

## Pack, Troop, and Crew Web Sites

Unit leaders keep asking me if the council will host unit web sites? If the council no longer hosts web sites, where do I find an inexpensive web site hosting service? This topic was discussed extensively in the Northern Star Council Webmaster Committee meeting. Following this meeting, I received information in an email from Matt Markham, the Rolling Hills District Webmaster. In this email, Matt wrote:

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"Hey all --

"I wanted to pass along some more information on easy and cheap unit hosting options.

"I showed everyone hosting a site through Google Apps last night. The cost for Google Apps is free. The only expense is the domain hosting, which is \$10 dollars per year. You can pay Google, and they will set it up for you through GoDaddy's hosting service. To get started, go to: <http://www.google.com/a/cpanel/domain/new> and click on 'I want to buy a domain name'. That will set up your Google Apps with a domain that you purchase.

"If you want to explore more what Google Apps has to offer, go to: <http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/business/editions.html>

"I'm using the free (standard) edition for my Boy Scout Troop. What's up at the time of this email took me less than one hour to do. It's very, very easy. You can find it at <http://belleplainetroop324.org>. Using Google Apps also let's me create accounts for each adult leader so that I can have an internal site for us as well to capture Troop specific information that we wouldn't share with the world."

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While not endorsing Google Apps, the Webmaster Committee is providing the above as a low-cost option. When creating unit websites, it is important that you follow the BSA guidelines which can be found on the Northern Star Council web site. Go to:

BSA Website Guidelines FAQ  
<http://www.northernstarbsa.org/Resources/Guidebooks/WebFAQ.aspx>

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