

ASSIGNMENT 2: DESIGN SPECIFICATION

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1 Description of the Project

This project will document the steps involved in designing a website for an event planning business called “Memory Lane Event Planning”. Memory Lane Event Planning aims to create unforgettable experiences for a range of upscale events, such as weddings, milestone birthday parties, anniversaries, and more. The business is committed to making sure that each moment is thoughtfully crafted and planned to perfection, with attention given to every detail. Therefore, the main aim for the website design is to communicate a sense of professionalism, elegance, and trustworthiness while also being user-friendly and visually interesting.

2 Goals

The goals of the website include the following:

- **Develop** a user-friendly website layout.
- **Outline** event packages and services clearly for quick identification of offerings.
- **Demonstrate** event portfolio to exhibit past event work.
- **Make use of** interactive features, such as a contact form and “Inquire” call-to-action buttons, for easy communication and efficient access to inquire and book.
- **Show** client testimonials to build the trust of potential clients.

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the website is to provide a professional, intuitive and user-friendly platform for people seeking upscale event planning services. The website aims to showcase the company's expertise and portfolio and facilitate communication between clients and the event planning team.

2.2 Scope/Limitations

Due to the 12-week time constraint of semester 2, the scope is limited to designing sketches, wireframes, mock-ups and prototypes for four main pages that include a selection of the most important features. Prioritising the key features is essential to ensure the success of the website design within the time constraint.

Below is a breakdown of the four main pages and their features:

- A **home page** that includes carousel of event photos and short quotes from the associated testimonial, introduction information about the company, the type of events/services offered, call-to-action buttons, etc.

- A **gallery** page that serves as the company's portfolio to display past events and also a source of inspiration for potential clients.
- An **about us** page that includes more details about the company, their team and an FAQs section.
- A **contact** page where customers can contact the company with their inquiries and/or book an event with them via a form, also featuring a list of the company's office location, contact details, and social media links.

These core web pages stand out as key features as they cover the fundamental aspects of an event planning website such as a company introduction, event and service information, communication facilitation, and a visual showcase of events. Any additional features would enhance the user experience but are not critical for the website's ultimate success in providing event planning services. Overall, the main aim of these key web pages are to create a trusted space where potential customers can explore, inquire, and envision their own unforgettable experiences.

3 Competitor Analysis of Similar Websites

The three websites analysed are other upscale event planning companies. Their general layout and menu options closely resemble the goals and vision of the Memory Lane Event Planning website.

3.1 Competitive Analysis of Website 1

Website 1: <https://tarafay.ie>



Figure 1 - Display of Home Page for website 1

This is a luxury event planning website that promotes planning events such as weddings and other private events.

Website features/functionality:

- The website includes a services page that details the type of events they plan and their key services that come with these events along with an option to inquire and one testimonial is featured on this page also.

- The gallery page features event-specific photo sections and also features videos of the events they have planned.
- The about page provides more information about the company's owner, more about the company itself, information on the wider team, more testimonials, the number of couples and celebrations they have been involved in and it also includes a moving list of magazine/article/website names, such as Vogue, that have mentioned the company before.
- The press page includes recent publications about the company, advice from the company and the events that have been planned by them.
- The journal page gives different articles e.g. an article of trending wedding ideas for the year 2024 written by Tara, the company owner.
- The contact page includes a contact form, contact details such as phone, email and location, along with a recommended budget and another testimonial.
- At the end of each page, the companies Instagram is linked along with showcasing the most recently posted photos on their page.

Pros	Cons
Showcases beautiful event photos not only on gallery but on other pages too, which keeps the website visually interesting	Too much information on the landing/home page
Social media links are always present on the upper right of the screen, no matter what page you navigate to, making those external medias easily accessible at all times	You have to click the logo to get back to the home page as there is no clear home navigation option, this may not be obvious for all users

Simple, easy to understand contact form present on the contact page	For non-regular website users, finding the navigation menu may be hard as it is always in hamburger menu state
Nice selection of colours used throughout the website	There is not many testimonials/reviews, and the testimonials that are present are all scattered very randomly on different pages

3.2 UI Evaluation of Website 1

Colour:

- The website uses a soft and elegant colour palette, featuring shades of white, beige, light blue, light orange, and a darker green. These colours create a sense of sophistication and luxury.

Typography:

- A mixture of black and white is used for text throughout the website.
- The typography on the website is clean, modern and easy to read on most pages.
- Sans-serif fonts are primarily used for headings, subheadings, navigation menu items and main body text, while serif fonts are used for some of the other content such as testimonials, some of the subheadings and contact form text.
- The headings are consistently capitalised throughout the website which draws attention to key sections and information. Furthermore, the use of varying font sizes and styles creates visual hierarchy and interest.

Layout:

- The layout of the website is clean and well-organised. Each page features a generous amount of white space, allowing content to breathe and creating a sense of professionalism.

- High-quality images are not only featured on the portfolio page but are featured throughout the website, showcasing the company's portfolio of events and services.
- The navigation menu is consistently displayed in the form of a hamburger icon, which I feel could potentially lead to usability issues for some users.
- Social media links are always present on the top right of the screen making those external medias easily accessible from any page a user may be on.
- Call-to-action buttons are also placed strategically to encourage users to inquire further about services.

3.3 Competitive Analysis of Website 2

Website 2: <http://www.andreafreemanevents.com>

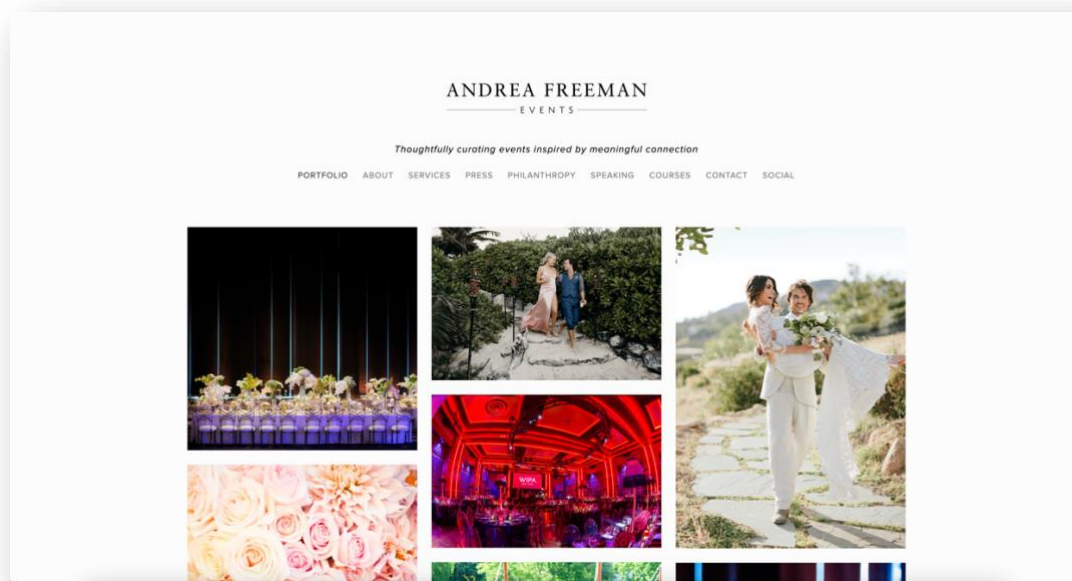


Figure 2 - Display of Landing Page for website 2

This is another upscale event planning website that promotes planning events such as weddings and other social and corporate events.

Website features/functionality :

- The first page a user sees when viewing this website is the portfolio that includes multiple photos from different events and some text about the company below them.
- The about page has subpages that include more information about the company, the team along, a Q&A page and testimonials.
- The services page details the type of events they plan in separate subpages.
- Some of the navigation options have a dropdown that include different relevant pages to select from.
- Additionally this website also includes pages for press, philanthropy, speaking and courses.
- The press page is similar to the last website in that it includes recent publications about the company, advice from the company , etc.
- The philanthropy page promotes partnering up with companies to support various non-profit and community organisations. For example, they help the New York Chapter of Wish Upon A Wedding, which gives weddings to couples dealing with serious illness or tough situations.
- The speaking page promotes the company owner, Andrea's, public speaking talent and leaves an email to book her for public speaking events in relation to event planning.
- The contact page includes a contact form and contact details such as phone, email and location and the social page links their Instagram.

Pros	Cons
There is not an overload of text on majority of main pages and all the content is laid out in neat sections	You have to scroll to the end of the portfolio photos before seeing an introduction text which may confuse users who want to know about the company before viewing their work
Social media links are always present in the websites footer making those external medias easily accessible from any page	Due to the lack of colour used on the website, the pages that do not showcase photos have very little visual interest
Simple, easy to understand contact form present on the contact page	The testimonial page feels too cramped with text as there are no photos or colour present

3.4 UI Evaluation of Website 2

Colour:

- The websites colour palette primarily consists of white and grey. There are no other colours present on the website except for the colours in the showcased photos.
- While the colour palette may appear somewhat bland, it does contribute to a sense of professionalism. Additionally, it allows the visual elements, particularly the pictures, to stand out more when they are present.

Typography:

- Black and grey are used for text throughout the website.
- The typography on the website is clean and modern. However, sometimes it can become hard to read on the stark white background, particularly where there is text in a small font size.

- A sans-serif font is consistently used throughout the website, but there is a serif font used only on the company owners name located at the top of the page.
- Headings and subheadings are capitalised.
- The use of varying font sizes between headings, subheadings and body text aids in visual hierarchy and readability.

Layout:

- The layout of the website is minimalist and well-structured, there is plenty of white space that allows the content room to breathe and to not appear too cluttered.
- Similar to website 1, images are not only featured on the portfolio page but are featured throughout the website, showcasing the company's portfolio of events and services.
- Navigation is intuitive, featuring a simple menu structure located at the top of the page, enabling users to easily explore the different sections of the website. Some navigation options include subsections that organise content onto separate pages.

3.5 Competitive Analysis of Website 3

Website 3: <https://www.mandymarieevents.com>

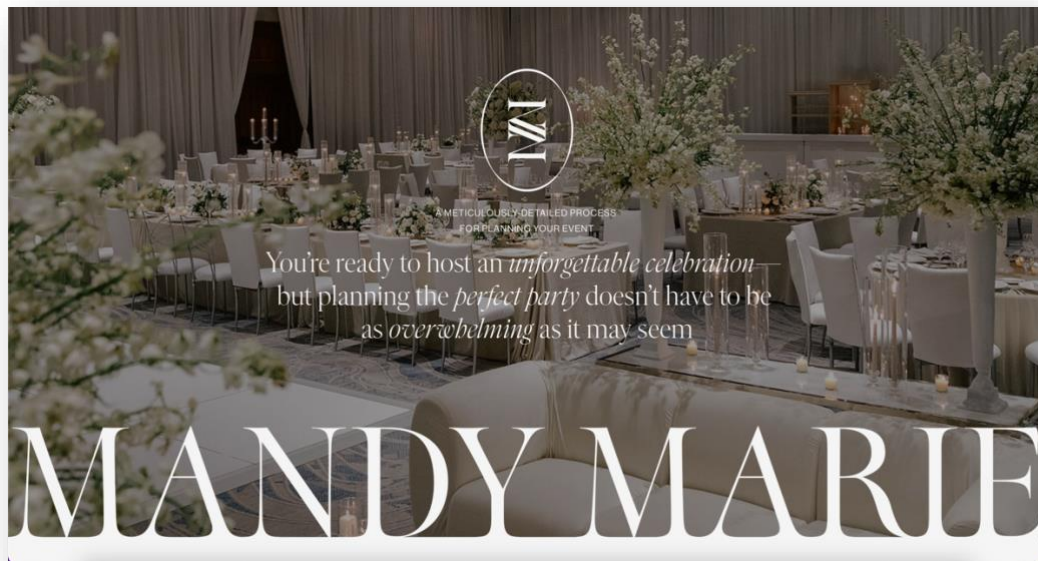


Figure 3 - Display of Home Page for website 3

Website features/functionality:

- The first page a user sees when viewing this website is the home page that includes a slideshow of images with the company owners name at the bottom, under that there is more photos, website and company, information text, testimonials and a lot more.
- The about page provides more information about the company itself, information on the wider team, more testimonials, a moving list of magazine/article/website names that have mentioned the event planning service before and more testimonials.
- The services page details the type of events they plan and the phases they take to plan these events along with an option to inquire and a testimonial is featured on this page too.
- The portfolio page organises event photos into distinct sections, allowing users to browse through the photos based on event type, such as weddings, parties, etc.
- The contact page includes a contact form and their location/address.

