



Getting LinkedIn!

Advanced Marketing For Big Time Results

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This year has been all about the power of social networking -- specifically the "Big Four": Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest... and LinkedIn. Today we're going to focus on LinkedIn, dispelling common myths and taking a look at some of the unique ways it can help you build your business.

So What Is LinkedIn Anyway?

LinkedIn is a social network, just like Facebook or Twitter. However, the emphasis with LinkedIn is on the "network" rather than the "social".

LinkedIn is an online professional network -- emphasis on both "professional" and "network". Thinking of it as "an online reference page where people can go to find out facts about you and your business experience" is fairly exact.

Those who think of LinkedIn only as a repository for résumés are missing the boat, however: This social network has a well-established, proven presence, with eight years online and over one hundred million users registered, leading to an average of over 4 million hits a day.

It used to be thought of as a place where professional, post-graduate males between 28-40 posted résumés or CV's on the net, but with social networks realizing they're at the crest of power, with the phenomenon of social search posing a serious threat to Google and its algorithms, that has changed.

Here's the beauty of LinkedIn: **You set your own demographic** by importing contacts from or linking:

- Your email address book
- Twitter
- Your blog

In addition, LinkedIn now has some exceptionally powerful features it never had before -- one of them unique. This particular feature allows you to:

- Post "recommendations" (i.e. testimonials) for your network contacts
- Allow them to post recommendations about you

One unique but rarely-talked-about fact about LinkedIn: It's almost as easy to shoot your business in the foot on the site as it is to vault it to new heights. It's not as forgiving as Facebook or as easily forgotten as Twitter.

Knowing **what you are doing** and **why** becomes imperative, if you want to use LinkedIn to maximize your business growth and reputation.

LinkedIn Basic Benefits

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Your LinkedIn presence ideally endows professional credibility, as well as an opportunity to:

- Display your skills and experience
- Short-cut the project-landing or job-hunting process
- Establish expert status for your business core skills
- Find strong potential Joint Venture partners
- Seek expert tips, opinions, feedback and advice
- Gain insider knowledge of your niche

LinkedIn also offers another benefit many people overlook. It can help catapult you to the top of Google's rankings, so that it's actually **you** people find when they Google your name -- not the five thousand other Betty Smiths who haven't yet created a LinkedIn profile.

Your LinkedIn profile immediately displayed on a Google search creates a powerful first impression for those interested in your services, adding instant credibility. "Oh. She's got a profile on LinkedIn." You might be surprised how many times people actually say that (while reaching for the phone to call the person they've just been Googling).

LinkedIn Groups also provides a decided advantage in building and refining your own personal demographic. You can join or even start a group very easily, connecting with like-minded industry professionals who are not yet in your address book. By doing this, you are connecting with your target niche.

This is especially advantageous if you have a B2B (business-to-business) service business: You can pick up permanent jobs or land projects with astonishing ease.

How to Use LinkedIn To Your Advantage

LinkedIn is best used for networking. Not only can you find clients if you're a B2B service, you can also make yourself known to potential JV partners -- as well as help yourself to a host of high-end insider tips and leads.

LinkedIn operates by allowing you to post the following:

- Your Profile
- Your Profile Photo
- Your Résumé or CV

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- A Summary (the equivalent of a "Resource Box" in article marketing)

You can also:

- Join groups
- Ask for recommendations
- SEO-optimize your LinkedIn URL
- SEO-optimize your keywords in your Summary section
- Add your own, custom anchor text to your links
- Answer member questions as an instant "expert"
- Connect your Twitter and Facebook account
- Searching by Companies you may have worked for or currently do business with

You can also add up to three URLs to your websites or blogs.

Take time to set up your profile. It is the best source of free professional advertising and promotion you could ever hope to get.

Four LinkedIn Do's and Don'ts

Nevertheless, there is an accepted etiquette to LinkedIn.

Rule # 1 is... never indiscriminately invite people to join your network or group because you think it will be advantageous. This group is far less tolerant of "hit and miss" random requests than is, say, Facebook. Here's a typical reaction, quoted on BNET: *"I get **LinkedIn** requests from people I've never met, but they've seen my name along with my company, so they send a request. I'm tired of it. Tell people to stop. I feel guilty not helping these people, but I also refuse to recommend someone if I don't know what kind of worker they are."*

Rule # 2: Update your status. Regularly. Not only will you miss amazing freelance or job opportunities if you don't, but LinkedIn only works if you remember to use it! (All too many people make the mistake of saying: "There. I've got my profile posted on LinkedIn -- that's all I need.")

It's not a static "business card" -- it's more of a living gallery of who you are and what you can offer.

Rule # 3: Use recommendations wisely -- both giving and requesting.

Be choosy about who you ask. Always ask those who know you well. Asking people who are peripheral is more likely to result in a "no" (or in having your request ignored). After all, you wouldn't walk up to the Vice President of a large corporation and ask him to write you a letter of

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recommendation if the closest you'd ever come to getting to know him consisted of watching him onstage at the annual meeting.

Be sparing also in giving recommendations: Resist the temptation to please your friends and curry favor, if that's something you've gotten into the habit of doing on other networks such as Facebook or Twitter. Make sure that your word carries weight; and that a recommendation from you is "pure gold".

Rule # 4: It's a very simple one: Never send people network requests ("friend" requests) without changing the default message to something more personal.

Testing has proved to many internet entrepreneurs that a better response rate is garnered when that message is personalized and a reason added.

LinkedIn encourages you to round up as many contacts as you can -- but that's more to their advantage than yours. Choosing your contacts is very much like defining and targeting your ideal customer: It's better to have a smaller "list" that is highly responsive and appreciative -- one that connects and engages naturally, with enthusiasm, tied by common interests -- than a huge, generic one.

Take some time to browse through all the tutorials and sections. Join two or three groups, seek out contacts from three or four companies and add business friends and contacts you know well from your address book.

Then study your new contacts' profiles and summaries. See how they network and model yourself after the style that feels most comfortable and fits in with your business image, branding and "voice."

