



The New Advertiser's Playbook: How B2B Marketers win with LinkedIn Ads

If you're new to launching LinkedIn Ads campaigns and looking to sharpen your strategy, this guide is here to help you drive measurable results. We'll walk through four core pillars: targeting, ad formats, creative, and measurement. You'll learn how to build smarter campaigns and avoid the most common mistakes new advertisers make so that every dollar you spend works harder.

#1

Find the Right Audience

#2

Choosing the Ad That Supports Your Objective

#3

Building High-Impact Creative

#4

Measuring and Optimizing Performance



Core pillar #1

Find the Right Audience

Whether you're new to LinkedIn Ads or looking to refine your strategy, this guide is here to help you drive measurable results. LinkedIn Ads delivers the highest return on ad spend among major advertising networks, achieving up to 113% ROAS¹, thanks to LinkedIn's precise targeting, which helps reduce wasted spend, improve conversion rates, and generate higher-quality leads. From C-suite to emerging decision-makers, LinkedIn's audience is multigenerational, highly qualified, and active across every screen.



LinkedIn's Targeting Advantage

LinkedIn's first-party data, based on real user attributes like job title, company, and industry, makes it uniquely suited for B2B targeting. LinkedIn has 1.2 billion members across the business community with professional incentives to keep their profiles accurate and up-to-date.

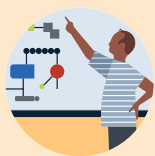
Best Practices for Targeting on LinkedIn

- **Start with an audience size of 50,000+** for optimal delivery and lower cost per thousand impressions (CPMs).
- **Use Audience Insights** to discover your ideal customer profile. See member titles, industries, interests, and more.
- **Avoid hyper-targeting** by layering no more than 2 additional filters beyond location and language.

Here's how LinkedIn help you target the right audience:

Audience Insights

Install the LinkedIn Insight Tag to see results like Audience Insights in Campaign Manager. This gives you an in-depth look at your target audience's traits, broken down by career, company, interests, and more. These insights are actionable, mapping directly to available targeting options as you build your campaign.



Understand your audience better

Gain valuable audience insights into your matched or saved audiences — like job titles, company names and industries — prior to campaign launch using the most accurate professional data, only available on LinkedIn



Create tailored content

Learn which topics and interests resonate with different audiences to customize content along their buyer journey



Reach your ideal audience

Use what you learn to adjust and reach audiences who are most likely to become qualified leads and customers

- **Why it matters:** These insights help you know your audience and take action, so you can achieve better results on LinkedIn.
- **Pro tip:** Use insights to refine audience segments and guide messaging strategy.
- Don't just take our word for it, take our customers: Innodisk's first full-funnel campaign on LinkedIn produced a 143% increase in website visitors and +88% new visitor traffic using audience insights.

AI Pro Tip: Use Predictive Audiences

Predictive Audiences allows you to combine first-party or third-party data with LinkedIn's predictive **AI modeling**. This creates high-intent audience segments tailored to your business goals by predicting which members are most likely to convert based on behavioral and professional traits (e.g., titles, industries, skills).



¹Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, March 2025

Core pillar #2

Choosing the Ad That Supports Your Objective

Sponsored Content ads are native ads that encompass a variety of formats in feed and off platform. This ad type is designed to seamlessly integrate into the user experience, appearing alongside organic content and maintaining a consistent format with the rest of the feed.



- Formats include Single Image Ads, Video Ads, Carousel Ads, Document Ads, Event Ads, Article and Newsletter Ads, Click-to-Message Ads, and Thought Leader Ads.
- **Pro tip:** Use visuals, photography and illustrations of people, and benefit-driven headlines under 60 characters.



We'll spotlight a few of our most popular Sponsored Content types to help you launch your campaign:

Engagement & Consideration

Thought Leader Ads



- Thought Leader Ads allow advertisers to sponsor a thought leader's post from their LinkedIn Company Page, with the thought leader's approval.
- You can **authentically communicate** through a trusted voice, building brand equity and staying top-of-mind with your target audience.
- Thought Leader Ads have up to **2.4x higher click-through-rate (CTR⁴)** compared to other single-image ads within the same objective in 2025.

Awareness & Reach

Video Ads

Why Video Ads?

Because they are an effective way to captivate a targeted audience within a LinkedIn feed with sight, sound and motion



- Video creation is **growing 2x faster²** than any other format on LinkedIn.
- LinkedIn Video Ads have on **average 3x higher engagement³** rate than non-Video ads.
- Videos are the highest engaged format on LinkedIn, making them ideal for both awareness and lead generation goals.
- Video Ads offer a portfolio of solutions, including videos that serve on-site as well as off-site placements.

