



PLAN, PROMPT & PUBLISH

Build a Real Website with AI and Lovable — No Code Required

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Everything else is a rental. Your domain and website are the only digital real estate you actually own.

At a Minimum, Your Site Should Have:

- **Basic contact info** — hours, phone, email, location
- **A clear call to action** — one obvious thing you want visitors to do
- **Mobile-friendly design** — most visitors are on their phones — design for that first

Domain Names

- **Cost** — \$9–\$20/year through GoDaddy, Namecheap, or directly through Lovable
- **Buy it now** — even if you're not ready to build — secure your .com
- **Use it for** — your website, email, redirects to Google profile, QR codes, social links

Before You Build — Answer These Two Questions:

1. **Who is this for?** Describe your ideal customer in specific detail — not 'everyone.'
2. **What should they do?** One primary call to action: book a call, view a menu, order online, sign up, contact you.

Does It Reduce Friction? Checklist:

- Can I pay a bill online?
- Can I qualify myself as a customer? (Am I in the right place?)
- Can I book an appointment? (Use Calendly — don't build this yourself)
- Does it work on a phone?
- Can I get there in two clicks? (Think Airbnb, not EZ-Pass)
- Is shipping/pricing transparent?
- Is it accessible? (High contrast fonts, alt tags on images, screen-reader friendly)

Gather Your Ingredients

Think of this like baking a cake. Put all your ingredients on the counter before you start mixing.

Ingredient Checklist — What to Gather Before You Build:

- **Real photos** — products, you working, lifestyle shots. Dollar-for-dollar the best investment you can make.
- **Domain name** — do you own one?
- **Logo and brand colors** — hex values if you have them (e.g. #BB4430)
- **Copy (words)** — even rough drafts — what goes on each page?
- **Products/services list** — detailed descriptions
- **Testimonials** — quotes from happy customers
- **Sample sites you like** — 2–3 websites with notes on WHY you like them
- **FAQs** — top 10 questions customers ask you
- **Documents and data** — menus, price lists, PDFs — even a photo of a handwritten menu

The 5 Ps — Run Every Page Through This:

Page	Does this page need to exist, or can it combine with another?
Pictures	Do you have images for this page? If not, merge or cut it.
Prose	Do you have enough copy to clearly explain what this page is about?
Purpose	What should the visitor understand or feel on this page?
Proposal	What's the call to action — the big button at the bottom?

Sample Web Map (Simple is Fine):

Home → About Us → Menu → Calendar → Contact

Build your map as a simple bulleted list in a Google Doc or notes app before you open Lovable.

The 19-Question Website Brief

This document is the foundation for everything — your logo, your images, your copy, and your first Lovable prompt. Fill it out before you touch any tool.

Tip: Use a voice memo on your phone. Talk through the answers, let it transcribe, then paste into a doc.

	Question	Notes / Prompts
1	Business name & tagline	What do you call yourself and what's your one-liner?
2	Elevator pitch	2–3 sentences: what you do and why it matters
3	Why you started	Your origin story — people connect with the why
4	Your ideal customer	Specific: age, mindset, pain points, how they find you
5	The problem you solve	Not what you do — the problem you solve. "People in our town don't have..."
6	Brand personality	If your brand were a person: warm? quirky? professional? snarky?
7	Tone of voice	Casual? Formal? Write a sample sentence if it helps.
8	Visual style references	2–3 websites you like and WHY (screenshot + annotate)
9	Brand colors & logo	Hex values preferred (e.g. #BB4430). Use Coolers.co if you need help.
10	Products/services list	As detailed as possible
11	Secret sauce	What do you do better than anyone else?
12	Location & hours	Physical address, operating hours, service area
13	Contact info	Phone, email, social handles
14	Functionality list	Contact form, online ordering, booking, calendar, etc.
15	Primary call to action	The ONE thing you most want visitors to do

16	FAQs	Top 10 questions you get — write question AND answer
17	SEO keywords	What would someone Google to find you?
18	Page count with functionality	Your web map with notes on what each page needs to do
19	Documents & data	Menus, price lists, PDFs, any files that describe your business

Images, Colors & Branding

Colors — Colors.co

- Go to colors.co — hit spacebar to cycle through palettes
- Lock a color you like — then generate complementary colors around it
- Save your hex values — you'll need these in every prompt (e.g. #231F20, #BB4430)

AI Logo Generation — Quick Prompt Template:

PASTE THIS INTO CHATGPT OR GEMINI:

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"Make me a logo for [Business Name]. [Paste your elevator pitch.] Our brand colors are: [hex values]. I want a [horizontal / square] design that feels [adjectives from your brand personality]."
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Important: AI logos are not vector files. For physical signage, shirts, or billboards, hire a designer to rebuild it in Illustrator. Use the AI version as a concept/direction.

AI Image Generation — Quick Prompt Template:

UPLOAD YOUR 19-QUESTION BRIEF TO GEMINI OR CHATGPT, THEN SAY:

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"Based on the attached brief, generate photorealistic images of [describe scene]. I want them to feel [brand adjectives] and use the color palette described in the brief."
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Iterate: ask for close-ups, no-people versions, different angles. Save as JPEGs — you'll upload these to Lovable.

Real photos > AI photos. Use AI images as placeholders until you can hire a photographer.

Prompting Best Practices

Conjure the Genie First

Before making any request, tell the AI who you need it to be, what the objective is, and give it as much context as possible.

