

Estimate

W3C Website Redesign Proposal

Upstatement

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upstatement.com

Overview

We're so pleased to present our proposal for the upcoming W3C redesign. The work that the W3C does is so important to so many, and it wouldn't be an understatement to say that we owe our careers to the Web pioneers who defined and continue to shepherd the Web's development. We began our careers in the early 2000s, and spent a lot of time trying to get CSS to bend to our will, and to work around the limitations inherent in the medium. We've spent an unfortunate amount of energy trying to convince our clients not to build Flash websites. But as time passes, and the Web continues to change and transform, it seems so quaint now to look back at the things that stymied us.

The Web is now a place of endless creativity, a fully-formed operating system that continues to improve every day and open up brand new possibilities (very excited for Web Assembly). With these new powers, it's been more incumbent on designers and engineers to exercise restraint and care in deciding what to build, and what not to build. At Upstatement, we've always been pragmatic about not fixing things that aren't broken while still pushing the state of the art. In 2010 that led us to our first breakthrough project, when we joined Ethan Marcotte and Filament Group to design and build The Boston Globe's responsive website. And since then, while the tech has changed, our sensibilities haven't.

We believe in making smart, fast, and beautiful websites that people love to use. There's no better showcase for what a well-built site can be than the W3C itself, and we'd love to help make this project a showpiece as you lead the Web to its full potential.

Read on to learn more about our approach to this project, our team, and our process.



Mike Swartz
Principal

Our approach to the W3C.org

This project is a prime opportunity for the W3C to truly show the way forward and be a showcase of best practices and optimal web user experience. In order to succeed, the new W3C.org needs to:

- **Communicate the W3C brand and story through visuals, voice, content, and user experience**
- **Organize and provide intuitive access to useful information for members, developers, executives, and contributors, not to mention the W3C's employees**
- **Lay the groundwork for a more sustainable digital system and workflows that the W3C can continue to support in the future**
- **Transition to the new digital platform and go public with the new site**

In the coming pages we'll outline our approach to this project and ask ourselves how we might accomplish these goals.

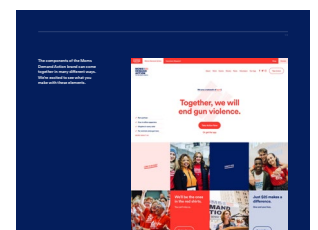
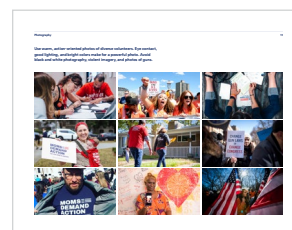
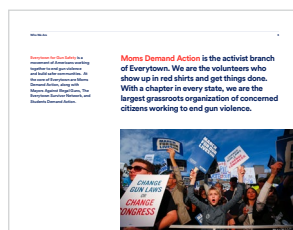
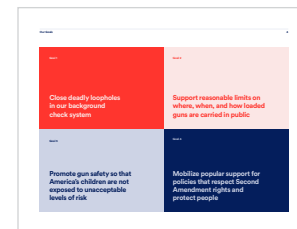
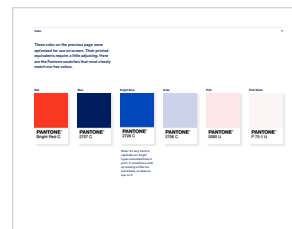
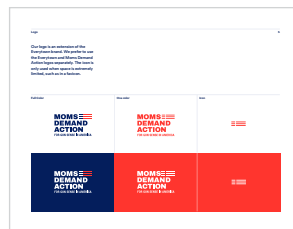
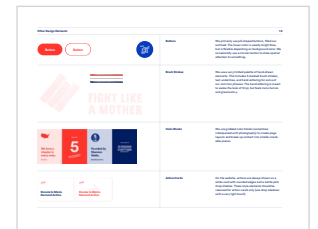
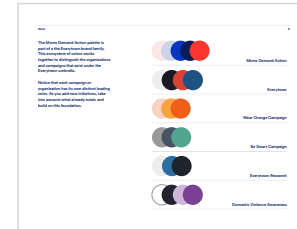
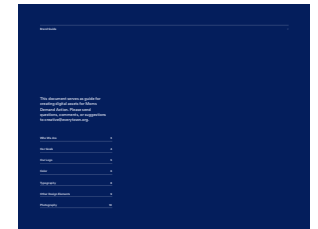
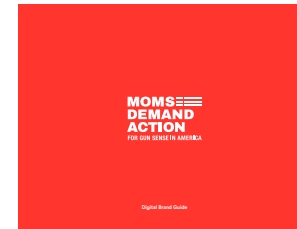
How might we?

Communicate the W3C brand and story through visuals, voice, content and user experience

As the W3C evolves over the next year, we'll need to find a way to tell its story and explain its history, values, and benefits. Our work will start by digging into what makes the W3C tick, and thinking through the ways it serves its audiences. This could result in a content audit, content strategy advice and the ideas that help us organize the user interface and make good content management choices.

We'll then begin pulling together the visual identity and design system to support the content strategy, smoothing out the look and feel and findings ways to make it expressive and memorable. This will power a consistent user experience across the site and set the W3C up to sustain the system long term.

A powerful and relevant content strategy combined with a robust and expressive design system will help us put together a user experience that's on-brand and valuable over the long term. Part of being on-brand for the W3C will be mean being fast, useful, and accessible, and we'll build an aesthetic for the W3C around these pillars.



