Identity construction by Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals on LinkedIn: A tensional approach

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Abstract

This study explores if, and how, the business social media site, LinkedIn, is providing for Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals an alternative site for the construction of identity. The two foci of this study are; firstly, a shift to where we increasingly live our lives, the world of social media; and secondly, the tensions that this shift creates for identity and identity construction, or the basic human need to know 'who we are' and 'how we fit in the social world'.

The study began with the observation of family, friends and acquaintances, who had taken up self-employment, and were becoming involved in a virtual world of work-related social media through LinkedIn. The researcher's interest was in if, and how, this virtual world acts as a site for construction of this new work identity, for an entrepreneur or small-business person. The definition of this identity was widened to include 'professional' when participants in the study repeatedly referred to themselves as 'professionals'; thus, the study became a study of a hybrid identity, i.e. the entrepreneurial professional. The specific group identified was Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals who engaged on LinkedIn. This research therefore is boundary spanning in that it spans the disciplines of: organisational communication and new forms of organisation; ICT and social media use; identity and identity construction, entrepreneurial, professional and digital; and globalisation, by juxtaposing the globalising effect of social media with local discourse.

The research approach was from a social/constructionist paradigm, utilising a qualitative methodology. This methodology was considered appropriate as it emphasises an inductive relationship between theory and research that is consistent with the assumptions of the interpretive/ constructionist paradigm, by foregrounding the ways in which individuals interpret their social world, and embodying a view of social reality that is constantly shifting and emergent (Tracy, 2013). As this was an exploratory interpretive study, the researcher was concerned not to predict or pre-empt the findings. Accordingly, the exploration of the participants' experience on LinkedIn was not organised around predicted or possible themes, but three interrelated communicative processes on LinkedIn identified by Putnam, Phillips, & Chapman, (1996) as three metaphors of communication itself. These were; 'engagement' in

general terms, with an emphasis on the participants' engaging in and making sense of the context of social media, secondly, 'connecting' or 'networking,' and thirdly, 'interacting'. All three align with an overarching constructionist approach, but each highlight certain features that other two perspectives neglected and provide important and interrelated insights into identity construction on LinkedIn.

Twenty-five in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with those who responded to a request, on NZ SME groups on LinkedIn, to be participants. The interview transcripts analysed through thematic analysis. In the process of analysis, tensions, contradictions and paradoxes emerged as a dominant concern. Tensions, such as identity tensions, have long been identified a part of organisational experience (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004), and a growing body of literature posits that irrationality is a normal condition of organisational life, and is reflected in the tensions evident in the discourses around the construction of identity in organisations (C. A. Clarke, Brown, & Hailey, 2009; Larson & Gill, 2017; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004).These tensions have increased as work increasingly moves to alternative or "less predictable settings of organizing"(Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007, p. 161).

The participants' discourses revealed evidence that LinkedIn was in fact being utilised as a necessary, and for many a normal, site for the construction of entrepreneurial professional identity, yet one fraught with tensions. The identified tensions were complex and interrelated and were interpreted through the analysis as occurring in different levels and dimensions. Tensions at the first level were: two tensions around engagement in the virtual context of identity construction, four tensions around networking and making connections, and finally, five identity construction tensions around interacting and relationship-building on LinkedIn.

Further interpretation of these tensions indicated underlying and overlaying tensions, or meta tensions, woven through the participants' discourses in two dimensions One dimension identifies the tensions specific to the contexts of LinkedIn, Aotearoa/ New Zealand, and entrepreneurial professionals. This dimension of analysis accords with the advice of Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) to pay "particular sensitivity to institutional and contextual variation" (p.161) when researching identity construction in unpredictable

organisational settings. The second dimension of analysis identified meta-tensions or overlaying tensional themes around identity work in organisations, that have taken on a different emphasis and character when experienced in the LinkedIn context.

These tensions in two dimensions are presented as an integrated framework of identity construction tensions. For each individual these tensions will intersect at different points, illustrating that identity resides not in the person themselves, but in the context, in the broadest sense, in which they engage.

The study makes several contributions. Firstly, it identifies the tensions inherent in engaging in LinkedIn and constructing a digital identity there. Secondly, it provides evidence that LinkedIn has, in fact, become, or at least was in the process of becoming, an alternative organisational site, and thus a site for organisational identity construction. Thirdly, it presents in a multi-level and two-dimensional framework for analysis of identity construction in this context. In one dimension it suggests that identity construction on LinkedIn needs to be understood, in the context of personal work situation of the individual, of a local yet global site of communication, and in the context the unique features of a virtual social world. In another dimension, the identity construction can be understood as the tensions likely in an organisational setting. Lastly it suggests utilising the lenses of three different metaphors of communication to explore communication on LinkedIn, engagement, networking, and interaction, and to analyse identity construction on LinkedIn.

The study concludes with a discussion of how an understanding of managing these tensions can be utilised in tertiary education courses and to inform small business owners about LinkedIn use.

Acknowledgements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIGURES and TABLES

Figures

Tables

Chapter One: Introduction

> Social media has become a native habitus for many and is a place to perform our various roles in our multimodal lives, as a professional, a parent, an acquaintance, and a colleague (Knight & Weedon, 2014, p. 257).

I have chosen to begin this thesis with the above quote in a bid to focus on two central issues of contemporary life which are the subject of this study. Firstly, a shift to where we increasingly live our lives in the world of social media; secondly, the tensions that this shift creates for identity and identity construction, or the basic human need to know 'who we are' and 'how we fit in the social world'. To address these two concerns, in this project, I examine and unpack the discourse of Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals on LinkedIn and investigate the tensions in identity construction that they experience in this context.

Identity, both personal and social, is a major human preoccupation. Identity construction is an important process for situating individuals within the social landscape, and to answer the question, 'who am I'? Work or occupational identity has long been recognised as an important facet of an individual's identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Erickson, 1974; Watson, 2008), and the workplace has traditionally been the site where work identities, and to some extent personal identities, are constructed, performed, and validated (Goffman, 1959; Haslam, 2001; Oakes, 2004; Postmes, Baray, Haslam, Morton, & Swaab, 2006). In the late 20th and the 21st century, organisational structures have become more fluid than in 20th century industrialised economies; a new work order has emerged, characterised by differentiation and fragmentation (Gee, Lankshear, & Hull, 1996). The expansion of information communication technologies (ICTs) has accelerated and facilitated change, so that increasingly, the focus of work is moving outside co-located workplaces (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Kraut & Resnick, 2011; Nardi, Whittaker, & Schwartz, 2002). Additionally, restructuring and downsizing has led to the greater use of external consultants and contractors, often working virtually and independently. As a result, work has become more distributed and individual-centred; in addition, careers are more fragmented and dynamic, with identification of the individual with an organisation weakening (Kraut & Resnick, 2011; Reedy, King, & Coupland, 2016; Shirky, 2008). In

1

a world where traditional work structures of the 20th century are rapidly disappearing; the construction of work identity needs to be constantly re-examined to be relevant in the field of organisational studies and communication.

Paradoxically, in this changing work environment, work-identity has become more important (Albert, Ashforth, & Dutton, 2000). Individuals who have moved from the traditional moorings of a workplace still have a need for "meaningfulness and connection" (Albert et al., 2000, p. 13) with others, and to understand who they are as working individuals, as described by Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley (2008):

> Ironically, as societies and organizations become more turbulent and individual-organization relationships become more tenuous, individuals' desire for some kind of work-based identification is likely to increase – precisely because traditional moorings are increasingly unreliable (p.326).

Changes in the nature of work are evident in the daily work experience of the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals in this study. They have generally moved from employment as a professional in a larger organisation to self-employment, utilising the power of the Internet and social media to do so, they work alone or with only a few others, are experiencing new work identity issues and tensions. This study aims to explore the construction of identity on LinkedIn as an emerging and complex organisational environment. To do so a tension-centred approach is adopted, as discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

My personal interest in this subject was ignited by changes I have observed, as well as anecdotal evidence in Aotearoa/New Zealand society during the past 10 years. Along with many of my friends and colleagues, I have known many people, both young and older (including members of my close family), who have shifted from professional employment, often in large organisations, to self-employment or employment in partnership with others, or with a small number of employees. These changes have been prompted by a range of different factors including changes in economic conditions, restructuring and redundancies, opportunities presented by the digital revolution and digital technologies, greater monetary reward compared to that of an employee, a unique idea, or a desire to be independent or have flexible work conditions. These individuals are primarily based at home and engaged in work that is very much Internet-

enabled, although they may also have some face-to-face contact with clients and others. I have also observed, anecdotally, that these individuals have become more involved in work-related social media, including discussion groups and networking sites such as LinkedIn, which are related to their professional interests.

As a professional of 40 years, I am personally, as well as academically, aware of the important role professional and/or organisational identity plays in the individual's sense of self. As such, I am extremely interested in how this sense of self is maintained, constructed, or reconstructed when a familiar organisational context is no longer present, and when individuals adopt the new work identity of an entrepreneur alongside an existing professional identity. An issue often identified in small businesses is a sense of isolation (Alstete, 2008; Gumpert & Boyd, 1984). It seems possible, therefore, that professional social media sites such as LinkedIn may be fulfilling the function of the social and professional group previously found at work, an arena in which to construct and perform work, as well as effect personal identity construction.

The general questions I began this research with were as follows: if a positive sense of work identity is important for an individual in terms of their psychological well-being and professional practice, did a business social media site such as LinkedIn provide an alternative site for this identity construction? If it did then, how, and to what extent was identity being constructed there, how was this identity construction different from in the physical world, what are the issues around identity and identity construction in the virtual world, and how are they being dealt with? Therefore, at a personal level, an understanding of how this apparent identity construction and reconstruction seemed to be occurring on LinkedIn was important; as it appeared necessary for better understanding friends and family members' new work lives and their individual sense of self, thereby serving as the impetus for this study. At a professional level, as an organisational communication researcher, the changing nature of work and workplaces with the breaking down of traditional distinct boundaries of public-private and work-non-work, and with social media the influencing this change, how this virtual world acts as a site for construction of this new work identity appeared to be an important topic of research.

In reviewing the literature in relation to online identity construction, I found that much of the contemporary research focuses on personal online identity, that is, private rather

than work identity, on Facebook and Myspace (e.g.D. Boyd, 2006; Fisher, Boland, & Lyytinen, 2016; Ivcevic & Ambady, 2012; Mazur & Li, 2016; Young, 2013). There is little research on work or professional identity construction on social media as a context. Studies of LinkedIn and identity tend to focus on the limited aspects of impression management, self-presentation for job-hunting, or career-building for employees (e.g. Chiang & Suen, 2015; Paliszkiewicz & Madra-Sawicka, 2016; Yang, 2015). As noted by Broillet, Kampf, and Emad (2014), literature examining LinkedIn with regard to understanding social interaction is rare; however, examining this social interaction is important for unpacking the changing nature of work identity construction, as social media increasingly becomes the habitus for all aspects of social life.

Kuhn (2006) notes that although scholars are recognising the breadth of discursive resources that are relevant to identity work and regulation, studies rarely "attend to discourses beyond the artificial boundaries of the organization" (p.1342). The sentiment in this statement is reflected in the call by Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) to study how 'real' people navigate the cultural codes of professionalism in emerging non-typical work sites, where members nonetheless strive for professional conduct and status. In this context, they suggest:

> [Researchers should] consider…other, less predictable settings of organizing (think, for instance, of self-presentation in ''singles'' forums). We recognize that [various] sites are likely to reflect specific cultural twists on larger social discourses of the professional; hence, this line of inquiry requires particular sensitivity to institutional and contextual variation…a neo-Weberian (Weber, 1978) take on professionalism, which emphasizes organizational member roles vis-à-vis developing institutional structures (p.161).

Given the paucity of research identified in this area, the present study therefore adopts an exploratory approach, but is also timely. If identity is an important concern, how work, including entrepreneurial professional identity, is socially-constructed by lone workers in distributed workplaces, the self-employed, and entrepreneurs in micro-businesses – all without an obvious organisational work context – is a new but important area of research. By considering LinkedIn as a non-typical or unpredictable organisational site, and examining the tensions inherent in identity construction there, this study will make a unique contribution to the body of work in the field of

4

organisational studies. The study also incorporates an as-of-yet unexplored but (as will be discussed later) important research theme, that is, the inherent tensions between the divergent local discourse within Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the dominant Western discourse regarding professionalism and entrepreneurialism. The study is therefore situated not only in the research field of organisational communication, specifically in the study of identity, but is linked to the research fields of entrepreneurship and self-employed professionals. It also incorporates the research fields of sociology and information communication technologies (ICTs), and how social media use and networking is shaping identities, work, and social life. Having briefly discussed the personal, business, academic and social significance of the study, I will next discuss the study background, and the context and setting of the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professional.

Aotearoa/ New Zealand has frequently been referred to as a land of small businesses. These small businesses are more than likely to be micro-businesses or entities comprising up to 10 employees. Micro-businesses represent approximately 89% of firms in Aotearoa/New Zealand (MBIE, 2017a; Mills, 2011; Statistics, 2011). Many new start-up businesses in Aotearoa/New Zealand have been established in the past five-to-seven years in fields that provide a service or consultant knowledge in areas related to ICTs, e.g., digital media, communication, marketing, and design fields. Other growth areas for new businesses, both in Aotearoa/New Zealand and internationally, include beauty, health and fitness, coaching services, as well as consulting services in financial, administrative, and accounting fields (MBIE, 2017a; OECD, 2012), occupations that are regarded as professional, in a general sense, that is, not blue-collar, manual, or low status occupations (Mancini, 1999). It is unsurprising that these are growth areas – in terms of numbers and where small start-ups are concerned – because they rely on professional expertise and individual knowledge to establish, rather than significant capital investment (D. N. Clark & Douglas, 2010; I. Miles & Green, 2008; Mills, 2011; G. Wilson, Mitchell, & Frederick, 2005). Additionally, the advent of the Internet and interactive technologies has provided mechanisms for these types of businesses to gain exposure and to be promoted relatively inexpensively by the owner/manager.

This study will also contribute to our understanding of what economists refer to as the 'New Zealand paradox' (McCann, 2009). This paradox is that in a highly-developed nation of innovators and entrepreneurs, with a robust infrastructure and positive conditions for economic growth, there is relatively low productivity growth, and income levels more than 20 per cent below the OECD average (MBIE, 2016). In addition to the country's limitations regarding size and geographic distance, business commentators repeatedly claim the root of this paradox to be a lack of desire on the part of business owners to grow and expand their businesses, often attributing this lack of desire to 'lifestyle values' and a lack of assertiveness in business relationships (c.f. Conway, 2015; Forte, 2012; McCann, 2009). These serve as inhibitors at the individual level; however, as discussed in the next chapter, their origins are deeply embedded within the local Aotearoa/New Zealand discourse. Therefore, this study of how entrepreneurial professionals construct a digital identity online will provide insight into whether – and how – the local discourse is currently influencing the identity construction of Aotearoa/New Zealand small businesspersons and micro-entrepreneurs in this context. It will also increase an understanding of how these micro-entrepreneurs can appropriately, but successfully, utilise social media in this context.

Micro-entrepreneurship – a drive towards self-employment or small, generally home-based businesses with a small number of employees – has also been identified as motivating a resurgence of entrepreneurialism in the current millennium, both globally and in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Delwyn N. Clark & Douglas, 2014; Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017). The 'micro-entrepreneurial renaissance' (Fonseca, 2014; Wong, 2012) has been fuelled by the growth of the Internet and new digital technologies, alongside web-based platforms of production, distribution, and promotion that facilitate new types of connections in the economy. Collectively – and somewhat misleadingly – these aspects are referred to as the 'sharing economy' (Hira & Reilly, 2017). These developments have given rise to a new and growing type of micro-entrepreneur, an individual who utilises digital media to create or promote a micro-business, and have also given rise to new forms of self-enterprise (Luckman, 2016). This movement towards independent employment in the digital age has been paralleled by a pervading discourse extolling the ethos of self-enterprise, captured in the statement, "we're all entrepreneurs now" (Tullman, 2015, p. 1).

In Aotearoa/New Zealand business, micro-entrepreneurship is an expanding phenomenon, (MBIE, 2017b), as is the use of LinkedIn among small businesses (LinkedIn, 2017b). However, though entrepreneurial identity is a growing area of research (cf.A. R. Anderson, Dodd, & Jack, 2009; Down, 2006; Down & Warren, 2008; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Gill & Larson, 2014b; Watson, 2013), there is little existing research on entrepreneurial identity related to micro-entrepreneurs, and no such research has been conducted in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

One new type of micro-entrepreneur is a professional who had previously been employed in a company or large business but has moved into self-employment or a small business environment, to some extent made possible by digital technologies. The participants included in this study are in this situation and as such, I use the term 'entrepreneurial professional' to express the hybrid nature of their identity. They tend to identify as 'professional' but are also entrepreneurs and are thus changing identities in an online context to include both a professional and entrepreneurial identity. This process of identity reconstruction, described in the literature as 'entrepreneurial transitions' (e.g.Hoang & Gimeno, 2010), produces tension between the two identities (P. Lewis, 2013). Furthermore, the construction of a 'entrepreneurial professional' is taking place in the context of a rapidly changing social discourse, partly related to changes in the work context, but also due to the development of Web 2.0. technologies that add to these tensions, as discussed in the following section.

As structural changes in society and work shifted the focus from an organisational to an individual identity, there has also been a shift in social discourse, influenced by Web 2.0 technologies, towards a stronger emphasis on calculated strategies for enacting the self through impression management (Marwick, 2013; Marwick & Boyd, 2011). This emphasis encourages entrepreneurs to engage in self-branding practices that draw on the practices of mainstream culture industries (Atkinson, 2007; Hearn, 2008) such as obvious self-promotion and status-enhancing behaviours (Marwick, 2013) – behaviours that conflict with accepted notions of 'professional' in the social discourse. Additionally, the connectivity, interactive and relationship-building capacities of Web 2.0 technologies on sites such as LinkedIn have produced imperatives in the social discourse regarding networking and attention-seeking self-presentation as necessary skills. LinkedIn is promoted as a business tool for professional profiling and networking

(LinkedIn, 2017b); therefore, not surprisingly, many micro-entrepreneurs are members of the site. However, a design of LinkedIn that foregrounds self-presentation and networking as essential activities, to some extent conflicts with accepted discourses on professional identity.

As this was exploratory interpretive study, data was gathered though interviews before a framework for analysis was developed. The participants' discourses (the interview data) was then analysed through an inductive process of thematic analysis. This process revealed that the predominant themes and sub-themes were the multi-layered and multi-dimensional tensions in LinkedIn engagement and identity construction there. As indicated above, and discussed in more detail in Chapter two, recent organisational communication literature has a strong focus on tensions and identity tensions associated with all organisational life (D. Grant & Cox, 2017); and local and virtual contexts create unique tensions, as well as more pervasive universal tensions that have been identified in all organisational life (Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016).Therefore, consistent with the predominant emerging themes of tensions in the data, I came to utilise a tensional lens to explore participants' engagement with and identity construction on LinkedIn, an approach I discuss next.

The tensional approach focuses on identifying and naming paradoxes, contradictions, ironies, and tensions within discourse (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). It is consistent with a growing body of literature that posits that irrationality is a normal condition of organisational life, and is reflected in the tensions evident in the discourses around the construction of identity in organisations (C. A. Clarke et al., 2009; Larson & Gill, 2017; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). Interest in organisational tensions has increased alongside work environments becoming more complex and turbulent, and taking on a range of diverse forms (D. Grant & Cox, 2017; Putnam et al., 2016). Identifying such tensions on LinkedIn would not only help to illuminate the nature of virtual identity construction there, but also assist in indicating that the site has indeed become an organisational context. Also, these tensions are not only the subject of theoretical interest, but a "pressing matter when they are experienced by real women and men seeking to negotiate formal and informal systems in everyday practice" (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004, p. 81). If LinkedIn is a new and emerging organisational form, such tensions were likely to not only be present, but also heightened in this new

environment, one that is becoming unavoidable and necessary in everyday work life for many. It was therefore important to unpack and acknowledge how these tensions are experienced, and identify how professionals are effectively, or ineffectively, managing them online. Additionally another important approach to the analysis was identifying and utilising the lenses the of communication the participants were utilising to discuss participation on LinkedIn, as I describe next.

As discussed later in Chapter two, this study takes the social constructionist stance that identities are constructed during communicative interaction and reflection, in a dynamic discursive process. Therefore engaging in and on LinkedIn is considered as a communicative process from which organisational identity is constructed. Communication is also regarded as the constitutive process of organisations (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). However, as the analysis progressed it became necessary to distinguish which lens or understanding of the communicative processes on LinkedIn was be utilised, to effectively explore how identity and identity tensions emerged from these processes. Accordingly, I organised the analysis of the participants' discourses around three interrelated processes of communication that were prominent in their discourses. These were: firstly, 'engagement' in general terms, with an emphasis on the participants' engaging in and making sense of the context of social media; secondly, 'connecting' or 'networking'; and thirdly, 'interacting.' These three discourses of engagement, networking, and interaction, have been identified as three metaphors of communication itself (Putnam et al., 1996), as I will discuss next.

Metaphors have been and still are a common topic in organisational studies (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2012; Deetz, 1996; Deetz & Mumby, 1990; Morgan, 1997; Örtenblad, Putnam, & Trehan, 2016). By seeing a thing as if it were something else metaphors facilitate the creation and interpretation of social reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) and are therefore useful for shaping an exploratory study such as this. Putnam et al. (1996) have identified that metaphors of communication can be classified into several related thematic clusters useful for describing different representations of communication. Metaphors also highlight certain features while suppressing others, as in this study where the features of communication such as engagement, networking, and interaction are foregrounded. However, Putnam et al. (1996) also caution that studies that mix metaphors may run the risk of confounding the assumptions that underlie the

nature of communication, but also concede that the use of different metaphors adds different insights and reflexiveness to research. On this basis of providing different insights and reflexiveness, as this is an exploratory study and there is no existing appropriate framework for exploration, I utilised three metaphors of communication to explore the topic from three different perspectives. Each chosen metaphor highlights certain features that other perspectives neglect, but all three align with an overarching constructionist approach, taking the viewpoint that communication is both the process and the outcome of the construction of shared meaning (Weick, 1990). In the next section I will discuss the three metaphors, engagement, networking, and interaction, in relationship to the clusters of metaphors they represent as described by Putnam et al. (1996), and how they interrelate. I then discuss the use of each metaphor of communication in this study and how they each provide different, but important and interrelated, insights into identity construction on LinkedIn.

The first metaphor of 'communication as engagement', as I use it in this study, is closely aligned with a cluster of metaphors that Putnam et al. (1996) identify as communication as symbolic *interpretation* of the social world, through the production of symbols that make the world meaningful. Communication from this perspective is people using language, exhibiting insight, producing and interpreting ideas, vesting meaning in events, to make sense of their world (Putnam et al., 1996): in short, acting symbolically (Deetz, 1996; Morgan, 1997). This view of communication often focuses on the metaphorical language that enables individuals to express abstract ideas, convey vivid images, transfer information, and structure coherent systems (Ortony, 1993) in new ways. Such metaphorical language can be seen very clearly in the reflective discourse of the participants in the first analysis chapter on engagement.

The second metaphor of 'networking' is aligned to the metaphor of 'communication as linkage', where communication contacts are viewed as the building blocks of organisational networks. Linkages then form the web or structural framework of the organisation (Putnam et al., 1996). These networks of relationships are communication systems defined through the presence or absence of links. The emergence of this metaphor, 'communication as linkage' reflects a shift in the focus from earlier metaphors of 'communication as transmission' (based on the conduit metaphor) to a metaphor of 'communication as connection'. Some interpretations of the

'communication as linkage' metaphor still reflect a conduit metaphor but the 'communication as connection' metaphor is consistent with social constructionism a basic premise of this study as discussed later in Chapter two, as it constitutes organisations as emergent networks of relationships. That is, organisations are not entities with fixed structures and boundaries, but are interactants intertwined through dyadic processes, consisting of multiple, overlapping networks with permeable boundaries (Stohl, 1995). In this study I use the metaphor of 'communication as connection (or networks)' in a limited sense, that is, it is digital linkages that create an individual-centred social world, the world of the 'networked individual'(Papacharissi, 2011b; Rainie & Wellman, 2012). I do however indirectly utilise a related representation of 'communication as a network of ties' as I consider the strength of relationship ties between interactants when connections are being made (Granovetter, 1973; Quinton & Wilson, 2016). However, both senses neglect many of the features of communication as symbolic creation of meaning, or interaction.

The third metaphor of 'interaction' fits within the cluster of metaphors that represent 'communication as interaction'. In this paradigm communication consists of interconnected exchanges and meanings that stem from exchanging verbal and nonverbal messages. This flow of actions and interpretations reflects back on and constrains previous and future message activities (Putnam et al., 1996). More specifically, 'interaction' in this study aligns with a metaphor of 'communication as social performance' (Goffman, 1959; Turner, 1980). From the perspective of this metaphor, "organizational reality is brought to life in communicative performance" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, p. 131), and this performance is interactional, contextual, episodic, and improvisational. This perspective or lens of 'communication as social performance' is discussed in Chapter six as the participants' discourse reveals the tensions they experience in performing an authentic entrepreneurial professional identity on LinkedIn in interaction with others.

Threads from each of the three metaphors extend to the other two metaphors and reveal interrelationships. The engagement metaphor, embedded in the wider cluster of symbolic interpretation metaphors, lies at the core of creating and responding to paradoxes and tensions inherent in the context of organisations (Putnam et al., 2016; Putnam et al., 1996), thereby illuminating tensions found through viewing the

participants' LinkedIn experience through the lenses of the 'communication as connection (or networking)' and the 'communication as interaction' metaphors. Focusing on the 'communication as connection' metaphor illuminates the meanings given to digital connections, as relationships and as a social world of interaction, and therefore overlaps with the interaction and engagement metaphors. Both metaphors, communication as engagement and communication as networking, illuminate the 'communication as interaction' metaphor as they provide the backdrop to communicative performance. The 'communication as interaction' metaphor brings to life the organisational realities and tensions, implied in the participants' discourses viewed through metaphors of communication as engagement and as connection (or networking). There are other representations of communication inherent in this study, such as 'communication as discourse', that did not provide a framework for exploration but serve as overarching framework for analysis, as in the analysis of the participants' discourse, discussed in Chapter three. The metaphor of 'communication as voice' that considers "the practices and structures that affect who can speak, when, and in what way" (Putnam et al., 1996, p. 389) also emerges in the analysis as I identify alternative contextual discourses of Aotearoa/New Zealand as contrasted the dominant global discourse around professional and entrepreneurial identity.

The three main lens or metaphors of communication, engagement, connection (or networking) and interaction therefore became the three lenses through which I analysed of the data and identified tensions. The study's general research aim of discovering if and how identity was being constructed on LinkedIn, and a broad research question of; How do Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals interpret and understand their experience of participation on with LinkedIn and construction of a digital identity there? was thus refined into three more focused research questions. These are: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around participation on social media and LinkedIn? What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around creating and displaying a network on LinkedIn? What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around interacting with their network on LinkedIn?

The tensions that emerged from unpacking participants' discourses around participation on LinkedIn were diverse, wide-ranging, and evidenced on many different levels and according to a variety of dimensions. To understand and make sense of these tensions, a hierarchy of levels of tension was developed, and from this, an integrated framework of intersecting dimensions was created. Firstly, the discourses were examined to identify tensions; these were then categorised into three levels of tensions: sub-tensions, tensions (or tensional themes), and meta-tensions (overarching general tensions, threaded throughout the discourses). From this analysis, a framework of tensions according to two dimensions was developed. The first dimension arises from the specific context of the participants, their specific national, digital, and occupational context or situation. The second dimension is organisational identity tensions, or tensions related to identity in an organisational context in general, but that are more significant, or take on a different character in the LinkedIn context.

The main contributions of this study are therefore not only to identify identity tensions in entrepreneurial professional identity construction on LinkedIn and to confirm that LinkedIn is being utilised as an organisational site for doing this, but also to contribute a framework of analysis for identifying and understanding these tensions. The study also contributes a three-lensed approach to understanding and exploring communication activity on social media by viewing it through the three metaphors of communication; engagement, networking, and interaction.

Before providing an overview of the following chapters in this next section, I provide a brief overview of the research site, that is, LinkedIn, its features and functions.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most predominant professional social media sites, both in Aotearoa/ New Zealand and globally. According to Claybaugh and Haseman (2013), it is built on one simple philosophy; 'relationships matter'. It was founded in California, USA, in December 2002 and launched on 5 May 2003; it is primarily used for business and professional networking in the broadest sense. As of August 2017, LinkedIn reported more than 500 million registered users in more than 200 countries and territories, the world's largest professional network on the Internet (LinkedIn, 2017b). Sixty-five per cent of LinkedIn members are located outside the US, and professionals are signing up

to join LinkedIn at a rate of more than two new members per second. There are more than one million Aotearoa/ New Zealand members on LinkedIn (LinkedIn, 2017b).

In addition to networking, the site is increasingly used to share knowledge via networks and groups. More than 1.5 million unique publishers actively use the LinkedIn 'share' button on their sites to send content to the LinkedIn platform, and LinkedIn members share insights and knowledge in more than 2.3 million LinkedIn groups (LinkedIn, 2017b).

The LinkedIn site, where any viewer can see basic profiles, jobs, and company information, is open; however, to create a presence and participate in LinkedIn, one must be proactive by joining, i.e., creating login details, an ID and password, and at least a basic profile. Once a member, they will have access to a number of features, designed for presenting professional profiles, expanding networks, and interaction between members.

The site has two membership categories, the standard membership which is free and the premium membership which that provides more information and functions to the user and has a membership fee. All of the participants except one were in the basic, free category of membership and said they had not purchased a premium membership because they did not need to extra functionality of a premier membership or they did not believe it was worth the extra cost. The premium member only named one function of premium category she used that of receiving more information about possible contacts. I have therefore limited the description below to the basic features and function of LinkedIn available to basic members and my discussion in subsequent chapters of participation on LinkedIn is in this context.

LinkedIn's features

Briefly, LinkedIn's features can be divided into four main categories: profile, network, interaction, and jobs and hiring. The main areas of interest of this study are the profile, network, and interaction categories.

Profile. The profile feature is where users provide personal information; they define who they are and what they are looking for. LinkedIn allows members to control what information can be seen on their profile. Members can access two different versions of others' profiles. The full profile is the complete profile view including all features, and

the user's details. This view is always visible to the person's first-degree connections. The public profile is the profile that is visible to all members on LinkedIn. Members can control which features and details they wish to present in their public profile. The profile may also be hidden completely, so that members must be connected in order to view it, or it may be completely visible, so that the public profile displays the same details as the full profile. Members can also choose options in-between.

LinkedIn has an ever-expanding collection of features designed for presenting profiles (Olsen & Guribye, 2009b). However, at October 2016, the standard LinkedIn profile section consisted of six main categories (see Figure. 1); additional sections can be added by the member. A brief description of each category follows below.
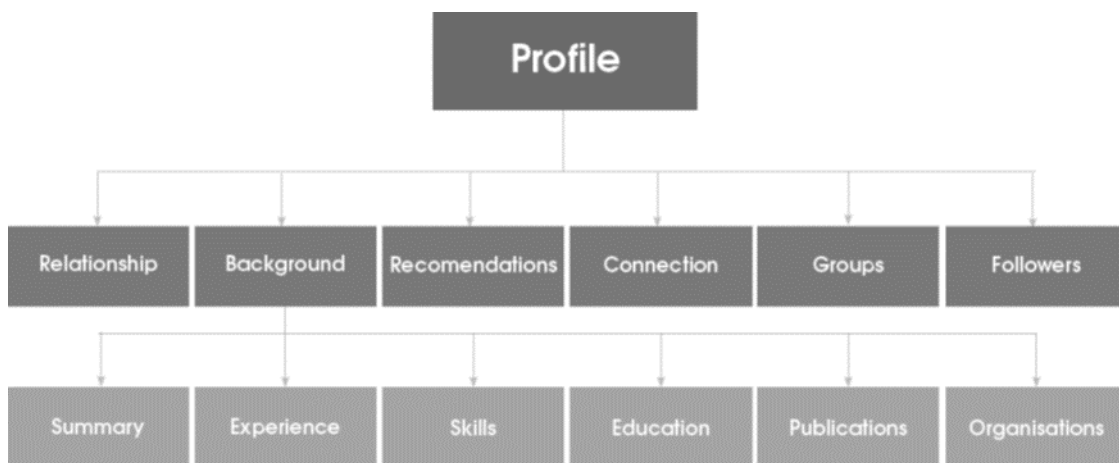
Figure 1: Structure of a LinkedIn profile site

Relationship. This feature shows how the member is connected to the viewer and the level of that connection.

Background. This section starts with a 'summary' that provides the member's name and an overview or summary of said member's information. This helps to build the body of the person's profile and includes their name, geographical area, past and present jobs, education, and commonly, a profile picture. The remainder of this section is a presentation of the person's skills, professional history, their industry of expertise, professional experience and goals, and his/her specialties within his/her industry. This enables the members to emphasise their most valuable assets and to identify what type of expertise one might expect them to possess. Company and/or personal websites, interests, groups, associations, and honours and awards can all be added to the profile. It

can also include endorsements by others, education, and other professional activities, such as publications.

Recommendations. In this section, members recommend their connections and their work. People can also request professional recommendations. This allows a member to illustrate their achievements, project credibility, and to provide additional information (Vickey, 2011).

Connections. This is a section that lists the member's connections and helps to provide information about the person's network and social contacts.

Groups. This lists the groups the member belongs to. It helps to define their interests.

Following. This section helps to define the members' intentions and what they are searching for. It includes, 'news', updates of key interests listed in the profiles, and suggests news that the member may be interested in. 'Organisations' refers to organisations or associations that the member has been part of, interested in, or associated with through connections.

LinkedIn's functions

With a focus on relationship-building, LinkedIn has a referral system that facilitates users being introduced to the person they intend to meet through a chain of contacts-of-contacts, enabling them to become closer to the people they wish to meet. Growing a network as large as possible likely reduces the degree of separation from these individuals, and makes ties stronger (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Nardi et al., 2002). LinkedIn also suggests new contacts. Therefore, the process of networking on LinkedIn consists of three main activities: establishing an identity or profile, actively making contacts and growing a network and relationships through invitations and acceptances, while at the same time building a reputation though comments and endorsements. According to Kietzmann et al. (2011), most social media have different levels of social media functionality, e.g., identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups. LinkedIn's main focus is on the identity function, then relationships and reputation (G. Smith, 2007, April 4), all of which contribute to networking (see Figure 2). The remaining three functions are considered less important on LinkedIn (conversations, communicating with other users; sharing, exchanging, distributing, and receiving content; presence, that is, knowing who else is

online or where others are located physically, and indicating whether other users are accessible).
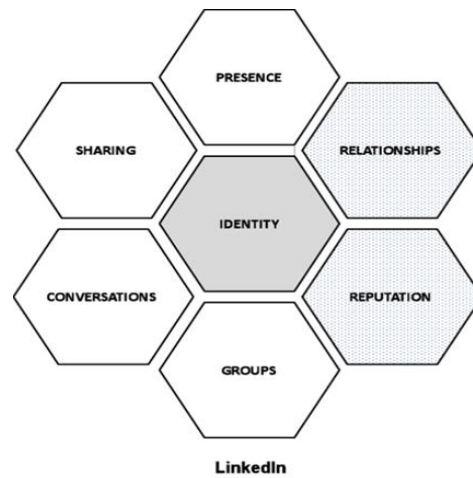
Figure 2: Functions of LinkedIn

<div align="right">

(Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. p.248.*)*

</div>

The identity function As defined by Kietzmann et al. (2011) this function represents the aspect where users reveal their biographical details and professional brand in a social media setting. Users have developed strategies for presenting this type of identity on social media, for example, they present these identities in the context of the different social media platforms they use; for example, hobbies and pictures on Facebook may be different from those on LinkedIn (van Dijck, 2013). Users also tend to use the identity function on LinkedIn for self-branding (Krasnova, Hildebrand, Günther, Kovrigin, & Nowobilska, 2008).

The reputation function. This allows users to identify the standing of others, and of themselves. In most cases, this reputation is a matter of trust. LinkedIn offers the option for an individual to build a reputation through the endorsement of others (Kietzmann et al., 2011). However, the 'groups' function, where users can create communities and sub-communities, also contributes to the reputation function. Reputation is often built through group membership and contribution (Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht, & Swartz, 2004; Nardi et al., 2002); if a member's contributions are liked and shared, their reputation grows (Comer, 2011; Halloran & Thies, 2012).

The relationships function. This represents the extent to which users can be related to other users. LinkedIn relationships are generally formal, regulated, and structured.

LinkedIn, for example, allows users to view how they are linked to others and how many degrees of separation they are from a 'target' member, for example, a potential client they would like to meet. Member profiles also need to be validated by others to be complete (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Members can invite anyone (whether a site member or not) to become a connection. However, if the invitee selects "I don't know" or "Spam", this counts against the inviter. If the inviter gets too many of such responses, the member's account may be restricted or closed (LinkedIn, 2017a).

This discussion of LinkedIn's technical features and functions does not include a discussion of LinkedIn's affordances, that is how members make use of the features and functions or how they relate to the technology, as already described in Chapter three. The degree to which members use these functions of reputation, networking, and relationship-building and how they use them may be an indicator of an individual's attitudes and beliefs about self-presentation, networking, and relationship-building in business. It may simply indicate the user's level of understanding, or lack of understanding, of the site and how it can be used, and/or confidence in its use, or revealing themselves to others. It may reveal how much they trust the site or its members. On the other hand, it may indicate how important the individual believes reputation building and networking is for growing their business, or indeed, if they want to grow their business using these functions.

Chapter Overview

I now provide a brief overview of the succeeding chapters in this thesis. In Chapter two, I provide a more comprehensive context for the study of professional identity on social media from an organisational studies and organisational communication perspective, with a review and discussion of the literature in three sections: identity, entrepreneurial and professional identity, and networking.

In Chapter three, I present the methodological commitments adopted in this study, detail data collection methods, and describe the participants and method of analysis. In the first section of Chapter three, I argue for the inductive thematic analysis of participant interviews employed in this study. I then discuss the process of participant recruiting and provide details of the context of this process. I provide a detailed explanation of my data analysis methods, which involve inductive thematic analysis. This was an ongoing

cyclical process, alternating between identifying emerging themes in the data, comparing the information with existing frameworks and models, explanations, and theories, and returning to the data for detailed coding and analysis (Tracy, 2013). Finally, as the site of this study is the LinkedIn social media site, I also provide a brief overview of LinkedIn, its functions, and features.

Chapters four, five, and six are my analysis chapters. In these chapters, I identify and discuss the tensions that emerged from participants' discourses. As noted above, I have framed these themes as tensions, because the participants' discourses revealed antagonistic discourses that indicated complex and at times simultaneously-held paradoxical notions of cyberspace and/or social media, and the processes of identity construction within this space. Accordingly, Chapter four addresses the research question: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around participation on social media and LinkedIn? I unpack and discuss two tensions and their implications for identity construction. The first tension centres on participants' discursive constructions of a virtual world consisting of boundaried, defined places vs discourses that describe a virtual world consisting of wide open, non-boundaried, unexplored spaces. The second tension is the imperative implied in the participants' discourse that, as an entrepreneurial professional, it is essential to participate on LinkedIn, and risky not to be there; at the same time, it is also a risky place to be.

In Chapter five, I address the second research question: What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around creating and displaying a network on LinkedIn? I identify four tensional themes. Some of these emerge as tensions within participants, and some evidence conflicting discourses between the participants. Firstly, I identify and discuss a tension between the imperative for entrepreneurial professionals to create an expanding network, juxtaposed with their personal reluctance to do so. Secondly, I discuss conflicting discourses between network participants as a living framework of relationships vs networks as a fixed database of contacts. Thirdly, I unpack tensions experienced by individuals related to openly displaying a network of contacts on LinkedIn, and a desire to keep this network protected. Finally, I discuss tension in the discourse between openness and closedness around accepting and offering invitations.

19

In Chapter six, when discussing tensions in interaction, I address the third research question: What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around interacting with their network on LinkedIn? These tensions are traced through five contradictory, or to some degree antagonistic themes that are evident in participants' discourses regarding what constitutes a 'genuine' professional. These themes indicate that a genuine entrepreneurial professional aligns with thought leaders, but is still original and authentic, is an unassuming expert, sells without being a sales person, both separates and combines professional and personal identity, and wants to watch others but is reluctant to watch others.

The final chapter, Chapter seven, concludes my thesis. I summarise, compare, and synthesise the findings presented in Chapters four, five, and six, addressing and drawing conclusions regarding the three research questions. I present a discussion and interpretation of these findings firstly by collating the tensions into a layered hierarchy, and work towards the presentation of a two-dimensional framework of tensions and meta-tensions around identity construction on LinkedIn, this being the major contribution of this study. I then also identify other contributions to organisational studies and other fields, and discuss the theoretical and practical applications, including future research issues and limitations arising from the study.

Chapter Two: Online identity construction of the entrepreneurial professional

'Who am I?' is an enduring human question. The issue of identity is undoubtedly one of the most controversial but also most established in research and debate within the contemporary social and human sciences (Bauman, 2009). As discussed in the Introduction, the specific aspect of identity that is the focus of this study is the construction of online entrepreneurial professional identity and the tensions inherent in this process. This chapter will review the extant literature and situate this topic in the wider body of organisational communication literature, and in the context of social media such as LinkedIn. For clarity, I have divided this literature review into three sections: Section A on identity; Section B on professional and entrepreneurial identity, and in Section C, on networking and identity. In the following section, I discuss and present a social constructionist understanding of identity, to establish the concept of identity with which I most align and to work towards an appropriate definition of identity for this study. Thereafter, I review and discuss the literature on online identity construction to explain how tensions are inherent in online identity construction, an assumption that is fundamental to this study.

Section A: Identity

Identity is discursively constructed

In this section I will discuss the concepts of discourse and identity, the discursive construction of identity, and the concept of multiple identities and the tensions inherent in understanding identity construction from a constructionist perspective, to background and argue for the tensional approach I have taken in this study. There are also many levels of identity which articulate with each other and overlap (Schwartz, 2001) , such as personal social and collective identity. In this study the most salient constructs of sense of self, personal and work or occupational identities therefore in this section I discuss these levels of identity and their meanings as used in this study.

In this discussion, I use the term 'discourse' in two ways, that may require explanation. Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) and others as have distinguished these two meanings of discourse as Discourses (with a capital 'D') as discourses (with a lower case 'd'). Discourses (with a capital 'D') they define as the wide-spread beliefs of a particular culture or society, or the "general, enduring systems of thought within social systems" (Allen, 2005, p. 49). These thought systems are relevant to "historically situated time" (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004, p. 8). Discourse with a lower case 'd' is the local practices of talk and creating texts or "the active process of discursive "work" in relation to other speakers" (Ruelle & Peverelli, 2017, p. 18). It is akin to communication or interaction (Larson & Gill, 2017). To distinguish between the two constructs in this study, I refer to 'Discourse' (capitalised) as 'contextual discourse' and 'discourse' (lower case) as the 'discourse' of the participants. However, I also distinguish between types of the 'contextual discourse'. I refer to local contextual discourse, as the discourse of a specific society or culture; contextual discourse may also be described as relating to a particular realm or occupation, such as the contextual discourse of professionalism, and also as the dominant or wider global discourse. All of these are distinct from 'discourse' as in the discourse of the participants.

The basic premise of this study is that all that social 'realities' including identity are socially constructed, as first articulated in sociology by Berger and Luckman (1966) and in social psychology by Gergen (1973), against the cultural and intellectual backdrop of postmodernism. Here, I use the term social constructionism, rather than social constructivism, as constructivism is sometimes associated with Piagetian theory (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1973). From the social constructionist perspective, all reality is socially constructed through discourse and therefore identity is produced in the discourse of social relationships and encounters (Kuhn, 2006); it is not pre-formed in our subconscious and only reflected in, or transmitted through, communication channels (Kuhn, 2006; Mumby, 2011). "We create rather than discover ourselves" (Burr, 1995, p. 28). Discourse in this sense involves social interaction and self-reflection on this interaction and elements of self-presentation or performance and reflection back by others. Mumby (2004) has defined discourse as "material, embodied, performative process through which social actors construct their identities in a dynamic, contradictory and precarious fashion" (p. 247). Consistent with this view of identity, in

this study I have chosen to analyse the discourse of LinkedIn members to explore identity construction on LinkedIn.

Identities are both the medium and outcome of discourse of both kinds. Contextual discourse generates socially accepted knowledge, or "truth effects" (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005, p. 169), that are not 'true' or 'facts' but people talk and act as if they are true. Thus categories of identity are not only generated but are also legitimised through contextual discourses (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005) and these are capable of enabling particular social identities in "ways that favour some interests over other and thus constrain truths and subject positions" (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005, p. p.171). These contextual discourses construct expectations of appropriate and desirable behaviour, as well as shared beliefs the about the habitus of work, home, school the marketplace etc. (Bourdieu, 1977) and are located in the even wider societal mélange (cf. Foucault, 1972). To understand discourse then attention must to be paid to the wider contextual discourse in a globalising world where there are increasing "competing, fragmentary, and contradictory discourses" (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005, p. 168). Kuhn (2006) noted that although scholars are recognising the breadth of discursive resources that are relevant to identity work and regulation, when considering organisational identity, studies rarely "attend to [the influence of] discourses beyond the artificial boundaries of the organization" (p. 1342). This study attends to these discourses and the effect of the local contextual discourse in Aotearoa/New Zealand and how 'truth effects' of this discourse influence identity construction on LinkedIn, that also has a global context. The study of identity construction on LinkedIn is new and significant to the literature because the site of LinkedIn, by juxtaposing, dominant global discourses with local contextual discourses, surfaces these contradictory discourses in the discursive process of identity construction. Thus, a tensional approach to the study of identity formation is appropriate as it is both a conflictual and dynamic process, as the various social discourses compete for supremacy as discussed next.

Recent scholarship from a poststructuralist stance, conceptualises identities as fragmented, shifting, and conflicted (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Holmer-Nadesan, 1996; Kuhn, 2006; Shotter, 1989; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005). This view has put more focus on the tensions in the process of identity construction (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). Identity is being

constantly constructed or reconstructed through new interactions and social experiences which reinforce existing identities and/or enable exploration of new facets of oneself (Abbas & Dervin, 2009). It is "constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak" (Weedon, 1987, p. 77). Identity therefore is not fixed but is in in a permanent state of becoming and the appearance of stability in any given identity, is transient (Ybema et al., 2009). As identity is constructed "somewhere in between the communicator and their audience" (Alvesson, 1990, p. 376) each person constructs an identity congruent with a number of their social selves (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005). Identity then is a multiple construct, each identity depending on the audience; we present a different self to different audiences, and they reflect back to us a version of ourselves as multiple selves. Therefore, instead of having one unified 'discoverable' self, we are fragmented, having a multiplicity of potential selves according to the social situation. Identity construction then in the context of LinkedIn is likely to be very complex and tensional as audiences are multiple and unknown, and there is sense of 'context collapse' (Meyrowitz, 1985) as the social context is fluid, uncertain, and merges with other contexts as is discussed later. However, as discussed in Chapter one, the tensions inherent in this identity construction work on LinkedIn, that is work or professional identity are yet to be unexplored in the literature, (Broillet et al., 2014). This study addresses this gap by exploring these tensions.

There is also a constant tension or juxtaposition between social and self-definition of identity, consistent with a definition of identity construction as the discursive articulation of an ongoing iteration between the social and self-definition (Alvesson et al., 2008; Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). These tensions are created by "a dynamic interplay between internal strivings and external prescriptions, between self-presentation and labelling by others, between achievement and ascription, and between regulation and resistance" (Ybema et al., 2009, p. 301). In this study I also refer to a distinction that has a been drawn between, the sense of self, and identity. As Burr (1995) explains although we have a multiplicity of social identities "we still feel as though we have as central unified self" (p.30). This apparent distinction between sense of central unified self and a socially situated identity has long been recognised in literature. For example Lanham (1976) alluded to this distinction as a reality, when he stated: "Every man possess a central irreducible self" (p.1), as well as a social rhetorical

self, "whose sense of identity depends upon daily histrionic re-enactment" (p.5). Lanham sees the Western self as shifting continuously between the central self and the social self. However, as Burr (1995) argues that, from a constructionist perspective, this sense of a consistent central self, continuous over time, is constructed from memory of social interactions. Memories allow us to look back at our experiences and behaviours and select those that 'hang together' in a narrative framework- making up the story of our lives. From this we identify patterns and repetitions that provide us with these feelings of consistency and continuity of self -a sense of a unique self that is constructed by memory and reflection on social experiences (Burr, 1995).

Therefore, the inner sense of self is not fixed and immutable, nor can be considered the 'true' or 'real' self, it is a *sense* of self that people construct rather than a 'discoverable' reality, however it is important in the narrative we tell ourselves about who we are. From a constructionist viewpoint, it is the interaction between an inner sense of self and one's external experiences that constructs social identity. The sense of personal self and social selves are linked in the identity formation process Webb (2006). As Jenkins observed: "It is in the meeting of internal and external definition that identity, whether social or personal, is created" (1994, p. 199). In addition, as Weiland (2010) states, "the self cannot be understood outside of the social because the self is inherently reflexive" (p. 506). Thus, identity *as* self is one's sense of inner coherent self, and identity *as* interaction indicates the external influences and understandings that influence, shape, and develop the self in the world (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Webb, 2006). In this study I utilise to the term 'self' when discussing a sense of central self as a unique individual, and 'identity' when discussing social identity.

The influence of a sense of self on identity construction on LinkedIn is unique in this context for several reasons. Constructing a social context on LinkedIn can initially be a somewhat inward-focused process, as discussed later in this chapter. Therefore, a sense of self constructed from memory of previous organisational experience carried forward into the LinkedIn experience will provide a sense of consistency and influence identity construction there. Transitioning from one work identity to a hybrid new identity will also create tensions that may be eased by a continuing or consistent sense of self.

Pertinent to this study also are the two concepts of personal identity (as distinct from self) versus public identity, a distinction that is different from of sense of self versus social identity. In this study the public identity enacted online is generally occupational or work identity and therefore is referred to as work identity or occupational identity in a broad sense, to differentiate it from personal identity, that identity that is enacted with family and friends. The term professional identity is used when discussing professional as a specific work or occupational identity as discussed later in this chapter.

In summary of the discussion above, identity therefore is formed through discourse, of both kinds; and a broad definition of identity that foregrounds the discursive nature of identity construction is appropriate, a definition such as is offered by Kuhn (2006), based on Anthony Giddens (1991), "The conception of the self, reflexively and discursively understood by the self" (p. 1340). However neither discourse or identity are being determined totally by the self (agency) or imposed by others by others via structural means (Essers & Benschop, 2007; Watson, 2013); two processes that are often described in terms of identity work and identity regulation (Alvesson et al., 2008; Ashcraft, 2007), where identity work focuses on the agency or work of the individual in creating their own identity and identity regulation focuses on the discourses that shape or produce identities (Larson & Gill, 2017, p. 486). In the next part, I will briefly discuss these two concepts.

Identity work. As suggested by the term 'identity construction', constructing an identity involves active or passive work, hence the term 'identity work'. Identity work is defined by Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) as a set of active processes (such as forming, strengthening, and revising), which serve to construct a sense of coherence and distinctiveness around identity. As Benwell and Stokoe (2006) observe, "identity may be a matter of taking positions within a contextual discourse, but it is also an active process of discursive "work" in relation to other speakers" (p. 18). In complex fragmented contexts such as social media, this work is more or less constantly ongoing (Larson & Gill, 2017).

The constructionist approach views identity as discourse, and it is available discursive resources that stimulate, inform, and effect identity construction via identity work. Discursive resources are, as per Kuhn's (2006) definition, "concepts, expressions, or

other linguistic devices that, when deployed in talk, present explanations for past and/or future activity that guide interactants' interpretation of experience while moulding individual and collective action" (p. 1341). These discourses are generally socially constructed through language and "anchored in a particular vocabulary that constitutes a particular version of the social world" (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1172). Language, according to Watson (1995), provides "the menus of discursive resources which various actors draw on in different ways at different times to achieve particular purposes…like that of making sense of what is happening in the organization" (p. 806). People tell stories about who they are by referring to existing social discourses and specific cultural norms, and by using the discursive resources of the local context (Callero, 2013; Linde, 1993). Subsequently, these discourses are likely to also influence the behaviours that are used to authenticate this identity within the relevant domain (S. Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010). In this study, it is the available discursive resources around an authentic professional and entrepreneurial identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand, that are being employed to construct and authenticate this identity in the domain of social media. These discursive resources as they are revealed in the participants' discourses about their participation on LinkedIn are therefore the focus of analysis.

The construction and authentication of identity is always a contested process; what is and what is not 'authentic' is mediated not only by the creator of the identity, but also by those for whom the identity is "performed" (A. R. Anderson, 2005), and can be simultaneously contested and legitimised (Hamilton, 2014). Referring to entrepreneurial identity, Lewis et al. (2010) explain, "The nature of the construct of authenticity [of identity] is ultimately contestable given that it may be conceptualized as being credited to external parties as much, if not more, than any inner dialogue of the entrepreneur concerned" (p. 666). Here Lewis et al (2010) are discussing entrepreneurial identity but the same holds for the 'professional' and all other identities.

As suggested above, identity work not only includes reflexive self-narration drawn from socially supplied discourses, but also interactions, via credible dramaturgical performances which, in turn, are mutually reinforcing (Down & Reveley, 2009; Goffman, 1959). This performed element of identity work is drawn from Goffman's (1961) concept of social encounters, according to which people perform in such a way as to "announce and enact who they are" (Creed & Scully, 2000, p. 391). Goffman

(1959). makes a distinction between 'front stage' actions are visible to an audience and are part of the performance and 'back stage' performance when no audience is present, something that can occur synchronously on LinkedIn. Social identity presented 'front stage' on social media in particular has to be actively managed, and this performance of identity increasingly requires people to strategically fit into a "community of strangers" (Côté, 1996, p. 421). In a globalised Internet-connected world this "community of strangers" Côté referred to 1996 has expanded exponentially and we have access to many more stories and lifestyles, or identity performances of others (Larson & Gill, 2017) that all influence identity construction. On LinkedIn and other social media front stage performance is permanent and very public, but also as described by (Young, 2013) it is not only performative, it must now be provocative and interactive to be noticed, as discussed later in this section.

As these influences on and opportunities for framing identity have increased, so the construction of identity has become a focal point in Western culture, and people have begun mirroring themselves in the strategic impression management that they see in today's media (Duffy, 2016; Larson & Gill, 2017). Consequently, the criteria for identity are becoming more a process of negotiating validity with others, increasingly so on social media, where the focus is on co-construction of one's identity with others through interactivity even provocativeness (Young, 2013) and, and the element of enactment or performance is heightened (A. R. Anderson & Warren, 2011; Papacharissi, 2002; van Dijck, 2013).

Identity regulation. The agentic nature of identity construction was originally given a dominant emphasis in the literature, however this emphasis has since given way to a poststructuralist position that acknowledges the identity regulation nature of contextual discourses that shape or produce identities (Nadin, 2007; Watson, 2008). As briefly discussed above, identities are regulated when social beliefs or practices impact on who we are (Bourdieu, 1977; Foucault, 1972). According to Alvesson and Willmott (2002), identity regulation "encompasses the more or less intentional effects of social practices upon processes of identity construction and reconstruction" (p. 625). Such practices can, for example, be the disapproving or approving responses that participants receive on social media, e.g., 'likes' or 'dislikes'. These reactions on social media may start as interactions between two people; however, the effect of social media and its multiple

audiences is that such reactions can escalate to the extent that they can rapidly become part of the wider contextual discourse, as happens in the case of Internet memes.

Identities are also regulated by the interests of organisations (Larson & Gill, 2017). Social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn have increasingly become sites for profit, and are therefore designed to encourage more open self-presentation, as they prescribe areas of self-definition for capturing valuable data (van Dijck, 2013). Additionally, as with institutions, professions and so forth, the design of sites such as LinkedIn shape how the members of these groups think of themselves and their social or professional identity. This design also re-forms the concept of identity in the contextual discourse and feeds back into individual identity formation. All these influences could be described as aspects of identity regulation.

Lewis (2015) tracks a focal shift in the literature away from agency as the primary construct in terms of identity formulation to include a broader context, in which the agent exists and identity is enacted (c.f.A. R. Anderson & Warren, 2011). This focal shift is not only to 'habitus' or the milieu of the deeply-ingrained culturally-based habits, skills, and dispositions formed from life experiences – which contributes to the formation of identity (Bourdieu, 1977) – but also includes the shape, form, and character of the embeddedness of that identity in said milieu (Pitt, 2004). For the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professional on social media, there are two pertinent features to the milieu or context, embedded in a more general experience, that need to be considered. These features are the online context or 'virtual world' as experienced on social media, with its emphasis on interaction and provocativeness, and also the wider context of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Just as identity or the construction of self has become a focal point in Western culture, identity has become a powerful term or 'root construct' in organisational studies (Albert et al., 2000). In the next section I will discuss how this study is situated in the broad field of organisational identity studies.

Situating the study in the field of organisational identity studies

One principle site for the discursive construction of social identity, identified by scholars, is organisations. Consequently, organisational identity has become an

important topic in organisational communication studies in the social constructionist tradition (cf.Allen, 2005). As Allen states, "A fitting topic for social constructionist research on organizational communication, is identity." (Allen, 2005, p. 49). The interpretive turn and its guiding interest in the social constructionism has led organisational communication scholars to no longer consider organisations as containers of communication but more as cultural constructions (Ashcraft, 2007). This view considers discourse and meaning as central components in organising, and organisations themselves as formed and reformed constantly through communicative interaction (Ashcraft, 2007), the reason that Kuhn refers to the so-called boundaries of organisation as "artificial" (Kuhn, 2006, p. 1342). This view of organisations accommodates the study of the construction of organisational identity in alternative or emerging organisational sites such LinkedIn and organisations in a culturally specific environments such as Aotearoa/ New Zealand, in that it allows for other understandings of organisational identity that depart from the dominant assumptions to emerge.

The interpretive turn also paved the way for scholars to consider others forms of organisational identity, such as identities being transcendent *across* organisations (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007) as with professional identity, and transcendent *of* organisations, as with entrepreneurial identity that embodies an particular type of worker (Downing, 2005; Gill, 2017). As discussed later in this chapter, the dominant global discourse around professional identity generates and legitimises certain characteristics of a professional, and also generates and legitimises certain characteristics of an entrepreneur. The identity of an entrepreneurial professional therefore is a (possibly uneasy) combination of identities that can transcendent across and of organisational structure.

Considering organisational identity as a discursive construction that can be transcendent across and of organisational structures, underlines the appropriateness of the social constructionist approach to identity formation, and why other theories of identity such as identity theory (IT) (Stryker, 1980, 2002) and the closely related role-identity theory (RIT) (McCall & Simmons, 1978) were less applicable to this study. The two theories, IT and RIT, define the demographic, social, and cultural factors that affect social interaction and identity through specific biographies, unique characteristics, role identities, and private and public experiences. According to this approach, social

behaviour for the individual is then based on an already defined and classified world and derived from the shaping and modifying of the expectations of their roles. Such approach that rests on an already defined and classified world of social roles is not easily applicable a the rapidly changing context of the virtual world or indeed appropriate to a social constructionist approach to identity.

Social identity theory (SIT), and its associated social classification theory (SCT) are also less relevant. Though SIT and SCT do suggest that context largely determines the activation of personal or social identity (cf.Hogg & Abrams, 1988) rather than describing a role in defined and classified world, but they also hold that social identity is the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group and that people cognitively separate the world into meaningful categories and make judgments based on these (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In this study where there is a dual influence of social contexts, the global social media context, and the local contextual discourse of the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, and dual identities, professional and entrepreneurial, categories and therefore identities, are likely to be multiple and contested (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). SIT and SCT therefore becomes difficult to employ to an understand identity construction in this context. More importantly, the categorisation of people into groups may also be less applicable on social media and the Web 2.0 technologies as these create an emphasis on the individual acting independently. As discussed in more depth later in this chapter, in the world of social media, being a networked individual rather than a member of a group (Papacharissi, 2011a; Rainie & Wellman, 2012) is the dominant basis of interaction and implies a movement away from group identification towards networked individualism (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). My approach to the construction of identity therefore, though drawing on aspects of SIT theory (for example the concept of social group categories), is to consider identity as a multiple, dynamic and contradictory discursive construction (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006) as I explore, through their discourse, the tensions in participants' construction of the identity of the entrepreneurial professional and in the LinkedIn context.

A tensional approach to exploring identity construction

In this study, during the process of analysis, I drew on dialectical theory to describe and explain the tensions evident in identity work on LinkedIn and the ways in which they are communicatively managed. The fundamental assumption of dialectic theory that all relationships are interwoven with multiple contradictions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). The world view represented by dialectic theory is appropriate in this study of LinkedIn as an emerging organisational context, as it is compatible with notion of a social universe that is not fixed and is without solid boundaries (Baxter, 2004b). Dialectic theory originating from Bakhtin's (1981) dialogism, has been adapted to explain dialectics in interpersonal relationships (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, 2000) with Relational Dialectics theory (RDT) and extended to organisational settings to explain communicative tensions (Putnam et al., 2016; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004).For individuals managing tensions between different identities or discursive resources is fundamental to the construction of identity, "a key part of identity work for individuals" (Larson & Gill, 2017, p. 1416). Therefore, regarding LinkedIn as an organisational site, and then identifying the identity tensions in participants' discourse, is not only an approach to explore if and how organisational identity construction work is occurring on that site, but also to identify divergent discourses within and between participants discourses and how these tensions are being managed.

Discussing the rising focus on organisational tensions in identity studies, Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) frame this focus in four tenets. Firstly, they call attention to the ubiquity of organised irrationality and assert that the paradoxes, contradictions and ironies that underlie tensions, although irrational, are a normal condition of organisational life, not anomalous problems to be removed or resolved. Secondly, they recognise that these tensions arise because communication is a site where organisational members struggle for the primacy of various meanings of truth and identity, including divergent truths such as gendered or minority truths and identities. Thirdly, tensions although irrational, and can be creative and energising, not necessarily anomalous problems to be removed or resolved. Finally, these tensions are an applied concern; that is if irrationality is positioned as an endemic feature of organisational life then the concern is to consider how men and women live with tensions productively, and not

seek to eliminate them. These four tenets guided the focus of the analysis, and conclusions, of my study.

If LinkedIn and social media are regarded as new and emerging organisational forms, then tensions, though expected, are likely to be heightened in this new context, since tensions increase "as organisational environments become more complex and turbulent, and diverse institutional forms merge and emerge" (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004, p. 81). Additionally, in a context where global and local discourses intersect, these irrationalities related to place and context may be heightened, where the local contextual discourse, for example, of Aotearoa/New Zealand, may diverge from mainstream western logics of organisational theory and practice, or dominant western discourse. I use the term 'western discourse' here in the sense employed by Gill (2017) and others (e.g. Ogbor, 2000), to refer to the discourse of United States and other European and westernised industrialised countries, and is influenced by the Protestant or Calvinist work ethic (cf.Weber, 1930).

A dialectical tension has been defined as a contradiction between two imperatives or extremes, that are both necessary or reasonable. There is not a simple ''either-or'' choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives but one that requires simultaneously attending to both competing imperatives (J. L. Gibbs, Rozaidi, & Eisenberg, 2013). Though these dialectical tensions could be seen as detrimental to individuals and organisations, by creating stress and anxiety around making choices and responding to work situations (Putnam et al., 2016; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005), they have been identified as a normal part of organisational experience. They have also been found to be productive in enabling the accomplishment of multiple goals since they enable people by recognising the tension to creatively transform or transcend it by embracing both alternatives as ''both-and'' options (Putnam & Boys, 2006, p. 81).

Tensions are identifiable in contradictory or paradoxical elements in the discourses, both within the discourses of individuals or between the discourses of different members. Contradictory in that opposites coexist that have the potential to negate one another. Paradoxical in that opposite poles implicate one another (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Tracy, 2004). In a paradox, actions and interactions reinforce contradictions and often lead to ironic outcomes in which efforts to manage the tensions

produce the exact opposite of what was intended (Putnam, Myers, & Gailliard, 2014). From these contradictions and paradoxes, and ironies in discourses, recurrent tensional themes can be identified. These J. L. Gibbs (2009) has termed "subdialects (or second order tensions)" (p.928).These second order tensions can then be grouped into overarching dualities, key tensions or meta-tensions. These dualities consist of multiple interrelated tensions, such that a given duality or tension is nested in larger systems of bi-polar relationships (Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004). Tensions such as these are meta-tensions in identity construction prevalent in all organisations. Accordingly, as Baxter (2004b) argues, an emphasis on "binary opposites," in creating tensions is too simplistic when in fact, many discourses can be competing at once at a time and she called for future work that constructed "multiple voices in centrifugal–centripetal flux" (p.189). This study responds to that call.

Therefore, to fully identify and explain organisational and identity construction experienced in participation on LinkedIn, surfacing the contradictions, paradoxes and tensions between and within, the discourses of individual users is necessary. From these a framework of tensions, one that identifies not only levels of tensions in terms of sub-tensions, tensions and meta-tensions, is called for, but also one that presents the multiple competing discourses, such as local and global, and in different dimensions, all interacting with each other in centrifugal–centripetal flux. Such a framework of tensions is helpful not only in explaining the necessary contradictions and tensions that arise when members face competing goals and interests (J. L. Gibbs, 2009; J. L. Gibbs, Scott, Kim, & Lee, 2010), but also to understand what is normal in this context.

These tensions between opposites or dualities can be managed or mismanaged in several ways, but overall, the literature suggests a number of ways individuals can manage tensions: through selection (of one alternative), separation/vacillation (recognizing both poles and vacillating from one to another), integration (combining both poles through a forced merger or neutralisation neither of which allows for both poles to be fully realised), or transcending (or transforming dichotomies through reframing or synthesis) (J. L. Gibbs, 2009; Seo et al., 2004).

