

The LinkedIn Machine Sales Playbook:

Your Guide to Mastering LinkedIn
for More Equipment Sales

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Imagine if you could speak to 2,000+ qualified prospects within your territory, every single week of your sales career, for free. Would this help you stay top of mind, see more opportunities, and ultimately win more machine sales?

This is all possible through LinkedIn – an incredibly powerful, yet often misused tool, in the world of machine sales.

LinkedIn is the only platform where you can isolate and connect with thousands of qualified prospects and market to them as frequently as you'd like, for free.

Whether you sell metal cutting CNCs, wood processing equipment, packaging automation, or another variety of capital equipment, LinkedIn is the perfect marketing tool for equipment sales where timing is everything.

Since machine upgrades are few and far between, staying top of mind with customers and prospects is critical to ensure every opportunity in your market is realized. Relying on frequent in-person visits and phone calls to every customer in your territory isn't scalable, let alone possible.

LinkedIn provides leverage and scale to your prospecting efforts, allowing you to uncover opportunities that otherwise would have been missed.

Following these two simple concepts correctly will drive consistent business from LinkedIn:

- 1. Building a network of highly-specific, ideal customers**
- 2. Speaking directly to them with relatable, value-added content**

While simple, failure to properly execute on these fundamentals will ruin any chance for consistent results.

This PDF guide will walk through how to effectively execute these concepts so you can learn how to consistently generate new machine sales from LinkedIn.

I. Isolating your Ideal Audience



You currently have a large number of prospects who don't even know you exist. Why doesn't this keep you up at night?

Because of our competitive nature, we lose sight of the ocean of prospects we aren't even aware of. Instead, we spend our time fighting tooth and nail to win over the customer who's already buying our competitor's machines.

Meanwhile there are an abundance of qualified prospects who are underserved. Today's business world refers to this as a "blue ocean" where competition is scarce. LinkedIn gives you access to fish within this blue ocean.

Upon realizing this, many salespeople overreact by connecting indiscriminately with everyone who pops up on their suggested page.

Most of these connections are the wrong people (non-customers).

This is damaging to your LinkedIn success for two reasons. For one, LinkedIn has pre-set limitations, meaning you can only connect with so many people per week (about 200). Because of this limit, there's a tremendous opportunity cost in connecting with the wrong people.

Second, the value of LinkedIn comes down to the quality of your network. It doesn't matter if you have 10,000 connections if none of them are qualified nor interested in buying the machines you sell.

“Garbage in is garbage out”.

This is why you need to start with an acute understanding of who your customer truly is.

The number of users on LinkedIn is vast and your connections are limited, so it's imperative that you focus on building an audience of only the highest quality prospects that you're able to service.

The way to do this is through an ideal customer audit.

An ideal customer audit reviews your all-time best customers to find common traits amongst them. You might find that a majority of your best customers have 20+ employees, or all service a specific industry.

The key is to clearly outline who your ideal customers are, so you can find more of them. Other shared qualities might be location, title of the decisionmaker, time in business, etc.

You'll also want to assess qualitative buying factors - the situation your customers were in before buying. What equipment was being used before upgrading? Were they outsourcing? What pushed them to invest in a new machine – new contract? Machine breakdown? Increased workload from a current customer?

Once you've spent time clearly outlining the parameters of your best customers, you're ready to find more of them on LinkedIn and start connecting.

