

Building Personal Brand: Advantage And Method In Marketing

Nguyen Thi Kim Anh

Vietnam - Korea University of Information and Communication Technology (VKU)

Email: ntkanh@vku.udn.vn

Abstract: In the era of digital technology explosion, building a personal brand is no longer the privilege of celebrities or information communication experts. Anyone - from fresh graduates, office workers, freelancers to entrepreneurs - can become a "brand" with its own value, influence and voice in their community. The rise of social platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook... has made building a personal brand easier and more popular than ever. Marketing systems often focus on branding products, services or businesses. However, in the digital age, people are the brand. Modern marketing has expanded its borders to the personal aspect, where each person is a "unique product" that needs to be positioned, promoted and developed as a long-term strategy. This article will help you clarify the benefits of personal branding, and introduce practical methods to apply in Marketing, especially in the context of Vietnam.

Keywords: Brand, Marketing, Personal brand, Building personal brand, Personal brand positioning.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Personal branding is how an individual positions themselves in the eyes of others, based on what they share, how they behave, the values they convey, and the image they build consistently over a long period of time. This is not just a "show off" on social networks, but also an important strategy in developing a career, expanding relationships, and creating future business opportunities.

In the context of the explosion of technology and digital media, the concept of personal branding is becoming more and more popular and is considered a valuable intangible asset. Not only artists, celebrities or media professionals need personal branding, but now anyone - from fresh graduates to business people, salaried employees or freelancers - needs to build a personal brand if they want to create a competitive advantage in their career. If in the past, Marketing only focused on products, services and businesses, now people - each individual - are also considered a "brand" that can be promoted, communicated and developed strategically. This is especially true in the social media era, where each status line, video or article can shape how others perceive you. In other words, personal branding is no longer an "accessory" to decorate your resume or social media profile - but has become a foundation to affirm your value, build your reputation and expand your opportunities.

Building a personal brand helps you stand out from the crowd, especially in highly competitive environments such as recruiting, sales, marketing or content creation. A strong personal brand can help you attract more customers, build trust with the community, and especially increase the likelihood of being remembered and chosen by others among countless people with similar expertise. This is why many marketing experts today believe that "personal branding is the most effective marketing tool in the modern world".

In Vietnam, many individuals have successfully used personal branding strategies to expand their influence, develop their work and spread value. YouTubers like Giang Oi, speakers like Nguyen Huu Tri, or independent content creators have shown the power of personal branding when built systematically and consistently. However, many people still misunderstand that personal branding is simply "pretending" on social networks, or being flashy on the outside. In fact, on the contrary, a sustainable personal brand is a combination of true internal values and the ability to effectively convey messages to the outside.

II. CONTENT

2.1. Khái niệm thương hiệu cá nhân

Brands are an important source of value for customers, companies and their partners. The role of brands in creating market value emphasizes the need to understand the nature of brands and develop a systematic approach to brand management. According to (Chernev, 2017), brand is a marketing tool used to identify a product, differentiate it from similar products in the market, and create a distinct market value that is superior to other marketing tactics. According to (Montoya, P. & Vandehey, T. , 2008), personal branding is the process by which an individual builds and maintains his or her own image, reputation, and unique values in front of the

public, in order to create trust, influence, and opportunities in work or life. Personal branding is the mark you leave in the minds of others – the sum of how you live, what you do, and how you share it with the world.

In other words, your personal brand is the image that others think of when they think of you – the overall perception based on your message, behavior, expertise, and style. An effective personal brand is not based on popularity alone, but on the convergence of the following four elements:

- **Personal Identity.** Is the true self of the individual: core values, strengths, beliefs, life goals. For example: A person whose identity is “creative, honest and inspirational” will build a brand around those 3 characteristics.
- **Differentiation.** What makes the individual stand out from others in the same field? For example: As a financial consultant, you can position yourself as “someone who helps young people master their finances in an easy-to-understand way” – that is the difference.
- **Value Proposition.** What problem does the individual help others solve? What role does it play in life or work? For example: A person with a personal brand of “inspiring high school students to study” will often share educational content, easy-to-understand learning materials, etc.
- **Visibility.** How to express yourself through channels such as social networks, videos, articles, offline events... Images must be consistent: from language, color, theme to the way to interact with the audience.

Table 1. Distinguishing personal branding from reputation and “pretending”

Criteria	Thương hiệu cá nhân	Danh tiếng	“Pretending” / Cheap PR
Based on	True Value + Communication Strategy	Other people's opinions about you	Unsustainable attention-seeking behavior
Objective	Building a Long-Term Image	Temporary Results	Makes a quick impression but can easily backfire
Stability	Consistency and Sustainability	Volatile Based on Emotions, Rumors	Often suspected or ostracized
For example	Giang Oi, Nguyen Huu Tri	An Artist Who Rises to Fame Through Scandal	Blazing a “virtual” life

Personal branding is not only the foundation of a generation's trust or a measure of human value, building a personal brand is planning to live a meaningful life. Bringing practical value to the community and those around you, not stopping to be proud of the benefits or personal achievements you have achieved.

