

School Marketing Internet Applications

including
Samples and Instructions
Screenshots and Weblinks

The internet provides so many school marketing opportunities that are:

- very contemporary
- popular with a significant and ever-increasing number of our school community
- ever-growing in possibilities
- often inexpensive or free
- fun!

The modern school needs to be actively involved with many of these internet opportunities, otherwise they will unnecessarily fall behind the interest level and communication methods of an ever-growing number of our students, staff and their families – with what could be serious ramifications for all concerned.

The CHALLENGE has been issued!

Headings

Website
Website Management Software Sample
RSS Feeds
SEOs
Blogs
Emails
e/i-Newsletters and e/i-Flyers
Social Networking Websites
Video Uploads
Chat Rooms
Skype

Website

The school website is one of the most important forms of marketing the school. It is often where school information is initially found, especially by families new to the area.

The website is often one of the first places that potential families, students and potential staff get an overall feel and basic appreciation of the potential for their involvement in School life.

Creating a Website - Background

Investigation in this area is critical.

The school will need expertise to create and then continually update a good website.

The initial construction of the website may come from school IT staff or other staff, systemic IT specialists, parents with special IT skills or from outside commercial consultants.

The continual updating would best be done within the School. In-servicing staff for making these updates would be money well spent.

An option, I have found very beneficial, follows.

Management Software

Another option is to have the website embedded in to management software which allows for management of the site. This takes the site beyond the static and into the realm of continual fluid development – Web 2.0.

The expense of this option is not considerable and with negotiation within the field a reasonable monthly cost would be expected. I would suggest speaking with trusted others in deciding on the businesses offering this support.

(See ‘Website Management Software Sample’ in this chapter for a specific example.)

This software allows for various detailed reports of website usage. It could include:

- the whereabouts in the world of visitors to your site
- number of webpages they visited
- the content viewed from webpages and applications they visited
- where they entered and exited the website
- who is exploring your site, through IP (Internet Protocol) addresses
- the browsers they used to link to your website
- any commercial activities you may have as part of your website, etc.

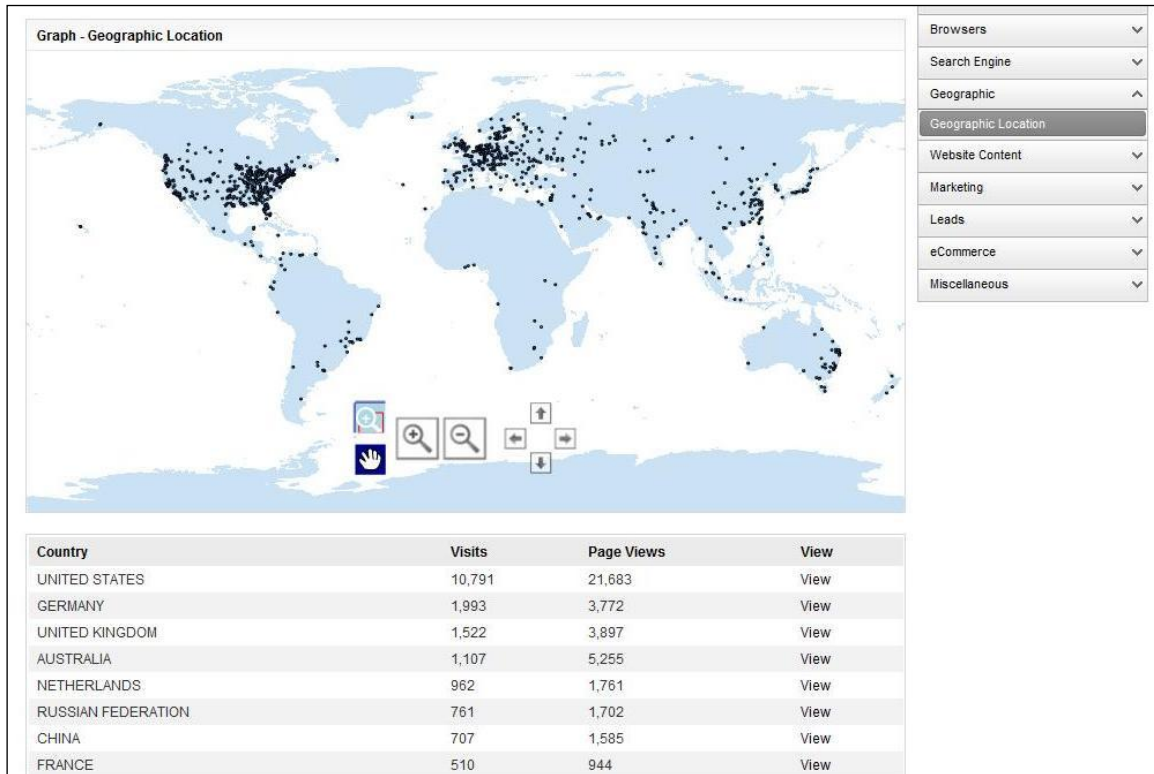
This allows for the non-IT expert to update the website regularly, from uploading photos, literature items, to adding webpages, blogs, galleries of photos and videos, etc.

