Social Media Strategy for Archaeology Job Seekers

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Learn what you never learned in college

What is Personal Branding?

Personal branding is simply *the act of taking control of the image you project to the rest of the world via the internet*. This is difficult to do in real life, but it's relatively simple to do online because of the nature of online interactions. Programs (Google, LinkedIn, Facebook, ect.) thrive on new tidbits of information. All day and night, these programs are searching for new bits of data, categorizing, and archiving it. *Personal branding is simply the act of feeding these programs the types of information you want them to digest* (stuff that showcases your expertise and skills) *and starving the internet of things that make you look unprofessional*.

Your personal brand is:

-- Who you are and what you are or want to be known for
-- What makes you stand out from the crowd
-- A public demonstration of your experience, skill, and career motivations

In the past, personal branding was done through face-to-face interaction with other professionals. Today, much of this interaction is facilitated by the internet and social media.

"Create something people want to share," John Jantsch

This is a continuation of the blog post series "Personal Branding for Archaeologists". It was focused on harnessing the power of the internet and social media to craft a professional brand as an archaeologist– a task nearly every Generation-X or Millennial in archaeology should be doing.

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Why should you care about personal branding?

Archaeologists, generally, are like young-old people (unless, of course, you're already old, which would just make you an old person). We tend to shy away from "technology" and "change" in order to embrace what already exists. I know many younger archaeos (Millennials) have already embraced social media and are fairly savvy with this stuff. But, a huge number of archaeologists over 35 years old do not see the ways social media can augment and further their careers.

Here are some alarming statistics from the Pew Research Center that may demonstrate the importance of online personal branding:

-- 39% of companies use social network sites to research job candidates (This is probably a conservative estimate)
-- 43% of hiring managers who researched candidates via social media saw something that caused them NOT to hire a candidate (hard-core politics Facebook posts, anyone?)
-- Surprisingly, only 19% saw something that caused them to hire a candidate; however,
-- 56% of hiring managers are more impressed by candidates that have personal websites, while only 7% of job seekers have their own site.

Social media and the internet is part of our generation's communication style:
-- Most Twitter and Instagram users are Millennials. Recent data indicated approximately 89% of users are young adults.
-- The most expensive DIY website costs less than $175/year– less than most archaeologists spend at the bar in a month.
-- Networking with other professionals via social media is easier than ever given that Facebook has over a billion users, 300 million are on LinkedIn, and over 255 million are on Twitter.

Personal Branding can Make the Difference

Whether you're ready or not, *hiring managers are looking you up on the internet* when you apply for a job. I've even heard that [universities are checking the Klout scores of their professors for hiring and honors](). Luckily that's probably not happening in cultural resource management archaeology, which appears to be averse to allowing their employees to have any voice online.

It is important to actively develop and promote your personal brand, especially for people working in the 'feast or famine' world of CRM archaeology. Potential employers and peers need to know what you've been up to, your capabilities, and your career goals. All of these can be discerned from your online activities

You also want to have a clear association between you as a human being and you as a professional archaeologist. If in doubt, help the internet sort it out.

While you need to manage your personal brand online, there is no one path you should follow, no precise toolkit of advice or social media strategies that are sure to improve your online brand. Just as we all follow multiple paths in life, there are multiple strategies you can use to let the world know about your professional identity.

One thing is sure, though:

It is much better to do something than it is to do nothing.

Lets. Get. Started!

The Bare-Bones Basic Strategy

AKA: Set it 'n Forget It

Who's this for: People who don't like doing "computer" stuff, undergraduate students, well-networked, seasoned vets, people that don't want to put too much into this whole "branding" thing

The Goal: Create a simple online presence

What do you need to do:
1) Create a complete LinkedIn account
2) Build a basic personal website
3) Populate the site with content (examples of previous work, contact info, a short bio)
4) Connect the LinkedIn profile with your website

Activity Level: Low (1—2 hrs./month)
-- Keep the website updated/backed up
-- Try to connect with a few acquaintances on LI every few weeks

