

Reflective Journal

CW1 of 6MEST007W Digital Media Production

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Reference Number: 17904913

Agency Name: Sparkle Agency

Project Name: Who Goes First

Role in project: Design Leader & Web Designer

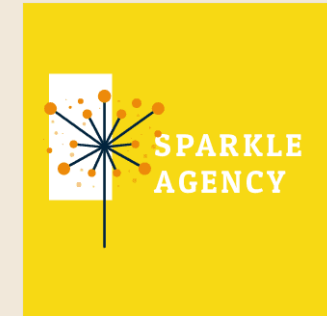


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REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

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INTRODUCTION

This reflective journal records the process from preparation to implementation of *Who Goes First*, a campaign project on mental health organised by the student organisation Sparkle Agency, from October 2021 to April 2022.

This journal contains a record of the author's work in preparation for the event, as well as a reflection on the outcomes of the work based on employability which the author has learned and experienced from courses and internship.

This journal was provided as an assignment for Digital Media Production Project (6MEST007W) and Professional Experience (6MEST008W).

Ying Li
written at the University of Westminster
on 31 March 2022



Ep. 01 The Birth of Sparkle Agency

In October 2021, Sparkle Agency, a student organisation dedicated to the psychological wellbeing of international students, began its journey.

Our first two weeks were focused on allocating our roles and setting the theme and tone of our project. After our discussion, I took on the role of design leader and was mainly responsible for web design.



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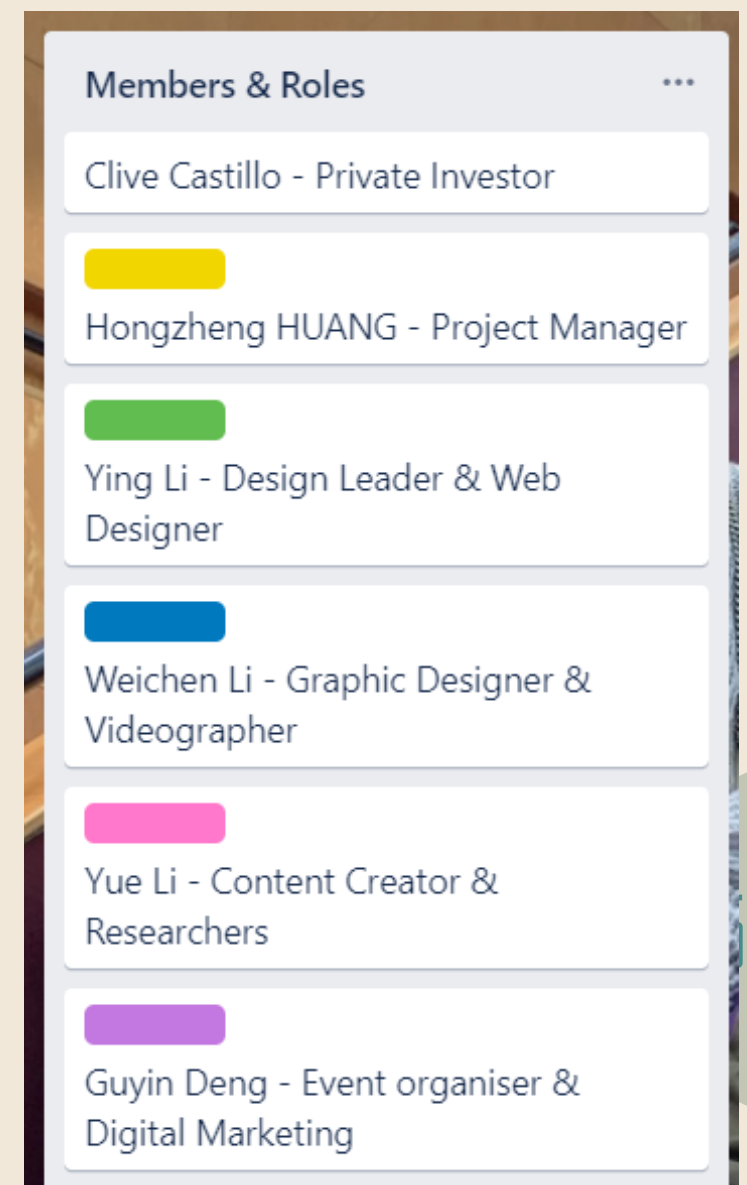
REFLECTIVE JOURNAL



Our first two weeks were focused on allocating our roles, building group trello board, and setting the theme and tone of our project. After our discussion, I took on the role of design leader and was mainly responsible for web design.

I formed a design team with project manager Hongzheng, graphic designer, and videographer Weichen, and decided that I would make the decisions and lead.

The reason I chose the position of Design Leader at first was so that I could further develop my design thinking. It was a challenge for me, not only because I had to lead the design work in our group, but also because I had never seen 'design' from the perspective of a leader before. I understand design as building on users to creatively solve problems for them, and I understand leadership as understanding, directing, and managing a team. Therefore, my initial thinking was it will probably be a coordinated process. Because my ideas are no longer carried out by me alone, I need to communicate to my team members and get everyone to carry them out together.



Ep. 02

Design thinking I – Branding

Design thinking is a problem-solving process, so when I was faced with our first design task my initial thought was not to create, but to think about what we needed.



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(mode process of design thinking)

Branding our group was the first task of our design team and before we could get our graphic designer to design the logo, we had to set the tone of the brand. By this time, we had basically settled on our topic being psychological wellbeing relevant. I got everyone together to discuss keywords related to our topic while I went on a palette study.

Red		Orange
Lust (S) ^[38]		Warmth (S) ^[39]
Power (S) ^[40]		Excitement (S) ^[39]
Excitement (S) ^[36]	Yellow	
Love (S) ^[38]	Competence (S) ^[36]	
Speed (S) ^[4]	Happiness (S) ^[38]	
Anger (S) ^[43]	Inexpensive (F) ^[27]	
	Low Quality (F) ^[27]	