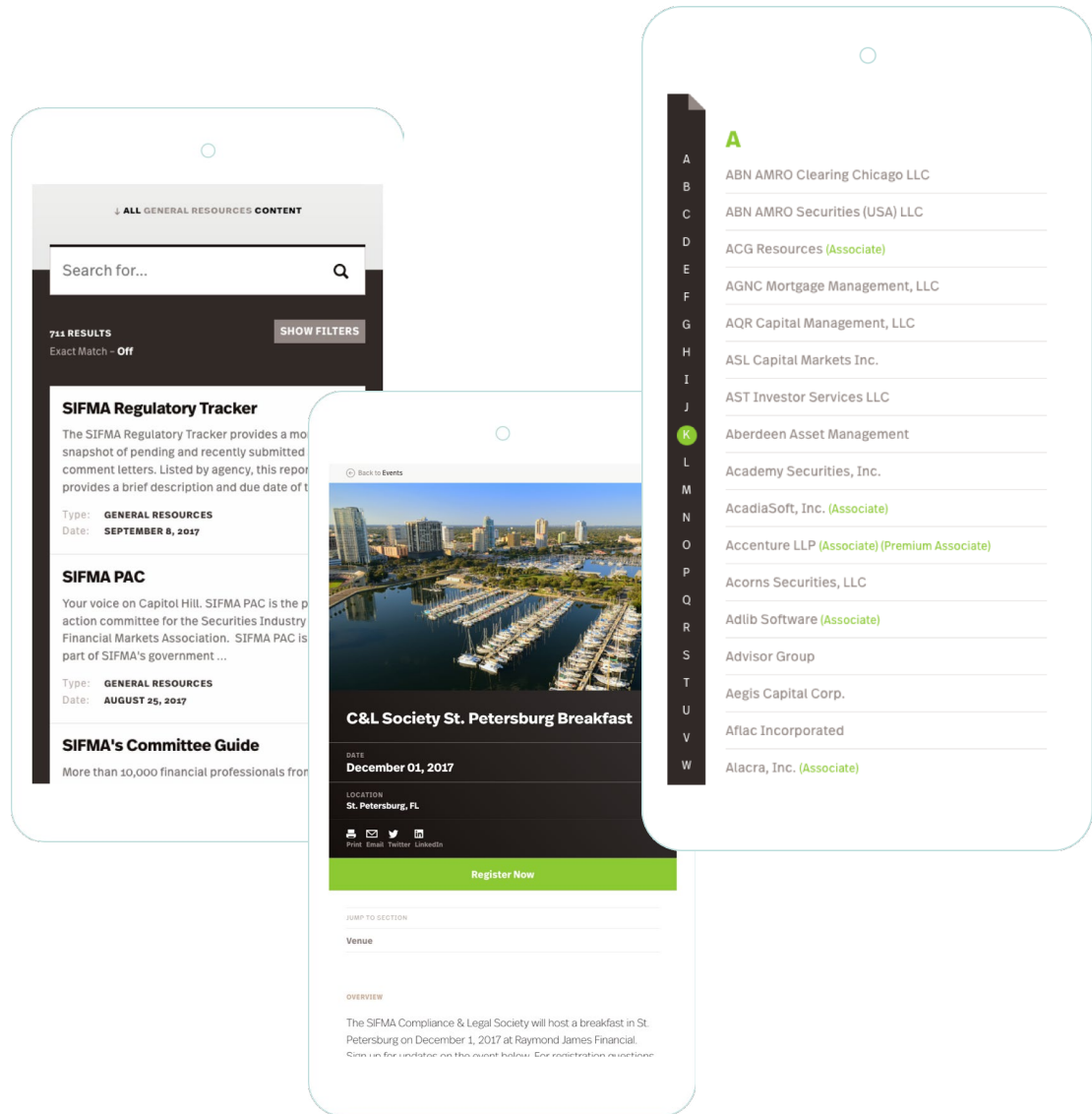
How might we?

Organize and provide intuitive access to useful information for members, developers, executives, and contributors, not to mention the W3C's employees

The W3C is a wonderful resource for web developers and those interested in the fundamental material of the Web. We'll look for ways to make this a best-in-class resource that pulls people into its orbit by being complete, accurate, and easy-to-use. The knowledge base is deep, and it's easy to get lost in its depths. Our team has a lot of experience providing simple interfaces to complex systems, such as in our work for MIT around their site-wide search, or for SIFMA.org and their knowledge base.

Beyond the information design and architecture, we'll also want to provide a guide to the organization at a meta level, what it does, and how to contribute or get involved.

Building smart information tools and providing fast and intuitive access to all the value the W3C can provide will not only serve your audience and mission, but also build your brand. Being useful, fast, and direct are aesthetic choices that people will remember and connect to the W3C.



Projects for clients like SIFMA.org (as well as MIT.edu) have focused on making a gigantic pile of data accessible and easy to step through.

