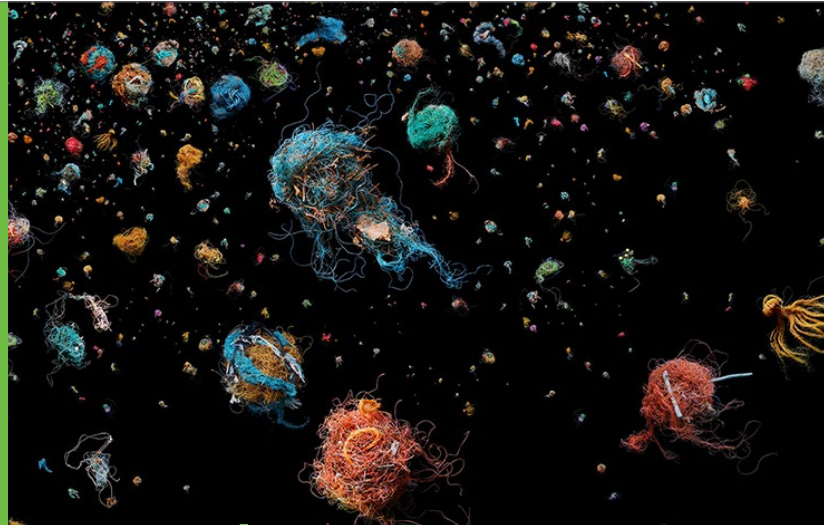


Case Study

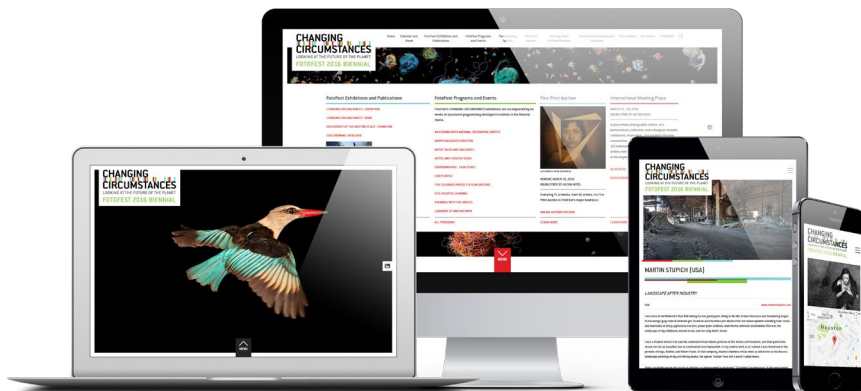
FotoFest

Through impactful visual design supporting the Biennial theme and organized comprehensive information to increase usability, HexaGroup creates a successful non-profit website.



Background

The 33-year old festival draws over 275,000 international visitors over the course of its six-week run. [FotoFest 2016 Biennial – Changing Circumstances: Looking at the Future of the Planet](#), was the 16th citywide celebration of all things photographic, with over 120 participating exhibitions, six weeks of engaging lectures and seminars for the public and artists, music and performance events, two multi-week film programs, and the world's largest international Portfolio Review. Reaffirming their commitment to photography as a tool for social engagement, internationalism, and community enrichment, FotoFest is the longest-running, and largest international contemporary photographic art event in the United States, and one of the world's most respected.



Objectives & Challenges

One of the main challenges FotoFest faced was the constant juggle trying to provide visitors with an array of information without overwhelming them. For the 2016 Biennial there would be over 120 exhibitions, 40+ featured artists, and a fine print auction that



2017 Crystal Awards

Website: Non-profit

2017 Communicator Awards
Silver Award of Distinction: General
Non-Profit for Websites

2017 Communicator Awards
Silver Award of Distinction: General
Art for Websites.

<http://goo.gl/bYpTbb>

See Other Awarded Sites:

<https://goo.gl/X73wg2>



needed to be easy for a very diverse audience to navigate through and find important event information.

Secondly, previous Biennial websites, like in 2012, utilized imagery, but showing photography wasn't a central focus. The event information took precedent instead, and the photography was secondary. The new leadership, along with the support of its founders, encouraged HexaGroup to be more creative with the 2016 biennial.

Lastly, it is always important to FotoFest that the website design incorporates the Biennial theme. Along with the principal exhibition, Changing Circumstances, The FotoFest 2016 Biennial theme was "Looking at the Future of the Planet". It presented artists exploring humanity's relationship with the Earth.

Solution

HexaGroup set out to improve user experience with a user-friendly responsive website that would encourage visitor participation in the Biennial program, while keeping the ultimate goal of showcasing photography in mind.