There are numerous other capacities depending on the management software. See the right hand columns in the screenshots below for details available through the management software I use.

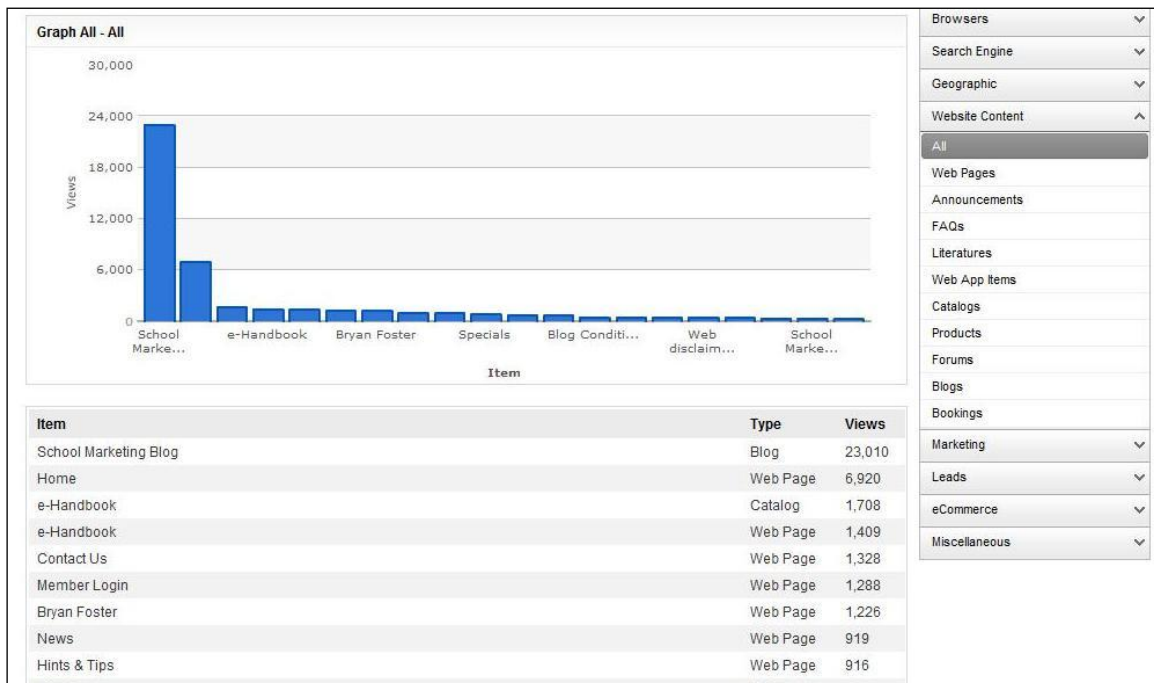
Always Interactive supplies my management software. Three such samples of my website's details are included and shown below at: <http://www.alwaysinteractive.com/>

Reproduction of all 'Always Interactive' web-screens in this e-book reproduced with permission of Always Interactive at <http://www.alwaysinteractive.com/>.

