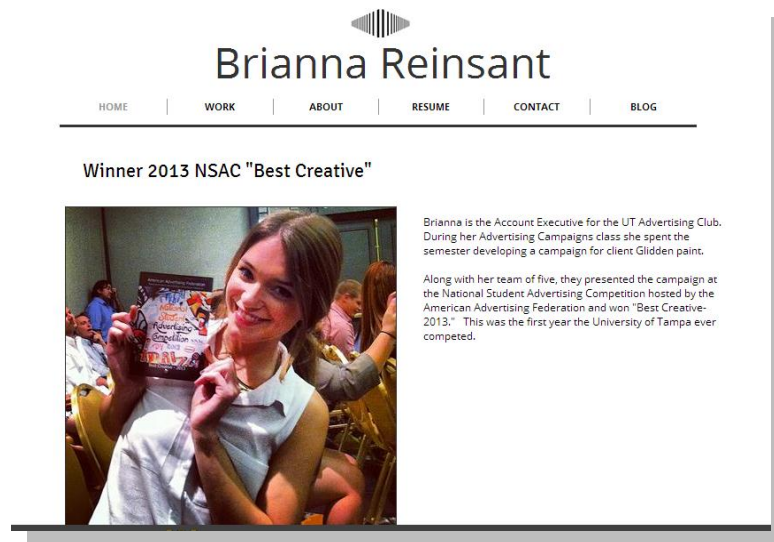# Home Page Strategies for Your Portfolio Site

So, you're creating an online portfolio web site to promote yourself to prospective employers. You have a logo, resume, and portfolio. You're either building the web pages yourself or using a CMS with a cool interface you've customized. Just one thing is staring you in the face: your home page. What will you do with that big, gaping, blank space staring at visitors upon landing? It's the most important page—the first impression—and yet, there's no formula for creating it, and you're at a loss. Here are some ideas for making a strong first impression on the home page:

- **Big News:**

Did you win a contest in your field? Did one of your clients do something great as a result of your work? Lead with your most exciting news if you have it. http://breinsant.wix.com/brianna-reinsant-

- **Autobiography / About:**

Some people use the home page as the "About" page (for tips on writing an "About" segment, see "About the About"). http://tamarajoseph2.wordpress.com/

■ **Skills Lists:**

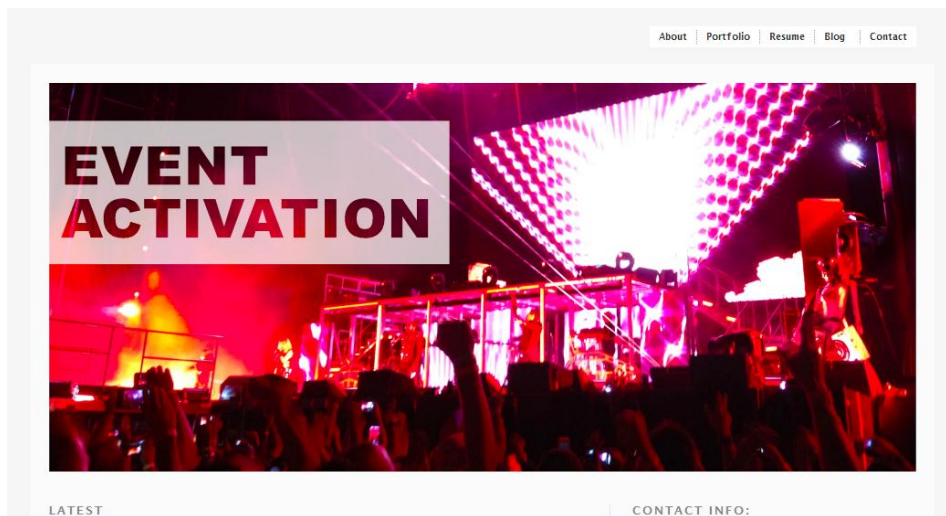What skills do you have to offer prospective employers and clients? You can list them on the home page.

www.KaseyColucci.com

■ **Slide Shows:**

Slide shows can be an engaging way to show off a strong portfolio up-front.

http://www.alexablackburn.com/

■ **Scrolling Portfolio Page as Home Page:**

Putting your work up-front can be a strong strategy if your portfolio is well developed.

■ **Endorsement Quotes:**

Some people feature endorsements from others about their work, on the home page. Testimonials are strong forms of advertising. http://baynechristian.wix.com/cbayne"
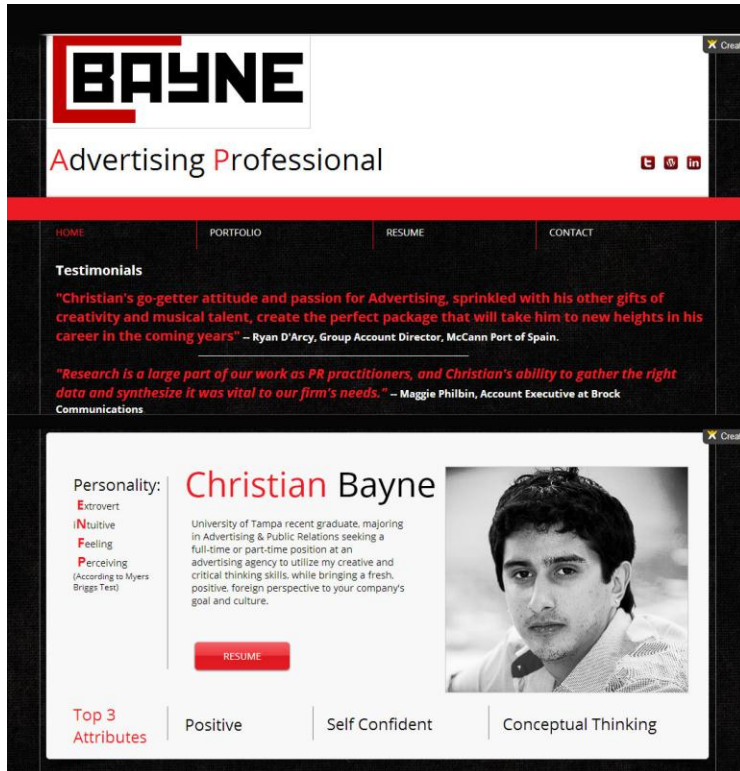
■ **Splash Pages:**

