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Affordable Ways to Share Print and Web Portfolios

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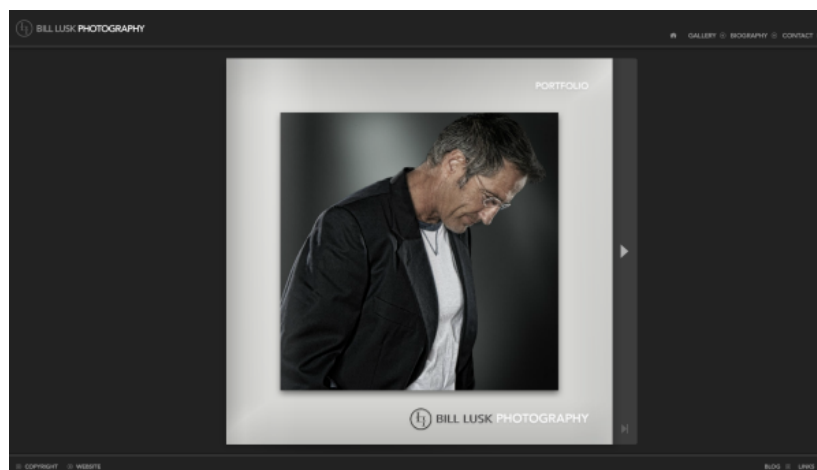
By Louisa J. Curtis

Question: What are some less-expensive options for getting my portfolio out there?

Good news! Nowadays, it really has become much more affordable to get your portfolio out there, both online and as coffee table books, which can be self-published. Here are a few suggestions and current trends; I say “trends” because some of them are certainly that, and it’s okay if you don’t do it all. You have to choose what works for you and your current budget.

Many websites now have features that allow you to create downloadable PDF files of your individual portfolios. This way, a creative can download a specific PDF and show it directly to a client, instead of the client having to look through your entire website. Taking this a step further is Flipbooks. Just like Amazon.com, where we can now “look inside” many books before purchasing them, Flipbook software turns pages much like they would be turned in a printed portfolio, so the viewer gets the feel of seeing a printed book online.

My client, photographer [Bill Lusk](#), and his web designer, [Greg Welch](#), have created a beautiful Flipbook of Bill’s main portfolio, which we re-edited recently. The Flipbook can also be downloaded as a PDF, while more of Bill’s work can be viewed in separate galleries on the website. And although some Flipbook software is initially free, in this instance Bill paid his designer to modify the publishing plugin “Issuu” so he could remove the branding and display the Flipbook within Bill’s custom website. If you don’t have a designer, [Agency Access’ design service](#) can also create a branded [Flipbook](#) for you.



Bill Lusk's Flipbook

So how about an affordable printed book? If you don't have hundreds of dollars to spend on printed portfolios, there are many well-priced self-publishing options available. Another of my clients, [Michelle Kawka](#), made two adorable landscape books through [Adorama Pix](#) printing services, one for her landscape and travel work, the second for her people and portraits.

Each book cost less than \$100 (price varies according to number of pages). They are small enough to make them easy to carry or to ship, and yet the size does not compromise the feel of the work. And at that price, she can redo them more than once a year!



Michelle Kawka's printed portfolios

Another, perhaps bolder portfolio promotion is one adopted by advertising photographer [Monte Isom](#), but then Monte's work is pretty bold, so it makes perfect sense, really. When I first met Monte and asked for his business card, he handed me a flash drive! At the time I recall thinking to myself, "I wonder how many people are NOT even going to look at this, because they're still scared to plug foreign objects into their computer?" But guess what? I had to eat my words, because it has worked very well for Monte and he hasn't sent out a printed book in years!

In the beginning, he was simply showing work from his website, but now the key component on the flash drives is his 90-second [portfolio reel](#), which is set to music. Monte maintains that anyone can take 90 seconds from their hectic day to view work, plus his [behind-the-scenes videos](#).

These are sent to ad agencies both in the United States and overseas – and it saves him an awful lot on his FedEx bills!



Monte Isom's flash drive