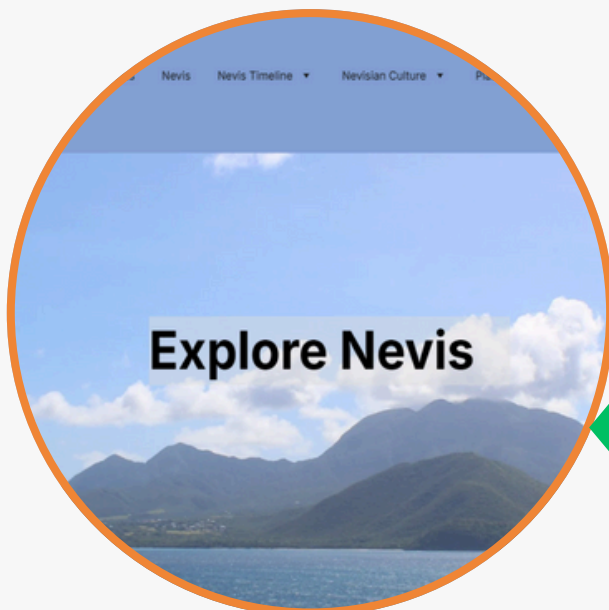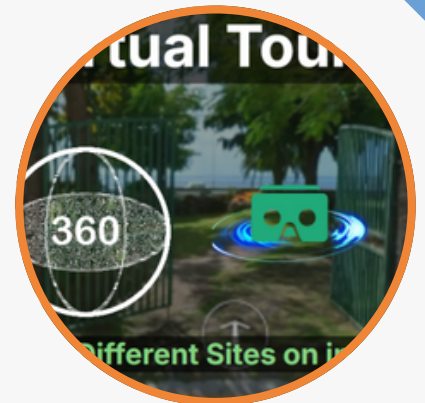Nevis360

2023 / 2025

Virtual Tour Project
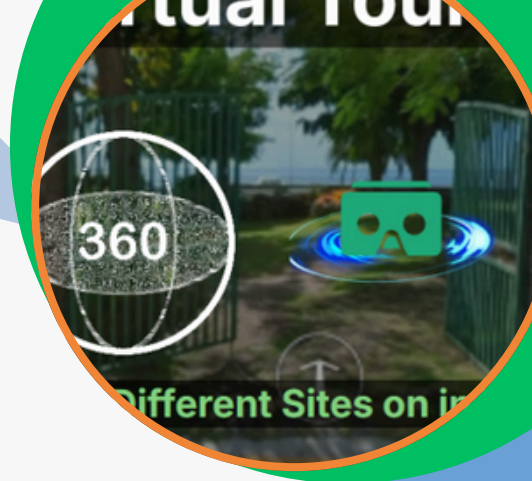
Digitally Nevis! Nevis VR Experience

Developed By
Arcquela Bendeito
Research and Documentation Officer

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

This VR tour project was developed independently by the author, Arcquela Bendeito, in the capacity of Research & Documentation and Intangible Cultural Heritage Officer at the Nevis Cultural and Development Foundation (NCDF). While aligned with my professional interests and responsibilities, this project was not an official assignment of the organization.

I gratefully acknowledge Regency Assurance for sponsoring this initiative and providing their full support throughout its development.

I also extend sincere thanks to the Department of Youth and Sports for recognizing my work through the Youth in Cultural and Historical Preservation award, which further motivated this effort.

Appreciation is due to the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society and the Nevis Cultural and Development Foundation for access to archival materials that were instrumental in the research and development stages.

Finally, I would like to thank my small but dedicated volunteer team; Jonathan Ward, Zoe Bendeito, and Travis Elliott, for their invaluable assistance with fieldwork and research.

Project Summary

In July 2022, I was honored to receive the Youth Impact 12 Award in the category of Youth in Cultural & Historical Preservation. This prestigious recognition celebrated my dedication to preserving Nevis' cultural heritage and promoting historical awareness among younger generations. Building on this achievement, I have used the Youth Impact 12 Award as a foundation to initiate and bring this project to life, contributing to Nevis' ongoing efforts in cultural preservation and historical education.

Nevis360, "Digitally Nevis! Nevis VR Experience project was conceived as part of the Youth Impact 12 Award Initiative, a recognition program supported by the Nevis Department of Youth and Sports and sponsored by Regency Assurance.

This project aims to preserve and showcase Nevis' historical sites, events, and landmarks through the immersive technologies of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), making them accessible to a global audience and raising awareness about Nevis' rich cultural heritage.This tour will provide an interactive, 360-degree experience that offers detailed views of key historical landmarks, enriched with multimedia content.

Objectives

The initiative aims to increase visibility for Nevis' cultural assets, drawing attention to the island's natural beauty, historical landmarks, and heritage, while also offering an engaging learning experience for people of all ages.

- Digitally preserve historical sites and landmarks.
- Creates an engaging and educational experience that merges historical and learning with entertainment, making it appealing to a wide range of audiences, especially students and youth.
- Can be use as a tool to attract tourists and showcase the beauty and cultural heritage of Nevis to a global audience.
- Promoting Nevis as a cultural and historical destination, positioning the island as a key point of interest of tourists and researchers.
- Leveraging the growing interest in virtual and augmented reality among younger generations to increase their engagement with and understanding of Nevis' history and heritage.
- Offering a flexible, online platform where individuals, regardless of location or physical ability, can explore Nevis' historical sites at their own pace and convenience.
- Established an easily accessible, digital record of Nevis' historical landmarks, aiding in educational research and public knowledge.

