



PREMIER TRUST

"It's A Matter Of Trust"SM

Using LinkedIn to Grow Your Business

The business-focused social networking site LinkedIn offers a number of ways to help you increase visibility and promote your services. LinkedIn is the easiest way to network with industry professionals to share referrals and it has become extremely useful for prospecting for new clients. An often overlooked benefit of maintaining a LinkedIn profile is that it will improve your website rankings in search engines.

LinkedIn currently has over 110 million users consisting mainly of business professionals who generally are well educated and have an above average household income. Of all the social media networks available, LinkedIn will give you the most return on your investment of time creating maximum exposure making this a great way to network with your target audience. LinkedIn offers a number of features that will help advisors increase visibility including:

- Connecting with your existing clients
- Requesting referrals through your existing clients' networks
- Linking and being introduced to potential clients and industry professionals
- Promoting your business and services through your company profile
- Joining discussion with industry professionals and potential clients

Getting Started:

To get started, create a personal LinkedIn profile (it's free and takes less than 5 minutes). Once you have created your basic profile that covers your employment and contact information, optimize your profile by adding a picture and information about your interests, education, awards, and certifications. We strongly suggest you put in a professional photo, if you have one, since this will probably be the first impression visitors will have of you and your firm.

After you have filled in the details for your personal profile you should build your professional connections. There are 5 basic ways to find and add connections on LinkedIn:

- Scan Your e-mail Contact List (automated option in LinkedIn)
- People You May Know (LinkedIn option)
- Use Keywords in Your Profile to search for colleagues and classmates
- Search manually for people you know using Search Box
- See who your existing connections know and invite them to connect with you

"Recommendations" is a LinkedIn tool where you can ask your connections/network to recommend your work. CAUTION: financial advisors are not permitted to post public recommendations due to FINRA and SEC regulations. We suggest you first check with your compliance department and if permitted, get three recommendations and **keep them private**. New visitors to your profile will know someone has endorsed you, even if they can't see the recommendation. LinkedIn will list your profile as 100% complete and you will benefit greatly as a 100% complete profile is **40 times** more likely to be found in a LinkedIn search and you will appear higher in search rankings.

Here is a list of all the items required for a complete profile:

- Current position
- Two past positions
- Education History
- Profile Summary
- Profile Photo
- Specialties
- At Least Three Recommendations

Increase Your Visibility with LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn Groups create a public forum where you can interact with other people, post content you find interesting and display your financial expertise by participating in conversations. With over 700,000 groups to choose from you are likely to find a handful with members that include your target prospects and/or your professional referral network.

To join a group, simply click on the “Groups” link in the top level navigation bar and then use the search bar to plug in relevant words. For example, you could type in “Estate Planners in Texas” or “Doctors in Boston” to find relevant groups.

When you first get started try to limit yourself to no more than five groups rather than spreading yourself too thin by joining a lot of groups at once. With five groups you can focus on engaging people in the group and consistently adding something interesting to the conversation. When it adds to the group conversation, include links to your website or your relevant content in your group posts. This will increase traffic to your website and educate group members about your firm.

Typically, group members are not looking for a sales pitch, so don't give them one! Always add to the group conversation, get to know the members, and give them relevant information. Networking is a great way to find qualified prospects!

Target Marketing On LinkedIn

As an advisor, you can use LinkedIn strategically to prospect and generate new clients. A more detailed breakdown of the user stats we mentioned earlier follows:

- Average age of a user is 41
- Average household income is \$109,703
- 95% of users are college educated
- 24% have a portfolio value of \$250k+

You can create a targeted marketing campaign on LinkedIn by using “Request an Introduction” or “Run an Advanced Search.”

Request an Introduction

LinkedIn is based on connections; the more people you know, the larger your network of 2nd and 3rd degree connections. In other words, the more people you are connected or linked to, the more people you can get connected to. How that works in LinkedIn is you ask the people you are connected to in LinkedIn to, generate an introduction to their connections. Then it's up to your connection to decide whether to forward your request to the desired recipient.

This is a great way to enhance your client referral program. Before you meet with a client for his or her annual or regular review, connect with them on LinkedIn. Take a look at their connections and, rather than asking for the usual referral at the end of the meeting, take a different approach. Create a list of five people to whom you would like an introduction. At the end of the meeting share the list with your client, explain that you are interested in meeting each of them and ask for a specific introduction to one of the five. The more specific you are with your client, the easier it is for them to refer you.

Run an Advanced Search

If you have a LinkedIn Premium Account, another way to target prospects is by doing a little information gathering and eventually, cold calling. Always keep in mind the Federal "Do Not Call List" and regulations. You would use LinkedIn Advanced Search options to find and learn about particular people within your target market. Then you can use the information to offer your new prospects your services tailored to them.

For example, you can search for the following in the advanced search options:

- Last Name
- Keywords in their Online Profile
- Location (Country, Postal Code, Radius)
- Position or Title
- Company
- School
- Industry
- Relationship to you
- Language

Conclusion

LinkedIn is a valuable tool for marketing professional services directly to potential clients through their already trusted advisors, attorneys, CPAs, etc. Financial Advisors should become well versed in its use and target new business the 21st Century way, using business oriented social media sites.

Good Luck!

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