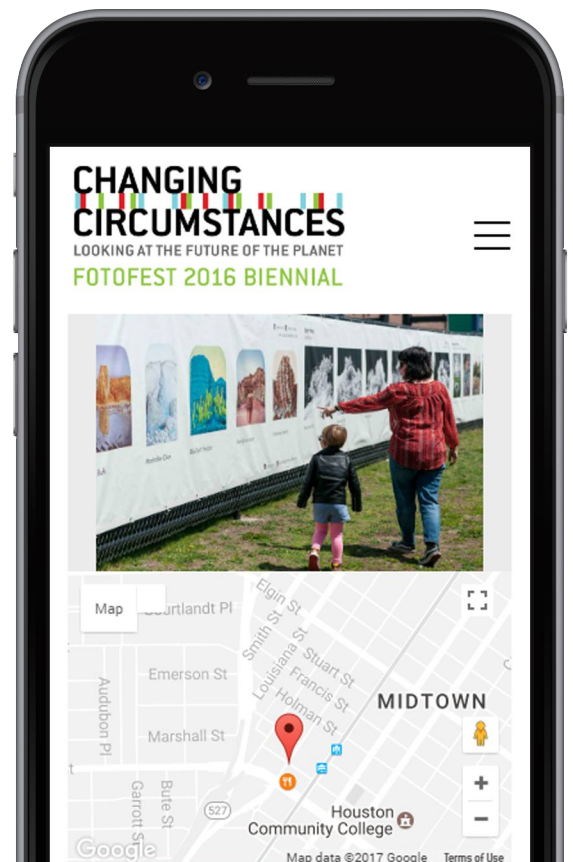
[Content was organized](#) in sections to present all key Biennial information in a comprehensible way, and avoiding overabundance. HexaGroup developed a website to act as a bold and modern space to showcase the photographs, and for visitors to get all the information they needed.

Homepage Design:

Upon first landing on the homepage, visitors are greeted by a large, striking image from an artist participating in the event. HexaGroup kept the design minimal since the photographs already made a bold statement. To make the [visual design user-friendly](#), options were kept simple on the homepage so the visitor had the option to either click the MENU button or anywhere in the page to load available menu items. Key programming information was presented in the middle of the page. Each of the four blocks of content were fully editable by the client and could be modified to display less content if necessary. The client could also turn off columns of content, allowing the layout to automatically update to display available content accordingly.

Individual Page Designs:

- A new calendar design functioned to promote key events at the top portion of the page with the ability to filter by various types of events during the Biennial.
- [Featured Artists page design](#) that could easily handle portrait and landscape images, showcased artist bio information and allowed users to click between artists easily with a previous and next option.
- [Participating Spaces](#) provided key information at a glance with a map, address, and a comprehensive list of events held at that location.
- [Online Auction Preview](#) could also handle portrait and landscape imagery along with key information for each item available for auction. Clicking on any item navigated the user to a details page with additional information, and enabled the user to scroll through all available items in the auction.



Design elements that were added specifically to support the event branding:

- Use of accent colors and imagery
- Rotating homepage carousel to start the idea of “Changing Circumstances” with pictures of various environments changing before us
- When an image loads colorful dots appear to make the short waiting process more aesthetically pleasing
- Scroll bars have the same color/style added to tie in design concept
- Headers, features and crosslinks utilize some of the logo colors as well

While reflecting the theme “Looking at the Future of the Planet”, HexaGroup incorporated design elements, including striking imagery and artist information, to enhance visitor experience. A compilation of artist bios and exhibit information was organized in comprehensive sections, enabling the visitor to easily sift through a mass of information. The content presented on specific artist pages also led visitors to other exhibits in the area by showing nearby attractions on an interactive map with clickable information. The site served as a hub of information for those interested in the FotoFest events throughout the city, and made it easy for visitors to participate in events that appealed to them.

Results

The goal to improve site interest was reached by increasing:

- Traffic: the traffic peaked at 1,906 sessions a day on March 11, 2016
- Time on site: visitors were spending over three minutes on the site during the festival
- Returning visitors: 64% of the people who viewed the site returned for more information
- Mobile Users: More than quadrupled compared to previous 2014 Biennial and now make up nearly 40% of traffic

“The FotoFest 2016 Biennial website was a dramatic improvement from our previous sites. We received near universal praise for it from colleagues and Biennial visitors. Of particular note, is the large visual presence – the opening slide show, the artists galleries, the Participating Spaces venue pages, and others. This is especially important, of course, because we are a photographic arts organization.”

▲
Vinod Hopson,
Communications Coordinator
FotoFest



Proven Methodology. Amplified Results.

At HexaGroup, performance is in our DNA. We've spent the last two decades honing a six-step marketing methodology that balances proven best practices with each client's unique objectives. Armed with in-depth knowledge of the energy, technology and professional service sectors, our team hits the ground running to achieve your KPIs.

