gravitate

Tourism Victoria

DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM

RFP RESPONSE

11/18/2016

For: Tourism Victoria, Online Service Provision

By: Gravitate
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         Vancouver WA 98660
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Hello!

Trina Mousseau
Chief Marketing Officer
Tourism Victoria
trina.mousseau@tourismvictoria.com

Dear Trina:

Thank you for considering Gravitate as a partner in creating a digital marketing platform for Tourism Victoria. We have extensive experience in the travel and tourism industry, and are incredibly excited for the opportunity to partner with you.

This proposal provides an introduction to our company, outlines our approach, and details our qualifications.

After you've had a chance to review this document, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your location and introduce our team. We'll get the chance to learn more about how we can help you achieve your goals for your digital marketing platform, and you'll get the chance to feel confident that we're the right fit for Tourism Victoria.

Warm regards,

Lynn Elyse Jacobsen

LYNN ELYSE
New Business Consultant
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Note: information in deep purple text *is a website link that works only when viewing this document on a device connected to the internet.*

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A Digital Experience Agency

Gravitate partners with clients to grow their business by redefining the digital experience in their industry — when companies want to make a transformation in the digital space, they hire us to find inventive solutions to complex problems.

Company Profile

We are a digital experience agency based in Vancouver, Washington. We've been around since 1999, which is a long time considering the web's propensity for disruption. That's enough time to learn the importance of refining a baseline process. It's also long enough to know that relevancy in a digital world means you have to be spry and adapt your process to suit the problem you're solving. We are a collaborative team of over 30 professionals: strategists, designers, developers, analysts, copywriters and managers. We believe in working side by side with our clients—we want you at the whiteboard with us.

Core Competencies

- Research & Strategy
- Content Marketing & Content Creation
- Design & Development
- Search & Social
- Hosting & Maintenance

Business Model

The majority of our client engagements are long-term, collaborative partnerships. The digitization of marketing means that customers are more connected, their interactions have accelerated, and there's an overwhelming amount of data to sift through. It's necessary for us to have an ongoing dialogue with our clients, so we can quickly adapt and iterate on success.

Most client engagements begin with a custom website. The extent of our post-launch relationship varies wildly. Some clients require minimal service— for example, website hosting and on-demand support. At the other end of the spectrum, we can become a substantive element of our clients' marketing program by providing strategy, content marketing, SEO, and more.

Unlike other agencies, we don't have a hit list of big-name brands we want to stuff in our portfolio. We maintain a select number of full-service clients that share a key quality: courage. We want to partner with courageous people who seek change—people who don't just want to leave a dent in their industry, but a crater.

Budget

Budget

Website Investment .... $110,000 – 130,000 CDN

- Research Phase: Discovery, Persona definitions, Analytics report, Content audit
- Strategy Phase: Content strategy recommendations, Site map, Information architecture, User flows, Scope of work document, Wireframes
- Design Phase: Page designs, Page templates, Content blocks, Web style guide
- Development Phase: Front & back end dev, CMS training & documentation, Final page build-out
- QA & Launch Phase: Site audits and testing, Site fixes, SEO setup, Site launch

Optional: Content Creation...................................... $200 CDN/hour

- Original copy writing
  - Home + 4 pages: 40-50 hours
  - Each additional page: 6-8 hours
- Designed content, such as infographics, whitepapers, quizzes, etc. Effort varies depending on project requirements.

Optional: Hosting & Support.............................. $135+ CDN/month

We offer a broad range of post-launch support services, from website hosting to full-scale digital marketing retainers. Options include:

- Website hosting with Amazon Web Services: $135+ CDN/month
- On-demand support: $170 CDN/hour
- After-hours support : $200 CDN/hour
- Annual maintenance plans: $500 - 1,700 CDN/month
- Annual digital marketing plans: $7,000+ CDN/month

Why a price range instead of a fixed cost?

It may sound dubious, but we can create a website anywhere within your budget—the difference lies in the extent of the solution.

