

What Exactly is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is heralded as the online social community for business professionals and entrepreneurs. What sets it apart from social sites like Facebook and Twitter is the understanding that people join LinkedIn with the goal of expanding their business in some way. Here it's accepted to let your business cards show, so to speak.

Cleverly disguising "tweets" and "updates" to shroud business intentions isn't necessary. Much like offline network meetings, professionals interact on LinkedIn with the explicit intention of making business connections.

Why LinkedIn is Important for Online Business

If the possibilities of one connection expanding into thousands, breezing by gatekeepers to talk directly with decision-makers, and making global ventures from the comfort of your home office sound appealing, then LinkedIn is the platform for you.

Not too long ago, attending networking mixers and Chamber of Commerce meetings were the workhorses for acquiring referrals and building business relationships. Now those activities have moved online within the Linked community. Essentially LinkedIn facilitates these same practices only in a tech-savvy way.

With LinkedIn you get all the benefits of offline networking with less of the hassle. Instead of shuffling from business luncheon to business luncheon "hoping" to meet qualified prospects, LinkedIn provides a platform for you to specifically search and research individuals who you know will directly add value to your endeavors.

Imagine walking into a business function where eager prospects are being introduced to you, colleagues acknowledge your accomplishments without your prompting, and you're in the spotlight for sharing the right answers for inquiries related to your industry. LinkedIn makes these scenarios a daily reality.

LinkedIn's ability to identify, research, contact, follow-up, engage and maintain your contacts in one place is unmatched by other social networks. For individuals who aren't ready to take on the responsibility of a website, LinkedIn could serve as an online business hub to refer business prospects.

Before Creating Profile

Setting up a LinkedIn account is a quick and easy process. You literally could set up an account in five minutes and become an official member of the LinkedIn community. However, speed is not the main objective. Rushing could lead to a sloppy profile that doesn't represent you well which defeats the purpose of joining LinkedIn.

Essentially your profile stands as a resume, business card and elevator speech all rolled into one. Prior to posting any information, there are some proactive steps you can take to ensure your profile works for you and not against you.

First, think about exactly who you want to be and who you want to reach on LinkedIn. What are your initial goals for networking on LinkedIn? Brainstorm ideas of how you plan to position and contribute your expertise.

- Do you want to find partners to collaborate on a project?
- Are you looking for clients within a specific niche or with a certain amount of annual revenues?
- Will you use it as a platform for thought leadership?

With that said, the next point to consider is the realization this social community is not a digital bubble. The general concepts of business still apply on LinkedIn. In the brick-and-mortar business world you have direct competition and it's no different on LinkedIn.

Thoroughly researching competitor's profiles is a preliminary step all savvy professionals should perform prior to creating a profile. If you want to become the go-to professional for your industry it's best to analyze who's holding the top spot.

Don't reinvent the wheel when creating your profile. To start out on the right foot in LinkedIn, figure out what other leaders are doing and do the same. Once you're comfortable using the site, adjust your profile accordingly.

How do you find the profiles of people to model?

A general rule of thumb is that a high search engine ranking stands as a good indicator of a professional who's doing well on LinkedIn for a particular niche.

Use Google search as a fast way to retrieve all the profiles for a niche or keyword on LinkedIn.

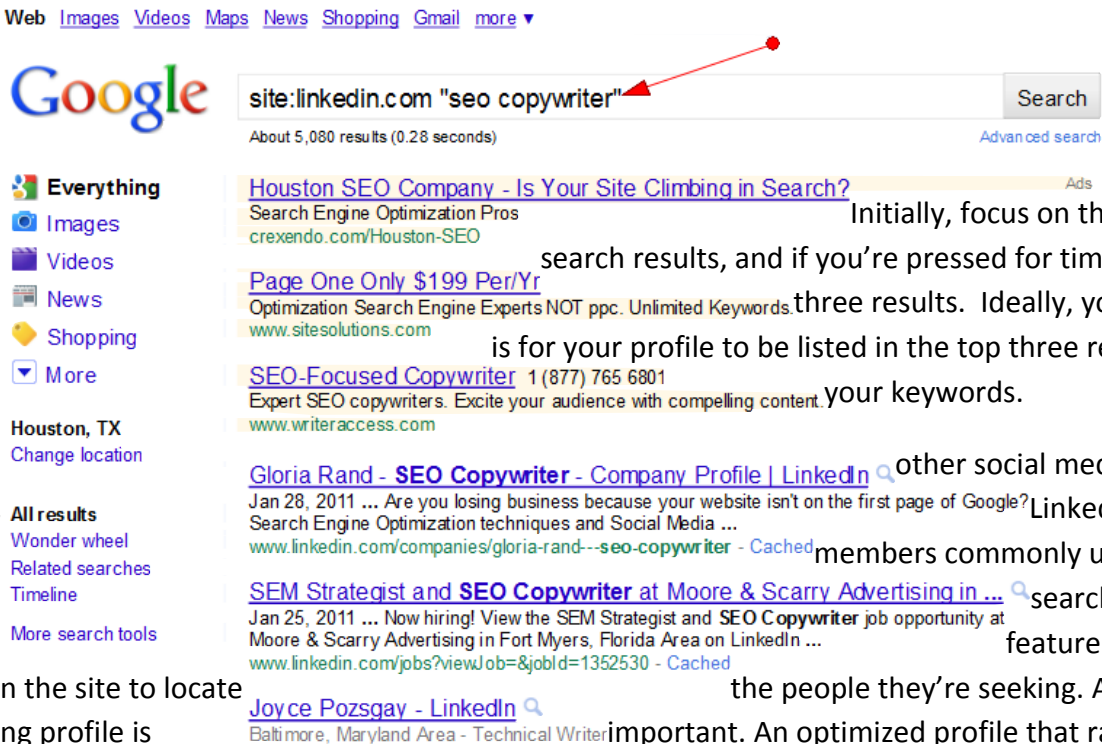
1. Go to Google.com.
2. Type in the search string `site:linkedin.com "your keywords"` .

3. Replace the phrase “your keywords” with terms related to your specialty.

ten first goal for Like sites, the within the site to locate ranking profile is well ensures you’re being seen by targeted searchers.

Initially, focus on the top search results, and if you’re pressed for time the three results. Ideally, your is for your profile to be listed in the top three results your keywords.

other social media LinkedIn members commonly use search feature the people they’re seeking. A high important. An optimized profile that ranks



The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "site:linkedin.com seo copywriter". Below the search bar, it says "About 5,080 results (0.28 seconds)". On the left side, there are navigation links: "Web", "Images", "Videos", "Maps", "News", "Shopping", "Gmail", and "more". Below these are "Everything", "Images", "Videos", "News", "Shopping", and "More". On the right side, there are "Ads" and "Advanced search". The search results are listed below the search bar. The first result is "Houston SEO Company - Is Your Site Climbing in Search?" with a subtext "Search Engine Optimization Pros" and a link "crexendo.com/Houston-SEO". The second result is "Page One Only \$199 Per/Yr" with a subtext "Optimization Search Engine Experts NOT ppc. Unlimited Keywords." and a link "www.sitesolutions.com". The third result is "SEO-Focused Copywriter" with a subtext "Expert SEO copywriters. Excite your audience with compelling content." and a link "www.writeraccess.com". The fourth result is "Gloria Rand - SEO Copywriter - Company Profile | LinkedIn" with a subtext "Jan 28, 2011 ... Are you losing business because your website isn't on the first page of Google? Search Engine Optimization techniques and Social Media ..." and a link "www.linkedin.com/companies/gloria-rand--seo-copywriter - Cached". The fifth result is "SEM Strategist and SEO Copywriter at Moore & Scarry Advertising in ..." with a subtext "Jan 25, 2011 ... Now hiring! View the SEM Strategist and SEO Copywriter job opportunity at Moore & Scarry Advertising in Fort Myers, Florida Area on LinkedIn ..." and a link "www.linkedin.com/jobs?viewJob=&jobId=1352530 - Cached". The sixth result is "Joyce Pozsgay - LinkedIn" with a subtext "Baltimore, Maryland Area - Technical Writer" and a link "www.linkedin.com/in/joycepozsgay".

