

8 WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR PERSONAL BRAND ON YOUR WEBSITE

- Establish Domain** — Your domain should be concise, emphasize professionalism, and communicate reliability in order to establish your credibility in an easy-to-remember format

Best practice tip: A personal website is no good if no one can find it. Choose a domain name that represents you, your name, mission or raison d'être.

- Make a Plan** — Think about what you want to communicate. What is the main message or takeaway? Is there something specific on your site you want to direct attention to?

Best practice tip: Create wireframes of the different pages or sections you want to develop. This helps you think through page elements ahead of time, eliminating any unforeseen obstacles or roadblock for getting your site up and launched.

- Smart Start Strategy** — Depending on how adept you may be at website development, there are beautiful DIY templates available from sites such as Squarespace and GoDaddy or if you're familiar with HTML and coding you can design and customize your site to your liking.

Best practice tip: Looking for a middle ground? This is a great opportunity to bring in a freelance designer or web specialist. Many companies specialize on web development and cover everything from copywriting, graphic design, development, SEO and conversion in order to get the most ROI from your new site. Choose which ever time, resource and financial investment is going to be best for you.

- Apply Your Brand to Social Media**

While your website should not be changed that often to maintain consistency of your Personal Brand, your social media pages allow you to relay your message and self-package every day, letting you shape your image or persona consciously. But most importantly, social networks allow brands to grow their visibility. Your online persona becomes a marketing and promotional tool to brand yourself.

Best practice tip: Tailor your message to the niche topics your brand occupies to position your brand, and yourself, as an expert in your field. Remember, posting daily drives engagement and strengthens your brand's familiarity with your audience.

- Organize Your Site – There are several elements your site will need to reinforce your brand’s image.**
 - Header: elegant, neat, uncluttered, logo in upper left corner, keep your menu in the same place throughout site
 - Hero Shot: professional photo of yourself
 - Calls to Action: Simple, clear directions to encourage visitors to accomplish the goals of your site
 - Forms: to collect visitor information, encourage registration or collect subscriptions. Request ONLY the information you need and nothing more.
 - Trust Builders: testimonials, awards and nominations, certifications, memberships, samples of work
 - Internal Site Search: so visitors can easily look up information on your site
 - Social Media Buttons: to direct users to channels you would like to share or connect on
 - Footer: Your address, contact email, phone number, etc. for quick access.
 - Additional Elements: portfolio of your clients or previous work, membership access, blog links, features/benefits, etc.

- Design Pointers to Consider – Your site needs to be designed with user experience in mind.**
 - Eliminate clutter. Nothing unnecessary should be present no matter how much you like it. If it doesn't serve a purpose for your site's visitors, toss it. It will only serve to clutter your user experience
 - Your content needs to be organized logically in groups.
 - Avoid features that slow your loading time like auto-play videos, complex animations or music. You have less than three seconds before new users get impatient with your site's loading speed.
 - Plan your page from the top down, with high priority information located at the top or can be accessed with minimal scrolling.
 - Select cohesive colors and images.
 - Budget white or blank space. It's pleasing when used in the right spot.
 - Avoid reader fatigue, legible fonts, appropriate font size, narrow lines and ample leading.
 - Uniform page layouts throughout your site will package the whole experience together.