30 Minutes to
Maximizing LinkedIn

by Neal Schaffer

Helpful Tips from the Author who Brought You:
Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing &
Windmill Networking: Understanding, Leveraging & Maximizing LinkedIn
As the leading author and speaker on LinkedIn for business and professional networking, I often get asked for beginner tips to help you get started and find real value in using LinkedIn. While I can’t offer as much help here as I could by your reading my two books, I did want to offer a quick summary to help ensure that you don’t miss out on what LinkedIn has to offer and get started (or restarted) – in a 30 minute read.

1. DETERMINE YOUR LINKEDIN OBJECTIVE

If you don’t have an objective for using LinkedIn, or any other social media website, you could be wasting a lot of your time. In order to ensure you gain positive ROI from your time spent here, make sure you determine your objective for using LinkedIn – and always return back to it if you think you’re getting lost on the site.

Neal’s Tips – Some Popular LinkedIn Objectives

Promote My Company
Find New Customers
Increase Website Traffic
Build a Professional Community within My Industry
Professional Networking
Personal Branding
Social Recruiting
Find a New Job

Additional Information Links:

What is LinkedIn and Why Should You Join? LinkedIn’s Value
http://wind.mn/xWMVGr

Why Use LinkedIn? 7 Reasons for Every Professional to Join
http://wind.mn/wVR7BS
CREATE YOUR LINKEDIN ACCOUNT AND PROFILE

Joining LinkedIn is easy, and all you need is an email address to sign up. Once you sign up and establish an account, LinkedIn will ask you to enter a lot of personal information in order to better develop your profile. While you might be taken aback by this, the more information you provide here the easier it will be for both you to get back in touch with those from your past and vice-versa. It will also add more of your keywords to the LinkedIn database to allow opportunities to come your way for whatever objective you might have.

**Neal’s Tips – Building a Stellar LinkedIn Profile**

- Be Real (professional photo, use full real name)
- Be Complete (use all of the real estate that LinkedIn provides you to be found)
- Be Branded (use the Headline and Summary areas to expose your strengths, differentiate yourself from the others, and allow relevant viewers of your profile to want to contact you)
- Be Searchable (make sure that relevant keywords associated with your brand, experience, profession, and industry are included in your profile)

**Additional Information Links:**

LinkedIn Profile Tips: The 10 Mistakes You Want to Avoid and Why
http://wind.mn/dJ2hKu

LinkedIn Profile Completeness - 10 LinkedIn Profile Tips
http://wind.mn/buA2NG

Inbound Marketing and Your LinkedIn Profile: 10 Ways to Maximize
http://wind.mn/x4YCBx

4 Questions to Ask in Creating Your LinkedIn Public Profile
http://wind.mn/ruBV5H

**DID YOU KNOW?**

87% of recruiters use LinkedIn to reach and engage potential candidates

(JOVBITE 2011 SOCIAL RECRUITING SURVEY).
Neal Schaffer
Author, Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales & Social Media Marketing | Social Media Agency Executive, Coach & Speaker
Orange County, California Area | Marketing and Advertising

Summary
Neal Schaffer is a leader in helping businesses and professionals strategically leverage the potential of social media as a business tool.

He has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg Business Week, Yahoo!, and the American Express Open Forum. He is fluent in Chinese and Japanese and currently resides in Irvine, California, where he proudly serves on the marketing committee for the United Way of Orange County.

Neal has published two books on LinkedIn:
Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing (http://windmillnetworking.com/linkedinbook) was published in July 2011.

Neal's first book, Windmill Networking: Maximizing Twitter, was a recipient of multiple industry awards and continues to be one of the best-selling books in its genre. Neal is currently working on his third book, tentatively titled "Windmill Networking: Maximizing Twitter."

Neal is also a frequent social media conference speaker and is passionate about educating his audience with concrete takeaways and compelling, customized content to help them truly maximize social media. Neal has spoken before thousands of executives and professionals at nearly 100 events including:

* National social media marketing events: Online Marketing Summit, Gravity Summit, LAudaCon 2.0, GABRIEL
* Corporate webinars: Vocus, Nimble
* Professional associations: HSA, FRSA, IABG, YPO, CEO Trust, Social Media Club, FENG & NAHREP

As President of Windmill Marketing, a social media strategy consulting practice, Neal has led social media strategy creation, educational workshops, and implementation coaching for a range of B2B and B2C companies including a Fortune 50 software company, a multi-billion dollar health insurance company, and a popular Mexican-American musician.

Specialties
* Social Media Marketing
* Social Media Strategy Consulting
* Sales & Business Development
* Lead Generation
* Inbound Marketing
* Internet Marketing
* Social Networking
* Social Media Coaching
* Corporate Training on Social Media, including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Blogs
* Social Media Keynote Speaker
* LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook & Business Blogging Strategies
* Business Development in Asia, especially Japan
BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Once you’ve gotten your profile set up, you now want to build your LinkedIn empire by establishing a robust network of connections. Since LinkedIn is a database, the more connections you have, the more you will be able to easily contact others through 2nd degree (removed by 1 common person) 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 Alumni based on where you worked or went to school. Make sure you only send an invitation to those you truly know – LinkedIn will potentially restrict your account if the recipient of your invitation says they don’t know you.

