The Role of Social Media in Personal Branding

Master Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the Degree

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Submitted to Dr. Marion Garaus

Inna Kharchenko

61900420

Vienna, September 24th, 2021

ABSTRACT

The current world is a world where social media and personal brands are increasingly influential. This master thesis investigates the creation and phenomenon of personal brand in social media and how it helps create and alter people's identity. Online personal branding refers to communicating positive personality traits on an online platform to differentiate yourself from others, which will help achieve professional goals. Personal branding can be seen as a reinvention of traditional branding but at a completely different level of engagement and visibility (Tarnovskaya, 2017). The thesis aims to study different literature sources in various disciplines to develop a contextual framework for building personal brands on social media and investigate how they can be created in social media and their pros and cons. In the study, only online personal brand building is investigated, without research of personal brand building in real life. The author also studies the advantages and disadvantages of online personal brand creation for the individual. In the thesis qualitative study was used. There is a lot of articles and studies existing online that allow to conduct this research with literature reviews and semi-structured qualitative interviews.

The study goal was to find out how the personal brand can be created and developed in social media, the advantages and disadvantages of having a personal brand on social media platforms, and what strategies can be used. The results of interviews are followed by the literature at some point. Ukrainian personal brand holders did not consciously follow any strategy when build personal brand and indicate more advantages than disadvantages of having a personal brand.

This master thesis can be helpful for those who are trying to build their personal brand online, and they could find helpful information on what pitfalls they should avoid, what strategy is better to use, or how to make an online personal brand an additional resource and tool for professional growth and development. Those already building a successful online brand could find this work helpful in finding new personal online brand positioning. Building a personal brand in social media is a relevant topic for research due to its sizeable positive impact on an individual.

Keywords: personal branding, personal brand online, social media, online personal brand building.