



Maximizing LinkedIn for Business

(Revised for 2018)



NEAL SCHAFFER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction: | Maximizing LinkedIn for Business |
| Chapter 1: | How LinkedIn Is Being Used by Corporations and Professionals Today |
| Chapter 2: | Optimizing Your LinkedIn Profile |
| Chapter 3: | Building Your Network |
| Chapter 4: | Using LinkedIn to Maintain Your Professional Relationships |
| Chapter 5: | Establishing Credibility Through Recommendations |
| Chapter 6: | Understanding Skills and Endorsements |
| Chapter 7: | Reinforcing Your Professional Brand Through Content |
| Chapter 8: | Joining Groups |
| Chapter 9: | Where to Go from Here? The New LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing |
| Chapter 10: | Staying Up to Date on LinkedIn (and Social Media) |
| About Neal Schaffer | |

INTRODUCTION: MAXIMIZING LINKEDIN FOR BUSINESS

The professional world has finally realized the importance of LinkedIn as a business platform that serves multiple objectives. Besides being a central hub for professional branding, networking and career management, LinkedIn is now becoming a growing source of news, knowledge and opportunity for professionals worldwide. Businesses are now calling on employees to participate on LinkedIn not only for social recruiting but also for social selling, social media marketing and employee advocacy.

As the leading author, speaker and trainer on LinkedIn for business, my goal with this handbook is to provide useful information that is just as relevant for employees getting trained on LinkedIn as it is for professionals, executives and business owners trying to derive more value from their LinkedIn profiles. While you won't get as much help here as you would from [reading my two LinkedIn books](#), this quick summary will help ensure that you don't miss out on what LinkedIn has to offer, so you can get started on truly maximizing your LinkedIn presence.

1: HOW LINKEDIN IS BEING USED BY CORPORATIONS AND PROFESSIONALS TODAY

Back in 2011, I wrote my second book about LinkedIn, [“Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing.”](#) At that time, I wrote:

*In order to maximize your company’s exposure on LinkedIn ... **every sales and marketing employee that represents your business needs to have a LinkedIn profile.***

While the book was geared toward sales and marketing professionals, the reason for having a presence on LinkedIn was clear:

...every employee representing your company that is on LinkedIn increases the chances that your company will indirectly be found, and the more connected your employees are to others (including each other), the easier it will be for those wanting to contact any of your company employees to do so through the LinkedIn profile.

Fast-forward to today, where:

- Social media extends well beyond the sales and marketing departments thanks to the evolution of **social business**.
- Companies are finally realizing that their **employees are a huge untapped source of brand advocates**.
- **Social media usage by professionals has become mainstream.**

Now, LinkedIn is being used by companies in more ways than you can imagine, including:

- Social Recruiting
- Public Relations
- Community Building
- Social Selling
- Social Media Marketing (organic)
- Paid Social

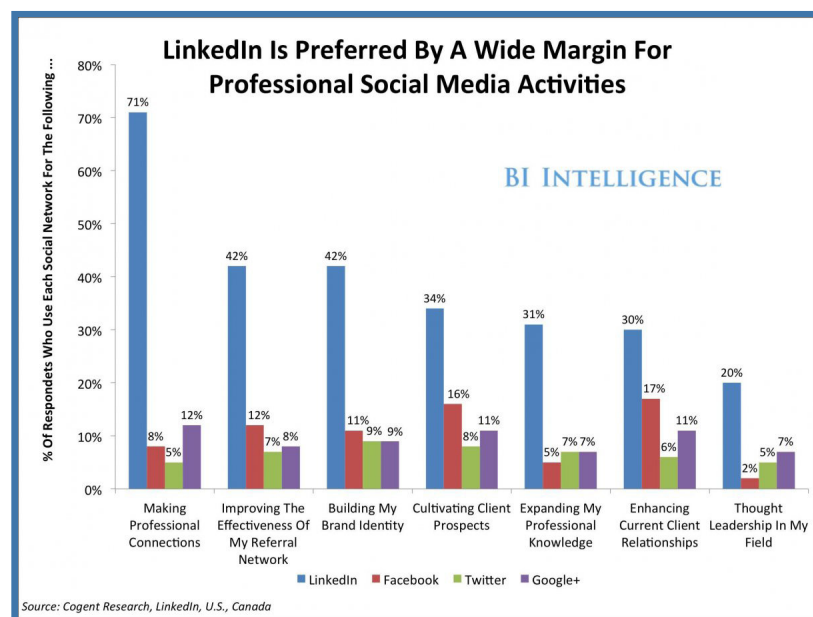
- Employee Advocacy
- Influencer Marketing

Regardless of what department you're in, it's becoming more likely that you can use LinkedIn as part of your job. Understanding the holistic value that LinkedIn offers businesses is really the first LinkedIn skill that every professional should possess.

As companies have become more involved with LinkedIn, so have individual users. Not only are more professionals now on social media, they are also **consuming more information** fed to them by their networks and **sharing more information** to their networks. Companies can take advantage of this trend by having employees share their brand message. After all, [Edelman's Trust Barometer](#) reminds us that "[Employees rank higher in public trust than a firm's PR department, CEO, or Founder.](#)"

This has culminated into companies developing what are called employee advocacy programs, something I touch upon in Chapter 9 of this eBook. Whether you're leading an employee advocacy program at your own company, receiving internal training on LinkedIn, or merely want to better utilize LinkedIn to meet your professional objectives, you'll be glad to know that LinkedIn can help in several ways.

