THE DIGITAL HERITAGE PLAYBOOK

A Guide to Institutional Survival for the Accidental Leader

Presented by Dixie Digital Media LLC



Introduction: The Digital Reality Check

Before you read another page, take out your pen and be brutally honest. This isn't about being a "tech person"—it's about being a responsible steward of the history you've been entrusted to protect. If you can't answer "Yes" to these, your organization is at risk.

Part 1: The Institutional Health Self-Assessment

Category 1: Identity & Trust

1. **Does your organization have an email address that belongs to the *office* (e.g., `info@ourhistory.org` or `SCVCamp1865@gmail.com`)?**

   [ ] **Yes**
   [ ] **No** (We use a member's personal email like `bob-the-plumber@aol.com`)

2. **Does your organization have its own phone number?**

   [ ] **Yes** (A dedicated professional line)
   [ ] **No** (We use a member's personal cell phone)

3. **Is your logo identical on your letterhead, your website, and your social media?**

   [ ] **Yes**
   [ ] **No** (We have several different versions floating around)
   [ ] **We have no logo at all**

Category 2: The Digital Front Door

4. **Does your organization own its own "land" (a website with a .org or .com domain)?**

   [ ] **Yes**
   [ ] **Facebook is our only website**
   [ ] **No website and no Facebook**

5. **The Smartphone Test:** Take out your phone right now. Open your browser and go to your website if you have one.
    - *How does it look?* Is it easy to read, or do you have to "pinch and zoom" to see the text?
    - *The Content:* When was the last time the "News" or "Events" section was updated?
    - *The Age:* Look at the very bottom of the page. What is the copyright date? (Is it 2026, or does it say 2019?)

    [ ] **Yes** (It looks great on mobile, content is current, and the copyright is this year)
    [ ] **No** (It's hard to read on a phone, the news is old, or the copyright is years out of date)

6. **The Accuracy Test:** Look at your meeting information on your site.
    - Is the meeting date and time listed? Is it buried, or is it on the front page?
    - If a stranger followed those directions tonight, would you actually be there, or is that information outdated?

    [ ] **Yes** (Meeting info is accurate, current, and easy to find)
    [ ] **No** (It's missing, buried, or the info listed is no longer correct)

Category 3: Succession & The "Bus Test"

7. **If you (or your current "tech person") were hit by a bus tomorrow, does anyone else have a master list of every password and login credential?**

    [ ] **Yes** (It's in a shared "Vault")
    [ ] **No** (It's all in one person's head)

8. **If your Facebook page was deleted tomorrow, do you have a backup of all the photos and stories posted there?**

    [ ] **Yes** (They are in our own digital archive)
    [ ] **No** (They would be gone forever)

Scoring Your Results Count up only the **"Yes"** boxes you checked.

- **7–8 "Yes" answers:** You have a solid foundation. You are acting like a professional institution.
- **4–6 "Yes" answers:** Your organization is in the "Hobby" stage. You are at high risk of losing institutional memory and failing to attract new members.
- **0–3 "Yes" answers: Your organization is invisible.** To the outside world, you don't exist. You are one leadership change away from a total collapse.

Part 2: The Math of Invisibility

If you struggled to check those boxes, you aren't just "behind the times." You are actively pushing away the people who would keep your mission alive.

- **The Trust Penalty: 84% of consumers** state that having a dedicated website makes an organization more credible than one that only has a social media profile.
- **The Consideration Gap: 30% of people** will not even *consider* an organization if they do not have a website. In 2026, a website is a "Birth Certificate." No site means you aren't a real institution.
- **The Search Dead-Zone: 97% of people** learn more about a local organization online than anywhere else. If you are not visible on the first page of search results, you are hiding from 97% of your community.
- **The Smartphone Ultimatum: 88% of people** who perform a local search on a smartphone visit or call a related organization within 24 hours. If your site failed the "Smartphone Test," you lost 9 out of 10 people looking for you today.
- **The Recommendation Killer: 57% of internet users** say they will not recommend an organization with a poorly designed mobile website. In a heritage group where "word of mouth" is everything, a bad website is actively poisoning your reputation.

Part 3: The Facebook Mirage (Why "Rented Land" is a Liability)

Many organizations think, "We don't need a website; we have a Facebook Page." This is a dangerous delusion. The public views "Facebook-only" groups as temporary, hobbyist, and potentially untrustworthy.

