



**We Didn't Plan an
Agency... But Here
We Are**

Who We Are

Render conference in Oxford, 2016



Lauren Sternberg-Gilbert

★ Star Mountain Design Owner & Web Designer

📍 New York, USA ☺️ Generation X/ Xennial

- Former New York City teacher (10 years)
- Bachelors Degree, Early Childhood and Elementary Education
- Built classroom websites with students

Aisha El-Tahlawi

★ Web Designer

📍 London, UK ☺️ Millennial

- Studied BSc Business Information Technology at UoG.
- Wanted to pursue Web Design after briefly studying it in Bachelors.

Where It All Began

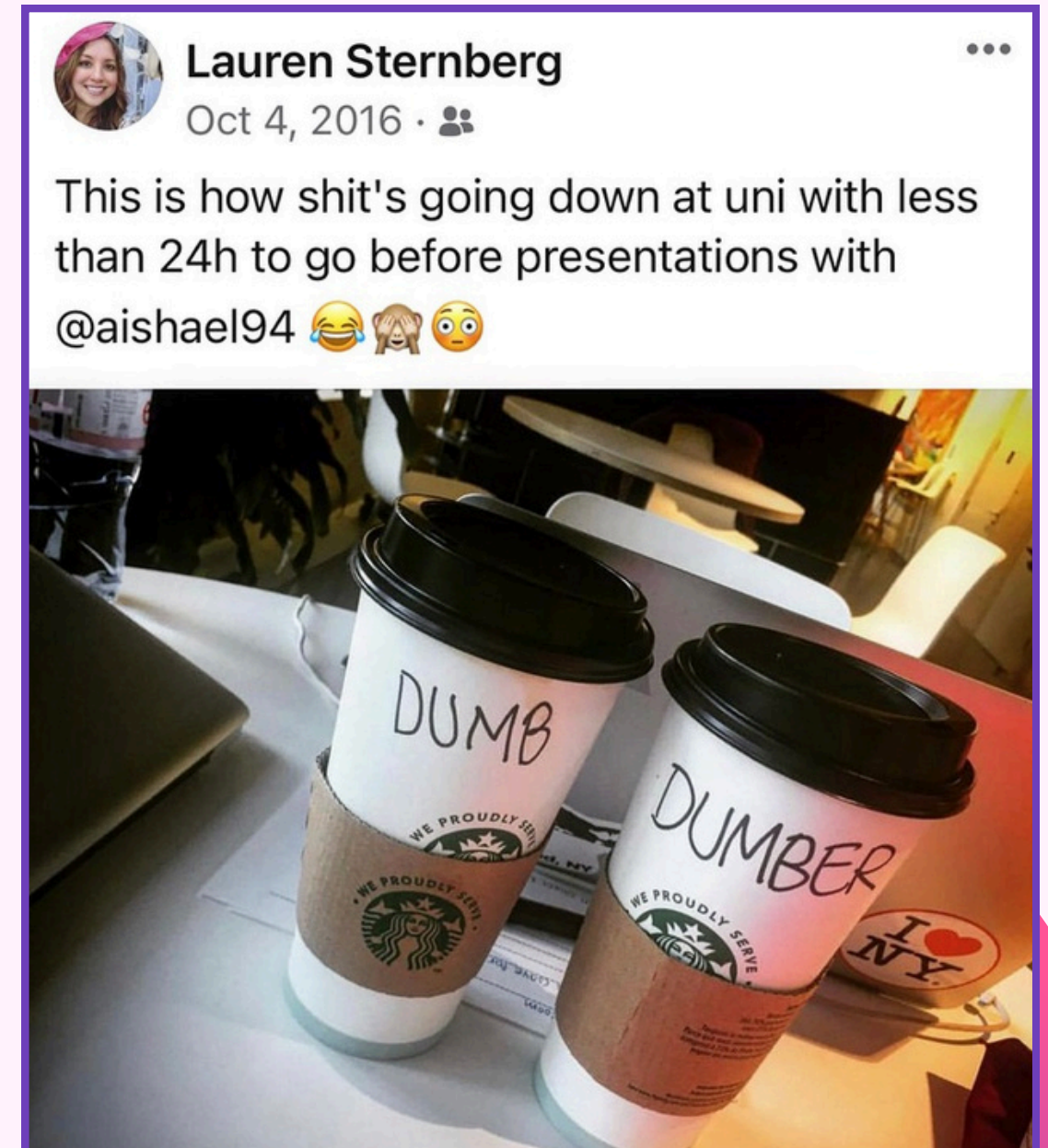
University of Greenwich

We were sitting exactly where you are now.

Same course.

Same deadlines.

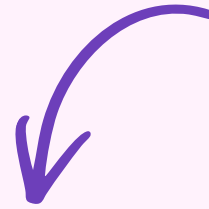
Same stress.



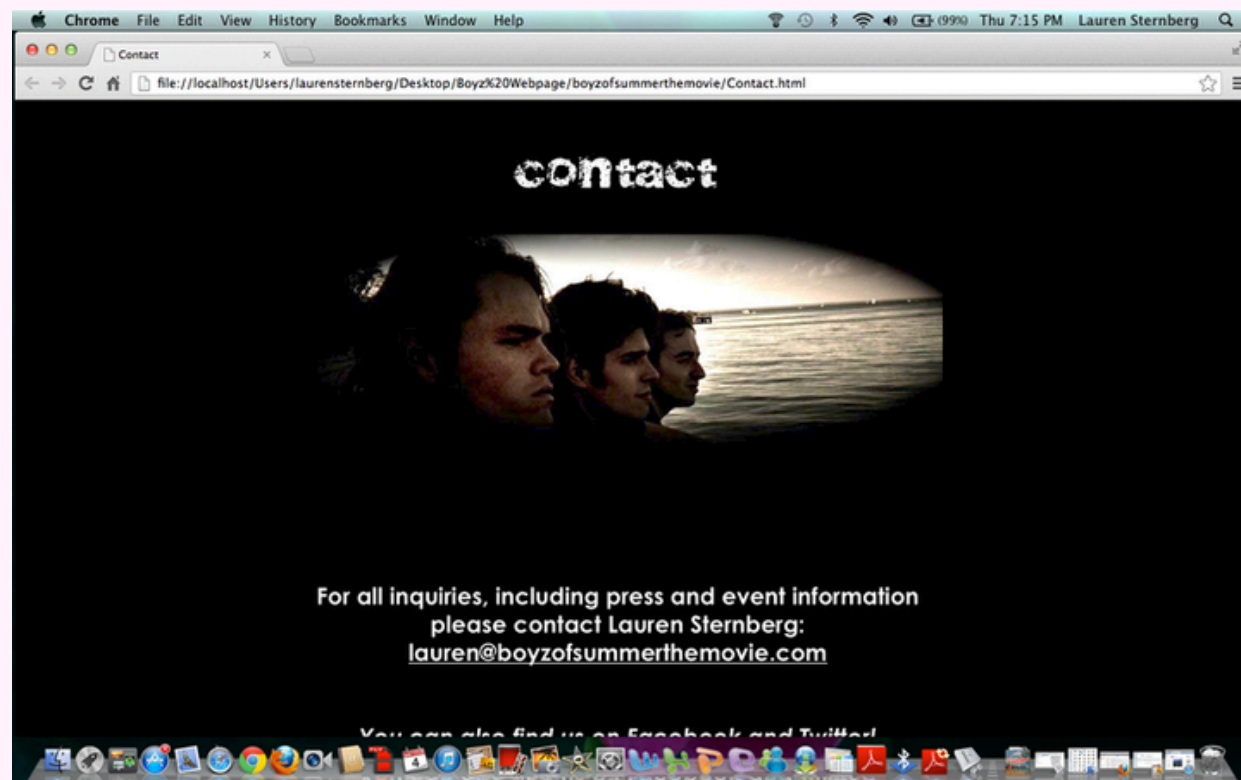
Lauren's Web Journey



Lauren's first website attempt on undergrad uni server - 2002 😂



Old school internet - 1990's AOL



A website Lauren did for a film her brother produced (2012)





Lauren's 3rd class to have a
classroom website



September 8, 2011

Dear Families,

As a way of bringing our class into the 21st Century, last year we designed a website that provided information about what we were doing in class, our kids, and helpful links for parents. We would like to do the same this year, as we received very positive feedback from families when we launched the site last November.

So that we can make this as accurate a representation of our class community as possible, we are asking your permission to include images of your child on the 2011-2012 version of the site. Your child's last name will not be used.

You will be able to find us at www.308isgreat.com.

We thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,
Ms. Sternberg
Ms. Mirell

_____ I give Ms. Mirell and Ms. Sternberg permission to use my child's image and first name on the class 1-308 website.

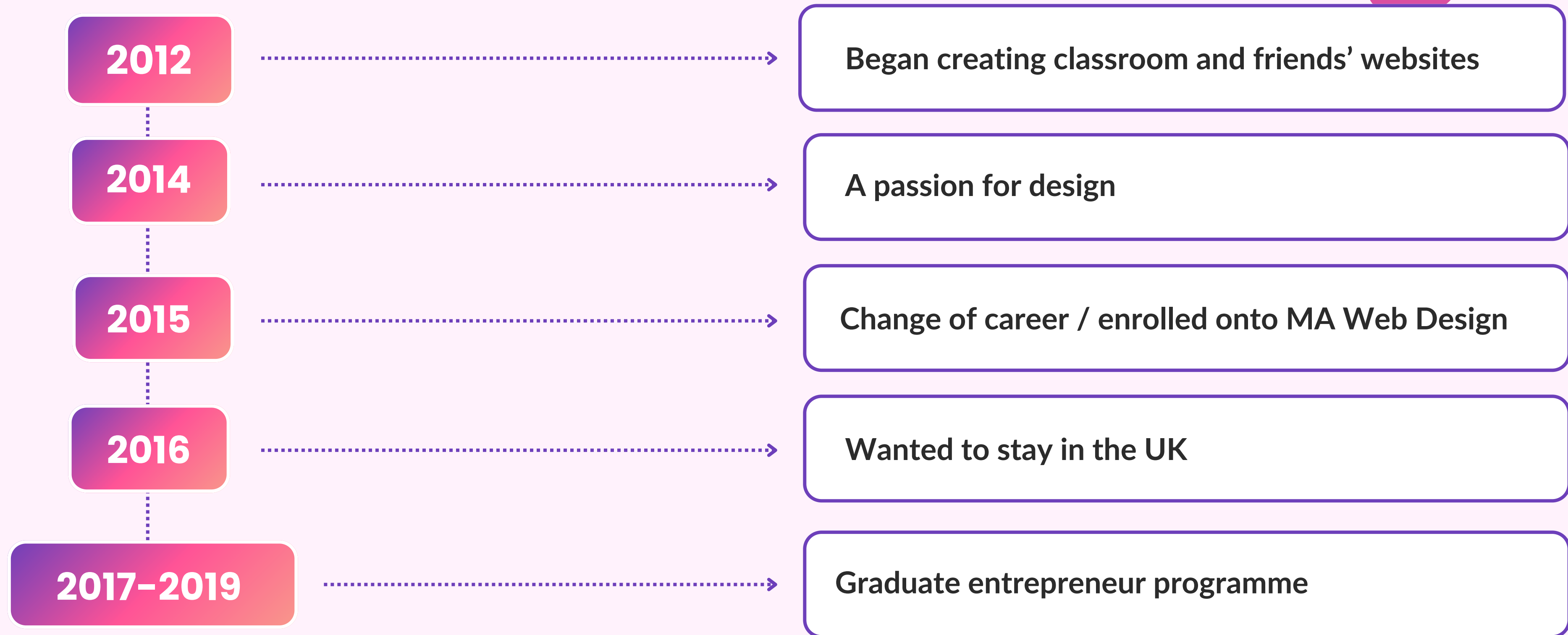
_____ I do not give Ms. Mirell and Ms. Sternberg permission to use my child's image and first name on the class 1-308 website.

