



Insight

July 2009

Dear Matt,

Networking. It's the lifeline for all businesses. You meet new people who introduce you to other people and the next thing you know your network has grown exponentially. And, with it your business grows as well.

Linkedin offers a powerful platform to connect with individuals you otherwise would never meet. I speak from experience. Today IB Media has over 900 contacts of which I estimate is made up of 75% previously unknown individuals (you're probably one of them). It's an incredible tool to help you grow your business. In this month's *Insight*, we'll be providing you with 10 brief steps on how to use Linkedin to grow your business.

In consideration of this month's topic, IB Media is offering a free workshop on Linkedin to any size group. Just let us know when you'd like us to speak on the subject and we'll be happy to do our best to accommodate your request.

Stay Positive!

**Ira
Your Virtual Media Director**



IB Up Close

Here he is! Leave it up to my daughter Renee to come up with some crazy idea on how to photograph my 3 week old grandson Asher. We call this Bookshelf Asher. For those of you connected to me via Facebook, I hope you enjoyed the up to the minute reporting on his birth. I have a compiled a document of all the postings. Drop me a note and I'll get it to you.



10 Steps to Grow Your Business and Your Network with LinkedIn

1. Develop an Interesting Profile

First things first, you have to invest time in your LinkedIn profile before you do any of the steps that follow. Why? You have to show others that you are a participating member of the LinkedIn community. Be sure to follow the LinkedIn Extreme Profile Makeover recommendations from two senior LinkedIn staffers.

2. Connect with Everyone You Know, and Everyone You Meet

Use LinkedIn as your professional address book. The site makes it easy to import contacts from Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, Outlook, etc., and will tell you if your contact is already on LinkedIn. It's important to also change the "boilerplate" text when sending invitations. No one wants to see you skip the opportunity to send them a personal message! Another tip: be sure to connect with people on LinkedIn that you meet in meetings, at conferences, etc.

3. Write Recommendations of People You Respect

Unless you have recently completed a project for someone and are asking for a recommendation of your work, stop using the "Can you endorse me?" feature of LinkedIn. Time is too short and too valuable to respond to every "Can you endorse me?" request. So, instead of asking for recommendations, dig your well before you're thirsty! Write them for others. People who you write recommendations for will generally return the favor.

4. Participate in LinkedIn Answers

LinkedIn Answers is a question and answer forum for all members of the LinkedIn community. Asking questions is the easiest form of participation, but answering them is arguably more valuable. Since answering questions usually takes more effort, investing the time to answer questions related to your field can pay off in ways you might not expect.

5. Share Answers with Others via Your Blog, Website, etc.

One way to build a network on LinkedIn, and traffic to your blog/website at the same time is to use the content created in LinkedIn Answers. For example, some bloggers take the answers they get to

their questions and post a summary of them on their blog. This gives people who answer your question some additional promotion on your blog/website (assuming they included a link in their answer!).

6. Create a LinkedIn Group

Groups on LinkedIn primarily exist for people to network together around a particular topic. The LinkedIn Groups Directory shows all premium and partner groups, as well as basic groups that pay a fee to be included. Groups are easy to setup, but take an investment of time to maintain. As members join, be sure to greet them, encourage participation, and share news that they will benefit from. No time to do this? Don't setup a group, or better yet : hire a virtual assistant to manage the group for you!

7. Participate in Other LinkedIn Groups

If you've joined LinkedIn Groups related to your interests, industry, etc., be sure to participate in a few discussions over the course of a couple of weeks. Also, add news that you feel the group would benefit from. Then, scan the group for people you would like to know and invite to connect with them. Be sure to send a personal invitation (see #2 above), and you'll quickly expand your personal network.

8. Get Creative with LinkedIn's Advanced Search

Are you selling a product or service and looking for prospects at a particular company? Use advanced LinkedIn search techniques to find people at the company that you are 2 or 3 degrees separated from, and connect with them through your mutual contact. You've just turned a "cold call" into a "warm call"!

9. Use LinkedIn Contacts Management (PC application)

Thanks to Mashable, I found LinkedIn Contacts Management, a freeware application for the PC that allows you to send emails to all of your LinkedIn contacts at once. It's a mailing list manager for your LinkedIn contacts, complete with filters and exports. Since we are all overrun with far too=2 0much email, I would recommend that you be very careful at how (and how much) you use such a powerful marketing tool.

10. Test and try new ideas

LinkedIn, and the community that uses it, is constantly launching new tools, discussion groups off-site, etc. For example, LinkedIn Polls now lets you poll your network and display the results, and the LinkedIn Applications directory is growing all the time. You can monitor developments at Linked Intelligence or try an Icerocket Big Buzz search: LinkedIn.

Source: Dot Connector

Welcome to our new readers of IB Media *Insight*. Each month we touch on a current media topic of interest in a short, concise format. You're busy. We get it.

Thanks to all for your thoughts on last month's *Insight* regarding Twitter. Keep on Tweeting!

Have a comment or suggestion on this month's topic or any you'd like covered in the future? Let us know. And, if you've enjoyed this month's edition, pass it on to someone who will appreciate it.

Next month? Next Gen Home Movies.

We're IB Media, Your Virtual Media Director. Always ready to discuss how we may add

value to your organization. Thanks again!

Ira Bass

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