HELP DOT BUILD THE WEBSITE

by Vicente Romano III on Friday, November 19, 2010 at 12:32am

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I am responsible for the choice of www.beautifulpilipinas.com. We were about to give a preview of “Pilipinas Kay Ganda” as the tourism country brand, and I was looking for an appropriate URL that would be associated with the new brand.

I searched and looked at all possible permutations of “beautiful”, “philippines”, “pilipinas”, “is beautiful”, and this was the best name that was still available.

Now, if you were the one tasked to do this and you finally chose beautifulpilipinas.com, will you automatically check what beautifulfilipinas.com was, especially since it was not even one of your candidate choices? Honestly? I didn't and am sorry for it.

But I think the bigger question is did it damage the reputation of our country? The categorical answer is NO, thanks to the vigilance of our twittering community. As soon as they pointed out the anomaly, we pulled out the site and it had a total exposure of no more than 14 hours. I doubt very much if any foreigner actually had a chance to see the porn site.

It may have caused the department embarrassment, but I don’t think it put our nation to shame.

Some time ago I mentioned that the budget of DOT for new media is from P60 to P100M. And some are asking, “is this all we get for P100M, with copies filled with typos and grammatical errors?”

Again, the answer is NO. The P60 to P100M new media budget is for 2011, and it will still be bidded out in 2011. To put it in perspective, Singapore spent the equivalent of P160 to P180M for the new media component of their new brand campaign.

We will spend it for the following:

1. Complete overhaul of current website, with language translation and full features

2. SEO /SEM (we want to make sure our destinations are on page 1 or 2 when googled for tourism-related keywords)

3. SNS campaigns (FB, twitter, and you-tube campaigns, stand-alone or in support of offline campaigns)

4. Interface platform to connect industry stakeholders (transport, resort and hotel owners, tour operators, etc.) with online booking capability

5. Online advertising in relevant web properties

Beautifulpilipinas.com was intended to be a facelift of the current site, in essence – an interim site. We just changed the look and feel, but literally cut-and-pasted from the different existing DOT websites.

I guess because the site was new, every page and every word was under close scrutiny.

So where do we go from here?

Since many of you in #helpDOT said you wanted to help… here’s the deal.

We will put up the website in a private URL. If you want to get involved,

1. Send an email to eamacayayong@tourism.gov.ph and express your desire to volunteer.

2. She can then give you the URL of the interim website

3. Tell her (via email) the page you’d like to work on

4. Submit a write-up (either as rewrite of existing one or an entirely new one) and/or a captioned photo or graphics design

5. We will put your name as the contributor, both to give credit and assign accountability

6. Of course, we will exercise editorial control throughout the whole process

This content will not only be useful for the interim website, but will also feed to whoever will win in the bidding to develop the full-featured website.

Think of it as the wiki-approach of building up our website.

BTW, put on the subject, “I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR PROJECT DOT WIKI-WEBSITE”

God bless,

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