

Portfolio Power-Up How To Turn Any Portfolio Into Your Strongest Sales Tool

TRANSCRIPT:

CRYSTAL: Well, thank you everybody for standing by, and welcome to the Portfolio Power Up—How To Turn Any Portfolio Into Your Strongest Sales Tool. I would like now to turn the call over to our host, Ed Gandia.

ED: Thank you, Crystal and hello everyone, welcome to our portfolio power up teleclass. As all of you know, in most of the creative freelance categories whether it's writing, design, photography, illustration, video, WordPress setup, you name it, just about any profession where you're creating something for a client, portfolio samples are an absolute must. Potential clients simply expect to see a portfolio sample from you if you're looking to get hired. It's evident that you have the skills, the creative capacity and the experience needed to help them with their needs but the question is does a portfolio sample, even a knockout sample, really motivate a client to hire you. Well, as we all know, that's not true in most cases. In fact, you might be surprised by how poor of a salesperson a traditional portfolio sample can be. And Steve, this is one of those deceptively simple techniques that takes about five minutes to describe but thirty minutes to explain how to apply effectively, isn't it?

STEVE: Yeah, that's a good way to put it. So please, folks, don't hang up the phone after five minutes. Stay with us for the next thirty minutes as we explain the details of this. Because again, it's one of those techniques that is easy to understand and get right away but the real advantage of using this technique is in the details and how you create a portfolio one-piece and how you use a portfolio one-piece when you're promoting your services. So stay with us.

ED: Well good. So in a nutshell then, what is the portfolio one-sheet technique? Let's start there.

STEVE: Yeah. What is a portfolio one-sheet is really all about—and you probably got some hints for those of you who have downloaded the worksheets and are looking at them now. You can probably get some hints and a good idea what they're all about simply by flipping through the worksheets. It's a technique that makes the presentation of a portfolio sample, whether you're presenting that portfolio sample in person or via email, which is very common these days or on your website, it makes the presentation of your portfolio sample much more impressive and persuasive to clients. And the reason why is that clients can see at a glance simply because it's a single page, they can see at a glance what you really bring to the table when they hire you to do a project for them. And as we're going to discuss later on, a portfolio one-sheet is also a terrific way of showcasing samples that are perhaps not “real samples”. Perhaps you've done some practice work because you've taken a design course or a copywriting course, or you've

created some spec samples but they're not real samples, you didn't actually do this work for real clients but you want to showcase them in the most effective, impressive way. We're going to show you how to do that later on with portfolio one-sheet as well.

ED: Good, good. But before we begin, Steve, though, why don't you give us a quick background on how you developed this idea of a portfolio one-sheet because this is kind of unique.

STEVE: Yeah. Well, I remember actually very clearly the moment it really hit me that showing a client an actual portfolio piece had a lot of drawbacks. And I remember meeting with a potential client who wanted a series of sales brochures written and I have this four-page sales brochure and of course, it came to the point in that conversation where the client said, "Hey, can I see a sample of your sales brochure writing? Can I see a sample from your portfolio?" And I pulled out this what I thought was a very impressive four-page brochure that I had done for a company called Alias/Wavefront and I passed it over to the client and the client did what a lot of clients had done when I show them a portfolio piece. He sort of looks at it in an odd way, he flipped through the pages very quickly, and then guess what, he narrowed his focus on a certain section on the brochure that I would actually prefer him not to look at. Like he was looking at something on Page 4 and reading some copy that I wrote there, where my really good stuff was on Page 2. So I found myself sort of jumping in and saying, "Hey, take a look at Page 2, it's much better" or—yeah, and then he would kind of look at me and he'd ask a lot of

predictable questions. He'd say, "How did you come up with the idea for this sales brochure? What kind of results did it get? Who did you write this for? Did you have any input into the design or did you just write it?" and things like that. And after awhile, I began to realize, hey, a portfolio sample in and of itself really doesn't do a good job presenting what I bring to the table as a copywriter. In fact, it's a very poor salesman a lot of the times for me. And the problem actually got exasperated when the internet came along and I started sharing portfolio samples by email, then I wasn't there personally to explain the portfolio piece and answer questions and walk a client through it. The portfolio piece was all on its own then, and therefore, even more ineffective. So those are some of the problems that I encountered and I started looking for ways to find a better way to present portfolio pieces.

ED: So you basically decided to try a different approach.

STEVE: That's right. And that's how this whole idea of a portfolio one-piece evolved.

ED: Okay. So we're going to review some samples of portfolio one-sheet in just a moment, but before we do that, let's summarize for the audience what are the disadvantages of showing the actual portfolio samples to the client.

STEVE: Yeah, that's good question. I get asked a lot, "Why can't you just show the portfolio samples?" Sure, there are some pitfalls, but why not just do that? There are really five good reasons why a portfolio

sample showing the actual piece that you created to a client has a lot of drawbacks. And for those of you who have the worksheets in front of you, you can jot these down on worksheet No. 1 where it actually says in the headline, “What’s wrong with just showing a portfolio sample as is?” So here we go.

The number one issue is that an actual portfolio sample often doesn’t tell the whole story. It doesn’t tell in and of itself what you actually—the work you actually did on the piece and the full value of what you brought to the table.

