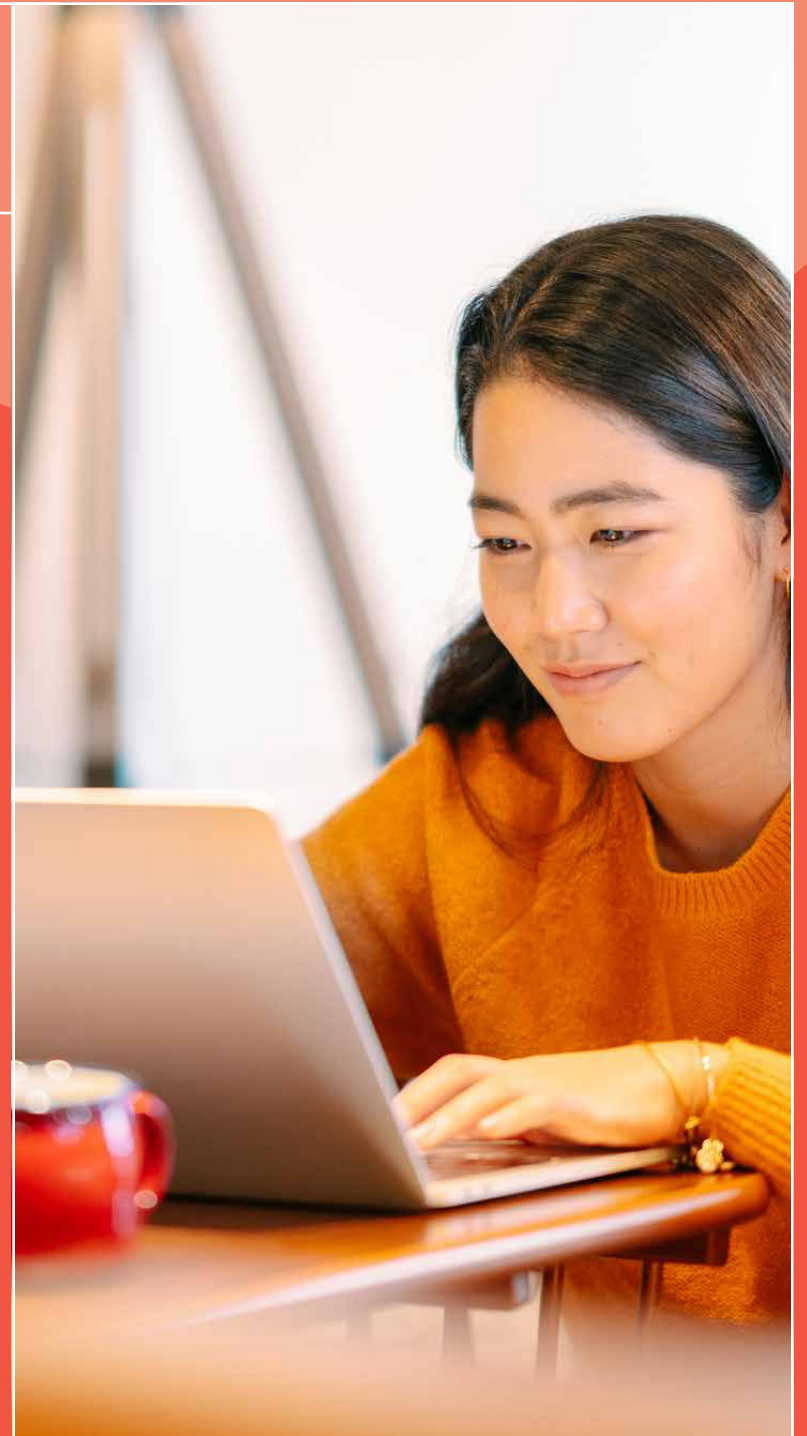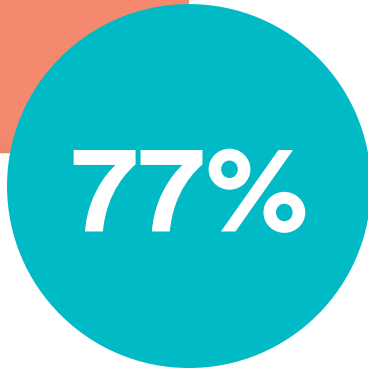# 10 Essential Elements of a Restaurant Website

Learn which design features turn visitors into paying customers.

77%

of diners visit a restaurant website before deciding to dine.[1]

These days, restaurants have two storefronts: their physical space and their digital space.

Guests look online to discover where to dine, and the website is the first place they visit. With more than 1 million restaurants across the nation, standing out among the competition online is the key to success. The best restaurant websites are designed to reflect a restaurant's brand and provide a stellar user experience that converts visitors into paying customers.

But what makes a website great?

**These 10 elements are essential to a powerful restaurant website.**

[1] Restaurant Dive, "77% of diners check restaurant websites before visiting, survey finds." August 2019

1

The website tells a story and effectively conveys the restaurant's brand


Every restaurant has a unique story to tell, and its website is the most powerful place to tell it. Given that 77% of diners visit a restaurant's website before deciding to dine, a compelling website that reflects the brand and dining experience is integral to success.

