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How Do You Separate a Personal Brand from a Professional One?

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Everything you post online, whether you believe it is professional instead of personal or vice versa, is connected with you in one way or another. In other words, it's true that you technically only have *one* brand. However, there are ways to at least attempt to keep your professional and personal life separate. The Internet has made this much more difficult, which is why putting a strategy in place has become a necessity.

Even if you have nothing to hide from either aspect, having a distinct line between the two can help you stay sane in this new, overly connected world. I've been having this problem as I've been [blogging daily for my hosting company](#). Too much overlap could lead to problems in either one of your "lives", so the question is ongoing: How can I truly keep my personal and professional brands separate?

Tips to Keeping Your Personal Brand Separate from Your Professional One

When it comes to this type of situation online, social media is going to be your biggest hurdle. While publishing articles, comments and reviews, and creating websites all comes into play, it's [social media that typically poses the biggest problems](#). Nonetheless, below are a few tips and best practices for keeping these two brands separate in all aspects of the Internet:

- **Decide what you want people to think of you online in general.**

The first step in keeping these two brands separate is of course defining them in the first place. As discussed above, while you may think of yourself as two brands, you are still just one person. This means you need to have a clearly [defined goal in mind](#) when it comes to separating those brands from each other, but you also need to define your brand as a whole. Think about things that define you--your hobbies, personal and professional goals, your current job, etc.--and then go through and determine where each fits into your personal vs. professional brand. It's okay if they end up overlapping, but having a good handle on what you want to discuss online can help you, particularly professionally.

- **Use the right social media platform at the right time.**

This overlaps with the last point and is probably the biggest (and most obvious) thing to keep in mind. Whenever you're writing something on social media, ask yourself: Would I want my boss to see this? Also ask yourself the same thing when posting on a personal account: Do my friends really care about this topic? LinkedIn is usually a pretty easy social account to work with because it should always be professional, but accounts like Facebook, Twitter, and for some, Google+, can get a bit trickier. Therefore, it helps to have two social accounts for each of these platforms: One personal and professional. This way you can monitor what you're posting and where.

- **Connect with the right people on the right accounts.**

This is arguably more important than the last point. If you can figure out how to separate what you publish on which social accounts or on which blogs, that's great, but that won't mean much if you're connecting with your professional connections on your personal accounts or

vice versa. Make sure you always direct those you work with to the correct account. Oftentimes co-workers or even employers will want to connect with you on a personal level (or will accidentally find the wrong account and try to connect). It's up to you to make sure you don't make the mistake of connecting. It's an easy one to make.

- **Think about your audience.**

Connecting with the right people in the right spaces is certainly thinking about your audience, but you have to also consider those that you maybe don't work with or don't know specifically. Social accounts like Twitter encourage following people in your industry that you don't know directly, and having a personal blog certainly allows anyone interested in your subjects to find it online even if they don't know you personally. This simply means that you should constantly be thinking about your audience. Who is comment on your blog? Who is retweeting your Twitter posts? If you start to find trends that maybe aren't what you had hoped to see, you can take measures to change your content or your approach to keep things where you want them.

- **Keep everything light and stay true to yourself.**

Keeping your brands separate doesn't mean that you have to be a robot in one sense and overly personable in another, and this is something that many people seem to miss. Separation doesn't mean you have to stop management--you want to still focus on success in both situations. The only way to do this is to be yourself and not appear fake or forced. It sounds obvious, but it's something many people forget, particularly when it comes to professional online publishing.

So what about a company's brand? Creating a brand for a company is an entirely different animal than dealing with your own personal and professional brands. According to Scott Langdon, Managing Partner of SEOAgency.com, "While both will most likely coincide with your company's brand, worrying about tone, style, message, who will be managing the company social accounts and content, etc. takes a lot more work and requires thinking about many different things."

The Takeaway and Extra Resources

Once again, the line between a personal and professional brand has always been blurred, and that fact isn't going anywhere. Your personal and professional lives are going to collide, so you have to keep this in mind when working to separate the two. While separation can occur to a certain degree, this is something to keep in mind whenever you publish anything online. Convince and Convert founder Jay Baer put it well when discussing social media when he said in an [article](#):

"Social media is rooted culturally in showing your real, whole self [...]. The fundamental truth is that your personal is almost undoubtedly more interesting than your business life. Period."

I also recommend checking out the extensive advice from Huffington Post regarding personal branding on [this page](#) and profession [here](#).

Do you have any tips for keeping these two brands separate as much as possible? Let us know in the comment section below.

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