

# Preserve Louisiana at the Old Governor's Mansion

Case Study: October 2020



*Keeping the doors open — virtually*

## Overview

Preserve Louisiana is a cultural institution focused on promoting historical awareness within the state. Founded in 1963, Preserve Louisiana (formerly the Foundation for Historical Louisiana) has endeavored to establish landmark designations and advocate for policy supporting preservation at all levels of government.

In addition to bureaucratic matters, Preserve Louisiana also engages the public with the state's decorated history through exhibitions, lectures, tours of the Old Governor's Mansion, and more. Currently, the organization's mission is: "to promote the preservation of our state's cultural and architectural heritage through education, advocacy and stewardship."

In the spirit of keeping the past part of the present, STQRY's app for the Preserve Louisiana team has helped the Old Governor's Mansion stay relevant in recent years by engaging the public with its rich history. The app also gave the organization a unique advantage when facing the COVID-19 pandemic.

## The Challenge

Preserve Louisiana created their first STQRY app back in 2017. It was primarily a self-guided tour option for visitors who wanted to move through the Old Governor's Mansion at their own pace, or when the Mansion's docents were unavailable. This expanded access and increased visitor capacity for the Mansion overall.

Digital tours are a great option for cultural institutions for a variety of reasons, including complete control over the content of the tour itself and modern visitor engagement strategies.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic created unique challenges for museums, most of which had to completely shut down all operations for months and were looking at a significant loss of revenue for an unforeseen amount of time.

Fortunately, the Old Governor's Mansion was well-suited to handle the pandemic with the STQRY app, becoming one of a few cultural institutions that was able to remain open (virtually), charge admission and bring in revenue during the pandemic.

## Key Features & Functionality

### App Highlights

Educational Resources

Gamification

Used for on and offsite touring

### Key Features

Quiz

Badges

Keypad for Access code

General Site Information

Multimedia Content

Mapping

### Key Functionality

Interpretation (audio guides, tours)

Self Guided Tours

Virtual Touring

Online and Offline Capabilities

Gamification (badges & quizzes)

Educational Resources

Alternative Option for Guided Tours



# story Preserve Louisiana at the Old Governor's Mansion



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**- Christina Lake, Director of Education and Museum Curator for Preserve Louisiana**

## The Solution

As the COVID-19 crisis began, Christina Lake, Director of Education and Museum Curator for Preserve Louisiana, added engaging features and updates that allowed users to get the full experience of the Old Governor's Mansion at home on their own devices. Staff also came up with a plan to start charging digital admission.

“We wanted to make the app relevant for when we reopened to the public and for continued access at home and in the classroom,” said Lake. “We are expanding the app to include archived recordings of our heritage lecture series, as well.”

The app's focus on virtual tours and learning experiences makes it particularly relevant to the school-age population, providing uniquely enriching educational experiences from home.

“In March 2020, I expanded the app to include badges, quizzes, and current exhibits,” said Lake. These features make the digital experience of the Old Governor's Mansion far more interactive for younger users, which is perfect for parents or teachers navigating the transition to virtual education.

“The badges have been a fun addition that we have used as a ‘check-in’ option and a way to generate a ‘completion grade’ for classroom use. I am looking forward to new, more interactive additions!” said Lake.

## The Result

While Preserve Louisiana developed their app well before the pandemic began in an effort to engage visitors with Louisiana's history in new and exciting ways, it has proven to be a staple to their business model during difficult times.

“The app was an accessible tour platform while [we] were closed during the quarantine, and a way to remain relevant to our members and friends,” said Lake. “It has continued to be a positive enhancement, as we have not invited our docents to return at this time (Louisiana just entered Phase 3 and we have had low visitation). The app allows visitors to still tour the Mansion, but with enhanced features.”

STQRY's app allowed the Preserve Louisiana team to interact with their visitor base while keeping their docents safe during the pandemic, as many of them are part of the high-risk population. When the

Old Governor's Mansion fully reopens, they will be holding off on docent tours and using the app as the sole method of guided tours in order to reduce potential contact and maintain social distancing.

By using the app's features in creative and innovative ways, Preserve Louisiana's STQRY app allowed the Old Governor's Mansion to be one of the few art institutions to charge digital admission and bring in revenue during lockdown. With the app, Preserve Louisiana was able to successfully keep the past part of the present during historically challenging times.

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**If you are interested in setting up a free demo, please contact us to schedule an appointment.**

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