

Training In Cybermissions

Practice of Cybermissions – Cybermissions 102

Guide To The Course

The enrolment form and course details can be found at:

<http://www.cybermissions.org/training/>

Most of the course will take place in the Interaction Center at:

<http://www.cybermissions.org/interact/>

Objective: To encourage and equip Internet evangelists and cybermissionaries to work effectively and strategically in using the Internet to fulfill the Great Commission.



Instructors: John Edmiston is the course coordinator, facilitators include experienced members of the Internet Evangelism Coalition Global Forum. However the course is meant to operate in a community-based adult-learning mode where we teach each other and where all real learning is due to the work of the Holy Spirit.(see Matthew 23:8).

Organization: Cybermissions.Org is a division of the Asian Internet Bible Institute (<http://www.aibi.ph>), which is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization based in Los Angeles California. The AIBI is a member of the Internet Evangelism Coalition.

Who Can Enroll?: Great Commission Christians over the age of 18. You must agree with the Nicene Creed.

Educational Method: Online classes, readings, forums and reflective journaling. Each week's lesson shall consist of three readings plus six additional links to websites that illustrate the points in that lesson. Students shall discuss the readings and links together in the class forum and personally reflect on the course in their journal. The course facilitator shall simply prompt and guide the process of adult reflection. Readings vs. Links - Readings are for in-depth discussion. Links are for quick scanning and browsing. We expect you to spend 20 minutes going through each reading and just five minutes looking quickly at each link. (Hint: Don't get bogged down with some of the links, such as Usability.com, which offer vast amounts of information - bookmark it and return to it later.)

Time Commitment: Around 4hrs a week depending on reading speed - 1 hour to read the 3 articles, 30 minutes to visit 6 links at 5 mins each, 30 mins to write in the forums, 30 minutes to write in the journal, 1 hour to work on the strategic plan for your ministry.

Cost: \$37.50 - There are two reasons for the cost:

- a) Personal Motivation - people who donate tend to press on to complete the course and do the assessment while people who do it for free tend to stop half-way.
 - b) Gratitude - all those Scriptures about oxen threshing etc. This ministry costs around \$6500 a year to run in overheads alone. Your donations are a real help.
- You can pay by IKOBO , Paypal or by cheque on a US bank

Scholarships may be available for students in developing nations. Please email me at johned@aibi.ph to ask for a scholarship

Texts: Print texts tend to be expensive or unavailable in many countries so we have deliberately not set a compulsory textbook. The closest thing we have to a textbook is the online Web Evangelism Guide by Tony Whittaker (who will us during take weeks 2, 3 and 10). Quite a few of the set readings are from it. However **Perspectives On The World Christian Movement** edited by Ralph Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne and **E-vangelism** by Andrew Carrega would both be very helpful in this course.

Assessment:

Cybermissions 102: A 2000 word (4 page) strategic plan: *That answers the six questions: "who, what, when, where, how and why" - relating to a specific Internet-based ministry project, and which applies the principles taught in both Cybermissions 101 and 102*

A) The main assessment is a 2000 word term-paper which you will upload to your assessment drop-box at the end of the course. Preferably the paper will be a **strategic plan** for your current or anticipated future Internet ministry.

The strategic plan should cover a) the biblical, theological, missiological and Christological basis of your ministry. b) The current status of the online ministry. c) The future plans for the ministry and d) how you intend to get there. It should cover such topics as your target group, and the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis), technologies employed and why they are appropriate and how you will engage in partnerships with other ministries both online and offline. *(Strategic plans can be much longer than 2000 words and that is fine, there is no upper word limit. Write as much as you need to write to help you plan effectively.)*

B) Students who are not in a position to draw up a strategic plan for a ministry can do alternative assessment. This will consist of a 2000 word paper on "The theology, future and ministry potential of cybermissions", plus reviews of any five of the readings in the course. The review should summarise each of the five readings and also give a personal reaction to each of the five chosen readings. This option is a concession. Students who are in a position to draw up a strategic plan should do so.

You will submit your assessment by email to johned@aibi.ph

Outcome: A strategic plan for your online ministry. You will also receive a Certificate of Completion from the AIBI. This is similar to in-service courses in the workplace.

ONLINE CLASSROOM

- The [Interaction Center](#) is where your online classrooms are located and where you participate in forums, use a reflective journal or upload certain files. You will find links to these on the left-hand side of the relevant subject area.
- The **forums** are public discussion areas for each subject. They will have topics - and you are expected to contribute a reply/replies to the question being asked. The whole class can read the forum and so it becomes a place for Christian discussion and debate (in a spirit of mutual edification). Personal attacks ("flames") are not allowed.
- The **reflective journals** are for your personal reflection on the course material. Only you and the lecturer get to see what is written there. You can freely express yourself.

Rules, Disclaimers etc

By enrolling you acknowledge that you realize that the following activities are banned at both the AIBI and Cybermissions.Org:

1. Unsolicited commercial e-mail or "spam". Multi-level marketing. Attempting to fund-raise from students or faculty.
2. Uploading viruses, exe files, pif files, pornographic material, music files or copyright material or sharing such files with fellow students.
3. Abusing, harassing or "flaming" other students or faculty.