Pros	Cons
Showcases beautiful event photos on the portfolio page and also throughout other pages, which keeps the website visually interesting	Overload of information and buttons to click on the landing/home page, making it lag when scrolling down
The portfolio page is laid out nicely by showcasing event photos based on their event type instead of showing photos of several different events on the one page	Compared to the previous two websites analysed, the contact form present on the contact page is very lengthy and could cause some users to become impatient and/or frustrated
Social media links are always present in the websites navigation menu making those external medias easily accessed from any page	There are not many testimonials/reviews, and the testimonials that are present are all on the end of different pages

3.6 UI Evaluation of Website 3

Colour:

- The websites colour palette primarily consists of white and beige. There are no other colours present on the website except for the colours in the showcased photos.
- The use of beige adds warmth and visual interest to the overall design. It creates an inviting visual aesthetic.

Typography:

- A mixture of black and white is used for text throughout the website.
- The typography on the website is elegant. Serif fonts are predominantly used throughout the website, with sans-serif fonts only being used for the navigation menu, some subheadings and text present on buttons.

- The use of varying font sizes, types and weight between headings, subheadings and body text aids in visual hierarchy and readability.

Layout:

- The layout of the website is more maximalist compared to the previous two. There is not as much white space but there is just enough on most pages to allow the content room to breathe. However, some pages do fall victim and appear a bit cluttered with too much text and images.
- Similar to website 1 and 2, high-quality images are featured throughout the website. There are a lot more slideshows of photos on this website which helps to add visual interest but causes lag to happen when scrolling.
- Navigation is intuitive, featuring a simple menu structure fixed to the top of the page, enabling users to easily explore the different sections of the website.
- Call-to-action buttons are strategically placed to encourage users to get in touch.

3.7 Unique Selling Point


The unique selling points of the Memory Lane Event Planning website include:

- **Dynamic and engaging visual design:** An elegant design featuring dynamic content, such as a carousel of images on the homepage, with pops of colours and images strategically placed throughout the website to maintain visual interest.
- **Intuitive and seamless navigation:** Easy-to-use navigation menu and buttons that make it simple to move around the website's pages without any problems or confusion.
- **Filtered gallery showcase:** Display of past events separated into specific event categories so users do not have to look at photos of events irrelevant to them.

4 User Experience

4.1 Personas

4.1.1 Persona 1



JONATHAN PATTERSON

"Turning 30 with success means celebrating with finesse"

AGE: 29
GENDER: Male
LOCATION: 12 Polo St., Waterford
OCCUPATION: Investment Banker

ABOUT

Jonathan Patterson is a successful investment banker who has dedicated his twenties to building a career in the financial industry. As he approaches his 30th birthday, he's looking forward to celebrating this significant milestone with a memorable event. Despite his busy schedule, Jonathan values meaningful experiences and wants his birthday celebration to reflect his taste for sophistication and style.

GOALS

- Jonathan wants to mark his 30th birthday with a sophisticated and memorable celebration. He wants an event that reflects his success, taste for elegance and style.
- Given his demanding job, Jonathan doesn't have the time to plan or manage the event details. His goal is to find an event planning business that will handle every detail involved in the planning process for him.

NEEDS

- Jonathan values efficiency and convenience in accessing information outside of work related activities. He requires a website that allows him to quickly find relevant details without much hassle.
- Jonathan requires a website that simplifies communication, offering a straightforward contact form that allows him to easily reach the event team without the need to search for contact details.
- Jonathan values trust and reliability. Jonathan needs assurance of the event planning company's reputation through reviews and testimonials on the website, to assist him in making informed decisions.

MOTIVATIONS

- Turning 30 is a significant milestone for Jonathan and he wants a celebration that reflects the achievement and growth of the past decade.
- Jonathan values experiences that stand out. He is motivated to have a birthday celebration that is unique, and aligns with his personal preferences.

PAIN POINTS

- Jonathan finds it frustrating when websites have overly complex navigation and an overwhelming amount of information, making it difficult for him to quickly find the exact information he needs.
- Jonathan dislikes it when websites do not have the option to fill out a contact/booking form, requiring him to resort to additional steps like making phone calls or sending emails outside of the website. This process is inconvenient for him due to his busy schedule.
- Jonathan feels skeptical about businesses that don't provide reviews or testimonials, as he relies on them to gauge the quality and reputation of the services.

MUST DOS

- Design a visually appealing and user-friendly website that reflects professionalism, sophistication, and trustworthiness.
- Ensure a simple and intuitive navigation structure, allowing Jonathan to easily find information about events, services, and reviews.
- Include a straightforward contact form on the website, allowing Jonathan to easily reach out to the event planning team without the need for additional steps such as making phone calls or sending emails outside of the website.
- Showcase reviews and testimonials on the website, giving Jonathan easy access to social proof of the company's reliability and reputation to instill trust and confidence in Jonathan.

MUST AVOID

- Avoid overly complex navigation structures that may frustrate Jonathan and hinder his ability to quickly find relevant information.
- Steer clear of overwhelming Jonathan with too much information on the website, keeping content concise and relevant to his needs and preferences.

Figure 4 - Persona 1 (made using Canva.com)

4.1.2 Persona 2



SARAH WALSH

"This wedding planning stuff is really stressful"

AGE: 41
GENDER: Female
LOCATION: 890 Ford St., Cork
OCCUPATION: Interior Designer

ABOUT

Sarah Walsh is a 41-year-old interior designer with an eye for aesthetics and a passion for creating visually stunning spaces. Sarah plans to get married in the next 2 years and envisions an event that not only celebrates her love and commitment but also reflects her creative but elegant style. She is eager to step back from being the main designer when it comes this huge personal event.

GOALS

- Sarah envisions a wedding that uniquely celebrates her love while also reflecting her personal style.
- Sarah's goal is to navigate through her wedding planning journey with minimal stress and anxiety. Her goal is to find an event planning business who can efficiently manage all the details, allowing her to enjoy the process without feeling overwhelmed.

NEEDS

- Sarah is eager to take a step back from her usual role as the main designer, Sarah needs an event planning business that understands her desire to hand over control for a stress-free experience.
- As a visual person, Sarah requires visually engaging content on the website, such as high-quality images or videos showcasing past weddings, to assess the quality of services offered.
- Sarah wants a personalised wedding experience and needs find an event planner that resonates with her vision. She seeks reassurance that her individual preferences will be understood and catered to throughout the planning process.

MOTIVATIONS

- Beyond the aesthetics, Sarah is motivated by the desire to celebrate her love and commitment in a meaningful and unforgettable way.
- Sarah is motivated to take a professional break from her typical design responsibilities, viewing her wedding planning as a chance to immerse herself in a personal project with less responsibility hanging over her.

PAIN POINTS

- Sarah gets disappointed when websites lack visually engaging content, as she relies on visuals to assess the quality of services.
- Sarah gets frustrated when she looks at websites and finds insufficient information about the team behind the business. This lack of transparency leaves her feeling uncertain about the level of personalised attention she will receive, leaving her feeling more stressed.
- Sarah dislikes websites with outdated designs, as she associates them with out of the loop or unprofessional services.

MUST DOS

- Design a modern, visually appealing and user-friendly website that reflects professionalism, elegance, and trustworthiness.
- Create a visually appealing showcase of past weddings or events organised by Memory Lane Event Planning, allowing Sarah to assess the quality and style of their work at a glance.
- Create personalised bios for each member of the event planning team, highlighting their expertise and experience. This will give reassurance to Sarah that she is placing her vision and desire for a stress-free experience in capable hands.

MUST AVOID

- Avoid a lack of visually engaging content on the website, as this may deter Sarah from the website.
- Steer clear of outdated website designs and trends that may give Sarah the impression of unprofessionalism or lack of attention to detail, potentially driving her away from engaging further with the Memory Lane Event Plannings services.

Figure 5 - Persona 2 (made using Canva.com)

4.2 Scenarios

4.2.1 Scenario 1

Scenario for Jonathan Patterson from persona 1.

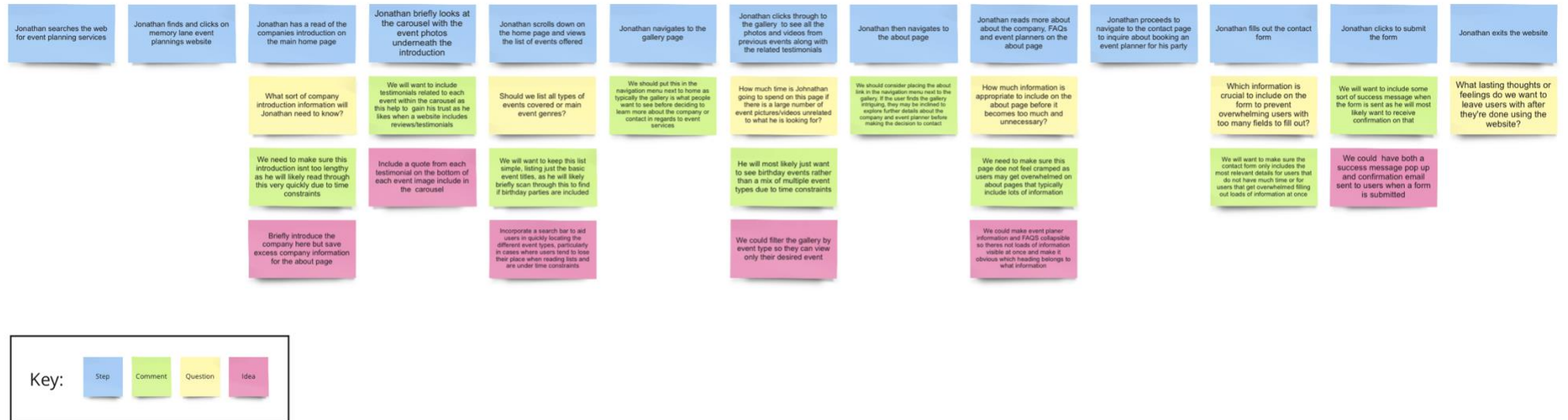


Figure 6 - Scenario 1 (made using Miro.com)

4.2.2 Scenario 2

Scenario for Sarah Walsh from persona 2.

