



LinkedIn Focus: The Key to Being Recognized in Social Communities



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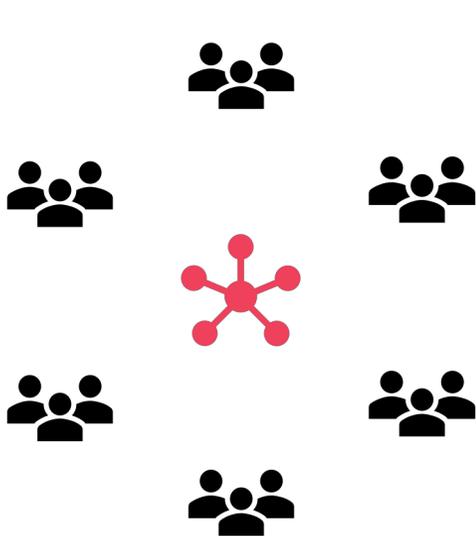
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Overview

The purpose of LinkedIn is found in its very name: “Linked” and “In.”

The premise of this social media site is that you are linked to other people through pages, groups, skills, and many more attributes within LinkedIn.

When performing prospect searches on LinkedIn you are able to search by:



- **First-degree connections** — people you are immediately connected with because you’ve accepted their connection invitation, or they’ve accepted yours (Person A).
- **Second-degree connections** — people you are connected to through your first-degree connections (i.e. Person A is connected to Person B).
- **Third-degree connections** — people you are connected to through a connection’s connection (i.e. you are connected to Person A, who is connected to Person B, who is connected to Person C).
- **Group connections** — people with whom you share mutual group membership.
- **LinkedIn members out of network** — everyone else on LinkedIn.

Overview

There is a huge value to having a large professional connection list on LinkedIn, especially if you sell BTB. But how do you reach beyond people you have worked with and start to expand your contact base on LinkedIn?

Many people choose InMail to reach connections beyond their existing network, but it has its limitations. While InMail enables you to send solicitation emails, it doesn't enable you to actually make the connection. It's very easy for prospects to simply ignore your InMail.

In this eBook we will show you how to use another tool, LinkedIn groups, to tap into professional communities where you can build recognition and as a result grow your contact base with targeted prospects.



What are LinkedIn Groups?

LinkedIn groups are communities that are created by people, companies, and/or organizations. A group will have a theme that will indicate the types of professionals sharing there.

LinkedIn groups often have rules. For example, many groups don't allow self-promotional content, like links to sales or services pages, special offers, job posts, webinars, and the like.

Within groups, members post discussions on topics and then others in the community who are interested in the subject matter will comment and engage.

The great thing about LinkedIn groups is that when you post a new discussion, it ends up in the weekly digest, which group members receive by email. This can exponentially increase your reach.

Let's do the math:

If you are in 20 professional groups that each have 1,000 members, ***you expose 20,000 people to your content every time you post.*** That's a lot of connections! An added benefit is that this also helps you indirectly overcome CASL (Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation).

What are LinkedIn Groups?

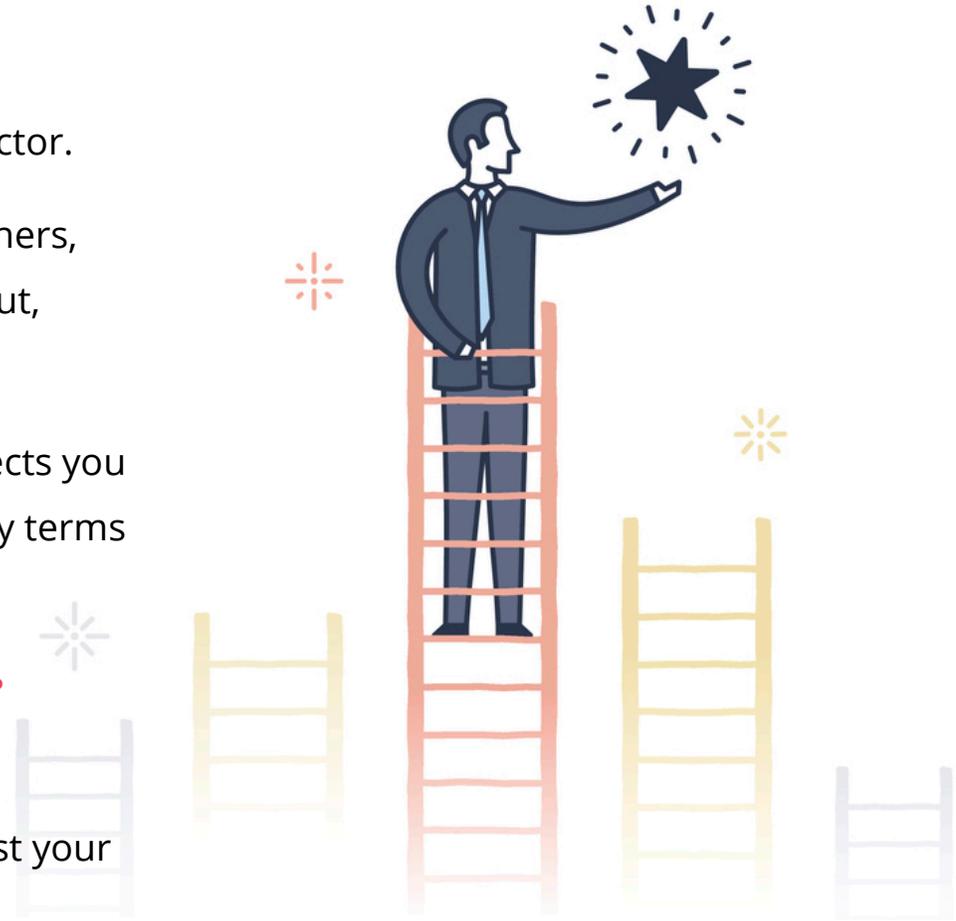
But perhaps the most important aspect of LinkedIn groups is the recognition factor.

