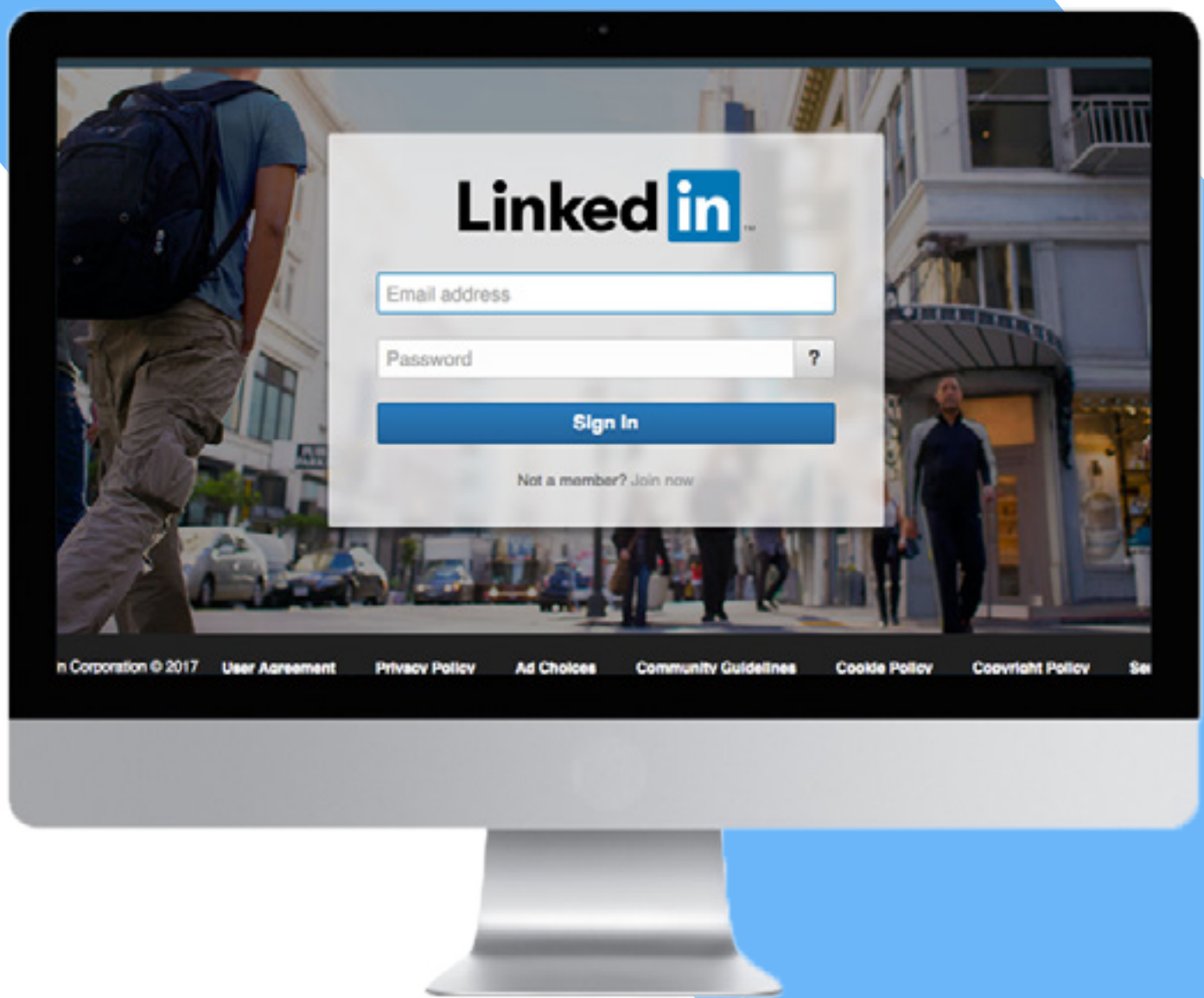


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LINKEDIN 5-DAY PROSPECTING PLAN



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GETTING STARTED

Networking has changed – a lot. And to stay connected, generate leads, and close deals, you need to, as well. LinkedIn is one of the most popular social platforms today, and can be an excellent and easy way for you to foster relationships with clients, build brand visibility, and convert prospects.

Concerned you don't have the online acumen or the time to use LinkedIn?

This quick how-to guide shows you simple and quick ways that you can use the site daily and see dramatic results. Have a profile but ready to use the platform for all its worth? Our advanced tips offer up strategic ideas for utilizing LinkedIn as a true business development tool.

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THE BASICS



CONNECT WITH INTENTIONS



OPTIMIZE PROFILE



KEEP AN EYE ON VIEWS



THOUGHTFUL INFORMATION



STAY ENGAGED

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STEP ONE

OPTIMIZE YOUR PROFILE



Both you as an individual and your company should have complete, clear, and comprehensive profiles. Make sure both utilize keyword-containing content – particularly the headline and summary of your personal profile and the company description of your business profile.

