

SCA Webministers Handbook

January 2023

Executive Summary

With the ever-changing and increased use of technology through the Society for Creative Anachronism, the Webministry has become increasingly important for keeping the populace up-to-date and informed about current events and activities, and giving newcomers an easy gateway to learn about and join us in our Society.

Webministers at the Kingdom or Local Branch level must be warranted by their superior in the Webministry and shall know how to create and/or maintain websites using current platforms and scripting/markup languages, assist with the backend infrastructure for websites and communication systems, and ensure backups are taken in case restoration is needed.

Kingdom Webministers shall give advice and train others; uphold and maintain duties of their office, as well as all laws, policies, and provisions of the Society, respective kingdom and local group, and country, state, and local governments; and always uphold professionalism that is seen and expected in both the Information Technology field and our Society.

These policies cover all official online presence 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, that is not expressly assigned to offices outside of the Webministry.

Society Webminister’s Handbook - January 2023.

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Responsibilities

Official Websites

The primary responsibility of the Webministry, as laid forth in the Society's Governing Documents, is overseeing the official websites of the Kingdoms, local branches, and other groups within each Kingdom, collectively known as "official websites." Every Kingdom must publish a website and each local branch, guild, or other group within each Kingdom is encouraged to have one as well.

Website Content

When it comes to content, a Webminister's primary role is facilitating, either by uploading content provided or by enabling others to manage content directly. Webministers execute oversight over content to ensure it complies with local standards and regulations.

The content managed by the Webminister for an SCA website typically consists of three types:

- Content originating from the various offices in the branch for which the relevant officer is responsible. Examples of this would be a local marshal handbook or guidelines from the seneschal on reporting. Webministers and their team should exercise caution when managing this content as it is not their responsibility.
- Content organization: These would be pieces of content connecting different pieces of the website together. For instance a short text introducing potential participants to the activities in the society and directing them to the relevant officer pages or information on the current royals. Webministers and their team often pick up items in this category. Activity here is commendable but not required.
- Overall look and feel: The structural pieces of the website(s), standards for the look and feel of the website with the intent to create a coherent experience for visitors. This could include graphics or translations of word documents to a html documents. This is the bread and butter work of Webministers and the core of their responsibility.

Webministers are primarily responsible for:

- The website infrastructure
- Facilitating others to post content online: It is encouraged to solicit content, but Webministers are not responsible for finding content.
- Ensure security is maintained
- Ensure policy compliance on websites within their purview

Webministers may, at their discretion:

- Create content
- Actively maintain calendars, etc.

Other Internet Infrastructure

In some Kingdoms, Webministers are also responsible for other types of Internet infrastructure, such as email services or cloud-based applications.

Kingdom IT infrastructure can include:

- Email accounts
- Mailing lists
- Web forums
- Office productivity software provided by the Kingdom, such as Google Workspace or Microsoft Office 365
- Internet-hosted database applications
- Wikis

Organizational

Kingdom Webministers

- Annual submissions to the Society Webminister for the Master William Blackfox Web Awards
- Issue, and manage, warrants to Webministers within the Kingdom (See Reporting & Warranting Chapter)
- Oversee “helpdesk” and ensure timely responses to issues

All Webministers

- Supervise deputies
- Regularly report up the chain of command
- Keep within budget as allotted

Limits of Responsibility

Online services and activities that are expressly assigned to offices outside of the Webministry, such as Social Media, are outside of the responsibility of the Webministry and the Webministry can not be held responsible for them. Individuals who choose to hold multiple positions do so by their own choice.

Online Privacy and Data Policies

All Webministers shall be aware of the SCA’s Privacy Policy and adhere to its requirements, as it applies to all SCA websites and online services.

For examples of how to implement these principles, see the Society Webminister’s Resources Guide.

Kingdoms may optionally implement their own data policies. If the Kingdom does not have a data policy the Kingdom Webminister shall have a data policy for the data they control (e.g. databases or emails for which the office is responsible).