The Professionalism Gap: Consumers are 3x more likely to trust an organization with its own website over one that only uses a social media page.

The "Ease of Entry" Problem: Why is trust lower on Facebook? Because it takes 5 minutes to create a Facebook page and 0 dollars. Scammers and "fly-by-night" groups use Facebook. Professional institutions own their own domains.

The Reach Reality: Facebook's algorithms are designed to keep people on Facebook, and they only show your posts to a tiny fraction of your followers. Conversely, Google Search drives 8x more traffic to local websites than all social media platforms combined. If you only have Facebook, you are shouting into a very small, crowded room while the rest of the world is searching for you on the street.

Part 4: The "Mobile" Death Sentence

If you do have a website but it's old, and not optimized for mobile phones, you are essentially committing "digital suicide" in front of your visitors.

The 3-Second Rule: It takes about 3 seconds for a visitor to form an opinion about your website that determines whether they stay or leave.

At least 60% of all searches are conducted on mobile devices. Is your website optimized to be viewed on a mobile screen?

The "Pinch and Zoom" Trap: 57% of internet users say they won't recommend an organization with a poorly designed mobile website. If a potential donor has to struggle to read your site on their phone, they aren't going to "work harder" to give you money—they are going to close the tab.

The Reputation Killer: 88% of online consumers are less likely to return to a site after a bad experience. If your site is broken, you don't just lose them today; you lose them forever.

Part 5: The Response Gap

The "No-Site" No-Response: When an organization posts an event or an "ask" on social media but doesn't have a website to back it up, engagement drops by over 40%. People need to "verify" you on your own land before they respond to your megaphone.

The Giving Gap: 75% of young donors (those in their 30s and 40s) say that a non-profit's website is the #1 factor in determining whether they will make a recurring donation. Failing to update your "Front Door" is essentially leaving money on the table that would otherwise fund your memorials and preservation projects.

Part 6: The Verdict

If you failed the self-assessment, these statistics aren't just "interesting facts." They are a description of your organization's current trajectory. You are becoming a ghost.

But there is good news: Every one of these problems is fixable. In the chapters that follow, we are going to show you how to move from "Invisible" to "Institution" using the very tools that are currently leaving you behind.

Part 7: The Contrast (A 15-Year Search for a Door)

"The story isn't necessarily the struggle, it is of contrast. Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 1865 is relatively new, only 6 years old. When it was created, we had the foresight to create a digital presence early one utilizing the free tools (we were a poor start up camp) that Google offers with a gmail account. No other camps in the area, and very few in the state for that matter, had done that.

We created a Google Site website, used Google Sheets to keep our membership logs and financial reports, Drive to archive everything camp related, groups to communicate, calendar to coordinate, and gmail to communicate with the world. Because we update our site often, posted photos and event information on the site, we naturally had a strong presence on Google Search. We obtained a Google Voice number and put that number in all promotional materials and marketing. The number was a part of what was shown in Google search results. We created a logo and put it on everything.

One day a gentleman called and left a message on our Google Voice number. He had seen our name and number in Google search results. He had been trying to get in touch with a Camp of the SCV for quite some time. I called him back. He is donating a piece of land along Interstate 4 in Florida here for us to build a flag site on. He had been trying to give the SCV this land for over 15 years. He had tried to find a Camp to give it to, but all contact information that was found on Google previously was old (not updated, bad websites) or had bad email addresses (personal trap) or had no phone numbers. We aren't the closest Camp in proximity to the project location, but he was adamant that we get the property because we were the only one he could contact, and we called him back. And we are the new kids on the block who set the digital playbook in motion at the onset. It paid off a huge dividend." - ***SCV Camp 1865 Camp Commander***

Part 8: Who is the "Accidental Leader"?

If you are reading this and feeling overwhelmed, know that you are not alone. Most of the people running heritage organizations today are what we call **Accidental Leaders**.

You didn't join your camp, chapter, or society because you wanted to be a Marketing Director or a Webmaster. You joined because you love history. You joined to honor your ancestors or to ensure that a specific piece of the past isn't forgotten. You are a historian, a patriot, or a preservationist.

