

# **An Online Professional Identity**

**By: Joshua Hinkle  
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*Executive Summary:*

Joshua Hinkle maintains a semi-professional outlook in the virtual world. He shows a military familiarity, which allows him to enter into the realm rather seamlessly. The job advertisement postings highlight the skills and values needed to attain a military career. His analysis of government and military professionals shows the importance of leadership and managerial skills, as well as other niches that can be used to set apart individuals. His limited, but strategic visibility creates a persona that is approachable and untainted professionally, ready to be built upon in a military career.

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## **The Future Professional You**

### **What do you want to be when you grow up/graduate? Why?**

I guess I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up, so I choose an pretty broad degree that is pretty much good for everything (but at the same time nothing...). I have a few choices that I will pursue once I am finally graduated. I would like to enroll in Officer Candidate School partly because of my father who spent practically 30 years in the service. All throughout my life I have considered myself a military brat. Growing up in schools around the eastern US, I was proud to say that my dad was a Marine. My brother and I would unashamedly put on our dads old uniforms, travel on restricted bases, and visits to the Pentagon. My dad has often been deployed and has served in different parts of the world. Many times, he would have to travel separate from our family for months, even years at a time, but we knew that he did such out of a sense of duty and service. He has always been a disciplined individual with strict regiments for physical fitness and lifestyle. He was the typical marine getting up early and working out, but simultaneously being a down to earth country boy. Five years ago, our family accompanied him on his tour in Japan and Korea. It was a great experience for me because it really showed me what military life was like. We spent time living on and off the military bases, which were basically like cities with medical, social and entertainment facilities everywhere.

### **What does this type of professional career look like? What are people looking for when they hire folks in these types of positions?**

I believe everybody has their own interpretation of how the military acts, particularly Marines. I think I have an advantage of sorts in seeing what this kind of job looks like. I would argue that this type of career looks a lot like other government jobs for the most part. Officers wake up, commute, come home tired and do the same thing over again. There are different aspects to each job, but for the most part they are like everyone else. However, there are distinctions that make a person a Marine Corps Officer. They usually only take candidates that show leadership skills and an ability to handle stressful situations. Obviously, the disciplined nature usually associated with the military is expected, if not mandatory in the sense of the Marine. There is a sense of duty, service, and camaraderie that people align with serving in the Marine Corps.

## **Job Advertisement Analysis**

The career path that I am looking forward does not necessitate any type of advertisement in the “job world.” The US operates under an all volunteer military service. However, those wishing to become an officer must go through the Officer Candidate School or some other government ordained military school. Therefore, there is no need to post advertisements for officers. The closest advertisement I could find would be for the military in general; possibly, image three targets those wishing to become an officer, but this is still inconclusive because all members of military service are required to be leaders.

## First Image:



Source: US Marine Corps, via The Associated Press

### Analysis:

In this advertisement for the US Marine Corps, it features a situated combat event as the soldiers appear to be exiting some type of armored military vehicle. But upon further notice the words are begin to appear more visible as the image is taken in whole. The image contrasts the appearance of a dark border and shows the Marines exiting into light. The words “The Sounds of Chaos” are capitalized and given to a greater font size to emphasis the message of the image. The purpose of this advertisement is to add to the persona of the USMC as the branch that is “gun-ho” and lives up to the name of “devil-dogs” charging into battle. The author wishes to communicate the idea of courage and bravery in the face of opposition and danger. The advertisement features the perspective of a marine that is charging out with the rest of his platoon, an image highly exemplary within the community. This effect gives the reader a participatory feeling of involvement to enact the concept of being in the photo itself. The advert emphasizes the “Sounds of Chaos” in its text given a highly artistic and descriptive feel to the idea of charging into battle.

This job advertisement communicates the values of courage and bravery to the prospective applicants. It shows that these two traits are necessary for the placement into the USMC.

## Second Image:



Source: Secure Nation WordPress Blog

### Analysis:

This advertisement focuses on the character traits that a US Marine will earn throughout the course of their career. The image advertises all of the high and noble gains that comes from being a Marine. The image features a man with a piercing gaze and sharp features, which communicate discipline and strength. The targeted audience could possibly be anyone. There are no limiting features in this article that withhold to any age, sex, financial or cultural limitation. However, it does feature a young, healthy black man, so it could aspire to reach those in particular.

