RAINMAKER PLATFORM

Rainmaker Webinars

Q&A on Rainmaker Design Settings

Jerod Morris, Rafal Tomal, and Chris Garrett

TRANSCRIPT

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Jerod: Hello, hello. Welcome everybody to the latest edition of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. If this is the fourth part in our Minimum Viable Website Series and we will be talking about design settings, answering your questions about design settings today, and very excited to do so.

Before we get started, let me bring in my two guests today. Rafal Tomal and Chris Garrett is also with us. His name is not on the title slide, but he is with us, which we're very excited about. Mr. Tomal, how are you doing?

Rafal: Hi. I'm good. How are you guys?

Jerod: Doing well, doing well. By the way, I've got a couple slides for you, Rafal, in here that are kind of a thank you for something that I learned from you in our last session. We're going to get to that here in the beginning. Mr. Garrett, how are you doing?

Chris: I'm doing great. Just saying in the chat box that I was in Las Vegas last week and for some reason it was 19C before we got there, and then it was 13 degrees while I was there. I do apologize for anybody that lives in Nevada. I brought the cold weather with me.

Jerod: You like to bring cold weather with you, don't you?

Chris: It seems to happen a lot.

Jerod: It just happens. It does. If you guys are ready, let's hop into this, shall we?

Chris: Let's go.

Jerod: Let's do it. Today's session, this is the Q&A and of course the way this Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap works is that we do a prepared session, then we answer your questions based on that session.

Previous session recap (0001:26)

Jerod: To begin, just a quick review of the last session that we did. That last session was me and Rafal talking about Rainmaker's design settings, and Rafal talked with us about how to choose the best theme for your Rainmaker site. We talked about the importance of starting with content, how to identify your brand's feeling, how to tweak your Rainmaker theme to fit your desired brand feeling and then Rafal went over his favorites in a demo showing the versatility of Rainmaker themes.

Certainly, if you haven't had a chance yet to watch that session, I highly encourage you to do so. I will just say that having hosted that session and

working with Rafal to put it together and then just listening to some of the things that Rafal said during the session, it totally changed my view of how I was going about this redesign of my site Primility.

My own personal site that I've been doing and using as an example as we've gone through these sessions of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. What really hit me, Rafal, was what you talked about in terms of mood and in terms of brand feeling, which is something I hadn't thought about that much and certainly hadn't thought about enough.

This is where I want to issue you the thank you. If you recall from that previous session, this was the working design that I had for the site, going with Rainmaker Pro and I had always used red as my primary color, but I had used it more because that's my favorite color rather than ever thinking about how that actually impacted the mood, or impacted the brand feeling, or what the color was communicating to the audience.

Based on your advice, I took a step back, really focused on putting a mood board together, thinking more intentionally about my colors, and so some of the work that I've done since then, this is the new look of the site.

This is with Altitude Pro and I decided that I wanted to go with a more magenta and green color palette. I could go on and on about why, but it's just a much more intentional choice and I think fits a lot more the feeling and the

mood that I'm trying to create and, based on some of what you showed with the demos and seeing the versatility of some of these Rainmaker themes, it inspired me to go back and start over and I think create a much better looking website. That is what I wanted to thank you for, Rafal. So thank you.

Rafal: Yeah, I do want to say that this is a very nice improvement. The colors are not easy. Even being a designer for so many years, I still struggle with choosing colors. I see many people going the safest route and choose grayscale images and grayscale photos. Being able to experiment too much with colors, but what you just did here, combining this photo color scheme with your own accent, green color, it looks very nice.

Jerod: Thank you. Again, if you missed that first session or if you ever want a refresher on how to create mood and your brand feeling, highly recommend that previous session that we did.

All right, with that said let's hope into the questions. We've got 14 really good ones. As always, we will give priority to the questions that were submitted ahead of time. If we have time at the end, we will answer any additional questions that you have. Of course we have Chris and Brian and Amelia there with us in the question box who can also answer questions while we are talking.

Is it possible to change the theme just for my Homepage? (00:04:45)

Jerod: Let's hop into this. Question number one comes from Amy. Amy's question is, is it possible to change the theme just for my Homepage?

The answer here Amy is yes, you can in a sense because you can customize your Homepage within each theme's Appearance settings. You could choose, for example, a specially designed landing page as your Homepage. As an alternative, you can also submit a custom theme to Support that may allow you to have different kinds of versatility than what the themes included in Rainmaker will give you if you need to go that route.

To show you how you do this, how you customize your Homepage within the Rainmaker Appearance settings, let's walk through a very quick tutorial.

You want to click on the 'Design' button and then click on 'Appearance' to get to the Appearance settings. Then locate the button that says 'Home & Posts Display' and click on that. That will bring up these options to either display on your front page your latest posts, or you can display a static page. If you choose to display a static page, you will now have the choice of any of the pages on your website.

Those can be your basic site pages or actual landing pages that you have designed using the Landing Page Tool or using the Visual Page Builder, but

any page that you have you can make that the front page of your site. That, in essence, should give you the experience and the feeling that you're looking to create. Chris, anything to add on that process for Amy?

