

Digital Branding for Professional Growth



Women Members Empowerment Committee
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
(Set up by an Act of Parliament)
New Delhi

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Foreword

The challenging and dynamic global environment has necessitated Chartered Accountants to be future ready not only to face the challenges but also to adapt quickly to growth. Digital transformation has radically changed the work environment. This is, indeed, the best time for Chartered Accountants to invest in digital skills and digital branding. Chartered Accountants need to equip themselves with the digital skills that are required to become relevant in globalized work environment and to create a digital brand so that their recognition is established in the digital world.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has always been committed in empowering women members in a knowledge-driven way. Towards the same, Women Member Empowerment Committee (WMEC) of ICAI has taken various initiatives to not only for skill development of women members, but also to make them more relevant in today's digital environment. The Committee has been extending a helping hand in the form of publications/booklets and training programmes in the relevant areas for the empowerment of its women members.

I am pleased to note that towards digital upskilling of women members, WMEC has come out with this e-publication - "Digital Branding for Professional Growth" which attempts to develop and maintain the digital quotient of women members.

I appreciate the efforts of WMEC for bringing out this relevant publication and congratulate the WMEC Chairperson- CA. Kemisha Soni, Vice-Chairman- CA. Pramod Jain and all Committee members for their valuable contribution in bringing out this e-Book. I also compliment the Committee Secretariat in providing active support in the release of the same.

I sincerely hope that this e-Book will help our women members to prosper globally and I am sure that the women members will find this book informative and useful.

Date: 1st February, 2022

Place: New Delhi

CA Nihar N Jambusaria

President, ICAI

Preface

Chartered Accountants do so much more than just handling money matters. We as a Chartered Accountant, need to embrace the digital shift and recognize that technology is constantly moving forward. The world is focused on automation and therefore we need to combine digital skills with emotional intelligence.

Developing and maintaining our digital quotient is an important part of our continuous learning objective. Post-pandemic, digital skills and capabilities have become more like necessities for growth, as remote work became routine and online client services quickly advanced. Keeping these factors in mind, WMEC adopted “Digital Empowerment for Better Tomorrow” as the theme for the year 2021-22.

As part of the initiatives of the Women Members Empowerment Committee, we have come out with this publication- “Digital Branding for Professional Growth”. Digital branding is the new buzzword that has come to herald the age of digital transformation. With the advent of social media and online forums, professionals now have access to a global audience. In today’s era of constant stimuli and distraction, making ourselves visible and memorable is key.

We are thankful to CA Nihar N Jambusaria, President ICAI and CA (Dr.) Debashis Mitra, Vice-President ICAI for their support and encouragement in bringing out this publication.

We appreciate the efforts put in by CA Shanu Goel, Secretary WMEC, Ms Ruchi Gupta and CA Jaya Kumari for their valuable contribution in developing the same.

We wish all of you a big success in all your future endeavors and hope that this publication will help you all in gaining knowledge about digital branding and various skills that are required to be relevant in current scenario.

CA Pramod Jain

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Date: 31st January 2022

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Chapter 1

Introduction

It's no secret that global professional opportunities are growing every day. But in order to succeed in this new landscape, you'll need to create a compelling brand that works not just in one market but in everyone.

What's a digital brand? In short, it's the way we present our professional image online. It's a visual identity that reflects who we are, what we're about, and how we want our clients and prospects to view us. We can't ignore that your digital brand is the key to your prospects seeing you, understanding your profession, and trusting you. So, what exactly does "digital brand" mean?"

The opportunities for accountants to use digital tools (like websites, social media, search engine optimization ('SEOs'), etc.) and strategies to enhance their practice are as abundant as the opportunities to improve the work of their colleagues and clients.

Discover the secrets behind digital branding and how they can help you increase your global professional opportunities right from your desk.

Start Building an Online Reputation Now

You should be thinking about your online reputation even if you don't have a website yet. The truth is, if you are going to succeed in any significant way in the online world, you need to be seen and known by people everywhere and anywhere on the web. And, there's no better place for your online presence to be than on the most widely used and one of the most trusted websites in the world, which is, of course - the web.

When people search for you or your profession online, they don't just find what they are looking for. They also find everything else related to your profession. This "bulk" info can have a powerful influence on their buying decision. In fact, the opposite was true for people with a positive image of the brand. If you want to increase sales and improve the quality of your leads and clients, you must begin to manage and build an online presence now.

A great way to start thinking about your online reputation is to ask yourself these three questions:

1. What makes me stand out from my peers?

What is it about you that makes you different from your peers? It could be anything: your Digitality, your expertise, your track record, your history, your connections, or anything else. Whatever it is, what is it that makes you unique and clearly distinct from everyone else in your field?

This is the question that helps you discover your unique selling proposition (USP). Your USP is the one thing about you and your profession that is so valuable that people who are deciding whether or not to purchase from you can't help but ask, "What makes me (or us) different?" Your answer to this question reveals the heart and soul of your profession.

2. Who needs to know me so I can reach my goals?

If you're going to use social media as a tool to help you reach your goals as a professional chartered accountant, then it's important to understand what types of goals you need to reach. Once you've identified those goals, it's time to think about how to find people who are already in touch with your ideal customer base.

The first step to using social media to promote your practice as a chartered accountant is to identify your goals. What do you want to accomplish? Do you want to have more clients? If so, then the first thing you need to do is to create a compelling sales pitch. You should write a one-page sales pitch that describes exactly what you will provide to your clients and how much it will cost them. After you've written this sales pitch, you should start thinking about the people who would be interested in hiring you. The first thing you should do is identify your ideal customer. Who is the person who is most likely to hire you? It could be someone who works for a big profession, a small profession, or an individual.

