

Case Study

# Rice University

Glasscock's marketing team came to HexaGroup looking for data to improve their website and drive their overall digital marketing strategy.



## Background

The Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies furthers Rice University's commitment to providing lifelong personal and professional development opportunities to the Houston community and beyond. Glasscock's marketing team came to HexaGroup looking for data to improve their website and drive their overall digital marketing strategy.

## Solution

We used our proprietary Clustaar™ Keyword Analysis to reach the following objectives:

- Determine and visualize the size and segmentation of each market
- Discover each market's search trends and interests
- Show Glasscock's positioning in the overall competitive landscape online
- Guide the overall digital marketing strategy including:
  - Website structure
  - Content development
  - Class offerings

With Clustaar™, we offer the most sophisticated level of analysis for digital marketing strategies. By incorporating a revolutionary clustering algorithm and data visualization, we analyzed Glasscock's main domain and department subdomains to determine their current position in the market.

## Challenges

Glasscock needed to appeal to a wide variety of potential students and target markets. They weren't aware of the size or current competitive positioning of each market. They struggled to attract individual groups, identify the courses each group looked for, and position themselves above other schools.



## RICE UNIVERSITY

The proprietary analysis revealed audience search trends. Glasscock was able to understand its specific keyword universe on a whole new level. By further categorizing the Clustaar™ research by degrees, certification, and types of courses being searched, HexaGroup guided the website structure and Glasscock's overall digital marketing strategy.

HexaGroup also tapped Clustaar™ for in-depth content analysis. For each segment, the analysis revealed:

- The number of content pieces (web pages, PDFs, blogs, etc.) positioned on top pages of Google
- The types and amount of content to develop to improve positioning and become the industry leader
- Competitive content

Based on the Clustaar™ results, our team gave recommendations for new classes to add, how to structure content, and a visualization of how they were ranking against their competitors, something Glasscock had no way of measuring before.

# Execution

First, we developed a new website for Glasscock. This was a turnkey service including strategy, information design, content development and visual design.

## Information Design

### Persona Analysis

In addition to Clustaar™ analysis, HexaGroup conducted a comprehensive persona analysis for each target audience. We developed content for each persona and their desired courses and organized it to help Glasscock promote course availability

Armed with relevant monthly keyword search volumes, a revealing competitive analysis and a solid road map of the content needed to connect with the school's personas and provide Google Page 1 coverage, we developed a new sitemap and content flowchart.

## Content Production

### User-Friendly Course Catalog

To improve user experience and site searchability, our team created a more responsive user interface. The course catalog allows visitors to easily search for relevant courses without having to navigate through pages of unrelated content.

Within the catalog, users can filter by department, areas of study, format, location, term date, and availability, allowing them to find exactly what they need. The catalog also includes detailed listings for sessions, courses, and locations as well as automatic updates of course availability. Plus, visitors can search the catalog directly from the home page with an auto-complete keyword search.

## Visual Design

### Blending Modern and Traditional

The new Glasscock interface brings life to the home page and creates the feeling of being part of the campus, while providing ease of access to the latest courses and news. The carefully selected color palette and clean, modern design enable visitors to find content in an intuitive and conversational way.

The site's refreshed design maintains the traditional brand standards of Rice University, while presenting a fresh, modern look and an elite yet approachable feel. Viewers are able to virtually experience the campus with background videos of the campus and large banner images.

## Technical Implementation

HexaGroup migrated Glasscock's website to Drupal 7 and integrated it with the HubSpot marketing automation platform, a CRM.

