



Case Study



Industry
Film/Media

Site
<https://clermont-filmfest.org/>

Challenge
Grow web presence with a lean staff and proprietary CMS, while staying up-to-date with rapidly-moving technology.

Solution
WP Engine Digital Experience Platform.

Results
With WordPress and WP Engine, the film festival staff can create new experiences for different aspects of the festival without having to engage developers on their proprietary CMS, helping Clermont-Ferrand retain its position as one of the world's most important destinations for filmmakers and film distributors alike.

Lights. Camera. Action: International film festival growth spotlights WordPress.

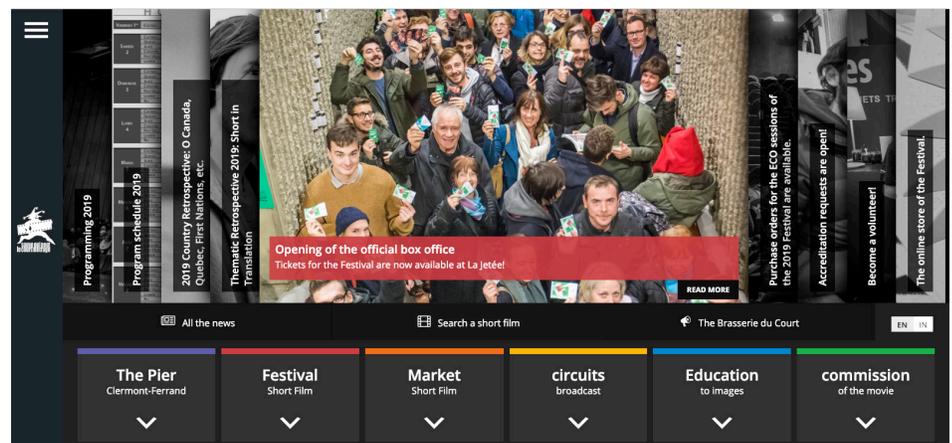
The Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival staff relies on WP Engine to manage their growing list of websites, so they can focus on finding the world's best short films.

The Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival is the world's largest international film festival dedicated to short films. It is held annually in Clermont-Ferrand, France, and with more than 160,000 attendees and 3,500 professionals, it is the second-largest film festival in France after Cannes.



Keeping up with rapid growth.

There are few events in the film world that share the status and stature of [The Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival](#). What began in 1979 as a "Short Film Week," organised by the Clermont-Ferrand University Film Society, has grown into one of the world's premier venues for short films, and is second only to the Cannes Film Festival in terms of audience and professional attendance.



Clermont-Ferrand is also one of the world's leading short film marketplaces, where French and foreign film distributors are able to view the 200 films that make it into the

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Short Film Festival



competition, as well the 9000 short films that are submitted for consideration but don't make the final cut. The marketplace is considered a top destination for up-and-coming filmmakers hoping to promote, and ultimately sell a new short film.

With a slew of activities surrounding the annual event, from film submissions to educational film clinics and a new film commission, the staff at Clermont-Ferrand has to juggle a lot, to put it lightly. As their list of responsibilities has continued to grow, the old, custom-built proprietary content management system (CMS) they used to build their original website was beginning to slow them down.

“We got to a place where we wanted to make regular changes to our website, including the addition of new sites that would let us communicate externally, and everything we wanted to do required a developer,” said Julien Westermann, Clermont-Ferrand's Director of Digital Marketing.

“In an effort to find a solution that our staff could use more easily, without constant developer assistance, we started building sites on WordPress,” Westermann said. “But after we had a couple of new sites up and running, we quickly realised how beneficial it would be to find a partner with deep WordPress expertise, who could help us get even more out of the platform.”



Adding WordPress for agility.

Westermann and his team began looking at different WordPress providers, and from the start, he said WP Engine jumped out as the top choice.

“There just isn't really anyone else out there with the level of WordPress expertise and support that WP Engine offers,” Westermann said.

While he and his team needed specific assistance keeping up with regular WordPress updates and backups, they were also looking for a provider that could help them with security patches and other general maintenance tasks that were eating up the staff's time.

“With WP Engine, we can rest easy knowing all of the backend maintenance is being taken care of,” Westermann said. “This allows the staff to focus on the film festival itself, rather than spending their time on site administration. We have a lot of things to keep up with, so being able to save staff time is huge for us.”

With WP Engine backing them up, Westermann and his team were able to begin building out multiple WordPress sites from their main website, which is still housed on the original, proprietary CMS.

“We're still relying on the original system for a lot of database storage,” he said. “We have our film archives there, as well as all of the data that accompanies those films. But we needed a platform that gave us the agility to launch new properties faster and make updates without tying up additional resources.”

What WordPress and WP Engine have allowed he and his team to do, he said, was build out blogs for the festival itself, the short film marketplace, as well as additional educational outlets for aspiring filmmakers, and a new site for the Auvergne Film Commission, which promotes the Auvergne region of France as a filming location.



Back to the basics: focusing on the film festival.

Since moving to WP Engine, Westermann said his team has been able to reclaim time they now spend on festival-related activities, including an increased output of content. The staff now has nine external blog sites that cater to different audience segments and needs, and they're hoping to build their content strategy out even further.

"We're able to focus on what we do best, which is promote the film festival," Westermann said. "WP Engine takes care of WordPress and we don't have to worry about it."

In addition to the backend support the film festival staff can now rely on, Westermann said they've seen site speed improve.

"The CDN WP Engine use helps us share our content all over the world, without sacrificing page load times or speed," he said. "That's been a big help, in addition to the regular backup and support we get."

As the film festival continues to grow every year, the various web properties it relies on will continue to face a growing amount of digital traffic. Westermann said he and his staff aren't concerned in the least, and hope to build out yet another external blog soon.

"We're confident that WP Engine will help us manage our continued growth," Westermann said. "Knowing we have a support system like that in place is absolutely priceless."

About WP Engine.

WP Engine is the world's leading WordPress digital experience platform that gives companies of all sizes the agility, performance, intelligence, and integrations they need to drive their business forward faster. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and has offices in San Francisco, California; San Antonio, Texas; London, England; Limerick, Ireland, and Brisbane, Australia.