

Linked inTM SECRETS

Discover How to **Get More Customers**
and **Clients** Using **LinkedIn**



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Introduction

With all the social media sites out there these days, it can be confusing if you're trying to leverage yourself effectively. Which social network is great for business? Which one is best for reaching customers and which one is best for making corporate connections? While many different techniques can be used from network to network, the free service LinkedIn has risen above the pack to offer quality business connections with employees, owners, traders and consultants the world over. If you're trying to reach more professional connections, LinkedIn is the network for you.

What Is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site that was founded in 2002 with the goal of connecting working adults with one another and building professional networks. Currently, LinkedIn has over 200 million members and makes the majority of its money through advertising. This revenue is used in part to purchase other, smaller social networking tools to be enveloped into LinkedIn to further enhance its use.

LinkedIn provides a unique feature where users can endorse others. If you are well known and want someone to get some good publicity, you can endorse them on your profile and those people will then show up on other people's networks as recommendations for hires in that field. As a result, LinkedIn has become a great tool for employers to find seasoned professionals with instant references built in.

Another great feature in LinkedIn is the ability to list out projects. When you list a project, you can connect it to an employer and list out other people on LinkedIn as members of that

project. As a result, you can help to establish a work history and simultaneously show credibility and contacts while listing your work.

LinkedIn is also known for actively promoting its job search engine. This helps you to connect with employers through connections, as new jobs are recommended based on the strength and content of your profile. Your education level is shown prominently on your site as well as work history, experiences and events. Also, you can recommend people for skills and positions.

With all of these unique features, LinkedIn stands out as a powerful marketing tool that encourages people to not only connect with others but to focus on their professional careers and contribute information that they will actively want to share with others, whereas other sites like Facebook and Twitter only encourage people to share social activities that could be potentially damaging to people's employment prospects.

Advertising with LinkedIn

LinkedIn is designed around advertising. On every profile and site search, there is a marketing blurb that tries to promote itself based on the skillset you have entered in. If your focus is in education, you will see an increase in education-related commercials to the side. This means that advertising on LinkedIn is focused on your professional career, while on Facebook it is focused on your social interests and 'likes'. LinkedIn relies on your expertise to craft your user experience.

So, how can you leverage LinkedIn as a potential advertiser? Most people who use LinkedIn aren't logging in to discuss social activities, so focus your marketing on things related to a

professional career. Most of the advertising you see on LinkedIn focuses on education, professional services and finance.

Choosing Your Audience

Once you know that LinkedIn is where you want to focus your advertising, the next step is to determine who your ideal audience is. What market best fits your products and who is more likely to notice your ads? This can help you in determining how to build your advertising account.

With any social media service, the best way to get your message out there is through marketing. In LinkedIn, you can create your own network where you can recommend and provide commentary to people based on their professional profile. You can also search by those profiles, and that is where this service can help you.

Let's say your product targets people who work with finance. Maybe you will search for the words QuickBooks, financial planning, Excel or anything else that would relate to money in the business world. The more terms you use, the wider your networking range. This will expose you to a large swath of potential customers, but this is only half the battle.

Ten Commandments of LinkedIn Advertising

While it can be argued that there are many different strategies for using LinkedIn effectively, the following are ten ways to leverage LinkedIn effectively in your marketing and promotions. While not all of them may apply to what you do, they are proven strategies that have worked for other businesses.

In the last section, we discussed focusing your network based on what people list out as their specialties. This is a good start, but now that you have that focus, what do you do with it?

One thing people look for in LinkedIn is a benefit to their networking strategy. It makes more sense to spend 20 minutes targeting people in your specific interest group than 5 minutes randomly adding people, so what about your landing page makes people want to link to you? For starters, you will need to provide a steady stream of service-related content that ties in not only with your audience, but with your service. Make your page one that provides some kind of educational or social benefit to those that visit. Maybe you can link to articles or post statistics that people will find useful. Some companies share links to planning tools or other helpful websites, while others offer special promotions that can only be viewed from their landing page.