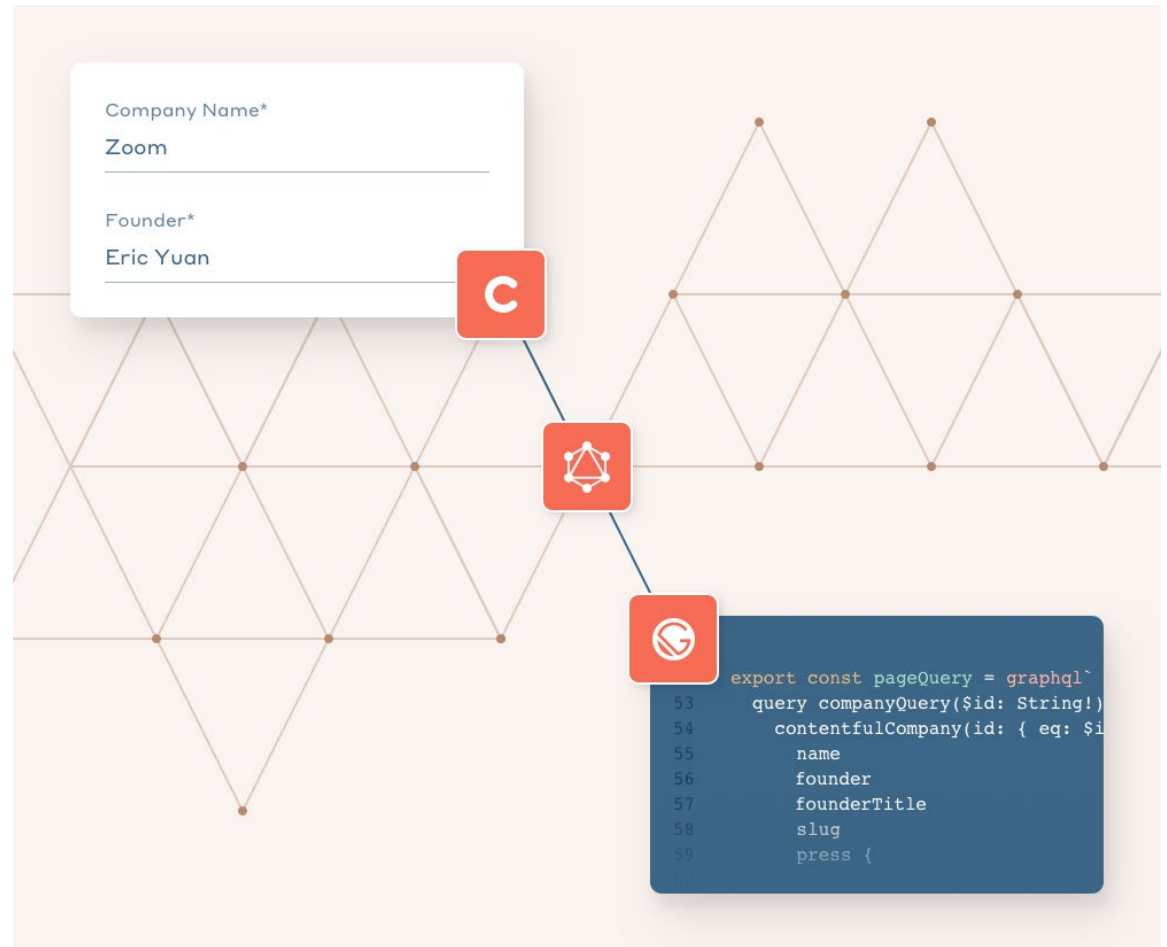
How might we?

Lay the groundwork for a more sustainable digital system and workflows that the W3C can continue to support in the future

A large part of this project lies in the planning and transition to a new content management system. During the research phase, we'll take a close look at the technical context of the project. To better understand the W3C, we'd likely conduct interviews and/or workshops with key engineering stakeholders to understand what problems you're trying to solve and what's not working with your current setup. The engineering output of the vision phase is a Technical Assumptions and Constraints (TAC) document delivered alongside or shortly after our Creative Brief.

The TAC serves to earmark assumed responsibilities and impediments that may influence Upstatement's technology effort for the project. In support of the Upstatement agile process, it is meant to be a living document that will grow and change as the project progresses and new information comes to light.

Delivering the Creative Brief and Technical Assumptions and Constraints document as artifacts at the beginning of a project helps bring stakeholders together around a shared strategy and chart a clear path forward for the Production phase.



In our work for Emergence Capital we proposed a headless CMS to keep it simple and fast. Read more about that project from Beatrice here: <https://medium.com/stories-from-upstatement/is-a-jamstack-right-for-your-site-3108bcb186bf>

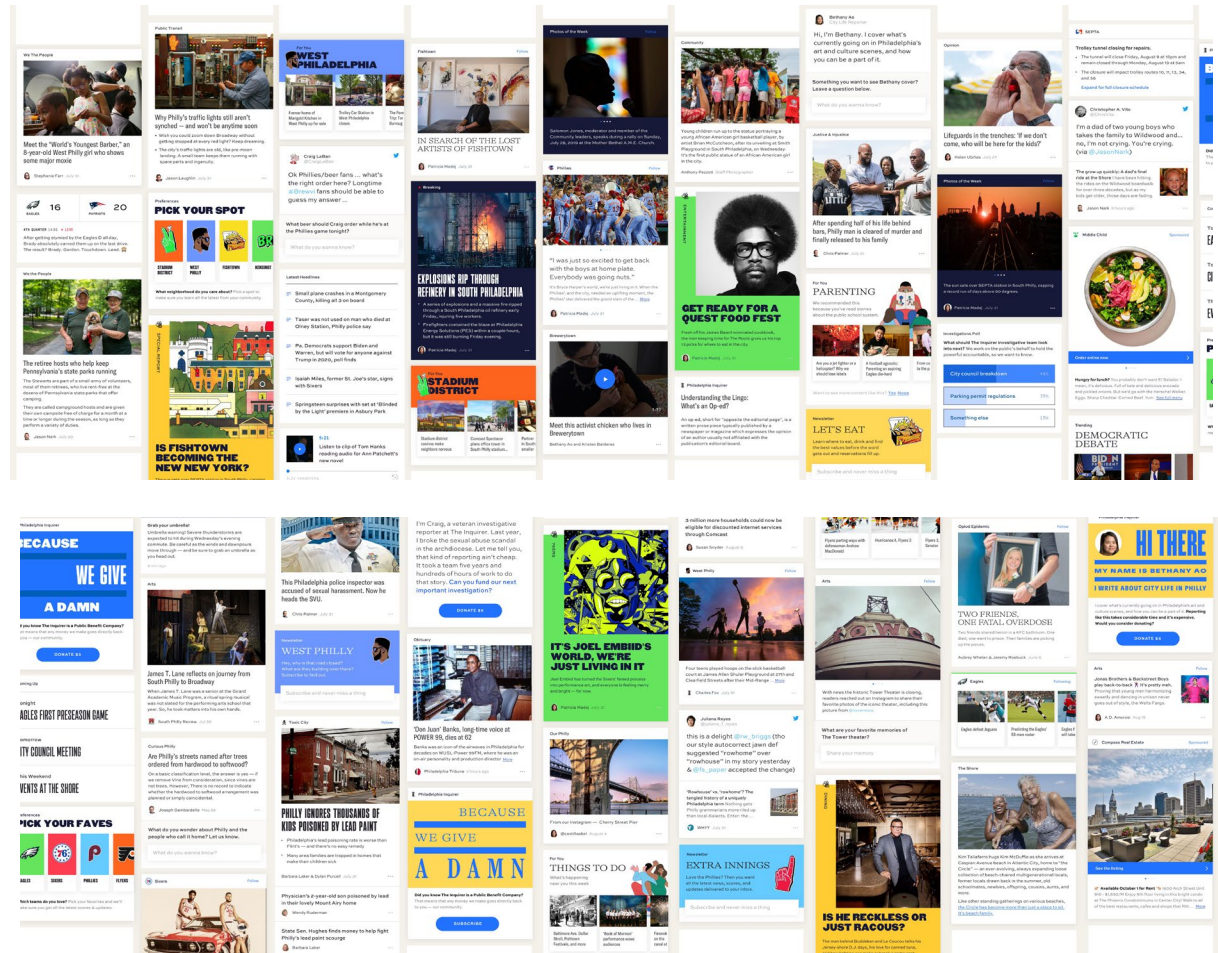
How might we?

