

BRAND YOU

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MUCH is written these days about personal branding – the idea of treating yourself as a product with all the hallmarks of a regular brand. The concept is as important to legal professionals as to any others.

Leading management author and consultant, Tom Peters suggests that everyone has a personal brand. Peters poignantly questions though whether your personal brand is sufficiently powerful to be meaningful to the person and the market place.

A strong personal brand transcends the CV. Do you think Michael Kirby was asked for his CV when he was appointed to the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO? No, Mr Kirby had already established his personal brand. His career and expertise have been showcased in the public arena and not in a back office somewhere.

How can you create a meaningful, personal brand?

Consider your area of specialisation and think about those lawyers you regard as specialists in their field. You probably recognise them as legal experts because you've seen their

names in lights. Perhaps you've read an article they've written, or seen them present at a law conference. Thus, a personal brand can be developed by using your specialist skills to establish a knowledge platform which will easily differentiate you from your competitors.

Here are some simple yet effective methods to help strengthen and develop your personal brand:

- Write articles:
 - for legal journals: showcase specialist expertise among the profession resulting in great referrals from your peers – it does happen.
 - client industry journals – broadcasting specifically with your target industry e.g for Mining lawyers: The Australian Journal of Mining
 - firm's newsletter – promoting to existing clients and new prospects
 - your clients' corporate newsletters – promoting within your clients organisation – don't be afraid to share knowledge that adds value – that's what clients are looking for.



- Present seminars - either within your firm, to clients or within industry forums
- Simply get people talking about you and your expertise. The internet makes this so easy and the number of Australian lawyers using the various forms of social media to develop their personal brand is growing. You only need to Google 'Australian Law Blogs' or visit www.djacobson.com/australian_law_blogs for a broad selection of lawyers who have embraced the power of the internet to promote their brand.

So in developing your personal brand – think beyond your CV, capitalise on your professional skills and expertise you've worked so hard to develop and take it one step further.