



THE BRAND
MARKETER'S GUIDE
to LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

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Before you can shape perception, drive engagement, or stimulate sales, people have to know who you are and trust what you say. That's where brand marketing comes into play.

Whether you're a B2B or high-consideration B2C brand marketer, it's your job to get your business the exposure, recognition, and trust it needs to compete in an increasingly crowded space. And while establishing awareness has always been the first order of business for the brand marketer, it's only one of many steps that marketers must take to make an impact across a long and complex buyer's journey. In fact, the extended and decidedly non-linear purchase cycle has effectively blurred the once rigid line between brand awareness and lead generation.

These days, there's much more to brand marketing than simply feeding the top of the funnel. Now a full-funnel approach to driving revenue has become **every** marketer's business. **Because today's empowered buyers spend more time researching their purchase online, brand marketers have more opportunities than ever to influence their decisions.** That's a good thing, and admittedly it's a bit of a challenge as well—especially given the ever-evolving mix of media and channels you have at your disposal.

The fact is that as a brand marketer, you've never had greater responsibility or a more measurable impact on your company's bottom line. The good news is you've also never had access to better tools or more precise data to help you succeed. This guide is all about harnessing the power of the newly expanded LinkedIn Marketing Solutions platform to help you:

- Establish awareness early—and **build** awareness continuously throughout the purchase cycle.
- Reach the right audience in the right context—and offer the relevant message they need when they need it.
- Keep your brand top of mind and be a part of the buyer's journey wherever your audience sees your products and services.

Read on to discover how
LinkedIn can help you build
awareness, influence purchase
decisions, and ultimately
generate sales.

What to Expect from this Guide

It's your job to create and sustain positive awareness for your brand throughout the long buyer's journey and beyond. The goal of this guide is to provide you with the insights and tools you need to be more successful and efficient at building brand familiarity and trust, and ultimately driving more revenue:



You'll learn how to use LinkedIn Marketing Solutions to get—and keep—your brand in front of the professionals that matter most to your business.



You'll understand why LinkedIn with its 400M+ members is the most effective marketing platform to accomplish all of your brand marketing objectives.



You'll have a clear understanding of which products within the LinkedIn portfolio are best suited to helping you achieve your brand goals.

So let's get started.

What Does the World of Branding Look Like Today?

In a recent survey conducted by Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, **77 percent of marketers identified “brand awareness” as their most important goal.**¹ In fact, it’s been a top goal for marketers for the last six years running. Why?

How prospects find, evaluate, and choose who they want to do business with has become increasingly complex. With the proliferation of channels and more competition than ever for mindshare, today’s brand marketer has to find new ways to reach and influence buyers throughout a long and often convoluted purchase cycle. Keeping your brand top of mind has never been more complicated or more critical.

It's Time to Rethink Brand Marketing

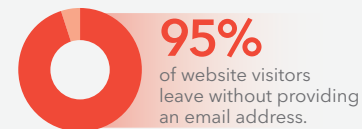
The buyer may be in the driver's seat, but there's a lot you as a brand marketer can do to steer the conversation your way.

You have to evolve your strategies if you want to effectively reach, influence, and ultimately help to convert today's research-savvy prospects.

One reason B2B and high-consideration B2C purchase decisions take so long is that they involve more people—not just decision makers but whole teams of stakeholders and influencers who have different needs and objectives. It's up to brand marketers to get the right message in front of as many members of the buying team as possible.

As if that weren't challenge enough, a recent Google study finds that today's buyer consults an average of 10.4 sources before they decide to purchase.² So you not only have to make an impression early in the buying cycle, you also have to make it often.

And then, you have to decide how you'll get the word out about your brand. Email, once a mainstay of modern marketers, is no longer the channel of choice. Consider these sobering statistics:



If only 5 percent³ of visitors to your site fill out a form and only 20 percent⁴ (on a very good day) open your emails, you'll have to move beyond the inbox if you want to reach more of the right people with your brand message.

²Zero Moment of Truth Study, Google

³B2B campaign form conversion rates range from 1-5 percent, SiriusDecisions Benchmark Survey

⁴Ayaz Nanji, "Email Open and Click-Through Rates: Benchmarks by Vertical," MarketingProfs, May 13, 2013



Get In Front of the Right Audiences Early and Often

The buyer's journey isn't linear, so it's important to promote your brand at every stage of the funnel. That's why the most effective brand marketers use targeted display and social advertising early and often to generate awareness, shape perception, and effectively nudge prospects from one stage of the funnel to the next.

Marketing spend on display advertising is slated to increase year over year. And some 74% of marketers say their top objective for using display is to build brand or product awareness.⁵ Why? Display advertising is a highly effective and highly measurable channel—especially for brand marketers. And simply put, it works. Look no further than HP for inspiration. Brand campaign ads and relevant content helped the company attract 300,000 new followers in just two months, making HP the most followed company on LinkedIn.

