



// FIELD MANUAL v1.0

THE CINEMATIC WEBSITE PLAYBOOK

How to build a top-1% website with the exact stack you already have.
Reverse-engineered from Linear, Stripe, Vercel and Awwwards winners -
then mapped to single-file HTML, Higgsfield, and Netlify.

RAFAEL CONSULTS // THE GRIND PROTOCOL // 2026



What “top notch” actually means

Before you copy anything, know what you are aiming at. The web design world has two summits, and the best sites borrow from both:

The SaaS Summit - Linear, Stripe, Vercel

Clean, sharp, fast, expensive-feeling. Design critics rank Linear as the most consistent execution on earth; Stripe set the template the whole industry copies; Vercel is “engineered to look designed.” These win on restraint and craft, not flash.

The Cinematic Summit - Awwwards winners

Immersive, scroll-driven, 3D, motion-heavy experiences (Ponpon Mania - 2025 Site of the Year; Gucci and Fauna Robotics among recent Sites of the Day). These win on atmosphere and motion.

THE PLAY FOR RAFAEL CONSULTS

Build a Cinematic-Summit site governed by SaaS-Summit discipline. Atmosphere + motion on the outside; restraint, sharp type and crafted detail underneath. That combination is what reads as \$50k, not \$500.

The invariants behind every elite site

Strip away the effects and the same four decisions show up every time. Take one away and the whole thing gets slightly worse.

1. Aggressive contrast

Near-black on near-white, or near-white on near-black. Nothing muddy in the middle. Your eye instantly knows where to go. Most brands are scared of this; the elite lean in.

2. Generous whitespace

Space is not emptiness - it is air. Rule of thumb: take the spacing that feels like enough, then double it. Dense layouts make the eye work; open ones let the content do the job.

3. Monochrome base + ONE accent

Almost entirely black/white/gray, then a single color does all the work - Stripe's gradient, Linear's purple, Vercel's rare blue. One color used sparingly hits harder than five used everywhere. This is the Hermes-orange principle.

4. Sharp, geometric typography

No rounded friendly fonts. Tight, geometric, slightly cold type that says "built by people who care about craft" without a word. Linear uses Inter (free). Vercel uses Geist (free). Stripe uses Sohne (paid). Pick ONE family and commit everywhere.

THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT YOUR CURRENT SITE

Your Rafael Consults v1 looks great but breaks Law #3 - it runs SIX neon accents (cyan, blue, magenta, violet, lime, gold). Promote ONE to hero status (cyan), demote the rest to rare semantic use. That single edit will instantly read more premium.

Six decisions that separate premium from generic

Interaction density, not visual density. Sparse to look at, but every element responds to hover, focus and motion. Behaviour is the luxury - not clutter.

Typography as the brand anchor. One family, 4-6 sizes max, used identically across the whole site. Swapping it should feel wrong.

Color as restraint. Color carries meaning (danger, success, primary action) - never decoration. Restraint reads as confidence.

Crafted microstates. Default, hover, focus, active, disabled, loading. If one state is missing, the element is not finished. This is 80% of perceived quality.

Physical metaphor. Menus grow from their trigger, modals enter with weight, things move like they obey real rules. Motion with intention, not decoration.

Obsession with the specific case. Not "all modals animate in 200ms" - but "how should THIS reveal feel, and why." Coherent far away, considered up close.

The motion + depth stack

This is what makes a site feel alive and “filmable” for your DMs. Every tool below loads from a CDN as a single `<script>` tag - no framework, no build step, drops straight into your one HTML file.

Lenis - buttery smooth scroll

A ~3kb library from Darkroom Engineering. It intercepts the scroll and eases it with interpolation. This single addition is the #1 thing that makes a site instantly feel 'premium' on video.

GSAP + ScrollTrigger - scroll-driven animation

The industry-standard animation engine. ScrollTrigger fires reveals, pins, parallax and timeline scrubbing as you scroll. Pair it with Lenis (synced via `gsap.ticker`) and motion becomes glassy.

Three.js or Spline - depth & 3D

For a true Awwwards hero: Three.js (code, WebGL/GLSL shaders) or Spline (no-code 3D you embed with one `iframe`). Use sparingly - one hero centerpiece, never everywhere.

