Five Tips for Building a Positive Brand on Social Media

CIPS and Procurious Social Media Knowledge Transfer Partnership
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FIVE TIPS FOR BUILDING A POSITIVE BRAND ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In the digital age, there is no such thing as ‘the middle of nowhere’.

Social media had made everything connected – today suppliers are also your customers. Your peers can be your mentors and advocates. Your shareholders are your customers, your suppliers and your employees…

But perhaps you’ve held out, convinced social media is just for kids, cat videos and the Kardashians. Heck, even LinkedIn is only for when you are actually in the job market, right? Wrong.

Love it or loathe it, this level of hyper-connectivity is here to stay and learning to navigate and distinguish yourself on social media, can be game changing for your career.

Regardless of which platform of choice – Procurious, LinkedIn, Twitter, or Facebook (or most likely a combination of these and others), here are some tips for building a positive brand image online and getting more out of your social media experience:

1. Lose the mask

Unless you are Batman or Superwoman, and there’s a genuine reason to hide your identity from the world, there’s little point being on social media if no one knows who you are.

One of the easiest ways to grow your network and build your personal brand is simply to pay a little attention to your profile.

So make yourself searchable by using your full name and your current role, include a snappy biography – a few interesting details to set yourself apart from the crowd – and add a photograph so people can put a face to a name.

And on the subject of profile photos – pick one headshot to use across all your professional networks so you are instantly recognizable. If possible, find one where you are smiling, look approachable and professionally dressed.

2. Don’t lurk, be an expert

People are renowned for ‘lurking’ on social media, rather than getting involved. Perhaps it goes back to that ‘tall poppy’ syndrome but in an age where you compete with people from across the globe for jobs and competitive advantage, being a wallflower just won’t payoff.

It’s understandable to feel a little intimidated at first about putting yourself ‘out there’ on social media. The overall feeling on social media is generally one of people wanting to reach out and help – not pass judgment.
As you gain confidence, start to think about what you want to be ‘famous’ for? Is it in relation to a particular category? Talking about capability development? Negotiations? Perhaps it’s tapping into a fascination for tech and writing about which mobile apps will help you be more productive.

Decide which subjects you feel most comfortable contributing to and focus in on these groups and discussions. It doesn’t take much to become a top-influencer on LinkedIn and then watch your global network grow as people seek your views.

3. You’re not a robot

Don’t be afraid to show some of your personality in social media– after all if we share the same things or are serious and dry all the time, then the social media sphere won’t be a very interesting or colourful place to hang out.

Finding a unique voice is probably the most challenging aspect of embarking on your social media quest. A common mistake is trying to copy another person’s style, which usually just winds up sounding forced and inauthentic. Social media is not academia. Just try to write as you’d speak – don’t overthink it.

Diversity really is the spice of life and in our experience, it’s those Tweets and posts that reveal a bit of personality that are the most shared, liked and retweeted..no doubt for the simple reason they stand out from the crowd.

4. Connect, connect, connect

The value you derive from social networks will ultimately depend on how involved your network is with the site.

Building a network is a never ending task so make it part of your daily routine. Once you’ve picked your social network(s), encouraging peers, suppliers, and LinkedIn or other connections to join will vastly improve the quality of your discussions and the effectiveness of your own personal branding efforts!

With the notable exception of Facebook (which in our opinion really should be kept for genuine ‘friends’ given the highly personal nature of materials shared), don’t just stop at adding those who you actually know.

We strongly recommend connecting with people who work in the same industry, manage the same category or perhaps who work in an area you would like to know more about. Don’t forget, you can cross borders much more easily online than in person!

Link to the influencer blog
5. Represent!

While it’s absolutely true that, as individuals, we have a responsibility to be good brand ambassadors for our companies, it’s even more important to remember that you are representing yourself.

So before you hit ‘post’, do a quick sense check:

- Does this add to the conversation?
- Are there any spelling mistakes here?
- Does it make sense, would you really talk like that?
- Would I care if my boss...or more importantly, my mum, read this?

Recruiters and employers are using social media to find out more about their candidates and many think that if they can’t find a candidate on social media, then they don’t exist as far as they’re concerned.

Remaining ‘off the grid’ is just about impossible, so you might as well take control of your online brand. Besides, you might just discover there is a whole world of fascinating, helpful and likeminded people out there looking forward to e-meeting you!