Chris: Yeah. Some of the things actually have a static Homepage without you having to change the static and latest post setting. I'm thinking of, and people correct me if I'm wrong, I think Parallax is one of those. There's a couple where they've got widgets on the Homepage and so the Homepage here is different from your blog page, just because that's how the theme is. Don't be surprised if the front page looks different without you going into that setting. Others you do have to go into that setting and pick a certain page.

Choosing a theme to sell a new product (00:06:51)

Jerod: All righty, so there you go Amy. Let's move on now to question two from John. John explains to us that he has never had his own website before. He feels handicapped in choosing the right theme from our list. His new product is the world's first anti-wrinkle serum that truly removes wrinkles in just 15 minutes using 100% pure and natural ingredients in his own formulation. That, John, sounds very exciting and obviously a great reason to get a website and get some visibility. As he says, he has no online visibility right now and he knows for sure that no one knows him or has ever heard of his new serum.

He really doesn't know how to choose a theme that could effectively help turn all inquiries into purchases. He wants us to help him choose one, or would it be more effective to help him get his product online faster for us and our experienced staff to guide him through the setup as soon as possible at a service charge? Rafal, how would you advise John here on getting a website going and starting to build his online visibility. What theme or design would help him do that?

Rafal: When it comes to choosing your theme, I think you should think more about what your marketing strategy is and how are you planning to bring visitors to your website. If you are going to run some online ads or going to … Then, probably, you want to create landing pages. There's a few different landing pages and maybe you want your Homepage to be a landing page, especially since you're trying to sell one specific product or a few different products. Then probably choosing a theme that has a very good Homepage that looks like a landing page might help to do this.

If you are planning also to, I don't know, start content marketing the product and build your own audience and having a blog, a podcast, then you probably will be looking at a theme with a nice blog that can handle a lot of heavy content pages.

Jerod: Then the default sales page. Did you want me to share this link, Chris?

Chris: It's up to you. I've picked on your site because it's one you did mention before, but I'll share it.

Jerod: Let's move on. Chris, did you have anything to add to question two?

Chris: I was just going to say it sounds like what John really needs is a sales page. Every Rainmaker site comes with a default sales page that's set up for you, but the copy explains what you need in each section.

For example, where the headline would be it says, "Start your page with a compelling headline. It's your most important element." Then it goes through all the sections of a sales page that you need to fill out. If you've never done a sales page before, the sales page that's built into Rainmaker does have all the sections you'd need to change and swap out. Every site comes with those, so everybody usually turns them off when they're not using them. It's a good starting point.

I picked on Primility.com because that's just a URL that we've been talking about and the URL is sales-page. You will have one on your site if you haven't disabled it. It's a really good starting point. That's how you convert visitors into leads, by using a sales page.

Like Rafal says, if you're using advertising, you'll probably want to have a different page for each advertising campaign. You don't want to just have one page that you send everything to because otherwise you don't know what's

working. It's not so much a theme thing, it's more of a copywriting thing, it's a sales thing.

Jerod: I see what you're saying. That's the default sales page right there. Yeah, makes sense.

Creating mobile navigation for online courses (00:10:41)

Jerod: All righty, moving onto question three from Jarmar.

Jarmar's question is in regards to the Member Area/LMS navigation and the mobile design first concept. Jarmar is struggling with not having a secondary navigation and/or having the sidebar dropping below the content when on mobile. He's wondering if there are better ideas, tools or templates available that will make the mobile experience with the LMS better.

Rafal, you actually worked out a good process for this and we've got a few slides to show Jarmar and walk him and everybody else through. Do you want to walk us through these slides, talk us through what we need to do here?

Rafal: Sure. I just wanted to mention that whatever you find on our own sites is usually a custom standard. We experiment, we test, and then we tweak and it will eventually end up being a standard Rainmaker feature. You can expect

whatever you see, whatever you like on our own sites, we like that feedback because we test a lot of stuff and then we know what to implement in the next version or having a roadmap for the next couple of months.

Improving mobile experience of some of our core features is definitely something I'd like to focus more in the near future. In the meantime, before we have this implemented as a standard feature, I have a temporary solution that requires a bit of custom code. When you go to your LMS, you can go to any lesson, any module, and on a bigger screen when you see your sidebar with navigation, all you have to do if you are using the Chrome browser, or if you're using Firefox, I think that's the same, you can right click on the navigation in the sidebar and you'll see the 'Inspect' element item in the menu.

Then you click on the 'Inspect' element. You have to find the ID of this navigation. It's where the section tag is and the ID here is lms-navigation-widget-7. Here's seven, but most cases it would be one. You can even try to use just -1. You want to copy this ID from here and when you go to the next page, anywhere when you edit your lesson or whether you edit your module, you can add a link at the top of the content that says, "Go to the Course Navigation," or whatever custom link you want to use. When you create a link as a URL, you want to insert that ID, that element ID we just copied. You use # and then you paste that in here.

One more thing here is the class. You can add class="mobile-only" and "class button", if you want to create it, make it look like a button on the page.

"Mobile-only" class will help you to hide this link from desktop viewers. It will be visible only on mobile screens.

