

What is a Personal Website & Why Do I Need One?

Personal websites are becoming increasingly popular. They can be used effectively for promotion, job searches, personal branding, and just for communicating with friends and family. These personal websites can often serve as a creative outlet and allow the site owner more freedom than they would have with a website that is tied to their business. Personal websites also allow the owner to change directions easily if their interests or purpose for the site changes at some point in the future.

According to Workfolio, a newly launched company that develops applications for professional visibility, 56% of all hiring managers are more impressed by a candidate's personal website than any other personal branding tool—however, only 7% of job seekers actually have a personal website.

Workfolio's founder and chief executive Charles Pooley says: "The employment market is an incredibly scary place to be right now as a job seeker—but a personal website offers several important things to improve your odds." One, it gives hiring managers a glimpse into your personality, he says. "A website gives you creative freedom to express your personality in ways that are not possible through your resume. Everything from the bio paragraph you write to the design options you choose for your website says something about you, and gives recruiters more chances to decide if they want to bring you in for an interview."

Having an informative, well designed website also sends a message that you take your career seriously—and employers will take note, he adds. Lastly, it offers visibility, Pooley says. "Showing up is half the battle. We know that an ever-increasing number of employers are researching job applicants online, and owning your own website with your name in the domain gives you a great shot at showing up when someone searches for you."

You definitely should have your own website. In this age, your digital footprint is everything and if you do not control the real estate of your search result page - someone else will. Your personal site is not just a website but a tool to engage people who will search you before they even meet you (over 80% of people will search you online!!) You have to be able

to control your online reputation so you can spend more time discussing issues that matter rather than reasons.

What Should I Have on my Personal Website?

Home Page

- * Short paragraph about you (and maybe a photo).
- * One or two sentences about your website (what they will find, etc).
- * A “Call to Action.” Point them to the content you want to see most.

About Page - Contact Information

- * Extension of Home Page paragraph- include info you want them to know - where you went to school, your skills, your hobbies (relevant or irrelevant). You want to the reader to feel a little bit of a connection with you.
- * Include a contact page or form if possible. Forms are more user friendly.
- Include at least an email address.

Portfolio/CV

- A showcase of your best work- title, screen shot, description, and link (if applicable).

Resume (*Preferably password protected*)

- Your Resume - You may have covered a lot of this on the About/ Portfolio page, but a resume is more formal, and a lot of people will want to see it.
- Try to include a word (.doc) and PDF (.pdf) version as well as the web based version so the visitor can download it.
- References should be sent only on request and not posted to your website.