



**RAINMAKER
PLATFORM**

Rainmaker Webinars

How to Choose the Best Theme for Your Rainmaker Site

Jerod Morris & Rafal Tomal



TRANSCRIPT



How to Choose the Best Theme for Your Rainmaker Site

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How to Choose the Best Theme for Your Rainmaker Site

Jerod Morris and Rafal Tomal

Jerod: Welcome everybody to the latest webinar in the Rainmaker Site Building Road Map. I'm Jerod Morris. I will be your host today. Very excited to have you all with us. We're really looking forward to today and I'm looking forward to having Rafal here with me. Rafal, how you doing, man?

Rafal: Hey, how're you doing? Thank you for having me.

Jerod: For sure. I appreciate you taking the time. You obviously are the man for design at Rainmaker Digital and everybody gets excited when they get a chance to get your insight. So it'll be very helpful for everybody, including me. I enjoy these sessions because I get to learn from you too. It'll be fun, and interesting, and educational.

Rafal: I enjoy these sessions too to be honest. Especially now that I know it can help people out there.

Jerod: Hey. Absolutely. So with that said, Rafal, are you ready to hop into this and get going here?



Rafal: Yeah. Sure.

Jerod: All right, let's do it.

For today's session in the Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap, we're going to talk about theme. You know, in our last session we talked about the basic settings and we really want to get you set up, get you going, to get your website out there.

To do the basics that you need to get a functional working website so then you can start taking the next steps with your content, and with your promotion, and with everything else that you need to do to build a successful site with the Rainmaker Platform.

So today, Rafal is here to help you choose the best theme for your Rainmaker Platform site. Obviously there are a lot of options and we want to give you as much insight as we can about which of those options to choose and really more importantly than saying, "You should choose this theme." It's more how to think about it and how to prepare yourself to make the choice that is the right one for you given your context, given your goals, and given how your content's going to be set up, and the kind of feeling that you're trying to evoke. We're going to go over all of that in today's session.



Rafal Tomal (00:02:00)

Jerod: Before we begin, let me just introduce Rafal, our guest expert. He is the lead designer at Rainmaker Digital. The founder of [Typespiration.com](https://typespiration.com).

The co-founder of [HackYourDesign.com](https://hackyourdesign.com) with Chris Garrett, who is traveling, so is unable to be with us today. Rafal is also the author of [The Essential Web Design Handbook](#). The proud father of Emilia. You can follow him [@RafalTomal](https://twitter.com/RafalTomal). Welcome Rafal. It's awesome to have you here.

Rafal: Yeah. I think the last point is my greatest accomplishment.

Jerod: The Twitter account or proud father of Emilia?

Rafal: Oh yeah, the proud father of Emilia.

Jerod: Yes.

Rafal: Sorry, the last one was the Twitter account.

Jerod: Yes. I agree. Now that I have a daughter myself, I feel the exact same way. It's almost like any other titles and achievements kind of fade into the background and it's like, "Oh yeah, this is the greatest thing I've done."



Rafal's first point (00:02:48)

Jerod: Well, let's do it. Let's hop in and Rafal, you know, you and I had a chat last week just to kind of get prepared for this. Throughout the course of that chat, you had a number of quotes that I thought were really interesting and so I made note of them. You'll kind of notice on these slides that I kind of pulled those quotes out so I want to use quotes really as jumping off points for you to add some really interesting context to this decision that folks are making when they're picking their theme.

Let's start with your first point that you made to me when we started talking about this, which is that "When you choose a Rainmaker theme, you don't have to worry." What did you mean by that? That you don't have to worry when you choose a theme with Rainmaker?

Rafal: Yeah. Most of Rainmaker customers come from the WordPress world, and if you had a website on WordPress before, you know how difficult it is sometimes to choose a theme. There's so many different theme providers, different theme marketplaces with tons of options.

Everything has had some different plugins, different features, and most of the customers don't even know what does it mean to have a slider? Do I even need a slider? You know, should I worry about if my theme is mobile



optimized, mobile responsive, or if it's good for SEO. If it's well coded so it won't be hacked or, you know, won't have any issues or bugs.

There are so many different things you have to think about and if you are a regular website owner, you don't have the expertise to know that kind of stuff. You know, I know a lot of my friends who are not designers or developers they even hire a developer for an hour or two consultation just to help them and let them know which theme is right for them or review the themes they did like, and look into the code and tell them if it's a good theme, if it looks professional, and if the theme provider is legit. All those things they have to pay for even before they buy the theme.

Design with Rainmaker (00:05:04)

Rafal: With Rainmaker themes, the good thing is that all of our themes have been professionally designed. Have been tested in the most popular browsers. They all have a clean code. They are responsive, SEO friendly. We even added some accessibility features. We set it to the [Genesis Framework](#).

So for all of those you don't have to worry. You don't have to make any quality compromises when it comes to choosing themes and wondering, "Should I go with a theme with mobile responsive or should I go with a theme that



has very good accessibility involved?” Right? I think that’s a great thing about Rainmaker. You have 30 plus themes that already have all those great features.

To us those are basic features. Mobile responsive, accessibility, visibility, SEO. For us, those are basic features, but there are so many other theme providers that black out on many of those.

Jerod: Yeah, absolutely. I think that’s an important overview when it comes to choosing a theme with Rainmaker. Of course, you can upload customer designs. So if you have a custom Genesis theme, you can submit that for approval, you can add your custom themes. What we’re going to be talking about today is choosing one of the themes that are in Rainmaker for you. There are 30 plus of them to choose from and we want you to make that decision better.

Rafal, as you just explained, you don’t have to make any quality compromises. All you have to worry about is which theme is right. Let’s dive in and help people make that decision.

A quick tip to start ... (00:06:43)

Jerod: A quick tip to start that I think is easy to overlook, but what can really be helpful for you as you try to decide which theme to pick is to utilize the Rainmaker gallery. That’s right there on the website.



If you go to RainmakerPlatform.com/gallery, you'll see a page that gives you two options. You can look at all of the themes. All of the Rainmaker themes. You can look at different example themes. You can obviously do this inside of your Rainmaker site as well when it comes to looking at the themes, but if you click on 'Live Preview,' that will show you a live preview, a live demo of the site. You can kind of see what it looks like, get a feel for it. Try to understand if that will fit with your content.

Even better than that, you can see examples of other sites. So how people have taken certain themes and then applied it, customized it, changed it to fit their specific context, their specific content. You know, you can see for instance how [Altitude Pro](#) looks on [Jesse Peterson's site](#). How [Magazine Pro](#) looks on [Female Creatives](#). As we go through these, again [Altitude Pro](#) on [Boutique Growth](#), [Café Pro](#) on [McPlants.com](#), [Enterprise Pro](#) on [Mountainside Media](#), [Education Pro](#) on [Livology](#), and [Parallax Pro](#) on [Copyright Matters](#).

