Nik Rice

Captain Rice

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What’s Your Online Presence Score?

We all know how important your credit score is when trying to buy something big. We also know that no credit can be a bad thing. Are you aware of how similar your online presence is to your credit score? Your online reputation is like a line of credit that can affect your professional, personal, and overall public credibility.

Whether it is getting a job or promoting yourself professionally, your online presence plays an important role. What you don’t know can actually hurt you. In the article, “How an Online Reputation Can Hurt Your Job Hunt”, Deborah Jacobs points out that ExecuNet claims that 90% of executive recruiters say they conduct online research of potential candidates. This means the vast majority of the people who make the actual decision of who to hire are looking at you online. In other words, those who do not consider tailoring their online presence to their resume’ are playing a style of Russian roulette where 9 out of 10 cylinders are bullets against them. Sometimes it’s who you know. In the article *7 Ways to Build Your Online Presence Now,* Kate Erickson says networking with others online who are in the same field can help introduce you to others. After you are in business, you then need to network professionally to build clientele. Once you are established, you can then begin to set yourself apart, making your business and skills more appealing. Those who do not utilize their online reputation are hurting both their chances of getting a job and being successful in today’s economy.

Your online reputation can also strongly affect your relationships and family. In today’s world, we are always on stage. According to Digital Media in the Classroom, our relationships can be hurt by foul language, cyberbullying, and basic immaturity. Who we are and what we say to our friends may not be what our grandmother wants to hear or see. Indeed, every valuable relationship should be constantly on our minds before we post a picture or a comment that might offend or exclude people we care about. First impressions are most likely your second. Your online reputation affects your family life even more before you start a family, according to The Art of Manliness who says, “81% of singles say they Google or check the Facebook page of someone before meeting them for a date.” We will never know just who is seeing us online but just like everything else in life, the ones we hurt the most are the ones we shouldn’t hurt at all. In other words, family members see, contact, and care about you most which means they are the ones to most likely see and respond to your online self. In summary, we should be more concerned with and aware of *who* is in our lives more than *what* is going on in our lives.

Finally, our online presence can affect our image and values as seen by our communities. Laying groundwork is essential in getting an audience. Erickson also points out that, “Once you start building strong relationships with others in the community, they’ll naturally become more interested in what you have going on.” It’s no secret that reputations take time to build and an online reputation is no different. Furthermore, having no online presence may discredit you in the public eye. Think before you post. The Art of Manliness brings up the point that people might not only judge each other’s values based on their questionable habits seen online, but also that their willingness to show off these behaviors publicly shows a lack of judgment and wisdom. It is often true that we might forgive the faults of others but we have a harder time forgiving others who do not consider how it affects those around them. In short, we see others’ values in how they live their life but also how they respond to being part of a larger community. Both our online image and values show who we are as individuals but also as part of our community.

 In conclusion, our credibility online is very much like a line of credit which we can build to bring what we want into our lives and keep trouble at bay just like our credit score. Whether it’s our professional life, our personal life, or our overall reputation in our communities, our online reputation can make or break us in today’s digital world.

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