Online portfolios: how to get your work out there while staying in

From painters and photographers through to musicians, designers and architects, every professional in the creative industry wants to get their work ‘out there’. While some dream of major exhibitions, others have visions of sold-out concerts, must-attend runway shows, or even grand-opening ceremonies.

But, when the global message is to ‘hang on in there’ due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for alternative ways for creatives to showcase their portfolio becomes a priority. With exhibitions and trade shows being cancelled worldwide, online sales can be a crucial rather than just an additional source of income. In that sense, digital portfolios are positioned frontline as the ultimate tool for creators to not only show off their talent but also profit from it.

There are numerous benefits of having an online portfolio: they are extremely flexible, making it easier to share; personalised, allowing professionals to tell their narrative in original ways, and rich in visuals, giving potential clients a clear picture of someone’s talent.

Of course, the extent to which an artist can be creative with their online portfolio will depend on the platform chosen. Despite most website builders offering pre-made templates, sometimes the overload of features and lack of design freedom actually create an obstacle to creativity.

As Coco Chanel once said, simplicity is the keynote of all true elegance. Therefore, choosing a website builder that is user-friendly, intuitive and where templates can be manipulated to your own personal taste is the first step into creating the ultimate online portfolio.

On top of that, it is important to know if the platform chosen provides e-commerce as an inbuilt feature. After all, it’s really not just for the fun of it – artists looking to

showcase and sell their art should assess how responsive a website builder’s selling tool is, as it is crucial to scaling a business.

It goes without saying that most artists looking into creating an online portfolio are not tech experts. So, unless you’re a specialist in building websites from scratch, opt for website builders that combine an impeccable user experience with the lines of support you’ll need.

Most website builders will charge you a fee for upgraded versions of their tools. Before making a choice, have in mind how much you’re willing to spend and evaluate which provider is the most cost-effective. From then, it’s time to get your hands dirty – not literally, #washyourhands – and build your

online portfolio. That’s when the fun begins.

Don’t judge a book by its cover, they say. But when it comes to online portfolios, they surely do. In that sense, take some time to come up with a striking landing page. It is the first page visitors will land on when visiting your portfolio, and crucial to whether they’ll read it further or not.

Once you’re done with your opening page, it’s about ‘me time’, or rather ‘you time’. Who are you? What are your achievements? Ensure that your choice of words reflects your personality, the work you produce and your inspirations.

Tell your story by showcasing your work in a way that better reflects your personal and professional journey. This can be

done by choosing a suitable gallery style, for instance. Clients testimonials are also a great way to add legitimacy to your work and make more people interested in what you do.

Last but not least, keep an eye out for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) best practices – if you want to get your work out there, you need to make sure people are able to find it online to begin with. Opt for keywords that are in your chosen niche and add a meta description to your portfolio in order to increase your Search Engine Results Page (SERP) ranking and lure visitors in.

Creating a striking online portfolio has become more important than ever. It’s a great way to highlight your achievements, as well as to demonstrate the range of your capabilities. Take some time to invest in it – both strategically and creatively. In other words, think of it as a piece of art. Once you nail it, it will certainly help get your work out there, while staying in.

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