

## 13 LinkedIn tips to get you started

LinkedIn is the 'business' arm of social media with some 100 million professional members worldwide. As with all social media, your input will determine your output. Here's a few tips to get you started but as this is all so fast moving, if you come across new/better ways to do things, please let me know!

### 1. Why have you joined LinkedIn? What can it do for you?

- a. Build relationships – as in face to face networking, thus it is with LinkedIn; follow up real time networking by inviting people you've met to join you on LinkedIn.
- b. Being seen as the active person in your profession locally – great way to build your business;
- c. Get introduced to the people you need; to build a network of business colleagues and professionals who may be able to help you directly, or who might know someone you would like to get to know;
- d. Find professionals your friends can vouch for;
- e. Keep up with friends and colleagues – LinkedIn makes it easy to hear about news/career changes/ projects and professional lives;
- f. Career advancement, change or professional opportunities
- g. Join appropriate groups (own industry and industries of your target customer) and then by adding value to the 'dialogue' you get to be seen as the expert and add to your own reputation and brand;
- h. Start your own group – give it a catchy name which will appeal and use words attractive to your target market and create discussions and add value to content;
- i. LinkedIn is a great way to search for contacts in businesses you would like to work with and see if there's someone in your network who knows someone in that company.

Remember your objective when completing and updating your profile.

### 2. Your Profile

- a. **Insert a photo – really important**
  - Ensure it's a 'proper' head shot/head-shoulders - not a holiday snap with the family; this is a professional networking site. If you don't have a good picture, then worth the investment - then it's ready for other sites, any PR you may be undertaking etc. Do NOT leave yourself as a blob.
  - Not the place for logos – see below for linking your Company profile (d)
- b. **Give it some of your time**
  - Give at least your key areas of expertise
  - Remember this is your profile, not your company's-even if you own it
  - Use the summary to mirror your elevator pitch – who do you work with and how can you help them; use strong buzzy words
  - Give a brief résumé of your previous employment and education. Don't skip the previous employment – people like to see the path you've travelled – if you omit this then people will ask why? Also good for further keywords etc.
  - When it comes to your 'current position' this may not describe fully your expertise – eg MD. You can add a second current position which better describes your role which will help people to find you
  - Try to include keywords – aim to jump-start a conversation from what you write
  - When you add your website, you have a choice of what you can call it on the drop down. The pre-selected categories are 'My Website' 'My Company' etc.

But, if just linking to the one website, better to choose the 'Other' option and modify the name, using your company name itself for one and your own name for the second, both going to the one website. This is better than just calling it 'my web' as this will strengthen your visibility in search engines. You could then use this link in various places on your website, for example when you comment in a blog, include a link to your LinkedIn profile in your signature. Make sure you select 'full view' on your public profile to make this work properly.

- Don't forget to include your contact details (but if you have a home/office consider whether you should give your home address)
  - Under the LinkedIn Help directory, see 'Ten Tips on Building a Strong Profile'
- c. **You can change the order the sections in your profile**- use the 'drag' handles
- d. **You should create a separate profile for your company from your Linked In home page** - go to the 'More' tab at the top and then to 'companies' and then add new; from this you can add your company logo – two in fact. And then complete these sections for your business, again using lots of buzzy words which will help in SEO. You need to list your services/products individually.
- e. **Consider adding the LinkedIn home page as your browser default** (Tools > Internet Options) and copy/paste your LinkedIn home page and click OK at the bottom)  
**or** [http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=browser\\_toolbar\\_download](http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=browser_toolbar_download) Or at the bottom of your LinkedIn home page go to Tools and download from there. If OTT perhaps as a 'favourite' on your tool bar or add it as your browser default. The advantage is that it is always 'there' so easy to spend a minute or two here and there seeing what updates etc.
- f. **Use your tag line to good effect**  
*Partner at Armstrong Beech Marketing: turning your business vision and ambition into a profitable marketing strategy*
- g. **Network activity – see below** -
- Check yours out – it tells you when you last updated it – put a calendar reminder on your Outlook ideally weekly (or more)!
  - It's short – just a few words but can be used to good effect.
  - Use it to say when you're running seminars (AND don't forget to add these under Events (see More... along top tab and Events is there); link to blog etc.
  - If you own a restaurant/pub you could say if there's a specific function you're working towards.
  - If you're offering a service with a time line running out, then add this (check surname not repeated)
  - And remember, your updates will be circulated amongst your LinkedIn contacts on the weekly update if they have their setting so to receive
  - Keep a list of your tag line & network settings update alternatives filed so you can just swap your 'standard' ones around