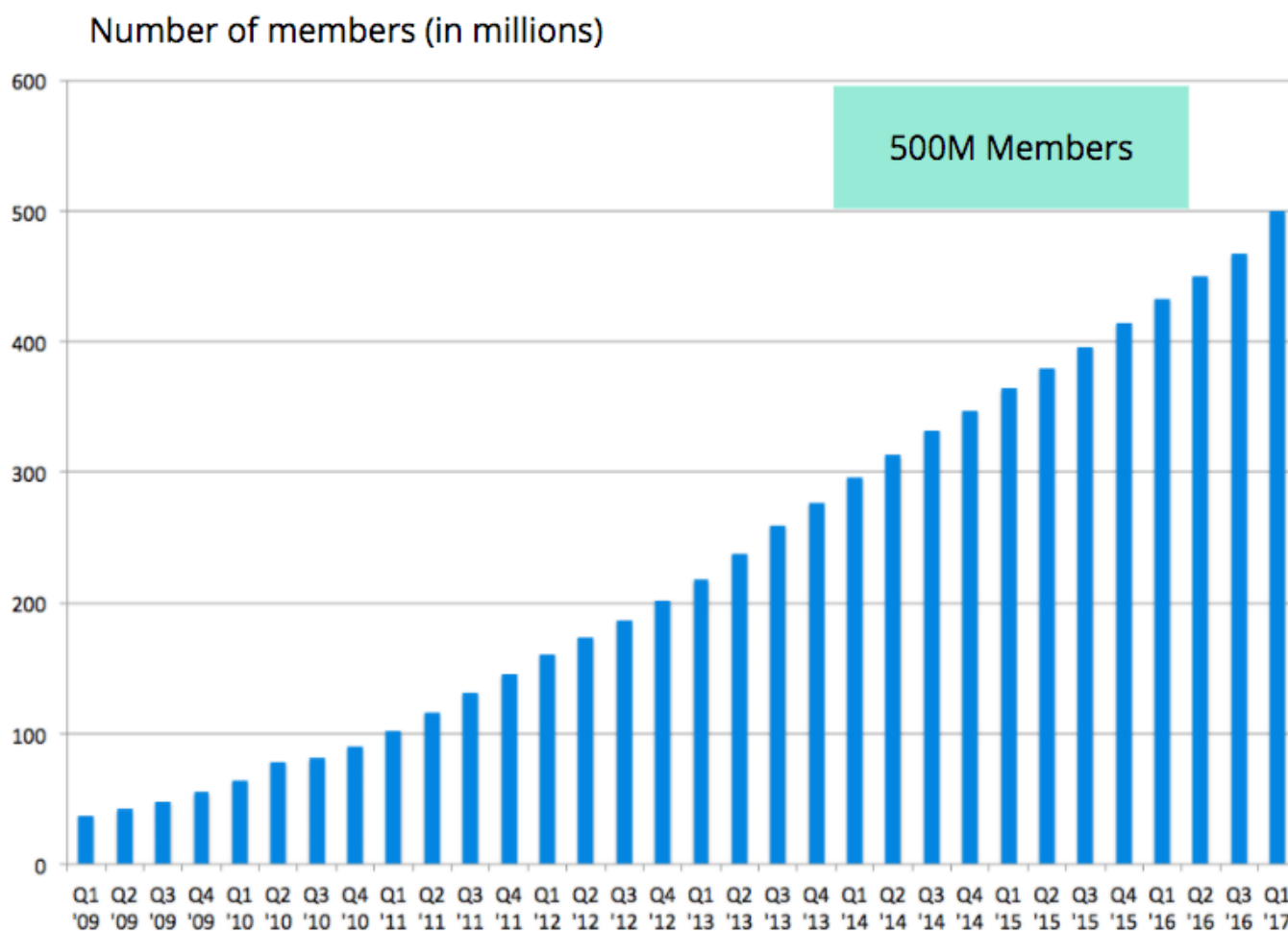
Consider this graphic:



Source: [Business Insider](#)

The conclusion is clear: LinkedIn is preferred by professionals for every single professional social media activity measured.

Even more convincing is that LinkedIn continues to grow as professionals worldwide join the network. A majority of LinkedIn users today weren't even on the platform just a few years ago.



Source: LinkedIn and Statista

[Source: Buffer](#)

At the time of writing this book, LinkedIn currently has 562 million users. You can find out the latest up-to-date number by [going to this link](#).

It's time to rethink your view of LinkedIn, so you can take full advantage of it. The following chapters explore the features that LinkedIn provides to every free account member, to enable you to achieve all your objectives for using the site.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [What Is LinkedIn and Why Should You Join?](#)
- [7 Reasons Why Every Professional Should Be on LinkedIn](#)
- [10 LinkedIn Skills Every Professional Should Have](#)



2: OPTIMIZING YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

As with any other social network, once you have signed up and established an account, LinkedIn will ask you to enter personal information to better develop your profile. While this might take you aback, the more information you provide, the easier it will be for you to get back in touch with those from your past and vice versa. This process will also add your keywords to the LinkedIn database, allowing opportunities to come your way.

This is where you need the following mindset to take advantage of what LinkedIn has to offer: **Your LinkedIn profile is not your resume. It is an inbound marketing tool that you can use to create your own future and tell your story.**

Remember: Your LinkedIn profile will become your default homepage on the Internet for your professional brand, and every action you take on LinkedIn will leave a footprint, with a link taking others back to your profile. Take a few minutes now to confirm that it represents you well and make a habit of revisiting your profile monthly or quarterly to ensure that your information and branding are still relevant.

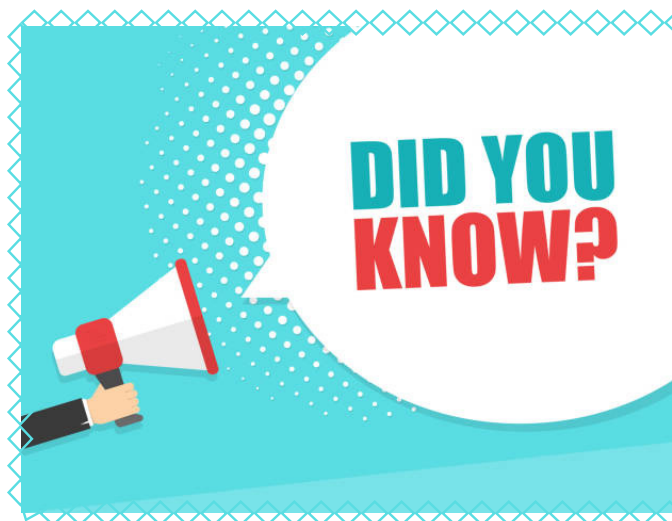
Neal's Tips to Building a Stellar LinkedIn Profile

- **Be real.** Use a professional photo and your full, real name.
- **Be complete.** Use all of the real estate that LinkedIn offers. Every
- **Be branded.** Use the Headline and Summary areas to tout your strengths, differentiate yourself from others, and make relevant viewers of your profile want to contact you.
- **Be searchable.** Make sure that relevant keywords associated with your brand, experience, profession and industry are included in your profile.
- **Be visual.** Insert links to YouTube videos, SlideShare presentations or anything else on the Internet where you are featured in a way that will help you reach your objectives. At the very least, upload your own company resources to make it easy for profile viewers to find out more about your organization.
- **Be trusted.** No matter how much you may want to promote your company, your LinkedIn profile should be all about you and how you can help other LinkedIn users,

not an advertisement for your products and services.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [LinkedIn Profile Tips: The 10 Mistakes You Want to Avoid and Why](#)
- [10 Incredibly Simple Ways to Maximize Your LinkedIn Profile for Inbound Marketing](#)
- [8 Creative LinkedIn Profile Tips to Help You Maximize Your LinkedIn Presence](#)
- [Professional LinkedIn Profile Tips: A Checklist of 17 Must-Have Items](#)
- [The Ultimate LinkedIn Profile Tips Summary + 8 Stats Infographic](#)



The simple act of adding a LinkedIn profile picture makes your profile 21 times more likely to be viewed by others and 36 times more likely to receive a message!

