# HOW TO GET STARTED
## *with classreport.org*

## OPENING FAQ

**\*QUESTION: Why do I want to start a classreport.org page?**

**\*ANSWER:** Because it's a wonderfully functional and inexpensive way to keep everyone in your class in touch with one another -- now and for always. Planning reunions will be a snap because you won't have to track down anyone. That will save your class time and money that you can put back into your reunion or donate to a good cause. You can even buy reunion tickets from the website. You can archive almost anything on the website, including your yearbook, your school newspaper, personal photos, even videos of your football games and other events. You can even add music jukeboxes to hear your favorite songs. And all this is stored forever. It's like a time capsule of your class. And you don't have to bury it! You can access it anytime you want.

**\*QUESTION: So why isn't a class Facebook page good enough?**

**\*ANSWER:** We highly recommend a class Facebook page. It's great for quick, texting-like communications between classmates or for making immediate announcements. But a Facebook page offers only a fraction of the advantages listed above, especially when it comes to archiving material and planning reunions.

**\*QUESTION: What does it cost?**

**\*ANSWER:** Most of the other reunion-type websites (such as classmates.com) are going to try to charge you – everyone, as an individual – every chance they get. Classreport.org asks for a $15 a month funding fee that is collected through voluntary donations of classmates. Also: All newly graduated classes get five years of free service (time to get out of college and start making big bucks!) before funding is required. Also: Once a class passes its $50^{th}$ reunion, no additional funding is required. Also: Once a class is paid in advance through its $50^{th}$ reunion, no additional fee is required. Also: The website frequently runs two-for-one specials – that is, pay for one month, get credit for two. Also: Even if fee donations lapse, no class gets cut off. The only thing that happens is some advanced administrative features are no longer available. It's not hard for a class to become permanently funded in almost no time. When double-funding is offered, you can fund your class for $90 in donations a year, or $900 for an entire decade. Also: Anyone who donates, even just $15, gets credit on the homepage of the website. Also: There are no ads, no spam, no annoyances of any kind connected to this website template.

**\*QUESTION: Why is the school district pushing this?**

**\*ANSWER:** Because the district and the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation would like to see all classes organized in this way. And because classreport.org has emerged as the web template of choice among PISD classes. Nearly a third of all the graduating classes in PISD history already have a classreport.org page up and operating. Every class has its own template already set up, even the 2011 classes at all five high schools. The district dislikes the idea of recommending websites whose only interest is making money. This website is extremely functional and very inexpensive. And it's a lot of fun!

# GETTING STARTED: Administrators

   *Remember! Your template has already been created. You can find it by going to www.classreport.org and clicking on the links to your state, city and school.

   *You will need a class administrator. And it is recommended that you have at least one co-administrator and maybe two. These are people who manage the content of the site and police the content. If your class has no administrator, there is a homepage link where you can volunteer. If you would like to be a co-administrator, simply contact the administrator and have them inform the classreport.org people to add you to the administrator list.

   *TIP! If you see a class administrator already listed on your site – and it's clear that they could use some help in getting the site going – contact that person and offer to help as a co-administrator. Administrators who essentially abandon their sites, after a while, will be dropped.

   *Administrators have two primary initial functions, which we will cover below. 1.) To enter a class roster so that all classmates will have a profile page waiting for them, and; 2) To post the "then" and "now" photos on each profile page. Each classmate has access and control over the content of his own profile page – except for those two photos ("then" and "now") at the top of the page. Only the administrators can post those. This is a means to verify that the person pictured is actually that person and that no one is trying to pull a fast one.

# GETTING STARTED: The Class Roll

   *The first thing you need to do is enter your class roll – that is, you need to type in the first and last names of the people in your class. This is where, for the first time, you will get introduced to The Office.

   *Only administrators have access to The Office. This is not intended to be a full tutorial on everything you can do in The Office. Once you really get into creating content, you can browse through it and see all the things you can do. For now you want to look in the left column for the link that says "Add Names."

   *You can see that it's possible to add class roll names 10 at a time. Just type in each classmate's commonly used first and last names (middle initial is not required) and, if female and married, her married last name in the far right column. Click OK and those 10 people will have profile pages automatically generated. Go to the next 10. Do that for everyone in the class and this part is done!

# GETTING STARTED: The Profile Page

   *You are going to want everyone to fill in his or her own profile page – so you might as well set an example and start with your own. You can add and edit anytime you like. You can put almost anything you like on your profile page: photos, videos, Facebook links, and even music jukeboxes.

   *Without a doubt, the most important thing is CONTACT INFORMATION! Be sure to include your address, phone number and email address. If most of your classmates follow your lead – and keep their information up-to-date – finding people for things like reunion will be a snap. Classreport.org has features that allow you to compile contact lists with just a couple of clicks.

   *Have fun with your profile page! It allows for limitless text. You can literally write your autobiography here, if you like.

# GETTING STARTED: Profile Page Pictures

*This is the final thing we'll cover in this opening segment. This will be your first crack at something fairly sophisticated. This covers the best way to post what are commonly called the "then" and "now" photos at the top of each profile page.

