



APPALACHIACANA

PLAYBOOK



Table of Contents

The Appalachiacana Brand

- Page 3: About Appalachiacana
- Page 4: Manifesto
- Page 5: Brand Architecture
- Page 6: Brand Guidelines
- Page 9: Open Source-Branding Benefits

Capturing Appalachiacana Love

- Page 11: Resident Persona
- Page 12: Communications Plan
- Page 13: Brand Assets
- Page 15: Kick Off Event: Appalachiacana Weekend
- Page 16: Social: Guidelines and Ideas
- Page 18: Social: Inspiration

Inviting Others to Appalachiacana

- Page 20: Potential Tourist Persona
- Page 21: Community Invitation
- Page 22: Generating Buzz

About

When potential tourists think about Southwest Virginia, their minds are either filled with negative stereotypes, beautiful mountains, or a combination of the two. Appalachiacana is all about starting a new conversation about Southwest Virginia and showing potential tourists what experiences await them when they visit. Together, Abingdon, Bristol, and St. Paul represent what's unique about Appalachia with their culture, nature, history, arts, and music. They have the power to own the conversation about Appalachia by showing tourists who their residents are and what makes the area special to them.

Appalachiacana has two important audiences:

Residents

Southwest Virginia residents are proud of where they live. Uniting Bristol, Abingdon, and St. Paul under Appalachiacana gives them a brand to show off their love of the area.

Potential Tourists

Potential tourists are used to seeing one type of advertisement about this region: pictures of mountains. Appalachiacana gives an insider view into the area and peaks tourists' interests whether they're into the outdoors, history, arts and music, food and drink, or the region's culture.



Manifesto

Appalachiana.

You might be thinking that's not a word and you'd be right.

It's not a word. It's a feeling.

It's the feeling that your neighbors aren't strangers, they're family.

The feeling that the best parts of life are also the simplest.

The feeling of warmth that surrounds you when you know you're welcomed just the way you are.

Appalachiana.

It's not a word, not really. It's a place.

It's a place where music, rhythm, singing, and dancing is in the water.

It's a place with its own words, its own slang.

It's a place where people don't mind getting their hands a little dirty and stories are just this side of believable.

Appalachiana isn't a word.

It's a smell and it smells like homegrown food and fresh air and wide open spaces.

It isn't a word. It's a spirit. The spirit of generosity.

It isn't a word, it's a state of mind.

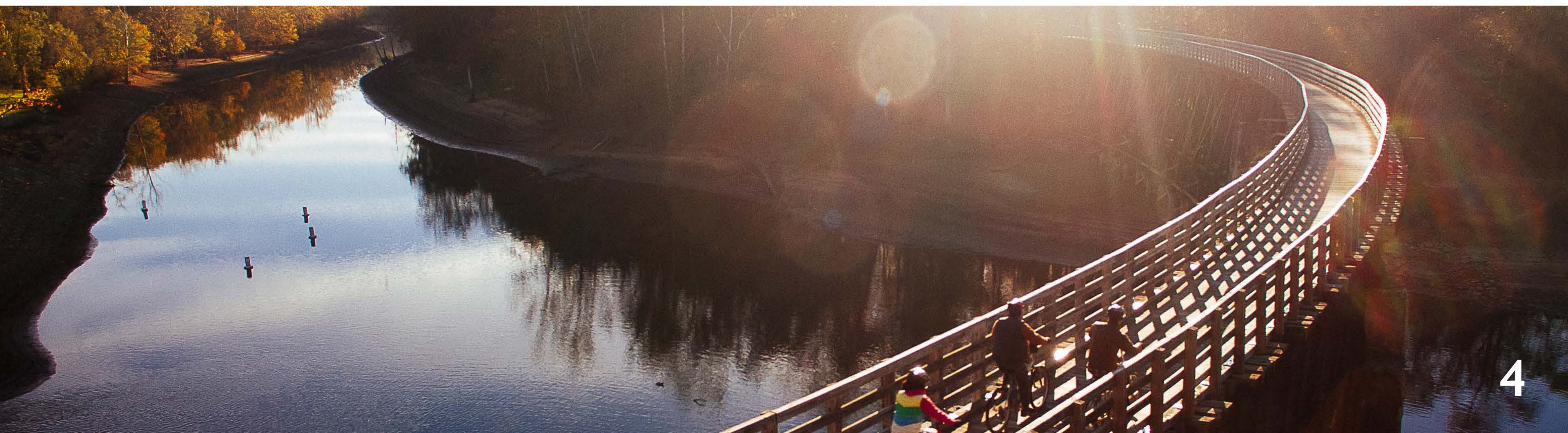
And it's a million other things too.

