About Tourism Currents

If you need to keep up with the fast-paced change in social media marketing for tourism and destinations, Tourism Currents is the right place to look. Here, you'll find the education and training you need.

Do you know nothing (or almost nothing) about social media?

- Start with the Intro: [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#Intro](http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#Intro)

Have no time to add social media to everything you're already doing?

- See how to integrate social with all the traditional work you have to do, including promoting special events and booking more meetings. Lesson 5: Promoting Special Events [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#5](http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#5) and Book More Meetings with Your Social Media Toolbox [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/toolbox-webinar](http://www.tourismcurrents.com/toolbox-webinar)

Struggling to keep up with ever-changing tools?

We'll help you manage the pace of change.

- Increase your social media confidence with our six-lesson course: [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/details](http://www.tourismcurrents.com/details)
Focus on building a solid home base with Lesson 2: Building a Home Base [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#2]

Select only the right outposts (and safely ignore the rest for now) with Lesson 3: Intro to Outposts [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#3]

And learn how to keep up by saving time: Finding Time for Social Media and Create Once, Use Many Times. [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/tourism-solutions]

**Looking for bloggers or searching for online earned media for your destination?**

We'll show you where the bloggers are, and who is ready to be your online champion.

- Get up to speed in just one hour with Finding Your Online Champions webinar [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/finding-your-online-champions]
- Go more in depth with lesson 4: Building Your Online Champions Network [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#4]
- Find out what makes a wired fam tour different, with Lesson 6: New Ways to Do Tours [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#6]

**Worried what people are saying about you online?**

Find out how to hear it, and how to respond with confidence.

- Build your listening skills with Lesson 1: How to Listen [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/individual-lessons#1]
- For hotels, motels and others facing online reviews in the hospitality business, get quick answers with Responding to Online Reviews [http://www.tourismcurrents.com/tourism-solutions]

*Brought to you by Tourism Currents*
We spend a lot of time finding and reviewing resources on the Web that relate to social media, technology and tourism. The blessing and the curse of such data-gathering is that you end up with a huge pile of great stuff, but how to get that stuff into the hands of as many people as possible? We share great links on Delicious every day, but only so many people have time to keep up.

That's how this ebook was born.

We've picked out some key resources and links that we think are directly relevant to many of the issues that you may be dealing with right now in using social media tools to tell the stories of your destination, and to connect with your visitors, fans and supporters online.

The links are organized along the topic lines of our Tourism Currents lessons; for example, if you're looking for resources and insights about promoting your festival or special event (one of our more popular lessons) then Section 6 is devoted to that.

There's a lead-in and an explanation for every link we've chosen, and plenty of screenshots so that you can see where those links will take you.

We think you'll enjoy these gems as much as we do, and please do share the information with your local staff, organization members and businesses that benefit from tourism.

Feedback and suggestions are always welcome - ping us on Twitter at @TourismCurrents. And watch for more great stuff at http://www.delicious.com/tourismcurrents.

Thanks, and enjoy!

Get our free newsletter, full of tips on social media for tourism: www.tourismcurrents.com/newsletter

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
CONTENTS

Section 1 ..... Social Media Made Simple

Section 2 ..... Home Base
(website/blog/FB fan page)

Section 3 ..... Outposts
(i.e. outlets – Twitter, Flickr, You Tube)

Section 4 ..... Listen to your audience

Section 5 ..... Who are the Champions
Finding the right people to champion your brand in social media.

Section 6 ..... Extra! Extra!
Promoting Special Events Before, During, and After

Section 7 ..... Tours for the Socially Savvy

Section 8 ..... Tools for the Tourism Trade

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Okay, okay, it may seem a little narcissistic, but we think our talk with Luis Sandoval and Jennifer Navarrete on Tech in Twenty (filmed during SxSWi 2010) is relevant because they asked us (A) How we got into this --something we suspect a lot of you are wondering, too-- and (B) How social media can benefit the travel and tourism industry. Click through for the answer.

Tech in Twenty: Becky McCray and Sheila Scarborough on tourism and social media

We can't say this enough (especially Becky) :

Social media is **not** just for big resorts and destination cities!

