

Using Social Media for Personal Gain

Mary Thomas



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* Figures taken from London Business School's Masters in Management 2010 employment report



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About the Author



Mary Thomas started Concise Training Limited in 2008. Since then she has given advice to business owners, marketing managers and individuals on how to use social media marketing to improve their sales, brand awareness and reputation.

She is the author of 'Social Media Made Simple', a workbook which helps business owners and marketing managers create a social media marketing strategy. She has created a Level 3 accredited City & Guilds qualification in social media as well as creating the learning resources for the Level 2 Social and Digital Apprenticeship.

As a qualified trainer, she trains groups to use social media in the most cost effective and time efficient way possible and has also created a number of E-Learning courses to allow individuals to learn how to use the tools in a best practice way in their own time.

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- Creating a Social Media Marketing Strategy
- Blogging

Preface

During the last five years, society has seen an explosion in the use of ‘social media’ as a way of communicating over the Internet. You may see ‘social media’ being discussed in the media, in your social life and in your work life, but what is meant by the term ‘social media’?

Social media is the use of tools on the Internet to find news (world, sports, celebrity, etc.), share what you are doing with others and communicate with businesses, brands, media agencies, etc. It is a way of “engaging with a large number of people in a time efficient and cost effective way”¹. Social media tools are used by businesses for marketing, brand awareness, education and to provide customer service. News agencies use social media as another medium to broadcast news and promote their brand. Celebrities use social media as a way of keeping in contact with their fans. Social media is being used by recruiters looking for somebody to fulfil a position. Children as young as 10 and people in their 90s use social media to communicate with their friends and family rather than the phone, email or even talking! Are you feeling left behind?

The purpose of this eBook is to give you an introduction to the terminology surrounding social media, explain the differences between varieties of social media tools and get you started using the main tools for your personal use. The focus of the eBook is how to get the most out of social media for your personal use; it does not include the way businesses can use social media for marketing.

Did you know?

There are 26 million Facebook website users in the UK. The Facebook mobile app is being used by an unknown but increasing number of people (March 2013).

Over 10 million Twitter users are in the UK. 60% of these users are aged 25–44 (May 2012).

10 million LinkedIn users are in the UK and 44% of them earn over £50,000 (September 2012).

18 million UK users have turned to social media to get customer service from brands.

But what does this mean for you as an individual? How can you make the most of this new method of communication and how in fact do you actually use it? Why should you want to use social media – isn’t it all about ‘what somebody had for lunch’? Should you care how you use social media? Isn’t it just a personal statement of what you are doing? Why would you want to share that?

During the past five years, I have primarily talked about using social media as a marketing tool for business. However, it has become clear that people who are not in business also need help to make use of this fantastic method of communication in a way that will enhance rather than damage their personal brand. How you use social media and what you say is public – it is out there to be seen by others and becomes part of your story and your brand. It will stay with you for years to come and become part of your history to be found by search engines.

This eBook was born out of seeing people (famous and not so famous) damage their personal reputations by not understanding the impact of their use of social media. There are also people too scared of damaging their personal brand to make use of these powerful tools to learn from others, engage with brands and promote themselves on a personal level. When you have read the eBook, you will understand the importance of developing and maintaining a personal brand before starting to create profiles. You will also understand how and why you can use social media in your personal life to engage with brands, communicate with friends and family and even find a job. The eBook will also give you some ideas of what to do when it all goes wrong!

The eBook starts by discussing your personal brand and how you present yourself to others offline and online. It then moves on to the difference between all the different forms of social media and helps you to get started with some of the main tools, both on desktop and mobile devices.

The range of social media tools is vast, so in order to create some logic through the eBook, the tools will be grouped together. There is inevitably some overlap between the groups and this will be covered as part of the discussion within each section. The eBook is not intended to give you a detailed training course in the use of each tool, but will give you some hints and tips to improve your personal brand on the internet.

The eBook will cover each of the following groups of tools:

Social Networking

Social networking tools discussed: Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and Facebook.

Social networking tools are free to use and enable you to instantly communicate with other people and businesses. To use each of the tools you will need to register on the tool and create a 'profile'.

Once you have a profile, you connect with, or follow, other people or businesses. Similarly, you will be followed by others. When you connect with or follow somebody, you see what they are saying or sharing using the tool. Some tools will allow you to see profiles and what they are saying or sharing without connecting.

This eBook will cover the differences between the social networking tools in terms of functionality and security. It will explain how to represent your personal brand on the tools, the importance of your profile, how to follow or connect with individuals and/or businesses, how to share what you are doing and how to engage with brands or businesses. The eBook will also cover keeping yourself secure when using the tools and how to use the tools for job hunting and learning.

Blog

Bloggng tools discussed: Tumblr, Blogger and WordPress

A blog (short for web log) is a regular personal opinion or snippet of information. Blogs can be any length but would generally be around 200–600 words. You can choose to follow blogs or write your own blog. Many people set up blogs to document a journey, a hobby or interest in the form of an online diary.

Variations of blogs exist including a vlog (a video blog), a micro blog (a short blog entry, e.g. Twitter is often known as a micro blog as it is only 140 characters) and a podcast (an audio blog).

This eBook discusses the differences between the blog tools, how to get started, what to write about and how often.

Picture Sharing

Picture sharing tools discussed: Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, and Social Networking

As mobile phones come with better and better cameras, more people are taking photos and want to share photos with others. There are a number of tools that are predominantly about sharing pictures with friends and family, but they are also used as a way to communicate with brands, media outlets etc. This eBook will look at the advantages of using each of the tools, how to use them to promote your personal brand and how to connect with business brands and media outlets.

Video Tools

Video tools discussed: YouTube, Vimeo, Vine and Instagram

YouTube is the second largest search engine and is owned by Google. YouTube is a fabulous resource of free learning materials, humorous snippets, news and more. This eBook will explore how to make the best use of YouTube for your personal gain. It will also discuss the difference between YouTube and Vimeo as well as how to make use of some of the other video sharing tools available like Vine and Instagram.

Instant Messaging

Messaging tools discussed: Snapchat, Skype, and Social Networking

Rather than emailing or phoning, it is now possible to have an instant conversation with somebody anywhere in the world over the Internet on a desktop or mobile device. The eBook will look at some of the popular tools and what to be aware of in terms of personal security.

Before you get started setting up profiles and using the tools, you need to think about how you want to represent yourself on the Internet – what is your personal brand? You should also consider what you want to achieve from your use of social media.

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1 Personal Brand

How you represent yourself on the Internet and in social media forms the impression people have about you. If somebody was to search for you, find your social media profiles and see statements you had made that appeared to be bullying or homophobic, racist, etc. they would form an impression about you. The impression that they form might be the wrong impression – but by that stage it would be too late.

In this chapter you will learn to identify your personal brand to make sure the impression your social media activity gives people is the correct one. Once you have understood your personal brand you can make sure everything you do on social media is based around your brand.

1.1 Why Should You Have a Personal Brand?

McDonald's, Marks and Spencer and Virgin each have a clearly defined brand. They each have a mission statement, set of values and logo and you know what to expect when you do business with them. The brand of the business forms part of your buying decision.

The branding of these businesses is integral to their marketing, their customer service and every interaction they have with you. In the world of social media, they need to monitor comments about their brand so that they can address any potential issues which would harm their business and highlight any positive feedback. Social media is so instant that it is very easy for a brand to be significantly harmed if a comment made is not replied to or handled well. If you want to find out about a business or brand, searching for the business on social media allows you to see what the business has said, but perhaps more importantly, what others have said about the business.

But this is all about business; what has this got to do with your personal brand?

A personal brand is the way that you present yourself on social media and therefore the way other people see you. In your offline life, you are probably conscious of how you appear to others. It is likely to matter to you whether you are seen to be helpful, polite or community spirited. This is all part of your personal brand and needs to continue into your online life. How you look also forms part of your brand. Many people care how they look at interviews, for example.

As Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon once said: “Your brand is what people say about you when you are not in the room.”

Have you ever searched for yourself on the Internet? It can be an interesting exercise to find out what is already out there about you and how you look to others. How are you currently represented on the Internet and is it correct? This exercise works best if you don't have a common name or the same name as a celebrity!

Unless you think beforehand about how you want to be seen online, it is easy to react and reply or comment in the instant world of social media and say or do something which does not represent your brand. You should spend time defining your personal brand in your head so you are clear in your own mind how you want to appear to others and hence how you should look and behave on the Internet and in the world of social media. You will learn how to do this during the remainder of this chapter.

1.2 What is your Personal Brand?

So as you have seen a personal brand is all about presenting who you are and what you stand for. A powerful personal brand has to be authentic because you and others need to believe in it. I am not suggesting you develop an alto ego – the idea is to understand more about who you really are. Your personal brand should be based on your values, your skills, your goals, your personality, how you look, what you say and do and the way you look out for other people. These will be explored in more detail shortly.

Once you have understood your personal brand, you should live your brand both online and offline. It will become clear to others what your brand is about and you will be able to attract the people you want to communicate with on a personal and professional level.

If you are looking for work, understanding how to represent yourself on social media and being self-aware of the consequences of not representing your personal brand will assist you in finding work with the right employer. There are many stories of people who have been shortlisted for, or even offered a job only to say something on social media that is perhaps out of character, but destroys their personal brand and ends up with them not getting the job.

If you are not looking for work – you may already be employed or self-employed – your personal brand is still important. Without first thinking it through, you may misrepresent yourself and/or your employer, resulting in disciplinary action or worse.

If you intend to use social media purely as a listening tool, you should still understand your personal brand to know what to listen for. If you plan to use social media only for personal communications, don't assume that your updates or profiles can never be traced back to you. Unless you are very careful, it is unlikely that you will be able to stay completely hidden. It is amazing what appears when searching for an email address rather than a name and as soon as you connect with others, your updates may be seen by their friends. We look in more detail about why you might use social media in the next chapter.

So time to identify your personal brand... I believe your personal brand is a combination of:

- Your values
- Your skills
- Your goals
- Your personality
- How you look
- What you say and do
- How you look out for others

As shown in Figure 1. We will look at these in turn next.

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Figure 1 – Parts of a personal brand

1.2.1 Your Values

Values are the things that you believe to be important in the way you live your life both at home and work.

The Oxford Dictionary defines values as ‘principles or standards of behaviour; one’s judgement of what is important in life’.

Your values will be reflected in what you decide is important to you and are probably the measures you use to tell whether your life is going the way you want.

For example, if an important value to you is ‘family life’, but you have to consistently spend 70 hours each week working, then you are likely to feel stressed and unhappy. On the other hand this may suit you if ‘wealth’ and ‘promotion’ are more important to you.

Understanding your values will help you to make decisions about living your life and your values should also be reflected in the personal brand that you create within social media.

To help you define your values, take these steps:

- a) Think about times (at home or work):
 - You have most enjoyed an activity.
 - You have felt most fulfilled or pleased with your achievements.
 - You have felt proud.
- b) For each, think about what you were doing and why you felt the way you did. Write a list of words that describe how you felt.
- c) Look at the list in Table 1 and add any words to your list that you think are important to you. (There are plenty of similar lists of values on the Internet if this one doesn't inspire you.)

Achievement	Freedom	Pleasure
Advancement	Friendship	Power
Adventure	Generosity	Professional
Affection	Health	Recognition
Assertiveness	Helpfulness	Responsibility
Competitiveness	Inner Harmony	Security
Community	Integrity	Self-respect
Cooperation	Involvement	Self-sufficiency
Creativity	Loyalty	Spirituality
Economic Security	Open-mindedness	Truthfulness
Fame	Order	Wealth
Family Happiness	Personal Development	Wisdom

Table 1 – List of values

- d) From your list, identify your top ten values, then your top five. These should be the things that you care about most and by which you want to make your decisions in life (personal and professional).
- e) When you have identified your values, think about how to represent your values in both your online and offline life. You may reflect your values in what you say (or don't say), how you look, and how you behave to others. You may refine or add to your list of values as you look at other aspects of your personal brand.

1.2.2 Your Skills

Let's be honest, you may have a value of 'creativity', but if you don't have a creative bone in your body, this might be a difficult one to achieve! Think about your skills. What are you really good at and how is this represented by your values? You may need to refine your list of values.

Your skills also form part of your personal brand. What you are good at is part of who you are and you need to do more of what you are good at and less of what you are not so good at. Make a list of your skills to feed into how you represent yourself. Some social media profiles ask for skills to be more clearly included than others so we may use this list later.

1.2.3 Your Goals

What do you want to achieve in life? What are you striving for? What inspires you? What do you want to be known for? Understanding what you want to do and where you want to go will help you identify who you should be talking to and how you should be using social media for your personal gain.

1.2.4 How You Look

Your personal brand needs to be reflected in how you look online and offline. If your personal brand is 'a creative fashion diva', then make sure it extends to how you come across in person (attire, hair, makeup, etc.), and in photos on social media. If your personal brand is one of being 'professional', then look professional when people meet you and look at your social media profiles.

1.2.5 Your Personality

Who you are needs to form part of your personal brand. You don't want to create a personal brand with no personality. Social media is 'social' and you should show those aspects of your personality that represent you. Your personality should be a key part of your brand. You just need to be aware of which aspects of your personality are not considered to be socially acceptable and the consequences of representing these aspects on social media. You also need to be careful how your personality comes across in textual language. What you say in a face to face environment with appropriate body language might not come across in the same way in an online environment.



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1.2.6 What You Say and Do

You need to live your values as part of your personal brand. What you say should represent your brand. If your personal brand is one of integrity, then think twice before you appear to be critical or mean about others.

For example,
If your personal brand includes the value of health, consider the impact of talking about unhealthy activities and constantly talking about cream cakes! I'm not suggesting you never talk about unhealthy food, but you should talk about it in terms of a treat rather than a regular theme running through what you say.

Similarly what you do becomes part of your personal brand. You need to live your brand.

For example,
If 'health' is an important value and an important part of your personal brand, then you should be seen to be living a healthy lifestyle. If community or generosity is part of your personal brand then you need to be seen helping in the community or giving to others.