Because Appalachiana is uncontainable. It's indescribable. It's a lot more than should fit in a place so little.

And we could try a million times over to tell you what we aren't, but maybe it would be easier to just show you what we are.

So, consider this your open invitation.

Appalachiana. You'll get it when you're here.



Brand Architecture



Purpose: Showcase Virginia as a tourism destination

Idea: Unite all Virginia tourism campaigns under one message



A different side of Virginia

Purpose: Showcase what makes Southwest Virginia different from the rest of Virginia

Idea: Highlight Southwest Virginia as a “different side of Virginia” with the outdoors as a main reason to visit. This is focused primarily on tourist attractions.



Purpose: Address the unfair perceptions tourists often have about Southwest Virginia

Idea: Own the conversation about Southwest Virginia by providing an insider perspective on life and culture

Channels: Landing page within visitswva.org (Appalachiana.com can redirect) and Appalachiana social channels



Brand Guidelines

Logo



The Appalachiacana brand will be open-source to allow towns and individuals to interpret what Appalachiacana means to them. While we suggest using one overarching logo at launch and on official tourism branding and merchandise, the word Appalachiacana will be offered to community members for them to express themselves through their own logos. This will allow for the Appalachiacana brand to organically develop with the region instead of being dictated to the region.

APPALACHIANACANA

You'll get it when you're here.

Suggested fonts

H1: BEBAS NEUE REGULAR

H2: Roboto Slab

Body: Vollkorn Regular

Location Logo Explorations



ST. PAUL



BRISTOL



ABINGDON

Location Logo Explorations

APPA
LACHIA
CANA



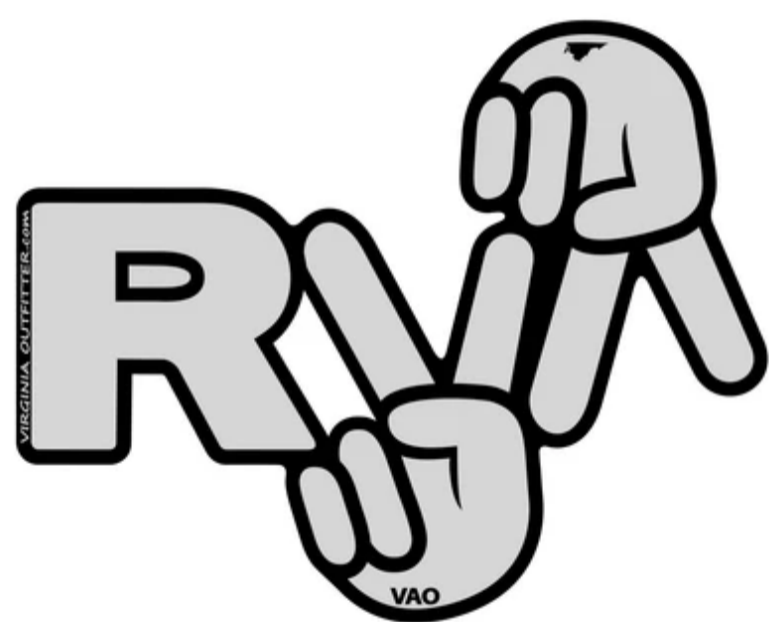
APPA
LACHIA
CANA



Open-Source Branding Benefits



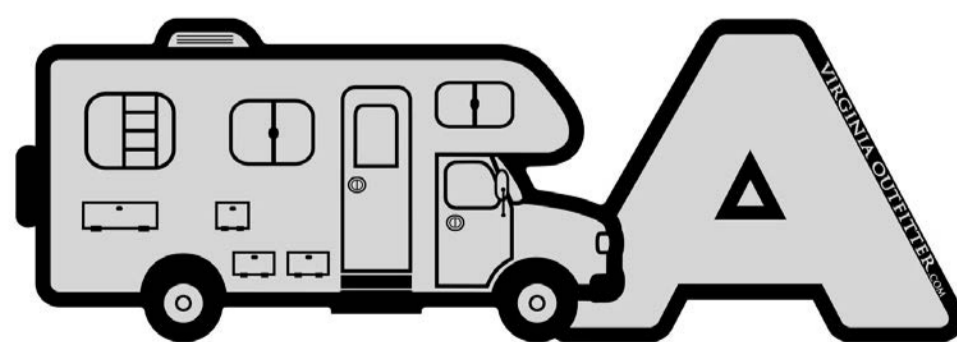
While the Appalachiacana brand provides structure for St. Paul, Abingdon, and Bristol, the towns can change elements of the branding to showcase their unique stories. An example of this is seen in Richmond's RVA brand.