If you use "mobile-only" class, then you have to add two lines, or maybe three lines of CSS code to your custom CSS. I should just go ... We're going to copy and paste. I think we showed you in the notes. You just copy and paste this code into custom CSS and it should automatically hide this. Go to the course navigation from any desktop screens and it will automatically show up only on mobile screens.

Jerod: We'll add that code to the lesson page for the replay, so that'll be there for folks. All righty, excellent. Thank you for that, Rafal.

What Rainmaker themes allow a search widget in the header or in the top navigation bar? (00:14:36)

Jerod: Next up we have question number four coming from Nancy.

Nancy's question is, what Rainmaker themes allow a search widget in the header or in the top navigation bar? Well Nancy, we have a list. Here are all of the themes. Now, we don't expect you to commit all of these to memory here live on the Q&A, so of course these slides will be included on the replay page. Basically, any of these themes right here are going to give you the ability to add a search widget in the header. It is the majority of themes. You can see,

you can pick from this list and any of those will have the search widget in the header.

If you want to grab this, grab a screenshot of this, or grab the slides once we upload them on the lesson page, you can always use it as a reference point any time in the future, if you're trying to figure out which themes have the header in the top navigation bar.

When trying to select the best theme for creating a membership site what elements should you look for? (00:15:29)

Jerod: Moving onto our next question, number five from Lawrence.

Lawrence is wondering when trying to select the best theme for creating a membership site, what elements should you look for? He's been looking for a theme that works well with having a forum, a sidebar menu, and a member specific blog. Rafal, what insight would you give to Lawrence on creating a theme for a membership site, or picking a theme?

Rafal: Yeah. Having a sidebar is definitely helpful in having a membership site so you can add an additional side navigation. Although you can use a secondary menu for that as well. I think almost all of our themes have a sidebar. Even if you don't see them on a demo, when you preview one of our

themes there should be an option, when you choose a theme, there should be an option in Settings to turn on the sidebar. I think the only theme that doesn't have a sidebar is the No Sidebar theme, which …

Jerod: Makes sense.

Rafal: Like the name says, it doesn't have a sidebar. Yeah, having the sidebar so you can add some additional navigation to make navigation around your member area easier for users is very helpful. Although, on my own site, I use … My entire member area is just one page.

I use an in-line page navigation right below the title. I use anchor text to link to different areas of the same page. I don't even need a sidebar navigation or a secondary navigation to take my users from one page to another. I just have different sections on one page and whenever you click the link, you just scroll down to the specific area. Users don't have to click and wait until the page refreshes. That's just another idea how you can handle member areas.

Jerod: Rafal, Amelia has let us know that Atmosphere Pro also doesn't have a sidebar. I realized that because when I was just doing that redesign for Primility that I showed you, I chose Altitude Pro, but the first one, Rafal, when I sent you over what it looked like, it was on Atmosphere.

The reason why I switched off of Atmosphere is because I know in the future that I'm going to want to have membership elements, have a course, and so

I do want a sidebar. That's why I ended up switching over to Altitude Pro to make sure that I would have one. It's an important decision.

Rafal: Yeah, sure. Probably that's two themes that have no sidebar.

Then someone asked what's an end code tag? An end code tag, it's what we showed in the previous slide. That's what the end code tag is. When you see that I use ID and the ID of the element, whenever you use ID in your page, you can, instead of having URL, you can link to that specific ID.

The browser, whenever you click on the link, the browser will take you to that part of the page instead of redirecting you to the other page. It's just a nice way to have an in-line page navigation so you can move users around the page. It's often used when you have a long page and you want users to go up. You can have a "go to the top of the page" link at the bottom and use ID of element of this at the top, like a header or site container, whatever the highest element of the page is.

Chris: It's often used for FAQs, where you want to link to the answer, or if you have long show notes for a podcast or a video. Sometimes you will use it to link to the timestamp and the piece of the transcript that goes with that timestamp. It's good for in-page navigation. It's a very useful thing to have.

Jerod: Absolutely.

Rafal: It requires a bit of HTML code, but there's really no other way to do this in a visual editor. It's just a nice extra feature to know about.

Is there a reference guide to common CSS codes for common changes that people request? (00:19:42)

Jerod: Moving on now to question number six, this question comes to us from Jeff.

Jeff says that he received the CSS code he needed to remove an automatic filter. This was very helpful and he was wondering if there is a reference guide to other common CSS codes for common changes that people request so that he doesn't have to keep emailing Support.

Well, the answer to this Jeff is that no, right now there is no reference guide for custom CSS changes. One of the main reasons for that is that they can be so specific to the site and to the theme being styled. As of right now, there is no reference guide but we do provide in the Knowledge Base some tools to help you learn custom CSS so that hopefully you can be comfortable with it and figure some of those changes out on your own.

Basically the best way to find this out is to go into the Knowledge Base, click on 'Design,' and then if you click on 'Custom CSS' you will see the introduction to CSS as well as some tools for using Firebug to customize CSS.

Now in this particular Q&A, you've already seen us once show you how to do

it with Chrome using the Inspect. There are a couple of more tutorials where we're going to show you how to do that too. Hopefully this gives you some additional insight in how to make some basic custom CSS changes.

