



# JEDCO

## Design + Development of JEDCO.org Website

1.07.2025

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Plaine Studios

2521 Daniel Island Drive

Charleston, SC 29492

## Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission:

We are excited about the opportunity to collaborate with JEDCO on the redesign and development of your new website—a project that represents the centerpiece of your Attraction Campaign and the digital front door to Jefferson Parish. As a longstanding partner of JEDCO for the past 20 years, Plaine Studios has a deep understanding of your mission, values, and audience. This relationship uniquely qualifies us to execute a website redesign that effectively showcases Jefferson Parish as a premier destination for business, innovation, and quality of life.

For this project, we propose a dynamic, user-centric website that not only reflects JEDCO's brand identity but also embodies modern design standards and advanced functionality. Built on the WordPress content management system, the site will be fully responsive, intuitive, and visually impactful, designed to engage prospective businesses, site selectors, and community stakeholders alike. Our approach includes integrating interactive data visualizations, embedded videos, and robust search capabilities to tell the Jefferson Parish story in a clear and compelling way. Additionally, we offer the option to elevate the traditional search function by incorporating a trained ChatGPT-powered chatbot. This innovative feature will enhance the site's accessibility and user experience by providing users with quick, conversational answers to their questions about starting a business, securing funding, or exploring available business and tax incentives.

Our experience working with JEDCO ensures that we understand your goals and expectations, and we are fully equipped to meet the scope of work outlined in your request for proposals. With two decades of collaboration, we have built a trusted relationship that has helped JEDCO communicate its economic development efforts to the world.

As the owner of Plaine Studios, I am personally invested in this project and available to negotiate the terms of the contract to ensure mutual success. We look forward to continuing our work with JEDCO and contributing to the growth and prosperity of Jefferson Parish. Thank you for your consideration, and we are eager to discuss how we can bring this vision to life. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or to schedule a meeting.



**Chris Brown**

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## Qualifications + Experience

### Overview

Plaine Studios was founded in 2003 with the vision of making high-quality design and digital media accessible to businesses and individuals looking to tell their stories in a compelling way. While we began as a small side project focused on digital video production, the business truly blossomed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Returning to a rebuilding New Orleans, we embraced the challenge of helping local businesses and organizations reestablish their presence through thoughtful design and innovative digital solutions, cementing our role as a trusted creative partner in the community.

Plaine Studios has since evolved into a full-service creative agency offering web design, branding, and digital marketing services. Guided by a client-focused, collaborative approach, we pride ourselves on crafting work that is not only visually stunning but also strategically aligned with our clients' goals. Today, we continue to help businesses grow by providing tailored services and innovative solutions that reflect their unique identities and aspirations.

Plaine Studios has had the privilege of serving a wide range of clients across numerous industries, including real estate and apartment rental, government agencies, restaurants, entertainment venues, retail businesses, e-commerce companies, law firms, advertising agencies, higher education, non-profits, bands and musicians, resorts and spas, opera companies, and even railroads. Representative clients include 1st Lake Properties, Crane Real Estate Brokers, JEDCO, and Cellular Skin RX, with the majority of our work concentrated in the greater New Orleans area. Each project has been an opportunity to bring our passion for design and storytelling to life, crafting solutions that balance creativity with purpose.

Over the years, our work has earned recognition for its quality and impact. Plaine Studios was named a 2007 New Orleans CityBusiness Innovator of the Year and has been featured in industry publications such as the *New Big Book of Layouts* for our menu design and *Designing for the Greater Good* for our Greater New Orleans Youth Orchestra website in 2010. We've won two ADDY awards for website design and were profiled in *BusinessWeek* magazine for our contributions to post-Katrina New Orleans. These accomplishments underscore our commitment to delivering exceptional work that resonates with clients and their audiences alike.

When you work with us, you're working with a family who cares about your story and your success.

