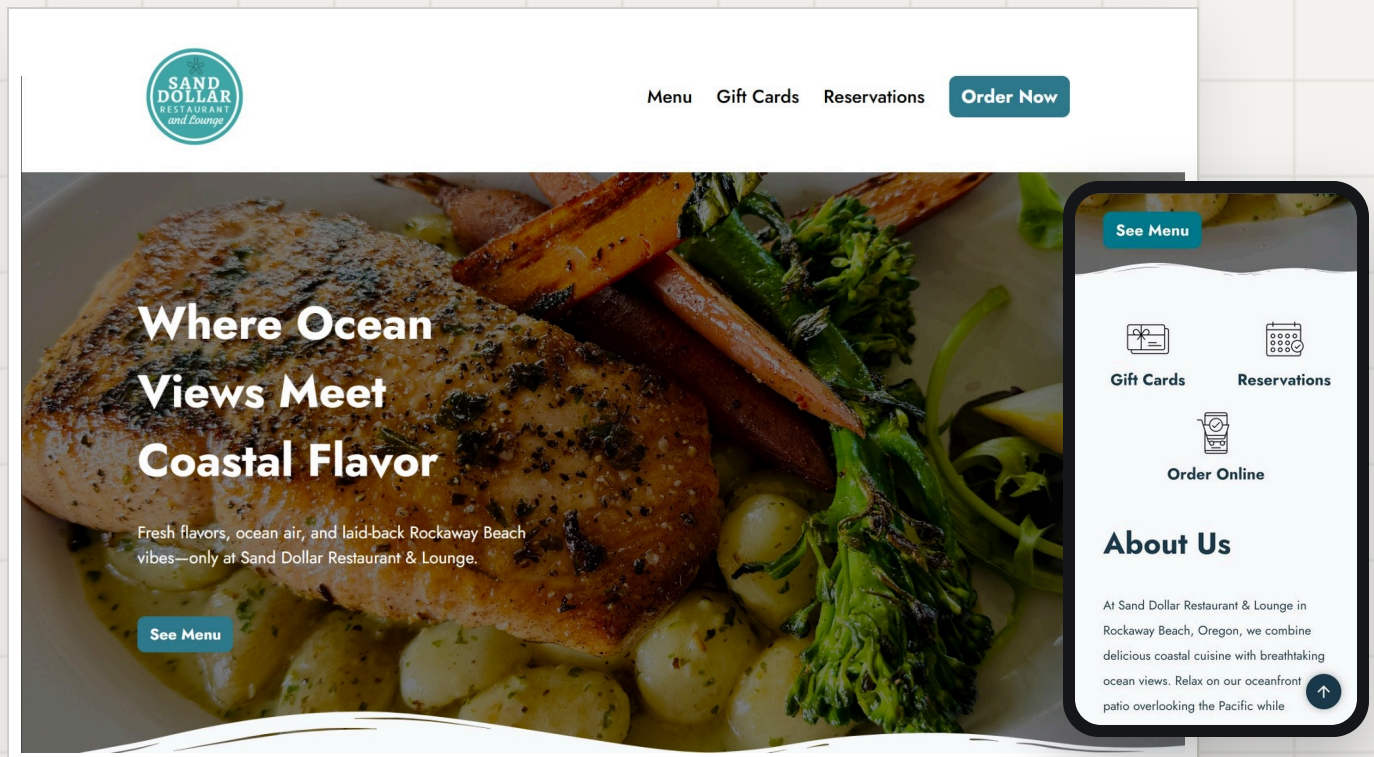


Sand Dollar Restaurant & Lounge

Website Redesign

I rebuilt an oceanfront restaurant's website & tied it into ordering, reservations, gift cards, and Google. Guests can check the hours, see the menu, then open ordering or reservations right from their phone.

