

Profile of a Web Designer

Robert Parker
Freelance Web Designer

Age: 42
No. of years in business: 5
Earning potential: For an in-house web designer, \$25,000 - \$200,000 per year.

Typical Project: Designing and installing a small, 5-page web site that would normally take me about 10 hours to complete.

9 a.m. - Project begins. Scan all graphics dealing with the project.

10 a.m. - Do data entry processing if it has not been done.

11 a.m. - The creative process starts. I make a rough draft and design the web page on paper. Setting up picture locations, color coordinating the backgrounds, designing the hyperlinks. Next comes the programming process: most designers use a Text Editor (or called an HTML program). This is software that knows all the computer codes for web design.

2 p.m. - After the web site page has been created, I run a test on all the links, graphics, making sure that everything is working properly.

3 p.m. - Take a break to eat.

4 p.m. - I contact the customer to make sure everything is correct and to their approval.

5 p.m. - If everything is O.K. with the customer, I contact their ISP (Internet Service Provider) to load the page on to their new web site.

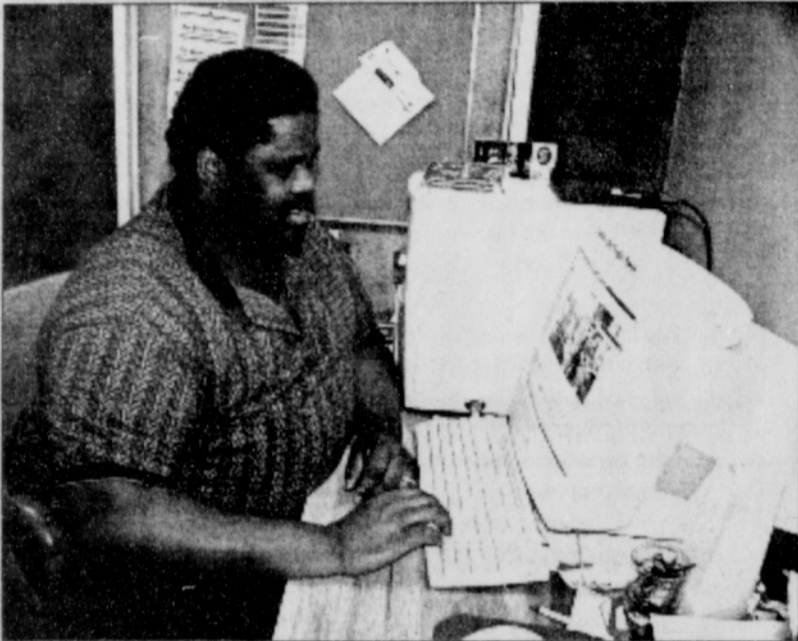


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/PORTLAND OBSERVER
Robert Parker runs R Theory, his own company that designs web pages for all kinds of businesses.

6 p.m. - It's time to check the links and connectivity.

7 p.m. - Project completed. End of my work day.

What do you like the most about your work? I like the variety involved. No two web sites are the same. It gives you a chance to keep up with the technology so you don't get stale or get behind the times. I also like the level of difficulty involved.

What do you least like about your work? I don't like customers who can't make up their mind about graphics and information for their web site.

What advice can you give for someone interested in getting into this profession? It's a relatively

easy job to do. The hardest problem I see is people not trusting their creativity and making their job harder than it is.

To Degree or Not to Degree

Are Great Careers Built on Academic Success?

BY DARRELL W. GURNEY OF MSN.COM

As a longtime professional recruiter, I've often been asked, "How important is a degree for getting a better position?"

The short answer: As important as you make it. Yes, there are headhunters who draw lines in the sand, unwilling to touch "non-degreed" job seekers. But that simply culls out workers who are less likely to be placed or less marketable to client companies. Recruiters receive so many resumes each day that they look for any way to lower the stack. For the same reason, recruiters tend to specialize in various industries and occupations. We can't be all things to all people.

But an individual without a degree is not any less "hot" than someone with one (or more). A non-degreed person can get just as much attention from recruiters and hiring companies - if they know how to present themselves effectively.

For those who are about to graduate, don't disregard this message just because you already have a degree or two under your belt. Out in the real world,

you'll encounter demanding recruiters who want more. The more letters after your name, they think, the better. You may even be on track to head straight back into school. But take it from me: Stop and think about your motivations.

The Examined Life

If Mom is a lawyer, doctor, or professor, and you're expected to follow the family line, then good luck. But this is your life, your decision. If you think that an advanced degree automatically makes you more marketable, consider life after school.

College degrees do support career growth - but you can't rely solely on them. There are so many more determinants of success than good grades. Maybe you can land that first great job, but it will not always lead to a satisfying long-term career.

What are the core "life skills"? Remember one little quotation, author unknown, that spells it out quite well:

Press On

"Nothing in the world can take the

place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful individuals with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education alone will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and Determination alone are omnipotent."

So, what's my point? If you're graduating, I offer a hearty "Congratulations!" on your very worthwhile accomplishment. And let me remind you that your hard-won degree, along with other requisite like skills, will take you as far as you choose to go. If you take time now to develop the non-academic side of your personality, career growth and happiness can be yours.

For those without degrees, you can gain a tremendous amount of informal education simply by being on the playing field - in the working world. As a professional recruiter who has placed many individuals in corporate America, I know that those who develop themselves academically and personally stand the best chance of making it.

* SOURCES: THE A TO Z GUIDE INFORMATION WAS TAKEN FROM THE ONLINE WEBSITES OF PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND WETFEET.COM

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