



TOURISM, TECHNOLOGY & YOU! WORKSHOP RETURNS JUNE 4TH



NITDO and our byway partners, the ILHC, are helping to help

you navigate through this new and challenging world at one of our regional workshops, Tourism, Technology & You!

Join us on Thursday, June 4th, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Kishwaukee Community College for this interactive and engaging workshop presented by Dr. Bruce Wicks and colleagues from the University of Illinois, Department of Recreation, Sports & Tourism. Come learn about the latest technology - Actual product demonstrations! Topics will include:

- Software - maps, YouTube, virtual tours, social networks, RSS
- Hardware - Podcasts, audio tours, navigation devices
- Recent changes in technology and functions of new technology

Mark your calendars for the date (that much is firmed up at this time). The workshop format will follow our other half-day session. Cost is \$30 with session materials included in a reference binder. You will leave feeling confident and full of new and affordable ideas!!! For details check out our website or call office to have a registration form sent to you. Hope you can attend this fast-paced, energetic and engaging session on what to do, what not to do and how to make it happen! See you there!

CO-OP MAILINGS ... WE NEED YOUR MATERIALS

We have coordinated a regional fulfillment mailing for partners showcasing the various things to see and do along the Illinois Lincoln Highway Corridor. We use the leads from Madden Preprint's Illinois Fall-Winter Guide (released over Labor Day weekend) as well as ads placed in the 2009 Illinois Travel Guide and the Spring and Summer 2009

ILLINOIS IBOT HIGHLIGHTS ECONOMIC IMPACT OF STATE TOURISM INDUSTRY DURING 2009 ILLINOIS ROAD SHOW, JUNE 8-11

Please save the date as IBOT hits the road for the 2009 Illinois Road Show, the six-market media tour taking place June 8-11. This year the four-day event will include press conferences at the following locations:

- **Monday, June 8, 9:30 a.m.:** Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago
- **Tuesday, June 9, 9 a.m.:** Holiday Inn Carbondale Conference Center, Carbondale
- **Tuesday, June 9, 3:30 p.m.:** Alton Amphitheatre, Alton
- **Wednesday, June 10, 9:00 a.m.:** Dana-Thomas House, Springfield
- **Wednesday, June 10, 3:30 p.m.:** John Deere Harvester Works, East Moline
- **Thursday, June 11, 2:30 p.m.:** Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center, Skokie

Jan Kostner, deputy director of IBOT, will lead the annual series of press conferences and events to share industry news, including the 2008 economic impact numbers, highlight the significant economic and social impact of Illinois' travel and tourism industry, and reflect on upcoming tourism initiatives as they play into the current economic climate. Themed "There's a Getaway for That," the presentation will emphasize the state's assets and ability to provide travelers with an Illinois getaway that is customized to fit their needs.

We strongly encourage the attendance of local tourism industry members including government officials, CVB board members, and hotel, restaurant and attraction representatives. All industry members will benefit from the information shared at the Illinois Road Show, so we hope you spread the word among your colleagues to attend a press event in or around your area.

TWITTER TIPS – LEARN FROM THE BEST AND SHARE!

The complete story can be found here:

<http://www.macworld.com/article/140254/article.html> and is an excellent reference for those (like us) who are just getting into the world of Twitter. The article in MacWorld offers 9 great tips...we've paraphrased three (3) and hope you will click the link to learn more.....

Nine Twitter tips for business...How to strike the right balance when using this popular messaging service by Jason Snell, Macworld.com



Twitter is so red-hot right now that it's united Shaq and Oprah. It's also so good at attracting buzzwords that I can't decide whether to call it a microblogging service or a social-networking Web site. But it doesn't really matter what you call it, or whether you prefer to follow Ashton Kutcher or Britney Spears. What matters is that users are taking to Twitter in massive numbers. And your business should be there, too.

newspaper inserts that will drop in 2009. In the mailings, we showcase several communities with their materials, the ILHC 2009 Visitor Guide, Illinois Scenic Byways rack cards, Northern Illinois Wine Trail rack card, and the Northern Illinois Visitor Guide. If your community would like to take part in these co-op mailings, please send 3,000 of your brochures or rack cards along with a check made payable to ILHC in the amount of \$475 to cover the cost of bulk mailing. Where else can you mail out your brochure for less than \$.16 each? Interested? Call Diane. 815-547-3854.