DESIGNER Dylan Dwight	ROLE Front-End Web Designer & Developer, UX/UI	TIMELINE April–September 2026 Plus a remote seasonal refresh, October 2026	PLATFORM Shift4 / SkyTab ecosystem
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Overview

Sand Dollar Restaurant & Lounge is a restaurant, bar, and live events venue in Rockaway Beach, Oregon. New competition was opening nearby. The old website wasn't pulling its weight.

Hours & menus were out of date. The main actions were hard to find. Nothing on the site connected to ordering, reservations, or gift cards. For a restaurant that depends on visitors finding it fast, that's a real problem. It gets worse in summer, Sand Dollar's busiest season.

I moved the site from GoDaddy to Shift4 & redesigned it around what guests actually come to do. Then I tied it into online ordering, reservations, gift cards, and the restaurant's Google listing. The goal was one connected system instead of a website sitting off on its own. I wanted guests to find what they need in summer so the restaurant could hold on to its regulars & long term guests instead of losing them to other businesses nearby.

At a Glance

GOOGLE NUMBERS: APRIL–SEPTEMBER 2026

100,000 Google Business Profile views	One System Website, ordering, reservations, gift cards & POS on Shift4	Rehired The owner brought me back for remote seasonal work in October 2026	Positive Feedback from staff, the owner & guests
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My Role

My scope was the website, the Google Business Profile, and the restaurant systems connected to them. The owner handled other listings like Yelp & TripAdvisor. I'm a front-end oriented web designer & developer. I use UX/UI principles to decide what goes where: clear hierarchy, short paths to the main actions, and layouts that work on any screen.

UX Research Guest needs, site audit, page structure	UI Design Layout, navigation, visual direction	Front-End Build Responsive pages in the Shift4 website editor
Content Copy, current photos, menus, hours	SEO & GEO Google listing, search & AI search visibility	Systems & Support Ordering, reservations, gift cards, the POS (point of sale system), staff training

MOVED FROM	GoDaddy Website Builder
MOVED TO	Shift4 website, Shift4 POS, SkyTab online ordering, Shift4 reservations linked with OpenTable, Google Business Profile
SHIFT4 SUPPLIED	The website editor, online ordering, reservations, gift cards, and the POS
I DESIGNED & SET UP	Page layout, navigation, copy, photos, menus, ordering & reservation settings, plus the links between systems

UX Research & Discovery

Most people who look up a restaurant want a few things, fast: Is it open? Where is it? What's on the menu? Can I order or book a table?

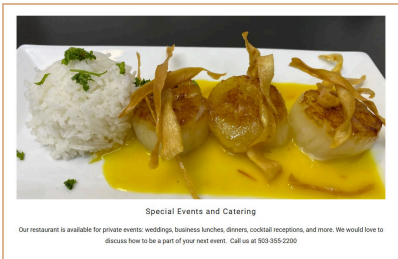
I went through the old site the way a guest would, then lined that up with the questions guests kept asking staff in person & on the phone.

What the Old Site Showed

- The main navigation only had Home & About. The menu, reservations, and online ordering were hard to find.
- The photos were strong, but the page didn't put the most important guest actions first.
- Contact details & hours sat low on the page.
- The contact form was generic & didn't match the decisions restaurant guests are trying to make.
- Food, drinks, catering, and venue info existed but wasn't organized into a clear path.

Behind the Scenes

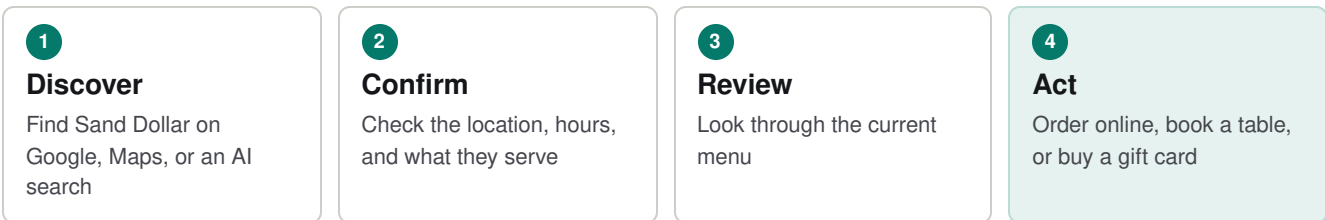
Working with the site day to day showed what screenshots can't. Menus & hours were outdated. Pages took a lot of scrolling. Photos didn't always match the restaurant. There was no real support for online ordering, reservations, gift cards, or events.



