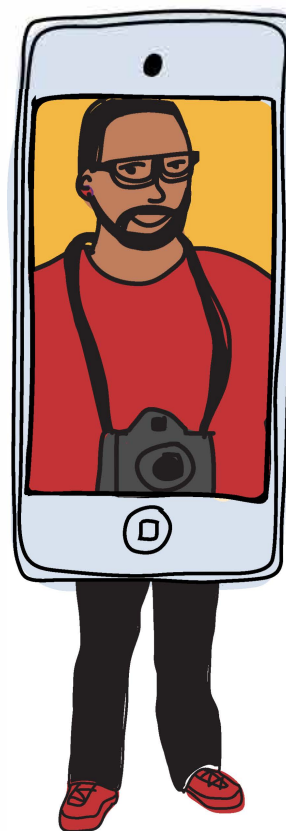
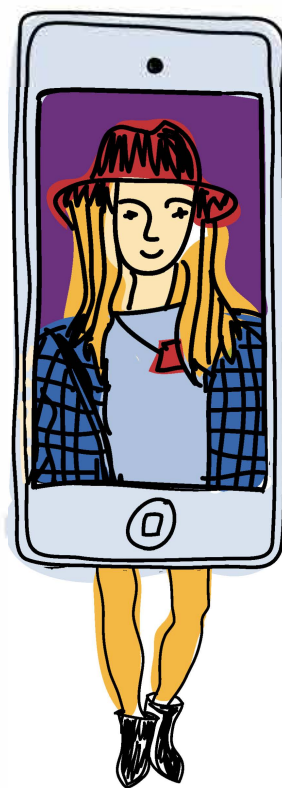


DIGITAL ME: PERSONAL BRANDING

..... in the
SOCIAL MEDIA AGE



PERSONAL BRANDING: NOT JUST FOR SELF-HELP GURUS ANYMORE

If you've ever felt like the idea of having a personal brand was a little awkward, you're not alone. Most people aren't terribly comfortable promoting themselves, and speaking in the third person is always a bit awkward.

Well, I've got good news and bad news. The bad news is...you need a personal brand now more than ever. The good news is you're reading a handy ebook to help get you started! Point: you.

Personal branding doesn't have to be awkward. It is how you tell the world about your skills, passions, values, and your amazing personality. The goal isn't to present a fake version of you, it's to allow the real you to take control of your digital identity.

Let's get started building your



THE BAD NEWS IS:

You need a personal brand now more than ever.

THE GOOD NEWS IS:

You're reading a handy ebook to help get you started! Point: you.

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR DIGITAL IDENTITY

You see, right now there's a lot of data floating around out there about you on the internet, some good, some not so good.



