

2 steps forward, 3 steps back

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It had to happen... things had been going a little too well in getting to this stage.

"What?" you ask..
"the Media Gallery going down, hard." I say.

Having trialed a number of gallery systems on the development site and finally determining which one was the best fit for the eFootball system, then installed it on the Bulldogs website, all was good. The integration work went well, and was followed by uploading about 3800 images - a long and tedious process to say the least! Over the next several days I labouriously went through them, categorising, sorting, and culling them to leave us with a solid set of 1700 images from the last two years of Bulldogs activities.

Still all well and good.

Well, at this stage it seemed like a good idea to put the gallery live to beta test it, and in the process invite others to send me more images of Bulldogs past and present. {josquote}The launch went well and we had over 2000 visits to the site{/josquote} in the week or so that it was up and running.

With all going well I returned to the site a few days later and found various errors cropping up - all related to database issues. A chat to technical support found that there was some unannounced server maintainence going on and that that was responsible for the database problems - and it should all be fine once they were finished. What didn't become apparent until a few days later was that the DB problems had started during the automated DB backups, causing them to be corrupted.

Most things settled down after the server maintainence had been completed with the core systems returning to normal operation, however the Gallery still was having problems. Lots of debugging and issue tracking later and we found the root of the problem: The live database had become corrupted with DB system files (and table data files) missing. Normally this would have been easily worked around by repairing the database installation and restoring the tables from the backups.

... but the backups were corrupted too... arse!

So, after trying to piece together the data files and several other tricks in an attempt to restore the data and failing, the only recourse was to remove the corrupted application and reinstall - which also means its contents were lost since the system is reliant on the database for its file keeping and organisation.

So, back 3 steps we go.

On the plus side, I have added several new features to the system, many of which are not yet apparent to all users. Some of {josquote}the minor cosmetic touches include a Time Zome clock on the front page{/josquote} (handy to let people know when events are actually happening), Random Article listings and a Tab Listing.

In the background we have a project management system in place, a fading article scroller, a system for easily generating web based forms, an inline gallery system (watch some of the future articles to see that) and some search bots to tie more of the data together.

Also being trialed presently are two different types of event management system, with the aim to use one of these to advertise Bulldogs and BSAFA events. Both systems are performing well, and both have their own strengths, though neither one has yet distinguished itself as the ideal solution. I anticipate that one or the other will end up being selected in the next week or so and start to make an appearance then.

Poll votes are still coming in... and thankfully, so is some of the historical data to answer them with. Roster updates are enjoying a surge in popularity and my aim is to have the near complete list of all Bulldogs teams since 1993 online soon. We are still after more information about past tours, camps and experiences, so please, email in your news, views and files to webmaster@gbbulldogs.org.

That about wraps it up for the moment, I'll blog again when some of these issues have been resolved.