

———— Best Digital Design

# Aardman.com

Where UX meets 'wonk'

★ **AARDMAN** x **true.**

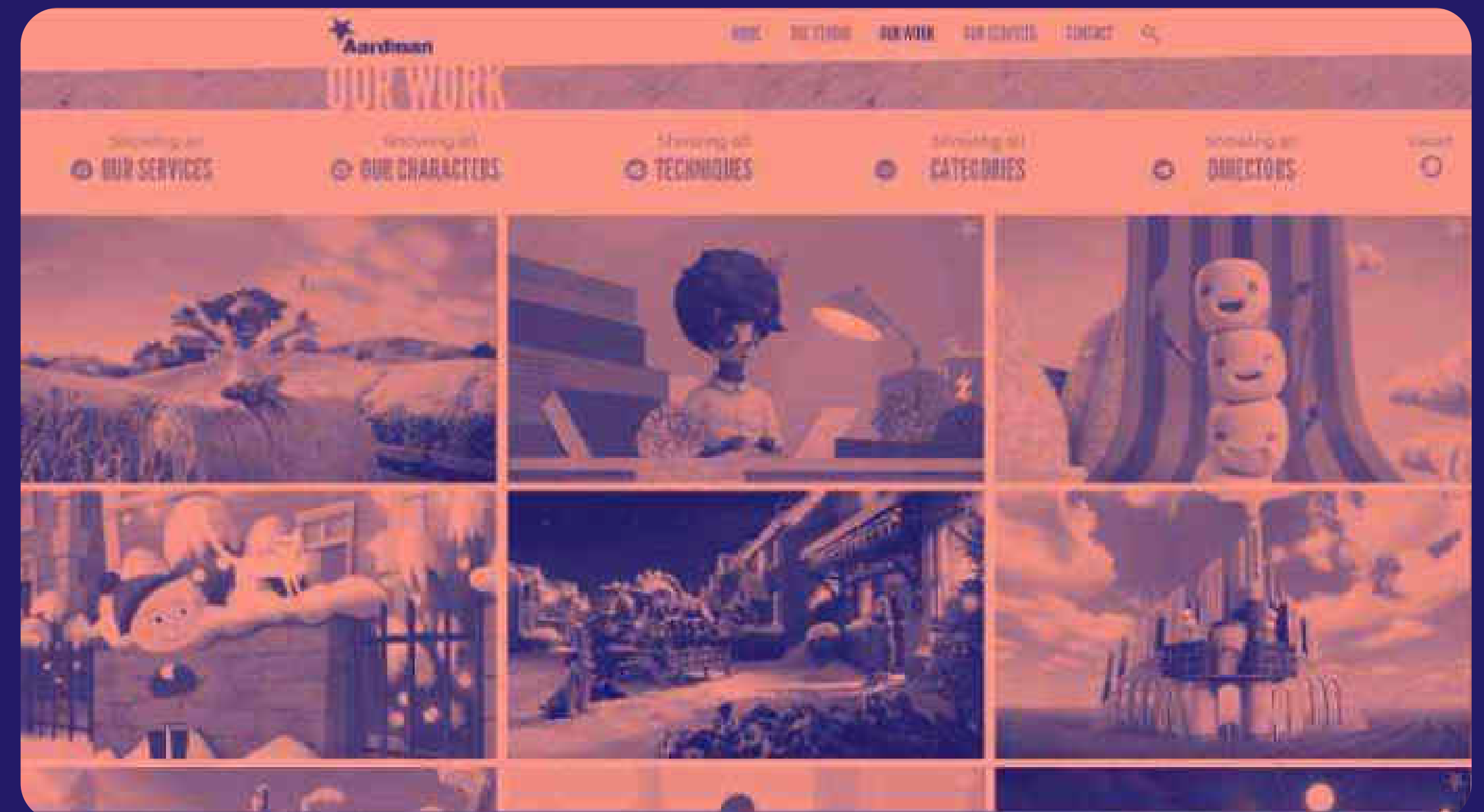
**Aardman.com is the B2B website for Aardman animation studios; a studio synonymous with global cinema box office hits such as Wallace & Gromit and Chicken Run.**

**They do however do an awful lot more; from TVC production to Virtual Reality Story Telling, Console Games to Live Attractions. And with that, they have wildly varied business audiences.**

As the studio has grown and developed over the years, so has what they do and who they are.

