



Self-Service Advertising on LinkedIn

Part 2: Execution



Part 2: Execution

How to create your campaigns, target your audiences, and set your budget and bids.



LinkedIn

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Creating your campaign

Define Your Campaign Goals

For any ad campaign to be successful, you need to understand your business goals.

Are you trying to build brand awareness, drive traffic to your website, or get new leads? The clearer and more specific your goals are, the more compelling your ad campaigns will be. Which ad units make sense to drive those goals?

Your campaign goals will directly affect how much you want to spend, who you want to target, and what creative assets and messaging you need to develop.

Camden College Example

Imagine you're a marketing director at Camden College.* What would your campaign goals be? Tuition is pretty expensive, so your best bet is to gather and nurture leads – then turn them into customers over time.

Keep in mind, nurturing leads takes time. Depending on the program, the student decision cycle is up to 2 years, and it takes several pieces of content to convert a lead.

Camden College's campaign goals are focused on driving leads in two ways:**

1. Offering downloads of their brochure
2. Inviting prospects to an on-campus event

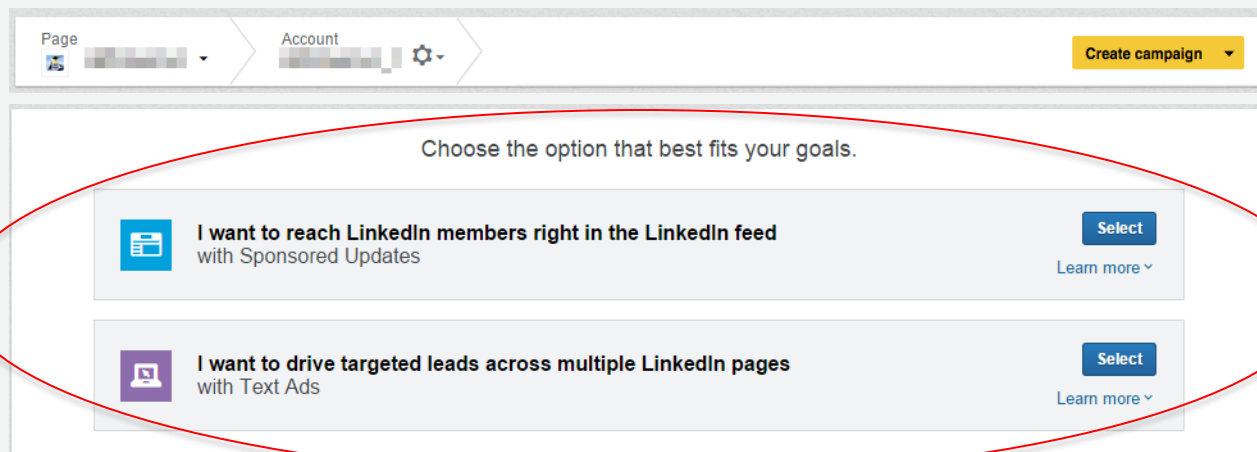
These goals can be achieved through both Text Ads and Sponsored Content on the self-service platform.

* Fictional university

**A lead is defined as a completed form in order to attend an event or download material


Choose a Campaign Type

In Campaign Manager Account page, determine whether you would like to run Sponsored Content or Text Ads (depending on your campaign goals) and create a campaign for that ad type.



Page [Profile Icon] > Account [Profile Icon] [Settings Icon] [Create campaign](#)


Choose the option that best fits your goals.



I want to reach LinkedIn members right in the LinkedIn feed
with Sponsored Updates

[Select](#)

[Learn more](#)



I want to drive targeted leads across multiple LinkedIn pages
with Text Ads

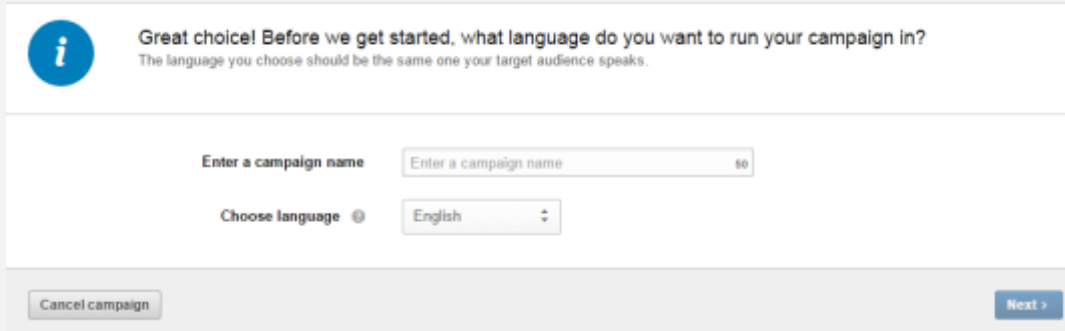
[Select](#)

