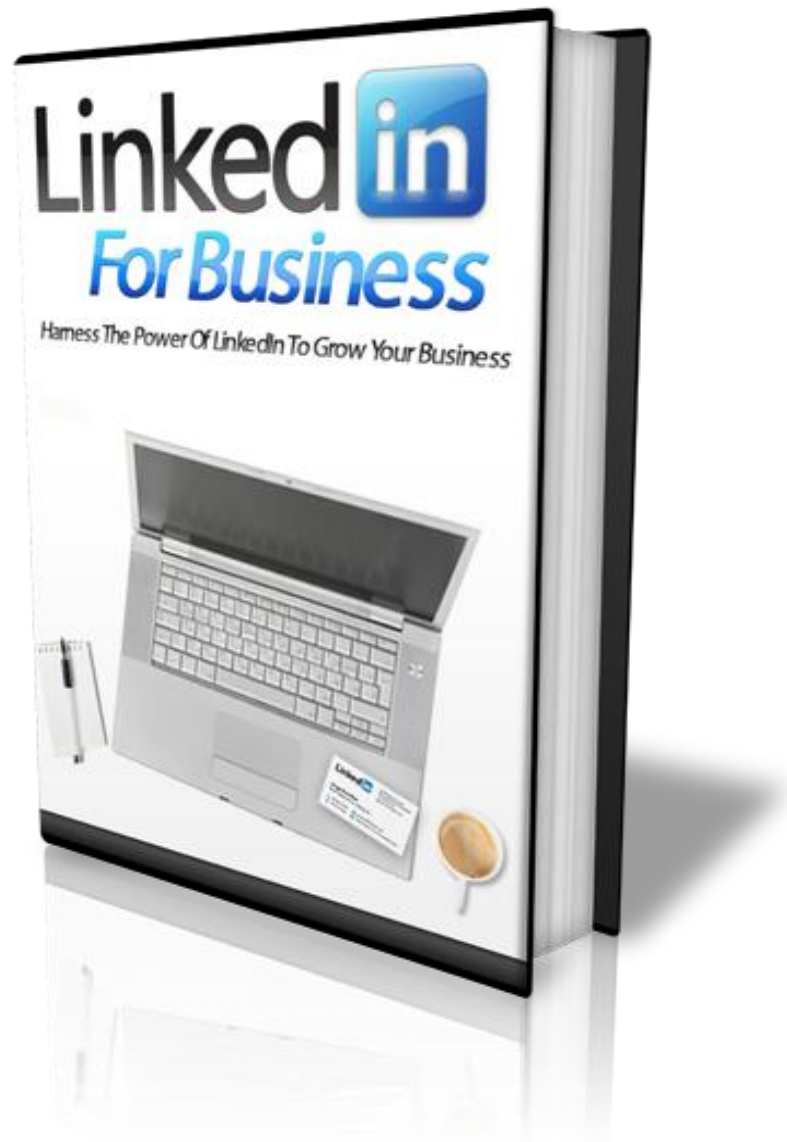


LinkedIn For Business



by Bertus Engelbrecht

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Introduction

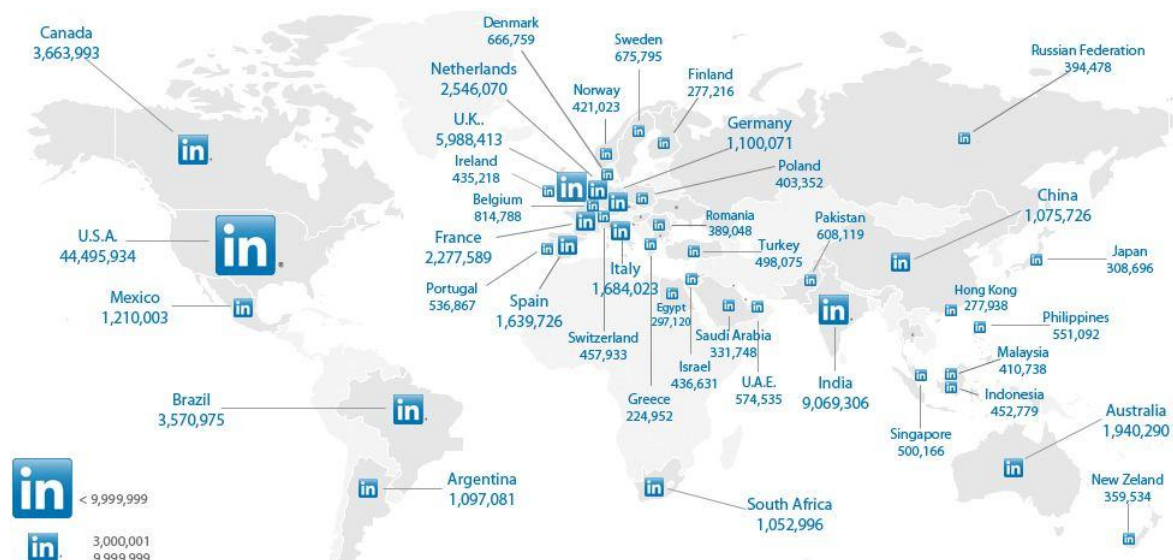


Whether you have read our LinkedIn Reader or not, you will, now that LinkedIn is the no.1 growing site for business professionals. It is a site that is used by both professionals and whole businesses alike.

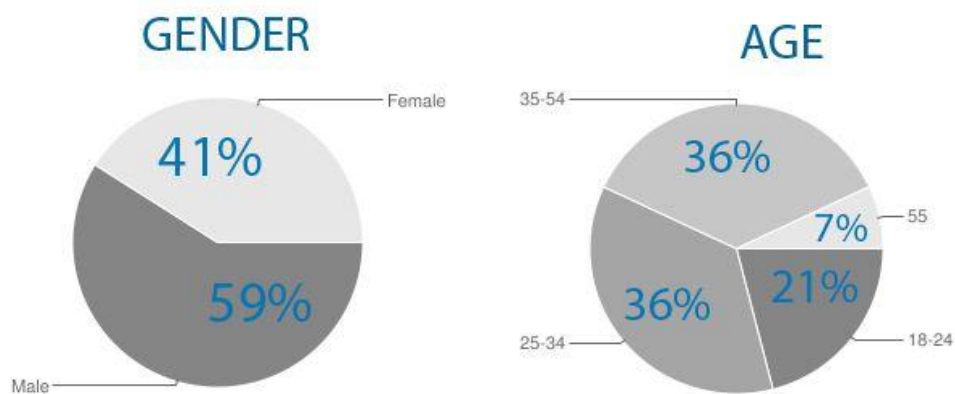
The website was founded in 2002 and launched in spring, 2003. IT was founded by Reid Hoffman. Hoffman began his career at Apple and Fujitsu after graduating from Stanford and Oxford universities in the 1990s. He was a member of the founding board of American financial transaction website PayPal and along with several other members, founded LinkedIn after PayPal was acquired by eBay in 2002.

By 2011, LinkedIn had amassed 135,000,000 users from across the world. This includes all the executives from the Fortune 500 and all major industries and industry leading companies.

As the map below demonstrates, LinkedIn members are fairly spread around the world with the largest group being Americans. Approximately one in six Americans is a member of LinkedIn. The same proportion of Brits are also members.