3: BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

Once you've gotten your profile set up, it's time to build your LinkedIn empire by establishing a robust network of connections.

One of the most basic yet unique functionalities that LinkedIn provides is the ability to visualize your degree of separation from other LinkedIn users. Those with whom you connect become your first-degree connections. First-degree connections of your first-degree connections appear as your second-degree connections, and first-degree connections of your second-degree connections appear as your third-degree connections.

Since LinkedIn is a database, the more connections you have, the more people you will be able to contact easily through second-degree connections and vice versa. Simply select Add Connections, which appears at the top right-hand corner of every page on LinkedIn and upload your email database. You can also search for colleagues or fellow alumni based on where you have worked or gone to school. Make sure you only send invitations to those you truly know; LinkedIn may restrict your account if recipients of your invitations say that they don't know you.

This brings up a critical point: LinkedIn is based on the concept of only connecting with people you know and trust. But compared to the past, we are getting to "know" a lot more people through social media. And with more and more fake profiles on LinkedIn for various reasons, we are all receiving more LinkedIn invitations than ever before.

It should be no surprise, then, that one question I often get asked is, "Which LinkedIn connection requests should I accept?"

Every professional must decide on his or her own LinkedIn connection policy. Whether it's only accepting invitations from people you have personally known for many years or accepting invitations from those who want to connect with you and who you think might add value to your network, decide on how open or closed you want your LinkedIn network to be. If you're in doubt about a particular invitation you've received, send a message back to the person and ask why the

person wants to connect with you. If the person doesn't answer or doesn't do so convincingly, then ignore the invitation.

A guideline that I give professionals for how many LinkedIn connections they should have is to multiply their age by 10. After all, you meet at least 10 new professionals each year, right? I don't expect college students to have 200+ connections upon graduation, but I do believe that professionals in their 40s and 50s can and should have connections in the hundreds.

Think about it: Over time, you get to know more people, even if you have been working at the same organization. Each year, the number of your real-world contacts grows as you meet more people in your professional and everyday life. These contacts should translate into LinkedIn connections. It's just a matter of taking those email addresses and checking them against LinkedIn's database. Your new real-world contacts who are also on LinkedIn then become your new connections.

Some of the most important assets of your professional life are the people you work with. So what is the upper limit for connections? How many is too many? I'd say you can't have too many connections. After all, as the name of the popular book implies, "[Your Network is Your Net Worth.](#)"

Neal's Tips: People to Invite

- Colleagues, past and present
- Partners and clients
- Professional association members
- Networking acquaintances
- Classmates
- Friends
- Family

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [15 Ways to Grow Your LinkedIn Network](#)
- [How Many LinkedIn Connections Should You Have? \[VIDEO\]](#)
- [7 Reasons Why LinkedIn Should Become Your New CRM](#)

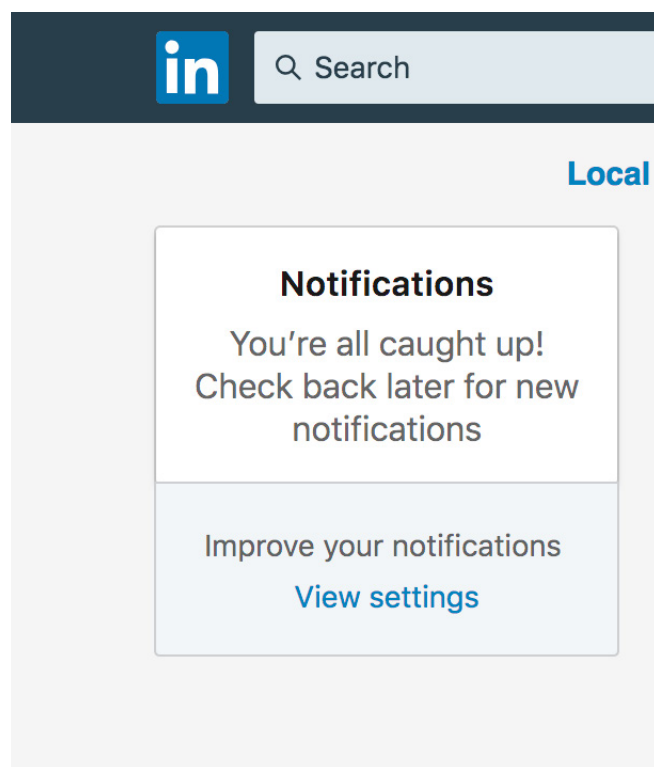


4: USING LINKEDIN TO MAINTAIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

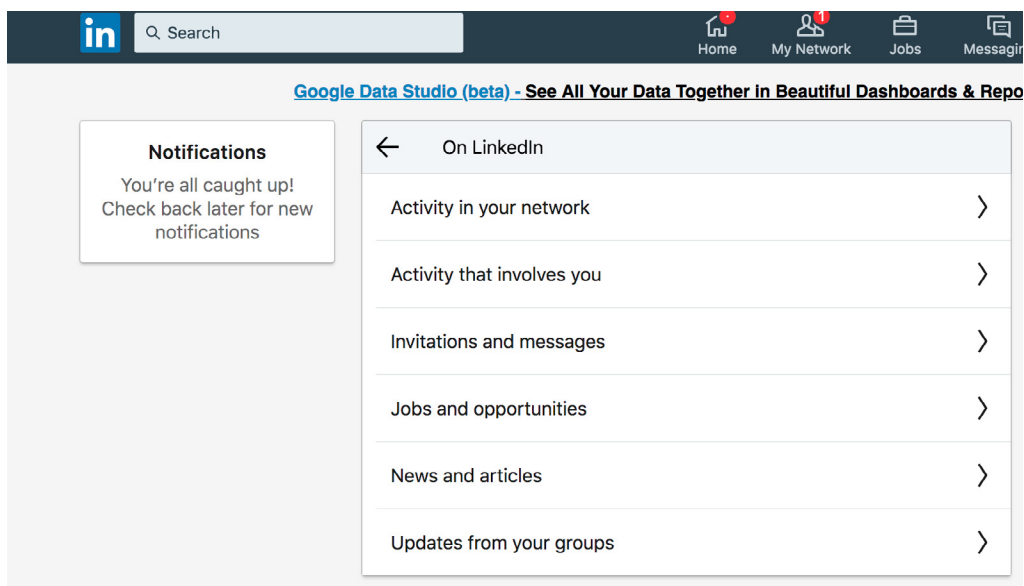
Now that you've created your network on LinkedIn, it's time to learn how to use LinkedIn to keep in touch with your professional contacts on a daily basis. After all, as LinkedIn says, "A healthy professional life starts with healthy relationships."