Location

[Bath, United Kingdom](#)

Industry

[Marketing and Advertising](#)

### 3. Don't keep LinkedIn a secret –

**Add to your email signature** – and you can personalise how your LinkedIn link looks too – see below. You can also connect with people through your email links and not just when on your profile page

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*To turn your vision and ambition into a workable marketing strategy-  
start with our marketing audit*



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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Armstrong-Beech-Marketing/138834322855176>

plus of course your disclaimers. See separate article on Email signatures

**Make sure it's on your Website and add to your business cards next time you reprint!**

#### **4. Add people to your Outlook contacts when you met them**

- a. When you first join LinkedIn, invite your contacts on Outlook/your email system etc to join - you can get a whole list of who amongst your contacts is on LinkedIn. You don't have to invite everyone - it's by selection, not default. There's an 'Importing your contacts' info sheet under the 'help' directory or go to Tools on the bottom of your home page with Linked In and import button is there. The latter also will show you your frequent email senders/recipients to see if they should be added.
  - b. And if you go to 'contacts' along the top tab, go to 'add contacts' (which does the same as (a) but you can also then choose to add colleagues and classmates
  - c. If you're looking for someone, then use the search function and go into 'advanced search' so you limit by country and any other criteria you choose
  - d. When someone who is on Outlook subsequently joins 'LinkedIn', I get an 'alert' to say that they have joined, and it's an opportunity to say welcome and invite them to join you. And now that I've prepared this paper, I can send them a copy of this to help them on their LinkedIn way!
  - e. Keeping a note of date and venue of where you met someone on your Outlook contact is really helpful so you can refer back if necessary!
  - f. Whenever you work with a new business, see who from the company is on LinkedIn and invite to join, if appropriate.
  - g. If one of your clients/customers leaves his/her company, you may be able to track him/her through LinkedIn and maintain the relationship in the new business.
  - h. Check your settings: > Account>Email Notifications> Network Updates - select weekly or daily. This will give you a two line summary of those people in your network and changes they have made to their profile. Really useful update.
- Adding connections increases the likelihood that people will see your profile first when they're searching for someone to do business with. People also like to do business they know, or where they have a mutual friend in common.

#### **5. Been (physically) Networking?**

Now, instead of the 'follow up' email, search for your new contacts on LinkedIn... Found them? Then add before the default: "I'd like to connect ...." something like: "Great to meet you this morning at the XXX networking breakfast", I'd like to connect... You're limited to characters so can't go overboard but the personal touch is good AND it reminds people where you met. You mustn't try to connect with people you don't know. It's spam and if reported your account can be closed down. You must follow up after attending a networking event. If you don't, you're wasting your time and money!

## **6. Who's viewed my profile?**

- a. Half way down on RH side on home page; some give a person's details, other's will just give you the business category, but you can usually click through on that and have a choice of people who may have looked at your profile.
- b. Full details aren't necessarily available as it depends on individual's own privacy settings. How did you set up your own settings? Go to Account Settings>right hand side under Privacy Settings > Profile Views > choice of 3.

## **7. Sales Acceleration**

- a. If you've got a meeting with a new client, see what you can learn about them – do you share any connections? What are their hobbies or interests? Show that you've done your homework.
- b. With existing customers/clients, see who they know and ask for a referral if appropriate.
- c. You could search for people in your prospect's company who are not involved directly in what you do. If they are a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree contact, ask for a referral and this is where trusted relationships count for a lot. You could forward your contact an email asking him/her to on-forward it to your 'wanted' contact with a request that they call/email you. If such a request for contact came from a few sources, then it would be powerful – too many and annoying, though!)
- d. If you have a really good solution/referral to a true 'friend of a friend' then it's a win-win.

## **8. Groups**

- a. Find those groups which are relevant to your business – go to the groups directory and search - they may be groups that are alumni, industry, local business groups,
- b. Look for the groups people have joined within your business type and see if they look appropriate; ditto people with whom you work;
- c. If you offer a service or product locally, check out the local business/chamber type of groups – such a good and easy way to get your name known locally
- d. Share information to links eg podcasts or if your company is hosting a webinar
- e. When someone invites you to join them on LinkedIn, see to which groups they belong and see if appropriate for you
- f. Join in on the discussions – great way to promote your name out there, but remember this is not a 'selling medium' though there's quite a lot of people out there who don't seem to understand this concept. By 'giving' information and advice you are promoting yourself without directly 'selling'. Keep it brief and to the point. Don't waffle.
- g. Great place to show your expertise in your field by linking to a 'white paper'/e-book/article on your website about the very subject under discussion!
- h. BUT when signing up to belong to groups, consider how many emails you want popping into your inbox – daily or weekly? It's easy to change though!
- i. If you need ideas/suggestions then this is also a great forum to receive help.
- j. And why not start your own group?