It’s **good for local businesses**, too.

Check out how the Beaumont, Texas CVB [made an impact on a local resident when he was 1,800 miles from home](#).

Sheila’s blog entry, mentioned in the article above, can be found [here](#).

*Brought to you by Tourism Currents*
Does your marketing department still think social media is a waste of money? Doug Schumacher at iMediaConnection has a host of reasons you can tell them, “\textit{Why social media is safer than you think.}”

Travel author Tim Leffel agrees and, in his article “\textit{6 ways to improve your destination marketing (and why you’re toast if you don’t),}” even goes so far as to suggest that NOT utilizing social media is more dangerous than taking the plunge.

Or you can point doubters toward Entrepreneur’s article, “\textit{How Twitter is Revolutionizing Business.}” In the interest of full disclosure, we have to tell you Becky was interviewed for the article. Of course, they interviewed John Battelle of Federated Media and Laura Fitton of oneforty.com*, too.

*Another site we love!

Social media intimidates a lot of executives who don’t understand it, or who fear that productivity and company security may be compromised.

Which makes us wonder, a little, if they aren’t missing the point. Social media isn’t just about chatting and updating and uploading content. In fact, you should treat your social networking activities just as you would any other promotional effort, which means having a plan.

Not sure how to formulate a plan? No problem! Check out \textit{Mashable’s 22-Step Social Media Marketing Plan}. Basically, according to article author Peter Kim, if you’re going to jump in then do it big. Sure, start small, but he mentions 22 subtly different social platforms and implies that savvy marketers should have an online presence in as many of them as possible. Exciting and ambitious stuff!
But, what about when things don’t go according to your plan?

The scariest thing about social media is the lack of control. Once you put your business out there you have no control over what people say about it.

Let’s be honest, here. You don’t have any control over what people say now. People will talk. If you are a part of the community, though, you can respond. In fact, here’s a few tips on how to handle negative feedback in social media.

Still not sure?

Don’t just take our word for it!

Andy Sernovitz, author of “Word of Mouth Marketing” agrees that social marketing is a good idea for tourism and said as much when speaking to the American Resort Development Association.

Make sure you check out the links in the far right-hand sidebar on Andy’s site, too, for some great resources.

Great stuff, right?

Andy threw some ideas out there, but those may not be applicable for every destination or tourism-oriented industry. Now what?

Look at these simple tips from the Harvard Business Review on, “How to extend your customer experience through social media.”

That’s more good information and some great high-level ideas on how to use social media.

But what if you’ve never done anything remotely like this before? Maybe your webpage was put together by someone in the corporate office who’s never been to your location; or your kids know more about the functions of your phone than you do; or all you know about Facebook is how to spell it? What then?

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Here are a few places (other than with us!) where you can learn more before you dive in:

- **Books:** [The Top 100 Best Social Media Books, Ever](#)
- **Blogs:** [Top 100 Social Media & Internet Marketing Bloggers](#)
- Tamar Weinberg’s Techipedia: [Best Internet Marketing Posts of 2009](#)
- Mashable’s [Social Media Guide for Small Businesses](#) (for not-so-small businesses, too)
- Chris Brogan’s [Building Blocks of Social Media for Business](#) (Chris is the co-author of “Trust Agents,” author of “Social Media 101”)
- Read, Write, Web’s: Who Uses Social Networks & What Are They Like? ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#))
- For what NOT to do, check out Tourism Keys’ post on the [7 Deadly Sins (of social media)](#)

That’s all well and good, but what if you feel like just don’t have the time to do it all?

**What You Need to Know About Outsourcing Social Media**

We can’t say we recommend outsourcing your social media, at least not all of it—after all, who knows your stories better than you? But, if you do decide to get some outside help, here’s [15 Ways PR Agencies Can Help Companies With Social Media](#).

And of course, we have to warn you about [How NOT to Outsource Your Social Media](#).
Home Base

Website

One of the functions of your profile on any social media site is to point people to your main home on the Internet, your website. There are loads of great sites, books, blogs, and more with valuable information on how to make your website the best it can be.