## Project Team

### Jacee Brown - Creative Director + Designer

[Jacee's expertise](#) combines design with a deep understanding of the social impact of digital communication. She studied Graphic Communication and Sociology at the University of Southern Mississippi, then joined Neill Corporation, creating web and print media for Aveda lifestyle salons and spas. At Loyola University New Orleans, Jacee rose from lead web designer to Director of Web Communications, responsible for the entire online presence of the university. Now Principal UX Designer at [Benefitfocus](#) (a Voya Financial company), she brings her extensive background in user experience and design strategy to Plaine Studios, ensuring that every project is crafted with intention, usability, and visual appeal.

### Chris Brown - Project Manager + Lead Developer

[Chris's journey](#) began with a Communications degree from Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, where he developed a strong foundation in broadcast journalism. His passion for digital design and storytelling flourished after moving to New Orleans in 2001, where he had the opportunity to work alongside acclaimed designer Brett Calzada at New Emit. Together, they built a respected web design firm serving the Gulf South, an experience that inspired Chris to launch Plaine Studios in 2005 as a side project focused on digital video production. After Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and brought an end to New Emit, Chris and Jacee returned to New Orleans with a renewed vision to grow Plaine Studios into a full-service creative digital marketing agency dedicated to helping clients craft distinctive and impactful digital presences.

Married since 2007, the couple now resides in Charleston, South Carolina with their three sons.

### Jason Heisel - Designer + Developer

Jason is the Owner and Creative Director of [Tip Top Design Stop](#) in West Palm Beach, Florida. He has a demonstrated history of exceptional work in the graphic design industry for over 20 years and is skilled in typography, print, video, motion graphics and web design. Jason has a B.A. in Graphic and Interactive Communications from Ringling School of Art and Design. Some featured work can be found [here](#).

### Kevin Kawa - Senior Search Engine Optimization Strategist

With over 25 years of experience in web design, development, and SEO/SEM campaign management across higher education and the private sector, Kevin brings a wealth of expertise to every project. Holding a BA from Georgia State University and an MA from Emory University, both in Cinema Studies, he currently manages over 100 SEO clients, delivering tailored strategies for success.

## Relevant Experience

### [JEDCO.org](http://JEDCO.org)

We have had the pleasure of partnering with you since 2004, guiding you through multiple website redesigns over the years.

### [1stLake.com](http://1stLake.com)

Since 2004, we have also had the privilege of partnering with 1st Lake Properties, guiding them through multiple website redesigns to adapt to the evolving digital landscape. Over the years, we've developed a custom WordPress-based site tailored to their needs, complete with a proprietary property administration database to streamline their operations. As a testament to our longstanding relationship, we are excited to be in discussions to collaborate with them once again on an upcoming 2025 redesign, ensuring their digital presence remains modern, functional, and aligned with their goals.

### [CraneBrokers.com](http://CraneBrokers.com)

We designed their website, creating a platform that remains active and highly relevant, effectively supporting their mission to help homeowners buy and sell properties in the greater New Orleans area.

## References

Scott Rojas - JEDCO Director of Facilities and Information Technology

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Kelsey Scram - JEDCO Director of Marketing & Communications

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## Conceptual Approach of Project

Our primary objective for this project is to redesign and optimize your website to reflect the quality and accessibility of your work while enhancing its functionality and performance.

### Summary of Approach

At Plaine Studios, we're excited to partner with JEDCO to create a modern, dynamic website that reflects Jefferson Parish's key role in the global economy while enhancing brand visibility, engagement, and usability. The following outlines our proposed approach to meeting JEDCO's needs, ensuring a seamless, data-driven, and visually engaging user experience for a diverse audience.

#### Website Design and Development

**Custom Design:** We will craft a visually appealing, modern design that aligns seamlessly with JEDCO's brand identity and Jefferson Parish's values. Our designs are fully custom, created specifically for your needs without relying on templates or pre-purchased themes. The inspirational and reference sites provided by JEDCO in the RFP reflect a modern aesthetic that we're excited to collaborate with you to achieve, tailoring it to your unique vision and goals.