It could also be someone who works in a certain industry, such as construction workers, plumbers, real estate agents, or whoever. The main thing is to keep putting faces to names until you come up with a list of people who are most likely to hire you. Once you've identified your ideal clients, the next step is to find out where they are on social media. To do this, simply log onto a relevant social media platform and click on the "Find People" tab.

The best way to find your audience is to determine what you're good at. If you're a great writer, then people will want to read your work. If you're a great speaker, then people will want to hear what you have to say. If you're an expert in a particular field, then people will want to hire you to help them solve their problems. Once you know what you're good at, you can choose how you want to grow your profession. For example, you can use social media platforms for advertising your profession, or you can write articles and books about the topics you're best at.

3. What are my values?

Chartered Accountants have an ethical code that sets the standards of conduct for their members. The main principle of the code states that "Chartered Accountants shall observe high standards of integrity in all dealings with clients."

You have to be consistent. You need to be sure that your values remain consistent over time. But more importantly, you should be consistent with what you say. It is important to be clear about the most important values to you. This can help you get better at communicating those values to others.

To me, the word "branding" is just another way of saying "marketing." It's the act of marketing yourself and your profession in the best possible way to help grow your bottom line. I think that the most important thing to remember when it comes to marketing is that we all have to market ourselves in a unique way.

Chapter 2

The Value of a Digital Brand

A brand is a lot more than products or services you sell. It's what you stand for. Your brand is what your profession stands for. While your logo and website may change over time, there is one thing that should never change: your brand values. Your brand values are what you represent to your clients. When your clients feel connected to your brand, they will be more likely to buy from you again and recommend your services to others.

Brand values form the compass of your professional compass towards market success. Your core brand values will remain stable and solid. However, getting sidetracked on your journey to brand loyalty can be challenging. You need to define your brand value proposition before it defines you.

Brand values are very important because they represent what we stand for as a profession. We believe in being honest, fair, and transparent. We want our clients to be happy with everything we sell.

Brand value propositions should guide how your profession works, just like your brand manifesto. Select actionable language when defining what matters to your profession. For instance, don't just say you "value integrity." Tell your clients that you work to do the right thing, and describe how you do that.

"I valued and appreciated, and we want them to always strive to improve themselves."

What are Brand Values?

Brands should be made up of a range of external and internal elements. Your external elements include a verbal identity, which helps to outline your tone of voice and persona, and your visual identity (logos, colors, and fonts). These two elements work together to create an emotional connection with consumers. But what really makes a brand stand out is your internal elements, which include your brand values. Your brand values guide your purpose, Digitality, proposition, and other aspects of your profession.

Your profession has core brand values. You believe in honesty, integrity, respect, and excellence. You want your employees to work hard, take pride in their jobs, and make every customer feel valued.

Brand values are the core beliefs or principles that guide a profession or organization. They help define what makes the profession unique and different from others. Your brand values should include your mission statement, vision, and values.

Brands don't matter if they aren't constantly represented by what you do and say. Clients and employees need to be reminded of your values if you want them to affect change. A unique value definition is needed to ensure your values stay true to who you are as a professional. Don't simply copy and paste ideas from other successful brands. Instead, take a close look at what makes those brands unique.

Your brand value proposition should be something that guides how your profession works. It should also tell your clients why you care about doing the right thing. You shouldn't use empty phrases that sound like they were picked out of a dictionary. Instead, choose meaningful words that tell your clients why you believe in doing the right thing.

Your profession's values must be timeless. You should never change them unless you see a negative reaction to your current code of ethics. Your values should be flexible enough to adapt to changes in the world around you.

Four steps for finding your brand value proposition

Step #1 Discover What Matters

To begin the search for your core values, you'll need to move beyond the conventional box full of common terms, such as "reliable," "trustworthy," or "friendly." These may all appear to be positive words, but they don't describe what makes your operation special.

Overcoming the norms those clichéd terms suggest will enable you to identify the values that establish your brand. Defining these unique values will help you find your core brand.

Do you hate unethical practices of finance and accounts and want to make sure your profession always cares for its clients? Do you love the planet and want to give something back with environmental measures? Consider ideas that appeal to your co-workers as well as your clients, and then build your community around them.

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Step #2 Know your clients and peers

If you're developing your brand, think objectively about the needs and expectations of your clients while considering the pre-existing solutions offered by your peers. An analysis of your peers might help you find a gap in the market or inform you that you need to re-think your values to better differentiate yourself from existing offerings.

The most powerful brand values are those which directly respond to a need in the market. Rather than trying to persuade your clients to feel the same as you do about a particular subject, find out what your clients actually think and what they wish to see from their favorite brands.

Step # 3 Commit to Something

How would your clients discuss you with someone who wanted to hire you? Would they say that you're someone who provides excellent customer service? Would they say that you offer best in the class services in India?

Find out what your clients already associate with your profession, and try to grow your brand values from that.

For instance, if your clients appreciate your Digitalized approach to customer service and other ancillary services, make "Digitalisation and a readiness to go the extra mile" your brand value. Once you've established it, fight for it with all that you do. Develop new ways to customize your customer experience.

Step # 4 Consistency is the Key

A brand value proposition should remain the same over time, as we mentioned above. You may change your logo, your colors, or even your professional name over time, but if you want to build loyal clients, you need to stay true to your principles.

Consider ways to simplify your brand values definition into a few keywords and phrases that will act as points of reference for your professional team. By understanding your values, your workforce will be able to provide a consistent professional image across social media posts and offline events.

Brand Value Case Study

Brand Value Example- Apple Inc

Apple's name has long evoked favorable reactions among its supporters. However, the profession has had its share of challenges to overcome on the road to success. Back in 1997, Apple was lacking market share, so it launched the "Think Different" campaign to define its brand values for its audience, employees, and shareholders alike.