BEFORE **EVENTS & CATERING**

Events info existed but had no clear path.

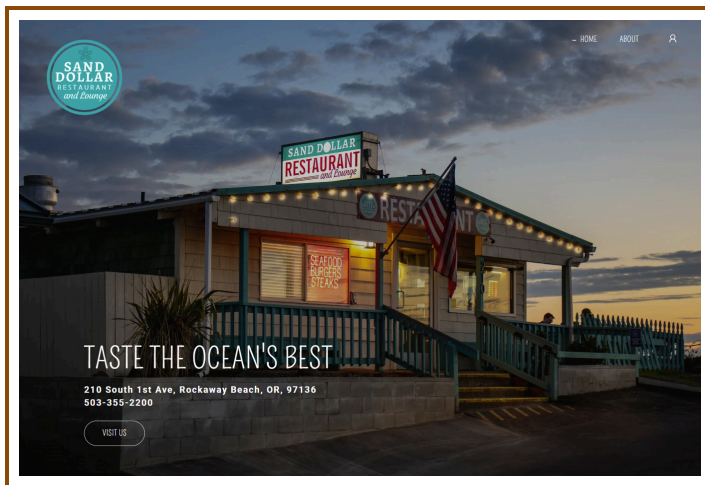
The Guest Path I Designed Around



From Problem to Design Decision

Problem on the old site	What I changed
Navigation only had Home & About	The header leads with Menu, Gift Cards, Reservations & Order Now
Hours sat low on the page, with only today's showing	Visit Us lists hours for every day, plus ordering & reservation cutoffs
No clear path to ordering, reservations, or gift cards	An Order Now button plus shortcuts right under the top banner
Menus & hours were out of date	The menu is real text that I kept current with each seasonal update

Before & After: The Homepage



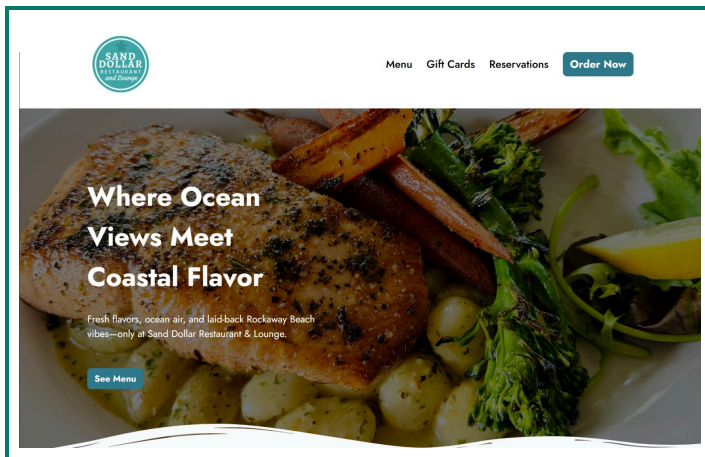
BEFORE

GODADDY

Nice Photo, No Clear Next Step

- Navigation: just Home & About
- One button, "Visit Us"
- No link to the menu, ordering, or reservations
- Hours further down the page

Redesigned Around Guest Actions



AFTER

SHIFT4

Every Main Action Up Front

- ✓ Menu, Gift Cards, and Reservations in the header
- ✓ Order Now stands out as the main button
- ✓ "See Menu" right on the top banner
- ✓ The same actions carry over to mobile

Before & After: Hours & Contact

BEFORE

BOTTOM OF THE CONTACT PAGE



Only today's hours, tucked in a dropdown under the contact form.