Using LinkedIn Groups

Joining a group is a great way to make your voice heard (and your face seen) in the LinkedIn community. You'll be notified of new threads and posts, and you can simply click and comment.

Just make sure your comments add value to the discussion. You should never make do with comments such as: "Great point, Cliff!"

Addressing a specific point from an expert or involved stance goes a long way towards adding value.

And if you can conclude your comment with a call to action (or at least make it an "open" statement, inviting further opinion or questioning, as opposed to a "closed" one) you'll be welcomed as someone who livens up the group and keeps the ball rolling and in play.

LinkedIn [Groups](#)

Most users know about LinkedIn Groups, and they are presented in such a user-friendly manner it would be hard to ignore them: However, there are a few vital, new changes you need to know...

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It used to be you could send messages to other group members whether you were officially connected or not. Earlier this year, LinkedIn phased that ability quietly out, reserving it only for **paid members**. (It's a safe bet there will be more changes along these lines, pushing their monetization efforts to more focused heights.)

Another thing this should tell us: The Groups feature is a popular one, and more and more people have discovered its value.

Other Groups changes include:

- New icons
- Process for leaving a Group

LinkedIn has made this process much simpler:

Remember you can edit your Groups settings so that you are not bombarded with messages. You can choose from:

- Email notification
- Daily digest

You can also choose whether or not to allow the group manager to send you emails, as well as group members.

Using LinkedIn Answers

Another effective way to set yourself up quickly as an authority voice: Provide valuable responses to questions asked in LinkedIn's ["Answers"](#) section.

The most important point to remember about LinkedIn is that it is primarily professional in focus. Various discussions can often be informal or friendly, but even so, "fluff" is cut out and people are there to make points, as well as provide or receive quick, focused expertise.

It is also multi-layered, with many other flexible options for boosting your credibility there -- or losing it.

Using LinkedIn Events

If you are holding any sort of event (online or off) don't just publicize and promote it on Facebook and your blog -- use LinkedIn Events.

If you go right now to your LinkedIn profile and hit the "Events" tab, you'll instantly see a list of "Most Popular" relevant event suggestions (most of which you will probably be totally unaware...)

When you create your own event, you will be able to access three tabs: **Overview**, **RSVP** and **Manage...**

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This list is not decided upon strictly by LinkedIn staff: It is self-determined by **what goes viral** and is most popular in your industry.

LinkedIn's Principle Product Manager, Christina Wodtke, describes Events as "A [new] tool that helps you find conferences and seminars that are perfect for your career, based on your professional network and also what we know about you based on your LinkedIn profile".

These events are then presented as "Recommendations" in the bottom right-hand corner of your profile. If you don't see an "Events" slug there, listing relevant events you might be interested in, simply scroll to the bottom of the right-hand sidebar and select "Add an Application" from the dropdown menu.

Information the LinkedIn Events function particularly likes to access reflect your industry and job title: This means -- especially if you're an entrepreneur -- what you call yourself can impact heavily on what LinkedIn serves up to you, as can the specific niche keywords you use.

You are not subject simply to their choices, however: You can filter searches easily from dropdown menus in the right-hand sidebar by **date** (month), **location**, **industry** and **event type**.

Once you've selected an event you may be interested in attending, you can then access more details about it -- including who is going from your own network (and which others are interested in it, but have not yet committed).

The "My Events" tab allows you to keep an eye on all events you're interested in. You'll know when new people from your network are added.

You can also keep tabs on Comments from the event, as well as let your network know whether or not you are:

- Attending
- Presenting
- Exhibiting
- Interested
- Not attending

These update choices will appear on your LinkedIn profile. Letting your network know that you are presenter at an event can really boost your authority.

Learning How to Use LinkedIn

You have likely already heard a great deal about LinkedIn. While eight years old it is only in the last while that word is really getting out about just how powerful this site can be to your business. If you have not yet used LinkedIn or you are relatively new to the site, you'll find some great tips here that can help you maximize this social media platform and get the most out of it.

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LinkedIn is an excellent tool for building your business and establishing relationships with individuals within your niche market. If you use the following tips, you'll see results. It won't take you long to build a strong following and accumulate connections. Your connection to other professionals will grow daily. One of the most important things about LinkedIn is finding the right persons to connect with to get the best results if you are using powerful strategies to target followers.

The best way to start building your LinkedIn network is to join groups. The key is to not hesitate. Instead, jump in with both feet and start participating in discussions and making those connections. Make yourself a goal to add at least one new connection every day. Over time, the results will become evident.

It is really important that you have your LinkedIn profile 100% finished. Incomplete profiles have the potential to hinder your ability to be found on the site. The more information you are willing to share the more trust you will build and the more likely you are to enjoy success with your LinkedIn profile.

When creating your LinkedIn profile makes sure you upload a good picture of yourself. Don't put up glamour and don't put up your company logo. Use this spot to help to create to a visual for those individuals that look at your profile. Let them see who you are.

Make sure that you obtain at least a few recommendations, which give you credibility. The easiest way to get a recommendation is to give a recommendation. Continue to build these over time. The more the better.

Finally, seek out groups that are relevant to your niche, your industry, your profession, etc. The more groups you join the more opportunities to promote yourself and your company. Don't forget to take advantage of the company pages that you can build for no cost. It is yet another tool to help you promote and grow your business.

LinkedIn is a social media site just as Facebook is. However, they are much different. There is no place for children or teens here. This is a site that's for business owners, professionals, entrepreneurs, and freelancers.

Learn How to Receive Recommendations on LinkedIn

When others recommend you on LinkedIn, it aids in you in establishing credibility. These days, a LinkedIn recommendation could be the difference between you getting a position and not getting a position. SO how do you get someone who you have done business with to write a recommendation for you? Glad you asked. Read on to find out how.

Even when the other party says "sure" they will write you a recommendation, the question becomes can they write a good one. Just because a person is an excellent business owner doesn't mean they are a great writer.

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A recommendation needs to be professional and it needs to tell those reading it why you are recommended. Are you reliable? Do you do excellent work? Are you affordable? Are you top in your field? You get the idea.