The **AIBI or Cybermissions.Org** cannot be held responsible for the actions of third-parties such as other students or spammers or ISP's or those who post offensive material. If you notice such material on a forum or in a class-related email by all means bring it to our attention and we will check it out, and if necessary, remove it from the website.



Using The Interaction Center / Doing The Course

1. Go to the Interaction Center then find Cybermissions 101, double click on the blue link - on the left you will see small yellow folder icons labeled – Week 1, Week 2 etc
2. Double click on the folder for the week you are studying.
3. In each folder you will see a number of readings (3 or 4) and about half a dozen recommended links.
4. Study the readings in-depth (20 minutes each); just browse the links and take notes (3-5 minutes each)
5. Open the Forum (Cybermissions Forum)
6. Comment on the readings and links in the Forum. If someone else has commented on that reading before you then post your comment as a “reply”. This keeps all the comments on an article in one “thread” and it is much easier to follow the discussion.
7. Sometimes, with long comments, you can lose contact with the server (which times out) and your masterpiece will vanish into cyberspace. Therefore do your posts in a text processor (such as Notepad) or a word processor (such as WordPerfect or Word) then cut and paste the text to the Cybermissions forums. Remember to save your work to your hard-drive.
8. If you cut and paste from a Word document you can sometimes get “funny characters” appearing in emails or text based forums. To prevent this save as: “text with line breaks”, close the file, re-open (it should look different and be in Courier font), then cut and paste.
9. You will also notice a Reflective Journal. You can use these for personal musings about the Cybermissions course.
10. If you have difficulties you can email me in johned@aibi.ph - if you do not get a response in 48 hrs then feel free to email me again as sometimes emails go astray.
11. If you get behind for some reason, or if you have to travel, then you can catch up. Just go back to the point where you were in the forums and add your comments. The forums will still be up for eight weeks after the course so you have 20 weeks in which to do the 12-lesson course. However you will get more from the inter-student discussions if you can keep up with the flow.
12. Please remember to pay the \$37.50 fee if you can afford to. The donation link is:
<http://www.aibi.ph/aibi/donate.htm> and you can pay by credit card using Ikobo or Paypal, or by check. Make checks out to:
AIBI-International, 514 E. Desford St. Carson CA 90745 USA

In the **Interaction Center** in week one you will see something like this (The illustration below is just an example - don't try clicking on the links here, they will only work in the Interaction Center):

Week 1 - Website Design & Construction 🖋️ +

Things: Website Design and Construction - Accessibility, Design Tips & Tricks, CSS etc.

🖋️ 🗂️ [Reading 1](#) - When Web Pages Don't Work - from IBM
1
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Reading 2](#) - Why Christian Web Designers Need CSS
5
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Reading 3](#) - Web Site Re-Design - read both parts please.
10
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Major Resource](#) - Christian Web Masters.Com - LOTS of information for Christian web site designers
11
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Major Resource: Website Design Help Forums](#) - SitePoint Forums
12
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Major Resource - Web Developer's handbook](#) - A wonderful array of tips, tricks, CSS styles and resources for webmasters.
14
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Link 1](#) - IT & Society - Web Navigation (studies on ease of use for users)
15
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Link 2](#) - useit.com - Jakob Nielsen's page on web usability.
20
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [A Useful Blog On E Ministry](#) - Covers marketing, design and reponse, regularly updated
22
[url](#)

🖋️ 🗂️ [Link 3](#) - Usable Web.Com - thousands of links on web design and usability.
25
[url](#)

  [Link 4](#) - IBM Web Design Guidelines



30

[url](#)

  [Link 5](#) - The Mission Station - section on computers, internet and missionaries.

35

[url](#)

  [Link 6](#) - MissionaryTechSupport.com - everything missionaries need to know about computers and Shawn, who runs the site, is very helpful.

45

[url](#)

Click on the links and read the material

Then comment on what you have read in the FORUM

The FORUM is located on the left hand side and has an icon that looks like a small stack of books.

Click on the FORUM link and post a message about what you have read.

You will follow this procedure for all six weeks of this course.

You will submit your assessment by email to johned@aibi.ph

Week 1- Website Design And Construction

When Websites Don't Work (IBM)

Website Redesign Part 1

Website Redesign Part 2

We are nearly there! Just two more weeks to go. This week we will look at web-design and redesign issues. For the first two years of your website you will probably have a major redesign every six months and you tweak it to suit your customers and to incorporate new technologies. It is important to design websites by putting the customers needs first. What do they need? What do they want? Do they have broadband or dial-up? Is the website well structured and clearly laid out? After that you can make decisions about graphics, logos, style sheets and content issues to best serve the group you wish to minister to.

As usual post your comments and keep working on your strategic plan – you should be close to having a first draft done.