Finding Qualified Prospects on LinkedIn

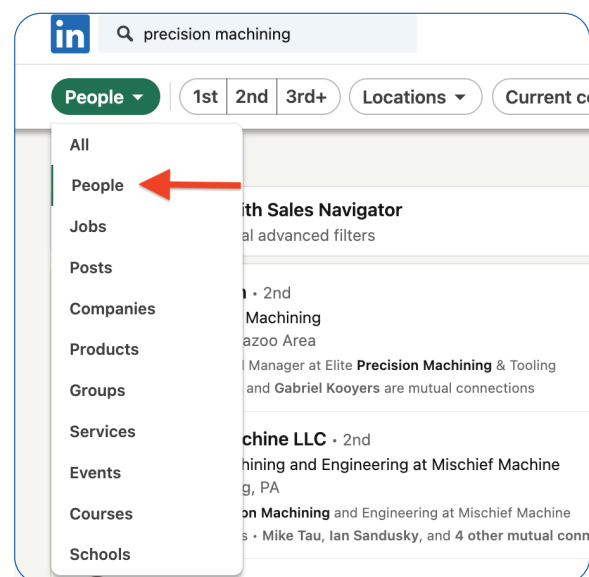
While all tips in this guide can be implemented at no cost, I highly recommend investing in LinkedIn's premium subscription – Sales Navigator.

Sales Navigator's advanced filters allow you to hyper-target and more easily find the best prospects within your territory.

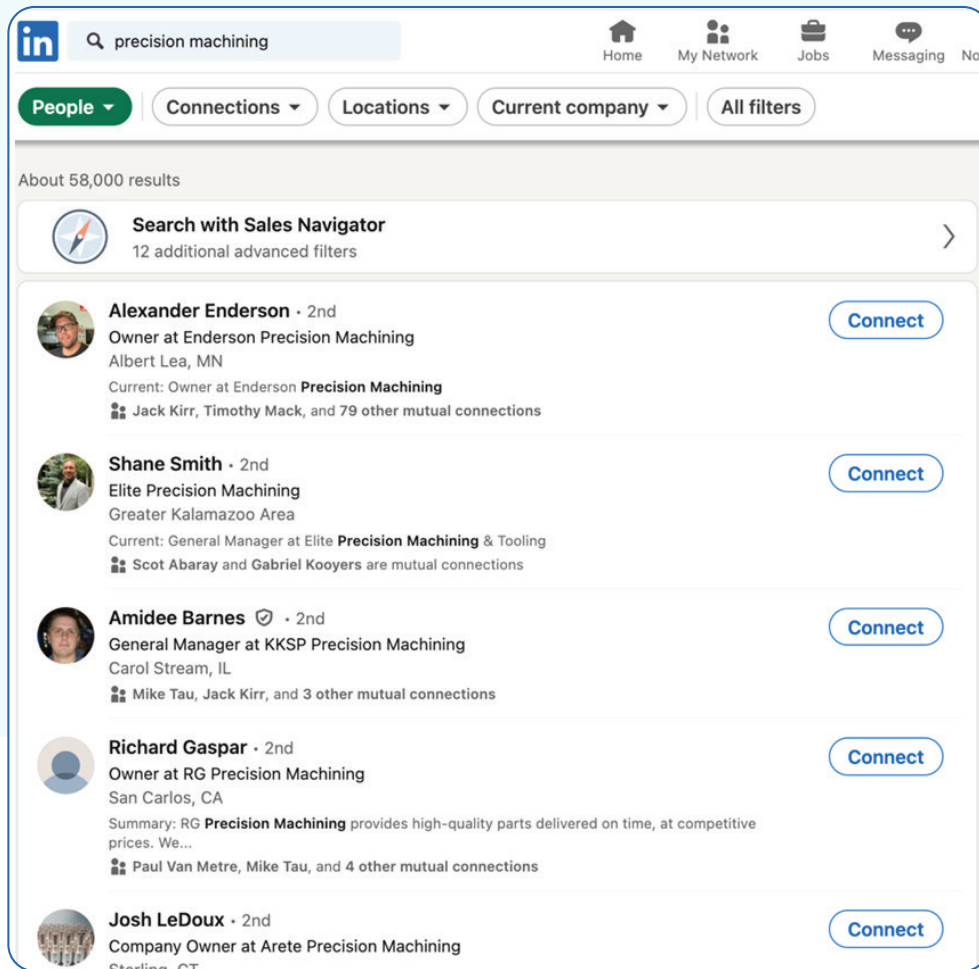
At \$99 per month, you'll easily see a return on this, even if your company doesn't cover the cost.