All of these sites, these aren't custom themes. These sites took the basic theme that's there in Rainmaker and used customizations to make it fit for their purposes. I think getting in and really checking out the demos, checking out the live preview, which we're going to talk about a little bit later, that's all very helpful, but it can also really help you generate ideas. See what's possible to just look at some of the other example sites because again, those can just be helpful as you go through and make that decision.



Rafal, any advice, you know, for folks who may want to get some ideas from other sites about how to do that and kind of apply the ideas that they're getting to their own site?

Rafal: Yes. You know, as you can see in this gallery, the great thing is that most of our themes come with black and white photos or have some kind of monochromatic scheme, but you can see even if you change a photo, you can change one color and this theme can look completely different than it looked before.

So one thing is to never think that what you see in the demo that's what your website has to look like and if you see a black and white photo or monochromatic scheme it doesn't mean that your website has to be the same way.

As you can see on all those examples, you can change the entire feeling of the site just by changing the photo or colors. Even adding your own logo to the site will automatically change the entire design, which is great. That's why we designed themes to be very simple so that the design doesn't dictate what the design of your site has to be.

Agenda (00:09:55)

Jerod: Yeah. Absolutely. So let's talk about today's agenda real quick. This is kind of where we're going to take you here as we go through this session.



We're going to talk about the importance of starting with content. Yes, before you even get to your theme, you have to think about your content. Then you have to identify your brand's feeling.

You have to then tweak the theme to fit the feeling and then Rafal is going to identify a few of his favorite Rainmaker themes and he actually prepared a nice demo showing the versatility of Rainmaker themes that he just talked about. Where just changing a few simple options can really almost look and feel like a different theme.

I should mention I know I see some questions already coming in. If we have time at the end, we will definitely take questions, and I'll try to be cognizant of any questions that are immediately relevant to something that we're talking about and try and catch them if I can. Remember, this is why we're doing the Q&A the week after. So we have the webinar, then we do the Q&A.

Any questions that you ask in this session that we don't get to, there will be a dedicated Q&A next week, and Rafal will be there, where we can answer as many of those questions as possible. We'll get to it today if we can, but if we can't, then definitely save that question for next week.

Start with content (00:11:07)

Jerod: All right, Rafal. Let's hop in and let's talk about starting with content. This is what you identified to me as being the first step that folks need to



take when they're thinking about their theme is to actually think about their content.

Step one: Pick a basic theme (00:11:21)

Jerod: In terms of steps here, you know, step one would really be just pick a basic theme, right? Rainmaker already comes with Rainmaker Pro as the default theme. To do this first step, thinking about your content as where you should start, just pick a basic theme. If you want to use something different from Rainmaker Pro, it's pretty easy. You can always just go to design themes and then you'll see the entire rundown of 30 plus themes and you can choose any of these to get going with.

If you look right here, this is the [Rainmaker Pro theme](#). This is a site [Strategic Athlete](#). It's built. This is the live version of the site which is just using the Rainmaker Pro theme. It's a really good theme all on its own. You know, I know sometimes we kind of think, "Well, it's the default theme, so I have to go with something different." Maybe, but Rainmaker Pro might also work and so it's certainly one to consider. Just pick a basic theme that you're going to go through these basic steps with.

Step two: Use the sample posts and pages (00:12:19)

Jerod: Then the second step is to use the sample posts and pages. Rainmaker comes with sample posts and pages already in their for you, as we discussed in



the last webinar, but you also want to go beyond just the sample posts and pages. Okay? You want to actually create sample content that is specific to your content.

Step three: Create samples specific to your content (00:12:41)

Jerod: To do this, you want to kind of project into the future. So are you going to have a blog? Are you going to have a podcast? Are you going to have a course? Are you going to have products? The reason why you want to ask yourself these questions is because the answers to these questions will help to dictate what your theme needs to be able to do and some of the elements that your theme needs to have in it.

Rafal, as you were talking to me, you know as an example, if you're going to have a course then you really need a theme with a sidebar. So if you want to just kind of briefly walk us through why it's so important to start with content and think about your content before you even think about what your theme is going to be?

Rafal: Yeah. If you want to have a course on your website, I think it's a good idea to have at least a sidebar. You know, if you want to have a clean navigation and give your users an ability to quickly move from module to module, from lesson to lesson, unless you have a different idea for your



course and you have more like a vertical flow for your course and include the navigation somewhere in the end of each lesson.

So it all depends on what your plan is. What exactly you want to do with your course. You know, for most users who have any experience with any courses, they usually have a navigation sidebar and that's what the users are expecting from your course as well.

Jerod: Yeah, and it's even more than just the types of content right? Are you going to have a blog? Are you going to have a podcast? How will this look in this particular theme? It's also kind of the elements of your content, right? So you know, if you write headlines are they long or short? What's your writing style like? Do you have a lot of long paragraphs or do you use short paragraphs? What do your images look like? How can these kind of elements, Rafal, influence what your choice may be for the theme?

Rafal: Yes. So, you know, the way we design websites is we always design around the content. We never do this the other way. We never, you know, have design first and then we match content to our design. That would be the bad way to design any websites. It is the same when you choose a theme. You should choose a theme around your own content, your own style of writing, around your images, around your headlines. You choose a theme that matches your content, not the other way around.



If you choose a theme first and then you start writing your content, then you'll be trying to match your content to your theme and make the headlines look good. So you will probably go along with some compromises and start shortening your headlines or making them longer just to make them look good, which is not the best way to make decisions on your website. It's always better to focus on your content first, get your copy right, and then a true theme that matches well, you know, your copy and convey your message better.

Jerod: I can confirm this is how we do it at Rainmaker Digital because whenever we have a design project for Rafal, he's always coming back to me and like, "Well, do we have copy yet? Do we have content yet?" That is obviously the place that you want to start because it's very hard for Rafal to do his job or for us to do the job of picking a theme without knowing that. It doesn't mean you have to have all your content created. You just need to have some samples. Have an understanding of what it will be so that you can make a good decision on your theme.

Rafal: Yeah, and I think it's one of the most common mistakes for website owners. I've seen this many times. Even when I was doing some freelance design, many people came to me asking for website design and whenever I asked them about the content they had no idea even what pages they were going to have on their website. They wanted to have a design right away.



They only wanted to see the design and then they were going to work on the content, but you know, we have to think the other way. In this case you don't want to spend a considerable amount of time browsing through the Rainmaker themes and customizing your theme, making all those changes that you need, to then figure out that it isn't right for your content. Then you have to change the theme and do all the work again, which will be a waste of time.

Which theme is best for long paragraphs? (00:17:04)

Jerod: Hey, so Rafal, a question for you. John brings up an interesting question. I don't have a slide to address this, so I want to address it now. He kind of gets into something specific here. For instance, if you write long paragraphs, which theme would you use?

My guess is there's not a specific theme that's best for long paragraphs, but what you could do, and correct me if I'm wrong, would be go to the demos of the different themes. Every theme demo is going to have examples of pages, examples of posts that shows you all the typography and all of that on there and go look for how it looks, how the paragraphs are laid out, what kind of a typeface is chosen.