Open-source branding encourages storytelling, creativity, and pride through community participation.



Open-source branding allows smaller groups to share their stories and carve out their own space within the larger community.



Open-source branding allows for the brand to evolve with the community.

A photograph of a person riding a bicycle on a wooden boardwalk. The person is wearing a dark puffer jacket and a red headscarf. The boardwalk has a lattice railing. In the background, there is a valley with trees showing autumn colors under a clear sky. A blue diagonal line separates the image from the text on the right.

Capturing Appalachiacana Love

Audience: Residents

Mark The Local

Age: 48 | Job: ATV Tour Guide | Home: St. Paul, Virginia | Status: Married



About

Born and raised in Southwest Virginia, Mark can't imagine living anywhere else. He loves the outdoors, his town, and the slower pace of life. Mark used to work in the coal mines, but since they've closed he is an ATV tour guide and helps maintain Spearhead Trails.

Goals

Provide for his family and adjust to his new line of work.
Help grow tourism to help support him and his town.

Authenticity

Wants a tourism campaign to represent him and his home town as they really are.

Pain Points

Despite his town being welcoming, not enough people are visiting and using the trails. He worries negative perceptions of the region might turn people off.

How can Appalachiana connect with Southwest Virginia residents?

Appalachiana Communications Plan

Objective

Provide a platform to showcase Appalachiana pride and bring the three communities together under one brand

Awareness

Get people excited about the Appalachiana brand

Barrier Lack of understanding of what Appalachiana is

Comms Task Introduce Appalachiana to the community

Tactics Event - Town hall introduction
Event - Community kick-off
Open source branding (community)

Education

Connecting Appalachiana to the cultural touch points of the region: history, arts, culture, outdoors, food, etc.

