



Now Boarding

The travel & hospitality industry's guide to creating and managing the optimal online visual experience.

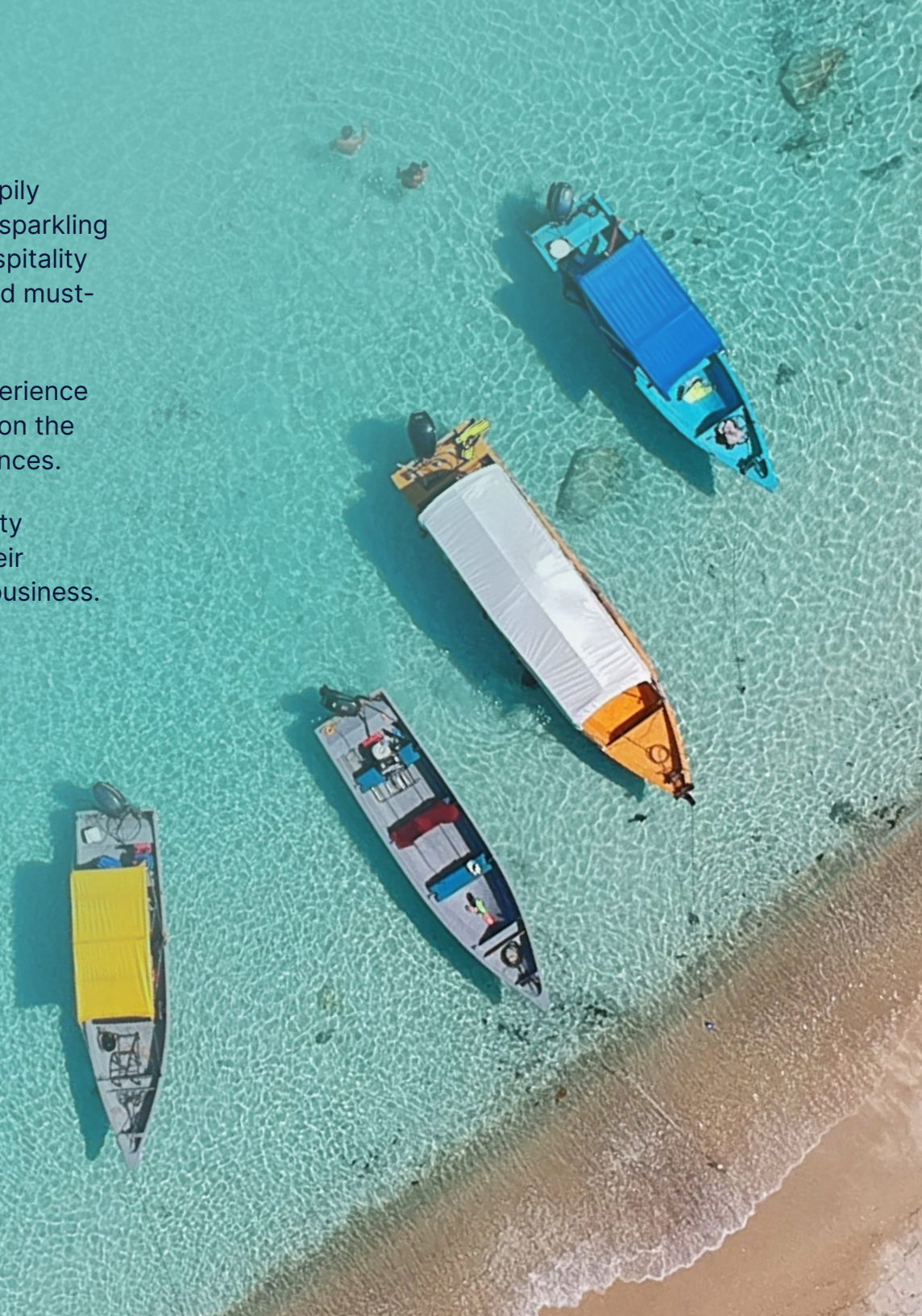
The travel and hospitality industry is at a digital transformation crossroads. Consumers are excited to travel again. Updating and revitalizing your online experience is vital to your economic recovery.

Introduction

White sandy beaches kissed by the sun. Fun-seekers happily zooming over tropical treetops on ziplines. Palatial rooms sparkling with crystal decor. No industry can rival the travel and hospitality sector when it comes to stunning, aspirational imagery and must-see visual experiences.

Travel-thirsty consumers expect a digitally immersive experience when shopping for a trip or hotel stay, and it's incumbent on the travel and hospitality providers to deliver uplifting experiences.

This guide explains how leaders in the travel and hospitality industry are delivering the needle-moving experiences their customers expect and producing the sales that grow the business.



Now serving travel-hungry consumers

The desire to travel is insatiable. To win the business, travel and hospitality brands must provide a digital shopping experience that is a memory of its own.

Travel and hospitality brands now have an opportunity to “start over” and earn the loyalty of new customers by providing a digital shopping experience that is a memory of its own.

For many consumers, the vacation starts on a website researching an online travel agency for deals and reviews or browsing a trusted global brand for inspiration.



Roadblocks

Time

Travel brands that are working from legacy media solutions don't have the time or manpower to achieve dynamic visuals that are sustainable long-term.