**Responsive Design:** The website will be fully responsive, ensuring optimal functionality and user experience across desktops, tablets, and smartphones.

**UX/UI Optimization:** An intuitive, user-friendly interface will be developed to maximize engagement and satisfaction for all target audiences, including site selection consultants, investors, and entrepreneurs.

**Brand Standards:** We will strictly adhere to JEDCO's Brand Standards Guide, seamlessly incorporating approved graphics, images, and videos to effectively convey Jefferson Parish's story. Please note that this proposal does not include the acquisition of new photography or video, whether through stock purchases or custom shoots. However, we maintain strong relationships with professional photographers and videographers in the Jefferson Parish area and would be happy to coordinate with them to procure new visuals for the site. Any costs associated with this would fall outside the scope of this proposal and would require a separate budget.

#### Content Management System (CMS)

**WordPress CMS:** We will use [WordPress](#) as the CMS for its flexibility, ease of use, and familiarity with JEDCO's team. This will allow non-technical staff to manage and update the site effortlessly. Your redesigned site will be built on a user-friendly platform that makes



managing and updating content simple and efficient. This setup will empower you to easily add new pages, posts, or updates as your organization grows, all without requiring technical expertise. To ensure optimal functionality, we will select plugins based on the specific needs of the site, as well as the stability and security of those plugins at the time of integration. Potential plugins may include [Gravity Forms](#), [The Events Calendar](#), and [Yoast](#). Where perpetual licenses are available, they will be included within the project budget. For plugins without a perpetual licensing option, we will secure the maximum number of years allowed under the budget.

**Content Framework:** A robust content structure will be developed to organize JEDCO's information, data, and graphics in a logical and accessible manner.

**Dynamic Content:** Interactive data, maps, and graphics will be integrated into the site as determined during the project, designed for quarterly updates by non-technical staff.

### Important Features

**Content Integration:** Existing content will be seamlessly integrated with new material to ensure consistency and relevance.

**Interactive Maps, Data, and Graphics:** We will create visually engaging interactive elements to enhance user engagement and provide valuable information.

**Video Integration:** The homepage will feature embedded videos to highlight key messages and announcements effectively.

**Event Registration and Online Payments:** Utilizing the WordPress plugin [The Events Calendar](#), we will implement a robust event registration and payment system, securely integrated with PayPal for seamless transaction processing.

**Pop-up or Header Scrolling Feature:** We will include a feature for displaying important data, which can be easily toggled on or off as needed.

**Robust Search Functionality:** A powerful search tool could be integrated to help users locate information quickly. But wait! There is a better way...

**Search Aggregator:** We could implement a search aggregator to compile and display relevant data sources, enhancing usability. But wait! There is a better way... here it comes...

**Conversational Chatbots:** To take searching a big step farther and into the future, we would leverage [ChatGPT](#) and [Chatbase](#) to develop up to five customized chatbots designed to address a variety of topics relevant to JEDCO's audience. These chatbots would be trained using the documents available on the JEDCO website, along with any additional resources of value, to create a highly functional and accurate tool for answering site visitors' questions. From setting up a new business to securing funding or applying for business and tax incentives, these chatbots would provide clear, conversational guidance. Unlike a traditional search function, which requires users to know exactly what they're

looking for, the chatbot allows users to ask questions in their own words, intuitively guiding them to the right information or resources. This enhances the user experience by bridging the gap between what users want to know and where to find the answers. As documents are added or updated in the future, JEDCO will be trained on how to retrain the chatbot with the new data or documents.

Plaine Studios is excited to showcase a semi-trained version of the JEDCO Chatbot. Check out the demo here: [JEDCO Chatbot Demo](#).

**Lead Generation Forms:** Multiple forms will be designed to capture leads and facilitate communication with prospective and current business owners.

**Document Upload Capabilities:** Users will have the ability to upload documents easily, supporting various community functions.

