

20 ways to boost your design career with social media

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Social media is not just for abusing celebrities and finding your ex-partners. It can get you work too. We reveal 20 ways to use Twitter, Facebook and other networks to send your career soaring.

Social media isn't just for annoying famous people or wasting time when you're supposed to be working. Used in the right way, it's a great resource for designers, enabling you to find inspiration, get advice from your peers and boost your profile.

Are you using Twitter, Facebook and other sites as intelligently as you could be? In this article we reveal 20 great ways to get more from your online networking...

01. Share, don't sell

The screenshot displays the IFTTT interface for a Twitter channel. At the top, the IFTTT logo is on the left, and navigation links 'My Recipes', 'Create', 'Browse', 'Channels', and 'kasino72' are on the right. Below this is a header for 'Twitter Channel' with a back arrow and the word 'Channels'. The main content area features a large grey square with the white Twitter bird icon. To the right of the icon is a blue text block explaining that Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service. Below the text is a prominent blue 'Activate' button. Underneath the main content is a section titled 'Popular Twitter Recipes' which contains three recipe cards. Each card shows an icon for the source service (Facebook, Last.fm, or Instagram) and the Twitter icon, followed by a title, author, date, and usage count.

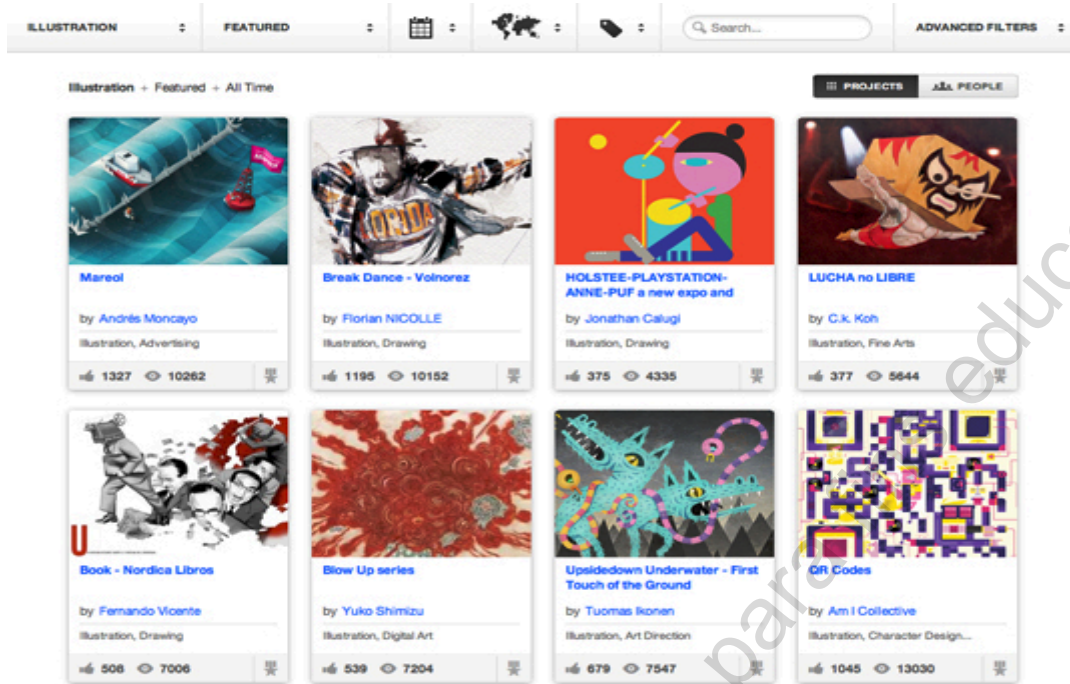
IFTTT.com is a great resource - but it can also fill your social networks with fluff. Use it wisely

Using any social network as a sales megaphone is likely to backfire: nobody wants a news feed or stream to resemble a bunch of carnival barkers, and it's particularly important to craft your content for the social network(s) you use: don't just post once and use services such as IFTTT to blare the post across every social network you've ever seen.

02. Be open minded

Social media can be a superb source of design inspiration, and the wider your social net the wider the range of inspiring things you're likely to come across. Spread your social net widely and focus on the inspiration, not the industry: it's better to follow interesting people from other creative fields than follow dullards just because they're designers.

