Oconee Economic Alliance launches 'more robust' website

BY STEVEN BRADLEY
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SENECA — Even if they never visit its new website, the Oconee Economic Alliance believes all county residents will reap the benefits.

The new site, InvestOconeeSC.com, went live last week and is designed to promote economic development and recruit industry by encouraging corporate decision-makers to choose Oconee County as the location for business.

Alliance executive director Richard Blackwell said that as part of the organization's strategic plan it needed a "more robust" website to properly represent the community and the value of locating industry in the area.

"A lot of times (site consultants) will go to your website and investigate you before they ever call," Blackwell said at a media event to preview the site's launch. "Perception is reality, so we need to showcase Oconee County visually, but also on the research side, as well."

There are more than "a thousand key data pieces," many of them Bureau of Labor statistics and census data, according to Blackwell, to provide corporations all the information they might need about the county.

"In today's world, when a site consultant is looking at a thousand different communities to make a decision on, if you can't answer their question, they will just eliminate you," Blackwell said. "So we took what the International Economic Development Council recommends as the key data elements and put them on the web site."

The site is also mobile-friendly, which is in keeping with the OEA's desire to make it more modern.

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Holleigh Alexander
Oconee Economic Alliance
marketing manager

Blackwell directed much of the credit for the website to marketing manager Holleigh Alexander, who joined the organization in December.

"The new website is modern, it's up-to-date and it's just a very 2014 website," Alexander said. "The old website was a good website and it served its purpose, it just didn't really draw you in or have that 'wow' factor about it. ... The new website has a lot more information that citizens or site selectors or anyone that's looking for information can come to the site to find."

The website was designed by Redhype, a Greenville-based agency, and cost just less than $15,000. Blackwell said some bids the organization received for the site were between $60,000 and $70,000 but also noted the bid selected wasn't the cheapest option either.