Katie Hough

Professor Spilde

Social Media Marketing

9 December 2018

<div align="center">Personal Branding Project</div>

This semester, I took a course on social media marketing. This course covered the basics for creating and maintaining an influential presence for a business on the major social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. Throughout the course, I also had the opportunity to explore proper personal branding tactics. With all the new information I learned about personal branding, I was able to evaluate the online presence I had already established and apply new methods to present a more professional persona online.

Step One: Assessing My Online Presence

The first step I took in accomplishing my goal of having distinguished online presence was to Google myself and examine the results. When I Googled "Katie Hough", the search results did not include anything related to me. I tried again, this time searching "Katie Hough Kansas City" and found two related results on the first page.
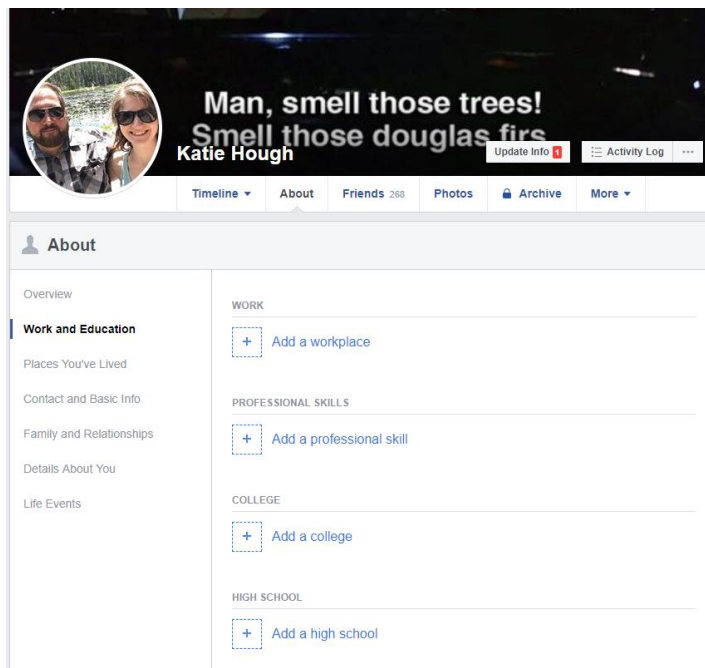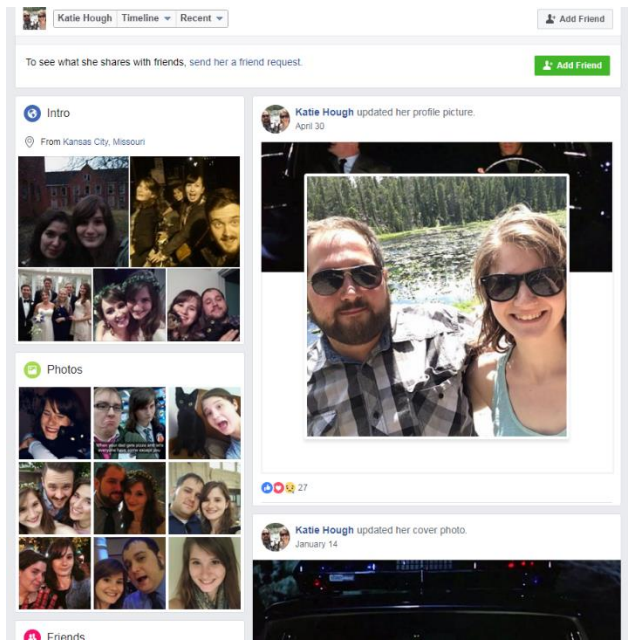

The Google results included a news article posted in January of 2017 and my LinkedIn profile and profile picture.

Next, I assessed my Facebook profile using the "view as public" option.

The only categories that I had made visible to the public were my profile pictures and cover photos. Everything else including information about me and posts I had made were not visible.