Creating a website is a bit like ordering a new car: there's a base model with standard features (power steering, power windows/doors, airbags), and there are optional upgrades (leather upholstery, rearview camera, blind spot indicators, sunroof, Bose speakers, nav system… you get the idea). Upgrades aren't critical for a reliable ride; they're luxuries.

With websites, here are the kinds of variable items that might impact budget:

- Icons (custom or hosted, i.e.: Icomoon)
- Fonts
- Imagery (custom or stock)
- Photography / Video
- Third-party integrations
- Pro plugins

Also, delegation of work will affect budget. The more content creation and page build we take on, the greater the budget requirement.

After we've met with you to discuss your needs in person, we will be able to determine the budget level that's right for Tourism Victoria.

Proposal

Solution

A website that gets stronger over time

We understand the complexity of a DMO website, and so for Tourism Victoria our recommended solution involves building a custom website, and then continuing to refine the website post-launch at a service level that's right for your organization. First, we'll build a strategic, engaging website that conveys credibility and communicates with all your various constituencies. After launch, we'll use a variety of testing tools (e.g., heat mapping, A/B testing) to subtly adjust layouts, calls to action, and visual hierarchy. This continuous improvement not only keeps your site looking amazing, but also has the functionality and advanced programming to deliver leads, clients, and revenue.

AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

- Visit Seattle: The 25 Best Tourism Websites in the World in 2016. Read more.
- Visit Seattle: 20th Annual Webby Awards Honoree in Tourism & Leisure Category. Read more.
- #6 of 10 Best Responsive Web Companies . Read more.

PRIMARY BENEFIT: A PLATFORM BUILT FOR GROWTH

Over time, your website will become an ever-stronger tool. For example, with the Visit Seattle website, we added these features after the original launch:

- visitseattle.tv
- Interactive map
- Complex site search

UNIQUE FEATURE: TRUE WORDPRESS EXPERTISE

- WordPress CMS experts: we not only build with it, we know it so well we've also written custom plugins and shared them with the WordPress community. Read more.
- Web Systems approach: we create both page templates and drag-and-drop content blocks, so that you can create your own page designs, without requiring any HTML knowledge. Read more.

We know DMOs

MULTIPLE AUDIENCES

At surface, it seems like a DMO's sole audience is the tourist. But going deeper, we know that highlighting partners, helping meeting planners, and informing media are just as important. An intensive research phase with thoughtful personas fuels long-term strategy and site architecture.

MOBILE-FIRST DESIGN

Perhaps more than any other industry, DMOs benefit from mobile-first design, since visitors use phones to plot their every move. It takes skill to create levels of navigation on a small device.

MASSIVE CONTENT

Thousands of pages with tourism information is typical. Using our digital research and working hand-in-hand with the client, we can carefully consolidate pages with no ill effect on post-launch site traffic. It means cleaner content navigation throughout the site, with primary, secondary and tertiary navigation menus.

INTEGRATIONS

From booking engines to weather apps to CRMs, third-party data integrations are numerous. Savvy planning prior to the development stage is vital, so we're well-prepared for every site feature and custom functionality.

Team

We're in this together

ACCOUNT DIRECTOR: KRISTEN REICK

Most similar client: Visit Seattle. Kristen is a doer who is constantly organizing, planning, and moving ideas and projects forward. With experience on both the client and agency side of marketing, Kristen has a knack for diligently managing day-to-day details while eyeing the big picture.

in www.linkedin.com/in/kristen-reick-4190284

STRATEGY TEAM: ROSINA GROVE & MATT MALONE

Most similar clients: Visit Seattle & Chinook Winds. Rosina has brought her passion for clear communication to the Internet as a content strategist, which is basically the same thing as an editor but way cooler.

in www.linkedin.com/in/rosinagrove

Most similar clients: Visit Seattle, Chinook Winds & GoBeyond. Matt is our senior analyst in digital marketing, content strategy, user experience, and information architecture. As an authority in this space, Matt helps make sense of cumbersome data and teaches clients how to stay on top.

in www.linkedin.com/in/itsmattmalone

LEAD DESIGNER: JESSICA SHINER

Most similar clients: Visit Seattle, Chinook Winds & GoBeyond. Jessica is a spunky designer with a big brain, not just a big head. She enjoys cat videos, reads like it's going out of style, and laughs abundantly. Think: stellar design aesthetic with a solid head on her shoulders.

