



FINANCIAL SERVICES AND

SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

How leading firms
have driven adoption,
changed behavior, and
improved performance

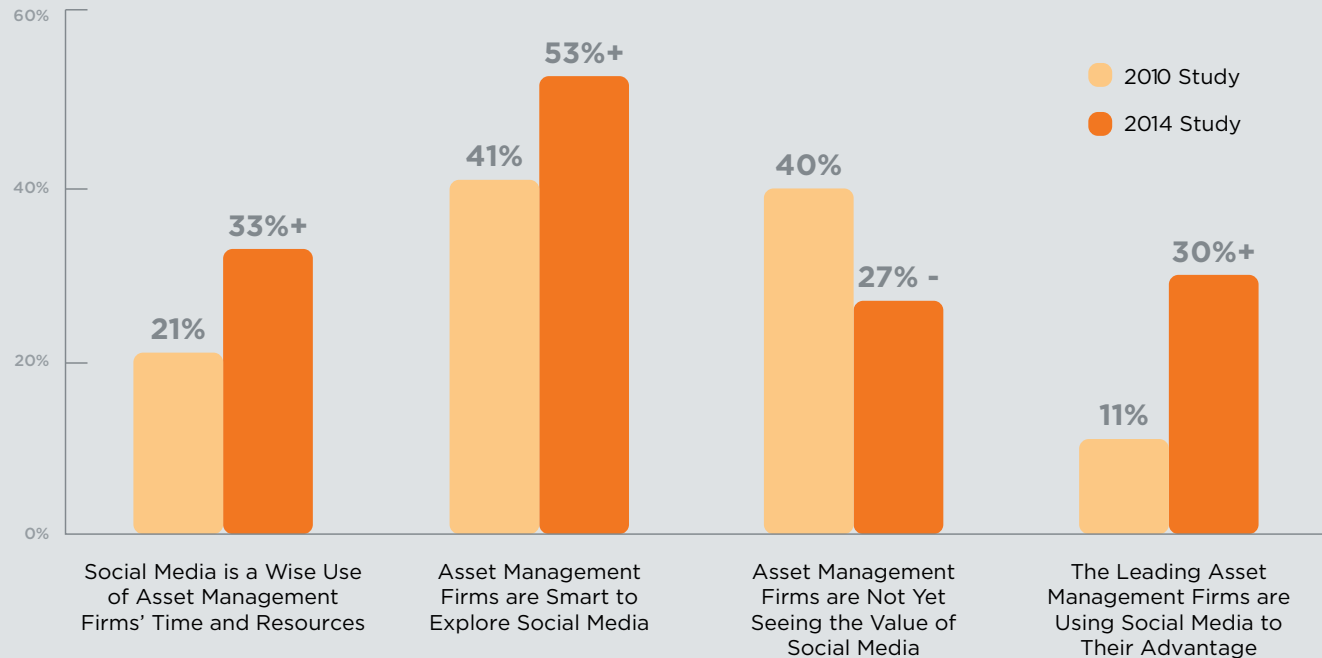
INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of B2B and B2C financial services companies and professionals see an unprecedented opportunity to network, educate and engage with clients and prospects on social media.

Seven in 10 financial advisors are using social networks for business purposes, and nine out of 10 are using LinkedIn specifically, according to research by LinkedIn and FTI Consulting.¹ In another study, more than half (56%) of financial professionals surveyed by American Century Investments² in 2014 said they see significant business potential in social media, up from 44% in the same survey five years prior.

+ More Positive Outlook

More than 300 financial professionals responded to American Century Investments' survey on social media adoption. More of them anticipate or are experiencing business benefits from social media, while fewer are skeptical about it.



¹Friedman, Emily of LinkedIn; and Neil Benedict of FTI Consulting, Financial Advisors' Use of Social Media Moves from Early Adoption to Mainstream, May 2012

²Kouri, Laura and Jamie Needham, American Century Investments, Fifth Annual Financial Professionals Social Media Adoption Study, Q1 2014

Financial services leaders who use LinkedIn have taken notice of the shift in attitude.