1.2.7 How You Look Out For Others

It is a good idea to consider what others think about you when you are identifying your personal brand and also to think about how you treat other people. The way you treat others should be integral to your brand. Is your brand one of being helpful? Then be helpful to others. Your personal brand should be clear throughout everything you do.

1.2.8 Creating Your Personal Brand

You should now be starting to develop a picture of your personal brand. It is worth writing a mind map or a series of post it notes so that you can remember the thought processes you have gone through. You may need to remind yourself of this while you are using social media to ensure a consistent approach. The remainder of this eBook will discuss representing your brand on social media.

1.3 How to Represent Your Personal Brand on Social Media

When you create profiles and use different social media tools, you need to think about your personal brand.

1.3.1 How You Look

What photo should you use in your social media profiles and how does that reflect your personal brand? If you want to display a professional personal brand, is it appropriate to use a holiday snap or badly taken photo? Similarly if your personal brand is a creative fashion diva, then a photo in a smart, professional suit is probably not appropriate.

Your photo on social media becomes as important as a logo for a business. It is a way of people trusting you and understanding who you are and what you stand for. I have seen people hide behind pictures of their pet, children or business logo. This is not a good way of encouraging trust.

What email address do you use? If your email address is hot-totty123@hotmail.com what impression does this give about you? Does it represent your personal brand? In general, Gmail addresses give a more positive reputation than Hotmail or other internet providers and have the added advantage of being linked to other Google tools, enabling you to build online relationships. There is a school of thought which says it is a good idea to use `firstname.lastname@` in your email address – but this does come down to personal choice and security if you are planning to use social media in a public way. I use `mary@`, for example, to represent my brand of being approachable and informal, but professional.

1.3.2 What You Say and Do

Make sure that whatever you say and do on social media represents your personal brand and gives a consistent view about you. Don't get into heated discussions on any of the tools and try to stay clear of religious, political, racist and gender comments, etc. Consider whether swearing forms part of your personal brand and if you do swear (even mildly), will that impact on who engages or interacts with you? Humour in particular is an area fraught with danger. What you know to be a joke might not come across as a joke when written down without associated body language or tone.

For example,

An individual in the UK has been jailed for putting an update on Facebook about his intention to shoot a random school in the US. He maintained it was meant as a joke but some US schools interpreted it as a serious threat.²

1.4 Being Aware of Other Factors

There may be other factors that you need to take into account when thinking about representing your personal brand on social media. These could include personal security, your personal circumstances, the people you work with and how your employer wants you to act on social media.

1.4.1 Personal Security

It is important at all times to think about your personal security when you create and update your social media profiles. You should regularly check your security settings on your profiles in each of the tools. Many tools have the option to automatically indicate where you are posting from. You need to decide whether you should turn this on or off depending on your own requirements. You also need to think about your personal security when writing status updates. It is not always appropriate to talk about holidays or the names of your children in such a public arena if people are able to find out where you live!

1.4.2 Your Personal Circumstances

Who you are and what you do will have an impact on your use of social media. If you are a teacher, for example, you probably shouldn't connect with the children in your school. You may be personal friends with the parents of children in your school – you need to decide whether it is appropriate to connect with these children. If you are self-employed, you need to handle the cross over between personal and business life. Who to connect with is not always cut and dried and it is worth thinking about before you start.

1.4.3 Your Employer's View

If you work for an employer, you should be aware how your employer wants you to use social media. There may be a Social Media Policy that you need to adhere to in your professional or personal use of social media. It is true that your personal use of social media should be personal. But if you can be traced back to your employer, either from your profile or what you say, you need to be aware that what you say on social media could damage the brand of your employer, and could lead to undesirable consequences for you. It could be as easy as adding 'my views are my own' to your profiles to indicate that you do not represent your employer. You will also need to think about issues like confidentiality to ensure that you do not talk about a client or proprietary information that could harm your employer if shared on social media.

1.5 In Summary

In this chapter, you have learnt about the importance of your personal brand and how you want to appear to others. There is no correct answer, but when you use social media, you need to be clear how you want to appear to others online and how this affects other parts of your life.

We will now look at the possible reasons for you to use social media.

2 Why Use Social Media?

When you do anything in life, it is always a good idea to think about why you are doing it and what you are intending to achieve before learning how to do it. The use of social media is no different and before you rush out and create loads of profiles based on your personal brand, it is worth taking some time to work out why you are getting involved.

Typical reasons that people I know use social media for their personal gain include to:

- Learn from others
- Find out what the fuss is about
- Connect and communicate with friends and family
- Talk about TV or radio programmes with people they know and don't know
- Build a community with others
- Communicate with or listen to celebrities or sports stars
- Get updates from news and other media outlets
- Engage with news and other media outlets
- Obtain customer service
- Find and engage with people with similar interests
- Engage with brands
- Play games
- Find and engage with more business contacts
- Find a job
- Find brands, products or services based on friends' recommendations
- Provide a creative outlet
- Share photos
- Make money
-

The list is endless, but I suggest you identify your top reasons and keep these in mind as you read the remainder of this eBook.

The reasons you want to use social media will influence which of the groups of tools, and which tool, you decide to use and how you use them. It is unlikely you will use all of the tools we are going to cover during the remainder of this eBook. Think about using the tools which will achieve your aims most easily and quickly.

During the next few chapters we will discuss each of the groups of tools in more detail.

3 Social Networking

There are a number of tools that can be classified as ‘social networking’. In this chapter, we are going to consider the four ‘main’ tools – LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+ and Twitter. Each has its own disadvantages and advantages depending upon your aims for using social media. These are summarised in Table 2. Each of the tools is discussed in more detail during this chapter. We don’t suggest that you need to use every tool, but select the ones most appropriate to meet your aims.

Reason for using Social Media	Best to use			
	LinkedIn	Twitter	Google+	Facebook
Professional networking	✓			
Communicate with friends and family			✓	✓
Communicate with brands		✓	✓	✓
Find a job	✓	✓	✓	
Engage with celebrities		✓		
Discounts from brands				✓
Updates from news outlets	✓	✓		
Discuss television and radio programmes		✓		

Table 2 – Best social networking tools to use depending on reason

3.1 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional social network. What does this mean? LinkedIn is used to present a professional ‘work’ image in a more formal manner than some of the other social networking tools. In general, information that is shared on LinkedIn is more text based and more serious than some of the other tools, though LinkedIn has recently allowed people to share photos. It is rare for people to talk about their family or activities outside work on LinkedIn.

LinkedIn allows you to create a comprehensive profile similar to a CV. You then choose to connect with people on LinkedIn. You would normally connect with people you know or have some connection with.

3.1.1 Why Use LinkedIn for Personal Gain?

You should use LinkedIn if you are looking for work, wanting to generate more business within your current role or to find new customers. LinkedIn is also a good way of finding suppliers and other contacts. LinkedIn has a section devoted to universities so young people can use LinkedIn to find out about universities they might want to apply to. It is a good tool for deepening and developing relationships with people. If you create an optimised LinkedIn profile, your profile will be found when using search engines. LinkedIn can also be used as a way of staying up to date with the latest thoughts and techniques around business, media and education. LinkedIn is a tremendous source of information from media sources as well as from prominent thought leaders such as Richard Branson, Guy Kawasaki and Adrianna Huffington.

It is not currently the best tool to use to communicate with friends and family, engage with businesses as a consumer or to obtain customer service from businesses.



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for exploration**

**Potential
for development**

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GRADUATES & SALES
PROFESSIONALS**
Junior and experienced F/M

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3.1.2 Creating a LinkedIn Profile

If you decide to use LinkedIn, the first thing is to complete your profile at www.linkedin.com. A half completed profile could do your personal brand more harm than good. It indicates a lack of attention to detail, a 'don't care' attitude, somebody who starts something but doesn't finish. It could result in a lack of trust. It may well be that you are just not sure what to put in the sections or haven't got round to completing it. But look at it from the point of view of somebody wanting to find out more about you and possibly employ you or do business with you.

A completed LinkedIn profile will also be more likely to appear in search results when people are looking for the skills that you have or the services that you offer. LinkedIn considers a completed profile to have a rating of 'All Star'. An 'All Star' profile needs to have the following:

- Completed contact information
- A summary
- A current position
- At least two past jobs listed
- 50 contacts
- One educational establishment
- At least five skills

This eBook is not intended to be a detailed 'how to' use LinkedIn, but have a look at the following hints and tips about filling in some of the sections and how to get the most out of LinkedIn.

Contact Information



Mary Thomas

Social Media Marketing | Social Media Training | Social Media Qualifications

Faringdon, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom | Professional Training & Coaching

Current	Concise Training, Faringdon Business Breakfast Club
Previous	Right Angle Consultants, Ignition4Business, 4Networking
Education	Oxford Brookes University

Figure 2 – LinkedIn contact information

Figure 2 shows the top section of a LinkedIn profile. The two important parts are:

Photo As discussed previously, this should represent your personal brand. I would recommend that you use the same photo (or similar) in all of the social media tools.

Headline This should describe what you do, not your role. The headline is included in searches and should include words to make sure you appear in search results in LinkedIn and search engines. These words are known as ‘keywords’ and should be words your potential audience might use to find you, not words you use to describe your skills and services.

Summary



Summary

How are you using Social Media for your business? Would you like to increase your brand awareness and find more customers?

I offer supportive, personal and affordable Social Media training either delivered using:

- face to face workshops in Faringdon
- face to face bespoke training at your site
- 1 - 1 training using Skype
- online courses (recently licenced by Pitman Training group)
- Social Media qualifications accredited by City & Guilds (see project below)

I talk your language and train at your pace to make sure that you get the best out of the training for your needs.

Author of 'Social Media Made Simple', a workbook endorsed by City & Guilds, to get you started with Social Media in the right way.

Figure 3 – Summary section

Have a look at my summary shown in Figure 3. In my opinion, the summary should be recent and benefit driven. If somebody is looking at your profile, explain what you can offer – you might want to include some aspects of your personal brand here. Write your summary in the first person; you are writing a personal profile, you should own it.

If you are using LinkedIn for job hunting, you should explain what skills you could bring to a business.

Skills/Expertise



Figure 4 – Skills & Expertise

Add the skills you identified when thinking about your personal brand. You can choose skills already in a LinkedIn dropdown list or you can enter your own skills. You should add between 5 and 50 skills.

It's only an opportunity if you act on it

IKEA.SE/STUDENT

IKEA

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As people connect with you, they will be encouraged to endorse your skills and expertise when they look at your profile and when they are endorsed by others.

When somebody endorses you, their picture will appear next to the skill you have been endorsed for and the number next to the skill will increase. In Figure 4, you can see the skills I have been endorsed for.

As you start to look at the profiles of people you are connected to, you will be encouraged to endorse them.

My recommendation is only endorse people you are sure have the skill. Don't endorse somebody just to be nice. Your photo is displayed next to the skill on their profile. You are saying they can do it.

3.1.3 Connecting with People

Once you have a profile that you are happy with, you need to find people to connect with and decide what you are going to do if people ask you to connect.

I would recommend that you only try to connect with people that you actually know or have something in common with. If you randomly ask people that you don't know to connect, and they tell LinkedIn that they don't know you, LinkedIn may restrict your profile. This restriction is quite difficult to lift, so should be avoided.

To find people to connect with, either use the search box at the top of the page or use the recommendations that LinkedIn gives you on the right hand side. Over time, build your number of connections and therefore your network.

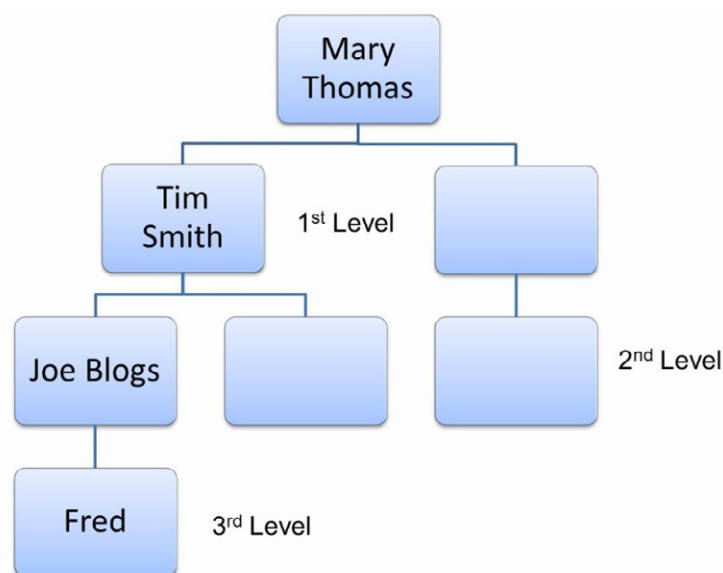


Figure 5 – Network of contacts

LinkedIn considers connections to be at a 1st level, 2nd level or 3rd level as shown in Figure 5. Connections at your 1st level are connections who are directly connected with you. These connections will see your status updates and can message you directly. They will also be able to see everybody else you are connected to (unless you hide your connections).

Connections at your 2nd level mean that you have a contact in common. You may want to directly connect with your 2nd level connections or may want your shared connection to introduce you. Your 2nd level connections cannot see all your connections.

Your 3rd level connections are still within your network and you will generally be able to see their profiles but they are more difficult to directly contact.

3.1.4 LinkedIn Security

You can choose to make your photo and activity on LinkedIn visible to everyone, your network or your connections. You can also choose whether your profile can be seen by people who find you using Google search. Your name and contact information will be visible to everybody. In general, I would recommend that you keep your LinkedIn profile public as you are likely to be using it as a way of promoting your personal brand.

3.1.5 Using LinkedIn

Once you have got your LinkedIn profile set up, you need to decide how and why you are going to use it. Some ideas:

Develop Your Personal Brand

If you want to develop your personal brand to be known as an expert in your field, develop relationships with customers or to find a job, you should be improving your visibility by building relationships and sharing content.