in www.linkedin.com/in/jessicashiner

LEAD DEVELOPER: WILL ASHWORTH

Most similar client: Visit Seattle. Will brings a 15-year passion for web development that gets results. He's skilled at planning complex integrations, creating detailed documentation and scope, and architecting and executing website projects.

in www.linkedin.com/in/williamashworth

A BALANCE OF LEADING & LISTENING

As experts in creating digital experiences, we will assume a solid leadership role to ensure our work is completed accurately and on time.

But an effective website collaboration also requires us to ask smart questions and listen carefully to your answers.
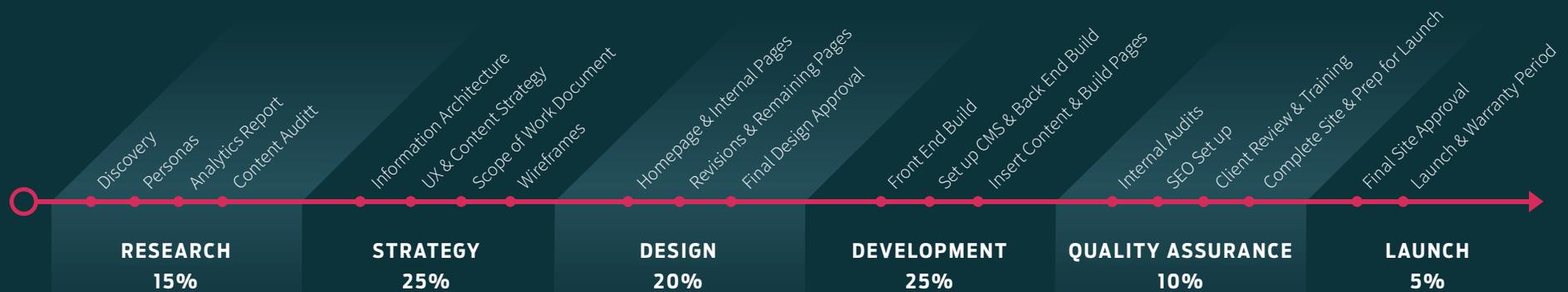
By sharing knowledge freely and continuing to learn from one another as we move along, we will co-create the right website for Tourism Victoria.

COLLABORATIVE TOOLS

Some meetings are best done in person at your location, like the kickoff meeting and design presentation. But most of the time, we use online tools to work with clients. Some of the tools we routinely use include:

- Trello for project management (although, we're flexible—if you have a preferred platform, we can use that instead)
- SlickPlan for site maps
- InVision for wireframes and page designs
- GatherContent for content staging and migration.

Process & Timeframe

Discovery · Personas · Analytics Report · Content Auditt · Information Architecture · UX & Content Strategy · Scope of Work Document · Wireframes · Homepage & Internal Pages · Revisions & Remaining Pages · Final Design Approval · Front End Build · Set up CMS & Back End Build · Insert Content & Build Pages · Internal Audits · SEO Set up · Client Review & Training · Complete Site & Prep for Launch · Final Site Approval · Launch & Warranty Period

RESEARCH 15% · **STRATEGY** 25% · **DESIGN** 20% · **DEVELOPMENT** 25% · **QUALITY ASSURANCE** 10% · **LAUNCH** 5%

DMO INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

One of the challenges in designing a website for the DMO industry is the lack of well-designed websites out there. For example, when Jessica was looking for inspiration in designing the Visit Seattle site, she didn't have many "Ooh, I want to steal that" moments. When designing in a bubble, it's that much more important to conduct thorough research that lets you walk in your persona's shoes.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Preliminary Research — Your team will get started even before the official kickoff meeting. To prepare for the Discovery meeting, we'll devour as much information as we can about you, so send us all the reports, materials, etc. that you can!

Discovery Meeting — We want to reach solutions with you in a collaborative session. Our discovery meeting will be a lively, interactive meeting where we share knowledge, debate ideas and gain inspiration.

