

# DESIGN MAKEOVER

JAKE WIDMAN

## CLIENT

Studio by JC / [www.studiobyjc.com](http://www.studiobyjc.com)

“I WANT THEM TO SEE SOMEONE YOUTHFUL AND ADVENTUROUS. I DON’T WANT TO PRETEND I’M YOUNG, BUT I HAVE YOUNG IDEAS.”

## name brand

► Juan Pena has always been an avid amateur photographer. But about five years ago, he took some photography classes and started doing some freelance work. Determined to expand, he set up a WordPress site and then, about a year and a half ago, launched a more visual site ([www.studiobyjc.com](http://www.studiobyjc.com)) based on a template he bought from his site host. “I wanted to get something up quickly,” he says. Unfortunately, he thinks the site already feels dated, and “when I open it, it looks just like everyone else’s webpage.” He’d like to have a site with a fresher look, as well as one that works better for promotion.

“Currently, I don’t get many visitors to the site except for prospective customers that I have referred to it,” he says. Other than direct referrals, he promotes the site through word-of-mouth references from clients, business cards he hands out at events, and occasional gallery exhibits. “Wherever I can show my photos, I’ll be there,” he says.

Part of the fresher look should be an appeal to a youthful clientele. His customers tend to be in their early twenties to mid thirties, and that’s what he sees as his target audience. “I want them to see someone youthful and adventurous,” he says. “I don’t want to pretend I’m young, but I have young ideas. I like to take risks and don’t like to take conventional photos. I like a mix of traditional posed photography with a strong influence from photojournalistic and candid shots.” Besides youthfulness, he wants to portray himself as an affordable upscale photographer. “I do not like the ‘cheap’ look that many photographers are going for.”

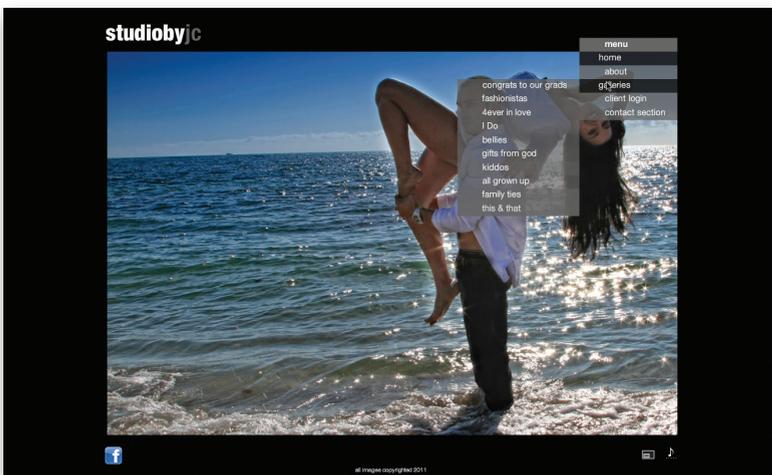
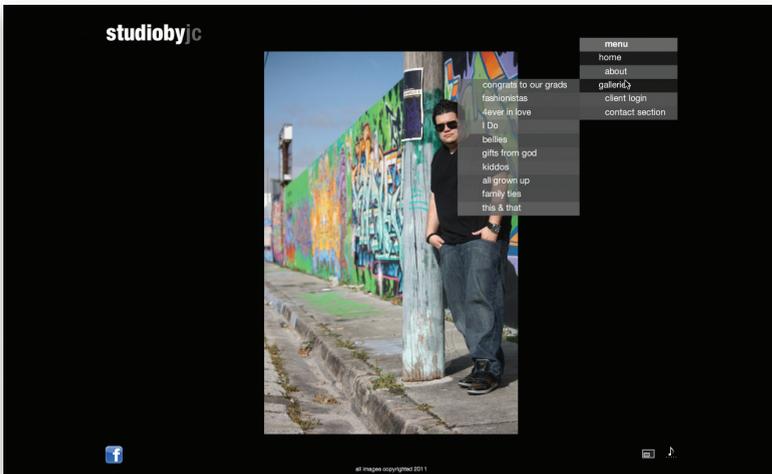
In addition to the overall image, Pena wants a site that looks good on tablets and provides connections to social media. We asked two designers to remake Pena’s generic photography website into a stronger, personal brand.