In conclusion therefore, this study utilises the construct of identity tensions, identified through antagonistic (or contradictory) discursive resources, to unpack organisational

34

and identity construction issues and contradictions and tensions that entrepreneurial professionals' reveal in their discourses around their participation on LinkedIn and present these tensions in a multi-layered and multidimensional and interrelated framework. I will also identify the various ways in which these tensions are managed. In taking this tensional approach therefore I was not seeking to find resolution or solution to these tensions but to surface the tension experienced in participation on organisational context of LinkedIn and the tensions inherent in identity work in that context and identify how these are being managed. In the following section I will discuss online identity construction and then the main identity tensions that may exist in this general context.

Online identity construction

In this section I discuss online identity construction generally, including definitions and a discussion of social media and LinkedIn and their affordances, before moving to a discussion of identified issues and tensions in online identity construction. First however I will briefly consider the constructs of cyberspace and virtual worlds and how I use them in this study.

Terms and definitions referring to the online world

There are many terms describing the virtual world of the Internet – 'cyberspace', 'virtual reality', 'virtual world', and 'the world of the Internet' are some of the most common. In this study, I employ two of these terms, 'cyberspace' and 'virtual world'. 'Cyberspace' is "the notional environment in which communication over computer networks occurs" (OED, 2017), a relatively dated term from the 1990's, but useful in this study. I utilise this broad concept of cyberspace when referring to the environment of the Internet as a whole, conceptualised in some discourses as a space. The concept of virtual worlds is more often associated with specific notional environments created on the Internet, e.g. for gaming. I use the term 'virtual world' when referring to a visualised or notional place within the broad environment of cyberspace, or when I refer to one part of cyberspace, for example., LinkedIn that is viewed as a distinct territory or place in cyberspace.

The action of presenting oneself online using a social networking site has become important for the many through social media communication, whereas previously, with mass media, it had only been limited and important to the few who presented themselves on traditional media. As we participate more online, we carry with us a digital identity, or e-identity. Stephanie Vie (2011) defines this digital identity as "the digital traces left behind as we participate in virtual worlds" (p.1). Chan (2006) describes online social networking sites as a kind of 'presencing' system – a personal presence within a social context. This online presence, sometimes referred to as an 'avatar', blurs the line between the individual and online space, as people are the content of each online profile, and each profile serves as a stand-in for the person at all times (Chan, 2006), a kind of 'digital me'.

Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas advised, when taking a discursive approach to the study of identity construction, there needs to be a balance between 'close readings' of individual discourses, and the consideration of broader contexts and macro-developments, "to avoid myopic pitfalls" (Alvesson et al., 2008, p. 12). Within organisational studies, there is an emergent consensus that, for its participants, organisations are sites "for realizing the project of the self" (Grey, 1994, p. 482). However, when an individual is not within an organisation in a traditional sense, the project of the self, at least in an occupational sense, must be realised elsewhere, and this study argues increasingly, this is LinkedIn; and this context influences the discursive construction of identity and therefore has a specific focus in this study.

In any organisation the context of identity construction is both the medium and outcome of interaction, and the meanings given to that context contribute to actors' abilities to develop a reflexive awareness of their actions (Kuhn, 2006). Pred (1990) contends that the locale of interaction has a "a site-specific combination of presences and absences, a particular combination of physical resources, a specific conjunction of human artefacts and/or elements of the natural world, that serves to enable and focus the interaction or activities in question" (p. 123). On LinkedIn the physical resources such as the technical features which enable the affordances, discussed below, the conjunction of human artefacts and natural elements and "presences and absences", are of a different character than in non -virtual context and have a unique effect on interaction. Just as social media differs from a traditional social context, LinkedIn as an organisational site differs from a

physical work-based organisational context. It is permanently public, globally-reaching, and the boundaries between work and personal life and other social contexts appear more permeable and contested than in the physical world. These differences will be discussed in depth later; however, they suggest a shift that others have identified, that in the digital age we are in a new age of identity construction, as I will discuss next.

Young (2013), in a study of identity construction on Facebook, proposed that the digital era represents such a new socio-historical age for identity construction, and identified three key areas of difference between digital identity when compared to identity constructs of the past. Firstly, the social interactions by which identity was constructed. These traditionally occurred between individuals and groups interacting within mutually constructed boundaries (e.g., family, work colleagues). On social media, such as LinkedIn the postings of others can make public otherwise private beliefs and actions of an individual, even though they may strive to keep them private to a limited group, thus the co-construction of one's social identity occurs through a broad range of intersecting readily-accessible networks, where boundaries between social spheres are less clear. Secondly there is permanent record of social interactions over time, and thirdly social media encourages users to make contributions that receive comment or reaction, to promote interaction, sometimes provocatively, or that strengthen existing offline bonds, for example 'likes' and 'dislikes'. Therefore, Young described the features of digital age as: social identity is co-constructed with and by others, personal identity is public and permanent, and identity criteria are provocative and interactive (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Identity: pre-modern, early modern, late modern, and digital

(Young, 2013 adapted from Côté, 1996; van Halen & Janssen, 2004)

	Pre-modern	**Early modern**	**Late modern**	**Digital age**
Social identity	Ascribed	Achieved	Managed	Co-constructed
Personal identity	Heteronomous	Individualised	Image-oriented	Public and permanent
Identity criteria	Loyalty to tradition	Personal unity	Expressiveness and flexibility	Provocative and interactive

While the concept of the Internet as a site to construct and explore one's identity is not new, what is relatively new is the immediacy and interactive nature of online social network profiles and communications channels, following the advent of Web 2.0 technologies. This 'connective turn' in social media came with a noticeable shift in the organisation of these platforms from database structures into narrative structures (van Dijck, 2013). These site features – immediacy, interactivity, and narrative structure – now have the potential to alter the way in which we interact, present, and represent ourselves in this social context (Young, 2013). Also inherent in constructing an online identity is the concept that the virtual world "requires people to write (or type) themselves into existence" (Young, 2013, p. 3). In other words, to exist in the online social world, a presence or identity needs to be established though writing and posting on a site such as LinkedIn.

As I have outlined above, the underlying premise of this study is that identity develops from social constructionism and that it "is a phenomenon that emerges from this dialectic between the individual and society" (Berger & Luckman, 1966, p. 196). This same process is occurring in the virtual world (Abbas & Dervin, 2009). In 1993, Lawley claimed, "The web is not a new world, but an electronic reflection of the world we currently inhabit" (cited in Miller & Arnold, 2003, p. 77), however, with the development of Web 2.0 since 2003, the social media features of connectivity, immediacy, and interactivity have created a virtual context in which the interactive social process of identity construction are expedited. Consequentially, in this and other ways, the web is not so much *reflecting* the world we inhabit, but also sense *becoming* the world we inhabit (cf.Knight & Weedon, 2014; O'Reilly, 2005). Accordingly, online identity construction is increasingly becoming a dialectical relationship between the individual and the wider virtual social world.

Because of this this dialectical relationship, a study examining how online identity is constructed implies not only understanding how identities are being formed and reconstructed using this social media, but how our constructions of the social world are changing, as the virtual world increasingly becomes that context. Constructed identities are embedded in a more general interpretation of reality, they are built into a symbolic universe and vary with the character of the later, or as Berger and Luckman (1996) claim: "Identity remains unintelligible unless it is located in a world" (p. 195). The first

focus of this study therefore is to explore constructions the virtual world of social media and LinkedIn, the symbolic universe that is the context of identity construction. It examines the dialectical relationship between the social world of LinkedIn and the individual to identify tensions experienced there, before exploring identity tensions in relating to others in this context. In the final part of this section I will discuss issues and tensions around participation on social media and the implications for identity construction, but firstly I clarify my use of terms referring to this context and briefly define and discuss social media its features and functions, and the affordances of LinkedIn.

Social media and LinkedIn

The term 'social media' itself refers to applications on the Internet (viewed by users as sites) based on Web2 .0 technologies that allow for "the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). As such, they are a type of mass media, in that they are publicly available (though they may include closed groups), and have affordances of participation (Rheingold, 2012), interaction, and relationship-building (Shirky, 2008; Surowiecki, 2004). Since the development of Web 2.0 technologies in the early 2000s, with functionalities for user-generated content, interactivity, identity-specific profiles, multi-media, as well as networking functionalities, social media has proliferated to become a potent force in social relations, marketing, recruitment, shopping, business, politics, social activism, and a host of other areas (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The total number of social media users is 2.39 billion, which is expected to expand to 2.72 billion users in 2019 (DBS-Interactive, 2017). There currently exists a rich and diverse range of social media sites that vary in terms of their scope and functionality (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Some sites are aimed at general social connection, e.g., Facebook. Launched 4 February 2004, Facebook has in 13 years grown to include two billion monthly active users, with more than one billion daily log-ons (Facebook, 2017). Other popular sites are YouTube, Pinterest, and Snapchat, which utilise primarily visual and photo sharing functionalities, while Twitter allows users to post and view updates in real-time, and is a site often relied on for news. A multitude of other sites, for example, China-based WeChat, have grown rapidly and is currently expanding their services outside of China. It is therefore not surprising that Knight and Weedon (2014) state that social media is "a native habitus for many and…a place to

perform our various roles in our multimodal lives" (p. 257) and that academic researchers are increasingly studying identity construction in a virtual context.

LinkedIn, however, is the only widely-used, specifically business-oriented social media site. It allows users to create professional profiles, post resumes, and communicate with other professionals. (A full description of LinkedIn's features and functions is given in Chapter three). As of August 2017, LinkedIn reported more than 500 million registered users in more than 200 countries, and more than one million users in Aotearoa/New Zealand (LinkedIn, 2017b) . This is a significant percentage of the working population in a country of approximately 4.5 million (MBIE, 2017a). Of course, due to the significant growth of social media, LinkedIn, like other social media, has garnered major economic value. The value of social media lies not only in providing sites for marketing and advertising; importantly, it serves as a source for mining data collected from people's activities when engaging with social media (Bradbury, 2011; Russell, 2011; Zafarani, Abbasi, & Liu, 2014). This economic value will undoubtedly drive its continued development.

Social media affordances

Social media is defined above as having specific functionalities however it is recognised that people use technology in different ways and people using the same technology may engage in similar or disparate communication practices (Fulk, 1993). The relationship between technology and the people who come into contact with, the users, termed 'affordances' (Gibson, 1979) is helpful explaining these differences or similarities in use of technologies. Affordances is defined by Faraj and Azad (2012) as *"the mutuality of actor intentions and technology capabilities that provide the potential for a particular action"*. This mutual relationship of intentions of the user and the technology capabilities, between new technologies and social practices, is also useful to explain the various enablers and constraints on identity construction on social media such as LinkedIn.

Treem and Leonardi (2012) identified four unique affordances of social media in work organisations: visibility and association (of content and people), as well as persistence and editability (of content). Social media unlike other collaborative media, such as instant messaging, is consistently high on all four affordances. Majchrzak, Faraj, Kane, and Azad (2013) proposed a similar taxonomy of affordances of social media in the particular context of organisational knowledge sharing: meta-voicing (providing collective feedback through commenting, voting, or rating of content), triggered attending (relying on automatic notifications about changes, to specific content to guide one's participation), network-informed associating (strategic linking with others to enhance opportunities to participate or engage), and generative role-taking (taking on emergent rather than prescribed roles to facilitate dialogue).

In terms of LinkedIn's affordances, that is how it is useful to members in an organisational sense (though not specifically in a single work organisation) LinkedIn could be said to be high in the four affordances identified by Treem and Leonardi (2012). However if assessed in terms of the affordances identified by Majchrzak et al. (2013) LinkedIn is not as high as in a single work organisation, as the focus is not on collaboration, though there is knowledge-sharing. Meta-voicing does occur by 'liking', but users do not systematically rank content. Although users are notified about new content, triggered attending, there is not a very high expectation to respond or contribute. LinkedIn is high in network-informed associating, that is the deliberate building of connections with others. However intentions in strategically linking with others on LinkedIn are not so much to enhance opportunities to participate or engage (Majchrzak et al., 2013) but to promote oneself or one's business brand. In terms of generative role-taking, members take emergent rather than prescribed roles, but dialogue is haphazard rather than strategic i.e. the intention is generally not so clearly collaborative knowledge-creation but simply knowledge sharing.

These affordances of LinkedIn reflect a change in social networks generally. There is a move away from group-centred networks (for example the group formed by a traditional workplace) to individual-centred networks (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). This movement not only affects affordances of social media but represent a change in how we construct identity online, as I will discuss in more depth in section C of this chapter. In the next section I discuss identity construction in the online context to unpack the unique issues

and aspects of this site of identity construction to identify them as possible sources of tensions in identity construction on LinkedIn.

Issues and tensions in online identity construction

Several themes and issues have been identified in the literature regarding the expanding phenomenon of permanent online presences. Firstly, there is the difficulty of managing multiple audiences in one's online social network. In the virtual world of social media sites individuals interact with significant others, but also construct and present an identity for a wider, sometimes unknown audience, with whom there may be little or no interaction. There are multiple unknown audiences thus, in this virtual context, an individual's identity is sometimes constructed in relation to imagined future others, as well as known others, and the presentation of self at times can be viewed, at least initially, as a somewhat solitary interior-focused process. This unknown audience can be an issue for the construction of personal online self, but is possibly more be more problematic in the case of the online professional self, as misjudgement or lack of knowledge of audience can have a direct immediate impact on work and career (Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard, & Berg, 2013), though this has yet to be explored.

In offline life, people can segregate through time and space, or at least, be more aware of the physical presence of audiences such a colleagues, family, and friends, thus allowing self-presentation to be catered accordingly (cf.Goffman, 1959). However, on online networks, such segregation is problematic (cf.Marder, Joinson, & Shankar, 2012). The front stage/back stage distinctions that Goffman (1959) describe are more difficult to maintain. The selves presented on online social networks are subject to simultaneous surveillance by multiple audiences that can occur 24 hours a day via many different search engines. This issue has been variously referred to and described in the literature as: the online multiple audience problem (OMAP) (Marder, Joinson, Shankar, & Thirlaway, 2016), context collapse (Marwick & Boyd, 2011), the problem of conflicting social spheres (Binder, Howes, & Smart, 2012), and the bridging of multiple heterogeneous social communities (DiMicco & Millen, 2007).

As discussed previously, identity is a multiple construct, that is we have a number of social selves. Through each of these identities, we present a different self. However, on social media, though we may present different identities on different sites, the

boundaries between these 'virtual worlds' are permeable, and identity is also multiply-interpreted by many different audiences. Multiple roles or identities that can overlap and be more difficult to keep separate in the virtual world where individuals' different identities can be viewed and interacted with by multiple and overlapping audiences (Marder et al., 2012; Marder et al., 2016). People in contemporary Western societies generally present different identities when they interact in a work setting (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013), compared to a personal setting such as with family and friends. Keeping this identity boundary between work and personal life has been established as one of the essential features of the bureaucratised society of the modern world (Weber, 1968), and creating a mental separation or 'boundary management' of multiple identities has been identified as a classic organisational challenge (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Boundary management involves the creation of "mental fences" that can be used to simplify and order the environment, i.e., "physical, temporal, emotional, cognitive, and/or relational limits that define entities as separate from one another" (Blake, Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000, p. 474). How this boundary management occurs is of interest to an exploration of identity construction on LinkedIn

This complex context contributes to a theme increasingly evident in the academic discourse of the need to construct and present an 'genuine and authentic', self in the virtual world – authentic and genuine in that it not only reflects the 'real' self but to some extent integrates the private and public, personal, and work or professional selves (Farnham & Churchill, 2011). Discourses of 'authenticity' and 'realness' have flourished over the last decade, as newly emergent technologies that have enabled consumer-audiences to be active participants in the cultural circuit (Baym & Burnett, 2009). Lewis (2013) notes that authenticity has become important as a significant qualifier of contemporary identity and is considered to be virtuous, since being true to oneself is understood as being sincere, honest, and genuine, as opposed to 'fake', insincere, and untruthful and lacking in integrity (Costas & Fleming, 2009). This concern about presenting an authentic consistent self in the virtual world echoes Mark Zuckerberg's now infamous quote:

> You have one identity. The days of you having a different image for your work friends or co-workers and for the other people you know are probably coming to

an end pretty quickly… Having two identities for yourself is an example of a
lack of integrity (Mark Zuckerberg quoted in Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 199).

Although Zuckerberg's statement has been heavily critiqued by scholars such as van
Dijck (2013) for promoting Facebook's underlying business goals by urging people to
reveal everything about their lives, dual trends have also been identified in the literature
that are likely to create pressure for individuals to present an integrated virtual identity,
an identity that will be received as authentic. The first of these trends is convergence or
total connectedness and integration of social media technologies (Binder et al., 2012;
Fuchs, 2017; Soltani & Abhari, 2013; Walther et al., 2011). This convergence mitigates
against boundaries between different social selves. Secondly, there is a growing
awareness and wariness of online deception and a corresponding increased need to
demonstrate genuineness and honesty for one's identity to be considered valid by others
(Binder et al., 2012; Folk & Apostel, 2013; Guillory & Hancock, 2012; M. Knight,
Knight, Goben, & Dobbs, 2013). These two trends are both likely to influence identity
as it is constructed and presented online, and consequently, the concept and construction
of identity.

Studies on managing this multiple audience issue have shown limited public awareness
of how to manage this problem. DiMicco and Millen (2007) conclude that most users
were not manipulating their online profiles or online behaviour to address their
professional and non-professional audiences. Similarly, Farnham and Churchill (2011)
found that users often had a limited awareness and lack of control over who viewed
their online profile. They identified three different approaches taken to this issue:
acceptance of the fact that generally, online postings were public; censoring of personal
material posted online; the use of privacy controls available on sites to manage who are
able to view online content (Farnham & Churchill, 2011). How the participants use
these approaches is also of interest in this study.

The work of Marder et al. (2016) highlights the negative side of this growing context
collapse of boundaries between offline and online work and non-work social spheres,.
They conclude that this context collapse produces social anxiety, supporting the
conclusion of other studies (e.g.Binder et al., 2012; Chiang, Suen, & Hsiao, 2013).
Chiang et al. (2013) advise keeping work connections separate from personal by using

sites such as LinkedIn, in a bid to reduce social anxiety. However, research into multiple audiences, generally indicates that even though there is a growing attempt to keep personal and professional online presences separate, this separation is difficult to accomplish, because online audiences can access overlapping information, and this complicates and produces tensions in the construction of professional identity online. Even though there may be a concern to keep personal and professional separate, it is increasingly recommended that if a professional profile is to convey a sense of the complete and authentic individual, without the embodied person being present, even a professional profile must express some personal as well as professional elements and that individuals manage the problems from personal /professional identity overlap with careful curation of their site (e.g.Chiang & Suen, 2015; Oslund, 2010).

Another recurrent theme in the literature, related to the issue of genuineness discussed above and an aspect of online presentation, is the issue of the 'real' versus 'ideal' or 'fake' self (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005). This aspect has been explored through the use of photos on social media (e.g.Marder et al., 2012; Siibak, 2009), and more generally, in relation to wall posts and personal information (e.g.Back et al., 2010; Mehdizadeh, 2010). Overall, research examining the extent to which a "real" rather than "idealised" self is presented online suggests that the nature of online social networking encourages individuals to present an online profile that is reflective of their offline self (Gosling, Gaddis, & Vazire, 2007; Ivcevic & Ambady, 2012).

However, it has also been noted that on LinkedIn, although factual biographical information such as prior work experience and responsibilities are not generally distorted, most profiles are more deceptive than social profiles as it concerns interests and hobbies (Guillory & Hancock, 2012). However the deeper issue in organisational studies, is whether there can be an objective 'real' self and a 'fake' or 'idealised self' (e.g.Weiland, 2010), or whether the fake self is simply another facet of the "crystallized identity" (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005, p. 3). From a constructionist perspective that there is no one 'real' self as all selves are social constructions and are multiple, however the contextual discourse around 'fake' and 'real' creates truth effects that influence how people talk. This study contributes to this research in this field in that it explores how entrepreneurial professionals' discourse constructs their and others' online selves, including if and when they are inferred to as 'real' or 'fake', (and/or considered genuine

or non-genuine) and how identities are not only generated but are also legitimised through this contextual discourse.

Another important aspect of online identity construction and presentation is the extent of the identification of individual small business owners (SBOs) with their businesses (Down, 2006; Down & Warren, 2008). In a small business of one, two, or three people, the individual or individuals often in a sense *are* 'their business'. Their skills, knowledge, experience, personality, and business relationships provide the services for sale, and serve as the business' primary assets. The individual's sense of self is therefore strongly linked to their business. Conversely, as social media requires a personal approach to succeed, particularly for a small company, the identity of the business is strongly linked to others' views of the personal identity of the individual business owner. As the entrepreneurial professional is increasingly interacting with others online as an individual, but also as an embodiment of the business in which they are involved, LinkedIn is an important yet sensitive domain for this professional identity construction.

This close association of the identity of the owner or entrepreneurial professional with the business is also reflected in the discourse around business brand. Research has shown that an SBO is likely to influence branding through their knowledge, business style, and personal networks (Mitchell, Hutchinson, & Bishop, 2012), and that the brand is generally based on the owner's beliefs and assumptions (Ojasalo, Natti, & Olkkonen, 2008). Therefore, the owner often talks as if he/she personifies the brand (Horan, O'Dwyer, & Tiernan, 2011). An owner will often 'self-brand' to present an image of their business to others. Self-branding is a more conscious, purposeful activity than the owner identifying with the business. Self-branding is an "identity that associates certain perceptions and feelings and entails managing and influencing the perception of [oneself] by others, which has positive benefits" (Rampersad, 2008, p. 34). This concept of the person as a brand was summed up by T. Peters (1997) thus: "We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be the head marketer for the brand called "You"" (p.1). In terms of personal digital brands, Rampersad (2008) define these as "a strategic self-marketing effort, crafted via social media platforms, which seeks to exhibit an individual's professional persona" (p. 34). Therefore, a specific aspect of strategic self-presentation, that need for entrepreneurial

professionals create a business brand closely linked to themselves, is likely to contribute to tensions when constructing identity in this domain, that may not occur in other organisational identity work. Such issues could revolve around how much a business brand may conflict or be congruent with a personal sense of self.

Another issue associated with the construction of a permanent and accessible online professional identity is the issue of identity security or ownership. In social media such as LinkedIn, where time and effort has been invested in identity work, there is a sense of personal ownership of a profile and page. Online, there are new risks of theft of professional identity or a personalised business brand, as these are now being expressed externally as content on a public page. Additionally, the individual's set of personal business relationships on professional social media may be subject to ownership claims in a SBO business partnership context (Mooney, 2013). These events can be experienced by individuals as identity theft, an event that can be traumatic (Steele, 2006). Concerns about this issue could create further tensions around the need to promote and at the same time protect it a brand on LinkedIn.

There are also are other issues of context associated with the design of the technology and the underlying assumption about professional identity this design conveys LinkedIn, like all social media platforms, is controlled by a technical interface, which is in turn controlled by site manager and the features of the interface to some extent shape and control the formation of online public identities (van Dijck, 2013). These features enable and regulate identity work. As van Dijck comments, "social media are not neutral stages of self-performance – they are the very tools for shaping identities" (van Dijck, 2013, p. 213). The narrative nature of self-presentation on LinkedIn is subtler than the style used by the most popular social media site, Facebook. The imposed uniformity of connectivity and narrative on LinkedIn has consequences for online professional identity construction. As Van Dijck (2013) argues:

> LinkedIn profiles function almost as inscriptions of normative professional behavior: each profile shapes an idealised portrait of one's professional identity by showing off skills to peers and anonymous evaluators. Not coincidentally, LinkedIn is often nicknamed "Facebook in a suit" (p. 208).

Presentation of the professional self is being fashioned by the architecture of the LinkedIn site, which at the same time also shapes a shared understanding of professional behaviour and identity. In a 2011 Wall Street Journal interview, LinkedIn CEO, Jeff Weiner, said when discussing a change in LinkedIn's infrastructure:

> More important are the behavioral changes taking place as a result of that infrastructure, the way in which people represent their **identity**, the way in which people are connecting with others, and the way in which they're sharing information, knowledge, opinions, ideas, everything (Raice, 2011).

As implied by the statement above, the discourse that shapes professional identities is being performed less in organisations and local social contexts, and more on social media sites, where identity construction is also to some extent being regulated by the design of these sites, and a dominant discourse that underlies that design.

In summary, there are several tensions around online identity creation and some unique issues or heightened issues around entrepreneurial professional identities that are likely to contribute to identity tensions social media sites such as LinkedIn. As the individual and the business are essentially being represented twenty-four hours a day by an avatar, there is lack of control over when, where, and who views them. There are multiple and unseen audiences that can create tensions about self-presentation. There is the possibility of ambiguity and interpretation without physical presence and context, and a concern about how to assess honesty and truthfulness, a 'genuineness' in others, and how to communicate these qualities about oneself when communication channels are limited, without revealing too much of personal identity. There is also a tension about how to both promote and protect the business brand. In this context, how much to trust others and how much of 'yourself' or 'your different selves' you reveal online are two issues that recur in the virtual world.

Meta-tensions

All the tensions and issues above can be seen as subdialects or minor tensions related to the context of LinkedIn, that could be productive or detrimental deepening on how they were managed (J. L. Gibbs, 2009). They can also be overlaid by four prevailing meta-tensions that have been identified in relational dialectic studies in organisations and may

therefore occur in this context if it is considered as an organisational context (Baxter, 2004a; Cheney, Christensen, Ganesh, & Zorn, 2011). These are; openness versus closedness, autonomy versus connectedness, and equality versus inequality. A further tension not yet identified in RDT studies but that has been identified in the organisational studies and social media literature and could be termed a meta-tension around a desire to watch others (peer surveillance) versus versus politeness and respect for privacy. I briefly discuss these meta tensions in the next section.

Openness versus closedness

This tension has been described as the desire to openly divulge information versus the desire to keep information exclusive (Cheney et al., 2011). J. L. Gibbs et al. (2013) have noted that while literature often emphasises the role of social media in a drive towards openness, the affordances of social media in fact promote both openness *and* closedness. Within organisational networks, members are motivated to share knowledge and communicate clearly with others to accomplish tasks, build relationships and achieve innovative solutions utilising social media. On the other hand, members are also motivated by impression management concerns and individual goals to protect certain knowledge and communicate in ambiguous or deceptive ways to protect it. They can be seen utilising ''strategic affordances,'' or affordances that draw on organisational members' desires for strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984). Strategically ambiguous messages can also help avoid revelation of too much sensitive information (Berger, 1997) and selective self-presentation (Walther, 2007). These strategies promote closedness. These conflicting intentions and motivations can be seen in tensions with social media use between openness and closedness.

Autonomy versus connectedness

The tension between autonomy versus connectedness in relationships has been well documented in organisational studies (e.g. Jameson, 2004; Putnam, 2003). This dialectic is a need to separate oneself as an individual versus the need to have ties and connections. On social media the need to have connection is very salient. It is by deliberately connecting and building a network that the individual exists and creates a social world in which to relate. The desire for autonomy however would still exert an opposing influence

Equality versus inequality

This dialectic has been described as the desire to be considered as equals versus the desire to develop levels of superiority (Cheney et al., 2011). Social media creates a false sense of equivalence between users through flattening social relationships and eliminating context, as there are multiple audiences and organisational status is not well-defined. Therefore it would seem that the desire to communicate as equals would be heightened (Marwick, 2012). On the other hand as Marwick (2012) comments, " Despite the technological affordances that purport to erase power differentials between individuals, hierarchies … are constantly re-established and reinforced through social interaction" (p.387). If professionals are seeking to establish themselves as competent and expert and, as entrepreneurs, to 'sell' their brand or services, then there may be an equal desire to appear more expert or competent than others, and therefore superior.

Desire to surveil others versus a reluctance to do so

The final tension, the desire to watch others and a level of discomfort, even guilt, in doing so is a common human experience, but one that is likely to be heightened on social media. With the growth of digital technology has come a consequent "relentless of visibility" (Ganesh, 2016, p. 166) and ''pervasive awareness'' where visibility is never ending, far reaching, and ceaseless, and individuals are regularly broadcasting and receiving information from their networks (Hampton, Her, & Lee, 2011, p. 1046). Related to the concept of from networked individualism (Rainie & Wellman, 2012), is "surveillant individualism" in which individuals monitor and surveil each other as everyday practice (Ganesh, 2016). This 'mediated visibility' is not considered interactive because individuals are seen by many viewers without themselves being able to see these viewers, while the viewers are able to see distant others without being seen by them (Thompson, 2005). However, interpersonal surveillance is reciprocal in that people create content, such as editing their own self-presentation to appeal to an audience with the expectation that other people will view it (Marwick, 2012). Users monitor each other by consuming user-generated content, and in doing so formulate a view of what is normal, accepted, or unaccepted in the community, creating an internalised gaze that contextualizes appropriate behaviour (Trottier 2011). As Trottier (2011) writes, "interpersonal scrutiny becomes professionalized in recognition that professionals are watching" (p.6).

Social media may increase the flow of knowledge through passive information-seeking strategies (Ramirez, Walther, Burgoon, & Sunnafrank, 2002), but it may also encourage 'lurking' behaviours, users traversing others' information streams unobtrusively and gaining knowledge without openly interacting. Child and Starcher (2016) identified that one of the reasons individuals use social media sites is for individual surveillance and mediated lurking, in a variety of forms including 'creeping' on others' sites (scrutinising a person's profile, photos, posts, and connections; 'stalking' individual pages (repeatedly accessing and viewing them in a short period of time); and watching what others post and how they interact online with others from a distance (Cook, Lee, Lee, & Cook, 2015; Trottier, 2012). All these actions although common, have negative associations, with implications of eavesdropping, voyeurism and gossip (Marwick, 2012)

Such lurking actions are generally considered impolite, even when not visible to others, but more so if they are detected, and they generally reflect badly on the lurker. Part of a polite greeting in most cultures is to introduce oneself and state one's business, and to act secretly behind another's back, to hide one's actions, for any reason, is considered impolite, even a threat. When polite people interact, they declare who they are and what they are doing (Whitworth & Liu, 2013). Therefore, on social media there is a tension between wanting to find out about others and being seen as violating others' privacy, not being polite, just as being seen to watch others too obviously in public is not considered polite. This concern is heightened on LinkedIn where the default setting alerts the 'watched' to who has looked at their profile.

The literature on interpersonal surveillance on social media is mainly about Facebook and the issues found generally about the members' privacy concerns (eg. D. Boyd, 2011; Child & Starcher, 2016; Cook et al., 2015). There is very little about the watcher's concerns about being seen to be watching because viewers on Facebook are anonymous. On LinkedIn where they are not generally anonymous, and professionals are watching, the tension between being polite and respecting others privacy versus a desire to gather information about others is more likely. Other issues or tensions around power and watching others arise. Marwick (2012) identified that using social software to systematically learn information about others, enables users to assert power over others by gaining a greater picture of their actions and identities. On the other hand, by

paying unreciprocated attention to peers on social media, users acknowledge the importance and visibility of their peers reinforcing their peer's higher status. For many, attention and visibility is a goal in itself, especially when it is connected to social status (Marwick, 2012, p. 389). Therefore, being aware that you are being watched is not necessarily undesirable, though being noticed watching others may reduce the status or power of the watcher.

Conclusion

In this section, I have outlined my understanding of the constructs of personal and social identities, the dynamic and fluid nature of identity construction, the tensions and contradictions that are inherent in this process online, and the possible meta tensions that frame online identity construction. In the next section, I review the literature and discuss the construction of both entrepreneurial and professional identity.

Section B: Professional and entrepreneurial identity

In this section, I discuss the construct of the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professional. To explore the dual aspects of this identity, I review and discuss relevant extant literature on professionalism and entrepreneurism as separate identity discourses. In the following chapters I further contrast and compare these two discourses to explore and analyse the tensions in identity construction identified and to argue that this hybrid identity creates tensions. I have included an extended focus on literature around e-professionalism and constructing a professional presence online, to situate the study in the context of social media and argue that there are new and/or intensified identity construction tensions in this context. I have also included a discussion of contextual discourses around the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identity to provide the specific cultural context of this study. I found no relevant literature or other writing that distinguishes a specific Aotearoa/New Zealand contextual discourse around professionalism; however, the general cultural context, that may also influence the local discourse around professionalism is described the final part of this section. In the following analysis and discussion chapters I also further contrast and compare the dominant local discourses with the dominant contextual discourse of Western societies to explore and analyse the tensions in identity construction identified.

The entrepreneurial professional as an identity

As discussed in Chapter one, I define 'entrepreneurial professionals' as people who consider themselves as professional, who had previously been in employment, and have entered into self-employment in an entrepreneurial role, either as a sole trader or in a micro-enterprise, often in partnership. They still identify as a professional, as distinct from a tradesperson, or blue-collar- or self-employed person. This distinction as discussed in the next section and includes dimensions of both class and an expected demeanour. However, these professionals have also assumed the role of an entrepreneur or small business person-owner and are therefore likely to experience or have experienced a significant identity re-alignment to that of 'entrepreneur', as well as 'professional'; that is, they are now an 'entrepreneurial professional'.

As Lewis (2013) notes in a study of the contextual discourse of female entrepreneurial professionals, in constructing this dual identity, entrepreneurial professionals are likely to draw on discursive resources from two occupational and social identities, i.e., entrepreneurial and professional, Their degree of identification with respect to each social group, entrepreneurs or professionals, will vary, and positive or negative evaluations that the individual holds about entrepreneurs or professionals, informed by contextual discourse, may influence their identification (Blake et al., 2000). For example, in the Lewis's (2013) study, women were reluctant to identify with the dominant masculine contextual discourse around entrepreneurship, instead drawing more on the discursive resources around professionalism, as discussed in more detail below. In the following two parts, I review and discuss the literature and contextual discourse around the construct of professional identity.

Professionalism and the professional identity

Many different authors agree that the concept of professionalism is ambiguous (e.g. Boshuizen, Bromme, & Gruber, 2004; Dent & Whitehead, 2002; van der Camp, Vernooij-Dassen, Grol, & Bottema, 2004). Moreover, the terms 'professionalism', or

'the professional' are often used in a largely undefined and taken-for-granted manner (Fischer, 2005; Mancini, 1999). Nevertheless, academic and popular social discourse suggests that the image of a professional is one who acquires specific knowledge or expertise (Boshuizen et al., 2004), as well as corresponding personal characteristics such as detachment, commitment, autonomy, and rationality, and suppresses characteristics such as spontaneity, emotionality, and individuality (van der Camp et al., 2004). A common profile of professional performance in the dominant contextual discourse is presented by Ashcraft and Allen (2003) as follows:

> Acts with restrained civility and decorum; wears a convincing shell of calmness, objectivity, and impersonality; thinks in abstract, linear, strategic [terms] – in a word, ''rational'' terms; covers the body in conservative, mainstream attire; keeps bodied processes (e.g., emotionality, spontaneity, sexuality) in check; has promising, upwardly mobile career track; derives primary identity and fulfilment from occupation and work accomplishments; speaks standard English; and so on (p. 27).

The concept of 'professional' also implies being white-collar and not working class, and a claim to authoritative expertise in a specific professional field (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007).

A further marker of being a professional is belonging to professional networks that are exclusionary in nature (cf. Crane, 1972; Macdonald, 1995). As Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) observe, "The term professional continues to evoke tangible evidence of status and identity, powerful images of actors and with attendant evaluations of bodies and behaviours, and exclusive networks of relationship" (p. 153). Furthermore, presenting oneself as a professional is seen to confer power (Swartz, 2003). The profile of a professional as presented by Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) reflects a gendered, raced, classed, and heterosexual bias to professional norms, which others have also noted (eg. Deetz & Mumby, 1990; Marshall, 1989, 1993; Murphy & Zorn, 1996); however, it nonetheless captures the common image that is dominant in the contextual discourse of industrialised Western societies (Gill, 2013, 2017). As Dent and Whitehead (2002) explain, to be viewed as a professional, "the individual must present an almost seamless association with the dominant discourses" (p. 11), and have the capacity to align with the dominant contextual discourses.

Concepts of professionalism are changing, however, and an aspect that is becoming more prominent is "the public manifestation of beliefs" (González & Benito, 2001, p. 345). Increasingly, to be a professional, one must be viewed as behaving in all aspects of life as a professional, expressed by Kompf, Bond, Dworet, and Boak (1996) as "displaying in one's public (and private) life types of behaviours likely to meet with the approval of the community in which one practices one's professional skills" (p. 5). Hence, individuals who are able to assimilate these signifying practices, the behaviours that legitimate them as professional, can "become" a professional, regardless of formal education or a link to a relevant professional organisation. The extent to which members view themselves as being part of a professional social group, and the extent to which they are in turn are validated by others as capable in this particular social setting is equally important, as this determines how their contributions will be evaluated (P. Lewis, 2013). Accordingly, as Trethewey, Scott, and LeGreco (2006) observe, in contemporary work, the appeal and requirement 'to be professional' is omnipresent in a wide range of occupations, from the top to the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. Thus the concept of professionalism is not only reserved for specific "professions", but is utilised by many to create a positive self-concept and social identity in many work situations (Fournier, 1999).

In summary, and to clarify my use of terms in the study, there are several understandings of the concepts of professional and professionalism; however, among these, three appear to be the most commonly-accepted. The first concept is of a professional in a traditional and limited sense, as someone who has a field-specific degree or higher-level qualification, and whose claim to practice as a professional in that field usually is validated by being a member of the relevant association. Examples related to this concept traditionally included doctors and lawyers, later widening in scope to include more recently regulated professions such as engineers, architects, and teachers. The second understanding of a professional is those who are in 'white-collar' occupations, distinct from 'blue-collar', manual or 'working class' employment. Consistent with this understanding, this group includes a wide range of positions, e.g., counsellors, designers, and marketers, who may or may not belong to professional associations. The third understanding of a professional is any individual who displays professional qualities and behaviour, for example, who is polite, accountable, self-

managing and emotionally-controlled, at any occupational level. In general, in this study the focus is on the second and third concepts of 'professional' and it is in this combined sense that I generally use the term 'professional'. As noted above, these two concepts of professional and professionalism have become more prominent in the contextual discourse of contemporary work. However, there is also a fourth understanding, that is, using the term as an adjective in the sense of generally relating to occupation or work activity, for example, when referring to professional life, rather than private or personal life. When this understanding of the term 'professional' identity is also employed by the participants in this study I use the term 'work' or 'occupational' identity to distinguish it from the other concepts of professional and professionalism discussed above.

Professionalism has generally been referred to positively in the dominant social and academic contextual discourse (Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978), and career success is often associated with successful professional identity construction (e.g. Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989; Hall, Zhu, & Yan, 2002). The positive associations with professionalism are especially important for careers in the contemporary work context that are characterised by shifting boundaries in occupational, organisational, national, and global work arrangements. Professionalism is an aspect of identity that can be drawn upon, even though careers and work roles are changing (Arthur et al., 1989; Hall et al., 2002). As such, this positive association with professionalism in the contextual discourse also carries over into the field of entrepreneurship or self-employment, and even into alternative contextual discourses in these fields, for example, Lewis' (2013) study of entrepreneurial women's identity construction. In this study, Lewis found that women, while they emphasised their differences from the masculine norm of entrepreneurship, at the same time drew on the discursive resources of professionalism, a contextual discourse also embedded in cultural notions of masculinity, in order to still be viewed as 'authentic' in terms of entrepreneurial identity within an enterprise context.

However, like contemporary careers, professional identity is also subject to relational and social influences within, and even beyond, the individual's present occupation or organisation (Hall et al., 2002). Increasingly, these influences are situated in the virtual world of social media. In this world, occupational and career distinction becomes less

important than purveying an appropriate identity or persona, and on some sites, e.g., LinkedIn, a site for professionals, a persona of professionalism is expected (Folk & Apostel, 2013; Olsen, 2008; Oslund, 2010). This new context has given rise to the term 'e-professionalism'.

E-professionalism

The complex concept of digital identity-shaping is increasing in importance, as digital communications have become a societal norm (van Dijck, 2013) and society is beginning to understand how to harness the potential advantages of social media (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008). However, professionals face challenges in terms of reconciling conflicting contextual discourses around social media. With the accessibility and popularity of social media platforms blurring the boundaries between professional and personal, there are challenges in terms of consistently displaying in one's public and private life the types of behaviours considered professional. The concept of 'e-professionalism' is evolving in the literature and popular discourse to describe how traditional professional paradigms may apply in the context of digital media (Cain & Romanelli, 2009; Kleppinger & Cain, 2015). The enactment of e-professionalism in the virtual world is limited, as the material and embodied aspects of the professional, the signifiers of status and power such as dress and deportment, and artefacts such as a briefcase, etc., are not presented. However, it follows that other aspects such as written communication ability, demonstrating knowledge or expertise, decorum, and constraint in virtual interaction, as well as the display of exclusive networks of relationships, would become more prominent.

This literature also reflects tensions around digital identity construction experienced by professionals. In professional training (e.g., in health and law), social media is often presented as a potential, if controllable, liability. However, the unintended consequences of these warnings about social media use and possible dangers to professional reputation, is a climate fear around engaging with social media limiting its potential and effectiveness (Kleppinger & Cain, 2015). For example, professionals may not utilise the ability to speak effectively on behalf of themselves and the profession through positive and thought-provoking social media posts. As Kleppinger and Cain (2015) explain,

"When conscientious users are overly concerned with protecting an image, they may hesitate to forge a positive, influential image of themselves and the profession" (p.3).

Thus, there is an identified tension around forging a professional image on social media. However, for entrepreneurial professionals, performing a professional identity online is an important aspect of identity construction, as social media provides a platform or arena where, if they can successfully enact an authentic professional identity, they will attract clients, a positive reputation, and recommendations (Donelan, Herman, Kear, & Kirkup, 2010; Kleppinger & Cain, 2015; Olsen & Guribye, 2009b; Oslund, 2010). The other identity inherent in online professionals who are self-employed is that of entrepreneur. In the next section I discuss entrepreneurial identity.

Entrepreneurial identity and entrepreneurship

As discussed in the introduction to this paper, there has been a resurgence of entrepreneurship or an 'entrepreneurial renaissance' in the past decade. This resurgence has been fuelled by the digital revolution and other social forces such as the changing nature of work (Delwyn N. Clark & Douglas, 2014; Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017; Fenwick, 2002). More specifically, scholars have argued that new digital technologies of production, distribution, and promotion have given rise to a new and growing type of micro-entrepreneur, providing skills, knowledge, or a product in the information technology (IT) or digital media fields, or utilising information communication technologies (ICTs) to market, promote or communicate their personal brand and sell their services or products (Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017; Luckman, 2016). As is also noted in the introduction, in line with these trends, many new start-up businesses have been established in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the past five-to-seven years in digital media, communication, marketing, and design fields. Other growth areas for new businesses both in Aotearoa/New Zealand and internationally are beauty, health and fitness and coaching services, as well as consultants in the financial, administrative and accounting fields (MBIE, 2017a; OECD, 2012).

In all the fields listed above, networking and self-presentation are acknowledged and necessary professional skills; therefore, it likely that these micro-entrepreneurs will be

utilising the social media and networking site, LinkedIn, which is promoted as a business tool for professional profiling and networking. By joining LinkedIn, members are also to some extent self-identifying as professionals, and in the case of SBOs who join small business groups on LinkedIn, entrepreneurial professionals. As Papacharissi (2009) contends, "Arguably, membership of an online professional network communicates a statement of class and profession… [The] predominant ethos is professional, and the site membership presumes technological literacy and computer-friendly occupations, which tend to be white collar". (p.212).

In the next part, I will briefly clarify how I define the term 'entrepreneur' in this study and then I discuss. entrepreneurship and entrepreneurialism as a concept, as well as different contextual discourses around entrepreneurial identity.

Defining the entrepreneur

As this study focuses on independent small business individuals, I adopted a more traditional concept of the entrepreneur that includes individuals who start a business entity, are self-employed, and are building a business around a product or technology that is in some way new or novel to a market (Hoang & Gimeno, 2016). Yetim, Wiedenhoefer, and Rohde (2011) offer a definition of an entrepreneur within this framework as someone who is in "the process of designing, launching and running a new business, which typically begins as a small business, such as a start-up company, offering a product, process or service for sale or hire" (p. 3639). This definition is more limited than the more fluid concept of entrepreneurship that implies a style of behaviour that embodies the concept of 'enterprising self' that is also becoming common in the contextual discourse. The enterprising self signifies the qualities of initiative, risk-taking, self-reliance, and self-responsibility within employment in an organisation, as well as in self-employment (Fenwick, 2001, 2002, 2008). I do not to focus on this concept since, although the qualities of an enterprising self were likely to be found in the participants in this study, the pertinent identity markers are being self-employed, of being personally or solely responsible for their business. These tensions and issues in this identity are not necessarily relevant to the discourse around the enterprising self. Nonetheless, as most entrepreneurs are enterprising, there are possible implications for my study in terms of considering the what the enterprising self is in this context.

According to the definitions above, most Aotearoa/New Zealand small business owners or sole traders can be defined as entrepreneurs, as firstly they are mostly in self-employment, but they are not only self-employed, as this is a broad definition that may also apply to such occupations as itinerant labourers may be for example (Hunter & Wilson, 2003). They also have set up and own a business, and own and manage, as well as work in, this enterprise. They have generally identified a new service or product to provide, or a gap in the local market to fill (Cameron, 2002; Campbell-Hunt et al., 2001; C. Massey, 2011). However, the focus of this research is not on whether Aotearoa/New Zealand small business people (NZ SBOs) as in this study can legitimately be called entrepreneurs, but the experience of a particular group of Aotearoa/ New Zealand small or micro business owners, who are professionals in the terms I have described above, of constructing a digital identity on LinkedIn. This identity is generally described in this study as an 'Aotearoa /New Zealand entrepreneurial professional identity'.

One aspect of this dual identity the 'professional' I have discussed above but to further unpack this concept of entrepreneurial professional identity, I now discuss the concept of entrepreneurial identity as defined in the literature,

Entrepreneurial identity

Entrepreneurial identity is defined by Hoang and Gimeno (2016) as "a person's set of meanings, including attitudes and beliefs, attributes, and subjective evaluations of behaviour, that define him or herself in an entrepreneurial role. It encompasses how a person defines the entrepreneurial role, and whether he or she identifies with that role" (p.1). However, as identity is both individually and socially constructed (Alvesson et al., 2008; Blåka & Filstad, 2007), then integrated into an individual's understanding of their identity (including entrepreneurial identity) are the contextual discourses or ideas of 'who one is' and 'who one should be' in a particular society and culture (Weiland, 2010). Such contextual discourses create understandings and preconceptions that are attached to different social roles within a society or a culture, and carry expectations for behaviour, values, and beliefs, which have been internalised through socialisation and identification processes (Weiland, 2010). Therefore, understanding how an entrepreneurial identity, such as an Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identity is being constructed, as in this study, needs to be informed by the contextual discourse

within the cultural context in which individuals enact this role. As Drakapoulou-Dodd and Anderson (2007) reflect, "Entrepreneurs are deeply embedded within the society in which they operate" (p. 342) , and Jack, Drakapoulou-Dodd, & Anderson (2008) also argue that to understand entrepreneurial identity construction, the surrounding contextual discourse needs to be understood, because "different histories, politics and economies may have formed different perceptions about enterprise" (p. 126). Such an understanding shifts the focus on exploring the construct of 'entrepreneurial', as a universal identity, to also considering the local discourses that influence an individual's construction of an entrepreneurial identity. To explore and understand the interaction between the dominant Western discourses, the Aotearoa/New Zealand contextual discourses and identity construction on LinkedIn in relation to the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneur, I considered other typical images of entrepreneur in other regions, that is dominant stereotypes and archetypes of entrepreneurs. I then compared these to the Aotearoa/New Zealand stereotypes and archetypes of entrepreneurs, as I discuss next.

Stereotypes and archetypes of entrepreneurs

Within social systems, that contextual discourse constructs stereotypical conceptions of occupational identities, that is, they are an amalgam of the characteristics of the collective, or of a specific role (e.g., values, goals, beliefs), and the perceived prototypical characteristics of its members (cf.Postmes et al., 2006). For example, a common stereotype of a business leader is white, middle-class, and male (Ashcraft, 2011). Some of these constructions of identity are transcendent, where the construct of an occupational identity is constructed and mobilised across workplaces, for example, the construct of a "professional" (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007) and "entrepreneur" (Gill, 2013). In this study, I utilise this concept of transcendence of identity across sites to include the LinkedIn site.

For some occupations and in some societies, idealised stereotypes, or archetypes, have developed. These are defined by Chesebro, Bertelsen, and Gencarelli (1990) as, "an atavistic, patterned, and universal symbolic image, rooted in shared understandings and representative of influential and desirable values and ideas" (p.258). As such, archetypes represent idealistic images of who we should, or should not be, or aspire to

be. The archetype of any occupational character is therefore a combination of ideal work self and ideal social self, and represents the ideal relationship to work and an economic system as it evolves over time (Chesebro et al., 1990).

These cultural or national archetypes are born out of the contextual discourses within a society, including academic contextual discourses about social and occupational roles (Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki, 2003; Drakopoulou-Dodd, 2002). These archetypes not only recur but can reduce the complex and diverse into one; they can transcend unique sites and situations within a society and are ambiguous as well as ubiquitous. As such, they can inspire awe, mystery, and romance (Chesebro et al., 1990; Gill, 2013). As a product of the social landscape, they can be traced in recurring themes in literature, popular culture, and sociological and historical writings (Chesebro et al., 1990), and influence trends in regional research (Gill & Ganesh, 2007; Gill & Larson, 2014b).These themes are expressed and can be found as metaphorical images or metaphors of identity, an approach I employ later in this section to surface archetypes in the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identity.

Some discourses around archetypes, however, transcend across cultures and societies. These transcendent discourses are not 'site-bound', but are influential across space (Ashcraft, 2007). For example, the literature describes a universal entrepreneurial archetype, as well as regional entrepreneurial archetypes (e.g.Gill, 2017; McGrath & MacMillan, 1992). In a time of rapid social and economic globalisation, the 'entrepreneurial way of thinking' (or the enterprising self) may represent an archetype in itself (Meyer, Gartner, & Venkataraman, 2000; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990; Venkataraman, 1997). The tension in the literature between place-embedded entrepreneurial archetypes and universal entrepreneurial archetypes is reflective of the tensions experienced by individuals as they construct and reconstruct identity in the rapidly changing and globally connected world of social media.

In the next part, I briefly unpack some themes and underlying images in US and European contextual discourses around entrepreneurial stereotypes and archetypes, in order to identify common themes and differences among and between these images. These themes will then serve as the basis for a discussion of images of the Aotearoa/New Zealand stereotypical, and possibly archetypical, entrepreneur.

US and European entrepreneurial contextual discourses

Although scholarship has only in past 20 years named the 'entrepreneurial man' as an explicit archetype, by considering the historical underpinnings of ideologies, myths and cultural stories, a better understanding of the idealised identities or archetypes of today can be gained (Gill, 2013; Gill & Larson, 2014b). It is from long-standing myths and ideologies that the metaphorical images and metaphors of identity arise that inform scholars and public understandings of the entrepreneur today. In the US, these often refer back to a mythical hero figure in the "American dream", for example, in the popular stories of Horatio Alger. Here we find the successful, self-made common man, who is able to succeed through his values and belief in hard work, bootstrapping, and egalitarianism. It is an ideal so embedded in the psyche that in 1964, Collins, Moore and Unwalla were able to claim, "In the American pantheon of heroic types, the entrepreneur is the truly successful common man" (p. 6).

The economic changes that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, with their focus on technology and communication, favoured a new image of an entrepreneur in the both the US and Europe, reflecting an individual who was elite, agile, and technologically capable; a figure "capable of strategically navigating shifting trends"(Gill, 2013, p. 336). The dominant ideal US and European entrepreneurial archetype is now a high-tech celebrity, a symbol of innovation and change, global perspective, and wealth creation (Boje & Smith, 2010; R. Smith & Boje, 2017), archetypically represented by the pioneers of Silicon Valley, for example, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. (Gill & Larson, 2014a; Holmer-Nadesan, 2001). As in the US, the mainstream popular and academic discourse in Europe and Britain typifies the entrepreneur as a white, male hero; an adventurous person who takes risks, upholds patriotic values, and creates wealth for himself and others (Gill, 2017), a figure similar to the public image of Richard Branson (R. Smith & Boje, 2017). Although ideal and reality are not the same, and research has shown that entrepreneurs are not necessarily constrained by these contextual discourses (e.g. Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2005; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Gill & Ganesh, 2007), these are nonetheless the dominant images and constructions that influence beliefs and behaviour about the modern entrepreneur (Ashcraft, 2007).

The academic discourse in the European and US literature on entrepreneurship also focusses on the successful entrepreneur building social capital and networking, although European academic literature, reflects a stronger sociological bent, and places more emphasis on utilising the value of family and social networking in starting and growing a business (e.g.Aldrich, Rosen, & Woodward, 1987; Jack et al., 2008; Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Olsen & Guribye, 2009a; Vickey, 2011; Yetisen et al., 2015).

Additionally, in terms of identifying an ideal archetype, the heroic connotations given to the entrepreneur in the US are generally less obvious in Europe. An example of the less heroic image of entrepreneurs is given by A. R. Anderson et al. (2009) via a survey conducted across several European countries. They uncovered a pervading image of the entrepreneur as conflicted, a social prototype that is a blend of strongly negative and positive traits, simultaneously seen as an aggressor and a winner, a victim and an outsider. The most transnational homogeneity was found to exist in relation to the image of the entrepreneur as a predatory aggressor. These positive and negative traits were, however, focused more on the European entrepreneurs' contribution or effect on society, rather than their individual character.

Research has also identified differences in entrepreneurial types between European countries. For example, Drakopoulou-Dodd (2002) studied the character of Greek entrepreneurs through their networking behaviours, and found that they include family and friends in their strong-tie networks, more so than entrepreneurs in other European countries, who are also nonetheless very closely tied together by contacts between other network members (Drakopolou-Dodd & Petra, 2002; Jack et al., 2008). The Scandinavian entrepreneur, is described in several studies by Johannisson and colleagues, as a paradoxical character, on one hand an individual carrying out a bold endeavour, but on the other hand, this endeavour is deeply-rooted in an organising, even collective effort (Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Johannisson & Senneseth, 1993; Johannisson & Spilling, 1986). For example, Johannisson and Nilsson (1989) found that in Scandinavia, small businesses tend to be clustered together in long-established industrial districts; that managing an independent business is enculturated as a way of life in these districts, and that economic activity is then embedded in a social texture of personalised small-business networks, interwoven by a network of strong-ties.

Despite some differences between US and European preoccupations in terms of an academic and attitudinal focus on entrepreneurial activity, their common stereotypical image of a successful entrepreneur is that of an adventurer, a man who takes risks, actively builds social capital and networks, upholds patriotic values, and creates wealth for himself and others. This image is arguably different in character and focus from Aotearoa/New Zealand images of entrepreneurs as they are reflected in the national contextual discourse. This will be discussed in the following part.

The Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial stereotype and archetype

There is to date very little in the literature that directly identifies the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial stereotype. Hunter and Wilson (2003) and Hunter (2007) recorded the stories of lasting names in Aotearoa/New Zealand business, for example, Winstone, and Hannah, and described their successful approaches and attributes that helped to grow their start-ups into relatively large and lasting companies. However, the story of these entrepreneurs has not given rise in the contextual discourse to a strong concept of a stereotypical or archetypical Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial type, as implied in Hunter's (2007) statement, "We have never had a good understanding of our commercial history, or how it contributed to national identity" (p. 13). There is related research into the nature and performance of Aotearoa/New Zealand small businesses (Cameron, 2002; Campbell-Hunt et al., 2001; C. Massey, 2011; Sternad, Jaeger, & Staubmann, 2013), and there are many business and popular press articles about the characteristics of Aotearoa/New Zealand small businesses (Conway, 2015; Westpac, 2015; Xero, 22 July 2016). As alluded to in the introduction, much of this literature generally bemoans the lack of growth of start-up businesses, and a lack of desire to expand beyond Aotearoa/New Zealand shores.

Aotearoa/ New Zealand society is comprised of diverse cultures, and many immigrants have brought with them contextual discourses around entrepreneurship from other societies. However, in this study, I was exploring entrepreneurial identity construction in the context of the dominant contextual discourse of Aotearoa/New Zealand today, (although there are other discourses), therefore I did not specifically seek out a mix of ethnicities or demographic groups. I expected that I would likely get a number of participants from different cultural backgrounds, and this was the case. There were

however no participants who identified as Maori, the tangata whenua (indigenous people) of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

As Maori have a long history of entrepreneurship (A. Anderson, Binney, & Harris, 2014; Tapsell & Woods, 2008) and, a study of Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identity that did not include Maori entrepreneurs seemed an omission, I did consider whether I would subsequently specifically recruit Maori participants. However, I decided that, apart from introducing a bias into the study, it would also have other implications. Aotearoa/ New Zealand is not only a multicultural country, but as a foundational concept, a bi-cultural country, i.e., a country founded on an equal partnership between Maori, as the tangata whenua, and the British Crown as representing all future immigrants to the country, often referred to generally as Pakeha. Therefore, Maori culture has a unique place in Aotearoa/ New Zealand in relation to all other cultures combined. In consideration of this, I had already consulted with one of my kaumatua (respected elder) colleagues about appropriate cultural norms and approaches if there had been Maori among the volunteer participants.

Although it has not been protected or valued as promised in the Treaty of Waitangi, the Maori culture remains strong in Aotearoa/New Zealand and as such, there are identified differences in a Maori model of entrepreneurship, one that emphasises, for example, collective action (Kawharu, Tapsell, & Woods, 2017; MBIE, 2017b). I am a sixth generation Pakeha Aotearoa/ New Zealander, but I do not consider myself to have the depth of cultural understanding to separately consider a Maori model of entrepreneurship. More importantly, however, the Maori culture and its values have also influenced Aotearoa/New Zealand society in general and has done so throughout history. The following discussion may therefore appear as a primarily colonial Pakeha narrative and contextual discourse, however the mainstream contextual discourse around entrepreneurship is a uniquely Aotearoa/New Zealand, one that has been influenced by Maori values and culture, as well as colonial Pakeha experience.

Although there is little specific literature related to Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identity, inferences can be drawn from the general social and popular contextual discourse. As Wetherell and Potter in writing about Aotearoa/New Zealand society point out, the "nationalist discourse takes the familiar things of the small-scale

and writes them large as a global 'corporate identity' for 3 million people" (1992). From such Aotearoa/New Zealand discourses, small-scale familiar images and behaviours such as the "no. 8 wire mentality", the "do it yourself (DIY) culture", and "tall poppy syndrome" (all described below) have become symbolic of what Aotearoa/New Zealanders should be, do, or have. As expressed earlier, a useful approach for unpacking the nature of the stereotypical entrepreneur of a nation is exploring underlying historical roots; therefore, in the next part, I present a brief exploration of the underlying themes reflected in historical and social literature, fiction, non-fiction, and the visual arts of Aotearoa/New Zealand that appear to give rise in the contextual discourse to an image of an archetypical Aotearoa/New Zealand small business person or entrepreneur.

The Man Alone

An iconic and sometimes heroic figure, ubiquitous in Pakeha Aotearoa/New Zealand colonial and post-colonial literature, is the "man alone" (D. Benson, 1999; D'Cruz & Ross, 2012; Evans, 2007; Fox, 2009; Jones, 1998; Steer, 2007; J. Wilson, 1998; Worthington, D'Cruz, & Ross, 2013). From Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872), through to Lloyd Jones *Mr. Pip* (2006), the man alone recurs as a figure that takes refuge in, or reflects a literal and metaphysical insularity. In 1959, E. H. McCormick wrote of the man alone as "the solitary, rootless nonconformist, who in a variety of forms crops up persistently in Aotearoa/New Zealand writing" (p. 130). Jones (1998) acknowledges that the man alone in Aotearoa/New Zealand literature has "evolved in about 130 years from frontier hero, through social victim or rebel to existential agent to a protean figure capable of multiple incarnations" (p. 332). J. Wilson (1998) describes the man alone figure as an "archetype representing an unconscious collective self-identification" (p.278), an outward expression of existentialist angst experienced by settlers in an alien landscape, separated on an island far distant from the civilisation that anchored their identity, and that is still inherent in Aotearoa/New Zealand life today (J. Wilson, 1998), and a situation that the Maori settlers in much earlier times had also encountered. In fact, modern-day Aotearoa/New Zealanders generally can and do refer to all foreign countries and lands as "overseas", as they do in this study. From this history in isolated and isolating bush-covered land, there seems to have arisen a cultural belief that "to go it alone" is a "good" and perhaps even heroic way of life. Thus the self-sufficient,

stoical "Kiwi bloke (man)" has become an Aotearoa/New Zealand collective ideal (Fox, 2009).

Isolation from international markets and businesses remains a fact of life in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and it is possible that this sense of isolation continues to shape the business mind, or psyche, as well as the literary landscape, and that the ideal of the 'man alone' flows through into how men (and women) live out their work lives today. Therefore, a national cultural ideal of the self-sufficient, 'stoical Kiwi bloke', that Wilson (1998) describes may not only contribute to the predominance of SMEs in Aotearoa/New Zealand, but also to an entrepreneurial archetype distinctive to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Related to the man alone ideal are other traits of ingenuity and inventiveness, egalitarianism, and a vision limited to self-sufficiency, as I briefly discuss below.

Ingenuity and Inventiveness

The combination of geographical remoteness, and an absence of entrenched tradition (Campbell-Hunt et al., 2001) have given rise to a tradition of resourceful, self-sufficient ingenuity (Phillips, 1987). A "can do, will do" attitude has encouraged entrepreneurs in an isolated country, small in size and population, to "do more with less" and a mainstream contextual discourse of valuing a "do it yourself", a "jack of all trades" and "no.8 wire" (fencing wire) mentality, or making something work with the available resources (Campbell-Hunt et al., 2001). This "kiwi ingenuity" is often acknowledged as a source of innovation, providing competitive and/or niche opportunities (S. Grant, 2008). However, in a rapidly changing globalised world of sophisticated and complex technology, utilising knowledge and invention from external sources is necessary, despite running counter to the Aotearoa/New Zealand ideal.

Egalitarianism

The impetus for immigration for many settlers to Aotearoa/New Zealand from Europe had been a collective belief that doing so was their means to escape from the traditional controls of a class-based society, to have their own plot of land where they were master, creating a society where egalitarianism was strongly valued (Fairburn, 1989; King, 2012; Sinclair, 1991). This egalitarian ideal can also be seen in the contextual discourse today, which values a low power distance social climate, where 'no one is better than

68

their neighbour' and where authority of position or status is not accepted without question. Although 'mateship' is important, long-standing family ties are less so in Pakeha society (Phillips, 1987), and there is an emphasis on individual ability and achievement, rather than relationship-building to achieve success (Forte, 2012). Egalitarianism has also possibly produced a strong dislike of corruption, paternalism, and nepotism (Bond, 2013; Stuff, 2017). This dislike may have created the strong suspicion of reciprocity in business and society, a suspicion that extends to regarding mutual favours being viewed as somewhat dishonest (Stuff, 2017).

These egalitarian values mitigate against being too successful and perceptibly rising above others. The individual who soars to success risks a backlash, should they become "too successful". Motion et al. (2001) describe the "tall poppy syndrome", a tendency for those who achieve or stand out from others to be targets of criticism. Modesty and understatement are considered virtues. "If you brag you are cut down to size. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, those who achieve success are expected to be modest and humble" (Motion, Leitch, & Brodie, 2001, p. 1087). An example of this attitude is the case of author Eleanor Catton, who won the Man Booker Prize in 2014, but failed to win the Aotearoa/New Zealand Book Award main prize in the same year. She was reported as saying, "We have this strange cultural phenomenon called "tall poppy syndrome"; if you stand out, you will be cut down" (Downes, January 28 2015).

A vision limited to self-sufficiency
This strong desire for independence, to be 'one's own boss' and not bound in place by a hierarchical society, can arguably be seen in the character of SME owners today. In a survey by Campbell-Hunt et al. (2001) on the motivations of NZ SBOs for setting-up a business, respondents indicated as their primary influencing factor, "to be your own boss", followed by "lifestyle", reflecting the desire to have the freedom to create their own means of income, and legacy, however meagre it may be. The Aotearoa/New Zealand brand of entrepreneurialism encompasses a belief that independence and self-sufficiency is the goal of "going it alone" in your own business, and aspirations of growing wealth and expansion are not necessarily valued or possible (McCann, 2009; Westpac, 2015).

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the European settlers' vision of a possible future was partly by necessity more restricted and limited, compared to the boundless frontiers and unlimited possibilities of the American, and to some extent, Australian colonist (Evans, 2007). Although collectively owned in the Maori culture, land acquired by sale, confiscation or war, was sold to by the Crown to European settlers, a condition that was not present in other colonial countries, for example the US. This limiting condition also has been seen as influencing the ambitions of Aotearoa/New Zealand settlers (Evans, 2007). Phillips (1987) also argues that because of their social origins, the majority of Aotearoa/New Zealand colonial ancestors were from lower middle-class families who worked in occupations that required effort, skills, and experience, they had all the traits associated with "getting by" and few of those necessary to "get ahead". As the NBER (2012) observed, "The migrants to the New World brought with them mental models and behaviours passed down through the mechanism of national culture that carried the seeds of their economic performance" (p. 15). These traits are still evident in the contextual discourses that influence Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurs today. For example, a research project partnership between software company Xero and three other publications revealed that "many owners of small Aotearoa/ New Zealand businesses are happy just to make a living for themselves and their family" (Xero, 22 July 2016, p. 1).

Conclusion

The themes and tropes the echo through the Aotearoa/New Zealand history and literature have been embedded in the national contextual discourse and point towards an understanding of why there is a strong desire to be self-employed, while at the same time, not being too successful or too reliant on, or even connected to others, with a vision limited to self-sufficiency that favours lifestyle, egalitarianism, and loyalty to "mates" over wealth and social success. As Sayers (2005) describes Aotearoa/New Zealand, "Within it we revel in self-effacement and we particularly like self-reliance and the willingness to give it a go" (p. 3).

