



Comprehensive Content Solutions

People Matter. Words Matter.
Content Matters.

[HTTP://YOUR-CONTENT-MATTERS.COM](http://your-content-matters.com)



**CONTENT
MATTERS** LLC.

We're more than just a content studio. We help organizations modernize their brand through content design that transforms and connects.

We're your storytelling partner. And we believe every brand has a story to tell.

Art Direction
Content & Digital Strategy
Generative AI
Organizational Assessment
Photography
Plain Language Communication Strategies
Training & Workshops
Writing & Editing

Why us



Empathy-Driven Content

We put people at the heart of everything we do. Our content is crafted with a deep understanding of your audience, ensuring it's not only seen but felt. This empathetic approach helps build genuine connections and delivers messages that truly resonate.



Data-Enhanced Creativity

What sets us apart is our ability to blend creative storytelling with precise data insights. This fusion ensures that every piece of content is not only engaging but also strategically targeted to meet the specific needs and behaviors of your audience, keeping your communications both relevant and impactful.



Technological Edge

We harness the latest technologies to elevate your content strategy. From advanced SEO tactics to generative AI, we use cutting-edge tools to enhance the effectiveness and reach of your content, setting you ahead in a competitive digital landscape.

Your partners in crime

GUEST TEAMMATES

Robbie Walters, Graphic Design
Jesse Parks, Brand & Identity Design
Chloe Moore, Content Analyst
Brandon Webb, Web Design



STACEY MARTIN, OWNER & PRINCIPAL

Stacey is a dedicated content leader with over 15 years of experience and proven success in brand and content strategy. From digital strategy to content operations, Stacey weaves together solutions based on experience in both public and private sectors.



SETON MCGOWAN, SENIOR STRATEGIST

Seton is a communications strategist with a focus on brand strategy and content. When she's not wordsmithing, you'll find her hosting themed dinner parties, listening to live music, or curled up with a British mystery and her white, wire-haired mutt, Walter.



CHRIS MARTIN, CREATIVE DIRECTOR & PHOTOGRAPHER

Chris Martin transforms photography into a powerful storytelling medium, capturing the essence of individuals and communities. Chris crafts captivating visuals that elevate your brand identity and tell your unique story.

How We Leave Our Mark

A	City of Durham, NC	Hosted multiple plain language workshops to significantly enhance organizational communication by training leaders to simplify complex information in emails, flyers, brochures, and financial reports.
B	Town of Chapel Hill, NC	Redesigned the North Carolina DMV's driver's handbook in plain language and multiple languages, enhancing comprehension and accessibility for a diverse driver population, promoting safer driving across the state.
C	Town of Chapel Hill, NC	Audited website content to streamline navigation and improve information quality.
D	Town of Chapel Hill, NC	Conducted an environmental scan of the competitive landscape, providing strategic insights to keep the organization adaptive and competitive in a dynamic market.
E	Town of Chapel Hill, NC	Established a Plain Language Center of Excellence, elevating the communication standards, fostering transparency, and building trust with residents.
F	Town of Chapel Hill, NC	Led comprehensive organizational assessment and provided actionable recommendations to enhance the communications team's capabilities.
G	North Carolina City and County Communication Professionals	Hosted a workshop on building a Plain Language Center of Excellence and conducted a plain language training session for North Carolina city and county communicators, enhancing their skills in clear communication.



“ *Stacey Martin and Content Matters are the premier choice for clients seeking high-quality branding and content creation services. My experience working with Stacey in our corporate roles has shown me her exceptional ability to navigate organizational complexities with ease, grace, and persistence. Stacey consistently focuses on achieving a cohesive and perfected brand voice while ensuring language simplicity to support all customers.*

Charlene Foley, President at SEE Me CX, Inc.