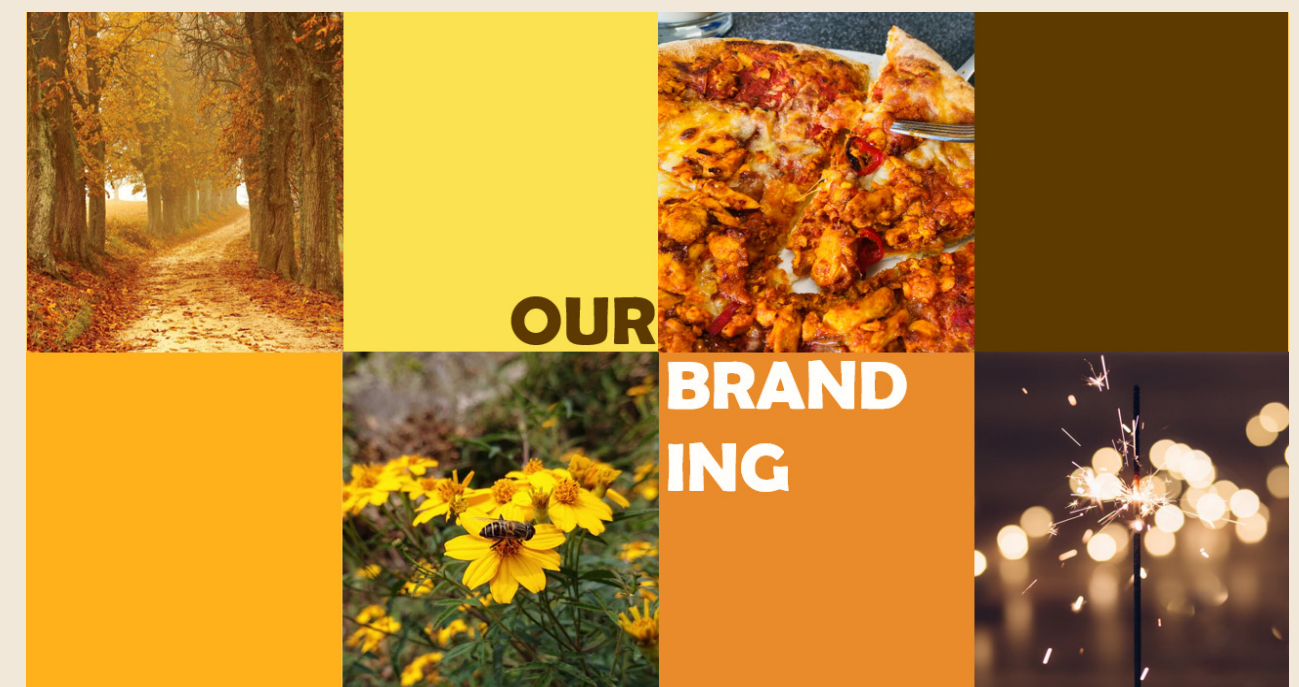
(colour psychology in Wikipedia)

Not only do colour psychology studies prove that warm colours tend to give positive, friendly and warm emotions, but the images searched for according to the keywords we have discussed also tend to have a predominantly warm tone.

I then created our moodboard and colour scheme using images that we searched for through keywords including home, childhood, warmth kindness, etc, as well as photos that our group members took of moments in their daily lives that they thought were moments when they felt happy.

#E98B2A	Theme colour: title
#FFB11B	Theme colour: subtitle
#FBE251	Highlight colour: notification
#FEF4A9	Decorative colour
#FFFEFA	Background colour
#5D3A00	Text colour

(colour proposal of branding)



(our moodboard)

Colour psychology is mostly used in brand design and brand marketing, and its role is as important as the graphic design of the brand logo. Our need is precisely to convey the appropriate mood with colour and graphics so that people's visual impression of our brand meets our expectations.

Ep. 03

Design thinking II – Website Functionality

Fandi Meng, an industrial designer who was my internship employer, once wrote in his blog that designers are not artists, they cannot stand apart from the market.

Being grounded in the market needs to capture the requirements, which is not only the client but also the user of the design product. Therefore, I would consider the functionality of the site in two aspects.

Firstly, from the perspective of viewers. It required the website has a clear layout and logic of user flow. In order to do this, I held a card sorting survey among our group members before I built up our app architecture, who are both my clients and viewers of my website. The result I wanted was that they could not only check if I had missed any features, but also comment on the whole functional logic from a viewer's point of view.

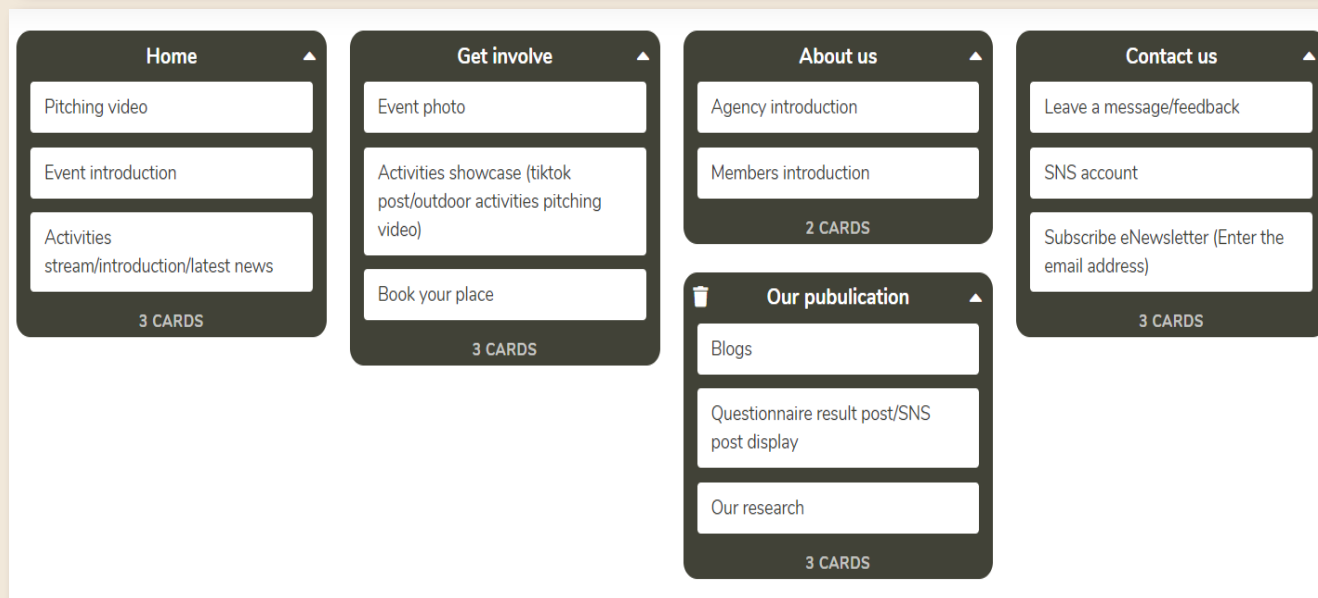
Sparkle Agency Web Design
Created: 2022年1月9日