You can communicate easily with members of your network, so use that as a means to announce LinkedIn-only deals. Maybe you will offer a certain percentage off your standard rate or the chance to sign up for a free trial. Make your site beneficial for your followers, and they will not only continue to pay attention, but they will not hesitate to recommend others to your page.

Secondly, LinkedIn allows you to promote other users. If you make a habit of tracking down users that have a particular skill and actively promote them, they will promote you in kind. Do not hesitate to endorse your followers if it means they will actively link you to others in their networks. When you consider that the main goal behind using LinkedIn is to network,

this can do nothing but help your potential client base and expand your active customer network.

Second, when building your profile, be as detailed as possible. Do not hesitate to include links to company sites, past products, success stories or other items that might help to promote your product or service. The more content you have, the better and more professional you will seem to others when they land on your profile.

One interesting thing about people on LinkedIn is that you're not just seeing links to their profiles, you're also seeing links to their companies and their projects. Take a good look at the people who are willing to network with you and see what they have in common. If it's a company, then actively target others from that company. If they don't want to network, then look at what type of company that is and see what other companies out there fall under the same category. Remember, people tend to like similar things in similar markets, and what holds true for one group on LinkedIn might hold true for others, so be bold and experiment with your connections.

Third, look at the quantity of contacts in a person's network. LinkedIn will show you how connected a user is. Use this to your advantage and target your recommendations towards followers with large networks first. These are people who will be actively using LinkedIn and will have a greater chance of seeing what you are doing. This means they will have a greater chance of sharing your site, recommending you to a larger pool of viewers and possibly purchasing your service.

Fourth, LinkedIn has a feature where you can list out projects. This is a great resume builder, as it not only shows what companies you have worked with but also who you have

worked with. There is a collaboration feature where you can list out other members on LinkedIn and give them credit, so look at how you can leverage this. Create simple tasks and invite users to collaborate with you. It could be something simple like a marketing project where they have to post about your company or services and in return, they are listed as a collaborator on that project. This connects them with you, builds some consumer loyalty and helps them out with a more robust profile.

Fifth, diversify. You might offer a host of services or products, so don't limit yourself to just one landing page. LinkedIn is a free service (yes, there is a premium service, but you don't have to use it to get some benefit out of LinkedIn), so make as many landing pages as you have products, branches or services. This will allow you to target specific people for specific products, expose yourself to a wider network and more closely monitor how many people are actively following what product or service. This gives you a fantastic free marketing tool where other people will hunt down your services and let others know how great they are, so take advantage.

Consider that not all customers are going to like your blanket offering of products. While you might want to offer a multitude of financial services, someone might only be interested in purchasing a mortgage while another might only care about auto loans. While your landing page might be for a company that offers both, that doesn't mean that one will share your page just because of how broad it is. However, a focused, one-topic page has a much greater chance of not only being noticed, but of being shared and included in someone's network.

This can also tie in with your advertising. You can purchase ads that run along the side of LinkedIn that can range in size and quality. These ads can link to anywhere, but most people tend to link them back to a landing page that allows people to track and recommend the product to others. If you have a host of landing pages, this can help you determine what advertising is working vs. what is a dud and help you to better plan for the future.

Sixth, don't reinvent the wheel. There's a reason so many ads look the same, it's because they look professional, they convey the proper message and most importantly, they work. Your ad should have a directed, simplistic focus that steers the customer's interest towards your landing page. To do this, look at how others in your fields have accomplished this and take good notes. There is nothing wrong with copying a technique (just don't copy the content), so see what works and go from there.

To help, consider what makes people want to do something (in this case, what makes them want to spend money). Monroe's Motivated Sequence has been a secret weapon of advertisers for decades and is still considered the best model for how to steer someone's attention towards the topic you want. In the case of a LinkedIn ad, this can easily be applied.

The first part of Monroe's Motivated Sequence is to get the audience's attention. Look at how ads on LinkedIn grab your attention. Do they use large text? Are there questions to get you thinking about a service or field of interest? What graphics do they use to lure you over to the side of the screen? Also, some might use animation or quick games to get you to click on their ads. These are all steered towards driving your attention, and more often than not, they work.

