Personal Web Portfolios

(resources for students 11/2017)

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What You Will Learn

What is A Portfolio and Resources to Build an Effective One

Key Points

Common Pitfalls

Good Practices

Articles and Tips

Web Hosting Platforms

Examples of Good Portfolios

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What is a Personal Web Portfolio

It is defined by Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English as "A set of pieces of creative work intended to demonstrate a person's ability to a potential employer."

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/portfolio

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Web Portfolio for Me?

How Do I Know If I Need a Personal Web Portfolio?

How Do I Create Portfolio for Job Seeking Purposes?

http://cis.cornell.edu/current-students/career-resources/professional-masters-students/prepare-and-explore/personal-web

Get Started Guides

Bentley University User Experience Center:

http://www.bentley.edu/centers/user-experience-center/ux-portfolio-why-you-need-more-one

2016 Google workshop at Cornell:

http://infosci.cornell.edu/sites/infosci/files/Cornell%20Portfolio%20Workshop.pdf

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Key Points

➢ Tailor the Portfolio like you would a resume

➢ Portfolios, like resumes, should be targeted to a particular job description especially when it is your dream job

➢ Spelling, grammatical, tense, and other errors need to be addressed

➢ It is important to know yourself and what type of job you are seeking when building a web based portfolio for your work

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Key Points

➢ Understand your audience

➢ Studying several job descriptions in the field you will be seeking work, will help you to also understand your target audience as you are designing your portfolio

➢ Write content that shows off your skills while addressing the key needs of your future employer

➢ Apply the skills learned in User-centered Design when creating a portfolio

  ➢ Don't talk about the project in length from your perspective. Understand and design the portfolio to the employer's perspective.

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Key Points

Project titles should tell what they are about from the employer's perspective

➢ Use "Web Design" rather than "Dr. Molar's Dental Practice"

➢ Make it easy for the employer to know what your skills are

➢ Make hyperlinks to take you to the projects directly

➢ When using default titles such as "The Blog" Change the title to reflect what it really is such as "Collection of Advertising Designs"

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Key Points

Project description write so an employer can make sense of it in relationship to their needs. Review job descriptions to best understand needs of the employers.

➢ Include enough detail

➢ Use photos of wireframe sketches

➢ Show the process of the project steps

➢ While you want the reader/viewer to know if the project was a group project, you also want them to know what skills you possess. Describe what you specifically did, what you recommended, or what role you played on the team

 ➢ When you speak from a group perspective it clouds the viewer from differentiating your particular skills

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Qualifications from an employer's job description:

"Your portfolio must demonstrate your design process, include but not limited to user research, wireframing, low fidelity prototyping and attention to visual design principles (layout, typography and information visualization)"

It's easy to know what they were looking for in a portfolio. Other job descriptions may not be so clear

You will need to determine by analyzing the job description how to best illustrate those skills you have for the position

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The Process:

➢ Break the process down into areas based on skills the employer is seeking

➢ Tell what you learned about teamwork, the differences in opinion and how it was solved, or other soft skills the employers are seeking (review job descriptions of employers you will be sending this to for clues) and how you worked through the process

➢ Insert a video about the process

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Key Points

Templates are good!

➢ Some students like to program the entire webpage to highlight their web design and development skills

➢ While this might be appropriate for some, it is MOST important to ensure the message about your skills is clear

➢ Many employers find that a site which has been designed from a stock template more appealing and easier to use than one coded by you

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Key Points

Ensure projects, job areas, and skills can be sorted according to an employer's needs so your portfolio can be sorted quickly and easily

➢ Consider More Than One Portfolio

Or

➢ Sort into several skill areas: UX Research, UX Design, or Front-End Development

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Key Points

Do not violate an NDA

Make sure you have permission to use the name of the client or to talk about your project. See more on NDA cautions

Don't include everything you have ever done

Keep your project choices specific to your intended audience needs

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Watch Out For…

One of the first things employers may want to do is click on your name or logo

➢ Make sure it is clickable

➢ Frustrating first experience for employers if it is not

Double check to make sure all links and buttons are working

➢ If the "more about me button" does not work yet instead one must click on the about me words at the top, fix it before sending

Make it easy for the viewer to get where they want to go

➢ Employers often are looking at portfolios very rapidly and might get frustrated when something doesn't work. A tiny detail like this could mean not getting an interview

Link to resume and to social media such as LinkedIn

➢ Use icons where linking is possible and ensure they work: Facebook Twitter and Instagram. If you link to these make sure they are relevant to the potential employer or potential audience

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Watch Out For

Link to a separate blog?

