



Broadband Technology Keeps Tourism in Rustic Appalachia Thriving

Name: Appalachian Quilt Trail

Internet: www.AQT.com

Products/Services:

Tourable loops and trails through points of interest within 19 East Tennessee counties

Location:

Rutledge/Grainger County

Innovative Insight:

“To local businesses, the Appalachian Quilt Trail is much more than a scenic trail. Through its online presence, it provides low and no cost marketing and PR opportunities to businesses that normally couldn't take advantage of large-scale marketing promotions.”

Importance of Broadband:

“This often forgotten rural area is now found through the use of broadband Internet. Broadband allows site users to more quickly exchange information with the website.”

The Future: Coming soon – an online marketplace featuring local handmade products.

Rutledge, TN – If you ever wanted to take an excursion through the Appalachian Mountains, plotting your course just got a whole lot easier, thanks to broadband technology. An initiative called the Appalachian Quilt Trail is working to draw visitors off the main roadways and into rural communities for an authentic Tennessee experience. The Trail is made up of a series of tourable loops and trails that direct traffic to local points of interest – all marked by large, handpainted quilt squares. The Quilt Trail extends across 19 counties, from McMinn to Hancock. The Trail’s website, www.vacationAGT.com, allows visitors to access an Interactive Map, detailing the path the Quilt Trail follows through East Tennessee and determine their chosen path through Appalachia to make sure they hit all the “off the beaten path” spots that might otherwise go unnoticed. Says the site’s designer, Cynthia Sellers: “This often forgotten rural area is now found through the use of broadband Internet.”

Starting this summer, website visitors will have an enhanced online experience with new features to make their vacation planning much easier. Website visitors will be able to discover what is located along the quilt trail through interactive pages containing detailed information about trail stops, including things to do, places to stay, and more.

The second feature is a printable itinerary map. The “Plan Your Trip” feature allows visitors to save and remove points on the itinerary, and to calculate the shortest route between two points. Custom-made composite terrain and street maps will list all major and local roads that are relevant to the quilt trails. The map will also feature icons with information on participating businesses. This type of detail is only made possible by broadband technology. “Broadband allows site users to more quickly exchange information with the website,” explains Sellers. The third upgrade to the site will allow visitors to get directions to designated points on the itinerary.

Also coming soon - an online market place featuring local handmade products.

So start planning your Appalachian excursion today! Visit the Appalachian Quilt Trail online at www.AQT.com.

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.