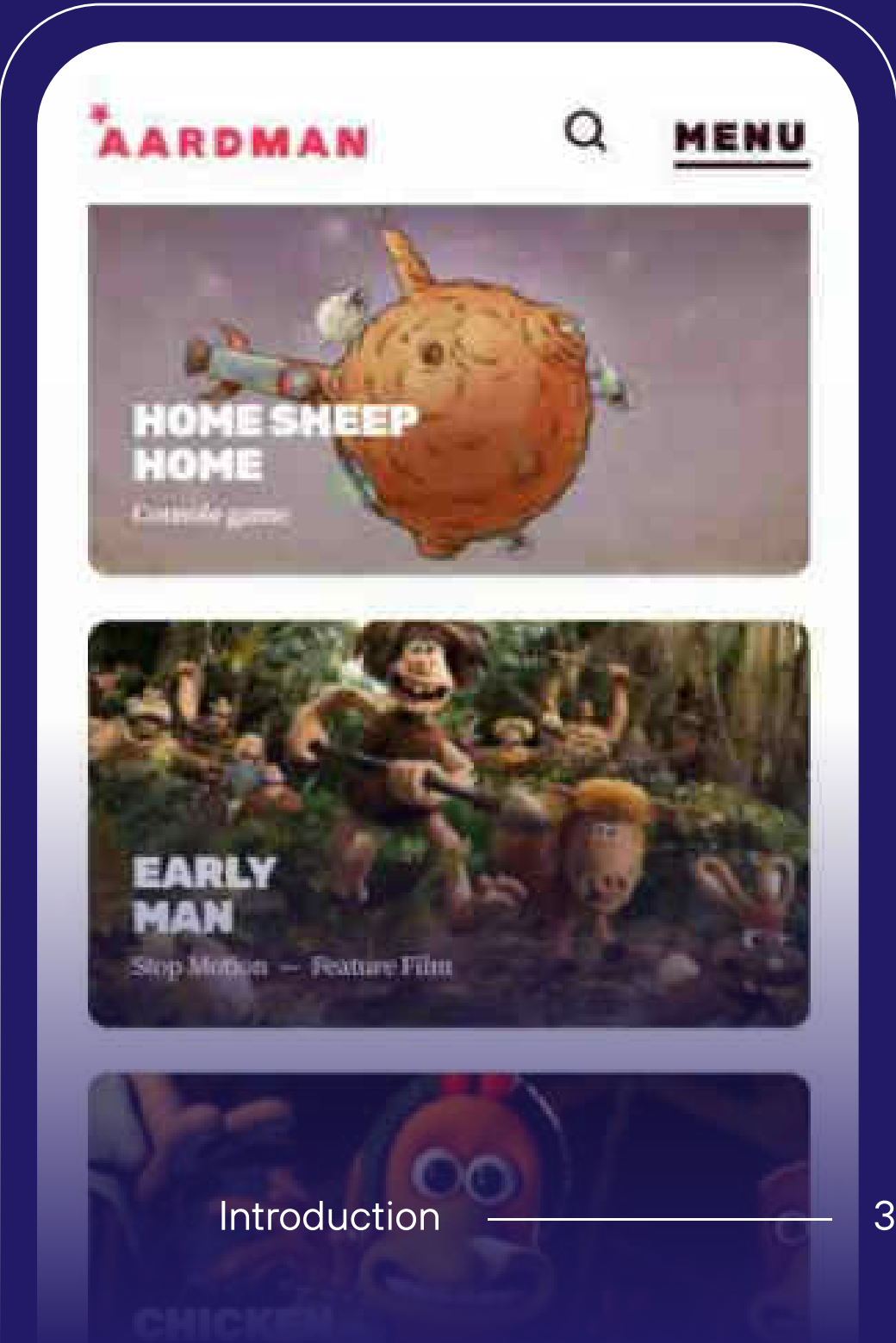
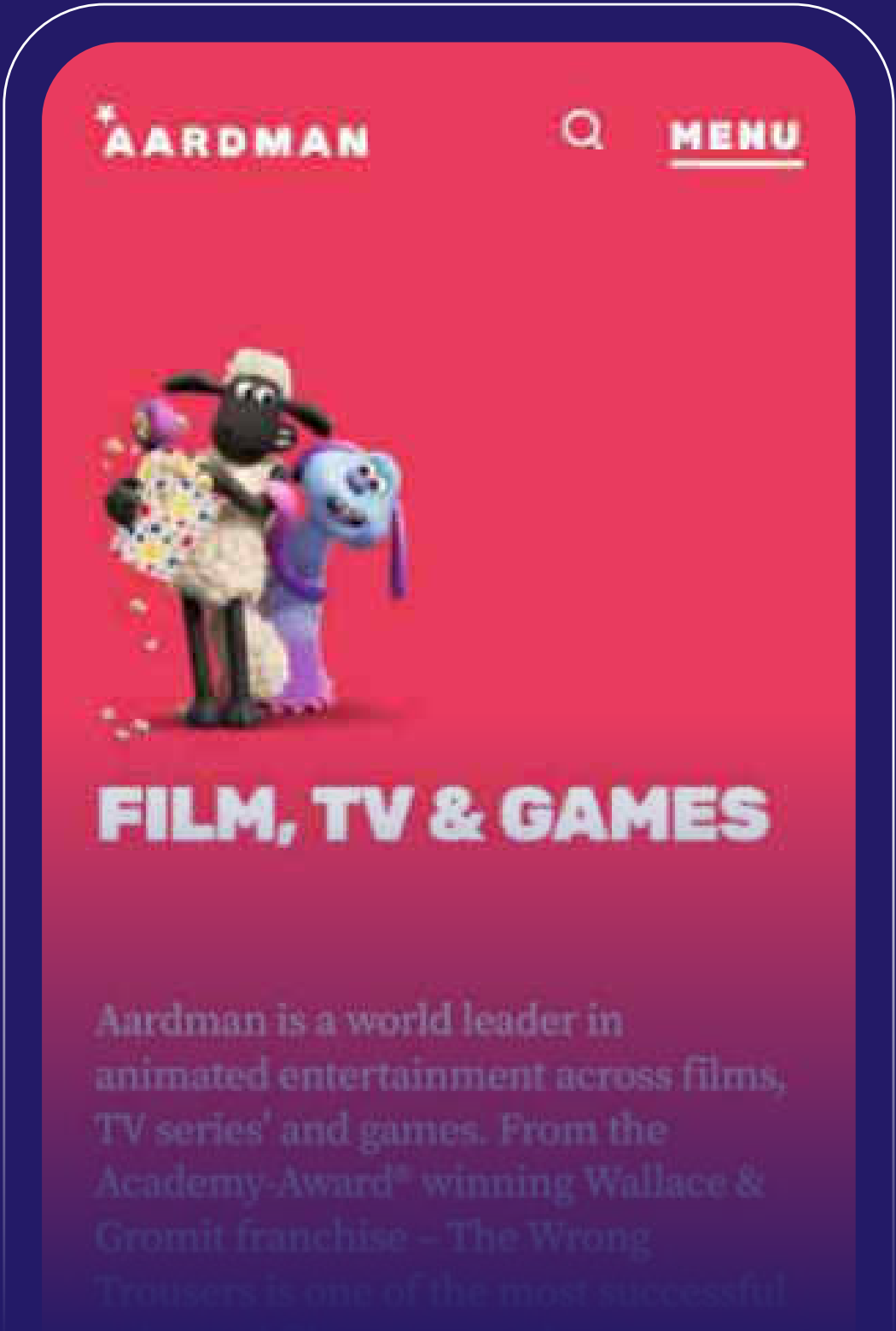
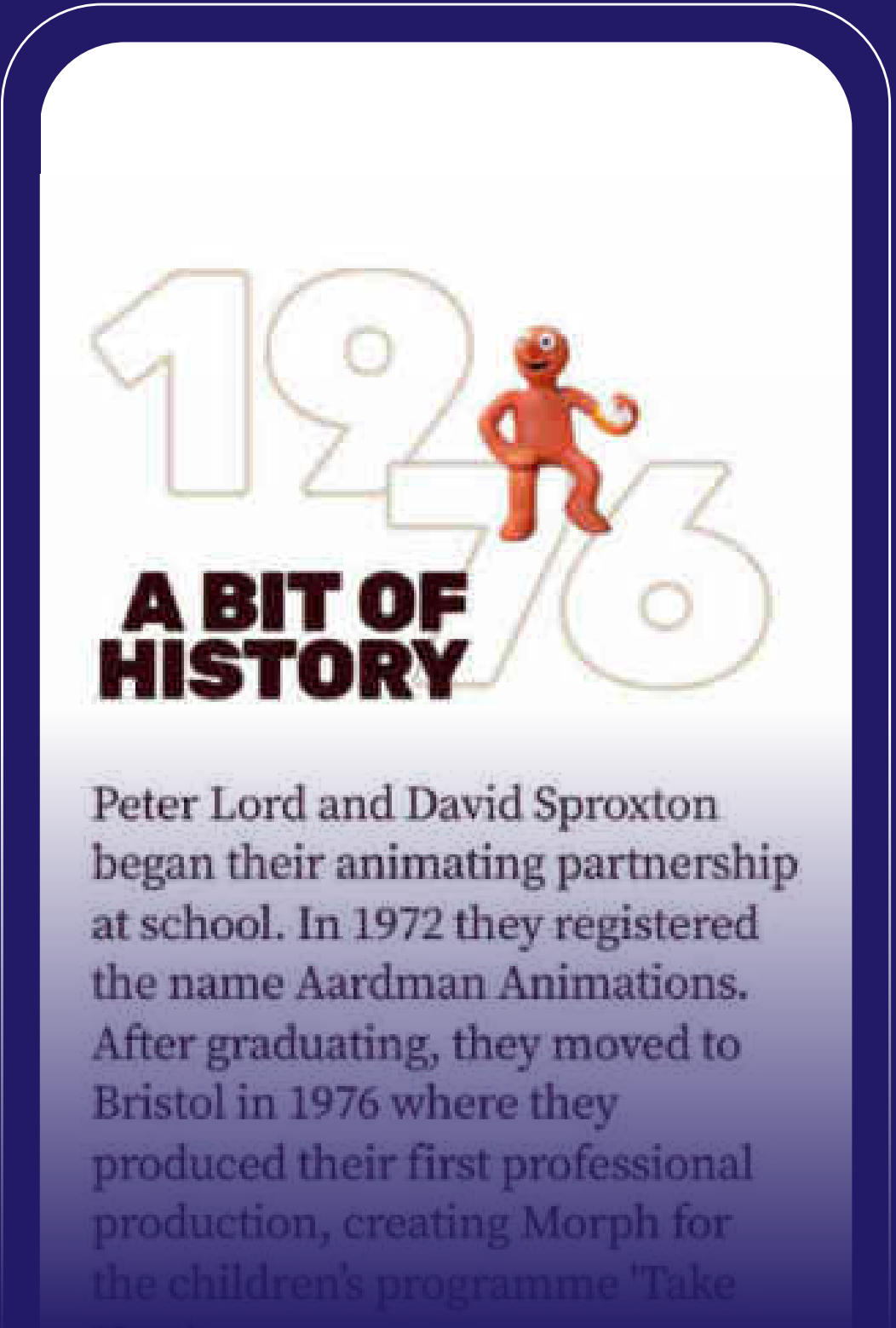
Their **old website** had become dated, flat, confusing and was a really poor representation of what Aardman have become.