To do this, 'like', 'share' and 'comment' on status updates published by your connections and publish your own content by sharing information that adds value to your connections. This can be your own content or links you have found. You can also listen to, and participate in, relevant group discussions.

Listen to News and Thought Leaders

If you want to use LinkedIn to listen to news articles and opinions of thought leaders, then you can make use of the LinkedIn Today and Influencers section, which is available on the LinkedIn home page.

Research

LinkedIn holds information about 10 million people in the UK. This information includes their name, who they work for, the position they hold in the company and what they do. You can use the search facilities within LinkedIn to find people you want to talk to and do business with.

3.1.6 Using LinkedIn for Job Hunting

LinkedIn is an essential tool to use when job hunting. Recruiters and employers search LinkedIn to find people to fulfil available roles so you need to make sure that your profile correctly reflects your personal brand, including your skills and aspirations. You should also check that your settings are set to be public so you can be found. Extend your network of contacts and inform your network that you are looking for a job. Research companies you want to work with and follow and engage with their updates. Find the relevant person to talk to, look for shared connections to get an introduction or even try to connect directly.

In LinkedIn jobs will be posted:

- In the jobs section of LinkedIn.
- By companies or individuals as status updates.

LinkedIn will also suggest jobs that have been posted that match the keywords and skills you have completed in your profile. You can apply for some jobs directly on LinkedIn.



The advertisement is a rectangular layout. On the left, the text 'YOUR CHANCE TO CHANGE THE WORLD' is written in large, multi-colored capital letters. Below this, a paragraph states: 'Here at Ericsson we have a deep rooted belief that the innovations we make on a daily basis can have a profound effect on making the world a better place for people, business and society. Join us.' This is followed by another paragraph: 'In Germany we are especially looking for graduates as Integration Engineers for' and a bulleted list: '• Radio Access and IP Networks' and '• IMS and IPTV'. Below the list, it says: 'We are looking forward to getting your application! To apply and for all current job openings please visit our web page: www.ericsson.com/careers'. In the top right corner, there is a dark blue box with 'ericsson.com' in white. In the bottom right corner, there is a dark blue box with the Ericsson logo (three slanted lines) and the word 'ERICSSON' below it. On the right side of the ad, there is a photograph of a young man with dark hair, wearing a brown hoodie over a pink t-shirt, smiling and looking at a laptop. A hand cursor icon is positioned over the bottom right corner of the advertisement.



3.1.7 Summary of LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an essential social networking tool for anybody working in business or for anybody looking for a job. If you are going to use LinkedIn, understand what you want to achieve from it and take the time to set up a profile that accurately reflects your personal brand. Use the tool to engage with others or to learn from others, depending on your aims – don't just let the profile sit there.

3.2 Twitter

Twitter is a quick immediate, public way of communicating with a large number of people. Twitter is used by individuals to communicate with their friends as well as businesses of all sizes for marketing and to provide a customer service function. Twitter is a very public way of communicating. Each message or tweet is a maximum of 140 characters and can contain links to website pages, photos or videos, as shown in Figure 6. The 'bit.ly/1fgdjnC' link in this tweet is a shortened link to a website page.

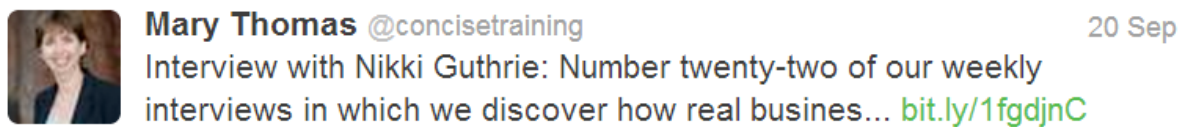


Figure 6 – Example of a tweet

People can choose to follow any Twitter profile. When somebody follows a Twitter profile, they will see all the messages the Twitter profile publishes. The power of Twitter is the quick and easy way messages can be forwarded – or 'retweeted' – to others.

For example

Commentary	Tweet	People who see the tweet
Person 1 is being followed by 500 people	Person 1 tweets: Not happy with the customer service I am receiving from Brand X. Having all sorts of problems.	This message could be seen by the 500 people that are following Person 1, plus anybody who is searching for tweets about Brand X.
5 of the people who see the message are also having problems with Brand X. They are each being followed by 500 people.	Each of the 5 forwards or retweets (RT) the message to their contacts.	Within less than 5 minutes, up to 3,000 people will have seen the message about Brand X.

What harm could that do to Brand X in the example, particularly if Brand X are not monitoring Twitter and don't offer a solution or response? On the other hand, if the message had been positive, how much additional business might have been achieved?

3.2.1 Why Use Twitter for Personal Gain?

Twitter can be used by individuals for a number of reasons including:

- To get customer service from brands – brands will often respond faster to tweets than to email or phone calls as the potential bad publicity of the tweet going viral is a real concern.
- As a source of information. Twitter is an amazing source of information. Many people use Twitter to establish themselves as thought leaders and show their expertise by sharing knowledge for free. As an individual you can make use of and learn from this free information.
- To keep up with the news. News organisations use Twitter to publish breaking news. News about a recent US East Coast earthquake was seen on Twitter 30 seconds before it was felt. Emergency services first heard about a plane crash in the US via Twitter.
- To talk to celebrities and sports stars. Many celebrities and sports stars use Twitter as a way of telling their fans what they are doing and individuals can talk to the celebrities via Twitter.
- To engage with brands – provide feedback to questions and find out what is going on with the brand.
- To talk to friends on Twitter. You can arrange meetings and exchange views – just remember it is a public medium.
- To communicate with people with similar interests. For example, a whole community of quilters has developed around the world on Twitter. Before Twitter, some individual quilters felt very isolated.

3.2.2 Creating a Twitter Profile

To set up a Twitter profile, register at www.twitter.com

Tips for setting up a Twitter account

- The Twitter username is the way that other users refer to you on Twitter. You will be referred to as @username (e.g. @concisetraining is used to refer to me) but the actual username does not include the '@'. So my username is concisetraining.
- Usernames are a maximum of 15 characters long and can only contain letters, numbers or the underscore character (_).
- A good username is similar or the same as your own name (or your brand). This helps people remember who you are.
- Usernames must be unique so you may need to use a nickname and/or numbers.
- Your Twitter name will be included in search results by search engines.
- If you choose a nickname, choose a name that is friendly and accessible. Your username becomes part of your personal brand.
- Each Twitter name is associated with a unique email address.

- Include your real name so that people can identify you.
- Include a profile picture to represent your personal brand. A picture of you will help to promote trust of your profile.
- Include a 'bio' or introductory text that is 160 characters or fewer that describes what you stand for and what you are going to tweet about.

3.2.3 Twitter Language

A language around Twitter has developed over the last few years. The main things you will see on Twitter are:

RT – retweet. A way of forwarding a tweet from somebody you are following to your followers. Using RT makes sure the credit is kept with the original tweeter.

DM – direct message. This is a private message sent to somebody in your network.

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Month 16

I was a construction supervisor in the North Sea advising and helping foremen solve problems

Real work
International opportunities
Three work placements







Hashtag – A word preceded by the # symbol, e.g. #tips. Hashtags are a way of highlighting keywords (or important words to your brand) in a tweet or they can be used to group tweets around a common theme or conversation. People can click on the hashtag and see other tweets that use the same hashtag. Hashtags can be used to listen for people talking about the words important to your brand as well as a way of promoting the skills and services you offer. You may see radio or TV programmes publicising a hashtag as a way of grouping the Twitter conversation.

For example

If you include #BGT13 in a tweet, it will be seen by anybody looking for tweets containing #BGT13 and communicating about Britain's Got Talent 2013.

@username – a way of mentioning a Twitter username.

// – used with RT. A way of indicating the original comment has finished and your comment starts.

Because tweets have a maximum of 140 characters, you will see text language being used. Text language is fine – but make sure that it is commonly used so that people can understand what you are trying to say.

For example

'TGIF' is fairly well known as meaning 'Thank Goodness It's Friday'.

*\$ is not well known as meaning 'Starbucks'.

3.2.4 Finding People to Follow

Once you have a Twitter account, you need to find people to follow. The easiest way is to put a name into the search box at the top of www.twitter.com and review the results. Click on a profile that you want to follow and click the Follow button to follow. Remember you do not need permission to follow anybody on Twitter – everything is public and you can follow anybody you wish unless they have set additional security settings (see 3.2.6 for more detail on Twitter security settings).

3.2.5 Tweeting and Engaging

To listen to what people you are following are tweeting (saying), look at your home page at www.twitter.com. This will show all the tweets from everybody you are following. This forms a continuously updated stream of tweets, so you may need to scroll down to read tweets.

You have three choices to engage with people:

Write a new tweet

This is how you tell people what you are doing or feeling or share interesting content. See Figure 7 for an example. Remember what you write about on Twitter is public. It can be seen by everybody, even if they are not directly following you, so be careful what you write – it will represent your personal brand and may exist for years to come. There are many incidents of people who wrote a tweet that came back to haunt them several years later. I would suggest that you shouldn't use Twitter to make personal attacks on people or write anything that you would not be prepared to say in public.



Figure 7 – Example of writing a Tweet

For example

I heard the other day about an incident at a cricket club. The club had three volunteer umpires. As we know, everybody is human and umpires do make mistakes in the heat of the moment. After a particular match, some members of the club took to Twitter to complain about a particular umpire. The umpire subsequently resigned. Was this the right way to treat the umpire? Would it look good when people check the personal brand of the perpetrators on Twitter? Has this helped the cricket club?

Twitter is not the right medium to use to have a personal chat with a select group of people. Use the private chat facility in Facebook or Google+ instead. See section 7.4 for more information on private messaging.

Reply to a tweet

When you see a tweet in www.twitter.com, you may want to reply to it as shown in Figures 8 and 9. If you roll your mouse over the tweet, you will see a Reply button. Clicking this allows you to reply to the original author in a very public fashion. The reply will form part of the conversation and will mention the original author, but can be seen by everybody. Replying to tweets is a great way of introducing yourself to people you have not yet met but who may be relevant to your brand.

Note when you reply to a tweet and put the username at the beginning, the tweet will be displayed in:

- The news feed of the individual you are replying to.
- Anybody who is following you **and** the person you have replied to.
- Your profile so anybody who looks at your Twitter profile will see it in the reply.



Figure 8 – Example of a Twitter reply (1)

In the example in Figure 8, my reply will be seen by all my followers because @quiltthegrain is not the first thing on my tweet.



Figure 9 – Example of a Twitter reply (2)

In the example in Figure 9, my reply will be seen by anybody following me and @Setting4Success.

It will also be visible on my profile.

Retweet a tweet

You may see a tweet that you think would be useful or interesting to your contacts or you may just want to help others by sharing their content, as shown in Figure 10. By rolling your mouse over the tweet, you will see a Retweet button. Click this to display the tweet in the newsfeed of your contacts. Not only does this share interesting content with your followers, but it also puts the brand of the Twitter name you retweeted in front of your followers.



Figure 10 – Example of a Retweet

The website www.twitter.com along with the Twitter smartphone app works well for listening and engaging with your followers. If you want to become a serious Twitter user, I would recommend that you use a third party tool, for example HootSuite or Tweetdeck, to make the time you spend on Twitter more effective and productive.

3.2.6 Twitter Security

In general, everybody can see your profile and what you write on Twitter, but it is possible to create a private Twitter account. If you create a private account, you will need to approve anybody who wants to follow you. This could work really well if you want to control your account or just use your account for listening to others. Do be aware that on a private account, you can't reply to people that you have not approved to follow you, so it can be quite hard to engage with people. Others cannot retweet your tweets. You are also dependent on the people you are following respecting how you are using Twitter – remember even if you have a private Twitter account, if you tweet something that others would consider incriminating, they would be able to take screen shots of the tweet as a way of saving the tweet for the future.

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3.2.7 Using Twitter for Job Hunting

Twitter is not the obvious tool to use for job hunting, but it is worth considering whether it is appropriate for your circumstances. Try:

- Following the accounts or hashtags relating to the industry you are interested in and participate where appropriate.
- Developing yourself as a thought leader by creating meaningful content that people care about.
- Following and engaging with the Twitter profiles of the businesses that you are targeting.
- Building your network and letting people know what you are looking for.
- Keeping Twitter informal and showing your interests and personality – within your personal brand.
- Connecting with people who work in the businesses that you are targeting. Finding out more about the business and opportunities.
- Being interested in what others are doing – don't just use it as a self-promotion tool.

3.2.8 Summary of Twitter

Twitter is so much more than 'what I had for lunch' and can be used successfully to engage with businesses, media and individuals in all aspects of life. Decide what you want to use Twitter for (if anything) and give it a go. Just remember it is a public means of communication!

3.3 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking tool that has over 1.11 billion monthly active users generating 4.4 billion likes and sharing 4.75 billion items of content per day. Facebook is primarily made up of status updates (text, pictures and videos) that others can 'like' or comment on. People use Facebook to keep in touch with friends and family as well as colleagues. Many people think of Facebook as a personal social networking medium, but it can also be used successfully by businesses and charities.

3.3.1 Why Use Facebook for Personal Gain?

Facebook is a fantastic tool for keeping in touch with friends and family and getting back in touch with people you have not seen for some time. Through Facebook, I keep in contact with cousins around the world who I would otherwise just not speak to. It can also be used to engage with businesses. On a personal level you may also want to consider using Facebook to:

- Talk to friends or family.
- Discover vouchers or offer codes distributed by brands.
- Discuss customer service issues with brands – brands will often respond faster to updates written on the timeline of the brand than email or phone calls as the potential bad publicity is a real concern.

- Follow celebrities to find out what is going on in their lives.
- Engage with brands – provide feedback to questions and find out what is going on with the brand.
- Use the instant messaging service to chat to friends. Adding a group of friends to a chat allows you to have a private group conversation.
- Communicate with people with a shared interest via Facebook groups.
- Find brands, products and services that your friends like and therefore you might like.

