

LOCAL EXPLORERS UPGRADES POPULAR TOURISM APP AND WEB PLATFORMS TO ENHANCE USER ENGAGEMENT, VISITOR FOOT TRAFFIC

Local Explorers has upgraded its popular app passport with optional new functionality & gamification features to incentivize more visits to local attractions.

BOCA RATON, FL, UNITED STATES, September 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Local Explorers](#), creators of popular mobile loyalty apps and websites for the tourism and hospitality industry, is making its already powerful solutions even better with a series of upgrades to incentive user engagement and visits to attractions featured on its apps and websites. In addition, back-end upgrades make it easier for destination-marketing organizations (DMOs) to import their databases of local attractions directly into their websites and apps, eliminating the need for time-consuming manual entry.



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- Passes
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Exciting upgrades and new features are here!

Here are the exciting and powerful new features Local Explorers app users can soon enjoy:

Passes: In response to client demand, Local Explorers has introduced a pass feature, which allows DMOs to offer digital passes to selected businesses and attractions, where users can enjoy discounts, free samples, or other benefits. This flexible feature allows DMOs to design passes for any duration and their choice of local attractions. "They can be for anything – a sipping pass for wineries, a tasting pass for restaurants, or an experience pass for attractions such as museums and parks," explained Susan Erickson, co-founder and vice president of Local

Explorers. “One of our client DMOs even has a chocolate pass because their community has so many great chocolate shops.” She added that the pass feature has the flexibility to accommodate both paid or free passes.

Coupons: While Local Explorers app users have always been among the first to know about ongoing discounts at participating venues, such as happy hour specials, in-app coupons give them yet another way to save – and offer participating businesses another easy way to build foot traffic and brand awareness. Businesses can not only choose the amount of the coupon discount, but how frequently users can redeem them. “Some businesses prefer to offer one-time discounts, while others allow visitors to redeem the same coupon once a week or once a month,” Erickson explained.

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Encourage tourists to participate and foster economic growth

Tiered passport points: Up to now, passport programs on Local Explorers apps offered users points for each first-time visit to a participating site, and users could earn prizes at a range of point levels. The new tiered point system, which allows DMOs to offer larger numbers of points for first-time visits and smaller point allotments for repeat visits, not only incentivizes app users to explore new venues but rewards them for supporting familiar favorites. Tiered points are especially advantageous for smaller DMOs, Erickson said. “Some organizations have just a handful of members, and users can complete their passports in just a weekend if they want,” she explained. “And then what? With tiered

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Laura Argenbright, senior director, GO Laurel Highlands

points, they can continue to accumulate points towards prizes by revisiting places they especially enjoyed. And by using the app, they’ll keep learning about new events and offerings at the venues on the app—so they’ll continue to stay engaged with these businesses.” Erickson added that Local Explorers will work with clients to help them design a passport and point distribution system that works best for them.

Point wallets: The app’s new point wallet gives app users a bigger range of prize options. Instead

of earning set prizes automatically upon earning a certain number of points, users' points accumulate in a digital wallet that they control. The original Local Explorers passport program automatically awarded prizes when app users hit certain point levels—for instance, stickers or a branded koozie at lower point levels and a hat or t-shirt at higher levels. With the app's new point wallet, users will be able to choose the prizes they want—they can save their points to redeem for larger prizes or redeem them as they go for smaller ones. "The point wallet lets users choose their own adventure—they can participate in the passport program in whatever way best motivates them," Erickson said. "This will give them a more personalized and fun experience." This allows them to redeem points on the go for smaller prizes or save them up to redeem later for bigger rewards.

Full integration with SimpleView and IDSS: Local Explorers apps have become even easier for DMOs to set up and maintain with full compatibility with SimpleView and IDSS, popular data management tools for the hospitality industry. Back-end users can now directly import information on participating venues from their SimpleView or IDSS databases, which makes it quick and easy to populate the app's database and update information. Current Local Explorers clients have praised this time-saving feature. "Our database went straight from our website onto the app, and it was a pretty seamless process," said Laura Argenbright, senior director of creative strategy and marketing for [GO Laurel Highlands](#), a Pennsylvania-based DMO.

Enhanced website functionality: Local Explorers has also refreshed the look and user experience of its desktop solutions, which allow visitors to Local Explorers websites to do many of the same things as its app users, such as learn about venues of interest, bookmark favorite venues, and design their own tours of sites of their choice. They can also follow tours curated by any Guild, Association or even a DMO to highlight featured locations. "It makes trip planning easy," Erickson said. This gives site visitors fun, easy, and engaging tools to help them discover attractions of interest and plan their trips before they go. Visitors to Local Explorers sites can explore an interactive map of area attractions, click on places of interest to learn more about them, and save their favorite places for future reference. They can also get directions for self-guided driving tours of featured sites curated, as well as map out their own custom tours. Users can simply choose places they'd like to visit and select them, then the website generates a custom tour for them, including directions and estimated driving times. "The best part is this is a seamless, all-in-one solution – we don't hand our users off to a third-party platform. Everything they need—from directions to venue-specific information such as menu specials or prices—is in one place", Erickson said. Sometimes older solutions have typically relied on third-party apps to support features such as interactive maps and tracking for loyalty programs, Local Explorers offers a fully integrated, all-in-one solution that allows back-end users to handle all monitoring and maintenance in one place. "What we offer is a lot less friction for all users, both on the front and back end," Erickson said. "With other sites, back-end users would have to log into not only their website, but also into a third-party site to update their map, for instance. With Local Explorers, once they've logged into their site, they can take care of everything." The all-in-one Local Explorers platform also includes features not available from competing solutions, such as the capacity to include events as well as attractions on maps and self-guided tours. "Local events

such as festivals are not only points of pride for communities, but important tools for brand-building and economic growth," Erickson said. "And visitors love being immersed in a community's celebrations. Our platform and proprietary technology help them make more meaningful connections with the communities they visit." For Guilds, Associations or DMO's that use Local Explorers' mobile loyalty apps, the web platform offers even more convenience: back-end users can manage their website and app from the same portal. "This means if you're updating information on your website, you can update it on your app at the same time," Erickson said. "This not only saves you a lot of work, but ensures visitors get accurate, up-to-date information no matter how they engage with you." So, it's a win-win for both organizations and visitors using their website and app, in conjunction with Local Explorers' support and products.

Local Explorers apps by software designers [Daruma Tech](#) are designed to help communities better connect with visitors and local consumers by making it easy for them to discover and patronize local businesses and attractions. Each app is custom branded for the community it serves, and the Local Explorers team offers ongoing, proactive support, from development to training to regular maintenance and updates.

To learn more, visit <https://www.localexplorers.com/>

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