

LinkedIn[®] Company Pages and Followers



Relationships That Drive Results

5 Steps to Engaging Followers on LinkedIn

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Relationships count more than ever

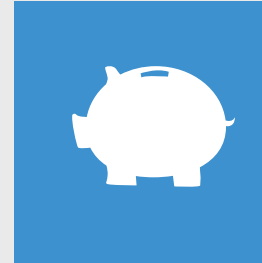
Relationships mean more today than they ever have for companies.

Consumers are in control of their online experience and can easily tune out irrelevant or promotional messages. On the other hand, they are increasingly interested in connecting with companies that can provide useful information and engaging content.

For years, LinkedIn has helped marketers forge mutually beneficial relationships with the world's largest community of business leaders and influencers. These relationships build brand equity and convert social actions into new business opportunities.

Members also benefit as these relationships with companies offer actionable insights and solutions that enhance members' careers and professional decision-making.

LinkedIn's premium audience at a glance¹



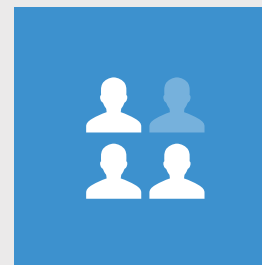
\$86k

average household income of a LinkedIn member



93%

more likely to be college graduates



3 OUT OF **4**

members use LinkedIn to keep up on business news or research companies

Build relationships that drive business results

Our research indicates that members are nearly 50% more likely to purchase from a company they engage with on LinkedIn.¹ Further, nearly 80% of LinkedIn members want to connect with the companies in their lives.² By tailoring your conversations with members according to their professional interests, you'll improve the image of your brand and fuel purchase intent for your products and services.

In this guide, we'll show you how to use your **Company Page** and other tools to attract followers and turn them into passionate brand advocates.

A proven model for success

Our research shows that leaders in social media are embracing a high-level, 5-step model for establishing relationships with customers and prospects. They are attracting and engaging a community of company followers by giving them the information and actionable insights they seek.

After reading this guide, you'll understand how to apply this 5-step model to your social media strategy on LinkedIn.

Proven Model for Social Media Success

1. Establish a Company Presence
 2. Attract Followers
 3. Engage Followers
 4. Amplify Through the Network
 5. Analyze and Refine
-

LinkedIn U.S. survey-based Follower report, January 2012

LinkedIn member surveys, January and February 2012

Organize your team for success

Whether you're a company of 2, 10, or 100,000 employees, it's important to establish clear roles and responsibilities for managing and optimizing your Company Page.

Here are some different strategies to consider:

Centralize

Appoint a single social media "champion" to coordinate all page content and track performance globally. This champion should work with individual product or brand managers to reflect the variety of interesting things your company is doing.

Scatter

Rotate ownership of the Company Page between each brand or business unit with a central or global marketing lead setting and managing the schedule.

Divide & Conquer

Split ownership between a global social media team and your company's HR or recruiting department to address marketing and hiring needs equally. Leads from each team should work together to manage posting schedules and shared goals.

Don't go it alone!

The key to building relationships is continuous communication and relevant content. Get help managing this process to ensure your company always has engaging content to share.

Enlist colleagues who understand customers' needs or have specific skills in content creation (e.g., video production, infographic design). What expertise can they offer?

Create a spreadsheet calendar with campaign themes and posting timelines, and work with colleagues to decide what they can best contribute and when.

Break up large themes into a series that you publish at fixed intervals, to get followers into the routine of "tuning in" for new content.

Highlight company or industry milestones to grab members' attention with timely information.

Step 1: Establish a company presence

STEP
01

Before you build your follower community, it's important to lay the groundwork of a great Company Page—your company's home on LinkedIn. Here's how to get started.

Craft a compelling story

Provide a great narrative

Click the "Admin tools" button in the upper right of the page to edit your company description, specialties, industry, website, and more. Use rich, descriptive language that helps readers understand your vision, purpose, and the value you offer. What makes you unique? Make sure the spirit of that story lives within all the content and conversations you publish on LinkedIn.

Include a description, 1-2 paragraphs long

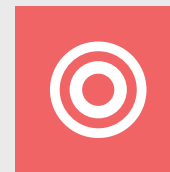
Company Pages are very SEO-friendly, and your description and company name are prominent data for search engines. Google search engine results pages show previews of your page text (up to 156 characters in length), so be sure your description leads with powerful sentences.

