**WEB DESIGN**

**PROJECT REPORT**

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| **PROJECT TEAM** | |
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**Lolcakes**

**http://vcr-ncirl-webproj.netlify.com/**

**Section 1: Design**

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Project Overview

Lolcakes is the company name with a website for marketing custom-made cakes for special occasions. The scale of the business is small, comparable to a part-time job, with limited production facilities.

The goal is to produce a website that would facilitate selling of products and create Internet, including social media, exposure to the business. This exposure is gained by displaying products, sharing ideas with site visitors, and providing an ordering platform.

The website content will be text, images and video clips. For this project – for educational purposes – ‘clipart’ and stock photos are used.

In addition some of the content may be shared on other social media sites, but leaving the website as the main marketing platform.

## Research / Investigation

From a multitude of private-owned companies selling cakes on the Internet, we have picked three examples:

The target group is mainly adults of all ages, who would rather conserve time or who are less proficient in baking and decorating.

The presentation styles are quite different, the first site is intuitive – navigation is made easy by having a semi-static layout, with changing centre content. The third site is even more static, leaving a ‘webpages of the noughties’ look.

The second web site is more advanced technically, with a static banner or menu bar, leaving more room for changeable content in the centre of the pages. The front page seems confusing initially, but is clearly more suited for different platforms by being responsive.

The Cake Shop - http://www.thecakeshop.ie

Pros: Simplicity, easy-to-read fonts, easy to navigate, contrasting colour scheme, image thumbnail utilisation for loading speed

Cons: Not responsive, suboptimal page utilisation, image thumbnails creates an extra step for viewing detail images.

Deborah’s Cakes - http://www.deborahscakes.ie/

Pros: Large images up front, responsive website, pleasant hover-over utilisation on small images

Cons: Obscuring hover-over effects on large images, not as intuitive navigation as the other sites, lacking lucidity

Scrummy Mummy - http://www.scrummymummy.ie

Pros: Simple and clear layout, good image quality, offering courses/workshops

Cons: Only slightly responsive site, suboptimal page utilisation (top half), “outdated look” and possibly not updated since 2016 (year mentioned!)

To make our website stand out is to give the site an overall “fresh” look, with simple navigation, sharp images with details, as the products are visually stimulating. Time and resources allowing video clips will be added as an eye catcher.

The marketing of cakes seem passive – some as passive as a statement such as: “Here are cakes. We sell them.” This is the image we are getting from some of the competitors’ sites. To be more professional about marketing we need to consider some elementary marketing theory such as Marketing Mix (Kotler’s 4 P’s; Product, Price, Place, and Promotion), and how to create demand. Methods for this are very similar to those used by successful companies: Sharing ideas and experiences, sharing “pro tips”, letting people interact via a community or utilise social media, using a mix of visual aids (images; video and still-), to summarise “Get people talking and desiring.”

## Requirements & Technical Approach

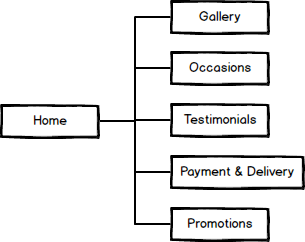
The minimum requirements are the following:

* The site should have a minimum of 5 HTML pages
  + The home page should be called index.html
  + One HTML page should include a HTML form
* Site styling controlled by at least one external CSS file
* Clearly defined, consistent, navigation system
* Website must be responsive
* Use of JavaScript (minimum 4 examples)
* Website Deployment