There’s a friend of mine who’s a designer and he specializes in exhibit design. He’s a freelance exhibit designer. There isn’t too many of those by the way in North America; he’s one of a few. And he used to be very frustrated because he would design and exhibit, take a picture of it, and then use that as a portfolio piece. And when people asked him about his exhibit design, he would show them pictures of exhibits he created. But the picture itself didn’t tell the whole story. It didn’t tell about the background, the research he did to compete in exhibits. It didn’t say anything about the strategy and why he did things the way, he did in order to create an exhibit that attracted more qualified visitors to the exhibit booth. It didn’t do any of that; it was just a picture. It didn’t tell the whole story, and he got frustrated with that. And when he started using portfolio one-sheet instead of just pictures of his portfolio, he got much better results.

Another problem, **number two**, is that an actual portfolio sample can sometimes tell a different story than you want it to tell. That brochure I showed that client that I did for Alias/Wavefront, that four-page brochure, the client was focusing on a section on Page 4 that I really didn't want him to spend a lot of time on because the client had changed the words there. I didn't like the way the client did it. It really didn't represent my best work. My best work was on Page 1, 2 and 3 but he wasn't focusing on that. So because he just focused on an area that I didn't want him to focus on, my portfolio piece was, in fact, telling a much different story to him than I wanted it to tell. So that's another drawback. When you have a portfolio one-piece, you can focus the clients' attention on those elements of your portfolio piece that you want the clients to see; you control the presentation.

Number three, an actual portfolio piece is essentially meaningless to a client unless it's put into the context of what that client is trying to achieve. Like as you and I know, Ed, there's this old saying in marketing: "People don't buy a drill, they buy the hole that the drill makes."

ED: That's right.

STEVE: Yeah, and it's the same thing for freelance creative services. Clients don't necessarily buy our designs or our writing or our photography or whatever it is that we create for clients. They actually don't buy that. What they're buying is the result of that. And what a portfolio one-sheet can do for you is to help you

position your portfolio one-piece in terms of the result that it helped your client achieve because that's what your clients are really interested in.

And number four, an actual portfolio sample doesn't answer all the questions that a client may have. I mean you can pretty much predict when you show a portfolio piece to a client the questions that client is going to ask. They're going to ask you questions about did you do the whole thing or just part of it, did you come up with a concept or did you just do the writing or just do the design. You can predict these questions. But why not answer those questions in advance rather than waiting for them? And if you send a portfolio piece by email or show it on your website, you're not there to answer those questions so that can put you at a disadvantage. But that's what a portfolio one-sheet can do; it can answer those questions that you know clients are going to ask about it.

And finally number five, and this is a big one, in some circumstances, let's face it, looking at actual samples can be boring. If you specialize in writing white papers showing a client a bunch of white papers, I mean—and taking them on a tour through every single page of all the white papers, it's going to be pretty boring to a client. It's just going to be words and images to him. They're not going to really understand what it all means. But a portfolio one-piece allows a client to get a sense of the work you do and the results you achieved at a glance by looking at just one page. So, I know I talked a lot about the disadvantages and

advantages of one-sheets there but I think it's very important to know why they're so effective and the problems that they solve.

ED: That makes a lot of sense and I'm wondering -- tell us about your first attempt at creating one of these one-sheets.

STEVE: Yeah, you can actually see the very first attempt at creating one on worksheet No. 2 where it says, "What's a portfolio one-sheet?" You can see a picture of my very first attempt right there. And this is actually a direct mail letter with a response card that I created for an old client of mine in UPS and it did very well. And, you know, I used to use—when I showed my direct mail examples to clients, I would actually give them the actual samples, but I found I had the same problems as when I showed a brochure, any other piece that I did. So I decided to try this portfolio one-sheet approach, and you can see what I did here. I know it's a small picture here but I'll walk you through it. You can see in the upper right-hand corner I have some editorial above the portfolio piece that I'm showing off here, I have some information about why it was created and importantly, the results that it got. And then, you see the lower right-hand corner that larger text box there? That is an excerpt from the copy, and this is one of the things that I really like about portfolio one-sheet is that you can focus the client on looking at your best work. What I did is I took the best two or three paragraphs, the really good paragraphs, from that direct mail letter and I just blew it up into an excerpt so clients will read that rather than looking at somewhere else on the letter. And I just simply showed with a circle and a bar there where that is in the letter. And

on the upper left-hand corner, I just have some basic information about who the client is and the objective of the piece and things of that nature. I created this myself. I didn't have a professional designer do it. Obviously, you can tell by looking at it. So it's a very simple attempt at creating a portfolio one-piece, but it worked very, very well the first time I showed it to a potential client at a meeting. And this is a true story. I passed it over with some trepidation because I've never actually used this before. He asked to see a sample. I passed this over. He picked it up. He looked at it for a couple of seconds. It looked like he read the whole thing, and then he said, "Wow, you obviously know what you're doing." And that's exactly the impression you want to make on a client. You want a client to think as soon as they see something that you've created; you want a client to think, "Hey, you know what you're doing." So that's the impression I got and it was really at that moment that I knew that this portfolio one-sheet technique was going to work very well for me.

ED: Yeah, looking at this I can see how the one-sheet can be a much better salesperson for your services than an actual portfolio sample.