Personal Website

The rest of the internet
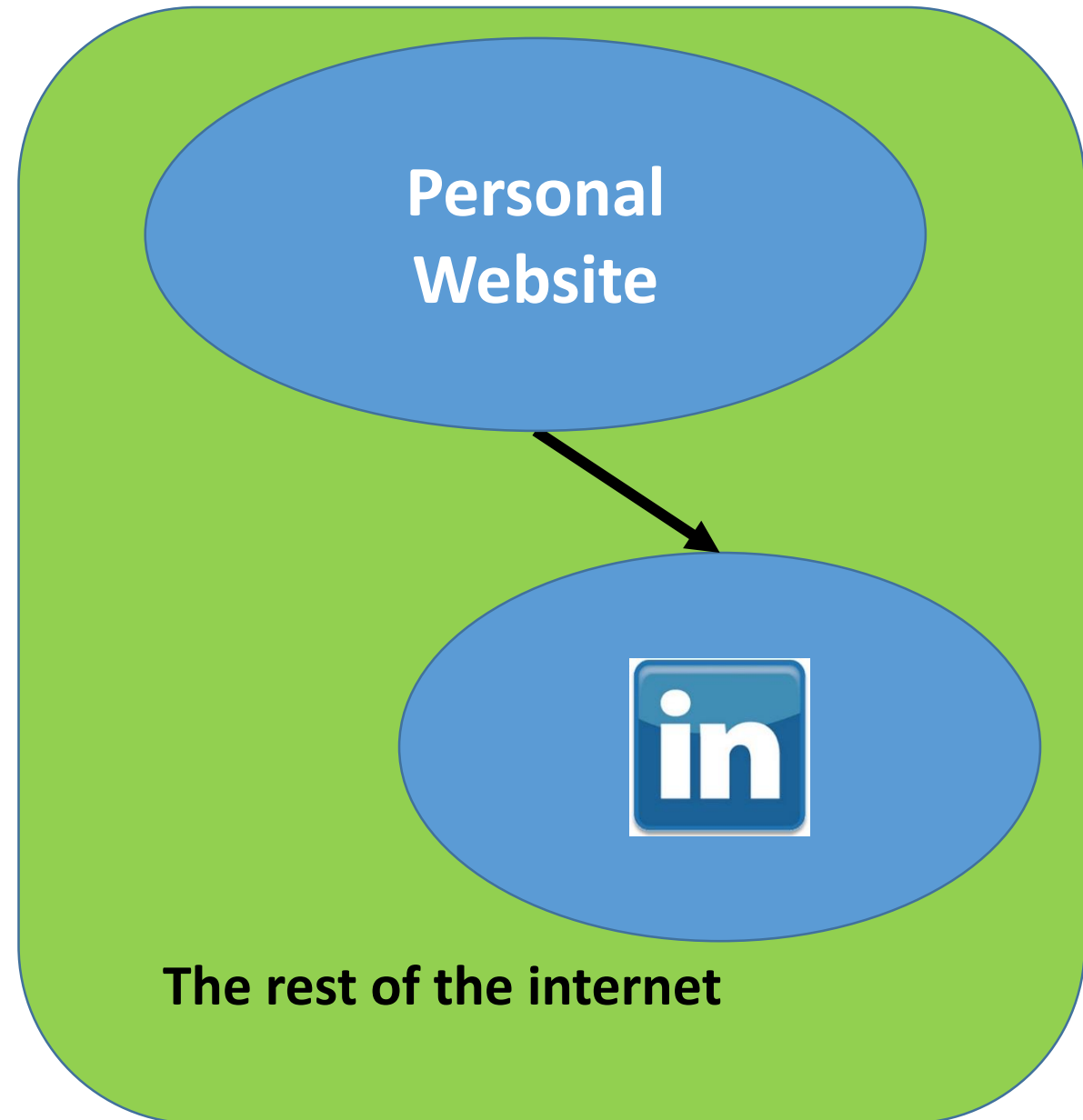
In the Bare-Bones Plan, you're just trying to reserve your place at the table. You've got a LinkedIn profile and have created a personal website so that, when the time comes for somebody to Google your name, they're going to see some good things.

GREAT JOB! You've taken an important step to create your own personal brand.

