

igniyte

Transform how the
world views you online

A Guide To Managing Personal Information Online



Contents

- 02 About The Author
- 03 Background
- 04 The Current Google Algorithm
- 05 Facing Negative Content?
- 06 Online Reputation And Your Career
- 07 Increase Your Presence Online
- 08 Ranking Assets For Your Own Name
- 09 Privacy Controls – How To Set Up Your Digital Assets & Protect Yourself
- 11 Dealing With Negative Press/Defamatory Comments
- 12 Removal Techniques
- 13 Online Content
- 14 The Importance Of Google+ Authorship
- 16 Summary: How To Maintain A Positive Reputation Online
- 17 Social Media Assets And Links To Privacy Settings.
- 19 Igniye Company Overview And Contact Details

About the author

Caroline Skipsey

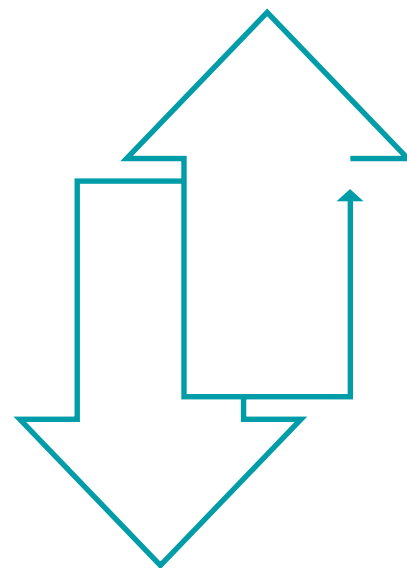
Caroline Skipsey is a Director at Ignyte and has been working within the digital and creative industries for almost 20 years. Ignyte is a Reputation Management company with clients across the globe. Caroline's expertise helps clients with negative content ranking for their own name, whether the content relates to privacy issues, defamation or is simply a video posted that they'd rather forget.

caroline@ignyte.co.uk

“As a consequence of social media, reputations built up over decades can be challenged in an instant”

Jennifer Evans - ANZ Bank

Background



The Internet started its life as an open research tool, and therefore privacy of information was less important than the need for information to be readily available and searchable. Whilst in the early days the content was predominantly text today, images and video are shown in search results.

A consequence of the rapid growth and advancement of the internet is that it offers perfect anonymity to those uploading content. Most users behave as if they cannot be seen and individuals, governments and companies around the globe are finding it difficult to track all content related to them online.

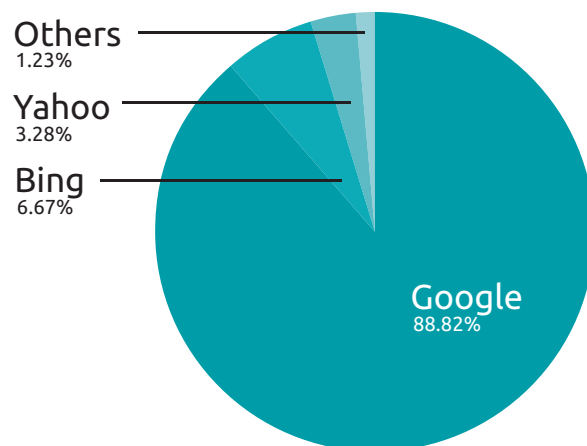
Hundreds of hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute and similarly, millions of images are uploaded to Flickr, Facebook and Instagram daily which means

policing the content is impossible. Google, YouTube and all the main social media profile sites rely on visitors reporting abusive or inappropriate content.

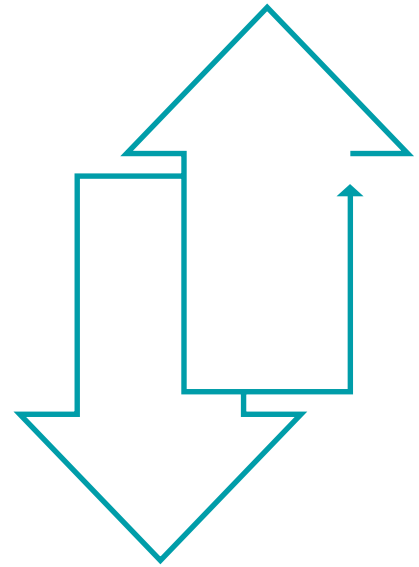
Warnings about revealing personal information online may sound obvious, but they often go unheeded. Posting comments in newsgroups, chat rooms or on any of the popular social media profile sites can find those comments on

page 1 of Google search results for an individual's name. Worse still, false information of a defamatory nature can be posted with no verification as to the person posting it. Anonymous posts and comments can cause serious damage to an individual's reputation.