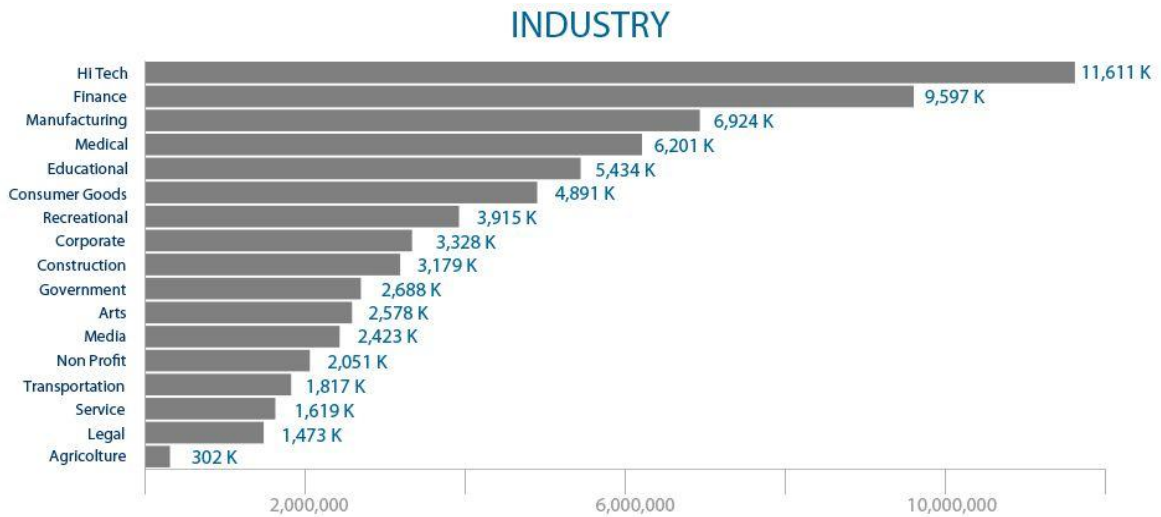


The following images demonstrate the gender and age balances of LinkedIn members:

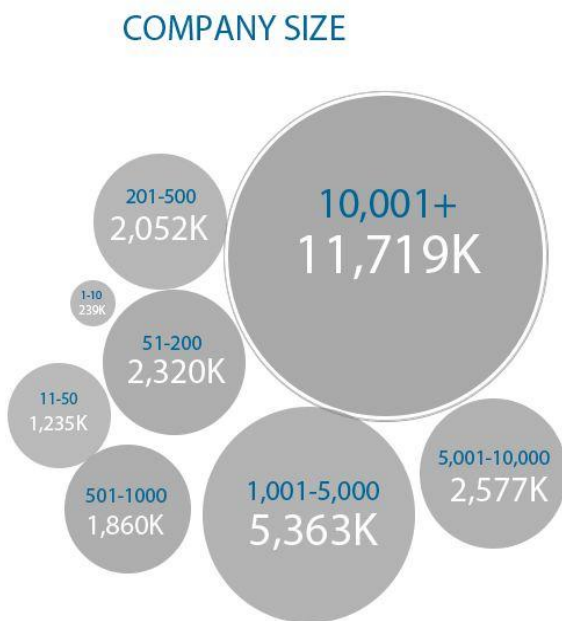


As you can see, the majority of users are men between the age of 24 and 54. According to statistics, approximately 33% of users access the website at least once a month. In 2011, there were approximately 4 billion people searches on the website.

As well as allowing individuals to join LinkedIn, the network allows various companies to register themselves as members. The reasons for this will be outlined in Part 2. The following graph illustrates the most popular sectors or industries from which the companies come. The most popular industries are hi-tech, manufacturing and finance.



These companies can also be broken down by their size. This graph demonstrates that there are many large companies involved in LinkedIn as well as smaller ones.



Vincenzo Cosenza's infographics demonstrate the growing reach of LinkedIn. The website has become a site where professionals can find work, find employees, connect with likeminded people in the same or related sectors and to pool resources.

This eBook is designed to show you how to set up and maximize your LinkedIn business page. This book is a step by step guide to make sure your page helps your website rank well on search engines, to help you find and organize your staff, to advertise your business and to build up your relationship with your customers and fans.

LINKEDIN PAGE

**Be part of the
professional global
business community.**



1. Setting Up Your Account

Before making a business page, you need to make sure your personal account has been optimized. You will know about most of the content already, but think, does it reflect the right you? Are you actively promoting your current business or company well?

Common SEO practices can be applied to any public profile on the internet and your LinkedIn profile is no different. If possible, make sure there is a good link to your company home page and to any relevant business and group pages on LinkedIn, (these may need to be done once you have finished building them).

You should also keep a continuous eye on the quality of your network. Are they good links to have? Alternatively, are they more social links? Do they perform a function or have the potential to if you need them? Once you have finished with your personal page, you are ready to build a LinkedIn Business Page.

Premium Accounts



The image is a screenshot of a LinkedIn Premium advertisement. It features a dark background with white and light blue text. At the top right, the text 'LinkedIn Premium' is visible. The main headline reads 'Finding the right people just got easier'. Below this, a sub-headline states 'Access and contact 135 million professionals at 2 million companies'. A quote in a light blue, handwritten-style font says 'I've found contractors, experts and business partners with the tools in my Premium account.' At the bottom left, the name and title 'Tim Smith, CEO, GridCentric' are listed.

Having a regular LinkedIn account grants you only so many privileges. You can contact certain members and you can add only certain people. However, if you are serious about business, then it is well worth you investing in one of 3 LinkedIn premium packages.

1. Business

The business package allows you to:

- Contact 3 people directly through InMail with a guaranteed response

- See 300 profiles when you search

- Access to premium search filters

- Automatically see expanded professional profiles

- Full list of people who have viewed your profile

- 5 folder profile organizer

- See first names for third degree contacts

- Access to reference search

- Priority customer service

2. Business Plus

Meanwhile, business plus has:

- Contact 10 people directly through InMail with a guaranteed response

- See 500 profiles when you search

- Access to premium search filters

- Automatically see expanded professional profiles

- Full list of people who have viewed your profile

25 folder profile organizer

See first names for third degree contacts

Access to reference search

Priority customer service

3. Executive

And the executive package gives you:

Contact 25 people directly through InMail with a guaranteed response

See 700 profiles when you search

Access to premium and total search filters

Automatically see expanded professional profiles

Full list of people who have viewed your profile

50 folder profile organizer

See full names for third degree contacts

Access to reference search

Priority customer service

Upgrading to a business or executive account is not essential to doing business on LinkedIn, but it does make the whole process a lot easier. For example, if you are planning to approach someone for a contract or as potential employee and you do not know them, you stand a chance of interacting with them. The same cannot be said of a normal account.

1.1 Making a Business Page

In order to set up a company, you need to log into your personal account. From there go to the company home page, which you can find on the main bar under the masthead. You will now notice there is the option to “Add a Company.” Click this. You will be taken to the following page:

[Companies Home](#) [Following \(3\)](#)

Add a Company

Company Pages offer public information about each company on LinkedIn. To add a Company Page, please enter the company name and your email address at this company. Only current employees are eligible to create a Company Page.

Company name:

Your email address at company:

I verify that I am the official representative of this company and have the right to act on behalf of my company in the creation of this page.

or

Enter your company’s name, your company email address and the tick the box to verify you are the official representative of the company. Once done, click the “continue” boss.

You will then receive a verification email from LinkedIn. Click on the confirmation link in the email and you will be taken to a “confirm” page. Click the confirm button and then log in with your primary email address and password (for your personal page).

At first, your page will be as barren as Svalbard in the winter:

Iconoblast has 0 followers

Follow Company

Share

How you're connected to Iconoblast

0 First degree connections

0 Second degree connections

0 Employees on LinkedIn

1.2 Company Details

To edit your company details go to the right-hand side of your main panel and click on the dropdown menu entitled “Admin Tools.” Then click on edit. You will be presented with a three-part details page for your business.

Part One: Basic Company info.

As the following graphic demonstrates. The section on the right-hand side allows you to determine the type of business you are running.

1. **Company Type:** Choose from eight options that include “public company” and “self-employed.”
2. **Company Size:** Range of sizes depending on the number of employees.
3. **Company Website URL:** Your website address
4. **Main Company Industry:** What type of company do you run?
5. **Company Operating Status:** Ranges from operating to out of business
6. **Year Founded**

7. **Company Location:** City, country, state etc...