But then, the previous leader stepped down, or perhaps you were the only one with the energy to keep the doors open. Suddenly, you were the one holding the gavel. Now, you are responsible for the bank account, the membership roster, and the public image of the organization. You might be a retired contractor, a teacher, or a mechanic. You know how to build a house, manage a classroom, or fix a Ford F-250, but you've never been taught how to build a "Digital Brand." You feel like you're trying to run a 19th-century organization in a 21st-century world.

The Ghost in the Machine: The "Bob" Scenario

We've all known a "Bob." Bob was the heart of the local Historical Society. He was the one who took the photos at the annual gala, kept the membership roster on his home computer, and was the only one who knew the password to the website. He did the work out of love, and the board trusted him completely.

Then, Bob passed away. Suddenly, your organization's history was locked behind a Windows password no one knew, on a hard drive sitting in a spare bedroom across town. In one afternoon, the organization went from "established" to "orphaned." This is the **Personal Trap**. This playbook is your "Institutional Insurance."

The Goal: Moving from "Hobby" to "Institution"

A **Hobby** is something you do for yourself in your spare time. An **Institution** is something you build to outlive you. Donors, members, and volunteers want to invest in Institutions. They want to know that their money, their time, and their names will be part of something permanent. "Trust Signals" are the evidence you provide to prove that you are an Institution worth joining.

This playbook is designed to move you from "Hobby" to "Institution" in two hours a week. Every one of the problems identified in the self-assessment is fixable. In the chapters that follow, we are going to show you how to move from "Invisible" to "Institution" using the very tools that are currently leaving you behind.

Chapter 1: The Psychology of the Gift

Why "Good Intentions" Aren't Enough

There is a hard truth we must face: **People do not join, serve, or donate to organizations they do not trust.** It doesn't matter how noble your cause is. To an outsider, your organization is only as good as it looks on their smartphone screen. Whether it's a potential donor with a checkbook, a prospective member looking for their roots, or a volunteer looking to give their time, they are all looking for the same thing: **Legitimacy.**

The Generational Shift

Today's donors and members are different. A 40-year-old donor does not look for you in the yellow pages; they look for you on their smartphone. If they find a personal AOL email address or a Facebook page that hasn't been updated since 2022, their subconscious makes a decision: *"This group isn't organized. If I give them $100, will it actually go to the mission, or will it get lost in someone's personal bank account?"*

The 3-Second Assumption

When a stranger finds you online, they make an instant "gut-level" decision. If your digital "Front Door" is messy, they make assumptions based on who they are:

1. **The Donor's Assumption (The Financial Check):**
    - *What they see:* A contact email like `history-buff-1961@aol.com`.
    - *What they assume:* "This is just a hobby club. If I give them money, is it going into a professional account or someone's personal pocket?"
2. **The Prospective Member's Assumption (The Legacy Check):**
    - *What they see:* A website that lists your monthly meeting at "The Old Mill Restaurant"—but The Old Mill went out of business three years ago.
    - *What they assume:* **"The lights are off."** If they show up to that address, they'll be standing in an empty parking lot. They assume the organization is a ghost. They won't call to check the new location; they will simply move on to a group that looks like it's actually alive.
3. **The Volunteer's Assumption (The Time Check):**
    - *What they see:* No website, no clear phone number, and a "broken" feel to your social media.
    - *What they assume:* "If they can't even manage a simple website, they are probably disorganized. If I volunteer, I'll spend my whole Saturday morning standing around waiting for someone to tell them what to do."

Trust Signals

In the non-profit world, donors expect a **"Professionalism Threshold."** This is the point where your digital presence proves you are organized enough to handle their legacy responsibly.

- **Identity:** An email that belongs to the office, not the person.
- **Stability:** A website that acts as the "Official Record" of your work.
- **Accessibility:** A way to reach you that doesn't involve tracking down a personal cell number.

Dixie Digital Lesson: The Cost of a Stagnant Site

A website that isn't updated is worse than having no website at all. No website makes you invisible; an outdated website makes you look **incompetent**. To a 20-year-old or a 70-year-old, "Wrong Information" equals "We don't care."

Dixie Digital Lesson: The "Grandchild Test"

Think about your 20-year-old grandson. If he wanted to find out when your next meeting was, where would he look? If he has to call three different people to find a physical address, he won't join. He expects the "Open" sign to be digital. If you aren't where he is looking, you don't exist to him.

