

LinkedIn Tips for the Social Marketer Cheatsheet

LinkedIn has experienced explosive growth in recent years by adding capabilities that entice marketers from virtually every industry; connecting them with a multitude of audiences.

LinkedIn has expanded its solution beyond a hiring and networking platform to include robust company pages, a highly targeted advertising solution, and a publishing platform. With these additions, LinkedIn is now the way to reach an audience with a business mindset.

Build Your Brand Presence

A strong LinkedIn presence comes from leveraging different aspects of the social network. Here are the areas that you'll want to pay specific attention to and how to get started:

Company Profile Page

Your company profile page is where a user lands when she searches for you or clicks on your logo from a user's profile. Company profile pages are a free LinkedIn service for any user looking to start one on behalf of their brand. Because this is your primary, branded landing page on LinkedIn, it's very important to make sure that you have carefully thought about the images and messages you choose to represent your brand. There are specific aspects of the company profile page that are customizable—pay attention to:

- **Your Logo:** This tells users who you are in a small thumbnail, which is attached to almost any action that you take across the platform—from posting a job opening to sharing a corporate news announcement. Often, this is an easily identifiable image that does not include additional text because the image size is so small. Your logo image, like your actual logo, will rarely change.

- **Your Header Image:** This image sits at the top of your company profile page and rests behind your logo as a backdrop. The header image has more flexibility

for creativity and frequent changes. Because of the larger size, brands have more real estate to work with to be creative. Your header image could include brand messaging, campaign promotions, or product images—the options are endless.

- **Your About Section:** The about section, resting under your logo and header image at the top of your company profile page, is your opportunity to share details about your company with a LinkedIn user that lands on your company profile page. This section includes a variety of elements like date founded, whether your company is public or private, and how many employees it has. The about section gives you room to provide a more detailed description of your organization, its products, mission, etc.

Posting

On your company page you have the ability to share posts. Posting on LinkedIn is a key way to build followers and fuel your paid advertising efforts (which we will talk about later in this cheat sheet). These posts can be comprised of text, images, links, non-native video (like a YouTube link), and slide decks.

Note that because LinkedIn is seen as a professional network; your content mix and tone should aim to be fairly professional and engaging. We've found that because users are on LinkedIn mostly for professional purposes, educational posts perform very well.

Showcase Page

A company showcase page is an extension of your company page that is designed to highlight specific products, or services. Showcase pages are especially helpful when your business has multiple solutions with different types of fans and followers. For example, PayPal could have a showcase page that highlights their merchant solution (targeted at business owners and sellers of goods) versus the payment tool that they have for consumers. Having these segments allows fans to follow the parts of your business that relate to them.

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Company Career Page

Another aspect of LinkedIn's offerings is 'Talent Solutions'—a LinkedIn product line that serves recruiters, HR, and can showcase your company culture. The focal point of this offering is the company career page, a paid page that sits tabbed behind your company profile page. The career page offers marketers, HR, and recruiting a specific space to run activities that pertain to attracting talent.

This space augments your Company Page branding efforts by sharing the personality and brand of your corporate culture. Your marketing and messages on your Career Page are targeted specifically at prospective employees or followers who are looking at all aspects of your company and personality. Like the company profile page, it has a variety of customizable elements, such as:

- **Your Header Image:** LinkedIn allows you to have a separate header for your career page. You want this to specifically relate to your company culture and hiring efforts. The image you choose should echo the identity of your brand and aim to capture the interest of prospective employees.
- **Your Posts:** Your posts will auto-populate from your company profile page, but you also have the ability to post separately. This could be a good place to highlight roles that you are trying to fill, team-building activities, employee testimonials, company perks and more.
- **Your Roles:** Your roles will auto-populate on the right side bar if you use LinkedIn Talent solutions to post your open roles. To maximize this benefit and get the most out of the traffic on your page, make sure that your roles are up-to-date.

LinkedIn Advertising & Optimization

Once you have built your company page and populated it with content, you have fodder for creating advertising to reach your target audience more broadly. Advertising through LinkedIn, in any format, helps you broaden the reach of your message or post, in a targeted and measurable way.

Ad Content

Most active companies post on their Company Page frequently, so if you are starting to think about running ads, there are a few content tips that will make a critical difference in your success:

- **Keep Your Content Fresh:** It's very important to be able to refresh your ads regularly.
- **Images Matter:** Make them interesting and eye catching, which will help improve your click through rates.
- **Sharp Subject Lines Make A Difference:** Try to keep it to one line, and make your subject lines engaging. For example, try formatting your subject line as a question or a tip—you want to give someone a reason click.
- **Do Not Over-Post:** Stick to no more than 1-2 post per day as a general rule. You don't want to over saturate your audience, paid or un-paid.

