

## Moore County Economic Development Partnership

Client: Natalie Hawkins

Company: Moore County Partners in Progress

Industry: Economic Development

Buyer Persona: Business owners and representatives,  
entrepreneurs, employees, and prospective residents

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# MOORE

## BUILDING MORE THAN THE ECONOMY

[moorecountyedp.org](http://moorecountyedp.org)







## Introduction

Natalie Hawkins had only been the president of Moore County's economic development arm, Partners in Progress, a little over a year when she recommended a rebrand to the board. The request was approved, and a meeting with First Flight Agency started a partnership that would include a name change for the organization, a new logo, and an integration of two websites into one. "Moore County EDP is excited and proud to launch our new name, brand, and website. We greatly appreciate the staff at First Flight Agency for their support ..., " said Hawkins.





## The Story of Moore County Economic Development Partnership

Moore County Partners in Progress was the economic development organization serving all of Moore County, NC. They provide assistance and resources to help businesses start, relocate, or expand there. They welcome the opportunity to showcase all that Moore County has to offer.

Natalie Hawkins was named the new executive director of Partners in Progress in April 2021 and quickly realized the organization's brand was ready for an upgrade. Moore County Partners in Progress created and maintained two websites, one for business information ([moorebusiness.org](http://moorebusiness.org)) and another for prospective residents ([moorealive.com](http://moorealive.com)). The organization also included an exclusive group of leaders who support economic development in Moore County, where membership was by invitation and capped at 100, appropriately named Moore 100.

Under Natalie's leadership, Partners in Progress drew many accolades for Moore County. [Aberdeen Awarded Grant for Iron Horse Industrial Park](#), [Moore Poised to Leverage Large Business Investments](#), [Manufacturer Expanding its Footprint to Robbins](#), and [County Highlighted for Entrepreneurship](#) are a few headlines found in local media.

In 2013 Partners in Progress kicked off the Moore Alive initiative, essentially touting the county as a wonderful place to work, live and play. As a result, the website [moorealive.com](http://moorealive.com) was constructed to provide a wealth of information about the county on employment opportunities, business and industry, its towns, places to live, recreational and leisure activities, professional networking, and even its climate. Moore Alive targeted four audiences — military, returnees, retirees, and relocates — and featured testimonials by Moore County residents from each group.







## The Challenge Partners in Progress Faced

Moore County Partners in Progress was the county’s economic development organization, but their name didn’t clearly portray what they did. When the organization was incorporated in April 2002 it was called Partners in Progress of the Sandhills. In July 2002, it was changed to Moore County Partners in Progress. Twenty years later, and with vast community growth, it was time to rebrand and to clearly define the institution’s purpose.

Maintaining two websites that worked together selling the county of Moore was time-consuming and redundant. While the sites were linked together, website traffic was divided, and a user researching the business environment, on one site, was sent to another site if they wanted to read about the quality of life in the area. The user experience, messaging and look were not reflective of the organization and today’s innovation. “As we worked to develop our new website, we wanted to provide one central location for all users and eliminate the need to post the same information on two separate sites,” said Hawkins.

Partners in Progress had four different logos that they used in their marketing efforts, all created by different designers and not within a cohesive brand theme. Different logos separated the entities that all fell under the same organization.



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## Why Moore County Partners in Progress Chose First Flight Agency

Natalie Hawkins received board approval for a rebrand and new website and began the search for an agency whose strategic thinking aligned with that of Moore County Partners in Progress. First Flight Agency heard of the pending rebrand and reached out to Natalie for a meeting. First Flight Agency has its headquarters in Southern Pines, a town in Moore County. First Flight Agency presented a proposal and timeline with a detailed process outline. After learning more about the agency, its work, and their process, Natalie presented her agency of choice to the board, and the partnership with First Flight Agency began.



## How First Flight Agency Responded

The project, like all with First Flight Agency, began with a kickoff meeting for the discovery and formatting of a creative brief. The goal of the rebrand was to “present a professional image to those outside of our community who are looking to come to it,” explained Natalie. Once the creative brief was approved, the First Flight team dug into history and data. The agency was tasked with renaming the organization and proving to the board why one website would be better than having two. “As we discussed the rebranding effort, we thought it was important to have the words ‘economic development’ in our name to communicate our purpose and services more effectively,” said Natalie Hawkins.

The name Moore County Economic Development Partnership, MCEDP, was decided upon. The organization also adopted a new tagline — Building More Than the Economy — and a new contemporary logo for use across all digital and print platforms.

While the brand strategy was underway and creative design was being developed, the digital strategists worked on a content strategy that included user needs, business objectives, user personas and scenarios, content types, functionality requirements, voice, tone, site structure, and mood boards. “...what I really liked about their approach was [that] they didn’t dive straight into the content. We spent a lot of time upfront talking about who are the primary users of the site, what are they going to be looking for, and what type of tone of voice the site should have. And we really spent a lot of time upfront on color schemes and logos, that I think really helped us when we got into the actual site content in laying the site out and taking the content from two different websites, and combining them...” shared Hawkins.



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## The Results

On April 24, 2023, the official launch of [moorecountyedp.org](http://moorecountyedp.org), and the newly branded Moore County Economic Development Partnership, MCEDP, was made with a press release to all board and Moore 100 members. “...I’ve gotten comments from board members and community members that say this provides a more defined mission of our effort that’s going to lead to new areas of focus in job creation and commerce...Comments like ‘I love it.’ ‘Congratulations.’ ‘This is a cool rebranding’...all kinds of great, great feedback,” Hawkins commented.

“I’m really excited to be able to present a new and updated image of our organization, and I think it’s going to serve us really well in the future as we try to recruit jobs and capital investment to our community,” concluded Hawkins.

## Resources

<https://bizfayetteville.com/more-news/2023/4/25/moore-county-partners-in-progress-rebrands-to-moore-county-economic-development-partnership/1779>

[https://www.thepilot.com/business/partners-in-progress-rolls-out-new-branding-campaign/article\\_56f427e8-e2e1-11ed-a44d-a72d2053a354.html](https://www.thepilot.com/business/partners-in-progress-rolls-out-new-branding-campaign/article_56f427e8-e2e1-11ed-a44d-a72d2053a354.html)

## Want these results?

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