

Personal Branding and Digital Citizenry: Harnessing the Power of Data and IoT



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Abstract

Personal branding is a way to elevate oneself in new marketing concept. For many, building and managing a personal brand is about value, mission, image, and vision. However, with the shift in the marketplace and the rise of the Internet of Things (IoT), Personal Branding has become a data function and a summation of all one's digital footprints, and how we are seen by Databots and not just as seen from one's own spectacles or as perceived by others. Consequently, we are witnessing an upsurge in the use of deep machine learning and predictive analytics to profile and select talents using their personal brand as a data function of their web presence and digital citizenry. In order to find out a solution, we conducted a survey and we observed how many students are not fully aware of their web presence/digital citizenry and how all their digital footprints from their social and professional networks can and will be used to profile them. After identifying this problem, we examined the idea of building and managing a personal brand- with high value by exploring the depths of "Digital Citizenship" concept.

To solve this problem, we developed a Personal Branding tool that allows students to develop and promote their own Personal Brand using a Digital Passport to express, share, and manage a multi-dimensional, drill down-able, presentation of all their academic and non-academic achievements, experiences, skills, interests, aptitudes and career highlights in their own unique style. We also examine how this Personal Branding tool can be used as a Digital Citizenry application that allows students to become fully aware of their Web Presence and manage, facilitate and monitor their Social and Professional Networks with a built-in Digital Footprint Analyzer and their very own Social Media manager.

Keywords: Digital Citizenry; Web Presence; Digital Footprints; Personal Branding; Internet of Things; Predictive Analytics; Machine Learning; Social Media Manager; Web 2.0

Introduction

Traditionally brands have been associated with businesses, products, organization or services but today researchers have recognized that brands can also be human [1,2]. Personal branding has become an important marketing task for everyday people along with celebrities and leaders in business and politics [3-7]. Web 2.0 has developed a friendly platform for personal branding, including creation of individual profiles and web pages [8,9] Web 2.0 focuses on user-generated data which is easy to use and mostly generated by non-experts [10]. As the job market is constantly changing, it becomes necessary to make certain revisions to the current culture, mindset and skills [10]. Significant efforts are required in order to succeed in the current job market, which is competitive due to its challenges and renovative updates. Hence to remain in synchronous with the various changes happening around and expand network importance one should know how to use it effectively.

Our motivation for this research was based on hypothesis that the general populace has a lack of awareness regarding the importance of monitoring online presence and has difficulty managing vast resources available to them. We tried testing this theory. We

scrutinized the way people consider their public data, represent their image online and manner in which they store personal data. A person can highlight him in a positive light, developing his on-line profile in such a way that the networked audience will get involved by the fashion data is represent but not in data. People who have succeed in their respective domain obtain their reputation and position based on combination of their proficiency and consistency which made them attractive and gave them ability so that they can distinguish themselves from others. And hence an authenticate personal brand should deliver both a track record and a promise to deliver its value.

To find the solution we conducted a survey, interviewed few students from the campus and completed literature review. We found out that:

- a) All final year students are working on the final year project so that they the potential employer can review them
- b) Most students who are aspiring professionals need to maintain a CAPSTONE equivalent for personal and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

c) More than half students are not aware of all their web presence/digital citizenry and how their digital footprints from their social and professional networks can be used to represent them

The Wall Street Journal confirms that, “Companies are investing in improving their online career portals, making their sites easier to use, adding more detailed company and job information and incorporating more social media. Job postings and text descriptions of corporate culture have been supplemented with YouTube videos and blogs from employees, HR officials and even executives, along with links to corporate Flickr, Facebook and Twitter pages that chronicle life at the company and include job postings.” Inextricably linked to one’s personal brand is their web presence, particularly in the context of social media [11]. Web presence is the public way an individual is observed from the point of view of an audience while on the internet. The more connections people make, the larger their digital footprint, and the more likely potential employers would find fewer positive aspects of a person’s digital life. This is important to consider, particularly when searching for a career. However, no one lives in a vacuum, and digital connections with friends, family members, or even professional contacts is virtually inevitable in the world we live in today. According to Brake, “Profiles and entries on Facebook, Twitter and many other such services can contain confessional material that looks as if it is only for the author to read or perhaps for trusted friends and family - but although social media services often include tools to keep such writings private, many are visible to a large number of people or even published openly on the web with potential audience of millions.”

The solution then is not simply to be aware, but to be able to manage one’s image in the digital space, promoting positive aspects while diminishing the aspects that are less so. In the article by Harris & Rae, the authors state, “... the “digital divide” between the “haves” and the “have nots” in the developed world is now less about access to the web than it is about understanding how to actively participate in the networked society.” Having the power to manage one’s overall web presence is key to success in modern times. The concept of Digital Content Storage is a library, a collection place of all digital content that a person owns and uses. This is similar to other methods used to save and share files of different types and sizes, such as Dropbox or Google Docs. The app we are presenting as a solution works in this same way, but with the added bonus of the “vault” feature, which would be a specific space located within the library with extra security features for more sensitive and restricted document files and information.