STEVE: You're absolutely right because it puts the control of the presentation of your portfolio sample in your hands. You control the presentation. You can show up the best aspects of your piece, you can describe the results the piece created for you, and, also, it instantly differentiates you from other freelance professionals because very few other freelance professionals use this technique or even know about it. But it makes you look much more

professional and an expert together. So it's a great technique and like I said, if you just have spec samples or practice pieces that you've done, it's also a great way to showcase those types of samples, as well.

ED: Got you. Got you. So let's—

STEVE: Well before we move on, Ed, there's one unexpected benefit that I got from using one-sheets. I found that clients really like them as well, because especially these days, clients are really busy and they like the idea of looking at a single page to get a good idea of your capabilities. And also, with a single sheet, they can clip that to internal proposals and get internal budget approvals to hire you and things of that nature so clients love this approach.

ED: Oh, I can see that. And especially—you're right—they're so frazzled today. What I've noticed to some few, if you send them too much, they'll put it off because they keep thinking I don't have time to review that right now. But if you make it very easy—

STEVE: That's right. In fact, someone sent me some portfolio samples just last week and it's like two or three PDFs and they were multiple pages long and the work I'm sure is really impressive; I just don't have the time to look at it right now.

ED: Yeah.

STEVE: So many pages. So one-sheet solves that problem, as well.

ED: I can see that. I can see that. So, let's clearly define this so there's no confusion about what a portfolio one-sheet is. Why don't you give us a clear definition of that?

STEVE: Sure, sure. Well, here's my attempt at a clear definition. You can write this down on worksheet No.2 there; we left some room for you. If a single page that showcases your sample so that it makes the impression you want it to make and conveys the information you want it to convey. That's important so that it makes the impression you want to make and conveys the information you want it to convey. By impression, obviously, you want clients to be instantly interested, intrigued, excited, impressed by what you've done at a glance. You want them to look at it and go, "Wow, you know what you're doing." And information, you want to provide the client as much information as possible about your portfolio piece so they understand the full value; they understand what you bring to the table. So that's my definition of a portfolio one-piece.

ED: Okay. That makes sense. And we should probably make the distinction that each one-sheet that you put together focuses on only one sample, so it's not intended to summarize your entire portfolio into one page, right?

STEVE: That's right, yeah. And I actually tried that, I tried to have a collage of direct mail samples, I find it doesn't work well. What works best is one sample for one portfolio one-sheet.

ED: Okay. I can see that. We're going to talk about how to put some of these together in just a moment. But why don't we first take a look at some actual samples in this handout?

STEVE: Yeah. You can look on worksheet No. 3. What you're looking at there is a one-page ad that I did for a client that was actually my most successful ad ever at that time. It got a huge response, but the ad was so deceptively simple. When I showed that sample to clients, they weren't impressed because it is just so simple. So what I did is I used the portfolio one-sheet approach and I put a picture of the ad and the portfolio one-piece and I described the results that it got. But notice here, if you look closely, you'll see callouts from the ad copy and it says copy close-up 1, copy close-up 2. What I did to explain to clients my strategy is I would describe why I wrote each section the way that I did, and that brought that portfolio piece to life for me. So instead of clients looking at it and going, "Hmm, this looks pretty simple," they would realize the strategy that went into writing that that made this ad so successful. And this is obviously a better design version of my portfolio one-piece. I'm starting to get better at it obviously at this point.

Turn over to worksheet No. 4 and there's another example of a direct mail piece that I put into a portfolio one-sheet format. This is a direct mail piece for Hewlett-Packard. Notice a couple of additional elements here. We have a testimonial from a magazine who reviewed the piece and also a mention of an award win. If you're lucky to win an award for a piece that you've created or you

can get a client testimonial associated with the piece that you've created, put that in your one-sheet, as well. It makes it much more impressive. You can see at a glance here how the portfolio one-sheet really brings this portfolio piece to life. If you saw a portfolio piece separately, it's still pretty impressive but it doesn't do nearly as good a job as this one-page portfolio one-piece.

Flip then over to worksheet No. 5. This is a piece that one of our readers did, Ed. Debb, she is a copywriter and a designer and she uses the portfolio one-piece technique quite a bit in her own work. And you can see -- here's a picture of two-sided sales sheet which she created for a client. It's a very good sales sheet, but you know what it's like, Ed, sales sheets when you first glance at them, they don't really look impressive.

ED: Yeah, they don't.

STEVE: But they're very, very effective. And it's a real art and science to create an effective sales sheet and she's very good at it. But the sales sheet in and of itself doesn't really show off her considerable copywriting and design talents. So what she did is she put it into this one-sheet format. You can see below she has copy close-up; she has excerpts from her copy so she's controlling the presentation. She's drawn the client's attention to those areas of the sales sheet that showcases her very best writing. And this is a very effective sales sheet and you can see, very simple to create and produce.

And if you flip over to worksheet No. 6, same thing, this is another example. This is interesting because this is a white paper that she's showcasing here and I don't know how long this white paper is but if it's like an average white paper, it's probably seven, eight, nine, ten pages in length. And showing a white paper to a client, the whole thing, I guarantee all the client will do is flip through it a little bit, and that's it. They won't really get the full value of what you brought to the table to create that white paper. So what she did is she put it, again, in a one-sheet format. She pulled out some of her best excerpts of copy from the white paper so she, again, drawing the client's attention to her best work. She's put in a testimonial that she has for this white paper at the bottom. She's showcasing a testimonial and again, very simply created, very simply designed here but very, very effective way to showcase her, again, considerable writing and copywriting design abilities.