* Indicates required field

*** Company Type**

*** Company Size**

*** Company Website URL**

*** Main Company Industry**

*** Company Operating Status**

Year Founded

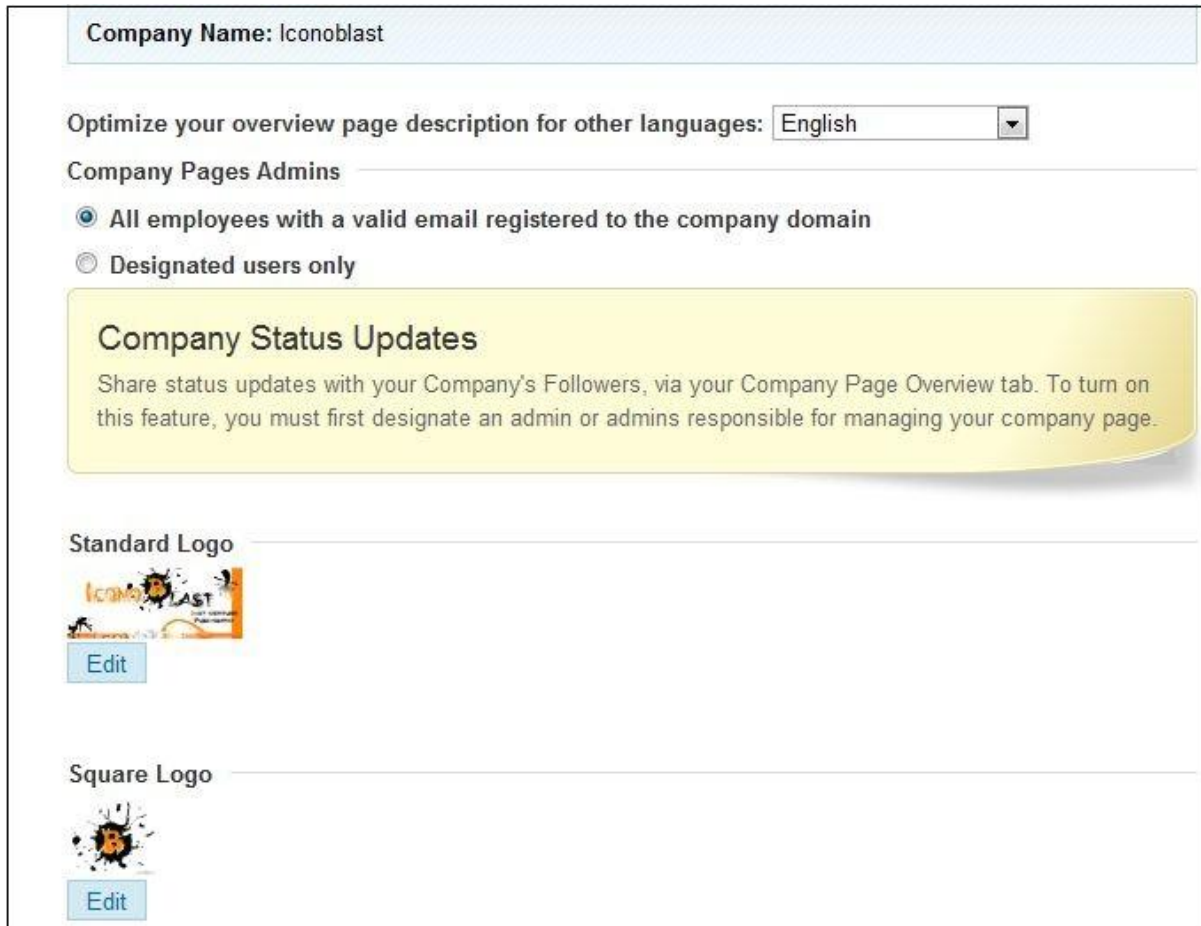
Company Locations
(Add up to 5 different locations)

[+ Add another location](#)

Part 2: Permissions and Logo

LinkedIn gives you the opportunity to decide who has the right to modify your business page. The first option allows anyone with an email address registered to your company website. The second option allows you to nominate specific employees who are connected to you on LinkedIn.

Second, you have the option of adding two logos. The standard logo is a rectangle and then you also have the opportunity to add a square logo as shown below:



The screenshot shows a settings interface for a company named 'Iconoblast'. At the top, the company name is displayed. Below it, there is a dropdown menu for 'Optimize your overview page description for other languages' set to 'English'. The 'Company Pages Admins' section has two radio button options: 'All employees with a valid email registered to the company domain' (selected) and 'Designated users only'. A yellow callout box titled 'Company Status Updates' contains text about sharing updates with followers. Below this, there are two logo sections: 'Standard Logo' and 'Square Logo'. Each section shows a preview of a logo with an 'Edit' button underneath it.

To add a logo simply click on “edit” and find the right file on your computer then press “upload.”

Part 3: Company Description

In part 3 you have the chance to outline what exactly your company does. This is divided into four parts:

1. **Company Description:** Write about your company. Use short and simple sentences, keep to the point, be factual and remember your SEO.

2. **Company Specialities:** You can add as many of these as you like. Think of them like tags. For example, your company might publish books or it might specialize in different types of cleaning service.
3. **Company Blog RSS Feed:** Add your RSS feed to help your SEO.
4. **News Module:** Toggle between showing news about your company and not showing it.

*** Company Description**

Company Specialities

[+ Add more specialties](#)

Company Blog RSS Feed

ex: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/blogspot/iconoblast>

News module

When your company is featured in the news:

Show news about my company

Don't show news about my company

Once you have finished adding information about your business, press the “Publish” button. You will now be taken back to your company overview page, where you will see the changes.

2. Page Optimization

2.1 SEO

SEO is short for Search Engine Optimization. Ever wondered why some websites rank better than the others do? Search engines send out spider programs to assess websites. The search engine then ranks the websites according to certain criteria placed against keywords put into the search engine.

In an ideal world, a website about vacuum cleaners will rank high on a search for vacuum cleaners. The search engines take into account the size of a website. The number of pages it has. The quality of the pages on the website. This is balanced against the number of keywords and links within and to the website.

When writing any page on LinkedIn, you need to abide by a simple set of rules:

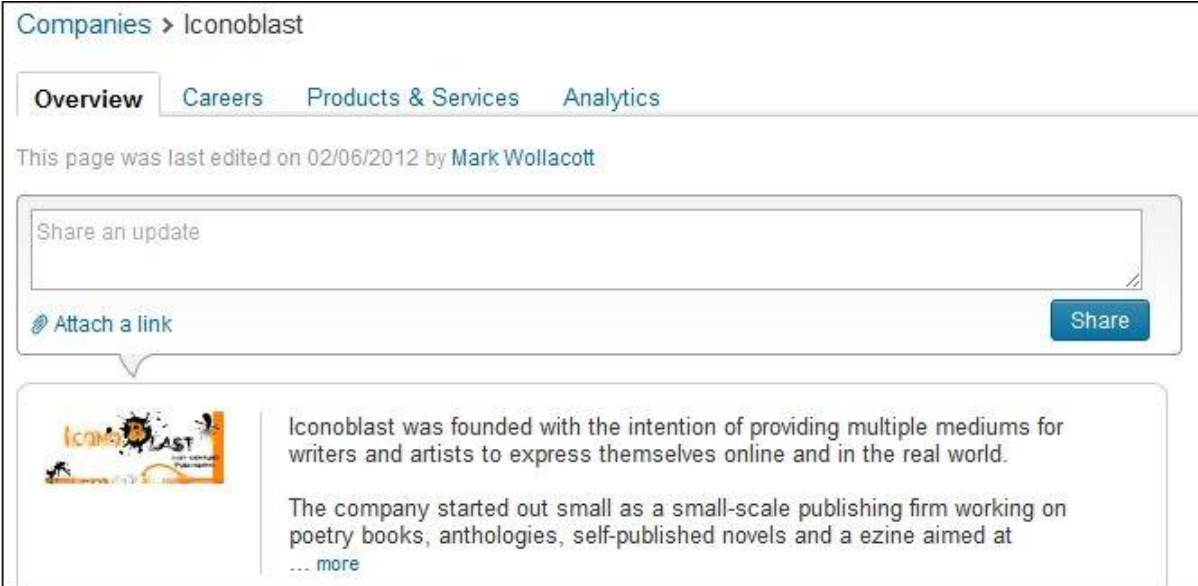
1. No spam. Keep to the point.
2. Don't become a super advertiser.
3. Choose your keywords and stick to them.
4. Do not stuff your pages full of keywords.
5. Fill out all information boxes.

2.2 Backlinks to Your Site

A backlink is a web-link that, if clicked, takes a user from one webpage to another. Search engines find backlinks to be extremely valuable commodities for a webpage, however, there are conditions. For example, each link should be one-way only and should link between reputable sites.

LinkedIn counts as a reputable site, so creating links between your website and LinkedIn is a must. One way you can do this is by putting your website's URL into the main company info section (see above).

The second method is by putting a link in as a status update for your company. Go to your main company page and you will see the status update bar below your main options bar like this:



The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile for Iconoblast. At the top, it says "Companies > Iconoblast". Below that are navigation tabs: "Overview" (selected), "Careers", "Products & Services", and "Analytics". A note indicates the page was last edited on 02/06/2012 by Mark Wollacott. The main content area features a "Share an update" text box with a "Share" button to its right. Below the text box is an "Attach a link" button. Underneath the update bar is a company information section with the Iconoblast logo on the left and text on the right: "Iconoblast was founded with the intention of providing multiple mediums for writers and artists to express themselves online and in the real world. The company started out small as a small-scale publishing firm working on poetry books, anthologies, self-published novels and a ezine aimed at ... more".