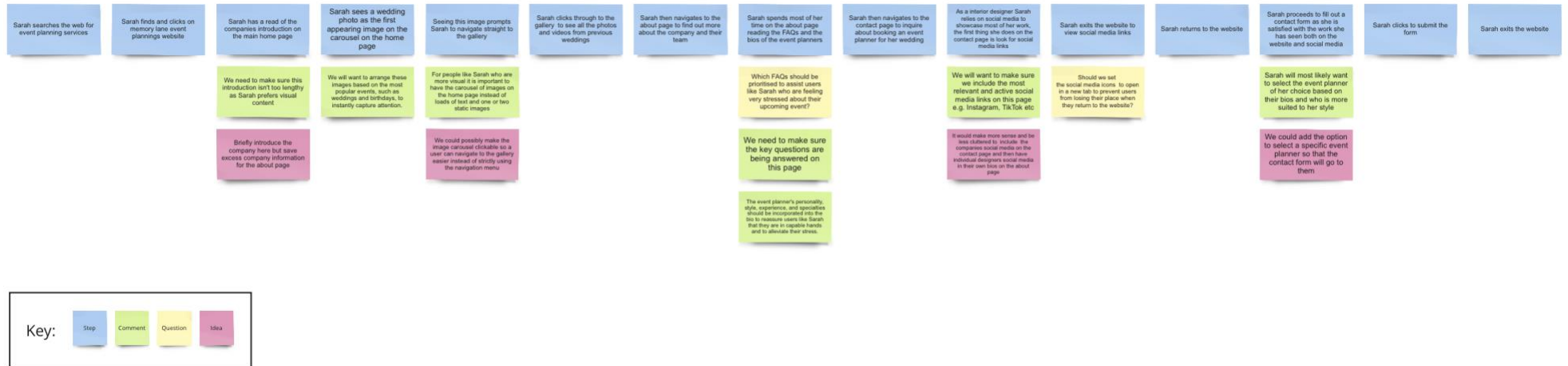


Figure 7 - Scenario 2 (made using Miro.com)

4.2.3 Scenario 3

Scenario for 67-year-old Peggy McDonald from Wexford.

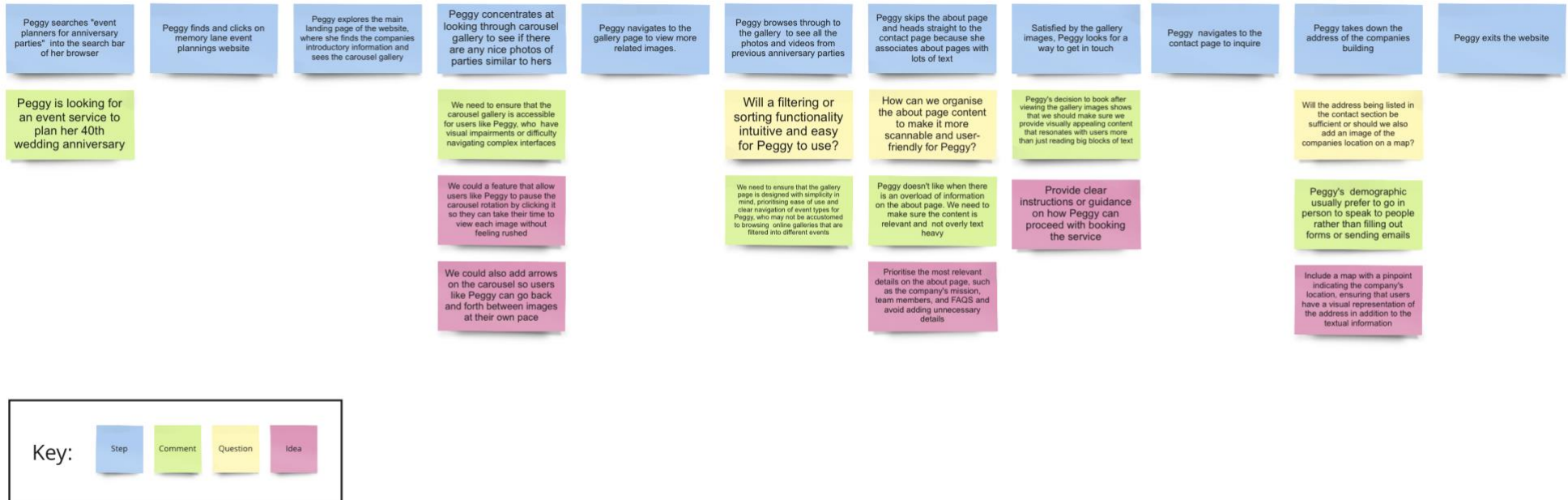


Figure 8 - Scenario 3 (made using Miro.com)

5 Content Strategy, Navigation Architecture & Visual Design

5.1 Content Inventory

Although the designs for this website will be limited to four pages, below is a detailed breakdown of the content elements that would be included in a more fleshed-out version of the website, providing a broader insight into its structure and functionality.

Page Title	Page Content	Page Objective
Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Company Introduction text• Carousel with images and testimonial quotes	Introduce the company and build trust by showcasing past successful events through a visually appealing carousel with images and testimonial quotes
Gallery/Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showcase of past events	Showcase past events through images and videos to inspire potential clients and demonstrate the company's quality
About	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More detailed information about the company• Bios of team members	Provide information about the company's mission, and team members to gain visitors trust and understanding
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of events and services	Offer a clear and detailed list of the events and services to showcase the diverse range of offerings to potential clients
Testimonials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Testimonials and reviews from satisfied clients	Build credibility and trust by featuring testimonials and

		reviews from previous satisfied clients
Contact Us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information, including a contact form, email address, phone number, social media links and location information. 	Make it easy for visitors to reach out by providing multiple contact options and location details
FAQs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A frequently asked questions list 	Address common questions about the event planning services and more, to provide helpful information to potential clients and reduce the need for direct inquiries
Booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A form where users can submit details about their event 	Make the booking process easier by allowing users to submit their unique event details

5.2 Sitemap

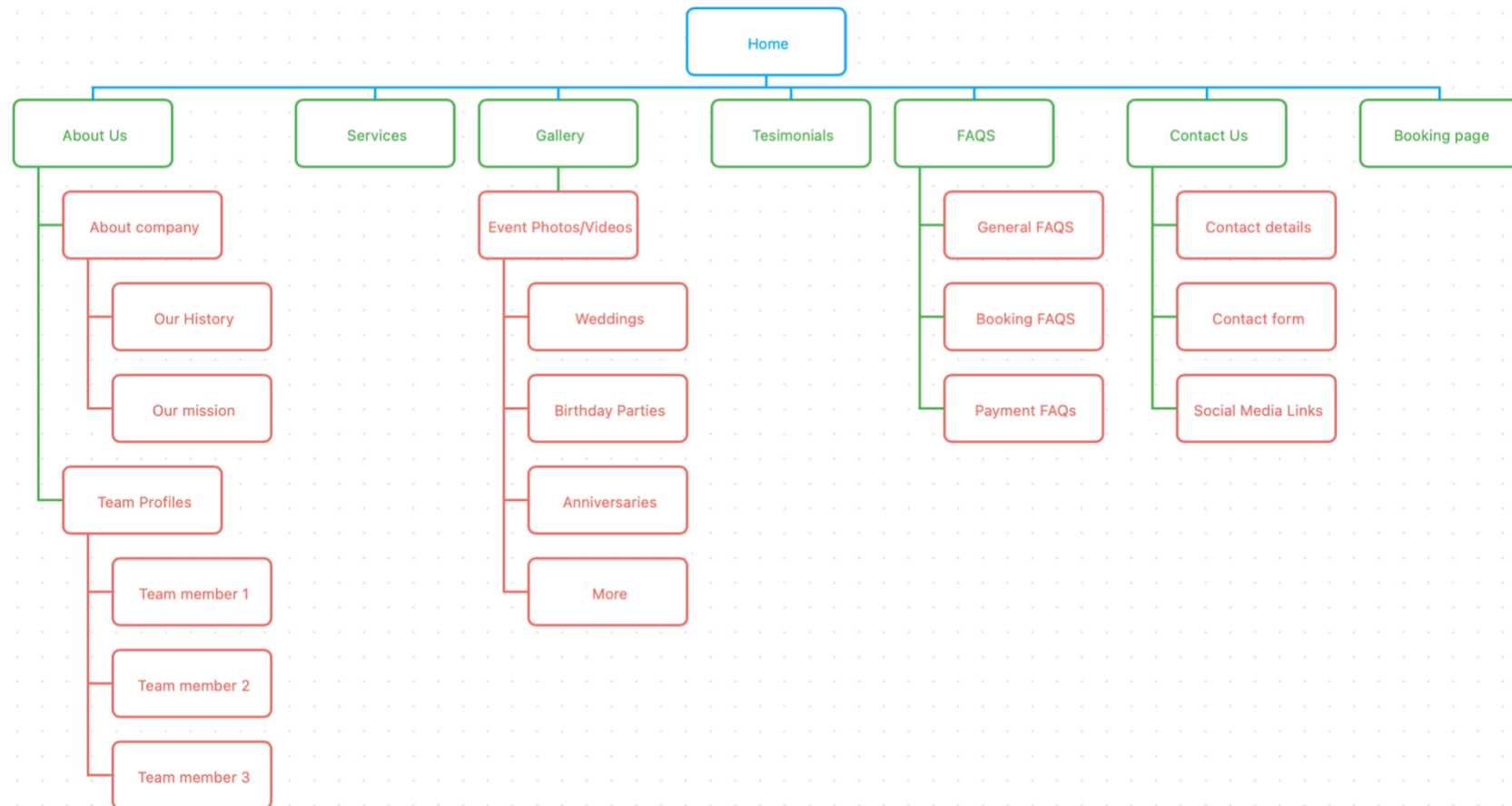


Figure 9 – Sitemap (made using app.writemaps.com)