As you engage with group members by posting discussions or responding to others, you can start to create new connections with prospects. Now when you reach out, they'll know who you are already.

This is, of course, much better than sending cold connection requests to prospects you don't know, *and* it makes sure that you are complying with LinkedIn's community terms and conditions.

Did you know that sending cold connection requests can actually violate those conditions?

Done right, LinkedIn groups are a huge opportunity that could significantly boost your reach.



How to Choose the Right LinkedIn Groups

When you start prospecting LinkedIn groups, it can seem overwhelming; there are a lot of choices available.

The key to success is choosing the right types of groups for your goals and making sure you understand the community rules.



Finding Groups

LinkedIn will recommend groups for you, plus you can also search for groups by keyword.

You might search by industry, by organization, or by interest. Don't be afraid to get niche, too — it's often better to be more specific than broad.

You can click on a group's name to learn more about it.

How to Choose the Right LinkedIn Groups

Types of Groups

The best types of groups to join are professional networking groups or association/membership body groups for professionals you are targeting.

Check to see:

1. **Who is the group owner?** Be careful that you don't join a group created by a competitor.
2. **Who is in the group?** Before joining a group, you can see the first, second, and third-degree connections of yours that are already members. If there are a lot, that is a good group to join.



How to Choose the Right LinkedIn Groups



- 3. How many members are in the group?** A high number of members (e.g. 20,000) can seem like a good sign — more people, more reach, right? Unfortunately, this can have the opposite effect. With so many members, your discussions are more likely to be drowned out in between a lot of other content. Conversely, too little membership (unless you are specifically choosing a niche group) doesn't really value the time you spend sharing there. We usually recommend anywhere between 1,000 to 5,000 members as a good-sized group to share in.

Community Rules

Just like you want to research the types of groups you're targeting, you also want to make sure that you understand the community rules of the group.

Is there a specification of how many posts you can make, or what types of content you can share?

How to Choose the Right LinkedIn Groups

Community Rules Continued...

Some groups may prohibit sharing links, or content that is too self-promotional. Or you may need to post discussions about a very specific topic area.

Others might even prohibit sharing blog posts from your own website. If this is part of your strategy, you'll need to be aware of this clause to assess whether you want to be a member.

While these rules may not be deal breakers for joining the group, you want to make sure that you understand them before engaging.



Share What Offers Value

The biggest mistake you can make in LinkedIn groups is sharing content that doesn't offer value.



This might look like:

- Link spamming.
- Sharing content without a thoughtful discussion topic or question.
- Only advertising your services.
- Repeatedly sharing the same discussions.

At the very least, doing this can get your content flagged for moderation in the group. At the very worst, it will get you removed from the group and could also harm your reputation with group members.

Share What Offers Value

In all cases, it's important that you don't just link to the content. You need to think of an actual discussion to go along with it.

For instance, let's say that you wanted to post about the latest Canadian interest rate increase.

You would not just link to an article or blog (even a blog on your site) about the increase. You would also want to include a discussion along the lines of:

"Do you think the recent rate increase is causing a reduction in real estate transactions?"