Rationale

Virtual historical tours offer a unique opportunity for students, visitors, and others to explore historically significant locations and understand their importance from the comfort of their devices. This innovative approach serves as an invaluable tool for providing relevant information about historical sites, thus raising awareness and increasing public interest in history.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the popularity of virtual and augmented reality has surged, particularly among younger audiences. These technologies present an engaging way to raise historical awareness and connect people to cultural heritage in a more interactive and accessible manner.

Other features and benefits of virtual historical tours:

360-Degree Views: One of the standout features of virtual historical tours is the 360-degree view, allowing visitors to explore a site from multiple angles. This immersive experience, navigable via mouse or touchscreen, gives the sensation of physically being at the location.

Multimedia Content: Virtual tours often incorporate multimedia such as videos, images, and audio descriptions, enhancing the experience and making it more informative. These elements can be used to explain the historical significance of the site, showcase artifacts, or provide guided audio tours.

Interactive Elements: Quizzes, games, and challenges can be integrated into virtual tours, ensuring visitors stay engaged and motivated to learn. These interactive features help visitors retain important facts and make the learning experience both enjoyable and memorable.

Accessibility: Virtual tours are accessible to anyone, regardless of location or physical ability. They provide an opportunity to explore and learn about historical sites without the need to visit them physically, overcoming barriers related to finances, health, or travel restrictions.

Convenience: Virtual tours allow users to explore historic sites at their own pace, anytime, anywhere, as long as there's an internet connection. Visitors are not pressured by time constraints and can revisit parts of the site as often as they like.

Safety: In addition to offering an alternative during times like the pandemic, virtual tours also provide a safe means of exploring historical sites when travel is restricted due to political, social, or safety concerns.

Project Budget

$2,500 XCD

Budget Expenditure:

- Tools and Equipment: $1,634.34
- Website and Hosting: $865.66

Tools and Technologies

Capture & Content Creation

- Digital Camera (Canon Rebel T6) , to take high quality photos and videos around the sites

- 360-degree camera (Insta360 One X2), which captures panoramic views of the sites.

Development & Design

- 3DVista Virtual Tour Software is used for 3D mapping and building the virtual tours, enabling smooth navigation and clickable hotspots.

- Interactive Multimedia: Incorporates videos, audio, and archival images and descriptions for deeper engagement.

Access & Hosting

- Web hosting (Hostinger) provides the online platform where the virtual tour website is built and accessed globally.

- Mobile and web access, which makes tours accessible via smartphones, tablets, and computers, making it easier to access them easily and anywhere anytime.

- Virtual Reality (VR) Platform, which allows users to explore the sites using VR headsets or directly on the web or software application.

Performance & Visibility

- Analytics and tracking to monitor website traffic to understand visitor behavior and assess engagement with the website and the tours. This helps improve user experience, track the reach of the project globally, and gather data to support future development and outreach strategies.

- Search Engine Optimization to increase the visibility and reach a wider audience, ensuring the site can be easily discovered on Google.

Process and Setup

To successfully create a virtual tour, the variety of tools and equipment listed above were used in a coordinated process:

Research and Information Gathering

Before visiting any site, detailed research and documentation are conducted. This involves collecting historical information, architectural details, and cultural significance through the museum's archives, interviews, and published materials.

Photography and Videography

A Canon Rebel T6 digital camera is used to capture high-quality photographs and videos of the sites. Both wide-angle and close-up shots are captured to document the site and its artifacts comprehensively.

An Insta360 One X2 360-degree camera is used to capture panoramic shots. It is mounted on an invisible selfie stick and/or tripod with high-resolution settings. Carefully positioning the tripod at eye level at certain points ensures a natural and engaging perspective.

Virtual Tour Construction
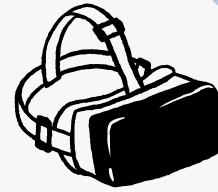
Captured media and research materials are uploaded into 3DVista Virtual Tour software. In this software, scenes are created with interactive hotspots are added and multimedia elements such as audio narrations, music, text descriptions and video clips and links are embedded.

Website Setup and Hosting

The completed tours can be exported as apps for viewing on desktops and mac os. However, to be accessible across devices, they are hosted through Hostinger, providing a reliable, global-access website platform and easily accessible via computers, tablets, smartphones and VR headsets.

Analytics, Tracking, and Optimization

Google Analytics is integrated into the website to monitor visitor engagement and behavior, helping to improve the experience over time. SEO tools are also utilized to optimize site content and increase visibility on search engines, making it easier for audiences to discover and explore the virtual tours.

Creation Process and Reflections

Period: January to March 2023
Date of Report Prepared: 12th April 2023

From January to March the 360 virtual tour progress was slow but well crafted. In January information and media content were collected for the historical sites Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton, Bath Hotel Estate and also the different buildings in Charlestown.

Ending January to February Bath Hotel Estate and Alexander Birthplace were photographed, compiled and constructed into a 360-degree tour using equipment that was funded by Regency Insurance the Insta360 One x2 camera and software called 3DVista.

During this time a small group was formed to help with photographing and retrieving information on the Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton. Assisting me was Zoe Bendeito, who was the 2nd photographer for additional media content, and Jonathan Ward (former museum attendant) assisted me with the main camera and helped with research.

