

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) COMMITTEE **WORKBOOK AND GUIDELINES**



WSC Information Technology Committee (WSCITC) Includes
Motions and Amendments Passed by the World Service
Conference 201923

*In accordance with the Sixth Tradition of Cocaine Anonymous,
this workbook does not endorse and is not affiliated with any
of the specific technology or software providers mentioned in
this Workbook. Any specific mention is meant solely as part of
a hypothetical example.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Internet Committee of the World Service Conference was established at the 1998 Conference to assist the C.A. fellowship in matters relating to the global communications phenomenon called “the Internet.” At the 2005 World Service Conference, the name was changed to Information Technologies Committee (WSCITC), to better fit the scope of emerging technologies. In order to fulfill this mission, the WSCITC has created this Workbook to assist and guide the entire C.A. service structure in the development of websites that will ensure unity throughout the service structure.

The purpose of the committee is to serve as a resource for the C.A. service structure in areas of emerging technologies. In addition, we facilitate and assist Areas and Districts in approving their local websites, so that they may have a link directly from the C.A. web properties. The IT Committee, on an ongoing basis, works on adapting available technologies to better carry the message of C.A., while always keeping in mind the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of C.A., C.A. policies, privacy, and security.

This Workbook contains the guidelines for setting up CAWSO approved Area and District websites. As well, The IT Committee provides guidance and suggestions - based on the Committee’s technological expertise, adherence to the 12 Steps and Traditions, and the input and support of our worldwide Fellowship - to address the adoption, use and adaptation where needed of advances in tech. It is expected that this Workbook will continue to grow to cover new developments as they arise in this rapidly changing environment.

This 2023 revision provides new guidance for Social Media, and begins to address the scope of our online meeting presence as it continues to develop. We encourage the Fellowship at every level - from the individual member to the Area, to World Service - to join this conversation about our use of technology to achieve our Primary Purpose, while respecting our fundamental commitment to principles of anonymity, spirituality and rigorous honesty.

In Love and Service

the WSCITC

INTERACTIVE ONLINE GUIDANCE - Social Media, Networking, Videoconferencing, Blogging, Blogging and other technology interactions

SOCIAL MEDIA (INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, TWITTER, SNAP)

Technology's advancements, as well as the unimaginable events of the past few years, have changed so much about how members and the fellowship as a whole interact online. Technology - and our Fellowship's use of it - continues to race forward. We reiterate key considerations when dealing with social media:

- **Anonymity** - Social media clearly meets the 11th Tradition definition of "press television, radio and film." Additionally, 12th Tradition considerations are paramount in sharing one's own sobriety status as well as that of others. Facebook, Instagram and other posts with sobriety or 12 step themes should aim for the greatest anonymity for the most people shared to the smallest groups. This can mean sharing to private groups, limiting posts to close friends, removing clear indications of a 12 step group, and using oblique phrasing or non-12 step specific wording ("Thankful for 12 years!"). Decisions about the extent of personal anonymity are just that: personal, and unto each of us. Use that consideration when sharing the names or images of others.
- **Group Conscience** - Local Areas, meeting groups, and other private groupings may wish to form social media contact lists. Clear, limited admin control should always be maintained by sober members with a year or more of continuous sobriety, a grounding in the steps and traditions and a working understanding of issues around technology and anonymity in particular. Postings to a private group should meet the group's conscience on appropriate content, set by substantial unanimity among the group, and clearly understood. At least one admin should have the ability to monitor and limit posts, and a spirit of rotation should guide the group in rotating these roles. Group members should be able to opt in to join (i.e., not be added without prior consent) and have a clear understandable option to opt out at any time.
- **Use of Copyrighted Material** - The AA Big Book is a literary work with a copyright belonging to Alcoholics Anonymous. Similarly C.A. holds copyrights on our books, including A Quiet Peace, and both Hope, Faith and Courage editions, as well as our pamphlets, the C.A. 12-Step Companion Guide and other works in development. Other Meditation books are published works belonging to a publisher (for example, Hazelden). It is illegal to reprint significant portions of a copyrighted work without permission of the copyright holder. "Significant portions" includes a Daily Meditation, or a well known section of the Big Book such as How It Works or The Promises.

