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Self-branding: How to sell you

Being a successful 'flauntrepreneur' isn't reserved for just celebrities



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By: Ky Joseph

May 1, 2008 12:00 AM - Is your personal brand as strong as it could be in business? Do you ever wonder why some people are so memorable and seem to keep priority placement in your mind while others just disappear into a distant fog? If you've never given it much thought, I suggest you start because mastering the art of branding yourself in business can mean the difference between being ordinary and extraordinary and that goes for entrepreneurs and business professionals alike.

Some of the world's most successful business people understand the necessity of self-branding strategies. Donald Trump comes to mind as a very successful entrepreneur but by my calculation, he is a far more successful flauntrepreneur. A flauntrepreneur is defined as an individual who has mastered the art of self-branding to achieve success in business. From a personal branding standpoint, Donald Trump only really became a household name and major success when he started using the equity in his name to capitalize on other ventures.

Using this strategy, he launched his own reality TV show, a magazine, he authored countless books, started a bottled water company and a clothing line.

So what's the secret to leveraging the equity in your brand to create more business opportunities? You first have to be a success in your particular field of expertise. Take Mississauga businessman, Marc Cullen; once an ordinary gardener, now the expert of all gardening experts, with a radio show, a column in countless magazines and several published books on gardening.

Becoming a successful flauntrepreneur is not reserved for celebrity status by any means and to that point; there are countless ordinary people who have morphed themselves into their own brand simply by devising a strategy to coincide with their passion and talent.

Fitness guru, Tony Little generates millions of dollars flogging his self-branded home fitness equipment and let's face it, there's nothing more special about his equipment than other brands except that his endorsement as a fitness expert makes the product somewhat more credible. He's a fitness expert because he created that image for himself and it's that simple.

Mike Holmes, the homebuilder and Debbie Travis, the interior designer are two examples of once ordinary tradespeople whose passion and strategy facilitated the creation of their own TV shows. Not long after, they leveraged the equity in their brand to solidify large endorsement deals with companies like Home Depot and Maxwell House.

Don't think that you have to have a TV show in order to create a strong personal brand because quite the opposite is true. Here are just a few tips to get your wheels turning:

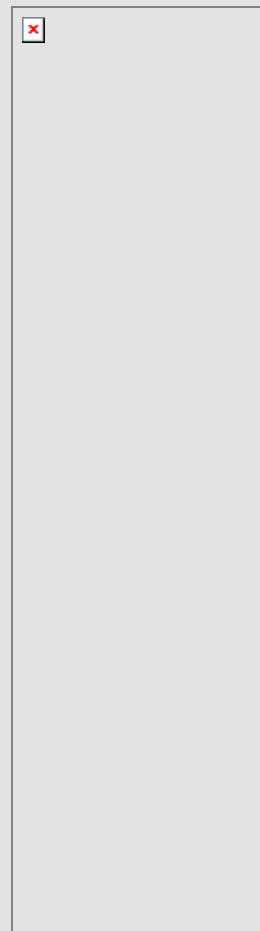
You first have to start with a foundation and a good product, which means you have to be good at what you do. A big secret to launching your personal platform is to celebrate a business achievement of yours with as many people as possible. You can start by sending a press release to everyone in your network of family, friends and associates and ask them to pass it along to each of their own personal networks.

This is called viral marketing and next to mass media, it's the most powerful tool to share news in today's technology world. In your press release, it's paramount to have a business offering of some kind, like "Call the expert for your free home evaluation today".

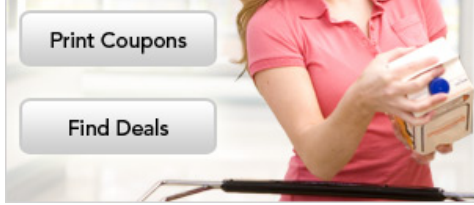
If you don't command people to do something, they won't. Do some PR and get your local newspaper to do a business story on you. Write a column for a business trade magazine. Create and distribute a monthly newsletter from the expert (you). The strategies are endless but crucial to achieving higher levels of business success.

Feel free to contact me if you have a question on the subject.

Mississauga's Ky Joseph is executive vice-president sales for "The Evanov Radio Group" and shareholder of several radio properties across Canada. She is a Master CPP Business Coach and in demand as a speaker on the topics of sales, management, personal branding and business achievement. She recently launched Flauntrepreneur™ Magazine, an online resource of self-branding strategies



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