Content Solutions



Art Direction and Photography



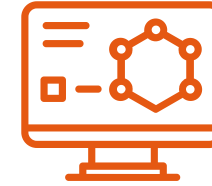
Culture

- content center of excellence
- generative AI adoption
- organizational assessment
- workshops / training
- writing guides



Content Design

- print / digital
- writing / editing
- layout / design
- photography



Content Strategy for Brand Redesign

- audit
- calendar
- content type development
- environmental scan
- information architecture
- journey mapping
- messaging
- personas
- stakeholder workshops



Content Marketing (monthly)

- 4 blogs
- 8-12 social posts
- 3-4 emails
- photography

Content Design

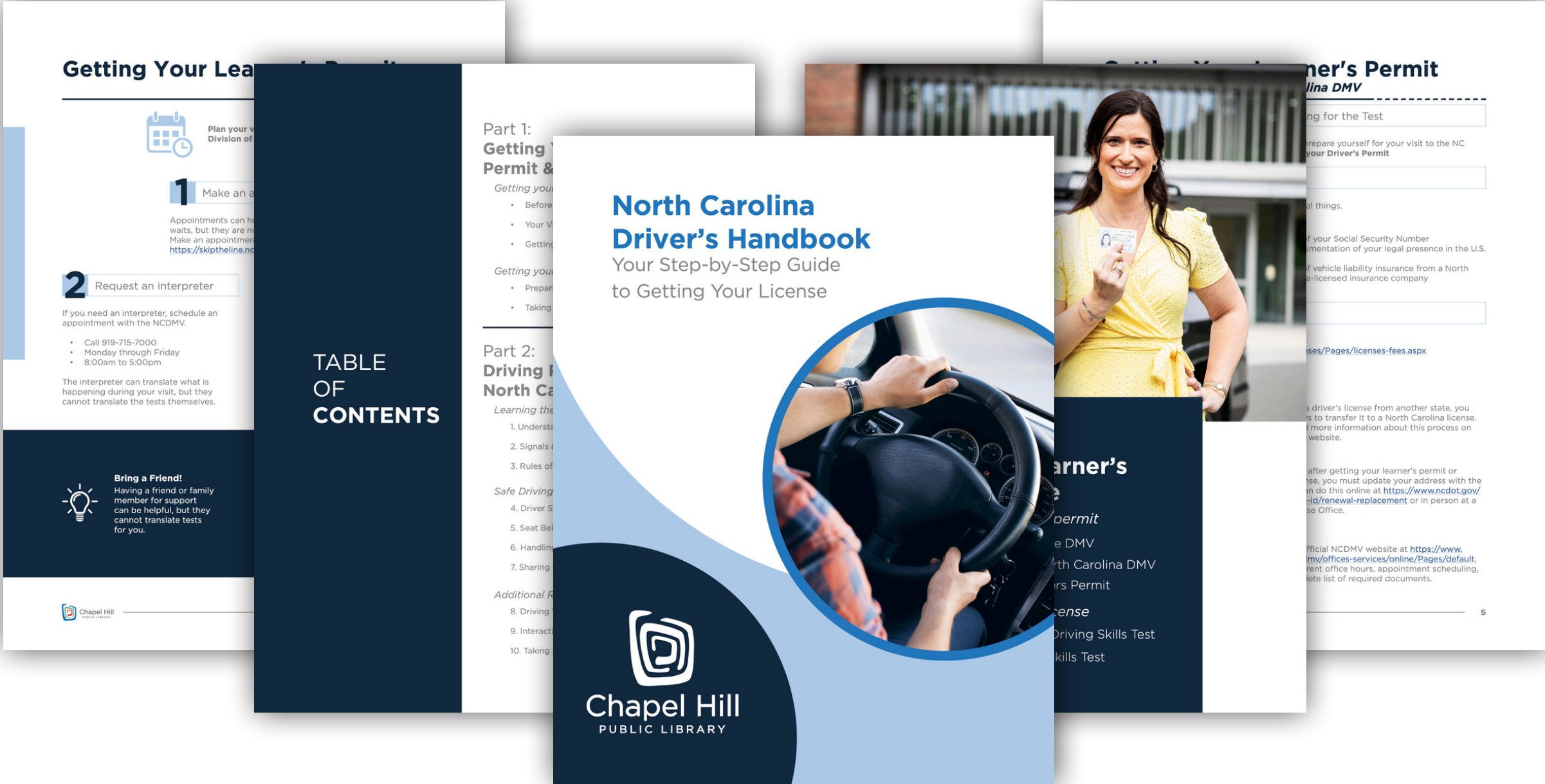
Modernizing your brand means designing resources that are inclusive and make an impact.