Insert high-value keywords

Our search bar also lets members search for companies by keyword directly from any LinkedIn page. You can help your target audience find you by including targeted keywords that describe your business, expertise, and industry focus in each Company Page field.

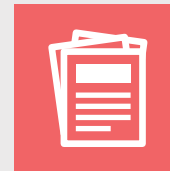
Showcase Products & Services

We've found that marketers who build out their free **Products & Services Page** tend to have twice as many company followers. Located as a tab within your main Company Page, Products & Services allows you to showcase everything your company does best and, most importantly, gives members a compelling reason to follow you.



Connect members with solutions

After you've added products to your page, you can design multiple configurations based on one or two of the following criteria: members' geography, company size, seniority, job function, or industry. With this feature, you can select to feature relevant products to a specific audience.



Go beyond products

You can link to just about anything on your LinkedIn Company and Products & Services pages. Give members a reason to follow you by directing them to white papers, case studies or how-to content. Rotate this content regularly.



Tell a story through video

Video is a proven method for increasing engagement on a site. If your company has a YouTube channel, embed product or customer testimonial videos that tell a compelling narrative about the value you offer.

Step 2:

Attract followers

STEP
02

Creating authentic relationships is central to achieving success on LinkedIn. Once you've established your company presence on LinkedIn, you can begin fostering these relationships by attracting followers to your Company Page. Here are some simple, effective strategies for attracting company followers and getting those relationships off to a strong start.

Engage your colleagues

Employees are your most reliable advocates. Encourage them to complete their profiles and include a link to your Company Page in their email signatures.

Announce your Company Page in an email newsletter to existing customers or partners

Ask recipients to reply to that email with feedback about the kinds of content they want to receive through your Company Page. This will help you focus your conversations.

Add a "Follow" button to your website

Your web team can pull simple code for a "Follow" button from developer.linkedin.com that you can add to your blog or website. This allows LinkedIn members to follow your company with a single off-platform click.

Celebrate your new page on the company blog

Once you set up your Company Page and start adding content, drive traffic to it through a compelling blog post.

Join the discussion on LinkedIn Groups

There are over 1 million LinkedIn Groups serving as communities for like-minded professionals worldwide. We have groups covering virtually every industry, and often the members you'll find in groups are also the members who are most eager to engage with companies.

Contribute to discussions in popular groups

Target groups that are relevant to the industries or customers you serve. The search bar on the LinkedIn homepage lets you look for groups by keyword.

Post ideas and questions that reflect members' interests

Include a link to your Company Page at the end of your post. Advise members to follow your Company Page if they're interested in gathering more insights and helpful information.

Share the mic

Contribute to popular discussions that members have started. As people "like" and reply to your comments, you have a chance to become a "Top Influencer" in the group. You can also earn trust with members by using the group's built-in sharing tools to promote their discussions on major social sites.

Be a connector

When you post to groups, aim to drive responses that will help members solve problems and share insights with one another.

Step 3: Engage followers

STEP
03

Once you have followers, it's important to nourish those relationships. The best follower relationships are rooted in great conversations—and your tool for developing those conversations is the **Company Status Update**.

At the most basic level, it's helpful to think of every update as a chance to convey your brand promise. But it's also important to think of what LinkedIn members expect to receive from status updates. As a rule of thumb, all content you post to LinkedIn should help members become more successful professionals. When you build a reputation for wanting to help your followers, you'll be more likely to convert them into loyal customers.

So, what makes a good status update?

Keep your content informative

A total of 68% of LinkedIn members say they would like to receive relevant news articles or insights from companies.

Be helpful and friendly, not sales-y

Have you ever had dinner with someone who always talked about him or herself? Avoid this pitfall, and don't post overly promotional messages. If you do post occasional company-related news or product announcements, be sure you're providing content that delivers a specific benefit to your followers.

Say it succinctly

We find that updates receive higher engagement if you keep it short - a brief sentence or two will do.

Post at least once per weekday

In general, companies that post 20 times per month reach at least 60% of their unique audience.

Think about timing

Updates posted in the morning usually earn the highest engagement, with a slight bump occurring again after business hours. Experiment to see what works best for your company.

Link to great content

Status updates containing links can have up to 45% higher follower engagement than updates without links. Just remember to write a compelling sentence to accompany the link, inspiring members to click through.

Tailor your content to specific audiences

What resonates most with followers? Content that's customized to their professional interests. With LinkedIn's Targeted Status Updates, you can reach distinct follower segments with content they're likely to find interesting.