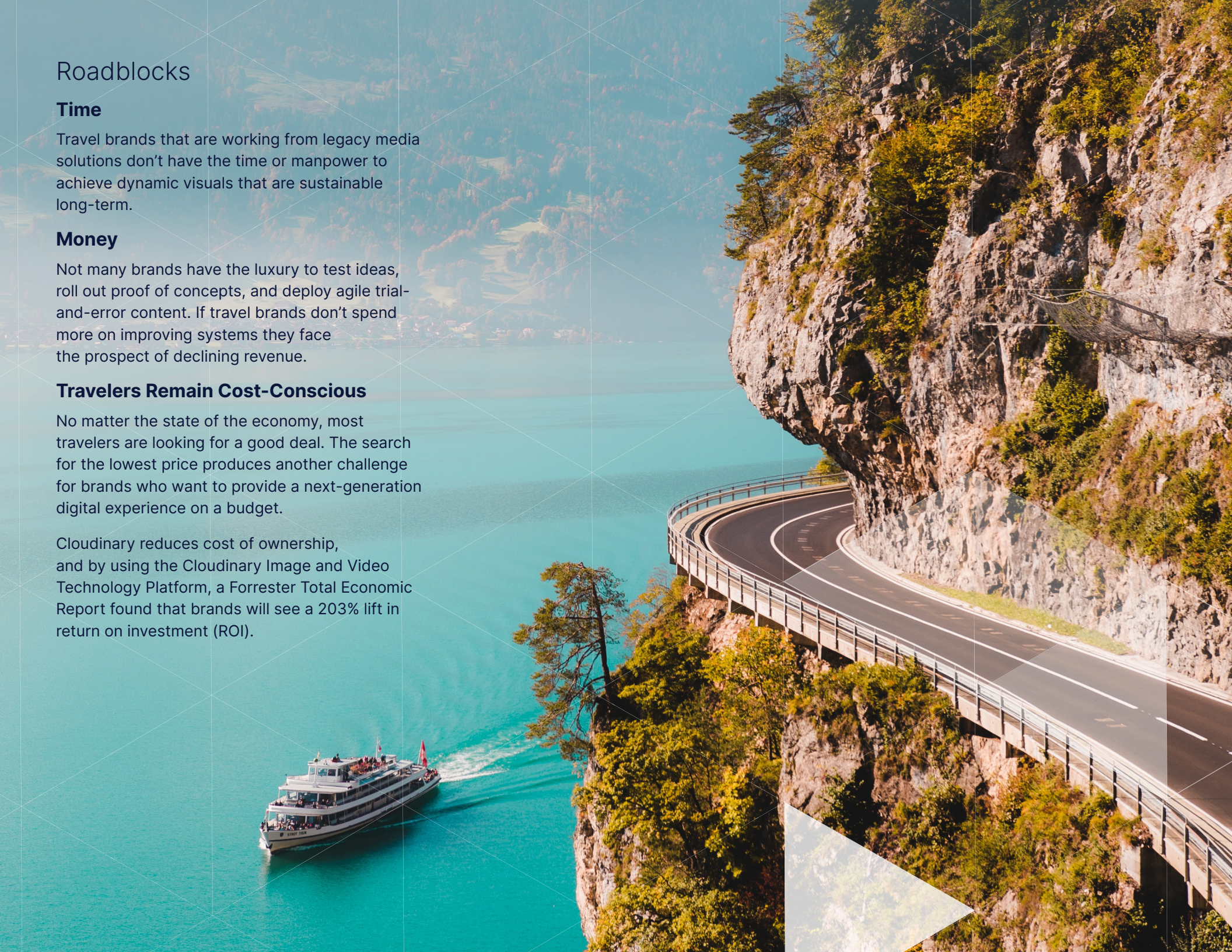
Money

Not many brands have the luxury to test ideas, roll out proof of concepts, and deploy agile trial-and-error content. If travel brands don't spend more on improving systems they face the prospect of declining revenue.

Travelers Remain Cost-Conscious

No matter the state of the economy, most travelers are looking for a good deal. The search for the lowest price produces another challenge for brands who want to provide a next-generation digital experience on a budget.

Cloudinary reduces cost of ownership, and by using the Cloudinary Image and Video Technology Platform, a Forrester Total Economic Report found that brands will see a 203% lift in return on investment (ROI).





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Next stop: the future

Brands with the right composable technology deliver, at scale, automated video, images, AR experiences, and highly customized content that speaks to the potential traveler.

Two of the world's leading travel and hospitality brands, lastminute.com and Xanterra, along with top industry CMS, Magnolia share how they've worked with Clouddinary to attract and maintain a loyal customer base.

Transformation at Scale

lastminute.com makes vacation packages visually surreal.

Content Velocity

Headless CMS provider Magnolia eases content delivery.

Programmable Media

Xanterra manages media with harmonized systems.

lastminute.com, the Single-Platform Advantage

lastminute.com

INDUSTRY

Travel Agencies

SIZE

1500 employees

HEADQUARTERS

Chiasso, Switzerland

[See Case Study →](#)



lastminute.com Makes Vacation Packages Visually Surreal with Cloudinary

- Single source of truth across teams and departments
- Efficient workflow leading to savings in publishing time
- Faster loading website with optimized images and videos

For a website catering to travelers, deals on flights or exclusive vacation packages are not enough to entice visitors. It's often the images of that luxury villa in Greece, romantic Parisian street, or exotic tour through the markets of Marrakech that inspire vacation bookings.

lastminute.com promotes its offerings on the company's website, via social media and advertising, and in its e-newsletters with millions of images. The challenge of having multiple teams dealing with so many assets, which includes an increasing number of videos, led lastminute.com to leverage Cloudinary for maintaining a centralized media library and digital asset management (DAM).

Cloudinary also gave lastminute.com the ability to automate image transformations to drive greater consistency across its platforms and launch new campaigns faster.



“Where we’ve seen some of the biggest benefits is in terms of user experience. We’ve been able to reduce the page size and improve loading time, which dramatically improves our visitors’ experiences using our site to search for the perfect vacation.”

— Stefano Castelli, Creative Production Manager, lastminute.com

"...as Cloudinary added more functionality, including DAM capabilities, to its platform, we saw the opportunity to increase team efficiency and improve the consistency and quality of experiences."