The contrasting background with the gold lettering make the words “pop out”. This effect adds to the fact that the word color also coincides with the USMC emblem. It emphasizes the relationship the words have with the emblem as if to say that this is what USMC stands for. The gold color gives it a regency and regality that says it is a privilege to become a Marine even though one volunteers for the position. The ad shows balance and alignment between the two main images creating an even flow of reading.

**Third Image:**



Source: The New York Times

Analysis:

The author mimics an advertisement in the classified section of a newspaper giving a sarcastic, but sophisticated feel. While the focus of the message may generally be directed toward a female audience, the message remains settled on the cultivation of leadership in the Marines. The background image shows an atypical situation, a female marine instructing subordinate male marines. Its startling, but then it moves to its secondary goal of showing leadership. There is a



text at the bottom right hand corner stating, “There are no female marines. Only Marines.” While obviously there are actual females in the USMC, the ads states that the USMC doesn’t play the gender card when it comes to leadership or in the

Probably the most important aspect of the image is the contrast between the script and the background image. The background serves as the visual representation for the text drawing the attention of the viewer.

## **Analysis of LinkedIn Profiles**

### **Gilberto Villahemosa:**

#### **Skills and Experiences:**

This profile is filled with a plethora of skills and experiences. He is a linguist fluent in Spanish and Russian who has graduated from West Point and achieved two masters degree from Columbia specializing in Russian affairs. He has over thirty years of military experience traveling multiple countries and dealings with military defense, security, strategy, counter-terrorism, and intelligence. He is a published historian with his featured work submitted for the approval of the Secretary of the Army. For any government or even contractual job

#### **Soft Skills:**

One of the main aspects of this profile is the amount of leadership positions held in each of the career. There has not been a position that was not in some form of authority, which has lead to awards such as the Bronze Star and the NATO Medal of Service. This aligns with his motivational skills, which make him a great candidate for any leadership position.

**5 Criteria Most Important to Profile:** Work, Education, Leadership, Management, Performance in Stressful/Difficult Situations

### **Mark W. Burns:**

#### **Skills and Experiences:**

The subject works for the Department of Defense with an extensive background of work experience in military and government fields. His profile includes a list of over twelve different positions of job experience over the past eighteen years. Jumping from job to job in the business world can be seen as fickle, but a closer look shows that most of these positions overlap showing a person capable of handling multiple responsibilities. The incorporation of certain recommendations with the positions adds credibility. The profile also includes an exhaustive list of education that proceeds from the beginnings of his career to the end, which makes for a very likable candidate showing a willingness and capability to learn and adapt. Also, some of the education is very diverse. This helps in attaining a very general management position where certain knowledge of different areas of study are required.

#### **Soft Skills:**

Some of the soft skills that could be gleaned from the profile include management and leadership skills from the type of work experience. In many of the descriptions of leadership positions, the skill of dealings and relating to others is noted. He also shows a developed skill in training others for entry to low-skilled level shown in his descriptions, which doubles as communication.

**5 Criteria Most Important to Profile:** Work, Education, Leadership, Training, and Communication experience

### **Antonino Giuseppe Pagoto:**

#### **Skills and Experiences:**

The subject of the profile seems very personable given by the smiling image and use of first-person in his summary. His profile shows a very well traveled man with military experience in many areas of the world. It shows an ability to work with different cultures and situations requiring a depth of cultural understanding. This gives him an advantage with international jobs. He exhibits the use of practically four languages, which is highly valuable in the international arena. The profile also shows a level of sophistication and experience with over fifteen positions all in areas of authority and leadership. His work with NATO adds a great amount of credibility and increases his availability in almost any field in government or abroad. His education is found in two different countries as well as achieving certificates from the NATO school. However, one aspect of his profile that seems lacking is the fact that he doesn't have any references listed. References help give an ethos of credibility, but I think the use of NATO helps counteract his lack of references.