Although this Aotearoa/New Zealand ideal may be changing as a result of globalisation, it contrasts with the traditional US archetype of a self-made man, who, although an individual, is not referred to as "alone", but as a successful self-made man gaining

status in society. It also contrasts with the modern "go-getting" US and European entrepreneurial archetype, who is increasingly depicted as high-tech-savvy and elitist, an individual of bold endeavour, one who acknowledges the worth of social capital and can harness the collective effort of existing family and social networks to start and grow a business through networking and collaboration.

However, in the current Aotearoa/New Zealand business environment, the intrusion of the external world via the Internet and social media is a present and inescapable fact. The characteristics of Aotearoa/New Zealand and the local small businessperson identified in the national discourse are relevant to this study of LinkedIn; an environment that is simultaneously both local and global and promotes networking and connection as an imperative. If the 'man alone' ideal of insularity and independence associated with the Aotearoa/New Zealand small business owner/manager is a strong factor in their identity, this insularity, coupled with a belief in individualism rather than connection or collaboration, a dislike of assertiveness and resistance to achieving growth, make it likely that their participation on LinkedIn will involve tensions in the processes of digital identity construction.

In the next and final section of this chapter, I review and discuss the literature on networks and networking, a fundamental feature of social media, and address entrepreneurial professional networking and its role in identity construction.

Section C: Networking

Social media sites are referred to by many in the academic and popular discourse as networking sites or social networks, almost as though social networking and social media were one in the same. For example, a film about the founding of Facebook has the title "The Social Network" (2010), although this and other social media sites such as LinkedIn are not the only means of networking, or even exclusively for networking, unless networking is given a very wide definition. LinkedIn and other social media are sites for self-presentation, communication, relationship-building, business promotion and so on, which may or may not be considered networking. Furthermore, networking is an age-old social behaviour and a focus of academic study for many years (Barnes,

1969; Bott, 1957; Granovetter, 1973; Korte, 1967), not just an on-line phenomenon. However, the affordances of social media of on-line networking are attractive and a recognised reason for growing social media participation. LinkedIn is marketed as the "networking site for professionals" and is certainly the largest and growing site of this kind (LinkedIn, 2017c).

Online networking on social media sites has characteristics that are distinct from other networking: connections are made by explicit agreement, connections are publicly displayed, and they create a unique social world around each individual, regulated by the individual, and interaction only occur where there is an explicit digital connection (Papacharissi, 2011a). These characteristics have implications for identity construction through social media networking, as discussed below. Therefore, a separate focus on professional and entrepreneurial online identity construction as revealed in online networking is warranted in this chapter. In this next section, I will; define and discuss networking and on-line networking and the characteristics of LinkedIn networks as they are considered in this study, discuss the relationship between networks and identity, and discuss business and professional networking. First, I will clarify my use of definitions and terms around networking in this study.

Definition and terms

Social or personal networks have been broadly defined by (Boissevain, 1968) as "chains of persons with whom a given person, is in actual contact, or with whom he can enter into contact. The personal network of each person is distinct although it may touch and very often partly overlap that of others" (p.547). This definition is so broad however as to not be meaningful today, because if a network can include "anyone with whom a person can enter into contact" then with rapidly growing internet connections, a network is becoming almost everyone in the world. In this study therefore, I define an online network as a chain of people where there is specific digital connection one to another, as I discuss in more detail below.

Common terms used to describe network and used in this study are 'ties' or connections between a pair of actors that vary in 'content' and 'strength'. 'Content' is the basis of the relationship and ties may be created through aspects of personal or professional life or a combination of both. Tie 'strength' is the potency of the bond between members of

a social network (Garton, Haythornthwaite, & Wellman, 1999). Ties that are weak, or even latent, are generally infrequently maintained, non-intimate connections, for example, between co-workers who share no joint tasks or friendship relations. Strong ties include combinations of intimacy, self-disclosure, frequent contact, and kinship, as between close friends or colleagues (Granovetter, 1973). Forming and maintaining ties is a frequently stated motivation for joining social sites is (V. Benson, Filippaios, & Morgan, 2010; Best & Krueger, 2006; Ellison et al., 2007).

In this study I make a distinction between two types of communicative activities that are generally termed networking on LinkedIn. On one hand 'networking' is seen as a specific act of creating and displaying a network, that is issuing or accepting invitations to connect to friends or contacts, and thus creating a network or set of connections that is then publicly displayed. Networking in these terms and the associated identity tensions I explore in chapter five. Secondly, networking also is the interaction that occurs in networks, that includes relationship-building and self-presentation. This aspect of networking and the associated identity tensions I explore in Chapter six. Networking of the second type on LinkedIn includes activities such as online conversations, postings, replies to postings, recommendations and self-presentation to gain attention and build reputation, as individuals interact with others to maintain and strengthen ties. These activities are also referred to in the literature under the general concept of networking, that has also been employed as metaphor for communication as discussed in Chapter one. This distinction between networking and interaction corresponds roughly to Granovetter's (1973) description of firstly forming ties and secondly strengthening those ties. However, so as not to confuse these interacting and relationship building activities with the activities of creating a network, as in offering and accepting invitations to connect, in this study I will refer to them as 'interaction on networks' though both types can be viewed as networking in general terms.

Networking and Identity

Networks shape social identity and social identity affects networks as "networks and identity co-evolve" (Ibarra, Kilduff, & Tsai, 2005, p. 362).The process of co-evolution of identity and networks occurs in two ways. Identity construction is reflected in network formation, that is who you connect to, or not, offers a definition of who you

are, who connects with you, or not, can simultaneously contest and legitimise that definition. Secondly, through subsequent interaction with those ties identity is further, constructed, negotiated and validated.

Work or occupational identity emerges through networking processes, that is the people around us in our work networks are active players in the co-creation of our work or occupational identities, and our identities are created, deployed, and altered in social interactions with others in our work network (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ibarra et al., 2005; Slay & Smith, 2011). Networks and the identities, therefore, change as we change roles and jobs, as people negotiate with themselves and others new identities, and new identities are constructed in new work situations (Hill, 1990; Ibarra, 1999).

As networked connectedness has quickly come to dominate the organisation of everyday social life (Christakis & Fowler, 2009; van Dijck, 2013), there is a greater focus than in the past on identity construction through networking (Papacharissi, 2011b; Papcaharissi, 2011; Sweitzer, 2008). On social media these networks become more visible and are publicly displayed and therefore shape identity construction somewhat differently than prior to social media. Social media networks like LinkedIn require a formal offer and acceptance by both parties, somewhat like a contract. Secondly, the context of the possible ensuing online interaction, although it may already exist or move offline, is bounded and regulated by the LinkedIn site, its design and affordances. Thirdly, the connection is displayed publicly and globally. Finally, the specific act of issuing or accepting invitations to connect to friends or contacts or joining a virtual group creates a unique virtual social world around an individual in which all other activities that facilitate identity construction occur. Without these self-managed digital connections, there is no social world to interact in, present the self or to build relationships (Papacharissi, 2011b). In the virtual world, you not only need to "write yourself into existence" (Young, 2013, p. 3), you must first consciously build a virtual world around you by deliberate digital connection before you can construct identity (or exist) in it. This affordance of social media, the increased facility for individuals to create an individual-centred enclosed network around themselves that they control in terms of access and size, has given rise to the growing contention that we are becoming a world of 'networked individuals' and of 'networked individualism'(Papacharissi,

2011b; Rainie & Wellman, 2012), a concept I will discuss next in relation to identity construction through networking.

Individual-centred networking and networks

With the evolution of the internet over recent years, social media networking is now one of the major uses of the internet and the prevalence of social network sites has thus changed how online networks are structured, from network-centred groups to individual-centred networks. (D. Boyd, 2007; D. Boyd & Ellison, 2008), also described as user-centred, or egocentric networks (Papacharissi, 2011b). This type of network usually termed informal networks have been a topic of interest in the pre-social media literature (e.g.Boissevain, 1968) and identified and studied by network analysis (Granovetter, 1973; Wellman & Berkowitz, 1988). However, individual-centred social media networks differ from the informal networks created by individuals before social media, as discussed next.

Web 2.0 services offer for the individual the affordance to organise and structure one's own social network. Instead of joining an existing group, an individual creates her or his own online profile, extending invitations to others to join his/her network and responding to similar invitations (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Papacharissi, 2011a; Papcaharissi, 2011; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008). The network is therefore somewhat formalised, and it involves a distinct offer and acceptance of an invitation and it is displayed and public, but the process is fast, easy and far-reaching. The network extends out un-boundaried like a web from the individual at the centre; it may intersect with other individual networks but is owned and managed by the individual. Online connections are no longer automatically paralleled by offline contacts but favour weak ties.

There has been a huge growth of individual-centred networks in the last ten years (Christakis & Fowler, 2009; van Dijck, 2013; Vie, 2011). The literature on social media networks has also shifted from a focus on group-centred networks to individual-centred networks as the formation of individual-centred networks has far outstripped group-centred networks (Abbas & Dervin, 2009; Bauman, 2009; Knight & Weedon, 2014; Papacharissi, 2011b; Sweitzer, 2008). This shift to individual-centred networks has been reflected in LinkedIn by a growth of individual profiles and individual-centred networks

and limited participation in LinkedIn groups (LinkedIn, 2017b). Håkansson and Ford (2002) have described such individual-centred networks as fluid and emergent and Quinton and Wilson (2016) consider therefore that this kind of network offers a greater potential for value creation for business through novel network creation.

Thus, the construction of online individual identity is closely aligned with the creation of these kind of networks on social media. As Papcaharissi (2011) describes, individual-centred networks on social media are used to "both authenticate identity and introduce the self through the reflective process of fluid association with social circles [as] the architectural affordances of sites *place the individual at the centre and source of all interactions*" (pp.305-306), so that 'networked individualism' is a growing feature of modern life. The deliberate and explicit creation of individual-centred networks can be viewed as individuals reproducing or transforming social structures and therefore constructing a local very individual-centred social reality (Harrisson & Laberge, 2002), as an individual's network not only reflects their identity, but creates the closed social world in which they construct their identity.

Discussing networking in this manner is consistent with a social constructionist approach, that is that, social reality is constructed by particular social actors, in particular places, at precise times, operating in local situations in the context of interactions (Knorr-Cetina, 1981). Exploring how individuals construct a network, as I do in this study, could be described as network analysis from a constructionist perspective, because it tracks an individuals' involvement in structured social relations (Wellman, 1983). This involvement is unique on social media, such as LinkedIn, as it is generally limited to an individual-centred network. For example, on LinkedIn a member cannot contact a second-degree connection within LinkedIn, though they may do so outside LinkedIn, but only if an email is supplied. Therefore, the social structure may regulate interaction and the construction of identity, but the individual serves in part to create the structure through the communicative interaction of connecting. As Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994) emphasise: "It is intentional, creative human action that serves in part to constitute those very social networks that so powerfully constrain actors in turn" (p1413). Creating individual-centred networks on LinkedIn is a form of intentional identity work, as individuals make and accept offers of connection based on their self-definition and are constantly being re-defined of others, by offers or responses to offers.

However inherent in this process of connecting, of creating a network that is then publicly displaying it are likely, tensions and contradictions, as I discuss next.

The advent of individual-centred networks on social media has influenced the networking aspect of identity construction, as it become more publicly-negotiated process but also as individual's networks are on open display. This public display of connections in online networks provides other viewers with indirect information about an individual (Donath & Boyd, 2004). In career-based sites, where connections are intended to be professional, these contact lists can serve as unofficial recommendations, as they are made by mutual consent and therefore some degree of professional regard between connected members must be present. In addition, more formal recommendations of individuals can be created, and made visible within the site (Donath & Boyd, 2004). Therefore, a publicly-displayed network can be of value on social media, but also creates new challenges and tensions around identity construction. This public display increases the ease of surveillance by others, and this surveillance includes others not only viewing your profile, but also your connections. However, the process is reciprocal and can be one of the reasons people join the site, that is not only to be seen but also to see others, their stories and connections.

As has been noted earlier in this chapter, social media sites blur the boundaries between the private and public spheres (Donath & Boyd, 2004; Gross & Acquisti, 2005). The social impact of this blurring, as networks form around individuals, is inevitably there is increased tension around the boundaries between personal and professional identities. Associations or friendships are being formed within these social media sites between colleagues, ex-colleagues, or other professional peers that permit insights into each other's personal lives which may not naturally occur through other day-to-day interactions. Identity construction processes on these individual-centred networks therefore may also focus more on the part of identity considered to be the essential self (Haslam, 2003), as opposed to that part that identifies with a social identity such as a professional. For example Raj, Fast, and Fisher (2017) found that an individual's sense that networking was "not for people like me" (Oyserman et al., 2012, p. 88) shaped individuals' networking behavior above-and-beyond imperatives in the dominant contextual discourse to actively professionally network (Raj et al., 2017).

Also as individuals strive to change their networks in pursuit of new professional identities, for instance to be entrepreneurs as well as professionals (cf.Krackhardt, 1998), the nature of identity change may raise issues concerning the potential overlap between the two identity construction processes (Ibarra et al., 2005). Also, past and present networks may merge as well as personal and public (D. Boyd, 2007), for example, in a new venture an individual may not want previous work associates in a company to see who they are connecting with, as it may give them information about their clients or plans.

Therefore, the reciprocal influences of social identity construction and social networks as identified on social media can shed light on the process and tensions of re-invention or reconstruction of identity that professionals experience when starting up in business. Simply becoming a member of a site as LinkedIn is an act of identity construction, that is identifying with "mainstream professional behaviour (Foster, Francescucci, & West, 2010; Rovai, 2002; Vassileva & Cheng, 2005). For professionals who seek to retain their sense of being a professional while simultaneously moving into entrepreneurship or self-employment, (Hoang & Gimeno, 2010; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) joining LinkedIn groups that reflect these two social identities provides a ready-made social setting to do so.

Social media sites usually have features that facilitate both individual-centred and group-centred networks and the immediacy afforded by social media network for connection and interactions (Kietzmann et al., 2011) encourages the formation of both types of networks. Although members of LinkedIn all are members of individual-centred networks, some, a smaller number, join groups, therefore I concluded that a study of identity construction on LinkedIn through networking needs to include group-centred networking and I have included in this study members who belong to both types networks on LinkedIn. I discuss the difference between the two in the next part as it is an important distinction in identity construction on online social network.

Group-centred networks and networking

Previous to the advent of social media groups of people often came together on-and off-line, focused around a personal or professional need or interest. Quinton and Wilson (2016) have described such group-based networks as intentional strategic networks.

They are "strategically and deliberately determined (for example, membership of professional institutional bodies on LinkedIn)" (Quinton & Wilson, 2016, p. 17). In this kind of group-based networking, the network is contained within the boundaries of the group. The name of the group represents the network, for example the Commerce Club or business associations.

These groups have now also formed on social media. I utilise the term group-centred networks to describe these online environments, web forums and discussion groups, where a definable group is created and curated by a manager or a committee, that people may subsequently join or subscribe to (Garton et al., 1999; Papacharissi, 2011b; Wellman & Berkowitz, 1988). These groups may have been stand-alone networks that have found a niche and exploited the internet to connect a group of people with the same professional interests for the first time, such as the "New Zealand Small Business Network" and the network is owned and managed by that organisation. They may also exist as a subsidiary of a larger existing online or offline network or organisation, (Garton et al., 1999), for example the Facebook group page for members of the NZ professional accounting association , CAANZ, an large off-line association.

The first aspect of networking, that is creating a set of contacts and displaying them, is not very relevant when discussing identity construction and its tensions on LinkedIn's group-centred networks. Although there is a choice an individual makes to join a group, the network of contacts they join exists outside the individual's control. The second aspect of networking though, interaction on networks is still very relevant. On the other hand, there is a great deal of literature on professional identity construction through interaction in offline and online group-centred networks, such as knowledge-sharing groups in organisations and communities of practice, that is relevant to the interaction aspect of networking (e.g.Barbour & James, 2015; J. L. Gibbs, 2009; J. L. Gibbs et al., 2013; Harrisson & Laberge, 2002).

The literature suggests that online groups afford professionals a context to construct and validate social identity in many ways. Firstly, high quality contributions can validate professional identity as being expert and knowledgeable (Kollock, 1999; McClure-Wasko & Faraj, 2005; Yetim et al., 2011) and create name recognition, again a validation of social identity (Huffaker & Lai, 2007). Reciprocity, mutual favours such

as giving and receiving information, introductions or expertise also ensures on-going validation as member of the group (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2002; Hew & Hara, 2006; McClure-Wasko & Faraj, 2005; Wasko & Faraj, 2000).

However, presenting the professional self to online groups can also create heightened anxiety and tension. Some of these are, fear of humiliation, ridicule or uncertainty about reception from others (Ardichvili et al., 2003; Bandura, 1997; Bock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee, 2005; Hew & Hara, 2007), and fear of misleading people with unimportant, inaccurate or irrelevant contributions (Ardichvili et al., 2003; Hew & Hara, 2007). These behaviours would be considered by the mainstream discourse as not presenting a professional identity, commonly defined, as described earlier in this chapter, as being expert, knowledgeable and confident. Such affordances to present and validate professional identity construction and the associated tensions could also be expected when an individual actively interacts with others on their individual-centred network. However, in a group-based networks different levels of participation have been identified, that also are used to describe the types of participation that have implications for identity construction.

There have been many studies describing participation in virtual communities (Kim, 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Porter, 2008; Preece & Shneiderman, 2009). These stages of participation of members of virtual communities can be divided broadly into two steps: firstly, initial viewing or information seeking, and secondly joining and ongoing, deepening participation (Dwyer, Zhang, & Hiltz, 2004). These two steps can then be divided into four stages from 'lurker' (visits the site but never contributes), through 'novice' (visits regularly but only contribute occasionally), to 'regular' (visits and contributes regularly) through to 'leader' (a very regular visitor and contributor). A member may move through the stages or as often occurs remain in one stage. Therefore, participation even non-participation has implications for identity construction and validation in virtual groups, heightened by the features of permanency and visibility to all.

In the next section I will briefly discuss professional networking and entrepreneurial networking as a specific focus and issues and tensions that may arise.

Professional networking entrepreneurial networking

Networks have also long been the subject of interest in organisational studies, an interest fuelled by Granovetter's (1973) comment that "economic action is embedded in ongoing networks of personal relationships rather than carried out by autonomous actors" (p.78). There is a large body of research on both professional networks and networking (e.g.Donelan et al., 2010; Nardi et al., 2002; Sweitzer, 2008) and entrepreneurial networks and networking (e.g.Down & Warren, 2008; Drakopolou-Dodd & Petra, 2002; Raj et al., 2017). The literature combining identity construction of both entrepreneurs and professionals and linking these identities and online networking however is sparse. Therefore, in this next section, I firstly discuss relevant extant literature on professional networking and entrepreneurial networking. I then discuss how networking is a factor in professional and entrepreneurial networking identity building, to draw together the several different themes.

By most definitions, business networks are connections between people for mutual professional advantage or business advantage (cf. Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Raj et al., 2017; Stephen & Toubia, 2010), and professional networking refers to the process by which individuals attempt to develop and maintain relationships that have the potential to assist them in their work or career (Forret & Dougherty, 2004).

There is a strong theme in the popular and academic discourse around the benefits of a large professional networks, as exemplified by the popular phrase, "It's not what you know, it's who you know" (Raj et al., 2017). Professional networking is often discussed as a central activity for those who wish to achieve positive professional outcomes (Arthur, Claman, & DeFillippi, 1995; Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle, 1999; Uzzi & Dunlap, 2005), and large networks are seen as having a critical role in professional advancement because they provide access to key contacts and support, novel and valuable information (Burt, 1997; de Janasz, Sullivan, Whiting, & Biech, 2003) as well as new professional opportunities (Granovetter, 1973, 2005; Lin & Dumin, 1986; Olsen, 2008; Raj et al., 2017; Sweitzer, 2008). These positive outcomes of networking have become so firmly accepted in the popular business press and contextual discourse, particularly in the field of marketing in business (Quinton & Wilson, 2016), that for the professional it could be seen that there is now exists a networking imperative. As Raj et al. (2017)

assert, "the benefits of a strong network are so clear that professional networking is often considered a central activity for those who wish to achieve superior professional outcomes" (p.772). This imperative to network has become stronger as online sites specifically for networking, such as LinkedIn, have developed (Olsen & Guribye, 2008; Vickey, 2011) although digital networking has gained additional meaning of focused on digital connection.

The networking imperative is evident for a professional building a career in a traditional organisation, but not as clear when a professional becomes self-employed. Networking will still be likely to provide access to key contacts and support, novel and valuable information, but these professionals are not looking for promotion or employment opportunities in other companies, but to promote and build their own enterprise, often through the means of social media (Vickey, 2011). In the next part, I discuss entrepreneurial networking.

The field of entrepreneurship in particular has embraced networking theory as a mechanism for exploring the creation and development of new ventures (Drakopolou-Dodd & Petra, 2002). The academic discourse emphasises the importance of networking for entrepreneurs (Aldrich et al., 1987; Gronum, Verreynne , & Kastelle 2012; Jack et al., 2008; Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Lipschultz, 2014; Vickey, 2011). As Ostgaard and Birley (1994) state, "The personal network of the owner-manager is the most important resource upon which he or she can draw in the early days of the firm's development" (p.281).Other researchers assert that engaging with stakeholders and building collaborative relationships through social media, entrepreneurs can also source valuable information (e.g. Birley, 1985; Gronum et al., 2012) and also gain access to opportunities (Burt, 1997; Gronum et al., 2012; Pittaway, Robertson, Munir, Denyer, & Neely, 2004), and a host of other resources, including finance and information (Ostgaard & Birley, 1994). Entrepreneurial networks have also been to shown act as providers of psychological and practical support (Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Johannisson & Senneseth, 1993), support that isolated small business people may need (Alstete, 2008; Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006; Cocker, Martin, Scott, Venn, & Sanderson, 2012). Sternad et al's (2013) study of resource poor Aotearoa/New Zealand SMEs, also identified building and maintaining network ties to obtain market knowledge and to develop internationalisation knowledge, as an essential process. As discussed above the

wider global discourse round entrepreneurship profiles the entrepreneur as a person of bold endeavour who builds their business through networking and relationship-building. As such the networking imperative is likely to be stronger for the entrepreneur than the professional, who may experience contradictory constraints to keep networks exclusive (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007).

As Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurs in start-up businesses pursue opportunities without wide access to resources of control and support, the dominant discourse in business and academic writing urges them to connect with different stakeholders through information communication technologies (Lipschultz, 2014; Vickey, 2011). Social media platforms, such as LinkedIn are described as useful tools to enable bi-directional, interactive communication and participation, to create business relationships with suppliers, distributors and customers, or to utilise social contacts, including acquaintances, friends, family and kin (Askool, Jacobs, & Nakata, 2010; Askool & Nakata, 2011; Katzman, 2008).

 The ability to create and maintain a large network online on business-related social media such as LinkedIn is seen as valuable, not only because it is easy and achievable, but also, because online connections of contacts are visible and accessible, opportunities are created for members to greatly the expand number of business connections. Members' contact lists become assets, not only for the owner, but others (Donath & Boyd, 2004; Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Many people join online groups in the search of a sense of belonging, information, empathy and social status (Baym, 2000) .These benefits may also be of importance for a new entrepreneur or self-employed professional who may be experiencing a sense of isolation. These benefits will accrue with further interaction and relationship-building after initial connection, however simply by having a publicly displayed list of contacts, the individual constructs and presents a sense of who they are in the social landscape and acceptance by others as a contact confirms this.

In summary, in this section, I have discussed the literature on networking with a focus of identity construction, and online influences on identity construction. There are many facets of the networking literature that are relevant to this study partly because the concept of social networking has been applied in this millennium to wide variety of

activities, processes, behaviours, phenomena, trends and technology applications. Some trends and foci for attention are clear though. Preoccupation and involvement with social networking has infiltrated most aspects of life, from personal to work life. This prevalence and preoccupation has occurred mainly because of the emergence of Web2.0 technologies and that have given pre-eminence to virtual networking. These trends have resulted a gradual shift away from community-based networks to individual-based networks centred on a digital identity. Such a major shift in the social landscape and the focus of human identity and will inevitably involve a shift in how identity is constructed in this new social world.

Conclusion

The aim of this study to explore the identity construction tensions of Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals on LinkedIn. In pursuit of this aim, this chapter has examined extant literature on several in different domains and on several topics, identity and identity construction, professionalism, entrepreneurialism and social networking. I have defined and discussed identity, and the construction of identity as a discursive process, the dominant and alternative discourses around professional and entrepreneurial identity construction, and the contexts of LinkedIn, of Aotearoa/ New Zealand, and the emerging world of networked individuals. All are identified sources of complex identity construction tensions. I have also considered how these tensions are likely be overlaid by four meta tensions prevalent in organisational contexts: openness versus closedness, autonomy versus connectedness, equality versus superiority, and tension around a desire to surveil peers versus a reluctance to do, because of fear of being unprofessional, or out of politeness and respect for privacy.

The literature on each of these topics suggests tensions in identity construction relevant to my aim, but none is through the combined lenses of the context of LinkedIn, Aotearoa/ New Zealand, and digitally- networked individuals, therefore the study is exploratory and required a novel approach to explore these tensions in this context. The approach I employed in this study is to view discourses of LinkedIn use through three different lenses or metaphors of communication as described in Chapter one; they are engagement, connection (or networking) and interaction. This approach is to create a multi-dimensional and multi-layered image of identity suggested by the literature.

Accordingly, the research questions I ask in this study are: RQ1: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around participation on social media and LinkedIn?, RQ2: What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around creating and displaying a network on LinkedIn?, and RQ3: What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse regarding interacting with their network on LinkedIn? In the next chapter I will further explain and discuss my methodological approach.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In this chapter, I argue for and describe the ontological, epistemological, and methodological bases of this study. I understand ontological as concerning the nature of reality and being, epistemological as concerning the nature of knowledge, and methodological as referring to the process and procedures of the research (Tracy, 2013). Firstly, I situate the study within anti-positivist and constructionist paradigm, and explain why, as a research approach, I adopt the interpretivist and constructionist theory of knowledge. Secondly, I describe and give a rationale for my methodology and method of inquiry, these being a qualitative study using inductive methods. I provide a rationale, based on my ontological and epistemological assumptions, for using semi-structured interviews as the method of data collection and why I chose to apply a thematic analysis of the participants' interview transcripts.

I then describe the specific methods of data collection and analysis employed. I firstly describe how I identified and recruited the sample of participants and how I prepared, conducted, and transcribed the interviews. I then present the participants' demographic data to provide some context for the findings in the analysis chapters prior to moving to a description of the method of analysis. I next discuss the research site, LinkedIn, its features and functions and, finally, I provide an overview of the analysis chapters to follow.

Methodological commitments

Underlying this study is the ontological stance of nominalism as opposed to realism. That is, in contrast to the realist assumption that the social world is made up of hard, tangible and relatively immutable structures, I hold the nominalist position that the social world, external to individual cognition, is made up of nothing more than names, concepts and labels which are used to structure reality (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Such an approach situates this study in an anti-positivist paradigm as opposed to the positivist or post-positivist paradigm. My understanding is that in the positivist paradigm, reality and truth exist as objective reality and the goal of the researcher is to clearly discover, explain, or understand this reality or truth; or in the post-positivist case, that the truth is also considered to be 'out there', but will only ever be partially understood (Bryman,

2008). From a positivist perspective therefore, identity exists as an objective social reality to be discovered (Collis & Hussey, 2013). The anti-positivist approach that I take, is that 'reality' and that all social 'realities' such as identity, are constantly constructed, reconstructed and understood through social interaction and individual reflection and therefore reside within individual cognition, a constructionist paradigm (Deetz, 1996). In this exploration of identity in the social world of LinkedIn, consistent with an ontological stance that is nominalist, anti-positivist and constructionist, I have aligned the study with the epistemological assumptions of interpretivism, relativism and social constructionism, as I will discuss next.

Interpretivism, in the broadest sense seeks to understand the social world and human action at the level of the individual experience; to uncover the way in which members of society understand or give meaning to social situations (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). Interpretive researchers makes the assumption "that people create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them… thus they attempt to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to them" (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991, p. 5). The epistemological position of interpretivism requires the researcher to grasp the subjective meaning of social action, social action such as LinkedIn participation (Bryman, 2008). As the general goal of this research was exploratory and based on individual experience, that is to understand participants' experience of LinkedIn and how they constructed identity there, I considered that the subjective lens of interpretivism as most suited to the study. Also assuming that meaning is within individuals, then it is usually hidden and must be brought to the surface through reflection, which can be encouraged through interaction between the participant and the researcher. Therefore the interpretive approach to understanding the social world and human action by accessing the meanings participants assign to them also underlies and informs the qualitative methodology employed in this research, that is the use of semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, as I discuss later under Methodology.

As discussed in Chapter Two, social constructionism, as first articulated in sociology by Berger and Luckman (1966) and in social psychology by Gergen (1973) is also an assumption of this research and it is seen as being situated within the broad tradition of interpretivism (Tracy, 2013). Social constructionism, however, goes further than

interpretivist theory to explain 'meaning', and 'reality' as more than the subjective meanings given by the individual about the world and what happens in it. Social constructionism posits that meaning cannot be imposed on the outside world from within the individual, a stance that is a purely subjective, instead, meaning must arise from interaction with the outside world (Chia, 2002). Meaning, and social 'reality' are constructed and reconstructed through an inter-subjective process involving the interaction of subjects with others and with the outside world generally (Berger & Luckman, 1966). As Tracy (2013) explains: "Both reality and knowledge are constructed and reproduced through communication, interaction, and practice"(p. 40). Thus 'meanings' and 'truths' about 'reality' reside in individuals but are being constructed and reconstructed socially, during communicative interaction and reflection (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Tracy, 2013). They are both the medium and outcome of discourse, rather than something pre-formed in our subconscious and only reflected in, or transmitted through, communication channels (Mumby, 2011). Contextual social discourses influence this construction of reality, as well as reality being constructed by the discourse of individuals. Here, the two meanings of 'discourse' as discussed earlier in Chapter two are being employed: discourse as a communication process between individuals, and contextual or social discourse as the wide-spread mutually constructed and held beliefs of a particular society (Allen, 2005; Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). Therefore the methodology of this study is in the interpretive tradition, in that it explores the research goal through accessing individual insight and reflections to understand the meanings individuals give to the experience of LinkedIn and identity construction there. In the analysis, discussion and interpretation of these findings this study utilises the more focused lens of social constructionism to further interpret and understand these experiences and the meanings constructed by social action in this context.

Relativism is also is an inherent assumption in the nominalist/anti-positivist/ interpretivist paradigm; that is that the meaning given to a social situation is informed by context. According to Neuman (2000), the goal of interpretivist research is to understand the meanings of human behaviour by understanding subjective experiences, which are context-informed, rather than to generalise and/or predict causes and effects, as the nature of 'truth' and 'reality' for an individual are relative to and dependent on context. Identity therefore from a relativist viewpoint needs to be considered as being

constructed relative to understanding the context, as well as the research design itself, the viewpoint of the researcher, and so on. I see the value of this approach is that it provides a more grounded and richer understanding of how identities are constructed in different contexts (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Deetz, 1996; Geertz, 1973). In this study, the context is the virtual world of social media as experienced by Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals. The 'reality' of this world as explored in this study is contained in the subjective and intersubjective experiences of the participants, and the 'truth' about their identities is in the meanings they give to them in this world, *in this context*. Such an approach is consistent with the advice of Crotty (1998) that, interpretivist research "looks for a culturally-derived and historically situated interpretation of the social word" (p. 67).

Two other commonly-referenced paradigms for understanding knowledge and reality are critical, and postmodern/post-structural, paradigms that examine discourses of power (Tracy, 2013). The postmodern/poststructuralist paradigms also examine faceted ways of being, and the dialectical nature of hegemony (Tracy, 2013). In this study, I have included aspects of critical- and post-structuralist traditions by emphasising not only the importance of subjective and intersubjective meanings for the individual and groups, but also by considering existing social structures that condition and enable such meanings, and that are constituted by them, such as the social constructs of 'organisation' and 'professional'. I also explore faceted ways of being, a postmodern construct. However, my focus was on exploring how participants construct reality and identity in this virtual world as an entry point to this examining this constructed social reality, and not to closely examine new discourses of power and dominant social discourses within this still emergent social context. Such an exploration of constructions of reality, however, can contribute to a basis for a more critical analysis.

In taking an interpretive/social constructionist approach, I was mindful that, if our knowledge of reality is a social construction by human actors, it is also not possible in a research process to partition out an objective reality from the person (research participant) who is experiencing, processing, and labelling said reality and the researcher. In other words, reality is constructed by the actor (e.g. the research participant), and this applies equally to researchers (Sciarra, 1999). There is no direct access to reality unmediated by language and preconceptions; therefore, in the

relationship between theory and practice, I as the researcher can never assume a value-neutral stance and am always implicated in the phenomena being studied. As Geertz states, "What we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz, 1973, p. 9). Therefore, in this research, I assumed the role of 'interpreter,' unpacking and interpreting from the participants' discourses understandings of how entrepreneurial professionals experience the virtual world, and the tensions they experience as they construct an online identity in an Aotearoa/ New Zealand context. However, it is inevitable that this interpretation will be influenced by my own experiences, values and beliefs; therefore, I will briefly consider possible biases in my role as researcher.

I am an Aotearoa/ New Zealander from six generations back. I have been educated in Aotearoa/ New Zealand and have worked here (except for being in the UK for a short time) for almost 50 years. I am not a digital native but began using social media roughly at middle-age. I have been a small business owner/manager in a start-up business for many years, as well as an academic in the field of organisational communication. Both experiences have given me a belief in the centrality of communicative interaction in shaping realities. Due to my background, my interpretations are likely to take place through a distinctly Aotearoa/ New Zealand lens, and I may have unconsciously paid attention to, or interpreted more definitively, parts of participants' discourses that more obviously aligned with, or did not align with, my cultural norms and values. Additionally, as an older person, I may have been more empathetic to those who were more fearful of new technology. However, while conducting this research, I was mindful of and open about these possible biases. My background and interests also meant that I found the interview experience interesting and collegial.

Methodology

I employed a qualitative methodology for the study, as it is consistent with the assumptions of the interpretive/constructionist paradigm (Bryman, 2008) in that it is able to foreground the ways in which individuals interpret their social world, and provide a view of social reality that is constantly shifting and emergent . As Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) state, "qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p.4). Hence, to explore understandings and experiences of participants on LinkedIn,

90

qualitative methods were likely to be the best-suited. In addition, as advocated by Ghauri and Grønhaug, a qualitative approach is "appropriate for inductive exploratory research" (2010, p. 106) such as this study is exploratory research in an emergent context such as social media. Tracy (2013) also notes that such qualitative methods are increasingly being used to study virtual and mediated communication contexts.

Social media, including LinkedIn, is a communication medium between individuals, and the experience of any communication between individuals – and the meanings given to it by said individuals – is complex and cannot be easily quantified (Tracy, 2013). New social contexts such as those presented in this study creates a need to uncover difficult-to-anticipate (and obtain) rich information about various interpretations of events and practices, and ways in which meanings may be contested; meanings such as an individual's understanding of the digital communication context, how they experience identity construction on a site, and reflections on the responses they receive from others. When provided by an individual, this type of information is often multi-faceted and contradictory, and as a result, difficult to classify and quantify. Therefore, I concluded that research employing an inductive qualitative approach was appropriate. I also considered that a deductive, quantitative approach would not be appropriate, as it emphasises the norms and practices of the scientific model, which views social reality as external and objective, and places an emphasis on testing theories (Bryman, 2008).

The research approach I used is founded on inductive reasoning, that is "bottom-up reasoning" (Tracy, 2013, p. 22), where understandings of the research interest are described from the participants' viewpoint, in this case through semi-structured interviews, and are context-specific. From that data, general patterns are conceptualised, and from these tentative claims are made and re-examined in the light of existing and emergent data, and finally conclusions are drawn that can build theory (Tracy, 2013). In the inductive process of this study I followed the approach of constantly revisiting data and the literature and connecting them with emerging insights then refining my focus and understandings as I describe next.

Rather than approaching the data collection with pre-existing theories and concepts and applying these theories to the data, I began instead by collecting data through semi-

structured interviews, engaging in open line-by-line analysis, creating larger themes from these data, and linking them together. Given that this is an exploratory study in the interpretive frame, such inductive methods were appropriate, as I did not attempt to predefine variables, but acknowledged context, and sought to understand the participants' experiences of participation on LinkedIn through the meanings that participants assigned to them (Klein & Myers, 1999). This inductive approach influenced the direction and focus of the research during the process in three significant ways as I discuss next.

Research design

I initially approached the study with a very broad research goal or aim, that is to understand the meanings given to their engagement on LinkedIn and construction of a digital identity there, by Aotearoa/New Zealand small business owners and entrepreneurs. This aim generated a broad research question of: How do Aotearoa/New Zealand small business owners interpret and understand their experience of participation on LinkedIn and construction of a digital identity there?

Although the research initially focused on Aotearoa/ New Zealand small/business owners and entrepreneurs, the type of small business individuals that had responded included a wide range of professionals, and all identified or referred to themselves as 'professionals' in the interviews. As LinkedIn has a reputation for being a site for professionals, in retrospect, this was to be expected. These professionals were either self-employed or in partnerships in small firms with less than 10 employees, that is, micro-businesses. They had all been previously employed as professionals in other companies and had either very recently or relatively recently (in the past 10 years) decided to become self-employed or set up a business based on their professional skills. Although they all still fitted the category of Aotearoa/New Zealand SBO or entrepreneur, on reflection, I decided that a more accurate and focused definition of them was entrepreneurial professionals. I therefore returned to the literature on professional identity to further inform this study. Thus the additional concepts of professionalism and professional identity and the combining the two identities, entrepreneurial and professional, became significant aspect of the analysis and interpretation of the findings

Another refocusing, that occurred during analysis, was to organise my analysis chapters around three communicative processes that clearly emerged in the participants' discourses. As discussed above, engaging and interacting on LinkedIn are communicative processes but the participants' discussion about them was multi-faceted and contradictory, and it became clear that it was necessary to interpret which lens or metaphor of communication was being utilised at any one time. As discussed in Chapter one, on further reflection and recourse to literature I identified the three most relevant metaphors or lenses of communication evident in their discourses, those of engagement, networking and interaction (Putnam & Boys, 2006; Putnam et al., 1996). These three metaphors were utilised in analysing and presenting the findings. For example as discussed in chapter five, when talking about his experience of LinkedIn one participant commented, "So I know that people are watching, so although there's no response and no direct conversation happening, there is this kind of existing…this kind of extant connection". Here he is utilising a metaphor of communication as 'engagement', or communication as symbolic *interpretation* of the new social world (Putnam et al., 1996) as I take the words "extant connection" as symbolic. Whereas later, he says "there [in LinkedIn] I have a smallish network of trusting relationships, I'm more likely to know people I know are likely to connect me with their connections or at least utilise their connections in their relationship with me". Here as discussed in Chapter six, he uses a metaphor of communication as connection, that is networks of relationships that are communication systems defined through the presence or absence of links (Putnam et al., 1996).

Additionally, throughout the data-gathering process and analysis process, themes of tensions and contradictions around the virtual environment and social media, and tensions around virtual identity construction, emerged as predominant in the participants' discourses. For example, as discussed in Chapter six a participant at one point enthusiastically espoused the importance networking saying "Networking, it's absolutely vital" but at another point he says it does not work, "I think it might be that we don't want to connect with people we don't know, but also it doesn't work…" Recourse to the literature revealed tensions as a recurring contemporary preoccupation in organisational and organisational identity construction studies (e.g.Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). Consequently, I decided a tension-

centred approach as the final framework for my analysis was the most appropriate as I describe later in the 'Analysis' section of this chapter.

These three emergent insights led me to refine my research focus and expand my one research question into three more specific research questions. These were: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' experience of social media and LinkedIn? What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around creating a network and displaying a network on LinkedIn? and What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around interacting on their network on LinkedIn?

The inductive reflexive method I have described is similar to grounded theory in that it utilises the method's most important basic rule, i.e., "study your emerging data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 80). However, grounded theory per se was not considered appropriate to this study, as the study does not seek to generate theory, but rather to provide a rich interpretation of the data, with reference to context, through an interpretive lens that ultimately contributes to understanding of constructions of the virtual world and identity online. Therefore, the adopted inductive reflexive method, rather than grounded theory, was utilised as the form of inquiry.

Method of data collection

I chose semi-structured interviews as the method of qualitative inquiry, after considering the alternatives. I considered neither naturalistic inquiry, i.e., analysing social action in a field setting, nor ethnography, or long-term immersion within a culture, useful or relevant, as most of the social action and interaction being considered occurred online, in a virtual setting, spontaneously, at no set time, and was immediately available only to the participants involved. Additionally, the meanings individuals' give to social interaction are often only accessed in later reflection.

The inquiry through interviews method I utilised has been advocated as useful for studying the impact of social structures on an individual, and specifically how this relates to identity (e.g. Frost, 2011; Riessman, 2008). Interviews, are themselves discourse, as defined in Chapter two as "the active process of discursive "work" in relation to other speakers" (Ruelle & Peverelli, 2017, p. 18), that can be analysed to

reveal how individuals interpretations of their 'reality'. The participant discourses that I refer to in this study are therefore essentially the record of the everyday or natural linguistic expressions of participants in one-to-one interviews, as they reflect on their experience of LinkedIn engagement. Recorded and transcribed they became the data set for analysis.

Also, as Shotter (1989) explains, "what we talk of *as* our experience of our reality is constituted for us very largely by the *already established* [italics in original] ways in which we *must* talk in our attempts to *account* for ourselves – and for it [our experiences of reality] – to the others around us" (p. 141). Therefore as Kuhn (2006) and others (e.g. Tompkins & Cheney, 1983) argue, these reflexive commentaries on experience reveal the social and contextual discourses acting upon, and sanctioning, particular identities, norms and rules of behaviour. Thus not only individual meanings but also insight into the ongoing social construction of meaning in this context can emerge from the participants' discourses, consistent with a study in an interpretive constructivist paradigm.

I also considered the one-to-one qualitative interview method as the most relevant and appropriate means of data collection as it is consistent with the assumptions of interpretive research. As this study was exploratory, and the general aim of the interview process was for participants to talk about and reflect upon their experience of LinkedIn, and for their discourses to provide insight into their understanding of digital identity construction as they experienced it there. One to one qualitative interviews appeared the most appropriate method of data collection as they tend to be much less structured and more flexible than quantitative research, and there is more emphasis was on greater generality in the formulation of research ideas and on how the interviewee frames and understands the issues or events at hand (Bryman, 2008). As J. L. Gibbs (2009) observed "they [interviews] are useful because they allow for examination of participants' discourse, various interpretations of events and practices, and ways in which meanings may be contested" (p.192). Interviews also allow for reflection and self-expression to occur (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Finally as discussed above, the qualitative interview is another site for this identity work and the interview data can "provide a window into the construction of identity" (Gill & Larson, 2014b, p. 528).

In deciding on this data collection method, I considered the three main methods employed in qualitative research: 1) interviews, group or one-on-one; 2) participant observation, in person or online; 3) document analysis, paper or electronic (Tracy, 2013). As I suggested previously when discussing an ethnographic approach, data gathering through participant observation was not considered appropriate for exploring the experience of social media use such as LinkedIn, or identity construction. LinkedIn use itself occurs randomly and inconspicuously, at various times and often in a private setting, therefore observation was not practicable; and observation does not provide access to individual understandings of the virtual world. Document analysis was also not an option, as the available documents would not have been appropriate to answer the research goal. I did study publicly available information on LinkedIn pages to gain an understanding of context, as is summarised below in the section, "An overview of LinkedIn's features and functions". However, I decided that from an interpretive perspective, this information would contribute little to an understanding of the meanings given to the LinkedIn experience by participants. The conclusion that qualitative interviews were most appropriate was also supported even in preliminary conversations with friends and colleagues regarding their participation on LinkedIn.

Specifically, I utilised the semi-structured qualitative interview, in the manner described by Bryman (2008) as one where the researcher has a set of fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but where the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. Questions may not follow exactly in the way outlined on the guide and questions that are not included in the guide may be asked as the interviewer picks up on things said by interviewees. Therefore interview process is flexible, and the interviewee's views are important in explaining and understanding events, patterns and forms of behaviour.

In choosing the one-to-one semi-structured interview method, my concern was how and what questions to ask to encourage the participants to surface their understandings of the virtual world, and identity construction that occurred there. I wanted to keep the interviews as unstructured as possible to allow self-expression and for important but unanticipated issues to emerge (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). I therefore needed participants to talk generally and expansively about their participation on LinkedIn. However, I considered that they would likely not find this easy, as LinkedIn engagement is

relatively new and therefore not yet a common topic of discussion and reflection on experience as, for example, talking about their previous work places. The social context, roles, norms, etc. on social media, and the vocabulary for describing them, are new and emergent. This view was confirmed when I pilot-tested questions with two colleagues.

Pilot interviews are recommended by Bryman (2008) as a means of testing whether interview questions are understood, make respondent feel uncomfortable or lose interest or if the flow of questions are logical. These initial pilot interviews suggested that simply asking participants to talk expansively about their experience of LinkedIn i.e. to attempt a completely open-ended unstructured interview elicited very limited responses. Questions like, "How do you experience the virtual world?" and "How do you present your identity or build your sense of self on LinkedIn?" elicited very little response. I decided that some structure, a framework of topics, was necessary to encourage the participants to talk widely around their experience and use of LinkedIn and to different aspects of engagement. I decided too that the semi-structured interview was desirable, not only to help the participants to express themselves, but to guide me as a researcher to ask about activities they were familiar with and in appropriate vocabulary meaningful to the participants. The Interview Guide therefore became not so much a set of questions for the interviewee but a set of prompts to remind me to suggest topics the participants could talk about.

In identifying the topics for the Interview Guide I firstly utilised my own and colleagues' common experiences of using LinkedIn. I also found two other studies of LinkedIn that used very similar topics as a framework for their interview questions, though they had different research goals. The first study by Olsen (2008) sought to discover how Norwegian human resources professionals were using LinkedIn for professional networking and career advancement, the other study by Vickey (2011) aimed at establishing how Irish SBOs used LinkedIn to build social capital. The topics they covered, however, were similar. In reviewing these studies, I realised the value of them to my study was that they were worded using concepts and language LinkedIn members were familiar with and that enabled the participants to talk about their participation on LinkedIn as a gradual developing chronological process -a pattern that was easy to talk about. These studies first asked about joining LinkedIn, setting up a profile, etc., then about creating a network, then about joining groups, and finally, about

contributing to groups and discussions. I utilised these studies to provide a framework of topics as prompts for reflection in the interview, as discussed in more detail below under 'Interview Guide'. Topics were reordered and other topics that arose out of pilot interviews and some open-ended questions to prompt discussion on new topics were added. During the interview the participants were asked to talk widely about their experiences of LinkedIn around and beyond the prompt topics.

In addition, in piloting further possible interview structures with colleagues, I found that they were comfortable at the giving answers to specific "factual" topics. However, nearer to the end of the interview, much more open-ended questions – requiring them to elaborate on their ideas – could be asked, gaining better responses, for example such questions as: "What is your view of social media?" and "Is there anything more you would like to say about this topic?" At this point in the interview process, the interviewee had relaxed, trust had been established between me and the interviewee, and the research goals were more clearly understood by them. Additionally, after going through the process of talking about their participation on LinkedIn, interviewees had generally become more articulate about their experience of social media and how it functioned as a social arena.

I was aware that the development of trust was important to elicit rich data and as such, I needed to take care during the interviews to adopt a non-judgmental approach, and to achieve rapport by attentive listening and mirroring the participants' communication styles, a technique that is recognised as assisting in establishing a rapport (Shockley-Zalabak, 2009). As discussed earlier, since I had to some extent a similar background to many participants, a stance of 'deliberate naiveté' (cf. Kvale, 1996) or even 'detached objectivity' (Douglas, 1985) was unlikely to be received as genuine, and would as a result not contribute to developing rapport. I therefore decided to adopt the style described by Rubin and Rubin (2005) as 'responsive interviewing'. This style suggests that researchers have responsibilities when building a reciprocal relationship, honouring interviewees by unfailingly respectful behaviour, reflecting their own biases, and openly acknowledging their potential effect. I also decided that although the interview was semi-structured, I would encourage participants to tell their story and cover topics in the order that they preferred or others that had not been asked for if they related to the general aim. I would not interrupt the flow of thought, instead simply make a note when

a topic had already been covered. In this way, the participants could be more self-expressive and reflective (Fontana & Frey, 2005), and articulate connections and conclusions that resonated with their own thoughts.

Once I had determined the methodology, method of data collection, and the Interview Guide (See Appendix One), I made an application for ethical approval to the university ethics committee. The study was deemed to be low risk, as participants were not identified, and their responses were to be reported thematically, pertaining to a general nature

The study of self-identified NZ entrepreneurial professionals using LinkedIn

The study consists of a thematic analysis of 25 semi-structured interviews with Aotearoa/New Zealand SME managers/owners about their experience of engaging with LinkedIn and social media. The analysis of these texts addressed three emergent research questions; What are the main tensions evident in' Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' experience of social media and LinkedIn?; What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals discourse around creating a network and displaying a network on LinkedIn?; and What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around interacting on their network on LinkedIn?

The Interview Guide

As indicated above, I chose this format of a semi-structured interview using an Interview Guide as I realised that discussing LinkedIn participation was not a yet a common experience and I would need to use prompts to suggest topics they could discuss. Also, as indicated above, when designing the initial Interview Guide, I piloted a number of possible topics several times, adding or deleting topics before and during construction of the final Interview Guide. I took care that the topics in the final Interview Guide followed the sequence and format of activities that participants would be familiar with as a result of joining and engaging with LinkedIn, these being, creating a profile, making and accepting contacts, keeping in contact with contacts, giving and receiving endorsements, and reading and making contributions to discussion groups.

In addition, from feedback in the pilot study, I added more general topics about activities on LinkedIn in general, i.e., the participants' understanding of social networking, if they actively networked, and whether they believed doing so was important for business. I added prompt questions about what they thought of someone who was not on LinkedIn, what their reaction was to strangers contacting them and being deleted as a contact or deleting contacts themselves.

At the end of the Interview Guide, I added more generative prompt questions, i.e., one that was non-directive, and one that was future-predictive (Tracy, 2013, p. 154). These about topics such as the participants' attitudes to social media and ICTs in general, and how and if social networking sites like LinkedIn have or would change work /professional/personal life. I also asked if they had any additional information/thoughts to add.

When considering what demographic information to collect, I was aware that I had access to much of this information through publicly available profiles. The participants would know this, too, and I did not want to ask unnecessary questions. Their field of professional work and their work and educational background – including their country of education and origin – was clear; however, certain aspects needed to be confirmed, as they may have been particularly significant to the research. Firstly, as this was the subject of the study, confirmation was needed as to whether they were a small business owner/manager or an entrepreneur. Additionally, gender may have an influence on digital identity construction online (Donelan et al., 2010; P. Lewis, 2013), as can age, therefore I added questions around these two topics. I did not ask a specific question to verify their country of origin, which is possibly an omission that should have been included in the Interview Guide; however, all the participants volunteered this information in their interviews.

Participants

I used purposive sampling to identify the participants as I was seeking out LinkedIn users who were also SMEs owners/managers. The LinkedIn platform was used to identify and contact the participant group. As the participant group was to comprise SMEs owners/managers, as well as LinkedIn members, a search was conducted on LinkedIn of all groups using the following search terms: 'New Zealand small business

groups' and 'New Zealand small business networks.' The following groups were found: New Zealand SME Business Network (4303 members) and New Zealand Small Business Talk and Blogs (1518 members). Three others were also identified but excluded, as they indicated very limited activity or were combined New Zealand and Australian groups.

The participants therefore were identified as SMEs owner/managers by their participation in these groups. This was later also verified by questions one and two in the interview, about whether they were SME owners and managers, and the number of people in their business. They were invited to participate in the study through LinkedIn SME group pages. An alternative method of identifying and contacting possible participants through their individual profiles was considered, but would have been less efficient and less accurate, as it would have involved myself making less-specific assumptions about their identity as SME owner/managers. As it happened, all the participants interviewed identified as SME owners and managers when setting up the initial interview, and in their answers to questions one and two. Another reason for inviting participants through group pages was that they would not only be aware of LinkedIn, but also of the potential of LinkedIn as a channel for gaining information or entering into a discussion with other Aotearoa/ New Zealand small business individuals.

An invitation to participate in the study was posted on the two LinkedIn groups identified. The post, which was visible to all members, explained the research and asked for their participation. They were asked to reply to the researcher via direct email. A further posting occurred after three months after initial analysis had been conducted to elicit additional respondents as discussed below.

Possible bias may have been introduced in this selection process, in that the participants were already adopters of LinkedIn, beyond a basic level. They had not only posted a profile but joined a group. Additionally, this process did not include Aotearoa/ New Zealand SMEs who had not engaged with LinkedIn. However, these possible limitations and biases were considered necessary, as there needed to be some level of engagement by prospective participants with LinkedIn, beyond simply joining, in a study designed to explore how the identity construction of SMEs' was revealed through participation on LinkedIn. What their membership of a LinkedIn and a LinkedIn group did not reveal, and which the study sought to uncover, was how, why, and how much

participants were engaged, their experience of the social media and LinkedIn was, and whether these responses reflected a shared meaning and common discourse amongst NZ SMEs about LinkedIn and social media, and how the process of identity construction was revealed in this discourse.

Procedures

All potential participants who had emailed in response to the invitation were replied to by email. The invitation to participate was repeated and an information sheet about the study and a consent form was forwarded. I requested that the interviews were in person if possible, but they were given the option of a Skype interview. The interviewees were all informed that their interviews would be recorded and transcribed for analysis. All those who originally volunteered, except three, agreed to participate in the interview. An interview date and time was arranged by email. In total there were 25 interviews. One interviewee was in Tauranga, one in Oamaru, one in Christchurch, one in Nelson, one in the Waikato, and two in Wellington; they were interviewed by Skype. The rest of the 18 interviewees were in Auckland and they all opted for a face-to face interview. The interviews were all conducted by me and took place between November 2013 and September 2014, with the majority being conducted over the summer of 2013-14.

Twenty-one participants were interviewed (either by Skype or in person) while at their place of work, two were at independent offices, and two interviews were conducted in a café. The interviews were 50-70 minutes in duration, with the average time of interviews 60 being 60 minutes. Where face-to-face meetings were not possible as the interviewees were not in Auckland, the interview took place via Skype. Eighteen of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, and the remaining seven via Skype. In one case, the Skype connection failed, and the interview was continued by phone. At the interview stage pseudonyms were not used.

The interviews were recorded but additionally, field notes about the interviews were made in a copy of the Interview Guide. I made these notes in the margin next to the question that was being answered at the time. Furthermore, notes following the interview were made in a notes section at the bottom of the page of the Interview Guide, immediately following the interview. These copies were kept, alongside a record of the interviewee's details and the interview recording for later analysis.

Whether face-to-face or via Skype, the interviews followed the same format. I introduced myself, thanked the participant for their time, checked that the timing was still appropriate, and checked that they had read and understood the 'Participant Information Form'. I then provided a brief overview of the purpose of the research and the general topics to be covered in the interview, as well as their rights as a participant to ensure they were fully informed prior to the start of the interview. I then asked for, and thanked them for providing, the signed consent form. If the interview was by Skype, the interviewees had been asked previously to scan or to take a photograph of their signed consent form and email it to me. Each interview was recorded using a phone recorder.

I sought to establish a rapport with the interviewee at this stage through some introductory conversation about their business, during which I mirrored their communication style, for example, if they had a succinct or discursive communicative style, I mirrored this. During the interview, I aimed to achieve a rapport by mirroring and attentive listening, while balancing this with presenting the topic questions within the agreed-upon time. In most cases, the interviewees were quite wide-ranging in their answers. At times, I asked additional questions to further explain the original question or their answer. If the interviewee provided brief, succinct answers, I did not try to draw out extra information if they had sufficiently addressed the topic, and if they had said that keeping to time was a concern for them.

The interviews gave rise to a range of challenges. Firstly, an effort had to be made to ensure that a range of topics around LinkedIn were covered within the allotted time, without restricting either the participant's ability to be able to provide full accounts, or the opportunity to explore new issues. Participants often addressed topics covered later in the Interview Guide when answering an earlier question. I needed to closely observe my Interview Guide and note when and where topics had already been discussed. If the interviewee's discourse appeared to be leading toward addressing a later topic, I did not interrupt the flow of thought. I also made notes next to each question as to the participants' non-verbal reactions when being asked and answering questions, e.g., surprise, confusion, amusement, etc. This was useful to remind me of significant comments, since such reactions were more difficult to decipher, or remember, when listening to the recordings later.

I adopted a flexible approach to interviewing, keeping in mind that since meaning is constructed collaboratively, the interaction process is inevitably influenced by the presence of the researcher and the dynamics associated with the interview process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). According to Tracy (2013), listening, following up, clarifying, and interpreting are crucial parts of interviewing. Following Tracey's advice, throughout the conversation, I verbally condensed and interpreted meaning, providing space for the interviewee to further reflect and reword. This changed the interview from a stimulus-response tool into a conversation that produced meaning. During the interview, the Interview Guide was used only as a 'map' for me to keep track of the interview; this allowed the participants to talk expansively, and I omitted topics that been answered earlier in a different manner.

In total, I conducted 25 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, using the Interview Guide. Once the first 21 interviews had been conducted, initial analysis of themes, as described in the 'Analysis' section began, though I also continued to conduct four more interviews. I then concluded at this point in data collection and analysis that I had sufficient data to achieve 'conceptual depth' (Nelson, 2016) in the findings, that is I had enough rich data, considering the variety and complexity of the themes that emerged in the initial analysis, to give useful insightful answers and understandings consistent with the research goal. This decision followed the advice of Fossey, Harvey, and Davidson (2002) that in qualitative inquiry, the aim is not to acquire a fixed number of participants rather to gather sufficient depth of information as a way of fully describing the phenomenon being studied.

In deciding to conclude interviewing at this point and therefore delimit the sample size I was aware of several salient considerations. Firstly that an inductive exploratory approach is a much broader than a deductive approach, in that as the researcher I was unaware of the types of categories that might emerge from data collection and analysis, and thus data collection was not determined by identified categories or codes (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012). Therefore, the grounded theory process of achieving saturation as described by Corbin and Strauss, that is "The point in analysis when all categories are well developed" (2008, p. 268), was not applicable. Also I was aware that in exploratory research there is always the potential to discover more, but there are practical limitations to data gathering, and ethical considerations, including the

consideration that it was potentially unethical to recruit further participants to a study and not make full use of the data they provided (Francis et al., 2010), given the complexity and richness of data I had gathered by then. In addition I was mindful of the advice of Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers (2002) that in qualitative research, to achieve depth of data, a sample consisting of participants who best represent the research topic is more salient than the number of participants. Given that my participants were all quite narrowly defined by the research topic, that is Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals on LinkedIn, and that they all accurately fitted this description, I was confident that they all closely represented the research topic.

This judgement to limit the number of participants to 25 was supported by the a literature review by Mason (2010) of 560 studies of qualitative interviews. The review found a range from 15 to 60 interviews, with the average being 25. Additionally, Guest, Bunce & Johnson (2006), in a literature review of sample sizes of qualitative doctoral studies, found an average range of 20-30.

The first 10 of the tapes were professionally transcribed; however, the standard of transcription was poor, and in some instances, the recordings were difficult to decipher. As a result, the interview tapes and files were closely reviewed as soon as they were received back from the transcriber in order to provide missing words and to correct transcriptions where needed. In most cases, I was able to decipher the missing words and mistakes in the transcriptions. Due to the poor quality of transcription on the part of the transcriber, the I transcribed the subsequent 15 tapes myself. Through this close revision of the transcripts and transcribing of the tapes, I became extremely familiar with the content of the tapes. Because of the time spent on this transcribing, and the method of initial coding I employed, that is directly onto the transcript, I decided to abandon the use of NVivo software, which I had intended to use for this study, as my familiarity with the content and initial analysis was closely linked to the texts in this transcribed form.

Analysis of the data

Firstly, the demographic data gathered at the beginning of the interview about gender, age, country of education, and type of business was collated in a table (see Appendix Two). The participants were numbered, but later referred to by pseudonyms in the

analysis chapters. In these chapters, the participants' field of work was noted, as well as their geographic region, and whether they had immigrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand at some point. These categories were kept general to maintain anonymity. These typologies were later referred to when identifying emerging themes.

In analysing the data, I used thematic analysis, a system for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning or themes across a data set. I utilised thematic coding method, defined by G. R. Gibbs (2007) as a form of qualitative analysis which involves identifying passages of text or images that are linked by a common theme or idea allowing you to index the text into categories and therefore establish a "framework of thematic ideas about it" (p. 342). I employed several phases of analysis, that are common in inductive thematic analysis: familiarisation with data; generation of initial codes; searching for themes (described as secondary level codes in this study); reviewing, defining and naming themes (described as tertiary level codes in this study); and producing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2012)

I also followed the advice of Coffey and Atkinson (1996) for researchers when interpreting qualitative data, that they look for contrasts, paradoxes, and irregularities, as well as repetition and regularities, in analysis. In analysing the data, I followed an iterative process of alternating between analysis of the emergent qualitative data, considering existing models, and seeking explanations, theories and research in the literature to illuminate the findings, then returning to the data to develop deeper understandings (M. B. Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Tracy, 2013). In the next section, I describe my analysis process, from initially identifying initial codes and writing analytic memos, to creating secondary-level descriptive codes or themes and tertiary-level interpretive codes or themes, all the time returning to the literature for further insight.

The first stage of coding
By reading and re-reading the data, and through the process of transcribing the tapes and/or re-transcribing, I became deeply immersed in and familiar with the data. While I transcribed, I began the process of coding by highlighting words and phrases, on the interview transcripts themselves that seemed significant because they spoke to the topics covered, I then went through the transcripts again and assigned initial primary

codes, the first stage of coding of the data by utilising the interviewees' words and phrases that captured the essence of that code. These codes often used an expression used by the interviewees themselves, or "in-vivo codes" (Strauss, 1987). As Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates (2001) advise individuals mobilise "interpretive repertoires" (p.271) when articulating their experiences, or use common terms, phrases and metaphors associated with particular discourses, thus, identifying these common terms, phrases, and metaphors was important in the analysis of these interviews. Some examples of the codes for words and phrases that identified them, and that I developed at this point, are: 'digital dinosaur' (other people who do not use LinkedIn), 'novice,' (participant does not know how to use LinkedIn properly), 'untapped goldmine' (says LinkedIn as valuable for business, but not sure how), 'recluse' (not wanting to network much), 'detective work' (e.g., curiosity about others' whereabouts, or 'tracking' people). In addition, I labelled non-verbal reactions with notes on the transcripts or field notes, for example "self-deprecating laughter," 'lack of comprehension," "enthusiastic", etc.

In addition, during the process of data collecting, transcribing, and initial analysis, I made "analytic asides" that gradually evolved during later analysis into "analytic memos" (Tracy, 2013, p. 201). (See Appendix Four). These have been described by Saldaña (2009) as, "A place to dump your brain" (p.32), and by A. Clarke (2005) as "sites of conversation with ourselves" (p.196). These memos were useful for synthesising observations and thoughts, ranging from a micro-level related to comments, and descriptions of actions, to a meso-level of patterns or common thoughts, a process similar to described as discourse tracing (LeGreco & Tracy, 2009). At this stage the three more focused research questions, as distinct from the one general question, emerged from the analysis of the data.

Second stage of coding

These analytic memos informed a second stage of coding of the data. This coding took place on a descriptive-level and was more focused on common themes in respondents' interview transcripts (Tracy, 2013). I began to collate the analyses into a first codebook. (See Appendix Five). For each code, I firstly assigned a shorter name to the code, then an explanation, then an example or examples that typified said code. For example, the short name for one code was, 'Conx. request'; the longer name was, 'Hesitant to connect with people through invites'; the explanation was, 'In answer to question (or

makes a comment) about who they accept connection requests from, and why or why not'; finally, the example was, 'P.25 evaluates invites, looks at profile before accepting, as long as they are in business' (see extract in Table 2 below).

Table 2: Extract from codebook one

abbrev	Code/theme	Definition explanation	Examples -	abbrev
Conx. request	Hesitant to connect with people through invites.	Answer to question (or makes a comment) about who they accept connection requests from, and why or why not.	evaluates invites, looks at profile before accepting, as long as they are in business.	P.25 evaluates invites =looks at profile before accepting as long as they are in business

Additionally, in this phase of analysis, as a subset of the analysis, I used some basic typologies (i.e. a classification system) related to LinkedIn use and cultural background to initially organise the data (Tracy, 2013). To identify participants who were experienced in using LinkedIn and those who were new to it, I used a typology based on Kim's (2006) 'membership life cycle' of online communities, as discussed in the literature review (Chapter two). Although it is debatable whether LinkedIn can be classified as a 'community', the theory is still useful for identifying the participants' reported level of engagement. The terms 'lurkers', 'novices', 'regulars', 'leaders', and 'elders' were used to categorise participants' participation on the site. This was done according to an increasing engagement scale ranging from 'lurkers' – those that read others' contributions and never posted – to 'elders' – those that posted often and had many followers. I identified these types in two ways. Firstly, I characterised the participants according to the answers they provided to the questions about 'whether they posted to groups or blogs', and 'how often'; secondly, I used the analysis of the participants' interview transcripts to further support verification of these typologies, for example, participants' own descriptions of their interaction with groups, in this way more accurately categorising them (see Appendix 3). Other typologies such as 'New Zealand educated' and 'non-New Zealand educated', and 'type of networking behaviours', were also developed (see Appendix 3). Throughout this analytical process,

I maintained awareness that the meanings participants gave to their experience, as revealed in their discourses, was the focus. For example, if they talked about themselves as novice users with limited contacts, although they may have been quite active in comparison to others in the study, this was considered a salient finding in terms of identity construction.