Search Engine share of search volume



The current Google algorithm



Google updates its algorithm throughout the year and the current algorithm for page 1 search results shows that the following are most likely to rank for an individual's name:

“For many people Google is the most important tool on the Web”

Marissa Mayer



URLs

- Particularly those with the search terms within them i.e. www.myname.com
- Web pages with the name included within the page title and URL structure e.g. www.websitex.com/my-name



Social Media And Content Sites

- YouTube, Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, Ebay, Pinterest and Brand Yourself all rank well if the profiles are optimised and contain the individual's name within them



News/PR

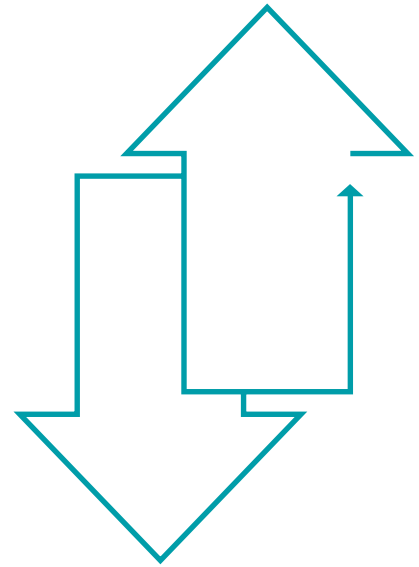
- News stories from local and national press will rank if the name is contained within the story and more so if contained in the title of the story.
- PR on-line trade publications and other online news websites.
- Individuals' quotations on blogs and forums (e.g. Google Groups)



Profile/Review Websites

- Company information websites and Director Directories.
- High ranking profiles sites such as Forbes, Brand Yourself, Yelp.

Facing negative content? Follow our four steps



Unfortunately, the internet offers the possibility of setting up profiles in other people's names – so it's really important to collect the profile names that belong to you.

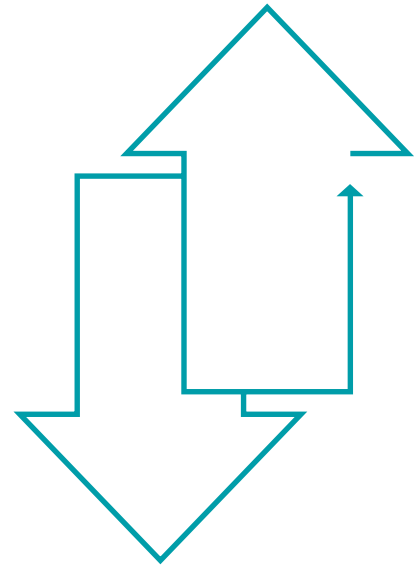
If an individual does find negative content or information available that is private, confidential or defamatory there are a number of ways to remove and suppress the information online.

“12% of employed adults say they need to market themselves online as part of their job”

PEW Statistics

- 1** Optimise current digital assets and social profiles. Do this by using the profiles – Tweet regularly, post on Facebook, update LinkedIn accounts and circulate blog posts on Google+. Without keeping the assets updated, they may lose ranking power.
- 2** Create new profiles and assets and ensure that they're optimised for the individual's name. Use the list of social profiles at the end of this document for those most likely to rank.
- 3** Where negative content exists, contact the websites directly if the content is defamatory or untrue.
- 4** Use the Google Removal Tool which can remove negative content from the search results. Google will only do this where the content is clearly defamatory, of an adult nature or through legal procedures. Link to the Google Removal Tool: <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/1663688?hl=en>

Online reputation and your career



Online reputation management is becoming increasingly important for individuals and the rise of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn is creating opportunities and problems when the content online is less than positive. Young people who are leaving education are finding that employers know considerably more about them prior to interview through searches made online than they might expect. It's considered more attractive to future employers if a LinkedIn Account or industry blog is found rather than an open Facebook profile showing inappropriate images.

With this in mind, here's Igniyte's guide to how to portray yourself in the best light to future employers:



Advertise

Previously, people used printed CVs to apply for jobs by posting them to companies advertising vacancies. It is much more common now for companies to advertise positions online and find individuals online using social media profiles. This has made it even more important to portray a positive online image of yourself in case potential employers view your profile.

