

# SC4ARC Website Committee Updates and Recommendations

February 13, 2021

## 2021 Work to Date:

- Continued weekly work sessions (except during power outages / ARES activations)
- Completed content cataloging to identify outdated/duplicate files and tagging so that content can be grouped/organized by subject matter rather than date.
- Prototyped web pages using Google Sites to test ease-of-use, functionality, design
- Continuing to evaluate cloud-based website and forum options

## Functional and Technical Requirements Summary

We generated [a list of functional criteria](#) for assessing the pros/cons of remaining with a Wordpress site versus migrating to a new platform. Our top criteria for this work are:

1. Upgrade the appearance and search functionality of the club website
2. Maintain the discussion forum space
3. Simplify administration and content management so that the site is easy to keep “fresh” and useful for all club members
4. Ensure security, user privacy, and stability for club recordkeeping and operations

Google Sites meets many of our criteria, and has the additional benefit of enabling us to keep all source files within the same Google Workspace that the club is now using (Drive, Photos, Groups). Squarespace scored the same or better in terms of functionality, and also offers much more flexibility in terms of design and a more appealing user experience.

One consideration is the Board’s intended use for the Google Workspace overall, how access is granted, and any other restrictions related to the license grant.

Either Google Groups or the 3rd-party service [groups.io](#) could replace the existing forum, and would offer the same or better usability.

Criteria	Wordpress	Google Sites	Squarespace
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Level of technical skills required	med-high	low	low
Level of design skills required	med-high	low	low-medium
Direct or hidden costs	\$120 yr	\$0	est \$200
Overall functional score (22 pts total)	10	14	18
Risks/Cons	high maintenance	limited design set	slightly higher learning curve
Pros	none	single space	Better design

### Considerations:

- Moving to Google Sites assumes the club is committed to using Google Workspace for all official club communications, and either will continue to receive a free license for Google Workspace or will budget for an ongoing license.
- Moving to Google Groups or groups.io rather than the embedded Buddy Press forums will require some transition; however the committee has explored workarounds to enable us to preserve existing forum content.

### Recommendations:

Based on our discoveries, the committee recommends that we create a new website based on a cloud-based platform such as Google Sites or Squarespace. This would add security, decrease maintenance, and make it much easier to create an appealing website that offers an improved user experience and more access to rich content.

### Next Steps:

- Continue evaluation of cloud-based website and discussion forums
- Prototype visual design options and user-based workflows
- Test prototypes with select audience groups
- Build new site structure and integrate content
- Document site structure and technical details
- Deliver new site and demo to members
- Provide guidelines for site maintenance, content curation, and support to Board

- Train content providers/webmasters as needed

Respectfully submitted,

Irma Mitton, chair