And worksheet No. 7 is a little bit different. This is from a graphic designer. He created an award-winning direct mail piece that you can see there for a major client. The thing is that whenever he showed it to the client, clients didn't seem all that impressed. Again, because the portfolio piece didn't do a good job of describing just how much value he brings to the table when he's hired to design a direct mail piece. So what he did here is he showed a thumbnail picture of the direct mail piece and then through callouts, he described the different elements of this direct mail piece and why he designed those elements the way he did for maximum effectiveness. And that made all the difference and this approach really impressed clients much more than showing off the

actual piece. So those are some examples, Ed, of different portfolio one-sheets.

ED: Now these are fantastic and just having these in front of you and as a reference can be a great way to get ideas to put your own together. So let's actually get in to that. That's a nice segway into this next section, which is how do you create these, what elements that need to be in place to make a portfolio one-sheet effective.

STEVE: **Well, the main element** is to show a thumbnail of the piece that you've created. And by the way, folks, you can jot these notes down on worksheet No. 8 where it says, "Elements of an effective portfolio one-sheet." Put a thumbnail of the picture of your piece. Now in some circumstances, that may not be possible. I was working with a scriptwriter a few months ago and she scripts podcasts for people and, of course, how do you show a podcast as an image on a portfolio one-sheet? Well, what she did is she showed them a picture of a microphone, so she had a representation of a podcast. But any kind of image on there that represents what you did, either a picture of the portfolio one-piece, an actual picture of it, or some visual representation of it can work very well.

Also, number two, draw attention with your one-piece on the best aspects of the work that you did. If you're a designer, pull out and enlarge those areas that really show off your design capabilities. If you're a writer, draw out those excerpts from the copy that are most impressive that you really want clients to read and that you

really want to show off. So control the presentation; show clients aspects of your portfolio piece that you want them to see.

Number three: Explain your underlining strategy from the piece. Clients like to hire writers and like to hire designers and photographers who are also good strategists. So, describe your thinking, your ideas, your reasons for doing things the way you did and that'll certainly impress clients.

Number four: Provide some information on the results that your client got from the piece. Now I know that's not always easy to do and sometimes the information is not always available, but do the best you can to describe some of the results that a client got from the piece, even if the result is very vague. Like the client was very impressed and the sales force really liked this new brochure and they used it a lot. Even if it's something wishy-washy like that; that's better than nothing. But if you can get the results, describe the results that your piece got.

Number five: Anticipate questions that your client is bound to ask about your portfolio piece, and if appropriate, answer those questions on your portfolio one-sheet. Clients want to know who your client was for the piece. They want to know the objective of the piece. They want to know the results that that piece got. So anticipate those questions and try to answer them on your portfolio one-piece. That's especially important these days because a lot of portfolio pieces are shared via the internet or shared via email and you're not there personally to answer the questions. So make sure

that a lot of those questions, the most important ones at least, are answered on your portfolio one-piece.

And finally, add anything else that you think might impress the client. If it's won an award, if you have a testimonial, if it got some publicity, whatever it is, feel free to add those elements, as well, to your portfolio one-piece. Even if it looks a little crowded, like my Hewlett-Packard one is, it can still be very impressive and effective.

ED: Well, that's good. That's really good, Steve. Let's talk about the basics of creating the one-sheet in terms of format and design. What should people consider when putting these together?

STEVE: Well, I tried a lot of different approaches and I've worked with other people who have tried a lot of different approaches as well, and what works best is this: One-sheet, one page. I've had portfolio one-sheets that were two pages and even three pages long, they didn't work as well. I thought they would, they didn't work as well. The one-sheet approach, there's something about having everything on one page that makes this work very, very well. So if possible, keep it to one page. 8 ½ x 11 page works best, unfold it, one side not both sides.

And also, produce it as an electronic format and probably a PDF format; make it as a PDF so it can easily be shared on the internet and by email. But also, keep the option open to create a good quality digital print version as well, especially if you attend live

meetings with potential clients, you want to be able to hand them a physical sample, not send them an email later on. If you're going to have your one-sheet designed by a freelance designer, let your designer know that even though he or she is creating your one-sheet as a PDF, to keep the option open to have a print version created as well because that will affect how that designer chooses colors and layout. As you know, Ed, sometimes, certain colors and layout that looks good on the PDF may not look good when it's printed as a print piece.

ED: Oh yeah.

STEVE: But let your designer know that you want to keep the option open for producing this as a print piece, as well.

And on the topic of designers, unless you're good at design, hire a good freelance designer to do it for you. Have your freelance designer create a basic template for it and then that makes all the other one-sheets that you happen to create a lot, a lot faster to create and it's a lot more inexpensive to create, as well. You don't have to create some original design for every single one-sheet; you can have a kind of standard version of it.

ED: Okay. Okay, so good. Good. That covers essentially what a portfolio one-sheet is and how you can create one now. We mentioned earlier that this is also a great way of showcasing samples that you've created on spec or maybe as an exercise in a course you've taken or even a fictitious sample that you've created

just so you have something in a new area that you're trying to break into. Is that right?