Dixie Digital Lesson: The "Wallet Test"

Think about a charity you've never heard of. If they asked you for $100, what is the first thing you would do? You would look them up online. If you found a messy, personal-looking page, would you pull out your wallet? Probably not. You are asking your donors to do something you wouldn't even do yourself.

Chapter 2: Branding (Your Digital Uniform)

Consistency is the Key to Growth

In the military or a historical reenactment, a uniform signals authority and order. In the digital world, your **Logo** and **Colors** are your uniform. Imagine if a Commander showed up to a formal memorial service in a Hawaiian shirt. Even if he was the most knowledgeable historian in the state, his "brand" would be ruined because he isn't in uniform.

Consistency creates memory. It takes an average of seven "impressions" before someone remembers who you are. If you use a different seal on your letterhead and a third font on your website, you are resetting that counter to zero every time you post.

The "Logo on Everything" Rule

Pick **one** version of your logo and use it everywhere. When a prospective member sees that same logo on a parade banner, then on a Facebook post, then on a website, their brain registers: *"I know these people. They are consistent. They are a real organization."*

Dixie Digital Lesson: The Non-Designer's Path

Pick two primary colors (e.g., Navy Blue and Gold) and two fonts. Stick to them. Consistency is the multiplier that makes a small budget feel like a big one.

Chapter 3: Your Official Identity (The Hub)

The "Deed" to Your Organization

If you own a house or a piece of land, you have a **Deed**. That deed proves you own the property. In the digital world, your **Google Account** is your Deed. It is the single most important asset your organization owns.

How to Build Your Digital Workshop

Think of this Google account as your **Workshop**. You wouldn't build a house using your neighbor's tools; you need your own.

1. **The Forever Account:** Create one master account that belongs to the *office*, not the *man*.
    - **Go to the Source:** Open your browser and type `accounts.google.com` into the address bar.
    - **Create Account:** Select "For my personal use" (even though it's for a group, this keeps it free and simple).
    - **Choose Your "Forever Address":**
        - *Don't use a name:* `Commander-Jones-Heritage@gmail.com` is useless when Jones retires.
        - *Don't use the current year:* `Heritage-Board-2026@gmail.com` will look old in twelve months.
        - *DO use your Permanent Identity:* `SCVCamp1865@gmail.com` is your Forever Address.
2. **The Tool Rack (The Waffle Menu):** Once your account is open, look at the top right corner of your screen. You'll see a grid of nine dots. This is the **Waffle Menu** (or the App Launcher).
    - **The Tool Rack:** Clicking this is like looking at the tool rack on your garage wall. Everything you need—Gmail, Drive, Sheets, Sites—is hanging right there.
    - **The Shortcut:** Type the tool name directly into the browser address bar: `mail.google.com`, `drive.google.com`, or `sheets.google.com`.
    - **The "New" Shortcut:** Want to start a new document or spreadsheet instantly? Type `doc.new` or `sheet.new` into your address bar. It's like having a clean piece of paper and a sharp pencil waiting for you.
3. **The Workshop Schedule (Google Calendar):** This is the heartbeat of the organization. Think of Google Calendar as the "Master Schedule" hanging on the shop wall.
    - **Internal Reminders:** You don't have to remember to check the inbox or update the site. Create a "Recurring Event" for your board meetings or memorial services.
    - **The Notification Hack:** In your Calendar settings, you can set "Email Notifications" for any event. If you have a board meeting on Tuesday, have

Google send you an email reminder on Monday morning. Let the machine do the remembering for you.

Google Voice: Your Virtual Switchboard

Giving out your personal cell number is a recipe for burnout. **Google Voice** gives you a dedicated, professional phone number for free that acts as a sophisticated switchboard.

- **Ring Any Phone:** You can program Google Voice to ring your cell phone, the Secretary's phone, or even both at the same time. You can change this "target" phone in seconds.
- **Texting:** Younger members prefer to text. Google Voice accepts SMS, allowing you to answer "How do I join?" from your computer or phone without revealing your personal number.
- **Office Hours:** You can set hours so the phone doesn't ring at dinner time.
- **Voicemail Forwarding:** When a message is left, Google can transcribe it to text and email it to the entire board instantly. Everyone stays in the loop.

