

Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

Society Webminister's
Handbook

September 2009

Society Webminister's Handbook 2009 Edition

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A. Introduction

These policies cover all official electronic publications produced by and for members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "the Society" or "SCA, Inc."), and its subsidiary branches.

1. The Term “Webminister”

While Kingdoms have coined many names for the office of Webminister the only officially recognized title is Webminister, and serves as an SCA-equivalent to “webmaster”.

B. Warranting and Chain of Command

The Kingdom Webminister shall: act as the recognizing authority for the Kingdom's internet sites; be responsible for overseeing the Kingdom-level internet site; maintain a roster of recognized branch sites for the Kingdom; monitor those sites for compliance with applicable SCA and Kingdom policies; and report on such to the Society Webminister.

Kingdom officers must be warranted. Officers are legal agents of the corporation and should be officially recognized as such. The warrant proves agency and standing in office. If you are an officer of this corporation, acts performed in your official capacity are covered by its insurance, and the SCA has an obligation to indemnify you. Therefore, Kingdom Webministers, and their deputies, must be warranted. Warrant forms can be found in Appendix B of the Governing Documents of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (Corpora), and on the SCA’s web site. Warrants for Kingdom Webministers must be signed by the Crown and the Society Webminister.

The chain of command is:

- President, SCA Inc
 - Webminister, SCA Inc
 - Kingdom Webminister
 - Principality Webminister (where applicable)
 - Branch Webminister (reports to both Principality and Kingdom Webministers, unless specified in kingdom law)
 - Branch Webminister

C. Requirements for Webministers

1. Membership

Kingdom Webministers must meet the membership requirements of the office as outlined in Corpora. If a Webminister's membership lapses during the term of office that officer’s warrant is considered terminated immediately upon expiration.

2. Qualifications

The ideal Kingdom Webminister has HTML experience, a complete web development lab in the home, and experience dealing with Internet Service Providers / hosting companies. None of us is perfect, but there are some minimum requirements:

- Experience with writing or editing content
- Balance and judgment in matters political
- Reliable email/Internet access
- A working telephone
- Regular contact with Kingdom activities
- Ability to meet the ongoing requirements of the Kingdom Webminister position, primarily but not limited to:
 - Regular updates to Kingdom website
 - Timely responses to inquiries and communications from corporate officers and members of the Board of Directors, as well as other Kingdom level officers
 - Annual submission of entries to the Society Webminister for the Master William Blackfox Web Awards
 - Monitoring of recognized branch websites within the Kingdom for policy compliance
 - Other duties and special projects that may be assigned by the Society Webminister

3. Emergency Deputy

Each Kingdom Webminister is responsible for finding and training an emergency deputy. The emergency deputy is familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the Kingdom Webminister's job, as well as the site and/or server and has administrative access. In the event that the Kingdom Webminister is unavailable to continue their duties, even temporarily, the emergency deputy assumes the office to ensure that there is no lapse in service.

D. General Guidelines for Recognized Web Sites

Every Kingdom must publish a website. Each Kingdom's website should be a showpiece of that Kingdom, showing it in the finest possible light. Websites will uphold high standards of excellence in order to demonstrate the pride that each Kingdom has in itself, and provide the best possible reflection of the Society.

1. Recognized Web Sites

For an Internet site to be recognized by the Society for Creative Anachronism, it must represent an established branch of the Society and must have a warranted Webminister responsible for its

content. The Society for Creative Anachronism will not recognize web sites for households. Kingdom or branch officers with separate or additional Internet sites for that office are responsible for ensuring that all such sites comply with Society guidelines.

Web sites which are not on the same domain name as the main Kingdom site may be deemed official if:

- The Crown approves
- The Kingdom Webminister approves
- The web site complies with all Society and Kingdom guidelines

If a site fails to meet these requirements it may not be recognized as official.

All recognized web sites must have a link to <http://www.sca.org>.

All recognized sites may not have links to non-recognized websites without an external link disclaimer such as:

“All external links are not part of the [Branch Name] web site. Inclusion of a page or site here is neither implicit nor explicit endorsement of the site. Further, SCA, Inc. is not responsible for content outside of [website address].”