There are many benefits to a LinkedIn membership, but the Notifications functionality and its ability to act as a virtual personal assistant will help you stay organized and in touch with your network in unprecedented fashion.

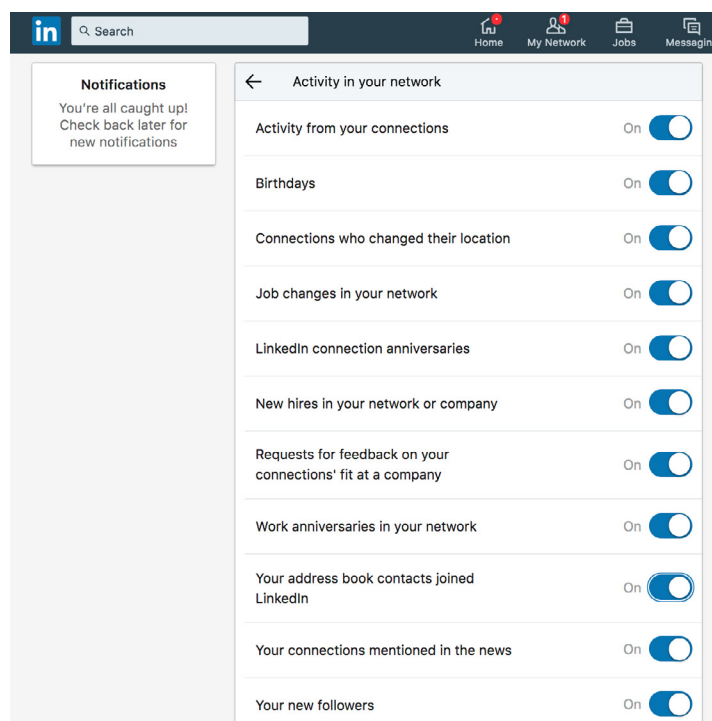
You can begin the process by selecting Notifications from the top navigation menu. Then you select "View settings" which will appear on the left-hand side of the screen as below:



You will then see the following screen which will allow you to completely control the types of notifications you wish to see on your notifications screen on LinkedIn:



While there are a lot of invaluable options, in terms of better keeping in touch with your network, the first selection entitled “Activity in your network” will be the most relevant section here. Clicking on that will allow you to see the following updates from your network in your notifications:



You can see how LinkedIn will automatically inform you of what is going on with your connections so that all you need to do is follow the notifications to keep in touch with your network.

You will be notified when those in your network who have birthdays, new jobs, work anniversaries, or even when they have moved. This information offers the perfect opportunity to keep in touch with your connections on important dates by making it easy to send them a quick message or post a status update comment.

Making Notifications your first stop in the morning and spending five minutes communicating with and staying up to date on your network will ensure that you maintain healthy relationships with your connections. But don't forget the other important way of keeping up with what's new in your network: Monitoring your network updates and the content that they share and engage with from your Home page on a daily basis.



DID YOU KNOW?

[Microsoft gives you the ability to connect LinkedIn with your Office 365 account to allow Outlook users a free tool to help stay connected with their LinkedIn networks. Find out more about this here.](#)

5: ESTABLISHING CREDIBILITY THROUGH RECOMMENDATIONS

Everything you do on LinkedIn will lead others to your profile. Show potential hiring managers, marketing partners, clients and other professionals that you have social proof by displaying endorsements and recommendations from your peers that back up what you say in your profile.

LinkedIn recommendations are the ultimate social proof in your profile. When people look at your profile, you want them to see you as a real, verified professional, and there is no better way to achieve this than by being recommended by peers who can help verify that you have the skills and experience you claim to have.

Many wonder about the true value of LinkedIn recommendations. With so many quid pro quo recommendations on the site, doesn't that limit their credibility? Still, people need a way to confirm the claims made by others in their LinkedIn profiles, ideally by objective third parties. That's what recommendations are for, and they serve this purpose well, so long as you receive professional recommendations that offer honest feedback from people who have worked with you and know you well.

Furthermore, although it might not happen frequently, there is always a chance that someone looking at your profile for a specific objective might actually be a first- or second-degree connection with someone who has recommended you. This is especially true if you work in a niche industry where many professionals know each other. In such cases, having a recommendation can help push your profile to the forefront and provide you with significant benefits.

Understanding the value of LinkedIn recommendations, you'll want to be proactive in sourcing them for your profile. Before you ask those in your network for recommendations, though, I recommend that you start by paying it forward and recommending others with whom you have worked in the past for their skills and experience. Human nature predicts that some of these connections might also ask you if you'd like to receive recommendations from them. But never write

a recommendation for the sole purpose of receiving one in return.

You don't need a lot of recommendations for social proof. LinkedIn used to recommend having at least three to achieve a "complete" profile. If you feel like you need a few more, now is the time to reach out to your old managers, colleagues, subordinates, customers and partners and ask for a recommendation, reminding them of your accomplishments in your request. Don't be shy; many busy professionals that I know actually prefer that you send them a draft recommendation together with your request, so long as the content is accurate and would authentically represent them. Whether you write a draft or ask for a recommendation, always remember to bring up specific actions that you took to achieve specific results. Vague recommendations offer little to no value.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [LinkedIn Recommendations: Will You Write Me One?](#)
- [Are LinkedIn Recommendations for Real?](#)
- [How Should I Deal With a LinkedIn Recommendation Request I Don't Want to Give?](#)



DID YOU KNOW?

You must be 1st degree connections on LinkedIn to recommend or receive recommendations from another user

6: UNDERSTANDING SKILLS AND ENDORSEMENTS

LinkedIn enables you to list skills on your profile and then be endorsed for those skills. Every professional has skills, and listing those skills helps categorize what you bring to the table as a professional. It also gives your connections the ability to endorse you. By adding a skill set to your LinkedIn profile, you also make your profile more credible. The credibility added by skills isn't on par with that added by recommendations, but the skills feature is still an important one that you should embrace. Keep updating your listed skills regularly, and make sure your profile displays the top 50 that LinkedIn allows.

