

# Kathleen's shared items in Google Reader

## How Do You Ask For Help? Why Bother? Alltop RSS

One of my [Secrets of Adulthood](#) is "It's okay to ask for help," and one of my resolutions is to "Ask for help." Why I find this simple act so difficult, I don't know. But I know that other people do, too -- for example, the excellent Marci Alboher just wrote about [how to ask for help](#).

I don't like to admit I don't know something or understand how to do something, and feel even more uncomfortable and sheepish when I ask for help promoting my work. I was comforted when I read this confession in Samuel Butler's [Note-Books](#): "I was nearly forty before I felt how stupid it was to pretend to know things that I did not know and I still often catch myself doing so."

The thing is, asking for help really helps. It makes my life a lot easier and more pleasant. And that makes me happier.

So now I'm going to ask for help getting the word out about **The Happiness Project**. If you're so inclined, it would be a huge help if you'd **forward the link** to this blog to three people who might be interested. Do you know someone facing a happiness challenge? Someone very interested in the subject of happiness? Word of mouth is the best recommendation; people really respect their friends' suggestions.

Also, if you're inclined to **buy the book** [The Happiness Project](#), it would be a huge help if you'd [pre-order](#) it. The book hasn't hit the shelves yet, but early interest brings all sorts of benefits for a book. Buzz at the beginning really matters.

So, phew, I did it. I asked for help. Not just one kind of help, but two!

Asking for help boosts happiness, because not only does it make your life easier, it demonstrates that you have a social network that supports you. What's more, asking for help is a sign of relationship and trust. As Benjamin Franklin recommended, "If you want to make a friend, let someone do you a favor." I remember someone at work telling me, "I never liked that guy until he asked to borrow \$50. Then I realized he must consider me a friend, and presto! I started liking him."

Also, by asking for help, you're boosting other people's happiness. Studies show that for happiness, providing support is just as important as getting support. Often, people like to help. I know I like to help. That's part A of the [Second Splendid Truth](#), also known as "Do good, feel good."

Do you find it difficult to ask for help? When you do ask for help, does it make you happier?

\* On Gimundo I found this happy video of [fun with sticky notes](#) -- by EepyBird, the same people who did the Diet Coke and Mentos experiment.

\* Interested in starting your own happiness project? If you'd like to take a look at my personal Resolutions Chart, for inspiration, just email me at **grubin, then the ?at? sign, then gretchenrubin dot com**. (Sorry about writing it in that roundabout way; I'm trying to thwart spammers.) Just write "Resolutions Chart" in the subject line.

**Do I Belong Here?Alltop RSS**

I'm a stranger.

After I wrote my first blog post, here, I noticed that the word "goal" had been auto-linked. The link connects to a paragraph as follows:

"Motivation is literally the desire to do things. It's the difference between waking up before dawn to pound the pavement and lazing around the house all day. It's the crucial element in setting and attaining goals-and research shows you can influence your own levels of motivation and self-control. So figure out what you want, power through the pain period, and start being who you want to be."

Yikes. This is not how I think about motivation, goals, power, or pain. This looks like the typical "just get going stupid!" mentality that doesn't work except with people who don't have a problem with goals, don't struggle to know what is the right thing to do, never worry that to invest their life in a goal may be to squander it. I disclaim that paragraph, O Anonymous Psychology Today Thought Borg! (shakes fist at sky)

But it got me to thinking how I'm a stranger here.

I'm blogging amidst a bunch of other thinkers whom I've never met, and whose way of seeing the world may differ greatly from mine. Many of them have "Ph.D." after their names. That means they obeyed their teachers. (I choose "Hs.D." for mine. That stands for high school dropout, because I wasn't willing to obey.)

How should I approach this? I could be combative, polite, or funny. Oh, but I love to argue.

## **Being an Intellectual Stranger**

My friend Michael Butler is a man who lives his life in constant analysis of himself and the world. He has no degree and he makes his living clerking at an electronics store. He sends me a steady torrent of links about engineering, physics, mathematics, and social philosophy. But he refuses to call himself an intellectual. "I eschew the term as poisoned rhetoric," he says. "I'm just a guy who likes to think."

It is poisoned, I guess. But I embrace the idea. I am an intellectual. I will suck the poison from the term and spit it away.

I see his point. The snake that bit the word "intellectual" is long and venomous. Intellectualism has become professionalized and ritualized, in the last couple of centuries. Research universities now seem to dominate the thoughtscape, with their great myth-making machines projecting images of spectacled people in tan cardigans or white lab coats, scowling at beakers of smoky liquid, or hefting copies of Chaucer (or doing both at those wild Chaucer drinking parties I've heard so much not about). This is good and bad. I love that it's facilitated a vast collection of ideas and produced communities of interdependent thinkers. I'm frustrated at some of the seemingly silly barriers between academic and non-academic culture.

Therefore, I define myself further: I say I'm a buccaneering intellectual. I feel a kinship with the men who called themselves the Brothers of the Coast and lived a wild life in the Caribbean for a few generations. They preyed upon the treasure ships; I prey upon the ideas of many disciplines. Anyone can. Just as the New World created an opportunity for the settlers who would become the historical Buccaneers, the Web makes a new world opportunity for outsiders like me.

(Notice that? The phrase "outsiders like me." Paradoxical eh? Collect outsiders together and you have a community. Now the outsiders become insiders.)

I won't claim that it's easy, but there's room in the world for people who think differently. Today, there's more room than there's ever been. I've seen too many people in my line of work (software development) who think they need a school to teach them computing, instead of jumping in themselves and siezing the knowledge for themselves from a thousand sources all around them.

