



Managing your Online Reputation



272 ROSE AVENUE | LENASIA
TEL: +2711 028 5656 | FAX: 086 595 5817
EMAIL: INFO@SPEEDYPLACEMENTS.CO.ZA
WWW.SPEEDYPLACEMENTS.CO.ZA

The Internet allows people to communicate in new and exciting ways, but while social media offers enormous opportunities to build your personal brand, failing to manage your brand online can also have severe consequences.

Interviewers are legally allowed to ask job-seekers to log into Facebook so they can check their profiles. Others argue that this is unlawful. But be honest – if you really, really wanted a job, wouldn't you agree to the check?

I've been telling clients for years to be careful of what they put online, even if they think their privacy settings are very high. My motto when it comes to the web is: be authentic, but be careful.

Your "**Google CV**" (the information generated by Google when someone types your name into the search engine) is a critical aspect of your personal brand. Few people still use telephone directories, but we all use search engines on a daily basis. Your name is being searched by clients, colleagues and competitors, so best you find out what information is available on you and how you can ensure that it reflects your personal brand in the most positive light.

Here are a few practical tips on how to do that:

1. **Google yourself at least once a month.** You need to know what information is out there. If you find anything compromising, like a photo you've been tagged in on Facebook, do your best to manage it. Un-tag yourself, remove any compromising remarks or images you've posted on social media, and better yet, don't post any of these in the future.
2. **Imagine what your mother would say.** In other words, if someone read out your Facebook comments, Tweets or blog entry at a dinner party, would you be embarrassed? If the answer is 'yes', rather don't put that info online.
3. **Maximise your LinkedIn profile.** LinkedIn pages generally have high Google ranking, meaning that they are one of the first links to show up in the results when someone searches your name. Make good use of this by keeping your LinkedIn profile up to date, including recommendations from clients and colleagues and filling in a complete profile that showcases all your skills and strengths.

Resource documents sourced and collated in collaboration with:

RDLB Digital Design House

Personal & Corporate Branding Solutions

www.rdlb.co.za | info@rdlb.co.za | 084 488 2919



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