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." Arthur Ashe

The Archaeology Careerist's Strategy

AKA Have Trowel, Will Travel

Who's this for: Young professionals, archaeology students, upwardly mobile crew chiefs, field directors, young PIs, and field techs that hate unemployment

The Goal: Craft a personal brand and network with others in the industry

What do you need to do:
1) Follow all the steps in the Personal Branding for Archaeologists blog series except blogging (unless you want to go the extra mile, of course)
2) Actively maintain at least one social media account and your LinkedIn profile
3) Engage with other professionals, archaeology fans, and the general public

**Activity Level:** Low to Moderate (2 to 5 hrs./week)
-- Use keywords and differentiate yourself within a niche
-- Optional: Maintain a keyword-optimized blog

A careerist is *actively trying to shape their personal brand* in order to define themselves as a professional and connect with others in order to move forward in the field. The idea is to create content (*tweets, blog posts, comments, ect.*) that people are willing to share and that demonstrate your competence. In the process, you're introducing yourself to people that may help you get or keep a job someday.

**The ultimate goal is to cut through the din on the internet and let your persona shine.**

Blog

Guest Posts

The rest of the Internet

Personal Website

"We're not that much smarter than we used to be, even though we have much more information -- and that means the real skill now is learning how to pick out the useful information from all this noise." Nate Silver
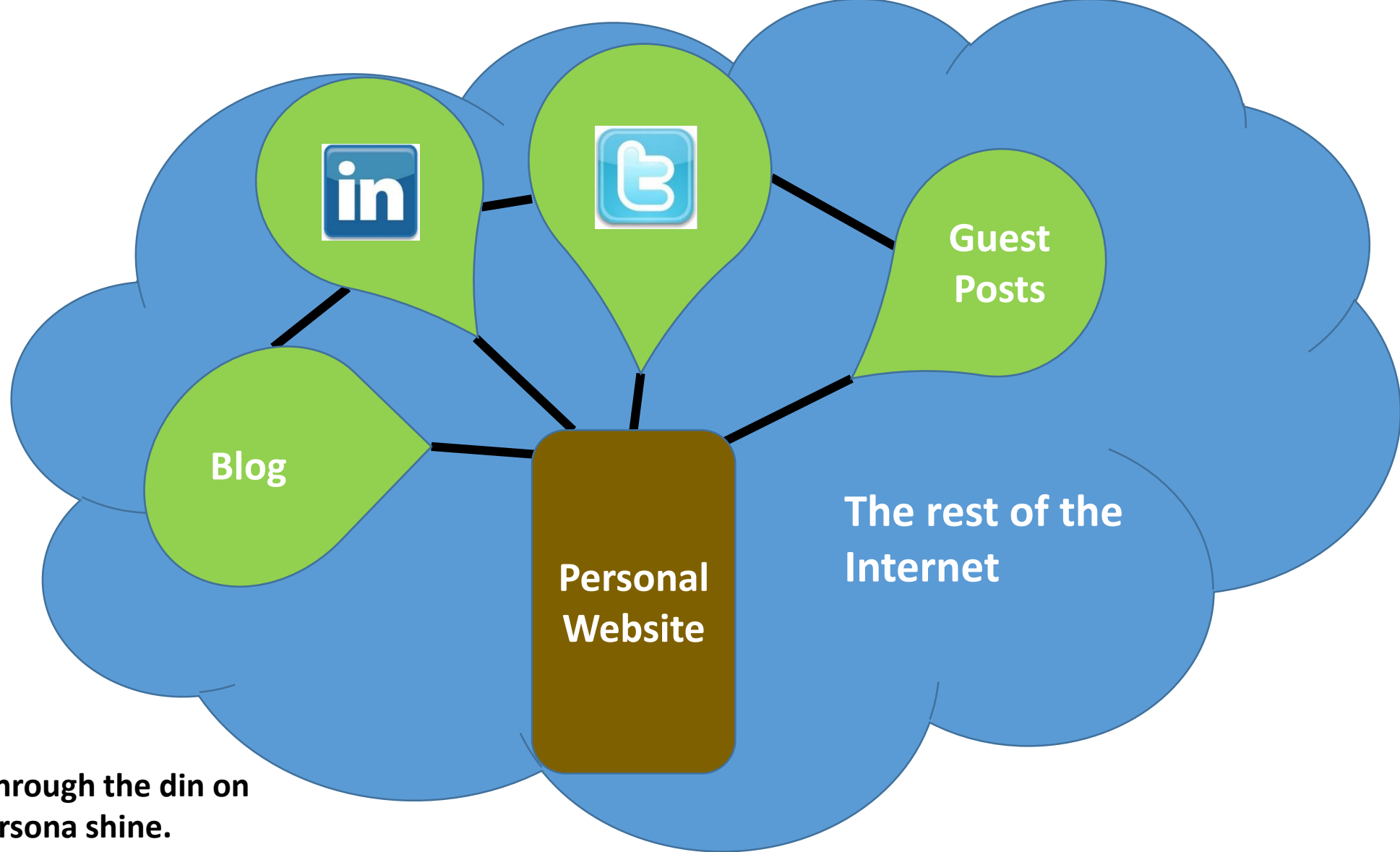
Social media and the internet is central to the careerist's branding efforts because it allows them to connect with individuals and publics around the world.

