

experience grand rapids | case study

## How “Mobile-First” Redesign Results in a **Better Website Experience**

After much planning and consideration, the team at Experience Grand Rapids **was ready to build its new website with a clear vision for what it wanted:**

- Not just a mobile-friendly design, **but a mobile-first design**
- To showcase **photography and site content**
- To deliver a **better user experience**

The Michigan city combines the cultural diversions of a cosmopolitan city with the spectacular recreation of an outdoor paradise, offering a great time to locals and visitors alike. **The destination marketing organization (DMO) aims for its website visitors to “Dream Grand And Go.”**

When it came to their dream website, the desire was to streamline everything to get the right content in front of visitors, make it the best user experience possible, and design with accessibility in mind.

### SITUATION

Good website design is about meeting people where they are, being able to highlight the content you want, and making navigation easy. Because only 25% of today's Experience Grand Rapids' website traffic comes from desktop users, moving to a mobile-first design optimized for the smaller screen was a must-do decision.



**First and foremost, we wanted to make sure the site was designed to behave better for your phone.**

With our previous site map, you'd scroll forever. You couldn't find anything, and it wasn't intuitive. The site was massive and overwhelming. I felt overwhelmed, and I managed the site!



**ANDREA ROBYNS**

Marketing Technology Director  
at Experience Grand Rapids



GRANICUS

simpleview

## GOALS

Designing for mobile-first, the **main goals** for the website redesign were to:

- Deliver a **better user experience**
- Showcase **photography and site content**
- **Streamline** navigation
- **Remove barriers** using standard accessibility guidelines with color and design

## SOLUTION

Delivering a better user experience meant drastically reducing the amount of content on the website overall — as is typical of most organizations, the DMO had long had a schedule for adding content but not for reducing it.

**“We considered ourselves content publishers,”** said Robyns. “We were pumping out the content, doing blog posts three times a week with brand new content ... **we needed to change our approach and decided to create a website content governance plan that would detail the day-to-day management of content delivery and style, as well as the long-term execution of content strategy tactics.**”



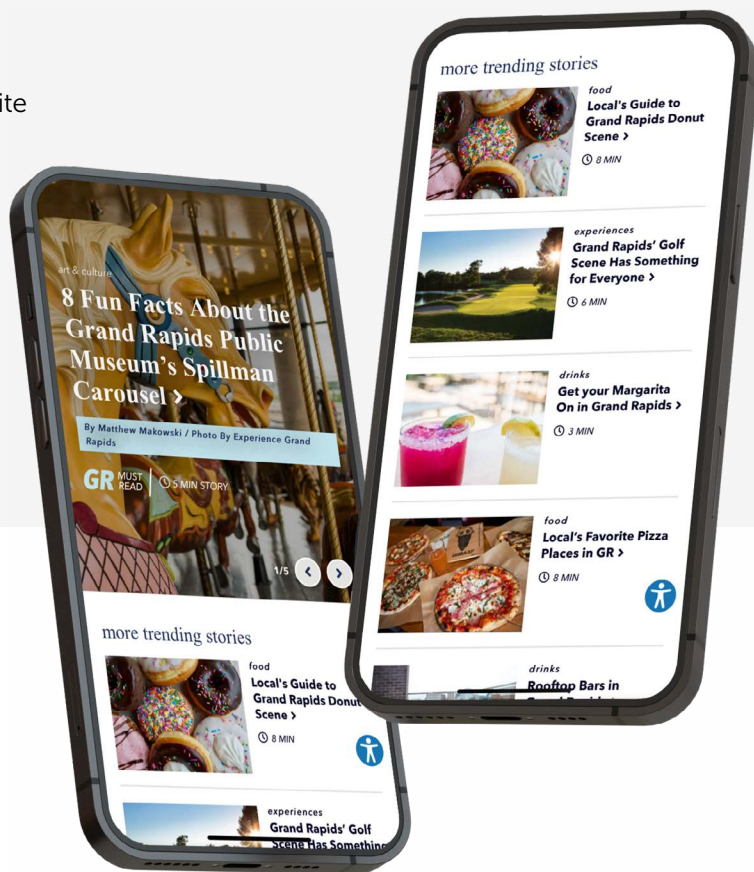
**I love the way the site functions.**

I love that we went with a simpler framework because our visuals can now take center stage.



**ANDREA ROBYNS**

Marketing Technology Director  
at Experience Grand Rapids



Understanding the DMO's objectives, the Simpleview team built a framework with streamlined navigation, slashing the site navigation menu from over 400 items to 169. Along with other content changes, this gives the DMO a better ability to interweave related content from articles, videos, and events.

**“It was pretty phenomenal to have the Simpleview team understand what we were looking for,”** said Robyns. “I love the way the site functions. I love that we went with a simpler framework because our visuals can now take center stage.”

As far as accessibility, the DMO has made a concerted effort to get detailed information helpful for navigating the destination into Simpleview CRM, which now pulls into **enhanced listings**, making it more useful to the end-user.

“

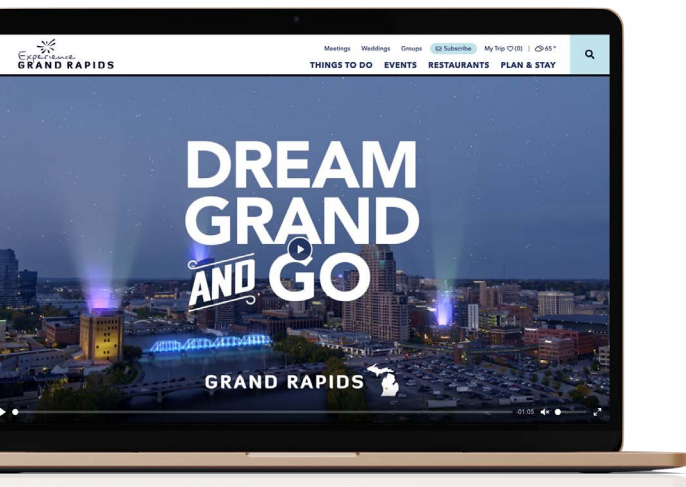
I could have anybody design a website, but for the Simpleview team to have that backend informational knowledge and understanding how everything pulls together and being able to trust that it will work is crucial,” Robyns said. **“I could trust what they were showing me and know it was going to work.”**

”

## RESULTS

The hard work by both Experience Grand Rapids and Simpleview resulted in a site that serves its mobile users well and enables the DMO to highlight its brand pillars in a more visually inspiring way.

**“Simpleview did a great job of putting a team together for our website redesign,”** Robyns said. **“My project manager took me every step of the way through multiple meetings to make sure that absolutely nothing was missed.”**



[SEE IT IN ACTION](#)

Results reported  
since the redesign:

