

After I came up with the idea to develop a website for my own startup, Agrate. I was thrilled and excited, eager to start. I love to code and over the years I've dabbled in countless languages. Web development was something I'd done before, but to build a new website from scratch was a huge undertaking. Needless to say, I was terrified. But if there's one thing I learnt from years of programming is that, when a project seems overwhelming, it's often time to just sit down, and just get started.

What did I learn about creating websites from planning.

One thing I learnt was the importance of a project plan, and how useful it is to ensure your website turns out the way you envision it. This website was critical as I intended to use it for my own company.

I started out with the project plan, writing out all the requirements I wanted my startup's corporate website to have. I met up with co-founder, Joshua, and together we discussed what we wanted our website to show, what messages we wanted to put forward, what kind of end user were we expecting and catering to. All these questions had to be answered before I could start. Without planning, there was a huge potential that the end website would not be able to achieve the goals we set out to accomplish.

After the project plan and wireframes, I went to work. Slowly, I mocked up the entire website in **Sketch**. <https://www.sketchapp.com/>. I translated the project plan into an aesthetic, minimal, and tasteful design. This was very important in the planning process for me as I wanted to get feedback from my co-founder before I wrote all the code for the website. He suggested some changes to the layout of a few elements, and tweaked the shades of yellow we were using. Ultimately I learnt how important planning is, especially in a situation where it is crucial the end result accomplishes certain goals. Anyone can make a website that looks good, but not everyone can make a website that feels good too. In the case of Agrate, we needed it to be painless for a user to sign up for our course, to make them feel inspired, and to be minimal, so as to please our intended target audience.

What steps to take/change to make it better.

I spend a lot of time slowly tweaking the paddings and the margins to layout my elements nicely at 1280 width. However while developing the website there were some areas where I feel I could have improved.

Page Loading Speed. I utilized a lot of images which negatively impacts the page loading time. I'm also using quite a few variants of the Lato font. In CA2, I plan to implement asynchronous loading of the fonts so that the homepage can load faster, this should help our future potential conversion rates.

Better Image Compression. I used basic image compression for CA1. However I plan to use better image compression for the website. I'm hoping to experiment with online services such as <https://compressor.io/>. This should allow me to fit higher quality photos without impacting page loading times.

Mobile Responsive. At the most common screen sizes on the desktop, the pages are mostly responsive, and are able to adapt to the page size. However I did not make the design suitable for mobile. One thing I feel I could have done was to take into account mobile-sized screens during planning so that implementing mobile responsiveness into my website would be less painful and more forgiving.