[Learn more](#)

	Sponsored Content	Text Ads
Campaign Goal	Direct Response + Brand Awareness	Direct Response
Platform	Desktop, mobile, tablet	Desktop only
Pricing	CPC or CPM	CPC or CPM
Targeting	Targeted audiences	Targeted audiences
Ad Placement	LinkedIn news feed, off network display	Text link on homepage; right hand rail or bottom of homepage, profile page, search results, groups, SlideShare

Create a campaign name

Your customers won't see the name – it's just for you.



The screenshot shows a step in the LinkedIn campaign creation process. At the top, there is an information icon (a blue circle with a white 'i') followed by the text: "Great choice! Before we get started, what language do you want to run your campaign in? The language you choose should be the same one your target audience speaks." Below this, there are two input fields. The first is labeled "Enter a campaign name" and contains the placeholder text "Enter a campaign name" and a small "50" character count. The second is labeled "Choose language" and shows a dropdown menu with "English" selected. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Cancel campaign" on the left and "Next >" on the right.



Choose a descriptive name that reflects the goals you're trying to achieve.



If you're just starting out, we suggest creating a name that reflects your target audience. Make it super easy to understand and remember!



When you have a lot of campaigns to keep track of, having a clear naming system will keep you organized.

Camden College Example

For example, one of Camden's campaigns is called "Brochure downloads | New Hampshire | Marketers."



Developing your ad content

Text Ads & Sponsored Content

Deciding on creative assets

Lead generation success starts by developing and delivering the right content. You need to GIVE value to GET value.

Start by asking yourself... "What are the common questions my audience is asking?" Then answer those questions with your "Big Rock" content.

"Big Rock" content delivers VALUE where your audience will gladly exchange contact info to get it, including guides, research reports, webinars, and eBooks. It can include evergreen content that you repurpose into different forms. The more visual, the better.



Text Ads



Determine exactly who you are trying to target

If you have multiple target audiences, separate them into different “buckets” and create campaigns tailored to reach each specific audience.



Create focused targeting criteria

When creating campaigns, use only a few targeting options at a time. For example, Geography/Industry/Seniority. We recommend at least 100k members per target for text ads.



Set an aggressive maximum bid

Give your campaign a higher chance of success by ensuring that you have a competitive bid.



Add a strong CTA

Ads with a strong call-to-action, such as “Apply Now” or “RSVP today” perform better.



Create multiple ad variations for each campaign

Use 2-3 active ad variations per campaign to show variety to your audience, while also allowing A/B testing to see which works best.



Address your audience directly

Grab their attention by calling out to your audience in the headline (e.g. “Attn: HR Directors” or “Are you an IT Manager?”).



Turn off low-performing ads

Active ads with a low CTR can weigh down a campaign and lead to a drop in impressions.



Minor changes can have a big impact

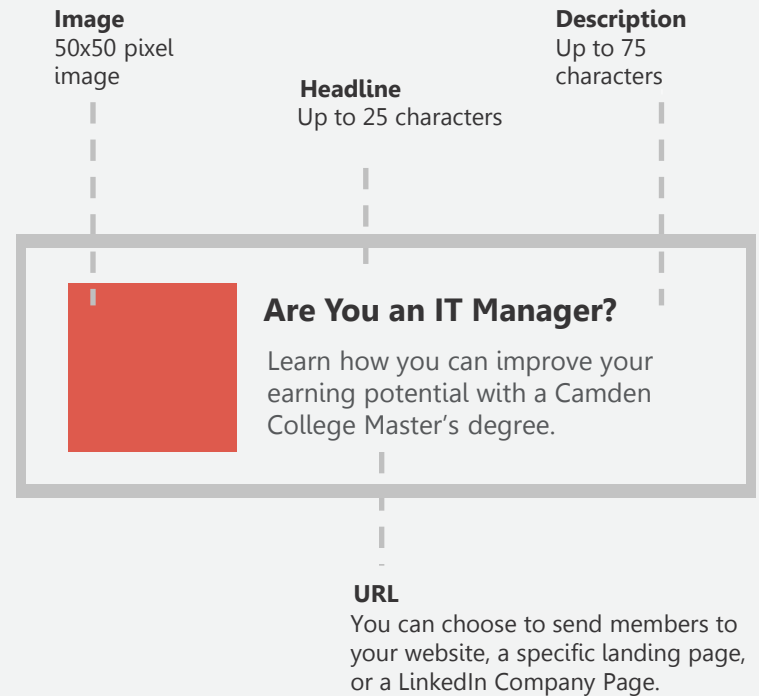
Even simple changes, such as adjusting targeting, raising bids, and refreshing/creating ad variations, can improve your performance.