3.3.2 Creating a Facebook Profile

Register with Facebook at www.facebook.com. Complete your profile with the following:

- A cover photo, which is a large photo at the top of your profile and can be used to illustrate your personal brand.
- A profile photo, which will be displayed alongside all your updates.
- Basic information about you. You can choose to complete as much or as little as you wish. Be aware that some of the information you complete, e.g. relationship status, interests, etc. will be used by Facebook to target what advertising you see.

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Facebook sees your Facebook profile, known as a timeline, as a way of displaying your life story. People can scroll back through your timeline to see photos you shared or comments you made several years ago. This functionality means that it is very important to understand what parts of your profile or status updates you share with which of your audience groups.

3.3.3 Facebook Security

For each section of your profile, you can choose who can see the information: 'Only Me', 'Friends', 'Friends Except Acquaintances' or 'Public'.

- 'Only Me' is a way of making the information completely private.
- 'Friends Except Acquaintances' indicates somebody you have connected to, but who you have indicated is an acquaintance, which means Facebook will filter updates from these people so you don't see so many.
- Choosing 'Public' means that the information can be seen by anybody using Facebook.

You can also choose who can find you on Facebook – 'Friends of Friends' or 'Everyone'.

It is important that you take the time to ensure you are happy with who can see what on your profile.

3.3.4 Functions of Facebook

Most people use Facebook for communicating with friends and family and sharing photos. The chat section of Facebook is also heavily used. I know many people who use the chat section of Facebook to exchange information with a group of friends rather than using the Facebook status updates as it is more private and will not remain on your timeline. However, do be aware of the personal security issues of having a private chat with people you have only met through Facebook.

You can use Facebook to find Facebook pages to communicate with brands and find interesting information. Like many of the other tools, businesses use Facebook to communicate with customers, offer discounts, share information about products or give free useful information. If you click 'Like' on a Facebook page, you are suggesting you want to see updates from that page. If the page starts to annoy you, you could hide the page, but be aware your friends might still be told by Facebook that you 'like' the page. Consider the impact on your personal brand of which pages you choose to 'like'.

3.3.5 Updating Facebook

To update your status on Facebook, you need to write in the white box that you can see at the top of your Newsfeed. Mention or 'tag' people in your update by using the '@' sign before their name and selecting them from a displayed list. Choose who you want to see your update by clicking on the dropdown ('Friends' in Figure 11), selecting Public, Friends or 'Friends Except Acquaintances'.

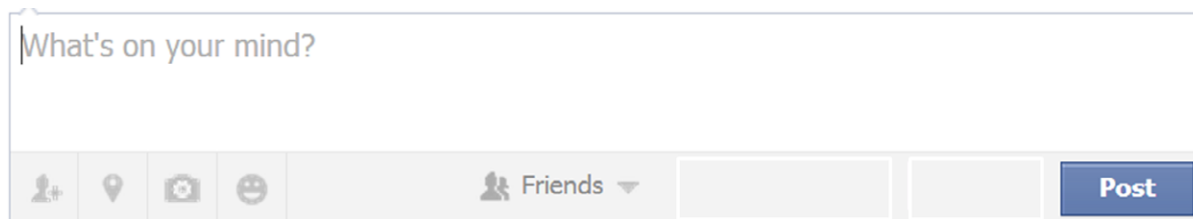


Figure 11 – Facebook status update

If the status update is set to public, it will potentially appear in Facebook search results. All updates will appear on your profile page (to be seen by people you have chosen to share the update with) and in the newsfeed of people you have shared the update with. You can attach photos or videos to your updates and in fact this is the best way of getting engagement from others on Facebook. You can also attach links to website pages.

What to Say

On your personal Facebook profile, what you say will depend on who you are communicating with and why you are using Facebook. As a general rule, I believe you should still be aware that unless your security settings are very tight, what you say on your Facebook profile still reflects on your personal brand. I would advise you not to be negative, homophobic, racist, sexist, etc. Do not be offensive or write comments that could be seen as bullying. I believe you shouldn't use Facebook to say anything that you are not prepared to say to someone's face or to your boss/mother just in case you don't select the right security settings that one time or if somebody sees your timeline by mistake.

You can use hashtags within your Facebook updates to give your updates more chance of being seen by people searching for updates containing certain hashtags. Clicking on hashtags in other people's updates will show you updates that have been shared with you containing those hashtags.

Facebook allows you to share information about how you are feeling or what you are doing. For example, you can say that you are reading a book or listening to music, watching a film or feeling happy/sad etc. If you create an update saying that you are reading a particular book and link to the book name, Facebook will include a reference to the book in the About section of your timeline. This information is included in Facebook search results. If anybody searches for people who like the book, your name will appear if you have made the information public.

3.3.6 Finding People to Connect With

The easiest way to find people to follow is to use the search option at the top of the Facebook page. Once you find people that you know, click Add Friend. Your friend will receive an invitation and can decide whether to connect with you. Once they accept your request, their status updates will now appear in your Newsfeed. Once you have connected with people, Facebook will soon suggest more people you might know based on mutual connections!

If you know people who comment on status updates posted by your friends, invite them to be your friend.

You can choose whether to accept an invitation to connect on Facebook. Consider the consequences of accepting invitations.

- There is a personal safety aspect. It might not be a good idea to connect with people that you don't know and with whom you have no mutual friends. Once you connect with somebody they will be able to see what is on your Timeline, which could expose you to a personal security risk.
- Who do you want to share your personal life with? Depending on how you use Facebook, you may decide you don't want to accept work colleagues or people you don't know well as friends.

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shape the future.
Every single day.

For more information go to:
www.eon-career.com

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- How are you going to handle the overlap between your personal and professional life? There is no 'right' answer to this. You need to understand why you are using Facebook – what sort of updates you are going to post and how this reflects on your personal brand.
- Should school teachers connect with their pupils? The answer to this one is probably no – but it is still not cut and dried as your personal friends' children may be your pupils.
- Should you connect with your children's friends? I frequently get asked to connect by the friends of my children. Personally, I don't want them to know what is happening on my Facebook timeline and I don't want to know intimate details about them. Many people who use Facebook look at the number of 'friends' they have rather than thinking about how they communicate with those friends and how their personal brand looks to the people they are connected with.

3.3.7 Using Facebook for Job Hunting

Facebook may appear to be an unlikely tool to use for job hunting, but if you keep in touch with people that you used to work with or that you have met, you never know what might happen! One of the best ways to find a new job is to be recommended by a friend. Make sure people know what you are looking for and what skills you have. Don't appear too needy though! Join relevant Facebook groups to get noticed by others for your comments and experience.

You will need to develop a public profile to be found in searches and you may need to connect to people that you don't know. Before you start, I would recommend you clean up what is visible on your Timeline to ensure that it reflects your personal brand.

3.3.8 Summary of Facebook

Facebook can be used successfully to talk to personal friends and family, communicate with business contacts and engage with brands. It is important to check your security settings and be aware who will see what you share on Facebook.

3.4 Google+

Google+ is Google's version of Facebook or LinkedIn. It can be used by individuals to communicate with their friends or with businesses. Everybody who creates a Gmail account or YouTube account will automatically have a Google+ account. A piece of content posted on Google+ is immediately indexed for Google search (depending on the privacy settings selected).

3.4.1 Why Use Google+ for Personal Gain?

Google+ is yet another social media tool, so why would you want to use it? Some reasons might include:

- To build your personal brand.
- To share updates, photos and videos with friends and family.
- To use hangouts (the video conference tool within Google+) to communicate with friends and family.
- To appear in search results.
- To exploit the use of Google Authorship if you have a blog.
- To join communities.
- To develop your status as a thought leader.
- To follow businesses and individuals to learn and find out about information of interest.

We discuss this functionality in more detail shortly.

3.4.2 Creating a Google+ Profile

To create a Google+ profile, you first need a Google account. Create a Google account either by creating a Gmail account, creating a YouTube account or by registering with Google+ at <https://plus.google.com/>. Once you are registered, type 'Google' into a browser and you will have a black bar on the top of the browser page. Click +Name on the left hand side to view your Google+ profile, as shown in Figure 12 (+Mary).

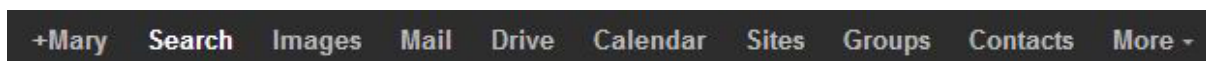


Figure 12 – Accessing Google+

As part of creating your Google+ profile, you should include a cover photo and profile photo to demonstrate your personal branding. The cover photo is a large photo shown at the top of your profile which can be used to show what you are going to talk about or what you represent. The profile photo is shown when you share an update. This should be a similar photo to that used on your other social media profiles.

As part of completing your Google+ profile, you should complete the 'About' section to demonstrate who you are and what you stand for. The 'tagline' in your story should include keywords related to what your skills are and/or what your personal brand stands for.

Figure 13 shows an extract of my Google+ 'About' section. Each portion of the Google+ 'About' section will be included in search results so skills, occupation, introduction should all include relevant keywords.

People

In her circles 936 people

Have her in circles 698 people

[Edit](#)

Work

Occupation
Social Media Trainer, E-Learning Development

Skills
Social Media Marketing, Qualified Trainer / Assessor, Microsoft Office, IT

Employment

Concise Training Limited
Trainer, 2008 - present
Concise Training specialises in offering IT training that the client wants in a way that makes it affordable and appropriate for the client. I have worked with IT for over 20 years and have been training adults for 7. I started Concise Training as I am passionate about helping people to use their IT in the most cost effective way possible. Training courses are developed for individuals to ensure that they learn what they don't already know. I started offering Microsoft Office training but over the two years have moved into Social Media training because I have seen how successfully it can be used by Concise Training and by our clients. More recently, we have been working with City & Guilds and Dawson Loane to offer the ITQ Social Media qualification.

Right Angle Consultants
Associate, 2010 - 2012

Story

Tagline
Social Media Marketing Trainer

Introduction
Trainer with Concise Training. Author of 'Social Media Made Simple'.

Offer City & Guilds accredited Social Media Level 3 Qualification.

Created resources for Level 2 Digital Social Apprenticeship for Digital Youth Academy

Bespoke training offered to businesses of all sizes at client size, over the internet or workshops in Faringdon.

Bragging rights
2 kids and 1 border terrier

[Edit](#)

Education

Loughborough University
1988

[Edit](#)

Basic Information

Gender	Female
Looking for	Who are you looking for?
Birthday	13 July
Relationship	Married
Other names	Denning

Figure 13 – Extract of Google+ 'About' Section

Include links to other social media profiles, relevant websites and blogs in the Links section.

3.4.3 Functions of Google+

When using Google+ for personal use, there are a number of functions available:

Photos

A number of tools are available to enhance photos you upload to Google+ from your desktop or mobile device. These include:

- **Auto Backup** – when enabled, photos taken on a mobile will automatically be backed up to your Google+ profile.
- **Auto Highlight** – helps you find photos that you have uploaded by de-emphasising duplicates, blurry images and those with poor exposure.
- **Auto Enhance** – automatically improves brightness, contrast, saturation, structure, noise or focus when photos are uploaded.
- **Auto Awesome** has three options
 - Upload a sequence of photos and Google+ will automatically create an animation based on the photos.
 - Upload a series of the same group of people and Google+ will create a photo based on the best smile of each person in the group.
 - Upload two side by side photos of a landscape and Google+ will stitch the photos together to create a panorama.



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Google+ Communities

Create or join a community (group) relevant to your area or interest to get involved in discussions. Communities can be public or private.

Google+ Events

Publicise or find events (public or private), invite people and share photos from the event with the people you have invited and the public. Each person at the event can upload their own photos to the event. Events are a great way of inviting friends and family to a party or finding out about events that are happening in your area.

Google+ Pages

Organisations or companies can set up a Google+ Page. Individuals can follow and engage with Google+ pages to get offers, discounts or information about the business.

Google+ Hangouts

A hangout is a way of holding a free video telephone call with up to nine other people using a webcam, speakers and microphone. (The webcam is optional – you can turn it off!) Hangouts can be started instantly or scheduled ahead of time. Hangouts can be private or public. Anybody can join public hangouts. The quality of hangouts is very good even with low broadband bandwidth. Hangouts can be used to collaboratively work on documents, share screens, watch a video together, hold a meeting, have a family conversation, etc.

Google Authorship

If you write a blog (see Chapter 4), Google Authorship allows you to create a link between your Google+ profile and your blog. When people find content from your blog (or website) using Google search, your Google+ profile photo will be displayed in search results, as shown in Figure 14. This increases the chances that people will click through to read the blog or other website content.



Figure 14 – Example of Google Search results when linked with Google+ profile

3.4.4 Finding People and Pages to Follow

In a similar way to other social networking tools, you follow people on Google+ to see their updates in your home feed. In Google+ you can follow anybody and anybody can follow you.

However, there isn't a 'follow' button on Google+. In order to follow somebody, you add them to one of your 'circles.' Google+ will start you off with circles with standard names – e.g. Friends/Family – but you can create your own circles, as shown in Figure 15. A contact can be included in more than one circle.



Figure 15 – Google+ Circles

You can find people to follow by clicking the People button on the left hand menu and looking at the list of people with a shared connection. By hovering over the Add button, you will be given a list of your circles. You can choose one of the standard circles (Family, Friends) or you can create your own circle first. Selecting one of the circles for the individual means you will be following the updates from the individual.

You can also find people to follow by:

- Searching for them by name in the search bar at the top of your Google+ page.
- Seeing them mentioned by others in your home feed.
- Seeing them displayed on the right hand side of your Google + home page under 'You May Know'.

3.4.5 Engaging with Others

Once you are logged in to Google+, you can view the updates from everybody you have in your circles by clicking the Home option on the left hand menu. You can +1 or share any post that others have posted by clicking the buttons on the bottom left of the post. Clicking +1 is similar to a 'Like' in Facebook. You can also comment on any post and this is another good way of making yourself more visible. Note that individuals can decide whether to allow a post to be shared or commented upon so you may find that shares/comments have been disabled on some posts.

