

Managing your personal brand



By Bianca Quinn-Diavastos

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Statistics show that, in South Africa, social media is an effective way to build your brand. According to the World Wide Worx report from 2016, the biggest growth year-on-year was Instagram, whilst the daily users on Facebook are just short of 8 million.



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1. The power of a good biography

Don't underestimate what a powerful tool a strong biography can be.

Get right to the point:

If it is an introduction, provide a short summary of what someone should know about you.

Don't be afraid to shine:

Go on, brag a little. Highlight your accomplishments by specifically referencing the work that you are currently doing, or projects that you have been a part of - for instance, a television series you appeared in, conference you were a speaker at, industry achievements you are known for.

Be targeted:

- Connect your profile to others by using hashtags, and keywords.
- Tag your company, projects you are part of, or brands you might be representing.
- Use searchable hashtags to represent your passions or position.

Be authentic:

- Add: hobbies, interests, fun facts, and personal anecdotes. If possible try to add an interesting and memorable fact.
- Try to use the same picture and name across different platforms.

2. Growing your follower base

A great way to grow your following, is by asking questions; joining conversations, and monitoring your name:

Ask questions:

- Questions are a great way to spark engagement and improve the visibility for your personal brand, whilst others chime in.
- Keep your eyes open for potential opportunities.
- A response from one follower could lead to a provocative question from another that could fuel great conversation.

Join conversations:

- Don't be afraid to add your voice and make yourself visible in a discussion.
- This is especially true if you have unique insights and value to add. You won't have much luck when it comes to building your brand if you remain a wishful lurker.
- Being responsive will keep you on track to grow your personal brand and your network of connections.

Track your name:

- Set up Google Alerts or social trackers to know where your name is being mentioned.
- Don't forget to include alerts for common keywords involving your area of expertise.
- Don't buy followers!
- "Vet" followers before you follow back.

3. Dealing with “trolls and haters”

- Don't get swept up in the moment - decide what your “rule of thumb” will be when you are not in the situation, and stick to it.
- Don't get involved in a twitter feud – ever! Sometimes, the saying, “There is no such thing as bad publicity,” simply does not apply.
- Your responses need to be true to who you are.
- There are a few ways you can deal with it but my first advice will always be – “don't feed the trolls.”
- Keep in mind that social media law is there to protect you.
- If you have a lot of followers and fans, they will sort out the trolls and haters on your behalf.

When you build your personal brand the rule that stands out more than anything else is to be authentic. Always stay true to how, and who you are when you use social media.

It is important to look your fans and followers "digitally" in the eye.” In life we build relationships through sharing, supporting, and getting to know each other. It is no different on social media. Remember this when you are online.

ABOUT BIANCA QUINN-DIAVASTOS

Bianca Quinn-Diavastos is the managing director of the digital marketing agency Jetweb - "Digital on Demand". She has worked in media and publishing since 2006, and has gained a diverse range of experience spanning the marketing and strategic digital industries.

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