EXAMPLE OPENER FOR ANY AI TOOL:

"I need you to act like an experienced copywriter who works with small business owners and entrepreneurs. I'm building a website and have created a comprehensive brief. I'd like your help writing on-brand, SEO-optimized copy. Don't be too nice — push back if something isn't working. Act like a co-founder, not a contractor."

AI the AI — Use One Tool to Prompt Another

Before opening Lovable, use ChatGPT or Gemini to distill your brief into the right first prompt.

UPLOAD YOUR 19-QUESTION BRIEF TO CHATGPT OR GEMINI AND SAY:

"I'm using Lovable to vibe code this website. Based on this brief, give me a first prompt I can paste into Lovable to describe what I want to build. Don't overwhelm it — what should I include in the first prompt?"

Copy what it gives you. That's your Lovable first prompt.

Your First Lovable Prompt Should Cover:

1. What you're building — one sentence
2. Brand personality — 3–5 adjectives + tone
3. Who it's for — one line about your ideal customer
4. Visual direction — hex colors + 1–2 reference sites
5. Page structure — sections to appear on homepage, top to bottom
6. Primary call to action — the one thing visitors should do
7. Navigation — what pages will exist so the nav is right from the start

Include this line: "Use placeholder copy and placeholder images that match the brand vibe. I'll refine each section after the first draft."

Building in Lovable

The Build Process — Step by Step:

1. Create your Lovable account — Use the referral link for extra credits: lovable.dev/invite/MR5MX1A
2. Paste your first prompt — The one ChatGPT/Gemini prepared from your brief
3. Review the first pass — Don't panic — it won't be perfect. It's a starting point.
4. Upload everything — "Now I'm uploading my full brief, logo, images, and menu. Please revise using this content."
5. Visual edits — Click the Visual Edit button to tweak text, spacing, and layout directly with your mouse
6. Test every feature — Fill out every form. Click every button. See what actually works.
7. Wire up functionality — Tell it exactly where to send form data, what to do with it, and test again.
8. Connect your domain — Map your existing domain or buy one through Lovable (~\$9/year)
9. Publish — Go live. It's real. Send the link to someone.

Visual Editing vs. Chat Prompting:

Chat prompting	Use for: adding new sections, changing layouts, wiring up functionality, big structural changes
Visual Edit mode	Use for: fixing typos, adjusting spacing, changing button text, minor copy tweaks — just click and type

Testing Checklist — Don't Skip This:

- Fill out your contact form — Does anything happen? If not, tell it where to send submissions.
- Click every button — Does it go somewhere? Does it do something?
- Test on your phone — Does it look good on mobile?
- Check your navigation — Does every page load? Are the links correct?
- Test any payment or booking integration — Does money actually move? Does a booking actually appear?

AI will build what you tell it to build. It will not automatically make it work the way you need it to. Test everything and prompt for the behavior you want explicitly.

Lovable Costs:

- Free tier — 50 prompt credits to start (use referral link for 75)
- Basic hosting plan — ~\$25/month to keep your site live
- Domain — ~\$9–\$20/year (buy through Lovable or your existing registrar)

The Yes, And — Third-Party Tools to Integrate

Don't rebuild what already exists. Embed the best tools into your Lovable site instead of building from scratch.

Tool	Cost	Use It For
Calendly	\$0–\$15/mo	Appointment booking. Embed the iframe — don't build a scheduler from scratch.
JotForm	Free tier + paid	Complex forms with logic, conditional fields, and data routing.
Stripe	2.9% + \$0.30/txn	Payments, Apple Pay, Google Pay. Deposits to your bank within 24 hours.
Zapier	\$19+/mo	Connect your tools: Eventbrite → CRM → Mailchimp → automated email.
Coolors.co	Free	Generate and lock brand color palettes. Get your hex values here.
Squarespace	\$16+/mo	Better fit if you just want drag-and-drop with no prompting.
Shopify	\$39+/mo	Better fit if selling products is your primary goal.
WordPress	Variable	Better fit if content/blogging is your primary goal.

How to integrate: "I use Calendly for my scheduling. Here's the embed code it gave me. Please integrate this into my Contact page." That's it.

If your main goal is...	Consider this instead:
Selling products	Shopify — built for e-commerce, handles inventory, checkout, shipping
Content / blogging	WordPress — years of baked-in publishing tools and plugins
Drag and drop, no AI	Squarespace — visual editor, easier learning curve
Complex events/calendar features	WordPress + Events Calendar by Modern Tribe (\$100/yr)
Just getting started, low budget	Lovable is perfect — get in the game

Lovable's sweet spot: small business or service provider, clean and functional web presence, no developer needed. If that's you, you're in the right place.

9 — Your Action

1. Buy your domain name — today. GoDaddy, Namecheap, or Lovable. \$10–\$20/year.
2. Fill out the 19-question brief — download the worksheet at rustbeltstartup.com/planpromptpublish
3. Get your color palette — colors.co — write down those hex values
4. Gather your ingredients — photos, copy, logo, testimonials, sample sites
5. Create a Lovable account — lovable.dev/invite/MR5MX1A — use the referral link for extra credits
6. Use AI to write your first prompt — upload your brief to ChatGPT or Gemini, ask for a Lovable-ready first prompt
7. Build your first pass — paste the prompt, see what comes back
8. Upload everything — brief, logo, images, menu, docs — throw the kitchen sink at it
9. Test every feature — forms, buttons, mobile view, navigation
10. Connect your domain and publish — you're live

Send me a link when you build something. I mean it. ryan@thincubator.co