We've gathered media content for the tours from the Archives under the care of the Nevis Historical Conservation, the Nevis Tourism Authority website, the Nevis Cultural Development Foundation Library, YouTube, Patrick 'Daddyplay' Howell's personal collection, and other sources.

By March the two historical site tours were completed (the Bath hotel needs more tweaking) and ready for public viewing, but unfortunately outsourcing the tour was a bit tricky.

The tours can be available to be accessed by downloading and executing as an application that can be executed on MacOS and Windows, it's not exactly what I have envisioned for distribution and display because it still has limitations in accessibility.

A website is taken into consideration to be a platform to host the tours accessible on both mobile, PC and possibly VR Headsets. For now, the website is currently in the works and a decision has been made to
brand the project.

Challenges encountered:
Despite the benefits, the project faces several challenges, such as the need for quality content and technical limitations.

Must provide a high-quality, immersive experience, which can be difficult to achieve. Additionally, the technology required to create 360-degree virtual tours is constantly evolving.

Weather and environmental changes beyond our control interfere with our fieldwork. For example, the day before Easter, I rallied the team to venture to a historical site in town, but as we got there and set up for shooting, the downpour of rain came and didn't stop until later in the night, so we had to postpone.

Post-production: Some shots may need do-overs because of lighting or objects obstructing the view or because certain angles were hard to capture.

People, mainly in crowded and public places, are difficult because people refuse to be shot but are not willing to move, or there is heavy traffic of vehicles obstructing shots. (Solution: Shooting on a holiday or Sunday where there is less traffic.)

Cost: Admittedly, this project's workload and production expenses were underestimated, but we managed to pull through and make it work with the original budget laid out. Maintaining this project's platform may require extended funds beyond the 2 years.
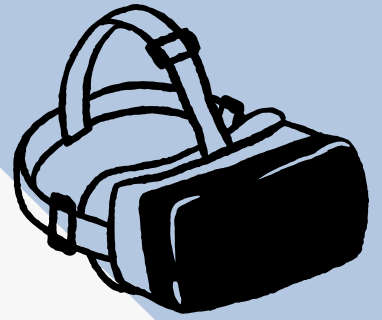
Completed Virtual Tours
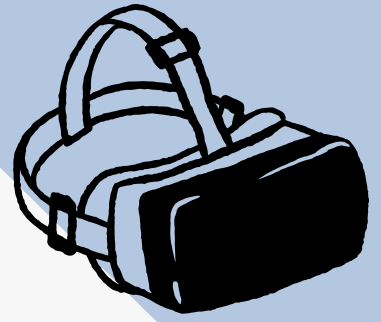
- <u>Museum of Nevis History; Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton & The Christena Disaster Memorial.</u> **Last Updated: 11 November 2023**

- <u>Jewish Cemetery.</u> **Last Updated: March 2024**

- <u>Hamilton Estate Ruins.</u> **Last Updated: March 2024**
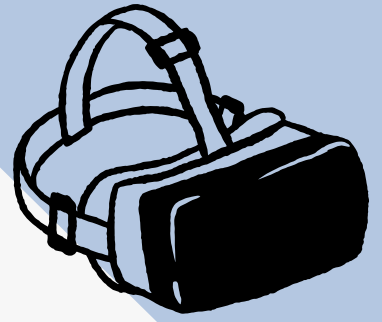
- <u>Fort Charles</u>. **Last Updated: February 2024**

- <u>Bath Hotel, House, and Springs: First Tourist Hotel in the Caribbean</u>. **Last Updated: February 2024**

- <u>Cottle Church Ruins: First Church on Nevis to Welcome Enslaved Africans and Slave Owners for Worship Together.</u> **Last Updated: 05 May 2024**

Virtual Tours: In Production

- Eden Brown Estate Ruins

- St. Thomas' Anglican Church

Website Design Overview

The Nevis360 website, in its current 2024 design, presents a clean, modern, and intuitive layout that emphasizes visual storytelling and immersive exploration. This design is a departure from the previous 2023 version, now focusing on a minimalist approach that allows historical and cultural content to take center stage while maintaining a strong visual identity reflecting the essence of Nevis.

The color palette is natural and welcoming, inspired by the island's landscapes with blues, greens, and neutral tones to evoke a sense of calm, authenticity, and connection to heritage. Typography is carefully chosen for readability, blending a modern sans-serif font for body text with elegant accent fonts for titles and section headers, creating a professional yet inviting appearance.

