

Web Page – a great tool for teachers

André Langevin, Teacher, Kingsway College, Oshawa, ON

When it was first suggested that I create a Web page, I was not very enthusiastic to the idea. In my mind, I knew I would have to learn much and I thought it would be very difficult. I then decided to dismiss the idea altogether until I witnessed how another teacher was using his Web page as a tool in the classroom.

After talking to him, he suggested that I give it a try. We agreed to meet and spend an evening together. I was right, there was much to learn! My colleague told me how to write a series of symbols to get the Web page looking right. Here is an example:

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<p class=MsoNormal align=center style='text-align:center'><span style='font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Black";mso-ansi-language:EN-US'>Telecommunication:  
Tel.: 905-433-1144; Fax: 905-433-1156; Web Page: <span style='color:purple'><a href="http://www.kingswaycollege.on.ca/"><span lang=EN-CA style='color:purple; mso-ansi-language:EN-CA'>http://www.kingswaycollege.on.ca/</span></a></span></span><span style='mso-ansi-language:EN-US'><o:p></o:p></span></p>
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I knew right away that by the end of the evening I was not going to pursue this endeavour further. A few days later I met my friend and he suggested that building a Web page need not be this complicated. He then told me I could simply type, paste pictures, create graphics, and use text boxes using my word processor, *MS Word* to develop my Web page. This time he had my full attention. I then decided to create my first home page.

- First, I typed my ideas on my word processor.
- Second, I included bullets and pictures and placed them where I deemed acceptable.
- Third, I chose an appropriate background. There are many free backgrounds available on the Internet. Here is the URL I liked to use: <http://www.backgroundsarchive.com/>. When using backgrounds and fonts remember to keep it simple and that contrast is important to avoid losing the message.
- Finally, in the File menu save your work but do not forget to select the *Web page* option in the *Save as type* address bar.

Now you need a home to host your Web page. There are many ways you can do this. For example your school may be able to host your Web page. Another example would be if you have a *Bell Sympatico* account, you can have them host your page for no additional cost. However, if you were to move and/or change your Internet Service Provider (ISP) you would have to start all over. This option may or may not be convenient. Another way would be to select a more public place such as <http://ca.geocities.yahoo.com/> or <http://geocities.yahoo.com/> . However, you will need to get an e-mail address from

Yahoo to use Geocities to post/build your Web page on their site. It is free and you do not need to use the e-mail address if it is not needed, you just need to have one. Another suggestion would be to respectfully suggest to *Cat~net* to provide to all SDA teachers a similar service to that of *Geocities* and *Sympatico* where SDA teachers may build their Web page. If this action was taken by *Cat~net* students, parents, and teachers would likely be more inclined to make *Cat~net* their homepage and more people would read the many articles found therein.

When you are ready to upload your home page and other links there after, both *Sympatico* and *Geocities* have easy to follow instructions for you to navigate. You may look at my Web page to get some ideas, <http://www.geocities.com/kidtraffic2004/>. You will see that it is still an ongoing project in progress.

Since I have posted my Web page, I have found that students cannot use the excuse that they have lost or misplaced their assignments, and parents are able to assist their children at home. If a student is sick, s/he is able to keep up with the class content by simply clicking on the appropriate unit outline. Via the same unit outline, parents are able to see if the child has any homework, should be studying for a test, or working on a class project.

Having a Web page made me clean up some of my teaching material and helped to better organize my ideas, lectures, and projects I present to my students. Another important aspect to this form of technology, you do not need to invest in expensive programs to create your Web page. As previously mentioned, sites such as *Geocities* and *Sympatico* make this new teaching tool possible at no extra cost. Furthermore, parents feel they are a part of the class and can assist their child which translates into an improved teacher/parent relationship with enhanced communication. At first you will need to take time to experiment. Once you feel comfortable with this new tool, you will soon see the ease of posting your prepared documents and handouts that you would like the students to view on the Web. Moreover, I do recommend you give it a couple of tries and see for yourself the many uses for this new teaching tool.