



LinkedIn Guide

There are over 4 million Australians signed up with LinkedIn. International numbers jump to over 350 million users worldwide.

They're all looking for professionals to connect to and do business with. No matter the size or nature of your business, someone out there is searching for you.

If you're not signed up for LinkedIn, some of your competition certainly is, and the people searching for businesses like yours are going to get in touch with them instead.

More than any of the other social media platforms LinkedIn is about 2 things -professionalism and networking. It's not about showing kooky pictures of you and your team, or sharing comic strip pictures that relate somehow to your industry.

While you can make a profile for your business (we'll show you how) the focus of LinkedIn is mainly on the people behind the brands. That means the focus is on *you* and how you make connections with other professionals.

LinkedIn is a streamlined connection forum; nothing more and nothing less. It's that clear-cut focus on networking that makes LinkedIn a powerful tool you're going to use to blow up your business.

Contents

- Why You Should be Using LinkedIn for Your Business.
- Get Familiar with LinkedIn Pages.
- Editing Your Profile.
 - Customizing Our URL.
 - Contact Info.
- Recommendations.
- Free Versus Paid Should We Pay to Get Premium?
- How to Generate Money-making Leads.
 - Generating Leads from a General Audience.
 - Generating Leads with an Exclusive Audience (Creating a Group).
- Joining Good Groups.
 - Gaining More Relevant Connections from Groups.
 - Writing an Enticing LinkedIn Connection Invitation.
- Quality Content.
- Group Discussion Don'ts.
- LinkedIn Business Page.
 - Creating a Business Page.
 - Using Our LinkedIn Business Page.

Why You Should Be Using LinkedIn for Your Business

1. You Can Attract Future Hires.

LinkedIn is *the* networking site for serious recruitment. Resumes and portfolios are all there for you to peruse when on the hunt for some new talent.

More importantly, LinkedIn creates a constant professional presence for your company in the top online hiring hotspot in the world. Your company will be on display for exactly the kind of people you want to hire, and their networks of contacts.

2. You Spread Your Brand.

LinkedIn is a networking web. As you show off your professionalism your brand will first touch the people closest to you, then they in turn will spread the good news to people they know, and so on. It's international word-of-mouth at digital-age speeds.

(Don't be afraid to ask satisfied customers or clients to write you a glowing recommendation on LinkedIn.)

3. Free Advertising.

LinkedIn lets you create a full profile for your business. This means that you can add SEO to your internet presence to catch more viewers.

If you're unfamiliar with SEO it stands for Search Engine Optimization. When someone looks for a business just like yours in a search engine like Google or within LinkedIn they type in an SEO keyword or phrase.

So for example a potential client might try "SMSF accountants." If they want a local business then they might try "SMSF accountants Sydney" or some combination thereof.

[Non-accountant examples will be in red.] So let's say you own a tobacco shop called "Stick *That* in Your Pipe." Someone looking for you might try "tobacco store" or if they want their search to be more locally refined they might try "tobacco store Sydney."

These are SEO key phrases, and you want to do your best to "own" these phrases. By owning them you turn up higher in the Google or LinkedIn results. The higher you are in the results the more potential customers are likely to investigate your website or profile over that of your competition.

LinkedIn gives you a chance to build some SEO key phrases into your profile, giving you a better chance to show up higher when someone searches for a business like yours in LinkedIn. This in turn gives you more chances to send these people over to your main website where you can convert them into paying customers.

4. You Can Target Sales Pitches.

You might not be a generalized firm. Perhaps you want to spend a lot of your time focusing on gaining clients in the small-to-medium business range, as opposed to doing personal income tax work.

Your business might have a specific niche of buyers you want to target. If you're a business-to-business affair selling ergonomic furniture you may want

to focus your efforts on big businesses that have a lot of butts that need office chairs under them.

With LinkedIn you can steer your branding efforts in the right direction by joining select groups of people to interact with, groups full of the right kind of people to recommend you to potential clients. You don't have to waste time shot-gunning your networking efforts in the hopes of possibly hitting a worthwhile target.

5. You Can Get and Give Outsourcing Referrals.

There may be work that you don't want to handle in-house. But jumping blindly into outsourcing waters can be a financial and security risk for your business. With LinkedIn you can vet outsource companies through your contacts, and give your own appraisals in return.

6. You Can Grow Your Industry Presence.

Find business tips. Find out about industry events. Find associations, guilds, and clubs. With LinkedIn you're going to find groups filled with people and potential customers that you can connect and interact with.

7. Give and Get Answers.

Running a business is a process where you never stop learning. Sometimes you're going to run into questions you just don't have the experience to answer yourself.

By throwing out your questions to your groups you'll be introducing yourself and your business, and giving someone the chance to be a hero by sharing their knowledge. From such tiny conversational acorns mighty business alliances can grow.

The vice versa of this is that you earn a grateful new contact by doling out wisdom of your own. You can gain respect from your new community by showing off your expertise.

Added bonus – if you answer a bunch of questions then potential customers who take a peek at your group are going to see you being the top authority in that field. What customer isn't going to want the guy or gal with all the answers to handle their business?

8. You Can Raise Funding.

Your brand and your knowledge will be out there for all to see. As it just so happens some of those viewers are investors looking for their next venture.

9. You Can Form Business Chains.

You're one link in your clients' business chain. Say you handle SMSF accounts. Those SMSF clients may be on the lookout for investor advisors before they turn their files over to you, and they'll need an independent auditor once you handle the tax work.

With LinkedIn you can find professionals in your business chain to form referral alliances with, shifting files along the chain from them to you and back again.

You're one link in your clients' business chain. Let's say you're a kitchenware company, specialising in restaurant-grade equipment. Your clients are restaurant owners. If they're opening a new spot they'll probably need a furniture store and a produce distributor.

With LinkedIn you can form chains of referral with such providers, recommending your customers to them, and they will do the same for you.

10. You Can Share Your Website Content.

If you have a blog on your main website (and you should) you can bring that content over to your LinkedIn profile.

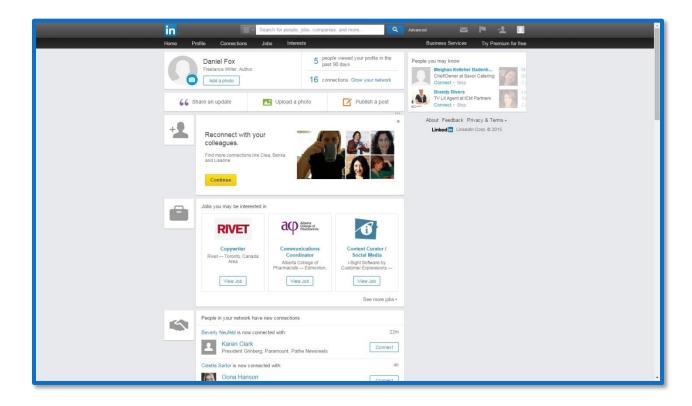
Even better, you can target that knowledge to potential customers and clients, including invitations to chat or links back to your LinkedIn profile or main website.

11. You Can Keep Tabs on the Competition.

Your competition is on LinkedIn to connect and show off too. Happily this means you can keep an eye on their personnel, their business practices, and what kind of content they offer to woo customers.

Get Familiar with LinkedIn Pages

Head to LinkedIn.com and sign up like you would for just about any other online service. Once you're able to log in your main page is going to look something like this:



If it looks a bit overwhelming, don't worry, you'll get used to it. It does take some time to become familiar with the different sections and options available to you.

What we're seeing in the image above is our Home page. Keep in mind that this is our personal page, not our business' page (which we will get to later).

The majority of the work we do on LinkedIn will be done through our personal profile (as opposed to our business' profile) because LinkedIn is all about the people behind a company logo.

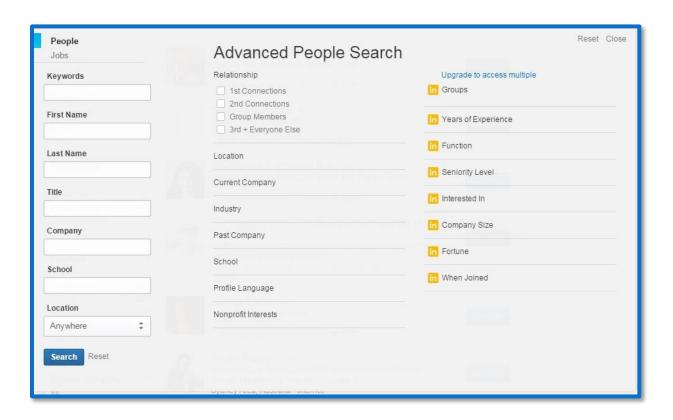
At the very top in the grey bar we see:



The LinkedIn logo (the "in" in the blue box at the left) is just another way to return to our Home page.

In the middle is a search box. The drop-down arrow on the left of the search box gives us ways to filter a search by People, or Universities, or Jobs, etc...

To the right of the search box is an Advanced search option, which gives us this:



This gives us another way to filter searches. " 1^{st} Connections" are the people who we are immediately connected with. " 2^{nd} Connections" are one link removed, people who are connected to our 1^{st} Connections. And then of course

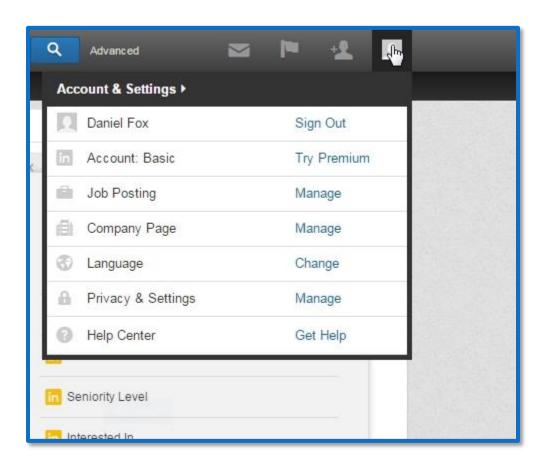
 3^{rd} Connections are one further link removed, people linked to our 2^{nd} Connections.

Back on the main Home page, the envelope icon is for mail.

The flag icon gives a list of new and past notices and alerts.

The head with a + sign beside it is a way to have further contacts suggested to us, and offers the option of letting LinkedIn search through our email contact lists for people we already know on LinkedIn.

If we hover over the final icon (the head in the box) we get:



Moving down the Home page, we come to the darker horizontal bar:



Home brings us back to this Home page.