Social media profiles allow you to advertise your skills and experience online and some, such as LinkedIn, even allow you to post a resume/CV online. People have gone to further extremes in trying to grab the attention of potential employers by creating

video CVs and posting it on video sharing sites such as YouTube and Vimeo. Remember to set privacy settings so that you're in control of comments and whether the content is public or private. By creating a professional personal website, potential employers can view written content highlighting skills, experience and aspirations, leaving them with a professional impression of a potential employee.

"46% of online adults have created their own profile on a social networking site"

PEW Statistics

Increase presence online



Create Professional Profiles

Social media sites offer great potential for networking with influential people. Social media can be used to broadcast the type of work you're looking for, and some of your connections may have connections working in related fields. Create professional profiles and ensure your content is professional to project the right personal image. It's best to set up a separate account for friends and family.



Network With People Online

Career profile websites and Groups on LinkedIn offer the opportunity of networking with influential people helping you get your foot in the door. Use social media to broadcast the type of work you're looking for. Remember, some of your connections working in connected fields, may have connections.

LinkedIn allows you to join professional groups and connect with business professionals within the same field. Twitter allows you to have direct dialogue with future employers - just make sure that your tweets are professional.



Check Online Job Boards

Many social media sites have online job boards and pages listing job vacancies, making it easier to look for work and more important to publicise your profile online.



Develop A Blog

A blog is a perfect place to showcase your knowledge of specific industries and provides the opportunity to syndicate content out through your social profiles. Write posts a couple of times a week and link up with your Google+ profile (as explained in the Author Ranking section). It's important to create good, informative and up-to-date

content. Use current stories in the news and in trade magazine as a basis for your content. Link to authority websites (newspapers and government websites). The Google algorithm also leaves space at the top of page 1 for related URLs, - so purchase a URL and link it to your blog - this is easy to do on Blogspot or Wordpress.

A homepage of a website www.yourname.com will usually rank for a search term of "your name" as long as the website is optimised and there aren't too many other people with the same name who already have optimised assets. Optimised websites usually have updated content appearing regularly, but there's no need to make your site complex - stick to 4 to 5 main pages and a blog section.

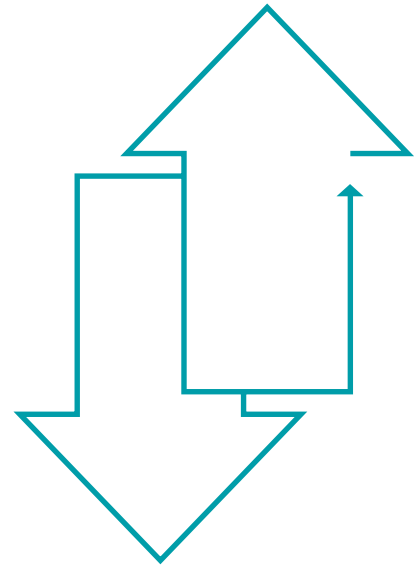
Igniye suggest the following platforms for building your own website or blog, without having to host the website yourself:

[wordpress](#)
[blogger](#)

"16% of all internet users have looked online for more information about someone they were dating or in a relationship with"

PEW statistics

Ensure that digital assets rank for your name or brand terms



One of the biggest mistakes individuals and companies make is that, in creating various social profiles, they concentrate on gaining followers and optimising for topics, rather than the profile ranking for their own name. Be careful with the use of nicknames as profile names. Think about the name terms future employers and business contacts will use when searching for information about you. If you're facing negative content, it's more likely to cause issues with a search of your full name rather than a nickname.

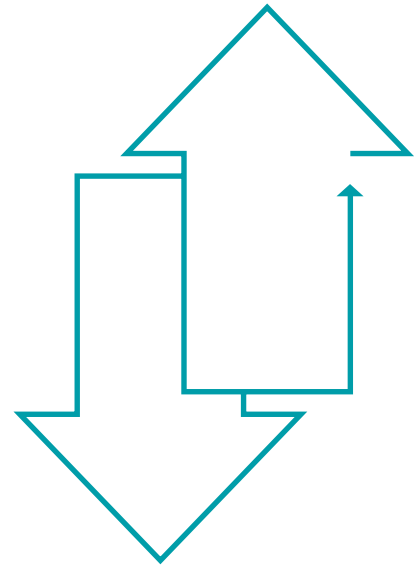
Please refer to the list below to ensure that your assets rank:

- ✓ Does Google know that the site exists? Set up the website on Google Webmaster Tools and Google Analytics. In the set up, make sure you add the code into your website's header file. [LINK https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home?hl=en](https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home?hl=en)
- ✓ Regularly update content on the website in the form of news/blog posts and articles.
- ✓ Add links to each of your profiles and blogs of all your digital assets.
- ✓ Share content. Find other articles you like and reference them, also look to circulate your own content across your social profiles.

