The Road To Success: Online Engagement & Identity Management

A Handout for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
April 26, 2011
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What is an online identity anyway?
Your online identity is how people perceive your personality, work ethic, and the quality of your work based on your web presence.

8 Reasons why you should care:
1. When you apply for jobs people will search for you online: what will they find?
2. No presence can be almost as damaging as a bad presence.
3. If you have a common name it may be hard to locate information about you online.
4. If you have an uncommon name everyone will know that embarrassing picture is of you!
5. The Internet is a location neutral place to get involved with professional organizations and connect with like-minded colleagues, these connections can lead to friendships and future collaborations
6. A digital portfolio or resume is an easy way to keep track of your accomplishments.
7. One of the number one reasons people don’t get hired or promoted is because no one knows about the great work they are doing, or at least not the people in charge.
8. Some invitations are only distributed online through websites like Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn, if you aren’t present you’ll miss these in person networking opportunities.

Platforms:
Academia.edu - Academic Interests and Institution Based Networking
Facebook – Friendship & Networking
LinkedIn - Resume and Networking
Twitter - Alternative to RSS Feed Reader, Networking
Websites and/or Blogs - Ultimate in Controlled Networking & Self-Promotion
Tips:

Always be genuine.

- If you don’t believe in what you’re saying you online voice will lack passion and conviction.

Be persistent, it takes time to figure out who you are and what works for you.

- 1-2+ years is normal.
- Things often gel just after you feel like you should give up because you aren’t getting anywhere so stick with it.
- Who you are evolves over time so don’t feel like you have to lock yourself in as a specific “type” of person.

Business Cards

- List your online contact information on your business cards. Make it easy for people to find you!
- Bonus points if you fit in a QR code for your website or virtual business card!

Defining yourself.

- Be careful not to define yourself by a single job description, that doesn’t allow much flexibility and we all change job titles sooner or later.
- Focus on your skills and personal interests when deciding on a screen name.
- Come up with 3-5 words that define how you’d like others to perceive you.

If you wouldn’t repeat it to your boss don’t post it online.

- Truly negative comments always seem to float to the top of search results.
- Legitimate complaints are okay to share but you don’t want to be known as “that negative person who lambastes people in public.”

Privacy.

- Never share more than you are comfortable with or let others pressure you into doing so.
- If you feel like people are invading your privacy you won’t be motivated to maintain your online identity.
- It’s okay to keep your personal and professional accounts separate; if you do you don’t have advertise that fact (it might hurt some people’s feelings if they aren’t on both lists).

Time commitment.

- It can take anywhere from several hours to several days worth of time to get started.
- Find a balance that works for you in regards to ongoing participation online.
- Ask yourself if you’re posting just to post or because you’re interested and/or participating in a conversation
Suggested Resources:

**How Great Leaders Inspire Action** Simon Sinek, TEDx Talks  
URL: [http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html)

**Building Blocks for Personal Brands**  
Lisa Carlucci Thomas, Social Eyes, Journal of Web Librarianship  

**Rob Forbes on Ways of Seeing** Rob Forbes, TED2006  

**The 2010 Social Networking Map** Flowtown - Social Media Marketing Application  
URL: [http://www.flowtown.com/blog/the-2010-social-networking-map](http://www.flowtown.com/blog/the-2010-social-networking-map)

**On Self-Promotion** (You could easily substitute librarian for woman or scientist.)  
Laura E. Mariani, Neuroscience PhD Candidate, Emory University  

**A Stealth Librarianship Manifesto** John Dupuis, Confessions of A Science Librarian  

**LinkedIn Bio Cliches** Stephan Abram, Stephen’s Lighthouse  

**Top Ten Content Management Systems** Ryan Yaple, Tech King  

**Presenter Information:**

Kiyomi Deards is an Assistant Professor with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln University Libraries. She is the librarian for chemistry, biochemistry, biological sciences and the Cedar Point Biological Station, and the incoming physics librarian. Ms. Deards belongs to several professional organizations focused on libraries, education, science and technology. She is the outgoing manager of the website for the Association of College and Research Libraries Residency Interest Group. Her research and educational interests are in STEM education and career issues, diversity, library management, mentoring, and teaching. She maintains a personal blog and website, LibraryAdventures.com.