You can share a text update, a photo, a link, a video or an event. When you share a status update, you can choose whether to share it with the public, with a particular circle of contacts or with an individual person. You can mention somebody in your updates using the + sign before their name and selecting them from a displayed list. It is a good idea to include hashtags within your status updates to indicate the keywords used in the update. If you forget to include hashtags, Google+ will attempt to identify appropriate hashtags for you. Hashtags are displayed in the top right corner of a post. Clicking the hashtag will show similar posts containing the hashtag.

3.4.6 Google+ Security

You can decide who can see each part of your Google+ profile by editing your profile, clicking the individual section and clicking on the drop down on the right of each option.

You can choose from the following options:

- **Extended Circles** are people in your circles' circles.
- **Public** – everybody will be able to see the information.
- **Company Name** – means only people who work for the same company as you will be able to see the information (if you have included your employment in your Google+ Profile).
- **Your Circles** – everybody in your circles.
- **Only you** means nobody else.
- **Custom** – you can include individual circles or individual people.

An advertisement for SKF. It features a woman with long dark hair smiling in the foreground. In the background, there is a large white wind turbine against a blue sky. The text 'Brain power' is written in large white letters on the left. On the right, there is a block of text about wind energy and SKF's role. At the bottom left, there is a call to action to visit the SKF website. The SKF logo is in the bottom right corner.

Brain power

By 2020, wind could provide one-tenth of our planet's electricity needs. Already today, SKF's innovative know-how is crucial to running a large proportion of the world's wind turbines.

Up to 25 % of the generating costs relate to maintenance. These can be reduced dramatically thanks to our systems for on-line condition monitoring and automatic lubrication. We help make it more economical to create cleaner, cheaper energy out of thin air.

By sharing our experience, expertise, and creativity, industries can boost performance beyond expectations. Therefore we need the best employees who can meet this challenge!

The Power of Knowledge Engineering

Plug into The Power of Knowledge Engineering.
Visit us at www.skf.com/knowledge

SKF



3.4.7 Using Google+ for Job Hunting

Google+ is still used by a minority of people, but the audience is growing daily and you could benefit by being seen as an early adopter. Recruiters are starting to use it to find candidates because they can directly email candidates found via Google+. Tips for using Google+ for job hunting:

- Create a Google+ profile that represents your personal brand and includes keywords linked to the skills you have and the work that you are seeking.
- Keep your profile information public so you can be seen by recruiters.
- Build your Google+ network by following and engaging with pages and people in businesses you wish to work with or who are relevant to your industry sector or area of knowledge.
- Join and engage with relevant communities of people.
- Share interesting and original content to establish yourself as a thought leader in your industry.
- Give +1s to show your appreciation of content written by others.
- Comment on and share information written by others.
- Join public hangouts held by the businesses you want to work with or that are relevant to your industry.

3.4.8 Summary of Google+

Google+ is a new, growing social network that will become more and more important as a way of displaying your personal brand. It has some fantastic features for individuals and businesses already and more will appear over time.

3.5 Social Networking Summary

In this section the four main social networking tools have been reviewed in terms of how to represent your personal brand and how to use the tools to communicate with individuals and businesses. Social networking is the new way of communicating and in a few years may take the place of email. Make sure you use social networking to enhance, not detract from your brand.

4 Blog

Noun: A website on which an individual or group of users record opinions, information, etc. on a regular basis

Verb: Add new material to or regularly update a blog

Blogs can be used for personal gain by reading blogs written by others or writing your own blog. There are a large number of blogs available to read. Some numbers:

³Tumblr.com has over 101.7 million blogs with 44.6 billion blog posts

WordPress has over 63 million blogs

Blogger has many millions of blogs but the exact number has not been published

This vast number of blogs can be used to seek information or join a community of people with similar interests. Most blogs seek comments and by commenting on a blog you can increase your visibility and make new connections.

Creating a blog and writing regular posts can be a way of establishing yourself as an expert, provides a creative outlet and is a way of communicating with a new community of people. It could also become a way of making money.

A blog may take a variety of forms – written, mainly consisting of images, a video (known as a vlog) or audio (known as a podcast) – and can be about anything of interest to you or your audience.

4.1 Reading Blogs

If you have an interest in anything, there are probably several blogs written about the subject with various levels of quality! It is just a matter of finding the interesting and relevant ones and using tools to make it easier to keep up to date with the latest posts. By reading blogs you can find a community of people to engage with. We discuss the community of bloggers more in section 4.5

4.1.1 Finding blogs to read

There are a number of ways to find blogs to read, including:

Blog Directories

A blog directory is a website which contains blogs sorted into categories. A blogger will apply to list the blog in the directory. If a blog is listed, it does not indicate anything about the quality of the blog. Some examples of directories include:

Alltop

www.alltop.com

Co-founded by Guy Kawasaki. This site has a vast number of blogs in a variety of subjects. A great place to start looking at the range of blogs available.

Technorati

www.technorati.com

This is one of the older and larger blog directories available. Search by keyword for specific posts on a topic or find entire blogs about a topic.

BlogCatalog

<http://www.blogcatalog.com/>

Bloggers need to pay to be featured on this site, so it may attract more serious bloggers. There is a good choice of categories to search



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Topic Based Automated Feeds

These are sites which automatically display blog posts based on topics or keywords you have selected. The blogs displayed will be based upon relevance, age and popularity. You may want to explore:

Guzzle.it

<http://guzzle.it/>

This tool shows you information from a number of sources based on topics. This is a good way of finding random sources of information about the topic that you are interested in. It is available on a desktop or as an app on the iPhone.

Blogs Recommended by the Blogging Tool You Choose

In section 4.5 we discuss a number of tools available to create a blog. Each of these tools will recommend blogs you may want to look at. We cover this in more detail in section 4.5.

4.1.2 Following Blogs

When you find a blog post that you enjoy and want to see more from, you will want to remember it. There are a number of ways to do this – some easier than others:

Bookmark the blog

Most internet browsers have a bookmarking facility and you can add the blog to the bookmark. This means that you will need to regularly revisit the blog to see if there any new entries.

Follow the blogger on social media

Most bloggers use social media to share new posts. By following the individual on social media you should see updates – though they are easy to miss. This method will mean that you remember the blog site, but you will need to manually return to the blog to check for any new posts.

Subscribe to the blog by email

Some blogs will allow you to subscribe using your email address so that you receive an email with the latest post. This is a good way of staying in touch though it could clog up your email if you subscribe to many blogs.

Use a blog curation tool

These tools allow you to view multiple blog feeds in one tool so that the latest posts are displayed each time you look at the tool. Many of these tools are available on mobile devices and some are displayed in a ‘magazine style’. You can include blogs and news feeds from media outlets.

A number of tools exist. The one that will be most suitable for you will depend on:

- The mobile device you are using.
- The look and feel that you prefer.
- Whether you wish to include updates from social media (Twitter, Facebook).
- Whether you wish to publish your own magazine of information you have curated.

New content curation tools are being created all the time. Three tools I would recommend you consider are Flipboard, Pulse and Currents. Each of the tools is available for Android and iOS mobile devices. There may be differences between the phone and tablet versions. Note, Pulse is owned by LinkedIn; Currents is owned by Google

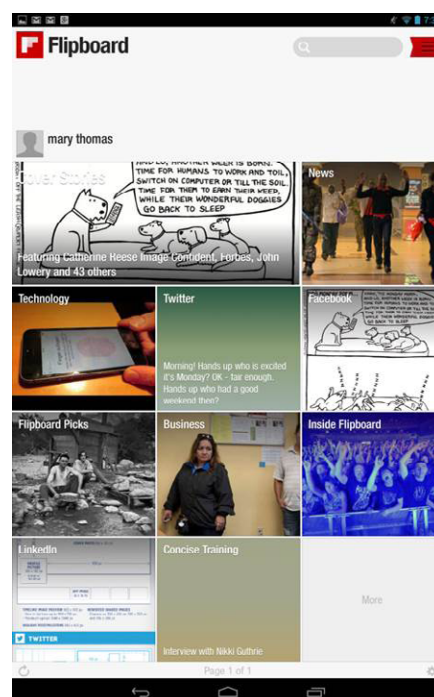


Figure 16 – Flipboard

They each:

- Allow you to include social media sites so that you can see updates from friends and connections.
- Suggest blogs and news feeds you might want to follow.
- Allow you to search for blogs to add.
- Allow you to save articles to read later (this is easier in Flipboard and Pulse).
- Allow you to share articles by email or social media.

Flipboard (see Figure 16) allows you to create a magazine of content that you can share with others, which may prove useful once you start writing blogs of your own as you can include your own blog as one of the articles.

It generally comes down to personal taste – which tool you enjoy using more! These only work effectively if you check the latest updates to the blog regularly.

4.2 Writing Blogs

Before you start to blog, it is a good idea to think about the tone and content of your blog. Remember your blog should represent your personal brand. Even if you are writing an informal blog, it should still be spellchecked and proofread before posting.

4.2.1 Why write a blog

There are many reasons to blog. 8% of bloggers earn enough money to be able to support a family. 9% make enough money to sustain their lifestyle on 4–6 hours a day blogging, 2% spend 1–2 hours a day blogging and make \$150K +⁴. However, many people blog just for the enjoyment of expressing themselves. When I have talked to people who blog, most talk about the enjoyment they get out of being creative when writing a blog and sharing their ideas and thoughts with others.



What do you want to do?

No matter what you want out of your future career, an employer with a broad range of operations in a load of countries will always be the ticket. Working within the Volvo Group means more than 100,000 friends and colleagues in more than 185 countries all over the world. We offer graduates great career opportunities – check out the Career section at our web site www.volvogroup.com. We look forward to getting to know you!

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VOLVO FINANCIAL SERVICES | VOLVO 3P | VOLVO POWERTRAIN | VOLVO PARTS | VOLVO TECHNOLOGY | VOLVO LOGISTICS | BUSINESS AREA ASIA



Blogs are also a good way of increasing your visibility, establishing yourself as an expert and sharing your ideas and experiences. If you are looking for work, blogging may be a good way of getting found. Blogs have a long life – once written, they exist on the internet until you decide to remove them. The content of your blog will form an important part of your personal brand. A blog is a great way of building trust with your audience, but you need to be consistent and regular to ensure that visitors keep coming back to read and share your posts.

Vanity blogs are blogs started by people who enjoy the creative experience of recording their ideas and sharing what they have done. Craft or cooking blogs often start like this. People like using the anonymity of the internet to boast about what they have achieved and comment on what they like. Remember though that what you blog about is part of your personal brand. Many blogs have been started by mothers with young children who need to talk to people outside their immediate circle. Blogging is a good way of building an online community.

Other reasons may include:

- To connect with people with a similar interest and share thoughts and opinions.
- To make a difference. Political blogs and blogs about social issues are written by people who are trying to make a difference.
- To stay connected with friends and family. A blog is a good way of letting friends and family know how you are getting on and share stories of your experiences.
- Just to see what it is all about.
- To give 'how to' tips.
- To help people who are going through a similar experience to you. Many parenting and health-related blogs are written for this purpose.
- To record a journey (physical or spiritual).

4.2.2 What to write about

The great thing about writing a blog is that there are no rules. Your blog post can be as long or as short as you like. Normally it is a good idea to keep posts short (between 200 and 600 words) and use a style that is easy to read. Remember most readers will typically scan content, looking for the most important points in a short timeframe.

You can write your blog about any topic that you are passionate about. When choosing a topic, remember that once you start a blog, you should continue. So you need to have at least 24 topics that you can write a post about (assuming 2 posts a month).

Depending on the reason for writing your blog, you may need to apply the ‘so what?’ test. Will the post inform or entertain your audience? Will visitors want to return to your blog to read more? Does it reflect your personal brand and help people to know who you are and what you stand for? Blogs that I have read include the diverse subject areas of:

- Help and advice on using social media.
- The personal journey of somebody training for an Iron Man event.
- The personal opinion of a digital marketing lecturer.
- Information about quilting.
- A personal view of how colour is used in life.

It is often a good idea to include an image relating to the blog post. It will make the post more interesting and may add context to the post. Be careful how you source images on your blog. Where possible, you should use photos or images you own (have taken, created or paid for). There are a number of websites that source copyright free images. Don’t just copy any relevant image from the internet and assume you can use it. You may end up with a large bill!

Tips to make your content easy to read

- Use short paragraphs, lots of white space, bullets, headings and subheadings to make the text easy to scan.
- Use a font type and font size that is easy to read.
- If you are displaying ads, make sure they don’t distract from your content – display them on the side of the blog.
- Use images in the post if they add value. Don’t just include an image because a post should have one.
- Use formatting (bold, italics) sparingly but to make a point.

4.2.3 When to write

Many people start to write a blog and give up after a few months. The main reason for this is that many bloggers do not establish a plan of content. We have already recommended that you identify at least 24 topics. To be organised, create an editorial calendar indicating what you are going to write about, when you are going to write it and when it is going to be scheduled.

It is up to you how often you create new posts. Some people write once a day, others once a month. It will be based on your reasons for writing your blog, how much content you have and the time you have to write.

4.2.4 Promoting a blog

It is possible that you want to write a blog for your own personal satisfaction or to be shared with your personal friends and family. If you do want your blog to be found by others you should:

- Publish a link to your blog on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+.
- Use Triberr, Stumbleupon and Scoopit to bookmark your post so it can be found by others.
- Include the blog in the directories discussed in section 4.1.1.
- Consider how your blog posts will appear in search engines. Use keywords in the title and content of your post – but where it makes sense. If you use keywords too often, your audience won't understand what you are saying.
- Comment on posts written by others in your niche market. Bring value to your comment or opinion and don't self-promote. It will make you more visible to other people in your field and provide links back to your website.

4.3 Blogging Tools

There is a choice of software you can use to create a blog. The decision will be based on:

- How much you want to customise your blog.
- How many other blogs related to yours are on the site. It is easier to build up a community with others on the same software as yourself.
- Where you will be updating your blog from – a desktop or mobile device.
- Whether you want to make money out of your blog from advertising.