STEVE: Well, that's right. Because it's a real challenge to show clients that kind of sample, a spec sample or some practice work that you've done. Because, I mean, let's face it, it never really looks good, it never really looks real, it kind of flags you instantly as a beginner. Can you imagine doing some web copy work but sending just the Word doc to client? I mean it just flags you as maybe not really in business—

ED: Yeah.

STEVE: And as a beginner. What a portfolio one-sheet does is it allows you to showcase your work in such a way that it looks much more professional and gets the client focused on the work you did rather than being focused on the fact that it's not a "real" project. And there's actually an example of this on worksheet No. 9. A student of mine, Milton Smith, did some work for a copywriting course that I teach and he wanted to showcase that work he did to clients. So what he did is he created a portfolio one-sheet and you can see the sample of it right there, a very simple sheet. It has the name of the client, the objective, it has his name on it, it has a testimonial there he got from me, and it showcases his copywriting work for an Ezine ad, an email newsletter ad, and a banner ad, a website banner ad. Now he didn't actually have those pieces produced. These were practice pieces. We didn't have those to show. So what he did is he dressed them up and showcased them in this portfolio

one-sheet and I think you'd agree, this is a much better, more impressive way to showcase that work than it would be if he simply sent a Word doc to a client.

ED: Very good, very good. So let's say that I'm a freelance web designer though and I created a few portfolio one-sheets of my best samples. So what would be the best ways to use these one-sheets to get business?

STEVE: Well, here are some tips on how to do that. You can jot this down, folks, on worksheet No. 10 where it says, "The best ways to use portfolio one-sheets to promote your services."

Number one is that you can put little thumbnails of your one-sheets on your website and then have a form that clients can fill out to request them. I get some arguments on this technique because some people say, "Hey, why don't you just put these on your website and let clients download them freely without having to request them?" But I find that if you put a form on your website and have clients request them rather than simply give them away on your website that you at least have their names and you can follow up on those leads, and I just like that approach better. So that's one way you can do it is to have your one-sheets available on your website for clients to request by simply filling out a form.

Another way, and here's something that I found really works well, is attach one-sheets or appropriate one-sheets to quotations and proposals and other pitches that you sent to potential clients during

that quoting process. If you're going to send in a proposal, clip a couple of appropriate one-sheets. When you do that, it dramatically increases your chances of getting the job. First of all, it puts your quotation in perspective; there's another element to it that impresses clients and motivates them to hire you. But also, if the person you're talking to has to share your quotation with a colleague inside the company that you haven't spoken to yet to get some kind of an approval, at least that person can see this one-sheet, as well, and be impressed by it and hopefully approve the budget. So I find doing that works very well.

Number three: Have them available at live meetings. When you attend a live meeting, an in-person meeting, with a potential client, have some of these appropriate one-sheets printed out and available. Don't pull them out all at once and show them to a client. Believe it or not, no one, and this is important, no one likes a portfolio tour. No one. Even if they say, "Take me on a tour of your portfolio." No one likes it, right? So never use portfolio samples that way. Instead, wait for a strategic moment in a meeting, let's say, when the client is discussing the direct mail piece he needs to have written or exhibit that he needs to have created for an upcoming tradeshow. And at that strategic moment, when you think it's the right moment, pull out your portfolio one-sheet and provide the client with one or two of those that showcases your best work.

ED: Hey, Steve, I'd like to add something there because I think that's a very, very good point. And it's somewhat counterintuitive, we

automatically think well, let's give them more, they like what they see, let me show them more. But less is more, right? And you see I'd like to think of it as food. If you're a caterer, you just give them small bite-sized samples and just a few. That's it. Don't throw a ten-course meal in front of them. It's overwhelming and you actually risk raising questions that you won't be able to answer or getting into a hole that you can't get out of. So just give them enough to take them to the next level, to show them what you're capable of, don't overdo it.

STEVE:

That's right. Because if you show a client, let's say, six portfolio one-sheets, for example, and if there's something about number six that the client didn't quite like or rubbed the client the wrong way a little bit or he has a question about it that you can't answer, he's not going to remember the five impressive one-sheets you showed him. What's going to linger is that issue about number six. Yeah, so be very strategic about this. I like that line, Ed, that less is more. I never show more than two, frankly, one or two, three at most.

Number four is use a portfolio one-sheet as an offer in your self-promotion and the marketing that you do. I've tried this on many occasions and it works quite well. I'll send a letter or an email to a potential client, I'll tell them about a one-sheet that's available that describes the results that my client got with the direct mail piece I've written for them or an email campaign I wrote for them, and they'll be interested and they'll request it. And I've gotten some good response that way and it's a great tool to use as offers in your marketing, and not just the front-end stuff where you're trying to

generate leads and interest in your services, but also that your stay-in-touch campaign, as well. If you're staying in touch with long-term prospects using a portfolio one-sheet as an offer is just another of a long list of ways you can stay in touch.

And finally, **Number five**, and here's an interesting technique that I've tried a couple of times, I'm going to do more of these, is to convert your one-sheet into a success story article. Now what I mean by that is that—you and I, Ed, work in the business-to-business field, so we know that a success story article is a case study. We call it a case study in B2B. But take in your one-sheet and repurposing it into an article format that becomes more of a success story can work very well.