Barrier Understanding how Appalachiana connects to the community

Comms Task Showcase the magic of the community

Tactics Insider guide
Spotify playlist
Storytelling
Local brand highlights

Action

Enable people to share what Appalachiana means to them

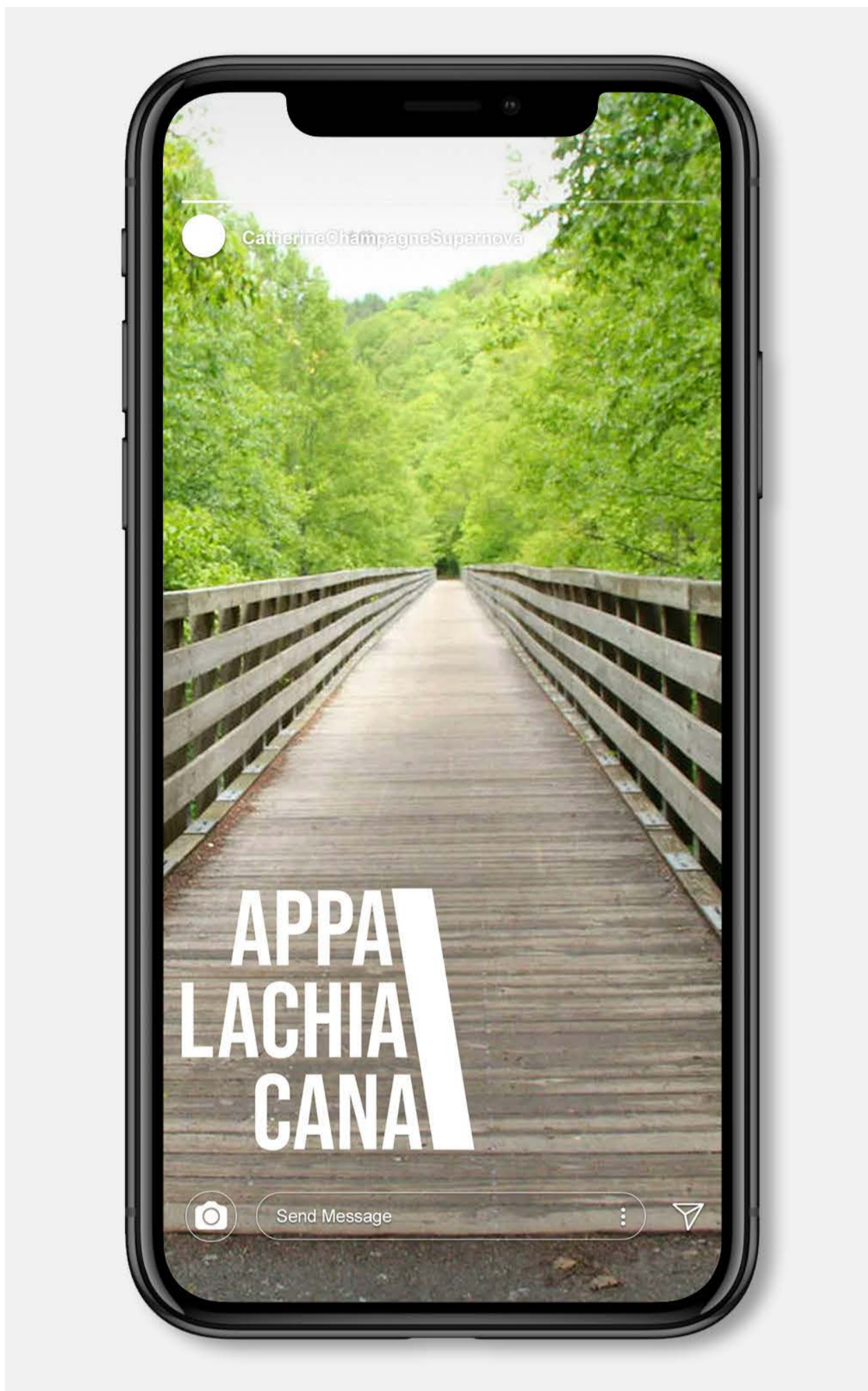
Barrier Understanding how to share

Comms Task Give people different ways to contribute their stories

Tactics Handle takeovers
Community Invitation
Open source branding (individual)

Appalachiana Brand Assets

The Appalachiacana brand can be used to build internal pride.



Location and stickers on Instagram



Open sourced elements allow anyone to print t-shirts for themselves or their business.

Appalachiacana Brand Assets

The Appalachiacana brand can be used to build internal pride.



A cheeky take on a classic bumper sticker.



Signs welcome visitors to the region and create visible boundaries.



License plates allow residents to show off their pride for their home.

Kick-Off Event

A weekend to celebrate what makes Appalachia great.

Friday

Theme Sounds of Appalachia

Kick-off concert in Bristol featuring local musicians and bands. Invite the campaign's most passionate advocates to speak and show the manifesto video.

Performances can be broadcasted live via Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Saturday

Theme Stories of Appalachia

Arts and small business showcase in Abingdon. During the day, walk around town, learn about local history, and take a ride on the Creeper Trail. In the evening, relax with a special Barter Theater performance about local legends and folklore of the area.

Sunday

Theme Adventures of Appalachia

Take an ATV ride in St. Paul on the Spearhead Trail soaking in the beauty of the mountains.



Social Guidelines

Tone

Appalachiacana social should feel like you're visiting a friend playing the role of local tour guide by showing off exactly what makes their town special, no matter how big or small that thing is.