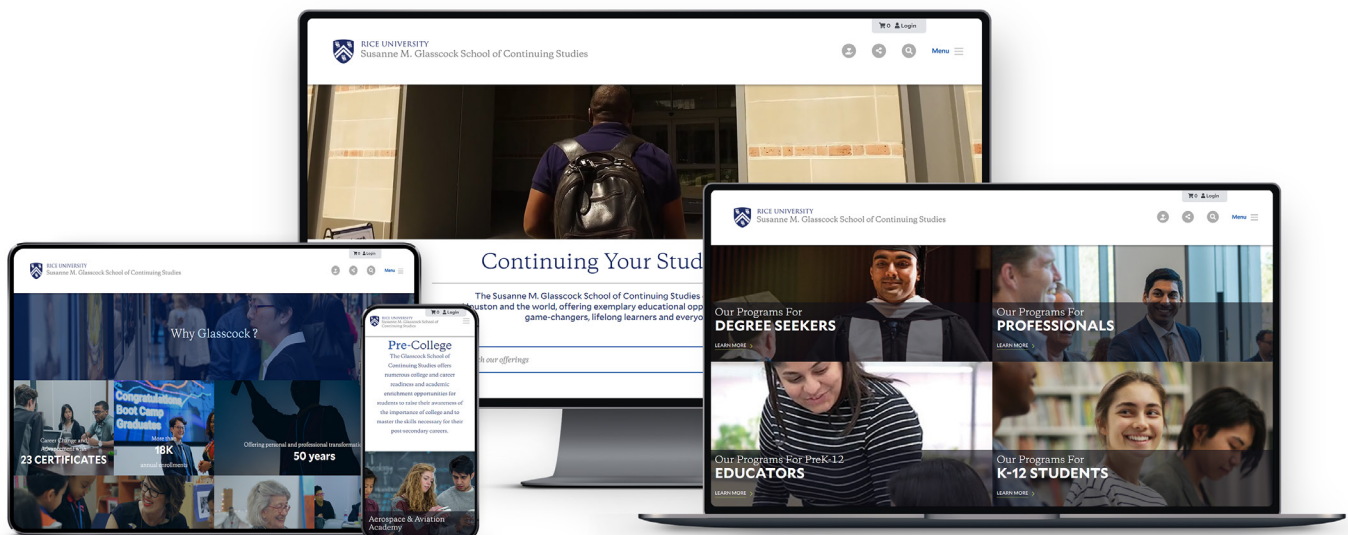
## Message Alignment

### Bringing the Brand to Life

As a digital representation of the caliber of the school and its courses, it was our goal to ensure that the website conveyed a clear, cohesive message, reflecting Glasscock's brand and culture.

Our team based the site's creative messaging framework on the Clustaar™ and persona analyses that identified key value propositions to share.

Brand voice across all the site content is consistent and engaging, speaking directly, displaying confidence, and providing useful, relevant information.



Visit [glasscock.rice.edu](http://glasscock.rice.edu)

# Results

We delivered on each of the objectives and provided a clear digital marketing strategy.

## Market Size and Segmentation

Glasscock's market is large and represents:

- Over 500,000 queries/month
- Over 4,000 keywords
- Over 28,000 unique URLs

The market is segmented into six core categories:

- |                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Certifications       | 4. Non-profit |
| 2. Personal Development | 5. ESL        |
| 3. PreK-12              | 6. Degrees    |

## Online Positioning in Competitive Landscape

Glasscock's positioning was strong overall, with a total of 438 relevant keywords ranking on the top two pages of Google. However, positioning varied greatly for each segment. While Glasscock led the way for certifications, personal development and ESL, significant progress was needed for degrees, pre-K to 12 and nonprofit to rank on search engines above other schools.

## Content Market Share and Development Needs

For each segment, HexaGroup showed Glasscock's position versus competitors in terms of the number of pages of content and the content's coverage percentage. We identified the pre-K to 12 segment as needing requiring the most significant content development effort to increase its online positioning. In contrast, the degrees segment required the least content development to achieve top positions.

## Overall Digital Marketing Strategy

Armed with the strongest keyword and competitive analysis on the market, HexaGroup was able to guide the overall digital marketing strategy including:

- Website structure based on search trends: This involved developing a sitemap for the new website that aligned with target markets' interests and search patterns.
- Content development strategy to reach top positioning in each of the market segments: A detailed list of new content was developed, along with identifying existing content to migrate to the new site.
- Classes offering to fulfill the target markets' interests.



*"Selecting relevant courses used to be very time consuming, but the new Glasscock website and course catalog make it easy for me to find and register for classes that I need."*

*"I no longer have to scroll through pages and pages of courses to register. The search and filter options on the new website show me exactly what I am looking for and even let me know who the instructor will be, the scheduled time, and when the courses start."*

## Student Feedback

## Performance

### Increased Registrations

The site's responsive design and improved course catalog, with helpful filters and search function, make the site more user-friendly, evidenced by student feedback. Clear calls-to-action throughout the site drive desired activity, resulting in increased registrations.

### SEO Optimization

Higher search engine rankings are consistently occurring due to:

- Content optimization for keywords identified in the Clustaar™ market analysis
- Ongoing technical optimization of the site, following the newest techniques and best practices

### Increased ROI

By providing personalized content and implementing HubSpot, Glasscock has been able to increase lead generation and effectively nurture prospects.

# Proven Methodology. Amplified Results.

**Working with HexaGroup, our clients amplify their marketing efforts with expertise impossible to find in a single employee or in-house team.**

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 your unique objectives. Armed with in-depth knowledge of the health care sector, our team hits the ground running to achieve your KPIs.

## Brand Asset Management

- Discovery
- Future Identity & Position
- Portfolio Strategy
- Audience Needs
- Internal Activation

## Creative Development

- Print
- Motion Graphics
- 3D Animation
- Video
- Mobile Apps
- Tradeshow Support
- Presentations

## Marketing Technology

- Marketing Automation
- CRM
- Lead Sourcing
- Analytics
- Enterprise Content Management
- Chatbots



## Research and Planning

- Clustaar™ Digital Market Analysis
- Traditional Market Research/Focus Groups
- Strategic Planning
- Marketing Communications/Media Planning

## Growth-Driven Website

- Information Architecture
- Visual Design/UI/UX
- Technical Implementation
- Content Development
- Hosting Maintenance

## Marketing Performance

- Inbound/Content Marketing
- Account-Based Marketing
- Social Media
- SEO
- Integrated Advertising
- Events/Tradeshow Support
- Public Relations
- Demand Generation