The above disclaimer may be included once on a page of disclaimers or on the main page of the site.

2. Publication Permission for Personal Information

Personal information will not be published on any SCA-recognized Internet site unless permission first is obtained from the specific individual. Permission must be received in writing or in electronic format; an e-mail from the person giving permission is acceptable. Such e-mail notifications should be archived, stored and treated the same way written releases are treated. Permission to electronically publish the contact information of an individual is in effect until that same individual revokes permission.

a. Personal Information Includes:

- Modern name
- Home or work address
- Phone numbers
- Personal e-mail address

It is permissible to list a person's Society name in connection with any office they hold without specific consent, i.e. – “Branch Seneschal: Lord Robert the Volunteer”; as well as official office e-mail addresses such as webminister@sca.org . If permission to publish a private email address is given by email, the permission must originate from that private email

address. In the event that the individual is a minor, permission to publish must be obtained from their parent or legal guardian.

b. Exceptions:

Personal information may be published behind a password protected portion of a Content Management System wherein the information being published has been released via an online consent during registration, and is maintained by the individual giving consent and by providing said individual the option to remove his or her information at a later time.

3. Web Publication Standards

a. Accessibility

As a non-profit educational organization, the Society for Creative Anachronism should be concerned that its electronic publications are as accessible as possible to persons with disabilities. This policy sets the minimum accessibility guidelines for SCA-recognized Internet sites.

Web Accessibility standards are currently being addressed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Their Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 should be reviewed (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>). All SCA recognized websites should strive to meet level A conformance. Higher levels of conformance are encouraged. It is the Society Webminister's prerogative to check Kingdom web sites for non-conformance, and Kingdom Webministers should check the web sites of local branches.

b. General Standards

There are certain standards one should keep in mind when generating a web site. Here are a few items to keep in mind; be aware that this list is not all inclusive.

Mandatory:

- Do not abbreviate anything without explaining the full term first, keeping in mind that the web site may be the first point of contact for people otherwise unfamiliar with the SCA and its attendant specialized vocabulary.
- Keep all your pages as uniform as possible; nothing confuses a visitor faster than obscure navigation and drastic visual changes from one page to the next
- Do not use flashing text, overly large fonts, overly small fonts, or other such items that are deemed inappropriate for a professional web site. When in doubt consult with other officers, or the Society Webminister
- When navigating away from your web site, either notify the user that they are leaving with a redirect page or visually indicate external links in some way (specific icons, font changes, or warnings that a link will open in a new browser window or tab)
- Obfuscate all e-mail addresses by placing spaces between names and "at" "@" signs, spelling out "at", or any other method which prevents automatic e-mail address farming

- Never use embedded sound, music or movies on a main page or the site in general. Give the user the option to “opt-in” by making a link to a page with the media content and allowing them to hear and/or see the content. Use of content appropriate media is encouraged, but allow the users to choose when and what to experience.
- Use both grammar and spell checkers on all site content
- Maintain a high contrast between text and background

Suggested

- Maintain easy to read, uncluttered pages. Providing too much information on a given page only obscures the page’s true message
- Avoid the use of frames
- Choose a favico.ico appropriate to the SCA
- Try to minimize external links to specific pages. If links are required, try to link to the root of any given site
- Do not assume that everyone has a broadband connection; limit the amount of graphics on any given page, especially the main page
- Check your links regularly and ensure they are not broken
- Attempt to use compliant hypertext markup language (HTML) and cascading style sheets (CSS)

c. Content Management Systems

A content management system (CMS) is an easy way to ensure that you meet all web site accessibility requirements, provide excellent service to your populace, and afford the Webminister a tool with which to update the site easily in a timely manner. An Internet search on the phrase “Content Management System” will return an abundance of resources.

4. Document Publication Standards

All documents available for download must be provided in Portable Document Format (PDF) format. The Webminister may provide other formats as a supplement to the PDF.

5. Image Publication Standards

All images, photographs and artwork that are used on a branch web site must have permission to publish from the artist, meet acceptable publication guidelines from the artist or publisher or be copyright-free. In the event that the subject of a photograph requests that their image be

removed from the web site, the Webminister should take any measures necessary to remove their image from the web site, either by direct removal or cropping of the image.

