

Maximize your Marketing Potential:

a

User Guide

For

Leveraging LinkedIn

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Executive Summary

It is important to have an effective online social media marketing strategy for you and your business. This paper looks at why LinkedIn Marketing is essential to your online marketing campaign and the range of advantages to your business or personal profile and industry exposure it can provide. By comparing LinkedIn to other social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter we see the benefits of a site specifically targeted at businesses and professionals regarding marketing and B2B marketing. To get the most out of LinkedIn Marketing there are a number of best-practices and tools that can help.

Social Media Marketing for Business

It is commonly accepted that any modern or online business marketing strategy is incomplete without utilizing social media (SM) platforms. They can help to get your name out and are a great way to market your products and services; they also give businesses and individual's opportunities to connect with users and potential customers on a more personal level, boosting brand recognition and loyalty.

In this paper, we will discuss best practices and strategies to boost your LinkedIn Marketing and provide you with a checklist on how to easily improve your LinkedIn marketing strategies. We will begin by discussing how it compares to Facebook and Twitter Marketing in terms of ROI and quality leads, and by outlining best LinkedIn practices to effectively utilize the advantages LinkedIn offers.

The intended outcome of this paper is to provide you with ways to enhance your LinkedIn visibility, actively grow your network, and increase your influence.

How does LinkedIn compare to other social sites?

Based on leads and returns on investment (ROI: a measure of business success against financial performance) we will compare the social media marketing capabilities of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn Marketing.

Facebook Marketing

Facebook (FB) offers a number of SMM opportunities, for personal and business uses.

Businesses and potential customers can go to your FB business page to discover what's going on with your company (by viewing your about, posts, videos, pictures, and updates) and/or explore events you are involved in. You can easily publicize your Facebook Marketing page/ads by posting links and adding social icons to your website. Clicks, likes, comments, shares and follow requests are great CTA's (calls-to-action) and get your audience engaged with you and your business (engagement leads to more timeline visibility etc.).

Facebook Ads are very effective at generating strong leads (users actually looking for your services) as the utilization of social graphs and activities can pinpoint users who match your target group. This may help you to stick to an advertising budget, but, when compared to other sites, FB is not always the best platform for B2B (business-to-business) marketing and lead generation as FB users are in predominantly personal networks for connecting with friends and loved ones so your online brand personality needs to fit in with this tone (so no hard-sells).

Twitter Marketing

Twitter allows businesses and users to share quick snippets of information and content in order to encourage traffic to your site or landing pages. Due to limited characters, tweets have to be punchy and engaging enough for people to stop and click through, so simple posts using quotes, statistics, or questions related to the link you're tweeting are a great way to make people want to read more. For more attention grabbing posts, incorporate more multimedia formats.

Like FB, you can generate leads on Twitter through meaningful engagement, as Twitter is useful for both driving traffic and customer service. To reach wider audiences make use of #Hashtags, which conveniently filter similar content, like keywords, and are very useful for getting involved in existing conversations to engage with new users.

Like Facebook, Twitter caters to a varied audience engaging in popular discussions, but the limited character may not make Twitter the best space for engaging with your followers on a personal level and it may be harder to create B2B connections on Twitter compared to other sites, like LinkedIn.

LinkedIn Marketing

LinkedIn is a powerful tool for both recruiters and sales professionals.

LinkedIn differs from other SM platforms in that it is specifically designed for the working world of businesses and professionals - meaning that, unlike FB and Twitter, only people looking for businesses or professionals will be using the platform and is ideal for business networking and B2B marketing.

LinkedIn marketing provides greater industry exposure and can offer a range of advantages to your business or personal profile. LinkedIn users specifically use the platform to showcase their job experience and professional experiences making it a valuable tool for driving traffic, knowledge sharing, networking and recruiting.

LinkedIn offers a number of great features like LinkedIn Pulse, "Get Introduced", Personal and Company Pages, InMail, LinkedIn Learning, Groups, and it even allows you to see who recently viewed your personal profile.

Company Page V Individual Account

Every business should have a LinkedIn Company Page but, as they completely passive, personal LinkedIn Profiles are better for forming relationships and creating leads and ROI.