Hovering over **Profile** gives us the choices of editing our profile, seeing who has viewed our profile, and seeing changes we made to our profile.

Connections is where we manage our Connections with various people. It also has options to let LinkedIn search through our email contact lists for more Connections, and to hook up our Connections with various sharing-oriented software like Evernote if we want to work on a project together.

Jobs is where we can search through job listings on LinkedIn, filtering for our interests and field.

Interests lets us search out interesting posts from our Connections, or search out top influencers in our field to follow. It's also where we can switch to a page showing the groups we belong to, or company pages we manage.

Over on the right side of this bar is **Business Services**, which allows us to post jobs, advertise, or join a couple of premium (paid) services.

Feel free to click through any of these options, they won't commit you to anything, and you can always return Home.

Heading back to the Home page, we find a bunch of white boxes arranged vertically down the centre of the page. This is a timeline like those found on Twitter or Facebook. New posts from your connections and suggested actions or stories from LinkedIn appear here chronologically with the most recent posts at the top.

Just above these white boxes is a mini-profile of ourselves, a number telling us how many people viewed our profile over the last three months, and how many connections we have.

Just below that is where we create posts via "Share an update," "Upload a photo," and "Publish a post."

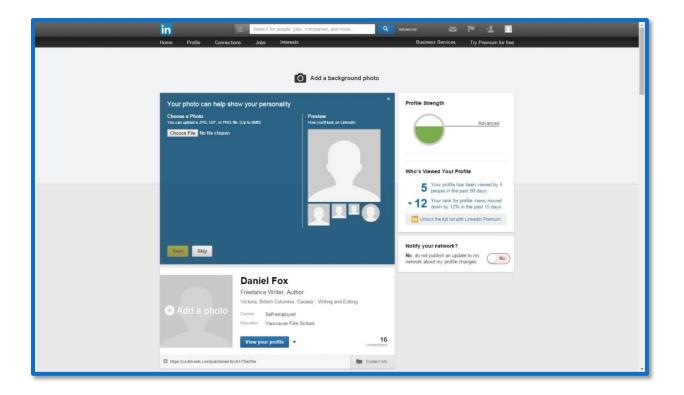
"Share an update" is the briefer of the two text options. Think of it as being like a Tweet, although it can be longer than Twitter's 140 characters.

"Publish a post" is much longer, like a blog post or an article. We can create a headline for it and add an image. We're also given some font options like bold, headline, italics, and the like.

And finally off to the right of the newsfeed boxes is a smaller white box that will always suggest more people for us to connect with.

Editing Your Profile

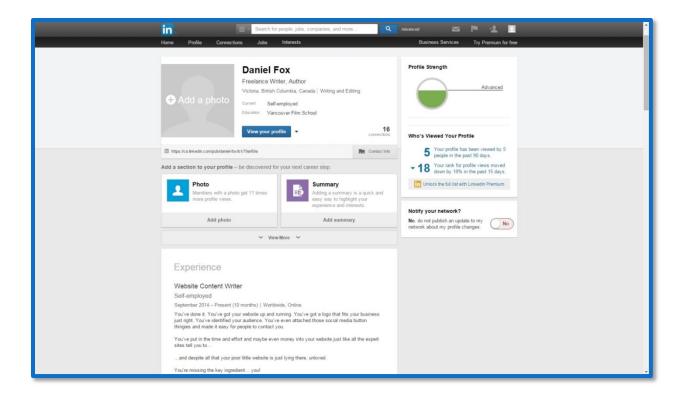
Hover over Profile and select "Edit Profile." We'll be brought to a page that looks like this:



One point to remember as we go through our profile – everything we do here can be edited, so feel free to experiment a bit with your text and pictures to see what gets the best response.

The big blue box at the top is LinkedIn's way of helping us set up our profile page. This will disappear once we fill out our profile, or we can just hit the "skip" option at the bottom left of the box.

For the sake of making our profile page look like it will the rest of the time once the blue box is gone we're going to close the blue box (however feel free to use the blue box as your guide to setting up your profile page). Without the blue box our page looks like this:



Let's start with the photo. Since this is our personal page we're going to want a picture of us, not our company logo or graphic. We need a fairly close head-shot of us looking professional. Since LinkedIn is ultra-professional what we don't want is a goofy type of picture that might be okay as our Facebook or Twitter profile picture.

The rest of the info in this box is text. Hovering over any bit of text lets us edit it by clicking the pencil graphic that shows up.

In the same box as our profile picture is our name. Immediately below our name is some text detailing our job titles. We recommend you put in all of your titles here, even if you wear multiple hats that don't necessarily have anything to do with each other.

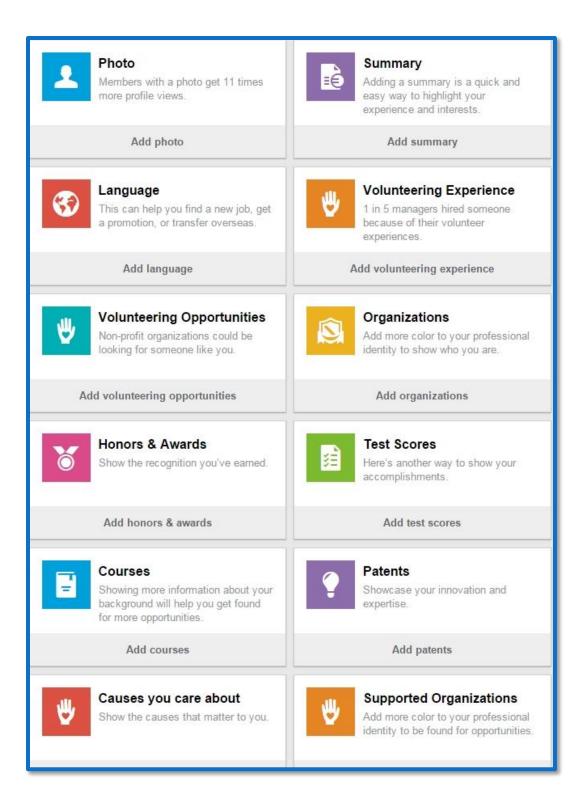
Still within that top box we can edit our current place of employment, our education, and we can add past places of employment.

The number at the bottom right shows the number of connections we have.

The big blue "View your profile" button allows us to see our profile page as visitors would see it.

And finally at the very bottom right of this box is a button that lets us update our contact info. Pressing this lets us update our email addresses, connect a Twitter account (to make our Twitters show up on LinkedIn), add websites, add an IM address, and so on. We'll get a bit more in depth into the Contact section in a little bit.

Moving down to the next set of boxes, **Photo** and **Summary**, we find a "View More" option. Pressing that gives us a whole bunch of boxes of items that LinkedIn suggests we fill in to make our profile more appealing:



Scrolling further down we come to a box where we detail our **Experience**. Here we can go into fuller detail about our responsibilities and accomplishments at past and present jobs.

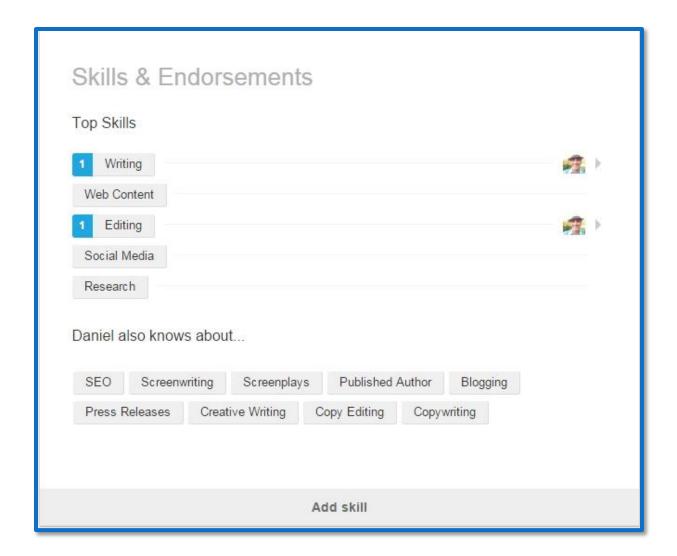
Two things are recommended for when we're filling out the experience section.

First, write it in the first person, not in the third person. "I did this, I did that," not "[Your name here] did this and that." Think of it as if we're having a quick conversation with someone, pitching them our services. It's much more inviting than someone talking about themselves in the third person.

The other recommendation is to break up big blocks of text. Graphics and pictures can help, but it can be as simple as throwing in a bullet-point list here and there.

Next is a box for **Education**.

Then we come to the box for Skills & Endorsements:



In this section we add tags that show off our abilities. Connections we've worked with or know us are then able to endorse those skills. The people who endorse us have their portrait show up beside the skills they have endorsed, as seen above.

Below the Endorsements box is the **Projects** section, which is where we can go into detail about the work we did on individual jobs.

And finally there's a section showing off which **Groups** we're following.

The more of the boxes we can add and fill out, the more interesting we'll be to people who choose to view our profile.

Also, the more boxes we have filled out, the more information LinkedIn has to suggest people we might want to connect with, thereby expanding our network.

One tip – if you add your birthday information, only add the day and month, not the year. The year can be used in identity theft.

A second tip – when we're reaching out to connect with someone we're given the option of filling in some text. Personalize the connection invitation. It makes it more likely the person will accept, and relieves them of the obligation of having to ask who the heck we are if we haven't been in contact for a while.

<u>Never use LinkedIn's generic invitation text.</u> It's impersonal and boring and makes it look like we just don't care if the person connects with us or not.

So let's say we've checked to see who has looked at our profile recently and we see someone we would like to connect with. Here's a template of text we can try:

Subject line: Hey [their first name], thanks for viewing my profile!

Main body: I saw you viewed my profile and am reaching out to discover if there is any way I can help you. As you would have seen I am a [your Profession] and so if you need any advice or just want to connect then let me know!

My email to connect on LinkedIn is [your Email Address]

Have a great day!

[Your First Name]

And here's a template for asking our 1st connections to introduce us to someone:

Subject line: [Insert 1st Degree Contact First Name], can you introduce me to [Insert 2st Degree Contact Full Name]?

Main body: Hi [Insert 1st Degree Contact First Name],

As you know, I specialize in helping [Insert Product/Service] in [Insert City] achieve [Insert Benefit]. I was doing some research on LinkedIn today and noticed you are connected to [Insert 2nd Degree Contact Full Name].