Restricting reprinting of copyrighted materials is not a suggestion. It is illegal.

Use of any copyrighted work requires permission (and usually a royalty) to the publisher or creator of the work. It is the responsibility of the individual poster (or the group) to respect and enforce copyright.

- **Social posting is not PI** - Please refer to Public Information (PI) guidance when looking to attract new members to the fellowship. Twelfth step work should be understood to be private and individualized. Public Information work online should be handled at the Area level by an elected member of the group, acting in accordance with the Steps and Traditions. Social media is clearly another helpful way to share the gifts of sobriety with other sober people. Nothing in these guidelines is meant to preclude or interrupt the opportunities for sober people to connect and share the gifts of sobriety with one another.

Conventions, Conferences and Retreats

Gatherings of sober people for Fellowship, Meetings and Socialization have renewed value in light of our recent period of isolation. Areas and Organizational Groups, as well as individuals, are making use of technology at every stage of the process. Here, too, we need to be mindful of balancing technology advances with the guidance of our traditions and steps:

- Any transmission or recording of speakers, meetings, and workshops should be clearly announced beforehand to speakers, participants and attendees, and it is up to the organizer, committee or Area to provide ways to anonymize participation or attendance for those who do not want to be recorded.
- Collaborative tools like Facebook, Messenger and WhatsApp groups around events should be private, with clear options for opting out for those who wish to exit a group. Our traditions suggest that posts to these groups be focused on the event or sobriety generally, and the group's existence should remain limited to reasonable time frames before, during and after the event.
- **Event organizers should remind attendees online, in print, and by announcement at the event that posting of photos, recordings and other posts mentioning the event should respect the 11th and 12th Traditions and the anonymity of others at the event.**

NETWORKING (Facebook IM, WhatsApp, Slack, Google Teams, Snapchat)

Instant Messaging has come a long way,, and become more than one to one communication. Messaging networks, group message boards and more have facilitated new, helpful ways for Meeting groups, Areas and other interested sober people to reach one another. While this technology offers greater opportunities for anonymity, there still remain considerations we should all use when sharing or contributing.

- **Membership** - As suggested above, membership in private groups should be "opt in" (that is requested by the interested person) and not automatically set and requiring the person to opt out. Members of the group should, however, be able to easily opt out should they no longer wish to participate in the group.

- Admins - Group admins are suggested to have a year or more of continuous sobriety, be current participants in the group, and to change in a spirit of rotation on a regular basis (6 months or one year is a common approach). Admins should have some technical familiarity with the app, its tools and processes. Admins should reflect the group's conscience, making sure posts meet group expectations, and taking appropriate steps when the group's conscience is not being met. This can include muting or deleting posts, muting or removing disruptive participants, and addressing concerns of bullying, threats or harassment. When in doubt, Admins can always seek the group's conscience, or the guidance of a sponsor or Regional Trustee.
- Notifications - members of the group may find themselves inundated with messaging - the Admins may want to provide guidance on how frequently messages can be expected and help those who wish to turn off or limit notifications.
- Literature - while sharing quotes, or even full Meditations may be desirable, individuals and groups should use the same consideration and care when sharing copyrighted materials in a message as they would in a more public setting.
- In these small forums and more private settings, we should still be guided by the 12th Tradition - "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." Everyone, including members of the Fellowship who may not be included in a particular forum, should be treated with dignity and respect.

Podcasting/Video casting (TikTok, YouTube)

Audio and video recordings have become part of information we share online. Podcasts and Video casts made by Area and Committees for PI service should follow Public Information guidelines as well as Fellowship guidance generally on audio and video recordings.

Individual members may feel interested in recording and sharing aspects of their sober journey. Our guidance is meant to address those interests, not to limit or prohibit sober content, but to keep in mind how our steps and traditions are best reflected in everything we do.

