

Kevin Champlin

APPLIED-AI ENGINEER · LLM · RAG & KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS · SENIOR FULL-STACK

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G github.com/kevinchamplin · M Gurnee, IL · Chicago metro · Remote-first (U.S.)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Applied-AI engineer and 20-year senior full-stack veteran who designs and ships **production LLM systems end to end** — RAG pipelines, knowledge repositories, prompt frameworks, and the evaluation harnesses that keep them reliable. I build grounded, citation-backed assistants over messy source material (PDFs, SOPs, internal docs, web content) for regulated-industry use, across **Anthropic Claude, OpenAI, and Google Gemini**.

The differentiator: senior engineering judgment that knows where production breaks, applied to AI systems where a wrong answer carries real cost. I operate fully independently — scope the problem, propose, build, measure, and document. Most recent engagement: WordPress modernization at **Levi Strauss & Co. via Xebia**. Available **June 1, 2026**.

CORE SKILLS

Applied AI / LLM	Anthropic Claude API (custom wrapper) · OpenAI GPT-4/5 · Google Gemini (Vertex AI) · multi-provider orchestration · prompt engineering & reusable templates · agentic toolchains · prompt caching · cost / latency / safety guardrails · kill-switch & budget gating
RAG & Knowledge Systems	Document ingestion (PDF, web crawl, SOPs, manuals) · chunking strategies · embeddings + vector search · grounded answering · source citations & provenance · human-escalation fallback · retrieval-accuracy monitoring
Evaluation & Reliability	Self-tuning eval harnesses · shadow-compare grading · ground-truth sets · ensemble models with adaptive weighting · regression monitoring · "refuse-to-guess" guardrails
Data Structuring & Governance	Metadata / taxonomy schemas · document versioning & provenance · multi-tenant isolation · role-based access · audit logging · encryption at rest / in transit · regulated & HIPAA-aware data handling
Languages	PHP 8.x · TypeScript / JavaScript · Python · SQL · Swift / SwiftUI (working) · C# / .NET
Full-Stack & Platforms	Laravel 11 / Livewire / Reverb · Next.js / React · Node / Bun · WordPress / WooCommerce · native iOS · Tailwind · WCAG accessibility
Data & Infrastructure	MySQL 8 · PostgreSQL · SQLite · Redis · queues · cron · Docker · AWS · Vercel · Plesk · Cloudflare · Mailgun / Resend
SEO & LLM Discoverability	Technical SEO · schema.org structured data · JSON-LD · llms.txt / llms-full.txt for answer-engine optimization · Core Web Vitals
Product & Process	Independent end-to-end ownership · scope estimation · technical communication with non-technical SMEs · process documentation · change-management for regulated / compliance-adjacent clients

SELECTED AI / LLM SYSTEMS — BUILT & SHIPPED SOLO

Chat Ironcrest RAG KNOWLEDGE ENGINE

Knowledge-base chatbot platform that turns messy PDFs (200+ pages, table extraction), internal process docs, and web pages into an always-on RAG knowledge base. Answers **strictly from approved sources** with timestamped citations and links — never the open internet. Per-client isolation, AES-256 / TLS 1.3, SOC 2-ready logging, role-based access, audit trails, and an analytics dashboard. Built for regulated industries. chat.ironcrestsoftware.com

AI Enrollment Assistant GROUNDING RAG · GEMINI/VERTEX

RAG assistant on Google Gemini / Vertex AI that answers prospective-student questions **only from an institution's official catalog**, shows its sources, refuses to guess, and escalates to a human counselor when the answer isn't covered. enroll.kevinchamplin.com

Career Readiness Report CLIENT: INTERNBRIDGE

AI system generating consistent, personalized career-readiness feedback for students from their experiential-learning data — reliable, templated outputs at scale for a higher-education client. crr.internbridge.com

The Mirror WEB + NATIVE IOS · HIPAA

AI reflection app with long-term memory and pattern recognition; built HIPAA-compliant with crisis-language detection and optional clinician sharing. trythemirror.com