Or, perhaps you have a job opening for an IT Network Analyst that you want to fill.

You *could* start a discussion like:

"Our cutting-edge retail company is hiring an IT network analyst. This is a lucrative position with room for growth, benefits, and more.

Required: four years of experience, formal education, and ability to manage an omnichannel system. Do you know anyone who might be interested?"



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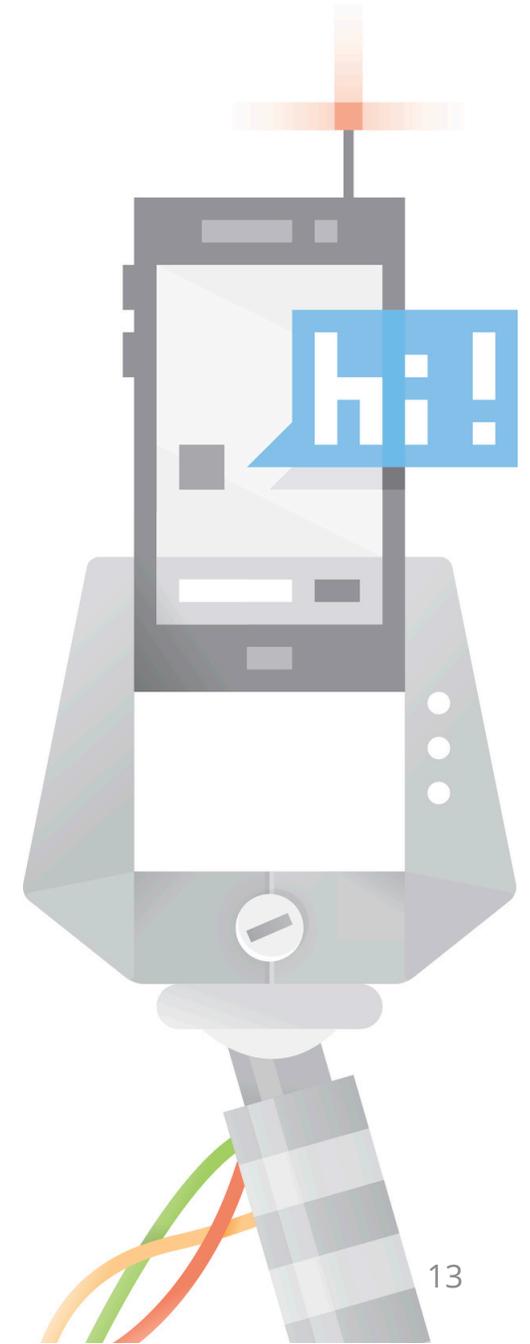
Share What Offers Value

But that might be more likely to be reported as spam or ignored by other group members. However, with a few simple shifts you can make it a thoughtful discussion *and* find people who might be potential hires.

Example:

“Our retail company is completely cloud-based and has many channels in house, including a bricks-and-mortar location, eCommerce store, mobile app, and phone sales. We are trying to create an IT strategy to manage all of these systems in one location while protecting our users’ privacy. Can you offer any advice on how to set this up?”

When you’re creating discussions, go for interesting and conversation-stimulating over promotional.



Share Consistently



Consistency is king on LinkedIn.

Does this sound familiar? You share a discussion on Week 1 because a topic is on your mind. Then Week 2 comes, and you are stuck in meetings, so you don't share. Same with Week 3. Week 4 you are reminded of your LinkedIn discussions and decide to share again.

This isn't the way you want to go about it! Missing two weeks might not seem like a big deal, but the reality is that if you want to build recognition, inconsistent posting isn't going to get you there.

