

HOW TO BRAND YOURSELF ONLINE

# HOW TO BRAND YOURSELF ONLINE



A Fun and Strategic Approach  
to Promoting Yourself or  
Your Business Online

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## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If you jump right into advertising or marketing, and miss branding as foundational, then you may waste a lot of time and money. I'm here to help you avoid that. In this piece, I start simply, with foundational concepts, and then build upon the ideas, adding more details which you might find changes the picture for your situation. I've also purposefully limited the scope of this piece to branding. I cover marketing and more in subsequent pieces.



Just like medicine or law, life online is a practice. So, don't worry if you have to try a few attempts at branding, before you get a good result. Just start, or start over, and keep going, you'll get better. That's how we learn most things in life. Exceptional branding is not instant, or luck. It's a practiced art.

## INTRODUCTION

This ebook has nothing to do with tattoos or cattle irons. And although we could draw some interesting parallels, we'll keep things focused on helping you brand yourself online. Personal branding is not just a fad or buzz word on the interwebs. It is business. Big business. And it is the future. Period.

Business has always been about products and service. But now, more than ever before, it is about branding. And not just the branding of multinational companies. But people. It's personal now. People like Apple the company, but they also want to know about Steve Jobs its founder. People like Nike, but they need a person to properly represent the brand, e.g. Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods.

### **You can do this!**

Companies and organizations rise and fall on their personal branding. People want to do business with people, not computers. So even if we are at home by ourselves, we still follow each other on Twitter, and friend each other on Facebook, and like each other on YouTube. We still want to feel connected. And yes, unfortunately for many, it's still a popularity contest. Remember high school. Well, popularity online matters. What, you want fluffy bunny slippers, or honest truth to help you brand yourself? So, let's keep it real. You'll be better positioned to promote your product, service, or yourself, once you

understand why branding is so important. And don't worry, anyone can brand themselves online. Yeah, this is way cooler than high school. All it takes is a little time, money, and strategic focus.

Sure there's a cost. Companies spend millions of dollars on their brand, to keep a good image. Actors spend millions of dollars on their image, because they are their brand. From sports teams to nonprofits, successful brands are built and maintained through focused strategy and constant care. So whether you're a starving artist, or a thriving small business, whether you're just starting out, or been in business a while, you need to be watching and learning from how successful people and brands spend their money and time. You can even emulate favorite brands and personalities.

## **What happens when someone Googles you?**

Today, people are "googling" each other more and more. Especially when they encounter you, but don't know who you are. They look to Google to tell them. So, being found online, the way you want to be found, is very important, and should be your priority. How you appear in the search engines speaks directly to your character. Are you credible? Can you be trusted? Are you at least presentable? There's no longer room for weak excuses about how you look, or not being into 'techie' stuff. It's time to put down the bag of chips and get to work branding yourself online.

Yes, you can do this. Even if you're a newbie, or tech illiterate, now with the power of web 2.0 (cue opening music) you can create a look you enjoy and are proud of. So, if you're serious about your personal brand, then you must understand some foundational basics first, and then strategically implement some of my recommendations below.

## **PART ONE: WHAT'S IN A NAME?**

### **THE RIGHT PERSPECTIVE**

My Dad told me once that "clothes don't make the man." True, but they sure do make a first impression. So let's be clear--Branding is everything!

### **Being found online the way you want, is your top priority.**

If you want to matter at all, you must brand yourself. It's no longer optional. In 1980, would you want to do business with someone who was NOT in the yellow pages? So today, what happens when someone Googles you? Are you there? Do you matter? Do you represent well? What's the first thing that pops up? Is there some stupid photo of you at a party you'd like to forget?

Remember, we DO judge a book by its cover. It's like leaving the house without having performed any grooming or personal hygiene rituals. You will be judged by society's standards. Conclusions about your character, skills, connections, likeability etc will be instantaneous.

So, you MUST prioritize branding yourself.

Also, branding is different from marketing. Branding comes first. Branding is who you are. Marketing is what you say. Branding is your identity. Marketing is your activity. So, start with branding first. Marketing, or getting your message out, comes later.

In this piece we will layout practical steps you should take to brand yourself. Some of the steps will also include some marketing strategies, sure, but that is not really the focus here. We'll cover that in subsequent piece.

Branding is being yourself. But it is being your *best* self. Dirty laundry is for the washing machine, not your blog. So please be cool online. Unless, bitching is your brand strategy. Sometimes hater blogs do work, and have large followings. But I'm giving you general principles. Even if you want to be a badass online, you can still be likeable. Because most people don't enjoy haters in the long run. So, I'm suggesting you keep a long-term focus. Remember, that tattoo you think is so hot at 19 is probably going to be pretty lame when you're 39. Just saying.