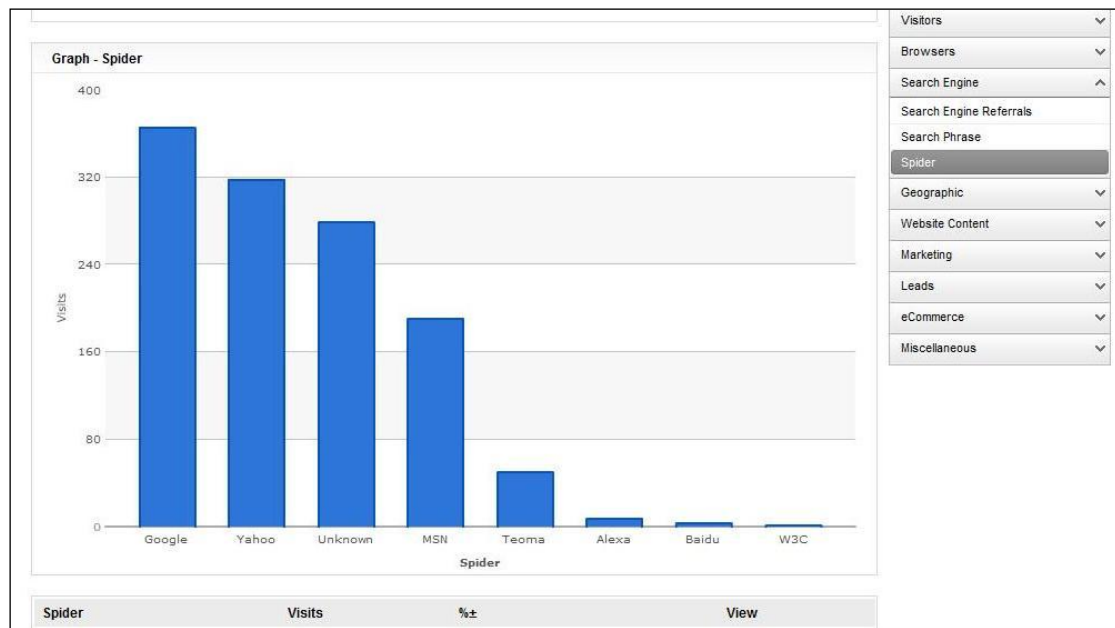
Geographic Locations and Viewing Numbers - below



Webpages Viewed and Numbers per Page - below



Search Engine Transfers to SMP website - below



Target Audiences

The website is also where more and more students and parents will continually visit throughout their time in the school.

School Marketing Managers and key school staff should use the website for interaction between the various stakeholders within the school e.g. their students, potential students, staff, families and other interested people including parishioners.

Regularly updated bulletin boards and newsletters, upcoming liturgical and social events, St Vincent de Paul and other charitable needs and requests, photo and video galleries of school activities, etc. are needed.

Website Examples

To view good school websites, for ideas for your own school's website, just go to your browser and type in such words as: 'outstanding school websites', 'school websites', 'best school websites', etc. There are so many good examples out there.