2.2. Benefits of personal branding in Marketing

In today's increasingly competitive market, personal branding is not just a strategy to “beautify your profile”, but an effective marketing tool that helps individuals create sustainable value, develop career opportunities and increase their influence in society.

- **Increase recognition and memorability (Brand Awareness).** An individual with a clear and consistent personal brand will be more easily remembered by others in their field of expertise. In Marketing, this is the concept of “top of mind” - when mentioning an issue, you are the first person people think of. For example, when mentioning people sharing self-development content, many people think of Giang Oi - someone whose brand image is associated with positivity, feminism and modern life. In the field of academic English, Dang Tran Tung has positioned himself as an “IELTS expert”, even though he does not represent any specific organization. According to research by (Nielsen, 2021), 92% of consumers trust content shared by individuals more than corporate brands, showing the growing role of personal branding in purchasing decisions and identity building.

- **Building trust and credibility.** In Marketing, trust is the deciding factor in whether customers choose a product/service or not. Personal branding helps build trust through consistent presence, valuable content, authenticity, and sincere communication. Real-life example: Nguyen Huu Tri (Teacher Tri) has built his personal brand as a positive educational inspiration through TikTok. His videos receive hundreds of thousands of views because they bring emotions and real values. The trust created from his personal brand is the foundation for developing a series of workshops and life skills courses that are attractive to young people. According to (Edelman, 2023), 59% of consumers are willing to buy from people they follow and trust, even if they have never met.

- **Expand career opportunities and business development.** When an individual clearly demonstrates their abilities, personality and self-worth, opportunities will “come to them” such as: invitations to interviews, cooperation, speaking, investment, or market expansion. Real-life example: Tran Thanh Thao, a freelancer who shares her self-study and career journey on Facebook, has attracted thousands of followers. Thanks to that, she not only has more customers but also builds her own courses and community. Personal branding helps her overcome the initial barrier of “not being famous” to gain a foothold in the content creation community. According to a survey by (CareerBuilder, 2022), 70% of employers use social networks to evaluate candidates before making a hiring decision, showing that personal branding is the most vivid “extended CV”.

- **Increase competitiveness and the ability to stand out in a crowded market.** In Marketing, “differentiate or die” is the basic principle. With personal branding, individuals can identify their unique selling proposition

(USP) to stand out in an information-overloaded market. For example, Chau Bui, from a photo model to a fashion icon, is thanks to building a unique personal image: personality, modernity, and distinct style. That difference helps her to be chosen by international brands as a representative - typically the event to attend Met Gala 2024. According to a study by (Company, McKinsey, 2020), individuals with a clear personal brand are often able to price their services 20-30% higher than those with similar capabilities but lacking a personal mark.

- ***Increase personal income and financial independence.*** When you have a good personal brand, you can completely create a source of income from yourself through: Providing personal consulting services; Writing books, opening online courses; Cooperating with brands as a KOL/Influencer; Developing products with your own name (personal product). Ha Linh - One of the people reviewing cosmetics - has become famous thanks to her honest review videos, without disguised advertising. Currently, she has the ability to earn up to hundreds of millions of VND per month through affiliate marketing and transparent advertising contracts.

- ***Increase social impact.*** A strong personal brand not only helps a person develop their career, but can also inspire, spread positive messages, and influence the community in a positive way. Tran Mai Anh (Thien Nhan's mother) - from a personal story, she built a brand associated with community activities, becoming a symbol of compassion and determination.

2.3. Methods of personal branding

According to (Montoya, P. & Vandehey, T., 2008), "A strong personal brand is a combination of authenticity and strategic positioning - when you understand who you are and what makes you different". Building a personal brand is not a temporary "pretending" process but a long-term strategy with a clear and consistent direction. The following steps are synthesized from the theory of branding experts combined with experience from personal marketing practice.

Step 1: Understand yourself - Identify core values and personal positioning

This is the most fundamental and important step. Before sharing your image with the outside world, you need to answer the questions: Who am I?; What are my strengths?; What value do I want to bring?; What do I want to be remembered for? For example, Giang Oi used to be an international student majoring in communications. When she returned to Vietnam, she positioned herself not as an "entertainment vlogger", but as someone who inspires a conscious lifestyle and personal development for young people. Thanks to her consistency with this positioning, she has a loyal community and a clear brand image.

Step 2: Identify the target audience

Similar to product marketing, personal branding also needs to target the right audience group to influence. These can be: Potential employers, Target customers, Professional communities, and Followers on social networks. If you are a freelance content writer, your target audience may be small business owners who need to outsource. Therefore, you need to appear on platforms such as LinkedIn, professional Facebook, personal blogs, etc.

Step 3: Build a consistent "personal brand message"

The brand message is the core story about you, what makes you different and the value you bring. It needs to converge 3 factors: Authenticity - Connectivity - Consistency.

Step 4: Optimize images and digital presence

After having a positioning and message, expressing your personal brand needs to be done through "communication channels" and "digital footprint".

Work to do:

- Build a professional profile on LinkedIn, Facebook, TikTok or other professional platforms.
- Design a consistent profile picture, cover photo, biography, and introductory article.
- Create a personal website/blog if you can afford it (to increase professionalism and appear on Google).