“Whether it's Facebook or Google or the other companies, that basic principle that users should be able to see and control information about them that they themselves have revealed to the companies is not baked into how the companies work. But it's bigger than privacy. Privacy is about what you're willing to reveal about yourself”

Eli Pariser, Upworthy

Protecting your reputation with effective privacy settings



There have been an abundance of press stories about Tweets and Facebook posts causing an individual irrevocable damage to their reputation online. Tweets are sent in an instant but cause a lifetime of regret. One recent story concerns Emma Wray, who sent out a Tweet about hitting a cyclist in her car. She lost her job and has been interviewed on national television about the mistake she will always regret.

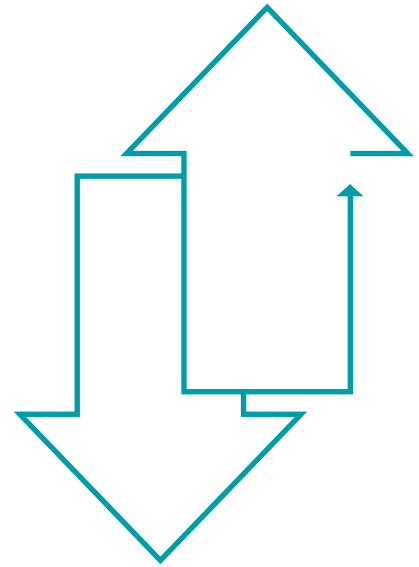
Earlier this year in the UK, Professor Mary Beard was subject to abusive messages and it transpired the individual responsible was a student going into his 3rd year at university. The damage done to his own reputation was a worrying consequence of a random Tweet.

All of the major social media profile sites can be set to control both who views the content, and who has the ability to post onto your profiles. Having an open profile on Facebook may gain you more friends, but also can leave you open to negative comments.


Check the privacy settings on all of your social profiles if you'd rather limit the number of people posting to your profiles. There's a full list of social profile sites at the end of this book along with links to information on how to set up privacy controls.


Fact


Google search results will never show individual Tweets or Facebook posts in the snippets, so if you find yourself in a negative content situation on a particular social platform, you at least know the individual posts will not feature on page 1 of search results





Here's a sample of the main social media platforms and how to ensure, within the privacy settings, that your content is less visible:-

 **Facebook**
Ideally set the privacy settings so that only "friends" see your content and can post on your wall.
[Privacy information](#)

 **Twitter**
You can set your profile so that only "followers" see your tweets.
[Privacy information](#)

 **YouTube**
Set your account so that so that no-one can post comments on any videos you upload. You can also set some videos to be seen only by you and these will not appear in search results.
[Privacy information](#)

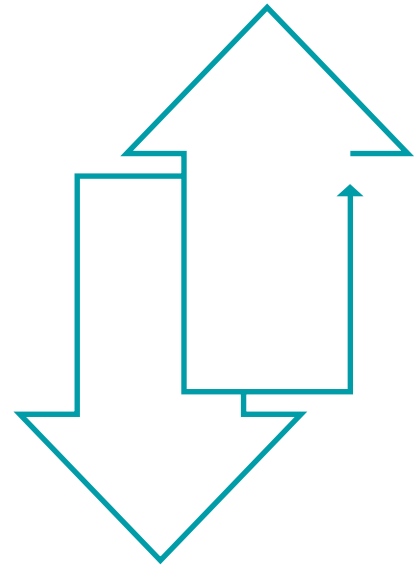
 **Blogs/Website**
Ensure comments are switched off or set to 'approval by you' in any blog posts or articles you write.

