

Analysis of Karen and Michael's Social Media Profiles

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As technology becomes a bigger part of everyday life what used to be personal social media is now becoming an important part of the professional world. Utilizing social media as a professional tool can be both taxing and useful. With a plethora of sites such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Meetup, Twitter, Vine, Weebly, and Wordpress it can be hard to keep one's profiles up to date on all of them and it could get easy to be overwhelmed. Which sites are the best? Is mixing professional and personal sites okay or should they be kept separate? Before technology came around all someone had to do was submit a resume when applying for jobs and the future employer would have their first impression based from the resume and then the interview; now employers can just Google a person and pull up all their social media accounts to learn about them before the interview. In the article *Managing Personal vs. Professional Identity on Social Media* by Queen's University (2014) states

“Many employers consider not only professional skillset, but also prospective employees' hobbies and passions outside of work. Because of social media, people's lives have become more transparent as work and professional boundaries have blurred. Many companies are embracing the value of learning about their employees' personal lives and interests prior to making an offer to determine whether potential employees will be a good fit” (p. 1)

Two Certified Athletic Trainers whom are also involved in education, Karen Law-Fairman and Michael Hopper, were chosen as subjects for this paper because they are model examples of utilizing social media in a professional setting. Individual social media accounts were analyzed and data was stored below to encourage a professional online identity. Both subjects utilize social media to post media related to the Athletic

Training and/or educational field. They are prime examples of how Athletic Trainers should represent themselves in the utilization of social media.

### **Method**

The digital habits of two professionals in the Athletic Training and Education field were analyzed. Content on the social media websites that they utilize are analyzed. LinkedIn profiles are studied to conclude the kind of information provided and how they use the site for networking with other professionals. Facebook and Twitter accounts are studied for their content to conclude what and why they post or tweet. Examples are chosen based on contribution to their online branding and association with study. Their websites are reviewed for both set up and appearance, and the content of their sites is analyzed to conclude how well they utilize their websites to promote their online identity. The examples provided below were gathered in a separate Word document for each professional and then analyzed to support the topics of online branding and professionalism. To display each professional's digital identity the top examples were chosen and offered within the corresponding section of this paper.

#### **Online Profile of Karen Lew-Feirman**

Karen Lew Feirman, DHSc, LAT, ATC is the Varsity University Dean, Director of Compliance, and Camp Administration Scheduling and Logistics at Varsity Brands. She joined Varsity University as the Dean in October of 2014. She is involved with the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, the Louisiana Athletic Trainers Association, the Southeast Athletic Trainers Association, the National Athletic Trainers Association and the USA Cheer Safety Council. Karen has served on a variety

of committees at the state, regional, and national level. Karen has several publications including, Athletic Training Exam Review: “A Student Guide to Success”, Fourth Edition, and has been published by the NATA and Cramer Athletics for her work in preventing and reducing injuries in cheerleading. Karen is active on the following social media websites: LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

## Facebook



Karen utilizes her Facebook as a mixed professional and personal account. She boasts her passion for philanthropy by posting about her support for *Make a Wish*. Many employers like to see their employees getting involved with non-profits and volunteer work. Karen utilizes this post to not only show her support but to reach out and invite others to show their support and be involved in something that is bigger than themselves.

While working in London for Varsity; the London New Year’s Parade, she posted her excitement about her experiences there. This is a purely personal post however it represents an appropriate way to post on social media while at work events. She did not post about how bored she was or how much of a burden it was to be a judge. Excitement and joy fill this post a good way to post about work events.

