

CASE STUDY

NEW CONTENT EXPLORATIONS

Social Series Video Creation | Visit St. Pete/Clearwater





ST.PETE
CLEARWATER



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IMPACT

67 VIDEOS

5M+ VIDEO VIEWS

30K+ NEW SOCIAL FOLLOWERS

122%+ INCREASE IN MINUTES VIEWED

10-MONTH TIMEFRAME



Video content and social media are here to stay.

If destinations want to engage visitors, they must build a social strategy and that strategy must include video. Visit St. Pete/Clearwater (VSPC) came to Miles with two requests in late 2018:

1. Create and distribute more social-first video.
2. Focus more attention on content pillars beyond the beach.

We conceptualized a social-first video series that would accomplish both goals. Our schedule was ambitious, with at least two videos completed each week. With a modest budget, tight deadlines and a lot of elbow

grease, we created 67 new videos in 10 months, all produced with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, IGTV and YouTube top-of-mind.

THE RESULTS?

ACROSS FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE

- Over 5 million total video views
- 30,830 new social followers (+20%)
- 274,076 more social engagements per month (+160%)

Additionally, VSPC continues to see gains in total minutes viewed per month on Facebook (+110%).

Although VSPC continued to focus on video posts beyond the social series, videos from the social series were nearly 2/3 of the videos posted in this 10-month period and were a strong factor in these impressive gains. The social series was so successful that VSPC continues to extend the program on rolling, multi-month cycles.

So why did this new strategy work? Here's how we created social-first video content that works.



ABOUT 5 BILLION YOUTUBE VIDEOS ARE VIEWED ON AVERAGE EVERY DAY - OMNICORE 2018

VIDEO CONTENT IS THE MOST POPULAR FORM OF CONTENT WORLDWIDE - CONTENT TRENDS / GLOBAL PREFERENCES, HUBSPOT, 2018



In our media-saturated world, getting full video views is an uphill battle.

Since approximately 65% of VSPC's content is consumed on mobile devices, we knew incorporating eye-catching imagery would be key to sparking a desire to engage with our videos and, ultimately, the destination.

To accomplish this, we worked with VSPC to identify content pillars that would showcase novel, fun and visually expressive experiences with a goal of creating a deeper engagement with viewers.

Through this process, we landed on five unique video series (Savor This, Best Ever SPC, Indulging With, SPC Events and Mobile Kitchen) that we believed would entertain and engage our audience.

But to do that, we knew we needed to create a unique style for these videos that had a different look and feel than anything VSPC had done before.



SAVOR THIS

The local culinary scene is booming in St. Pete/Clearwater. See some of the tastiest dishes – and most intriguing restaurants – in this series that focuses all on the food. Each episode is music-driven with on-screen graphics to relay fun information and tidbits.

AVG. VIDEO LENGTH: < 60 SECONDS



BEST EVER SPC

From shuffleboard to floating tiki huts, St. Pete/Clearwater has a unique and quirky culture all its own. Uncover our favorite local activities and see how to get in on the action. Each episode's story is driven by a local talent that reflects the destination's fun personality.

AVG. VIDEO LENGTH: 2-3 MINUTES



INDULGING WITH

Want to see what Florida's best chefs are up to? Get into the kitchen with these chef-led interviews, see what they're cooking up and follow them to some of their favorite places in St. Pete/Clearwater. Each episode follows a different restaurant's chef or owner(s) as the story driver.

AVG. VIDEO LENGTH: 2-3 MINUTES



SPC EVENTS

More than just "things to do," this series digs into events that celebrate St. Pete/Clearwater's culture, customs and one-of-a-kind events. Each episode is music-driven with on-screen graphics.

AVG. VIDEO LENGTH: < 60 SECONDS



MOBILE KITCHEN

Local chefs whip up Florida-inspired dishes at beautiful locations with a literal mobile kitchen. Each episode is hosted by a chef.

AVG. VIDEO LENGTH: 2 MINUTES

Worldwide consumption of video is staggering.



However, just because more of us watch more video content than ever before, that doesn't mean it's easy to market with videos, or even to get video views.

Social media poses two major challenges for video-based destination marketing:

1. Social media has a unique first-person style
2. Social media consumption is passive

Without addressing those two areas, we wouldn't be able to engage VSPC's target audience.

STYLE

The style that works for a TV commercial or website landing page just won't fly on social media sites. Viewers expect content that feels like it belongs, is personable and enriches their experience in some way. If a video post on a social media site doesn't hit the mark, viewers will simply keep scrolling.