The team at Aardman were working on a re-brand and needed true to help adapt that re-brand into a digital experience; a website that better reflected their brand, told a better story of what they do and why they're so great to work with.

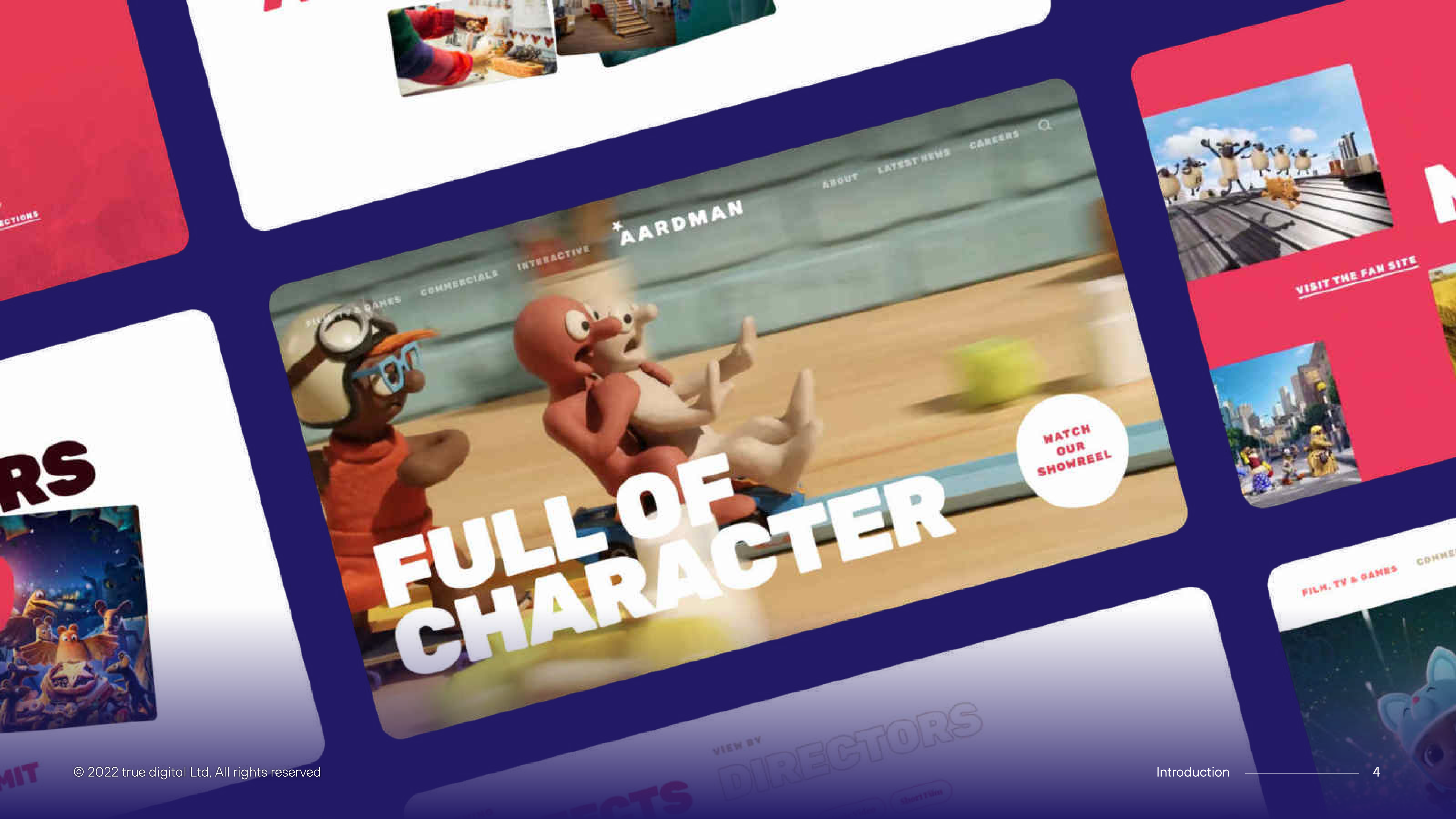


Simply applying new fonts and colours was never going to be enough.

We had to create a site that genuinely brought their characters to