Child's name: _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

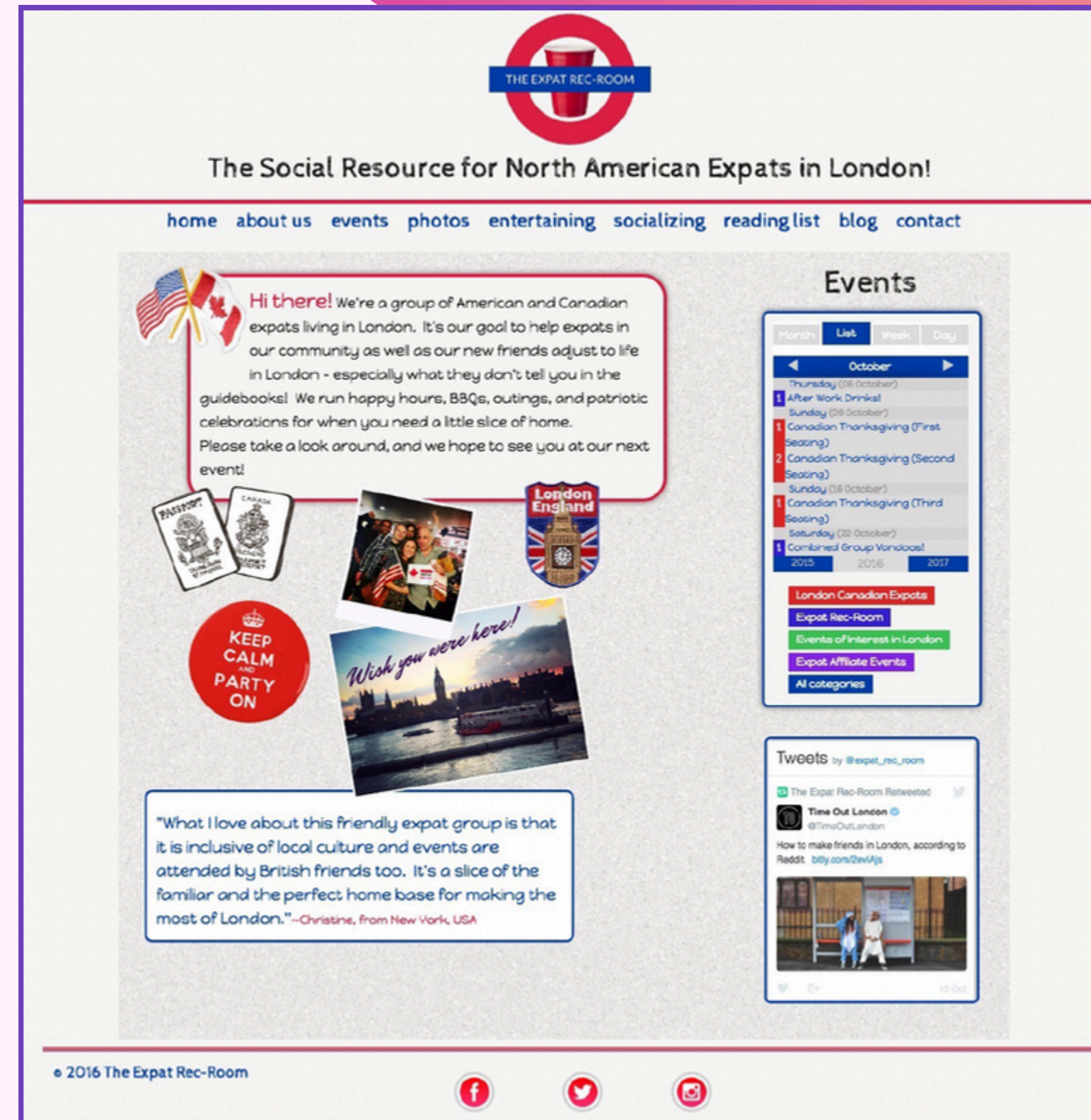
Lauren's Web Journey



Lauren's Final Project

Expat Rec-Room

Which turned into her initial business sponsorship from University of Greenwich



Graduate Entrepreneur Programme (now known as the **Generator**)

University of Greenwich offered the “Graduate Entrepreneur Programme” that gave you 2 years of visa sponsorship to start your own business, while also supporting your developing business.



Sadly, this route no longer exists.

The University Of Greenwich **Generator**

The Generator is geared towards U of G graduates who wish to develop a business.

How it works:

1) If you are an international student graduating from a UK degree programme, you can go on the Graduate Visa for 18 months (24 if you apply before December 31, 2026).

The University Of Greenwich **Generator**

The Generator is geared towards U of G graduates who wish to develop a business.

How it works:

2) You join the programme if you want support in growing your own business (international and home students welcome).

The University Of Greenwich **Generator**

The Generator is geared towards U of G graduates who wish to develop a business.

How it works:

3) The Generator will help you develop a solid business plan and assist you through early steps - through resources, workshops, 1:1s and connections to investors who can provide funding - which can ultimately put you in a good position to apply for the Innovator Founder Visa.

Pivoting Again

Going from Expat Rec-Room to
Star Mountain Design



 **GOV.UK** Register your company

 Companies House

**Congratulations, your company STAR MOUNTAIN:
DESIGN FOR WEB LTD is now registered.**

HMRC will contact you separately about your Corporation Tax application.

