

Mass LOMAP Webinars for Busy Lawyers: Developing Your LinkedIn® Action Plan – Q&A

Are you using a premium version of LinkedIn? Should I get a premium LinkedIn subscription?

This might be the single most common question I get when speaking or training on LinkedIn. And while I will say that my co-author is a firm devotee of the premium version (mostly for the expanded info you get about Who's Viewed My Profile), I personally have always used the free version and found it to be entirely adequate for my purposes. However, there are some situations when a premium account might make sense for you.

There are several different kinds of LinkedIn premium subscriptions, for different purposes. For example, there are LinkedIn Career accounts that can be helpful if you're looking for a job, Recruiter accounts if you're responsible for hiring that can help you locate and communicate with potential job candidates, Sales Navigator accounts that help you find sales leads and Business Accounts that give you more insights and data on businesses.

What's the difference between the free and premium versions of LinkedIn?

The main differences between the free accounts and the various premium accounts are:

In Mail: Premium LinkedIn Accounts give you additional "In Mail" messages, meaning you can contact people who are outside of your network more easily. With a free account you only get 3 In Mail messages; premium accounts provide more, depending on which subscription you have.

Who's Viewed Your Profile: LinkedIn Premium account subscribers will get more insights and see more information about the people who have viewed their Profile than you will get with a free account. This is one of the main reasons my co-author is a fan of Premium accounts – he likes to see who's looking at him on LinkedIn.

Expanded Search Capabilities: With a premium account, you'll get more results in your searches and be able to view more profiles of people who appear in your search results – up to third level connections. But with a well-crafted search, the 100 results you'll get with a free account should be plenty in most circumstances. Some of the premium plans, such as the Sales Navigator plan, also include additional search filters that can help you locate and save leads.

There are other advantages as well depending on which premium plan you choose, such as access to courses through LinkedIn learning, and additional business insights about companies on LinkedIn.

In general, for most of my clients, unless you're actively looking for a job, or are in charge of hiring for your firm, I recommend that you start with a free account. In my experience, most lawyers (and other business professionals) are only using a fraction of what is available on the free version. Once you start actively using

LinkedIn on a regular basis, if you find that you are being prevented from finding or viewing information that is important to you, you can always try one of LinkedIn's premium subscriptions for free for 30 days.

Given the number of LinkedIn requests that some people receive, especially from people they don't well or even at all, what are your thoughts on whether to accept invitations & how much to engage with these new people?

There are generally two schools of thought about this – one that says you should accept any and all invitations to get the largest network – and therefore the furthest reach – you possibly can. The other is to accept invitations only from people you know or want to get to know, to focus on the people you most want to connect to. I fall more in the second category. My co-author is a bit more “permissive” with his connection requests, and will usually accept more frequently than I would.

For the most part, I want my network to be not only useful to me, but also useful to my connections. That means I am usually looking for actual business relationships or opportunities for myself or for my connections. I have also seen an increasing level of spam and problems from accepting any invitation that comes along – there are too many people trying to get access to your connections, and your connections have more “rights” (such as being able to endorse you on LinkedIn) than people on LinkedIn that you are not connected to.

Personally, I will usually accept a personalized invitation to connect, because it shows me that the person took the time to think about why we should connect and didn't just send a blanket request to a whole bunch of people to beef up their connections. But that doesn't mean I won't accept an invitation without a personalized note. If I already know the person in another context, I will likely accept. Or if I see a good reason, based on the person's position or Profile, I will likely accept.

Another alternative if you're not ready to connect yet is to reply to the invitation to connect with a message to see if the person engages with you, or if you can find a reason to connect with them. If they don't respond, I usually won't accept the invitation. But everyone has to decide for themselves, based on their LinkedIn goals, what the right approach is for them.

You recommended that we post to LinkedIn at least weekly. How long should weekly updates be?

Your posts to LinkedIn don't need to be very long at all. They could be simply a sentence or two about something your audience might be interested in. And your content doesn't always have to be created by you – it can be content that you're sharing from another source, or the title of and link to an article. It's about staying top of mind with your audience, building a reputation as an information hub and/or expert in your area of practice. And most of all, it's about trying to engage with your audience.

What is your recommendation for creating video content?

Video is getting hotter on LinkedIn, as it seems to be anywhere else. Some people prefer to watch a video than to read text, and just the video image alone can capture attention in someone's LinkedIn feed. If you're going to post a video to LinkedIn, I recommend you keep it relatively short – only a few minutes. And if you're creating video, you could also post it to your own website as well – preferably with the text for those who don't want to watch the video but are interested in the information you are sharing. It's another way to

engage with your audience and set yourself apart. Your video content doesn't have to be professionally produced – it just has to be genuine and interesting to your audience.

How do you highlight factors in your headline?

This is a whole topic in and of itself. In general, I recommend that you include not just the fact that you're a lawyer, but also your area of practice, and possibly your firm's name, especially if the firm is a well-known one in your community or with your target audience.

Since people often encounter you on LinkedIn outside of your Profile – where they will only see your photo, your name, and your headline. So your headline has to do the work of getting that person to click over to your Profile – or to let them know right away that you are who they are looking for.

Your Headline doesn't have to be static – I tweak my headline frequently, depending on what I want to highlight about what I'm doing at the moment, or the kind of business I'm trying to attract. You can do that by changing the keywords you use in your headline, or changing the position of those keywords within the headline, so that the most important ones appear first. Don't forget to use the keywords that your potential clients, referral sources (or anyone else who is in your target audience) might actually use to search for the services you provide – and they may not be the same words lawyers would usually use.

Want more info on LinkedIn Headlines? Check out my short [video on the Lawyer Meltdown site here](#); my blog [post about LinkedIn Headlines on the Legal Ease Blog here](#); or download my [free printable LinkedIn Headline worksheet here](#).

You mentioned checking to see if your Profile is considered “complete,” or if your Profile has reached “All-star” status, but I don't see that on my Profile when I'm looking at it on the app on my smartphone.

The section I'm referring to can be found – both in the desktop version of LinkedIn and on the LinkedIn app – when you are viewing your own Profile. If you scroll down on your Profile below the About section, you will see a section called “Your Dashboard.” This is only visible to you. It will give you information, such as how many people have viewed your profile and your posts, and how many times you have appeared in search. At the top right corner of that box, LinkedIn will tell you the status of your Profile, and if it isn't complete enough, it will provide you with suggestions on how to improve it.

Feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn and let me know how you liked the webinar!



Allison C. Shields Johs

Allison@LegalEaseConsulting.com

Phone: 631-642-0221

LawyerMeltdown.com

LegalEaseConsulting.com (blog)

 www.linkedin.com/in/allisoncshieldslegalease