

# Designer Portfolio Websites Survey

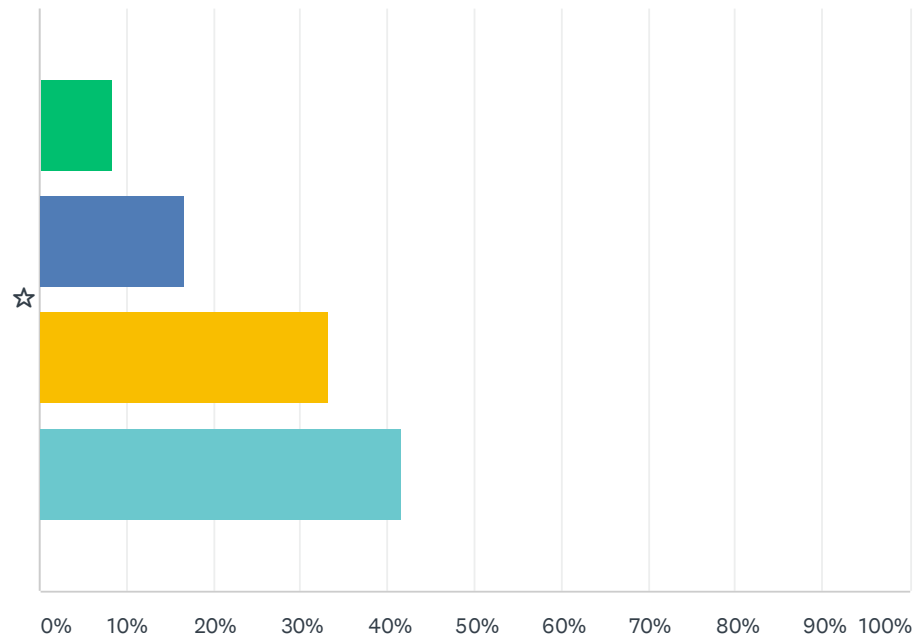
This is a small survey (qualitative) asking design recruiters from a variety of companies about factors that create good or bad experiences for them when reviewing portfolio websites in their efforts to find the right candidates for the right roles.

Here are the results with my findings/comments.



# Q1 What do you think of unique "out of the box" navigation and animation in a portfolio site?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



■ This gets in my way 
 ■ No strong opinion 
 ■ Nice to have but not a dealmaker or breaker 
 ■ This is a big selling point for me

	THIS GETS IN MY WAY	NO STRONG OPINION	NICE TO HAVE BUT NOT A DEALMAKER OR BREAKER	THIS IS A BIG SELLING POINT FOR ME	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	8.33% 1	16.67% 2	33.33% 4	41.67% 5	12	3.08

My takeaway: Dazzling the recruiter with fancy interactions or menu concepts is probably not necessary unless they are looking for someone with that specialty.

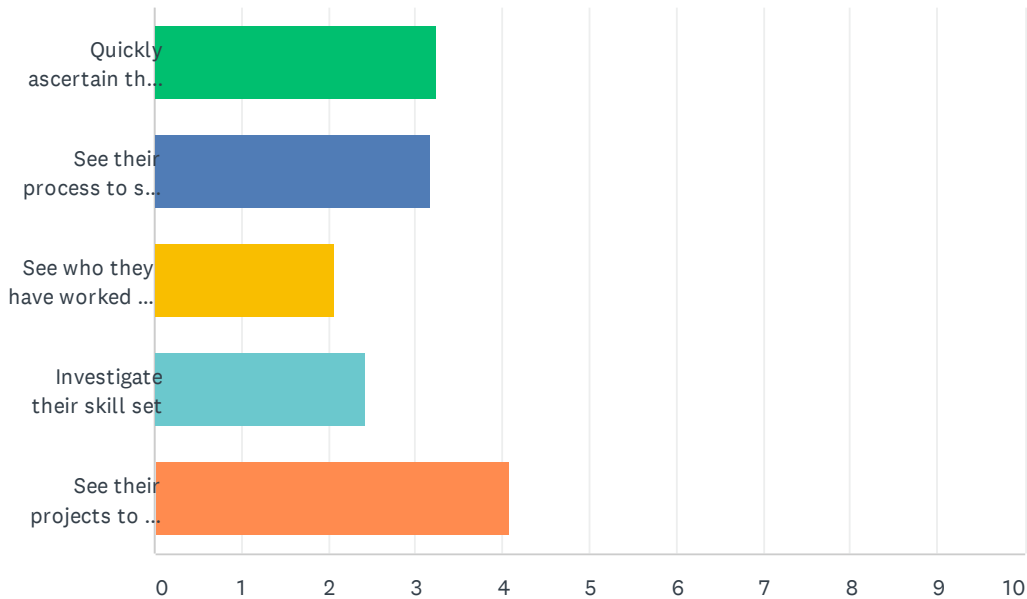
This really depends -- if it's "out there" and I can't find anything, I haaaate it. If it's crazy but functional, that's the BEST.