 **LinkedIn**
Set your profile so that only your confirmed contacts can see updates and your full profile.
[Privacy information](#)

Fact

In a recent study conducted by the University of Illinois, 30% of online reviews for products they tested were found to be false

Dealing with negative press/defamatory comments



There has been much recent coverage in the press about Google stating that they do not have to adhere to UK privacy laws. In an August submission to the High Court, Google has argued that, as an American company, it can't be covered by UK law or any privacy laws outside of the United States. This submission is in response to Google facing legal action by a group of British people, angry about the way iPhone settings are pre-set to track web usage. The company have already paid out \$22.5 million in compensation the States for the practice.

Whilst the pending court case relates to tracking internet usage on iPhones, there's further concern over how their the wider ramifications of their disregard for UK privacy laws.

Privacy legislation in the UK helps protect individuals and companies trying to keep confidential information out of the public domain. Many of the companies and individuals that Igniyte work with have a variety of issues surrounding information that is available about them online, for example;

Confidential personal information posted without their consent.

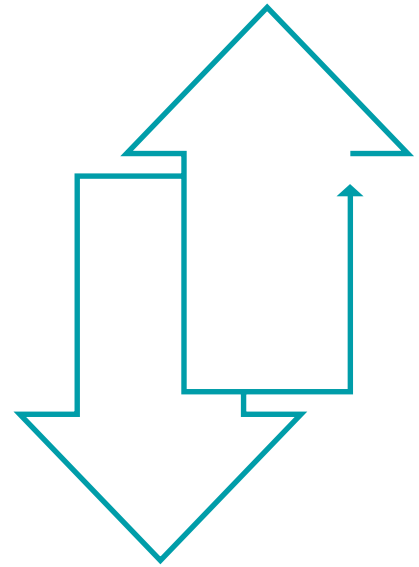
Fake profiles set up about them on various social media platforms.

Defamatory comments and opinions discussing personal or commercial issues, often with no substantiation.

“Google doesn't really forget”

Ethan Zuckerman, MIT

Is it possible to have content removed?



Whilst Google does have a Removal Tool which can eliminate some content from search results, the process is lengthy, which can be particularly frustrating as there are no barriers or time delays for posting new content online.

False or defamatory content and online harassment causes individuals distress, and can damage individual, company and brand reputation. A study last year by Bing Lui at the University of Illinois concluded that 30% of online reviews for certain products that they tested were false...a shocking statistic, although other studies have indicated that a lower percentage i.e. 10% of online reviews are false.

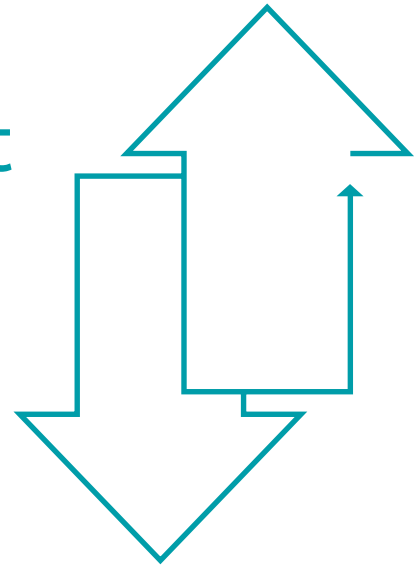
In terms of individual privacy, the recent Channel 4 project, Data Baby, that Ignyte took part in, showed how easy it is to create an individual, and promote related content online. Channel 4 created; social profiles and press releases and set up email accounts for a fictitious person. This fictitious example showed how easy it is to rank negative and false content about real people. And if Google are disregarding privacy laws outside of the United States, what are the steps you can take to right any incorrect content online or remove content that you don't want appearing?

Ignyte work with clients and individuals and suggest the following:

1. Contact websites directly regarding defamatory comments. Check the website's T&C's to see if any of the content contravenes their content policy.
2. If the content is defamatory, – it's worth submitting this to Google's Removal Tool. [LINK https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/1663688?hl=en](https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/1663688?hl=en)
3. Make sure that you own your own social media profiles and check Google for what is ranking for your own name.
4. Set up Google Alerts for your own name – this will alert you if anyone is posting content about you.
5. If you're facing negative press, use positive PR and press to negate the negative stories.

Online content

The importance of content and author ranking



Google has developed a complex algorithm for the ranking of sites and pages, based on authority around news and content. The good news is that the new algorithm does mean individuals, with limited time and budget, can have much success in getting their articles ranking highly for their own name and other key terms, if they follow Google's best practices. Getting an article ranking for your own name is down to creating of interesting, unique and relevant content. You must also ensure that keyword placement (i.e. your name) is used throughout, that you used strong tags, and circulate the article on social media and to other relevant websites.

