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Post Makes It Personal

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YOUR INTERNET BRAND

Your Internet Brand

The internet is a critical component to a successful job search. Your internet brand and social media can play a pivotal role in increasing the visibility of your professional image to potential employers or decreasing your desirability as a prospective employee. Both your internet brand and the social media you use (or do not use) impact your job search. Read on.

Job Search and Your Internet Brand

What is your internet brand or image? When you Google your name, the first page returned by Google is your Internet brand. Why should you care?

- 79% of employers Google a job candidate's name during the evaluation process
- 91% of employers use social networking sites to screen prospective employees
- 47% of employers check social networking sites to screen job candidates after receiving their job application
- Facebook is checked by 76% of employers, Twitter by 53% and LinkedIn by 48%
- 68% of employers have hired because of information on social networking sites
- 69% of employers have rejected a candidate based on information from a social network profile



Assess Your Internet Brand

Google the name you most frequently use or that you want to be your professional name. Ultimately, the name on your resume is your professional name. With or without a middle initial – decide now. What do you see? Do search results for other people show up? Is there “junk” there that has nothing to do with the professional YOU? Print this copy and mark the good, the bad, and the ugly. You need to reclaim your internet reputation. Be prepared for hard work, fun, frustration, and learning. In the end you can be proud and excited about your internet image.

Design Your Internet Brand

Decide what is professional and what is personal. What do you want employers to see and what do you want to remain private and hidden from employers?

To make this distinction, you may find it helpful to create a context diagram of your life. Brainstorm your life activities to decide which focus areas to highlight online to demonstrate character and values that employers seek in employees - such as passion, commitment, loyalty, curiosity, risk taking, and so on. It does not all have to be work experience or academic major related. The purpose of the context diagram of your life is to help you remember some great things you have done that would be appropriate to share with a future employer and show a larger picture of who you are. Write these ideas down on the context diagram.

We will circle back to this planning stage after we look at some of the options available to you to demonstrate your uniqueness and value using your internet brand. Now for the internet reputation triage!

Create Your Internet Brand

1. If you have a LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or other social media accounts, clean them up for an employer's eyes or adjust your privacy settings so the world cannot see their content - only the folks you grant permission to. Monitor your privacy settings and be aware that they are subject to change. Use common sense here.
2. Also cleanup all your voice mail messages, email closing, and anything else that an employer might come in contact with while you are doing an internship or job search.
3. The best way to improve your internet brand is to publish new material to the web.

While you cannot tell Google what to report when searched by your name, you can bury bad or old content below new content you want to be seen. Key here is also to keep in mind that the Google search engine (robot) ranks websites with some being indexed as having a higher authority than others. The indexed high authority websites are not known (Google proprietary information) but you can guess based on the returned results of a search. For example LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, University websites, Wikipedia, etc. will show up closer to the top of a search results. Also Google+, YouTube, and Blogger (to create blogs) are all owned by Google so you know they are indexed.

An easy addition to your internet brand is to create a career website using the Post University Career Services' Website Builder. Create your resume and have it reviewed by a Career Services professional by submitting it to the Review Center in the online Resume Builder. Then write a letter "to the web" regarding your general skills and experiences. You can also submit this letter to the Review Center to be reviewed. Use the Website Builder to customize your website and post your resume, letter, professional photo, and attach social media links. Suggestions for publishing new content follow with some examples from the Director of Career Services, Dr. Mary O. Rigali.

<i>Website Content</i>	<i>Website</i>
Career – resume & letter – only for Post students	Post.optimalresume.com Example: http://post.confidentialresume.com/MaryORigali/
Career/PR	About.me Example: http://about.me/mary.o.rigali
Resume	Visualecv.com
Resume	Innovatecv.com
Professional network	LinkedIn.com Example: http://www.linkedin.com/in/drmariyrigali
Social Network	Facebook.com Example: http://www.facebook.com/mary.o.rigali
Real-time information network	Twitter.com Example: https://twitter.com/#!/MaryORigali
Build/host a Blog	Wordpress or Blogger Example: www.maryorigali.blogspot.com

4. You can also publish content to the web by repurposing old content that you already have.

If you have research papers from school, power point presentations from work that can be sanitized to not display confidential information especially who it is about, pictures, videos, or newspaper articles about you, then you can post them on the web to help push the poor search results on your name to the second page and have good content represent your internet brand. The rule of thumb for internet postings is 500 words or less. If your content is longer then break it down in smaller sections.

Suggestions for repurposing old content and publishing to the web with some examples from the Director of Career Services, Dr. Mary O. Rigali.

<i><u>Website Content</u></i>	<i><u>Website</u></i>
Publish documents	Docstoc.com Example: http://www.docstoc.com/profile/mrigali
	Scribd.com
Publish slides	Slideshare.com Example: http://www.slideshare.net/MaryORigali
Publish photos	Flickr.com
	Picassaweb.com
Publish everything	Tumblr.com
Pin Board	Pinterest.com Example: http://pinterest.com/maryorigali/dr-mary-o-rigali/
Publish videos	Youtube.com

Now that you can see some of the many options available to you to improve your internet brand, circle back to the section above on Design Your Internet Brand and re-work your context diagram deciding on what type of website you would like to post what information about yourself. Keep your eye toward presenting that fascinating multi-dimensional and multi-skilled person that you are.

Key is not to post content to more than two new websites a week or Google will suspect something and not pick it up. Also be patient, as it takes Google's robot a week or more to reflect new content posted to the web under your name.

To leverage and cross-pollinate the new websites you have worked so hard to create which contribute to your internet brand, be sure to use the option on all of these new websites to post your websites. LinkedIn allows three websites to be posted while Facebook allows an unlimited number. All of the websites discussed here allow you to post some of your websites to them.

Now that you are focused on your online reputation, automate keeping track of your internet brand. Setup google.com/alerts to keep track of new Google indexes to content with your name. Setup the alert to search on your name in quotations. It will check daily and email you alerts when new postings occur.

Remember you are building your internet image and it all hinges on your using the same name and spreading that name around as much as possible. Therefore use your internet brand name where ever you can when creating new websites, social media accounts, publishing content - such as account user name, account ID, website account title or heading, everywhere!