However, 42% isn't nothing. If you want to sell yourself based on your unique take on nav and interactions, you could include them. Just make sure they are not distracting, disorienting, or cause the user to get lost and not find their way back.

Only do this if it makes sense to your brand and is consistent throughout the portfolio. One-off interactions are distracting

## Q2 Rank your main goals when looking at a candidate's portfolio website.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

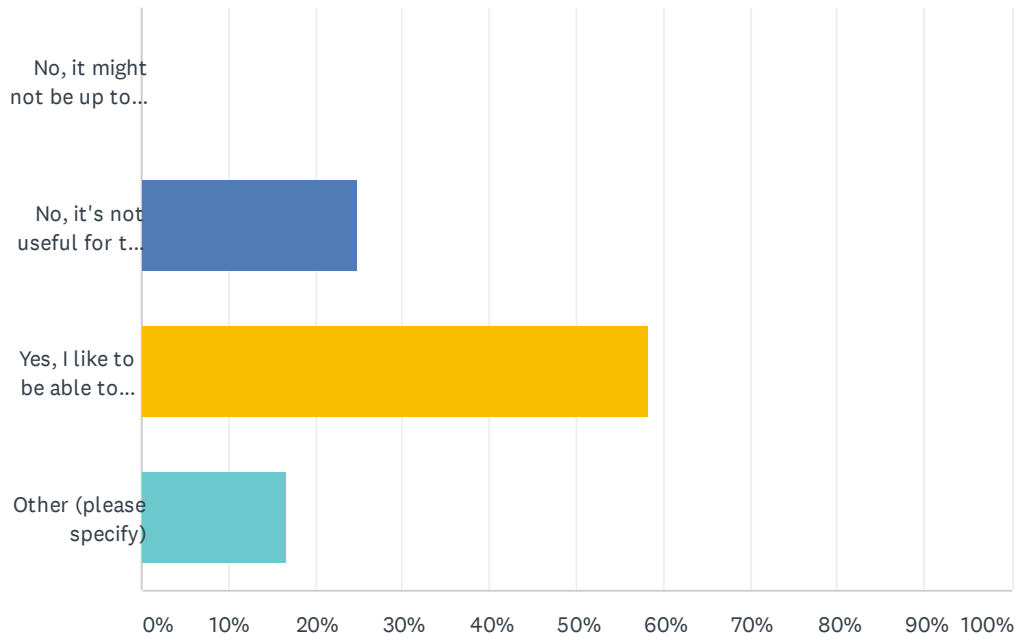


	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Quickly ascertain their experience	25.00% 3	33.33% 4	8.33% 1	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	12	3.25
See their process to see if they're a good fit for a particular role	8.33% 1	41.67% 5	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	8.33% 1	12	3.17
See who they have worked for in the past	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 3	25.00% 3	41.67% 5	12	2.08
Investigate their skill set	0.00% 0	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	41.67% 5	16.67% 2	12	2.42
See their projects to see if they're a good fit for a particular role	58.33% 7	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	12	4.08

Probably not a huge surprise that projects and process come in first and second. Based on this, it's a good idea to feature your favorite (also recent) projects on your home page

### Q3 Do you find it helpful if the candidate's resume is on the website?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