The "Think Different" campaign indicated that Apple strives to make the best, most imaginative products in the world while keeping its facets simple for the general public. Apple places a high value on products being high-quality over quantity.

Result: Apple's new corporate structure has increased the internal solidarity of its workers when designing an online and offline customer experience.

What are some ways you can use Brand Values in your CA Profession?

Brand value can be used in your profession by incorporating branding principles into your design decisions. Branding principles will help you to create an original and recognizable design that will stand out among the many other designs in the profession.

It can also be used as an indicator of how well-known and successful a profession, services, or person is. Brands with high values are more likely to attract and retain clients and investors and thus provide greater returns on investment for their owners.

Why will digital branding work for a profession?

Digital branding works for professions because of the opportunity for immersive and interactive content. Professionals can use digital channels to share their expertise with the world, and connect with potential clients, leading to more opportunities. Digital branding also helps people find what they're looking for on websites and social media platforms, increasing the chances that people will find what they're looking for.

- **Cost-effective**

Digital branding for professionals has become increasingly common among professional firms. This is because of the cost effectiveness of digital

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marketing over traditional means. Digital marketing will allow greater reach to potential clients, therefore creating more awareness.

- **Global Reach**

Digital branding is important for CA professions due to the global reach of their profession. Digital branding can help them maintain a professional reputation while still maintaining work-life balance.

- **Flexibility** - can access details while traveling (in office or in cars/trains), early or late, on laptop or mobile, one can schedule the post timings, etc.

- **Interactive**

The world of digital branding has changed the way many professionals market themselves. With interactive work, such as social media and blogs, professionals can keep their audiences engaged and informed.

- **Tracking Results & Analytics**

According to Beth A. Rubin, digital branding work for a profession is necessary because its tracking results and analytics. Professionals may want to consider the following points when considering digitizing their business:

1. Investigate what type of data they want to collect (i.e., online & offline clients)
2. Have an idea about what they want to track

****Please refer to the Code of Ethics updated by the ICAI guidelines for adherence before engaging in Digital Branding.***

Chapter 3

How to get started with Digital Branding?

Be it a professional or a Digital brand, the main goal is to have a strong, differentiated and authentic identity that will define you as an individual. That will help you to get noticed and get results from the people around you.

As a way to soothe your ego (and your desire for attention), you will need to build a Digital brand on the internet. Many people do it this way.

A famous example of this is Steve Jobs, who was known as the “mad scientist” and founder of Apple Inc., but he was also quite successful in his own right. He had an amazing customer relationship management system called “Applebee’s” and created the first iPod in 2001, which was considered by many as one of the greatest products of all time.

This is not just limited to individuals either. Branding is used by professionals as well; companies like Microsoft use their corporate brand for advertising their services.

There are several platforms available for building your digital brand. These platforms can help you establish your expertise and build a fanbase for your profession.

The following are some of the latest and most popular platforms for building digital brands:

I. Search Engine Optimization:

1. Website
2. Google My profession

II. Social Media:

1. LinkedIn
2. Twitter
3. Instagram/ Facebook
4. Quora

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5. Facebook
6. Whatsapp/ Whatsapp for a profession

III. Content Branding:

1. Blogs
2. Writing Books/ Journals/ Articles

IV. Audio/ Visual Branding:

1. Webinars/ Seminars
2. Youtube
3. Podcasts
4. Twitter Spaces/ Clubhouse

Digital Branding Strategy

Digital branding is the process of creating a representation or image of yourself that is representative of what you want to represent. A Digital brand is the way in which you present yourself to others and the world around you.

When you are starting out with social media, it is important to have a plan and strategy for your digital brand. For example, if you are just starting out with social media, it may be difficult to craft a Digital brand that will resonate with your audience. There are many ways in which one can build a Digital brand online. Here are some of the ways in which one can build their own brand through social media:

1. Create an account on each platform that they use: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and so on.
2. Use your current profile information (username) as an identifier for your profile on each platform.
3. Upload photos of yourself on each platform where possible (using Instagram).
4. Use hashtags that relate to what you do and share them with your followers or followers-at-large.
5. Post updates about yourself and about your expertise in the subject in comments or send messages to people via social media platforms (such as Facebook Messenger).

Google Business Profile (formerly known as Google My Business)

Google is the most visited website in the world. It currently holds more than 92% of the market share for search engines. You can attract a new audience to your profession by creating a Google Business Profile (formerly known as Google My Business).

You can easily get found on Google when people are looking for services like yours in your local area by creating a Google Business Profile.

It shows searchers how and where to find your profession on Google My Business. Local SEO is also enhanced by having a Google Business Page. It is more likely that a local listing will appear when people search for a nearby business using Google Maps.

Website for Digital Branding

Digital branding is a great way to show off your ability to be successful in your industry. This can be done in different ways, and the best way is to build a website. Starting with Digital branding and understanding what it means will be of help.

**Please refer to the ICAI's website guidelines*

Social Media for Digital Branding

Digital brand is a very crucial aspect for a profession to grow. It's not just about the success with the profession but also your Digital brand. Without a good Digital brand, you won't be able to stand out in the crowd. Many people think that it is impossible to become successful online because of their lack of skills, but it doesn't have to be like that. From Digital branding, we can learn about effective strategies on how to build an excellent professional and social media presence.

The following are some tips and strategies on how to build your own Digital brand:

- Choose an influencer
- Use influencers wisely (i.e., don't use them too often)
- Use the right influencers (i.e., don't use the wrong ones)
- Stay updated with what other people say about you on social media
- Be active and post at least 3 times a day

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- Be honest with yourself and be frank when sharing what you want others to know about you in your profile
- Don't worry about your privacy. Nobody will ever find out everything about you if you keep this idea in mind. It will give you more confidence when dealing with public figures in social media because they know nothing but good things are going to come from your account (at least from me). If you post something bad, it will ruin it for everyone else who knows them Digitally or through social media.