My Instagram profile had a few photos uploaded. My bio was an emoji that is only visible on the Instagram mobile app.
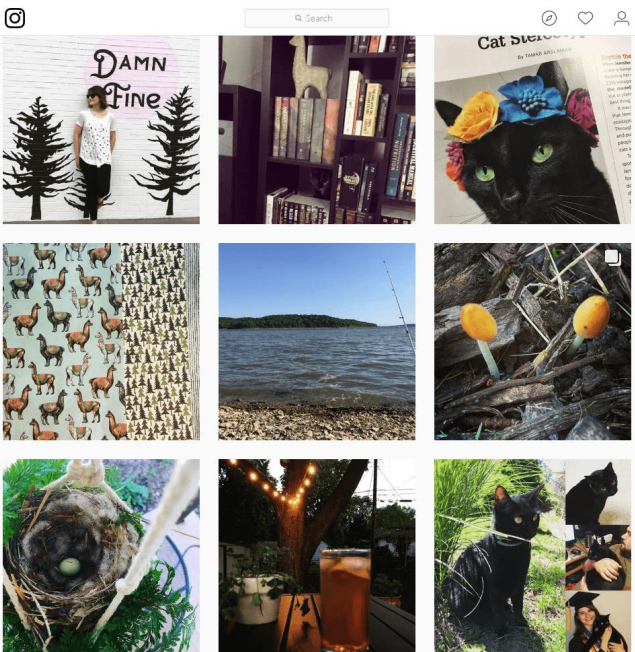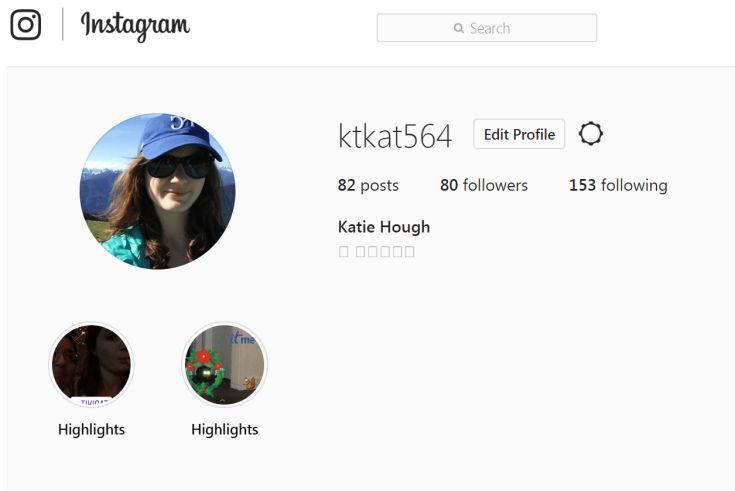
The profile had already been set for public view. An unfamiliar viewer may have been able to find out a little more about me that they could not learn from my Facebook profile, but their biggest impression of me would probably be that I love cats. At the beginning of this project, I had 80 followers.

Next, I looked at my LinkedIn profile.

I had already put a lot of time and effort into making my LinkedIn profile look professional. The only item I was missing was my summary. At the beginning of this project, I had 19 connections.

Katie Hough
Marketing Major at Johnson County Community College

Experience +

Customer Service Representative ✎
Cosentino's Market
Aug 2010 – Present · 8 yrs 2 mos
Kansas City, Missouri Area
As a Customer Service Representative, I focus on leading a department of over 40 employees to provide the best service possible for our customers. My daily responsibilities include addressing customer requests and complaints, encouraging employees to be friendly and helpful, and performing various administrative tasks to ensure the business runs smoothly.

Education +

Johnson County Community College ✎
Associate's degree, Marketing
2018 – 2019

Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley ✎
Associate's degree, Biology, General
2012 – 2016
Activities and Societies: Member and Recording Officer of Phi Theta Kappa Academic Honor Society

Volunteer Experience +

Co Organizer of Donation Drive ✎
Rose Brooks Center Inc.
Oct 2015 – Dec 2015 · 3 mos

While serving as a leadership officer for Phi Theta Kappa, my chapter organized a Christmas donation drive to provide clothing, personal hygiene products, toys, small gifts, and monetary donations to assist the women and children seeking refuge from abuse at the Rose Brooks Center.