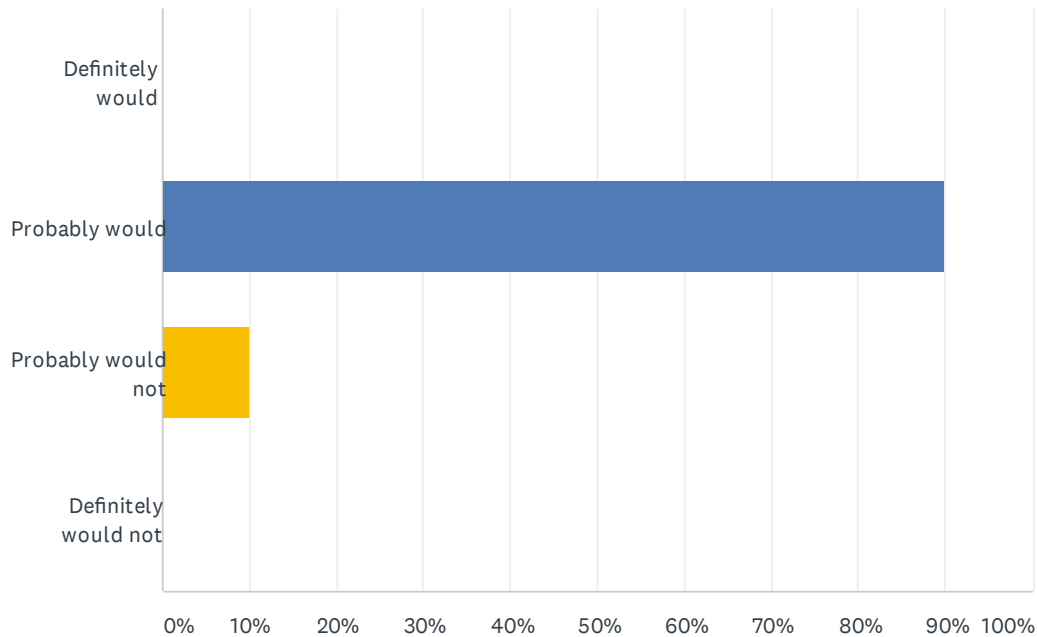


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No, it might not be up to date	0.00%	0
No, it's not useful for this phase for me	25.00%	3
Yes, I like to be able to download it from the site	58.33%	7
Other (please specify)	16.67%	2
TOTAL		12

I think this is enough consensus to have a handy download link on your website. It's also convenient for you, as you can refer people to your site for the latest version of your resume if you're away from your desk, tech difficulties, etc.

## Q4 Would a poor portfolio site experience be a dealbreaker for you even if you were impressed by their projects and experience?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 2



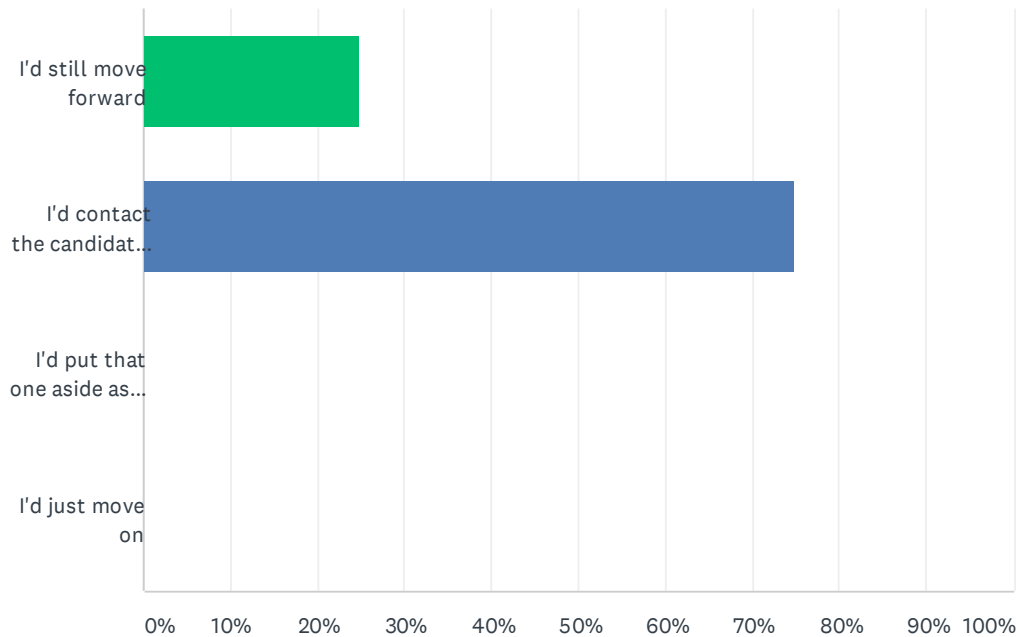
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Definitely would	0.00%	0
Probably would	90.00%	9
Probably would not	10.00%	1
Definitely would not	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Don't let people get lost or annoyed on your portfolio site.  
(See also question 1)

Depends on the role. UX portfolios tend to be simple but should be well organized. Visual and Interactive designers who preach brand should practice it with their portfolio. If your portfolio(site) is subpar, you better blow me out of the water. (with your work samples)

## Q5 What if the site was well organized, the projects were pretty, but the process/storytelling wasn't there?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

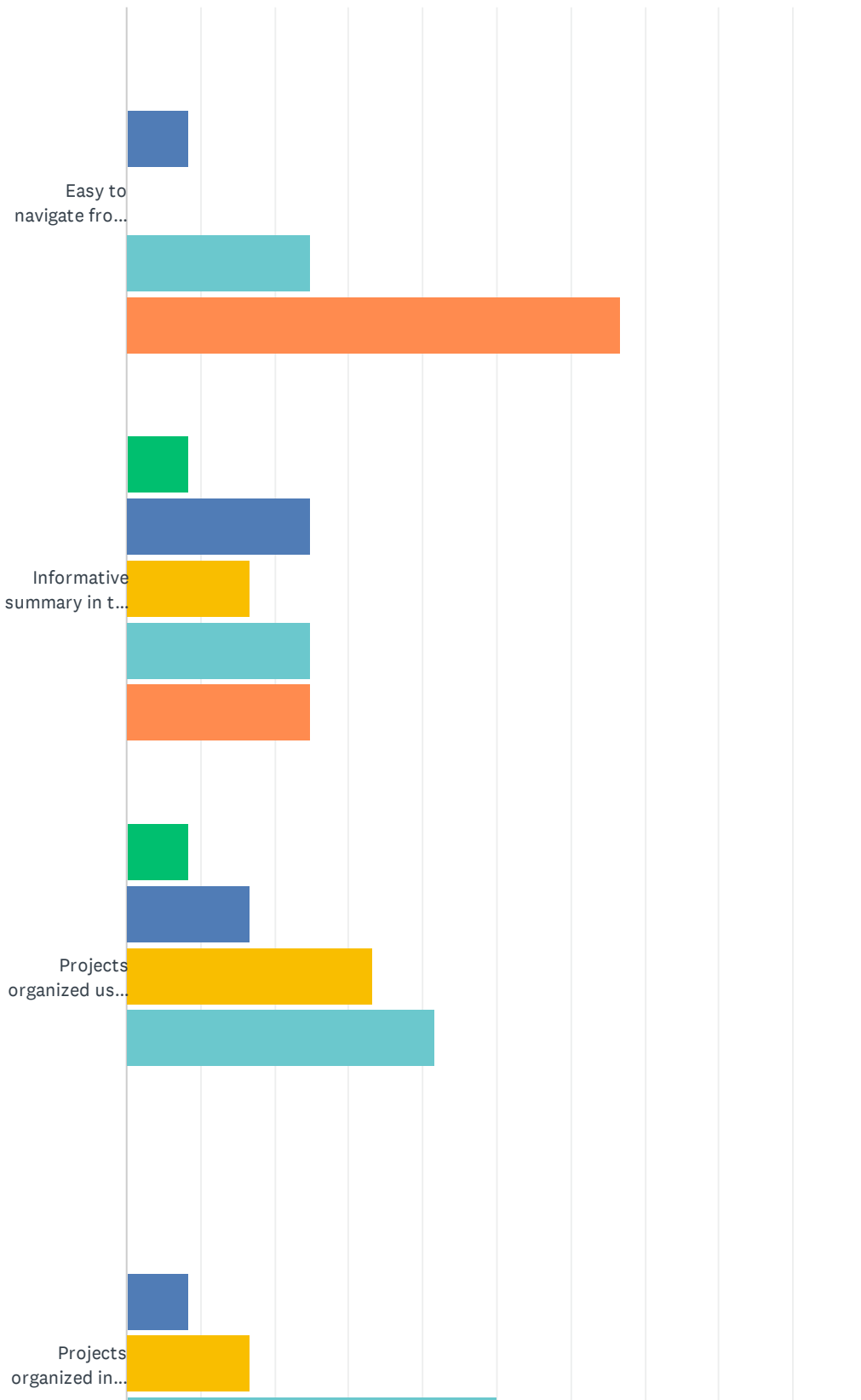


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I'd still move forward	25.00%	3
I'd contact the candidate and ask if they had process in a presentation deck	75.00%	9
I'd put that one aside as a plan B but keep looking	0.00%	0
I'd just move on	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

