

## CASE STUDY

# Optimizing the Brand Experience



### ABOUT ST. ELMO'S

St. Elmo Steak House has been a landmark in downtown Indianapolis since 1902. It is the oldest Indianapolis steak house in its original location, and has earned a national reputation for its excellent steaks, chops, seafood, and professional service. Frequenting by a long list of celebrities, professional athletes and politicians, and the recipient of numerous industry and national awards, St. Elmo Steak House is recognized as one of the finest restaurants in the country, and a must-stop for all visitors to Indianapolis.

# 40%

sales increase  
in the first year

As an upscale brand, where their clientele have high expectations for quality and service, St. Elmo Steak House wanted to ensure their eGift Card offering and customer experience, was of the highest quality and consistent with their brand.

They had reviewed a number of eGift Card services, including one that was an “add on” option to a table reservation system they use. They quickly learned that some services had significant limitations including: limited branding and options for both the website experience and the eGift Cards, gift card buyers being redirected to generic third party sites, and limited mobile capabilities for both the purchase and storage of eGift Cards (eg. no mobile wallet capabilities)

St. Elmo's felt their customers would not be pleased with either the gift card buying or receiving experience, and as a result that gift card sales could be negatively impacted. Their primary objectives were then to find a solution where the online gift card (both eGift Card and physical gift card) buying experience fit exactly with the St. Elmo Steak House website look and feel, that properly represented their brand experience, where visitors were not redirected to a third party site, and that would optimize online gift card sales.

# SUCCESS STORY

After an extensive review of their options, St. Elmo's chose Buyatab to provide the technology and services to facilitate the online sale of both eGift Cards and physical gift cards from the St. Elmo website. Buyatab also

provides branded Customer Support and assumes 100% liability for any credit card chargebacks. assumes 100% liability for any credit card chargebacks.



Buyatab designed the online gift card buying experience to fit exactly with the St. Elmo

website and brand standards. Website visitors appreciate the url doesn't change to a 3rd party. The visitor is presented with a choice of visually interesting custom St. Elmo's gift card designs, to which they can add a personal message. The buyer has the option of sending the eGift Card by email or text message, and can have it sent immediately or easily select the date for delivery. Physical Gift Cards can be sent by mail or courier. If the gift card buyer is visiting the website with their mobile device, they still have an outstanding and easy buying experience due to website mobile optimization.

This high quality and branded experience is designed to optimize sales and prevent potential card buyers from "bailing out" that might be experienced with lessor quality services where visitors may question the authenticity, quality, or even the safety of the system.

The recipient of the eGift Card appreciates the branding and designs, personal messages, and overall quality giving them confidence in the authenticity of the gift card. They have the option to either print the gift card or save it to their mobile device, including storing it in a mobile wallet for easy display when the visit the restaurant.

*“Everything is branded 100% how we want it. It works seamlessly on our website and looks very professional.”*

Bryn Jones,  
Director of Marketing

*The St. Elmo Online Gift Card Program has been a tremendous success right out of the gate. In the initial year, there's been an overall increase in gift card sales of nearly 40%, including \$100k of sales in the very first month after the program launch, which far exceeded expectations.*



### **Results**

The St. Elmo Online Gift Card Program has been a tremendous success right out of the gate. In the initial year, there's been an overall increase in gift card sales of nearly 40%, including \$100k of sales in the very first month after the program launch, which far exceeded expectations. Much of that growth is attributed specifically to eGift Cards which now outsell physical gift cards, and in doing so is reducing costs associated with physical gift card production, shipping, and operations. St. Elmo's also save costs and ensures the highest quality experience by having Buyatab manage the online sales process, customer service, and fraud protection.

Perhaps even more important than the increased gift card sales, relates to the need for an optimized customer brand experience, which is nicely summed up by St. Elmo's Director of Marketing, Bryn Jones, "Everything is branded 100% how we want it. It works seamlessly on our website and looks very professional." St. Elmo Steak House is anticipating continued growth of the program and to ensuring that the online gift card experience is consistent with the legacy of this iconic American brand.