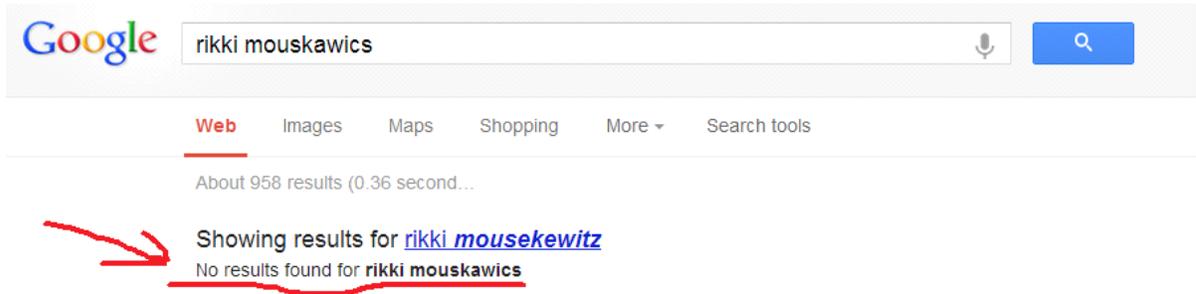
## GETTING STARTED

# Online, you can be whatever you want!

So, first things first. Who are you? How can you be your own brand if you don't know who you are? Know thyself said the ancient philosopher. Aheem....well....sleeping through humanities class was *still* a good idea, because it doesn't really matter who you are in real life. Online, you can be whatever you want. Just pick something you like. Something you're good at, want to be good at, want to do, or just really like to talk about. If it's your business, then that's easy. Be Richard the CPA, or Jake the Lawguy. If you're a mid-level manager, be Susan CEO. It's ok to think up. Talk in the direction you want to go. If you're a Mom, that doesn't mean you have to be just a Mom online. You could be an artist, author, commentator, cartoonist, whatever. (Of course blogging about being a Mom is just fine too, if that's what you enjoy.) But whatever you choose to be, it does need to be something you're proud of. Again, think of it like a really noticeable tattoo. You better like it and be comfortable with it, because that's what everybody is gonna see and associate with you.

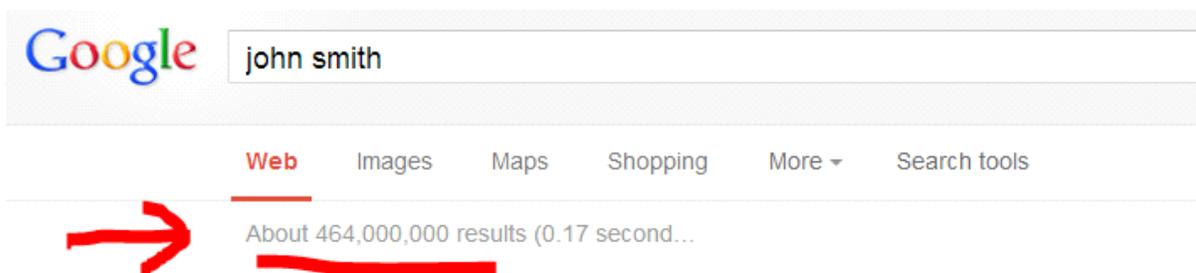
Getting a domain name is a good place to start. Although Facebook and YouTube and Tumblr and Pinterest have their own merit and spaces, the big deal is a website listed in the search engines. It's says I'm here, I'm for real. Here's some examples. If you're name is

Rikki Mouskawics, then you've been blessed with a rare uniqueness. Your own name itself is valuable, because Google doesn't know of anyone else online claiming that nameness.



So, at this point it's easy. Go get a dotcom, Facebook account, YouTube channel, etc in your name. And we'll go into this in detail below.

If, however, your name is John Smith, welcome to the club. Pretty sure JohnSmith.com is taken.



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Google has over 400 hundred million unique references for John Smith, including wrestlers, mormons, and murderers :) How are you going to stand out. Could you use your initials? Or, use your middle name too? For example, JAllenSmith.com. Or a moniker added on like JohnSmithHipster.com or JohnSmithMacDaddy.com or JohnSmith007.com or JohnTheLawnDude.com or JohnTheTaxGuy.com. Remember, make sure it's something you like, but also easy for others to remember and spell. JohnS34345 is not good for anything, including an email address. Drop it.

This is a good time to brainstorm. Write down ideas on paper. Even ask a friend for an initial reaction. Don't worry about buying dotcom domains if you're not serious. But, if you do find the right dotcom, then don't wait, grab it. Because good domain names disappear quickly. There's lots of registrars online, but I usually use 1and1.com, GoDaddy.com, HostGator.com. They always have sales too, so google "domain names" and you'll probably see the latest offers.

# **Fast way to check available names:**

**[www.InstantDomainSearch.com](http://www.InstantDomainSearch.com)**

I like to start with searching for a dotcom (.com) first, because it's still the first suffix most people think of when they think of a website.

I also like to google what other dotcoms are in that space already. Meaning, the first page of Google is extremely valuable real estate. If there's already similar names or businesses listed there, then it's crowded, and you might need to keep thinking of ideas for unique names. Obviously, there's a lot more to discuss regarding Search Engine Optimization or Search Engine Marketing, but for now, the simplest answer is try to pick a dotcom name that is your name, a variation of your name, your exact business name, or a description of your business or interest.

## IS IT WORTH BUYING?

For example, even if you are an estate planning attorney and your business name is John Doe at Law; it's still a good idea to have an online name such as ChicagoEstatePlanning.com. You might also have JohnDoeLaw.com too. It's ok to have more than one website, just as long as you tie the brand together. Or, you might want two different websites to appeal to different market segments. Retail stores do this all the time with outlets. Nordstrom and Nordstrom Rack. Nike and Nike Outlet. You may also do this different locations. Pizza Shop Westville and Pizza Shop Eastville.