Anyone can be an intellectual. Don't ask for permission! Education is not gruel doled out at a workhouse. It's abundant and cannot be denied to anyone for whom learning is a way of approaching life each day.

### **What About Credentials?**

Even outsiders must develop credibility, we just do it in a different way. Buccaneering intellectuals collect credentials just the way real Buccaneers did? and you can do the same thing: by telling true stories of exploits. I don't have a degree, but I can proudly say that I taught critical thinking skills to engineers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (I have a polo shirt to prove it). I never took the SAT, but I served on a merit review committee for the National Science Foundation. And, heck, I can say I blogged for Psychology Today! Even if they kick me out right now, that one's going on my resume.

Degrees are designed to be interchangeable. Stories and experiences are unique to each of us.

Even as I fashion my own little stripes and medals, and continue to improve my education, I try to keep in mind how frail reputation can be. I remember the day my publisher decided to publish my book on self-education. I caught myself thinking "Now I'm a self-education expert!" Well, wait a minute. Two people at Simon and Schuster liked my book. Therefore it was published. Therefore my work can be cited on Wikipedia. But those two people are not themselves self-education experts. They just trust me. My reputation as an autodidact rests on the opinion of two people with university degrees.

Of course, I really am a self-education expert. I think. I wrote a book...

### **Do I Belong Here?**

You will be the judge of that. (Oh, and so will the Psychology Today editors. Yeah, pretty much mostly them.)

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-feeling-thinking/200907/do-i-belong-herehttp://psychology.alltop.com>

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### **Fish Oil Makes Smarter BabiesAlltop RSS**

Want your baby to be a genius? How about great at sports? Several studies show that higher levels of fish oil intake will help. As a bonus, the babies also had better visual acuity!

DHA, which is predominantly found in fish oil, is the main oil that makes up our brain. When low, it is associated with depression ([fish oil may be more effective than Prozac for depression](#)).

As the baby takes the DHA from the Mom's brain if there is not enough in the diet, this is one of the two main causes of [postpartum depression](#) (the other is low progesterone).

In the first study involving 109 infants and their mothers, higher cord blood levels of DHA (docosahexaenoic acid from fish oil) was found to be associated with more optimal visual, cognitive, and motor development in infants during the first year after birth. The authors concluded that there is a "...need for substantial increases in this critically important fatty acid during the third trimester spurt of synaptogenesis (brain connection formation) in brain and photoreceptor development."

The second study, which was placebo controlled, looked at visual acuity and found that even low dose fish oil supplementation during pregnancy resulted in the babies having better vision.

The third study also showed higher fish intake was associated with smarter babies, but in this study a bit of the effect was cancelled out if the hair mercury levels were high. This is why even though nutrition from food is usually the best source, during pregnancy it may be best to get the fish oil instead of the fish. In addition to making a smarter baby, the fish oil (at 4 gm a day) was shown to be safe in pregnancy.

Just be sure the fish oil is mercury free, toxin free and stable (not rancid). Don't eat fish oil if you would not eat a piece of fish that tastes like the oil, because it means the oil is rancid. I recommend Eskimo 3 (by Enzymatic therapy) liquid fish oil 1 tsp a day or [Nordic Naturals Arctic fish oil capsules](#) 2 caps 3x day. These are available in most health food stores.

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/complementary-medicine/200907/fish-oil-makes-smarter-babies><http://psychology.alltop.com>

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## **George Did a Great Job**[chrisbrogan.com](#)

Shared by Kathleen

WatchI recorded this video in support of George Smith Jr?s crazy blackmail-like threat while at BlogHer. George represents Crocs in their social media efforts. I?ve spoken with him...Watch

[http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/chrisbrogandotcom/~3/2n\\_Lyw25wrU/http://www.chrisbrogan.com](http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/chrisbrogandotcom/~3/2n_Lyw25wrU/http://www.chrisbrogan.com)

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## **How Can I Keep Track of Gifts I'd Like? [Ask Lifehacker]**[Lifehacker](#)

Shared by Kathleen

Create one for meDear Lifehacker: My family and friends are big on giving gifts. Even if you say you don't need anything, and mean it, you'll still end up with gifts. What can I do to guide th...Create one for me

<http://feeds.gawker.com/~r/lifehacker/full/~3/zCPKEIFS7qU/how-can-i-keep-track-of-gifts-id-like><http://lifehack>

## **WriteRoom Syncs Basic Docs Between the Cloud and the iPhone****The Steve Rubel Lifestream**

Shared by Kathleen

What is simplenote  
On the Mac I have become a fan of a little app called WriteRoom. It's a very basic writing app that also has an iPhone counterpart. Last night the developer pushed an update t...What is simplenote

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/steverubel/~3/9czk7wuelkE/writeroom-syncs-basic-docs-between-the-cloudhttp://www.steverubel.com>

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## **HOW TO: Deal With Social Networking Overload****Mashable!**

Shared by Kathleen

FuAlexandra Levit is a Wall Street Journal columnist and the author of They Don't Teach Corporate in College, How'd You Score That Gig?, and Success for Hire. Read her blog or o...Fu

<http://mashable.com/2009/07/30/social-networking-overload/http://mashable.com>

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## **Gmail Removes "On Behalf Of" For Real This Time [Gmail]****Lifehacker**

A few months back we got word that [Gmail had fixed the annoying "On behalf of"](#) nonsense that showed in your email headers when you sent email from your [consolidated email addresses](#) via Gmail?an annoyance that steered many away from using Gmail to send from alternate addresses. It turned out to be a bug that time around, but Gmail has now officially offered the option to remove the "On behalf of" indicator, meaning you can now send emails from several different addresses via one central hub in Gmail without tipping your hat to the recipient.

