6 Tips for Leveraging Your Personal Brand to Create Partnership Opportunities

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Comedian Kevin Hart is building an entertainment powerhouse from stand-up comedy, acting, hosting award shows and launching a successful production company. Hart has added an original series with Peacock TV, a talk show in which he interviews "A-list celebrities, athletes, and public figures." The series is called *Hart to Hart*. In a recent interview, the comedian sat down with rapper Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter to discuss life lessons and business moves.

During the conversation, Hart opened up about the realization that his name, image and likeness were more valuable than his income, stating: "I realized my name and likeness was worth more than my actual check because it allowed me to open up other opportunities."

In short, Hart was speaking about the power of personal branding and leveraging his brand to create alliances and partnerships. In the interview, Hart asked Jay-Z about the moment he understood the power of his personal brand. Here are six lessons from the discussion about pivoting from a personal brand to a profitable business:

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1. Hard work accumulates

Multi-million dollar partnerships are a byproduct of your hard work meeting the right opportunity. Work like you're already a millionaire. As the face of the organization, give considerable thought to the following questions:

- What about you as the leader, entrepreneur or coach makes you unique?
- Why are you motivated to do this work?
- What values are you driven by?
- What principles guide you and your organization?

When you're clear on these answers, you automatically align yourself with your future partners, *whether you know it or not.* When you're showing up consistently with quality products and services, the right people will notice. When partnership opportunities present themselves, you have more negotiating power, because you have a proven track record of doing the work and getting results.

2. Think differently

It's not about being new; being different is better. Your brand origin story holds the key to "thinking differently." Uniqueness allows you to approach problems and opportunities with a different perspective only you can provide. Do some research on "first principles thinking." First principles thinking is a problem-solving method based on understanding the underlying causes and not just the symptoms.

The first principles thinking methodology is at the core of some of the most successful organizations in the world, including Tesla, Amazon and Apple. When you think differently, it allows you to be innovative, which leads to new

opportunities.

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3. Take responsibility

When you enter the marketplace, think about your business as an extension of your mission. A brand's mission is a declaration of purpose that guides its operations and provides a framework for decision-making. A good mission statement should be clear, concise and inspiring. It should also be specific enough to give guidance but not so restrictive that it stifles creativity or innovation.

In the interview with Hart, Jay-Z stated that his mission was a byproduct of his lack of opportunity. The "status-quo" path to becoming a musician wasn't available to him, so he launched a record label. With the label's success, his mission became to show other artists who faced similar challenges that they could create their own opportunities. The same is true for you — when you're clear on your mission, it will guide how you operate and make decisions in your business.

4. Create products and services that align with your brand's mission

What characteristics contribute to brand leaders like Hart and Jay-Z's ability to leverage their name, image and likeness, instead of being beholden to their current income or stakeholders? The answer lies in their ability to create products and services that align with their mission versus waiting for someone to offer an opportunity. This proactive mindset allows them to see beyond the status quo and identify new growth opportunities.

5. Be clear on what you bring to the table

When you can see the value in what you have to offer, it makes it easier to find opportunities that are a good fit and walk away from those that don't fit. When you're clear on your mission and the significance you bring to the table, it becomes easier to identify partnerships and negotiate your asking price.

For example, if you're interested in scaling your business past six figures, you will need strategic alliances. These partnerships can form joint ventures, mentorship relationships or even investments. To create win-win partnerships, you must be crystal clear about your value and be able to back it up with data.

Related: **The 7 Key Elements of an Effective Personal Brand**

6. Develop a marketing strategy that gets the message in front of the right people

Your personal brand's position will determine the types of opportunities that come your way. For example, if you want to be known as an expert, you need a marketing strategy that gets your message in front of the right people. Your plan may include speaking at conferences, writing articles for trade publications or being featured on industry podcasts. When you're strategically positioning yourself, it allows you to attract opportunities aligned with your goals. Foster relationships built on trust and respect. Relationships are crucial to business success, but not all relationships are created equal. It's essential to foster relationships with people who share your values. Consider connecting with like-

minded individuals through associations and networking.

By following these tips, you can position yourself to take advantage of opportunities that will help you grow your business. When you’re clear on your mission, the value you bring to the table, and have a marketing strategy that positions you as an expert in your field, opportunities will come your way. The key is to be strategic about the opportunities you pursue; always keep your mission at the forefront. By doing so, you’ll be able to create partnerships to help you achieve your goals and grow your business.

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