

Portfolio

ref: mostly [smashing magazine](#)



DEFINE GOAL

1. Hire me
2. Consider buying my _____
3. Respect/remember me
4. Be my friend



HIRE ME

These portfolios focus on getting you a job.

**Target the work you show to the type
of company you want to work for.**



Considering Buying My _____

These portfolios focus on getting you work.

Target generating leads towards work.
Move visitors through your sales channel.



Reputation Building

These portfolios build your name in the industry

Target your showcase.

-Tie your work with a blog to build reputation

-As an artist continue to build your showcase.



Networking

These portfolios focus on building relationships.

Many networks have good portfolio building tools.

Leverage their existing networks for traffic.



DEFINE TARGET

Have a target market in mind when choosing
your portfolio pieces and designing your website.

Echoing their best aspects is a good idea.



DEFINE TARGET

The more you target your design to a specific market the more it will speak to that market.

Don't showcase edgy, grungy, or arty work unless that's the market you're going after.

Design the portfolio you think your clients want to see.



PLAN LIKE A PRO

Set aside the time needed to achieve the goals you've outlined for the portfolio.

Set deadlines for key milestones to hit.



PRIORITY: USABILITY

Viewing your work is of paramount importance.

Use straight-forward, accessible navigation.

Users scan pages rather than read



PRIORITY: USABILITY

Example:

Galleries are great for displaying your work

BUT...avoid pop-up-and-close gallery navigation

It makes it hard to find the navigation unless the window is opened.



PRIORITY: USABILITY

Use best practices ([Jeff Veen](#)):

- Is it standards compliant? A glance at the markup will also tell how organized the author is.
- How does it address typography? Prove your understanding of visual hierarchy and findability with style.
- Is it presented in a self-contained box of Flash? Breaks the Back button? Frames? Inflexibly huge layout? Sluggish load?



Be Picky

Limit portfolio selection to the best work you have.

Don't include samples of work types that you're not targeting.

Promote the scope of your goals.



Be Picky

Some of you will have mixed bag portfolios.

The more types of work you do the greater challenge you'll have in promoting yourself.

Categorize and prioritize.



Use Big Pictures

Show your latest & greatest from the start.

Show your work up front without requiring effort on the part of the viewer.

Don't make them navigate cryptic thumbnail galleries.



Use Big Pictures

If your navigation is via thumbnails, make the thumbnails consistently big, inviting and clear enough to communicate what's on the other end.

Labels are welcome



Explain Your Work

Succinctly describe your role, the challenge, and how it was met.

Summarize process and possibly link to docs: analysis, code samples, sketches, comps, diagrams.

This shows how competent and thorough you are. Blogs are natural for this.



Explain Your Work

Link to final production of your work to seal the deal.

Spelling, grammar, and engaging copy count
immensely.



Focal Point: Work

Your work should stand out foremost.

When unsure about a visual element, shoot for simplicity.

Keep in mind the visual hierarchy!



SHOW YOUR BEST SELF

Communicate your personality with your design.

Blend in your **remarkable** personal elements
without overshadowing your work,
confusing your audience, or
sacrificing usability.

A brief, real bio.



BE EASY TO CONTACT

Make sure your contact information is easily available.

Phone number,

email address (even if not linked),

“safe” social links (FB, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.),

physical location (city/state)



Use Clear Navigation

Make sure users can find what they are looking for

Make sure you are directing them to where you want
them to go



USE THE RIGHT TECH

If there are technologies inherent in your job description
then it *may** make sense to build your portfolio with
that technology.

*Only if it's robust (esp. client-side technologies), fast
loading, highly usable and looks great.

Safest - use JS/Flash to enhance rather than replace.



USE THE RIGHT TECH

Consider your time:

The easier it is to maintain, the more likely it is you'll update your portfolio on a regular basis.



PROMOTE YOURSELF

Go to relevant organizations' conferences & competitions

Have relevant blogs/tweets

Be very search engine friendly ([SEO 101](#)).

Clear link labeling (part of SEO) –
not “click here” but “3D portfolio sketches”



PROMOTE YOURSELF

Github

Behance Network

Coroflot Portfolios

DeviantArt

ArtStation

CPU Luv

Youtube

Sketchfab

Gamasutra/Career Guide

NewGrounds

FWA

Motionographer

CGHub



KEEP IT CURRENT

Stale = bad.

Update with latest and greatest productions and accomplishments.

Cheat with a “safe” Twitter, Tumblr or blog feed widget. Prune when appropriate



How Web skills make you special

Standards. Accessibility. SEO.

Semantic markup that is clean and optimized for search engines as well as easy to edit and understand.

Images in the proper format
(GIF, JPG, PNG).



How Web skills make you special

The clear separation of content (markup), presentation (CSS), and behavior (unobtrusive JavaScript).

Separate CSS files for different types of media and user agents.



How Web skills make you special

Solid typography knowledge that is specific to on-screen display.

Understanding how people use the Web and how a screen differs from a printed page.



How Web skills make you special

All of this and much, much more.