Channels

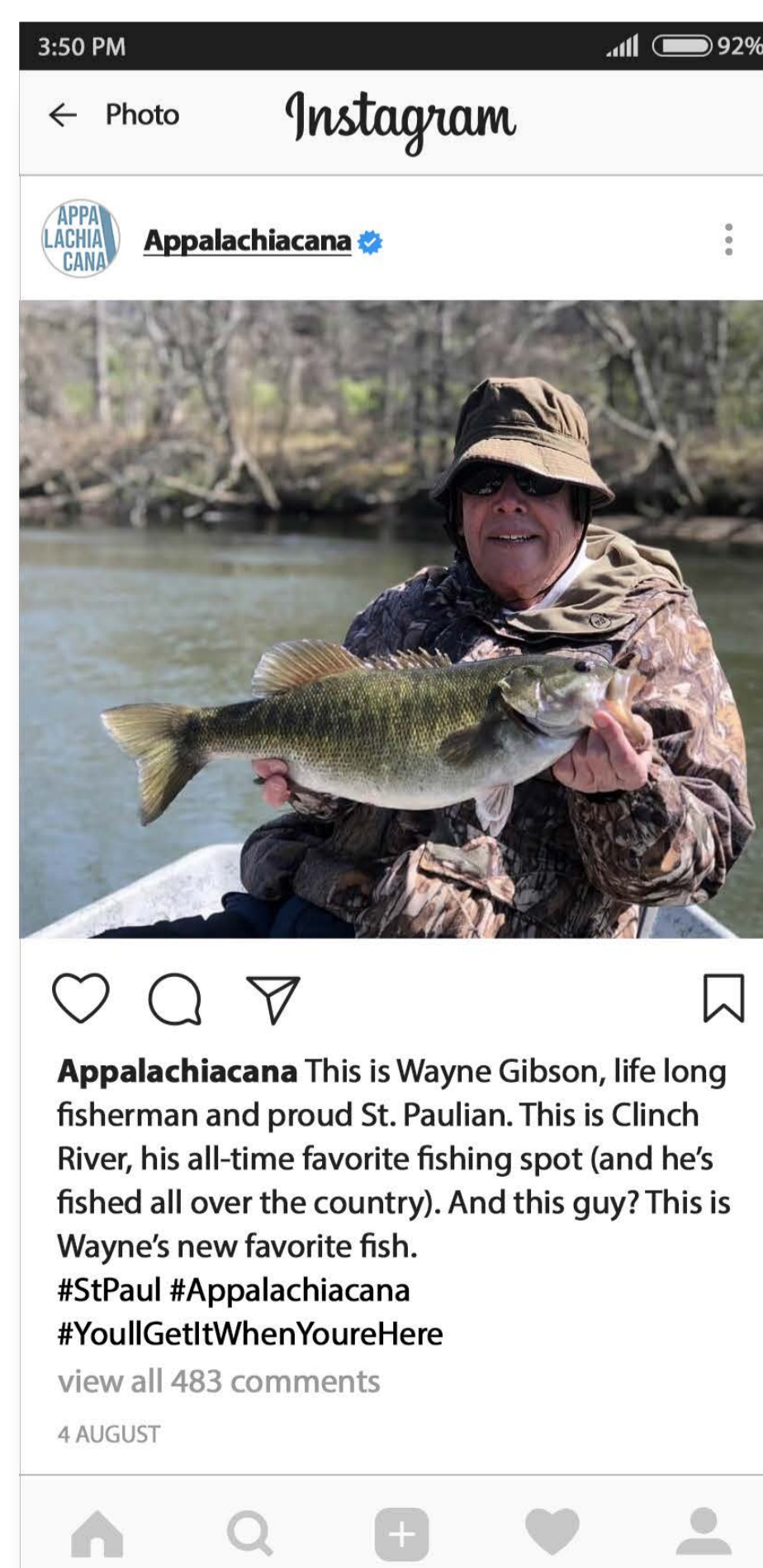
Focus on Instagram and Facebook at first. Appalachiacana can also naturally extend into YouTube for additional storytelling or LinkedIn to build brand partnerships.

Content

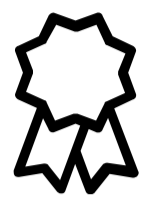
While the content shared should be aesthetically appealing, don't feel like every post needs to be professional photography. Instead focus on giving a snapshot into Appalachiacana life, even if it's shot on an iPhone.

User-Generated

Allow community members to contribute their own content by using #Appalachiacana. You can then ask them for permission to reshare their stories on Appalachiacana social.

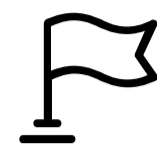


Social Ideas



Local Brand Highlights

Pick at least one local business a week and showcase them on social by giving a virtual tour and talking to the store owner. Focus more on the story of the store and the owner and less on weekly sales or deals to make it feel authentic.



Insider Guide

Round-up weekly events happening in Abingdon, St. Paul, and Bristol relevant to residents and tourists and showcase them on social. This can be done through Instagram stories saved as highlights and through the website.

Spotify Playlists

Start an Appalachiacana Spotify account and capture the music of Appalachiacana in a playlist! You can also ask local musicians to have their own playlists as well with their music and the music of the area that inspires them.