Attention isn't the only thing that is needed to sell with Monroe's. The next is Need. You have to establish a need or problem for your users. If they are going to use your service, it is most likely geared towards improving their quality of life, so what about their lives is lacking to the point that they would want to part with their money? The answer is whatever you tell them is lacking. Many people are content until they learn about an absence of something, so inform them of this absence and show them how bad things are without it.

This could be a service that they didn't realize they could use or a product that could make their lives better. This need should be immediately established so that it is at the forefront of the viewer's mind. This helps you because then they start to list off to themselves all the things wrong with their lives because of that absence. This effectively sells the product or service for you.

Once the problem or need has properly been set up, the next step is to introduce satisfaction. Show your people the solution you have to provide. Let them know there is a fix and that yours in particular is the one they should use. This should be as simple and as direct as possible; you don't want people getting confused about what you are offering.

This leads into the fourth step, detail. Now that they know there is a fix for their problems, let people know all the details about how that fix will work and all of the benefits they will receive for using it. This can be as elaborate or as direct as you want, so long as it helps to sell the solution that you have steered them towards.

Finally, provide motivation to act. Show people what they need to do to have your product or use your service. Tell them how to contact you or what they need to do to buy. If you fail

to do this clearly, then all you've done is educate people about a product, not actually sell it. Make the process of buying as clear and direct as possible. Remember, it should never be difficult to give someone money.

When ads on LinkedIn use something flashy to draw your eye and then ask a question that highlights a problem, you suddenly focus on that problem. Then the ads will usually offer some kind of a solution in the form of a company or product. Maybe a bullet list of benefits will appear in the ad, along with directions to click to proceed. All of this has used Monroe's Motivated Sequence in the space of a simple one panel blurb, but they work and people do notice.

The seventh tip for advertising on LinkedIn is to focus your advertisements. Once you decide to build an ad and post it on LinkedIn, you have control over who gets to see it. LinkedIn is very thorough about gathering its customers details, including company and location. If you want to target a specific region or country, LinkedIn will offer you the chance to do so right up front.

On top of this, you can steer your LinkedIn advertisements towards companies that have certain skill sets or have a certain number of employees. Don't be afraid to go big in your advertising choices. Remember, sometimes a company-gearred service is one that many people might have to sell management on, so if you are focusing your advertisements on just that company or field, there is a greater chance that more people from that industry are going to have you in the back of their mind and consider you when making recommendations.

Now, what about frequency? When advertising on LinkedIn, it's not a one size fits all purchasing program. LinkedIn allows you to choose how much you want to spend and what metrics drive that spending. Do you want to pay for a certain number of clicks a day? If so, then you can enter in a blanket amount for your advertising. What about a certain percentage vs. how much you've spent? If you feel that a click is worth \$1.00, then you can set your base budget and see what you can get per day based on the budget you provide.

Notice the key words in that last paragraph- you pay for clicks, not postings. LinkedIn figured out there was no financial benefit for end users to advertise if no one was clicking on the ads that were running. LinkedIn wants you to spend money, so they will help you to figure out what markets have the highest click ration to help you focus your marketing and make it successful. As a result, you pay for followed clicks, not just views. This makes LinkedIn similar in its advertising to services like Google AdWords, except this is a much more focused engine targeting just LinkedIn customers.

Next, think of ad variation. Sometimes, it's repetition of a product or service that sells it above the competition. The more something stands out in a client's mind, the greater the chance they will remember it later. This is why companies invest so heavily in logos, songs, catch phrases and marketing schemes. You aren't just selling a product, you are building a corporate identity and persona around your brand.

When people see your ads, they should know what your company is just by the mascot, the color scheme, the fonts or the logos. They should be able to look at the overall ambiance of the ad and associate it correctly. Think of how effective a slogan, song or jingle has been at

helping you to associate with a branding and consider who your company colors, logos or messages are being used in each ad.

