Matt Birch

Web Developer

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EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

Web Developer & Website Manager with 12+ years building and maintaining fast, user-centric websites. Specializes in modern JavaScript (React, Next.js, Astro) and WordPress, with a strong HTML5/CSS3 foundation and a product mindset shaped by scaling a sports media business to millions of monthly readers (acquired 2021).

- **Modern Frontend Expertise:** Architect responsive, component-driven UIs with React/Next.js/Astro and TypeScript. Emphasize performance, accessibility, and scalable design systems.

- **Website Management & CMS:** Administer WordPress and other CMS-driven sites, including template customization, content workflows, SEO-friendly information architecture, and ongoing updates.

- **Backend & Infra:** Build Node.js APIs and Supabase-backed services. Apply CI/CD and Git workflows for reliable, repeatable deployments and smooth collaboration.

- **Performance & UX:** Ship sites that feel instant by optimizing bundles, implementing caching strategies, and profiling critical paths to improve Core Web Vitals and mobile experience.

- **SEO & Content Ops:** Translate editorial and SEO strategy into technical implementation (semantic markup, meta strategy, structured data) to increase discoverability, engagement, and conversions.

- **UI/UX & Product Design:** Craft intuitive interfaces and design systems with Figma, React, Next.js, Framer, and Tailwind CSS—especially for data-driven applications and high-content sites.

- **Process & Collaboration:** Lead in agile environments. Partner with designers, marketers, and stakeholders. Keep projects on track with clear communication, documentation, and issue-spotting.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Optimize Web Solutions   October 2021 – present | Reston, Va.
Web Developer

- Design and build custom web applications with React, Next.js, and Astro—taking projects end-to-end from initial concept through deployment.

- Focus on performance and scalability, consistently improving Core Web Vitals and user experience across client projects.

- Develop responsive, modern frontends for SMBs and startups, with backends on Node and Supabase where needed.

- Apply technical SEO and speed optimization practices to maximize visibility and conversions.

- Partner directly with clients to translate business goals into clean, maintainable technical solutions —keeping communication clear and timelines predictable.

Independent Contractor
Website Manager & Web Developer

March 2024 – present

- Manage end-to-end website updates and enhancements for small business and startup clients, including content changes, design refinements, and performance tuning on WordPress and modern JS stacks.

- Configure and maintain WordPress themes, child themes, and plugins—ensuring compatibility, security, and consistent brand execution across pages and templates.

- Partner with founders and marketing leads to translate business goals into clear web requirements, scope small to mid-size projects, and prioritize backlogs of improvements.

- Implement on-page SEO best practices (semantic HTML, internal linking, schema where appropriate, meta strategy) and integrate analytics/Tag Manager for funnel tracking and reporting.

- Conduct cross-browser and cross-device QA to validate layout, responsiveness, and core flows before launch. Triage bugs and coordinate fixes through Git-based workflows.

- Support hosting and domain operations—coordinating DNS updates, SSL certificates, staging/production environments, and low-friction deployment processes.

The Sports Daily
CEO

July 2015 – October 2021

- Built and scaled a digital sports media platform from launch to acquisition, overseeing technical, product, and editorial strategy.

- Scaled sports tech infrastructure: Architected and maintained a high-traffic platform supporting 2M+ monthly unique visitors with consistent uptime and optimized performance.

- Data-driven growth: Implemented advanced SEO and analytics dashboards, driving a 150% increase in organic traffic and a 200% lift in mobile engagement.

- Product innovation: Led a site-wide redesign with WordPress and modern web stacks, improving UX and positioning the platform for sustained growth.

- Team leadership: Managed a distributed team of 25+ writers, developers, and analysts, aligning technical direction with content strategy.

- Successful exit: Negotiated and guided the platform through a seamless acquisition process, ensuring operational continuity and technical integration.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Soft Skills & Leadership
Core Interpersonal Strengths

- **Emotional Intelligence:** Empathetic and relationship-driven. Excels in building trust with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders.

- **Communication:** Clear, adaptable communicator skilled at translating technical concepts for diverse audiences.

- **Project Management:** Experienced in Agile workflows and sprint planning. Highly organized with disciplined time management.

- **Leadership:** Leads by example — mentors junior developers, fosters collaboration, and drives team accountability.

- **Problem-Solving:** Analytical thinker with a creative, structured approach to resolving technical and operational challenges.

Content Strategy & Website Optimization
Digital Content, Information Architecture & Site Governance

- **Information Architecture**: structure menus, page hierarchies, and internal linking to support clear navigation, SEO, and user journeys.

- **Web Content Ops**: coordinate page updates, media assets, and publishing workflows to keep sites accurate, consistent, and on-brand.

- **UX-Focused Writing**: craft clear, action-oriented microcopy, error states, and calls-to-action that guide users through key flows.

- **SEO-Driven Content**: align copy, headings, and metadata with search intent, improving discoverability and engagement.

- **QA & Governance**: review pages for accessibility, broken links, layout issues, and brand/style adherence before and after release.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages, Frameworks — HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript (ES6+), TypeScript ⎢ ⎢React, Next.js, Node.js, Astro ⎢ ⎢WordPress, PHP ⎢ ⎢Figma, Framer, Tailwind CSS

Development & Tooling — Git/GitHub ⎢ ⎢VS Code ⎢ ⎢npm/yarn ⎢ ⎢Chrome DevTools ⎢ ⎢Docker ⎢ ⎢Supabase CLI ⎢ ⎢CI/CD pipelines for web deployments

Performance, SEO — Core Web Vitals ⎢ ⎢Technical SEO ⎢ ⎢Google Analytics ⎢ ⎢Lighthouse Audits ⎢ ⎢Performance Optimization

Design: UX & Accessibility — Responsive Web Design ⎢ ⎢CSS Grid/Flexbox Layouts ⎢ ⎢UI/UX Best Practices & Interaction Design ⎢ ⎢Accessibility Standards (WCAG) ⎢ ⎢Cross-browser, cross-device QA

Collaboration & Project Tools — Asana/ClickUp-style project tracking ⎢ ⎢Slack/Google Workspace ⎢ ⎢LLM workflow automation (Claude/ChatGPT/Gemini) ⎢ ⎢Email marketing & website integrations

EDUCATION

Virginia Commonwealth University   May 2011
Bachelor of Science, Mass Communications