

Savvy Web surfers catch Ma in online flagrante delicto

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A spoof of the poster for the movie Back To The Future features President Ma Ying-jeou
PHOTO OF INTERNET PICTURE TAKEN BY LIU JUNG

Internet users made fun of President Ma Ying-jeou yesterday after discovering “futuristic” online videos prerecorded by the Presidential Office.

An Internet user named Xdite wrote on the popular Web forum PTT that if users substituted the Web Site address of Ma’s weekly video for the dates July 25 and Aug. 1, viewers could watch in advance Ma’s online videos scheduled for the next two Saturdays.

The two videos were circulated among pan-green Plurkers before being removed yesterday.

The “discovery” sparked debate among Web users about whether Ma was misusing the videos by making them in advance.

Presidential Office Spokesman Wang Yu-chi said Ma had prerecorded the videos, which were supposed to address current affairs, adding that Ma would remake the videos.

Users also chided Ma over remarks he made in the online video that he had used computers when he was in college and while serving in the military.

A Plurker named BillPan wrote that while Ma graduated from National Taiwan University in 1972, the first personal computers only became available in 1973.

“It is very unlikely that Ma would have used computers at the time,” the Pluker said.

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Ma's remarks "sound like a white lie, a means to leave a favorable impression with young Internet users," the Plurker said.

The Presidential Office said the idea of a weekly online video was inspired by former US president Franklin D. Roosevelt's Fireside Chats and the large population of Internet users in Taiwan.

Each week, Ma will address a different topic, beginning with the subject of two-way Internet communication between him and the public and updates on his recent activities, the office said.

□ ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY AFP

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