

## COLLECTING POSTAL CODES AND EMAIL ADDRESSES TO INCREASE EVENT VISITATION

At the recent Central Counties Tourism Symposium 2019, many of us connected, sharing our successes, our challenges and new ideas we will be attempting this year. During a break, in chatting with Brandon Pickard of [Durham Tourism](#), he shared some of the recent events he ran and how he uses social media to publicize in advance and during the events, then creating a social buzz by posting pictures/hashtags during the event as well as afterwards. While there is no doubt that an active social media campaign is an essential and valuable tool to help you engage visitors, it doesn't help in collecting postal codes, adding people to an email list or getting event surveys completed. Brandon and I continued to talk as I explained how text messaging can be used to help further event goals and how easy it is to connect with visitors through texting.

### Here's how it works.

At a festival or event, visitors and passers-by can text a keyword to our special SMS.net phone number to receive an automatic text reply containing a variety of potential responses (for example text: CCT to 767638). Your event can print the "text your keyword" option on posters, in social media pages, in digital or print advertising, or even include it on a small postcard being distributed on site. The visitor's text can contain a link to the day's agenda or a link to drive visits to a social media page where all the details are listed. SMSnet will have a pre-determined list of your messages and we send them out for you.

### Contact with your visitor can continue during the balance of the day, weekend or beyond.

You can provide event reminders, alerts, sponsor messages, lost/found information, a promotional code, contest information. That night or day after the event, a link to an online post-event evaluation survey can be sent where you can ask permission for much more information you can use such as an email address to join your newsletter or to send future announcements. If you ask for permission as people subscribe to texting or afterwards, the host can continue to text the subscriber post-event with the occasional event update, an invitation to the next event, links to your website or social media pages. Texting can also give your sponsors additional opportunities. Any link to a landing page or to a survey can be sponsored.

You can also export the cell phone numbers and upload them to Facebook as an advertising hit list allowing the host to advertise directly just to the owners of those phone numbers on Facebook. This is possible if the subscriber is also on Facebook and has given Facebook their cell phone number for password verification or other reason, even if the cell number is private on Facebook. (Minimum 100 cell numbers on Facebook, or on LinkedIn, 1000 minimum.)

### Build information about your visitor.

Acquiring email addresses through the text service will help you build your visitor base and increase visitors for future events. If you are using the [Central Counties Event Survey Program](#), or the [Central Counties Visitor Research Program](#) this will help you obtain more postal codes to get more information about your customer demographics.

### A simple solution to engage your event customer.

SMSnet has provided text messaging services for Symposium 2017 and 2018, plus a variety of other Festivals and Events. Our customers use text messaging because it works on every cell phone, everywhere. There is no App to download, no one needs WIFI to receive a text and subscribing to the service is seamless and takes seconds. If you would like information, please visit [www.SMSnet.ca](http://www.SMSnet.ca), text or call Rick O'Connor at 905-716-6916 for info or a quick quote.

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