

Getting Started with Social Media

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- B. Monitor Blogs
- C. Monitor Social Networks

So you're ready to join the community? You're ready to jump into the online social networks? Well here is your checklist for getting started. My intent is to make this easy yet broad. There are many service options for the topics I talk about below, however for the purpose of this eBook I will only recommend one for each topic. This is your starting point. It's your checklist. Everything is optional.

Step 1: Create Your Online Identity

- A. Get a Brand Name
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A. Get a Brand Name

The first thing you will want to do is create consistent branding for yourself or your company that you can use in multiple places. The purpose is to allow people to recognize, remember and associate you easily with your other profiles.



If your name is unique then use it. There is nothing better than branding yourself with your own name. However many of us aren't able to do that (mine, 'Rob Williams', isn't that unique!). If that's the case, use a nickname or come up with something memorable. No matter what you choose, you will want to make sure that the name is easy to type and remember.

BONUS: If the domain name for your new online identity is available, buy it now! Don't wait.

B. Get a Headshot Photo

Now that you have a name, it's good to put a face to it! When you do this you're allowing people to visually recognize you and make you more human. Look for a recent photo of yourself and see if it will work if cropped properly. If not, ask a friend to take a close-up digital photo of your face.



Take your photo and crop it fairly tight around your head. If you don't have software to do this, try easycropper.com. Save your photo in either .PNG or .JPG format in a few pixel sizes: 300x300, 100x100, and 50x50. The 100x100 and 50x50 are the most commonly used

online. Saving the 300x300 gives you a larger one you can make for a custom size if you need to later. If you don't have software to resize photos, try shrinkpictures.com.

BONUS: Create a folder on your computer called "profiles and logos" and save all copies of your photos and logos there for easy retrieval.

C. Get Your Contact Information Organized

The main staple for being social online is to allow people to contact you. Therefore, let's get your contact information organized and created to match your new identity.

Email is still the most popular way for people to communicate online and a very effective way to manage the interactivity on your new social media profiles. Having an email address that is easy to remember and communicate is important. I recommend trying Gmail found at google.com/gmail.



Although email is popular, you may want to communicate with others faster or have a conversation with them without talking on the phone. This is where Instant Messaging (IM) comes in. When you are connected to others in your IM program the two of you can chat back and forth in real time. Often you can invite others to your chat by creating a private chat room. There are several free IM accounts available. If you have Gmail then you also now have Google Talk built into your Gmail webpage.

With all of the IM services available, my favorite is one called Skype. This downloadable program, found at skype.com, not only allows you to text chat with others but also allows you to voice chat and video chat with other Skype members. In addition, for a small fee, you can call any phone number in the world. I've found it to be my favorite all-in-one application for my chat needs.



BONUS: With IM services you can only talk to people on the same service. There are two major ways to bridge this gap: download a desktop application like Digsby from digsby.com or use the website meebo.com. Using these resources you can log into most, if not all, of your accounts and talk with your contacts.

D. Get an online home base

It might be a useful thing for you to get a website connected to your new online identity. If a good domain name is available and it reflects your brand then buy it! You can usually purchase a domain name from a site like bluehost.com for less than \$10/year. You may decide not to create a website for the domain, but you should at least secure that brand name if it's available should you decide to use it in the future.

Creating a website is much easier today than it ever has been. I suggest you start with the free blog service WordPress, at wordpress.com. Simply create an account, pick a name for your site, and choose from several provided design templates. When choosing a name you should certainly use your brand name. If you purchased a domain name you can use it for your new blog (check the settings for details).



Now that you have a website, you'll want to put at least a minimum amount of content on there. First thing I suggest you create is an "About Me" page. It doesn't have to be complex, just a little about who you are and what you're up to; and don't forget to use that great new headshot you have!

Next create a "Contact Me" page that shows people how to contact you but **please use discretion as to what you make public**. Do not put your email address on there so people can click on it to email you. As convenient as it seems, this is how spammers collect addresses. Instead, create a graphic that has your address on it or write it like this: "address AT domain DOT com". This helps stop spam robots from finding your email while allowing people to easily figure out your address so they are able to write you.

Lastly, publish a few of your thoughts, opinions, or just write what you like on your blog from time to time. You might be surprised at what you can come up with!

BONUS: When you create a blog, you now have automatically built in is a great notification system called an RSS feed. This allows people to subscribe to your blog to get updates when you post something new. To take full advantage of this, head over to feedburner.com and use your Google account to register. There you create a more user-

friendly RSS feed, configure email updates from your site, and keep statistics for you so you know how many people are subscribed to your blog.

DOUBLE BONUS: You may decide that the free blogs are too limiting in what you can do with your design and extended functionality. WordPress makes its software fully available to you for free at wordpress.org. Additionally, free support, plugins, and themes are available all over the web. However, you'll need a web host and domain name to make this work. I suggest bluehost.orangejack.com as they always have great service and competitive rates. If you are looking for a professional theme to use, I suggest checking out thesis.orangejack.com.

