



Agriculture & Tourism Partners of Illinois
c/o Central Illinois Tourism Development Office

700 East Adams Street
Springfield, IL 62701
Ph. 217-525-7980
Fax. 217-525-8004

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**DON'T FORGET TO CHECK
OUT THE ATPI WEBSITE**

Here is the rest of the information that should have been included in the latest ATPI eNewsletter! Sorry that it was originally omitted.

Tourism & Technology

Technologies are ever-changing and evolving in today's world. Sometimes it seems too overwhelming or difficult for us to learn the latest applications. However, in the tourism industry, there are so many ways for us to take advantage of these new technologies and use them to market our attractions. The best part is, a lot of these options can be produced and viewed by the public at little to no cost to the attraction!

Bruce Wicks, Ph.D. and Associate Professor of Recreation, Sport, and Tourism at the University of Illinois (and ATPI Board Member), is currently studying the impact of technology on tourism along with a doctoral student Byeong Cheol Lee. Through his research, he has been able to identify why it is so important for the tourism industry to stay on track with emerging technologies and how they can do so successfully.

Google Maps offers a free and easy way to notify the world that you exist! By going to www.google.com and visiting Google Maps, you can input your attraction's information. This will enable visitors to locate your attraction and find it through a search on Google Maps. You can also add photographs to your map site by creating a free account on www.panoramio.com then uploading those photos onto your Google Maps listing. This is free & easy!

If you'd like to take it to the next step, you can produce an amateur or professional digital video promoting your attraction and upload it onto YouTube. YouTube has become one of the most effective ways for marketing to an international audience. Again, this is a simple task which consists of saving the video file on your computer then visiting www.youtube.com to open a free account and upload your video. Another valuable tool is the ability to tie your YouTube videos onto Google Maps. All video files on YouTube can be located onto Google Map.

Another way to further market your attraction is by utilizing virtual tours on your website. The experience of a computer-mediated environment can provide vivid images and create a greater and more lasting impression. A virtual tour can be created by uploading a digital video file to your existing website. Or, you can create a photo-based virtual tour through free software called Photosynth. This program turns



ATPI's recently launched website, www.agfun.com, is seeing tremendous results in accomplishing its goal of marketing your attraction!! The site is consistently seeing at least 100 new visitors per day. Visitors are geographically located in cities throughout Illinois, as well as out of state visitors from Missouri, California, Florida, New Jersey, and many more. We have even had international visitors to agfun.com!! If you currently have a website on record with ATPI, it is listed and linked with your attraction's information. Remember, you can update your attraction's information listing through agfun.com as well by clicking on the link at the bottom of the opening page. We encourage you to visit the site to make sure your information is current and explore other agritourism attractions in your area! _

overlapping photos into 3-D panorama. You just need to take a lot of overlapping pictures of a room, space, or building and the software then figures out how the photos relate even if taken from different angles. Photosynth formulates them into a 3-D, 360 degree view making it an ideal technology to utilize for a museum display, small-scale facility, or winery tasting room! Visit www.photosynth.com to create your free account and see examples.

It pays to explore and research these technologies and what might be most beneficial to your attraction. These are all new and exciting ways to market and advertise agritourism entities throughout Illinois!

Upcoming Tours and Conferences

May 14 Sustainable Ag Tour – Organic Meats and Poultry - Open Range Products in Pecatonica, IL and Eickman's Processing in Seward, IL

June 2-4 National Value Added Agriculture Conference, Moline

June 19 Sustainable Ag Tour – Growing Strawberries, Naturally Jed's Farm, Thompsonville

July 7 Sustainable Ag Tour – Grass-fed Beef, Pastured Chickens and Eggs - Meadow Haven Farm & Graze 'n' Grow, Sheffield

August 13 Sustainable Ag Tour – Creative Community Co-op Farming - Basu Natural Farm, Pembroke

August 15 Sustainable Ag Tour – Raising Elk and Innovative Farming - Mackinaw Valley Elk Farm/Blue Schoolhouse Farm, Congerville

September 15-17 Small Farms Conference, Springfield

September 22 Sustainable Ag Tour - Fresh Fruits and Vegetables - River Front Berry Farm, Martinton

• For further information on the Sustainable Ag Tours, please visit http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/smallfarm/ag_tours.cfm