Text Ads

Deciding on creative assets

Ads that perform best are relevant to the target audience and are written with clear, and compelling language.

Note: Your ad may be shown as a text only version in locations such as the top of the LinkedIn homepage.



Choose words that grab the attention of your target audience. Give LinkedIn members a reason to click through by highlighting special offers, unique benefits, downloadable white papers, free trials, or product demos.

Text Ads

Creating text ads

Try writing different variations of ad copy to determine which version speaks more to your audience. To create a new version of your ad, with the same target audience, click **Create another ad** and you'll see a new creative box to fill out.

Note: You may only upload up to 15 variations in any one campaign.

- 01** A creative box will appear. Fill out the information for creating your text ad.

Where should members go when they click your ad?

☐ My Page on LinkedIn

Select a page

☒ My Website

http://www.example.com

Add a catchy headline, image and copy



ex: Want to land a promotion? 25

Describe why someone should click your ad. 75

[Show me how to write a great ad](#)

- 02** Click **Save** and your new text ad will appear in the **Ads** tab.

- 03** To add a variation, click **Create another ad** to open a new creative box.

Text Ads

Common mistakes

Not including an image

- ✓ Use an eye-catching image that describes your product or service. Images of professionals tend to perform well.

Only using one creative

- ✓ Be sure to use at least two creatives so you can test out variations of your ad. For example, try re-framing your headline as a question or referencing the audience in the headline.

Not showing the “best” creative more often

- ✓ Keep testing multiple creatives in your campaign to determine the best performing versions and pause any under-performing versions.

Fully capitalizing your ad or repeating punctuation

- ✓ No one wants to be yelled at – unfortunately, that’s what all caps and lots of exclamation points feel like to your readers. Instead, try using normal punctuation and use exclamation points in moderation.

Not including a call to action or offer in the body or headline of the ad

- ✓ One way to improve your ad is to grab your audience’s attention with key phrases in your ad’s headline such as “Try Now,” “Download,” or “Free for 30 days.”

Text Ads

Designing your ad

Here are two ads that Camden College (our higher ed example) could write for their target audience.



Are You in Accounting?

Close your books faster w/
accounting software made for
SMB's. Free trial!



Improve Your Accounting

Innovative accounting software.
Easy, secure, robust – Switch to us
today!

Effective

Headline draws attention of the target customer

Description identifies the product

Ends with a strong call-to-action or offer

Less Effective

Headline is too generic

Image is not engaging or relevant to product/service

Review the [advertising guidelines](#) for details on what's acceptable to include in your ad.

Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

Two ways to publish!

Sponsor Organic Company Updates



Validate

Gain insight into performance of update before putting budget behind it



Gain organic reach

Reach your organic follower base in addition to your target audience

Direct Sponsored Content



Personalize

Customize your message to target each audience



Test

A/B test variations of your content to optimize performance



Control

What gets published on your Company Page locally or globally

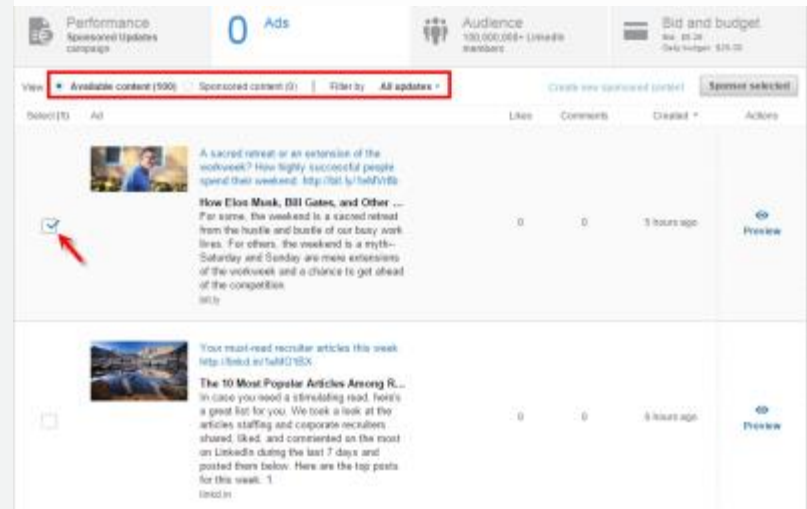
Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

Select content to sponsor

If you haven't posted the update you want to sponsor yet, don't worry. You can choose updates to sponsor after campaign setup as well or launch direct sponsored content instead.