## **A domain is like raw land. The value is location, and how it's developed.**

Domain names are like raw land. The value is in its location, *and* how its developed. If your city is growing North, and there's an intersection just north of the city, it's reasonable to bet the land around that intersection is going to become more valuable. If you bought it, you could profit later on by selling it at a higher price, or developing a business there which produced annual revenues. Unfortunately this is old news, and many cyber squatters have already bought up lots of good domain names. But, with a little imagination, you can still get a great name.

Now that ICANN (international internet regulatory body) is making more TLDs (Top Level Domains) available, like .me, .name, .us, .co, etc., there's even more options to be creative. For example, JohnSmith.me or JAllenSmith.name. Just google for a domain registrar which provides the option to purchase different suffixes/extensions. For example, NameCheap may have .me but not .name available. So check 1and1 and GoDaddy too. Also, there may be a lot of new extensions coming in the future, so keep watch, because it is often fast-action-takers who are rewarded. Plus, sometimes domains do not get renewed, or they are put up for sale on sites like Flippa or Sedo. Money talks right. So there are *always* options, for the right price.

## **JUST FEEL THE MUSIC**

I doubt many would have thought the domain TomShoes was that significant. But, it's actually a great name. It's easy to remember. There's not a lot of other shoe stores out there with similar names. And Tom had a great story, told it well, and so people remember what TomShoes is about. So if you want to find it on Google, it's pretty easy to remember what to type in. That's what you need to think about with selecting your brand name. What would people type in Google to find me?

For example, if you have a side business selling herbal tea, and your legal business name is Jane Doe Enterprises LLC, you probably don't

want your online brand to be Jane Doe Enterprises. (Unless you're planning to be the next Martha Stewart.)

**Branding is your first impression.**

**Marketing is your relationship.**

**Without a good first impression,  
you probably won't get a chance to  
start a relationship.**

Generally, you would want something like OrganicHerbalTea or NaturalHerbalTea or JanesHerbalTea. You could even get specific like KombuchaTea or NaturalKombucha. But something like JanesHerbs might be *too* broad. Tea is an herb, true, but you're not selling herbs. You're selling tea. So distinguish your tea. WickedTea might work. It's intriguing. Or put a spin on a common phrase or pop culture reference. For example, ShadesOfTea, or SenoraTea. You could even choose a name which suggests the solution to a problem, say MenopauseTea. It's a real niche. But that's very specific. And this is still ok, if you want to have several niche websites which all direct searchers back to your main site. But this is more SEM strategy and probably not the most effective presently. So, again, don't go crazy buying a bunch of domain

names at first. It's best to find one good name which distinguishes you, and has good raw potential to be developed.

Google ranks websites based upon their perceived value to the searcher. If you develop your site by offering good information which people are looking for, then Google wants to rank your site higher, making it easier for people to find. So, even though the name is important, it's what you do with it that matters most. TomsShoes is a fine name, but who cares. What's better about Toms shoes verses JennysShoes? The point is branding is very important, but it's not everything. Marketing your brand comes next, and is just as important, perhaps more important. But Branding and Marketing work together. Branding is your first impression. Marketing is your relationship. Without a good first impression, you probably won't get a chance to start a relationship. So, it's worth the effort and time to carefully select a brand name that is unique, descriptive, easy to remember, and search engine friendly.

## **Don't lose common sense just because it's the Internet.**

Creating an appealing looking brand is not genetic. You're gene pool doesn't matter. Hooray! Anyone can create a stunning brand online. However, good taste *does* matter. And, unfortunately, not everyone has good taste. So, if you suck at matching ties and socks, please get some help creating your brand. It's part science and part art. Understanding human behavior, especially emotional and

psychological triggers helps. But don't overthink it. If you're selling cars, then yes, your brand better create an allure. But if you're selling bricks and molded concrete, then just naming it sexybricks.com is not really going to provide the magic chemistry. So, branding online has many of the same fundamentals as branding offline. It's got to work in real life.

Don't lose common sense just because it's the internet. What do you know about great brands from your everyday life. What magazine ads do you like? What billboards catch your eye? Why do some family dentistry ads appeal more than others? Think about your audience. It's not your opinion that's most important. Your favorite color might be olive green. Fine. But why is the top selling car color white, black, and red? Be willing to understand the sentiments of your target market. Who is your ideal customer? What kind of branding does your competition do? Could you emulate parts of it? Have you ever noticed that many national brands are similar, except one is the blue team and one is the red team and one is the green team? Microsoft spent over a year and millions of dollars to come up with the word 'bing.' They needed people all over the world to like it. Understand your audience, buyers, followers, etc. Keep it simple. The less clutter the better. Use universally appealing colors, words, sounds, etc. If you're not sure, ask. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So be confident enough to ask for help.

## FUDGERY NOT FORGERY

At this point you should have a name picked out for yourself, or at least a few good name ideas. Unfortunately, the domain name you really want may not be available. So have a few backup names. Because it's not as simple as just purchasing a domain name from GoDaddy. We also have to see what's available on Google+, YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc. It's important to have as many as possible of the big social media sites under your brand. So, for example, if someone searches for your brand directly within Facebook or YouTube they will find your branded Facebook page or YouTube Channel.

