



## Dale Hartle Award for Best Club Website 2011

By Dale Hartle DTM, District 72 Webmaster



Seven club websites were entered in the 2011 Award:



- Toastmasters @ Lunchtime 940555
- Foveaux Toastmasters Club 4978
- Palmerston North Toastmasters Club 1923
- Rangiora Toastmasters Club 9337
- Terrace @ 12 Toastmasters Club 7243
- Pegasus Toastmasters Club 8922
- Biztalk Toastmasters Club 1458145



These club sites were visited at least twice by the District Webmaster and District PRO during March and April 2011.



A number of issues were identified with the websites:



- Non-compliance with Toastmasters International rules for club websites – no logo, no Trademark Statement
- Poor formatting and layout, making the site difficult to navigate, and pages difficult to read and understand; poor use of FreeToastHost sites and its functionality
- Out of date information – no up to date information or news, past events and meetings still being promoted, or too much information in a not very user-friendly format
- Poorly written content or blank pages, lack of structure, headings, and with broken or inactive links to external websites or email, insufficient club identifying information, typing errors, text pasted from another source without reformatting
- Poorly optimised photographs – stretched, too dark, not cropped, no captions or explanation
- No indication of when the site was last updated, or webmaster contact information
- Poor or no metadata such as keywords, page titles and descriptions, making the site appear inadequately in a Google search result



So there is still a lot of work to be done to train club webmasters in the basics of building and managing a club website, so that it is compliant, well structured, has well-written up to date content, correctly optimised photographs, links and file downloads, and has sufficient metadata for Google searches. Club websites need to promote and sell the club and answer the six basic questions a prospective member always asks, be attractive and easy to navigate. There is increasing use of links to social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. However for these to be successful, they require constant maintenance with updates of timely and useful information. FreeToastHost sites seem to be the most difficult to configure and maintain due to their restricted templates.



The **Winner** of the **Dale Hartle Award** for the **Best Club Website 2011** is:



**[Terrace@12 Toastmasters Club](http://www.terraceat12.co.nz)**



**[www.terraceat12.co.nz](http://www.terraceat12.co.nz)**



**Webmaster: Alex Dean, VP Public Relations**



(fresh new design, links to social media (Toastmasters Twitter),  
useful navigation menu, news in a blog format from home page)



***Congratulations!***

