Social Media TuneUp: Managing Your Personal and Professional Identity on Social Media

Though social media started as a personal platform, it is now leveraged as a way to professionally connect, promote, and solicit ideas. Follow this tuneup to see if you are managing your personal and professional use of social media.

Step-by-step guide

Account creation and profile management:

1. To have separate accounts or not?
   1. Though many people do have private accounts to connect with family and friends, and public accounts to manage their professional identity, you can leverage the list and group features in many social media accounts to tailor your messages to specific groups. For example, Facebook allows you to create lists of people you’d like to tailor posts for.
   2. Many professionals link their work emails to their business profiles and personal email accounts to their personal profiles.

2. What are privacy settings?
   1. Privacy settings are different in each social media platform, but most platforms allow you to make your account and posts only visible to people you choose to follow.
   2. 34 percent of employers admit to checking employees’ social media profiles, sometimes by accident. Social media platforms work to keep people engaged and active. They are constantly asking if you know people or have worked at places.
   3. If you want to keep your accounts private, check your privacy settings. Take note that you will be missing out on the fact that others CAN find you- to bounce ideas off of, to learn from or to collaborate with.

3. Where should I create accounts?
   1. Facebook is known as THE platform to be on, if you are going to be anywhere. It allows you to post text, pictures, videos, and links. We also recommend having a professional profile on LinkedIn. You may wish to look into some other social media platforms, however. Wondering where to get started? Try some of these tips: Do you like to comment on things? Try Twitter or blogging. Do you take a lot of pictures? Try Instagram or Pinterest. Are you interested in creating videos instead? Try YouTube. Does figuring out a way to manage all these accounts sound daunting to you? Keep reading.

4. How do I connect with others?
   1. Focus on building your following, ‘organically’. If you post good content publicly, people will find you. You can actively seek to find people you are connected to by searching for them. You can also use hashtags (more on this below) to find people interested in a shared topic or to post for others you may not be connected to yet.
   2. Retweet, like, and share what other people are sharing.
**Our recommendation:** Have an account, and use one account per platform—at least on Facebook. Only establish privacy settings if you have to.

**Message management:**

1. **What should I post about?**
   1. In the social media world, personal and professional lives intersect and overlap. Be OK with that.
   2. Think entrepreneurial. Whether you teach in a program that could always use more students or you are volunteering at a Boys and Girls Club event that you want people to attend, use social media to your advantage.
      1. Promote your passions. Link to interesting articles. Post pictures of events you are attending. Promote the work of others in your field.
      2. Promote your program or course. Link to the application. Post pictures of the campus and encourage people to apply. Promote work by colleagues in your program.
   3. **How can I use hashtags?**
      1. Hashtags begin with the '#' symbol and are used on most major social media platforms.
      2. Find hashtags in your area of passion by searching Google for the topic and the word 'hashtags'. For example, "ed tech hashtags" or "philosophy hashtags".
      3. Also, search for 'hashtag chats' (these take place on Twitter at a particular time and on a particular day).
      4. Take a look at the conversations already happening on the hashtag.
         1. Retweet, like, and share the tweets already happening.
         2. Find new people to follow.
            1. People will most likely follow you back.
      4. Post your own content using the hashtag.
         1. People will most likely follow you.
   3. **Use a social media management tool.**
      1. We recommend Hootsuite.

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