"We have seen a groundswell of investment professionals, such as financial advisors, on our platform," said LinkedIn's Jennifer Grazel, Global Head of Category Development, Financial Services, in an interview with eMarketer. "In the early days, independent advisors were the first movers, given that a lot of the wirehouses and broker-dealers had a lot more gating of social media use—there was the ability for read access but not write access. But that has slowly changed."

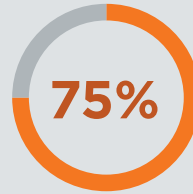
At first, financial advisors saw LinkedIn predominantly as a prospecting channel. What they now realize, Grazel said, is that LinkedIn can be used as a source or destination for key insight distributed through sales and marketing teams.

"Brands are trying to be part of the conversation and discovery process by embedding themselves throughout the consumer decision journey," Grazel said. "Companies like BlackRock, Citi and American Express have done this."

These and other leading brands know that clients—consumers and businesses—have changed how they research professional services and are using that research to drive decisions around how and when to engage in person.

How Buyers Are Changing

Armed with technology tools to access vast amounts of information, clients and prospects are determining how and when they will engage with sellers.



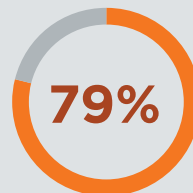
... buyers use social media to conduct research.³



... buying decision-makers who never respond to a cold outreach.⁴



B2B buyers are: 5X more likely to engage with a professional via a warm introduction than via cold outreach.⁵



... small and medium businesses (SMBs) that consider industry-specific news/articles to be the most valuable content shared on social media.⁶

Sources:

³Schaub, Kathleen, Social Buying Meets Social Selling: How Trusted Networks Improve the Purchase Experience, IDC, April 2014

⁴Tweet Me, Friend Me, Make Me Buy, Harvard Business Review, 2012

⁵Chen, Lilly of LinkedIn, Global Study of B2B Buyers, May 2012

⁶Priming the Economic Engine: How Social Media is Driving Growth for Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs), LinkedIn, 2014



Even as leading firms embrace social selling, some financial services revenue producers remain reluctant. They might be concerned about inadvertently saying or doing something that violates company or industry rules, or they feel that face-to-face meetings are still the best way to build trusting relationships with prospects and clients.

Early adopters would counter that digital technology simplifies compliance management so that client-facing professionals can focus on high-value conversations that actually increase the number of face-to-face meetings. Also, social platforms, such as LinkedIn, have been credited with increasing trust in the financial services industry, and research and case studies prove that social selling provides direct benefits to all businesses, including those that are complex and heavy regulated, such as investment firms, insurance agencies and banks.

Finally, compliance partners can leverage the LinkedIn platform to provide complete archiving, filtering and flagging for all public and private client conversations, allowing effective business conversations to take place on LinkedIn while ensuring compliance with relevant regulations. LinkedIn's certified compliance partners include:

- Actiance
- Erado
- GlobalRelay
- HearSaySocial
- Proofpoint
- Smarsh
- Socialware
- OpenPoint
- SunGard



GO WHERE THE BUYERS ARE

GO WHERE THE BUYERS ARE

One of the most urgent reasons to embrace social media is because clients and prospects already have—and they aren't waiting for corporate leaders to catch up.

According to FTI Consulting, 52% of affluent investors said they would interact with financial advisors via social media, but only 4% currently are being engaged by financial advisors online. With 73% of the 5 million “affluent investors” using LinkedIn to research investment decisions, social media has enormous potential for lead generation.

Busy consumers still need help managing their investments or purchasing life insurance, said Brian Church, Head of North America, LinkedIn Sales Solutions. But they also can research a world of solutions without placing a single phone call.

