



# AND THE ART OF LEGAL NETWORKING

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INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON

*Relationship Building  
within the International  
Lawyers Network*

POSTED IN [LEGAL MARKETING](#), [SOCIAL MEDIA](#), [TWO FOR TUESDAYS](#)

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## Two Ways to Use LinkedIn to Attract Your Ideal Client

BY LINDSAY GRIFFITHS ON MARCH 1, 2016



Of all the social media platforms out there, I'd venture to say that LinkedIn is the one that lawyers are most comfortable using. It has a reputation for being the most professional, and as a result, it's had the widest adoption within the industry. In recent years, LinkedIn has really expanded their offerings, and provided a

robust, deep platform that allows us to engage in new ways, all which make it an even more valuable platform than it was at the beginning.

Like any social platform (or any tool, really), LinkedIn is what you make of it – you can treat it as a place to broadcast from, and as long as you have something valuable to say, you may find that many people are listening to you. But if you want to use it as a business development tool, then you need to get serious about the steps that you take to leverage its features. I read [a great article today](#) over on Inc which talked about three ways to use LinkedIn to attract your ideal customer. Since “sales” is a dirty word for lawyers, we’re instead going to talk about using LinkedIn for business/relationship development (which, by the way, is really the same thing, but said in a more palatable way).

Since it’s our Two for Tuesday day, we’ll just presume that you already have a robust LinkedIn profile. I promise that at some point this year, I will update my LinkedIn for Lawyers book, which is a step-by-step process for setting up a profile, but for the moment, let’s set aside that tip and focus on the other two that Inc author, Bill Carmody, suggests.

## Tip One: Find The Right People via More Intelligent Search

LinkedIn, as you may or may not know, is a fantastic research tool, and I highly recommend it – whether you’re meeting with someone you already know, or you’re searching for someone in particular, it can offer you incredible data that you may not have access to otherwise. For example, let’s say you’re meeting with a potential client. You may already have a pile of information sitting on your desk about the company that you’re meeting with, the principals involved, the latest news and items of interest, etc. Take a few minutes to look each of the individuals attending the meeting up on LinkedIn (keep in mind that depending on your privacy settings, and theirs, they may be able to see that you’ve looked at their profile, even if you’re not connected). Depending on how robust their profiles are, you’ll get to see a photo of them, where they went to college, some of their interests and activities, any volunteer work they share, boards that they serve on, the responsibilities they list as being part of their jobs, other positions that they’ve held, etc. You may learn that you have more in common with each of the people in the meeting than you realized, and that will give you common ground to build on.

When it comes to business development, Carmody tells us that it’s not that different:

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**Seems obvious enough, but the highest ROI of your time starts with knowing who you should be talking to. If you know the name of a person you want to do business with and you do a Google search, more often than not you’ll find their LinkedIn profile where you can get all kinds of insights about that person. ‘Finding common**

**ground is one of the most powerful ways to connect with people’ explains Mr. Derezin [VP of LinkedIn Sales Solutions]. ‘I have many stories of deals getting done because a salesperson took the time to research and discover interests outside of their top prospects job function. Let’s say you are a soccer coach, for example in your off time. You can connect with someone else who’s also a soccer coach and you then have a shared experience that can serves as a great foundation.’”**

In some cases though, you may not know who it is that you want to talk to – and LinkedIn can help you with that too. If you know the names of the companies that you’re targeting, search for them in LinkedIn as well. Their company pages will come up in the search, and along with following those pages (which will keep you updated on the information that they share), you can also see a list of the employees that are affiliated with the company. That list can be sorted by people who are connected to you in the first, second and third degree – you may be already connected to someone at the company without realizing it, or share a direct connection with someone at the company who would be willing to make an introduction (something that we’ve talked about here at [Zen before](#)).