Passing the Torch: Sharing and Succession

An organization is only as strong as its ability to survive a change in leadership.

1. The Power of "Shared" Access Instead of emailing files back and forth (creating multiple messy versions), the **Forever Account** "owns" the files in Google Drive. You then "Share" access with the individuals on your board.

- **Viewer:** They can read it but can't change a single comma.
- **Editor:** They can help you update the roster or minutes.
- **Benefit:** When a board member leaves, you simply "Remove" their access. The file never leaves your "Vault."

2. The Hand-Off Protocol When a new Commander or President is elected, you don't have to move a single physical file. You simply sit down with them and:

1. Hand over the **Master Credential Sheet**.
2. Update the **Recovery Phone Number** in the Google Security settings to their phone.
3. The "Deed" has now been officially signed over. The history remains intact, and the new leader is ready to work on Day One.

Dixie Digital Lesson: The "Bus Test"

If you got hit by a bus tomorrow, could your organization still function on Monday? If the passwords are only in your head, the answer is "No." By creating a Forever Account and a Hand-Off Protocol, you are making sure the mission is bigger than any one person.

Chapter 4: The Digital Filing Cabinet (Admin & Records)

Ending the "Trunk of Shame"

Every heritage group has a **Trunk of Shame**. It's a plastic bin filled with disorganized folders, faded receipts, and loose photos passed from one garage to another. **Google Drive** is your organization's fireproof, flood-proof, and theft-proof vault. It is the **Institutional Memory** of your group.

- **Accessing the Vault:** Click the **Waffle Menu** or type `drive.google.com` directly into your browser.
- **Organizing Your Shop (Drive Folders):** Just like a well-organized workshop has a drawer for every bolt, your Google Drive needs folders:
    1. **GOVERNING DOCS:** Bylaws, Charters, and Tax-Exempt certificates.
    2. **MINUTES:** A folder for each year (e.g., "2025 Minutes").
    3. **FINANCIALS:** Receipts and budget reports.
    4. **MEMBERSHIP:** Your rosters and application forms.

The Living Ledger (Google Sheets)

In the old way, the "Roster" was a file on the Secretary's personal laptop.

- **Real-World Fix:** Create a **Google Sheet** called "Official Membership Roster."
- **Functionality:** Unlike a paper list, you can "Sort" this list by dues-paid status, rank, or join date with one click.
- **The "Shared" Benefit:** The Commander and the Treasurer can both have "Viewer" access. They can see who is active at any moment without having to call the Secretary.

Professional Records (Google Docs)

Meeting minutes are the legal history of your camp. Using **Google Docs** ensures they are uniform and protected.

- **Real-time Collaboration:** If the Secretary is taking notes during a meeting, the Commander can watch the document update in real-time.
- **Version History:** Google Docs has a "Version History" feature that acts like a time machine, allowing you to "Undo" mistakes from hours or even days ago.

The Virtual Meeting Hall: Google Meet

Whether it’s an emergency or a board member who shouldn't be driving in a thunderstorm, **Google Meet** is your solution.

- **The "Personal Touch":** If you are talking to a potential donor, an email feels cold. Seeing your face and your passion for the project creates an immediate personal connection.
- **Emergency Meetings & Convenience:** You don't have to force everyone to drive 45 minutes for a 10-minute vote. You can launch a meeting instantly from your browser or smartphone.
- **Inclusion:** It allows key members who are sick or far away to contribute their wisdom from the safety of their own home.

The Institutional Rolodex (Google Contacts)

Stop asking "Do you have Bob's number?" Use the Forever Account to host a shared directory. Use **Labels** to create groups like "Emergency Board." You can email the whole group in two seconds by typing the label name into the "To" field.

Field Tools: Keep & Tasks

- **The Field Notebook (Google Keep):** Take a photo of a tombstone and type a note underneath it while you are in the field. Record a voice memo and Google will transcribe it for you. It syncs to the Forever Account instantly so the Secretary can see it at home.
- **The Digital Punch List (Google Tasks):** Big projects fail because they feel too big. Use Tasks to break them into "small bites" (1. Get permits, 2. Buy supplies, 3. Schedule volunteers). You can assign specific tasks to board members for accountability and see when they are checked off from your Gmail side panel.

"But is it Safe?" (Addressing Privacy Fears)

A file in a locked Google Drive is significantly safer than a paper file in a garage.

