



Maximizing LinkedIn

How to reach prospects
in the age of social selling

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& LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT



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INTRODUCTION

Social media has dramatically changed the way customers make buying decisions. It's turned the traditional sales process on its head. Today's B2B consumer has completed hours of research of the internet before choosing to even interact with a sales professional representing the products or services they are seeking.

With over 300 million users online, LinkedIn has become the social media platform for business.

For this reason alone, savvy salespeople are using this tool to great advantage.

We've compiled seven tips in this eBook to help you get started.

Get started >>



B2B buyers complete up to **56%** of the buying process before they contact a potential supplier



Decision makers consume **five pieces** of content before they contact a sales rep



77% of B2B buyers said they did not talk with a sales rep until after they did their own independent research



57% of buying decisions are already made before there is an interaction between a buyer and a sales rep

Total Users of Social Media:



313
million
users

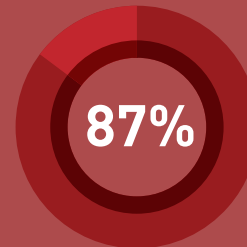


1
billion
users

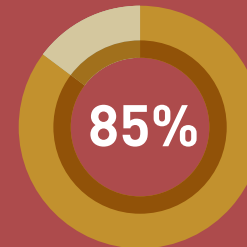


150
million
users

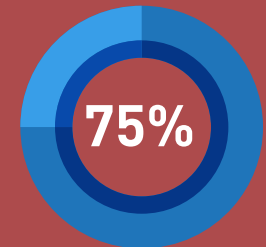
Where Your Prospects Are:



LinkedIn



Facebook



Twitter

Tip 1: GET YOUR PROFILE RIGHT



Your profile is essentially a virtual business card. It is the place where you can showcase your expertise and establish credibility in the eyes of prospects. Be concise, complete and compelling.

Optimize the “Top of the Fold”

This area contains your photo, headline and summary. It is the only part of your profile that many people will ever see - so it needs to be clear and compelling.

Photo: A picture does say a thousand words so choose wisely. Use a professional photo. Consider the image you want to project. Wedding photos, vacation selfies, or pictures of pets are rarely appropriate!

Title: Right under your name is a space to add a headline. It defaults to your current title. Titles often miss the essence of who you are. Change your headline to something that speaks to how or why you do what you do.

Summary: Keep it concise, to the point, results-oriented and positive. Use the 3 x 3 guideline to craft your summary: three paragraphs with three sentences apiece. And, don't forget to add a call to action at the end.

Be Found Easily

Customize your public profile URL: LinkedIn assigns a random URL to every profile. This is usually a lengthy code rather than a simple, memorable URL. In Edit Profile mode, select edit on the URL under your profile photo and change it to something more personal that could help you to be found through web searches.

Keep your profile public: Don't restrict your LinkedIn profile and don't be shown as anonymous when you look at other people's pages.

**30% of people
whose profile
you view
non-anonymously
will view
you back.**



Next Tip: Never miss a chance to build your professional network >>

Tip 2: NEVER MISS A CHANCE TO BUILD YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

LinkedIn is a powerful social network. The keyword here is Network. Building up your network of connections is critical. Connections breed connections.

Your first level contacts connect you to a much larger universe of second and third level connections. This becomes a powerful source of potential prospects or referrals.

Make It Part of Your Follow-up Routine:

Whenever you meet anyone, virtually or in the real world, always follow up quickly with a connection request while you are still fresh in their mind.

Personalize Your Connection Request:

Take a moment to craft a short, personalized note when you make a connection request - Link it to your recent interaction or if it's a referral from someone else, let them know who you know in common and why you want to connect.

Next Tip: A better way to find prospects >>



Need ideas for messaging?

Contact us at [learn\(at\)horn.com](mailto:learn@horn.com) for samples of connection requests that are compelling and effective.

[Get in touch now >>](#)

Tip 3: A BETTER WAY TO FIND PROSPECTS

Using the Advanced Search tool on LinkedIn allows you to find people by title, company, location or keyword. With a paid account you can also add criteria like company size or seniority level to your searches.

Save Your Searches:

Save your search criteria and access it on a regular basis to watch for anyone new who matches the customer profile you are looking for.

For example, you might setup a search for any one with the title Purchasing Manager in the telecommunications industry, within 100 kilometers of Toronto.

Each week you can review the results and make a point of connecting with anyone that fits your target profile.