Transition to the new digital platform and go public with the new site

One of the benefits of the agile process is that we work together to build the site, so training for the W3C starts during the project. By having the W3C core group on our small team and delivering quickly, we'll spend a lot of time using the site side by side, adding content, looking for improvements, and finding ways to optimize the back-end user experience as well as the front. By the time the site launches, you know it like the back of your hand.

We're also looking to complete a mindful transition from the old to the new. We'll look for elegant ways to handle archives, URL redirects, and onboarding for users that were accustomed to the previous design.

Our overarching goal is to set the W3C up to launch the site smoothly and ensure its sustainability in the long run. Combined with post-launch help from us, we'll make sure transition is handled responsibly and the site gets better over time.



Some of our work in progress for the Philadelphia Inquirer. We're used to launching large-scale platforms that affect millions of users, so we take the transition seriously.

About us

Upstatement is a diverse design and engineering studio that builds brands, software, and user experiences for the postdigital age. Our studio was born in the newsrooms of The New York Times and The Boston Globe and is a product of the fusion between storytelling, design, and engineering.

We build brands from scratch, helping visionaries find their voice and break new ground. We create strategies that point our clients in the right direction, questioning assumptions to make their organizations more valuable. We design award-winning experiences that people love. And we ship software that millions of users interact with every day to do everything from read the news, apply to college, or get out the vote.

Our process is flexible, and no two projects are alike. We have a playbook of problem-solving tools designed to help our clients tackle tricky puzzles,

We believe in small teams doing great work for visionary clients that make a difference

prototype ideas, test and validate these solutions, and deploy them to their users.

One of our mantras is that launch day is just the beginning; all of our work is focused on helping our clients make big transformations in a sustainable way. We produce tools and frameworks that grow over time and empower our clients to continue the work of the project long after we're done.

We do all this with a small team of experts and lots of time to focus, so your project is the only thing on our minds.

Read on to find out how we do it.

Vitals

- Founded in 2008
- 40 full-time staff
- Boston, MA



2017, 2018,
2019

Our process

Orientation



Before we ever design or build anything, we start by understanding the big picture. Why are you investing in this project? What's the ideal outcome? How does this work help you succeed in the long run? How can we make this sustainable? We get to the bottom of these questions and more through research, observation, user testing, and a series of strategic activities designed to understand your goals.

During the orientation phase, we get to know each other, get the project set up, collect materials and previous research, and generally prepare for the focused work ahead through planning and scheduling.

Deliverables

- Project starter questions
- Project roles matrix
- Project dashboard
- Analysis of existing data
- Workshops

Our process

Strategy and Vision

With a good understanding of the problem at hand, we begin to build a solution. We establish a strategy to guide us and help us stay focused on the big opportunity for this project (and for you to use post-rollout). This includes the big goals, the unique opportunities, and the expected results. It's our roadmap, helping the project stay focused now, and helping to guide your team in the future.

Our vision is the strategy in action: What does it look like? What does it sound like? How does it work? How will people receive it? During this phase, we tackle high-level brand attributes like mission, vision, positioning and voice. We also start to establish the character of the solution and deliver the big ideas in a tangible way. This helps to build momentum around the project, involve a wider group of stakeholders, and stress-test the strategy before we begin the process of building.



Deliverables

- Creative Brief
- Technical Assumptions and Constraints
- Brand platform
- High-level concepts and prototypes

Our process

Build and Deploy

During the build phase, our teams work to develop and deploy the solutions described in the Strategy and Vision phase. For a brand, this could be continued application of brand voice and identity across the entire organization. For a website or app, it could be the ongoing development and deployment of content, tools and user experiences.

We build and test in an agile manner, organizing our work into sprints that group and prioritize items by importance. Our client product owner is in the driver's seat, prioritizing each work item and reviewing it at each sprint review.

In this way, we continuously develop and deploy our work so that there are no unpleasant surprises at the end of the process. It has the added benefit of exposing important work for testing, review, and use along the way, giving you the ability to make changes and set priorities as needs emerge.



Deliverables

- Brand style guides and assets
- Website builds
- Training and documentation
- QA testing
- Launch support

Our beliefs

We believe good ideas become great experiences by prototyping.

We build to think. We make things real, rapidly putting ideas into action at low fidelity to discover strengths and gaps in concepts. Making things tangible quickly allows us to learn from experience and real user interactions, and not rely on abstract theories.

We're constantly iterating our own process as well. Learning is a big part of our culture, and we have frequent knowledge shares and group sessions to find new solutions to our clients' problems and stay up to date with best practices.



Our beliefs

We believe we are most successful when we work with our clients, not just for them.

To us, all clients are partners. We form tight bonds with our clients, and feel like a part of the team. For us, each project is a relationship and the product of our work together is something we can stand behind and continue to be proud of. Launch day isn't the end — it's really just the beginning. We give our clients the tools they need to continue updating and improving their projects long after our work is finished. Our design process produces complete style guides, thorough documentation, and intuitive code frameworks — everything a partner needs to maintain and grow their website or application.



Our beliefs

We believe solving single variables seldom leads to elegant solutions.

