# Company offers college campus tour videos on the Web

May 28 2009, By Scott Travis

Want to take a cross country trip to visit colleges all over the United States, but don't want to shell out thousands for gas, food and lodging?

A Boynton Beach, Fla., company says it has the solution.

YOUniversityTV.com is touting itself as the first Web site providing video tours of college campuses. There are about 400 colleges, spanning from Florida to California to Hawaii. The segments are about 10 minutes each and feature a team of young hosts, most of whom are just out of college themselves. The graphics, music and interview styles are reminiscent of the reality and "Spring Break" shows often found on MTV.

And it's helpful too, said Chloe Dolandis, 24, of Boca Raton, Fla., who is one of the hosts.

"It's cost effective, saving students time and money, because you don't have to travel," said Dolandis, a Florida Atlantic University graduate who hosted many of the segments. "What you need to know is one place. I wish I had something like this when I was looking at colleges."

In addition to the Web site, YOUniversityTV is also negotiating with several networks to bring the campus tours to television, company officials said.

"We always thought college content could make for great television,"

said Angelo Kotzamanis, one of the co-founders. "It's just so visually appealing, rich in history and very entertaining."

And during a recession, when families are looking for ways to cut expenses, Kotzamanis said the Web site can prove a valuable resource, although he doesn't expect it to replace all travel to colleges.

"We're just a helping hand for the prospective student," he said. "A student may apply to 10 schools, get accepted to seven but maybe only afford to visit three or four," he said. "Our Web site narrows that down."

A Florida International University video looks at the school's large array of sculptures, its proximity to Miami night life, its diversity and its academics.

A video on the University of Florida examines the school's popular sports atmosphere, its tough admissions standards and its cheap price for in-state students. Students, faculty and admissions counselors are interviewed. The video includes shots of campus buildings shots, football and basketball clips and lots of Florida gator mascot shots.

UF officials like the idea of the site.

"Certainly we think it's one more way to get out information about our university," said Steve Orlando, a spokesman for UF.

FAU is not featured. Spokeswoman Lisa Freed said the company approached the school last year, but the two sides couldn't agree to terms of the contract.

Don't expect to learn much about any of the negative aspects of the colleges. A Virginia Tech video includes only a fleeting mention of the 2007 massacre. A tour of Duke doesn't rehash the drama involving the

lacrosse team. A contract the company signed with UF says it agrees not to "adversely impact the good will and reputation" of the school.

"We're not being investigative like news," Kotzamanis said. "We're helping students know about the school from an admissions perspective."

Kotzamanis and his business partner, Ron Reis, have been together since 2001. Their previous company, Max World News, filmed stories for clients and pitched them to media organizations. That company folded in late 2007, and the partners focused their attention on YOUniversityTV in early 2008. Film crews have spent a year visiting college campuses and launched the Web site in April.

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