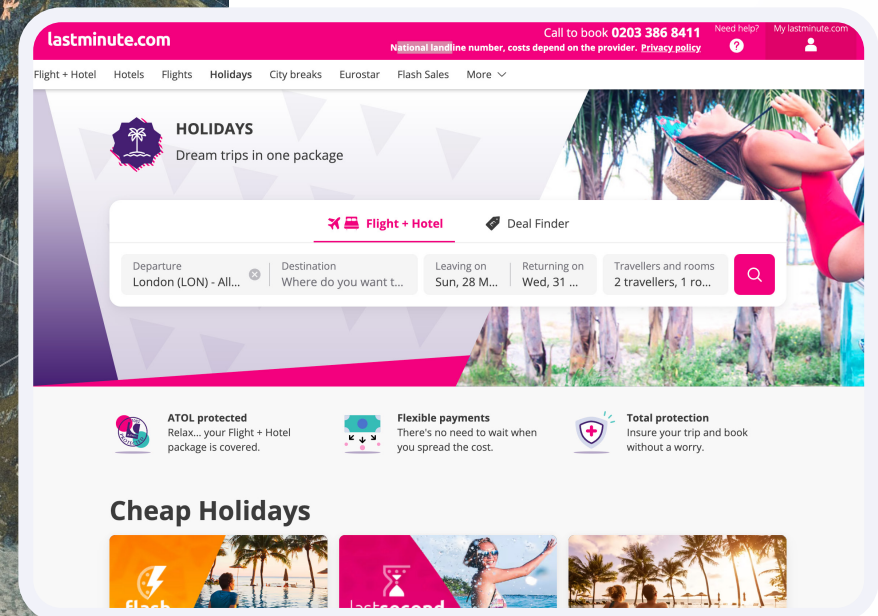
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ABOUT

lastminute.com

lastminute.com is the European Travel Tech leader in Dynamic Holiday Packages. The company's mission is to lead the travel industry by leveraging technology to simplify, personalize, and enhance the customers' travel experience.

Through the company websites and mobile apps — available in 17 languages and 40 countries — people search and book their ideal travel and leisure experiences. More than 1,500 people spread across the group's offices worldwide enjoy working at lastminute.com to help customers find and do "whatever makes them pink".



“For the majority of images on our site, we use the Cloudinary API to integrate with our CMS. This connection allows us to dynamically manage images and eliminates the margin of error in terms of compressing them to ensure they perform optimally.”

— Manuel Mascheroni, Head of Content Management at lastminute.com.

THE CHALLENGE

Streamlining Asset Management

In business for more than two decades, lastminute.com historically had separated teams that managed its image assets, using different repositories.

As a company, lastminute.com had been using Cloudinary for a long time for very specific use cases, such as hotel images. These were managed by tech teams, who dealt with image upload, asset management, and serving to the live site, all via API. In parallel, there was a team dedicated to manual asset management (with editors and non-tech people), using a different DAM provider for editorial purposes.

Another challenge was how long it was taking to modify images for new campaigns. This was a time-consuming task, with designers having to make the changes to each picture in Photoshop, then upload all the new images for the campaign into the old DAM. Depending on the number of images involved, this process could take weeks. This labor-intensive work limited lastminute.com's ability to quickly launch new campaigns that would let vacationers capitalize on limited-time deals.

THE CLOUDINARY SOLUTION

A Cross-functional DAM for the Entire Asset Lifecycle

Using Cloudinary, lastminute.com can securely upload assets from a wide variety of sources. They then can organize images using AI-based tags and metadata to make them easily searchable.

At the same time as they were moving to Cloudinary, lastminute.com implemented a new content management system (CMS). With Cloudinary's APIs, it was easy for lastminute.com to integrate the two systems and automate the media workflow that was previously manual and time-consuming.

The ability to make transformations by simply editing the image URL — a capability unique to Cloudinary's system — was a “killer feature that we're taking advantage of a lot,” Mascheroni added. “It is one of the biggest advantages we've seen.”

