

Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Managing your persona online is partly marketing, partly tradecraft, and mostly magic. We at the Hetherington Group are very good at the tradecraft—as we’ve been told. The marketing is the harder part; it requires flexibility and salesmanship, sometimes beyond tolerance level.

Much of the online information that appears on the Web is the property of its author—their prized possession. Asking that author to remove, redact, or edit their hard work involves charisma. Consider an online article about Bob Smith, written by a journalist covering Bob Smith’s company. That journalist went through much research and writing to craft that story and get it published. Now you are asking that journalist to remove the information, edit the work, or even perhaps kill the story.

It’s a humbling experience for you to approach with figurative hat-in-hand asking with such solicitous remarks as “how wonderful their work is,” and “how sorry you are to have to ask them to remove their work.” Even if you are indeed angry about the content publicly posted online, you’ll never get the journalist’s assistance with anger. The humble-bow approach can work beautifully—and, in fact, has for many years worked well for me. You truly do achieve more with honey than vinegar. Courtesy, rather than shock and awe, gets the job done.

In that spirit, you’ll find our feature article in this issue of *Data2Know.com* filled with helpful information on how to manage your online persona.

Happy reading!
Cynthia H.
Cynthia Hetherington

Protecting Your Image Online

by Cynthia Hetherington, MLS, MSM, CFE, CII



Have You Googled Yourself Lately?

That’s not a bad line to throw out at a happy hour; it’s sure to raise a few eyebrows. However, it is a serious question to ask anyone—professional or otherwise—concerned with their own personal security. With a good Google search, I can find where you live, discover your likes and dislikes, learn what you do with your free time, or what others might think of you. Perhaps even habits you would likely not want known, particularly by coworkers.

Between time spent with Pokémon Go and looking up puppy memes, take a minute to search on your name in search engines such as Google, Bing, and others to find out where your name appears.

To properly execute a search on yourself, be sure to enter your name using quotation marks and consider alternate forms of your name. For example, in my case, “Cynthia Hetherington,” “Cindy Hetherington,” “C Hetherington,” and finally all of those again, including the L for my middle initial (“Cynthia L Hetherington”). Do not worry about periods or other punctuation; the search engines ignore those.

Your search results might likely surprise you. First and foremost, if your Facebook or LinkedIn profile appears at the top of the results, then you will need to take some corrective action at those Web sites to prevent them from being searchable. Use the privacy features on those sites to manage the accessibility of your profile.

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