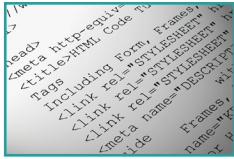




FEATURE



Building a Successful Business as a Freelancer

[By Stefan Pinto]

11 years ago, I drove home on the New Jersey Turnpike in a shocking state of bewilderment. I had only just handed my then-manager their gray, corporate-owned, incommodious desktop, laptop, and docking-station in exchange for the unpredictable life of a freelancer. I had only one client then to secure my future — albeit immediate, and I had rent and a car lease.

As fortune and quite a bit of perseverance would have it, my then-client left that job and went on to another — taking my tiny start-up web design business with her. Now, I had two clients.

To be considered a truly successful freelancer comes only after delivering on your word, in at timely fashion, and exactly what the client needs. They are hiring *you*, not a big firm, not an agency, *you*. Deliver a good job, on time, and within budget, and chances are, you will get repeat work, and perhaps a good reference that could only help gain you new, additional work.

The following are some other good traits to cultivate while on the road to building a reliable business as a freelancer.

Professionalism Is Key — Always.

Clients like to know that the person working for them (or sometimes representing them) can deliver their goods in a *poised, eloquent, and polished* manner. A pharmaceutical giant trusted me to present their new public affairs intranet to their board of directors — including the CEO.

Be an Expert in One Particular Thing

Have a broad knowledge, but be an expert in one particular thing — and by expert, I

mean *really know it*. It is helpful to know your overall industry so you can facilitate a discussion on best choices or approaches, but you should be a total expert in at least one area — be it HTML, Photoshop, or Flash. This way, you can be that “go to guy” everyone trusts will answer or solve their issue.

Make Certain that Your Resume is Current

The technology field changes ever so rapidly. If you don’t keep your skills current and adapt with all of the changes, you can easily become stale — or worse, obsolete! If your resume screams all of the relevant latest technologies, you have a phenomenal advantage. Better yet, if you embrace a new technology or program and really know it, you can be that much appreciated “go to guy” above!



Stand out from the Crowd by Sending an HTML Resume Instead

With all of the mail recruiters and prospects receive in response to a bid or a posting, why

not make yours applicable to the job? If a web designer claims to know CSS, Photoshop and HTML, then how clever it will be to prove it right there, in the email! Believe me, this gets attention, and ultimately a call back. See a good example at www.parallaxid.com/resume/pinto.htm.

Finally, ask all of those happy clients (and you will have several) to write you a quick testimonial. Selling can be quite a challenge, but it helps if you have solid references to support you. You can even use a professional networking site, such as LinkedIn, to show these.

About the Author

Stefan Pinto has experience designing and building interactive websites for Fortune 500 and small business companies. His experience list includes Merck, Merrill Lynch, AT&T, and Topps. He has been featured in the New York Times, PC Week, WebWeek, and other trade publications. He was the recipient of the Photoshop Professionals prestigious “Guru” award for outstanding website design.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.