Brand Yourself: Personal Branding and Reputation Management
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Learn how to create a compelling personal brand by using traditional PR and community relations strategies.

Manage your personal brand through social media.
What is Personal Branding?
Personal Branding

- **Personal branding** is the process whereby people and their careers are marked as brands.
- The concept suggests that success comes from self-*packaging*.
- An asset that pertains to a particular person or individual
- Includes but is not limited to the appearance and knowledge of the person
- Leading to an indelible impression that is uniquely distinguishable.
- The term is thought to have been first used and discussed in a 1997 article by Tom Peters.
Importance of Personal Branding

• “Regardless of age, regardless of position, regardless of the business we happen to be in, all of us need to understand the importance of branding. We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You.”

• “The good news -- and it is largely good news -- is that everyone has a chance to stand out. Everyone has a chance to learn, improve, and build up their skills. Everyone has a chance to be a brand worthy of remark.”

As per Steve Pavlina.com: “Personal branding is basically the way you market yourself to the world. Your personal brand is what other people think of you. In some ways it’s outside your control, but you obviously have some influence over it”.

Unavoidably, people will form opinions of you.

External brand – how you project yourself to the world.

Key is to project and image that fits who you really are…

BUT to do it properly, you should learn from the experts.
The Essence of Your Personal Brand

Promote yourself but first be sure there is a substance to your image.

“Public Relations is good performance properly publicized.”

– Edward Bernays, the “Father of Public Relations”
– Basic Elements of Good Performance:
  • Education
  • Training
  • Experience
  • Integrity/Ethnics

*KNOW THYSELF:* what is your vision of the world; what is your purpose; what are your values and passions; what are your top goals; what are your attributes?
Analyze your Personal Brand

• Brand assets:
  – Do many people have positive awareness about you?
  – Do they associate you with quality and effective work?
  – Do they trust you? Come to you for advice?
  – Do they have a clear understanding of who you are?
  – Do you believe in your talents?
  – Do they think of you as an expert in your field?

  – **The strongest brands are managed for strategic awareness.**
    • Source: David Parker, *Building Strong Brands*
Strategic Brand Identity Analysis

• How do you see yourself? SWOT Assessment
  – What are your strengths/capabilities?
  – What are your values?
  – What are your weaknesses?
  – What are your opportunities? Threats?
• Define yourself in three adjectives. Examples: Genuine, charismatic, energetic, intelligent, enthusiastic, trustworthy, persistent, hard-working, effective, flexible, agile, “can do” attitude, etc.
• If you were an animal, what animal would you be?
• Define what you stand for, your values.
• Is there a heritage to back you up? A trajectory of achievement?
• Define how you want your relationships to others to be perceived:
  – Collaborative, friend, adviser, problem-solver, leader…
Brand Image Assessment

• What is your brand image—how others perceive you? Ask them about your core brand attributes and strengths.
  – Ask your family, best friends.
  – Ask co-workers and colleagues whom you can trust.
  – Ask your boss if he/she is a mentor.

– Study competitors—their brand image and identity
  • What are their strengths and weaknesses?
  • How do they distinguish themselves from others?
Your Brand Identity

• Manage your personal brand for *strategic awareness*.
• How do you want to be perceived?
• Create a strong brand, with clarity about who you are and what you are not.
• Be consistent.
• Build a reputation.
• Define your target audience – to whom are you directing the personal branding campaign?
Your Brand as Symbol

- What is the visual imagery of your personal brand?
- Do you project a “sex symbol” type of brand?
- What kind of a symbol does your appearance project?
- Is there a logo associated with your visual materials?
- Use color to communicate your brand position.
  - Ex: blue conveys intelligence, authority…
  - Green conveys freshness, hope, innovation, respect for the environment
Your Value Proposition

- The statement of functional, emotional and self-expressive benefits delivered by a brand that provide value to a customer.
- What benefits do you provide to others? Ex: know-how, ability to work in a team
- What is your value to others? Ex: superior work product, reliability
- Is there a heritage associated with your personal brand?
- Define these benefits before establishing your brand position.
- Examples:
  - How do people feel when they are with you?
Personal Brand Position

• Develop your personal brand position, an aspirational statement—how you as a strategist want to be perceived—what makes you different and special.

• “A brand position is the part of the brand identity and value proposition that is to be actively communicated to the target audience and that demonstrates an advantage over competing brands.”
  – Source: David Parker, Building Strong Brands
  – Must have a specific target audience and be attainable/realistic.
  – Example: Margaret Perez is an exceptionally intelligent, uniquely classy and charismatic woman who has the expertise to get things done and the personality that gets others on her team.
  • Target: Miami business leaders
Another Brand Position Example

• For cruise line employers seeking more value and innovation in an employee, Marta Lopez is the most reliable/trustworthy, agile, innovative and cost-effective executive in the cruise industry.