Old Tumblr posts you regret



That time you ranted about unicorns...for 3,000 words

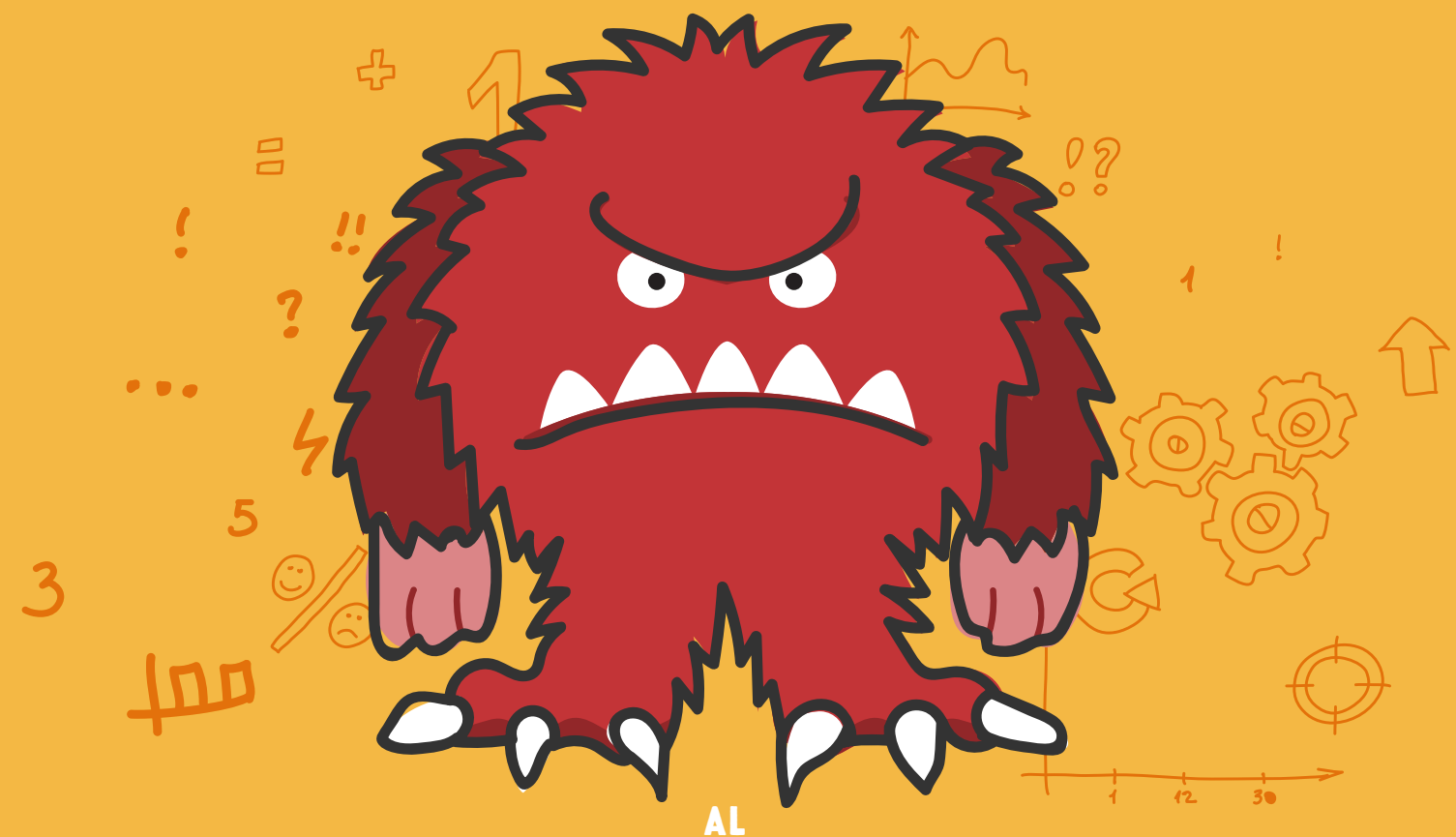


The high school band photos that just won't go away

While we can't erase the past, a personal domain and website can help you take control of your online identity.

THERE ARE ALGORITHMS OUT THERE RIGHT NOW DEFINING WHAT PEOPLE THINK ABOUT YOU.

They determine whether or not people see your cat pictures and they control what people see when they search for you online.



If you find yourself disappointed by your page 1 search results (c'mon we've all done it), the most important thing to remember is that while these algorithms are powerful, they can be defeated with a little creativity and the right plan.



HOW TO THRIVE IN THE GIG ECONOMY

Once upon a time there was a thing called a job. You had the same one for your entire life, and then you got a gold watch and something called a pension.

Things have changed.

Today, your career is probably going to take a lot of twists and turns. You'll change, you'll pivot, you'll adapt.

To do so you'll need a home base, a place that doesn't depend on your employer, current contract, or freelance gig. It is the one constant throughout your career that ensures no matter where you go, you have a place that's just for you. It's your personal domain and website—your Digital Me.

THE TROUBLE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Speaking of algorithms, let's talk about social media. It's fun, it's addictive, it's somehow full of cats, but if you think having a hot Instagram account or a compelling Twitter bio is enough, I've got some Snapchat stock to sell you.






While your penchant for avocado toast may have put home ownership out of reach, trust me when I tell you that it's always better to own your home than rent.

When you rely exclusively on social media as your digital platform, you are living on rented land. And while your data may be valuable in selling ads, representing your personal brand effectively is only an afterthought to these platforms.

Your social media accounts are important to your Digital Me, but your personal domain and website are the home for your online identity.

HOW MANY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS DO YOU HAVE? ARE YOU ACTIVE ON ALL OF THEM?

Take a minute to fill out the chart below.

	USERNAME:	FOLLOWERS/SUBSCRIBERS:	ACTIVE/INACTIVE
 TWITTER			
 FACEBOOK			
 INSTAGRAM			
 SNAPCHAT			
 YOUTUBE			
 OTHER			

MORE THAN JUST A RESUMÉ

So what's the big deal? You already have a resumé. You made it in Microsoft Word and you didn't even use the default template.

Ya, about that. While a nice resumé is important, having a personal domain and website are critical even if your career doesn't involve coding. Digital skills are essential to almost every career in some capacity, and even if they aren't, having them can make you stand out from the crowd.