How well do you know [Insert 2nd Degree Contact First Name]? Would you be willing to introduce me to [him/her]? I would like to invite [him/her] to [Insert Activity].

If you are not comfortable with introducing me via LinkedIn, I totally understand.

And, please let me know if I can return the favor and introduce you to someone in my network.

Cheers.

[Insert Your First Name]

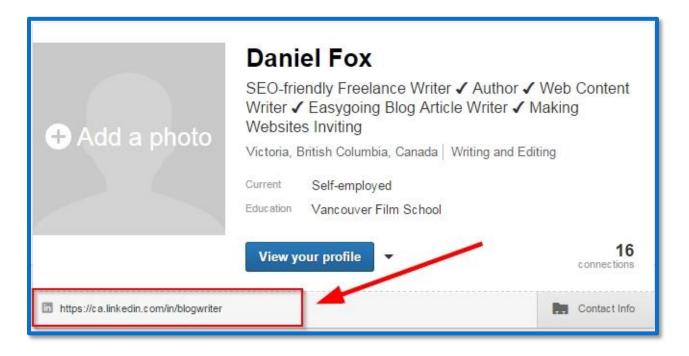
Customizing Our URL.

Our URL is the address that appears in the address bar at the top of any web page. When we join LinkedIn we'll get a default URL that will usually start with a LinkedIn address that is country-specific (like https://au.linkedin.com/in).

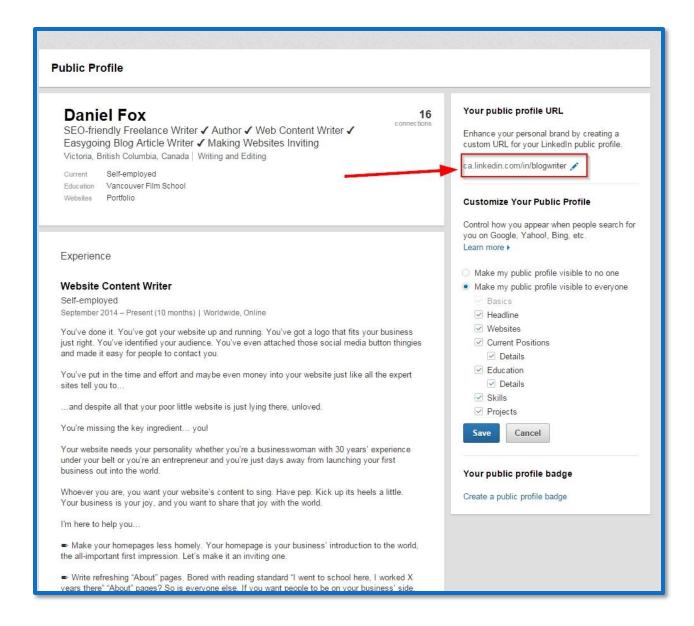
This will usually be followed by our name and then a bunch of code.

We can modify the end part of this code to be more memorable, more appealing, and to serve us better in Google's and LinkedIn's search efforts.

To do so hit the Profile option at the top of the page. The section we want to edit is at the bottom left of the top white box:



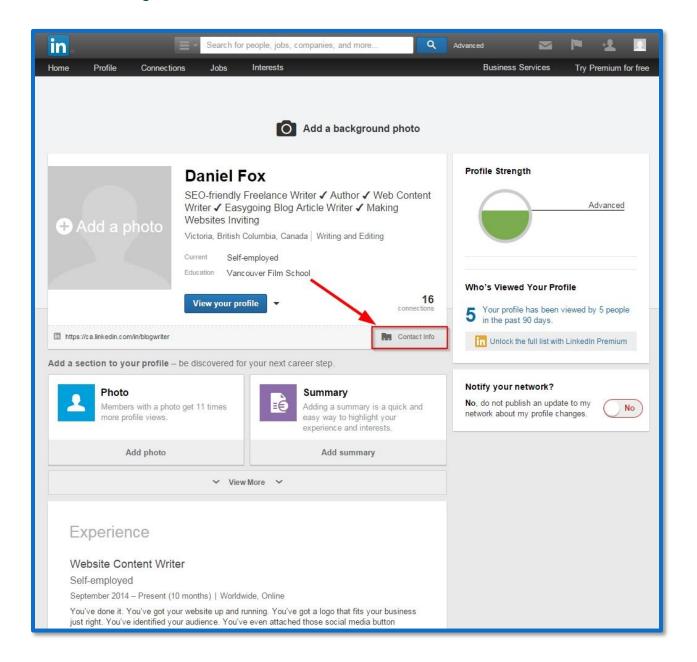
When we hover over the URL address as shown in the red box we're given a little cog to click. That brings us to a page where we can edit the address:



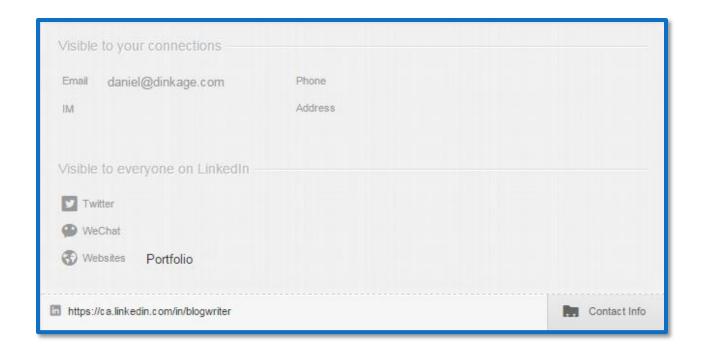
We can't change the first half, but the end bit is all ours. So what phrase should we stick in there to best exemplify the name of our game? It could be our name, business name, or as shown above the name of one of the services we have to offer. Don't be afraid to experiment, the address can always be edited at a later date.

Contact Info

Let's tweak our contact info. Go to Profile at the top and choose "Edit Profile" which will bring us to:



Select the small Contact Info box as shown above. This leads us to:



Our email will look a tad more professional if it's not a generic yahoo or gmail address. If you've built your website through one of the DIY sites like Weebly or Wix there should be an option to create an email address that is connected with the site (it will have the same ending, like "dinkage" above, as the name of the actual site).

If that's not an option slap "create email address" into Google and hunt around.

We also have the options of giving out an Instant Message service, a phone number, a physical location address, a Twitter account, a WeChat account, and finally our Websites.

Here's a little trick for the Websites. Choose edit beside "Websites" to get:

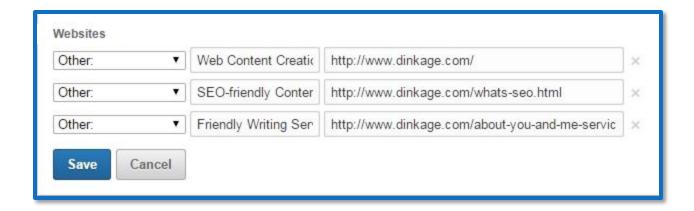


On the left side are those 3 drop-down menus. Choose "Other" for each of them. That lets us enter our own text description for each box instead of taking the premade designations:



If you have any statistics for your website, choose the 3 pages that seem to draw the most visitors (otherwise take your best guess – for example, don't put a contact form in one of these slots, instead try a services page).

In each of the 3 "Website Title" boxes we're going to put a little description of the different services what we have to offer (e.g. what customer pains we can alleviate):



Your firm might try "Personal Income Tax," "Compliance," "Small Business Bookkeeping"... whatever you have on your menu of offerings.

So for example if we owned a fitness business we might try "Nutrition," or "Exercise plans," or "Simple fitness tips." We can try anything and everything that our business has to offer, linking back to the corresponding web page.

This gives visitors to our LinkedIn profile more items they can select from our menu, which means there are now more ways to entice them to click through to our main website.

It's also a little more SEO related to our business for LinkedIn's search engine to find.

Plus it clearly defines what we do. Some business' names are vague – say [Your name here] Consulting... but consulting involving what? By editing the text ourselves we can be crystal clear as to what it is we do.

This also means that people who do click through are relevant visitors – they didn't just stumble onto our site, they came because they're at the very least interested in what our business has to offer them.

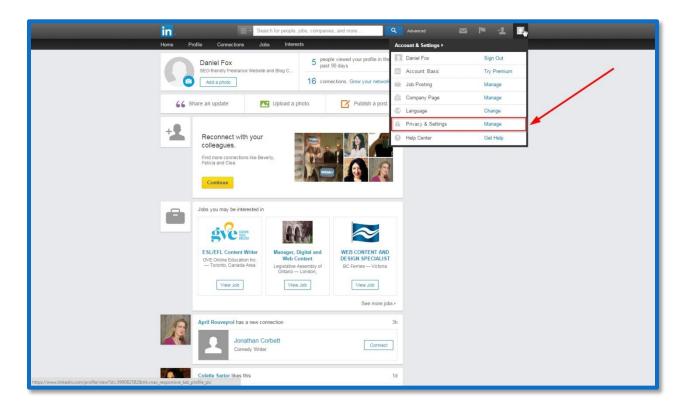
As always, these selections can be edited, so try out different phrases and connected web pages to see which combinations get you the most activity.

Recommendations

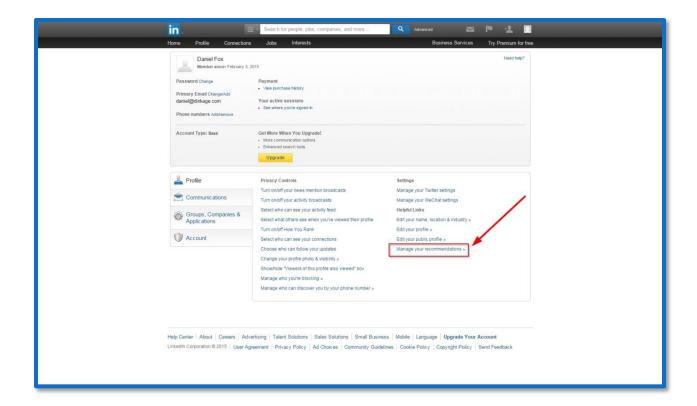
Recommendations are generally going to hold more value for people checking out our profile than the Skill Endorsements. Skill Endorsements are just clicks. People will click clickable boxes just because they're there.

Recommendations require people to actually take the time to write about us.