Designed with mobile-first principles, the website performs smoothly across all devices, offering touch-friendly navigation and optimized load times. Subtle hover effects, smooth scrolling, and transition animations add polish without distracting from the content.
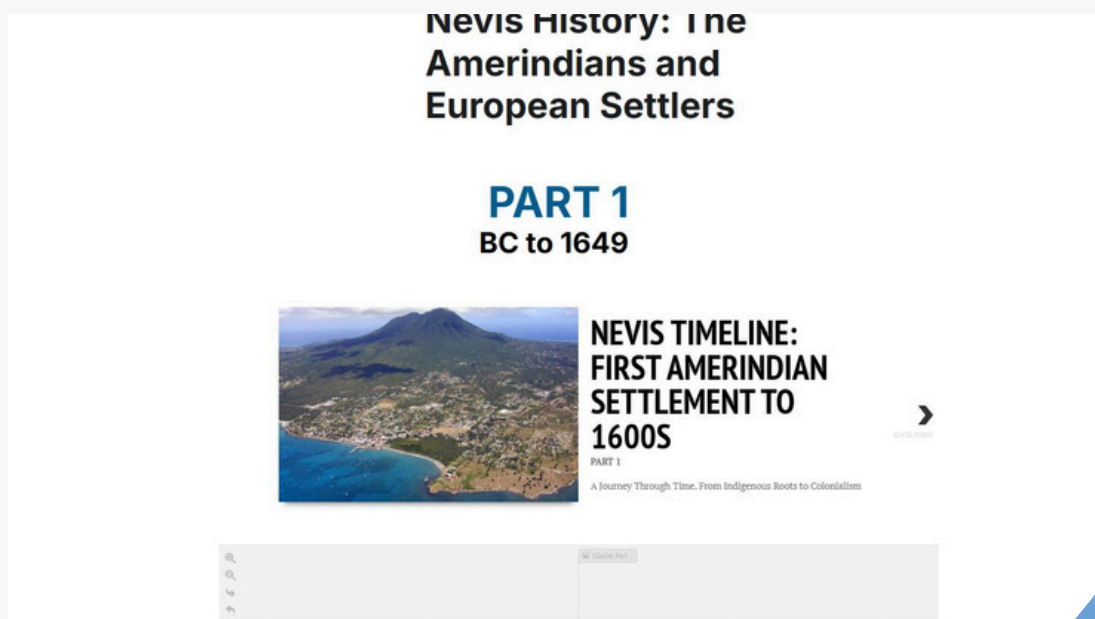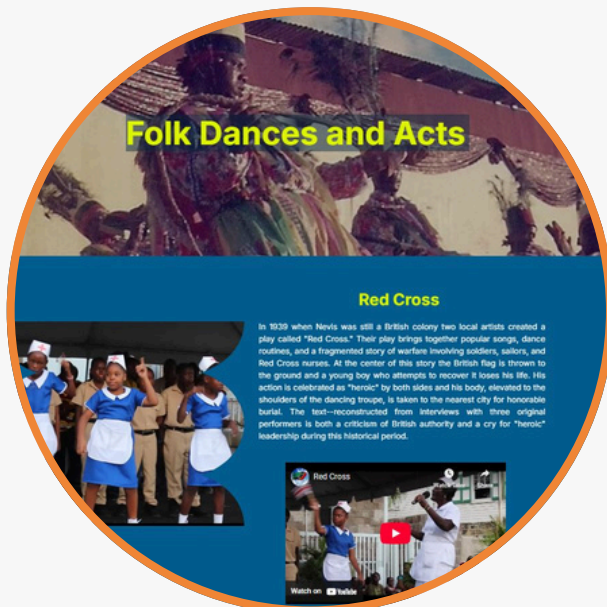
https://nevis360.online/
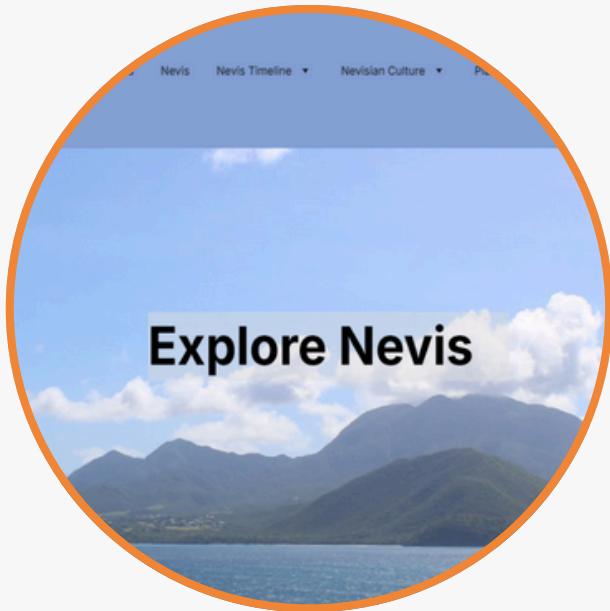
Explore Nevis

The website Nevis360.online provides a rich, interactive exploration of Nevis's history, culture, and significant landmarks through virtual tours and curated educational content. Here's a summary of its offerings:

A Nevis Timeline details the island's evolution from prehistoric times to modern-day, highlighting key events such as colonization, the sugar plantation era, independence movements, and cultural milestones.

https://nevis360. online/timeline

Nevis History: The Amerindians and European Settlers

PART 1
BC to 1649

NEVIS TIMELINE: FIRST AMERINDIAN SETTLEMENT TO 1600S
PART 1

A Journey Through Time. From Indigenous Roots to Colonialism

Nevisian Culture: Showcases vibrant traditions, including folk dances, music, and proverbs, emphasizing the island's African, European, and indigenous cultural blend. It celebrates notable Nevisians and their contributions to various fieldslProfiles significant landmarks like the Hamilton Estate, Bath Hotel and Hot Springs, Fort Charles, and the Jewish Cemetery, offering insights into their historical and cultural importance

