## Building a Website – No Coding Required!

by Alan German

Building websites used to involve knowledge of the hypertext markup language (HTML) and the need to write code since it's typically an HTML file that is interpreted by a web browser to display a given web page. Today, there are several content management systems that offer WYSIWYG editors so that you can create your very own web site with no HTML coding being required (by you!)

One such system that is available to many of us is Google Sites. Anyone who uses Gmail has a Google account and can use its login credentials to access Google Sites. So, for example let's see how we can create a simple web site on which we can post a number of digital photographs in order to share these with friends and relatives.

Firstly, navigate to https://sites.google.com/. If you are not already logged into Google, enter your Gmail address and password. An obvious prompt on the first screen is *Start a new site* with options for a number of pre-defined templates. The default selection of templates may not be what you want to use, so navigate further to *Template Gallery – General*. Scrolling down this page we find *Photo Portfolio* which sounds like it might be a good starting point for our purposes. Selecting this item loads the template into the main window and provides access to various editing tools.
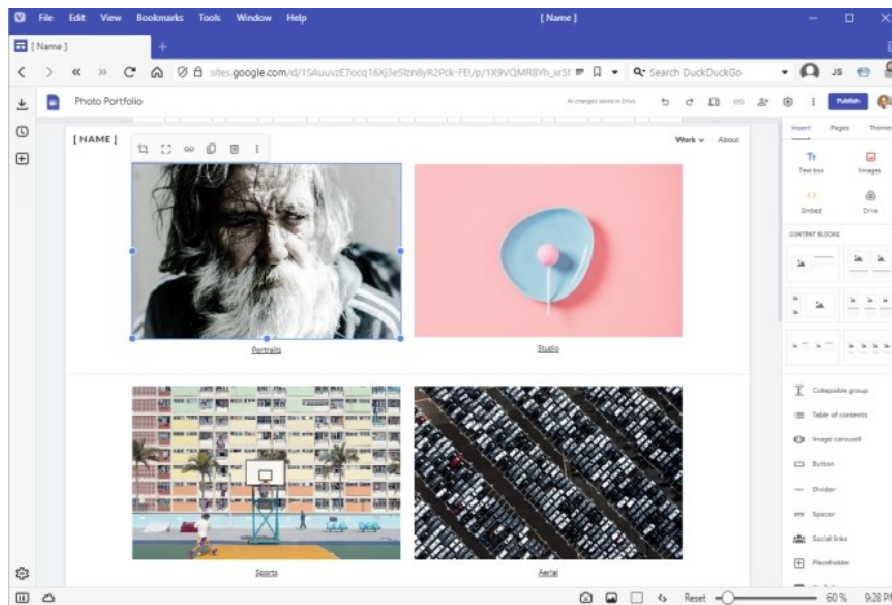
Some editing features are fairly obvious. For example, we can change [NAME] to ALAN'S BIRD PHOTOS by simply typing over the default text. Similarly, we can change the *Portraits* caption below the first image to *Texas*. However, we may need to be a little careful with this change. *Portraits* is actually a link to a sub-page so, to be safe and retain the link, we can start typing immediately after the "P" and, once we have entered *Texas*, we can delete the redundant characters from the previous *Portraits* title. (Don't worry if you mess this up; it's really easy to create a hyperlink, as we will see.)

To eliminate categories that we don't need, such as *Studio*, we use the mouse to select the thumbnail and click on the trash can icon (*Delete group*) in the menu that pops up. To eliminate an entire section, e.g. *Sports* and *Aerial*, which is not needed, hover the mouse

Inside this issue:

Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, March 13th, 2024

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 13th, 2024

Building a Website – No Coding Required!
Speaker: Alan German (OPCUG)

Conventional websites require knowledge of the HyperText Markup Language (HTML), editing HTML files, and uploading these files and any associated digital images, etc. to a web hosting service, in order to create an on-line presence. Today's technologies offer web page templates, WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editors, and instant web hosting. So, it's easy to create a website with no HTML coding being required. And it can be completely free. For example, anyone who has a Google account (e.g. uses Gmail) can use their login credentials to create and manage Google Sites. In this presentation we will see how to create a website from scratch and make our content available on the Internet.