“The changing world of the consumer is working against financial advisors, bankers and revenue producers in general,” Church said. “Business clients and individual consumers are able to do more research for themselves, so all financial services revenue producers are dealing with a better-educated market. That means they need to better position themselves as experts and thought leaders.”

Business clients have changed, too, and social media is fulfilling their needs by providing thought leadership and insight. LinkedIn research on B2B decision-makers on the network shows that they are 5X more likely to engage with an industry thought leader than cold outreach. Not only this, 70% of B2B buyers in the financial services industry expect new or different insights from B2B sales professionals.

Key Findings On High Net Worth Investors

Affluent social media users are significantly more active in financial management than non-social media users.



5 million in the U.S. and Canada are actively using social media to help them make financial decisions.



Two-thirds visit LinkedIn monthly, which is consistent with Facebook and over 2X Twitter and Google+.



Regardless of whether or not they use an advisor, social media users tend to be more active with their investing.

Source: Social Media's Growing Influence Among High Net Worth Investors, white paper by Chris Savio of Cogent Research and Jake Raroque of LinkedIn

Another top reason to use social media is because it instills trust. Buyers not only use social media to research options, but also to research the backgrounds of companies and individuals. A professional, trustworthy and thoughtful profile on LinkedIn and a trail of valuable information-sharing paints a picture of someone a buyer can trust and would benefit from knowing.

A complete social media profile should emphasize the value of knowledge transfer that would take place through a connection.

“Our data tells us that successful revenue producers use their LinkedIn profiles to educate their target audience so they can influence the buyer’s journey,” Church said. “Additionally, those that use profiles to convey their credibility and personality are experiencing increased inbound interest from LinkedIn members who are searching for their services.”

Trust with clients is very important in the financial services industry, but even more important in sub-sectors, such as accounting, where 84% of successful financial representatives believed trust was the reason they were successful in the past quarter (Q3 of 2014).



“Not only are social media users more likely to manage their own investments, they are more likely to do their own investment research. They also represent fertile ground for financial advisors, as they are looking for information and guidance to help them with their investment decisions.”

- **Social Media's Growing Influence Among High Net Worth Investors**, by Chris Savio of Cogent Research and Jake Raroque of LinkedIn



BENCHMARKING WITH

THE SOCIAL SELLING INDEX



Year	1894	1995	2013	2014	2015
1	16346	467	23	22	22
2	16346	467	23	22	22
3	16346	467	23	22	22
4	16346	467	23	22	22
5	16346	467	23	22	22
6	16346	467	23	22	22
7	16346	467	23	22	22
8	16346	467	23	22	22
9	16346	467	23	22	22
10	875	13	13	23	23
11	1834	45	24	24	24
12	1834	45	24	24	24
13	1834	45	24	24	24
14	1834	45	24	24	24
15	1834	45	24	24	24
16	1834	45	24	24	24
17	1834	45	24	24	24
18	1834	45	24	24	24
19	1834	45	24	24	24
20	1834	45	24	24	24
21	1834	45	24	24	24
22	1834	45	24	24	24
23	1834	45	24	24	24
24	1834	45	24	24	24
25	1834	45	24	24	24
26	1834	45	24	24	24
27	1834	45	24	24	24
28	1834	45	24	24	24
29	1834	45	24	24	24
30	1834	45	24	24	24

