Visus LLC
Enterprise Software Solutions
Results Driven

Microsoft Partner

Chumash Casino

CLIENT SUCCESS: BRAND WEBSITE REDESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

SNAPSHOT

CHUMASH
CASINO RESORT

ORGANIZATION

Located in the Santa Ynez Indian Reservation near Solvang, California, The Chumash Casino Resort is the largest hospitality and entertainment company on the California Central Coast.

CHALLENGE

Replace an old homegrown website that was difficult to manage and complicated for visitors to navigate with an efficient, modern solution. Enable the marketing team to be self-sufficient in managing and updating the website without help from the technical services department or outside technology resources.

STRATEGY

Work with the resort's marketing team to conceptualize a new web presence. Use Progress Sitefinity to create a custom website and content management system that simplifies promotional activities for staff and improves the experience for site visitors. Move the site from traditional hosting to Microsoft Azure cloud-based platform.

RESULTS

Ease of management and automated workflows make the marketing team more efficient and promotions more effective. The cloud-based platform-as-a-service provides better performance and saves more than sixty percent in monthly costs. Visitor traffic to the new website has increased by 400 percent. Customers stay on the site longer and follow through more on calls to action.

The Chumash Casino Resort is an AAA four diamond resort in the Santa Ynez Indian Reservation near Solvang, California. It offers a gaming area with slot machines and table games, a 320-room hotel, spa, fine dining and entertainment events. The resort attracts more than 10,000 patrons per day. It is a major employer and the largest hospitality and entertainment company on the California Central Coast.

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Whether visiting for a concert, an overnight stay, gaming, or a day at the spa, most customers travel some distance to visit the resort. The target market is within 120 miles of the facility. Its marketing department is tasked with driving visitation through a variety of outreach channels. Key among these is its website, which is considered to be the virtual front door to the resort and a crucial resource for the public to get information about the multi-faceted venue and its events.

Previously, Chumash Casino Resort had a homegrown website that was cumbersome and inefficient for staff to manage and difficult for customers to navigate. When the resort expanded its facility to include a new 12-story hotel tower, company leaders decided it was time to upgrade its web presence to coincide with the expansion.

Chumash Casino Resort engaged Visus LLC to design and deploy a new website that would be easy for non-technical users in the marketing department to manage and would provide a superior experience for site visitors. "Our extensive technical services department operates within multiple systems," explains Michael Armenta, senior marketing manager at Chumash Casino Resort. "They must manage and analyze data from the gaming floor, the hotel system, point of sale, dining and more. The business must prioritize where resources are spent. So our technical services department didn't have time to manage the website or design a new one."

> "Visus has been our partner for a long time. The Visus team has taught our marketing staff a lot about technology. They have learned a significant amount about our business and the way we market to our customers. Through close collaboration, both teams build a valuable understanding about what the other does."
>
> – Michael Armenta, Senior Marketing Manager, Chumash Casino Resort

The team from Visus collaborated closely with the resort's marketing staff to design and develop the new web presence. "The Visus solution enables our marketers to be self-sufficient in delivering information and promotional content without help from our

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technical services department or outside professionals," Armenta says. "It makes our marketing team more effective and provides our customers with a better experience. It's a great marketing tool that we can utilize to help drive interest in the business."

Modern Solution Streamlines Management and Improves Customer Experience

Armenta says making changes to content on the old site was clumsy, and functionality was rudimentary. "We couldn't adjust the layout of a page or create new pages," he explains. "And it required a lot of repetitive effort. For example, if we wanted to modify details about a promotion, event or other information, we had to manually make those changes throughout the site. It was time consuming and demanding. Our marketing people are not developers. We wanted to make it easy for them to manage all information in one place on the back end."

Visus used Progress Sitefinity Content Management System (CMS) to create a user-friendly content management dashboard that features drag-and-drop functionality for adding content. It includes an event management module for daily events with a full calendar that can be viewed and downloaded by customers. The system utilizes widgets, which are website toolbox components that can be reused in various places on the site to streamline tasks such as creating or updating promotional content or generating a new page.