It would be ideal for your brand name to be the exact match, letter for letter, of your website domain name, Facebook page, Twitter account, YouTube channel etc. But, before you spasm, just breath. You're allowed a little leeway here. Most people can figure out if they're at the right YouTube channel if you've branded it properly. For example, [www.JohnSmith.com](http://www.JohnSmith.com) and JohnnySmith on YouTube would be ok. The key here is weaving the various social media sites together into one cohesive brand. If there's already 200 people with the same name on Facebook and YouTube, then you're gonna have to be creative here. If you still want to use your name, you may be forced to use a moniker or nickname, at least until people associate the name with you. Nobody does this better than the fine folks of Los Angeles. Beyonce, Pink, Madonna, Slash, Eminem, Jack Black, even John Wayne and Marilyn Monroe. How many musicians and actors have stage (fake) names? Answer: 92% That's right, I just

made that up. But we all know it. They do it because it works. It's just part of branding.

## **The Internet never forgets!**

So a moniker or stage name is perfectly fine. Maybe even mandatory. But make sure it's uniquely yours. If you make enough noise too close to someone else's turf, you invite trouble. Sorry to spoil the party, but if a neighbor calls the cops, you better drop that joint fast. Keeping it legal can be a real downer. But anything valuable is worth protecting. An established brand is a warm shelter for people. It's their provision, it's important and personal. So be yourself, be creative, and borrow ideas from others, but don't steal their stuff or peace, or infringe upon their establishment. Yes, the defining line between idea imitation and copyright violation can be mirky. One's legal, one's not. If you think that changing your name to JamesBond is a cool idea, then you better have a judge sign the order. Using JohnSmith007 for your Facebook profile and YouTube channel is probably fine for messing around with a hobby biz, or entertaining friends and family. But if your intention is to build up a real online brand on that name, your success could be your downfall. Using the moniker to get attention could eventually get the attention of the real license holder for 007. Ala cease and desist. So unless your stated business is Weird Al style lampooning, come up with something unique. And, don't be afraid to seek legal advice. If it's important to you, then start right. An ounce of prevention is worth a

pound of cure. Did I already say that? It's worth repeating, because the internet *never* forgets.

## **PART TWO: LET'S DO IT ONLINE**

### **GLAMOURSHOTS**

Before you litter the interwebs with your amazing likeness and cute witticisms, it best to have a decent looking mug shot prepared in advance. No, it doesn't have to be taken by a professional in a studio. In fact, for most social media sites, it's preferable to have a complimentary but realistic photo. Something natural or candid offers more personality. Most people respond quicker to someone online they perceive to be a *real everyday person* like them. Of course, this may vary depending upon your career aspirations, say model or actress. But, for the most part, the corporate suit headshot by Olan Mills, or worse the Miss Piggy glam foofoo is NOT the trend. Rather, just jump in the photo booth, or grab a shot with your phone. Crop your face from a recent vacation photo. Best to be a little conservative here too because, setting your ego aside, not everyone cares about your biceps or boobs. Unless, that's what your selling e.g. personal training or .....whatever :)

Your headshot, should be chestup or even neckup, cropped closely around your face. Yes, smiling is ok. You're not a gangster rapper (unless you are). Most people smile when they're having fun. Sun glasses or hats which cover your eyes is usually not a good idea

either. Looks like your hiding something. Remember, you've got a split second to convey warmth and authenticity. This photo is your real-life handshake. Plain backgrounds are best. Or something with less distraction. The color should contrast with your face and shirt, so that you stand out. The goal is your face clearly lit and visible smiling. Yes, there's room to be a little artsy and/or cool here too. These are just guidelines.

**Most people respond quicker to someone online they perceive to be a real everyday person like them.**

If you don't like using your own photo, then use a company logo. All your accounts can have this same logo uploaded. Just be consistent. And if you change your logo design, then reload the new version to all your accounts. Even if you don't have a business, you can still use a logo. Some people prefer using a visual aid or nickname to help distinguish themselves. You could even 'cartoon' your likeness. Just have an online designer draw a caricature of you from a photo. Again, be cool here. The goal is to look/appear better, not weird. Again remember, it is a popularity contest. Cartooning yourself as Freddy Krueger or an Orc from Middle Earth is not a brand most people would warm up to.

Just like your picture, you also need contact information that also looks genuine and reputable. The first thing any social media website

asks is for you to setup a username, email, etc. You might have thought 'sexychick69' was the cutest Facebook name ever. And, by some stroke of luck, you became really popular with the male friend requests. But, that is not branding. That is writing your phone number on the bathroom wall. Attention is guaranteed, safety is not.

## **Don't be sloppy with your online profiles!**

And what phone number should you give out? If you answered personal cell, then you have failed. It's just too easy to get a GoogleVoice, second line, dedicated voicemail, etc. There's numerous services online for cheap or perhaps free. Of course, an actual real business phone line wouldn't hurt. Even if you're not sure if you even are a business yet, at least having a separate contact phone communicates your intentionality, and maybe professionalism or sophistication. Yes, it helps you stand out, in a good way.