Company name:
STAR MOUNTAIN: DESIGN FOR WEB LTD

Company number:
11062993

Company type:
Private Limited by Shares

Companies House submission number:
049-095926

Starting From Scratch



bespoke and affordable web design

Star Mountain, Design For Web is a London and New York City-based web design studio focusing on creating engaging, responsive websites for small businesses and startup companies. Through an understanding of your company's needs as well as the user experience requirements of your customers, we will build a WordPress-powered website that will tick all the boxes.

But here's the icing on the cake - we can train you and your staff to maintain the content of your website, thus eliminating the cost of having a full-time developer on staff.

Sound good? See what we can do for you.

WEBSITE BUILDS



WEBSITE REDESIGN



MAINTENANCE TRAINING



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www.star-mountain.co.uk

The Early Days

This was Star Mountain's first website in 2018.

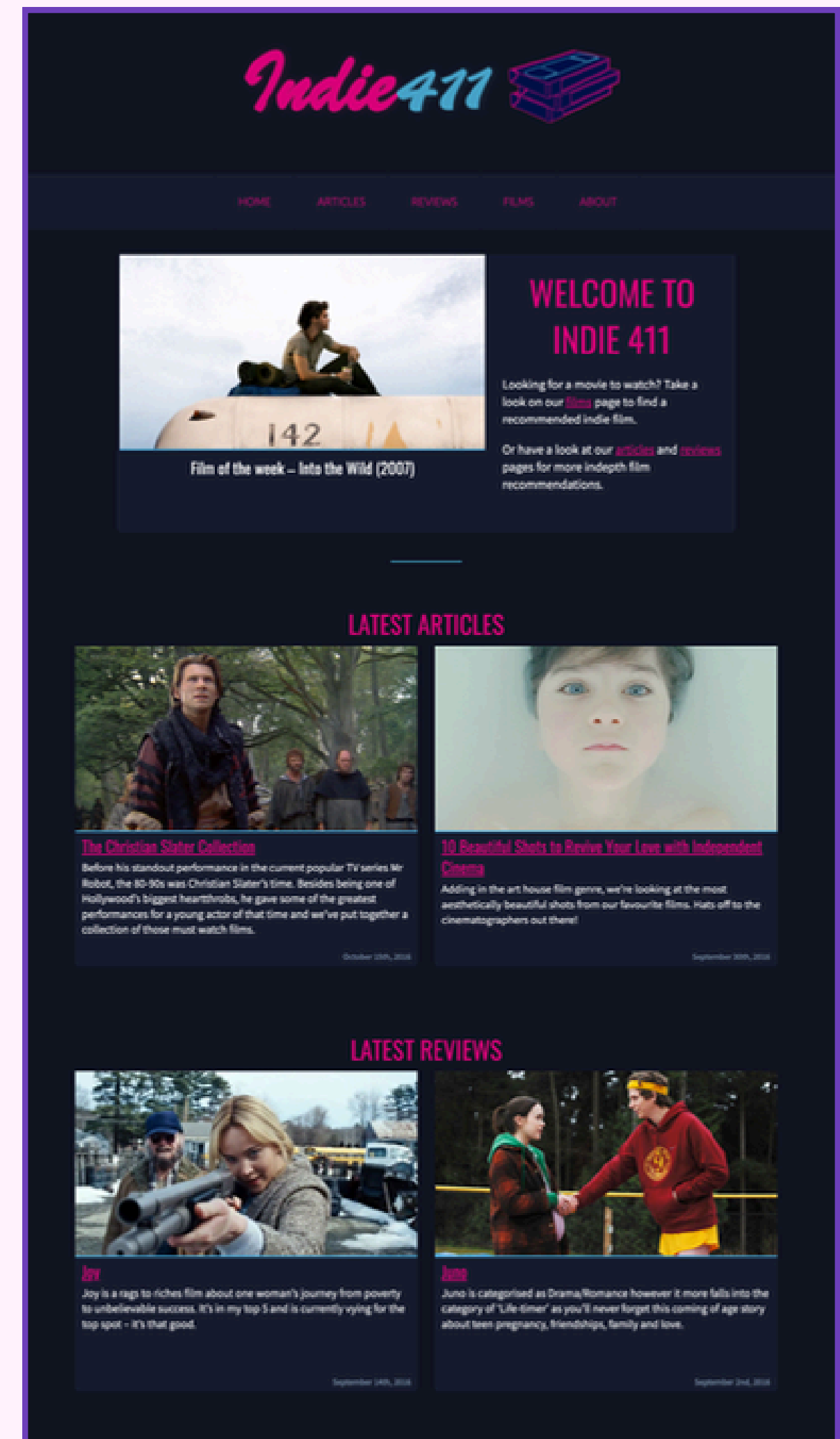
It doesn't need to be perfect from the get go

Aisha's Web Journey



Aisha's Web Journey

Aisha's Final Project on her MA which helped get her first web job.