Neal’s Tips – Who to Send Invitations to

- Colleagues (past & present)
- Partners & Clients
- Professional Association Members
- Networking Acquaintances
- Classmates
- Friends
- Family

Additional Information Links:

How to Grow Your LinkedIn Network in 15 Ways http://wind.mn/y7Ve07


Adding Connections Easily Found in the Upper Right Corner

Many Ways to Find People

One Introduction Away from Millions of Professionals!
As you increase your network of connections and more and more people from your past get back in touch with you, it’s time to think about LinkedIn Recommendations. Recommendations are powerful in that they are “Virtual References,” allowing others who view your profile to verify your professional experience. If someone wants to contact you for a professional or business opportunity, they will often look at your Recommendations, see who wrote it and what their relationship to you was, and confirm that the content of the Recommendation matches up with your profile.

**Neal’s Tips – Recommendations Best Practices**

- LinkedIn recommends you receive 3 recommendations to “complete” your profile.
- Contact all of your old report-to managers and ask them for a recommendation, reminding them of your accomplishments in your request.
- Pay It Forward and recommend others that you think are worthy of it. Sometimes they might recommend you in return, but never write a recommendation (or ask for one) with a quid pro quo objective: It will be clear to those who read it.

**Additional Information Links:**

LinkedIn Recommendations: Will You Write Me One? [http://wind.mn/y3cgSw](http://wind.mn/y3cgSw)

The Real Value and Importance of LinkedIn Recommendations [http://wind.mn/yM8kyO](http://wind.mn/yM8kyO)
5 JOIN GROUPS

LinkedIn Groups are the biggest public Internet forums for professionals in the world. As of January 1, 2012 there were more than 1 million LinkedIn Groups, with the largest having more than 600,000 members. I consider Groups to be virtual industry conferences or tradeshows – wouldn’t you want to be seen, meet others, and promote your expertise at the largest networking event for professionals on earth?

Neal’s Tips – Join 50 Groups

LinkedIn allows you to join 50 Groups. To maximize your potential to reach others – and for them to reach you – I recommend you join the maximum 50.

Which Groups to join? Try a combination of Big Groups, Local Groups, Alumni Groups (from both past universities as well as 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 start receiving lots of email from LinkedIn! There is a link at the bottom of every newsletter which allows you to turn off the daily or weekly update.

Make it a habit on a daily or weekly basis to jump into a Group conversation or start your own!

Additional Information Links:
LinkedIn Groups: What are They and Why Join a LinkedIn Group? http://wind.mn/yqGK3w

Which LinkedIn Groups Should I Join? LinkedIn Groups Guide http://wind.mn/uzilwW

LinkedIn Groups Best Practices and Social Networking Etiquette http://wind.mn/wKy481

Recommended LinkedIn Groups:
The Social Media for Strategies Business Group http://wind.mn/windsm

Windmill Networking - Social Media Education & Open Networking http://wind.mn/windwn

BUSINESS IS EVERYWHERE IN LINKEDIN GROUPS.

Here’s how I developed business through a group discussion. In Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing there is a case study of a businessman who generated 75% of his five million dollars in annual revenues from LinkedIn Groups.
CHECK OUT ANSWERS

There are more than 1 million LinkedIn Groups based on every profession or industry that you can imagine. LinkedIn Answers, on the other hand, are public Q&A forums that provide you with only 20+ categories to choose from. This means that, for most professionals, you can concentrate your efforts on only 1 or 2 categories. Answers provide you a perfect opportunity to not only tap the LinkedIn community for answers to your professional problems, but Answers may also help you promote yourself and your company by displaying your expertise in responding to the questions of others.

Neal’s Tips – “Own” Your Answers Category

- Look through the Answers categories – and where appropriate subcategories – and make a commitment to “Own” it or become the expert in it.
- Make it a habit to check out your category on a daily or weekly basis to see if there are any questions you can respond to – or even learn from.
- Try reaching out to others who respond to your questions or answer the same ones – it could lead to fruitful networking opportunities – and even future business!

Additional Information Links:
LinkedIn Answers Tips and Why Every User Should Use It
http://wind.mn/wI8ZyJ

LinkedIn Answers Feature Tips and Etiquette Recommendations
http://wind.mn/yhuIR4

Find Answers in the More Tab
RESEARCH COMPANIES

Regardless of your LinkedIn objective, there might be a need for you to do research on companies. Instead of going to Hoovers or OneSource, try doing a search within LinkedIn Companies. Companies provides a resource by allowing you to search through its database of more than two million companies that are registered. Companies allows you to map your own Professional Graph to whoever is working at the company you are researching, allowing you to easily find networking opportunities at that particular company.

