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# Mekong New Media Boot Camp

May 26th, 2011

La Folie Lodge, Dong Daeng Island, Laos

Emerging technologies and new media are driving customer engagement, led by social media channels, from Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Flickr, and Foursquare – to mention the most famous ones – are changing the way we market and connect with consumers. But how to really leverage content and build engagement? Which channels are right for specific markets, recognizing that Facebook is not the major social network in Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, and Netherlands? How can destinations and tourism operators in the Mekong region leverage social media to position the Mekong Regions as a great tourism destination, make it a star? How can mobile platforms and apps build engagement with travelers?

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These and other questions will be discussed and debated on May 26th at the first **Mekong New Media Boot Camp**, preceding the Mekong Tourism Forum 2011 ([www.mekongtourismforum.org](http://www.mekongtourismforum.org)) in nearby Pakse on May 27th & 28th. This unique gathering will be hosted by Jens Thraenhart, award-winning global e-tourism expert, blogger and president of Dragon Trail (<http://www.linkedin.com/in/thraenhart>).

The goal of the New Media Boot Camp is collaboration by international media experts, from journalists to bloggers to come up with a plan for how new media channels, story-telling through engaging content, and emerging technologies can be leveraged to market the Mekong Region as a unique, authentic and sustainable single travel destination to the world. The findings and insights from the Boot Camp and field trip will be presented at the Mekong Tourism Forum the following day, and will help to guide the GMS Tourism Working Group in its future strategic direction.

## The Mekong New Media Boot Camp will:

1. bring together travel bloggers in the Mekong region and share best practices, learn, and network
2. expose international travel bloggers (both consumer and trade) to the emerging Mekong subregion to learn about the opportunities and challenges
3. educate travel suppliers, from hotels and attractions to travel agents how to leverage social media marketing and web 2.0 technologies.



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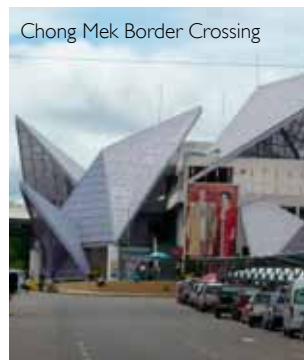
A combination of bloggers, social media experts, journalists & travel suppliers from the Mekong region and beyond will make for unique discussions. Each session will be conducted voluntarily by regional and international bloggers and be aimed to educate travel suppliers in the GMS on how to leverage social media, how to deal with positive and negative hotel reviews, how to integrate web 2.0 technologies into the travel websites, and how to measure social media and digital marketing campaigns, the pitfalls and how to start a successful blog, and much more.

Following the morning sessions and lunch at the lodge the group will be led on an exclusive field trip to the historic, UNESCO-protected town of Champasak and the ancient Vat Phou Temple Complex. Later the group will board a private Mekong River sunset cruise aboard the Vat Phou Boat ([www.vatphou.com](http://www.vatphou.com)) back to Pakse.

Participants at the **Mekong New Media Boot Camp** can register at the special rate of US\$100/per person, including dinner and accommodation at La Folie Lodge on May 25th (twin-sharing basis; single rooms available for a supplement of US\$30), morning camp sessions, lunch, afternoon field trip and sunset cruise on May 26th. Space is limited to just 50 people, so register soon! For more information or to register please email: [newmedia@mekongtourism.org](mailto:newmedia@mekongtourism.org), or call (+66) 86 025 5585.

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### The Greater Mekong Sub-region



Chong Mek Border Crossing



Vat Phou Cruise





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# Mekong New Media Boot Camp – Agenda

## May 25th

Check into La Folie Lodge / registration / welcome dinner

## May 26th

8am-9am

Breakfast

9am-10am

**DISCUSSION 1:**

**The Top Social Media Trends for Travel & Tourism**

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Travel, tourism and hospitality marketing are being dramatically impacted by social media. There is a never ending list of options of that each travel industry marketer needs to understand and leverage including blogs, user generated content, YouTube, Facebook, Google Connect, Twitter and more. An expert panel of social media experts will present and debate their top social media trends. Audience participation will add insight and controversy to the discussion. The workshop will conclude with the panel choosing the top three social media trends relevant to the Mekong Region to pay attention to in your sales and marketing plan.

10am-10.30am

**Networking Break**

10.30am-12pm

**DISCUSSION 2:**

**From Theory to Reality: Putting the Trends to Work for your Organization**

Knowing what the trends will be for the next year is one thing, but putting them into practice is totally different. Learn from the panel of experts as they discuss each of the top three social media trends for travel, tourism and hospitality sales and marketing professionals selected in the previous workshop and illustrate how to implement them into your organization. We put the experts to the test and move the bar higher as we analyze the opportunities these trends represent for travel & tourism organizations, and challenge them to show the audience how to achieve successful results.

## Agenda



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12pm-13.15pm

Lunch at La Folie Lodge

13:15pm-13:30pm

Boat transfer to Champasak Town

13:30pm-16:30pm

An interpretive walking tour of UNESCO World Heritage Champasak Town and Vat Phou Ancient Temple Complex led by Daniel Davenport, author of the forthcoming interpretive guidebook *Experiencing Vat Phou*.

16:30pm-18:30pm

Sunset cocktails and canapés cruising from Champasak Town back to Pakse on the Vat Phou Boat with Mekong Cruises ([www.mekong-cruises.com](http://www.mekong-cruises.com))

18:30pm

Arrival to Pakse and transfer to Champasak Grand Hotel

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## Agenda



Mekong River View From Champasak Grand Hotel (Mekong Tourism Forum 2011 venue)



Location of La Folie Lodge



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La Folie Lodge