ED: Yeah, and tell us what that's about because I think this is an interesting approach to showcase your samples.

STEVE: Yeah. The success story article approach, this is really a variation of the portfolio one-sheet and we didn't have this on the original information page with this teleclass but it's a technique that is closely associated with one-sheets and it fits nicely into our theme of powering up your portfolio. And basically, here's the way it works is you take a portfolio one-sheet -- like you'll notice on a portfolio one-sheet, it'll often have the name of the client, it'll have some information about the results, it'll have some highlights from the copy or from the design or whatever you're highlighting about the piece. Sometimes, it'll even have a testimonial from the client, as well. Well you take that and you write an article based on all

that information. You turn it into a 700- or 800-word article and it becomes a success story article and that can be very useful as well. In fact, there's a couple of samples we'd like to show you. If you turn over to worksheet No. 8, here is an example of a success story article.

ED: No. 11, Steve. I'm sorry; it's worksheet No. 11 not 8.

STEVE: Oh, I'm sorry, did I say eight?

ED: Yeah.

STEVE: Okay, worksheet No. 11. Turn to worksheet No. 11 and the title will say, "The success story approach." And you'll see an example of a success story article that Mindwalk Design Group did for a direct mail piece that they wrote, that they created. This is actually three pages long, I'm just showing you the first page here but it follows the typical format. It describes the problem that the client had, the challenge, what they were trying to achieve. It went into how Mindwalk created the direct mail piece to solve that problem, to achieve the client's objective, and finally gave a summary of the results that the direct mail piece achieved for the client. Again, about 700 or 800 words long and it's like an expanded editorial one-sheet. It's expanded into a success story format.

And if you turn to worksheet No. 12, not 9, here is another example of a success story. This one from my friend Pete Savage and this is, again, coincidentally this is showcasing another direct

mail piece, but you can see how he has taken a portfolio piece and he's created a story around it, a success story around it. Again, following that same format of describing the problem the client had, describing the solution, which is his great consulting and copywriting work on this direct mail piece, and then the results this piece achieved.

And also, he has an added element here. He has quite a long and extensive bio that he has here as well and several client testimonials that he's integrated into this, as well. And that makes a very effective way of presenting a portfolio sample. There's a pro and there's a con to this approach. The pro is that a success story article can be much more effective than a one-sheet because it just contains much more information and it dramatizes the piece a bit more. However, it does have this one drawback in that while a one-sheet a client can look at and quickly at a glance, get what you're all about and get what you bring to the table, at a glance. With a success story format, the client pretty much has to read it or has to scan it, so not as many clients will read a success story as they will look at a one-sheet. So that's kind of the downside of success story format. It has its place and can work very, very well.

ED:

So Steve, this is a question that somebody asked me yesterday. I think we need to bring it up just to be clear on this. Let's say you've been freelancing for a long time and you have dozens and dozens of samples in your portfolio. Is the objective here to create a one-sheet for each one of these and if not, how do you decide which pieces you do this with?

STEVE: Okay, first of all, yeah, it's a mistake to create a one-sheet for every single portfolio sample you ever do. Because you don't want to show clients—as we talked about earlier—less is more. You don't want to show clients twenty samples; you want to show clients one or two really good samples. So you don't need a portfolio one sheet for every piece. What you do need is a portfolio one-sheet for every category that you do. For example, I'll just use myself as an example; I do a lot of work in business-to-business sales communication, so sales brochures, sales presentations, things of that nature. So I'll have one or two items—I have actually two or three portfolio one-sheets in that area. I have a large direct mail portfolio, so I have two or three one-sheets there. You know, I didn't create 101 sheets; I just created two or three of my best work. So just have one or two good pieces for each category that you do.

ED: That's good advice. That's good advice and that's a lot of information. So let me--

STEVE: We've been on longer than thirty minutes so--

ED: Yeah, we kind of packed it all in. Let me try to summarize, do a quick review of what we just discussed and then we'll go ahead and take some questions.

STEVE: Great.

ED: We've talked about how the portfolio one-sheet technique is a way for clients to see at a glance what you really bring to the table when they're considering you for a project. We also talked about how it can help you make the impression you want to make and convey the information you need to communicate, especially when you don't have the chance to explain the sample yourself in the live meetings, when their looking at these samples behind closed doors, so to speak. We've also gone through several real examples that have shown us how this technique can put control of the presentation of the samples in your hands. How it enables you to showcase the best aspects of the piece and why it reduces portfolio apologies, why it makes you look more professional, more together, why it makes it easier for the client to share your samples with his or her team and her colleagues. And for freelancers who are starting out or trying to break into a new area in their field, it allows them to showcase spec samples or samples created on fictitious products.

We've also talked about and covered the elements, the key elements that make portfolio one-sheets effective. We've explained how to create a portfolio one-sheet for your best samples. Aside from using them when a prospect asks you for samples, we also talked about a few ways you can use them and leverage them to help drum up more business. For example, using them in a direct main promotion, having them available at live meetings, converting some of them into success story articles, and as the bonus strategies, we expanded on that last one and we discussed

the success story article approach, why it can be so effective, and how you can turn some of your samples into case study articles.