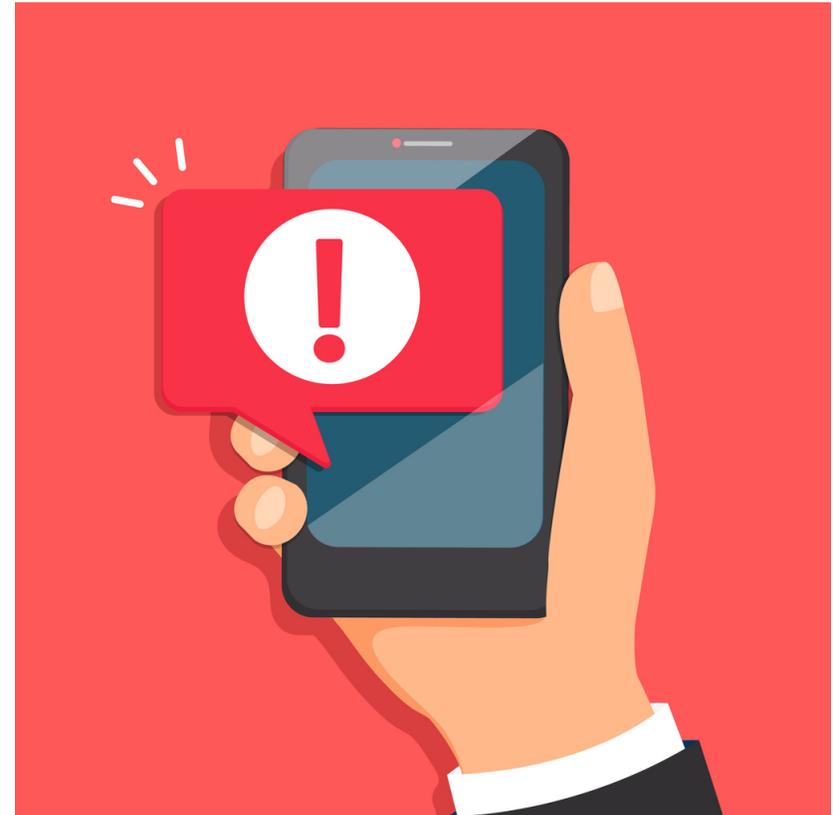
We recommend weekly sharing for consistency.

There's another side to this coin — besides sharing too infrequently, you also don't want to get excited and start oversharing. If your posts are doing well, it can be tempting to increase your frequency, but this is exactly when you should leave them wanting more.

Share Consistently

Daily sharing might seem like a great idea, but it can have negative consequences, such as:

- Your posts being penalized by algorithms.
- People becoming too accustomed to seeing your posts and scrolling past them.
- A lot of unnecessary time on your part that could be spent on other areas of your job.
- When in doubt, limit sharing to once per week, but do your best to never miss a week.



Dos and Don'ts of Sharing

Do

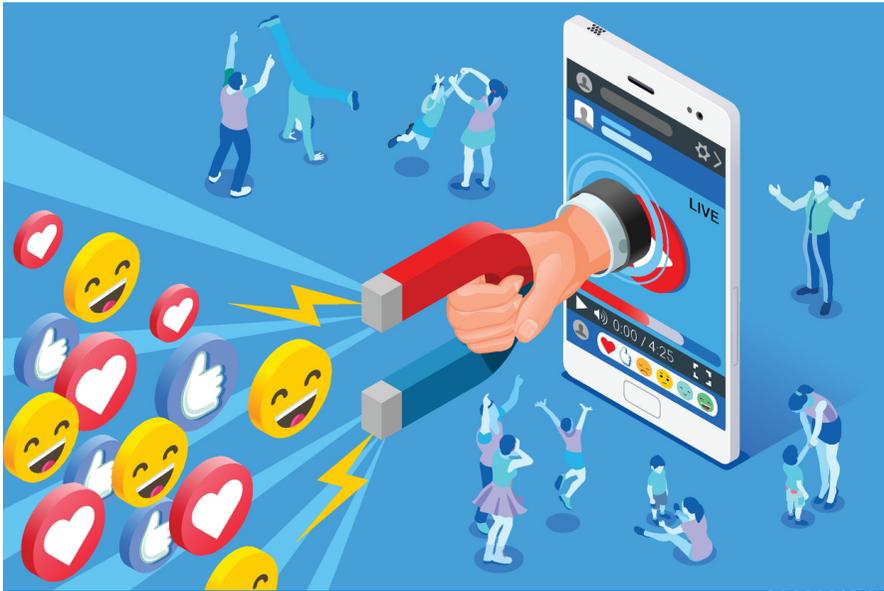
- ✓ Share content that is of value.
- ✓ Accompany content with an interesting discussion topic.
- ✓ If members engage with your content, re-engage. For instance, if someone comments, respond to them.
- ✓ Engage on other members' threads if you think you can add value.

Do NOT

- × Over post – once per week is enough.
- × Spam links.
- × Ignore people who comment on your threads.
- × Get into impassioned arguments with people who comment on your threads. Remember that you are building relationships here — you don't want to risk alienating a possible connection, or other members who might see the post.

Value Beyond LinkedIn

It can seem sometimes that LinkedIn exists in a silo, and while it is a great tool for building recognition among members, it doesn't offer value outside of that.



This is far from true!

Outside of the recognition you gain inside LinkedIn communities, there's a lot of opportunity to boost your other digital marketing efforts with these discussions.

