

MOVING IDEAS

Tips On Avoiding Moving Time Headaches

(NAPSA)—Moving to a new city or state can be an exhilarating experience, with opportunities to explore unknown surroundings, develop new relationships with neighbors and create a new home. Moving can also bring undue stress and anxiety when not well coordinated. Making a plan ahead of time using Internet resources can make for an easier transition.

Studies show that people are turning to the Internet in large numbers to make the process of settling into a new community easier. A recent comScore survey revealed that consumers who had moved in the past six months were almost two and a half times more likely to have used local search sites, such as Switchboard.com (www.switchboard.com), than average consumers.

Spending a little time in advance on a Web site that offers local business listings and a mapping feature helps people who are moving to quickly identify where the local coffee shops are, the discount superstore that may come in handy, the closest vet or the nearest pharmacy. Not only can exploring the new neighborhood online be fun, it helps in the preparation of any move and saves time in the long run.

To make life even easier, sites like Switchboard allow users to plot all the businesses they need to visit on a map and send contact information straight to their cell phone. Having driving directions and phone numbers handy in one location vs. on various pieces of paper can reduce the chaos of a move and lower the stress level.

Another useful resource for moving is the United States Postal Service Web site (www.usps.com). It has a change of address form,



A MOVING STORY—An ounce of online preparation can avoid hours and hours of frustration.

along with information and time line for when an address change request should be filed, how long it takes before the request is active and how long mail will be forwarded to the new address.

When changing an address, don't forget to update utilities, credit card companies and magazine subscriptions to ensure timely delivery at the new location. One to two weeks ahead of a move is the best time to arrange the cancellation date of services such as water, garbage, electricity, phone and cable and to set up new services. For other monthly bills and subscriptions, a good rule of thumb is to contact the company when the bill or publication arrives the month before the move.

Moving can be a life-changing event, and sometimes a challenge—and it's important to evaluate a location to ensure it's the best place for the future. With that in mind, approaching moving with an organized plan and using the best online resources can make relocating a simpler experience than it has been in the past.