



PERSONAL BRANDING: WHAT IS IT AND HOW CAN I GROW MY NAME?

By Bryan Andrew Ruiz
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What is a Brand?

A brand is the identity of a specific product, service, or business.

A brand can take many forms, including a name, sign, symbol, color combination or slogan. The word branding began simply as a way to tell one person's cattle from another by means of a hot iron stamp. A legally protected brand name is called a trademark. The word brand has continued to evolve to encompass identity - it affects the personality of a product, company or service.

Personal Branding and Why?

I believe the very first thing you should do when establishing a brand is to figure out who you are as a brand. What are your talents? What defines you? What are your strengths? For example, maybe you make exquisite jewelry or you have gained so much experience and knowledge in sustainability. Take that notion and run with it!

It's important to know your strengths and talents because those are the qualities that will set you apart from the competition. In the current economic climate, companies are seeking out talented and unique individuals to join their team. They have the ability to do this because hundreds of people are applying for a single job. By being unique and different, will keep you top of mind.

Once you find your angle, learn as much as you can about it. Being in the age of digital, there is no excuse not to learn about new technologies, industry news, people to follow and also tips to improve your craft.

Here are some ways to grow your knowledge in your field:

1. Research websites and blogs (which is done easily with Google Reader)
2. Take Classes / Read Books & Magazine
 - a. Local Community Colleges offer cheap classes in many trades
 - b. Whenever I want to gain more in-depth knowledge, I go to the book store and go to the graphic design and marketing section and emerge myself there for hours just seeing what's new. The magazine section is also great because it's very current. There are hundreds of magazines that specialize in single topics so it's easy to read just about your trade.

3. Read Tutorials
 - a. You can find millions of tutorials online. I am always looking for tutorials to help me when it comes to graphic design. A quick Google, Yahoo or Bing search can help you out for sure.
4. Go to events and panel discussions
 - a. There are always events in every industry. Panels are created with experts in specific fields. They typically discuss what they are currently working on, industry hot topics and then a Q&A session for you to probe them for information you are interested in.

Tools To Promote Your Personal Brand

Personal Website

Nowadays everyone should have a website about themselves. There are so many reasons for one to have a website. The following are things you could host on a simple website:

- **YOUR BIOGRAPHY.** Tell a story about yourself. How you got into your field, what experience do you bring to the table and fun facts about you.
- **YOUR RESUME.** You can always keep your resume updated online which will allow it to be accessible all the time to employers and yourself.
- **YOUR PORTFOLIO.** Whether you're a photographer or tattoo artists, a website is a great place to display all of your work for someone to see.
- **CONTACT INFORMATION.** This information makes it helpful for anyone to reach you for inquiries about you or your craft.
- **ECOMMERCE.** Are you looking to sell something? Paypal and other websites like it can help you integrate their system into your website to sell products.
- **PRESS.** If you ever have an article published by you or about you, it's a good idea to have them hosted on your website as well.
- **TESTIMONIALS.** After working with someone it's always great to post positive feedback about working with you.

Blog



THE BUZZ
ADVERTISING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Starting your own blog

(TheBuzzOnAdvertising.com) is a great way to have a voice online. Blogging gives you an

outlet to talk about exactly what you want to talk about. In my blog (www.BryanAndrewRuiz.com/blog or www.TheBuzzOnAdvertising.com), I discuss things that are happening in the communications industry such as new commercials, fun technology, breaking news and old advertising which takes you back to its time of release. My blog is sending out information I am passionate about and also think other will enjoy.

The key to blogging is being knowledgeable on your topic, staying on top of it (posting one entry a week may not be as effective and one or two a day) and engaging your reader with fun posts.



Facebook

Facebook is an obvious outlet for self-promotion! Update your profile with your website and blog URLs. Also, you can also post some of your better blog posts on your wall to share with all of your friends. If you have a company or business you are trying to promote, you can always set up a page to have fans "like" your page, which will enhance your brand even further.



Twitter

If you're not tweeting, set up an account today! I have a personal twitter name (twitter.com/adv_guru) and blogging name (twitter.com/TheBuzz_Adv). Posting articles, your posts, and statements about your trade is another way to establish credibility in your field.



Linked In

This is a great place to establish yourself as a professional (<http://www.linkedin.com/in/bryanruiz>). You can link up with others in your same field and join groups with those who share the same interest. LinkedIn is growing and their site's features are now including new feeds which will also help you with researching.



Bryan Andrew Ruiz has had over 6 years of professional communications experience which includes marketing, production, sales and planning. He has had the opportunity to work in traditional media (TV, Radio and Print) and in the digital outdoor sector. Recently, he has shifted his focus in strategic digital marketing producing cross-platform marketing strategies that include online, mobile/tablet, social media planning.

On the design front, Bryan has experience in print and web design which has complemented his digital strategy experience. He has worked with many clients around the country to build their brands with logo/collateral design, website implementation and email & social marketing. As a NYC graphic designer, he is always willing to take on new clients and help build their brand.

For more information about Bryan Ruiz (A New York Graphic and Web Designer), check him out at BryanAndrewRuiz.com or email him at me@bryanandrewruiz.com.