

Developing Your Online Presence

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Why do you need an “online presence”?

You get most of your information online; so does everybody else. If the internet has no evidence of your professional activities, products, and accomplishments, then you don't exist for anyone who doesn't see you in real life. But your online presence can go far beyond mere existence, in ways that can be intellectually engaging and professionally useful. Let's consider three different levels of online presence. Everybody should do Level 1, and at least a little of Level 2. Level 3 requires more commitment.

Level 1: Exist

When people google you, they find information about who you are as a professional (scientist, teacher, academic, job-seeker, etc.).

Level 2: Participate

You participate in academic or professional communities online, for example by talking to other academics on Twitter, announcing your accomplishments on Facebook, or messaging people on LinkedIn.

Level 3: Lead

You generate or lead intellectual conversations online, for example by maintaining a blog, publishing on other people's blogs, or developing a broad audience on Twitter.

Today:

1. Identify your goals
2. Google your neighbor
3. Assess your current online presence
4. Identify next steps and make a plan

What are your goals?

Audiences	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Fellow researchers in your field<input type="checkbox"/> Potential academic mentors<input type="checkbox"/> Potential academic employers<input type="checkbox"/> Current students<input type="checkbox"/> Potential students or RAs<input type="checkbox"/> Research participants <input type="checkbox"/> Potential non-academic mentors<input type="checkbox"/> Potential non-academic employers <input type="checkbox"/> Policy-makers<input type="checkbox"/> Science journalists<input type="checkbox"/> General public	<p>Level 1: Exist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Provide basic biographical information<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a broader context for your publications or conference presentations<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate contact to grow your professional network<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a narrative for a potential employer<input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to your outputs: publications, presentations, code, teaching materials, etc. <p>Level 2: Participate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Initiate contacts to grow your professional network<input type="checkbox"/> Publicize accomplishments<input type="checkbox"/> Elicit feedback<input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback<input type="checkbox"/> Participate in intellectual discussions <p>Level 3: Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Disseminate your findings or views to academics<input type="checkbox"/> Disseminate your findings or views to non-academics<input type="checkbox"/> Initiate intellectual discussions

What is your existing *public, professional* presence online?

Available info	Out of date/ incomplete	Up to date	Create, update, or delete soon?
Basic biography			
Image of your face			
Contact information			
Research overview			
Professional overview			
List of products/accomplishments			
Downloadable CV/resume			
Access to publications/presentations			
Access to code, data, etc.			
Discussion/commentary			

Location	Static content	Dynamic content	Create, update, or delete soon?
NACS website			
Lab website			
Personal website			
Blog			
News articles			
Google images			
Facebook			
Google Scholar			
ResearchGate			
Academia.edu			
LinkedIn			
Twitter			
Reddit			
Quora			
StackExchange			
GitHub			

Next steps

Identify problem areas in your current online presence

1. Noisy google results (e.g. other people with your name)
2. Conflicting/out of date information
3. Too much personal content

Create a consistent identity

1. Use the same professional picture everywhere
2. Keep core bio consistent and current
3. Develop an intriguing 1-sentence research description (c.f. Elevator Pitches!)
4. Consider using a personal website as the hub of your online identity.

Set goals for online interaction

1. Identify an online community you'd like to participate in
2. Set a weekly goal for participation (e.g. 10 minutes a day tweeting, or 30 minutes a week commenting on a blog).

Your to-do list: