Jason Caldwell

📍 Maine, USA ✉️ jaswrks@o5p.me 📞 678-230-5847

Ⓒ Schedule Meeting 🔗 LinkedIn 𝕏 Twitter ⭘ GitHub

📑 StackOverflow Ⓦ WordPress DEV Blog 🔗 jaswrks.com

Principal Engineer, Growth Engineer, Engineering Manager, Engineering Director, Full Stack Developer, SEO Specialist, Growth Consultant, Team Builder — ["Tactical Bracket Typer"]™

Jason began his career at eUniverse under MySpace founder Brad Greenspan. Later, under WordPress co-founder Matt Mullenweg at Automattic as VP of Growth Engineering. With over 20 years of experience in software development and engineering leadership, he is now a principal engineer, growth engineer, and company founder. Jason is highly proficient in PHP, JavaScript, TypeScript, React, Preact, Vue, Bash, OOP, system design, SQL, and cloud computing — with a record of managing, executing, and delivering complex tech projects.

He excels at mentoring high-performance engineering teams, specializing in MarTech (growth marketing technology). Jason has led consumer-facing B2C projects at scale with over 130 million users and is recognized for his significant contributions to the WordPress community and developer advocacy. Known for his exceptional problem solving skills, strong leadership, and commitment to continuous learning and professional growth, Jason consistently drives innovation and excellence in every endeavor.

📅 **Schedule a Meeting with Jason**
   <https://meet.jaswrks.com 🔗 >

- **What is a Growth Engineer?**
   <https://jaswrks.com/blog/growth-engineers 🔗 >

- **New York Times Article — Jason Caldwell**
   <https://www.nytimes.com/2020[...]/labor-remote-work-coronavirus.html 🔗 >

   Jason was prominently featured in a New York Times article discussing the impact of COVID on remote work and labor market. Highlighting his role at Automattic, the article showcases Jason's leadership in adapting to and thriving in a distributed environment. His insights on managing distributed teams, data-driven strategies, and optimizing productivity underscored innovative approaches that have defined his career.

Skills

HTML / CSS 20 years	**PHP (OOP)** 20 years	**JavaScript** 15 years	**TypeScript** 8 years
Node.js 12 years	**React/JS** 8 years	**Preact/JS** 2 years	**Vue/JS** 3 years
SASS / PostCSS 8 years	**Bash / Shell** 12 years	**Ruby** 6 years	**Python** 4 years
Rust 1 year	**Git / GitHub** 12 years	**macOS / Linux** 12 years	**Windows** 20 years
MySQL / RDBMS 20 years	**NoSQL** 8 years	**Redis** 6 years	**Memcached** 12 years
Vite/JS 2 years	**Jest / Vitest** 2 years	**PHPUnit** 12 years	**MarTech** 12 years
Leadership 15 years	**Team Building** 15 years	**Recruiting** 12 years	**Hiring** 12 years
Marketing 12 years	**Web Analytics** 15 years	**VS Code** 6 years	**PhpStorm** 12 years
Technical SEO 15 years	**WordPress** 15 years	**CRO** 15 years	**A/B Tests** 12 years
Systems Design 15 years	**Diagramming** 15 years	**Agile** 8 years	**Roadmapping** 15 years
AWS 12 years	**Cloudflare** 8 years	**LAMP / LEMP** 20 years	

Professional Experience

Clever Canyon, Hop.gdn, Remote Engineering   2022 – 2024
Growth Engineering Consultant 🔗

Jason provided consultation, key insights, attention to detail, excellent verbal communication, hands-on web design, and software engineering. He played a pivotal role in crafting digital brands for diverse clients and assisted with team building — growing the team from 2 to 15 people. Jason built an isomorphic rendering library on top of Preact, giving Clever Canyon brands a distinct advantage by enabling highly performant application and marketing landing pages.

He also crafted TypeScript libraries, including a comprehensive TypeScript utility types library, all of which were adapted for web, Node.js, Cloudflare Worker, PWA, and AWS Lambda environments. This work transitioned Clever Canyon from traditional hosting to edge computing, primarily on Cloudflare, through microservices, achieving substantial cost savings. Jason also experimented with Cloudflare's new D1 edge database hosting, which is now successfully used by internal tools, including a news aggregator.

Automattic, Inc. (WordPress.com)   2018 – 2022
PHP/React/JS Engineer, VP of Growth Engineering,
Lead-of-Leads, Hiring Manager 🔗

Jason led a team of 18 engineers and designers focused on the growth of WordPress.com, primarily through top-of-funnel optimization using A/B and multivariate experiments. As a growth engineer, Jason's role involved leveraging data-driven insights to develop and implement strategies that increased user acquisition, retention, and overall engagement. Under his leadership, these teams expanded Automattic's marketing technology stack, resulting in millions of dollars in annual growth. As VP of Growth Engineering, Jason also served as the hiring manager for MarTech roles across multiple brands, which collectively serve over 100 million users. Automattic's portfolio includes WordPress.com, WooCommerce, Jetpack, Tumblr, Simplenote, Longreads, VaultPress, Akismet, Gravatar, Polldaddy, Cloudup, and other notable products.

