PLUGGED IN AND WIRED UP

It’s a big world out there on the World Wide Web. And, with more than 3 million new websites being created every month, it’s only getting bigger. So how do you make sure you don’t get lost in it all – that people can find you if they’re looking and will notice you if they’re not? It’s all about making sure you’re seen in all the right places. Because, when it comes to online hotspots like Facebook, YouTube and the iTunes Store, if you’re out of “site,” you’re out of mind.

“The College definitely recognizes the importance of its online presence,” says Larry Stoudenmire, director of web and electronic marketing. “There are so many things out there that we can take advantage of – really simple, easy ways to expand our overall functionality and our online visibility.”

Perhaps the simplest way to reach out online is by establishing an official presence on Facebook and YouTube – a step that the College took in May.

“These new media initiatives are a great way for the College to communicate with an international audience, including potential students and faculty,” says News Manager Melissa Whetzel, adding that the College’s Facebook page – which includes pictures of campus, official information and links to significant pages on the College’s website – was an immediate hit. In fact, the College had more than 900 “fans” within its first month on this popular social-networking site. Fans of the school can add links and “buttons” to their own Facebook profiles and can even post messages on its “wall.”

“On the page’s wall, prospective students are talking with current students about the best professors, classes and student life activities,” says Whetzel, who oversees the page. “It’s really making a difference in the way potential students, current students, faculty, staff and alumni communicate.”

That’s not the only difference it’s making. It’s also changing how the College is promoted.

“With alumni leaving comments like, ‘best four years of my life’ and ‘best school ever,’ they’re speaking to potential students on their own terms,” says Whetzel. “Honestly, we couldn’t pay for the impact those testimonials will have.”

And, if a picture is worth a thousand words, then the movies posted on the College’s new YouTube channel should also have a pretty big impact. Not only does the channel give the College access to millions of viewers who can subscribe to the channel and become its friend, but it also allows the College to centralize all of its videos on this high-traffic video-sharing website.

Both the YouTube channel and the Facebook page simultaneously share and centralize information about the College – as do the College’s new master calendar system (cofc.edu/marketing/eventmarketing/mastercalendar.html) and the future blog server and iTunes U application, both expected to launch this summer.

iTunes U (short for “university”) is a free service that allows colleges and universities to post audio and video podcasts of speeches and lectures as well as class notes and other digital content onto the iTunes Store for students to search, download and play. Content can be made public or secured behind individuals’ login and password.

“Faculty will benefit by having another channel for presenting information, and students by having richer media available 24/7,” says Director of Web Strategies Andrew Bergstrom, explaining that students can download information onto their iPod and continue learning as they walk to class, work out or sit on the beach. “It very much caters to them because they already have the mobile devices it uses. It fits into their world – they can take it with them in their pockets.”

And so, in the end, perhaps it is a small world after all.

Pictured above (l–r): Andrew Bergstrom, Larry Stoudenmire and Melissa Whetzel
Ah, summer. Lounging around with a good book at the pool, cooking out with friends in the backyard, collecting seashells with loved ones at the beach: It’s a wonder we can fill the long, slow hours of the day … right?

Yeah, right. For most of us, the lazy days of summer are just a myth – an illusion fabricated from a combination of song titles, excessive heat and childhood memories. Indeed, for Stephanie Auwaerter, lazy summers is a veritable oxymoron.

“This is my go time,” says the director of orientation in the Office of New Student Programs. “I’m here at sun-up, and often into the night. It can be a little nuts around here at this time of year.”

It’s easy to see why, considering that, over the course of the 10 two-day orientation sessions that Auwaerter coordinates each summer, some 3,250 people – including incoming first-year and transfer students and their families – visit the campus with questions, concerns and anxieties about what life will be like at the College of Charleston.

“This place – which to us seems small – can seem so big to new students and their families,” says Auwaerter. “Orientation helps them feel at home. It allows them to get to know the campus and make connections with upperclassmen, faculty and each other. It’s about assuring students that, yes, they will fit in here, and showing parents that, yes, we do have banks here; yes, we do have doctors here; yes, their children can do their laundry here; yes, everything is going to be OK.”