A prominent logo, evocative photos of the food and interior and captivating descriptions about the restaurant, its cuisine and the people who work there go a long way in effectively conveying that story.
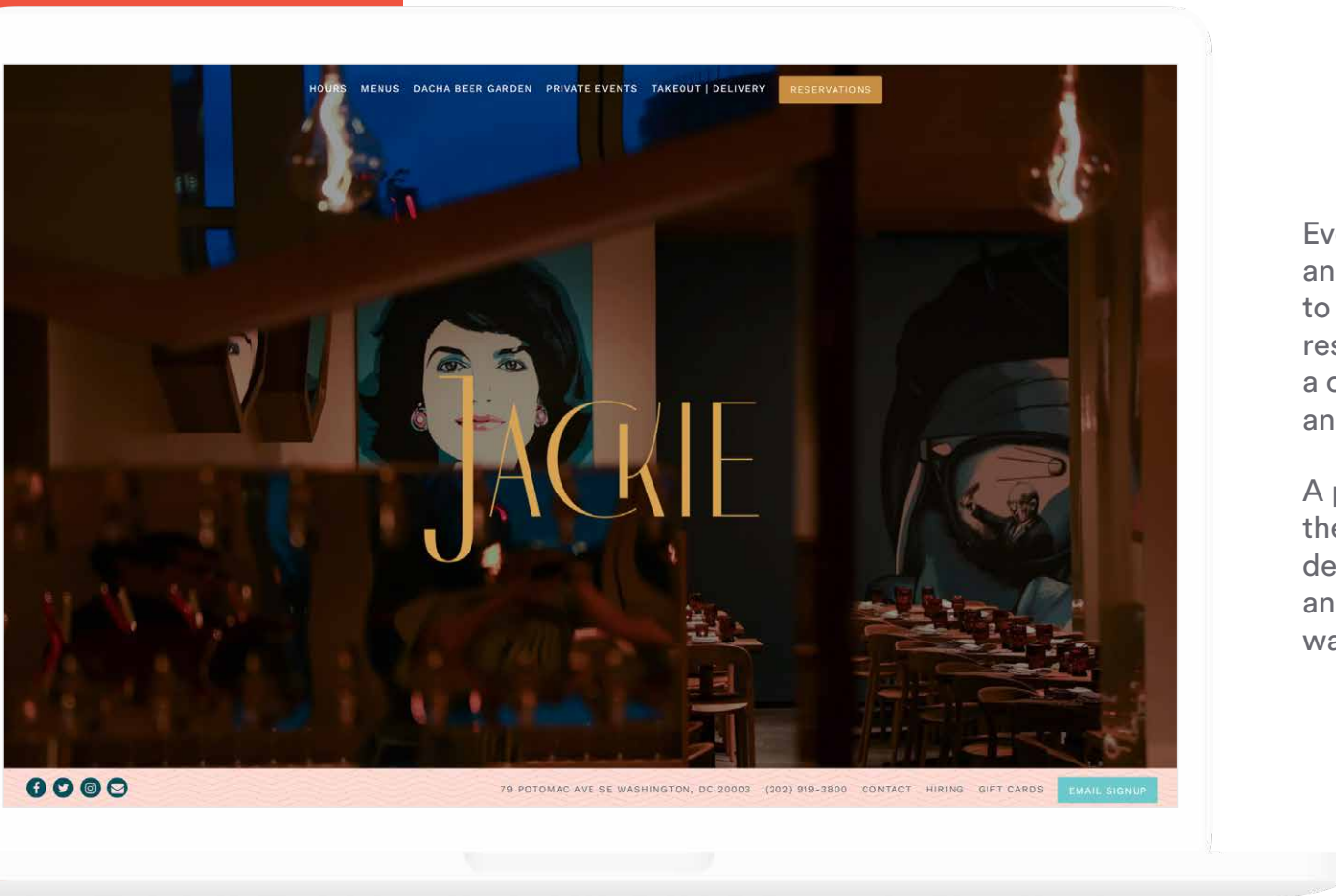
2

The website is simple for restaurant staff to navigate, manage and update
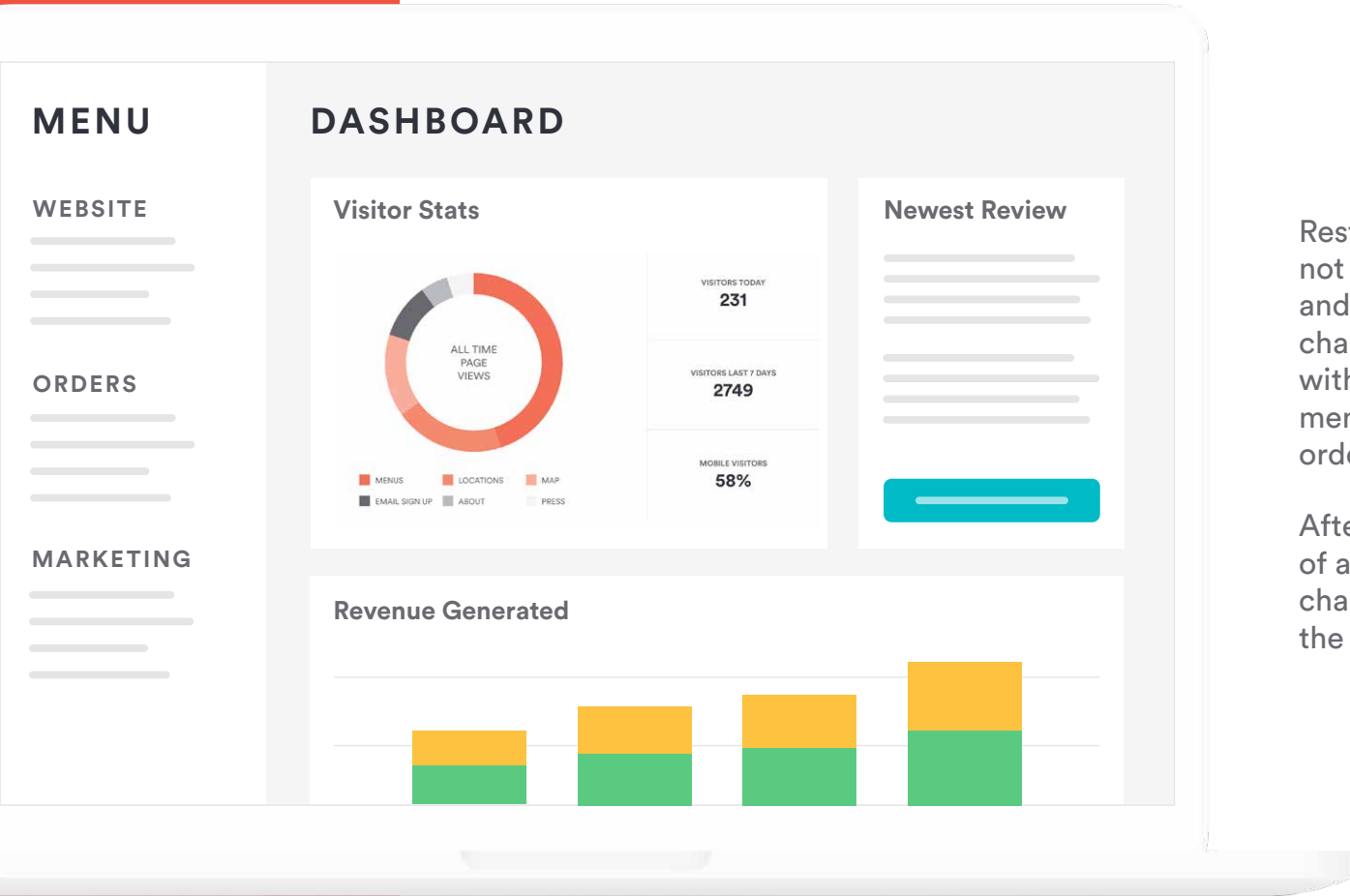

