

## Website Branding and Collaboration Powers Castle Hotel & Spa Revenue Growth



*"If you are looking for a company that will make sure you show your best value, share a great story and assure your guests they'll have a memorable experience, you have to work with Liqui-Site. I wouldn't choose anyone else."*

Kimberly Yancey, House Manager, Castle Hotel and Spa

### Business Needs

#### **Create Lasting Memories**

Combining refinement and luxury with old-world elegance, the award-winning Castle Hotel and Spa (Castle) sits on ten wooded acres. "We strive to create lasting memories through the generations, and to treat our guests as royalty," related Kimberly Yancey, House Manager.

The on-site Equus restaurant boasts Four Diamonds from AAA, recognition in the Michelin Guide, a Forbes Travel Guide Four-Star Award, and an "Excellent" rating by the New York Times. Castle also houses the luxurious Sankara Spa.

## Generate More Revenue

Over the past year Castle worked with Liqui-Site, an eMazzanti Technologies company, to make several improvements to its website. "Our goals were to make the website more appealing and efficient for guests and to generate additional revenue," reported Yancy.

Castle had worked with Liqui-Site prior to its acquisition by eMazzanti. And, soon after Yancey joined the Castle management team, the eMazzanti/Liqui-Site company leadership impressed her.

"Once I met Carl and Susan, I knew I could collaborate with them," she reported. "Developer teams may not have full knowledge of what it takes to brand a property. When you have branding, design, and hospitality experience, like the team at Liqui-site, it makes it a lot easier to have those conversations."

## Solution

### Big Picture Understanding

Susan Chait, Brand Champion at Liqui-Site, took responsibility for the success of each project. Working closely with Yancey on design, she managed the Liqui-Site team and project collaboration to complete everything on schedule.

"Working with Susan is like girl power," related Yancey. "It sometimes provides me a sense of family because I know she wants what's best for our company. And I know that, at the end of the day, whatever ideas I have to share with her, she understands the brand and the big picture."



## Experience Gift Cards

At one point, Yancy and Chait worked on a project re-inventing the hotel's gift cards to offer guests a Castle Experience. The hotel had been utilizing a system that did not capture guest information where the guests just purchased a gift card for a dollar amount.

Together, they greatly enhanced the program by connecting each gift card to a Castle Experience, such as a spa treatment, tasting menu or a chef's table experience.

"People loved the idea of gifting the experience and it drove revenue," reported Yancy. "Guests were more willing to pay to gift the Chef Table Experience as opposed to a \$100 card. It makes a big difference when you can give someone an experience. It's been very successful!"

## Attention to Detail

Chait helped Yancy create the layout. And, when it came time to put the data into the system, she worked to collaborate with the Liqui-site web development team, making sure that the tedious tables for handling fees and tax were set properly on the website.

"I made sure to run my ideas past Susan and collaborate with her to see exactly what she thought because, as an operations manager, you have to see all sides," explained Yancy. "Prior to this, we had no guest information. So basically, we started from scratch."

Now if someone purchases a gift card, staff sees the purchaser, who it's gifted to and their address, so they could contact them to resolve an issue or a lost card if necessary.

## Coordination with Understanding

Other projects tackled included updating the room packages page, rotating menus regularly (especially after the Michelin recognition) and adding a Discovery page of destinations to explore during a visit.



Yancey also created a calendar planning out upcoming events. Liqui-site then suggested and built pop-ups on Castle's home page to promote them. "We even started selling tickets for on-property programming from the website—driven by the pop-ups," she related.

Yancy coordinated by phone with Chait on dates for events and the pop-ups. "Susan always checked back in and the timing of her response was perfect," she reported. "It felt good to have someone else on the other end who understood where we were trying to go."

### **Page by Page Rework**

Throughout the year, Liqui-Site proceeded with a page-by-page rework of the website with a lot of brainstorming, always working within Castle's goals and the brand.

"If there were multiple ideas and parties involved and not everybody was communicating, Susan definitely knew how to handle those situations by making sure that everyone came back together and shared all the information that they had collected," reported Yancy.

## **Benefits**

### **Sales and Repeat Business Up**

Castle's gift card sales increased by 45% because of the enhanced gift card purchase and redemption process, including both online and offline changes. Repeat business also increased by 25% from the prior year. "We became very busy at times!" confirmed Yancey. "Even our international business is up."

Castle's improved website and stronger unique branding also allows guests to see the real value of the property. "Working with Liqui-Site allowed us to show that our true value is in our history and making historic moments in each family or individual who comes to our property," explained Yancey.



2015 | 2013 | 2012 Microsoft  
Partner of the Year



**Inc. 500** || **5000**  
2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010



**ShoreTel Sky**  
Partner of the Year

## Surge in Expectations and Engagement

Overall, guest expectations soared along with customer satisfaction. "Seeing continued strong interest through the pandemic, I understand that our property is very important to people in Tarrytown, Westchester or even New York," reported Yancey.

"This means that when we're past COVID-19, the flood gates will open up," she observed. "Because if you still have that level of engagement with your guests, that means not only a job well done, but you're also thinking, where can I take this next? I would love to do more with Liqui-Site."

## A Great Story Shared

Recently, Yancey met six of the Liqui-site team members at an eMazzanti event held at Castle. "I can tell that it's a nurturing environment," she remarked. "When you have everybody working together and uplifting each other, you're only going to get the best from them."

"Carl is a great leader for his team," she continued. "He is very knowledgeable and holds everyone to the same standard. Their ability to execute... you can tell it starts at the top."

"If you are looking for a company that will make sure you are represented well, show your best value, share a great story and assure your guests they'll have a memorable experience, you have to work with Liqui-Site. I wouldn't choose anyone else."