Convincing 2,750 nervous students and their even-more nervous parents that they’re in good hands isn’t just up to Auwaerter. It’s a campuswide effort, involving not just new student programs and the 27 orientation interns that Auwaerter oversees, but dining services, the bookstore, IT, mail services, the treasurer, the registrar and all the academic and student affairs departments – just to name a few. What is up to Auwaerter, however, is making it a success.

“Fortunately, I have a lot of help – both from the staff and the orientation interns,” she says, explaining that – in addition to supporting new student programs and representing the interests of new students in various capacities – much of her academic year is spent training and supervising the sophomores, juniors and seniors who essentially serve as the faces of student orientation. “It’s a really neat group. I feel lucky to have the chance be a part of their lives for four years and to watch them experience, learn and grow.”

Indeed, having a hand in students’ growth and development is what makes all the hot and sticky chaos associated with orientation worth it for Auwaerter.

“In the days when I think I’m going crazy, I just think about the six students who asked me to take their picture on the second day of orientation last year,” she says, recalling that – based on their chummy behavior – she’d assumed they were friends from high school. “When they told me they’d just met the day before, that was all I needed. Just knowing that when those students came back to the College, they’d have each other to help them adjust and to get them through – and that orientation made that possible – it makes all the stress of the summer worthwhile. That, to me, is what it’s all about.”

So, forget goofing off outside or loafing around the house. Auwaerter wouldn’t spend her summer any other way.
Coffee, honey, oatmeal, salt: The ingredients in Amy Achurch’s kitchen cabinet seem pretty standard. Stick around a little while, however, and you’ll see that it’s what she does with these household basics that’s so special.

“You really don’t need fancy ingredients to make a basic soap,” says the assistant director of housing assignments, explaining that the simplest soaps can be made from a pre-made base that’s melted, poured into a mold and refrigerated for a half an hour. Of course, she says, “there are some really complex soaps out there. It really runs the gamut.”

Achurch insists that her soaps are on the simple end of the spectrum. Picking up the colorful glycerin-based soaps on her kitchen counter one by one, she describes the natural oils she uses for fragrance, the dyes she uses for color and the additives – lavender buds, shaved almonds, rose petals, rolled oats, cinnamon and chamomile – she mixes in for texture and visual interest.

“I enjoy experimenting with them,” she says, noting that she also makes fizzy bath bombs out of citric acid and essential oils and body scrubs out of anything from salt to coffee. “I get a lot of recipes online, but I like adding my own touch here and there.”

It’s the personal touches that make Achurch’s soaps and scrubs such popular gifts among her friends and family. The “Sassy Suds,” as they’re stumped, have also sold at craft shows and have even been special-ordered as party and wedding favors.

Still, Achurch says, she makes them primarily for herself.

“I’m obsessive about bath products,” she admits. “I love bubble baths – sometimes I take three a week. That’s how I relax, how I get away. It’s just my way of winding down after a long day.”

It makes sense, then, that she was in the bathtub when the idea of making her own soap first occurred to her three years ago. After doing a little research on the melt-and-pour method of soap making, she decided to give it a try.

“It seemed simple enough,” she says, “but it definitely didn’t come naturally to me at first. It took me a while to learn all the tricks.”

Now that she has all but perfected the melt-and-pour method, however, she’s ready for something a bit more advanced.

“I’d like to get into a little more complicated stuff, like hot-cold process,” she says, explaining that this soap-making method is more time consuming than the melt-and-pour method, but that it’s also more natural and flexible. “I want to experiment more with some other ideas – there’s so much more that I can do. But the hot-cold process is definitely what I want to do next.”

And after that?

“My dream is to have my own business one day, but I understand the commitment it takes to keep up with demand, and I’m not there yet,” says Achurch. “At this point in my life, I don’t want to come home after a full day of work and spend three hours over the stove to make a bar of soap. One day, but not now.”