Restaurant operators are busy and should not be held captive by the long wait times and high fees that design agencies quote for changes. Restaurants can take back control with an all-in-one system that makes editing menus, creating events and managing online orders simple and intuitive.

After all, the website is a direct reflection of a restaurant's storefront. Managing changes should be as easy as opening the door for guests.

3

Beautiful, relevant photography reflects the food & dining experience
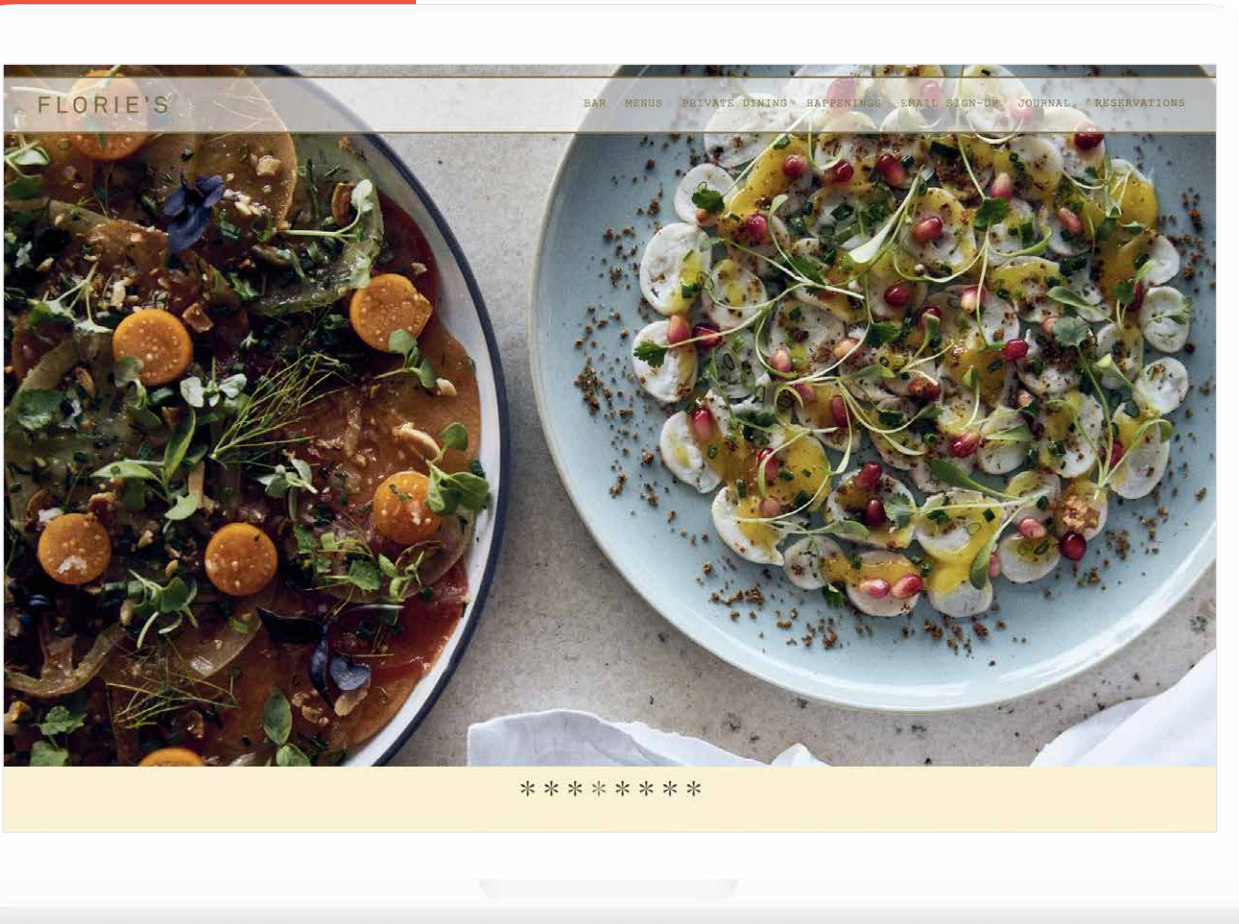
Photographs of the restaurant's cuisine and atmosphere convert online visitors into customers. It's a simple way of visually selling.

In fact, 45% of diners specifically look for food photography when visiting a website. Professional photography might seem like a luxury, but it's not an expense—it's an investment.