Aisha's Path To Star Mountain Design

First job wasn't the right fit

Stayed in touch with Lauren

Took a leap by coming on part-time in June 2019,
then full-time in October 2019



A Modern Day Star Mountain Design Is Born



Finding Our Niche

Start with communities you are familiar with

Look for a gap, not a crowded market

You don't need to serve everyone

Understanding Our Clients

Make it accessible

Address their fears and concerns

Learn about their competitors & target audience

Website Questionnaire – Gathering Requirements

Website Survey Questionnaire

Please answer the questions below. We appreciate you taking the time to fill out the questionnaire. Your answers will help us understand your business, what you require in a website and will help us come up with an estimate.

1. Your details

Name *



Email *

Website Questionnaire – Gathering Requirements

2. About your business

Business Name *

Describe your business in a few sentences: *

What services do you offer? *

Who is your target audience / potential clients? (age, gender, interests) *

What is the geographical reach of your website? *

What makes your business/services unique? (USP) *

Who are your competitors? *

Website Questionnaire – Gathering Requirements

3. Website requirements

Do you want to build a new website or a redesign of an existing one? *

☐ Build a new website ☐ Redesign of existing website

What pages do you need on your website? *

E.g. Home, About, Services...

Features you need for your website: *

Blog

Portfolio

E-Commerce

Booking system

Login/Registration/Client Profile

Live chat

Contact form

Events listings / Calendar

Social media feed embed

Newsletter / email subscription

Other features not listed

What's the underlying goal of your website? *

4. Content

Do you have the content ready for your site? (e.g. text and images) *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a logo? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a tagline? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Website Questionnaire – Gathering Requirements

5. Style

Do you have an existing style/brand guide? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

What are three of your favourite websites and why? *

Colour preferences: *



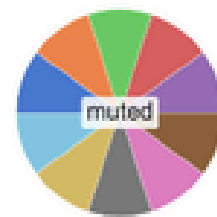
Bright



Pastel



Deep



Muted



Dark

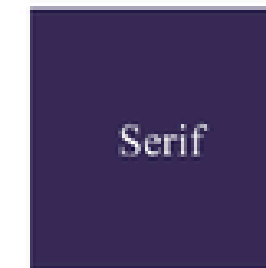
Select as many colour wheels as you'd like.

Describe any colors you're imagining for your website: *

Typography preference: *



Sans Serif



Serif



Combination of both

List any fonts you're imagining for your website:

Website Questionnaire – Gathering Requirements

6. Budget & Launch

What is your budget? *

What is your ideal launch date for website? *

What is your preference in communication in regards to website progress/updates? *