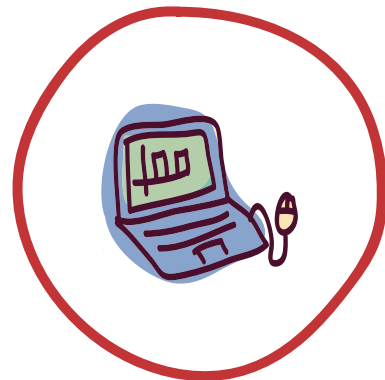
A personal website provides you with a place to collect your work, showcase your expertise, and dazzle people with your glowing personality. It's a digital space you own, you control, and won't spam you with LinkedIn invites.



CLOSED VS. OPEN

You don't have to be a Linux-obsessed, GitHub superfan to appreciate the value of the open web. The internet is an open standard, that means that when you build your website no one controls what you put on it but you (sorry Zuck!).

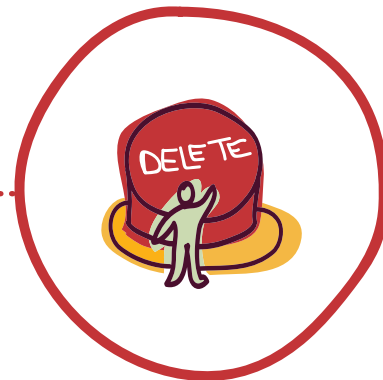
Of course, it's impossible to escape these proprietary platforms completely, so long as you see them as an extension of your digital identity and not the entirety of it. Here are some tips for how to get the most out of closed platforms.



1

EXPORT DATA.

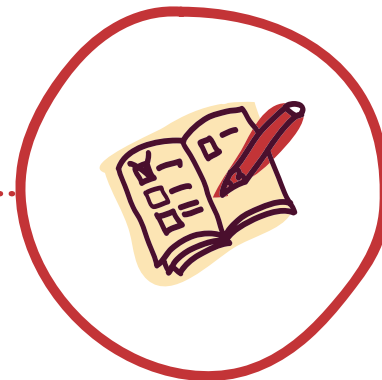
Check to see if the platform supports exporting your data and content. Some do, some don't, most hide this feature 18 menus deep so you can't find it.



2

PRESS DELETE.

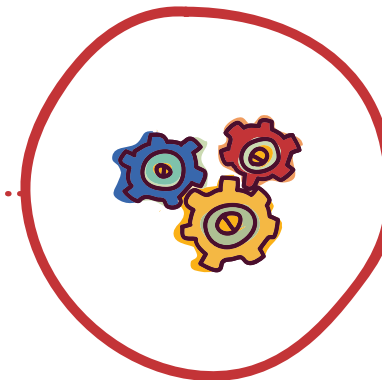
Always make sure you can delete your profile completely. You never know when you might want to ghost.



3

OWN YOUR CONTENT.

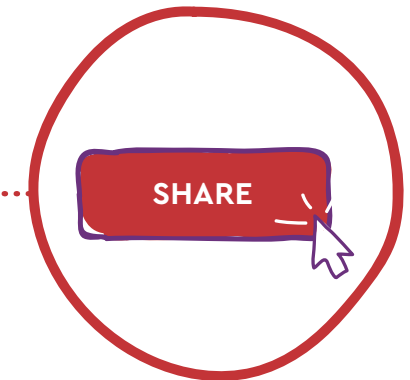
Don't write original content directly to these platforms. Republish content from your blog, post an excerpt, use RSS, but always keep your best content for a platform you own.



4

STAY PRIVATE.

Always check your privacy settings to make sure the people you want, or don't want, to see your content can (or can't).



5

BE FLEXIBLE.

Use a service such as [IFTTT](#) or [Zapier](#) to push content from your website automatically onto social platforms (or vice-versa).

THE HUB FOR YOUR DIGITAL IDENTITY

With so many different platforms out there, it's often difficult to keep track of who you know from where. Did you message them on WhatsApp? Was it a snap? Did they retweet that awesome meme you totally invented? If only you had one place where everything could come together?

Rhetorical questions aside, yes I'm talking about your personal website. Instead of having to remember a half dozen different social media profiles, a personal website, with your own personal domain name, is an easy way to direct someone to everything all at once. Whether you just want to add links to your various profiles, or aggregate all your content in one place, your personal website acts as a hub for your digital identity—one where you control the traffic.