Audience Research — We supplement audience insights we gather from you with sources like the Pew Internet and American Life Project and O*NET OnLine. We may also conduct surveys and/or interviews with key constituencies.

Content Audit — We inventory relevant website pages so that we can track and identify existing content; then we often will tag for audience, goal, task, product, solution, or whatever else is a priority for the project.

Analytics Research — We review analytics data and/or set up additional tracking, allowing us to understand the online competitive environment in relation to your keyword space.

UX Strategy — We collaborate with your team to determine a comprehensive plan for your website. This is when we will determine your optimal domain strategy, site map information architecture, user flows, and technical specifications. At this point, we will be able to provide budget recommendations for the full website build.

TIMEFRAME

For a website project like Tourism Victoria, a four-month timeline from project kickoff to launch is ambitious, but achievable—six months would be more comfortable. When working on a tight timeline, our client plays an essential role; we need you to provide feedback and approvals promptly, deliver content on time, and ensure your 3rd party setups (like SimpleView and JackRabbit) are complete and ready to go.

Testing & Support

Standards

DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Typically, we develop in two phases: front end and back end (there will be two developers, your lead developer, Will Ashworth, and a support developer). This is usually done following a waterfall methodology, meaning that the back end starts after the front end has finished, however, for expedited timelines they may be conducted in tandem (and some of the back end elements can even be developed before the design phase begins, since they are not reliant on page designs).

QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDITS

Upon completion of the development phase, we have a series of standard audits and reviews to address most issues before you even see them. At minimum, there are two developer audits and one design audit. For these audits, we follow detailed checklists so we don't miss anything.

CLIENT TRAINING & TESTING

Once our internal audits are complete, our next step is to present the website and train your team to use the CMS (we also record the training session and make it available in your WordPress admin area for future reference). You'll then have a fixed period of time to test the website and build pages.

SEAMLESS LAUNCH & SEO PROCEDURES

Once we have sign-off from your team, we're ready to launch the site. We'll do a final SEO audit and setup to ensure your existing domain authority is transferred to the new site.

HOSTING & SUPPORT

We offer a variety of post-launch website hosting and support options. Once we are in the development phase and understand the technical requirements of your website, we'll be able to recommend the appropriate hosting setup. We host with Amazon Web Services, and our Service Level Agreements are in accordance with AWS. For support, we offer both on-demand and annual service agreements.

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES & CMS

- WordPress
- HTML
- CSS
- PHP
- JavaScript (jQuery)
- MySQL

BROWSER SUPPORT & TESTING

- Chrome 54+
- Firefox 49+
- Internet Explorer 11+
- Safari 8+
- Edge 12+

RESPONSIVE DESIGN

- 320px - 1440px viewports

TESTING PLATFORMS

- iOS
- Android
- Windows 10
- OSX

Qualifications

DMO / Tourism Experience

DMO / Tourism portfolio

We understand the travel and tourism industry

Over the past decade, few industries have undergone transformation as dramatic as the travel industry in general, and the Destination Marketing Organization industry in particular. Once the sole hub of comprehensive information about a region's resources for a traveler, they now struggle for viability among a new breed of competitors: online travel booking, user-generated content on social media platforms, and peer to peer offerings like AirBnB. It's more challenging than ever for DMOs to demonstrate their value in driving consumer demand to their various constituencies.

We know that in order to drive that consumer demand, we need a crystal-clear understanding of your various users from the moment they land on the site, so that we can quickly tell a compelling story and prompt a clear path to conversion, whether that means booking a service, signing up for a mailing list, sharing on social media, checking out a member's page, or other action.