Splash pages contain no information per se—they just leave a graphic impression. While splash pages are usually advised against for businesses, a portfolio site with arresting graphic impact on the home page can make a strong creative statement if you are planning to work in creative fields. In the example below, the photo was taken by the student, so all work was hers. http://www.shelbymalvestuto.com/, http://www.clarisavportfolio.com
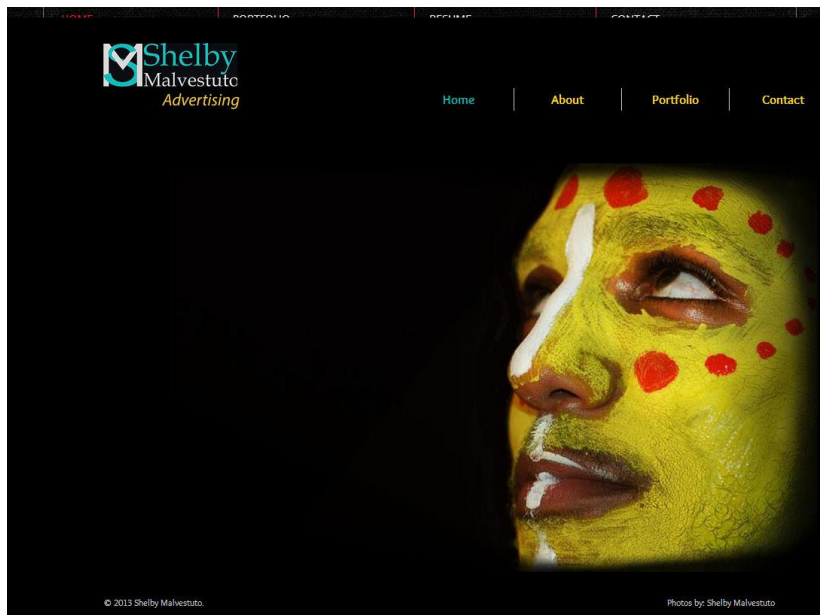
■ **Random Quotes:**

While quotes can be effective, it can be risky to fill your home page with a huge quote, for several reasons. First, it's not your words, so it's not showing any of your creativity, talent, or skill in the most important place you have to make a first impression. Also, your reader might not think the quote is as insightful as you do. At the same time, if there's an unusual quote you'd like to include as part of a strong splash page, it can be effective.
http://conniewhitener.com

■ **Photo Of Yourself:**

If you include a photo of yourself on the home page, make sure you are dressed for the job you want (no club wear, wild hair, seductive poses or family pics). Also, make sure the photo has strong production values (good lighting, resolution, and composition). Dress to send a message. Are you trying to project a creative, upbeat, quirky persona? A business-like demeanor? Experiment with different shots. If you believe an employer could be biased against any of your physical characteristics (obviously discrimination does exist in the workforce), or if you believe a photo would detract from more important content, a photo is not needed.

■ **Clever:**

Some students create clever approaches to their identity, which can be risky but effective for students who are already fairly established in a field, have a strong portfolio, and can afford to appear a little playful. If you do take this kind of risk, ask for many professionals' opinions about whether or not you're hitting the mark.
http://alvarogabaldon.weebly.com/index.html
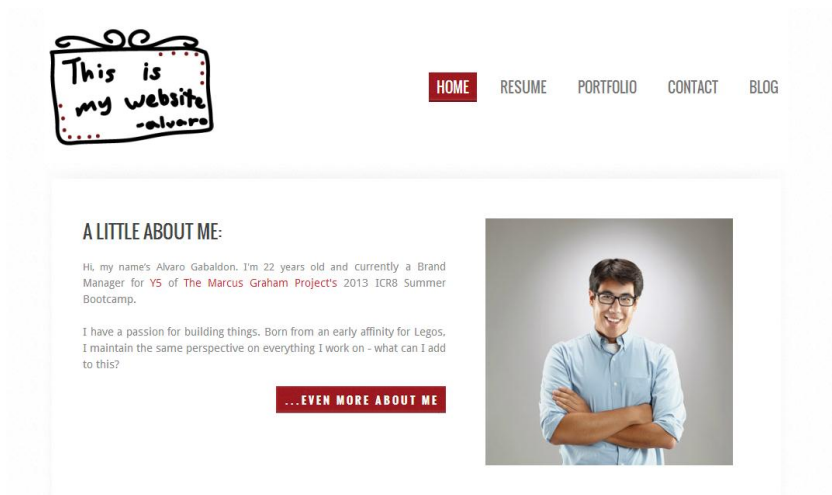
■ **Combinations**

Students use various combinations—and even all of the above—in their home page designs. See what works best to showcase your skills, experience, and identity.