If you're trying to figure out what skills might be the most appropriate to add to your profile, just open your profile and scroll down to the Skills & Endorsements section. Then, select Add Skill. In the box that appears, enter a keyword that a hiring manager, customer or marketing partner would use to look for someone like you. For example, in the following screenshot, I entered the term "social media."

Add Skills

Q social media

social media

Social Media Optimization (SMO)

Social Media Communications

Social Media Measurement

Social Media Blogging

Add

Based on this input, LinkedIn recommends several skills that might be appropriate to include. Going through this exercise for a few keywords is bound to help you populate your database of skills.

Once you have the right skills in place, you might be surprised when people in your network start to give you endorsements for your skills. How can you leverage endorsements for engagement with your network as well as promoting your professional brand?

When LinkedIn first introduced endorsements, there was a bit of an outcry from the community for a variety of reasons. If for some reason you don't want to be endorsed, you can opt out. LinkedIn provides you with options for managing all your endorsement-related activity whenever you click the pencil icon at the far righthand side of the Skills & Endorsements section of your profile as shown below.

Skills & Endorsements

Add a new skill



[View 1 pending endorsement](#)

You will then see the following screen:

Reorder Skills & Endorsements (49)

Reorder your skills within a category or choose up to 3 skills to feature in your top skills.

Top Skills

Public Speaking

Social Media Marketing

Content Marketing

Industry Knowledge

Content Strategy

Marketing Strategy

Online Marketing

Adjust endorsement settings

Save

From there select “Adjust endorsement settings” at the bottom and then you will see the following screen giving you all of the options you need to manage your endorsements:

Endorsements



Manage how you receive and give endorsements

I want to be endorsed

Yes ☒

Include me in endorsement suggestions to my connections

Yes ☒

Show me suggestions to endorse my connections

Yes ☒

Don't let the controversy prevent you from taking advantage of LinkedIn's endorsements feature. Although you can choose whether or not you want to be endorsed, I have found that choosing to be endorsed always works in favor of professionals. Endorsements help you engage with your network and promote your professional brand. And since endorsements are typically easier to get than recommendations, they offer a great way of lightly engaging with your network.

There is another important reason why you should accept endorsements: According to LinkedIn, your profile is four times more likely to be viewed if you have endorsements. There are many potential explanations for this, but clearly endorsements from other trusted LinkedIn users show that you and your skills are real. Perhaps this influences how often and where you appear in LinkedIn searches.

Neal's Endorsement Tips

- Endorse your connections as a way of keeping in touch.
- Help your connections with their personal branding by endorsing them for their appropriate skills.
- Pay it forward — you never know how an endorsement might aid your connection in the future.
- Take endorsement choices as valuable feedback from your network.
- Deepen your relationships by thanking those who endorse you.
- Avoid quid pro quo endorsements as much as possible. I suggest writing a recommendation instead, if you really want to thank someone for meaningful endorsements.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [8 Ways to Make LinkedIn Endorsements Work for You and Your Network](#)

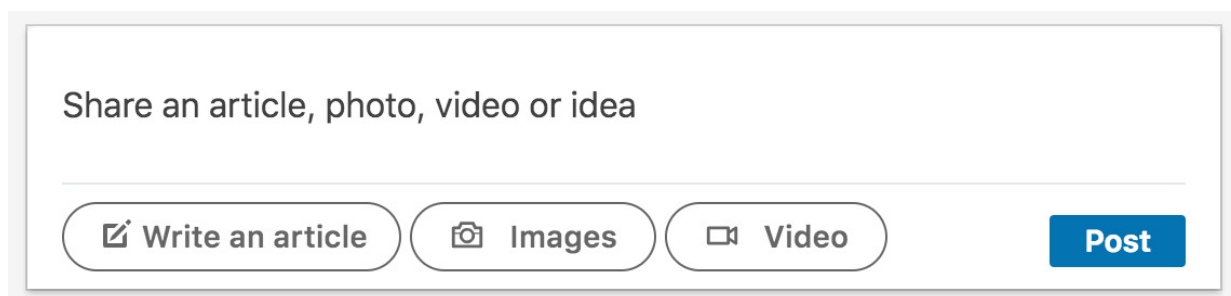


7: REINFORCING YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND THROUGH CONTENT

Although your LinkedIn profile is static, it's easy to dynamically update it while engaging with your network. By posting a professional status update, you can share information with your connections that they may value while promoting your own personal brand.

The top of your LinkedIn home page beckons you to share an update. If you read something online that might be of interest to your network or you see compelling content in your LinkedIn news feed, why not share it as a status update? If you share relevant status updates every day, you are engaging with your network daily, maintaining mindshare among your connections, and developing and promoting your professional brand.

LinkedIn gives you an even more powerful way of letting your professional voice be heard: the ability to actually publish a long-form blog post. This is done when you select the “Write an article” option that appears in the status update box at the top of your home screen.



Why should you consider blogging on LinkedIn? It's simple: LinkedIn owns a large publishing empire, and publishing content on LinkedIn ensures that a sizable audience will read your content. Your posts also become part of your profile, allowing your profile visitors to understand you and your thoughts at a deeper level. If you have advice to share, want to discuss your experiences with others, or enjoy mentoring other professionals, the LinkedIn publishing platform is the most powerful way to let your professional voice be heard and display your thought leadership for all to see.