[note: I am an affiliate for BlueHost and Thesis]

Step 2: Create Social Media Profiles

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Most all social media profiles have a few things in common: you need a name and an email address. Some may ask for more information but they aren't always required. Once you have your profile you get a simple page that others can see. Now you are able to find other people's profile page and connect (or *socially network*) allowing you to share updates with each other. With each of the categories I mention below there are multiple sites that do basically the same thing. I'm going to give you what I believe to be the best one in its class.

A. Multi-purpose Connecting: Facebook

There are a lot of online communities you can join but I suggest you start with one of the largest and easiest to use - Facebook at



facebook.com. Here you create a simple profile and be “friends” with others. There are literally over 250 million profiles on Facebook and it’s growing daily. You can be assured you will find someone to connect with.

Once you are connected with your friends, you can email each other inside Facebook, write on an individual’s public discussion board called their “wall”, play games by adding applications made for Facebook, share websites, notes, and your current status to let people know what you are doing or planning to do. The purpose of it is to have multiple touch points with your friends in one place.

BONUS: If you are a brand looking to have a Facebook presence, it’s best to create a Facebook Page at facebook.com/pages instead of a normal profile.

B. Professional Connecting: LinkedIn

LinkedIn, at linkedin.com, is one of my favorite social media websites because it is more focused in its purpose. Instead of just connecting with friends for fun, LinkedIn helps you connect with professionals. When you create your profile here you include, in essence, your résumé. You also indicate your goals such as networking, looking to be hired (or to hire), and collaborate on projects. Once you have your profile updated you then can connect with colleagues and other business professionals in your field. If you’ve ever been to a networking event where you exchange business cards, you then have the idea of what LinkedIn is about.



C. Face-to-Face Connecting: Meetup

Social media websites are indeed great ways to connect with others. But what about getting together with people face-to-face? Meetup, at meetup.com, is a great site to manage your gatherings and invite others to come. You’ll be able to find local listings for all kinds of events to attend in person.



D. Status Sharing: Twitter

When I started with Twitter, at twitter.com, I wasn’t sure what to do with it. After some time I got the hang of it. Twitter is like a fast moving chat room where you control who is allowed to participate



in your room. To connect with people in twitter you “follow” them. Whenever those you follow post an update, you’ll see it on your twitter homepage. Likewise when people follow you, your updates will show up on their twitter homepage.

Twitter is purposefully limited in what you can write. It has to be no more than 140 characters so you can’t communicate a lot at once! The reason the communications are kept brief is because it is built so that you can use text messaging. You can send and receive twitter updates not just through the web, but also through your mobile phone, desktop applications and email. Some of these require an integrated 3rd party application, but this makes using twitter very versatile.

E. Photo Sharing: Flickr

Do you like to take photos and share them? Flickr, at flickr.com, is perfect for you. When you upload your photos you can keep them private or make them public. In essence it is a photo blog allowing people to see and comment on your photos. If you

find people that you think take great photos or just want to connect with your friends then add them as a contact. Flickr allows you to designate your contacts as friend or family and set rules for which groups sees which photos. One interesting feature about Flickr is it allows others to publish your photos on their websites only when giving you proper attribution.



F. Video Sharing: YouTube

Do you like to make and create short videos? YouTube, at youtube.com, is the most popular place to upload and share those videos. When you create a profile, you actually create a “channel”.

On this channel you display all the videos that you have uploaded and all the videos that you have marked as a favorite. To connect with others you “subscribe” to their channel and those videos will show up on your channel also. When you upload your video others can link to it or put it on their own website, so understand these are very public and shareable!



G. Audio Sharing: Utterli

Sometimes it's just easier to pick up your phone, call a number, and make an audio recording that you want to share. Now Utterli, at utterli.com, has made it



easy to make an audio recording fast. Simply create an account and register your phone number with them. They use caller ID to know what account to put your recording. Your recording can be seconds or many minutes long. Since this is a social networking site, you can connect with other Utterli users; as with most sharing sites, your audio can be shared on other websites.

H. Web Page Sharing: Delicious

Have you found a Web page you'd like to bookmark for yourself but don't mind if others see it as well? Delicious, at delicious.com, is a great place to save these



pages. Once you have saved it, you can add tags to them to help classify the bookmark. I use this system to store most of my bookmarks of interesting Web pages so I can access them from anywhere. You can connect with others to see what sites they find interesting or just use it as a resource for yourself.

I. News Sharing: Digg

Digg, at digg.com, is one of the easiest websites to find new and interesting articles. When you join you can submit an interesting article you found to the Digg community. If others like it they can "digg it" by voting for it. The articles that are most popular because they received the most votes appear on the homepage of digg.com. Articles on Digg allow for commenting plus you can also be friends with other Digg users to find out what sites they have found interesting.