It's not good enough to discuss your blog posts and advertise yourself on the internet. You need to use these online interactions as a means of making meaningful contact with potential collaborators. Your work should demonstrate your expertise while also addressing problems/conundrums that other archaeologists may have.

Be of service to others. *Give, give, give, give, give, give, give, and give before you make a sales pitch for yourself.*
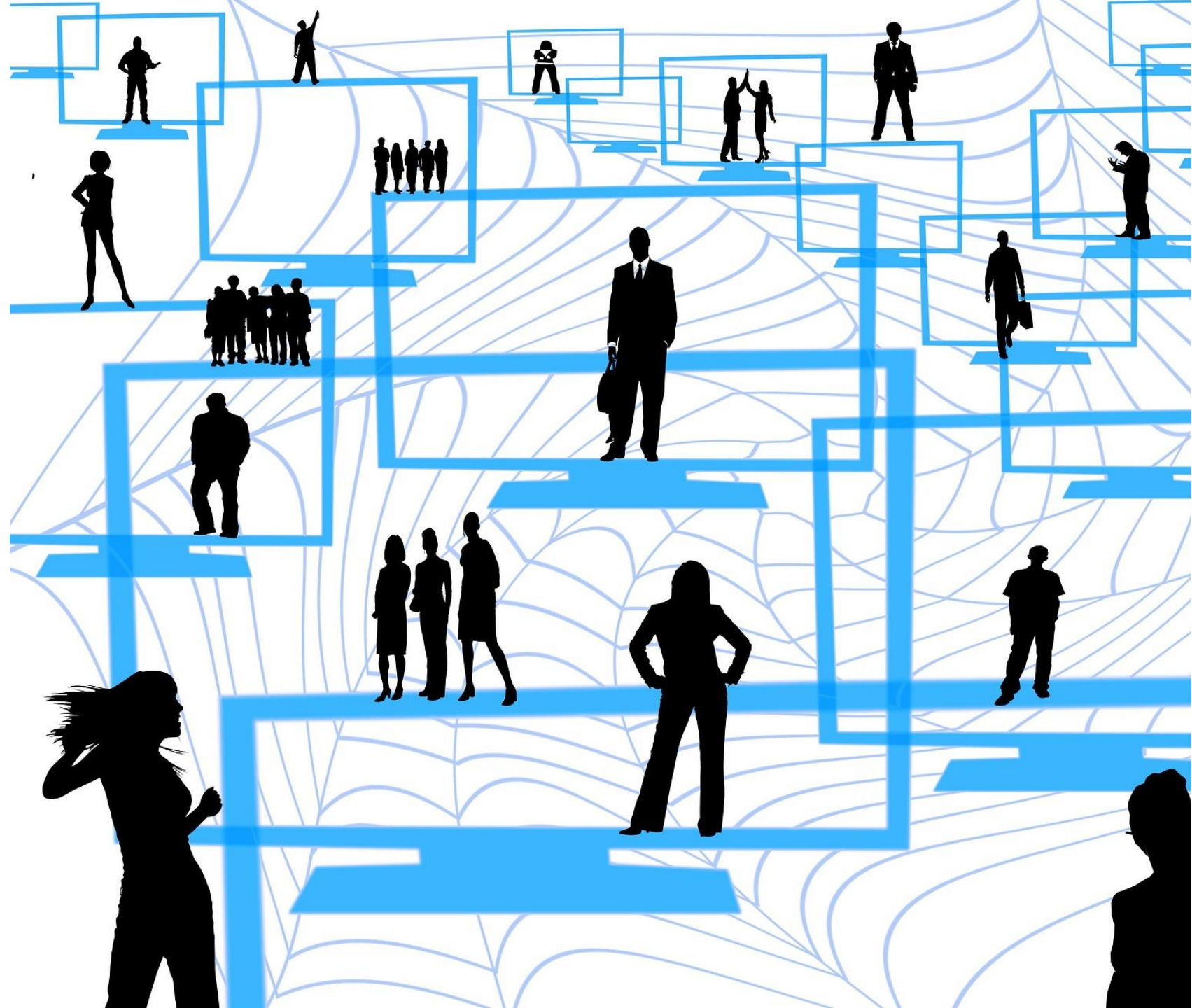
The Archaeology Niche Domination Strategy