"BEING CANADIAN IS IMPORTANT TO MY BRAND BECAUSE CANADA REPRESENTS KINDNESS, INSPIRATION, AND OPPORTUNITY. EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE AND WE ALL HAVE ACCESS TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES."

SEKOU KABA
Canadian Olympian
SEKOUKABA.CA

Your personal website can host your skills, your experience and your education, but it should also highlight your creativity, your thoughts, and your accomplishments. It's the nexus of your personal and professional lives.

And let's face it, you're Canadian, and you believe that your values stay with you no matter what you're doing. That means that whether you're a cabinet maker, data scientist, or professional roller derby champion, the .CA at the end of your personal domain name declares that your values aren't optional, they are part of who you are.

CHOOSE CANADA

There has never been a better time to be Canadian online

If you've been paying attention to the world these days you might notice something—Canada is having a moment.

Everywhere you look, Canadian values, leaders, artists, activists, athletes, and entrepreneurs are showing the world that this country is pretty awesome.

As the world looks for leaders that embrace diversity, inclusion, equality, justice, and fairness, being proudly Canadian online declares that you believe in these values too.

When you're choosing your personal domain, .CA reflects who you are because you have to be Canadian to get it, kinda like a GST refund cheque.

When it comes to your digital identity, where you're from and what you believe in are just as important as what you do or where you went to school. .CA is like a digital Canadian flag on your backpack.





IT'S UNIQUELY CANADIAN

Whether you live in the 6ix, represent VanCity, or practice the East Coast lifestyle you know that where you're from is a major part of your identity. When you're online, your domain can do the same thing. While your name should be your brand, having .CA at the end declares that you're proudly Canadian.

Unlike many other country-specific domains, not just anyone can get a .CA domain. We manage the .CA domain on behalf of Canadians to make sure only those who live or do business in Canada can get one.

We take that very seriously. We even have our own millennial on staff whose job it is to make sure only Canadians can register a .CA. Her name is Jasper, she is very nice, but she does not like Californians who try to register a .CA.

So, like a Canadian passport, your .CA domain tells the world that you get your forecast in Celsius, eat ketchup chips, and use a VPN to access American Netflix (on your parents' account). It's an exclusive club but we're very friendly :).

MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

Of course having a .CA domain is more than just a Canadian flag on your digital backpack. It turns out .CA domains have a lot of great side benefits.

Because .CA domains are exclusively for Canadians, a lot of work goes into making sure every one is safe, secure, and reliable. Visitors to a .CA domain are more likely to trust what they see and feel secure clicking on the link. Need proof in listicle form? Well here are five reasons to get a .CA domain for your personal website:

**"YOU ARE WHO
YOU CHOOSE TO BE"**

NALIE AGUSTIN

Metastatic Breast Cancer Thriver

NALIE.CA

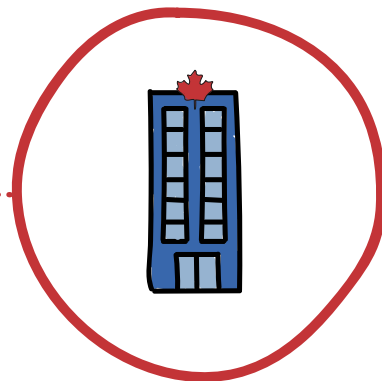
WHY CHOOSE .CA?



1

YOU'RE A CANADIAN TALKING TO OTHER CANADIANS.

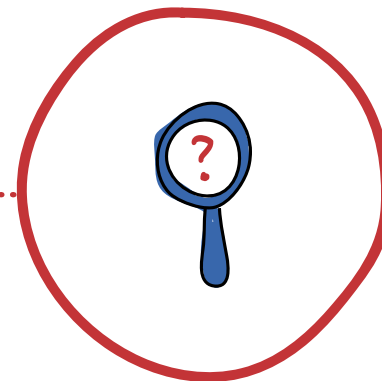
Your .CA domain name immediately tells people where you're from. Did you know that 79 per cent of Canadians prefer to support Canadian businesses? Now you do.



2

DOING BUSINESS WITH OTHER CANADIANS IS JUST EASIER.

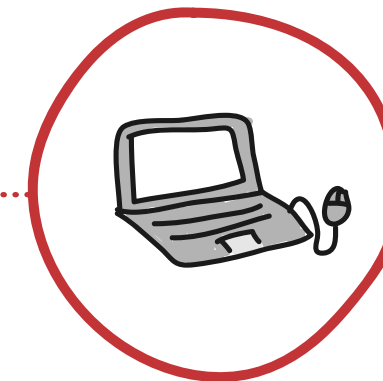
Remember when you ordered that sweater and it was priced in U.S. dollars, took over a month to ship, and you had to pay an extra \$30 in duty to get it across the border? None of that.