So that's a lot of information, Steve and I appreciate you sharing it with us. We're now going to open it up for questions and I'm going to hand it back over to Crystal who's going to explain again how to ask questions using your phone keypad.

CRYSTAL: Thanks Ed. To start the Q and A part of the call, I'm going to explain the following process. If you would like to ask a question or if you have a comment, press Star 2 on the keypad. This will place your question in the order that it was received, so you don't actually become un-muted until I select you. How it works is I will un-mute each call in order and I'll let you know that it's your turn by saying the last four digits of your number. So before you ask your question, once you are un-muted, please state your name and your location. So once again, if you want to ask a question or have a comment, press Star 2 on your keypad. And our first question comes from last four digits 6123; you are un-muted; you can go ahead.

KEN: Yes, this is Ken Brooks Johnson. The question I have is, is there a low cost graphics program a beginner can use to develop a format?

STEVE: I don't know of any software or template off the shelf that you can buy or find on the internet. Is that what you're referring to, something like that?

KEN: Yes.

STEVE: --that has this template in it. For example Microsoft Publisher, I don't think they have a one-sheet template because there's not—not a lot of people even know about this technique. It's not new, I've been using it for years, but I really haven't spread the word around that much. So, not a lot of people are even aware of this technique. However, as a participant of the class, you do get a very simple template that you can use that we're going to send to you that you can use in your word processing program to create a very simple one-sheet. So that's a very good place to start. But what you should do, eventually, is to hook up with a good freelance designer to have that designer create a template for you. Now offline, if you want to shoot me an email, I can send you a recommendation of a freelance designer who creates my one-sheets and creates one-sheets for a lot of other freelance professionals, so he know what they're all about; you don't have to explain it to him. He knows the best practices about how to create a template for a one-sheet and if you just contact me offline, I'll be happy to send you his name.

KEN: Great, thank you.

STEVE: No problem.

CRYSTAL: So our next question is from the caller with the numbers 8461. Make sure to let us know your name and your location. Go ahead; you're un-muted.

LEE: Hi everybody, this is Lee Leftkin from Santa Fe, New Mexico and I have a couple questions. I've done a number of campaigns that have like three ads in them. Would you suggest showing three ads on a one-sheet? In many ways, it makes more sense to see an entire campaign.

STEVE: Yeah, you'd think that way wouldn't you and I used to think that way, too. But every time I've used a one-sheet, I got better results. So it's counterintuitive sometimes. You'd think a client wants to see every step and component of a piece but that's not necessarily so. I created a series of cell sheets for a company one time many years ago. There was about six or seven of them. I didn't create a separate cell sheet for each one of those; I simply kind of fanned them out into a picture on my one-sheet and then showcased my best work from two or three of those cell sheets on my one-sheet. So it was all done on one-sheet.

LEE: Okay, so you're saying basically take three ads, fan them out, and then just give a description of the whole project.

STEVE: That's right, the results that your client achieved, the strategy you're thinking, your strategy or ideas behind it, how you put it together, why you did it that way. Try to get it all on one-sheet.

LEE: Okay, thank you. Next question real quickly, I'm writing articles now. What would you do visually to show that you—an article?

STEVE: That can be very tricky. Like I said, was working with someone who does podcasts and how do show visually with a podcast. And she ended up using a microphone and a picture of her client behind it as a visual representation of a podcast script. If you're doing something that doesn't lend itself to being very visual, like an article or a white paper—sometimes it's a very simple cover. Find some way to have a visual representation of that and you just have to do some creative thinking. I can't think of a good way to do an article right now, but maybe just showing a picture of the front page of the article could be enough to have a visual representation of what that is.

LEE: Okay, thanks very much.

STEVE: Oh, no problem. Thank you.

CRYSTAL: Our lines are still open for questions. We've got nobody in queue right now.

STEVE: Well there's one thing that we didn't cover, Crystal, that Pete summed up in the summary and that's this idea of portfolio apology. So I just wanted to explain, briefly, what that is. We've all that experience where we show a portfolio piece to a client and we say, "Here's why I wrote it this way and here's the idea behind the headline," and blah, blah, blah. And then the client says, "Who came up with this ugly red border around it?" "Oh that wasn't me. That was the designer. I advised him against it." We always have those situations where we apologize for some aspect of a portfolio

piece we did that perhaps we didn't have control over or the client changed and a one-sheet solves that problem. You can eliminate those elements and avoid this what I call portfolio apology, which can really ruin the presentation.

ED: Hey Steve and I also wanted to add as far as the question on how to present an article. If the article's going to be published in an industry or trade publication—I write a lot of those articles—try to get a thumbnail or picture of the front cover, which you can always grab online. It doesn't have to be the particular issues that it was in. You can always grab something, so that's an idea if it is getting published somewhere like that or find an icon or a thumbnail of a generic publication, you know, a nice stock photo or one of these stock illustration sites. And that might convey the fact that it was a print publication.

STEVE: That's a great suggestion, Ed. Thanks.

CRYSTAL: We have two more questions waiting here if you guys are ready. The next question, your caller number is 6424. Just make sure to let us know your name and where you're calling from. Go ahead, you're unmated.