We have no intention of re-inventing the wheel. You’ll find more sources for this kind of intel on some extended links pages at the back of this book.

We DO want to share a techipedia article by Hugo Guzman, the VP of Social Media and SEO at Zeta Interactive, about the importance of making your website social media-friendly. There’s also a gem in there about the importance of optimizing your email marketing for social media, too.

A couple of quick website reminders, though:

- Be accessible to the world – translate your website.
- Make sure your content is available to everyone with audio & video captioning.
- Tourists are far from home--make sure your site is mobile-friendly.
- While you’re at it, don’t underestimate the importance of good directions.
- Learn about outside trends & tech that can affect how visitors see your site.

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Blogs are a common first step for those unfamiliar with social media--they were social when social wasn’t cool.

Since there’s not much point to a blog that no one visits, or one that no one can find, check out this great video from WordCamp San Francisco 2009.

Matt Cutts, a Google engineer who’s been blogging since 2005, makes a lot of complicated programming language about blog SEO easy to understand.

Don’t follow that link until you have some time to devote to it. The video is a little over 46 minutes long.

You’ve got a blog. Now, how do you tell the world you have a blog? Check out Sheila’s article for Every Dot Connects on the ways and means of marketing your blog.

Blogging Basics: Getting traffic, readers and attention for your blog

Remember, too, that while the statement, “Content is King,” is not as accurate as content writers wish it were, it IS a valid point. The best promoted, most SEO-friendly blog will flop if you don’t load it with good content and give people a reason to come back.

Better yet, make your content interactive with video blogging. Find some great tips on getting started vlogging here.

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Who doesn’t love lists? Facebook has become so massive we decided to break it into manageable chunks.

1. Mashable has a wealth of info on practical uses for all our new-fangled technology. Before you jump in, read their Facebook primer.

2. Want more? We love AllFacebook.com, “The Unofficial Facebook Resource.”

3. A few words of wisdom from Sheila about why CVBs and DMOs should join Facebook. For example: You should join FB because it is (a) free and (b) a dominating force in social media, with over 300 million users worldwide.

4. Start with a new profile for your business or CVB. Do not tie this profile to any of your employees’ personal FB profiles.

5. Just a Facebook profile is not enough, though. You need to create a Page.

←What You Need to Know About Facebook Pages

Practical wisdom from Kimberly Moniz of SHIFT Communications, including a reminder that the intern, generally, should not be the person who sets up your FB presence.

How to Better Engage Facebook Page ‘Fans’ →

The same way you engage them with a website or blog – offer valuable content 😊

Speaking of content...This article is loaded with tips for using FB’s built in metrics (available to page administrators) to rate and improve your content quality.

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
6. Get to know your audience with tools like Page Analytics.


8. Get comfortable with the details:

   Facebook tagging (for business)
   Getting rid of unwanted FB notifications

That should get you started.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Just in case you’re thinking that a Page is a bit self-centered, Josh Peters (co-author of Twitt-Faced) shows you How to Make Facebook Your Company Newsroom.
Have you heard people talking about “tweeting” and wondered what all the fuss was about?

Start here: CIO’s article, “Twitter: How to Get Started Guide for Business People.”

Not sure Twitter is relevant for your CVB? Check out “Twitter tips for tourist boards.”

You can use the service as a newswire, to answer questions about your destination, announce specials, and more. You can even use it to promote specific events – hashtags are great for this.

Isaac Mizrachi, of the E-Tourism is Here blog, has even more specific examples in his article, “Twittourism - Promote Your Tourism Brand on Twitter.”

Remember that Twitter is a public community and, like any public place, certain behavioral standards are expected. Take the time to learn Twitter Etiquette before you send your first tweet.

Although it shouldn’t be your main reason for tweeting, doing so can help your search rankings now that both Google and Bing are incorporating tweets in their search results.

If you want to reap search rewards, though, a) make sure your content is rich and relevant, and, b) be careful which URL shortener you use – some of them can reduce your chances of coming up in search results.

