

Top 50 Ways to **Maximize**

LinkedIn

**2013
Update**

for Business



Advance to Excellence on the
World's Largest Business Site
FREE Report By John H. Lee

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Top 50 Ways to Maximize LinkedIn for Business

By John H. Lee

Your Profile

1. A Good Headline

Just as with any online content intended for Search Engine Optimization and or attention grabbing, a good headline on your LinkedIn profile is equally important. On one hand, having a good headline can help you to show up higher in the LinkedIn search engines while on the other hand, a compelling headline can help you to keep the attention of someone visiting your profile.

Finding the balance between the two is dependent upon your LinkedIn goals. You may be using your profile simply as a reference for more information in which you will be driving direct traffic, in which case Search Engine Optimization is not a priority. Otherwise, you may desire to show up in the LinkedIn search engines

more frequently.

2. A Professional Profile Picture

LinkedIn is a platform aimed at business professionals. There are many different types of industries and standards therein. However, profile images that are common on social networking sites like Facebook and or Twitter may not be appropriate for LinkedIn. You should always seek to be unique and stand out from the crowd but an image of you at the beach may not get you the feedback or response you're after. This is especially true if you are looking for a position with a company that holds such things as professional imagery paramount.

It should also be noted that a logo is not a good representation of a professional individual. LinkedIn is simply an extension of in person networking (for the most part) and when meeting in person, well, we don't shake hands with a logo. If you do not have a professional image that represents you well, it's not too late to get one. With today's technology, it's easily obtained.

3. Complete Your Profile and Stay Current

LinkedIn has different benchmarks which determine the percentage of your profile's completeness. There are different factors like; your education, your past experience, your profile image, etc. that will show just how complete your profile is. It is smart to get your

profile as complete as you can. (100% if possible)

Just as your business card may be a representation of you or your firm, your LinkedIn profile can be indicative of the same. Many professionals as well as companies now refer to your LinkedIn profile for information. If employment or new clients are what you seek, it makes perfect sense to give yourself the greatest chance at success by completing your profile and having a great online representation of yourself. This could prove to be a valuable asset to you as time goes on. It does take time to complete but it is time well invested. You should also keep it updated as careers and or positions change. Once again, you want to give yourself the greatest chance of succeeding overall. You'll probably never have to completely change all of the info on your profile but the more you neglect to update it, the more potential work you are creating for yourself.

4. Search Engine Optimize Your Profile

Many businesses swear by search engine optimization for attracting targeted traffic to their websites. At this point in time, they are well founded on using this medium. SEO does volumes for attracting the right audience for businesses but sometimes it isn't given the priority it deserves when applied to social networking websites like LinkedIn. People commonly seek out things online by typing keywords into search engines like Google and Bing but also, by typing keywords into LinkedIn's search engine.

Whatever keyword your business is best represented by

should be used throughout your profile in order to maximize the prospect of you being found by your market. In other words whatever a person seeking your particular type of service/product would type into Google should be the same keyword you use throughout your LinkedIn profile. In order to remain at the top of the LinkedIn search engines you may have to rewrite your profile info every few months but it will be worth it for the enhanced traffic.

5. Post Regular Updates

Every time you make a new connection on LinkedIn you have unlocked another notch in a valuable marketing tool. That tool is updates. Whenever you post an update to your profile, your network can see it. This means that you can communicate in subtle manner not so intrusive or direct with your contacts. This is not to say don't contact your connections directly from time to time to maintain good relationships, it's simply suggesting to stay on the top of the mind of your contacts in a non-threatening and even useful way. The useful aspect is the sharing of good information.

The information you share in your updates should be relevant to your market and or connections. This is also another way of establishing or maintaining your standing as an expert in a particular niche. Updates may also be used to ask questions, make announcements, promote events, and more. Using other online software like Hootsuite or Buffer can guarantee that your updates are shared equally across your major social networks;

Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, etc.

Grow Your Network

6. Upload Your E-Mail Contact Lists

To really leverage the power of LinkedIn, you will want to grow your network considerably. You will be able to take advantage of opportunities as it grows but first things first. A great way to begin or expand your network is to upload your contacts from your pre-established email address books.

You can upload your contacts from your Gmail, Hotmail, Outlook, etc. and send contact requests simultaneously. Doing this can expand your LinkedIn connections considerably because you are contacting people that you already know and are already familiar with you. If they already have LinkedIn accounts, once they accept, you will be able to look into their 2nd connections and possibly ask for introductions to some of their connections. Whether you have zero or over 500 connections, this activity can greatly increase your network.

7. Search the Connections of Your Connections

Business networking is all about meeting the right people who can help you with your career. As you are going through the process, introductions play a key role. You

may never know just how to reach the right people or where they can be located. Your best associates and colleagues are probably more than willing to assist you but if they don't know who you need to meet, they are useless in this area.