Third stage of coding

I then began to focus more on the transcripts as a whole and comparing them with one another. I completed a third stage of coding, which organised and synthesised the data into interpretive themes (Tracy, 2013). In this cycle of coding, I adopted more analytic and interpretive codes, similar to what some have called 'focused codes' (M. B. Miles et al., 2014). With this further analysis, contrasts, paradoxes, began to emerge as prominent themes. Most interview transcripts revealed contradictions or paradoxes about the nature of the virtual world, and the process of participants' identity construction in it. Returning to the literature, I found these paradoxes were similar to the findings of a study on managerial identity construction by Clarke et al. (2009); here, the researchers identified that the dialogues of managers consistently revealed or drew on what they termed, "mutually antagonistic discursive resources"(p. 323). That is "rather than being relatively coherent or completely fluid and fragmented, managers' identity narratives may incorporate contrasting positions or antagonisms" (C. A. Clarke et al., 2009, p. 323). Further review of the literature revealed that contrasting positions or antagonisms are often referred to as 'tensions in identity construction', and as discussed in the literature review, managing these tensions can become a key aspect of identity work for individuals (Larson & Gill, 2017, p. 72). Therefore, I decided to use a tension-centred approach, similar to a number of existing studies (e.g.Tracy & Trethewey, 2005; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004), as the framework for my final analysis.

The third coding was therefore framed around themes of overarching tensions. These tensional themes were revealed at times as tensions within an individual's discourses or between participant discourses. The first overarching tension was identified by considering the discourses around the communicative activity of engagement and making meaning of the virtual world, a tension theme around the context being both controlled and uncontrolled. The second tension was centred on a paradoxes and

contradictions around LinkedIn use specifically. These two tensional themes are discussed in Chapter four.

When discussing the communicative activity of connecting there was an overarching tensional themes around the imperative to create a network, and that active, wide, and even global networking are essential business activities today, and a conflicting sense that a professional included in their network only with a closed group of known others. This overarching tension was surfaced in four tensional themes expressed by the participants. These four themes are discussed in Chapter five.

Looking through the communication as interaction lens, another overarching tension was identified around how to present an authentic or genuine entrepreneurial identity when relating to others, and to simultaneously promote and protect a professional or business brand (as distinct from a network) on social media. This overarching tension was identified and expressed in six tensions or contradictions around presenting an authentic entrepreneurial professional identity online. These six tensions are discussed in Chapter six.

The 11 identified tensions provided the framework for the analysis in the final codebook of themes. (See Appendix Six). The codebook was divided into 11pairs of codes or 22 codes Each code describes one dimension of a tension. Each code contains a description of the entire tension, the short and long name for the code, an explanation, and a set of example quotations, (See Table 3 below).

Table 3: Extract from codebook two

Codebook Two: (Tensional theme 2)				
Tensions	**Abbrev**	**Code**	**Definition/explanation**	**Examples**
Third-level [analytic] codes				
TENSION 2. LI risky to use/risky not to use (acceptance of the networking imperative) versus need to protect brand).	3.LinkedIn (LI) impt.	LI Important to engage with and it is risky for business not to.	Statements suggesting that participants believe social media, LI in particular, to be important and a key tool for business. It is a fast, inexpensive tool for establishing a business presence networking tool, and is also useful for keeping up to date with industry trends. It is necessary to be a member, so as to be viewed as current, and not to appear 'out of touch'.	LI imp- Risky not to engaged with it. "I [see] it as part of building your brand because it is networking and it is business: it is a business site. And when I joined years ago, it was just something that you needed to do. There's a saying that if you want to start in social media, the best time was five years ago, [and the] second best time is today... So, from a' Google juice' point of view, if you're trying to build your own brand it's imperative [to] have a LinkedIn profile, because it comes up so quick at the top". (5,5)

Subsequent to this analysis of the data and consistent with the iterative process, I carried out member reflections with two participants. The two participants identified themselves as expert or mature users of LinkedIn and said that they would be available for member reflections. This member reflection involved sharing in-process analyses and conclusions, making notes of reactions, and including these reactions in further analyses. It "allows for…sharing and dialoguing with participants about the study, providing opportunities for questions, critique, feedback, even affirmation" (Tracy, 2010, p. 844). This was valuable not only for validity, but for additional insight and credibility. For example, at this point, I tested the concept of defining the participants in the study as Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals, rather than more

generally as Aotearoa/ New Zealand SBOs, and they agreed that "entrepreneurial professionals' was the more appropriate term.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed my methodological commitments and processes employed in the study. Firstly, epistemological and ontological questions about the nature of truth, and how it can be examined, were addressed, thereby determining the paradigmatic and methodological approach for answering the three research questions. I adopted an interpretive-qualitative approach to this research. This involved listening to and reflecting on the first-person discourses of participants, relating their experiences with LinkedIn, and then analysing these as discourses though the lenses of three metaphors of communication. I then described how I inductively drew out from this analysis, eleven dominant tensional themes. The value of this interpretative approach is that it provides a grounded and complex understanding of how identities are constructed through participation in, and engagement with, new media such as LinkedIn.

In the next three chapters, I will present the analysis of these discourses, using the three metaphors of communication as a framework. In the following chapter, Chapter four, I will consider the first two tensions, through the communication as engagement lens, concerned with the wider issues of how the participants described the virtual world of the Internet and social media. Chapter five addresses the four more tensions around the activity of building an online network and using LinkedIn as a networking tool, through the communication as connecting or networking lens. The final analysis chapter, Chapter six, addresses the tensions identified through the communication as interaction lens around presenting an authentic entrepreneurial identity on LinkedIn. Within this analysis I identify that some of these tensions were being expressed as tensions within individual discourses and some as contrasts between the discourses of different groups of individuals. These differences suggest that tensions are being managed in different ways. In some cases, groups are selecting one pole in the tension over another, in some cases individuals can be seen recognising both poles and vacillating from one to another or seeking to integrate both poles through a forced merger, and in other cases participants can be seen to be transcending these dichotomies through reframing or synthesis.

Chapter Four: Discursive constructions of the virtual world of social media

All participants in the study made statements suggesting that they believed that social media is important for entrepreneurial professionals, and that LinkedIn is a key tool in this context. In the participants' words, "LinkedIn is king" and "at the top of the list". They referred to LinkedIn as a fast, inexpensive means for the entrepreneurial professional to establish a business presence on the Internet, a tool for personal profiling, for networking to reach new clients and generating new business, and for keeping current with industry trends. However, as indicated in Chapter one, their discourses also revealed complex simultaneously-held contradictory images of LinkedIn, social media, and the wider virtual world. These contradictions I have framed as tensions. These tensions influence how and why participants engaged with social media and LinkedIn; as such, they both enable and constrain the construction and presentation of online entrepreneurial professional identity.

In this chapter, I address the first research question: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around participation on social media and LinkedIn? in two parts. In section A, to situate the participants' discourse in the broad context, I discuss the first tension that is revealed around two conflicting images of this virtual world, one consisting of boundaried and defined spaces, the other consisting of wide open, un-boundaried, unexplored spaces. These two images describe a context of social media sites that is both enabling and constraining the construction and presentation of entrepreneurial professional identity. In section B, I narrow the focus to LinkedIn itself and discuss tensions around the necessity but also the risk of using LinkedIn for business purposes, a tension that both enables and constrains the construction and presentation of online entrepreneurial professional identity.

Section A: Constructing identity in a dual virtual world of places and spaces

As discussed in the literature review, when participants described the virtual world, they often used figurative language and imagery, referencing as discursive resources existing structures and objects in the physical world. Recurring images of boundaried spaces and

places contrasted with contradictory images of wide open, un-boundaried places. In this part, I discuss these two paradigms in opposition to each other.

Cyberspace as Boundaried 'Places'

Overall, their discourses indicated that the participants held one common image of cyberspace as being divided into mapped-out, boundaried 'places'. That is, each participant utilised discursive resources referring to boundaries, places, and sectors; further evoking these discursive resources, participants repeatedly used analogies to buildings, rooms, walls, shops, and marketplaces, viewed through windows, and accessed by portals, pathways, and roads. To understand these visualisations, I refer to boundary theory (Michaelsen & Johnson, 1997; Nippert-Eng, 1996a; Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013) as described in the literature review. Furthermore, literature on 'place' and identity construction (e.g. Gill & Larson, 2014b) considers place as central to the social world, as it not only includes the physical setting, but also the range of human activity and social-psychological processes that are carried out in it (D. Massey, 1994; Stedman, 2002).

Overall, it seemed that the participants were describing the creation of "mental fences" (Blake et al., 2000, p. 474) to simplify and order the new virtual environment into places, and to create limits that defined identities in this world as separate from one another. Neil, a financial consultant, explained his view that the Internet makes people more visible, but that there are boundaries between virtual places that to an extent define and reveal only some aspects of a person's identity. He said, "They're actually called the walls…the walls of the Internet…for example everything that happens in Facebook is behind the walls of Facebook."

The participants referred in their discourse to actual mapped places and physical boundaries in the physical world, or to the virtual world, metaphorically, as being made up of different 'places' as in a place on a map, a meeting place, or a place of business. For example, Leah, a beauty and make-up consultant, referred to people being in the digital world as "on the map" and Valerie, who owned an executive support business said, "I did know about LinkedIn being a place, it's a sort of an online c.v. place."

Participants described the characteristics of different places in cyberspace. When discussing social media sites, they evoked images of social media being divided into

114

different sectors, with different behaviour and expected roles in each place, as in the physical world. Warwick, a health and well-being specialist, described this separation: "I prefer to keep the person, as who you know they are, in certain sectors." Richard, a marketing professional, described the behaviour and expected roles on LinkedIn as follows: "I see [LinkedIn] as professional meeting place. On LinkedIn, I have my suit on." Louise, a communications consultant, said, "Facebook is your coffee shop and LinkedIn is your board room. So, the two are very, very different platforms and conversations. Facebook's about what you do on the weekend, or outside of work, and LinkedIn's about what you do from nine-to- five". Thus, according to the above, we can see that participants draw on the concepts of boundaried places to visualise, describe, and make sense of the of the virtual world, and how to act and interact in it.

Other described these 'places' in more amorphous terms, even somewhat personified, that is, a 'place' in cyberspace is more like a person's digital or virtual work self, and/or personal self, a stand-in for the physical self, viewed through social media or Internet sites that serve as "windows", "doors", and "portals" for accessing these places that hold the virtual place-holder selves. As Campbell, a designer, said, "I use Facebook pages simply as, another portal. I see Facebook as being a window into somebody's private life. And I see LinkedIn as being a window to their business life, personally. And to me it's quite a clear the divide between the two."

At least 95% of the participants in the study specifically compared LinkedIn to Facebook, the two being their most familiar social media sites. Many participants, roughly 50% (like Campbell), used language and imagery relating to the concept of 'place' to make this comparison. Although these numbers are not intended to demonstrate statistical significance, I present them to indicate the prevalence of certain imagery and metaphors in the discourses. In the following sections, I discuss and unpack specific metaphors the participants used that refer to "place" in order to illustrate that participants used discursive resources that divided cyberspace into places, but also to highlight the nature and variety of these conceptions of places. Specifically, I discuss metaphors of 1) home; 2) marketplaces; 3) social events or community places; 4) public forums; 5) theatre.

Online social media places as home

Participants compared the Facebook site to a home setting, where social activity should take place, and LinkedIn as a place of business, where only business should be discussed and not personal viewpoints (e.g., politics). A typical example of this viewpoint was given by Brian:

> Facebook is like your family sharing place or your friends sharing place. The way to think about Facebook is like somebody walking into your lounge. So, if I walked into your lounge and said, 'hey do you want to buy a website?' or 'do you need some internet marketing?' You're going to go 'you've just walked into my lounge, we're having a conversation about our hobbies, why are you trying to sell me something?' And it's the same on LinkedIn, it's like walking into somebody else's business and going 'I think that the National government sucks because of XYZ,' you go "this is my business, why are you talking about that?"

In terms of identity work, the above quote illustrates that this participant saw virtual places as having different socially-constructed contexts, as in the physical world, and appropriate self-presentation is required for each context. However, other metaphors and allusions were used that underscore the fact that the social discourse is still emergent when constructing a shared understanding of contexts in this boundaried virtual world.

Online places as marketplaces

The marketplace was another recurring metaphor or allusion when referring to social media sites in the work-related virtual world, evoking an image of a socially-constructed context that is partly commercial, and partly social. Three participants specifically used the word, 'marketplace' as in the following examples. Peter, who ran a management consultancy, said: "Yes, it's definitely about maintaining a presence in the marketplace and being found by people who don't know me already, so there's a lot of that about it". When discussing social media sites, Warwick said: "You know there's just different places for … yeah, I guess I have been introduced to different marketplaces". Wilma said, "But the knowledge of who I am and what I do is now in the marketplace".

Other participants extended the analogy related to the marketplace to shops and shopping centres. Trish, who had a business based in fine arts, described her profile on

LinkedIn as, "Like a shop front for a business because you're the person behind the business so you want to look professional". Another typical example is Colin, who was in the health and safety industry, and described the importance of a business presence on the Internet using similar imagery:

> Well you used to once, you know, have the high-street presence so that people would go 'well, if I want to go to the agency, there's the agency, or look at the big building.' But now, creating an on-line site for yourself becomes your shop.

Colin used the same imagery when describing the importance of networking on social media; however, instead of being like a village high street, he described the context as now being a global marketplace:

> Business is all about networking with the village that is a global platform now. If you're not sharing your information, I guess it's the equivalent is not having a sign in front of your building. If you go to a building and they've just got a number on there with a plain door, you would go whoa, there is something going wrong here.

Brian, explaining his visualisation of cyberspace, evoked many images related to "buildings", "rooms", "walls", "shops", "marketplaces", "portals", "pathways", and "roads." He characterised the whole of cyberspace as a "marketplace", unlike others, who said that business and social places were, or should be separate. Brian described his website as being a shop or a business, where buying and selling took place, and social media as creating the necessary foot traffic to it:

> So, I say the way to look at your social networks in the virtual world, it's all your foot traffic. So, if your website is your virtual business you've got to be getting more foot traffic to it. Because lots of people go 'well why do I even need a website if I've got a Facebook or LinkedIn business page?' and I go 'well those are just points of contact, they don't have sales pathways going through them, they're not encouraging the person to buy from you, what they are is they're just the foot traffic that, you've got to get the people back to your website.

The above discourses provide an indication of where the participants viewed their digital professional identity was located in the virtual world. Four other participants, like Brian, specifically indicated that their virtual professional or business identity in cyberspace as existing more prominently on their business website than their social media profiles. A typical example is Campbell, who identified his business digital self as being his website, and social media as a portal or pathway to this self. Campbell stated:

117

It is another portal: it is another step towards people who are actually accessing my business website and me. Every single one of those, the Facebook pages, Pinterest and LinkedIn and Google-Plus, they all point back towards my business website.

Here, Campbell is indicating that his digital professional self is residing on his website. However, other participants described LinkedIn as a place where their digital business or professional identity resided. Trish said that her LinkedIn profile was, "like a shopfront for my business." This move of digital identity from a website to LinkedIn was a relatively recent process, for example Neil said, "LinkedIn **became** my digital me in the working area". while Valerie stated she "got the message" and changed from regarding her website as the place where her public business identity was located, to viewing her LinkedIn page as the place where her digital identity was, because "a search result that would come up on the first result, it would have your LinkedIn profile rather than your website. So, that's the message". She was indicating that her authentic professional or work identity on the Internet was not where she preferred it to be (on her website), but where others saw she was, i.e., her LinkedIn profile.

Such comments illustrate the reciprocal communicative process of identity work, that identities are not only socially constructed but **co**-constructed. The participants comments suggest that the interactive nature of social media such as LinkedIn creates an online context in which they had come to accept as more authentic as it is co-constructed and validated by responses and interaction with others than the less interactive sites of web pages.

Online places as venues for social events or communities

When discussing participation in the LinkedIn group sites, as opposed to individual sites, the imagery changed from that of a marketplace and commercial space, to more of images of places where community or large social events occurred. Wilma, who had a recruitment business and described herself as a professional networker, still evoked the image of "rooms" when she stated that a LinkedIn group was like a party room: "So, it's a bit like walking into a room at a party, and there's some people there, and you have a conversation with them about something, and you get to know them. And so that happens in LinkedIn groups". A more common image was that of a community. Five participants evoked the discursive resource of communities, places where people should and generally did behave appropriately, as in a community. Brian said he had joined a

university alumni site on LinkedIn and that, "You link up with them, so you start building up this huge community around you". Four other participants commented about the behavioural norms that existed in LinkedIn groups as though they were the norms of a community. Two typical comments were from Anne, a marketing professional, who said, "a good community will police itself", and Valerie, who stated, "I think its community regulating". These comments indicate that some saw a LinkedIn group as or like a community, and like a community, tacit rules of social interaction would or should therefore evolve.

Online spaces as public forums

Many participants' discourses about LinkedIn media groups evoked images of public forums or platforms, rather than social or community gatherings. The word 'forum' connotes a slightly more formal setting than 'community'. A community implies an informal group of people discussing issues, and who also support and cooperate with one another, while a forum implies a place of public assembly, where individuals take turns at expressing opinions, often opposing views, and in many instances via platforms. When evoking images of LinkedIn groups as public forums, participants often referred to the rules of this place, as managed by the founder. For example, Colin said, "This is what the purpose of this forum is. It's to engage [in order] to share ideas, but not to sell your own services". As this quote indicates, participants believed that at times, these forums were hijacked for purposes inappropriate to a public forum, such as marketing services. In another example, Geraldine, an education consultant, said:

> Look you know, this isn't an appropriate forum for you know, whatever. I mean the ones that I've sort of been involved with, they tend to have some quite um...vocal people in the terms of… they're, you know, very well up in their own field, and you know, they just don't want people using the site or their postings for…um…a marketing exercise.

As can be seen by her somewhat confused expressions and restarts, Geraldine experienced difficulty when describing the social rules and appropriate behaviours for LinkedIn as a forum, but indicated she believes these rules exist or are emerging, despite not being clear. By characterising this virtual place as a forum, she, like other participants, appeared to be ascribing and creating appropriate roles in this place, as they did for other "virtual places", as if they were defined social areas. There is the

suggestion in her discourse – and the discourse of others – that they expected these "forums" to be used in a manner they termed "professional", that is, in a way that increased mutual knowledge, and an understanding of topics and issues, as in a traditional public forum, and not for individual gain. Such a suggestion contrasts with Brian's observation that the whole of cyberspace is a marketplace, in which selling is the norm.

Online places as theatre

Neil, however, said that he did not view these LinkedIn groups as forums, because behaviour occurred in them that would not be tolerated in an actual public forum, which he referred to as a "public plaza" or "agora". Instead, he evoked the discursive resources of theatres, where people are putting on a show for egotistical reasons, and indicated that he believed they can do this because there is less social control in these virtual groups than there would be in an actual plaza:

> I do have an opinion that I think that at these theatres, they are doing more damage than good. Because they are allowing…I mean the people that are making throw away noises and saying a lot of crap on that particular agora. Which is out there. I think of they wouldn't be doing that if they were in the public plaza.

This image is of LinkedIn groups as a kind of theatre, a place where individuals can put on a show, as opposed to a community space or even a forum, or a place where participants are being more supportive and collaborative, or knowledge-generating. The theatre is a place that is more unpredictable and individualistic than the other metaphorical places mentioned and indicates that the virtual world remains more open and unregulated than the participants' metaphors about groups suggest. I discuss this view of cyberspace as an open, unregulated space in the next section.

In summary, in analysing the imagery that participants used to describe social media and the virtual worlds of cyberspace, participants can be seen evoking the discursive resources of home, marketplaces, social events or community places, public forums, and theatre. These images together evoke a virtual world parallel to the physical world of home, work, and public life. In evoking these images of places, ranging from home to public theatres, participants also indicate that they visualise each place as having a different function, purpose, and expected behaviour.

120

It is not surprising that participants employed terms from the physical world (even if the inferred relationship was not always obvious or direct) when describing a new and virtual business and social world. Artefacts of the existing business and social worlds are familiar, and the concepts accessible. It is also not surprising that these images of boundaried places were found to be common, as they participants sought to simplify and/or order a new and confusing virtual environment. By ascribing specific known structures, rules, and inhabitants to each site or place, a degree of uncertainty about behaviour in each virtual place can be reduced. However, there are different and competing images of online spaces as social contexts, and these mitigate against uncertainty reduction, and creates tensions around behaviour, self-presentation, and ultimately, identity work. These tensions will inform my discussion of the participants' comments about reactions to others and their own behaviour in LinkedIn groups, as discussed in Chapter six.

I now move on to the second element of the tension around images of cyberspace, the conflicting images of cyberspace – and in particular, social media – as open, unregulated space.

Cyberspace as Open Spaces

Contrasting the previous section, where I established that the participants described cyberspace and social media as being divided into mapped out, boundaried places, in this part, I establish how participants simultaneously evoked discursive resources of cyberspace as open territory, a vast unexplored terrain, without boundaries, chaotic, and to date, unmapped and unregulated. This image was presented with both positive and negative connotations. The positive view of this image was that new technologies opened up opportunities for business expansion and creation, similar to the notion of a new frontier. The negative view posed that this territory is so new that it is difficult to know what to do and how to behave, and while exploring it, the explorer may become lost, ambushed, or waste precious time in an unproductive manner. Though different, the two images project the same mental image of cyberspace as unregulated open 'space'. A concept of 'space', as opposed to 'place' is described by D. Massey (1994, 1996) as imagined, open, flexible, unmappable and global, compressing time and

geographical distance, and disembodying. In this section, the different facets of this image will be investigated in the discourses and discussed.

Cyberspace as a place of lowered boundaries

The first indications of this tension were present even when participant discourses evoked the discursive resource of boundaried places. Conflicting allusions and language indicated that they did not only hold images of cyberspace as being boundaried or mapped out, but simultaneously, as being open and unregulated. For example, although participants described a boundaried world in cyberspace, they also alluded to these boundaries being lower than, and also affecting, the strength of traditional social and work boundaries in the physical world. Many participants (more than 60%) described how the information available on social media had helped to bring them closer to family and friends overseas, and to break down barriers when relating to business contacts in the real world. A typical example is, still using metaphors like "walls" and "doors", stating, "I had seen pictures of their [business contacts'] children that Instagram. So, that has certainly sort of lowered the physical boundaries, the walls. From a business point of view, it certainly has opened the door to a significant level". Peter, again using images of walls when contrasting LinkedIn connections to typical cold calls to a corporate client, described how LinkedIn had broken down "walls" in business: "Otherwise it is really a closed, cold call type of situation. You might call at a big company and say 'hello, I want to talk to the person responsible for that'; and there's about sixteen walls to stop you getting in touch with that person".

These comments about lowered boundaries indicate that, although participants frequently described the virtual world as being relatively ordered into specific places, a different understanding was also expressed in their discourses of the world of cyberspace as a more open and fluid space. Although they talked about walls and boundaries between sites and identities, as noted above, they also commented that they were aware that to some extent, these boundaries were notional, fluid, and permeable. For example, Louise acknowledged the lack of boundaries in cyberspace when she stated, "You can just log in to just about everywhere in your life via Facebook". This permeability of boundaries was described with statements that indicated an underlying anxiety and fear, as expressed in Leah's statement: "And most of the time that's just through… I think it's linked into my Facebook, and I don't know if that's very wise".

122

In the next section I will discuss a second image of cyberspace linked to this awareness that the boundaries between virtual places were notional, fluid, and permeable.

Cyberspace as the new Wild West, or a new unregulated frontier

This alternative image of un-boundaried cyberspace was of a virtual terrain of countless possible connections, and vast information stores that has been established. Participants generally described social media as the more chaotic, unpredictable, uncontrollable part of cyberspace, with business space overlapping with personal, social and political space. This image of social media being a new frontier was reinforced by the use of allusions to gold rush times, the open sea, or the Wild West. The specific comparison to "gold rush" times used by two participants when talking about LinkedIn reflects this feeling. Neil used the metaphor of "gold" in a positive way, describing LinkedIn as akin to a new type of gold rush, providing him with business information and contacts that he found previously difficult to "mine". Previously, he had to find the exact place (the river) where this information or these contacts were located:

> The difference is that it's exposing me to an array of the information and relationships that I can dig up. It's like when in a gold rush you know, that 'okay, the gold will be in that river and you need to find that river.' And now the gold it's everywhere.

Ron, a design and marketing consultant, used a similar comparison to gold mining, but said:

> I see it [LinkedIn] as potentially a gold mine for new contacts for me. However, I struggle to work out how to extract the gold so to speak. You know, I've got nearly 120 connections there, and I'm not sure how I would then turn those connections into business. Some of them are existing business relationships anyway, so what sort of value can I add to those, I don't know.

The use of such a comparison can be viewed as significant not only because the gold rush era in Aotearoa/ New Zealand was a time of economic opportunity and growth, but also because it was a chaotic time of social upheaval (Fairburn, 1989; Sinclair, 1991). It prompted in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, as it did in the US and Australia, large scale population migration to new, untamed, and unregulated territories. In the US, it drove migration west, and referring to LinkedIn in this context recalls 2012 comments made by a NZ Government minister, who claimed "the social media terrain is the new Wild West; chaotic and unregulated" (Walker, 2012, p. 165). Moreover, as early as the 1990s, cyberspace had been called the new electronic frontier (e.g.Rheingold, 1993).

Ron also used another analogy to describe the social media experience, i.e., a journey overseas to new lands. This is another resonant theme in the Aotearoa/ New Zealand consciousness, as mentioned in the introduction to this paper, as the country had been settled during fairly recent times by waves of exclusively seaborne immigrants. Engaging on social media is something Ron believes he should be doing, but he is not entirely sure why; he explains: "It's like we know we *should* be in this boat, but we don't know where it's going, and we don't know how it's going to benefit us". The combined language and imagery of the participants allude to an image of a new open territory consisting of boundless connections, information, and business possibilities.

Cyberspace and social media as new, shocking and overwhelming

The participants also described feelings of being shocked and overwhelmed by a new world that is vast and unregulated. For example, Colin first referred to the opening up of Aotearoa/New Zealand to the global economy through free trade agreements as a shock to many SBOs during the 1980s and 1990s. He then compared this shock to the shock of the advent of the Internet, which seemed to simultaneously make competing in a global market more possible, at least for some industries, but also very difficult due to information overload. He said:

> All of a sudden, they were competing with the world. And they were going 'oh shit, people are now going to buy from Australia or America.' So, the village just got bigger and bigger. And then all of a sudden, the internet came along. Well the shift, it's almost come full circle because all of a sudden there was a lot of information at our fingertips, but the trouble is what there is now is too much information.

These feelings of information overload were referred to by participants in the context of information on the Internet in general, but also about social media, as illustrated by this statement from Valerie, who said, "I hated Twitter. It was just a busy highway of information being twittered out every second". The multitudes of communication choices and channels available in cyberspace also presented issues and reinforced the image of the Internet as a vast, unknown, territory. For example, Brian commented, "I know what it's like to be small business owner. You don't know whether you should send an email campaign or a text message campaign, or how many times you should post on LinkedIn".

There were also talked about issues of overload in terms of learning new technology, as Brian further described:

> So, there's a big problem with all this new technology, there's so much to learn, people don't really know how to learn it, well they just don't have time to learn it because it takes so long to learn, and there's going to be a new generation of tools coming out.

When it came to the more strategic use of social media and LinkedIn for building their businesses, most participants indicated they recognised the potential inherent in social media, but like Ron, they "struggled" to know how to harness this potential and gain benefit from it. Ron explains:

> And I think for me, LinkedIn is just, unfortunately, tends to be, something where, because it's not a clear, for me anyway, there's not a clear strategy as to how I can use it to build my business…it tends to sit in that too-hard basket.

These examples convey an image of social media being an open and chaotic new frontier, evoked in these cases not by images of space, but by discursive resources around feelings of the shock arising from being in unfamiliar open territory, and being overwhelmed by endless possibilities.

Cyberspace and social media as problematic for the location of professional self

The openness of social media also was expressed as a concern or an anxiety about how participants' professional selves could be 'found' by others in this virtual world, or where it could be located. This anxiety indicated that, despite their expressed understanding that cyberspace was divided into boundaried places, they also described it as not being clearly mapped or signposted; rather, it was a wide-open and unmapped-out space. As entrepreneurial professionals, their business is closely linked to their identity; therefore, participants talked about the need for being easily 'found' as individuals in cyberspace. In most cases, their business was themselves, personally providing a service; therefore, it was likely that potential clients and business associates would want to know about them, or connect with them, as an individual. In the physical world, they would typically be found at their place of work, and traditional contact norms and details would be clear. Their discourse indicated that being 'found' was more

problematic in cyberspace, and this problem was linked to where their identity was being constructed.

As discussed above, many participants referred to their company website as where they preferred their professional identity, their "digital me," to be found in cyberspace. Yet a digital professional identity of this kind cannot be said to exist if it is not seen and recognised by others, and as many participants observed, websites did not bring people to them. Several other participants described social media as a conduit through which clients and others were more likely to connect with them or seek them out, as they could connect to them in this way more as an individual than on a website. Therefore, their discourse indicated that LinkedIn was becoming more recognised and accepted as a place to present or enact their professional identity, and where they were found by others in cyberspace. Yet as this discussion indicates, this sense of place for professional identity to be established and exist in, i.e., cyberspace, was still contested, fluid, and gave rise to tensions, as would be expected in any new territory. These tensions were around the open nature and lack of control on social media created for participants locating their professional virtual identity on LinkedIn.

Social media sites are not owned or controlled by the participants, and their discourse reflected some anxiety about whose territory their professional identity was located in. The structure, security, and limits of LinkedIn appeared to give some participants a sense of safety, manageability, and control over their presented identity, compared to other social media sites. As Colin said, "But it [LinkedIn] keeps that sort of trust by limiting what you can do on it". However, participants also expressed many anxieties about LinkedIn as an open and unregulated space. For example, they expressed anxiety about who owned their profile and contacts on LinkedIn. Richard, when discussing this issue, said: "I think most people would consider they owned their networks, because they've built them, you know, because of their own social networking skills and efforts". However, Belinda, who was in a professional partnership with several others, did not express the same confidence in ownership of her contacts list: "If I am encouraged to have a profile link connect with people, and I leave this firm, can this firm say to me, "Well actually no, they are our contacts and not yours, and we want you to leave them all behind? I don't want you to take them with you".

Cyberspace and social media as problematic for the location of work sites

There was a recurring theme in participants' discourse that, although many increasingly carried out their business in the virtual world and referred to places such as LinkedIn as business sites, they also said that cyberspace and social media were too unregulated to be considered as a site of work. For example, Don, a management consultant, stated that he believed real work, as such, only happened at the physical work place:

> Yeah but a lot of this stuff about, you know, technology has changed the way in which work happens, you know, I'm not sure if that's so…Well, I mean maybe I'm a reactionary but…like it's changed inasmuch as I was just having a conference call with someone in the States for a service, we use with them. A few years' ago, I wouldn't have done that, …but now I'm quite comfortable doing it as a tool...But it hasn't changed the fact that you've got to come to work.

Though this is in some ways a definite statement, Don's hesitations and qualifications, and the inclusion of an example of him working in the virtual world, indicate that he may be changing his understanding. Colin claimed to have changed his view about where real work could occur, but indicated that most others still had not:

> But the thing is that you know, the tools are there, but we haven't shifted in the concept of managing workloads. And you know that we still work under the mentality that only if you turn up to work, that you're working - which is a big mistake.

Colin also said that New Zealanders believe work only truly happens in a physical workplace, because they still generally conceptualise workers as inhabiting a physical space within roughly a 60-kilometre radius from their workplace, that is, within driving distance:

> And so, it's not really an advantage, the whole concept of being able to source people who are on-line, and the global nature is that you can access talent and experience that you probably otherwise wouldn't, if we work under the traditional model, if you've got a 60-kilometer radius.

As such, the understanding that work can only be done at a physical work site contradicts the image of cyberspace as comprising business places, and indicates that work done through social media, such as networking, relationship-building, and self-branding is not yet considered 'work', in part because the virtual work context is still emergent and undefined.

127

Although cyberspace and social media may or may not be viewed as a work site, this issue can help us to understand the tension created by simultaneous images of virtual boundaried places vs. un-boundaried spaces. The reservation in participants' discourses about what constituted real work and work sites and therefore, possibly real, professional identity, has implications for entrepreneurs constructing an authentic professional identity on LinkedIn. If the wider Aotearoa/ New Zealand social discourse is that work, including identity work, can only occur in a physical worksite, with other people, then this social discourse will create tension for many of whose work is no longer in traditional workplaces such as the study participants, as they do not have access to this work context. If work conducted virtually is not considered 'real work', a professional identity constructed on LinkedIn may not be as valid to others and therefore, reflexively, possibly to the individual. If, as widely contended, having a sense of identity (including work identity) is a fundamental need, the discourses of the participants are likely to reflect a strong drive to define or redefine LinkedIn as a valid context for work identity construction, and/or possibly to redefine what is considered 'work identity'.

In summary, the participants evoked images of cyberspace, and in particular social media, as an exciting and expanding new world of boundless opportunities and territory. However, there was also a common discourse for many around how deep exploration into this new world was considered too difficult, it was in the "too hard basket." The open, unregulated nature of cyberspace and their lack of experience in this new environment were discussed in tandem with expressions of anxiety locating their professional virtual identity on LinkedIn. Ambivalence about ownership of territory, and as a result, issues of trust and fear when relating to increasing numbers of unknown others recurred in their discourses. Additionally, there was present in their discourse an underlying anxiety among participants that their professional work and identity constructed in the virtual would not be as validated, as in the physical world.

Section B: Viewing online presentation through the lens of risk

When asked to discuss participation on LinkedIn specifically, recurrent in the participants' discourse were competing discourses that; on one hand to be active on

LinkedIn was as important, even vital for business, but on the other hand, it is also risky, personally and for business, to participate. In this first part of Section B, I discuss the common discourse that emerged from the discourses around the theme that LinkedIn membership is a vital business tool.

It is vital to be on LinkedIn and risky not to be

As many of the respondents were from communication, marketing, and design fields, where networking and self-presentation are acknowledged as necessary skills, and since LinkedIn is marketed as a personal profiling and networking tool, it was likely that the participants would describe LinkedIn membership as important or necessary. Most of the other participants were from financial, law, and health and fitness services, where such activities are also important (see Appendix 2). Typical comments that illustrate this general discourse are those of Neil: "To me it's essential. I check LinkedIn daily and sometimes many times a day", and of Jill, a professional writer and editor, who said, "I see it as such a key tool, particularly for, well, small people, it was like one of the first things you've got to do, is get on LinkedIn." Melanie, a marketing professional, agreed that this tool was essential for SMEs, "Well it's absolutely vital, but then perhaps you're talking about small-to-medium businesses… I think it depends on the type of business you're in. I never needed LinkedIn until I started my business".

The participants' comments that LinkedIn was important were to some degree expected, as they were already members of LinkedIn and had agreed to participate in the study. However, they also supported their comments with specific examples and stories from experience. When asked about whether they believed they could be in business today without LinkedIn, what they found LinkedIn useful for, and what they thought of someone who was not registered on LinkedIn, they utilised similar common discursive resources that emphasised the vital nature of LinkedIn, and were expressed in four themes, as I discuss in the next section.

LinkedIn is an essential business tool

At least half of the participants, when asked if they believed they needed to use LinkedIn in small business environments, emphatically agreed. Jill's answer was typical: "I think ten years ago, sure, I guess. [she did not need to be on LinkedIn]. Now I'd say, why would you not want to be now? Why would you even consider that? So,

for me it's kind of, it would be professionally risky not to be using the tools I think."
When they expanded on why using LinkedIn was essential to their entrepreneurial
business, the LinkedIn features of time-saving and cost efficiency were emphasised; for
example, consider the comment below from Melanie:

> I'd also say that [joining LinkedIn] is the fastest way of doing it. The fastest way of
> building contacts and networking with people because it has become old-school to
> have these little meet-ups, people don't have time anymore. That's it, because, in my
> opinion, it's mainly because of time restrictions, that we don't have time to connect
> personally anymore, and therefore social media would be the best, the most effective
> way of getting your name out there and connecting with others.

Sam, an education consultant, expressed the time-efficiency, "Well, the value of these
on-line networks, interrelating channels for interrelationships, is that generally they're
asynchronistic, so they're less intrusive on time". For Josephine, the cost efficiency
aspect was attractive for a business start-up:

> It was the only way available that I could free-of-charge build a network; build
> relationships, and I mean across the whole range: not just the client-relationships but
> peers, J.D.s and other complementary business roles. So, it was a full gamut of the
> whole business and marketing perspective of relationships that you could possibly
> have. So yeah, LinkedIn was king.

LinkedIn has useful functionalities

Participants specifically mentioned that the LinkedIn functions of presenting a personal
profile or brand, building their brand, and relationship-building, were vital for a
professional entrepreneur. Many participants described changing their use of LinkedIn,
from a purely information-gathering tool to a network and relationship-building tool,
through to a tool that promoted their personal brand. As Melanie explained:

> LinkedIn, for any business, I'd say that it's at the top of the list, to really get
> connections, contacts, build relationships and to get information from other companies.
> Again, that's something that changed over the past two and a half years since I've
> registered on LinkedIn. Initially it was to get information, so it was research, pure
> research. Right behind that the reason was to find contacts, to connect with people out
> there, in similar industries, other industries, to, you know, share information. Now I'd
> say there's a strong aspect or motivation or motive, yeah to hopefully get seen by
> others.

Louise, an early adopter of LinkedIn and employed in a start-up business, emphasised
LinkedIn's importance to her as an entrepreneurial professional for building her own
brand:

> I just saw it [LinkedIn] as part of building your brand because it's networking, and it's business: it's a business site. And when I joined years ago, it was just something that you needed to do. There's a saying that if you want to start in social media the best time is today. In fact, that would be one of the little sort of tick boxes that you must, particularly at this digital age.

Wilma also emphasised LinkedIn's value for brand-building and unobtrusive relationship-building for an entrepreneur:

> But the knowledge of who I am and what I do, is now in the marketplace. So, I would see it has been a valuable tool. It helps me run my business in the way that I want to run it, which is keeping connected and keeping my profile in front of people and keeping connected with people, which is my business. I use it for relationship building and connecting and that's because I have a business that's really 90% dependent on referrals, 10% comes in from the website. So, I'm very dependent on other people and relationships with people and maintaining those relationships and forming new relationships. LinkedIn can help me do that… So, it's a very gentle way of connecting with new people, the discussions, and it's keeping your profile and your credibility up in the market place.

Five others also mentioned in their discourses that they appreciated LinkedIn as an important tool, which they could use to take a low key, unobtrusive, and somewhat passive approach to promoting their profile and relationship-building. For example, Sam stated, "I know that people are watching, so although there's no response and no direct conversation happening, there is this kind of existing…this kind of extant connection which is there, which can come into play". Graeme, a security specialist, described checking in to LinkedIn as, "Just to…keep a finger on the pulse, to a certain extent."

Not being on LinkedIn damages professional reputation

When asked what they thought of someone who was not on LinkedIn, at least 50% of respondents stated that not being on LinkedIn created a reputation risk and can negatively affect a person's self-presentation as a professional. Typical responses included Colin comment: "I think their credibility takes a hit especially in our industry", while Richard replied, "I just think, I expect any professional, like any um...especially if you've got involved in digital, we would expect him to be on LinkedIn." Someone not on LinkedIn was described by many as not being up-to-date with trends, or, as in a typical quote from Linda, "like a bit of a dinosaur," or not serious or professional. Leah stated, "I would think that they're either a little bit behind the times…or not serious

about their [profession]…not 'on the map'…from a professional viewpoint". Melanie had a similar opinion:

> If they are a business person or a professional person, I would be surprised that they're not on LinkedIn. I would find that, I want to use that word 'strange,' but I do find it surprising if people, professional people are not on LinkedIn. Yeah, it's almost like 'get with the times.'

Participants also discussed how they joined LinkedIn to protect their own image; for example, Ron said, "LinkedIn was very much something that everyone else was doing, so I had to be on the same band wagon. In some ways that's possibly another reason why I joined LinkedIn in the first place, because I don't want to be seen as being primitive in my marketing."

Other less common discourses about professionals who were not on LinkedIn utilised non-committal or less adamant language, though participants generally qualified their opinion by referring to individual circumstances when it was acceptable not to be on LinkedIn such as when age was a factor. For example, according to Kay, "older people may not know how to use it and they might be afraid, there might be a bit of being afraid of using it and not wanting to struggle with figuring it out."

LinkedIn is growing in importance

LinkedIn was also talked about as growing in importance, and there was a common discourse about the significance and usefulness of the website increasing in the near future, despite most participants expecting LinkedIn to be superseded by other sites in the long-term. For example, Colin said, "It's been a useful tool, and it certainly appears to be growing. I think it's helpful; and I think as long as people see it as a useful tool, and it's not used as a trivial gossip network, then it might, you know continue to be successful." Richard's view was that LinkedIn had more potential compared for use than it was currently being used for: "It hasn't really come of age yet in my opinion. in terms of being able to deliver commercially. But I think as previously for, you know, Twitter, and for LinkedIn really, they're heading that way pretty fast."

In summary, a common discourse around LinkedIn and its use was that, for the entrepreneurial professional, it is an important, cheap, and efficient tool for creating an

Internet presence, building and promoting a professional business profile, and networking and relationship-building, as well as for staying up to date with industry trends. All these functionalities were discussed as increasing in importance and value for entrepreneurial professionals. Therefore, it was considered risky not to be on LinkedIn, not only because of missing potential business opportunities, but for the damage this can do to professional reputation. However, also evident in participants' discourses was a concern that participation on LinkedIn came with many risks to business and reputation, thus creating a tension in their discourse, which is discussed in the next section.

It is risky to be on LinkedIn

The participants' discourses also revealed a shared discourse that it was simultaneously risky to use LinkedIn. This riskiness was alluded to in several different ways, usually when describing others, that is, they talked about *others* as viewing social media as risky, simply because they were not used to it, and feared what they did not know. For example, Jill referred to social media as a "shock", particularly for older people. She said, "People will just be used to it, because once the shock has gone away for the older people and so forth." Richard, when describing clients that he worked with, said, "Actually to persuade them to create a LinkedIn page, I mean that's a step too far for most of them". Although they were referring to others, their discourse indicated that this unease about risk included themselves, as it was something they had experienced or were still experiencing. Neil, a long-time user of social media, described the social media environment as "boiling" or chaotic, and this contributed to the fear he had observed in Aotearoa/ New Zealand:

> To me the social media is at the stage of existence of getting used to, it's boiling. It needs to settle, needs to settle down in some way. In the same way that everything which is new requires two stages. The fear, and the getting-used-to.

Some participants identified certain industry sectors as being more averse to social media use; for example, Jill said she found that public service feared social media: "But the public service, it seems to me still really wary of social media and they just think about it as posting to Facebook, it's something you do in your private time. And so, I can see that that's not being reconciled and there's this massive tension with the

disintegration of traditional media and this fear of social media". Here Jill expressing a tension that comes from the need to use social media, that is risky and not trusted, but necessary because traditional media (that is more trusted and less risky) is disintegrating. Brian, a web designer, found a similar reluctance to engage with social media, but conceded it was 'okay' for some groups not to, due to the risks for them, as he expresses here: "I've just recently done a project looking at national security now I kind of think it's okay for some people [not to be on LinkedIn] it's risky".

However, as indicated by Jill's comments above regarding the disintegration of traditional media, a common discourse was also being expressed that engagement with social media, even if risky, was inevitable. Campbell, a designer, stated, "Yeah, print isn't dead, but it's dying." Campbell's comment underscores what he views as the inevitable, i.e., print mediums are being replaced by online, interactive media. Several participants also expressed concerns about a range of specific risks, i.e., business, personal, and societal risks. Business risks included wasting time and energy, security risks pertaining to intellectual property being stolen, and false identities; personal risks concerned possible damage to reputation, privacy and anonymity being undermined, and interpersonal misunderstandings increasing. Risks to society included becoming dependent on mediated communication. These specific risks are discussed next.

Risk of wasting time and energy

Participants expressed a general reluctance to become too engaged in and spend too much time on LinkedIn. This risk was inherent in talk about valuable time and energy would being expended, with no or unequal return. A typical example are Peter's comments:

> I think there is a risk that people could spend too much time on it. I have a friend - a business associate, and he probably uses it 30 minutes a day, and does all the things they tell you to do…And so yeah, I think it can work. I'm not sure that he's got heaps amounts of business as a result of doing that. I think since this study is around small-medium businesses. I think the answer to that has to be that all small-medium businesses are under huge pressure, so they have to be very circumspect about how they spend their time.

The participants referred to vastness of the Internet and the possibilities of endless connections when discussing the risk of not having control over time and energy spent.

Richard commented that increasing his number of contacts would create time problems: "Not that it's a big number, but you know once you get to a couple of hundred (of contacts), I suppose that becomes a hell of a time-waster."

Security risks

Another discourse alluding to 'risk' in the participants' discourse was around lack of control over property in cyberspace, and the risk of intellectual property being stolen or lost. Older people were commented on as being warier of this, as Colin said, "Yes, absolutely. Because they're just a different generation and they've grown up with protecting their IP." However, many participants also expressed their own concerns about revealing business information and contacts that may be used by competitors, the site owner, or stolen by others. One concern was about ownership and the security of a member's contact database, as expressed in this typical reply from Richard:

> I don't like to think that you don't own or control your database and Facebook and LinkedIn can take it away if they are...you know with the swipe of a button. It's... they are inherently risky...but you know, that's the nature of the environment: you can't do much about it really, but you've got to try and convert those people to the newsletter

Interestingly, Richard's solution to this issue was to try and convert clients back to an older technology, that of the email newsletter where he had more control.

Several participants talked about the risk of others using a false identity and that connecting to these people may create dangers for them, either by damaging their reputation, or by harming their own or their business' security. Josephine, a marketing professional, describes this:

> I have seen even in the early days, but probably more after about two years, there started to be false profiles and multiple profiles; deliberately set up multi-profiles and multi-groups for people specifically with the intent of building connections, in probably a different way. And perhaps this is rather ruthless, but sometimes when I just see if there's a fairly clear pattern of behaviours, I have no problem in reporting into LinkedIn with my apprehensions about certain connections.

This risk concerning ownership and integrity of contact lists participants said also influenced their attitudes and approaches to networking on LinkedIn, as they tried to simultaneously protect, increase, and publicise their contact list. I discuss this tension in detail in Chapter five.

Personal risks to reputation and privacy

Another theme prominent in the participants' discourse was the possible risk to reputation related to the permanence and public nature of any posting on the Internet and social media. They discussed how there is little control over who reads postings on the Internet, even among LinkedIn groups, and as such, readers may find some posts offensive or inappropriate. As business individuals, participants expressed concern about how this would affect their reputation. A typical example of this risk was expressed by Belinda:

> This stuff is on the internet, and that means it's very hard to remove, and often you don't have a lot of control over who's seeing it, so you need to manage what you put on. So, I am probably a bit more circumspect than some over what I would be comfortable putting on the internet, And I've seen the effects of people, you know, posting silly things on there, you know 'my boss is a dick.' Well, you shouldn't be that surprised when your boss sees it, and you get fired. Because that's a really stupid thing to do. Yeah, I mean individuals certainly do have privacy but if you choose to put information on, out of the personal forum, then to a certain extent you're answerable to yourself.

In addition, false information was also noted as having the potential to affect brand and reputation, as Jill explained:

> I've heard this a couple of times from HR people, they think that everybody tells porkies [lies]on their LinkedIn profile, I just think gosh that's a really risky game given it's so public. Yeah, the extent to which your activity is broadcast I find, personally, think it needs to be managed. I think that you want to have control over that. I'm a bit of a freak like that. I think you know it's your brand, it's your stuff to manage. I mean it's blunt instrument for doing that, that's my view.

Both Belinda and Jill used the discursive resources of "control" and "manage", while at the same time expressing that control was in essence difficult, which seemed to create anxiety about revealing too much in self-presentation, indicated in the use of language such as, "I am a bit more circumspect than some" and "I'm bit of a freak like that".

The participants' discourses also reflected a common concern that the so-called "walls of the Internet" were permeable, and that privacy and anonymity were not possible, which in turn gave rise to risk. A typical example of this was a comment by Graeme: "There are plenty of people that go, 'Well I want an anonymity on-line.' Well, sorry we're in an age where you can't be that. People research you online; they want to know who you are, where you come from". In another typical example, Anne described how she advised others that their private information was often not secure:

I said to them 'you need to be very aware,' …, I said to them you know 'you need to make sure you've locked down your Facebook profile' because I can get in there, I can see your children, I can see what you did at the weekend, I can see what you posted last week, and that's not cool. And the other thing is when people tag you in photos [put your name on] is to make sure you un-tag yourself because they can follow you through somebody else's photos…because you just don't want people, especially for me in my position, I don't want people googling me and finding this picture of me and my daughter, you know it has to be separate.

The above quote points to another connected theme of risk expressed in the discourses regarding separating social identities, such as work and personal, in cyberspace, that was increased by having a professional or work-related profile on LinkedIn. The participants' discourses generally reflected a strong common desire to keep their personal and business selves separate on social media, and they often described how they sought to separate these digital identities and worlds, as discussed in more detail in Chapter six. However, there also surfaced in participants' discourses a recognition of the inevitable blurring of boundaries between personal and business worlds on social media, with the linking of personal and business digital identities. This theme that using LinkedIn was essential, but the context created a risk of exposing private life to public gaze, emerged as a constant tension that these professionals experienced in identity construction in this context.

Risk of interpersonal misunderstanding

As LinkedIn is still relatively new, it would be expected that the rules and norms of interaction on the site are still being shaped. Additionally, a great deal of interaction on LinkedIn occurs through written text. The participants frequently observed that these conditions increased communication risks such as unintentionally offending someone by using the wrong tone, providing misinformation, under- or over-responding, connecting to the wrong people, or simply being misunderstood. They talked about the damage to reputation and brand that may be caused as a result of these communication breakdowns or misfires. A typical example is the following comment by Belinda:

The difficulty I find with something like a discussion site is it's really hard to get tone just from one or two sentences, and particularly if you disagree with something. Some things that can be a bit of a balancing act, not coming off like that they are a 'know it all'.

On a personal level, there was also they also evoked the discursive resources of risk around being rejected when social media is used for interaction. This risk of rejection was implied in several participant statements, for example, by Louise when discussing how she feels when she issues invitations to people she doesn't know: 'I am actually sticking my head out here [taking a risk] because I actually want to meet some new people, so if I can get you out of the woodwork, because I don't know you, then that will be great."

Risks such as these that are related to the permanence and public nature of any posting on the Internet created tension in the participants' discourses, as they described how they simultaneously seek to promote and protect their business identity and brand on LinkedIn. I discuss this tension further in Chapter six.

Risk to society

Participants' discourses also referred to several risks at a societal level. They talked about concerns that being on LinkedIn in the evenings and weekends would create pressures and problems that needed to be recognised and controlled, for example, personal life and identity becoming intermingled with their work life and identity. Melanie, for example, explained how she had had to limit LinkedIn use:

> I used to spend a lot of time. This year I purposefully, consciously try to slow myself down, because last year I did suffer a bit of a burn-out, I would get home in the evening because I do have a day job, I would get home in the evening and I would get on the computer and I would start having conversations with people until the early morning hours. So yes absolutely, without you realising it, once you've gone through all your groups and the posts and the comments that people might have left on your posts, there's several hours that have passed. You have to be really disciplined, and I know I've read quite a few posts about this subject as well, you have to be disciplined and say it's just an hour on LinkedIn a day and whatever I don't get to today needs to wait until tomorrow.

Several other participants also referred to the risk that engagement with LinkedIn and other social media may reduce real life networking and engagement in business. Peter "Social media generally, or specifically LinkedIn, in the business environment: has it reduced real world in networking? and in doing so, has it helped or undermined potential opportunities? It's a worry: that is a worry." Others expressed concern about social media eroding social skills. Kay, a communications professional, put it this way:

> I think social media can be also dangerous in some respects, it takes away the interaction of people, and you have a whole group of people that all they do is social media but there isn't that true relationship that's developed on a face-to-face perspective, and I think that's quite a shame in some respects.

Peter expressed a concern that LinkedIn or social media could become an emotional satisfier to the degree that it will affect social life and productivity in business, as expressed here:

> Yeah, perhaps there is a danger that if it's used too much in the workplace as a crutch. An emotional crutch for individuals...they might you know, productivity might take a big hit. I guess the other thing is in, not in the business environment, in their private time: again, it could be an emotional satisfier. That isn't necessarily good for the psyche.

In this part of the chapter (section B), I discussed how the participants' common discourse expressed a sense that is was imperative to be on LinkedIn as entrepreneurial professional, and that it was risky not to be on. At the same time. Most participants evoked discursive resources around risk and even danger related to being on LinkedIn. These risks were both personal and business-oriented, and were related to privacy, security, and efficiency. Additionally, risks to self-esteem and intrusion of business on personal life were also evoked. These risks were described as real and difficult to control, and something they worried about.

This discourse around two dialectically opposed risks, highlights the tensions that participants experienced regarding engagement in identity work on LinkedIn. As discussed in the chapters one and two such tensions are inherent in doing identity work for professionals, and possibly more so when professionals are in self-employment or small businesses. These tensions around boundaries between private and public life, protecting intellectual property while developing professional relationships, devoting time to networking and relationship-building at the expense of other aspects of running the business, and of interpersonal understandings with client and colleagues, are common in professional life, and contribute to making professional identity construction risky and precarious. However, the discourses of the participants LinkedIn indicated that these tensions were heightened or made more obvious to them when the organisational context became LinkedIn.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I unpacked and discussed participants' discourse around cyberspace as a whole, and the virtual worlds within it, and then their participation on one specific social media site, LinkedIn, to addresses the first research question: What are the main tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around participation on social media and LinkedIn? In my analysis I identified two major tensions in their discourse that act as enablers of, and constraints on identity construction.

In section A, participants' discourses about engaging in cyberspace generally consisted of imagery and language that juxtaposed references to cyberspace as being made up of 'places', with opposing references to the cyberspace as one 'space'. These contesting discourses, utilising the two paradigms of 'place' and 'space', created a tension in the participants' discourse around competing understandings the context, that was reflected in their discourse about their own and others' participation on social media sites. Such tension reflects the discussion in the literature around space versus place (D. Massey, 1994, 1996), as representing two understandings of context, and extends it into the virtual world.

When utilising the notion of 'places', they compared cyberspace to 'virtual worlds' made up of boundaried, defined separate places, similar to the physical place's participants inhabited at home, at work, and in the marketplace, with the appropriate roles and behaviour occupants ascribed to each place. Their description of places in the virtual world aligns to definitions of 'places' being formed out of 'spaces' when there is human interaction with that environment. (cf.Cheng, L. E. Kruger, & Daniels., 2003; Sampson & Goodrich, 2009). Thus 'place' is a given setting that is ascribed meaning through an array of social and cultural mechanisms, symbolic and emotional meanings and the range of human activities and social psychological processes that are carried out there (Stedman, 2002). This tendency to divide cyberspace into specific social spaces has also been described as fulfilling a need to have a specific audience to communicate to and with. As D. Boyd (2007) explains, " we need a more specific conception of audience than 'anyone' to choose the language, cultural referents, style and so on, that comprise online identity presentation. In the absence of certain knowledge about audience, participants take cues from the social media environment to imagine the

community" (p. 131), though this imagined audience, might be entirely different from the actual readers of a profile or as other users have imagined.

Participants indicated that their vision of cyberspace, with its specific places, was commonly accepted as the context in which their activity and interactions on social media were conducted, and that others understood the use and meaning of each place and behaved in ways appropriate for each place. However, the comparisons participants used to describe this context varied widely, indicating that their understandings of each of the boundaried places were not mutually-held conceptions. Therefore, even within this paradigm of boundaried virtual places, the social discourse did not appear to have established a shared 'truths effects' about the context.

Simultaneously as they referred to places participants also referenced a diametrically-opposed image of cyberspace as comprising broad, open, un-boundaried, and unexplored spaces that were sometimes chaotic and unregulated. Participants expressed these images in less concrete terms than those of 'places', for example metaphors of, or allusions to, gold rushes and boiling cauldrons were employed, giving a sense of a space riskier than they conveyed when they talked about virtual 'places'. This image of 'space' recalls Massey's (1994) description of space on the internet as the context of identity construction, as imagined, open, flexible, unmappable and global, and disembodying. These tensions within and between two different paradigms reveals the complexity of the social construction of identity in the virtual social world.

The influence of these two tensions, between space and place can be traced in participants' discourses about their specific participation on LinkedIn. LinkedIn was described as an important business tool that was necessary to use; however, there were competing discourses about the business, personal, and even social risks associated with LinkedIn use, that surfaced an overarching tension, a tension that LinkedIn for an entrepreneurial professional it was risky **not to** engage in LinkedIn, but it was also risky **to** engage in LinkedIn, to have an identity there, and these risks were still considered new and not well understood. Their discourses around how they constructed and performed identity in this contested, risky, but necessary context, are unpacked and discussed in-depth in the following two chapters.

Chapter Five: Creating an online network as a digital work habitus

In Chapter four, I presented, unpacked and discussed the participants' discourses around the context of social media in general and identified in their discourses competing images and understandings of this context that generated tensions when engaging with social media and LinkedIn specifically. In this chapter, I unpack the participants' discourses about their participation on social media in one specific aspect, that of creating and displaying an online network through using LinkedIn as a tool to do this, in a bid to answer the second research question: What are the main identity construction tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around creating a network and displaying a network on LinkedIn? I consider creating a network as a discrete topic, as distinct from interaction on a network, the self-presentation and relationship-building activities discussed in the Chapter six.

With the advent of social media, the nature of creating a network, including business network, has changed. One of the most important affordances of online social networks is that they have made creating a large-scale network feasible, accessible, and efficient (Donath & Boyd, 2004; Garton et al., 1999). As discussed in the literature review, the deliberate and overt actions of creating a network by sending and accepting invitations to connect, and then publicly displaying a network, create a specific and boundaried virtual world in which this online identity, the "digital me" is constructed. This makes the action of creating an online network itself a fundamental consideration, not only as an expression of identity, but in terms of partially creating a context for the social construction of identity, although there are other aspects of context such as the site itself and the wider social milieu.

Also I discussed the literature review, the benefits of having a strong network (in size, composition and relationships) are said to be so clear that professional networking is often promoted as a central activity for those who wish to achieve positive professional outcomes (Arthur et al., 1995; Arthur et al., 1999; Uzzi & Dunlap, 2005). Research also supports the importance of networking generally for entrepreneurs (Aldrich et al., 1987; Gronum et al., 2012; Jack et al., 2008; Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Lipschultz, 2014). Thus, there is generally in the contextual social discourse a 'networking imperative' for both professionals and entrepreneurs. LinkedIn promotes its site as a "networking site for professionals" (LinkedIn, 2017b) and regularly suggests possible connections to

members, predictably creating more emphasis on networking as a professional activity and expectations to network for those who are members.

As I explored the participants' discourse around creating and displaying a network and unpacked these in the analysis, several tensions became evident. The first tension was that while most participants made statements that indicated they believed that networking generally was an essential activity for a business professional today, that is they constantly describe it in terms akin to a 'networking imperative', the majority also described a reluctance to actively create new network contacts on LinkedIn. This tension I have discussed as: 'Networking is an imperative, but it is not for 'me''. A second tension was apparent when many participants described their network in terms of a database of known people, a list of contacts that reflected who they were as professionals, rather than an emergent and living framework of relationships, as envisioned in LinkedIn's tagline 'Relationships matter'. I have termed this tension as 'My network as a fixed database versus a living framework of relationships'. A third tension evident within individuals' discourse was that while seeking to create and also display and publicise a network or set of contacts on LinkedIn, as an expression of their reputation or standing in the profession, the participants also wanted to protect this set of contacts from exploitation by others, a tension created by the public nature of connections and connecting activity on LinkedIn. This tension can be expressed as: 'I need to promote but protect my network'. Finally, there was tension when discussing who they connected with and why, between one set of participants generally regarding online networking and their network as open and expanding, versus another group who described their network as a closed; that is, they had a personal preference for connecting only with known others and having a small, closed, but trusted group of contacts on LinkedIn. This tension I have termed: 'Openness versus closedness in networking'. All these tensions created contradictions that can be expressed in the following paradoxical question: If the participants were only going to connect with people they already knew, or they did not want their connections known to others, why join LinkedIn in the first place?

The underlying issue in this question I consider to be one of identity, how participants and others discursively and reflectively viewed themselves in this virtual world, their own identity, influenced their engagement and networking activities on LinkedIn. There

seemed to be a clash of inherent beliefs or assumptions about what was professional (in a broad sense) behaviour. While a majority of participants in their discourse simultaneously expressed a belief that business networking was 'good' in a general sense, they also said that assertively connecting with others was not congruent with their sense of 'real' self, or that it was not professional behaviour. Also in Aotearoa/ New Zealand to be linked to someone not like them, which is likely in a large network, would not reflect well on their professional identity. Therefore, woven through these four tensions named above, were other tensions created by the presentation of multiple identities on this context and contradictions between them; tensions between entrepreneurial and professional identity; universal and NZ entrepreneurial archetypes; and between personal identity and entrepreneurial/professional identity. These overarching tensions I will refer to in the discussion on this chapter and further discuss and interpret in the final chapter.

Thus, in this chapter, the analysis is organised under the four minor tensions presented above, that is: Networking is an imperative but it's not me; 'My network is a fixed database versus a living framework of relationships'; 'I need to promote but protect my network' and 'Openness versus closedness in networking'. Informing this discussion will be the participants' self-reports about the number of connections they had, and how often they used LinkedIn networking functions (see Appendix 3).

Networking is a professional imperative but it's not me

With the advent of Web 2.0 applications, the capacity to network widely and easily appears – if Metcalfe's law applies – to offer a significant business advantage. This law posits that the value of a network increases for the individual member as the number of members in the network increases, due to network effects (Hendler & Goldbeck, 2008; Shapiro & Varian, 1999; Song & Walden, 2007). Therefore, having a large and expanding network can be viewed as one of the main values and benefits of being on LinkedIn. However, contradictions in the participant discourses point to tensions between active networking as an imperative and a personal reluctance to do so.

Most participants in the study (roughly 85%) in their discourse expressed a belief it necessary as a professional, but even more so, as an entrepreneur in a small business or self-employed, to create a network online particularly on LinkedIn, and as such,

experienced a strong imperative to do so. This imperative was either inherent in statements about the importance of LinkedIn, being a networking tool, or directly through statements such as, "Business is all about networking … and it is a global platform now". Thus, in this aspect the participants discourse was consistent with a dominant social discourse that networking is good for business.

When discussing their actual networking behaviour, however, **only** roughly 15% of participants made statements that indicated they actively created network connections with enjoyment or enthusiasm, another approximately 15% said they actively networked, but reluctantly, and the majority did not actively seek out connections. I start my discussion with examples from the smaller group who enjoyed networking and then move to discuss the group who did not enjoy it but made themselves seek out new connections and finally discuss those in the majority group who did not actively seek out new connections.

 One example of an enthusiastic global networker is Neil, an immigrant to Aotearoa/ New Zealand and who lives in a relatively remote area. He stated that for him, LinkedIn was essential for a global business and he also liked to create new connections:

> It's absolutely that. I am a consummate networker. And it's not only my, how can I say, my pleasure and my passion, it's how I do work. I mean I am in [place omitted] for God sake. So, you ask what social networking means to me, pretty much everything. It's essential for business. I mean a lot of people say, okay you build your stuff, and people will come. It doesn't work like that.

Helen, another immigrant who had business connections overseas when she arrived in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, also said she "liked connecting", as in the following: "I've got one of the most...active LinkedIn profiles: I think…I'm in the top two per cent in the world. I just like connecting". For Helen, networking statistics on LinkedIn reflected, to herself and others, her identity as a professional, that is, someone who networks.

Another self-described 'natural networker' was Campbell, also an immigrant. For him "social media platforms are simply an additional extension to natural networking". He stated that he actively increased his network on LinkedIn. For him, a large number of connections is clearly an aspect he views as having strategic benefits, both for himself and his business; this connecting with the discourse around professionalism and the networking imperative, as discussed in the literature review. In the following quote, he

expresses not only how he networks, and an enthusiasm for networking, but an understanding that the network effects of LinkedIn will be of benefit to him:

> But yeah, the beauty for me is now I've got, I mean just shy of 800 connections on LinkedIn, which exponentially sort of opens up the second and third-degree connections - so yeah, if it is business-related, I will [connect] and if it's to a third-degree connection for example, I will approach one of my other first-degree connections, and I will see if I can get an introduction. And if it's to a second-degree connection who I've seen has viewed my profile, and I can see that they're potentially a worthy connection, you know they might have information that's worth sharing or things like that, I'll just send them an invite to connect.

Campbell clearly enjoys both online and face-to-face networking. He does not hesitate to contact people he does not know, and actively looks for new connections, as he explained later:

> I will purposely, you know if people have made their connections public, I will sort of work through their connections and just see if there's anyone that's worth connecting to, and occasionally if there is a very clear business purpose for me to do something, I will actually actively go and look for the connection.

This group who enjoyed networking however was the minority, and all immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand in their adult years. The rest were less enthusiastic about networking. A larger group of participants stated that they were not natural or enthusiastic networkers; however, their comments reflected a theme in the social discourse around professionalism and entrepreneurship, namely, that actively building a network was an important professional and business activity, and something they needed to engage in, as discussed in Chapter two. Josephine, though without showing the same personal enthusiasm for networking, expressed the view that a professional should engage in creating a network purposefully, and that a large network is a valuable professional and business asset:

> Social networking is definitely active networking on line, very purposefully for instance. you know, how you can look at the stats, and see your entire sixth generation. I think five or six generation network size. Mine was tens of millions, so it means that I have massive access to even the second generation of connections. So, my need is probably lesser than others who are starting out right now.