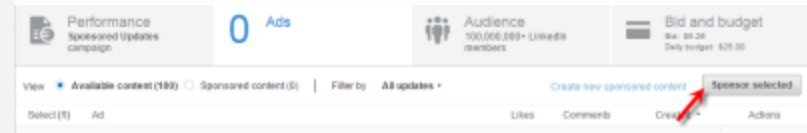
01

From the **Campaign Manager**, select the update(s) that you would like to sponsor by checking the box to the left of it. You can filter for all available content on your company page and/or previously sponsored content.



02

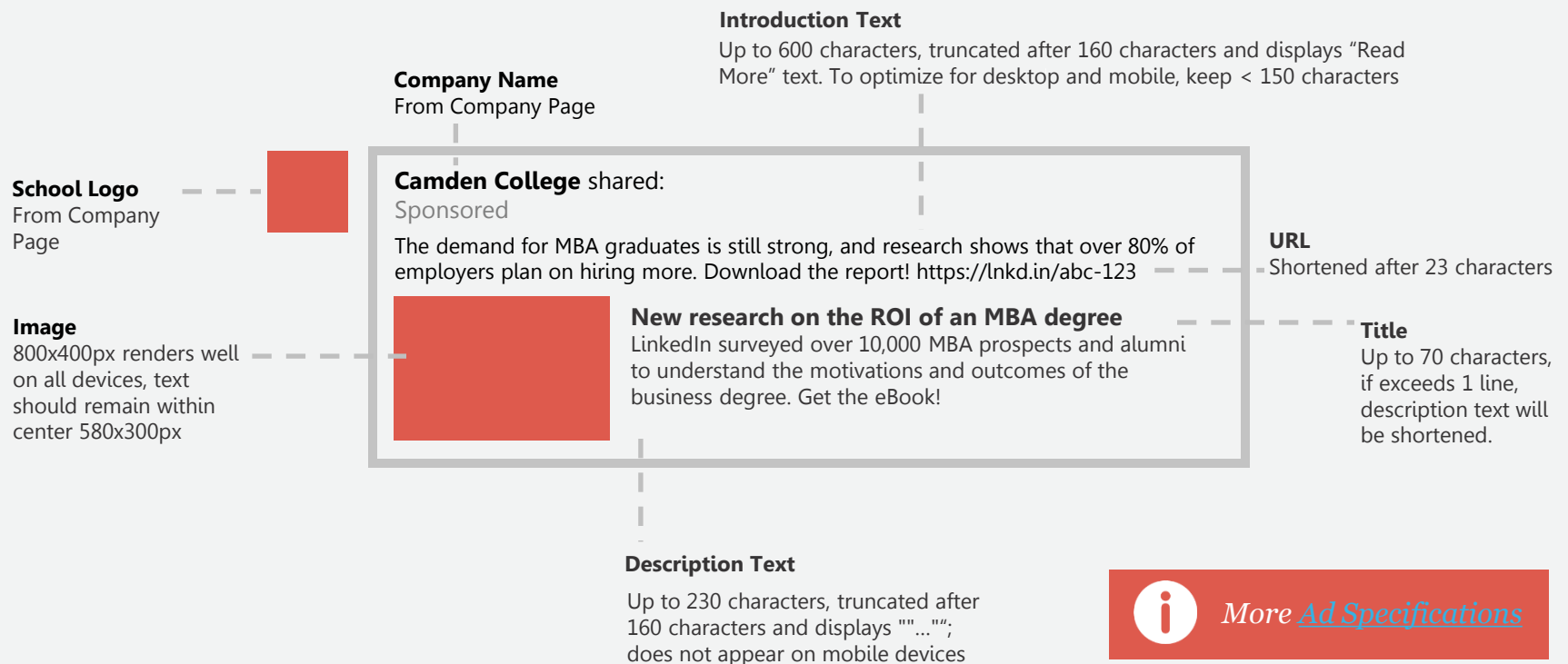
Select **Sponsor selected**. Any updates you select will automatically become sponsored once you've completed campaign setup.



Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

Or, create direct sponsored content

You can also choose to create sponsored content without publishing to your company page. This allows you to test unique variations to find what messaging or content resonates most with your audience target. Before you create your ad, think of the type of images or messaging that will catch your audience's attention.



Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

Creating direct sponsored content

If you haven't posted the update you want to sponsor yet, don't worry. You can also choose to create sponsored content without publishing to your company page, too.

Note: You will need to be granted permission by a *Company Page Admin* to create direct sponsored content. If you're a *Company Page Admin*, go to the **Company Page** or **Showcase Page** and click the blue **Edit** button in the upper right. Scroll down to the Direct Sponsored Content Posters section and add the LinkedIn member you wish to grant privileges. Click **Publish** in the upper right.