We will have some additional hints and tutorials on that coming in the future as well, because obviously it's something that people ask about and we want you to feel as empowered as possible to make some of these changes on your own. So some of those will continue to come.

How can we easily customize the colors of themes to suit our own brand? (00:21:13)

Jerod: Moving on now to question number seven from Claire.

Claire asks, "How can we easily customize the colors of themes to suit our own brand?" A great question. The best way, Claire, is to edit available color options in the Appearance editor. I'll show you how to do that here in just a second. An additional way is to use custom CSS, which we just talked about, or to contact Support for simple, specific, color change requests.

If you have a request, like you want to change the color of your links, you can usually reach out to Support for that and they will be able to help you. People like Brian, who has done that for me, by the way, and I know has done it for others, can a lot of times help you make those one specific changes.

Now, it needs to be a specific change, the Support team isn't going to basically help you make design decisions and redesign your entire site. But if you have, say, "I want to change the color of X," a lot of times they'll be able to accommodate that request. A lot of times, you don't need to do that. Instead of waiting for Support to get back to you on that, a lot of times you're able to do it on your own. Let me show you a couple of ways.

First, how to edit your colors right here in Rainmaker using the Appearance editor. Again, click on the link to take you to the Appearance editor and then find the menu option for Colors. Every theme I think has this, or most of the themes at least, have this option for colors. They'll have some different options. This particular theme that I chose for the demonstration has an accent color.

It'll have a default color and then you can click on the little color swatch and it will open up a color picker that allows you to basically pick from the whole range of colors right here. You can pick from some standard shades of different colors and you can also add in whatever hex code that you want.

So if you have created a mood board, like Rafal talked about in the last session, and you have very specific shades that you want to use, then you can paste the hex codes for those shades right in here. It's important to know that each theme is going to have different color options. A different theme here has options for a background color, for a link color, and an accent color. They

aren't all going to have that many colors, but you'll just have to go in, check the theme that you've chosen and use the color picker to change some of the different color options that you have.

Coming up, there is a question that asks about how to change links. I'll actually walk you through how you do that with custom CSS, so that tutorial is coming up here in just a few questions.

What is the process for submitting a customized Genesis theme to replace the one chosen in Rainmaker? (00:23:52)

Jerod: Moving on now to question number eight. This comes to us from Nicholas.

Nicholas says that someone from his organization has created a Genesis theme for one of their other sites that he might want to use in Rainmaker. What is the process for submitting a customized Genesis theme to replace the one chosen in Rainmaker? The custom theme process requires that the theme be submitted by uploading the theme zip file via a form that you can access with your Rainmaker account. When the form is submitted, a ticket is created in the Help Desk and the Services team reviews the theme.

If the theme is approved, Services then installs it on your site and it can be activated when you're ready. Now, just to be as clear as possible so you know where to go to submit your custom theme, let's walk through it real quick.

If you click on the 'Help' button and type in 'custom,' into the search bar, that will bring up ... The very first link is "How can I install a custom theme on my site?" Click on that link and it will walk you through all of what needs to happen to install the custom theme. Then you will have the link to click on for the Custom Theme Submission Form. You'll just have to log in through your My New Rainmaker account to be able to access that page and submit your theme. Then you will be on your way and ready to go.

The Services team will be able to review that theme. If it passes the inspection, then it will be able to be uploaded and you'll be able to use it whenever you need to use it and you'll be able to choose it right from the same theme menu where you choose any other Rainmaker themes.

Is there going to be a page builder in Rainmaker? (00:25:29)

Jerod: All right, moving on to question nine from Barbara.

Barbara says that she's heard that we're testing a page builder and would love to know if this is true. Well Barbara, I have excellent news for you because

yes, it is true and the page builder is in Rainmaker Labs right now. It is already there, ready for you to use and this is a pretty extensive Rainmaker Labs feature. It is powerful already as it is. To show you how to activate and use the Visual Page Builder, we have this quick tutorial.

The first thing that you need to do is make sure that you have Rainmaker Labs activated. Click on the Settings gear, or roll over the Settings gear icon and click on 'General.' Then you will find an option for 'Enable Rainmaker Labs.' You want to make sure that you have that checked, check it and then click 'Save.' This will enable Rainmaker Labs on your site and now when you roll over the Settings gear icon you'll have an option for Rainmaker Labs. Click on that, scroll down and you will find the option for the Visual Page Builder. You want to click the check mark on that, scroll to the bottom of the page and click 'Save.' Now the Visual Page Builder will be enabled on your website.

Then what this will allow you to do is you will now have an option to edit with the visual editor. You can actually visit the page, the customer facing page, and access it from your blue Rainmaker toolbar. You can click 'Edit the Visual Editor.' If you are in a post or page edit screen, there's actually a button right over there near where you can update and publish and schedule posts. A blue button where you can click to edit with the visual editor too.

From either place, you can open up the visual editor and once you open it, you will see this new toolbar come up. If you scroll over, 'Add Element,' you will see an entire list here of elements that you can add. There's images, there

are columns of text, all different kinds of elements that you can basically take, drag right into your page and then see visually right there and then be able to update.

