

USE CASE: STACKLA

Lake Charles Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau



Lake Charles Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau has worked with Simpleview for more than 13 years. Their Digital Media Manager, Elizabeth Eustis, has attended all 12 Simpleview Summits. Her job requires a lot of her, so she makes sure she, her team, and her destination are getting the most out of the Simpleview technologies and service offerings they trust to help them serve their customers day in and day out.

The Lake Charles CVB uses our CRM + CMS integrated solution to organize their customer and partner data and maintain their website seamlessly. Along with utilizing our online creative and SEO services during their site build, the bureau also chose to implement User-Generated Content on their website through our Simpleview CMS Stackla integration.



Elizabeth has implemented UGC in numerous ways throughout their award-winning destination website to help deliver relevant, vivid experiences to site visitors and travel planners. We'd like to share her experiences. We think they'll inspire you.

UGC GOALS

Inspire Travelers with Authentic, Real-Time Visitor Experiences

Elizabeth wanted to use UGC to prominently feature the visitor experience on their website and within their blogs, so people visiting the site and reading the blog could see visitors enjoying the Lake Charles experience in real time. Elizabeth wanted site visitors to see "...people just like you are here doing things you would probably want to do."

Provide More Relevant and Engaging Content

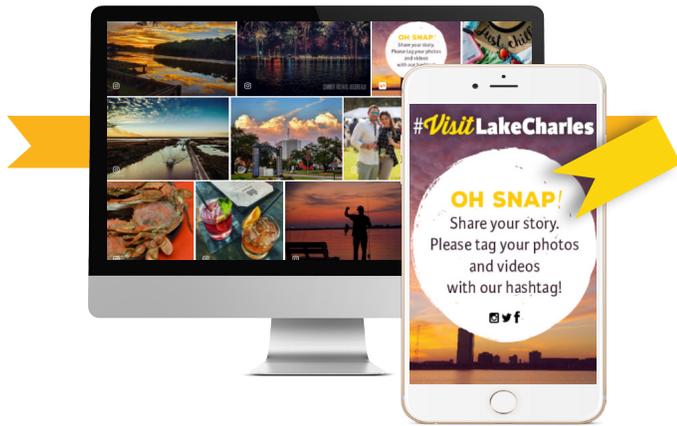
What has developed since they started using the Stackla integration, says Elizabeth, is that UGC has helped them fill out once bland pages. For instance, now they can provide more visual content that illustrates the youth sports experience, the wedding experience, or the reunion experience in Lake Charles.

Encourage Conversion

"UGC has helped me build out widgets specific to those types of themes, so when people look, like coaches or sports teams considering bringing tournaments here, they can see youth sports happening within the last two months. They can see the fields look great, fans having a great time. They see we can accommodate sports and fans. Same with weddings."

Lake Charles offers a variety of wedding venues, but the DMO never had a lot of images of these venues, despite trying to market them. Now, Elizabeth says, "people are tagging us or happy to help us give a better overall picture of what our area can offer visitors and businesses."





UGC IMPLEMENTATION

Hashtagging Like a Boss

Elizabeth has used and promoted the hashtag #visitlakecharles for four years, encouraging visitor engagement and content contribution that reaches out to a variety of travel personas. "We have an active local user base that helps us tell a story, because I'm not always able to get out in the field and experience these things." The hashtag is promoted on their homepage, and on a landing page encouraging users to share their stories.

Guest Blogging for Authentic Storytelling

Lake Charles works with community bloggers who help extend their brand voice. These bloggers tell simple, real stories from their own heart and experience. Sometimes Elizabeth reaches out to local writers, and sometimes event organizers or event lovers come to the CVB, eager to promote an event they feel connected to. "We've even had people on Facebook who have offered for us to use their images, trail images for example, and I'll suggest a photo story of their experience on the trail."