When you write an update, you'll notice a feature that lets you share it either with "all followers" or a "targeted audience." Selecting the second option lets you send your update to a subset of followers based on geography, job function, industry, company size, or seniority.

We've seen promising results from early tests of Targeted Status Updates. Philips, for example, saw a 106% increase in follower engagement after posting Targeted Status Updates during a six-week period.

Audience targeting best practices

Include your biggest brand advocates: your employees!

Employees are 70% more likely to engage with your posts.

Don't target ultra-granular segments

Limit yourself to one or two targeting criteria per update to ensure that your content receives many high-value impressions.

Engage locally

Your company has a presence all over the map. Use Targeted Status Updates to let employees in regional offices contribute content that speaks directly to your customers or prospects in different areas.

Target your ideal customer profile

Aim to reach followers who match your target customer.

Case studies: learn from the best

Across LinkedIn, companies are seeing the benefits of engaging their followers: Recent research shows that LinkedIn is 277% more effective at lead generation than Facebook or Twitter.⁷

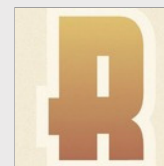
How are leading marketers engaging their followers? Here are some helpful case studies to guide you:



Enterprise cloud computing company **salesforce.com** used Targeted Status Updates to promote its Cloudforce London conference to a U.K. audience. During a five-week period, the company experienced a 30% increase in the rate of follower engagement. In addition, these targeted updates showed a 30% increase in amplification (the ratio of "likes", comments and shares to total update impressions).



HP wanted to engage professionals and gather recommendations for its products. The company launched its own page, inviting members to recommend and comment on the items in the Products & Services area. The company also ran LinkedIn ads to generate recommendations at scale. The results: More than 2,000 recommendations, 20,000 new followers, and 500,000 viral updates about HP products in two weeks.



A relative newcomer to the HR space, **Reconverse** wanted to raise awareness and create conversation around its mission to change the corporate recruiting model. Speaking to an audience in the HR field, the company used status updates to stage a contest, igniting a dialogue. The first update alone generated 1,403 "likes", 120 comments, and 87 new followers. Reconverse attributes 90% of its revenue to its LinkedIn community-building efforts.

Step 4: Amplify through the network



What is amplification and why does it matter?

Nothing impacts peoples' perceptions and behavior like the recommendation of a trusted friend, colleague, or family member. When you post content to your Company Page, your followers can "like", share, or comment on your updates, which "amplifies" your messages to their entire first-degree networks.

Each amplification action is an endorsement of your content and brand. As members amplify your posts across LinkedIn, you have the chance to build relationships with even more members who discover your company through the recommendation of a close contact.

Amplification plays an important role in engagement. A LinkedIn study found that non-followers actually engaged with status updates 30% more than followers did.¹ This is likely because many non-followers—who saw the updates once their connections "liked", shared, or commented on them—reacted to the implicit endorsement.

Also, a study of thousands of company updates found that over one-third of all impressions were due almost entirely to amplification.² Each additional impression is a chance for your company to reach members and convert them into followers.

LinkedIn analysis of over 9,800 company Status Updates that received at least 500 impressions, during January 2012

Based on a study of all company Status Updates with at least 1,000 impressions posted June 1-15, 2012

Make your content viral

STEP
04

How do you encourage followers to amplify your content?
Here are some ideas to get you started:

Ask coworkers to share your content with their networks

Employees can show their corporate pride and “shout out” fellow colleagues.

Link to “best-of” lists that focus on industry insights or relevant company news

Research shows that, on average, posts can boost their amplification rate by nearly 40% if they steer followers toward “Top” lists (e.g.: “Top 10 social media tactics in B2B marketing”).

Invite customers to write reviews on your Products & Services page

Their recommendations will get amplified throughout the network.

Post interesting videos

One recent study found that when a status update linked to a YouTube video, followers who engaged with it took twice as many amplification actions (“likes”, shares, or comments) compared to posts that did not contain videos.

Ask members for feedback about an industry trend, business problem, new product, and more

Your followers will welcome the chance to respond to questions. On average, status updates received nearly 50% more comments if they contained questions.

Listen to conversations that occur off

LinkedIn

Collect findings from your various contact forms, call centers, and blog comments, and create status update content around the most popular topics. When you post content that better reflects your community’s interests, your followers will find your updates more worthy of a share, “like”, or comment.

