

Chumash Casino

CLIENT SUCCESS: TICKETING APPLICATION

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

Enable the company to disengage from a third-party ticketing agency that was inflating costs for the business and its customers and was preventing marketing professionals from managing events and directing the online experience of site visitors.

STRATEGY

Work with the resort's marketing team to design a custom ticketing application that would integrate with the company's new website to provide self-sufficiency and control for marketers and make it easier for customers to purchase tickets to events.

RESULTS

The ticketing solution paid for itself in less than one year by eliminating third-party costs and fees, which were substantial, sending a windfall of capital to the marketing department's bottom line. Marketing staff now has full control of all activities related to event management and ticket sales. Customers pay less for tickets and enjoy a more consistent experience on Chumash Casino Resort's website.

The Chumash Casino Resort is an AAA four diamond resort in the Santa Ynez Indian Reservation near Solvang, California. Along with its popular gaming area, 320-room hotel, spa and dining, the resort also presents a wide variety of concerts, shows, tournaments and sporting events.

The Chumash Casino Resort previously depended on a third party ticketing agency to handle ticket sales for these events. The arrangement generated unnecessary costs for the resort and its customers, fragmented customers' web experience with the brand, and excluded marketing personnel from managing entertainment events. To improve the process, the resort called upon its longstanding trusted partner Visus LLC.

"The mission to eliminate the third-party ticket service and bring all ticketing activities in-house was an extension of a website redesign project Visus undertook with us," explains Michael Armenta, senior marketing manager at Chumash Casino Resort. Previously, if a visitor to the website clicked to purchase tickets to an event, the action took the customer to the third party ticketing agency's website, creating an inconsistent online experience and disconnecting customers from the resort's marketing communications.

"Our partnership with Visus has opened the door to almost unlimited possibilities for how we can optimize practices in every way—front of the house, back-end management, and the customer experience with our brand."

– Michael Armenta, Senior Marketing Manager, Chumash Casino Resort

"We wanted our new website to be all encompassing so our customers could come to one place to complete everything they wanted to do," Armenta continues. "And we wanted our marketing professionals to maintain control of site visitors' online experience and keep them engaged with all of our offerings. Our staff could not do that once customers went offsite to make a ticket purchase."

The arrangement with the ticketing agency created additional challenges for marketing professionals at the resort. If changes were required for an upcoming event such as modifications to seat layout or pricing, marketers were required to contact the ticketing agency via email, request the changes, and then wait—sometimes for several days.

It was also expensive. "When we calculated the annual total our customers were paying in additional fees above and beyond our ticket prices, as well as the amount our business was paying the agency to sell tickets to our customers, the benefits of having our own ticketing solution became very compelling," Armenta says. "When we factored in the advantages of regaining control of back end management and front end user experience it became a priority objective for us. As always, our partners at Visus listened closely to our ideas in collaborative brainstorming sessions. They created a technology solution that perfectly fits our needs."

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Cost-Effective Solution Streamlines Event Management

Visus designed and deployed a custom ticketing application for Chumash Casino Resort that provides the resort's marketing team with full control of ticketing activities, preserves a cohesive online experience for customers and saves money for the business and its customers. Cost savings to the business by eliminating its dependency on the ticket agency paid for the new solution in less than one year.

"I appreciate the fact that the Visus team is very thorough in their research. They take the time to understand our business and our needs during the discovery process, and they communicate clearly with us about project status through every stage of development. Once the system was deployed, they remained engaged to ensure it works the way we want it to."

– Wayne Hurte, Executive Director of Marketing, Chumash Casino Resort

"The ticketing solution Visus created for us has been especially successful because it dramatically reduces costs—not just for us, but for our customers as well since they no longer pay a third-party fee for tickets," says Wayne Hurte, Executive Director of Marketing at Chumash Casino Resort. "Money we were giving to the third party service now goes directly to the bottom line for our marketing department to apply to promotional projects."

The custom ticketing application is integrated into a new website that Visus LLC designed and deployed for The Chumash Casino Resort, and is part of a plan to enable delivering information and promotional content without

help from the technical services department or outside professionals.

"Viewers to our website can click on Entertainment in the user-friendly navigation links that Visus designed for the site," Armenta explains. "From there, they can view all our upcoming concerts and events. When they click Buy Tickets they remain on our site and are directed to our ticketing engine, which continues to guide them along the path to a purchase. It looks and feels consistent with the rest of the web experience we present."

Armenta says the Visus solution provides his team with back-end control of ticket sales while automating many tasks. Users in the marketing department can manage details behind the scenes without help from technology experts. The Visus solution provides the capability for marketers to design custom show floors to accommodate any event—from a traditional concert setting to a runway stage for a fashion show or ringside viewing for a boxing match. Visus also created an algorithm that automatically identifies the best available seats in the house and gives customers full control to make selections based on factors such as price range and preferred seating location.

"Along with creating custom solutions for us, Visus also helps us navigate issues in our own technology. We have a multi-faceted business with many different information systems. Visus makes valuable recommendations about how to keep our technology performing optimally. They are trusted partners in our business."

– Wayne Hurte, Executive Director of Marketing, Chumash Casino Resort



Michael Armenta
Senior Marketing Manager,
Chumash Casino Resort



Wayne Hurte
Executive Director of Marketing,
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“Visus designed a custom solution for us from scratch,” Hurte says. “The Visus team always takes the time to understand our business, the way we work, and our processes and systems. This solution is much more valuable to us than a packaged system because it is targeted directly to the unique needs of our business. That speaks to the value of having a long-term partner.”

Visus created comprehensive reports that provide full visibility into ticketing activities to help managers analyze the success of entertainment events. The Visus team also developed a mobile phone app that ushers and other event staff can use to help prevent fraud by identifying re-used tickets.

“The ability of the Visus team to listen to our ideas in collaborative sessions and then suggest and deploy the right technology elevates our concepts beyond what we initially envisioned,” Armenta concludes. “They always have the best interests of our business in mind.”

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