

# MAFA Website Guidelines

The Web is an exciting place to be! With our new guild webpages and links to guild websites, MAFA hopes to help our members extend their reach into cyberspace. In this way, we believe we can raise public awareness of the fiberarts, create increased interest in fiber activities, and help individuals who are not currently affiliated with a guild find a local fiber home.

While a Web presence provides a lot of positive opportunities, it is true that the Internet is not safe—although it can be used safely. Websites are about as public as places get, so it's important to use common sense and think about how you want to show yourself to the world.

The following are some guidelines to help your guilds, and MAFA, present themselves to the world-wide web in the most positive, useful way.

**1) Provide complete and useful information.**

Make sure you include the location and time of meetings. Indicate what workshops are about and what their fees are (or are estimated to be). Make sure you indicate if events are open to all, have space available for non-members, or are members-only. Provide snail-mail and/or email points of contact (but see also point #6 below). If you're using a free email address (for example, *myguild@emailprovider.com*), make sure someone is checking the email at least once a week and answering inquiries.

**2) Keep your information up-to-date.**

People who are interested in participating in fiber activities really want to know what you're doing *now*, and in the near future. We need to be strict about this: if you haven't sent updates in 6 months, you will be warned, if we don't hear from you for a year, your guild's page or link on the MAFA site will be shut down.

**3) Respect other people's property, including intellectual property.**

Don't post someone else's instructions or graphs unless you have received written permission to do so. Don't swipe pictures or text from the Internet, magazines, or books. A good rule of thumb is that everything published on paper or electronically after January 1, 1923 is copyrighted, and you need permission *in writing* to use it.

**4) Stay on topic.**

We could include many paragraphs here about not linking to political, religious, social, or other causes. We could lecture you on the need for tolerance in a multicultural society. We won't. Be responsible and respect the rights of others. Besides, it's much more fun to talk about fiber stuff.

**5) Do no harm.**

It's impossible to take back words written in anger once you have written them out and shown them to the world. No matter the provocation, do not malign, slander, or even be mean to vendors, instructors, or other people on your webpage. Save it for private emails...and the Better Business Bureau.

**6) Be careful.**

Minimize the amount of personal information you put on the web. Do not publish addresses, phone numbers, email, or photos that identify people by their full name. Obtain written permission from points-of-contact to publish their information. Upon request, the MAFA Webmaster can provide email addresses of the form *yourguildname@mafafiber.org*, which will forward email to the actual email account or accounts you specify. This protects personal email addresses, and also enables you to change who's acting as contact person for the guild without the hassle of notifying every online directory owner, instructor, local

yarn shop, sister guild, and other email contacts of the change. In essence, your guild will have a permanent email address, even though the people receiving those emails may change.

The MAFA Webmaster and Board reserve the right to temporarily or permanently disconnect from any independent website or disable or discontinue any MAFA-hosted site that is demonstrating foolish Web behavior by not adhering to the above guidelines

### **Linking an External Guild Site to MAFA**

Send the URL for your guild's homepage to [webmaster@mafafiber.org](mailto:webmaster@mafafiber.org).

### **Creating a Guild Webpage on the MAFA Site**

First, decide which of your members is going to be the point of contact (POC) for your guild webpage. This will probably be your most Web-savvy member, and not necessarily your MAFA Rep, President, or official contact person for inquiries about your guild. Your POC should provide an email address for an account that he or she checks at least several times a week. The POC's email will not be publicized in any way; we just need to know whom to contact if there's an issue about your guild webpage.

Email the files for your MAFA webpage and its updated to [webmaster@mafafiber.org](mailto:webmaster@mafafiber.org). Please be considerate: send updates no more than *once* a month, and make sure your instructions are very clear. Your POC may want to coordinate website updates with the release of your guild's newsletter.

### **Technical Guidelines for Guild Webpages**

Text content must be in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), rich text format (.rtf), or plain text (.txt) *only*. Other formats, such as Works, Word Perfect, and so on, will not work.

Images (pictures) should be in JPEG format (.jpg or .jpeg). If you know how to compress your images for use on the Web, please send them as 400 x 400 pixel 72dpi. If you don't know how to format your images for the Web or your program of choice can't quite achieve the ideal parameters, send the pictures anyway, and the MAFA Webmaster will perform the reduction.

Attachments, such as newsletters, should be in PDF format. There are a number of free PDF makers available to help you do this, including PDF Creator (<http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/>). If necessary, you may also send attachments in Word, RTF, or text, and ask the webmaster for assistance.

If your guild has a website template that you prefer, provide the graphics. Otherwise, the webmaster will use a generic page and tailor it for your guild.

The MAFA Webmaster has final editorial approval.

### **Legal Disclaimer**

The usual disclaimers apply. In using the MAFA website and its services, you are agreeing to hold MAFA, its Webmaster, its Board, and all others associated with it blameless for any and all issues that might arise from your hosted webpages and/or email accounts not working on a temporary or permanent basis or not being updated in a timely manner. You also understand that if there should be a change in MAFA's Webmaster or web hosting service, the guild webpage program may be discontinued or become a for-fee service.

We're thrilled to be able to offer this service to our member guilds, but cannot provide any guarantees or warranties.