

## Business & Retail Briefs



**Anthropologie** is now open in the Westside Urban Market at 1207 Howell Mill Road. The store sells clothing, shoes, bags, jewelry, accessories, furniture and more. [anthropologie.com](http://anthropologie.com)



Milan, Italy-based cargo carrier **Cargoitavia** began scheduled service to Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in February. The two weekly flights between Atlanta and Milan will have an estimated \$15 million economic impact on the metro area. "Our freight forwarders have been asking for more airlift capacity to Europe," said Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. "Cargoitavia is a world-class, all-cargo airline that meets this need, and I am confident it will serve our customers well in the years to come. Air cargo has a huge economic impact on Atlanta and the metropolitan area, and I am committed to growing this vital business sector."

Tim Etherington is opening **Property-Tax-Reductions**, a new real estate property tax consultant business, this spring. Etherington has more than 25 years experience and is a property tax expert. He'll be offering consultations and aid in property tax appeals. For more information, call (678) 995-553 or [Property-Tax-Reductions.com](http://Property-Tax-Reductions.com)

**The City of Decatur** launch its updated website at [decaturga.com](http://decaturga.com) last month featuring a more powerful search engine, front page links to interactive city services, city blogs, the latest news, a comprehensive events calendar, and a changing spotlight on key initiatives. All the information from the old site has been updated and transferred to the new site as well as the interactive features such as Open City Hall, paying parking tickets and taxes online, submitting a citizen request and signing up for CodeRed notifications. A new feature is the ability to sign up for a variety of e-newsletters including meeting notices, special events, emergency information, and general news. In conjunction with the city's website launch, the **Decatur Tourism Bureau** unveiled its brand new site specifically designed for visitors and tourists at [visitdecaturgeorgia.com](http://visitdecaturgeorgia.com)

**Ashley L. McCartney** was been selected Chair of the **South East Atlanta Business Association** (SEABA) at the recent annual meeting. McCartney is a Cum Laude graduate of the Georgia State University

College of Law and a managing partner of McCartney & Kan, LLC. Also on the board: Barbara Kenney (Treasurer), Cary Burgess, Dave Chambless, David J. Payne, Jeffrey E. Rogers, Sr. (Vice Chair), Rick Hudson and Shay Eskew.



**Underground Atlanta** continues to evolve and expand its retail footprint. Comfort Suites Atlanta Downtown is offering 156 newly renovated boutique-style suites near Underground, while Jamaican Restaurant & Lounge, Georgia Peach Restaurant & Lounge, Subway and Le Restaurant Creole are the newest dining options. Tourists can take tours Downtown, Midtown and historical neighborhoods in eco-friendly electric cars courtesy of ATL Cruzers, which begin at the ACVB Visitor's Center at Underground. Also newly opened: Weaves in the City, Smiling Dental and Fuzion Showcase & Lounge at Kenny's Alley with R&B, comedy and jazz. [underground-atlanta.com](http://underground-atlanta.com)

**Urban Interns**, a national marketplace that connects growing companies with people seeking part-time jobs, internships and freelance positions, has launched in Atlanta. Urban Interns first launched in New York City in 2009 and after raising additional funding has expanded into 11 additional cities across the United States. Thousands of job-seekers and employers use Urban Interns every single month to connect with one another. [UrbanInterns.com](http://UrbanInterns.com)

**The Atlanta University Center Consortium Council of Presidents** has appointed **Sherry L. Turner** as executive director. She replaces Marilyn Jackson, who served in this capacity for the past seven years. Turner will oversee the day-to-day operations and provide leadership to the Consortium's academic and community engagement activities. A researcher, professor and administrator, Turner is the former Vice President for Student Affairs at Spelman College. [atlantauniversitycenter.org](http://www.atlantauniversitycenter.org)



## Making Sense of Social

Brigette Flood

### Facebook, Here We Come – Like it or Not

Social media generates so much buzz, it almost seems like noise. So let's start at the beginning where all conversations about social media usually start – Facebook. You've heard of it?

The social network service has more than 600 million active users, and it's quickly becoming the online platform for both personal and business engagement. Someone recently commented, "What if Facebook becomes the web?" I'll give that a minute to settle in. It blew my mind, scared me to death and fascinated me all at once. The simple insight is that Facebook is all about infinite possibilities. It's exciting stuff, and it's constantly changing and evolving.

Business likes exciting, buzz-worthy trends; especially ones that have as low barrier to entry as Facebook does. You noticed it's free, right? So naturally, Facebook is where every business, big and small, wants to have a presence. For some, it's an arguable use of resources. If you are a consumer-facing organization (business, non-profit, agency, municipality), it's a great way to engage customers in meaningful and entertaining ways.

However, if you are a B2B company, there are some compelling reasons to get in on the action and some equally compelling reasons why you shouldn't. It all depends on your objectives, goals and on your ...

wait for it ... do not go further if you don't have one ... please I'm not kidding ... it makes all the difference in the world ... your strategy. Because when social media is good, it's very, very good. But when it's bad, it's very, very bad. Just ask any of the voters or nominees for The Suxorz Awards, which call out the worst in social-media marketing.

One main differentiator between good and bad is a well-planned strategy, and here's why. Social media marketing is a relatively new and emerging area, but it's still marketing.

And the fundamentals of marketing still apply. Don't put yourself out there without a consistent message and a goal in mind. What do you want to say, what do you want your customers to do? Why, how, how often and how does it align with your overall business goals? Need help getting started? There are affordable local experts to help you out. I will be chatting with some of them on my blog, [makiningsenseofsocial.com](http://makiningsenseofsocial.com).

Also feel free to tweet me any questions @brigflood or @ATLIntownPaper with hashtag #socialsense. [IN](http://www.linkedin.com)

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### Tax Advice: De-Mystifying your property assessment

By Tim Etherington

There is so much misinformation regarding Intown property tax assessments, I wanted to try to de-clutter the property tax landscape in light of recent state legislative streamlining tax initiatives.

Last June, then Gov. Sonny Purdue signed into law "The Property Tax Assessment and Appeals Reform Bill" to help homeowners seeking property tax relief during turbulent economic market meltdowns. This new statewide statute signifies a sweeping overhaul of how the values of homes and business properties are assessed, including areas where significant distressed sales have occurred.

#### New Law Highlights

- Requires annual assessment notices sent to all properties with right to appeal.
- Requires annual assessment notices to include the estimated property's taxes.
- Only "current use of property" determines Fair Market Value.
- Longer appeal period of 45 days, rather than 30 days.

- Automatic taxpayer victory on appeals when county fails to respond within 45 days.
- Taxpayer must be given access to all data used in determining property value.
- Sales price cannot exceed property value for following tax year.
- Must consider any open-market sale as arm's length transaction – including short sales.
- Additional training and qualifications required for tax officials.

An important point to note is that a reduction in the assessment does not always reduce the actual bill. Other factors such as millage rates, homestead exemptions, and other exemptions will also affect the final tax bill. [IN](http://www.linkedin.com)

Tim Etherington, President, Property-Tax-Reductions can be reached at (687) 995.5537 or [info@Property-Tax-Reductions.com](mailto:info@Property-Tax-Reductions.com) For common property tax assessor mistakes in establishing property values check out [Property-Tax-Reductions.com](http://Property-Tax-Reductions.com).