4

## The website is mobile-friendly and responsive to all devices
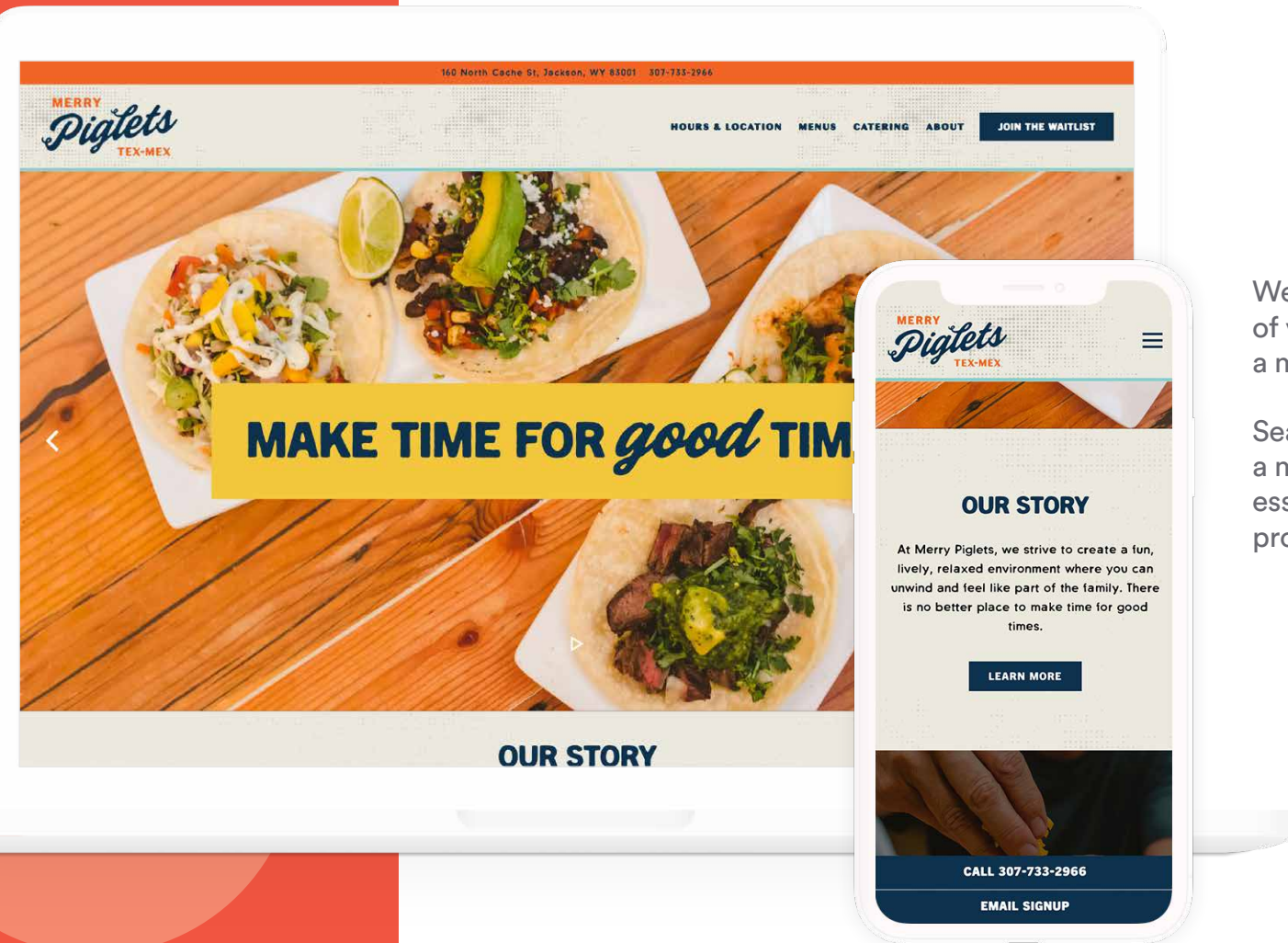
We live in a mobile-first world. In fact, 70% of visitors to restaurant websites come from a mobile device.

Search engines know this, which makes a mobile-friendly and responsive website essential for ranking high in search results and providing a best-in-class user experience.

5

The website is a digital storefront that sells gift cards, merchandise, tickets and more
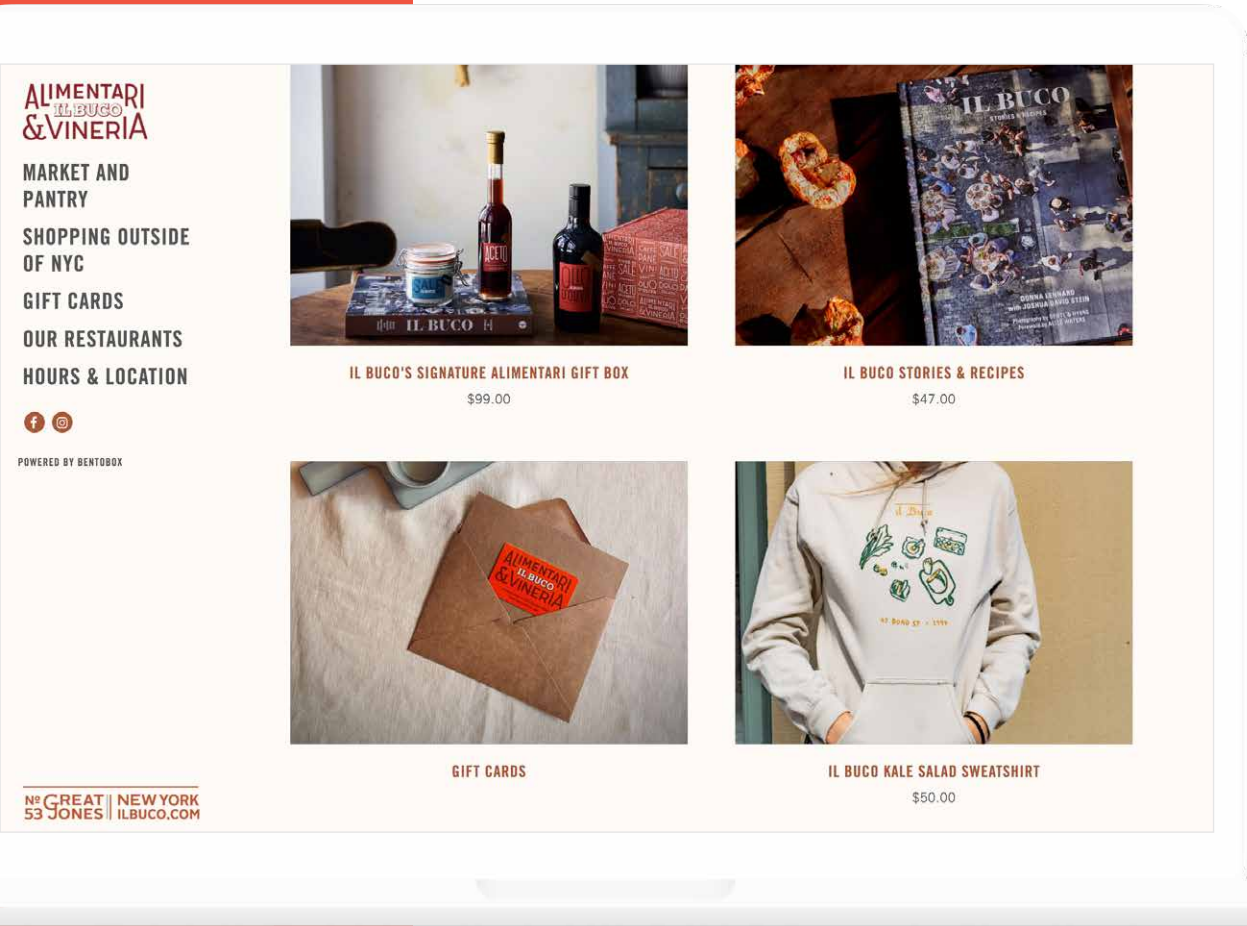