03. Present your portfolio

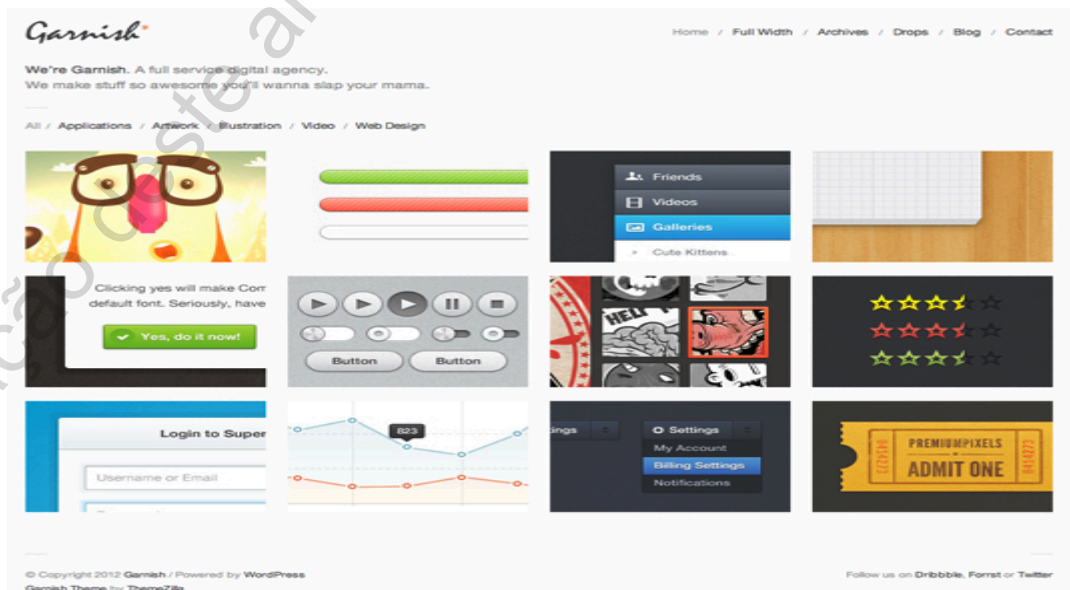


Portfolio sites like Behance enable you to interact with fellow designers and solicit feedback

An online portfolio showcasing your very best work is essential, and if the images can't tell the full story of your creative genius then provide commentary and context to explain why you're so awesome. If you don't want to build your own, you could use a Tumblr with a theme such as SimpleFolio, or build a WordPress site with a theme such as Sideshow, Garnish or Cameron Moll's Briefed or you could use somebody else's site.

There's no shortage of contenders in that latter category, including Behance's ProSite, Cargo, 4ormat and Carbonmade. There are also skill-specific sites such as deviantArt for digital artists and 500px for photographers.

Such sites aren't just static galleries: many are social platforms in their own right, enabling designers to solicit feedback and comment on others' work.



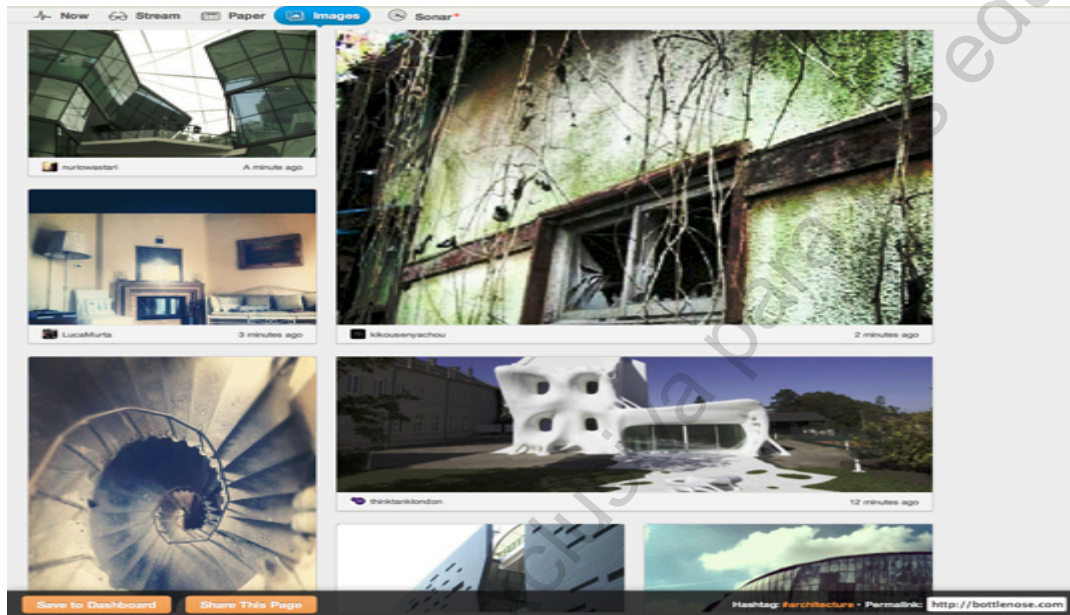
Don't want to code your own portfolio site? WordPress themes like Garnish do it for you