Katie Hough
Marketing Major at Johnson County Community College

Skills & Endorsements   Add a new skill ✎

Customer Service · 3
Thomas Diggs and 2 connections have given endorsements for this skill

Leadership · 2
Thomas Diggs and 1 connection have given endorsements for this skill

Communication · 3
Thomas Diggs and 2 connections have given endorsements for this skill

Industry Knowledge

Research · 2	Project Management · 2
Social Media Marketing · 2	Event Planning · 3
Social Media · 2	Marketing · 2
Event Management	Strategic Planning
Job Evaluation	Public Relations
Sales	Retail

Tools & Technologies

Microsoft Office · 2	Microsoft Excel · 2
Microsoft Word · 2	Microsoft PowerPoint · 2
Adobe Photoshop	

Katie Hough
Marketing Major at Johnson County Community College

Interpersonal Skills

Management · 3	Public Speaking · 2
Training · 2	Team Leadership
Team Building	Time Management
Employee Training	

Other Skills

Social Media Outreach · 2	Constructive Feedback
Supervisory Management	Adobe Creative Cloud

Show less ^

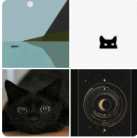Accomplishments   +

1   **Honor & Award**   ⌄
Graduated with Honors

Interests

MMGY Global
12,583 followers

Johnson County Community College
39,776 followers

University of Missouri-Kansas City
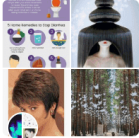67,064 followers

Adweek
991,667 followers

Lastly, I viewed my Pinterest profile.

Katie H
3 followers · 3 following

Boards   Pins   Tries   Topics   Last saved to ⌄

Create board

Abode
83 Pins

Pleasing to My E...
32 Pins

Wedding day
70 Pins

I need to organi...
7 Pins

FOOD + DRINKS
304 Pins

Places to Visit
37 Pins

Maybe I'll Make ...
22 Pins

DECOR.
97 Pins

Pacific Nort...
9 Pins

Cocktail Party
15 Pins

Random
31 Pins

DP+MJ
243 Pins

I'd totes wear this
58 Pins

Exterior
12 Pins

My Pinterest boards were mainly concerned with things I found visually appealing.
One may have been able to learn a little about my personal style preferences and foods I like but it would be difficult for them to discover details about my personality and professionalism.

Before starting this project, I did not have a Twitter account or Youtube channel.

Even though I have several different social media accounts, I have always been conservative about posting personal details because I thought that the less information I display, especially publicly, the better. However, once I began learning more about personal branding from this course, I decided that I should make more information about me available to the public in order to give potential employers the opportunity to learn more about me and hopefully determine that I am a good fit for their business.

Step Two: Defining My Personal Brand

Before I could begin making meaningful changes to my social media profiles, I had to consider how I wanted to present myself and how I wanted to be perceived by others. To do that, I took time to think about why having a personal brand is important.

To me, personal branding is important because it helps you differentiate yourself from others in your career field. It allows potential employers to learn more about you before inviting you in for an interview, and it is what drives you in both your personal and professional life.

One method I used to create my personal brand was to think of words that I would like people to use to describe me. A few words that I would like to be described as include "creative", "strategic", "fun", and "analytical".

With this in mind, I developed a personal branding statement:

"I use strategy and creativity to produce work that stands out."

Step Three: Developing a Personal Social Media Strategy

I developed a personal social media strategy to use as a guide to build an influential online presence.

My personal social media strategy:

- Make more connections with individuals in my career field
- Make more posts that are relevant to my career field and my passions
- Make myself more accessible on search engine results pages

Step Four: Optimizing my Social Media Profiles

In order to become easily discoverable on search engines as well as social media platforms, I had to ensure that each of my profiles were fully-optimized. To achieve this goal, I made several additions and changes the profiles.

Facebook:

I had never felt that it was necessary to include my place of employment, job title, or education on my profile. I have always been conservation about posting my personal information for anybody on the internet to see because I thought that the less information I display, especially publicly, the better. However, taking this course has certainly changed my mind about this method of thinking.

I decided that I want to give myself the best chance possible at being hired for any job I may apply for. I now believe that it is a good idea to give potential employers the opportunity to learn more about me, so they may consider me as an ideal candidate for a job position. So, I finally added my education and employment information on my Facebook profile.

I also began posting more frequently about topics related to marketing and things that I am passionate about.