This meeting will be via Zoom video conference.

Join us at https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting.
The Zoom link will be live at 7:15 pm.
The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

Coming Up…

April 10
Unlocking Creativity with an AI Image Generator
Speaker: Bob Herres (OPCUG)

May 8
Free Software: What Can It Do For You?
Speaker: Adam Hunt (Full Circle Magazine)

June 12, 6 PM
Annual Pizza Night *(see article next page)*

September 11
Members' Favourites Night *(tentative)*

OPL Presentations:

Feb 26 2024
KEEPING PASSWORDS SAFE
Carlingwood Branch

Feb 26 2024
BUILDING A WEBSITE – NO CODING REQUIRED!
North Gloucester Branch

Complete OPL lineup at https://opcug.ca/mec-category/opl-presentations/

Message from the Webmaster

I apologize for the problems some of you may have had trying to connect to the February general meeting from the website. I accidently redirected all the meeting links by adding a single entry in a management app.

Although I do my best to not break anything on our site, accidents do happen. In order to circumvent any future issues with the website, please either bookmark the Zoom link for **Meetings and Q&A** (https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting) in your browser or subscribe to the **Announcements List** to receive an email beforehand that includes the link (or an alternate link or notice of cancellation should there be a Zoom problem). For instructions on how to subscribe to the Announcements List, visit https://opcug.ca/google-groups-how-to/.

Sincerely,
Brigitte Lord

2024 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
Regular Monthly Meeting	Wednesday, March 13th	7:30 pm via Zoom video conference: **https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting** To see all upcoming events, visit https://opcug.ca/#upcoming
Next Q&A Session	Wednesday, February 28th	Until further notice, Q&A sessions are no longer held after regular monthly meetings. Join us on all other Wednesdays for weekly Q&A.
Next OPL Presentation	(see Upcoming Events)	Visit https://opcug.ca/mec-category/opl-presentations/ for the full list of presentations. There are no presentations in July and August.

ANNUAL PIZZA NIGHT

Pizza Time! Wednesday, June 12, <u>6 PM</u>

Once again we are fast approaching the end of our OPCUG season, and once again we'll celebrate it with pizza, drinks and desserts. These are free for OPCUG members and their guests.

The event will be, as always, on the second Wednesday of June, that is June 12, 2024, starting at 6 PM. It will be at the **Britannia Park Trolley Station** (see images below), under a sheltered area in case the weather does not cooperate, with free parking and bathroom access. Unfortunately, for those who like beer or wine with their pizza, **alcohol is not permitted** in the park. Pop and water will be provided.

To help with planning, we're asking you to **register by email** at **pizzaparty@opcug.ca**. Tell us if you are bringing guests and how many, your pizza preference (e.g. combo, special, meat lover, vegetarian, gluten free, etc.), and if you need a ride or can offer a ride.

We look forward to seeing you all in great numbers!

Britannia Park Trolley Station (click image for more photos):

Sky view of Trolley/Picnic Station and parking (click image to view larger):

Map to Britannia Park (click image to open in Google Maps):

ARTICLE

Experts: DON'T Charge Your Smartphone or Tablet Overnight – Your Battery Will Thank You

by Kurt Jefferson, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society
https://ckcs.org/
lextown2 (at) gmail.com

(reprinted with permission)

Many of us who own iPhones, iPads, Android phones, or similar devices charge them while we sleep. So, as we're napping, our phones and tablets slowly charge their batteries. Then, when we awake, we're ready to take on the day, and so are the devices on which we depend–ready with a 100% charge.

Now, experts are spreading a new message: By charging our devices overnight, we might slowly be killing the battery. Techjury.net writes, "I know it's great to wake up and have 100% juice to carry you through the day. However, your cell phone battery needs only about two hours to recharge itself completely."