And this is true for email addresses, twitter names, skype names etc. All your visible online user names, forum profile names, accounts, etc. should be thoughtfully chosen to reflect you and your brand. The easiest way to start is choose a new gmail address. Or, even better, get an email address setup with your domain registrar. For example yourname@yourdomain.com This is usually offered for free or just a couple bucks a month. You can even setup email exchange services to sync to your phone or Apple/Microsoft/Google accounts. It's not hard, it just takes a little time. I use Microsoft Office, so I use

MSExchange. Who knows, maybe I'll switch to GoogleApps soon. The point is my email, contacts, calendar are all synched with my properly chosen email and online profiles.

Make a checklist of all your online profiles and contact information. Care enough to create the account names you really want. Safeguard this. Be intentional about your profiles. This is your brand. Setup new additional more professional accounts. This may mean, you have to abandon a few old accounts, or, at the very least, try to change the usernames. It's not a bad idea to have a personal Facebook account and a professional Facebook account. As long as you can be disciplined enough to keep them separate. Yes, there's some extra planning and record-keeping required here. Well that's life. Everything worth doing takes effort. So don't be sloppy with your online profiles. Make your brand an investment worthy of your time and care.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA SOUP**

It's a jungle out there. A real menagerie of media. A galaxy of social media systems. A morass of rotting profiles. A sticky web entangling our life. Hours lost in the vastness of cyberspace. And a pickeling of our best intended fruits. What?! Ok, not sure what I'm saying. Kinda like Facebook late at night. Anyways...something substantial, perhaps profitable, is going to happen here, right?

And this happens to all of us. It's easy to get totally lost in social media. If we don't have a roadmap and a destination and a travel plan, we're just sight-seeing, and burning gas. This might be ok for Sunday afternoon, but not for the work week. So, during your work week, or whenever you focus on paying the bills, you've got to have a checklist of Social Media chores working to build your business. Stated differently, you've got to follow a recipe of Social Media ingredients to cook a well-prepared meal. Basically, social media if purposefully endeavored can help put food on your table. That's right. This stuff really does help make you money. If you look good online, people will want to follow you, listen to you, hire you, work with you, etc. Sure, it takes work, but it's fun too. Just focus and stay on target.

So, you should have your short list of sites you maintain profiles at. Here's the most important (for now):

LinkedIn

Facebook

Google+

YouTube

Twitter

Pinterest

And in that order. No. It doesn't matter. This priority list is determined by a very complex algorithm developed by a team of

leading economist and mathematicians. Ok not really. But these are the big 6. And where you should spend most of your time. Especially if you don't have much time, or feel overwhelmed by the social media learning curve, just brand yourself here.

If you could only pick two to start, then definitely do LinkedIn and Facebook. Because these are true live interaction sites. But I highly encourage you to develop Youtube and Google+ soon thereafter.

Because updating here gets you posted all over the Internet. The main reason is because these are Google. And Google is king right now. Google competes with Facebook. So you're missing out on a lot of search-engine love if you're only posting in one.

## **Sorry Facebook, Google is still king for now**

Facebook posts are not feeding the G monster. In other words, posting on YouTube and Google+ will get you listed in Google's search engine generally faster than anything else. You don't have to know anything about SEO to see this happen. (But this is not the focus of our branding report. I do go into how to market and promote yourself online, including some SEO stuff, in another report.)

Most people when asked what a social media internet site is, would say Facebook. And it is. It's an online bar or after 5 mixer with hors d'oeuvres. But LinkedIn is the networkers luncheon. It's the place to be with heels on and business cards ready. Plus, the demographics

at LinkedIn are more substantial. It's a higher educated, higher networth, higher concentration of business owners, career-minded, upwardly mobile yada yada. This, however, doesn't mean uppity. It just means more tax payers. Real people. A higher concentration of real accounts. Compared to FTP (facebook/twitter/pinterest) where probably 25% or more are fake accounts, or otherwise misleading.

Now, this doesn't mean I'm biased against FTP. No, not at all. In fact, Facebook and Pinterest are the most fun to past the time. And, not to mention YouTube, which is literally changing the definition of media entertainment. And that's my point, branding yourself can be fun. But it's also about planning how to spend your time and invest your life. If you're a musician, you may prefer MySpace and SoundCloud. Or, if an artist, you may prefer DevianART. Fine, but add that to the big 6. And, as you progress in your branding, you'll want to add to your list of social media sites. For example About.me, Tumblr, Lockerz, RebelMouse. Maybe Manta, Plaxo, StumbleUpon. But this is constantly changing. So expect to transition a new one in, and an old one out. So sorry MySpace. But, for the near future, always count on whatever Google owns to be vitally important real estate that you should be investing time in.

So, yes, do what you like, but do it with purpose. So, at minimum, your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to spend perhaps 30 minutes a day going to all of your sites, and posting one helpful or positive thing, finding 3 people to request a connection, and then get the heck out of dodge. Best use of your time. A little bit, done

consistently, and with purpose, will have a compounding effect building you a thriving brand online.