study address
<https://study.uxtweak.com/cardsort/L3Yivrt0Bg4vBRAArYlwc>

completed
5 of 8 respondents

created
2022年1月9日
by Ying Li

RESULTS



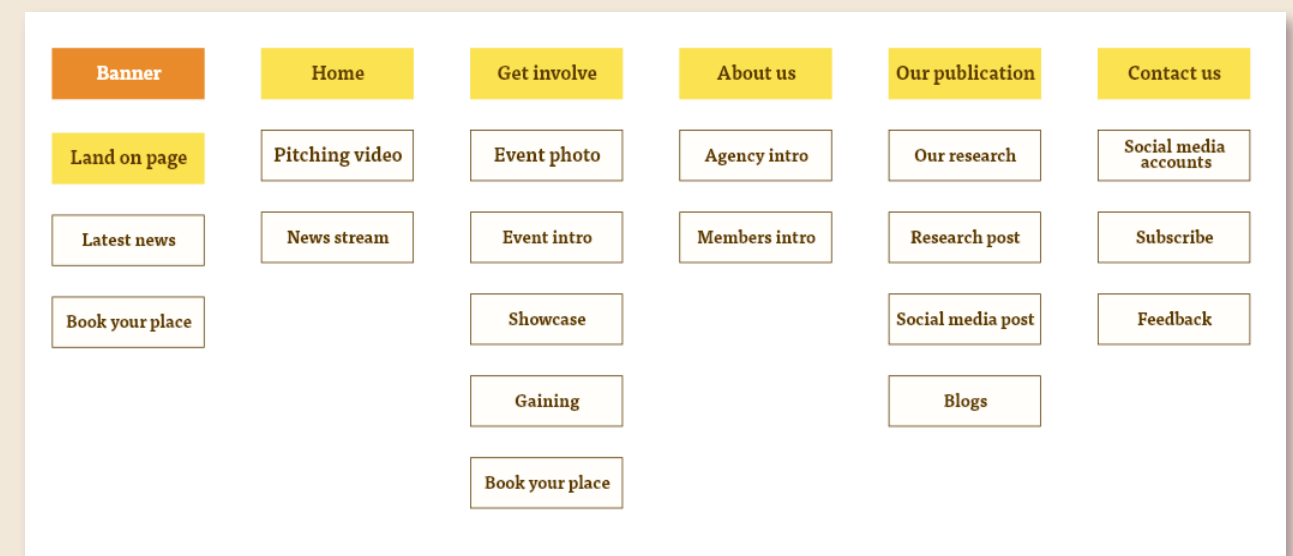
(the card sorting survey was conducted on UXtweak)

Question 1: Single line text answer – required
Are there any other items you think could be added? (If so, please write the nam...
FULL QUESTION TEXT ▾
Respondent's answer
展示一下我们给的纪念品 可能加在get involve里面
Showcase our GIFTS, and could put it into 'get involve'

This proposal was adopted and used in the design of our final website.

This proposal was adopted, but we abandoned 'blogs' part at the end.

Question 1: Single line text answer – required
Are there any other items you think could be added? (If so, please write the nam...
FULL QUESTION TEXT ▾
Respondent's answer
Our blogs可以放在一个新目录(Our publication)里
Could put 'our blog' into a new category 'our publication'.



(initial information building formed based on card sorting survey results)

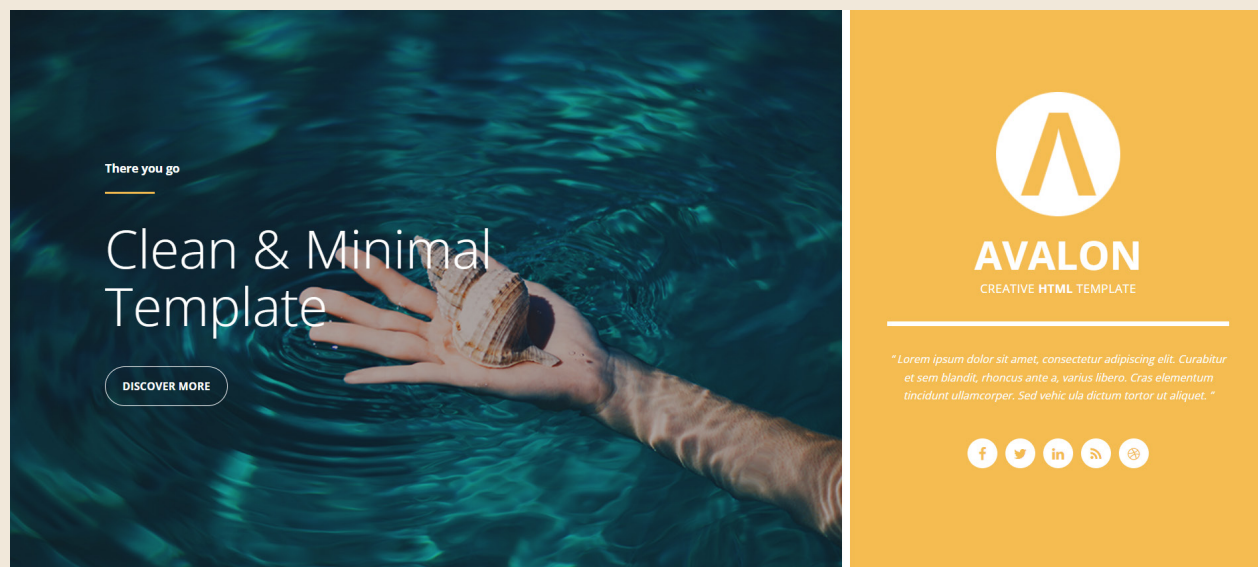
Secondly, from the perspective of owner. As the owner of the website, or, in a professional context, as the designer's client, I thought about what requirements the website needed to meet. The main and the most important function of this website are marketing and pitching. It would not be like Instagram or any other social media marketing allow us to post rapid and piecemeal content. Its content needs to be well-established, well-ordered and highlighted.

According to my research, the biggest advantage of a website as a marketing platform is that it is a space that is entirely owned by the publisher, which is available 24/7 to its viewers and provides detailed information about the services and objectives of the brand. Therefore, our website marketing design will be updated with the latest news in conjunction with our social media marketing.

