

## Being easy to find (and attractive)

You want to be easy to find for people who are looking for someone *fabulous at and passionate about doing what you do*. Here's how.

### Being easy to find for people who want Someone Just Like You

Your aim with this approach is to make finding you easy for prospective clients who are looking for someone just like you. You don't know who they are so you can't easily contact them.

Instead, you can sprinkle signs of yourself and your expertise around online so prospective clients will easily pick up the trail and find you.

There's evidence most buyers of professional services look online as part of their search process. And the percentage is growing. As more "digital natives" become decision-makers, even more people will look online for potential providers.

To show your value online, and make you easier to find and more credible to people who are *looking for someone just like you*, you can blog (in an unusual way described below) or you can answer questions.

### Blogging

Blogging even occasionally can demonstrate how you think and who you are. Without too much effort, you can make it much easier for people to discover you. And when people find you, they'll recognize that you're capable, thoughtful and personable.

#### An unorthodox approach to blogging

Blogging doesn't require writing frequent posts. Most professionals who blog aspire to grow a group of regular readers and frequently deliver new content to them. It's a great cultivation strategy, but more work than necessary.

Instead, take advantage of the fact that any online content, once written, stays available. Just write enthusiastically on topics you are passionate about professionally and it will be available for years to people who are looking. One consultant says he still gets leads and comments from people who just read posts he wrote years ago. Write about the articles you've read or the approaches you've developed. Or write about events and developments in your niche. Whatever excites you. The idea is to let people see who you are.



If you get serious about this, you can do search engine optimization of your postings so they show up higher on relevant searches.

### **Answering questions**

Answering questions also provides visibility and demonstrates your interest in delivering value. You can answer questions in specialized online forums or in social networks like LinkedIn.

On specialized online forums, people ask questions and get answers about an industry, function or other defined subject. In some forums, e.g., Microsoft's forums about its products, contributors can gain official recognition as experts. Many professionals contribute to such forums because the forums allow professionals to showcase their expertise and provide an implicit endorsement. Prospective clients search for someone with whom to discuss their problems (and to eventually retain); they are inclined to contact first professionals already identified by the community as expert in areas relevant to the prospective client's problem.

LinkedIn is another spot for answering questions. Many people do answer the questions there, so the quality of your answers can be compared to others'. For most professionals, LinkedIn groups, focused on specific subjects, will be the best places on LinkedIn to answer questions. You'll have to explore a bit to find the best places on LinkedIn for you, where the conversation is appropriate and active.

### **Something to try this week**

- Explore what people are doing to be visible online in your field. If you are a consultant, look at some consultants' blogs. If you are an accountant, check out some accountants' blogs. Look for writing by people in firms of your size and type. Decide if you'd like to try yourself. You can be up and running in minutes at blog hosting sites like WordPress, Blogger, or TypePad.
- Investigate LinkedIn and its groups. A great way to experience the dynamic of the question and answer approach is to ask a question. After you've asked one and gotten some responses, find one you can answer and try it.

### **What are these tips?**

These monthly tips help professionals create more business and enjoy their work more. We focus on how to start relationships, how to build relationships, and how to convert those relationships into sales.