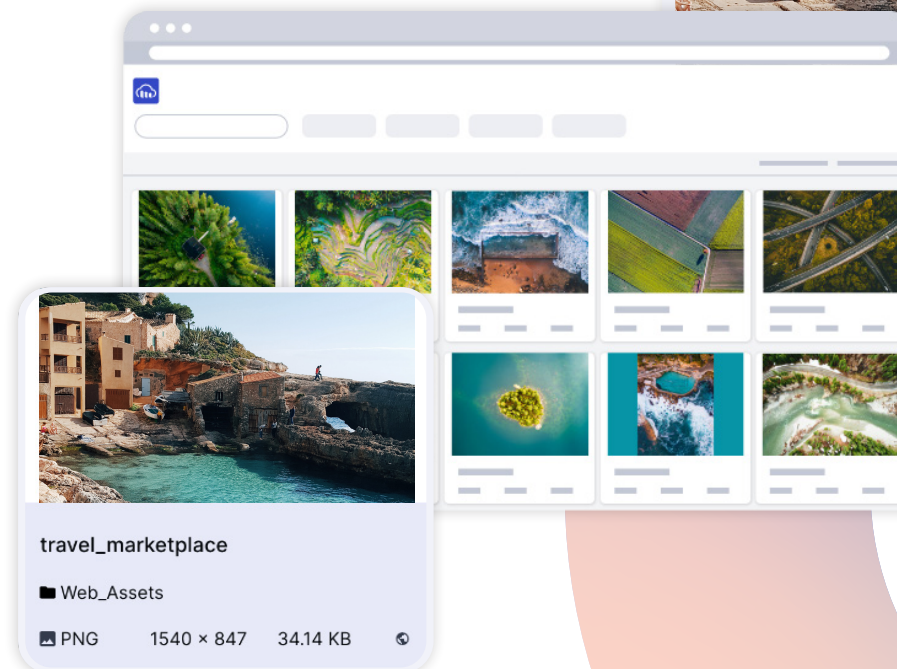
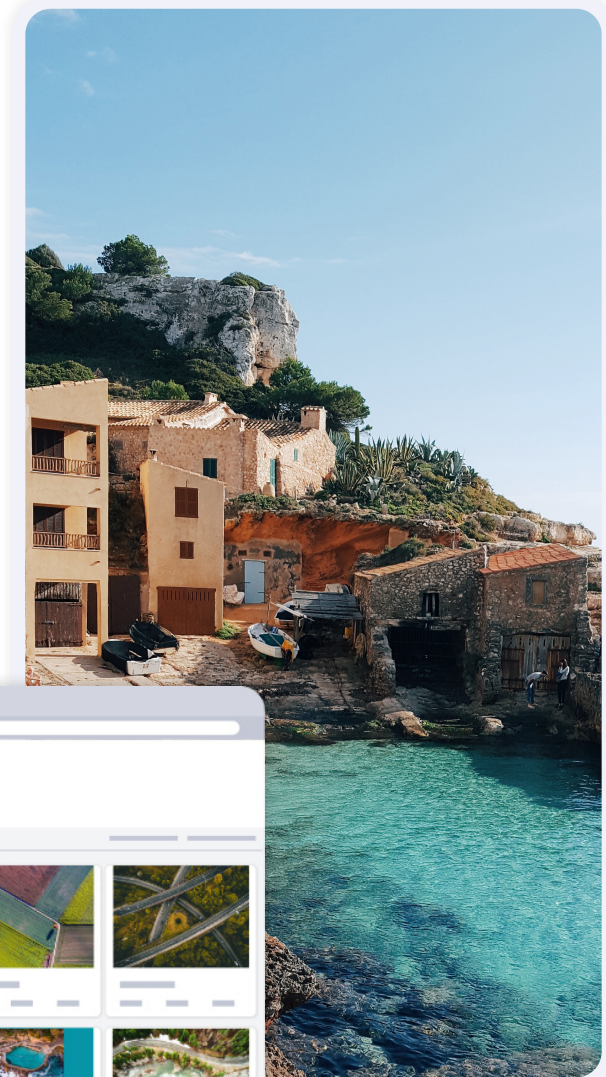
lastminute.com can change certain parameters in the URL to resize, change the format, and adjust the quality of images. They also have used it for a wide variety of other transformations, including cropping, blurring, and applying overlays in real time, without the painful download-edit-upload cycle.

The company specifically used this feature when it launched its Flash Sale product offering with specially hand-crafted travel deals available for

a limited amount of time. For that product, the company took advantage of Cloudinary overlays and image manipulations. “In fact, every week we use those features for populating our landing pages,” said Mascheroni.

lastminute.com also discovered the benefits of Cloudinary for video manipulation.

“Video is continuing to grow in popularity and importance,” he noted. “Cloudinary enables us to customize the video player to suit our brand and optimize videos to reduce both our bandwidth usage and our website visitors' bandwidth requirements. Being able to make these changes in real-time is quite impressive. Since videos can be quite huge, the ability to optimize performance is key for us.”



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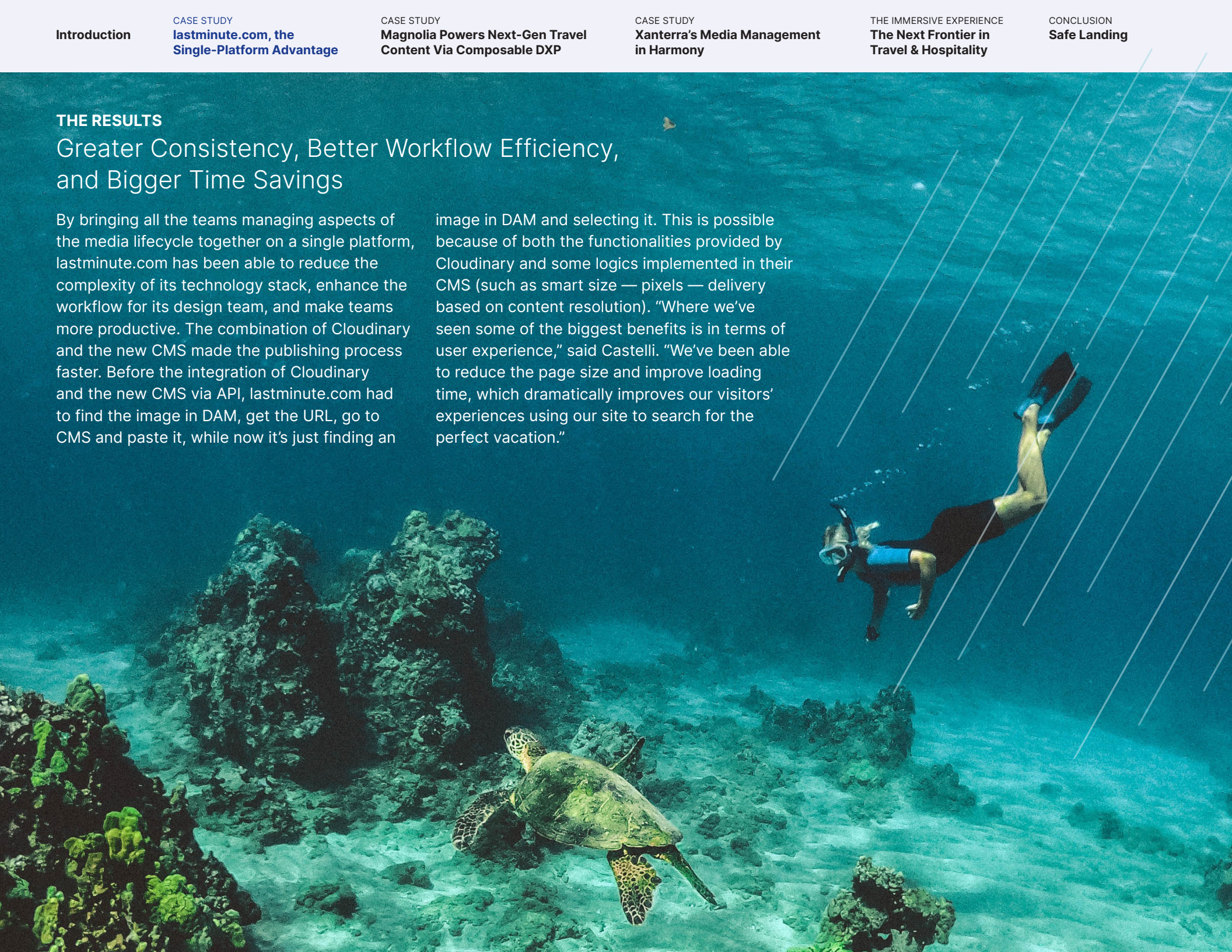