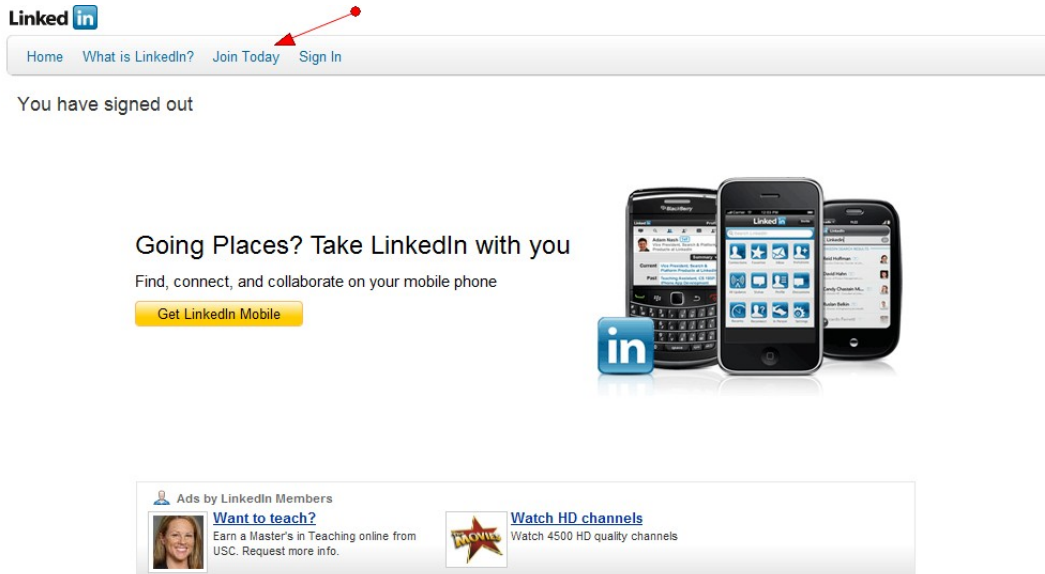
Visit each of the top listed profiles and take note of how they’re representing themselves for your market. In particular, pay attention to the keywords used and their headlines.

How to Set-up a Basic Account

The basic membership to LinkedIn is free and allows you to create a profile. For a large majority of users, the free option is adequate enough to effectively network on the site.

To get started:

1. Go to LinkedIn.com.
2. Select “Join Today”.



Next you should see a page to enter your name and email address you want associated with your profile.

This screenshot shows the LinkedIn sign-up page. At the top, the LinkedIn logo is on the left, and 'Already on LinkedIn? Sign in' is on the right. A yellow banner with an information icon says 'Hmmm... looks like you already have a LinkedIn account, sign in now.' Below this is a grey box with the text 'To join LinkedIn, sign up below ... it's free!'. The registration form includes fields for 'First Name' (filled with 'Kashia'), 'Last Name' (filled with 'Foster'), 'Email' (filled with 'kashiafoster@gmail.com'), and 'New Password' (filled with '*****'). Below the password field is the text '6 to 16 characters' and a green 'Join LinkedIn' button with an asterisk. To the right of the form is a box titled 'LinkedIn helps you...' containing three bullet points: 'Establish your professional profile online', 'Stay in touch with colleagues and friends', and 'Find experts, ideas and opportunities'. A red arrow points from the 'Join LinkedIn' button to the first bullet point. At the bottom, there is a link 'Already on LinkedIn? Sign in' and a disclaimer: '* By clicking Join LinkedIn, you are indicating that you have read, understood, and agree to LinkedIn's User Agreement and Privacy Policy'.

Unlike other social media sites, it's not enough to just enter your name and email to create a profile that you can complete later. On the next page, you're required to input details related to your professional standing.

LinkedIn

M, Let's get your professional profile started

I am currently:

* Country:

* ZIP Code:
e.g. 94043 (Only your region will be public, not your ZIP code)

* Company:

* Job Title:

[Create my profile](#)

* Indicates required field.

A LinkedIn profile helps you...

- Showcase your skills and experience
- Be found for new opportunities
- Stay in touch with colleagues and friends

Once this information is completed, LinkedIn will offer to search the contacts linked to your given email address. Any contacts connected with a web email can be imported to your account at this stage.

Getting the ball rolling to reach out to prospects on LinkedIn couldn't be easier. But If you're not sure about pulling in "all" your emails at this stage, bypass this part. Just choose "Skip This Step" at the bottom of the screen.

LinkedIn

See Who You Already Know on LinkedIn

Step 2 of 6

Searching your email contacts is the easiest way to find people you already know on LinkedIn.

☐ Yahoo! ☐ Windows Live Hotmail ☐ Gmail ☐ AOL ☐ Other

Username: @

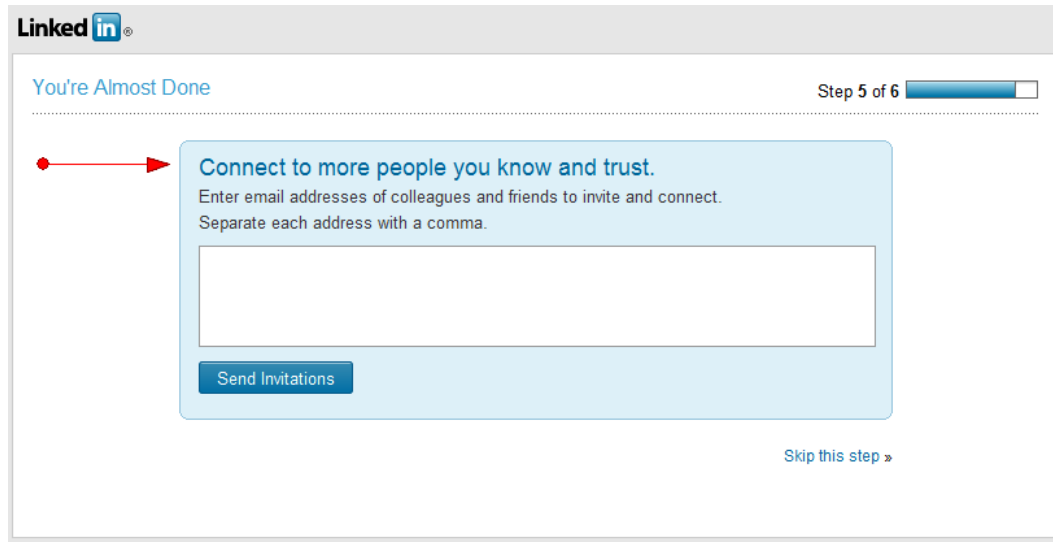
Password:

[Find Contacts](#)

We will not store your password or email anyone without permission.

[Skip this step »](#)

Now LinkedIn asks if you would like to manually enter email addresses to send invitations to colleagues interact with you on LinkedIn.



LinkedIn

You're Almost Done

Step 5 of 6

Connect to more people you know and trust.

Enter email addresses of colleagues and friends to invite and connect.
Separate each address with a comma.

Send Invitations

[Skip this step »](#)

Selecting a membership plan is the final step for the first phase of completing your profile. The basic membership option provides enough access to experience the benefits of participating in the community.

