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Passport Online Launches Social Media Tool Kit

Users of NexCite and VacationPort Receive Free Access to
Social Media Toolkit & Optional Fee-based Services

Beaverton, Oregon – Passport Online Inc., the Internet marketing solutions company for leisure travel agents and suppliers, has designed a social media toolkit for its customers. "We have been a part of the travel agent's online presence since we started in this business," said Greg Kott, president and CEO of Passport Online Inc. "Essentially, a website is the digital storefront, and now, as social media explodes, we wanted to help our customers navigate these new opportunities to expand their overall digital footprint."

Passport engaged the services of a local Portland-based social media and advertising company to manage a research project with existing customers and help design a how-to for travel agents to follow. A pilot project with a core group of travel agencies was created, outlining the opportunities for travel agents to leverage the social media space to grow their business. The project resulted in the development of a step-by-step guide, with more than 50 pages of directions and information that will help travel agencies establish a solid social media foundation from which to work.

"Our recommendation is that, at a minimum, travel agents should have a website (their digital storefront), a blog, a Facebook Fan Page, and a Twitter account, and tie them together and to their website. We will be assisting our customers in establishing a presence on all of these platforms and assuring that they all drive their customers back to their websites for detailed deals and product offerings," Kott said. "Social media is becoming a preferred way for people to communicate with each other. And travel agents need to communicate with their clients in ways their clients want to communicate on the Web. There has never been a better time for travel agents to have a conversation with the consumer in the social media landscape. Agents are now able to leverage social media behavior to create a powerful extension of their current website and digital strategies."

The toolkit provides not only step-by-step instructions on establishing a presence, but also provides advice on how to develop content, how to get into a content-development routine and how to assure that you maintain your presence effectively on all platforms. The toolkit will also outline real-world examples from the pilot project, showing how agents used their social media presence to extend their reach and generate new business. Customers can opt to have Passport Online's social media consultation service help them get started for an additional fee.

"Social media is important in today's environment," said Doug Zanger, who consulted on the project. "It does take commitment, but if you think about it in your current day-to-day, you can, over time, easily incorporate it into your workflow. At the beginning of the

process, it may take a little more time but it becomes progressively easier and there are plenty of ways to create content in one place and have it automated to be present on just about any social media platform."

The toolkit can be found on AgentPort, the customer portal for NexCite and VacationPort users. Those who are not currently customers can inquire about the Passport product portfolio at sales@passportonlineinc.com

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About Passport Online
Passport Online is a leading supplier of Internet tools that help the leisure travel industry reach the travel agency consumer. Millions of unique travel agency consumers use Passport Online's shopping engine on travel agency websites to search for their next vacation experience. Each day, unique consumers are on those sites, seeking the product advice and opportunities offered by their trusted travel agent. Passport Online's key products are VacationPort and NexCite. Passport Online also offers complete email design and delivery services that integrate with the VacationPort and NexCite systems.