*The "then" photo is normally a graduation photo, usually out of the yearbook. "Now" photos are current photos, posted at intervals as we -- gulp! – grow older. This is probably the most popular single feature on the entire website. Why? Because people are very curious about how their classmates have changed! Posting these pictures – and then keeping up with them – is one of the best ways to drive people to your website and to maintain interest in keeping up with the website. And, most importantly, it's a great way to keep contact information current. Why? Because your classmates do it themselves. Remember: Only administrators (those with access to The Office) can post these "then" and "now" pictures.

*"Then" photos are something you can do right now. All you need is a yearbook and a scanner. "Now" photos are something that you gather from various places, starting about 5-10 years after graduation. You can have people send them to you. You can copy them off Facebook. Or you can take the pictures yourself at class events.

*It is highly recommended that you use some kind of photo editing software. Why? Because it is critical that photos be cropped to the right size. Plus, as you get better at this, you will want to edit photos for maximum visual appeal. And you may want to learn how to build fancy "billboards" for display on the homepage of your website and elsewhere. The industry standard is Photoshop. You can buy a basic version called Photoshop Elements for around $60-$80. This will not only make you a whiz at classreport.org web mastering, but it will allow you to professional edit all the photos you take -- for family, business, etc. The basics are easy to learn and we will cover many of them here in future classreport.org tutorials.

***Scanning!** Here's where you start posting your "Then" photos. Scan each page of the senior section of the yearbook – and do it at a high resolution. You should see something close to a 600 dpi among your scanning options. Use that one.

*Make a separate file out of each page that you scan. Tip! Use the page number when you name the file so they will be easy to find. These are your master pages.

*You now need to break down each master page into individual photos. Go ahead put a rough crop on the first photo and save it using the person's last name and first name initial as the title. Then call up the master page again and repeat this for each individual photo on the page. Be sure to create new titles for each individual. You don't want to change that master page or you may have to rescan it. You should end up with about 20-30 master pages, each one broken down in separate files for each individual on that page – and a photo file for everyone in your class.

***Editing!** Now call up one individual photo for editing. It should still be at 600 dpi.

*First thing – you may see a dot matrix pattern that makes the photo look bad. This is common with photos in books and newspapers. To get rid of it, find the "Filter" and "Blur More" buttons at the top. Zap it with a couple of doses of "Blur More" and the dot patterns will bleed together and you will have a dot-free photo.

*Next thing – put a precise crop on the photo. Here are the exact dimensions to make it fit perfectly on the profile page.

## WIDTH: 2.222 inches.  HEIGHT: 3.014 inches. RESOLUTION: 72 dpi

Find the crop tool and type in these dimensions at the top of the page. Then drag the crop took across the photo until you see the crop you want. This should be just across the top of the head and just to the outside of each ear. Finally, go Right Click and Crop.

*Last thing – Look for a command that says "Auto Contrast." Apply that and the color balance and light balance of the photo will improve substantially. If it looks the way you want it, click Save and the photo is now ready to be posted on that person's profile page.

***Posting!** And it's simple from this point on. Go to THE OFFICE and look for EDIT/DELETE NAMES and PROFILES. You will go to this location often. This is where you go to make your own changes to classmates' profile pages. This is where you can add contact information on people as you find them. This is where you go on those sad occasions when a classmate passes away and you need to list them as deceased. But for now, all we want to do is add photos.

*Click on EDIT/DELETE NAMES and PROFILES and navigate your way to the classmate's profile page. At the top you will see two upload buttons, the one for the yearbook photo on the left and the current photo on the right. Here, we are only concerned with the yearbook photo. Click on that one.

*A new box will appear which is pretty self-explanatory. Browse until you find the photo file to be loaded. Then click SUBMIT. You can now return to that person's profile page, hit the refresh button and you will see the photo at the top. Be sure to hit SAVE at the bottom. Do that, and the homepage will reflect that an update has been made to that page and that will serve as an alert for people to go see it.

**THAT'S IT!**

**FINAL THOUGHT:** This is just the basics of how to get your website off the ground. This gives your classmates a place to actually go, and to visit and to contribute with their own profile information. Of course, it's up to you and others to help spread the word, through phone calls, emails and especially Facebook. This is why we also recommend a class Facebook page. Locating people is the next critical step, which we will cover later. Be patient and diligent and let the snowball grow. You will quickly go from dozens of connected classmates to hundreds in a short time. AND REMEMBER! Once you've done most of this set-up work, you never have to do it again!

**TIP!** As you contact classmates, urge them to REGISTER on the site and then bookmark it. Registering is how you will know that a permanent connection to that classmate has been made.

**ANOTHER TIP!** Take pride in your website. Keep if free of bad language and bad grammar, if at all possible. Use capitalization rules. Make it look professional. The alternative is a visual eyesore that people may not want to visit.

**FINAL TIP!** You will be surprised how much fun this can be. You will be stunned how much good this does people – people who are lonely, ill or sad over a great loss. The opportunity to connect with friends is always a joyous experience. You are in a position now to make it happen. Good luck! And happy reminiscing!

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