Obviously you can see all the text editing options that you have. All of it's done visually right here on the page. Then of course you click 'Save and Update' when you are done to use it.

Just as a quick example, here's an image. Again, it was impossible for me to get a screenshot of this, but when you scroll over this Add Element again, you see all the different options. I just clicked on the one to add an image. I dragged it over. The image just plops in right there. I can choose the image and then I have a whole bunch of different options for editing the image right there.

I can drag it and move it and edit it and see exactly how it will look instead of being back in the post/page edit, making my changes and then having to open it up to see how it looks. It's a really powerful tool. It's getting better. We've gotten a lot of really good feedback on it and we definitely recommend that you go use it and try it out. If you've been looking for a visual page builder, this can really revolutionize the way that you're using Rainmaker.

Chris, did you want to add any insight to the Visual Page Builder before we move on?

Chris: It's in Labs for a reason, so we do need you to give us feedback. It's not quite ready for prime time because we know that we're experimenting with it, but it's very useful. I love it. I especially like seeing text flow around and resizing images and moving the images around to see how the page balances out.

When you're in the regular visual editor and then you have to hit Update and Preview and refresh the page and you keep going back, it's hard to do that kind of thing. The things that we are going to be adding next are more page elements and making it so that you can create your landing pages with the page editor.

We're incorporating more of the short codes, which I love because even though I worked on some of the short codes I can't remember all the parameters. It's nice to be able to have a visual way of using the short codes, which means that you don't have to do as much code. Even short codes, it still feels like programming. It's all in Visual and you just fill out the forms and say what you want the element to look like. That's what we're working on, just making it easier and making it more powerful and being able to do more stuff with it, which our philosophy is every page is a landing page so you can see where we're going with it.

Jerod: Hey Rafal, just out of curiosity, I mean you're obviously someone who's very comfortable working in code, do you typically work in code or do you like using a visual page editor when you're designing?

Rafal: I use mostly code just because it's the fastest way to me. I like having more control, but having this visual builder, I mean this entire Visual Page Builder, is one of those features that I'm most excited about. I've been using it on my own site and whenever I had ... I published my few recent posts and I needed to make some quick changes, I just clicked Edit in the Visual Page Builder and I went in there.

I could find the place where I wanted to edit faster, seeing my page already formatted and looking how it looks on my page. I could find this one particular place where I wanted to edit. It was much faster and easier experience for me than actually digging through the code. If I was going to code an entire page from scratch, then I would probably go into HTML and do this my own way.

Jerod: All right. Yes, try out the Visual Page Builder and please give us your feedback as you do.

What would be the best theme for a Rainmaker site devoted to hyper local podcasts? (00:31:23)

Jerod: Question number ten, this comes to us from Lori.

Lori would like to know what would be the best theme for a Rainmaker site devoted to hyper local podcasts. She's thinking of a simple landing page with

a subscribe to the newsletter button and a link to a portfolio page showing the podcast.

Well Lori, for this question I decided to ask Scott Ellis for some insight because Scott specializes in helping people with their Rainmaker sites, so he really understands Rainmaker, and he also runs a hyper local website himself, with a podcast, and it's built on the Genesis Framework, just like the Rainmaker Platform themes are. His website is called Lifestyle Frisco.

I asked him for his insight and he gave us some good insight. Scott said, "Without knowing more about what the other content will be on the site, it's a little hard to say, however, based on what I know, the following two seem the most suited to me."

His first choice is Minimum Pro, because it's simple, clean and has a prominent call to action. The button can easily be replaced with an email opt-in and appears on every page. It's also got a template already built to make use of the portfolio feature, which would be a good place to feature hyper local podcasts. It'll also accommodate blogging if you plan to go down that road.

Here is a quick demo image of Minimum Pro. As he said, the call to action button right here. That is his first option and you can view the demo real quick or obviously you can view it from inside of your Rainmaker site.

Minimum Pro was his first option and Modern Portfolio Pro is his second choice. Scott says that he would replace the intro with a call to action on the homepage and the portfolio is built right in, hence the name of the theme. It's nicely visual on the homepage to feature the podcast artwork.

He thinks that this one is slightly less out of the box than Minimum Pro, but its advantage is that it's more visual. Here's a look at Modern Portfolio Pro. Here's the section where he said he would include the call to action. Obviously, you can see what it would look like to display a podcast. Those are the two options, Minimum Pro and Modern Portfolio Pro. Of course, just about any theme on Rainmaker can be used for any purpose, but that is his initial reaction.

You can contact Scott anytime @vsellis on Twitter. He is actually probably going to join us on some future sessions here on the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap because he has a lot of great insight to share, just as he did here.

How to change the color of links in Education Pro (00:33:56)

Jerod: Moving on now to our next question. This one comes to us from Nina. Nina is trying out the Education Pro theme, however she can't figure out how to make the links that are placed within the pages another color so that they stand out to be clicked on. "Can you please advise if there is a way to do this?"

The answer, Nina, is that yes, there is a way to do this. The first option, this is an excellent example of a change that you can reach out to Support for.