Completing Your Profile

Activating a basic account is only the beginning of establishing yourself on LinkedIn. At this point, your profile is nowhere near finished. Essentially all you've created is a LinkedIn web page tied to your name and email address.

Bringing your LinkedIn hub up to speed requires more work, but is well worth the effort. The first place to start working is on your profile. A well written and complete profile is essential to maximizing your efforts. Speaks for you, demonstrates who you are

Edit your profile by:

1. Clicking the "Profile" menu from the Navigation toolbar.
2. Choose "Edit Profile" from the drop-down menu.



Profiles on LinkedIn are formed in a resume-style structure. In edit mode, individual entry fields are distinctly marked to enter specific information (i.e., summary and specialties) about you

and your experience. Clicking the blue hyperlinks for each field redirects you to an entry form for that field. Guided prompts within the entry forms give you ideas of what to add.

☒ Include photo

[Preview](#) or [Cancel](#)

[Close](#)

Add URL: [Attach](#)

[Attach a link](#)

visible to:
anyone

☐ Sign in with twitter

[Share](#)

Current
Owner at Web Marketing Group [Edit](#)

+ [Add a current position](#)

Past
+ [Add a past position](#)

Education
+ [Add a school](#)

Recommendations
+ [Ask for a recommendation](#)

Connections
+ [Add connections](#)

Websites
+ [Add a website](#)

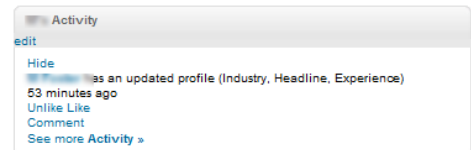
Twitter
+ [Add a Twitter account](#)

Public Profile

NEW [Add sections](#) to reflect achievements and experiences on your profile.

[Add sections](#)

Summary
+ [Add Summary](#)



[Edit Profile](#)

[View Profile](#)

Summary

Professional Experience
& Goals:

[See examples](#)

Specialties

Examples: Union negotiation, purchasing, government liaison, branding and identity, server architecture, mergers and acquisition, salary arbitration, international law... [See more](#)

[Save Changes](#) or [Cancel](#)

Note: Selecting the “View Profile” tab at the top of the edit area enables you to preview your profile as you make changes.

Uploading a Picture

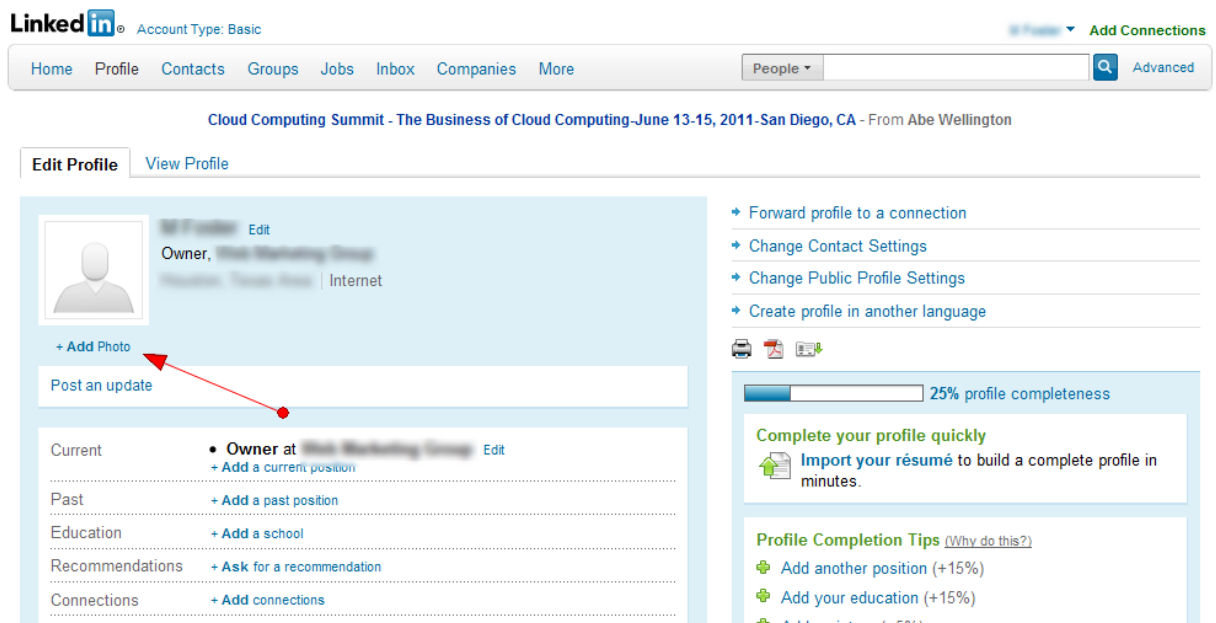
Add personality to your profile with a photo of yourself. Be selective about the photo you use. LinkedIn does not allow you to edit a picture once it’s been attached. You can resize, but not edit, so choose wisely.

Lighting, distance, and facial composition are all elements to consider when making your choice. Profiles without pictures come off as less personable. People like to do business with people. A photo of a logo is better than nothing if you’re uncomfortable with a personal photo.

Business headshots are best for the professional environment at LinkedIn. Lifestyle images, like what you’d expect at Facebook, don’t work well here.

To attach your photo:

1. Select “Profile” from the navigation toolbar.
2. Click “Edit Profile” from the drop-down menu.
3. Once on the editing page, choose “Add Photo”.



The next page allows you to upload an image. Browse your directories to find the picture you want to post to your profile. Also LinkedIn provides a built-in photo cropping feature to capture your headshot.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox Companies More People Advanced

Edit My Profile View My Profile Go back to Edit My Profile

Current Photo

Upload a Photo
You can upload a JPG, GIF or PNG file (File size limit is 4 MB).

Browse...

Upload Photo or Cancel

By clicking "Upload Photo", you certify that you have the right to distribute this photo and that it does not violate the [User Agreement](#).

Help Center | About | Blog | Careers | Advertising | Recruiting Solutions | Tools | Mobile | Developers | Publishers | Language | Upgrade My Account

LinkedIn Corporation © 2011 | [User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Copyright Policy](#) | [Send Feedback](#)

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile C

Edit My Profile

Current Photo

Upload a Photo

To the left is what your profile photo will look like.

To make adjustments, you can drag around and resize the yellow square below. When you are happy with your photo click the "Save Photo" button.

Save Photo Cancel

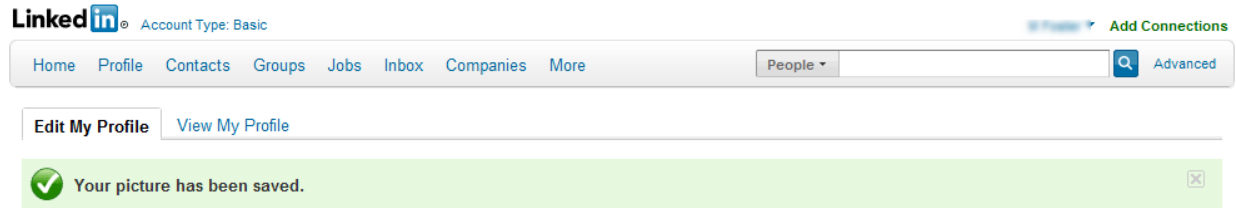
Go back to Edit My Profile

Account

Help Center | About | E

LinkedIn Corporation © 2011

After saving your photo, designate who should see your image.



