

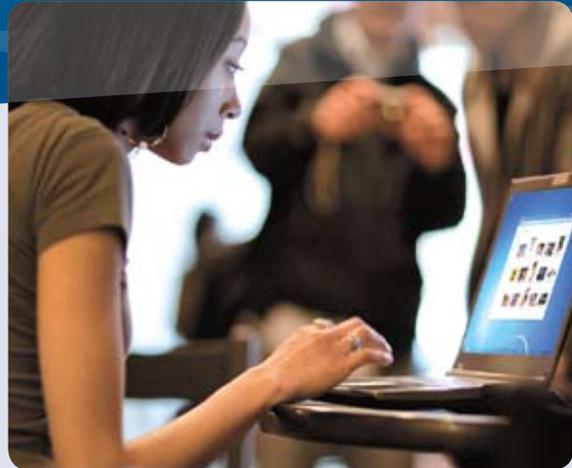
Take Charge of Your Online Reputation

Chances are you already have a reputation online, even if you don't know it.

On the Internet, you create an image of yourself through the information you share in blogs, comments, tweets, snapshots, videos, and links. Others add their own opinions (good or bad) and contribute to your reputation.

Anyone can find this information and use it to make judgments about you. For example, Microsoft* research found that of the U.S. hiring managers and job recruiters surveyed, 79 percent routinely review online reputational information when considering job applicants.

Most of them count online reputation as one of their top selection criteria. In fact, 70 percent of U.S. hiring managers in the study have rejected candidates based on what they found. Top disqualifiers included unsuitable photos and videos, concerns about the applicant's lifestyle, and inappropriate comments.



* Microsoft Online Reputation Research (December, 2009):
www.microsoft.com/privacy/dpd/research.aspx

Discover what is on the Internet about you

Use search engines

- Type your first and last name into several popular search engines. Search for images as well as text.
- Search all variations of your name—other names you've used, nicknames, or middle name or initial. Include personal domain names (**yourname.com**) in your search.
- Search sites you frequent—online directories and sites that compile public records, genealogy sites, the Web sites of organizations to which you belong or contribute, and the like.

Search blogs and social networks

Review what others have posted about you in comments, pictures, or videos. Explore blogs, personal pages on social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter), or photo-sharing sites like Flickr and Snapfish.



More helpful info

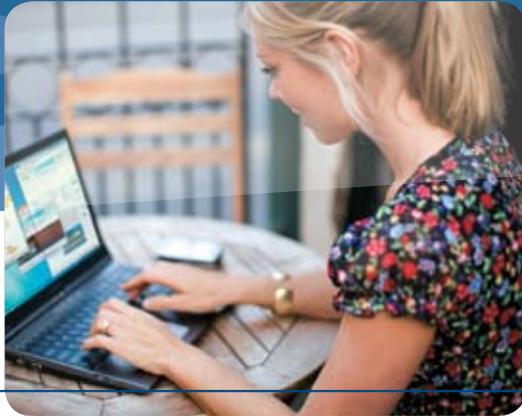
- Get more info about managing your online reputation: microsoft.com/privacy/dpd/default.aspx.
- Get practical advice about how to help protect your privacy on the Internet: microsoft.com/protect/privacy/prevent.aspx.

Evaluate your online reputation

Think about the story this information tells.

- Does the info reflect the reputation you want to have? If not, what's missing?
- Is it accurate? If not, what should be deleted or corrected?
- Do you need more than one online profile—whether professional, personal, or for an area of interest, like a hobby or volunteer work? If so, is it okay to mix info from different profiles?
- Do you want your profiles to be public or more private?

Your answers to these questions are important because information online is searchable, often permanent, and may be seen by anyone on the Internet.



Protect your online reputation

Act online in a manner that reflects the reputation you want to earn.

Think before you share online

- Think about what you are posting, who you are sharing it with, and how this will reflect on your reputation.
- Choose photos and videos thoughtfully, particularly those that might be provocative or make you look irresponsible.
- Talk with your friends about what you do and do not want shared. Ask them to remove anything you don't want disclosed.

Treat others as you would like to be treated

- Be civil in what you say and show on the Web.
- Respect the reputation and privacy of others when you post anything about them (including pictures) on your own pages, on others' pages, or on public sites.

Stay vigilant

- Sign up for personal alerts. Some search engines will automatically notify you of any new mention of your name or other personal info.
- From time to time, search for yourself following the steps in "Find out what is on the Internet about you" on the reverse.
- Periodically reassess who has access to your pages. It's okay to remove those who no longer belong.



Polish your professional reputation

Publish the positive

To be your online best, create what you want others to see. Link anything you publish to your name.

- Join a professional network such as LinkedIn or CareerBuilder. Put together a robust profile and make connections with colleagues there. Ask for recommendations from those who know your work well.
- Comment on professionally-oriented blogs and participate in online forums where you have expertise.
- Start a blog or register a Web site in your own name. Write regularly (at least twice a month) on a subject about which you are knowledgeable. Invite visitors to make comments.

Consider separating professional and personal profiles

- Use different e-mail addresses, screen names, blogs, and Web sites for each profile.
- Don't link your real name (or sensitive personal information such as your home address, phone numbers, or photos) with other profiles that you create.
- Add personal information to your professional profile judiciously and only as it reflects well on that image. Avoid cross references to personal sites.
- Look for **Settings** or **Options** to help you manage who can see your profile or photos, how people can search for you, who can comment, and how to block unwanted access.

Restore your online reputation

If you find information about yourself that does not fit the reputation you want, act quickly.

- In a respectful way, ask the person who posted it to remove it or correct an error.
- If the person does not respond or refuses to help, ask the Web site administrator to remove the digital damage.
- If you feel a public correction is necessary, present your case simply and politely.