We redesigned the North Carolina DMV's driver's handbook in plain language and multiple languages, enhancing comprehension and accessibility for a diverse driver population, promoting safer driving across the state (39 pages).

Town of Chapel Hill, NC

Document Design

- writing
- editing
- design
- photography



Available in Arabic, Burmese, Karen, and Spanish



Content Design

Modernizing your brand means showing communicators across the organization examples of a voice that is clear and concise.

We hosted multiple plain language workshops to significantly enhance organizational communication by training leaders to simplify complex information in emails, flyers, brochures, and financial reports.

City of Durham, NC

Document Design

- writing
- editing
- design



Fiscal Year 2024-25
Budget Development Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

The development of budget guidelines is a best practice and supports **The Citywide Strategic Plan Goal, Innovative and High-Performing Organization**. One of the objectives of this goal is to promote **organizational sustainability**:

- Strategic Sustainability – realistic vision and goals
- Program and Service Sustainability – high-quality services and programs
- Personnel Sustainability – effective and reliable personnel
- Financial Sustainability – recurring revenues equal to recurring expenditures, adequate financial reserve and contingency planning.

The General Fund is the primary fund for the city and supports 24 of the 27 city departments including 1,700 of the City's 2,404 full-time employees.

The City Manager shall use the following **Budget Development Guidelines to prepare the FY 2024-25 Proposed Budget**.

OVERALL

The budget should prioritize funding based on the City's Strategic Plan, needs related to accommodate population growth, State and/or Federal mandates and initiatives consistent with the City Council's priorities.

REVENUES

For FY 2023-24, the two largest sources of revenue to support **General Fund** operations were local **property taxes (46.8%)** and local **sales taxes (35.5%)** representing 82.3% (**\$232M**) of the fund's **\$281.5M budget**. Local property taxes also fully support the Debt Service Fund which accounts for the City's General Fund debt service obligations. The property tax appropriation for the **Debt Service Fund was \$47.5M** for FY2023-24.

The City must use a strategic approach to balance the budget by assessing revenue enhancement opportunities and cost control. **The FY 2024-25 Budget must support the City's Strategic Plan and identify funding to enhance priority programs and services.**

- The current tax rate for the **General Fund** of **31.55 cents** (per \$100 assessed value) may be increased to cover the pay study market adjustments and other pay policy considerations.
- The tax rate for the **Debt Service Fund** will remain at the current rate of **11.50 cents** (per \$100 assessed value).

Page 1 of 3





Revenue
Where our money comes from.

Last year, most of our **General Fund money** came from **property taxes and sales taxes**. Local property tax and sales tax accounted for 82.3% (\$232 million) of the fund's total budget of \$281.5 million.

Revenue Source	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount (in millions)
Local Property Taxes	46.8%	\$108
Local Sales Taxes	35.5%	\$124
Other Revenue Sources	17.7%	\$49.5
Total General Fund	100%	\$281.5

- *Property taxes fully supported the Debt Service Fund, which covers the city's debt service obligations.*
- *The property tax appropriation for the Debt Service Fund was \$47.5 million in FY2023-24.*

**Potential changes to taxes**

- The tax rate for the General Fund may be increased to cover employee raises and other costs.
- Rates for other funds, like those for debt service or solid waste, are likely to stay the same.

**Additional guidelines:**

- The **General Fund's** fund balance will not fall below 12.0% at the end of FY 2024-25.
- **Non-recurring funds** will not be used for recurring expenses.
- **Proposed water and sewer rate** increases will not exceed an average of 6.2% for the average customer.
- **Fee adjustments** will be considered to align fee revenues with the cost of services for better cost recovery rates.
- The proposed **increase in Stormwater rates** for typical residential customers (tier 2) will not exceed \$1.55 per month.

Table: Summary of tax rates and fund allocation.

