

aus300zx.com - Site History

The early days

The Australian 300ZX Owners Association was founded by myself (Blipman) on June 7, 2000, as there was no way of Australian Z owners getting together at the time other than on the US-based TwinTurbo.net, and that simply wasn't happening. After meeting Wykked at a workshop and Peter expressing the same thoughts, I decided to put the site together.

The site originally ran off a computer tucked away at Monash University (where I was studying at the time), but because the computer was used by other people for other tasks (and because it wasn't exactly officially sanctioned by the university) it would often go offline, so things were sometimes a little flaky. I wrote the original site software in WebClasses (an ASP plugin for Visual Basic), however in the process I learned that it was the wrong software for the application, and as such the site had a few problems with some things, and never had all of the features implemented that I had hoped. The Events, For Sale, Links, Members section and the many static pages all ran under this software, however the forum was hosted on Network54.com, which meant it was not linked directly to the Members section, and had advertising which sometimes annoyed the hell out of a lot of people :-)

When I first started the site I had no idea it would attract so many members, nor that it would be the great resource (thanks to the input of too many members to mention) that it is.

Back then, the site looked like this:



Older members refer to this as the "black and red" days; the colour scheme always had its friends and its enemies.... I'll remember it fondly :-). At this time, the site did not have the www.aus300zx.com URL either, but a long and for most impossible to remember address which referred to the computer at Monash University. After about a year the visual theme of the site was changed.

Version 2

Around mid 2001 Network54.com (off which we ran our forum) started adding more intrusive advertising, and the site was becoming of sufficient size and age that a lot of questions were being asked that had already been asked many times before, necessitating some sort of search function. Simon J (raZorTT) talked to me about rewriting the site software, and said he had started on it, although to be honest I didn't think it would ever happen. Then, one day, he gave me a URL to look at, and lo and behold, there was a completely rewritten version of the site with an integrated forum, under our control, linked to the members section, with all the features (such as search) that we had always wanted but was not possible with the old software. Importantly, raZorTT (along with Scythe, who uses the software for the MR2 Australia website) was also able to extract the thousands of posts already made on Network54.com and integrate them into the site for search capability, so nothing was lost.

After user testing by a few members, version 2 went live on the 11th of December 2001, and several new sections of the site went online at the same time. The site performed exceptionally well and in my opinion was far superior to many, many, existing forum systems out there.... kudos to raZorTT and Scythe.


Version 2 looked like this



And after an upgrade looked like this

Aus300zx Forum Aus300zx Forum Aus300zx Forum

Aus300zx Forum Technical zed4life's Control Panel Members Logout Search

 The Australian 300zx Owners' Association
www.aus300zx.com




Welcome back zed4life
You last visited 01 Jan 2006 11:40

We have 4,306 registered members, 19,850 topics and 166,496 posts.
The time is now 7:40 AM AEST on 01 Jan 2006

There is currently 1 member, 0 invisible members and 7 guests browsing the forum. Welcome to our newest member **Genx13**.

zed4life

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Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
General			
 Z Related For all things to do with Zs	10010	92992	In topic " Air Con Issues " by zed4life 23 minutes ago
 Non-Z Related For all the non Z related discussion	5879	49322	In topic " Hi All.. " by ZGOODZ 01 Jan 2006 23:40
 Coming Events			In topic " NSW Wine Day... "

Version 3

In mid 2006 the site started experiencing troubles due to high load, the software was taking up 100% of the CPU usage on the server where it was hosted, which wasn't viewed lightly by the host who had several other website also running off the machine. The site went down a few times without warning and then the host unexpectedly pulled the plug on us, much to our displeasure. At this time raZorTT and Scythe had other things going on in their lives and didn't have the time to do a major rewrite which would be necessary to keep the existing software working, and we were forced to seek other arrangements.

Having learned from this experience and the problems associated with being solely dependant on one or two people for the software of the site, we realized that as it is going to be around for a long time, yet people come and go, whatever solution we find mustn't rely on one person. So, the decision was made to switch to commercial forum software and although the exact functionality of the old site which we loved so much (it was custom written to our needs) could not be replicated, we found a satisfactory solution with vBulletin (which is what we are currently running). While the forum was having all of the problems at this time, Stu (Hyper101) without really being asked stepped up to the plate and helped with the selection of the forum software, setting up a few trial forums for members to try and vote on. Stu also was involved with converting all of the old forum posts and user data to the current form and now handles the technical side of the site.

Just before our beloved version 2 met it's end we also decided to add Rob (K-Zed) and Mark (zed4life) as forum moderators, their level headedness and contribution to the site in the past made them obvious choices.

Note: The Association is non profit, charges no fees, and if I have my way, never will. We have sold stickers in the past to pay for webhosting and domain name registration, and have a surplus to keep us going at least another year or so.



Greg – PEXZED has since been added to the moderation team

Who's who?

Ben (Blipman) - founder & moderator

Pete (Wykked) - co-founder & moderator

Rob (K-zed) - moderator & maintains static data

Mark (Zed4life) - moderator & maintains static data

Greg (PEXZED) – moderator & maintains static data

Stu (Hyper101) - moderator and maintains software side

Forum founders Peter - (Wykked) & Ben - (Blipman) with Stuart - (Hyper101 -the tall one) at 'Thanks to Stu Tech day' - September 2006



Moderators: Mark (Zed4life) & Rob (K-Zed)



Greg (PEXZED)



What's with the boring name?

Ok, so The Australian 300ZX Owners Association is a bit of a mouthful (A300ZXOA isn't much better), but it was just something I used at the very beginning and sort of stuck. Besides, I couldn't think of any clever pun with Z in it.

Why not become a proper club or become CAMS affiliated?

A few people have asked this in the past, but input from members who have been in official car clubs has been that this informal setup is far better. For reasons why, do a search. CAMS affiliation would allow us to hold our own race days, however that is not the emphasis of the Association, and would introduce large costs, necessitating the introduction of fees.

- Blipman