



A NEW BLUEGRASS TRIO — The WDStone & Associates team that created the City of Sparta's Web site presents city officials with three awards that the site has recently won. From left: Roman Stone, Jeremy Germentis and Jim Bos, all of WDStone & Associates; and City of Sparta Recorder Tonya Tindle, Manager Marty Carmichael and Mayor Tommy Pedigo.

SPARTA WEB SITE WINS THREE TOP AWARDS

SPARTA - "Bluegrass USA" is finding its way onto the map, physically and online.

The bluegrass-themed Web site that was designed and developed for the City of Sparta has earned three new international awards for design and creativity.

More importantly, say city officials, it is drawing visitors and interest to the town.

The site, located at www.spartatn.com, was designed and developed for Sparta by WDStone & Associates of Cookeville.

The three awards it has won includes:

- **Best in Category** in the 7th Annual Horizon Interactive Awards competition. The site was chosen as the top government site over entries from larger cities and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

- **Silver Award** in the creative segment of the Summit International Awards competition. The site was ranked among the best in a group of thousands of submissions from 25 countries. Awards were distributed based on the findings of an international panel of judges.

- **Communicators Award of Distinction** for projects that exceed industry standards in quality

and achievement.

The Horizon Interactive Awards competition received entries from dozens of countries and was judged by a panel of media and public relations professionals. Competition organizers have a stated goal of creating a “level playing field to all participants regardless of company size.” Other Horizon Interactive Awards Best in Category winners include sites built for Mercedes-Benz, the Lollapalooza music festival and Reebok.

“The 2008 competition was the most competitive to date. The work in this year's competition is at such a high level that the judges really had their work cut out for them,” said Mike Sauce, founder of the Horizon Interactive Awards. “All of the winning entries displayed a high level of sophistication, aesthetic creativity, technical excellence and clear purpose.”

The Summit Creative Award was created to recognize and celebrate the creative accomplishments of small and medium sized advertising agencies and other creative companies throughout the world with annual billings of under \$30 million.

The Communicator Awards program has honored the best creative work in the communications fields for 14 years. By winning the Award of Distinction, Sparta's Web site demonstrates that its design and development is among the best in the industry.

Sparta Mayor Tommy Pedigo said the awards are just another example of Sparta being recognized as a great place to visit.

“We already knew the town was a wonderful place to visit,” he said. “Now, folks are recognizing that our Web site is a wonderful place to stop by, too. The site has been a tremendous tool in terms of tourism and creating awareness of the city. It's full of information for residents, visitors and potential newcomers, and the creative design makes it attractive and easy to use.”

The site's design is based on the city's role as a cradle for early bluegrass artists. It includes a comprehensive list of events, key tourist attractions, historical events, modern objectives, and sections about relocation and economic development.

“The site was challenging but fun to build, and it's great for Sparta to gain this international recognition,” said Roman Stone, president of WDStone & Associates. “The city has such a rich history and promising future, and it was a joy to capture some of that in an online showcase.”

WDStone & Associates was founded in 1980. The company has advertising and marketing partnerships with financial institutions, schools, universities, municipalities, counties, chambers of commerce, churches, civic groups, government agencies and business and industry.

WDStone & Associates, the oldest advertising agency in the region, has offices inside a 152-year-old house, said to be the first built in Cookeville, at 114 N. Washington Ave. It also has a branch office on Spring Creek Road, Cookeville.

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