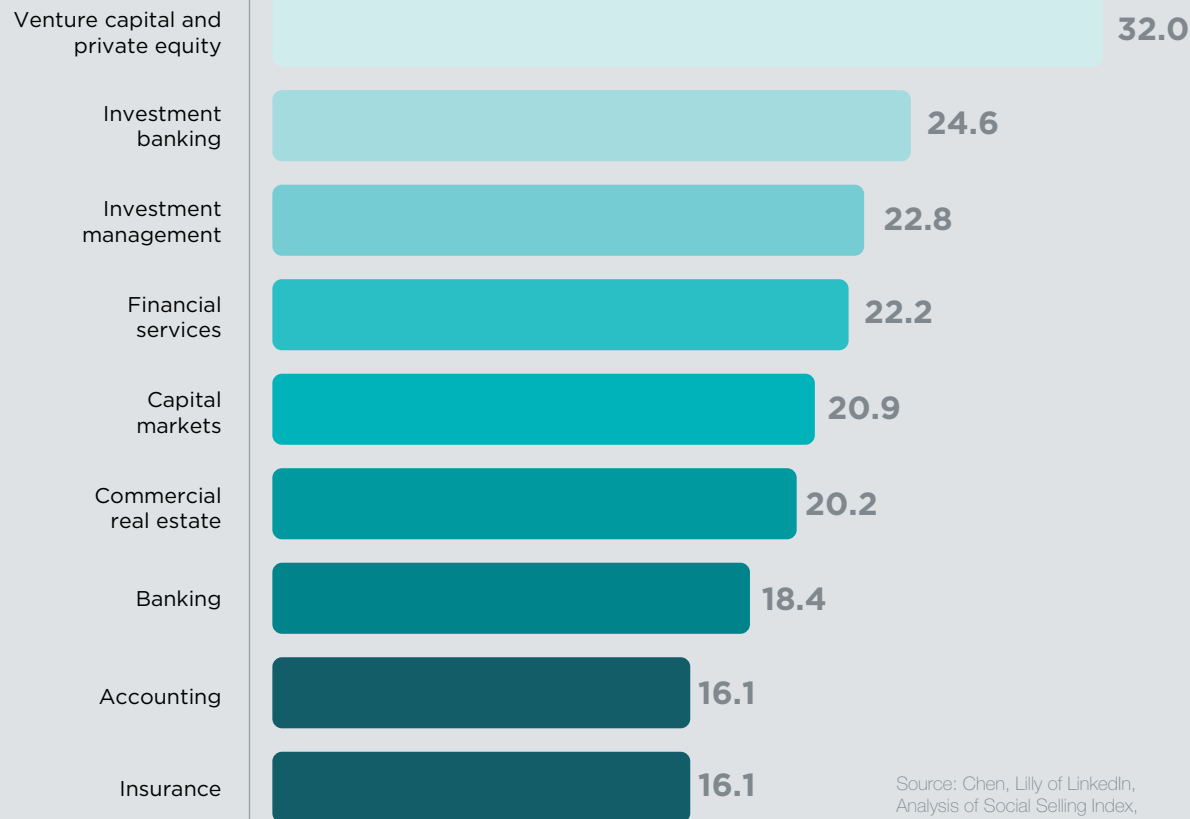


BENCHMARKING WITH THE SOCIAL SELLING INDEX

A good measure to benchmark a financial services organization's social selling position is LinkedIn's Social Selling Index (SSI), which measures the 4 Pillars of Social Selling on LinkedIn and is designed for companies with more than 100 employees and 10 business-development professionals.

The average client-facing professional in the financial services industry has an SSI of 20, while the average professional in venture capital/private equity has a SSI of 32. Professionals in industries such as insurance are not social selling as much and have an average SSI of 16.

SSI: Financial Services Industry



Source: Chen, Lilly of LinkedIn, Analysis of Social Selling Index, November 2014

The 4 Pillars of Social Selling



Successful salespeople use a four-step method to maximize their social selling efforts:

1. Create a professional brand
2. Find the right people
3. Engage with insights
4. Build strong relationships

Each pillar is worth 25 points, so a Social Selling Index of 100 is perfect.

Within the financial services and insurance industries, venture capital and private equity professionals lead social selling adoption, while insurance and accounting professionals have been slower to adopt.

Despite the low adoption of social selling in the insurance sector, insurance professionals have the greatest 12-month growth in SSI, indicating that professionals in this industry are starting to recognize the need to adopt social selling.

