

CVB goes High-Tech with New Initiative

Visitors Center Information at the touch of a button – 24/7. That’s what the Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau made available to the city’s visitors this summer.

Constant information will be provided, not just at the eleven convenient Virtual Visitor Center kiosks and on the CVB’s newly created website, www.VisitCorpusChristiTX.org, but at visitor’s fingertips by way of cell phones, GPS devices and other gadgets.

The CVB’s plan was announced as part of their Technology Initiative during a late July press conference at the American Bank Center.

The recently implemented Technology Initiative will begin with a text messaging, mobile marketing plan, which is one of the most innovative marketing plans in the country, encompassing text messaging, advertising and marketing, all in one. It will allow visitors to receive information on Corpus Christi directly to their cell phones and other devices bypassing mail, publications, billboards and other advertising strategies.

GPS Marketing will work with Tom-Tom GPS service and will enable visitors to receive information regarding attractions, hotels, venue locations, restaurants and more when navigating to and within Corpus Christi.

Another soon-to-be implemented plan is the Electronic Interactive Map, which will be made available on www.VisitCorpusChristiTX.org. The Electronic Interactive Map will give visitors the ability to plan their trip visually by creating way points and getting directions and information with the click of their mouse. This can be used as a stand-alone tool or in conjunction with the Tom-Tom service.

The Technology Initiative also involves search engine optimization or SEO, which will increase the CVB’s page ranking when people search keywords associated with Corpus Christi, such as nature: kite boarding, surfing, beach, coast, kayaking, sailing, fishing, hunting, dolphin, aquarium and museum, just to name a few.

Another integral phase is the Social Media Marketing Plan. The CVB’s Social Media strategies began in July with the launch of the CVB’s Facebook account, Visit Corpus Christi, and the Twitter account, VisitCCTexas, and will continue October 1 with the launch of www.CorpusChristiInfo.org, which will have blogs posted by the CVB staff three times a week with pictures. The blog titled “Corpus Christi: Day & Night” will touch on everything the city has to offer. Plans to launch an account with Flickr, a photo-sharing site, and post videos about local attractions and events on the video-sharing site, You Tube, will follow soon after the blog’s launch.

The blog, photo- and video-sharing initiatives came out of a partnership between the CVB and Equity Marketing Solutions, which also plays a large role in not just the Social Media Marketing

plan but the SEO strategy. Equity Marketing Solutions Founder and President Andrew Arenson said the goal is to create a highly-functioning, intelligent, respectful program that will become the backbone of integrated social media marketing involving microblogs, blogs, video, photos and other content.

“The CVB searches constantly to keep ahead of technology and is continuously improving its technological outreach in this high-tech world,” said Keith Arnold, president and CEO of the CVB. “Eighty-five percent of people plan and purchase travel online and we need to be where they are.”

The Technology Initiative began with the new look and URL and of the website and continued with the installation of Virtual Visitor Centers, which feature the high-tech, LCD, touch-screen kiosks giving people information 24/7.

The first six kiosks were strategically placed at key entry points to the city inside Stripes Convenience Stores. In June, the CVB added a seventh kiosk at the Corpus Christi International Airport. Four more were added in July at the American Bank Center, La Palmera Mall, Texas State Aquarium and the U.S.S. Lexington. A 12th kiosk is coming soon to Corpus Christi City Hall.

According to reports generated by the kiosks from March to July, visitors accessed the kiosks more than 4,000 times spending an average of 4.93 minutes per session and accessing 21,714 page views.