03

Choose **Create new sponsored content**. This will allow you to create a sponsored update without publishing to your company page.



Audience

100,000,000+ LinkedIn members



Bid and budget

Bid: \$5.26
Daily budget: \$25.00

ates ▾

Create new sponsored content

Sponsor selected

Likes

Comments

Created ▾

Actions

04

Enter your click-through URL and allow the **Campaign Manager** to scrape its contents. You can then edit each part of the sponsored update except for the Company Logo and Company Name. See slide 26 for specifications.



Performance
Sponsored Updates
campaign

1

Ads
(1) Active



Audience
7,000+ LinkedIn members



Bid and budget
Bid: \$2.49
Daily budget: \$25.00

Create new update: You can create multiple variations of the same update to see which image and copy combo gets the best results.

Create and do not share on company page (Direct Sponsored Content)

Direct Sponsored Content name: @ _____

COMPANY PAGE

What's on your mind?

Cancel

Save

Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

Selecting Direct Sponsored Content

Your newly created Direct Sponsored Content will be labeled with:

 Direct Sponsored Content

Note: You cannot edit a Sponsored/Company Update nor a Direct Sponsored Content once you've submitted it for review. Launch a new variation and pause or archive the old variation to effectively make changes.

05

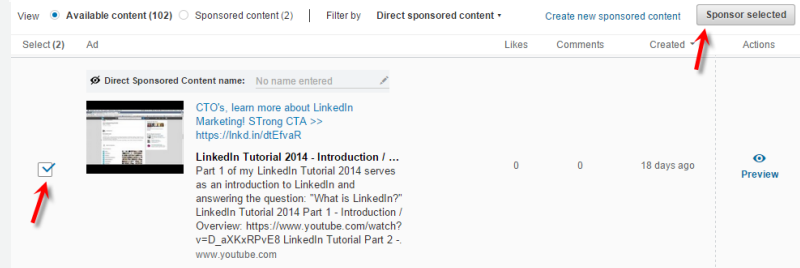
You can create a unique name for your Direct Sponsored Content to help distinguish between ad variations more easily when you're assessing performance.

06


Click **Save**.

07

As before, select your new direct sponsored content and any additional Sponsored Content by checking the box to the left of it. Then, click **Sponsor selected**. Any updates you select will automatically become sponsored once you've completed campaign setup.



The screenshot shows the LinkedIn Sponsored Content management interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Available content (102)', 'Sponsored content (2)', and 'Filter by Direct sponsored content'. A 'Create new sponsored content' link is also visible. Below the tabs, there is a table with columns: 'Select (2)', 'Ad', 'Likes', 'Comments', 'Created', and 'Actions'. A red arrow points to the 'Sponsor selected' button in the top right corner. Another red arrow points to the checkbox in the 'Select (2)' column next to the first ad entry. The ad entry is titled 'LinkedIn Tutorial 2014 - Introduction / ...' and includes a description and a link to a YouTube video. The 'Created' column shows '18 days ago' and the 'Actions' column has a 'Preview' link.

Select (2)	Ad	Likes	Comments	Created	Actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 CTO's, learn more about LinkedIn Marketing! Strong CTA >> https://linkd.in/dtEvaR LinkedIn Tutorial 2014 - Introduction / ... Part 1 of my LinkedIn Tutorial 2014 serves as an introduction to LinkedIn and answering the question: "What is LinkedIn?" LinkedIn Tutorial 2014 Part 1 - Introduction / Overview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_aXKxRPvE8 LinkedIn Tutorial Part 2 - www.youtube.com	0	0	18 days ago	Preview

Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

With Rich Media

Now, you can also launch Sponsored Content or Direct Sponsored Content with an embedded rich media for a larger, more visual ad unit within the news feed. This is great if you have a very engaging image or infographic to capture your audience's attention right away.

Regular (Link Sharing) Format

Camden College shared:

Sponsored

Follow

The demand for MBA graduates is still strong, and research shows that over 80% of employers plan on hiring more. Download the report! <https://lnkd.in/abc-123>

New research on the ROI of an MBA degree

LinkedIn surveyed over 10,000 MBA prospects and alumni to understand the motivations and outcomes of the business degree. Get the eBook!

Embedded Rich Media Format

Camden College shared:

Sponsored

Follow

The demand for MBA graduates is still strong, and research shows that over 80% of employers plan on hiring more. Download the report! <https://lnkd.in/abc-123>



[More Ad Specifications](#)

Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

How to Embed Rich Media

Your newly created Direct Sponsored Content will be labeled with:

Note: You cannot edit a Sponsored/Company Update nor a Direct Sponsored Content once you've submitted it for review. Launch a new variation and pause or archive the old variation to effectively make changes.

