



IBOT FLICKR PAGE

We want to make sure we've got your region, community or even attraction or event covered – please send any pictures you'd like to include on the IBOT Flickr page. Events, attractions or just landscape photos – IBOT would welcome them all. Please send photos in jpg format (ideally file should be 200KB or higher for optimum quality) to enjoyillinois@gmail.com, AND include a brief description including where it's from and who (if anyone) should be given credit.

Remember, your photos are representing Illinois tourism, so be sure to send the best ones! At the same time, the goal of the Flickr page is to connect with consumers, so please note that photos should not be commercial.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

Governor Quinn has launched www.Recovery.Illinois.gov, a tool for every taxpayer interested in the \$787 billion federal stimulus package. This site allows the ability to quickly share state-focused information about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, collect project ideas from the public and direct people to relevant state and/or federal agencies and applications.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS WINE TRAIL

The press was really running and while printing our regional visitor guide, we were also able to produce a companion piece for the 26 partners of the Northern Illinois Wine Trail. We secured grant dollars through IBOT's Marketing Program, sponsorship from IGGVA and ad sales from three winery partners – and the individual wineries contributed the final costs for the piece. So, we produced and inserted 50,000 brochures which were

ILLINOIS GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM – DETAILS & UPDATES



As you already know, the 2009 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism will be held at The Fairmont Hotel in Chicago, March 4-6, 2009. The new online registration for the 2009 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism is available today. Plus, register

two or more people from one organization and save 10% off the registration fee. To register online, complete the [registration form](#). Bold field names indicate required information. If you wish to mail or fax your registration, please use the PDF Registration Form which then can be faxed to (217) 442-2137 or mailed to: Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureau, 100 W. Main Street, Suite 146, Danville, IL 61832. For partnership, trade show or additional information, email Julie Elmore at info@ilgovconference.com or call (630) 730-1780.

A popular feature of the conference is the **Silent Auction** which takes place on the trade show floor throughout the days of the conference. This year, we wish to really emphasize travel and tourism as that is what our industry is about. Specifically, we are asking for getaway packages to encourage your industry peers to visit your area and use their vacation time in 2009 to stay in Illinois! As usual, a portion of the proceeds from the silent auction go directly towards scholarships to allow students to attend the conference. To submit your packages, simply fill out form and fax (form can be found on conference website www.ilgovconference.com or on our website). If you have any questions about the Silent Auction, please call Anne Hornyak at (312) 795-1703.

In addition to the wonderful educational tracks offered, there are showcasing events. Beginning on Wednesday, March 4th, join attendees at **The Icebreaker Reception: A View from the Top**. All conference attendees will want to be at the official kickoff celebration at John Hancock Observatory. Enjoy the 360 degree view of Chicago at night and sumptuous hors d'oeuvres while reminiscing with old friends and colleagues. On Thursday, March 5th, the evening's activities begin with **Illinois Tourism Marketplace Networking Reception**. Visit the Illinois Tourism Marketplace trade show for the opportunity to network with exhibitors featuring the latest products and services available to our industry. Don't forget to stop by the Border's Corner bookstore where you'll be sure to find a selection to your liking. And, a wine tasting offered by the Illinois Grape Growers & Vintners Association puts you in the mood. The evening continues with either a dinner event (sponsored by the Illinois Tourism Alliance) at Harry Carey's or the option of seeing two delightful performances. You may choose to go solo or entertain clients but you won't want to miss the opportunity for a reception and discounted theatre tickets to Broadway in Chicago's "Jersey Boys" or The Second City's "America: All Better." [Click here](#) for more information. The evening concludes back at the Fairmont with a **Late Night Reception: Sweets and Treats**. Still time to get your last minute registrations in, but time is ticking. Hope to see you in Chicago at the conference!

inserted into the center spread of the 2009 Northern Illinois Visitor Guide and then produced an over-run of 50,000 pieces as a stand-alone piece. Contact us to receive a quantity of inserts.

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

Lincoln – Douglas Reunion:

www.lincolndouglasreunion.com

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

Film Locations:

www.onscreenillinois.com

Lincoln Bicentennial Commission:

www.alplm.org

Power of Travel – info & stats

www.poweroftravel.org

Discover American, 1st US Travel website

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

Illinois Hispanic Travel:

www.disfrutailinois.com

Chicago Olympics:

www.chicago2016.org

University of Illinois Extension

Agritourism:

web.extension.uiuc.edu/agritourism/

FY09 NORTHERN ILLINOIS ADVERTISING



NITDO has submitted their FY09 Marketing Partnership Grant. The Spring insert will be dropping on March 8th. The Summer 2009 insert closes in late-February – six spaces were available; four remain at this time. We have learned that our award amount is at the 45%-55% level, where you, the local partners, pay 55% of the ad costs and ILLINOIS BOT's grant program pays for 45%. This is the LAST CHANCE for this insert. Contact NITDO if you are interested in participating. The costs for the 1/6th page units are as follows:

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Full Cost of 1/6th Page</u>	<u>1/6th pg w/45-55</u>
Summer 2009	\$4,023.66	\$2,213.01

EXPECTATIONS FOR 2009 – WHAT TRAVELERS WANT

While 2009 will likely prove to be a difficult year for regional tourism, travel experts believe there will be some opportunity for businesses and organizations that recognize and react to changes in consumer behavior. Industry expert analysis of recent surveys shows several trends that may impact how you want to market to travelers in 2009.