Creating Your Headline

The headline area of a profile is prime real estate on LinkedIn. The information put into the headline segment is very important and should be strategically written. Essentially the headline area of your LinkedIn profile is equivalent to your elevator speech. Wikipedia defines an elevator pitch (speech) as:

*An **elevator pitch** is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a product, service, or organization and its [value proposition](#). The name "elevator pitch" reflects the idea that it should be possible to deliver the summary in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately thirty seconds to two minutes.*

Searching for people with LinkedIn's search box returns a listing displaying only photos, names and headlines. Knowing this, you can understand why what's put into the headline is so important.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox Companies More

People john smith

Find People Advanced People Search Reference Search Saved Searches

Search john smith

Keep filter selections Search Show more...

Refine By

Location

- ☒ All Locations
- ☐ United States (16325)
- ☐ United Kingdom (3486)
- ☐ Greater New York City Area (2413)
- ☐ Greater Los Angeles Area (1013)
- ☐ Canada (920)

Show more... Enter location name

Relationship

Sort by: Relevance View: Basic 23,480 results Save

JOHN SMITH Out of your network
Director of Business Development for Financial Service Solutions Groupe at
Greater New York City Area | Financial Services

John Osgoode Smith Out of your network
Lawyer at SMITH & WERKER
Toronto, Canada Area | Legal Services

JOHN MICHAEL SMITH CPA Out of your network
TAX AND ACCOUNTING at JOHN MICHAEL SMITH CPA, PA
Sarasota, Florida Area | Accounting

John Smith Out of your network
John J Smith at John D Smith
Ottawa, Canada Area | Medical Devices

Premium Search
Find the right people in half the time

Premium Search Tools:

- Premium filters
- Automatic search alerts
- Full profile access

Upgrade or Learn more

Ads by LinkedIn Members

Cloud Computing Summit

A headline filled with the right trigger words is an effective positioning tool. To be known as a SEO copywriter for the financial industry, words related to this specialty need to be in the headline.

To update your headline, from your profile's editing area, choose "Edit" next to your name.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox Companies More

People Search Advanced

Sell Online the Easy Way - Easy to Setup, Free 14-Day Trial. Open Your Own Online Store Today! - From Volusion

Edit Profile View Profile

 **Mike Foster** [Edit](#)
Owner, [Web Marketing Group](#)
Houston, Texas Area | Internet

[Edit](#)

Post an update

Current • **Owner at [Web Marketing Group](#)** [Edit](#)
+ [Add a current position](#)

Past + [Add a past position](#)

Education + [Add a school](#)

Recommendations + [Ask for a recommendation](#)

Connections + [Add connections](#)

[Forward profile to a connection](#)

[Change Contact Settings](#)

[Change Public Profile Settings](#)

[Create profile in another language](#)

30% profile completeness

Complete your profile quickly
[Import your résumé](#) to build a complete profile in minutes.

Profile Completion Tips (Why do this?)

- + Add another position (+15%)
- + Add your education (+15%)
- + Add your summary (+15%)

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox Companies More

Edit Profile View Profile

Basic Information

Name

First Name:

Last Name:

Former/Maiden Name:

Display Name: ☒ Mike Foster ☐ M F

Tip: For added Privacy, you can display only your first and last name.

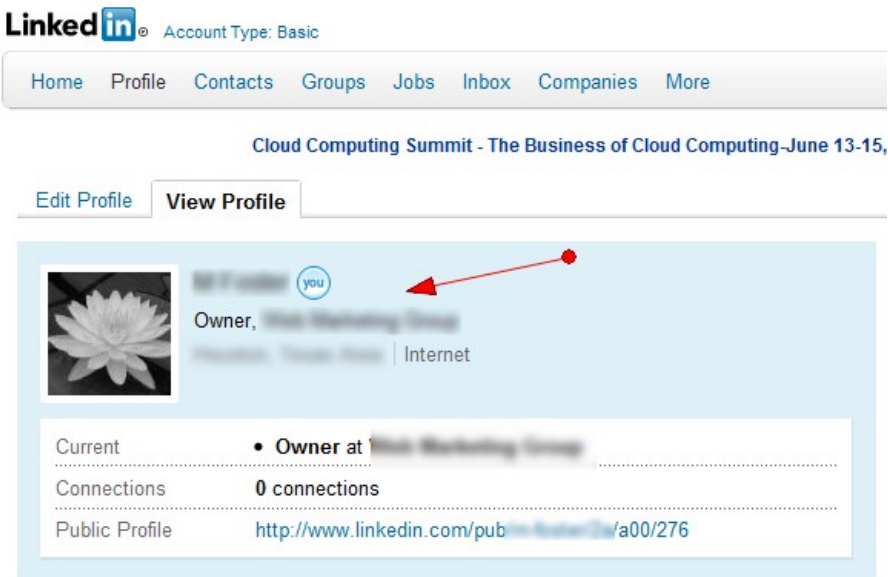
Headline

Professional "Headline": Web Marketing Group"/> [Examples: Experienced Transportation Executive, Visionary Entrepreneur and Investor... See more](#)

Location & Industry

Country:

The information you put in the "Professional Headline" field displays as the primary tagline at the top of your profile and returns for internal search results.



Public Profile vs. Private Profile

Certain segments of a profile can be restricted from public view by non-members. Although it sounds counter-productive, this strategy could work in your favor. Giving public access only to portions of your profile whets the appetite of lurkers just enough to compel them to join and possibly connect with you to find out more.

Whether you display all portions or restrict some, a public profile is an effective business tool. Interested persons often research LinkedIn bios to learn more about you, but don't necessarily want to join the site themselves. A public profile on LinkedIn ensures your professional skills are presented to all people who desire to know more about you.

Change your public profile display by:

1. Clicking "Profile" from the navigation toolbar.
2. Choose "Edit Profile" from the drop-down menu.
3. Scroll the page until you see the "Public Profile" field.
4. Select the "Edit" link to the right of the website address.

Importing Contacts

Now that your profile is finished, it's time to import contacts. Looking for people one by one could waste valuable time better spent networking. You could use the site's search box to locate possible prospects, but LinkedIn provides several ways to streamline this process.

To import contact:

1. Choose the "Contacts" menu from the navigation bar
2. Select "Add connection" from the drop-down menu. There you'll find several choices for importing data.

Whether you decide to have LinkedIn sync with an online email, manually enter contacts yourself, or import from a desktop email, this networking tool makes it simple.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn 'Add Connections' interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Profile', 'Contacts', 'Groups', 'Jobs', 'Inbox', 'Companies', and 'More'. A red arrow points to the 'Contacts' menu. Below the navigation bar, the 'Add Connections' section is active, with sub-tabs for 'Colleagues', 'Classmates', and 'People You May Know'. A red arrow points to the 'Add Connections' button. Below this, a message states: 'Get more value out of LinkedIn by inviting your trusted friends and colleagues to connect.' The main content area is divided into two panels. The left panel, titled 'See Who You Already Know on LinkedIn', contains a form with 'Email:' and 'Password:' fields, a 'Continue' button, and a link to 'Import your desktop email contacts'. A red arrow points to the 'Email:' field, and another points to the 'Import your desktop email contacts' link. The right panel, titled 'Enter Email Addresses', contains a large text input area and a 'Send Invitations' button. A red arrow points to the input area.

Also you'll have the opportunity to approve and decline the additions of emails as LinkedIn searches the designated online email box.

Furthermore, you can upload .csv, .txt, and .vcf files. Most desktop contact management applications, like Outlook, let you export address to one of the file types mentioned.

To use this feature, click on "Import your desktop email contacts". From there you can browse your computer files and attach the document. As with the web email function, you can accept or deny email addresses.

Importing information does not automatically connect you with people. After importing, each person will receive an invite from you to join your network on LinkedIn. If they accept the invitation then you'll be connected.

Adding the first round of contacts seems like a hassle. Even so, you've got to start somewhere. Keep in mind that all it takes are a few connections to gain access to professionals with the resources to help you realize your goals-whether personal or business.