Articles should be between 450 and 600 words and only mention your name a couple of times. Any more mentions and Google may think that this is "key word stuffing".

Using quotations is essential, as Google will pick up quotes in the snippets of content appearing in search results. See example below.

The impact that Author Rank is having on organic search results is still questionable, but Google are definitely referring to Author Rank and selling it in to the industry.

Eric Schmidt, Google Chairman, recently said

"Within search results, information tied to verified online profiles will be ranked higher than content without such verification, which will result in most users naturally clicking on the top (verified) results. The true cost of remaining anonymous, then, might be irrelevance."

[Why online reputation management is essential SEO optimisation ...](#)

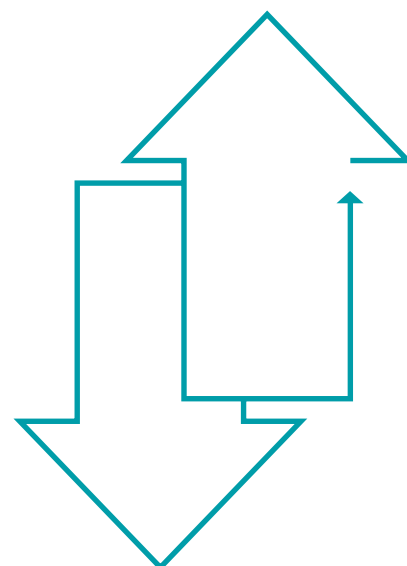
www.bmmagazine.co.uk/.../why-online-reputation-management-is-an-es...

29 Jul 2013 - One company, **Igniye** works with clients across the world to address this ...

As Director, **Caroline Skipsey**, explains, "Most of our clients already ...

Simon Wadsworth +1'd this

The increasing importance of Google+ authorship



Anonymity is currently a huge issue, with anyone being able to post anything about anyone, so Google's focus on Google+ Authorship is welcome and will hopefully lessen the extent that anonymous, false or scam content can receive a high ranking for an individual's name.

Authorship is all about Google+. You'll need a Google+ account to get it set up and this can be done in conjunction with creating a GMAIL account.

If you're a WordPress user, Google's new partnership has made it incredibly easy to set up Google+ Authorship.

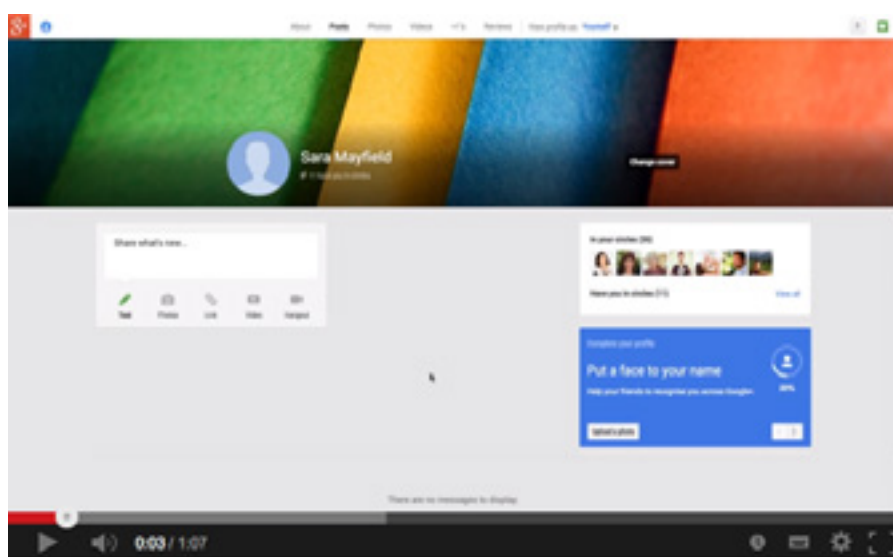
For self-hosted blogs, use the Sharing settings section of your WordPress.com account. Visit the Settings>Sharing area in your administration area, and connect up your Google+ Account.