As you will note, just below your status bar is the option to “attach a link.” Click on this and paste the URL of the page you want to link to. For

example, you could link to a news update, a blog post or a product launch. The choice is yours.

The “Careers” and “Products & Services” sections also give you scope for attaching links to your company webpage. Make smart use of them to help promote your company and its services.

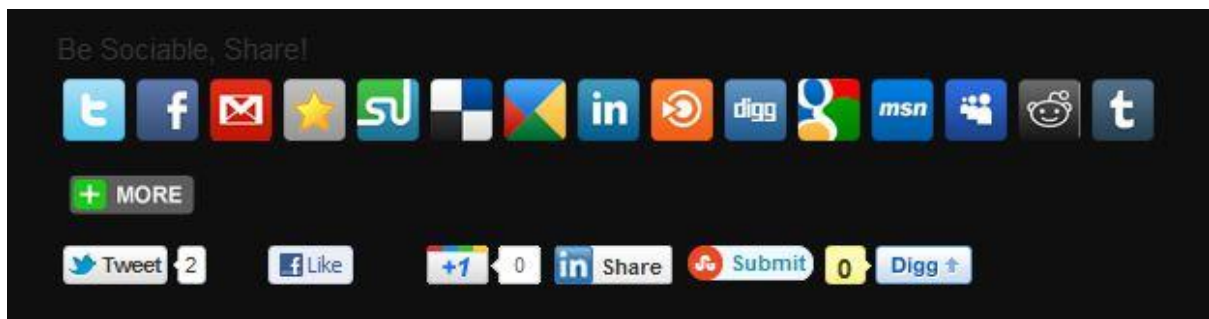
Passive backlinks are those that you have no control over. On LinkedIn, this includes recommendations and status updates written by your customers and fans/followers. In order to maximize these links, you need to provide excellent content that is going to get people talking and get people recommending.

2.3 Driving Traffic to Your Site

There are a number of other ways you can drive traffic to your website via LinkedIn. Here's a few:

1. Use Sociable on Wordpress (or LinkedIn Share button)

If your company employs a Wordpress, blog as part of its website go to the plugin section of your dashboard. From here, click on "add new" and then search for "sociable." Install the plugin then activate it. You can decide which social sites you can allow users to interact with. I recommend you use all of them:



Other blogs allow you to install a specialized LinkedIn Share Button. To make one of these you need to go to this address:

<https://developer.linkedin.com/plugins/share-plugin-generator>

You will then be taken to the developer screen. There will be a series of options on the left and a preview on the right (see below).




The process is simple. First, paste the URL to your LinkedIn company page and then decide on the shape of the button. Click "Get Code" to generate the HTML code to paste into your website.

Build a Share Button

Enable users to share your website with LinkedIn's professional audience, and drive traffic back to your site.

URL to be shared (Optional)

Choose a count mode

<p>Vertical</p> <p>4,216</p> 	<p>Horizontal</p> 	<p>No Count</p> 
--	---	---

[Get Code](#)

2. Put a link in your profile

If you have a company profile on LinkedIn, chances are you also have a personal profile too. This profile reflects who you are as an individual and professional. You can also use it to link to your company's website.

3. Auto post blog updates to your profile

By doing a search online or by accessing more Wordpress plugins, you can get software to automatically post blog updates from your website to your personal or company profile.

4. Applications: Wordpress & Blog Link

Alternatives to finding an automated software programme to post blog updates to your LinkedIn profile are the “Blog Link” and “Wordpress” applications you can find by clicking “more” on your LinkedIn homepage.



Blog Link by SixApart

With **Blog Link**, you can get the most of your LinkedIn relationships by connecting your blog to your LinkedIn profile. Blog Link helps you, and your professional network, stay connected.

Blog link allows you to enhance your profile by giving you links to other people’s blogs from your network. By virtue of this, it also allows other users to see your blog updates in their news feed.



WordPress by WordPress

Connect your virtual lives with the WordPress LinkedIn Application. With the WordPress App, you can sync your WordPress blog posts with your LinkedIn profile, keeping everyone you know in the know.

Quite simply, the WordPress app allows you to synchronize your Wordpress blog posts and your status updates on LinkedIn. This removes the need to manually update your status feed on LinkedIn.

5. Join Groups (see Section 5.1)

Join or set up your own group to facilitate discussions. See Section 5.1 for more.

6. Answer Questions (appropriate blog posts only)

If you click on the “more” section you will also find the “answers” page.



In this section, users are able to ask and answer questions on any professional topic. You can take this opportunity to answer questions related to your company’s industry or your own personal skills and experience.

If you answer a question and you have a relevant webpage on this subject within your website, then you can attach a link to that page. The better the answer, the more questions you answer well and the accuracy of your links, will help to give you and your company a reputation for good quality solutions.

3. Business Tools

3.1 Adding a Product

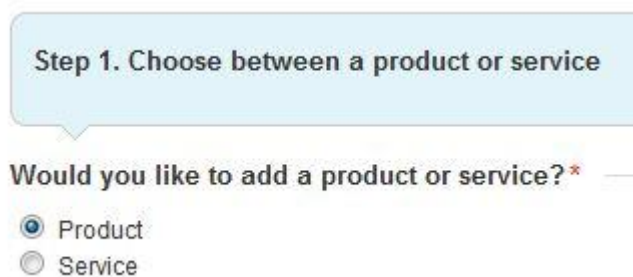
The first and most simple step in monetizing your LinkedIn page is to create products and services on the business page. First, go to your business page and then click on “Products.”

If you have no products or services listed on your page, there will be an option to add one in the main panel. If you already have some, then you go to the admin menu on the right hand side and select “add product.”

Adding a product is potentially an 11-step process.

Step 1

Toggle between a product consumers can buy or a service they can hire.




The image shows a screenshot of a dialog box from LinkedIn. At the top, a light blue speech bubble contains the text "Step 1. Choose between a product or service". Below this, the question "Would you like to add a product or service?*" is displayed. Underneath the question are two radio button options: "Product" (which is selected) and "Service".

Step 2

Choose from dozens of categories to find the one that suits your product.

Step 2. Select a category

Select a category that best fits your product/service

Choose category * 

Step 3

Quite simply enter the product or service name.

Step 3. Name your product or service

Product or Service name

Product name...

Step 4

Upload a small image or logo for your product. Make sure it is small enough for LinkedIn to accept it. Sometimes this function can be a bit sticky and the image might not load. Just try again later.

Step 4. Add an image of your product or service.

Choose an image that represents your product or service. Your image will be re-sized to 100x80 pixels.

Image / Photo



100x80 pixels, .PNG, .JPG, or .GIF

 Add image

Step 5

Now enter a description of your product. You should have one ready prepared for press releases, blogs and news sections on your website.

No doubt, you can also use the product description as found in catalogues and other websites.

Make sure you keep to standard SEO guidelines. Pick a keyword to use two or three times in the description (product name or type of product), then a subset of minor keywords about its function or benefits. Keep these down to 2-3 word clusters and do not stuff the text full of them.

Step 5. Describe your product or service

Description *

B *I* U | ☰ ☰

Write a brief description of the product...

Step 6

Add the key features of your product. Treat this section like a tag bar on a blogging site. Choose 1-3 word keywords that aptly describe what your product does and why it is good.

Step 6. List of key features

Use this section to list the key benefits or use cases of your product or service.

Create a bulleted list of product/service features

[+ Add more features](#)

Step 7

Your product or service should have a dedicated webpage introducing it in full. This should be on your company's homepage. This page can either link to a place where the product can be bought or has a buying function embedded into the webpage itself. Either is fine. Copy and paste this URL into part 7.

Step 7. Add a URL for this product or service

Use this section to link to a location on your website where LinkedIn members can learn more about this specific product or service.

Website

Enter a product or service URL...

Step 8

Now add the contact information for your product. This could be yourself, members of your sales team, the project manager, your PR/Marketing department, departmental manager or even the designer themselves.

These people should be LinkedIn members associated with your company.

Step 8. Add a contact from your company

If a LinkedIn member wants to contact your company or learn more about this product or service you can showcase who in your company they can contact. Start typing the name of the contact people in the boxes below. You must be connected to that member on LinkedIn to include them below.