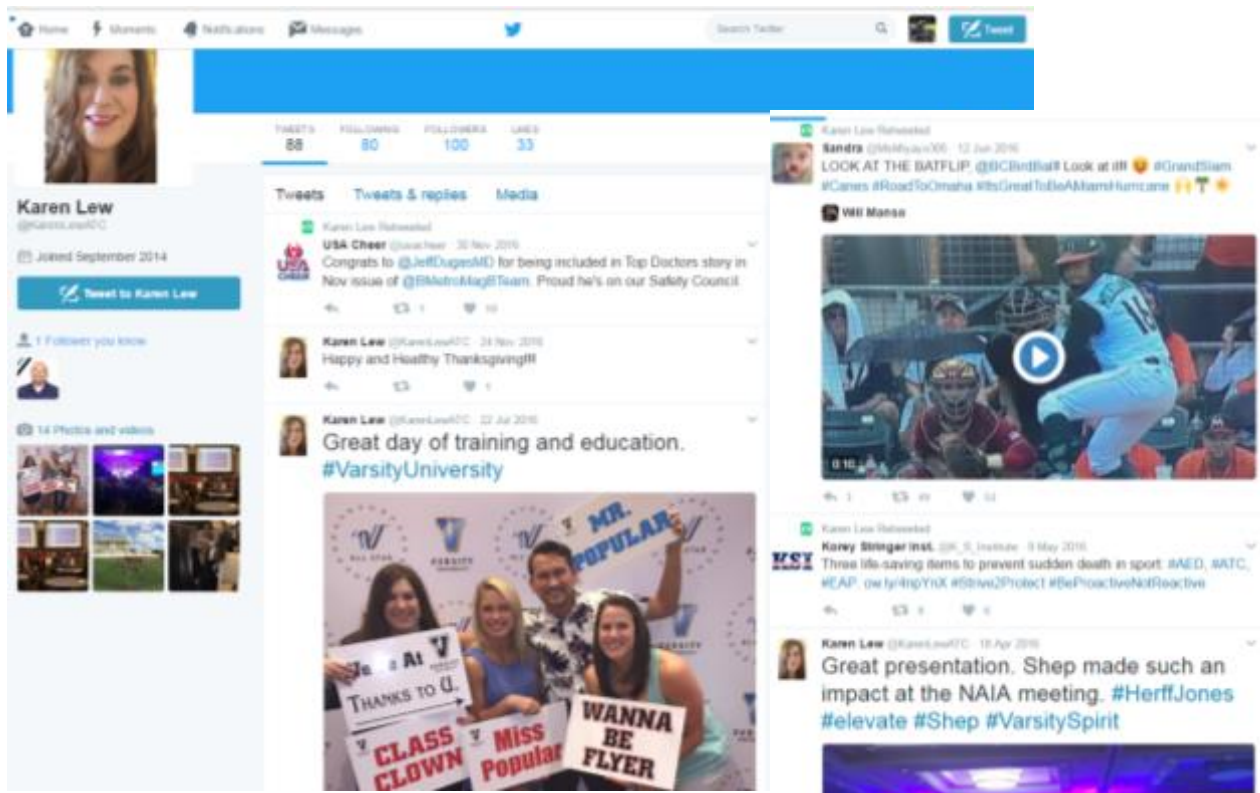
When someone goes to Karen for advice she not only replies but replies with a dense, thought out answer. Her response is excellent advice for any professional applying to jobs.

## LinkedIn



LinkedIn is solely a professional website. Karen's profile is basic for someone of many professional years. Her background informational section is blank but her skills and education are sufficiently filled out. Her skills are endorsed by a sufficient number of people. Karen is settled in her career so I do not believe she utilizes LinkedIn for networking to acquire a job which could explain for the lack of posts on her account.

## Twitter



A preview of Karen’s Twitter will show that she does not tweet very often. Her tweets or retweets are both professional and personal or a mix. It seems she may find it easier to use one account for both personal and professional online identity as opposed to maintaining two separate accounts; one for professional posts and another for personal matter. Even when Karen does post or tweet about personal matters she tends to shy away from politics and controversial issues making her combined accounts professional even when they are personal.

