Chapter X

Launch and Promotion

Introduction

At this point you should be excited. You have created a Web portfolio and uploaded it to the Internet. You and your immediate circle of friends and colleagues may know about the site by now. Potential employers, potential clients, and other important contacts may not be aware that you have posted a Web portfolio. During the launch and promotion stage you will reach out to your audience with marketing communications that launch and promote your new Web portfolio. In this chapter we will discuss the launch and outline vehicles and methods that you can use to promote your Web portfolio.

We mentioned previously that the Web portfolio is a product. The Web portfolio truly embodies the meaning of a product. Pride and Ferrell (1987, p. 12) defined a product as a good, service, or idea. As a good, the Web portfolio represents you and to work as physical entities that can be bought. As a service, the Web portfolio can promote you as a freelancer who provides specific services. As an idea, the Web portfolio contains your philosophies, your images, your concepts, and your themes. And with all products the Web portfolio needs launch and promotion. Marketing and communications activi-
ties and vehicles are what drive launch and promotion. So to begin, we will talk about marketing and communications and how they fit into your strategies for getting your Web portfolio seen by the right people.

**Marketing**

Marketing your Web portfolio and the Internet requires you to make contacts and relationships with others who promote people who do what you do. For example, www.aquent.com is a creative staffing firm specializing in finding freelance and permanent work for hire situations for designers, copywriters, marketing specialists, and others who provide creative services. At Aquent site, potential employers can type keywords related to their needs such as Web design or illustration and a database will provide a list of potential candidates and their Web portfolios. When the freelancers who work for Aquent create their Web portfolio, they make sure to organize each category of work explicitly so that clients can have quick, direct access to samples. This form of marketing is highly effective for specialized fields such as creative services. If you have other specializations that are technical or business centered you can seek out other Web services that market your Web portfolio of work to potential clients. GURU.com provides Web-based, portfolio marketing services similar to Aquent.com. However, GURU.com has a wider range of specialization areas. There are a few issues with the Web portfolio capabilities of the sites. Typically, they only allow the person posting the Web portfolio to use their templates and shell. This can be a bit limiting and does not lend to the idea that creating a Web portfolio helped to build valuable and reusable technology skills. So I recommend using these marketing sites in addition to other activities in which your entire Web portfolio is showcased.

To showcase the entire Web portfolio you need to have server space and a host as we discussed in Chapter IX. When you do have your server space and your unique URL you can begin to think about communicating the Web address to others. Your new Web portfolio address should be highly visible on all of your professional communications. These items include your cover letter, your résumé or CV, your business card, your letterhead, the brochures, and your promotional items. When you drive people to your Web site, you should be prepared for feedback and be ready to discuss business if the site compels them to contact you.
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