5.3 Wireframe Sketches

5.3.1 Home page

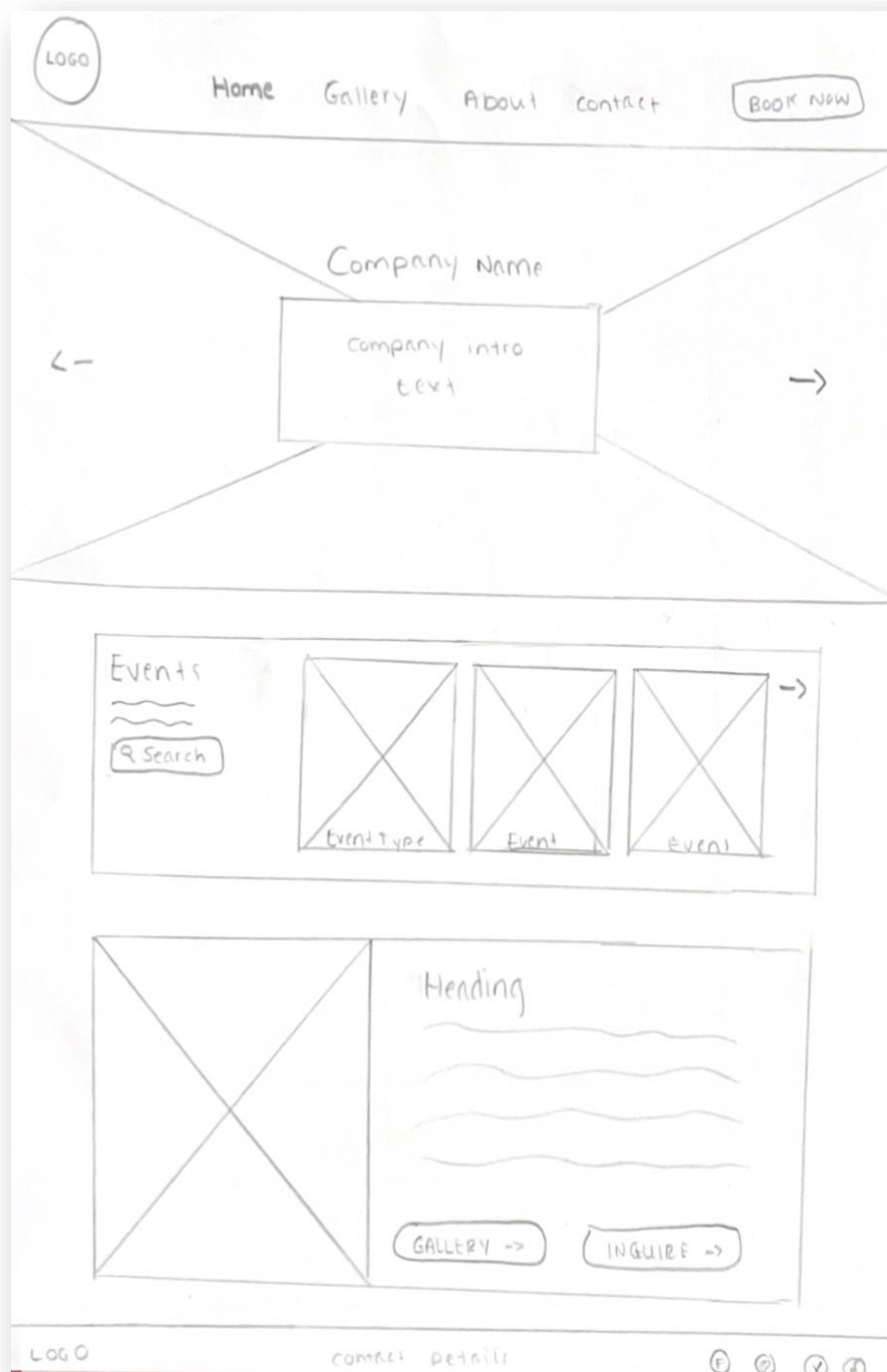


Figure 10 - Home Page Wireframe Sketch

5.3.2 Gallery page

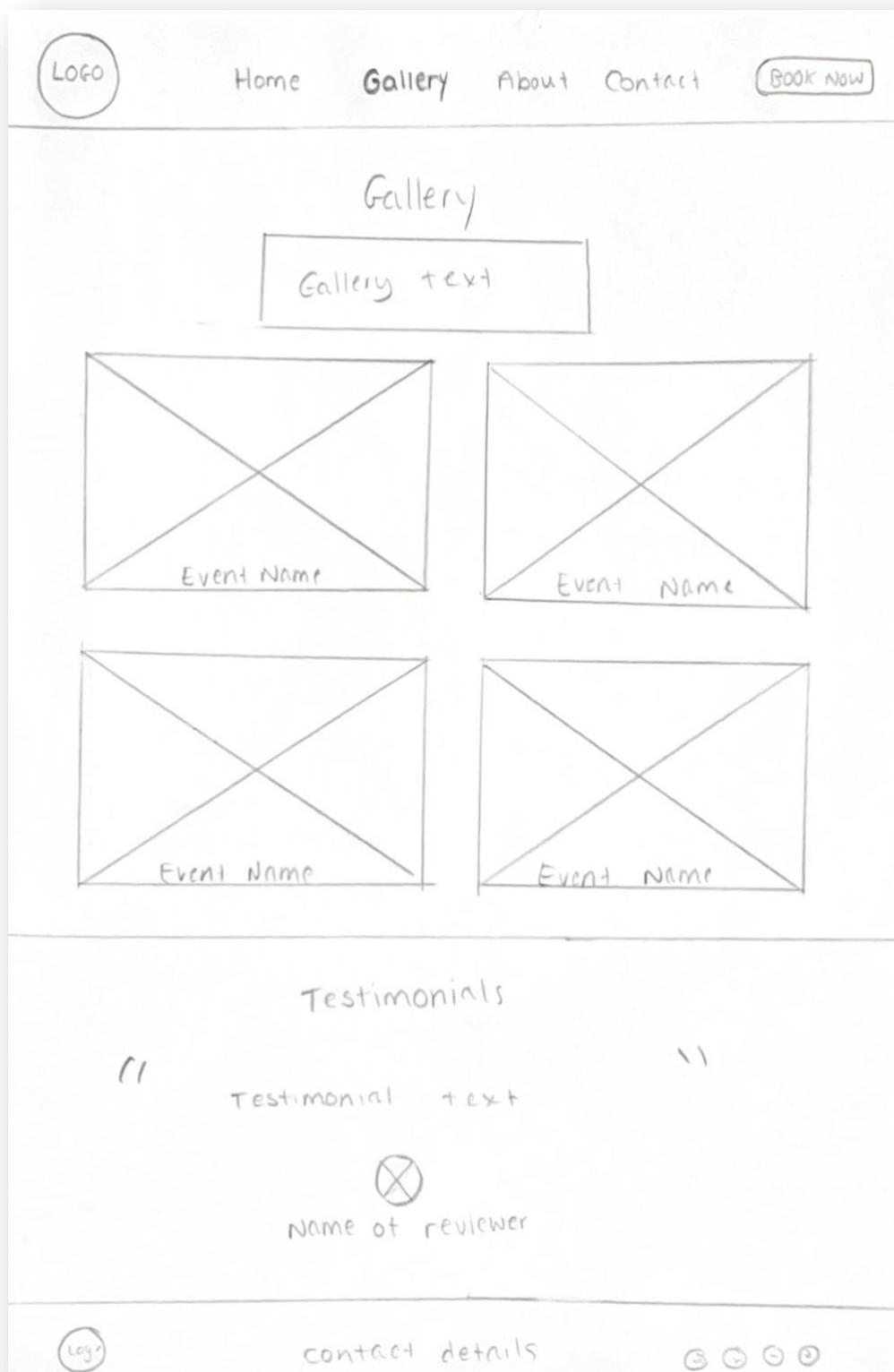


Figure 11 - Gallery Page Wireframe Sketch

5.3.3 About page

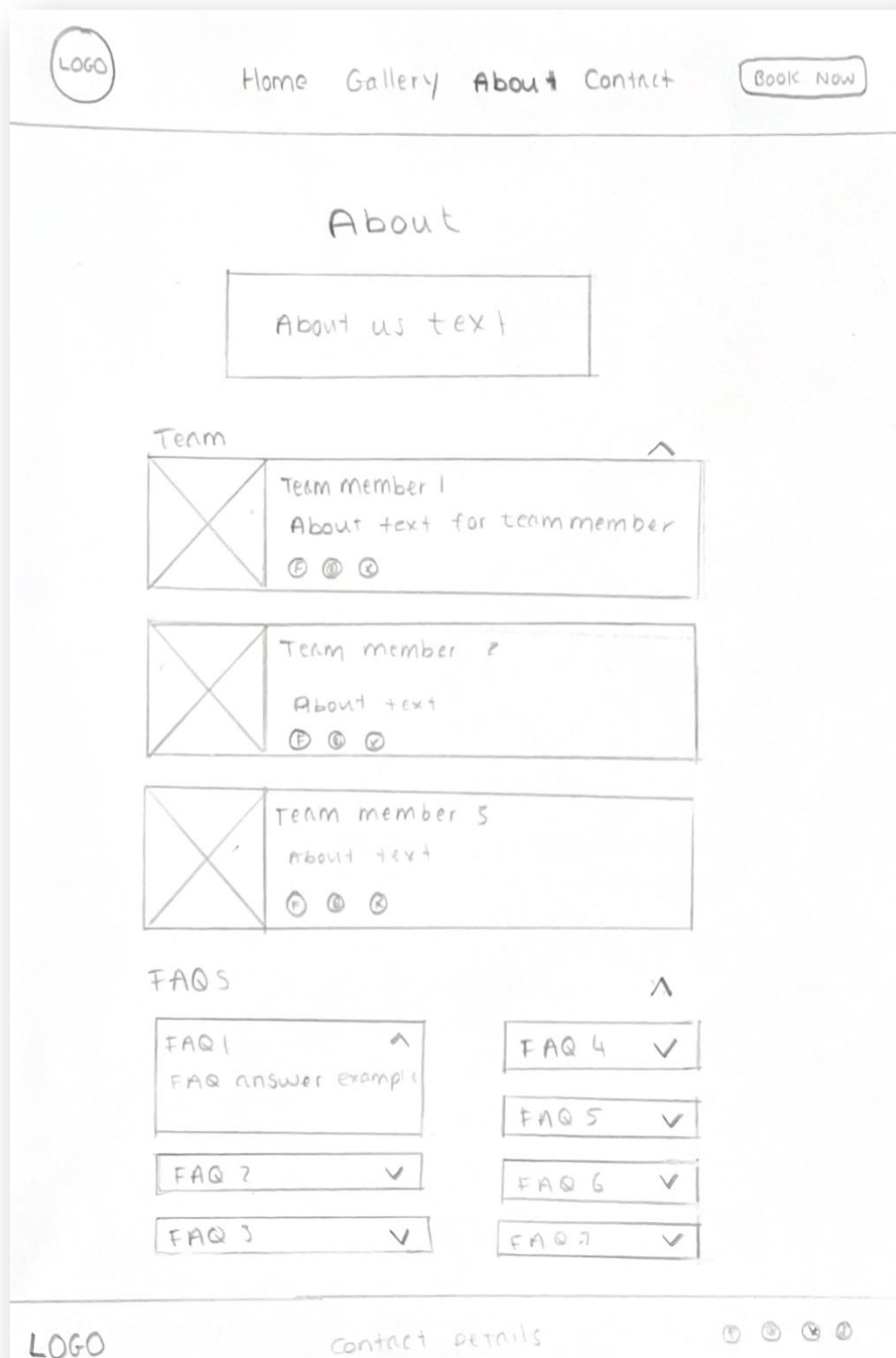


Figure 12 - About Page Wireframe Sketch

5.3.4 Contact page

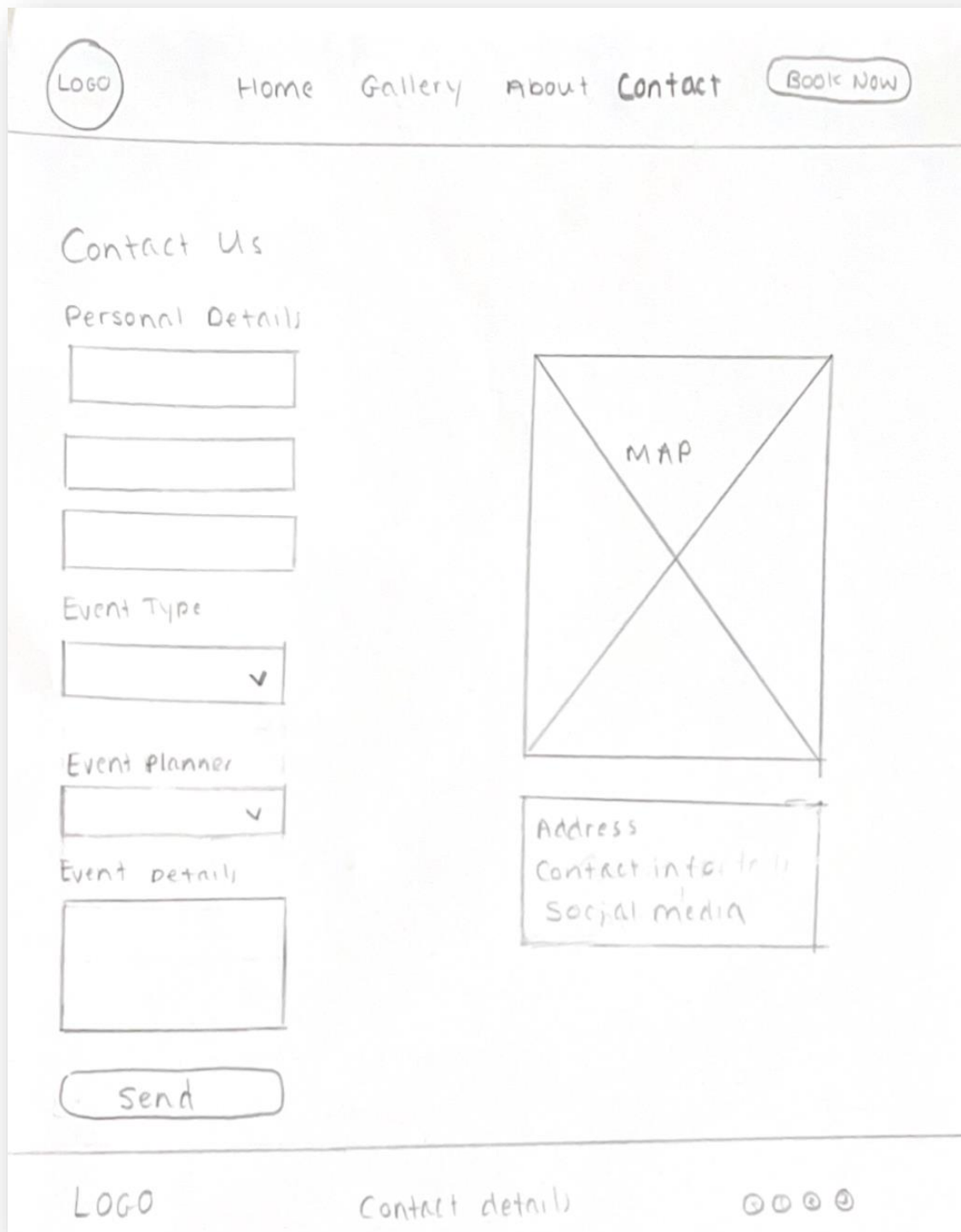


Figure 13 - Contact Page Wireframe Sketch

5.4 Wireframes

Wireframes, Mock-Ups and Final Designs were created using Figma.

