

Crafting My Digital Legacy: A Journey from Community Service to Pro-Social Marketing



Discovering My Why

As I approach the end of my college journey here at Rutgers University, I find myself reflecting on the experiences that have shaped my personal brand and professional aspirations. Over the past year, I've had the privilege of interning at Choose New Jersey (CNJ), the state's leading non-profit economic development organization. This role, my longest tenure in any job, has been instrumental in helping me understand my "WHY," which is the driving force behind my passion for social impact and marketing. As described by Mark Beal, Frank Kovacs, and Kadeer A. Porter in *Win The Job & Thrive In A Multigenerational Workplace*, "Your personal brand consists of your past education, career experiences and achievements as well as your values, passions and personality that make you the only you on the planet (Beal et al., 2024)." From an early age, I've been deeply involved in initiatives that contribute to the greater good, and this internship has allowed me to align my motivations with meaningful work. As I prepare to transition from college to my career, I am eager to craft a strategic marketing plan for my personal brand, focusing on my short and long-term objectives, unique experiences, and the industries where I hope to make a difference.

Short-Term Career Objectives

1. Securing a Position at Choose New Jersey: My immediate goal following graduation is to continue working with Choose New Jersey, where I've been a marketing intern since March 2023. I am on track to graduate in January 2025, and I am determined to leverage my experience and skills to secure a full-time role at CNJ, ideally as a Digital Marketing Coordinator or Specialist.
2. Building a Career in Pro-Social Marketing: I am passionate about using my marketing skills to drive positive social change. In the short term, I aim to work in the pro-social marketing or social impact sector, where I can contribute to campaigns and initiatives that address critical global challenges.

3. Expanding My Skill Set: In the year following graduation, I plan to continue honing my digital marketing skills, with a focus on social media strategy, content creation, and analytics. I am committed to staying adaptable in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Long-Term Career Objectives

1. Relocating to the West Coast or Tri-State Area: Within a few years, I aspire to secure a digital marketing role in another state, preferably on the West Coast or in the tri-state area. This move will allow me to broaden my horizons and work in diverse markets.

2. Leading a Digital Marketing Campaign: Inspired by the global challenges of our time, such as climate change, terrorism, and shifting demographics, I am eager to lead a digital marketing campaign that addresses these issues. My goal is to spearhead initiatives that not only raise awareness but also drive tangible social impact in a viral/trendy manner.

Personal Brand: A Unique Blend of Community Service and Media

My personal brand is rooted in a unique combination of community service and media, reflecting my commitment to social impact and my passion for creative expression:

Community Service: Marina Krivonossova mentions in her article, *7 Ways to Kickstart Your Career Before Graduation*, “While it doesn’t pay, volunteer work often offers you more freedom when it comes to building your experience in a way that makes sense for you (Krivonossova, 2024).” From a young age, I’ve been actively involved in community service, volunteering at nursing homes, teaching children at elementary schools, and immersing myself in cultural events like film festivals. The COVID-19 pandemic, which claimed the life of my grandmother, deepened my resolve to make a difference. In response, I joined AmeriCorps (the sister program of PeaceCorps), where I served as a Community Engagement Specialist for three years, working and volunteering to support communities in need.

Media and Marketing: My journey into media and marketing has extended with a TikTok opportunity, thanks to Professor Beal, where I hosted live sessions to promote and market the HP Sprocket Select. This experience allowed me to reach a wider audience than I ever imagined, and it ignited my passion even more for digital marketing.

Internship at Choose New Jersey: At CNJ, I actively promote New Jersey as a prime destination for businesses. My responsibilities include creating visuals, developing social media assets, and navigating the complexities of marketing strategies. This internship has taught me the importance of adaptive productivity and has solidified my role as a key contributor, with some opportunities with design lead to the team.

Passions and Hobbies: Beyond my professional pursuits, I am passionate about music and photography. Music is my therapy, and Spotify is my most used app for listening to music.

Additionally, I've been playing the piano since the age of five, and I've been capturing moments through photography since 2016 under my brand, Janice Fe Photos.

Extracurricular Activities: At Rutgers University, I've been an active member of alpha Kappa Delta Phi (yes, the alpha is lowercase), the first and largest international Asian-interest sorority. In leadership roles such as Community Service Chair and Media Chair, I've honed my event planning, delegation, and content creation skills, further enriching my personal brand.



Attributes and Values of My Personal Brand

1. Collaborative/Team Player: In *How Students Can Build Their Personal Brand While in University*, Kathryn LeBlanc mentions, “Another important aspect of personal branding is building key relationships. When you take on a new internship, it’s your responsibility to shake hands and talk to coworkers around the water cooler (LeBlanc, 2018).” My experiences in both community service and professional settings have taught me the value of collaboration. Whether working with fellow volunteers or coordinating with colleagues at CNJ, I thrive in team environments and believe that collective efforts lead to greater impact.

