

Using LinkedIn

To Build Your Business

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- **Read Company Profiles** - Do you want to target specific companies within a niche industry? To find these companies, simply use LinkedIn's "Search Companies" function. (Look for the search tool at the top of each LinkedIn page.)
- You can learn quite a bit reading Company Profiles: how large the company is, its specialties, locations and the number of employees at each location, and its previous years revenues.
- If you want to partner with a Real Estate office use LinkedIn to find agents and gather some information about them.

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- **Study individuals' profiles** - Once you have a list of individuals you'd like to target, go to each person's profile and see what you can learn.
- Some people keep their entire profile "open" for viewing, and for those who do, you can learn quite a bit: the person's connections, the Groups they belong to, the events they're attending and even the books they're reading.
- Also look to see if people have links to a corporate or personal blog or Twitter or Facebook profiles - if they do, be sure to follow them and/or add their blog to your blog reader.

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- **Search "Groups"** - You can also find people within your targeted industry by using LinkedIn's Search Groups function. Find specific Groups by using industry keywords in your search (i.e. B2B social media).
- Look for Groups that seem to have a good fit with the industry you're targeting and see if they match them up with the Groups the prospects on your list belong to. Then, join those Groups. Why? So you can begin networking and getting to know people!

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- **Join Groups** - Now that you have an idea of who some of the experts are in your industry, which companies they work for, and which Groups they belong to, it's time to join a few (2 - 3 at the max) Groups.
- The reason I limit this number to two or three is because to do this step well, you really need to devote time to getting to know people within the Group and how the Group operates, and answering questions when you can (without being self-serving).
- If you join too many Groups, you'll spread yourself too thin.
- Try to find and join groups that have members who are mainly not your peers/competitors

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- **Search "Answers"** - Again, do a search using your industry terms and you'll find questions (and answers) people have posted relating to your query.
- Read those Answers that pertain to your industry and analyze who is answering them - do these people match any of the names on your prospect list? Who are the experts?
- Answer questions to be recognized as an industry expert. This will help you get noticed. The best answers are rated by the "asker", which could position you to be "an expert" as well.

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Your contacts may be even more valuable to others than they are to you. Many people in the business community, especially avid networkers, have numerous connections that don't do any [short-term, revenue-generating] good for them personally but that could be invaluable to their new networking contacts. Think about these valuable contacts as you reach out to people whom you hope might help you.

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Connect, by all means, with your former colleagues from every company that has ever employed you. There is something about old-workmate ties (unless you, aren't the sort that former teammates think of fondly) that can't be duplicated in most relationships of shorter duration. Seek out these old workmates, tell them what you're up to and who you're most interested in meeting, and offer to help them out as well.

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Time. There are a few aspects of time you need to be mindful of as you embark on this journey. Building your network will take time. Don't spend hours on your computer trying to build yourself an uber-network overnight. Instead, commit to allocating 1 or 2 hours each week working on your network. The results will come, and LinkedIn should be just one of the avenues you employ in your marketing plan.