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7 ways to freelancer's personal branding

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As defined by Jeff Bezos, personal branding is what others say about us, when we leave the room. This short formula reflects the essence of image-building activities, which are an important element of any professional career. Personal branding is no longer reserved only for celebrities – on the contrary – a strong personal brand can bring us many benefits, for example as a freelancer in the IT industry.

Advantages of a strong personal brand in IT

A strong personal brand, and thus recognition in the selected environment, allows you to increase your network of professional contacts. Thus, you literally have experts at your fingertips, whom you can not only learn from, but also be inspired by the materials they post. Also, a wide range of contacts in the industry allows you to stay up to date with all the latest news and events. A recognizable person can count on like-minds to help in solving problems, while sharing knowledge, and provide invitations to interesting events (and invites a speaker).

So – how can you consciously build your image of an expert?

Consider your action goals

To be able to plan personal branding activities, you must first set a goal. Without a goal, you may find it difficult to choose which activities to develop, and which are simply a waste of time. These goals could be to share the acquired knowledge? Develop others? Be a conference speaker? How about creating technical courses or podcasts? The goal will be a guide that will stop you from getting lost among dozens of possible activities. For example, developing an account on YouTube will work well for an aspiring podcaster, and a future speaker would rather choose to tweak their profile on LinkedIn.

Target group

The saying goes that when something is good for everything, it usually is good for nothing. It is similar to the selection of the target group of your activities. Contrary to the appearances, the better you define the group, the greater the likelihood that the content will be of value to your audience, which will translate into commitment. Content intended for everyone will be too general and it will not stand out in the crowd with the content you create. Juniors? Maybe seniors? Scrum masters or architects? What are they interested in? What social media do they use? A well-defined group will allow you to create more valuable materials that will respond to the needs of the recipients.

Think about what sets you apart from the competition

Do you have extensive design experience in a particular technology? Or perhaps you have changed the area of your expertise and see a wider context in emerging issues? Competition in personal branding is growing daily by leaps and bounds. Bear in mind that people remember the characteristics of others, so find your differentiator and don't be afraid to use it!

Don't forget the future

When was the last time you entered your name in a browser? Don't remember? It's high time to catch up! Why? If you don't do it, others will jump at the chance and it is definitely worth having control over what the web tells about us. Importantly, enter your data in the incognito mode and do not limit yourself to the first two pages of Google. If you don't have time to monitor content manually, you can leave it to the tools. Google Alerts is a free option that will let you receive notifications when a specific keyword appears in the search engine. Brand24 is a paid app, but it's a very detailed monitoring tool that checks not only search results, but also blogs, podcasts etc.

Select the channels you want to be present on

Medium, Twitter, LinkedIn or maybe GitHub? For starters, it's good to remember that... you don't have to be everywhere. Also, if you start working on too many channels at the beginning, you will quickly find that you will run out of time to create original and attractive content. So, what should you bet on? Be where your audience is. You don't know where they spend their free time? Ask them! At the beginning, using just one or two media is enough.

Bet on regularity!

Even the most interesting content and the best-chosen communication channels will be useless if you are not there regularly. Recipients are not the only ones who appreciate the regularity of receiving content. Social media algorithms also promote active authors by "cutting off" the reach of those with publication gaps. What to do to post regularly? Always keep your content in stock for times when you won't be able to publish anything new. In addition, remember that before you even start personal branding activities on the web, prepare a few or a dozen spare materials. The ease in coming up with new topics comes with time, so at first, it is not worth

exposing yourself to downtime and frustration due to lack of ideas.

Consistency is the key!

Audiences like regularity, but that's not all. To create a community around you, you need to be authentic, although it is often difficult. What can happen when your audiences discover that you are completely different in your private life than on your social media? You will lose the people you have attracted with your hard work. A personal brand is built on who we are, therefore, any disappointment about us as people reflects on our activitiesNowadays, it is worth consciously building a personal brand. Such action can bring you several benefits if you remember the basic principles. If you are wondering whether it is worth acting, remember that the amount of content on the Internet is growing second by second, so the best time for creating your personal branding is... now.

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