



Annual Report 10/11 - Debenham web site

<http://debenham.onesuffolk.net>

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1. Introduction

This report is a brief summary of highlights and changes made to the Debenham web site over the past 12 months.

2. Revenue

The table below shows the month-on-month revenues received, gained, lost and forecast

Revenue (£)												
YTD received	0	35	200	200	440	455	515	515	515	625	625	625
YTD gained	0	35	110	110	310	325	345	345	345	455	455	455
YTD lost	0	0	0	0	45	45	45	45	115	423	423	423
10/11 forecast	703	738	813	813	858	873	893	893	755	625	625	625

In summary:

1. Revenue generation for end fiscal 10/11 out turned at **£625** – a net gain of **£32** over the previous year. But it remains lower than some previous years mainly due to the lack of 'big' front page sponsors who would each be worth £300pa.
2. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to find new sponsors – for three very different reasons:
 - a. Companies appear to be cutting back on their advertising budgets in these recessionary times – as witnessed by the number of adverts lost
 - b. Skilled Trades in particular are completely the opposite – some have not renewed their adverts on the basis that they have so much work to do, they dare not advertise!
 - c. As witnessed by the launch of the new website (see later), where advertising is FREE, there seems to be a degree of apathy amongst Debenham businesses to advertise themselves for the benefit of local residents and tourists

3. Key Indicators

A set of measures designed to show how the web site is performing in terms of growth and popularity. Regrettably, since Jun of last year our host provider could not provide reliable stats. Up to the point of failure, the indications were that traffic to the website continues to grow.

4. Interface with UK Hosts

Overall, UK Hosts have been quite quick and cooperative if something goes badly wrong e.g. database corruption, albeit a fairly rare event. In terms of overcoming perceived issues e.g. spamming, no solution has been found. Suggestions on alternatives have received little response and normally need chasing. In addition, a large number of files relating to a Debenham photogallery and Parish Council minutes from before 2007 have been 'lost'

5. Summary of web site activities

- Continual spamming of the News Item feature remained a problem. 'Dodgy' comments can only be removed by manual intervention by the Editor until UK Hosts come up with a solution. This was not forthcoming and remained a problem. One specific topic on closure of Debenham Resource Centre was being robotically spammed faster than I could delete the pornography – hence had to be withdrawn!!
- A broader set of advertising options have been implemented. These provide a set of 6 options, as against the previous 2, each designed to appeal to different sorts of advertisers and their differing requirements. The option has also been made available for bespoke forms of advertising for which I will quote a specific price. These were quite successful but nevertheless did not generate a high level of income – albeit maybe more than if these options had not been available
- The forthcoming changes to Suffolk County Council budgets led to a proliferation of topics and news items in an effort to keep everyone informed on proposed changes

I believe the website continues to provide a valuable service to the community

6. New website

In Oct 10, I submitted a Strategy Proposal to Parish Council in which I outlined how the website needed to change into the future. This was based upon achieving three criteria:

- Reduced cost
- Technically superior website
- Better support

I also proposed a three phase approach. This was accepted – since it would only involve my time and no cost to PC – and the benefits were to be welcomed.

- Phase 1 – Feasibility. This tested the new systems' capability to deliver a world class website and also to test the level of support that would be forthcoming. It was completed in Dec 10 and I concluded that the three success criteria were achievable. PC agreed a GO for Phase 2
- Phase 2 - Content import. This phase involved importing all the relevant content from the old website. This proved to be a bit tricky as the new system doesn't do a very good job of importing existing web pages. It was completed at end Feb 11 and again PC agreed a GO for Phase 3.
- Phase 3 – Launch preparation. Technical issues had to be resolved with the existing host provider in order ensure a trouble free launch. At the same time, greater publicity was given to existing advertisers, clubs and organisation in order to ensure sufficient content on board in time for launch. The launch date was agreed as 19 April. I am pleased to say the launch went very smoothly and no issues arose. An end-of-project report will be prepared by end June in order to assess the effectiveness of the new website.

Since launch:

- A polling question asking for a comparison with the old website is currently showing that 96% of 68 people who have voted think the new website is 'better' or 'much better' than the old one
- The new host providers - 'onesuffolk' – voted Debenham as Village of the Month for May 11
- The website has been visited 5,706 times by 2,054 unique visitors from 43 different countries – that averages around 100 hits per day!!
- If you Google 'Debenham, Suffolk', we rank No 1 and googling 'Debenham' we rank as No 5 – not bad for a few weeks!

7. Acknowledgements

I would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to all the following for their work and support over the past year:

- **Suzie Morley** – Sub-editor who provides a specific Family History web site. This has world-wide appeal for those seeking information on Debenham. A measure of its success is that 97 people from around the world are tracing Debenham roots.
- **Tony Hutt** – Sub-editor who is maintaining all the Church and Church Organisation pages for the Debenham Benefice and other churches in this area.
- **Simon Abbott** – Sub-editor who has recently taken on the task of coordinating all the information available on the Debenham Skatepark Project and ensuring their web site is kept up-to-date
- **Ann Evans** – Sub-editor who has been gathering together photogalleries of Debenham both now and in the past – to replace those that have been lost
- **Lynne Cockerton, Ian Baldwin and Simon Pyett** – Parish councillors who supported the development of the new website by testing new features and offering constructive advice
- **Darryl Kirk** – UK Hosts (our previous hosting service) who ensured a very smooth changeover to the new website by re-directing addresses from the old website
- **Kerry Burn** – From 'onesuffolk' who provided excellent support during the new website development phase and continues to support post-launch issues

8. Conclusion

The main event of the year has been the move to the new website which I hope will now be fit for purpose for the next few years. However, I do not stop there. The new system does provide extra features which I will be launching over the next few months. One slight disappointment is the lack of any feedback from visitors as to how the website can be improved and what new features they would like to see.

I am also putting some emphasis on promoting Debenham as a great place to visit – so have been a bit disappointed at the apparent lack of interest from local shops and businesses in advertising their services. I would like to remind everyone that businesses, clubs, organisations etc can advertise for FREE. And a website has global reach as witnessed by the 43 countries who have visited so far!!

I believe that Debenham now has a world class community website and meets the needs of the community for rapid communications.

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