Techjury adds, "Experts' opinions on Li-Ion batteries are unanimous – you should keep your iPhone charged at 40%-80%. This is the optimal charge level of your iPhone (or any other smartphone, for that matter) to prolong its battery life. Sometimes this 20% could mean the difference between your iPhone lasting through the day or not. Still, charging your iPhone overnight to 100% often will decrease its battery capacity faster."

If you need more proof, ladbible writes, "Before going to sleep, most of us will put our phone on charge to make sure it's ready for the day ahead. But doing this could be causing damage to our iPhones, according to tech expert Adrian Kingsley-Hughes, writing for ZDNet."

"An iPhone can go from zero to 50% charge in about 30 minutes using a 20W charger, and then go to being fully charged in under two hours," writes Kingsley-Hughes.

He adds, "Given that an iPhone can charge up so rapidly, it doesn't make sense that we hook it up to a charger for eight hours a day.

That works out to a third of its lifetime."

Plenty of iPhone owners are unaware of this, but Apple introduced Optimized Battery Charging in iOS 13 for iPhone. So, if you're running that version of iOS or later, your device stops charging when it's 80% charged.

Optimized Battery Charging is switched on by default. (It's available only on the iPhone–not the iPad.)

If, for some reason, you want to turn off Optimized Battery Charging, visit Settings > Battery > Battery Health > Optimized Battery Charging.

Apple writes, "When the feature is enabled, your iPhone will delay charging past 80% in certain situations. Your iPhone uses on-device machine learning to learn your daily charging routine so that Optimized Battery Charging activates only when your iPhone predicts it will be connected to a charger for an extended period of time. The algorithm aims to ensure that your iPhone is still fully charged when unplugged."

Returning to the original question–why shouldn't you charge your device overnight?

The simple one-word answer is–heat.

Here's how Kingsley–Hughes explains it: "Heat is a killer of batteries. While there's nothing you can do about the normal wear and tear that a battery experiences from being charged and discharged, heat is something you can do something about. When your iPhone is connected to a charger, it gets warmer -- warmer than if it isn't connected, and even though that increase might only be a few degrees above room temperature, doing this overnight every night doesn't seem smart to me."

He writes that he has radically changed how he charges his iPhone.

Instead of charging it overnight as he sleeps, he now gives it one or two daily charges.

Under his new schedule, he charges his iPhone for 30 to 45 minutes directly after he awakes. (During this same period, he charges his Apple Watch.)

Then during mid-afternoon, he charges his phone for another 30 minutes so that the battery icon shows it's 80% charged. Kingsley-Hughes says that's usually enough of a charge to last until the next morning.

If he knows he'll be on a trip that keeps him inside his car, he takes a car charger or a power bank and recharges his phone using either of those measures.

In summary, he believes the new charging regimen stresses his iPhone's battery and charger less. And he uses a cable rather than a wireless charging system.

So, there you have it.

If you're still charging your iPhone, iPad, or Android device while you sleep overnight—stop it. Instead, find an alternative charging schedule.

Experts say your battery will live longer.

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Slidewise: a review update

by Chris Taylor

(original review and update also available here [PDF])

I wrote a review of Neuxpower's Slidewise in the January issue of the newsletter (https://opcug.ca/Articles/2401NEWS.pdf). As a heavy PowerPoint user, I find this software invaluable in fixing issues, especially those around fonts and font substitutions.

As mentioned, I think Slidewise is pretty pricy for casual PowerPoint users. In my discussions with Neuxpower, I suggested they consider releasing a freemium version of Slidwise. The freemium model benefits both the user—who gets basic features for free, and the vendor—if a user decides to upgrade to the full version of the program.