https://nevis360.online/nevisian-culture
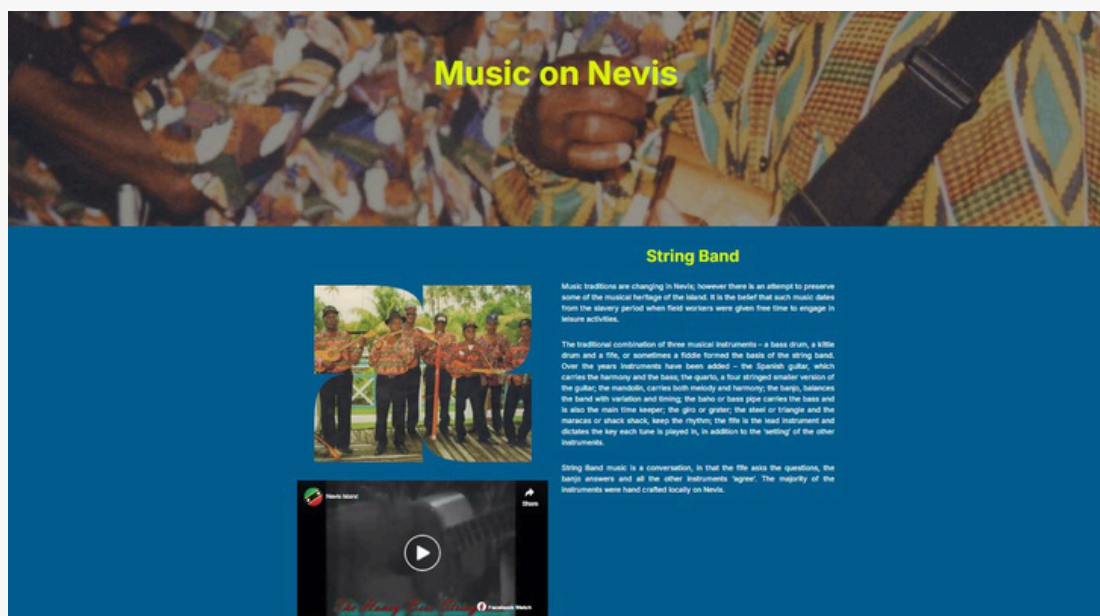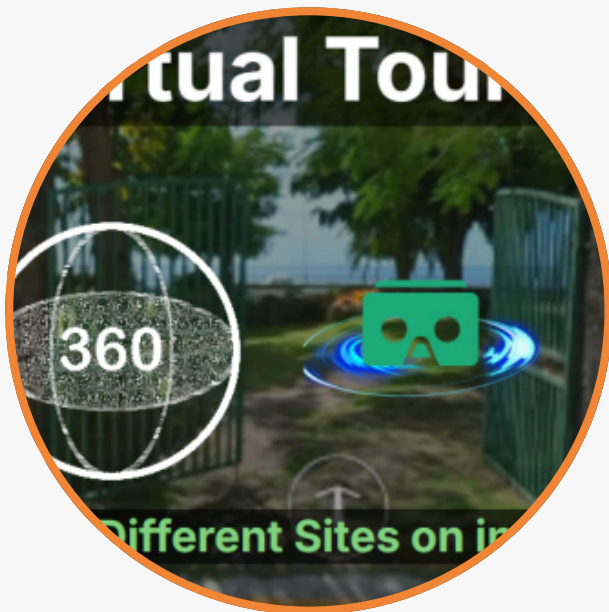
Immersive 360-degree tours bring Nevisian history to life. Visitors can explore iconic sites such as the Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton and Charlestown, supported by multimedia content for an engaging experience.
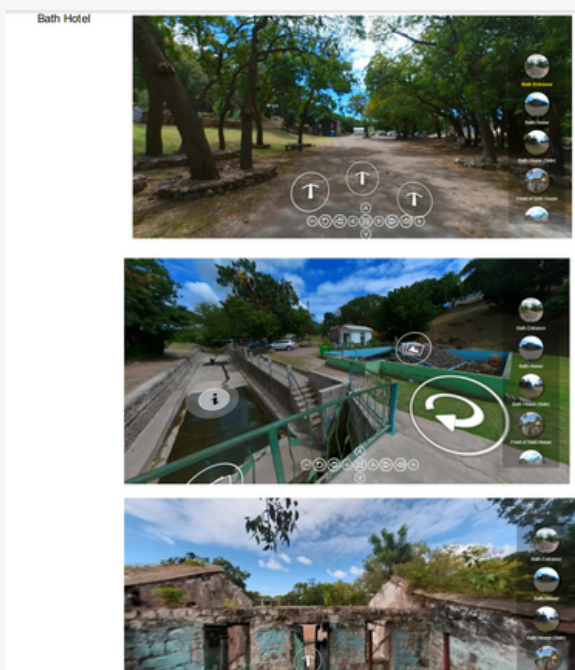
https://nevis360.online/360-virtual-tours
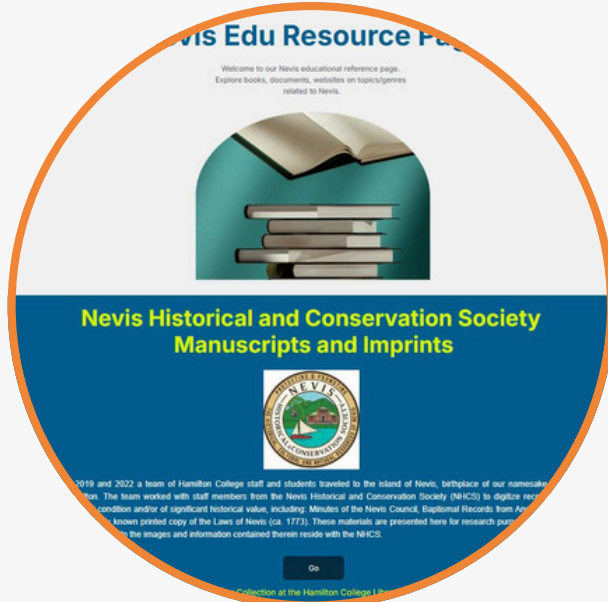
Explains the island's geographical features, including Mount Nevis and its coastline, alongside an overview of the Constitution of Saint Kitts and Nevis, highlighting the unique autonomy of Nevis.