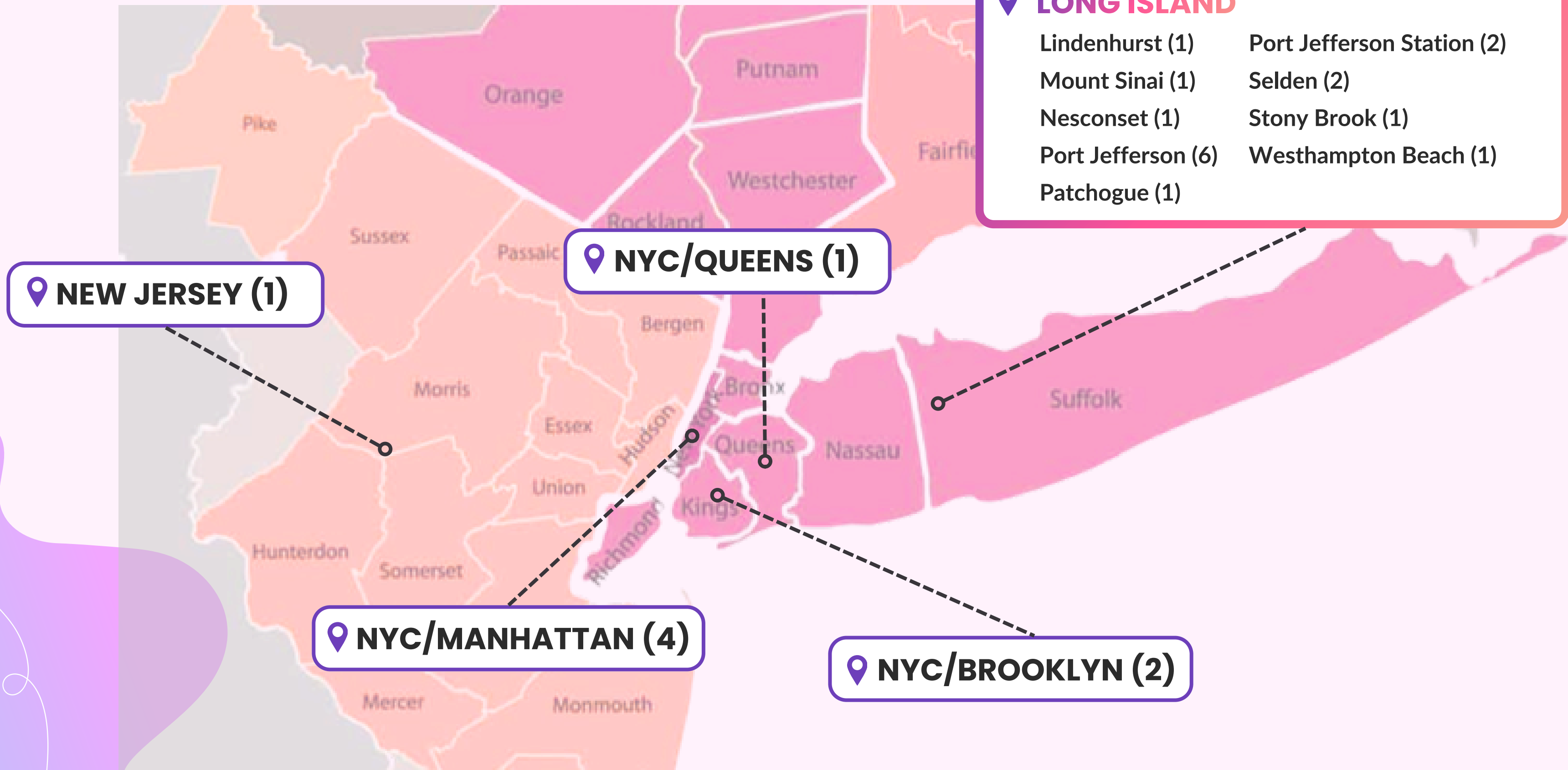
☐ Email ☐ Other

Any concerns or worries you have? *

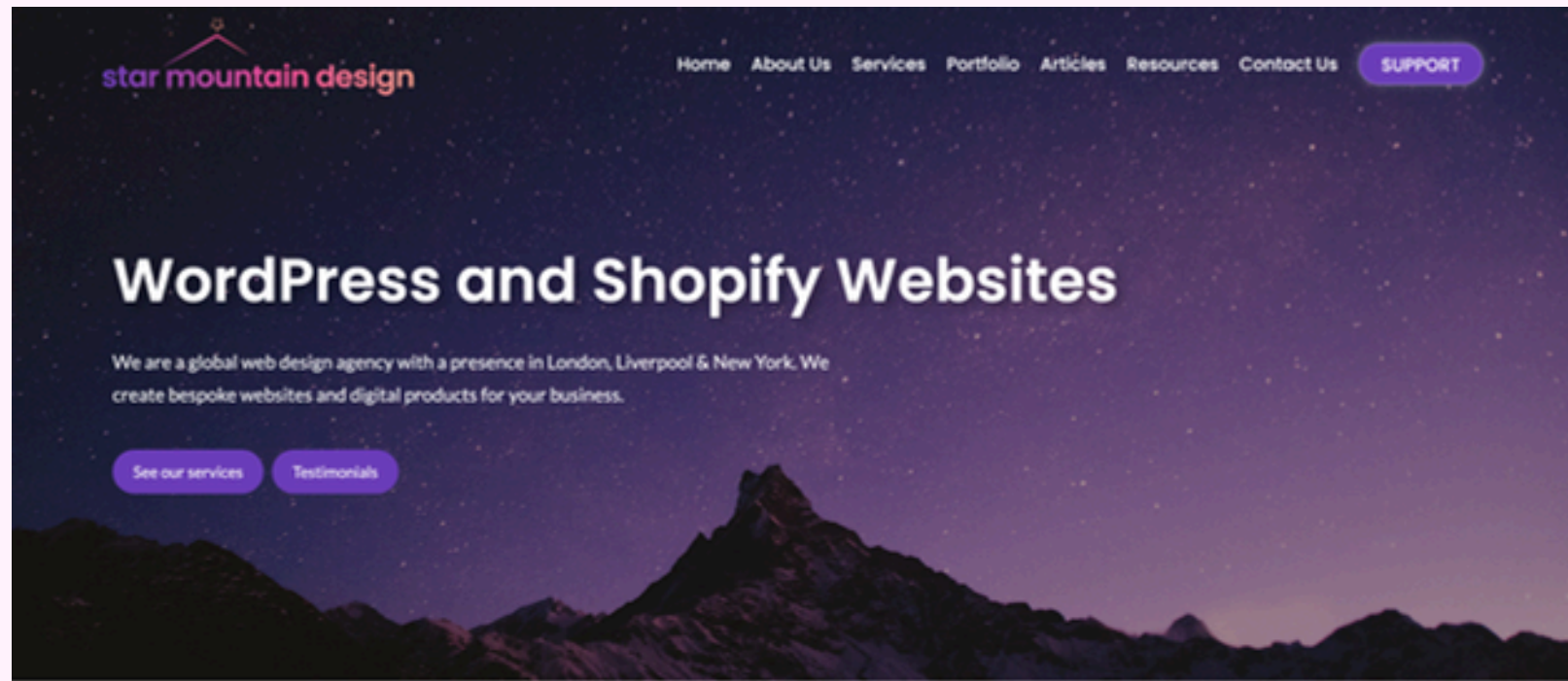
Anything else you'd like to add? *



Where Our Clients Have Come From



In New York City Metro Area Alone



WordPress and Shopify Websites

We are a global web design agency with a presence in London, Liverpool & New York. We create bespoke websites and digital products for your business.

[See our services](#)

[Testimonials](#)

STAR MOUNTAIN DESIGN

Bespoke web design that is as unique as your business

At Star Mountain Design, we craft powerful and visually stunning websites on WordPress and Shopify for businesses worldwide. We take your ideas and goals and bring them to life online. We do this by working closely with you at every stage from concept to launch so the final result isn't just good, it's exactly what you envisioned.

[View our work](#)



AFFORDABLE & FLEXIBLE

Get an online presence that can grow with your expanding business

Our mission is to provide businesses with a reliable and affordable online presence. As such, we take a careful approach to website development. From using our own lightweight, custom-built WordPress themes for static and blog websites and Shopify for eCommerce websites – we make user experience and scalability of your site a priority.

This ensures that as your business grows, your website can grow right alongside it.

Where we are today

8 years in
business

60+ websites in
our portfolio

Our clients
return to us

Doing work we
actually enjoy

We're Broadening Our Horizons