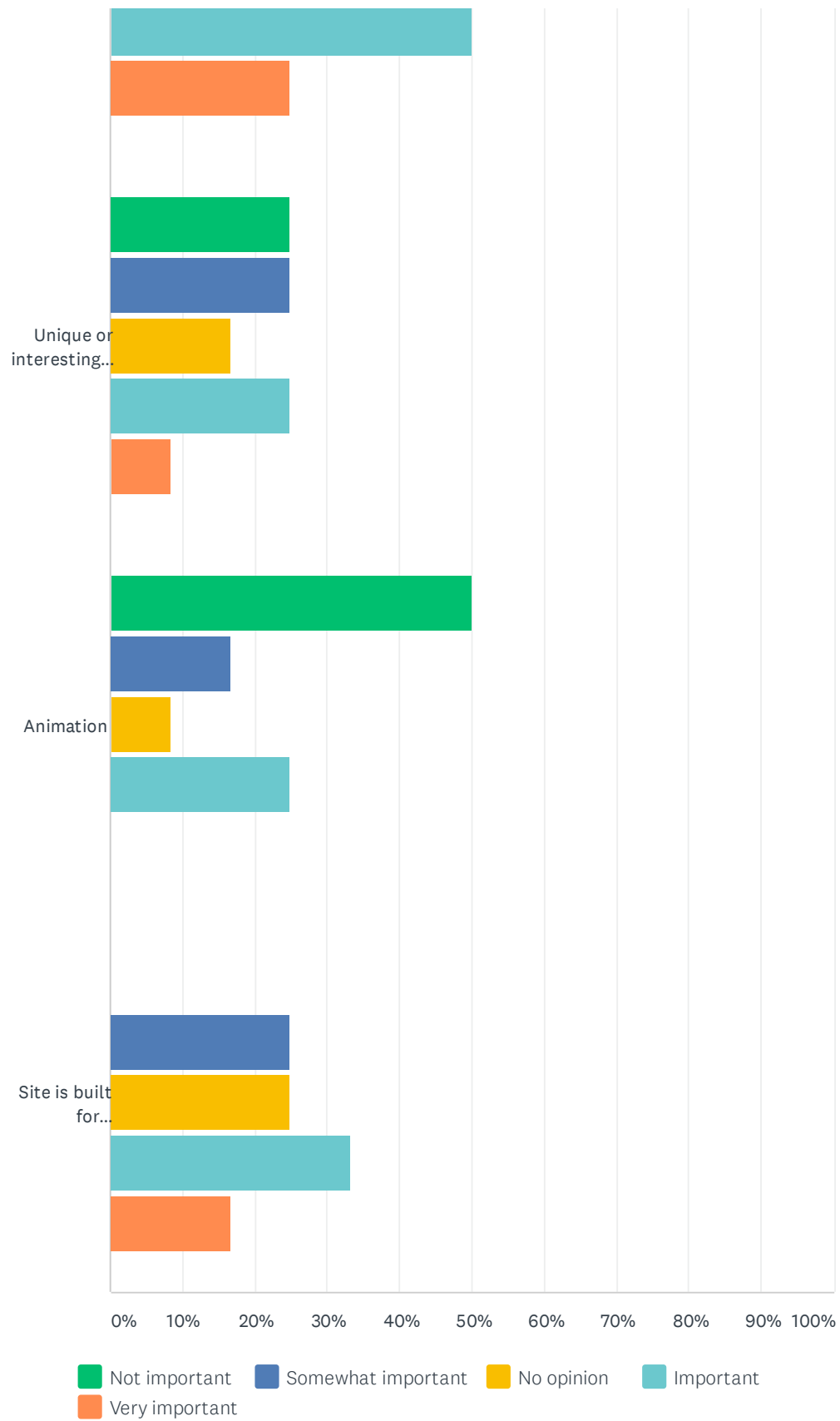
This was me. If you're not showing process in your site, make sure you have it in a presentation deck until your site is ready. Maybe some leeway for this rule if you're strictly a visual or graphic designer.