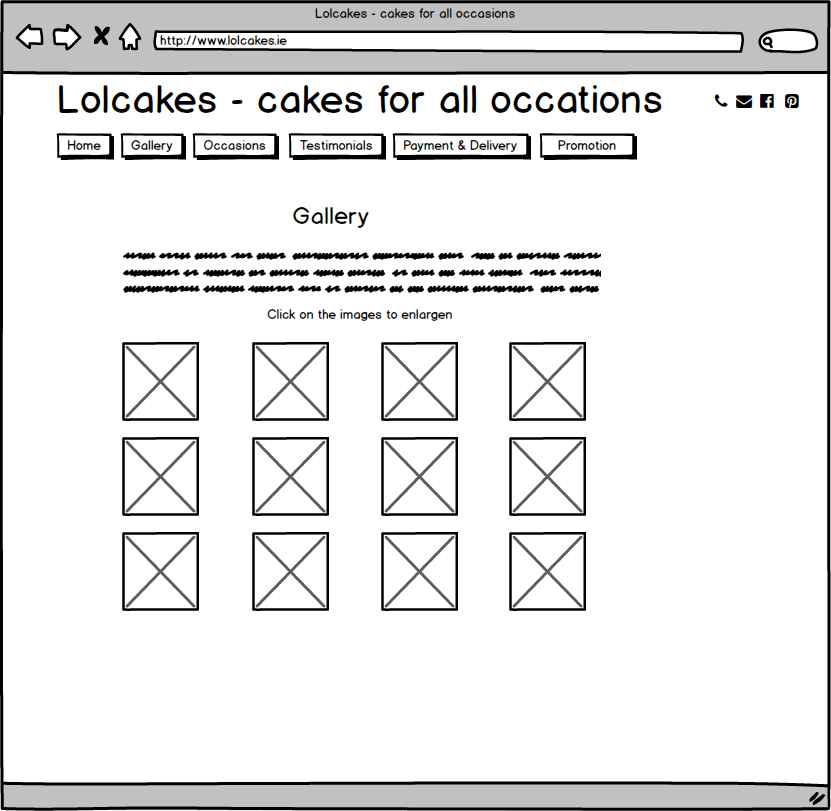
The technical approach:

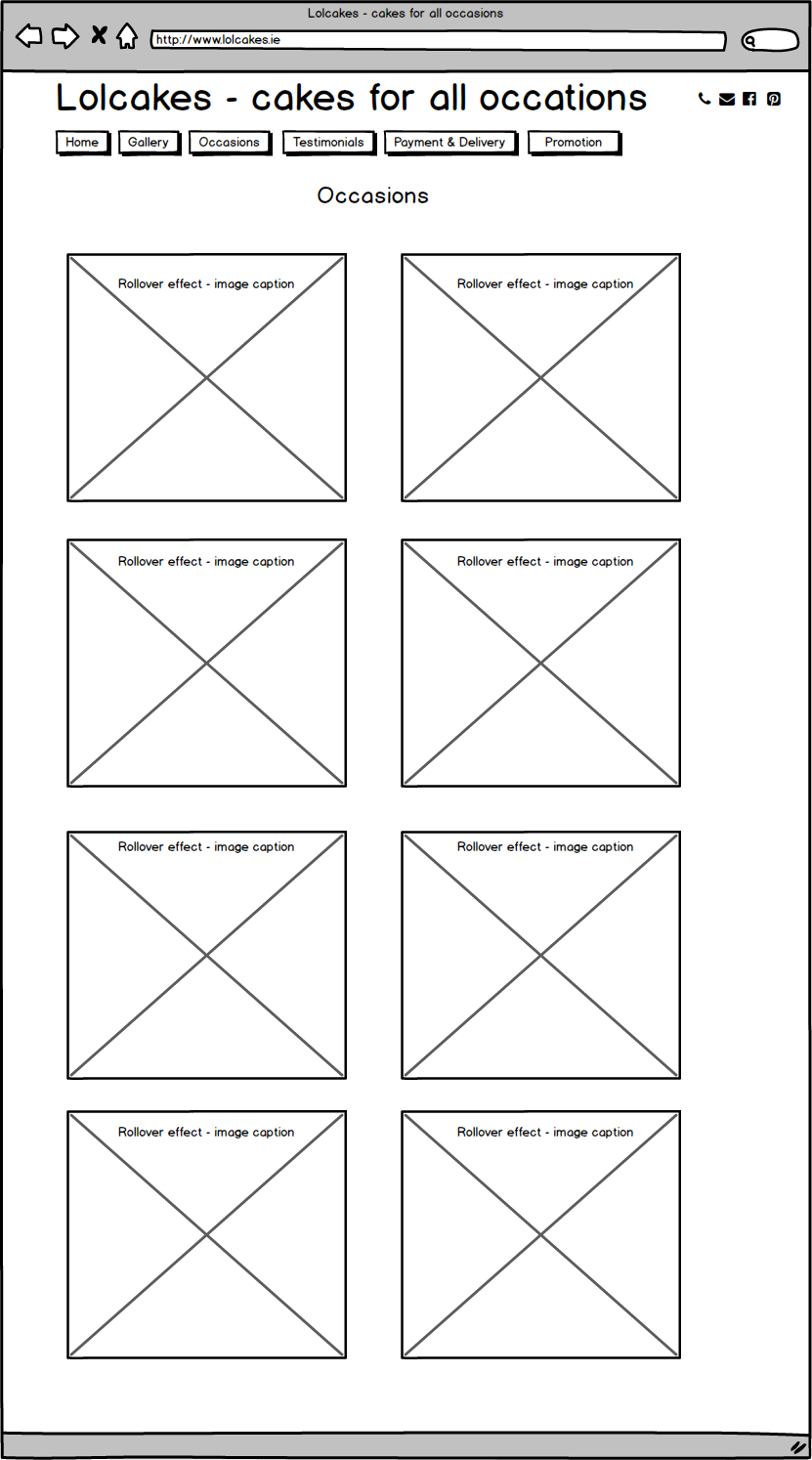
1. Step by step application of Knowledge gained through lectures and flip reading.
2. Idea collaboration via a WhatsApp group
3. Implementation utilising tools like Git, Eclipse and Netlify
4. Validation through Eclipse initially, then likes of W3schools