3

GOOGLE LOVES .CA.

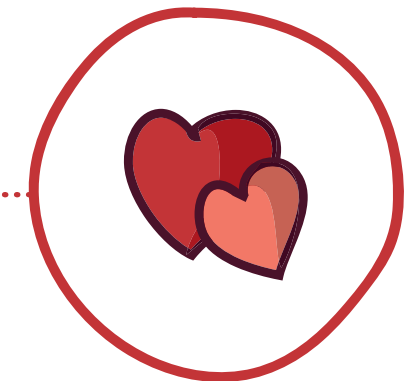
Your .CA domain name tells search engines, "Hey, this is a canuck over here" which means you'll be more visible to fellow Canadians.



4

.COM IS ALREADY TAKEN.

You probably wouldn't want it anyway, but a .com domain is hard to come by. Also, it's a little too corporate for a someone as unique as you.



5

.CA GIVES BACK.

Every .CA domain that is registered helps fund our [Community Investment Program](#) which does cool things like help kids learn to code and provide access to under-served communities.

BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

OK, so you've decided to develop a personal brand. Now what? Well, the good news is that you probably have all the information you need to get started, you just need to make sense of it all.

Here are some questions to get you started.

WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES?

The things that define who you are and how you see the world.

(i.e. creativity, diversity, respect, winning)

WHAT IS YOUR X FACTOR?

The one thing that separates you from other people with similar skills and experience. This could be a particular skill or combination of skills, or a combination of skills and background/personality, etc.

(i.e. I'm a killer coder who also great at building relationships)

WHAT ARE YOUR PASSIONS?

The things that make work not seem like work at all.

(i.e. woodworking, hedgehogs, kite-surfing, death metal)

WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

The thing you were put on this Earth to accomplish.

(i.e. rule the world, travel the world, save the planet, smash the patriarchy)

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONALITY?

The things that make the way you see and interact with the world unique.

(i.e. shy, serious, funny, energetic, playful)

A great personal brand truly is your Digital Me, it's a reflection of not just your skills, but what it would be like to work with you, create with you, and even hang out with you.





First name	Last Name	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	.CA
<input type="button" value="🔍"/>		

PRO TIP

When you're grabbing your .CA domain, be sure to get a personalized email address too. It looks more professional than your Yahoo address and makes it simple to remember.

CHOOSING A DOMAIN

OK so now it's time to start building your personal brand online. The first step is to head over to the [Digital Me website](#) and check to see if your name is available. You can also do a search on the left side of this page.

If you need a little more help getting started with choosing a domain, we have a whole other [ebook](#) on that!

If your first name last name combination is available, perfect! If not, you can always try variations on your name such as First Name, Last Initial or First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name. Here are a few examples from our friend Ajay. You can even add descriptive words, adjectives or your profession to your personal domain.