If you write a recommendation for the party you are asking for a recommendation from, it accomplished two things. First, they will feel more obligated to provide that recommendation to you. Second, if you write a good recommendation about the other party, then they can use that as a bit of a template for writing yours and it is much more likely to be exactly what you want.

Make sure there is no swearing or cussing in the recommendation a person writes for you. A recommendation should begin with the 'best' thing about the person. It should be brief, concise, and to the point.

However, you should never write a recommendation for someone you have not worked with personally, because you are putting your reputation on the line when you do so. Go ahead and link to anyone that you link to anyone that you like, just be a little more cautious when it comes to who you will write a recommendation.

This brings up another point. If someone you haven't worked for directly offers to write a recommendation for you, it is a good idea to not accept that recommendation. The reason being is you do not know anything about that person and as a result if they are less than reputable that will reflect on you and could be very detrimental to you in your quest to nail that perfect job, to get freelance contracts, etc.

Recommendations are one of the most powerful tools that LinkedIn offers, and they certainly set the site aside from other social media sites. Make sure you get the maximum value from them.

Website Success Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn – it seems to have become one of the buzzwords but still only, a few actually understand much about LinkedIn other than its stock continues to grow in value. LinkedIn is where you will find 100 million professionals who have gathered. It's a forward thinking concept, that's smart and focused.

There are a lot of people that still think of LinkedIn as a site where online resumes are stored. What many don't realize is that LinkedIn is eight years old. It came to being long before the Great Recession. Moreover, while it is useful in connecting people to job that was really is only a small portion of the creator's vision for the site. Today the site is so much more than that.

As the economy changes and adapts, LinkedIn will be able to continuously offer value to professionals in a number of ways, not just to find jobs. We already have had a taste of where the creators are taking the site. We have seen:

Signal – It's a tool that allows you to see what is happening in your network by letting you sort through relevant tweets, status updates, and connections. Are you ready for the next rollouts that LinkedIn developers are going to introduce?

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You will be happy to know that it's as easy as can be. Make sure your profile is credible. Take some time to review it at least a couple of times for accuracy. Check to ensure it is complete and that there is no important information missing. Is your story consistent?

Give your connections the attention they deserve. If you do not have enough connections, you will miss out on the powerful tools LinkedIn offers. If you have too many connections then these phenomenal tools also become useless because your network is really just junk. So choose your connections wisely.

Do not be afraid to connect with your connections. Every now and then drop by their profile and say 'hi,' ask how their family is doing, or how they have been feeling. If you are aware that someone is completing a major project and find out how things are going and if they are coming together.

It really is very simple. Whether you are looking to find a job, get yourself promoted, or find out more about what is happening in your particular field you will be ready. When you use LinkedIn as the powerful tool, it is you can enjoy website success.

Changing How I do Business Using LinkedIn

If you find yourself wondering if LinkedIn could have a positive affect on your business, the answer is an emphatic yes. Many online business owners will tell you that LinkedIn is one of their most valuable tools.

Participating in LinkedIn is a great way to bring in questions and queries that are later converted into paying sales. Many businesses have been able to get business directly from LinkedIn. The key is patience. You won't generate revenue overnight but the customers you do establish often become long-term customers.

If you are targeting B2B companies, LinkedIn will be a very valuable tool, as it is preferred over Twitter and Facebook according to a recent study. However, it is not enough to just put up a profile. You will need to take the time to create a detailed profile, and then you need to participate on the site. Groups are a great way to do that.

When it comes to groups, the more the merrier. Seek out groups that meet your profession, your industry, or your niche. Then make sure you engage in conversation on those groups. Over time, you will increase traffic to your website, and you can improve your Google ranking. Make sure you use Google Analytics so that you can see where your traffic is coming from.

Do not make the mistake of thinking LinkedIn is just a source of business. It is so much more. You can use it to seek out vendors; find consultants, hire professionals, and these same people can refer business over to you.

Group discussions can be a valuable source of information. You can learn all kinds of great things like streamlining business procedures, learning how to use LinkedIn to change how you do business, finding ways to find better vendors and suppliers. The groups are a wealth of

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information. If you participate in the groups you are a member of, you will also be a source of information for others. It's a two way street and when used properly can be very beneficial.

The internet has changed the way we do business. Social media has changed the way business is done even more, and LinkedIn, which prides itself in being a business resource, simply takes things a little further keeping things focused and business related. If you are not yet using LinkedIn, the time has come for you to sign up and begin to enjoy the benefits it has to offer.

Company Overviews: And How to Use Them

Notice that the company in our example, above, has chosen to feature more of a mission statement rather than impartial company data in the "Overview". Compare this with the example below, which is more flatly descriptive and statistics-driven:

Other companies use different models for their Overviews:

- List of key personnel (no mission statement or stats)
- Bullet points listing services or benefits
- Hard statistics

Which one should you choose? The answer, of course, lies with the persona, voice and mission at the heart of your company. In our examples above, Dotson Horse Transport speaks directly to the potential customer, hooking into emotions and promising empathetic and experienced transport to these prized pets and investments.

B-Line, on the other hand, goes for credibility, since they are dealing with a left-brained industry and often left-brained clients, who are all about fact, not feeling. Hard statistics works well for this group too.

If you offer a B2B (business-to-business) services and you have employees or a VA or designer, you may wish to let potential customers "meet" the people they would be working with. Showcasing their individual skills and their cohesion as a team, as well as giving a flavor of your company dynamics, can be a sound pre-qualifying strategy.

You can use this "Companies" search function to research companies for any purpose you desire.

Creating Your Own Company Page:

Since we're discussing Companies, let's note here that creating a Company Page is not necessary -- but everyone on LinkedIn with their own business should consider it.

A Company Page allows you to brand your business, boost your presence and be buzzworthy, if you approach it with forethought.

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Whatever approach you decide to take when creating your own Company Page, however, do your best to **speak directly to your readers and their deepest needs**, rather than making it all about yourself or your company's achievement.

Voice and **relevance** are your best friends, when showcasing your company.