5.4.1 Home page

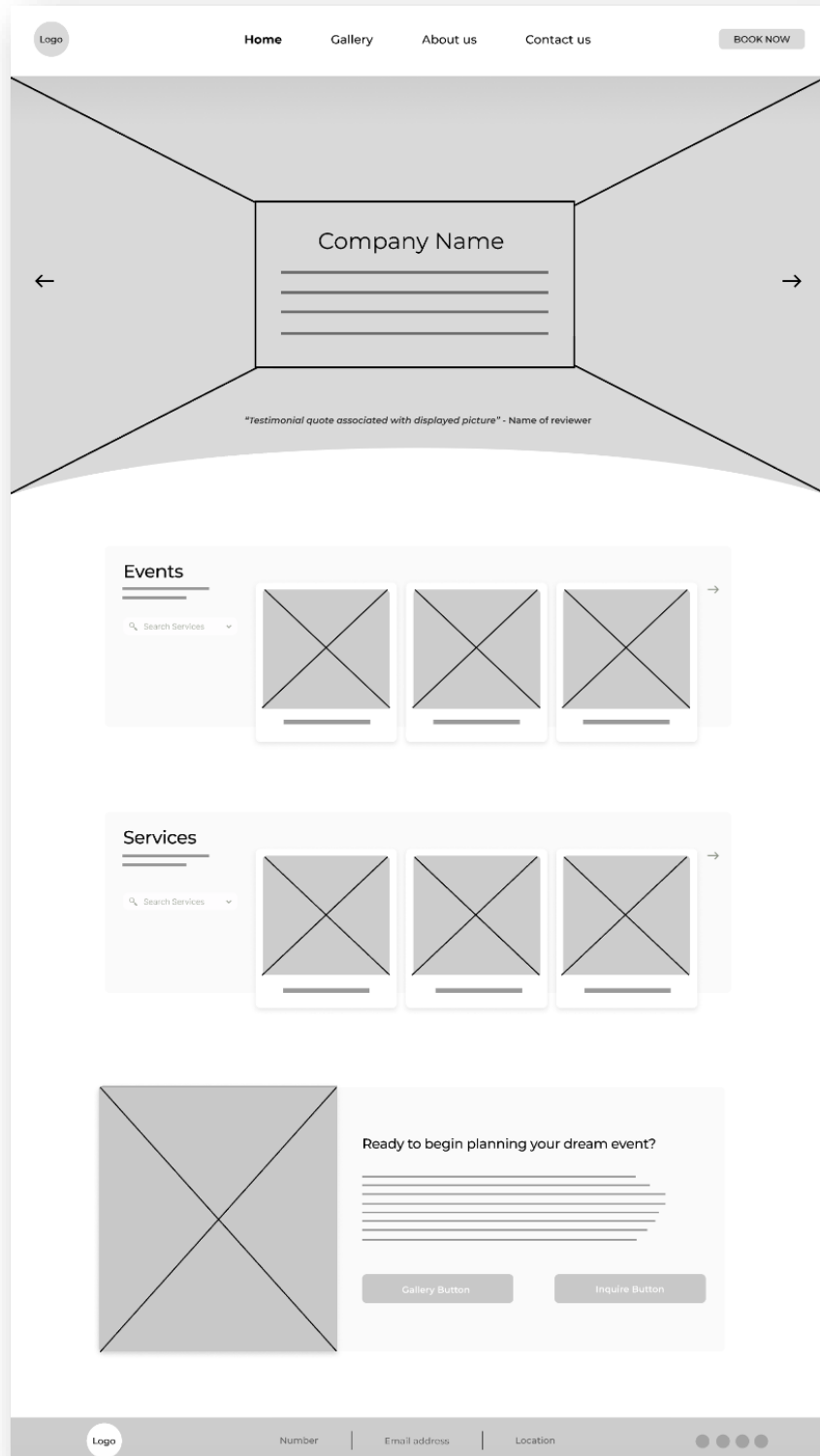


Figure 14 - Home Page Wireframe

5.4.2 Gallery page

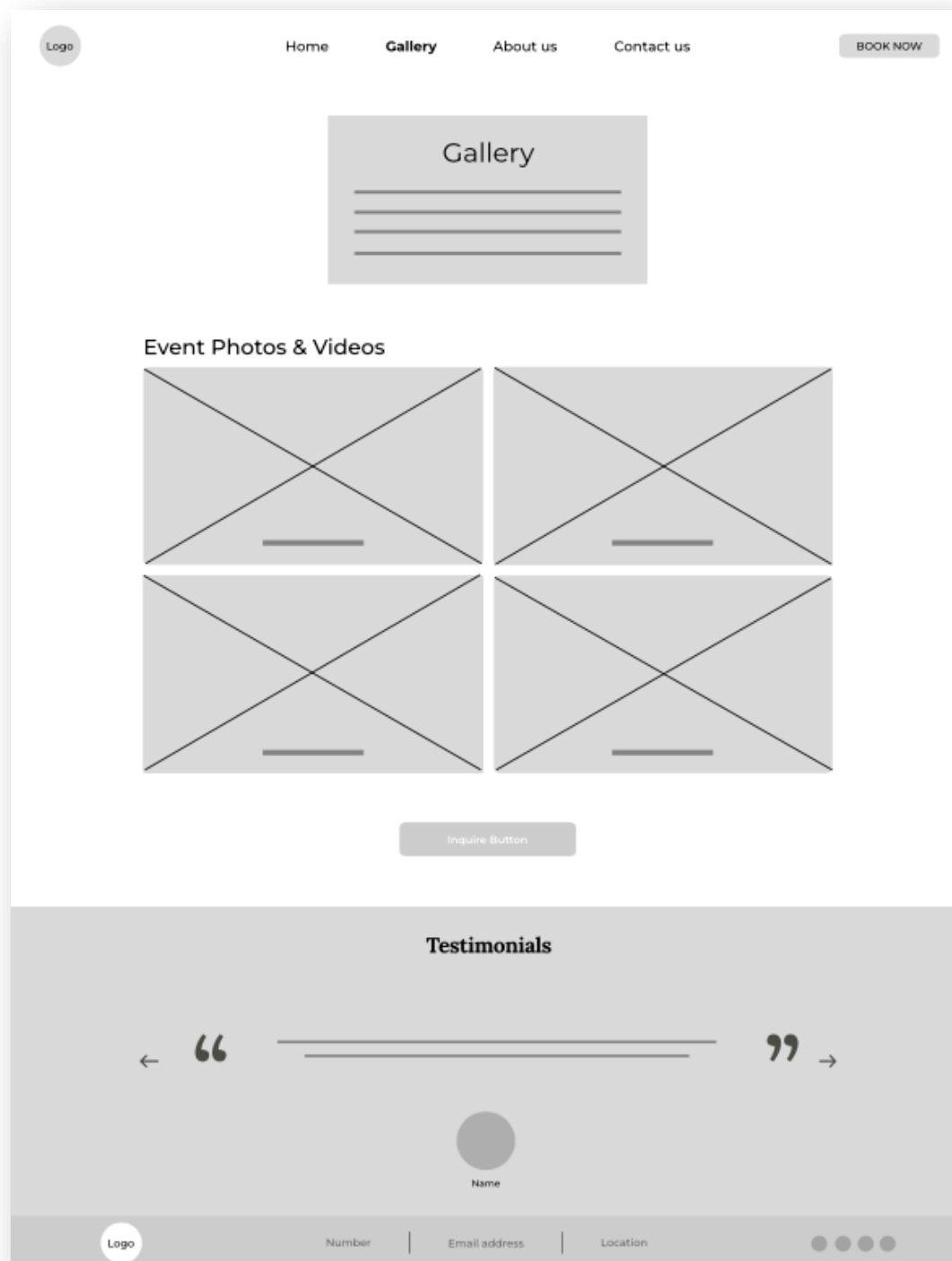


Figure 15 - Gallery Page Wireframe

5.4.3 About page

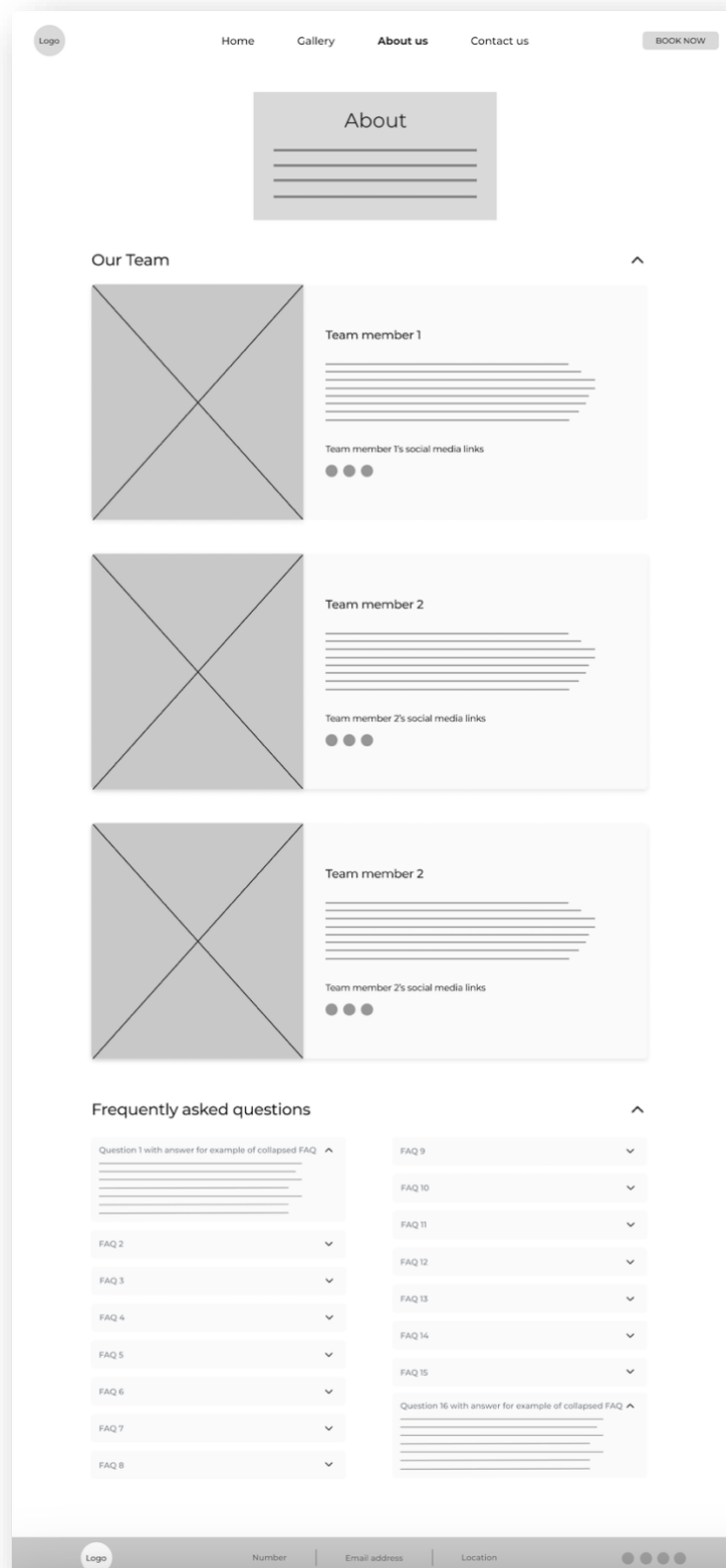
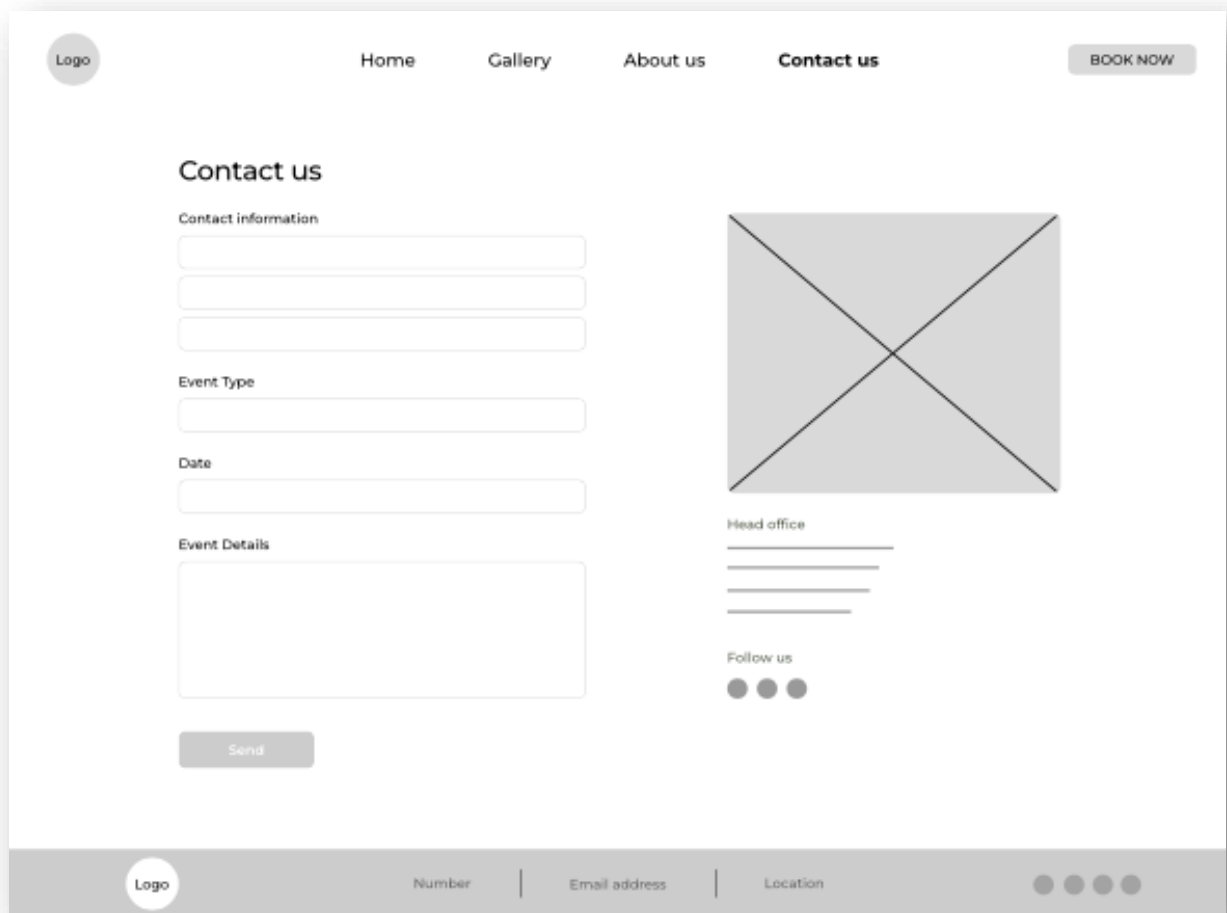


Figure 16 - About Page Wireframe

5.4.4 Contact page



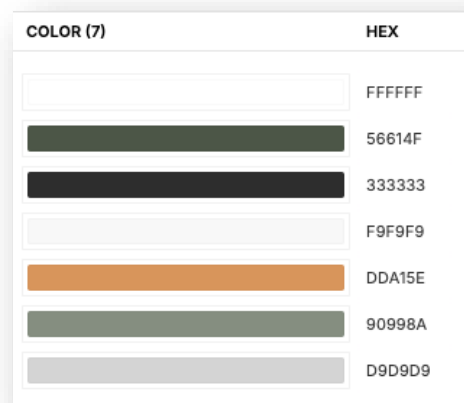
The wireframe shows a contact page layout. At the top is a navigation bar with a circular logo placeholder on the left, followed by links for Home, Gallery, About us, and Contact us (which is highlighted). A 'BOOK NOW' button is on the right. The main content area is titled 'Contact us'. It features a form on the left with sections for 'Contact information' (three input fields), 'Event Type' (one input field), 'Date' (one input field), and 'Event Details' (a large text area). A 'Send' button is at the bottom of the form. To the right of the form is a large square placeholder with a diagonal 'X'. Below this is a 'Head office' section with three horizontal lines for text. Further down is a 'Follow us' section with three circular social media icons. The footer contains a circular logo placeholder, followed by three columns of text: 'Number', 'Email address', and 'Location', separated by vertical lines. On the far right of the footer are four circular icons.

Figure 17 - Contact Page Wireframe

5.5 Mock-Ups

I added the colour palette, fonts and actual body text content to the mock-up designs to provide a more realistic representation of the final website's visual and written content presentation.

Below is my final colour palette, which is mostly derived from the colour palette used in the business card with a few minor changes to the shades of green and the addition of grey tones.



COLOR (7)	HEX
	FFFFFF
	56614F
	333333
	F9F9F9
	DDA15E
	90998A
	D9D9D9

Figure 18 - Colour Palette

I used “Lora”, a serif font, on the headings, subheadings, and event category text and “Montserrat”, a sans-serif font on the body text, footer text, button text, and navigation menu items.

The body text content gives off a sense of professionalism and elegance. The language used in the body text is well spoken and sophisticated, yet clear and straightforward when it comes to content such as events, services and contact form details. The carefully chosen words aim to highlight the unforgettable moments and experiences created by Memory Lane Event Planning, along with a goal of establishing an emotional connection with potential clients.

I will summarise more about accessibility, perception, cognition and information processing in the final design section.