To switch to this new method, go to the [Accounts page under Settings](#), and click "edit info" from the "Send mail as" section. Then choose the option to "Use your other email provider's SMTP servers."

Huzzah! [[Official Gmail Blog](#) via [Smarterware](#)]

<http://feeds.gawker.com/~r/lifehacker/full/~3/4qSGICGrd28/gmail-removes-on-behalf-of-for-real-this-timehttp://lifehacker.com>

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## **New Comm Biz » Expanding Posterous as a Workflow Tool****www.newcommbiz.com**

<http://www.newcommbiz.com/expanding-posterous-as-a-workflow-tool/http://www.newcommbiz.com/>

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## **Facebook | B. Woods Design****www.facebook.com**

Welcome to the official Facebook Page of B. Woods Design Get exclusive content and interact with B. Woods Design right from Facebook. Join Facebook to create your own Page or to start connecting with friends.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Maplewood-MN/B-Woods-Design/44148004043><http://www.facebook.com/>

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### **Top 10 Free Tools for Monitoring Your Brand's Reputation**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

Brand monitoring has become an essential task for any individual or corporation. Here are 10 free tools for monitoring your brand's reputation.

<http://mashable.com/2008/12/24/free-brand-monitoring-tools/><http://mashable.com/>

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### **10 Ways Personal Branding Can Save You From Getting Fired**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

[View my My Posts Facebook Twitter Friendfeed LinkedIn Flickr YouTube 10 Ways Personal Branding Can Save You From Getting Fired](#)

**December 10th, 2008** by [Dan Schawbel](#) [22 Comments](#)

Dan Schawbel is the author of [Me 2.0: Build a Powerful Brand to Achieve Career Success](#) (Kaplan, April 09), a Social Media Specialist at EMC Corporation, and owner of the award winning [Personal Branding Blog](#).

Instead of scaring you with the harsh reality of the economy, I would much rather give you hope and advice on how to tackle it head on! The solution I'm proposing is "personal branding," which is the process by which we market ourselves to others.

As a Mashable [\(\)](#) reader and social media connoisseur, realize that the difference between the branding of the past, and that of the present, is that social media has handed you the keys and a microphone to your future success. What I mean is that you are empowered, and are given the opportunity to let your voice be heard, at the cost of your time. OK, now for the tips:

1. Become an invaluable asset to your colleagues, professional network & clients

The first people who get laid off are the ones that are not needed for business to be conducted. If the business depends on your services and expertise, then you will, more than likely, remain in your current position, despite the economic climate.

As a social networker, you need to keep in touch with your friends, family and business contacts and provide them with any resources or help possible. As a business owner, it's your job to convince your clients that they are benefiting from your services and are getting good ROI. The best way to keep in touch with your network is to import your contacts into [LinkedIn \(\)](#), [Facebook \(\)](#) and [Twitter \(\)](#), so you can provide them with valuable information over time.

2. Position yourself as the go-to-person for a specific skill

When it comes to branding, you want to own a word or phrase in the minds of others. It's also beneficial to be someone that gets called upon when a specific need arises. A lot of young adults are branded as technically proficient, partially due to being raised in a sea of computer wires. Have you ever been asked to help someone in the office with a computer program?

Start letting people know what you're good at and you will increase your value, which will increase the chance you survive the recession. Use a blog to position yourself as an expert in your field and people will be magnetically attracted to the information that is flowing out of each post you write.

3. Gain self-confidence and rise to the occasion

The worst thing you can do during a recession is lose faith, be uncertain and show it emotionally on the outside. An individual's success or failure lies in their mental state. Those who are confident in their own abilities, skills, internal network and the future, will survive and thrive during a period of economic struggle. If you see an opportunity, go and grab it.

You need to be branded as a go-getter so people trust you with more work and are assured of the outcome. It's in your best interests not to post negative status messages on your social networks. The web is public, and many people are connected to management, so attracting the wrong attention won't work in your favor.

4. Focus on social equity, not just monetary equity

During a recession, many people choose to focus on every penny they have. They save money, instead of spending it (of course). The issue is that you come off as "cheap," which will hurt your brand image. Also, people divest or don't put much energy into building social equity (relationships/strong network), but rather monetary equity. This is a problem because money can't really get you another job if you're laid off, but your network can.

On the web, social equity is viewable through the amount of content you produce on your blog, or the amount of engagement you have on social networks. Over time, this equity begins to become a valuable asset to your career.

## 5. Build contact lists before you need them

I'm sure you've heard the phrase, "build a network before you need it." Well, today I'm offering you a social media strategy if you ever need to recover from being laid off. If you create a blog, join social networks, create a database of your network and possibly start an email newsletter; you are in effect establishing lists.

I speak with a lot of people who get jobs by notifying these "lists" that they just got laid off and are interested in a specific position. The key here is to build these lists out (RSS subscribers, Twitter followers, Facebook friends) before you need them. Then, you have a whole pool of people that can help you out. All it takes is one person from that list to get you back in the game!

## 6. Go on a branding spree by advertising it everywhere

Your brand needs to be where people are searching, especially where your unique audience is searching. I don't think it's revolutionary that you brand yourself on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, but I would like to offer you a few other sites that may connect you with other passionate and ambitious brands, such as [VisualCV.com](http://VisualCV.com) and [Jobfox.com](http://Jobfox.com).

I think it's imperative that you advertise your brand on the "old skool" job boards as well, including [Monster](http://Monster.com), [Careerbuilder](http://Careerbuilder.com) and [Yahoo! Hotjobs](http://Yahoo! Hotjobs).