But, rest assured: When that day comes, her pantry will be stocked.
families,” says Auwaerter. “Orientation helps can seem so big to new students and their questions, concerns and anxieties about what incoming first-year and transfer students summers is a veritable oxymoron. Excessive heat and childhood memories.

Fortunately, I have a lot of help – both upperclassmen, faculty and each other. It’s know the campus and make connections with sophomores, juniors and seniors who representing the interests of new students and student affairs departments – just to treasurer, the registrar and all the academic housing assignments, explaining that the simplest household basics that’s so special.

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“On the days when I think I’m going crazy, I just think about the six students in good hands isn’t just up to Auwaerter. Convincing 2,750 nervous students and have each other to help them adjust and to they’d just met the day before, that was all something a bit more advanced.

“A church insists that her soaps are on the simple end of the spectrum. Picking up the counter one by one, she describes the natural experience, learn and grow.”

A church operates off screen and, lucky for us, our characters are much more dynamic. Chris Starr ’83, chair of the computer science department, knows this first hand. In fact, it’s what motivated him some five years ago to organize a Charleston Soccer League team for computer science majors at the College.

“The team was started to get students and faculty out to do stuff together, to get out of the classroom – out from behind the computer,” says Starr. “There’s just so much more to life.” Things like sunlight and fresh air.

“This gives a bunch of geeky software guys a chance to get outside and into the sunshine once a week,” says Starr, adding that the team plays four seasons a year – including the winter season, when it is played indoors (primarily at the College gym) with a smaller, less bouncy ball and referred to as futsal. But even during the summer season, Starr jokes, “you can see us coming because of our pasty glow.” Officially dubbed the Homestarz after Homestar Runner – an Internet-based cartoon popular among gamers and tech-savvy types (“It’s incredibly out there and geeky, just like us,” laughs Starr) – the team is loosely referred to as the Computer Science Soccer Team. That, however, is a bit misleading.

“It’s mostly for computer science students and alumni, but we’ve had faculty, staff, students and alumni from all over campus over the years,” says Starr. “The team represents the whole College. And not just in warm bodies. The Homestarz represents the supportive environment and helpful community that typifies the College.

“It builds community, and that’s what the College of Charleston is about,” says Starr. “That’s what makes us distinctive. It’s just a really cool community.”

Justin Jaques, a utilities operator in the College’s Central Energy Plant and an outsider to the computer science department, couldn’t agree more. When he was assigned to the Homestarz through a player pool last winter, he was welcomed into the team wholeheartedly.

“I’ve played with them ever since,” says Jaques. “My favorite part of the team is the people. We have a lot of fun on and off of the field.” And fun, of course, is the main objective. “This is about having a Sunday afternoon set aside for play,” says Starr, explaining that the Division 3 team doesn’t bother with organized practices. “We don’t win many games, but we have a lot of fun. We celebrate like we’re winners – we celebrate any goal we can make.”

So, while the Homestarz might not be ready to go up against Brazil, these computer science “nerds” have all the right stuff: active bodies, a supportive and respectful group of friends and the smarts to back it all up.

And that’s a winning combination.
Pictured above (l–r): Homestar Justin Jaques, Andrew Bergstrom and Chris Starr

You’ve seen the movie: Physically unfit, socially inept and intellectually gifted computer nerd struggles against the stunningly athletic, enviably popular and miserably obtuse sports jock for respect, power and romance. Based almost entirely on well-known stereotypes and formulaic narratives, it’s a familiar plotline on the big screen and small screen alike. But the College of Charleston operates off screen and, lucky for us, our characters are much more dynamic.

The BATTERY Project, the College’s initiative to implement a new suite of administrative software applications, recently made significant progress when SunGard Higher Education’s Banner Unified Digital Campus system was chosen to replace the College’s outdated programs.

Banner is the world’s most widely used collegiate administrative suite. It will integrate all the College’s applications into a single environment. These applications include finance, human resources, student, advancement, portal, document imaging, workflow, data, warehouse/store and enrollment management for recruiting and admissions. The new system will provide meaningful new support and improve operations for faculty, staff and students alike.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, the implementation phase of The BATTERY Project will begin this summer with a campuswide kick-off celebration.