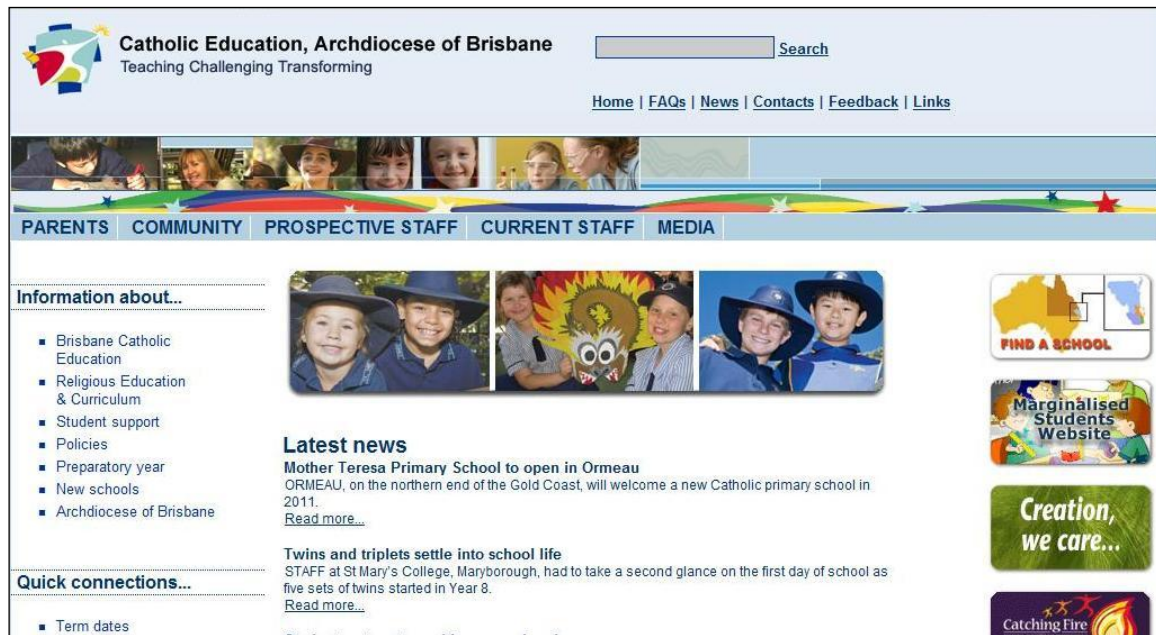
You may also visit various school websites, system-level office websites and diocesan websites for both ideas and for key personnel.

Below are three good examples. St Joseph's Hunters Hill and Brisbane Catholic Education sites see the News as central to their homepage. Another couple of similar sites worth viewing are the Loreto Toorak site at: <http://www.loretotoorak.vic.edu.au/home/> and Aquinas College, Southport <http://www.aquinas.qld.edu.au/>

The following is reproduced with permission of St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill and may be found at: <http://www.joeys.org/index.cfm>



The BCE homepage is produced with permission of Brisbane Catholic Education and is found at: <http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/>



Another often used style for homepages emphasizes detail. It is very important that it is presented in an attractive, clear and succinct format. A good example of an archdiocesan website is included with permission from the Archdiocese of Brisbane and found at <http://bne.catholic.net.au/asp/index.asp>



Another good example follows and is reproduced with permission of Saint Ignatius College, Riverview <http://www.riverview.nsw.edu.au/>



Website Inclusions

Many good ideas can be gained from exploring the World Wide Web (WWW or Web or Internet) and noting characteristics that may be included on your website.

This exploration would be relevant both for those about to create a website and those who are / will be doing the updating.

Homepage

The homepage is the most important page to get correct. It is the page the viewer normally reaches on their initial search. First impressions are critical.

The appearance needs to be in-line with the school's selected branding styles:

- colors
- photos (for ease of acquiring and using professional images, check out such sites as: istockphoto (<http://www.istockphoto.com/index.php>) and crestock.com (<http://www.crestock.com/>). These sites provide professional standard images at relatively inexpensive rates. You buy royalty-free images which you can then use on your website. You may, however, have good professional ones done for you. These photos need to be professionally presented. Don't skimp on costs here.)
- logo
- motto or catchphrase
- selected key words and key phrases
- good graphics
- clear, directing toolbar/s and other links
- attention grabbing inclusions e.g.
 - news updates
 - upcoming events
 - webpages on your website listed
- **School - Parish Weblinks**

Another good sample of a homepage is included with permission from The Catholic Parish of Southport and shown here and found at: <http://scp.org.au/>.

Religious schools should have weblinks with their parish/es.

This allows for visitors to the church website to see the schools within the parish.
It also allows for visitors to the school website to see links with their parish.

Both groups would benefit from this obviously stated link.