## 7. Make your brand so visible that people can't avoid seeing you

When you admire some of the most successful personal branders on the Internet, like a [Robert Scoble](http://RobertScoble.com) and a [Pete Cashmore](http://PeteCashmore.com), one thing remains consistent: they are everywhere! This works in their favor because people remember them. If they were everywhere, but didn't have credibility, a reputation or strong backing, then it might not have a great impact on you.

You need to not only advertise your brand on social networks, but comment on blogs, join forums and Facebook pages, as well as write articles for other blogs. If you aren't already famous, then use the same avatar on all your social networking sites and keep your bio consistent, to the point and with links to your other sites. Make your name and face travel and see some great results.

## 8. Become so remarkable that complete strangers talk about you

When you were growing up, and maybe even right now, people talked about you behind your back. These were typically people who you knew and maybe didn't like. Well, in the age of web 2.0, you can visualize and track these conversations, from blog to blog and profile to profile. If you have a loud enough voice and take a stand on a topic, you can be a brand that is spoken about by people you may not even know. These individuals might actually be able to pull you into a new opportunity at some point.

## 9. Be a content producer, not just a consumer

It's really easy to brand yourself an innocent observer. The problem is that consumers aren't sharing any value with the world, while producers are building value in themselves and getting their ideas noticed. Try and start a podcast series or write a blog about what you love. Something you're really passionate about, whether it be work or play. People will begin to notice and be drawn to your brand. Being a producer is much more rewarding, and it causes your network to flourish, thus positioning your brand for career success.

## 10. Have an "endorsement mindset"

Last but not least, and possibly one of the most important things to keep in mind, is the power of positive endorsements. Collect endorsements throughout your life like you would collect baseball cards. You are the chief marketing officer for the brand called you, but what others say about your brand is more impactful than what you say about yourself.

On LinkedIn, give other people endorsements and you will notice that many will return the favor. If you've had blog commenters or people write about you, ask them to use their comments on your blog.

Endorsements will prove your worth, allow you to market yourself into a new job or rise in the ranks in your current job.

Imagery courtesy of [iStockPhoto \(\)](http://iStockPhoto.com), [hidesy](http://hidesy.com), [MiquelMunill](http://MiquelMunill.com), [Sveta](http://Sveta.com)

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@Gadget - Personal branding is a process and it takes time. Patience is a virtue! [LikeReport ReplyMore ?](#)

<http://mashable.com/2008/12/10/personal-branding-in-recession/http://mashable.com/>

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**Twitter, Facebook, Digg: Can You Join Too Many Networks?mashable.com**

[View my My Posts Facebook Twitter Friendfeed LinkedIn Flickr YouTube Twitter, Facebook, Digg: Can You Join Too Many Networks?](#)

**December 16th, 2008** by [Dan Schawbel](#) 58 Comments

Dan Schawbel is the author of [Me 2.0: Build a Powerful Brand to Achieve Career Success](#) and publisher of [Personal Branding Magazine](#) and the [Personal Branding Blog](#).

There are literally thousands of social networks on the web right now, but which ones should you join?

Many people have spread out their personal brands on too many networks and are now unable to manage their existence on all of them. As the number of social networks grows (more startups) and shrinks (economic downsizing), we must be smarter about which ones we join and which ones we ignore. Today, we'll go over a simple method you can use to figure out which social networks to participate in so your brand is visible and easily manageable across the web.

A social network is only as strong as the amount of people that are a part of it

Think about it, if a message board has no messages or a blog has no comments, the likelihood that you will be the first to contribute is slim. If there is no one to interact with on a social network, then why join? If people in your location aren't using it, then it makes no sense to join as well.

[Facebook](#) () has over 110 million users, [MySpace](#) () has close to 200 million users, [LinkedIn](#) () has over 30 million users, and [Twitter](#) () has over 5 million users. It's safe to bet that joining a social network with millions of users is the way to go because there will be many people you already know on them. Also, a large volume gives you the ability to share your brand with many people, instead of just a few.

Credibility matters

So the social network has a million users; that's great. What if the million users are people with no status and are not more successful than you are? There is no point in being part of something that can't serve as both a support system and resource for your personal brand. If the people on the network aren't credible, then you won't get anything out of it.

To me, [LinkedIn](#) is the most credible social network on the planet right now because it contains profiles of Fortune 500 executives and leading entrepreneurs. The average individual salary on LinkedIn is \$109,000 and legends like [Bill Gates](#) have already setup their profiles there. Then there's Twitter, which is home to [celebrity users](#) such as [Britney Spears](#), [Shaquille O'Neal](#) and [MC Hammer](#). Facebook has industry titans such as Michael Dell and MySpace is home to [Paris Hilton](#).

Ponder relevance

The largest social networks, with millions of users, are always going to be relevant for you because they target the masses and not a single niche. Any smaller network that you join must be supported by an interest that is relevant to your brand. Aside from the main topic of the social network being of importance to you, the users on that network (credibility) are just as important.

[Totspot.com](#) is a social network for mothers and their babies. If you are a single male who attends college, this network certainly isn't for you. The same goes with [MyDogSpace.com](#), which is targeted at people who have a pet dog. If you don't have or want a dog, then you best join a different network. Signing up for every social network is a waste of your time and gives you no means to start or hold a conversation with that audience.

What about PageRank?

PageRank is extremely important for your personal brand because it allows you to command your [Google](#) () results. This is great for promotion and protection in the digital world. If you sign-up for social networks that have a high PageRank (see volume), you can block any bad press you may receive over your lifetime.

For instance, if you [Google my name](#), you'll see my LinkedIn and Twitter accounts in the top 10 results. These are two spaces where there isn't bad press or content that I don't want people to view. My friend, [Jeremiah Owyang](#), states that your Google results are your new business card. Your results are a depiction

of who you are, so it's smart to join the networks that best represent your brand, and carry a high PageRank, so people can easily view them and be impressed. Any social network with a PageRank of 6 or higher is satisfactory.