https://nevis360.online/nevis

Website Analytics Summary

Here is sample analytics data retrieved for nevis360.com, covering two distinct data sources and time periods. Notably, Google Analytics was only implemented in 2025, meaning earlier insights are limited to basic hosting-level metrics. Despite minimal marketing efforts, the website has demonstrated discoverability, underscoring the value of foundational SEO practices.

Hosting-Level Analytics (Pre-2025)

Sample server log data—likely from mid-November (year unspecified)—provides technical access information:

- Total Bandwidth Used: 401.83 KB
- Total Requests: 448
- HTTP Errors: 4xx and 5xx codes logged
- Top Requesting Countries:
  - Spain (6), United Kingdom (4), Netherlands (3), Canada (2), Denmark (2)
- Additional Logs: Total requests and unique IP addresses over several days
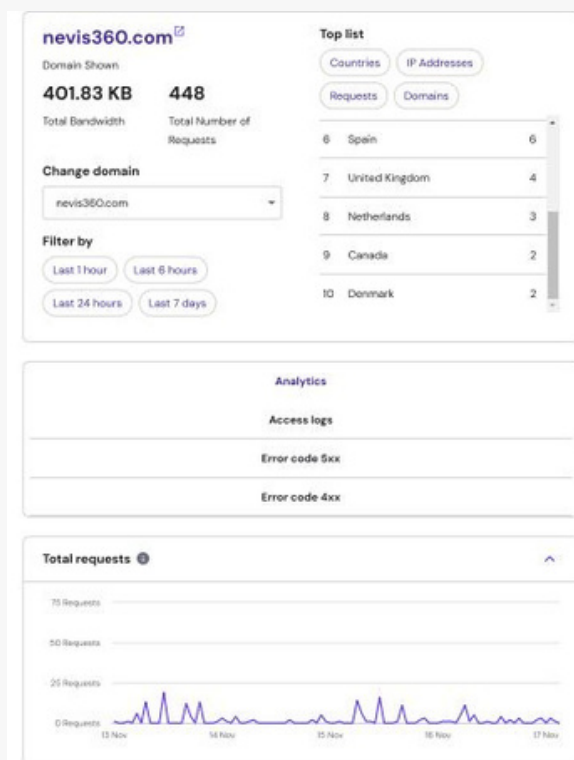
While limited in behavioral insights, this data reflects international access activity and helps track general website traffic.