The finishing touches

Film grain / noise overlay - a fixed semi-transparent texture. Instantly cinematic.

Custom cursor - a small lerping dot that grows on hover. Pure vanilla JS.

Magnetic buttons - buttons that lean toward the cursor.

Scroll progress + section counters - HUD energy, on-brand for you.

Elite technique -> what YOU run

ELITE TECHNIQUE	HOW YOU DO IT (NO REBUILD)
Smooth scroll	Lenis via CDN <script> in your single file
Scroll animation	GSAP + ScrollTrigger via CDN
3D / depth hero	Spline embed (no-code) or Three.js CDN
Cinematic visuals	Higgsfield image + looping hero VIDEO
Sharp typography	Inter or Geist (free) via Google/CDN
Grain / cursor / magnetic	~40 lines of vanilla JS
Hosting	Netlify drag-drop (what you already use)

THE POINT

You do NOT need React, Next.js, Webflow or a developer. Every elite technique on this page is a CDN script tag or a Higgsfield render dropped into the single HTML file you already deploy to Netlify.

Always Higgsfield. Every visual, every time.

Stock photos are the #1 tell of a cheap site. Owned, cinematic, on-palette imagery is the tell of an expensive one. Generate one centerpiece per section, review, regenerate only if clearly off.

Hero IMAGE prompt (already live on your site)

PROMPT

Cinematic dark futuristic command center, deep navy-black void, glowing holographic HUD panels and data dashboards, electric cyan + blue data streams, magenta/violet neon accents, subtle grid + scanlines, premium tech brand, no text, wide cinematic composition, moody lighting.

Hero VIDEO prompt (the big upgrade - looping background)

PROMPT

Slow cinematic dolly through a dark futuristic data center, holographic HUD panels drifting past, volumetric cyan and blue light, faint magenta glow, particles, seamless loop, no text, 4-6 seconds, moody atmospheric. -> mute, autoplay, loop behind the hero.

Rules

Match the locked Future Electric palette every time (navy void + cyan/blue, magenta/violet accents).

One centerpiece per section maximum - visuals support copy, they don't replace it.

Preflight credits (get_cost) - a hero image is ~2 credits. Generate ONE, don't batch variations.

Self-host the output on the site (don't hotlink) so it never breaks.

Ship-it standard

Type: one family, 4-6 sizes, a real modular scale. Tabular numbers for stats.

Color: define meaning before value. One hero accent; others rare and semantic.

Interaction completeness: every clickable has default/hover/focus/active states.

Motion: defined easing curves + durations, used consistently. Never raw browser defaults.

Smooth scroll: Lenis on. This alone changes the whole feel on video.

Hairlines: 0.5-1px low-alpha separators - never the default HR.

Focus rings: designed, visible, keyboard-accessible.

Empty/loading states: designed, not stubbed - these are trust moments.

Whitespace pass: go through once and double the breathing room.

Grain + cursor: the cinematic finish.

7 upgrades I'd ship to your site right now

1. **Add Lenis smooth scroll.** One script tag. Biggest perceived-quality jump for the least effort.
2. **Add GSAP ScrollTrigger reveals.** Sections rise and stagger in as you scroll - instantly cinematic.
3. **Generate a Higgsfield hero VIDEO loop** and run it muted behind the hero. This is the centerpiece.
4. **Demote 5 of 6 accent colors.** Cyan leads; blue/violet/magenta/lime/gold become rare + semantic.
5. **Swap to Geist or Inter** for that sharp infrastructure-grade type.
6. **Add a film-grain overlay + custom cursor** for the finishing film texture.
7. **Double the whitespace** between every section. Let it breathe.

CONTENT PLAY - SELL IT WHILE THEY SCROLL

Once the motion is in, screen-record a slow scroll-through (the smooth scroll is what makes it look expensive on camera). That 15-second clip IS your DM opener to business-owner friends: 'made you think - this is the kind of site + AI system I build.' The site sells itself; you just hit send.

Built by the TGP War-Room for Rafael Consults. Always Higgsfield. Always cinematic.