Release Forms for Personal Information, Photographs, and Other Creative Works

All Webministers shall be aware of the SCA's policies laid out in the Release Forms Handbook and adhere to its requirements. Obtain written consent from individuals before publishing their personal data or portrait-style images depicting them. Ensure you have a license or grant of use before publishing photographs, videos, or creative works.

Avoid Taking Sides in Disputes

Webministers shall ensure their website benefits the entirety of their Kingdom or the community they serve.

Official websites shall not take sides in disputes within the SCA. Official websites must not publish personal attacks, or seek to advance the aims of particular factions within a kingdom or branch.

Philosophical discussions of the way the Society or a Local Branch operates are not out of place, but shall be handled carefully. Articles that cause anger and divert people from historical study and re-creation shall be avoided.

Use of official websites to further personal or factional agendas is grounds for removal from office.

Chain of Command

The purpose of a Chain of Command is to show who is responsible for what job and to identify who reports to whom in the organization. While we are an organization of volunteers, it is still vital to understand lines of communication within the organization.

Office Hierarchy

Society Webminister and Kingdom Webministers provide guidance to local branches as requested or needed to ensure (Kingdom) policies are upheld.

The Society Webminister is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining society-wide standards for websites and Internet technology.
- Warranting Kingdom Webministers.
- Collecting reports from Kingdom Webministers.
- Reporting to the Board on the overall state of the webministry.

Kingdom Webministers are responsible for:

- Maintaining their Kingdom's website.
- Warranting and overseeing local Webministers in their Kingdom.
- Maintaining a roster of local branch Webministers who report to them.
- Collecting reports from local Webministers.
- Reporting to the Society Webminister on the overall state of webministry activity in their Kingdom.
- Setting Kingdom policies which supplement (but do not supersede) society policies.

Local Webministers are responsible for:

- Maintaining the website for which they are warranted.
- Reporting to their Kingdom Webminister.

Webministers at all levels of the chain of command may have deputies to assist them in their work.

The Webministers of the Pennsic War and Gulf War websites are to be considered Deputies to the Society Webminister in all ways, including reporting for the duration of the site's existence and are bound to the same requirements listed in the Officer Requirements chapter. The War Webministers must be warranted.

Current Structure is as follows:



Figure 1: Chain of Command

Officer Requirements

In order to ensure the Webministry properly fulfils its responsibilities, all Webministers must meet certain requirements.

Requirements for All Webministers

- All 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.
- Reliable Internet Access
- Experience using HTML and/or CMS, as applicable

Kingdom Webministers

- Experience with ISPs and hosting services
- Experience with mail servers, if applicable
- Organization, coordination, delegation
- Fundamentals of project management
- Be able to communicate requirements and realities of technology with non-technical people
- Have a good understanding of how technology works, changes, and evolves, and an understanding of how to troubleshoot issues when they arise.

Kingdom Webministers can appoint deputies as they need and see fit to accomplish the mission/project.

Branch Webministers

Depending on Kingdom requirements and where the Branch website is hosted, requirements for Branch Webministers may vary.

For example, some Branches may need to have experience with ISPs, hosting services, and/or mail servers, and others may be hosted on their Kingdom's server and, therefore, not items needed to be known by the Branch Webminister.

The following are guidelines for Branch Webministers:

- Be a warranted Webminister
- Read, understand, and follow the Kingdom Webminister Policies
- Organization, coordination, delegation
- Fundamentals of project management
- Be able to communicate about technology items with non-technical people
- Have a good understanding of how technology works, changes, and evolves, and an understanding of how to troubleshoot issues when they arise.

Reporting and Warranting

Reporting Requirements

Quarterly reports are due to the Society Webminister by the following dates: March 1st, June 1st, September 1st, and December 1st.

The first quarterly report of the year, due on March 1, is the Annual Report or Domesday report. This shall include:

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

Each quarterly report shall include:

1. Issues being addressed,
2. Pages created, updated, and removed,
3. Kingdom websites created or removed,
4. Policies implemented,
5. Questions the Kingdom Webminister may have, and
6. Any other pertinent data deemed appropriate in communications from the Society Webminister.