Google Analytics Data (March 31 – April 27, 2025)
Since setting up Google Analytics, more detailed data is now available to assess user behavior and content performance. Highlights from this 28-day sample include:
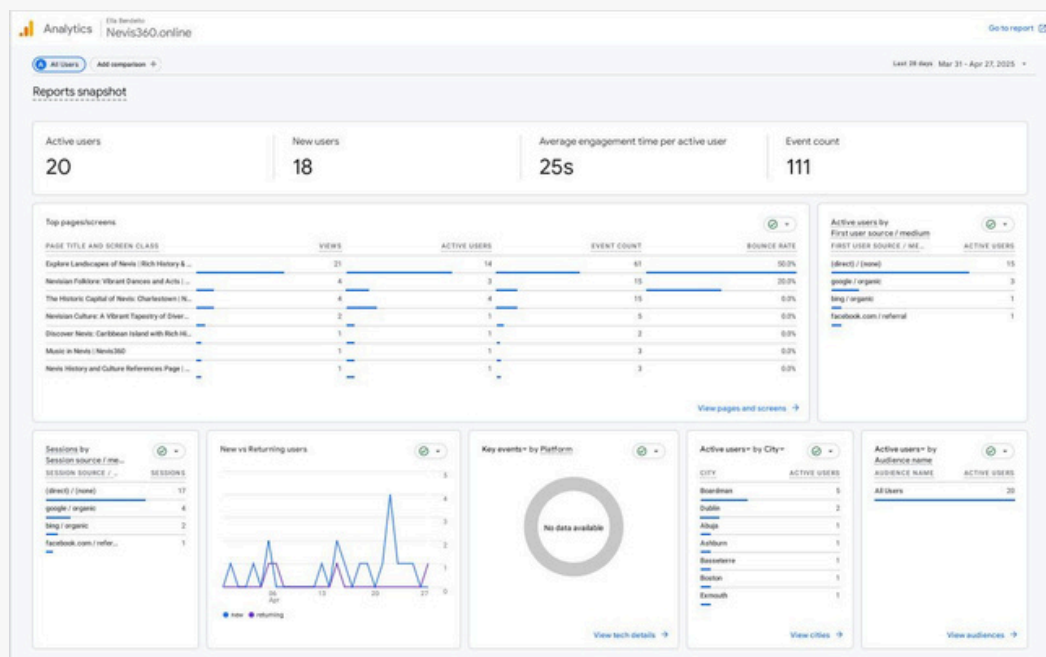
- Active Users: 20
- New Users: 18
- Sessions: 25
- Average Engagement Time per User: 25 seconds
- Average Session Duration: 1 minute 13 seconds
- Event Count: 111
- User Demographics:
- Top countries: United States (8 users), Brazil, Ireland, St. Lucia, United Kingdom (2 each), plus others
- Key cities include: Boardman, Dublin, etc.
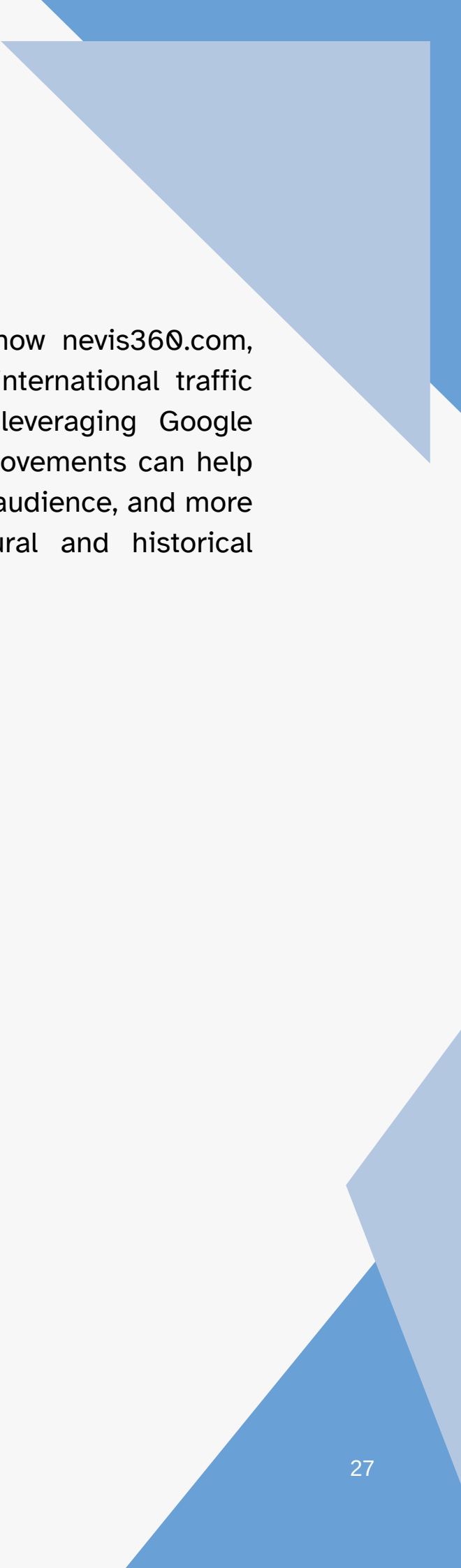
- **Popular Landing Pages:**
- Homepage ("/"), "/charlestown", "/nevisian-folklore", "/nevisian-culture"
- **Top viewed content:**
- "Explore Landscapes of Nevis..." (21 views, 14 users)
- "Nevisian Folklore..." (4 views, 3 users)
- Traffic Sources:
- Direct: 13 new users
- Organic Search: 4
- Organic Social: 1
- Sessions arrived via: direct, Google, Bing, and Facebook

The Role of SEO and Analytics

Even without a structured marketing campaign, nevis360.com has remained discoverable across various countries, thanks in part to basic search engine optimization (SEO) strategies—such as keyword relevance, content structure, and clean metadata. Organic search and direct traffic have shown measurable results, which indicates that the site is optimized well enough to be found by users with an interest in Nevisian culture, history, or heritage.

Now that Google Analytics is active, the website can track how users interact with content, which regions are most engaged, and what search terms or referrals are effective. These insights will be crucial for:

- Improving content based on user interest
- Targeting new audiences
- Enhancing site performance
- Making informed decisions about future outreach and development

The retrieved sample data illustrates how nevis360.com, with minimal promotion, is attracting international traffic and engaging users. Going forward, leveraging Google Analytics alongside continued SEO improvements can help the site grow its visibility, reach a wider audience, and more effectively showcase Nevis' rich cultural and historical landscape.

Feedback

Ella Bendeito
April 24, 2023 · Charlestown

Another Demo of the historical virtual tour but this time at the Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton and the Christena Disaster Memorial.

#Nevis #History #virtualtour #Nevisheritage #SaintKittsandNevis #historicpreservation #insta360official #NevisHeritage #Nevis #caribbean #360videos #photography #museumofthefuture #museum #alexanderhamilton #hamilton— 😌 feeling accomplished with **Jamela JJ** and 6 others at **Nevis Historical and Conservation Society - NHCS.**

YOUTUBE.COM
Birthplace of Alexander Hamilton Virtual Tour Demo
Another glimpse of the anticipated virtual tours of the island of Nevis!#virtualreality #virtualto...

Nicholette Walters, Jamela JJ and 15 others   7 comments   1 share

👍 Like   💬 Comment   🟢 Send   ↪ Share

Ella Bendeito
April 20, 2023 · Charlestown

Subscribe! 📣 📹

#history #virtualtours #NevisNaturally #Nevis #NevisHeritage #SaintKittsandNevis #historicpreservation #insta360official #caribbean #photography #museumofthefuture #museum #alexanderhamilton #hamilton— 😌 feeling excited with **Nicholette Walters** and 8 others at **Hot Springs - Bath Village.**

YOUTUBE.COM
Bath Hotel Estate Virtual Tour Demo
A glimpse of the anticipated virtual tours of the island of Nevis!