Today's restaurant websites are key revenue generators—and not just with online ordering. Whether for gift cards, merchandise like t-shirts and cookbooks, tickets for special events or even online catering, a restaurant website should have wide-ranging e-commerce capabilities.

Rather than relying on numerous third-party vendors and copious integrations, restaurants should partner with a website provider that offers all of these features and more in one easy-to-use system.

6

Crucial information like contact info, hours and location are front and center
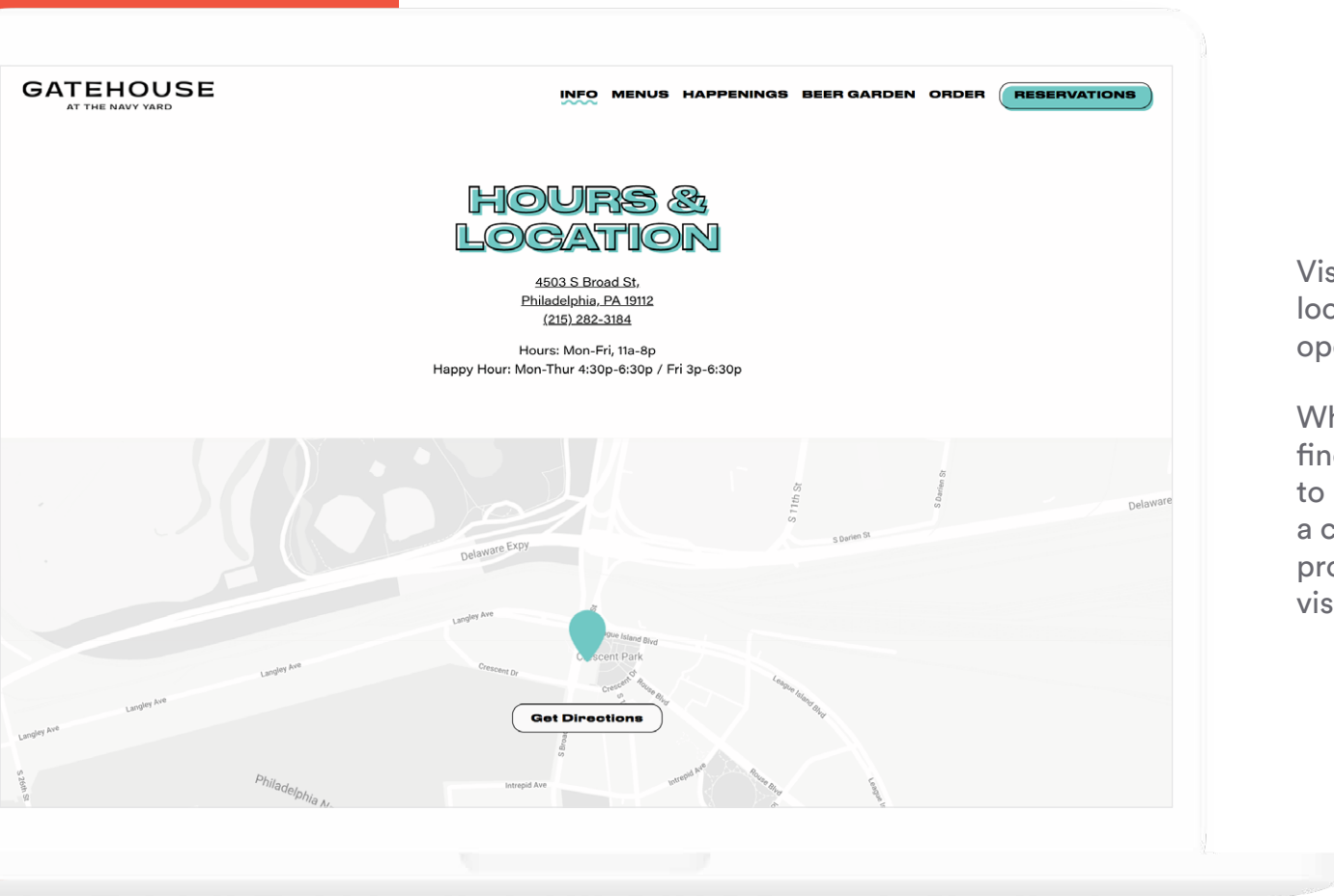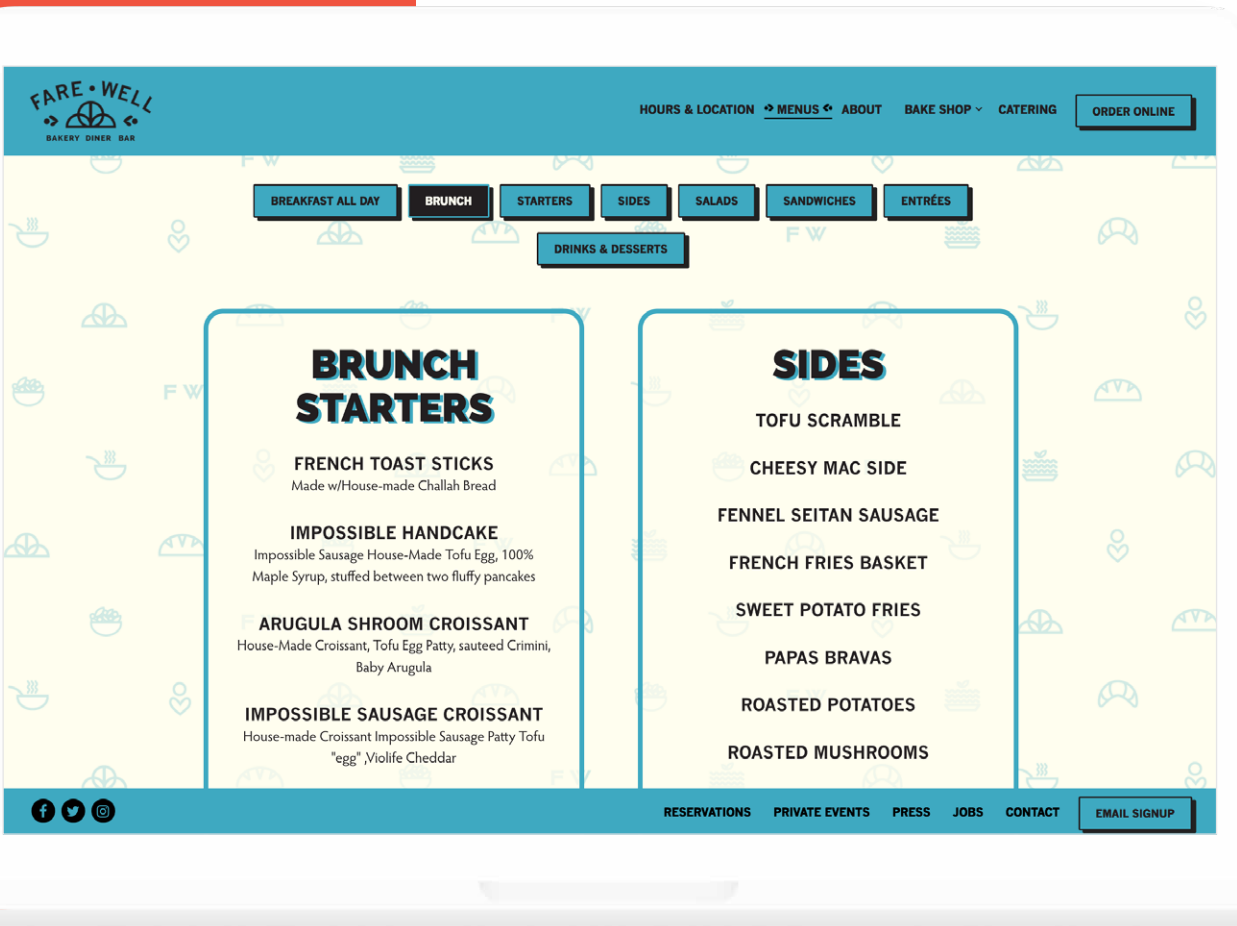

Visitors to a restaurant's website are looking for crucial information like hours of operation, store address and contact info.

When visitors have to sift through pages to find this information, they are more likely to leave for another website (potentially a competitor's). Making that information prominent is critical for converting online visitors into paying customers.

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7

Menus are text-based (not PDFs or images) and easy to view on all devices

In addition to hours and contact information, online visitors are looking for food and drink menus. Restaurants must ensure that their offerings are up-to-date. With text-based menus, it's simple for restaurant operators to quickly make edits or remove 86'd items.

Furthermore, PDF and image-based menus are unreadable to search engines and assistive technology, impacting search results and leaving the restaurant vulnerable to ADA-related issues.

8

## Buttons to order online or book reservations are always visible

When a visitor lands on a restaurant's website, it should be simple for them to book a table or order pickup or delivery. The best restaurant websites promote reservations and online ordering in their top navigation and then keep the navigation bar fixed on-screen.