ALLISON: Hi, it's Allison and we are in Southern Ontario. My husband and I are both on the line. I am a freelance designer of accessories and women's clothing and I do the spoke pieces, so I don't start until there's a human in front of me so that the garment fits that human as opposed to a random human, if that makes sense.

STEVE: Okay.

ALLISON: So what's very important in my work is to demonstrate that as the person moves, the garment moves and it's still comfortable to wear. And I was wondering if you had any examples of people who were making something that movement was important in. So are people using video to do this kind of thing to relay these kinds of concepts and really illustrate your portfolio? Because I'd like to put web clips of some of my better pieces.

STEVE: Sure, there's a lot of people who have spoken that use one-sheets that actually produce videos, for example, or produce three dimensional things like trade show exhibits and things of that nature. You're in a very similar category where you have kind of a three dimensional moving thing that you do. And what you have to do again is do some creative thinking and find ways to represent that on a portfolio one-sheet and then maybe you have instead of one image, you have two or three images that conveys the sense of movement with a caption below that describes it. I'm not sure, but that could be one idea that you could explore. But find some way to convey that on a one-sheet. Because, like I said, the one-sheet approach can work very well for you in many different circumstances. Now saying that, you should also have perhaps a video on your website as well for those prospects who want to go a bit deeper and learn a bit more about you. Having an online demo on your website could be very advantageous to you, as well. But

also have one-sheets, because there's a lot of situations you'll run into where that a one-sheet is going to be very, very handy.

ALLISON: Yes, I think so too. And if I'm going to do the video kind of thing where I'm demonstrating the work, typically how long should that video be to be the equivalent of a one page would you think?

STEVE: Oh, no more than a couple minutes long. With online video, when people are looking for product information and looking into products -- they've done studies on this for different types of products, especially business to business products and services, and short is better; the shorter the better. People will look at an online video when they're trying to make a buying decision. They want to get the information very, very quickly. They don't want to take too much time, so you don't have to—so don't put any slow kind of Hollywood beginning, that kind of thing. Get right to the point and convey the information that you want to convey in the most effective way possible and the shortest way possible.

ALLISON: Okay, thank you very much for that. That means I'm on the right track with what I'm trying to work on. So thank you.

STEVE: Great, you have a very unique business. Congratulations.

ED: You know I have something else to add to that one that might help. So maybe you can come up with two variations: so one would be the PDF version that shows three or four pictures that convey that movement. The other one could be one that's each a

one-sheet on a web page; it's a web page specific for that sample. And you could have the same layout almost as you did in the PDF, but the difference is you have the video imbedded there in a key part of that page.

ALLISON: Oh, I like that.

ED: You see what I'm saying? So it wouldn't be a page that you'd be able to get to through the main navigation on your site, so you'd have to give a person a specific URL.

ALLISON: I like that a lot.

ED: Yeah, so they have that the access, if they can get online and they can see it, but if you're somewhere you can't do that, then you have the PDF.

ALLISON: Okay, great. Thanks very much, guys.

STEVE: Sure.

ED: It's our pleasure.

CRYSTAL: So we only have time for one more question and the last caller here is 9538. So go ahead, you're un-muted. Just make sure you let us know your name and where you are calling from.

KATHY: Hi, this is Kathy in Michigan and I want to thank you for validating an idea that I had but couldn't quite figure out how to bring to fruition but the portfolio one-sheet certainly does that. My question is, I've done several series of book for major publications and I'm wondering if repeated editions, if it would be better to use that fan approach to show the covers of several and then just key elements from each of those, or whether I should focus on a single edition and what was best to highlight from that particular edition?

STEVE: What you have is a bit of an – may be an exception to the guidelines that I gave you and I think you and I spoke before, haven't we? Am I thinking of the right person? Okay. There's someone else I was speaking to a couple of months ago who had the same situation. They had written a lot of books in a series and what I suggested to her was to create an image at top, kind of like an icon on her one-sheets of all these books, but have the one book that she's focusing on that one-sheet in color and the other books in black and white as kind of a key guide. So we're—this one-sheet is about book number two, the other is about book number three. But anyone who looks at the one-sheet will get that it's part of a series and that she wrote the whole series. That approach worked very well for her.

KATHY: Now within a book, there are like profiles of individuals as well as how-to information and reference materials.

STEVE: I know where you're going with this, because there's different aspects of a book that you want to showcase, right?

KATHY: Yeah.

STEVE: And you can do that with—that's why I said it may be the exception the rule, the rule being one portfolio piece, one one-sheet. Well, for you, you might have to have one book that showcases the how-to aspects of the book but then have a second one-sheet that showcases the expert interviews that you've done for the book and the expert profiles, whatever that may be. See what I mean?

KATHY: And that's what I was thinking but I appreciate the feedback.

STEVE: That's right, you may have to have two or even three because books are such long pieces—two or even three one-sheets of the same book showcasing different aspects of it.

KATHY: Thank you.

STEVE: Thank you.

CRYSTAL: And that's all the time we have today. So this ends today's telecast and I want to thank everyone for attending. I'd like to invite you to visit www.thewealthyfreelancer.com/bonus where you can grab a number of valuable bonuses just for signing up for email updates from TheWealthyFreelancer.com. Again, thanks for listening and have a wonderful day.

STEVE: Thank you everyone. Thanks Ed. Thanks Crystal.