First stage

Description

During the initial phase of my project, my primary objective was to formulate the main research question along with a few subsidiary questions. At the outset, I generated a multitude of questions, some of which proved to be extraneous to my specific research objectives. Recognizing this, my semester coach provided me with valuable guidance on how to refine and narrow down my questions further. By applying their advice, I successfully distilled my inquiries into a single main question that would serve as the focal point of my study. Additionally, I identified two sub-questions that would complement and delve deeper into different aspects of the main question, enhancing the comprehensiveness of my research. This iterative process enabled me to streamline and focus my inquiry, ensuring a more precise and targeted investigation.

Main research question and results

Question: What does the professional portfolio look like?

Research method: Literature study

Why: Find contextual information, guidance, and best practices.

How: Created a search plan where I identified relevant keywords in order to find my resources.

Results:

(Article) – first source

Portfolio is a living and changing collection of records that reflect accomplishments, skills, experiences, and attributes. It highlights and showcases samples of some of the best work, along with life experiences, values, and achievements. The personal information that is incorporate into the portfolio can reflect on abilities as an individual as well as become a useful tool in marketing myself to other employers.

Portfolio can set people apart from other applicants, whether in a professional or academic setting.

- It allows you to be more personal and creative in order to expand on and exhibit your skills, knowledge, projects and experiences.
- A portfolio is a method of self-discovery and confidence-building.
- It is a multi-faceted way to organize your accomplishments, goals, aspirations, and personal thought. It showcases your personality to potential employers and organizations.
- It is a useful tool to include in an interview. It provides tangible proof of your skills and abilities and demonstrates to the employer that you are qualified for that specific job.

There are three main types of portfolios:

1. Student Portfolio—Useful in an academic setting; demonstrates knowledge attained in each class or throughout your school career. This portfolio can be very helpful if you plan on continuing your education beyond the undergraduate level.
2. Project Portfolio—Useful in an academic and professional setting; shows the efforts or steps taken to complete a specific project or independent study. For example, if you have the experience of producing a school play, you will create a portfolio that incorporated the materials and research that was involved. If you wanted to apply for a grant in order to do another play, then you could use your portfolio as a form of proof that you did a good job and would be a prime candidate to receive the requested grant.
3. Professional Portfolio—Useful in a professional setting; demonstrates your skills, background, accomplishments, and experiences. This portfolio is versatile and can be arranged for a specific position. For example, a teaching portfolio History, Accomplishments and Job History, Skills and Attributes, Education and Training as well as Testimonials and Recommendations.

[(Article)](#) – second source

A professional portfolio is a collection of examples and evidence to showcase your experience, capability and potential for employment opportunities and professional development.

Your portfolio should contain written and visual overviews of projects and significant pieces of work that you've managed or been involved with. It should also include an insight into skills you have, methods you've used, the impact of your work, along with any relevant outcomes and / or lessons you've learned. From an employer's perspective, a professional portfolio indicates that you're self-reflective and proactive in terms of your own development.

[(Article)](#) – third source

Professional is not a label you give yourself, it's a description you hope others will apply to you," says Harvard business professor, David Maister. But what actually makes someone a professional? For starters, it involves a certain level of knowledge in your field. You also need authority, experience and credibility in order for others to see you in this light. And what better way to achieve this than to create a portfolio website that highlights your expertise? A professional portfolio is a collection of work samples and other documents that provide an overview of your abilities and qualifications. By putting your portfolio online, you can proudly display your work to the world and establish yourself as an expert.

First sub-question and results

Question: What kind of portfolio should a web developer have?

Research method: Literature study

Why: Find contextual information, guidance, and best practices.

How: Created a search plan where I identified relevant keywords in order to find my resources.

Results:

(Article) – first source

Whether you're passionate about fashion or food or finance, it's tempting to specialize in developing websites in the niche you love. But when it comes to your Web Developer portfolio, you really need to showcase work you've done for a broad variety of clients to highlight your versatility — and to ensure future clients from various industries get a sense of your range, particularly if you're hoping to branch out in different areas. "If you're aiming for a tech company, they want to see other tech websites. If you're looking at health care, they want to see other healthcare-related websites," says Jay Eckert, the Founder and Creative Director of Parachute Design. "The broader you can keep it, the more people you can appeal to."