Methods

In choosing a method of study we thought it would appropriate to make use of an online survey in order to reach a variety of respondents in light of our triple constraints: we were able to reach the highest amount of people in our given time by the most cost-effective means. We conducted our study using Google forms.

We posted several links to our survey on Facebook and Twitter, in order to gain a wide viewing and have the most success. Distributing the survey in this way allowed us to get feedback from those who may no longer be students or in the academic world and did not assume any prior knowledge of our topics, giving us the widest possible net to cast for data. This survey included questions based on personal brand, web presence, and digital content storage, gauging the participants both in their current knowledge of these topics and also their current usage of applications and software/hardware specific to these subjects. This initial survey was left open for one week. We used the analytics provided by Google Docs initially, and then used the raw data to analyze the information for ourselves to make our conclusions. We split this survey into sections, and each section was specific to one of the three topics we were testing. This allowed us to get a somewhat general idea of the prior knowledge our participants had for each of our topics. For example, “Are you Familiar with Personal Brand?” was a specific question we asked our participants in order to try to gain an understanding of what the general public might or might not already know about the subject, an approach we felt was useful in giving meaning to the survey.

Findings

The data we collected from our surveys proved to hold a number of patterns which we found in the process of our analyzation. Our initial survey collected data from 60 volunteer participants. This gave us quite a bit of information, which was useful in gaining knowledge from a large variety of data. One of our main interests was in determining how important people considered their social media presence. We were interested in the importance people put on themselves and their personal media first. Our results showed that over 50% of people placed themselves and their social media in the mid-range. 81.67% of respondents rated their social media at a 3 or higher on a scale of 1-5, with 66.67% rating themselves at 3 or 4, the middle rankings as depicted in Figure 1.

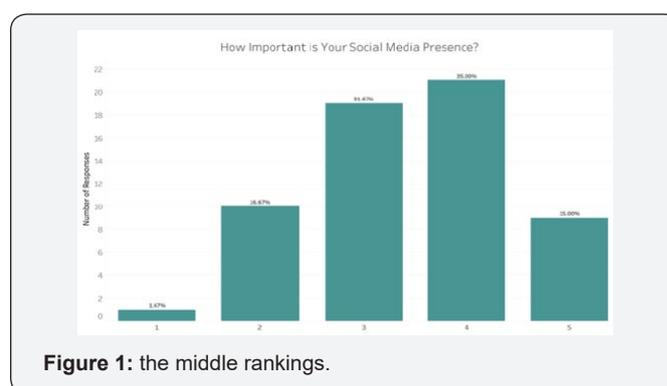
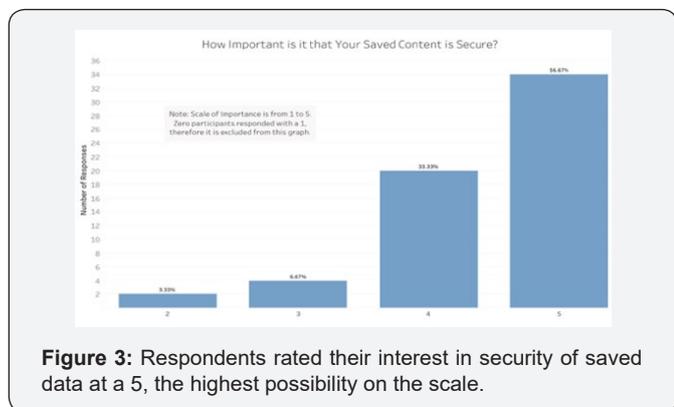
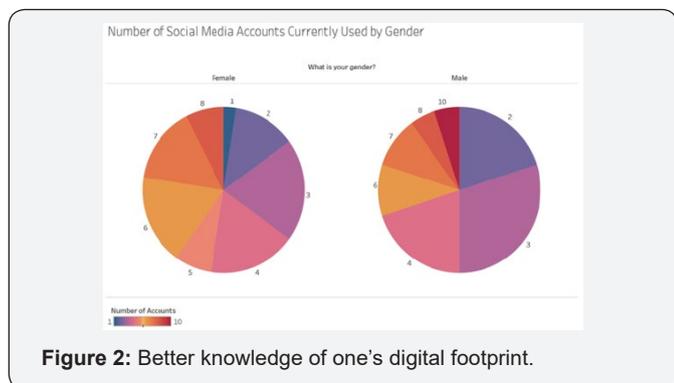


Figure 1: the middle rankings.

According to these results, gender is not a highly determining factor when considering number of social media accounts currently in use by users. This is especially interesting considering the gender of respondents: as stated, 66% of respondents were female and 33% male, and interestingly, our data shows a low lev-

el of disparity between the two. We determined that this further proves that a better knowledge of one's digital footprint is universally beneficial shown in the following Figure 2.