Customizing Your LinkedIn URL

By default, LinkedIn assigns you a URL with random numbers and letters. For branding purposes, you will want to customize the link. An easy-to-read website address increases the chance of people being able to remember and find you on LinkedIn. Promote your signature link on your blog, Facebook pages, and through email signatures to drive traffic to your profile.

Customize your URL by:

1. Selecting the "Profile" menu from the navigation bar.
2. Click "Edit Profile" from the drop-down menu.
3. Scroll down the page until you see your "Public Profile" website link
4. Choose the "Edit" function to the right of your link.

All LinkedIn website addresses begin with www.linkedin.com/in/. On the next page, enter your preference for a unique URL to the LinkedIn prefix.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile page for a user named 'Owner, Web Marketing Group'. The profile is currently at 25% completeness. A red arrow points to the 'Edit' button next to the 'Public Profile' URL: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/.../2a/a00/276>. The profile completion tips on the right suggest adding a position (+15%), education (+15%), a picture (+5%), a summary (+5%), specialties (+5%), and a recommendation (+5%).

The screenshot shows the 'Edit My Profile' dialog box. The 'Your Public Profile URL' section displays the current URL: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/.../2a/a00/276>. Below it, there is a field to 'Customize this address' with the text 'www.linkedin.com/in/' and a 'Set Address' button. A red arrow points to the 'Set Address' button. A note at the bottom states: 'Note: Your custom URL must contain 5 - 30 alphanumeric characters. Please do not use spaces, symbols, or special characters.'

The Home Page – Your Personal LinkedIn Headquarters

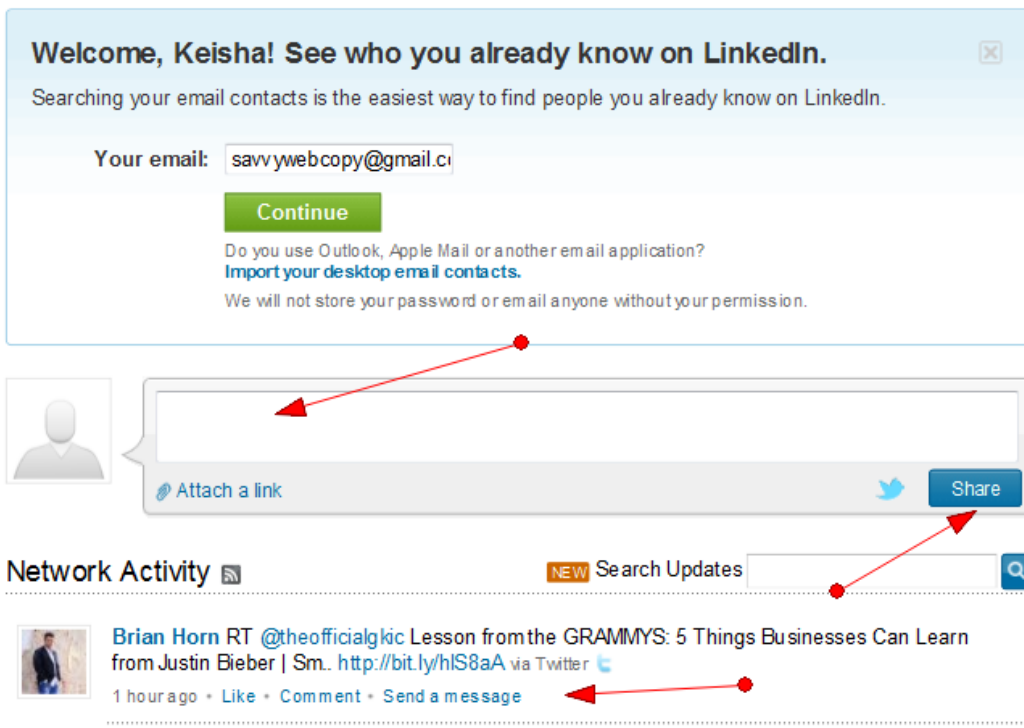
Status updates and announcements from your personal network are posted to the Network Activity portion on your Home Page.

At a glance, the Network Activity area keeps you on top of what's going on with your connections. To make the most of your interactions on LinkedIn, this is an area to check regularly.

Respond directly to individual updates without leaving the Network Activity are by choosing either to "Like", "Comment", or "Send a Message" found below individual updates.

Strategic Tip: Indicating that you like an update or leaving a comment could be discreet ways to gain the attention of people in your network who may be hard to connect with otherwise!

To broadcast your own updates, Input messages into the empty conversation box and click share to send messages to your entire network.



A Little of This, A Little of That

In addition to Network Updates, the Home page notifies you of People You May Know, Who's Viewed Your Profile, and the size of your LinkedIn Network, among other timely tidbits of information.

LinkedIn Applications

LinkedIn offers a handful of applications to enhance your contributions to the community. Applications act as digital automation tools eliminating the need to manually complete different tasks. Ideally, you want to spend more time networking instead of learning how to use applications. At the same time, it's best not to waste valuable energy clunking through busy work that can be minimized with the help of applications.

To add applications:

1. Click the “More” menu from the navigation toolbar.
2. Or select “Add an Application” from the lower right side of your Home page.
3. Or choose “Add an Application” from the sections area while editing your Profile page.



With the goal of highlighting your expertise on LinkedIn in a streamlined manner, here are some recommended applications to get you started.



Tweets Application : Tweets connects your LinkedIn Profile with your Twitter stream. It’s a Twitter utility you can use directly from LinkedIn. Quickly re-tweet and reply to tweets without ever having to leave the website. Personal updates and updates of people you’re following show up on the sidebar of your profile.



Events Application: Are you planning to attend or present at an upcoming conference? Let the LinkedIn community know about your agenda with the Events application. Events recommends seminars related to your industry. Even more, you can read others comments about a particular training. Easily discover which colleagues plan to participate in the same events. It’s an effective way to demonstrate your commitment to continuing education and honing your professional skills.



WordPress: Common advice for enriching one's experience with you on social media sites speaks to giving significant valuable directly from within the site-without requiring the person to leave the website. The WordPress application does this and more. Broadcast your insights by syncing blog posts with your LinkedIn profile. A special feature allows you to tag only the posts you want to display on your profile.

LinkedIn Privacy Settings

Protecting member's privacy is vital to an online networking community. Especially for a professional social site linked LinkedIn, ripe with high profile contacts and industry leaders. LinkedIn addresses this concern through its comprehensive privacy settings control panel. Beyond the tweaks shared earlier for managing privacy in specific segments, on the privacy settings page you have the choice to customize all elements of your personal data.

Find the privacy settings area by:

1. Clicking your "Name" at the top, right-hand side of your profile page.
2. Select "Settings" from the drop-down menu.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn account settings page. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Profile', 'Contacts', 'Groups', 'Jobs', 'Inbox', 'Companies', and 'More'. A red arrow points to the 'Settings' dropdown menu in the top right corner, which also includes 'Sign Out'. Below the navigation bar, the 'Account' section is visible, showing the user's account type as 'Basic' and a prompt to 'Upgrade' for more features. The 'Settings' link is highlighted in the left sidebar with a red arrow. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'Profile Settings' and 'Personal Information'. Under 'Profile Settings', there are links for 'My Profile', 'My Profile Photo', and 'Public Profile'. Under 'Personal Information', there are links for 'Name & Location', 'Email Addresses', and 'Change Password'.

Email Settings: Contact Settings, Receiving Messages, and Invitation Filtering

Settings worth paying attention to are the Email Settings. Inmails and Introductions, found in the **Contact Settings** sub-category, fuel the ability for member's to make connections through LinkedIn beyond their personal networks. Later you'll learn more about Inmails and Introductions, and exactly how to use them. For now take note these features determine how accessible you are to the LinkedIn community.