THE RESULTS

Greater Consistency, Better Workflow Efficiency, and Bigger Time Savings

By bringing all the teams managing aspects of the media lifecycle together on a single platform, lastminute.com has been able to reduce the complexity of its technology stack, enhance the workflow for its design team, and make teams more productive. The combination of Cloudinary and the new CMS made the publishing process faster. Before the integration of Cloudinary and the new CMS via API, lastminute.com had to find the image in DAM, get the URL, go to CMS and paste it, while now it's just finding an

image in DAM and selecting it. This is possible because of both the functionalities provided by Cloudinary and some logics implemented in their CMS (such as smart size — pixels — delivery based on content resolution). "Where we've seen some of the biggest benefits is in terms of user experience," said Castelli. "We've been able to reduce the page size and improve loading time, which dramatically improves our visitors' experiences using our site to search for the perfect vacation."



Magnolia Powers Next-Gen Travel Content Via Composable DXP

INDUSTRY

Digital Experience

SIZE

180+ employees,
13 offices worldwide

HEADQUARTERS

Basel, Switzerland



With the rise of the digital age, the travel and hospitality industry has experienced a radical shift in purchase behavior. Consumers that previously relied on in-person accent interactions have gone online, resulting in an ongoing, industry-wide digital transformation. Consumers expect more from their online shopping experiences and that includes how they select a destination to how they book travel via mobile.

At the same time, the industry is in the midst of a major digital transformation. Consumers expect more from their online shopping experiences and that includes how they get their groceries via in-store smart carts to how they book travel via mobile.

A report from Skift Research estimated that more than a third of online travel sales are completed via mobile; signaling to companies in

the industry that hotels, airlines, and resorts need to have digital content that engages and entices consumers across all digital channels.

Magnolia powers their online shopping experiences through a hybrid headless digital experience platform (DXP), enabling travel brands to orchestrate dynamic content from booking to the actual travel experience to post-travel.



About

Founded in 1997, Magnolia started one of the first headless content management solutions that let organizations create engaging websites and digital experiences around their existing IT infrastructure. The company provides a fast and flexible content hub, available in the cloud or on-premises, ready-made connectors to critical third-party tools like DAM, commerce, and search, and a unified authoring experience that empowers every business user to get fast, personalized experiences live regardless of tech stack. Magnolia powers the digital presence of some of the largest companies in the world, including American Express, JetBlue, The New York Times, CNN, Sanofi, Sainsbury's, Generali, and Ping An.

The Challenge

Different travel brands have different needs. An online travel agency may need to manage an aggregate of flight times and package pricing in real time, while a direct-selling brand may need an immersive video of on-site travel excursions and room amenities.

Magnolia's DXP connects the entire travel shopping experience. Starting with search engine optimization, Magnolia works with

brands to ensure that the business, products, and tours are discoverable in search engines. Through easy integration with booking service, Magnolia empowers travel brands to create a high-quality, content-rich booking experience that educates travelers and increases conversions.

Depending on the site, the service could require management of locations, dates, and capacities or it can add photos and videos of destinations to accompany choices.

Then there's the travel experience itself, where Magnolia connects travelers to real-time content; for example, this can include travel apps and digital companion devices handed out by a resort or cruise ship to provide tips during travel. The headless solution connects different tools and data sources to power engaging digital experiences.

There are also cross-selling excursions, visits to museums, and post-travel follow-ups to book another trip or provide ratings and reviews. The digital experience is full-circle in travel; brands need a digital experience platform that executes complex, cross-channel messaging in the simplest way possible.



The Results

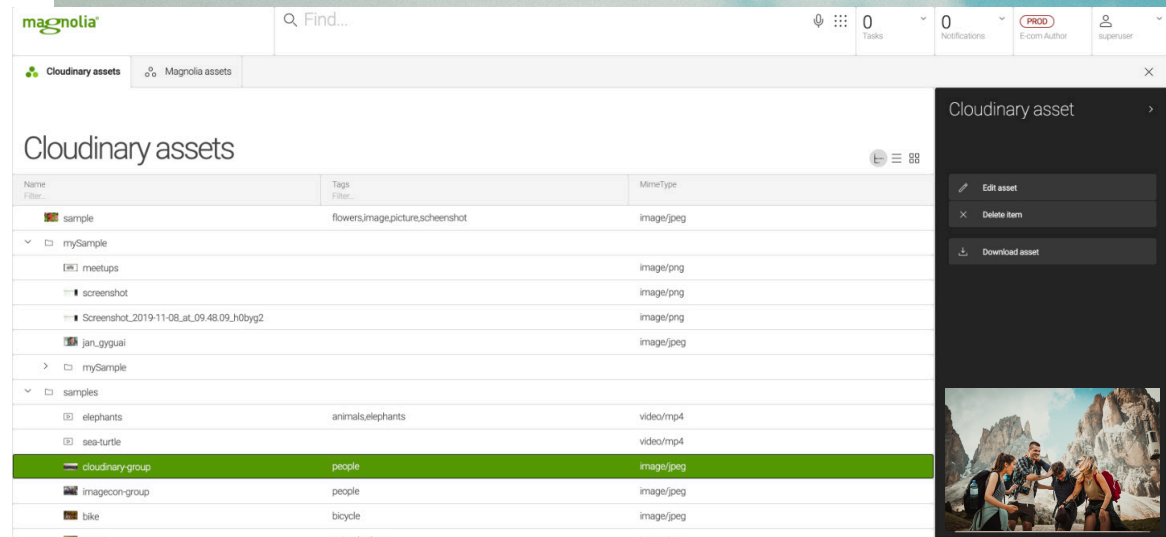
The magic of Magnolia is its unified experience orchestration. Since Magnolia is a composable system, a user doesn't realize that they're tapping into 20 backend systems to compose a moving digital experience. Ecommerce content, marketing automation forms, analytics, or even content from other content management systems - they're all available in one single UI in Magnolia, to be mixed and matched into compelling pages and experiences, delivered to any channel.

