

NEVER RUN OUT OF PROJECTS STARTING TODAY

10 Lessons on How to Get Consistent Projects and Manage Them Effectively

1st Webdesigner

Never Run Out of Projects Starting Today

(Chapter 1&2)

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Part 1.
Becoming a Web Design Professional



Chapter 1
Getting Long Term Steady Projects

There are more than 300 million people connected to the Internet - that's a huge number of opportunities waiting for anyone to tap into.

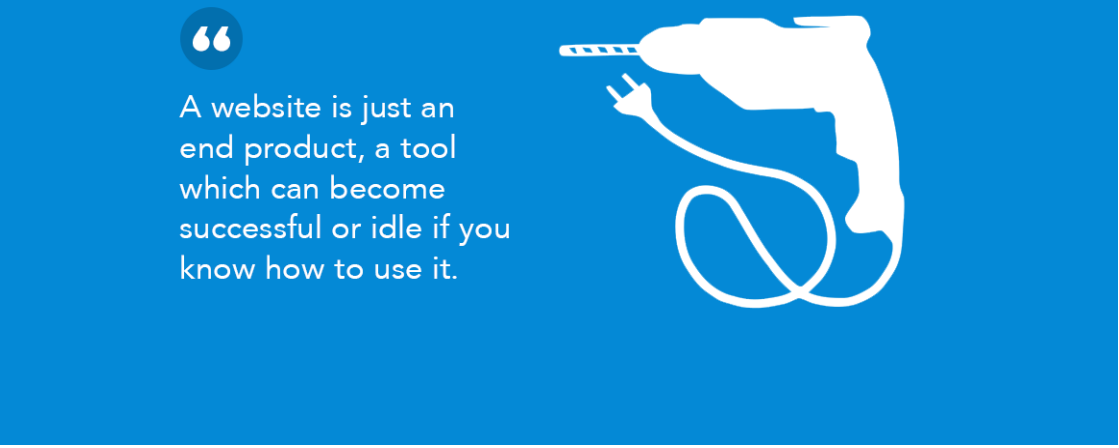
But the same dilemma remains:

Why are there a lot of freelance web designers struggling to find long-term clients?

If you are one of them, you might be wondering what you can be doing wrong or thinking if there is a sure-fire formula to get to this level.

Why are some web professionals successful and charge higher project after project, while others are struggling to find the right clients?

To be honest, there are no set methods or standards how to acquire projects that are long-term. Instead, we give you principles shared by experts and web professionals who have been successful in the business.



A website is a tool.

As we lay them down to you, you might notice that you might have come across them or already know about them, but haven't really given them so much thought.

So we lay down the basics for you.

Let Your Clients Know What You are Capable of Doing.

A website is more than a website. What does it mean?

It simply means that a website is just an end product, a tool which can become successful or idle if you know how to use it. When you design a website and give it to your clients, they don't know what to do with it unless they have marketing and design knowledge.

All they know is that they already have a website and you finished your job. That is how most web designers work - they meet the client, ask their clients what they want, they design the website, give it to the the client, the client pays them, and then the working relationship ends.



Listen to our interview with **Paul Jarvis.**.

However, if you present to your client that you can add value to his or her business other than creating a website, you are positioning yourself to become part of their team for the long term. Knowing how to code or how to design a website alone isn't enough anymore.

It is a fact that there are many web designers out there who are as talented, or maybe more talented, than you are. So what is that extra value you can add that will let clients choose you and work with you for a longer period of time?

Paul Jarvis, as he mentioned in our podcast interview with him, was able to charge $9000 per project because he also offers his clients different business strategies which will help them use their website effectively to grow their business.
In short, you have to begin thinking and practicing that you are also an entrepreneur and look at the other aspects of web design aside from coding and designing.

Making the Website Work

Websites nowadays are interactive - designed to be explored, shared, and used across different types of platforms and devices. So when you design a website, you should also focus on the business aspect of the website.

Focusing on the business side of the website does not mean that you have to manage all its aspects or even take on the accounting side of things. It simply means that you have to make sure that it works to meet the specific needs of each of your client and in so doing, you'd help them grow their business.

For example, if your client is an author, their primary goal is to expand their readership and their community as well as increase the sales of his book. If the client is a musician, then they definitely need to build their fan base and sell their music. For some, they might want to increase their membership, their subscribers, their visitors, and so on. Ask what your client does, what it is they offer, and how can the website you've created help them grow their business.

Make Sure that You Set Your Client Up for Growth

Knowing and understanding something is one thing, but making it work effectively and efficiently is another.

The process does not stop when you find out what your client needs. It is just the beginning because the most important thing is you help them create a strategy that will help them grow their business. The strategy includes placing the right elements in the website as well as implementing these elements. How are you going to use email and opt-in boxes, membership systems, and contact forms?



Listen to our interview with **Jairek Robbins**.

Even the placement of the header is very crucial in optimizing the website. Even the graphics and the copywriting should contribute to the website as a whole in order to achieve its targeted purpose - and that is to convert them from visitors into customers.

In fact, the beauty of graphics should complement the value of the content and vice-versa. One of the most powerful quotes about content states that "the user always look at the content and graphics as one entity and never separated from the other." With this in mind, you should never overlook either of them.