Q6 Please rate the things that make for the most hassle free and delightful experience for you in a portfolio website.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



## Portfolio Websites





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	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Easy to navigate from anywhere on the site	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 3	66.67% 8	12	4.50
Informative summary in the hero section of the home page	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	25.00% 3	12	3.33
Projects organized using tags	8.33% 1	16.67% 2	33.33% 4	41.67% 5	0.00% 0	12	3.08
Projects organized into basic design categories (i.e. UX, brand identity, etc)	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	16.67% 2	50.00% 6	25.00% 3	12	3.92
Unique or interesting microinteractions	25.00% 3	25.00% 3	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	8.33% 1	12	2.67
Animation	50.00% 6	16.67% 2	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	12	2.08
Site is built for accessibility	0.00% 0	25.00% 3	25.00% 3	33.33% 4	16.67% 2	12	3.42

Of course if your specialty is animation or microinteractions, you can ignore this—it's important.

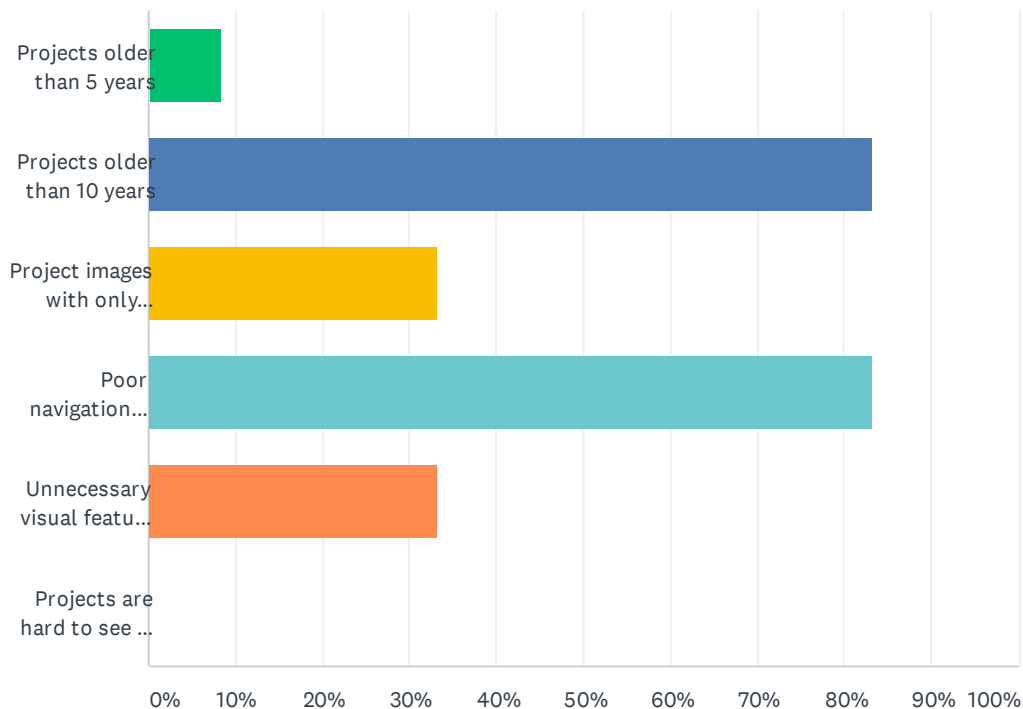
If you are not using a CMS or have enough projects to justify tags, you can simply make sure to at least have them categorized and a way to let the user find any category from any page on your site.

You should just follow accessibility guidelines. Recruiters might not care but most employers would, Also why not, what are you a monster?

Let the user find anything from anywhere. It's ok to have a "next" link at the bottom of a page/story, if you also have a sticky nav at the top or a nav on the footer. Users may want to choose what to see next, not just click the mystery button.

## Q7 Check anything on a portfolio site that you would consider a red flag for that designer's skills or judgment

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Projects older than 5 years	8.33%	1
Projects older than 10 years	83.33%	10
Project images with only captions and no stories	33.33%	4
Poor navigation experience	83.33%	10
Unnecessary visual features or animation	33.33%	4
Projects are hard to see on my phone	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 12		