### SEO and Analytics

**Search Engine Optimization:** A thorough SEO keyword analysis will be conducted to optimize the site for search engines and improve visibility in target markets.

**Analytics Integration:** Advanced analytics tools will be integrated to track user behavior and site performance, providing actionable insights for continued improvement.

**Optional Monthly Maintenance Plan:** As part of our ongoing SEO services, we will conduct a comprehensive monthly evaluation to ensure your website continues to perform optimally and adapts to evolving market trends. This includes:

1. **Performance Tracking and Reporting**

We will analyze key metrics like website traffic, keyword rankings, click-through rates (CTR), bounce rates, and conversions using tools like Google Analytics and Search Console. This helps us identify areas of success and opportunities for improvement.

2. **Technical SEO Checks**

We will ensure the technical foundation of your site remains strong by monitoring site speed, mobile responsiveness, and core web vitals. Regular checks will be performed to address any crawl errors, broken links, or indexing issues.

3. **Backlink Monitoring and Strategy**

We will assess the quality of your backlinks and identify opportunities to build high-value links that enhance your domain authority.

This monthly evaluation keeps your online presence strong and effective by ensuring that your website remains competitive, adapts to changes in the market, and continues to drive meaningful traffic and conversions. We will provide you with a detailed report each month and are always available to meet with you to discuss strategy or provide any needed clarifications.

## Website Ownership and Training

**Ownership Transfer:** Upon completion, the fully functional website will be turned over to JEDCO for continued management. JEDCO will retain full ownership and will have the option to contract with us for future updates and support on an as-needed basis.

**Documentation and Training:** Comprehensive training materials and documentation will be provided to ensure JEDCO's team can confidently manage and update the website.

## Website Hosting, Security + Maintenance

The website will be hosted on a secure, dedicated server located at a state-of-the-art data center in Virginia, with our team managing all aspects of server uptime, maintenance, and updates. We will also be responsible for core updates to the WordPress platform and its plugins to ensure the most secure environment possible. We will also make regular backups of the site, which will also be accessible to you. We do not offer email account setup or management as part of our hosting services.

Since JEDCO will be managing the site updates, there is no need for a monthly retainer for ongoing website maintenance. Instead, as in our longstanding relationship with JEDCO, we will bill for any requested tasks that exceed 15 minutes, charged at our hourly rate in half-hour increments. Prior to starting any work, we will seek your approval and, when appropriate, offer alternative solutions based on our expertise to ensure the most effective and efficient approach.

## Organization

[Chris Brown](#), Owner and Project Manager of Plaine Studios, will serve as the primary point of contact and will oversee all communications between the Plaine Studios team, JEDCO, and any other stakeholders involved in the project. He will ensure that all project updates, feedback, and deliverables are communicated clearly and efficiently, facilitating seamless collaboration and alignment throughout the project's lifecycle.

## Timeline

### I. Proposal Acceptance

Upon acceptance of the terms outlined in this proposal, we will promptly begin scheduling the project milestones detailed below. Before moving to the next phase, we will collaborate closely with you to discuss and finalize the design direction, ensuring a shared vision and alignment on creative goals. Timelines will be clearly communicated throughout the project.

### II. Content Strategy and Site Architecture (2 weeks)

We will begin by reviewing the content strategy and target audiences, which will serve as the foundation for developing a strategic sitemap and content and keyword structure for the site. Prior to starting the design phase, we'll carefully plan the content and site flow to ensure that the design aligns with the site's SEO and content objectives. Once the overall structure and page layout have been finalized, we'll move forward with creating the homepage design, setting the tone for the entire site.

### III. Initial Homepage Design (3-4 weeks)

We will begin by creating an initial homepage design tailored to the preferences and recommendations discussed with you in advance of starting. Three (3) unique homepage design concepts will be delivered for review, with up to two rounds of revisions available for the selected design to ensure it aligns perfectly with your vision.