Instagram:

To better optimize my Instagram page, I included a brief summary about myself and where I am located. I also made sure to post more frequently about things I am passionate about, such as cats, alpacas, and exploring the great outdoors.
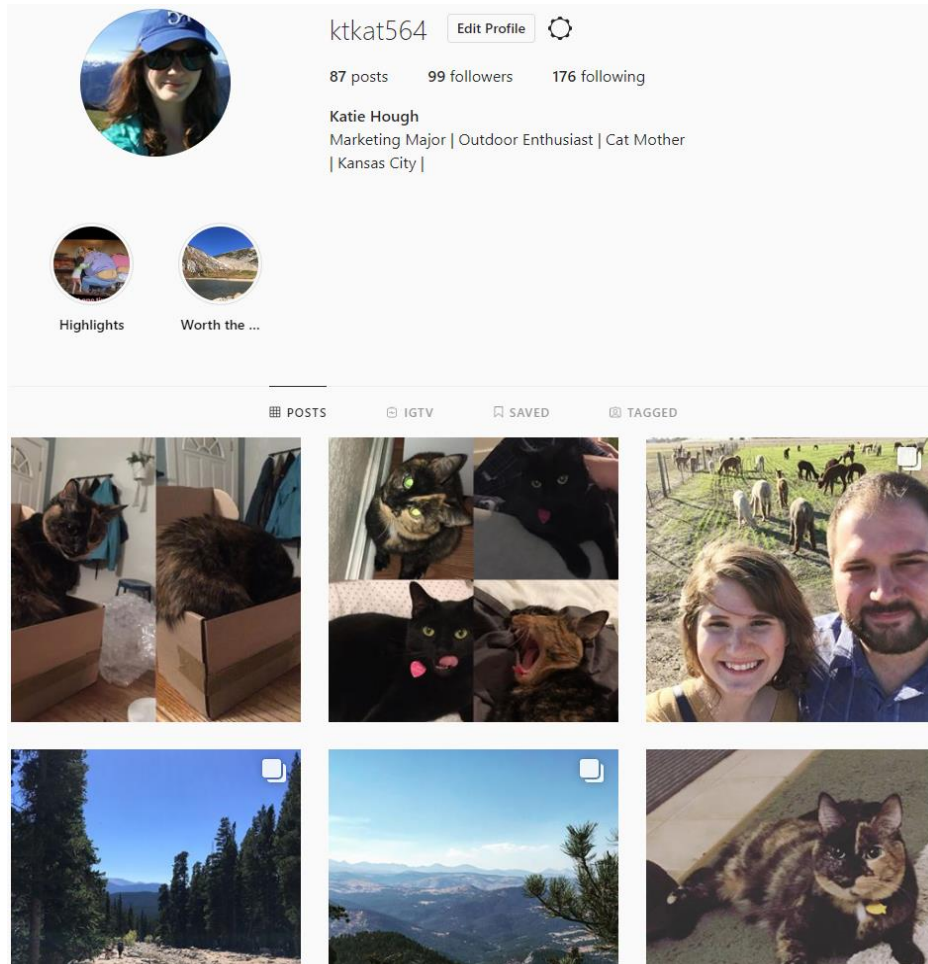
Twitter:

Before this project, I did not have a Twitter account. I deleted my account years ago because I felt that Twitter was outdated and unnecessary. Having created a new account and explored the community, I discovered that Twitter is a useful platform for many business professionals, not just celebrities, corporations, and public figures. I found a few marketing professionals and businesses that I would have never found out about if I hadn't given Twitter a second chance. Going back to creating a Twitter account in the first place, I added a profile picture, cover photo, my location, and a short bio for all to see when they visit my profile. I also Retweeted a few posts that I felt were relevant to marketing and my interests.

Additionally, I created took advantage of the Twitter Lists tool and constructed a list of various marketing businesses and professionals to keep an eye on and gain some industry knowledge from.

LinkedIn:

I had already added most of my professional information on LinkedIn before beginning this project. To complete my profile, I added a brief summary. By doing so, I was able to achieve All Star status.

I also added new skills that I had learned over the semester and the Hootsuite Platform Certification.

Pinterest:

For my Pinterest profile, I created a new board with tips and ideas to aid me in my professional development. If a potential employer viewed my Pinterest profile, I would want to give them impression that I am always looking for new ideas to ensure my work is creative, original and effective.
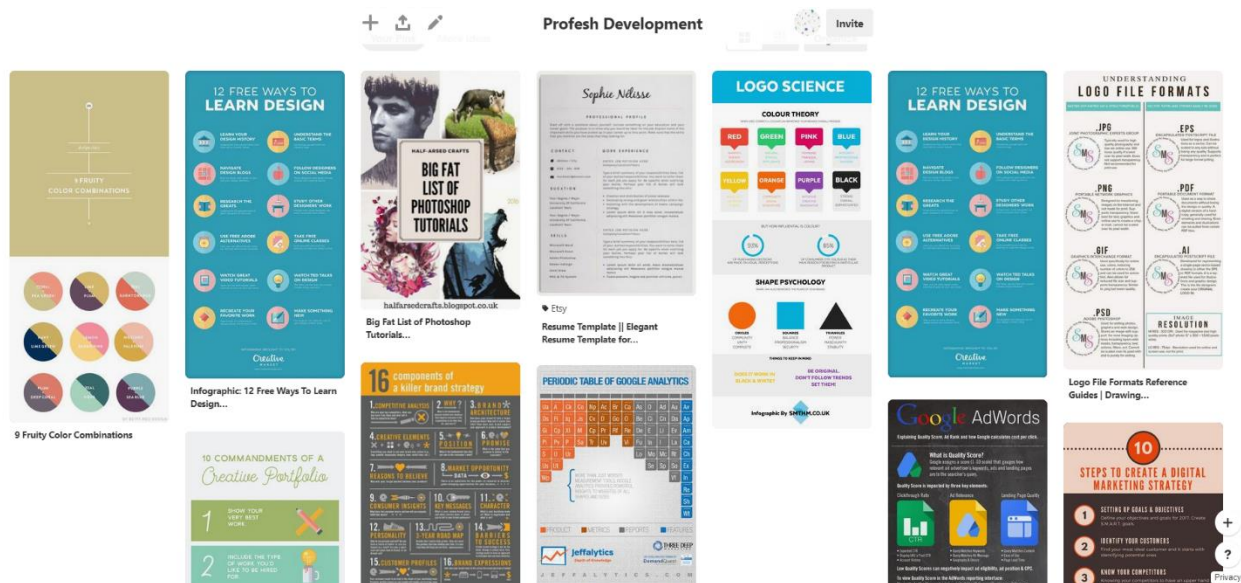
Youtube:

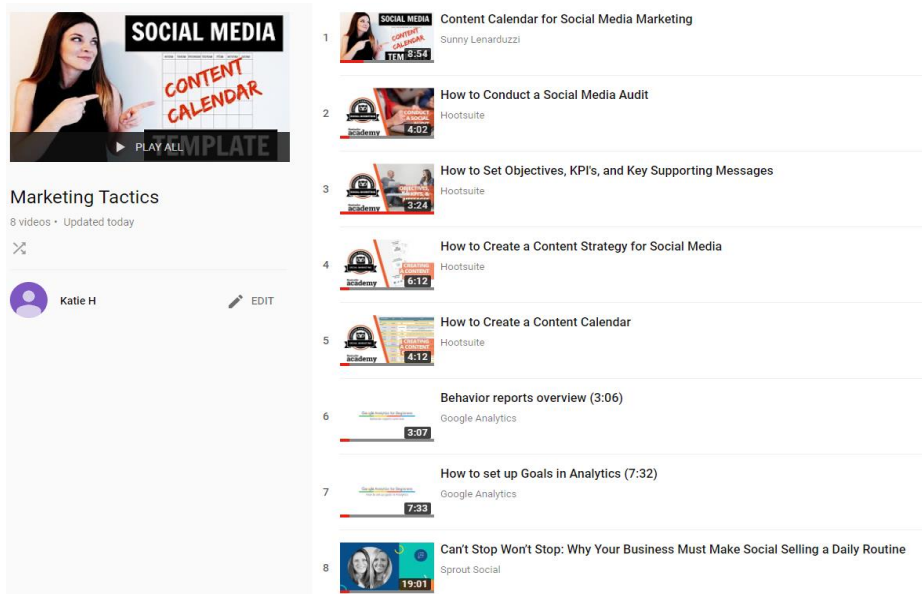Much like Pinterest, my goal for my Youtube channel is to display my eagerness to learn and find new ways to create original and effective work. I created a playlist of marketing videos to expand my knowledge of my career field.
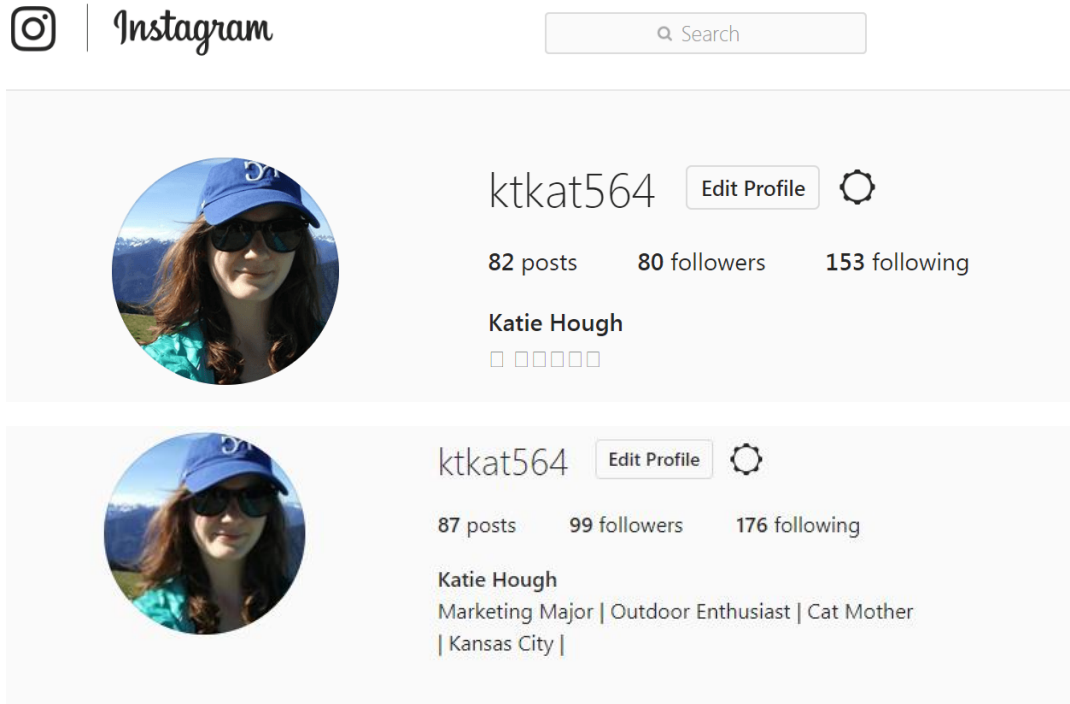