Great design and development doesn't live in a vacuum. We zoom out to consider the whole picture. Needs, wants, and perceptions are affected by many facets of the entire system, and impactful design comes from a broader understanding and a holistic perspective. One of our core values is to interrogate the premise. That means we think critically about what you need. Before doing any design we have to understand: What are your goals? Why are you making this site? Who is the audience? What are their needs? We'll help you articulate your problem, then synthesize design and technology to find the best solution.



Our beliefs

We believe in building systems, not screens.

All our designs are built from the component level out. Think of it as object-oriented design. By focusing on the atomic pieces of the design, we create systems that our clients can extend and update over time. This results in powerful designs that are flexible, extensible, reusable, and easy to maintain. We're as serious about creating a design strategy that stands the test of time (and helping you own it) as we are about being human-centered. And from a rock-solid strategy comes everything else—brand personality, tone, site flow and architecture—even new digital service innovations we haven't considered yet.



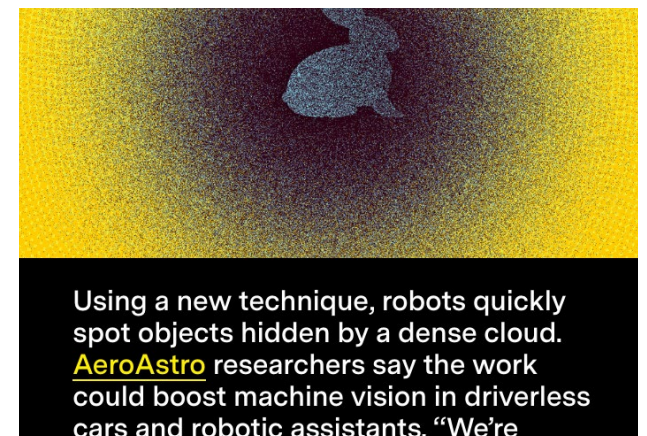
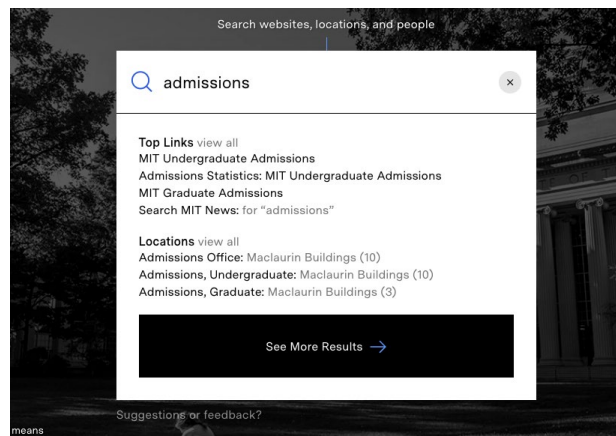
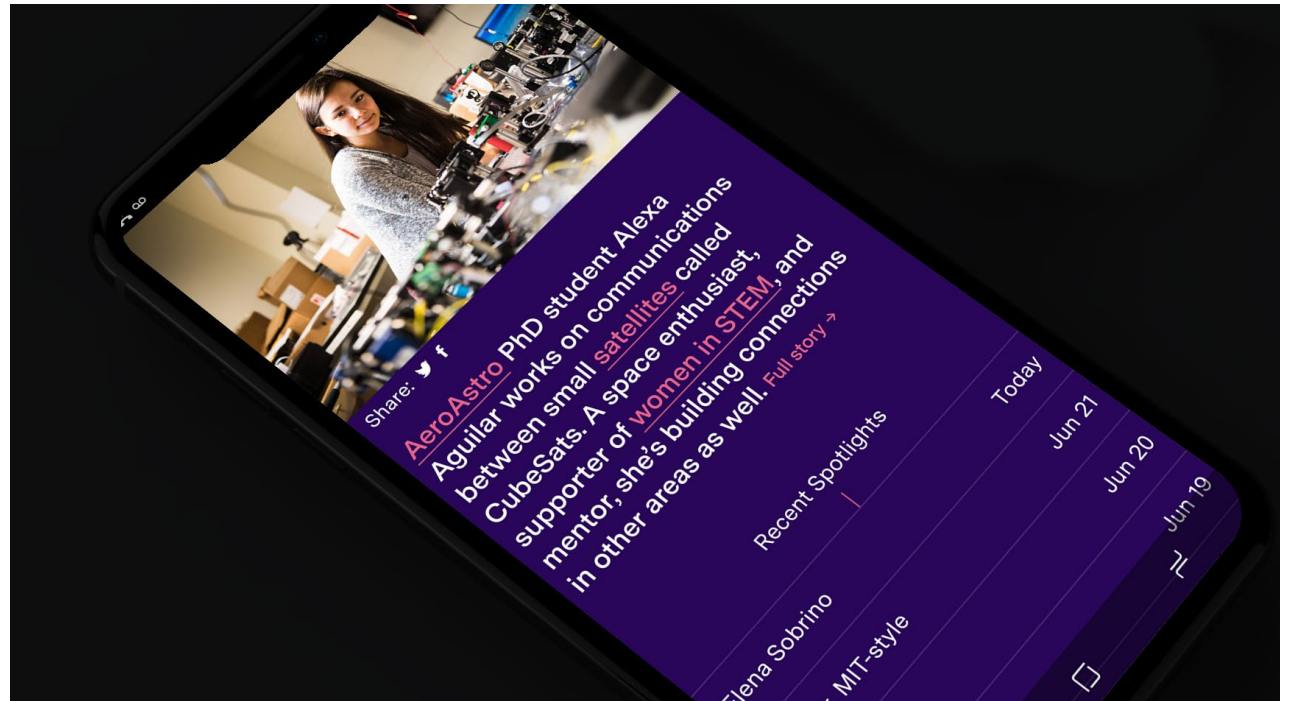
Selected work

MIT.edu

We helped MIT re-introduce its digital presence through redesigns of their major properties. Over the course of several months, we immersed ourselves in MIT's culture to understand the unique stories and ideas that represent the institution — and come up with the right ways to showcase them.