5.5.1 Home page



Figure 19 - Home Page Mock-Up

5.5.2 Gallery page

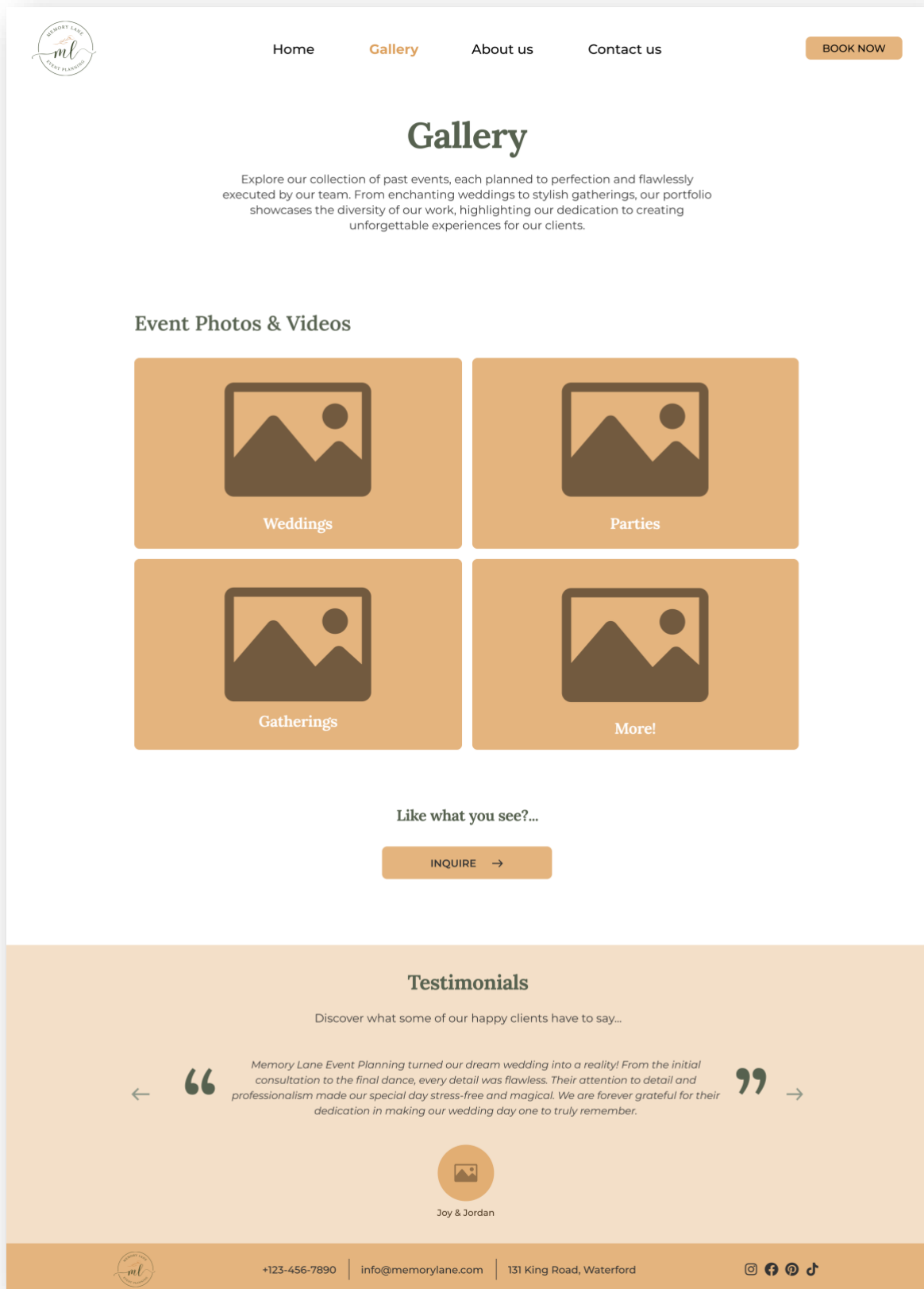


Figure 20 - Gallery Page Mock-Up

5.5.3 About page

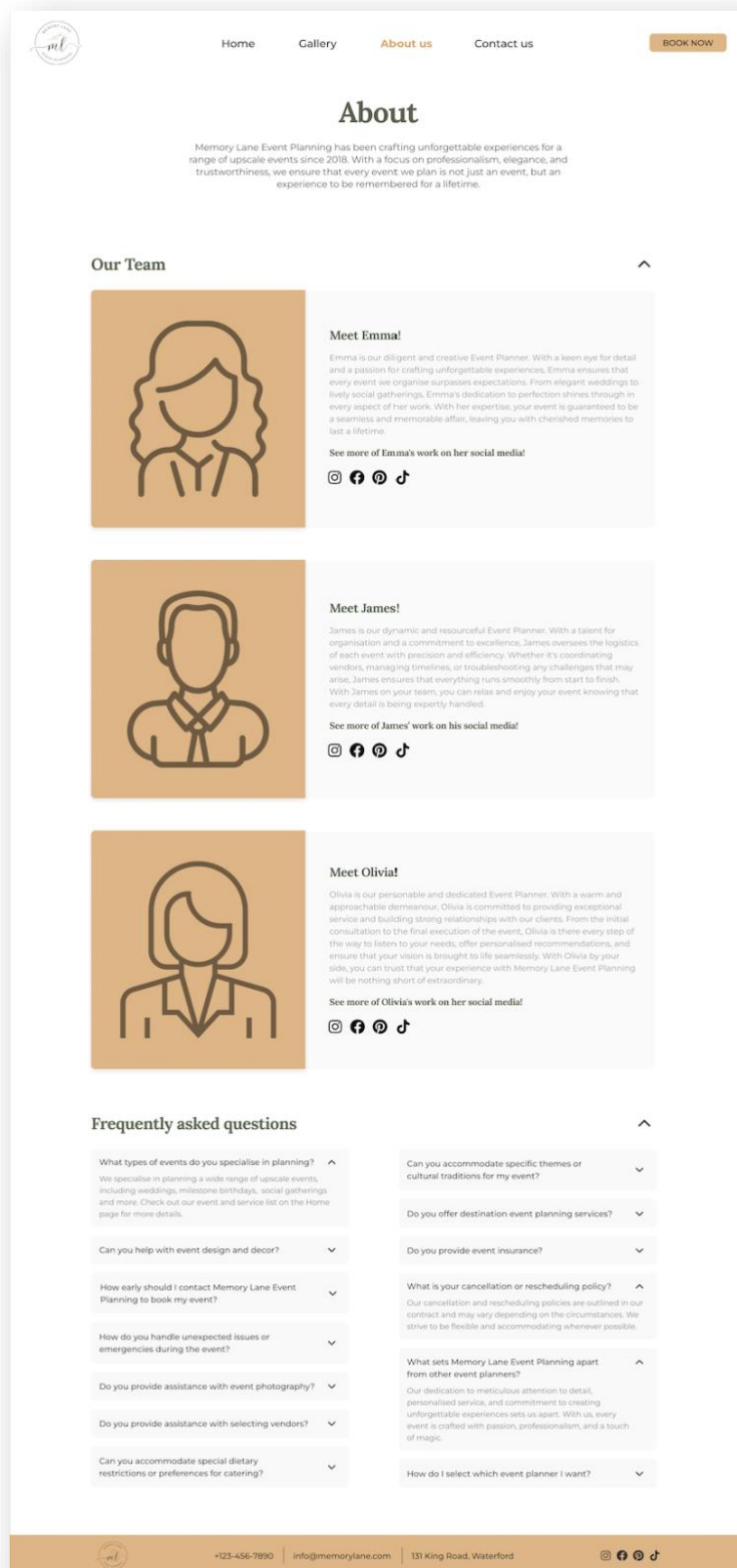



Figure 21 - About Page Mock-Up

5.5.4 Contact page



HomeGalleryAbout usContact us

BOOK NOW

Contact us

We are excited to get planning!

Contact information

Event Type

Select an option

Event Planner

Select your preferred event planner


Date

Date

Event Details

Tell us more about your vision





Send




Head office

131 King Road,
Waterford
Ireland
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Email: info@memorylane.com

Follow us





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Figure 22 - Contact Page Mock-Up

5.6 Final Design

Before showcasing the final designs, I will summarise the page's content in reference to accessibility, perception and cognition and information processing.

Accessibility:

Each page of the website is designed with accessibility in mind. The home page offers easy access to introductory information about the company, its events and services, clear navigation, search bars, and prominent call-to-action buttons. Similarly, the gallery page provides clear navigation and filtering options for users to browse photos and videos from relevant past events with ease. The about page ensures easy access to information about the company, its team, and FAQs, while the contact page features a straightforward contact form and essential contact information, simplifying the process for users to reach out to the company for inquiries or bookings.

Perception:

The design of each page emphasises user perception and engagement. By focusing on specific topics on each page, such as introducing the company's services or showcasing past events, the pages maintain clarity and purpose. Additionally, the design avoids overwhelming users with excessive animations or irrelevant information, keeping the focus on each page's main purpose. Through a combination of text, icons, and images, the pages appeal to multiple senses and facilitates dual encoding. The use of pops of colour assists in adding visual interest while also highlighting important features.

Cognition & Information Processing:

The website is structured to aid cognition and information processing. The home page presents introductory information concisely, which allows for quick comprehension of the services available for visitors. The about page breaks down content into sections with collapsible options, allowing users to process information at their own pace without feeling overwhelmed. Similarly, the contact page features a straightforward form, preventing users from getting overwhelmed, while essential company details are neatly organised beside the form for easy access without excessive scrolling.

