

2018-19 District 76 PR Contest (Club website contest)

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Objectives:

- Raising the comprehensive quality of the Club websites in District 76 as well as optimizing the key message for Toastmasters.
- Finding room for improvement by receiving feedback from outside the Clubs
- Recognizing VPPRs and Webmasters of the Clubs, which District 76 has not been recognizing much in the past. Also, facilitating inter-Club communication between VPPRs and Webmasters through the contest.

Entry period:

November 24, 2018(Sat.) – February 28, 2019 (Thurs.)

How to apply

Please apply from the form below. Anyone who is a Club officer or a webmaster can apply.

<https://goo.gl/qdzLM2>

Judges and awards:

The websites will be reviewed by the judges selected by the District. Clubs with the winning website from each Division and the top three websites in District will receive a trophy or a certificate and a voucher for purchasing Club supplies as awards at the beginning of the District Council Meeting at the annual conference on May 11, 2019.

Schedule:

After the entry deadline at the end of February, we will conduct the first judging session by Division in March and the final judging session by mid-April. We will announce the winners in late April and give awards to the winners at the annual conference in May.

**The entry is optional, though we recommend your entry as it will benefit your Club a lot!
We look forward to many applications from all around the country!**

Judging criteria

We conduct the contest based on the following model guest (persona).

An office worker in Japan who speaks Japanese as his/her mother tongue and can conduct business in English as his/her second language. He/she found the name Toastmasters through our magazine ad or a word of mouth, and search the Internet with the word “Toastmasters” in katakana.

Criteria list

1. Key message (30 pt.) – Does the website communicate about Toastmasters clearly?

(Correct) “A place to learn about communication and leadership”

(Wrong) “Cheap English conversation school” “A magical communication seminar which changes your personality in one day” etc. that is, any incorrect or exaggerated message.

Also, any expressions which is against the TMI Constitution, such as expressions which overly prioritize the participation of specific age, gender or nationality group over others may be taken as discriminatory expressions. Putting advertisements of businesses run by the Club members is also against the Constitution.

2. Organization (25pt.)

- Ease of navigation and readability including with smartphones (10pt.)
- Communication of what the Club is all about is showing and effective (10pt.)
- Ease of contact when trying to participate in a meeting as a guest (10pt.)

3. Design (25pt.)

Readability both in smartphone and PC (10 pt.)

Use of colors and fonts (5 pt.)

Use of Toastmasters logo and compliance to the brand guidelines (5 pt.)

4. Search engine optimization (SEO) (10 pt.)

Which # of page the Club website shows if you search by the two keywords “トーストマスターズ” (Toastmasters in katakana) and the name of prefecture the Club is located (or for Clubs in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama and Chiba, use the name of the nearest station instead of the prefecture name). (10pt.)

5. Timely updates (10pt)

The information on the website is updated timely (within one week) (10pt.)

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Q. When is the website going to be judged?

A. We will conduct first and second judge sessions from March 1 to April 20, 2019.

Q. Is the language of the website going to affect our rank in the contest?

A. The main language can be either in whichever language, but whether you can search by the keyword “トーストマスタース(Toastmasters)” in katakana is one judge criteria. The reason is that this term focuses on Japanese users because in Japan, we feel the brand awareness of Toastmasters among Japanese people is much lower than those who mainly speak English in Japan. That is why we promote Toastmasters in katakana word this term using ads, promotional video and other materials. Even without such materials, if you take a look at the website of English Toastmasters Clubs in Japan with a large number of members, you can find Japanese explanations in most of them. We appreciate your understanding. In the upcoming years we may conduct a contest focusing on English users but it depends on the future policy of the District.

Q. Our Club has only a website in SNS such as Facebook, blog, Twitter etc. Can we apply for the contest?

A. If you can locate Club information such as what Toastmasters is all about, meeting information and report of past meetings and events, you can apply. Following this criteria, Facebook pages and blogs should be okay. If you have only a page in Meetup or Twitter, it may not be appropriate for a entry in this contest because the kind of information you can list there is likely to be limited or unorganized, and the “organization” section of the judging criteria could become nearly zero for such pages.

Q. We have a website in FreeToastHost, which is not strong at search engine optimization and mobile readability. Could you treat them specially?

A. The contest is based on the viewpoint of a model guest as persona and his or her predicted action and impression. Does he or she take a look at your website, or avoid viewing it just because the website is developed by FreeToastHost? We do not think so. Even in FreeToastHost you can use both English and Japanese in your website and you can add a lot of original contents to it. So we do not treat FreeToastHost websites separately from other websites. By the way, the concerns on FreeToastHost websites such as SEO and mobile readability do not occupy high percentage in the judging criteria. Rather, we focus more on key messages and organization so you can be ranked in the high position even with your FreeToastHost website if you make improvements on them.

Q. We have a website and Facebook page. Can we make multiple entries?

A. Yes. You can either make multiple entries, or a single entry combined. However, in either case, we take a look at whether the information in these two pages are consistent or not. For example, if the time and place are different in your website and SNS, they are misleading to guests, so such inconsistency will affect the judging point (organization section).

Q. I don't think our Club website can win this contest because other Clubs' websites look better.

A. It is still worth entering the contest even if you do not think your Club website is the best in Japan! Our judge team consisting of experienced Club and District officers take a look at your website and give you some detailed feedback, which may be helpful in improving your website. The contest also focuses on your Club's VPPR and Webmaster because we would like to have these people recognized more both in our District and in your Club. Most of all, we would like you to make use of this opportunity to review your website so that it can bring more non-TM guests to your Club.

Q. Our Club is an advanced Club or restricted Club. Can we still apply? Is the judging criteria the same?

A. Yes, such Clubs can apply to the contest. A non-Toastmaster may find your Club through a search engine and find an open community Club through a link from there, so being non-Toastmaster friendly as well as Toastmaster-friendly is important for such Clubs' websites. The judging criteria is the same.

Q. Our Club is a prospective Club. Can we apply?

A. Yes. The condition is that the Club is registered as a prospective Club in District 76 and assigned a Division.

Q. Can we re-enter the contest if we change the URL of the website or any other reasons?

A. Yes, you can. In that case, please let us know the entry is an update from the last one rather than a new one.

Q. I do not agree with the judging criteria.

A. The participation of the contest is totally optional. We respect your decision if your Club do not enter the contest.