- Podcasts should be produced/hosted by members with a year or more of continuous sobriety, and a good working knowledge of the steps, traditions, and guidance of the fellowship
- This guidance refers specifically to posted recordings that specifically refer to the fellowship of C.A. Generalized messages of sobriety, recounting one's sober journey in general terms, sharing sober ideas are all up to the individual.

- A 6th Tradition disclaimer should accompany the podcast. No suggestion or referencing should imply or state that the opinions expressed reflect the opinion of the Fellowship or its membership.
- Being mindful of the 11th Tradition - “we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, television, radio and film” - great care should be taken to remove identifiers of individual speakers as well as anyone they may mention in their sharing.
- Along similar lines, videos should provide visual as well as auditory anonymity - thus, **any video content that includes any recognizable person, in or out of the Fellowship, is likely to violate our traditions.** So, for instance, a video of a cake and candles celebrating an anniversary would be okay, but a selfie video proclaiming one’s time would not (if it specifically referred to C.A.).
- Further, and for similar reasons, **no meeting, convention, retreat, or conference or sound or images therefrom, should be used in a publicly shared recording.** This includes business meetings, and social/special events where the roe of C.A. is clearly referenced, spoken of, or visually represented (for instance, a sign or poster).

HOW TO SET UP AN INTERNET WEBSITE

Four basic items that are necessary for a C.A. Area or District website:

1. Internet access through an ISP (Internet Service Provider);
2. Website hosting provider (companies that provide space on a server for websites)
3. Domain registration (process of acquiring a domain name from a domain name registrar, usually your hosting provider);
4. Person(s) (usually called a webservant) or committee to create and maintain website.

Domain names are used to establish a unique identity. Organizations can choose a domain name that corresponds to their name, helping Internet users to reach them easily. (e.g. www.localca.org) (Examples of domain names currently being used by C.A. Areas are: ca4la.org, caofmn.com, and caofutah.com). **The World Service Office has reserved the domain names ca.org, cocaineanonymous.org, and similar names for its own use.**

When selecting a domain name, it is suggested that Areas pick a name easy to remember. Since many domain names are already in use, it is a good idea to have several possible choices in mind when applying for your domain. Domain registrars allow online inquiries to see if a given domain name is available. It is also suggested that, where possible, the domain name be registered such that the Area or District is listed as the “administrative contact”.

[While it should go without saying, Trusted Servants, Area Service Boards, and all members should remain mindful that **an Area website, its domain name, and its online assets belong, ultimately to Our Fellowship.** Based on the experience of many, we suggest oversight of technological assets (like a web domain, Social media group oversight, etc.) try as much as possible to avoid ownership or the financial control of one individual, that a spirit of rotation accompany every tech related service role, and that any use of tech should be easily understood such that even a non-expert can oversee basic management functions.]

CONCERNING WEBSERVANT AND/OR INTERNET COMMITTEES

The District or Area should take care in selecting the person that will create and/or maintain their website (i.e., their webservant). Since the website will sometimes be the first contact people have with C.A. in their Area, it is important that the website be presentable. Further, because websites are a form of public outreach, the webservant should be well versed in the Twelve Traditions. It is therefore strongly suggested that the webservant be a member of C.A. and have experience both in service work and in website design.

As stated previously, while the Webservant role may require some familiarity with tech, oversight of tech assets should be maintained in a way that makes it relatively easy for even an interested but less knowledgeable member can fulfill the duties of the role when needed.

It is further suggested that a member of the Area or District Board be assigned to monitor the website, so as to maintain a link to the group conscience. That said, every member, not just those in service, should feel comfortable to raise concerns about maintaining appropriate online content for the Fellowship.

The District or Area is reminded that the website needs to be maintained after it is constructed, since some things (e.g., events and meeting locations) may change from time to time. Care should be taken to make site maintenance as technologically easy as possible so that as many as possible are able to be of service when online material is addressed.

It is further suggested that at least two District or Area members, including the webservant, know all appropriate passwords or access details.

Finally, while Areas may wish to consolidate online oversight with other Areas, care should be taken at the Regional and World level that no one individual's oversight role grows to a significant total percentage of the Fellowship's online presence. **We suggest that each region seek out a different individual who can serve as "tech support" where needed, separate from any and all other regions.** The concepts of group responsibility and Spirit of Rotation should guide us at every level to broadly distribute access to, and oversight of, each online asset.

