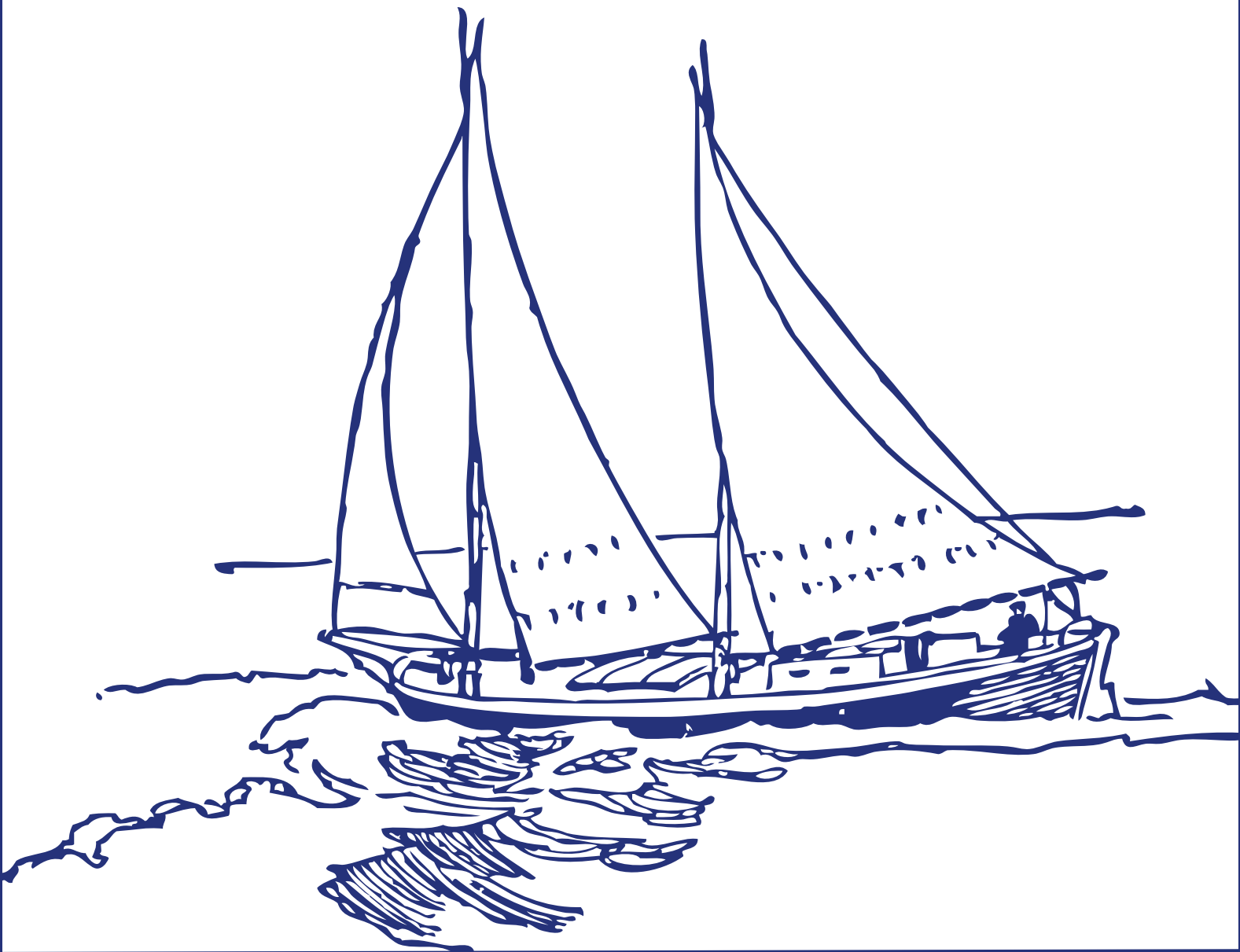




ROSE CITY YACHT CLUB WEBSITE EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