For an interesting look at Twitter and Tourism from outside the industry, check out search engine land’s, “A Look at the Travel Industry on Twitter.”
Are you looking for tools to help you make the most of your shiny new Twitter account?

Look no further than oneforty.com, where Laura Fitton, author of Twitter for Dummies has compiled a massive list of apps, buttons, and more to help you make the most of your Twitter time.

Maybe you’ve been tweeting for a while and want to see what kind of impact you’re having?

Here’s a fun little review of Twitter ranking sites that highlights how meaningless most of them are.

If you’re serious about tracking your Twitter activity--or your boss wants to see results after you convinced him to upgrade your company phone to unlimited texting so you could tweet as needed--check out: How to Track Your Twitter ROI.

Make sure you join Twisitor center, too – a site that aggregates Twitter info from tourism boards all over the world.

Check out Twaller, too. Twaller is Twitter for travelers. It’s built around the idea that when you travel somewhere new the best people to tell you where to go and what to see are the locals. (So true!)

You can’t list yourself on Twaller, but, if you’re tweeting smart and using appropriate hash tags, you should end up there.
In 2009, the Travel Insights 100, a group of 100 travel writers, bloggers and thought leaders across eight travel categories were asked what they thought about Twitter.

Sheila is a member of the Travel Insights 100, and blogged a short summary of her thoughts on the survey and a link to the survey results (also linked in the image above).

Finally – A few random thoughts on Twitter for tourism & business:

How to use Twitter for tourism: fall foliage reports

A pretty clever notion!

What in the world should a restaurant tweet about?

Tasty suggestions from Deep Dish Creative
Location, Location, Location!

It’s not just a mantra for real estate anymore!

One of the most exciting social media developments from a tourism perspective is the growing popularity of location-based applications.

Think Twitter with a physical location tag and you’re starting to get the idea. In fact, Twitter recently added the ability to tag tweets with a location, likely in response to services like:

![Images of location-based apps]

Get Ahead of the Location Game from Chris Brogan offers sound advice on getting on location-based services, from the basics (get a smart phone) to the more complex (hosting location-aware contests).

Check out these 6 Innovative Ways Businesses are Capitalizing on FourSquare. Location-based app users are more likely than most to (a) seek out places they’ve never been before for the new venue points and (b) return to a place over and over in an attempt to win Mayor status for that location.

Still not sure how this could work for tourism?

See how the Pennsylvania Tourism Board is tying it all together, combining their foursquare integrated, "The Fantastic Roadtrip-a-Matic," with a Facebook photo contest and 20 new itineraries on the VisitPA.com site.

Another good idea is creating a Google Place Page. If you cross a yellowpages.com listing with a review site and combine that with Google Maps you get a Place Page.

Want more? Check out John Jantsch’s (of Duct Tape Marketing) 5 Ways to Get Found Online in Your Town. Great tips for attracting more locals!

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
People typically associate LinkedIn with job hunting and \textit{(individual or personal)} business networking but there’s no reason why you can’t use it to promote tourism. New integrated widgets like Tripl can make it even easier.

It’s not likely to be your strongest social media outlet, but it IS an outlet and it seems a shame to let it go to waste.

We found a couple of blog posts on using LinkedIn to promote your business/blog. There’s some repetition between them, and not all the suggestions apply to tourism, but there’s enough substance to them that we decided to go ahead and give you the links.

33 Ways to Use LinkedIn for Business

Topt 10 Ways to Drive Traffic to Your Blog Using LinkedIn

It’s only been four months since Google announced Google Buzz and the jury appears to still be out. Will it take off like all the other Big G apps we’ve come to know and love? It’s too soon to tell.

If you want to take it for a test drive, here’s what some of the top tech and social media folks around the web have to say:

- Google Goes Social with Google Buzz (from Mashable.com)
- Gizmodo answers the question: \textit{What is Google Buzz}?
- Google Buzz launches: 5 first look tips for PR and marketing practitioners (courtesy of Drew B with 33-Digital)
- More recently, Robert Scoble asks: Is it time to reconsider Google Buzz vs. Facebook or Twitter?
Now just plain, “Delicious;” the periods in the middle were dropped after a site redesign in 2007 when the service changed its domain from, “del.icio.us,” to, “delicious.com.”