Communication with the Society Webminister

Communication is key to the Webminister Office. The Society Webminister is available to give advice and assist in problem solving. Questions regarding policy issues and/or interpretations, Kingdom problems related to the webministry, copyright issues, or other larger matters or concerns shall be brought to the attention of the Society Webminister.

Transfer of Office

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

Notification

It is the responsibility of the outgoing Kingdom officer to send a letter to the Society Webminister with notification that a new Kingdom Webminister has

been nominated. The letter must include:

1. The proposed new Webminister's modern name, address, phone number, and e-mail address,
2. A review of the proposed Webminister's qualifications,
3. The planned date the office will change hands, and
4. The signed warrant for the new Webminister.

If the Kingdom's Webminister office has been elevated to the status of Greater Office, please include an extra copy of the warrant paperwork 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 shall follow this letter with an introductory letter. Should the warrant be approved, the new Webminister shall follow this letter with an introductory letter to the corporate office, the Kingdom Ombudsman, and the Webminister's Ombudsman.

Transfer of Records

All records, equipment, funds, and other materials belonging to the Webminister's office will be transferred within 30 days of the change of office. This includes the timely turnover of all passwords, server names, and other administrative access. Changes to WHOIS Registrations and all accounts that must be in the Webminister's name must be changed within 30 days.

Oversight of Local Websites

The supervision of local Webministers within the Society falls to the office of the Kingdom Webminister in each kingdom. It is important that locally produced websites 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 local Webministers. The Kingdom Webminister is responsible for ensuring that all local Webministers are aware of and abide by the copyright laws of the country/countries in which the Kingdom is located, by the Laws and Customs of their Kingdom, and by the policies in the Webminister Handbook.

Warranting

Warrants are official recognition of the legal agency and standing of an officer within the corporate SCA structure. Kingdom Webministers are officers and therefore require warrants. 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 website.

The Society Webminister is warranted by the BoD (Board of Directors) in consultation with the Manager of IT and reports to the Manager of IT on a quarterly basis. Kingdom Webministers are warranted by their Kingdom Crown and Seneschal, in consultation with the Society Webminister, and report to the Society Webminister on a quarterly basis.

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 website 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

Removal from Office

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 faithfully execute the duties of the office of Webminister
- Extended, persistent lack of communication
- Failure to abide by the policies in this document

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 deputy will assume the office for the remainder of the reign.

Infrastructure

Hosting Requirements

At a minimum, SCA Kingdoms are mandated to have an official website. Kingdoms may also officially provide email, mailing lists, wikis, and other online services at the discretion of the Kingdom Webminister, so long as those services are not otherwise assigned to other Offices such as social media.

All official services must be hosted on platforms that are: secure, reliable, actively maintained, has an active community or paid support channel, is field-proven, and is well-regarded in the industry. This includes that all services shall, to the maximum extent possible, be provided over encrypted channels such as HTTPS, not HTTP.

All official services must have multiple people with administrative access, to ensure that services can be actively maintained in the event that a single administrator might become unavailable. Administrative access for all official services, including local branch websites, must be also be held by the Kingdom Webministry for continuity purposes.

Official services may never be hosted on a service that requires banner or popup advertisements, or third-party advertisements beyond a potential link back in the footer.

All payments for Webministry services shall be made according to SCA, Kingdom, and Branch (as applicable) Financial Policies.

Domain Names

Official domain names will be purchased and registered by the Kingdom in such a way that the ownership shall remain with the Kingdom through changes of officers. Kingdoms that wish to use a domain underneath the “sca.org” umbrella will be provided such a domain at no cost to the kingdom.

Official websites are encouraged to use the same domain name as the kingdom or their associated local office, but may use different domain names with the approval of the Kingdom Webminister provided that they are registered as owned by the branch and not the individuals involved.

Website Construction

Official Websites, definition

Official websites are recognized by the local Kingdom Webminister and include websites for local groups and organizations within the Kingdom. Official websites need to adhere to the same regulations as kingdom websites. In addition to the Kingdom and local branch websites, Kingdom Webministers may designate additional websites that are associated with Kingdom Offices, Royal Guilds, or other groups within the Society as official websites.

