Mountain Lakes CVB launches new website

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WALHALLA — In this day and age, a website's user friendliness determines its fate.

With that in mind, after eight years with the same site, Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau recently launched a brand-new web presence at scmountainlakes.com.

The site went live about two months ago, but Mountain Lakes CVB president Ken Sloan said they softly launched the new website so they could work out the kinks.

"We still have a few holes to fill in, but primarily it's good to go," he said.

A lot of new technology has developed since 2008, so the main objective was to give the website the flexibility to adapt to different mobile devices, such as smartphones and iPads. Without that ability, the website could lose a large percentage of its audience right off the bat, Sloan said.

"We also needed it to look fresh and clean," he said. "We have a lot of new businesses in town. When we built the business, we didn't know who we were in terms of our brand, but now with Destination Oconee launched, we are an outdoor adventure destination. So we wanted the website to have that look and feel."

With more content and video, the site offers locals and tourists a better taste of the Upstate. An advanced technology embedded in the events page also taps into events posted on Facebook.

"Our website is constantly searching for events within all the zip codes in Oconee County," Sloan said. "So if you create an event on your Facebook page, as soon as you launch it, we see it and it automatically gets implanted into our website. If people are looking for a master event page for Oconee County, we'll have that on our website."

With the old site, users would sometimes only stay on the home page for two seconds and then continue surfing the net. But Sloan has already seen better results for the new site through the use of Google Analytics.

"Now we're seeing a number of people that land on the first page then proceed to another page and another page," he said. "Every month we get these reports that allow us to make adjustments on the fly to better engage the locals and the visitors as well."

Another benefit to the new site is advertising opportunities for local businesses. Owners of bed and breakfasts, boat rentals, whitewater rafting outfits and cabins can reach a broader audience through the CVB.

"This will be the first time we've ever had featured business listings on our website," Sloan said.

For more information, email ken@scmountainlakes.com or call 877-685-2537.