Further, artwork and photographs used on web sites should be resized appropriately for page content, in terms of both display size and file size. Larger file sizes, regardless of display size, will require longer load times, and cause viewers of the site to become frustrated with delays. An example of an area where larger file and display sizes are expected would be an arts and sciences gallery showing detail work on metalwork, clothing or the like.

6. Hosting for Recognized Web Sites

It is required that recognized SCA web sites be hosted on an account to which more than one person has access, rather than on a personal web site owned by one of the members. This will ensure that a recognized website does not go down or go stale should an individual member move or quit the group. Administrative access for SCA Internet sites should never be kept by a single individual. At a minimum, administrative access should be given to both the Kingdom Webminister and Kingdom Seneschal.

Recognized websites may never be hosted on a service that requires banner or popup advertisements.

All payments for web services should be made by the Kingdom or local Exchequer with the Webminister acting as liaison.

7. Advertising

While it is not normally desired, group websites may accept paid advertising for publication, at the discretion of the Webminister. The fee charged for such ads is left to the determination of the Webminister but should apply to all advertisements equally. Webministers should not accept any advertising which, in their opinion: promotes a negative image for the Society; which is written in questionable taste; which would fail to interest a significant number of their readers; which advocates the breaking of civil, Kingdom, or Society laws; or which, in their judgment, is inappropriate for the website for any reason. Commercial advertisements must be for products and services vital to the educational purposes of the Society. Kingdom Webministers must not accept ads for partisan politics or elections. All funds should be collected in the group's name, and delivered directly to the office of the Exchequer.

8. Politicizing the Office

Kingdom and branch web sites announce events and provide information to their members. Philosophical discussions of the way a Kingdom or a branch works are not out of place, but they need to be handled very carefully. Articles that cause anger and divert people from study and recreation are not acceptable.

This is not an issue of freedom of the press -- Webministers have a responsibility to see that their web sites do not further the political aims of any one faction within a Kingdom, and that a web site is not used to provide a platform for any one view in preference to another. Personal attacks

may not be published in the name of the SCA or any of its branches, or paid for with money that will have to be reported to the IRS as spent in the furtherance of our educational purpose.

Webministers have a further responsibility not to take sides in a political dispute in print. Use of the website to further personal political aims is grounds for removal from office.

9. Statement of Ownership

All websites that are recognized by the SCA are required to display the following disclaimer and copyright statement. This statement should be displayed on the home page of the site, but may instead be displayed on a separate page, provided that an obvious link to such a disclaimer page is provided on the home page.

“This is the recognized web site for the <branch name> of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and is maintained by <Modern and/or SCA name of Webminister>. This site may contain electronic versions of the group's governing documents. Any discrepancies between the electronic version of any information on this site and the printed version that is available from the originating office will be decided in favor of the printed version. For information on using photographs, articles, or artwork from this web site, please contact the Webminister at <Webminister's email address>. He or she will assist you in contacting the original creator of the piece. Please respect the legal rights of our contributors.

Copyright © <Year> <branch name>. The original contributors retain the copyright of certain portions of this site.”

10. Copyright Policies

The Society operates under the ideals of chivalry. Respect for others' property, including intellectual property, is part of those ideals. The Kingdom Webminister must ensure that copyrighted material is not used in the Kingdom website except in compliance with applicable copyright laws. Authorization from the copyright holder must be received in writing or in electronic format (an e-mail from the person giving permission is acceptable), prior to publication. Such e-mail notifications should be archived, stored and in all other manners treated the same way written releases are treated. The notice "Copyright © [date and holder]. Used with permission." must accompany the copyrighted material. This policy also explicitly applies to any article or message originally published or posted to any web site or electronic forum. In order to republish the message or article in any other form, permission in the form of a signed release must be obtained from the author.

Kingdom Webministers are required to maintain a file of all copyrighted material used in the Kingdom website. This file shall include a copy of the material used and the applicable permission letter.

Kingdom Webministers also are responsible for ensuring that branch Webministers within their Kingdom are familiar with these standards and adhere to them. If there is a possible copyright problem, Kingdom Webministers are advised to speak with their local officers about the item in

question, and to follow up such conversations, if necessary, with a letter pointing out the possible violation and suggesting a remedy.