When you are ready to create your own Company Page, you need to also think of including:

- Your area of specialization
- A reader-oriented "snapshot" of your company's unique personality
- Any other relevant information you feel your potential customer ought to know
- Integrated blog posts and tweets
- Access privileges for your VA, manager or other staff
- "Follow" button

You'll do this through user-friendly input sections under the following tabs:

- Overview
- Careers
- Products and services
- Analytics

You can decide whether your primary focus is going to be on attracting customers or clients, skilled staff or even B2B peers for networking purposes.

Just remember to keep the focus slanted towards **whoever you want to attract** -- not on your achievements.

How Professionals Can Benefit From LinkedIn

Professionals turn to LinkedIn as a method of communication. By creating relationships and sustaining those relationships, they can enjoy the full benefit of LinkedIn. LinkedIn builds credibility, which in turn provides networking opportunities to professionals.

Referrals that are obtained through a professional LinkedIn network offers a number of opportunities. These referrals are also more qualified and because LinkedIn offers a very efficient method to build your referral base, it's extremely popular. LinkedIn is an excellent forum to network and to build referral systems that are strong and reliable.

When you connect with individuals on LinkedIn, you then are able to take advantage of what are referred to as second and third tier contacts. You can take advantage of these levels in order to

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further build your referral base. It can quickly gain momentum and before long, it will be growing rapidly.

Quality not quantity are the best motivators. When you are connecting with individuals on LinkedIn, it is more important that you look for quality connections. Qualify your connections before you start sending out he invites. When you are communicating with any of the referrals, you should reference "LinkedIn Today." The news section will provide you with relevant industry news that can help you determine quality and relevance.

LinkedIn continuously adds new products and apps that help to improve the professional lives of those using LinkedIn, which is more than just a place people go when they are looking for jobs. LinkedIn focuses on building relationships through groups and by using "LinkedIn Today." Other like-minded professional contacts, which was made so that you can communicate freely. You will be updated with industry news that is relevant, so you will be prepared and ready.

LinkedIn is able to use a vanity URL specified for the business, which can be more professional and easier to find on LinkedIn. LinkedIn offers job postings and it offers tracking of information such as when individuals leave a company, along with day-to-day tasks.

Groups are one of the most powerful tools that LinkedIn offers. Not only should you join relevant groups, you should participate in those groups. Doing so can be far reaching and it can lead to new business, which translates to more jobs, and increased revenues.

When you use all or some of the tools that LinkedIn has to offer you can create a profile that can have maximum impact. As a professional, you'll discover opportunities you never dreamed of.

Improve Web Traffic Combining LinkedIn and Facebook

Many have willingly dove into using Facebook, but those same people are often hesitant to try LinkedIn. That's mostly because they do not really understand what LinkedIn is. Let's look at the difference between these two, and why it is important to actually use both.

It was on September 26, 2006 that Facebook went public. Anyone that was age 13 or older was allowed to join the site. Since then, teens, moms, dads, young adults, grandmas, grandpas, and adults alike have arrived in droves at Facebook so that they could stay in touch with friends and family. The site has few restrictions and is all about personal social networking. You post you landed that new job, you tell your friends that your boy just scored the winning goal, or you post pictures of your kid's birthday party.

This is where LinkedIn differs. There's really no place for children's sporting events, or birthday parties here. LinkedIn is a social network for professionals. On LinkedIn, you can connect with coworkers, colleagues, and professionals and others that you meet while you are networking. It's an excellent place to connect with others that like-minded, gather ideas, and find career opportunities with potential.

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Resume is setup rather like a resume that's professional and polished. Make sure you take advantage of all the features on the site. The LinkedIn groups are of great value and an excellent way to network and meet others.

LinkedIn is not just for you to connect with those you know or with people from within your own industry. Make sure to think outside the box. Think about what industries might compliment your own. Then connect with individuals from those industries. Join groups and then seek out those with the same professional interests you have. Then you can connect with them.

On Facebook, find people you know and people who share your interests or your profession. Join groups and pages, then reach out to those individuals within the groups or pages, and connect with them.

When you understand the differences between Facebook and LinkedIn, you can use both to bring traffic to your site. Both are very valuable tools to bring traffic to your site.

Is Your Private Information Being Leaked on LinkedIn

One of the most common concerns that arise by those using LinkedIn is whether or not their private information is being leaked out to the internet and to the public. What you may not realize is that this leaking of information can be very beneficial to you and your business. There is a lot of information on social media sites like LinkedIn.

There's plenty to take away from the company information that can be found on LinkedIn. The competitive intelligence and marketing information is invaluable. There are tons of valuable information on this social media site for anyone who is seeking to get their hands on corporate data.

On LinkedIn, individuals are busy promoting their professional credentials and tend to share a lot of information. If you use some of the LinkedIn search tools that are available for free, you can pull out the information that you need.

You may be surprised at just how many corporate secrets are actually floating around on LinkedIn. Employees have a tendency to share information that they think is harmless, when in fact it is often providing the competition with information they need.

For example, Company A's employee writes in his status "I just signed the largest Wi-Fi contract that's ever been signed at a whopping \$10 million dollars." Company B is wondering what the competition has been doing with their Wi-Fi contracts. They obtain this information on LinkedIn, which otherwise may have been very difficult to obtain.

While what you find might not be earth shattering. If you take just 10 minutes to surf the site looking for information on Apple you would discover:

*In 60 days Apple shipped 2 million iPads.

*On launch day, there were more than 300,000 iPads available.

*Apple HR had more than 30 internal sites.

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If your company has strategic information that you do not want to find searchable on LinkedIn, you should consider using one of the software programs that will monitor your LinkedIn profile(s) watching for posts on your company.

So what does your LinkedIn profile or your LinkedIn company page say about you. What are you sharing with the world, and is it information that you wanted to share? Have a final look to make sure you have no 'company secrets' floating around that you didn't intend to share, and instruct your employees on what is considered acceptable posts about what is going on in within the company.

8 Ways to Maximize Your LinkedIn and Your Personal Branding

Personal branding is key to your success and LinkedIn is an excellent tool to help you achieve that. Let's look at 8 ways to maximize your LinkedIn and your personal branding.