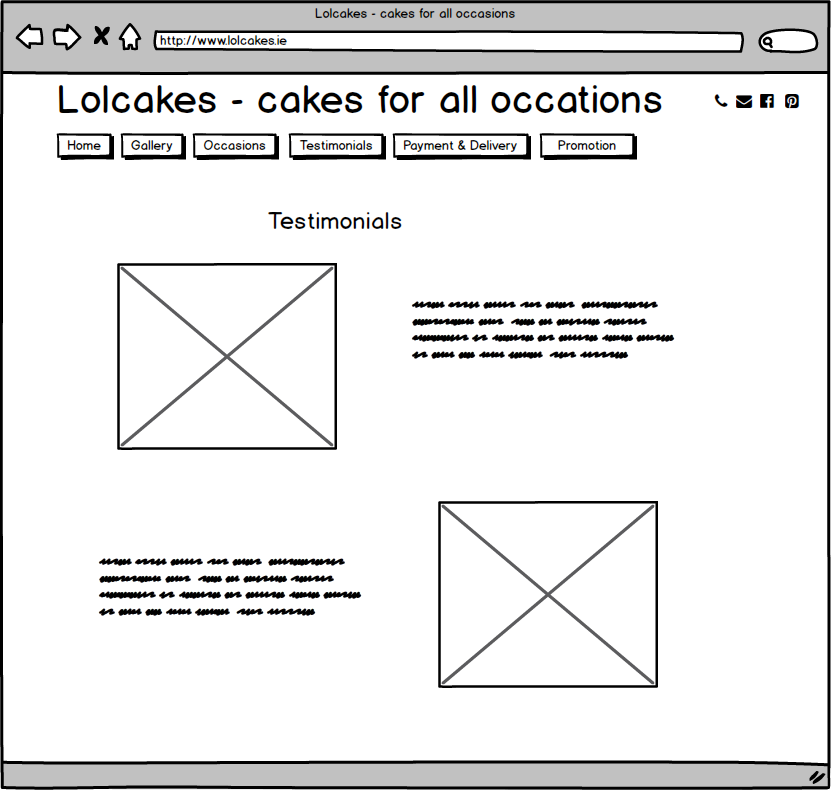
## Wireframe / Sitemap

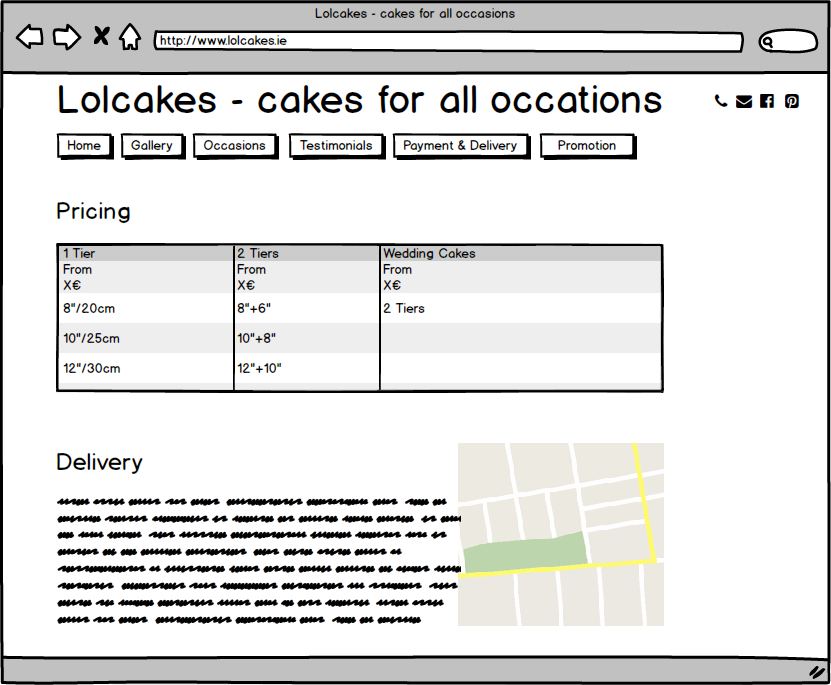


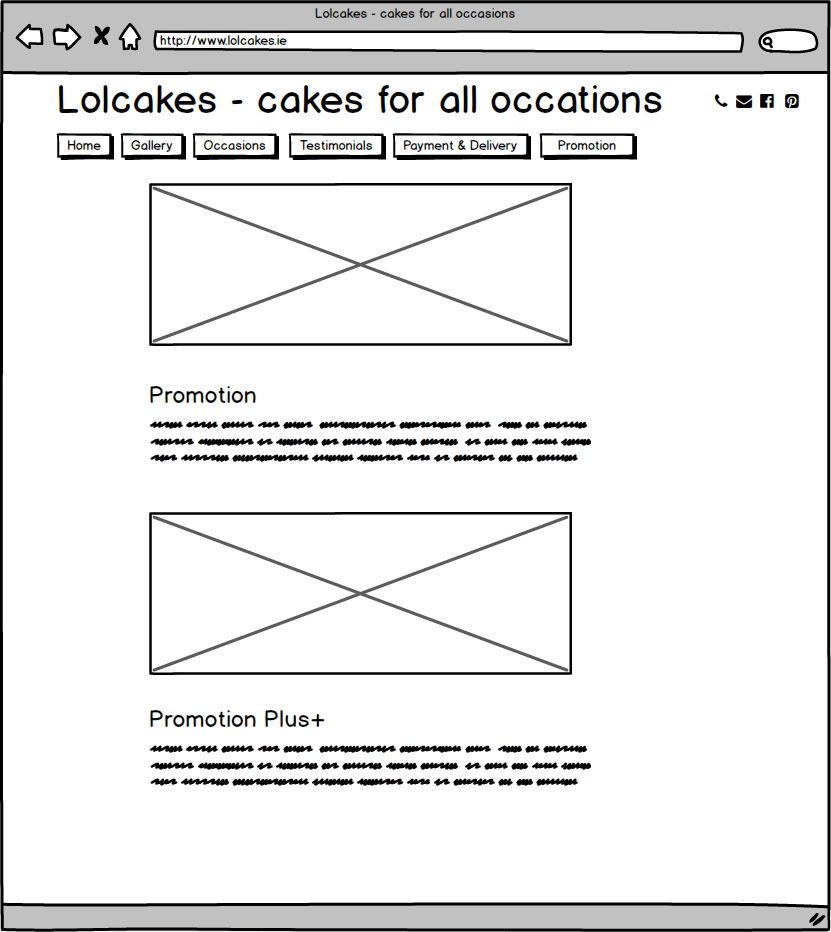












**Section 2: Development**

# PRODUCTION LOG

Starting from the project requirements, all team members came up with their own idea of a website. After discussing ideas for content, production, requirements, feasibility and other aspects, we picked the theme that would be fun, not overly technical and the example best suited for a learning opportunity – and possibly useful for a small business afterwards. The alternatives for project were a website for a school, a website for a virtual modern museum but the selection in the end was an enterprise specialising in baking and decorating customised cakes.

## Research

Post-selection of the theme, the group went out to explore examples of other companies’ websites, benchmarking them for ideas, layout and technical solutions. Examples of benchmarked websites are mentioned in chapter 1.1.

## Selection of tools

When benchmarking was complete, we chose Eclipse, GitHub and Netlify as the platform to work with. Pros mentioned were the integration of the tools, version control and previewing possibility. Eclipse has built-in tools such as validation, spell checking and code formatting helpers. Also, using Eclipse as a tool, helped us with other projects running alongside this project. Cons experienced was the delay getting Eclipse properly set up for the integration for GitHub. Eclipse is in no means an intuitive tool (compared to simple HTML editors or WYSIWYG tools such as MS Expression), and time was spent learning about the tool itself before any production work was done.