“LinkedIn has helped create an environment where we can not only invite people to join, but engage them once they arrive. We can have dialogues with potential customers in a way that encourages organic growth of the community.”

Bryna Corcoran
Digital Marketing and Social Media Strategist, HP



⁵eMarketer, February 12, 2015.

With online display you can serve ads to a select audience no matter where that audience spends time online. Plus, LinkedIn's first-party audience data such as job title, company, industry, and more, enables you to achieve truly precise targeting.

Whether your prospects are spending time on LinkedIn or on top publisher sites across the Web, it's never been easier to reach and engage them with relevant ads and content. Now you can serve up branded messaging where your ideal audience is most likely to find it—wherever they go online. And repeated exposure ensures your company will remain on their radar throughout the consideration stage and beyond.

Did You Know...

You can keep your brand top of mind with prospects both on and off LinkedIn using [LinkedIn Display Advertising](#). We offer two ways to target just the right people to increase awareness and engagement with your brand and subsequently drive more prospects into your funnel. Onsite Display reaches members when they're on LinkedIn and Network Display gets your message in front of them wherever they travel online, on business publisher sites, and elsewhere on the web.



Reach and Influence the Right Business Audiences in a Premium, High-Quality Context

It's important to reach the right audience in the right context—that means in an environment and at a time when they're most receptive to your message. When you put your brand in front of LinkedIn's 400M+ members, you reach an educated and affluent audience that's hungry for the kind of useful content that can help them to excel in their careers. **In fact, LinkedIn members are 26 percent more interested in receiving brand messages compared to members of personal social networks.**⁶ That's because LinkedIn is a professional network and its members are there for the express purpose of creating, sharing, and consuming professional content. If you want to build brand credibility and educate prospects, try putting your content in front of this highly receptive, high-value audience.



Did You Know...

You can effectively build your brand by publishing directly to the LinkedIn feed, where members engage regularly with content. Whether you're sharing your company's thought leadership, whitepapers, or information about an upcoming event, **LinkedIn Sponsored Updates** can spark meaningful conversations with the right people. HSBC, one of the world's largest banking and financial services organizations, uses Sponsored Updates to drive awareness and engage an audience short on time but hungry for insight. Using Sponsored Updates, the company drove more than 40,000 interactions with content and boosted organic update impressions by 1500%. They also attracted more than 3,750 new followers to the HSBC Commercial Banking LinkedIn Company Page.

⁶LinkedIn Mindset divide: <http://www.slideshare.net/LImarketingsolutions/bc12-mindset-dividechristina>

“Sponsored Updates allowed us to reach the right audience on the right channel to educate marketers.”

Amanda Rendle

Global Head of Marketing, Commercial Banking and Global Banking and Markets, HSBC



Another way to reach your prospects in a professional context on the LinkedIn network is through targeted LinkedIn Display ads. Choose from IAB-standard ads, or formats native to LinkedIn like Follow Company Ads, Spotlight Ads, and more. Boost brand awareness by accurately targeting your ideal audience and engaging them in a professional context.



Increase Awareness and Engagement to Drive More Bottom-Funnel Conversions

Brand marketers today play a larger than ever role in driving leads, opportunities, and revenue. To position your business for success, you need to reach the audiences you care about most and educate them about your brand throughout the purchase cycle. **That's why more B2B marketers (72 percent according to a recent report by the Content Marketing Institute⁷) are investing in the creation and distribution of high-quality content.**

It's no secret that people are eager to engage companies that provide useful information. One of the best ways to build favorable awareness for your brand is to give your audience the content they want, when they want it, using the channels they find most convenient. As prospects educate themselves about your brand and interact more with your content, you can begin to tailor your messaging to make it more personal and that much more relevant. Building this valuable brand/audience relationship is key to driving more bottom-funnel conversions.

Did You Know...

With **LinkedIn Sponsored Updates** you can publish relevant content straight to the feed of your target audience on the LinkedIn site. That means your own brand content will appear right alongside other high-quality updates from news sites, thought leaders, and member connections. And you can leverage Sponsored Updates to get your brand message in front of high-value audiences no matter where they are in the decision process.

Of course it's important to tailor your content to the needs and behavior of your audience. At the top of the funnel, during the awareness stage, you'll want to serve up content that's more "snackable" and messaging that helps to establish your brand as an industry thought leader. As your target moves further along the funnel into the consideration stage and becomes more familiar with your brand, you can feed them more product-focused content, like whitepapers, case studies, and other gated material.

By using upper funnel tactics like Display Advertising and Sponsored Updates to build brand awareness and drive consideration, **you are effectively priming your prospect to be more receptive to product-specific messaging down the road.** Here are a few more ways you can leverage top-funnel channels to drive more bottom-funnel conversions:



Run Display Ads and Sponsored Updates together:

Members who recall your brand as a result of a Display campaign will be more inclined to click on your Sponsored Updates when they show up in their feed.