K. Item Sharing: Google Reader

Google Reader, at google.com/reader, is one of the most useful websites you can have to keep up with updated websites. It is a RSS



reader allowing you to subscribe to RSS feeds from other sites and get all of the updates in one place. One of the features of Google Reader is being able to share your favorite updates with others. If you like an update that is in your reader, at the press of a button it will be added

to a unique “shared items” blog for you. It’s like your personal “best of the best” in one place allowing others to see what you find the most interesting. When you share an item you may also place a comment on the item to tell everyone why you found it interesting!

BONUS: If you find yourself sharing a lot of stuff, there is a Firefox plugin found at shareaholic.com that I’ve found very useful to submit items to various social media sites quickly. Also check sharethis.com as you may find it useful as well.

L. Aggregating/Lifestreaming: FriendFeed

One characteristic of having several sites where you share items is that your good stuff is spread out all over the Internet! There are a couple ways to aggregate all of your stuff into one place.

One option is if you use Facebook, you can add applications to your profile and import items automatically from some of your social network profiles.

Another option is to use FriendFeed, at friendfeed.com. This site serves multiple purposes and is a social media network on its own. However, for this eBook I want to share with you that you can import all of your social media items and blog updates into one place – your FriendFeed profile. This aggregation of all your published and shared items into one place is often referred to as ‘lifestreaming’. This makes it very convenient to aggregate and collect everything in one place for others to see.



BONUS: Remember that blog you created? Place links on your site to your social network profiles so people can connect with you.

Step 3: Manage Your Brand

- A. Monitor the News
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It is entirely possible (and likely) that other people around the web are talking about you and your brand. When they do you should take the opportunity to respond. How do you find out what they are saying? I suggest two ways to monitor your brand online.

A. Monitor the News: Google News Alerts

How will you know if your brand name shows up in the news? Google News, at google.com/news, monitors thousands of news sources and pulls them together for you. Perform a search for your brand (if it is two or more words, surround the entire term "in quotation marks"). The results will show you what Google News knows about you. Now look for a link called "News Alerts" (usually near the bottom of the left side). Click that link and you can create an email alert to be sent to you when your brand comes up in the news.



B. Monitor Blogs: Google Blog Alerts

New blog posts appear daily at a very rapid pace. How can you monitor blogs specifically to see if anyone has mentioned your brand? Google has a blog search engine at google.com/blogsearch. Perform a search for your brand (if it is two or more words, surround the entire term "in quotation marks"). The results will show you what Google knows about your brand among blogs. Now look for a link called "Blog Alerts" (usually near the bottom of the left side). Click that link and you can create an email alert to be sent to you when your brand comes up in blog posts.



C. Monitor Social Networks: Social Mention

There are a lot of specialized tools available for monitoring your brand or keywords in various social media networks. However, at this time, none seem to be as comprehensive as socialmention.com. On this site you can perform your search on one of many social media channels, or across all of them at once. After you've performed your search, you can subscribe to the search results so you can stay updated easily.



Conclusion

Actually, this is the starting point. It is my hope that you now have a broad but thorough understanding of social media. I hope you got a taste of the various ways to communicate and connect online. Should you be involved in all of these networks? It depends on who is in your audience and in what networks they are participating. If the people you want to connect with are on one service then you probably should go join them there.

If after reading this eBook you have questions about some of the social media services, I encourage you to [visit our website Orangejack.com](http://www.orangejack.com). It is there you may find the answers to your questions. Just look around or use the search feature to find all the articles available on your query. And of course you will find ways to connect and contact us from the website. Please don't hesitate to contact us!

Remember, this is SOCIAL media. So be human! Be social!

You can learn more about social media and Web strategy by visiting www.orangejack.com and connecting with us there. You may also consider subscribing to the Orangejack Updates at www.orangejack.com/subscribe.

Thank you for downloading, reading, and distributing this eBook! To make sure you have the most recent version, be sure to check www.orangejack.com/ebook.



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Websites Referenced in this eBook

<http://www.easycropper.com>
<http://www.shrinkpictures.com>
<http://www.google.com/gmail>
<http://www.skype.com>
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<http://www.wordpress.com>
<http://www.feedburner.com>
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<http://www.facebook.com>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages>
<http://www.linkedin.com>
<http://www.meetup.com>
<http://www.twitter.com>
<http://www.flickr.com>
<http://www.youtube.com>
<http://www.utterli.com>
<http://www.delicious.com>
<http://www.digg.com>
<http://www.google.com/reader>
<http://www.shareaholic.com>
<http://www.sharethis.com>
<http://www.friendfeed.com>
<http://www.google.com/news>
<http://www.google.com/blogsearch>
<http://socialmention.com>
<http://orangejack.com>
<http://orangejack.com/subscribe>
<http://orangejack.com/ebook>

My Social Media Profiles

Print this out and fill in the details for your accounts to keep them handy

	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address
	Login Password Address

	<p>Login</p> <p>Password</p> <p>Address</p>
	<p>Login</p> <p>Password</p> <p>Address</p>
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