According to the experts, value will be most important for the 2009 traveler. That doesn't necessarily mean they will choose the least expensive option, but consumers want to make sure they are getting their money's worth. They will demand more for what they pay and shop aggressively to ensure they get a good deal.

Not everyone will hit the airport in 2009. According to a recent survey by Trip Advisor, 18% of Americans plan to take a "staycation" and visit sites and attractions close to home. Leisure and business trips will likely get shorter as consumers attempt to save money. Nearly two-thirds of Travelers Want Expectations for 2009: What Travelers Want respondents said they planned to stay fewer nights.

Travelers are also staying more connected to the Internet. Nearly 30% say they check their email daily during a weekend trip. Almost 40% check it daily if they are traveling for a week or longer. How travelers book their trips will also change. Use of travel agents has increased to almost 30% and will continue to grow as travelers place a higher value on their own time and see agents as a source of knowledge. Marketing will go mobile as more consumers use Internet enabled phones, making text messages and audio/video podcasts a necessity.

2009 NORTHERN ILLINOIS VISITORS GUIDE AND REGIONAL WEBSITE

Hot off the press -- the 2009 Northern Illinois Visitor Guide. This new 50+ page guide features the vast array of things to see and do in our 14 counties, and offers the visitor a chance to make their getaway plans.

It is the companion piece to our comprehensive website, www.visitnorthernillinois.com which is getting increased hits and visits each month. And the website has a new look recently unveiled, with graphics to mirror the stunning new cover of our regional guide. And make sure that your listing info on the website is accurate and complete. 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



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 and generated over 7,000 leads) as well as ads placed in the 2009 Illinois Travel Guide and the to-be-released Spring & Summer 2009 newspaper inserts that will drop later this year.

In the mailings, we showcase several communities with their materials, the ILHC 2008 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?

If interested, call Diane at 815-547-3854.

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.

THE PRESIDENT TRAIN? – CHECK OUT METRA'S NEWEST CAR

The Metra commuter rail service is reconsidering its long-standing policy of sparing its riders of advertising on its trains. In early February, Metra rolled out a coach covered with an advertisement for the Illinois Bureau of Tourism. The coach is covered with a vinyl plastic that features the likenesses of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Ronald Reagan and newly minted President Barack Obama. And it corresponds nicely with the Illinois tourism trend of Presidential Trails.

Metra officials say the car will be used on several rail lines in an effort to gauge public reaction and determine how well the vinyl stands up to the weather. Metra executive director Phil Pagano says the commuter rail agency is exploring all opportunities to increase non-fare income. Officials point out advertising is the Chicago Transit Authority's largest revenue generator aside from fares.

TRAVEL GREEN: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

The travel and tourism industry has recognized that collaboration is the backbone of sustainable travel. Across the globe, alliances have yielded organizations and programs with missions to share knowledge, resources, policies, practices, initiatives, criteria, and/or assessment measures covering the wide spectrum of sustainable travel. These partnerships are the means by which a repository of information necessary to ensure preservation of environments, cultures, and economies are being created and maintained for the benefit of all.

Coalitions have been formed to focus on the theoretical and practical aspects of ecotourism, while others examine individual segments of the industry. Management, operations, and advocacy are represented, as well as local, national, and world governments. All underscore the importance of raising awareness, corporate and social responsibility, and the wise stewardship of cultural and natural resources.

To learn more about this new segment of Green Travel, visit the website, www.travelgreen.org – it's very interesting and timely! Check it out

Calendar of Events - Illinois Tourism Happenings . . .

Mar 1-4

National Main Street Conference, Chicago

Mar 4-6

Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism, Chicago

Mar 4

ICCVB Mtgs @ Illinois Governor's Conference

FROM THE DORM TO THE NORM: WHAT DEMOGRAPHIC USES UGC AND SOCIAL NETWORKING?

Social media is not the exclusive domain of the young. EyeforTravel research shows when it comes to user-generated content, age isn't a boundary. Roughly as many customer reviews are read by young and old alike with 54% of 18-34 year olds having read customer reviews in the last 30 days, compared with 58% of 35-49 year olds and 57% of 50-64 year olds.