For a website to be an official website of the Society for Creative Anachronism, it must represent a recognized branch, office, guild, etc. of the Society or provide an official service via the web to such a group, and must have a warranted Webminister responsible for its content. The Society for Creative Anachronism will not recognize websites for households, individuals, informal guilds, or unofficial military units. 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.

Websites which are not run by the Webministry, such as those operated by individuals, households, businesses, or other groups which may be adjacent to the Society but are not managed by it are not and can not be considered official websites. Avoid ambiguity as to whether or not websites are official: while there are no hard-and-fast rules, factors that could lead people to believe an unofficial website is official include using the name of a specific SCA branch in its titles or URLs, having the website be maintained by SCA officers, or routinely linking to it as part of official communications. If an unofficial website seems likely to create confusion about whether it is official, this creates a risk of unintended consequences for the SCA including reputational damage, trademark dilution, or legal liability. Webministers must promptly bring such situations to the attention of relevant officers in both the webministry and the seneschalate.

All Official Websites

All official websites must include:

- A copyright statement.
- A disclaimer listing who is responsible for the site, including an email address, which is usually Webminister@ and website's domain name.

All Kingdom and Local Branch websites shall include:

- A description of the branch's geographic scope, including modern boundaries.
- Kingdom websites shall include links to the websites of their local branches; local branch, office, guild, or inter-Kingdom event websites shall include links to the website of their Kingdom(s).
- A list of the branch's officers and royals (if applicable).

- A current calendar of upcoming events.
- Links to current governing documents, such as Kingdom laws or Branch charters.
- Information for both newcomers and established members, given that these two groups need different information.

Each Kingdom's website shall 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.

Accessibility Guidelines

Care shall be taken to make websites accessible on multiple browsers and platforms, including mobile devices, and to make sites accessible to those users with disabilities. Those wishing more guidance on website accessibility should refer to the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Accessibility Standards Overview and are encouraged to leverage a site checker.

Referencing Society Policies

When referencing Society policies and other official documents, link to the relevant page on sca.org or another appropriate website, rather than downloading a copy of the document and re-posting elsewhere. This ensures that viewers are seeing the most recent version rather than an out-of-date copy. (Link the page rather than the specific document, in case of changes.)

Personal Information, Photographs, and Creative Works

As outlined in the Release Forms Handbook, Webministers may need written permission before publishing personal information, creative works, or images of individuals, whether to a official website or third-party hosting service:

- Personal information shall not be displayed on official websites unless the Webminister has the appropriate release form on file.
- Photographs, videos, artworks, and creative writing shall not be published unless the Webminister has a release on file from the creator.
- Photographs, videos, and artworks that depict individuals in a "portrait style" shall not be published unless the Webminister has a release on file from the person or people pictured.

Copyright Statement and Disclaimers

All official websites must display the following disclaimer and copyright statement.

This statement must either be displayed on the home page of the site, or on a separate page for which there is an obvious link on the home page.

This is the official website for the <group name> of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and is maintained by <SCA and/or modern name of Webminister> who may be contacted at <Webminister's email address>.

This site may contain non-authoritative copies of some SCA policy documents; to be sure you are viewing the complete and current version, consult sca.org or the originating office directly.

This site may include links to external pages which are not maintained by the SCA; such links do not represent an endorsement, and the SCA is not responsible for the content of those pages.

Copyright © <current year> <group name>. Please respect the rights of our contributors, who retain copyright to certain portions of this site. For permission to use photographs, articles, or artwork from this site, contact the Webminister.

Appendix 1: Common Terms and Definitions

2FA: 2 Factor Authentication. Electronic authentication method in which a user is granted access to a website or application only after successfully presenting two or more pieces of evidence (or factors) to an authentication mechanism: knowledge (something only the user knows like a password), possession (something only the user has like a token code), and inherence (something only the user is usually using biometric checks).

App: An application that either runs on a mobile device or in a web page

Backup: A copy of a website, project, data of some kind to be stored in at least two different locations for safety, so in the case something happens to the website, project, or data one can recover quickly from the loss. Backups can be done manually or automated, but need to be validated regularly. Trust but verify.

