



Perry County's Chamber of Commerce Website Becomes a One-Stop Shop for County Residents...With a Little Help from its Tech-Savvy Executive Director

Name:

Perry County Chamber of Commerce

Internet:

www.perrycountytennessee.com

Products/Services:

Informational resources for the citizens of Perry County

Location:

Linden/Perry County

Leadership:

Pat Vanden Bosche, Executive Director

Innovative Insight: *"I wanted to make the website something that county residents would look at as a resource. This is a website for the people."*

The Importance of

Broadband: *"Broadband is absolutely vital to what I do. If I had to maintain the site using a landline, forget it."*

Impact of the Web site: *"The mayor tells me he checks the site every day to find out what he has to do for that day! The site has made a big difference in the community. And that's what we set out to accomplish."*

Linden, TN - When Pat Vanden Bosche accepted the job of Executive Director of the Perry County Chamber of Commerce a little over a year ago, her first order of business was giving the Chamber's website a complete makeover. "I called it a black and orange Halloween nightmare!" she laughs. As a successful web designer for more than two dozen clients around the country, Pat knows a thing or two about creating a user-friendly website. "I wanted to make the website something that county residents would look at as a resource," she says. "This is a website for the people."

And the people are responding. Since Pat revamped the site, traffic has skyrocketed from around twenty or thirty visitors a day to three or four hundred a day! Pat credits the ease of getting around the site and the innovative yet easy-to-use features for the jump in traffic. Visitors to the site can access an exhaustive directory of county contacts, view an up-to-the-minute countywide events calendar, and watch videos of local events, such as concerts, parades, and profiles of local residents. The site is even proving quite useful for county officials, who use it as an agenda to keep up with their personal schedules. "The mayor tells me he checks the site every day to find out what he has to do for that day!" laughs Pat.

Such a resourceful tool would not be available to county residents without broadband technology. "Broadband is absolutely vital to what I do," says Pat. "If I had to maintain the site using a landline, forget it." Unfortunately, though Pat has access to broadband at her office in Linden, many Perry County residents are still struggling to gain broadband availability. But Pat remains hopeful that it won't be long before Perry County is on the fast track. "Perry County is an area of Tennessee that progress has not caught up with yet," she says. "But when they get broadband here, you're going to see a huge shift in the economy."

For now, she's doing her part to bring Perry County, and even its surrounding counties, into the age of technology. She recently signed on to update and maintain Lewis County's Chamber of Commerce and Economic and Community Development websites, perhaps a daunting task for a Chamber Director also juggling the maintenance of dozens of other websites on the side. But for Pat...it's all in a day's work. "The site has made a big difference in the community," she says. "And that's what we set out to accomplish."

About TN 95:

Citizens across the state are using technology in innovative ways to ensure that Tennessee remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. Connected Tennessee is profiling businesses and Tennesseans in each of the state's 95 counties to identify lessons learned on the path to successful innovation. For more information visit our Web site at www.connectedtn.org or call 615-242-9508.