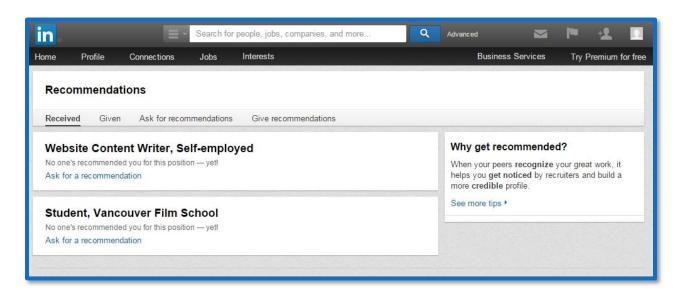
To get to our Recommendations page we can go through the settings box found at the top right:



Choose "Manage" next to "Privacy and Settings." From the next screen choose "Manage your recommendations":

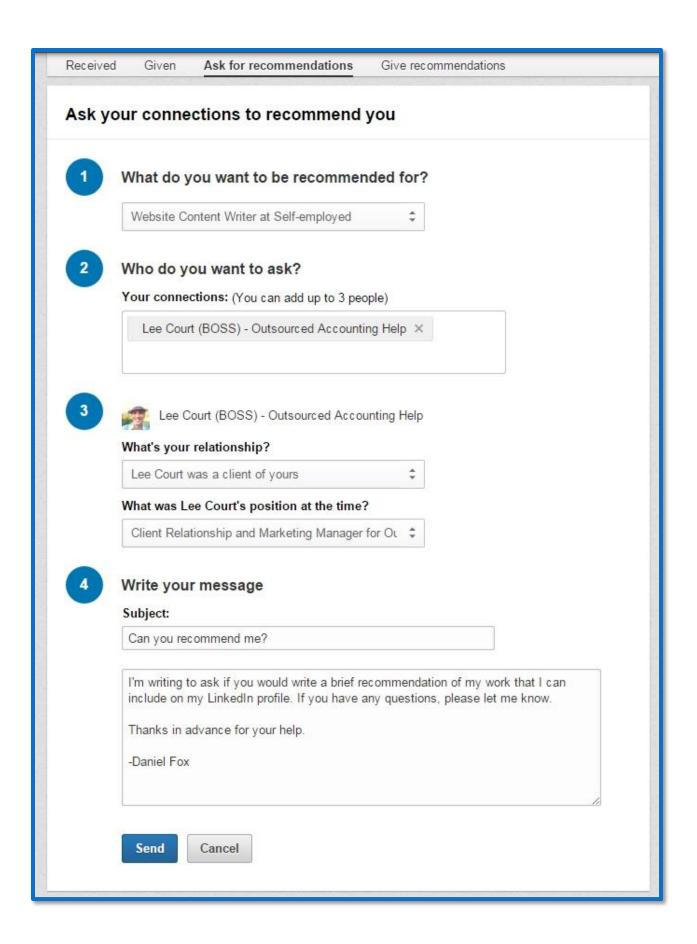


This leads us to the recommendations page:



Since this is a new LinkedIn profile there's nothing here yet, but this is where we get all of our recommendation business done.

Along ti	ne top we're given four tabs – recommendations we've received, that
we've giv	ven, a tab for asking someone to give us a recommendation, and a tak
to give a recommendation to someone else.	
LinkedIn	n does its best to help us with the last two options by giving drop-dowr
	nd premade text:



Do not use the premade text when asking for a recommendation.

If we're asking someone to take time out of their day to write us a recommendation, the very least we can do is personalize our request. This shows that we're not just spamming our requests out hither and thither, but that we care about the kudos from the specific person we're writing to.

If it's applicable we can even be pre-emptive and write a solid recommendation for the other person first. It'll add a bit of incentive (or at least a sense of guilt and obligation) for them to return the favour.

Free Versus Paid – Should We Pay to Get Premium?

The short answer – no.

The extended answer is that there's nothing in premium that we really need, certainly nothing worth paying for.

The first thing that premium nabs us is early access to new features that are being rolled out. Generally speaking this dives into the realms of bells and whistles, but adds nothing that is going to help generate business leads. Besides, all such features eventually become free anyway.

The second thing that premium gets us is LinkedIn tries to help us fit "powerful keywords" (basically SEO) into our summary section. However the examples LinkedIn's program gives tend to be things that people would never search for like "sales organizations" or "providing insights." Nobody is going to type these terms into the search engine when looking for a business.

How to Generate Money-Making Leads

So we've dealt with all the background stuff that is going to make us more appealing and give us more integrity and an air of expertise within our field. Now it's time to get to work turning our connections into convertible business leads.

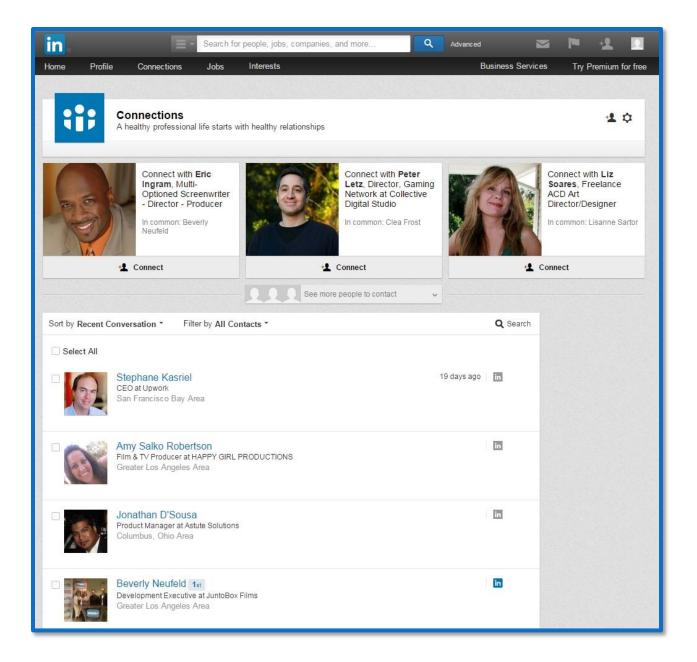
Generating Leads from a General Audience

First let's look at grabbing leads from an audience that is interested in our field or industry, but not necessarily exclusively from us.

Click on "Connections" along the top of your personal profile.



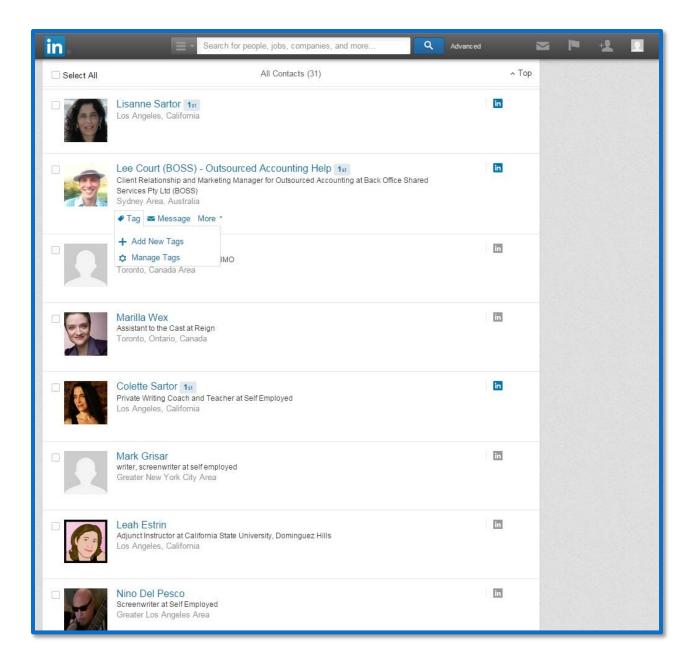
That will bring us to a screen that looks like this:



Whenever we hover our mouse over one of the connections we get three small blue options along the bottom – Tag, Message, and More. More just gives us the option to remove the connection.

Message is for a private message.

Tag is the one we want. When we click on Tag, we're given the option to create a little checkbox that puts a connection into a certain category for us:



We can add more than one tag per person. We can tag them with what field they are in, or perhaps we would prefer to tag them with services or products we can offer this particular person.

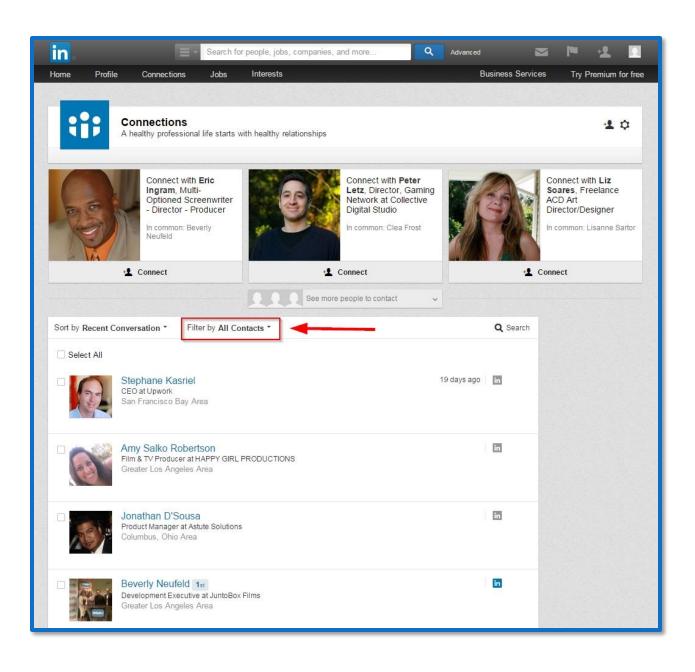
We can add, delete, or edit tags with the Manage Tags option.

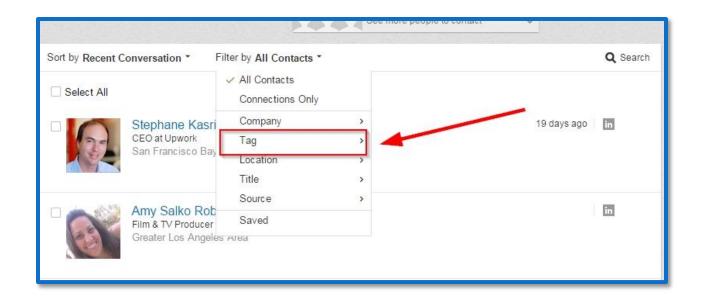
A good habit to get into is tagging someone as soon as we connect with them so we'll immediately have them grouped in the correct category.