You also cannot tell who they know just by knowing them. LinkedIn is a great help in this area because you have the option of looking at who your connections are connected to. It may be time consuming to do all at once but if you take a short time daily or weekly, you can search through your contacts 1st connections and then request introductions to those who you feel can add value to you or vice versa. These introductions can be made via email, 3 way calls, or in person. The good news is that there is no longer a boundary separating you from locating the right people.

8. Scan Your Business Cards

It is not recommended to limit your business networking to just online activity. It is highly advised to go out and meet people face to face in order to acquire worthy contacts. Going out to networking events in your area is a great way to meet, mix, and mingle with fellow business people.

If you have been doing this for some time, hopefully you have held on to a lot of the business cards you have acquired. If so, it will serve you well to take time and send those folks LinkedIn contact requests. You can do this by using the email address they provide on their cards. *(This can also be accomplished easily with the*

LinkedIn “Card Munch” App, described later). The good thing is that they may remember you and become a LinkedIn contact. If you hadn’t had the time to strengthen your relationship, you can now use LinkedIn to do so. At the very least, you can become more familiar with some people and ask for introductions or meetings where you see they are appropriate. You can now review their profile for commonalities favorable to your goals. These are things that were not that apparent from just possessing their business cards.

9. Plan to Bridge the Gap

Commonly, business networking is mostly done in person. Warm, real-life encounters seem to be the best places for relationships to blossom. In business, it can be the difference in gaining new business or not. However, if you are planning to maximize the effectiveness of your networking efforts, the gap between online and offline should be bridged.

For example, when meeting a new contact in person, it should already be part of your strategy to connect on LinkedIn whenever possible. Of course, not everyone has a LinkedIn account or is even interested but those who do can be communicated with on a higher and more consistent level. This is a level in which regular information exchange and updates are commonplace. These very aspects set the stage for greater familiarity among colleagues. On the flip-side, connecting online and then meeting in person also bridges the gap and allows more effective interactions and relationship growth to transpire.

10. Become a Member of [Top Linked](#)

One of the best uses of LinkedIn is to use it as a tool to keep in touch and communicate with a network of colleagues that you know and are already familiar with. However, meeting new contacts is of course at the core of networking. It wouldn't be networking if the prospect of meeting new people (by whatever means) wasn't welcomed. Therefore, "[TopLinked](#)" is highly recommended.

[TopLinked](#) is a group of over 100,000 professionals who are "Open Networkers". They are active members of LinkedIn from various industries and corporate ranks. In becoming a member of this group you must agree to accept all incoming contact requests. You are also permitted to send out as many contact requests to other [TopLinked](#) members as your LinkedIn account will allow. This is an excellent way to grow your network fast but it is wise to know who your target market and ideal contacts are. This way, you will likely leverage the opportunities of so many unknown connections suddenly coming into your network. As you may know, you can filter through your contacts by keyword in order to find the best. Become a member now by [Clicking Here](#).

Networking

11. Introduce Yourself

Networking in the real world, like that of a live event, requires you to introduce yourself to others. Doing so may be awkward to some but nevertheless, it opens the doors for fruitful business relationships to begin. In face to face encounters it is difficult to be ignored initially and because of this, it assists in the continuation and growth of a productive relationship.

However, introducing yourself online in the same way is met with blatant disregard. It is easy to create a nice, sincere introduction to a potential contact and be ignored. This is not a reason to give up and not pursue the same while networking on LinkedIn. It makes more sense to continue while focusing on your goals. It also makes the continued correspondence with those who do respond more valuable. LinkedIn is for networking so using the website for this purpose, in this way is highly recommended. Simply be professional and dedicated to your objectives and it will work for you.

12. Look for Opportunities to Help

Because there are so many communication avenues on LinkedIn, there lies the opportunity to be of assistance to many. From network updates, discussions in groups, to commenting on articles in the “LinkedIn Today” section, the opportunity to help is never ending. These pleas for help are a pathway to client acquisition, partnerships, and

more. If you are goal oriented you will not find it difficult to locate tons of opportunities to stand out as a go-to person.

Finding opportunities to assist doesn't always come in the form of questions. You may find a discussion in which adding your input can prove to be valuable to those involved. You can share resources and recommendations which will heighten the opinions of others when considering working with you. It can serve you well in gaining referrals as well as offering useful info enough times will qualify you as an expert who is worthy of mention.

13. Seek to Bridge the Gap

Many of us find ourselves developing new contacts by way of in-person networking events. There are many to choose from including; business card exchanges, seminars, workshops, job fairs, trade shows, etc. However, many do not see the value in bridging the gap between online and offline networking. It is easy to keep up and keep connected to contacts by using LinkedIn and its many features.