The headline could be your current title, but if that title does not clearly state how you can help your connections, save it for the “Current Position” field. This is what people see first about you on LinkedIn and what the algorithm crawls when users perform searches. Make sure the specialties and skills areas are also filled with all relevant areas.

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STEP TWO

CONNECT WITH INTENTION



On Facebook, you probably did not accept the friend invite from the overseas individual with a profile photo from a stock photo site. That was smart. Use the same hesitation in LinkedIn. While it may seem good to have a large professional network, a connection is only valuable when it's real.

If you receive an invite from someone you do not know, take pause and consider if this individual would make sense in your network. Are they in your field? Could they make a good future hire, or client? Do you have mutual connections that may be able to connect you in real life? If so, accept and send a note to learn more about them, their interest, and how you might be able to help each other. If not, consider declining and avoiding diluting your network.

The same goes for sending invites – assume the individual you are reaching out to will take that same pause, and write a personal note with your request explaining how you two might have mutual interests or connections.

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STEP THREE

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR VIEWS



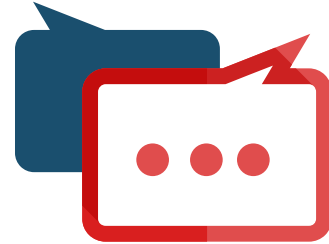
If someone is looking at you, you'll want to know and to return the favor. LinkedIn keeps a running tally of who has recently viewed your profile, and if the user's profile is public, tells you who they are. Your list may also contain light details about users who viewed your profile but are private users – you may see only their title or their company. While not as helpful, knowing what kinds of individuals and companies are finding you through the site can help you hone and improve your profile's content.

For those that are public, treat this "view" as a smile or nod that you might receive at a traditional networking event – an opportunity to start a conversation. If you aren't connected, send them an invite. If you are connected through LinkedIn already, send them a message about how it's been awhile and you'd like to catch up offline. Provide your email and/or phone information so an interested individual can easily get in touch with you.



STEP FOUR

STAY ENGAGED



Each day, scroll through your feed for a few minutes to see what your connections are sharing. Like or comment, or send a note to go even further and discuss how a point the brought up has affected you or how news about their company might lead to you working together. Be relevant.

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STEP FIVE

SHARE THOUGHTFUL INFORMATION



LinkedIn is the perfect place to enhance or even launch your content marketing strategy. Start by sharing links to articles in industry publications or news updates about your company that would be interesting and helpful to your connections. But eventually upgrade to use the article feature to share trend-related, branding, or thought leadership content (more about that in Advanced!).

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ADVANCED TACTICS

Sales, marketing, and business development professionals can put the power of LinkedIn to work for them by utilizing even more of LinkedIn's features. Pick and choose which work for you and your company, and work them into your weekly or monthly to-dos.



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TACTICS



CONNECTION
HUNT



CLIENT
HUNT



BRAND
YOURSELF



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TACTIC ONE

CONNECTION HUNT



Your current relationships can connect you to new ones. Pick a few of your connections and browse their list of connections. Chances are you'll find a few faces that are familiar but that you aren't connected to. You'll probably also see a few people you don't know but would like to. Reach out to your connection and see how they know these people and if an online or in-person intro is possible. Be sure to return the favor when someone contacts you looking for an introduction to someone in your network.

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TACTIC TWO

CLIENT HUNT



You know who your whale is – that company that you would love to work with if you just knew the right person to start the conversation with. Use LinkedIn to bring that dream closer to reality. Head to the company’s profile page, and click on the “See employees” link. You’ll get a full list of all LinkedIn users who currently list that company as their employer. When you find an individual that would be a great connection for you, click on them and see if you have any mutual connections. That whale might just be one intro request away.

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TACTIC THREE

JOIN INDUSTRY GROUPS



LinkedIn has developed niche groups for every industry, job role, and skill set. There are also groups for school alumni, former employees of organizations, regional areas, associations, and more. Join those that apply to you and check out the discussions happening there.

Engaging and becoming a part of them will get your name out and help position you as a subject-matter expert, but simply reviewing these discussions can help you stay on the pulse of your industry and the topics and issues important to it.

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TACTIC FOUR

SPRING FOR SPONSORING



LinkedIn's promotional opportunities are a great way for your company to gain more visibility and stretch your content marketing views. Create an account in the Campaign Manager, and you can promote your articles, create text ads, or sponsor a message to be sent via InMail. Like with other social media platforms, you can set your overall budget, daily limits, and only pay per view or click, so you can easily start small and see which tactics work best for you.

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TACTIC FIVE

BRAND YOURSELF AND YOUR COMPANY



As we mentioned earlier, LinkedIn is the perfect place to share important and relevant content. Make sure your content marketing strategy includes LinkedIn as a platform, and tailor the topics you publish there for it. That means less press releases and more helpful, actionable information that positions you and your company as an industry leader. When you publish directly through LinkedIn, you also get to see real-time analytics like how many people viewed your article, where they were from, what job titles they had, etc. If they are public their full profile will show, and you can use that as a lead-in to an introduction.