01

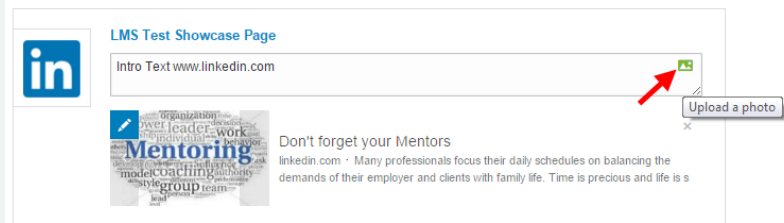
Continue to create your Sponsored Content or Direct Sponsored Content as you typically would: paste your link and allow the platform to scrape your landing page. Once scraped, add an intro text before your link. At this time, you may also paste over the link with a shortlink. Otherwise, LinkedIn will convert your link into a lnkd.in shortlink.

02

Click the icon in the upper righthand corner to attach your rich media.

Create and do not share on Company Page (Direct Sponsored Content)

Direct Sponsored Content name:



LMS Test Showcase Page

Intro Text www.linkedin.com

Don't forget your Mentors

linkedin.com · Many professionals focus their daily schedules on balancing the demands of their employer and clients with family life. Time is precious and life is s

03

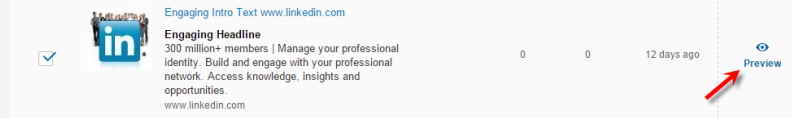
Click **Save**. As before, select your new direct sponsored content or sponsored update by checking the box to the left of it. Then, click **Sponsor selected**. Any updates you select will automatically become sponsored once you've completed campaign setup.

Sponsored Content/Direct Sponsored Content

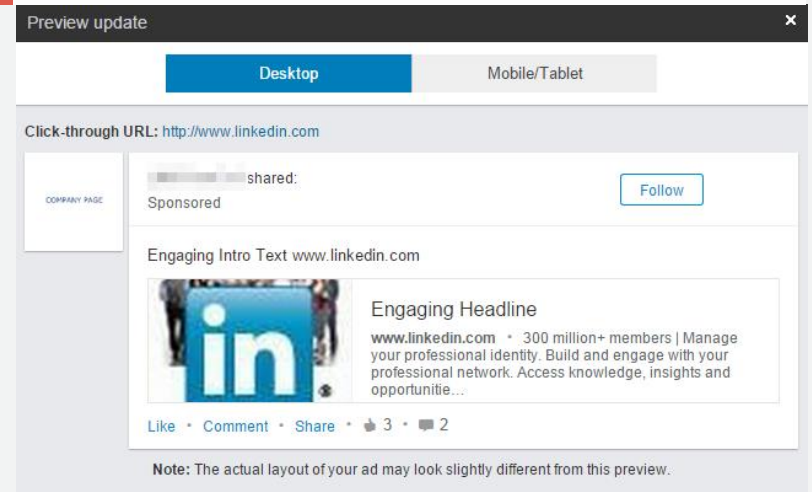
Preview Your Ads

You can preview your ads to see how they'll look as Sponsored Content on desktop, tablet, and smartphones. Simply select the **Preview** icon to the right of your update.

01 Select the **Preview** icon to the right of your update.



02 Click the tabs above to preview your ad on different devices.



Getting your creative approved

After you create and submit your ad, our team will automatically review your creative to make sure it meets our [Ads Guidelines](#). You don't have to do anything.

Note

During this review period, your ads won't be shown on LinkedIn. You don't need to take any further action while your ad is under review. It will be turned on once it's been approved (usually within 24 hours).



Targeting

Develop your targeting persona

Who should you target?

When choosing target options, start by narrowing down your target audience to LinkedIn members who are likely to be interested in what you offer. Here are some things to consider when thinking about your target audience:

Do they have specific job functions?

Do they have certain skills?

Where are they located?

Do they work in a certain industry?

Do they belong to certain LinkedIn Groups?

Camden College

Using personas to picture your audience

Put yourself in the shoes of your target audience by creating a persona. Camden College's business school, for example, might have a sample customer like this:



Mark Smith

Age 28

Title Marketing Manager

Company ABC Technologies Corp.

