

VISITGREENVILLESC 2020 HOTEL BOOKING CAMPAIGN

September-December 2020

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CAMPAIGN PARTS

- Road Trip Paid Social, Sept. 1-Dec. 31, 2020: EP
- TV Spot Paid YouTube Promotion, Sept. 1-Dec. 31, 2020: EP
- Thanksgiving Hotel Paid Social, Nov. 14-25, 2020: VGSC
- Christmas Hotel Paid Social, TBD: VGSC

CAMPAIGN SNAPSHOT

Totals from all campaign elements combined Updated: 12/2/20

CONCEPT SUMMARY

Social media campaigns and series — particularly those that aren't backed by millions of dollars for production, marketing, and advertising — thrive by maintaining simplicity in concept. Today's audience needs to be able to understand what's happening and what's in it for them quickly, so concepts need to account for this. Simplicity in the form of tapping into the alphabet is where the concept for this series came from: We'd use each letter of the alphabet to highlight one hidden reason to plan a future trip to Greenville.

Like many concepts, this one evolved throughout ideation and execution. It started as a single series highlighting our "greatest hits" — a definitive A-to-Z guide to visiting Greenville — but it became apparent quickly that we had more than enough stories to tell and items to highlight to get more granular in our approach to subject matter, which is how we landed on two separate tours — one for food, one for attractions — that would focus on businesses, places, and things to see and do that are not usually featured in the many travel magazine articles about Greenville as a destination.

TIMELINE OF PROJECT

STAGE 1 - MID-APRIL TO END OF APRIL

- Created concept of a content series utilizing the alphabet as a tour guide.
- Concept pitched to marketing team; action items for execution created.
- Shared Google Sheets document created and made available to marketing team to contribute ideas for each letter under each topic.
- List narrowed down to a few options per letter.
- Searched for and saved as many user-generated photos that fit lists as possible.

STAGE 2 - EARLY MAY TO LATE MAY

- May 5 First A-to-Z food tour series post published.
- May 8 First A-to-Z attraction tour series post published.
- Week of May 25 Began to run four posts per week, two from each topic, as a result of PR pitch to Greenville Journal, which wanted to run both series as a "Summer Staycation" piece; Series sped up to ensure summer completion.
- May 27 Began writing longer-form, detailed feature stories for captions.
- End of May Began concepting for web pages to house and archive full series.

STAGE 3 - JUNE TO EARLY JULY

- **June 9** Began training to create and edit pages within website content management system.
- Mid-June through early July Designed web pages; Designed and created graphic headers for each series web page; Designed and created teaser graphics for full schedule of upcoming letters; Rewrote captions for first three posts of each series to match longer-form theme of new approach.
- **June 30** Published A-to-Z food tour page to website and added to navigation.
- **July 2** Greenville Journal publishes article highlighting both tours as part of its "Road to Summer in the Upstate" feature.
- **July 12** Published A-to-Z attractions tour page to website and added to navigation.

STAGE 4 - MID-JULY TO MID-AUGUST

- August 6 All A-to-Z feature story captions are completed and final posts are scheduled.
- August 12 Final food tour post is published.
- August 13 Final attraction tour post is published.



A-TO-Z SERIES REPORT RESULTS, METRICS AND ANALYSIS

May-August 2020

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

MAJOR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - SOCIAL MEDIA

The A-to-Z series began running on May 6 and ran for 15 weeks, concluding August 13.

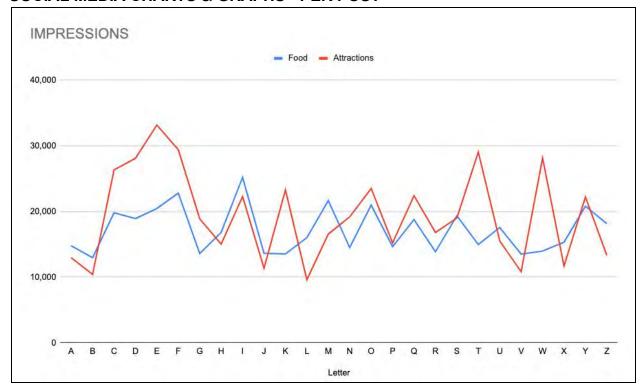
Tour	Posts	Impressions	Reach	Total Eng.	Comments	Eng. Rate
Food	26	446,085	390,120	13,002	300	2.91%
Attractions	26	522,557	469,950	20,847	398	4.00%
Combined	52	968,642	860,070	33,849	698	3.5%