The new homepage takes advantage of MIT's diverse audience. The daily Spotlight section gives visitors a peek into some of the most interesting news and stories the communications office wants to highlight — they have a variety of formats and design tools to easily make each fresh and interesting. The work gets a second life in the daily newsletter sent to over 100,000 addresses each day.

Students, staff and others who need to get to a particular page can use a customized Elasticsearch integration to search across MIT's many sites in seconds (and without trying to navigate a giant site tree).

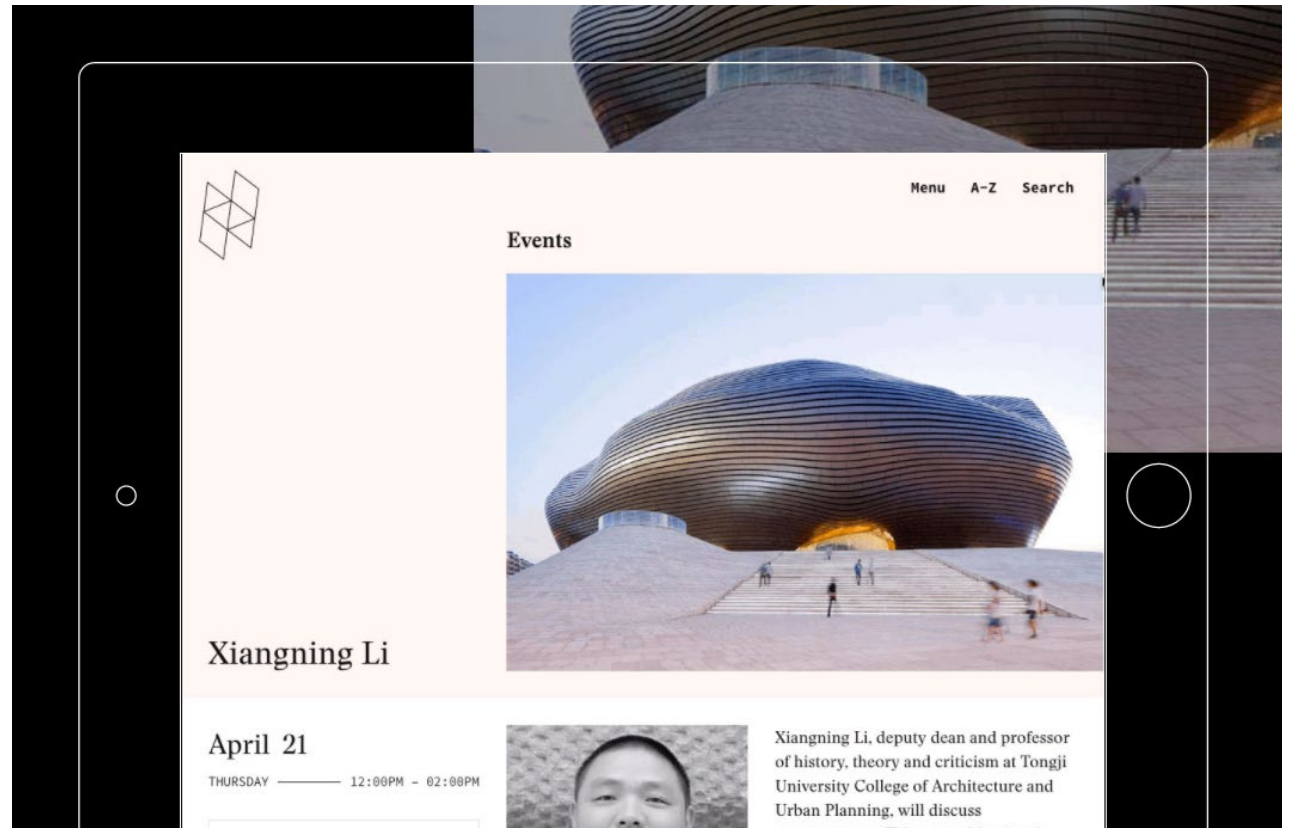


Harvard University Graduate School of Design

We helped the Harvard Graduate School of Design conduct a major web and digital infrastructure upgrade over the course of a year.

Like any major architectural project, there's much more than meets the eye. Before beginning work on the user interface or anything the public would see, our engineering team worked with Harvard to modernize their approach to content systems. We built an API and management layer for the GSD that combines their many back-end systems, from courses to people, events, projects, media and resources. This data layer powers the site and other data applications across the school.

The design sits back and acts as a canvas for the GSD's incredibly diverse set of visuals. Each can tell a separate story while still remaining in harmony with other imagery on the same page.