Ep. 04

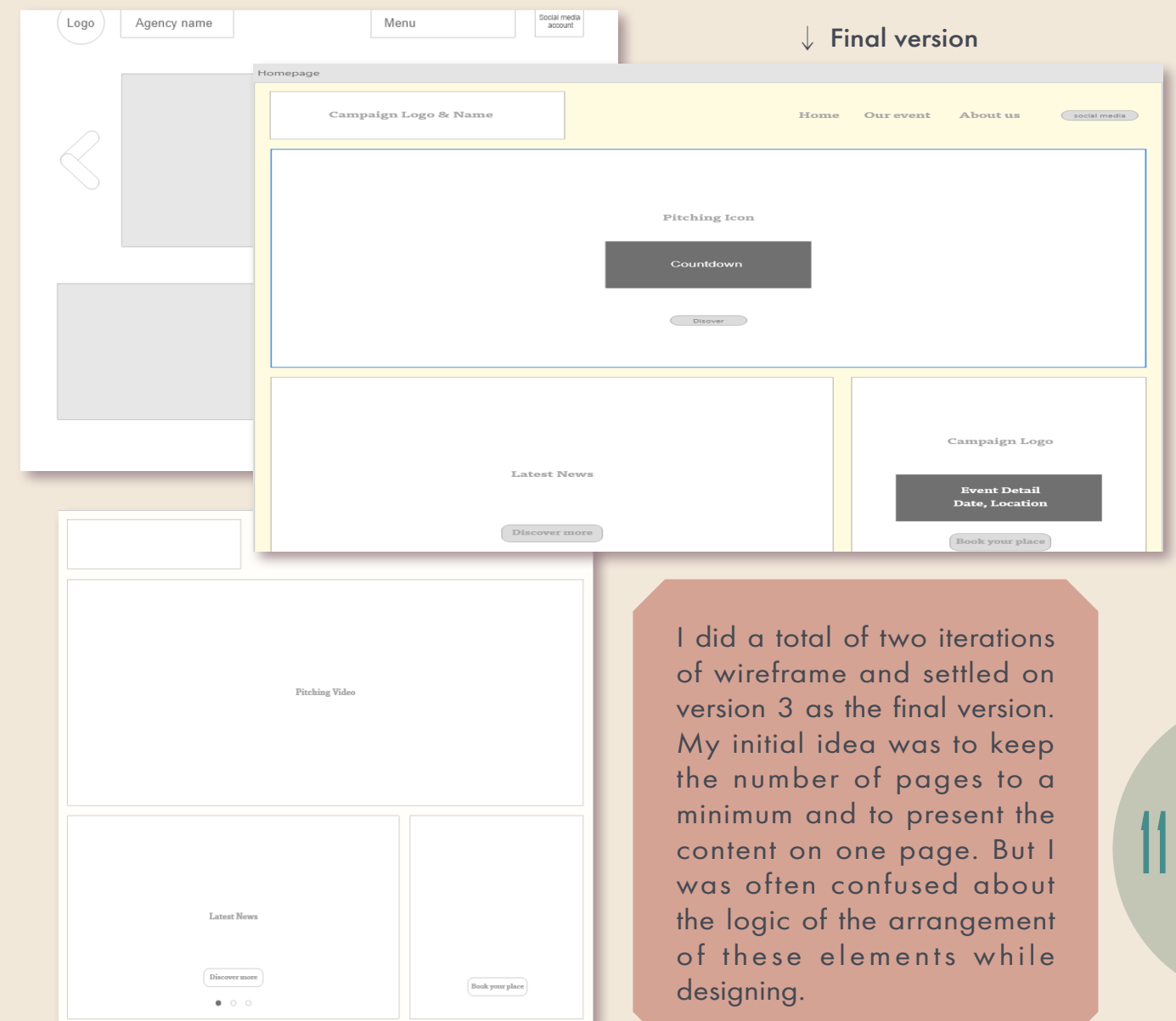
Design thinking III – Website Wireframe

By the time I was ready to start designing the wireframe of user interface for the website, our graphic designer had already completed both our agency logo and campaign logo. Therefore, when doing case studies on campaign websites, I dropped design templates that did not fit the tone of our logo, such as those that were too business-like or academic.



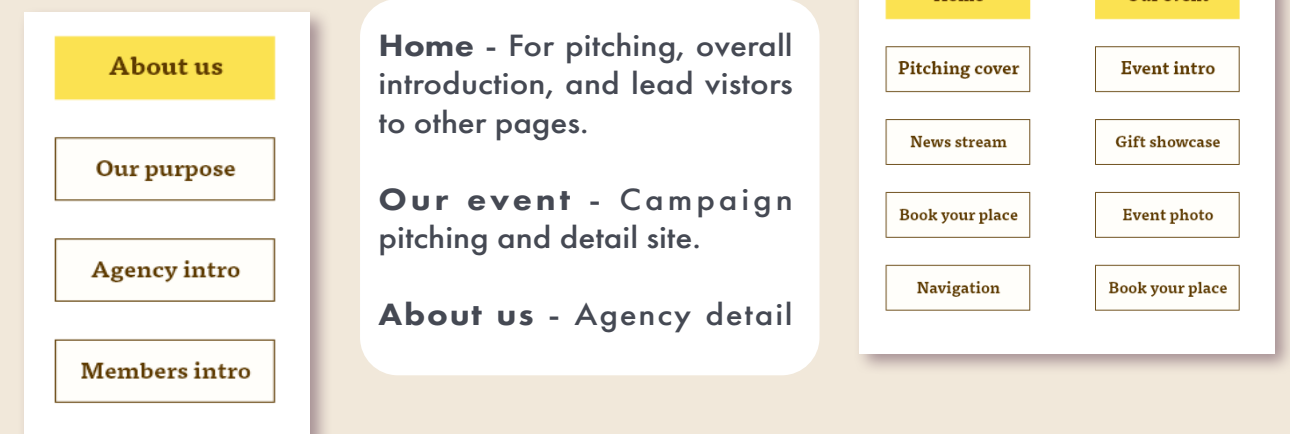
(<https://technext.github.io/avalon/>)

This is the best layout template I found for reference after searching. Its rectangular colour block layout makes the whole page look clean and lively. At the same time, the information in each section is more noticeable and the functionality of each block is more highlighted. After deciding on the approximate style of the layout, and in order to form the final wireframe, I decided on the different functional divisions and their layouts, referring to the information architecture that had been done before.