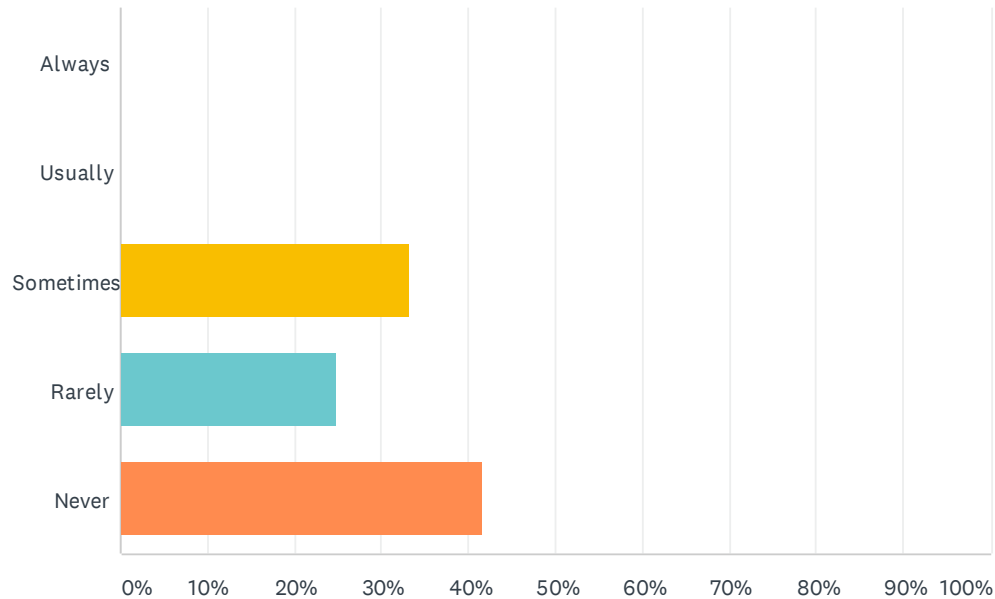
This again

If you have something really great from 10 years ago and it doesn't look at all dated, you could archive it but keep it handy for very specific reasons/interviews. However, putting ancient work front and center will make it look like you're not as proud of anything you've done lately.

I found this one good to know. But note that it means projects are hard to see, not the site. Make sure it's mobile friendly, especially if you're a ux or ui designer

## Q8 How often do you review portfolio sites using your phone?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

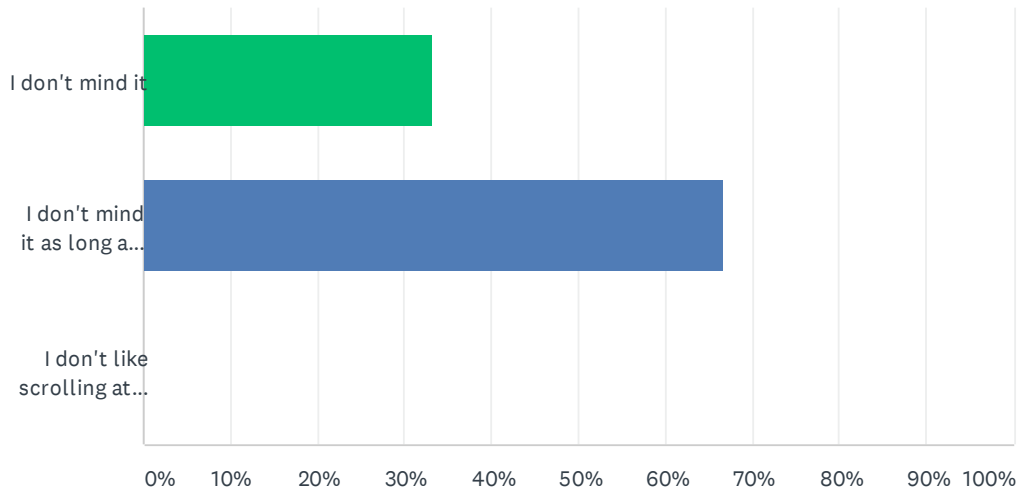


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	0.00%	0
Usually	0.00%	0
Sometimes	33.33%	4
Rarely	25.00%	3
Never	41.67%	5
TOTAL		12

Of course your site should be responsive for all devices, but with this info in mind, you can justify prioritizing a layout that makes for the best desktop version.

## Q9 How do you feel about scrolling?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I don't mind it	33.33%	4
I don't mind it as long as the navigation is always in view	66.67%	8
I don't like scrolling at all, I'd rather click	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

Having a scrolling nav on a long scroll is a great bonus

I used to keep hearing that users "hate scrolling" so I wanted to ask this question to double check. This comment from one of the respondents is good advice. Either a scrolling nav or a progress bar lets people know how long of a story they'll be reading.