Neuxpower has released version 2.1 of Slidewise with lots of nice additions. As well they have embraced the freemium model. When you install Slidewise, you get the full version for 30 days, after which you get the option to pay for the full version or switch to the free version.
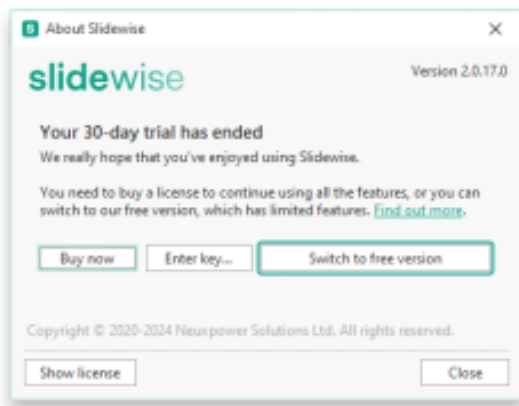
The free version helps with the biggest issues I have working in PowerPoint: fonts. It will let you find what fonts are used in the presentation and where they are used. It also details whether fonts are embedded or substituted. There are some additional features in the free version of Slidewise. For a complete list, see https://support.neuxpower.com/hc/en-us/articles/21741589503377-What-can-I-do-with-Slidewise-Free.

I encourage all PowerPoint users to install Slidewise. I think most PowerPoint users can find great benefits to using the free version, even if they never upgrade to the full version.

Bottom line:
Slidewise PowerPoint add-in
https://neuxpower.com/slidewise-powerpoint-add-in
Price: freemium, full version CA$106 per year
System requirements:
Windows 8.1 or greater
32-bit or 64-bit Office 2016 or greater or installed (not web)
Office/Microsoft 365
XML versions of PowerPoint data files (e.g. pptx and potx)

Quick Tip 61: Managing system tray icons: an update

by Chris Taylor

In Quick Tip 42 (https://opcug.ca/Articles/2203NEWS.pdf) I showed how you could move system tray icons (icons near the clock on the taskbar) from the visible area to the hidden area or vise-versa.

In it, I said you can *...simply drag visible icons in the system tray, hover over the chevron to open the hidden icon area and drop them there.*

In its ongoing quest to make changes for changes' sake, Microsoft has slightly modified this behaviour in Windows 11. Unfortunately, it can appear as if you can't drag icons from the visible area to the hidden section. Following the instructions above, when you drag an icon and hover the mouse over the chevron, the hidden icon section does not open. Instead, you see an "unpin" tooltip.

One might be forgiven for thinking that if you release the mouse button, the icon will just disappear. Not so. In fact, the icon will be moved to the hidden area that pops up when you click the chevron.

You can also control which icons appear in each area by right-clicking a blank area of the taskbar and choosing *Taskbar settings.* Toggling on any item makes it appear in the visible area of the system tray. Toggling it off moves it to the hidden section you access by clicking on the chevron.

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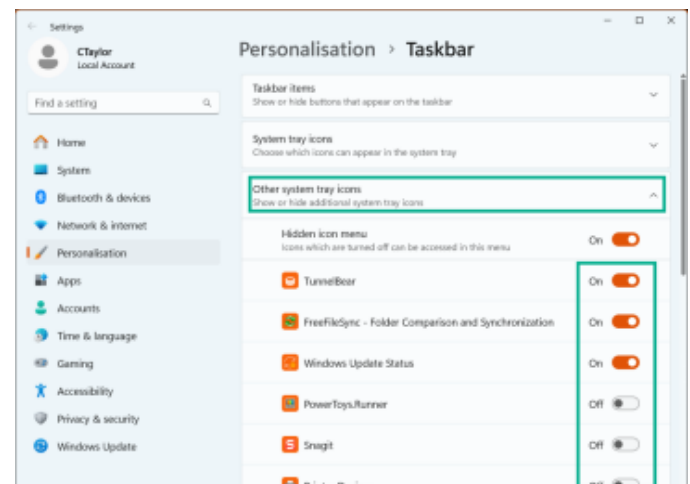
THROUGH THE LENS

A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts. After the click of your camera, you're only half done!

Setting up a new camera

by Lynda Buske & Chris Taylor   (article also available here [PDF])

When you buy a new camera, be it factory new or just new to you, it can be a bit overwhelming. We recommend that you eventually read the entire manual but just to get started, there are some things we advise you **do right away**.