Again, it's a small, very specific request. As long as you know what color you want it to be changed to, someone like Brian can go in there and really help you out and help you do it.

Option number two, if you want to take things into your own hands, is to try your hand at custom CSS. As I mentioned before, that process intimidated me when I first started, but the more comfortable that I've gotten with it, the more empowered I feel, the more confident I feel running my Rainmaker sites. It's actually much simpler than I thought that it was going to be.

Let's run through here, a quick example of if Nina was going to do this by herself using custom CSS, how would she actually do it? Again, the first option is to go in and make sure that you understand how Custom CSS works and get the basics. Go to the Knowledge Base, click 'Design,' click 'Custom CSS,' make sure you read the introduction to Custom CSS, all the other materials. If you're going to use Firebug in Firefox, then there is a tutorial that will help you do that.

I'm going to show you here how to do custom CSS using the Chrome Inspect tool. I quickly switched over my preview site that I've been using to Education Pro, so I know it looks a little jumbly and not that great, but there's no content created for this. I did this just for purposes of the quick demonstration.

Notice how the links right now are blue. That's the standard color for the links, they're blue, and we want to change those links per Nina's question. What I want to do is I want to right click on the link, and Rafal showed this earlier in the tutorial that he had.

You want to right click on the element that you want to change, in this case a link, and then scroll down and click 'Inspect.' When you do that, it will bring up this sidebar. This sidebar will appear right there on your page. This will show you the code that is governing the styles on the page. This information here is what's telling the browser how the post should look and what colors things should be and how they should be spaced and everything about the style on the page.

What you want to pay attention to is this section down here. This is where you want to focus your attention because this is where you can actually make changes and try them out in the browser before you bring them over to the Custom CSS section. What you want to identify is the element that needs to change.

The nice thing about colors is that it's fairly easy because you can actually see the color swatch right there and so you know that the links are a certain color. If you know that you want to change that, look for the color swatch that matches that color, that matches the element that you want to change. You can see how the blue right here matches the blue color of the links.

Typically, if you've clicked on the right area it's going to be up there toward the top. You're not going to have to scroll very far to see it. Now what you want to do is you want to click on the hex code beside the color. When you do this, this will allow you to edit and see what it will look like without actually saving the edit live.

Literally, when you click this, you can type in a new hex code. What I did is I just typed in the basic hex code for red, which is #FF0000. If you're not sure what the hex code is for a color, just Google, "Hex code for red," or use a color picker to find out the hex code for whatever image you're trying to match. Say that you want the links to be the same color as this. You put a color picker over this color and you can find out the exact hex code. Again, notice the differences here.

You can see, here's the original hex code, I clicked there, I typed in my new hex code. Now you see the hex code here, the color swatch has changed and lo and behold, the link color has actually changed. Now nothing has changed on the live site. This is just a preview inside of the browser, but you can see what it would look like.

If you want to change it to another color and see what that would look like, go right ahead. Change it to another color and see what that would look like using the exact same process. Again, you can see how the color of the link has changed and matches the swatch here, which is dictated and governed by the hex code.

Now what you need to do to put this on your site using the Custom CSS tool is you need to copy the section that you edited. Look at what I've highlighted here. This is what you want to copy. You can't just copy the line that says color. You want to copy this entire section. Look for the opening bracket and the closing bracket and then the class right before it.

In this case it's 'a' because that's for link. Copy this entire part right here, make sure it's highlighted, do your Control C, and then you're going to take this back over to your site, click 'Design,' click 'Custom CSS,' and then paste it right in here in your Custom CSS section. You paste the exact code that you had there using the Inspect tool, paste it right here, and you can preview it before saving. If you just want to be sure, click 'Preview,' and you'll be able to see what it looks like. Then click 'Save' once you're ready and you will have the new color right there on your site.

If you look here, I changed it to Live and now the link is red on the live site because I have that code pasted in there. Now, real quick, a word of caution. Editing elements in Custom CSS can change elements that you don't necessarily mean to change. An example would be, let's say that you want to add an underline to your links, well that might then add an underline to images that are linked. It can have unintended changes. You want to be careful when using custom CSS. Be sure that after you make a change, to click around, inspect different page types, to make sure that there were no unintended changes that were made.

Again, once you learn how to do this, making small little changes and just seeing what your site would look like with different tweaks here and there, it can be quite the empowering experience.

Then again, just another reminder, make sure to take advantage of the tutorials and be prepared to play around a little bit. Play around with Custom CSS, get comfortable with it, so that you can learn and so that you feel confident when it's time to actually make the changes on your live site.

Chris, any additions that you would make or words of wisdom for anybody looking to use custom CSS on their Rainmaker site?

Chris: Two things. One, if you're overwhelmed then we do have a Services team who are ready and willing to help you. It's not something that you should stress about. If you're happy to do it, do it. If you're not happy to do it or if you're worried about it, we do have people who can help you and there are various options.

Like you said, Support can help you with a very specific question, like, "How do I make my link color green?" If you've got a bigger question, then for sure we've got the support, we've got Services team, there's people like Scott Ellis as well, and the other side of it is we're adding and building on all the features.