Some questions to keep in mind:

- What is the purpose of your website?
- How is the purpose reflected in the design? How are form and function related?
- Is your website cluttered, unclear or slow loading? Does it annoy people?
- Can an 85-year-old grandmother from Kentucky use it without getting confused?
- Is the English level suitable for most international visitors?
- Can a visually-disabled or color-blind person use it? Is it high contrast?
- Is it search-engine friendly?

Does it clearly convey the message you wish it to convey, and that message only?

Week 2 - Community-Building Online And Using A CMS

Creating & Supporting Online Communities
Creating A Sense Of Community Around A Website
Four Smart Ways To Run Online Communities

One of the smartest ways to create community around a website is by the use of web portal and bulletin board software – such as TikiWiki, PHPNuke, XOOPS, Mambo, PostNuke, PHPBB2 and many others.

Many of these can be found at Sourceforge the online home of Open Source software projects and a site that you should bookmark now! The web address is <http://www.sourceforge.net> .

Reviews of web portal software can be found at: <http://www.opensourcecms.com/>, which also gives you the ability to test demo copies of the software to see which program suits you best. All the Open Source software we recommend is free. We do not advocate using “pirate” software. Free does not mean inferior, many of these programs are awesome. (Thank you Glen Davies for Interact! <http://interact.sourceforge.net/>)

Setting up the software is one thing, maintaining momentum and interest in bulletin boards and discussion forums is quite another. This week we will focus on the dynamics of running an online community.

Questions to keep in mind include:

- What enhances community online?
- What kills community online?
- How can you build interest among participants?
- What are the characteristics of a “safe” community?
- Can a community be “too safe”? Why is a small amount of conflict essential?
- How can you get volunteers to man bulletin boards and chat rooms?
- What is the best kind of community for your target group?
- What language/s should you have your site discussion areas in?

Week 3 – Pragmatics –Web Marketing, Search Engines, Online-Offline Synergies

Ralph Wilson's Web Marketing Checklist

Recruiting Volunteers

Integrating Online and Offline Aspects Of Life

This week we look at some of the nitty-gritty practical details like getting in the search engines, finding volunteers and not letting your website run your life. Web ministry can be absolutely exhausting, there is always "one more thing" to do. It can also be very quiet and dull if you don't get a good listing in the search engines!

As usual post your comments and keep working on your strategic plan – when its done email it to me at johnded@aibi.ph! I am looking forward to reading them.

Some questions to consider:

- Which are the best search engines for your target group?
- How can your friends assist your ministry?

Do you really NEED to be still working at midnight

Week 4 – The Local Church In Cybermissions

How a local church can have a global impact by using the Internet. Looks at how churches can best design and implement their websites for evangelistic impact. Includes an article from the Vatican!

- Questions
- a) how can local churches get a vision for Cybermissions?
 - b) What tips and tricks can improve church websites?
 - c) Why are some websites so awful (see the Evangel Praise website)?
 - d) how can a church webmaster be a vital part of the ministry team?

Week 5 - Reaching Major Religions Online

Very few Christian websites target Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Bahai, Shinto, Chinese religionists, animists etc. Yet these are major blocks of people who have yet to hear the gospel! This week we will study some of these religions and consider how they can be won for Christ.

Is there a major religion that God has put on your heart?

What are some of their interests and values?

How can a bridge site be designed that addresses these interests and values?

Whats pecial precautions or technical considerations might be required?

Week 6 – Unreached People Groups

43 Target Nations

Chinese Internet Use

10/40 Window

Global Peoples

This week we look at using the Internet for cross-cultural missionary work. Many countries are inaccessible to conventional missionaries or have ongoing conflicts or other restricting factors. The Internet is now global and while many members of such nations will not have Internet access - some will, and these are often the leaders, the innovators, the movers and shakers within the culture. We have students in this course from Mongolia, Ghana, Uganda, Benin, Cameroon, and even the Central African Republic. In fact most of the Cybermissions course students are from developing nations!

We look at 43 nations that are amenable to a Cybermissions approach, at the phenomenal growth of the Internet in China and at the 10/40 Window – the area where most of the unreached people groups are. We will also look at some missiological data about Global Peoples. The Internet is now multi-lingual and multi-cultural and can take the gospel to the most remote parts of the world.

1. An analysis of and reaction to each of the main readings.
2. A couple of quick comments on two of the recommended links.

It is also recommended that you start work on your final paper – the strategic plan for your online ministry. Start jotting down a few ideas that you will develop later.

Some questions to keep in mind:

- How can the Internet influence leaders who then can influence others?
- How is the Internet less culturally restricted than a conventional missionary - who has an accent, clothes, culture and “foreign presence” ?
- What are the main safety advantages of Cybermissions?
- How can a well-done web site in a single “mega-language” such as Spanish, Arabic, French, Portuguese, German, Dutch, English or Chinese reach many countries?
- How can a web site target a single cultural minority group? What are the advantages of being one of the few websites addressing a particular town or region?

How do the slow connections in many parts of the world affect how you would plan your website? Is it a good idea to have low-band-width and high-band-width versions of the same website.