1. Download the full manual from the company website and keep it handy

2. If a used camera, reset all settings to factory defaults

3. Set language, date/time & time zone

4. Set autofocus mode – the default may be multiple point (matrix) focus and you may prefer single point focus (I know we do!). Check to see if it is set to continuous focus or subject tracking. You may wish to have neither.

You may not need to do the following items before your first shoot but we suggest you do them **not too long after** you purchase your camera.

1. Check the manufacturer's site for firmware update, especially if it is a used camera

2. Format the memory card in-camera

3. Set file format to your preferred setting: JPG, RAW or both

4. Set image size and quality. The maximum on both takes more storage space but gives the most flexibility for cropping, printing, etc.

5. Adjust the viewfinder diopter so that everything in the viewfinder looks sharp.

6. Turn off beeps. They can disturb wildlife or annoy other people.

7. Adjust screen and viewfinder for brightness

8. Disable the ability to take photos without a memory card. Why is this not always a default??

You may want to replace the strap to suit your needs and body. You may wish to customize the naming of the files from say IMG to your initials (e.g. LMB). There may be the ability to embed copyright info which could help someone locate you if you lost your device.

We highly recommend purchasing extra batteries and memory cards. We often get our best pics at the end of a shoot after we've become familiar with the subject, the light, the best angles, etc. We never want to miss those shots because we have no more battery power or space!


Lynda's and Chris' presentations on photography at the OPL are included here.

Building a Website *(Cont'd from page 1)*

over one of the thumbnails. Then, in the pop-up menu that appears on the left side, click on its trash can icon (*Delete section*). We are now left with just the *Texas* group. We will see later how to create new groups and sections, and additional sub-pages.

Selecting the word *Texas*, which is contained in a text box, brings up another pop-up menu that allows us to change the font, style, size and attributes (such as *Bold*) of the displayed text. Similarly, selecting just the thumbnail image, displays yet another pop-menu that provides options such as *Crop*, *Insert link*, *Duplicate* and a "kebob" icon (three vertical dots) that provides *More editing options*. The first additional option is to *Replace image* which can be done either through *Upload* (browsing the hard disk for an image file) or *Select* (browsing other locations, including *Google Drive*, for an image file).
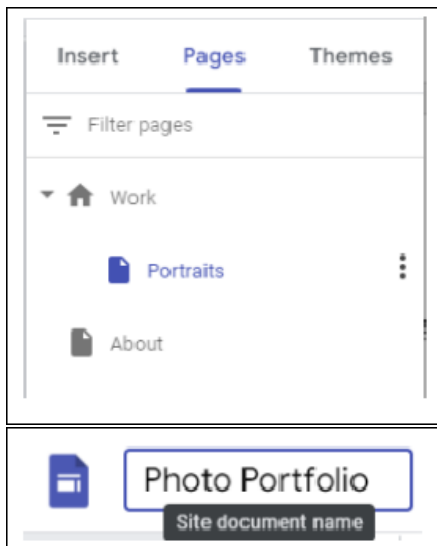
Once we have set the title and the associated image for our *Texas* group, we need to edit the related sub-page. Note that the sidebar on the right side of the window has tabs for *Insert*, *Pages*, and *Themes*. We have been using the editing tools in the *Insert* tab. Now, we want to modify the content of one of the sub-pages listed in the *Pages* tab.

We select *Pages* and then click on the chevron next to the *Work* page to drop-down the menu of sub-pages where we find *Portraits*. Selecting this sub-page loads it into the editor where we can

change the text and images to suit our needs using the same tools that were applied to the main page of our site. More on this later; however, while we have the *Pages* menu open, let's change the default names of our web pages to better reflect the contents of our website. So, in the right sidebar, hover the mouse of *Portraits*, click on the pop-up kebab icon, and select *Properties*. This allows us to change the name of the page to *Texas*. Similarly, we can change the name of the main page from *Work* to *Home*. And, while we are in a renaming mode, let's go to the text box in the top-left corner of the home page and change the *Site document name* from *Photo Portfolio* to *Alan's Bird Photos* to truly customize our website.