CMS: Content Management System (such as like WordPress) that once installed can allow users, even with limited skills, to manage websites. Generally provides a WYSIWYG editor for simple editing of page content. It also allows for more dynamic content and automation.

Copyright: The rights one has over the use and duplication of a creative work (like photos, videos or text).

Creative Commons: One of several public copyright licenses that enable the free distribution of an otherwise copyrighted “work”. A CC license is used when an author wants to give other people the right to share, use, and build upon a work that they (the author) have created. CC provides an author flexibility (for example, they might choose to allow only non-commercial uses of a given work) and protects the people who use or redistribute an author’s work from concerns of copyright infringement as long as they abide by the conditions that are specified in the license by which the author distributes the work. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

DNS: Domain Name System, the “glue” that keeps the Internet working. DNS maps domain names (like www.sca.org) to numerical IP addresses (like 192.237.180.41), so that any kind of request (mail, web, etc.) are routed to the correct server responsible for the domain.

Domain: The internet address in its top-level form (i.e. yahoo.com, sca.org, google.com).

Embed: Having media like videos or music, possibly from a different location, inserted in to your web page.

Group Pages: Websites or pages for a specific branch, office, guild, etc.

Guild: A group of people within the SCA officially chartered by the Kingdom or a local group for a specific purpose, usually the promotion of a particular Art or Science.

Hosting: The server or company that is maintaining the server on which web pages are stored.

Household: A group of people within the SCA not recognized as an official SCA branch.

HTML: Hypertext Markup Language: HTML is the standard markup language for documents designed to be displayed in a web browser.

Markup (Language): Markup language is a system for annotating a document in a way that is syntactically distinguishable from the text, meaning when the document is processed for display, the markup language is not shown, and is only used to format the text. The idea and terminology evolved from the “marking up” of paper manuscripts (i.e., the revision instructions by editors), which is traditionally written with a red pen or blue pencil on authors’ manuscripts. Such “markup” typically includes both content corrections (such as spelling, punctuation, or movement of content), and also typographic instructions, such as to make a heading larger or boldface.

Nameserver: Dedicated server/s that manage DNS for domains. These are either the local server that machines use to find domains, and or is the servers responsible for a specific domain.

Officer Pages: Websites or pages for an office or officer in a Kingdom or local group

Official Site/Page: A website recognized as the website for that group or office, which is recognized by the group

Permissions: Security levels used on web servers or other services to manage access to various functions of the service and/or files and folders.

Releases: Forms, depending on circumstance, to allow the grant of use of artwork, the photograph or video of individuals or small groups, software/code, or giving permission as a/the subject having been photographed/videoed.

Responsive: A web page layout that adapts to the size of the browser screen or window. Responsive websites can help users have good experiences whether they are on mobile devices or larger laptop or desktop screens.

Server: A physical or virtual machine that manages security, data, and/or services. Examples include web servers delivering web pages, and media servers will deliver images, music, or videos.

Social Media: Websites, applications and platforms where users create and share content with each other.

Strong Password: A strong password is something that is not easily guessed and is *never* shared among active users. Aim for something randomly generated and stored via a password manager tool (such as 1Password or LastPass) which often exceeds minimum suggested values for password length, complexity, etc. If you do not use a password manager, recommended password lengths are 8 to

64 characters (or more, if possible), with longer always being better. Checking <https://haveibeenpwned.com/> regularly is a good idea (1Password does this automatically for you, should you choose to use it).

Subdomain: Example of subdomains would be `members.sca.org` or `heraldry.sca.org` (both being subdomains of `sca.org`)

Website or Site: An grouping of pages hosted by a single entity or a collection of web pages gathered together to represent an idea or theme.

Webminister: The greater officer in charge of a group's (Kingdom, Principality, Barony, Shire, etc.) digital assets, like webpages and email.

Webministry: Overarching term for all of the people and services under the purview of a Webminister.

WHOIS: A query and response protocol that is widely used for querying databases that store the registered users or assignees of an Internet resource, such as a domain name, an IP address block, or other information.

WYSIWYG: What You See Is What You Get; a concept where content is edited in a form that resembles its appearance when printed or displayed as a finished product, such as a printed document, web page, or slide presentation.