As been our practice, we continually research new websites that may be of interest to our regional partners. Here are some sites for websites for you to check out.

Illinois Tourism:

www.enjoyillinois.com

Northern Illinois Tourism:

www.visitnorthernillinois.com

Chicago Tourism:

www.explorechicago.org

Lincoln Bicentennial:

www.lincoln200.net

Travel Industry of America:

www.tia.org

Illinois Wine Industry:

www.illinoiswine.com

Northern Illinois Wine Trail:

www.northernillinoiswinetrail.com

National Scenic Byways:

www.byways.org

Illinois Byways:

www.illinoisbyways.org

Illinois Agri-Tourism (ATPI):

www.agfun.com

Traveling Green:

www.travelgreen.org

Illinois Film Locations:

www.onscreenillinois.com

Lincoln Bicentennial Commission:

www.alplm.org

US Travel Association:

www.ustravel.org

Power of Travel – info & stats:

www.poweroftravel.org

Discover America:

www.discoveramerica.com

Tour Illinois:

www.tourismillinois.org

Meet In Illinois:

www.meetinillinois.com

Sports Illinois:

www.sportsillinois.com

Illinois African-American Travel:

www.soulfulillinois.com

Does this mean that plumbers need to start posting messages about what they had for breakfast in order to drum up sink-repair orders from desperate Internet hipsters? No, but you can and should use Twitter to connect with your customers, clients, and fans in a way that you couldn't do before. Here are some tips on how to use Twitter effectively—and a few cautions, as well.

1. Don't automate it If you've got a blog that's connected to your business, you can use a service such as [TwitterFeed](#) to directly channel your new blog posts into Twitter posts. Sounds nifty, doesn't it? Well, don't do it. Your business's primary Twitter feed ought to be hand-fed. If you publish a flood of impersonal links, your Twitter account will just seem like a faceless promotion machine. And that's not any way to engage people on Twitter. Link to the very best stuff on your blog, as well as relevant stuff you see elsewhere on the web, and also post items that don't contain links at all. (Don't forget to use a URL-shortening service such as [tinyurl](#), [is.gd](#), or [xrl.us](#) for your links.)

2. Be conversational Your business's Twitter account should talk like a person—even if it's a collective "person" representing your company or brand. Think of your Twitter account as a character in a little Internet play—it's a walking, talking personification of your entire company. If you feel like it, take it to the limit: Use the first-person ("They're putting my stuff on sale again!"), invent a personality. Or just use the royal "we" and "our"—"Our editors have the latest on so-and-so." But be chatty.

3. Follow people who are relevant From your Twitter account, follow everyone on your staff that uses Twitter. Follow colleagues in related companies and in your industry. Follow relevant brands and journalists and pundits in your market, even those who compete with you. It's polite to follow people. And by following people you are creating an ecosystem—people will see who you are following and consider those as suggestions for users they should follow as well.

Again, this is really good stuff, so click the link in the opening paragraph to learn all of the information.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND NITDO

Yes, the regional tourism office has joined this new and engaging world of social media. After tutoring from regional partners, educational sessions at the Illinois Scenic Byway conference, Tourism, Technology Workshop last November and in June (yes, we are offering it again), we took the plunge. **Northern Illinois Tourism** can be found on Facebook and on Twitter. To find us on Facebook, and hopefully become a FAN, search for Northern Illinois Tourism. We try to update each day on things to see and do in our area, and we really appreciate you sharing your news with us. So far we have talked about our award-winning wines and wineries along the Northern Illinois Wine Trail, antique and crafts fairs, museum opening, waterpark grand openings, and festivals.

So, share your news with us and we'll be sure to tell others. Our fan base is growing each day, and we encourage you to tell others about the opportunity to know of really fun things to see and do in our area. It's easier when sitting at the desk (and travel schedules don't always give me the time). So, if you have news to share, please shoot me an email so I can blast it out.

And again, we blast our information, in a much condensed format using Twitter, and you can follow us on Twitter at [@VisitNorthernIL](#). Our goal is the same as Facebook, to share things visitors can do when planning their getaways. And, we are surprised by those who have decided to follow us: market segments such as Home School Moms, Wine Clubs, Triple AAA office, and more. So, it's a broad spectrum and we are trying to find dialogue to fill all interests. So, tell us your news and we'll tell others.

