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Gregory Bowers

Who Uses PDF Portfolios These Days?

**A sarcastic appeasement of an
application form's requirements**

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Portfolios
These Days?**

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To actually see my portfolio, please visit <https://gbbowers.com/work/> and consider updating your job application form to include an open text field in addition to the file upload. Most new designers will be bewildered, and resort to PDF-printing pages from their portfolio site. This helps no one. Thanks.

Greg Bowers
Gig Harbor, WA
Gbbowers.com

For my kid, my cat, and 2001 Seattle Mariners.

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Prologue

When I first got started in the design field, we'd bring hardcopies of our portfolios, often huge zippered cases or binders. We begged companies to accept a digital file, or better yet, visit our fancy new "interweb sites." We also tied an onion to our belts, which was the style at the time.

Time passed, and recruiting evolved. Printed portfolios went the way of the printed résumé, and application moved to the world wide web. Forms allowed for uploading a portfolio, but this didn't allow for the rich multimedia experience designers needed to showcase our skills. But a website! A website could meet that need! Why, you could put whatever you pleased on a website. Even a dancing hamster! What a world!

Eventually, folks realized most of their applicants were sending URLs to websites, and that even those with static PDF portfolios could just as easily share it as a linked file from Dropbox or Google Drive. Times they were a-changin'!

In this challenging throwback to yesteryear, Greg Bowers will fulfill the requirements of your application form by directing you to his portfolio site at gbbowers.com. In doing so, you might gain some insight into his strange personality and self-effacing humor. Personally, I think he's scary and he stole my wallet.

–Grandpa Simpson

Chapter 1

Was this really necessary?

During the process of filling out your application form, I was struck by an interesting challenge: not only was the Portfolio field a file upload input, but it was also a required field. I shuddered when the red asterisk used to indicate this didn't tie to a footnote or legend, let alone use a better practice of including a quick "(required)" snippet of text.

"I can handle this!" I thought. I'd recently created a plain text file with my portfolio's URL (and password, which I've since removed) to solve this problem applying for another job—one that I clearly didn't want as much as this one. I browsed for that file, and was struck with horror: the txt file was greyed out and not an option to upload.

Flummoxed and cursing Sol Invictus for ignoring my daily sacrifice, I realized the field had a file-type restriction, despite no such indication in the form. I would need a PDF that could direct the intelligent, witty, and downright beautiful people so desperate to hire me to my portfolio site, of which they clearly already knew [the address](#). But how could I do this in a way that made me stand out, or at

least show how committed I can be to a bit? Then it hit me. I could really be that facetious.



So I went about creating this book, which will clearly be read by dozens of people. Or no one. Maybe you'll reject my humor, startled by my lighthearted nature flying in the face of all the overtly earnest kids applying for this role who are just really good at self promotion and buzzwords. That's okay. Your loss, I guess. However, the fact that the field for a GitHub profile is also a file upload (my GitHub is linked from my site, btw) in the application form shows y'all either have an enormous collective funny bone, or you really need my help. If you want to see my attempt at capturing a few of the things I've worked on in the past, by all means, stop reading this drivel at head to <https://gbbowers.com> to see that inspired masterwork.

Hey, does this count as a cover letter, too? Do you even read those?

About the Author



Gregory Bowers is a celebrated designer of products and services, and a clearly gifted writer of prose. He is not well known for slam poetry, which he's never tried, but assumes would vaguely resemble Mike Myers doing so in the film "So I Married an Axe Murderer". Greg once wrote a research paper on using a late 90s era flip phone to control a multimedia video conferencing room used for Internet2 research. He was also bitten by a golden eagle at his Eagle Scout Court of Honor. Greg is disabled and an advocate for inclusion and access for all. He lives with his family in Gig Harbor, Washington, where he enjoys feeding the birds and waiting for something in return.