life; where the interaction design reflected the innate playfulness of the brand and where the digital experience could take users on a journey to join the dots between the rich world of the studios incredible product.

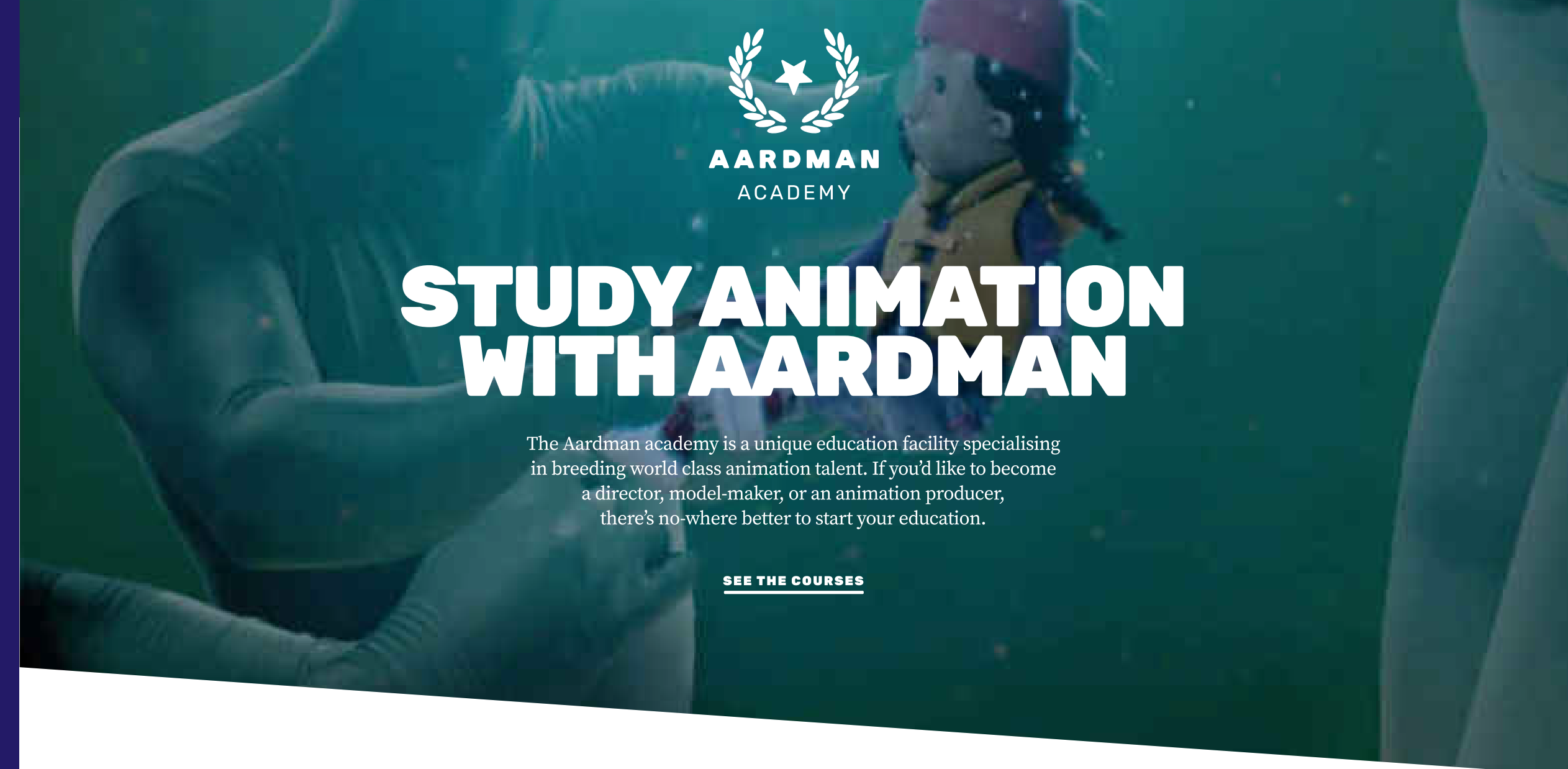






We simplified the IA, made signposting as clear as possible and built a backend system that made servicing the different user-types incredibly straight forward.