➢ make sure the employer can get back to your page quickly and intuitively

Don't just cut and paste from openideo page to your portfolio

➢ Rewrite or summarize according to the employer perspective

Describe the process

➢ Tell what you learned about teamwork, the differences and insert a video about the process if possible

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Good Practices…

One students told the story of how a portfolio was built http://yuqicornell.github.io/projects/myportfolio.html

Projects can be captioned to align with employer needs

Sortable by employer needs makes it easier for the employer to find the skills he has

Employers can see the evolution of the app http://cargocollective.com/Jaskeerat as well as know she understands iteration (something most employers' job descriptions were needing)

Include a Next button at the bottom of the page so that it might encourage employers to look at more

Project Reports: Don't just cut and paste project reports to your portfolio. Make a link to them in case an employer would like to read it but summarize and rewriting while keeping in mind the user or employer perspective

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Good Practices…

Logo: at the top can be clicked on to bring back to home page

Contact: Take you directly to the Let's Connect form or email

➢ Make sure to include your contact information in several places to make you easily accessible to employers

➢ Ensure icons and links are all clickable

Titles: should clearly indicate what is important to employers

➢ The titles of the paragraphs might be trends from job descriptions you are targeting

➢ Employers seeking human robot interaction might want someone with building empathy, prototypes, brainstorming and ideation, design and evaluation, skills. These could be titles for paragraphs on your portfolio

Photos are important in web based portfolios

➢ All photos should have "employer relevant" captions because sometimes these are the only things an employer will read on the first pass

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Strong interpersonal,collaboration, and communication skills:

"Apparently, in a design thinking workshop, just ideating is not enough, one should be able to physically create a tangible representation of an idea- and that is exactly we were tasked ahead to do! At this moment, my fellow business graduates were thoroughly confused, while, I was completely ecstatic, this was my playing ground, and I was ready to get my hands dirty! But how do you represent a service based education idea with random stationary?

Well, we were going to find out about that, weren't we. The next 25 mins were spent in more discussion, sketches, collaborative thinking.

Surprisingly, while we participated in sketching a service model of our idea, we came across conflicting view points within group members. This was an important learning for me. While we all had a mental image of our collectively thought idea, our mental models differed considerably from each other. Creating some kind of a prototype of the idea, ensured that all of us were at the same pace, as well as made us think about some loopholes that we had previously ignored. "

 Her process is also broken down into areas based on skills where she wants to find jobs.

http://cargocollective.com/Jaskeerat

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Articles and Tips

 "The Pro Guide To The Perfect UX Portfolio" highlights strategies for anyone needing a personal web portfolio

http://thenextweb.com/dd/2015/07/27/the-pro-guide-to-the-perfect-ux-portfolio/#gref

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Articles and Tips

The links directly below are a few ui/ux personal portfolio ui/ux articles (which offer some nice tips for those of you beginning to think about or starting a personal web portfolio)

Rachel Graham from Bentley University put together a wonderful guide to get you started http://www.bentley.edu/centers/user-experience-center/ux-portfolio-why-you-need-more-one

http://www.creativebloq.com/ux/product-portfolios-61412126

http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/ui-designer-portfolios/

http://thenextweb.com/dd/2015/07/27/the-pro-guide-to-the-perfect-ux-portfolio/

http://www.slideshare.net/MaryWharmby/great-ux-portfolios-39212601?next_slideshow=1

http://www.uxbeginner.com/category/ux-portfolios/

This link is not directed to ui/ux designers but also offers some good tips https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-35-best-personal-websites-weve-ever-seen

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http://www.expertise.com/design-and-photography/easy-steps-to-create-a-beautiful-design-portfolio

http://vitamintalent.com/vitabites/top-free-portfolio-sites/

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Microsoft

UX Designers: UI/UX designers that are working on designing elements for our software

What are we looking for: Hybrid Visual/Interaction designers in visual or interaction. Typically our hiring managers like to see a portfolio that demonstrates some kind of UI or UX type work. If it's only graphical or only interaction, it needs to be super good or super relevant for application, cloud, or OS, but typically HM's want to see a mix of both work experience and great design experience in the portfolio.

Some industrial designers also have the ability to do UX Design, but they have to show some interaction design in their portfolio.

The portfolio is the most important part of the resume, followed by the design of the resume.

Past internships and extracurricular activities are nice but not a must in the UX space.

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What do you look for when you look at a prospective candidate's online portfolio?

➢ Google: creativity, craftsmanship

➢ Facebook**:** If they have TA'ed, past internships, involvement in SWE outside of school

If different from what you listed above, what makes a portfolio stand out to you?

➢ Google: Attention to details

➢ Facebook: Depends – mainly past experience or Hackathons

How important is the online portfolio in making your decision about who to bring in for interviews?

➢ Google: extremely important

➢ Facebook: we look at candidates we have met, are referred or apply online to our website

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How do you select who to bring in for interviews?

➢ Google: based on portfolio, referral and background

➢ Facebook: background

Do you have any advice to offer to students to make their portfolios more useful or more meaningful?

➢ Google: include the design process of their projects

➢ Facebook: In terms of resume, how they are laid out. It is difficult to always determine graduation years and it would be amazing if they all put their expected graduation year. It helps to weed out what roles they could be a better fit for

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In your opinion, what mistakes do you frequently see students making in their online portfolios?

➢ Google: have very vague information about their specific contributions and the process of their design projects

➢ Facebook: Resumes can be choppy, this is a personal preference but Education should always be first on a resume. When still in school it is one of the details we have to look at to see grad year and when experience is listed first sometimes again it can be difficult to see the break down if they interned while taking classes or they took a semester off and co-oped.

Do you have any additional ideas, resources, or ways that I might share your thoughts with the students?

➢ Google: it's a good idea to spend less time on creating the portfolio platform (there are a number of good platforms out there to host design projects), and focus more on detailing the whole design and thought process of projects

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Two Examples of Good Portfolios from MPS IS Alumni

http://yuqicornell.github.io/projects/myportfolio.html

http://cargocollective.com/Jaskeerat

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