04. Get recommendations

Recommendations from other people carry a lot of weight when you're pitching for work, and social sites such as LinkedIn enable past employers and clients to provide such recommendations. You can ask your connections for a nice comment about something specific to display on your profile, or you can ask them to introduce you to someone they're connected to but who isn't part of your network.

Quality is more important than quantity here: don't contact everybody you've ever worked with, for or near - and if you can return the favour, please do.

05. Get a bird's eye view



Bottlenose's social media search can be a good source of eye candy and inspiration

Staying on top of multiple social media channels can be a pain, but there's no shortage of apps and services to help you stay current. For example, Tweetdeck enables you to monitor and manage multiple accounts, schedule tweets for later posting and save searches for instant access. We particularly like Bottlenose, which enables you to spot what others are sharing including URLs and images.

06. Get stuck in

Bar the odd bit of backstabbing and murder, the online design community is a welcoming one, and you can give your profile a boost by being a valuable contributor to comment threads, Twitter conversations and portfolio sites. It's a karmic thing: if you're helpful to others, then others are much more likely to be helpful to you.

07. Follow people who follow people

Many jobs and commissions are filled without agencies or employers advertising them: organisations with reasonably large social media followings can save advertising cash by blogging or tweeting when they need some new blood. The better-connected your social network, the more likely you are to find out about such opportunities.

08. Get your RSS in gear

The screenshot shows the Creative Bloq website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Find a job', 'Your account', 'Your shortlist', 'Recruiter A-Z', and 'Career advice'. Below this is a search bar with 'Programming' entered and a 'Find jobs' button. A table lists job categories and counts:

Level	Sector / Field	Job Function
CEO / Managing Director (4)	Art / Animation (135)	3D Modelling and CAD (22)
Director (112)	Audio (13)	Account Management (3)
Manager (333)	Corporate (1)	Administration (1)
Mid-Level (203)	Design (59)	Analyst (11)
Junior / Executive (56)	Development (196)	Animator (31)
Trainee / Graduate (12)	Digital / Web / Digital Media (14)	Architect (2)
Assistant (7)	Games (370)	Artist (123)
Freelance (7)	Marketing and Communications (25)	Artworker (73)
	Mobile (10)	Business Development / Sales (20)
	Other (3)	Character / Creature TD (4)
		Community Management (9)

Below the table are 'JOBS SIGN UP TOOLS' including 'Get job alerts by email', 'Upload your CV', and 'Register Free'. On the right, the 'RECRUITER ZONE' includes options to 'Set up an account', 'Search CVs', and 'Advertise with us'. A 'NOW RECRUITING' section features logos for companies like crytek.com/career, amikus, ALIEN, BLIZZARD, CODEMASTERS, JICE, and open recruitment.

Many jobs boards publish in RSS. Choose your speciality and subscribe in Google Reader

Many jobs boards - including our very own Creative Bloq jobs board - publish RSS feeds of new positions, enabling you to filter your search and see when new vacancies matching your criteria are published. One of the easiest ways to stay on top of such feeds is to stick them into a Google Reader folder so you'll see the alerts as you're catching up with your various blogs and news sites.

09. Time it right

Most people's news feeds are like Niagara Falls, with tweets and status updates roaring past at frightening speed. If you're posting work-related items or things you think will delight your peers, make sure you post when people will actually be online - which, in most cases, means during office hours (in their time zone) or the early evening.