Some social networks aren't built to last, especially in this economy

If you don't believe a social network will withstand this economy because it's not funded or because it doesn't have a business model, then don't bother. If you join a social network, take the liberty of filling out a profile page and then spend hours building a community, then find out it's shutting down, you've lost all of your hard work. You wouldn't have enough time to direct others to your other networks before the sites closes.

Create a social network worksheet

To further show you how to classify social networks and select the best ones to house your brand on, I used Microsoft Excel to create a spreadsheet. Notice how the "usual suspects" pass all the tests, while some of the niche players do not. This spreadsheet is "personal specific," meaning that it's built through my eyes and not yours. Some of these networks are relevant to you, so you should join them to meet people who are similar to you. Does a network have to pass all these tests? I would say as long as it passes at least 3 of them, you may want to join it.

If you want to get more value out of this kind of worksheet, then add a column for "user name" and one for "password," so you can keep track of where you are and how to access each one.

First impressions on the web

As the number of social networks increases, people are tempted to join more and more of them. When this occurs, your personal brand becomes spread too thin. Your ability to constantly update each profile, to ensure it includes the most updated and accurate information, will be unmanageable and unenjoyable.

Also, by joining a social network, you are setting "conversational" expectations, meaning that people should expect you to have a decent level of participation on each one. If you fail to update your profiles and, either build content or network with other users, then it's a waste for you. The only exception is if the social network has a high PageRank, which you can use as a defense mechanism.

What all of this comes down to is how first impressions on the web have been completely redefined. Each entry point into your personal brand may be different (how people access information about you), so consistency and accuracy becomes extremely important. In this way, limiting your social network participation to only the one's you're most suited to communicate on, is highly encouraged.

Next step: how to manage your social networks

After selecting and committing to using social networks in your daily routine, it's time to learn how to properly [manage them](#). When it comes to your profile information, you will have to manually update it over time. A LinkedIn profile, for example, won't fill itself out on its own. A systematic approach you can use for updating your profiles, could be writing down the ones you're on and the date when you last updated it. Every time there is a milestone in your life, you should make sure they all reflect that update.

Here are a few tools you can use to update your content on social networking sites. By using these tools, your personal brand will have a consistent message throughout the web.

- [Tubemogul](#): If you like web video and want to see your videos appear on many social networking sites at the touch of your mouse, then Tubemogul will be a very helpful tool. After submitting a video using this

service, your video will load on MySpace, YouTube ([\(\)](#)), AOL Video, Blip ([\(\)](#)).tv, and more.

- [Twitter Feed](#): Ever wonder why many blogs are broadcasted on Twitter automatically? By using Twitter Feed, you are able to syndicate your blog entries through Twitter, without having to manually tweet each post.

- [Gravatar/OpenID](#): Your picture and name are the two most important brand assets you have on the web. Instead of uploading different pictures of yourself to various websites, Gravatar/OpenID will take your web presence and make it consistent wherever you go.

- [Ping.fm \(\)](#): How would you like to update your status once and have all your social networking sites respond? Ping.fm allows you to submit a status update and have it appear on around 30 social networking sites, such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr ([\(\)](#)) and Del.icio.us, within seconds!

- [FriendFeed \(\)](#): This service has gotten extremely popular, especially when Twitter had a lot of downtime months ago. All you need to do is submit your social networking accounts and it will stream them into one feed that people can subscribe to or that you can push out to Facebook and other networks. Another tactic you may try is to use create your own [FriendFeed widget](#), which you can embed on social networks, your blog or website. People will get a better sense of everything you're doing using FriendFeed and it will save you time from re-creating the same content.

Managing your social network profiles will become increasingly tedious, unless you take the proper steps to only join ones that will further your personal brand and use social tools to alleviate the process. Updating your profiles is extremely important, especially at a time of [economic recession](#), when hiring managers are looking for the best talent. You wouldn't want to look less experienced than you actually are, would you?

Imagery courtesy of [iStockphoto \(\)](#), [Qwasyx](#), [JoanVicent](#)

Tags: [digg](#), [facebook](#), [linkedin](#), [myspace](#), [social networking](#), [twitter](#)

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Logged in as [Logout from DISQUS](#) Logged in as using Facebook Connect ([Logout](#)) [Use Media ?](#) Showing 50 of 58 Comments Sort by Popular now Best Rating Newest first Oldest first [Community Page](#) [Subscribe by email](#) [Stuart Foster 12/16/2008 08:32 AM](#) I feel that you should have a presence on as many social networks as you are capable. The scalability of the networks should be at your personal discretion. If your work, subs, or blog entries start to suffer because you have over extended yourself...obviously drop one or two and refocus. However...don't automate. I hate it when people auto-dm me or automatically ping their blog out...social media should be social. Interesting article, Dan I wonder what others will think. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in](#) [Shefaly 12/16/2008 08:36 AM](#) A great exhaustive post which deserves wider reading.

Many of my otherwise super-studly-smart friends are social media noobs. I end up giving 101 tutorials all the time because they are not sure whom to ask. I shall forward this link generously now. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in](#) [Dan Schawbel 12/16/2008 08:36 AM](#) @Stuart - You need to do what you can manage. There are some social networks that will help you own your Google results, which you should obviously join. The other factor is that you have a competitive disadvantage if you don't join the largest social networks because people are searching for you on there (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc).