MAY 2026



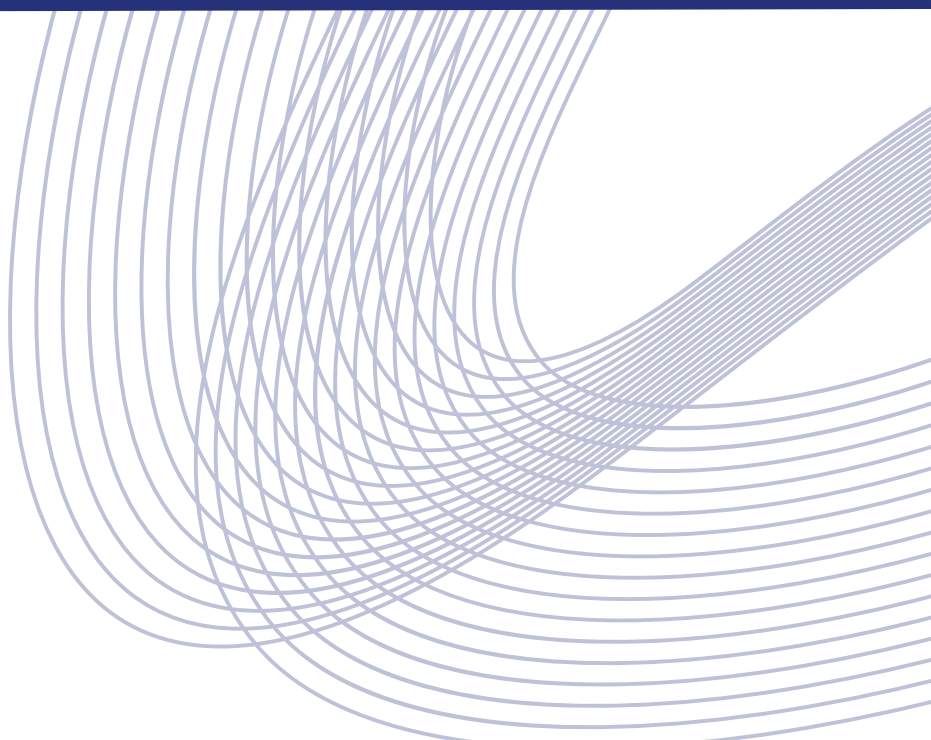


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the Rose City Yacht Club website and identify opportunities to improve usability, member engagement, accessibility, content organization, and overall effectiveness as a recruitment and communication tool. The website successfully communicates the club's history, amenities, and boating culture. The site provides detailed membership information and contains valuable resources for current members. However, several opportunities exist to modernize the user experience, reduce friction in the membership process, improve content organization, and increase engagement among both prospective and current members. This report outlines key strengths, areas for improvement, and prioritized recommendations.

WEBSITE STRENGTHS

Strong Organizational Identity

The website effectively communicates the club's history, culture, volunteer philosophy, and member-focused environment. Visitors quickly understand that RCYC is a community-oriented boating organization with a long history dating back to 1932.

Detailed Membership Information

The membership section provides extensive information regarding:

- Club amenities
- Membership requirements
- Fees
- Moorage information
- Application procedures

This transparency helps prospective members understand expectations before applying.

Valuable Member Resources

The website contains:

- Club documents
- Newsletters
- Event information
- Membership forms
- Club history

These resources support existing members and preserve organizational knowledge.

Mobile Responsiveness

The website functions adequately on mobile devices and uses a modern WordPress theme that adjusts reasonably well to different screen sizes.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Membership Process Complexity

The membership process requires visitors to:

1. Read lengthy instructions
2. Download multiple documents
3. Contact a membership representative
4. Mail a physical check
5. Attend multiple meetings

While these requirements may be necessary for club governance, the online experience feels complex and intimidating to prospective members.

Recommendation

Create a visual "Become a Member" process flow displaying:

Step 1 → Tour the Club

Step 2 → Submit Application

Step 3 → Attend Board Meeting

Step 4 → Attend Membership Meeting

Step 5 → Approval and Induction

This would significantly improve user understanding.

Excessive Text Content

Many pages contain large blocks of text with limited visual hierarchy.

Examples include:

- Membership page
- About page
- Commodore welcome content

Visitors often scan webpages rather than read every paragraph.

Recommendation

Break content into:

- Short sections
- Expandable accordions
- Bullet lists
- Callout boxes

This would improve readability and engagement.