For example, when meeting a business person in the flesh, there is a good chance that they have a profile on LinkedIn. While you may not find an immediate need for staying connected right away, connecting on LinkedIn may keep each of you within each other's reach and previously unseen opportunities may present themselves. These are opportunities that would otherwise have been overlooked. Simply by connecting

offline and expanding online increases these possibilities. The beauty is that it doesn't require a lot of effort or work to put it into place.

14. Share Events You Are Planning to Attend

When interacting with fellow colleagues in the office it is common to mention an event you may be attending and even to invite a few to accompany you. This simple act can be extended and used as a tool in your online networking pursuits. This is an opportunity to use LinkedIn as viable extension of your in-person networking. Since every personal encounter, especially in person, adds to a relationship's growth, meeting each other at an event can be a valuable experience.

Of course it isn't practical to invite a LinkedIn connection to meet you at a local event if they live 3,000 miles away. This is only appropriate if they live within a reasonable traveling distance of the event. However, you may find an event that is in their area and pass along the information if you feel they could benefit from attending. This adds value to your connection status.

15. Offer Positive Feedback to Colleagues

Your LinkedIn connections often post remarks and opinions reflecting their current business status. When you see this, it is an opportunity for you to respond with positive feedback. In building good business

relationships, positive feedback, (or even honest feedback), is welcomed. Offering positive feedback is a great pathway to beginning a conversation and building a relationship.

If you check your network updates regularly, you will find a treasure trove of business questions and issues seeking a good response. You can also look for opportunities to give positive feedback by regularly scanning the discussions within the groups. Another area to find opportunities for positive feedback is in the “Updates” section. This is a good place to give a colleague a compliment or begin a dialog. When you give a colleague a good complement, you are opening the doors to continue communication between the two of you. Depending on your goals and the targeting in your contact pursuits, you may be creating a golden opportunity.

16. Give a Good Recommendation

Recommendations are a regular and popular part of LinkedIn's arsenal of features. If you have worked with a colleague on a particular project or are the former or current client of the connection, you can post a positive recommendation to their profile. When you do this for a fellow colleague, many times they will reciprocate and offer you a good recommendation as well.

Recommendations don't always have to be commending previous work. You can give a recommendation that is solely based upon your connection's character. For

example, you can post your professional opinion of a colleague whom you may be friendly with and by doing so, you are helping them to establish a more positive online image. This could help them in gaining clients as well as being hired for certain position. It is solely up to you what you would like to post to a person's profile regarding recommendations. However, whatever you post should be of relevance and be projected towards their career goals.

17. Communicate with Ensuing Colleagues

Networking is often considered a proactive activity. Few look at the communication with ensuing colleagues as a networking activity. It is important to note that communicating with those who are in pursuit of you can open the doors to opportunities as well. It is common for a person who receives an e-mail or some kind of solicitation from ensuing colleagues, to ignore them. This should be taken as an opportunity to probe deeper into their network and find opportunities where you can help each other.

It doesn't take much time and can prove valuable later. When receiving an e-mail or communication from ensuing colleagues, use your imagination for immediate objectives to figure out if there are commonalities which will assist either one of you. You may not be in the market for their product or service but it doesn't dismiss the probability of a positive outcome.

Relationship Building

18. Immediately Connect on LinkedIn after an Event

Everyone wants to get the most out of their time. When spending time networking and events, we want to make sure that this is time well spent and can be leveraged later in helping to achieve our goals. There is nothing better than face-to-face contact when it comes to beginning business relationships. However, many potentially good business relationships end at the event when they can be nurtured online. In our busy lives, we pass up relationships that could accelerate our careers.

Follow-up is a huge part of networking but most people only follow-up when they see the potential for immediate results. Even if you only see the opportunity for immediate gratification, you should send a contact request to your new contact including some aspects of the conversation you had. This will help to refresh their memory on the conversation that transpired between the two of you as well as link them to you online. From this point, meetings can be arranged, resources can be exchanged, and the relationship does not have to end at the event. This is also a way to expand your network exponentially.

19. Endorsements

Endorsements are a relatively new way to give viable credit to your connections. The best way to describe an endorsement is to say that it is similar to a “Like” for a person’s skills. Since Endorsements were introduced they have exceeded the 1 Billion mark. This is due widely due to the fact that we can be endorsed for skills by connections who have never even met us or have had any experience working with us. Endorsements of course are intended to be received as a short and quick way to give a recommendation or compliment. However, they are a lot less credible in terms of an individual’s real-life merits. Recommendations hold far more credibility as they must be hand written and take more time and effort to complete. That being said, giving and or receiving endorsements is another great opportunity for initiating dialog among connections. Example; when you receive an endorsement, you can contact your “Endorser” and thank him/her; followed by a question or other conversation starter.