Then we set about creating a frontend design system that betrayed all of that simplicity and made the website feel like an absolute playground of fun.



## OUR CHARACTERS



**WALLACE & GROMIT**

**Aardman recently became employee owned. They pride themselves on the diversity, creativity and slight leftfield approach of their team. So, we had to make sure these traits shone through.**



We selected the boldest of colourways, upweighted the scale of the fonts to deliver real punch and added outline versions to the set. We incorporated touches of the brand's thumbprint pattern; a motif that is not only reminiscent of their Claymation origins but also screams of the many hands that go into the making of the current Aardman product.



A mockup of a website for Wallace & Gromit. The background is a vibrant pink. At the top center is a circular logo featuring a stylized face with large eyes and a pink smile. Below this, the title "WALLACE & GROMIT" is displayed in large, bold, white sans-serif capital letters. To the left of the title is a small video player showing a scene with the characters. To the right is a small image of a character in a yellow suit. Below the title, there is a large yellow character in a full-body suit holding a yellow balloon with a smiley face. To the right of this character is a small video player showing a scene with the characters. Below the large yellow character is a small image of a character in a yellow suit. To the right of this image is a small circular button with the text "WATCH THE TRAILER" in red. At the bottom of the page, the text "FILM, TV & GAM" is written in a large, outlined, white sans-serif font.



The Aardman team are then brought to the fore through contact cards, that not only put faces to names, but in service of the B2B purpose of the site, allow users from different sectors to immediately identify and contact relevant people.

This shortens the journey to lead generation and business development, but through a means that feels entirely human and in keeping with the brand.

FILTERS

All


Sales & Marketing

Production

Trustees

Exec Board


Aardman Academy



HELEN ARGO

Executive Producer - Commercials & Short Form

Helen is responsible for the studio's Commercials and Short Form productions, creating animated and digital content for advertising agencies, third party brands as well as Aardman's own IP. Most recently she has produced The Bear and the Squirrel - a 4D film for Efteling, and stop motion musical short Robin Robin for Netflix.



WILL BECHER

Director

Will is a Director and Creative at Aardman. In 2018 he co-directed the BAFTA nominated A Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon (2019), then went on to direct his first commercials for the company on a campaign for DFS featuring the much loved duo, Wallace & Gromit.

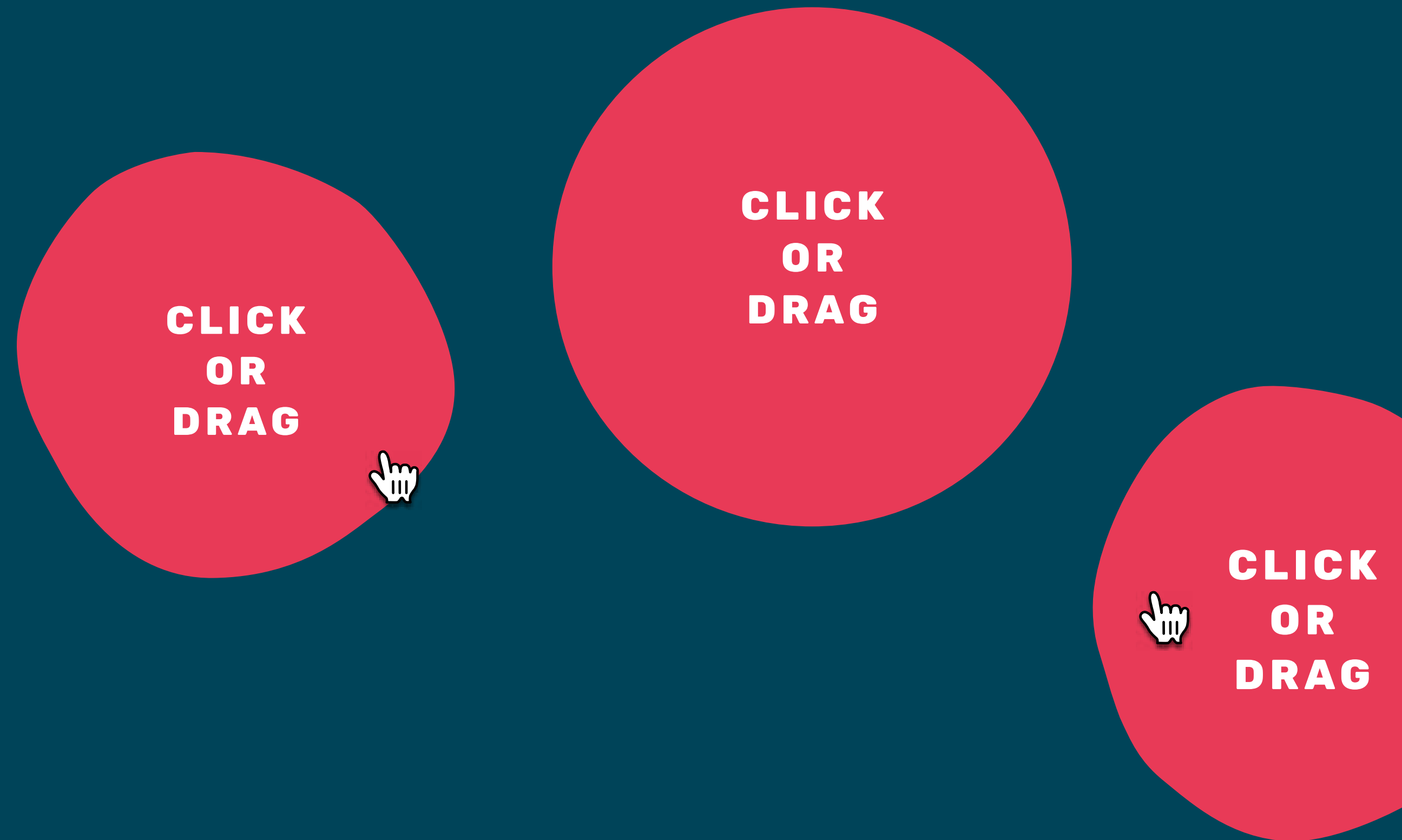
© 2022 true digital Ltd, All rights reserved