Personal profiles allow you to proactively connect with targeted prospects and develop valuable relationships - providing continuous opportunities to find and interact with targeted profiles.

Personal pages allow you to do a number of things company pages will not, namely: send personal messages (company pages can only respond to messages); send connection requests and connect with practically anyone you want (connect with 2nd level connections and fellow group members with a simple connection request); and join up to 50 LinkedIn Groups (which provides a huge source of targeted leads interested and engaging in relevant topics).

Company pages do, however, provide a unique opportunity for exposure previously unavailable to personal profiles in the form of Sponsored Updates / LinkedIn ads, which are great at targeting high-quality leads and traffic in a short period of time.

Company Pages are also SEO-friendly (if great keywords are utilized in your descriptions) and allow you create a network of your employees on LinkedIn if they have listed your company as their current position, gaining the company organic exposure and creating additional links from each profile.

LinkedIn Best Practices

Getting the most out of a platform specifically designed for businesses and professionals is down to how you leverage the advantages it provides. Here is a list of LinkedIn best practices that provide a checklist to make sure you are getting the most out of LinkedIn's marketing capabilities:

✓ **The Perfect Profile.**

- 100% complete with a professional picture and relevant branding.
- Your headline, summary, skills, experience, URLs etc. are optimized with keywords
- Your profile needs to show that you are well organized and value is added through meaningful tools and apps
- Effectively build a following by searching for and following other companies

✓ **Networking.**

- Proactively and strategically grow your network (have a weekly goal of connections made) by engaging with **Groups** (detail below)
- Utilize status updates to consistently add value to connections
- Use the Answers Feature to engage with others through Q&A
- Utilize "Introductions" and InMail to build your strategic network
- Share your LinkedIn updates on other SM, e.g. tweet LinkedIn updates

✓ **Powerful Networking Tools to use.**

- **Tool: Groups**

- Conversation is less likely to be directly on LinkedIn Pages to other SM marketing profiles, to make up for this there is **LinkedIn Groups**
- LinkedIn Groups filters conversations, people, pages according to industry and common interests, allowing users to meet and engage with industry professionals, ask or pose questions, and/or showcase their own industry expertise.
- Users can message any member within these groups for free.
- ✓ **Tip:** Expand your groups by appropriately informing fellow group members about the kind of team members or prospects you are looking for.
- **Tool: OpenLink (this is very useful for recruiters and sales professionals)**
- One of the major benefits of a paid for business or Premium account is OpenLink. This allows members to find and connect with other professionals allowing anyone to contact you and can see your full details in the search results, whether the searcher is part of your network or not. Become an open networker by adding the OpenLink-status to your profile and increase the number of incoming invitations.
- ✓ **Search Savvy.**
- Utilize the Advanced Search Feature by using targeted keywords (create a keyword list by studying the groups your target audience is in and from how others describe themselves (keywords) on LinkedIn)

✓ **Daily Routines**

- To make the most out of LinkedIn, as with most things, ideally have a daily routine. Spend 15 minutes per day actively growing your network and increasing your influence by utilizing status updates to consistently add value to connections. As a rule: keep your LinkedIn Profile up-to-date, post once-a-day and respond to messages in a timely fashion.
 - Your daily routine should include the following:
 - Review your network and check your LinkedIn groups daily
 - Invite others to connect, share content, and like at least 3 wall items (to remain active)
 - Check your LinkedIn messages & send thank you messages (go for personalized messages)
 - Send call-to-action messages (encourage users to engage with your company)
 - Leverage your existing LinkedIn connections (instead of just focusing on making new connections).
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In Conclusion

It is clear that LinkedIn is a Powerful marketing platform, especially for B2B marketing. To increase sales for a business can't just sit and wait for leads to come to you - you need to be proactive with networking on LinkedIn. By using the above checklist and constant active engagement you can enhance your LinkedIn Marketing strategies.

Make sure you, your, employees and team members have been coached on how to leverage LinkedIn, LinkedIn Groups and Personal Profiles to build meaningful connections and one-on-one relationships effectively.

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