Based on, again, if you think your headlines are going to be long or your paragraphs are going to be long, see what kind of looks best based on how



you project. Is that right? There's not a specific theme. You want to go look through them and kind of see what's going to match best with how you're projecting it to be?

Rafal: Yes. I think, you know, browsing through them is probably the best way to do this, and specifically about long paragraphs, you will be looking at the font in the body text. For long paragraphs, it would be best to have a bit smaller line heights. Those are the spacings between lines, but bigger gaps between paragraphs. Probably a smaller font size too.

Whenever you have a long paragraph, you can squeeze a little bit more on the page and have a bit longer lines then choose a theme with a very big font size and big line heads and then make your content one huge vertical log of content or copy. You're probably looking at more about typography. You want to make sure the typography matches your writing style.

How a post is set up on two different sites (00:19:00)

Jerod: Yup. Okay. So moving forward, and again, when we talk about the site setup, just take two examples, right? Look how different this site's post setup is. So it's got a short headline and obviously kind of a narrow post area. You can see they're using a big image right here at the top. Obviously an important sidebar that's promoting their free course and that's promoting additional posts. They have this background image too.



Look how different that is from this site, which has tons of white space. Obviously a longer headline is going to look better here, but it's totally different. For each of these two site owners to make the choices that they've made, they obviously had to make decisions or have realizations about their specific content.

So they chose a theme and a layout that was going to fit that the best and that's important because you can take a Rainmaker theme and make it look, you know, obviously totally different and really fit it to what you want it to do, but you have to know what you need it to do. That's why starting from content is such an important foundational decision, foundational thought process to go through.

Why you should plan ahead (00:20:06)

Jerod: So Rafal, I want to get to this point too because I know we had a couple of questions in here. You said, "You know, you can always change your theme later, but the best practice is to plan ahead. I know someone asked. Again, what do you do if you need to change your theme? Well, we'll get into this a little bit later. You know obviously you can change your theme within one click.

You can change the theme. Now it's not that easy as you're going to have different customizations to make and that kind of thing, but while that is easy,



you can also kind of help prevent that by planning ahead and giving yourself the best chance to choose the right theme from the beginning, right?

Rafal: Yeah. When you choose a theme and at that time you don't have a course, or a podcast, or you're not planning to have a landing page on your homepage, but you are planning to have it in the near future, then you probably want to choose a theme that will serve your needs in the future.

This is so you won't have to change your theme later. It never hurts to choose a theme that has all the stuff and just not use it but have it ready for the future rather than choosing something that doesn't have it and then looking into how to customize it later and stretch that theme possibilities to your new needs.

Jerod: A couple of quick questions about these themes and which ones they are. I believe Females Creatives is Magazine Pro and I believe Boutique Growth is Digital Pro. Both of those, if you go to RainmakerPlatform.com/gallery, they're both in there. So just to let folks know.

As you said, you don't want to choose your theme, spend time designing it, and then realize it doesn't match your content. So as much as you can go through this thought process ahead of time, the better off you'll be and kudos to everybody here because obviously you are interested in making the right choice for your themes so I think you'll all be ahead of the game as far as this is concerned.



Step four: Choose your theme (00:22:17)

Jerod: Then step four is to choose your theme. You know, make the choice for your theme. This is of course after you kind of have your sample content ready to go. Choose your theme and then you can start moving forward. Again, when you want to choose your theme, go to Themes and then you have the entire 30 plus list of themes here at your disposal to choose and move forward with. Again, demo them, preview them. You know, kind of try them on with your content. See what looks best and that will help you make the best choice.

Once again, you can always submit a custom Genesis theme for review, but if you're going to use one of the Rainmaker themes, as obviously most folks on the platform will, then this is a place where you want to get comfortable. Once you have that demo content ready to go, that sample content ready to go, you know, I would recommend trying it with as many themes as possible and seeing how it looks. Seeing how it feels.

Then before you start customizing your theme style, which would be the next step, you need to decide what your theme style will be. What feeling you want your site to evoke. To Rafal, this is why I'm so excited that you're on this session because if I had planned this session myself, I would have totally skipped over this next part. It ended up being the part that you and I spent a lot of time discussing when we had our call.



Identify your brand's feeling (00:23:36)

Jerod: So let's hop into that now, which it to identify your brand's feeling, which is so important when it comes to designing a site that's going to evoke and inspire your audience what you want it to inspire. As you said to me, think like your customers. Make them feel at home. What does that mean when we're talking about website design?

Rafal: Well, I think when we design websites, we often make a mistake of designing websites for ourselves. We're thinking what we like and we want to design something that we imagined would be good, but we have to think about our customers and what makes them feel like this is what they're looking for.

For example, if you are designing a website about sports cars, you have to think about your customers. Who they are and what they might like about sports cars. They may be looking for those bright reds colors that give energy and some nice photos of sports cars. On the side you might be choosing a typeface that is bold and Sans Serif instead of having a classic look. So there are many different small decisions when it comes to design just to evoke, you know, a specific feeling in our customers. That's one of the ... In fact, you know we skipped this step.

This is one of the most important parts because we as humans, we make our decisions based on our emotions. You know, we think we make rational



decisions. Overthinking everything and we think we are sure about our decisions, but the truth is that behind most of our decisions are our feelings. That's our power that makes decisions for us.

So we have to make our customers feel at home so once we evoke those emotions, those feelings in them, it will be much easier to convert them into our email signup form or into buying our products, or into reading our posts, articles. Everything will then be much easier.

Jerod: Yeah. You know, and if you're watching this and you've never really thought ... You've never really done a mood board, which we're going to talk about here in a minute, and you've never really thought about your brand's feeling, let me just admit that I've developed a lot of websites. You know, obviously I even work with people like Rafal and I've been exposed to these ideas. I have never done this myself.

It makes me feel dumb when I hear you explain it because I do it with words, right? A lot of times we do it with words and we think about the emotional impact of our words. Especially if we come from a writing background as I do, but it's so easy for me to ignore the design element of it and to take that for granted and think, "Well, you know I can let my words do the heavy lifting," and that's just ... It's dumb and it's short-sighted to do that. You really want both of them working together and that's why not skipping the step and taking it seriously is so important.



The biggest takeaway for me from preparing this webinar was the importance of doing this. It's something that I really want to do moving forward with every site that I put together. Again, it just doesn't make sense to overlook it.

Create a mood board (00:26:56)

Jerod: So let's talk about a mood board. Rafal, do you want to explain what a mood board is and then we'll kind of give it a very brief overview of how you do this and show some examples so folks can at least begin to take the first few steps toward creating their own mood board, which will be really helpful as they begin to choose what theme they want and what kind of feeling they want to evoke.

Rafal: Yeah. A mood board is actually one of my first steps whenever I start any design. I don't often show it to anyone, but that's what I do for myself just to, as the name says, mood board, just to set myself into a mood for this particular design and kind of feel the brand, the product, I'm working on. Because sometimes when I'm working on a design for a client and this is a company or a product that I'm completely not familiar with, it's very hard to set yourself into that kind of customers choosing and feel that brand.