Contact us

You can only add people that you are connected to on LinkedIn

	<input type="text" value="Employee name..."/>
	<input type="text" value="Employee name..."/>
	<input type="text" value="Employee name..."/>

Step 9

Are you running a special promotion on your product or service? Such as a prize or a discount? Add the URL, title of your promotion and some details about it in step 9. This may help drive customers to you.

Step 9. Add a promotion for this product or service

Do you have a promotion or special offer for this product or service? Include a title, description and URL where users can click to learn more.

Create a special promotion

<input type="text" value="Give it a title"/>
<input type="text" value="Enter a URL"/>
<input type="text" value="Write a brief description of the promotion..."/>

Steps 10 and 11

Add the URL and title of any YouTube promotional video here.

Step 10. Add a YouTube video about this product or service

Do you have a YouTube video about this product or service? Add a title for your video here.

Title your video _____

Step 11. Add your YouTube video URL

Copy and paste the URL from your YouTube video in the box below.

YouTube Video URL _____

3.2 Recruitment

When looking for new staff you have the option under “Careers” to post a job advertisement on your company page. Select the careers option and you will be presented with two types of job advert:

1. Post a Job

Like with creating a product or service, creating a job vacancy is a multi-step process. However, it also costs money. LinkedIn will give you a calculated cost for posting a job for 30 days based on the location of your company.

Step 1

Enter the job title and the location of the job. This can be on site or even off site. LinkedIn will automatically insert the name of your company.



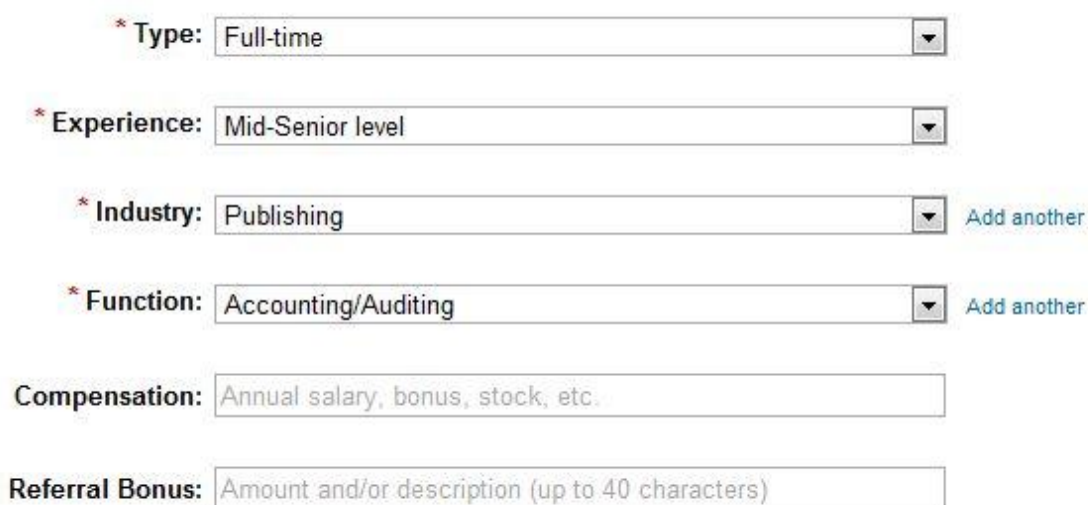
* Job Title:

* Company:
Start typing, then select from the list to link your posting to a company page.

* Location: [[Enter location](#)]

Step 2

Multiple sections to be filled in here. First, what type of job is it? Is it full-time, part-time, contract-based, temporary or other? Then decide what experience level you are looking for (from entry level to executive). LinkedIn will automatically select what industry the job is related to, but you can change this if necessary. You will then get to choose the function of the job, what the salary or compensation is for the job and announce what the referral bonus will be. These last two options are optional.



* Type:

* Experience:

* Industry: [Add another](#)

* Function: [Add another](#)


Compensation:

Referral Bonus:

Step 3

As with your company and product/service descriptions, make sure you SEO your job description. You need to outline what the job is for, what the duties of the job holder will do and whom they report to and/or oversee.

*** Job Description** [Examples - Preview](#)

B I U |  

Step 4

Enter here what your desired criteria are for selecting the person and the process by which you will do that.

Desired Skills & Experience [Examples - Preview](#)

B I U |  

Step 5

LinkedIn will automatically enter the company description from your business page, however, you can modify it here if you so desire.

Company Description

Preview

B *I* U | ☰ ☰

Iconoblast was founded with the intention of providing multiple mediums for writers and artists to express themselves online and in the real world.

The company started out small as a small-scale publishing firm working on poetry books, anthologies, self-published novels and a ezine aimed at students called Wulfstan's Literary Tumble. The company is looking to develop itself in Britain and create a social network for artists and writers to rival Facebook

Step 6

Finally, LinkedIn provides you with some options about whether the applicants apply through LinkedIn or through your own website.

* Applicant Routing

The email address you specify below will not be disclosed to candidates.

Collect applications on LinkedIn and be notified by email:

Direct candidates to an external site to apply:

Job Poster

Show my profile summary in this job listing

2. Premium Career Pages

In addition to this basic service, LinkedIn provides a premium career page service, which helps you to develop your company's brand as an employer as well as a service provider or product manufacturer.

In order to set up such a service you need to deal directly with LinkedIn. This is because the social network understands that each business is unique and has its own requirements and quirks. We can, however, go through some basic details about what the Premium Career Pages offer you and your business.

Additional features include videos, featured employee pages, banners and a lot more. The showcase feature also allows the page to display the most relevant jobs to the person browsing the page.

3.3 Contact building

As well as providing tools to find new recruits, LinkedIn offers a platform for networking with likeminded individuals and companies. There are a number of reasons for wanting to build a network of contacts on LinkedIn. These include:

Future Jobs: As noted above. LinkedIn gives you the tools to hire new workers and executives for your company. By networking, it helps you headhunt or cherry pick your employees or to ask members of your networks to recommend good potential employees.

Advice: Sometimes it is good to get advice from outside the company. This can range from professional advice on a subject you are not well versed in or from someone in the same capacity as you, but at a different company.

Contracts and Services: Building up a network that is re-enforced by recommendations, follows and a good working relationship helps companies get and maintain contracts, allows them to know who to approach when services need outsourcing or who to go to when products are needed.

Normally this works on an individual level. A person finds contacts that they hold as friends, current and former colleagues, fellow group members and so on. The problem for businesses is that it can only have

a list of employees (self-declared) and a list of followers. How then should a business create a suitable network of contacts via LinkedIn?

1. **Staff Networks:** Simply put, companies can exploit their staff's personal networks on LinkedIn. This requires close communication with your staff and having them willing to turn to people on their networks for advice, recommendations and to find service providers.

2. **Groups:** You can set up a company group for your business (see section 5.1). An open group can be accessed by anyone, but you can create a more closed group based on invites and approved applications. This could allow you to find other business leaders and create a private forum on LinkedIn where you can interact on behalf of your businesses.

3.4 Events

Events are another tool for getting your brand and your business out there. If you are about to launch a new product, open a new office, or even discontinue a much beloved but now out of date service/product, you can arrange a LinkedIn event.



The advantage of the event is that it publicises your product, service or new office, and it includes your followers in the project. This is also a great opportunity to run a promotion or to get feedback. Similarly, it can be used as a private function, so employees linked to your company know exactly when the office party is.




The events page can be found by clicking on the “more” button and then clicking “events.” This will take you to a home page for events. On the top left will be an event search option, which is followed by a list of

events you might be interested in. On the right-hand side, you will find a list of your events and above it, a “create event” button.

Creating an event is a simple process:

1. Click “create an event.”

Create an Event on LinkedIn Step 1 of 3 

Name:

When: 8:00 AM America – Los Angeles Time
[Add end time](#)

This is a virtual event

Venue: e.g. Cityplace Conference Center, Dallas
[Add street address](#)

Logo: Upload logo image (optional)
 No file chosen
PNG, JPEG, or JPG; max size 1 MB.
Note: Image will be resized to fit 60x60 pixels.

or [Cancel](#)

2. You will now be taken to step 1 of three. The first step will ask you to enter the name of the event, for example, Bob’s Birthday Party, when the event is taking place, where (you can make it a virtual event) and then a logo for the event.

3. In step 2 you will be asked for more details about your event. First, write a description of the event. This should include the basic SEO tactics we have discussed before.

Tell us more about your Event

Step 2 of 3 

Description:

Industry:

Labels:
e.g. Design, Hadoop, SEO

Website:

This event requires registration on the event website.