So, the message, request, beg or plea (whatever you want to call it), please

Illinois Hispanic Travel:

www.disfrutailinois.com

Chicago Olympics:

www.chicagoolympics2016.org

University of Illinois Extension

Agritourism:

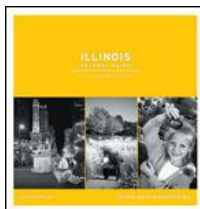
web.extension.uiuc.edu/agritourism/

iGoogle...ANOTHER TOOL TO COMPLIMENT FACEBOOK, MYSPACE AND MORE. CHECK IT OUT!

Many of you are already using the social networks of Facebook and MySpace to tell "your followers & friends" more about you and what you are doing. In our recent workshop with Jodi Rudick, she spent time talking about another new tool. And, I wanted to with you to another social network platform that is easy to create, could have very positive benefits for your business, and doesn't require frequent updating. It's called Google Profiles. What Jodi liked and discussed about Google profiles is that your personal/business information will appear on the bottom of a Google search result page if someone uses your name for a search.

Anyone can create a Google Profile personal account and have their name and photo appear on the first page of Google search results. Since so many of you use your last name as your business name you might as well take advantage of getting a first page listing telling about you. No one really knows how long this Google opportunity will be available but I'd suggest you register today to take advantage of this FREE listing. And, for those who were unable to attend the sessions we hosted at Starved rock on April 22nd with Jodi, her hand-outs and PowerPoint's are available on our website, www.visitnorthernillinois.com under the button for Education & Resources on our home page.

FY10 CO-OP MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES



We have just finalized our FY10 Marketing Partnership Grant for IBOT for ad space for the upcoming fiscal year. While this is NOT by any means a guarantee of acceptance, we have our fingers crossed. So, we have requested the following ad space – and will

continue to send me short and timely briefs on your business, attraction, event or whatever you think would be relevant to share. We're glad to spread the news, your news, and hopefully keep the interest strong in visiting Northern Illinois. Thanks~

ILLINOIS SCENIC BYWAYS STATEWIDE CONFERENCE RESOURCE MATERIALS



It is hard to believe that in the past decade, not only did the State of Illinois create its Scenic Byway program, but it now boasts seven, premier and well-respected Byways. And, to fully educate partners on each byway's happenings and bring educational opportunities to the partners of each of the individual organizations, the **Alliance of Illinois Byways** hosted a State Convention last month in Galena. The speakers presented on varied topics form Social Media and Marketing Lessons From Mother Goose, to Visitor Experiences and Website Ideas. The presentations were awesome and we've got a great opportunity for you. All of the session hand-outs (which were compiled into a great attendee binder) are available for downloading on the NITDO website. So go to our home page, www.visitnorthernillinois.com and look for the button on right called Education & resources. Click there and the header will read Previous Workshop Presentations. There you will find all sessions that were presented – AND as a bonus, some additional resources offered to the byway partners courtesy of the NSB resource Center. So, we'll have them posted for awhile, but take time to download those which may be relevant to your organization. Thanks to all who participated in this conference – and organizers are considering making this a bi-annual event, offered again in 2010 (the alternate year of the National Conference).

So, now that we've mentioned it, mark your calendars for the National Scenic Byway Conference, scheduled for August 23-26, 2009 in Denver, Colorado. The conference theme, "Elevate Your Expertise" is perfect for the mile-high city, and a great place to network with the other 100+ byways, share success stories and see how your community and partners can better take advantage of what the byway program brings to your community. For information on the byways conference, check out the website, www.bywaysresourcecenter.org for details, registration and conference schedule.

As stated, we have 7 premier byways here in Illinois – check to see where they are in Illinois and if any run through your area. In Northern Illinois we have four byways in our region: Illinois Lincoln Highway, Great River Road, Illinois River Road and Historic Route 66. More info on these byways can be found at www.illinoisbyways.org.

MILITARY VEHICLE CONVOY ACROSS THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

The Military Vehicle Preservation Association (MVPA) is recreating the famous 1919 U.S. Army's Military Transportation Corps Transcontinental Convoy – along the nationwide Lincoln Highway. The convoy rolls out of Washington, D.C. on June 13, 2009 and finishes in San Francisco on July 8th.