There are a number of ways to add content to our web pages. Note that the original page template had multiple sections, each with two groups of an image and a text box (caption). If we select the *Insert* tab in the right sidebar, we find a section labelled *CONTENT BLOCKS*. Selecting one of the block types inserts this section into the current page. So, we can click on the single-group block to add this block below the section of our page with the *Texas* group. To move the image block and the text box to form a group to the right of Texas, it appears to be necessary to drag each of these items separately into place. This action briefly displays grid lines to help position and size the units appropriately. Adding an entire section with two groups is much easier since we only need to click on the double-group content block and the new section is positioned immediately below our existing group on the page and is ready for content to be added.

The next building block that we need to consider is how to create a link between one of our captions and a sub-page so that our website can have multiple, hyperlinked pages. The trick here is that the sub-page has to be created first and the link made to the existing page. Once again, there are multiple way to achieve this. If we select the *Pages* tab in the right sidebar, we can hover the mouse over our newly named *Home* page, click on the kebob icon that appears to the right of the label, and select *Add subpage*. This pops up a menu that

asks us to give a name to the new page. An alternative method is to duplicate an existing sub-page. For example, hovering the mouse over the Texas label in the right sidebar, and clicking on the kebob icon, brings up a menu that includes *Duplicate page*. As the name suggests this option creates a sub-page with the existing content of the *Texas* sub-page. When creating this duplicate, the default name of the new page is *Copy of Texas*; however, this can be overwritten with any name for the new page that we wish to use. So, for the second sub-page of our website, we replace *Copy of Texas* with *Uganda*.

Now that we have a new sub-page, we can easily create a link from the *Uganda* caption to this page. We simply select the caption's text which brings up the edit menu we saw previously that allows changing the various font attributes. This time, on this edit menu, we select the *Insert link* icon. This pops up a list of the available sub-pages from which we can select our new sub-page, and then click on *Apply* to set the link as *Page: Uganda*.

We should note that if we re-use an existing sub-page, as we have done by renaming *Portraits* to *Texas*, we will need to replace the page content with our own material. This will also be the case if we duplicate a sub-page and give it a new name, such as for our *Uganda* page. These actions don't change any of the page content, so we have to make the changes manually. Conversely, if we create a new sub-page on the home page, the new page will be blank and we will need to add titles, text, captions, and images as desired.

The methods for modifying the content of sub-pages are the same as those available on the home page. We can replace images, edit captions, add new content blocks and so modify the entire content of any page. In fact, there are many more options available than just the basic features that have been discussed so far. For example, some of the other tools that are available in the right sidebar are text boxes, dividers and spacers, the ability to add links to social media, and options to include document files and forms.

Building a Website *(Continued from previous page)*
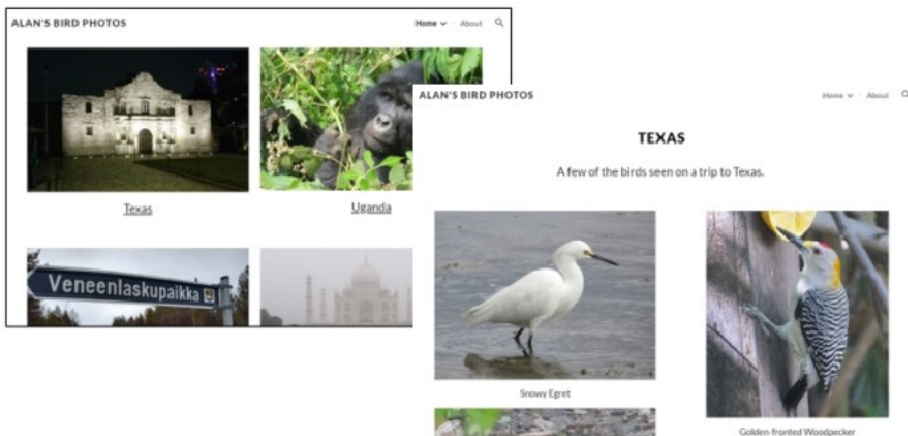
We now have all the tools to create and modify sub-pages, edit page content, and create hyperlinks from the home page to the various sub-pages of our website. However, there are two further, important items in the menu bar along the top of the editing window. One of these is a *Preview* icon that allows us to view the story so far (use the back-arrow to return to the editor). The other icon is the large, blue *Publish* button. Pressing this button launches our completed site on the Internet with, in the present case, a URL of *https://sites.google.com/opcug.ca/alans-bird-photos*.