Storytelling

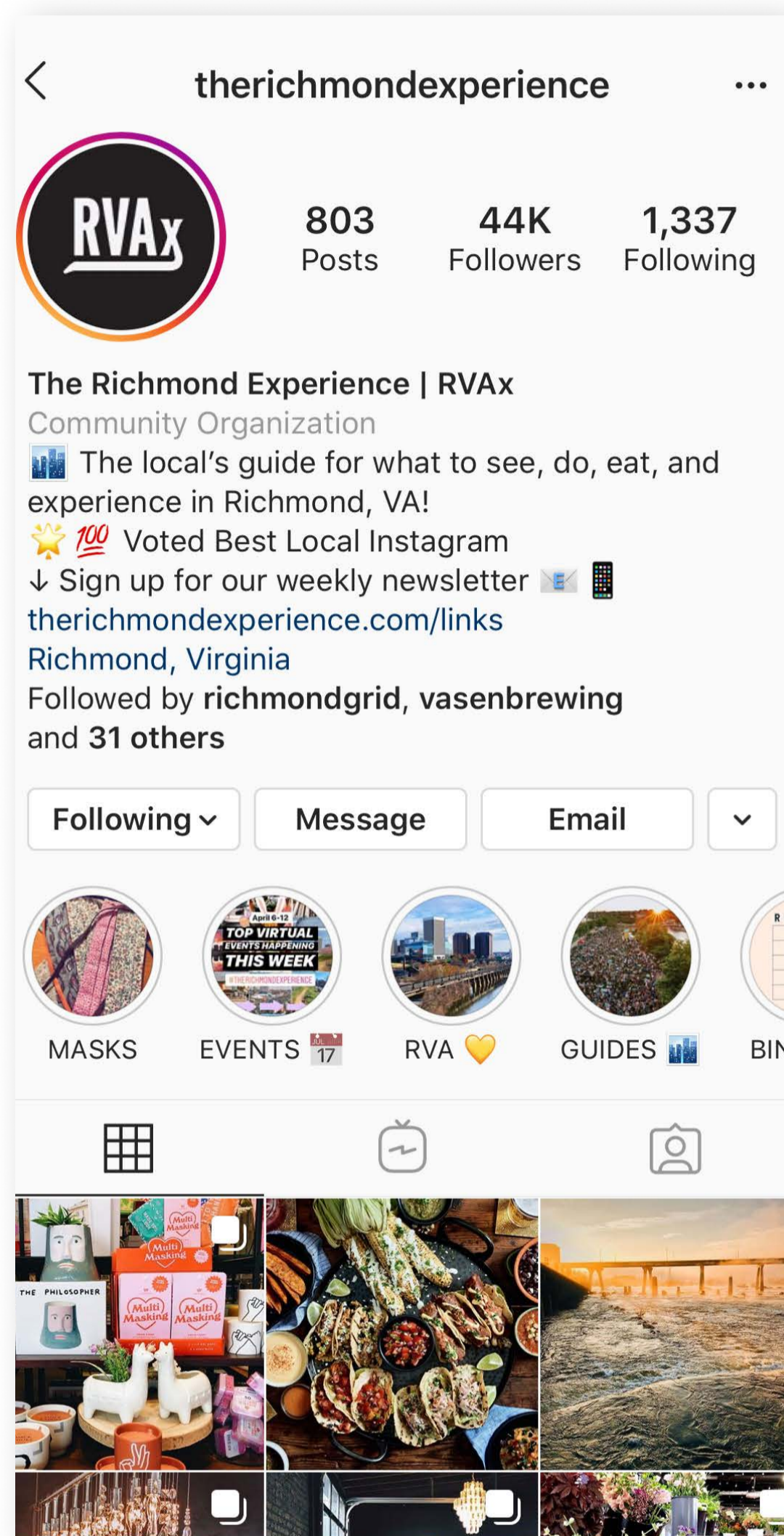
Appalachiacana is full of legends and lore just waiting to be shared. Consider sharing at least one story a week on social by making a video of someone telling the story or by using multiple Instagram posts/stories you can scroll through.