The reason why we want these tags is so that we send out the right content to the right people. We don't want to send out personal income tax content to medium-sized business owners and vice-versa.

The reason why we want these tags is so that we send out the right content to the right people. If we're a security agency we don't want to send content geared toward home-owner security features out to the heads of major corporations, and vice versa.

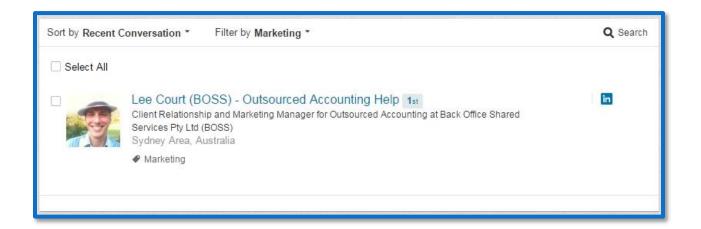
For the sake of example we're going to tag Mister Court as seen above with "Marketing." Now, with every one of our connections proudly wearing their new tags, we can go back to the very top of this screen and choose to Filter, in this case by the tag "Marketing":







And that filters down to:



Once we have a whole whack of people connected to one tag we'll have a much longer list. We can further narrow down who is going to receive our content by

using the check boxes just to the left of the person's image (or we can select all).

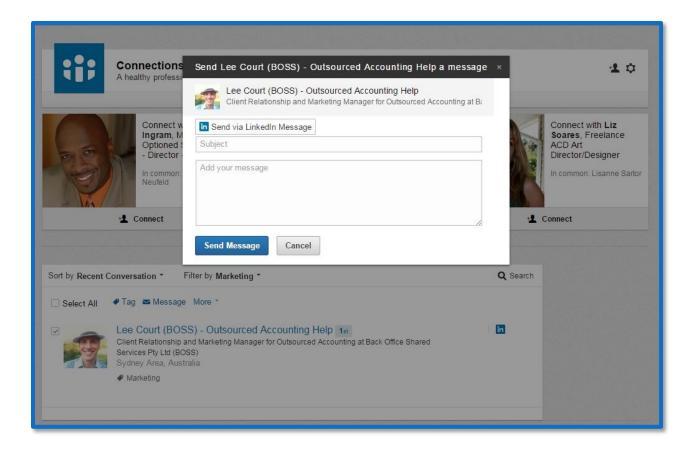
Just a quick note here – LinkedIn keeps changing the number of people "Select All" actually selects. It used to be everyone in the list, then that number changed to 20, then 10.

So by the time you're reading this the number may have changed again. Just be aware that you might have to send some content out more than once to reach everyone with a specific tag.

Now that we've selected our Marketing tag group (in our example this group consists of the one and only Mister Court) we get a Message, Tag, and More option along the top that will do one of these three options for the whole "Marketing" tag list instead of just one person. We select Message:



And voila, we can send out some juicy content with hints, tips, some kind of promotion or deal, you name it:



Pro Tip – When we're sending out a message to a tag group we should look for a little checkbox at the bottom of the screen where we actually create that message. The box says, "Allow recipients to see each other's names and addresses."

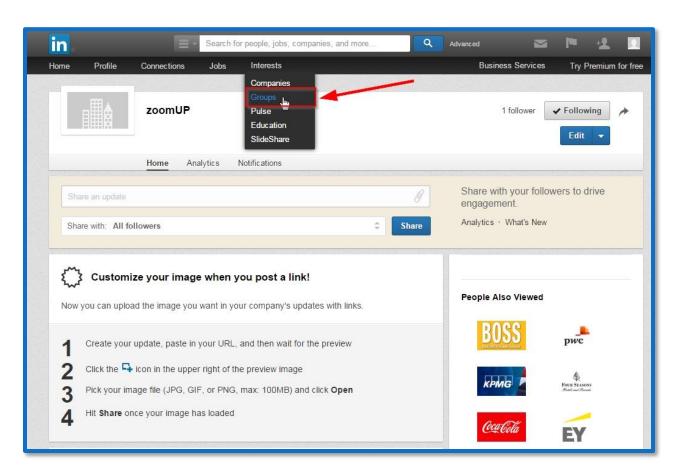
Make sure this box is unchecked.

The reason being is that everyone wants to feel special. Mass messaging reduces that exclusivity. If everyone within a group is seeing that everyone else in the group is receiving the content then it loses some of its special snowflake shine. Your specially-constructed content is now viewed as spam. Nobody likes spam.

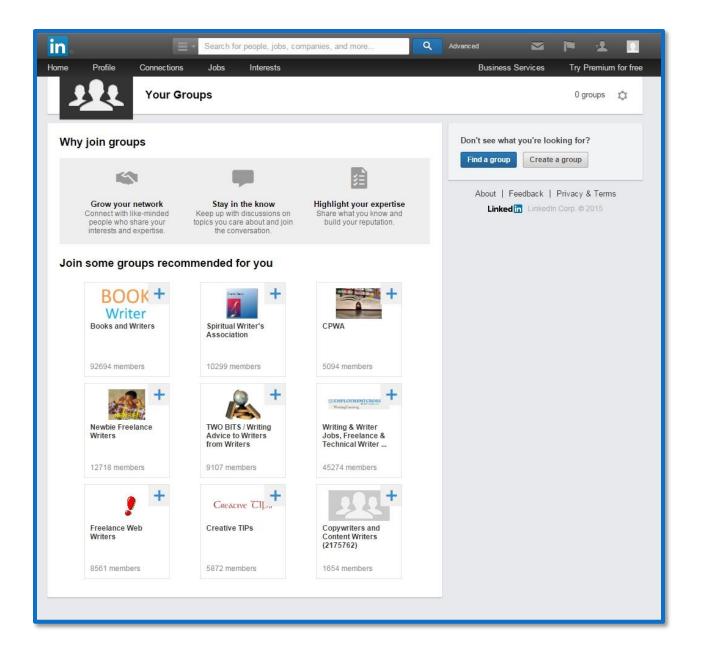
Generating Leads with an Exclusive Audience (Creating a Group)

Now let's take a look at creating leads with people who are far more interested in us than a general, non-exclusive audience. This takes more work than the non-exclusive leads, but it also pays far more dividends.

We're going to be working in groups. At the top of our page hover over Interests and then choose Groups:



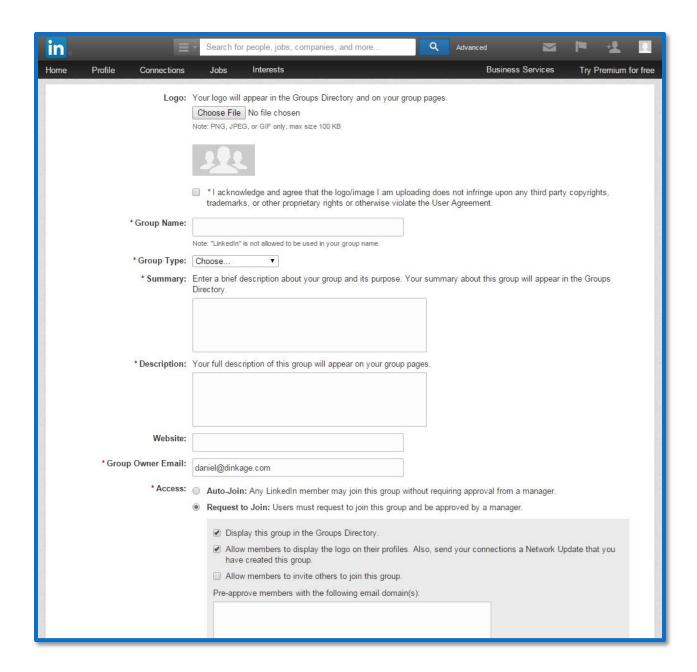
If we have a new account then the first time we go to the Groups page it will look like this:



Since we're looking at a profile of a writer, LinkedIn has mined that profile to suggest writer-related Groups to join.

Currently LinkedIn lets us join 50 Groups, 50 sub-groups, and create up to 10 of our own.

That's what we're going to do here – create our own Group. So we click the "Create a group" button at the top right and we're brought to:



Let's start with the group name. Ultra important – do not name the group after yourself or your business. To attract people, we want to name the group after some service we provide, or some pain point we can alleviate. We want to name it for what we can do for other people.

Depending on your services we might want to create a group called something like "Small Business Start-ups Australia – Taxes and Accounting Made Easy for Beginning Entrepreneurs."

Say we own a professional kitchenware company. In this case we might create a group named something like, "Tips, Hints, and Tricks for Successfully Opening a Restaurant." We might want to get even more specific and make it revolve around how to buy produce and kitchenware for beginners, or how to set up a restaurant's accounting for beginners, and so on.

This has far more appeal for someone in our target audience than just the name of our firm or company. It displays clearly what we have to offer in the group. Plus, since we created the group, we establish an identity that says that we're experts in that particular arena.

The Group's picture says "logo" beside it (see picture above), but putting our business' logo there somewhat eliminates the feeling that the Group is about helping everyone and makes it more about being a sales pitch arena.

So instead of throwing in our business' logo at this point we should source a picture that plays along with the title and the theme of the Group.

In the case of our small business start-up group, we can either take a picture ourselves or hit the various source picture sites to find a picture of (for example) a business-woman looking defeated by the mounds of paperwork around her.

In the case of our restaurant start-up group we might try to find a picture of a chef looking overwhelmed and looking like she or he could use a helping hand.

Group Type – Under the group name box is a drop-down menu with selections for the type of group we're making:

Logo:	Your logo will appear in the Groups Directory and on your group pages.
	Choose File No file chosen
	Note: PNG, JPEG, or GIF only; max size 100 KB
	080
	*I acknowledge and agree that the logo/image I am uploading does not infringe upon any third party copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary rights or otherwise violate the User Agreement.
	trademarks, or other proprietary rights or otherwise violate the oser Agreement.
* Group Name:	
	Note: "LinkedIn" is not allowed to be used in your group name.
* Group Type:	Choose
0.0000	Chanse
* Summary:	Alumni Group about your group and its purpose. Your summary about this group will appear in the Groups
	Corporate Group Conference Group
	Networking Group
	Nonprofit Group
	Professional Group Other
* December 1	
Description:	Your full description of this group will appear on your group pages.
Website:	
* Group Owner Email:	
Group Gwiler Email.	daniel@dinkage.com
* Access:	Auto-Join: Any LinkedIn member may join this group without requiring approval from a manager.
	Request to Join: Users must request to join this group and be approved by a manager.
	Trequest to donn. Oseis must request to join this group and be approved by a manager.
	☑ Display this group in the Groups Directory.
	have created this group.
	Allow members to invite others to join this group.
	Pre-approve members with the following email domain(s):
	The second secon

Unless we have an obvious reason to do otherwise we're probably best off choosing Networking Group or Professional Group. These two assignments are the most likely to draw in more users in relation to the kinds of groups we're creating.