So you have to create that mood board, which when you look at that mood board, it looks like a mosaic of different images, pictures. It can be color schemes. It can be typography. Almost anything that somehow evokes



feelings about what you are creating. So it's very useful to have this mood board.

In Pinterest you can print it out and hang it on your wall. You can hand it out to your entire team to make sure everyone's on the same page and everyone know what the feeling of your company, of your products is. It's very helpful even when you're working on a team and sharing it with everybody and make sure you all have the same feeling about the company and the products you're working on.

Jerod: How do you know when your mood board is kind of ready or when you've settle on the right feeling? Is that just kind of a gut feeling? An instinct? Are there things you should be thinking about like certain colors for certain emotions? How much do folks need to get into understanding all of that and even some of the science behind all of that to create a good mood board?

Rafal: Yeah. I think the mood board is never done. I often go back to mood boards and I optimize them. I change them. I switch them. I discovered during the designing process that those designs don't exactly fit this brand that I was trying to create. So I often go back. You know, change. Modify.

It doesn't have to be a huge board with tons of pictures. It has to be something that you can have a quick look at that you can fit on your screen. That would be perfect. Then you don't have to scroll and think. You should be able to look at it at a glance and know what the product is or what the



company is about. So you don't have to figure out by reading any descriptions there. The mood board should speak for itself what it's all about.

Jerod: Yup. I know I already kind of showed you these, but we have some examples here of some mood boards. Just some different examples of how that looks. Once you do this, then you're ready to make some basic customizations, which we'll get into here in a minute. Let me ask you this, Rafal. You've got your mood board. How would you then go from, you know, kind of mood board ...

Do you think a mood board should actually be done before people chose their theme? Should you get this in mind and then kind of go through the themes and look and see which theme generally fits kind of the feel of your mood board or do you feel comfortable enough with the versatility of Rainmaker themes that you can take any of the themes and customize them? With even just the basic accent colors, with imagery, with even some basic custom CSS that you could customize them to fit the mood that you're trying to evoke?

Rafal: Yeah. I think our themes are universal enough to almost turn anything into the style you want. So I would want to go through the process of having your content first, thinking about the theme more as a layout for your content than what style you should have. Then style your theme for whatever brand you're trying to convey.



Jerod: Okay. All right. So we've got our mood board. Now we're ready to make some basic customizations.

Tweak the theme to fit the feeling (00:31:35)

Jerod: So this is where you tweak the theme to fit the feeling. So this part right here is going to be very kind of tutorial heavy to walk through some of the basic customizations. We're not going to get into custom CSS here. I have a couple slides that mention that later so I'll give a little bit of insight on that then.

I really want to walk you through, you know, what it looks like customizing a site and how you can kind of change this feeling. The demo that you prepared for us at the end Rafal really shows that as well. So what you just talked about really illustrates it for folks. Let's talk about tweaking the theme to fit the feeling.

Step one: Go to the Appearance editor (00:32:08)

Jerod: So the first step is to go to the Appearance editor. One of the benefits of Rainmaker is to make some of these basic customizations you don't have to give them a code. You don't have to fumble around there. You can make a lot of customizations just using the Appearance editor.



So if you click into the Design menu and then click on 'Appearance,' that will take you to the Appearance editor for your live theme. I've been walking you through kind of the demo site that I've been doing with [Primility](#). I just have the basic Rainmaker Pro theme on there.

So this is what it looks like before I've made any customizations. You can see the only thing that's not the default part of the theme is just the text header right there. I haven't customized anything else on this theme. There are a lot of different customizations you can make. Obviously what you do with menus, there's a lot of different content areas. How you choose to do your layout, there are many different things that will influence the functionality of your site, the design of your site.

We're going to really focus on these right now. The colors, the header image, and then the backstretch and background images because even just those customizations can make a big difference.

Step two: Changing your colors (00:33:21)

Jerod: So let's go to step two, which is changing your colors. Once again if you're at the Appearance editor, if you click in here to 'Colors,' this will pull up this menu right here and it will allow you to change your background color and to change your accent color.



So I know in terms of kind of the mood that I want to evoke with Primality it's a big bold idea, this idea of balancing your pride and humility. Red has always been the color to me that really accentuates that feeling, you know? A feeling of action. That's what I want. That's always the first thing that I do when I'm editing a site for Primality I will go in and change it to red.

Now you've got some default colors down here. Kind of some basic colors, but you can also add a hex code and get very very specific. So if there is a specific shade of red that you want, and in this specific case there is, then you can actually paste that hex code right in here and you will get that specific shade of red, or blue, or green, or whatever color you want. If you want to know how to do that.

How to get the hex code, the way that I do it is I use a program called Digital Color Meter on Mac, which helps me identify the hex code of any color on my screen. So I've got a logo, I just take that color, as you'll see, so that the logo matches the accent color later when I have both of those in there. I open up my Digital Color Meter, scroll over it, and I get the hex code. Which is the pound sign and then six letters or numbers that indicate a color. You just paste that in right here and you'll get your color.

Rafal, do you have any advice for people who want to get really specific with their color? Is there maybe even a better way to get a good hex code than what I've just described?



Rafal: Yeah. So if you don't have specific brand colors for your website, having a mood board can be very helpful here. If you can go back to the slide with one of those mood boards, you can see that you could use a stock photo for your background using those palms or whatever image you choose, and you can see the color scheme with these three colors on the bottom. You can pick one of these colors using this picker and grab the hex color of those colors and try to use it as an accent and see which color looks best on top of a particular background image.

It's very helpful to have this mood board because you can grab any color. Even you can pick a color from a photo, which is nothing new to designers. Whenever I design a custom website and I am trying to figure out what color scheme to use and I want to create my own color scheme, I would very often look first at real photos and I'd pick colors right from the photos and I'd create my color schemes.

So that's the way designers create color schemes. They take it from nature. They take it from real photos. You know, it's very hard to think about colors without having any reference. So it's going to be very helpful to have a mood board here.

Jerod: Carol says she uses [ColorZilla](#). Michael says he uses a chrome extension called [Eye Dropper](#). I'm not sure about a PC version of the hex picker, so if anybody has that and wants to drop it in the chat, that would be helpful, but



those are a couple of other options if you don't use the Digital Color Meter like I do.

Moving on then with colors. So the other nice thing is I've got my accent color on here. You can obviously see what the color's going to look like on the homepage. So on the homepage on Rainmaker Pro it changes the link right here and obviously it'll change the link up here, but what's really nice about this little appearance header, it's a browser in here. You can actually click on these links and it'll take you to different pages so you can see what it'll look like on different pages if you change this accent color.

I can look at the blog page and see, you know, where this comes in as a link and whether I like that or not. You can use custom CSS and change these individually, but this shows you by default what it'll change. So you can click around to some different pages, which you want to do before you save any of these changes. You want to look and see how it's going to affect other pages on your site.