Location San Francisco Bay Area

Professional interests

Entrepreneurship, Leadership,
Social Media Marketing, Technology

Choose your targeting filters



You can filter your target audience by criteria such as: job title, job function, or industry. A maximum of 100 selections are permitted per targeting option.



As you select your target options, we'll show you an estimate of the audience size you'll be able to reach. Keep your target audience between 60,000 and 600,000 members, as this range has the best history of success.



To start out, we recommend having at least 100,000 members per target group for text ads and 300,000 members per target group for Sponsored Content so you don't miss out on unexpected opportunities.

Targeting Filters

- Location
- Company name
- Company industry
- Company size
- Job title
- Job function
- Job seniority
- Member skills
- Member schools
- Degrees
- Fields of study
- Member groups
- Member gender
- Member age



You'll want to avoid gender and age targeting until you get the hang of the system and learn a little more about what works for your business.

Targeting by geography

Choose who sees your ad based on where they live or work.

Start by choosing at least one geographic location for your campaign.

Select geographies based on where your leads or customers are located.

You can target by regions, sub-regions, or countries.

Use information you know about your prospects to develop thoughtful targeting – but don't go so narrow that you miss other opportunities by casting too small of a net.



Note

If your products or services are applicable to members all over the world, you can select all regions. However, for higher engagement we recommend you focus only on those audiences who are most likely to be interested.

Targeting by company

When you target by company, you can select:



Company by name

or



Company by category



Company by name

If the product or service that you're offering could appeal to employees at a particular company, you may want to target by company name.

When you enter the name of a company you'd like to target, we'll automatically suggest similar companies that you could target as well.

Keep in mind that this is a very specific targeting method, and we only recommend it to those who feel comfortable going very narrow. Even in cases where you want to target a specific company, we recommend you also include some "similar" companies to your campaign. Including similar companies will give you a better chance at getting impressions and clicks.

Targeting by company

Company by category

If you're new to online advertising, still refining your target audience, or want to scale campaigns, this broader targeting option is recommended for you. You can choose from company size and/or industry.



Company Size

Target LinkedIn members based on the size of the company they work for.

You can target companies with as few as one employee or as many 10,000+ employees.

Some companies choose not to identify their size, so we recommend testing out targeting to both "all sizes" and your "target size", or excluding by company size instead. Your results will show which works best for your campaigns.



Industry

Target based on your audience's industry.

Choose broad industry categories or get more specific with industry subsets. There are over 17 categories to choose from.



Different industries may use different terminology so consider creating separate campaigns and ad copy for each industry you're targeting.

Targeting by job

When you target by job title, you can select:



Job Title

or



Job Function and/or seniority

Job by Title

When you enter a specific job title, we'll suggest similar titles for you to target.

Because different companies have different titles for the same jobs, try using additional words in the job title.

LinkedIn will help you by suggesting additional titles.

If you know the job titles for the audience you'd like to target, this is a good option for you.

Example

If you're looking for an Account Manager, also try targeting a Senior Account Manager, Junior Account Manager, Director of Accounts, Account Strategist, and so on.



You can target up to 100 similar job titles in a single campaign, so the more you choose, the broader your ad's reach.

Targeting by job

Job by Function and/or Seniority

Job function and seniority are two job title categories you can use to hone your targeting.



Job Function

Target by job function if you want to show your ad to members in a specific job discipline.

If your offering could appeal to multiple job functions, consider creating separate campaigns with ads tailored to each function.



Seniority

If you're trying to target professionals with a certain level of professional experience, you may want to try targeting by seniority.

Since LinkedIn is a professional network, members don't list age on their profile. We recommend targeting by seniority instead of age.



Job function, seniority, and industry can be combined for more accurate targeting.

Targeting by Groups

Since over 80% of our members belong to at least one group, targeting by groups is an effective way to reach an already highly engaged audience.



Get started searching for groups using the LinkedIn Groups Directory:
<https://www.linkedin.com/directory/groups/>



Since the autocomplete doesn't pick up ALL relevant groups when you enter certain words, it helps to experiment with multiple word combinations.



Next, try testing a campaign just for Groups. Target as many groups as possible with a common theme and highlight that theme in your ad copy.



The bigger and more aligned your overall target audience, the better the chance your ad will get multiple clicks.



You don't have to be a part of the same LinkedIn Groups as the members you want to target in your campaigns.

Test and iterate

Always start broad so you cast a wide enough net to gather statistically significant data. When you're feeling comfortable running campaigns, and are generating enough click volume to measure performance, try testing different targeting criteria. Use your click data to inform optimizations and expansions to your campaigns. This way, you can see which combination of targeting filters is the most effective in generating clicks and conversions.