### IV. Interior Pages Design (2 weeks)

Once the finalized homepage design is approved, we will move forward with designing up to three key page templates, determined collaboratively to best support your site's structure and functionality. We will deliver a single version of each page type, with up to two rounds of revisions included to ensure the designs meet your expectations.

### V. Design Approval

Once all page layouts have been finalized, we will request email confirmation of design approval before moving into the development phase.

### VI. Initial Build (4 weeks)

Following design approval, we will begin the initial build of the site, focusing on the core page types approved during the design process. Once the initial build is complete, JEDCO will review the pages to either approve them or provide feedback for revisions before proceeding to full-scale development.

### VII. Initial Build Approval

Before proceeding with the full site build, we will seek approval of the initial build. Once JEDCO approves the initial build, we will move forward with scheduling and commencing the full build.

### VIII. Full Build (3 weeks)

We will proceed with building out the entire website, ensuring that when the full build is presented for review, it is a fully functional, launch-ready site.

#### IX. Full Build Revisions (2 weeks)

Two rounds of revisions to the full build will be included to address any necessary adjustments.

#### X. Quality Assurance Testing and SEO Optimization (1 week)

We will conduct thorough testing across a range of browsers and devices to ensure the site displays consistently and functions seamlessly. During this phase, all search engine optimization (SEO) tasks will be completed to prepare the site for a successful launch.

#### XI. Website Launch (**Estimated Launch Date: June 21, 2025**)

With your approval, we will move forward with launching the website, followed by thorough post-launch testing to ensure optimal functionality, performance, and speed optimization. While the proposed launch date represents a realistic timeline contingent on close collaboration and meeting key milestones, we are fully aware of the importance of ensuring the site is live by June 30, 2025, and will work diligently to meet this deadline.

## Cost Proposal

Plaine Studios proposes a comprehensive redesign of the website that aligns with the outlined budget below, delivering a modern, responsive design and robust functionality.

### Website Design + Development

**Total Investment:** \$68,800

### Website Hosting + Security

*We do not provide email hosting.*

**Total Investment:** \$300 per month, billed annually in advance, starting from the site launch date.

### Chatbot Integration

*This setup and training of the chatbot(s) is included in the website design + development budget above. However, there is an annual fee from Chatbase for the functionality. A demo of the chatbot is available here: [JEDCO Chatbot Demo](#)*

**Total Investment:** \$990 annually, paid by JEDCO to Chatbase.

### SEO + Analytics Monthly Maintenance Plan

*This service is optional and not included in the website design + development budget above, but highly recommended for ongoing growth and support of the site.*

**Total Investment:** \$3,480 per year after launch, billed annually in advance, starting from the site launch date.

### Overages

Our current hourly rate for any work outside the project scope is \$135/hour. However, we are committed to flexibility and collaboration—if an out-of-scope request arises but the overall project remains under budget, we will not charge for the overage. Additionally, we will always seek your approval for any out-of-scope work or potential overages before proceeding, ensuring complete transparency and alignment.

## Terms of Payment

Plaine Studios proposes the following payment schedule:

**Upon Design Approval (Milestone V):** 33% of the total budget

**Upon Completion of Full Build (Milestone VIII):** 33% of total budget

**Upon Website Launch (Milestone XI):** Final 34% of total budget plus annual website hosting (\$3,600) plus any overages or optional services requested.

*We gladly accept payments via checks or ACH transfers.*

## Conclusion

We are excited at the prospect of partnering with JEDCO on the redesign and development of your new website. Plaine Studios has a deep understanding of your mission and values, uniquely positioning us to deliver a dynamic, user-focused website that reflects your brand identity while engaging key audiences. Leveraging our experience and a fully custom WordPress solution, we are confident in our ability to create a visually impactful, responsive site that showcases Jefferson Parish as a premier destination for business and innovation. We take great pride in the trusted relationship we've built with JEDCO and look forward to strengthening it further by contributing to the growth and prosperity of the region. Thank you for considering Plaine Studios, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss how we can bring this vision to life.