You can do that right from here without making any, again in this Appearance editor, you're not making live changes on the site. What it's showing you in here is just a preview version so you can rest easy and it gives you a nice way to kind of play around, make some changes, see what they'll look like before you publish them live.



Step three: Change the backstretch/background images (00:37:53)

Jerod: The third step then is changing the backstretch and the background image. This can really have a big impact on the mood, the feeling of your site, as you'll see with this example.

Again, it's a really basic example, but we have a more in-depth example coming for you. You can choose 'Backstretch.' Each theme is going to be a little bit different. Some themes don't have a backstretch image, but they all I believe have a background image. So each theme is going to be a little different with what changes what and you want to get in and just kind of, you know, play around with the theme a little bit. Change an image, see where it changes, see how it looks, and so with Rainmaker Pro, the backstretch image is this image right here.

So you've got this default image that's already loaded. You can obviously keep that and use it if you would like to or you can change it. It tells you what the default image is. It's 1200 by 675. So I always like to use an image here that is the exact same dimensions.

I figure the theme was designed for an image with these dimensions, so I always just try to make sure the image that I'm uploading has the same dimensions. Then if you do want to change, you just click this button right here to change the image, upload your image, and as you can see, I've



basically used an image that is the exact same dimensions. The original image was, you know, 1400 by something and so I made it so it's the exact same or almost the exact same dimensions, and I uploaded it.

You can see how it really changes the feeling of the theme having those colors, right? You can see the difference between this and the difference between having this image up here. Now obviously you have white text right here and with this mountainous background and some of the snow, the text kind of fades into the background a little bit. So that's not something that I necessarily want for the long term.

Well, I can go back and maybe I actually liked how this looked where it's kind of more of a greyscale look and the white text really pops and the red accent link really pops. So I actually took this image here and I just made it a greyscale image. I did that in Photoshop really quickly, made it greyscale to see what it would look like. Interesting, the white text still kind of fades into the background a little bit, so I actually darkened it.

Again, to kind of go back to how the theme looked originally, if I had picked this theme because I liked how it looked and I was looking to match that, I certainly can and, you know, one big way that you can do that is try and match the feeling, the color of the image, to how the original theme looked. Or again, if I wanted to change it, then I can use a different image and it'll almost completely change the feeling of the theme.



So there's no right or wrong answer there. It's all based on your mood board, the context of your site, and the choices that you're going to make. Just changing the images is obviously going to make a big difference and it's really easy and quick to just use these tools right here to see how it'll look and the impact it'll make on the site.

Before we go into header image, Rafal, the demo that you have is going to actually show us some of the huge differences. The difference that background and backstretch images can make. Do you have any thoughts on this general process to help guide folks as they make their decisions?

Rafal: Yeah. One of the most important thing when you're choosing a background image is to make sure, like you said, that the text and the image looks good and you can read the text on top of the image. Another thing is when you choose a background image. You chose this man sitting on the rocks on the right side, which has a good balance. You know, someone is on the right side and you can see the left side of this image in blank so you can have this place. You have room for your copy.

So I always recommend choosing photos that have this kind of balance. If you have copy on your website, make sure there is something in your picture prominent enough on the right side and is facing toward the copy on the left side. This man is looking more toward the copy. If he was looking to the other side, that would be, you know, not the best photo to choose.



So it's also the same when you have a photo of someone looking straight at you. It's always better to have someone looking towards the text, the copy you have in your header. So those are the small things that you can always tweak and you can always spend some time choosing the right photo. It's always good to remember.

Jerod: By the way, that man in the image is me, actually. My dad took that picture in Colorado. It was an awesome moment.

Rafal: You were thinking about this header right, when you were taking this picture?

Jerod: Yeah, I was thinking about web design.

Rafal: All on the right side.

Jerod: That's right. So a couple of really quick questions. Chris asks, "Is JPEG or PNG best for the backstretch?" Do you know? Does it matter?

Rafal: Yeah, I already answered this question I think in the chat. When it comes to big photos or any stock photos, always go with JPEGs because JPEGs are optimized so the image size would be smaller and you won't even notice the quality difference between JPEG and PNG when you look at photos. PNGs are better for icons, something vector.



You know, when you have sharp edges or small elements that you want to make sure that the edges are clearly visible. JPEGs, they may optimize the edges and you would have kind of a blurred effect on those images. So for photos always go with JPEGs and for any icons or images with a transparent background, go with PNGs.

Jerod: Perfect. Then Wes asked, “How do I change the image to the size of the default image of the theme?” I change my image sizes using Preview because I just crop it and I crop it to those exact dimensions. If you want to actually change the image size and keep everything in proportion, Photoshop works. Rafal, do you know any other good ways to edit sizes? Either the image size or the canvas size of an image?

Rafal: Yeah, I think there are a few web tools available right now like [Canva](#), that you can use and upload your image, crop it. Even in Rainmaker, you can add an image and you can crop it right from the Rainmaker admin.

Jerod: That’s right.

Rafal: One thing is to remember, when you click ‘Edit Image’ here ... I don’t think we have a screenshot for that, but once you ...

Jerod: I think if you click on Edit Image there, it’ll bring up the menu and you can actually crop it.



Rafal: Yeah. There we have some options. You can click horizontally or vertically the image. For example, if you would have been sitting on the other side and you wanted to have, like I said, this balance, then you could flip it horizontally and have the image on the other side. So that would be something you could do quick from the Rainmaker admin.

Step four: Change the header image (00:45:09)

Jerod: Yeah. All righty, so that's the backstretch and background image. Let's talk now about the header image. This is the header right here. Right now it is a basic text header and that's the default.

So remember back to the General Settings from the last Rainmaker Site Building Roadmap webinar we put in the title of our site. This will pull the title of your site right here, and it'll just do it as text, but if you want to add a header, you can do that and it shows you that the recommended header size for this theme is 200 by 60. So click 'Add a new image,' and I have uploaded my header. Actually I didn't change the dimensions of this one perfectly to 350. The dimensions are just 350 by 117 even though the suggested dimensions are 200 by 60.

Once I upload it, it actually then takes you to another page where you can crop the image and basically get the correct aspect ratio of it. So even if the dimensions aren't perfect, it will get the right aspect ratio for you so that when



it uploads it and adds it to the site, it looks okay and it's not just this little section here.

If for some reason you get to this section and part of your header is cut off, then you may need to change the dimensions, but this tool is pretty helpful in allowing you to be versatile with the image that you upload. Once you upload it, it'll go right here. I'm not necessarily crazy about how this looks against the black backgrounds. Kind of going with the greyscale look here of the site. Again, this is just for demonstration purposes, but that is how you would add it.

If you wanted to hide the image, you would click this and you would get rid of it. You would go back to the text or you could add a new one as well. Any thoughts on the header image, Rafal, and what folks should keep in mind?

You know, I went with a very basic text header because that's kind of the logo that I've been using, but I would say there are a lot of different ways that you can stylize your header and make it look better.

Rafal: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. One thing about logos, it doesn't have to be big. That's one of the most common questions I always have requested from my customers. Can you make the logo bigger? The thing is that the logo is already in the left top corner, which is the most prominent point of your side. The most prominent spot.