Nicholette Walters, DaddyPlay Howell and 7 others   2 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   🟢 Send   ↪ Share

Write a comment...

Ella's Post

Most relevant ▾

Kerdis Clarke
I'm loving it!
2y   Like   Reply

Tammie Liburd-Browne
Wonderful Ella!!
2y   Like   Reply

Nicholette Walters
Awesome ‼️
2y   Like   Reply

La-Tesha Bendeito

Tenor
2y   Like   Reply

Lorenzo Bendeito

Bravo
2y   Like   Reply

Island Girls Rock
Love this! ❤️
2y   Like   Reply

Pamela Martin
Great job Ella!
2y   Like   Reply

Write a comment...

Tammie Liburd-Browne
February 20, 2023 · 🌐

Wonderful Ella!

Department of Youth - Nevis
February 20, 2023 · 🌐

DIGITALLY NEVIS PROJECT LAUNCHED!

Arcquela Bendeito, a 2022 Youth Impact 12 Awardee in the area of Youth in Cultural and Historical Preservation, has launched her virtual reality project and we are over-the-moon excited for Miss Bendeito!

For this project, Arcquela sets out to:

1.) Electronically resurrect historical sites and landmarks in Nevis lost to time
2.) Blend learning with entertainment
3.) Attract visitors to Nevis
4.) Showcase the beauty of Nevis from the touch of a screen.

In a phased approach, Arcquela will first complete a virtual reality tour of Charlestown. The Nevis Bath Hotel was her first stop.

We encourage everyone to support Miss Bendeito's effort to increase the awareness of historical sites of Nevis.

Congratulations, Arcquela!

👍❤️ 7

From: Kate Tebbet- Regency Assurance <ktebbet@regencyassurance.com>
Sent: Friday, May 12, 2023 5:45:33 AM
To: Kerdis Clarke <kerdis.clarke@niagovkn.com>
Subject: Historical Virtual Tours of Nevis

Dear Miss Clarke,

Just wanted to share back that I had a look through the site Arcquela is building and I think its absolutely wonderful.

I found it easy to navigate when I clicked through to the tours. Love the section for feedback. I particularly enjoyed reading the Nevis profile page - some great content – very interesting and engaging.

Please do let her know my feedback and pass on our many thanks for giving us a mention! We are incredibly proud to be able to support her in realizing this brilliant project.

I've attached a selection of our logos from our Graphic Designer. These should work well being high resolution for her site and there are a few options she can choose from if she likes.

Thanks so much and speak soon.

Kate

REGENCY
a s s u r a n c e

Kate Tebbet
Head of Community Engagement

www.regencyassurance.com

LIVE**LIFE**

Future Plans and Development

In the future, the Nevis360.com website could be adopted by the Nevis Cultural Development Foundation (NCDF), as outlined in the "NCDF Culture Website Proposal". The proposal advocates for the NCDF to adopt the website as its official digital platform, addressing the foundation's current lack of an independent website and aligning with its goals of cultural preservation, tourism promotion, and education.

Key Highlights:

Current Need for a Digital Presence: The NCDF requires a website to promote Nevisian culture, engage with the youth and diaspora, and strengthen its partnerships and outreach.

Nevis360.com Alignment: The website already supports NCDF objectives by offering rich cultural content, historical timelines, virtual tours, and a professional presentation. It also boasts existing global reach and a strong foundation for further development.

Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness: Adopting the website would save time and resources compared to creating a new one. The proposal outlines how the website can serve as a dynamic platform for promoting events, showcasing culture and artists, hosting virtual exhibitions, offering educational resources, and engaging with the community.

Technological Details: The website is hosted on Hostinger with a business plan, and it is easily managed using Hostinger's Website Builder. The site can be redesigned to align with the NCDF's branding.

Intellectual Property and Management: Arcquela Bendeito currently holds the intellectual property rights to the content on Nevis360.com, including virtual tours and historical timelines, but is willing to grant the NCDF a non-exclusive license for these assets. Additionally, Bendeito offers to continue managing the website or serve as the main editor.

Buyout Proposal: A buyout fee is proposed for the NCDF to gain full ownership of the website, including development, content, domain, hosting, and intellectual property.

Opportunity for the NCDF: Transitioning Nevis360.com to the NCDF would provide the foundation with a valuable digital platform for cultural preservation, education, and community engagement, helping to expand its reach and enhance its visibility.

Conclusion

This project represents a key initiative to promote and maintain Nevis' cultural heritage through innovative digital solutions. By creating virtual tours through historic websites, the project successfully combines educational values with entertainment, providing a dedicated experience with a diverse audience, from students and history enthusiasts to local and global tourists. Without extensive advertising efforts, the website shows promising levels of use, especially directly and through organic traffic.

Interactive multimedia, 3D mapping and virtual reality integration offer exciting possibilities to formulate how Nevis' rich history and culture is shared with the world. Possibility of adopting nevis360.com to the Nevis Cultural Development Foundation (NCDF). If approved, this website will become a dynamic platform for education, tourism funding and commitment in the community, potentially making a significant contribution to Nevis' digital heritage.