Personal branding: How to make most of social media websites

Story and photo by Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

Today's economic environment demands individuals take a more creative approach to differentiating themselves from their peers. Whether looking for a new job or just trying to hold on to a current one, people today need to leverage all of the resources of the information age to their advantage.

It was with this idea in mind that local entrepreneur and military family member, Jermaine Higgins, who owns his own marketing company, created a workshop in conjunction with Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC).

The workshop, entitled Personal Branding 101, is a primer for people wanting to learn how to use the internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the myriad other free tools available to enhance their image and communicate directly to colleagues and potential employers or clients.

"What I wanted the students to achieve is to just think about ways to brand themselves," said Higgins. "When you think about marketing, you are a brand. I tell people they need to start being conscious of how they can actually communicate who they are."

During the course, Higgins laid out the idea of creating a personal branding tool kit. The "tool kit" helps individuals not only inform others about themselves, but also help people reflect on the type of individual they are and what they have to offer the community.

"I want them to sit down and think about how they perceive themselves and how other people perceive them," he said. "I'd like them to start at ground zero and create a plan to execute their personal branding."

For individuals like Cynthia Cross, a professional who accompanied her husband to CFAY as a family member, the workshop was a great way to help her prepare for the day when she transfers to her next duty station.

"Being a military spouse and constantly moving, you're always looking at how to market yourself when you're transferring," said Cross. "I also thought this would be a great way to see what new tools are out there."

During the workshop Higgins showed how people could use different services to compliment one another and reach a targeted audience or wide, general audience ensuring maximum exposure and effectiveness.

"I thought it was excellent. Especially for this community. If you have a niche or a passion for a small-business idea, this is a great way to learn how to market and brand yourself," said Cross. "I'd recommend this to anyone."

For community members interested in this or the other many programs FFSC has to offer, stop by the fourth floor of the Community Readiness Center or log on to www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka and click on the community support tab.

Higgins Consultancy Group President and military family member Jermaine Higgins addresses the class during his Personal Branding 101 workshop held at the Community Readiness Center Oct. 28. The hour-long workshop helps teach the importance of using some of today's latest, and free, technology to differentiate themselves from their peers in the workplace.

CNFJ Twitter contest finalists tour CFAY, *USS George Washington*

Story and photo by MC1 Brock A. Taylor, CNFJ Public Affairs

Winners of Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) U.S-Japan alliance slogan contest got a chance to experience the U.S. Navy for a day during a VIP tour of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Nov. 6.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-Japan alliance, CNFJ hosted a slogan contest on its Twitter site, allowing Japanese citizens to choose a catchphrase that best describes the half-century partnership between the U.S. Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force.

CNFJ chose five finalists who were invited to step inside CFAY and see first hand what life is like on the installation, including an in-depth tour of the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73).

"This is one way that we are combining traditional and new ways of communicating with our host nation public in sharing the message about the purpose and capabilities of our bilateral security alliance," said Cmdr. Ron Steiner, CNFJ public affairs officer.

The top slogan was "*One Ocean: One Mission*" by Koji Morooka. The runner up slogans included "*Together We Lower the Anchor of Peace*" by Mayumi Kinoshita, "*Defending Together the Cornerstone of Peace*" by Minato Takiguchi, "*Unsinkable Alliance*" and "*A partnership that Begins from the Sea*" by Mami Hioki, and "*Bonds Across the Seas*" by Yuichi Hokazono.

CNFJ created the Japanese Twitter account, http://twitter.com/cnfj, in May 2009, and since then followers have grown from several hundred to more than 7,500. In response to the growing interest in learning about the U.S. Navy in Japan and the 7th Fleet area of responsibility, Steiner says CNFJ will be providing opportunities similar to this in the future to allow more Japanese citizens to learn accurate and in-depth information about the mission of the U.S. Navy.

"I really appreciate what the U.S. Navy does and so I decided to participate in the contest," said Hioki.

Hioki, along with the four other winners received copies of "Enduring Partnership," a book describing the history of the U.S.-Japan alliance, with a special signed letter from CNFJ Rear Adm. Richard Wren. Following a tour of *George Washington*, the fans got a chance to see workers in action beneath the U.S. 7th Fleet flagship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19), which is currently undergoing a dry dock maintenance availability at Ship Repair Facility. For Mayumi Kinoshita, seeing the daily activities of U.S. personnel in motion up close was awe inspiring.

"I'm a big fan of ships," said Kinoshita. "It was really exciting to actually go on the *George Washington* and see what it's like on the ship."

The contest's top winner, Morooka, who has been following the CNFJ Twitter page for nearly half a year, says he was surprised with the opportunity to see the base in person.

(Left) Lt. Cmdr. Dave Hecht, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) public affairs officer, describes the layout of the ship's flight deck to Japanese guests as part of a VIP tour aboard the ship Nov. 6. The tour was part of a reward given to five finalists of the CNFJ 50th anniversary of U.S.-Japan alliance slogan contest via the command's Japanese Twitter website.

"I couldn't believe it when I found out I had won," Morooka said.

This is Morooka's second visit to CFAY. The last visit was during one of the installation's Friendship Day events, which draws thousands of guests inside the gates.

"It was very crowded and busy during my last visit, but this time I was able to take my time and see a lot more. I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity," Morooka said.

After a tour of the installation, the guests concluded the tour with lunch at the Main Street Food Court, where they got a chance to indulge in American-style food.

The editor asks:

"***Did you know***, continuation board results have been approved by the chief of naval personnel, and Navy Personnel Command (NPC) is notifying commanding officers of Sailors who have not been selected for continuation?

"Once notifications are complete, all results will be posted on BUPERS Online at https://www.bol.navy.mil where individuals may check their results personally, similar to advancement results.

"The senior enlisted continuation board is a performance-driven review of master chiefs, senior chiefs and chiefs with more than 19 years of service and three years' time-in-grade. It serves as a force stabilization measure, like Perform to Serve, allowing the Navy to retain the best Sailors.

"The senior enlisted continuation board convened Sept. 20 at NPC. The board reviewed 9,096 active duty, full-time support, and reserve records including 5,740 chiefs, 2,343 senior chiefs and 1,013 master chiefs."