Here are a few computer technology tools to assist AAUW branches gain greater visibility for the organization and their branches:

Tools

Websites – A page or collection of related pages on the Internet describing/promoting an organization, product, service, business, or individual. Websites live outside of time, i.e., a structure that typically includes these pages: Home/About, Calendar, Contacts, and Membership. It can include the group's newsletters, information about community action projects, public policy, and in the case of AAUW, information about EF and LAF. The information is updated periodically but what's been updated and when isn't readily transparent.

Website Hosts – There are many providers who offer website service. This includes templates for designing a site and Internet service. Some hosts charge for their service while others offer free sites.

Blogs – Unlike websites, blogs have the news front and center with news articles or headlines showing up on the front page as they are posted. Blogs are much simpler both in format and site management. Blogs are interactive in that several people can update (post) from any location and in minutes. Also, blogs allow for conversations (comments) about the articles. As a side benefit, most of the blog/content management system setups provide you with a wide range of site design templates to jump start the look and feel of the site.

Blog Hosts - There are many free sites. A popular provider is Blogger/Blogspot at http://www.blogger.com. Others are Joomla at

Tips

➢ Industry experts say a website should contain 50 or fewer pages with a liberal sprinkling of graphics/photos.

Currently 12 of our 27 branches have websites. An excellent example of a good website is the Medford branch, winner of the 2007 state website award. Go to http://aauwmedford.org to view this site.

➢ If your branch wants to develop its own website and you have a fairly computer literate member to serve as web manager, look at the easy-to-follow directions for creating a free website at www.weebly.com or select a web hosting company of your choice.

➢ An example of an AAUW blog is the Kingston, NY branch, which is based on Blogger/Blogspot (http://www.blogger.com). The Kingston address is http://kingstonaauw.blogspot.com. The Association has a new blog at http://blog-aauw.org. Another example is the personal blog of Marilyn Mullanix at http://marilyn-mullanix.blogspot.com.

Tools

Tips

http://www.joomla.org and WordPress at http://www.wordpress.org. Because additional software is involved, do be aware that this may add some complications to your system. If you are just getting started and want to minimize the technical issues, note that Blogger can get you up and running very quickly, and will handle ongoing maintenance for you.

Combination Websites/Blogs – Many sites are a combination of websites and blogs. The software that runs a simple blog can also be used to host sites that look like traditional sites with news added on.

➢ An example of the combination website/blog is the AAUW California Online Branch (http://aauwcaonline.org). The branch uses blogs for LAF, EF, Public Policy, etc. The chairs for those committees do their own posting, relieving the site administrator from doing all the work.
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Add Ons to Websites/Blogs - A number of features can be added to websites or blogs, such as RSS feeds, calendars, E-mail updates, statistics, protected area, and links. Here are some add ons:

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds place updates from your favorite websites onto your site.

➢ RSS feeds: An explanation from Nancy Shoemaker, president, AAUW NC is at http://www.aauwnc.org/a-gentle-introduction-to-rss/. To subscribe to the AAUW RSS feed on a website/blog, go to http://www.aauw.org and click on Subscribe to RSS Feeds on the left side of page under News and Information.

Calendar of your branch's events can be added onto your website or blog.

➢ Google has a free calendar that you can use. Google "Help" even explains how to do it. Go to http://www.google.com/googlecalendar/overview.html

E-Mail Updates is a way to receive updates about your branch

➢ Example of this is found on the Kingston, NY branch site at http://kingstonaauw.blogspot.com or go directly to SafeSubscribe at http://www.safesubscribe.com to sign up for this service

Tools

Statistics is a counter that you can use for the site or individual pages to keep track of the number of hits.

Password Protected Area is a way to put information on your website that is for members only.

Links are a way to go from your website or blog to another site with just a click of your mouse.

Social Networking is a new concept to many of us but for the next generation of AAUW members it's part of daily life. Sites like Facebook reach more than 50 million active users.

Tips

➢ StatCounter at http://StatCounter.com is free and easy to use. You can also use Google Analytics or Feedburner.

➢ Example is the state website at http://www.aauw-oregon.org.

➢ The AAUW of Oregon website is a good example at http://www.aauw-oregon.org. YouTube is another site you can go to in order to add AAUW produced videos to your website or blog. Go to http://www.youtube.com, at Search type in AAUW.

➢ See the _Facebook for AAUW_ handout for information about this popular social networking site. To go to Facebook online: http://www.facebook.com.

The above information is just the "tip of the iceberg" so far as information is concerned regarding what's available for websites/blogs and the opportunities available for networking and increasing awareness of AAUW and our mission. If your branch doesn't have a website, consider creating a simple, free blog.

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