Continue the conversation with LinkedIn Sponsored InMail:

Once members recognize and trust your brand, they'll be more likely to open, read, and act on your targeted Sponsored InMail—and with 100% deliverability it's the most personal way possible to engage members on LinkedIn.



Use LinkedIn Display Ads to drive traffic to your website:

Using LinkedIn targeting data, you'll attract more of the right people to your site up front—high-quality visitors whom you can later nurture into known contacts using **LinkedIn Lead Accelerator.** By tracking online behavior and user demographics, you can deliver waves of synchronized offers to precisely targeted segments and optimize your messaging over time.



Measure the Impact of Your Branding Efforts Anywhere Along the Funnel

You know metrics matter. You're on the hook to drive revenue, so you need to be able to measure and prove your success every step of the way.

Because brand marketing can impact the entire marketing funnel, it's important to align success metrics with the right stage of the funnel. At the top of the funnel, you'll likely be measuring factors like audiences reached, direct visits to your website, and engagement with your content, ads, or landing pages. At the bottom of the funnel, it's important to track per-visitor page views, web form conversions, lead quality, and cost per lead.



Did You Know...

With LinkedIn's Full-Funnel Analytics, you can easily and effectively track the impact of your campaigns in real-time and optimize along the way to make sure you're always getting the desired results. Our platform helps you determine the right success metrics depending on your marketing objectives, and provides insight on what's working in the funnel—from top to bottom. Advanced reporting capabilities enable you to track key metrics including lift in visits, reach, engagement, audience demographics, and much more.

Why LinkedIn Marketing Solutions for Brand Marketing?

As a brand marketer focused on B2B or high-consideration B2C, you know your biggest challenge is getting your message in front of the right people at the right time. **The right people are business professionals and there are 400M+⁸ of them on LinkedIn right now.** An active community that grows by more than 200 thousand daily, LinkedIn members comprise the single largest group of influential, affluent, and educated business professionals on the planet.

They hail from companies of every size and represent every industry—including the high-value groups that matter most to your business. LinkedIn members also spend 2.8 times more than the average adult on the Internet.⁹ And there are 2.5M+ business decision-makers active on the platform in the US.¹⁰

Finally, according to a 2016 report, some 94 percent of B2B marketers use LinkedIn to distribute content, making it the social media platform used most often (they also say it's the most effective social media platform).¹¹

For brand marketers especially, LinkedIn is the best way to reach more of the right people and nurture them through the purchase process until they're ready to buy.

⁸LinkedIn Q3'15 earnings

⁹comScore Buying Power Index Jan'15, US only

¹⁰comScore, Dec'14, US only

¹¹B2B Content Marketing Report: 2016 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America. Produced by Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs.

LinkedIn Enables You to Target More Effectively and Segment for Better Relevance

Better targeting drives engagement and demand. With 400M+ members worldwide nobody has more data around people and jobs than LinkedIn. In-depth member profile information means you can define your audience with precision using criteria like location, company size, industry, job function, seniority, and more so you can target just the right people among that coveted audience of affluent and engaged professionals.

Of course members turn to LinkedIn for more than just jobs, they come to better themselves, build their professional brands, keep up with industry news, and so much more. In fact, LinkedIn members are consuming and sharing professional content in record amounts—over 1.5 million publishers actively use the LinkedIn Share button on their sites to send content into the LinkedIn platform.¹² This represents a tremendous opportunity for brand marketers to reach an audience hungry for relevant content.



¹²The 2014 Professional Content Consumption Report, published by LinkedIn

Conclusion

Your target prospects are doing more research online, and are in control of where and when they engage with your brand. To shape the outcome of the purchase decision, you must keep your company's brand and content in front of prospects early and often.

LinkedIn Marketing Solutions are expressly designed to impact every stage of your funnel so you can reach more of the right people—anywhere online—and nurture them through the funnel until they're sales-ready.

In this guide, we've touched upon four solutions within the LinkedIn platform that were built with brand marketers like you in mind:

Display Advertising

Reach the right people on LinkedIn and anywhere they spend time on the Web.

Sponsored Updates

Build brand awareness, then drive engagement and further extend your reach by delivering Sponsored Updates on the world's only professional feed.

Sponsored InMail

Send personalized messages directly to LinkedIn member Inboxes.

Lead Accelerator

Convert the 95% of web visitors interested in your brand even when they don't provide an email address.

One or more of these solutions may be just what you need to increase awareness and engagement with your brand and subsequently drive more prospects into your funnel. If you're ready to take a deeper dive, visit marketing.linkedin.com now to see how you can leverage the power of LinkedIn Marketing Solutions to position your brand for success.

Questions?

Contact us at marketing.linkedin.com.

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