**Soft Skills:**

The persona of the subject creates a supplementary skill not often found in military and government jobs. It seems to be a proven skill as his work experience is livid with healthy examples. This type of ethos allows the subject to stand out in an area where jobs and people can be considered dull and mundane. The subject also exhibits the obligatory skills of leadership and management found in the military arena.

**5 Criteria Most Important to Profile:** Work, Education, Leadership, Interpersonal, Communication

***Conclusion:***

*Word Experience:* Work experience seen throughout these profiles needs to show evidences of proven work life. Work experiences in the military field also need to be centered around the exhibit either levels of government contracting, security, or other fields like logistics. With government contracting becoming more of financially fiscal way of operating, people with military experience are very desirable. If the subject also displays international relationships within the job, these also add great diversity to the job.

*Education Experience:* In judging a person profile, education would rank second because it allows the candidate to show an intellectual side that is not often associated with the military. The basics would at least require a four year accredited degree, and the more the degree corresponds to the an area of specificity, the more likely the candidate will be selected. Also, if the the education contains an international element, it will help the candidate because most military and government jobs deal with other nations and cultures.

*Leadership Experience:* In looking for government contract or military jobs, whenever they exhibit aspects of leadership, their profile will rise to the top of the applicants. But not only leadership will be required as the competition for these types of jobs is always competitive. There will need to be some aspect of leadership that sets the profile apart for the rest such as an award or recommendation. The ability to lead and inspire a group of military folks is in high demand.

*Management Experience:* The ability to manage a team of people is always challenging and not often found. To have a prove ability is also in high demand. In government contract or military jobs,

there are often people of differing skills, cultures and personalities that can be challenging to get together to work out. For a candidate to bring a team of people to work efficiently and get results is highly desirable. The ability to manage resources and funds, and budgeting of government money is important because of the stigma associated with waste and fraud within the government.

*Interpersonal/Relational Skills:* When looking at government contract and military applicants, there is again the international aspect and the building of cross-cultural relationships. The ability to relate and converse with different people shows an employer a valuable skill in not only a shrinking world, but when the government is often seen as the face of America. The reputation of America is on the line in many diplomatic affairs, so the ability to bridge gaps and establish connections is important.

## **The Current Internet Visibility**

### ***Online Identities:***

Outside of Facebook, I don't think that I have any visibility on the internet. I hardly make any posts or status updates as it is basically used to just have one. I believe that I had a MySpace account, but I haven't used it in years. My email address with Yahoo and as well with ODU includes my name and could be found out; however, I don't think that they would be of any use outside of knowing which email provider I use. Also my LinkedIn allows for me to be identified. My other identities are less identifiable, but should be included in the event of background checks that are necessary for any military or government job. These include Diigo, Wordpress, North American Motoring, Motoring Alliance, Motoring Underground, VADriven, and VWVortex. I also have accounts with EBay and Amazon that I frequent. I know that I have other accounts with vendor websites, but these are just usually tied to my email address and not a username or pseudonym.

### ***Online Identity Search:***

When I searched through Google, I used Joshua Hinkle and only received these [results](#) on the tenth page. It is my name associated with a high school state track race, which is rather odd considering the fact that it is almost six years old. I tried to even search the common misspelling of my last name "Hinkel", which is more closer to the German root of the name, did not come up with any results close to my name as it seems to be a popular last name, more popular than mine.

When I searched through Yahoo, my actual profile came up with nothing. It was like I was non-existent, so I stopped searching for "Joshua Hinkle" together by the 6th page. Upon further surveillance, my identity did come up with a result that said there are 55 people with my first and last name. Some of interesting note were professors, mixed martial arts fighters, and rather shockingly criminals!

In my search through Bing, my first time searching came up with my Facebook profile, so I logged off of the account and tried it again. I found another hit on my name when I ran track in high school back in 2006 on the 3rd page.