LinkedIn ads are generally small, so get the most mileage you can from your graphic.

Include the same people, situations, catch phrase or general saying in your ads to build brand recognition. Also, consider building a standard template and then offering up multiple variations with slight changes. Use the same sentences or phrases with the exact same graphics in an attempt to diversify your ads and also help you to track which message seems to be having the best effect.

Oddly enough, you can have three ads with the exact same picture and the exact same market, but one might get more clicks than another. Consider the power of words and the influence of you vs. I language. In I language, you are putting the focus on yourself. This is good for arguments and teaching, but it is terrible for selling. You don't want people to focus on themselves; the whole point is to focus on you and how you can help them, so employ you based language. Focus on the customer and point out everything they need. Let them know they are important and focus everything on them. A person that is focused on is a person that thinks they are special, and these are the people most likely to purchase from you.

What about neutral ads that don't mention you or I? These are generally read by users as I advertisements, which means they are still considered more educational than convincing. Consider the sentence: "The one simple rule to get out of debt." Now, let's focus it on the user by changing it to "your one simple rule to get out of debt." What makes it unique to

me? Why is this so important that I need it in particular? This is what your customers will pick up on and what will make them want to click.

Eighth, track your metrics. LinkedIn provides a great tracking tool that tells you the frequency of your clicks and what markets seem to be interested, so pay attention and focus your energies where your clicks are the strongest. These metrics also reflect time, so pay attention to what days are getting the most clicks and steer your finances towards advertising on these days.

Consider that LinkedIn is meant for professionals. As a result, the primary email address most people use is their work address. Now consider that whenever there is a change to someone's LinkedIn account, the notice is sent to their linked email, and most professionals are more likely to pay attention to what is in their work email during the day while they are actually at work. They will already be in the proper mindset, so focus your energies on businesses during their working hours.

Now, consider your Return On Investment (ROI). It's nice to think that all advertising works great, but the truth of it is that only certain advertising will work with certain groups. You will need to be extremely focused in your efforts to see results, and most people just do not click on an ad unless that ad proves to be relevant to their jobs or interests.

In looking at ROI, you need to consider several factors. One is your immediate return through LinkedIn. Unfortunately, this is not seen by many as an instant money maker, so your immediate return might not be too strong. Instead, you need to focus on your long term ROI and ask yourself with each posting, "how will this ad benefit my goals?"

If your goal is to market and network to build up a larger customer pool, then make your ads for services or articles that will be hosted on your landing page. In this technique, you're selling the page more than the product, but that will in turn lend towards brand recognition which will make people consider your product before your competition.

If your goal is to drive recognition of a product, then you need to make that product clear and upfront in your ads. Most people do not appreciate being tricked by thinking they are clicking on an ad for one service when it is really another. Tell people right up front what it is and what their benefit is so that they will be more comfortable with clicking.

In advertising, you should have a multi-layered goal that ties to each of your ads. What ads are there to drive customer recognition of your brand? What ads are there solely to drive traffic? What ads help to promote your actual services? Also, even if all of these go to their own individual landing pages, that doesn't mean that they can't all reference the same overall company page. Make sure you have a solid message and direction for all of your clicks to follow.

Ninth, how will you involve your people? One thing people like is interaction, and LinkedIn provides this through recommendations and network building. Take the time to comment or send messages to your users, to take the time to focus on people that you have interacted with. Write a blurb highlighting one of your clients or businesses so that they get some exposure.

Now take this further. What if you are trying to break into a certain market? Maybe along with highlighting that business, you can offer special promotional rates just to people from that company? Maybe offer a discount or extra product or service just for their

employment. This will not only increase the chances of people wanting your product but also increase the potential number of sales.

Consider that if someone works for a company and sees that they can get a special offer just based on their employment, they will be more likely to share that knowledge with their coworkers than a simple sale ad. Because of their membership in the company, they will be compelled to share the benefits of that membership. Subconsciously, they will expect others to do the same for them, which means the next time you try it, the odds of your sales going up will increase, as more people will be likely to share the information.