This 90th Anniversary Convoy of military vehicles is coming through Illinois on June 20th, will overnight in Rochelle, and complete its trek across the state on June 21st. The convoy will arrive in Rochelle about 2:30 p.m. and will be greeted with a parade, music and food booths on Rochelle's airport grounds until 6 p.m. In the evening, a Hangar Dance will be held with a buffet dinner prepared by the Rochelle VFW. There will be a tribute to Bob Hope and a USO-type show presented by Salute2Entertainment and, finally, dancing from 8-12 with music by Johnnie Kaye Orchestra.

begin to take reservations for the ad space. NITDO has requested one full page in the 2010 Illinois Travel Guide; one full page in the Fall-Holiday 2009 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert), one-half page in the Spring 2010 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert) and one full page in the Summer 2010 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert). If you are interested in working with us on these co-op opportunities, please let us know. The format will be repeated from the current year where pages will be divided into 1/6th units.&nbs p; Each partner will receive a one photo or logo, headline, 65 words of copy, name of organization, address, website and phone.



2009 NORTHERN ILLINOIS VISITORS GUIDE & WEBSITE

The 2009 Guide, it is the companion piece to our comprehensive website,

www.visitnorthernillinois.com which is getting increased hits and visits each month. You can now add or edit your information via our online form – so check us out to check you out! Remember listing info is FREE. Each listing contains information on your attraction or business, description, address, phone and where available, your website. While we can't possibly list every attraction in the entire 14-county area, we try to be as inclusive as possible on the website.

If you have a specific question about the website, or perhaps want to get a copy of the new 2009 Visitor Guide, email

mary@visitnorthernillinois.com.

And, if you're in the Belvidere area (or planning to see staff members at a meeting), let us know and we can bring them to you. AND, we have other materials to share as well: the Northern Illinois Wine Trail 4-page brochures, the Illinois Lincoln Highway Visitor Guide, rack cards for the Illinois Lincoln Highway, Northern Illinois region and a collective partner rack card that showcases the regional website, the ATPi agritourism website, Northern Illinois Wine Trail, Illinois Scenic Byways and more. Let Mary know

For more information and/or tickets for the evening events, please call 815-562-8619. Tickets are \$30 each or \$50 per couple. On the morning of June 21st, a Pancake Breakfast will be held on the airport grounds until noon. \$6.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children 12 and under. If you can't make it to the Rochelle events, be sure to watch for the convoy as it crosses the state on Illinois Lincoln Highway. More info at www.drivelincolnhighway.com or www.mvpa.org

SENATE COMMITTEE PASSES TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT OF 2009



U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

According to US Travel Association's (formerly TIA) most recent release, the US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation today approved S. 1023, the "Travel Promotion Act of 2009." The bipartisan legislation, led by Senators Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and John Ensign (R-NV) creates a public-private partnership with a budget of up to \$200 million

annually to attract international travelers to the United States by better communicating America's security policies and competing for visitors. According to an analysis by Oxford Economics, the program could drive \$4 billion annually in new spending by international travelers to the United States.

"Our nation's economy is struggling and international travel promotion is part of the solution," said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. "This much-needed legislation will help the United States to create thousands of new jobs and welcome billions in new spending by international visitors. Thanks to Senators Dorgan and Ensign, the United States is one step closer to joining nearly every developed nation in the world in competing for visitors, strengthening its economy and enhancing its image."

The Travel Promotion Act specifies that travel promotion would be paid for by private sector contributions and a \$10 fee on foreign travelers from countries that do not pay \$131 for a visa to enter the United States. The legislation requires no contributions from U.S. taxpayers. Similar legislation was introduced in the Senate and passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008, but did not receive a vote before the Senate adjourned.

Overseas visitors spend an average of \$4,500 per person, per trip in the United States. Facts on declining overseas travel to the United States:

- International travel to the U.S. declined by 10 percent in the first quarter of 2009 according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.
- Despite a weak dollar that made the U.S. a travel bargain and 48 million more people around the world traveling "long haul," the United States welcomed 633,000 fewer overseas visitors in 2008 than in 2000 - remaining below pre-9/11 levels of overseas visitors for the seventh consecutive year.
- Had the U.S. kept pace over the last eight years with the average growth in global overseas travel, we would have received an additional 58 million visitors, \$182 billion in new visitor spending and \$27 billion in new tax receipts. In 2008, overseas travel would have created 245,000 jobs.

