



Six Tips To Enhance Your Online Brand

If your company relies on leads from your website, then your online presence is your brand. Online branding is especially important for service providers who don't have a tangible product that clients can look at. Instead, customers are buying the information you present about the service — and the reputation you've built up to support it.

The Internet rules in this “digital era,” and Google GOOG -0.75% controls 80 percent of the search results, so make yourself stand out. Search engines want to reward the brands that real people find valuable. You can't assume users will easily search and find your brand or business only because you have a live website. Instead, you must focus on building your online brand to create a personable impression for first-time users, while continuing to engage and reward long-time customers.

If you're noticing a high bounce rate in your site visitors, it's time to take a look at the image your website is projecting and consider revamping it with the following tips.

1. **Add credibility with customer testimonials.** Make sure to capitalize on the great customer relationships you already have by gathering and sharing client testimonials and reviews on your website. A testimonial is much more than an ego boost. They have tremendous power to persuade other people to seek out your business for products and services. Having real clients share their experiences boosts your credibility because it shows that your service has been “tested” by the public.
2. **Capitalize on press and publications.** Promote and link to any publications where you, your brand or your services are mentioned. The ability to get press adds to your brand's legitimacy. These announcements can be published under a “Recent Press” or “Recent Mentions” section on your website. Receiving third-party commendations positions your company as an authority in your field, and often, fame leads to more business.
3. **Boast about your recognitions.** Any awards or recognitions that your services, business or employees have earned indicate the quality of your brand. Display recent accomplishments on your website where users can easily find them. Take advantage of any widgets or icons as well. Having a “Recent Recognitions” section on your website can be very valuable for enhancing your credibility.
4. **Display your social following stats.** Use a social stats widget or plugin on your website to display your social following stats. Positive engagement on social media can increase the likelihood that viewers will find your brand likable. Social media is an opportunity to make your brand more personable and human, and less like a faceless corporation.
5. **Establish yourself as a resource.** Establish yourself as industry leader by sharing free educational content. Offer useful white papers, e-books, and other downloadable materials that your viewers will actually need or benefit from. Aim to establish yourself as a resource for knowledge, humor, current events, or whatever else you can capitalize on. You should be willing to educate your customers and readily give them the information they want. If you're not willing, then your users will find a competitor who is.
6. **Avoid jargon.** Avoid using your own industry's jargon on your website. Speak in the potential customers' terms instead. One common mistake is filling website content with industry language and buzzwords. Instead of pitching to a client with fancy terms, speak to them in language that they would use to search for your products or services. You must get in the mind of your potential customers. Don't try to woo them with insider jargon.

Developing a strong online presence and paying attention to your overall online branding increases both positive customer experience and search engine optimization results. Your reputation is not out of your hands. Take control of your online identity and gain leads from enhancing your online presence.

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