

Blogs/Photo hosts/Portfolios and Other Ways of Creating an On-line Presence

If you have opened an e-mail account, you can blog, or build a portfolio. It is that simple! And because 80% of employers currently use or are planning to adopt social recruiting practices . . . it is that important. Of that 80%, 66% said they had successfully hired this way. 95% of employers use LinkedIn, 42% use Twitter, and 59% use Facebook (Jobvite - <http://www.jobvite.com/>).

Having a web presence is crucial for practicing artists and designers. It sends a very strong message that says you have embraced the 21st century!

Portfolios are generally quite specific. They may be fashioned to apply to graduate school (see: "Looking Beyond OCAD" under Graduate School at: http://www.ocad.ca/students/career_services/career_resources.htm); they may be in preparation for applying to a specific gallery for an exhibition; or they may be an attempt to create (see below) an on-line presence.

Graduate schools and galleries, of course, will specify exactly what is required; they need to be researched and adhered to with careful precision.

The main key in preparing a successful art portfolio is presentation. You are practice- or studio-based professionals, your portfolio, or, in this case, your web presence is exemplifying who you are, and what you can do. Make good choices, unique and specific for your purposes. For instance, <https://www.blogger.com/start>, is great for uploading pictures, samples of your work, and so on, but it has a very linear look. You may wish to use a more photo-based host that frames your work, and gives it a more gallery-like, or photo-album look <http://carbonmade.com/>. Some of these may be somewhat general, only hinting at specifics: e.g., You may submit CD or DVD showing 15 to 20 recent examples of your artwork; others may ask for samples (applying to a three-D program often requires representations of 3-D pieces) of artistic development (past and present examples). Individual schools' and galleries' requirements need to be researched and adhered to with careful precision.

Creating an On-line Presence

In today's competitive environment, it is often essential for practicing artists to have a presence on the web. It sends the very positive message that you are computer literate, connected to your time, and that you understand the global nature of the 21st century. More than 85% of prospective employers/clients search Internet resources to profile your web presence. Create a web presence to let the world know you are *connected*. Keep it professional.

The minimum requirements for your website should include a brief artist's statement, or profile, and any other web sites with which you wish to link. This is the professional face you show the world. Without blemishes or distractions, true and pure, this can be a powerful, global, statement.

Some portfolio hosts (picture album/gallery type format) you may consider:
(Following sections were vetted and revised by Niloo Inalouei, a first-year Fine Arts student)

Warmtoast Café

<http://www.warmtoastcafe.com/join/>

This site allows you to upload 18 images (.jpg, gif or .png) of any dimension to your portfolio at 250kb per picture. Whether you are an illustrator, graphic designer, or fine artist, this is a simple and free way of creating a web presence. There are sample portfolios there for you to view and see what that presence would look like. Tap into the experience and expertise of your peers and your professors for their opinions and insights. One easy, free, and simple way of creating a web presence is to create a blog. These should be fashioned specifically for the purpose in mind, even if it means creating two or more blogs; they should also be maintained and updated frequently in a professional and purposeful manner. One of the first indicators viewers may check is the 'last updated' information.

Dr. Helen Barrett's favorite links on Alternative Assessment & Electronic Portfolios

<http://www.electronicportfolios.com/>

This site contains numerous categorized links and references dealing with alternative assessment and electronic portfolios, including her article, "Technology-Supported Portfolio Assessment".

Nuts and Bolts of Your Portfolio

<http://www.writedesignonline.com/nutsbolts.html#template>

Nuts and Bolts of your portfolio is exactly like the title says it is, a great general website explaining what is needed to make a great portfolio. It also includes a section on how to present it. If you are looking for a general overview of what a portfolio consists of this is a great site.

Portfolio Artifacts

<http://www.csp.msu.edu/pages/misc/cdc/webport/Artifacts.html>

What is an artifact? This site defines and explains the concept. There are tips on what kinds of artifacts should be included in a portfolio, and why. The website is set up similar to a tutorial. HINT: The website is focused more towards presentation/career portfolios but does do a good job of explaining what an artifact is.

Portfolio Library

<http://www.amby.com/kimeldorf/portfolio/>

The links on this page are very useful. There are sample portfolios and a few links under the how-to section that are very helpful. This compiler found this site exemplary, and highly recommends those thinking of building a web presence to take a look at it.

Some of the more popular blog-hosting (linear/story-telling format) sites are:

Before you start to upload your text and images, know what it is going to look like first. Plan it out schematically. What do you want it to look like in the final version. Most blogging sites will post each imported picture at the very top of the frame you are working on; so, in most instances, your schematic will show what picture you want to be the first in your *story* as being loaded last.

Blogspot.com

<https://www.blogger.com/start>

You simply need to register, select “Create A Blog” and follow the instructions. There are templates to help you create backgrounds, and comprehensive “Help” information.

A newer site, one this compiler finds more dynamic than blogspot.com
<http://www.tumblr.com>

Again, it is a matter of registering, selecting a template and posting.

Wordpress.com
<http://wordpress.com/>

Same as the above two. But even a little more user-friendly.

There are other forums (Facebook, for instance), but as mentioned above, remember you are creating this presence with professional purposes in mind, so check the authenticity of the site and take the time to set your preferences to protect yourself. One such professional purpose, for instance, is you can now mention on your résumé, or curriculum vitae: “See www.???” for examples of my work.

Other hosting and/or information sites:

Portfolio Information
<http://www.poss.ca/en/jobhunt/strategies/portfolio>

This is Possibilities site
<http://www.poss.ca/en/careerprofiles/numbers/neardeath>

Create Your Own Portfolio
<http://electronicportfolios.org/portfolios/howto/index.html>

The information on this site is based on the 5-by-5 Model for creating portfolios. The site has five main points, they are as follows: Setting the Portfolio Context, The Working Portfolio, the Reflective Portfolio, the Connected Portfolio, the Presentation Portfolio. If you are interested in doing your portfolio using the 5-by-5 Model this is a great site to explore. Also great for getting ideas.

<http://carbonmade.com/>

With Carbonmade you can make an online portfolio .You can manage your online portfolio with variety of tools that allow you to change how you display your work. This is a terrific site for fine artists, as it has a very seamless, gallery look where you can create five or more categories (Portraits; Landscapes; Still Life; etc.). The only drawback is that you can have only 25 images on the site; but that is more than enough.

Uploading your videos:
www.vimeo.com

A free site (though you can upgrade to more advanced services) where OCAD students and others post and share high quality videos.

Some sample student blog-portfolio web presences which viewers may find inspiring:

<http://www.thomasgfairbairn.carbonmade.com>

Thomas G. Fairbairn

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/dorin.petrescu>

Dorin Petrescu

<http://malihaart.carbonmade.com/>

Maliha RAhman

<http://webspace.ocad.ca/~db08nj/>

Diana Bahr

www.lowerdawesstudio.blogspot.com

Stephen Berg