A couple of people have asked about the DPP, the styles feature that goes beyond just a customizer. We are working on making all the things compatible

with that because it does add a lot more ability to change things using the forms and click and drop down menus instead of having to learn CSS. It is something we're aware of and something we're working on.

The problem with, or the challenge with, making all of those things compatible is we've got thousands of live sites using those things. We can't be too quick with rushing these things out because we don't want to break anybody's live site.

You can imagine if we made something look bad because we made a change on an existing theme, then a lot of people would be affected. We just have to be very cautious. We did make a recent change that Jerod put in his newsletter which is allowing us to make a lot of these changes a lot more speedier and with a lot more confidence because of the way we've changed our development process. You should see more things rolling out in the future.

Jerod: Thanks for adding that, Chris. Appreciate it.

How do you replace the solid color in footer one with an image or a specific color in Parallax Pro? (00:43:02)

Jerod: Moving on now to our next question from Jeff. "Referencing Parallax Pro, how do you replace the solid color in footer one, the footer before the

final website footer, with an image or at the very least with a specific hex code color?"

There are three options for you, Jeff. You can use the built-in color style picker for the theme. You can also, of course, email Support, because again, this is a small, specific request, the exact kind of request that they are so great at handling. Then option three, you can try your hand at Custom CSS. Let me walk you through this real quick. The first option is using the built in color style picker for Parallax.

If you go to the Appearance editor for Parallax, click on 'Color style,' you will see that Parallax actually comes with five different color styles. The default is that red color. There's also a blue, a green, an orange and a pink. You can certainly try one of those five and see if it fits with how you want that area to look, or, again, you can try Custom CSS.

Here's the reminder of how to get to the Custom CSS tutorials. If you were going to do this using the Chrome Inspect tool, I once again switched my site to Parallax to show you this, so you want to right click anywhere in the red area and then scroll down and click 'Inspect,' just as we did before.

Once again, you want to identify the color that is governing this area and so you can see here the background color. You see the color swatch. Also, you see that it's in here under 'footer- widgets.'

Again, that makes sense and let's you know that you're in the right place. Identify this color that you want to change and then, again, you want to click on it, type in your new hex code. I just went basic and typed in the hex code for black, which is #000. Notice how it changed the style of the section immediately. Now this section is black. Again, you want to copy the entire area with the name and then everything that's between the open brackets and the close brackets, copy that, and then paste it into your Custom CSS.

Once again, you can preview it or you can save it onto your live site. Either of those options will work well for you. Now, what I don't know or don't have a tutorial prepared for is how to do the image. Chris, or Rafal, do you guys know how you would change that to an image?

Rafal: If you can go back to the previous slide, I just wanted to show you one more trick you can do. If you don't like hex codes and you are not sure, but you are preferring to choose colors from a palette, when you click this, and I don't know Jerod if you know this, but if you click this small black square, you have to check this in your browser because you don't have a screenshot for that.

If you click this small square, then it shows up a color picker and color palette that you can click and choose any color you want from the palette, or there's a color picker that you can choose any color from your page. That's very helpful and it can help to change color without playing with hex codes, if you want to do it that way. When it's coming to changing the color for an image that

requires additional CSS code. When you have background color, you have to change color to image. So it would say ...

Jerod: So, this right here?

Rafal: ... 'background-image.' Instead of having a hex code, you have to type in 'url' and then type in the URL inside the brackets for the image. That would load the image for you. We can drop the code for that in the chat.

Jerod: Yeah, that would be good.

Is there an easy way to change themes without losing any data? (00:46:52)

Jerod: Moving on now to Claire's question. "Is there an easy way to change themes and have all your data and posts and pages migrate across? Does it happen automatically when you change themes? I haven't tried as I don't want to lose everything."

Here's the answer to that, Claire. When you activate a different theme, all of your content will still be available in your dashboard. You will want to find the theme setup instructions for the theme that you select because you'll need to rearrange your menus and widgets. We recommend activating Maintenance Mode if you would rather arrange your content to fit within your new theme's

design behind the scenes instead of doing it all live, out there while people can see your site.

Let me walk you through just how to find these two areas. First, to find the theme setup instructions for the new theme that you're choosing, what you want to do is just scroll over Help and go to the Knowledge Base. Then if you scroll down a little bit, under Topics, you will see an area for Theme Instructions. Open that up. You'll see a dropdown. Locate your theme and it will have all of the information that you need to know about that theme so that you can get setup correctly.

Now, as for Maintenance Mode, to activate Maintenance Mode, what I would recommend is scroll over Help, search for Maintenance, and that will bring up here in the search results the Maintenance Mode settings. I would go in there, make sure you understand what Maintenance Mode is, what it will do and then that will actually walk you through the steps to set it up and then how to turn it off once you're done.

If you follow those steps that will help you do this in the best way possible. I think the most important thing to stress here is that when you change themes, nothing happens to your content. Your content is all there. Your content is all the same. Again, what you would have to be mindful of is just some of the content areas and how those might be rearranged. Again, checking out the theme settings and theme instructions will help you make that as easy of a change as possible.

