Online, the brand is YOU!
by Carole Guevin
Summary

Portfolio websites for designers and developers can be a compelling way to switch jobs and find new clients. These tips were gathered from the thousands of portfolios that I have reviewed since Netdiver inception.

They will show you the essential ingredients you need and why your online book is all you’ve got, how to promote yourself as an individual brand from a communication point of view and kick your butt into gear to build a strong presence that brings in the money.
Stardom or reputation?
Stardom or reputation?

Reputation is all

- Establish your credibility
- No witness program
- What you DO is %(! you are
- There is valor in values. Have plenty
- There are consequences of how and why, you do what you do

Cancel inertia

- Movement will get you somewhere.. eventually
Stardom or reputation?

The brand is YOU

- Be authentic = own your distinctiveness
- Don't lie nor exaggerate
- Don't build your success on others
- Don't copycat the past
- Find your voice aka signature

Get going

- Pursue an idea till the end. Failing is ok
Being creative is not a job
Being creative is **not** a job

100% best = Excellence

- Aiming for perfection leads to procrastination
- Being the best you can be today is NO indication of what you will be tomorrow. Be known for that

Talent for hire

- You own your talent – nobody else!
- Protect, nurture and defend it
Dodging the hidden bullets
Dodging the hidden bullets

Idea *are* enough

- Not anymore. DA limited by ignorance will design according to his/her limitations
- Acute awareness of advances leads to anticipating solutions
- Hello? Ever heard of the “converging media” reality
- Have technical skills + ideas = message

*Whatever works*

- Mediocrity has NEVER paved the way to success
Dodging the hidden bullets

It's impossible

- Usually a statement issued by an art director who owns no computer, never surfs the Internet or sends email when assessing a project because he/she is completely out of touch with the possibilities out there

- An open client will help you realize the vision

- He will grant both space and trust on top of (some) budget

They will find me

- Wishing well thinking. You REALLY have to work hard
The 6 seconds and less pitch
The 6 seconds and less pitch

No kiddin'

- Makes or breaks you
- Respect the time of your audience

On being direct

- 65% are looking for information to make a business decision

Research till you hurt

- Know WHO you talk to. Period
Billing your assets
Billing your assets

And we sell?

- Time. Non-renewable. It's our one and most precious asset
- Intangible = high risk for clients. Be fair first, to YOU

Where's the box?

- Talent + experience + (technical) expertise
- No matter how tempting, never under-sell yourself

Toll booth

- Everything is negotiable but NEVER free
What's in and out of a strong portfolio
What's in and out of a strong portfolio

Only your Mother reads it all

- So forget about showing your *when-I-was-3 years old-doodles*, pre-pro designs, any *half-baked* attempts and all experiments that you know, bottom line, are not really *that* good
- Honest – just keep the crap out

Edit – edit – edit

- Too painful? Incapable of objectivity? Ask for help
- Less is best. At any given time anyway – you won't want to show less than your BEST
What's in and out of a strong portfolio

What works then?

- Show ONLY what you absolutely want to REDO
- Hideous *paying-the-bills-only-projects* can safely be left out

Experiment – experiment - experiment

- Expand your scope. Maintain on-going personal projects and/or collaborations with people you can learn from

Show and tell

- Pride (only) in DELIVERY
Making it on the (world) map
Making it on the (world) map

Newbies welcomed

- We are 3FF so, at one time or another. Accept your ignorance
- Dare to ask – to the point of annoyance if need be
- Learn right not poorly. Allow yourself time to ramp up the skills, experience and a strong portfolio
- Faking it, is suicidal – and somebody will see right through it
- Vow to continue no matter what - even if overwhelmed by the never ending pile of things to learn, skills to acquire, etc
- Drop the BUTs, don't skip this step, and find a good mentor
Making it on the (world) map

Let it be known

- Knock on all possible doors to receive visibility for your work such as portals and editorial desks
- NO is part of the process
- When you receive coverage, tell your potential clients NOW

The World is in your backyard

- Contextualise your offer = think locally + dare to act globally
- Keep an eye on the competition and in perspective that the pie BEING the world, there's room enough for everyone
In case of doubt, jump
In case of doubt, jump

The value of insecurity

- Normal to doubt. We make things that are invisible, visible. Our role is to reinvent and reinterpret. We are not cloning engineers!

Raging fears

- Of failure, incompetency, rejection, and all the related nasties are.. our ego check point. Keeps us sane and.. human

Jump.. now!

- All great discoveries happened after exhausting all available solutions.
Thank you!

For speaking inquiries: Carole Guevin

What's new in design? Cross-discipline portfolios directories?

For inspiration visit:

http://netdiver.net/
http://ello.co/ellodesign

desk@netdiver.net