1. **The "Lock and Key":** You decide exactly who sees what (Viewer vs. Editor).
2. **The Audit Trail:** Google shows you exactly who opened a file and when.
3. **Encryption:** Your records are scrambled so only you can read them.
4. **The Garage vs. The Vault:** Think like a contractor. Would you rather store your most valuable tools in a wooden shed with a rusty padlock (your garage), or in a bank vault with 24/7 security (Google)? Moving to the cloud is not **risky**—it’s the most responsible thing you can do for the history you protect.

Chapter 5: The Front Office (Your Digital Museum)

Building a Home You Actually Own

In the digital world, there is a massive difference between "Owned Land" and "Rented Land." Understanding this difference is the key to your organization's long-term survival.

The Website: Land You Own

Think of your website as the **Physical Museum** of your organization. When you build on your own land:

- **You Own the Deed:** As long as you pay your annual "property tax" (domain fee), the land is yours.
- **You Control the Layout:** If you want a specific room to display "Letters from the Front," you build it exactly where you want it.
- **You Paint the Walls:** You decide the colors and fonts. Your website is a true reflection of your organization's character—professional, historical, and welcoming.
- **It's Your Record:** You control the narrative. The information is organized logically so a visitor can find what they need in seconds.

Facebook: Land You Rent

Facebook is like being a tenant in a massive apartment complex. You might have a nice "unit" (your page), but you are strictly a **Renter**:

- **No Customizing:** You can't change the colors of the walls or the layout of the rooms. You are forced into their "branding," not yours.
- **No Adding Rooms:** You can't add a new wing to store your archives or display your artifacts. Your history gets buried under yesterday's post.
- **The Eviction Risk:** This is the most dangerous part. Because you don't own the land, the landlord (Facebook) can **evict you** instantly. They can delete your page, lock the doors, and every photo, story, and contact you've spent years collecting is **lost forever.**

The 3-Page Essential Site

Don't get overwhelmed. You don't need a massive library to start. Solve the "Trust Problem" with three simple pages:

1. **The Home Page (The "Open" Sign):** Who are you, and when/where do you meet? (This is where you fix that "out-of-business meeting place" issue!)
2. **The "About" Page (The Legacy):** Why does this history matter? Use your Google Photos archive to show your story.
3. **The "Contact/Join" Page (The Action):** Put your Google Voice number here and a simple **Google Form**.

Step-by-Step: Creating Your Google Site

1. Open the Shop: Click the **Waffle Menu** and select **Sites**, or type `sites.google.com`. Click **(+) Blank**. **2. Set the Theme:** Click **Themes** on the right. Pick a clean style (like "Aristotle") and use your "Brand Colors." **3. Hang the Sign (The Header):** Type your Camp or Society name. Click **Change Image** to upload a photo of your meeting hall. **4. Arrange the Exhibits (Inserting Content):** Use the **Insert** tab to drag in text boxes and images from your Drive.

The Cinema Wing: YouTube

Every museum has a room where they play a short film. **YouTube** is your Cinema Wing.

- **Archiving:** Upload oral histories or guest speaker videos to your organization's YouTube channel.
- **Embedding:** Place these videos on your website. Instead of just reading text, a visitor can click "Play" and hear the history in your ancestors' own words.

High-Performance Features

- **The Map (Where we meet):** Click **Map** in the Insert menu. Type in your meeting address. Now, a visitor can get directions with one click.
- **The Join Form:** Click **Forms**. Select the "Membership Application" you created.
- **The Calendar:** Click **Calendar**. Select your organization's calendar. Your "Open Sign" now shows every memorial service automatically.

The Technical "Plumbing": Domain Setup

Building the site in **Google Sites** is like painting the walls. Setting up your **Domain** (`www.YourHistory.org`) is like connecting the main water line.

- **Our Advice:** Build the site yourself to save money, but hire a professional developer—like **Dixie Digital Media**—specifically for this technical DNS "hook-up" to ensure your site is secure and visible.

Dixie Digital Lesson: The $12 Trust Signal

Spending roughly **$12.00 a year** to buy your own domain name (like `www.SCVCamp1865.org`) is the cheapest and most effective "Trust Signal" you can buy. To a donor, that `.org` is a badge of authority.