Another typical example of a participant was Peter. He said he actively expanded his network because he viewed doing so as an aspect of professional identity, even though his discourse indicated he experienced conflict with a personal sense of self by doing so. Peter said:

> I think it's vital. I'm not a natural networker, certainly not in the real world. Networking never ends in conferences, I have to force myself to do the room. There are some people that can work the room naturally - I don't. Networking, it's absolutely vital, but then perhaps you're talking about small-to-medium businesses. I think it depends on the type of business you're in. Well it's absolutely vital, I have to do it a great deal, because people don't go looking for my type of services.

Three other participants described networking in generally as something that was expected of them as a professional. Colin stated, "A previous boss instilled in me the importance of networking and the importance of building relationships, and that [doing so can present opportunities]." When discussing LinkedIn, a younger participant named Belinda described networking as an activity that has more recently become an expectation of a professional in business:

> But I've sort of known more about it in the last half a dozen years as the expectation of me to network has increased, so I've not known an alternative or been practising at a stage where I was not expected to network.

Some participants also indicated that they did not enjoy networking but found that LinkedIn had provided means for doing this more easily, and that it was something they believed they had to do. For example, Peter, who had to "force" himself actively network, "to do a room" at conferences, found LinkedIn useful because he did not have to engage in face-to-face contact. Other participants described how it was psychologically or emotionally easier for them to establish new contacts on LinkedIn, compared to cold-calling on the phone or face-to-face meetings. A typical example is Wilma, who said she had "a business…based on networking and referrals". When discussing networking with unknown people on LinkedIn, she said she preferred LinkedIn, because it gave the other party more psychological safety to say "no", as she explains below:

> I don't find that the easiest, but it's much easier than picking up the phone and doing a cold call. Because you give the person the right to say no. That's what I like about LinkedIn. You don't force people into a corner, you give them an invitation, and they

can say "yes," or they can say "no." They can just say "no" by not responding. And to me I don't like hard sells and I don't like doing it to other people, but I give people an invitation to connect with me and they can look at my profile and do that.

As noted previously, among the 30% of participants who described themselves as more enthusiastic, active networkers, all except one were immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Of the four participants in the next group who indicated that networking was difficult for them, and something they did because they felt they had to, all but one was Aotearoa/ New Zealand-born. This difference should not be surprising if they were true to the Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial type I describe in Chapter two: that is unassuming, non-assertive, and self-sufficient.

Three participants, all Aotearoa/ New Zealand-born, did mention that they found being involved in LinkedIn discussion groups facilitated the process of networking, and that they subsequently felt personally more comfortable making network connections, compared to simply accepting or issuing invitations without this previous contact. Their discourse indicated that such group conversations gave them an opportunity to promote their personal, as well as professional identity and overcame their fear of 'cold-calling'. For them, group activity facilitated online and offline one-to-one connection. An example of this is the following quote from Valerie:

> I found that I can create individual connections with people…and also getting over the fear that other people are listening into your conversations. I find it [LinkedIn] a great tool to help develop one-on-one individual relationships.

Sam also said he found the environment of LinkedIn groups less threatening than direct, face-to-face networking and relationship-building: "They are also less confrontational: they're not eyeball to eyeball …things are kind of happening more alongside, which is a different dynamic to the direct communication styles". Josephine also commented that LinkedIn discussion groups often made offline connection easier:

> Sometimes you can be having a discussion, and then that for me, the familiarity that breeds with those people who interact on that particular discussion, means it's much easier to actually talk with them offline privately as well.

For Josephine, the networking activity of joining a group facilitates interaction, as membership to a group created an initial tie (even if weak) with other group members,

without needing to directly contact them. These networking activities of joining a ready-made group and therefore a network requires less personal assertiveness or risk. It could be seen a reluctance or rejection of the move towards networked individualism, an approach that creates a network that is fluid and emergent but offers a greater potential for value creation for business through novel network creation.

All these Aotearoa/New Zealand-born participants also indicated a preference for a more indirect approach to network-building that made the discomfort or self-consciousness around networking more acceptable, and in fact by this approach these participants were connecting on LinkedIn to be people they now already knew. Again, this preference for an indirect approach was not surprising if they were true to the unassuming, non-assertive, Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial stereotype.

The participants' discourse about networking as a professional and/or entrepreneur was that networking required purposeful and assertive communication, which led to interaction, but this activity was clearly uncomfortable for many, who described themselves as 'not a natural networker', preferring to build a network by passively receiving invitations. In addition to the Aotearoa/ New Zealand influences indicated above, these approaches to networking may have been related to tension between conceptions of what is professional, and what is entrepreneurial. However, they may also be related to a sense of personal self or identity that is incongruent with the dominant discourse around professional or entrepreneurial identity. Raj et al. (2017) found a similar result pertaining to personal/professional identity incongruence when examining the differences in professional networking, tensions made more salient when the context makes separating personal and professional identities problematic.

My network is a fixed database that reflects me versus a living framework of relationships

A larger group, when reflecting on the topic of networking, did not seem at all comfortable discussing their active networking, in fact did not describe actually issuing invitations and appeared to prefer to discuss their set of contacts as displayed or presented on LinkedIn, that is to discuss their network, rather than their network-building activity. When describing LinkedIn, these participants often evoked the language of existing technology, describing LinkedIn as a database, rather than an

149

interactive tool that could expand their web of connections. For example, Josephine said, "LinkedIn is my database". Sam compared his LinkedIn contacts to business cards, e.g., "You used to go to conferences and you would get business cards and it would all be rah, rah, rah, and then that would be it. But now that contact remains on my list." Marie described her LinkedIn connections as a contact list, rather than a network she was actively expanding: "So, they (others) do that to try and expand their networking. I don't tend to do that. I think a lot of my LinkedIn network don't post actually, they are a contact list." Even Neil, an active networker compared LinkedIn to a Rolodex: LinkedIn, it's what was called years ago a Rolodex. I mean I have, let me show you, I used to have my collection of little cards'.

These discourses suggest their displayed network, rather than networking itself, was more of a reflection of their identity or their self-presentation as professionals and/or entrepreneurs. Many described their network as a display of relevant, worthy, but already established connections, and indicated that this network gave shape to and promoted an image of their own professional identity that was trustworthy, of some standing in their industry, and that they had strong ties to those they conducted business with. In this sense, their network represented an aspect of their "digital me", their professional self, online. When used in this fashion, LinkedIn served as a more a publicly-displayed database of contacts than a networking tool. A typical example of a statement that illustrates was made by Sam, an Aotearoa/ New Zealand-born and educated SBO:

> Well some people operate networks as kind of a work activity that they specifically go out building networks: I don't. but I don't use it as a search machine. I use it as my network of connections and people that I've met. There are people I would like to meet and get to know and have conversations with. I doubt that if I approached them through LinkedIn, that they would respond, or they might. I wouldn't if it was me. For my part, I would rather have a small network of trusting relationships than a larger network of superficial relationships. And my strategy there is that if I have a smallish network of trusting relationships, I'm more likely to come in contact with people that I know are more likely to connect me with their connections or at least utilise their connections in their relationship with me. I'm a bit careful about just kind of going connecting up with anybody, because I regard my connections on LinkedIn as a kind of an indication of myself, the sort of people that I talk to, and associate with.

In the above quote, Sam is describing how his personal image or brand is not only contained in his profile details and postings, but also in his network, serving as a reflection of himself, i.e., his personal as well as professional identity.

Paradoxically, however, as alluded to in Chapter four, in relation to social media use in general, at the same time as they curated and restricted their networks, many participants were influenced in their opinions of others by the number of connections they had on LinkedIn. They mentioned this point several times, for example, Louise said, "I have a quick look [at] their profile, and if they've got only a handful of connections, then I don't bother". Colin said:

> It's kind of the brand thing I think, because I'm a professional networker. So, within my role, I meet a lot of people. It would look a bit strange to me, if I had looked at someone else and they had 14 connections straight away, I would go, "they're not very on to it.

However, in contrast to Helen, when discussing the number of connections on his network, Colin indicated that having too many connections may reflect an image intimating that he was not genuine or authentic professional:

> I would say beyond that, it's a genuine professional relationship and not just the token, or a random, or a number-collecting exercise like many people do. It's not a badge of honour that you've got 2,000 LinkedIn connections, because again if someone says to me that, I just go "Well you're not very genuine, are you?" So, you've got to be very careful about the image that you are portraying

These contradictory viewpoints reflect a tension around the construction of professional identity, i.e., whether a competent professional should be selective in their connections, or widely-connected. The general theme that a large number of connections promotes a positive image was at odds with the expressed desire and tendency of the majority of participants to limit their number of connections. As discussed in the literature review, for a professional, there is an imperative to network, but there is also a message in the dominant discourse to be in an *exclusive* network of relationships, one of the signifiers of professional identity (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007) that creates a tension, that the trend towards a digital networked world magnifies. As a network is displayed on LinkedIn, having too many contacts may negatively affect self-presentation as a professional.

The tension and contradictions around these expectations may also reflect a tension between presenting an entrepreneurial identity *and* a professional identity. The dominant image of an entrepreneur implies assertive and wide networking, within many fields of possible value, while for a professional identity, networking implies a more careful, selective process. These tensions may also indicate a dichotomy between a more widely-accepted profile of the entrepreneurial type as a bold, outgoing individual, and the Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial type as self-sufficient and non-assertive (or 'pushy') in relationship-building. In addition, this tension may also indicate an incongruence between their sense of identity in their role as a professional and/or entrepreneur, and their personal sense of self.

As discussed in the literature review, Raj et al. (2017) conclude in their study that 'who you know' may ultimately be determined by 'who you think you are'. They found that those who generally avoided professional networking did so because networking felt identity-incongruent with how they viewed themselves as individuals (their personal identity), and this was a stronger influence on networking than networking's benefits. Additionally, those who actively networked did so because it felt identity-congruent to them, that is, professional networking was viewed as consistent with themselves as individuals, their sense of personal self. Therefore, it seems possible that an incongruence between what the participants in this study described as a necessary aspect of their professional role and their personal identity, in a context where boundaries between professional role and personal self are becoming blurred, may be a contributing factor to this tension.

I need to promote but protect my network

Similar to these issues around self-presentation as a professional are other participants' statements suggesting that, since their displayed networks as a reflection of their personal and professional brand, they therefore had to be careful who they connect with, not only because unknown people may present false motives or may even be threatening, but because connection with them could potentially do direct damage to their professional reputation or business, or by association, damage their professional image. Claybaugh and Haseman (2013) found that by joining a social network in which people are well-known to one another other, and thereby adding another person as a direct connection, people put themselves at risk. This risk included the disclosure of

personal information to third parties and an individual using the personal connection for their own gain. It also included the reputational risk of being connected to someone who is not credible, thereby inferring a lack of professional judgement to be connected with them.

Several participants stated to have deleted contacts because of the possible reputational damage by association, as in this typical example statement from Josephine:

> For example, one was someone that I did business with, and he shafted a lot of people, so, I intentionally deleted the connection, and ...not only on LinkedIn but he was a connection on Facebook, as well, and I deleted there, and un-friended him.

Don also explained that he believed a connection with someone may imply permission for them to use this connection for business introductions. This could be dangerous or damaging to their reputation if they did not know the person:

> I think it might be that we don't want to connect with people we don't know, but also if it doesn't work, because if I say......because you're connected to this person, if I'm going to go "yes," because I'm connected to them, it's worth something to someone I'm connected to in LinkedIn. And there's a reason for that, so I can go to that person and say, "Hey, can you introduce me to them." But if that's someone you don't know, and you've just randomly contacted with you, or it was the other way around... you won't want to do that.

In addition, there is a danger of someone in their contact list who acts unprofessionally using their connections to connect with others, as Peter explains about a contact he deleted:

> Well the one I mentioned earlier is because his behaviour. I didn't know him; and in his first exchange with me, he was suggesting something that wasn't above board. I don't know. It was his style, it was not appropriate. And therefore, I thought, no I don't want this guy in here. Interestingly, he had already got two or three other New Zealand connections there that were connections of mine, so you know, he's obviously trying this quite ruthlessly just to use it [LinkedIn] as a way of getting in.

Participants also expressed concerns about others in their network list gaining access to their contacts and business. A typical example referencing this fear is the following statement by Peter:

> But what about your competition? Do you accept your competition? Because your competition can then browse around your contacts and say oh, I believe you deal with xxx, um...you should be dealing with us: we're much better.

Connecting with the 'wrong' person may also possibly result in giving away important business information to competitors, e.g., future plans, as described below by Don:

> People put you into a difficult position sometimes.... If we're looking for a new service or product, all the reps that you talk to would try and connect to you, but if you started accepting that, then your competitors might know what you're looking at doing.

These risks were another source of tension around professional and entrepreneurial identity construction for participants, as alluded to in the previous chapter. They wish to be connected – and to be seen as being connected – to useful and influential people in Aotearoa/ New Zealand and overseas. As Sam states, "I regard my connections on LinkedIn as…an indication [of] the sort of people that I talk to, and associate with". This view is similar to the view expressed by Neil about LinkedIn represented his "digital me" online. However, participants also considered that they were inhibited in this aspect of identity construction by the risks inherent of having people in their network they could not trust. These risks included being associated with someone who did not have a good reputation, people using their connection with participants in an unprofessional manner, being spammed or scammed by these connections, and having their contact lists or business information used by competitors. Putting their professional self and business in a position where this could happen was inconsistent with participants' expectations around professionalism; they had been too spontaneous and had not used reasonable judgement. In addition, participants were concerned about protecting known business colleagues, customers, and clients on their displayed network from these 'risks by association', as they could contribute to presenting an identity that is unprofessional and untrustworthy, and lacking judgement or business acumen.

The tensions that arose in this context may also have reflected a tension between two identities, i.e., entrepreneurial and professional. Although the pressure to take risks is increasing on workers in general, including professionals, with the emerging focus on the 'enterprising self', risk-taking has long been present in the social discourse around

154

entrepreneurialism (Beck, 1992; Fenwick, 2002; Giddens, 1991). For someone in their own business, in the current business environment, risk-taking is more than an *expectation* or pressure; it is a *requirement* for sustaining their business. The participants' discourses reflected this wider contextual dialogue around risks, in that taking the risk to actively network is characteristic of being "in your own business", rather than characteristic of being professional, which required caution when networking. As Neil commented when discussing the somewhat uncomfortable 'work' and risks of active networking, "Right, I mean how can you can be an entrepreneur if you can't face rejection [when networking]." Importantly, in this instance, he is referring to entrepreneurial identity, not professional identity.

In the next section, I discuss how participants' discourses reveal that these identities are expressed and validated in how or if they built their network and who with, through the process of accepting or issuing invitations to connect, to give an insight into who they think they are.

Openness versus closedness in building a network

As a result of the advent of social media, a relatively new aspect has been added to networking activity, i.e., the ability to effortlessly send out and accept invitations to connect to others, and to formally and publicly become part of someone's network. This action directly announces, "I am networking," and generally prompts a direct response that may announce, "I am networked with…," in a way that is more public and unequivocal than previous informal networking. As outlined in Chapter two, the two main affordances LinkedIn provides for building a network are: firstly, accepting or rejecting invitations to connect, and secondly, issuing invitations to connect. The participants' discourses around these two behaviours is discussed in the next section and to further explore how they construct the habitat of online professional and entrepreneurial identity construction. Their discourses also reveal tensions around entrepreneurial vis-a-vis professional identity, the universal entrepreneurial archetype vis-a-vis the Aotearoa/ New Zealand archetype, and personal identity and professional/entrepreneurial identity congruence.

Openness versus closedness in accepting invitations

More participants described themselves as more likely to accept connection invitations, as opposed to actively issuing invitations. Roughly half of the participants said they were open to accepting invitations from unknown people; however, only two of these "open" participants said they were comfortable with accepting all invitations. As Olsen and Guribye (2008) note, these totally "open" participants appeared "more concerned about being able to reach as many people as possible, than knowing the people he/she is directly connected to, and will accept anyone as a connection" (p. 52). This small number indicates that for most participants completely open networking is incongruent with the identity of a professional, which they associated with qualities of caution, rationality, strategy, and a lack of spontaneity.

An example of a self-described "completely open" networker was Helen, who as described above, said she had "one of the most active LinkedIn profiles", from which I understood she had a large number of contacts. Helen said of accepting invitations: "Yes. I [receive many] invitations…and I always accept [them]". Helen did not seem to be employing any strategic behaviour. Her approach is to build a network that is more fluid and emergent (Håkansson & Ford, 2002), as discussed in Chapter two. However, as she has been on LinkedIn for many years, she may have adapted her style over time, finding this open style more effective for business. For example Quinton and Wilson (2016) conclude that this kind of networking may offer a greater potential for value creation for business, through novel network creation. In this way Helen can be seen as aligning more with the entrepreneurial identity profile of a risk-taker. Helen was an immigrant to Aotearoa/New Zealand and had used LinkedIn overseas, and as such may have had a more open approach to relationship-building than other participants. However, considering the attitudes to large networks revealed in section one above, this behaviour was likely to have been regarded, at least by Aotearoa/ New Zealand LinkedIn members, as unprofessional or not genuine.

Other participants (roughly 40%), described attitudes that were open to accepting invitations from unknown people, but described a more regulated response. They indicated they would accept invitations to connect from anyone if they viewed them as beneficial in relation to their own business or professional career, a response that could be termed more 'professional' than that of a completely open networker. They screened

156

contacts based on who they thought may become useful in the future or may represent interesting business opportunities. As Olsen and Guribye (2008) note, this type of networker, "[does] not need to know the people they are connecting to, but there must be some common interest". These participants said they were prepared to accept invitations and expand their network with people they had not met or did not know but described checking and verifying the behaviours of these individuals before doing so. A typical description of this behaviour was given by Belinda, who described checking the inviter by reviewing their profile:

> If I know them, I'll accept them straight away and if I don't know them, I'll probably have a look at their profile and try and work out why they are connecting with me, I generally just say "yes."

Josephine, who presented as an enthusiastic but more strategic networker, described her checking behaviour as focusing on business opportunities and the verification of the integrity of a user's profile:

> When they contact me, my initial reaction is who are they, and what's in it for them that they want to contact me, and what's in it for me. And so sometimes I look at their profile; I look for verifying factors, so I'm seeing it with cynical eyes as well as opportunistic eyes. And I'll ask them sometimes after accepting, or sometimes before: What prompted you to contact me? What do you see the benefit is now or short term or long term and how can I help you? What ways would it be helpful for you? And what ways do you think I can benefit you, or be a mutual benefit? So, I'm asking from a number of different angles, and I know some, on odd occasions, people have been threatened by that. They feel like even just asking questions as a sell job. To me it's not: it's I genuinely want to know what, you know…is it just because LinkedIn suggested that they should contact me.

These participants indicated in their discourse that by demonstrating "openness" in networking, they were shaping and promoting their identity as a legitimate entrepreneur. However, they also indicated in their discourses that by limiting this openness they were also demonstrating strategic judgement, as they would come across as a legitimate professional; for example, when Belinda said, "[I would] try [to understand] why they [wanted to connect] with me". Josephine, by referring to using "cynical eyes as well as opportunistic eyes", can be viewed as utilising the discursive resources related to the professional characteristics of being objective and rational ("cynical") and strategic

157

("opportunistic"), rather than spontaneous. However, this strategic but open approach was only one approach.

The other half of participants chose a more restricted approach in order to limit their connections, in effect acting as a privacy control (Farnham & Churchill, 2011). Their discourses indicted participants were not very open to accepting invitations from new or unknown people. Roughly 30% of these participants would accept invitations to connect only from people that they trusted and knew. They indicated that they were more concerned about knowing the people they accept invitations from than the overall size of their network. The connections could, however, include people the participant had met briefly or only exchanged a few words with. A typical statement describing this behaviour was given by Leah: "So, at the moment, when I see them, I'm just accepting their contact if I know them. But I don't, if I don't know them". Graeme stated employing a similar approach, i.e., that he would generally only connect with people he had met personally:

> In relation to people that contact me unsolicited and I don't know them, always I'll look at who they are...yes, where their industry is; where they're from; and see if there is some sort of connection probably. Generally, I will connect... And then again, I would like it to be a qualified connection to them. Generally, my contacts, I'll generally only connect with people I've met - either over the phone or personally: I don't go looking for contacts through LinkedIn alone. Absolutely and probably a good 80 percent of them would also be contacting my phone address book as well, you know my cell phone.

A smaller number of participants (roughly 16%) said that they would accept invitations to connect from people that they have had some previous contact with, or who were in the same industry as they were. They did not need to have met a person to connect to them, but connections needed to be respected individuals in the same industry. A typical example of a statement indicating this behaviour was made by Wilma, who described her checking behaviour in terms of seeking out common interests:

> If they contact me I evaluate... if they've contacted me because I've been on a discussion with them, then I would probably nine times out of ten, just out of courtesy, if they've taken enough interest to "like" what I've discussed and want to stay connected with me, they've given me an indication "I like what you've said, you've got something of interest" I would say "yes." If they come cold turkey, just send invitations out, I think if this person does this... I would have to decide whether there is any correlation between us… I'm selective… just common sense, I think. I don't have an open-door policy of just accepting everyone.

In this quote, we can see Wilma balancing two professional constructs, i.e., 'courtesy' a term associated with professional decorum, and caution and selectiveness in making contacts, and which was influenced by how they behaved. If someone is coming "cold turkey" or unknown to her, she would be more hesitant about the person, considering their behaviour, and which would indicate that they are not likely someone she would have a "correlation" with, or common interests with. This participant said she had started out on LinkedIn as an enthusiastic and open networker, but was now more cautious, and only connected with people she knew. This was a common theme among participants and may indicate that they originally saw social media as a different world with different rules, but that they now understood it now as more of an extension of the physical business and professional world.

The other issue at play may be incongruence with personal and professional identity. In the following quote, Wilma reflects further on how her networking behaviour has become more closed. She has become aware that contacts are not useful to her if she does not connect regularly; additionally, she does not want to connect with people who are not like her, people that to her appear incongruent with her personal sense of self. She once again using the phrase "cold turkey" to indicate her suspicion of these people, as she describes below:

> Yes… well I probably… if I went through my contacts, probably two thirds of them I would regularly see as I was at other networking groups… does that make sense? And then there would be a few of the people that I've linked up with and I've kind of wondered why I've linked up with them, or they've linked up with me, but you do... especially in the early days you get very zealous and want to connect up with everybody and after a while you get more selective. But no, I think I deliberately choose who I... I'm very deliberate about who I want to connect up with. I tend to connect with most people who are in [*name of city*] if they're in a similar area that I'm in and there's been some point of connection …or they're a friend of a friend of mine, I'll do it. Mainly that I can see some correlation, sometimes I just do it out of courtesy, but I don't like doing it for people from other cities who I don't know, and I think "why on earth are you doing this cold turkey."

The discussion and the examples above indicate a tendency among the majority of participants to be cautious about accepting LinkedIn invitations to connect, and that they had become more cautious over time. Their discourse indicated that their experience of connecting with unknowns, and their opinion of others connecting to

them without reason, had led them to focus on constructing an online professional identity that was less open, and that showed more discernment when connecting with others. Through these actions, they can also be seen as opting for a professional rather than an entrepreneurial approach. A "cold-calling" approach, although some considered it easier to effect online, is not generally referred to professional. In the next section, participants' discourses about actively issuing invitations to connect will be discussed.

Activeness versus passivity in issuing invitations

The majority (roughly 60%) of participants said they did not spend much time sending out invitations or searching for new connections; as such, they can be described as passive networkers. They may log on to LinkedIn to accept connections, to change their profile, or to receive updates on existing connections, but not to actively network. A typical example of this attitude is expressed in the statement from Don below:

> I haven't contacted people and not got a reply, because I don't do it. Because it breaks down the whole purpose of the site. So, I sort of have a rule, I wouldn't connect to anybody that I couldn't call on the phone, or at if least email. I don't see the point of just growing the connections with people that you don't know… if you wouldn't pick up the phone book to contact them it's...so I'm quite trepidacious (sic).

Don's discourse here indicates that active networking to connect with new people is not part of his professional identity, nor is it the purpose of LinkedIn as a professional site; rather, he is indicating the opposite view, that is, active networking to new people is not professional. His expression "trepidacious" implies that contacting unknown people online may be risky to his professional identity and reputation, and this emotive word also possibly indicates that this behaviour is incongruent with his personal sense of self. He seems to be expressing Raj et al. (2017)'s conclusion that people only want to know others who are like they consider themselves to be. Leah's discourse reflects a similar concern; contacting people she did not know was difficult for her personally, and she felt inhibited with regard to doing so. In the example below, her use of the term "cold-calling style", which has negative, possibly unprofessional connotations around "selling" in Aotearoa/New Zealand, indicates her negative attitude to contacting people she did not know:

> I haven't used it, probably to its fullest potential, just because of…like inhibitors not wanting to branch out and contact people cold-calling style. Yeah, I try and keep it real world contacts only, rather than the random person.

These typical statements made by Don and Leah suggest that having a socially-assertive personality was not how they viewed themselves personally; therefore, personal-identity incongruence is a factor in expressing entrepreneurial identity through networking. It is not, however, the only factor.

In terms of professional identity, active networking was discussed by most participants as necessary in order to demonstrate a legitimate professional identity. At the same time, issuing invitations to people who did not know them through LinkedIn was also described as possibly being even more damaging to a professional persona, with connotations of being a "pushy" salesman. The participants' discourses indicated that they felt inhibited in terms of effecting active networking, as this was not something that legitimate professionals engaged in, and was "cheeky," according to Richard, as in the typical statement below. He indicated that for him to contact unknown people was almost too daring and impertinent, and he considered these characteristics unprofessional:

> Oh um... I haven't used it really to get new contacts...um... It's more a matter of, if I've come across something or I've heard about somebody I might search their profile, if I'm feeling cheeky and I don't know them, I might just suggest a connection.

Here, it seems that tension is being expressed about drawing a boundary in this new context between two identities, i.e., the professional and the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial behaviour is pro-active and assertive, and may be interpreted as "cheeky", that is, bold and presumptuous, and is demonstrated through active networking. Contrastingly, professional behaviour was considered polite and respectful, a tension evident throughout most participants' discourses.

A minority (roughly 40%) of this study's participants reported actively seeking out new connections. Of this 40%, possibly one participant, by their own discourse, could be described, as a "power" networker. Power networkers, according to Olsen and Guribye (2009b), are focused on having as many connections as possible; they enthusiastically send out invitations to new people, search for people, and go through friends'

161

connections to expand their own professional network. Snow (2013, April) describes these networkers as "super-connectors", highly-connected individuals who often report experiencing a high degree of satisfaction as a result of relating with others. This assertive type of action is congruent with dominant images of entrepreneurial identity. The definitions provided here indicate that active networking is congruent, for these types of people, with a personal sense of self; it is something that is both 'them', and a characteristic of professional and/or entrepreneurial identity.

Of all the participants' discourses concerning networking, there were possibly only three who made statements indicating that they were power networkers, or "super-connectors". Louise, an immigrant to Aotearoa/ New Zealand, described how she used networking to differentiate between people that were useful to her and those who were not. She sent connection invitations strategically to carefully-chosen groups of people that she did not know and was unconcerned with whether they connected with her. She explained:

> Well those In-mails that I sent out last week (about a product), they were to 20 different accountants that were across Australia and New Zealand … So, you know, I just do a search from that, and then just pick those people out from the details that LinkedIn threw up and then think "Yeah, okay that person would be applicable…that person's not" and reached out to those people targeted. And that's been fruitful in that…yes… I sent out 20, I got a note from LinkedIn saying that 15 people hadn't actually opened the emails. Now that would be either that their email address that they are using for LinkedIn probably isn't a work one. So, they haven't opened it. Those that do get opened, the response rate's pretty cool…I would say probably about a quarter of them actually then…just come back to you.

Warwick and Brian also said they sent out bulk invitations, but their activity appeared more random, and less strategic and productive. For example, Brian said:

> But every now and again, I sent out sort of like fifty or a hundred or so of invites, I'm pretty unattached to them. You know, I don't actually count whether they do accept, or I just randomly select them.

Another eight participants said they actively sent out invitations and searched for connections; but they did not express the same enthusiasm or strategies as the power networkers and were more concerned than power networkers about checking a person's background and reputation. However, most of those who said they were active

networkers also stated that they would only issue invitations to those they knew, or knew of, or had a connection with. They stressed that these people had to be similar to themselves, or "similar-minded", as in this typical statement by Kay:

> I would purposely go under the contacts that I do have, similar like-minded people and also a similar industry, where there's educational personal development, or coaching, or anything that is remotely related to personal development and what I do, I would go onto their profiles and then see what contacts they have. But also, generally, people that you see you do have a lot of contacts in common, it shows you how many contacts you have in common…With those contacts that I'm quite familiar with, so those that I've met face-to-face or that I have been in conversations with whether it's via the internet or whether it's on the phone, doesn't matter, or Skype even, so then I would go onto their profiles and see who their contacts are, and initially that is how I build a lot of my contacts. Initially it was a group of people that had similar interests to me, and then from there on I just broadened the network really. So, I tend to go via other people.

This desire to connect with similar people seemed to limit the range of contacts participants connected with. In general, participants expressed a reluctance to issue invitations in a bid to connect "outwards", with people overseas, particularly if they viewed them as having a higher status; this was also the case involving unknowns. There were only two participants, who both framed themselves as natural networkers, and who described taking risks and sending out invitations to connect to well-known overseas people. Louise had developed a working relationship with the personal assistant of a famous author in the US through LinkedIn. Neil described attempting, unsuccessfully, to connect with a famous person he believed he had a common ground with. Once again, these two participants were immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Sam said he had made a strategic connection with a colleague who was respected internationally, but that he had first met them in person at a conference and had then developed the relationship on LinkedIn. However, even some of the participants who described themselves as "natural networkers," such as Campbell, indicated caution or reluctance to connect with unknown others. Campbell expressed, "I will very seldom connect with someone that I don't [already] have a connection with".

As the statement above indicates, although many of the participants described themselves as actively building their networks, they were in fact primarily describing inviting people they already knew, or had met, or had heard of through other

163

connections. Even Trish, who was enthusiastic about LinkedIn's proactive networking features, indicated she was only reconnecting with people known to her:

> I like the contact search that pops up and tells you people that you may know within your networks without having to actively go looking for... that I've met years ago but not been in contact with and then they join LinkedIn and then they pop up in the feed.

In summary of the statements about issuing invitations, participants often conveyed positive statements about the value of networking as an important part of professional identity and identified LinkedIn as an important professional networking tool. However, their discourses also conveyed a negative attitude towards issuing invitations to others in order to connect and build a network. This seeming reluctance by many to use LinkedIn to actively network with a wider range of people was explained by some as resulting from a fear of rejection, one of the risks identified by participants in the previous chapter. Louise, an active networker herself, stated that in her opinion, this was why other people did not actively issue invitations on LinkedIn:

> They don't know how to take it to the next level, because everyone's fear of rejection. Yeah, I think so. I think rejection is an answer to so many things, that you just don't want to put your neck out there in case someone says "No" and you feel bad.

For Louise and other active networkers like Neil, this statement indicates self-described "natural networkers" believe that other professionals do not network on LinkedIn, or elsewhere, because they fear rejection, a factor that demonstrates, as discussed later, how networking activity regulates or polices professional identity construction.

Nevertheless, participants' discourses revealed that LinkedIn is able to mitigate against this fear as a result of its virtual and asynchronous features. When asked if they had ever had a connection request rejected on LinkedIn, most participants were not aware of whether this had happened, as LinkedIn does not inform them if a connection request is not accepted. Most did not seem concerned about this rejection, if it had happened at all, possibly because this rejection did not occur directly or in person, and therefore did not threaten their self-esteem or their professional sense of self. When prompted, three participants remembered sending an invitation to someone they wished to connect with, which had not yet been accepted. They were generally unconcerned or philosophical about this rejection, or attributed it to some other factor, for example, the fact that

person they had sent the invitation to, did not use LinkedIn often, and had therefore not yet seen the invitation. The extract below from Kay's discourse, is a typical example of this type of thinking:

> Initially I sent out a few invitations to connect and then sometimes what happened is people would only get back to me five or six months later and say, "oh you know I don't really use LinkedIn, but I saw you invited me, so I accepted." From others you won't hear, so that's the other thing that's quite nice that is positive about LinkedIn, it doesn't show you who rejected your invitation, you just don't get anything back, which is fine. And because it goes both ways doesn't it, there are people who I don't feel comfortable in connecting with, so I'd rather just ignore it.

Participants' discourses therefore indicated that LinkedIn mitigated against a fear of rejection when networking, which in other contexts may have regulated professional identity construction through networking. In the case of LinkedIn, participants' discourses indicted the regulating factor was the fear that too active networking may be seen as unprofessional or was perhaps incongruent with participants' sense of personal self.

However, there was in the participants' discourses mention of other factors that regulated issuing invitations to connect on LinkedIn. Prominent among these were concerns about trust. Trust issues appeared to relate to the view of social media being an open, unbounded and un-regulated environment, as discussed in Chapter four. Participants often indicated that even on LinkedIn, which they described as relatively controlled in terms of structure and format, it was sometimes difficult to trust that the people they were connecting with were who they said they were. Participants were concerned that the LinkedIn identities of these people may not have integrity, or even validity. For example, Colin said, "I wouldn't trust a profile I didn't know, or make a link here [on LinkedIn], and then trust a profile. I would only trust the people I've already made friends with here."

Others described dangers of connecting with people they had not met in person. They were concerned about this leading to threats, extortion, or damage to their reputation. A typical example of these fears is expressed in this comment by Melanie:

> Because unfortunately I have met a few people... because I learnt this lesson the hard way... met a few people on LinkedIn that invited me on Facebook and I just connected with them randomly without really researching what they were about, and it turned out

that they wanted money, or they were somewhere in Africa and didn't have food and I need to send $10,000 otherwise their children would get murdered.

The theme of personal danger when networking with unknowns on LinkedIn, and preferring face-to-face interaction, appeared to reflect an incongruence between active networking and participants' personal sense of self, rather than an incongruence with their sense of professional identity. For example, they described themselves as the type of individual who would not allow themselves to be targeted by scammers and believed that they were personally more adept at building relationships face-to-face, as opposed to online.

These comments were similar to participants' statements suggesting that, since they regarded their connections to be a reflection of their personal and professional brand, they had to be careful who they connected with, because unknown people may not be who they claim to be, or even be threatening. Also present, as stated previously, was reputational risk. Not only were there risks in accepting an invitation to connect but issuing an invitation to someone to connect who subsequently did not behave professionally was considered even more damaging.

A subtler theme that was evident in the discourses was the indication of uncertainty about the strategic purpose of using the capacity of LinkedIn to create a wide and expanding network. Richard stated: "I guess it's trying to be connected without actually knowing how that connection might benefit from me". He further comments, "some [connections] are existing business relationships anyway, so what of value I can add to those, I don't know". In these statements, there is the suggestion of reluctance to actively use connections or networks strategically, possibly, because this type of behaviour is incongruent with a sense of personal self. This apparent reluctance for actively and strategically networking through LinkedIn is illustrated in Colin's statement below, where he describes the response he received when talking to SBOs about why they were on LinkedIn:

> You know...business themselves, you ask them, 'Well what are you trying to achieve?' [by being on LinkedIn] And they just go 'Well, I don't really know.' So, you've got to literally go oh well, you're obviously you're achieving what you wanted to you set out to do: nothing.

166

Accordingly, although participants discussed active networking as a legitimate professional activity, their discourses also indicated that they were not actively using the main functionality of LinkedIn to build up a large number of connections, locally or globally, or in a strategic manner. It was also again observed that among the 60% of participants who, by their own account seemed to prefer "passive" networking, that is, only accepting invitations, all had an Aotearoa/New Zealand background. Indeed, another reason given by participants for not connecting with a large number of people on LinkedIn was that they believed that relationships, at least in Aotearoa/New Zealand, were better initiated and developed face-to-face, as expressed in this typical statement by Kay, herself an immigrant to Aotearoa/ New Zealand:

> I think it's really helpful, but I think nothing will ever beat face-to-face. I think New Zealander's prefer that face-to-face interaction…. I think relationships are built more on face-to-face and interaction whereas I don't think LinkedIn is interactive.

This observation that relationships, at least in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, are better initiated and developed face-to-face will be unpacked and discussed in Chapter six.

The discussion and the examples above illustrate that the discourses of the majority of participants, in terms of shaping and promoting their professional and entrepreneurial identity, indicated that a passive approach was more congruent with their personal and professional identity. That is, they would cautiously accept invitations to connect, and less often actively invite people to connect with them, and when they did so, they tended to invite people who were already known to them. In this sense, they were reactivating a relationship or adding known people to their LinkedIn database, rather than building a network. A majority of participants also indicated that they regarded LinkedIn as more of a support platform for their existing networks, rather than a means for building them.

However, the discourses of some participants in the more active networking group indicated that networking was not only for shaping and promoting their professional and entrepreneurial identity, but as something that was also 'them', and congruent with their personal sense of self. These participants claimed to be natural networkers. Others in the more active networking group also spoke of networking as demonstrating

professionalism, and therefore they engaged in it, however, they also expressed personal discomfort about doing it, suggesting that networking was something that was not 'them' and was incongruent with their personal identity.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the general discourse around networks and networking, as well as the more specific aspects of the participants' discourses around their networking activity on LinkedIn in relation to personal, professional, and entrepreneurial identity online. In summary, from these general statements about networking and networks, it appears that for the participants networking and networks were integral to their identity as a legitimate, professional, small business person and/or entrepreneur. By joining LinkedIn, widely known as a professional online networking tool, they said they were demonstrating and affirming networking and networking behaviour as part of their professional and entrepreneurial identity, even if it did not always feel comfortable, and gave rise to tensions. The participants all indicated that they needed to be seen as actively networking or at least espousing the important value of networking in business, that it was an important business activity, congruent with a professional and entrepreneurial identity, and that LinkedIn networking had exposed them to expansive and easy opportunities for connecting with others. Not only did they feel a greater expectation to network as an expression of their professionalism, but as entrepreneurs, they needed to engage in networking in order to generate business.

However, when they described their actual networking activities the participants' discourses revealed that they were likely to be closed to approaches by unknown others and passive in their approach to others. It was also noted that a predominance of Aotearoa/ New Zealand-born and educated participants expressed a stronger preference for closed network and passive networking than the immigrant participants.

Networking and networks also created other tensions around the conflicting expectations about their network, or set of connections, as these were displayed on a public network; these tensions included questions about how many connections to have, who to include, and what risks they incurred. However, when discussing their "pubic displays of connection" (Donath & Boyd, 2004, p. 73) there surfaced in the participants' discourses a tension around this aspect of identity construction. In general, participants

preferred to have and display a smaller and exclusive set of contacts or network, indicating that they were a professional, rather than a larger expanding network, which would be more congruent to an entrepreneurial identity.

Participants' discourses also included concerns about networking that making connections and storing them were public activities, and that these activities needed to be carefully nuanced in order to be seen by others as pro-active, polite, and genuine. They did not want to be seen as networking incautiously, or even too strategically; they believed that this was not professional and distrusted the professional nature of others that did so. Their displayed networks also needed be carefully curated in order to reflect a professional identity that was well-connected, but circumspect in terms of who they connected with. They also tended to refer to their LinkedIn network more as a useful database for keeping track of their contacts, as static rather than an active, living framework of relationships.

This chapter contributes two claims to the study at hand. First, that Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals have a very conflicted approach to networking, and this is evident in the tensions with identity work on LinkedIn; tensions that could arise from a contradiction between the more general, universal entrepreneurial archetype and the Aotearoa/ New Zealand entrepreneurial archetype. Their discourses also indicate tensions between entrepreneurial versus professional identity and between personal identity and professional/entrepreneurial identity. Most participants said the connections in their network needed to have some correlation with both their personal and professional identities. They articulated that since this network reflected their professional identity, and to some extent their personal selves, their networks needed to generally consist of a limited number of trusted known others.

The second claim in this chapter is that this tendency to limit and make their networks exclusive, which participants appeared to increasingly be doing, raises broader questions about social media use and LinkedIn, and the work identity construction that takes place there. As noted at the start of this chapter, the social world, where individuals interact and socially construct identity on social media, is created by the individual themselves through individual-centred network creation. Although social media presents access to global and random possibilities of interaction, this will only occur if there is connection. In the physical business world, I would argue, social

connection is less controlled by the individual. Encounters and interactions with others are not only inevitable but cannot be limited to an individual's prior decision to connect or not connect. If we tend to only connect on social media with those who are like ourselves, all online interactions will be with people who are similar to us, and since we are spending more time on social media, this will have implications for identity construction and business. This theme links back to a theme expressed by participants in Chapter four, about the negative societal effects of reducing face-to-face contact, and will be further discussed in Chapter seven.

In the next chapter, I discuss the construction of entrepreneurial professional identity through LinkedIn social interaction other than simply connecting. Activities such as posting, discussion groups, and conversations between members will be presented in order to further unpack and confirm the claims of this chapter.

Chapter Six: Constructing the authentic online entrepreneurial professional identity

This chapter further addresses the third research question: What are the main identity tensions evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals' discourse around interacting on their network on LinkedIn? I discuss and analyse the participants' discourses around the interactive activities on LinkedIn such as posting, contributing to discussion groups, and conversations between members. These identity construction activities are concerned with reputation-building through self-presentation and branding, and with the relationship-building functions of LinkedIn (Kietzmann et al., 2011), as described in Chapter three.

My approach to exploring these tensions was to analyse and present how the participants sought to socially construct an authentic online entrepreneurial professional identity, consistent with their conceptions of what constitutes a professional. I have chosen the word authentic to describe their constructed image of 'proper' or legitimate entrepreneurial. This focus is consistent with the observation in Chapter three that authenticity or being 'real' or genuine is a recurrent theme in the current literature on online self-presentation (e.g.Baym & Burnett, 2009; Farnham & Churchill, 2011).

In their discourses participants expressed five somewhat contradictory expectations of how they should present construct and enact a genuine or authentic entrepreneurial professional identity on LinkedIn, all it appeared relating to the overarching tensions they experienced around the need to promote themselves and their business versus the need to protect it, that is to show rrestraint in terms of behaviour to curate and control their professional image but also to be expressive, proactive, even provocative, to promote themselves and their brand.

These tensions were expressed in the five themes, i.e. that an authentic entrepreneurial professional: 1) follows thought leaders or experts but is also is original and authentic; 2) is un-assuming and modest but a knowledgeable expert; 3) sells without being a salesman; 4) both separates and combines personal and professional identity and 5) wants to watch others (and expects to be watched) but is reluctant to watch others.

In discussing these themes, I mainly focus on professional identity, the most prominently referenced identity in the participants' discourses; however, I continue to reference entrepreneurial identity as well as other salient identities, namely Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial identities and personal identity, as well as the tensions created by these competing identities.

The authentic entrepreneurial professional aligns with thought leaders but is still original and authentic

Publishing on LinkedIn, other than creating a profile page, was generally discussed by participants as a means of shaping and promoting their professional selves on LinkedIn. This was affected either by blogging, or posting interesting articles by others, commenting on the blogs or posts of others, or joining conversations in a discussion group. Participants did not distinguish in their discourses between the different types of postings they made; therefore, all these activities such as blogging, posting, commenting, and involvement in discussions, will be unpacked and discussed together in this section. Generally, all these activities involve self-expression and interaction. However, tension was also evident in the participants' discourses about whether they should engage in these activities, because of the reputational risks involved such as being too expressive of their own opinions.

Participants expressed expectations of themselves and by others that, as a professional, posting on their site or on group sites was something they should be doing. An indication of this expectation of themselves as professionals is evident in comments made by Marie and Richard, who both used the word "should". Marie said, "I should be generating discussions and making a point of commenting on discussions at least once a week". Richard said, "I should [post] milestone business comments [to indicate when I have] done something interesting or useful…not so much [bragging]…but…[posting] something that people might find interesting that I have done business-wise".

However, most participants' discourses revealed that they in practice preferred to look and see what others, mainly people they viewed as experts were posting, and then re-posting these contributions. They often said they were following thought-leaders, generally those overseas; according to Don: "I do [see the activities of] thought-leader[s]…I do follow people who are in our industry that are very… well-known

[because they] almost all blog. I [see the thoughts of] people who are leaders in the particular fields that I'm interested in". Marie said:

> Where I do learn stuff now is the thought leaders that I follow, and I'll follow their blogs through their LinkedIn blogs. and I find them very useful. Pretty much all of them are overseas, they tend to be off-shore thought leaders. There's almost no New Zealand thought leaders that have come up on my LinkedIn that I would follow

In addition, participants said that they read group postings to look for contributions from those they considered to be experts. Richard said, "I belong to…groups because I have an interest in [their subjects], or [because] I want to engage in the topic; I want to [find] expert opinion[s]". They described looking for ideas or the opinions of experts and leaders in the field, and that they often re-posted the information they found to give themselves more visibility. According to Anne:

> If I see something really interesting come through that I know will help those that I'm connected with, because a lot of my clients, which are small businesses, are connected with me on LinkedIn, so if I see something, then I'll re-post it. If they [thought-leaders] do a post then I'll like it, for obvious reasons, to get more visibility I guess, they've got more people looking at their profiles.

These comments illustrate that participants believed an authentic professional demonstrated that they were current and informed by reading and reposting expert ideas. However, many also expressed a belief or recognition that to establish their own individual professional identity, they needed to either post original content, or engage in discussions in a way that reflected their own expertise. Jill, a marketing and communications consultant, commented that she needed to post and share information on her page and to her groups to signify that she could use the full functionality of the site; she explained, "You have to demonstrate [having these skills and knowledge] and then actually…use…the functionalities of connecting to others and sharing information…for me…it would be professionally risky not be using these tools".

Geraldine said that posting also gave her an opportunity to express her personality, as well as her knowledge, and to establish her professional credibility and identity, as she explained in the following:

> It's that other people that are actually seeing something in what I write, and the way that I write it, that gives them the confidence to make a move to me. I mean you know,

I've obviously got a profile which, you know you can read through and so on, and there's information there. And then it seems as though the tone of the postings that I put...up...people just like it.

For others, sharing content and knowledge on their personal page or in groups that reflected their expertise was important. Josephine expressed this understanding in the following extracts: "I guess [sharing content] was also a way of creating authority and showcasing expertise, on my profile and in the groups, and with that comes to branding…or adding…trust…to your profile and showcasing what you're doing and your expertise". According to Wilma: "I often go there [to LinkedIn] to actually educate others. For example, I'll jump into a relevant discussion to put my little bit of expertise in, so that adds credibility to who I am, and people think 'oh she obviously knows what she's talking about'''. Brian also said that sharing good quality original content was an important activity for using LinkedIn effectively, and to build a professional profile, as he describes in the following:

> Yeah you have to be posting original concepts or people start ignoring you. So, there's lots of people that just keep on sharing things like dummy photos, but they don't get a lot of clicks for that… they get clicks… but it's not building their brand as a person and it's not leading into a sales pathway. All they're doing, it's nearly like Facebook, they're just kind of sharing rubbish, it's not bad rubbish, but if you're not sharing at least 20% original content you're missing out on a lot of the benefits of social networking, building your brand, becoming the expert in your area, or getting people to your website so they can follow a sales pathway.

As Brian expresses in the above comment, sharing free content was referred to by about 30% of participants as a means of promoting their expertise and business. Richard remarked, "Some people will give you some of their quality stuff for free to show how good they are". However, though Colin also said he believed that sharing content was important for professional integrity, he commented that this sharing was sometimes regarded as foolish by others:

> Well you've got to give, and that's where people I think with social media people really got confused. It's not taking: it's giving. Because people used to say that, when I put stuff on my blog…you know, they would go, "Well you're putting all your knowledge up there. What are you doing?" and I was going "Well, it's there for the people to use it."

Members referred to several barriers that made them hesitant about sharing content, posting to LinkedIn, or engaging in group discussions. Paradoxically they were concerned that by being too open, they might not appear genuine and honest, but appear overgenerous or opinionated, and participants often reported regarding others' contributions, except those of experts, with mistrust or suspicion. This expressed concern about appearing too open was related to another concern about the need to appear humble as discussed in the next section.

Many experienced tensions between contributing useful or interesting content and giving away too much of their business information and intellectual property to potentially dishonest others. Josephine, for example, said that in the early days of LinkedIn, a competitor had used some of her work in a way that merged her brand with her competitors:

> Here was my competitor using my work. So, there was certain languaging and brand perceptions that were very much at a threat. Sadly, like I said, I realised too late. I had no idea some of that was happening…another few things happened, and I realised the high likelihood, that … I think that our brand had been merged in people's perceptions and my brand had been lost.

Here, Josephine indicated that she had lost some of her unique professional identity through these events, an identity that was being expressed not only through her original ideas, but also in the way she expressed them. She said that as a result she had learned to be circumspect, not only about how much original material she posted, but also who she allowed in her network.

The participants also expressed a concern was by that by seeking to display their expertise, they might inadvertently display a lack of expertise. This concern was expressed indirectly in their criticism of others who posted poor content. Several participants said this needed to be assiduously avoided, for example, Valerie said:

> And so, it kind of gives an image of like an authority person writing on a particular subject, when in fact some of the writing that they do is not really up to what I feel would be of an authority level. It's great to see the small business owner get there but some of them it's the writing I have a sort of an issue with.

Alternatively, participants expressed this concern directly by stating that their own content may not be good enough. For example, Rob said: "[My] concern is: Am I providing meaningful and interesting content to these people? Or are they just going to

get sick of me and unlike me?" Belinda referred to this concern about posting poor content indirectly, by saying that people were generally not particularly willing to contribute, because they may be criticised for not being an expert, as indicated in this comment, "I think we all take ourselves a bit too seriously. We just pretend we know it all but...rather than divulging that the possibly we don't".

Another participant, Melanie, who appeared in her discourse to display more confidence in her ability to provide good content, was nonetheless careful about posting, and expressed some of the pitfalls in doing so. For example, she expressed a tension around not only saying something meaningful, but also to not offending anyone, and yet being ready and able to support her opinion if necessary, as she describes below:

> On LinkedIn yes, it's your reputation, you don't want to be perceived as a circus and also you want to say something meaningful. So, I do put a lot of thought in and if I create blogs or posts that are posted on LinkedIn, I do put a lot of thought in that, I don't just write anything… And I need to be very careful about what I say because that could automatically… you know people are very direct on LinkedIn, and they would let you know if you offended someone or if they don't agree with you, then you have to be able to defend yourself.

As such, to be an authentic professional on LinkedIn, participants indicated that they needed to follow and align with thought leaders, but still post good, original, and authentic content, and/or engage in discussions in a way that reflected on their own expertise, thus demonstrating the professional attribute of being an "expert", but as discussed next not appearing superior to others.

The authentic entrepreneurial professional is an unassuming expert

Participants stated that to present a professional image, they needed to show that they had expertise and currency, as discussed above, therefore, they needed to present themselves in their postings, blogs and conversations as knowledgeable and capable. Equally, however, they also said they had to do so without sounding arrogant or confrontational, and without adopting an inappropriately self-important tone, all of which they also talked about as unprofessional. In fact, they said they felt they had to present themselves as modest, approachable, unassuming and accepting of others' ideas. Additionally, they needed to demonstrate they had expertise and were interactive by offering something of value to others, but they had to do so without relinquishing too

much valuable or confidential business knowledge. All these expectations of how they should present as a professional created a theme in their discourse of seeking to walk a fine line between appearing to be an expert and knowledgeable and yet being modest, approachable, and cautious within this relatively new medium.

One way of appearing modest and not offending others that many participants' discourses alluded to, was to not openly contradict others. Although participants often expressed frustration about comments or the postings of others, most participants expressed concern about openly contradicting others. This concern was articulated by a significant number of participants in the study. As Anne explains in the following extract, they did not want to be seen as having an argument in a public forum: "I post just to post knowledge, and I get people coming in going, 'oh that's not right, ra-ra-ra' and I just get frustrated with it, because I don't want to start too much of, you know, a forum thing. I'm quite happy to just post". Marie explains in this extract that she would not contradict someone publicly, and even when explaining this, she is careful about classifying the views of others as being wrong:

> And the couple of times that I've posted directly to the people who have commented on my posts. Um...sometimes the views they've put up are so ridiculous...they've been not ridiculous to the people who made it, but um...to me. But I also I don't feel I'm going on the public forum...are you kidding me?"

Wilma also did not like public disagreements, which she described as unprofessional; she described the indirect approach that she said most people to take to this:

> Yeah and I find that even if people disagree on discussions, they'll say "look I'm not sure if I agree with that because from my experience blah blah blah," but no I've never seen anybody put down another person's opinion. They might express a different one, but I've not seen any blog where somebody's actually put down somebody else's, they've just proved a perspective. And I really like the fact that it you're not getting all gossip, slander, attacking and that kind of stuff. I don't like that stuff, and if it was on, I wouldn't follow it. I feel quite strongly against it. But again, I mean you're dealing with professional people, to me it's unprofessional to act like that, people are not going to benefit if they behave like that, but I've not actually seen any on the sites that I visit or the groups that I'm on.

Louise also said she found open disagreements in public unacceptable, and compared it to a group of people sitting around a table, face-to-face:

Unless there's something particular about it, I should say to that person after …maybe I've thought that they had said something that they shouldn't have done or just got something completely wrong. I wouldn't want to embarrass them in public. I've done that on odd occasions but generally no… because it's a group discussion…you know you're in a group, like it's like we're sitting around this table.

These participants and others who shared this view seemed to imply that they did not openly contradict others, not only because this behaviour made them feel personally uncomfortable, but as is inferred in their comments, contradicting someone publicly was not congruent with their identity as a professional, and that such public action would damage their reputation and brand. For example, Wilma said: "People are not going to benefit if they behave like that", while Campbell commented more directly that these arguments could disaffect potential clients:

> I do think that there are people who could disaffect their audiences by being too vocal, particularly when comments and things get acerbic, and you know you start getting to effect on-line arguments that always degenerate. So yeah, I think people can be in danger of disaffecting portions of their audience or portions of their potential clientele.

Other participants expressed the view that as professionals, they should not only be supportive of others, but should also not adopt a superior tone, as there is no benefit to them doing so, as Melanie expresses below:

> Yes, well that's how I see it, I see it as a place where you should be supportive. It's fine to have a different opinion about something, that's fine and that's healthy just to say this is how I see it, you don't have to agree with me, but when it starts being negative or attacking each other personally… "well what do you know, I've got this Master's degree in psychology and you don't have that and this is what I know" …then I just don't see the purpose.

Belinda also described in correcting someone publicly as a threat to professional reputation; this threat pertained to being viewed as a "know-it-all", and she gave this as an explanation as to why she did not contribute to discussions:

> Well I guess I could, [contribute to a discussion] but the difficulty I find with something like a discussion site is it's really hard to get tone just from one or two sentences, and particularly if you disagree with something. Some things that can be a bit of a balancing act, not coming off like they know it all. It's not so much causing offence as you just don't want to be the person who sort of pops up correcting people …I guess.… it's about your reputation...And the reputation that you're trying to build.

This theme that openly contradicting others would damage their reputation by being viewed as difficult, acerbic, or a "know-it-all" were similar to participants' other comments that they made about the importance of appearing real, authentic, friendly, and approachable at the same time as appearing as knowledgeable, professional, and experts in their field.

Another variation on this theme was the participants' attitude towards endorsements of themselves by others. The facility to endorse others was mentioned by at least 75% of the participants in the interviews, mostly unprompted. All but three of these mentions expressed a general intense dislike of the endorsement function on LinkedIn. Many of the reactions were very strong. The strength of this reaction is shown in these example statements from Helen, "Endorsements are really, stupid I think, because anybody can endorse anybody for anything. It's not credible, then, is it? That's my pet hate about LinkedIn". Campbell added, "Endorsements. They're worthless…they're honestly…give me a proper…if you're going to endorse me, give me a proper written recommendation". Participants also questioned the honesty and integrity of people endorsing them for skills that the endorser could not possibly know they had, as implied in this example from Colin: "There are certain people that endorse me all the time, and I go, "Look 'I don't even know you…what the hell are you doing?' Well it straight away, it seems, 'well how un-genuine are you?'" Campbell even questioned the sanity of someone who did this:

> So, there's a guy I worked with about 25 years' ago, and suddenly he gave me endorsements for about 15 things. And I thought he had gone bad in the head: I really did - I thought that, because you know...he's older than me, and I thought well okay, well he's... last time I met him, he was a little bit, you know, funny. Or maybe he's gone senile.

This behaviour of giving unsolicited and unwarranted endorsements some participants indicated not only as reflecting poorly on the endorser's honesty, but that it may also have reflect on the integrity of those who are being endorsed, by implying they have skills or knowledge that they do not have. Belinda made a typical comment that suggests this risk:

From a negative perspective, I guess you're sort of seeing people endorse you for skills that they wouldn't have a bloody clue what your skills are. Sort of like last year with people endorsing me for things I don't do, like endorsing me for [area of business] on LinkedIn. I didn't do [area of business]. I don't want an endorsement for it. To be honest, I don't tend to put a lot of stock in endorsements. If people want to endorse you, that's fine, but it's only really helpful if it's an endorsement for something that you do.

Additionally, Geraldine stated that unearned endorsements jeopardised her integrity:

So that I feel that, whatever it is they're endorsing for, they've got some knowledge of. If I just feel that I don't know the other people...um...and it jeopardises my integrity, so I won't go down that path. No. I mean to me, it's very important that you have a quality service, and you will also have something where your integrity is intact, and people know that they can um...trust you.

These negative reactions seemed not only to be associated with feelings that false flattery threatened the recipient's integrity as well as that of the endorser, but also that too many endorsements were also viewed as an indication of the lack of legitimacy or genuineness of these endorsements, and were sometimes viewed as the endorser trying to promote themselves, as implied in this typical comment by Don:

They drive me crazy...I hate them, endorsements. I don't like people endorsing me for things when they have no expertise in it themselves, so I want people to randomly endorse me, only because they think it's nice, but if they're using it to ask for endorsements themselves and self-promote wildly, then it's annoying. And the other thing is, you see people who are endorsed, up to the eyeballs. Endorsements from all these people, and it just means nothing.

The example above suggests the receivers of endorsements were uncomfortable with feeling they had been placed under an obligation to reciprocate, as is clear in the next example from Graeme, who derisively referred to the giving of reciprocal endorsements as a "game". When asked if he felt obliged to reciprocate an endorsement, he said, "No. Well I feel very strongly about giving endorsements for someone you don't know anything about. So obviously, I'm not going to play that same game". Valerie, when commenting on a similar activity about endorsements, that is, giving and/or asking for a recommendation on a profile page, stated her understanding of the professional culture of LinkedIn, and shared expectations of how she believed people should behave there, reflecting the contempt generally expressed by participants about those that did not meet these expectations:

There have been some interesting characters and I suppose it also brings out the question of the culture that is expected of people participating on LinkedIn, there are certain behaviours that you sort of raise the eyebrow to... when they send you a request to recommend them when in fact you have never worked with them. That sort of contact from people doesn't really go down well with me personally. So, you have these sorts of expectations as to how the people that are on LinkedIn are supposed to behave or carry themselves.

Four participants, however, stated that they liked endorsements, for example, Trish said, "Yeah, they're good, I like them. It kind of adds a bit of weight to your profile". One participant in this group, Neil, even viewed endorsements as something to be a "treasured", stating, "I have…I don't know, I have dozens of endorsements, which I treasure, and keep". Kay was also positive about endorsements and their validity. She also liked giving endorsements, even when she had never met the person, she gave them to. She believed it supported a member's credibility to have endorsements, even if they were not valid, as she described here:

Yes, I like that because it builds credibility, and when I look at someone's profile and I see that they've got plenty of endorsements in certain areas, then immediately your perception changes, whether it's valid endorsements or not. I have endorsed some people that I have never met before, but again as I said, I read through their profile, and if I get a mail back saying they're "not comfortable getting these endorsements from me because we've never met, and how about we meet first and then you can give me an endorsement?", that's fine, I appreciate that. I can see how they could feel that way about it, but I appreciate endorsements.

Another participant, Louise, expressed a positive response to endorsements and their benefits. She described giving endorsements as a strategic means to remind people of her presence, develop relationships, and gain recognition for a personal brand; as she explained:

Endorsements are good in that it's just another touch point for someone to see you again just for a fleeting second. You'd need…it's like a recommendation where you're saying hey, I work with this guy and it was really cool, and we did this, that and the other. It's just a quick tick "yes," you would know what that person's good at this, or "yes," is good at that. And it puts your brand on their radar for doing it. So, it's just another little "hello, I'm here."

It should be noted that the two participants above, who were positive about endorsements in their discourses, were discussing endorsements more as an active behaviour that was directed at others. They described the endorsements they gave, or their reaction towards endorsements other people had on their profiles, not only about receiving endorsements themselves. They were also comfortable about describing how their giving of endorsements promoted their brand and themselves to others. It may also be of significance that the four participants who spoke of endorsements positively were all immigrants to Aotearoa/ New Zealand, who had been on LinkedIn for a relatively long time, while most of those who spoke strongly against endorsements were all Aotearoa/ New Zealand-born, perhaps reflecting the strong influence of the 'tall-poppy syndrome' present in the contextual discourse.

The authentic entrepreneurial professional sells without being a salesman

All the participants in the interviews expressed a close link between their business, their business brand, and their professional identity and reputation, reflecting the fact that they all owned their business. Their discourses indicated that there to be little distinction in their minds between their business and their professional identity, a finding that has also been noted in other studies of SMEs and SBOs (e.g.Horan et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2012). This close link between themselves and the business was expressed by Josephine, who managed a two-person business, as a feeling of pressure they experienced that the business was only "them", or that they were on their own in their business:

> We've got financial hurdles: we've got everything against us. We don't have budgets. We have nothing. We've just got ourselves. Whereas they [big companies] have all sorts behind them, machines behind them to make them be what they are.

When discussing LinkedIn, the participants indicated that they viewed their personal profile as representing themselves, as individuals, as professionals and as their business. For example, Jill, a sole trader, when discussing whether her company had a profile on LinkedIn, said she had a personal profile, and that as such, in some ways she did have a company profile, because she was her company brand; she expressed this as follows: "[It] sounds ghastly, but I do think of myself as a personal brand, so when you [ask if] I have a company profile, in some ways, I do". Graeme went further and identified that he

182

merged his personal professional networking with company branding "So, that the profile gets the brand out. Personally, it's partly networking as well: it's a bit of a personal brand and personal networking". Like Graeme, participants often expressed this blending of their individual identity and their business in terms of 'brand'. Typical statements that illustrate this blending were made by Peter: "I have the feeling it's the same thing [his profile and his business brand]. Because my business is my brand and my brand is my business", while Josephine said, "As a representative, or the representative of a business, we were speaking with our own profiles, so the focus really was on personal branding plus corporate branding intermingled".

As conveyed by the statements above, many participants' in their discourses described their activities on LinkedIn as online branding of their professional identities and of their business; a process that in most cases they said was overlapping. A typical comment from Wilma illustrates this: "[The] knowledge of who I am and what I do is now in the marketplace". In this statement, implies that for her, who she is, what she does, and her business are one in the same. This overlap or equivalence of the business and personal identity created tensions in the participants' discourse around professional identity construction. Firstly, because participants said because they represented their business, they had to market their business themselves, offline and online. They indicated that they had to sell themselves, as an individual, to sell their professional services and retain business. They said that social media such as LinkedIn had given them an efficient means to do this 'selling', but they needed to do so without appearing to be salesman or unprofessional and "pushy".

Most participants articulated that for LinkedIn to work well for them, to brand themselves effectively, and to positively influence their audience, they needed to self-present positively, and communicate professionally. A strong theme in their discourse was that the ability to communicate effectively on the Internet was an important component of their professional identity, and criticised others as being unprofessional in communicating ineffectively. However, communication on LinkedIn generally occurs through the medium of text, a medium that participants also referred to as potentially 'tricky'. They also referred to producing public broadcast content themselves, without using public relations consultants or writers (as they had in larger companies), something that many said was relatively new them (as indicated above by Josephine),

and as this information can be accessed at any time and as such, needs to be current and correct. All these aspects of the LinkedIn context, the predominance of text, the need to do it all themselves, and the need to keep up-dating, were expressed by the entrepreneurial professional as new issues in selling themselves online, issues that were expressed alongside the opportunities LinkedIn gave them and created tensions.

Presenting a profile on LinkedIn was described by most participants a necessary step in selling their business, and themselves as a professional. LinkedIn was referred to often a dominant channel for presenting and expressing their professional self on the Internet, and for establishing a personal brand for themselves and their business. Brian explained:

> One of the great things about LinkedIn is that whole profile side of things builds up your personal brand and I think that really helps when you're trying to friend strangers on LinkedIn, if you've got a profile that says nothing about you or doesn't even have a personal photo then they're going to go "well I don't even know this person, why would I friend them", but if you ask to friend them and you've got a professional photo and you've got a lot of recommendations by other businesses, the likelihood of them accepting it is a lot higher.

Brian here expresses that, in a sense, the profile acts a stand-in for the physical professional self and therefore, the 'look' of the page is important; it must make the right first impression, as a professional is expected to do in the physical world. Just as the appearance of a person in the physical world conveys message (Trethewey et al., 2006), the appearance of the profile, in a sense, they said, is a message about the person, and that being correct, complete, and up-to-date, with a professional-looking photograph is similar having the correct professional attire and grooming. Posting a profile that did not look professional was described as potentially more damaging to a professional reputation than not having a profile. In their discourses, participants found excuses for people not having a profile on LinkedIn, such as being part of an older generation, but not for having one that was unprofessional. These typical statements from Richard illustrate this attitude: "People are looking for more information on somebody, so if they go to your profile and there's no photograph; you've got basic, you know information, but not much else there, you look like you're really don't care". According to Melanie, "You should put on there and what's appropriate, what's relevant and the sort of profile will get the reader's attention".