Duplicate Content

Several sections appear repeatedly across multiple pages.

Examples include:

- Commodore's Welcome
- Marina description
- Membership information

This creates maintenance challenges because updates may need to be made in multiple locations.

Recommendation

Consolidate duplicated information into central pages and link to them rather than repeating content.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Forum Challenges

During consultation meetings, the RCYC web team identified low participation within the current bbPress forum as a significant concern. Feedback from members suggests that the platform feels outdated and is not regularly used as a primary communication tool. This challenge is consistent with broader trends across many organizations, where traditional forum-style communication has been replaced by more interactive and mobile-friendly platforms.

The current forum structure requires members to actively visit the website, navigate to discussion boards, and check for updates manually. Modern users increasingly expect real-time notifications, simplified participation, and mobile accessibility.

Alternative Community Platform Options

Option 1: Circle

Circle is a modern community platform designed specifically for membership organizations, clubs, and professional communities.

Advantages:

- Modern user interface
- Mobile-friendly experience
- Real-time notifications
- Organized discussion spaces
- Event management capabilities
- Member directories
- Better engagement analytics

Potential Drawbacks:

- Monthly subscription cost
- Requires migration from existing forum content
- Additional administration and setup

Option 2: Discord

Discord has become a popular communication platform for organizations, hobby groups, and communities.

Advantages:

- Free basic plan
- Real-time communication
- Mobile and desktop apps
- Voice and video channels
- Push notifications
- High member engagement potential

Potential Drawbacks:

- May feel unfamiliar to some members
- Less formal than traditional forums
- Requires moderation and member onboarding

Option 3: **Private Facebook Group**

A private Facebook group offers a familiar platform for many users.

Advantages:

- Low implementation cost
- Familiar user experience
- Strong notification system
- Easy photo and event sharing

Potential Drawbacks:

- Requires Facebook accounts
- Limited organizational control
- Privacy concerns for some members

Recommended Approach

Based on the needs of Rose City Yacht Club, Circle appears to offer the strongest balance between professionalism, member engagement, ease of use, and long-term sustainability. Circle provides many of the organizational benefits of a traditional forum while offering modern features that encourage participation and ongoing member interaction.

If budget constraints are a concern, Discord represents a viable alternative that can significantly improve engagement while minimizing costs.

Regardless of the platform selected, increasing communication accessibility and reducing participation barriers will likely result in higher member engagement than the current bbPress forum structure.

NAVIGATION OPPORTUNITIES

Important information is sometimes buried several clicks deep.

Prospective members likely seek answers to:

- Cost
- Slip availability
- Membership requirements
- Club activities
- Contact information

Recommendation

Create a dedicated "Join RCYC" landing page that highlights:

- Membership benefits
- Costs
- Membership process
- Frequently asked questions
- Contact information

User Login Friction

Feedback from club leadership indicates some members dislike login requirements.

While security remains important, excessive login barriers can discourage engagement.

Recommendation

Review:

- Which content truly requires login protection
- Whether some resources can be made public
- Opportunities for single sign-on or simplified login processes

TECHNICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Plugin Audit

The site currently operates with approximately twenty WordPress plugins.

Potential risks include:

- Slower page performance
- Security vulnerabilities
- Plugin conflicts
- Increased maintenance workload

Recommendation

Conduct an annual plugin review to:

- Remove unused plugins
- Eliminate overlapping functionality
- Maintain security updates

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Opportunities exist to improve search visibility.

Recommendations:

- Add stronger page titles
- Improve metadata
- Use more descriptive headings
- Optimize images

This could help prospective members discover the club more easily.

Accessibility Improvements

The website should continue improving accessibility by:

- Verifying image alt text
- Reviewing color contrast
- Improving heading structure
- Ensuring keyboard navigation compatibility

These improvements benefit all users and support accessibility standards.

CONCLUSION

Rose City Yacht Club possesses a strong organizational identity, valuable member resources, and a well-established online presence. The greatest opportunities for improvement involve simplifying the membership journey, improving content organization, reducing user friction, and modernizing member engagement tools. Implementing these recommendations would strengthen both prospective member recruitment and current member satisfaction while maintaining the club's unique culture and volunteer-driven traditions.

THANK YOU