## **9. Check out the Answers (Q&A) – go to the More... tab along the top**

- a. If you can offer help and advice to a question it creates a relationship with that one person and also endorses your expertise to everyone else who reads
- b. Answers are linked to your profile
- c. Make sure you give quality information

- d. Especially powerful if you have specialist knowledge in 'techy' areas.
- e. If you have an answer which is more fully dealt with on your website or blog, then link to this.
- f. People can vote on answers, which counts towards your 'expert' rating
- g. Great forum if you need specific feedback on some research or a topic you're investigating or you need external expertise?
- h. Even if the person asking the question is the other side of the world, if you're able to help then that's great in itself, but also your answer may be viewed by someone in your target area who may become interested in you as a result of your expertise.
- i. Most categories also have a RSS feed which you can set up using the Google RSS reader, so you can be aware of new questions in your area.

## **10.Recommendations**

- a. Ask for one/two liner recommendations for you/your business-service – explain that you are building your 'on line' brand and that if they felt that the work/service you provided for them exceeded their expectations, then you'd really appreciate them writing a brief recommendation on LinkedIn.
- b. You want them to be balanced views giving good endorsements but not too OTT.
- c. These also show up in summary on the weekly LinkedIn update
- d. Personally I always think it looks 'contrived' when you see two people recommending each other at the same time! (but that's only a personal view)
- e. Take time to give recommendations as well
- f. Where someone gives you a reference but doesn't want their name/ business name attached, it can still go onto your website, but it doesn't carry the weight if you just put DN or 'company from Bath'....

## **11.Don't sell overtly**

- a. Rather, think about how you can communicate by helping/giving; trying to 'sell' won't help you/your brand on LinkedIn in the long term.
- b. Start a discussion thread about something topical within your industry and to which people will contribute – see the sort of discussions that attract a good following
- c. Or maybe something challenging!

**12.Advertising** – you can select a 'pay per click' option rather like Google Ad words, with the plus that you can be very selective about your target market (not free)

**13.Use its applications – Go to More... at top of home page>drop down, or some of the key ones are below 'experience' in your profile**

- a. Lots of social networking...
- a. Show, don't just 'tell': Applications give you the chance to show what it is that you do... You can post a power point or keynote presentation (slide share or Google presentations), add a video (slideshare or Google presentations), feed into your blog (word press and blog link) and add PDF files or word documents (box net), announce and RSVP events, conduct polls, share the books you're reading (Amazon) and Twitter (you can link Twitter to your Linked In account – really useful. Currently this is not poss with Facebook (April 2011)
- b. Believe <http://www.jingproject.com> good if you want to add a video (free software). It will allow you to record a 5 minute screen capture as a video.
- c. If you're running an event, send invitees the link for them to confirm on your LinkedIn event. Again good for SEO etc. and to show others what you are doing.

**And lastly, four golden rules:**

- ✓ Be patient and take the long-term approach
- ✓ Try to keep the same tone when you leave messages as this will be your 'voice'. Whilst you don't want to waffle, you also don't want to sound curt. Follow new groups first before you contribute, so you get the feel of the group etc.
- ✓ Be constant – try to allocate some time daily and keep to that. Half an hour would be great, particularly when starting, as there's a lot to do and learn.
- ✓ Don't just 'broadcast' your offers; LinkedIn, as with all Social Media, is about building relationships. Therefore consider following this 'rule of threes':
  - one message about your business but not a 'sales' message.
  - the next about something relevant in the industry, eg accountant and budget; new industry guidelines in XXX; etc.
  - something personal about you/your business colleagues;/ something random, but always professional. This keeps the interest. If you are ONLY in 'broadcast' mode, you'll soon be 'hidden' from view more than you're read.

I hope this has been helpful. *Here's LinkedIn's own link to its learning pages:*  
<http://learn.linkedin.com/training/>

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***If you know you need to get this sorted but just can't face it, then perhaps I can help? See under Marketing Projects on my website- I can spend a morning with you/your team to get you set up and ready to roll.***

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