20. Organize Contacts and Stay in Touch

LinkedIn has a feature in the contacts section of your profile where you can organize, (by way of Tabs), and label your contacts/connections. This is a useful feature because if you have thousands of contacts (which many people do), it may be time consuming to locate an

individual when you need their information fast. Using the Tabs feature on LinkedIn, you can segment your connections so that you can send particular information to particular people.

For example, you may only want to send an event invite to people in a particular industry or in a particular city. You can organize your contacts and connections into the appropriate categories. Once you do this, you can e-mail them in bulk and spend less time individually selecting those you wish to communicate with. It is almost comparable to communicating to your own group but there are major differences. You can also categorize your closest contacts into one area as well. Doing this, will make it easier for you to locate those in your immediate network and communicate with them as you wish.

21. Ask for Advice

Asking for expert advice is actually an excellent way to build relationships. When asking for advice, you are giving the expert a chance to showcase their know-how. The communication that happens between you and your chosen expert is full of opportunities to nurture a relationship. Compliments, resources, and even invitations can be exchanged on the way to a more secure connection.

You don't have to limit the asking of advice to just experts. Remember, if relationship growth is what you're after, it is wise to use the asking advice approach with targeted contacts. People are usually willing to answer an

honest inquiry and provide more information on a subject. When receiving a good answer to a question, it's a smart idea to show sincere appreciation. If the opportunity arises, you can refer this person to a colleague and better yet, write a good recommendation.

22. Contact Connections outside of LinkedIn

Staying connected and communicating with your contacts on LinkedIn is important and is essential if you are to make a success out of networking. However, there are some additional steps that you can take in order to make your relationships a bit more personable. Finding ways to contact your connections outside of LinkedIn can further strengthen your business bonds. If you see the potential for positive growth with a connection that you have met online and never in person, they may be contacted outside of the website.

For example, you can visit their company website and click on their "Contact Us" page which will give you their main phone number. From this point, you can call their company directly and ask to be transferred to their extension. Within reason, they should be happy to hear from you and depending on your current relationship status, productive things can occur from this point. This is one way to stand out from their other "LinkedIn Connections".

23. Maintain Follow-Up through LinkedIn

There are many ways to follow-up with new connections after meeting in person. After meeting in person and then sending contact requests on LinkedIn or other business online social networks, the relationship can and should be maintained. Most of us are pretty busy and the maintenance of certain relationships goes unattended which leads to the loss of potentially significant connections. It is much easier to maintain certain aspects of relationships because of the technology available.

For example, as you get engaged in group discussions as well as locating relevant information for your market, you can share some of your discoveries and pertinent information with your network. Doing so will keep you in the top of mind of your new connections. You can post this information on your profile updates and even directly e-mail it to particular contacts. Also, if you have had an initial communication with new contacts but it didn't seem fruitful immediately, the sharing of information and current activities will help to make you more familiar to them. Psychologically, this builds a type of subliminal trust.

Group Activities

24. Give Expert Advice

A lot of great things can be said about getting involved in the right LinkedIn groups. There are thousands of business people communicating with each other on

various topics. There are many seeking answers as well as those (qualified or not) lending information. It is the job of real experts to get involved and give advice to help the group's community.

Doing so can help you to brand yourself as an expert in a particular niche. There are thousands of consultants and thought leaders available online but when you become known as one because of a public track record of sound input, it could be the deciding factor in being hired. This means being hired to a company as an employee or by a client seeking expert advice and counsel.

25. Speak Your Mind, Give Your Two Cents

Groups on LinkedIn are an open platform for a number of different things. Individuals post business concerns, advice, and resources just to name a few. Within the many discussions lies the opportunity to comment and add your honest input where you feel it's necessary. When you participate in this capacity you may be helping others to reach conclusions and or solve problems.

Giving your honest "Two Cents" is also a great way to invite others to take your opinion seriously and possibly connect with you. This could lead to any number of positive outcomes for your business/career. This is what networking is all about. If you can advance or help others to advance by the exchange of information, (even if that comes by the form of an opinion), your networking efforts are justified. The above is also a great means of exposure, especially when done on a regular basis.

26. Start Your Own Group

If you are in search of like-minded individuals on a particular topic, starting your own LinkedIn group could be the correct path to take. Sometimes, simply joining an interesting group will not deliver the same benefits as establishing your own. Beginning your own group can put your business at the center. Of course, the topics and or mission of the group must be interesting enough to your chosen niche in order to attract members to join and participate.