Vantage AI ENSEMBLE · SELF-TUNING

Laravel + Claude. Three-model ensemble (momentum, mean-reversion, sentiment) for equity analysis with adaptive daily self-tuning. vantage.champlinenterprises.com

Diamond AI AUTO-LEARNING EVAL LOOP

PHP + MLB Stats API auto-learning pipeline for outcome prediction; hourly auto-grading and an overnight tuning loop. diamond.champlinenterprises.com

AI Showcase & Claude Skills (OSS) COST-GOVERNED · OPEN SOURCE

AI Showcase: Laravel 11 + Livewire + Reverb + Claude with live cost telemetry and per-visitor budget gating (ai.kevinchamplin.com). Plus six MIT-licensed Claude Code skills (github.com/Kevinchamplin/cClaude-skills).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Full-Stack Engineer · Contract via Xebia

FEB 2026 – MAY 2026

Levi Strauss & Co.

Brought on with open-ended direction ("what can you do for us?"). Independently audited the WordPress platform, wrote and got approval on a modernization proposal, implemented it, and proved the impact with analytics.

- Added **LLM / answer-engine discoverability** (llms.txt-class metadata, JSON-LD entities, structured data) — positioning Levi's content to be retrieved by AI search before it becomes the default channel.
- Modernized legacy templates and PHP functions; unified duplicated template parts and fixed missing database indexes for performance and maintainability.
- Exposed user-facing fields through ACF so content teams ship copy, image, and metadata changes without engineering review.
- Worked inside an enterprise change-management and review process; shipped through Xebia's delivery pipeline.

Founder · Applied-AI & Full-Stack Engineer

2024 – PRESENT

Champlin Enterprises, LLC — Gurnee, IL

Studio housing a self-funded portfolio of production applied-AI systems (above), built as **sole engineer** — ingestion, retrieval, prompt design, evaluation, and governance — alongside AI consulting engagements such as InternBridge.

- Specialize in **grounded RAG and evaluation**: citation-backed answers, refuse-to-guess behavior, human escalation, and self-tuning eval harnesses across Claude, OpenAI, and Gemini.
- Ship prod-direct with full ownership of infrastructure, data governance, and documentation.

Founder · Lead Software Engineer

JUL 2018 – PRESENT

815 Media, LLC — LaSalle, IL

WordPress + full-stack agency serving Fortune 500, regulated-industry, and high-growth clients.

Selected clients: Mark Anthony Group (White Claw, Mike's Hard Lemonade) · Wells Fargo (internal agent portal) · Global Medical Response Learning · Mendota Mutual Insurance · Bureau County Clerk · Cedar Creek Ranch.

- Built a custom **REST API integrating WordPress with a third-party CRM**, improving data accuracy and streamlining client data management.
- Architected custom themes/plugins and unified navigation across high-traffic Multisite networks; authored Gutenberg blocks for non-technical editors.
- Drove a **35% lift in online sales** via a custom WooCommerce plugin and cut cart abandonment ~20%; reduced page-load times 30–50% across client sites through performance and database optimization.

Earlier Experience

2002 – 2018

- **Programmer · DBA · Systems Administrator**, Illinois Valley Community College (2010–2018) — PHP internal systems backed by SQL Server; automated reporting/BI dashboards (SSRS); led accessible responsive site redesign.
- **Web Developer II**, Progressive Impressions International (2008–2010) — SaaS features for financial-services clients under strict security; analytics segmentation app (PHP/MySQL).
- **Web Developer**, LKCS (2002–2008) — database-driven financial-services sites in PHP/Classic ASP; bespoke MySQL schemas; introduced team coding standards.

EDUCATION & AVAILABILITY

Associate's Degree, Computer Programming — Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL

Available **June 1, 2026** for W2, W2 contract, contract-to-hire, or 1099 / C2C via Champlin Enterprises, LLC. Open to fully remote (U.S.) or onsite in Chicago metro. U.S. citizen; no sponsorship required.