Several participants commented that false information on their profile, or "porkies" as Jill described them, would quickly be noticed and affect their reputation and that of other. As Jill said:

> Yeah, I see it being a representation of my professional brand and anybody I work for would be associated with that, and you know there would be I guess reputational implications as well.

This need to be honest was strongly associated with being a genuine or authentic professional, as opposed to 'being a salesperson'. The participants were aware that people from different aspects of life would see their profile, unlike a CV that is generally used in the form of private communication, or their profile on a company website. Several participants' discourses indicated a tension they felt between a need to present only a positive impression, but also to always be truthful and genuine, as posted information was public and can be questioned by anyone. Therefore, they stated that their profile not only needed to be truthful, have suitable information and 'look the part' to a broad audience, but also had to represent their professional self in all its facets. These facets may include other business interests beyond their primary business, or possible future employment. Richard expressed this need as follows:

> I know a lot of people would look at it, like if I met somebody in business: I'm also chairman of a not-for-profit, and so that appears on there as well, so I know that people...if I would meet them in one context or another quite often, they would look at my profile to see who I am and what I'm about. So, the whole thing has to look the part where it has to look professional …Yes, exactly.

In this statement, we can see Richard indicating that social media has made it even more necessary that a professional look be maintained in different contexts, both on- and offline, so that externally, there can be seamless identification of the person with their professional identity. As Kompf et al. (1996) explain, this process is akin to, "displaying in one's public (and private) life types of behaviours likely to meet with the approval of the community in which one practices one's professional skills" (p.5).

Accordingly, the participants' discourses indicated that keeping a profile current, accurate and appropriate for any audience was something they strived for and referred to as important for marketing their professional image. However, participants also said that to sell themselves effectively, they could not simply present a profile; they also needed to communicate interactively and offer content of value, as described above. In doing so, however, they were concerned that people might think they were engaging in

spamming or selling. A common theme was that others were often looking for personal gain by trying to 'spam' or sell and doing so in the guise of providing useful information. This image of themselves as a salesperson, most participants said was one they wanted to avoid, as professionals. Richard gave an example of the general negative reception that this behaviour was often met with, "I found with some of them is that they quite often get shut down, you know, by other people who sort of say, 'Look you know, this isn't an appropriate forum for whatever.' You know, they just don't want people using the site or their postings for a marketing exercise". Also, Geraldine said, "Real estate agents and mortgage brokers and SCO [social content optimisation] people, would probably still be the spammiest" (*sic*), I think."

Peter described in very negative terms a disingenuous, indirect selling behaviour he had observed. He described it as a kind of deception:

> One thing I've noticed, is questions are invariably asked by people who already know the answers. They're asking the question divisively in order to get people to enter a discussion that they will then come out on top of. The number of times I've sat there ready to answer one of those questions, thinking, "Oh, that's where I can help here," then I check their profile and see who they are, and then darn it, they actually own a company that does this. They know the answer; they're just trying to hook people in.

The participants' discourses revealed a general theme that for them being professional involved a type of self-presentation and marketing online that was well-presented visually, and verbally and that appeared open and even generous with knowledge, including disclosing some aspects of personal self, but that any suggestion of being a salesperson or spamming was to be avoided.

The authentic entrepreneurial professional both separates and combines professional and personal identity

LinkedIn was described by most participants as a social context in which participants' professional identity could be appropriately enacted; as a safe professional place, where 'safe' indicated a place where one could curate a professional image, removed from a personal identity. On the other hand, the participants' discourses reflected a contradictory theme, that this separation of professional and personal was both difficult to achieve and to maintain. I will firstly discuss the image conveyed of LinkedIn as place for professional identity construction as distinct from the personal.

186

All the participants referred to LinkedIn as a professional place and therefore joining LinkedIn was itself could be seen an act of identity construction as a professional. They viewed LinkedIn as a professional place, separate from personal lives and identities, a place in which, metaphorically, as Richard noted, they had their "suit on". According to Melanie: "I expect people that are on there [LinkedIn] to be professional people and to behave themselves. So, they shouldn't be overseen by a manager or a headmaster. They're all adults so they should be polite". Here, Melanie is referencing images in the dominant discourse of the professional as self-controlled and accountable. Warwick said, "What I liked about it [LinkedIn] is, it's clean; professional; and it seems to be somewhat verified." LinkedIn was described generally as a professional place that had a formality about it, which if utilised well and appropriately, could build participants' credibility in the marketplace. Marie said, "LinkedIn is slightly more formal. It's more professional, and also more about I guess you are building that external credibility".

In addition to LinkedIn's own claims of being the premier site for professionals (LinkedIn, 2017b), what made the site a legitimate place for professionals for the participants, was the appearance and structure of the site, as well as the professional behaviour of the members using it. Some participants specifically commented that, because LinkedIn was more controlled and structured than most social media sites, they felt a sense of comfort that their professional image was protected and therefore, their professional self could be given expression there. Graeme expressed this in a typical comment: "We certainly do use Facebook as well, but no... personally I'm much more comfortable with the control and structures and my image via LinkedIn". Others commented that they were reassured by the fact that they believed the control of LinkedIn's structure, image, and brand, was being carefully monitored. This view was expressed in the typical statement below by Brian:

> I think they have [kept it professional] because... they're doing quite a good job of that, because they used to have [plug-ins], and then they cut out all of them. Because, as soon as you start breaking out of that brand or structure it starts becoming a different thing and I think LinkedIn do a really good job of that.

Colin commented that people sometimes adopted a more "snobbish" tone on LinkedIn: "You know, if you're the CEO of something, you can look important. You can get a bit snobbish and you can do that with LinkedIn". Colin uses language here that indicates LinkedIn provides him with the social standing and importance associated with a high-

187

status professional. Additionally, participants indicated that they believed other people generally viewed those on LinkedIn as professionals. This point was made by Peter, a consultant, when discussing who uses LinkedIn. He said, "People use Yellow Pages [not LinkedIn] when they need plumbers. They don't use them [Yellow Pages] when they need consulting firms".

Many participants indicated that they would not like to see LinkedIn depart from this professional image and were concerned that this was a possible trend. According to Valerie, "It [LinkedIn] still has that integrity factor; I just hope that they don't open it up too much", and Wilma said, "I'd like to think that it's sort of a professional place. And I hope it always stays that way to be honest". These statements, including those about 'the Yellow Pages', being 'snobbish' and having 'your suit on' also imply that LinkedIn is somewhat exclusive, that belonging to LinkedIn confers status above that of a blue-collar worker. Additionally, there is an implied concern that this exclusivity and professional image may change and as a result, membership to LinkedIn may no longer strongly signify professional identity. As discussed in the previous chapter, participants generally maintained exclusivity around their individual networks, but LinkedIn conferred another level of exclusivity conveyed by its design and infrastructure that identified members as professional. However there was a concern that participants had no control over changes to its design and infrastructure.

Most participants said that they attempted to keep their professional and personal profiles and contacts separate; they generally expressed the belief that they could present separate professional and personal selves on the Internet, and that this separation was important for constructing their sense of professional self. As discussed in Chapter four, participants appeared to mentally divide cyberspace into personal places and work places, and most participants felt strongly that mixing personal and professional selves on social media sites was not desirable. This is shown in typical comments from Colin: "I would definitely put a divide from a professional and a personal association", and Geraldine said, "I mean I keep them very sort of um...is that there is a definite demarcation there if you like, you know personal stuff that's family things, and ah...then the business side of it is strictly business". Sam said, "My LinkedIn profile is an incomplete picture of me, and it's an incomplete picture of me by convention. In other words, I don't put pictures of my grandchildren on LinkedIn".

As well as personal comments about family, political views were also not considered appropriate for a professional to express on LinkedIn, in contrast to many other social media sites. Cheney and Ashcraft (2007), as well as others (e.g.Schmidt, 2000) comment that acting professionally can also signify an apolitical stance. As Sam said:

> I generally don't look to enter into public debate about politics. LinkedIn, I associate with being, having a certain degree of publicness and Facebook as well. So, I mean I would be a watcher if I was involved in that: I would probably be reticent about engaging in conversation.

Political discussions were said to be appropriate on Facebook, but not on LinkedIn, as Brian stated, "My political views aren't relevant to my business colleagues on LinkedIn but on Facebook, I've got a number of friends that post their political views and I'm happy to respond, but I wouldn't do that on LinkedIn, it's not appropriate". One participant, Marie, said she considered only business-related political views were appropriate for a professional to express on LinkedIn: "I don't mind politics being there, but I don't want to hear your views on politics which is not work-related and it's personal". In these statements, participants can be seen carefully curating their comments on LinkedIn to come across as professional, that is, rational, detached, and apolitical.

To maintain their professional persona, most participants commented that not only did they avoid posting personal information, or personal or political comments on LinkedIn, but they also kept their personal and professional networks of connections separated. Networking activity was discussed in detail in Chapter five; but, in terms of keeping professional and personal networks separate, most participants said they kept this separation by conscientiously using LinkedIn for professional connections, and other social media, usually Facebook, for personal connections. For example, Sam said; "Yeah, I specifically use LinkedIn for professional ties, and Facebook for general friendship". Jill said, "Yes, I do [keep a separation] because Facebook is more for the personal relationships, whereas LinkedIn is more for the professional relationships". Warwick stated a preference for keeping people "in certain sectors", stating, "That's why I like LinkedIn, because [it is] about business and I don't socialise there". Wilma also said Facebook was for friendship, family, and socialising, and LinkedIn was for business, although the same people may be included on both these networks:

Yes absolutely. Facebook is for personal and LinkedIn is professional. Facebook is the one where you make friends. Facebook is the social, family side of things, and LinkedIn is work, it's professional, and I for one keep the two quite separate. I just keep Facebook totally for social and family. I really only have LinkedIn [for business], it's all I rely on. I would say the majority of people who want to be friends with you automatically just go on Facebook and invite you there. That's what most people do. You don't usually get that on LinkedIn unless they're a business person in their own right and then they do both.

Notwithstanding their assertions that they kept their online personal and professional identities separate, most participants' discourses also indicated a tension around this separation of professional and personal selves in cyberspace; that doing so was both difficult to achieve and maintain. Participants described quite complex strategies they used to keep these virtual personal and professional spheres, separate. For example, many described moving people from one site to another as the relationship changed from being personal to business-oriented, and vice versa. Colin gave the following example:

Well a good example: when I started out here and I was working as more of a consultant, the Learning Manager here, [*name*], and I connected on Facebook. He was probably an exception, because I didn't know him that well. We also connected on LinkedIn. Now when I started working here, and he in effect came became my boss, one of the first things I did was un-friend him on Facebook. But on the same account, I have no qualms about him being connected with me on LinkedIn.

Marie described how, when she wanted to talk to a Facebook friend about a business topic, she emailed them on LinkedIn, not to her work email, as she wanted a personal opinion. In the extract below, she indicates that she viewed LinkedIn as a kind of intermediary medium, a mid-way between work media (as represented by work emails) and personal media (as represented by Facebook), and could therefore be used to link the two.

Like this morning, I sent an Inmail [email through LinkedIn] out to um...an ex-colleague from [*company name*] from eight years' ago who I … ah... she's actually on my Facebook. I wouldn't have seen her in three years, but she's on my Facebook, she's not on my LinkedIn; but I wanted to catch up with her on a work thing, so I had emailed her on LinkedIn. Yeah. And I didn't email her [*company name*] email address, because it's um...it is a work thing, but I wanted a personal opinion on a work thing more than a "hi formally asking you in your work capacity to meet with me in my work capacity."

Here, Marie describes a type of 'boundary gymnastics' that conveys a complex message, which she assumes the recipient of her email, as a professional, will understand. These subtle distinctions in the use of sites and channels appeared important to the participants for constructing and protecting a genuine, legitimate, and authentic professional identity on LinkedIn, indicating that perhaps understanding and nuancing these distinctions are becoming a mark of being a professional in the virtual world. Also these 'boundary gymnastics' indicate that the actual separation between public and private identities in cyberspace is notional.

As they were engaging with an interactive medium, participants also had to encounter the behaviour of others on LinkedIn and at times expressed exasperation with others when they did not seem to understand or obey the 'professional rules' as they understood them and judged them as unprofessional for it. This reaction illustrates some of the difficulties participants encountered with their strategy of separating personal and public selves, and the fact that the presumed 'rules' or 'conventions' were not as embedded in the medium – or as shared – as they had expected. For example, in the extract below, Warwick showed his frustration about people not transferring from his personal to his business page:

> I wanted to try and separate my business and personal you know. I had a personal Facebook page for a while, but it's quite hard to get people to… to say, "Hey go to my business one." It's a nightmare. (*laughs*) So, I'm struggling with that a little bit. I have actually asked some people um would you go to my business page, from my personal page, and they sort of got really irritated. I try to keep them separated, and then I've been finding, you know, with Facebook, they sort of blend together a few times.

Jill described the same struggle to keep the two virtual worlds separate. She had work colleagues on both Facebook and LinkedIn, but preferred to keep her work activities consigned to LinkedIn:

> Because my natural world is separate, but you know it's the Venn diagram. So, Wellington is a little city, it's got loads of women like me doing work like I do, and we do get together, so some of my work colleagues. I'm on Facebook with and more of them I'd be LinkedIn to, but I notice that the work colleagues that I'm on Facebook with will use Facebook more as a professional tool. But I err on the separation side.

Some participants had contacts on both Facebook and LinkedIn and accepted that there was often an inevitable overlap. However, even they said that they would, or preferred to keep professional and business contexts separate from personal counterparts and would do so via 'how' and 'where' they interacted. That is, they expected to discuss business and stay 'professional' on LinkedIn, as expressed by Valerie:

> I like to keep them separated but I find that they do overlap at times, so I've come to the realisation that it can't really be black and white. I'm comfortable with the idea that sometimes those things kind of cross over. People that I work with and they have become friends, we tend to stay on Facebook or like they lead the conversation there on Facebook. So, most of the activity that has been on LinkedIn has to do with the business.

Sam also described this overlap; however, he believed that a professional relationship can be maintained on LinkedIn:

> They are overlapping: but they're different in my mind; they're a spectrum, and…for instance, a professional relationship which is also a friendship. If you're doing professional work, you need to be aware of where the friendship begins and ends in…and how to maintain the professionalism. So, in that sense they overlap, but they're different.

This distinction between social media sites was discussed as a way in which participants could shape and promote their online professional identity, and distinguish it from their personal identity, as Melanie describes here: "I wouldn't say it's a different person, it's just the more serious, focused Melanie that's on LinkedIn, compared to the silly, chatterbox, bubbly, fun person that's on Facebook", and this process of professional identity construction is also supported and controlled by other members on the site, as Melanie further explained, "I guess that's what I love about LinkedIn because it's not like that. I really would speak very highly that it seems to just unconsciously discourage that [*personal stuff*] because there's a tone to it that everybody seems to recognise and just flow with".

Colin explained the importance (he believed) of not providing too much personal information, yet paradoxically, at the same time being aware that others can find this information anyway:

> Don't say too much, but you know don't get paranoid about your personal information. You're in an age where they're going to find it anyway, but you know obviously, keep personal information away from it.

Here, Colin illustrates his understanding and an expectation about appropriate professional behaviour in cyberspace, which filters through in other discourses. He seems to indicate that it is important for professionals not to provide too much personal information about themselves on LinkedIn, as doing so may reveal a lack of boundaries, as well as a lack of self-restraint (which is associated with professionalism), and that this would be considered unprofessional, and lose them respect. However, there was an acknowledgement by most participants that personal information could be discovered and linked to their professional identity, that the boundaries were notional, but to be considered 'professional' they needed to take reasonable steps to present the personal and professional sides of their identity separately. If others sought out personal information about them, this seeking-out activity would be regarded as an aspect of the other person's professionalism, or lack of it. Further tensions and dilemmas around seeking out information about others are discussed later in this chapter, as part of the fifth tension.

However, despite the efforts evident in the discourse to separate personal and professional online identities, the participants' discourses suggested that, as entrepreneurial professional, branding or marketing their business involved presenting aspects of their personal identity and was also closely aligned with their sense of self. Kleppinger and Cain (2015), and others (Cain & Romanelli, 2009; Ward & Yates, 2013) have commented that the advent of social media has given this phenomenon of SBOs identifying themselves with their business additional dimensions, for example, as the participants discourse suggested, social media lends itself to the self-presentation of an individual, rather than of a company or business. An illustration of this effect is that some participants commented that company pages on LinkedIn, compared to individual profile pages, were not very useful, and that on Facebook, company pages mostly did not work. Helen noted, "For…myself, I don't do well with my company pages on Facebook…most people find that they're not useful". Some participants commented that large companies with socially-oriented products could present a company brand on a company social media page and interact with customers at a company level, but that this was not an approach they themselves could take. For example, Colin said, "So any product that's social, you might have a company social media page that is useful.

Whittaker's chocolate and things [products] like that-it makes sense". However, as these entrepreneurial professionals were generally a provider of a service, and engaged in a micro-business, the participants indicated that interaction with a customer on social media needed to occur through a personal profile page on LinkedIn, not a company page. These comments indicate that on social media, it is the individual that must interact even in a business role, and this places more emphasis on the individual's personal identity.

Accordingly, a personal profile page on LinkedIn – rather than a company profile page, which is too impersonal, or a page on another social media platform, which is too personal – was described as appropriate for establishing and selling a professional identity online. It was described as professional without being impersonal, as illustrated by this typical statement by Belinda, when discussing why her business only had a personal profile page, and not a LinkedIn or Facebook company page:

> No. We don't have our own company LinkedIn page. We've talked about it, but done nothing about it, and we certainly don't have a company Facebook page. And the chance of us getting one would be slim or none. Yeah. Only I think Facebook's about what you do on the weekend, or outside of work, and LinkedIn's about what you do from nine to five.

However as other participants explained, a LinkedIn interactive personal profile page focuses more on themselves as an individual and to some extent their personal identity, than on their business, as conveyed by Richard here:

> I think the nature of my business being a virtual business owner, I really have to be myself, but I have put some of my personality on some of my posts that I do, just because I feel like being yourself really brings out who you are. And being genuine online, so that you attract the type of clients and the type of business that wants to work with you and especially as it's a service type business.

Here, Richard can be seen using the word genuine to describe the legitimate online professional, genuine in this context meaning he had to express some of his personal self in his posts. The same sentiment was expressed by Campbell who said:

> Nowadays, it's very easy to find out whether people are talking absolute rot, or what they're putting out there as an expression of who they are. I put out stuff that's an expression of me…you know. I still enjoy a gin and tonic on a hot summer's day, but you know…occasionally I'll just post that I'm just enjoying the G & T.

Thus, as these examples suggest, LinkedIn presented the participants with another paradox, that to be the genuine entrepreneurial professional they must both separate and be seen to be separating professional from personal identity, yet also combine professional and personal identity.

The authentic entrepreneurial professional wants to watch others but is reluctant to watch others

Participants indicated that they also liked using LinkedIn to follow others' professional lives, and to easily gather extensive business and social information about them. They also reported using the site to check up on or rediscover old friends, acquaintances or colleagues, and to see what they were doing, despite not intending to contact them, at least not immediately. However, this information-seeking or tracking behaviour also created some anxiety and tension for participants. These tensions were expressed as doubts about the appropriateness of this behaviour, the possible costs in terms of distraction and time, and the constant social comparisons that it created.

Members reported spending time on and enjoying tracking others, despite stating that they did not have time to spend on LinkedIn. Typical examples of this activity were provided by Kay: "I enjoy going through the profiles" and Neil, "I like keeping track of people changing jobs or moving in the industry". Anne stated: "I just find that interesting, to see what people are looking at in my realm of the industry." Participants also appreciated that LinkedIn was pro-active in terms of reporting on people's lives, as this typical statement by Helen illustrates: "But as they post information, I get advised; LinkedIn tells me you know, people connections that I've had; changes that they've reported in their lives."

Even though they did not initiate this tracking of others, they appreciated getting this information as Richard said:

> But I would prefer LinkedIn, because it's a little bit more pro-active, and I find that even if I'm not in touch with people, then I basically know what's going on in their life or their career. ... kind of like Facebook, but you know what I mean. It's like even if you're not active on it...you still kind of know what people are up to.

Participants recognised that this tracking activity can waste time, and needed to be managed, as in this statement by Campbell:

> So, it can be invasive [on time], but …it's not a fad anymore; it's you know, these are serious platforms and serious parts of our life now. And we just have to manage them you know. For example, I had spent four days away this past weekend, and barely touched social media. You know, I think we need to be beyond the point of it just constantly having to be up to date.

However, participants also expressed concerns about engaging in this tracking. They were concerned that tracking may be viewed by others as akin to spying. They were aware that if they looked at someone's profile, that person would be notified, and few seemed aware that they could conduct this activity anonymously. Most wished to keep this type of activity private, and some mentioned that they would like to be able to view profiles anonymously, as on Facebook. Some made comments that implied that LinkedIn itself was in a sense surreptitiously tracking or spying on others; for example, Trish said, "LinkedIn was kind of subtly in the background all the time just keeping an eye on what people were doing".

Josephine said that LinkedIn was considered a stalking tool by those under 45, as in the following comment:

> Most of those under 45 detest LinkedIn, and they regard it as a creepy stalking kind of thing. But I think it was those people haven't grown up with the off-line networking that requires you to do it. They would put it in the same context… they would say they were stalking people like in a room. But to me it's not creepy; it's not stalking: it's just basic human to human targeting.

Her explanation for why younger people thought of LinkedIn as a stalking tool was that younger people had not been required, as she had, to engage in face-to face networking, and regarded any networking as 'stalking'. However, this reported dislike of LinkedIn may also have been related to the fact that younger people were more accustomed to social media, which had sensitised them to the concept of electronic stalking or that they could be identified as looking at others' profiles on LinkedIn.

196

Notwithstanding this participant's comment, participants of all ages in this study showed some hesitation at being observed "spying" on others through LinkedIn. They indicated that they did not like being seen to be reading profiles, unless it was someone who had asked to connect with them. For example, Ron, who was in his 40's said, "Once again, the problem with LinkedIn is that you cannot view somebody's profile anonymously, [at least] as far as I'm aware". Colin, who was in his 50's, when discussing whether he had tracked someone on LinkedIn, used the actual word "stalking" to describe this behaviour. He said, "I haven't done that…you know we are sort of delving into stalking to some degree. Yeah." Campbell, also in his 40's, used the expression 'voyeuristic': "You know, again that's another one of those sorts of voyeuristic, to me, precarious ways of sort of getting an insight into people's lives and things like that". Peter, also in his 50's, implied that finding information about others through LinkedIn generally suggested a certain deviousness; he used the word "sneaky" when describing using the endorsement function to track down other peoples' connections, "Although there is one sneaky thing you can do with endorsements. Because you can't see other people's connections unless you are connected to them, other than shared connections, you can look at someone's profile, find out who they know by looking at their endorsements".

These examples seem to reveal underlying personal concerns of participants about their own professionalism in using LinkedIn to gain information about others. There was also a concern that if this activity was observed by others, it may reflect badly on their reputation; participants thought they may be seen as 'spying' on others. Jill, who was in her 40's, reflected this concern in her comments below when discussing whether it was worth getting the paid version of LinkedIn, which automatically allows for the anonymous viewing of profiles: "I just think it's quite a cheeky tool ... And it's actually "ooh do I want to be nosy or ooh will I have to pay for it" and then it's kind of like "oh that's ridiculous"

Furthermore, participants were concerned that others may misinterpret an interest shown in their profile, as Ron explains:

> So, there's a little bit of a concern that …if you're just checking people out, then clearly you don't want to… I guess it depends on what you're doing, but, say if somebody has just come in for a job interview and they know you then checked their profile… it might give the wrong message.

Conversely, even though they did not like being seen to be looking at the profiles of others, all participants who discussed this activity were pleased and interested about knowing when others looked at their profile. This did not seem to make them feel spied on or uncomfortable, as Jill commented:

> The aspect that I think works well, I think it's intriguing that you can have this aspect of who's seen your profile. I think it's huge that it works. It's kind of funny and twee on one level, and I think it's quite a playful feature that works. I don't feel surveilled or uncomfortable.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Wilma: "If I look at their profile, then they'll come back and look at my profile, but that doesn't matter to me, knowing that they've come back and looked at mine".

Marie, who was in her 30's, stated knowing who had viewed her profile was an attractive feature: "I quite like the way it's designed. I look every day to see who's viewed my profile". Colin also said he liked this feature and wanted to see it expanded: "I… would like to see a bit more of an expanded look at who's looking at my profile". Neil explained that he used the visibility of others checking his profile to measure the impact his professional presentations were having: "Then following those public appearances, and of course there could be there is a bit of ego here, because we are humans, then I love to see who is checking my profile." Both Colin and Marie said they used the feature to assess the impact they had had after a business meeting. Marie said it was part of her "follow-ups" to see whether a potential client had checked her profile. Colin said that if they had done this, it was an indication that others were taking him seriously: "They had checked out my profile, so it was as if they were looking into me, because you could see that, and they actually asked to connect with me, so straight away. I saw they had taken me seriously."

Therefore, it can be seen that participants were concerned that looking at others' profiles might affect their professional reputation, as it may appear as though they were 'stalking' or being voyeuristic, or it may give a false message to others whose profiles they had viewed, that they were interested in them. However, when others looked at their profiles, participants' reactions changed. They talked about this as an indication that they were being regarded positively by colleagues and possible clients, or that they

198

were being noticed in the marketplace, which they viewed as a measure of their professional standing as observed by others, a validation of their professional identity.

Although participants seemed concerned about being seen to be "voyeuristic" they also gave practical reasons for looking at others' profiles. The primary reasons participants provided for checking profiles, even if they were not looking for connections per se, were two-fold. One was to check the credibility and background of someone who had invited them to connect, or with whom they were doing business; the other was to gain information about people that they may be meeting and potentially building a relationship with. As discussed in chapter five, participants said they checked the profile of someone who had invited them to connect but they also checked profiles of others who wanted to do business with them. Leah explained this in the typical comments, "Maybe it's browsing the profile of somebody who's accepted me as a contact, or requested a contact…just make sure I know who they are and…yeah" and Trish said, "Suppliers as well... if somebody approaches me to supply I tend to use it to kind of check them out a bit, just to check they are who they say they are and things like that".

The second reason participants gave for checking a profile was to find out background information when meeting someone new, as Peter described:

> The LinkedIn profile - this is typically how I'll use it if I am meeting people: I will check just to see who they are and who they know. and Wilma, "I might look them up on LinkedIn, find out a little bit more about what they do, because it's a starting point to have.

Participants often indicated that they would use this information to establish a rapport when conversing with someone new; Sam said: "I use it for people that I might be doing business with, to find out a bit about them; I looked up a person and I kind of sussed out [researched] a bit of her background there before I met her, so I could make some intelligent conversation". Wilma said, "I might look them up on LinkedIn, find out a little bit more about what they do, because it's a starting point to have. So, it's a way that I learn about other people, just information basically, it just helps with my communication by giving me background." Peter explained how he believed LinkedIn was also useful for quickly finding common ground with a new group:

> I'll look people up on LinkedIn prior to a meeting, so if I'm at a meeting, and if someone else is invited I haven't met, I'll look for them on LinkedIn... Now you just

sit and read everyone's CV before you go and meet them. So, it is interesting, and it really helps because you can find things that they're interested in or have done...or are similar to yourself and build common ground.

Accordingly, this checking of profiles is starting to be viewed as part of being professional, being informed about others and as a result, being able to create good relationships with someone when you first meet them. Kay viewed this profile checking as a two-way process for improving communication. By providing people with information about herself on LinkedIn, she believed it makes them feel more comfortable with her: "It is a good way for people to maybe know a bit more about you without having to ask certain questions because they're not always comfortable asking that.".

In summary, this activity of mining for information about others, which most participants engaged in, was discussed as potentially having the power to damage participants' professional self-concept, as well as the image others had of them. Many still indicated they regarded the activity as somehow underhanded; they personally did not want to view themselves as someone who engaged in 'stalking' or gathering information about others in a furtive manner. This negative effect on their concept of self as an individual and a professional is supported by the fact that participants were also concerned that others may see them doing this. However, they also indicted they viewed this information-gathering behaviour as enabling them to enhance their professional image and self-concept. They said that showing knowledge of and an interest in others, particularly prior to meeting them, was part of a professional approach, and could positively influence the course of relationships, business meetings, and team processes. As this information was now available on LinkedIn it was now being discussed as part of their professionalism to do this research, to be informed about people before you met them or do business with them, and possibly risky not to.

In addition, interest by others in their profile was something participants seemed to find affirming as a professional, and as an indication that others were looking for them and wanted to find them. They appeared to be using these profile views as one measure of their professional and business importance and reputation, in effect a form of auto-communication around their professional identity As well as the participants' interest in

who was viewing their profiles, and what this meant for their professional profile in the industry, participants made statements that indicated that some of their information-gathering behaviour was enacted in a bid to observe how they compared to others they knew with regard to their profiles, careers, and lives in general. Typical comments include those made my Trish: "It was great for that, because it gives some of the professions, jobs, schools- it's a hub of information" but added "I don't do it regularly". Wilma described this behaviour as follows:

> Yeah, I've searched for people I used to work with... people I used to go to school with. I've just done a random 'I wonder what they're doing now' kind of thing, and I've found quite a few people through there. That's really interesting when you find out somebody you went to school with is a brain surgeon, you always knew they'd be something like that and somebody else... I got a LinkedIn request actually from somebody I went to school with... 'wow I recognize that name'... and he works at NASA! Quiet guy and yeah, he works at NASA. It's been really interesting finding out people that you used to go to school with and what they're doing now, it's really good.

Belinda commented that she used LinkedIn to keep track of previous colleagues and clients, "And sometimes you don't know where they end up, so it's quite nice to know where people end up and what happens next".

In these examples, the participants indicated that they gathered information not to connect with others, or to find out if they were making an impression on others, but to compare the careers and lives of others to their own. There appears to be a desire to locate themselves in the web of relationships of known others, and to keep track of their progress vis-a-vis others. Don noted that LinkedIn shows him where he is situated within this web of relationships, how far he is separated from others, and who knows who, as he describes here: "And it shows connections of how far you are separated from people, and who knows who...that obviously, that's fantastic." This kind of tracking points to a desire not so much for building up a social network, or creating relationships within a community of SBOs, but to create an ongoing mental map of where participants and their peers fit within the fabric of society and work. As such, this process also involves them engaging in another dimension of identity construction work.

This image of a virtual map of where they fit within a web of business relationships suggests that the participants professional identity on LinkedIn was not just constructed

through individual's offered or presented definition of their professional identity, or the validation, affirmation and recognition of others, or even comparison with others, but was also influenced by participants' increased awareness that they were part of wider virtual web of relationships between professionals, a web that was highly accessible to their view and omnipresent, as represented by the LinkedIn network. This network provided them with a context in which they and others could position themselves as professionals, even if they were engaged in a solo business. In addition, their LinkedIn profile provided them with a single place where their professional story – not only their present business or recent work – could be curated and publicly presented, as Brian describes in the following:

> I've got a lot of that information spread around the internet and when you start putting it into LinkedIn you start getting this real historical recording of your whole business life and I really like that. And then you've got all of your friends giving you recommendations and stuff like that so it's a reputation tool, you know it's really good. There's lots of tools out there where they'll measure your reputation based on how many times you post or how many pages you've made and stuff like that, but I think probably the best one at the moment is LinkedIn.

The fact that this individual profile page exists, appears to serve as is an affirmation and a measure of participants' and others' on-going professional identities.

Brian's comment also illustrates how online professional identity construction on LinkedIn is becoming more public and permanent, (Young, 2013), regulated through the discourse structure of LinkedIn's environment. As LinkedIn grows more people now author and publish their work or professional histories online, an autobiography that once written and publicly displayed becomes an enduring aspect of their identity.

In summary in this chapter, contradictory, paradoxical or tensional themes of entrepreneurial professional identity construction on LinkedIn are discussed. The participants articulated a need to demonstrate they followed thought-leaders, but at the same time needed to be present themselves as personally expert and knowledgeable. However, though they needed to appear to be expert, they were also extremely concerned about presenting themselves as modest and in no way appearing superior to others, and to never publicly correct or contradict others. They said they as were very much aligned with – or practically identical to – the identity/brand of their business and that they needed to 'sell' it through their online interaction as individuals. However, this

need created tensions as they expressed an intense dislike of being viewed as selling or being aggressive in their marketing approaches, something they disliked in others on LinkedIn. They also said believed that they needed to be truthful and provide suitable useful information to a wider audience, but at the same time to be professional was to protect their brand and intellectual property, indicating another tension Participants also expressed a need for their professional identity to reflect aspects of their personal selves but in contradiction that they had to keep, and to be seen to be keeping, their professional and personal identities separate online, Participants reported viewing others' profile on LinkedIn and described using this information in their professional lives, but expressed a tension that they may be seen to be doing so and this was unprofessional, and paradoxically they were using this information and others' views of their profiles to measure their own professional status. Therefore, they both desired to surveil others through LinkedIn, and were reluctant to do so for many reasons; the regarded watching others as unprofessional, they felt uncomfortable about it as something not congruent with their own sense of self, and they did not be seen to be watching.

Conclusion

Much of the professional identity construction work described reflects the appropriate identity behaviour of traditional organisations, even verging on the side of formality (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Murphy & Zorn, 1996). It appears that the dominant discourse of participants one that reflects a professional identity that is cautious in volunteering expertise, polite, supportive and modest, critical of salespeople, and somewhat suspicious of strangers, indicating a possible trend towards greater insularity within a known group than possibly even in the physical world.

There were, however, divergent discourses and other influences in participants' discourses. Some described actively expanding their network, a curiosity about strangers, and an acceptance of and willingness to give praise and effect endorsements. In addition, the ease and prevalence of 'stalking' behaviour brought the careers, achievements, and connections of others into constant view in a way that was previously not possible, creating a window on the world outside participants' networks. These discourses generally came from immigrants to Aotearoa/ New Zealand.

Within the analysis I identified that some of these tensions were being expressed as tensions within individual discourses and some more as contrasts between discourses of different groups of individuals. These differences suggest that tensions are being managed in different ways. In some cases, groups are selecting one pole in the tension over another, in some cases individuals recognizing both poles and vacillating from one to another or seeking to integrate both poles through a forced merger and in a few cases transcending these dichotomies through reframing or synthesis. These observations will be further discussed and compared, and the synthesised findings presented in chapters four and five will be discussed in the next, and final, chapter.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and conclusions

This study began with my observation of family, friends, and acquaintances who had taken up self-employment, and were becoming involved in a virtual world of work-related social media. My interest was in if, and how, this virtual world acts as a site for construction of this new work identity as an entrepreneur or small-business person. My definition of this identity was widened to include 'professional' when participants repeatedly referred to themselves as 'professionals'; thus, the study became a study of a hybrid identity, i.e. the entrepreneurial professional.

The general purpose of this study was to explore how work or occupational identity is discursively constructed on social media. The specific group identified was Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals who engaged on LinkedIn. As this is an exploratory study, I was concerned not to predict or pre-empt the identity themes I might find, and therefore in my analysis I first focused on the communicative processes around participation on LinkedIn and construction of identity there. Accordingly, I organised the analysis of the participants' experience on LinkedIn around three interrelated metaphors of communication that emerged from the participants' discourses. These were: firstly, 'engagement' in general terms, with an emphasis on the participants' engaging in and making sense of the context of social media, secondly 'connecting' or 'networking,' and thirdly, 'interacting.' These three discourses of engagement, networking, and interaction, that have been identified as three metaphors of communication itself (Putnam et al., 1996), as discussed in Chapter one. All three align with an overarching constructionist approach, but each highlight certain features that other two perspectives neglected and provided important and interrelated insights into identity construction on LinkedIn.

After the first level of thematic analysis, tensional, contradictory and paradoxical themes emerged as dominant features and, after recourse to the literature, I came to utilise a tension-centred approach in the subsequent analysis. This approach, as advocated by Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) and others (e.g.Putnam et al., 2016; Putnam et al., 2014) focuses on identifying and naming paradoxes, contradictions, ironies, and tensions within discourse. The first set of tensions identified were tensions around engagement in the context of the virtual world of social media, and specifically,

LinkedIn. Secondly, there were tensions around networking or connecting, that is, creating and displaying a network, which were related to both the context of identity construction and the work of identity construction itself. Thirdly, there were identity construction tensions around interacting and relationship-building activities. These tensions, which emerged from unpacking participants' discourses around engagement, were diverse, wide-ranging, and present on many different levels and dimensions. To analyse and make sense of these tensions, a hierarchy of levels of tensions was developed and from this, and then an integrated framework of themes in intersecting dimensions was created.

In this chapter, I firstly present a summary of findings in these three areas, as unpacked in the three analysis chapters. I then present a discussion and interpretation of these findings, including a collation of the identified tensions into several levels in a hierarchy of tensions, working towards the presentation of a two-dimensional framework of tensions and meta-tensions on LinkedIn as a major contribution of this study. Next, I discuss other contributions to the fields of organisational communication, organisational studies and identity construction. I then discuss the implications for research of this study, with specific reference to entrepreneurial professional identity, and the application of findings to New Zealand and global business and education practice, as they relate to LinkedIn. Finally, I present the limitations of this study and suggestions for future research.

As indicated above, in organising the findings, I came to utilise a tension-centred approach. Accordingly, in this study, analysis of the participants' discourses revealed 29 sub-tensions or themes that were summarised into 11 main tensional themes. These tensions unpacked and considered in the three analysis chapters, are: two tensions around the virtual context of identity construction, four tensions around networking and making connections, and finally, five identity construction tensions around interacting and relationship-building on LinkedIn. These tensions are collated in Table 4. In the next section, I briefly discuss these sub-tensions and tensions.

Table 4: Tensional themes in discourses about engagement, networking, and interaction

Engagement	Networking	Interaction
Place vs space	Imperative to network vs reluctance to do so	Aligns with thought leaders but is also original
Risk of participating vs risk of not participating	Networks as living vs networks as fixed	Is an unassuming expert
	Openness vs closedness in networking	Sells without being a salesman
	Displayed network vs protected network	Separates and combines personal and professional identities
		Wants to surveil or watch others but doesn't want to surveil or watch others

When discussing their engagement with the virtual context and social media generally, a deep underlying tension was revealed in the analysis around the participants' use of contrasting discursive resources, which simultaneously described cyberspace in language that referenced images of both 'places' and 'spaces.' On one hand, the participants' discourse alluded to cyberspace as comprising boundaried, defined, separate 'places'. They referenced appropriate or expected behaviour and appropriate occupants to each 'place', seemingly ascribing a cultural context and imagined audience for interaction and identity presentation, based on a known or familiar context within the physical world (D. Boyd, 2007). However, different participants expressed different images of the social context of each 'place' and therefore, different expectations regarding their appropriate use, creating a basis for interactional tensions, which will be discussed later.

In contrast to images of 'places' within the discourses of the same individuals, a contrasting but simultaneously-held image of cyberspace was conveyed as a wide open, un-boundaried, flexible, unmappable, global, and disembodying 'space'. Participants' discourses conveyed the recurring theme that social and cultural mechanisms had not

yet given clear meaning to this environment, and it was therefore chaotic, unregulated, and risky to enter, so much so that their sense of self became lost in this space, and they were unsure of where they were going in cyberspace, or why (cf.D. Massey, 1994).

When the analysis of the participants' discourses specifically focused on the specific context of LinkedIn, a second tension emerged, related to the first tension, but one that I considered separately in a bid to provide more insight into LinkedIn as an organisational setting. This tension was expressed in the paradox of LinkedIn as an important business tool that was necessary, risky *not* to use, but also risky *to* use, because of the many business, personal, and even social risks associated with its use.

When the analysis of the participants' discourses focused on networking through issuing and accepting invitations to connect, they indicated that online networking had opened up expansive and easy opportunities for connecting. They also felt a strong expectation, as a professional, to actively network on this site (more so now that they were a business owner or entrepreneur) and an imperative that creating a digital network was a necessity. However, in contradiction to this networking imperative, most participants said they preferred to, and did, limit accepting invitations to connect to people they knew, and to issue even fewer invitations themselves. They said they also did not like to be seen as networking incautiously, or even too actively or strategically.

The participants' discourse also revealed tensions around their displayed network. On one hand, they said that a large network of contacts reflected positively on their entrepreneurial professional identity. In contradiction though, they also indicated that a small, exclusive network aligned better with their sense of professional identity, and that displaying a large network may convey a message that they were not a genuine authentic professional; thus reflecting the traditional image of a professional as belonging to an exclusive network (Crane, 1972; Macdonald, 1995). Both views can be seen as consistent with the claim of Donath and Boyd (2004) that, "In this context, 'public displays of connection' present the center of identity performance and are typically viewed as a signal of the reliability of one's identity claims" (p.73). This tension around whether to display a large or limited network, illustrates the paradoxical nature of identity performance in this context. Many also expressed a trend to retreat from open active networking over time, rather than becoming habituated to it. They

referred to their LinkedIn network as a database, rather than an active living framework of relationships, indicating they viewed their LinkedIn network as somewhat static. Also noted was a predominance of Aotearoa/New Zealand-born and educated participants expressing a stronger preference for passive networking (i.e. only accepting invitations and not issuing them), and a limited set of displayed connections.

When the analysis of the participants' discourses focused on interaction with others and relationship-building, their responses revealed other identity construction tensions. They expressed a need to appear to be experts and knowledgeable, but at the same time, modest and unassuming. Much of the professional identity construction work described in their discourse reflects the dominant global discourse around professionalism, for example, being polite and exclusive, and there were indications that these professional identity behaviours were being intensified online. However, there was also a cautiousness around volunteering expertise that made it difficult to present as an expert, a wariness of connecting with strangers, and a possible trend towards even greater insularity within a known group than in the physical world. There was little alignment with the dominant discourse around entrepreneurialism, of being assertive and taking risks, and this feature was more prominent in the Aotearoa /New Zealand-bred participants.

A prominent theme in the participants' discourse was that their own identity was very much aligned with the identity or brand of their business. On LinkedIn, which many referred to as a marketplace, they now felt personally responsible for getting their brand known, but there was tension in doing so, in that the process would reveal too much of their personal identity online. Additionally, they said that they needed to offer useful information to 'look the part', but not give away too much intellectual property to strangers. Furthermore, they were concerned that they may come across as 'selling' or being aggressive in marketing their business. There was also tension around the need for work or professional identity performances to be congruent with wider community identities and historical work identities, all of which are now publicly displayed on LinkedIn.

A further tension was evident in the participants' admission that they often viewed the LinkedIn profiles of others, even if they were not connected or did not want to connect with them. This surveillance feature of LinkedIn increased expectations that they were

informed about others' background and careers as a part of their relationship-building process, but it also served to allow them to more easily reflexively evaluate their own and the careers of others, thus influencing their own identity construction. Their interest in watching others was offset by a concern that this was not polite and could be interpreted as 'stalking', creating tension around being observed as watching, or even simply knowing themselves that they were doing it. Participants stated that not only would others consider this behaviour unprofessional, but that it was also incongruent with their professional identity and even their own sense of self.

In summary, the analysis of the participants' discourses overall revealed that LinkedIn was in fact being utilised as a site for the construction of entrepreneurial professional identity, and that this was becoming necessary and for many a normal, yet also complex and contradictory process, fraught with tensions. LinkedIn appeared to be simultaneously providing participants with a means to connect with others and construct a work/professional identity but also to be limiting their social work-world by connecting them only to those who they considered appropriate, that is, were like them. This self-boundaried world is likely to have a regulating effect on their identity construction in this world. There were, however, divergent discourses. A few participants described actively expanding their network, curiosity about strangers, and an acceptance of and willingness to give praise and endorsements. These divergent discourses were almost exclusively from immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand, indicating a divergence between local contextual discourse and the wider global discourse related to professionalism and entrepreneurialism.

Having detailed and summarised the sub-tensions revealed in the findings of this study, I will now move to a discussion and interpretation of these tensions, and link these to a wider framework of tensions and meta-tensions, as identified in the analysis.

Discussion and Interpretation

I have based my discussion, interpretation, and implications of these tensions on four tenets related to this tensional approach as described by Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004). The first tenet is that organised irrationality and paradoxes, contradictions, and ironies are ubiquitous, and create tensions that are a normal condition of organisational life. The second is that communication is a site where organisational members struggle for

the primacy of various meanings of truth and identity. The third is that tensions, although irrational, can be creative and energising, and not necessarily anomalous problems to be removed or resolved. Finally, that these tensions are an applied concern; that is, if irrationality is positioned as an endemic feature of organisational life, then the concern is to consider how men and women live with tensions productively, rather than seeking a means to eliminate them.

The tensions experienced by the participants around professional identity construction on LinkedIn were to be expected if they are ever-present in organisational and/or occupational identity construction. As such, the evidence that tensions around work identity were present indicates that LinkedIn has in fact become, or at least, had been in the process of becoming, an alternative organisational site, or using Cheney and Ashcraft's (2007) description, a "less predictable setting of organizing" (p.161). By articulating their contradictions and struggles to present an authentic entrepreneurial professional identity, participants are confirming that the site and their interaction there matters to them in their daily work activity, in the same manner as the interaction in a more traditional work site is important to individuals, as they engage in the social world and identity construction processes there. However, this process of the construction of LinkedIn as an organisational site is very much in an emergent stage, as became evident in the conflicting images in the participants' discourse around whether the context was still a 'space' or had become a 'place', as discussed below. Notwithstanding this tension, the study not only claims that LinkedIn is emerging as a context for organisational identity construction, but also identifies tensions inherent in this process, tensions that are new or take on a changed character or significance on LinkedIn.

The identified tensions are complex and interrelated and can be viewed according to different levels and dimensions. The tensions at the first level are the contradictory or paradoxical discourses within or between discourses, or sub-tensions. At the second level are tensions that are an interpretation or generalisation of these sub-tensions. There also emerged two dimensions of tensions. The first dimension related to the specific context, that is Aotearoa/New Zealand, LinkedIn, and the online entrepreneurial professional. This dimension of analysis accords with Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) advice to pay "particular sensitivity to institutional and contextual variation" (p.161) when researching identity construction in unpredictable organisational settings. The

211

second dimension, described as meta-tensions, are more general tensional themes around identity work that surfaced in the analysis, and which align with those in prior studies in organisational communication, but which have taken on a different emphasis and character when experienced in the LinkedIn context. Both dimensions of tensions were surfaced and unpacked in the analysis chapters but were not analysed or ordered there into these two dimensions; they are simply presented as multiple tensions. The aim of this section is therefore to identify, organise, and discuss these tensions and meta-tensions, and to present them as an integrated model. In doing so, I am seeking to contribute to the body of knowledge, not only by identifying the unique features of organisational identity tensions in the novel setting of LinkedIn, but also by offering a method of analysis for the identification of these organisational tensions, as well as a framework for ordering them (which can be replicated in other studies of LinkedIn or unpredictable organisational sites). Next, I will discuss the tensions in the first dimension of tensions, a dimension concerning the virtual context.

The first tension in this dimension was a tension of 'space' versus 'place'. The participants in this study were negotiating with themselves and others, not only their identity, but also the meaning of the virtual world in which they interacted. This negotiation is important for identity construction if 'place' is regarded as an active character in the construction of identity, rather than simply a context in which identity is constructed and played out (Gill & Larson, 2014b; Sampson & Goodrich, 2009). As Sampson and Goodrich (2009) contend, "places bring to the table their own sets of considerations in which the setting becomes active" (p.903). Participants' discourse around LinkedIn consistently utilised discursive resources referring physical places; however, there were distinct differences among individuals' images; consequently, there were differences in the descriptions of the identity that was appropriate for presentation there. These different images were underscored by tension between whether this context, i.e. LinkedIn, was one of many defined 'places' for connecting and interacting online, or whether it was still an unorganised 'space'. This 'space' was an environment that had not yet been given clear meaning by social and cultural mechanisms (D. Massey, 1994); it lacked boundaries and regulated behaviour. As such, it was a risky yet necessary environment to be in. The defence against this risk for many was expressed as

a tendency to limit connections and interactions, as well as behaviour that was not productive for promoting their business online.

The second dialectical tension identified around context reflects the 'irrationalities' that arise when the dominant discourse conflicts with the truth or identity of some participants (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004), for example where the local contextual discourse around identity diverges from mainstream dominant or transcendent discourse (Ashcraft, 2007; Gill, 2017). The virtual context of LinkedIn is both local and global, in that LinkedIn is worldwide, and global connection is as easy to establish as a local connection, purportedly making the world 'smaller'. However, in this study, the global/local tension was not so much centred on participants interacting globally, as most still tended to remain connected only within Aotearoa/New Zealand; rather, it was evident in two specific aspects of the study.

Firstly, when Aotearoa/New Zealand participants' discourses were contrasted with immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand, a tension was identified between the Aotearoa/New Zealand contextual discourse and the mainstream dominant discourse concerning entrepreneurialism and professionalism. For example, the need to be assertive and confident in communicating with others, set against the desire to be unassuming, and to not be viewed as a trying to be a 'tall poppy' as described in Chapter two.

The local/global tension was also evident in the implications of the design of LinkedIn. The technical digital context to some extent regulates identity construction work through the architecture and design of the site, a design that reflects dominant transcendent discourses around professional interaction, but these contrast with the discourses of Aotearoa/New Zealand participants around their professional interaction on LinkedIn. As discussed in Chapter two, LinkedIn as a site was created in the US as a site for professionals, and has been observed to incorporate and convey the image and qualities of professionalism and business that are dominant in mainstream or transcendent discourse (e.g.Papacharissi, 2009). A prevailing assumption of the LinkedIn site's design is that, in this place, a professional or business person is one who grows and expands a network, and subsequently develops these relationships through assertive interaction. In addition to their discomfort accompanying assertive interaction, as discussed above in the first section, most participants' discourses suggested

213

discomfort with the networking affordances of LinkedIn, which constantly display connection invitations or suggest connections. Despite espousing networking as an imperative, there was a reluctance to appear to need, or to be seen actively seeking out new business connections This reluctance to connect was consistently articulated more often and obviously by Aotearoa/New Zealand-born participants. This contradiction in their discourse aligns with Gill and Larson's (2014b) observations about mainstream and locale-specific discourse, i.e., "When they conflict, individuals are more likely to outwardly identify with the locale-specific discourse, yet still acknowledge the desirability of the transcendent discourse" (p.539). Such a tension between the networking imperative and reluctance to network seems to reflect an Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial type, where self-sufficiency and independence is valued. It indicates that the 'man alone' discourse is still influential, and that one of the reasons they had entered into business, to be independent, was not congruent with the need to connect to others, which is implied by LinkedIn's design, thus limiting the usefulness of LinkedIn's design as a business tool in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

These global/local tensions were interweaved in the discourse with other similar tensions, but from a different source – tensions experienced by blending professionalism and entrepreneurial identity, and how this hybrid presents online. The differences between 'professional' and 'entrepreneurial' identities are not new, but the hybrid type, the professional turned micro-entrepreneur, is increasing, due to opportunities opened up by the Internet and social media. Although the majority of participants seemed to align with some of the assumptions of the dominant discourse around professionalism, such as politeness, formality, and attention to detail in profile presentation, they also seemed reluctant to engage with LinkedIn functions more aligned with entrepreneurial activity, that is, actively expanding their network connections, and assertively promoting interaction, such as sharing expert knowledge in professional conversations, despite stating that such activities were important, creating a tension in the work of constructing the hybrid identity entrepreneurial professional on LinkedIn as discussed next.

The most prominent theme in the discourse of participants around professionalism online was the importance of being viewed as authentic. Yet being genuine and authentic as a professional, while promoting their business as an entrepreneur, was

fraught with tensions. They described being genuine and authentic as needing to present with the knowledge of a professional, and the communication abilities of a public representative of their business, but never in a manipulative, untruthful, or even too-persuasive manner. They needed to be seen as expert, but non-conflictual and modest, eschewing praise and avoiding obligations for reciprocal favours, but nonetheless being supportive and generous to others, expectations that are to some extent contradictory and tensional. These tensions are related to the conflictual expectations of a hybrid identity but are heightened on LinkedIn. Although the technology is necessary for building a new micro-business, since the main medium of expression on LinkedIn is writing, it lacks the media richness of other social media, and therefore makes meaning more prone to misunderstanding. Additionally, it is a context where different personal, public and occupational identities are more likely to overlap or merge, as discussed next.

The final tension in this dimension exists between bringing personal aspects to a LinkedIn identity, which then become both public and permanent (Young, 2013), and the desire to keep the personal private. This tension was increased by participants' awareness of "context collapse" (Marwick & Boyd, 2011, p. 114), and the consequent difficulty of separating personal and professional (as in the sense of work) identities in the virtual world. Participants said they needed to present a digital entrepreneurial professional identity that to some extent conveyed, and was congruent with, their personal self, in order to attract attention and likes. but they also needed to protect their personal self and postings elsewhere that may undermine their professional or business image. Their online performance needed to be carefully nuanced to include a wider public understanding of work or professional identity, than it would have been prior to social media, i.e. in a traditional work context. This identity could be viewed as more aligned with personal social identity as it had to be congruent with wider community identities, such as those of members of a charity board, as well as historical identities, e.g., former work roles, all of which are now available to the audience as a backdrop to professional identity performance. These findings align with other studies on increasing context collapse on social media; however, by shifting the focus to LinkedIn and work or occupational identity, the study highlights specific issues and tensions around work

and professional reputation, tensions that are directly related to the potential loss or gain of income and future work.

In summary, in the context of this study, four dialectical tensions or contradictions around identity construction were identified. Firstly, tension between viewing LinkedIn as a place or unregulated space and uncertainties about what type of space or place this is; secondly, a seeming inconsistency between the more transcendent or global entrepreneurial archetypes and the Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial archetypes; thirdly, a dialectical tension between the two sides of a hybrid, entrepreneurial identity, and professional identity. Finally, tension created by a desire to simultaneously present a credible work or professional identity, but protect and separate it from personal identity, in a context that blurs distinctions between the two and consequently drives a need for congruence between them.

These tensions are illustrated in Figure 3 below. The 'push-pull' effect of contrasting tensions in the context represented by the double-ended arrows is illustrated as directly or indirectly influencing the construction of identity on LinkedIn.

Figure 3: Dialectical tensions for an Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial/ professional on LinkedIn

In addition, these tensions are intersected in another dimension with three meta-tensions, which have already been identified in the literature on organisational identity construction (e.g.Cheney et al., 2011), but which appear to be more prominent, significant, and with a different character in the setting of LinkedIn. These tensions are illustrated in Figure 4 below, by the double-ended arrows illustrating the push-pull effect of these identity meta-tensions in the organisational context of LinkedIn. These tensions are: openness vs closedness, autonomy vs connectedness, and equality vs superiority. Added to these three tensions is a further tension around peer-to-peer surveillance, that is, tension between the desire to surveil others versus a reluctance to do so as this activity was antipathetic to politeness and respect for others' privacy. I will discuss these meta-tensions in this dimension in the following section.
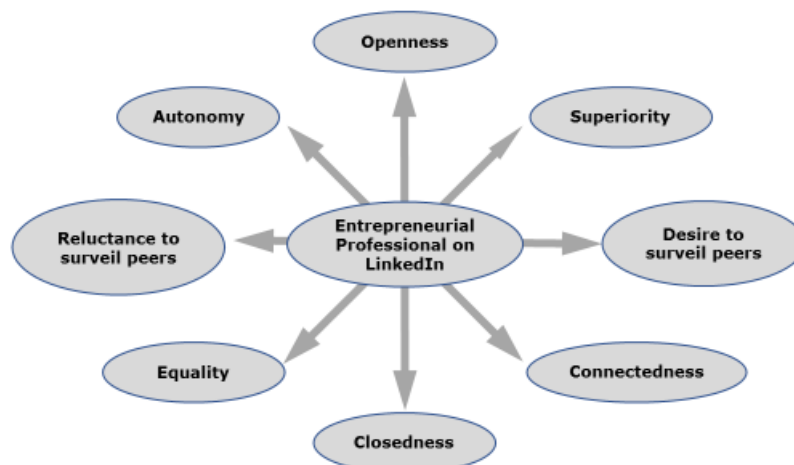
Figure 4: Meta-tensions on LinkedIn as an organisational context.

The meta-tension of openness and closedness can be seen in the tension between the risks and benefits of sharing information (Cheney et al., 2011) and the willingness, or otherwise, to merge personal and professional digital identities. Social media may increase the flow of knowledge through passive information-seeking strategies (Ramirez et al., 2002); however this knowledge flow on LinkedIn is limited by pressure

to protect intellectual property and information that constitutes personal business brand and a reluctance to share with an audience that is somewhat unknown and therefore, untrusted. Additionally, rather than using strategic ambiguity, such as posting samples or incomplete information, most Aotearoa/New Zealand users appear to prefer not to post at all, or not to post personally-authored content, but to follow and post the content of thought leaders.

The second meta-tension, autonomy vs connectedness, is revealed in willingness, or otherwise, to accept the networking imperative. Although social media such as LinkedIn imply more connectedness, it also increases the ability to be closed-off and autonomous. Connections can be limited, as in this context, without a digital connection, there is no need to interact with others who are not known or are not like you, thus creating a boundaried or 'small world' of interaction centred on the individual within the larger context. Aotearoa/New Zealand participants showed a stronger preference for closedness, to limit and make their networks exclusive, and to connect only with others who were known to them.

Participants' tendency to limit and make exclusive their networks, as revealed in this study, raises wider issues around social media use and LinkedIn, as well as work-identity construction within this space. As noted in Chapter five, the social world – where individuals interact and socially construct identity on social media – is created by the individual themselves through individual-centred network creation. Although social media opens up global and random possibilities of interaction, these will only occur on LinkedIn if there is a connection that is consciously established, a two-way digital first-person link to the person and their network. However, the entrepreneurial professionals in this study generally said they only connected with those they knew or who were like them on LinkedIn. The local Aotearoa/New Zealand discourse is likely to be influencing this tendency towards autonomy, but the individually-controlled LinkedIn network may, in fact, increase unhelpful isolating effects on LinkedIn users. As most online business interactions will be with others who are like them, and as participants spend increasing amounts of time on social media, this will have implications for work and professional identity construction. For example, individuals may be losing some of the wider perspectives they may have gained offline if they had to interact or communicate with others who were different from them. In addition, the tendency to

network, and therefore interact with those who are like themselves, will limit the opportunity for global business connections and new ideas through online networks.

The tension of equality vs superiority is evidenced in the need to appear an expert, but to also be modest and unassuming, no better than anyone else, and even to not be 'too expert'. A tone or contribution that implied superiority or even certainty was strongly condemned by many. This reaction is likely related to the local context and 'tall-poppy' syndrome, but was also the pre-eminence of written communication on LinkedIn, which makes tone management more difficult, as well as the public nature of a posting, which creates a high risk of disagreement, public correction, or competitiveness (Bovée & Thill, 2016). The context of LinkedIn therefore creates new and heightened tensions around this organisational dialectic of equality vs superiority. Avoidance of this tension by not contributing is not productive, as existence online does not only imply connecting, but also requires contributing, and this contribution needs to be provocative and interactive to get recognised (Young, 2013). As Benwell and Stokoe (2006) observe, "identity may be a matter of taking positions within discourse, but it is also an active process of discursive "work" in relation to other speakers" (p. 18). Therefore, managing this tension equality vs superiority through tone and carefully nuanced contributions is important.

The final meta-tension revealed in the study is in an interest and need to surveil, or watch, others for information and comparison, versus a hesitancy to do so out of politeness and respect for privacy, and the fear of being detected doing this. This tension is considered in this study as an overarching meta-tension in an organisational context, as the issue of surveillance has become increasingly salient in work life (Ganesh, 2016; Mathiesen, 1997). Though physically watching and being watched is a normal human activity in organisational life, the virtual context heightens and makes significant issues and tensions around surveillance, as discussed in Chapter two. If LinkedIn is accepted as an organisational context, then these surveillance tensions are newly significant organisational tensions. This study identifies this particular tension in the participants' discourses around surveillance; however, as this is an exploratory study, in this context, others are likely to be identified in future studies.

For the LinkedIn users in this study, the information gained by surveilling others was useful in relationship-building, and being surveilled was considered welcome attention, conferring professional recognition and increased social status (Marwick, 2012, p. 389). In contrast, being noticed watching others, they said carried the risk of being viewed as eavesdropping, voyeuristic (Marwick, 2012), and impolite or violating the privacy of others (Whitworth & Liu, 2013), and thus reduced the status and esteem of the watcher in their own eyes as well as the eyes of others. LinkedIn, unlike Facebook, has a default setting to identify viewers of profiles, and this was a constant tension for participants. Therefore, the LinkedIn context has greatly increased opportunities not only for surveilling others but also for being detected as obviously and explicitly doing so creating a new pervasive organisational tension, a desire to surveil others versus a reluctance to surveil others. A shift to viewing LinkedIn as an organisational context, where professional behaviour is expected, foregrounds this tension. Having discussed the two dimensions of tensions and meta-tensions, in the next section, I present a model that integrates these tensions.

The above two dimensions of tensions and meta-tensions do not imply that one is dominant over the other. They are discussed in two dimensions to differentiate the specific tensional elements of this study from more general tensions. One dimension, the horizontal, includes tensions inherent in the context; the context of the virtual world of social media, in this case LinkedIn, around space and place, i.e. the context of Aotearoa/ New Zealand; the life or career context of professionals who have become entrepreneurs, and the context of merging public and private identities. The second dimension, the vertical, includes meta-identity tensions that have been identified in organisational contexts in general, but that are highlighted or foregrounded in the virtual context, i.e. identity tensions related to levels of openness, connectedness, equality, and desire to and reluctance around surveilling others, which in turn are entwined with the specific contextual tensions. A combination of these sets of dialectical tensions can be represented as intersecting tensions within these two dimensions (see Figure 5). The figure links the specific tensions experienced in constructing identity in the virtual context of LinkedIn (indicated by dotted lines) to the more general identity tensions present within organisations (indicated by a solid line).

Openness/closedness (a)
Connectedness/autonomy (b)
Superiority/Equality (c)
Desire to surveil peers /reluctance to surveil peers (d)

Place/space (1)
New Zealand/Global context (2)
Professional/entrepreneurial identity (3)
Personal/public identity (4)
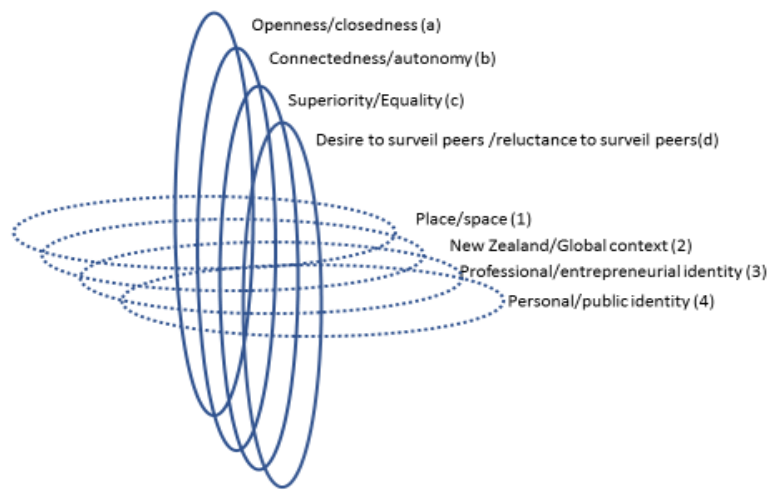
Figure 5: An integrated framework of identity construction tensions experienced by Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial/ professionals on LinkedIn.

Vertical tensions interact with horizontal tensions at different levels and combine to create unique tensions for each individual. This approach echoes Gill's (2017) conclusion to a study of entrepreneurial identity, i.e. entrepreneurial identity resides not in the person themselves, but in the context (in the broadest sense) in which they engage. For the entrepreneurial professionals in this study, a similar conclusion can be made, although identity construction in digital contexts has become even more complex and multi-faceted, as social media is collapsing personal and professional, and global and local boundaries, making multiple work identities more possible. Therefore, the tensions in constructing a digital identity are many-faceted. Though likely to include those identified in the study, they are experienced in a unique combination for each individual and entrepreneurial/professional, depending on the situation or context. A visual conceptualisation of how these identity tensions crystallise in each individual is presented in Figure 6 below.
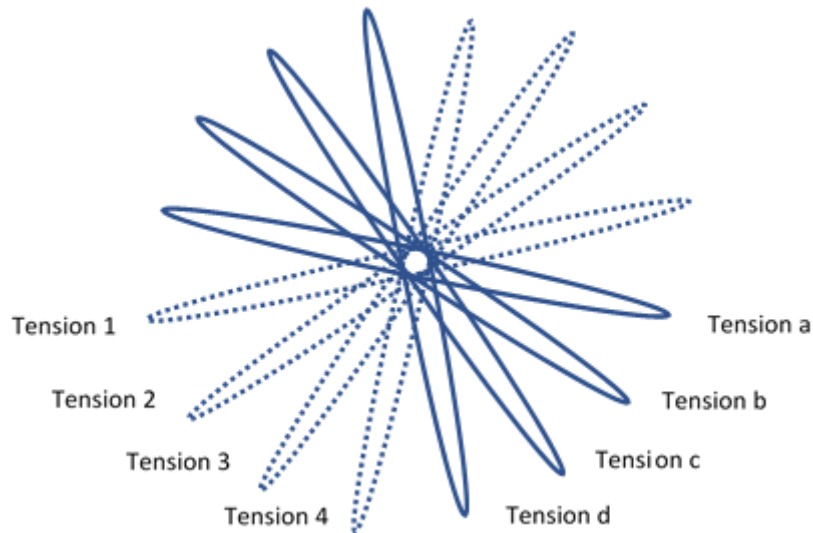
Figure 6: Conceptual image of identity construction tensions on LinkedIn for the individual.