Based on a study of all company Status Updates with at least 1,000 impressions, posted June 1-15, 2012. Viral reach measured in number of uniques. Best-of list analysis based on updates that included the words “Top...”: 10, ten, 5, five, 3, three, 100, one hundred, 50, fifty, 30, thirty, 25, or twenty-five. Video analysis based on updates with links to youtube.com/ oryoutu.be/.

Dive into the comments

As you post engaging content, certain followers will leave comments below your updates. Don't let these comments go unrecognized or unanswered—as a page admin, you can dive right in and start interacting. This will help build loyalty among members, keep the discussion going, and amplify conversations throughout the network.

Here are a few ideas for capitalizing on comments:

Praise

Use the comments section to thank followers who contribute thoughtful remarks about your products or industry.

Showcase

Connect with your most passionate, prolific commenters and invite them to write a guest post on your blog. Link to the post in a status update.

Organize

Appoint a team of coworkers as ambassadors to your follower community, empowering them to respond to comments.

STEP
04

Encourage amplification off-site

While your followers spend a lot of time on LinkedIn, your relationships should continue off the site as well. With this in mind, we've provided you with tools to let you start conversations with members in multiple settings—not just on LinkedIn.com. Here are a couple of plugins (available at developer.linkedin.com) that will help you further amplify members' enthusiasm into endorsements for your brand.



Recommend plugin: Embed this simple plugin on your website, on all pages that showcase the products you've also added to your LinkedIn Products & Services page. With one click, your site visitors can recommend a particular product to all their first-degree LinkedIn connections.



Share plugin: When you add a share plugin to your site, you empower all readers with LinkedIn accounts to share your content with their networks. This turns every visitor into a potential champion for your brand.

Step 5: Analyze and refine

In any marketing campaign, success depends on your ability to measure performance and optimize resources. LinkedIn's analytics tools empower you to do just that, ensuring you have the insights you need to strengthen follower relationships.

Take note: what content drives conversation?

The best way to improve follower engagement and amplification is to experiment with different kinds of content. Once you understand what works, you can easily refine your approach. Page admins can see statistics (engagement rate, impressions, "likes", shares, and comments) below each status update starting 24 hours after they post.

Measuring Engagement

An important Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is a post's Engagement Rate—the ratio of clicks, "likes", comments and shares to total update impressions. This is an important global metric for understanding how often members take action on your updates. If you include a link in an update, be sure to generate it with a link-shortening service like bitly or Ow.ly. This way, you can keep track of total click-throughs.

Measuring Amplification

As you post updates, note which subjects and formats seem to drive the highest amplification rate—the ratio of "likes", comments, and shares to total update impressions. This helps you understand how often members are sharing your content. For example, you might notice that you drive high amplification whenever you post about your company's philanthropic initiatives. This might tell you that many of your followers are interested in learning more about your company's values and culture.

Track your progress

STEP
05

Your Company Page includes helpful Follower Statistics and Page Statistics tools that let you view changes in the size and composition of your follower community, as well as activity on your page. Here are a few best practices for getting the most out of these features. It may be helpful to create a simple spreadsheet to track these KPIs over time.

Establish goals for growing your follower community

Use the Follower Statistics page to understand how your follower community is growing over time and what kinds of followers you're reaching. Set targets for acquiring followers who match your ideal customer profile.

Get to know your recent followers

Your Follower Statistics page displays three of your most recent followers. Click through to their profiles to learn more about them. Record info like job function, location, company, etc. This will help you understand how your audience is changing at the margins.

Measure lead generation and follower conversion

Are your updates driving leads? Find out by first tracking sign-ups from your LinkedIn landing pages (e.g., webinar and event registrations). Your conversion rate is the number of leads generated from these pages divided by the number of visits. Remember, you can track click-throughs if you use a service like bitly or Ow.ly to create links for your updates. You can also estimate how well you're converting followers to leads: Divide your number of new monthly or quarterly leads by the number of new followers you've acquired during that time.

Set engagement targets

The Follower Statistics page also displays monthly engagement metrics for all your posts collectively. As you optimize your updates based on individual performance, you should see an uptick in the overall month-to-month engagement rate.

Let your follower relationships thrive

Like any good relationship, your followers require care and attention. By following the five-step model in this guide to deliver consistently high-quality content that addresses members' professional needs, you will not only grow your follower community, but also forge bonds and foster honest conversations with potential customers.

As always, please keep in touch and stay on top of the latest news and advice by visiting our Company Page [[linkedin.com/company/linkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/linkedin)], or check out our blog [blog.linkedin.com]. Thank you for reading, and happy posting!