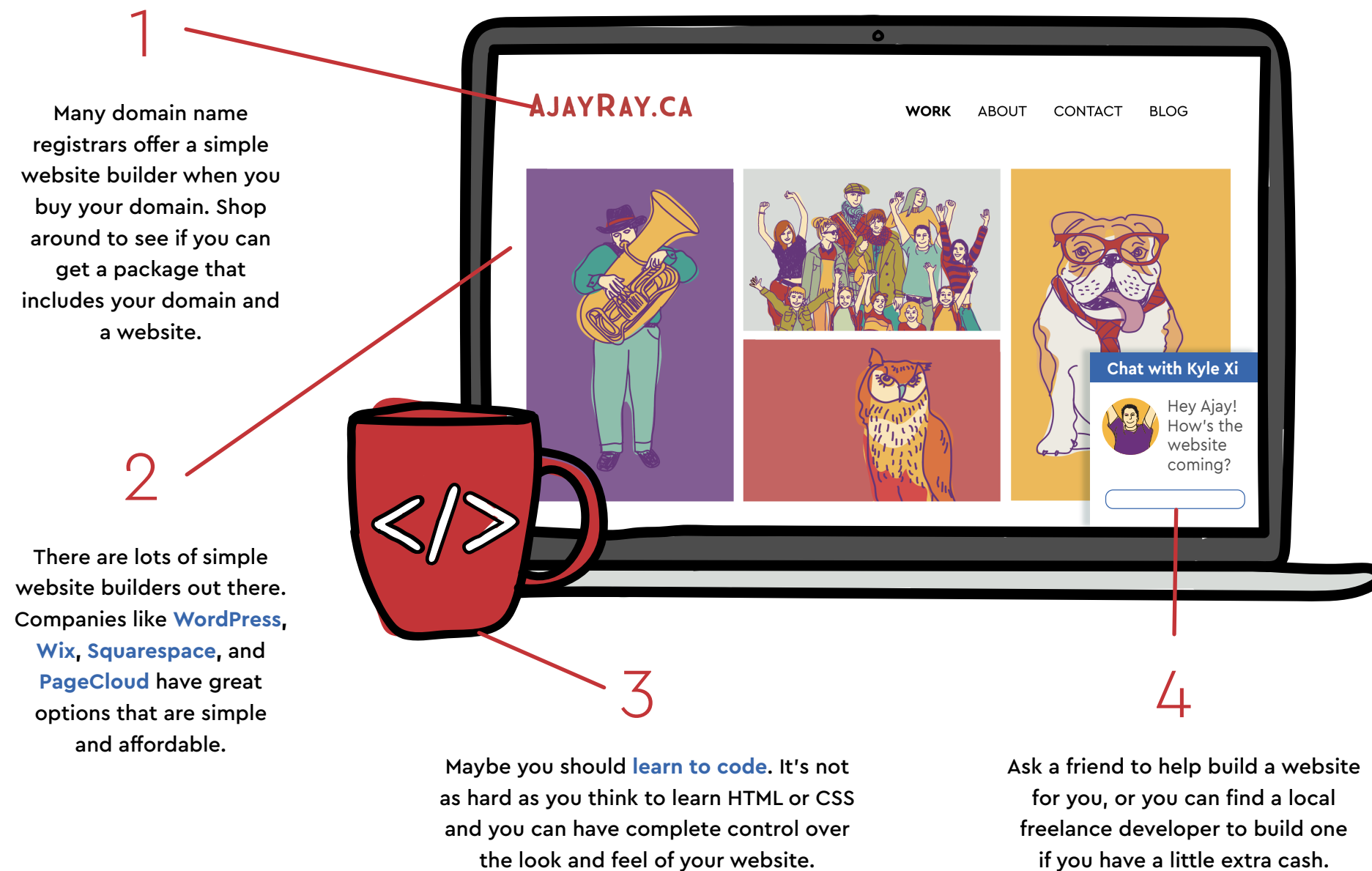
- **AjayRay.ca**
- **Ajay.ca**
- **AjayR.ca**
- **AjayMRay.ca**
- **CallMeAjay.ca**
- **PhotosByAjay.ca**
- **AjayThePhotog.ca**

WHAT'S A REGISTRAR?

A Registrar is business that actually sells domain names to the public. Our Registrar partners also offer other services like web hosting, email and more.

BUILDING A WEBSITE

Next, you're going to want to start your own website. While the process may seem daunting, there are a lot of simple tools out there that can make the process simple and painless.



NEED SOME MORE TIPS?

We have many helpful blogs and videos that can help you get started with your personal website.



Video: 3 tips for choosing the perfect domain name



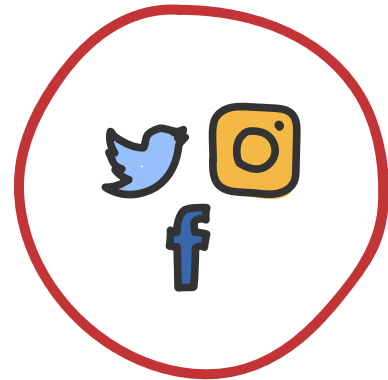
3 reasons why you should get your own custom email address



.CA or .com – which TLD is better for your website?

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

Getting your website online is the easy part. The hard part is actually filling it with content. Don't panic. Resist the urge to overthink it and start with a few simple tactics.



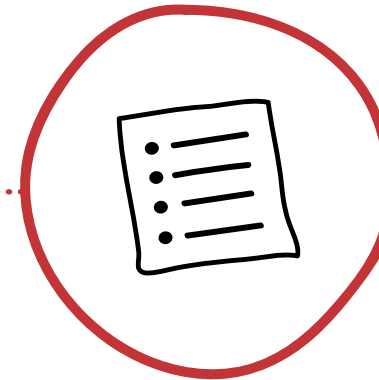
ADD YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS.

Provide links to all your profiles across the various social media sites. Your website acts as a hub for everything.



