

Entrepreneurs

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7 Things You Can Do To Build An Awesome Personal Brand



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The term branding has long been relegated to companies, but today almost every individual has a personal brand. Not many of us have consciously cultivated these brands, but they exist nonetheless. A digital footprint in the sands of time and space crowd sourced by friends, colleagues, and bosses. According to an AVG study, 92 percent of children under the age of two already have a digital footprint.

The question is no longer IF you have a personal brand, but if you choose to guide and cultivate the brand or to let it be defined on your behalf. Here are seven ways to start building an awesome personal brand.

Start thinking of yourself as a brand

What do you wish for people to associate with you when they think of your name? Is

there a certain subject matter in which you want to be perceived as an expert or are there general qualities you want linked to your brand? Once you understand how you wish your brand to be perceived, you can start to be much more strategic about your personal brand. This doesn't mean you can't be human. On the contrary, as Michael Simmons writes, [authenticity is key in the digital age](#). A strong personal brand can yield tremendous ROI whether you are working with an organization or leading one. Here are some examples of individuals who have built up authentic and powerful personal brands: [Michael Port](#), [John Bates](#), [Mike Michalowicz](#), [Dave Kerpen](#), [David Meerman Scott](#), [John Jantsch](#), [Dave Carroll](#), and [Barry Moltz](#).

Audit your online presence

You can't mold perception without first understanding the current status. In other words, [Google](#) GOOGL +0.75% GOOGL +0.75%

yourself and setup alerts for your name on a regular basis. Have a fairly common name? Consider using your middle initial or middle name to differentiate. Cultivating a strong personal brand is just as much about being responsive to what is being said as it is about creating intellectual property.

Secure a personal website

Having a personal website for yourself is one of the best ways to rank for your name on the search engines. It doesn't need to be robust. It can be a simple two to three page site with your resume, link to your social

platforms, and a brief bio. You can always expand on the website with time.

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Find ways to produce value

We've all been there. Someone in your network posts something utterly mundane or ridiculous, and you wonder what compelled them to do so? A medium is not a substitute for a message. Find ways to add value to your audience by creating or curating content that's in line with your brand.

Be purposeful in what you share

Every tweet you send, every status update you make, every picture you share, contributes to your personal brand. It is an amalgamation of multiple daily actions. Once you understand how you wish your brand to be perceived, you can start to be

much more strategic about your personal brand.

Associate with other strong brands

Your personal brand is strengthened or weakened by your connection to other brands. Find and leverage strong brands which can elevate your own personal brand. Start with the three C's: company, college, colleagues. Which school did you attend? Are there groups you can join? An alumni newsletter you can contribute to? What hidden opportunities are available within your company which you have yet to tap? Consider submitting a guest post to the company blog or look at other digital assets you can connect to your brand.

Reinvent

A strong personal brand is dependent on a strong narrative. In other words, what's your story? Take a second to think of celebrities you know who have a strong personal brand. [Mark Cuban](#). Martha Stewart. [Richard Branson](#). They all have a very clear story and a consistent brand. If you have multiple passions or areas of interest, a narrative becomes even more crucial so there can be a unified theme. If you need help defining your story, I highly recommend reading [Reinventing You](#) by Dorie Clark.

Most importantly, remember that a strong personal brand should be ubiquitous and ever evolving.