Ad Types

LinkedIn offers two main ways for marketers to engage with their ads: through a self-serve platform or as a LinkedIn Advertising Partner, which means that you have a signed insertion order for ad products that usually spans a quarter.

Self-Service Ads: These ads include display and text ads, and sponsored content ads. They give marketers a quick an easy way to get started with LinkedIn advertising.

- **Display & Text Ads:** These ads appear in various places across the platform, like the side and bottom of a homepage. Advertisers can include an image or video and limited ad copy.
- **Sponsored Updates:** As your page posts updates, you can pay to distribute those posts to a larger audience across the LinkedIn network. Also known as Sponsored Content, these ads appear in the LinkedIn users' news stream, which typically makes them feel less like an ad and leads to higher engagement.

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- **Dark Posts:** These ads are unique because they support campaigns that a marketer does not want to push out on their LinkedIn homepage (hence the name 'dark posts'). You can create dark posts and put paid advertising behind them without publishing them. Using dark posts has a couple advantages: 1) you can create very targeted ads and avoid alienating your hard-won followers by sharing too many broad messages, and 2) you are able to do discreet A/B testing for the same campaign or ad without posting your message multiple times on your page. This lets you easily test variations in image, copy, and targeting.

LinkedIn Advertising Partner Solutions: These ads introduce more variety and ad options than the self-service ads. Marketers that implement LinkedIn Advertising Partner Solutions have access to all types of ads on the network.

- **Premium Display Advertising:** These ads offer more options in how they are served and the size of the ad, which gives marketers more flexibility with their message and creative. The types of display ads include textlinks that sit on the home profile, company, group and message pages, footer banners, and larger side navigation banners.

- **Sponsored InMail:** These ads give advertisers the ability to send a type of email message that appears in a LinkedIn user's inbox. It's a great way to send a targeted, detailed message to a specific set of users.

- **Follow Company Ads:** These ads help businesses and brands grow their following. They appear on a user's page and encourage them to follow a specific company. Followers receive posts and updates without needing to spend ad money.

- **Join-Group Ads:** These ads are a great way to get a targeted group of people to join a community. They include a description of the group and a call to action to join.

Targeting

The LinkedIn targeting options are very granular and accurate, which makes it easy to reach the specific audience you are going after. Targeting on LinkedIn is based on firmographic and demographic data—allowing you to target LinkedIn users based on company, industry, job title, experience, geography, etc. It also lets you exclude users based on company, or job title, which can be important when thinking of your competition.

Optimization

LinkedIn ads work on a pay-per-click basis so the advertiser who bids the most gets the highest share of impressions. Keep this in mind as you set your bids. To make sure that your ad spend is optimized try implementing these tips:

- **Run a Few Different Campaigns:** Take advantage of the detailed demographic targeting provided by LinkedIn by running a few different campaigns. This allows you to tailor your messages and content to a specific audience. The more relevant your content is to that audience, the higher your click, conversion, and engagement rates will be.

- **Change or Add New Content 1-2 Times a Week:** Keeping your ads fresh is an important way to maintain your audiences' interest. Offering the same content over and over again will exhaust their attention and can be damaging.

- **A/B Test:** Experiment with your images, subject lines, ad text, etc. This will help you discover your audience's preferences and ensure that your ads reflect them.

- **Experiment With All Ad Types:** Try each type of ad to see which works best for your business and target audience.

- **Provide a Mix of Content Offers:** If you are using LinkedIn for lead generation, try mixing gated content (content that needs a user to complete a form prior to access) with un-gated content, which will help keep your target audiences engaged.

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Publishing on LinkedIn Pulse

LinkedIn Pulse is the latest offering by LinkedIn to help users expand their personal brand and thought leadership. Any user can publish to LinkedIn Pulse, and if they get a wide enough readership and distribution through their own network, LinkedIn will increase the posts' visibility by sharing it broadly across the network.

For brands, this means that cultivating a set of thought-leaders in your organization has more benefit than ever before. You are able to use your LinkedIn Pulse articles to increase your inbound links, support your thought leadership platform, increase the followers on your company profile page, and boost your social following on other social platforms.

Groups

LinkedIn groups are communities on the social platform formed around topics of interest, industry, title, professional organization, brand, etc. In these spaces users can, based on group permissions, share articles, post jobs, exchange advice and gather digitally.

Groups can be a strategic and important way for a organization to create a community of its users. From a support focused group, to a user group, to an invitation-only advocacy group, brands can use groups to segment their audience and develop relevant conversations. Before starting a group, identify your objectives and decide which group structure will best facilitate those goals. LinkedIn offers a variety of functionality controls in groups—like choosing whether to have an open or closed group, turning on or off the ability to post jobs, etc. Make sure that your group settings match the objective of the community you are trying to build and are not overly strict—it is still a social network.