Most users who come to your website, that's the first place they look. So you don't have to make your logo pop. You don't have to make it big enough to be noticeable. Everyone will see the logo right when they come to your site.

One thing is you can always make your logo smaller. Match more the size of your navigation or a bit bigger than your navigation. And when it comes to logos, it's also a good idea to always have your logo as a PNG. PNG being the best option so you can have a transparent background and you can see that the logo is sharp enough now it's not optimized, and it's not blurry or anything like this.

For logos, for headers, I think you need to have the exact size and like you said, you can crop it in the next step once you upload the image. For the background images, it doesn't even have to be that exact size. Even if you upload a bigger photo for your background image, it will match, it will resize to match the placeholder for the image. With logos, it has to be cropped or it has to be resized to the exact size.

Jerod: Michael asked how I got the logo image to be transparent and that's just saving it as a PNG. The way that I did it is I go into Photoshop and you can just remove the background. There's a tool. I think maybe the Magic Eraser or the Background Eraser. If you have a solid background and a solid color image it's pretty easy to erase the entire background. So that's how I did that.



Rafal, one of the reasons why I wanted to use this site here is I'm hoping that it might highlight a few issues. So you've seen me go step by step here on how I'm kind of designing this. You know, making some of these basic customizations to the site. What jumps out at you here as maybe a choice that was a good choice or a choice that was a bad one?

For instance, is it good to have the accent color the same as the header logo color? Did you like it better with the actual picture or keeping it more greyscale? These may be impossible questions to ask because you're not in my head as I planned this, but I'm just curious as to your perspective as a designer where you fall on just some of these basic choices that I made.

Rafal: Yeah. I think your accent color for the button is okay. It's good. I would change the color of your logo maybe to white and I would make it smaller because right now when you're looking at the space, the logo somehow attracts more. It's like a magnet right now. And maybe it's a distraction from the main call to action in your header. I would make it smaller, less prominent. You know, like I said before, it doesn't have to be big. Even if it's smaller, it's in a spot where everyone finds it, so I wouldn't make it a distraction from the content.

Jerod: You know, I think someone you can ask those questions to, it's important that not everybody has access to ask Rafal his expert opinion, but as we are designing our sites, you know, we have our preconceived notions,



we have our preferences and they are important, but as you go through this process, you know once you get settled on something kind of basic that you may be ready to take live. Get some other people's opinions.

You know, see how they look at your site. See what jumps out to them. See what looks good, what looks bad. Even if they don't have design background, they may be just like an audience member whose reaction is going to be important to you once you get your site out there. It doesn't mean that you have to change your design based on what they say, but it's good feedback to have. So just something to keep in mind as you go through this process.

Rafal: One other thing about logos and headers. One of the things I often see on websites is whenever someone has hired a designer to design a logo and it wasn't a professional designer or maybe not the best designer they would provide just the logo as a vertical size. This could be a problem for websites.

Most websites have very short headers like in this case and if you have a vertical logo, if it could fit here, it would be very small, even tiny like a tiny icon, which is also not the best way to use logos. So I would always ask whoever you hire to design the logo to have a horizontal version of your logo so you can match it in your website header and make it smaller but still wide enough to be able to read the full name of your company or site.



Step five: Edit content areas (00:52:19)

Jerod: Absolutely. All right, so let's talk real quick about editing content areas. So if you go back to the main Appearance editor page, you'll click on 'Content Areas.' This is where, you know, a lot of the themes have differences and they have some different content areas that you can edit. If we click on 'Content Areas,' this theme has a 'Before Header' content area. That's this one right up here, which is a really nice place, as it suggests, to put a call to action.

It's a pretty cool element of this theme. So if you click in there to Before Header and if you're not quite sure, you don't know where Before Header is, obviously you can look at what the content is and just match that to where the content is on the page. You know that if you make an edit here to either the text that

will be visible or to the link that is being linked to right here, this is the place to make that change.

So currently it says, "Here's a good place for a call to action that's linking to the library page," so I just edited that to, "Get your daily dose of Primality. Click here to subscribe," and I've got a link to the subscribe button. You don't need to put the full length. You can obviously just put the second part of the link after your main domain of the path, and that will still link to that, which is nice. You can make that edit right there to that content area and then there are other ones.



Again, for this one, it's got the Front Page Image content area. As we look at that, we can see that this content here is going to change this content. You can see I've already made an edit, right? Originally it's "Grab Attention." This is a good place to grab attention. It's kind of nice. It kind of suggests what you should use these content areas for. So I've put mine on here, right? So "Be meaningful," that's kind of the big idea. How I'm grabbing attention, then you can put a little descriptor right here.

Again, you just change this content right here. Then you can obviously change what the link text is going to be, where the link is going to, but content areas are where you do that. There are obviously other content areas down the page and you can give it a good live preview to see what it looks like before you're going to save it, which is the next step. Saving. Before we get there, Rafal, any quick tips as you edit these content areas for these folks to think about?

Rafal: You know, one of the great things about content areas to me is that you can use HTML code in there. Even if you don't know HTML you can still copy any code from your page or, you know, generated by a visualizer. You can go then to a text app and copy the code straight from there and place it here. Even if it's a button or you want to have a secondary headline or subheading here you can use some HTML code, which is very nice.

Jerod: Yup. All right. Then you want to save it obviously and to save you just go here and that will save and publish it live. So just understand that that will happen. Save and publish live.



Rafal, the other note that you had is to be consistent. When we talked about this, you were kind of mentioning if you're going to use a black and white image for example, then you should use black and white images throughout your site. You don't necessarily want to oscillate between a black and white image and a color image. You want that feeling to be consistent. How important is that and what are some of the key ways that you achieve consistency throughout a site?

Rafal: Yeah, so you can actually achieve consistency, but like you said, choosing a similar color scheme. Only using black and white, that's your choice, or choosing photos that have a similar color scheme. Again, this kind of comes back to your mood board where you're going to always look back at and match any new photo you choose for your post images or your pages and compare it to your mood board and make sure that this matches your entire website feeling and mood. So that could be like your cheat sheet for any decisions you are making about images, photos, or anything that could potentially affect the feeling or the design of your website.

Take advantage of the live preview option (00:56:34)

Jerod: I have a couple other notes here before we get into Rafal talking about some of his favorite themes in the demo that he prepared. So take advantage of the live preview option for the different sites. As you scroll through all of the different Rainmaker themes, you'll see here a button for Live Preview. So if you



click on 'Live Preview,' it will take you to the Appearance editor for that theme. You can go through and you can make different changes. You can see what it looks like and do a live preview before you actually switch the theme.

So you don't have to, you know, switch it to the new theme, make that live, and then go through and do all this. You can make these changes right there in the live preview. Give yourself a good idea of what the theme is going to look like with your content, with your site, before you make any changes. For example, I did the live preview for Café Pro and this is what it looked like. So obviously this one has that very same content area.