Additional Information Links:
10 Steps to Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales & Social Media Marketing
http://wind.mn/rm9ULo
Windmill Networking Companies Page
http://wind.mn/AqpKgn

Neal’s Tips – LinkedIn Companies: An Invaluable Source of Business Intelligence

- From the “Companies” home tab, make sure you navigate to “Search Companies” to see the search filters that LinkedIn provides to make it easy for your to find your target company based on a number of criteria, including location, industry, and company size.

- When you find a company, click on the “Check out insightful statistics about [Company Name] employees” on the top right-hand side. This will lead you to a number of unique insights about the company drawn from user-generated content of LinkedIn users.

DID YOU KNOW

- LinkedIn is more global than you think! There are 19 countries that have more than one million users in every major continent, including North America (United States, Canada, Mexico), South America (Brazil, Argentina), Europe (United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Germany, Belgium), Africa (South Africa), Asia (India, China, Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia) and Australia. The most “LinkedIn” countries? More than 10% of the population of these countries are LinkedIn members: United States, Netherlands, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and Belgium.
Access Advanced Companies Search from This Tab

Click Here to Access Business Intelligence about This Company

Subset of Insightful Statistics
LinkedIn allows you to keep your finger on the pulse of the news that others in your industry are reading through their LinkedIn Today app, which you can find under the “News” tab. Consider Today your daily newspaper for keeping tabs on what other professionals have already decided are worthy of reading, saving you time by cutting through the noise that exists on the Internet.

LinkedIn Today gives you the ability to save interesting articles for you to read later on LinkedIn - or on your smartphone’s LinkedIn app! You can also easily share something from LinkedIn Today to your network as a Status Update. If you don’t have anything to post, why not update others on something that you recommend they read?

You’ll notice that under the “News” tab is also a “Signal” link. Signal is an application, which allows you to search through all of the news sharing and status updates that happen on LinkedIn and shared on LinkedIn via Twitter. Try some searches if you’re trying to find who is sharing information relevant to you – and consider engaging with them!

Additional Information Links:
LinkedIn Revolutionizes Social News with LinkedIn Today http://wind.mn/eFSbwC

6 Reasons to Use LinkedIn Signal Tool to Analyze Users Tweets http://wind.mn/vTaMAg

Windmill Networking on LinkedIn Today: http://wind.mn/yYY0dk

Neal’s Tips – LinkedIn Today as an Engagement Vehicle
LinkedIn can feel overwhelming at times, and by no means is there any need for you to add any of the optional applications that exist. However, depending on your objective, these are the apps that I recommend you consider adding:

**Reading List by Amazon** (if you’re an avid book reader)

**Events** (for professional networking)

**SlideShare Presentations** (to promote your company presentations)

**WordPress** or **Blog Link** (if you blog)

*Neal’s Tips – Profession-Specific Apps to Consider*

- **Lawyer Ratings and Legal Updates** (for lawyers)
- **Real Estate Pro** (for real estate professionals)
- **Portfolio Display** (for creative professionals)
- **GitHub** (for software developers)

**Additional Information Links:**

What are LinkedIn Applications?
http://wind.mn/xxQxU0

Create a LinkedIn Event on Your Next Trip and Windmill Network!
http://wind.mn/IEHfVX

*Example of SlideShare Presentation on My Profile*
LinkedIn is constantly changing their functionality and adding new features.

Make sure you stay up to date by:
Subscribing to my Newsletter (http://wind.mn/windlist),
Following me on Twitter (http://twitter.com/nealschaffer),
Joining my Facebook Fan Page (http://facebook.com/windmillnetworking),
Circling me on Google+ (http://gplus.to/nealschaffer), and finally
Connecting with me on LinkedIn (http://www.linkedin.com/in/nealschaffer).

Additional Information Links:
10 New Features LinkedIn Introduced in 2011 to Leverage in 2012
http://wind.mn/zyCLb9

Neal Schaffer is a leading social media strategist who was recently chosen as a Top 30 Social Media Power Influencer by Forbes Magazine. The author of two social media books, Maximizing LinkedIn for Sales and Social Media Marketing and Windmill Networking: Understanding, Leveraging & Maximizing LinkedIn, and frequent speaker for corporations and associations on a wide variety of social media for business topics, Neal's Windmill Networking Blog on Social Media Strategy is considered one of the top 100 marketing blogs in the world as recognized by AdAge. Neal has created social media strategies and executed educational programs for a variety of companies, from a Fortune 50 company to a musician who has one million social media fans. In addition to providing speaking, training and social media coaching through his own Windmills Marketing agency, Neal is also Vice President of Social Strategy for 5150 and Green Dream Social, two social media agencies located in Southern California. Neal is a graduate of Amherst College, speaks fluent Japanese and Mandarin Chinese, and currently resides in Irvine, California.
How Neal Can Help You

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http://windmillnetworking.com

Buy the Books


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