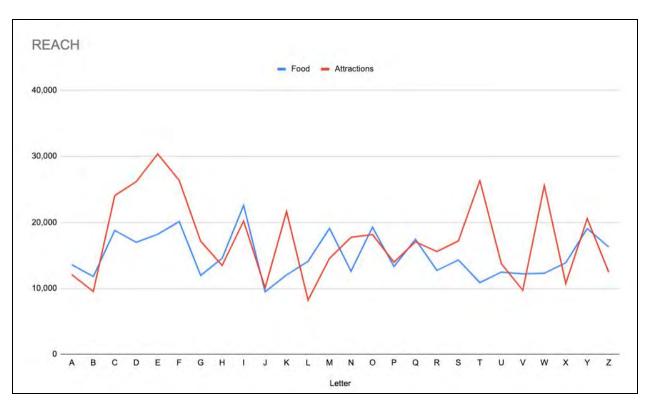
MAJOR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - WEB PAGES

The A-to-Z series produced two web pages to drive traffic to the site. Numbers reflect publish date through August 27.

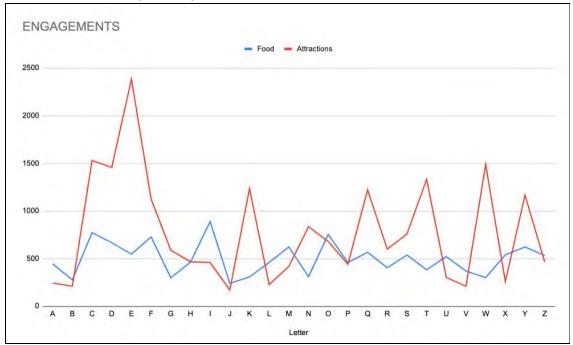
Tour	Publish Date	Views	Avg. Time on Page	Page Ranking Since Publish	Referrals to Other Related Pages
Food	6/30	1,068	4:00	#33	77
Attractions	7/12	983	4:10	#41	61
Combined		2,051			138

SOCIAL MEDIA CHARTS & GRAPHS - PER POST





CHARTS & GRAPHS (CONT.)



ANALYSIS & KEY LEARNINGS

Below are the top conclusions we can draw and learnings we can take into the future from A-to-Z series results:

 Attractions Get People Talking: Because paid social media would not be available for this series, we could hypothesize that distribution metrics (impressions and reach) would be similar to one another, so engagements would be our greatest measure of comparison. Attractions performed 62% better than food in this category, which is consistent with our everyday social media results.

Below are per-post averages for 2019 separated into attractions-related and food-related posts for comparison. The A-to-Z series mimicked our previous year's overall results with little discernible difference in distribution, but a very clear separation in engagements:

Metric	2019 Attractions (Avg. Per-Post)	2019 Food (Avg. Per-Post)		
Impressions	24,081	21,318		
Reach	18,315	15,944		
Engagements	1,170	637		
Eng. Rate	4.9%	3%		

Key Learnings: To keep our audience engaged, continue the existing emphasis on posting attractions-related content at around 3:1 compared to other content categories. ... For other series ideas, focusing mostly or completely on attractions content and subject matter will perform at or above expectations.

• Longer Captions Experiment Largely Successful: An informal study early in 2020 showed longer Instagram captions were bringing in better results for influencers. The A-to-Z series was a chance to try this out. Instagram's character limit is 2,200 per caption and we averaged 1,953 characters per post during the series. The long-caption series posts were consistent with short-caption non-series posts over the same time period in terms of distribution. There was a slight edge in engagements for shorter captions, but not enough to definitively say they work better. Our test of longer captions didn't create significant metrics for us, but audience reactions (P. 15-20) show they were read and appreciated.

Key Learnings: Brevity is still key on Facebook and required by Twitter, but we can explore providing deeper stories with context in our Instagram captions without fear of turning our audience off. ... Series that require context should remain exclusive to Instagram. ... This tactic could use more experimentation.

• Photos Still More Engaging Than Video: Video continues to be the medium of choice for many brands, but we often see our audience respond less to video vs. high-quality photo content. The sample size during the A-to-Z series is extremely small — in fact, we only published three total videos of the 52 posts — but performance of video on social for VGSC historically makes it less surprising to see all three as some of the lowest performing posts of the series. The two videos posted in the attractions series were the lowest performing of that tour; the one video posted during the food tour was in the bottom four — of note, the food video was a Whale Tale production and performed significantly better than the other two in attractions, which were shorter, lower-quality cell phone videos.