Furthermore, avoid missing important Inmails and Introductions by customizing how you're to be notified when you receive them. The **Receiving Messages** feature presents a detailed time-grid to specify exactly when and how often notifications are released.



Receiving Messages

LinkedIn will send you a notification when you receive important messages from other users. How would you like to receive these notifications?

		Individual Email Send emails to me immediately	Daily Digest Email Send one bundle per day	Weekly Digest Email Send one bundle email per week	No Email Read messages on the website
General					
InMails, Introductions, and OpenLink	?	☒	Not Available	☐	☐
Invitations	?	☒	Not Available	☐	☐
Profile Forwards	?	☒	Not Available	☐	☐
Job Notifications	?	☒	Not Available	☐	☐
Questions from your Connections	?	☒	Not Available	☐	☐

Just as it sounds, the **Invitation Filtering** function sifts invites based on your selection of whether or not to receive invites outside of your immediate network. Depending on your personal reasons for joining LinkedIn, it's advised to initially accept all invites to increase the chances of growing your connections.

LinkedIn

Account Type: Basic

97° 30' 00" N, 106° 30' 00" E

Add Connections

Home

Profile

Contacts

Groups

Jobs

Inbox

Companies

More

People

Advanced

Invitation Filtering

Connecting on LinkedIn is the best way to stay in touch with trusted contacts, and each invitation you accept can add hundreds of professionals to your network.

You can control how you'll be notified of the invitations you receive.

Notify me of...

- ☒ All invitations (Recommended)
- ☐ Only invitations from people who know my email address or appear in my "Imported Contacts" list.
- ☐ Only invitations from people who appear in my "Imported Contacts" list.
Tip: Don't miss invitations from people who matter to you. [Add people to your "Imported Contacts" list](#)

Save Changes

 or [Cancel](#)

The Mechanics of LinkedIn

After opening an account, creating a profile, and importing personal contacts you're ready to move out into the larger network. LinkedIn works for you based on who you already know. People you know and who acknowledge knowing you are bridges to new connections.

LinkedIn employs a tier system for organizing member's relationships. A person's position in relation to your personal network dictates the actions you'll have to take to add them to your network.

LinkedIn's hierarchy of connections is primarily structured in three levels. Your direct contacts are marked as 1st level, the contacts of your first level contacts are marked as 2nd level, and if someone is linked with a person who in turn is connected with one of your direct contacts that person is tagged as a 3rd level contact. If you have no connection, then they're identified as out of network.

Also, all of the contacts of your 1st level contacts are made visible to you. LinkedIn even reveals the number of shared connections you have with a person, and the identity of the shared connections.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn search results page. At the top, the LinkedIn logo and 'Account Type: Basic' are visible. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Profile, Contacts, Groups, Jobs, Inbox (3), Companies, and More. A search bar with 'People' selected and an 'Advanced' search button is present. Below the navigation bar, tabs for 'Find People', 'Advanced People Search', 'Reference Search', and 'Saved Searches' are shown. The main search area has a 'Search' box and a 'Refine By' section with filters for Location (All Locations, United States (7), Las Vegas, Nevada Area (5), Dallas/Fort Worth Area (1), Sacramento, California Area (1)) and Relationship. The search results are sorted by 'Relevance' and viewed in 'Basic' format, showing 7 results. Three red arrows point to the contact buttons on the profile cards: the first arrow points to the 'Add to network' button for Richelle Shaw, the second arrow points to the 'Add to network' button for Brenda Prinzavalli, and the third arrow points to the 'Add to network' button for Richelle Shaw (Out of your network). The right sidebar features a 'Premium Search' section with a 'Find the right people in half the time' headline, a list of premium search tools (Premium filters, Automatic search alerts, Full profile access), an 'Upgrade' button, and a link to 'Learn more'. At the bottom of the sidebar, there is an 'Ads by LinkedIn Members' section featuring the 'University of Phoenix'.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox 3 Companies More

People People Advanced

Find People Advanced People Search Reference Search Saved Searches

Search

Keep filter selections Search Show more...

Refine By

Location

☒ All Locations

☐ United States (7)

☐ Las Vegas, Nevada Area (5)

☐ Dallas/Fort Worth Area (1)

☐ Sacramento, California Area (1)

Enter location name

Relationship

Sort by: Relevance View: Basic 7 results Save

Richelle Shaw (3rd)
Author at RTS Publishing, LLC
Las Vegas, Nevada Area | Telecommunications

Brenda Prinzavalli (2nd)
Business Organizer with Balanced Organizing Solutions, LLC
Las Vegas, Nevada Area | Management Consulting

In Common: 1 shared connection

Richelle Shaw Out of your network
Owner, FreshStart Telephone
Las Vegas, Nevada Area | Telecommunications

Owner at Elevate Sports Apparel
Sacramento, California Area | Law Practice

Premium Search
Find the right people in half the time

Premium Search Tools:

- Premium filters
- Automatic search alerts
- Full profile access

Upgrade

or [Learn more](#)

Ads by LinkedIn Members

[University of Phoenix](#)

Introductions, InMails and Invites

As you come across the profiles in the community, LinkedIn displays several methods for adding the person to your network. Regardless if you're directly on a profile page or reviewing a listing of profiles from a search, generally these options are offered to initiate contact:

- Send InMail
- Get introduced through a connection
- Add to your network

On the profile page you'll find this information in the upper, right-hand corner. When working from a search result page, the listing has to be selected in order for contact methods to display on the right side.

Want to teach? - Change your life, become a teacher. Earn your MA in Teaching Online at USC. - From Master of Arts in Teaching

People

« Go back to Search Results Next »



Richelle Shaw (3+)
Author at RTS Publishing, LLC
Las Vegas, Nevada Area Telecommunications

- Current
 - Owner at FreshStart Telephone
 - Author at RTS Publishing, LLC
- Past
 - Executive Vice President at Colorado River Communications
- Education
 - University of California, Los Angeles
- Recommendations
 - 5 people have recommended Richelle
- Connections
 - 101 connections
- Twitter
 - richelleshaw

- Send InMail
- Get introduced through a connection
- Add Richelle to your network
- Forward this profile to a connection
- Find references
- Save Richelle's Profile

Report profile photo as...



Introductions: Have We Met?

Facebook has likes, Twitter has re-tweets, and LinkedIn has introductions. Designed around the principle of referrals, introductions are one of the best ways to meet new people on LinkedIn. Introductions are highly regarded because they deliver built-in trust.

The basic idea is that if you don't know a person who you would like to be connected to, find someone within your personal network who will introduce you to this person. When a potential contact sees that you're linked to someone who they know, it implies you're a credible person.

Compose introductions

To: **Richelle S.**
From: **Kendra Foster**

3 of your trusted connections can introduce you to someone who knows Richelle.
Please choose one:

- ☐ Benjamin, Kimberly
- ☐ Kim, Brian
- ☐ Marissa, Maria

Continue

You've Got Inmails

On the other hand, InMails are a paid feature of LinkedIn enabling you to send emails directly to a person's LinkedIn mailbox, regardless if they're in your network or not. Depending on your account level, you'll receive a credit for a certain number of InMails per month. If you send an InMail but you don't get a response from the recipient after seven days, then your account is credited for the InMail.

Although InMails require payment and you're running a risk by contacting someone who doesn't know you personally, it's an effective tool for professionals to cut to the chase in developing targeted connections. Using InMails to meet a fellow LinkedIn Member is another way to show you're serious about your business and willing to invest to grow your business.

