

Creating an Online Portfolio

Why bother?

- ◆ **More visibility**
Gives you a professional online presence
Can be a 24-7 “megaphone” for your business
- ◆ **More control**
Lets you emphasize some projects and downplay others
Lets you focus attention on the type of work you most want to pursue
- ◆ **More flexibility**
Provides a durable, portable, navigable alternative to hard-copy samples
Enables any number of people to review your work simultaneously
- ◆ **More traction with potential clients**
Can get you on hiring managers’ radar
Helps you influence hiring managers’ perceptions and preconceptions
- ◆ **More versatile presentation**
Is ideal for showcasing help systems, interactive content, and multimedia
Can be a work sample in its own right

What’s the main purpose?

- ◆ **To come to the attention of potential clients via online searches?**
Then you need to differentiate yourself among all the other people offering your skills/services/products.
You also need expertise in SEO and enough web bandwidth to handle potentially high volume.
- ◆ **To pass the initial screening process?**
Then ensure your samples cast a wide but shallow net.
Leave the client hungry to see more.
- ◆ **To help convince a potential client to hire you?**
An online portfolio isn’t likely to accomplish this goal.
Face-to-face meetings, as well as a resume and set of samples that are tailored to the client’s specific needs, are indispensable deal-closers.

How?

- ◆ **The Free Way: Google Sites, WordPress, blog sites, portfolio networks...**
Limited space for free; risk of terms changing without notice
- ◆ **Software tools**
Site-building software; portfolio generators; templates from your web host
- ◆ **Custom services from a web designer**
Professional quality – but what’s it take to maintain?
- ◆ **DIY**
Highest degree of control; greatest time commitment
- ◆ **Combo of the above**

Food for thought – examples from the web

- ◆ **Web site with separate portfolio page**
 - ◆ Sample list – minimal actual samples:
 - <http://www.awrittenword.com/portfolio.htm>
 - <http://ydegrow.com/pubs.html>
 - <http://techcomplus.com/projects.htm>
 - <http://www.jvhcommunications.net/library.html>
 - <http://stoverwriting.com/books.htm>
 - ◆ Basic sample pages:
 - <http://stormwrite.com/projects.aspx>
 - http://www.4techwriter.com/Documentation_Samples.html
 - <http://www.gordoncomputer.com/IDexamples.html>
 - <http://www.dagordon.com/>
 - <http://www.watts-associates.com/portfolio.html>
 - <http://techscribe.co.uk/techw/software-documentation-samples.htm>
 - <http://geistassociates.com/Samples.htm>
 - <http://www.paulmacmartin.com/more/index.html>
 - <http://mickeywriting.com>
- ◆ **More elaborate treatment**
 - <http://summitpubdesign.com/portfolio.html>
 - <http://www.yourcontentsolutions.com/portfolio/websamples>
- ◆ **Content hosted on issuu.com**
 - <http://learnshareprosper.com/writing/samples.html>
- ◆ **Static portfolio within an actively updated site**
 - <http://idratherbewriting.com/digital-portfolio/>
 - <http://www.scriptorium.com/books/>
 - http://web.mac.com/estherhurwitz/EstherHurwitz/Freelance_Writing_and_Copyediting.html
 - <http://www.cybertext.com.au/tips.htm>
- ◆ **Samples intermingled with dynamic content**
 - <http://www.rockley.com/>
 - <http://www.urbancreations.com/index.htm>

More morsels

- ◆ <http://freelanceswitch.com/finding/build-a-killer-online-portfolio-in-9-easy-steps/>
- ◆ <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/03/04/creating-a-successful-online-portfolio/>