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GUIDE 2019

**How to boost
your own
personal brand**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cathy Hayward is managing director of Magenta Associates, and a communications specialist with more than 18 years' experience in a range of journalistic, publishing and marketing roles. She founded Magenta in 2011 after a journalistic career spanning a number of different titles including *FM World*, the award-winning magazine for the British Institute of Facilities Management, *Marketing Week*, *Financial Management*, *Soccer Analyst*, *Supply Management*, *Unions Today*, *People Management* and *Director*. She holds a Masters degree in journalism, as well as the Chartered Institute of Public Relations' post-graduate diploma in PR.

Introduction

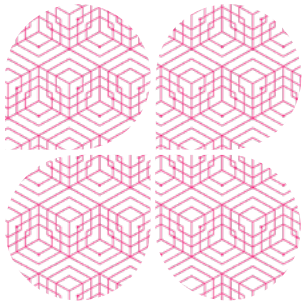
Stakeholder engagement is an important concern for the built environment, especially when applied to the management of outsourced contracts. Individuals also need to ensure that stakeholders, i.e. bosses and clients understand and appreciate their efforts, which can be a challenge for those working in property management who are not involved in the core day-to-day activities of their organisation.

But the wider aim should be to extend your brand further by building up a business reputation within the entire sector, not just within an organisation, and this requires more than simply keeping management and clients abreast of your activities.

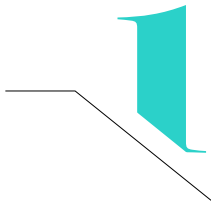
Cultivating and managing your personal brand is an important way of furthering your career, whether you're in a junior role and want to move up or have years of experience under your belt and want the recognition, responsibility and remuneration that you deserve.

As Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, describes it: "Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room." So whether you're motivated by career progression, want some personal recognition for your achievements or plan to move into a consultancy role, here are some tips on how to boost your personal brand.





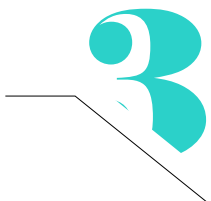
This short guide takes you through the process.



Increase your networking. It's often surprising to find how many very talented and senior people within the built environment neglect this side of their career. There are plenty of networking opportunities to choose from: industry bodies, special interest groups, leading suppliers, the media together with conference and exhibition companies all hold regular events. Many of these take place in the evening or during trade sector shows, so with careful planning there needn't be any conflict with work demands. You may feel nervous about attending these occasions but keep in mind they offer you the opportunity to meet like-minded people who will have many of the same interests and concerns. Begin by attending events to simply meet and greet people and once you've been to a few – step up the process by taking a more active role. This may involve taking part in a panel debate, joining a particular interest group or taking up a speaking opportunity to share your experiences. Being seen out on the circuit will really help to publicise your personal brand, and it doesn't have to be a massive commitment, just once or twice a month would suffice.



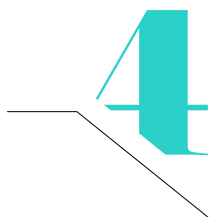
Volunteering is another important way to boost your brand, so check out the groups where you feel you have most interest and can make the most positive impression. For instance, if you've a lot of experience in devising an environmental strategy for your business, you could volunteer to join the organising committee of a sustainability forum; or if your company's building has just had a major new fit-out you could offer to show delegates around it as part of a conference event. There are countless ways of volunteering within the built environment where you'll often hear appeals for a venue, advice on key issues or requests for help in organising a charity event. See our separate guide on volunteering for more tips.



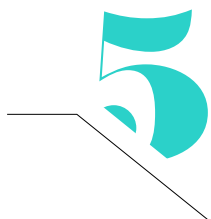
Writing articles. There is a wealth of untapped knowledge within the built environment, as the industry boasts a range of people with great understanding of any number of intricate issues, be it health and safety, change management, Building Information Management (BIM) or the latest technology. The media is always keen to tap into that intelligence, whether as an opinion or comment piece, an advice article or a case study. If you don't



fancy doing the writing yourself, you could instead offer your expert opinion to journalists on a range of topics. That way your name will still grace the pages of leading magazines and websites within the sector and you'll come to be identified as an industry expert.



Social media is also a vitally important facet of boasting your brand, so it's essential to set up a Twitter and LinkedIn account (though do check your company policy first on what you can and cannot say). Once you've got a Twitter account you can build a following by posting tweets of your views, retweeting an interesting fact and, if your name appears in an article or comment piece, ensuring this is tweeted as well. As the world's largest professional network, LinkedIn is probably the most powerful conduit; so use it to share interesting articles, videos and presentations with your network, and as a way to position yourself as an expert who is keen and willing to share information. See our separate guide to LinkedIn for more details. You may choose to push your social media presence further by setting up your own blog account. This can be done as an individual – though it is quite a commitment, or through the company website – particularly if you work for a supplier. If time to write is an issue, these can be farmed out to PR or publicity firms to manage. A good agency will get under the skin of your business, and ensure you're happy with what appears before it goes live.



Awards – the built environment offers plenty of opportunities to not only share your achievements – but be rewarded for them. There are a range of awards out there, from the personal – FM of the Year or Young Manager of the year, to team-based awards, recognising the achievements of a major project or the contribution made towards energy management, health and safety or customer service. So put yourself or your team forward for these accolades. If you've done something great, it's important to share it, particularly for in house providers who might not have many FM colleagues who understand what a great contribution you've made.

Working within the built environment can often feel like beaver away in the background, and without your paying some attention to your own brand – that's how it will stay. Tom Peters from Fast Company spells out the challenge. "All of us need to understand the importance of branding. We are CEOs of our own companies, Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called 'You'." But, he says: "Everyone has a chance to be a brand worthy of remark." Make sure that goes for you too.





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