AKA I'll Show you an Expert

Who's this for: Archaeology grad students (especially PhDs), CRM companies, University anthropology departments, and anyone else crazy enough to try it

The Goal: Use keywords, social media, and your professional work to dominate online search results for a niche within archaeology while simultaneously connecting with other archaeos to promote dialogue within this niche

What do you need to do:

1) Follow ALL the steps in the Personal Branding for Archaeologists blog series
2) Create and maintain multiple, branded social media accounts
3) Publish eBooks, white papers, journal articles, book chapters ect. related to the content on your online platforms
4) Use your personal website/blog as "authority site" for targeted niche
5) Collaborate with other archaeologists to disseminate and fine-tune information

Activity Level: Extreme (5—10+ hrs./week)

GOAL: Do everything you can to dominate the internet for a specific, targeted aspect of archaeology, cultural resource management, or historic preservation
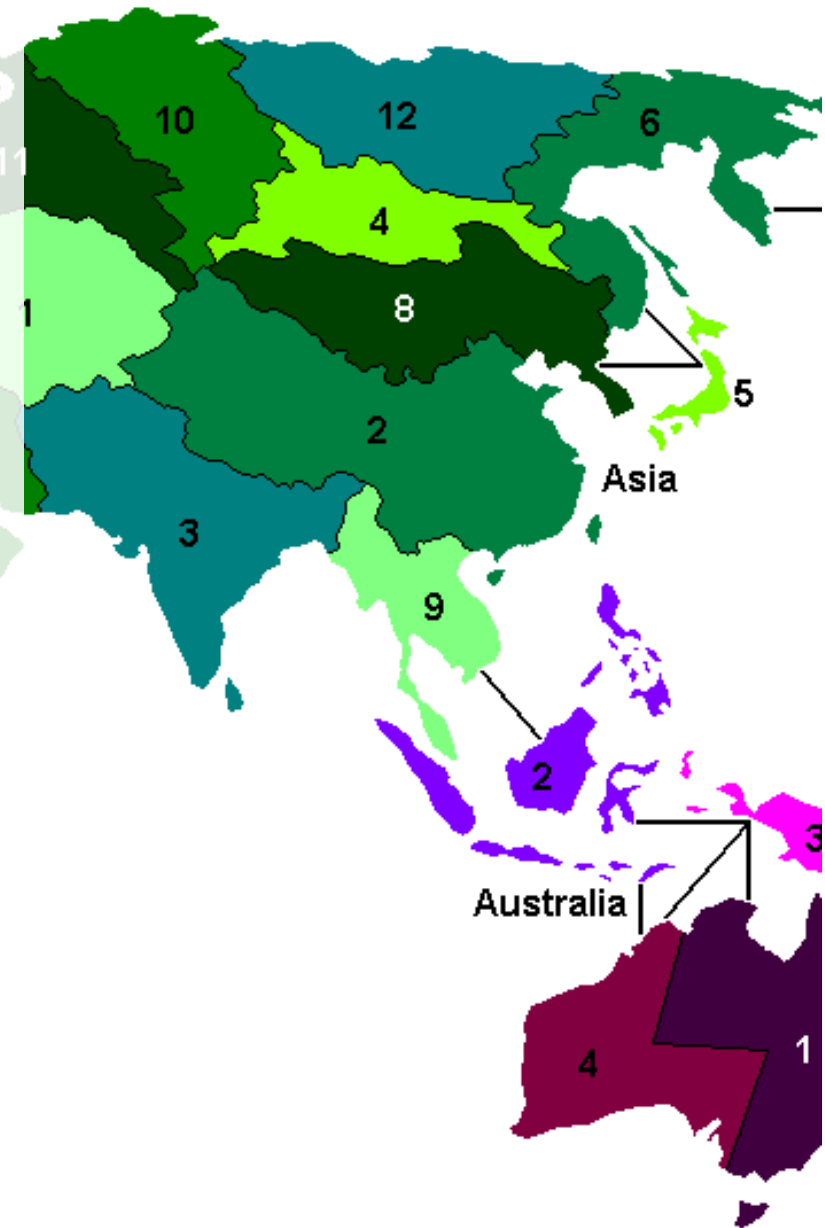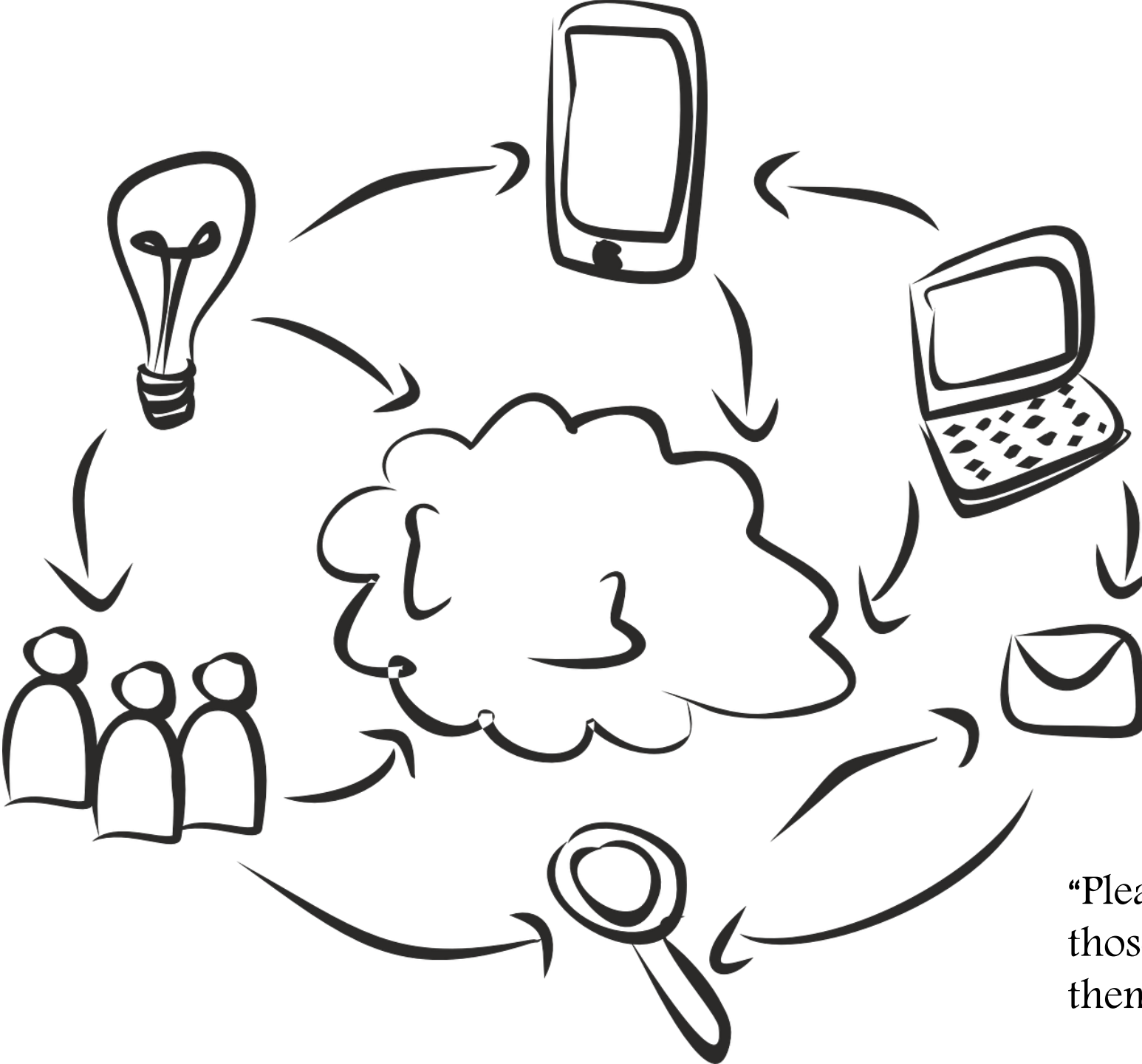