Next, actively encourage people to link your landing pages or to send you messages about networks in a bid to get their companies promoted for a special offer. You could hold a contest to see how many people someone can get to link back to your site, or how many times you can get a recommendation for a certain service. You could even see how many times your company comes up as an interest in a certain corporation. All of these not only promote interaction, but help to keep people focused on your product or service.

Tenth is to keep experimenting. You never know what is going to work and what won't until you try. The truth is there is no sure fire way to get your sales in LinkedIn to take off, but variety is a nice place to start. Hit the sites hard with a host of different types of links to see what generates your leads and what does not and go from there.

Using Connections

LinkedIn may be focused on professionals and building a professional Network, but that doesn't mean you can't use it with other services. LinkedIn wants you to be noticed and

wants you to continue to promote your site, but the thing is that many users now have multiple types of social networking that they use. To help with this, LinkedIn offers you the chance to promote any changes to your site on Facebook and Twitter.

Now, you might think that these are not your primary audiences. After all, you are looking at LinkedIn, not Facebook, but the truth of the matter is that Facebook and Twitter have a larger following and a greater network of potential viewers. This means that your friends or followers in these programs might not be aware of what you are doing in LinkedIn without some kind of post or reminder.

When multiple landing pages were discussed earlier, we said to make one for each product or service. The same goes for making one for each social media outlet. Get followers that maybe don't know about LinkedIn or who maybe don't check their profiles as much as they should. You might inadvertently stumble across several networks from people that never realized you were promoting on LinkedIn in the first place.

Ask and Gather

LinkedIn has a great feature that connects with your existing email accounts and allows you to invite anyone you have interacted with to your network. This means that you might reach people you interacted with once or twice, or people that you haven't spoken with in a while. This is a powerful tool, but are you using it effectively in your marketing?

Look at all the ways you can collect data from people. The easiest metric to track for most is their email addresses, so ask people and promote their use. Create mailers or offer contests via email registration. Remember, each email you collect is another potential LinkedIn

profile waiting to be connected to. Also, you might convince someone to join LinkedIn when they receive an invite from you, which means more customers to interact with.

So, what are some easy ways to connect with users and get them to want to network with you? Many companies have started using LinkedIn as a corporate blog to promote brand awareness. These blogs might not even have anything to do with the products being sold, but they might tie in with corporate culture or offer up some helpful knowledge or technique. This is called generating substance, and if you want people to see a value in your postings, you need to provide that substance, otherwise they simply won't care.

The nice thing about this is you don't have to be a multi-faceted business guru to provide content. Maybe you promote an interesting link of the day, or maybe you repost a news story about something company-related (please give credit if you do this.). It could even be a humorous blurb or story, or even a business-appropriate joke to keep people's attention. The only constant is that the postings stay constant. If you start it, then maintain it to help build that brand awareness. Remember, people won't actively look for you if they don't know you exist.

One great way that some companies have started building a loyalty network is through promoting their employees. Some companies will offer a spotlight on their employees, showing off the projects they have done or discussing their high points. This not only helps to ensure your employees feel valued, but it also helps to paint your company as more human, which is something you want when trying to get people to connect with you.

Pitfalls

Most of what has been discussed here have been positives of using LinkedIn for your promotions, but there are some traps you may want to avoid. Again, not all marketing works for all customers, and some can be turned off more easily than others.

For starters, when advertising with a graphic, consider the context that your audience will view it in. Is your picture one that would be considered safe for work? Yes, attractive, nearly-naked people tend to get clicks, but are those the kind of ads people at major corporations are going to be more focused on clicking or staying away from in case IT is watching? Consider your content in your pictures before posting and make sure your graphics are workplace-friendly.

Second, watch your language. While on the surface, this could be taken as do not swear, on a deeper level, you have to consider what a company will filter for and what they will allow. Some words tend to trigger web filters pretty easily, so be careful about your verbiage. Also, look at the message your words send. Are you trying to be edgy, dynamic, endearing? Do your words properly convey the message you want people to see? Sometimes people get so wrapped up in sending out a strong message that they fail to consider if it is the right one.

