

# Partner Case Study

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## Partner at a Glance

Name: Texas Travel Industry Association

Location: Austin, TX

Number of Members: 800

In Business: Over 25 Years

URL: [www.ttia.org](http://www.ttia.org)

Business Partner Since: October 2007

## CONSTANT CONTACT’S BUSINESS PARTNER PROGRAM EARNS GOLD STARS FROM THE LONE STAR STATE

For travelers who want to tour the Lone Star State, there are countless travel agencies, hotels, and tourist attractions that can help visitors plan their vacations. But where do these organizations go when they need support and information about the Texas travel industry? They turn to TTIA — the Texas Travel Industry Association.

A nonprofit professional association for Texas’s travel and tourism industry, TTIA offers its 800 companies and 2,500 individual members help with networking, education, and marketing; it also keeps its members — which include hotels, restaurants, parks, chambers of commerce, and transportation organizations — informed about state legislation and other concerns that affect them.

In the biggest state in the continental U.S., keeping association members informed could be a full-time job. That’s why Constant Contact has become an integral communication tool for TTIA, as well as for its many members. A Constant Contact Business Partner for two years, TTIA uses the email marketing service for its own monthly newsletters and recommends its members use it for keeping in touch with their own customers and constituents. According to TTIA Director of Communications Sarah Ruh, “Our goal is to be an information resource and networking and marketing tool for our members. Constant Contact helps us do that.”

### CHALLENGE: Finding a “quick draw” solution to reach thousands of members

For years, TTIA sent out direct mail to inform members about news, legislation, and other travel-related details. But with so many individuals and organizations under its umbrella, TTIA found it tough to get the word out in printed form. “It was so much work to put together a printed newsletter. When we sent mailings out, we wondered if anyone was reading them,” Sarah recalls.



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TTIA first started sending email newsletters using Outlook® but, “it was this clunky thing that gave us a lot of bounce backs; the computer was tied up for an hour sending to 2,500 names,” Sarah says. Three years ago, TTIA made the switch to Constant Contact — which has not only given TTIA an easy, immediate way to send news, program updates, and hot topic discussion items, but also provided an added benefit to its members through the Business Partner program.

### **SOLUTION: Reining in the power of email marketing**

Constant Contact immediately elevated TTIA’s email marketing experience by offering fast, easy mailings, spam compliance, and segmented mailing lists. The ability to create segmented lists has helped Sarah streamline the flow of information to appropriate members within her database. “Our monthly newsletter goes out to everyone, but we also have lists just for legislative updates or nature tourism, as well as geographic lists that go out to different parts of the state,” she says.

Wondering if anyone is reading TTIA’s mailings is also a thing of the past, thanks to Contact Contact’s easy tracking features. The tool helps Sarah assess who opens the emails, what links they click through, and what topics are of interest to them. “We use this feature a lot to see what material gets a good response from our readers. We can then adjust our content accordingly,” she says.

When TTIA first started using Constant Contact, its members were clearly impressed. Sarah says the questions came rolling in about how members could use Constant Contact in their own companies. That’s why TTIA decided to engage Constant Contact as a Business Partner. “It was a natural progression to offer Constant Contact to our members,” says Sarah, who recommends that all TTIA members sign up for an account. “This is an added resource for our smaller members, most of whom have small budgets and can’t afford ad agencies. Part of TTIA’s job is being a resource for our members, so it’s nice to point them to a tool that helps them do their jobs better.”

TTIA members use Constant Contact for a range of email communications, including hotel, transportation, and attraction promotions, announcements about museum exhibits, discount coupons, and newsletters featuring attractions in their particular city or region. Sarah says Constant Contact appeals to those in the travel/tourism industry because of its immediacy. For example, “Hotels can quickly send out a ‘limited time special’ if they have weekend inventory they want to fill at the last minute,” she says.

While Sarah will happily give members advice about sending out their e-correspondence, she has found that most can do it themselves. “I will make suggestions but Constant Contact is so easy that people pick it up in a very short time. Plus the Constant Contact customer support is excellent.”

And signing up for Constant Contact through TTIA is easy. Members simply click-through to Constant Contact from a link on the TTIA website and sign up for an account; they pay Constant Contact directly. Constant Contact then pays TTIA a percentage fee of these accounts.



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### RESULTS: “No Mess” for Texas Travel Industry Association

TTIA enjoys the fact that through Constant Contact’s Business Partner program, it can recommend a useful service while receiving a reward for the referral. “The Business Partnership couldn’t be easier,” Sarah explains. “It has been a very low-maintenance, great partnership for us.”

In addition to being a hassle-free way to generate income, the Constant Contact Business Partner Program works well for TTIA because Constant Contact offers excellent support to its partners. For example, Constant Contact representatives often speak at TTIA’s conferences about best practices in email marketing. “Constant Contact really supports our efforts to help our members,” Sarah says. “I truly feel like we are partners.”

Constant Contact’s easy-to-use features, superior customer service, and flexible Business Partnership arrangements all add up to something “exceptional,” she says. “I’ve looked at other companies but Constant Contact is the best. It’s a great tool for our members and one of those things I don’t have to think about it. It’s just part of doing business. What I’d say to other potential Business Partners is: ‘Join the Business Partner program! Go for it! You have nothing to lose!’”

### TIPS FOR OTHER ASSOCIATIONS:

If you are an association offering services to your members, consider partnering with Constant Contact. A business partnership with Constant Contact will offer you:

- A free, on-going partnership with the industry’s leader in email marketing focused on small businesses, nonprofits, and associations.
- Email Marketing and Online Survey products you can offer to members as an added membership benefit.
- Flexible partnership structuring that meets the needs of your organization, plus a continual revenue share.
- Free, live coaching and online educational resources for your members.