A TYPICAL AREA WEBSITE

The www.ca.org/meetings (C.A. World Services) local area contact page contains links to many Area websites. It is suggested that Areas wishing to develop their own website first review some of these sites. While there is great variation among Area/District websites, nearly all contain most of the following content:

- The C.A. Preamble
- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of C.A.
- Current conference approved literature
- A local meeting schedule
- A local activities and/or events page
- Area contact information, including email, telephone, and mailing address
- Information regarding service committee meetings

There is other content, such as the C.A. logo/trademark and disclaimers, which is required by CAWSO as a condition of having a link to your website from C.A (C.A. World Services) local Area contact page. These requirements are discussed in detail in the next section.

Additional content an Area may wish to include are selections from C.A.'s many pamphlets, illustrative graphics, links to other local C.A. websites, convention information, and downloadable convention registration forms. However, this additional content should be carefully considered, so that the overall website remains within C.A.'s Twelve Traditions. A later section will outline some things to be avoided.

CAWSO also has some content available for download (e.g., graphics, the C.A. logo, approved copyright and trademark statements, the current version of this document, and other useful information). These materials can also be obtained by emailing a request to webservant@ca.org.

Any websites containing C.A. members' names, phone numbers, or email addresses, or displaying C.A. business reports or financial statements, need prior written approval from both the Area/District and the affected member(s). Additionally, when there is a need to distribute C.A. business or financial documents to members, it is suggested to utilize at least one secure access method (e.g., password protected site, etc.) in order to avoid C.A.'s name being drawn into public controversy, or any other potential violations of the Twelve Traditions of C.A.

The IT Committee will submit a quarterly report to the World Service Trustee assigned to the IT Committee. However, websites change over time, and should there be any questions regarding something seen on a C.A. website, please email webservant@ca.org.

THINGS TO BE AVOIDED

The following items have been found to be in conflict with the Twelve Traditions, or otherwise harmful to Cocaine Anonymous as a whole, and must be avoided by Area and District websites:

- a) Links to non-C.A. websites must be avoided, including all of the following:
 - 1) Commercial websites or any website containing advertising, except for the following:
 - a) Mapping Services for meetings and events (e.g., to give directions to a meeting location), when accompanied by the disclaimer found below
 - b) Online payment gateways (e.g., for the purposes of collecting donations or payments for events), when accompanied by the disclaimer found below
 - 2) Government websites
 - 3) Non-profit organizations websites (whether involved in the field of recovery or not)
 - 4) Recovery houses, hospitals, and alternative treatment providers
 - 5) Websites of other 12-Step programs
 - 6) Pages posted by individual C.A. members
 - 7) Any non-C.A. meetings or events
- b) Websites may only post literature that is currently approved by the C.A. World Service Conference for use in C.A. meetings or C.A. service work.
- c) No website may post material in violation of copyright law.
- d) UNDER NO CONDITION SHALL ANY AREA, DISTRICT, GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL POST MATERIAL FROM THE BOOKS “HOPE, FAITH & COURAGE”, “HOPE, FAITH, AND COURAGE II” and “A Quiet Peace”, except for such sections as might be distributed as part of Conference-approved meeting formats.**
- e) Discussion of, or reference to, outside issues, including (but not limited to) religion, politics or drug policy must be avoided.
- f) No website may contain advertising, even if required as a condition of web service. This does not include, however, the name of a product or service as it might be used in the course of C.A. business (e.g., a convention hotel’s name).
- g) Nothing will be posted or linked to by any Area or District, which breaks the anonymity of any member of C.A., with or without their permission.
- h) Areas and Districts must not post material that brings C.A.’s name into public controversy.
- i) Chat rooms must not be used.
- j) Non-conference approved audio/video files
- k) Do not use the proper name of a location without including the sixth tradition disclaimer:**

“In the spirit of Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.”