It is a similar to having your own networking event or starting your own networking group. Your business can get great exposure but it is highly recommended that you have a particular objective or desired result for the whole undertaking. Groups are great to gain or deliver valuable content in all forms. They can also be a hot bed for spammers and those just seeking to promote their own interests or products. You can help to avoid this by posting rules and monitoring all of the activity in your group.

27. Prospect

There are dozens of ways to locate a desired client, partner, or contact but using a targeted LinkedIn group has been proven very effective. However, it is really important to know exactly who you are looking for. Some enter LinkedIn groups and unfairly target the entire group as worthy prospects. This is not a recommended course of action and many times can lead to complaints and even getting banned from the group or LinkedIn all together.

It is wise to approach the aspect of prospecting from an exceedingly professional point of view. This means to introduce yourself and speak in the same manner as you would if you were approaching a valued prospect in person. This will get better results than an empty-general email that can be sent to anyone. It is better to approach in a sincere and genuine manner for the best results. It can sometimes take a longer time to be more personable and choose your prospects carefully but the rewards are greater in this case as well.

28. Offer Resources

Most of us, no matter what industry we are in, possess a treasure trove of knowledge. This is knowledge that we may take for granted but could be extremely valuable to others. Being active in any community online or off has rewards well beyond explanation. Therefore, the sincere offering of resources is recommended when you are involved in LinkedIn groups.

Offering good resources can also put you in the position of being considered an expert or go-to person. It also can give your company repeat exposure. This means that the open offering of little known resources can be leveraged as a marketing tool for your firm. This can create a trust factor which can be valuable in gaining new clients, partnerships, or even recommendations. So, there are advantages to not being a secret agent and harboring info that could help your network.

29. Welcome Newcomers

Most, if not all, groups on LinkedIn display new members when they join. If branding or building relationships is what you're after, this is a great opportunity to introduce yourself and welcome a new member to the group. In networking, a good "Ice Breaker" is often sought after as a means to begin a conversation. Welcoming a new member to a group is an excellent opportunity for this.

You have the option of receiving all activity for a particular group you are focused on. This means that it is possible to receive an alert for all new members who join in real-time. You can send them a welcome message and ask a "conversation starting" question. If you are very knowledgeable in this niche, you can also use this as an opportunity to offer answers to questions or to prompt and encourage the new member to get involved in the discussions.

B2B Traffic Generation

30. Link Your Profile to Twitter

As with other social networks, LinkedIn allows you to post regular updates to your profile. Many don't know how to take real advantage of the updates feature. It is a common belief that too many updates is overkill and that many contain non-relevant/trivial information. It is also believed that updates are simply for relaying information and posting them is time-consuming.

When you consider the vast amount of LinkedIn users that view their network updates as well as the general updates available to all site users, you will start to see the great potential in traffic generation via updates.

Remember, there is a feature on LinkedIn in which you can search the updates with keywords. This means that if you use your main keywords in your updates, there is a chance that you will be found by a potential client. Also, you can link your profile to your Twitter account, Twitter users can also find you. This makes B2B traffic generation more accessible.

31. Post Your Link after Comments

To really take advantage of the networking potential on LinkedIn, it is a smart move involved in the many discussions within the groups. There are thousands of active LinkedIn users that are posting their concerns and input in groups as well as on updates. All of the above are opportunities to get engaged in the conversation.

After all, what is networking without good and interesting conversations?

Getting involved in conversations and leaving comments is a way to meet new people, stay connected to people you already know, and give yourself exposure. However, it is an excellent traffic generation vehicle. It is not suggested to just comment or respond to discussions with a link to your website. When responding to discussions or even updates, it makes more sense to respond sincerely with good information. As you are responding with great information it doesn't hurt to post your link after your words. Remember, many people who are not

actively engaging, are still reading and clicking. Many times in groups, posting a link after starting a discussion will get your discussion pushed to the “Promotions” section. Considering this, you should post your discussions a questions (followed by links) and or post links after you reply to other’s discussions.

32. Post Your Link after Everything

There are many avenues for communication on LinkedIn. You can be actively involved and engaged in groups and the many discussions therein. You can post offers and more information in the "Promotions" sections of groups. You can post regular updates to your profile and respond to the updates of others. You can ask and answer questions in the "Answers" section. You can send single or mass e-mails to your network. All mentioned are great opportunities to interact with other LinkedIn members. As you get involved and become more active in LinkedIn, you must remember that you are not in violation you leave a link back to your website within all of your communications. As we all communicate with each other online, we are competing with many, sometimes even in one on one conversation. If not directly competing with a business competitor, we are competing with a person's attention span and time management conflicts. It is smart to make it as easy as possible for a person to locate you and or your point of business which would be your website, blog, etc.

