

## Guidelines for Seventh-day Adventist Church Web Sites

The presence of Seventh-day Adventist churches, offices, and institutions around the world has established a global recognition for the Church. Public perception concerning the worldwide family of Seventh-day Adventists is influenced by the lives of members, by the actions of each organization, by denominationally-identified services and programs, and by the maintenance of aesthetic appeal at all physical properties. The Church has adopted and registered, as a trademark, its official [name](#) and [logo](#). All denominational organizations listed in the current *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* are authorized to use, for non-commercial purposes, the registered trademarks ("Seventh-day Adventists," "Adventist," "SDA," or any derivative of such; see GC BA 40 40) and logo, of the Church. The right to use the official name and logo of the Church is accompanied by an obligation to protect these against misuse and misrepresentation.

Technological advances have made it possible for a local entity of the Church to exhibit a global presence through a Web site. It is in the interest of the worldwide Church to provide guidance regarding how the Church is portrayed, and thus perceived, through a Web site. All denominational entities choosing to establish an online presence are expected to develop their Web sites within the scope of the following guidelines. Division executive committees may adopt additional guidelines respecting the content and operation of Web sites within the division territory.

1. Only official churches, organizations, and entities administered by organizations listed in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* are entitled to use the Seventh-day Adventist Church's corporate identity symbols (logo graphic and text) as described in the [Church's corporate identity standards manual](#).
2. Domain names used by Church entities should be owned and registered in the entity's name, or in the name of another denominational entity, such as a conference, union, or division, that has granted use of its domain name; and a business plan should be established to preserve the domain name for future use by the entity.
3. Every denominational Web site should display appropriate trademark and copyright notices and symbols.
4. Seventh-day Adventist Church beliefs and teachings are to be upheld in content published on all denominational Web sites. Promotional material and information provided through the Web site must be consistent with the beliefs and ethical values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
5. Widespread public access to a Web site requires that communication and information originating from a site must reflect the courtesies of public discourse. The Church's message can be communicated in ways that acknowledge diversity of viewpoints while avoiding hostile or offensive remarks and caricatures about other people, groups, or organizations.
6. Seventh-day Adventist Web sites must respect intellectual property rights when posting audio, video, pictures, text, and all other content.
7. All Web sites should display professional appearance, including design, choice of colors, graphics, and layout. It is recommended that Web sites be tested for usability before being made public. Divisions may identify preferred Web site hosts and/or software platforms in order to facilitate connectivity among denominational entities and to maintain technical quality of denominational Web sites.
8. Adventist internal language, jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations are to be used with care on denominational Web sites as they are available to all Internet users, many of whom will have little understanding of such terms. Web site content is to be checked for spelling and grammar.
9. The board or executive committee of the entity having a Web presence is ultimately responsible for the maintenance, content, and operation of the site. Therefore, each entity is expected to establish a system for monitoring and oversight, including the appointment of personnel who are entrusted with responsibility for managing the Web site and its content. Care should be exercised in selecting types of information that is made available for global access.
10. In the context of the Internet culture, Web pages which include time-sensitive information should be updated on a regular basis. It is recommended that a monitoring system be established to measure unique visitors or page views.
11. Care should be exercised when selecting links to other Web sites. Information portrayed on Web sites linked to a denominational entity's site should be supportive of the Church's mission, message, and values. Legal counsel should be obtained as to whether or not commercial activity facilitated by the Web site will jeopardize the organization's status as a religious, not-for-profit organization.
12. Denominational entities sponsoring Web sites are responsible for ensuring that the operation and content of the site is in compliance with applicable laws, including requirements for the privacy protection of children who may access the Web site or whose picture may be placed on the Web site.
13. A feedback option for visitors to leave inquiries and comments is recommended.

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*These guidelines were voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in Silver Spring, Maryland, October 10, 2006.*