With this in mind, we put several best practices into play to raise the view rates and engagements:

- Shorter video lengths, keeping what works best on each channel in mind (i.e. less than 60 seconds for Instagram, around 3 minutes for Facebook)

- Eye-catching imagery or scenes for the first few seconds to capture attention
- Immersive story and visuals for more of a personal connection
- "Soundless-first" approach, utilizing on-screen graphics

PASSIVE CONSUMPTION

Pull up Facebook, Instagram or YouTube at any given moment and you probably have no idea what you're looking for. Social media is a space where people "know it when they see it." We scroll until something catches our eye.

Consumers are not opening their social apps and searching "St. Pete/Clearwater" or "Florida" or even "vacation." In fact, they are scrolling, not searching.

The average person thumbs through about 300 feet of content each day on their phone. That's equivalent to the size of the Statue of Liberty! So there's a good chance your content may be seen — the challenge is to get people to pause.

We tackled that challenge by tracking video analytics with a custom-built dashboard in Chartio. The analytics tool helps us go beyond likes, letting us peer into metrics like average view time.

The dashboard provided snapshots into metrics by social channel, demographic information and aggregate views. With this sort of single-login access to data, it was easier and more efficient to review data to better inform our content

strategy decisions. For instance, we could see that:

- Novel experiences like a floating tiki bar or diving for sponges fared better than having a picnic in a park for the Best Ever SPC series
- Shorter videos truly high-lighting the food and restaurant experience performed better than longer-narrative culinary videos
- Shorter highlight videos in the SPC Events series were a better format to showcase activities like a weekly market versus the longer narrative of Best Ever SPC

Visit St. Pete/Clearwater's main goal was entertaining and engaging U.S. travelers at the top of the travel funnel and firmly establishing VSPC as more than a beach destination — a tactic meant to differentiate themselves from the competition and showcase diverse attractions beyond the beach.





We started with a strategy to launch two videos a week.

We knew this would be challenging, since a typical two-minute video takes about a day to shoot and another day to edit to first proof. And that's in addition to the few weeks it can take to concept, write and fully plan the video.

We also had to adhere to tight turnarounds so the social-first content could be as timely as possible and launch on a weekly basis. In other words, we couldn't shoot months in advance and have a bank of work to pull from.

We needed to be nimble and fast in both content strategy and production in order for this content to be fresh and relevant.

If we were to make our weekly

post schedule, a dedicated videographer/editor coupled with a rolling content strategy was the only way to make the quick turnarounds.

After a topic is approved, a producer crafts the creative brief, outlining the topic, talking points, locations and talent. A videographer shoots then edits each video, keeping a consistent feel for each series and smoothing out the process between production and post-production.

To keep videos authentic, we stay away from edits that alter reality or frame a topic in a misleading way. Once a video is approved, VSPC adds it to their

social calendar based on an approved launch schedule.

It was important for us to have a reliable, measurable way to track video performance. **For this purpose, our analytics team at Miles built a custom, first-of-its-kind dashboard in Chartio.** The tool aggregates video performance across YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, by tracking video views and other metrics for each video on each platform. Audience demographic analysis, traffic sources and video view length are a few of the in-depth areas we look at with this tool.



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As of February 2020, after 10 months of the social series, we had created 67 completed and launched videos covering a range of topics and activities. During that same time period, **Visit St. Pete/Clearwater saw impressive gains across Facebook, Instagram and YouTube that included more than 5 million total video views for these videos, 30,830 new social followers and 274,076 more social engagements per month.**

With this success, VSPC continues to partner with Odyssey to produce the social series on an ongoing basis.

One of the benefits of the social series is its highly adaptable nature — allowing the program to continue to evolve.

For instance, in December 2019, with the success of Savor This and Best Ever SPC, we strategized with the client to focus content creation on those two series and the Events series. The Mobile Kitchen and Indulging With formats are being integrated into the larger Savor This format, rather than being standalone series, which will give Savor This a wider creative net.

Most episodes will still focus on the music-driven restaurant/food montage, but we can expand to include chef-driven storylines, cooking tutorials and host-driven storylines when the stories warrant it. This allows simplicity for viewers, while also leveraging the most successful series. The net deliverables per week remain consistent.



St. Pete/Clearwater bucks the idea that Florida is just a beach playground.

St. Pete/Clearwater's local culture runs deep – something that is extremely attractive to potential visitors.

Locals are outright foodies and downtown St. Pete has a high concentration of chef-driven restaurants. A thriving artists community literally paints the town once a year. To the north, a long-standing Greek community dives for coveted sponges.

From Friday nights spent playing shuffleboard with new friends in St. Pete's downtown, to events

celebrating a vibrant LGBTQ community, to quirky shops, cool clubs and world-class museums, St. Pete/Clearwater bucks the idea that Florida is just a beach playground.

And every evolution of the VSPC's social video series captures that, creating a colorful look at a place visitors will want to go.



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