CHALLENGES COMMON TO DMO/TOURISM SITES

- Abundant (potentially overwhelming) content
- Complex information architecture
- Multiple 3rd-party integrations that need to impart a seamless end-user experience
- Numerous stakeholders with varying needs
- High rate of mobile traffic
- Functionality requirements that go beyond standard, for example, site search and interactive maps
- Relatively large number of website editors who will be using the content management system
- Geolocation
- Multi-language solutions

VISIT SEATTLE

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/visit-seattle

GO BEYOND

www.gobeyondtravel.com

CAMPUS LIVING VILLAGES

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/campus-living-villages

CHINOOK WINDS CASINO RESORT

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/chinook-winds-casino-resort

ALL HANDS VOLUNTEERS

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/all-hands-volunteers

RUSTIC PATHWAYS GROUPS

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/rustic-pathways-groups

VOOMAGO

www.voomago.com

Case Study: Visit Seattle

One site, countless audience types

Visit Seattle does more than serve up activities for visitors, it communicates to meeting planners in search of convention space, business owners hoping to boost patronage, and Seattle residents researching their own weekends. So how did we meet the needs of all these users? By conducting an intensive digital marketing research phase, in which we crafted personas to represent audience types that fueled the long-term strategy and architecture of this complex site.

8,000 pages of events, restaurants and tourism information required re-working their sitemap and information architecture. Using our research and working hand-in-hand with the client, we consolidated pages with no ill effect on post-launch site traffic. In turn, this made for cleaner content navigation throughout the site, which relies on primary, secondary and tertiary navigation menus.

The list of third-party data integrations was by no means short. This made the planning stage all the more important, and by doing our tech spec homework, we were well-prepared for every site feature and custom functionality heading into the development stage of the project.
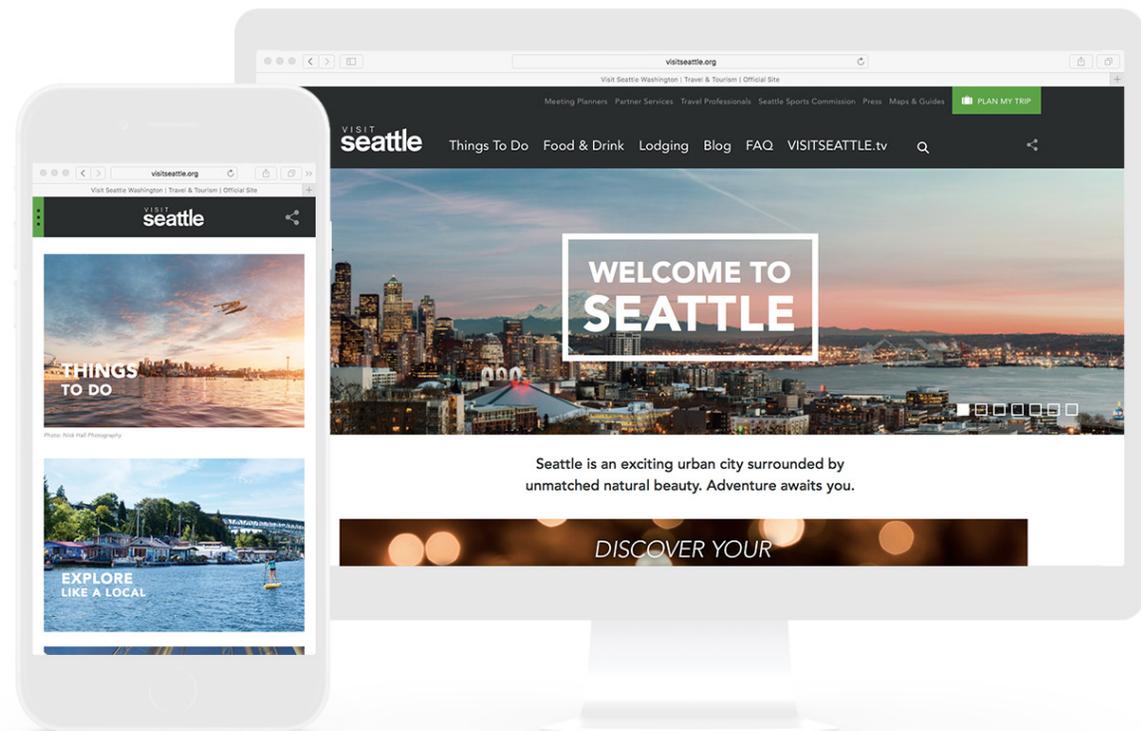
REFERENCE