Webministers who persist in reproducing copyrighted material without permission will be removed from office and may be subject to further sanctions.

11. Quality of Content

a. Editorial Material

All editorial material, both text and images, must conform to the goals and objectives of the Society, and portray the Society and the Kingdom in a positive light. No content, including official Kingdom announcements, is exempt from this requirement.

There is no way to anticipate all the types of material that may be objectionable; what follows is a representative list:

- Personal attacks on individuals or groups
- Harsh criticism of the behavior of individuals or groups
- Copyrighted material used without permission
- Use of racial or religious stereotypes
- Offensive words, phrases, or images

It should be noted that, per Corpora, banishment or sanction announcements may not state why the individual is being banished or sanctioned.

If there is any concern that specific material may be questionable, consult with the Society Webminister.

E. Kingdom Websites

1. Domain Names

Official/recognized domain names will be purchased and registered by the corporate office, and not owned by an individual. SCA, Inc. will provide this service free of charge to all Kingdoms. All Kingdoms who own their own domain should contact the Society Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and Society Web Minister to coordinate transfer of ownership.

Individual exceptions may be made to this rule on a case-by-case basis in the event of issues with hosting requirements or the like, but approval from and coordination with the Society Webminister and Society CTO is required.

2. Required Inclusions

The Kingdom website must publish a Statement of Ownership as outlined above, plus the following items:

- The names and contact information of royalty
- A list of Great Officers and their deputies
- A calendar of events for the month
- A list of all branches and groups within the Kingdom, with links to recognized branch web sites and contact information for branch seneschals if a site with appropriate contact information is not available.
- Any other official documents as mandated by the Kingdom Seneschal or Kingdom Greater Officers
- A “Newcomers” page with information about the SCA and the Kingdom
- Modern boundaries of the Kingdom
- The name and e-mail address of the Society Seneschal, the Corporate Secretary/Registrar, and the Ombudsman for the Kingdom, or links to said information.

3. Event Announcements

Event announcements should be published on the Kingdom web site, or linked to from the Kingdom event calendar if not hosted by the Kingdom web site. Not every event needs to be published on the Kingdom web site. When posting, keep in mind the policies regarding the posting of personal information. It is highly desirable that event notices be published for those events at which any one of the following will take place:

- Crown and Coronet tournaments
 - Coronations and investitures
 - Appointment of Kingdom or principality officers
 - Presentation of awards or titles
 - Proclamation of law
 - Establishment or advancement of branches
- It is the responsibility of the hosting branch to make an electronic event announcement available.
 - It is the responsibility of the hosting branch to notify the Kingdom Webminister of the URL.
 - It is the responsibility of the Kingdom Webminister to place a link to the event announcement from the Kingdom calendar of events.

These responsibilities may be delegated to the Kingdom Chronicler and/or Kingdom Seneschal, if the Webminister and other involved officers agree, or where it is required by Kingdom Law.

The Kingdom Webminister should provide space, whenever possible, and technical expertise for creating event announcements whenever requested to do so.

4. Reporting to the Corporate Office

a. Reporting Requirements

1. Annual Reports

Annual reports are due to the Society Webminister by February 15th. This report should include the following items:

- Complete contact information for the Webminister and all direct deputies, to include membership number, membership expiration date and warrant expiration date.
- A roster of all warranted webministers
- Summary of the status of the office within the Kingdom, as well as any financial expenditures for hosting, server maintenance, firewalls, email accounts, software, etc.
- Recommendations/commendations for the Master William Blackfox Web Awards

2. Quarterly Reports

Each Webminister will send a list of issues being addressed, pages updated, policies implemented, and any other pertinent data deemed appropriate in communications from the Society Webminister.

Quarterly reports are due to the Society Webminister no later than the following dates: March 1st, June 1st, September 1st, December 1st.

b. Communication with the Society Webminister

Communication is the heart of the office of the Webminister. The Society Webminister is always available to assist in problem solving. Questions regarding policy issues, Kingdom problems, copyright problems, or other larger issues should be brought to the attention of the Society Webminister.

c. Transfer of Office

Generally speaking, the Society Webminister will approve the successor chosen by the current Kingdom Webminister and Crown. The current Kingdom Webminister should be sure the proposed successor reads these policies before accepting a nomination.