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE POLICIES FOR POSTING ON C.A. WEB PROPERTIES

AREA EVENTS

- a) Event must clearly be C.A. sanctioned. Acceptable indications are:
 - 1) District/Area flyer with C.A. logo
 - 2) CAWSO notification to CAWSO webservant
 - 3) Trustee notification to CAWSO webservant
 - 4) Currently posted to Area or District Website

- b) Event should be of interest outside Area or District, such as:
 - 1) Conventions and retreats
 - 2) Multi-day events
 - 3) Regional events
 - 4) World Service events

- c) Event information must be provided in electronic form to the CAWSO

- d) Linked pages and files must:
 - 1) Be in compliance with the Twelve Traditions
 - 2) Be provided in a digital format
 - 3) Pertain to the event (e.g., convention registration form)
 - 4) Be of reasonable size and of printable dimensions (8½" x 11" or smaller)
 - 5) Be in an Acrobat ("pdf") format, or some other format convertible to "pdf" (Displayed format on C.A. web properties will be Adobe Acrobat, as it is PC/Mac compatible)

- e) Website links from C.A. web properties will be approved to:
 - 1) Websites in compliance with the Twelve Traditions.
 - 2) C.A. District or Area websites, if not a link to a meeting of any sort.
 - 3) Area/District website's event page.

- f) **The main page of information for Events on the C.A. web properties will include the following disclaimer:**

"Certain information listed herein about the local event, the event location, event activities, and even the host city is included for informational purposes only; so that those attending the event looking for something to do during the event might have that information. The listing of such information here does not, nor should it imply affiliation, cooperation or endorsement of such venues, hotels, or activities by C.A. or by C.A. World Services. If you have further questions or concerns on this matter, please contact the Event Chair"

REQUIREMENTS FOR C.A. AREA/DISTRICT WEBSITES

All C.A. Area or District websites must meet the following requirements in order to be considered for linking by the CAWSO:

- a) The Service Committee for the Area or District must have approved the website, and the CAWSO must be contacted by an elected officer of the Area or District with a statement to this effect.
- b) A link to the email address of the Area's current webservant must be posted on the website itself. This may be done in a way that obscures the individual's name, but the link must allow anyone to send email directly to the current webservant.
- c) Contact information for the Area must remain current so that any problem not resolvable by contacting the webservant can be resolved directly with the Area or District board.
- d) The official C.A. logo, unaltered except for color and size, must be present on the home page of the website. The size of the logo must be large enough so that the "®" (which indicates a registered trademark) is visible, and the logo legible. This logo, as a computer file, is available from the World Service Office upon request.
- e) The following link to a distinct "Disclaimer Page" must be placed at the bottom of the home page of the Area or District web site. The link shall be titled "<your area or district> Site Disclaimers". This distinct page shall contain the following disclaimers:
 1. **Cocaine Anonymous is a Fellowship of, by, and for addicts seeking recovery. Friends and Family of addicts should contact Co-Anon Family Groups, a Fellowship dedicated to their much different needs.**
 2. **Some of the items contained in these pages are published with permission of C.A. World Services, Inc., but this does not imply endorsement of this website by the C.A. World Service Conference or the C.A. World Service Office. The information provided within this website is intended to be a convenience for those who visit our website. Such inclusion does not constitute or imply endorsement by, or affiliation with, the <your local area> Area or the Districts within.**
 3. **We regret being unable to offer links to non-C.A. sites, due to our longstanding tradition of non-endorsement of outside enterprises, whether related to our goals or not. While we are grateful for all links from other Web sites, we do not endorse any product, service or opinion offered by any outside organization.**
- f) Any page containing quotes from copyrighted C.A. literature must contain the current copyright notice, and identify the piece being quoted [however, the books "Hope, Faith & Courage", "Hope, Faith & Courage II" and "A Quiet Peace" are NOT available for online reprinting, and are not covered by this provision]. This current copyright notice is as follows:

"Cocaine Anonymous World Service Conference Approved Literature. Copyright © <year> Cocaine Anonymous World Services, Inc. "C.A.", "Cocaine Anonymous" and the C.A. logo are registered trademarks of Cocaine Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved."
- g) Area/District newsletters, personal stories, ~~audio and video media~~ must be approved by the Area/District and the Regional Trustee before posting on the Area/District website.
- h) When utilizing any of the following:
 - 1) Mapping Services for meetings and events (e.g., to give directions to a meeting location)

