**Webmaster’s Report 2021 AGM**

This report covers the MGCCSE’s online presence which includes a website and social media plus email system since 2020.

**Social Media**

Social media is an instant method of contacting members and keeping them informed and engaged with the club. That is reaching members immediately with news, updates and any social activities. At present it is not being used to its full potential due to a slow take-up of members to our social media feeds. However, there is growth and we shall continue to feed it and advertise it through our other communications mediums, Safety Fast and email newsletter, plus any additional print such as the events list.

The success of social media relies on people using it – the more comments, likes and shares we get the better we do in the search engine rankings. To keep people engaged regular posts have to be made which is why sometimes you will see “filler” posts if there has been no activity for a while.

**Facebook**

We currently have 254 followers on the page. If each was a member that is around 15% of the membership. That is a low percentage and may reflect that members are not sufficiently aware of it and it is also not actually guaranteed that they are all members in any case. On the positive side the number of followers has increased by over 100 this year.

The most popular posts have been the review of the Spring run to Leonardslee with a reach of 605 and the review of the Fairmile Brooklands gathering with 495 and the death of Prince Philip with 341. The reach is measured by likes - if you like something then it goes to your feed and pyramids away from there. So the trick is to like or comment as much as possible!

The page is the main social media face of the MGCCSE and so is controlled by the club. There is an option for visitor posts but that is fairly well hidden and any interesting/ relevant visitor post can be promoted to the front page. This does give us good control over what is posted on our public face but does not allow for much interactivity, that is where the MGCCSE Chat Group comes in.

**Facebook Chat Group**

This is a private page where members can post freely and chat. The numbers, again, have not been encouraging with 125 members at present. This number has remained fairly static since the inception of the page in 2020 – rising just 15 members this year. Posts are often shared between both pages to try and reach the maximum audience.

Access is via request and members have to answer a couple of simple questions. The request is then approved (or not) by an admin – either me or John Gallop.

**Twitter**

Twitter is a short format media and we currently have 70 followers. This has remained fairly static in 2021 with a rise of just 2. It is used mainly for events promotion and does not generate much interactivity.

**Instagram**

Instagram currently has 274 followers and has one of the lowest posting rates of all our media. However, with the increase of 69 members this year it is worth improving that post rate. It is intended as a mobile medium for instant posting of pictures. Mostly useful for events as they happen. However, I have now discovered how to post from the desktop so have started to post more heritage pictures.

**Website**

The website is the traditional online medium. It is still the place to go for information about the club, natter and events. It has been revamped since 2020 and there are now more updates to it. The aim is to keep it up to date as the repository of all club information.

It is built using Wordpress and hosted by FastHosts. The hosting service was changed last year. There has been a cost of £86 this year to FastHosts for hosting services.

The current website was created in 2017 with the following year reaching over 11,000 hits. 2019 and 2020 respectively were 8.7k and 9.7k but this year we are over 10k already and will probably finish around 12k. *It should be noted that these figures are slightly skewed as there was a counting issue with the site software in August (our highest hit month last year) resulting in an abnormally low figure for that month. Without that issue we would likely be over 11k views already.*

This does show that the site is being used regularly with around 33 views a day. This is the highest average view figure since inception. Our best views this year have been in May with over 1,500.

Some months are better than others according to content. The events season attracts more hits as people search for activities in the region. Again, number of hits effects google rankings, and it is from Google that we get most of our customers.

Content is mostly event orientated but is also home to the newsletter archive and natter details plus other general club information.

After the home landing page the top ten most popular pages and posts this year in descending order have been:

Natters Information Page

Brooklands Meet information post

2021 Events Page

Valentines Photo Competition Post

Spring Run 2021 information post

MGCGT Body Shell sale post from 2018!

Competitions page

MGCCSE Committee page

Contacts page

Autumn at Lullingstone review post

A couple of things can be noted from that – people are looking for their local MG meets, event information, club information and the oddity here is the high number of views of a 2018 spares post. Perhaps there is capacity for a “for sale” section?

**MailChimp Email**

The final online communication method is one of the most important. It is intended for circulation of the email Newsletter, compiled by Ray and Will, and also for any interim updates or information. It was used to give information about this AGM for instance.

It was introduced in the Summer and replaced a system using a standard personal email client. Mailchimp had many advantages in that it does not clog up a personal email and run the risk of blacklisting for spam and that it provides statistics for the mailshot. The statistics can be a bit worrying as it shows how many members actually received and looked at it. It should be noted that the figures are reflective of, and even slightly above, the sector average.

Of the two newsletters sent out this year on average 1157 were delivered of which 58% of members looked at them. Of that 58%, 48% clicked through to the actual newsletter which means 28% of the members who received an email actually looked at the newsletter – around 324. With a membership of 1472 that means that just over 22% are reading it. These are likely to be our core members. Of course we have nothing to compare these figures too for previous years but both mailshots so far have been similar.

How to improve that figure is difficult. There is an option to include the newsletter in the bulk of the email rather than as clickable link. If it had been sent that way we could say that 46% of members read the email instead of 22% but you wouldn’t know if they just opened it and closed it straight away. As a recordable link there is an intention to see it and you have a better idea of who is reading it. 80% of all members receive the email however there is concern that the remining 20% (some 300 members) are not receiving all the information they could. Of course every member receives the printed Safety Fast and is the only media we have that is guaranteed to reach all members.

Mailchimp also identifies bad emails and there were several of those when the system was first loaded! New emails are added as we receive the membership updates from Kimber House so there should be gradual growth here.

**Conclusion**

We are still in relatively early days for the revamped online presence and as more members get to know about it we can expect to see viewing figures rise. The increase in website views this year is a good demonstration of that. It would be great to get all members on all our platforms straight away but that is not going to happen! It’s a slow process and a beast that continually needs feeding!

One thing we can’t be accused of is a lack of communication methods with our members, most of which are no or low cost. With print medium we have seven different methods of regular communications with members which I suspect is better than most CRBs. There is one concern in the members we don’t reach, those who we do not have email addresses for. Of course they may be looking at any of the online media or content with Safety Fast and are happy to be informed that way but we cannot be sure of that.

Social media/ website is our visual online shop window and it is important to keep the window dressing attractive to attract new members and to engage current members.

Tim Morris

November 2021