1. Make the Most of your Profile

Using your LinkedIn profile properly is very important. When you communicate with others on the site, your profile will speak for you. Don't just upload any photo, upload a good photo. Don't upload your logo here. People want to see what you look like. Make sure you completely fill out your profile – do not leave any areas blank.

2. Build Your Contacts

When you first join LinkedIn you need to build your contact base. Connect present and past colleagues along with your alumni from your university or college.

3. Recommendations

Recommendations are very important. In fact, it is one of the most powerful tools that LinkedIn has to offer. That's because people recognize recommendations as sincere and trustworthy. Other people must write them and they are very hard to fake or forge.

4. Use Groups

There are three ways you can use groups: lead generation, increase your LinkedIn profile development, and personal development by learning from

5. Promoting Events

Using LinkedIn to promote your events is a very wise move. You can easily target your audience and you can spread your information quickly all the while establishing your personal brand.

6. Use Your Status Updates

The LinkedIn status updates are not used to their full potential. However, that's been changing a little bit thanks to the integration of Twitter with your LinkedIn profile, a move that was much needed. Update your LinkedIn profile with relevant blog posts and news. When you use your status updates wisely they can play an integral role in your person branding.

7. Using Applications

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LinkedIn offers a very good learning center to help you get the most out of the various apps that are available including the best way to go about creating your personal branding.

8. Networking for Lead Generation

LinkedIn is a very powerful tool for you to use to connect with others who are looking to individuals from within the corporate community. When you take full advantage of the tools LinkedIn offers you can build a powerful personal brand. It will not take as long as you might think, and it is worth every bit of time you put into it.

Getting the Most From LinkedIn Searches

There are plenty of social media sites out there and LinkedIn is one of them. Unlike Facebook, which caters to users of all ages over 13, from all walks of life, and with all kinds of interests, LinkedIn is far more focused. LinkedIn is the best social media site for professionals, businesses, and freelancers alike. There is no room here for teens or hobbies. This is a site that allows you to promote yourself and your company and to network with other businesses within similar markets.

One of the powerful tools that LinkedIn has to offer is the ability to search. When you know how to get the most from your LinkedIn searches, you can truly get the most out of the site. LinkedIn is built on a highly evolved platform with a well-developed search platform that is broken into six separate sections. Each of these sections will offer you a mix of suggestions as you type. The advanced search is a very powerful tool.

6 Sections for Advanced Searches

Here is the breakdown for the six individual sections for your advanced searches.

Updates – You can filter your results based on your connection level. You can set updates from your immediate network – from friends of your friends, friends to friends, or your third level marketing. You can also filter by time, location, range, etc.

People – You can filter by relationship, location, school, and industry. There are several more options available if you have a premium membership.

Jobs – You can filter by how current the jobs are, the industry they are in, the experience that is required, etc. There are a number of other search options available in this section.

Companies – You can filter by industry, location, company size, relation, fortune, etc.

Groups – In groups you can filter by language and category.

Answers – You can filter by categories, and you can even add multiple categories.

With so many options, you shouldn't have too much difficulty seeking out exactly what you need, especially if you also use the search Boolean operators. Using these operators, you can

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exclude words, add words, combine two or more phrases, and add that final touch to your search. Tweaking ensures you get the exact results you were looking for.

Understanding how to use the LinkedIn searches to their fullest capability offers you stimulating opportunities that will inspire you to search more creatively not just on LinkedIn but on other social media sites too.

Building Meaningful LinkedIn Relationships

If you have any type of professional life, which most of us do, you should have signed up at LinkedIn. You will create a profile just as you do on other social media sites. However, just setting up your profile is not enough. You need to make sure your profile is complete and working effectively so that you get the most benefit and value from it.

LinkedIn is recognized as a very effective way for professionals and businesses to build relationships that eventually will lead to business opportunities. It is also recognized as a great way to strengthen your network, maintaining it and keeping it strong, and ensuring you get the most out of your business.

To begin with, you will establish connections that will help you increase your exposure online and help you to boost your reputation. Make sure that you have filled out the business profile so that those who are surfing and visiting the site can check it out. You should include people from within your company that you work with.

Once you connect with others, you need to do more. To build a relationship you have to go deeper. If you just connect but you never interact, there will be nothing for either of you to gain from the experience. It's critical that you interact if you want LinkedIn to be a successful component of your business.

You might be surprised to learn that it is all in the timing. As soon as you make a new connection, you respond to a question, you are introduced to a business associate, etc. you need to make the move to communicate directly with this person. There are tons of ways to bridge that gap and open up communication. You can ask a question, show interest in what they are saying, give advice, etc.

Make sure that you make the most of every event. Pay attention to events and activities that are happening in LinkedIn and that you are involved in. There are likely a number of events that your business could benefit from. Try to find live events in your area, or follow web events.

Be a resource to other LinkedIn members. If you know how to listen to other, it can be a very valuable tool. Sharing your expertise with others is an excellent way to build significant relationships within LinkedIn and these relationships are far reaching to your business and may eventually translate to revenue.

Knowing how to build meaningful relationships on LinkedIn will help you to create a viable tool that can benefit your business in many different areas.

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Building Strong Business Connections on LinkedIn

You may already have a LinkedIn account. Are you using it in the manner that you should be to get the maximum benefit from it? It's important for your profile to be complete and then you must leverage the connections you have made.

If you find LinkedIn isn't doing a whole lot for your business, you may be concentrating your efforts in the wrong place. A common mistake is to spend all your time building your online connections so that you are able to strengthen your visibility and credibility. That is important; however, that's not your toughest challenge. A much larger challenge that you face is to take the connections that you establish and deepen them so much that those people are buying what you are selling

The success of all social media relies on relationships, and LinkedIn is no different. Meaningful interactions are a must to the success of any business whether that interaction occurs face-to-face or online isn't significant – it just must occur.

You need to pay close attention to the connections you are making and what they are doing. You are connected to them online, so it's highly likely that they will be posting the events they plan to attend. If you see that those events are occurring in your region, you should also plan to attend them. If the events are live, you should attempt to set up an appointment where you can meet face to face. It will do wonders for the growth of your business.