SSI Growth Over The Past 12 Months



Source: Chen, Lilly of LinkedIn, Analysis of Social Selling Index, November 2014

Guardian's 5 STEPS To Sales Navigator Adoption



56%

Growth in Connections



89,000

Searches



+\$21 Million
Sold*

*Life Insurance, face value

Insurance and financial services provider Guardian participated in a 12-week pilot of Sales Navigator, LinkedIn's complete sales solution for social selling on LinkedIn. Here are the results and how Guardian achieved them:

Step 1. Quick Response To Buying Shifts

Anticipating a wholesale shift in the way consumers engage with insurance firms and individual advisors, Guardian recognized the opportunity to help its financial professionals evolve their approach to the market. With a smaller community of agents than many other firms, along with a highly entrepreneurial culture, Guardian encouraged individual agents to explore a new approach to marketing, each in their own unique way.

Step 2: Choose Market-Leading Partners

In order to address the challenges of working in a regulated industry, Guardian first deployed Socialware, a security and compliance platform, to enable an appropriate balance of access controls and agent enablement. Once the compliance requirements were in place, Guardian identified LinkedIn as the appropriate social platform for agents' needs.

Step 3. Support Through Training & Tools

Guardian worked directly with LinkedIn and Socialware to offer training and so was able to accelerate adoption and enable agents.

Step 4: Set Goals

Guardian's business goals were to:

- Enhance the value proposition for potential agent candidates looking to build their own financial services practice.

- Enable agents and advisors to differentiate their personal brands while accelerating prospecting efforts.
- Highlight the expertise and unique approach to holistic planning offered by Guardian agents and advisors.

Step 5: Deploy Strategically And Trumpet Success

The Sales Navigator training curriculum and support enabled Guardian to train an elite group of professionals to develop the systematic practices necessary to deeply mine their own networks and explore the value of strategic prospecting using advanced filters; connecting through introductions; and understanding relevant sharing metrics in order to refine future messaging.

Guardian then spotlighted the success stories. One sales professional with just two years in the business was featured by Forbes as a particularly intriguing success story. This representative leveraged his LinkedIn network to expand his reach, connect with high net worth prospects and uncover more than 30 qualified prospects in six months. He is now considering working with more senior advisors, helping them apply the principles of social to their high net worth client networks and centers of influence.

"LinkedIn has shown us a whole new way to drive quality prospecting activity, leading to quality sales opportunities," said Beth Wood, 2nd VP of Marketing, Guardian.



So what does your company need to do to get started on social selling and deliver heightened value for producers? Take the same proactive steps as social selling leaders in financial services:

- Tap into the ready-made market of LinkedIn's 300-million-plus user base of diverse professionals;
- Train on social selling best practices for networking, knowledge-sharing and ongoing engagement; and,
- If needed, invest in automated compliance-management solutions if this fits your business model and size.

By taking these steps, financial services leaders can boldly and strategically find opportunity instead of threats in social media, and benefit through more efficient and effective processes, more connections and more sales. LinkedIn Sales Navigator allows financial services professionals to win clients and deepen relationships with existing clients.

A woman with long brown hair is smiling while talking on a mobile phone. She is sitting at a wooden table in a cafe, holding a white coffee cup. In the background, a man in a dark shirt and tie is looking at a tablet. The cafe has a warm, bokeh-lit background with other patrons and tables. The overall scene is a professional meeting or collaboration in a casual setting.

MANAGING CULTURE CHANGE:

FOCUS ON 3 BENEFITS

MANAGING CULTURE CHANGE: FOCUS ON 3 BENEFITS

SSI leaders will attest that social selling adoption requires a culture change. Communicating the benefits of social selling practices such as networking and knowledge-sharing—and sharing best practices—can help drive that change.

1. Networking

Sellers can use LinkedIn to rapidly and exponentially grow their networks.