Here are some suggestions along with examples based on Camden College's typical customer persona, Mark Smith.

ProStock Example

Try each targeting option as its own campaign. Once you know which target works best, you can start optimizing for that target.

Campaign 1. Industry (Technology)

Campaign 2. Job Function (Marketing)

Campaign 3. Groups (Social Media Marketing)

ProStock Example

Go a step further and create different targeting combinations to see if a particular pairing performs better than others. If you've identified a segment that performs well, try using other targeting options to reach that audience.

Campaign 1. Industry + Job Function

Campaign 2. Job Function + Groups

Campaign 3. Industry + Groups

Campaign 4. Skills (Marketing)

Campaign 5. Field of Study (Marketing)



Using 2+ targeting criteria can increase your performance by up to 10% according to our internal LinkedIn analysis. Keep in mind your own campaign performance could vary.



Budgeting

Setting a budget & time period

You can control your advertising costs by setting a daily maximum and total budget. Plus, you only pay for performance, which means you only pay when you receive clicks or impressions.

For additional flexibility, you can log into the **Campaign Manager** at any time and switch your campaigns on or off.

Some things you'll want to decide:

The total budget you want to invest in your LinkedIn Ads campaign.

The total number of campaigns you want to create based on your total budget.

Your daily maximum, which is the amount you want to spend per day.

Whether you want to run a CPC or CPM campaign, and how much you're willing to bid.

Whether you want your campaign to run continuously or for a specific period of time.

Here are some terms you might find helpful

Payment Methods

CPC is cost per click. You'll only get charged when someone clicks on your ad.

For CPC, if your maximum bid is \$3.00 per click, you'll be charged less than or equal to \$3.00 every time your ad receives a click. If your ad doesn't receive any clicks, you won't be charged. Bid your maximum CPC because your actual CPC will be lower.

CPC is ideal for performance advertising since you only pay when someone in your target audience clicks on your content, company name, or company logo.

CPM is cost per thousand impressions, so you'll be charged. Every time we show your ad 1,000 times.

CPM is a good option if you care more about the number of times your ad is shown, versus clicks received. This is a good choice for campaigns with brand awareness goals. We generally recommend this type of bidding option for people with experience advertising on a CPM basis.

Daily Budget is the amount you're willing to spend per day. To set your daily budget, multiply your CPC or CPM bid by the number of clicks or impressions that you'd like to receive each day.

For example: If you want 1,000 clicks each day and want to spend no more than \$3 per click, you'll want to set your daily budget at \$3,000/day.

Clicks are exactly what you think – when a visitor actively clicks on your ad.

Impression refers to when your ad is shown to a LinkedIn member.

Bid Price is the amount you're willing to pay LinkedIn every time someone clicks on your ad or every time your ad shows 1,000 times.

We'll provide a Suggested Bid Range to help you choose the best possible bid price. The range represents an estimate of the competing bids by other advertisers for your target audience.

If you're just getting started with LinkedIn Ads, we suggest bidding above the minimum so you increase your chance of winning in the auction. Don't worry--if you outbid the competition, you will only be charged just enough to win the auction, so you should bid the maximum you're willing to pay for a click or impression. This will maximize your chance of winning the auction.



Most people visit LinkedIn on weekdays, so focus your budget on those days.

Bid & budget details

The minimum CPC bid (cost per click) is \$2.00 per click.

The minimum CPM (cost per 1,000 impressions) bid is \$2.00 per thousand impressions.

Your ads are priced based on a [second price auction](#), which means that you'll only pay enough to beat the next highest bidder.

01

Enter your bid and budget details in the **Bid and Budget** tab.

Bid type ⓘ ☒ Cost per click (CPC) ☐ Cost per impressions (CPM)
Pay when someone clicks your ad.

Bid ⓘ USD Suggested bid to reach the majority of your audience is \$2.54. (Other advertisers are bidding between \$2.54 – \$4.07) Minimum bid: \$2.00.

Daily budget ⓘ USD Minimum budget: \$10.00. Your campaign's actual daily spend may be up to 20% higher. [Learn more.](#)

Start Date ⓘ ☐ Start immediately ☒ Schedule start ⓘ

End Date ⓘ

Total budget ⓘ USD Minimum budget: \$10.00.

[^ Show less](#) [I want to learn more about campaign](#)

Note

Although we turn off your advertisement for the day once your daily budget is reached, the change isn't instantaneous. You will be charged for clicks or impressions that are delivered during that time, up to 20% over your daily budget.

Social engagement is free! This means you won't pay when members click on the like, comment, or share actions. It's also free if a member follows your company directly from your Sponsored Update.



Click **Launch Campaign** and your campaign is complete!