5.6.1 Home page



Figure 23 - Home Page Final Design

5.6.2 Gallery page

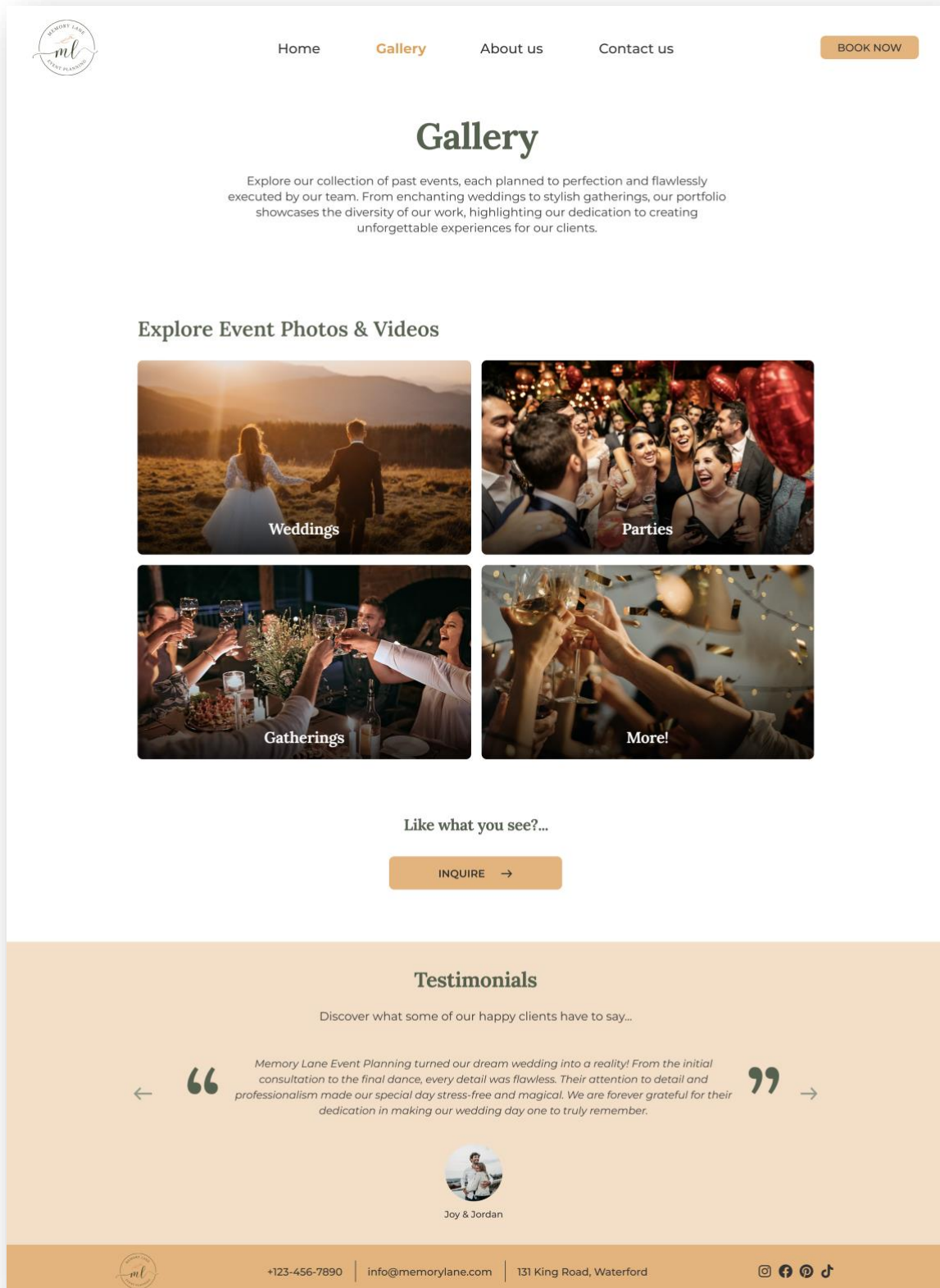


Figure 21 - Gallery Page Final Design

5.6.3 About page

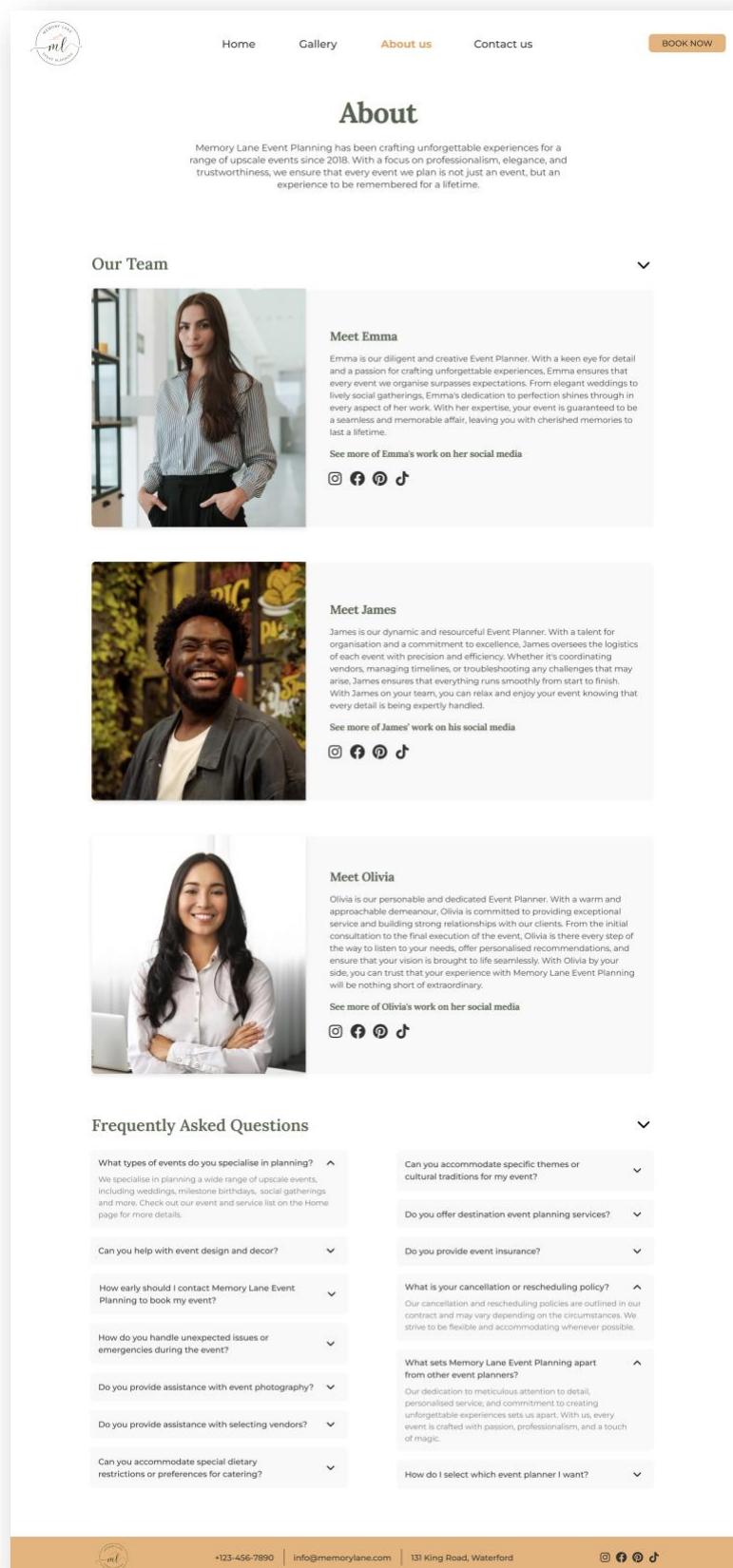



Figure 22 - About Page Final Design

5.6.4 Contact page



HomeGalleryAbout usContact us

BOOK NOW

Contact us

We are excited to get planning!

Contact information

Event Type

Select an option

Event Planner


Select your preferred event planner

Date

Event Details

Tell us more about your vision

Send








Our Details

131 King Road,
Waterford
Ireland

Phone: +123-456-7890
Email: info@memorylane.com

Follow us





+123-456-7890 | info@memorylane.com | 131 King Road, Waterford







Figure 23 - Contact Page Final Design

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6 Evaluation & Testing

6.1 Usability Heuristics

Usability Heuristics below are all based on Nielsen's general principles for interaction design as these principles align best with the website's evaluation objectives.

6.1.1 Visibility of System Status

This evaluation principle involves consistently providing users with timely feedback to keep them informed about the system's current state. When users are aware of the system's status, they can understand the results of their actions and make informed decisions about their next steps. Predictable interactions instil confidence in the company.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, it is ensured that users are constantly informed about the system's state or progress. For example, when users submit details on the booking page, clear feedback is provided indicating whether their submission was successful or if there were any errors. This principle is evaluated through user testing and observation, to assess how effectively the system communicates its status to users and identify any areas for improvement.

6.1.2 Match Between the System and the Real World

This evaluation principle involves resonating with users by using language, terminology, and concepts that are familiar to them, rather than using internal language. Design choices should be tailored to the specific users of the product. What may seem clear to the designers might be unfamiliar or confusing to the end users. When the design matches real-life expectations and does what users want it to do, they will find it easier to understand and remember how the interface works. This helps to create an overall intuitive user experience.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, terminology, concepts and language that resonate with the target audience and that accurately represent the services offered by the company is used. This principle is evaluated through user research, including surveys and interviews, to ensure that the website's language and imagery connects with users and accurately reflects their expectations of upscale event planning services.

6.1.3 User Control and Freedom

Users may sometimes make unintended actions and require a clearly identifiable way to cancel or reverse them. This evaluation principle involves providing a clearly marked exit option that enables users to exit unwanted actions without undergoing a lengthy process. When users can easily backtrack or undo actions, it promotes a feeling of freedom and assurance. These exits allow users to maintain control over the system, preventing them from becoming stuck or frustrated.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, users are able to navigate the website freely and there is not many features included where a user will require an exit option from. Features like a visible navigation menu is implemented to facilitate easy movement between different sections of the website. This principle is evaluated through usability testing, where participants will be observed as they navigate the website to assess how effectively they control their interactions and move through the site with ease.

6.1.4 Consistency and Standards

Users shouldn't be left guessing if different words, situations, or actions convey the same meaning. Jakob's Law of Internet User Experience states "Users spend most of their time on other sites" (Nielsen Norman Group, 2023). In other words, this law emphasises that experiences with these other sites shape a user's expectations to be the same as what they already know. Inconsistent design may overwhelm users by requiring them to adapt to new layouts and design patterns.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, consistency in design elements, terminology, and layout is maintained throughout the website. Navigation menus, button styles, and colour schemes remain consistent to provide a cohesive user experience. This principle is assessed through heuristic evaluations, where the website's design is compared against established standards and guidelines, as well as conducting an analysis of similar websites, to identify any inconsistencies or deviations.

6.1.5 Error Prevention

This evaluation principle involves identifying and addressing potential errors within a system to minimise their occurrence and impact on users. There are two main categories of errors: slips and mistakes. Slips are unintentional errors that can occur if a user is having difficulty focusing on tasks, while mistakes are conscious errors arising from an inconsistency between the user's mental model and the design.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, measures are implemented to prevent errors or minimise their impact. For instance, contact/booking form validation is used to check for input errors before submission, and clear error messages guide users on how to correct their mistakes. This principle is evaluated through both usability testing and error tracking, where the frequency of user errors is monitored to identify any patterns or recurring issues that need to be addressed.

6.1.6 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

This evaluation principle involves simplifying the design to focus on essentials and avoid irrelevant, unnecessary information. Every additional element in the website interface ends up competing with relevant ones, causing the relevant information to be drowned out. This principle does not mean the design has to be flat, rather it ensures that visual elements support the users' primary objectives.

In relation to the Memory Lane Event Planning website, aesthetic and minimalist design principles are implemented to ensure a visually appealing and user-friendly interface. Essential information is prioritised and clutter is avoided to maintain a sleek and elegant appearance. For example, the design focusses on high-quality imagery and presenting content such as services offered and past events in a visually engaging yet uncluttered manner. The effectiveness of aesthetic and minimalist design is evaluated through user feedback and visual assessments to ensure that the website conveys professionalism and elegance while facilitating intuitive navigation and engagement.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Project Summary & Achievements