Craft

8

The primary CTAs are designed to be organically shaped and in constant flux to nod to the wonky nature of the people that make Aardman so special to work with.

Those CTAs - when used as play buttons - follow the mouse with their speed and shape being effected by the interaction to add a sense of playfulness.





Aardman & cgatsake capture the beauty of birds in film for RSPB legacy



Netflix signs exclusivity on new Aardman franchise

News cards are then given a rollover state that quite literally manifests this wonk with each interaction. Character carousels and the accompanying indicator 'pips' move with a playful liquid jelly motion.

Meanwhile, sitewide you are surprised and delighted by unexpected motion and interaction that brings the whole thing to life without ever confusing or distracting the user from their tasks.



**Not only were all these pieces of interaction design innovative in their own right, but along with the high demands of vast quantities of video content, this could easily have caused problems in terms of load speeds and in-turn affected usability and search visibility.**

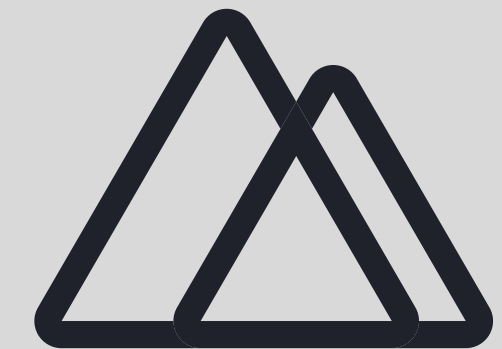
**So we employed a headless architecture, pairing the simplicity and ease of Umbraco's backend with nuxt JS as the frontend framework.**

This enabled us to push the dial on the creativity whilst maintaining quality and functionality. This also gave us the scope to develop unique functionality that embedded the brand in a digital design system that wouldn't break.

For instance, we always knew that our IA would require a component-based approach to make it flexible and quick enough for the Aardman team to use and to properly service the different user's sectors whilst cross selling and promoting other services.