Inroads with Invites

Technically, you can send anyone an invite at any given time. With the invite feature, you don't need a connection or a paid account to send one. However, it's highly advised to use discretion with this method. Recipients can respond by stating they don't know you, preventing you from sending the person an invitation ever again. If you receive too many "I don't know ___" responses, LinkedIn may restrict you from sending invitations altogether.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic ▼ [Add Connections](#)

[Home](#) [Profile](#) [Contacts](#) [Groups](#) [Jobs](#) [Inbox](#) [Companies](#) [More](#) [Advanced](#)

[Add Connections](#) [Colleagues](#) [Classmates](#) [People You May Know](#) [View Sent Invitations](#)

 **Invite Richelle to connect on LinkedIn**

How do you know Richelle?

- ☐ Colleague
- ☐ Classmate
- ☐ We've done business together
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I don't know Richelle

Include a personal note: (optional)

I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn.

Important: Only invite people you know well and who know you. [Find out why.](#)

[Send Invitation](#) or [Cancel](#)

Building Credibility

Establishing yourself as an expert on LinkedIn takes more than a polished profile. In the same way an offline networking group, like the Chamber of Commerce, expects more from its members than handing out nice brochures, so is it with LinkedIn. In particular, LinkedIn members want to see contributions specifically for the community.

Accomplishments of all kinds are great for earning attention from business colleagues. Yet, receiving endorsements and praise from other LinkedIn members adds an additional layer of credibility.

Some strategic ways to demonstrate your expertise on LinkedIn are with Recommendations and participating in LinkedIn Answers.

Recommendations

Similar to testimonials, business partners can leave Recommendations on your profile promoting you or your services. When you're just starting on LinkedIn, it's a good idea to encourage people you've worked with outside of the community to join and post their testimonials to your profile. A Recommendation stands as social proof from a third party that you're a skilled professional.

As stated by LinkedIn:

Users with Recommendations in their profiles are three times more likely to receive relevant offers and inquiries through searches on LinkedIn.

If you choose to do so, recommendations will appear in two places on your profile page. At the top of a profile, LinkedIn shows a Recommendation counter, while a detailed-view of each recommendation appears toward the bottom of a profile. Recommendations are visible to your personal network and Fortune 500 companies utilizing the LinkedIn Recruiter Tool.



Brenda Prinzavalli 
 Business Organizer with Balanced Organizing Solutions, LLC
 Las Vegas, Nevada Area · Management Consulting

Current	• Co-Developer at Marketing Organized • Co-Author & Co-Developer at Accomplishment Journal Series • Dream Team Organization Editor at KWU  see all...
Past	• Owner at B&B Enterprises (Self-employed)
Education	• University of Nevada-Las Vegas • University of Iowa
Recommendations	4 people have recommended Brenda
Connections	405 connections
Websites	• Company Website • Blog
Twitter	organizebrenda
Public Profile	http://www.linkedin.com/in/brendaprinzavalli

Recommendations For Brenda

**Owner, Organizing Consultant for Businesses,
Balanced Organizing Solutions, LLC**

"Met with Brenda and our paths cross all the time! NAWBO and other organizations. Brenda's appearances for Fox 5 TV Las Vegas are just the beginning of her ability to connect with individual and small business owners. I am excited about her upcoming book project. If you need to get organized, Brenda can get you there!" *June 18, 2009*

 **Diane D.**, CEO, Executive Solutions Online, LLC
 was with another company when working with Brenda at Balanced Organizing Solutions, LLC

"Brenda is a dedicated professional that truly cares about your desired outcome resulting in a timely and long lasting organized success. That sometimes may mean a different approach to a desired ending - and she has you redirected with ease and efficiency, always with a smile and with your best interest uppermost in her mind." *May 17, 2009*

 **Nancy N.**, DSC, Aflac
 worked with Brenda at Balanced Organizing Solutions, LLC

The simplest way to get Recommendations is to ask. Satisfied clients are usually more than happy to share their experiences.

To request a recommendation through LinkedIn:

1. Select "Profile" from the navigation toolbar.
2. Choose "Recommendations" from the drop-down menu.
3. Click the tab marked "Request Recommendations".

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile **Contacts** Groups Jobs Inbox Companies More People Advanced

Received Recommendations Sent Recommendations **Request Recommendations**

Ask the people who know you best to endorse you on LinkedIn

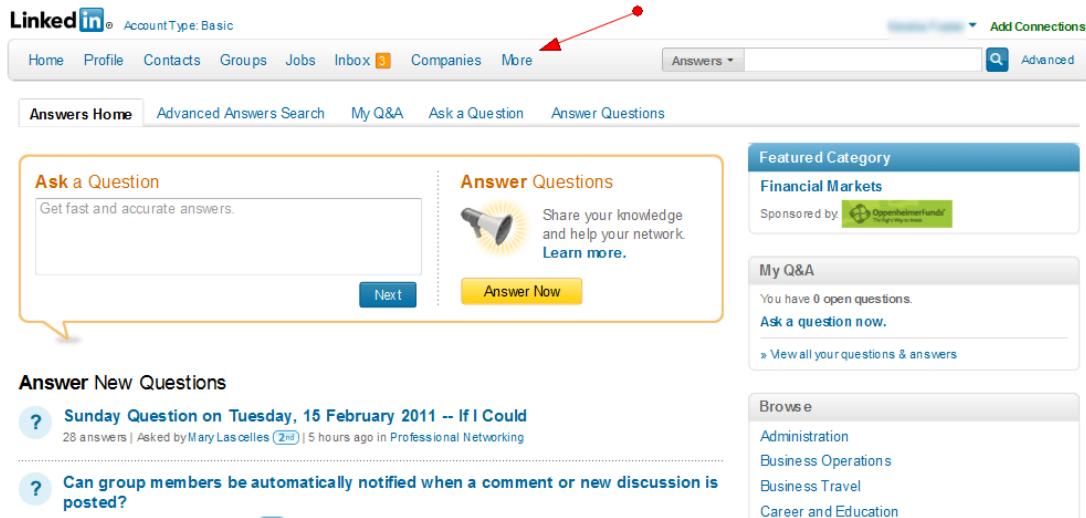
- 1 Choose what you want to be recommended for
CIS Issues Resolution Specialist II at CenterPoint Energy [Add a job or school]
- 2 Decide who you'll ask
Your connections: [Select connections] You can add 200 more recipients
- 3 Create your message
From: [Name] [Email]
Subject: Can you endorse me?
I'm sending this to ask you for a brief recommendation of my work that I can include in my LinkedIn profile. If you have any questions, let me know.
Thanks in advance for helping me out.
[Compose message]
Note: Each recipient will receive an individual email. This will not be sent as a group email.
Send or Cancel

LinkedIn Answers

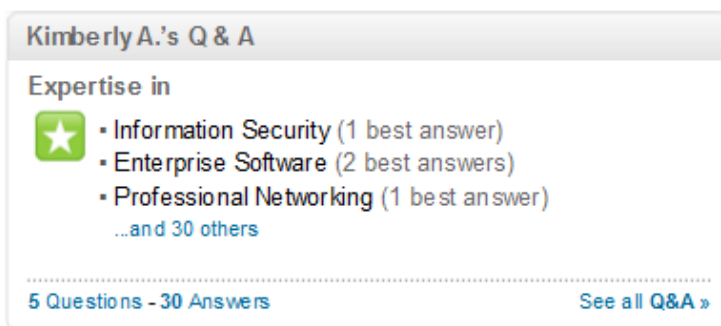
LinkedIn Answers is an ingenious system where you can ask and answer questions submitted by the LinkedIn community. Talk about an opportunity to rack up cool points in your niche! Answering questions on LinkedIn is a savvy way to be positioned as the obvious expert without being pushy or annoying.