When publishing the website, we can set who is allowed to view it by selecting the *MANAGE* option. For the current test site, the options were *Restricted*, *Ottawa PC Users Group* (presumably since I was using an OPCUG Google account), and *Public*. *Restricted* allows specifying individuals who can view the site. An invitation to view the site can be sent by using the *Share with others* icon in the menu bar of the editing window. The recipient receives the link to the site but must also respond by entering the security code that is provided in an automatic follow-up E-mail message. In contrast, a much simpler process is to set the permission to *Public.* This allows anyone who knows the site's URL, or locates the site on the Internet, to be able to view the content.

As we have seen, creating relatively simple page layouts in Google Sites, using pre-defined page templates and available page elements, is exceptionally easy. However, there is also a comprehensive set of tools that can be used to build quite complex web pages with absolutely no requirement for HTML coding. If you have ever wanted to create a website but didn't know how to go about it, give Google Sites a try. It's fairly intuitive and hence easy to learn, and there are dozens of how-to articles and video tutorials available on the web to assist you. Google Sites is also free, extremely flexible, and yet quite powerful. So, what are you waiting for? If you build it - they will come!

Bottom Line

Google Sites (Free with Google Account)
Google LLC
https://sites.google.com/

Two-for-one Offer on New Memberships

If you know anyone who is not a current member but who wishes to join our club, now is the perfect time. The Board of Directors has voted to repeat our special, two-for-one offer for individuals joining the club. New members can pay the regular, annual fee of $20 by March 31, 2024 and receive two-years of paid-up membership! Tell all your friends, colleagues, and relatives to sign up at https://opcug.ca/join-or-renew/ before March 31st. **Note that current club members do not need to renew their membership.** Your membership will be extended by a further year – at no charge – automatically!

Review of the OPCUG Financial Records for 2023

It is this reviewer's assessment that the 2023 OPCUG financial records submitted to me by the Treasurer are a complete and accurate representation of the club's financial activities for that year.

Richard Aylesworth

The Board of Directors would like to thank Richard for his thorough review of the club's accounts.

OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

To receive the monthly newsletter by email, send an email to:
opcug-newsletter+subscribe@googlegroups.com (leave subject and body fields blank)
You do **not** need to create a Gmail or Google Groups account.

To subscribe to other OPCUG Google Groups member services, go to:
https://opcug.ca/google-groups-how-to/

Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the Riverside United Church, 3191 Riverside Drive, Ottawa. Parking is free at the church. OCTranspo bus #90 stops nearby. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/.
(NOTE: Until further notice, all our events are via video conference. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/)

Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. followed by a Q&A Session until 10 p.m.

OPCUG Membership Fees:	$20 per year
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Director w/o Portfolio
    Karen Wallace-Graner   **karenwg@opcug.ca**

Q&A HAS GONE ON-LINE! WEEKLY!

Because of the pandemic, the OPCUG is holding weekly Q&A sessions in Zoom video-conferences.

Join us every Wednesday (except on regular monthly meeting nights) at 7:30 pm to discuss computer issues. Questions (and answers) on any computer-related issue are welcome. Or, do you have a favourite computer program or topic that you would like to share with the group? Send your questions, answers, or the details of what you would like to share to:
SuggestionBox@opcug.ca

Everyone is welcome to attend Q&A sessions and to ask questions about their specific computer-related problems. Join us at: https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting (if you use the Zoom client, the meeting ID is **924 9556 0898** and the password is **opcug**).

Users helping users
for over 40 years