David Newman
Creative Director
206-461-5873
dnewman@visitseattle.org

www.visitseattle.org

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/visit-seattle

- Launched May, 2015
- Destination Marketing Organization
- WordPress CMS
- Mobile-first design

Case Study: Chinook Winds Casino Resort

Upping the ante

There's a lot happening at Chinook Winds. Potential guests must quickly find information about gambling, dining, golf, events, promotion, tournaments, rewards—in addition to booking rooms, tee times, tickets, and dinner reservations. We worked with the CW team to understand their audience, and to audit, prioritize, and organize the plethora of information. From there, our strategists and UX designers mapped detailed user flows to funnel target personas to applicable CTAs. This process informed the sitemap, information architecture, navigation, CTAs, and wireframes.

With so much content, it would be easy to get lost in a dropdown menu scrolling through lists of pages. We simplified the navigation options, exposing only six top-level landing page links, which serve as an information hub for any particular offering (e.g.,the casino hub allows users to quickly find information on slots, table games, keno, poker bingo, promotions, etc.) It's a guided experience for the website, similar to how CW's concierge service would advise you in person at the destination. The alternative is seen on many other casino and resort websites—a cluttered mess of information to sift through when all you want to find is the operating hours of the buffet.
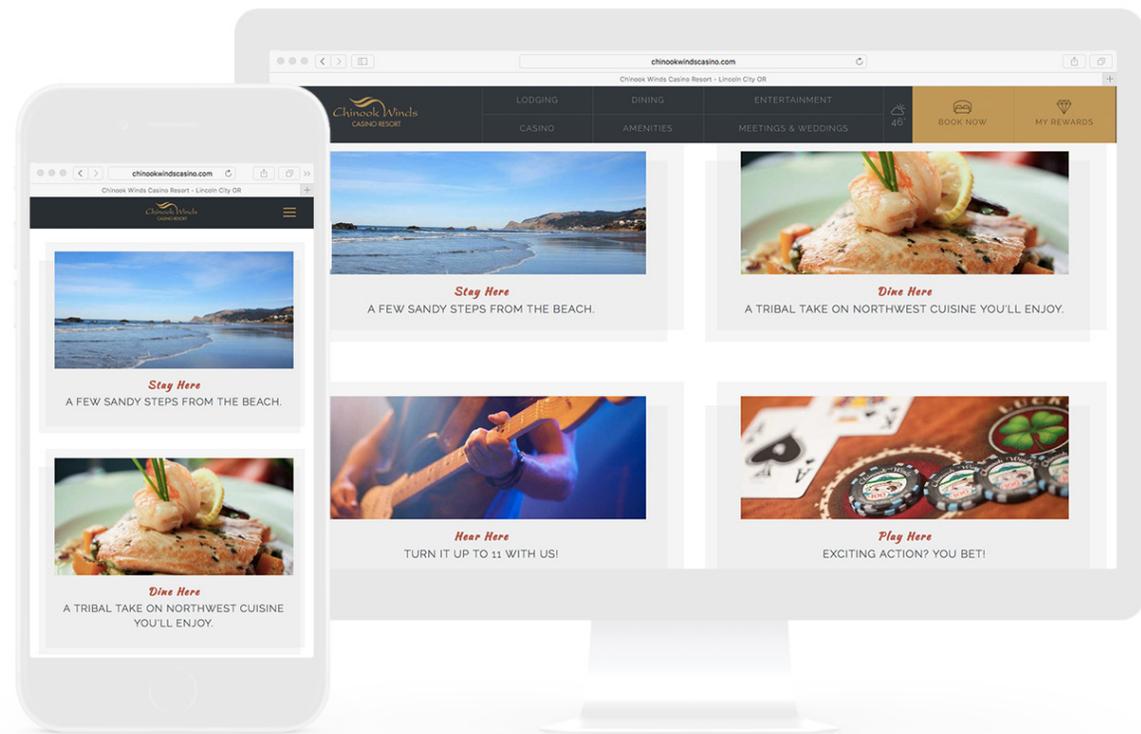
REFERENCE

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Advertising Manager
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www.chinookwinds.com

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/chinook-winds-casino-resort

- Launched May, 2016
- WordPress CMS
- Responsive design
- Tourism industry

Website Profile: Campus Living Villages

Crafting a digital experience for students worldwide

Campus Living Villages creates residential communities for students studying at 76 universities in 5 countries. A truly global brand, we relaunched 61 separate websites under one umbrella. It was an ambitious project requiring rich expertise in content strategy, an intensely collaborative client-agency partnership, and a flexible content management system to empower team members across the globe.