Once that is complete, you're set up and ready to go for Google Authorship. The plugin

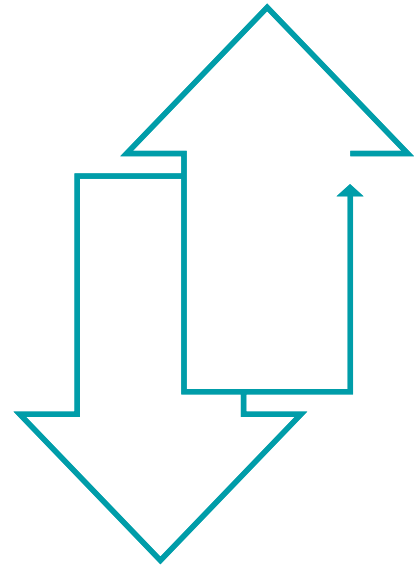
automatically adds all the information you need to each post.

Starting from scratch? Here's our step by step guide to setting up Authorship. (Continues on next page).

1. To set up a Google+ profile use the following video



[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT HOW TO SET UP A GOOGLE + PROFILE PAGE](#)



2. Make sure your Google+ profile is fully completed. In terms of Authorship you'll need to complete the following:
 - Ensure that you select an image and that it is a photo of you, not a caricature
 - Verify your email on your Google+ profile
 - Sign up for Authorship. Enter your email address on the Authorship signup page: <http://plus.google.com/authorship>
 - Link to your Google+ Profile. You need to officially associate your content with your Google+ profile – add a link to your Google+ profile with “?rel=author” added to the end. Always try to have a bio at the end of your blog post. You can add something like “Connect with me on Google+,” with a link that goes to your own profile

- Link to your content from your Google+ profile. Now that you've linked to your Google+ profile from your content, it's time to link to your content from your profile to complete the circle. Go to the 'About' page of your profile, and click the 'Edit' link at the bottom of the 'Links' section of your profile. Find the 'Contributor to' subsection, and click 'Add custom link.' From here you can enter the URL, the title of the blog, and whether you contributed content to it either in the past or are currently doing so.

Keep your Google+ profile current and ensure that you're “adding” to your Google+ circles.

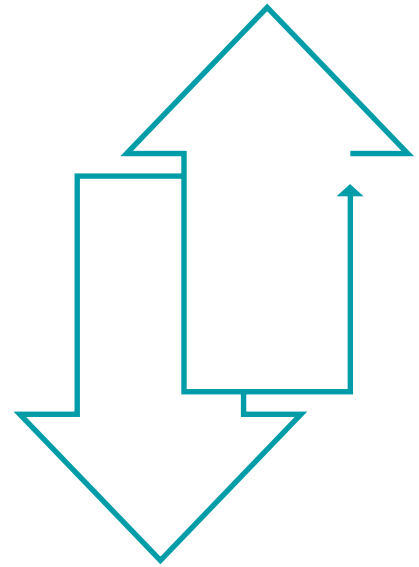
By following the above, you should be able to get both a Google+ profile ranking for your name, along with pieces of content.

“Talk low, talk slow and don't say too much”

John Wayne

Summary

How to maintain a positive reputation online



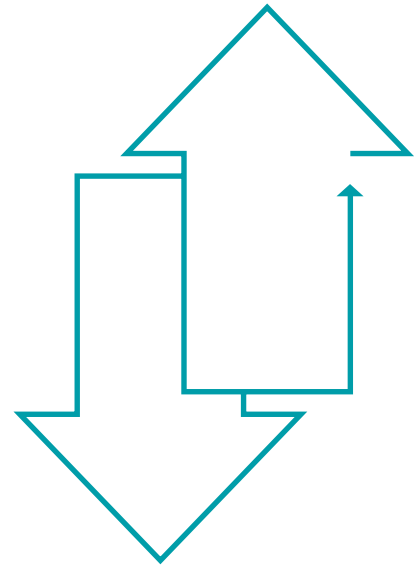
With content constantly updating online, here are Igniyte's Key Factors in the maintenance of a positive reputation online:-

1. Monitor search results for your own name. Set up Alerts that notify you when your name is included in content online.
2. Control your own digital assets. Make sure you own the accounts on the main social assets – even if you don't use them.
3. If you are facing negative content, fight the negative content with new content.
 - a. Get a Google+ profile and blog
 - b. Write articles about subjects that you're interested in or that complement your career and work.
 - c. Use social media and ensure your assets rank for your own name.
 - d. Contact any websites that feature defamatory content about you.
 - e. Use the Google Removal Tool to attempt to remove defamatory content from the search results if the websites themselves don't help you with removal.
4. Set up your social and web assets so that they are secure and limit people from commenting on, or posting, content without your consent.
5. Be careful what you sign up to. Many websites scrape information from other more authoritative websites. Read the Terms and Conditions before you sign up to anything on the internet.

