

TELUS Wise

Manage your digital reputation.

Your personal and professional image and reputation are no longer based solely on face-to-face interactions or what you put down on a resume. Nowadays, prospective employers, college admission officers, sports recruiters and even volunteer organizations are using social media to get a better idea of who you are and how you present yourself online before making any decisions about you.

Below are a few tips to help ensure your social media presence doesn't get in the way of your academic or professional aspirations:



Google yourself.

The first step to managing your digital reputation is to find out what it is. Make yourself aware of what others see when they type your name into a search engine like Google, and ask yourself the question: is this a true representation of me and would I want a potential employer or college professor to see it? You can also set up Google alerts to notify you if and when your name appears online.



Declutter and clean up your social media profiles and accounts.

Remove, untag yourself or make private any offensive, revealing or controversial comments and photos. Instead, focus on sharing positive values, actions and news. For instance, highlight your volunteer work or passions. While you're at it, delete and deactivate any accounts you don't use to keep your information safe.



Lock down privacy and security settings.

All social media sites offer a level of security when it comes to protecting who can access your profile and how. Be sure to review each site's options carefully and select the appropriate level of viewing for your audience. Remember, even if your account is locked down, your friends and connections can save, download and share your posts. This means you always have to think before you post and make sure you're comfortable with the fact that what you post online can potentially get shared.



Separate personal and professional profiles.

Know your potential audience for all social media interactions. You may wish to only connect with professional peers on platforms such as LinkedIn, reserving other platforms like Instagram and SnapChat to connect with friends and family. Also, be cognizant of your online images and behaviours, including who you follow or support. Accurate or not, we are typically judged by who we associate with, and as the saying goes, "you only get one chance to make a first impression."

These are just a few ways you can maintain a positive and professional presence online. Remember, it's important to be always kind in your online interactions and to consider your potential audience both now and in the future.



Bonus activity: start a professional website or profile.

Turn your passion project or hobby into a professional website or profile that showcases who you are and why you love what you do. For example, if you're interested in creative writing, start a blog to share your work. If you're a STEM fan, create a Twitter account to share STEM-related articles or projects. Find inspiration from professionals you admire who are leading the way in the areas that interest you.