WRITE A QUICK BIO.

Nothing too complicated, just a couple of paragraphs that explain who you are and what you're all about.



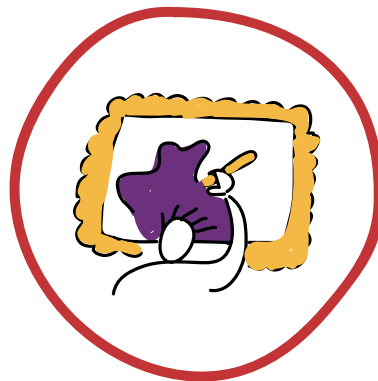
LIST YOUR SKILLS.

This will help potential employers know what you're capable of and help Google rank your website properly.



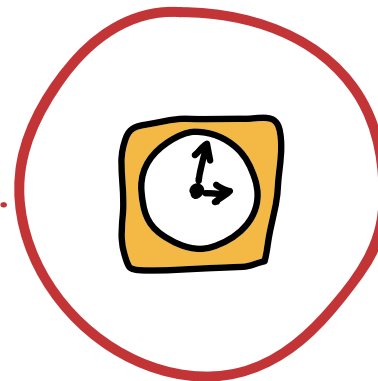
LIST YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

If you've won any awards, are a member of any interesting groups, write them down and provide links if possible.



SHOW OFF YOUR WORK.

If you have writing, projects, videos, art, or anything else on the web that shows off what you can do, add it to your website (or link to it) so people can find it.



DEVELOP A BLOGGING SCHEDULE.

You don't have to blog every day, but once a week try to write down some of your thoughts, provide insight into your career, or share your ideas.



SHARE SOME VISUALS.

A great personal brand means showing people who you are and what you're like. People like to put a face to a name so add some pictures that show what you're all about.

BUILDING YOUR BRAND OFFLINE

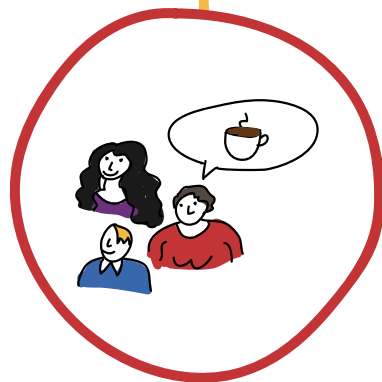
If you put down your phone and look up you'll see something really amazing—the real world. While emojis don't work here yet, actual human contact can often do the trick. Here are some ways to build your personal brand offline:

"I BELIEVE THAT NOW, MORE THAN EVER, THE WORLD REALLY NEEDS CANADIAN VALUES - KINDNESS, COMPASSION AND INCLUSIVITY. MY .CA DOMAIN HELPS ME SHARE THOSE VALUES."

HANNAH ALPER

Canadian Activist

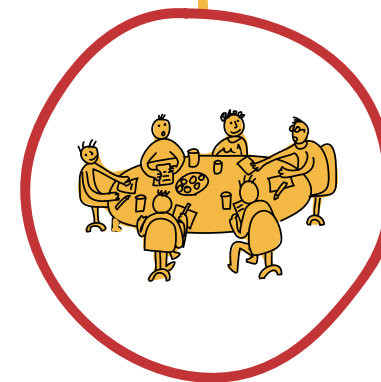
[CALLMEHANNAH.CA](https://callmehannah.ca)



1

FIND MEETUPS IN YOUR AREA.

There are great groups you can find that will host events that will help build your personal network.



3

BUILD A COMMUNITY.

Not literally, unless you are a carpenter, but find others in your field (or related ones) and go out for drinks, host a dinner, or just hang out and share freelance horror stories.



2

GET SOME BUSINESS CARDS.

They are old school, but in a good way, like vinyl. A card with your shiny new personal domain, and your personal email address, is a great way to stand out from the crowd.