2. Determined: My determination has been a driving force in my life, propelling me through challenges and setbacks. This attribute was particularly evident during my time with AmeriCorps, where I faced numerous obstacles but remained steadfast in my commitment to serving others.

3. Adaptable: In today’s digital age, adaptability is crucial, and I’ve demonstrated this quality in my ability to navigate new technologies and platforms. My success in the TikTok marketing opportunity is a testament to my willingness to embrace change and learn on the go.

4. Creative: Creativity is at the heart of my personal brand, whether it’s through my photography, music, or marketing campaigns. I strive to bring a fresh perspective to every project I undertake, ensuring that my work is not only effective but also innovative.

Industry Focus: Social Impact, Prosocial, and Digital Marketing

I am passionate about working in the pro-social and digital marketing sectors, where I can use my skills to drive positive change. These industries are at the forefront of addressing global challenges, and I am eager to contribute to their efforts.

Opportunities: The pro-social marketing industry is growing rapidly as more companies recognize the importance of traditionally well-understood strategies like SEO and social are undergoing huge changes as platforms are reprioritizing AI in both their user experiences and back-end algorithms. According to Voltaire Capellan, a Digital Marketing Coordinator, “The professional digital world has always been ever-changing, but the magnitude and frequency of changes as a result of AI are unprecedented (Capellan, 2024).” This presents a wealth of opportunities for professionals like me who are dedicated to making a difference. Capellan also emphasizes that “...there are two main strategies for adapting: professional development and experimentation. Attending conferences, webinars, and taking classes is important no matter the stage of your career. They are necessary for keeping up-to-date on the latest big moves in digital marketing... The game of digital marketing is not and will never be solved, which means anyone can be a pioneer in this field (Capellan, 2024).” In digital marketing, the constant evolution of technology offers endless possibilities for creativity and innovation.

Challenges: AI presents both the biggest opportunities and the biggest pit-falls for digital marketers. These technologies are evolving quicker than ever before, which means we’re seeing both a lot of very useful and not-so-useful implementations of AI.

Target Companies

1. Choose New Jersey: CNJ’s mission to stimulate job creation and attract capital investment aligns perfectly with my passion for economic development and community service. I am eager to continue contributing to CNJ’s efforts to promote New Jersey as an ideal place to live, work, and play.
2. Spotify: As a music lover, Spotify’s mission to unlock human creativity resonates with me on a personal level. I am drawn to the company’s commitment to empowering artists and inspiring listeners, and I would love to contribute to their marketing efforts.
3. Adobe: Adobe’s vision of changing the world through personalized digital experiences is incredibly inspiring. I admire their innovative approach to technology and creativity, and I believe my skills and passions would be a great fit for their team.

Potential Job Titles

- Digital Marketing Coordinator/Specialist
- Growth Marketing Coordinator
- Performance Marketing Specialist

Strategic Marketing Plan: Winning My Dream Job

To secure a job at one of my target companies, I've developed a strategic marketing plan that leverages my personal brand, network, and content creation skills.

1. Content Production and Sharing: I plan to continue producing and sharing content that reflects my passion for digital marketing and social impact. This includes writing thought leadership articles on LinkedIn, sharing my photography work on Instagram, and engaging with industry professionals on Twitter.

2. Networking: In *How To Land Your First Job After College* by Mike Profita, "...a joint survey conducted by LinkedIn and The Adler Group revealed that 85% of all jobs are obtained through networking (Profita, 2022)." I will actively engage with my professional network to secure informational interviews at my target companies. I've already established connections with individuals who work at these companies, including an alum from my sorority who works at Paramount (for example). I plan to nurture these relationships and seek out new connections through LinkedIn and industry events.



3. Marketing Materials: Once I secure an informational interview, I will prepare a portfolio that showcases my work, including case studies from my internship at CNJ, my TikTok marketing experience, and examples of my photography. I will also create a personalized pitch that highlights how my skills and values align with the company's mission.

4. Interview Strategy: Before, during, and after the interview, I will market myself as a candidate who is not only skilled but also deeply passionate about the company's goals. I will follow up with a thank-you email that reiterates my interest and outlines how I can contribute to their success.

Building My Brand for the Future

Through this research and writing process, I've gained a deeper understanding of my personal brand and how it aligns with my career goals. I've realized that my brand has been shaped by my experiences in community service, media, and marketing, and that these elements uniquely position me to make a meaningful impact in the pro-social and digital marketing industries. Moving forward, I am committed to continuing to build my brand, expanding my network, and seizing opportunities that align with my values and aspirations. Ultimately, it all comes down to connecting with others, sharing my story, and staying true to my "WHY" as I embark on the next chapter of my career.

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