33. Send a Useful E-Mail to Your Network

The average LinkedIn user is an expert in something. The knowledge that is taken for granted by some considered to be very valuable to many. As the saying goes, “One man's trash is another man's treasure.” This is never been truer than in the possession of valuable information. If you are involved in a particular niche, your network of colleagues will be glad to receive useful information.

If you can share good information enough, you will be looked at as a source for it. Furthermore, in this information age, the sharing of information is welcomed without hesitation. It is especially welcomed when it comes from a trusted source like a colleague. Therefore, as you proceed to do your part in the relaying of valuable information, don't forget to include a link back to your website or blog. Remember, it doesn't have to be a link back to your website or blog; you can point that link to whatever you wish. (Think Traffic!!)

Professional Prospecting

34. Saved Searches

The time that you spend on LinkedIn searching for particular client via keyword doesn't have to be wasted. Some people spend an hour or more searching for a particular client within a particular niche. Doing so is

using LinkedIn in an effective way but it doesn't have to be time gone to waste. It is possible to save many of the searches that you have discovered to produce positive results. This is a feature that can be very useful when tracking where a client originated from.

In sales, it is always recommended to use several different forms of prospecting. However, when acquiring clients, one can lose track of which method of prospecting yielded the best results. Saving your searches can help you to know where a certain client came from. Another benefit to this great feature is that it can be set so that LinkedIn will send you an e-mail when new prospects matching the same search criteria becomes available on the site.

35. Group Communications

Being active in LinkedIn groups had numerous advantages. They are a place for networking in which relationships can begin and the beginnings of business transactions can be found. Prospecting in these groups is a very common practice by many. The less experienced will usually throw sales pitches and propositions around haphazardly. Doing so causes a lot of alienation and avoidance. When there is no credibility build up and no trust has been established, there is little chance that business will be transacted.

It is however a smarter course of action to participate in discussions and add value to conversations. When doing so on a regular basis, this affords a sales rep the

opportunity to project his/her value greatly. When this approach is taken LinkedIn groups become an abundant hot bed of potential business. Of course it depends on the industry you are in but knowing how people operate and adjusting to it is smart business.

36. Using "In Mail"

Using "In Mail" is a way to reach out and contact anyone you desire within LinkedIn network. Although there are millions of professionals on LinkedIn it is not possible to openly contact anyone at any time with a free membership. This is the way that LinkedIn has been able to maintain a certain standard throughout the years. Using this paid feature, you are given the freedom to send messages to anyone you'd like on the network. It is limited to 30 per month but nevertheless gives you an extension to your reach.

You are guaranteed a response and are credited for an unanswered inMail. This feature comes in handy for contacting C-level individuals or LinkedIn members who block the acceptance of messages from their group members. This is also an excellent feature if you have mastered your approach and may even get you past the gatekeeper as most do handle their personal e-mails. This can be a very effective form of prospecting depending on a few factors.

37. Maintaining a Positive Image

Just as a business card is a representation of a professional, an online profile takes it one step further. This is especially true when it is an online profile located on a business network like LinkedIn. It's true that the measure of service rendered truly defines the value of any given company or professional. However, getting to the point of sale and then continuing the point of loyal customer begins someplace. It could very well begin viewing of your profile.

Although it can be considered to be of a passive nature, maintaining a professional and up to date profile can help form a complete and positive image complimenting your prospecting efforts. Furthermore, pay special attention to any comments you make while participating in groups as well as any updates you post to your profile. All of these are contributors to a professional image. The desired result of prospecting is most likely a sale and anything you can use to achieve that goal must be held to the highest of standards.

38. Tracking Persistence

When engaged in business networking there are numerous activities one could be involved in at any given time. You could be attending a business networking event or having a conversation over coffee with a new contact. You could be attending a workshop full of potential clients or adding your two cents to a targeted blog or discussion board online. Whatever your activity is, it is probably being executed to gain a particular

result.

Networking, just like any other form of marketing should be trackable when defining results. There are a variety of different ways to track the effects of networking versus your sales accomplishments. However, digitally tracking your results using LinkedIn may be a bit easier. It is possible to know and record just how many comments you have left in discussions and even the number of updates or e-mails you may have enacted. LinkedIn's sophisticated technology allows us to go back and count what we have been involved in. Because this is possible it encourages persistence and can make prospecting on this website worthwhile. When one can measure activity versus results so closely, LinkedIn could become a superior medium for prospecting.

Job Hunting

39. Target Companies Strategically

When searching for a Job using LinkedIn, it is smart to not just seek positions but to seek out and target companies who would be the ultimate fit for your employment goals. You can use the "Company" search bar to find companies to your liking. However, if you do begin your search with a position in mind, you can simply type that position into the "People" search bar and then investigate the companies of the connections in your network. Once you begin locating favorable companies, you can choose to follow them as you would when following someone on Twitter or "liking" a page on

Facebook.