The three most popular blogging tools are Tumblr, Blogger and WordPress. In this section, the advantages and disadvantages of each tool will be discussed, along with some examples of people or businesses using each tool.

Table 3 indicates the main differences between the tools in more detail.

4.3.1 Tumblr

Advantages

- It is easy to create posts from mobile devices.
- It is easy to read posts in mobile devices.
- Blogs can be shared to social media on the mobile version, not so easily on the desktop version.
- Easy and quick to set up.

Disadvantages

- You may see adverts when looking at Tumblr on a mobile device.
- Logos, colours and other branding items can't easily be added to the blog
- It can be considered cumbersome to get around.

Who uses Tumblr?

Tumblr is used by people who want to create quick, consumption-style posts. Questions, quotes, photos and videos work particularly well. Some examples (illustrated in Figure 17):

- Fashion brands – e.g. J. Crew.
- Large brands share company news or culture, e.g. Mashable.
- Publishing and broadcast media share snippets of information e.g. The Telegraph.

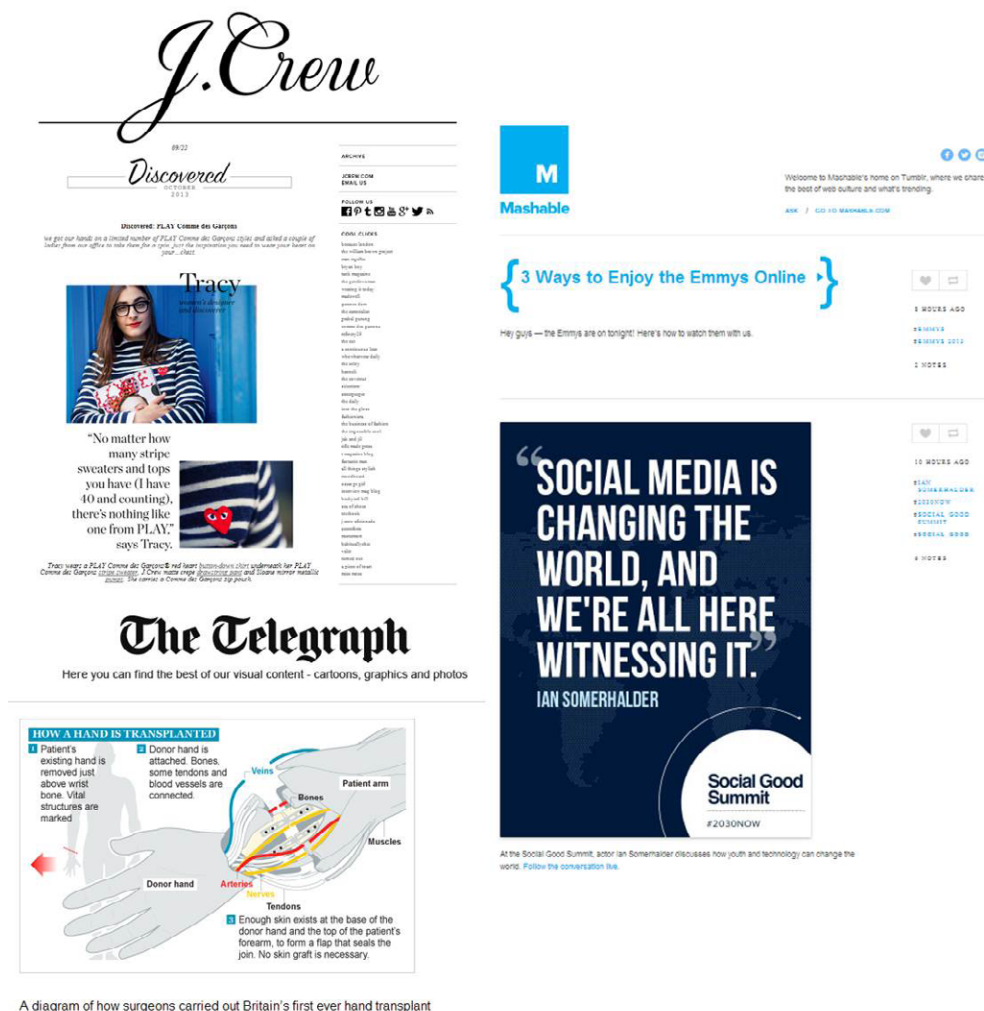


Figure 17 – Examples of Tumblr

4.3.2 Blogger

Advantages


- It is quick and easy to set up on a desktop machine.
- You can add ads to the blog so that if you get enough visitors you can make money from your blog.
- It is easy to post from mobile devices.

Disadvantages

- When somebody is looking at your blog, there is a 'Next Blog' button – there is no control over which blog they might find so think about who you want to look at your blog.
- You can create a post from a mobile device but the creation process shows ads. There is no control over which ads you see.
- It is difficult to read blogs from the Blogger community on a mobile device. It is better to use a content curation tool as discussed in 4.1.2.

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Who uses Blogger?

As illustrated in Figure 18, Blogger is used mainly by individuals or small businesses (e.g. Quilting Along the Grain, Malcolm McDowell) though the Twitter blog is hosted on Blogger, as is the YouTube blog.

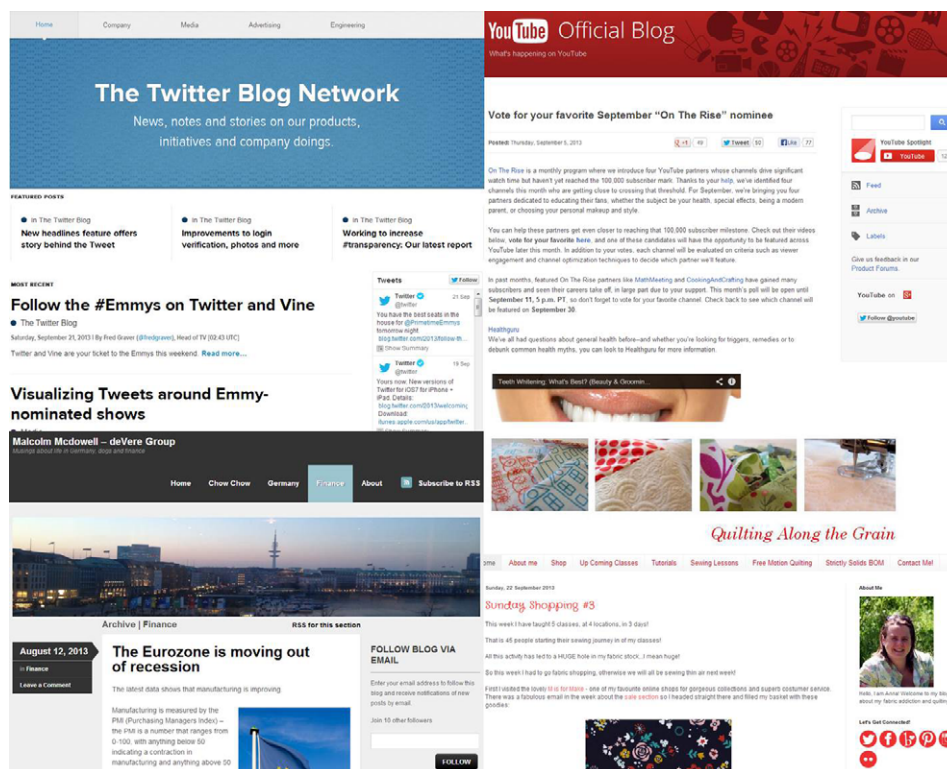


Figure 18 – Examples of Blogger

4.3.3 WordPress

WordPress is open source software that is used for millions of websites and blogs. There are two versions of WordPress:

- **WordPress.org**
The version to use if you want to create a complete website or want to host your own blog on server space you have paid for.
- **WordPress.com**
Allows you to create a free website or blog but it will have some limitations. You can pay extra to release some of the limitations, but it will still have more limited functionality than WordPress.org.

To set up a free WordPress blog (as a comparison to Blogger or Tumblr), you should use WordPress.com. To have an all singing, all dancing blog or website, you should pay for space on a server, install WordPress.org and maintain the site yourself.

Download free eBooks at bookboon.com

Advantages

- A range of functionality available.
- Highly customisable.
- Range of themes available (paid and free).

Disadvantages

- Can be a bit confusing to set up as there are so many options.
- There is a limit to the amount of storage you are allocated for free. You can purchase more but it might be better to use WordPress.org for scalability.
- Plug-ins, which add more functionality to a website in WordPress.org, cannot be used on WordPress.com.
- WordPress can include advertising on your site.

Who uses WordPress?

The WordPress.com blog software is used by individuals and small businesses including Cooking with Mr. C and Sarah Quinton as shown in Figure 19.

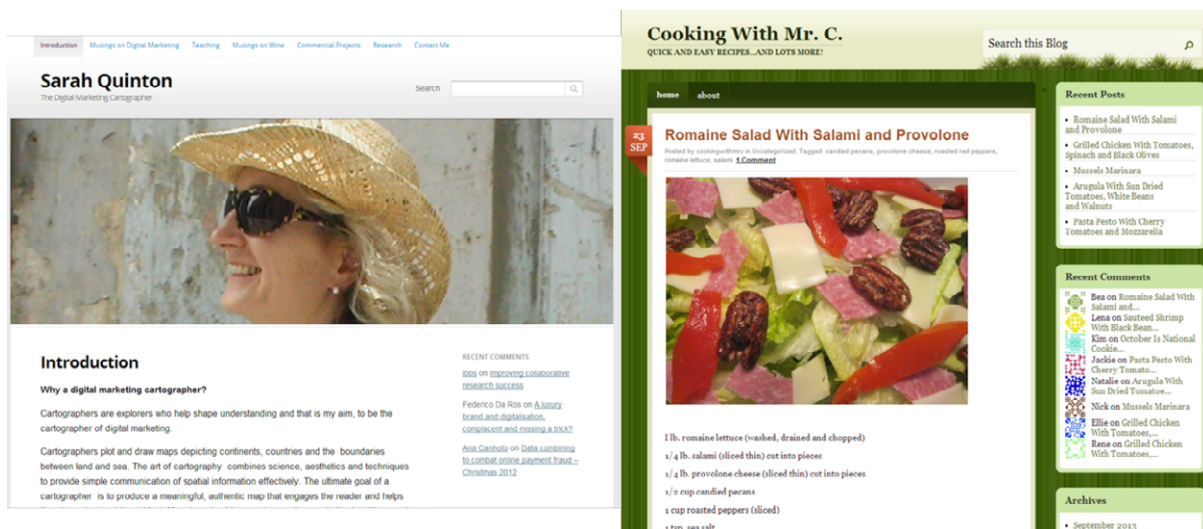


Figure 19 – Examples of WordPress.com

Table 3 – Comparison of Blogging Tools

	Tumblr	Blogger	WordPress.com	WordPress.org
Choose a template or theme	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Customise the colours	Yes – depending on theme chosen	Yes – full customisation	Yes – depending on theme chosen	Yes – depending on theme chosen
Customise the font	Font size can be difficult	Yes – full customisation	Font can be difficult	Font can be difficult
Include social media sharing buttons	Some themes will include social sharing buttons	Automatically included on blog	Social sharing can be turned on/off easily	Social sharing can be turned on/off easily
Include social media follow buttons	Included as links	Google+ Badge added as gadget Links to social media added as gadget Need to add HTML code to add buttons	Added as widgets or links	Added as widgets or links
Subscription options	Subscribe RSS included	Follow by Email added as gadget Subscribe To added as gadget	Added as widget	Added as widget



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Jane, Chinese architect

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	Tumblr	Blogger	WordPress.com	WordPress.org
Include branding logos	Not on basic option Can create HTML code	Image added as gadget	Yes	Yes
Contact form	Can use a setting to allow people to contact you to ask a question	A contact form is added using a gadget on the side bar. To put this in a page requires HTML coding	Can be added for each page or post on the blog	A contact form is added as a plug-in
Static pages	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mobile version	Yes	Yes	Yes if you choose a theme that is mobile compatible	Yes if you choose a theme that is mobile compatible
Be able to measure number of visitors	Depending on theme chosen or will need to add Google Analytics ID	Gadget – Blog's stats	WordPress stats	Can include Google Analytics
Include Google Adverts	No	Include a Google AdSense Gadget	No	Google AdSense plug-in
Shows adverts	Sometimes on mobile version	Yes when creating a post on mobile version	Possible. You can remove ads being displayed for a fee.	No
Mobile creation of posts	Very easy to create new posts	Easy to create new posts but ads displayed	Easy to create new posts on mobile device	Easy
Reading posts on mobile	Easy to follow Tumblr blogs on mobile	Better to use another content aggregator	Easy to read blogs you follow on WordPress	Easy
Storage space	Multiple blogs per account 75 pictures/day 250 posts/day (including reposts) No limit on total storage	100 blogs per account 1MB per page (100s page of text) 1GB total storage of images No limit on total storage	3GB total storage More available if purchased	Unlimited
Cost	Free	Free	Free but upgrades are available	Cost of hosting/maintenance
Include extra functionality	No	No	No	By using plug-ins
Create community within tool	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

4.4 Blog Comments

The online nature of blogging enables you to engage with others through the use of comments. You can encourage people to comment on your blog or comment on blogs created by others.

4.4.1 Commenting on blogs written by others

The advantage of commenting on blogs is that it gets you noticed by others. If you comment on or share my blog, I will thank you and want to know more about you. If you write your own blog, I may have a look at it and subscribe to your posts.

Even if you do not have your own blog yet, subscribing and sharing other people's blogs is a good way of raising your visibility.

Remember, comments are public so anything you say should reflect your personal brand. Try to add value to the conversation; don't just add a link to your blog or website.

This is the start of participating in a blogging community. We will cover this in more detail in section 4.5.