The loops in Figure 6, signifying each identified tension (represented by numbers and letters) and in two dimensions (represented by dotted and solid lines), have been drawn out and rotated, so that that they intersect and crystallise at a central point. This point represents the unique identity tensions for an individual in a specific context. This multi-dimensional image of identity tensions arises partly from exploring communicative activity on social media from a three-perspective approach, consistent with the metaphors of communication as engagement, networking and interaction. This approach to analysis of the participants' discourses through these three metaphors was essential to adequately pursue the aim of this study in the complex study-context of LinkedIn as a new, fluid organisational form, as I argue next.

Putnam et al. (1996) advise that the bases for choosing a particular metaphor of communication in a research project should be; the researcher's goals, the ontological basis of both communication and organisation, and the phenomenon that is most central to the organising process. My goal was to explore if and how Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial professionals were creating a work or organisational identity on LinkedIn. The ontological bases of communication and organisation in this study is that communication is constitutive in that it creates and represents the process of organising,

and therefore organisations are always in the process of becoming through communication (Ashcraft, 2007). The phenomenon that is most central to the organising process is participation in and on LinkedIn. However, as this is an exploratory study, accomplishing the aim involved two interrelated and reflexive processes; one that identified that LinkedIn was being constituted as an organisation, and the second that identified and unpacked identity construction work on LinkedIn and the tensions in this process.

 Pertinent to this exploration then was the distinction made between communication and discourse. They are not synonymous, and an emphasis on language distinguishes the discursive from the more general communicative approach (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). Discourse, as defined in Chapter two, is both the medium and outcome for social interaction. The central concerns of discourse is language in use and the texts of ingoing interaction processes (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). From this discourse emerges contextual discourse (often referred to with a capital D), that is the general and enduring systems of thought (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Gee, 1999). The discourses of concern and analysis in this study are the texts of the participants' reflective discourses around LinkedIn participation. Within these discourses, contextual discourses are also identified.

Communication, as distinct from discourse, is a related but broader construct outside discourse and language. From a constructionist viewpoint communication is both the process and the outcome of the construction of shared meaning (Weick, 1990). It is a construct that encompasses, for example, network analysis, information processing, message flow, and consideration of socio/cultural context (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004). Accordingly, I have approached this study considering LinkedIn as a new organisational form constituted by communication, where discursive identity construction is occurring within the constructs of several broader communicative processes. These processes such as engaging in the virtual world by a deliberate choice to join, self-presentation and performance, networking and interaction, are all illuminated through different perspectives on communication.

To limit the discourses of their participation and the analysis of the discourse of the participants, to one metaphor or perspective on communication would have diminished

this study. LinkedIn was being considered as an organisational context that is novel and fluid. A wide range of concerns and possible identity tensions, many new to traditional organisational studies, had been identified in various other literatures, for example, literature on social media communication and entrepreneurial networking. These needed to be explored from different communication perspectives. A broad tent of representations of communication, metaphors of communication, as engagement, networking and interacting, therefore was needed to provide a framework for the discourses. These different perspectives on communication are represented by the three research questions. As the participants talked about their involvement in communicative activities on LinkedIn, a discursive construction of LinkedIn as an organisational site emerged, as well as the identity construction tensions they experienced there.

As discussed in Chapter one, considering the participants' discourses through the metaphor of engagement captured, though symbolic interpretation, their reflective understanding of this emerging virtual social world and the sense they made of it. This interpretation is at the core of creating and responding to paradoxes and tensions inherent in the context (Putnam et al., 2016; Putnam et al., 1996). Considering their discourses through the metaphor of connection or networking put an important focus on the digital individual-centred network, how this networking is creating social world of networked individuals, and the significance of this phenomenon for identity creation and regulation. The use of the interaction metaphor put the focus on interpersonal relationships and how organisational realities and tensions are brought to life in, mainly verbal, interaction and reflection. Therefore, by approaching the project through the three perspectives of communication, and by playing them off one against another, there emerged a multi-layered understanding of an emergent virtual organisation and identity construction tensions experienced there. It is through the use of these different lenses that the study's outcome of a crystallised image of identity construction tensions was able to be constructed.

I now return to the four tenets of the tensional approach articulated at the start of this section, in order to briefly summarise the contributions of this study thus far. In relation to the first tenet, i.e. that organised irrationality and paradoxes, contradictions, and ironies are ubiquitous, and create tensions that are a normal condition of organisational life, the identified tensions in this study provide evidence that LinkedIn has, in fact,

become – or at least was in the process of becoming – an alternative organisational site, and a site for organisational identity construction.

The second tenet, that communication is a site where organisational members struggle for the primacy of various meanings of truth and identity, is illustrated in the tensions arising from the participants' discourses. This study's contribution is to identify these tensions and to present a two-dimensional framework for analysis. A further contribution is the use of three discourses or metaphors of communication – engagement, networking, and interaction – to identify and analyse identity tensions. Each of these approaches have provided different perspectives on communicative activity on LinkedIn, thereby creating a multi-layered and dimensional image of identity construction tensions as they occur there.

The last two tenets, that is the third tenet, that tensions, although irrational, can be creative and energising and not necessarily anomalous problems that must be removed or resolved, and the fourth tenet, that these tensions are an applied concern, are addressed in the following section on application to practice. By foregrounding the tensions experienced in identity construction in this context, the "palpable binds people experience" (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989, p. 162) this study aids theory building in several other areas, (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004) as discussed next.

Other contributions

Firstly, this study contributes to the ongoing evidence that the Internet and social media is contributing to rapid social change (Meyrowitz, 1985). By providing evidence that occupational identities are being developed on LinkedIn, and therefore that a social order is being collectively and discursively constructed by participants, LinkedIn emerges as an organisational site (Kuhn, 2006). Thus, the study extends the academic discussion around dislocating organisational studies from traditional work sites as the primary influencer of work-related identities, to broader constructions of what can be considered 'work sites' (Ashcraft, 2007).

The study contributes to the academic discourse on the influence of 'place' as an active agent in identity construction. The findings of this study extend our understanding of Aotearoa/New Zealand small business owners through exploring their participation on

LinkedIn and are consistent with the view that Aotearoa/New Zealand is a unique small business environment. For example, the influence of place in terms of the Aotearoa/New Zealand setting is reflected in the discourse around professionalism and entrepreneurship. Most participants in this study favoured the presentation of a professional, rather than an identity that aligned with the dominant Western discourse around entrepreneurial identity, seemingly because this identity was more congruent with local discourses. Aspects of entrepreneurialism referred to positively in dominant Western discourse, such as assertiveness and connectedness, are not referred to positively in this study. As P. Lewis (2013) found that 'professional' is a more acceptable identity than 'entrepreneur' for female entrepreneurs; so this study reveals that in Aotearoa/New Zealand, there exists a similar negative view of entrepreneurialism as expressed in dominant Western discourse. However, the specific contribution of this study is that it reveals a divergence between the dominant discourse and a local contextual discourse, rather a divergence between the dominant discourse and a gendered discourse. Although Aotearoa/New Zealand it is a land of small business, the ideal of entrepreneurship here has a different character that is not aligned with assertiveness and connectedness. As (Gill, 2017) observes about Aotearoa/New Zealand, because of " the legacy of small business ownership in this country, coupled with a history of colonialism and diversity through immigration, as well as a geographically distant position and perception .... entrepreneurship means something different in Aotearoa/New Zealand than it would anywhere else" (p.53).

This study contributes to the local Aotearoa/New Zealand business research, in that it indicates that the ideal of self-sufficiency and independence, the 'man alone' attitude, may still be a strong theme in Aotearoa/New Zealand small businesses discourse. As identified in Chapter two, a greater understanding of the identity aspect of the Aotearoa/New Zealand small-businessperson is being called for to unravel the Aotearoa/New Zealand paradox (McCann, 2009), i.e. the combination of good conditions for SMEs to grow, and a general lack of growth. As the identity of a small-business is closely linked with its owner, LinkedIn is a useful site where social interaction and identity construction can be studied to reveal the underlying values and beliefs that drive these owners, and thus illuminate this paradox from a different paradigm. The LinkedIn assumptions that connections and networking with others, and

226

the growth of these connections are a given in business today, do not align with the discourses of participants about networking on LinkedIn in this study. The continuing dislike of the 'tall poppy' syndrome and egalitarianism appears to be a prominent factor in inhibiting contribution, discussion, and sharing of expertise on LinkedIn. This study also suggests that the design of LinkedIn reflects a dominant or transcendent discourse of Western industrialised countries about social identities, in this case, professional and entrepreneurial identity, which can conflict with the contextual or local discourse, creating tensions for users. With social media gaining a greater foothold in business, the features and affordances of global connectivity collaboration and sharing are likely to remain of limited use in New Zealand, given this conflict.

This study also extends the knowledge around social comparison and social anxiety on social media to LinkedIn and work identities. An individual's concept of who they should be, their "ideal selves" or "ought selves", facilitated by social comparison on social media (Jang, Park, & Song, 2016, p. 862), has been shown to cause social anxiety on sites such as Facebook (Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011; Jang et al., 2016). This study revealed that LinkedIn's affordance to view the profiles of others does facilitate social comparison; however, consequent social anxiety was only evident in increasing expectations to stay informed about the background and careers of others as part of the relationship-building process. Participants' strong interest in the profiles of others indicates they were using LinkedIn to situate their identities, and to gain a sense of who they were in relation to others within this social landscape. This was generally discussed as a positive feature. There was social anxiety, but it was centred on others potentially knowing they were observing, that is, that 'they were being seen to be watching', and anxiety that watching others was 'unprofessional', an anxiety heightened by the professional brand of the site. This finding provides new insight and a new dimension to organisational, political and sociological literature on electronic surveillance, which has traditionally been concerned with issues around the 'watched' or surveilled, and its implications for individual privacy and society in general (Birchall, 2016; Cook et al., 2015; Ganesh, 2016; Mathiesen, 1997). This study uncovers new tensions related in being the 'watcher' in electronic peer-to-peer surveillance.

Watching others takes on a different character on LinkedIn, where the digital connection allows for wide and easy surveillance for everyone because of shared

227

information, and LinkedIn is in many ways based on surveillance. Recent literature on social media claims that since 'sharing is the fundamental and constitutive activity of Web 2.0' (John, 2013, p. 176), it therefore follows that peer surveillance is an accepted mutual practice, a kind of silent communication, corresponding to some of the characteristics of online social networking (Albrechtslund, 2008). However, this study shows that for individuals, online peer surveillance is not a comfortable mutual contract, it still has negative connotations that create anxiety, not so much for the 'watched' as for the 'watcher', when the latter is an individual within the professional setting of LinkedIn. It is attractive to watch others surreptitiously, but at the same time, damaging to the watchers' own sense of self or professional identity by being seen doing so, or even when it is only that *they* know they are doing it.

The identified tensions in this study are important when considering how LinkedIn can be used in the businesses and lives of entrepreneurial professionals. As Trethewey and Ashcraft (2004) assert, finding how to live with organisational tensions, as opposed to simply eliminating them, is necessary in organisations, and the appropriate response to tensions includes finding ways to hold together necessary incompatibles, and identifying ways to cope. Consequently, not only surfacing the tensions on LinkedIn as common and normal, but also identifying the ways – both productive and debilitating – by which members cope with embedded dilemmas, so that LinkedIn or similar future sites can be used more productively for business, is a practical outcome and contribution of this research, as discussed next.

Application to practice

Responses to the tensions identified on LinkedIn can be found in other studies about social media (e.g.Farnham & Churchill, 2011). These responses, as discussed in Chapter two, are; to attempt to build notional virtual 'walls' between the professional and private selves, to limit and control networks and therefore, overall interactions, and to manage these tensions through a process of self-censorship and carefully nuanced self-presentation, rather than utilising privacy features (Chiang et al., 2013). As indicated above, the respondents in this study of LinkedIn favoured option two when creating networks, but option three for relationship-building or interactive activities. They limited their audience to known and local individuals when networking, but when

interacting, employed a seemingly more productive response of carefully nuanced interactions that were appropriate to multiple audiences and contexts, including the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, as discussed next.

Responding to these many tensions by retreating from the virtual world, and not having and promoting a digital presence there, is not a viable option in businesses of all types today but is particularly the case for micro-businesses in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Neither is retreat from active to passive networking, because digital identity cannot be established without creating an active and constantly regenerating network centred on the individual. It is only through this digitally-connected network that an individual exists in cyberspace. Therefore, this study indicates that greater understanding of how to use LinkedIn effectively is needed, and concurrently, this study contributes to this understanding through several practical applications.

Many participants in the study were experienced or becoming experienced at using LinkedIn, and although they felt tensions, they also revealed how they balanced positive self-presentation and branding in practice with interactive relationship-building that was appropriate to the Aotearoa/ New Zealand context. Similar to the findings of Vitak (2012) and Young (2013) in studies on Facebook, the participants consciously managed their online identity through the use of self-censorship, rather than privacy settings. They were aware of the public nature of their postings and took measures to monitor their own online behaviour, with a clear understanding that even though their profile may only be accessible to contacts, all their activity on LinkedIn left a permanent record that could be scrutinised at a later point in time. Thus, they indicated that for them, LinkedIn is not a 'space' in which to experiment with different identities, but more predominantly a 'place' where authenticity in identity presentation and interactions is essential for facilitating the online social networking process (Gosling et al., 2007). Many recognised a need for keeping some congruence with a personal self, and consistency in their professional self-presentation regarding their digital identities over time, as their work identities changed and transitioned in a manner consistent with Zuckerberg's (2010) advice to "have one identity" (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 199).

The experience of these participants can be utilised to inform employment seminars and courses. Younger professionals are generally well-versed in using Facebook and other

socially-orientated social media such as Instagram, but are generally less versed in using LinkedIn, the dominant social media site for work relationships (Florenthal & Dykhouse, 2012; Oslund, 2010). This study interviewed experienced professional LinkedIn users, and its findings can be used to broaden training courses beyond basic training, to create a curriculum vitae on LinkedIn (cf.Paliszkiewicz & Madra-Sawicka, 2016). As Young (2013) concludes in a similar study on Facebook use, "The activities of adult users would be well placed to inform educational strategies with adolescents to maximise their potential for appropriate long-term online social networking activity" (p.15). The present study suggests approaches for educating trainees on how to manage their online professional identity in an ongoing basis; that is, how to present a professional image and manage relationship-building that is appropriate to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, and to understand the potential negative consequences of poorly managed interaction or self-presentation.

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, as well as other countries, an increasing number of courses are offered for graduates or near-graduates on how to create a LinkedIn profile page, to establish a digital presence, and how to connect with potential employers. As Kleppinger and Cain (2015) contend, "Even if one is averse to using social media, future employers may use it for business purposes and for many, the ability to navigate social media is a non-negotiable 21st-century skill" (p.2). At present, many of these courses present social media and even LinkedIn as a professional danger, rather than highlighting its positive uses (e.g.Kleppinger & Cain, 2015). However as Kleppinger and Cain (2015) argue, "educating students about e-professionalism is important, [and] efforts should extend beyond addressing privacy controls and ill-advised Facebook posts, to encompass proactive, positive uses for social media" (p.3). In addition, this study can be used to inform and redevelop tertiary courses in organisational communication at a more theoretical level. Such courses can utilise the findings of this study to enhance an understanding of the tensions inherent in LinkedIn use and self-presentation, and how to navigate these tensions by accepting them as normal and consciously managing online identity through the carefully nuanced use of self-censorship, with a clear knowledge of multiple audiences.

At a practical level, this study suggests that specific technical skills are needed to enhance relationship-building. In general, the use of privacy settings and message

control settings were not common in this study; however, many participants indicated that they were not aware these existed and would utilise them once they knew how. The two skills in this regard were being able to make themselves anonymous when viewing others' profiles and grouping contacts so that postings could be sent to targeted or relevant groups. Participants indicated that they were cautious about researching the profiles of others, because on LinkedIn (unlike Facebook), they were visible doing this activity. They were afraid of spamming others with postings or irrelevant information, and these fears and cautions limited their networking and relationship-building activities. Therefore, practical skills for how to control postings to and from certain groups, how to block content or people's posts without eliminating them from one's network, how to limit email notifications, and how to use settings that will make possible anonymous viewing of profiles will be useful. These aspects address not only technical skills, but an aspect of nuanced communication with others, and can be included as part of relationship-building on LinkedIn in organisational communication courses. Such measures will reduce the aspect of threat and a perceived lack of control that appears to be limiting effective use of LinkedIn.

In terms of the Aotearoa/New Zealand business context, the findings of this study indicate that communication tone should take care to sound modest and non-conflictual, but sincere and honest. The use of endorsements must be limited, and issuing endorsements or invitations to connect, without obvious links or knowledge of the other person, will tend to be regarded as lacking in integrity, or perhaps indicate an insincere request for reciprocal favours. Aotearoa/New Zealand government and business advisors developing mentoring courses to encourage SMEs and others to utilise social media and Web 2.0 technologies can utilise the master/apprentice model, suggested above; that is, mature users of LinkedIn can mentor others. Such mentoring can also be useful for immigrants to Aotearoa/New Zealand, who will benefit from understanding an Aotearoa/New Zealand approach to networking and relationship-building. Similarly, the design of LinkedIn, which makes assumptions about professional behaviour, may provide insight into how LinkedIn's functions and design are perceived and utilised by professionals outside the US, where it was created.

In terms of networking and endorsements, it would appear that some aspects of the LinkedIn site are not congruent with an Aotearoa/New Zealand context. The site

assumes, by consistently suggesting connections, that networking will happen. Greater nuancing of these features to fit the Aotearoa/New Zealand context will assist LinkedIn to reach its membership goals, for example, including a video feature to visually introduce the inviter, which will be able to facilitate building trust. In addition, similar studies in other countries can be conducted to align the functions of LinkedIn to the values and expected behaviours of the typical users of these contexts.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that, because of the paucity of literature on identity construction on LinkedIn, with none in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, this research served as an exploratory study, and therefore, as the aim of the study is broad, the findings are broad in scope and somewhat tentative. The general aim was to explore whether LinkedIn as a social media site functioned as an alternative work/organisational site for identity construction for Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurs or professional people working in a self-employed or micro-enterprise environment. I explored this by surfacing identity construction tensions occurring there. Originally the study focused on Aotearoa/New Zealand small business individuals or entrepreneurs. However, when the participants were recruited through Aotearoa/New Zealand small business groups on LinkedIn, they self-identified in their discourses as professionals and as entrepreneurs; this required modifying the focus on identity to include both professional and entrepreneurial identity. This narrowed down the focus to a more specific identity but broadened the study through the inclusion of a second identity. From the participants' discourses emerged many different facets of identity construction – virtual identity, entrepreneurial identity, and professional identity, all in the context of an Aotearoa/New Zealand identity. These identities needed to be unpacked and explored in relation to one another, which created a rich but broad and general set of findings. In future research, a focus on the construction of each identity will reveal more specific understandings of each digital identity.

A second limitation that may be raised about this study is that it was situated in Aotearoa/New Zealand, which limited its context, thereby raising the issue around whether these findings are generalisable elsewhere. However as this is an interpretive study the issue of generalisability is not appropriate, as it is intended to contribute to our

understanding specifically of Aotearoa/New Zealand small or micro-business owners. That said, the conclusions about tensions between Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurial and professional identity and mainstream Western discourse are context-specific, however, they do suggest that similar differences may exist elsewhere, which can be explored. For example, the design of LinkedIn makes some assumptions about professional behaviour that are not context appropriate and this may provide insight into how LinkedIn's functions and design are perceived and utilised by professionals outside the US, where it was created. There are also other general findings about images of cyberspace and LinkedIn, and tensions experienced with professional interaction and identity construction on LinkedIn are less specific to the context of Aotearoa/New Zealand. However there is a limitation in that although Aotearoa/New Zealand is a bi-cultural country, this study is based primarily on Pakeha discourses, and responses may have been different, such as reflecting a less individualistic worldview, if Māori participants had been included.

Finally, the lack of literature and research identifying and drawing out themes in the local Aotearoa/New Zealand discourse around professional or entrepreneurial identity meant that these themes had to be interpreted indirectly, primarily from social, historical, and popular writing.

Future research

The findings and limitations of this study suggest several avenues for future research. Firstly, future research can focus on the construction of the two different occupational identities, professional and entrepreneurial, within a virtual context, which will reveal deeper understandings about the construction of each. Such research can also include identifying how individuals reconcile the tensions, or find ways to "hold together necessary incompatibles" (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004, p. 84) in order to function effectively in this context.

As LinkedIn is now emerging as an alternative site for the social construction of organisational identities, further research into the construction of identity on this platform, in particular research into online identity as constructed by the micro-entrepreneur in this context, is becoming an important field. Entrepreneurs and others such as those working from home need to find alternatives to physical workplace sites

where their work identity can be socially constructed and validated. LinkedIn and other sites such as Twitter, as well as blog sites, provide a platform for this identity work. Research in this area will therefore shift the study of work identity construction into a new work order.

Research into the local Aotearoa/New Zealand discourse around the construction of entrepreneurial identity is another direction for future research that is lacking and needed. As discussed in Chapter one, entrepreneurship, particularly micro-entrepreneurship, is an expanding phenomenon in Aotearoa/New Zealand (MBIE, 2017b), with a drive towards self-employment (Delwyn N. Clark & Douglas, 2014; Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017). Such research can contribute to understanding the identity conceptions of Aotearoa/New Zealand entrepreneurs and small business owners, figures that are prevalent in this country; therefore, provide a better understanding that is needed of the personal drivers of economic activity in this field.

Finally, research that identifies how LinkedIn's architecture and design are utilised in different contexts, outside their home context of the US, and how this design influences local engagement on the site, will be valuable. Such studies will contribute to an understanding of place-based differences in identity discourses, as well as the effect of social media in diffusing transcendent discourses globally.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in this study, I sought to explore a new, peripheral site of work, far from the 'notional' boundaries of traditional organisations or physical workplaces, that has been enabled by the technology of social media, as well as the social construction of identity that takes place there.

These words of Linda Putnam (2017) explain and support this quest:

> One big development in my discipline is the rise of social media in permeating and breaking boundaries – all kinds of questions are arising out of challenges to public-private and work-non-work as distinct boundaries. It's all about the new digital interface, convergence of media, and social media's influence in all walks of life – to the point that if you aren't situating your work in this space, you may not have a place in the discipline. I think the work that people are doing on social media and its relationship to organization and organising is critical. It's about constructing a new understanding of what is going on in society and with social interactions (In D. Grant & Cox, 2017, p. 192).

Defining LinkedIn as a new organisational context for work is possibly still a far-fetched notion for some; however, the experience of the participants in this study confirms it to be an important arena for their daily work lives. Furthermore, in the time that I conducted this research, LinkedIn membership worldwide expanded from 10 million users to 400 million users globally. This significant growth indicates the popularity of the site, and the ubiquity of social media in every aspect of life, including work life, and as such, should be a vital site of research for all aspects of social life.

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Appendix One: Guiding Interview Questions

Background

1. Do you own/manage a small-to-medium business? Yes/no
2. How many employees in your current company? (count yourself)

   2-4   5-9   10 -24   25-49   50-99

3. Gender: Male/Female
4. Age

   20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65+

5. What country did you complete the bulk of your education in?

Profile

- How long have you had a profile?
- For what purpose did you join?
- Is that purpose being met?
- How long do you spend on LinkedIn a day/week?
- Network sites? Group discussion sites? Other?
- Which do you use the most?
- How often do you visit the network sites? (on average per week)
- How often do you visit the group discussion sites? (on average per week)
- How long at a time on average do you spend on a group discussion site?
- When you post, do you reply directly to another post, or to the whole group?
- What version of LinkedIn do you have? Pay/free? Any particular reason for this choice?
- What do you think is positive about LinkedIn?
- Positive features of the format/design of LinkedIn?
- What do you think is negative about it?

Topic 2: Why are you a member of LinkedIn?

- Why are you a member of LinkedIn? Education? Career? Conscious or random decision? Other.
- How did you learn about LinkedIn?
- Have you been/are you a member of any other social networking services?
- YES: what kind of services? How are these services similar/different to LinkedIn?
- Do you use them often/differently?
- NO: is there any reason why you're only a member of LinkedIn?
- How long have you used LinkedIn? Do you see yourself continuing using the service in the future?
- In what types of situations do you see yourself using the service?
- What expectations do you have of professional networking services? Is this important to you?
- Does LinkedIn fulfil your expectations? Can you provide examples?
- What do you think about spending time on networks like LinkedIn?

Topic 3: How do you use LinkedIn to get in touch with new people?

- Do you get new contacts? How? Can you provide examples?
- Who do you contact? Have you ever been contacted by unknown people? Can you provide examples? How do you contact them?
- What kind of relationship do you have with these contacts now?
- Is there anyone you have not received a reply from?
- Who contacts you? Have you been contacted by any unknown people? Can you provide examples? How do they contact you?
- What kind of relationship do you have with them now?
- Is there anyone you have not responded to? Why?
- What type of people do you get in touch with? Entrepreneurs? Projects? Education and career? Job seekers?

- What use is the LinkedIn network to you? Can you provide examples?
- OR/AND does it help to maintain existing relationships? With whom? How? Can you provide examples?
- Have you found any old acquaintances through LinkedIn? Gotten back in touch? Can you provide examples?
- Have you consciously searched for old acquaintances? Can you provide an example?
- Have any old acquaintances found you? Can you provide an example?
- Have any of the relationships evolved with the help of LinkedIn? How? With whom? What features do you use to maintain relationships, e.g., endorsements, InMail, personal replies to group discussions?
- Is there anyone out of the work-context that you are in contact with? Have you made any new friends? Can you provide examples?
- Have you deleted any contacts? Who? Why?
- What do you think of someone if you cannot find them on LinkedIn?

Topic 4: How do you use your contacts?

- How many contacts do you have? Do you know who all of them are?
- How many of your contacts do you know?
- Why do you keep them in your contact list?
- Has anything become easier since you have started using LinkedIn networking? If so, what?
    - Do you use your existing contacts on LinkedIn? How? Can you provide examples?
- What is your approach to getting contacts?
- Have you ever been rejected/not received an answer? Can you provide an example? How did you react?

- Have you ever sent an InMail? Used an introduction? Can you provide an example/have you wanted to?

- What do you think about these functions?

- Professionals/friends? What do you have more of? Who do you contact most?

- What type of relationship do you have with your contacts?

Strong/weak ties? For example:

- Have any of the relationships evolved? Has LinkedIn played a part in this? Can you provide an example?

- Is there anything you would like to change about LinkedIn networking? If so, what?

Topic 5: What does social networking mean to you?

- All humans have a social network. What does social networking mean to you?

- How do you regard network-building?

- Professional network vs. personal-networks? Do you keep them separated?

- What is the difference? Difference in use? Exceptions? Do they overlap?

- Do you use your personal network in job-contexts? Can you provide an example?

- How do you keep in touch with people in your personal network? What tools do you use to do this?

- Positive/negative? Why? Can you provide examples?

- What is it about network-building that is important to you?

- Do you feel it is important to have an **online** network like LinkedIn? What is it that makes it/does not make it important? In what situations has it been important to you? Can you provide examples?

- Does LinkedIn work for you in terms of establishing, maintaining, and developing relationships? Is it simply an address book, or is it more than that? What do you think makes it/does not make it something else? (e.g., visual/interactive)?
- What part of your personal network does LinkedIn represent? Can you provide an example?

Topic 6: How have social networking sites like LinkedIn changed work/professional/personal life?

- How have social networking sites like LinkedIn and others changed your life? Work? LinkedIn in particular/personal? As a SME business owner, do you ever have a sense of isolation?
- If yes, do you believe LinkedIn or other social media sites have helped to reduce this?
- Have you used these sites for collaboration, cooperation, or gaining information from others that has helped you in business? Do you think people use LinkedIn and other sites as public platforms, i.e., to make social, political, or philosophical comments?
  - What is the level of trust you have of people on your social media networks?

General

Is there anything you would like to add?

Adapted from (Olsen & Guribye, 2008) and (Vickey, 2011).

Appendix Two: Demographic data

No.	Gender	Age	No. of employees	Business type	Location	Education
1	M	60-64	5	Business development, Property mgt.	Auckland	NZ
2	M	60-64	1	Finance	Otago	S.Am.
3	M	45-49	2	Advertising	Auckland	NZ
4	F	30-34	1	Beauty business	Tauranga	NZ
5	F	45-49	1	Communication, marketing and advertising	Auckland	UK
6	F	50-54	2	Communication consultant	Auckland	NZ
7	M	40-44	1	Designer/marketing company	Auckland	SA
8	M	30-34	15	Internet marketing company	Auckland	NZ
9	M	50-54	2	Web development	Auckland	NZ
10	M	45-49	4	Drug detection	Auckland.	NZ
11	F	60-64	2	Online school	Auckland	SA
12	F	30-34	9	Legal services	Auckland	NZ
13	M	55-59	3	Management consulting	Auckland	Ireland
14	M	60-64	1	Wellness and health consultant	Nelson	NZ
15	F	60-64	4	Language school	Ch.Ch.	UK
16	F	35-39	14	Taxation consultants	Auckland	NZ
17	M	55-59	5-9	Media	Auckland	NZ
18	F	30-34	1	Executive support services	Auckland	Samoa
19	F	35-39	1	Fine art supplies and services	Auckland	UK
20	M	45-49	3	Web design/Internet marketing	PN	NZ

21	F	40-44	5	Website development	Auckland	NZ
22	F	40-44	1	Writing and editing, publishing	Wellington	NZ
23	F	35-39	1	Mental health industry	Auckland	NZ
24	F	50-54	5	Marketing and advertising	Wellington	UK
25	F	50-54	2	Financial	Waikato	UK

Appendix Three: LinkedIn use

Partici-pant no.	Years on LinkedIn	LinkedIn use p.d/p.w.	Very regular/ regular/ occasional user	No. of contacts	Posts to groups	Stage of group partici-pation*
1	7-8 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Regularly	2
2	9 yrs.	Several times a day	Very regular	More than 1000	Regularly	3
3	3-4 yrs.	2-3 Times a week	Occasional	192	No	1
4	6 yrs.	Twice a week	Occasional	324	Occasionally	2
5	6 yrs.	Several times a day	Very regular	1000's	Very regularly	4
6	6 yrs.	Several times a day	Very regular	500+	Regularly	2
7	8 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Regularly	2
8	8 yrs.	Daily	Regular	389	Occasionally	1
9	6 yrs.	2-3 Times a week	Occasional	500+	Regularly	2
10	5 yrs.	Occasionally		376	No, reads only	1
11	3 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Occasionally	1
12	3 yrs.	Daily	Regular	200	A couple of times	1
13	8 yrs.	2-3 Times a week	Occasional	500+	Occasionally	1
14	5 yrs.	Several times a day	Very regular	491	No, reads only	1
15	2 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Very regularly	3
16	8 yrs.	Once a week	Occasional	500+	Once every two weeks	2
17	5 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Regularly	2
18	5 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Regularly	2

19	6 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	At least twice a week, v. regularly	3
20	3 yrs.	Every day	Regular	500+	Occasionally	1
21	5 yrs.	Daily	Regular	391	Occasionally	1
22	5 yrs.	Daily	Regular	346	Regularly	2
23	2 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	Regularly	2
24	6 yrs.	Daily	Regular	109	Regularly	2
25	6 yrs.	Daily	Regular	500+	At least twice a week	3

* 1 = lurker; 2 = novice; 3 = regular; 4 = elder or leader

Appendix Four: Analytic memos

Memo No.	Tape Nos.	Ideas
Memo 1	1, 3, 12, 15, 25	Stalking/tracking behaviour Hesitancy to post or give opinions publicly
Memo 2	2, 4, 7, 18 and 20	The virtual world of work Identities Managing connections
Memo 3	6, 10, 13, 22, 23	I am my business; my business is me LinkedIn provides different work opportunities, pressures and dilemmas It is my responsibility to brand my business, but it's risky on LinkedIn
Memo 4	Tapes 5, 8, 11, 16, 17.	Networking and networking styles
Memo 5	Tapes 9, 14, 16, 21, 24,	Etiquette in groups

Analytic Memo 1 Tapes 1, 3, 12, 15, 25

Stalking/tracking behaviour

This behaviour refers to LI members using the site to check up on old friends, acquaintances or colleagues and see what they are doing, although they do not intend to contact them, at least immediately. Members find this a satisfying and interesting activity and will devote time to it even though they say they do not have time to spend on LI.

However, they would like to do this anonymously (as on FB). They often express concern that this tracking may be seen by others on LI because they are aware of the tab-see who's looked at you profile. (Few seemed aware of the privacy settings that could make this activity anonymous). Therefore, it was a private activity.

There seems to be a desire to locate themselves in the web of relationships of known others and to keep track of their progress vis a vis others. Not to build up a social network as envisaged by Papacharissi (2011) and Parks (2011), or create relationships within community of SBOs, but to create an ongoing mental map of where they and their peers fit in the fabric of society and work.

New Zealand's history of a small population, where individuals were isolated from others in their places of life and work, is a situation that to some extent continues to today particularly with SBOs. It recalls the "existential angst" of identity loss in an empty landscape and separated from civilisation that anchored their identity and still inherent in New Zealand life today (J. Wilson, 1998). The need to create a sense of identity and links to wider community. Led to 'nosiness' about other people's lives, (where they are now? what they are doing? -in relation to my life) that has been noted as a characteristic of earlier times in small town rural NZ where at the most 'three degrees of separation' was the norm.

Example

Participants described LinkedIn, and it was useful "could keeping track of people changing jobs or moving in the industry." Or for checking up on the people that they went to school with or

met 10 years' ago and "and they can "have a look and find out what they're doing", and "to know where people end up and what happens next". There is an undertone of voyeurism or stalking that is reflected in the comment that it was as though LinkedIn was "a window into the business life" of people.

Hesitancy to post or give opinions publicly

Although most acknowledged that posting on LI was one way of building a profile or brand most saw posting is risky business and needs to be done cautiously or it may damage the member's reputation or relationships. They tended to look and see what others were posting. Members referred to several barriers that made them hesitant to posting to LinkedIn and engage in group discussions.

Conversely others' contributions were sometimes regarded with mistrust or suspicion that they are looking for personal gain. However, the it may also be an expression of the "tall poppy syndrome", a New Zealand tendency for self -effacement and a distrust of what is seen as insincere flattery (Motion, Leitch, & Brodie, 2001). There is a suggestion too that the reciprocal obligation involved factor is a kind dishonest manipulation. In a society such as N.Z. that values lack of corruption highly, reciprocity expectations in business can sometimes create underlying discomfort or distrust.

Appearing to be 'a know it all'

Replying to others in a way that might seems contradictory or correcting was considered not good etiquette. People may be offended, and this will affect reputation.

Content may not be good enough

Concern that the content posted will "not be liked" or may be considered expert enough inhibits posting.

Example

One participant said that he was concerned to provide meaningful content, or will they get sick of him and unlike him'

Others' posts are viewed with suspicion and scepticism.

Generally there was a reticence about accepting the value of others posting. Several commented on the fact that there was a lot of contractors trying to get business through posting.

Examples

Some saw a lot of information posted as "bullshit", inflating facts or giving endorsements that were not genuine.

Not all members held these opinions unequivocally. Participant 25 believed her postings added to her credibility and regularly gave endorsements, believing it was important to compliment people. However, she later contradicted herself when she discussed receiving endorsements from people who didn't know her well, saying "often people are trying to get in your good books".

Analytic memo 2-Tapes 2, 4, 7, 18 and 20

The virtual world of work

Participants discourses reveal the changing context of work where there is movement of work space to cyberspace, and the mental imagery or map of the virtual world they have formed of these virtual places. They are describing the virtual world as evolving into different spaces, work spaces, as well as a social spaces, political spaces etc.

 The SBOs seem to be creating boundaries or "mental fences" that can be used to simplify and order the environment, or "physical, temporal, emotional, cognitive, and/or relational limits that define entities as separate from one another" (Blake et al., 2000, p. 474).

Participant 20 explained his visualisation of work place in cyberspace. He characterised the whole cyberspace as marketplace. His website was like a shop or a business where the buying and selling takes place. Social networks of all kinds create the foot traffic, i.e. "they are just the foot traffic that… you've got to get the people back to your website. the whole goal … is to build up this foot traffic."

Other participants conceptualised this virtual work space in less physical ways. In their discourses, they talk of spaces where they are more in control, in the same way as they control their business premises, and other virtual places where they are not so much in control. In most cases the 'controlled' space, and where they are at home, is their website. On their own website, they see themselves as having have control of how they present their business image, themselves, a clear definition of services, prices etc. Their professional/business identity as they see it, resides more in their business website than their social media profile.

Example

Participant 7 sees himself and his website as the business -social media as a portal or pathway to this. "It's another portal [social media]: it is another step towards people who are actually accessing my business website and me".

Generally, they have less of a sense of ownership of LinkedIn pages, than their website.

 Examples

Participant 20 comments reveal this difference in ownership, "So I still steal them (recommendations) from LinkedIn and put them on my website."

However, for one participant 2, LI is his work identity and his work space. He says: "LinkedIn becomes my digital me, in the working area"

The social media space, or the foot traffic space, is generally described as more chaotic, unpredictable, uncontrollable part of the internet, overlapping with the social space. The metaphor of a 'gold rush' about LI used by two participants, reflects this feeling. Such a metaphor recalls the 2012 comments of a NZ Govt Minister that, 'the social media terrain is the new Wild West; chaotic and unregulated" (Walker, 2012, p. 165). A world of boundless connections and information has been opened up that is overwhelming for many. It is still for many SBOs in the 'too hard basket' to have any control over. Or it maybe they wish to protect their independence by remaining in their own workspace, rather than engaging in the hard sell of interacting in the market place.

There may be others' reasons for this hesitancy to engage though. The boundary between professional and personal life has been seen as one of the essential features of a bureaucratised society (Weber, 1968) and people display different identities when they interacted in a professional setting versus a personal setting with family and friends. This mental separation or 'boundary management' of multiple identities is a classic organizational challenge (Ollier-

Malaterre et al., 2013). Then there are the opposing human drives to segment, versus to integrate, professional and personal identities (Blake et al., 2000).

Identities

Identity management is more complex with online social networks. The ties or connections formed here also present new challenges, as previously that would have been formed in the physical work place or other recognised meeting places such as the Chamber of Commerce where boundaries around behaviour and etiquette are more established and accepted.

The managing of boundaries of personal and professional identities has been commented on in relation to social media such as Facebook (D. Boyd, 2007; Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). How a professional identity is established on sites such as LinkedIn, where self-presentation is riskier, as it is public and lasting, is less commented on. The SBOs in the discourse reflects different means of managing identity and connection.

Separate professional and business virtual identities and places

The discourses reflected a predominant desire to keep the two worlds of virtual personal and professional, separate. It might be that they are still influenced by a bureaucratic model of work, even though they are now in a small business, but it may be that given a desire for a personal lifestyle, not increasing wealth, that has been identified as one of drivers for NZers to go into business, they may wish to enforce this separation to protect their valued lifestyle.

LinkedIn is seen as part of the business space and is professional. Facebook, as is Pinterest part of social space and is more casual. Twitter is somewhere in between.

Examples

Participant 2 described cyberspace in physical terms as walled-off spaces "It's actually called the walls…the walls of internet. Well everything that happens in Facebook is behind the walls of Facebook." Participant 3 used the metaphor of walls and windows also "I see in Facebook as being a window into somebody's private life. And I see LinkedIn as being a window to their business life…personally. And to me it's quite a clear the divide between the two". This participant described LI as "more of a board room setting than a bunch of friends"

They all wished to keep their personal friends and business associates on separate virtual platforms, so they could communicate with them appropriately depending on the setting.

Example

This participant says: "professional network versus personal networks. To me it's important to keep them separated, and this participant explains on LinkedIn he remains professional with friends. "Even though a lot of my clients are my friends it's all professional stuff."

The need to keep these professional and virtual spaces separate is emphasised in different ways.

Maintaining etiquette

There are etiquettes for language behaviour and topics that are described as appropriate for each. Political views, family news and photos, are not welcomed on LinkedIn. Language is more formal, and format and structure is valued because it does not allow divergence from this behaviour. There is also a kind of hierarchy maintained, influencers and though leaders are named or identified by their number of followers. They are identified by the participants as 'experts' and have status. In many ways these mirror the norms practices of work organisations.

Examples

This participant explains what an inappropriate comment on LinkedIn is:

"You know my political views aren't relevant to my business colleagues on LinkedIn but on Facebook I've got a number of friends that post their political views and I'm happy to respond but I wouldn't do that on LinkedIn, it's not appropriate".

Conversely talking business on Facebook is not appropriate. One participant says that customers "don't want or see it (Facebook) as a business space " This participant uses the room metaphor again

"It's like somebody walking into your lounge. so if I walked into your lounge and said, 'hey do you want to buy a website?' or 'do you need some internet marketing?' you're going to go 'you've just walked into my lounge, we're having a conversation about our hobbies, why are you trying to sell me something?'.

There are also other behaviours that are considered inappropriate such as asking for recommendations or giving endorsements when you don't know someone well.

Example

Participant 18 describes this situation:

"Yeeah? There have been some interesting characters and I suppose it also brings out the question of the culture that is expected of people participating on Linked In, there are certain behaviours that you sort of raise the eyebrow... when they send you a request to recommend them when in fact you have never worked with them. That sort of contact from people doesn't really go down well with me personally, so you have these sorts of expectations as to how the people that are on Linked In are supposed to behave or carry themselves."

Interestingly this participant mentions culture. It is possible they are referring to some cultures where such requests are more common.

This behaviour it seems is often controlled by peers or social control. Others do not respond or directly address the writer.

Example

"Um...but what I found with some of them is that they quite often get shut down.

Um...you know, by other people to sort of say, "Look you know, this isn't an appropriate forum for you know, whatever... I mean the ones that I've sort of been involved with, they tend to have some quite um...vocal people in the terms of they're...you know, very well up in their own field, and um...you know, they just don't want people using the site or their postings of the...a marketing exercise..."

Managing connections

However, another way of maintaining tone and etiquette as well as maintaining reputation and distance between personal and professional is managing how contacts are made. Most will only issue invitations to people they know and are doing business with. If they are contacted by a friend or make friends with work colleagues, they will generally transfer that friend to Facebook.

Example

"…people that I work with and they have become friends, we tend to stay on Facebook or like they lead the conversation there on Facebook. So most of the activity has been on Linked In or has to do with the business contacts, so where I could see potential for business development."

288

By accepting invitations to connect from someone if they knew them in what they see as the 'real business world' they generally know how people will behave and that their behaviour will be business or professional

Example

 "Yeah, I try and keep it real world contacts only, rather than the random person. So, if somebody contacts me…normally it is they have invited me as a contact rather than me going out and finding them. So, at the moment, when I am just accepting their contact if I know them. But I don't, if I don't know them."

In this way, their reputation or brand is preserved.

Example

"we don't want to connect with people we don't know, but also if it doesn't work, because if I say...because you're connected to this person, I'm going to go 'yes', because if you're connected to them, it's worth something to me, someone that I'm connected to in LinkedIn, and there's a reason for that. I can go to that person and say, "Hey, can you introduce me to them." But if it's someone you don't know, and you've just randomly contacted with you, or it was the other way around, you won't want to do that..."

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Analytic memo 3-Tapes 6, 10, 13, 22, 23

I am my business; my business is me

The majority of the respondents were from businesses that could be classed as micro businesses. This was not unexpected as within NZ business sector, the majority of SMEs can be classed as micro businesses and as such the sample was similar to the wider NZ SME sector (MBIE, 2016). Also, most the respondents were from communication, marketing, design fields where networking and self-presentation are acknowledged and necessary skills, therefore they would be on likely be on LI as it is marketed as business tool for personal profiling and networking tool. Several others were from financial, law and health and fitness services. Many were working in two businesses or jobs sometimes to sustain themselves during start-up.

It is not surprising that there were many participants from all these fields as these are growth areas for start-up businesses (MBIE, 2016). Also, the predominance of these areas of business in the sample may present a bias in the study, however given that these are the growth areas in NZ, such a bias should not affect the utility and relevance for the study of communication practices of small business in NZ.

 Research indicates that they very common areas of new business because they rely on professional personal expertise or knowledge of the individual, rather than large capital investment to establish. Additionally, the advent of the internet and interactive particularly LinkedIn has provided mechanisms for this type of business to become known and be promoted relatively inexpensively by the owner/manager.

All the participants in this group of interviews expressed a close link between their business, their personal brand and their identity. Some seemed to find it hard to separate these mentally. They saw very little distinction between their company and themselves.

Participants 6, 13, 10 and 22 expressed this blending of their individual identity and their business, in terms of brands. Participant 10 went further and identified his personal networking with personal and company branding.

Examples

"as a representative, or the representative of a business we were speaking with our own profiles, so the focus really was in personal branding plus corporate branding inter-mingled." (P6).

"But I have the feeling that's the same thing...Yeah…Because my business is my brand and my brand is my business, so… (P.13)

"Well yeah, actually I think of, sounds ghastly, but I do think of myself as a personal brand,, so when you say do I have a company profile, in some ways I do. (P.22)

"So, that the company profile gets the brand out. Personally, it's partly networking as well: it's a bit of a personal brand and personal networking...definitely. (P.10)

This close link between themselves and the business was also expressed by Participant 6 as a feeling of pressure they felt that the business was only 'them'.

'We've got financial hurdles: we've got everything against us. We don't have budgets. We have nothing. We've just got ourselves. Whereas they have all sorts behind them, machines behind them to make them be what they are". (P.6.)

LinkedIn provides different work opportunities, pressures and dilemmas

Most saw it LinkedIn as a key tool in their type of small business, because it provided inexpensive means of promoting their business through networking, personal profiling and reaching new clients and business.

Examples

That's why I see it as such a key tool, particularly for, well, small people." (P.13)

Participant 23 said

"Well it's absolutely vital, but then perhaps...you're talking about small-to-medium businesses, I think it depends on the type of business you're in…I never needed LI until I started my business".

This tool being relatively new is likely to also be a catalyst for growth in these business fields. When asked if she would be in business without LI now Participant 23 said "Probably not...I'd also say that's the fastest way of doing it. Fastest way of building contacts and networking with people because it has become old-school to have these little meet-ups, people don't have time anymore…That's it, because it's mainly, in my opinion, it's mainly because of time restrictions, that we don't have time to connect personally anymore, and therefore social media would be the best, the most effective way of getting your name out there and connecting with others" (P23).

When asked the same question Participant 22 said:

"I think ten years ago for sure. I guess now I'd say, why would you want to? Why would you even consider that... So for me it's kind of, it would be professionally risky not to be using the tools I think".

Time pressure

The comments above indicate that uses LinkedIn saves time. However, paradoxically many, including participant 23, mentioned that this kind of networking and promotion came at a time and energy cost that they as an individual in business for themselves could not afford.

Examples

"I think since this study is around small-medium businesses. I think the answer to that has to be that all small-medium businesses are under huge pressure, so they have to be very circumspect about how they spend their time'. (P.13)

Others gained this time to network and promote themselves and their business by going on LI in the evenings and weekends and this created pressures too, that needed to be recognised and controlled. The pressure of work taking all their time, even at home is also indicative of how their personal life and identity has become intermingled with their business.

Example

Participant 23 explained that she had had to limit LI use.

", I used to spend a lot of time. This year I purposefully, consciously try to slow myself down, because last year I did suffer a bit of a burn-out, I would get home in the evening because I do have a day job, I would get home in the evening and I would get on the computer and I would start having conversations with people until the early morning hours. So yes absolutely.… without you realising it, once you've gone through all your groups and the posts and the comments that people might have left on your posts, there's several hours that have passed…You have to be really disciplined, and I know I've read quite a few posts about this subject as well, you have to be disciplined and say it's just an hour on LinkedIn a day and whatever I don't get to today needs to wait until tomorrow."

It is my responsibility to brand my business, but it's risky on LinkedIn

The participants appreciated to direct contact with other professionals in the field, the access it gave them to possible clients. However, there was a hesitancy, ambivalence and caution about using LI to promote themselves and their business through networking and self-branding. Their responses indicated several origins and reasons for this ambivalence, but they tended to be related back to their lack of control over the medium, as discussed before vis a vis company websites. LI leaves a permanent record, and had a wide reach, including global and along with these features were mingled trust and privacy issues. Also, though most participants recognised that for LI to work well, for them, to brand themselves effectively and positively influence, they needed not just to self-present but to interactively communicate. How to achieve this interaction was a challenge. Communication on LI was usually in a medium of writing that some recognised could be 'tricky'. They were all producing the broadcast content themselves and not using PR consultants or writers, something that was relatively new to many. Therefore, there were dangers in self- branding may cause negative instead of positive perceptions of them and their business.

All these concepts of self-branding and its dangers were expressed in various ways in the participant's discourses. They described how they tried to present a professional image, that

291

showed they had expertise, knowledge or reputation without revealing inappropriate or confidential information or adopting an inappropriate tone; sounding knowledgeable and approachable without being not arrogant. Several expressed the need to be truthful as the information was broadcast and could be questioned by anyone. They did not like any kind of dishonesty including unearned endorsements. Others commented in theft of their identity, contacts or clients.

Example

Participant 22, who has worked in the public sector expresses a lot of these tensions in her narrative

"That's why I see it as such a key tool. Yet I also am aware of the implications for the public sector in terms of managerial security and not having too much private information about managers who access government information to be too available online. So I kind of see, you know for me, I see it as being really crucial to have your photo and to have information about you, I don't mean expose everything, but you know to have a fully formed public face, but then I understand that that's kind of suited and relevant to what the nature of my work.

Yeah, I see it being a representation of my professional brand and anybody I work for would be associated with that and you know there would be I guess reputational implications as well, which is why I find it funny, I've heard this a couple of times from HR people, they think that everybody tells porkies on their LinkedIn profile, I just think gosh that's a really risky game given it's so public…Yeah, the extent to which your activity is broadcast I find… personally think it needs to be managed so I've switched off that I want all my activity to be posted, and I often get feedback from other people saying, 'I've just changed my profile, updated my profile and suddenly. I've got a lot of people congratulating me on having a new role'". So anyway, there's that aspect of it that I find tricky.

I think that you want to have control over that. I'm a bit of a freak like that. I think you know it's your brand, it's your stuff to manage. I mean it's blunt instrument for doing that, that's my view. So you can post and like you say be involved in discussions is probably a more meaningful way, anyway that's my sense. (22)

Then discussing the fact that her postings are global she expresses concern over others not understanding the NZ context.

".. so that's not necessarily about my expertise that I feel tentative about, it's more about understanding the context." (22, p.2)

The lack of control over content once published is an issue for those who were using their sites to sell their programmes or ideas.

Example

This participant believed a competitor stole her brand

"here was my competitor using my work. So there was certain languaging and brand perceptions that were very much at a threat. Sadly like I said, I realised too late. I had no idea some of that was happening…another few things happened, and I realised the high likelihood, that … I think that our brand had been merged in people's perceptions and my brand had been lost."

This obviously was a source of distress to her and influenced her business for a long time.

For Literature review?

292

The importance of self -branding in SMEs has been well established in the literature. The concept of people as brands was summed up by T. Peters (2007), "we are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be the head marketer for the brand called You". This concept of personal or self-branding is defined as creating an "identity that associates certain perceptions and feelings" and entails managing and influencing the perception of you by others, which has positive benefits (Rampersad, 2008, p. 34)

In a sole trader or micro business, the personality of the SME is closely connected to the owner-manager (Deacon, 2002), and it is often the expertise or knowledge of the owner/manager that are being marketed. Small business marketing activities are often restricted by limited resources (Reijonen, 2010) and therefore self-marketing by the owner. defined as "varied activities undertaken by individuals to make themselves known in the marketplace" (Shepherd, 2005, p. 590) is a usual and necessary practice. The concept of self-marketing is closely linked to the concepts of self-promotion or self-branding (Ward & Yates, 2013).

Research has established that SME owner-manager influences branding through their knowledge, business style and personal networks (Mitchell et al., 2012), that a brand is based upon the owner's beliefs and assumptions (Ojasalo et al., 2008) , and that the owner often personifies the brand (Horan et al., 2011). This concept of personal or self-branding is defined as creating an "identity that associates certain perceptions and feelings" and entails managing and influencing the perception of you by others, which has positive benefits (Rampersad, 2008, p. 34). Self-promotion that can help the individual being viewed as "effective, well-connected, powerful, knowledgeable and up to date" (Ward & Yates, 2013, p. 101) positively influences organisational success. However, projecting an opposite image can be damaging. Effective self-promotion, if applied consistently, will create an effective and powerful brand (Hernez-Broome, McLaughlin, & Trovas, 2007) and these ideas underpin the notion that SME owner-managers should represent their organisations and become their own "brand" champions. This is of particular importance in start-ups when the "brand" will be personified by the owner-manager as front man of the business (Juntunen, 2012).

Value of this topic
The wider literature on branding suggests it is crucial to business growth yet <u>SME branding research has not received the same attention as service or product branding</u> (Horan et al., 2011). The SME owner-manager self-branding concept is aligned to the wider topic of entrepreneurship, the notion of the SME owner being an entrepreneur and the impact of the "entrepreneurial personality on SME branding" (Horan et al., 2011, p. 114), p. 114). Although the literature (Ramsey, Ibbotson, Bell, & Gray, 2003; Reijonen, 2010) frequently claim that owner-managers can be a barrier to marketing and the wider literature suggests that over reliance on the SME owner can be a weakness, <u>other research shows the opposite (e.g.Resnick, Cheng, Simpson, & Lourenço, 2016). This research indicates that the key marketing tool lies within the SME itself, and more specifically the SME owner-manager</u>.

Analytic memo 5
Etiquette in groups- **Tapes 9, 14, 16, 21, 24,**

One topic that participants were all able to articulate well was there understanding the rules of interaction, particularly in groups. LinkedIn's image was consistently compared to Facebook (FB) and universally described as professional. One participant called it the "boardroom" rather than the 'living room' (FB) and another said when he was on LinkedIn, he "had his suit on".

Another said "You know, you're the CEO of something, you look important. You can get a bit snobbish and you can do that with LinkedIn".
Participants said the site, in comparison to Facebook, was not suitable for gossip, tittle tattle or personal or family interest posts.

In groups the interaction norms discouraged discussion of political personal or religious themes. When replying or commenting on posts care needed to be taken not to offend by directly contradicting someone. Though a direct response was acceptable when inappropriate remarks were made. No participants made reference to group or site managers moderating the interaction, assuming that the participants knew how to act as it was a professional site. There was reference though to a more recent trend for 'spammy, salesy' posts which compromised the integrity of the group.

Example
 Participant 24 commented in relation to an inappropriate remark that these are more discouraged in NZ groups.
"There was one comment, perhaps a couple of weeks ago, where someone said you know 'I completely disagree with this, how can you be so ignorant' and it's kind of like 'oh OK, maybe the guys having a bad day' but I don't believe so, and I don't think it's as prevalent here in New Zealand, probably the rest of the world it might be, but no I haven't really seen anything like that. I don't think there's anyone that dominant in LinkedIn or the groups that I belong to. They're all pretty professional."

Participant 8 described his reaction to spamming
"...but I don't use LinkedIn to do any broadcasting factors: it's something that I personally dislike when people do it. You know, I think we get frustrated with the amount of times we get hit and spammed as it is, and the mediums that traditionally, like Twitter was a good example like LinkedIn also, is that it was very passive in respect that you could engage on your terms, and not have people sort of selling at you.

Appendix Five: Code book one

NB This codebook is second level analysis. First level of analysis was directly on the interview transcripts

Participants

abbrev	code	Definition explanation	Examples -
Second -level descriptive Codes			
Post. P	Posts	Answer to question or makes a comment about whether they post often and publicly or reply to individual	P.1. Posts publicly P.3 tries to post -but doesn't do it P.12. posting exception rather than the rule (lurker) 'look and see what others are saying' P.15. P.25-regularly posts to keep up profile
Profile	Building profile	Answers a question or makes a comment about using LinkedIn for personal branding or to build their profile-	P1. Way of getting a profile and traffic to website/not interactive -they can read what he says/ invites p. to look at profile P.3 Actively promoting himself on a website saw Li as a source of content P.12 good way to promote yourself P.15. P.25 regularly posts to gain cred
Intro	Initial introduction	Answer to question or makes a comment about how they got onto LI or other soc. media	P.1. Someone introduced me to Li P.3 I guess it's just one of those things that you see other people using somehow... And you think that looks like the place for me to be. -social copying P.12 P.15. P.25
LI /FB image	LI Serious/business/FB social	Answer to question (or makes a comment about how they see LI or other soc. media	P1. LI is serious/ FB social

			P.3 Actively promotes himself on his website saw Li as a source of content
			P.12 Li Facebook for grownups
			P.15.
			P.25 FB social Li professional
Pers. @ Bus. Sep.	Keeps business and personal networks separate	Answer to question or makes a comment about as to whether they keep networks separate	P1. Generally separate but overlap
			P.3 FB window on private life-LI window on public life
			P.12 Says she doesn't keep personal and bus soc. media contacts separate but later says she does
			P.15.
			P.25 definitely
1- way comm	One -way communication most often -blogs website etc.	Answer to question or makes a comment about whether they use LI for interactive communication -discussion or more for blogging style posting	P1. Blogs -one way
			P.3 trying to be connected - doesn't know what the benefit might be
			P.12-
			P.15.
			P.25 2 Replies to comments, comments on others posts
Trust info	Trust in information posted	Answer to question or makes a comment about their trust in postings or information on LI	P1. P.1 There tends to be bullshit on it:
			P.3 might feel exposed - opening yourself up to someone harvesting your clients-it's in the back of my mind-it's about the integrity of the p.
			P.12
			P.15.
			P.25
Conx request	Willingness to connect with people through invite	Answer to question or makes a comment about who they accept connection requests with, and why or why not	P1. Only connects with p. he knows/connections part of reputation

			P.3 Connects with people where there is some sort of relationship
			P.12 Will connect if they have common interests-don't need to know them
			P.15.
			P.25 evaluates invites =looks at profile before accepting as long as they are in business
Conx invite	Willingness to invite people to connect	Answer to question (or makes a comment about who they make connection invites to, and why or why not	P1. Doesn't search for contacts
			P.3 Says he is proactive but in earlier statements doesn't seem to never invite anyone
			P.12
			P.15. Doesn't invite
			P.25 actively invites selected p.
People Knowledge	Knowing where people are or what they are doing without communication with them	Answer to question or makes a comment about what they like about being on LI	P1. Fills out background info. on p./likes to track without connection
			P.3 Looked for old classmate colleagues etc
			P.12 Keeping track of p. you knew 10 years ago
			P.15.
			P.25 I learn a lot about people -background info
Pot.	Sees untapped potential in LI	Makes a comment about LI's potential	P1.
			P.3 t's like we know we should be in this boat, but we don't know where it's going, and we don't know how it's going to benefit us.
			He did not know how to utilise the network he had created to add value to his business- potentially a gold mine
			P.12, there's not a clear strategy as to how I can use it to build my business…it

			tends to sit in that too-hard basket
			P.15. it's got huge potential
End.	Attitude to endorsements	Answer to question or makes a comment about attitude to endorsements	P1.
			P.3 I only endorse p I get endorsed from -iffy about congratulating p.-dishonest must be genuine
			P.12-
			P.15. it jeopardises my integrity, so I won't go down that path.
			P.25 I use it all the time its good giving people a compliment -but takes others' endorsements with a grain of salt! Says it's a bit shallow-trying to get in their good books – (this is what she does)
Rels.	Uses Li to build relationships	Answer to question or makes a comment about using Li to create rekindle, build or maintain relationships	P1. Relationships-evolve not actively developed
			P.3 after initial contact is 'lost'
			P.12.
			P.15.
			P.25 it's all about relationships-someone is posting and you can make a comment -a touchpoint
Coll.	Collaboration on LI	Answer to question or makes a comment about using Li to collaborate look for partners etc	P1. Thinks collaboration is imp. But doesn't do it
			P.3
			P.12
			P.15.Does collaborate
			P.25 Uses it to share ideas
Ett.	Communication etiquette	Answer to question or makes a comment about tone behaviour etiquette using Li	P1.
			P.3 Might be over endorsing under endorsing-concerned they may not like him or his content
			P.12 Finds it hard to get tone right esp. when disagreeing

			'doesn't want to appear a know it all'
			P.15.
			P.25 dislikes gossip slander unprofessional-p. on LI unconsciously discourage it
Rep.	Reputation		P.12.Not correcting is part of reputation-
			posting is a way of increasing readership and developing profile
			P.25 Posting is a gentle way of building credibility and profile
Soc. Copying	Social pressure or social copying	Most participants in the New Zealand group were intrinsically linked to how they became aware of LinkedIn; that is, they usually joined because they had heard about it from someone, others suggested they did, or had seen or heard of others using.	Respondents generally said that it was the place to be' or they had been told about it or to use it by others but weren't sure of how to use it for business.
			They were not impressed by those who weren't on LI
			I don't want to be seen as primitive
Strategic business use	Unsure of strategic use for business	When it came to using LinkedIn more strategically for building their business, some recognised that the potential was there, but several 'struggled' to find out how they could gain benefit from it.	Several mentioned creating a profile or presence, e.g. p1 they made the decision to join LinkedIn because of 'strategic business reasons', such as creating a presence on the internet.
		Others were more confident about networking and knew it was impt.	but did not identify active networking as a beneficial feature or activity. Also, relationship building was seen as something that happened F t F
			P.3 It's like we know we should be in this boat, but we don't know where it's going, and we don't know how it's going to benefit us. The funny thing with LinkedIn is I see it as potentially a gold mine for new contacts for me. However, I struggled to

			work out how to extract the gold
	Espoused value of networking v. networking behaviour	Generally networking was praised but in practice active networking on LI was not practised Others embraced networking as essential activity	P1. 'I'm on LinkedIn with people that I already have some connection with. I'm a bit careful about just kind of going connecting up with anybody, P.25 A lot of my business is based on network and referral
Sep. Identities	Separation of different facets of identity	Different platform for different social relations very important –personal/business/political – -people want to keep personal and private networks identities separate on social media If they contact/find a friend through LinkedIn they will move them to Facebook and visa versa If they are on both they will communicate differently when they do so on LinkedIn e.g. More of a business persona on LinkedIn even if talking to an old friend.	P.12"I mean I certainly wouldn't go around inviting clients to be friends with me on Facebook" "do I use LinkedIn socially? No".
	Tracking	Keeping track of business/social web important even if there was no contact. Tracking or even stalking old acquaintances and colleagues impt. feature.	A desire to see where old friends and colleagues are; where they are in a web of relationships
	Etiquette	Rules and norms about how to communicate developing. A lot of concern about having the right tone or appearing to contradict or be a 'know it all'. Etiquette about endorsements a difficulty-many found it an imposition but felt bound by reciprocity. Political statements disliked -it was a business forum	

Appendix Six: Codebook two

CODEBOOK TWO Tensions 1 and 2 –Chapter 4 -

Tensions and Paradoxes (Overarching)	Abbrev (sub-tensions)	code	Definition/ explanation	Examples (Interview no., page no.)
Third -level analytical] codes				
TENSION Images of cyberspace is boundaried space v Open space	1.Rooms	Cyberspace is made up of boundaried spaces	Statements indicating the participants carried mental images of cyberspace divided into boundaried spaces or mapped out places. Metaphors of rooms, walls, windows, roads, portals and pathways, places are referred to. LI is described as an access portal to 'digital me' There are 'places' they mainly control and other 'places' where that are more controlled or owned by others e.g.LI.. Sometimes these places come to be seen as communities. They at times raise issues of ownership (e.g. who owns their LI contacts and profiles etc.)	**Place** It's actually called the walls…the walls of internet." (2,12) 'I did know about LinkedIn being a place to... it's sort of like an online CV place, (18,3) "because I had seen pictures of their children on that Instagram, I had seen you know... So that has certainly brought the sort of…lowered the physical boundaries. From a business point of view, it certainly has opened the door to a significant level" (7,10) "LinkedIn for me is an important business space and tool" (22,1)

				They perceive the structure, laws and inhabitants of the site or place governs content and behaviour. Participants describe spaces where different behaviour applies (-ref: Bourdieu 'habitus") social control is exerted on those who violate those rules.	"You know, I see it (LI) as a professional-meeting place." (17,9) LI is the "boardroom" rather than the 'living room' (FB) on LinkedIn he "had his suit on". I think Facebook's about what you do on the weekend, or outside of work, and LinkedIn's about what you do from nine to five. (5,17) Facebook is your coffee shop and LinkedIn is your board room. So the two are very, very different platforms and conversations (5,4) "But um…I prefer to keep the person as, who are you know, in certain sectors …" (14,12) "I see in Facebook as being a window into somebody's private life. And I see LinkedIn as being a window to their

| | | | | business life…personally. And to me it's quite a clear the divide between the two." (7,15)

So it's a bit like walking into a room at a party, and there's some people there, and you have a conversation with them about something, and you get to know them. And so that happens in LinkedIn discussion forums…in groups; and for me that's probably the most attractive and useful part of LinkedIn.

(25,16)

Marketplace analogy

Participant 20 characterised part of cyberspace as a marketplace. His website was like a shop or a business where the buying and selling takes place. Social networks of all kinds create the foot traffic, i.e. "they are just the foot traffic that… you've got to get the people back to your website. the whole goal … is to build up this foot traffic." (20,2) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

				And "Facebook is like your family sharing place or your friends sharing place." (20,6)
				And discussing Facebook and again he describes it as a place where social activity takes place and not business activity, and LI as a place where business takes place and not politics , and there is a sense of personal ownership about these places "it's like the way to think about Facebook is like somebody walking into your lounge so if I walked into your lounge and said 'hey do you want to buy a website?' or 'do you need some internet marketing?' You're going to go 'you've just walked into my lounge, we're having a conversation about our hobbies, why are you trying to sell me something?'. And it's the same on LinkedIn, it's like walking into somebody else's business and going 'I think that the National government sucks because of XYZ', you go 'this is my business, why are you talking about that?' (20, 14).

