

10 unconventional ways to build your personal brand



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

You won't find me regurgitating advice like, " Get out there and join networking events." I absolutely will not tell you to " be yourself."

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Those things, and more, have been said repeatedly. How about something a little more actionable to help you ?

So, think about something more actionable: If you want to stand out, you need to disrupt the norm. Here are 10 unconventional approaches to personal branding to try. Now, I don't recommend employing *all* of them. Instead, choose one, or a few, and tailor your approach to what works for you and your audience.

1. Target an influencer and build a relationship.

Find influencers within your industry -- even mid-level people working on their own branding. Reach out to them directly and start building a relationship -- but not a " networking" relationship. Build a high-level relationship that graduates to a genuine friendship.

Having even just a small number of genuine friendships in your industry can have more impact than 100 people who " sort-of know" your brand.

2. Get obsessively good with a single marketing channel.

Experts say you should have a robust content marketing and strategy across a number of channels. That advice isn't wrong, but it's a little lacking.

Watch some of the ways your audience digests content and then become a master of engagement and production value on that channel. Think in terms of how focused on video to grow hisfamily's Wine Library business.

Amazon CEO offered smart advice in this same regard, “ A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.”

3. Exercise confidence.

This is about as conventional as I'll get for recommendations, because it's an important one. The more confident you are, the easier it will be to cross through uncharted waters and try new things to grow your personal brand. Find ways to exercise your confidence daily and step outside of your comfort zone.

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4. Be a little silly.

Everyone else will tell you to be “ your best professional self.” That's not bad advice, but it's boring. People want real human engagement. Your audience is more likely to connect with you if they feel a personal connection, and everyone is a little goofy inside.

I'm professional when I need to be, but I like to show my sense of humor in the right situations. Too many people suppress and hidepersonalitytraits, displaying strictprofessionalismwhen building a brand.

Be a little silly. Make faces in a Snapchat profile pic,. Have fun and give people a reason to pay attention.

5. Promote your content directly.

Identify people that you want to follow you. Learn a little about them through their social and shared content. Then go find content you think would be beneficial to them.

Share it with them, and tell them, “ I saw you were interested in X, or had X problem, so I think this piece of content might interest you/be helpful.”

This is how you and create raving fans.

6. Start a community.

Start a community instead of joining one, like an online (or local) community group for a specific niche or an industry that you want to specialize in.

It doesn't even need to be fancy; every Facebook or LinkedIn group started with a single person with an idea. Be that person.

7. Build content around others.

Build content around other people,, to create a positive association between your own growing personal brand and theirs. You can do this through:

- Interviews
- Co-authored content
- Sponsoring content like webinars

8. Call people on their bulls*.**

I'm giving you express permission to stir up a little controversy. Sometimes you need to just go out and make some waves.

Find someone in your industry who doesn't quite have all the facts, or has a differing opinion or perspective. Get out there and engage with that person. Tag him (or her), comment and create a buzz. Keep it above the belt, but don't be afraid to flex a little.

As of the says in his social bios, " I call your bullshit."

9. Leverage storytelling.

The idea of getting attention through storytelling isn't new, but a surprising number of people still don't leverage it. of B2B marketers still don't know what kind of content is effective. Even if they are trying to connect through stories, they're missing something.

That's an opportunity to work storytelling into your own branding strategy to make a more personal connection. It's unconventional because so few other people are doing it.

" The best stories have a human element," , director of marketing for BlogMutt. " Without a personal connection, a story is just information."

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10. Do an 'AMA.'

Get on sites like and to answer questions. An AMA (Ask Me Anything) on Reddit and similar communities is a great way to establish expertise within

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your industry. Just make sure your answers are accurate, and you're being authentic without trying to be promotional.