



EMWA's new website

by Shanida Nataraja

By the time you read this, I hope that you will have seen one or more of the new online features promised to EMWA members—the new EMWA website, online membership database, and conference booking system—and are enjoying the expanded functionality that these systems offer to you, as a member of EMWA. As is the case for most projects of this size and complexity, it has taken us longer than expected to reach this point. However, now that they are in place, we hope that not only will your interaction with other EMWA members be enhanced, but you will also be able to better manage your EMWA activities, whether it be informing us of new contact details, checking your EPDP credits or registering for upcoming conferences. Head Office also have a brand-new system that allows them to process membership applications, invoices, and conference registrations in a timely and efficient manner. This leap in technology ensures that EMWA as an organisation continues to meet the needs of its membership, even as the membership expands in years to come.

The new website

As was the case with the old website, the new website offers all visitors access to past issues of EMWA's journal, *The Write Stuff* (TWS), as well as access to our freelancer listing and job advertisement pages. Building on this foundation, however, we have added some additional features for all visitors to the website, such as a company listing, allowing all interested companies to subscribe and advertise their services, and an online membership application form to speed up the process of becoming an EMWA member.

Certain areas of the EMWA website have restricted access. These sections are only accessible when you are a member of EMWA. On first trying to access these sections, you will be taken through a registration process. The information on this registration form will be sent to and checked by Head Office, and you will receive an email of confirmation within 24 hours of your registration. You will then be ready to see the exciting website features offered to EMWA members. Not only will you be able to view the conference schedule in advance, and use the conference planner to select events that you wish to attend, but you will also be able to access our online registration system to register and pay for these events (for more details, please see 'The new conference booking system' below). You can also access the new online membership database to update your contact details and manage your EPDP credits (for more details, please see 'The new online membership database'

below), as well as creating a profile page, which, although not yet visible to other EMWA members, will soon enable us to build a Facebook-like networking feature into the website.

You will notice that the new website also allows you to submit an interesting web link, view photos from previous conferences, and view news items and blogs written by other EMWA members. It is also possible for you to create a blog for yourself, or indeed submit an important news item. These are ideal forums in which to communicate with the rest of the EMWA membership, whether it be to alert members to an important issue or publication, or to merely ramble about a medical writing-related topic close to your heart. To activate these features, please contact me at webmanager@emwa.org.

The new online membership database

For security reasons, accessing the new online membership database will require you to follow another process of registration and choose a new and unique password. We ask that each of you follow the link given on the members-only home page of the website to access the web portal of the database. On clicking the link, you will be asked to enter your email address (as known by EMWA). If the database recognises your email address, an email will be sent to your email account with a link, which, when followed, allows you to choose a password and login to the online database using your assigned username and chosen password. Once in the database, you can then verify or update your contact details and confirm your EPDP credit record (if you find an error in your EPDP credits, please contact Head Office to rectify the error). Keep a secure record of your username and password, as these will enable you to login to the database in the future, as well as registering for upcoming conferences via our online conference booking system.

The new conference booking system

In addition to the normal methods of conference registration, we now offer online registration. Once you have chosen the events you would like to attend, using our website conference planner, it is now possible to login to the conference registration system to register and pay for these events. Logging into this system, will require the same username and password used to access the online membership database.

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Moving forward

One of the most exciting things about these new features, especially the website, is that you, as a member of EMWA, now play a much more active role in both managing your EMWA activities and determining the content of the website. In addition to allowing EMWA members to add content directly to the website, in the form of news items, interesting web links, or blogs, it is also much easier for EC and EPDP committee members to post information on the website to keep the membership informed and give them access to important information. If you are interested in becoming a regular contributor to the website, whether it be to write a blog or news item, publish an article, submit

a report, or post photos from conferences, please contact me at webmanger@emwa.org and we can get things setup so that you can start contributing right away.

I hope that this expanded functionality improves the channels of communication between yourself and EMWA, as well as between yourself and fellow EMWA members, and goes some way towards building an online community for our thriving organisation.

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