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Pressfolios gives journalists an easy way to show off

By Allie Caren



Courtesy of Pressfolios

It's easy to use, easy to share and easy to fall in love with: It's called [Pressfolios](#) and it's the new, online digital portfolio maker.

Based out of Washington, D.C., creators Marc Samson and Dan Kaufman have given journalists the newest platform for displaying and dispersing their work.

Samson grew up in Annapolis, Md., and graduated with a degree in business from the University of Maryland in 2007.

One day, while searching for a new client to fill up his time at a media relations job, he realized people need a website to easily display what they've got, what they can offer and what they have the potential to do.

He started poking around the Internet, and didn't really like anything he saw. He said there were tons of website builders but, "the problem is, when I started digging around, they're built for everyone," he said.

He found outlets for photographers and designers — but he soon discovered there wasn't something specifically for journalists.

"The content that we have to show off is a little more complicated than uploading a photo," Samson said.

Samson knew he couldn't be the only one searching for such a solution, and — abiding by the poster he taped to his wall that said, "A problem held by one is a problem held by many" — he and Kaufman came up with Pressfolios: a portfolio for the press.

The duo built what Samson described as a "lightweight, minimum viable product," and put it out to the world to see how people would react.

Pressfolios was originally launched in May of 2012. Samson said 900 people signed up in the first 10 days. The site now has several thousand users.

Though Pressfolios is very much for soon-to-be or recent graduates — driven, young and tech-savvy Millennial reporters — Samson said there is another side to Pressfolios' market: mid-career, technically-inclined, career-minded, mainstream individuals who thought they were going to be at their current job forever and all of a sudden need to make a change.

"That's the person we want to be there for," Samson said.

Samson said nowadays, journalists know about the different platforms and social media tools at their disposal. Older people, however, might not have that experience.



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In its mission to make a user's life easier, Samson explained Pressfolios serves two purposes. First, and most obvious — it allows users to (easily) display all of their work, background and qualifications easily and efficiently.

It also serves as a secondary backup mechanism — every time you add your story, it is permanently backed up in two places to ensure you will always have a digital copy of your work (even if your current or past employer accidentally/intentionally removes the story from the company's server, or if the organization goes under).

"It's never been more important to keep track of your work, to back up your data and to maintain an active online presence as a professional," Samson said.

Samson said that links disappear a lot faster and a lot more often than people realize.

Though there is, and will always be, a free, less-advanced version of Pressfolios, Samson said that the company is leaving private beta within the next month and releasing a newer version with added features, and is inviting users to upgrade their accounts at some undisclosed cost. Samson said it will not be expensive.

Samson explained Pressfolios is also working on "blanket subscription" plans for journalism schools and students, which will allow all students an "in" to Pressfolios (thus bypassing the waitlist). Until then, universities are invited to request access codes for their students.

So far, 32 universities have requested access codes.

Samson said a main goal for Pressfolios is to be as simple and straightforward as possible.

"Our mission is to give journalists control of their published work and control of their personal brand," Samson said.

Pressfolios eliminates a lot of frustration between potential employee and potential employers early on, like problems opening Word attachments or PDF files. In addition to uploading clips or links to your stories, you can upload a resume, quick bio, head shot and cover photo as well.

Samson said since Pressfolios makes the process so easy, there's no reason not to do it.

Allie Caren is a student at Syracuse University and was a Summer 2012 USA TODAY Collegiate Correspondent. [Learn more about her here.](#)

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