Your timing is of the essence. The goal is to build deep relationships with the most important of your connections. In a perfect world, you would do this with all your connections but initially start with the connections that you feel can have the greatest value to your business.

Don't be afraid to ask for advice on LinkedIn. There isn't anyone who doesn't just love to get their opinion in there. Everyone wants to feel valued and important. You will be quite surprised at the number of very good responses you receive. When you reach out you are able to communicate with one of your connections and begin to build a relationship with that person.

LinkedIn is a powerful tool for building strong business connections providing you understand how to use it properly and maximize your relationships on LinkedIn. We've started you down the right path. There is plenty of other helpful information available online – make use of it!

6 Top LinkedIn Open Networkers you Should be Following

Open networkers can be a powerful tool for you on LinkedIn, so let's look at the 6 tops LinkedIn open networkers you should be following.

However, before we do that we must remind that it is against the LinkedIn User Agreement to invite someone into your network of professionals if you do not know them personally. The reason for this is LinkedIn was built on the philosophy of trust, which means you need to know a person in order to truly trust them.

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LinkedIn has added the follow feature, which allows you to follow a group discussion, and then a little later on you can invite them to join your network.

1. Olivier Taupin – Linked HR is the largest LinkedIn Group at 850,000 members and more than 350,000 professionals. Creating a community of this magnitude is no easy task. Definitely, this group's worth exploring.

2. Chris Brogan – Most of you already know who Chris Brogan is, a well-known, powerful online marketing guru. Be sure to read the many posts Chris has on in LinkedIn blog. Chris is a very smart networker and you would be wise to hook up with him on LinkedIn, because you can learn a lot.

3. Gerald Haman – This is a man who is known as the 'solution man,' on LinkedIn and he is also the creator of tons of 'innovator' LinkedIn groups including "Innovative Marketing, PR, Sales, Word-of-Mouth & Buzz Innovators with more than 100,000 members. Gerald Haman is a professor at Northwestern University, and he has also helped clients generate more than 2 billion dollars in revenue from 3 million ideas.

4. Thubten Comerford – This is a man who has a deep spiritual connection, and who has been ordained as a monk in the Tibetan temple in the past. He also has an incredibly successful track record in his business ventures. He is a social media consultant and you should definitely have a look at what he offers.

5. Jay Deragon – This may be a name you are familiar with since he was one of the social media bloggers for 2011 that was mentioned a number of times. Jay's goal is to have us all become part of his new 'Social Flights' venture. Jay is a very smart and business savvy man and most of us could earn a lot from him.

Top Ways to Maximize Your LinkedIn Profile

Your LinkedIn profile can be an excellent tool that can help you to grow your business and ensure increased sales. LinkedIn groups are a great place to start your focus. Find groups that are relevant is a good place to start.

No matter what your industry, your business, or your profession, there are groups that are a great match, and that will benefit you. There are benefits to both joining and then participating in these groups. There are many really powerful groups with thousands of members. The largest is 32,000. These powerful groups can be a real help when building your business.

Take it one-step further and connect your LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. That way both accounts can receive an update. When you sync from Twitter it tends to stay on top longer than it usually does in a Twitter stream. The more interaction that occurs the more people that see it, which can be very helpful. So, be sure to connect your Twitter account to your LinkedIn account.

Next, you want to add your company profile. LinkedIn is always improving its platform and until just recently, the company page section has been lagging. Now you can share information on

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your products and services, you can add a video, and you can provide insights on the people who work for your company, and on your company itself.

Take the time to perform search engine optimization. People are always searching for other people and/or companies on LinkedIn. They might be looking for freelancers, employees, industry experts, employee candidates, and so many more. Just imagine how happy you would be if suddenly you were being continuously contacted for the products and services you offer. By taking the time to do your search engine optimization so that you place better in the search engines you, open up these doors.

Finally, take some time and add some advanced applications that can help you. One of the biggest improvements on LinkedIn has been that they have added a number of useful applications. It does not matter what your industry is, there is at least one application for everyone that will help to get your messages across faster and more efficiently improving the LinkedIn experience. Take advantage of the applications and tools that are available to you. It can make your LinkedIn experience that much better.

Now that you have some of the top ways to maximize your LinkedIn profile, what are you waiting for?

Adding Admins to Your LinkedIn Company Profile

There is a lot of buzz around the LinkedIn site. If you do not already have a LinkedIn account, the time has come to set one up. LinkedIn now allows you to 'add Admins' to your LinkedIn company profile. This is a handy feature that was certainly needed. Some businesses have a dedicated employee that administers the LinkedIn company profile, but others share the tasks and it makes it much easier when each person can have their own admin log in.

LinkedIn used to be that when you created your profile for your business or organization you were the only one that would be able to edit that profile. Then they added another feature that allowed anyone with a company domain email to access the profile. Finally, now you can add people in your network.

You will still maintain total control of the profile because you are the creator of the profile. However, this is a great feature for those that hire a consultant outside of the organization to manage their social media. You can now manage that account without having to have access to your account.

If you would like to use this option for your LinkedIn company profile, just click on the 'edit' button, which you will find on the right corner. Then under the 'Company Pages Admins' section you will need to choose 'Designated users only.' Here you will type in the box the name of the person you want to add. It says "Start typing a name." If you are adding more than one 'Admin' person than you will just need to repeat the process.

Having other administrators ensures someone is available at all times to answer questions, post commentary, and follow what's going on in the groups. Not only does it diversify the workload, it

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also diversifies the posts, different ideas, different dialogue, and different ways of discussing things.

LinkedIn is a social media tool for businesses, professionals, and entrepreneurs of all sizes. No business should be without a LinkedIn account, in this day and age. Don't worry. It's relatively easy to set up an account and to use the site. LinkedIn itself provides you with tons of help and there are all kinds of information available online as well.

If you have a LinkedIn account, why not add another administrator to take some of the pressure off of you. If you are just setting up an account then be sure to share the administrator responsibilities.

Top 5 LinkedIn Marketing Tips for Business

LinkedIn is such a useful business tool, and yet far too often its true value is overlooked. This is by far one of the best tools available so make sure that you take advantage of it.

