



Curating Your **Digital Reputation**

What is a digital footprint? Generally, the phrase “digital footprint” refers to the information that can be found about you as a result of your internet activity. One’s digital footprint can be pretty complex, but at a basic level it includes your email, website use, and social media.

Why should I care? Generally, to protect your privacy and your reputation. As you start to enter the professional world and become more “known”, information about you will become readily searchable by peers, faculty, supervisors, coaches, potential employers, prospective graduate programs, etc. You get the idea. Now is the time to think carefully and intentionally about managing your public persona since, once something is published to the internet or sent via email, it can be very difficult, if not impossible, to remove or delete it.

What can I do? Below are thirteen steps you can take to begin managing your digital footprint:

- 1 Establish a separate, secondary email address with a professional handle as one way of separating your personal and professional selves.
- 2 Lock down your privacy levels on all of your social media accounts.
- 3 Never post about illegal activities.
- 4 Never post confidential information (social security, address, etc.).
- 5 Be wary of emotional posting and consider how your words might be viewed by others. Don’t over-share.
- 6 Regularly clean up your profiles to remove any negative posts and pictures (every 6-12 months).
- 7 Make sure your profile pictures are appropriate and depict you positively.
- 8 Post content and photos judiciously, highlighting positive experiences that let your personality, interests, and skills shine through.
- 9 Maintain a LinkedIn profile with up-to-date skills, experiences, and projects. Make sure that your social media presence is consistent with your résumé and cover letters.
- 10 Google yourself, and then set up a Google alert for your name so you know when you have been mentioned or tagged by someone.
- 11 Keep a list of all of your accounts
- 12 Use a password keeper to organize and recall passwords for different kinds of sites you visit.
- 13 Pay attention to the way that you link your accounts (i.e., registering or logging in using your Facebook account).