4. Now decide what industry your event is related to (LinkedIn will automatically select the same as your company, but you can change this). Then add labels (think of tags) and the website where people can find out more information. Also, if your event requires registration on your company website, then tick the appropriate box.

5. Step 3 allows you to promote your event via Twitter and Facebook.

Share your event

Step 3 of 3 

Get the word out about your event! Share it on:

Your event will automatically be shared with your LinkedIn connections.

[Skip this step](#)

6. Click “Create Event” when you are finished.

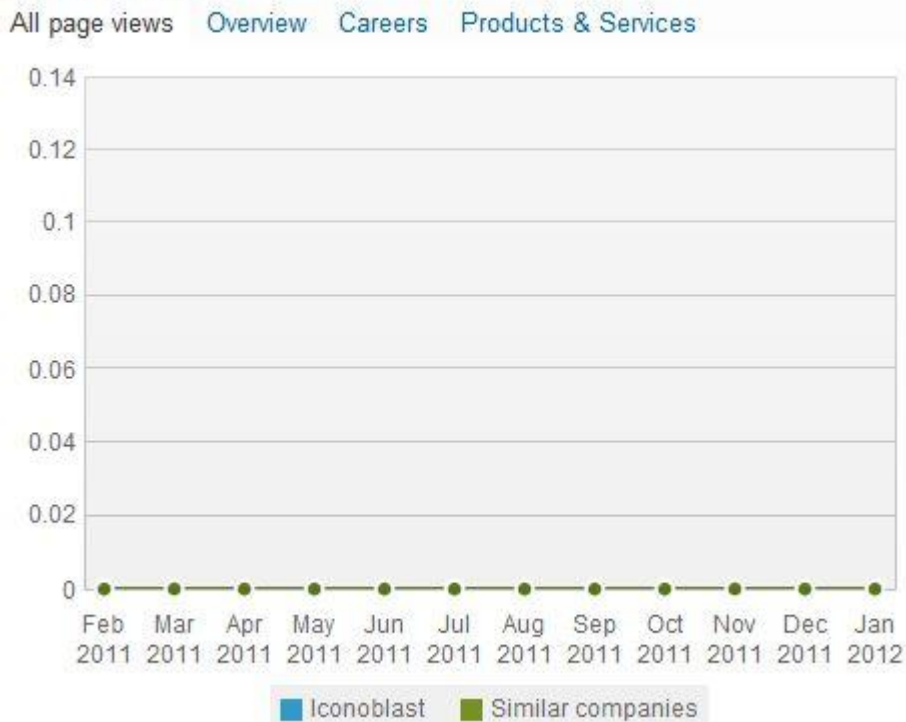
3.5 Analytics

Now go to your company homepage and click on the “analytics” option next to careers and products. As you might expect, LinkedIn provides you with 4 means of testing the visibility and popularity of your company page. Having a large number of followers and staff is one thing, but keeping them active is the key.

1: Page Views

At first, this graph will be bare like this one. Hopefully, however, this will pick up as you attract fans and viewers. First, you get to see how many people are viewing all your pages. You can then select an overview, see how many are viewing your career pages and then your product and services pages.

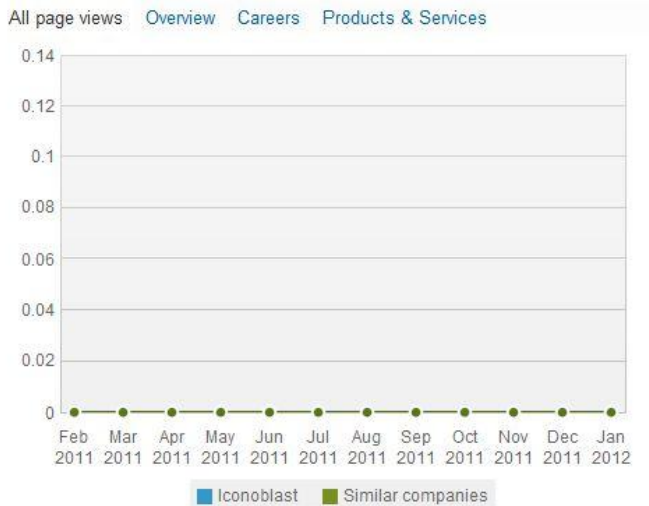
Page Views



2. Unique Visitors

One page view rarely equals one individual. Sometimes people will view one page and leave and other times one person will view every page multiple times. This graph lets you check out the exact number of individuals who have looked at your pages.

Unique Visitors



3. Clicks: Products and Services

Who has been clicking on your products & services page? And what have they been interested in?

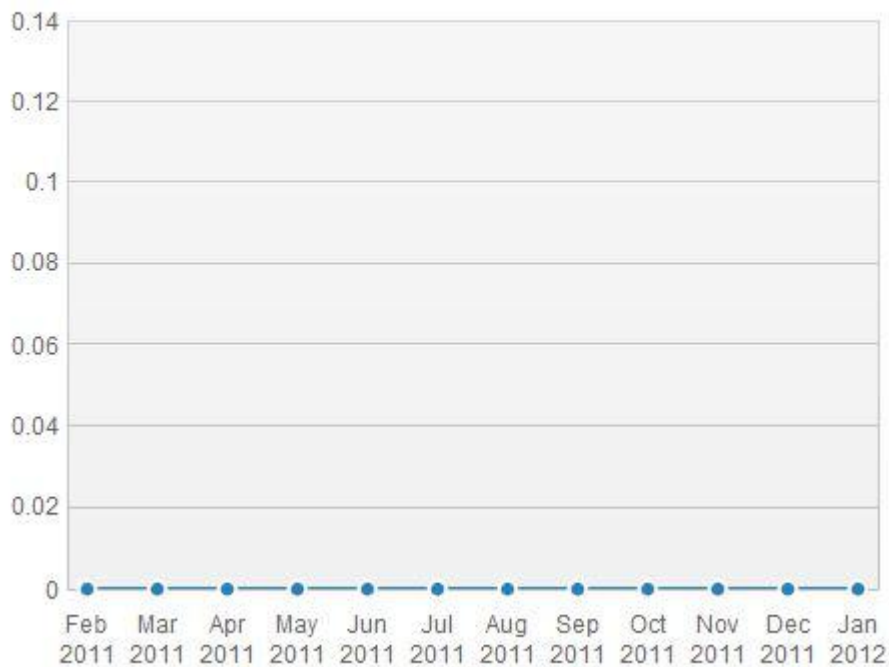
Clicks: Products & Services



4. Members Following [Company Name]

The front page of your business page will tell you how many people follow your company, but with this graph you can find out if that number is rising, holding steady or actually declining.

Members following Iconoblast



Analytics are just one way of monitoring page activity. In addition to this, you can keep an eye on how active your business page is. Are people liking and recommending your product? Furthermore, if your online shopping cart includes a “where did you hear about this product” feature, you may be able to track some sales directly from LinkedIn. Also, you can check your website’s statistics to see how many people linked to your site from LinkedIn.

4. Brand Building

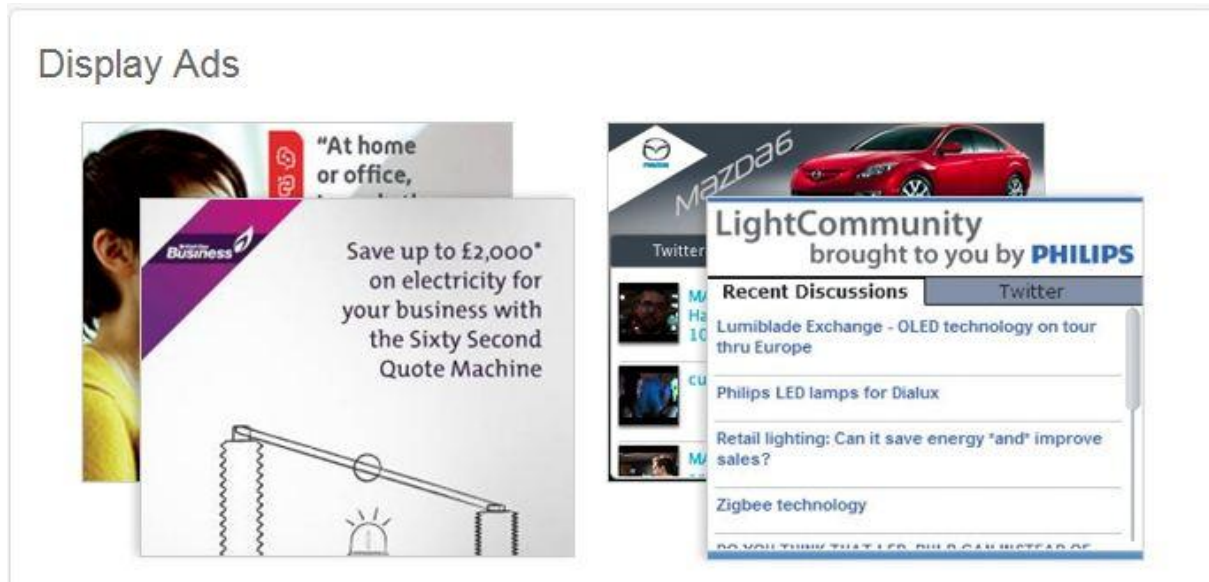
The point of many tools mentioned in the previous section is to help you organize and run your business. Other tools, as outlined in this section and in the next too, are designed to help you build your brand. Brand building is essential to monetizing your LinkedIn business page.