Joining too many isn't scalable and will reflect poorly on your personal brand if you are unable to update them with accurate information. As you become more successful, this becomes a requirement. [LikeReport Reply More ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in](#) [Stuart Foster 12/16/2008 11:20 AM](#) I keep

everything up to date though... Does it take vigilance? Absolutely. But I like to have a really broad solid presence in a lot of different places. I have my hands in a lot of pots...but I like it that way. This isn't for everyone though, and I totally understand if you aren't willing to spend as much time as I do...doing the due-diligence to keep those profiles up to date. I don't just set up a profile and leave...I actively participate in every community I join. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Craig 12/16/2008 08:42 AM](#) I agree, there are so many social networks out there, and more trying to become the next big hit everyday. It gets frustrating to think I need to sign up for all of these when I have no real need for them. The key is do what works for you personally and will work for your company brand. Stick to the ones you like and get involved. I have to be honest, I am not in FriendFeed and don't plan on it. Still not sure the reason to it. What people don't realize is that there are also many people not in any social network who do just fine. Keep to what you can manage and have fun. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Beth Kanter 12/16/2008 08:43 AM](#) This is a great piece! Last month I wrote a post called "Your organization's social networking doesn't have to be like mastercard, you don't have to be everywhere"  
[http://beth.typepad.com/beths\\_blog/2008/11/your...](http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2008/11/your...)

Great advice about the spreadsheet.

This relates to some of the trends for 2009 -- that we're going to have social media indigestion and start getting more focused  
[http://beth.typepad.com/beths\\_blog/2008/12/soci...](http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2008/12/soci...)

Thanks for an excellent useful piece. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in ShriNagesh 12/16/2008 08:43 AM](#) Absolutely Dan,

Clients, recruiters prefer to google a name before they trust a person. I even do it before buying a book. It shows that I am credible. I worked on projects for personal branding as well as corporate brand management successfully and in most cases my clients knew what they want. People started realizing the importance of web2.0 in personal brand management. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Dan Schawbel 12/16/2008 08:44 AM](#) You won't see celebrities on all the social networks for this very reason. They divide their time (or their management) into proven social media marketing tools (Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, etc) to make the most of their time. It's all about ROI/ROR (return on relationship). You can't have a strong relationship with people if you're spread too thin! [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Gadget Sleuth 12/16/2008 08:53 AM](#) Yep, spreading too thin is a big mistake, and joining too many of any type of site can cause that to occur. It's best to focus on the top 2-3 in a category and make the best of those (applies to any type of site in any genre really). [LikeReport ReplyMore ? Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Bryan R. Adams 12/16/2008 08:55 AM](#) Another good post Dan. You definitely need to find out what works for you. I agree that LinkedIn is tops. And they are starting to understand that they have to continue to move with the times. The new apps are great. The thing about the main social networks is that they offer something different, which is why you can be in a bunch of them without feeling too spread out.

So here's my question: Do we need to be in more than one bookmarking site? [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Dan Schawbel 12/16/2008 08:59 AM](#) @ Bryan - I can't claim to be a social bookmarking expert, but I do know that if you enable your readers (if you have a blog) to bookmark and share your posts, then their activities will benefit you greater than your own. 3rd party endorsements are always strong than your own, unless you are Bill Clinton, etc.

If you just like using social bookmarking sites, then I'd recommend the big ones again, such as Stumbleupon, Digg, Reddit, etc. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in John McElhenney 12/16/2008 09:02 AM](#) Really... I mean really? Do you need to ask this? If you don't think so you are not getting out there enough. If you don't leave spoils of the social media war spread across the interwebs with gleeful abandon, you must not be participating at a high enough, risky enough level. [LikeReport Reply More ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in andre 12/16/2008 09:02 AM](#) Very good post.

But did you try this new tool [www.tarpipe.com](http://www.tarpipe.com) to publish and control the flow of your information ? give it a try ;) i love it [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in Dan Schawbel 12/16/2008 09:05 AM](#) @andre - come clean..do you work there? I'll check it out

@John - I think we do have to ask this or I wouldn't have spend hours writing it for Mashable! Not everyone here is a social media "expert." Even the experts need to rethink how they operate as they become more busy. [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in andre 12/16/2008 09:12 AM](#) @Dan I'm clean :) I'm not working there ... and this was not spam.

I think it can be interesting in this discussion.

I happen to know the project it's from portugal (my country) and i know the founders ... but also i've been using it and it serves the problem that you were talking about.

Hope this didn't made you think i was just making publicity

And actualy i think you should join as much services you can to promote yourself .. just have to find the best ones and find an easy way to publish information to them all [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in John McElhenney 12/16/2008 09:12 AM](#) @Dan I agree. I was being the sword against which you could clash. But do tell me, why is there a Gravatar based system here in the posting tools. And right up there \*/points towards top right of monitor/\* you have the Google Friends Connect login. Can't we all play together?

I know it probably has something to do with wanting to get into the Friends Connect stream quickly, and gosh knows most of us in SM do.

Yep, my one other comment, the dang, "gravatar supported image" thing caused me, no wait, allowed me, to add another profile to my profile keychain. Jeesh.

The good thing about it is. It will never end.

Profile on is my motto. The strong will survive the weak will implode.

Happy Tuesday.

JMac [LikeReport ReplyMore ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in John McElhenney 12/16/2008 09:14 AM](#) Sorry for the dang spacing problems. Guess the system doesn't support line breaks but needs something more like this.

And thanks for giving me a gravatar introduction. See, that pretty pic above. Gracias amigo! [LikeReport Reply More ?Use Media ? Optional: Login](#) or [Connect](#) or [Sign-in](#)

<http://mashable.com/2008/12/16/choosing-social-networks/http://mashable.com/>

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### **Presenting: 10 of the Smartest Big Brands in Social Mediamashable.com**

Let's take a look at 10 companies that have done a phenomenal job of taking advantage of social media platforms.