The aim of this project was to design a website for a fictitious company called Memory Lane Event Planning. The goals set out for this included focusing on developing a user-friendly website layout, clearly outlining event packages and services for quick identification, utilising interactive features like a contact form for easy communication and booking, showcasing client testimonials to build trust, and demonstrating past event work through an event portfolio. The final design of this website included four main pages, a home page, gallery page, about page and contact page.

7.1.1 What would I change if I were to begin this project again?

If I were to begin this project again, I would create additional designs to showcase how the website content would look on mobile and tablet screens. I did not get to do these extra designs for this assignment due to them being out of scope based on time constraints and having other module work to balance alongside, but I would have loved to create a fully responsive design.

I would also design and showcase a subpage of the gallery to display how the event photo and videos would actually be displayed when one of the event categories is clicked on and opened. As the requirement for this assignment was to design four pages, I did not end up doing this for this current assignment. However, I plan to further add to this design, along with making it responsive, as I intend to add this to my portfolio to show potential employers going forward.

If I were to begin this project again, I would also incorporate more interactive features to add to my unique selling points. I was so focussed on including the key event planning features and getting them to fit within the four pages without looking overly cluttered, I didn't think outside of the box in terms of adding something more unique to the website. I expand on this point further in the section "Upon reflection what could have been done differently / better".

7.1.2 Is the UX design successful?

Overall, I believe that the UX design of the website is successful in meeting the goals that were set out. The design supports the user personas and scenarios by providing intuitive navigation, clear categorisation of events and services, detailed biographies of team members, clear contact information and a gallery that categorises the event photos and videos by event type. Furthermore, clear calls-to-action buttons, search bars, and intuitive navigation enhance accessibility and usability, allowing users to easily find their desired information and contact the company.

7.1.3 Upon reflection what could have been done differently / better

Upon reflection, I could have further improved the website experience by considering additional design elements to enhance user interaction. For example, I could have implemented a section where clients could upload their event experiences or testimonials to the website to help create a greater sense of community and trust. Additionally, integrating a section dedicated to building a personalised event package, which would allow users to visually select their preferences to send to the event planners, could offer enhanced engagement and a valuable interactive experience for users. Furthermore, I could have made the gallery page better by exploring ways to incorporate more visual storytelling techniques, such as before and after sliders showcasing event transformations. These features would have added more depth and engagement to the website. However, again I aim to add these features to the design in the near future to expand on my unique selling point and to use in my portfolio to show potential employers going forward.

7.1.4 Main challenge this project posed

As a UX Designer, the main challenge I faced during this assignment revolved around balancing the aesthetics with functionality. I found myself getting caught up in trying to make the design look pretty, which at times caused me to lose concentration on the end-user's main needs. Therefore, when this would happen, I made sure I took a step back and refocused my attention toward striking a balance between visually appealing design and user-friendly functionality, while also meeting the websites goals.

7.2 Lessons Learned

7.2.1 Lessons learned from this project

These are some of the main lessons I feel I have learned from this project:

- This project highlighted the importance of empathising with users and understanding their needs, preferences, and pain points. By creating personas and scenarios, I gained valuable insights into who the target audience would be, which helped me to make more informed design decisions and resulted in a user-friendly website tailored for my main users.
- I learned the importance of self-reflection and seeking feedback in order to continuously improve my work and designs. Regularly stepping back to review and critique my own work, as well as getting feedback from my lecturer and class mates, allowed me to identify the areas that needed improvement and refine them.
- I learned the importance of documenting my design process and reflecting on my decisions. Documenting what I did for this design specification allowed me to track my progress and ideas, establish my goals, user needs and website functionality, justify my design decisions and reflect on areas for improvement. This process ultimately contributed to my growth as a designer, providing me with a clearer understanding of how to approach future design projects.
- This project deepened my understanding of design concepts such as accessibility, perception, dark patterns, and usability heuristics. I learned how to design more inclusively for end users, the ethical implications of dark patterns, and the importance of usability principles in optimising and evaluating the overall user experience. Additionally, exploring principles of visual perception provided insights into how users interpret and interact with design elements, helping guide me with decisions on layout, typography, and imagery to enhance user engagement and comprehension.

7.2.2 Improving as a UX designer

To become a better UX designer, I could benefit from learning even more about user behaviour and psychology, staying consistently updated on design trends, and gaining hands-on experience through working with companies on design projects. Furthermore, seeking guidance from experienced designers and lecturers and continuing to stay open to feedback would also help me to become a better UX designer and improve my skills further.

7.2.3 New tools or methods I am curious about

I'm curious about how AI could be used for the user research part of UX design. There are a number of AI tools emerging that help with analysing a large amount of user data to detect patterns, interpret current user behaviours and trends and predict future trends. Since beginning my dissertation with the title "Building a Generative AI-Powered Code Migration Pipeline for Application Modernisation", I have found myself becoming really interested in how AI can enhance efficiency in other areas such as design. Personally, while I recognise it as one of the most important stages in the design process, I find user research to be somewhat tedious. I'm more drawn to the creative aspects of designing wireframes and prototypes. Therefore, seeing that there is AI that can assist with this intrigues me and I am curious to see how accurate and reliable these tools are by reading up a bit more about them and trying them out.

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