

How to use social media to build your personal brand



Undoubtedly, social media has changed the way we do business. There is no denying that it has its pros and cons - from perpetuating an always-on culture to raising concerns regarding cyberbullying, hacking and stalking, it's certainly made aspects of the way we live more complex.

It's made the hiring and application process more complex too. If you want to find out about your interviewers before the big day, just have a quick look on LinkedIn and you'll potentially have the entire work history of your interviewer. Well, it goes the other way too. Companies can look at the social media history of any candidate, so there is an added pressure to make sure your online presence is safe and clean for employment.

As of May 2019, the internet had around 4.4 billion users - a number that grows all the time. Of these, roughly 3.4 billion are active on social media, spending an average of 142 minutes on apps such as Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook per day ([Brand Watch](#)). Given the significant amount of free time people are spending on social media apps, marketers, business owners and entrepreneurs have a golden opportunity to grab some extra information on the candidates they hire.

If you're looking to accelerate your career, social media can play an extremely influential role in your success. [Continuing Professional Development](#) (CPD) continues to be crucial to the modern marketer, and social media should certainly be a part of this.

As a digital speaker, author, trainer and [CIM](#) Fellow, I have grown my own social media and subscriber following to over 5 million followers, which is the result of consistent, high-quality outreach. Here are my top tactics for making connections, building your personal brand and promoting your skills across social media:

Make a connection

Engaging at a human level is essential to building a social media presence - people buy other people, rather than faceless brands. When it comes to making connections, don't sit back and wait - it's essential to be proactive to ensure you build a network of quality contacts. Building a solid and engaged audience is down to you and if you want to accelerate its growth, make sure you're actively reaching out to new business, brands and people each day, either by joining associated groups or getting in touch with every customer, team member, suspect, supplier, journalist, prospect you know.

Always respond to interactions and start conversations of your own. If you can do this, you'll become part of the [90%](#) of marketers who agree that making the effort on social media has increased exposure for their business.

Consistency is king

According to eMarketer, 50% of millennials never go more than [5 hours](#) without checking social media, so make sure you've got something different on yours. Consistent and frequent posting is key to building a loyal audience – you need to be seen to in order to gain traction. When you start to make high quality content, your audience will build an appetite for it and if you're not regularly feeding that, they'll take it elsewhere. Ace this by integrating it into your daily routine – I set an alarm on my phone and spend a quick 10 minutes updating each of my platforms every day.

Ensure quality

Almost [40%](#) of users follow their favourite brands on social networks but contrary to popular belief, it's quality, rather than quantity, that wins the social media game. Your content, tone and voice should reflect you and the message you want to send to your audience. Think about the content you're posting, too. If you're a senior marketer, you can establish yourself as an expert in your field by sharing the latest tips, trends, techniques and tools of your profession; without giving too much away of course. Use compelling visuals rather than graphics and put your focus into mastering one platform rather than juggling all - that way your efforts won't be diluted, and people know exactly where to find your strongest presence. Aligning yourself with prestigious bodies and organisations such as [CIM](#) will also help you to gain a competitive advantage and showcase the fact that you adhere to best practices in your industry – all of which can really boost the credibility of your personal brand.

Gain an understanding

Understanding that your future or current employers may be able to access information about you should inform how you use social. You could be killing, rather than crushing, your social media efforts if you aren't generating engagement with the right people.

Use analytics tools to get a better understanding of the kind of person engaging with your pages and find a way to speak to them. Ask for your audience's opinions and act on their views by generating content that resonates.

Social media can be a noisy place, but it can also be a great place to build a personal brand that will give you an advantage in your career. If you follow these tips, you will be on your way to social media success.

About the author:

Dawn McGruer is Founder of CIM accredited study centre, Business Consort – Digital & Social Media Academy which has trained and certified over 25,000 professionals. She is a Fellow of the [Chartered Institute of Marketing](#) and has over 20 years' experience working in the marketing and digital marketing sector. To find out more about Dawn, feel free to connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).