

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



RACVB Receives Award for Social Media Usage at State Tourism Conference

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2010

ROCKFORD, IL – What's happening? @gorockford: RACVB was honored with IL Excellence in Tourism Award for "Best Social Media Marketing" at 2010 Governor's Conference on Tourism! (11 characters remaining)

That's Twitter-speak for the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau was honored with a 2010 Illinois Excellence in Tourism Award (IETA) in "Best Social Media Marketing" for its social media marketing efforts. The IETA recognizes innovative tourism promotional and marketing initiatives from across the state of Illinois.

"As an organization, we are always striving to be trail-blazers in the tourism industry," said John Groh, RACVB President/CEO. "We have embraced the crucial role social media is now playing for businesses and organizations and have made it an integral component of our marketing strategies. We're thrilled with the recognition our efforts have received."

The Rockford Area CVB's complete social media marketing program includes involvement in numerous social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr, as well as text message alerts and the production of video podcasts designed to give visitors insider tips on how to travel Rockford like a local resident. Targeting tech-savvy parents and young adults with an affinity for travel, the RACVB utilizes social media to interact with visitors, the local community, tourism industry partners and the media, and to listen to their conversations. The RACVB's new website gorockford.com, launched in December of 2009, features full social media integration through the ShareThis application.

"We're very pleased and humbled to be recognized for our efforts in the social media arena. Social media is always changing, so it's a challenge to continually learn and stay updated on new technologies,

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practices and strategies," said Stacy Kiejko, RACVB Marketing Communications Manager. "Social media has provided us with a more direct way to engage and interact with the local community, travelers and other industry professionals, and those connections are invaluable to us. We feel honored to be recognized by our peers in the tourism industry."

The award was presented at the 2010 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism held February 17-19 at the Fairmont Chicago. Hosted by the Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (ICCVB) and the Illinois Bureau of Tourism (IBOT), the annual Governor's Conference draws tourism industry professionals from across the state for opportunities to learn from tourism experts and to take advantage of the latest information, products and services to enhance travel in Illinois. Representatives from the travel and tourism industry who were registered to attend the conference were invited to submit entries for the Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards.

The Rockford Area CVB was also recognized for its social media efforts in April of 2009 by Viscape, an online community for vacationers. Viscape named the RACVB as one of the top tourism organizations to follow on Twitter on its list "15 Tourism Heavyweights on Twitter," which also included New Orleans, Pensacola, and Albuquerque.

To view the Rockford Area CVB's social media efforts:

- www.twitter.com/gorockford or follow us at @gorockford
- www.facebook.com/gorockford
- www.youtube.com/user/skiejko
- www.flickr.com/gorockford
- View our video podcasts on gorockford.com or iTunes (search keyword "gorockford")
- Sign up for our text message alerts by texting GOROCK to 30364

The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is a private, non-profit organization that champions efforts to promote and further develop the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. RACVB generates positive economic impact for the community through investments in tourism marketing, sales, promotion and advocacy. www.gorockford.com

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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