In building out Automattic's inaugural MarTech growth teams, Jason demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic vision. He meticulously selected and mentored top talent, fostering a collaborative and innovative culture. Jason's approach to full stack growth engineering, which involves the use of data-driven insights to optimize user acquisition and engagement, was instrumental in defining team goals and aligning them with broader business objectives. He emphasized the importance of continuous learning and experimentation, encouraging his teams to leverage cutting-edge marketing technologies and methodologies. Through his leadership, these teams not only enhanced the marketing technology stack but also drove significant user growth and engagement across Automattic's diverse product portfolio. Jason's ability to inspire and lead a team of experts was key to Automattic's sustained success and expansion.

WebSharks, Inc.

Founder, Chief Technology Officer

Jason built back end web services in PHP, Python (Programming Language), designed MySQL databases, created front end HTML and JavaScript UIs, and utilized tools such as Git, Mac, Linux, Docker, and Vagrant. He integrated various third-party web service REST APIs, including PayPal, Stripe, and multiple CRMs, to enhance the functionality of their applications. Jason established, trained, and managed a cross-functional team to facilitate software documentation and provide support through help desk applications. One of his key achievements was leading the creation of s2Member®, a commercial eCommerce plugin for WordPress, which he maintained for several years. He also developed Comet Cache®, Comment Mail™, and numerous other commercial plugins for WordPress.

Jason's work with eCommerce APIs, multiple programming languages, Agile methodologies, and attention to detail, enabled entrepreneurs to launch and manage work-at-home businesses using s2Member and other software by WebSharks. He focused on creating user-friendly and robust solutions that empowered users to efficiently handle online transactions & membership management. By providing comprehensive support and continuous updates, Jason ensured that these tools remained reliable and effective, fostering the growth of many small businesses in the digital space. His dedication to excellence and innovation significantly contributed to the success and reputation of WebSharks, Inc. — known now as WP Sharks™.

FunnyTaf, Inc. 2001 – 2008

Founder, Chief Technology Officer

Led the creation of numerous Flash animations, innovative marketing concepts, and a wide range of marketing materials, including banners, one-page designs, and email campaigns, significantly contributing to the company's growth from 10 million to 40 million active users. Gained technical expertise in PHP, JavaScript, ActionScript, HTML, XML, CSS, and REST APIs. Developed and executed successful SEO strategies, social media campaigns, and viral video advertising. Maintained multiple websites, including FunnyTaf.com, CardFountain.com, MakesMeSmile.com, SendABaby.NET, and SendAPet.NET.

Prior to FunnyTaf, Inc., Jason worked at eUniverse, Inc. under the guidance of MySpace founder Brad Greenspan, where he gained invaluable insights into the digital marketing and social media landscape. This information technology experience provided him with a deep understanding of user engagement and online community building, which he effectively applied at FunnyTaf, Inc. Leveraging the strategies and skills learned at eUniverse, Jason was able to drive significant traffic growth and enhance the overall digital presence of the company, contributing to its rapid expansion and success in a competitive online market.

eUniverse, Inc. (Nasdaq: EUNI) 1999 – 2001
Business Development & Flash Team Leader

Worked under the leadership of MySpace founder Brad Greenspan. Jason collaborated with several Flash artists, websites, and mailing lists for LOLfun.com, FlowGo.com, GotLaughs.com, and JustSayWow.com. These sites, though now defunct, saw millions of visits per day at their peak. Jason worked with several Adobe products, PHP, ColdFusion, JavaScript, ActionScript, HTML, and CSS.

Greenspan's innovative approach and vision for online communities provided valuable mentorship to Jason, shaping his understanding of digital engagement and large-scale web operations. This experience at eUniverse, Inc. was foundational, allowing Jason to develop critical technical and marketing skills that he later applied successfully in his subsequent ventures.

StorterChilds Printing 1995 – 1999
Offset Printing Pressman

Jason led a team on two offset printing presses. One being a massive Komori 6-color 40" — 15 feet wide by 40 feet long machine, producing millions of impressions. His projects ranged from business cards and posters to professional portfolios and brochures. Notably, he handled major projects such as Florida Gator football posters featuring professional athletes, as well as invitations, pamphlets, and national championship posters for the University of Florida.

