

SELF-SERVICE SOLUTIONS

Town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina

INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SIGNAGE SOLUTION





Interactive Digital Signage Solution

Situated in the mountains of Western North Carolina, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock is home to just over 1,200 permanent residents. While their full-time population is slight, the town welcomes thousands of visitors and tourists from across the country every year.

From well-known regional attractions like Tweetsie Railroad, The Blowing Rock, The Blue Ridge Parkway, and Appalachian Ski Mountain, to lesser known gems like Mystery Hill and Moses Cone Memorial Park, the town offers something for visitors of every age. Blowing Rock is also home to more than 30 restaurants, numerous retailers, and a multitude of events throughout the year, some of which include Art in the Park, Symphony by the Lake, and more.

The Challenge

While the town welcomes thousands of visitors every year, the Chamber of Commerce Information Center operates under standard weekday 9–5 business hours. When looking for a way to engage visitors and locals alike, while also bridging the information gap that exists outside of weekday business hours, the Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority enlisted Meridian’s help to develop an interactive digital signage solution.



The main benefit we’ve found is the number of people we’re able to reach when our offices are closed. We’re able to connect our customers with the information they’re looking for when they’re looking for it.

Tracy Brown

Executive Director,
Blowing Rock Tourism
Development Authority

Town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina
A MERIDIAN CASE STUDY



The Solution

In order to successfully engage and inform both tourists and locals at all times of the day and night, the Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority worked with Meridian to deploy two interactive outdoor kiosks.

The dual-sided units include a 55" landscape-oriented screen that runs a constant loop of static digital signage. The opposite side displays a pair of portrait-oriented, side-by-side 46" interactive touch screens that feature InterAct, Meridian's highly configurable and easy-to-use interactive digital signage software solution.

Built on the secure Mzero software platform, the interactive solution adds value through a user-friendly interface that promotes engagement and includes wayfinding, virtual assistance, information-sharing, and advertising capabilities.

Blowing Rock's kiosks, specifically, provide users with interactive information on local restaurants, shopping, attractions, lodging, and events within the Town of Blowing Rock and the surrounding area. Within each category, users are able to select individual listings to obtain more information. Users can also utilize this feature to visit a business, organization, or event's website, obtain their phone number or address, identify hours of operation, or even use the mapping feature to navigate to their destination.

About the Client

Chartered in 1889, Blowing Rock was settled largely by those seeking refuge from the Civil War—others found their way to the mountain town during the summer months as a reprieve from the heat often experienced in the south. At the time of its charter, Blowing Rock's permanent population sat at just over 300 people. However, with the Watauga Hotel, Green Park Hotel, and Blowing Rock Hotel all established prior to the turn of the century, the town thrived as a tourist destination from the very beginning—and it continues to do so today.



Customization

While the town of Blowing Rock is progressive in their thinking and their initiatives, the small downtown community still maintains a simplistic historical appearance—and the Tourism Development Authority didn't want the interactive digital kiosks to disturb that appeal. Custom designed to match the aesthetic of the mountain community, the kiosks were built to incorporate seamlessly within an existing outdoor structure and the downtown landscape as a whole.

The Results

While the interactive digital signage units are still relatively new to the Downtown Blowing Rock area, tourists and locals didn't waste any time exploring all that they have to offer. In fact, in 2018 the units saw more than 10,000 interactions throughout the year. "The kiosks have definitely changed our visitor experience, because visitors can access the information they need instantly," says Loni Miller, Director of Membership Services & Art in the Park for the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce.



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