## **CLEAR AS MUD**

So what am I doing exactly? Playing around on Facebook? How is that going to build my brand? Ok, here's an example of how it works in the offline world. It's Saturday, and you're going to your son's little league baseball game. What do you wear? Your favorite beer t-shirt eh. Wrong. You wear your golf/polo shirt with your company's logo embroidered. You bring a hat with your company logo. You drive your SUV with the magnetic signs on the doors. You bring a couple business cards in your pocket. Etc etc. Got it? You can still be cool though. You don't have to walk around handing out refrigerator magnets. But the point is you're branded and ready to make a statement, even if it is just little league. So now, with social media, you can let the Internet do this for you 24/7! You can still be friends on Facebook, but people need to know that you're a Realtor, or bass player in the band, or home decorator. Got it? There's nothing wrong with having your online profiles subtly and stylishly advertising for you.

So everyone of your online profiles needs to have your logo, website and contact info displayed all nice and pretty. But that doesn't mean they all have to be the exact same logo. They might be the same. But, it's ok to vary it slightly, because again you want to look like a real person. You might even have one account like LinkedIn be all

business and professional, and then have Facebook or Tumblr be after 5 stuff (non-work related). Some sites like Pinterest are made for this. Even if you don't have a specific Pinterest biz site, just create separate categories on your personal site. For example, on my site <http://pinterest.com/jeffburritt/> I have an 'About Me' board where people can find out more about my business endeavors. YouTube now has the ability to create sections of videos called playlists. So you can have fun stuff and hobby stuff and business stuff categorized, making it easier for visitors to explore your channel.

## **There's nothing wrong with having your profiles subtly and stylishly advertise for you.**

Do I really have to set up all these online accounts? Well, yes and no, but mostly yes. Obviously the more you do the better chance of people finding you. Not everyone will search for you in Facebook or LinkedIn. Some people will specifically look in YouTube. Why? Well, because. Just because. That's reason enough. And some people will not use (or refuse) Google or Yahoo or Bing or Dogpile (yes it's a real search engine). Although, there is some crossover with results, the search engines are competing against each other. They all want to offer the best user experience, so they're constantly tweaking their algorithms. And many times ignore or do not emphasize content from a competitor. So, although Google is most

important, you still want to make sure you show up in the others too. For example, Yahoo doesn't like to include YouTube videos in search results. Google doesn't like to include Pinterest pics in its search results, but likes to include Lockerz pics instead. Bing doesn't like to include YouTube videos either, but encourages people to login to Bing with Facebook to tailor results. So yeah, they've all dated, and now they hate each other. It's complicated.

Your job is to put enough of your own original self-branded material online, so that the search engines are helpless to ignore you. Got it? And if this just makes you roll your eyes with disbelief, let me assure you again: Yes, you can do it. Even if you're not a techie or graphic designer. Just start with your digital camera, and have your teenager doctor up a few photos. (Instagram is great at this too, by the way) You can even pay for others to help you. Sites like Fiverr.com make this easy. Just search graphic design and sort by highest rated. If you want something more professional, and are willing to pay for it, try sites like Folyo.me, where you can hire some world-class designers who are affordably priced. You can even outsource all the uploading and managing of your online content too. Find a reputable social media manager off odesk or elance. Then you just email them your pics and a few 'about you' descriptions, and they'll upload and customize it.

## **READY, FIRE, AIM**

Just do it. As cliché as it sounds, this is the most important part. Big brands can be built with small steps. That's one small step forward, soon followed by another step forward, and so forth. Lots of steps in succession. It's also called walking (or running if you're really motivated). That's how you get someplace. Small steps actually taken are better than big plans forgotten. It's not enough to dream about the destination, or just think about taking the journey. It doesn't matter, unless you actually take the steps. So set your goal, then take the steps.

## **Small steps taken are better than big plans forgotten.**

And what about all that "begin with the end in mind" stuff? Well, I don't think anyone really knows precisely where they want to go in life. Most people just have a general idea. That can still be a good goal. And that's where you start. So don't waste time procrastinating, trying to visualize the final picture. It's much better, practically speaking, to just start and make adjustments as you go. Ironically, the destination becomes clearer when you're in motion. And even if you don't know where you're headed, then just pick a direction and try it out. If it doesn't work out, or feel right for you, in time you'll realize it. And you can just go back and delete your

photos and tag lines, and just upload new ones. No biggie. Just shake that Etch-a-Sketch and draw a new image for yourself.

## **HUMILITY HELPS**

**Charisma will catch someone's attention but it's character which will keep it.**

Egos abound. And for what good? Now before you go all Tony Robbins on me, yes I do believe in self-visualization. I do believe in keeping a positive picture of your best self and most desired destination in mind. But this is also no fairy tale. Don't let your blissful imagination be perfectionism. Which is just an excuse for not taking the sweaty, dirty, real-world journey of actually doing something. There is no perfect airbrushed life. There's always bumps and freckles, and even a few scars. But we should smile anyway. It's not about failure and success here. It's more like a journey where you learned more and became more because of the ups and downs. Besides, that's a better story. And one people will appreciate more because they know it's real.

Branding is what people see. It's outside stuff. And I do believe that our outside is a reflection of our inside. So, remember to be true to yourself. And always seek to grow on the inside if you want to grow your influence on the outside. True, charisma will catch someone's

attention, but it's character that will keep it. So brand with relationship-building in mind. And that is always a worthwhile goal, regardless of your occupation or trade--To have a life measured in quality relationships. And you can have as many as you want. Just do right by people. Start with you, branded as your best, offering others your best, to help them be their best.