10. Get some fresh air

The screenshot shows the Lanyrd.com event page for 'Points Brighton'. The event is scheduled for 11 October 2012 from 7:30pm to 11pm. It is located at The Skiff, 6 Gloucester Street, BN1 4EW, Brighton, England. The page features a 'Ticket Information' table:

TICKET TYPE	REMAINING	SALES END	PRICE	FEE	QUANTITY
Standard Entry	Sold Out	12 Oct 2012	£5.00	£0.95	Sold Out

The page also includes a map of the location, social media links for @pointsbrighton and #pointsbrighton, and a list of 17 known attendees. A 'Sign in' button is visible in the top right corner.

Use Lanyrd to make connections and plan your schedule before heading off to design conferences and meet-ups

The conference circuit is a great source of both inspiration and new connections, and laying the groundwork in advance can reap dividends: sites such as Lanyrd help you to find out what's on, where it is, when it's happening and who else is going, enabling you to make introductions, organise meet-ups and plan your schedule. Twitter's great for local recommendations while you're there, too.

11. Go where the work is

There's no shortage of social networks, but the time and energy you can expend on them is limited - so don't waste your efforts on networks that won't benefit you. Concentrate your energies on the networks where your peers and potential clients are. Who knows, that might even mean Google+.

12. Find your niche



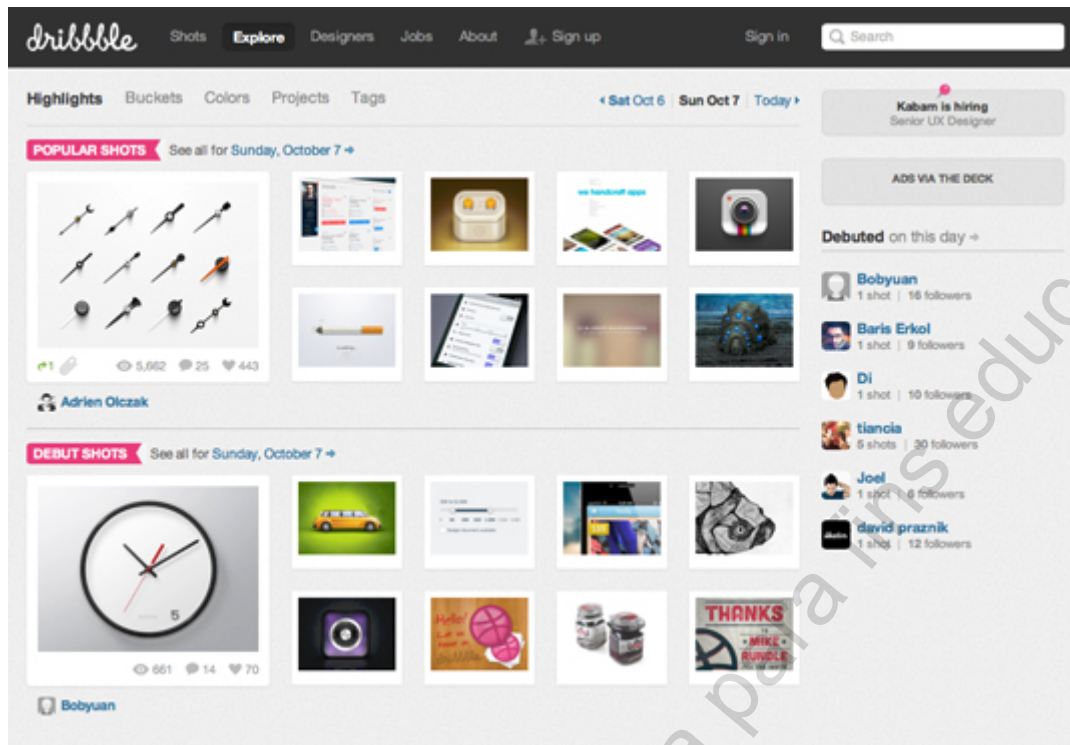
Social networks exist for every kind of designer. If you do it, there's a network for it

In addition to the big social networks, there are social sites focused on specific sectors. For example, user experience designers and IAs have networks such as the London IA, while lovers of all things HTML5 can talk code on sites such as HTML5 Rocks. Such sites are great places to learn new things and stay on top with technologies and trends.

13. Emulate your idols

Take some time to analyse the way people you follow actually use social media. Are they prolific with praise and retweets? Do they post often, or only when they've got something big to talk about? Are they on-message or largely off-duty? Identify what works, and decide what's worth emulating - and then do the reverse for the people who annoy you.