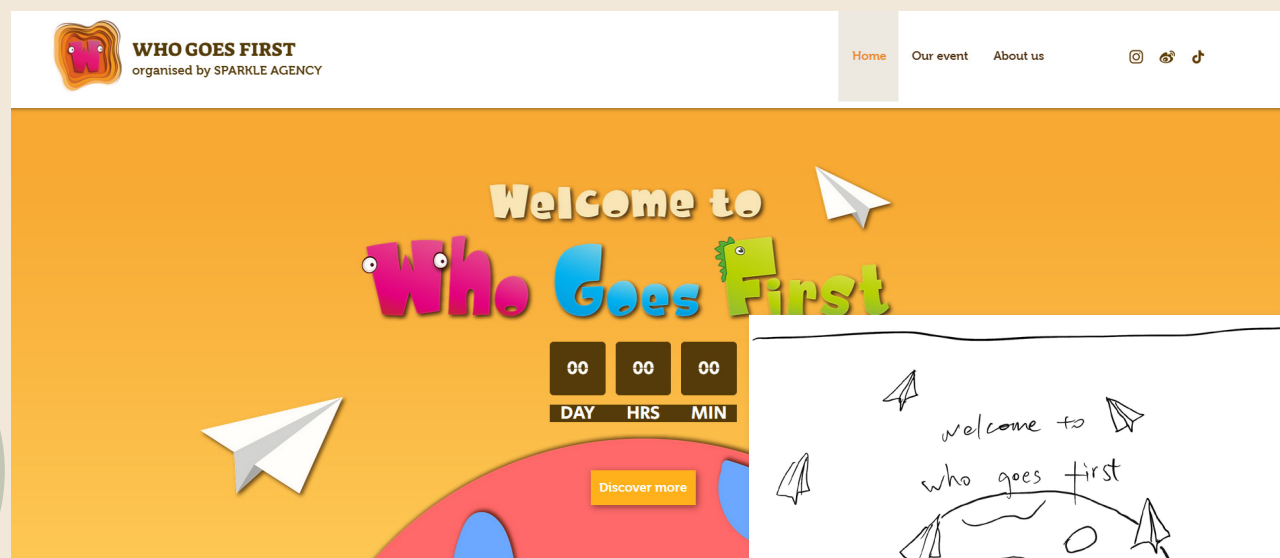
I did a total of two iterations of wireframe and settled on version 3 as the final version. My initial idea was to keep the number of pages to a minimum and to present the content on one page. But I was often confused about the logic of the arrangement of these elements while designing.

After working on the GUI in wix and referencing more event websites, I revised the information architecture and created the final version of wireframe, which overturned my previous idea of having as few pages as possible to express the content in a coherent way. I decided to group similar content together and create different pages in three key sections.



Ep. 05 Branding I - Website GUI Design

From our initial planning and organisation of children's outdoor games to our final decision on origami craft activities, our colour palette and themed images have always given our audiences a lively and childlike feel.



(<https://whogoesfirst.org>)

A brand image is like a character, then there must be words to describe it that sum up its personality, appearance, behaviour and so on. The style of our campaign is mainly energetic and childish, so when I designed the website to reinforce and convey this image, I would unify this character from the icons design, font design and content.

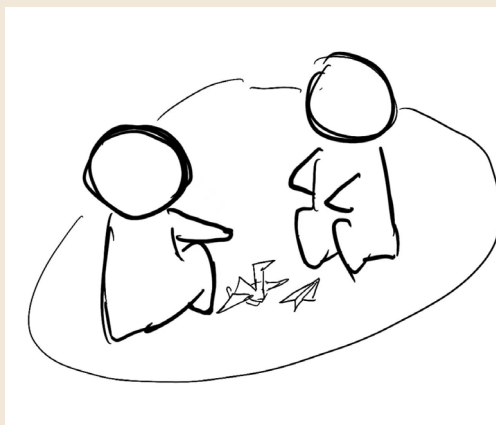
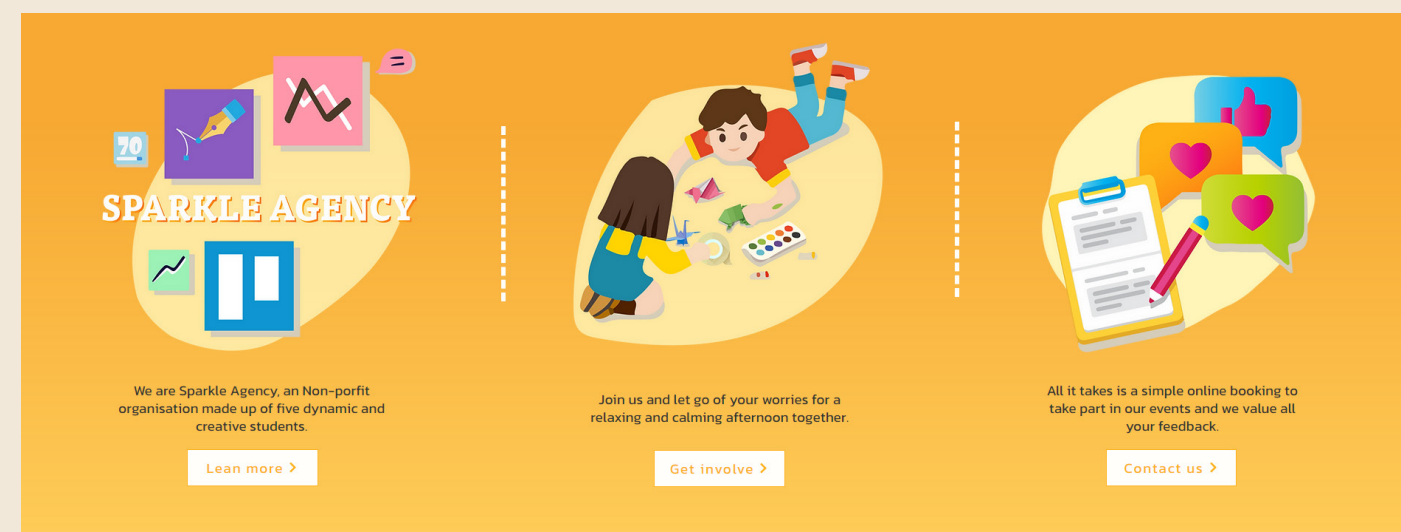
If your brand was a person, choose 3-5 words that would describe him or her.

Simple	Artistic	Strong
Beautiful	Bold	Childish
Funny	Serious	Goofy
Responsible	Professional	Angry
Dry	Corporate	Hipster
Wealthy	Sophisticated	Bohemian
Extravagant	Silly	Modest
Fun	Patriotic	Fashionable
Affordable	Rebellious	Activist
Charitable	Caring	Handy
Outdoorsy	Young	Effective
Reliable	Witty	Peaceful
Smart	Confident	Weird
Fast	Chill	Blunt
Manly	Experienced	Vigilant
Trendy	Flamboyant	Secure
Quirky	Honest	Rugged
Active	Bookworm	Sexy
Eloquent	Resourceful	Over-the-top
Expert	Efficient	Party Animal
Energetic	Creative	Discrete
Daring	Zen	Exclusive

(<https://www.shopify.co.uk/blog/how-to-build-a-brand>)



When considering icons for a website, I try to pick icons related to origami for decoration. When designing original icons, I use abstract cartoon images as material to create flat graphics. This choice makes the site more relevant and childlike.



Three different visual navigation icons link to the three main sections of our website from left to right: the AGENCY page, the EVENTS page and the ENROLLMENT page. The main purpose of this design is to visually appeal to the viewer and to explain the main content of the page in a simple and convincing copy. I designed the three icons to reflect the content of the website to which they link. Due to my limited skills, I was unable to draw a complete icon by hand, so I had to adapt the elements to my own sketches and combine them with my own additions. I can only make a new icons from my own design sketches by adjusting and adding my own elements.