Results and Reflection:

This project encouraged me to step outside of my comfort zone. Before taking this course, I was not interested in frequently posting on social media and I did not feel comfortable exposing so much of my personal information for everyone to see. Although I attempted to make myself more accessible and post more regularly, I only saw a significant difference on some of my profiles. I did not see a noticeable difference concerning increasing in followers, engagement, or other factors on Facebook, Youtube and Pinterest. Although optimizing each of these profiles did not produce impactful results, I am confident that the changes I made will be beneficial for me in the future.

The changes made to Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter appear to be more effective.

For Instagram, my follower count rose from 80 to 99 between the months of September and December, which is a 19% increase.
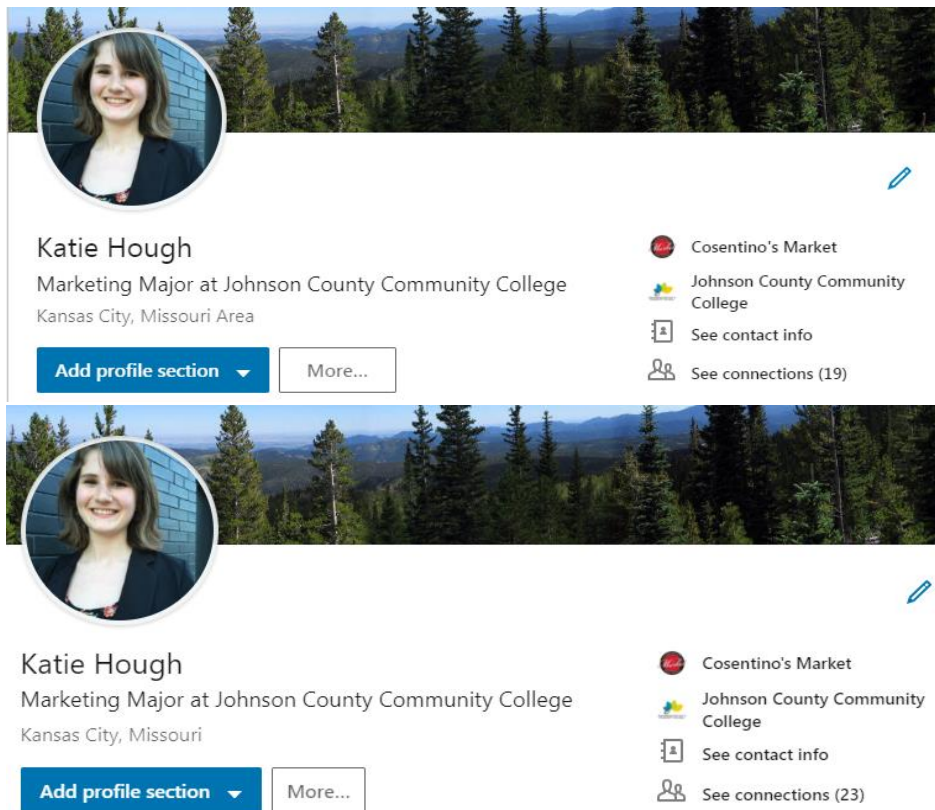