There is a basic difference in this case; the updates you will see from the firm will be of a professional nature and feature personnel news. This is however good for you as it keeps you abreast of openings and other opportunities as they become present. If you can be alerted when certain positions open, it will allow you to quickly reach a hiring manager. Moreover, if you're really keeping an eye on the company's movements, you can begin to develop a relationship with the hiring manager of other employee who can make an introduction for you at the optimum time.

40. Get a Job Seeker Premium Account

While a Job Seeker Premium account on LinkedIn can be a significant investment for someone who may be currently unemployed, the extra exposure may be worth it. With a Job Seeker Premium option, your resume gets shifted to the top layer of candidates applying for the same position. This is a plus considering that a hiring manager may (and usually is) inundated with tons of resumes. You are also able to take advantage of inMail which allows you to directly email anyone on LinkedIn. With inMail, you are guaranteed an answer or you will be given credit for non-responders. Furthermore, you are credited unused inMail up to 30; meaning that inMails you don't use will carry over to the next month. This is valuable for reaching out directly to hiring managers whose companies could benefit from your valuable talents. You can also view a

full list of people who have viewed your profile. This could be valuable when doing a bit of backtracking; get in touch with a profile viewer who is a great job match and strike up a dialog.

41. Use Good Keywords

The Internet has become such a useful tool in today's world mostly because of the great targeting factor. Specific targeting has always played a role in marketing but the relevance of it really comes full circle considering how search engines work. At the base of searching and being found lies specific keywords. The search engines on mega sites like LinkedIn work in a similar way to the major search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. When seeking employment, you must take this into consideration as it could mean the difference in being found or not by potential employer.

It is wise to try and think like an employer who is seeking their perfect and fully. If it was you, what would you type into the LinkedIn search engine to find the perfect candidate? Whatever you feel those keywords would be should be what pepper throughout your profile. As you write your professional summary it is a smart move to use those keywords at least five times when describing your experience and expertise. This will allow you to show up at a higher position when your desired employer is seeking you out. Of course there are no guarantees what you will always want to give yourself the greatest chance for victory.

42. Maintain an Updated Profile

Any busy jobseeker knows that full days can be sacrificed in search of employment. With all of this activity, it is easy to lose track of or neglect to keep your LinkedIn profile current. A position may be acquired but it may not be the position one would like to remain at long-term. Because of this, an individual may leave a job and start another one, sometimes a few times within a year. This could happen until a person lands in the position they feel they will have for years to come.

Because of so much chaos a profile neglects to be updated and an employer or colleague viewing your profile can get confused by the misinformation. This can cause opportunities to be missed and also make a statement about your organizational skills. It could possibly brand you as unorganized. Remember, especially when seeking a job, your LinkedIn profile serves as an online resume. It should be updated regularly to represent you well.

43. Request Recommendations from Colleagues

Just as business can be acquired through a referral, a recommendation can sometimes be the bridge between being hired or not. It is said that a LinkedIn profile can be considered an online resume so having good recommendations can really assist in projecting a positive image. A recommendation contains kind words but if those words are relevant to the finer points of a desired position, an employer may take them very

seriously. Therefore, it is advised to get recommendations from your friends and colleagues.

Recommendations come in a few different forms. You can receive a recommendation from a former client or from a colleague you have worked with in the past. You can also receive recommendations from a colleague who is simply referencing your character and why it is enjoyable to work with you. It can also be giving reasons to entrust you with certain things. You can begin to receive recommendations by requesting them from your closest colleagues or you can simply write great recommendations for your colleagues and ask them to reciprocate.

44. Use the “Introductions” feature

In business networking, the introduction to the right contacts is vital. After all, your direct contacts do not always hold the key to advancement in your career. However they may be connected to those who do. This is why introductions are so important and are at the very foundation of making networking significant. Without proper introductions, a large percentage of our networking activities would be practiced in vain. At live networking events or in real life, we introduce and are introduced to people. LinkedIn has made this process digital.

As you scan through your network of colleagues and figure out which ones could possibly know someone who can help you to get the right position, you can contact them and ask for an introduction. This is a feature that is

standard to all LinkedIn profiles. There is a limit to how many introductions you can use but the good news is that the feature does exist and can be used effectively. This is significant because your connections may very well be closely connected to a desired employer and a simple introduction may land you a position.

45. Join or Start Groups in Your Industry

There are many uses to being part of a targeted group on LinkedIn. You can start discussions, common on discussions, post announcements and advertisements, and communicate with fellow group members. Basically, being involved in groups extends your reach and multiplies your options. Being active in groups gives you the opportunity to showcase your expertise as well as build relationships within your industry. Done the right way, you could almost guarantee yourself a position.