Key Learnings: Data continually show that our audience prefers high-quality image content. We've seen this materialize in everything from short-form cell phone clips to full production, high-quality video — although higher-quality video does perform better. More research is needed to determine where our sweet spot lies with video. Taking time to properly test and evaluate video content with our audience — both existing and intended — is a worthy use of hours in the future.

- A-to-Z Web Pages Move the Needle: The concept of the A-to-Z series lent itself
 to creating pages and archiving the series on our website. This would allow
 people to see the full series in one place which could not happen on social
 without sorting through posts published between A-to-Z series posts. The pages
 have several benefits in that they:
 - provide VisitGreenvilleSC with two extra pieces of evergreen content that can keep site visitors engaged;

- grow the amount of rich, searchable content available on the website, which aids our search efforts;
- can continually be promoted beyond the life of the series on social media, greatly extending the relevancy window of our overall content production efforts around the series and increasing the return-on-investment.

The pages haven't been live for long, but they have shown an impact in terms of time on site and referrals to other pages on the site — a key to keeping people interested, engaged, and clicking on our site.

Each caption for each Instagram post was copied and pasted onto each page. Doing this not only makes all the text of our captions crawlable by search engines, but it also allowed us to hyperlink to member listings and other businesses, attractions, restaurants and more within the page. The pages have accounted for 138 referrals to other areas of our website, namely pages that benefit our members. For example, the kayaking post on the attractions tour earned 24 referrals to Lake Jocassee Tours and Jocassee Outdoor Center.

Key Learnings: When social series can also become rich web content, efforts should be made to create and maintain the page(s). Executing this idea increased our ROI and the impact of the series in the short-term, and we should expect an increase in both as we continue to promote the pages in the future. ... Another note on ROI: With a small staff size, cross-promoting and cross-creating content can be an efficient, effective use of our time. Creating and updating the pages certainly falls into the category of "working hard," but this is still a good example of also working smart, especially when the work is done and we see the long tail metrics of the pages over time get recorded.

• Audience Response Tells The Story: Our metrics for the series were consistent with our overall performance on Instagram, so we can't claim that the series performed above expectations if we look solely at the data. Just as important to the success of any social media campaign is audience response. As each series began to catch momentum in June, we saw a significant spike in new followers on Instagram. We cannot say for sure that this is due to the series, but the rise in followers in June and July compared to April and May is significant enough that we can conclude that the series may have played a role in that increase.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.*	Apr.	May**	June***	July***
New IG Follows	1,512	1,126	1,082	770	776	1,274	1,466

^{* -} Pandemic/quarantine begins mid-March; Paid social media tactics stop

** - A-to-Z series begins May 6

*** - A-to-Z series established, runs throughout full month

Even more of an indicator of our success in terms of audience response came in the form of comments left on posts, the highlights of which are available in this report on Pages 15-20. The series was aimed at in-state and nearby travelers and meant to inspire future visits, but the unexpected result of the two-topic series was the service it provided locals. We heard from several residents who learned something new from our series — even one who has lived in Greenville for decades.

Key Learnings: An engaging social media series that occurs weekly potentially creates enough increased interest to spur audience growth. ... To see the whole picture of the impact of a campaign or series, we should look beyond metrics and account for actual audience response and feedback.

MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

From concept to execution, a priority on highlighting membership where relevant was maintained. Below are metrics that represent member businesses and organizations either highlighted or mentioned in A-to-Z series posts:

Social Media Category	Result
Total Members Highlighted or Mentioned	29
In Food Tour	13
In Attraction Tour	16
Member Post Impressions	428,284
Member Post Reach	382,853
Member Post Engagements	13,559
Member Post Comments	301
Member Post Engagement Rate	3.2%

MEMBERSHIP WEBSITE IMPACT

Because of the creation of web pages to archive the two series and publishing all captions within the pages themselves, we were able to hyperlink within captions to other areas of our website. Below are website click referral metrics pertaining to members from A-to-Z series highlights and mentions:

Tour	Live Since	Clicks on Tour Web Page to Other Pages	Popular Listing Page Clicks By Letter
Food	June 30	77	 C - Mast General Store J - The Anchorage K - Poppington's M - Grill Marks and LTO N - Topgolf U - Trappe Door and Coffee Underground
Attractions	July 12	61	 A - Craft Axe Throwing B - BMW Performance Center D - Otter Creek and Discovery Island Waterparks G - Greenville Glides Tours K - Jocassee Lake Tours and Jocassee Outdoor Center R - Roper Mountain Science Center Z - The Gorge Zipline