A U.S. Travel Association analysis of government data reveals that the travel industry will lose nearly 450,000 jobs between 2008 and 2009. Previously the Travel Industry Association (TIA), the U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$740 billion travel industry. U.S. Travel's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. For more information, visit www.ustravel.org.

New Official Website Makes Summer Travel Planning Easier for U.S. Resident Travelers DiscoverAmerica.com Brings Together the Leading Sources of Official Travel Planning Information Along with Great Deals

what quantities you need/want for distribution. Thanks~

Calendar of Events - Illinois Tourism Happenings . . .

June 2-4

National Value Added Agriculture Conference, Moline

June 4

Tourism Technology & You Workshop , Malta

June 16-20

Lincoln Highway Assn National Convention, South Bend, IN

June 20

MVPA Convoy through Illinois, Overnight Stop, Rochelle

July 1

Happy New Year – FY10 Begins!

July 21

Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition Annual Mtg, DeKalb

Aug 14-23

Illinois State Fair, Springfield

Aug 23-26

NSB Conference, Denver, CO

Aug 30-Sept 1

ESTO Conference, Reno/Lake Tahoe, NV

Nov 4-5

ISEN State Convention, Tinley Park, IL



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and Offers to Help Americans Plan Summer Vacations



As millions of Americans search for deals and discounts to build their summer travel plans, the [U.S. Travel Association](http://U.S.TravelAssociation.com) – together with all 50 state tourism offices and more than 100 convention and visitors bureaus – recently launched DiscoverAmerica.com, the Official Travel and Tourism Website of the United States. This one-stop travel planning source features

special deals and offers to help U.S. residents save time and money and get on the road this summer.

“This should be the first stop for anyone planning leisure travel today. We’ve brought together a wealth of information and made it easy for travelers to find great destinations, activities and deals,” said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. “It houses official content from all the states and the largest destinations and offers some great tools to help you plan where to go and what to do.”

The site’s 7,000 pages feature official content on all 50 states, the five U.S. territories, more than 100 cities and regional destinations, and more than 3,000 popular trip activities. It will continually evolve with the addition of new destination and attraction profiles. DiscoverAmerica.com compiles the most-trusted and official sources in travel, from state tourism offices and convention and visitors bureaus to agencies such as the National Park Service and Scenic Byways. Other reliable brands in travel information such as American Express, Fodor’s, Google Maps and Weather.com are also represented.

Beyond the destination overviews, DiscoverAmerica.com features an Activity Finder (in the “Activities” tab) loaded with trip activities in 24 categories that can be sorted by user interest. It further allows users to search activities by time of year or by nine different geographic regions. The “Places” tab features an Interactive Map where users may plot the approximate driving distances between two locales; just click and drag the map’s points to determine the mileage between any two places on the U.S. map. DiscoverAmerica.com also hosts a community section of authentic anecdotes and trip photos from fellow travelers on the “Stories” tab.

Though no federal funds were used to develop the domestic site, the new U.S.-focused DiscoverAmerica.com joins six Discover America-branded sites that were born from a cooperative agreement awarded in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Commerce to the U.S. Travel Association to build and market official travel planning websites targeting the five leading inbound markets to the United States (Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Japan and Germany).

Meetings and events are responsible for nearly 15% of all travel in the United States and create \$101 billion in spending, one million jobs and nearly \$16 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state and local level. Without the jobs generated by travel for meetings and events, the unemployment rate in the United States would jump from 7.6% to 8.2%.

U.S. Travel is conducting its campaign in partnership with the American Hotel and Lodging Association, Destination Marketing Association International, International Association of Exhibitions and Events, Meetings Professional International, National Business Travel Association, Professional Convention and Management Association and SITE (formerly the Society of Incentive Travel Executives). These associations recently released recommended meetings and events guidelines for companies receiving taxpayer assistance. The groups are strongly encouraging the U.S. Treasury Department to embrace these guidelines and, in so doing, establish transparent standards for those who have accepted federal government support.