<http://mashable.com/2009/02/06/social-media-smartest-brands/http://mashable.com/>

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### **40 of the Best Twitter Brands and the People Behind Themashable.com**

We've handpicked 40 of the best brands experimenting with the micro-blogging platform, Twitter, and interviewed the people behind the tweets.

<http://mashable.com/2009/01/21/best-twitter-brands/http://mashable.com/>

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#### **40 of the Best Twitter Brands and the People Behind Them**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

We've handpicked 40 of the best brands experimenting with the micro-blogging platform, Twitter, and interviewed the people behind the tweets.

<http://mashable.com/2009/01/21/best-twitter-brands/http://mashable.com/>

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#### **The Importance of Focus: A Guide for Social Media Brands**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

brands must not lose their internal focus amidst the din of new information.

The world has changed. The new reality of online customer conversation means brands will need a strongly defined sense of self in order to succeed. This represents a need to think counter-intuitively about your brand ? focusing on the inside more than the outside. The initial challenge is not to better understand and respond to the customer. The challenge is to start with better understanding who you are, what you truly believe in, and what you can realistically offer to your customer.

A lot is being said about the effect of social media on brands ? from Tropicana changing its packaging and then changing it back again to the use of social media as a ?real time? focus group. But the fundamental problem with all of this is that it focuses on the customer at the expense of the brand.

You?d think the predominant marketing ethos ? where you defer to the customer, where you position your brand against a perceived consumer need could only be right for these open-conversation, social media times. Yet the opposite is actually the case.

Why?

Because if all you focus on are what customers are telling you, you risk losing sight of who you are, what you believe in and what drives you forwards.

The number one thing the Internet does is spot lies and fake-authenticity. If you position yourself against a need that you cannot deliver, or worse yet, that you do not believe in as an organization, people will find you out and make you pay. Nobody respects a liar.

The number two thing the internet does is overwhelm. With corporations already drowning in data they don?t know what to do with, you need to be careful how you use more and often contradictory points of view, and then figure out how these should drive action as opposed to just more data paralysis.

The number three thing the internet does is move at real-time. If you engage (and increasingly you will have no other choice) you need to be able to respond just as quickly, across multiple contact points, and multiple facets of your organization and your brand. This perceived loss of control is deeply scary for any traditionally trained corporate communications manager, and yet this very real time aspect harbors great opportunity.

Defining the Conversation

Before opening yourself up to the conversation, before engaging outside, start with who you really are, what you as an organization really believe in, and what gets you out of bed in the morning.

Forget mission and vision statements. These are banal at best. Forget ?shareholder value? ? No one ever got out of bed for increased shareholder value (but if you have something powerful to drive you, you have a better chance of creating plenty of it).

Instead understand what you believe in and really can deliver, articulate this ethos simply so that everyone in your organization can understand it, place it firmly at the heart of your brand, and drive it through both your operations and your culture in everything that you do.

Then, and only then, should you engage in the wider conversation. With a clear sense of internal purpose and direction you stand a much better chance of using social media and online conversation as a source of competitive advantage rather than disadvantage.

This will be hard. It is fundamentally counterintuitive for any classically trained marketer to think in this fashion, to focus on the organization before the customer, and yet the times have changed and this is what will be necessary.

So who?s already getting it right?

There are a few brands out there who are beginning to get it right. Three that immediately spring to mind are:

Zappos, Method, and Living Proof (Disclosure: Living Proof is a former client of Wolff Olins).  
Zappos

[Zappos](#)? success is driven by a deeply felt belief in the value of customer service ? this gives them a tremendous strength to resist constantly switching and changing with the consumer mood. This service zeal permeates everything they do, and acts as the filter for their conversations when they engage with their customers. Fundamentally this is incredibly empowering ? here everyone, at every level of the organization, is able to engage in an open consumer conversation in order to deliver the Zappos idea of service.

Method

[Method](#) is a company that believes deeply that it is in a war. A literal war against dirty. And not dirty in its classical sense (although they are good at this too) but a bigger war against toxins and bad ways of doing business. It is this self-belief in doing something fundamentally right, and the importance they place on being a cradle to cradle company that gives them the permission to engage with customers on their own terms ? and to encourage others to become advocates in the war against dirty.

Living Proof

[Living Proof](#) is a company recently formed to beat back the lies and artifice of the beauty industry through the refreshing concept of products that actually work. Their purpose is simply defined as ?solving problems?. Their first product ?No Frizz? uses high-end MIT science to solve the problem of frizzy hair, but the product isn?t what?s really interesting. What?s really interesting is how uniquely open their purpose is allowing them to be with their customers ? not just through great service, but by asking the consumer to engage with them around what they can do to solve their everyday beauty concerns.

Strong Internal Purpose

If you look at these three brands, the thing that connects them together is their clear and simple sense of purpose ? not an externally sourced marketing positioning, and certainly not a banal mission or vision statement. A purpose that is first bought into by their employees, before being presented to the consumer in a way that brings a natural self-confidence to that conversation.

As we move forward and as the world continues to demand greater and greater engagement from companies, and from brands, then this idea of a strong internal purpose will become more than optional ? it will become essential. This will mean social media not being limited to use as a focus group or crowd sourcing experiment, but more importantly as a means of showcasing your beliefs, and engaging with your consumer on your own terms, not just theirs.

<http://mashable.com/2009/03/06/brands-focus/#http://mashable.com/>

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## **5 Elements of a Successful Facebook Fan Page**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com)

For many companies a Facebook fan page is an integral part of their social media campaign. Here are 5 elements that contribute to a successful Facebook fan page.

