



LinkedIn 101 for Individual and Business Profiles

As of January 2013, LinkedIn reported over 200 million registered users from around the world and they estimate that it grows by 2 new users per second.¹ Over 2 million companies have Company Pages. As a social networking site, LinkedIn sees itself as a way to connect the world's professionals to make them successful, which means you can find and be introduced to potential clients, service providers and other experts, and be found for potential business opportunities. By viewing profiles about companies, news and discussions, you can gain insights about your industry and client base. Many members also see it as a means for finding new jobs.

LinkedIn users have average 15 years of experience in a particular industry and an average of 41 years old. Around 47% are "decision makers", while their average income \$106,000.² Do these demographics sound like potential customers and clients for your business?

How to Create Profiles for Individuals

To get started

- Grab your resume or your last job application. It will help you remember your positions and responsibilities as you fill out your profile.
- Find a recent photo that you can upload. It should represent you at work - this isn't Facebook so avoid shots from your last vacation. Make it match what you do!
- Go to www.linkedin.com, enter some basic information and click "Join Now" to start creating a new profile.
 - Name - Make sure you are consistent with how you use your name (using middle initials, full name or the like). Consistent names across all social media platforms helps with Search Engine Optimization.
 - Headline - a short description of what you do and your value. This elevator pitch shows up all over LinkedIn results. Be creative, go beyond your job title.
 - Add your company website URL under "Edit Contact Info". You can also link to other URL's, such as a blog or RSS feed. Also choose "Other:" for website type if you want to use descriptive names for a particular website, because they can help improve search results.

¹ <http://press.linkedin.com/News-Releases/165/LinkedIn-reaches-200-million-members-worldwide>

² <http://www.socialbuzzclub.com/1687/linkedin-strategies-for-your-business-and-increased-market-visibility>

Make connections

Select “Add Connections”, one the upper right of your page. You will be presented names of people with whom you can connect.

✳ Don’t just hit the “Connect” button from the “Add Connections” or even the “People You May Know” pages, because it will send the default request.

Personalize your request. Go to the search box and search on a person. On that person profile’s page, click “Connect”. You will get a box that contains the default request that you can edit to be more personal. After all, personal connection is what networking is all about, right?

Once you have connections

If you have worked directly with someone, consider recommending them or endorsing one or more of their listed skills.

- To endorse, go to the person’s profile and click the “+” button next to a specific skill they have listed.
- To write a recommendation, go to the person’s profile and look for the Recommendation section. Click on the “Recommend *name*” link.
- Once you have a lot of connections, considering using Tags to manage them. Default tags are assigned when you connect, for colleagues, friends, partners, classmates and group members. You can create your own tags if you want to subdivide connections even farther.

Some profile improvements you can make

Click “Profile” on the navigation bar and then “View Profile”. Click the Down Arrow next to “Edit” on your profile page. Change options for what information is visible to everyone from your profile.

Manage your settings by moving the cursor over your name in the upper right of the heading, and select “Settings”. From here you can:

- Change your password.
- Manage your activity broadcasts and who can see them (by default all your connections will see when you change your profile, join groups, make recommendations or follow companies).
- Select who can see your connections (by default, your connections can view other connections).

- Change your profile visibility.
- Other controls and settings for email preferences, and group, company or applications options.

Change the URL for your profile. Click “Edit” next to the URL under your photo. Change it to your name or other recognizable text. Once saved, you can put this URL on your business card, email or website.

Join Groups

Go to “Groups” and choose “Groups You May Like” to see what recommendations LinkedIn has for you, based on your profile. New postings in these groups will be delivered to your email address.

Click “Groups” then “Groups Directory”, which gives you access to all groups that have been created. You can narrow this one down by your connections, categories or languages.

Follow Companies

Choose companies to follow by clicking the “Companies” tab in the navigation bar, or by using the Search box with the “Companies” option. You will receive emails when these companies post status updates.

Ask or Answer Questions

Click on “More” and then “Answers” in the navigation bar. Share your knowledge and establish yourself as an expert.

Read the News

Click “News” in the navigation bar and see stories that LinkedIn tailors for you through LinkedIn Today, or try “Signals” which lets you filter what you see. Use LinkedIn to filter through information relevant to your industry.

How to Create a Business Profile

To add a Company Profile, you need to have the company name listed in your profile under your experience. Once again, make sure you type in the full company name for consistency. And you'll need a valid email address for that company based on the company URL, so for example, myname@chaffeecountyedc.com for the CCEDC.

To get started

Click on the “Companies” tab in the navigation bar and the click “Add a Company”.

- Name - Make sure the company name matches the company you put on your personal profile.
- Admins - You can have all employees with a valid company email address administer the page, or individually add administrators.
- Logos - Add both your standard logo and a square version. The square version will be sent out with your status updates.
- Company Description - Here's your chance to describe your business. Make sure you include those keywords that are relevant to your potential customers and will improve search engine results.
- Specialities - Keywords that describe what you do.
- Add other information as needed, and make sure you include your business website URL.
- Next add in your products and services. Be creative - search for “HubSpot” and click on their Products tab to see how they use their product descriptions to market their products and link people to other content.

Add a Follow Us Button on your website, blog or other online media.

- When a user clicks on a Follow Us Button they are automatically added as a follower.
- See LinkedIn help for how to add a company Follow button to your website.

Be Social

Publish status updates, linked to useful information or content.

- Go to your company page and at the top, type in the “Share an update” box (500 character limit). You can type in URLs and also attach other content - click on the paperclip to attach files. When done, click “Share”.
- These updates will be seen by followers and in search results for your company.

Other Information about LinkedIn

When someone searches Google for your name, your LinkedIn profile will be one of the first links in the results. Because Google has a preference for LinkedIn profiles, take advantage of that, and make sure relevant keywords or common search terms for you and your business are included in your personal and company profile.

There is so much more you can do once you master the basics. Just remember, it is a professional networking environment. Treat your online interactions like you would your in-person activities to build trust and credibility.

Take some time to search for other tips about LinkedIn to better market yourself and your business. Here are a few to get started.

<http://topdogsocialmedia.com/5-essential-linkedin-strategies-for-small-businesses/>

www.pr2020.com/page/6-step-corporate-linkedin-strategy

<http://www.socialbuzzclub.com/1687/linkedin-strategies-for-your-business-and-increased-market-visibility>

<http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/28976/11-Reasons-Your-LinkedIn-Company-Page-Sucks.aspx>

Find Chaffee County Economic Development on [LinkedIn](#).

[<http://www.linkedin.com/company/chaffee-county-economic-development-corporation>]