## Creating a look and style

The target audience will be assumed to be men and women of adult to senior ages, of different technical skill and learning styles. Therefore the decision was made to follow the KISS[[1]](#footnote-1) layout ideology. The aim was to cover the main topic – marketing cakes – with little “bells and whistles” on the website that can be accessed on desktops, laptops and mobile devices. The website would serve as a calling card, and to complement a social media presence.

We found the selection of layout on a few axioms: User Centred Design - Navigation on the website is to be kept simple and the selection of fonts and colours are considered for readability. Images will have high value, since the products have an aesthetical side. Images will show some of the highly detailed work put into the products in order to have an edge in the business.

Wireframes were produced with Balsamiq to plan the layout of each page individually. These working file was also shared via GitHub to all group members.

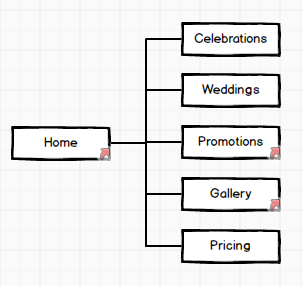
The process of work was a smaller scale of Plan-Do-Check-Act with short cycle times, due to the size of the group, and the real-time communication within the group. Implementing imported JavaScript was also completed by Trial and Error, but thanks to previous experience of code implementation these were never major or critical issues.

GitHub commits/pushes were performed several times a day disregarding if it was a larger or smaller update, notifications of any significant updates were also shared to the other group members via WhatsApp. Any updates would naturally require the other members to perform a “pull” to stay in sync with the current version.