A-TO-Z: BY THE NUMBERS

The following may not be performance metrics, but they help tell the story — and illustrate the scope — of the A-to-Z social media series:

52 total posts published

15 weeks of content

104 hours just to write all captions

101,603 characters used in captions

1,953 average characters per caption

16,808 words written in captions

137 possible photos searched for, sorted and organized for use

6 marketers to make it all come together

2 public relations professionals, too

18 businesses featured as a result of PR speed pitching sessions

3 hours of content management system training

2 web pages created from scratch

2 custom web graphic headers created from scratch in-house

60 individual updates published to A-to-Z web pages

215 friends tagged by our followers in post comments

Of **52** total posts, we highlighted:

- **9** global grub spots
- **12** chefs, bakers and makers
- **14** sugary sanctuaries
- **3** donut destinations
- **15** outdoors oases
- **6** relaxing respites
- **7** history hotspots
- 120+ species of bird
- **3** corporate chickens
- 2 dog days
- 1 wine swine
- 1 Jedi Master
- **1** (Hello) Kitty (Drummer)

POST HIGHLIGHTS

Below is the top performing post overall, and the top performing food tour post:

BEST OVERALL POST - HIGHEST METRICS IN ALL KPI CATEGORIES

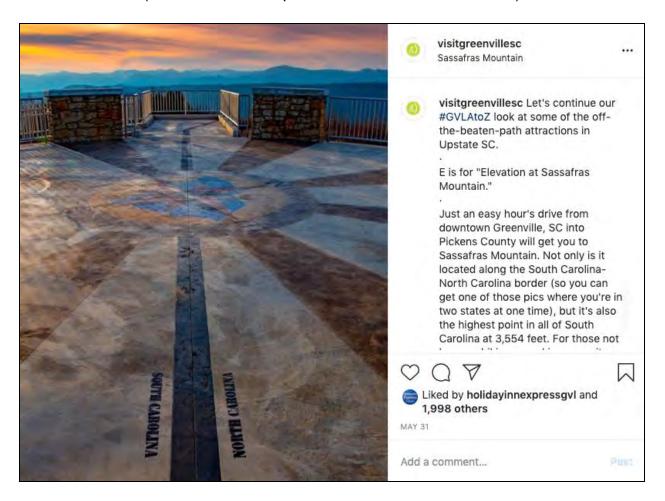
E is for "Elevation at Sassafras Mountain"

Most impressions: 33,150 **Most engagements**: 2,384

Highest engagement rate: 7.2%

Furthest reach: 30,397 Most likes: 1,999 Most comments: 62

Most saves: 323 (184 more than the post with the second-most saves)



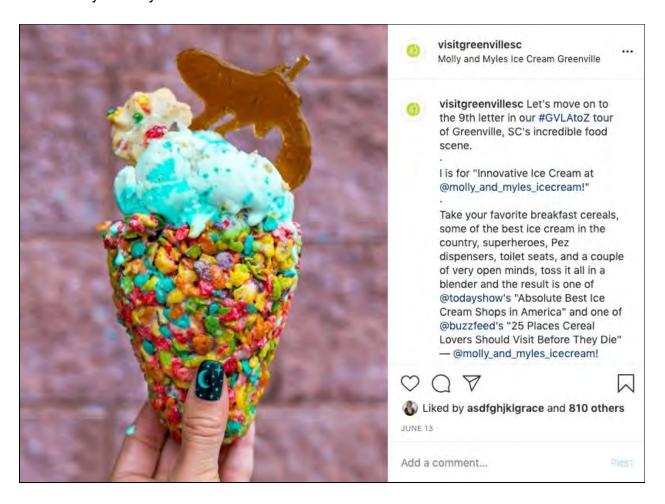
BEST FOOD POST

I is for "Innovative Ice Cream at Molly and Myles"

