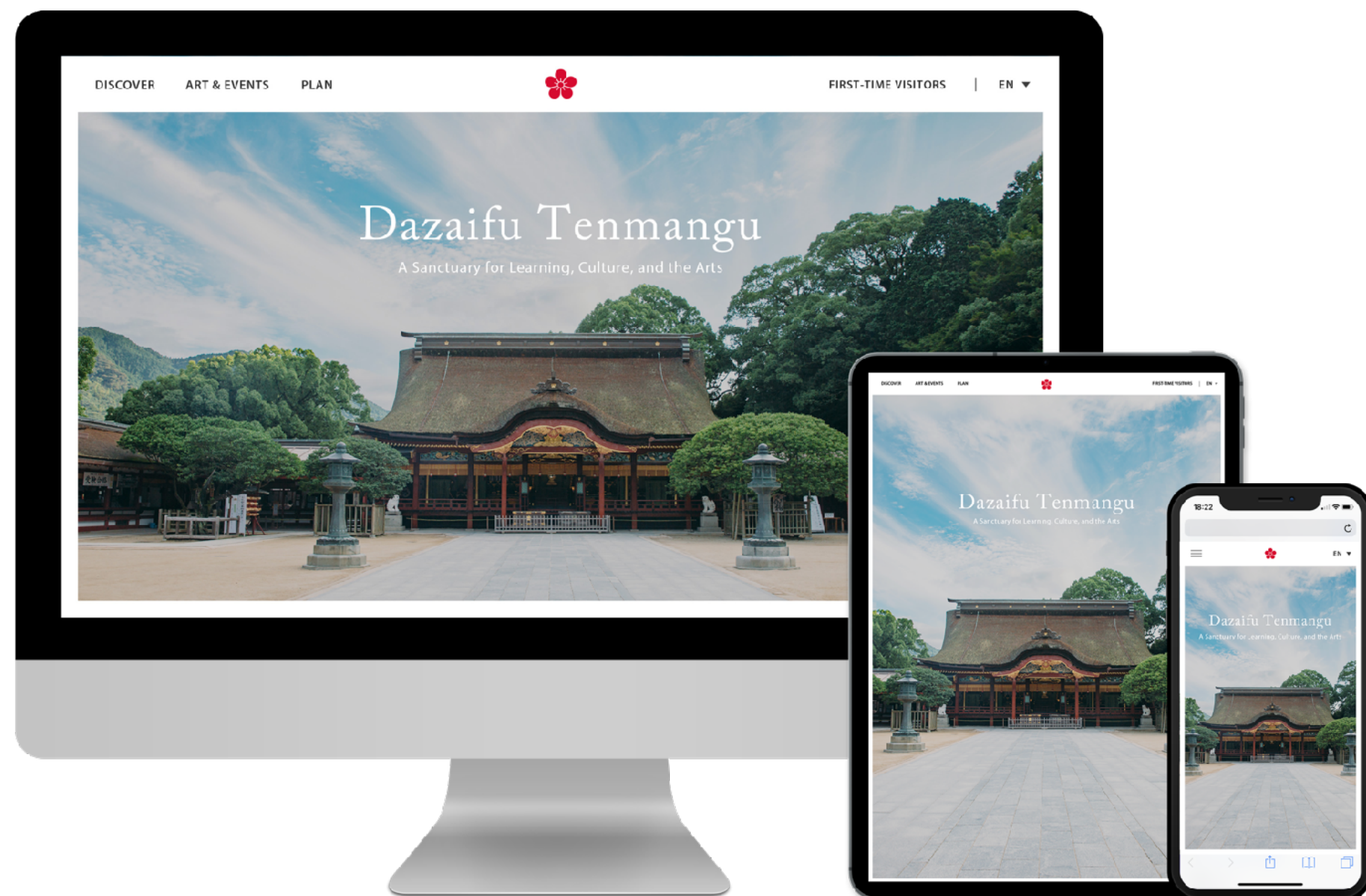


Dazaifu Tenmangu

Welcoming visitors to slow down and spend more time at a revered shrine



Project

Dazaifu Tenmangu

Client

Dazaifu Tenmangu

Year

2015

URL

<https://www.dazaifutenmangu.or.jp/en/>



Solutions

UX & UI Design

Content Strategy

Creative Copywriting

Responsive Web Development

Localization

The challenge

Dazaifu Tenmangu is the head of over 12,000 Tenjin shrines, and more than 10 million people from around the world visit each year. We created a new multilingual website that captures the warm spirit of the shrine and presents its long and important history in a respectful and engaging way. The site encourages visitors to budget more time at the shrine and to visit again in a different season on another trip to Japan.

We created the content in English first, and then localized it into Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean, French, and Thai. We kept the localization teams to one or two, for consistent, accurate translations true to the concept and branding.

Capturing the spirit of Dazaifu Tenmangu

We designed the website and planned its content to capture the warmth of the shrine, based on our own experiences there. We chose a calm color scheme with plenty of white space and simple, elegant fonts to capture the unhurried atmosphere. We approached the user journey through the site much like a movie, with wide-angle photographs to convey the sense of space, and more intimate shots to tell the story of the shrine and the people that imbue Dazaifu Tenmangu with life. We add to the intimate feeling with “Meet the People,” an interview-style page that introduces some of the friendly faces of the shrine, including the priests, the gardener, and the museum curator.

Seasonality and nature

Nature is an intrinsic part of the Shinto religion, and the shrine is set in beautiful grounds which change to the rhythm of the seasons. We showcase the beauty of the grounds through high-quality images that capture the natural environment, from the delicate pink of the plum blossoms to the verdant greens of the ancient camphor trees.

Compared to a physical space, visiting a website can be a slightly cold and static experience, so we worked with an illustrator to create animated elements of the natural environment. As visitors explore the site, plum blossoms unfurl, petals drift and camphor leaves float on an imaginary breeze.

Creating a virtual visit

The user experience emulates a real visit to Dazaifu Tenmangu with easy navigation, smooth scrolling, and subtle animations that create a sense of gentle movement. Rather than overwhelming users with information, they are encouraged to click through to learn more, creating their own path through the site, much like strolling the shrine grounds.

Encouraging visitors to explore more of the shrine

While millions of people visit Dazaifu Tenmangu each year, many visit only the main sanctuary, missing the on-site museums, subsidiary shrines, walking trails, and art installations. We give additional focus to these experiences, introducing the shrine’s cutting-edge contemporary art program and the year-round events which connect the shrine to the community and the world. We explain the many statues and sculptures throughout the grounds, from traditional shrine guardians to contemporary installations, and we give friendly suggestions and advice in the “First-Time Visitors” section.

We introduce all aspects of the shrine, from history to etiquette, through relatable content designed to enhance visitor experience, encourage longer visits and show people why they should return. Visitors of all faiths are welcome to visit and participate in the rituals and customs at Dazaifu Tenmangu. The site conveys this message through a warm, welcoming online experience.