What you can do with Thought Leader Ads



Build credibility by communicating through a trusted voice

Promote authentic content a variety of sources to generate brand trust. You can boost thoughts from company employees, industry experts, customers, or content creators.



Distinguish your brand as an industry authority

Share unique perspectives from your execs, industry experts, or customers to position your company as a category leader and stand out from competitors.

² Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, March 2025

³ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, April 2025

⁴ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, July 1 – September 30, 2025



Grow community around your thought leaders
Generate followers and engagement for thought leaders in your organization.

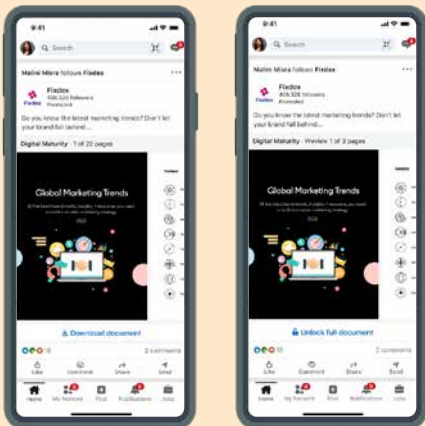
Lead Capture & Conversion

Document Ads

What are LinkedIn Document Ads?

Document Ads allow advertisers to promote documents directly in the LinkedIn feed, where members can easily read and download content without having to leave the platform.

Choose to share your content freely to build awareness and grow thought leadership or gate your document with a Lead Gen Form to capture interested leads.

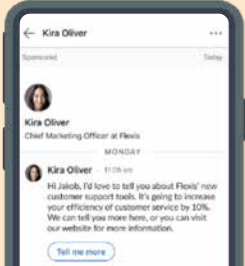


- With Document Ads, you can showcase whitepapers, case studies, or guides to inspire audiences with thought leadership or collect leads at scale.
- Document Ads see a **2x higher lead gen form completion rates⁵** and **4.5x engagement rates⁶** compared to other formats in 2025.
- From our customers: **Radware's** volume of leads rose -1,020 across both three and five-page documents while utilizing Document Ad.

In addition to Sponsored Content, LinkedIn also offers Sponsored Messaging formats including Conversation Ads.

Conversation Ads

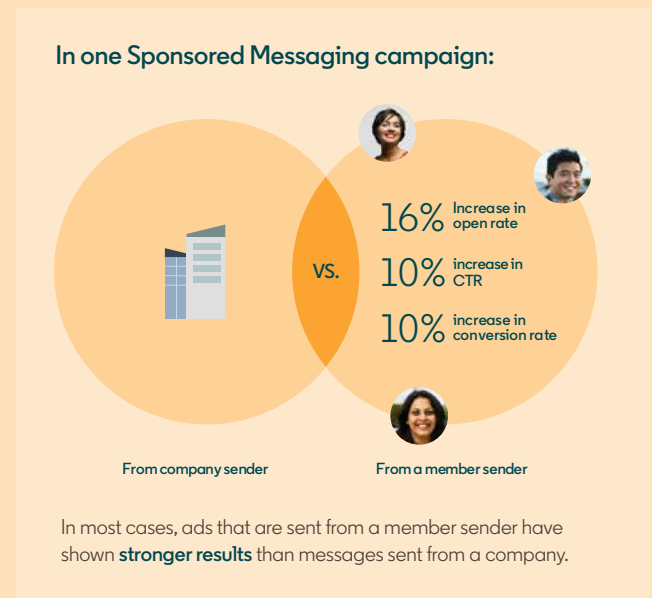
- With Conversation Ads, you can seamlessly create a “choose-your-own-path” experience for your audience.



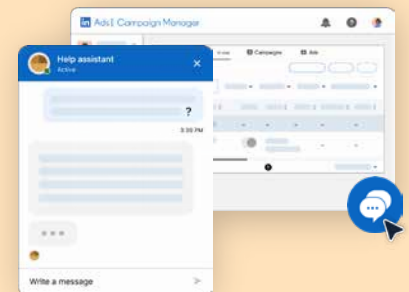
Start quality conversations with a choose-your-own-path experience

Deliver multiple offer and types of content in a single message for a highly engaging experience.

- **Map your customer's Journey:** Determine where in the buyer journey you want to engage your prospects and what result you want from that conversation or message.
- **Turn conversations into quality conversions:** Drive higher quality leads more quickly into your pipeline by asking qualifying questions and including Lead Gen Forms.
- BambooHR increased cost-per-lead efficiency by 40% with Conversation Ads.
- **Pro tip:** Send your Conversation Ad from a member instead of a company:



AI Pro Tip: Use the **AI Powered help assistant** in Campaign Manager to help choose the best ad format for you based on your objective.