It is very important for companies to promote themselves. As well as marketing and advertising (see below), companies want to get a positive message out to current and potential customers. Having a perfect profile is one thing, but LinkedIn has several tools that allow users to prove their quality. Outlined below are ways you can actively promote your business.

The problem for this book in terms of some of the aspects of brand building is that LinkedIn tailor makes each ad campaign with you. This means there is no simple 10 step guide to making adverts and sponsorships. Instead, we'll provide you with some information and then you contact LinkedIn in order to develop your ad campaign.

4.1 Marketing and Advertising

1. Display Ads



There are three basic types of display ads. These are more or less the standard type of online advertising that hark back to traditional real world ads such as billboards.

Standard Ad Units and **Text Links** will be displayed on profile and other LinkedIn pages in a traditional manner. These include IAB-compliant ads, text links to your product page or homepage, and premium ads.

Content Ads are more dynamic and engaging.

Homepage Takeovers are designed to reach specific target audiences and are designed to be high impact.

2. Social Ads

Social Ads



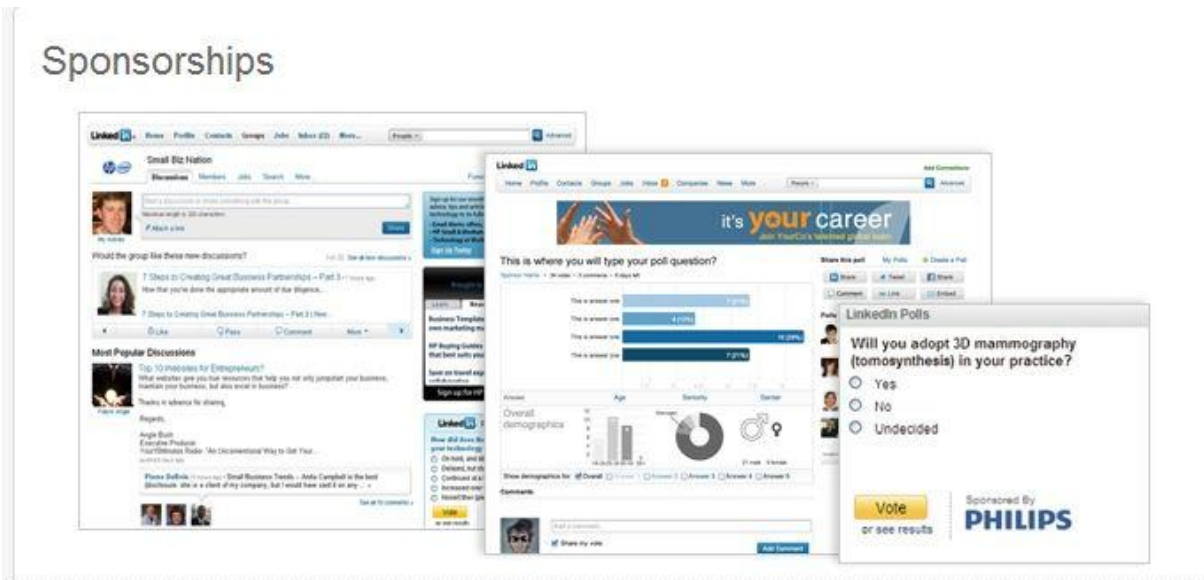
There are three basic types of Social Ads available on LinkedIn. These ads are more attuned to social networking and peer recommendations.

Follow Company Ads allow you to highlight your company followers and use them to attract new followers.

Recommendation Ads allows you to showcase and promote your endorsements in order to inspire additional recommendations.

Join Group Ads allow you to create an advert out of your group discussions.

3. Sponsorships



Display and Social Ads are designed to show off your products and services. They are active means of promoting your brand. However, these can have a negative aura because it is out and out marketing. Good will can also be created by sponsorships. This can range from sponsoring products, interns, events or students.

LinkedIn has a number of groups that specialize in bringing together sponsoring individuals and businesses. Many of these are specialized by industry.

4.2 Group Emails & Warm Calling

Partner Messages



Done correctly, messaging potential clients and customers can reap many rewards. They can lead to sales and to spreading the word about a product. However, if done badly, they can be treated as spam and even in some cases harassment.

LinkedIn has created **Partner Messages** to allow businesses to utilize the network's InMail system for messaging. These can be customized, personalized and hand-delivered to your targeted recipients. The subject range can vary from advertising products to advertising jobs.

These messages should be utilized because:

1. They are guaranteed to be kept at the top of an inbox pile
2. The number any one user can receive is limited, so they do not become spam.

3. They can be personalized
4. They can be sent to specific people or types of people.
5. They make a great impact.

In order to activate Partner Messages you will need to contact the LinkedIn team to work out your messages, how you personalize them and who you send them to.

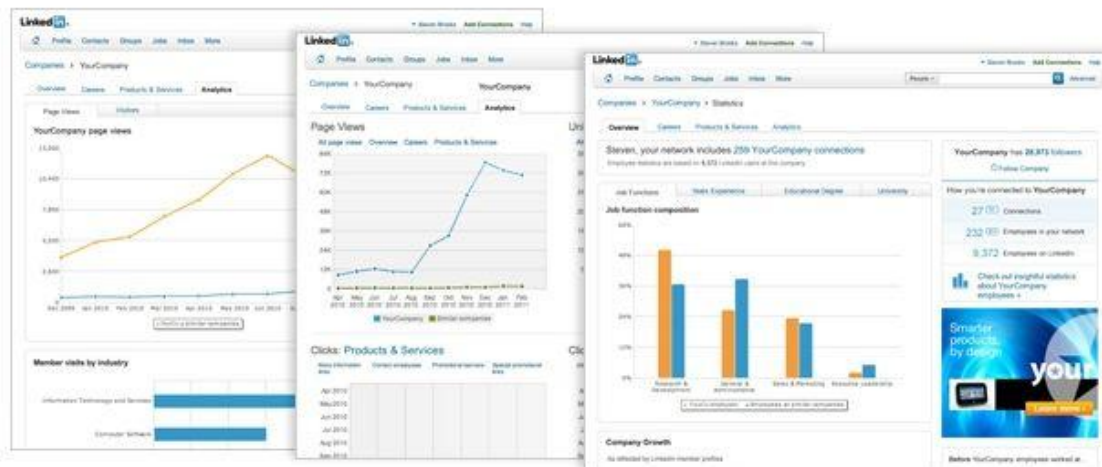
The main advantage of a message is that the user will be notified that they have received a message and they will see it in their inbox. The advert will not change or disappear because the user has refreshed their webpage. The message will also stick around at the top of the user's inbox longer than a normal message.

Each user can only receive the one partner message per 60 days. This means your message becomes exclusive to this person for that duration. Combine that with the high visibility and you have a winning combination.

When composing your partner message make sure you know what you want to say to your potential customer, client or employee. You do not have to worry so much about keywords. Instead, keep the sentences short and simple, keep to the point and make the message as human as possible. Avoid advertiser speak and jargon as much as possible.

4.3 Market Research

Insights



Many elements of LinkedIn insights or analytics have been covered already. Your adverts, banners and other marketing techniques can be analyzed using these analytic tools. You can check clicks, page views and follows therefore, assessing the impact of your advertising campaigns.

In addition to this, LinkedIn insights act as a means of market research. This can be done in terms of short term and long term impact. The data collected should be compared to actual product sales, likes on other social networks and keyword trends on Twitter.