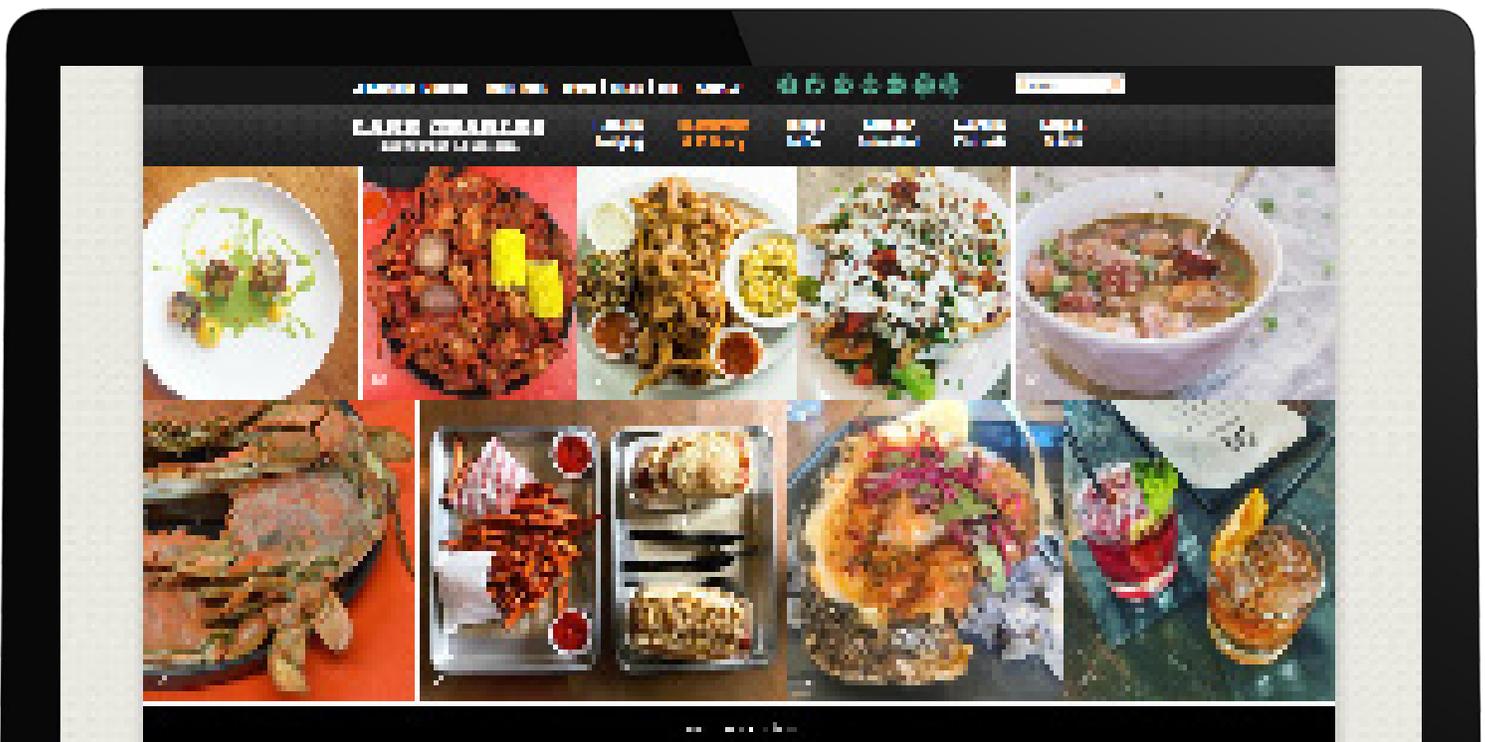
Spotlighting Special Events

VisitLakeCharles.org features a Mardi Gras microsite linked from the Events & Festivals navigation item. The event-focused mini-site features user-generated photos of the festivities and the people (and animals) enjoying them.

Culinary Inspiration in a State Famous for it's Food

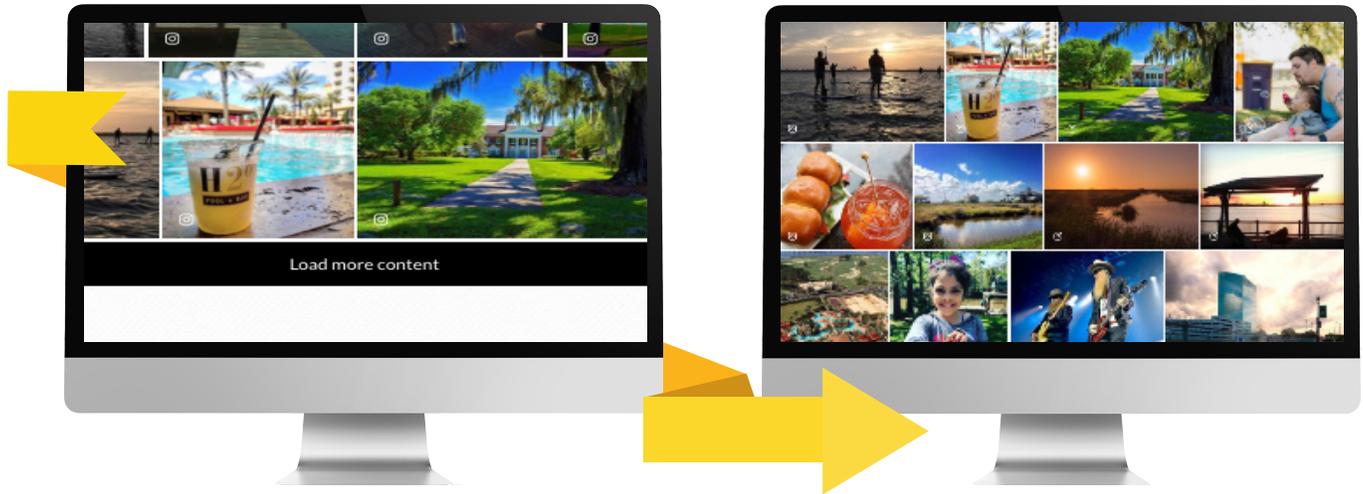
"Food and Louisiana are kind of an iconic thing," says Elizabeth.