### Online Profile of Michael Hopper

Michael (Mike) Hopper, MS, ATC, LAT is the current Head Certified Athletic Trainer at Bishop Lynch High School in Dallas, Texas. As a Head Athletic Trainer, he is responsible for the healthcare of almost 800 student-athletes daily. He is a licensed Athletic Trainer in both Illinois and Texas, as well as being Certified by the BOC for Athletic Trainers. Hopper is also

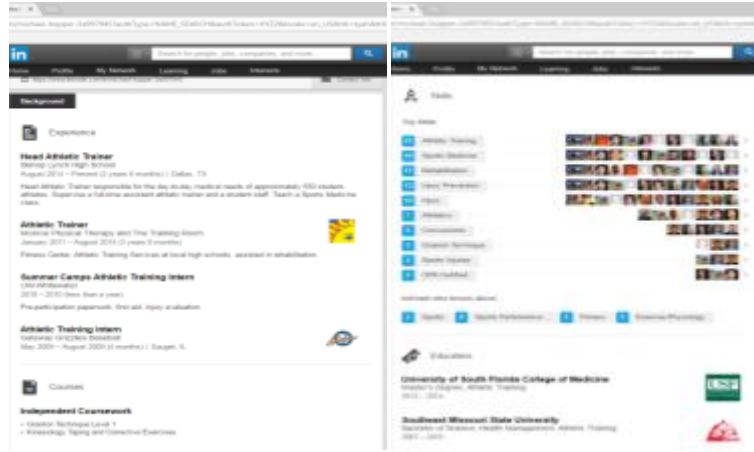
certified as a Level 1 Functional Movement Screen practitioner, KinesioTape and Graston Technique. Mike is active on social media through various websites to include: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and WordPress.

## Facebook



Mike's Facebook is a mix of personal and professional life. While he utilizes this social media platform as what seems to be mostly professional posts he does have the occasional person post such as the one in regards to his student loans. His post of a motivational quote for athletic trainers is a great way to put professional peers in a good mood. He advocates for important concerns such as Sudden Cardiac Death among athletes and the importance of AED's and CPR training in schools and in sports. He is vocal about what he is passionate for but not vulgar or menacing to others. He shows great pride and passion in his career through his posts.

## LinkedIn



Michael's LinkedIn profile is flooded with knowledge of his life. While he does not actively post anything on LinkedIn his profile is bound to get noticed. He has a large of skills that are endorsed and every section is filled out with information about Mike's professional past and present.

## Twitter





Mike’s Twitter account is by far where he shines in his online identity in terms of main stream social media. He is an avid tweeter and even co-hosts a video info segment called #ATtalk. Twitter is where Mike posts most of his professional media. He advocates for Athletic Trainers around the nation, gets involved in the National Athletic Training Association (NATA) and provides knowledge through #ATtalk. With over 3k followers he reaches a lot of people. He provides a link to his WordPress account to direct his followers to more of his online identity. Connecting sites is important when attempting to get followers of different sites to cross reference and read posts from sites they may not know of.



## WordPress



"Even though the potential of blog use in increasing student interactivity and collaboration has been explored by many educators, the research conducted on the effectiveness of blog use in an educational context is still quite limited and is considered as a contradictory research area." (Kilic, 2014) Hopper does a great job of educating through social media. His WordPress account has been up and active since June 2011. He has his links to his Twitter as well as links to other sites he has posted articles for. His WordPress account is used for posts that are longer and more in depth than his Tweets can be. All blog posts are of a professional caliber.

## Discussion

Through reviewing Karen and Michael's I could collect some excellent examples of what my PLE should look like. I plan on mixing Karen's ability to mix personal and professional life together to obtain my online identity. I believe the personal touches make it more inviting and relatable. Every now and then I can relate doing core and balance training with my dog to my work as an Athletic Trainer, this would lighten up the mood and hopefully bring a smile to readers faces seeing a husky on a balance disc. I enjoy how Mike links all his profiles together, I

plan on linking my WordPress account to my Twitter. Mike is active in on multiple social media platforms and is constantly posting new things. I believe this is the hardest part of keeping a PLE. To maintain one's online identity it is crucial to make the time to do so. Maintaining and being active in the Athletic Training profession on social media is a take away from analyzing Mike. Through the analysis of social media profiles one is able to create an image to follow when creating their own their own online identity.

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