(Article) – second source

If you are focusing more on frontend development or are planning on working as a freelance web developer, a portfolio website is a keyway to impress potential employers and clients.

While you're more likely to hear about a portfolio in relation to UX design, they are a great way of putting yourself solidly on the map and setting out your stall as a web developer. After all, you've worked so hard on these projects—why not show them off?

In essence, your portfolio should be so much more than your software developer resume. Its scope is much wider, stretching to your entire online presence—your LinkedIn, Github, StackOverflow, social networks, personal website. Each of these individual elements should be consistent with each other, even down to the username you use.

It might not sound like much, but keeping the same username across all platforms makes it easier for recruiters and employers to find out everything you want them to. Remember that you want to be easy to find.

Second sub-question and results

Question: What should a front-end portfolio contain?

Research method: Literature study

Why: Find contextual information, guidance, and best practices.

How: Created a search plan where I identified relevant keywords in order to find my resources.

Results:

(Article) – first source

In 2015, an email address will suffice. It's not necessary to give out a phone number; if you're like many people, you'll prefer to keep your personal cell number off the web where anyone can find it. Don't go overboard with every little detail. Include relevant highlights. And don't forget to include your personality. Others may have your skills, experience and even education—but your hobbies and personality quirks are what make you, you! Showcase some projects you've worked on, but keep it to the type of project you would like to work on again. Don't just give a job title; provide context, too. A potential employer looking at your site will not be able to take away much with just a job title.

Consider including:

- Who it was for
- Project/job description.
- When (dates)
- Any relevant screenshots/URLs/code samples to the work

Don't go crazy. Include only your strongest skills, and ones that will prove useful in the type of job you're looking for. If you're just starting out and don't have much "real" experience to add, this is a great way to focus your energy. Only include your education or certificates if they are relevant to web development and the jobs you desire. **For developers**, there are two social media networks that are basically non-negotiable - GitHub and LinkedIn. Adding a small photo is important because people will trust you more when they know what you look like. A photo transforms you from some nebulous, faceless entity to a real, relatable person. A lot of people in HR still rely on hard-copy resumes. Make yours easy to find (put a download button in the footer or sidebar) and print-friendly.

Key takeaways:

- Ease-to-find contact information.
- Bio/about section
- Relevant experience
- Personal projects
- Documented source code
- Education
- Relevant social media profiles
- Awards/special recognition
- Your photo
- Downloadable resume

Question: What should a front-end portfolio contain?

Research method: Competitive analysis

Why: Find contextual information, guidance, and best practices.

How: Identifying the most important competitors and list their offerings.

Results: While using this research method I have investigated a lot of front-end portfolios and each of them was unique on its own. Some of them had a kind of gamification inside that allowed the user to play around as a robot that destroys everything. This kind of interaction uses 3D features that are unknown to me. Personally, the most eye-catching and easy to understand was a simple portfolio consisting of four sections: About Me, Projects, Resume, and Contact Me.

Conclusion and recommendation

To sum up, the research on portfolios emphasizes the importance of creating a dynamic collection of records that accurately represents accomplishments, skills, experiences, and attributes. A well-crafted portfolio highlights best work, life experiences, values, and achievements. When it comes to web developer portfolios, it is crucial to strike a balance between showcasing diversity and focusing on projects that align with the desired work. Additionally, summarizing the background should include relevant highlights that showcase the personality, emphasizing projects and providing context such as the client, project description, dates, and relevant samples.

It is important to emphasize strongest skills applicable to the desired job, particularly for those starting out. If sharing GitHub repositories, offering clear context and documentation is recommended. Education level and certificates should only be included if they are relevant. Social media networks such as GitHub and LinkedIn are crucial for developers. While exploring front-end portfolios, I noticed that each portfolio had its own unique characteristics. Some portfolios incorporated gamification elements with interactive features such as 3D experiences, which can be unfamiliar to some. However, a simple portfolio with four sections (About Me, Projects, Resume, and Contact Me) was found to be eye-catching and easy to understand.