The layout evolved several times while trying to achieve simplicity, we could see that the original design in the wireframe stage had changed noticeably. The group agreed that in order to avoid having the users scroll up and down, a slideshow element was a good idea and quick and easy to implement. On the Gallery page it made sense to display a selection of produced items as a “portfolio”, but with thumbnails in order to conserve download time from a user point of view. The thumbnails were created of the original images with Easy Thumbnails (freeware) http://www.fookes.com/easy-thumbnails, saved into a separate folder and included in the Highslide thumbnail viewer application code. Easy Thumbnails allows batch processing as opposed to single image re-scaling with GIMP2.0.

All code and images are produced by the group members, unless listed in this project report separately.

## Final sitemap



## Third party elements

We have made a best possible effort to use only non-commercial and license free or Open source type license elements for making of website. Any use commercial or element in breach of license is unintentional and would be promptly removed.

The slideshow element on pages index.html, celebrations.html and weddings.html is adapted from http://www.electricprism.com/aeron/slideshow/. The downloaded package comes with sample images for the player, images for the player control element (play, pause etc. buttons), its own css stylesheet with definitions for its classes and id’s and the JavaScript for all the versions of the slideshow player. The player element is commented visibly in the HTML code.

The thumbnail viewing element on the gallery.html page is adapted from http://highslide.com/. The downloaded package comes with sample images, css stylesheets for all versions of the viewer, the JavaScript files for all variants of the thumbnail viewer.

Both applications came with instructions how to add <script> and the sections in the HTML code (such as <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="css/slideshow.css" media="screen" />). These are commented in the HTML files for easier finding.

The Cake quiz on the index.html page is made with Hot Potatoes application from https://hotpot.uvic.ca widely used by teachers for making exercises online. The HTML code is manually edited to include a link (top and bottom) back to the Lolcakes home page.

Location is provided by http link obtained through Google Maps. An example

<iframe src=https://www.google.com/maps/embed?pb=!1m18!1m12!1m3!1d2380.066753691024!2d-6.331630449532012!3d53.37785507988739!2m3!1f0!2f0!3f0!3m2!1i1024!2i768!4f13.1!3m3!1m2!1s0x48670d9e5acdf13b%3A0x430420106b352bbc!2s45%2C+River+Vale%2C+River+Rd%2C+Rathborne%2C+Dublin+15!5e0!3m2!1sen!2sie!4v1492903003285 width="450" height="225" frameborder="0" style="border: 0"></iframe>

The Logo was found by a Google search for free non-commercial images cake logos. We also made sure that image is free to change with same Google search. The logo has been re-worked by the team, by adding text inside the logo, and therefore unique.

Social media logos (Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and YouTube) were retrieved from http://fontawesome.io/ and are free to use.

Text fonts used in project were used from Google api and fontawesome.io

The email validator JavaScript used to set up newsgroup was obtained from W3schools.

See also chapter 7 References & Appendix

# Validation

Using Eclipse as the development tool, initial validation was built-in. The final validation of the website HTML and CSS was done using the provided tools:

<https://validator.w3.org/> and <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>. Every HTML page was checked with the HTML validator and they passed.

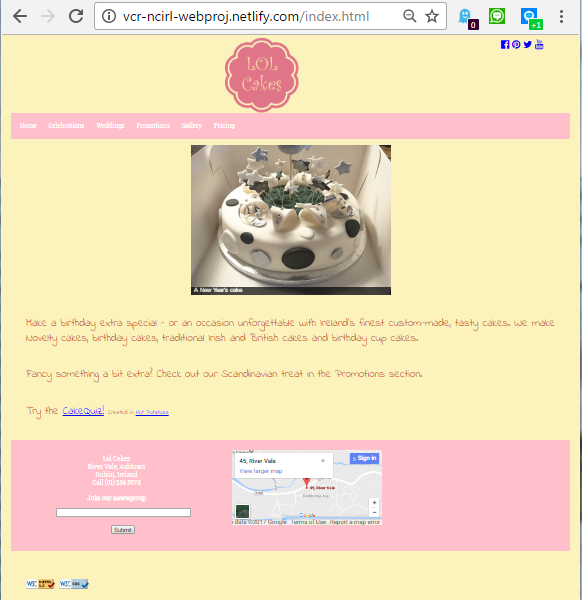




# Deployment

The website project is deployed at URL: http://vcr-ncirl-webproj.netlify.com. As the Netlify site is working seamlessly with GitHub, we decided to use that for initial deployment. Since the changes will show in near real-time, it became the most convenient method for deployment – and we can wholeheartedly recommend it for an iterative development process. We experienced no issues with deployment, Netlify availability was 100% during the project, and no other tools such as SFTP/FTP were needed for deployment.

