

PERSONAL INTERNET PRESENCE: Professional Image Self-Audit

Begin the review process to be sure your online profile is spotless before it is seen by recruiters and potential employers.

Google yourself

It's important for you to know what people see when they Google your name.



1. Google Search: Search your own name on Google. This is something a potential employer will do, and it's a good idea to know ahead of time what they will see.
 - a. Check multiple pages of search results, not just the first 10 results.
 - b. Search all terms associated with your name (i.e. Your name + past employers, education).
 - c. Check the images tab to make sure all photos of you are appropriate for viewing.
2. Google Alerts: Establish Google Alerts for your name and any of the terms you would check in Step 1. As Google finds new information with those terms posted on the web, you will receive a notification. If you have a very common name, consider using your middle initial to differentiate yourself.

Build your professional online presence

LinkedIn is incredibly valuable as a massive database of other people's personal brands and career paths to research.



1. Create a complete profile including keywords a recruiter or business owner might use to find someone with your skills and interests. Present these attributes prominently and frequently to attract recruiters searching online.
2. Upload a purely professional photo. Be sure no alluring or unprofessional images are available of you. Plan to have your professional headshot taken each year at the University of Evansville Career Day event, and use that photo for all networking purposes.
3. Check the "Contact Me" option. Many recruiters search LinkedIn only for candidates willing to be contacted.
4. Join groups to build connections and become part of conversations about industry news in addition to receiving daily e-mails with job postings relevant to your interests.
5. Every time you reach out to connect with someone, customize the "I'd like to add you as a connection" messages (also similar to the messages you can send when you friend someone on Facebook). This is a great, easy way to stand out and show that you are someone who takes the time to personalize your communications.
6. Scour other people's LinkedIn profiles to look for companies you may want to apply to, job titles or professions you didn't know about, professional organizations where you might network, and people with similar interests who might be willing to offer some job search advice.

Facebook



1. Be sure all available information is accurate and up to date. Also, complete your work history.
2. On the Privacy Settings page, change the "Photos Tagged of You" setting to "Only Me" and "None of my Networks" so that you can untag yourself in any embarrassing photos or ask friends to delete them.

3. Go to the "Privacy Settings" section. If you want to be found by recruiters on Facebook and are comfortable with what they will find, set search visibility to "Everyone on Facebook." If you want to reserve Facebook for your personal life, limit it accordingly.
4. Also in the privacy settings, check "Public Search Listing," which will create a public search listing for anyone searching on a search engine outside of Facebook.
5. Set separate networks for private and professional contacts. Add new contacts to the appropriate network.
6. Check to see which applications are visible on your profile page and which publicize information about you. Alter settings to limit who sees what information.
7. Alter privacy settings to limit who can write on your Facebook wall and who can read posts to your wall.



Finally, search your own name on Twitter to see what people are saying about you. Even if you are a frequent Twitter user, your name may appear in conversations you missed.



Job boards

1. Update: Check SimplyHired, Indeed, Glassdoor, TheLadders, and any job boards that feature your résumé to ensure information is current. Be sure to update old profiles or delete them.
2. Contacts: Make sure you have search and "contact me" features enabled. Many sites offer features to remain confidential. Ensure they are set to display and search only the information you want public.



Clean up your web presence

1. Fix it: If you have the ability to edit the website, do so. Sites like Wikipedia will allow you to edit web pages, but keep in mind most changes are tracked and can be changed back.
2. Ask: Contact that former employer to correct the "About Us" page that still lists you as "Managing Director" or that friend who's posted embarrassing photos of you.
3. Defend: If you can't edit or delete the information, be prepared to defend it in an interview. This is especially true of negative stories in the press, which can be corrected if proven inaccurate but will rarely be removed.

Adapted from cdn.theladders.net/static/images/editorial/webchecklist09.0218.pdf and www.pwc.com/en_US/us/careers/pwctv/assets/your_online_image_worksheet.pdf