“Not only is the target audience for the financial services industry on LinkedIn, but they are active on LinkedIn,” said LinkedIn’s Church. “This gives financial services professionals a great opportunity to connect through common relationships with

existing and potential customers and clients. It’s not just referrals through common connections, such as existing clients or people in their personal networks. Financial advisors and agents ‘expand’ their centers of influence of referral networks of realtors, accountants and attorneys who refer them leads. LinkedIn provides a great way to scale the referral model and do it way more efficiently.”

Taking this a step further, Church advises financial services professionals to look for common buying triggers among connections. Life-changing events, such as switching jobs, often trigger a 401(k) rollover need, for example, and LinkedIn’s Sales Navigator makes these events visible for prospects outside of a user’s network.

Dave A. Brock, a sales expert with consultancy Partners In Excellence, said social media activity can also be an opportunity to educate people about trigger events they might not be aware of, such as changing rules for retirement savings, estate planning and tax rules.

“Sales people in every industry are looking for triggers, which create a need to change and a subsequent need to buy,” Brock said. “For example, in regulated and non-regulated industries that are very energy intensive, major long-term shifts in oil and energy pricing create triggers and opportunities. It’s no different for sales people in financial services.”



Case Study: Habif, Arogeti & Wynne

Using Sales Navigator to Connect with Target Accounts

Habif, Arogeti & Wynne is the largest independent accounting and business advisory firm headquartered in Georgia, and one of the top 50 firms in the United States. The firm provides a wide range of financial solutions to more than 15,000 clients in a variety of industries.

Habif, Arogeti & Wynne was using relationship selling, but needed a way to expand its connections with prospects. They chose LinkedIn's Sales Navigator.

Now business developers use InMail and leverage their team's connections to get in front of prospects who were unresponsive through other communication channels. They filter by industry and seniority to ensure they are contacting the right person at the target company.



Sales Navigator has allowed us to get in front of companies that we weren't able to connect with in the past.

-Richard Kopelman,
CEO & Managing Partner, Habif,
Arogeti & Wynne, LLP



 share

 Tweet



2. Knowledge Sharing

Church said financial services professionals should share content that would appeal to their target audience and that doesn't promote specific services or financial products. For example, if an ideal prospect is someone who works in the computer software industry, then make an association with this industry by sharing thought leadership about it.

"It's all about staying front of mind," Church said. "If and when someone in the agent's network decides they need a financial advisor or want life insurance, who do you think they will contact?"

Research supports that financial advisors who leverage LinkedIn to cultivate client prospects gain new clients as a result. Nearly a third surveyed by LinkedIn and FTI Consulting gained \$1 million or more in assets under management over 12 months, while 12% gained \$5 million or more.

Organizations such as banks that target SMBs also will find their best leads on LinkedIn, according to research. SMBs are 21% more open to receiving financial information on LinkedIn than on Facebook and Twitter; and, after using social media for discovery and consideration, 93% of SMBs are driven to take some sort of action, while 37% are driven to purchase.

The same research also shows that among financial advisors on LinkedIn, those with a higher SSI are 4X more likely to have gained new clients via LinkedIn than financial advisors with a lower SSI.

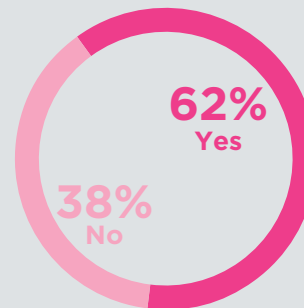
Financial advisors with 250+ connections on LinkedIn are over 4x more likely to gain new clients compared with financial advisors with fewer than 55 connections.