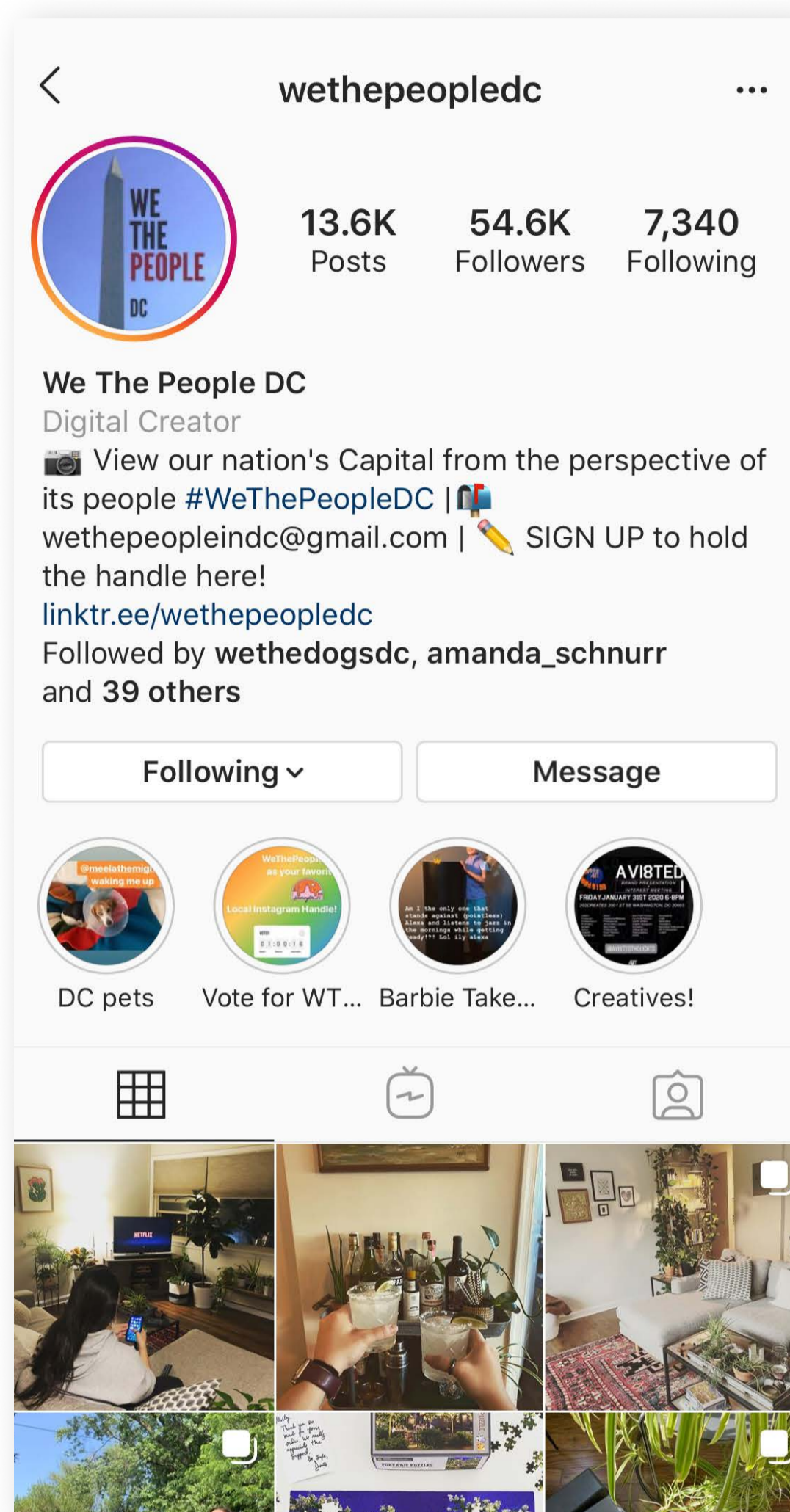
Handle Takeovers

Appalachiacana residents are diverse in their backgrounds, occupations, and interests. Allow a resident to take over the Instagram account once a week to walk through their day. Suggested content includes their favorite local spots, what they do at work, and their favorite things.

