

## **Blogincafe.com**

In 2008, Oakland County hosted the Blogincafe.com at Chrysler Arts, Beats and Eats over Labor Day Weekend. More than 2,500 festival-goers visited the 30-foot blogging tent, which served to introduce residents of Oakland County to blogging. Our I.T. Department organized and staffed the project with volunteer time, and supplied 35 computers for residents to write their opinions about everything from the economy, environment and the festival itself.

*BACKGROUND:* Oakland County was approached by Chrysler's Arts, Beats & Eats Festival organizers to produce a public blogging tent at the 2008 festival held over the four-day weekend. They would provide 2 free food tickets (value=\$1) for anyone who posted a valid blog on the web site. Oakland County was asked to create a brand, create and host the blog and manage the production on-site. Oakland County created the bLOGINcafe.com brand and set-up a separate and unique web site to house the content.

During the planning process, Oakland County Community College (OCCC), which already had an office location centrally located at the event site, was brought on as a Partner to provide wireless connectivity to 10 computers set-up in a 30-foot tent directly in front of their building. This tent was located very close to one of the festival entrances (adjacent to the main parking structure). OCCC also provided on-site security and volunteers to assist throughout the weekend.

OCCC also opened its doors to an inside training room, where there were 25 additional computers set-up for public blogging. The Detroit Free Press was an additional partner providing the hosting services for the blog.

*Oakland County plans to use social networking web technologies more in the future to facilitate a service-based, customer-focused government. As many governments now are faced with the severe budget and service cuts, turning to cost-effective and readily available technology is a cost-effective, practical solution to both bridge service-level gaps and lay the groundwork for reaching an increasingly mobile and high-tech customer base.*