

DARUMA TECH ENHANCES POPULAR MOBILE PLATFORM TO HIGHLIGHT LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THEIR UNIQUE “BUY LOCAL” INITIATIVES

BOCA RATON, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, February 11, 2021

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Communities now have an impactful new way to connect residents and visitors to homegrown businesses and products, thanks to the newly enhanced Local Explorers mobile app designed by Boca Raton-based software developer [Daruma Tech](https://www.darumatech.com/).

Local Explorers, a powerful and flexible upgrade of Daruma Tech’s popular,

award-winning Brewers Marketing app, lets tourism boards, artisanal guilds, and other community advocates create branded mobile apps that let users find local attractions such as shops, restaurants, and galleries, learn about their offerings and hours of operation, and create their own personal tours of local hotspots. Local Explorers also fosters engagement with a virtual

passport program—by using the app to check in at participating venues, users can earn virtual passport stamps and points towards prizes. They can also leave ratings and see ratings given by other app users.

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Susan Erickson

“Our vision is for the apps to be local, social, and mobile,” said Susan Erickson of Daruma Tech. “We want each app to reflect and celebrate the unique vibe of its community, and for users to be part of the conversation about the places and communities they visit.”



Local Explorers App by Daruma Tech

Erickson added that the inspiration for Local Explorers comes from numerous requests from current customers. “Our customers are about celebrating their local communities and culture as

well as craft beverages—they see how effectively our apps connect participating businesses to local enthusiasts and are asking how our platform can be used to promote other producers and small businesses in their communities. And with small businesses under so much pressure due to COVID-19, communities are now finding it even more important to leverage new tools to engage consumers and support Buy Local campaigns.”

One Local Explorers fan is Anthony Martin, a Nova Scotia-based business consultant. When a colleague returned from a craft beverage festival raving about the mobile app built for the festival on the Local Explorers platform, Martin began to see its possibilities for promoting Canadian products and attractions. “It can be a community explorers app—the exploring can be more than craft beverages, it can be art installations or natural attractions or retail—it’s all about offering people experiences and making them aware of the resources in their communities.”

Erickson added that because communities have different budgetary constraints and growth strategies, the Local Explorers platform is scalable and customizable. Organizations can choose from a basic trail app that provides users with location information, a virtual passport, and mapping capabilities or an expanded version with multilingual capabilities and other enhanced features. They can design their incentive programs to fit their budgets as well—from user check-in points going towards seasonal raffles to earning branded swag such as t-shirts and hats. And if a community group envisions a feature or functionality not currently offered, Daruma Tech will work with the community group to make this a reality.

Communities already using Local Explorers have also found it a practical and cost-effective way to build customer engagement and awareness while working around the challenges of COVID-19. “It gives us the flexibility and freedom to showcase our members and highlight those that have the capacity to conduct business safely during this weird time,” said Jim Bauckman, director of communications for Grow and Fortify, a firm representing Maryland’s value-added agricultural producers, including vineyards. “We have lots of open space and outdoor experiences for consumers to make safe visits to their favorite manufacturers throughout the state.”

Martin agrees, adding that Local Explorers offers a much-needed support to small businesses fighting to stay afloat in the wake of COVID-19. “Big box stores have the resources to ride it out—small businesses are at risk unless they get help,” he said. “A lot of Canadians want to shop local to support their neighbors and communities, but may not be aware of the smaller businesses near them. Local Explorers can be a good way to connect them and help rebuild local economies.”

Businesses featured on Local Explorers benefit not just from increased exposure, but the ability to respond more quickly to public demand and market changes. A user-friendly, secure web portal lets participating businesses easily update their information and share their latest promotions with app users, and the app’s detailed user analytics provide useful insight on customer behavior and preferences.

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