⁵ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, July 1 – September 30, 2025

⁶ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, July 1 – September 30, 2025

Core pillar #3

Building High-Impact Creative

Creative plays a pivotal role in driving advertising performance. Members approach content with a professional mindset on LinkedIn, so clarity, relevance, and authenticity are critical for success.



Key Principles & Best Practices

- **Clarity > cleverness.** Avoid jargon – speak directly to the value you provide.
- **Visuals matter.** Ads with photography and illustrations of people consistently perform better than abstract or text-heavy graphics.
- **Benefit-first headlines.** Use less than 60 characters and highlight outcomes (e.g., "Grow leads 3x faster," "Cut hiring costs in half").
- **Pro Tip:** Set your [ad rotation setting](#) to 'optimize for performance.' This allows LinkedIn to serve the best-performing creatives to your audience, improving overall campaign results.

A/B Testing

A/B testing is critical for optimizing creative performance.

Tip: Change only a few options at a time to isolate what part of your test impacted your campaign's performance.

After you launch: Leverage LinkedIn's A/B testing feature to precisely measure how a specific variable influences campaign performance instead of manually rotating ads or duplicating campaigns.

Creative Tips by Format

- **Sponsored Content:** Use bold, scroll-stopping imagery. Pair with short, punchy copy. (e.g., "Achieve More, Stress Less.")
- **Video Ads:** Optimize for the first 3 seconds. Use captions and consider 15-30 second lengths.
- **Thought Leader Ads:** Include an Image or video to catch your audience's attention.
- **Conversation Ads:** Use [LinkedIn Macros](#), like first name and job title, to personalize your ad to each recipient.
- **Document Ads:** Ensure the first page is visually engaging and communicates clear value.

Creative Optimization Process

1. Align on single primary KPI to determine campaign success
2. Leverage AI in Campaign Manager to draft compelling copy
3. Double down on winners, sunset underperformers
4. Apply learnings to future campaigns
5. Keep experimenting! Test new variables to continue learning and refining your marketing strategy.



Core pillar #4

Measuring and Optimizing Performance

After your campaign launches, [measurement and optimization](#) are what turn campaigns into repeatable, scalable growth engines post launch. The right metrics and tools help you understand what's working, why it's working, and where to go next.



Define Key Metrics

Start with clarity: Identify goals, define your objectives, and calculate your values.

- **For awareness:** Track impressions, video completion rate (VCR), and engagement rate.
- **For consideration:** Look at click-through rate (CTR), time on site, and page views.
- **For conversion:** Focus on cost-per-lead (CPL), form fill rates, and conversion volume.

Capture your results

Use the [LinkedIn Insight Tag](#) to map out customer interactions and leverage your online customer data.

When Insights tag is installed you can utilize:

- [Website Actions](#): Captures and logs all actions performed by potential customers on the site automatically.
- [Conversion Tracking](#) to measure outcomes like downloads, signups, or purchases.
- [Professional Demographic Reporting](#) to analyze which job titles, industries, or geographies are engaging most.
- [Retargeting](#): Build audiences of high-intent website visitors.

Pro Tip: Do you also have offline customer events like sales calls or in-person event leads? Use [Conversions API \(CAPI\)](#) to import these to LinkedIn to supercharge the capabilities above.

Activate and Optimize Based on Insights

- Pair signals with algorithmic optimization & targeting features like [Predictive Audiences](#) and [Qualified Lead Optimization](#) to drive efficiency and impact.
- Use [Measurement Insights](#) to analyze your performance, identify high-performing segments, and reallocate budget accordingly.
- Use [A/B Testing](#) to compare new creative or ad formats with underperforming segments.

Real-World Results

- Companies using conversion tracking saw **up to 20% higher conversion rates**.⁷
- When A/B Testing revealed a conclusive winner, customers saw a 20-40% improvement in ROI⁸.
- [Cognism](#) used Website Actions to segment audiences by intent and launch personalized campaigns, resulting in a 3x increase in conversions and a 135% boost in CTR.
- Conversions API helps achieve up to 31% increase in attributed conversions and 20% decrease cost per action.⁹

Success Is In Sight

Seeing your ads perform on LinkedIn isn't about doing one thing perfectly – it's about doing many things thoughtfully. The most successful B2B marketers don't treat LinkedIn like just another channel. They treat it as a full-funnel engine that combines precision targeting, relevant creative, and smart measurement to drive real business impact.

Start small. Launch smart. Learn fast. With the right tools and a testing mindset, you'll build a campaign that doesn't just deliver clicks, it drives growth.

When in doubt, return to this playbook. The fundamentals don't change, only how well you execute them.

For more information, visit marketing.linkedin.com

⁷ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, September 27th - October 3rd, 2020

⁸ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, August 2024

⁹ Source: LinkedIn Internal Data, July 1 - August 26, 2023