We mention this because a lot of people still use the old spelling/domain (it just routes to the new one).

Delicious is a no-frills social bookmarking site and we love it! In fact, most of the links in this eBook started out on our delicious page.

One of the best ways to offer meaningful content is posting links to people other than yourself. Delicious lets you do that without having to involve your webmaster. Just create an account, start collecting links, then add a link to your delicious page to your email signature and social media profiles.

With Flickr you can post photos of your area for free, or, if you upgrade to their pro account, almost free. AND you won’t have to harass your Webmaster to get them online.

Even better, you can tag them so they come up in image and text searches.

For example – If you search Flickr for tag, “tourism,” you get this. Click on “tourism clusters,” and you see this.

You can also make photo maps. Take a second to think about the possibilities. Not sure what we mean? Here’s a photo travel map created by an individual. Pretty neat, huh? This one is Flickr-created based on photo geo-tags.

Now imagine using this tool to create a self-guided tour of your city. Or your city’s parks. Or pretty much anything you want to, chock full of pretty pictures to make people want to come see it in person!
Another offering from Google. This one is still in Beta...

Basically it’s an user-customized travel search engine that filters out the spam---and the big spammy sites. This is mostly an end-user tool, but if you check and your CVB or DMO website is not listed, you should definitely submit it for inclusion!

One of the things we stress over and over is the need to make your content relevant. By relevant we mean useful to your users/fans/followers. Radian6 offers 10 Ways to Share Helpful Content in Social Media.

The most important point in this article is to be selfless. Yes, we are all involved social media to pursue specific goals, but, sharing good information that does not directly benefit, or even reference, you is a great way to build trust and value online. And that DOES serve your goals!

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Listen to Your Audience

Listen. Do you hear that? You don’t?! Well then you need to learn to listen. Whether you’re active in social media or not, I guarantee you that someone, somewhere out on the Internet, is talking about you.

We’ve got tips and links for how to listen—whether you’re listening to what people are saying or “listening” for ROI—but we’re going to start with The Big One:

Ken Burbary’s Wiki of Social Media Monitoring Solutions

This list aggregates tools from all over the web, including free, freemium, and paid sites. The wiki details the platforms measured and provides URLs. The list defaults to sort-by-edit-date—meaning the most current listings are always easy to find right at the top.

There’s a lot of information on the wiki. Dawn Foster at WebWorkerDaily breaks it down into manageable chunks and takes several of the apps and services for a spin when she checks out Monitoring Solutions for Social Media and Twitter.
You have fans and followers in the hundreds or even thousands. Does that mean that all your brilliant fan pages and witty tweets are seen by hundreds or thousands of people? Do they all click through when you link a new blog post or mention the new content on your home page?

No.

Start with the element that started it all – your website.

Way back in the 90’s pageviews—eyeballs on your content—were the gold standard for website ROI. This hasn’t been the case for a while.

ReadWriteStart (a ReadWriteWeb channel aimed at start-ups) has an excellent article on the Death of the Pageview.

Interactive insights group takes it a step further – in addition to discussing what no longer works they have a great list of links to the back-end; how to take the data some services give you and turn it into usable ROI statistics. Their Social Media Metrics Superlist is a must-read.

Still not sure how to determine your social media ROI? Whatever you’re doing, make sure you avoid The Five Biggest Mistakes in Measuring Social Media.

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Are you more interested in knowing WHAT people are saying about you in the social-verse than their click-through rate? If you don’t want to have a third party do your listening for you (not as bad as having them do all your social media, but not the greatest option either) start with a couple of simple Twitter tools to get a feel for what people are saying.

Start with [5 Simple Twitter Listening Tips Every Marketer Should Know](#).

You can even [Eavesdrop on Twitter by following your keywords](#) — and it’s okay!

---

Are you a fan of the Big G? If so, here’s some nifty tips on [How to Use Google Desktop as a Keyword or Reputation Monitoring Tool](#).
Find Your Champions
Finding the right people to champion your brand in social media.