In contrast, when it comes to social networking sites, like Facebook and MySpace, there is a definite discrepancy in the age of regular users. EyeforTravel found that 70% of the 18-34 age group have used social

Mar 5

Illinois Tourism Alliance Dinner,
Harry Carey's

May 9-17

National Tourism Week, Discover
Great American Traditions

Mar 12

Tri-State Tourism Conference,
Platteville, WI

Mar 31-Apr 2

TravelCom '09, Atlanta, GA

May 12-13

State Scenic Byway Conference,
Galena, IL

May 16-20

International POW WOW, Miami, FL

Aug 23-26

NSB Conference, Denver, CO

TRI-STATE TOURISM CONFERENCE

The Tri-State Tourism Council proudly presents: Bridging the Tri-State Connection, Spring Tourism Conference on Thursday, March 12th. The Conference will be held at the Governor Dodge Hotel & Convention Center in Platteville, WI. Brochure can be found on our website under Education Resources. Also more information can be found at www.tristatetourism.com.



networking sites in the last 30 days, compared to only with 35% of 35-49 year olds and 12% of 50-64 year olds.

So why do the over 35's feel more comfortable reading user reviews over participating social networks? Firstly, travel-specific user-generated content (UGC) sites, like TripAdvisor, are easy to use and very accessible. The search functions are clear and quickly give people access to vast amounts of specific, relevant content. This is not the case for social networks.

Secondly, travel-specific UGC sites rarely require people to log-on or leave personal details, something which older people may see as an obstacle. Reading user-generated content is more passive and less personally intrusive compared to actively participating in online social networks. Lastly, compared to social networks, the benefits of UGC sites are obvious. For the over 35 age group, who are reading online hotel reviews, they can immediately see the opportunity to save money, avoid making bad decisions and get demographically suitable advice. The benefits of social networking sites on the other hand, are not so clear. The over 35 year age group tends to have more money to spend so it makes sense for them read customer feedback before making large purchases, such as travel.

On the other hand, there is a distinct portion of over 35's who are perfectly poised to take advantage of the social networking phenomena: The Business Traveler. This group tends to have greater connectivity and has access to state-of-the-art handsets and laptops. Plus, they tend to spend more of their time online. They are also more likely to accept impartial advice from fellow business travelers with the same requirements. After all, you don't need to be someone's "friend" to get advice on traversing Chicago O'Hare on a Friday night.

There is great potential for the business traveler to use social media to increase efficiency, access business-specific information, such as suitable restaurants for clients, and get updates on delays and adverse weather conditions. Social networking sites Triplt and LinkedIn have recently made moves to exploit this opportunity. The Triplt application on LinkedIn allows users to notify potential clients of upcoming trips.

"Triplt was selected by LinkedIn as their travel application precisely because an older more professional audience is using social networking tools like LinkedIn and Triplt. The focus of these second-generation tools is on providing social utility and mobile convenience that provide information when and where people need it," commented Gregg Brockway, Triplt Co-founder.

CHICAGO OLYMPICS 2016 – ONE STEP CLOSER

Mid February marked a major milestone for Chicago 2016's bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games with the submission of the Candidature File to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne, Switzerland. With the help of the Chicago community and the family of famed Olympian Jesse Owens, Chicago's bid book was sent off and delivered with great enthusiasm and excitement. You can read a recap of the events leading up to the submission of Chicago's bid book to the IOC at the website, www.chicago2016.org.



With this major component of the bidding process completed, we look forward to hosting the Evaluation Commission in April to talk in detail about the plan, show them all Chicago has to offer the world and help them to understand how hosting the Games in Chicago would positively impact the Olympic Movement.



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The IOC Evaluation Commission visit to Chicago is scheduled for April 2-8, 2009. IOC members and subject matter experts will be in town to review all aspects of Chicago's bid, including proposed venues, and to experience the city firsthand.

One of the things that the IOC Evaluation Commission will be looking for during their visit is the enthusiasm of the Chicago community, and efforts to help decorate the city for the IOC visit like Bank of America has done will demonstrate Chicago's excitement and support. The mural wall is an iconic space in Chicago, dedicated to celebrating the spirit of Chicago's community and is seen by tens of thousands of commuters every day. The wall has featured a number of iconic Chicago institutions, events and organizations over the years, including the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. The installation of the new mural began in January. It is expected to be completed in late March and remain visible through July. The mural will feature the Chicago 2016 emblem on the water tower and imagery of three Olympic and Paralympic athletes engaged in sport on the three walls.

Chicago is in the final selection for the 2016 Olympic Games with Rio, Madrid and Tokyo. The final announcement of the selection will be made in October 2009. Keep checking back for more news and ways to get involved and check out www.chicago2016.org.