SSI	GAINED NEW CLIENT VIA LINKEDIN
GREATER THAN 25	56%
BETWEEN 10-25	37%
LESS THAN 10	14%

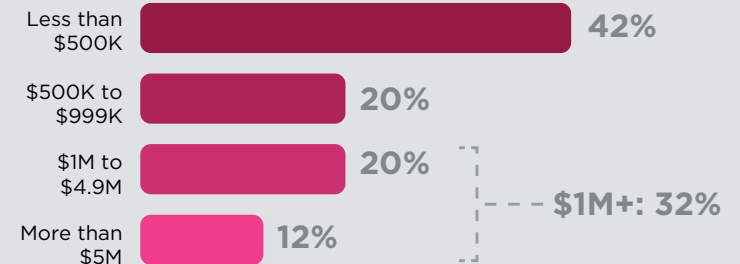
CONNECTIONS ON LINKEDIN	GAINED NEW CLIENT VIA LINKEDIN
GREATER THAN 250	66%
BETWEEN 55-250	41%
LESS THAN 55	21%

New Clients Gained Through LinkedIn

Has your use of LinkedIn for prospecting helped you gain new clients?



Corresponding gain in assets under management from new clients



Source: Financial Advisors' Use of Social Media Moves From Early Adoption To Mainstream, white paper by Emily Friedman of LinkedIn and Neil Benedict of FTI Consulting

Case Study: First Business Financial Services

Sales Navigator Opens Doors to New Leads

First Business Financial Services focuses exclusively on the specific needs of businesses, key executives, and high-net worth individuals seeking a higher level of financial service and expertise.

The sales team needed new, high-quality lead sources to increase pipeline and shorten a lengthy sales cycle.

LinkedIn's Sales Navigator opened up a new prospect pool and made it easy to get straight to the right contact.

Beneficial results included:

- With Lead Builder, reps have discovered great target accounts that they never had access to through traditional lead lists.
- When leveraging teammates' connections to set up a meeting, the average success rate is at least 80%—3-4X higher than without Sales Navigator.
- Reps use TeamLink to get warm introductions to valuable contacts, shortening the sales process and increasing the likelihood of getting in the door.



I called on companies for two years without getting a meeting, and within three months of using Sales Navigator, I was able to get in the door. We haven't found a better source for getting to the proper contact as quickly as we can.

-Lynn Sigfred,
Vice President, First Business Bank



 share

 Tweet



3. Best Practices

Through Sales Navigator training, LinkedIn shares the best practices it has developed through its own social selling. The training covers the transition from a traditional resume to an information-rich profile that educates the buyer; how to build an effective network to ensure referrals at scale; and how to win new business and deepen relationships with existing clients.

“We remove the friction between buyers and sellers by helping make sure that Sales Navigator is used properly by sales people,” Church said. “We solve for referrals at scale and by name. For example, for those that have to reach out to third-degree connections, we provide insights on prospects through profile information and allow them to be saved as leads.”

Sales Navigator provides two engagement options in this instance: Reach out through InMail or save the connection as a lead to be fed social intelligence when that person is mentioned in the news, shares content on LinkedIn or perhaps changes jobs. Then, if that person connects with someone in the financial professional's network and becomes a second-degree connection, Sales Navigator notifies the financial professional, providing an immediate opportunity for a warm referral.

As for being found, “We provide a networking platform for financial services representatives to be found by their target audience because they can see everyone who has viewed their profile and follow up softly with ‘Thanks for visiting my profile. How can I help,’ ” Church said.



Training Tip

Financial services and insurance companies should think of LinkedIn's educational curriculum as an extension of internal training teams and programs.