Overlap scrolling on Parallax themes (00:48:56)

Jerod: Then Jeff asks, "Do you have any data or even anecdotal evidence that people find it easier to navigate a theme, such as Rainmaker Pro, compared to Parallax or Altitude Pro?"

The reason Jeff asks is that the look and feel of Parallax and Altitude Pro is nicer than Rainmaker Pro, however he's worried about the constant overlap scrolling that needs to be done when using the former, especially on mobile devices. Our opinion would be very much appreciated. Rafal, what do you think about this? Is there any data or evidence to suggest that one is easier than the other?

Rafal: We don't have any data. We haven't ever run any testing on that because it depends on the website, it depends on your content. It's case-to-case situation where some content might be better with Rainmaker Pro, some content might be better with Parallax and Altitude Pro.

The best way is to try one or another theme and see how it works for your audience and with your account. The worst thing you can do is make any assumptions based on someone else's test and based on someone else's audience. You just have to do this on your own content, on your own audience, I think.

Upcoming webinars (00:50:15)

Jerod: All righty. We have about five minutes left here. I do want to alert everyone to the upcoming sessions that we have. Next Wednesday, we're going to be talking about how to setup and manage your Rainmaker blog. Chris, that will be you and me, back together again. And then …

Chris: I look forward to it.

Jerod: Yup. Then the following week we will have another Q&A. As usual, a webinar with a content presentation and then a Q&A to answer your specific questions based on that, where we'll be talking, answering your questions about setting up and managing your Rainmaker blog. I believe we are going to post the links to register for those events. Yup, those are in there.

If you're not yet registered already, make sure that you get registered for those. Again, with the Q&A, as you see here, we always try to go through the submitted questions first so make sure that you submit your questions ahead of time for the Q&A.

Additional Questions? (00:51:05)

Jerod: We do have a few minutes left. If there are any additional questions, we can answer them. Chris, I don't know if we have any that have come in that we weren't able to get to.

Chris: I think we covered most, weaving it into the presentation. A couple of questions about submitting custom themes. You only need to submit a custom theme if you actually want to have a theme that's very different from the themes that are actually built in. There are customization options within Rainmaker, including being able to add it on CSS. It's only for if you really have different templates or if it's quite a fair bit different from what's already there.

The first step is ask yourself, "Do you really need a custom theme?" Support can help you with that. The second step is to get your theme developed and then submit it. They don't just reject themes. They actually tell you if there's a problem and what the problem is and how to mitigate it, usually.

The main reasons we would reject a theme from going up onto a site is there's a security issue or there's an issue where it would cause problems. It's not that common, especially if you're just doing a visual code. It's usually if you're trying to add code or if you've got a theme from somewhere else and there's something bad security wise there.

Especially with free themes, you can't always trust where you're getting them from. There are certain things that we look for. In most cases, we can just say, "Hey, you just need to change this and we'll be able to accept it," or we'll say, "You really need to cut that out because it's bad for security," but in most cases it's just fine and it'll go up.

Then you can activate it when you're ready. There's a whole process and it's very interactive. Nobody's going to be left wondering what the problem was. A lot of people who think they have to submit a custom theme, they actually don't need to. Go to Support first and say, "Hey, this is what I want to do. Can I do this without having a custom theme," if that makes sense.

Jerod: Couple additional questions here. Heinrich said he sees costs attached to themes. Are these costs on all themes? I have to assume, Heinrich, that maybe you're at StudioPress.com and you see the cost for the Genesis themes because there are no costs for Rainmaker themes. The themes that are there available in the themes menu in Rainmaker, you can use interchangeably as often as you want, as many as you want.

There are no costs on the Rainmaker themes. Obviously, they are similar themes, the same themes, customized for Rainmaker that you see on StudioPress.com, the themes built on Genesis. Just want to make sure to clear up any confusion there.

Jeff says that these sessions have been invaluable for him. That is excellent to hear, Jeff. That is why we are doing them. Thank you for your question because your questions and the questions of everybody else have been invaluable in allowing us to tailor these sessions to you. Keep those coming.

Chris: The questions have actually inspired us to start adding more text articles for free as well on the Rainmaker site. We were just talking about that

before we started this session. There's a few things that we feel like we could pull out of these Q&As and pull out of the webinars and actually expand on as articles. Thank you for the live questions and the pre-supplied ones. They really give us a lot to work with.

Jerod: Rafal, we have really appreciated your time over these last two sessions. Thank you for joining us and lending your insight to everybody's who's using Rainmaker. We really appreciate it.

Rafal: Yeah, sure. Thank you. I just also wanted to say that those questions and this Q&A are very helpful to me in seeing what our customer's needs and worries are. We know that the Visual Page Builder and helping people customizing themes visually without code is very important for our customers. That's something we'll be very focused on in the next couple of versions.

Jerod: Absolutely. All righty, well I think it is time to close up. This has been another Q&A here as part of the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. We appreciate you being here, we appreciate your questions and we look forward to talking with you on the next session about how to setup and manage your Rainmaker blog so that you can drive tons of traffic, attract the kind of people that you want and build the audience that will help you build your business. That's coming up next on the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap. We'll talk to you then.