When your client sees the value you can offer and see the results of what you have done, your clients will naturally go back to you.

As Jairek Robbins said in our podcast interview with him, "You have to over-deliver until you make raving fans from your customers and they can't stop talking about you to every person they meet."

Chapter 2
Placing Up Your Portfolio

Your portfolio is your career calling card which provides a sneak peak for prospective clients. It's one of the most important elements in your career as a web design professional where you can present your best work in the most professional and accessible way.

How you set up your portfolio will either attract or shoo away your clients. So in this section, we gather some of the most helpful tips and advice to help you nail the portfolio that will impress.

1. Create Detailed Visuals - It Is Not Just about the Aesthetics

We live in a world where pictures, graphics, and anything related to visuals are very important. True that words can help you create a mental image, but nothing beats seeing the image itself.

That is why marketers and advertisers depend a great deal on the visuals when they launch a campaign - and what people see first, sticks in their minds. However, potential clients need more - when they like what they see, they would want to know more. In short, they want details.

That is why it is very important that you put forth something that will interest your clients.

Make sure that your portfolio represents the skills and specialty you have the best way possible. If you are a logo designer, make sure that you place a high quality image in your portfolio.

On the other hand, if you are a developer, find a way how to showcase your work. If it cannot be represented by an image, make sure that you provide a clear and thorough explanation about the project.

2. Include How Long It Will Take You to Finish the Project

It is a very dynamic world we live in, where every minute counts. For business owners, time is synonymous with money. They have a goal where a short delay can mean a loss of profits. That is why, clients want to know how long it takes you to finish a certain project.

This is one mistake web developers and designers often commit. Because they are creatives, they tend to focus more on the project without regards to time. Their most common response when asked about this is, "It depends on the project."

You should stop this wrong practice and start looking from your client's perspective - after all, he's the one who's going to pay you. It does not mean that you become a "Yes Man" to your client's every whim, but think that your client wants details as fast as possible. So learn to compromise and give estimates early because what you can do now, your client wants it done yesterday.



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3. How Much Does the Project Cost

Realistically, most, if not all, clients have three criteria when looking for a web designer or developer - visuals, time, and cost.

They also need clear information about these three items as fast as possible. If your portfolio includes these three elements, you will save a great deal of your and your client's time. Yours from answering the same questions again and again, and your client's because he can get down to asking other important questions regarding the project.

With regards to pricing, it is up to you how much you will price yourself. Some points you need to consider when thinking about pricing is the competition - how much are similar designers charging; the time you will put into the project; and most importantly, the value you are bringing into the project.

4. What Challenges You Faced and Improvements You Made

The first three points are just the icing on the cake, but unfortunately, they are not the cake. The fourth point is the top layer of the cake



Give a Link to a Finished, Live Website

because when you answered the first three points, your client wants to dig deeper and ask for more information.

Explain what are the challenges you faced in the previous projects you made as well as the improvements you did. This will give him an idea what things are involved in the process as well as your expertise in helping face the challenges and create solutions.

Aside from the challenges, the client also wants to know what you can do for an already existing website. This is essential for the types of clients who already have an existing website which he wants to improve or develop.

5. Give a Link to a Finished, Live Website

Showing the client screen shots and visuals of the project you've finished is good, but providing a link to a finished, live website is way much better.

It holds more power and has more credibility, and proves to be a much better testimony. It also squashes all doubts whether it is a real project or not.

6. Provide a Creative Write-up About Each Project

Clients are people with emotions and who won't refuse or avoid reading a story, especially successful or inspirational stories. Thus, you give yourself an edge when you share an interesting story about each project you are involved in.

The story can be about how the client find you, how many revisions you did, the trial and error process that goes into it, and more. You can even include funny anecdotes while you're doing the project. If you happen to be involved in a popular project or for a well-known client, it helps a lot if you include stories about that client. It is a given that when you open up first, they will also begin to open up first.

7. Explain What Your Role Was in the Project

Sometimes, you get involved in a project where you share it with another designer, or you were not able to finish a project. If this is the case, specify what your role is in the project instead of pretending that you've done it single-handedly. Give credit to whom credit is due.

Besides, the truth will come out sooner or later and when the client finds out that you are lying, then you have jeopardized not only the project, but your reputation as well.

Clients value integrity and honesty. It doesn't matter whether you play a small or a big role in a project. What matters is you are honest, which builds client trust.



8. Specify the Skills You Used in the Project and Which Industry It is In.

This is the section where you can let your technical skills shine to impress tech savvy clients, who are specifically looking for a UI expert or Ruby on Rails developer. Here is where it is okay to explain what type of programming language, or software did you use.

In addition, you can also include which industry the website is in. Specifics like this make it easier for the client to find you and more likely to hire you if he saw that you have experience in a similar project within a similar industry.

9. Drive Traffic to Your Portfolio Page

Congratulations when you have done all the tips and advice suggested above. However, there is one thing you shouldn't forget - driving traffic

to your website. No matter how well-designed and well-written your portfolio is, but there is no traffic to it, you will soon be thrown into the sea of other web designers who sank into oblivion.

Drive traffic to your portfolio page by posting advertisements on web design sites, other social media sites, or other places where it is appropriate. Optimize it so that it will show up in search results and clients will find you.

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