"Cajun, creole, seafood...we have some verbiage, and I wanted to be able to explain specific foods, but at the same time I wanted UGC visible as well. That's when I got the header idea." Now enticing food images show in the header first, without weighing the page down or disrupting the body content or listings. Are you hungry yet?



Offering Visitors More

Using Stackla to pull in a variety of images on home and feature pages quickly tells a lot of stories to potential visitors, offering inspiration and relevant content that can increase engagement. Using geolocation, Elizabeth uses Stackla tags to pull in images to the homepage of people enjoying their time in Lake Charles in a variety of ways. Visitors instantly get a feel for the experiences and activities people in the area are participating in, in real time, from weddings to family beach fun. Elizabeth got the idea to visually storytell with UGC this way from Summit, and then recently implemented the Stackla "load more" button to offer even more experiences to site visitors.



"I love how recently stackla has the 'load more content' button, so you can keep on going. You are not limited to widget space. I could sit here all day and look at more and more pictures." Elizabeth feels the "load more" option underneath the homepage overview content gives visitors more of an exploration experience. They can see that there is more going on, but without all the extra images making the page feel weighed down.

"Just the food one delivers an additional 4 rows of food images. Visitors can see even more variety. I think that's pretty cool."

Promoting Content, Rewarding Contributors

Finding, engaging, spotlighting, and rewarding valuable social media contributors can inspire more user-generated content contribution while cutting down on content creation requirements from the DMO team. For the past two years, Elizabeth has also chosen a photo of the month from the stack on the website. A hashtag mention and a stand-out number of likes or comments help inspire her choice, but she also likes to choose a variety of photos ... a sunset image one month, a food photo another month, for example. She highlights the chosen image with a feature blog during that month. In addition to that recognition, a mini canvas is created from the photo, featuring their hashtag, and displayed at the bureau for a month. The canvas is then mailed to the winning poster.

From the monthly winners, one photo of the year is chosen and recognized at the National Tourism Week Celebration.

The photo of the year winner is invited to an award luncheon and receives a plaque and a 16 x 20 canvas of the photo. The photo is included in an award list that is distributed to the press. "So far, both winners have come to the award ceremony, even if they are from out of town," says Elizabeth.





The Analytics Of It All

That result—both photo-of-the-year winners traveling to Lake Charles for the award ceremony—is just one example of the return on investment user generated content and promotion can deliver. With Stackla and Simpleview, results can be tracked. Analytics are available in a 7-day snapshot.

“I’m surprised that, say I post a photo on Monday... a few weeks later, looking at the analytics, I’m happy to see that the new photo is in the top 3 already,” said Elizabeth.

THE NUMBERS

LAUNCH - FEBRUARY 16TH, 2017

 **50,080**

Users have experienced Stackla in the first 15 months. Users who interact with Stackla are highly engaged and much more likely to complete site conversions

 **7,770**

Unique clicks to Partner Links by users who visited pages on the site with Stackla account in the first 15 months.

PAGES PER SESSION (PPS)

3.62 PPS for Users who have seen Stackla

2.06 PPS for ALL Users **76%**

Improvement over full site performance

SESSION DURATION (SD)

4:05 SD for Users who have seen Stackla

2:08 SD for ALL Users **91%**

Improvement over full site performance

PAGES PER SESSION

5.27 PPS for Users who have interacted with Stackla

2.06 PPS for ALL Users **156%**

Improvement over full site performance

SESSION DURATION

7:22 SD for Users who have interacted with Stackla

2:08 SD for ALL Users **245%**

Improvement over full site performance