Fund	Tax Rate (per \$100 assessed value)
General Fund	31.55 cents
Debt Service Fund	11.50 cents
Solid Waste Fund	5.59 cents
Dedicated Housing Fund	3.38 cents
Transit Operating Fund	3.75 cents
Downtown BID	7.00 cents
Half Penny For Parks	1/2 cent



Design your work
Budget Development Guidelines

Strategy

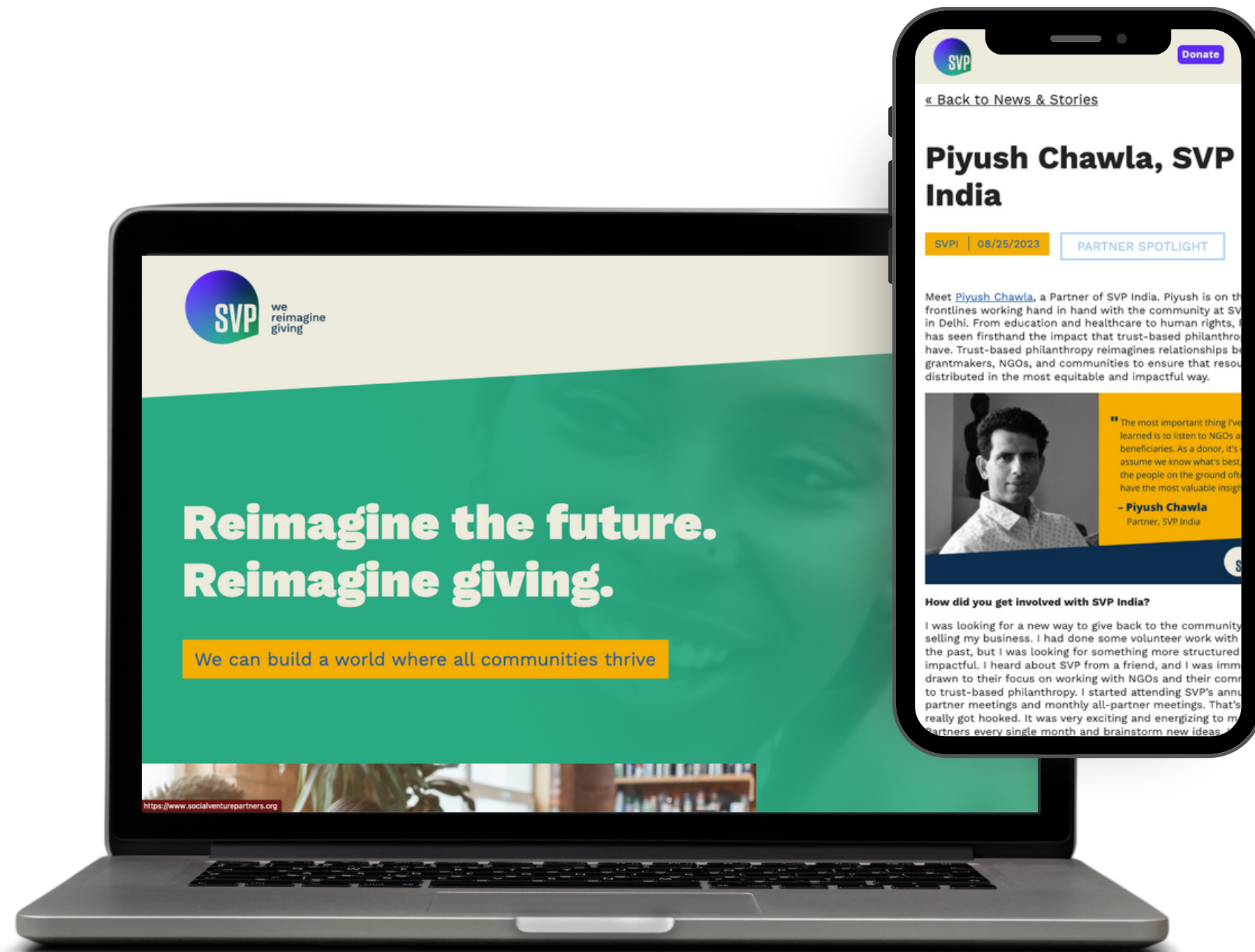
Social Venture Partners International (SVPI) hired our friends to redesign their corporate brand and launch a new web presence.

We led content strategy and development for affiliate spotlights, partner spotlights and donor learning.

