



CPA Info #123

December 2005

Results of a Follow-up Survey to 2004 and 2005 Agritourism Web Site Development and Marketing Workshop Participants

Megan L. Bruch
Marketing Specialist
Center for Profitable Agriculture



The Web Site Development and Marketing Workshops and follow-up study were conducted as part of the Tennessee Agritourism Initiative. Funding for the initiative was provided, in part, through an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and USDA Rural Development.

Study Background

The *Center for Profitable Agriculture* provided leadership for two rounds of Web site development and marketing workshops as part of the Tennessee Agritourism Initiative. The first round was held in November 2004 and included three workshops, one each in Nashville, Jackson and Knoxville. The second round was held in March 2005 and included workshops in Nashville and Knoxville. Dr. John Toman, Director of Information Technology for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, provided instruction for the day-long programs. Lynne Scott, Web designer with UTIA, provided instruction for a portion of the Knoxville workshop in March 2005. Funding for the workshops was provided in part through an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and USDA Rural Development.

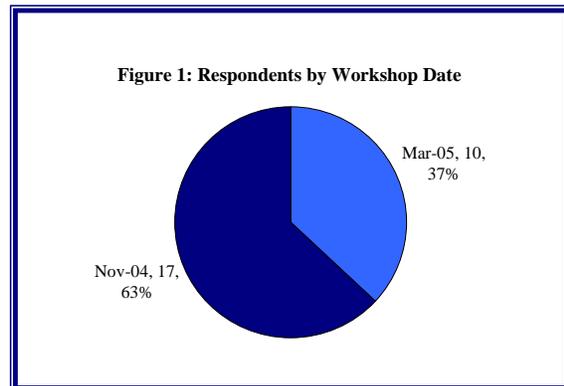


John Toman and Megan Bruch help participants at the Jackson workshop.

The two rounds of workshops provided training in Web site development and marketing to a total of 80 participants for 480 participant hours. In November 2004, 52 participants completed the first round of training with 17 in Nashville, 18 in Jackson and 17 in Knoxville for 312 participant hours of training. In March 2005, the second round of workshops reached an additional 28 participants, 13 in Nashville and 15 in Knoxville, for 168 participant hours of training.

In June 2005, 48 participants in both rounds of the Web site development and marketing workshops were asked to participate in a follow-up mail survey, 30 from the November 2004 workshops and 18 from the March 2005 workshops.¹ The objectives of the survey were to determine how participants had used the information from the workshops, collect information to estimate the financial benefit the participants had received due to the workshops and determine if an advanced version of the workshop was desired.

Out of 48 surveys mailed, 27 were returned for a 56 percent response rate. November 2004 participants accounted for 17 of the returned surveys or 63 percent while March 2005 attendees returned 10 of the returned surveys or 37 percent (Figure 1).



¹ The number of participants included in the follow-up survey is less than the total number of participants of the workshop. Some enterprises had more than one participant in the workshops, and only one survey per enterprise or organization was included for the follow-up study. Workshop participants such as workshop planners and those involved directly with the Tennessee Agritourism Initiative were also not included in the follow-up survey.

Use of Workshop Information

The survey asked respondents to indicate how they had used the information they learned in the workshop (Table 1). Thirteen respondents or 48 percent used the information to “plan a Web site,” 11 respondents or 41 percent “improved their ability to communicate with a Web developer,” and ten respondents or 37 percent “made improvements to an existing Web site.” Five respondents or 19 percent used the information to “build a Web site,” and three respondents or 11 percent each used the information they learned to “market a Web site” and “hire a Web developer.” Nine respondents or 33 percent, five from 2004 and four from 2005, indicated they had “not yet used the information but planned to do so in the future.” None of the respondents indicated that they would not use the information in the future.

<i>Respondents have used information to...</i>	<i>November 2004</i>	<i>March 2005</i>	<i>Total</i>
Plan a Web site	7	6	13 (48%)
Build a Web site	3	2	5 (19%)
Make improvements to operation’s pre-existing Web site	5	5	10 (37%)
Market a Web site	2	1	3 (11%)
Hire a Web developer	3	0	3 (11%)
Improve ability to communicate with Web developer or others	7	4	11 (41%)
Not yet used the information learned but plan to do so in the future	5	4	9 (33%)
Not used the information learned and do not plan to do so	0	0	0 (0%)

Financial Benefit Experienced

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they had experienced any financial benefit from attending the workshop and implementing the information learned.

Respondents were asked about five categories of savings or gain:

1. Saved expenses on class or workshop fees
2. Saved expenses from not needing to hire a Web developer
3. Saved expenses from a Web developer or others through an improved ability to communicate
4. Experienced an increase in sales by having and marketing an effective Web site
5. Experienced cost savings or increase in income from the workshop in other ways than those already listed

Seventeen respondents or 63 percent indicated financial benefit from the workshop in at least one category (Table 2). Four respondents experienced financial benefit in four categories. Five respondents reported benefit from three categories, and five respondents also reported benefit from two categories. Three respondents experienced benefit from one category.

