



Why audit your social media profiles?

Quick: How many social media accounts do you have? A quick tally for me nets at least eight. Listed in order of most-frequently used: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, JD Supra, LegalOnRamp, Martindale Connected, Google+ – and I am sure there are some others I signed up for and forgot about.

Now, when was the last time you audited your multiple accounts for accuracy or consistency?

If you care about your reputation, then an audit is something you should put on your calendar three to four times per year.

Without a doubt, what we say and do around others has a direct effect on how people view us (and, yes, judge us), both personally and professionally. And today, there is enough online information about us that people can search, learn, assess and make a decision about how they view us ... without ever meeting us in person.

Sound risky? If you don't pay attention to the information in your key social media profiles, it can be.

I'll admit, right here and now, that I have not given my personal accounts the same level of scrutiny I provide to my clients. Here is my point: Regardless of the diligence with which you monitor your client's or employer's data to keep it accurate and up-to-date, if someone notices that your LinkedIn account shows you working at a company you left three months ago, they are likely to make unflattering assumptions.

Ideally, most of us want people (i.e., potential clients, referral sources and peers) to be able to learn about us via these electronic resources. However, if you don't exercise a modicum of persistence in keeping your information fresh and up-to-date, you present an excellent opportunity for someone to make erroneous assessments about your personality, your work habits and even your professional capabilities.

Put a quarterly appointment on your calendar to spend an hour looking at the basic information in your social media accounts. Compare them for accuracy and content.

- Check your company's social media policy for style guidelines for titles and company names, and make sure you are compliant.
- Make sure profile photos are consistent and recent.
- Update employment status and job title changes.
- Add/update relevant publications, speeches and presentations.
- Don't forget to "cleanse" out-of-date and potentially irrelevant material that may be cluttering your profile.

Obviously, the more time you put into this process, the better. But the important thing to remember is to invest some time consistently in reviewing and updating them, so your professional reputation and skills are clear from the start – and stay that way.