For example, IELTS Tung has his own website, a consistent social network system with black - yellow - white colors, professional but friendly words, creating a sense of trust and youthfulness. According to (Forbes, 2022), people with professional personal websites are 27% more likely to receive cooperation opportunities than those who are only present on social networks.

Step 5: Produce and share valuable content (Content Strategy)

This is the core element to create influence. Content should revolve around:

- Sharing professional knowledge
- Personal stories & real-life experiences
- Practical solutions or specific instructions
- Inspiration, thinking orientation, life skills

Step 6: Interact and build community

A strong personal brand cannot develop if it is only "one-way talk". Regular interaction, responding to comments, participating in professional communities helps:

- Build trust
- Create deep connections
- Attract loyal groups (core fans)

Experts such as Master Do Huu Hanh - Digital Marketing lecturer, regularly share knowledge on Facebook, organize offline knowledge sharing → create a strong and reputable community of students.

Step 7: Measure effectiveness and improve.

Personal branding needs to be checked periodically to see if you are conveying the right message. Indicators to monitor: Natural increase in followers, Interaction rate (comments, likes, shares), Number of invitations to cooperate, recruit, book, Feedback from followers. Some tools that can be used for measurement are as follows: Meta Business Suite (for Facebook, Instagram), LinkedIn Analytics, Google Analytics (for website), Metricool - social network statistics synthesis

2.4. Challenges and common mistakes in personal branding

Building a personal brand is full of potential, but it is also easy to make mistakes without a clear strategy. Here are some common challenges and mistakes and how to fix them:

- Inconsistency across channels
 - Uneven messaging, visual style or content quality between LinkedIn, Facebook, TikTok... makes information fragmented and confusing.
 - Method: Build a set of brand identity standards (logo, color, tone of voice) and apply them evenly across all platforms.
- Lack of authenticity
 - Copying other people's styles, using clichés or over-promoting - makes the brand lose trust.
 - Method: Show your true identity, share personal stories and real experiences — keep only the "most cooked" parts.
- Over-promotion / Selfishness
 - Only posting achievements, promoting yourself without providing value to viewers.
 - Method: Combine valuable content, sharing knowledge with personal stories, responding to comments and supporting the audience.
- Not interacting with the audience (Ignoring audience engagement)
 - Not responding to comments, not listening to feedback makes the audience feel distant.
 - Method: Maintain two-way interaction – reply regularly, ask questions, organize livestreams/q&a.
- Lack of storytelling (Neglecting storytelling)
 - Technical, dry, unstructured content – difficult to attract sympathetic audiences reddit.com+2reddit.com+2reddit.com+2.
 - Method: Use storytelling based on personal experiences to create emotions and deep connections.
- Poor visuals
 - Poor quality profile pictures, banners, and personal designs negatively impact reputation.
 - Method: Invest in professional images – take photos in your personal style, consistent across all channels.
- Not tracking and improving (Ignoring analytics & feedback)
 - Not using engagement metrics to adjust strategies, leading to ineffective content.
 - Method: Track engagement, shares, comments; collect feedback and improve periodically.
- Expanding channels too quickly or losing direction (Over-diversification)
 - Emerging on too many platforms instead of focusing on one or two key channels — leading to thin quality and difficulty in controlling austinkimbell.com.
 - Method: Choose 1–2 platforms that best suit your strengths, do well on them before spreading.
- Wrong attitude: Relying on fake advertising (shilling), badmouthing others reddit.com: causing disgust, loss of trust.

2.5. Some key solutions in personal branding

Although personal branding brings many benefits, without a clear strategy, it is easy to encounter problems such as inconsistency, lack of trust from the community. Here are some key solutions to help overcome these barriers:

- Clearly define your personal positioning and values from the beginning. You need to answer 3 questions: Who are you? What are the values you want to share? Who is your ideal audience?
- Focus on developing 1-2 most suitable channels. Avoid spreading out, losing control of your image and

message. Individuals should choose platforms where their target audience is most active, optimize their personal profiles on that platform (profile photo, bio, link, pinned post ...).

- Build content according to consistent pillars. Create 2-3 content pillars such as: Expertise, sharing personal journey, inspiration or real stories, schedule regular postings (eg: 2-3 posts/week) and maintain a stable “brand voice”.
- Create real interactions and a loyal community. Respond to comments, inbox, and feedback in a positive way; Organize Q&A, mini online events to connect with the audience; Recognize and “call out” active followers.
- Monitor effectiveness & improve periodically. Use analytics tools (Facebook Insights, LinkedIn Analytics, TikTok Analytics) to evaluate, Which posts are most interested? How does the audience interact? What is the optimal posting time? Adjust content and strategy based on real data.

III. CONCLUSION

In a flat world where social media and digital content dominate user behavior, building a personal brand is not only a good thing to do, but a must if you want to survive and develop sustainably. Whether you are a student, employee, entrepreneur or professional, your personal brand is an intangible but valuable asset that helps you connect, influence and reap new opportunities. If built correctly, your personal brand not only serves your personal goals but is also a lever in every modern marketing strategy.

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