LinkedIn’s search benefits don’t just stop there though. As Carmody points out:

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**[W]ithin LinkedIn, you can do advanced searches around: (1) Geography so that you can pinpoint physical locations where you’d like to focus your efforts, (2) Industry so that you are focused on the right companies interested in what you have to offer, (3) Titles so that you are connecting with the right level, (4) Keywords to get really specific around what you’re looking for, and several other attributes. When you use Sales Navigator (the paid version of LinkedIn for sales professionals) you can go even deeper with things like Look Alike Leads-as the average sales has more than five decision makers to influence.”**

There’s a lot of flexibility and capability within LinkedIn that allows it to be a significant research tool in helping you to find the right people in the companies that you’re interested in connecting with, as long as you’re willing to do the research and the legwork, or you have an assistant willing to do it for you (as long as when it comes to engaging with that person, YOU are the one to do it).

## Tip Two: Share More and Sell Less

“The best way to sell is to share.” — Jim Rohn

I know what you're thinking – "Lindsay, I DON'T sell."

Are you sure?

When you're posting to LinkedIn, are you keeping your audience in mind and only sharing those things that would be of greatest interest to them, whether it's your work or someone else's? Or are you only posting the things that make you look good?

LinkedIn, like every social platform, is YOUR channel, yes, and so ultimately, you do of course want to make yourself look good. But it turns out that the best way to make yourself look like a thought leader (I know, everyone hates that phrase, but I still like it) is to share mostly other people's work, and only some of your own. It's the truth. The idea is that you have your finger on the pulse of the industry – whatever your area of expertise is, be it trademark law, trusts & estates, the NLRB, etc., the people that follow your profiles want to know what the latest information is on that subject – not just from you, but from all the experts in the field. You make yourself an expert by aligning yourself with their commentary when you share it (and you can also offer your own thoughts when you share).

Carmody helps illustrate this idea beautifully:

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**This one is a bit counter-intuitive, so let me explain. Imagine you're sitting at your desk and the phone rings. Out of force of habit, you accidentally answer the phone before checking Caller ID. Immediately the person on the other end of the line launches into a sales pitch. At this moment, all you are thinking is 'How quickly can I hang up on this person and get back to what I was doing?'"**

While 99% of the lawyers I know would NEVER pitch in their social posts, limiting your sharing on LinkedIn and other social media platforms to your own blog posts, articles, etc. is basically the same as launching into a sales pitch – it's as if you're saying, "I'm less worried about what my audience wants than I am about making sure you know what I think about this subject." Successful content marketing is about focusing on your audience, and offering them what they want – whether it comes from you or not. Particularly in the legal industry, you're dealing with an extraordinarily sophisticated buying audience, so they're absolutely able to read between the lines and understand that whether you're the one doing the writing, or you're just sharing the best of other commentary on a particular subject that you've found, that you're a go-to expert for that area.

Carmody's key line here is:

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**What they truly want is an expert who can help guide them through their (buyer's) journey.”**

Let's disregard that word “buyer” for a moment – your audience, ideally made up of clients and potential clients, wants an expert [you] to help guide them through their legal services journey. If you share content that shows them that you know what you're talking about, you know what their important issues are, you can then distill those issues into the salient points in your own writing for them, and you're friendly and engage with them when they want to connect with you, that gives them the confidence that working with you on a legal matter in the same vein would be similarly comfortable for them. I was speaking with one of my lawyers last week, and he explained that the reason that some of his clients have been clients for 25 years or more is because he gives them comfort and confidence, and he gets the job done. If you can translate that to what you're sharing on your social platforms like LinkedIn, then you'll be giving your audience what they want.

Carmody makes one more point that I'd like to emphasize here, and that's the idea that all talk and no action doesn't get the job done – we can discuss these two for Tuesdays suggestions forever, but unless there's eventually a commitment to implement changes, even small ones, in your content marketing and business development efforts, nothing changes. He says:

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**It's easy to get overwhelmed by all the cool things you can be doing on LinkedIn, so most people end up doing little to nothing. One of my favorite quotes from Tony Robbins is, 'Knowledge isn't power; it's potential power. Execution trumps knowledge any day of the week.' You have the knowledge, but if you do nothing with it then you're not putting the power of LinkedIn to work for you and your business.”**