

CS3: Whalen's Pub & Grill

Objective

Whalen's Pub & Grill, a new sports bar and grill located in the internationally-known George Street region of St. John's, Newfoundland, required signage, business cards, internal and external promotions plus a website with weekly updates. Their location on George Street West, while lucrative, has the most pubs per square foot of any street in North America, providing a wealth of already established competition. Superior branding and promotion was required in order for Whalen's to stand out from rival pubs and restaurants.

Solution

Keeping in mind the athletic theme of Whalen's Pub & Grill, an illustrated hockey goalie, indicative of Canada's favorite pastime, was developed as the predominant image for all marketing materials. Starting with the large exterior signage, Stone Waterson developed a contemporary and compelling look and feel for all promotions, mirroring the sports-minded pub atmosphere.

The business cards were inspired by memories of the popular 84-85 O'Pee O'Chee hockey cards and designed to replicate their classic look. A completely unique and stand-out concept, the nostalgic value alone was enough to excite sports fans and prompt those in the area to visit the location or website.

Leading up to the pub opening, eye-catching full colour poster flyers were placed in designated areas, promoting a large musical event held on St. Patrick's Day. The response was so effective, Whalen's Pub & Grill still holds the event annually.

For in-house promotions, menu cards were designed for table displays using hockey imagery and details of food and bar specials, plus mini-flyers listing upcoming acts and special events on the reverse.

A frequently-updated website combined with email newsletters and social networking through Facebook provides an engaging web presence to which visitors return regularly week after week. A captivating html/Flash hybrid, animated interactive modules on each page promote the items of interest from bar specials to nightly entertainment. Instantly, visitors can see all acts and events occurring in the next two weeks and click to learn more. This interactivity lends the project a tangible feeling of being above and beyond all competitors and implies that with a company that uses superior marketing, you can expect superior service.

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To encourage people to visit the site more often, regardless of the upcoming events, a photo gallery of patrons and memorable events was constructed. Upon posting, all new photos are mentioned in the weekly newsletter. Frequenters of the establishment will visit to see themselves and subsequently forward the site link to more friends and acquaintances.

The contact page itself generates hits in a "tell a friend" capacity. Beside contact information, newsletter sign-up, and a map with driving directions, this section encourages visitors to provide email addresses of others who may be interested in the venue. Effortless on the client's part, automatic messages are generated then forwarded to each name entered.

Clearly branded as being part of the Whalen's website, a weekly newsletter delivered via email briefly outlines the upcoming sports events and live entertainment plus current bar specials. Recipients wishing to learn more are given a direct link to the site, driving return traffic each week.

Using Facebook as a social networking tool is not only convenient but has saved thousands in advertising costs for the client since beginning operation. Staff can send a quick email to hundreds of solicited patrons as frequently as necessary, and keep live site updates down to once a week. If there is a change in entertainment or a last minute promotion required, the client can instantly make a large percentage of clientele aware. Not only is it easy to add photos, promotional images, and information updates, staff can chat and keep close contact with all Facebook users, creating a friendly community which constantly expands awareness of the pub online.

Result

Striking marketing materials resulted in a great first impression among the local residents and bar patrons. The new establishment quickly stood out from rival venues and attracted contacts from not just the local region, but all across Canada. With enhanced awareness amid a sea of competition, Stone Waterson was able to get much more traffic inside the pub during the first month of operation than expected.

Using only organic Search Engine Optimization techniques and without paying for Google ads or other online services, Whalen's had the highest ranked bar or pub site in Newfoundland and Labrador in well under a year. With more hits per week than any other venue in the province and a far-reaching positive response, their website

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was crucial in providing a competitive edge in the local bar scene.

Our online marketing strategy coupled with effective print materials keep the pub "first in mind" for many patrons who frequent the area, and constantly attract new customers to the venue. In a very successful first year of operations, Whalen's has enjoyed an ever-increasing body of clientele, already surpassing most similar competition in average sales and positive recognition.

Client Comments

"We are overly impressed with the quality of work from Stone Waterson. Several people have praised our new site and the numerous hits speak for themselves.

Easy to view, the layout of the site makes it very simple to find information, while notifying viewers of our specials, event and promotions. Because of this, bookings for parties and bands have increased remarkably. I have received phone calls from all over Canada for band and party bookings based on Google search results and the professional appearance of the website.

Our new site has exceeded my expectations and continues to increase business and awareness for Whalen's Pub & Grill. A great job indeed!"

Curt Whalen, Owner/Operator
Whalen's Pub & Grill

