

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

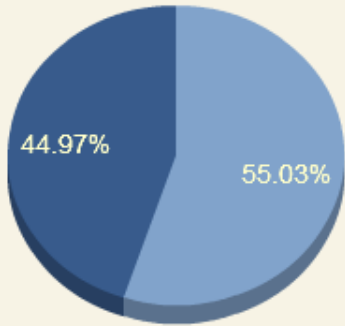
- Most traditional method of communications
- Plus
 - ▣ Expected
 - ▣ some people need paper
- Minus
 - ▣ Teacher time
 - ▣ Bottom of backpack
 - ▣ siblings
 - ▣ Environmentally friendly
- Talk to school – publish in conjunction?

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](#)

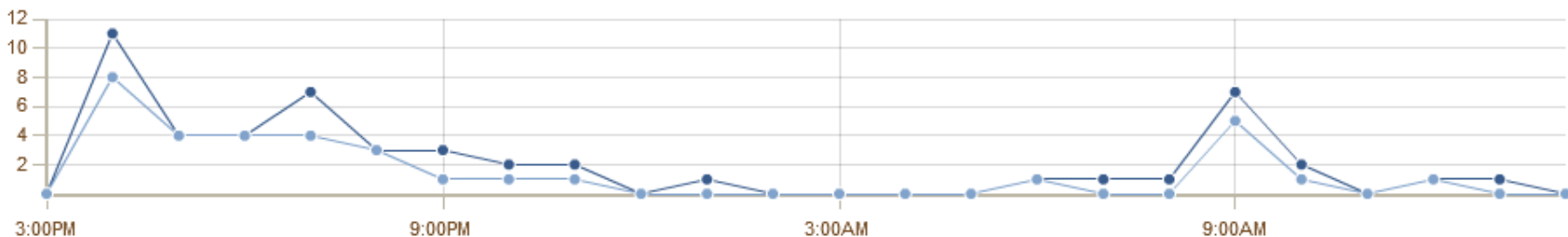
[view all industry stats](#)

0 complaints

[view complaints](#)

Total Recipients	149
Successful Deliveries	149
Times Forwarded	0
Forwarded Opens	0
Recipients Who Opened	(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 Clicks	97
Last Click Date	11/30/10 9:51PM
Total Unsubs	0
Recipients Who Liked on Facebook	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 with the domain name, 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 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 Table:** A table with columns for Registrant, Administrative, Technical, and Billing, all listing Sarah Holland at 3150 Wallace Crescent, Prince George, British Columbia V2k 3R6, Canada. Contact info: sarah@sbkc.me, Tel +1.(250) 962-7225.
- 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

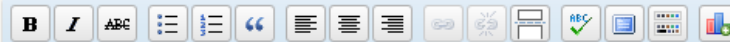
Polls

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, image, video, table, 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

Rich text editor toolbar: Undo, Redo, Font color, Text color, Bold, Italic, Underline, Link, Unlink, Image, Video, Table, Bulleted list, Numbered list, Indent, Outdent, Link, Unlink, Text color palette.

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
 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  
<img src="
```

Custom
HTML



Google
AdSense

Sarah's Demonstration Website



School Website

Home

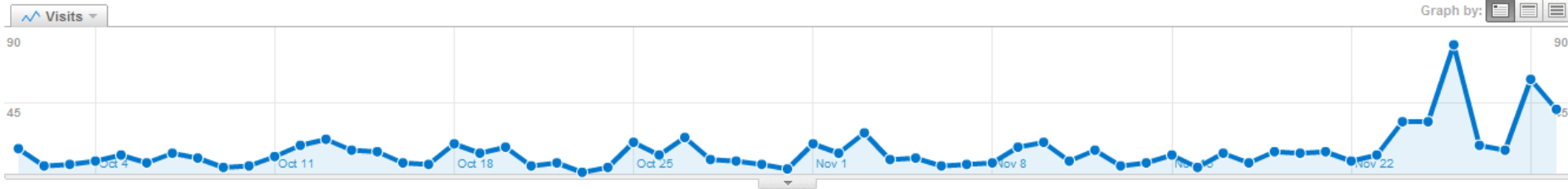
Click here to edit.

[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



- Referring Sites**
471.00 (54.01%)
- Direct Traffic**
117.00 (13.42%)
- Search Engines**
84.00 (9.63%)
- Other**
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

- 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

- 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