

AA Meeting Google Map Program Available for Download

John, Tuesday 24 June 2008 - 16:05:36

I have placed a copy of the AA Meeting program on the downloads page on this website. Feel free to download and use the program.

The AA Meeting program produces an interactive Google map showing Alcoholics Anonymous meetings for a local area. Users can search for meetings based on type, time, city and day of week. Additionally, an address or intersection can be entered and the map will zoom in and center on the location helping the user to see what meetings are nearby.

This program is extremely useful for helping people unfamiliar to an area get to a meeting.

I have been running the program on PHP 5.0 and MySQL 5.0 with no problems, but it should also run on PHP 4.3 and MySQL 4.1.

- » Get a Google Maps API key.
- » Set up a MySQL database.
- » Edit config.php.
- » Upload files.
- » Start entering meeting information.

- » **Get a Google Maps API key**

You will first need to get a key from Google to use the API. Follow this link and you should see, "How do I start?" Follow the steps to get a google key.

<http://code.google.com/apis/maps/>

There are also some very good tutorials and examples here if you want to get into how to create your own program.

Once you have a key, copy it somewhere and remember where you put it.

- » **Set up a MySQL database**

Your web host will provide facilities to create a MySQL database. They will also likely provide access to a program called phpMyAdmin which is used to administer MySQL databases. Create a database for the map program and then open your new database in phpMyAdmin. Find and click the Import link. Click the Browse button and locate the mysql_create_tables.sql file in the aa_meetings/scripts folder. After you click Go all of the necessary tables will be created.

- » **Edit config.php**

Now unzip the attached file and edit config.php. If you are a windows person, you will want to use wordpad to open it. On each line there is a define statement. Replace anything in square brackets with the appropriate value. Remove the brackets as well when doing this. Your values should only be surrounded by quotes.

» **Upload files**

Copy the aa_meetings folder and all of its contents to your web directory on your web host.

» **Start entering meeting information**

Go to http://your_website_address/aa_meetings. If everything was done correctly, you should be looking at a google map of your area. Scroll to the bottom of the page and logon with username=admin, password=admin.

Click the Meetings link at the top of the page. Click the "Show/Hide Form" button and start entering meeting information. Don't enter the Lat or Lng fields now. We will let google do that for us.

After you click "Save" you should see the meeting listed and highlighted in magenta. Click the "[Geocode]" next to it. If it works, you will see a page with a latitude and longitude for the meeting. Click the save button to commit the coordinates to the meeting.

When you click the "[Geocode]" link, the program passes the address information of the meeting to Google's servers which then try to figure out the coordinates. Sometimes this will not result in a successful result. If that happens, edit your meeting's address information. My advice is to do a search for the meeting on <http://maps.google.com> and copy the address from there.