• For leaders of influential business organizations, Esther Valdés is an influential leader and fundraiser, with a special talent for teamwork and engaging new audiences.
First Impression

• Some say that the first impression is made within 60 seconds of a meeting.
• How will you differentiate yourself? Make yourself memorable?
• Anecdote: My interview with the Metro-Dade Latin Affairs Selection Committee
• Unspoken impression + words make that impression.
  – Your appearance
  – Your actions
  – Your words
Communicating your Personal Brand

- Your personal appearance
- How to convey a professional appearance
  - The importance of online photos
  - What you wear in interviews
  - What you wear on the first day of work
  - What you wear to office parties
- Personal grooming – cleanliness; neatness; make-up; hair styles
- Exercise; the right diet (for energy and well-being)
Dressing for Success

• Dress for success = what do your clothes say about you?
  • Be better dressed than your competitors.
  • Put some effort into it. Do your nails!
  • Understand the business in which you are in: conservative vs. creative
• Avoid really short skirts, flip flops, low-cut, shorts and other trendy, relaxed dress that is overly informal and/or provocative.
• SUITS ARE IN! One to two-buttons; dark; lightweight wool; must fit well.
Professional Dress

• Dress appropriately for the occasion and for your personal brand – on a budget it is possible to dress with good quality, comfortable, appropriate, well fitting and versatile pieces.
  -- Who is your target audience? How do they dress? What is the workplace dress code?
  -- Understand the environment – ex: Miami vs. San Francisco
  -- Understand your industry and how to dress appropriately.

Dress for the job you want (not the one you have)!
  – The role of the stylist – help in learning your personal style.
  – Books on dressing for success
  – Role models within the industry
  – Magazines – Fashion, business
    * Online - Personal Branding Magazine

But avoid being overly trendy or sexy – trying too hard may be just as dangerous as trying too little.

• Anecdote – the smart account executive who had to be restyled
Your Resumé

• Must be error free, clearly describe your experience and be attractive.
• LinkedIn—a profile on LinkedIn—a business-oriented networking site with millions of experienced professionals from around the world, representing hundreds of industries from more than 200 countries.
• Print Resumé must include:
  – Key accomplishments
  – Skills
  – Education
  – Goal
  – Online resumé can be more detailed.
  – Mail it in a unique way. Ex: a direct mail piece with a baseball caught the attention of the president of a major media organization
Brand Yourself as a Professional

- Establish yourself as expert in the field—path to credibility. Ex: write articles about issues in your industry or for company newsletter.
- Mind your manners! Civility is still important.
  - Ex: Texting at meetings and during business lunches
  - The consequences of using curse words
- Recognize the needs and priorities of others.
- Be part of a team; share the spotlight with others.
- Behave in a dignified manner
  - Be careful with drinking at public events.
- Avoid losing your temper.
- Do not discuss personal problems at work; talk to a psychologist!
- Go the extra mile to please clients/customers
- Lead through example
Reputation

- Reputation is crucial in the branding process.
- *He aprendido que se pueden requerir años para requerir la confianza y únicamente segundos para destruirla - Dulce María Loynaz*
- *He aprendido que mientras mis antecedentes y circunstancias puedan haber influenciado en lo que soy, yo soy responsable de lo que llego a ser.*
Brand Yourself with Your Boss

- Let your boss know of your accomplishments, especially when nearing performance evaluations.
- Treat your boss well.
  - Make him/her look good.
  - Recognize a job well done.
  - Write a card; give a small gift.
  - Avoid making your boss jealous.
    - Example: avoid being the one interviewed by media about company newsworthy story in which your boss has actively participate.
Personal Branding Through Community & Public Relations

• The importance of community activism and philanthropy
  – Choose activities that fulfill your strategic goals and focus.
  – Make sure you have a passion for these community endeavors.
• Learn to lead at community organizations – committee work
• Your work problems do not belong at community events.
• Community relations can lead to effective public relations.
• Create events at which you can be the leader.
• At a community event/party try to meet as many people as possible, but don’t interrupt a conversation brusquely in order to go to another group.
• Remember faces and names. Use mnemonic devices.
• Concentrate on the person to whom you are speaking.
• A major community contribution can lead to significant community awareness of who you are.
Personal Branding through Public Relations and emarketing

• Learn public relations techniques or hire an expert:
  – Do not brag but don’t be too modest.
  – Make speeches/presentations at important professional events.
  – Publicize leadership roles in community organizations through news releases, photo distribution, emails, Facebook, etc.
  – Invite interesting people from your target audience to your home for dinner, lunch or breakfast.
  – Build relationship with key journalists.
  – Distribute news about important achievements – they must be newsworthy. Consider using a PR firm.
  – Place newsworthy photos in leading magazines and online.
  – Write articles about subjects that you know well and place them online and/or in leading blogs and publications.
  – Email invitations and news to potential customers, influential leaders—make sure that they are worthwhile and of interest to target audience.
  – Follow up a meeting with a personal note, preferably by mail.
The Importance of Reading and Good Conversation

