Cultivating an Online Presence
(for the Academic Job Market)

Academics create professional profiles online to publicize & broaden access to their research and to make connections. When applying for academic jobs, an online presence can provide additional information to support your applications and to help control what information prospective employers will find out about you online.

What tools can I use to create an online presence?

- Personal academic eportfolio or website
  What should I include on an eportfolio or website?
  • Welcome page / CV: Introductory framing statement
  • Research: research interests, research experience, dissertation summary, grants and fellowships, publications, presentations, future research
  • Teaching: teaching philosophy or teaching statement, teaching interests, teaching experience, pedagogical training, teaching effectiveness or feedback on teaching, honors & awards, sample syllabi, course materials (assignments, handouts, etc.)
  • Service: department, university, profession, community
  What tools can I use to create a personal ePortfolio or website?
  Google Sites, Weebly, Blogging software (e.g., Wordpress, Blogger.com, Tumblr.com), Interfolio (through Brown’s Career Lab), Digication, WiX, HTML (e.g, Dreamweaver, Adobe)

- Online profile
  Where can I create a professional online profile?
  • LinkedIn, Academia.edu (a social network for scholars), ResearchGate.net (share publications & connect with collaborators), Google Profiles (Google +)

- Social Media
  What should I consider when developing a professional social media profile?
  • Permanence: Everything you post is immediately on your permanent record.
  • Multiple accounts: Create accounts for personal use & others to share materials broadly.
  • Privacy: Regularly check your privacy settings.
  • Connections: New connections can solidify your profile or be potentially damaging.
  • Institutional Codes of Conduct – e.g., Brown’s Office of Public Affairs & University Relation’s Social Media Guidelines
  Where can I create a professional social media profile?
  • Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google +, Academia.edu, Mendeley (reference manager & academic social network).

How should I get started in creating my online presence?

- Research disciplinary conventions by looking at recent graduates in your (& related) department(s), hires in your (& related) department(s) & hires at institutions you’d like to apply to. You can find links from official university / lab websites & use searches to investigate their online profiles.
- Create a brief description, including your name, position & where you work, and describing your broad research field and goals to reframe for multiple online sites.
- Select consistent photos that you can use across multiple online profiles.
- Present yourself with confidence & show your passion for your field & your research.
- Be selective & use your time wisely!

Additional Reading
- Creating Your Web Presence: A Primer for Academics (ProfHacker, 2011)
- How to Overcome What Scares Us About Our Online Identities (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014)
- Social Media: Self-reflection online (Nature, 2011)