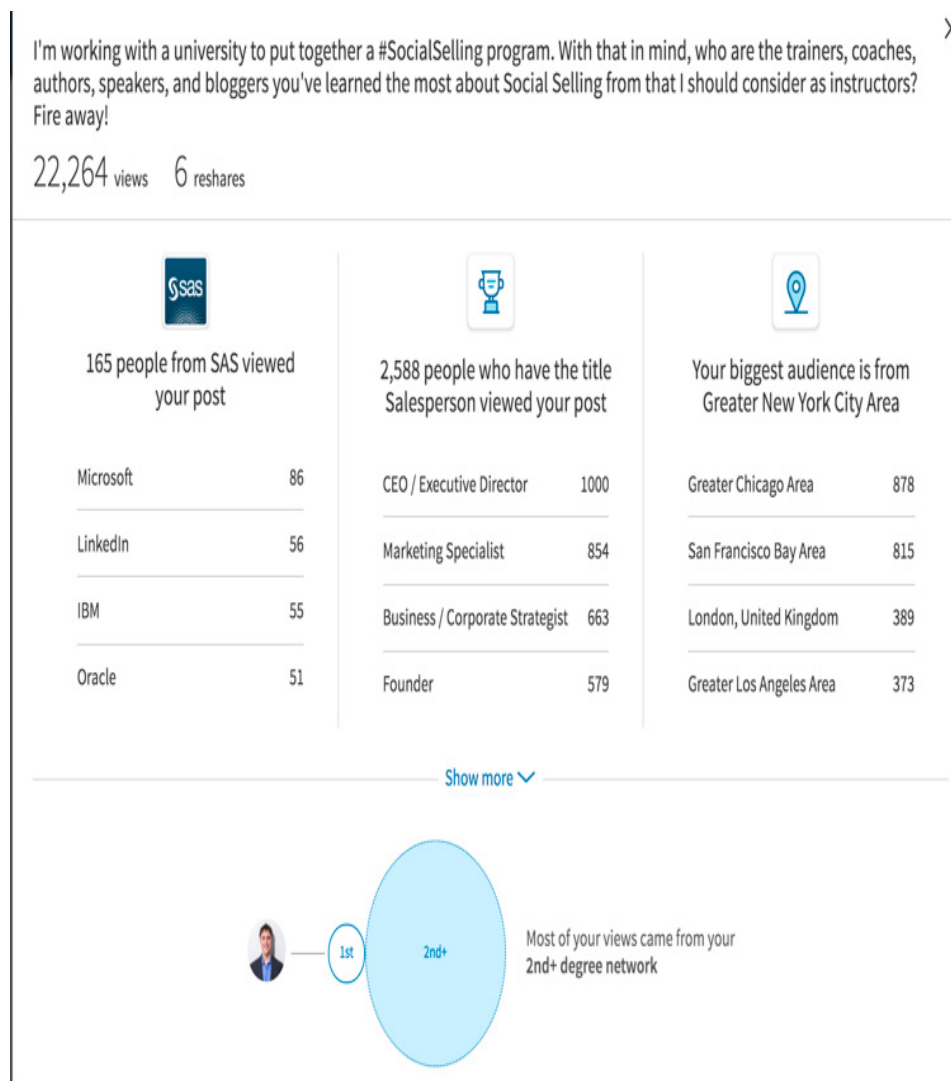
Here is my advice regarding publishing on LinkedIn, based on the type of entity you are.

Professionals Who Have Never Blogged: You now have the ability to share your knowledge and experience with the world. You don't have to blog every day; on the contrary, consider adding a few paragraphs of your thoughts monthly or even quarterly to help pay it forward and indirectly showcase who you are as a professional. Remember that the content you publish will become part of your LinkedIn brand and affect the way that others perceive you, so make it count! An hour of your time each month can make a profound impact on the professional lives of others, and it will undoubtedly serve your professional branding well in the long term.

Businesses: From a content marketing perspective, you can understand how the LinkedIn publishing platform offers content the chance to be seen by a large audience. Unfortunately, this platform is for individual profiles, not company pages. Simply having employees publish links to your company page will do no good. But this is the age of employee advocacy, where employees who are proficient at social platforms become brand ambassadors for your company. Encouraging the sharing of your company's social messages is only the beginning of an employee advocacy program; encouraging and helping your employees find their own voices to help them publish their thoughts and ideas on LinkedIn's publishing platform will be a win-win for your company and its employees.

Content Creators: You can not only republish your blog posts on LinkedIn, using it as a syndication channel, but if you are a video creator, LinkedIn is currently giving preference in its news feed for video. This means you can gather unprecedented attention for your video content organically for free in the lucrative LinkedIn news feed. Ideally you would create videos, and whenever possible publish unique content on LinkedIn and align the topics of your content to LinkedIn's unique professional demographic.

Regardless of which direction you plan to go, even the act of sharing a simple status update can bring you viral results that would make most social media marketers jealous. Below is an example that I like to share from a simple status update that I shared some time ago:



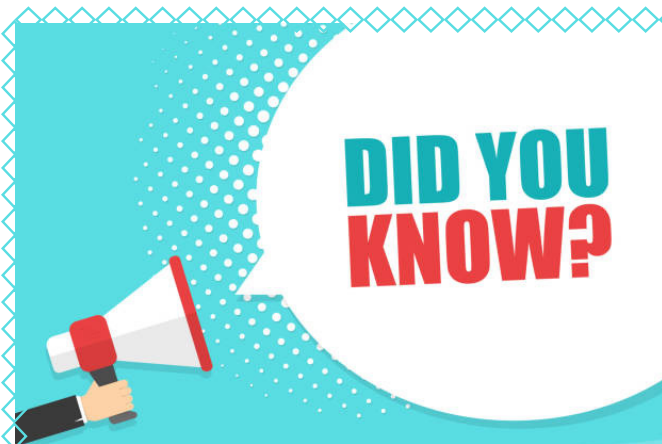
This simple status update not only got 22,000+ views, but an overwhelming majority of the views came from outside of my 1st degree connections. Furthermore, it was exposed to those working at Fortune 500 enterprises, CEOs/Executive Directors were the second most populous demographic to see the post, and I had more viewers from New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and London than I did my own nearby hometown of Los Angeles! This speaks to the potential viral nature of the LinkedIn news feed that I hope you can also tap into.

Neal's Tips for Blogging on LinkedIn

- Close posts properly. Remember to include a short bio and even a call to action at the end of each post to better educate your readers and increase your chances for relevant engagement.
- Engage. Be a listener, and monitor your LinkedIn notifications for comments on your posts. The comments section of your post will turn out to be a great platform for engaging with your network and making more connections.
- Spread the word. Don't limit your long-form posts to the publishing platform alone. Share them everywhere — on Facebook, Twitter, and wherever else you have a presence.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [How Will YOU Use the LinkedIn Publishing Platform?](#)
- [How to Write Your First Blog Post on the LinkedIn Publishing Platform](#)
- [9 Tips to Writing Posts That Get Read on the LinkedIn Publishing Platform](#)



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

LinkedIn monitors articles published on LinkedIn and will often display them to people outside of your network if the news feed algorithm determines that your content is suitable for a wider audience. Furthermore, your content published on LinkedIn also gets indexed in search engines like Google. What this means is that there is a potential for your content to get hundreds of thousands of views over a long period of time. Below is an example of one of my LinkedIn blog posts that has received more than 200,000 views to date!