• Stay informed about your industry—read trades and business publications.
• Stay informed about the world—NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Time magazine, Vanity Fair, etc.
• Stay informed about your community—Miami Herald, El Nuevo Herald, Diario Las Americas, Miami Today, etc.
• Reflect some of your knowledge in your conversation but don’t be pedantic. No one likes a “know-it-all”.
• Know to whom you are talking. Listen, listen, listen! Show genuine interest in others.
• Use informal conversations to communicate key points about your personal brand in a subtle way. Ex: Emilio Estefan’s technique
• Look people in the eye.
• Smile – this is your most effective weapon.
Public Speaking

• Your ability to convey your thoughts with enthusiasm, confidence and the right projection of your voice, is crucial to your professional brand.
• Get training in public speaking if it does not come naturally.
• Your voice is a powerful ally…or enemy.
• Make sure people in the back can hear your voice – PROJECT your voice as if you were a theater actor.
• Whenever possible, avoid reading speeches and go for bullet points and visuals. Make the presentation as dynamic as possible.
• Be enthusiastic – show your love for what you do and what you are talking about.
• Don’t try to be funny if humor does not come naturally.
• Engage your public. Ask questions.
• Leave enough time for open discussion.
Trademark your Personal Brand

• As per lawyer Angel Castillo, an expert on trademarks:
  – While not many people do it, I think that anyone who uses his or her own personal name regularly in commerce to provide services to others should have their full name registered as a service mark, which serves to identify and distinguish the services of one person, including a unique service, from the services of others, and to indicate the source of the services.
  – This may be done with the State of Florida by applying for a state registration pursuant to Chapter 495, Florida Statutes (if the name is used inside this state) (e.g., “Jack LaLanne”) (other states have similar provisions); or for a national registration under 15 U.S.C. '1127 with the United States Trademark Office (if the name is used as a service mark in interstate commerce) (e.g., “Jimmy Buffett”). To qualify as a service mark, the individual’s name must identify and distinguish the services provided, and not merely the individual. The name must be used in a manner that would be perceived by purchasers as identifying the services. This is not always an easy standard to meet.
Changing your Brand

• With time you may need to change your personal brand somewhat:
  – As you age, the personal brand that you project to others must evolve.
    • There is nothing more pathetic than people who want to project the image of a 21-year-old when they are 55.
  – You will change and others will change.
  – Like Madonna, you may have to redefine yourself but, most likely, your core values will not change.
  – Your brand must continue to be aligned with these core values but some aspects of the branding must change, e.g., personal appearance.
  – Perhaps your brand will evolve into a “happy, compassionate nobody” as Marc Lesser pointed out in The Huffington Post.
Distinguish Yourself!

- Keep learning throughout your career:
  
  He aprendido que.........Debo seguir aprendiendo.  Dulce María Loynaz

- “… if you're really smart, you figure out how to distinguish yourself from all the other very smart people walking around with $1,500 suits, high-powered laptops, and well-polished resumes. Along the way, if you're really smart, you figure out what it takes to create a distinctive role for yourself -- you create a message and a strategy to promote the brand called You.”

Discussion

• A society is defined by the people it chooses to celebrate.
  Celebrity - Film by Woody Allen

• What kind of personal brands do we celebrate?
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Jorge Plasencia, Chairman and CEO
República
Social Media & Personal Branding

• Social media enables you to communicate your personal brand: be smart about how you play the social media game!
• Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn are excellent communication vehicles if used properly.
• Social media enables us to interact effectively and demonstrate your areas of expertise and capabilities.
• Social media can also be the undoing of your personal brand. Ex: provocative photos in Facebook
• Consider tweeting key information, resources, and other professional advice -- while building a following.
• The use of emails = jokes, silly anecdotes, “junk mail” can really give you a bad reputation.
• Blogging to communicate personal brands -- but you should analyze the cost-benefit ratio, especially in terms of time & effort.
• Reputation is the basis for all communications.
Your Website

• Potential employers will do a search about you – what will they see in your website – how does it portray your personal brand?
• According to Tom Peters, “…the Web makes the case for branding more directly than any packaged good or consumer product ever could.”
• Your website is one of your most effective personal brand symbols.
• Study the websites of people who are successful and are your role models.
Your Website & Your Blog

• Buy a domain (URL) (such as myname.com).
• Website should communicate the brand position in terms of the design, the content, samples of work, articles about you, speeches, testimonials and photos.
  – Show your face in a close up – with professional head shot that stands out. Avoid photos with fake, crazy expressions unless your personal brand is all about being fun and quirky.
  – Get a professional to help you.
  – You must have a site that people can trust, that is worth the visitor’s time.
• Use colors effectively to communicate your personal brand.
• Consider wordpress.com as a free blog provider.
LinkedIn

- Post a profile that expresses your brand position.
- Post testimonials from satisfied clients, former employers, colleagues, community and business leaders.
- Recruiters are using LinkedIn to find candidates.
- Twitter to bring others to your website.