1. Complete your profile – Your profile is at the heart of your online business branding. Your LinkedIn profile will almost always rank very well in a Google search. You want to have a solid profile because first impressions can make or break you. Make sure your profile is completely filled out with no missing information.
2. Connect with all – You should connect with as many people as you can. Begin with those you know and trust and then you will be able to make recommendations to other users when they are looking for an introduction. If you want to find the opportunities that are out there, you need to keep your communication lines open on LinkedIn. The more connections you make the more you will be able to grow your business and improve your sales.
3. Create a call to action – It is easy to do and so important. You need to create a call to action on your profile. When people arrive and read what you have to say they'll feel inspired and much more likely to click through on your links that will take them to your website.
4. Make sure you are compelling – Most LinkedIn profiles will put you to sleep. Yawn – they are so boring and show nothing of the personality of the individual. Make it interesting and compelling. Tell people who you are, who the people are you help, what you offer for sale in services or products, and anything else that could be important to making you interesting for those that find your profile.
5. Recommend Others – Give and you will receive. If you recommend then you will be recommended. When you recommend others without them asking you to do so, they return the favor and this will help to improve your profile and build credibility, which will improve your business.

How to Brand Yourself in LinkedIn

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LinkedIn has become a key business networking tool, and it can be an incredibly powerful resource when you want to develop your personal brand. To maximize LinkedIn take advantage of all the features it has to offer and make the most out of your LinkedIn branding campaign.

1. Edit your LinkedIn URL – As part of developing your brand, you can leverage your name. Click on 'Profile,' then click on 'Edit Profile.' A blue box appears. Scroll down to the bottom to 'Public Profile.' Click 'Edit,' and a page comes up. Enter your name in the box on the right hand side.

If you have a more common name, you can try using your 'first name + middle initial + last name.' This will let you expand your name brand. Your LinkedIn profile will appear higher in Google search rankings, which means if someone is looking for you, they are much more likely to find you.

2. Modify your Headline – Modify your headline and take advantage of the branding power LinkedIn can offer you. If you are attempting to position yourself to advance your career, you should not overlook the power of the headline. LinkedIn defaults your last job title in the headline. However, you can modify this, simply by going to 'Profile,' then 'Edit Profile,' and then click 'Edit.'

Use a keyword or keywords that potential recruiters are likely to search. If you were most recently a Director of Marketing, you could create a headline that supports that.

3. Create a Flawless LinkedIn Profile – Consider hiring a professional writer to create copy that's compelling and engaging, as well as keyword rich. Make sure that it is 100% free of errors.

4. Ask for Recommendations – Ask former or current superiors, subordinates, or colleagues for recommendations. Click 'Profile,' then click 'Recommendations.' Type a short note asking for the recommendation. When hiring managers and/or recruiters see the positive comments in the recommendation they care more likely to look to you.

Finally, join groups and then participate in them. In fact, the importance of groups cannot be stressed enough. They do a great job of extending your reach. When you use them smartly, you will enhance your professional branding and that's important. By participating in the groups your name will become recognizable and you will be able to build your branding, one of the most powerful strategies around!

How to Create Your Personal Brand Using LinkedIn

These days just about everyone has a LinkedIn account. LinkedIn is an excellent site to promote and sell yourself as a professional, and your company, or organization. Follow these steps and you will be way ahead of the crowd when it comes to using LinkedIn for personal branding.

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Step #1 Determine what you want your LinkedIn profile to do for you. LinkedIn is about much more than posting a picture. It is a chance for you to stay connected to people, showing them who you are and what your goals are.

Step #2 Don't be boring. There are 40 million members. Make what you have to say interesting enough to get read. Stand out in a very big crowd! You can pull in other content such as your blog, books you are reading, etc., to keep things interesting.

Step #3 Now it's times to write a summary – rock it! You can write it in the third person if you like. It may feel strange like you are bragging about yourself. When you write in the third person, it gives you the opportunity to write your full name. Of course, you can always write in the first person too. Remember to incorporate your company name, your keywords, and anything else you want associated with your LinkedIn profile.

Step #4 A photo is important. Even if you are self-conscious about how you look in a photo, remember this – those that are thinking of working with you. If a person is going to pass judgment on you by your appearance then they might as well do it right away rather than later. Have a headshot taken if you must. Professional photographers can get a good shot of everyone.

Step #5 For your url get a vanity url. For example, if your LinkedIn profile looks a bit like this <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/joe-blow/3/231/438> you can make it available at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/joeblow> This is much easier to remember than the first url.

Step #6 Show our profile to another person and get their feedback. Then you can tweak it. In fact, show it to a few people. At least once a month you should tweak your profile.

Step #7 Now it is time to start using LinkedIn. You can begin to recommend people who you work with, look for old co-workers that you really liked and respected.

There you have it – Seven simple steps to help you create your personal brand using LinkedIn.

How to Use LinkedIn to Drive Traffic to Your Site

LinkedIn is a social networking site for professionals and it now has more than 100 million users. Almost 60% of LinkedIn users are in consultant positions or at the executive level. As a result, LinkedIn has the highest number of decision makers in one place over all social media networks. LinkedIn is one of the fastest growing sites – one new user arrives every second, or translated that's around one million new users every week.

Just as you would with other social media sites, you need to use the white hat approach. Rather than transparently advertising your goods or services or outright asking for work, try to interact, help, and engage people.

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Your LinkedIn goal should be to establish yourself in your niche or your industry. Take the time to connect with colleagues, and customers that you have already established a relationship with and then build on that relationship.

Groups are one of your most popular tools on LinkedIn. You can drive traffic to your website and reach an endless stream of targeted professionals. There are more than 870,000 LinkedIn groups with memberships varying from 1 to 400,000. Most of the groups are business related, although there are nearly 130,000 corporate alumni and academic groups.

WordPress is one of the favorite LinkedIn groups because of its knowledgeable and engaging members. You can easily get your questions answered, and you can participate in a lively discussion. Every application you use will have a LinkedIn Group that represents it. The same applies to every type of job you might do, there is a group for. Whether you are a photographer, an illustrator, a Photoshop user, a marketer – there is a group for you.