> "Visus custom designs solutions that perfectly fit our needs. They have made it a point to learn about our business. So when we make a request, they understand what we're talking about in the context of our workflows, our business processes and our customers. The research they have done eliminates language barriers and makes everything go more smoothly."
>
> – Wayne Hurte Executive Director of Marketing, Chumash Casino Resort

The content management system also automates workflow via a promotions management module. When marketers make an update to a promotional element on the site, the new information is propagated out to all appropriate pages where that material is displayed. The system tracks the start and end dates for each promotion and automatically removes the related elements from all pages when a promotion concludes. "The promotions management module has truly made life easier for our marketing people," Armenta says. "Adding content such as pictures and text is as simple as a single drag-and-drop action to update the entire site. Everything is easily managed from one place behind the scenes. We can train new users within minutes."

Chumash Casino Resort's new Sitefinity CMS is an example of a growing trend called digital transformation. One defining aspect of digital transformation is operational efficiency, which Armenta says the new solution facilitates in many ways through automation, ease of use, simplified management and more. Another aspect of digital transformation is enhanced customer experience. "We wanted to make it as easy as possible for our customers to quickly find the information they are looking for in our multifaceted offerings," Armenta says. "Visus worked with our marketing team, beginning at the earliest stages of development to collaborate on how the site would be laid out so it would be simple for customers to navigate. Then they used their expertise with state of the art digital tools to make that a reality."

Visus created a streamlined dual navigation system that allows viewers to easily locate information without needing to dig through multiple submenus or complex lists. Calls to action are well defined and available. "The site is very clear, organized and responsive," Armenta says. "It displays perfectly on every kind of device from desktop systems to mobile." The system can also detect where site visitors are viewing from and automatically deliver pertinent content based on their location. Promotional elements can be given weighted values that determine the order in which they are presented to customers.

> "Working with Visus helped us create multiple efficiencies for our staff and improve our customers' experience on our website. We now get the same amount of site visits in a week that we previously got in a month. And they stay on the site longer. I believe that is because of the efficiency of the site Visus created and the excellent user experience."
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> – Michael Armenta, Senior Marketing Manager, Chumash Casino Resort

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The Chumash Casino Resort and Visus LLC enjoy a long-term relationship that extends back many years. “Visus is not merely a third party we work with; they are partners in our business,” says Wayne Hurte, executive director of marketing at Chumash Casino Resort. “We have full trust in them. That’s very valuable. Any recommendation they make is always in the best interest of our business.”

Generating new ideas is a primary task of marketing professionals. Hurte says the Visus team helps his marketing personnel better understand their ideas from the perspective of the technology and what the impact may be. “The Visus team is fantastic,” he says. “Over years of close collaboration, they have helped us understand how things work from a technical aspect. Some of our marketing ideas can get extremely complicated. Visus is always there to explain the details of what will be required to develop those concepts into a functional solution in a way that we can comprehend.”

> “Visus has helped us in our ongoing mission to get the right information in front of the right people. The result is we are seeing more website visitors click to make a purchase—whether for tickets to a concert or event, to book a room at our hotel, or make reservations for dining.”
>
> – Michael Armenta, Senior Marketing Manager, Chumash Casino Resort Casino Resort

Armenta says collaboration with the resort’s marketing team represents a fundamental component of the Visus process and is crucial to the success of its endeavors. “The Visus team works closely with us from the very outset of a project because they know we understand our business better than they do,” he says. “They know how to work with marketing teams, they know how to work with technical services teams, and they understand that there is a drastic difference between the two. Whenever we try to flesh out a new marketing idea or promotional concept, it’s always a good process we go through together with the Visus team. Working with Visus has helped us evolve our marketing processes over the years far beyond working with any other partners.”

Michael Armenta
Senior Marketing Manager,
Chumash Casino Resort

Wayne Hurte
Executive Director of Marketing,
Chumash Casino Resort

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