QUORA for Digital Branding

Digitally, this is favorite social media platform. About 500 practicing CAs currently use Quora, giving them an edge over other professional colleagues. What makes Quora unique is the reason users visit it. Quora is neither search nor social media, but somewhere in between. In contrast to other social networks where content gets buried or disappears, the content posted here can be easily found even months and years later.

There is an 85% chance that any potential client finding an answer posted by you/your firm on Quora will connect with you when they search for any formal consulting. This is simply because they were comfortable with your simple answers. Practitioners who are active on Quora manage to get two new clients every year. Moreover, the brand is also cultivating as the platform has a global reach.

Podcasting for Digital Branding

Developing your digital brand through podcasts is not a new concept. However, it has proven to be a very effective and strong method of establishing your authority and expertise on a topic. Podcasts are a great way to educate your audience about a particular topic if you're an expert in it.

Webinars/ Seminars

Industry professionals are dedicating their time to the webinar circuit to share their expertise with peers or prospective clients. Webinars offer an excellent digital marketing opportunity for professionals looking for a way to improve their brand's visibility.

How to get started with Digital Branding?

With a webinar, a professional can communicate with the audience and prospects simultaneously. Webinars are interactive and offer your followers the opportunity to interact with you in real-time through text, voice, or video chat.

Youtube

YouTube is a more recent phenomenon that some professionals are using as a way to build their brand and network with peers. You can build a YouTube channel into a great resource for those looking to learn the basics of finance and accounts in a simple manner.

Professionals can use it to share knowledge with others, to increase the profile of their business, or to give advice on how to manage personal finances.

Twitter Spaces

You should consider a few things when building a personal brand with Twitter Spaces as a Chartered Accountant professional. Twitter Spaces is the newest platform for professionals to speak in public. Here you can share your expertise or thoughts about your subject, encourage discussion with your audience, and add value to your professional career. Twitter Spaces is a powerful tool for building your expertise in your field.

Clubhouse

Using Clubhouse, you can create a conversation or discussion room for your followers or audience. You or your audience can listen to the conversation happening in the room in a friendly and interesting way using the app. You can discuss your expert topics with your peers and industry experts. Building your brand's expertise in the subject matter is a new and emerging way to do that.

Guest Blogging for Digital Branding

The idea of guest blogging is to write and publish an article for another website.

Articles for these websites (or publications) typically include your byline and are marked by the editor as being written by a "guest author" or a "contributor."

You may be compensated for your guest blogging efforts, depending on the publication. This is not always the case.

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Some publications will offer non-monetary rewards for your post, instead, like a link back to your personal website or social media accounts.

Digital branding is a really big deal

If you're not taking it seriously, you're probably not going to have any success. It's kind of like a game people play with themselves: they try to figure out what they're good at and practice that part, then they try to figure out what they are bad at and practice that part and so on.

The best way to take your digital brand seriously is to get started with it now. Get the information you need in order to start building your brand online. It helps if you invest some time learning about the basic fundamentals of digital branding first, but even if you don't have time for that today, it doesn't mean you can't start tomorrow. Once you have an idea or two under your belt, it will be easier for you to manage a full-blown plan of action.

Chapter 4

Create a Visual Style for your Brand & Everything about Building Website

Every excellent brand has a distinct visual aesthetic.

Apple? Black and white, simplicity, and minimalism.

What about Red Bull? Red, blue, and a variety of other hues

Digital brands, on the other hand, are not much different. What about Steve Jobs? The turtleneck.

What about Danielle Laporte? Handwritten lettering on white backgrounds

And about Tony Robbins? The color blue. Who is Seth Godin? His photo, as well as the orange color.

When laying the groundwork for your Digital brand, you must settle on a visual style. You must decide what distinguishes you visually and capitalize on it.

Invest in Quality Photographs

Invest in professional photographs since they are an excellent way to demonstrate who you are to the rest of the world. It's also an excellent approach to express your actual self.

Social media allows us to connect with a large number of people and establish a larger audience than ever before. Investing in images that represent who you are demonstrating to others that you are a professional who takes your art seriously. It will also convey the caliber of your Digital brand.

Let us ask you this: do you expect the menu of a restaurant to include lousy photographs of their food? No. Why should your Digital brand be any different? If you want to sell your brand, you must also make an effort to sell yourself.

At least once a month, you can schedule meetings with photographers. These photographs can later be used on social media accounts, websites, promotional flyers, proposals, or anything else linked to your own brand.

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It's a terrific way to express yourself. It's a terrific opportunity to establish yourself as an expert.

Make sure you invest in excellent photographs.

Reveal your Digitality through your website

The term "Digital branding" sounds like a buzzword. Everyone tells you that you should create one, but what exactly does that entail?

To be sure, there are numerous factors to consider while developing a successful Digital brand. A Digital website is one of the most significant of these core pieces in the current day.

In this chapter, we will discuss with you about building your brand website, building it, and maintaining it.

4 reasons to launch a Digital website

1. When it comes to presenting your professional identity, a brand website gives you power.

Because of the customizable aspect of creating a website, the majority of potential clients and companies favor Digital websites over any other branding tool when making employment selections. Unlike your professional efforts on social networks such as LinkedIn, where you are required to fill out particular content sections (with non-editable headlines), your audience will expect you to use your Digital website to demonstrate more of your Digitality and knowledge.

2. A brand website makes you more approachable

Simply putting oneself out there on the web allows potential clients, clients, and recruiters to find you.

3. You are the only owner of the content on your website.

Because you manage everything on your Digital website, you don't have to worry about content disappearing or having to cope with social feed algorithm adjustments.