Are you already on LinkedIn? If you have not yet signed up to use LinkedIn now is a good time to do so. LinkedIn members are not there to look at their friends' photos or to give their friends a minute-by-minute description of their day. Rather, it is an excellent place to make the types of connections that can grow an income.

Take the time to update your profile so it clearly and concisely explains what you are all about and what it is you have done. Make sure that you take the time to get at least a couple of recommendations. The best way to do this is to offer to write a recommendation for someone else. Now start driving traffic to your site.

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Next, you want to add your company profile. LinkedIn is always improving its platform and until just recently, the company page section has been lagging. Now you can share information on your products and services, you can add a video, and you can provide insights on the people who work for your company, and on your company itself.

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Take the time to perform search engine optimization. People are always searching for other people and/or companies on LinkedIn. They might be looking for freelancers, employees, industry experts, employee candidates, and so many more. Just imagine how happy you would be if suddenly you were being continuously contacted for the products and services you offer. By taking the time to do your search engine optimization so that you place better in the search engines you, open up these doors.

Finally, take some time and add some advanced applications that can help you. One of the biggest improvements on LinkedIn has been that they have added a number of useful applications. It does not matter what your industry is, there is at least one application for everyone that will help to get your messages across faster and more efficiently improving the LinkedIn experience. Take advantage of the applications and tools that are available to you. It can make your LinkedIn experience that much better.

Maximizing the Value of Your LinkedIn Company Page

If you are looking for an inexpensive, powerful marketing tool for your business, you will want to read on. One of the best tools around for promoting your business is the LinkedIn Company Page, which costs you nothing to set up. You just need to have an existing LinkedIn profile, and then you can create your company page.

Are thinking what's the difference between a Facebook page and a LinkedIn company page and why is this better? The main advantage of LinkedIn is that it allows companies to build their brand through the use of customer recommendations, which is an extremely powerful tool that all LinkedIn users should take advantage of.

There are tremendous benefits to taking advantage of this. If a person is looking for a service or product and they see that you have been recommended by someone in their network, then they are more likely to buy from you than they might be otherwise.

The full power of the company pages is that LinkedIn members are able to recommend services or products on the company profile and those recommendations will show on the personal profiles too.

Yet another LinkedIn benefit is the tabs. This is especially true now that Facebook has removed the tabs from their pages. The company page lets you feature specific services or products using three different sizes of banner images that will link directly to your company website.

The LinkedIn company page lets you bring your business alive. Millions of LinkedIn members can easily stay in the loop with your company's news, job openings, business opportunities, and products/services. From a central hub you can tell your company's story all the while highlighting your services and/or products. You can easily showcase any career opportunities and brand your company. You will be able to use word of mouth to drive your company and maximize the value of your LinkedIn company.

Now is the time to spread the word. You can do that with a company page by posting regular status updates in the same manner you would on Facebook. Only, here you will tell your

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followers about new products and services, make recommendations, provide ideas and tips, and promote any career opportunities that may arise.

Your LinkedIn company profile will allow you to develop meaningful relationships and engage in conversations. Your analytics will allow you to learn who is visiting your page, what's drawing them there, and what visitors are learning about your company. You can then use this information to formulate your status updates and draw traffic to your page.

Marketing With LinkedIn

There are many different social networking sites. However, when it comes to professionals and businesses there is no question that LinkedIn is the leading site. There are tons of opportunities here that will let you build your own brand, advance your career, and market yourself. Let's look at some of the tools that LinkedIn provides to help you market yourself.

Your Profile

In addition to creating your own personal brand, you should list your other qualities in the subtitle. For example, you are a blogger, you are an entrepreneur, or you are a writer. Make sure you post only designations that are relevant to the market you are targeting. You should also make sure you list your experience. You can list yourself as the CEO or Founder of your company if you are the owner. This will help promote yourself.

Use the summary section to introduce and describe what it is you are offering. Use it to describe your service, your product, your blog, whatever it is you are promoting. You should also customize all of your website links. Turn to your external profile links to connect your profile viewers to your blog directly or any other offers you are sharing.

Your Groups

It is important that you join groups. LinkedIn lets you join around 50 groups. There are groups from every industry so finding groups that are relevant to what you are doing, your product, your services, etc. There is more to it than just joining. You need to participate and openly discuss issues at hand. Of course, we are assuming you know something about the topic and so your expertise will bring you rewards in the form of new customers.

Make sure to participate in the conversations and posts that take place. Engaging in an open dialogue will help you to build your presence. When these posts are 100% relevant, you quickly begin to build credibility.

You might even want to start your own group if there is a niche that isn't currently being covered. Even if there is another group, there may be room for your group as well. Running your own group provides you with an excellent marketing tool.

Marketing with LinkedIn is a skill that once you develop can take your business far. You will grow and prosper as a result of the work you do on LinkedIn. That's why all these large

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companies can be found on LinkedIn – they already know the secret and are reaping the benefits.

Paid Subscription to LinkedIn

Do you really need a paid subscription to LinkedIn?

If your business depends on geo-targeting, especially local, it's a "must". With a free account, searches for contacts, businesses and jobs are limited to a broad fifty mile radius: With a paid subscription, that narrows down to twenty-five miles. You may not think this makes much difference, but it can.

You can view unlimited profiles with a paid subscription (the free version caps out at one hundred).

You also gain access to the Profile Organizer, which can save a lot of time and energy if you like to manage contacts and events.

However, the real reason to upgrade is the ability to use InMail with the paid service, for instant connection that doesn't rely on recommendations or introductions.

And there's a 30% response rate from direct InMail contacts, according to CIO news. (LinkedIn itself guarantees 100% response rate -- or else credits are returned to your account.)

Even if this isn't an issue with you, consider this: Do you really want potential JV partners or companies you'd like to deal with to discover you don't have InMail? At \$199.95 a year (\$19.95 a month) at current time of writing, a paid LinkedIn subscription can be considered one of those basic, business "musts".

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