AFTER

DESKTOP VISIT US



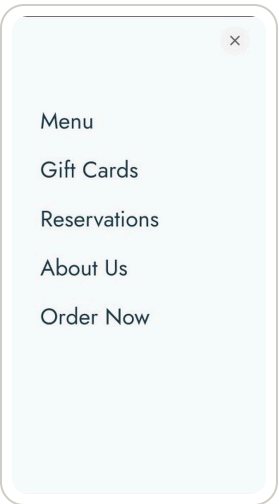
Hours, happy hour, holiday closures, and ordering & reservation cutoffs, right on the page. Captured from the live site in October 2026.

Design & Development Approach

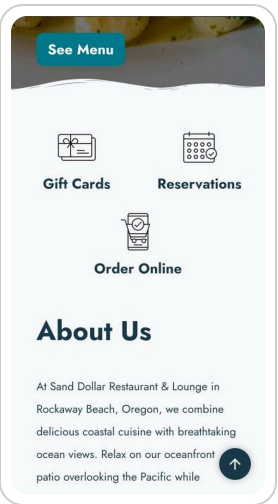
Mobile First: That's Where Guests Are

Lots of people look up a restaurant on their phone right before they decide where to eat, often from the beach, a hotel room, or the car. If the site is cramped or hard to use on a small screen, they move on to the next place. So I laid out every page for a phone first, then scaled it up for desktop.

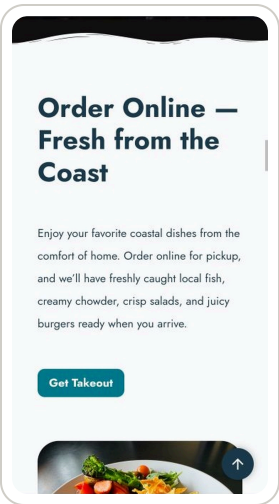
- ✓ **Navigation** turns into a full screen menu on mobile, led by the main guest actions.
- ✓ **Shortcuts** for gift cards, reservations, and ordering sit right under the top banner.
- ✓ **The menu** is real text with descriptions & prices that fits any screen size.
- ✓ **Ordering** gets its own section with a direct takeout button.



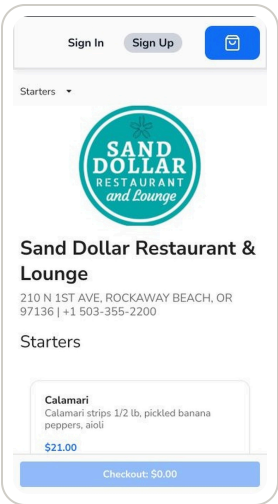
AFTER **MOBILE**
Full screen navigation



AFTER **MOBILE**
Action shortcuts



AFTER **MOBILE**
Order online section



AFTER **MOBILE**
Online ordering menu

Visual Direction

The look pulls from the restaurant itself: the teal logo, current food & dining photos, plus a wave divider that nods to the coast. Simple, warm, and easy to scan.