Place has changed, but we ain't strangers.

Come and Pick up Gifts for You

The headline font on the website is partly based on the font chosen by the graphic designer for the campaign logo - a cute dolphin font for some eye-catching headlines. Some design changes were made to match the headline, such as adding a projection effect to make it look more like a paper cutout.

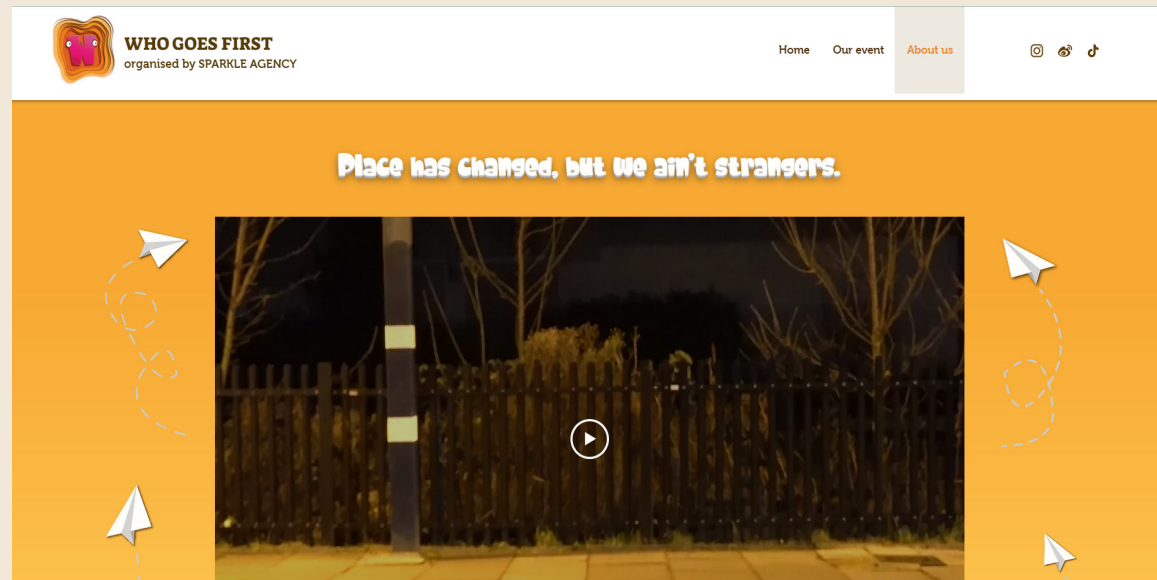
Cute Dolphin

<https://www.dafont.com/cute-dolphin.font>



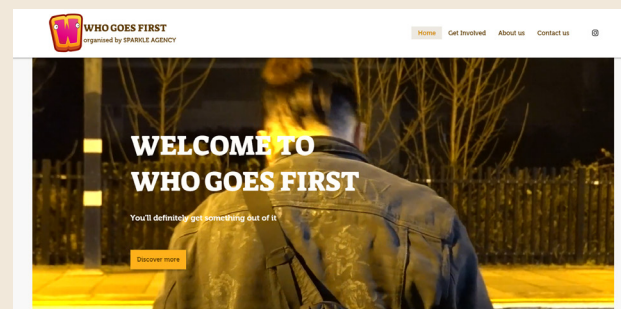
Ep. 06 Branding II - Website GUI Design II

Our website took shape in January, but it took a number of tests and discussions among the team before the final design was completed and launched in early March.



(first version ↓)

For example, the agency introduction video was not initially included in the site elements. Instead, I had planned to insert the campaign video as our pitching cover on the front page, and during initial testing, I put the agency video in the cover section instead of the unfinished campaign video and checked the effect. I found that due to the changing background colour, the cover headline was not visible regardless of the colour. The first solution was to ensure that the video was equally bright or dark and then adjust the colour of the text to the most obvious contrasting colour. However, this method is very difficult for videos where the main material is shot on location. The second solution is to overlay a low transparency graphic below the text to slightly separate the colour of the video, but then the video will be partially masked. After much discussion with my team members, I was unable to come up with a suitable solution and we finally gave up on inserting the video in the cover section and proceeded to draw the cover's pitching icons.



But this agency introduction video is something I have considered and thought it necessary to include as a section in our agency introduction. This video is a very clear introduction to our agency objectives and the audience we are targeting. Therefore, it ended up on the front page of our agency section as part of 'our purpose', with one of our taglines.



Overall web design reflection

Looking back over the months from gathering information to finalising our campaign website, I would say it was more challenging than the two assignments I had done on educational games or the original application last year. Last year, although I had done plenty of pre and post research, my mindset during the design process was mostly self-satisfied. However, this experience has completely changed my formerly solidified mindset. I was not only meeting my own needs, but also the needs of the whole group as an agency, so I needed to communicate with them several times to do a better job.

More, for example, about the content of the website, it is because I did a marketing planning internship in the summer, I know that no matter which platform of marketing, the ultimate thing is to grasp the needs of the clients. The website is also an important part of our marketing and promotion, so the first question I ask myself before I start all my design work is, what do we want from this website? What are its objectives? How do we present the need? These are the questions I ask myself in subsequent designs, as logic for continuous improvement.