Consider the following:

- You share a link to an interesting article and group members click

this drives traffic to the content source, which gives that source more site

Value Beyond LinkedIn

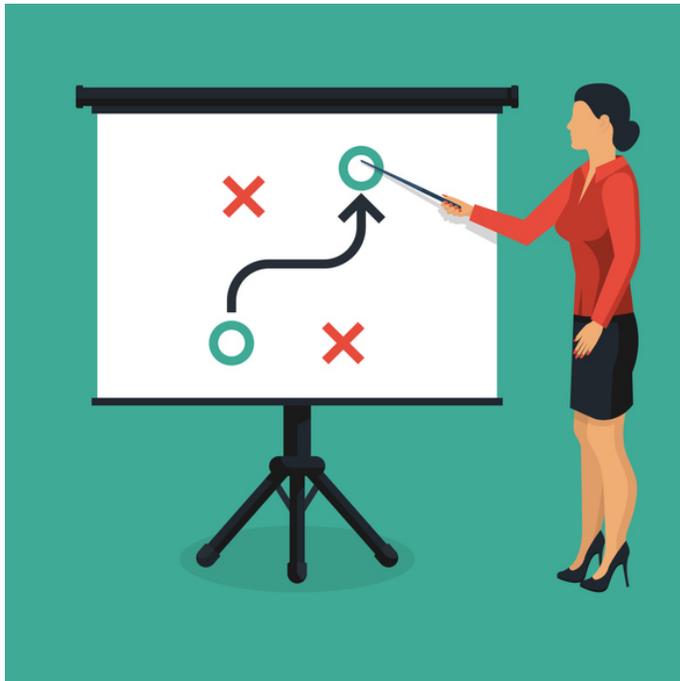
- You create thoughtful blog content and optimize it for search engines (SEO). You then link this blog to discussions. This can give your blog more traffic, which will actually help the post rank better organically on search engines, like Google.
- You can gain a better understanding of your audience. For instance, if you are a business automation company you might ask questions of your targeted groups about the factors that stop them from automating. You could then look for solutions to incorporate into your marketing.

It should be reiterated — your related content should **not** be self-promotional.

For instance, *don't* post a discussion like “What are you planning for your business in the coming year?” and link to your company's sales page.

A better practice is to optimize a call to action into your blog banner or side bar to cross-promote your solutions without the offer being within the content you are sharing.

Key Takeaways



- ✓ Join 10, 15, or 20 professional LinkedIn groups that would include your prospects.
- ✓ Start sharing relevant weekly content.
- ✓ Whenever possible, link to search engine optimized content on your website.
- ✓ Do not spam groups. Accompany content with an insightful discussion topic.
- ✓ Share consistently, but don't overdo it.
- ✓ Re-engage those who engage you.

Conclusion

We hope this eBook has given you a better understanding of how to improve your recognition on LinkedIn.

For sales and marketing staff, especially those who sell BTB, LinkedIn is one of the best-performing social media platforms. And group sharing is a huge opportunity.

If you're not sharing in groups, you are only scratching the surface of what LinkedIn can accomplish.

More recognition can lead to more prospects, which can lead to more sales and ultimately more revenue — all without ever leaving your office.

The real question is can you afford to *not* be on LinkedIn?



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Conclusion

If you think your schedule is too full for consistent LinkedIn group posting, or you have questions about what content to post, you might consider outsourcing.

For instance, DigiForce can act as your company staff, find groups, join them, post weekly discussions, and engage — keeping you informed every step of the way.



For more information about this program, please reach out to David Sahly:

- Email: david.sahly@digiforcemarketing.ca
- Phone: 1-888-701-4441 ext. 7
- Web: www.digiforcemarketing.ca



About the Author

DigiForce is a digital marketing agency that understands enterprise business. Our team takes a purpose-driven approach, letting strategy lead content. We have a combined 20+ years working in the digital marketing field.

Within our team, we have experts in strategic marketing, content creation, pay-per-click advertising, website development, and more. We are a one-stop-shop that is your marketing department's greatest ally. We allow you to get more done using less resources.

Work with a Team with a Diverse Skillset

There is nothing worse than reviewing content created by a third party and feeling that they are completely disconnected from your business. Our team members don't just know digital, we also know how to translate your company's message.

We have 20+ years of experience working with companies who provide service to the following industries:

- Technology and software.



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About the Author

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- Real estate.
- Legal/government.
- Financial – lending, mortgages, economy, insolvency, account/tax, and more.
- CPG.

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Learn more at www.digiforcemarketing.ca.



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