4. A website will aid in the development of your digital brand.

With a Digital website, freelancers and professional owners may establish an audience, position themselves as experts, and begin recruiting clients. According to a 2017 Upwork report, the freelance workforce is increasing three times faster

Create a Visual Style for your Brand & Everything about Building...

than the broader workforce in the United States. Freelancers are predicted to make up the majority of the US workforce by 2027.

5 steps to using a website to develop a Digital brand

Hopefully, you've concluded that creating a Digital website is worth your time and work.

What's the next step? Developing a strategy for moving forward.

In five simple steps, we'll break down all you need to know about digital branding to help you succeed:

1. Obtain a unique domain name.
2. Get a professional email address with your domain in it.
3. Make a decision on a website builder.
4. Make content for your website.
5. Optimize and publish your content.

Let's Discuss this in little detail.

Obtain a unique domain name

In general, creating a website on any platform you're comfortable with is simple (there are plenty of beginner-friendly options). But first and foremost, you cannot have a decent professional/ Digital website without a Digitalized domain name.

You don't need a website design in place to register a domain name if you're just getting started. In fact, it may be more convenient to skip this step at first so that you have something to plugin later.

You may always redirect your domain name to your Facebook profession or LinkedIn profile if you want to get some use out of it while you're still creating your Digital website. According to [Verisign](#), the number of .net and .com domains pointing to a social profile is steadily increasing.

Get a professional email address with your domain in it.

Aside from owning a Digital domain, having a domain-based professional email address is another approach to appear more professional to potential clients. According to a GoDaddy poll, a professional email address is a crucial website factor that inspires trust online for 75% of respondents.

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Aside from looking more professional, having a professional email address has several advantages, including easy recall, legitimizing professional transactions (including email marketing), and not advertising other professionals with each message you send (because you're sharing your brand with them when you use @gmail.com or @yahoo.com).

Make a decision on a website builder

You've created a good groundwork for your Digital website at this stage. When it comes to turning your Digital website into a finished product that adequately portrays the competitive advantage of working with you, the real work begins.

You don't need any web development knowledge to build a great end result because there are so many free and economic tools available. What this implies is that you no longer have any excuses for not getting started - the time is now!

But, before you start hacking away at the appearance and feel of your website, think about the essential factors for a great user experience and how to choose the proper website builder for your project.

The following elements should be included in your website design:

Mobile-responsive.

More than half of the world's population uses their mobile phones to access the internet. If you want to grab the bulk of the market, you'll need to make sure your site is responsive on both desktop computers and mobile devices.

The page loads quickly.

It's critical to optimize for page speed since consumers will abandon a website if it takes longer than three seconds to load. Page speed is one of Google's official search ranking factors since it adds to a positive user experience.

Navigation is simple and intuitive.

When looking for something on a website, most consumers prefer to utilize navigation rather than search because it is quicker and faster. As a result, having your website simple to use and material easy to find has a beneficial impact on the amount of traffic you receive from search engines. The three-click rule states that completing a task should take no more than three clicks.

Simply said, when evaluating design possibilities, put yourself in the shoes of the user.

Create a Visual Style for your Brand & Everything about Building...

The following are some recommendations for great Website builders for your reference:

- WordPress
- GoDaddy Website Builder
- Wix Website Builder

Make content for your website.

Having gotten the website structure (its backbone) up and running, it's now time to fill your site with content.

Some of the basic pages for your website include-

Dedicated Bio/ About you

A website's About page is usually the most visited page. When new visitors find your content beneficial, they frequently go to the About page to discover more about you.

A decent About page, when done correctly, can open doors for you.

It's also an opportunity for you to convey your story, highlight your strengths, and highlight what sets you apart from the fellow professionals. Writing a solid bio page, on the other hand, might be difficult, especially if you're writing your own.

Don't use your About page as an excuse to give a detailed narrative of your life's events. Rather, choose to emphasize the following:

- Who are you?
- What you care about and what you do
- Your qualifications and experience
- Your service and how you may assist visitors to your website

Links to your work/portfolio Page

Your Digital website is a chance to show off your greatest work, whether you're a writer, photographer, graphic designer, web designer, web developer, artist, or even an actor. Remember to include examples of projects you've finished, client work you've done, and articles you've written.

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When it comes to using WordPress, there are a plethora of portfolio plugins to select from, as well as specialized themes for displaying portfolios.

Contact Us Page

More people (including site visitors, potential clients, and subscribers) will want to contact you as your Digital brand increases. Make it simple for them to do so by including your professional email address as well as links to your social media accounts (at least the ones that are most relevant to your professional brand and are most constantly updated).

Blog

Although adding a blog area to your website is optional, it can greatly aid your SEO efforts and help you establish thought leadership.

If you're going to devote time to blogging, make sure your site is search engine optimized so that more people of your target audience can find it.

Blogging helps with this since Google notices when you routinely produce high-quality content for your site and feels more comfortable promoting you in relevant search results.

Filling your blog with high-quality content on a regular basis keeps visitors on your site longer, demonstrating to Google that these results are useful. It also allows you to link internally and externally, directing readers to relevant material on your site and demonstrating that your website is trustworthy because it is linked to by other trustworthy sites in the same niche.

When it comes to content creation, it's fine to express your opinions on occasion.

Finally, before you start writing regularly, try to have a few blog pieces ready to go so that you have something to publish even if you get busy. Remember that if you are unable to produce your own blog entries, you can engage a freelance content writer to do so for you.

Optimize and publish your content

Now that you've begun designing your website's content, it's critical to understand how to optimize it for search engines before hitting publish.

As noted in the last section, search engine optimization allows consumers to locate your website, and outstanding content keeps them there. It also aids in the growth of organic traffic. If done correctly, this can eliminate the need to pay for ad traffic.

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Focusing on developing search-friendly content also allows you to establish trust and authority, which will help you stay ahead of the fellow professionals.

