
10 Tips for Marketing with LinkedIn



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For those not yet exploiting LinkedIn to market their business, then the time to sit up and take note of the following 10 tips, is now.

1. Complete your profile

Everyone dislikes an incomplete profile. It smacks of “can’t be bothered” or “is this enough?” When others search to learn more about your company, product or service, there needs to be a profile that is 100% complete or that all-important first impression is likely to be tainted.

Make sure you have an up-to-date photo that is recognisable as you and try to choose a photo with a welcoming smile.

2. Add wow factor

Once you are happy with your profile, slowly start to introduce wow factor. There is little worse than a bog standard, run-of-the-mill profile entry as these fail to exhibit any personality or fascinating qualities.

To pep up a profile why not introduce an intriguing story in the summary, or make a video endorsement appear within the first 10 seconds. At the bare minimum, there should be something about you and who you can help. This will at least act as a guide for searchers landing on your profile. Use the Company Page tool to add more information. Here you can invest in banner images, optimise your products and services tab, request recommendations and develop a diverse content strategy.

You can also include links to articles, slideshow presentations and all sorts of rich-media that will help your profile stand out from the crowd.

3. Sign up to targeted groups

This sounds obvious but it’s amazing how many fail to even search for like-minded clusters of LinkedIn users. LinkedIn groups are the online equivalent of industry events, and there are over 1 million on LinkedIn.

For engineering companies, for example, why not check out the Engineer Network Group, which provides industry-focused professionals with a designated place to gather and share advice and articles. Furthermore, it’s easy to post questions and just wait for the answers to roll in. For anyone discovering that there doesn’t seem to be a group that is 100% right, the answer is simple, start one.

4. Make a custom webpage

Create a custom webpage for the group on your website. This kind of page will offer greater context, engagement and visibility for your group.

5. Connecting and recommending

Naturally you should connect with everyone you know on LinkedIn so you can make recommendations to others when they want an introduction. However, there is an extremely large LinkedIn community out there, and some suggest that connecting with everyone is not such a bad idea. This school of thought implies you already know about the opportunities that exist with your closest contacts, so why not use LinkedIn to introduce yourself to new people... who knows where it could lead?

In terms of providing recommendations, the more you give, the more you will receive – don't hold back. Finally, it could be worth connecting your Twitter account to LinkedIn. Sure, not everything posted on Twitter will be useful for a LinkedIn audience, so simply add #in with a Twitter update and it will synchronise to your LinkedIn account whenever there is a particular message you would like contacts to read.

6. Boost your search ranking

Ensure your listing is top of the pile by getting smart in one or two areas. For instance, the use of relevant keywords in the headline can work wonders. Also, don't forget to include current and past work experience, while exploiting the 'summary' and 'specialties' sections makes good marketing sense.

The summary is the heart of your profile and should read well and be engaging. Specialties is a section that represents an opportunity to showcase your attributes in succinct phrases. Other tips here include customising the URL with your name, and adding custom anchor text to links. LinkedIn users can have up to three links to other websites. Don't forget to populate the 'skills and expertise' section so that others can provide you with a quick and easy endorsement for specific skills.

7. Answer questions

Ask and reply to appropriate questions in groups to add additional credibility to your profile and raise your profile amongst industry peers. You can now also share your contributions on question-and-answer site Quora with your LinkedIn connections.

8. Integrate LinkedIn into your marketing

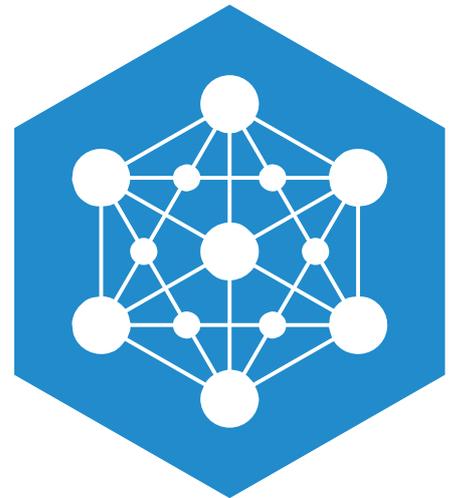
Whenever you do a seminar, webinar or exhibit at a trade exhibition, always invite your audience to network with you on LinkedIn or join your group. You can also inform group members about a forthcoming special offer or event and encourage them back to your website or blog. It all helps engage an audience and construct a network. Try not to overtly sell your services as this will turn people off, but feel free to drive people to relevant content that adds value.

9. Review and reload your profile

Rebooting your profile every couple of months or so keeps it current, pertinent and informative. Every time your profile is updated it is shared with your network if you have this feature enabled in your settings.

10. Keep up with new features

LinkedIn is constantly evolving, so failing to stay abreast of the latest features and tools means you can easily fall behind your competitors. For instance, the recently released LinkedIn Contacts is a new tool designed to make it easy for users to build and maintain important relationships. The tool can pull in, and keep up to date all your address books, emails and calendars in one central location. In addition, it compiles details about past conversations, meetings and notes, and provides helpful notifications. It is also available as a separate smart phone app.





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