You know that guy no one wants to sit next to at a dinner party? The one who only talks about how awesome he is? Well, social media is like a 24-hour worldwide dinner party and you do not want to be that guy. But you do want everyone to know how awesome you are.

The main solution is to BE awesome, so that people and businesses who come into contact with your business can’t help but notice your awesomeness. The Internet is a big place, though, and even the awesome can’t reach everyone.

This is where **your champions come in.** Champions are people who talk you up to the world so you don’t have to do it yourself.

Sheila is a champion for any number of destinations, CVBs, and businesses. Not because they asked her to be, but because she checked them out, was impressed, and told people so.

How do you find the right bloggers though? Social Media Today (whose content is so smart we decided to ignore the post’s typos) offers **The Very Basics of Blogger Outreach.**

Why? Bloggers, especially niche bloggers, make some of the best brand champions around.

Once you’re past the basics, Chris Brogan gives us the rundown on a different approach, a **themed blogger outreach.**

Sheila makes a plea and offers practical tips on how to **make it easy for bloggers to write about you.**

Nancy Brown offers some great advice on **working with travel bloggers** from both sides of the fence, both as a marketing/PR pro AND as a travel blogger herself.

---

*Brought to you by Tourism Currents*
Todd Lucier of Tourism Keys agrees – Your DMO needs a tech-savvy storyteller!

Mark Tafoya of the Culinary Media Network and Sheila explain, “Culinary Tourism: What a Food Blogger Brings to the Table.”

That’s another long one with lots of video – wait until you have some time and a good ‘net connection before clicking through.

The GranTourismo project: Lara and Terence aren’t so much champions as sponsored bloggers.

Still, this project represents an unique collaboration between bloggers and a vacation rental agency with properties all over the globe.

Notice the whole GranTourismo event takes place outside the United States? Probably because it is very far outside the new FTC blogging rules. What do these new rules mean for press trips and fam tours?

Is your area home to a lot of history? If so, look for champions at Markeroni – a whole community devoted to the location and logging of historical markers!

The Grumpy Traveller recommends his Top 15 travel Twitterers.

LocaFollow makes it easy to find tweeps in the places you’re visiting 😊

Marty Vanag, of the Bloomington-Normal, IL Economic Development Council tells a story about WHY out-of-towners like to find local tweeps.

Sawhorse Media’s Wanderlisting – Yep another big list of travel tweets, but this one sorts by category. Available categories include Deals, Destinations, News, Tips, and several more.
We saved our favorite champs for last:

**YOU**

You and your co-workers are the local storytellers and host. You are the individual voices given to a large entity that otherwise would not have one. So remember, next time you’re tempted to complain about work that you aren’t necessarily just speaking for yourself...

This article from the Open Forum about [5 Ways to Find and Use Your Employees as Spokespeople](https://www.openforum.com/article/5-ways-find-use-employees-as-spokespeople) is a good jumping off point.

In travel and tourism we know that people are the ones who really make things happen.

We hope this will empower you to be your own brand champion.

_Brought to you by [Tourism Currents](https://www.tourism-currents.com)_
Before we proffer advice on how to use social media to promote your events, we want to share a hard-learned lesson from Nancy Lublin, CEO of DoSomething.org. She tells us just what can happen if you forget to use social media when promoting your event. And it’s a smelly story!

Now that you know the wrong way to go about things, let’s talk about the right way. Starting with 7 Ways to Use Social Media to Create Buzz-Worthy Events by Jay Baer, social media coach and consultant.

If you’re promoting a special event, check out Eventful. While not available in all markets, the site features comprehensive event listings, including from movie times to family-friendly festivals—truly something for everyone. With 15 million registered users, can it hurt to sign up?

Twitter, airports, hashtags, and mobile, oh my! Valyn Perrini, Executive Director of the Open Travel Alliance in the U.S. shares how her well-managed mobile media helped build anticipation before she even left for a conference last Fall.

Another way to bring excitement to an in-person event is to run an online competition to build buzz.