**The Institute of Chartered Accountants in India has published guidelines on websites for CAs. When designing and laying out content for the website, we would like the members to adhere to the guidelines to the fullest extent possible.*

Chapter 5

Leveraging Social Media

Till now, we have seen how you can build your digital brand with the brand website.

In this chapter, we will discuss with you how you can build your online presence with the help of social media.

But before we start with building an online presence in social media, here are some basics about social media platforms.

Social media talks of everything

Social media is a way to reach potential clients and increase your online presence. Tapping into the power of social media is an excellent way for professionals to improve their profession. Social Media can help branding yourselves by making sure people are aware of your services, and getting them in contact with you. It's important to understand that not all social media channels are created equally.

If you are struggling to stand out in a crowded market, then you are making the common mistake of not leveraging social media. Social media is a powerful tool that can help your services come to life for potential clients. It is the perfect way to connect with others over shared interests and passions.

Here are some tips and tricks to leverage Social media platforms for boosting your brand awareness

Why you should be using social media for your profession

Social media and the use of social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook are becoming a very important part of our lives.

As a professional owner, there are many ways you can use social media to your advantage.

Whether you are in a startup or a bigger profession, you need to be aware of the best ways that using social media can help your profession grow.

Because we believe that there are many people out there who would like to know more about using social media platforms for boosting brand awareness, particularly such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.

How you can use social media for your profession

Social media is one of the most powerful ways to reach your target audience. However, there are a few steps that you must take to be able to excel on these platforms. The main thing you need to keep in mind is that social media platforms are not just about getting up-to-date with your target audience.

You have to show that you know what matters and what you can offer. So here are some tips and tricks to leverage social media platforms for boosting your brand awareness. Some practical and easy to apply tips for using social media platforms for boosting brand awareness.

1. Make Yourself Visible through Images

Make sure your profile picture doesn't look like a generic photo of you with no Digitality or thoughts behind it. Do you know how people think public figures look? No, they don't - but they will think of your profile picture if they see it. If your profile picture looks like a generic, boring photo of someone, then people won't think much of it and will be less likely to follow you on social media channels such as Facebook or Twitter, where they see profiles full of such photos or videos (more than likely).

2. Use Just Right Image Size & Format

If you want people to view your profile picture, make sure that it's big enough so that it makes sense in the context of the rest of the page or post (i.e., if it's too small, people might not be able to tell who you are without seeing more content).

For example, if your profile picture is only 10 pixels wide by 8 pixels tall, then people might not be able to tell who you are from seeing just one photo (unless there's an informative tag in the caption). However, if it's too big for its own good (or because there's just too much text within), then visitors might not get much out of seeing more content within the page or post - without reading more about who you are first (which is what happens when people see a lot of text).

3. Use Images Properly

Don't use images so small that they're hard enough for even a tiny edition print newspaper like The New York Times wouldn't fit inside them! Don't use images whose resolution seems too low compared with other browsers' resolutions - all browsers have different resolutions based on their type and vendor, but each

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browser has different pixel sizes; so try using images at different resolutions across all browsers - but remember: bigger isn't always better!

The following recommendations will help you raise the profile of your profession.

LinkedIn for profession

LinkedIn is an online social networking site for professionals used to connect with other professionals in the field. LinkedIn is easy to understand and navigate but can be difficult if you are not utilizing it correctly.

Recent research has shown that LinkedIn is used mainly by males over the age of 45, but females are catching up quickly. Unlike Facebook, LinkedIn is not a Digital site where you share your birthday or what you had for dinner - it's a place for finding connections to help your career.

It's not just for finding dates and jobs anymore. LinkedIn is used as a professional networking site by professionals around the world. It helps people find potential clients, start conversations with potential investors, and meet new people who can help them take their profession to the next level. If you're looking for a way to take your career to the next level and connect with people in your industry or someone you want to network with, LinkedIn is a great place to start.

Here are some quick tips on having an amazing LinkedIn Account:

- Have a professional photo and background image (most of the professionals on LinkedIn do not have a background image)
- Write a compelling headline that isn't merely: Practicing Chartered Accountant
- Create a summary that tells a story
- Detail your past experience
- Add education, skills, and certifications
- Get recommendations
- Send personalized invites

Pinterest for profession

Pinterest is a great place to get ideas for your profession. What better way to use Pinterest than to use it as a tool to promote your brand?

Create a professional page on Pinterest and pin the professional logo, an image of their service, or even just some general keywords like “profession” or “management.” Set pins using these similar keywords, and then create a follow-up post to talk about the new service you have on sale. You can also include your website URL in the post so that people can see it pop up next to the pin (a great way to boost sales).

To make sure you get as much exposure as possible, keep adding pins until they start showing up more often in search results.

If all else fails and there isn't enough time for social media promotion at work (which is probably why more than 70% of brands don't use it), then there are other ways around it — such as creating a blog or landing page on your own website where people can go and find out more about your profession before they decide whether they want to buy something from you.

Facebook Page for the profession

Social media platforms have become the go-to destinations for professionals, influencers, and celebrities. However, now it appears that brands are turning to social media to help their profession grow.

Despite the vast array of channels, it is still relatively simple to use each platform for your profession.

So here are some tips and tricks for using social media platforms for boosting your brand awareness some practical and easy to apply tips for using social media platforms for boosting brand awareness.

How to build a big Facebook audience?

If you want to build a big audience and make your profession grow, then you should use Facebook and Instagram. These platforms are very popular among users as they are very user-friendly and easy to use.

Here are some tips on how to use these social media platforms for boosting your brand awareness:

1. Make it simple yet effective;

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2. Consistently post relevant content;
3. Be consistent in posting the same content;
4. Be Reliable and Consistent ;
5. Be interactive and like and comment and share others posts

Twitter for profession

Social Media is one of the most powerful tools that are available to anyone. The reason being is because it gives you a chance to interact with people whom you would never have the chance of interacting with otherwise. The more people you interact with, the more trust people will build in you, and they will eventually follow your page.