This strategy uses the internet but extends far beyond that. *The goal is to become a thought leader* with regard to a specific facet of archaeological method, theory, and practice. It is an old concept pioneered by academicians that can be vastly expanded upon using the internet and social media.
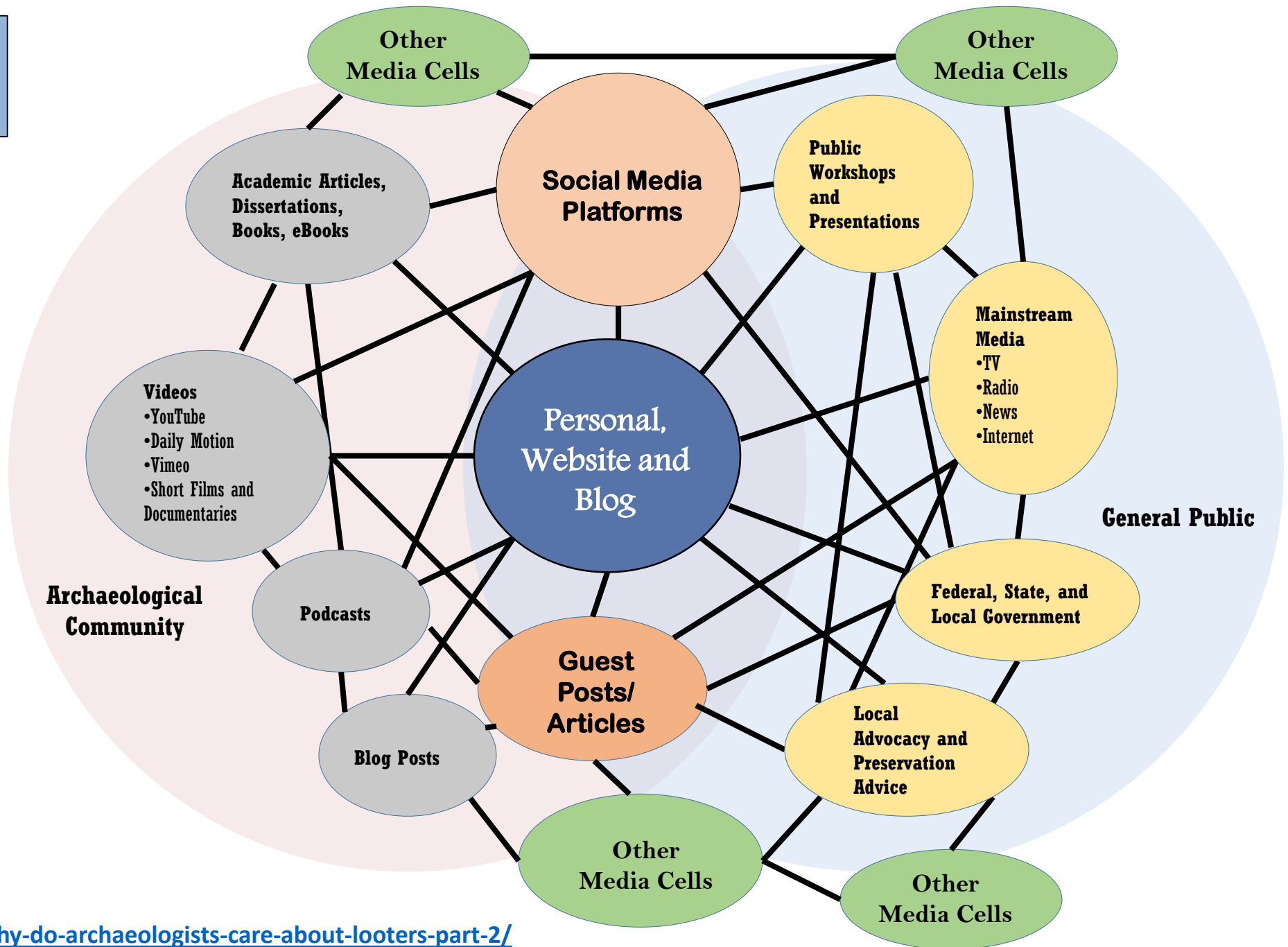
I do not mean domination in the literal sense. This strategy involves creating valuable content in collaboration with others that has been scrutinized and commented upon extensively. The idea is to make your name synonymous with concepts you've pioneered/seized upon/investigated and make sure your affiliation with those concepts is widely known.