So you see that's already up here. It's got the basic background image from Café Pro, so if I wanted to change that, I would go in here to Background Images and that's where I would change that. Then it's got my site title, my site description, but I could very easily go through and make some changes and say, "Okay, what would my site look like on Café Pro?" If I like it, I can save it, and activate it, and make that my live theme right there. It's really nice so really take advantage of that live preview option and then consider custom CSS.

I know I saw some questions about how you change the height of, you know, headers, and how you change the height of text, and all of that. Well, custom CSS is one of the ways that you can do that. So if you go to the Design menu and click on 'Custom CSS,' that will take you to this field where you can paste in custom CSS and that will overwrite what is there and alter the design of your site. You can preview that before you save it and take it live.



I know custom CSS if you're not comfortable with coding and making some of these changes, it can be a little bit intimidating and that's exactly where I was. Just through some practice, through following some tutorials, through actually asking our very own support team. People like Brian who's there in the chat right now, they gave me some really quick pointers, you know, on how to use a program like a Firebug or the Element Inspector with Chrome.

We can't get into that in this session because it's too much. Although we're planning something for the future and there's documentation in the Knowledge Base for how to do some of this, if you're anything like me, it's simpler than you think to actually go through and make some of these changes.

Custom CSS really allows you -- once you get comfortable with it -- it really gives you a feeling of empowerment over the overall look and feel of your site. Which is obviously a nice feeling to have. Any final thoughts, Rafal, about tweaking the theme before we jump in and start talking about some of your favorite Rainmaker themes?

Rafal: Yeah. Customized CSS is definitely something advanced and it gives you all the new range of possibilities, but you can achieve a lot with just changing your photo and modifying some of the basic colors.

I've seen many sites and many website owners who have tried to customize some CSS on their own and they actually broke the design of the site, more



than if they had actually used just the customizers and those options that are already there. You can achieve a lot with just changing some options in the customizers. Some themes have more advanced customizers available with a full range of options and little things to tweak your design. I would go there rather than trying to do custom CSS if you don't know what you're doing.

Jerod: Yeah. Rosalyn asks, "Is there a program or website Rafal, that you recommend for beginner custom CSS?" I'll just say here on the custom CSS page, we've got links to [W3 Schools](#), a list of our and their own CSS documentation. Is there anything else that you would recommend for anybody who is interested in learning a little bit more?

Rafal: I'm planning to actually right a tutorial on our Rainmaker blog that will show some tricks and tips on how to go into Code Inspector, find a new one, and how to change color or size or something without even knowing CSS or HTML. Something you could do if you really want to customize it without any designers or developers to write something like this. I think it could be very useful.

Jerod: Very nice and we're going to continue to expand the content that we have on the blog at [RainmakerPlatform.com/blog](#). Rafal, I speak on behalf of all of us when I say that post would be fantastic. I would be very interested in seeing that one so that'd be great.



Rafal's favorites (01:01:42)

Jerod: Okay, let's move on and let's talk about some of your favorite themes. I know it's not an easy choice for you to go through some of these things. I know you have affection for a lot of them, but you've got a few that stand out. Actually, I have to tell you, I was surprised by this. Again, I think it's my own bias and that's why I wanted to point this out earlier is the first thing that you get when you get on Rainmaker is Rainmaker Pro.

There's kind of a bias to the default theme. It is, "Well, this is default. This is just kind of basic and I need to choose something else." This was the first one you mentioned to me as your favorite theme when we started talking about this. I'd love for you to explain why.

Rafal: Yeah. I love this theme, especially. It's very simple and it's very easy to customize and change almost the entire feeling of the theme just by changing the color and the photo. The theme doesn't have its own feeling because it has very straight shapes, it has a very simple font, San Serif, which doesn't really tell too much about the style. It can be used for almost any type of website, which is very nice.

Jerod: By the way, Tom says, "Rafal, please cancel your schedule until you finish that custom CSS tutorial." I'll run that by Brian. See how that goes. Okay, so that's on Rainmaker Pro. You're also a fan of [Atmosphere Pro](#). What is it about Atmosphere Pro that you like?



Rafal: Yeah, Atmosphere Pro is probably the same reasons why I chose the Rainmaker Pro. Also when you look at it, it's also very simple. Very easy to customize. Doesn't have any typefaces that would have its own style or would dictate any design from you. So that's probably the same reasons I chose Rainmaker Pro. I also love themes with big hero banners, so when you come to the site, you see one title, subtitle, it can also be one paragraph and then one button to click to get started.

I always like those kind of layouts because it welcomes the user on the site and doesn't give any choices to, you know, it doesn't make these decision pauses what to do next. It has one button to click and get started, which I think is a good way to start.

Jerod: Something I've noticed on some of these sites, especially these with the huge hero banner like you mentioned and the text right here, I've seen folks that have a headline that maybe spans two or three lines and then, you know, there's maybe six or seven lines going so it's a lot of text. Is this a good place for a lot of that? A lot of expository text or do you want to keep it real simple here? As simple as you can communicate the basic message and drive people to the call to action. Do you see that people have too much text in these areas?

Rafal: No. I would actually choose to have it very short. You know, just to speak right on topic. That's one of the things why you should have content first before you choose a theme. When you look at Atmosphere and you



compare it to Rainmaker Pro, if your paragraph is longer, then you might want to go with Rainmaker Pro because you can see it has more room for longer paragraphs and a bit smaller font for headings.

Then if you go to Atmosphere, you can see the heading is much bigger, which would require a shorter headline and also has less space for the subheading, which should be a one-sentence paragraph or two sentences max.

Jerod: Yup. Then another one that you like is [Altitude Pro](#), which I second. I'm a big fan of this thing.

Rafal: Yeah, this is also very nice theme. It's very flexible with background photos. It has this overlay on the photos so even if you choose a photo with lighter colors, it won't interact with the text you have on top of it. You have a bit more flexibility and if you want to give a choice like "Sign Up Now" or "Learn More," it looks very nice with those two buttons. One should always be primary and the other button should be secondary. This is a perfect combination.

Demo showing the versatility of Rainmaker themes (01:06:27)

Jerod: Yup. All right, so let's end with a bang here, Rafal, and you've put together a quick demo that shows the versatility of some different Rainmaker



themes. Actually it's the three themes that we just discussed. I'll through these images, but walk us through what these different images illustrate about these Rainmaker themes.

Rafal: Yeah. So this is the standard looking theme and you can see this has a black and white photo. When I often talk to people, they like Rainmaker Pro, they like the layout, but they don't like having black and white photos or they don't want to have this monochromatic look, but it can look a bit different if you imagine a different photo. If you can't imagine, the best way is to just change it and try.

So here I changed the photo with bright colors. It might be a bit too bright for the white text so you might want to experiment and move it to the side or put it in an overlay in your image editor just to have this perfect combination here. You can see how different this website looks now when I change also the background color for this light peach color to accompany the background photo.

Then you have the button color, this bright green color, which is contrasts with the background. Those few changes, and I did this just by using Appearance and the basic customization options without any custom CSS. You can see how much it changes the entire theme of the site.

