

GOOGLE MAPS GALLERY COULD BE A HELPFUL NEW TOOL FOR TOURIST BOARDS



Google have expanded their popular mapping program with the new Google Maps Gallery, a selection of specific static or interactive images - rather than the usual open-world global program - that shows areas and information with a deliberate focus, such as the map of 25,000 worldwide web-cams that offers screen-shots. The applications for this tool are limitless, as any combination of information and map can be uploaded by a third party, but this simplicity and versatility could be particularly beneficial for the tourism industry.

The benefits of this new Google Maps Gallery for tourism.

This easy access to maps full of interactive information is ideal for any tourism board as these images can be as specific as a map of a certain country or city and top destinations and attractions can be easily highlighted with helpful web-links. Currently, VisitDenmark are using Google Maps integration on their website to highlight links to hotels, events and other essential items to inform travellers and help them plan their itinerary; with Google Maps Gallery, this city map could be accessed much more easily - via Google Maps, Google Earth or a simple search engine query - and be seen by those that may not yet know they want to visit Denmark. This gallery means great SEO and greater presence to a wider consumer base, so it makes sense for tourist boards, hotel chains and many other businesses to take their current database of information, apply it to this new format and reap the rewards.

It will take a while for this new scheme to expand from a few interesting pages to the extensive, varied atlas that Google wants it to be but, with some simple efforts, it could make Google Maps an even more useful tool for the industry. Soon, a curious, prospective traveller will go from browsing for ideas to a simple, useful map full of data and the perfect web-link in a short series of clicks.

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