You Can Do It!

**[YOU MIGHT INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND LINK TO WEBSITE  
AGAIN HERE, INCLUDING ANY OTHER OFFERS]**

# Appendix

## Lists of Popular Social Networks

### Listed Alphabetical by Category

Source: <http://knowem.com/websites/all/>

### Blogging



### Bookmarking



### Business



## Community



## Design



## Entertainment



## Health



## Information



## Microblogging



## Music



## News



## Photo



## Tech



## Travel



## Video



# Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Sites

Source: <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-networking-websites>



1 | Facebook  
2 - eBizMBA Rank | **750,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **2** - Compete Rank | **2** - Quantcast Rank | **2** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



2 | Twitter  
13 - eBizMBA Rank | **250,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **24** - Compete Rank | **5** - Quantcast Rank | **9** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



3 | LinkedIn  
27 - eBizMBA Rank | **110,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **44** - Compete Rank | **23** - Quantcast Rank | **14** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



4 | Pinterest  
31 - eBizMBA Rank | **85,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **42** - Compete Rank | **16** - Quantcast Rank | **36** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



5 | MySpace  
84 - eBizMBA Rank | **70,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **51** - Compete Rank | **62** - Quantcast Rank | **138** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



6 | Google Plus+  
95 - eBizMBA Rank | **65,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **\*NA\*** - Compete Rank | **\*NA\*** - Quantcast Rank | **\*NA\*** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



7 | DeviantArt  
183 - eBizMBA Rank | **25,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **346** - Compete Rank | **74** - Quantcast Rank | **130** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



8 | LiveJournal  
303 - eBizMBA Rank | **20,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **605** - Compete Rank | **203** - Quantcast Rank | **102** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



9 | Tagged  
315 - eBizMBA Rank | **19,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **447** - Compete Rank |  
**217** - Quantcast Rank | **282** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



10 | Orkut  
350 - eBizMBA Rank | **17,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **\*NA\*** - Compete Rank  
| **\*NA\*** - Quantcast Rank | **156** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



11 | CafeMom  
451 - eBizMBA Rank | **12,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **127** - Compete Rank |  
**82** - Quantcast Rank | **1,144** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



12 | Ning  
456 - eBizMBA Rank | **12,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **617** - Compete Rank |  
**411** - Quantcast Rank | **339** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



13 | Meetup  
621 - eBizMBA Rank | **7,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **838** - Compete Rank |  
**516** - Quantcast Rank | **509** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



14 | myLife  
728 - eBizMBA Rank | **5,400,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **122** - Compete Rank |  
**391** - Quantcast Rank | **1,670** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



15 | Multiply  
1,590 - eBizMBA Rank | **4,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **3,382** - Compete  
Rank | **780** - Quantcast Rank | **608** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Networking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**

# Top 15 Most Popular Social Bookmarking Sites

Source: <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-bookmarking-websites>



**1 | Twitter**  
**15** - eBizMBA Rank | **250,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **30** - Compete Rank | **5** - Quantcast Rank | **9** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**2 | Pinterest**  
**31** - eBizMBA Rank | **85,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **42** - Compete Rank | **16** - Quantcast Rank | **36** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**3 | Reddit**  
**295** - eBizMBA Rank | **16,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **705** - Compete Rank | **64** - Quantcast Rank | **115** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**4 | StumbleUpon**  
**416** - eBizMBA Rank | **15,000,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **950** - Compete Rank | **\*150\*** - Quantcast Rank | **150** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**5 | BuzzFeed**  
**562** - eBizMBA Rank | **14,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **419** - Compete Rank | **132** - Quantcast Rank | **632** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**6 | Delicious**  
**869** - eBizMBA Rank | **5,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **1,396** - Compete Rank | **\*870\*** - Quantcast Rank | **342** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**7 | Tweetmeme**  
**873** - eBizMBA Rank | **5,450,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **1,317** - Compete Rank | **877** - Quantcast Rank | **426** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**8 | digg**  
**1,314** - eBizMBA Rank | **4,100,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **3,137** - Compete Rank | **430** - Quantcast Rank | **375** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**9 | FARK**  
**1,728** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,850,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **2,045** - Compete Rank | **1,019** - Quantcast Rank | **2,120** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**10 | Slashdot**  
**1,805** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,700,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **2,335** - Compete Rank | **\*1,825\*** - Quantcast Rank | **1,254** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**11 | Friendfeed**  
**2,380** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,500,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **4,053** - Compete Rank | **\*2,400\*** - Quantcast Rank | **686** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**12 | Clipmarks**  
**2,541** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,400,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **\*2,800\*** - Compete Rank | **1,679** - Quantcast Rank | **3,145** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**13 | Newsvine**  
**2,544** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,390,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **2,224** - Compete Rank | **2,020** - Quantcast Rank | **3,388** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**14 | Diigo**  
**3,078** - eBizMBA Rank | **1,200,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **4,765** - Compete Rank | **\*2,700\*** - Quantcast Rank | **1,769** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**



**15 | DZone**  
**6,464** - eBizMBA Rank | **325,000** - Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors | **9,527** - Compete Rank | **\*NA\*** - Quantcast Rank | **3,401** - Alexa Rank.  
**Most Popular Social Bookmarking Websites | Updated 4/1/2013 | eBizMBA**