AFTER **DESKTOP** **MENU**

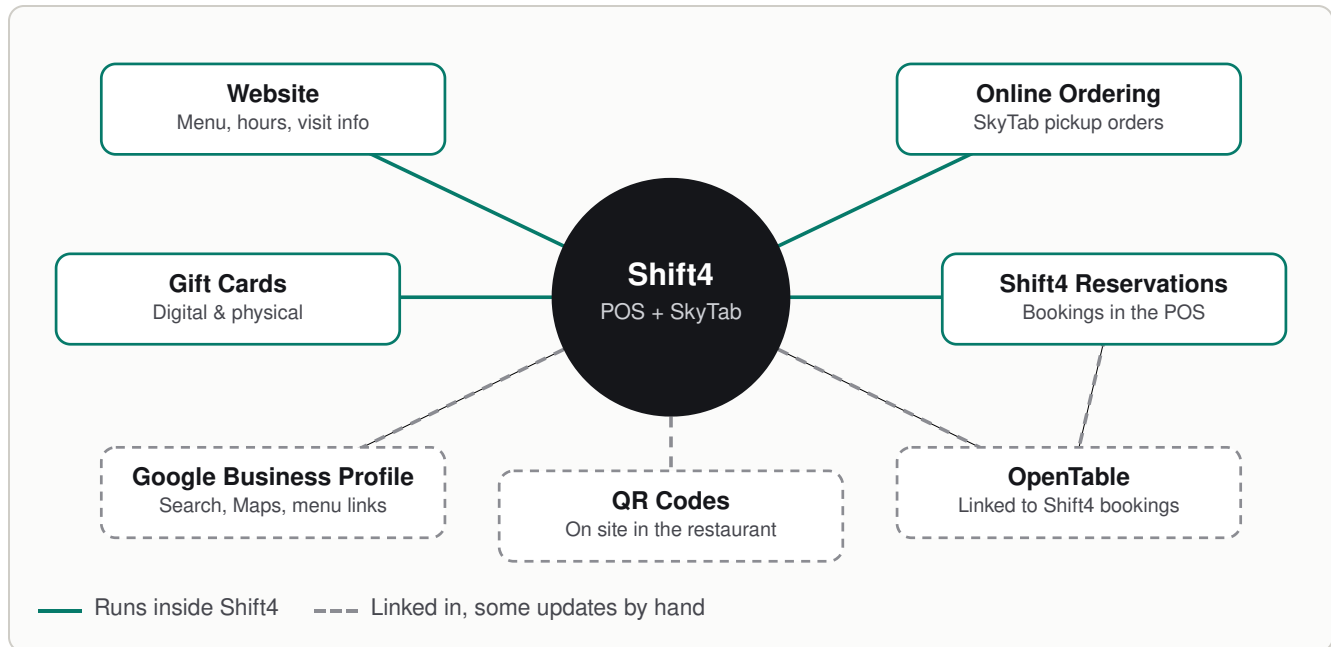
Close view of the Starters section: real text grouped by course with descriptions & prices.

Building an Ecosystem, Not Just a Website

Most of Sand Dollar's guest tools run on Shift4. I set them up to work as one system instead of separate tools.

The website, online ordering, Shift4 reservations, gift cards, and the POS menu all live in Shift4. Google, OpenTable, and the QR codes in the restaurant link back into it.

Not everything synced on its own. I kept hours, menus, and prices consistent by updating each place, publishing the changes, then checking the live pages.

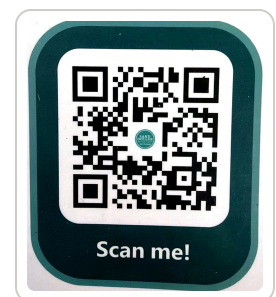


OpenTable & Shift4 Reservations

The restaurant took bookings through both OpenTable & Shift4 reservations. I linked the two so bookings landed in the POS. Staff could see reservations alongside orders in the same system.

QR Codes in the Physical Restaurant

I made QR codes & placed them around the physical restaurant. Guests at a table or by the door could jump straight to the website, menu, or ordering on their own phone.



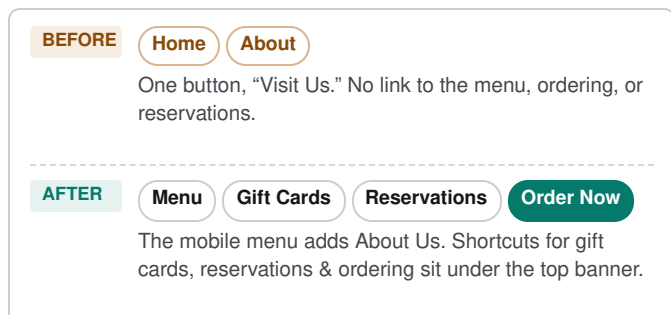
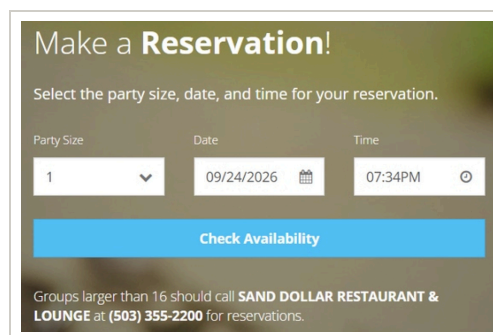
ON SITE QR CODE

QR sign in the restaurant.