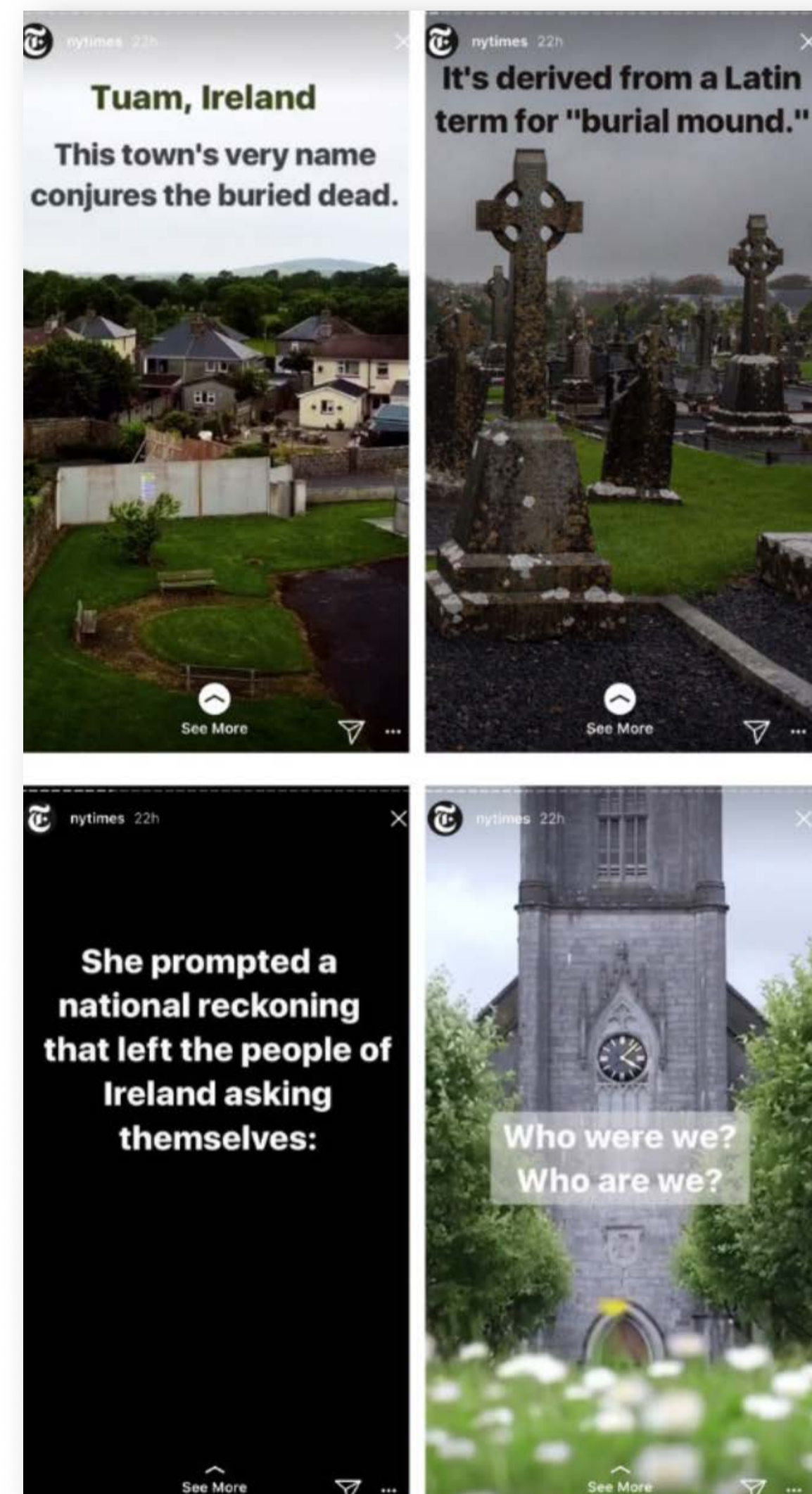
Social Inspiration



The Richmond Experience (@therichmondexperience) is a great example of how to showcase weekly events and highlight local brands.



We The People DC (@wethepeopledc) allows one DC resident to take over the handle per day. It's a good example of what handle takeovers could look like.



The New York Times (@nytimes) uses their Instagram stories to tell stories in a way that could be replicated for local lore and legends. Another account to look to for storytelling examples is Humans of New York (@humansofny).

Inviting Others to Appalachiacana

**Audience: Potential
Tourists**



RJ & Desirae

Potential Visitors Persona

Age: 28 & 27 | Job: IT Associate & Nurse | Home: Manassas, Virginia | Status: Married



About

Curious and a tad adventurous, RJ and Desirae don't like to visit the same place twice. For them, travel plans are dependent on Desirae's work schedule as a nurse and therefore, they don't plan trips more than one month in advance. Their average trip is about 3 days long. They know about Southwest Virginia, but it's not on their radar because they don't think there is anything to do there.

Goals

Visit a new place that isn't too far from home, but still feels like an escape from their everyday life.

Use travel experiences as a way to differentiate themselves.

Behaviors

Don't like to travel anywhere that requires him more than 3 hours in a car to get there.

Travels the most in July and August.

Pain Points

Wish there were more ways to explore interesting cultures close by.

Wish they could do more outdoor activities, but aren't equipped to handle extreme adventures.

Channels

Get travel ideas primarily from friends and family.

Rely on Google to find travel deals and reads reviews before booking.

Community Invitation

Residents invite potential tourists to visit Appalachiacana through Appalachiacana postcards. These postcards will be provided in community spots such as coffee shops and stores. Residents can send them to out-of-town friends or to a broader audience. Invitations written to broader audiences can be dropped off at designated locations and used as marketing pieces.



Creating Buzz About Appalachiacana

When planning vacations, 50% of people rely on recommendations from friends and family. 33% turn to social media and only 9% look at print ads (Mintel: Vacation Inspirations 2019). How can Appalachiacana capitalize on word of mouth recommendations?



Buskers can be placed in major cities within easy traveling distance to Appalachiacana playing Appalachian music. When a person lingers a little too long, dances, or gives the buskers \$20 instead of \$5, they'll be rewarded with a trip to Appalachiacana.



ATVs caked with mud from the trails of St. Paul can be parked in the middle of busy urban areas. When someone agrees to help clean the ATV, they'll be rewarded with a trip.

Not only will these giveaways earn media attention, they'll be used to generate content. When winners take their free trip, their adventures will be documented and used on social channels.



APPALACHIACANA

You'll get it when you're here.