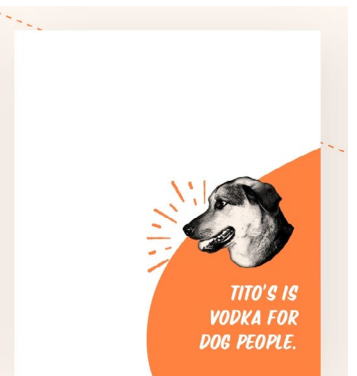
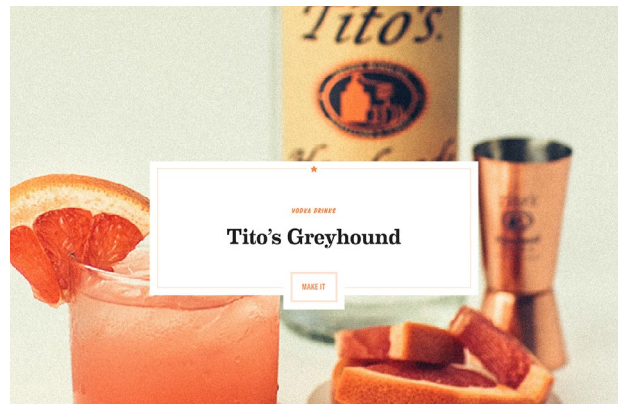
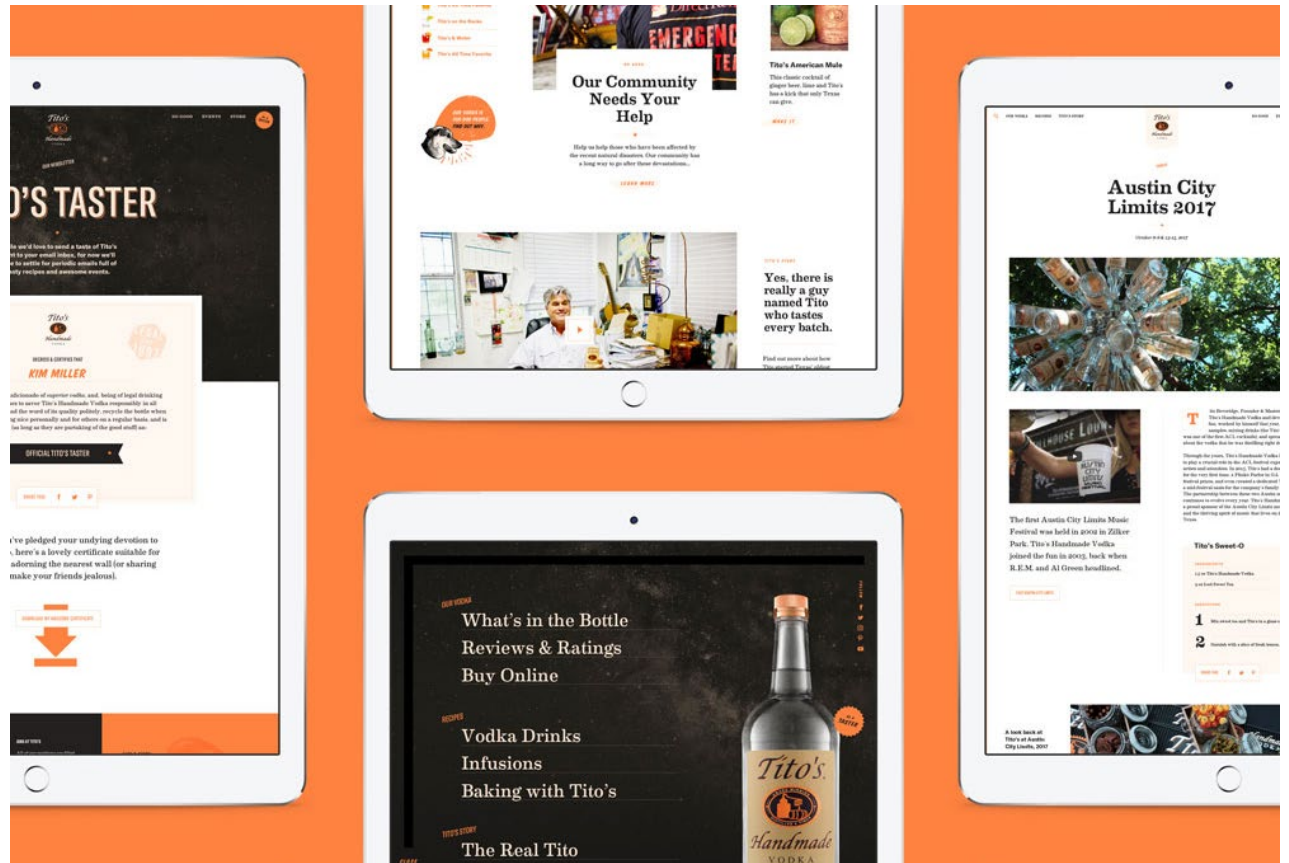


Tito's Vodka

When [Tito's Handmade Vodka](#) reached out to us, our creative director and principal, Tito Bottitta, replied immediately: "This is the email I've been waiting for!" It turned out we had a lot more in common with Tito's Handmade Vodka than just an in-house Tito, and before we knew it we were on a plane to Austin, Texas.

Our challenge was to design and build a new digital home for Tito's Handmade Vodka, and push the brand forward through type, color and art direction. The Tito's brand is legendary, and its handmade aesthetic is instantly recognizable. But the brand assets were feeling homely, not homemade. So we updated nearly every piece of the brand toolkit but the bottle itself (which is sacred ground, for good reason). By the end, a new palette of type, colors and interactions helped the brand be its best self.

It needed to be a place for the Tito's team to share all of their amazing stories, and it needed to stay true to the fun, quirky, warm brand that is distinctly Tito's.



Emergence Capital

[Emergence](#) is warm, personal, and laser-focused on its mission: to find and support visionary people who are going to change the way we work. With Salesforce, Box, and Zoom among their portfolio companies, they've got the track record to prove it too.

We worked closely with their team to build a site that better reflects who they are today, culminating in a refreshed identity that emphasizes Emergence's core values, human touch, and unique approach. You'll see it reflected in everything from the beautiful illustrations to the fast, friendly, modern tech stack. We also wrote new positioning statements, designed a destination for their big ideas, and answered the question: What makes a website feel friendly?

It's the VC that really does care about people, so we centered the design on striking illustrations of the iconic CEOs they back. Leading with their CEOs reinforces their founder-focused culture and affirms their ability to identify visionaries. Organic patterns complementing the illustrations allude to Emergence's personalized approach.