Even small professional owners can leverage Social Media platforms to spread their brand awareness and grow their profession.

Here are six ways that can help boost your brand awareness on Social media networks as a small professional owner :

1. Blogging – Blogging is a perfect tool for any kind of professional because it allows them to develop content and generate traffic around their niche. They can use blogs by creating a blog post on any topic they wish and then publish it on their site or blog page. If they have a blog page that has most of the posts, they can create new posts using articles from other blogs or from other websites. The best part about blogging is that you can use your own voice for writing your post as well as use other people’s voices in your blog post to enhance its credibility.

2. Sharing – Sharing is one of the most effective ways for you to boost your brand awareness because it creates trust between two parties and helps them feel like they have an intimate relationship with you by sharing something that interests both parties at once. This way, they feel like they know more about what interests them than when they don’t share anything at all, even though you had nothing new to say about them at all before posting this topic at all.

3. Linking – Linking is another excellent way for your users to boost your brand awareness because it helps users find out about new things on your site without having to click the link itself. This way, users get more exposure for themselves without having to click any links or copy-paste random words from internet pages or social sites into an email, which boosts their trust even further.

4. Writing – Writing is also very effective for boosting your brand awareness because if done properly, writing can be an excellent way of reaching out to people who may not be aware of what interests them if done properly. In addition, writing can make users feel like they are talking directly with the creator of their topic in relation to whatever interest both parties share together. It's also good if one uses different styles depending on the target audience he/she wants his/her readership/followers/

Instagram

Social media, or social networking sites, are all about connecting people in a way that makes them feel like they are in the same room. Social media can be a great tool for your profession or brand, and it can help you build your online community.

But not all of your clients will have the ability to use social media platforms such as Instagram or Facebook. So if you want to increase your brand awareness, you must consider using these platforms. There is no other way to do this besides using social media platforms on a regular basis.

Using different social media channels for your profession can help better showcase your services.

You can connect with your clients on this platform and interact with them directly without having to send them an email address and ask them to sign up. This is especially handy when you want to reach out to people in the early stages of their journey.

They may not know how to navigate the internet yet, but they will love how Instagram allows them to show off their Digitality and their likes instantly without feeling like they have to learn how to do it. This can be especially useful when your marketing campaign is reaching out to new clients, who may not be tech-savvy at first but are also driven by their passion for something other than money-making endeavors such as photography or graphic design.

You can engage with your clients by posting an image on Instagram through things like hashtags. The hashtag posts are basically images that contain a specific hashtag that starts with # followed by another hashtag which then goes from left-to-right (in chronological order) until finally ending with # the last hashtag so that it looks like one long chain of hashtags rather than just one hashtag per image (which would be confusing).

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The # sign acts as a shortcut for users who would otherwise type out a full hashtag themselves, saving time and space while still allowing users who prefer longer chains of hashtags (such as those used in Twitter's search function). Users can view full-resolution versions of these images through Instagram's lens so that they don't have any trouble understanding what is being said (which could make understanding what people mean easier).

Instagram allows brands and professionals to post content directly onto their own accounts without having login credentials needed because most accounts are "public." This means that anyone who has access has any information about the account, including pictures that can be used against companies trying to undermine or attack brands online by spreading fake news or unsolicited messages from fans asking for free stuff in exchange.

Social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have made it easier for professionals to connect with clients and achieve growth. Social media has also been a powerful way for professional owners to build connections with potential leads and clients.

These social media platforms have become important tools in today's digital marketing landscape. They provide the platform for professionals to connect with their clients solve their problems while establishing authority in the field. With such powerful and effective social media platforms, companies can effectively target consumers via their online presence.

In order to use these platforms effectively, you need to be smart about your advertising strategy as well as your content strategy. This means that before creating content for these platforms, you must ensure that your audience consists of people who are interested in your service.

Another important aspect of using social media is the quality of your building your expertise on these platforms. It is important that you establish yourself as an authority in order to gain the confidence and trust of the audience.

Chapter 6

Three Reasons to Record a Podcast Today: It's Never Too Late

Starting a podcast can be a great opportunity to make a little extra money while exercising your creativity and talents. With the rise of new technologies, podcasting has experienced an uptick in popularity. An image as a podcaster may seem like something out of a science fiction film, but it is very real.

While it does take a lot of time, effort, and planning to start a podcast, it can also be a very fulfilling way to build your Digital brand online. Podcasting is incredibly diverse and, with the right niche and show format, it can be extremely profitable.

You're still not convinced? Below are three reasons you should start a podcast today to build your brand online.

Podcasting is a great way to build an audience for your brand online.

It allows you to share a message with your audience through audio content and eventually build a community around it. Podcasting has experienced a surge in popularity since the early 2010s. According to "The Podcast Host," there are now over 250,000 podcasts being downloaded every week worldwide. [Reuters Institute Digital News Report](#) shows that podcasting is now a worldwide phenomenon, with 36% of those surveyed accessing a podcast each month and around 15% using a news podcast.

Unlike newspapers, magazines, and books, which are printed, produced and distributed through traditional channels such as stores, newsstands, and bookshops, podcasts are delivered digitally.

Podcasting is a great way to share your expertise with the world.

Putting out content positions you as an expert in your field, and this includes podcast episodes. You can talk about cases, interview clients, or chat with colleagues - it doesn't matter! Simply having the episodes on your website and social media will make your firm more impressive and gravitas.

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Not only is podcasting a great way to network but it's also been proven to be a good way to build an audience.

Podcasting is a great way to connect with other podcasters and learn from them.