Summary and Description – The same rules apply here as they did in our personal and business profiles – make the text about how we can help our audience, not about how great we are.

Also, load some keywords in here relating to what our group has to offer in order to give LinkedIn's search engine something meaty to grab hold of.

Website – The link to our business' website.

Group owner email – Whatever our email may be.

Access – Here we choose if any old Jane or John Doe can join, or if we have to grant everybody access on an individual basis.

This depends somewhat on how dictatorial we care to be. But there are two benefits to consider if we choose the "Request to Join" option.

The first is that we can keep our competition out. That means they won't have the opportunity to steal away our thunder in our own group, the cheeky monkeys.

The second is that every time someone asks to connect with the group, we can check them out. This gives us the chance to introduce ourselves with a little message as we grant approval. This makes the group a little more personal, makes the joiner a little chuffed to be dealt with on an individual basis, and lets us take up some of their mental real estate with the personal attention.

In the grey box below (still in the Access section) there are three check boxes (see picture above). We'd suggest having all three checked since this allows group members to do some of the recruiting for us. And if we've selected the "Request to Join" option we still control who gets in.

(Even if we didn't choose "Request to Join" we can always kick people from a group.)

Scrolling down to the bottom of the page we see:

English ■ This group is based in a single geographic location. □ Check to confirm you have read and accept the Terms of Service.
Discussions in LinkedIn groups can either be open to the world to see and share, or restricted to members only.
Create an Open Group

The first three boxes are pretty self-explanatory.

For the last choice we want "Create an Open Group."

An open group lets people investigate what's going on within the group – seeing all the juicy content and help that the group has to offer – without becoming a member yet.

Members-only means nobody gets to take a peek.

Since the name of the game is sharing quality content, of course we want the world to see how awesome our group is. The more people who take a peek the more people who will want to join.

Once we hit the "Create an Open Group" button we'll be taken to a screen where we can set different parameters for the group (e.g. if posts can just be posted or if they have to be moderated first). Go through the various options to tweak the group's rules to your own liking.

Also on this new page is something called a "Hero Image."

Here's where we can put our company logo or a banner indicating our company's ownership of the group. The initial group image we mentioned above is about the group itself, but *this* image is about who runs and moderates the group.

Joining Good Groups

So we've talked about creating our own group. But there are over 2 million groups already in LinkedIn. We're going to want to join some of those so we can start widening our connection net... but which ones?

Tip 1- There isn't much point in joining a group where all of the participants offer the same thing and are on the same level as us within an industry. Businesses that offer the same services as us are never going to buy our services, so we're just wasting our LinkedIn time hanging out with them.

Also, we'd be giving away our good content to them instead of to people who actually need our services. We'd be giving something up for nothing in return, and strengthening our competition in the process.

So we want to look for people who are:

- 1. Our direct customers.
- 2. People in our industry's chain who we can swap recommendations with. Using our earlier SMSF tax work example, we can check out groups that involve investment consultants (who will advise people in the creation of their SMSF portfolio) who come before us in the chain, and the people who come after us as well (independent auditors). So if we're a fitness coach business, we can check out diet groups and fitness clothing groups (as examples of businesses that come before our own business in the chain) and maybe spas or massage businesses (for businesses that come later than us in the chain).

Tip 2 - Once we start joining groups do take a moment to go into the settings and uncheck the boxes that give options for **Activity** ("Send me an email for

each new discussion") and **Digest Email** ("Send me a digest of all activity in this group").

Leaving those two checked will result in our email inboxes being absolutely flooded with updates.

Tip 3 – Make sure there are some people in the group. We want our content to reach larger numbers of relevant readers. That's much harder with anemic groups. Compare groups in your target markets to see which have healthy numbers.

Tip 4 – Make sure there are actually discussions going on in the groups. Even if they have high numbers, if they have low numbers of discussions that means people aren't that invested in that group. We want the people who are actively interested in our field.

Gaining More Relevant Connections from Groups

Once we're signed into a group related to what services we have to offer, it's time to go searching for the people within that group that are more likely to need our business

If your firm works in corporate taxes maybe you'll want to target CFOs. To do so, go to the search bar at the top right of the group's page and simply type in "CFO." You can add more parameters to that search – say you want to keep it local. In that case try "CFO [your city here]."

Say you're a corporate event planning company. Who within a company's structure has the position that you're most likely to do business with? Purely for the sake of example we're going to say people with Human Resources in their title are what we want.

So once in the group we go to the search bar at the top right and type in "Human Resources." If we want to keep it local we can try "Human Resources [your city here]."

Now we get back a list of people more likely to send business our way than just the whole list of group members. It will take time, but we can skim through their profiles and see if they're the individuals we need.

Writing an Enticing LinkedIn Connection

Invitation

So we're gathering a bunch of relevant possible connections. What can we say to them to get them to want to become our (complete strangers) connections?

Pro Tip – Do not hit the simplified "Connect" button. This just sends an impersonal message requesting a connection which almost nobody will trust or want to connect with.

Instead, click on the person's name or the option to view their profile. From here we can send out a more personalized request. Keep in mind we only get about 300 characters in a connection request message, which is not a lot of space to convey value.

When we try to connect with someone from their profile page we get this screen:

How d	o you know P	hilip?			
0 0	Colleague				
0 0	lassmate				
○ v	Ve've done bus	siness together			
○ F	riend				
0 0	Other				
(I	don't know Ph	ilip			
Include	e a personal n	ote: (optional)			
I'd like	to add you to	my professiona	al network on	LinkedIn.	
- Danie	l Foy				
- Danie	el LOX				
					1

And here's a message template we can try:

Hi [Person's Name].

I'd like to connect with you as well as personally invite you to join [name of the Group you've created]. I believe you'll find the content of great value plus it's a great opportunity to learn more about you and [their business' or company's name].

Thanks.

[your first name]

If they accept the invitation to connect, immediately (not the next day, but the very second you receive a confirmation – a delay means lost traction) shoot them an invite to the group you run.

To do this select Interests, then Groups from the top homepage bar. Select the group management page.

From here do not select "Send Invitations" down the left hand side because this sends out a generic invitation again, which is connection poison.

Instead look for the curving arrow pointing to the right at the top right of the group management page.



This is the share button, which is where we would normally send out emails to all of the group's members.

However in this case we're only going to be sending our message (the group invite) out to the one person, our newest connection.

So deselect the checked box marked "Share an update," since this would post to the group's timeline.

Make sure only the "Send to individuals" box is checked. This will allow us to put only that particular connection's name in the recipient box.

Here's a group invite template we can try:

Hi [their first name],

Thanks very much for connecting with me.

As promised, here's your personal invitation to [your group name].

We're really excited that you've joined with us and we're looking forward to learning more about you!

Thanks again,

[your first name]

And not that it really matters in this case since we only have one recipient, but uncheck the "Allow recipients to see each other's names and email addresses" box just so it becomes a matter of habit.

After all that, even if the person declines to join our group, we still have them in our non-exclusive leads (our connections as opposed to our group), so it's not time wasted.

If we're on our mobile and want to send out a personalized invite look for this symbol:



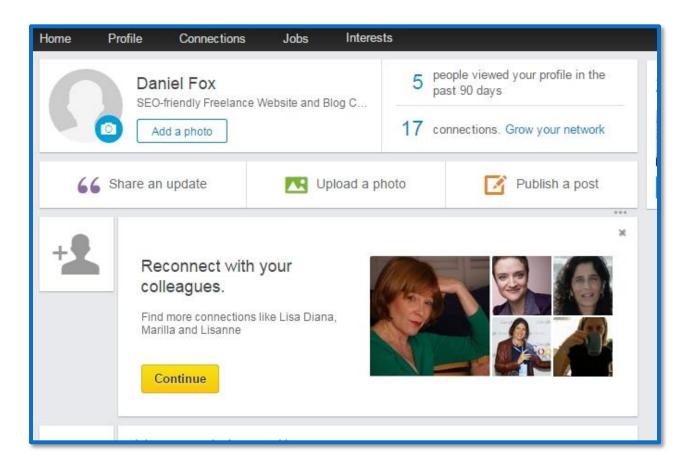
Then select "Customize invite."

Quality Content

So we have at least a handful, and preferably oodles, of people who want some content from us. We're ready to share content to our groups.

First let's get the technical bits out of the way so we know how to share our content.

We've already looked at how to share some of our original content via the "Share an update" and "Publish a post" options at the top of our home page:



But can we crank out enough good original content to keep ourselves in the minds of our connections? If not, where do we get more content?

The first place is original blog content. Hopefully we have a blog attached to our website because the content will be SEO-rich and help bring new visitors in to see our offerings. We can share those blog posts in LinkedIn (and any of our other social media outlets as well).

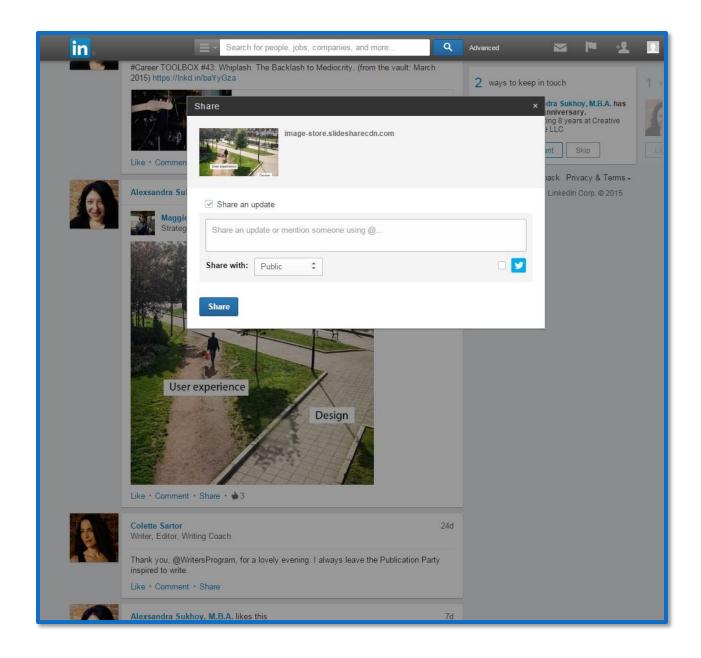
But not everyone can be a dapper Canadian content writer experienced in writing engaging SEO-rich posts. Some people really can't, or don't want to, write at all. Running a business, after all, doesn't leave a lot of time or energy for anything else.