Jerod: Mm-hmm (affirmative). You've got a better example too for Rainmaker Pro.



Rafal: Yeah, this is another example. You can see this is a completely different style. So here I used a background photo with a wave, which has dark blue colors, navy colors. I used a background which is a blue-grayish to also match the feeling of this main photo. I chose the accent color to be yellow, which is a great contrast for any blue colors. It really stands out.

Jerod: Hey, Rafal, on this one you mentioned an overlay. Can you explain what you meant by an overlay on this one?

Rafal: Yes. When you have a photo that you really like but it might have bright colors or something that interacts with text, then that would require you to use an image editor, but like we mentioned before, there are many different options. There are some very simple image editors available on the web that don't require any skills.

You can take a photo with Instagram and put a filter on it, and you can use one of those image editors just the same way. You could change the color scheme a bit or put a light overlay or a darkish background on top of the photo, so when you replace it you can see the white text a lot better.

Jerod: Excellent. Let's go on and let's talk about Altitude Pro.

Rafal: Yeah, this is also a basic look that I started with and, like I said before, this has an already built-in overlay. So whatever image you choose, it will



already have this darker overlay on it so it's much easier to match any photo you want, and if you go to the next slide.

Jerod: So just to clarify, the overlay's built into Rainmaker, so when you upload your image, it'll put an overlay on it, which will help the main text contrast against that image?

Rafal: Yes, it's specific. You know, each theme might have a different overlay. Like Rainmaker Pro doesn't have an overlay, but the text has text shadow, which also helps to put contrast on a photo.

Jerod: Let's look at some examples of how this can look different.

Rafal: Yeah, so I used a photo of a big house here. It could be for any real estate agents, for example and you can see how it changed the entire feeling of this page. It doesn't have this dark sad mood like the previous one with the forest, where it's very dark and almost monochromatic.

Here you have this bluish-purple sky and if you use the right accent color, like I used a yellow almost orange, it might not look like this in the screenshot but it was more orange than yellow, it stands out really nice and matches the photo that is behind it.

Thanks to the overlay that is almost like a gradient overlay on top of this photo it goes darker and darker towards the bottom of this header. You know,



it makes the text and buttons pop up on top of it and you don't have any problems reading it.

If you saw the original photo without the overlay it was very bright because without the overlay it would be very hard to read the text, especially where the windows are because those were the points where it there white and light spots.

Jerod: Yeah. Now let's look at another example.

Rafal: Yeah, this was another example with a house. I see many real estate agents choosing this particular theme because it has a really nice huge photo, which might be good if you want to expose a house or, you know, something you are selling, or if you are renting a property or something like that. It can be a very good theme for this use. I also used a photo and I used a contrasting bright accent color for the button so it stands out really nice on the page. You just can't miss it when you look at this. It's almost the only bright color on the page.

Also you can see, like I mentioned before about the logo, here I have Rafal's Rainmaker Site which is just text but if I put a logo here, I would also go with a white logo or something that doesn't interact with the call to action button here. So make the logo small, probably the same size like this text here. I wouldn't do something that would distract from this call to action.



Jerod: As opposed to the example I showed with Primality, where the header logo was red and the link was red, so they were kind of competing for attention. And maybe this was even dominating it.

Rafal: Sometimes it's hard to imagine and we think that's the way we should do it, that we should show the logo however it is, but once you change it to a different color, make it a bit smaller, and then you can compare both sites, you can really see it looks much more professional and it makes the call to action stand out a lot better.

Jerod: Yup. Finally let's look at Atmosphere Pro.

Rafal: Yup. When you look at this demo site, you might think you have to go with this monochromatic photo and it's very simple, but we can change it to almost everything you want just by changing the photo. I specifically chose a photo with bright colors. Orange, you know, just to see how the mood of this website completely changed compared to the demo one.

Just by changing the photo, and I also changed the color in the path navigation where the Home and About is. I changed it to orange to match the background photo, which I also picked right from the photo and I didn't have to think about hex color. I just used a color picker, pointed it somewhere in the photo that I liked, and I chose this color to be my accent color. You know, the header text looks really nice on top of this image so you don't have to even make any changes here.



Jerod: And then variation number two.

Rafal: This is another photo I chose to show what this theme could look like for a restaurant, a hotel, or something. You know, where you can put a really nice big photo of food, or a room, or anything, and have simple text. I chose a blue color as an accent, which you can see in the navigation.

The nice thing about this theme is that the button doesn't have any color. You can almost choose any color you want for the rest of the site and it can still have this white header, white text, and white button on top of whatever image you choose.

Sometimes it might be problematic when you choose a color you like but it doesn't match very well with your header image, with your background but you really like the color, and then you have to make a compromise, where you've got to decide if you want the color you really like or do you go with the background image?

Jerod: Yup. Well, we ran over our time here, but this has been really helpful, Rafal. Again, our goal with this session is to really help you kind of go through the thought process when you're trying to choose a theme. You know, what you should be thinking about when you go through it. I see a lot of specific questions in the Q&A.



You know, “I’m in such and such an industry. Which theme should I choose?” Those questions aren’t always easy to answer because it’s going to depend on a lot of different things as we mentioned. I think those are great questions to ask and then go over with folks. I would walk through the process that we laid out here. Understand, again, a lot of these Rainmaker themes are versatile. Even more than they look on first impression.

Before we wrap up Rafal, obviously you’ll be back to answer questions next week, but any final thoughts for folks as they embark on the process of choosing their theme or possibly embark on their process of rethinking their choice and consider a new theme?

Rafal: Yeah. The main purpose of this entire webinar is to focus on the content. That is the most important part. Especially website owners, they like to focus on content. They don’t want to worry about the design or the development or any of that stuff.

Here you have a chance because you already have all these professionally designed themes, so whatever choices you make with your photo or colors, you can make it very simple, very basic. You won’t make any mistakes because the theme already has a good look. It already has all those features. So you can just focus on your content and make sure you have good copy and you can work from there.



Jerod: All right. Coming up next week we have the Q&A on Rainmaker design with Rafal. He will be here. We will send out an email that will have the link to the place where you submit your questions. Definitely submit them ahead of time. If you've seen these Q&As before, you know that we really try and prepare detailed answers. Sometimes even with tutorials to your questions. You know, that may not be completely possible with all questions about design, but we always give preference to the questions and priority to the questions that are submitted ahead of time. So please submit your questions ahead of time.

Then coming up the week after that, we will be moving on and talking about how to manage your Rainmaker blog. That'll be on March 8th. Those are our two upcoming sessions.

Rafal, you've been really generous with your time. Man, thank you very much. This was extremely helpful. Based on the comments, extremely helpful for a lot of the people who were here and, as it always is, extremely helpful for me too. So I appreciate you time and your insight.

Rafal: No problem. Thank you.

Jerod: We will talk to you all next week on the Q&A. Again, get those questions in ahead of time and we will get through as many of them as we can during that session. Take care and good luck as you design your site.