1. Notification

It is the responsibility of the outgoing officer to send a letter to the Society Webminister notifying that office that a new Kingdom Webminister has been nominated. The letter must include:

- The proposed new Webminister's modern name, address, phone number, and e-mail address
- A review of the proposed Webminister's qualifications
- The planned date the office will change hands
- The warrant for the new Webminister. If the office has been elevated to the status of Greater Office, please include an extra copy for the Society Webminister to sign and return in addition to the copy kept for records.

Copies of this letter must be sent to the proposed new Webminister, the Crown, and the Kingdom Seneschal. The new Webminister should follow this letter with an introductory letter. Should the warrant be approved, the new Webminister should follow this letter with an introductory letter to the corporate office, the Kingdom Ombudsman, and the Webminister's Ombudsman.

2. Transfer of Records

All records, equipment, funds, and other materials belonging to the Webminister's office will be transferred within 60 days of the change of office. Additionally, all passwords, server names, and other administrative access will be turned over as quickly as possible, not to exceed 60 days.

5. Oversight of Branch Web Sites

The supervision of branch Webministers within the Society falls to the office of the Kingdom Webminister in each Kingdom. It is important that locally produced web sites present the SCA as a positive experience, both to the members of the local branches they represent and to any new or prospective members who read them.

Each Kingdom must have a method of supervising its branch Webministers. The Kingdom Webminister is responsible for ensuring that all branch Webministers are aware of and abide by the copyright laws of the country or countries in which the Kingdom is located, by the Laws and Customs of their Kingdom, and by these policies.

6. Removal from Office

a. Causes

Kingdom Webministers are subject to removal from office as stipulated in Corpora. The causes for which the Society Webminister may seek the removal of a Kingdom Webminister include, but are not limited to:

- Use of objectionable material
- Use of copyrighted material without permission
- Failure to maintain a Society membership as outlined in the governing documents of the Society
- Failure to abide by the policies in this document

b. Re-warranting

The Kingdom Webminister may not be re-warranted without the approval of the Society Webminister. Causes for which a warrant may not be renewed include, but are not limited to:

- Use of the web site to promote factionalism within a Kingdom
- Proven inability to answer correspondence, either from the corporate level or from within the Kingdom
- Politicizing the office of Kingdom Webminister
- Failure to respect and adhere to the ideals of the Society

c. Suspension or Removal at Kingdom Request

Should a Kingdom request the removal of the Kingdom Webminister for causes not readily apparent to the Society Webminister, the Society Webminister will investigate the circumstances of the request. Should the evidence show that the Kingdom's request is valid, even if the corporate office has no reason to remove the officer, the Society Webminister may agree to the removal. The Crown has the option of suspending the Webminister at any time for just and stated cause, as provided in Corpora, for the duration of the current reign. In the case of a suspension, the Webminister's emergency deputy will assume the office for the remainder of the reign.

F. Branch Web Sites

1. Domain Names

Where possible, it is preferable to have local branches follow one of the following web site naming conventions:

- BranchName.KingdomName.org

- BranchName.KingdomName.sca.org
- KingdomName.org/BranchName
- KingdomName.sca.org/BranchName

If external domains outside the Kingdom domain must be acquired for a branch because the Kingdom's domain does not accept or support subdomains, domain names should be purchased and maintained by an SCA branch, and never by an individual.

In cases where a group name is difficult to spell, it is recommended that two domain names be registered: one with the full name of the group, and one with a shortened version. Example: The Shire of Duthaich Beinne Aird could be simplified to DBA.

2. Reasons for a Branch Web Site

A branch website may be less formal than a Kingdom website. It exists to serve the needs of a local branch or organization, such as a College of Heraldry or an Order, to inform and educate that group of people about the SCA community in which they live, and to further the educational purposes of the SCA. It is crucial that the members of a local branch communicate with one another, and a web site is an excellent method of communicating with the populace.