## Top 125 Largest Social Network Sites

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_social\\_networking\\_websites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites)

Listed by number of registered users

Facebook	1,000,000,000
Twitter	500,000,000
Qzone	480,000,000
Google+	400,000,000
Sina Weibo	300,000,000
Habbo	268,000,000
Renren	160,000,000
LinkedIn	160,000,000
Vkontakte	123,612,100
Bebo	117,000,000
Tagged	100,000,000
Orkut	100,000,000
Netlog	95,000,000
Friendster	90,000,000
hi5	80,000,000
Flixster	63,000,000
MyLife	51,000,000
Classmates.com	50,000,000
Sonico.com	50,000,000
Plaxo	50,000,000
douban	46,850,000
Odnoklassniki	45,000,000
Viadeo	35,000,000

Flickr	32,000,000
WeeWorld	30,000,000
Last.fm	30,000,000
Myspace	30,000,000
MyHeritage	30,000,000
Xanga	27,000,000
mixi	24,323,160
Cyworld	24,000,000
Gaia Online	23,523,663
deviantART	22,000,000
Skyrock	22,000,000
StumbleUpon	20,000,000
BlackPlanet	20,000,000
Foursquare	20,000,000
Fotolog	20,000,000
Friends Reunited	19,000,000
LiveJournal	17,564,977
StudiVZ	17,000,000
Geni.com	15,000,000
Goodreads	13,000,000
Tuenti	12,000,000
Busuu	12,000,000
XING	11,100,000
Taringa!	11,000,000
Nasza-klasa.pl	11,000,000
Hyves	10,097,000

WAYN	10,000,000
Buzznet	10,000,000
SoundCloud	10,000,000
Care2	9,961,947
CaringBridge	9,500,000
Stickam	9,000,000
delicious	8,822,921
My Opera	7,300,000
Open Diary	5,000,000
Livemocha	5,000,000
Trombi.com	4,400,000
weRead	4,000,000
iWiW	4,000,000
Ibibo	3,500,000
Tylted	3,000,000
43 Things	3,000,000
Ravelry	3,000,000
MocoSpace	3,000,000
BIGADDA	3,000,000
Jiepan	3,000,000
CouchSurfing	2,967,421
Draugiem.lv	2,600,466
Itsmys	2,500,000
eToro	2,500,000
Kiwibox	2,400,000
Grono.net	2,000,000

DXY.cn	2,000,000
GetGlue	2,000,000
Vampirefreaks.com	1,931,049
Fotki	1,632,565
English, baby!	1,600,000
TravBuddy.com	1,588,000
Nexopia	1,400,000
CafeMom	1,250,000
Fetlife	1,200,000
Fubar	1,200,000
Zoo.gr	890,000
Focus.com	850,000
Faces.com	700,000
aSmallWorld	550,000
IRC-Galleria	505,000
Ryze	500,000
ReverbNation.com	500,000
italki.com	500,000
Gather.com	465,000
MillatFacebook	461,200
Cross.tv	450,000
SocialVibe	435,000
Biip.no	430,000
Skoob	420,000
Identi.ca	395,695
Diaspora*	370,000

Indaba Music	350,000
LAGbook	350,000
Hospitality Club	328,629
Partyflock	321,125
Travellerspoint	310,000
GamerDNA	310,000
FilmAffinity	250,000
LaiBhaari	250,000
Academia.edu	211,000
Faceparty	200,000
Mubi	200,000
HR.com	194,000
Elftown	185,000
CozyCot	150,000
Athlinks	139,458
Goodwizz	110,000
PatientsLikeMe	109,587
Gays.com	100,000
Blogster	85,579
Elixio	80,000
Hotlist	80,000
Wiser.org	71,600
WriteAPrisoner.com	66,000
Zooppa	60,000

# Social Media Header Dimensions

## Facebook Timeline

210 px

Profile Picture

180 x 180 px

Cover Image

851 x 315 px

Note: The Profile Picture needs to be 180 px submitted, but it will be resized as 160 px on the Cover Image.

## Pinterest Profile

Text Area

Profile Picture

160 x 165 px

# Twitter Profile

Menu  
&  
Recent Activity

Header Image  
520 x 260 px

Profile Picture  
81 x 81

Tweets

Background

Notes: The Header Image size is ideal for not resizing the text. But you can load up to 1252 x 626.

Also, the background can be set for left, right, or center alignment. It can be up to 2500 px wide. But 1200 to 1600 px wide is recommended for best viewing on multiple devices.

# YouTube One Channel

TV size

2120 x 1193

Logo Safe Area

1280 x 350

Notes: You must upload a minimum size of 2120 x 1193. This is larger than usual, but this is for viewing the channel on a flat screen TV. The center of your graphic is the most important. Your logo or important message should be in this area.

## Google +

Header

2120 x 1129 px

Logo

Name

Buttons

Aprox 160 px

Notes: Your logo appears as circle. Also, Google adds a black gradient fade at the bottom. So make sure you image or info is clearly visible above this.

Company Header

646 x 220 px

## LinkedIn

Notes: This header size is only for company pages. Personal pages just allow a personal photo.