Neal Schaffer posted this



How to Write Your First Blog Post on the LinkedIn Publishing Platform

Neal Schaffer on LinkedIn
March 26, 2014

 Edit  Delete

 **239,578 views** of your article

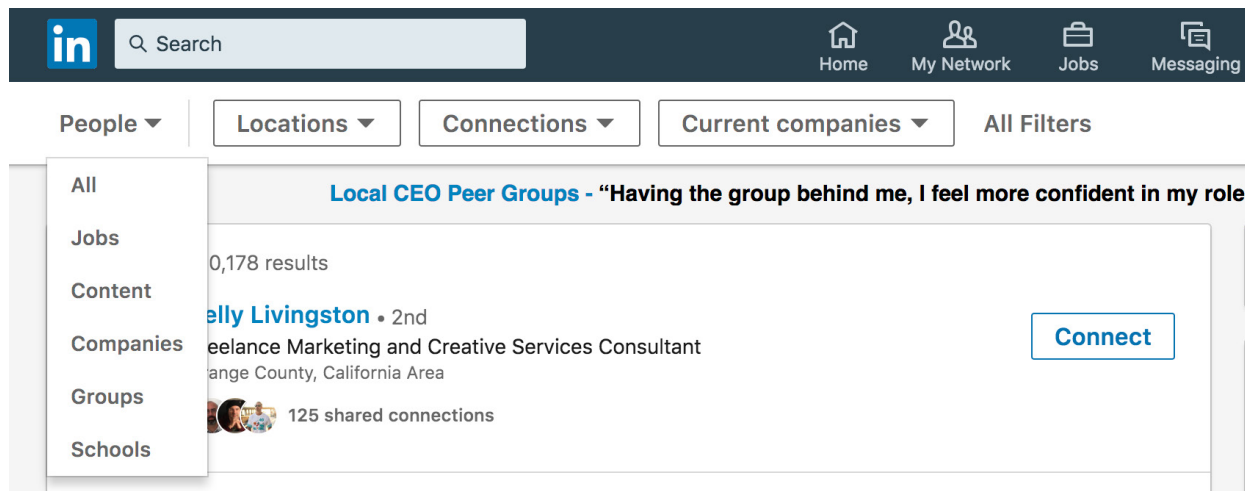
8: JOINING GROUPS

LinkedIn groups are the biggest public Internet forums for professionals in the world with more than [2 million LinkedIn groups](#) in existence today, the largest of which now has well over [1.8 million members](#). I consider these groups to be virtual industry conferences or tradeshow – wouldn't you want to be seen, meet others and promote your expertise at the largest networking event for professionals on earth? With [more than half of LinkedIn members belonging to at least one group](#), you get a sense for the potential to leverage it.

If this is not enough to convince you of the value of LinkedIn groups, consider some additional points. LinkedIn groups help you:

- **Connect with other professionals with similar interests.** Joining groups allows you to bond and connect with people who have the same professional interests as you.
- **Learn from the experts.** There are many subject matter experts who participate in LinkedIn groups; you can easily engage with and learn from them.
- **Show your expertise in your field.** LinkedIn Groups can help you showcase your talents and skills on a wider stage. People beyond your first-degree connections who are members of your LinkedIn groups will be able to recognize you for who you are.
- **Increase your visibility.** LinkedIn groups allow you to increase your visibility to the online world in a dramatic fashion, especially since discussions from public LinkedIn groups have the potential to be found in Google searches! LinkedIn allows you to join up to 100 groups but start by joining a few targeted groups that are aligned with your professional objectives. I also recommend that you join one or two of the largest groups on LinkedIn, which can help expose you to hundreds of thousands of LinkedIn users.

Finding LinkedIn groups to join is easy. From the dropdown menu next to the search box, select People. From there you will see an additional dropdown pictured below that will allow you to search Groups.



Then, search for relevant keywords, and you are bound to find many groups that may interest you. Can't find an appropriate group? Start your own! I've started my own groups on LinkedIn, and today they are used by thousands of LinkedIn members for sharing information, teaching and learning.

One other benefit of joining a LinkedIn group is that the default setting for group membership allows group members to message each other. This means you can contact and be contacted by other group members regardless of whether you are connected to them. This is an easy way to improve your "contactability" on LinkedIn.

While social media etiquette and best practices are hardly carved in stone, it's helpful to follow a few guidelines when participating in groups. Following these suggestions will add to your personal brand on LinkedIn and help you get the most out of groups.

- When posting a discussion on a group, make sure that your post aligns with the mission and policies of the group and adds value to the group.
- Watch your frequency. Starting no more one discussion a week is good etiquette, unless otherwise specified.
- Remember to follow group etiquette on group **discussion boards**, too. As the centerpiece of each group, these boards are where all the real conversations happen.
- *Kuuki wo yomu*. This Japanese phrase means reading the *atmosphere*, which is always a good idea. For groups that have no guidelines or policies listed, the best practice is to observe first and then contribute in the same tone.

Neal's Tips: Join 100 Groups

- LinkedIn allows you to join up to 100 groups. To maximize your potential to reach others and for them to reach you — join the maximum number of groups.
- Try a combination of big groups, local groups, alumni groups (for both schools and companies), industry groups, professional association groups and target market groups.
- Make sure that you don't get daily or weekly updates from every group you join, unless you want to receive lots of email from LinkedIn! There is a link at the bottom of every newsletter that allows you to turn off the daily or weekly update.
- Make it a daily or weekly habit to jump into a group conversation or start one of your own.

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [LinkedIn Groups Tips: What Are They and Why Join Them?](#)
- [Which LinkedIn Groups Should I Join?](#)
- [LinkedIn Group Etiquette: What Are the Rules?](#)



DID YOU KNOW?

[Here's how I developed business through a LinkedIn group discussion. In "Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing," there is a case study of a businessman who generated 75 percent of his \\$5 million in annual revenues from LinkedIn groups.](#)

9: WHERE TO GO FROM HERE? THE NEW LINKEDIN FOR SALES AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

This eBook is intended for a very broad audience of business professionals, so I tried to make all of the advice applicable to you no matter in which department you work for any given company. Once you have optimized your profile, gotten into a routine of content publishing, and engage regularly on LinkedIn, you have begun to discover the immense value that LinkedIn can bring to your business.

Let's take it one step further.

My social media agency, [PDCA Social](#) (website currently only in Japanese!), helps businesses implement strategies for all social networks, including LinkedIn. Just as I had written a book on LinkedIn for sales and social media marketing several years ago, I believe that businesses that are successful on LinkedIn combine the following components that you should consider as well:

Employee Advocacy – Employee advocacy is defined as the systematic leveraging of your employee's voice in social media. Now that social media is mainstream, and an overwhelming majority of employees are already using it, wouldn't it be great if our employees shared more of our company's content? That's the premise behind the establishment of employee advocacy programs, and at a minimum, just having all of your employees create a LinkedIn profile (feel free to share this eBook with them!), register your company as their current place of employment, and even perhaps like your LinkedIn company page and engage with some of your company updates is a great way to get started. No matter how small your company is, there are benefits from having an employee advocacy program. If you'd like to delve deeper into what it takes to create an employee advocacy program, check out the free eBook I co-wrote on [how to develop an employee advocacy strategy](#).