On mobile, quick action buttons are always visible and often promote a user to start an order or call the restaurant. These buttons increase conversions, connect guests with restaurants faster and drive more revenue.
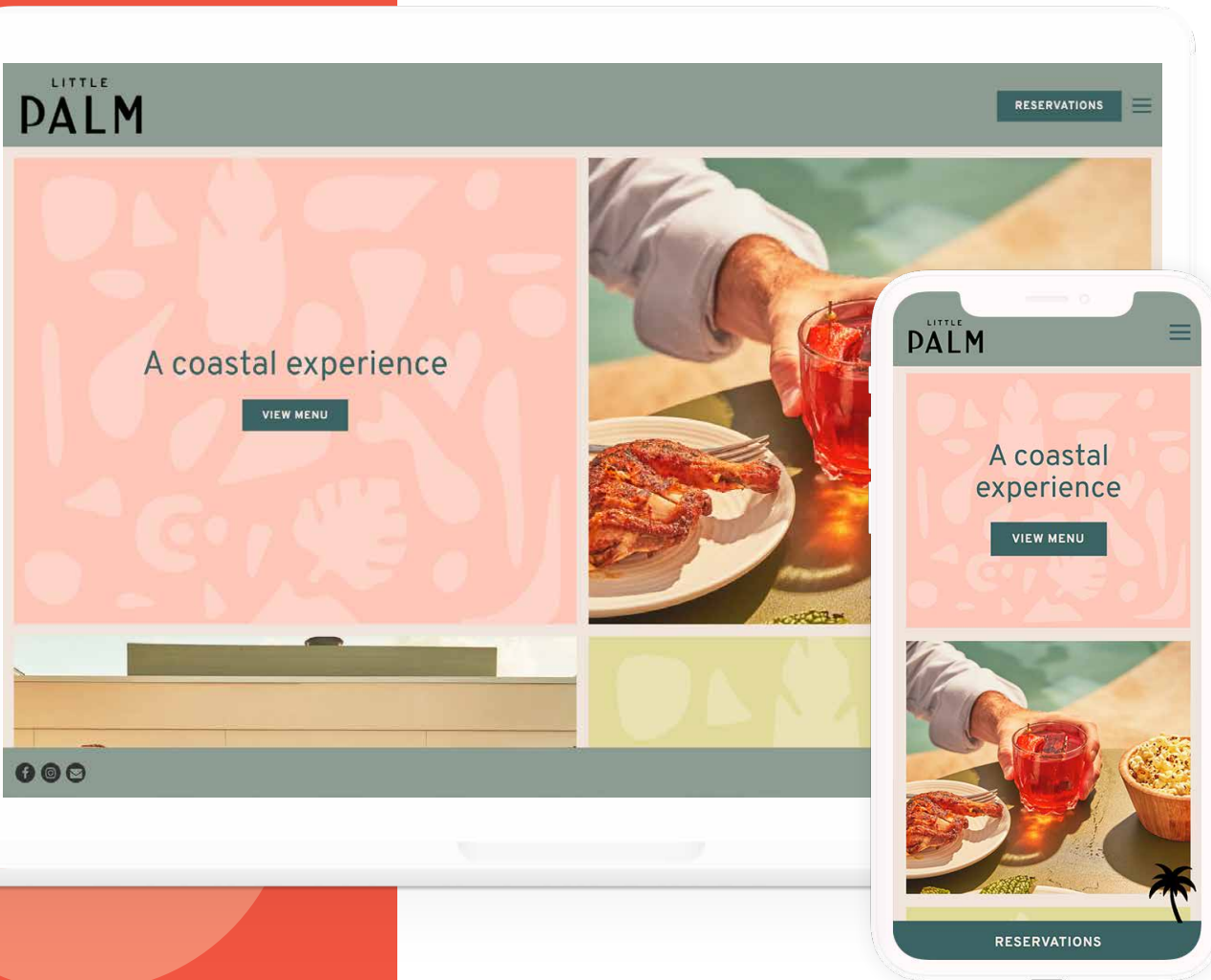
9

The website features contact forms for catering and private event inquiries
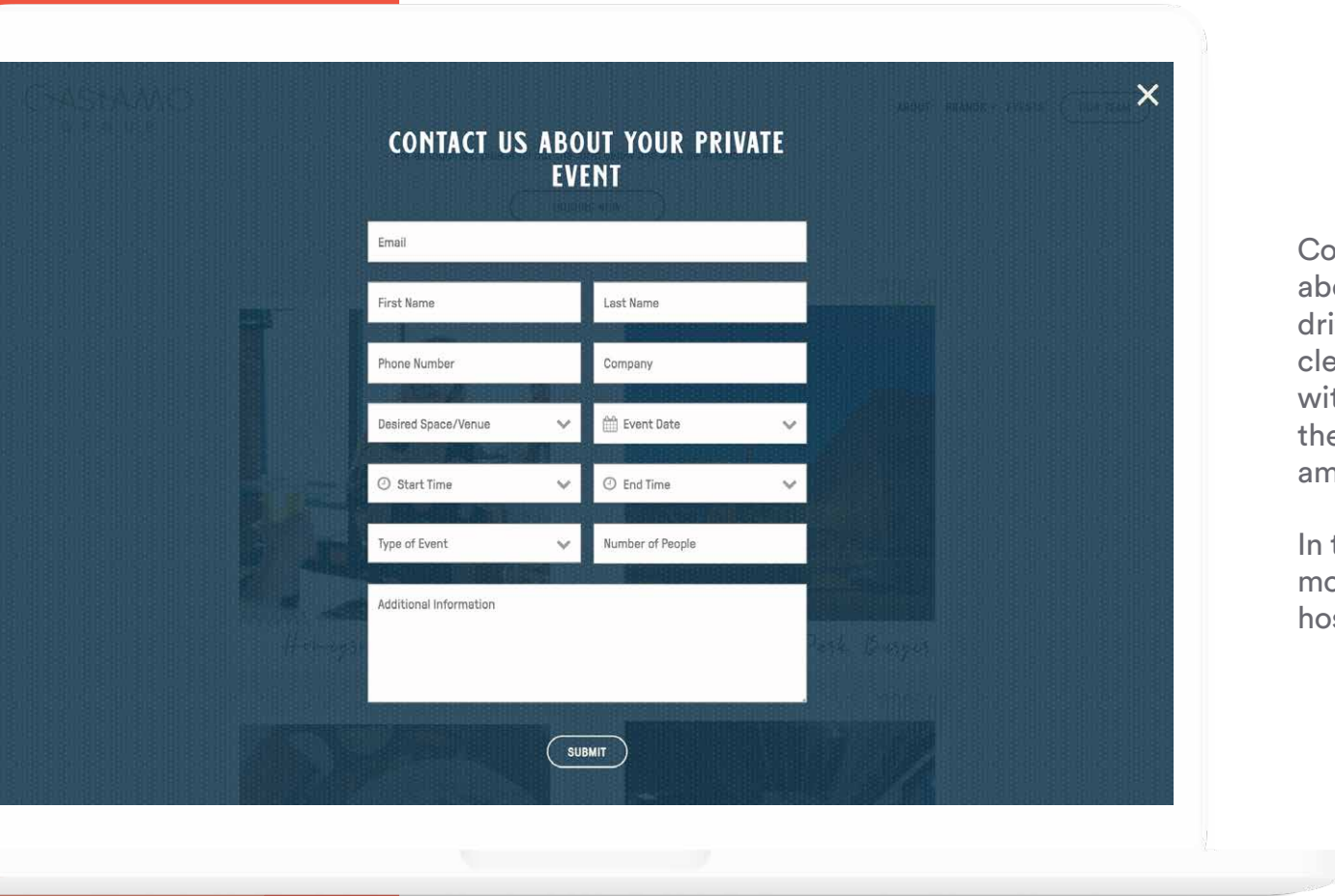