				"I guess it's the equivalent is not having a sign in front of your building. If you go to a building and they've just got a number on there with a plain door, you would go whoa...this is something going wrong here." (9,14)
				"Well you used to once...you know, you used to have the High Street presence so that people would go well, if I want to go to the agency, there's the agency, or look at the big building. But now people will go you know...through I worked with this guy; he was brilliant; here's examples of his campaigns, so creating an on-line for yourself becomes your shop." (9,22)
				"And all those sorts of things, but the thing is that you know...the tools are there, but we haven't shifted in the concept of project managing workloads. And know that we still work under the mentality that you

				would turn up to work that you're working, which was a big mistake." (9,22)
				"like a shop front for a business because you're the person behind the business so you want to look professional" (19, 7)
				"Yes, it's definitely about maintaining a presence in the marketplace and being found by people who don't know me already, so there's a lot of that about it". (13,2)
				"You know… yeah, I guess I have been introduced to different marketplaces." (14,13)
				Community "And so a good community will police itself … (21,8) LinkedIn will recommend that you link up with them, so you start building up this huge community around you." (4,17)

				Identity is in website.
				"every single one of those: the Facebook pages, Pinterest and the… and... Google-Plus, they all point back towards my business website, so again it's just…yeah." (7,6) Identity is in website.
				"I think most people would consider they owned their networks, because they've built them you know because of their own social networking skills and efforts" (17,17).
				Identity is in LI site "LinkedIn becomes my digital me in the working area." (2,11)
				"search result that would come up, on the first result it would have your Linked In profile rather than your website so that's the message" (18,3)

				Forum
				At the top there was a definite kind of this...this is what the purpose of this forum is: it's to engage to share ideas but not to sell your own services. (9,6)
				"I do have an opinion that I think that at these theatres, they are doing more damage than good. Because they are allowing…I mean the people that they are making throw away noises and saying a lot of crap on that particular agora. Which is out there. They won't be doing that…I think of they wouldn't be doing that if they were in the public plaza." (2,20)
				"Facebook page at work, but we have found it ah…really not the right forum really for work." (16,)
				"Look you know, this isn't an appropriate forum for you know, whatever. I mean the ones that I've sort of been involved with, they

308

				tend to have some quite um...vocal people in the terms of they're...you know, very well up in their own field, and um...you know, they just don't want people using the site or their postings for ...a marketing exercise..." (15,16) **Rules and structure of place** But it keeps that sort of trust by limiting what you can do on it. (9.27)
	2.space	Cyberspace= Open space	Cyberspace is open territory like a vast unexplored terrain that is chaotic and open and as yet unregulated etc... This description is reinforced by use of metaphors or images of the Wild west, gold rush times or open sea This perception may be voiced in positive or negative terms. The positive view is that this situation opens	**Gold Mine/wild west** "I see it as potentially a gold mine for new contacts for me. However, I struggled to work out how to extract the gold so to speak. You know, I would sort of…I've got nearly 120 connections there, and I'm not sure how I would then turn those connections…some of them are existing business relationships anyway, so what sort of value I can add to those, I don't know." (3,2).

			up opportunities for people. The negative is that the territory is so new it is difficult to know what to do and you could get lost, ambushed or waste precious time unproductively. It also raises question of identity in this new place for example the blurring of boundaries between 'real' self and digital self.	Participant 2 used the same allusion to a 'gold rush' in a positive way, as a new kind of gold rush, describing how LinkedIn provided him with business information and contacts that he previously found difficult to 'mine'. Previously he had to find the exact place (the river) where that information or contacts were: "The difference … is that it's exposing me to an array of the information and relationships that I can dig … It's like when in a gold rush…you know, that 'okay, the gold will be in that river and you need to find that river'. And now the gold it's everywhere." (P.2.) **Don't understand how to use it.** "It's like we know we should be in this boat, but we don't know where it's going, and we don't know how it's going to benefit us". (3,) "So there's a big problem with all this new technology, there's so much to learn, people don't

| | | | | really know how to learn it, well they just don't have time to learn it because it takes so long to learn, and there's going to be a new generation of tools coming out," (20,16)

"it tends to sit in that too-hard basket.' (3,3)

"I used to hate Twitter was just a busy highway of information being twittered out every second" (18,4)

I think there's so much available, but they just don't know how to use all the benefits of it, I think. Here I am, 208 contacts. I don't know how people handle it when they have 500+ because every time they would be looking up, they would have so much stuff to go through on their feeder page. (25,11)

think it could be like Facebook, it could be a real time-waster, but for my business it's actually part of my core activity but i think to be honest for |

				a lot of people it could be a time-waster, you've got to manage it really carefully (25, 12)
				All linked together: "And most of the time that's just through…I think it's linked into my Facebook, and I don't know if that's very wise" (4,2)
				"All of a sudden they were competing with the world. And they were going oh shit, people are now going to buy from Australia or America. So, the village just got bigger and bigger. And then all of a sudden, the internet came along. Well the shift...it's almost come full circle because all of a sudden there was a lot of information at our fingertips, but the trouble is what there is now is too much information, and I see that with my kids, well my daughter in" (9,21).
				"And so it's not really an advantage, the whole concept of being able to source

				people who are on-line, and the global nature is that you can access talent; and experience that you probably wouldn't, if we work under the traditional model, you've got a 60-kilometer radius. (9,23)
				New /fearful
				"To me the social media is at the stage of existence of getting used to… it's boiling. It needs to settle, needs to settle down in some way. In the same way that everything which is new requires two stages. The fear and… the getting used to. Who doesn't know the existence of cell phone these days? There is pretty much no grandmother who doesn't know that the cell phone is something useful. They could still decide to use it or not. But they cannot ignore its existence. Ten years' ago, not even twenty, ten years' ago, they could ignore it." (2,21)
				It's just about meeting more people

313

				and keeping in contact with the people that you've already met...And whilst I don't spend my life on-line, I mean I would prefer to do things face-to-face and meet people face-to-face, you would also miss out on a whole chunk of stuff that you just wouldn't pick up the phone or email for…or write a letter for. (5,17)
TENSION 2. LI risky to use /risky not to use- (acceptance of the networking imperative) need to protect and project brand	3. LI imp	LI important to engage with and it is risky for business not to.	Statements suggesting that they believe social media, LI in particular, is important and a key tool for business. It is fast, inexpensive tool to establish a business presence networking tool, also is useful for keeping up to date with industry trends. Also it is necessary to be a member so as to be seen as current and not to appear to be 'out of touch'.	**LI imp- Risky not to be on it** I just saw it as part of building your brand because it's networking and its business: it's a business site. And when I joined years ago. It was just something that you needed to do. There's a saying that if you want to start in social media the best time was five years' ago, second best time is today... So, from a' Google juice' point of view, if you're trying to build your own brand it's imperative, they have a LinkedIn profile because it comes up so quick at the top." (5,5)

				In fact, that would be one of the little sort of tick boxes that you know…particularly at this digital age if they had got an application from somebody and they haven't got much of a LinkedIn profile, it's going to count to probably against you. Particularly if you're looking at marketing or you know, an on-line sort of position: it would be expected. (5,5) Participant 6 said that when starting a business' "It was the only way available that I could free-of-charge build a network; build… relationships, and when I say I mean across the whole range: not just the client-relationships but peers, JDs and other complimentary business roles. So it was a full gamut of the whole business and marketing perspective of relationships that you could possibly have. So yeah…LinkedIn was king." (6,2)

				"I was like one of the first things you've got to do is get on LinkedIn." (22,13)
				"I think ten years ago for sure [could not be on LI] I guess now I'd say, why would you want to? Why would you even consider that... So for me it's kind of, it would be professionally risky not to be using the tools I think". (22,16)
				So it's only. I never needed LinkedIn until I started my business really. (23,4)
				That's why I see it as such a key tool, particularly for, well, small people." (22,4)
				And then we bought our own business and then all of a sudden it became alive to me because somebody again over coffee, sit down and said, 'the way you need to grow your business is through LinkedIn'. And that's where she was teaching me 'I do

				this, this and this', I was like 'Oh ok' so it was somebody giving me some very helpful advice that basically got me on. .So I would see that.. and it helps me to keep connected with people more or less. but I would see it has a valuable tool. has it brought me in new business, well I would say not directly, but indirectly it helps me run my business in the way that I want to run it, which is keeping connected and keeping my profile in front of people and keeping connected with people, which is my business? (25,6)
				"Yes, so it is important...yeah. I have to say that social networking is an intrinsic part of my social life now. And it's also an intrinsic part of our business life." (17,20)
				I'd also say that's the fastest way of doing it. Fastest way of building contacts and networking with

| | | | | people because it has become old-school to have these little meet-ups, people don't have time anymore. (23,13)

Uses

So I know that people are watching, so although there's no response and no direct conversation happening, there is this kind of existing…this kind of extant connection which is there, which can come into play. (1,5)

Most of the time I respect that if they're actually doing pro-active and starting discussions and asking questions and networking. So actively in networking. (4,8)

whereas LinkedIn, for any business, I'd say that's at the top of the list, to really get connections, contacts, build relationships and to get information from other companies. (23,3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

				Just to...yeah, keeping a finger on the pulse to a certain extent. (10,2)
				Again that's something that might have changed over the past two and a half years since I've registered on LinkedIn. Initially it was to get information, so it was research, pure research. Right behind that the reason was to find contacts, to connect with people out there, in similar industries, other industries, to, you know, share information. Now I'd say there's a strong aspect or motivation or motive rather if you want, yeah to hopefully get seen by others. (23,4)
				"it's just a very easy way of keeping in touch in a very sort of gentle, uncomplicated way isn't it? It's a very useful tool, and because it's all about relationships, say when somebody else puts a posting on, and you know the person, you can make a comment, you've got a like a

				little sort of, I call it a touch-point with someone, I love to comment, it's a way of just keeping connected. And the other thing is with discussions, if I start a discussion and somebody else comes along and likes or make a comment, I can then look that person up and think 'oh that's an accountant', because I like to deal with accountants, I haven't met that person, I like their comment, I notice who they are and then that gives me a link to base the email, 'look I've noticed your comment on my discussion' and then you can have a little private discussion with them, 'by the way this is the angle I'm coming from, if you'd like to know more, let me know and I'll send you some information'. So it's a very gentle way of connecting with new people, the discussions, and it's keeping your profile and your credibility up in the market place. (25,2) for me I use it for relationship building and connecting and

| | | | | that's because I have a business that's really 100% dependent on. 90% of our business comes in from referrals, 10% comes in from the website, so people have to refer, so I'm very dependent on other people and relationships with people and maintaining those relationships and forming new relationships. LinkedIn can help me do that, obviously a lot of word-of-mouth, a lot of networking at Chamber does it as well, but it's one of the tools I use, you know alongside other tools. It's very helpful in my line of business which is referral based. (25,3)

To me it's essential. I check LinkedIn daily and sometimes many times a day, depending which is my activity

(2,13)

And for me the LinkedIn was very much something that everyone else was doing, so I had to be on the same band wagon. (3,1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

				So I know that people are watching, so although there's no response and no direct conversation happening, there is this kind of existing…this kind of extant connection which is there, which can come into play. (1,5)
				I find self-employed people more proactive.
				if they're self-employed, they're more likely to be on it. They say that they're there because it personally relates to them. (25,10)
				Attitudes to those Not on LI
				"So I just think...I expect any professional...like any um...especially you've got involved in digital...like we would expect him to be on LinkedIn..." (17, 16)
				that they're either a little bit behind the times I guess, or not serious about their professions...So yeah, just not on the

| | | | | map really. From a professional viewpoint. (4,7)

So once again, in some ways that's possibly another reason why I joined LinkedIn in the first place because I don't want to be seen as being primitive in my marketing. (3,5)

"I think their credibility takes a hit (if you can't find them on LI), especially in our industry: we're in education; we're in business. Business is all about networking with the village it is a global platform now. If you're not sharing your information, I guess it's the equivalent is not having a sign in front of your building. If you go to a building and they've just got a number on there with a plain door, you would go whoa...this is something going wrong here." (9,14)

You look like a bit of a dinosaur (5,5)

If they are a business person or a professional person, I would be surprised that they're not on |

				LinkedIn. I would find that... I want to use that word 'strange', but maybe that's too much of a strong word because it's their choice, some people don't see the purpose of doing it, but generally with people that are in the industry where you depend on liaising with other people, outside stakeholders or other businesses in general, and I find especially in New Zealand because it is a smaller country, there are less people, people do connect with each other, or with quite a few people around them. Because chances are, if you meet someone that they might know someone that you know, that you know, that they know and so forth. So I do find it surprising if people, professional people are not on Linked In. Yeah, it's almost like 'get with the times'. (23,8) it's someone that you would imagine, because it's all for business owners, you would just assume that they would also be on LinkedIn, (23,3) But I had one yesterday and I thought OK you're

				obviously not on LinkedIn, and I was a bit surprised. When I get a younger person, I tend to think that. When I get an older person, I just accept that not all older people are into the technology. If it's a younger person, you know 25-30, I think that's surprising. (25 ,19)

Future

Now look my perception is that it's been a useful tool, and it certainly appears to be growing. I think it's helpful; I think the risk it has is that it doesn't get set in a certain generation or like you know, Facebook may be guilty of. And I think as long as people see it as a useful tool, and it's not used as a... trivial gossip network, then it might, and you know, I mean continue to be successful. (10,9)

And I think um... It (LI) hasn't really come of age yet in my opinion. In terms of being able to deliver commercially. But I think as previously … you know, for Twitter, and for LinkedIn really,

				they're heading that way pretty fast." (17,10)
	4. risky	Engaging in LI is risky	Because it is new and open territory LI and other social media can be risky to use for personal and business reasons. This risk was alluded to form several different angles A general reluctance to become engaged and -Revealing business information and contacts to competitors that may be poached -The rules of interaction were not clear and giving misinformation, using the wrong tone, connecting to the wrong people may cause damage to reputation -Damage to your reputation because there was a permanent record of what was said that may be available to	**General fear** "And to actually to persuade them to create a LinkedIn page...I mean that's a step too far for most of them". (17,10) **Certain occupations or groups** .. I've just recently done a project looking at national security now I kind of think OK for some people (LI) it's risky." (20,12) " But the public service, it seems to me still really wary of social media and they just think about it as posting to Facebook, it's something you do in your private time. And so I can see that that's not being reconciled and there's this massive tension with the disintegration of traditional media and this fear of social media." (22)

			anyone then engaging on LI was risky. Postings on groups could be read by anyone that joined there was also a risk that engagement might reduce real life networking and engagement and be used as an emotional crutch	Participant 20 referred to social media as a shock particularly for older people i.e. "and people will just be used to it, because once the shock has gone away for the older people and so forth" (22,15) "But you know it is part of the culture down here, everyone has a political view on stuff, but you don't necessarily broadcast it." (22,14) **Lack of control** "I've just changed my profile, updated my profile and suddenly got a lot of people congratulating me on having a new role so anyway there's that aspect of it that I find tricky. I think that you want to have control over that. I'm a bit of a freak like that. I think you know it's your brand, it's your stuff to manage. I mean it's blunt instrument for doing that, that's my view." (22,17)

				".. I know what it's like to be small business owner. You don't know whether if you should send an email campaign or a text message campaign or how many times you should post on LinkedIn" (20,16)
				False info Lies and multiple identities
				"everybody tells porkies on their LinkedIn profile, I just think gosh that's a really risky game given it's so public". (22,5)
				"No I don't, but with that, there was caution I always screen who I connect with and who I don't; and that I have seen even in the early days, but probably after about two years, there started to be false profiles and multiple profiles; deliberately set up multi-profiles and multi-groups for people specifically with the intent of building connections, in probably a different way….And perhaps this is rather ruthless, I'm usually

328

| | | | | extremely cautious and kind, because I realise there is ignorance in those starting out, but sometimes when I just see if there's a fairly clear pattern of behaviours, I have no problem in reporting into LinkedIn with my apprehensions about certain connections. For instance, I've had about three people: three different profiles, asking for connections and they are various profiles of the same person, who's sometimes is on." (6,6)

I think I have... I like to think I've a certainly a healthy scepticism about any information to be honest.
I'll trust it to a point, and I've said it before, but I also know a lot of it is unqualified, so I wouldn't rely upon that alone

(10,8)

Damage to society

"I think social media can be also dangerous in some respects, it takes away the interaction of people, and you have a whole group of people that all they do is social |
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				media but there isn't that true relationship that's developed on a face-to-face perspective, and I think that's quite a shame in some respects." (24,12)
				"social media generally, or specifically Linked In, in the business environment: has it reduced real world in networking, and in doing so, has it helped or undermined potential opportunities. It's a worry: that is a worry" (13,16)
				"...yeah, perhaps there is a danger that if it's used too much in the workplace as a crutch. An emotional crutch for individuals...they might you know, productivity might take a big hit. Um...and I guess the other thing is in - not in the business environment in their private time: again it could be an emotional satisfier…That isn't necessarily good for the psyche" (13,20)
				No, for me it's a bit concerning that it does fulfil the social

| | | | | needs, especially with the young people today. And that's part of my business, to get them to connect with people face-to-face and not hide behind a social media screen and attack each other verbally and personally.

… Talking to someone face-to-face avoids all those misinterpretations that goes along with typing, texting certain words that are used. They've unlearned to talk to someone face-to-face and to socialise directly and it takes away that experience of connecting with a person. Because you don't have that on internet and texting and so on. (23,12)

Lack of control over IP

"To me it's just the way of building a database and talking to people. I don't like to think that you don't own or control your database and Facebook and can take it away if they are...you know with the swipe of a button. It's... they are inherently risky...but you know, that's the nature of the environment: you |
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				can't do much about it really, but you've got to try and convert those people to the newsletter." (17,20) (going backwards)
				Personal risk I really discard a lot of people that approach me For example, here is a gentleman who sent me yesterday a request for…I don't know, who wants to for investors two hundred thousand dollars… like yeah. (2,5)
				Because unfortunately I have met a few people... because I learnt this lesson the hard way... met a few people on LinkedIn that invited me on Facebook and I just connected with them randomly without really researching what they were about, and it turned out that they wanted money or they were somewhere in Africa and didn't have food and I need to send $10,000 otherwise their children would get murdered. (23,8)

				And they are also saying…I am actually sticking my head out here 'cause I actually want to meet some new people, so if I can get you out of the wood work, 'cause I don't know you, then that will be great. (5,19)
	4 b	Privacy, security issues		"this stuff is on the internet, and that means it's very hard to remove, and often you don't have a lot of control over who's seeing it, so I am probably a bit more circumspect than some, over what I would be comfortable putting on the internet. And I've seen the effects of people...you know, posting silly things on there, you know 'my boss is a dick'. Well, you shouldn't be that surprised when your boss sees it, and you get fired. Because that's a really stupid thing to do. Yeah... I mean individuals then certainly do have a privacy and we have the Privacy Act which protects you; or personal information, but if you choose to put information out of the personal forum, then to a certain extent you're answerable to yourself." (12,12)

				So there are barriers that I'm incredibly aware of, depending on how public my contribution is and where it is. (6,23)
				"And most of the time that's just through…I think it's linked into my Facebook, and I don't know if that's very wise" (4,2)
				"So this whole thing...because there are plenty of people that go, "Well I don't...I want an anonymity on-line...this on-line thing." Well, we're sorry we're in an age where you can't be that. People research you on-line: they want to know who you are; where you come from; what you do the very least LinkedIn is a safe, secure environment. You know, they are very careful about how they manage their lists and things, and that's something LinkedIn has to be careful with. If they blow that, then they'll blow their reputation..." (9,13)

| | | | | "I said to them 'you need to be very aware', because I do google people, because I want to know that our competitors are not coming along and they're pretending to be someone else because that has happened, and I said to them you know 'you need to make sure you've locked down your Facebook profile' because I can get in there, I can see your children, I can see what you did at the weekend, I can see what you posted last week, and that's not cool. And the other thing is when people tag you in photos to make sure you un-tag yourself because they can follow you through somebody else's photos.

I make all of my things that I'm tagged in or named in have to come to my timeline and I have to approve before they go up and I think that's the way it has to be because you just don't want people, especially for me in my position, I don't want people googling me and finding this picture of me and my daughter, you know it has to be separate." (21,9) |
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Codebook 2 Tensions 3 ,4, 5and 6, Chapter 5

Tensions and Paradoxes	Abbrev	code	Definition/explanation	Examples
TENSION LI Digital Rolodex/networking tool -but won't connect to those they don't know	5. known	LI is a digital rolodex/business card - storing information about contacts	Statements indicating, they perceive LI as a way of organising and storing information about contacts. Networking is an activity	"Well some people operate networks as kind of a work activity that they specifically go out building networks: I don't." (1,9)

| -so what's the point? "networking" | | | where you connect with known people and don't connect with unknown people. Like to check them out face to face too. | there are people I would like to meet and get to know and have conversations with. I doubt that if I approached them through LinkedIn, that they would respond, or they might. I wouldn't if it was me. For my part, I would rather have a small network of trusting relationships than a larger network of superficial relationships. And my strategy there is that if I have a smallish network of trusting relationships, I'm more likely to come into the people I know are more likely to connect me with their connections or at least utilise their connections in their relationship with me. And so that's my model, rather than just going out and connecting with thousands of people. (1,10)

"so it's not really a social network: it's a social index. You link into the people you know: you don't go on there and go… It doesn't seem to be there for meeting and making new friends so much - it's just an index that you have." (7,8) |
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				"that I haven't used it …probably to its fullest potential, just because of…like inhibitors not wanting to branch out and contact people cold-calling style ...Yeah, I try and keep it real world contacts only, rather than the random person. So if somebody contacts…normally is they have added me as a contact rather than me going out and finding them. So at the moment, when I see them that's just accepting their contact if I know them. But I don't if I don't know them."(4, 5) "I haven't contacted people and not got a reply, 'cause I don't do it. Because it breaks down the whole purpose of the site. So I sort of have a rule, I wouldn't connect to anybody that I couldn't call on the phone, or at if least email. I don't see the point of just growing the connections with people that you don't know… if you wouldn't pick up the phone book to contact them it's...so

				I'm quite trepiditious" (8).
				"I wouldn't trust a profile I didn't know or link here and then trust a profile. I would only trust the people I've already made friends with here." (P.9)
				Generally my contacts, I'll generally only contact with people I've met - either over the phone or personally: I don't go looking for contacts just through LinkedIn alone. (10,7)
				Yeah. Absolutely and probably a good 80 percent of them would also be contacting my phone address book as well, you know my cell phone... (10,9)
				In relation to people that contact me unsolicited and I don't know them, always I'll look at who they are...yes, where their industry is; where they're from; and see if there is some sort of connection probably. Generally I will

339

| | | | | connect...I don't think I've never connected with somebody because I guess I can't see any harm in connecting with them. And then again, I would like it to be a qualified connection to them (10,7)

Yeah and I've had in part I do like the fact that if they change jobs or their profile for any reason, you get updated about that, so you can you know...you contact them if you change your job or with anything like that, and touch base at the end of it. (10,8)

"I don't believe so, I think relationships are built more on face-to-face and interaction whereas I don't think LinkedIn is interactive." (24,9).

"I think a lot of my LinkedIn network don't post actually...they are a contact list" (16.23)

Oh um... I haven't used it really to get |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | new contacts...um... It's more a matter of if I've come across something or I've heard about somebody I might search their profile <u>if I'm feeling cheeky</u> and I don't know them, I might suggest a connection<u>.</u> (17,11)

"But I don't use it as a search machine. I use it as my network of connections and people that I've met."(1,8)

" So I know that people are watching, so although there's no response and no direct conversation happening, there is this kind of existing…this kind of extant connection which is there, which can come into play. (1,5)

"there are people I would like to meet and get to know and have conversations with. I doubt that if I approached them through LinkedIn, that they would respond, or they might. I wouldn't if it was m… I would rather have a small network of trusting relationships than a larger network of |

				superficial relationships. And my strategy there is that if I have a smallish network of trusting relationships, I'm more likely to come into contact with the people I know are more likely to connect me with their connections or at least utilise their connections in their relationship with me. And so that's my model, rather than just going out and connecting with thousands of people" (1,10)
				"You know...business themselves, you ask them, 'Well what are you trying to achieve?' And they just go 'Well, I don't really know'. So you've got to literally go oh well, you're obviously you're achieving what you wanted to you set out to do: nothing." (9,4)
				That's right. So now I think it's definitely… And people don't how to turn a weak tie into a strong tie anyway. They don't know how to take it to the next level, because everyone's fear of rejection. Yeah I

				think so. I think rejection is an answer to so many things, that you just don't want to put your neck out there in case someone says "No" and you feel bad. (7,11)
				Yes. well I probably. if I went through my things, probably two thirds of them I would regularly see as I was at other networking groups. does that make sense? And then there would be a few of the people that I've linked up with and I've kind of wondered why I've linked up with them, or they've linked up with me, but you do. especially in the early days you get very zealous and want to connect up with everybody and after a while you get more selective. But no I think I deliberately choose who I... I'm very deliberate about who I want to connect up with. (25,13)
				I only use it for follow-ups personally (25,16)
	6. net	Networking imperative-is	Includes positive	And they are also saying…I am

		an active and important business activity and LIs a useful digital tool to do this	statements about the value and necessity of actively networking on social media and that LI is a useful new tool for connecting with new people, although may show hesitation in doing it. Some will seek new connections but usually qualify this with some caveats. Some indicate that possibly they have changed their attitude towards networking with new digital platforms as they have used them more.	actually sticking my head out here 'cause I actually want to meet some new people, so if I can get you out of the wood work, 'cause I don't know you, then that will be great. (5,19)
				It's absolutely…that I am a consummate networker. And it's not only my…how can I say…my pleasure and my passion. It's how I do work. I mean I am in Oamaru for God sake. (2,6)
				No, no. I like this. Well of course I get new contacts. Yes, I do get new contacts…Oh yes. I reasonably good at connecting (2,7)
				I mean you can't be an entrepreneur if you can't face rejection. What I'm saying is, that there is no difference of sending a letter a hundred years ago, having an answer or not. The difference is the time and the noise. So what you ask…social networking means to me, pretty much everything. It's

				essential for business. I mean a lot of people say, okay you build your stuff, and people will come. It doesn't work like that. (2,7)
				a previous boss around instilled in me the importance of networking and the importance of building relationships, and that the doors then can open (9,5)
				"I think their credibility takes a hit (if you can't find them on LI) , especially in our industry: we're in education; we're in business. Business is all about networking with the village it is a global platform now. If you're not sharing your information, I guess it's the equivalent is not having a sign in front of your building. If you go to a building and they've just got a number on there with a plain door, you would go whoa...this is something going wrong here." (9,14)
				"but I've sort of known more about it in the last half a dozen years as the

				expectation of me to network has increased, so it's got...I've not known an alternative" (12,10)
				"Social media is a natural extension of natural networking for me. I am a natural networker: I'm very easy in groups of people and you know, I can interact with people in getting into conversations and things like that, and build relationships and stuff like that, so for me all of these social media platforms are a simply additional extension to natural networking…
				I will very seldom connect with someone that I don't have a connection with, unless it's very directly for a business purpose and that. But yeah, the beauty for me is now I've got… I mean just shy of 800 connections on LinkedIn, which exponentially sort of opens up the you know, the second and third degree connections - so yeah…if it is business-related, I will…and it's to a

				third-degree connection for example, I will approach one of my other first degree connections, and I will see if I can get an introduction. And if it's to a second-degree connection who I've seen has viewed my profile, and I can see that they're potentially a worthy connection, you know they might have information that's worth sharing or things like that, I'll just send them an invite to connect." (7,7)
				Social networking is definitely the active networking on line very purposefully for instance. (6,21)
				P 8 when asked about the value of LI to networking said:
				"I think it's vital. I'm not a natural networker...certainly not in the real world. Networking ever ends in conferences, I have to force myself to do the room ...there are some people that can work the room naturally - I don't…

				Networking, it's absolutely vital, but then perhaps...you're talking about small-to-medium businesses. I think it depends on the type of business you're in. ..." (8,14)
				Yeah, it's kind of the brand thing I think, because I'm a professional networker (9,10)
				"If I know them, I'll accept them straight away and if I don't know them, I'll probably have a look at their profile and try and work out why they are connecting with me, but generally I don't tend to discriminate too much if someone connects with me or wants to connect with me: I generally just say yes. (12,7)
				"Yeah, it's kind of the brand thing I think, because I'm a professional networker So within my role, I met a lot of people. It would look a bit to me, if I had looked at someone else and they had 14 connections straight away, I would go

				they're not very on to it.." (9,11)
				I've got one of the most um...active LinkedIn profiles: I think it's at...I'm in the top two percent in the world.
				Um... I just like connecting. (11,8)
				"and found that I can create individual connections with people… and also getting over the fear that other people are listening over your conversations. I find it a great tool to help develop one on one individual relationships." (18,4)
				"There's those that you obviously know nothing about, and it's your choice whether you connect with those complete strangers or not. But I believe that it's the networking site: so, if it's networking and there's going to be people that I don't know…like in that working event." (5,8)
				That's right and there's heaps of people that I'm very familiar with on LinkedIn, but I've

| | | | | never actually met (7,12)

but thankfully my network…you know, how you can look at the stats, and see your entire sixth generation… I think five or six generation network size. Mine was tens of millions, so it means that I have massive access to even the second generation of connections. So my need is probably lesser than others who are starting out right now. (6,6)

Works both ways. What do I think when they do? When they contact me, my initial reaction is who are they, and what's in it for them that they want to contact me, and what's in it for me. And so sometimes I look at their profile; I look for verifying factors, so I'm seeing it with cynical eyes as well as opportunistic eyes. And I'll ask them sometimes after accepting, or sometimes before, what prompted you to contact me; what do you see the benefit is now or short term or long term; and how can I |

				help you; what ways would it be helpful for you; and what ways do you think I can benefit you or be a mutual benefit. So, I'm asking from a number of different angles, and I know some on odd occasions, people have been threatened by that: they feel like even just asking questions as a sell job. To me it's not: it's I genuinely want to know what, you know…is it just because LinkedIn suggested that they should contact me. (6,14)
				Okay. And I always accept (11,8)
				with those contacts that I'm quite familiar with, so those that I've met face-to-face or that I have been in conversations with whether it's via the internet or whether it's on the phone, doesn't matter, or Skype even, so then i would go onto their profiles and see who their contacts are, and initially that is how I build a lot of my contacts. Initially it was a group of people that had similar interests to me, and then from

				there on I just broadened the network really. So I tend to go via other people. (23,3)
				I would purposely go under the contacts that I do have, similar like-minded people and also a similar industry, where there's educational personal development, or coaching, or anything that is remotely related to personal development and what I do, I would go onto their profiles and then see what contacts they have. But also generally, people that you see you do have a lot of contacts in common, it shows you how many contacts you have in common, (23,5)
				I think if this person. I decide whether there is any correlation between us, so if they're an accountant I would always say yes, if they're somebody say selling travel, and I've never heard of them before and they live in Auckland and I live in Hamilton, I kind of, I just can't see the point in connecting. I tend to

				connect with most people who are in Hamilton. if they're in a similar area I'm in and there's been some point of connection through Chamber or some other… or they're a friend of a friend of mine, I'll do it. Mainly that I can see some correlation, sometimes I just do it out of courtesy, If they contact me I evaluate if they've contacted me because I've been on a discussion with them, then I would probably nine times out of ten, just out of courtesy, if they've taken enough interest to like what I've discussed and want to stay connected with me, they've given me an indication 'I like what you've said, you've got something of interest' I would say yes. If they come cold turkey, do what I did and just send invitations out, I think if this person... I decide whether there is any correlation between us, so if they're an accountant I would always say yes, if they're somebody say selling travel, and I've never heard of them before and they live in Auckland and I live in Hamilton, I kind of, I just can't see the point in

				connecting. I tend to connect with most people who are in Hamilton… if they're in a similar area I'm in and there's been some point of connection through Chamber or some other... or they're a friend of a friend of mine, I'll do it. Mainly that I can see some correlation, sometimes I just do it out of courtesy, but I don't like doing it for people from other cities who I don't know, and I think 'why on earth are you doing this cold turkey', I'd then be part of the 70% who don't respond. So it works both ways. I don't expect people to always respond to me, but I don't always respond to everyone else. I'm a selective... just common sense, I think. I don't have an open door policy of just accepting everyone. (25,8)
				Not many contacts
				It would look a bit odd to me, if I had looked up someone and they had only 14 connections. Straight away, I would go they're not very on to it. (9,10)

	7. Publicise c	Publicise your contacts	Statements suggesting that contacts are a reflection of their personal brand therefore it is important to gather as many good contacts as possible. Others are judged on the quality ad quantity of their contacts. Is linked to but not the same as the attitude that networking on LI is necessary	I do vet them. If I've got time, I go into each and everyone's profile… I have a quick look of their profile, <u>and if they've got only a handful of connections</u> and there's no real substance to their CV<u>…then I don't bother</u> … but I connect with most people…just the few that you just think…Nah. "(5)
				"Linked In with people that I already have some connection with. I'm a bit careful about just kind of going connecting up with anybody, because I regard my connections on LinkedIn as a kind of an indication of my…the sort of people that I talk to, and associate with" (1,5)
				"Yeah, it's kind of the brand thing I think, because I'm a professional networker So within my role, I met a lot of people. It would look a bit to me, if I had looked at someone else and they had 14 connections straight away, I would go

				they're not very on to it ..." (9,11)
	8.Protect c	Protect your contacts	Similar to above in that statements suggest that contacts are a reflection of their personal brand but therefore they must be careful who you connect with. Also, you 'own' your contact list and this could be stolen by untrustworthy others. Is linked to but not the same as attitude of networking on LI is risky.	"I think it might be that we don't want to connect with people we don't know, but also if it doesn't work, because if I say... The point is, I say right...because you're connected to this person, I'm going to go yes, because if I'm connected to them, it's worth someone I'm connected to in LinkedIn, and there's a reason for that, so I can go to that person and say, "Hey, can you introduce me to them." But that's someone you don't know, and you've just randomly contacted with you, or it was the other way around, you won't want to do that..." (8) "But what about your competition? Do you accept your competition? Because your competition can then browse around your contacts and say oh, I believe you deal with xxxx, um...you should be dealing with us: we're much better." (13,8)

				"For example, one was someone that I did business with, and he shafted a lot of people, so, I intentionally deleted the connection, and he...not only on LinkedIn but he was a connection on Facebook, as well, and I deleted there, and un-friended him." (7,10)
				"Well the one I mentioned earlier is because his behaviour...I didn't know him; and in his first exchange with me, he was suggesting something that wasn't above board. Now you could say, well maybe he's just being a smart marketing person...maybe he's got some really cool idea that he wanted to share with me, and thought that from reading my profile, it would really be beneficial for both of us. I don't know. It was...his style was not appropriate. And therefore, I thought, no I don't want this guy in here. Interestingly, he had already got two or three other New Zealand connections

				there that were connections of mine, so you know, he's obviously trying this quite ruthlessly just to use it as a way of getting..." (13,10)

Codebook 2 -Tensions 7,8,9,10,11 Chapter six

Tensions and Paradoxes	Abbrev	code	Definition/expl anation	Examples
TENSION Restraint in terms of behaviour and	9.Promote b	Publicise your brand	Li is their digital image, which is closely tied to their business. LI is a good way to promote themselves	"as a representative, or the representative of a business we were speaking with our own profiles, so the focus really was in personal branding

controlling an image b/c they are "curating an image"-I am my business This involves coping with expectations and reactions of others and exhibiting behavior that at times conflict 9-21 are specific descriptive codes that reveal this tension)			through their posts and communications to others. There is a distinct tension between giving good information, "stuff", and spamming/sellin g yourself or product.	plus corporate branding inter-mingled." (P6). Certainly from the company site, that's around putting the brand out there as well... So that the company profile get the brands out. Personally, it's partly networking as well: it's a bit of a personal brand of personal networking...definitel y. (10,2) "But I have the feeling that's the same thing...Yeah…Becau se my business is my brand and my brand is my business, so… (P.13) "Well yeah, actually I think of, sounds ghastly, but I do think of myself as a personal brand, so when you say do I have a company profile, in some ways I do. (P.22) "So, that the company profile gets the brand out. Personally, it's partly networking as well: it's a bit of a personal brand and personal networking...definitel y." (P.10,5)

359

				Like my original reasons were purely for networking getting my name out there I guess and see who else is out there and use it as a networking tool. guess a previous boss around instilled in me the importance of networking and the importance of building relationships, and that the doors then can open. (10,5)
				"some people will give you a some of their quality stuff for free to show how good they are." (17,25)
				"it's that other people that are actually seeing something in what I write, and the way that I write it, that gives them the confidence to make a move to me. Um...I mean you know, I've obviously got a profile which, you know you can read through and so on, and there's information there. Um...and then it seems as though the tone of the postings that I

				put...um...people just like it." (15,9)
				People are looking for more information on somebody, so if they go to your profile and there's no photograph; you've got a basic you know, but not much else there, you look like you're really don't care. (17,5)
				you should put on there and what's appropriate, what's relevant and what sort of profile will get the reader's attention and then I figured how you can actually put a link on there, so putting links from my website on my profile page. (23,9)
				That's it, because it's mainly, in my opinion, it's mainly because of time restrictions, that we don't have time to connect personally anymore, and therefore social media would be the best, the most effective way of getting your name out there and connecting with others. (23,13)

				I often go there to actually educate others. For example I'll jump on a relevant discussion to put my little bit of expertise in so that adds credibility to who I am and people think 'oh she obviously knows what she's talking about'.(25,5) But the knowledge of who I am and what I do, is now in the marketplace. (25, 6)
	10.Protect b	Protect/contr ol your brand	Because Li is their digital image, which is closely tied to their business it is important to curate this image. Publishing on LI can hurt this brand if you make mistakes or allow others to make posts on your site. Also make strong negative statements about others who do not post quality posts or make inappropriate posts. Also, your brand could be stolen. Your stuff could be stolen.	"sort of like last year with people endorsing me for things I don't do, like endorsing me for property law on LinkedIn. I didn't do property law: I don't want an endorsement for property law." (12) "here was my competitor using my work. So there was certain languaging and brand perceptions that were very much at a threat. Sadly, like I said, I realised too late. I had no idea some of that was happening…another few things happened, and I realised the high likelihood, that … I think that our brand had been

				merged in people's perceptions and my brand had been lost..." (6)
				"I know a lot of people would look at it, like if I met somebody in business: I'm also chairman of a not-for-profit, and so that appears on there as well, so I know that people...if I would meet them in one context or another quite often they would look at my profile to see who I am and what I'm about."
				So, the whole thing has to look the part where it has to look professional…Yes...exactly. You have to behave yourself on LinkedIn."
				(17,9)
				"So, there's a guy I worked with about 25 years' ago, and suddenly he gave me endorsements for about 15 things. And I thought he had gone bad in the head: I really did - I thought that, because you know...he's older than me, and I thought well okay, well he's... Last time I met him, he was a little bit, you

				know...funny. Or maybe he's gone senile" (7,10)
				"So that I feel that, whatever it is they're endorsing, they've got some knowledge of um...so consequently connected with many endorsements that are on there. But you know I haven't taken up if you like. If I just feel that I don't know the other people...Um...and it jeopardises my integrity, so I won't go down that path. No. I mean to me, it's very important that you have a quality service, and you will also have something where your integrity is intact, and people know that they can um...trust you." (15,9)
				So you wouldn't put something on LI that's a bit frivolous that you might put on Facebook because it might affect your image
				On LinkedIn yes, it's your reputation, you don't want to be perceived as a circus and also you want to say something meaningful, so I do put a lot of thought in and if I create blogs or posts that

| | | | | are posted on LinkedIn I do put a lot of thought in that, I don't just write anything… and be very careful what I say because that could automatically.. you know people are very direct on LinkedIn, and they would let you know if you offended someone or if they don't agree with you then you have to be able to defend yourself… (23,5 |
| | 11. No p/p | Professional and personal don't mix | Statements indicating a need, desire or actions to keep the two worlds of virtual personal and professional, separate. | "Yeah, although I specifically use LinkedIn for professional ties, and Facebook for general friendship." (1/8)

Generally yes. I wouldn't say it's a black and white rule where there's a grey area there and as I said before, you know some of the professional networks have gone on to the social networks as well which is good... (10,12)

"…people that I work with and they have become friends, we tend to stay on Facebook or like they lead the conversation there on Facebook. So most of the activity has been on Linked In or |

				has to do with the business contacts, so where I could see potential for business development." (18, 6)
				"because my natural world is separate but you know it's the Venn diagram, so I've got lots of… Wellington is a little city, it's got loads of women like me doing work like I do and we do get together, so some of my work colleagues I'm on Facebook with and more of them I'd be LinkedIn to, but I notice that the work colleagues that I'm on Facebook with will use Facebook more as a professional tool. But I err on the separation side" (22,12)
				"I mean I keep them very sort of um...is that there is a definite demarcation there if you like, you know personal stuff that's family things, and ah...then the business side of it is strictly business" (15,12)
				Participant 16 makes a subtle distinction

				between the personal and work
				" Generally yes. I wouldn't say it's a black and white rule where there's a grey area there and as I said before, you know some of the professional networks have gone on to the social networks as well which is good…work uses of different platforms…Like this morning, I sent an in-mail out to um...an ex-colleague from Fonterra from eight years' ago who I … ah... she's actually on my Facebook. I wouldn't have seen her in three years, but she's on my Facebook, she's not on my LinkedIn, but I wanted to catch up with her on a work thing, so I had emailed her on LinkedIn. Yeah. And I didn't email her Fonterra email address, because it's um...it is a work thing, but I wanted a personal opinion on a work thing more than a hi formally asking you in your work capacity to meet with me in my work capacity."
				"Yeah. So, LinkedIn, it's like well this isn't just a social chat, but it's sort of work-related, but it's sort of social its

				fine." (16,16). "Yeah. Well a good example: when I started out here and I was working as more of a consultant, the Learning Manager here, David Foley, and I connected on Facebook. He was probably an exception, because I didn't know him that well. Most of the people I know really well on there, but we did connect...it just happened to happen. We also connected on LinkedIn. Now when I started working here, and he in effect came became my boss, one of the first things I did was un-friended him on Facebook. But on the same account, I have no qualms about him being connected with me on LinkedIn. And if he sees me posting something on LinkedIn, well I'm working. I'm networking. So…" (9,17) "Definitely." (keeps personal and professional networks separated) "Yes absolutely" (Facebook is for personal and LinkedIn is professional)" (25,13)

				, I wouldn't say it's a different person, it's just the more serious, focused Mari, that's on LinkedIn, compared to the silly, chatterbox, bubbly, fun person that's on Facebook. (23,5)
				Yes because Facebook is more for the personal relationships whereas LinkedIn is more for the professional relationships. (23,12)
				Facebook is the one where you make friends... Facebook is the social family side of things, and LinkedIn is work, it's professional, and I for one keep the two quite separate. (25,6)
				So it's really about our personal profile and I just keep Facebook totally for social family so I haven't. I really only have LinkedIn, it's all I rely on. (25,7)
				would say the majority of people who want to be

			friends with you automatically just go on Facebook and invite you there. That's what most people do. You don't usually get that on LinkedIn unless they're a business person in their own right and then they do both.(25,9)
12. Yes p/p	Can't stop professional and personal mixing	Statements indicating that it is not possible to keep the two worlds of virtual personal and professional, separate. May say that they want or accept this or don't care	They are overlapping: they're different in my mind; they're a spectrum, and…for instance, a professional relationship which is also a friendship. If you're doing professional work, you need to be aware of where the friendship begins and ends in…and how to maintain the professionalism. So in that sense they overlap, but they're different. (1,9)

"I like to keep them separated but I find that they do overlap at times, so I've come to the realisation that it can't really be black and white. I'm comfortable with the idea that sometimes those things kind of cross over." (18,4)

"I wanted to try and separate my business and personal you |

				know… I had a personal Facebook page for a while, but it's quite hard to get people to say, "Hey go to my business one…it's a nightmare." (Both laugh.) So I'm struggling with that a little bit. I have actually asked some people um…would you go to my business page, from my personal page, and they sort of got really irritated. I try to keep them separated, and then I've been finding, you know, with Facebook sort of blend together a few times. ." (14,4,8)
				"But um…I prefer to keep the person as they are you know, in certain sectors …And that's why I like LinkedIn and Google Plus, because that's really about business and I don't socialise there." (14,12)
				"They are overlapping: they're different in my mind; they're a spectrum, and…for instance, a professional relationship which is also a friendship. If you're doing professional work, you need to be aware

				of where the friendship begins and ends in…and how to maintain the professionalism. So in that sense they overlap, but they're different." (1,9)
				"don't say too much, you know don't get paranoid about your personal information. You're at an age where they're going to find it anyway, but you know obviously keep personal information away from it." (9,14)
				"*I* would definitely put a divide from a professional and a personal association" (9,15)
				"I think its community regulating" (18,3).
				Exactly, on Facebook I hate that people put all their personal stuff, their boyfriend breakups, all of my nieces and nephews all over Facebook, you don't need to tell everyone, this isn't the kind of place to say all this stuff. You're just going to invite a whole lot of yucky

			stuff back, you're making yourself a target. That's just what Facebook is and I don't like it at all. And I guess that's what I love about LinkedIn because it's not like that. I really would speak very highly that it seems to just unconsciously discourage that because there's a tone to it that everybody seems to recognise and just flow with. (25,15)
13. LI prof	LinkedIn has a professional image	Statements that indicate Li is seen as a professional business space. Controlled by structure and professional behaviour of participants	"You know, you're the CEO of something, you look important. You can get a bit snobbish and you can do that with LinkedIn." (9,9) but we certainly do use Facebook as well, but no... personally I'm much more comfortable with the control and structures and my image via LinkedIn.(10,15) "LinkedIn is slightly more formal. It's more professional, and also more about I guess you are building that external credibility." (16,12) "What I liked about it (LI) is, it's clean; professional; and it seems to be

373

				somewhat verified. (14,5)
				"Yes...exactly. You have to behave yourself on LinkedIn." (17,9)
				"Yeah, LinkedIn I see as purely professional and so you know, there's no you know...I went fishing or um...you know I went on holiday - none of that stuff on LinkedIn. But in my view, that's how it should be...Yeah, LinkedIn is when I'm wearing my suit, you know ...Facebook is to rest." (17,22)
				"I'd say it's a lot more formal on LinkedIn. I think Facebook is a very… to me it's almost like texting. You kind of just chat, whereas on LinkedIn it seems to be a lot more defined… just my impression... a lot more of a professional forum that you don't say 'gidday buddy how are you going?' you know? You keep it

				all very appropriate" (21,3)
				"Yeah? There have been some interesting characters and I suppose it also brings out the question of the culture that is expected of people participating on Linked In, there are certain behaviours that you sort of raise the eyebrow... when they send you a request to recommend them when in fact you have never worked with them. That sort of contact from people doesn't really go down well with me personally, so you have these sorts of expectations as to how the people that are on Linked In are supposed to behave or carry themselves." (18,2)
				"Yep. It's all about first impressions, it's about doing business… you know if I wanted to do business with you I would want to know that you're respectful, you have integrity and that will come out in the way you are on LinkedIn." (21,10)

	14.exp	Show expertise	Statements that indicate you should showcase your expertise - but be careful this not be interpreted as spamming or 'skiting' (see no 17)	I'd like to think that it's sort of a professional place. And I hope it always stays that way to be honest. (25,13)
				"I <u>should be</u> generating discussions and making a point of commenting on discussions at least once a week. (16,4)
				"some people will give you a some of their quality stuff for free to show how good they are. ...you know, there's less kind of spammy you know." (17,25)
				"I think we all take ourselves a bit too seriously. We just pretend we know it all but...rather than divulging that the possibly we don't. "(12,11)
				"So I guess it could be like a content dispersion network for me as well. It was also a way of creating authority and showcasing expertise: those I on my profile and in the groups, and with that

			comes the whole branding…
			Or adding that trust that belongs to your profile and showcasing what you're doing and your expertise" (6,4)
			"Well you've got to give, and that's where people I think with social media people really got confused. It's not taking: it's giving. Because people used to say that when the social media stuff was my blog. You know, they would go...well you're putting all your knowledge up there. What are you doing, and I was going well, it's there for the people to use it?" (9,19)
	15.real	Seem like a 'real', genuine, friendly person	Statements that indicate you must connect and sound real friendly genuine, helpful etc. to make LI or another social media work but don't be too personal (see no.18)	"Yeah, I still feel it's not stuffy, in a sense I think there's a whole lot of drawbacks of having self-censorship, theoretically I think, but there's still a sense that you can have conversations, you know it still can be interactive, it can still be genuine." (22,7)
			"Yeah, and then there's…something

| | | | | that sort of came up quite quickly earlier on in the Twitter days, when lot of people were posting things that didn't necessarily reflect who they were. And they were quite quickly (laugh) outed, to use an Americanism, as being fake. And you know, on LinkedIn it's very easy to find out whether people are talking absolute rot, or what they're putting out there as an expression of who they are. I put out stuff that's an expression of me…you know. I still enjoy a gin and tonic on a hot summer's day, but you know…occasionally I'll just post that I'm just enjoying the G & T." (7,12)

"Um...and then it seems as though the tone of the postings that I put...um...people just like it. And they sort of say you know, "You're such a warm person," and ah...you know, "You're my best friend," and... (15,10)

"the way that I operate um... is very much having a |
|---|---|---|---|---|

				conversation with somebody. Um...if you start doing this...um, including umpteen people, it loses its personal touch. The whole idea really is that the individual... It's like having a conversation, so whether they're in Argentina or Iran, or you know, St Petersburg or whatever, they actually feel that they're sitting in my home. Yeah. And you know, I used to have people actually arriving at the door. And you know we used to make coffee and have homemade muffins, and then I just... chat. And you know, I just want to generate that on-line if you like..." (15,13) "I would say beyond that, it's a genuine professional relationship and not just the token or a random or a number collecting like many people do. It's not a badge of honour that I've got 2,000 LinkedIn connections, because again if someone says to me, I just go well you're not very genuine are you? So you've got to be very careful about the image that you

				are portraying." (9,12)
				"But I've got a heap of endorsements and you know, there are certain things...like there are certain people that endorse me all the time. And I go...look I don't even know you.

So what the hell are you doing? Well it straight away, it seems, well how ungenuine are you?" (9,11,12) |
| | | | | And then I think the link from a negative perspective, I guess they're sort of seeing people endorse you for skills that they wouldn't have a bloody clue what your skills are. And it sort of, it loses its credibility because of that, I think. I think because LinkedIn obviously on it's...by itself pops up every so often...do you know this person, and can you endorse them for this skill or that skill. And you often get people endorsing you for skills that um...to be honest, they wouldn't have a clue |

				if you've got that skill or not. It's most like 'I'll just tick that box and endorse them'. And as a result, I think it lose its credibility. It's almost as if...like I think if someone endorses you, it should be a qualified endorsement as opposed to...yes, I'll just tick that box and I am now endorsing that person. Well I feel very strongly about giving endorsements for someone they don't know you anything about. So obviously I'm not going to play that same game. (reciprocate) (10,3)
				"Yeah. She came back...that's why she said, "Who the hell's this. And I decided...I actually rang her up. I said look you know, this is the back story, and she was quite angry 'because she felt that you know there was dishonesty. It wasn't the intention: the intention wasn't, 'cause what we were doing was just building the profile a bit, then it was going to be handed over..." (9,26)

			Yes, I like that because it builds credibility, and when I look at someone's profile and I see that they've got plenty of endorsements in certain areas, then immediately your perception changes, whether it's valid endorsements or not. It's the same as the Facebook page, whether you buy 2000 likes or whether you gain 2000 likes, the person that's going to come across your page and see that you've got 2000 likes, immediately is going to think 'oh OK, 2000 other people liking this person, there must be something valid to it. I appreciate endorsements, if it's something that I do, then absolutely. Why not? (23,10)
16.No contra	Don't openly contradict	Be careful to not directly contradict or criticise. be careful of the tone you use if you put forward a different opinion	Unless there's something particular about it, I should say to that person after they've…maybe I've thought that they had said something that they shouldn't have done or just got something completely wrong. I wouldn't want to embarrass them in public. I've done that on odd occasions

				but generally no…you replied because it's a group discussion…you know you're in a group, like it's like we're sitting around this table… (5,9)
				"It's not so much causing offence as you just don't want to be the person who sort of pops up correcting people ...I guess. … it's about your reputation...And the reputation that you're trying to build." (12,2)
				"And the couple of times that I've posted directly to the people who have commented on my posts… um...sometimes the views they've put up are so ridiculous...they've been not ridiculous, to the people who made it, but um...to me. But I also I don't feel I'm going on the public forum...are you kidding me?" (16,28)
17.mod	Show modesty	Don't sound like a know it all, brag or oversell yourself	"Well I guess I could, but the difficulty I find with something like a

				discussion site is it's really hard to get tone just from one or two sentences, and particularly if you disagree with something. Some things that can be a bit of a balancing act, not coming off like if they know it all." (12,2)
				"I should put up milestone business comments, you know when we've done something interesting or useful or...not so much skiting* I guess, but you know putting up something that people might find interesting that we've done business-wise." (17,12) * (NZ slang = boasting)
				No, I haven't got involved in any of them. I'm just a passive observer. (10,13)
				Yes well that's how I see it, I see it as a place where you should be supportive. It's fine to have a different opinion about something, that's fine and that's healthy just to say this is how I see it, you don't have to agree with me, but when it starts being

				negative or attacking each other personally, 'well what do you know, I've got this Master's degree in psychology and you don't have that and this is what I know', then I just don't see the purpose.(23,14) I expect people that are on there to be professional people and to behave themselves. So they shouldn't be overseen by a manager or a headmaster. They're all adults so they should be polite. (23,15) Yeah and I find that even if people disagree on discussions, they'll say 'look I'm not sure if I agree with that because from my experience blah blah blah', but no I've never seen anybody put down another person's opinion. They might express a different one, but I've not seen any blog where somebody's actually put down somebody else's, they've just proved a perspective. And I really like the fact that it is. you're not getting all gossip, slander, attacking and that kind of stuff. I don't like that stuff, and if it was on, I

			wouldn't follow it. I feel quite strongly against it. But again, I mean you're dealing with professional people, to me it's unprofessional to act like that, people are not going to benefit if they behave like that, but I've not actually seen any on the sites that I visit or the groups that I'm on (25,14)
18.No pols	Keep politics and personal out of LI	Li is not the place for political or personal statements	Well yeah. I mean I do have a connection on Facebook with a guy in politics, but he was a work colleague and then a friend beforehand, and I generally don't look to enter that kind of public debate and LinkedIn is sort of I associate with being, having a certain degree of publicness and Facebook as well. So, I mean I would be a watcher if I was involved in that: I would probably be reticent about engaging in conversation. (1,10) "You know my political views aren't relevant to my business colleagues on LinkedIn but on Facebook I've got a number of friends that post their

				political views and I'm happy to respond but I wouldn't do that on LinkedIn, it's not appropriate".
				"Yeah. Like I mean again this guy I actually...he always puts...you know, oh John Key's done this, isn't he a dick or something like that, and I was thinking like I don't want any of your views …
				I don't mind politics being there, but in an information dissemination way …. I don't want to hear your views on politics which is not work-related and it's personal" (16,29).
	19.lang	Be careful with language	Avoid sounding ignorant, dogmatic or rude or unprofessional	They are also less confrontational: they're not eyeball to eyeball - they're more along kind of happening…things happening alongside, which is a different dynamic to the direct communication styles. (1,11)
				"You kind of cringe a bit if somebody recommends you and writes something that's you know like

				poor grammar or something like that" (19,9)
				"People used to be quite you know, quite casual with their language and things like that, and so I've really noticed the change" (8,26)
				"Truthfully….As I said, they're all platforms, but I do think that there are people who could disaffect their audiences by being too vocal or quite you know…particularly when comments and things get acerbic, and you know you start getting to effect on-line arguments that always degenerate, that you know…the comments' sections of blogs are just often hysterical to read, because you sort of start off on point, and then just gradually degenerate into just into… the rabble…just biffing it out. So yeah, I think people can be in danger of disaffecting portions of their audience or portions of their potential clientele or things like that. Personally, I'm quite careful about things I

| | | | | post. You know, for example, my Twitter profile and my Facebook profile: they are clear that I'm a Christian. It's part of me; it's part of my DNA; it's part of my makeup - I make no bones about it. You know, pin my colours to the mast as it were, but I don't sort of you know, get in there and bash things down" (7,14) |
| | | | | I got into a bit of an argument I suppose once where the lady… I had made a comment: I didn't think it was a nasty comment…I certainly didn't mean it as a nasty comment. I was comparing a book to another classic book and I said it's this version - this book…I haven't written this book. This book was a modern day version of how to win friends and influence people. Well she went up one-one. She reported me to Dale Carnegie Institute and all the rest of it; it was defamation of their branding; and I've got other people in New Zealand that were on my side, and all the rest of it… Well my goodness, hey it just said this book was an updated |

				version of this book, but no… So I unconnected from her and I just said you know…too small a world oh…go away.(7,23)
				"They are also less confrontational: they're not eyeball to eyeball - they're more along kind of happening…things happening alongside, which is a different dynamic to the direct communication styles" (1,11)
				I haven't seen anything inappropriate at all on LinkedIn. I mean I can say that you could get a young person on there that it perhaps not aware but I mean if you're looking through postings and stuff, it becomes very obvious, like everybody copies everybody else, it's almost self-regulating in that way because people… no one's going to like stuff if it's inappropriate and that's not going to build your image, and I think people very clearly see this

				is the expectation, this is what people want to see, it's got to be informative, educational, interesting and professional. I think in a sense it speaks for itself really. (25,14)
	20.spam	Don't spam or sell	You should not spam or sell, but people are doing this and some	you've sort of thought if that's going to be someone that's going to spam me… (5,9)

"Um...but what I found with some of them is that they quite often get shut down.um...you know, by other people to sort of say, 'Look you know, this isn't an appropriate forum for you know, whatever'... I mean the ones that I've sort of been involved with, they tend to have some quite um...vocal people in the terms of they're...you know, very well up in their own field, and um...you know, they just don't want people using the site or their postings of the...a marketing exercise..." (15,16)

"Real estate agents and mortgage brokers and SCO people. The SCO people, they would probably still be |

				spammiest I think". (17,22)
	21.inter	Interaction impt. but…	Interaction is recognised as important for relationship building This includes commenting or replying to other postings. But/or because of time constraints, fear of not appearing knowledgeable etc. but not being sure how to do it and/or not being interested in others posting or prefer to interact f- t- f, if at all.	"I think it's really helpful, but I think nothing will ever beat face-to-face. I think New Zealander's, well society as a whole, prefers that face-to-face interaction." (24,6)

"I don't believe so, I think relationships are built more on face-to-face and interaction whereas I don't think LinkedIn is interactive". (24,9)

"My personal view is that a person-to-person contact is always the richest form of contact. Like personally I think number one is face-to-face, number two is the phone and then the rest flows from there." (17,23)

"I was part of a cluster group and stuff that helped me understand that you know, that that was something that could happen outside of just…you know, being in groups, they made it quite an interactive…" (14,10)

"the way that I operate um... is very much having a |

				conversation with somebody. Um...if you start doing this...um, including umpteen people, it loses its personal touch. The whole idea really is that the individual... It's like having a conversation, so whether they're in Argentina or Iran, or you know, St Petersburg or whatever, they actually feel that they're sitting in my home. Yeah And you know, when I have been people actually arriving at the door. And you know we used to make coffee and have homemade muffins, and then I just... chat. And you know, I just want to generate that on-line if you like..." (15,13) "Yeah I still feel it's not stuffy, in a sense I think there's a whole lot of drawbacks of having self-censorship, theoretically I think, but there's still a sense that you can have conversations, you know it still can be interactive, it can still be genuine." (22,7)
TENSION	22.stalking	Interest in others - stalking or	Statements that indicate that they like using	"might look them up on LinkedIn, find out a little bit more about

Interest in others = interest in self = auto-communication? Code word "self" enhances and restructures the receiver's ego		tracking or gathering information about others	LI to check up on others and gathering social information about them. But often show a concern that they should not be doing this or that it will be noticed. Don't actually want to connect when tracking others. Often statements that indicate that use this information to establish rapport when meeting or conversing with someone	what they do, because it's a starting point to have (25,2) if you do it via LinkedIn, they can very easily just click on your name…or else as the person that sent this message and read all about you. (5,7) I like the one the fact that you can view who's putting articles or who's watching and so forth. (10,3) "Yeah I've searched for people I used to work with... people I used to go to school with. I've just done a random 'I wonder what they're doing now' kind of thing, and I've found quite a few people through there. That's really interesting when you find out somebody you went to school with is a brain surgeon, you always knew they'd be something like that and somebody else... I got a Linked In request actually from somebody I went to school with... 'wow I recognize that name'... and he works at NASA! Quiet guy and yeah, he works at NASA. It's been really interesting finding out people that you used to go to school with and what they're

				doing now, it's really good." (19,8)
				"I'll look people up on LinkedIn prior to a meeting, so if I'm at a meeting, and someone else is invited I haven't met, I'll look for them on LinkedIn, so..." (8)
				"The other side of LinkedIn I find interesting is, and it was the place where the demographics and data that you can get, so some of the business pages and things you can get and what they must know, so they can see their compile of...you know, you change your job. They know this stuff; turnover rate of different companies; their intention rate; they know what types of roles, and you know LinkedIn will have this incredible amount of information on the company just through people naturally doing things like changing their role, or updating that now, how often people get promoted within the certain business. There's all this data that we're all kind of putting out there without really

395

				thinking about it. "(8,25)
				"I use it for people that I might be doing business with, to find out a bit about them; I looked up a person recently who was in the market as an independent director, and I kind of sussed out a bit of her background there before I met her, so I could make some intelligent conversation." (1,4)
				really, I am the one often instigating connections with other people and sometimes if I look at their profile then they'll come back and look at my profile, but that doesn't matter to me, knowing that they've come back and looked at mine, it's often about me checking them out, does that make sense? (25
				"...I noticed that they had checked out my profile, so if it was, they were looking into me, 'cause you could see that and furthermore, they actually asked to connect with me, so straight away I said

				they had taken me seriously." (9,11) "I enjoy going through the profiles" (23,2) For me it's... the reason I went on Facebook, because again it's something that I never went on before I moved to New Zealand, is so that I can share pictures and news with the family back in South Africa. (23,11) It was great for that, because some of the professional. jobs. it's a hub of information. I don't do it regularly, I've only done it once, but it was great to be able to reconnect through that. (25,9)
	23.auto	Auto-communication Checking on how you stack up	Statements that indicate that some of this information gathering behaviour is to see how they compare in their profiles, careers etc. to others who they have known.	"could keeping track of people changing jobs or moving in the industry." Or for "checking up on the people that I went to school with, or met 10 years' ago, and "have a look and find out what they're doing", and "to know where people end up and what happens next".

| | | | | And show connections of how far you are separated from people, and who knows who...that obviously, that's fantastic. (8,8)

"I've got a lot of that information spread around the internet and when you start putting it into LinkedIn you start getting this real historical recording of your whole business life and I really like that. And then you've got all of your friends giving you recommendations and stuff like that so it's a reputation tool, you know it's really good. There's lots of tools out there where they'll measure your reputation based on how many times you post or how many pages you've made and stuff like that but I think probably the best one at the moment is LinkedIn," (20,4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other | 24. local | More comfortable with local connection and or critical of local NZ content or behaviour | Statements that indicate they are more comfortable connecting with local people or reading local content.

Also the opposite that | 'Most of them are probably Tauranga-based I'm guessing. Probably weak ties and I would think of them not more as contacts than as associates, although some friends are on there.   Most of them |

			they prefer to read overseas experts	I think of as local contacts." (4,6)
				"But you know it is part of the culture down here, everyone has a political view on stuff, but you don't necessarily broadcast it." (22,14)
				".. so that's not necessarily about my expertise that I feel tentative about, it's more about understanding the context." (22, p.2) NZ context.
				Most are in New Zealand (23,6)
	25. 24/7	Works on LI evenings or weekends etc. or refers to many jobs	Has time issues because of work pressures -may stop them from looking at LI or they look at LI a lot in the evening. This becomes a drain on personal time.	"I think since this study is around small-medium businesses. I think the answer to that has to be that all small-medium businesses are under huge pressure, so they have to be very circumspect about how they spend their time'. (P.13)
				"Not that it's a big number, but you know once you get to a couple of hundred (of contacts), I suppose that becomes a hell of a

| | | | | time-waster, so... "(17,15)

Participant 23 explained that she had had to limit LI use.

"I used to spend a lot of time. This year I purposefully, consciously try to slow myself down, because last year I did suffer a bit of a burn-out, I would get home in the evening because I do have a day job, I would get home in the evening and I would get on the computer and I would start having conversations with people until the early morning hours. So yes absolutely.… without you realising it, once you've gone through all your groups and the posts and the comments that people might have left on your posts, there's several hours that have passed…You have to be really disciplined, and I know I've read quite a few posts about this subject as well, you have to be disciplined and say it's just an hour on LinkedIn a day and whatever I don't get to today needs to wait until tomorrow." (23,16) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

				"Well, the value of these on-line network: interrelating… channels for interrelationships is that generally they're an asynchronistic, so they're less intrusive on time" (1,10)

so it can be invasive, but I think we've been at it; we've been at it for you know…it's not a fad anymore; it's you know, these are serious platforms and serious parts of our life now. And we just have to manage them you know (7,13) |
| | Age | Age is a factor in soc media use | Expect older people not to be on LI or more cautious

Expect older p to be on FB

Expect younger p to be more Web2 savvy etc | "Yes...absolutely. Or 'cause they're just a different generation and they've grown up with protecting their IP (9,14)

Yes, I would. Because older people may not know how to use it and they might be afraid, there might be a bit of being afraid of using it and not wanting to struggle with figuring it out. (23,9) |
| | | improv | Improvements | And actually I'd like it if it said, you've already sent an invite to this person six months ago and they haven't responded, I would like that |

				feature improved. (25,7) More visual e.g. video clip form the person