- 2) Online payment gateways (e.g., for the purposes of collecting donations or payments for events) the following disclaimer should be included on the same page and in close proximity to the link, widget or form:

“In the spirit of Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. As such <your area/district/service committee> of Cocaine Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous as a whole does not endorse and is not affiliated with <payment gateway/business name> or any of the companies and/or services offered on the <payment gateway/business name> site. Any links to external websites or services are only provided as a convenience to our members.”

- i) Each website should provide A Privacy Policy indicating how any data collected (names, personal information, financial data) will be hold and maintained. Such data should be held securely in a password protected area overseen by the webservant, IT Chair, and/or other responsible Area service members. Additionally, any use of cookies (data markers left on the user’s computer or device) should be disclosed and an opt-out provision provided

LINKING, EMERGENCY DE-LINKING, & NON COMPLIANCE

a) Linking

When an Area or District wishing to have their website linked from C.A. web properties contacts either CAWSO or WSO webservant, this information will be forwarded to the WSO Board and Trustee responsible for internet matters. The website will be viewed for compliance according to the currently approved WSCITC Workbook and Guidelines. If the website is compliant, the Trustee responsible for internet matters will inform the WSO Board and the Board Chair to proceed with the linking of the website. The WSOB Chair will then contact the WSO webservant to authorize linking of the website, and will notify the Area/District Chair and Regional Trustee of the new link.

b) If the website is found to be non-compliant, **the WSOB Chair will send notice of non-compliance by all available methods to that website's webservant, Area/District Chair, and Regional Trustee.** This notification will include a description of the non-compliance and offer possible solutions for compliance. Unless and until the site comes into compliance, it will not be linked from the C.A. web properties.

c) Emergency De-Linking

The WSOB chair may terminate the link from the C.A. web properties to any C.A. Area website immediately, under any one of the following conditions:

- 1) Direction from the WSBT as the result of a WSBT vote.
- 2) Notification from the affected Area/District officers that they do not authorize the site.
- 3) The website contains material that is clearly illegal (e.g., drug sales), totally unrelated, and/or bringing disrepute to C.A. (e.g., pornography).
- 4) The Area link is dead or pointing towards an outside website (a domain provider etc.)

In all cases above, the WSO webservant, Regional Trustee, affected Area/District Chair and Area Delegates will be immediately notified by all available methods of the action and the reason.

d) Non-compliance

When a possible non-compliance issue is brought to the attention of the WSO and/or WSO webservant, this information will be forwarded to the WSOB and the Trustee responsible for internet matters. The website will be viewed for non-compliance, and if the website is found to be non-compliant, the WSO Chair will send the notice of non-compliance by all available methods to that website's webservant, Area/District Chair and Regional Trustee. This notification will include a description of the non-compliance, and offer possible solutions for compliance within a reasonable time frame.

If the website fails to come into compliance within the specified time frame, then the website will be de-linked and notification sent to the website's webservant, Area/District Chair and Regional Trustee. When the non-compliance issues are corrected, the website will be linked or re-linked to the C.A. web properties, upon request from the Area/District.

Any new websites not currently linked to C.A. web properties, or any concerns about existing websites regarding possible compliance and/or non-compliance issues, should be emailed to webservant@ca.org. The committee will then review the website for compliance in accordance with the WSCITC guidelines and forward any comments to the WSO and the WSBT. WSO or WSBT are responsible for addressing any issues forwarded from the WSCITC.

Virtual Services - Coming Soon

Introduction

Statement of Purpose

Starting an Online Meeting –

- Disclaimers
- Collecting the 7th Tradition / Matters of Finance

Meeting Service Positions

Anonymity and Security – pdf draft available

Chit System – Meeting attendance confirmation – pdf draft available

Virtual Helpline/Hotlines

Virtual Services Committee Guidelines

Virtual Service Committee Structure

ADD: Helpful Links