Chapter 6: The Megaphone (Social Media Strategy)

The Shuttle Bus Strategy

Social media is not the destination; it is the **Shuttle Bus** used to pick people up and bring them to your house (Your Website). If you keep them on the bus, they never see your full history.

- **The Porch vs. The Dining Room:** You use the porch (Social Media) to wave at neighbors, but you bring them into the Dining Room (Website) to have dinner with them. That is where the real relationship happens.

The entire reason to have an organizational Facebook account is to drive traffic to the website. Use it to brag about your accomplishments, showcase what you've done, and announce events—**but do it with an ulterior motive.** Every "brag" should be an invitation to come inside.

Managing the Megaphone: Google Photos, Forms & Groups

- **The Visual Fuel (Google Photos):** Instead of photos being scattered on phones, upload them all to the Forever Account. Create a "Shared Album" for an event so members can "dump" their best photos into one place. Always upload to your Vault *first* so you own the history even if Facebook deletes your account.
- **The Digital Mailbox (Google Forms):** Create a "Contact Us" or "Membership Application" form. Use a **QR Code** at your physical meetings. Members scan it and "sign in" digitally. The data goes straight into your Google Sheet roster automatically.
- **The Field Guide (Google Maps):** For meetings at remote cemeteries, **Drop a Pin** and share the GPS coordinate link. Embed this map on your website so no one gets lost.
- **The Professional Mailing List (Google Groups):** Stop trying to "CC" fifty people. Use **Google Groups** (e.g., `members@SCVCamp1865.org`).
    - **Single Address:** Email one address and Google handles delivery to every person, keeping personal emails private.
    - **Web Archive:** Groups keep a web archive of every message. A member joining in June can read every announcement sent in January. It ensures that when you retire, the next person has the professional blueprints of every conversation.

How to Swing the Megaphone

- **The "Heartbeat" Rule:** Aim for one to two high-quality posts per week. Consistency shows the world you have a pulse.
- **The "Rule of Thirds":** 70% Education (History), 20% Humanity (Photos of members working), and 10% the "Ask" (Donations/Join Us).
- **The Bridge Rule:** Never end a post without a link. If you tell a story but don't provide a link to your website, you've just told a story to a stranger on the street and walked away. **Always provide the path back to your house.**

Chapter 7: The 2-Hour Work Week (Sustainability)

Managing this workshop doesn't have to take over your life. Efficiency is the key to preventing volunteer burnout. If you have anchored your tools correctly, your technical workload is reduced to a simple monthly routine:

1. **The Monthly Batch (1 Hour):** Use the **Meta Business Suite** (for Facebook Pages) to schedule your "Shuttle Bus" posts for the entire month at once.
2. **The Website Refresh (30 Mins):** Use your Calendar reminder to swap one photo from your **Google Photos archive** to the homepage. This tells search engines that "the lights are on."
3. **The Inbox Sweep (30 Mins):** Check your **Google Forms** responses and **Google Voice** messages. Forward the leads to your committee members.

Succession: Handing Over the Blueprint

By managing your projects in **Tasks** and your mass communication in **Groups**, you are creating a "Standard Operating Procedure." When you retire, the next person doesn't just get a list of names; they get a professional communication system and the "Blueprints" for every project the organization has successfully completed. You are giving them the map to success.

Conclusion: Leaving a Digital Legacy

Buildings crumble and paper fades, but a well-managed digital presence can live forever. By following this playbook, you are creating a digital backup of your community's soul. You are ensuring that fifty years from now, when the next generation goes looking for their history, the door is already open for them.

Secure Your Legacy Today.

Preserving history is a full-time job. Managing the technology shouldn't be. **Dixie Digital Media LLC** is here to bridge the gap.

- **Visit us:** dixiedigital.media
- **Email:** Dixie@DixieDigital.Media

Appendix: How to Talk to the Board

1. **Insurance:** *"We are doing this because if our paper records or our current leaders are gone, our history dies. This is Institutional Insurance."*
2. **Recruitment:** *"The next generation is looking for us on their phones. If we aren't there, we are essentially choosing to be invisible to our future leaders."*
3. **Cost:** *"Most of these tools are free. The only cost is $12 a year for our domain. That is less than the cost of one missed donation or one volunteer who gives up because they couldn't find our meeting hall."*