3. Definition of a Branch Web Site

A local branch web site is the recognized publication of a recognized group within the SCA, Inc. It cites that local branch or educational organization as its publishing authority, and is maintained by a Webminister who is recognized and warranted by the Kingdom Webminister.

4. Reporting

Branch Webministers must make a written report to their Kingdom Webminister on a regular basis. These reports must be made at least once per year, although a Kingdom may decide to require them more frequently.

5. Removal from Office

The Kingdom Webminister, with whatever Royal approval is required by Kingdom Law, may seek the removal of a branch Webminister. The reasons for removal from office include, but are not limited to:

- Use of copyrighted material without permission
- Failure to abide by the policies in this document
- Use of material that is in poor taste or is otherwise objectionable. If in doubt, contact your Kingdom Webminister
- Infringement of Kingdom Law

- Politicizing of the office

G. Additional Policies

1. Electronic Mailing Lists

Electronic lists are extremely valuable to disseminate information to a large group of people in a timely manner. We need to be mindful that not everyone has access to this medium, nor does everyone wish to have access to this medium. Additionally, as most of the lists are hosted by list providers such as Yahoo and Google, ownership of the lists often can be in contest. It is recommended to refrain from the use of publicly hosted mailing lists whenever possible. The Governing Documents of the SCA, Inc., cover when communication to and from an officer may be considered official. Moderators of said mailing lists are not considered warranted officers of the SCA at any level, and there are no reporting relationships to any SCA officers. Officers at any level of the SCA may choose to use a private mailing list to assist with communications for their office, but the use of such mailing lists is not regulated by the SCA, Inc.

If a mailing list is maintained by a Kingdom or the Society (example: lists.sca.org) and the moderator is acting in an official capacity as recognized by the Kingdom or the Society, communications via such lists may be recognized as official if the persons subscribed to the list also are recognized as officers and subscription to the list is required to fulfill the obligations of said office.

2. CaféPress

CaféPress and other similar vendors allow for the customization of certain household items to be sold and profits rendered to the patron who provided the artwork and inspiration for said customization. While this falls outside the purview of the Society Webminister, many questions regarding this service have been raised. There is no official SCA policy regarding this service. When considering the use of this service, keep in mind that all branch names and heraldic devices registered with the SCA College of Arms belong to the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., and may not be used without permission.

Appendix A

Glossary

- Domain: The web address in its simplest form (i.e. yahoo.com, SCA.org, netscape.net)
- Group pages: Web sites or pages for a specific group in a Kingdom, Orders and recognized Guilds.
- Host or Hosting: The company that is maintaining the servers on which web pages are stored
- Main page: The index page or the first page that people see when visiting a web site. This does not include splash pages
- Official site/page: A web site recognized as the web site for that branch, group or office (recognized by the Kingdom or local branch)
- Splash page: A greetings page. Sometimes these include animations or a choice of options to select what kind of detail a user would like to see on the web site
- Web page: One page of web code
- Web site: A collection of web pages gathered together to represent an idea or theme

Appendix B

Example Whois record:

Domain ID:<Set by Registrar>
Domain Name:<YOUR DOMAIN>
Created On:<Date>
Last Updated On:<Date>
Expiration Date:<Date>
Sponsoring Registrar:<Registrar name>
Status:CLIENT TRANSFER PROHIBITED
Registrant ID:<YOUR ID>
Registrant Name:SocietyforCreative Anachronism
Registrant Organization:SocietyforCreative Anachronism
Registrant Street1:P.O. Box 360789
Registrant Street2:
Registrant Street3:
Registrant City:Milpitas
Registrant State/Province:CA
Registrant Postal Code:95036-0789
Registrant Country:US
Registrant Phone:+1.9999999999
Registrant Phone Ext.:
Registrant FAX:
Registrant FAX Ext.:
Registrant Email:
Admin ID:25117816-NSI
Admin Name:Hostmaster
Admin Organization:Hostmaster
Admin Street1:SCA, Inc.
Admin Street2:P.O. Box 360789
Admin Street3:
Admin City:Milpitas
Admin State/Province:CA
Admin Postal Code:95036-0789
Admin Country:US
Admin Phone:+1.9999999999
Admin Phone Ext.:
Admin FAX:
Admin FAX Ext.:
Admin Email: