Tessa Watkins
They/Them
Senior Web Developer in Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Contact@TessaWatkins.com | TessaWatkins.com | 412-906-9498

I have created professional websites for clients all over the world in a variety of industries. I have a background in design, a passion for user experience and accessibility, and skills in full-stack development. I have a strong sense of curiosity that allows me to always be open for learning new techniques, programming languages, and exploring technology. I've authored official WordPress plugins, contributed to WordPress Core, and created countless more themes and plugins from scratch.

FAVORITE SKILLS

- Mobile-First Web Design and Development
- User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) Design
- Human-Centered Design (HCI)
- Full-Stack Web Development & API Integration
- CMS Integration (WordPress & Umbraco)
- Digital Marketing (SEO/Schema, Email, CRM Integration)

TECH STACK

- HTML5, CSS3, XML, LESS, SASS
- JavaScript, jQuery, AJAX
- ASP.NET, MVC, C#
- PHP
- Python
- Flash, ActionScript 3.0 and 2.0

DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM FAMILIARITY

With my experience at digital advertising agencies and as a freelancer, I am proficient at developing custom solutions that meet a client's vision and functionality requirements in a fast-paced environment. I have created landing pages, email newsletters, templates, and lead collection forms with secure data handling of personally identifiable information (PII) in platforms including, but not limited to, Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Pardot, Marketo, MailChimp, HubSpot, SharpSpring, Vertical Response, and more.

PROJECTS I'M PROUD OF

Contact Form 7 – Dynamic Text Extension, WordPress Plugin   Jan. 2023 - Present
Adopted this popular WordPress plugin with over 100,000 installations and completely overhauled its code to make it compatible with newer versions of WordPress, developer-friendly, and added new features desired by its user base.

Accessible Reading, WordPress Plugin   Jun. 2022 - Present
Authored this WordPress plugin, available in WordPress's official repository, that integrates with the Bionic Reading® API to allow website visitors to toggle the appearance of text content between standard text and text formatted using the Bionic Reading® technique to assist in accessibility for neurodivergent and disabled people. The plugin automates the text generation from the API, making it easy to use for WordPress content authors.

Socialized, WordPress Plugin   Jun. 2022 - Present
Authored this WordPress plugin, available in WordPress's official repository, it adds social media sharing buttons to blog posts that, when shared, utilizes vanity URLs to add UTM parameters to the links that are shared to track traffic acquisition through those shared links. The generated share links are short to fit within social media character limits.

Website Performance Enhancement, UPMC HealthBeat   Apr. 2021 - Present
Increased this WordPress website's performance score for Google's Web Core Vitals from 19/100 to over 60. My innovative optimization techniques directly resulted in increasing their average session duration by 194%, decreasing their bounce rate by 72%, and increasing their new users by 5%!

Custom Human Resources Platform, UPMC Marketing   Feb. 2021 – Present
Created a custom dashboard that includes annual employee reviews, work leave requests, promotions, equity increases, and terminations from designing the user-experience and workflow to developing the web application complete with automations, all powered by WordPress, to support a team of 60+ managers, supervisors, and employees.

Appointment Scheduler, Romano Floors   Aug. 2020 - Feb. 2021
Designed and developed a custom WordPress plugin that uses the Google Calendar API for this flooring company's website to streamline the scheduling of customer consultations. This intuitive calendar integration displays available timeslots to customers and seamlessly syncs to my client's calendar improving customer experience and conversion by 62%.

Automated Monthly Post Analytics, UPMC Digital Marketing   May 2020 – Aug. 2020
Developed a custom web application that uses Google MyBusiness (GMB) and Google Spreadsheets API to collect and compile GMB post analytics to provide critical insights for data-driven decisions for their 700+ worldwide locations regarding COVID-19 vaccinations.

Automated Weekly Team Reports, UPMC Marketing   Apr. 2020 – July 2020
Created a custom tool that sends out individualized team reports to managers and department directors in a way that is useful for their department's unique hierarchy. Using the Harvest API, this tool compiles employees' hours into team-based reports and it sends out a customized email to each team leader and department director on a weekly basis, saving supervisors valuable time and effort in directing their teams.

Contact@TessaWatkins.com | 412-906-9498 | TessaWatkins.com
Visual communication is preferred due to my auditory processing disorder and hearing loss.
I use automatic live captions in video and phone calls.

Tessa Watkins

They/Them
Senior Web Developer in Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Contact@TessaWatkins.com | TessaWatkins.com | 412-906-9498

EXPERIENCE

Lead Developer, Flying Cork   May 2016 – Present
Develop websites and web applications for Flying Cork's clients.
Tinker and explore innovative technology, researching and developing new techniques.
Utilize my skills in HTML, CSS, SCSS, PHP, JavaScript, jQuery, Adobe Creative Suite, web design and development in an agile environment.

Web Designer & Developer, AuRise Creative   Apr. 2012 – Present
I love doing what I do so much that I even do it in my free time. I've been doing freelance web design and development since April 2012. My company helps nonprofits, startups, and new/small businesses get their first website together to establish an online presence.

Visual Developer, BHiveLab | BWorks | BRUNNER   Apr. 2014 – May 2016
Developed websites and applications for clients belonging to BHiveLab, BWorks, and BRUNNER agency.
Utilized my skills in HTML, CSS, LESS, ASP.NET, MVC, C#, JavaScript, jQuery, Flash, AS3/AS2, Adobe Creative Suite, web design and development in an agile environment with several teams of varying sizes.
Supported and developed multiple projects for multiple clients and brands simultaneously with a sense of urgency.

Software Engineer, Tobii DynaVox   June 2013 – Feb. 2014
Programmed in Action Script 3.0 and XML to implement features and functionality. Work on a smaller team with source-controlled projects to collaborate teamwork in a Scrum environment. Also worked closely with the Quality Assurance team to test web and application products.

EDUCATION

Human-Centered Design Certification   Jan. 2016
University of California, San Diego

Bachelor of Science, Game Art and Design   July 2009 – Sept. 2012
Art Institute of Pittsburgh
> 1:1 mentorship with Ruth Comley, Entertainment Technology Center of Carnegie Mellon University for core elective credits toward degree, 2011 – 2012. I advocated to the Department Chair for this one-off 9-month course for me because my choice of specialization, programming and software engineering, did not previously exist.

VOLUNTEER

UX Designer, Thriving Avalon   Aug. 2023 – Present
Volunteering with a small group of individuals working to develop a platform for neurodivergent and disabled folks to build a community where everyone can share the in's and out's of navigating the world. Imagine if Stack Overflow, Yelp, and Google Reviews made a baby, that's what we're aiming to make!

Guest Speaker, World Information Architecture Day   Mar. 2022
Gave a public presentation titled, "Aren't we all a little bit human? Connecting with Autism" on March 5, 2022, for a virtual global event called World Information Architecture Day hosted by World Information Architecture Association. This talk discusses the connection between autism and the technology industry.

Vice President, Lebo Pride   May 2022 – Present
Volunteered with Lebo Pride to put on the inaugural Lebo Pride Celebration in June 2022, and continued with a core group to incorporate Lebo Pride as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit grassroots organization and continuing our work to educate and celebrate gender diversity. I designed, developed, and currently manage their email newsletter in MailChimp, their WordPress website, their social media channels, Slack, and online donation collection.

Digital Team Lead, M.O.R.E   June 2020 – Present
I am part of the leadership team for the Mt. Lebanon Organization for Racial Equity (M.O.R.E). I designed, developed, and currently manage their email newsletter in MailChimp and their WordPress website.

Disability & Mental Health Advocacy   Aug. 2020 – Present
I am a vocal leader in the autistic community and publicly speak on topics such as neurodiversity, disability, and mental health. I am also on the planning committee for PA Representative Dan Miller's annual Disability & Mental Health Summit.

Contact@TessaWatkins.com | 412-906-9498 | TessaWatkins.com
Visual communication is preferred due to my auditory processing disorder and hearing loss.
I use automatic live captions in video and phone calls.