

## Why Regional Clubs Should Have Web Sites

Some people you just have to drag, kicking and screaming all the way, into the world of technology and all them new fangled gadgets [*and that's coming from me...a person's who's never owned a cell phone, used an ATM card, or been to a Starbuck's!*] That notwithstanding, every regional club should have a web site up and running. A club web site has benefits to offer individual members, the club itself, RMS, and the hobby at large.

*"But it's too expensive to have a web site!"* No, it's not. It depends on what package you get and what provider you go with. But...you can even do it for free, just by piggybacking the new club site on one of your member's individual site. For example, my school was continually having problems with its servers so that my classroom web site seemed to be down every other week. So, I simply shifted the whole site and piggybacked it onto my own personal matchcover site. No problem. Many internet connection providers (ISPs) give their customers free web site space on their servers as part of their internet service. I get 100 megs of space, myself, and even the RMS web site, which is huge, doesn't take up anywhere near that (*yet!*)

*"But we don't have any expert to make one and run it?"* Sure you do! You've got members who can do it. Building a web site is easy! Even a person starting off with no computer knowledge at all can do it. Almost every ISP has a tutorial for its customers on how to build their own web sites. It's so easy, *I'd* offer to make a site for any club that wanted one...but I use an obsolete program that might cause problems down the road when the club webmaster tried to do updates with a newer program. Chances are, though, that each club already have at least several members who know what they're doing.

*"But what would we really get out of it? Aha! Bingo! Just look at what the benefits are..."*

**1. New members!** Since the RMS web site went up in 1999, it has consistently been the single largest 'member-getter' we have...simply because a web site reaches so many people. A web site can do the same for any other club. The club would literally be getting world-wide publicity!

**2. A central focal point for disseminating club information!** Post your schedule of upcoming meetings; post your membership list; post club application; post club projects that members can work on...the possibilities are endless. A web site would function as an electronic bulletin board for club members.

**3. A central focal point for incoming queries from non-collectors!** With a web site up, your club will be getting questions from non-collectors...*"I don't know what do with Great Grandpa's collection of 500,000 covers"; "I just found this old Charles Lindbergh cover in my attic. Do you know of an interested party I could donate it to?"; "How do you spell your club's name? I want to be certain my lawyer gets it right when it comes to Primary Beneficiary in my will."* I get queries every week from non-collectors that I refer to other clubs and collectors. Who knows what's out there just waiting for an outlet? ...And the *outlet* could be your club!

**4. Raise \$\$ for the club!** On your club web site, you can have auctions, raffles, drawings, you name it!

Businesses, big and small, scramble every day to put up a web site, so you know *they* believe it's to their advantage.....  
It's to the club's advantage, as well.

.....*But you can't get any of these benefits if your club doesn't have a web site!*