<i>Number of Categories of Financial Benefit Indicated</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>
1	3
2	5
3	5
4	4
Total with at least 1	17

Respondents who had experienced financial benefit were also asked to estimate the amount of savings or increased income they experienced to date from attending the workshop and implementing the information learned. Only 12 of the 17 or just over 70 percent who indicated they experienced financial benefit estimated the amount gained, and some of these did not provide estimates for each category of financial benefit.

Even with missing estimates, respondents reported a total of \$7,575 in expense savings and/or revenue increase in the three to six months following the workshops (Table 3). Respondents reported average benefits of \$76 saved in class or workshop fees, \$210 saved from not having to hire Web developers, and \$175 saved from better communication with their Web developers. Respondents also reported an average increase in sales for the period of \$751 and other benefits of \$467.

	<i>Number of Respondents Experiencing Benefit</i>	<i>Percent Experiencing Financial Benefit</i>	<i>Number of Respondents Reporting Estimate of Benefit</i>	<i>Total Estimated Benefit Reported</i>	<i>Average Benefit Reported</i>
	<i>A</i>	<i>B=A/ 27 Respondents</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E=D/C</i>
<i>Saved - class or workshop fees</i>	12	44%	9	\$680	\$76
<i>Saved – no Web developer</i>	8	30%	5	\$1,050	\$210
<i>Saved – better communication</i>	12	44%	4	\$700	\$175
<i>Increased sales – better site or marketing</i>	6	22%	5	\$3,755	\$751
<i>Other benefit</i>	6	22%	3	\$1,400	\$467
<i>Total Benefit Reported</i>	17	63%	12	\$7,575	

Assuming financial benefits experienced were similar across the entire sample,² total financial benefits can be estimated for the period of three to six months following the workshops (Table 4). First, an estimated number of people in the sample experiencing financial benefit can be calculated by assuming that the percent of the entire sample experiencing each category of financial benefit is the same as the percent of the survey respondents who experienced the benefit. Thus, to find the estimated number experiencing the financial benefit (Table 4, Column F), the number in the sample, 48, is multiplied by the percentage found in Table 3, Column B. The estimated financial benefit by category (Table 4, Column G) can then be estimated by multiplying the estimated number experiencing financial benefit by the average benefit reported (Table 3, Column E).

Using this method of estimation, the sample potentially saved more than \$1,600 in class or workshop fees, almost \$3,000 from not having to hire a Web developers, and more than \$3,700 from better communication with their Web developer. The sample has also increased revenue by over \$8,000 and gained almost \$5,000 in additional financial benefit for a total financial benefit of more than \$21,000 for the three to six months following the workshops (Table 4).

Table 4: Estimated Total Financial Benefit		
	Estimated Number Experiencing Financial Benefit	Estimated Financial Benefit
	<i>F</i>	<i>G=Fx E</i>
Saved – class/workshop fee	48 x 44% = 21	\$1,621
Saved – no Web developer	48 x 30% = 14	\$2,987
Saved – better communication	48 x 44% = 21	\$3,733
Increased sales – better site or marketing	48 x 22% = 11	\$8,011
Other financial benefit	48 x 22% = 11	\$4,981
<i>Estimated Total Financial Benefit</i>		\$21,333

The total estimated financial benefit can be used to estimate an average financial benefit for each participant in the sample³ by dividing the estimated financial benefit by the number of participants in the sample (Table 5). Using this method, the average participant was estimated to experience \$455 in financial benefits in the first three to six months following the workshops. This includes a savings of \$34 in class or workshop fees, \$62 from not having to hire a Web developer and \$78 by improving communication. The average participant was also estimated to increase sales by \$167 and experience \$104 in other financial benefits.

² “Sample” for these purposes will include the 48 workshop participants sent follow-up surveys to prevent double counting for the participants from the same enterprise.

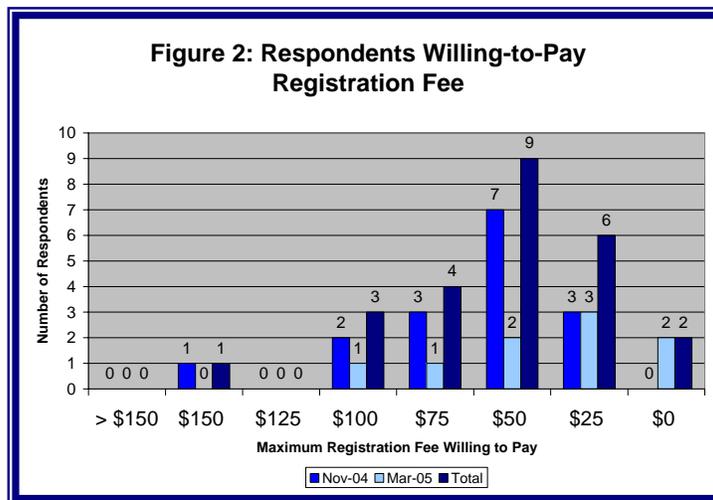
³ Once again, “sample” will refer to the 48 participants included in the follow-up survey group.