## **5 Elements of a Successful Facebook Fan Page**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com/2009/03/30/successful-facebook-fan-page/http://mashable.com/)

For many companies a Facebook fan page is an integral part of their social media campaign. Here are 5 elements that contribute to a successful Facebook fan page.

<http://mashable.com/2009/03/30/successful-facebook-fan-page/http://mashable.com/>

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## **Social Media and SEO: 5 Essential Steps to Success**[mashable.com](http://mashable.com/2009/03/30/successful-facebook-fan-page/http://mashable.com/)

[View my My Posts Twitter Social Media and SEO: 5 Essential Steps to Success](#)

April 15th, 2009 by [Lee Odden65 Comments](#)

Lee Odden is the CEO of [TopRank Online Marketing](#) and editor at [Online Marketing Blog](#).

Now more than ever, company marketers are charged with improving performance with fewer resources and shifting marketing budgets from traditional to digital tactics like [SEO](#) and [social media](#). There are significant benefits from combining search engine optimization and social media marketing tactics ranging from increased social network discovery via search to the ability to attract links for improved SEO.

Making the most out of combining SEO insights with social media marketing tactics can be accomplished with a roadmap that identifies the audience you're after, the goals you're trying to reach (and can measure) as well as a strategy that sets the stage for the tactics you'll use to execute your game plan. Read on to get a better understanding of how SEO and social media complement each other and a step by step guide for creating a social media roadmap.

The benefits of SEO and social media

From a marketing standpoint, you can look at the benefits of SEO and social media two different ways.

**First**, implementing a social media marketing program without optimizing content is leaving money on the table. Useful social content (blog, video, images, audio) that cannot be discovered via search is a lost opportunity to reach an audience that is looking.

For example, [The Student LoanDown](#), the popular blog about student loans and college financing from Wells Fargo, identifies 29 keywords in its Keyword Meta Tag and doesn't rank in Google's first page for 26 of them. Those that do rank are variations of the blog's name.

While there is a generous amount of cross linking within posts, a basic blog template optimization effort leveraging keywords and other minor adjustments could improve search traffic for this site substantially without any compromise in content quality or user experience.

Social interactions and media sharing amongst social network participants create the kind of content that can improve a brand's visibility within search results through profiles, videos, blog posts, or other media. A good example is [Stormhoek wines?](#) first page Google [\(\)](#) rankings including blogs, Facebook [\(\)](#) and Twitter [\(\)](#).

On the flip side, implementing SEO programs without leveraging the content distribution and linking benefits of social web participation makes link building for SEO an uphill battle. The nature of the social web encourages participation: sharing, voting, commenting and linking. Popular social content gets exposure, traffic and can result in a substantial number of relevant inbound links.

The famous [Blendtec iPhone video](#) has attracted over 6,000 links resulting in a top ten ranking on Google for the word, ?blender.?

Content + Links = Search Engine Success.

Social media roadmap

However you look at it, SEO and social media work well together as long as there is a framework for doing so. One way to build SEO and social media programs efficiently is to follow a social media roadmap:

**1. Find the audience;** understand their behaviors, preferences, methods of publishing, and sharing. Most companies that are involved with the social web in the channels where their customers spend time have a good sense of where to start. Many companies are ahead of the game by tracking their audience via social media monitoring software that identifies keywords, conversations and [influencers](#) such as those pictured in the Radian6 screen shot below.

**2. Define your objectives.** Objectives are often driven by marketing or sales, and SEO has long been directly accountable to substantial improvements in web sales. Social media is not direct marketing though, so different objectives and measurements apply. The role of SEO in a social media effort is to directly influence discovery of social communities or content via search. Do a search for Zappos on Google, for example, and you'll easily find more than shoes: Twitter, Blog and a YouTube [\(\)](#) channel are all on the first page of search results.

Indirectly, social content can boost links to website content, improving search traffic and online sales.

**3. Establish a game plan.** The game plan for reaching objectives in a combined SEO and social media effort will often focus on content and interaction, since it is content that people discover and share. Whether a keyword-focused strategy for reaching goals means publishing new content or creating an opportunity for consumer-generated content, it must involve proactive promotion and easy sharing amongst members of the community.

**4. Create a tactical mix.** The tactical mix for a social media marketing effort is based on doing the homework of finding where the desired audience spends its time interacting with and sharing content. Whatever the tactical mix is, it's an investment in time and relationships ? not a short term ?link dump? to promote optimized link bait. Much of the content creation and promotion for a social media marketing effort happens within the tactical mix and, of course, that means optimizing content for keywords.

Whether content is created by marketers as part of a social destination like a niche community or a promotion vehicle such as an interactive ad, keyword glossaries become useful for writing headlines, deciding on anchor text for links and outreach activities like blogger relations.

**5. Measure your goals.** Goals measurement should roll up to the specific objectives, both direct and indirect. Leveraging both social media monitoring services as well as web analytics can provide marketers with the insight to improve results. Radian6 and Webtrends have recently [announced a partnership](#) that will bring web analytics and social media analytics together all in one interface. In the meantime, marketers can use specific measurement tools to monitor the effect of their social web participation as well as the search engine performance of SEO efforts.

Extend the value of your investment

By involving SEO insight in a social media marketing effort and vice versa, marketers, public relations professionals and advertisers can extend the value of their investment. Well optimized social media content marketing efforts can attract new network participants via search. News content that experiences distribution via social news and bookmarking channels can facilitate links to company website content directly and indirectly. Advertisers that fund social media campaigns can continue to realize the traffic benefit from keyword-optimized interactive content long after the campaign has ended.

<http://mashable.com/2009/04/15/social-media-seo/http://mashable.com/>

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