When you have something valuable to share, it can pay off.

Podcasting is a great way to connect with other podcasters and learn from them. When you have something valuable to share, it can pay off. Easy to distribute: You can easily distribute your podcast through RSS, email, and social media. With email marketing, you can also include links to specific episodes in your outreach. You can find email newsletters, and RSS feeds on sites like Libsyn, Blubrry, and Podbean.

But don't think of it as one-stop marketing—it's not. Because podcasting is still a new medium, you should use other marketing tools in combination with it to achieve your goals.

But it's also a great way to build a following, gain new subscribers, and increase your income.

In this post, I'll show you how to set up your own podcast and start growing your audience online.

Conclusion

In conclusion, podcasts are a great way to find new information, have an intellectual conversation with friends, and keep up-to-date with the latest news. Now is the time to start your own podcast or join one that interests you!

Wrapping up!

There are benefits to podcasts that you can gain from listening in. Podcasts are a great way to gain knowledge of new topics, have intellectual conversations with friends, and stay informed on the latest news.

Chapter 7

The Trend in 2022: Digital Branding

After this long, let's share with you an insight about the trends in 2022 for professionals and professional owners who are resonating with Digital branding online.

It's all about YOU when it comes to Digital branding. Whatever form of branding you choose for yourself, the important thing is that you have to be yourself. It is important to your followers and your audience that you are seen as you are. Never be afraid to speak your mind, and always UPSKILL.

When it comes to investing in your Digital brand in 2022, having a clear investment strategy is vital. A stock-market or crypto investment will quickly burn through your resources, chasing the next shiny object. Rather, take note of these five trends that will be important in the coming year.

Rise of New Social Platforms

From the iconic Facebook blackout in October 2021 to court proceedings involving Instagram's top executives and escalating censorship issues affecting all leading platforms, 2021 proved that the holy trinity of Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube is not as indestructible as we imagined. New social platforms were gaining traction in 2021. Some were fueled by a specific community, such as Discord, which grew in popularity thanks to the NFT crowd. Others, like Parler, became a meeting place for persons with certain political beliefs. If we talked about micro-influencers within "old" social-media platforms in past years, the year 2021 accelerated this trend, and now we're talking about micro-platforms for specialized groups.

We can only expect this tendency to continue in 2022, with news like Rumble preparing to go public and Donald Trump intending to build his own social media site.

Make room for more in-depth (and longer) discussions.

Clubhouse's early users would spend hours and days on the site, forgetting to eat and shower, when it originally launched in late 2019. Despite the fact that interest in the platform waned rapidly, Clubhouse identified a significant market need: the

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internet needs a space for lengthier conversations, and the audio appears to be an excellent medium for this.

Since the start of the pandemic, Facebook has been establishing audio rooms, Twitter has added Spaces, and the popularity of podcast listeners has been steadily increasing. We're used to hearing that people's attention spans are shortening, yet styles that allow for a larger dialogue seem to be gaining traction. If you're planning a Digital brand strategy for 2022, make sure you leave room for deeper dialogues with your audience. It may be a weekly Instagram Live, a podcast, or a Facebook group.

"Inspirational" should be replaced with "relatable."

Instagram stories take precedence over postings. Facebook groups discussions take precedence over page posts. The pendulum is swinging away from the perfectly polished image and inspirational content and toward real-world problem-solving with community support. Even social-media formats that are gaining traction speaks to a shift in public opinion. Examine the thoughts and messages you offer, regardless of the medium you use.

Being an opinion leader does not imply that you have everything worked out and can present your ideal "after" photo. The world is changing at a breakneck pace, and it's up to you to ask the correct questions and be transparent about the issues you and your firm are now facing. In 2022, you'll earn more brownie points by showing your audience the "behind the scenes" of your outcomes or even starting open debates with your community.

Bring individuals together around the same goal and set of ideals

Your Digital views on social matters have nothing to do with your professional skills as, say, a photographer twenty years ago. Today, they can easily become a decisive element that turns some potential consumers into loyal fans while repelling others. According to studies, four out of five buyers prefer companies that reflect their Digital values. The same is true for your Digital brand's followers.

Contents that appeal to the five senses: if we can read, listen, and watch- They work well!

It'll be even better if we can smell and taste it. It's a more comprehensive immersion experience. This has strength if you can read it while simultaneously hearing it. Many digital newspapers now allow you to "listen" to the text.

The podcast is popular because it allows you to combine it with other activities such as going for a stroll, cooking, or taking a rest while closing your eyes. The audio rooms appeared to have more travel distance, so it stayed halfway. In a world where attention spans are hardly more than a minute, Tik Tok and the Reels, among other experiences, reign supreme.

You'll need to engage more than one sense to keep your attention.

End Note

"You're smart. You're educated. You're a professional. Your digital footprint should speak for itself."

There is no one solution that will fit every individual's needs; however, when looking at the benefits and drawbacks of digital branding, it is clear that they outweigh the disadvantages.

For an effective digital branding strategy, your profession should take care to develop a comprehensive profile with a strong social media presence. Make sure to have a consistent theme across all of your content, including posts on your website and blog, tweets on Twitter, posts on Facebook, videos on YouTube, and other content on LinkedIn.

Digital branding is not about products or services but instead about how an individual person connects with their audience. It's important to remember that it takes time and dedication to create a strong brand identity.

- Digital branding is the process of connecting with one's audience in order to promote oneself.

- Remembering that Digital branding takes time and dedication will give you the motivation necessary to keep working on your brand.

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Digital branding is a journey, not a destination!

We see that we are all on a journey to become the best person we can be. You focus on getting better at what you do, and Digital branding is just one step in that journey.

The most important thing is to keep barreling through and keep working hard.

Find new ways to get involved with your work and grow your network. Remember, this is a journey, not a destination.