For more information about BATTERY, visit cofc.edu/battery, or contact Vice President of Fiscal Services Priscilla Burbage at burbagep@cofc.edu or 953.3578.

• Concrete pile caps and grade beams will continue to be poured at the new science center this summer and should be completed in July.

• At the Cato Center (SOTA project) this summer, scaffolding and decking will be erected and placed on the fifth floor, rebar and post-tension cables will be placed on the fourth floor, reshoring will continue on the third floor and the exterior-wall placement will continue on the first and second floors.

• At the Carolina First Center this summer, ceiling grid installation will be finished up on the arena and concourse levels and work on the presidential suite and area halo will continue.

• At Fort Johnson, the boathouse has been removed to make way for the new Grice building. Construction will begin in October.
WEB DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PRESENTATION

Learn about the strategic plan for the College’s web development project, the campuswide initiative to improve the design, functionality, navigation and content of the College’s website.

WHEN: Monday, June 2, 10 a.m.
WHERE: Beatty Center, Wachovia Auditorium
FEE: None
CONTACT: Andrew Bergstrom, 953.5294 or bergstroma@cofc.edu

TIAA-CREF ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS

Get help making informed decisions and setting up your long-term financial plan in an hour-long session with a TIAA-CREF financial consultant.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 9
WHERE: Lightsey Center basement, room B36
FEE: None
CONTACT: Please enroll at tiaa-cref.org/moc or contact Sandy Butler, 953.5709 or butlers@cofc.edu

BACK-TO-SCHOOL PICNIC

Sit back, relax and enjoy a great meal at this annual event honoring the employees of the College.

WHEN: Wednesday, August 20, 12 p.m.
WHERE: F. Mitchell Johnson Physical Education Center, recreational gym
FEE: None
CONTACT: Alexa Thacker, 953.6673 or thackera@cofc.edu

All information is subject to change. Please verify times, places and registration requirements with listed contact.

NEWS BRIEFS: News You Can Use

- **Lou Burnett**, biology professor and director of Grice Marine Lab, and **Karen Burnett**, research associate in the biology department, received a three-year grant renewal from the National Science Foundation to continue exploring the physiological consequences of mounting an immune defense against bacterial infection.

- **Mikhail Agrest**, senior instructor of physics and astronomy, spoke at the naturalization ceremony for new citizens in the U.S. District Court for South Carolina in April. He will speak at another naturalization ceremony at the Charleston Federal Courthouse again on June 23.

- **A Notice of Election form** must be completed and submitted to human resources within 31 days of employees’ dependent children’s college or university graduation. For more information, contact Sandy Butler at 953.5709 or butlers@cofc.edu.

- Even though the **Faculty and Staff Dining Room** is closed for the summer, the $5 soup-and-salad deal is still available from 11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Charleston Greenhouse, located inside the Stern Center Food Court. For information about summer hours for the other dining locations, visit cofc.edu/diningservices.

- **Summer lap hours for the Stern Center Pool** are Monday–Friday, 7:30–9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. and Monday–Thursday 6–8 p.m. The pool is closed on Saturdays and Sundays.
I spy something ...

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month’s photo quiz, and congratulations to Elizabeth Kassebaum, secretary to the Board of Trustees and vice president of college events, who was the first to guess that the object in question was the plaque inside the center archway of Porters’ Lodge. The 1985 senior class commissioned John Michel – a local artist and a studio art professor at the College from 1973 to 2004 – to create the plaque in honor of Charleston’s Renaissance 200 celebration and the College’s bicentennial.

Take a look at the picture above. The object can be found on campus right now. Do you know what it is? The first person to submit the correct answer will win a tasty lunch for two at Liberty Street Fresh Food Company, compliments of ARAMARK. Good luck!

Send your submission to lutza@cofc.edu by Friday, July 25, 2008. The contest is open to all College faculty and staff. One submission per person, please.