

# Tips to Create an E-Portfolio

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**By Karin Eldor**

Think e-portfolios are only for creative types? Think again.

According to a *Forbes* article, 56% of all hiring managers are more impressed by a candidate's e-portfolio than any other personal branding tool.

However, only 7% of job seekers actually have one.

That's a huge missed opportunity!

After all, your personal site serves as a

e-portfolio. It becomes a representation of you and your work, and is an integral part of your personal brand.

Let's flip it for a minute: imagine you were researching companies to apply for, or doing some pre-interview prep. What you see on a company's website can make or break your perception of that company. The same goes for you, as a future candidate -- when selling yourself, you need to make sure you stand out from the rest, and that your brand is properly reflected.

It also ensures that you can show off your *mad skillz* to recruiters and HR managers. It might even lead to contracts if you have a side hustle (a side company that you manage in addition to your full-time job) or a passion project. Who knows where else it can lead!

So learn how to create your e-portfolio. After all, if you build it, they will come...

## **Choose a platform to host it**

The first step is looking into the different tools that allow you to build an e-portfolio. Sites like Wordpress, SquareSpace and Weebly, which are popular website creation services and blog platforms, allow you to create one, for an annual fee. They are user-friendly and offer a wide variety of templates to choose from; select the layout that best shows off your work, image and personality.



There are also portfolio-specific platforms, such as Pressfolios (whose first 12 stories are free) and Clippings, which is more popular among journalists and writers, and even keeps track of who viewed your profile.

## **10 steps to a winning E-Portfolio:**

### **1- Homepage**

As is no surprise, this is the most important part of your site. Since it might be the only page visitors go to, make sure it showcases your career highlights.

Include a brief professional biography or your elevator pitch to give prospective clients or recruiters a snapshot of your qualifications, experience and expertise.

### **2- Headshot**

Get your photo taken professionally and display it on your homepage and your "About" section. You can also use this same photo as your profile picture on social networks.

### **3- Your actual portfolio**

Here's the meat of your site. Add clippings, images, website designs, writing samples, presentation slides, and active links to all your work; whatever is relevant to you.

**Tip:** Make sure you have written permission to publish any work you've done for clients or former/current employees before posting.

You can also include some non-client work, such as volunteer projects, especially if you don't have many clippings.

### **4- Your digital footprint**

By the same token, include media mentions or articles about you. (Perhaps one of your projects led to notoriety and 15 minutes of online fame?)

**Tip:** Perform a Google search about you and see what pops up. On that note, it's critical to clean up any "digital dirt", also known as the digital breadcrumbs that exist online and can risk tarnishing your reputation. Remember; some of your social media profiles can even pop up in Google's search results, so you want to make sure your rep remains in tact. And don't forget to check "Google Images" as well to see what pops up.

Incidentally, creating your e-portfolio is a great way to ensure that your positive stuff – i.e. your projects and website -- come out on top when someone searches you online.

### **5- List of awards or recognition**

List any awards or honours you might have received, whether from college or university (graduated at the top of your class, perhaps?), your career-related achievements, or any awards you might have earned for community involvement. The passion projects you focus on--even outside of work--help showcase your commitment and dedication.

## **6- Your resume**

List your career-related experience, including your education (if high school was a long time ago for you, then only stick to post-secondary education). Make sure to include links to all the companies you've worked at.

**Tip:** Create a downloadable and printer-friendly PDF version of your resume so that it's easily accessible to recruiters and hiring managers.

## **7- Services you offer**

List your expertise; this is a key spot to include any technical skills you might have, such as coding or experience with any software or programs. Your skills add to your differentiating factor and help you stand out even more.

## **8- Testimonials**

Reach out to former managers, colleagues and clients to gather testimonials about you. If you already have some recommendations published on LinkedIn, then repurpose and post them on your personal site.

## **9- The logos of places your work has appeared in (if applicable)**

Since brand association is a powerful tool, include the logos of any brands you've worked with, or publications in which you've been quoted or featured. Most of us are visual by nature, and seeing the logo of a credible magazine on your site, for example, can go a long way.

## **10- Contact information**

So you've made a strong impression; now make sure your visitors know how to get in touch with you. List your email address, your cell phone number, as well as all social media networks where (interested) people can connect with you.

**Tip:** Be mindful of your email address; never put your year of birth or random numbers in it. Email addresses like karineldor1978@hotmail.com are a huge no-no.

As well, make sure your contact information is accessible from every page on your site.

## **Make your e-portfolio work**

Creating your e-portfolio is a key way to build your online presence. Make sure you take the time to get it up there and ensure it represents the best of you by tweaking and updating it regularly.

And finally, once it's ready, make sure you promote it! Include a link to it on your resume, cover letter, business cards (yes, you still need business cards!), social media profiles, and especially your email signature.