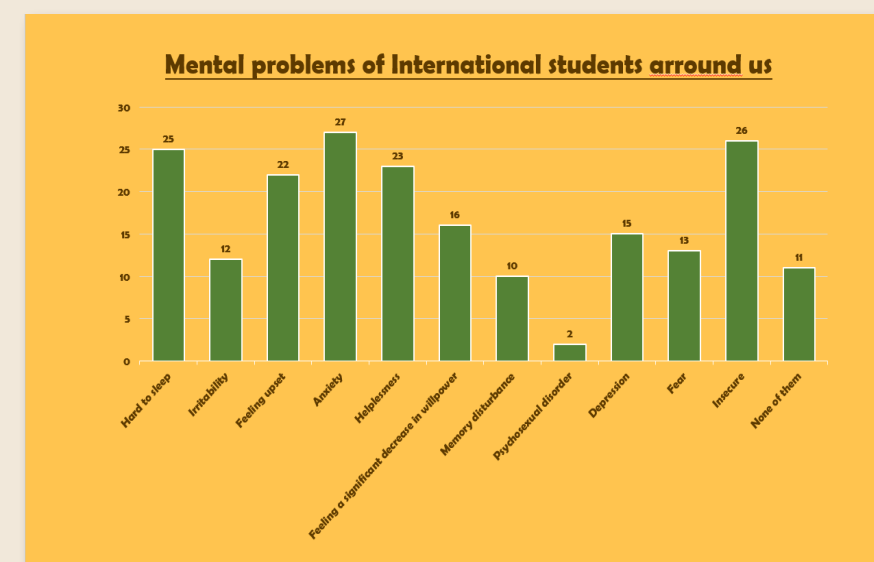
Ep. 07

Branding III - Pitching Presentation Preparation

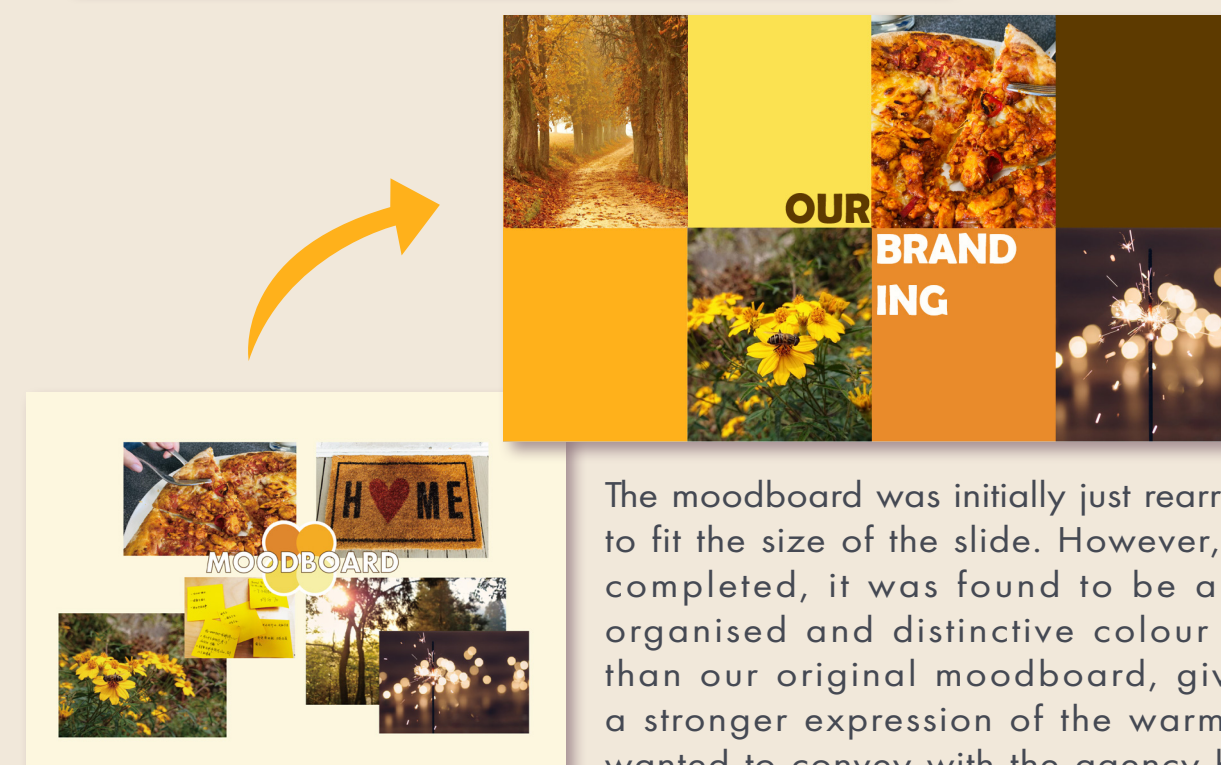
The pitching presentation is a great opportunity to promote our brand image to the public. Through this presentation we can tell our brand story to everyone, so I started planning this presentation with the aim of promoting our brand as the designer of presentation slides.



The design of this PowerPoint matches our own colour scheme and creates a unified design style. I redesigned the bar chart and moodboard to make them more suitable for this slide.



The bar chart uses stronger colours and a white border to make it less serious and more vivid, more in keeping with our childlike



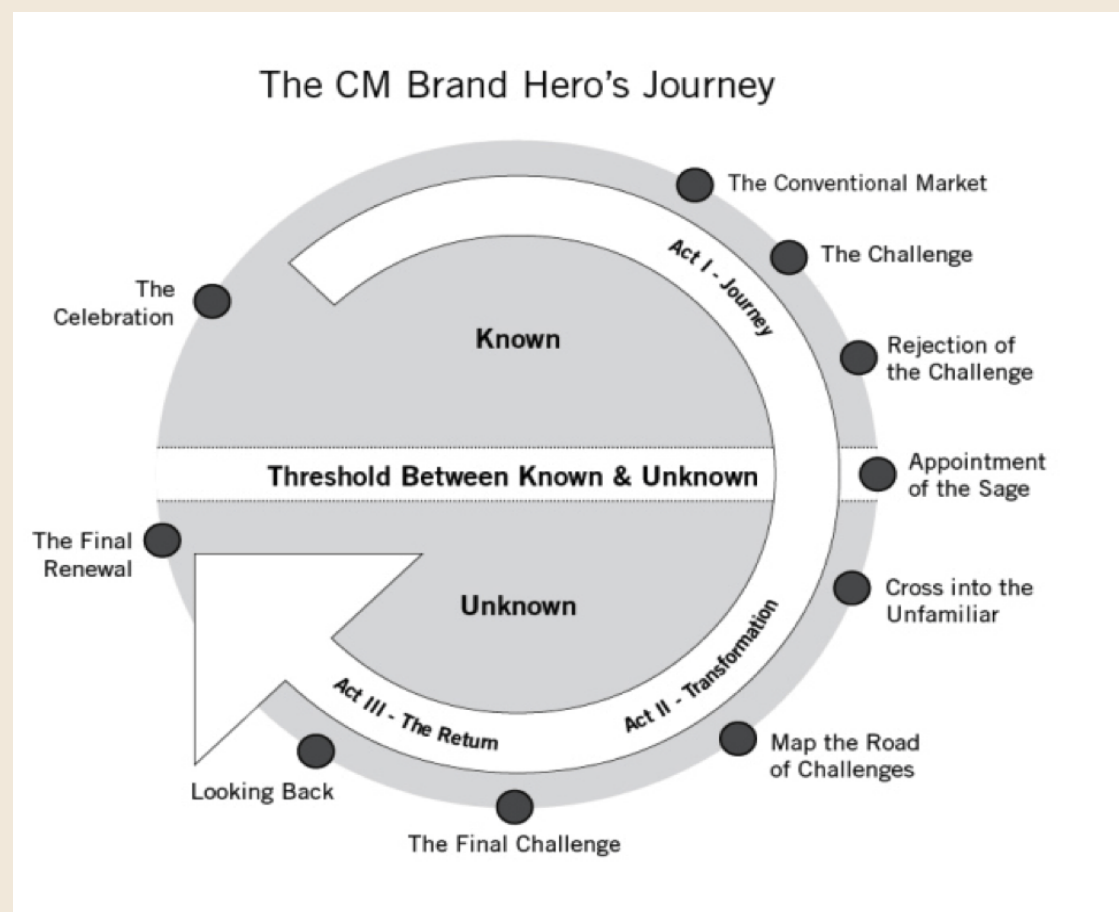
The moodboard was initially just rearranged to fit the size of the slide. However, when completed, it was found to be a more organised and distinctive colour block than our original moodboard, giving it a stronger expression of the warmth we wanted to convey with the agency brand.