"Please stop waiting for a map. We reward those that draw maps, not those who follow them." Seth Godin, Poke the Box

Diagram of Archaeology Media Cell Network

This concept goes far beyond personal branding and can evolve into an entire media network that promotes your professional brand and work to a much wider audience.

It involves accessing online and traditional media as seen here. *The best known archaeologists have long been crafting networks like this.* Today, we can augment them with social media and other internet communication platforms.

http://www.succinctresearch.com/why-do-archaeologists-care-about-looters-part-2/

Other Media Cells

Other Media Cells

Academic Articles, Dissertations, Books, eBooks

Social Media Platforms

Public Workshops and Presentations

Mainstream Media
•TV
•Radio
•News
•Internet

Videos
•YouTube
•Daily Motion
•Vimeo
•Short Films and Documentaries

Personal, Website and Blog

General Public

Archaeological Community

Podcasts

Federal, State, and Local Government

Guest Posts/ Articles

Blog Posts

Local Advocacy and Preservation Advice

Other Media Cells

Other Media Cells

DOMINATION IS NOT FOR EVERYONE

It takes time and a lot of effort. It also opens you up to scrutiny and judgment by others. Also, *you will make mistakes, lots of them*, and not everybody is going to let you forget them.

However, you will be well on the pathway to creating a solid personal brand because you are parting with convention and moving away from the game as it's now played in archaeology. *There will be both rewards and penalties for going an unconventional route, but the rewards will outweigh the penalties.*

"Organizations that destroy the status quo win. Whatever the status quo is, changing it gives you the opportunity to be remarkable." Seth Godin

When Should you Start?

"The cost of being wrong is less than the cost of doing nothing…Today not starting is far, far worse than being wrong. If you start, you've got a shot at evolving and adjusting to turn your wrong into a right. But if you don't start, you never get a chance."

Seth Godin, Poke the Box

The Best Time to Start is NOW!!

Pick a strategy and start taking control of your personal brand online

Here's how you can get started today!

PHASE I
1. Read the Personal Branding for Archaeologist blog post series
2. Create a completely comprehensive LinkedIn account
3. Using your name as inspiration, start your own personal website and connect it to your LinkedIn profile
4. Learn everything you can about how LinkedIn works; connect with as many archaeologists as you can

PHASE II
1. Get at least one social media account
2. Connect with as many archaeologists as you can on that platform
3. Learn everything about how that platform works
4. Start a blog; start guest blogging

PHASE III
1. Use your blogging and social media to connect with others that can help further your research
2. Use your online activity to help address the problems faced by your peers
3. Use your online activity to create communities of practice that contribute to the wider field of archaeology
4. Connect with others in a sincere, honest way that helps improve other people's lives and careers
5. Go beyond the internet into the academic press and mainstream media

PHASE IV
1. Go where no one has gone before…
2. Use archaeology, the internet, and social media to spread world peace…

There is no better time than the present. No better day than today. What are you waiting for?

Learn more about the cultural resource management archaeology industry

Keep reading the **Succinct Research Blog**– weekly insights into archaeology and cultural resource management.

Or, check out our social media sites:

About William A. White, III

William A. White is the *Research Publications Director* at **Succinct Research**, a company dedicated to disseminating information about cultural resource management archaeology and historic preservation to practitioners and students of those fields. The ultimate goal is to help heritage conservation professionals better serve their communities.

For over a decade, Bill has worked on archaeological fieldwork projects in some of the most remote locations in the United States including the temperate rainforests of Washington State, at high altitudes near Great Basin National Park, and in the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts of the American Southwest. As a cultural resource management archaeologist, Bill has played an integral role in helping others develop their professional skills and use their experiences to find gainful employment. He has helped numerous students and co-workers on their career paths.

An innovative, thorough archival researcher, field scientist, and author, Bill has participated in over 100 historical, archaeological, and anthropological research projects across the United States. He has written or co-authored over 50 research reports and given presentations to diverse audiences across the United States, in Canada, and the United Kingdom. A lifelong student of human cultures and practices, Bill graduated from Boise State University with a B.A. in Anthropology and a Native American Studies minor and earned his M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Idaho. He is currently a PhD student at the University of Arizona.

Learn more about what Bill and Succinct Research can do for you, your business, or organization.

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