Social Selling – Social selling means a lot of different things to different people, but I define it as salespeople utilizing social media as part of their strategic toolbox to help research, prospect, accelerate, and ultimately close more deals faster. In other words, just as I like to say that [social](#)

[media replaces nothing yet complements everything](#), social selling should complement the traditional sales activities of your salespeople, not completely replace them by any means. Being a former B2B sales executive myself, I have always thought of LinkedIn both as a business tool and as a salesperson's best friend. What I talked about in this eBook will help you create the infrastructure for your social selling, but the magic happens when you strategically prospect using the search functionality that LinkedIn provides you, publish content that is geared towards an audience of current and/or potential clients, and begin to reach out and engage with prospects to bring them into your marketing funnel. I wrote the preface for an eBook on social selling that I recommend you download called [Focused Social Selling](#) that I recommend you check out. I also created a program for Rutgers Business School if you would like to take more formalized classes on the subject. For those interested check out [Social Selling in a Digital World](#).

Social Media Marketing – From a company perspective, LinkedIn only gives you one organic option to engage LinkedIn users from a marketing perspective: The LinkedIn Company Page. Unfortunately, similar to Facebook Pages, it is becoming very difficult for content from your company page to be seen by many LinkedIn users. This is due to the fact that there are too many LinkedIn users sharing too much content compared to the amount of news that we consumer in our news feed. The other main reason is that by limiting organic reach of company page content forces company to “boost” these posts – or advertise – in order for them to be seen. This is why when I consult with companies on LinkedIn marketing, I find a combination of employee advocacy and social selling, in addition to a potential paid social complement, will give companies best results in LinkedIn marketing. If you're interested in building a LinkedIn sales and marketing strategy or want some advice on implementation, please [contact me](#).

[Paid Social](#) – LinkedIn is unique in the world of social media advertising, or Paid Social, in that not only can you do the typical display ads as well as boost company page content in the news feed, but LinkedIn also allows you to use the same targeting methods to do sponsored LinkedIn InMail campaigns. LinkedIn cost per click or per impressions have an expensive minimum, but if you have a robust marketing funnel with resourceful content that would attract your target audience on LinkedIn, you should consider investing more in Paid Social on LinkedIn in parallel with employee advocacy and social selling efforts. If you want to find out more about LinkedIn Ads, check out this great Slideshare that my friend and LinkedIn Ad expert AJ Wilcox created.

Influencer Marketing – Influencer marketing on LinkedIn is still relatively new, but as influencer

marketing begins to envelop every industry, more and more B2B companies are investing in influencer marketing and realizing that LinkedIn is a great place to find and engage with them. If these influencers are also content creators and publishers on LinkedIn, engaging with influencers on LinkedIn gives you the extra benefit of ensuring that your collaborations are seen by the LinkedIn connections of these influencers. I recently did a podcast interview with best-selling business author and marketer extraordinaire Jay Baer on B2B influencer marketing that you can check out by [clicking here](#).

Additional Information Links: *(Please click each link for more information)*

- [4 Convincing Reasons Why Employee Advocacy Should Begin on LinkedIn](#)
- [Employee Advocacy Best Practices Learned from Citrix](#)
- [5 Things You Need for a Successful Social Selling Infrastructure](#)
- [Where's Your Social Selling Playbook?](#)
- [Influencer Marketing is About Community, Not Campaign](#)
- [How Influencer Marketing Brings True Value to Your Business](#)

10: STAYING UP TO DATE ON LINKEDIN (AND SOCIAL MEDIA)

Social media is and always will be in constant flux. For that reason, I recommend you have your own “go-to” list of blogs and other resources that you subscribe to keep up-to-date. Below are some of mine as well as some of my friends that I recommend you follow and subscribe to if you haven’t already.

MY COMMUNITY

[Social Media Center of Excellence](#) – A free Facebook community to ask social media questions and engage with other social media professionals.

MY BOOKS

[The Business of Influence](#) – My upcoming book on influencer marketing.

[Maximize Your Social](#) – The definitive guide to social media strategy.

[Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing](#) – Whether you are in sales or in marketing, this will help you leverage LinkedIn more strategically for your company.

MY BLOGS

[Maximize Social Business](#) – I used to have my own blog known as Windmill Networking (named after my first book), but when I began to accept other contributors, it morphed into its own media site called Maximize Social Business. Currently we have 20+ subject matter experts who frequently contribute.

[Neal Schaffer](#) – Some of my blog content is on Maximize Social Business, the remainder – including my podcast – being on my own branded blog.

OTHER BLOGS

I often get asked what social media blogs I recommend, so the following are ten I have chosen based on both quantity of content as well as quality of the content. They include blogs by some thought leaders, tools vendors, as well as media sites. You probably have heard of most if not all of them, but if not, they are all highly recommended. In fact, if you just read these 10 blogs, in addition

to my own two of course (!), it is probably enough to stay ahead of the game.

- [Buffer](#)
- [BusinessesGROW](#) (Mark Schaefer)
- [Content Marketing Institute](#)
- [Convince and Convert](#) (Jay Baer)
- [Digiday](#)
- [Hootsuite](#)
- [Hubspot](#)
- [Jeff Bullas](#)
- [Neil Patel](#)
- [Social Media Examiner](#)



ABOUT NEAL SCHAFFER

Neal Schaffer is a leading authority on helping businesses through their digital transformation of sales and marketing through consulting, training, and helping enterprises large and small develop and execute on social media marketing strategy, influencer marketing, and social selling initiatives.

President of the social media agency PDCA Social, Neal also teaches digital media to executives at Rutgers University, the Irish Management Institute (Ireland), and the University of Jyväskylä (Finland). Fluent in Japanese and Mandarin Chinese, Neal is a popular keynote speaker and has been invited to speak about digital media on four continents in a dozen countries.

He is also the author of 3 books on social media, including Maximize Your Social (Wiley), and soon will publish his 4th book, The Business of Influence, on educating the market on the why and how every business should leverage the potential of influencer marketing.

Neal resides in Irvine, California but also frequently travels to Japan. Learn more about Neal at <https://nealschaffer.com>.