Taking into consideration that I had created my Twitter account during this project, my follower count grew from 1 follower in October to 8 in December, a 700% increase.
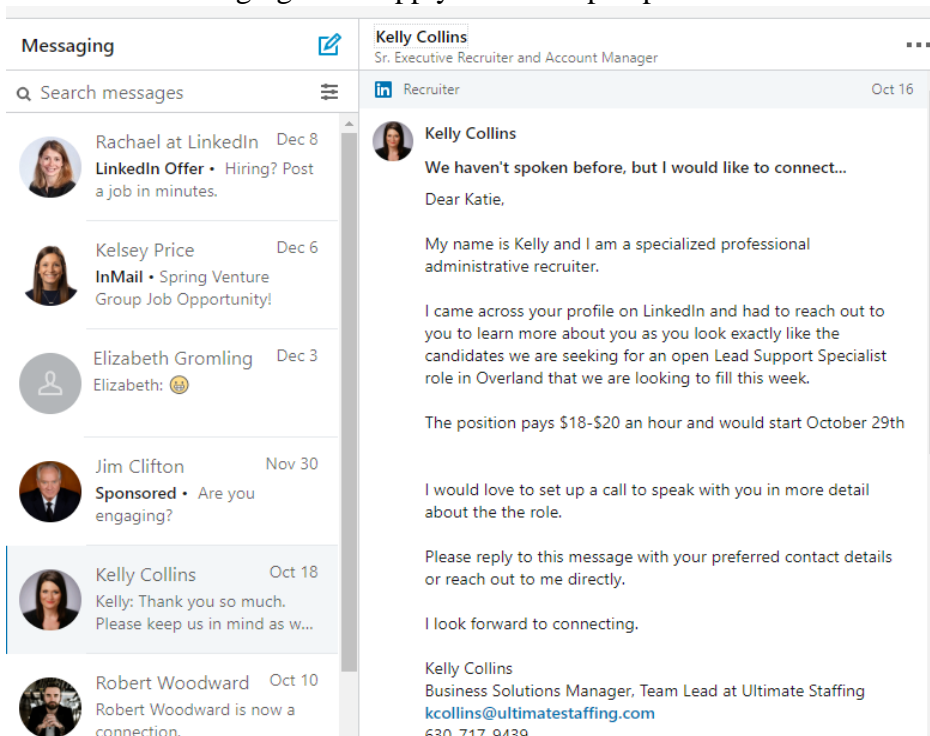
On LinkedIn, I made 4 new connections after beginning this project, an increase of 17%.

The additional information that I added to my LinkedIn profile brought a few messages from job recruiters encouraging me to apply for their open positions.

The final Google Search:

Although I had made several changes to better-optimize my online presence, this Google search result yielded similar results to the search I had performed three months prior. One notable change is that my Twitter account is a result on the first page of results.

Overall, I felt that this was a particularly challenging project for me due to the fact that I have never been someone who is eager to expose so much of myself to everyone who uses the internet. Additionally, I had never taken the time to think about what it is that I stand for and how I want to be perceived by others. My goal has been to just get through school, get a degree, get a job, and then figure myself out. I now understand that this approach would not have been beneficial for me in the long run. I am glad that I have been given the opportunity to reevaluate my goals and ambitions.

This project helped me to realize how important it is to begin preparing for the career I want now instead of waiting until I am almost finished with my degree. Moving forward, I am excited to continue learning about how to define my personal brand and discovering new ways to improve how I am perceived by others. I will continue to build connections with other marketing students and professionals. I look forward to using this knowledge to put forth my best creative and strategic strengths to stand out from the rest of my peers, and to continue to grow both personally and professionally.