) on this page.

**Publish**

Save Draft

Preview

Status: **Draft** [Edit](#)

Visibility: **Public** [Edit](#)

Publish **immediately** [Edit](#)

[Move to Trash](#)

**Publish**

**Categories**

All Categories Most Used

- Events
- News
- Newsletters
- PAC Admin
- Resources
- School Update
- Uncategorized

[+ Add New Category](#)

**Post Tags**

Add New Tag

Add

*Separate tags with commas*

*Choose from the most used tags*

# Blogger

The screenshot shows the Blogger 'Compose' interface for the blog 'École Heather Park Elementary School ...'. The top navigation bar includes 'Posting', 'Comments', 'Settings', 'Design', 'Monetize', 'Stats', and 'View Blog'. Below this is a secondary bar with 'New Post', 'Edit Posts', and 'Edit Pages'. The main area features a 'Title:' text box, an 'Edit HTML' button, and a 'Compose' button. A rich text editor toolbar is visible with icons for undo, redo, font color, text color, bold, italic, underline, link, unlink, insert link, insert image, insert video, insert document, bulleted list, numbered list, indent, outdent, link, unlink, and a text color palette. The main text area is empty. Below the text area is a 'Labels:' text box with a 'Show all' link and a 'Location:' field with an 'Add' button. A 'Post Options' section is expanded, showing settings for 'Reader comments' (Allow selected), 'Post date and time' (Automatic selected), 'Edit HTML Line Breaks' (Press "Enter" for line breaks selected), and 'Compose Settings' (Show HTML literally selected). At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'PUBLISH POST' (orange), 'SAVE NOW' (blue), and 'PREVIEW' (blue). A link 'Return to list of posts' is located at the very bottom.

École Heather Park Elementary School ...

Posting Comments Settings Design Monetize Stats View Blog

New Post Edit Posts Edit Pages

Title:

Edit HTML Compose

Labels:  Show all Location:  Add

Post Options

Reader comments

- Allow
- Don't allow

Post date and time

- Automatic
- Scheduled at

Edit HTML Line Breaks

- Press "Enter" for line breaks
- Use <br /> tags

Compose Settings

- Interpret typed HTML
- Show HTML literally

[Report editor issues](#) | [Learn more](#)

PUBLISH POST SAVE NOW PREVIEW

[Return to list of posts](#)

# Weebly

weebly editor

Elements

Design

Pages

Settings

Basic

Multimedia

Revenue

More

Title Text

It was a really s  
the sky. The lig  
through the wi

Paragraph  
with Title



Paragraph  
with Picture



Picture

Title Text

Title

It was a really sunny day for  
the day. The light reflected  
through the window. I was  
with just a cloud in the sky  
of the day, which through  
reflected off of the top of

Paragraph



Video



Contact  
Form



Two Column  
Layout

```
<object ty  
/x-shockwa  
height="32  
style="wid  
<ing src="
```

Custom  
HTML



Google  
AdSense

## Sarah's Demonstration Website



Home

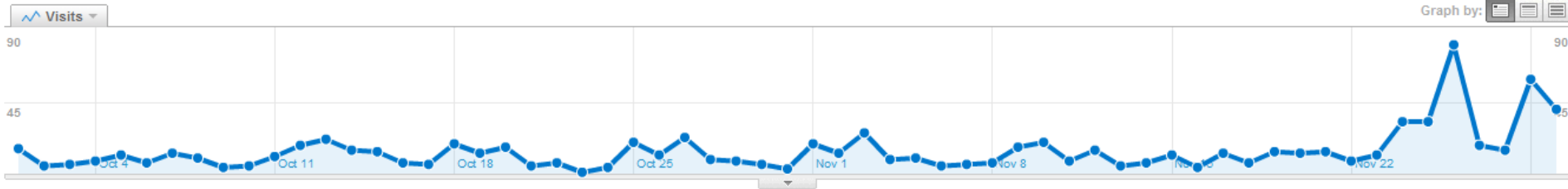
**Click here to edit.**

[Click here to edit.](#)

# Google Analytics

## Dashboard

Oct 1, 2010 - Nov 30, 2010



## Site Usage

872 Visits

2,606 Pageviews

2.99 Pages/Visit

46.56% Bounce Rate

00:02:36 Avg. Time on Site

39.45% % New Visits

## Traffic Sources Overview



<b>Referring Sites</b>	471.00 (54.01%)
<b>Direct Traffic</b>	117.00 (13.42%)
<b>Search Engines</b>	84.00 (9.63%)
<b>Other</b>	200 (22.94%)

[view report](#)

## Content Overview

Pages	Pageviews	% Pageviews
/	878	33.69%
/p/school-information.html	154	5.91%
/p/pac-executive.html	142	5.45%
/p/calendar.html	101	3.88%
/p/discussion.html	86	3.30%

[view report](#)

# Google Analytics

## Keywords

Keyword	Visits	% visits
heather park pac	27	32.14%
heather park elementary	12	14.29%
heatherparkpac.info	8	9.52%
heatherparkpac	6	7.14%
heather park elementary school	4	4.76%

[view report](#)

## All Traffic Sources

Source/Medium	Visits	% visits
hpar.sd57.bc.ca / referral	315	36.12%
Heather Park Update List / email	197	22.59%
(direct) / (none)	117	13.42%
google / organic	80	9.17%
draft.blogger.com / referral	77	8.83%

[view report](#)

# Social Media

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- Facebook
- Confidentiality issues and types of posts
- Is anyone using this?



# Communicate IN

- Face to face
- Suggestion box
- Go to meetings
- Post comments
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Anonymous?
- Facebook? – should this be school controlled?

# Conclusion

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- Different methods work for different people
- Hit them with as many messages as possible, so hopefully a few will stick
- Google is your friend
- PTOToday.com
- Ask DPAC for help