The Build

Website

- ✓ Moved the site from GoDaddy Website Builder to Shift4 & redesigned it.
- ✓ Clearer desktop & mobile navigation, new copy, current photos, social links, plus correct hours & location.



AFTER RESERVATIONS

Party size, date, and time in one step, with a phone option for big groups.

[Try the live reservations page](#)

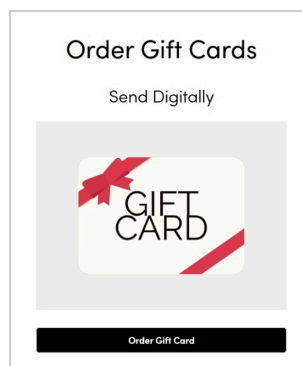
[Open live ordering](#)

Ordering, Reservations & Gift Cards

- ✓ Built & kept up a website menu & a Shift4 online ordering menu, with rules for items that can't be ordered online.
- ✓ Set up online ordering, reservation settings, and seasonal hours.
- ✓ Linked OpenTable & Shift4 reservations so bookings flowed into the POS.
- ✓ Set up digital gift cards & physical gift card options.

Day to Day Operations

- ✓ POS menu & price updates.
- ✓ Device & connection troubleshooting.
- ✓ Staff training on payments & gift cards.
- ✓ Filed Shift4 support tickets & feature requests on a regular basis whenever I hit a gap in their ecosystem, like reservations not being able to block same day bookings or close a single holiday. Online ordering already supported holiday closures.



AFTER GIFT CARDS

Guests can order digital gift cards online. The live page also has a balance check.

[See the live gift card page](#)

SEO & GEO: Getting Found

SEO helps a restaurant show up in search results. GEO (generative engine optimization) is the same idea for AI answers, like when someone asks an AI assistant “where should I eat in Rockaway Beach?”

I treated the restaurant’s info like content that has to be easy for both people & machines to read: clear, current, and the same everywhere it appears.

SEO

- ✓ Site submission, page titles, and descriptions.
- ✓ Location keywords & real menu content on the page.
- ✓ Google Maps & Google Business Profile upkeep: hours, photos, plus links to the website, menu, ordering, and reservations.

GEO

- ✓ The same name, address, phone, and hours everywhere: the site, the Google listing, the ordering pages.
- ✓ Menus as real text, with dishes & prices that can be read & quoted.
- ✓ Plain, descriptive copy that answers what guests ask: what it is, where, when it’s open, and what it serves.
- ✓ A complete, current Google listing.

After the Work: My AI Prompt Test

I tested local prompts across these AI tools. Sand Dollar’s name & website came up as the number one result.

Tools

ChatGPT by OpenAI

Claude by Anthropic

Google Gemini

Google AI Overviews

Perplexity

Perplexity models

Sonar 2

GPT-5.6 Terra

GPT-6.1

Gemini 3.7 Flash

Claude Sonnet 5

Claude Opus 5.5

Kimi K3

GLM 5.3

Grok 4.6

Nemotron 3 Ultra

These were my own tests, not a tracked ranking. AI answers can change over time.

Results & Impact

These numbers come from two different dashboards with different time frames. I keep them apart because they aren’t steps in one path.

Google Business Profile				
APRIL–SEPTEMBER 2026				
SEPTEMBER IS A PARTIAL MONTH				
100,000	39,000	15,187	5,592	5,876
Profile views	Searches	Customer interactions	Website clicks	Menu content views

In August 2026 alone, the profile logged 709 direction requests.