Agency Partner:
SolDesignCo Atlanta, GA

Strategy – Brand Redesign

- audit
- journey mapping
- messaging
- calendar
- content type development
- writing / editing



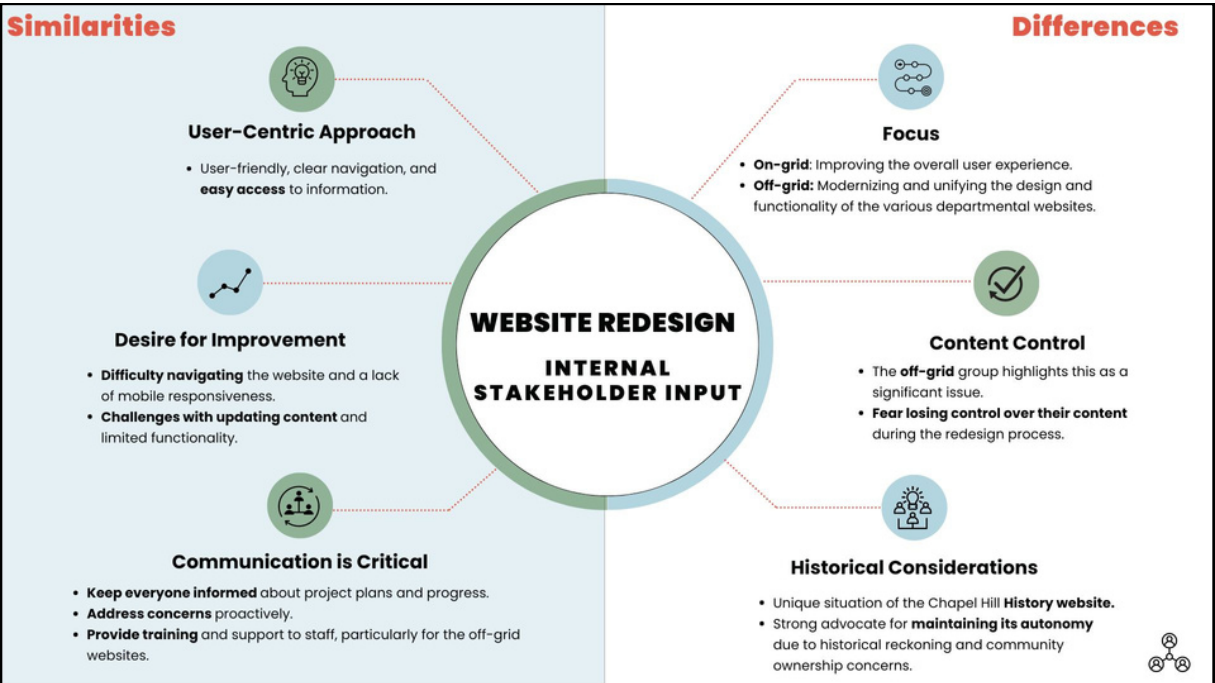
Sol.

Strategy

Oranizational Assessment

Landscape Analysis				
	Ann Arbor, MI	Austin, TX	Boulder, CO	Lawrence, KS
Leadership	Communications Office	Communications and Public Information Department	Communications and Community Engagement Department	Communications and Community Relations Department
Structure	Different departments are responsible for providing content. Communication Department focuses on promoting these opportunities and crafting the actual messages. Works with the IT Department.	A centralized office provides services to departments. It connects and guides departments. Collaboration and integration is critical to reaching goals. Working on a market study to reevaluate all roles and create career paths.	Prioritize internal growth. Have both a decentralized and centralized model.	Desire to transition towards a more unified structure and a shared services model. Brand Manager, a Director of Public Participation or Community Relations, a Webmaster, and a Photo and Video person.
Strategic Planning	Undergoing a major planning initiative for our comprehensive plan.	"An effective communication strategy is not just about the dissemination of information, but also involves actively shaping and influencing policy discussions and outcomes."	"Involving people (in the process (vision, mission, values) and making them feel part of it is crucial for the success of the strategic plan."	"We have a distinct brand, and we're really proud of serving as the voice and the storyteller of the city." Working on a strategic communications plan to support homeless programs.
Community Engagement	The department has a systematic internal process for community engagement.	The community engagement team serves as in-house consultants for other departments, providing guidance and support for two-way communications with the public. This approach underscores the city's commitment to involving its citizens in its operations and policy decisions.	Community engagement is a crucial part of the department. It involves facilitating dialogue with the community and gathering input on decision-making.	"We would benefit from an additional content manager. Millie's role [grant-funded] is strictly public participation around homelessness. Her job is project-based and exclusively to communicate with neighbors around our work in homeless programs."

Stakeholder Input



We don't just modernize brands, we cultivate them with a deep understanding of the target audience, competitive landscape, and internal stakeholders. The **focus on understanding** is the foundation of a powerful web strategy.

Strategy – Brand Redesign

- In depth audit
- environmental scan
- personas
- stakeholder workshops



Resident

ADVOCATE AUNG
PROVIDER, LAWYER
Age 45, Single, Burmese Pastor

AMBIVALENT ANDREW
HOMELANDER OF MEDIA, BOWLE-PIST
Age 25, Single, Remote Worker / IT

BURNED OUT BIBI
PROFESSIONAL, WANTS ACCOUNTABILITY
Age 55, Married, Retired

INVESTED IRIS
NOSTALGIC, DOESN'T UNDERSTAND JARGON
Age 67, Married, Retired Teacher

NEW RESIDENT NINA
BOY, EASILY PROVOKED
Age 38, Married, HR Manager

Business Owner

ENTREPRENEURIAL ELSIE
PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS OWNER, OUT OF TOWNERS
Age 35, Single, Founder of Small Business Start-Up

PROACTIVE PAULINA
RESIDENT BUSINESS OWNER, HAS LIMITED INTERNET ACCESS
Age 50, Married, Restaurant Owner

Employee

ENVIRONMENTAL EVAN
PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE, CHANGE SEEKER
Age 43, Married, Urban Planner

Press

MEDIA MICAH
NOT A RESIDENT, SECOND SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH
Age 33, Single, Reporter

Personas

	Discovery & Findability	Usefulness	Relevance	Influence
CHARLOTTE, NC	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
DETROIT, MI	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
AUSTIN, TX	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
WILLIAMSBURG, VA	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
DUNWOODY, GA	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
ASHEVILLE, NC	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
BOULDER, CO	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
ANNAPOLIS, MD	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
★ CHAPEL HILL, NC	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★

Environmental Scan

Culture & Strategy

Modernizing the Town of Chapel Hill's brand means adopting a clear and concise communication style.

We built a content center of excellence, integrated generativeAI writing tools, and developed an online plain language curriculum to align and empower communicators throughout the organization.