### Screenshot of deployed site



# PROJECT TEAM

Based on the team members’ backgrounds, it was natural for the team to assume the roles of 1) system support and JavaScript engineering, 2) artistic design and coding and 3) quality assurance, validation and project coordination, while all roles were overlapping, bouncing ideas off each other was a natural working form. The team was communicating via a group chat in WhatsApp and email for the latest ideas, updates and notices. The team had brainstorming sessions, each member contributed equally with different ideas that were reviewed and decisions were made based on the project scope and requirements and through common agreement.

# CONCLUSION

The project was a success from our side. Looking back at the requirements, the journey of the project work and the experience as a whole, we can say we ticket all the requirement boxes, learned a great deal about planning, implementing and deploying a successful website.

In other words the learnings were not limited to the technical side of the work, but also included team collaboration, project planning and time management.

The project still leaves room for further development on the site, for example for adding ordering and payment processing options. With time and further iterations, one might fine adjust the images, layout including site background, but the site is well functional as it stands at the time of final submission.

# REFERENCES & APPENDIX

### Applications

Thumbnail viewer: http://highslide.com, 22/04/2017

Image carousel: http://www.electricprism.com/aeron/slideshow, 22/04/2017

### Fonts

https://fonts.googleapis.com

http://fontawesome.io/

### Example Images used for educational purposes only:

Bride throwing the groom out cake: http://snappypixels.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/funny-cakes-celebrating-divorce-21.jpg, 22/04/2017

Rose and Ivy Leaves Wedding cake: http://www.alloccasionalcakes.co.uk/page\_1996109.html, 22/04/2017

Ham looking cake: https://www.flickr.com/photos/55881531@N00/307889179, 22/04/2017

Happiness is a piece of cake: https://i2.wp.com/cathman.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/pexels-photo-227432.jpg, 22/04/2017

Cthulhu cake (via Pinterest): https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/f6/c5/0c/f6c50c6c137eb8d09238b700cc5de250.jpg, 22/04/2017

Pizza box cake (via Pinterest): https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/f2/17/ee/f217eed99f76bb0f670ea99c3493eaf8.jpg, 22/04/2017

Happy Easter cake: https://www.softlips.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/001779.jpg, 22/04/2017

Wedding cake, pink background: http://www.gettyimages.ie/detail/photo/elegant-wedding-cake-royalty-free-image/157608063, 22/04/2017

Wedding cake close up: http://www.canstockphoto.com/wedding-cake-0658500.html , 22/04/2017

Wedding cake, grey background: https://thumb1.shutterstock.com/display\_pic\_with\_logo/128908/171252503/stock-photo--d-image-of-classic-wedding-cake-171252503.jpg, 22/04/2017

Cupcakes and wedding cake: http://www.mrsclaudia.net/2017/02/16/wedding-cake-with-cupcakes/, 22/04/2017

Couple cutting wedding cake: http://www.canstockphoto.com/wedding-cake-14082808.html, 22/04/2017

Wedding cake with fresh flowers: http://www.canstockphoto.com/wedding-cake-5560811.html, 22/04/2017

Wedding cake with square base: http://www.canstockphoto.com/wedding-cake-8326506.html, 22/04/2017

Cake with daisy and carnations: http://www.canstockphoto.com/wedding-cake-6317178.html

1. Keep It Simple and Stupid [↑](#footnote-ref-1)