Working as an offset printing pressman is a trade that demands significant skill, precision, and dedication. Rising to this role involves mastering the complexities of the printing process, including meticulous attention to color accuracy and quality control. The position carries a high level of responsibility and prestige, requiring the ability to produce high-quality prints consistently while managing tight deadlines and large-scale projects. Jason's expertise and leadership in this field reflect his commitment to excellence and his capacity to handle the heavy responsibilities associated with offset printing.

First Jobs: Greyhound Bus Lines, Craftmatic Beds 1989 – 1994
Foundations of Work Ethic and Empathy

"I worked with my father at a Greyhound where I grew up in Gainesville, near the University of Florida. I gleaned invaluable lessons in integrity, honesty, and the importance of a solid work ethic. Those formative years I spent as a ticket agent and also navigated surrounding areas making package deliveries, which instilled in me a deep appreciation for diligence and reliability.

Later, for Craftmatic Adjustable Beds — across north-central Florida and south Georgia, I attended sales seminars and conducted in-home sales presentations for elderly couples seeking solutions to medical needs, which further enriched my understanding of human nature and the significance of maintaining good health and respect for those with life experience.

These humble beginnings not only shaped my professional journey but also grounded me in fundamental values, fostering a deep sense of purpose and empathy. They taught me the importance of humility, resilience, and compassion — values that continue to guide me in both my career and personal life."

Education

High School Diploma / Vocational Classes   1991 – 1994
Eastside High School — Gainesville, FL

Eastside High is a public school in Gainesville, Florida, United States. It was opened in 1970 and is managed by the Alachua County School District. Eastside harbors two magnet programs: the Institute of Culinary Arts and an International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

Computer Science And Programming   2012 – 2017
University of Alaska Online 🔗

At the University of Alaska, Jason pursued computer science and computer programming through online vocational classes, focusing on practical hands-on PHP programming — designing web applications. This experience laid a robust foundation for his technical abilities, providing him with essential skills in computer science, systems design, and software development, all within a supportive academic environment.

Business, Leadership, Organizational Leadership   2014 – present
Harvard Business School Online 🔗

Jason enhanced his expertise in business, organizational skills, and management skills through Harvard Business's online courses. This rigorous program not only deepened his technical acumen but also sharpened his strategic thinking, engineering leadership skills, and empathy for others. The blend of cutting-edge computer science education with core business principles prepared him to tackle complex challenges and lead effectively in the tech industry.

Autodidact, Self-Directed Learning   1994 – present
Udemy, Code Academy, LinkedIn Learning 🔗

Jason has enhanced his skills through platforms like Udemy, Code Academy, LinkedIn Learning, Demand Curve, Treehouse, and training from popular JavaScript instructor Wes Bos and industry expert Cate Huston. He is a full stack engineer using PHP (7.x, 8.x), JavaScript, TypeScript, React/Preact, Bash, and AMP.

References

Monica Ohara, *Chief Marketing Officer,* Automattic, Inc.

Jessica Snavely, *Chief Marketing Officer,* AWeber

Justin Vanning, *Growth Marketing Executive,* Twin Health

Ashley vonClausburg, *Product Designer,* Square

Phu Bui, *Director of Performance Marketing,* Logos

Raam Dev, *Engineer,* WordPress.com VIP

Projects

Clever Canyon 🔗   2022 – 2024
Cleverly Crafted Digital Brands
  Clever Canyon specializes in creating expertly crafted digital brands. They offer a range of
  services, including web design, development, branding, and digital marketing. By
  combining creative design with strategic thinking, Clever Canyon helps businesses
  establish a strong online presence and effectively communicate their brand message.
  Their solutions are tailored to meet the unique needs of each client, ensuring impactful
  and engaging digital experiences.

Preact Isomorphic Rendering Library 🔗   2022 – 2024
  Jason's Preact isomorphic rendering library enables server-side rendering (SSR) and client-
  side rendering (CSR) for Preact applications. It helps create faster, SEO-friendly web pages
  by rendering initial content on the server and enhancing user interactions on the client.
  This library supports seamless transitions between SSR and CSR, optimizing performance
  and UX by reducing load times and improving efficiency. Ideal for building high-
  performance, interactive web applications with Preact.

Cloudflare Worker Utilities 🔗   2022 – 2024
  A versatile toolkit for Cloudflare Workers, offering a wide range of utility functions to
  enhance performance and functionality. From efficient string manipulation to streamlined
  date formatting, this repository equips developers with the tools they need. With a focus
  on simplicity and effectiveness, this project elevates Cloudflare Worker projects
  effortlessly.

Text-to-Image: AI Image Generation 🔗   2024 – 2024
  LLaVA is an open-source chatbot trained by fine-tuning LLaMA/Vicuna on GPT-generated
  multimodal instruction-following data. It is an auto-regressive language model, based on
  the transformer architecture.