## MAKEOVER SUBMISSIONS

WE’RE LOOKING FOR PRODUCT PACKAGING OR LABELS, PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS, WEBSITES, AND MAGAZINE COVERS THAT ARE CURRENTLY IN THE MARKETPLACE FOR FUTURE “DESIGN MAKEOVERS.” SO IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS A DESIGN THAT YOU’D LIKE US TO CONSIDER MAKING OVER, OR IF YOU’RE A DESIGNER AND YOU’D LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR A FUTURE “DESIGN MAKEOVER,” SEND US AN EMAIL AT [LETTERS@PHOTOSHOPUSER.COM](mailto:LETTERS@PHOTOSHOPUSER.COM). (NOTE: THIS IS PURELY A DESIGN EXERCISE AND THE DESIGNERS DO NOT WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE CLIENT, CREATE FUNCTIONING WEBSITES, ETC.)

## [ BEFORE ]

“UNFORTUNATELY, I THINK THE SITE ALREADY FEELS DATED, AND WHEN I OPEN IT, IT LOOKS JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE’S WEBPAGE. I’D LIKE TO HAVE A SITE WITH A FRESHER LOOK, AS WELL AS ONE THAT WORKS BETTER FOR PROMOTION.”



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## DESIGNER

Kevin Jessee / [www.kevinjessee.com](http://www.kevinjessee.com)

### [ AFTER ]

► When I look at other photography websites, I see a lot of the same thing: a major focus on the photography and little to no focus on the photographer. The photography is important, but what's forgotten is the business side and the communication with the client. While I like to see the photos from a photographer, I also like to know their philosophy, why I should choose them, and what makes them different from the rest.

My goal was to design a site that was attractive, informative, and easy to navigate. The old website was very dark; I used white space, shades of black, and a highlight color to bring it to life. Since it's a photography website, I included a jQuery slider under the navigation bar to show off a sample of photos. Below the slider is a nice introduction to Studio by JC, taken from his existing About page, inviting the visitor to explore more.

The current website is strictly Flash-driven, which prevents it from being viewed on certain tablets and smartphones. Plus, it imposes SEO (search engine optimization) restrictions, making it more difficult for visitors to find the site. I would create the site using eye-catching graphics, while coding for usability across multiple platforms.

A great way to interact with your clients is to offer a blog and Facebook and Twitter feeds. Clients can learn more about the photographer, get help with ideas for shoots, and provide feedback. I provided space for that interaction on the right of the homepage.

I also set up a single gallery landing page showing examples of what the visitor is going to see in the individual galleries. At the side is a menu that lets the visitor navigate from one gallery to another. Each nav button contains an icon representing the topic, adding to the creativity of the site. The nav labels, as well as the headline on the homepage, are in the Google Web font Anton.



“WHILE I LIKE TO SEE THE PHOTOS FROM A PHOTOGRAPHER, I ALSO LIKE TO KNOW THEIR PHILOSOPHY, WHY I SHOULD CHOOSE THEM, AND WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT FROM THE REST.”

## ABOUT THE DESIGNER

### KEVIN JESSEE

As a freelance designer, illustrator, and photographer based in Western Washington, Kevin has had the opportunity to work with a wide variety of clients. Since graduating from the Art Institute of Seattle, his goal has been to continually learn about effective, creative marketing. By passing this knowledge on to his clients, Kevin is able to assist them to be successful in their markets. His philosophy is, “If my clients are successful, then I will be successful.” Each client has a different need and budget, and Kevin’s goal is to make sure all creative work is effective in cost, message, and promotion of the client. Building relationships is key.

Kevin is also grateful for the support he receives from his wife and daughter. “They are my inspiration and joy!” When not working, Kevin enjoys flying small aircraft and cycling. He can be reached at [kevin@kevinjessee.com](mailto:kevin@kevinjessee.com). ■ CD

