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# Elite Folios

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Part of the

## **ELITE FREELANCING METHOD**

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▣ This is a sample module from the Elite Freelancing Method: A Complete Strategy Guide For Web Designers.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- Attract as many clients as you want with an irresistible portfolio
- What exactly goes into a killer portfolio
- How you can buff up your portfolio to epic proportions

Let's get rockin'!

## The Power Of An Elite Portfolio



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**N**o one will care all that much if you've developed a website for *Gertrude's Homemade Candles* or designed banners for *Joe's Landscaping*. More impressive is if you've created work for *Ford*, *Motorola*, *Sprint*, *Burger King* and so on.

As a designer, you compete in an industry where a picture is worth a helluva lot more than a thousand words and nothing (nothing) attracts new clients more than a portfolio stacked with work featuring multi-national brands.

So, your first key to becoming a happier, more profitable designer is this..

**Key 1: Make sure your portfolio is nothing short of killer.  
And if it isn't, BUFF IT UP using brand studies.**

Now, if you have a lot of good quality work already in your portfolio, you're off to a great start. If you don't, here's what you can do to buff up your 'folio and create yourself a powerful client magnet.

## Use brand studies to attract attention

Artists use the term "study" when they explore different subjects and techniques. For example, a painter might use a photograph of a forest and practice their skills by painting a work entitled "Study of Pine Trees." or a photo of a woman and create a watercolor called "Study of Light on Skin"

The Elite web designer employs a similar technique. Use brand studies to practice your craft and get potential clients interested in your portfolio. Here's how:

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1. **Pick a handful of multinational brands** to use as studies, such as Nike, American Airlines, Dell, Coca-cola, etc. These are simply suggestions; pick whichever high profile brands you like.
  2. **Next up, select one of your chosen brands** and draft yourself a creative brief for your study. The brief can be anything you want. Here are some examples to get you thinking:
    - "Home page for Mercedes USA"
    - "Landing page for Kellogs Special K contest"
    - "Magazine Ad for Adidas DLX Running Shoe"
    - "Web Banner Campaign for Dell Winter Laptop Promotion"
    - "Email Newsletter Design for Coca-Cola 'My Coke Rewards' Give-away"
  3. **Execute the brief.** Go ahead and create the work! You want to create a finished piece worthy of your portfolio.
  4. **Add the new brand study to your portfolio** with a caption, like "Study of Web Banner Ad Campaign for Dell Winter Laptop Promotion," or whatever is relevant to your piece. Remember to pay respect to the brands you are studying and place the mandatory, "All trademarks are copyright of their respective owners" somewhere relevant.
  5. **Enjoy the benefits** of practicing your craft, showing the world what you can do and slipstreaming behind all kinds of powerful brand names.
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## Why brand studies are so powerful

There are many reasons why creating brand studies is a great idea:

- **Brand Awareness:** Multinational brands have spent billions of dollars in advertising their company's names. We all immediately recognize these brands, including your potential clients.
- **Social Proof:** Having these items in your portfolio not only showcases your style and skill, it significantly reduces concerns that new clients might have about hiring you. It gives them a chance to assess whether your creative point of view is a good fit for their project.
- **Get ahead of the Pack:** While your competitors are showing folios full of work for unknown clients, your portfolio is majorly buffed by the presence of legendary multinational brands.
- **Practicing Ups Your Game:** Yup, practice makes perfect, and in creating these studies, you've improved your skill set that much more. By marking each of these new portfolio items as a "study," you are clearly stating your intent for each piece.

I received a lot of compliments but not a single client ever questioned me about my studies of Pepsi, Mobil, Honda and Levis, yet each of these studies helped me land more and more work for many years. If anyone would have bothered to inquire about them, I would have responded that the study items in my portfolio "are a product of me exploring and practicing my craft, like artists and designers do the world over."

## Keep your portfolio simple & accessible

Assume your potential clients are busy people and execute the design of your portfolio accordingly by making it

1. Fast loading
2. Super easy to access and browse
3. Easy to reference in conversation

Potential clients come to your site for two primary reasons: 1) Check out your work and 2) Make contact with you if they dig your stuff.

Consider using your home page as your portfolio to make it that much faster for them to screen you. Many designers use this technique. It's a smart strategy because it lets visitors to your site accomplish what they came to do, faster.

Remember, keep things clean and simple; and for now, forget about writing persuasive marketing copy for your business. Instead, focus on executing a killer 'folio that shows (rather explains) why people should hire you.

OK, so your website and portfolio are in place. Now it's time to start expanding your client base. And that's what we're going to tackle next.

### Section Summary

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- ✓ Get a killer portfolio online
- ✓ Make your portfolio the focus of your website
- ✓ Use Brand Studies to buff up your 'folio and generate customer confidence

**Thanks for checking out *Elite Folios*.**

**If you enjoyed it, I've got another killer freebie for you.**

**[Click here to check it out.](#)**