Based on this process and the slides I have helped design in my internship, I believe that the most important point of a slideshow for branding purposes is that all the content presented on a limited screen is the first impression we want people to have of our brand. From a design point of view, the theme colour makes a strong impression, especially if all the slides are in the same colour. This is perfect for branding campaigns where the audience can see the brand's theme colour at a glance and get an initial, lasting impression. From a content point of view, the slides should be designed with visual images as the main focus, complemented by text, and the content that is put up should be simple and important, and most representative of the brand.

Ep. 08

Branding IV - Agency Branding & Personal Branding

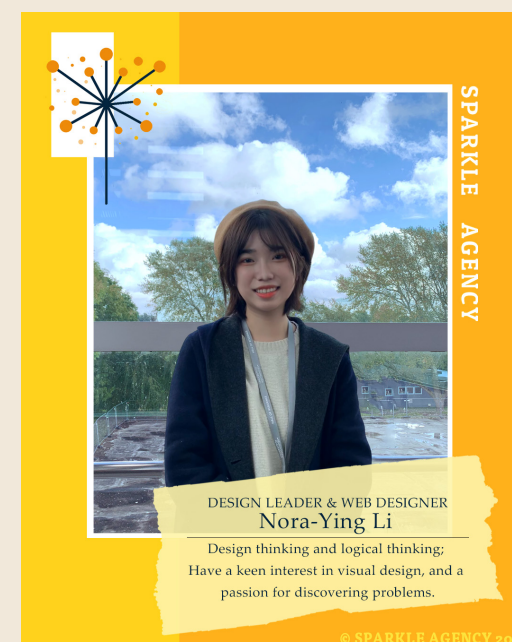
I was fortunate enough to work on branding for a while when I was a marketing planning intern last summer. At the time I did a lot of case studies on brands or founder stories, so I applied the patterns between them to my creation of our agency brand and personal brand.



(<https://writtent.com/blog/15-storytelling-techniques-writing-better-brand-story/>)

So when the project manager and I start to conceive the branding story of our own agency, I first imagine our target audience as a persona - young people (mainly students). Then I think about the difficulties they will encounter - they will be confused about the future. I then combine this with the theme of our campaign design - the planet - in order to create our campaign story.

Branding Design



The branding of our agency is mainly done by me who sets the colour palette and theme colours, with the graphic designer mainly responsible for the logo design, so much of the rest of my follow-up work follows the established style.

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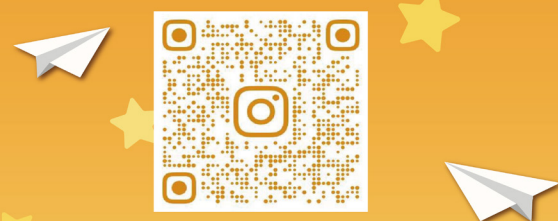


It may be noticed that the palette of these journals is completely different from our agency's because the journals follow the personal branding palette that I have designed. I imagined what my personality would look like if I were the main character of the story, and came up with the idea that perhaps a less saturated, lighter colour would suit me. And I created my brand image and logo through my image features, i.e. pink round-rimmed glasses and pink hair tails.

Ep. 09 Campaign Implementation

We had a stall on campus on the 11th and 14th of March to promote our origami workshop and to drive traffic to our Instagram and event website, and on the 15th of March we held our official origami workshop at Harrow Campus in room J1.01.

Follow our Instagram!



You can get these lovely postcards and bookmarks

was not particularly easy to scan, so I improvised a separate QR code poster on the advice of the project manager.

Apart from my job, I found those two days to be busy but rewarding. I am a very introverted person and lack the courage to interact with strangers. But I could feel that I was getting braver and braver to talk to people during the two days of the stall including the Origami workshop. Ultimately, I'm willing to try to get out there and invite people to follow our Instagram feed, which I think is a bonus beyond my professional skills, and I value it very much.



I would regard this campaign as a success as I heard a lot of positive feedback. One of our sessions allowed participants to fold paper freely and we also taught them what they wanted to learn to fold. As I taught our participants to fold, I would communicate with them. Many of them were new to university and said that origami was a relaxing and fun activity for them. When I see their pleasant smiles when they finish their work, I feel that I can regard this activity as a success.



Ep. 10 Evaluation

1. Self-evaluation as DESIGN LEADER

I might be a 'designer' with lots of ideas, but I'm not a perfect 'design leader'.

As a design leader I have a clear grasp of the overall design style and future design work, and I have communicated with our graphic designer many times to make sure I get my point across. However, my leadership skills still need to be improved, and I have often failed to listen to our designers' ideas first, but have instead expressed my own views first, which may not be conducive to the other party expressing theirs. I think I would have done a better job if I had a clearer management style and a more patient way of communicating.

2. Self-evaluation as WEB DESIGNER

I did not use any template for my campaign website design but created it completely from scratch using WiX's editor. The whole process of researching and preparing the website was very smooth and logical, that are coping mechanisms I had worked out during my two practical assignments last year. The only thing that I found very difficult was that I did not communicate my needs to my team members promptly during the process of creating the website, and the lack of communication and the lack of clarity in the waiting and needs of both parties.

3. Summative reflection

It is unlikely that I would have been able to gain the courage to adapt to a professional environment without the project experience I have had over the past two years. Without the summer internship experience in a professional environment, I could not have better reflected on how the production of my Final Project and Portfolio would have helped me in my future professional field.

The most rewarding part of the Final Project was learning how to manage multiple tasks and work as a team. When faced with a large amount of complex and multi-faceted work, there is no way to proceed without learning to plan and manage. I've always had a misconception. I used to think that I would be less effective at the things I was good at if I spent time managing work and communication rather than creating the content of my work than if I did it alone. But the group work has stimulated my creativity more than I could have imagined. For example, our graphic designer was an art student, and I gained new insights from discussing the barriers between design and art with him. I had been so obsessed with uniformity and efficiency that I had developed a fixed mindset that all design could be handled. But often the most basic 'applicability' was forgotten. Perhaps the process of design can be approached with experience, but the content of design cannot be generalised.