Users get a classical page build experience, fully visual and with a ton of firepower.

Add Cloudinary's visual management solutions to the Magnolia DXP, and travel brands don't need to do a thing to produce fully optimized and engaging visual media for their sites. The Cloudinary AI solution automatically manages images for the front-end site including 360° video, ABR streaming of high-definition video, generative AI, and more. All assets are findable in the Magnolia UI, where they can be easily further cropped, optimized with focal points for any device, tagged for personalization, and reused across pages and experiences.

Cloudinary automates visual assets and gets them ready-made for a content partner to deliver next-generation digital experiences. For a travel industry that's now moving faster than ever, stronger digital connection is imperative.

Learn more at: www.cloudinary.com



Xanterra's Media Management in Harmony



A WORLD OF UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES®

INDUSTRY

Travel and Hospitality

SIZE

10,000+ employees

HEADQUARTERS

Colorado,
United States



“We needed a solution that would be flexible enough for our various properties now and into the future. To us, this meant the solution had to be lightweight and easy to use so no matter how much more content we must manage, we’ll be ready to serve our stakeholders.”

— Andrew Heltzel, Chief Commercial Officer

Xanterra Travel Collection® Finds Easy Path to Media Experience Management

- Simplified storage of visual media files
- Streamlined indexing, cataloging, and delivery of visual assets to internal stakeholders and agency partners
- 30% time savings by managing visual media directly in CMS Streamlined workflows for more dynamic marketing

Xanterra Travel Collection® is a diverse group of travel and hospitality companies on a mission to deliver unforgettable, environmentally-friendly experiences. The company prides itself on growing its sustainable travel practices and expanding its business through acquisitions. As more properties are added to its portfolio and more digital content is ingested, Xanterra needed a better way to quickly integrate visual assets inherited through its acquisitions. It also needed a better way to create and manage all its visual media, including new seasonal content for marketing and recruiting purposes.

ABOUT

Eco-friendly accommodations within America's greatest getaways

Known for its “Legendary Hospitality with a Softer Footprint,” Xanterra Travel Collection® provides “A World of Unforgettable Experiences” through its operations in national parks, including lodges, restaurants, tours, and activities, as well as through its ownership of resorts, a cruise line, a railway, and tour companies. With operations in

Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Zion, Glacier, Rocky Mountain National Parks, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, as well as other resorts, Xanterra operates 14 websites for various national park lodging properties in addition to its corporate site.



THE CHALLENGE

Consolidating and Transforming with Digital Asset Management

While the landscapes of North America may be visually stunning, the journey from completing photo and video shoots to creating visual assets for marketing teams can be as treacherous as an off-trail hike.

That's why in 2019 Xanterra looked for an easier way to store and manage visual media. The team assembled a cross-organizational task force to better understand the landscape of current media management systems and identify a solution that satisfied as many stakeholders as possible. Twelve vendors were invited to respond to its RFP.



THE CLOUDINARY SOLUTION

Scalable and Future-Proof Digital Asset Management

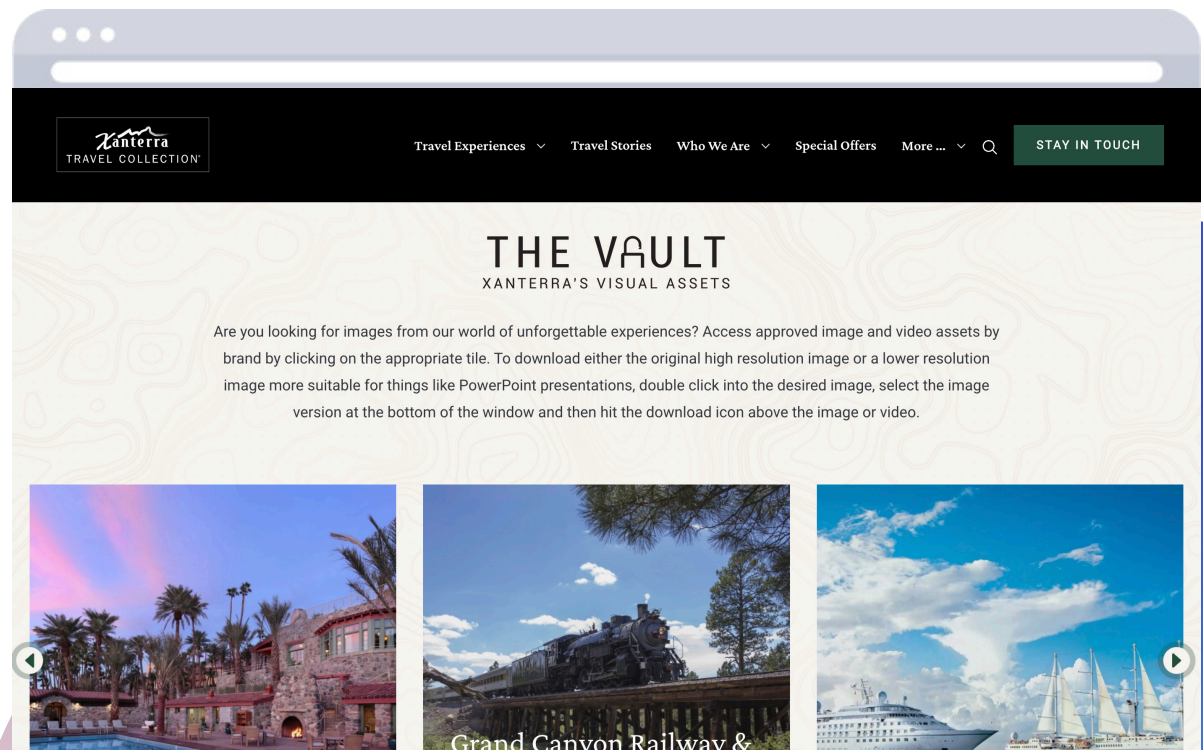
Ultimately, the Cloudinary DAM solution won Xanterra over for its advanced capabilities in managing and delivering assets in a more automated way, with the bonus of the Cloudinary WordPress Plugin which allowed for a seamless pathway to its existing CMS. Xanterra decision-makers were impressed with how easy it was to use and find features in Cloudinary as compared to other solutions evaluated.