Took on freelancers

We use Noemi Bisicchia who graduated in 2018 for advanced graphic design work

We're attending more conferences

First international conference this June

We're going to Krakow, Poland for WordCamp Europe!

We've done our first talk together (thanks David & Prisca! 😄)

We'll assume the cheque is in the post! 🙄



What We Have Learnt

Starting before feeling “ready”

Navigating problems

Don't limit yourself but don't oversell yourself either

Use existing connections

Our rates are based on our expertise not your budget



So How Do You Actually Start?

You don't have to wait for someone to give you a chance.

Experience

Freelance

Build your own agency

Here are some helpful tips

Solve a problem

What can you offer?

Word of mouth is powerful

Show your face

Use social media

The background features large, abstract, organic shapes in shades of pink and purple. One large shape is on the left, and another is on the right, both with soft, wavy edges. The text is centered in the white space between them.

But most importantly ...

**Keep in touch with your fellow
classmates & teachers**

They can be your most vital connections

Final Words

Be prepared for anything.

Your business will always be evolving.

Keep connected and up to date in Web even after graduating.

You are never going to know it all so don't try.

Community - **GO TO THE PUB!**



MA friends over the years 🥹





Thank you!

See you at the Mitre! 🍻

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✉️ aisha@starmountain.co.uk

starmountaindesign.com/web-design-students