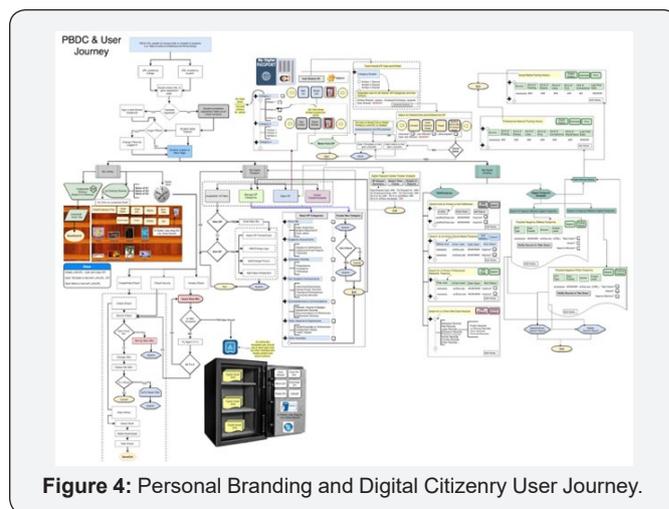


We were also very interested to see how highly people determine the importance of security of their saved content, asking them to rank that importance on a scale of 1-5. Interestingly, from this data, we found that zero respondents rated their security importance at one, the lowest. Alternatively, 56.67% of respondents rated their interest in security of saved data at a 5, the highest possibility on the scale, which shows very clearly how highly security is considered as represented in the following Figure 3. Another interesting pattern we found in our data was the distribution of gender, in the way that affected our survey. In Figure 2, our respondents were 66% female, 33% male, so we thought it prudent to measure some of our responses by gender to find important differences in the use of social media and web accounts.

The System: Personal Branding and Digital Citizenry (PBDC)

The collected data and various surveys lead us to develop a system which will connect the students with recruiters and vice a versa. The application we build is named as 'Personal Branding and Digital Citizenry'(PBDC). This application is nothing but 360° approach for students and ambitious professionals to be accountable career owners and recruiters, admissions and employers to accountably attract, manage, retain and grow talent. While research phase we came across same system which manages student data and support them while recruiting process

named as e-Portfolio. We explore the various ways people use the e- Portfolio for and make the affinity diagram from the collected data so that we can categorized the feature which comes under same category. That helped us to note down all the key features of the e-Portfolio. There are few idiosyncratic features which we included in PBDC like in build Digital Rights Management (DRM), Copyright Tracking with Audit Trail and Version Control, Hold and manage all types of files etc. These all feature are designed after finding the loopholes in the system people are using currently and from e-Portfolio. User journey of the Personal Branding and Digital Citizenry (PBDC) is as shown in Figure 4.



Unlike any of the e-Portfolios applications in the market, our Personal Branding and Digital Citizenry (PBDC) system provides both schools and professional organizations with: A Capstone and Career Fair management apps allows the school to schedule and manage a Capstone or a Career Fair event each term giving all attendees, including potential employers a secure access to view and rate students' capstones or final course projects. A powerful Personal Branding tool that allows students to develop and promote their own Personal Brand and measure and manage their career using a Digital Passport to express, share, and manage a multi-dimensional, drill down-able, presentation of all their academic and non-academic achievements, experiences, skills, interests, aptitudes and career highlights in their own unique style.

A Digital Citizenry tool that allows students to become fully aware of their Web Presence and manage, facilitate and monitor their Social and Professional Networks with a built-in Digital Footprint Analyzer and their very own Social Media manager. A personal and smart digital objects repository (My Library) that interfaces with the campus' Learning Management Systems to allow students to build, deposit, and maintain their own virtual library shelves of all their favorites and must hang on to course materials (i.e. lecturer and course projects and notes etc.), books/publications, videos, and any other learning & content materials etc. (also providing cheaper and more secure cloud storage). A personal and secure (Digital Vault) hidden in one of the student's virtual library

shelves allowing them to safeguard and protect their most valuable digital assets, documents, resources or artifacts etc. for added security Blockchain will be added to this solution [12-14].

Conclusion and Future Scope

Because online branding has received more attention it was necessary to design the system which should be different from the e-Portfolio and we tried to be developed something which is different from the e-Portfolio. Here we list few things which make PBDC unique:

- a. Built in Digital Rights Management (DRM)
- b. Copyright Tracking with Audit Trail and Version Control
- c. Hold and manage all types of files
- d. Metadata for searching, browsing and discovery
- e. Taxonomies & configurable workflows with user roles and permissions
- f. Access-controlled collections with customizable classification
- g. Web service interfaces for:
 - i. Video streaming and transcoding services
 - ii. Content and assessment authoring tools
 - iii. Learning management systems (e.g. Moodle, Canvas etc.)

By providing best-in-class Personal Branding & Digital Citizenry management support for students and aspiring career professional, AND best-in-class management support for academic admins, career services, recruiters/admission, and employers, both campus and professional organizations will “revolutionize” the way students manage their Personal Brand and careers.

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