14. Get Dribbbling



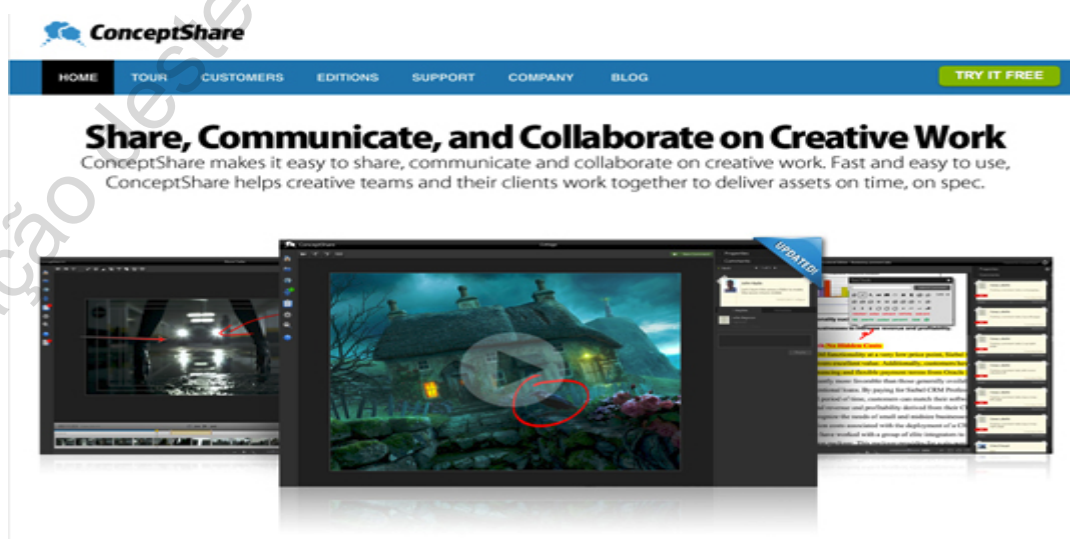
Aka "Twitter for Designers", Dribbble is a great place to showcase work and find inspiration

It's been described as 'Twitter for Designers', and that's not a bad description: Dribbble is a great resource for designers of all kinds, and if you can wangle an invite it's an excellent place to show off your completed projects and works in progress to peers and prospective clients. To get an invitation you need to sign up as a prospect and then be invited by an existing Dribbble member.

15. Look local

If you're looking for business in your local area, following and interacting with local organisations, media outlets and businesses on services such as Twitter can introduce you to potential clients, boosting your profile without any ad spend. Combining search criteria with geotagging can also help identify opportunities near you.

16. Ask for feedback



Sites such as ConceptShare.com enable you to share work with and solicit feedback

Social media's a great way to get feedback on designs or code, and there is also a wide range of dedicated design-sharing sites where you can solicit feedback from clients and collaborators on all kinds of creative work - although such sharing usually has a fee attached. Examples include Conceptshare, Cageapp, Noteboxapp and ConceptFeedback.

17. Change your profile

A basic one, we know, but make sure your profile page(s), blog, show you at your best: whether it's a LinkedIn CV or just your Twitter profile page, it's all part of the marketing mix and should make it abundantly clear that you're awesome and should be hired immediately. Don't forget the contact details.

18. Stay on trend



Other people's Twitter Lists can be fantastic things. Here's one for type foundries

One of the most important benefits of social media is that if you follow the right people, they'll keep you abreast of the things you need to know about, whether that's the latest apps or the latest enfants terribles. You can find the right people by seeing who other designers follow, and in some cases those designers have helpfully organised their news sources into Twitter lists.

19. Think long term

Social media is a marathon, not a sprint; you want people to follow you because they find you interesting, not because you've followed the entire Twitter user base in the hope that some of them will auto-follow you back. It sounds wanky, we know, but you're building a brand here.

20. Don't get blocked

Hijacking trending topics to promote your URL, posting inane comments purely to get some profile, using irrelevant #hashtags #every #monday #tuesday and #wednesday to get your #design #business into as many #twitter #feeds as possible; these things will get you a block, not a boost. And quite right too.

Fonte: CreativeBloq [Portal]. Disponível em:

<<http://www.creativebloq.com/career/boost-your-design-career-social-media-1012939>>. Acesso em: 9 Oct. 2012.

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