

4 Uses for Social Media: Pt 1 Professional Branding and LinkedIn

What is your first thought when I say social media professional branding? “Why is social media branding important?” The short answer is because a PEW Social Media Fact Sheet reported, “Around seven-in-ten Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and entertain themselves.” Most people you interact or want to interact with are on social media.

The long answer is that you are often dependent on social media footprint to connect with fellow professionals, collaborate on projects, and build your reputation. For that to happen, you need to create a professional brand that personifies who you are, what you represent and the skills you can offer a potential employer (or something like that). Yes, social media branding does take time. However, once you set up apps such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and WordPress, apps this series includes the time it takes is considerably less.

First, you need an arsenal of a professional brand that communicates a unique you. Before you even get online and on apps, sit down and type or write out your skills, what professionals have said about you and your work, your greatest strengths, what value you consistently bring to the table, and your passions, personality, gifts, and unique traits. Then, highlight the things that are distinctly you that are interesting to others. How many times has someone wanted to know more about ... that you do or say? Also, anticipate who you want to be and what you want people to most to remember about you for your professional brand. Trim your words about you down until you have a few sentences remaining. Play with words that are ...

Impactful

Interesting

Interactive

Informative

Illustrative

Instantaneous

Develop that one sentence that is the most substantial thing another professional should know about you. This is your 60 Second Sales Pitch, and it is the bulk of your professional brand. Hold onto the rest to later expand your brand, use in a cover letter, for interview answers. From the sales pitch brand, create a phrase that is a tag line compact enough to post across your social media apps.

For example, you are a nonfiction writer and photographer who writes a variety of topics, from narrative to informative, so you “express reality in ways that captivate, inspire, and inform.” That encompasses both writing and photography, rolls off the tongue, and is interesting. It covers the bases of ways you communicate—photo, narrative, topical—with intrigue through the lively words you chose—express, reality, captivate, inspire, and inform.

You now have a tag line to represent your professional brand and apply across social media apps, starting with the LinkedIn app where all that information you originally wrote, plus your resume goes into a profile.

LinkedIn

Today, companies selecting a candidate for a position look at LinkedIn profiles. Your LinkedIn profile, therefore, is a key part of your professional brand. Kate Harrison quotes in [Top Social Media Tips for Every Platform: YouTube, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Pinterest](#), “LinkedIn is a community of professionals who are ready to be educated on your business and what you have to offer. As a result, it’s a great place to build your personal reputation, brand awareness and a loyal network.”

The simplest way to explain LinkedIn and what it does is to think about it as a live, interactive resume. Like a resume, your profile includes business and positions worked, schools attended, and skills acquired. Your profile helps you build connections and share information among professionals on a day-to-day basis. Fauzia Burke explains in her online marketing book, “The LinkedIn audience is where professionals connect and help each other to be effective, productive, and successful. LinkedIn gives you the opportunity to showcase your professional experience. It is a great way to gain more visibility, increase your rank with search engines, and inform your professional network” (96) about your career activities and trajectory.

However, for it to be effective, you spend time with it, posting quality content, (not photos of pets, vacations, and family members) following and interacting with fellow LinkedIn professionals. From this network you may also gain affirmation of the skills you post or testimonials that beef up your profile and your professional brand.

Works Cited

Burke, Fauzia. *Online Marketing for Busy Authors*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.: Oakland. 2016