Because of the different cultures and countries, our team seized every opportunity to ensure the right blend of back-end standardization and customizability so the content could flex its muscles on the front-end. Each country, city and university page gives the user a snapshot of their options, and the markers allow for easy entry points into any campus village. For the publisher, adding new locations on the map is as easy as dropping a latitude and longitude into WordPress.

Whereas a common project progresses from strategy to design to development, this was an intensive partnership between content strategists and developers. We established the content hierarchy and URL structure early on in the process to create a uniquely manageable international site.
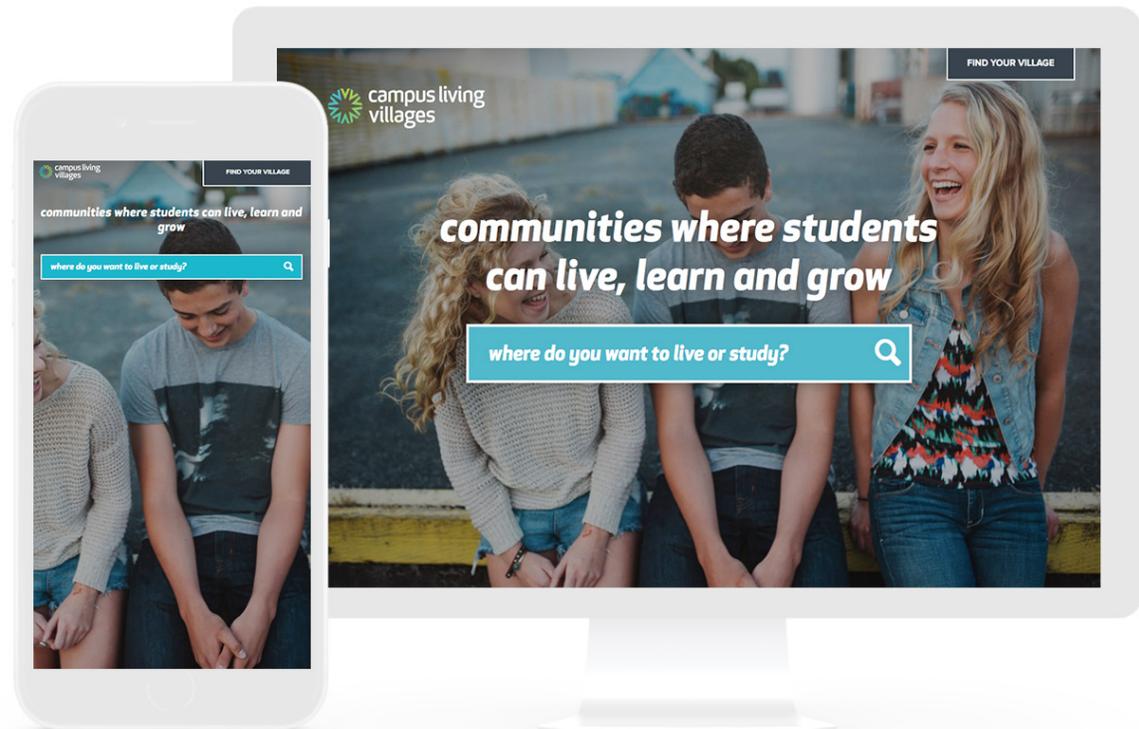
REFERENCE

Shannon O'Connor
Director of Operations
shannon.oconnor@clv.com.au

www.mystudentvillage.com

www.gravitatedesign.com/work/campus-living-villages

- Launched September, 2015
- Combined 61 separate websites into one
- WordPress CMS
- Responsive design
- Travel-related industry

"I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity."

— Oliver Wendell Holmes

Thank You