



Technology Report AGM 2016

Sometimes it's hard to describe how much fun it is to work for a small organisation, without legions of support staff, experts on this and that or droves of technical advisers. You're are simply thrust into the deep and you'd better swim.

Last year I wrote about taking on the challenge of building a website for the club. I am happy to report that our site has been operational since July 2015 and is attracting good visitor numbers mainly from NZ and the Czech Republic, but also from the rest of the world. Other clubs are looking at us to see what and how we're doing things and hopefully they can learn a thing or two.

The website is hosted on a cutting edge cloud platform, GCE (Google Cloud Engine), which provides robust back-end services, good pricing and the ability to grow, should the need arise. When it came to building the site itself I decided to employ WordPress framework, which is a tried and tested framework. It is estimated that WordPress powers about 25% of websites globally. The continuous development and testing of the core framework provides relative protection against malicious abuse. WordPress also enjoys the support of a great development community that produce various plugins enhancing the functionality of WP core with new functions. The benefit is quick deployment, inexpensive upgrades and maintenance.

Summary of functions:

- Bilingual site - English and Czech
- SSL connection
- Sections:
 - Home
 - About club
 - Kids
 - Playgroup
 - School
 - Events
 - Gallery (photos feed from Facebook)
 - Reports (past event reports)
 - We Love
 - Partners
 - Approved business directory
 - Useful Links
 - Donation page
 - Fundraising (temporary page)

The usefulness of the site was particularly tested during our Magnesia Fundraising event, Summer Camp Bublava and Obecna Skola movie events. They gave me the opportunity to experiment with custom designed elements, ticketing and payment interfaces.

Good websites need not be expensive. The grand total built cost came to about \$350, whereas monthly hosting is between \$35 and \$50, which is in-line with other providers. Of course this does not calculate any time invested...

As websites are only as good as the content that's on them, I have one person I'd like to express gratitude and that's Aja Hansen. She tirelessly works on event reports to be published on the website and ensures that I upload them with minimum turnaround.

All this effort has been paying off with high Google Search ranking, where the page appears between the top three results for terms such as: "czech club nz, czech club new zealand, czech school nz, czech school new zealand".

My objective in 2016 is focusing on integrating our bank's payment interface to the website to allow us better collection of payments on ticketed events or processing recurring payments, such as school fees.

Amongst other notable activities was Movie Night - Obecna Skola. From a technical perspective it was particularly interesting sourcing the movie as a ultra high resolution (4k) DCP package, delivered via the internet and preparing it for use in a Digital ready cinema. Undoubtedly a skill that will come to fore in subsequent movie projections that we are beginning to work on.

Lastly, I would like to thank to our donors who have offered their financial support towards the costs of running the website. If you are interested promoting your business through our website please contact me to discuss the package of benefits we have on offer.

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