WordPress.com — WordPress, Your Way 🔗   2018 – 2022

WordPress.com is a popular platform for creating and managing websites and blogs. It offers a user-friendly interface, customizable themes, and tools for content creation, SEO, and social media integration. With built-in hosting, security features, and various pricing plans, WordPress.com caters to bloggers, businesses, and developers, enabling them to build and grow their online presence easily and efficiently.

Gutenberg — Block-Based Editor 🔗   2018 – 2022

WordPress Gutenberg is a block-based editor introduced to simplify content creation in WordPress. It allows users to build complex layouts using blocks for text, images, videos, and other elements, providing a more visual and intuitive editing experience. Gutenberg enhances flexibility and customization, enabling users to create rich content without relying heavily on custom code. It aims to streamline the process of designing and managing content, making it accessible to both beginners and advanced users.

Jetpack — Security & Performance 🔗   2018 – 2022

A powerful WordPress plugin suite designed to enhance site security, performance, and marketing. It offers features like real-time backups, malware scanning, and spam protection to keep your site secure. Performance tools include image optimization and lazy loading for faster load times. Jetpack also provides marketing tools such as SEO, social media integration, and analytics to help grow your audience. It's an all-in-one solution to boost your WordPress site's functionality and success.

Landpack — Landing Pages Made Easy 🔗   2018 – 2022

Revolutionizes communication between marketers, engineers, and designers at Automattic. Its proprietary React component library and framework, seamlessly integrated into WordPress, enable collaborative creation of dynamic landing pages. By facilitating efficient communication and streamlining workflows, Landpack transforms the way teams collaborate, ensuring cohesive and impactful marketing efforts.

WP Calypso — React Frontend 🔗   2018 – 2022

A modern React.js-based frontend for WordPress.com, designed to enhance speed and user experience. It provides a sleek, intuitive interface for managing WordPress sites, offering seamless access to content creation, site management, and analytics. WP Calypso supports real-time updates and streamlined workflows, making it easier for users to create and manage websites efficiently. This open-source project exemplifies a shift towards a JavaScript-powered WordPress ecosystem.

WordPress VIP — Enterprise Hosting 🔗   2018 – 2022
WordPress VIP is a premium managed hosting platform designed for enterprise-level sites.
It offers unparalleled performance, security, and scalability, with features like automated
backups, robust security protocols, and expert support. WordPress VIP provides advanced
tools for content management, workflow optimization, and analytics, making it ideal for
high-traffic websites and complex digital experiences. It ensures reliability and efficiency
for large-scale businesses and media organizations.

Comet Cache — Performance Plugin 🔗   2009 – 2018
Comet Cache is a performance optimization plugin for WordPress, designed to speed up
your site by caching pages, posts, categories, and more. It intelligently generates static
HTML versions of dynamic content, reducing server load and improving load times for
visitors. With features like automatic cache clearing, GZIP compression, and user-specific
caching, Comet Cache enhances site performance and user experience, ensuring faster
and more reliable access to your content.

s2Member — eCommerce Platform 🔗   2009 – 2018
s2Member is a powerful eCommerce and membership management plugin for WordPress.
It enables site owners to protect content, manage subscriptions, and accept payments
through various gateways like PayPal, Stripe, and Authorize.Net. With flexible membership
options, customizable access restrictions, and robust security features, s2Member
simplifies the process of creating and managing a membership site, enhancing user
experience and revenue potential.

Personal Interests

Chess Player 🔗

I love Chess.com! It's a fantastic platform where I can challenge myself, learn new strategies, and connect with players from around the world. Every game sharpens my skills — and, I have a lot of sharpening left to do.

Offshore Fishing 🔗

I'm passionate about offshore fishing, especially in Indian Rocks Beach, FL, where I've competed in a few tournaments. The thrill of the catch and the beauty of the open sea make each trip unforgettable.

Alaska / Montana 🔗

I lived in Alaska for seven years, experiencing its majestic landscapes and unique wildlife. The Northern Lights, rugged mountains, and the tight-knit community spirit made my time there unforgettable and deeply enriching.

Travel / Meetups / Conferences 🔗

My love for the outdoors has taken me to some of the most scenic and rugged terrains in the country, including Alaska. I've also lived in Montana, Maine, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida, and there are only two states in the USA I haven't visited yet. These diverse living experiences have given me a unique perspective on different cultures and landscapes, fostering a deep appreciation for the USA and a continual desire to discover new places across the globe.

Beyond the United States, my passion for travel has led me to collaborate with engineering teams in places like Amsterdam (Netherlands), Japan, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Iceland. These international experiences have enriched my professional and personal life, allowing me to gain a global perspective on technology and teamwork. I've also attended conferences in New York, Dubai, across the USA, and various locations in Europe. These events provided valuable opportunities for networking, learning, and sharing my expertise with a global audience, further broadening my horizons and enhancing my contributions to the engineering field.