- Content Center of Excellence
- Workshops/ training
- Generative AI



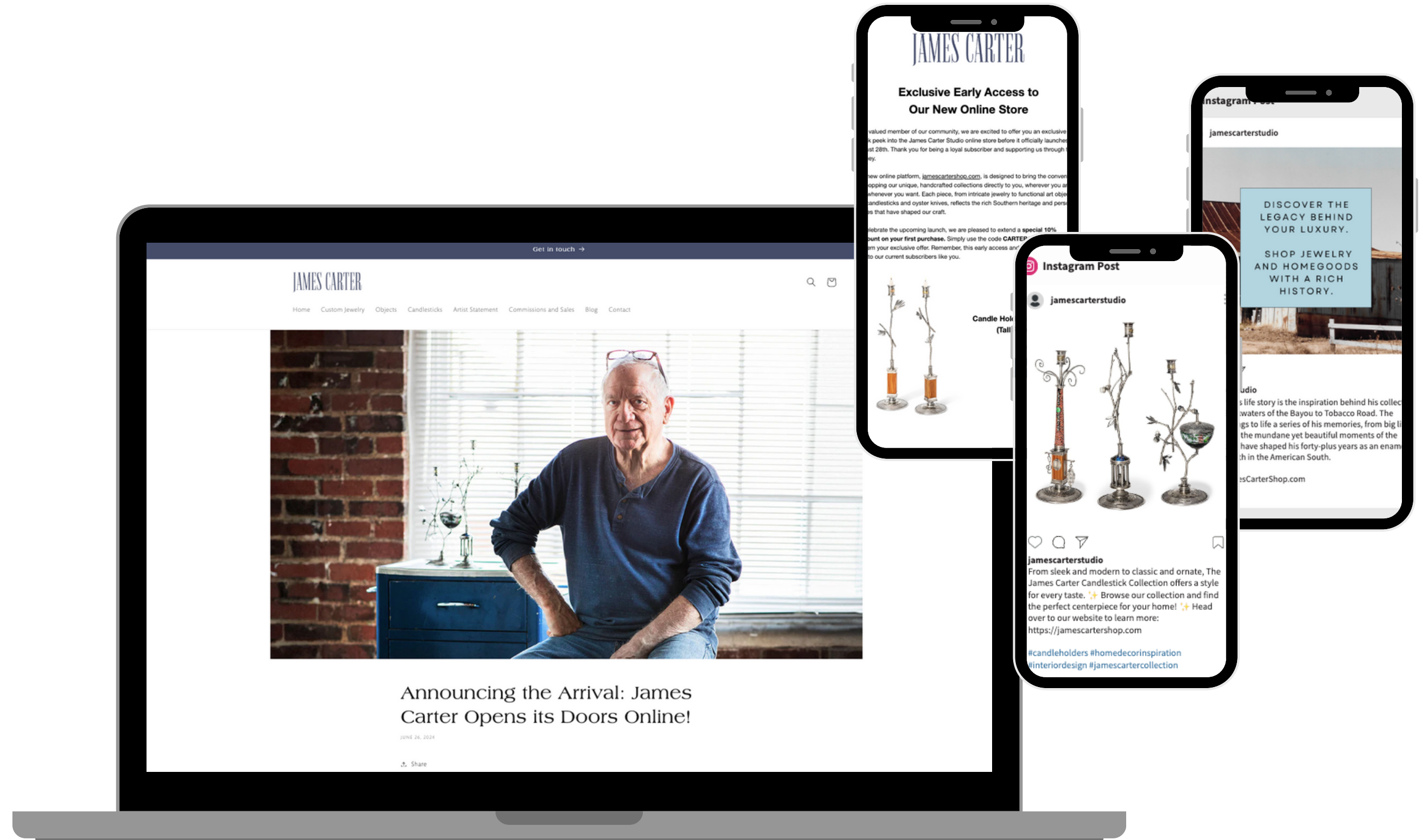
Execution

Modernizing James Carter's brand is launching a new e-commerce Shopify site through high-impact photography, long-form blog content and social media.

We helped James Carter, a master of storytelling, connect his cloisonne art and jewelry to his life journey as a Merchant Marine and throughout the South.

Content Marketing (monthly)

- 4 blogs
- 8-12 social posts
- 3-4 emails
- Photography



JAMES CARTER

JAMES CARTER
STUDIO

Photography

"ONE OF THE BEST COLLEGE ATHLETICS IN AMERICA"
—NICH.COM

CATAWBA COMPETES IN THE
NCAA DIVISION II SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

OUR WOMEN'S SWIM TEAM EARNED
THE HIGHEST TEAM GPA (3.9)
OF ANY WOMEN'S SWIMMING PROGRAM IN THE COUNTRY

"ONE OF THE BEST COLLEGES FOR SPORTS MANAGEMENT IN AMERICA"

WE GENERATE OUR OWN ENERGY.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE A KNACK FOR PULLING OFF THE IMPOSSIBLE. Big goals. Big wins. Bigger championships. We take that energy onto any field and up against any opponent. That's why 10 percent of students (10%)

24 VARSITY TEAMS:
BASEBALL M
BASEBALL W

GOOD goes FAR.

CATAWBA COLLEGE

2300 W Innes St, Salisbury, NC 28144
1-800-CATAWBA | catwba.edu

We're the planet. Our paper is 100% post-consumer waste, FSC certified, and manufactured with renewable, non-polluting electricity. It's also acid-free. Woo-hoo!

GOOD FAR.

CATAWBA COLLEGE

WELCOME TO THE FRED STANBACK JR. ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE'S 189 ACRES.

Here, you'll do research, have class, and work on environmental sustainability innovation. It's one of a kind for serious exploring or simply reconnecting with yourself.

Modernizing brands always means new photography.

MND PWR

for smart marketing

Thank you.



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