zoom

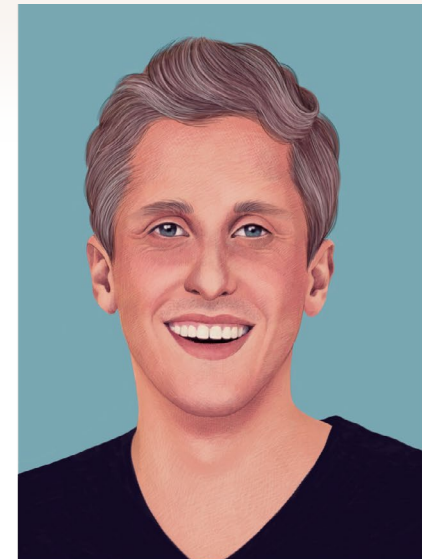
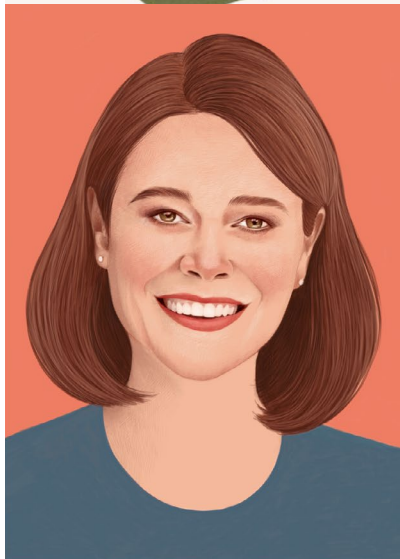
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Penguin Random House

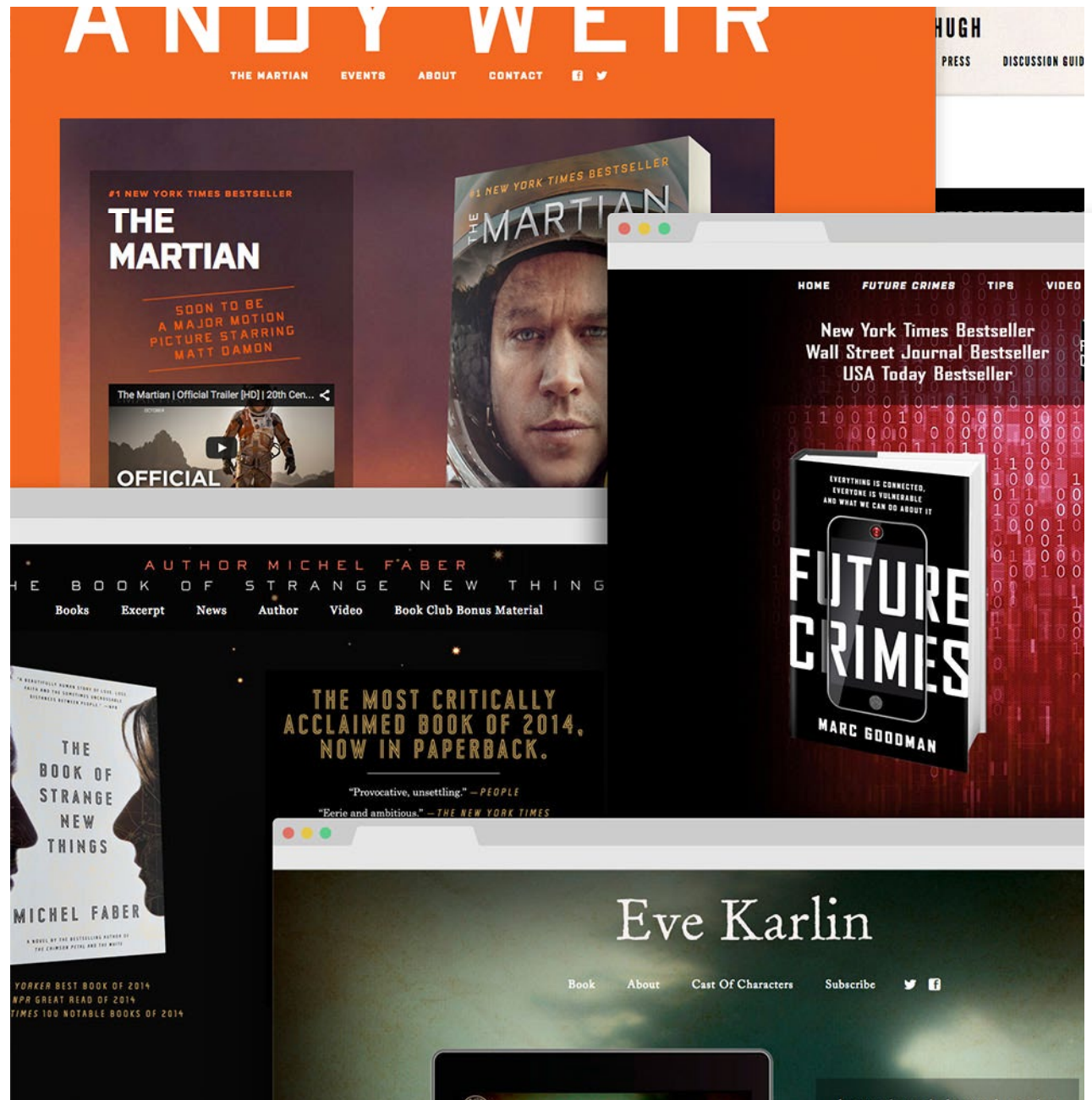
For each of the 15,000 titles that PRH publishes each year, there's an author who wants to build a site that promotes their book and connects with their fans. In the past, each website was built from scratch using a mishmash of tools and freelancers — making maintenance and upkeep nearly impossible.

Random House's marketing team challenged us to create a new WYSIWYG system for them to easily spin-up new WordPress sites, customized to meet every author's needs.

After their team makes key stylistic choices, pages are generated automatically using data from their internal API.

The result is a complete site in minutes: full of relevant information, an author's bio, photos, a complete listing of titles with samples, reviews, purchase options and more.

Each site gives an author tons of options to make it their own. They can customize book pages with new info, add events to promote their book tour and blog to keep in touch with readers.



What happens next?

This estimate is a conversation starter. If the contours of this project framework align with your thinking, we can move on to a more detailed project plan. In the coming phases, we work closely with your team to hammer out the exact activities, deliverables, timeline, and price that fits your project.

The next step could be a studio visit or meeting with your team. This gives us the opportunity for a more detailed share and discussion of similar work and your project in particular. We've done a lot of exceptional projects, but none of them are exactly like yours. We'd love to get into the details with you to make something great.

Questions?

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Thank you!