“There is no such thing as public opinion. There is only published opinion”

Winston Churchill

Social media assets and privacy settings



A list of all the main social profile sites are listed below. When setting up new profiles ensure the name that you are trying to create content for is used for the name of the account, e.g. for the name Janice Deacon, set up the Twitter account with “Janice Deacon” as the profile. Don’t forget you can add numbers and hyphens to account names if your name has already been taken.

[www.facebook.com https://www.facebook.com/help/325807937506242](https://www.facebook.com/help/325807937506242)

[www.twitter.com https://twitter.com/privacy](https://twitter.com/privacy)

[www.plus.google.com https://support.google.com/plus/answer/2409893?hl=en-GB](https://support.google.com/plus/answer/2409893?hl=en-GB)

[www.linkedin.com http://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/66](http://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/66)

[www.myspace.com https://www.askmyspace.com/t5/Community/ct-p/community](https://www.askmyspace.com/t5/Community/ct-p/community)

[www.pinterest.com http://about.pinterest.com/privacy/](http://about.pinterest.com/privacy/)

[www.blogspot.co.uk / www.blogger.com https://support.google.com/blogger/answer/42673?hl=en](https://support.google.com/blogger/answer/42673?hl=en)

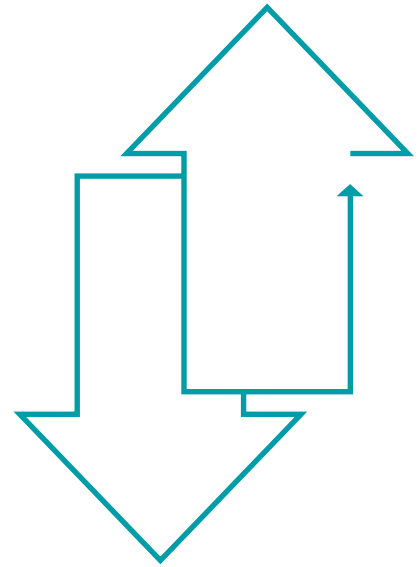
[www.flickr.com http://www.flickr.com/help/privacy/](http://www.flickr.com/help/privacy/)

[www.wordpress.com http://en.support.wordpress.com/settings/privacy-settings/](http://en.support.wordpress.com/settings/privacy-settings/)

[www.youtube.com https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/3127309?hl=en](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/3127309?hl=en)

[www.vimeo.com http://vimeo.com/help/faq/managing-your-videos/privacy-settings](http://vimeo.com/help/faq/managing-your-videos/privacy-settings)

Other assets to consider



www.forbes.com

www.about.me

www.digg.com

www.reddit.com

www.qype.co.uk

www.yelp.co.uk

www.yell.com

www.bebo.com

www.stumbleupon.com

www.livejournal.com

www.badoo.com

www.ebay.co.uk

www.foursquare.com

igniyte

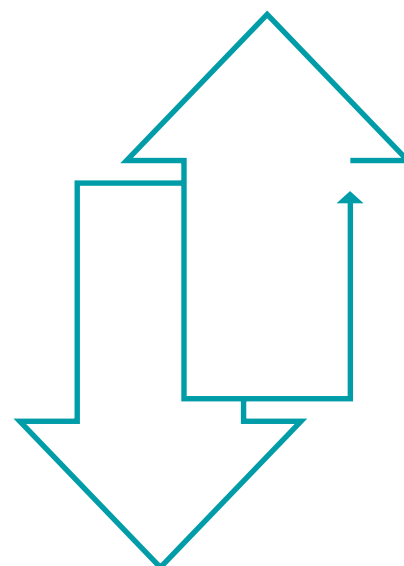
Transform how the world views you online

Igniyte is a UK based Online Reputation Management Company with clients across the World. Working since 2009 to help; Individuals, Companies and Brands to replace negative press articles, reviews, blogs and comments that rank highly in search results. Igniyte use a variety of techniques to ensure positive, informative or neutral assets rank above negative content. Social profiles, content and PR, websites and blogs all are all optimised to sit in alignment with Google's algorithm for page 1 search results.

info@igniyte.co.uk

Phone: 0800 080 7997

International: +44 0203 542 8682



Fact

Google+ is now the second largest social media platform in the World

(Sep 2013 – Global Web Index)

igniyte

Transform how the
world views you online