The initial phase of implementation included ingesting 7,000+ assets into Cloudinary. This used to be a tedious, time-consuming process, requiring the Xanterra web team to log into their DAM, download an image or images, and use an image editor to resize the images, remove backgrounds, or perform other repetitive tasks.

But ingesting 7,000+ assets with Cloudinary DAM was a breeze. With the Cloudinary WordPress Plugin, the Xanterra web team can handle several aspects of image editing directly in WordPress—no image editor is needed. The team also sees in real time what is available in the DAM and approved for use. This simplifies workflows and saves the team time, allowing them to focus on other tasks instead.

“One of the reasons we chose Cloudinary is that it had a solution that would be flexible enough for the unknown. This meant to us that it was a future-proof solution as we grew how much content we must manage, both internally as well as through acquisitions.”

—Andrew Heltzel, Chief Commercial Officer



The Results

Cloudinary's WordPress plugin has transformed digital asset management for Xanterra. By replacing manual work with automated workflows from Cloudinary directly in WordPress, the team is already saving time and money, with further savings expected as Cloudinary is eventually rolled out to all of Xanterra's websites.

The decentralized asset repository that Xanterra now has with Cloudinary benefits employees across teams and departments directly. Employees now know what assets are ready for use and can create their own collection of assets for future use.

Cloudinary has transformed visual media asset management for Xanterra. What was previously seen internally as a static repository of media files is now a powerful and dynamic system. Xanterra relies on Cloudinary to create engaging digital experiences that work to the company's strategic advantage.



The Immersive Experience: The Next Frontier in Travel & Hospitality

The future is immersive, and the reality is that many travel brands are years behind when it comes to managing optimized, customized, visual media that is effortlessly delivered across all channels.

The **immersive experience** is a multi-sensory interaction that a user has with your brand. Examples include:

- Screen-based experiences
- Experiences related to speech, sound, spatial, scent, touch, and gesture
- Extended, virtual, augmented, or mixed-reality experiences

Brands can use a combination of these modes to deliver multi-sensory experiences that consumers can emotionally connect with. Immersive customer experiences are also an intuitive and compelling way for brands to differentiate themselves from the competition.

Providing the viewer with a 360° view of a destination creates the sensation that they're experiencing the location and provides a sense of how it might look and feel in real life, compelling them to purchase.



The Journey Begins

Immersive experiences in the travel industry are crucial for seven reasons.

1. Instill a feeling of “know before you go”
2. Drive engagement
3. Reduce cancellation rates
4. Enhance overall customer experience
5. Encourage exploration
6. Differentiate from the competition
7. Improve SEO

Instill a feeling of “know before you go” –

The technologies that support the immersive experience provide brands with the essential tool they’ve been missing: an ability to convey to the consumer exactly what will be waiting for them when they arrive. They purchase with confidence and eliminate the “fear of the unknown.”

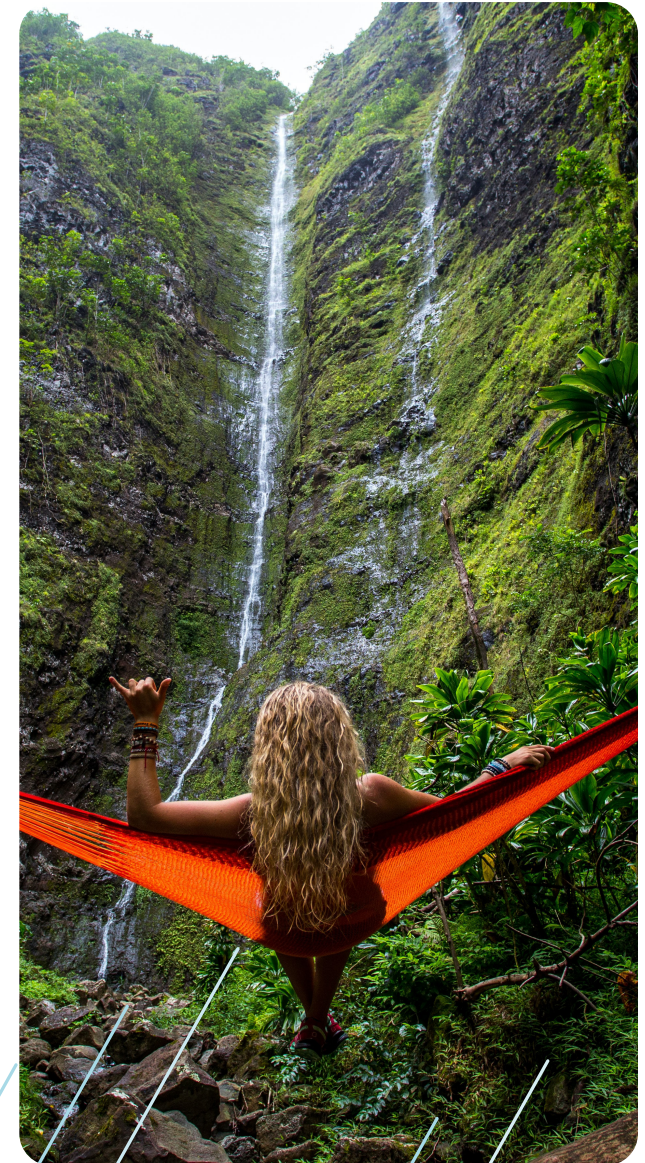
Drive engagement - Immersive experiences engage better than passive experiences like reading a guidebook or watching a travel program. Travelers that actively engage, are more likely to book your service and more likely to share their positive online experience with others.