Third, don't verbally tie yourself to a region or company if you can help it. While you may want to highlight a company on a landing page or maybe you are geared towards a certain region of the world, you don't want to inadvertently exclude potential customers because they think your ads don't immediately apply to them. Remember, you can focus your ads in

terms of companies and locations ahead of time, so listing out that info in the actual ad might prove redundant.

Fourth, don't slack on your content. It can be easy to start with a big push, but the number one thing that kills an audience's interest is inconsistency. Don't slouch on your posts. Make sure you dedicate a certain period of time each day to providing some form of content. If you can't or think you might have problems with this, hire someone to do it for you or spend a day or two generating multiple posts so that you can just plug and play. However you do it, just be sure to keep doing it. You are setting an expectation of service as accompany when you post, and to do so inconsistently will send a bad message about what your company considers professional.

Fifth, be careful on rebranding. Some smaller companies take the philosophy of experimentation a bit too far and keep trying to reinvent themselves every month or quarter, but the truth of it is that many companies form bonds over the long term with clients, and just because you announce a name change or a new logo, that doesn't mean that your clientele is paying attention. To build your brand, you need consistency, so stick to a logo or name and try to avoid being so edgy that you can't make up your mind about your name. Remember, you're a business, not a rock star.

Along with these tips, one big one is to always keep maintaining your landing pages. This doesn't just mean adding special articles or catchy photos; LinkedIn actively encourages you to continue to connect with other users, so take the time to do so. It will suggest people in different fields to help you expand your contacts, and if you have people with large networks, this list will just keep growing as you continue to add clients.

Each time you log in, pay attention to the recommendations for new clients that LinkedIn recommends. Whereas Facebook actively discourages the large-scale adding of friends, LinkedIn will go so far as to raid your entire address book and start connecting en masse. Let the software do its job and help you network. After all, that is what it's for.

Finally, do not hesitate to ask for help. A lot of people start off using LinkedIn and its advertising tools without knowing exactly what they are doing, but this should not be the case. LinkedIn gives a multitude of walkthroughs, guides, FAQs and even YouTube videos to help users better understand how to leverage the product. Remember, they want you to use their services, so if you have a question, ask their support team. LinkedIn is known for being responsive and you will get an answer to your problem in a timely fashion.

In recent years, LinkedIn has actually surpassed Twitter in advertising dollars spent on its site. This is saying something, considering that Twitter's following dwarfs LinkedIn. This means that not only are more people using LinkedIn to connect with their customers, but that more companies are seeing a greater return on their investment. That means that advertising on LinkedIn works, and that people are buying.

While there could be a multitude of factors behind this (the ease of the LinkedIn tracking tools, the cost of the ads, the simplicity of an ad design), the biggest one is that with LinkedIn, you are connecting companies and professionals, and these are people who are going to be in a better position to make decisions about where the money should go.

Facebook and Twitter are nice, but their followings range too wildly in age, employment and income to give a solid focus like LinkedIn does. Also, with LinkedIn's interface, you

have a higher chance of reaching people who are actively looking to connect as opposed to just chat.

Conclusion

LinkedIn is a wonderful tool for reaching people in the business world. Unlike its contemporaries, it is driven by a singular market- the professional world. This means that of all the services out there, you can count on LinkedIn to be the one that focuses on people with careers, goals, ambitions and more importantly for an advertiser, financial resources.

This report covered several different techniques to consider when using LinkedIn, from content of an ad to considering your audience and your goals. While some of these may work for you and some may not, there is one constant when it comes to using LinkedIn for your marketing, and that is that LinkedIn will help you if you continue to use it. This service is a tool, and like any tool, it is only as good as the effort you put into it and how effectively you leverage it. This guide suggested several good uses for that tool, now it is up to you to figure out how to apply the correct use to your business so that you can use LinkedIn to succeed in helping your business thrive.