CONCLUSION

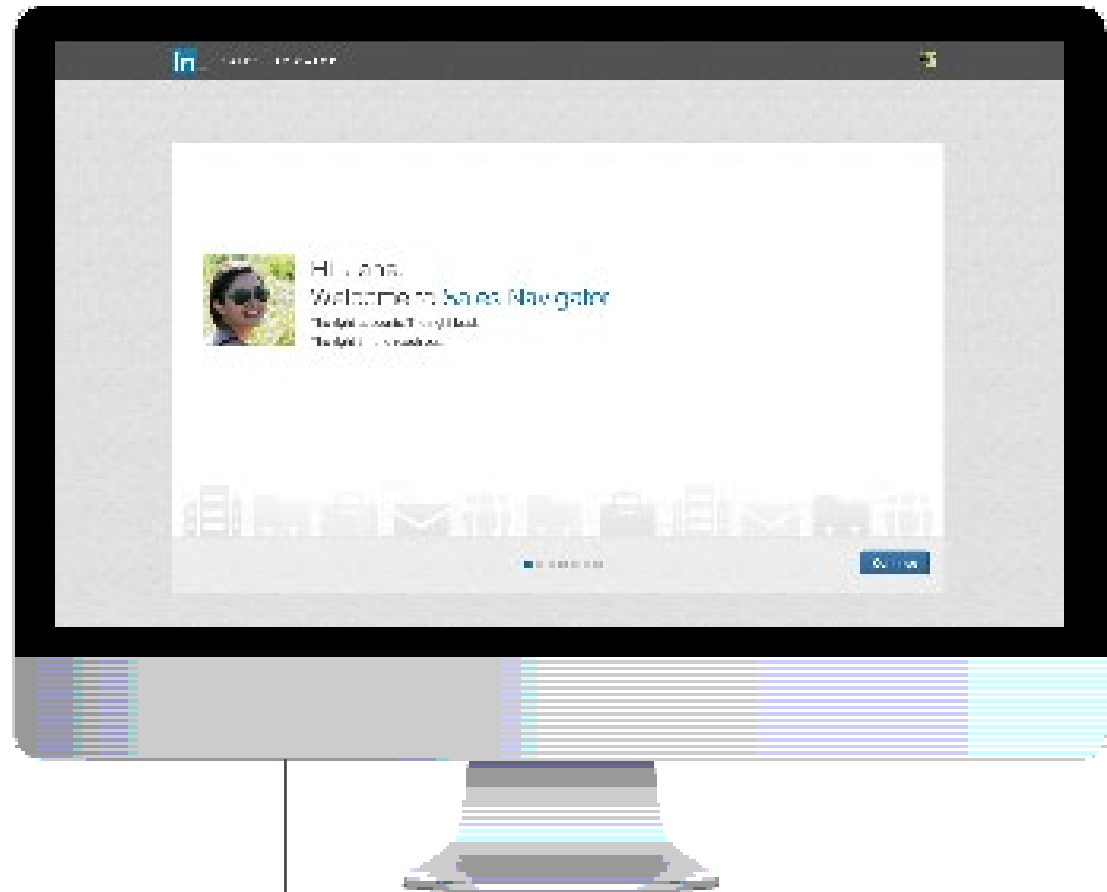
CONCLUSION

The financial services industry was one of the first sectors to use social media, but the focus was on prospecting, and compliance fears limited engagement capabilities. Today, things are different, and leading companies are adopting compliance-management technology, LinkedIn's powerful content-sharing capabilities, and the Sales Navigator social selling platform.

For companies such as Guardian, Habif, Arogeti & Wynne and First Business Financial Services, social selling is proving real value: more efficient targeting, growing connections and increased revenue. These leaders recognize that buyer behavior has changed, and that clients and prospects are already online, researching solutions on their own and evaluating individual advisors, insurance agents, bankers and other financial services companies.

Organizations that ignore this sea change risk losing clients and customers to those that are embracing it.

Customers and clients are looking for you and your company on LinkedIn. If you want to be the first to warmly welcome them with knowledge, trust and solutions—instead of a competitor—start leveraging social selling today.



LinkedIn's Sales Navigator provides a ready-made toolbox and infrastructure to begin social selling.

ABOUT DEMAND GEN REPORT



Demand Gen Report is a targeted e-media publication spotlighting the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and, ultimately, drive growth. A key component of our coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts. For more information, visit www.demandgenreport.com.



ABOUT LINKEDIN SALES SOLUTIONS

LinkedIn Sales Solutions

LinkedIn Sales Solutions empowers sales professionals to fill their pipelines proactively. Find the right people, know what to say by uncovering key insights, and get warm introductions by extending your LinkedIn network. For more information visit sales.linkedin.com.