3,542

Website visitors

6m 43s

Average visit time

178

Clicks into the SkyTab online ordering flow

~5.0%

Ordering clicks ÷ website visitors (178 ÷ 3,542)

Online ordering clicks are clicks into the ordering flow, not completed orders or revenue.

A Gap in the Reporting

The same reporting view showed 0 attributed orders & \$0 in attributed sales alongside the 178 clicks into ordering. It didn't establish how those clicks related to completed orders. That's a reporting gap I'd like to see Shift4 close.

What People Noticed

Staff responded well to the new website & the cleaner POS workflow.

Training got easier because menus & payment steps were clearer.

The owner & guests gave positive feedback. Guests used the site.

Clear, current info online meant fewer basic questions from guests.

These results reflect the combined effect of the redesigned website, updated local search presence, restaurant operations, seasonality, and guest interest, not the redesign alone. No revenue, completed orders, or sole cause is claimed.

METHOD AND LIMITATIONS

Source materials: Google Business Profile performance dashboards supplied by the client/project owner and the SkyTab website analytics dashboard. Google metrics cover April–September 2026, with September incomplete as of September 20, 2026. Website/SkyTab metrics use a separate latest-31-days window. Google views, searches, and interactions are platform-reported performance measures and should not be interpreted as a deduplicated, step-by-step user funnel. Online-order clicks show intent to open the order flow; they are not attributed orders or revenue. The August direction request figure comes from the same Google Business Profile records. The AI prompt results come from my own tests after the work was done, across the tools & Perplexity models listed on the SEO & GEO page, not a tracked metric, and AI answers can change over time.

Key Takeaway

A restaurant website only works when it's connected. Google, the site, the menu, ordering, and reservations all have to tell guests the same thing, especially on a phone. People went for the menu & the website most. That backs up putting the menu, hours, and main actions first.

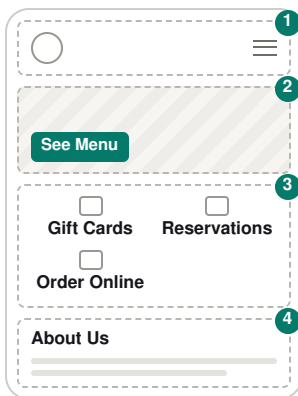
Reflection & Next Steps

What I Learned

The best call I made was treating the website, ordering, POS, and Google listing as one system & keeping hours & menus the same in each place. Most of the old site's problems were really consistency problems. Staying consistent is as much an operations habit as a design choice.

Working inside the restaurant while building for it changed how I prioritize. The questions guests ask at the door or on the phone became the site structure. Next time I'd set up better tracking on day one so the impact is easier to measure.

Working Within Shift4's Template



Shift4's website editor set the page layout. My design work was in what I could control: section order, navigation, copy, photos & settings. This diagram shows the top of the mobile homepage. I drew it after launch from the live site.

- 1 The menu button opens a full screen menu led by the main guest actions.
- 2 "See Menu" sits right on the top banner.
- 3 Shortcuts for gift cards, reservations & ordering sit right under the banner.
- 4 About Us comes after the main actions.

After the Job: Rehired for Seasonal Work

APRIL–SEPTEMBER 2026

Redesign, launch, and ongoing upkeep while employed at the restaurant.

OCTOBER 7–8, 2026

The owner was happy with the results & brought me back for remote seasonal work. I handled the Fall/Winter refresh: new hours, ordering cutoffs, reservation windows, menu updates, and holiday notices. I updated the website, Shift4, and Google, then checked the website, ordering & reservation changes live. One hours change touched eight different places.

How I Use AI in My Workflow

I use AI tools for research, drafts, and checks. This case study was put together with generative AI help from my own notes, screenshots, and data. I edited it & checked every claim myself.

Next Steps

- ✓ A regular seasonal update routine so hours, menus, ordering, and listings stay in sync every time the menu changes.
- ✓ Keep pushing Shift4 on feature requests, like letting reservations block same day bookings & close single holidays.
- ✓ Set up better before & after tracking for future changes.