One can of course *hire* a dapper Canadian writer. Or even a spirited Do-It-For-You company that will zoomUp and do it for you.

But there's more content to be found right in our timelines, provided by other people. Good content doesn't always have to be original to ourselves, we just have to be the ones providing it to our groups.

So if there's some good stuff showing up in our homepage timeline, we can feel free to share it to our groups. Don't worry, we're not stealing credit for it, we're just the ones recommending the content as something our groups want to read.

Each post in our timeline has "Like," Comment," and "Share" options at the bottom. We're going to use this picture as our example. We choose "Share":



Uncheck the "Share an update" box because that will just put it out in our basic timeline like a regular post, whereas we want to concentrate on our groups.

Instead we want to choose the "Post to Groups" box (not pictured in the example above because your friendly writer has not created any groups of his own).

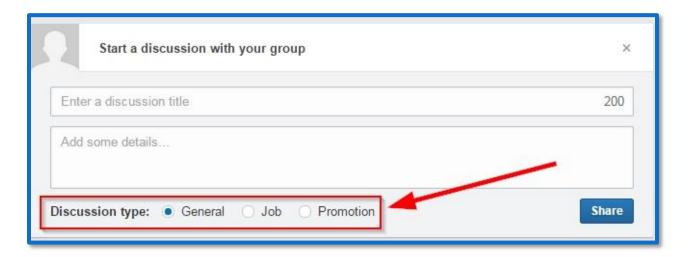
When we choose this we'll be able to add all the groups we want to include as well as add our own Title to the post. Take the time to think up a really good title, something that's going to grab eyeballs.

Whether we send original content or we're passing on some noteworthy stuff we've come across, by sending it to groups we're giving ourselves the chance to engage with thousands of people interested in our field.

And remember to get into the groups and get engaged – comment on posts, like them, offer free advice – this is you setting a ball rolling that is going to result in a word-of-mouth avalanche.

Group Discussion Don'ts

- 1. Don't spam. 'Nuff said.
- 2. Don't mix up promotional posts with general discussion posts (or job posts). When we go to start a new discussion topic (as opposed to commenting on an already ongoing discussion) within any of the groups we belong to we're given these three options:



Shoving promotional posts into general discussions is tacky and a sure-fire way to get ourselves ostracized.

3. Don't Get Angry. If someone flames up at us in a discussion we don't return fire. Instead we keep calm and reply as politely at possible. This way at the worst we only lose the interest of the one person, instead of losing a whole bunch of people who are turned off by our angry posts. At best, others see that we're the bigger person, able to keep our professionalism, and we earn some respect.

4. Don't "Always Be Closing." LinkedIn is about networking. We do this by helping others, communicating, and showing off our expertise when we give others a helping hand. What we don't want to do is be annoying by always trying to sell our services – LinkedIn is not an ongoing advertisement for our business.

LinkedIn Business Pages

Let's now switch our focus to creating a page for our business, as opposed to our personal page.

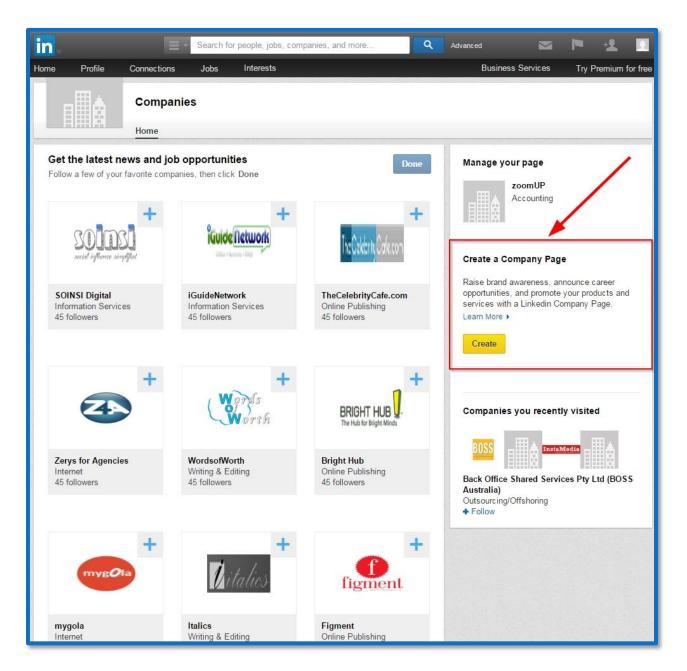
Most of our focus in this guide has been on our personal profile page, since LinkedIn is about linking professionals, and not so much about promoting businesses.

But business pages have value too. Here we can post job openings, announce new hires, announce initiatives, send out positive quarterly results, and so on. For a fuller idea of what we can do with a business page, seek out some of the business pages of leading companies in your particular niche and make a note of the kind of posts they make.

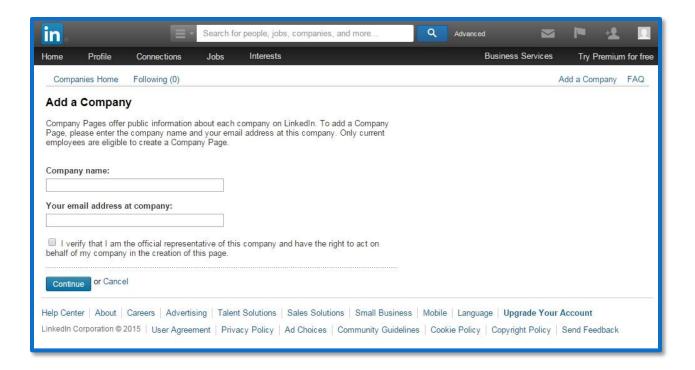
Creating a Business Page

To create our business page look for the "Interests" option along the top of our personal home page. Choose "Companies."

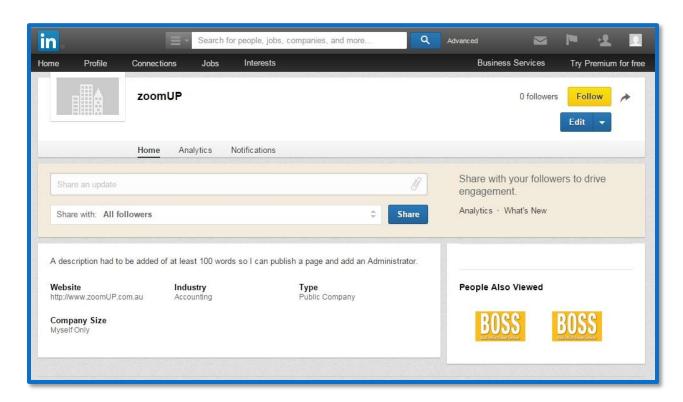
Down the right side of this page is a "Create a Company Page" option:



We'll have to fill out the following:



And *voila!* We should end up with an empty company page that looks a something like this:



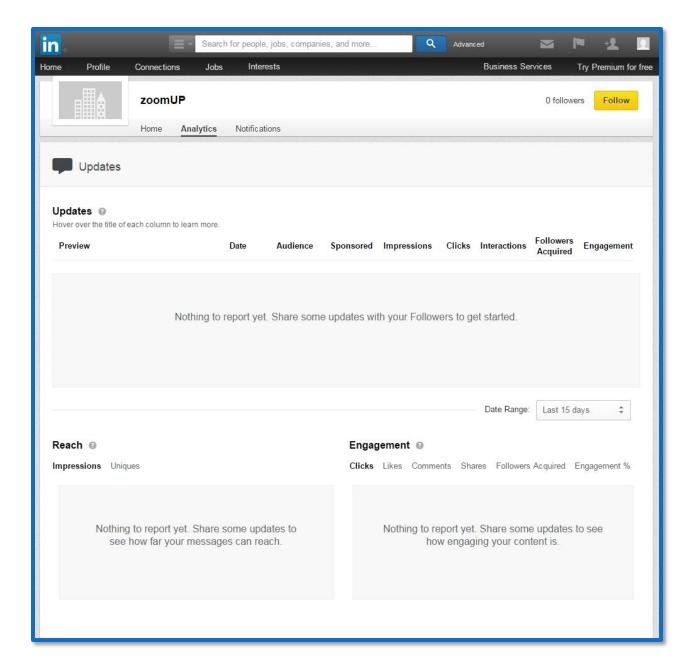
At the top left we have our company name (in this case, "zoomUP"). Immediately to the left of that is where our company image would go - a representative face or a logo.

Make the image bold and easily distinguished when it's small. Remember, it's going to be seen on mobile devices too.

Below the picture and company name are three options: Home, Analytics, and Notifications.

Home of course brings us back our company Home page.

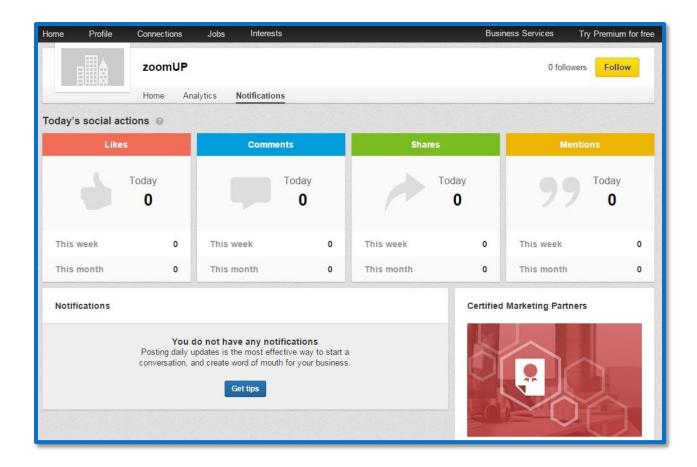
Analytics gives us some data on different things:



Since this is a new company page there isn't much to see yet. But once we start putting content out it can tell us how many people have looked at it, how many people engaged with it (Liked it, Commented on it, etc...), and so on.