Most impressions: 25,173 Most engagements: 888 Furthest reach: 22,582

Most likes: 811 Most saves: 54

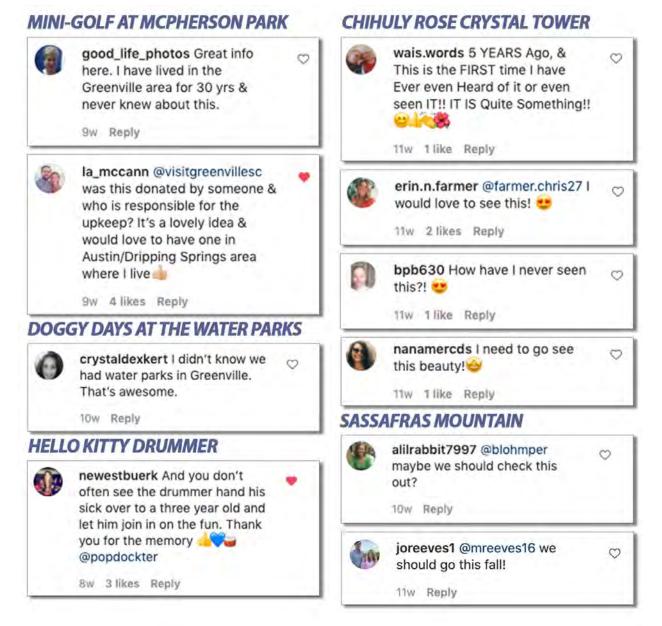
Note: Molly and Myles is a member business



AUDIENCE REACTIONS

From tagging friends and encouraging them to visit, to locals who have lived in Greenville for years learning something new, to members grateful for being included, comments were overwhelmingly positive and impactful. Below is a compilation of highlights from what people were saying (* - denotes member highlight or mention):

ATTRACTIONS





DRIFT FLOAT AND SPA*



BLUES BOULEVARD JAZZ



KAYAKING ON LAKE JOCASSEE*



LEMANS KARTING*



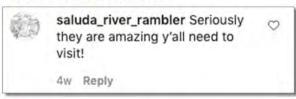
done it! It's super fun!

We should go 🛩



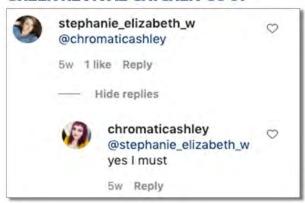


CITY SCAPE WINERY*



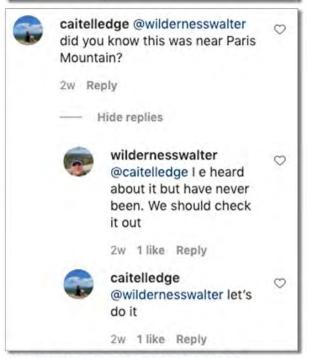


GREEK REVIVAL CHICKEN COOP



HERDKLOTZ PARK





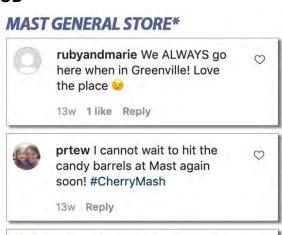
DOGGY'S DAY OUT PROGRAM

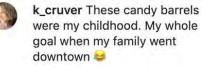


YEARLY LEAF-PEEPING

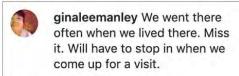


FOOD





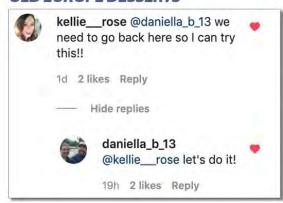




13w Reply



OLD EUROPE DESSERTS*



PITA HOUSE

0

0











MOLLY AND MYLES ICE CREAM*

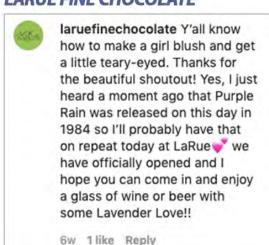


8w 1 like Reply





LARUE FINE CHOCOLATE





VAULT & VATOR*







GRILL MARK'S AND LTO BURGER BAR*



ARYANA RESTAURANT

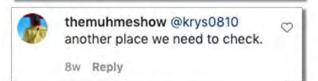
8w Reply



DISTINCT CIDER ROOM









HENDOUGH CHICKEN & DONUTS



ORAGAMI DONUTS



MYLES PIZZA PUB





ASIA PACIFIC MARKET



LINKS

A-to-Z Food Tour Page

https://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/food-drink/a-to-z-food/

A-to-Z Attractions Tour Page

https://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/things-to-do/a-to-z-attractions/

Greenville Journal Article:

https://greenvillejournal.com/travel/the-road-to-summer-in-upstate-south-carolina/