

Unlock LinkedIn's Marketing Potential

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8 Ways to Use LinkedIn as an Effective Marketing Tool



We hear a lot about Facebook, [Twitter](#), and now Google Buzz ... but let's not forget about the most popular networking site for professionals: [LinkedIn](#).

LinkedIn has over 30 million registered users, and it's considered the Internet gold standard for **professional networking** and, yes, **marketing and business development**.

Today, LinkedIn is becoming increasingly popular among **lawyers**.

They're using the site to build connections, find warm leads, and create personal brands, not to mention hunting for jobs.

What are YOU doing to maximize the value of your LinkedIn account?

Joshua Fruchter, editor of LawyerCasting and [LinkedIn for Lawyers 101](#), offers these ways to use the site as an effective business and marketing tool.

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1. Create a powerful profile.

Once registered at LinkedIn, it's important that lawyers write comprehensive profiles highlighting their current positions, past experiences, and other areas of expertise. A LinkedIn profile should include words and phrases that you believe visitors to LinkedIn may use when they are searching for a lawyer in your area of practice.

2. Build connections.

To help build your connections, import your business contacts into LinkedIn from other software and websites. You can then use the imported contacts to connect with people you know who are already using LinkedIn, or to invite other colleagues to join LinkedIn.

Lawyers may get additional work from existing clients simply by inviting them to join their network on LinkedIn. The invitations remind the clients of matters they want done.

3. Give and get recommendations.

LinkedIn provides a feature that allows you to ask your connections for recommendations, and for you to reciprocate by recommending them. In this way, connections can help each other build their reputations for quality work.

4. Solicit advice from your network.

Need help with a matter or a client? Your LinkedIn contacts may help.

A powerful tool to use for this purpose is LinkedIn's "[Answers](#)" feature. In "Answers," attorneys can ask other LinkedIn members for information, suggestions, and referrals.

5. Provide assistance to others.

It's important to answer questions on LinkedIn. This will demonstrate your expertise in various areas and get you more exposure.

Of course, an attorney, when responding to questions on the site, needs to be careful to avoid inadvertently creating an attorney-client relationship with online contacts. If the response involves discussions of the law, one approach a lawyer might take is to stress that your response should only be considered as a general guideline to the issues raised by a particular question, but that to provide legal advice you would need to speak personally to better understand the particular facts of the case.

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6. Join LinkedIn Groups.

LinkedIn users are able to organize themselves into different groups based on schools attended, industry, geography, and various personal or professional interests. Join groups to become acquainted with like-minded peers who may be interested in joining your network and sharing advice, ideas, and referrals.

As a member of a group, you can initiate discussions about topics other group members might be interested in. You can also submit links to articles of possible interest to the group prefaced with your own commentary. Both activities provide you with an opportunity to increase your visibility among your peers.

You might even consider launching your own group in a niche where you are an expert and asking others to join.

7. Explore LinkedIn's add-on applications.

You can customize LinkedIn with a variety of applications that you can add to your profile.

Here are just a few of the applications currently available:

- Display links to your blog posts in your LinkedIn profile.
- Display past Powerpoint presentations in your profile.
- See which of your connections plan to attend upcoming events.
- Set up collaborative work spaces.
- Share travel plans and coordinate in-person meetings with people in your network.

8. Use LinkedIn to obtain warm leads to prospective clients.

Expanded use of LinkedIn allows you to look at the names of people you don't know who belong to the networks of YOUR connections. So if you see the name of a target client in your friend's network, email your friend and ask to be introduced to his connection. No cold calling necessary!

As you can see, LinkedIn isn't just a social networking site. It's changing the way lawyers work and build their practices.

Unlock LinkedIn's potential today - log in and use it!

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