4.4.2 Managing comments on your blog

It is great to get comments on your blog but what then? To cover yourself, always choose to approve comments before they are published on your blog (a setting within the tool). If the comment is genuine, you should approve the comment and write a reply (as a comment) thanking the person who made the comment and addressing any questions raised. If appropriate, include another call to action to encourage more comments. This should be done in a timely manner – within the same hour would be perfect!

To cover yourself, it is a good idea to think now about how you are going to respond to negative comments or defamatory comments, so that you have a procedure if and when the time comes. You may find yourself in one of the following situations:

- Negative Comment

Unless the comment is highly offensive, you should approve the comment as if you don't, the comment could be made on places that are out of your control.

You need to respond quickly but not in anger. Everybody is entitled to an opinion and you should take on board what people say and put your reasons why you agree/disagree.

If the negative comment is as a result of somebody just being mean then, although it can be difficult, the best way is to respond to the comment without emotion giving your side of the story. You may want to ask people you know are your fans for support. In some circumstances, it may be better to ignore the comment and take the 'higher ground'. If the comment is actually slanderous or abusive, then you are within your rights not to publish the comment, particularly if you have a clear comment policy.

To create a comment policy, you may want to include text at the bottom of the blog to say "Any comments which are abusive, slanderous or could cause offence will be deleted."

- Spam Comment

A spam comment is a comment that is not relevant to your post but is left by somebody who wants to include a link to their website from your blog to try to convince search engines that their URL is popular as it has lots of back links. These spam comments can detract from your blog entry, may annoy visitors and can adversely affect your own search engine ranking.

This is another reason you should make sure that your comment settings are set to approve comments before displaying them. You should delete any spam comments that you receive.

A spam comment can appear to be flattering – do check the email address that it comes from and if in doubt, I would mark it as spam.

4.5 Blogging Communities

When you have created your blog you will find the tool you have used (Tumblr, Blogger, WordPress.com) will start suggesting blogs for you to follow and you will start to get followed by other bloggers. By seeking out, following and commenting on other blogs you are creating a network of people with whom you share your knowledge or passion. If you follow and share their blogs, you in turn will get followed and shared. Over time you will develop a group of people who regularly read, share and comment on your posts. I have known people to create lasting friendships and support groups with the people they have met through blog comments.

4.6 Summary of Blogging

If you want to be creative, take interesting photos or find writing enjoyable and relatively easy, blogging can be a fantastic way of promoting your personal brand, building a reputation as an expert or building a community of new friends. If you don't have the time, content or inclination to write your own blog, why not search out and read some of the interesting, thought provoking or entertaining blogs others have written for you. You may find a new interest that you can add to your personal brand.

5 Image Sharing

With the advent of smartphones and advances in the use of the Internet, people share images with friends and family in ever increasing numbers. Sharing images can also be used as a way of developing a network and illustrating your personal brand. Depending on why you want to share images or discover images, you could use a variety of tools and settings.

5.1 Why Share Images?

Your reasons for sharing images may be as simple as sharing personal photos with friends and family. You can upload personal photos to a private area on Flickr or Picasa and give friends and family the link to view your images. You may also decide to share photos on Facebook or Google+ (publicly or privately) or other social networking sites (publicly). People share photos publicly to show places they have been or food they have eaten.

You may want to express your personal brand by sharing images that you can relate to, find funny or express how you are feeling. Looking at images and commenting, liking or sharing images published by brands or others is a way of expressing what you feel about the brand or the person. You may wish to share or save images or products you aspire to or want to remember.



Be careful though; spending time looking at other people's photos can lead to envy and at times can be a form of stalking! Also remember that if you share one of your photos online you may not have control of where that photo ends up.

In this section, we will look at using Pinterest, Instagram, Flickr and social networking to share images with others and find images you like.

5.2 Pinterest

Pinterest started in the US with the concept of scrap booking. Women (usually) have forever created physical mood boards or scrap books of images they like around a theme – a wedding, special occasion, etc. Using Pinterest, people can create a number of boards around different themes and 'Pin' images they like around the internet and from their own computer to a digital board. Images pinned can have URLs or comments attached.

Although boards can be private, most boards are created publicly and people can pin images they see on other people's boards to their own boards – known as 'repinning'.

From a personal point of view, this is a great way of finding images that you like and are related to your personal brand. Boards have been created about travel, animals, fashion, social media and more. Pinterest is the third largest social networking site in the US⁵ (behind Facebook and Twitter) and Pinterest has the higher average order value for referral traffic⁶. People are prepared to spend money on products they see on Pinterest.

5.2.1 Getting Started with Pinterest

The best way to get going on Pinterest is to register for an account at www.pinterest.com. Complete your profile details and find boards that have already been created in the subject area that interests you.

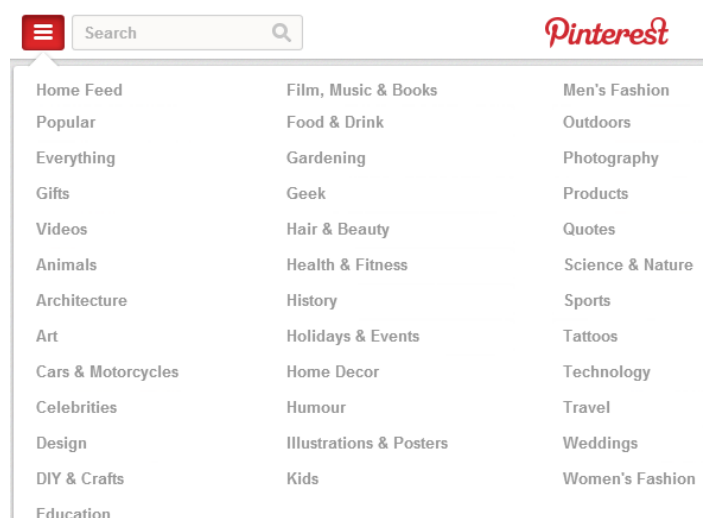


Figure 20 – Pinterest Search

To find boards, either use the search box or click on the top left hand button in Pinterest and choose a category as shown in Figure 20.



Figure 21 – Pin It Image source woodkinderclass.blogspot.com

When you see an image that you find interesting or that appeals to you, click the image and click Pin It to add it to one of your boards.

Clicking on the heart in the top right hand corner, as shown in Figure 21, indicates you 'like' the image

You can also choose to send a status update via Facebook or Twitter to tell your friends that you have added a new Pin.

When you pin an image from your own site you can include a description of the image and the URL, which will allow people to find out more information or buy the product on your website.

The best way to use Pinterest is to have a look around. See how brands like Lakeland <http://pinterest.com/lakelanduk/> or Sainsbury's <http://pinterest.com/sainsburys/> are using Pinterest.

Pinterest is a great way of collecting and saving images (your own and others) to view or revisit at a later date. It is available on desktop and mobile devices.

5.3 Instagram

Instagram is an app available on iOS and Android mobile devices which allows you to share photos you have taken with the Instagram app on social networking sites. You can also comment on, like and share photos taken by others. It works very well with Facebook (having been bought by Facebook in 2012), so is a good way of uploading photos directly to Facebook. There is a community of people on Instagram and you can choose to follow people (known and unknown) from within Instagram.

5.3.1 Using Instagram

The Instagram app allows you to take the photo, apply edits or filters and upload photos to the Instagram site (and other social networks). To use Instagram:

1. Download the app and register. If you wish, you can create a private account which will mean only users you approve may follow you and view your profile.
2. Complete your profile with that all-important photo and bio information.
3. You can decide to be notified:
 - a) When a user likes or comments on one of your photos.
 - b) When a user mentions you in a comment.
 - c) When your photo is posted to the Popular page.
4. If you wish, connect to other social networks.



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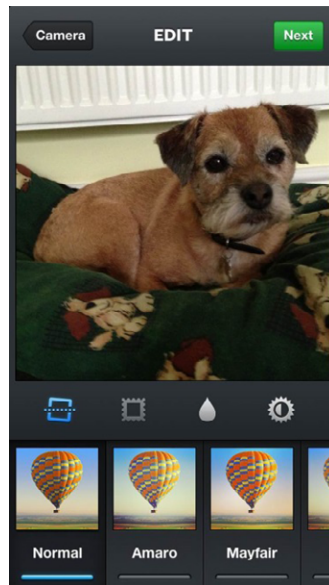


Figure 22 – Options to edit photo

5. To take a photo, click the blue camera button.
Note: Instagram sizes photos to perfect squares so images may be cropped. Consider this when you take the photo.
6. Once you have taken a photo a set of four icons appears to allow you to add filters, borders and other edits, as shown in Figure 22.

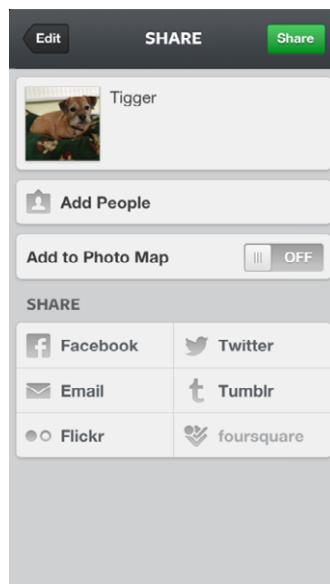


Figure 23 – Share a photo

7. Once you are happy with your photo click Next. Add a caption, people, or location as appropriate and click to share to the social networks of your choice, as shown in Figure 23.

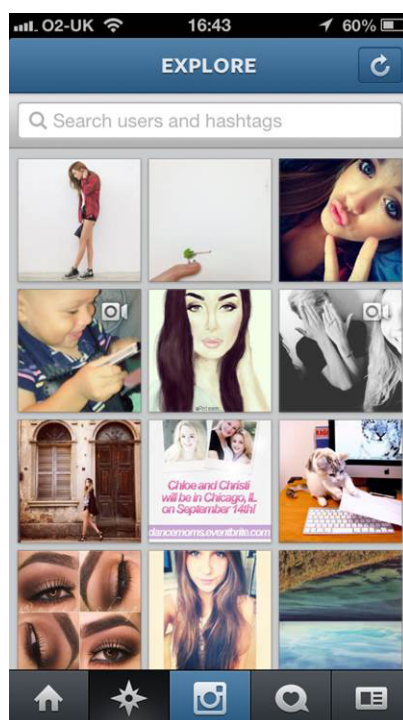


Figure 24 – Explore

8. Find people to follow by selecting Explore on your profile tab, as shown in Figure 24. You can search for friends who have connected their Facebook and Twitter accounts to Instagram or search by name/keyword or connect your mobile contact list. Instagram will also suggest people you might want to follow based on their popularity and shared friends.
9. Once you've followed users you will see their photos appear in your newsfeed. Like or comment to share their photos with your Instagram followers. You can also Tweet the photos to share with your Twitter followers or copy the URL to share on other social networks,

Instagram is a great way of taking photos, editing and sharing them instantly on a variety of social networking sites.

5.4 Flickr

Flickr, owned by Yahoo, allows you to store and share photos. Unlike Instagram, where your photos will be seen by people following you and then forgotten, Flickr allows you to store, manage and share your photos multiple times. There are iOS and Android versions of Flickr as well as a desktop version. You can use Flickr in two ways – free to search and with an account.

5.4.1 Free to search

Flickr can be used as a free to search public website, available to anyone with an internet connection. This is a good way of finding copyright free images to use in blogs, either by looking in The Commons section of Flickr or by looking for images that have been licensed under Creative Commons. If you find an image that you wish to use under Creative Commons, be sure to check the terms of the licence, which will tell you how you can use the image and whether you need to attribute the image to the author.

5.4.2 Register for an account

Anyone who wants to upload, store or share their images can register for an account on Flickr. You will automatically be given 1 terabyte of storage when you sign up for a Flickr account (equivalent to over 500,000 photos). You can choose to upgrade to an Ad-Free account for \$49.99/year or double your storage space to 2 terabytes for \$499.99 per year.

Register on Flickr

Create a Flickr account and choose a username. You can create a cover photo for your profile by clicking the cover image at the top of your profile. Click on the small profile image (or buddy icon) on the left to choose a different profile image.



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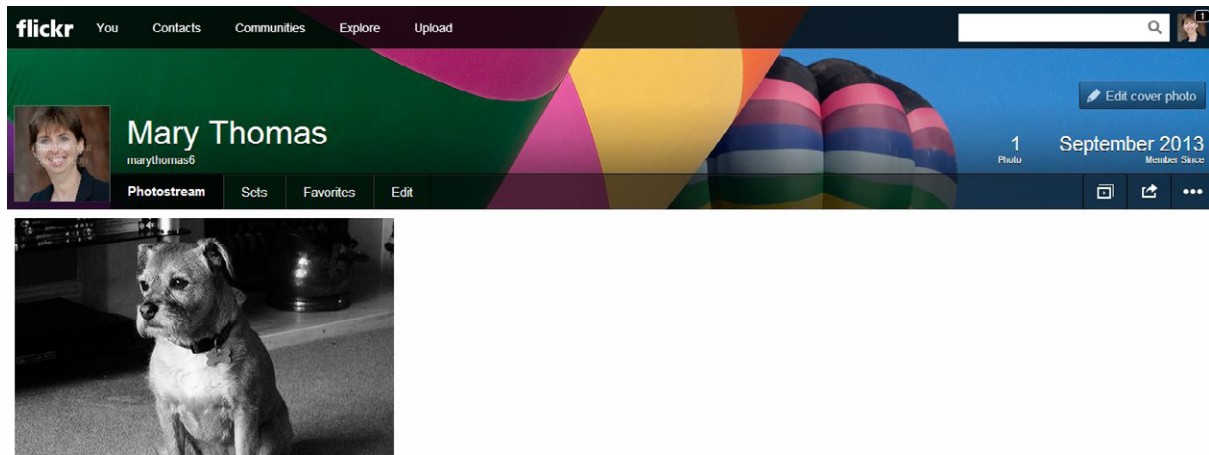
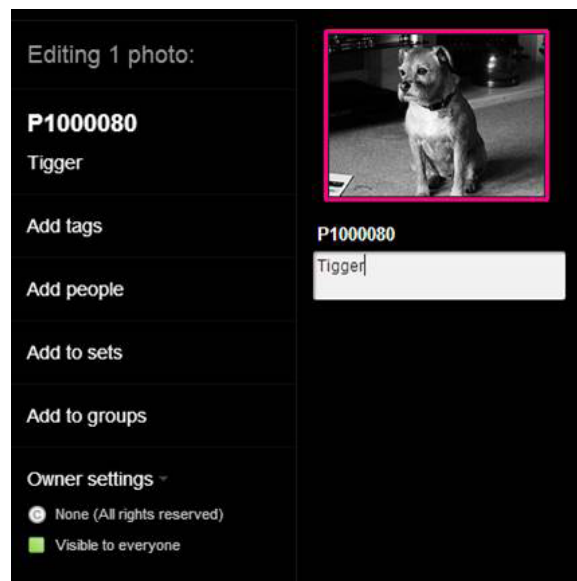



Figure 25 – Flickr profile

Click on the profile image on the top right of the Flickr window and choose Settings to include a bio, change your username and set your privacy settings. You should check Privacy & Permissions to see who can access your original image size and whether you want your photos and your profile to be shown in public searches. Sharing & Extending allows you to connect and automatically share photos to other social networking sites.