### ***Evaluation:***

In retrospect of my current online visibility, it seems that none of my online accounts that I use can be found without a more involved search process. It seems that I have very little online visibility, which in my opinion plays to my advantage in search of a government or military career where in terms of ethos, less can be more. Even in my Facebook profile which should generate the most in terms of visibility and understanding, it contains very little information or photos that may demean my reputation. My lack of online visibility would create a more respected reputation in certain circles because even though social media such as blogs, Twitter, and Tumblers are popular within communication and entertainment jobs, the military is less likely to be concerned with that type of involvement. It rings more loudly with younger audiences, so a lack of involvement gives a more mature ethos.

In relation to criteria used in searching for job profile, this lack of visibility doesn't aid much to work, education, leadership, management, or interpersonal/relational skills. The only connection that might be gleaned from an active Facebook profile might add to the

interpersonal/relational skills. It may say that I, in fact have a social life and am accustomed to building relationships via social media technology.

I would like build upon these goals in reference to the criteria I have selected for a government/military position. The LinkedIn profile aids tremendously, but I believe that to truly build a substantial base for these criterion, I would have to actively involve myself in these endeavors. Endeavors, such as internships jobs related to security and international topics, would increase this greatly.

## **Conclusion: Strengths and Weaknesses**

Two strengths:

I think the two strengths that are communicated through my online identity is that it remains untainted from embarrassing or detrimental information that might discourage employers and showing a willingness to move forward with my career. There is very little available from just search engine searches of my name. This obviously helps because I'm still just a college student and viewed with little experience, but at least I don't have bad experiences broadcasted throughout the internet world that would damage or hinder potential jobs. After making the survey of my identity, I'm more aware of the potential danger for that to occur. My background check would show a positive result. So, if an employer wished to find out more about me, they would have to refer to my created professional identity from LinkedIn, which shows minimal professional experience, but I can describe a willingness to move forward. I will continue to build upon my professional identity with LinkedIn with every chance that comes around.

Two weaknesses:

One the other hand, employers looking for individuals with an online identity will expect more from a candidate of my caliber. They might wish for more involvement in virtual identities, so they might think that I'm not some, for lack of a better term, social outcast who is incompetent with present day technology. Nowadays, Twitter accounts run through the news media and seem a credible source for many professional accounts. I say this because even the LinkedIn accounts that I analyzed offered their Twitter accounts as a means of communication. Secondly, another weakness that could result from a lack of virtual visibility might show a lack of transparency for employers who wish for candidates to have a virtual presence. With technology and social media becoming more and more mainstream, individual without a presence could be applied the stigma of someone who has cause to remain invisible. Indeed, I have nothing to hide, but the thought may resound when looking for this type of information. I hope the creation of a Twitter and personal blog account would help solve this possible predicament.

## **Appendix A: Hyperlinks to LinkedIn Profiles**

1. [Antonino Giuseppe Pagoto](#)
2. [Mark W. Burns](#)
3. [Gilberto Villahemosa](#)

## **Appendix B: List of Online Identities**

1. [Facebook](#)
2. [Diigo](#)
3. [WordPress](#)
4. [LinkedIn](#)
5. [North American Motoring](#)
6. [Motoring Alliance](#)
7. [Motoring Underground](#)
8. [Hampton Roads Mini](#)
9. [VADriven](#)
10. [VW Vortex](#)
11. [Ebay](#)
12. [Amazon](#)

## **Appendix C: Analysis of Formatting**

I believe the status of my formatting and stylistic decisions plays to my advantage in creating a formal ethos necessary for a project. I choose the Baskerville font-type to give it a formal look while distancing it from the over-used Times New Roman. It still contains serifs, which maintains its readability. I choose to include the pictures directly into the advertisements because it seemed neater and concise. The headings remain consistent throughout the document. I choose to include sub-headings because it just seems to flow better and allows for the reader to jump from section to section. I tried to manage my areas of white space by avoiding double-spaced spacings. I wanted the reader the ability to scroll from page to page avoid those huge globs of wasted space, but it wasn't always avoidable. I found it necessary in some instances where sections between headings were needed, because I inserted page breaks between headings. I felt that uniformity was more important to creating an reputable ethos. If I had more time, I would have been able to fill the space with deeper content into each areas, but I am content with the time and space as they are now.