Contact forms allow visitors to inquire about catered or private events and help drive additional revenue streams. Having a clear contact section helps guests connect with the restaurant faster and streamlines the communication process, reducing the amount of back and forth.

In the fast-paced world of restaurants, time is money and this frees up staff to provide great hospitality to other guests.

10

The platform is ADA accessible
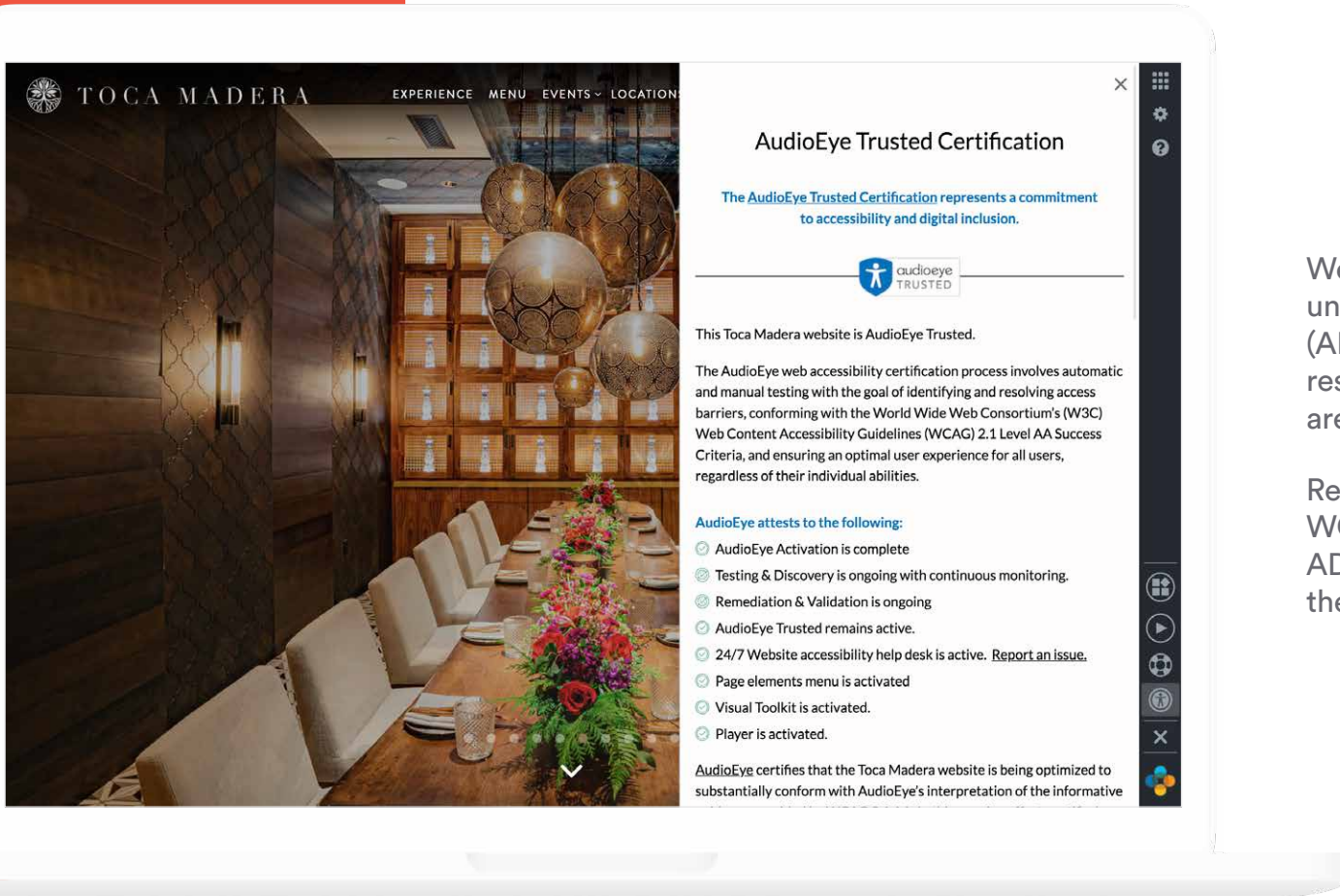
Websites are considered a public realm under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Therefore, restaurants are held responsible for ensuring that their websites are digitally accessible to anyone online.

Restaurants must align with the ADA and WCAG guidelines to avoid the potential for ADA-related lawsuits and to be on par with the latest online accessibility standards.

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BentoBox Empowers Restaurants to Succeed

BentoBox is a website, commerce and marketing platform for restaurants. We apply these essential elements to create websites that work for restaurants while they focus on running the day-to-day. We design websites for over 7,000 restaurants worldwide to drive high-margin revenue and connect with guests including José Andrés's ThinkFoodGroup and Danny Meyer's Union Square Hospitality Group.

Sign up for a free BentoBox demo today to see how BentoBox can help your restaurant's digital storefront drive more awareness and high-margin revenue online.

GET STARTED