Uploading Photos

To upload photos, use the Upload link in the top navigation bar or use the Upload feature in the Flickr app. You can upload photos up to 200MB in size and videos of up to 1GB each.

When you upload a photo, add a caption, tags to allow people to find your photo and the names of any people who are in the photo (making sure you have their permission). You can also choose whether to make the photo visible to everybody and whether comments are allowed on the photo.

When you upload a photo you will be asked to set filters:

- Safety Level – safe, moderate or restricted.
- Content Type – photos/videos, illustration/art/animation, screenshots/screencasts.

Your photos will not be deleted by Flickr unless you contravene their rules (e.g. upload photos you don't own, forget to set an appropriate content filter or upload illegal content).

Building a Network

As you explore Flickr and find photos you like, you can invite people to be a contact or you can add people from your email address book or Facebook friends to be Flickr contacts. You can also join groups and share photos with groups.

Flickr works well as a space to store images you have taken and wish to share with others or as a place to find interesting images and make connections with new people. It can be a way of finding photos you can use in presentations, blogs, etc. but do be careful that you check the copyright licence first.

5.5 Using Social Networking to Share Images

Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn all allow you to share an image as a status update. Twitter includes a link to the photo whereas the photo is included directly within the update on the other sites. Google+ offers additional features to enhance your photos, as described in section 3.3.3.

These tools can be used for your personal gain to share, like and comment on photos to demonstrate your personal brand and to increase your network of connections. Do be careful how you set your security settings on the photos you share. When you share photos with your contacts, consider the impact if the photo were to be shared by others and go viral. I know somebody who shared a personal photo on Facebook which was liked and shared by thousands of people. She also received many friend requests from people all over the world. The photo was quite innocent, but it could have caused problems for her or the people in the photo.

5.6 Summary of Image Sharing

With the advent of camera phones and the resulting interest in photography, there are now a number of ways you can share the photos that you take with your friends and family. You can also surround your profile with images as a way of demonstrating your personal brand, interests and values. Use the tools available to promote yourself in the best light possible

6 Video

Just as image sharing has increased in popularity with the advent of smartphones, capturing and viewing video has gone through a similar revival. People love watching video of all sorts and will watch video on a variety of devices. YouTube is the 2nd largest search engine and every sixty seconds over one hundred hours of video is added.

As an individual, you can view video to entertain, educate and inform and you can also capture video to share with others. As with all the tools that we have discussed, ensure that any video you capture reflects your personal brand and will not harm your brand if found by people you are trying to impress.

6.1 YouTube or Vimeo

There are two main sites to consider when finding and hosting video: the popular site YouTube, and Vimeo.

YouTube is the site that is used by most people. Every month over one billion people use YouTube to look for information, entertainment and education. In comparison, Vimeo has about seventy million monthly unique visitors.

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The people who use Vimeo are normally going to be interested in filming and creativity. The videos are likely to be of a better quality and comments are more likely to be constructive about the video than on YouTube.

Be aware that YouTube works far better in terms of search (it is owned by Google) and is completely free to upload videos up to 15 minutes long whereas although Vimeo has a free option, it can get restrictive pretty quickly, forcing an upgrade to the paid option.

6.2 Using YouTube

YouTube can be used without an account to watch videos but you will need to create an account to upload videos and interact with others. As usual you should register with YouTube and create your all-important profile. Note: An email address on YouTube will automatically create a Google+ profile so it is a good idea to use the same email address for both. One email address on YouTube can be associated with multiple video channels. You could create different channels for your different areas of interest or knowledge.



Figure 27 – Example of video on YouTube

Once you have created your YouTube profile, you can subscribe to channels you find interesting to get notified when the channel uploads a new video. You can also add likes, dislikes or comments to individual videos. Similarly others can like, dislike or comment on videos you upload.

When you upload a video to YouTube, you should add tags and a description to assist others in finding the video. Videos can be set to be:

- Private – visible only to the people you select.
- Unlisted – don't show up on YouTube and can only be accessed by people who have the link.
- Public – visible to anybody.

6.3 Using Vimeo

The free version of Vimeo allows you to upload 500MB of video each week. Video cannot be intended for commercial use.

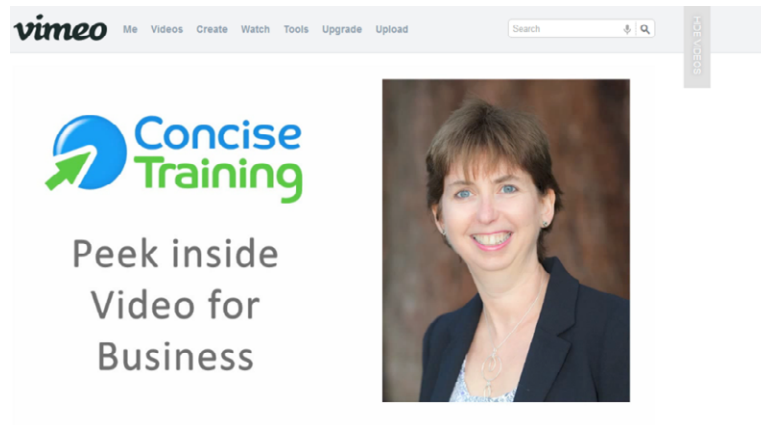


Figure 28 – Example of video on Vimeo

You can use Vimeo to search for videos that have been created in a number of categories by clicking Watch. There is a search box on the top right.

The videos tend to be higher quality, larger and more creative than those found on YouTube. You can follow a profile to see new videos that they upload. You can also like, comment and share videos.

To upload videos on Vimeo, register for an account on Vimeo, complete a profile to tell people who you are and set your privacy settings. Click the Upload button to upload a video and add Title, Description and Tags to help your video get found. You will need to wait for the video to be processed. This could be as long as 45 minutes. If you don't want to wait you will need to upgrade to a paid account.

6.4 Vine

Another way of creating and sharing a video is to use Vine. Vine allows you to take a 6 second video on a continuous loop and share on Twitter or Facebook. Some businesses use Vine to take a short promotional video, but you could use it to demonstrate your personal brand either by taking a quick, spontaneous, humorous video or by planning a video to show what you stand for and who you are. You could take a video of your portfolio, for example (products, designs, drawings etc.)

Be aware that Vine videos are “in the moment” and are soon forgotten. It is possible to have a Vine video be retweeted and go ‘viral’ but it would still have a lifetime only as long as it is viewed on the social networking sites.

To take a Vine video, download the Vine app to your mobile device. The 6 second video can be taken in short sections which are automatically stitched together by Vine into a 6 second shot.

6.5 Using Instagram to See and Share Videos

Instagram has introduced a 15 second video facility (not on a loop) which can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, email, Tumblr and other sites. You could use it in a similar way to Vine – but you have more time so you could make it more interesting.

6.6 Summary of Video

Video consumption is growing exponentially. There is a generational shift to watching rather than reading information. Uploading video is a fantastic way of enhancing your personal brand but do be careful as it can also harm your brand if the video isn't appropriate. Subscribing to video channels, sharing and commenting on videos you watch can be a great way of getting your personal brand in front of others.

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7 Instant Messaging

Instant messaging is a fantastic way to communicate with friends and family all over the world in real time and for free. There are a number of tools you may want to explore to do this.

7.1 Skype

Skype allows free video calls to anybody else running Skype either on a mobile device or desktop machine. Skype generally works well for video and voice calls but there have been some compatibility issues between devices. The quality of the connection will depend on the quality/speed of the broadband connection each participant is using. Skype users are spending more than 2 billion minutes a day connecting⁷.

To use Skype, you will need to download the application to your desktop or mobile device and register for a Skype name. You need to add an appropriate photo and invite others to connect with you. The easiest way is to find out the Skype name of the person who you want to connect with. Once the invitation has been accepted, you can text message, call or video call.

Make sure you know the person who is asking you to connect. It is not unusual to get invitations from people you don't know. If you connect, you may well suffer nuisance calls from them.

Other functionality available in Skype includes group messaging or calling, screen share and exchange of files. Not all of this functionality is available in all versions of Skype, which can cause issues.

Recruitment companies and prospective employers may wish to conduct initial interviews using Skype so I would recommend you become familiar with it. Remember, Skype can be used for video calls as well as voice only, so ensure that at least your top half reflects your personal brand image!

7.2 Snapchat

The Snapchat app can be downloaded as an app on iOS or Android devices. Snapchat allows photos and messages to be sent to friends with a timer from 1 to 10 seconds. Once the photo or message is sent, the receiver has the time set by the timer to look at the photo or message before it 'self-destructs'. Friends can then take their own photo to reply or send a message. Users send 350 million photos per day on Snapchat.

Snapchat works well when all parties can access their phones and can respond quickly to the messages.

Be aware even though the photo or message is deleted by Snapchat after a few seconds, it does not prevent the receiver taking a screenshot of the photo while it is on the screen. If this does happen, the sender is notified but that may not prevent the photo from being shared in another format.

7.3 WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a way of messaging over the internet. Users can text and send images, video and audio without having to pay for SMS charges. It is available for iOS, Blackberry, Android and Windows devices.

As at August 2013, WhatsApp had over 300 million active users and 325 million photos shared each day. WhatsApp allows group messaging; you can also block contacts and use notes like “my battery is about to die” or “I’m busy”.

There are no ads on WhatsApp but after the first year, there is a subscription fee of \$0.99 per year.

7.4 Social Networking Messaging

Some of the social networking tools offer the ability to use instant messaging.

7.4.1 Facebook

Facebook Chat allows you to instantly message any friend who is online. On the right hand side of the Facebook page, the Chat button will show which friends are available to chat (indicated with a green dot). Selecting a friend and typing a message will start the conversation.

Friends using Facebook on their mobile devices will get messages when they login to Facebook. Alternatively, there is a Messenger mobile app that allows you to message friends on Facebook. The message will appear on top of any other apps that are running.

7.4.2 Google+

You can start a Google+ Hangout with your friends, which can be either an instant message or a video call. You can have a hangout or instant message with a group of up to 10 people. Click on the Hangouts button to get a list of your friends. Friends available for a hangout are indicated by a green speech bubble.

Google+ Hangouts work very well once you have joined the hangout. It can be difficult to invite people not already on Google+ or to find the right hangout to join. If the video facility within the hangout is going to be used, make sure you are presented properly.

7.5 Summary of Instant Messaging

Using a variety of instant messaging tools ensures you will be able to communicate with any of your friends or business connections, whichever device they are on or tools they use. It is important that you only accept instant messaging connection requests from people you actually know well. These are private 'rooms' and can easily be used by people for bullying, grooming, abuse or requests that make you uncomfortable. If this happens to you, I would recommend you leave the conversation and block or unfriend the individual immediately.

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8 In Conclusion

The vast range of social media tools available offer an incredible way of engaging with people through text, image, video and voice. The possibilities are endless and exciting. Never before has it been possible to become friends with, and exchange ideas with, people all over the world. The technology allows opportunities to find communities of people with shared interests, learn from other cultures and opinions, start political or freedom movements and more.

However, it can be a dangerous technology. Many people have revealed too much about themselves or responded in haste. It is important to always remember the public nature of social media. At the end of the day, it is your decision what you share on social media. Nobody is forcing you to share your deepest secrets! There are ways of responding or talking privately – but actually there are better technologies to use to do this. For example, it is possible to send a direct message on Twitter by using DM before the tweet, but actually if it is a very private message, why not use text rather than run the risk of missing off the ‘DM’ or spelling ‘DM’ incorrectly so that the message is sent publicly?

If you understand your personal brand and why you are using the range of social media tools available, you are less likely to fall into the trap of making a mistake or revealing too much information. As a general rule, ‘think’ first.

9 Resources

We have talked through a number of different tools you could use as part of your personal brand. This section of the eBook lists each of the tools and where you can find more information.

9.1 Social Networking

Twitter	www.twitter.com
Facebook	www.facebook.com
LinkedIn	www.linkedin.com
Google+	plus.google.com/
HootSuite	www.hootsuite.com
Tweetdeck	www.tweetdeck.com

9.2 Blogs

Flipboard	www.flipboard.com
Pulse	Available from iTunes , Google Play
Google Currents	http://www.google.com/producer/currents
Tumblr	https://www.tumblr.com/
Blogger	http://www.blogger.com
WordPress	http://wordpress.com/

9.3 Picture Sharing

Pinterest	www.pinterest.com
Instagram	www.instagram.com
Flickr	www.flickr.com

9.4 Video Sharing

YouTube	www.youtube.com
Vimeo	www.vimeo.com
Vine	https://vine.co/
Instagram	www.instagram.com

9.5 Instant Messaging

Skype	www.skype.com
WhatsApp	www.whatsapp.com
SnapChat	www.snapchat.com

10 Endnotes

- 1 'Social Media Made Simple', Mary Thomas, 2012
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