4

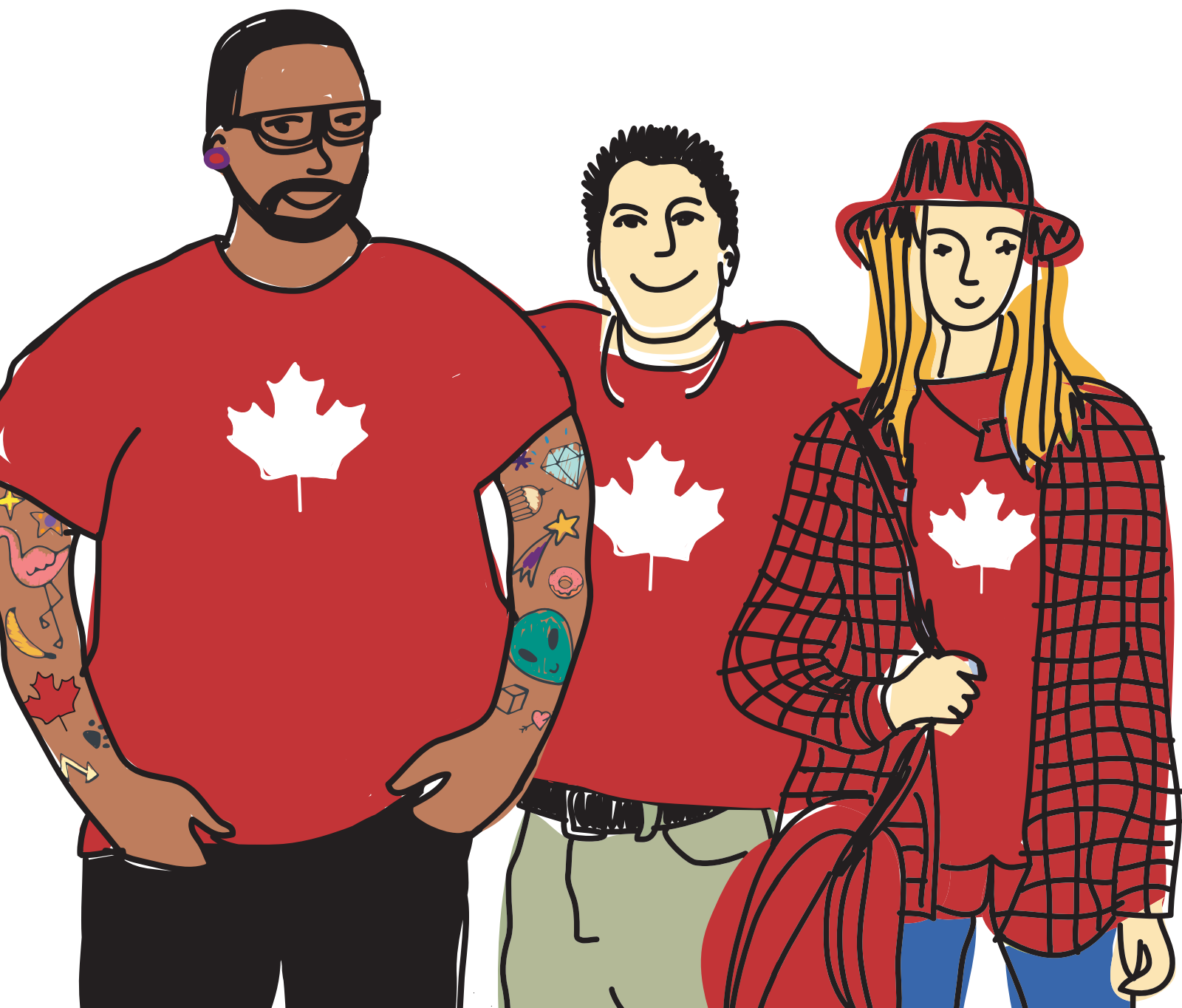
SPEAK AT EVENTS.

No really, don't be shy, you are never too inexperienced to share your story. Share your successes, your failures, your dreams, you'll be amazed at how doors will open up if you put yourself out there.

TIME FOR ACTION

And that's it! Simple right? It might seem intimidating, but the best way to develop a great personal brand is to start small and grow over time. A digital identity is always evolving, so it will never really be finished. Just have fun and remember to be yourself.

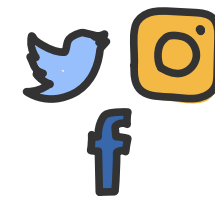
If you're stuck for what to do next, **here's three quick wins to get you on your way.**



.CA

1

**GO GRAB YOUR PERSONAL
.CA DOMAIN RIGHT NOW.**



2

**ADD YOUR NEW DOMAIN
TO ALL YOUR SOCIAL
MEDIA PROFILES.**



3

**START A BASIC WEBSITE TO
USE AS YOUR ONLINE HUB.**

IF YOU NEED HELP,
HEAD ON OVER TO

DIGITAL
me

where we'll have tons of tips, tricks,
and advice to help you along the way.

WHAT'S your .CA?

First name

Last Name

.CA