Next Tip: Never make a cold call again >>

If your company has a company page (and it should) you may have followers highlighted on your LinkedIn company page. Whether these people are current, past or prospective clients they might just represent an untapped source of new business opportunities.

Before you reach out...

Make sure you spend a few minutes doing some background research before you jump into execution mode.

Take a good look at their profile. Look for common ground you might share: previous employers, schools, their connections. It's often surprising how much information some people include in their profile – the teams they work on, the projects underway, and where they are located. Try to map out a series of contacts at one company and determine who the key decision makers and influencers are likely to be.



Tip 4: NEVER MAKE A COLD CALL AGAIN



Few salespeople truly like making cold calls. And even fewer potential customers like them. Today, cold calls are almost never required if you are using LinkedIn and other social media to its fullest advantage.

With LinkedIn, you can learn enough about a potential customer to make your call more relevant and insightful for them. And don't be shy about telling people you spent some time reviewing their LinkedIn profile - **it shows that you have gone to more trouble than the other 70% of salespeople who aren't yet fully leveraging LinkedIn.**

Things to Note:

When reviewing a potential customer profile watch for insights you might use to make a richer, real-life connection.

Things like:

- Changes in profile
- Status updates
- Connections in common
- Any posts they may have contributed to a group

Next Tip: Get past the gatekeeper with InMail >>



Tip 5: GET PAST THE GATEKEEPER WITH INMAIL

Face it. Senior decision makers are a tough group to get through to. People in these roles are inundated with emails and calls every day. They simply have to screen out most of the noise. This is where LinkedIn's InMail service can come in handy. **According to LinkedIn, InMail is 30x more effective at reaching a contact than a cold call.**

Crafting An InMail Worth Opening:

1. Ensure you have a very compelling subject line: make sure the WIIFM Factor is very clear.
2. Demonstrate insight and knowledge about their business. It's not about you (yet). Show that you understand the issues their business may be facing
3. Be clear about the reason for your InMail. Ideally link your objective with some insight you have gleaned about their business.
4. Be specific about what you are looking for. Are you seeking a meeting? A chance to speak?
5. Keep it short. Enough said.

Next Tip: Interacting with Groups >>

The WIIFM Factor

"What's in it for me?"

WIIFM is the stuff that shows how or why what you have to say matters to those who you are trying to say it to.

It's the value proposition, the thing that makes the venter realize that what you're offering is worth their money or their time.



Need ideas for messaging?

Contact us at learn@horn.com for complimentary samples of invite communications that are compelling and effective.

[Get in touch now >>](#)

Tip 6: INTERACTING WITH GROUPS

LinkedIn groups are a great way to learn more about the industries you are focused on. The discussions in Groups will tell you what people care about and more importantly what their frustrations (and therefore unmet needs) are.


Benefits of Joining Groups

1. They can give you further insights into what's happening within a target industry or even within a prospect company
2. They allow you to see more of an individual prospect's details - in particular their full name. This is usually restricted to first, level contacts (which reinforces the importance of our first tip on page 2)
3. Group membership brings you closer to all the other group members and may be enough reason to reach out and make a first degree connection with some of the members.

Next Tip: The “look and look back” Trick >>

Tips for Identifying Good LinkedIn Groups

- Guidelines are outlined in an email when you request to join
- Multiple group members are actively participating in discussion
- High engagement by existing members



70% of prospects are more likely to respond to you if you are members of the same group.

If you are going to contribute, help, don't sell.

Tip 7: THE “LOOK AND LOOK BACK” TRICK



LinkedIn offers a way to see who has looked at your profile. Unless visitors have set their profiles to anonymous, you can click on the “Who’s viewed your profile?” link and see a list of who has visited your profile recently.

You can use this to your benefit in a couple of ways:

1. When someone checks you out, reach back out to connect. And be sure to gently inquire what brought them to your profile and whether there is anything they might require from you.
2. When you look at someone’s profile, **there’s a 30% chance that they will look back at your profile.**



CONCLUSION

Recent studies have shown that **78% of sales professionals who are consistently beating their quotas by 10% or more are also big users of LinkedIn.**

Social media has changed the game for salespeople today. Embracing these tips will help you to get started, or simply to refine your own approach to social selling.

For more on how to embed Social Selling tactics into your team's Sales Culture, contact HORN's [Client Solutions team](#) and get the conversation started.

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