Table 5: Estimated Average Financial Benefit	
	Average Financial Benefit
	H=G/48
Saved – class/workshop fee	\$34
Saved – no Web developer	\$62
Saved – better communication	\$78
Increased sales – better site or marketing	\$167
Other financial benefit	\$104
Total Average Estimated Financial Benefit	\$445

This is an estimate of benefits received only within six months for November 2004 workshop participants and three months for March 2005 participants. It is likely that participants will continue to experience financial benefit from the workshop over time through cost savings and, especially, increased revenue. These benefits are expected to multiply as more information from the workshops is implemented and marketing efforts take effect over time.

Workshop Registration Fee Willingness-to-Pay

Respondents were asked to indicate the maximum registration they would have been willing to pay if the expenses of conducting the workshops had not been paid by special grant funds (Figure 2). Several categories of potential registration fees were listed. One respondent would have been willing to pay \$150 for the workshops. Three respondents would have paid \$100, four would have paid \$75 and nine would have paid \$50. Six other respondents would have paid \$25. Only two respondents were not willing to pay any registration fee for the workshops. On average, respondents would have been willing to pay a registration fee of \$54 for the workshops.



Advanced Workshop Interest

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would be interested in participating in an “advanced” Web site development workshop to receive additional training on techniques used to build a site. A total of 18 respondents, 67 percent, indicated they would be interested in an advanced workshop (Table 6). Just less than half of November 2004 workshop respondents were interested while 100 percent of March respondents were interested in an advanced workshop.

Table 6: Interest in an Advanced Workshop			
	Number Respondents Interested in Advanced Workshop	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents Interested
	<i>H</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>J=H/I</i>
Nov-04	8	17	47%
Mar-05	10	10	100%
Total	18	27	67%

Several respondents reported they would like an advanced workshop to cover a variety of material. Most often, respondents reported interest in more hands-on work in building a Web site and additional marketing information.

January and November were most often ranked first choices when respondents would likely be able to participate in an advanced workshop with eight and four first choice votes. February and March received the most second and third choice votes.

Respondents were also asked to indicate which location they would prefer for an advanced workshop from a list of possible locations. Knoxville, Nashville and Jackson were listed with an option for respondents to specify an alternate location. Nashville was indicated by eight respondents, Knoxville was chosen by seven, and Jackson received one vote. Clarksville received two write-in votes, and Morristown and Spring Hill each received one.

Summary

The *Center for Profitable Agriculture* provided leadership for two rounds of Web site development and marketing workshops as part of the Tennessee Agritourism Initiative. With primary instruction from John Toman of the UT Institute of Agriculture, the two rounds of workshops provided training in Web site development and marketing to a total of 80 participants for 480 participant hours of training. In June 2005, 48 participants in both rounds of the Web site development and marketing workshops were asked to participate in a follow-up mail survey, 30 from the November 2004 workshops and 18 from the March 2005 workshops. The objectives of the survey were to determine how participants had used the information from the workshops, collect information to determine the financial benefit the participants had received due to the workshops and determine if an advanced version of the workshop was desired. Out of 48 surveys mailed, 27 were returned for a 56 percent response rate.

In the three to six months following the workshop, thirteen respondents or 48 percent used the information to “plan a Web site,” 11 respondents or 41 percent “improved their ability to communicate with a Web developer,” and ten respondents or 37 percent “made improvements to an existing Web site.” Five respondents or 19 percent used the information to “build a Web site,” and three respondents or 11 percent each used the information they learned to “market a Web site” and “hire a Web developer.”

Respondents reported a total of \$7,575 in expense savings and/or revenue increase in the three to six months following the workshops. Respondents reported average benefits of \$76 saved in class or workshop fees, \$210 saved from not having to hire Web developers, and \$175 saved from better communication with their Web developers. Respondents also reported an average increase in sales for the period of \$751 and other benefits of \$467.

Assuming financial benefits experienced were similar across the entire sample (48), total financial benefits can be estimated for the period of three to six months following the workshops at over \$21,000. The average financial benefit per participant is estimated at \$445.

All but two survey respondents indicated they would have been willing to pay at least \$25 in registration and up to \$150 for the workshop. On average, respondents would have been willing to pay a registration fee of \$54 for the workshops.

A total of 18 respondents, 67 percent, indicated they would be interested in an advanced workshop. Most often, respondents reported interest in more hands-on work in building a Web site and additional marketing information. January and November were most often ranked first choices when respondents would likely be able to participate in an advanced workshop. Nashville and Knoxville were the most preferred locations for an advanced workshop.



Appreciation is extended to Rob Holland and Amanda Ziehl, Extension Specialists with the Center for Profitable Agriculture for reviewing this publication. Thank you also to Kim Martinez, Principle Secretary for the Center, for assistance in survey distribution and data entry.

**Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.**