Reduce cancellation rates – When a client purchases after an immersive experience, they already have a realistic expectation of how the accommodation looks and feels in real life. By virtually placing the person in their room they have already set realistic expectations. This drastically reduces the risk of cancellation upon arrival or of having to relocate a disappointed guest.

Encouraging exploration - Immersive experiences can encourage travelers to explore destinations beyond the typical tourist hotspots. This can lead to more authentic and off-the-beaten-path experiences, providing travelers with a deeper understanding and appreciation of a destination.

Differentiating from competitors - Immersive experiences differentiate travel brands from competitors, creating a unique selling proposition that attracts and retains customers.

Improving SEO - Increasing the time visitors spend on a website and reducing bounce rates is great for SEO rankings. Including alt tags and descriptions on images and videos can also help search engines understand the content, leading to a better Search Engine Results Page (SERP) position.



Going into the Unknown

The path to creating the kinds of immersive experiences described here is not always a straight or smooth one. There are challenges associated with creating and delivering the ideal digital experience. The primary challenges are:

Market saturation - Too many players vying for the traveler's attention. As a result, travel and hospitality brands must create digital experiences that stand out from the crowd.

Changing consumer behavior - As the COVID pandemic waned travel behavior went both directions with some travelers seeking more local and domestic destinations while others were of the attitude the more far-flung the better. Travel brands must adapt their digital experiences to reflect these widely differing preferences.

Balancing automation with personalization - To deliver truly immersive digital experiences, travel brands must strike a balance between automation and personalization, taking into account the unique needs and preferences of the individual.





Difficult Roads Lead to Beautiful Destinations

Technology has made it easier for travel and hospitality brands to deliver immersive digital experiences that offer a world of creative possibilities to lure clients and entice bookings.

Some potential next-generation visual experiences for the industry include:

Personalized Video Content

Advances in AI and machine learning have made it easier for travel brands to create personalized video content that adapts to individual travelers' preferences and interests helping travelers discover new destinations and experiences that are tailored to their tastes.

Interactive Virtual Tours

Virtual tours have become more interactive, allowing travelers to explore destinations in greater detail and interact with digital elements, such as menus or hotel rooms for an engaging and personalized experience than traditional video tours.

3D

Auto-generate realistic images of products, rooms, day trips, or nearby museums and upsell opportunities by enabling users to engage with a 3D image or spin set.

Augmented Reality (AR)

AR technology allows travelers to overlay digital information onto real-world environments, providing a more contextual and immersive experience. For example, AR maps display information about landmarks, restaurants, and local events as travelers navigate a destination.

With the right workflows and technology, travel brands can consistently deliver video, AR, VR, spin sets, and more, and with automation that enables creative teams to focus on being creative instead of spending valuable time on tasks such as cropping photos.



The reliable way for travel brands to develop visual media that is scalable and consistently engages travel customers is to go composable.

Cloudinary seamlessly integrates its visual media management into a best-of-breed tech stack, unifying a brand's media asset library, fueling developers to create rich media experiences, and providing intelligent automation for optimized delivery.

Safe Landing: Conclusion

The Cloudinary Difference

Assets - Antiquated digital asset management systems and processes can lead to ever increasing costs, lackluster brand experiences, and missed growth opportunities. Cloudinary helps brands compress content workflows, eliminate redundant repetitive, and manual tasks.

Content Velocity - Media files are cumbersome and can get lost in time-consuming workflows. Brands that have switched to Cloudinary have seen asset preparation time reduced by half.

Performance Optimization - How fast your webpage downloads has a direct impact on SEO and site rankings. With Cloudinary, clients have seen pages load 30% faster and Google SEO rankings jump more than 25%.

Customization - Enabling consumers to engage with media that personalizes their experience can further delight their travel-buying experience. Cloudinary can create image variants, enabling them to design their own resort merchandise, for example.

Video - Developing shoppable video comes with having tremendous respect for the consumer. Cloudinary helps manage a balanced approach to content, automates effectively and tests personalization in different ways. This can't be done without a composable partner like Cloudinary.



To earn loyal customers, travel sites, brands, and hotels need to deliver a digital experience that excites travelers, instills confidence, and delivers an experience that meets the visual innovation already being reached in other industries.

Contact Clouidnary to schedule a demo and see how its Image and Video Technology Platform can revolutionize your brand.

Visit Clouidnary's [travel and hospitality](#) solution page to learn more about how Clouidnary can lift your brand and chart your course to a composable, innovative visual future.





Cloudinary's mission is to help **travel and hospitality** companies unleash the full potential of their media to create the most engaging visual experiences. The Image and Video Technology Platform is an intelligently automated end-to-end rich media management and delivery SaaS platform for delivering highly engaging visual experiences at scale.

To start delivering visual experiences faster and with greater flexibility and ease, check out **[Image and Video Technology Platform](#)**.