Scrolling down, Analytics will also give us info on the demographics of our followers and visitors to our business' page.

And Notifications gives us updates on how much we've interacted in a day:



Back on our home page, below those three options is this box:



This is where we create new posts to send out to our Followers. The second of the two boxes lets us choose if we want to send our posts out to *all* of our Followers, or to a specific targeted audience.

The final big white box below this is where our company's description will go. This is our elevator pitch of our company, a clean and precise rendition of what we have to offer. It's also a good spot to slip in some SEO keywords and phrases so we return higher in LinkedIn's internal search results.

So for example we might want to mention our location, the services we provide, and of course that we're an accounting firm.

So if we were a physical therapy outfit called "Rub You the Right Way" we might want to include our location and such phrases as "physical therapy," "fitness," "massage," and so on.

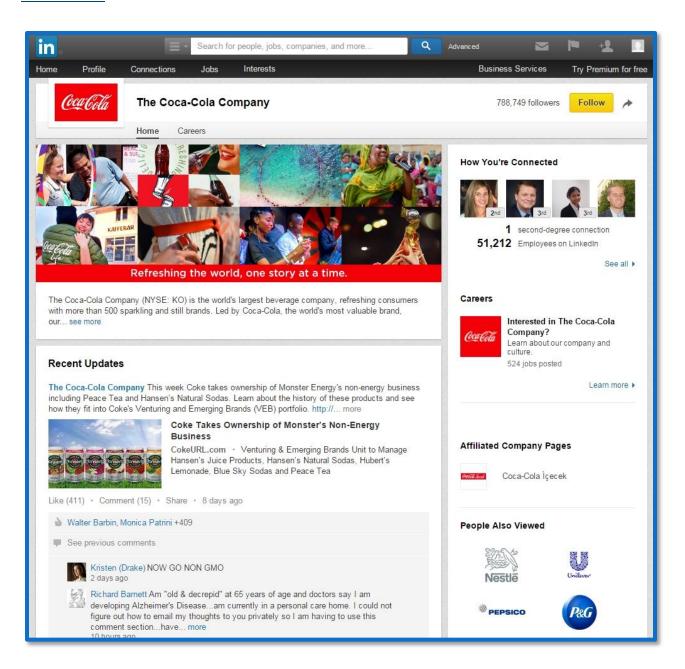
The idea is to think of all the phrases related to our business that someone might search for in the search bar and include them so we show up in the search results.

We edit all of these features on our company page by hitting that big blue "Edit" button found near the top right of the page.

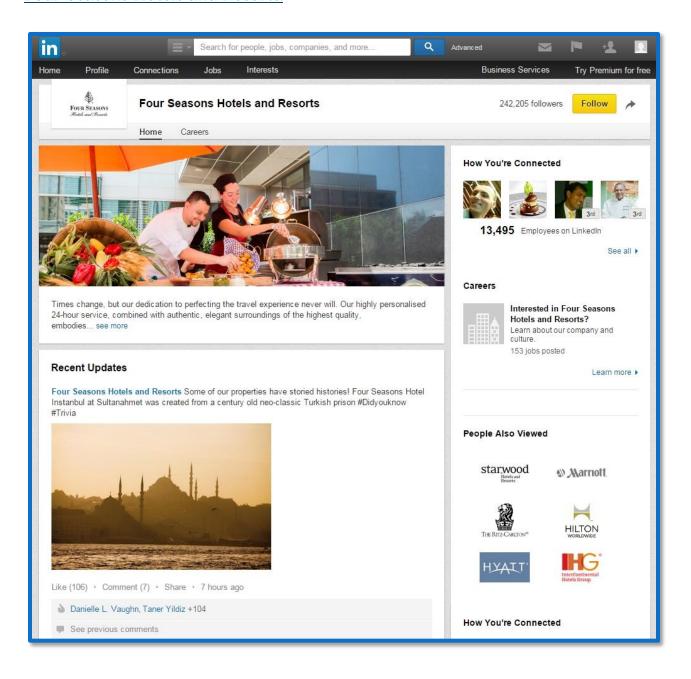
Here are a couple of examples to provide inspiration. Two things to keep in mind:

- These are huge international companies, yes. But there's absolutely nothing they're doing with their company pages that we can't do with ours.
- 2. Notice that these companies recognize that their audience on LinkedIn is a professional one these are people who are interested in the business end of these companies, and not necessarily the more promotional type of posts one would find from the companies on Facebook or Twitter.

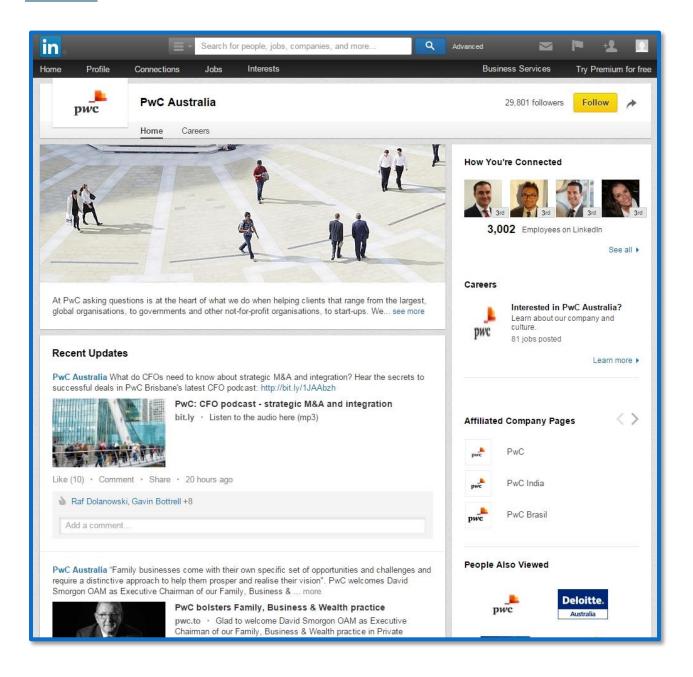
Coca-Cola:



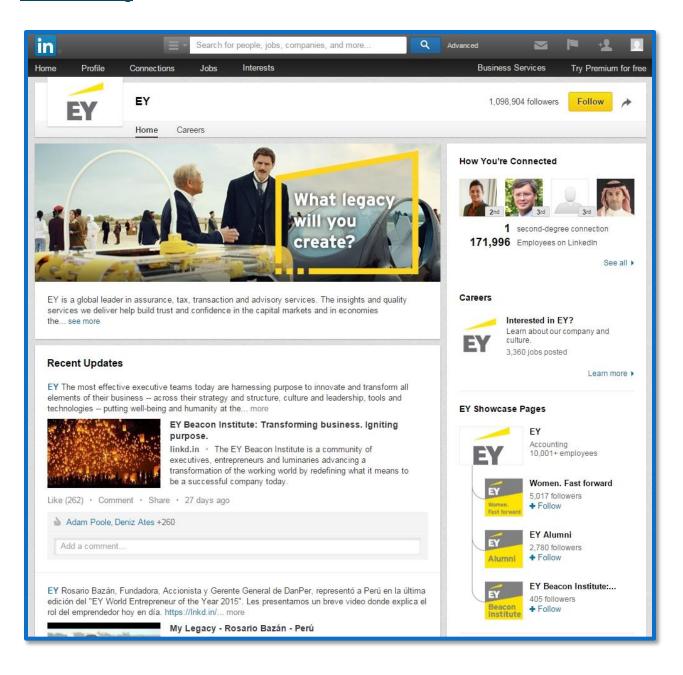
Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts:



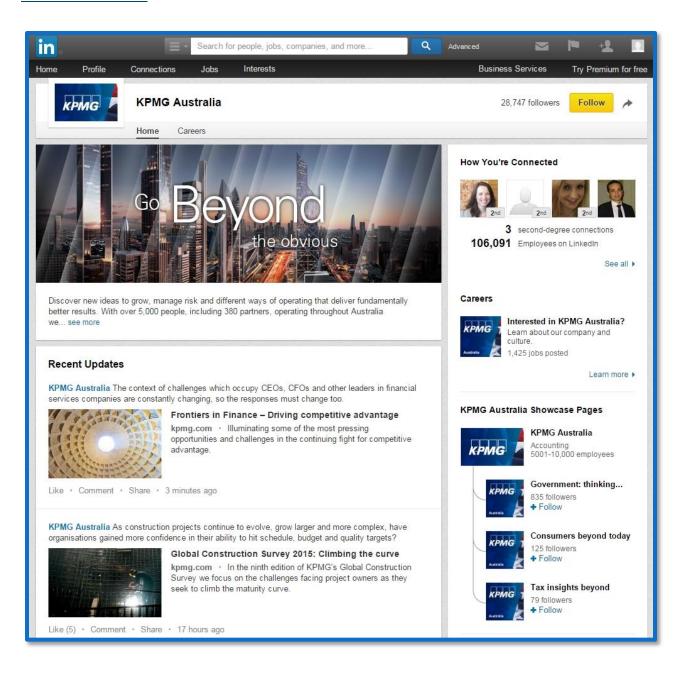
From the Australian accounting world we get some examples from <u>PWC</u> Australia:



Ernst & Young:



KPMG Australia:



Using Our LinkedIn Business Page

Here are some ideas we can use to draw attention to our business page.

1. Create a Question.

We can work up a question and then send it out to some of the top influencers in our field. We post their replies, and since they're influencers we'll germinate discussions with their followers, all connected to our business' page.

What kind of questions? They can be very industry-specific, or they can be more general questions that every business leader will need to learn about at some point or other.

"How do you best handle personality conflicts in your team?"

"Have you had positive outsourcing experiences?"

"What kind of help can be found for someone starting a business in [your city here]?"

2. Generate Leads.

Just as we've worked throughout this guide to generate our own personal profile leads, we can put some effort into generating leads for our business.

We can send out free samples or promotional deals in exchange for reviews or recommendations.

We can politely ask existing customers or clients to write a recommendation.

3. Promote Links to Other Social Media Outlets and our Website.

We can embed links to our other platforms throughout our banners and descriptions. It's also another place for our business' website blog posts to appear.

4. Get our Teams Engaged.

It doesn't just have to be us leader-types doing the work on LinkedIn. If we get our team members going they'll help spread our brand and show off the expertise we associate with our business. The more spiders spinning, the bigger the web.