Access the LinkedIn Answers forum by:

1. Clicking the “More” menu from the navigation toolbar.
2. Select “Answers” from the drop-down menu.



Questions are kept open for seven days. Multiple answers can be submitted by different LinkedIn members. The creator of the question picks who she thinks shared the best response. If your response is chosen as the “Best”, a green box with a star is posted on your profile page, and attached to your name in the Answer area, indicating you’re a proven expert.



All Answers are Valuable

The brilliant aspect of the process is that all answers are saved within the LinkedIn database. So if at a later point in time a member decides he would rather search through previous answers, instead of submitting a new question, those responses will be returned.

With this capability, there’s no need to worry if your answer is not picked as the “Best” all the time. All answers are logged and have the potential to generate interest and drive traffic to your profile.

How to Answer LinkedIn Questions

To answer a question:

1. Click the question.
2. Select the “Answer” button on the next page.
3. Input all details necessary into the entry form to thoroughly respond to the question.

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox 3 Companies More

Answers Advanced

Answers Home Advanced Answers Search My Q&A Ask a Question Answer Questions

Using LinkedIn Questions

Open Questions Closed Questions

? Can group members be automatically notified when a comment or new discussion is posted?
5 answers | Asked by Carol Deckert (2nd) | 5 hours ago in Using LinkedIn

? Is your company growing? How can you best make key contacts to increase your company's growth?
3 answers | Asked by Steve Deaville (14k+ contacts) (2nd) | 14 hours ago in Using LinkedIn

? Poll: Do Twitter updates in your LinkedIn newsfeed annoy you?
12 answers | Asked by Dan Antonson (2nd) | 6 days ago in Small Business, Using LinkedIn

? Are some people on LinkedIn getting rude or what?
57 answers | Asked by Sahar Andrade (2nd) | 6 days ago in Using LinkedIn

Browse

- Administration
- Business Operations
- Business Travel
- Career and Education
- Conferences and Event Planning
- Finance and Accounting
- Financial Markets
- Government and Non-Profit
- Health
- Hiring and Human Resources
- International
- Law and Legal
- Management
- Marketing and Sales

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox 3 Companies More

Answers Advanced

Answers Home Advanced Answers Search My Q&A Ask a Question Answer Questions

Go back to Answers Category Home | Next »

2nd Carol Deckert
Training sm biz 2 make connections by bldg relationships. Chief Networking Officer & Open Networker w/9,600+ connections. see all my questions

Can group members be automatically notified when a comment or new discussion is posted?

I have a closed LinkedIn Group that I operate for my local Referrals Unlimited Network (RUN Lancaster) group. Is there a way that when a new discussion is posted, or a new comment made, that an email is automatically generated to each member to tell them to go look at what has just been posted?

Many thanks for your help!
Carol Deckert, Networking Expert/Coach
posted 6 hours ago in Using LinkedIn | Report question as...

Answer Suggest Expert Reply Privately Share This

LinkedIn Account Type: Basic Add Connections

Home Profile Contacts Groups Jobs Inbox 1 Companies More Answers Advanced

Answers Home Advanced Answers Search My Q&A Ask a Question Answer Questions

Go back to Answers Category Home | Next >

Carol Deckert
 Training sm biz 2 make connections
 by bldg relationships Chief
 Networking Officer & Open
 Networker w/9,600+ connections.
[see all my questions](#)

Can group members be automatically notified when a comment or new discussion is posted?

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Many thanks for your help!
 Carol Deckert, Networking Expert/Coach
 posted 6 hours ago in [Using LinkedIn](#)

Your Answer
 Your answer will be visible to all LinkedIn users.

Web Resources (optional)
 List websites that support your answer (ex: <http://www.site.com>)
 List websites that support your answer (ex: <http://www.site.com>)
 List websites that support your answer (ex: <http://www.site.com>)

Suggest an Expert (optional)
 from your network

☒ **Write a note to Carol (optional)**
 Your note will only be visible to the person who posted the question... take this opportunity to introduce yourself professionally.

or [Cancel](#)

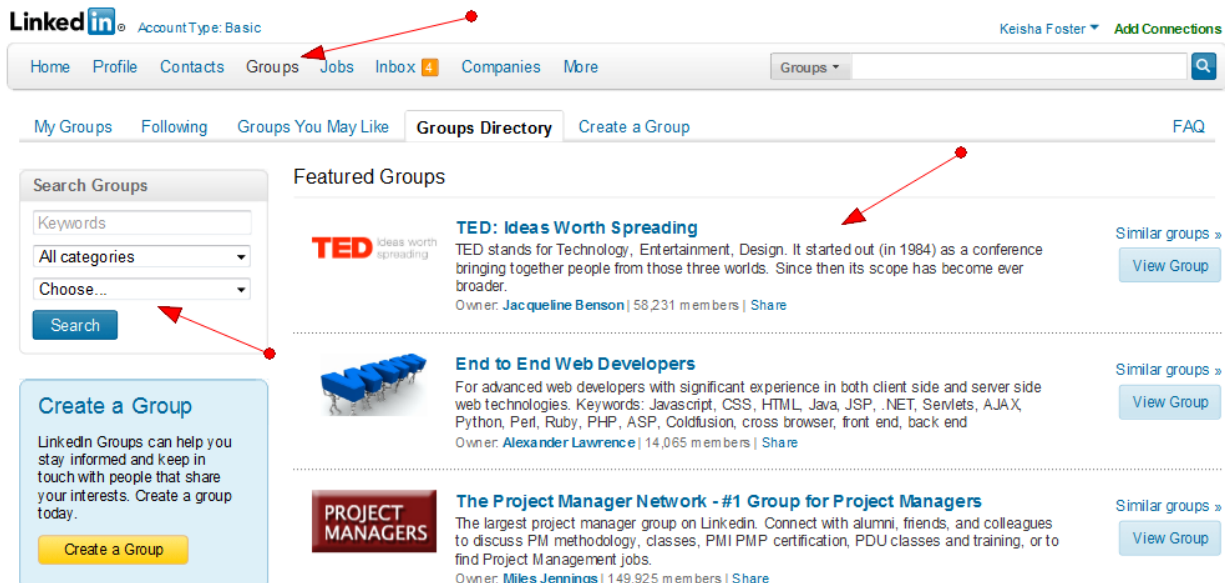
LinkedIn Groups

Joining a LinkedIn Group introduces the opportunity to strengthen connections with like-minded individuals in an exclusive forum. The Groups function provides a private space to interact with LinkedIn members that share common skills, experiences, industry affiliations, and goals.

Group leaders capitalize on this feature through providing additional benefits and access for each participant with the expectation of solidifying their overall brand and mission. It's a win-win situation. In most cases, invitations are sent out asking a person to join a group.

Nevertheless, you're allowed to initiate the process of participating in groups. For private groups, managers have the authority to accept or deny requests. The Group Directory lists all the groups currently on LinkedIn. To search the "Group Directory":

1. Select “Groups Directory” from “Groups” menu on the LinkedIn navigation bar
2. Click “Search Groups” box
3. Enter a keyword or a group name in search box. Narrow your search with the category and language selection. Click “Search”.



The Future of Networking is Here

The information presented in this report barely scratches the surface of LinkedIn. Its capabilities expand beyond the confines of being just a social media site. It's quickly evolving into a robust CRM (customer relationship management) tool for participants who understand and want to capitalize on the value of nurturing relationships for business.

With over 95 million registered users, the rate at which your network expands on LinkedIn is truly amazing. A hundred strategic contacts could mean access to millions in a short amount of time. Think about how many networking mixers you would have to attend to get those kinds of numbers!

Ultimately, if you want to position yourself as an industry leader and add to the open discussion on the issues in your market, LinkedIn is the way to do it. With a little effort, it's easy to become recognized as the go-to person in your niche utilizing this great tool.

