

A background image showing a group of people in a professional setting, with several individuals holding and looking at their smartphones. The image is slightly blurred and has a blue tint, serving as a backdrop for the title text.

Leveraging LinkedIn – How the Social Network Can Help Win Clients

As an advisor in 2018, you're probably told by many that you need to be leveraging social media to build your practice. Between Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter, where to focus your time and what to do on each platform can feel like a daunting task. But, when it comes to leveraging these platforms, you don't have to tackle them all at once. In fact, spending time building your network on one may be the kickstart you need to become more familiar with social media.

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LINKEDIN'S RISE TO PROMINENCE

Over the past decade, LinkedIn has become the premier business social platform. Its evolved into much more than a job-hunting tool and enables you to expand your network, stay top of mind, and build trust with clients. LinkedIn has swelled to 560 Million¹ users since launch, with 40% of those users being active on a daily basis.¹ Additionally, it makes up more than 50% of all social traffic to B2B websites and blogs.¹ Needless to say, it's a hard platform to ignore.

With all of the opportunity on the social network, how do you build a presence? Below we expand on a few things you can do to build, maintain, and engage your network.

Set goals for the platform

Setting goals make people more successful. Professors get tenure faster, employees get larger raises, even students learn up to 250% faster when setting goals.² Building your network on LinkedIn is no different. Aim to set a goal for the platform, make it specific – do you want people to learn more about your brand or are you trying to capture leads? Two very different goals that will ultimately drive your content strategy. Depending on your goal, it's important to set specific metrics, e.g. if your goal is to drive leads, measure the amount you're capturing on a weekly basis. A broader goal, and specific set of metrics, will allow you to determine how effective the platform is for your business.

¹ LinkedIn by the Numbers: Stats, Demographics & Fun Facts. Omnicore. Sept. 2018

² "The Relation of Self-Efficacy and Grade Goals to Academic Performance." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*

Optimize your profile

Your LinkedIn page should explain your job, who you work with, and any specialties you possess. It should also give prospects and partners a good background of your work history. Your profile is your front page, so you should:

- Use your headline to explain your value add, in addition to your job title
- Add your LinkedIn information to your email signature and business cards
- Use the summary section as key area to show your experience and knowledge
- Clearly explain your job and past positions
- Add media including PowerPoints, PDFs, and web links
- Ensure your email, phone number, and all of your contact info is included

Build an engagement model

Once you've set goals and built an optimized profile, it's time to get to work. Building a brand on the platform takes time and a lot of effort, so you need to build an engagement model that works for you and your team. You want to regularly engage with your connections while staying within your compliance guidelines. A few actions you can take:

- Connect with every individual prior to or following a meeting
- Share content regularly on your personal profile and company page. Aim to post 3-5 times a week to stay top of mind
- Join 10+ groups where your ideal prospects and industry partners may be spending their time. Engage regularly within the group discussions
- Search for and reach out to prospects within your target industry. Aim to reach out to 5-10 contacts per week
- Test the LinkedIn Ad platform to reach a more specific target audience

As you continue to digitize your practice, it's no secret that LinkedIn is a powerful platform and can be leveraged to grow your network and attract new clients. In order to effectively build a brand on the social network, it's essential to optimize your profile and engage your audience regularly, while staying well within your company's compliance guidelines. Once you get your LinkedIn engine up-and-running, it's that much easier to expand to other networks.