For a look at one site where they’ve got it all laid out for meeting and event planners, check out ExperienceColumbus.com’s Social Media Tool Kit. Very Cool.
Tours, Lists, and Other Socially Savvy Specialties

These last few pages offer a few more bits of advice – a site you might want to make sure you’re listed on or a neat idea to add value to your existing web presence.

We also wanted to give you a look at some sites and groups who are doing social right. It may not be perfect, or all-inclusive, but they all have something going for them.

Tech Toys and Mobile Apps

Travelfish sets a new benchmark in iPhone travel guides with their guide to Angkor

A gorgeous app that sets the bar high for those who want to follow.

Is It Time for Your Travel App? Todd Lucier at Tourism Keys makes a case for apps over mobile websites. What do you think?

The Joy of Geocaching -- Another way to draw (GPS-enabled) visitors

AR Tourism & Mobile Technology – Not quite as sophisticated as Pennsylvania’s 2010 Summer Program but impressive nonetheless.

The new way to look like a dork with an iPhone: Augmented Reality. This has the potential to be brilliant---or a series of wrecks (literally) waiting to happen.

Deep Dish Creative interviews Ann Peavey -- the woman behind @SeattleMaven (the city’s official CVB Twitter id).

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
Tours and Itineraries

Want Customer Love? Give A Tour – Jonathan Littman waxes poetic over a visit to the Celestial Seasoning tea plant in Colorado.

Why Google City Tours is Important to Tourism – Basically because it’s something CVBs need to be doing (aggregating information on attractions with reviews and maps) and Google is saving you the time and expense.

Speaking of Google... If you have an amusement park or other pedestrian locale and want people to be able to view it ala Street View—they can. It’s called the Google Maps Partner Program and if you give them permission Google will come collect a street-level view and add it to their website.

Legoland, California is an early adopter if you want to see it for yourself.

Got history? Show it off! If eligible, list it with the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places. While you’re there check out the itineraries the NPS has put together for American History enthusiasts – and they’re even sorted by state for easy reference.

Brought to you by Tourism Currents
TexTreks: Your Online Texas Tour Guide

Save postage and put your visitors guide online. This one lets potential visitors narrow their search to one of 7 regions before hunting for hotels or activities.

Texas Historical Commission – Texas Historic Sites Atlas

If you know a Texas history buff do NOT send them the link or you may not see them again for the rest of the day!

DMOs—Do You Know What Your Visitors Are Looking For?

Activity info, apparently. Lodging, which is what so many DMO’s focus on, was a distant 3rd (of 4) in terms of traveler’s priorities.

That’s where this article comes in: 7 Destination Marketing Tips For Selling Your "Experience"

One of the tips specifically mentioned is the creation of interest-oriented itineraries – don’t give people a list of surrounding attractions and a map with the hours. Give them a PLAN.

They’ll thank you for it.

Trying to appeal the geotourists?

Check out National Geographic’s Center for Sustainable Destinations.

Even the U.S. Department of Agriculture is doing its part to Promote Tourism in Rural America.
Tools for the Tourism Trade

- **AudioSnacks.com** – Local user-created downloadable audio tours

- **The Complete Guide to Google Wave** – Good book (great deal for a download!) on a misunderstood topic with so much potential.

- **Podcasting Equipment Guide (2009)** - Exactly what it says it is, and broken out into four levels of equipment needs, from Beginner to Prosumer.

- **Screencasting Primer** - In the mashup between presentations and video, you can find screencasting. The best explanation of it is, in fact, the screencast on the primer site.

- **17 Essential Tools You Need To Produce Your Own Videos: a PDF**

- **10 Great Tools to Create a Mobile Version of Your Site**
About Tourism Currents

Tourism Currents created online training courses to teach social media marketing for tourism professionals. The courses were researched and written specifically with tourism in mind.

Learn more about the courses at www.tourismcurrents.com/details

Get our free newsletter, full of tips on social media for tourism:
www.tourismcurrents.com/newsletter

Special thanks to Dyanna Larson, writer-editor at Ink Think – Where Words Go To Work, for working with us on this resource. Check out her services at www.inkthinkva.com