In section 5 you will learn about how to conduct more personal market research using groups and polls. Before that, you can use the data from insights and analytics to examine responses to certain products and certain styles of presentation. For example, are users responding more to web links than to videos or vice versa? What kinds of messages are

getting more comments and likes than others? Which products are selling well and which ones are not? Do these compare to positive and negative impressions expressed by users on LinkedIn?

Before you answer all these questions, you should interact with your customers.

5. Interaction Tools



In the 21st century, traditional business models have been shaken up by the internet. First this was because of the spread of ideas and information, then the ability to create virtual shop fronts at a fraction of the price of their bricks and mortar equivalents.

However, in the last few years, since the rise of MySpace, Facebook and Twitter, social networking and more specifically, interactivity, have become the buzzwords for modern business.

The modern user, especially those between 16 and 40, expect their companies to be more than the faceless purveyors of quality goods and services. They want a face. They want to feel a part of the company. They want to feel like their voice matters. This section will show you how to make that happen on LinkedIn.

5.1 LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn groups present an opportunity to gather employees and fans together in one place. This gives you the chance to begin discussions with these people, to run polls and to post content for just your fans to see.

Setting up groups



Setting up a group is very easy. You do not access it through your business page, but through your personal profile. Go to the top bar of your home page and click on “groups.” Click the “create a group” button on the dropdown menu.

Step 1

Logo:

Your logo will appear in the Groups Directory and on your group pages.

No file chosen

Note: PNG, JPEG, or GIF only; max size 100 KB



* I acknowledge and agree that the logo/image I am uploading does not infringe upon any third party copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary rights or otherwise violate the User Agreement.

Create a logo image for your group page. First, choose between a company/branded group or an interest group (see below for more information on the difference between the two). If you choose the former, use the same square logo as for your company page. If you choose the latter, it will be better to use a picture related to the nature of the group

or the nature of your business. Next check the box to say you have the right to use the picture (make sure you have the right of course).

Step 2

* Group Name:

Note: "LinkedIn" is not allowed to be used in your group name.

* Group Type:

Enter the group name. Naturally it can be the same as your company if you like or something related to your company's interests. Then choose what type it is. The choices are: Alumni, Corporate, Conference, Networking, Nonprofits, professional and other.

Step 3

* Summary:

Enter a brief description about your group and its purpose. Your summary about this group will appear in the Groups Directory.

Write a quick summary of your group. This could be the same as your company, however, this might not play well to your prospective audience. Orientate the summary towards what you want the group to achieve. For example, this is a group that is designed to allow users to discuss our products, to help form the future of our company and reward our leading supporters with exclusive news.

Remember your SEO when writing the summary. It should be short and to the point. Keep focussed on the most important information and remember that you can put more details into step 4.

Step 4

* **Description:**

Your full description of this group will appear on your group pages.

Your group description should be a longer version of the summary. This is your chance to expand the basic points you made in the previous step. Keep using short sentences and keep them to the point. Remember your SEO by choosing a couple of keywords so your group turns up in search engine results.

Step 5

Website:

* **Group Owner Email:**

LinkedIn requires you to state a contact email address. This can be your personal email address or you can use the same company email address you used when setting up your company page. Also include a web address. While this is optional, it is a good opportunity to create another quality backlink to your website. Perhaps use a product page or a blog page or even your contact page. The choice is yours.

Step 6

*Access:

- Auto-Join: Any LinkedIn member may join this group without requiring approval from a manager.
- Request to Join: Users must request to join this group and be approved by a manager.

Display this group in the Groups Directory.

Allow members to display the logo on their profiles. Also, send your connections a Network Update that you have created this group.

Allow members to invite others to join this group.

Pre-approve members with the following email domain(s):

The access section allows you to decide how individuals join your group. Auto-join allows anyone to join by simply clicking the “join group” button when viewing the group. This is the best option for promoting your business for two reasons. First, users prefer open groups as it gives a good impression and second, if your group becomes popular you will not want to have to approve or reject potentially hundreds or thousands of applications.

The closed “request” join option is better if you want to filter your group’s members. If you want the group to only be open to employees or if you want to create a select group of people in the right industries and so on, this is a good means of doing that.

You can further develop this option by deciding if you want to display the group in the group directory or not. In the same theme, you can decide if your group name and logo turns up on the user’s profiles or not. Then you can decide if group members have the right to invite others or not. And finally, you can pre-approve certain users who are already on your contacts list.

Step 7

Language:	<input type="text" value="English"/>
Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> This group is based in a single geographic location.
Twitter Announcement:	<input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="text"/>
* Agreement:	<input type="checkbox"/> Check to confirm you have read and accept the Terms of Service .

The final element of the set up allows you to select the group's language. By doing this you help LinkedIn filter groups according to the search requests of users. The location is really only useful if your group is location based. This might be good, for example, for a temporary group that is looking to bring together people for a specific project such as building a new store in a city and so on.

By linking your group to your Twitter account, you can automatically turn new discussions and comments into tweets.

Finally sign the agreement and click "create a group."

5.2 Branded vs. Interest groups

While there are many types of possible group for you to create. There are two main themes to bear in mind. These two types revolve around a single question. Do you want group members to know this group is run by your company?

A branded group is upfront. This means the user wanting to join your group knows exactly what it is going to be. They know people will discuss your company, your products and your services. A lot of people appreciate this honesty and will make an informed decision about whether they want to join it or not.

Interest groups have the potential to discuss a wider subject than just your company. You can use the group to gather opinions and feedback on a range of subjects without using the group to overtly promote your group. The risk is that users will feel betrayed if they later find out you run the group or if the group is then used as a promotional machine.

5.3 Keeping Groups Active

Setting up a group is not the end of the process. If you do this the group will sit empty and unloved. Like an un-watered plant it will shrivel and die.

Share



Click the share option on the right-hand side of your group page. This gives you 4 basic sharing options. The first is to share on LinkedIn, the second is to share on Twitter, the third on Facebook and finally to personally invite others. With the latter option you can name specific contacts on your profile and ask them to join.

Populating your group with fans is an essential part of building your brand. It also helps to entice new group members. People want to see an active group with a good number of members. If a group has no logo, no members and no activity, it will struggle.

Discussions



The best way to interact with your fans and group members is to start a discussion. You could do this as a kind of press release, but perhaps it is better to get users to review products or to discuss possible improvements to said product.

When starting a discussion, you first title the discussion then you write your basic point. Again, remember your SEO and keywords. The discussion's content does not have to be business related and it does not have to be an advert. What it must be is engaging and interesting for your group members.

Finally, you have the option of attaching a link. This means you can link to one of your web pages or to a news item. It is up to you.

Polls



The screenshot shows a user interface for creating a poll. At the top, there are two options: 'Discussion' (with a speech bubble icon) and 'Poll' (with a list icon). Below these are three input fields: 'Ask a question', 'Specify up to 5 answer choices.', and 'New choices will appear as you type.'. At the bottom, there is a character count warning, a date 'Runs until: 2/11/2013', and a 'Share' button with a Twitter icon.

Polls give you the chance to find out if your customers like a product or service. Or you can use it to ask which products need upgrading, which is the best or even what colour the new one should be. First ask a question, then list a number of answers. You can decide when the poll closes and if you want to share the poll on Twitter.

Members

This part of your group allows you to find out who your members are and who are the most active. Rewarding these people or getting on well with them could help the group develop.

Promotions

These are created using other pages or through your business page, but they will show up on this section of your group. This is helpful because it remove your promotions from your discussion section.

Jobs

Rather than being a place to create jobs or post job adverts, this section is for you to create job discussions. The layout is the same as the general discussions section, but gives you the opportunity to identify positions you are interested in, get people involved in informal applications for a position and more.

More

As with other areas of LinkedIn, there are many more options available:

1. Check out your own activity on the site. Is it enough? And is it well targeted?
2. Check the settings to make sure the group is optimized
3. Start a subgroup within your group
4. Check out the group profile. Is it attractive?
5. Look at the group's statistics.

6. Conclusion

Well, I hope that you enjoyed reading this ebook and that you really take action with what you have learned.

LinkedIn is a powerful platform that you can use very successfully for your business.

Your next step is to print out the Checklist that you received with this course and start implementing all the strategies you learned. Tick them off one by one, as you complete each step. This will help you to track your progress and make it easier to take action with this course.

I wish you all the best with your business.