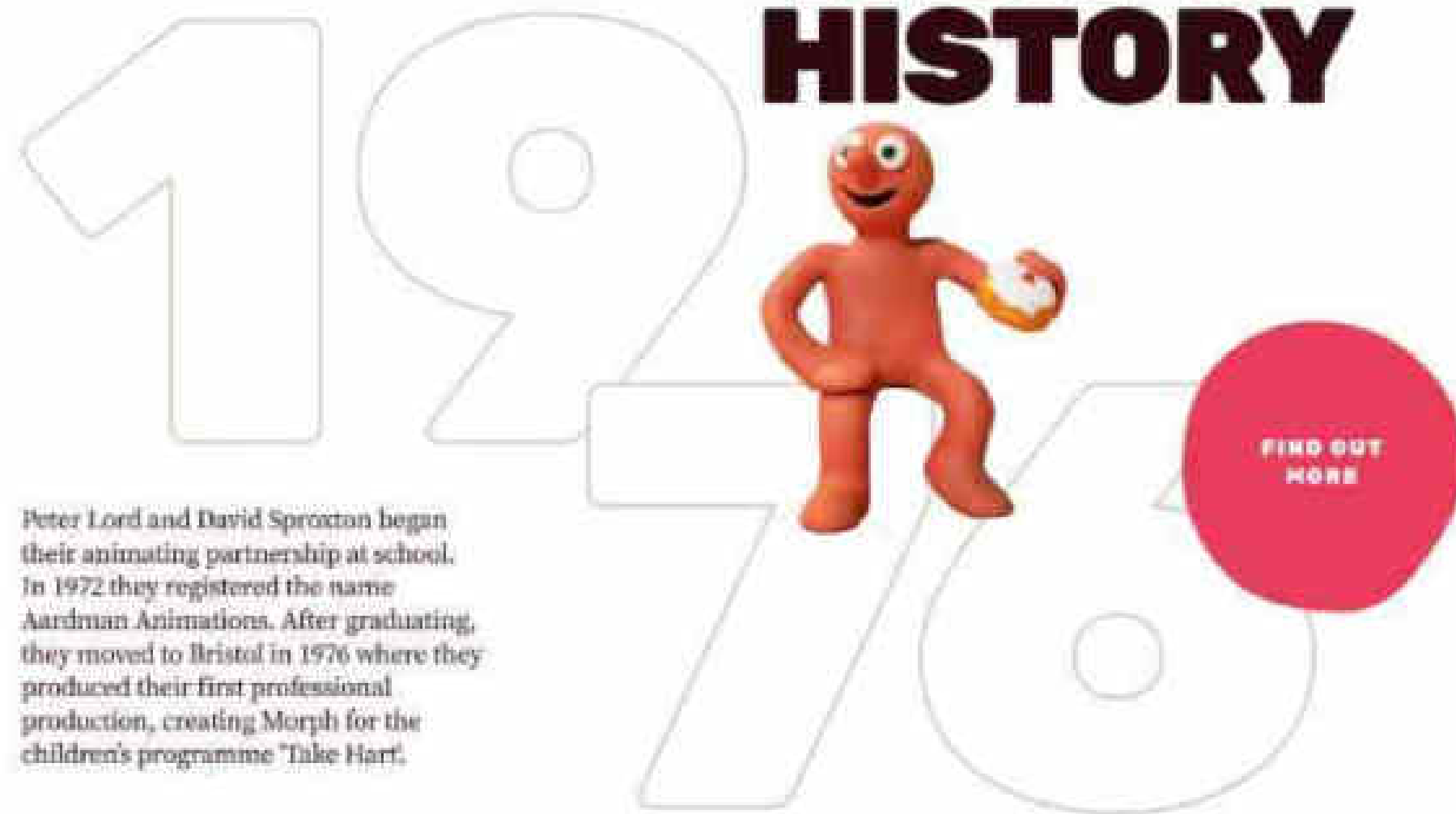
x



# ABOUT AARDMAN

For over 40 years, Aardman has entertained and charmed the world, creating much loved characters and bringing unforgettable stories to life. We live and breathe the values that underpin our creative processes and culture - integrity, excellence, humour, independence, collaboration and openness. We are committed to providing a workplace where people and ideas can truly thrive, and strive to have a positive impact on our local community.

## A BIT OF HISTORY



Peter Lord and David Sproxton began their animating partnership at school. In 1972 they registered the name Aardman Animations. After graduating, they moved to Bristol in 1976 where they produced their first professional production, creating Morph for the children's programme 'Take Hart'.

## EMPLOYEE OWNED

Aardman became Employee Owned in 2018, securing our ethos, creative values and independence for the future. Guided by the principle of keeping the company in the hands of those who helped build it, our partners work closely with the Exec Board to ensure

However, to emphasise the brand's wonk and boldness we wanted to create a wonky edge to many of the components; one which drops into place as it scrolls into view. These components also needed to be flexible in terms of where they sat in the hierarchy and ultimately whether they used the pink or white theme. Simple right? Wrong!

To allow editors to place these components wherever they wanted, choose a colour and then have the wonk drop not break edges as components butted together, required complex logic and a combination of design and front-end thinking to create what the client later excitedly branded a "full-wonk system"



**The attention to detail that went into creating the website was not just in aid of exploration; it wasn't just about seeing what was possible. The site was after all a B2B tool and had to deliver against key measurements.**

## First and foremost, the website is the primary external embodiment of Aardman's rebrand.

It had to epitomise the human nature and diversity of team that so many want to work with time and time again. It had to scream of the fun, playful and bold nature of Aardman's storytelling and characterisation, and it had to encourage their audience to explore and dive deeper into the varied skills and offerings of the studio to help dispel the typecasting of Aardman as purely a claymation film studio.



# And it's working!

To this point we have seen a...

**200%**

increase in session durations

**13%**

reduction in bounce rate

**1790%**

increase in video plays to end

**15%**

increase in sessions per use

**100%**

increase in traffic from  
social media

**10,000**

video plays per month

**24%**

Average conversion rate from  
contact cards to Linked-in

**40%**

Average conversion rate from  
contact card to email



 **AARDMAN** x **true.**