For example, you probably already know the companies in which you would like to work. Being involved and active in groups can put you directly in touch with key people in those companies. Creating alliances and friendships can afford you favor one positions become available. You can also start your own group which invites others in your industry or your desired companies to join and participate. The above are simply great ways to position yourself appropriately. It doesn't have to take a long time especially if you are focused in your approach.

Apps & Enhancements

46. LinkedIn Mobile App

As you consider all of the activities you can take advantage of on LinkedIn, it is easy to become doubtful that you will have enough time to sit down in front of your computer daily and get it all done. You of course have a schedule and many other things to accomplish during any given week. This is where the LinkedIn Mobile App comes in very handy. This app is available for the iPhone, iPad, Android, and a handful of other mobile devices. The great thing about the app is that once you download it, you can participate in many of the usual social activities involved with using LinkedIn effectively; communicate and monitor group activity, send and receive email, stay in the loop on updates and LinkedIn Today, post your own updates, send and receive connection requests, search the LinkedIn Network, and more! All while you are on the go. This is fantastic when you are actively involved in LinkedIn and building your results. It doesn't have to stop simply because you've left the office.

47. Card Munch

Card Munch is an excellent addition to the LinkedIn Mobile arsenal. It is an app that makes "bridging the gap" much easier and efficient. Any active networker is out and collecting business cards. It takes time to sit and send connection requests manually to those you have met and now

want to add to your LinkedIn Professional Network. This app helps crunch (or munch) the connection request time frame by allowing you to photograph your business cards, after which the Card Munch technology will match the information on the business card (Name, Company, Phone, Email, etc.) with the corresponding connection on LinkedIn. They must also have a profile but once the match is made, you are then given the option to send a connection request. In addition, you can view their entire profile on the app with the photo of the business card at the top of the page. Incredible!!

Buffer

Buffer is a free online software that allows you to post all of your social media finds or any other information you want to share with your LinkedIn (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) network at one time during the day. Once you do this, the software will post it in individual posts one at a time throughout the day or week if you'd like. This takes the work out of being on top of your posting schedule throughout a day or week and allows you to stay visible to your network while you are off doing other things. Using this automated software, you can take 15 to 45 mins or less and post your content and forget about it until it runs out. Then you'll simply refill and forget it. A great time saver.

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is an auto-posting online software as well but is a bit different from Buffer. With Hootsuite, you can post multiple updates and choose which social networks (Linkedin in this case) you would like the updates to appear. The difference is that you will manually schedule when you want your updates to post. You have a great choice of social networks to sync to your Hootsuite account; Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, Google +, Four Square, and more. You can also sync Hootsuite with popular and active RSS Feeds in your industry and enable updating 24 hours per day on your profile from these feeds. This is useful for remaining visible to your network while sharing useful information. This also helps you not to “disappear” from your social media presence when you get bogged down with other projects.

Five Hundred Plus

As you continue to build your network and become engaged in multiple relationships you will find this tool valuable as it helps you to keep your interactions organized. Being organized in your various dealings with so many can only assist you in maximizing your new and existing relationships. It is an obvious rule of thumb to stay visible and at the "top of mind" of your connections. This can be done by continuous posting of relevant updates but direct interaction takes relationship

cultivation a step further. While Five Hundred Plus is relatively new and in its beta stage, it is primed to improve over time.

The concept is to assist you in maintaining your many relationships with your LinkedIn connections. You are able to see your connections in a left column and are given the option to drag and drop them into categories based on how much you plan (or should) to stay in contact; weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly. Your email communications can be recorded automatically using this free online software. It is also entirely possible to enter your own desired communication data manually if you wish. Your contact is then cloaked in red when it is the designated time to get back in touch. This is a great alternative to posting reminders in Outlook or on another calendar equipped with reminders. It was created with LinkedIn in mind. A very useful and up and coming online software.

Conclusion

I hope this information has been useful to you. I welcome all comments at: biz-networking@bizivents.com. Please share this report with your friends and colleagues.

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Please feel free to send me a contact request on LinkedIn as I am an Open Networker and will accept. My Public LinkedIn Profile address is;
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Other publications by John H. Lee

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About the Author



John H. Lee AKA JohnTheNetworker, is the President of Bizivents.com, a company dedicated to providing the education and means necessary to establish flourishing business relationships. In addition to founding Bizivents, The 200 Pros Networking Happy Hour, and authoring "Expert Networking Secrets Exposed in Plain English", John offers Social Media Lead Generation, Social Networking, and Business Networking Coaching services to professionals and businesses of all sizes.

Compelled to serve and assist, John has also authored "The Rapport Superstar, Blueprint for Networking Success" and "Top 50 Ways to Maximize LinkedIn for Business". John

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