Using either subscription, the first step to locating new prospects is to run a keyword search on LinkedIn. You'll want to filter your results by "People" rather than by "Companies".

The keyword search is used as a starting point to find large groups of prospects. The results will be broad as a keyword search identifies all LinkedIn profiles with matching keyword(s) used anywhere on their profile.



Keyword search refined for people



Example of keyword search results

Examples of your keyword search term might be “precision machining” or “custom cabinets” based on your ideal audience. You should see thousands of results, many of which will not be qualified.

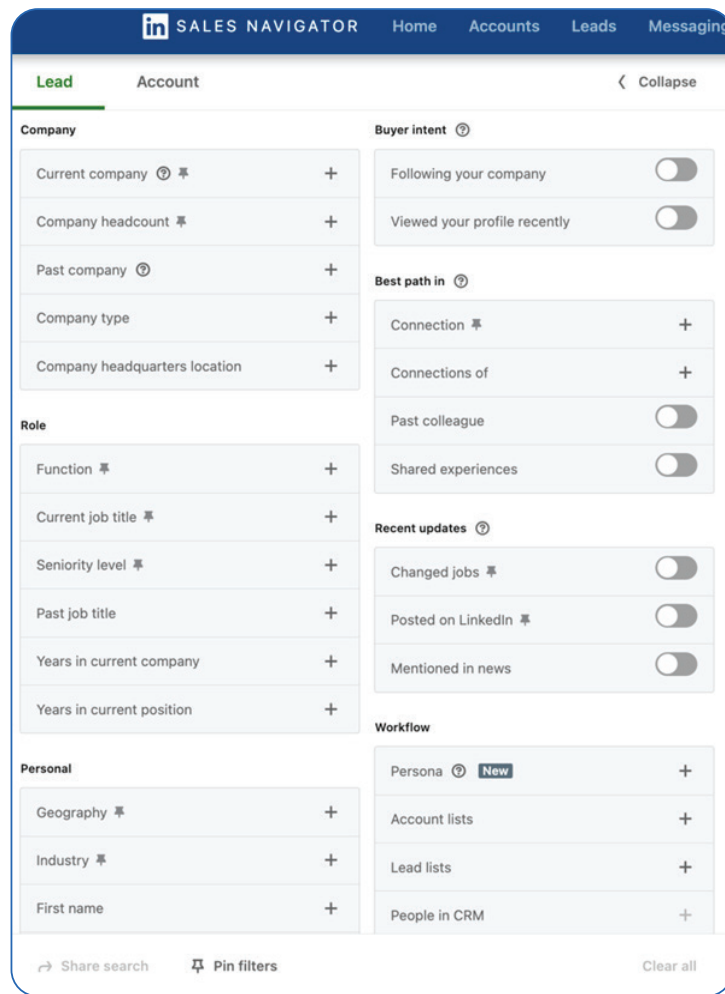
The key is to now refine these results with the previously outlined qualities from your ideal customer audit.

Two key filters to utilize are:

- ⊗ Geography (your territory)
- ⊗ Seniority Level (decisionmakers)

Additional filters on Sales Navigator include:

- ⊗ Industry
- ⊗ Company headcount
- ⊗ Current job title



Sales Navigator additional filters

Get creative and use the filters to get as specific as possible. The more closely these results match your ideal customers, the higher the quality of connections. The quality of your connections will greatly impact your success on the platform.

Once you've refined your results it's time to start connecting. From the search page, you can view profile to confirm a prospect is qualified and then send them a request.

Remember your connections are limited. Therefore, it's important to be particular with your requests and only connect with individuals who match your ideal customer criteria and are involved in the buying process.

Consistency is key. Connecting with 200 people the first week and then stopping won't produce any results. The compounding effect of building out your network every week is what generates results.

Comb through your search results and continue to iterate your keyword searches to identify new, qualified prospects. If you aren't sure of what keywords to use, look at the profiles of some of your best customers for potential keyword terms.

Not all requests will be accepted. An average connection rate within 30-50% is typical, so long as your profile is updated, professional, and not incredibly salesy.

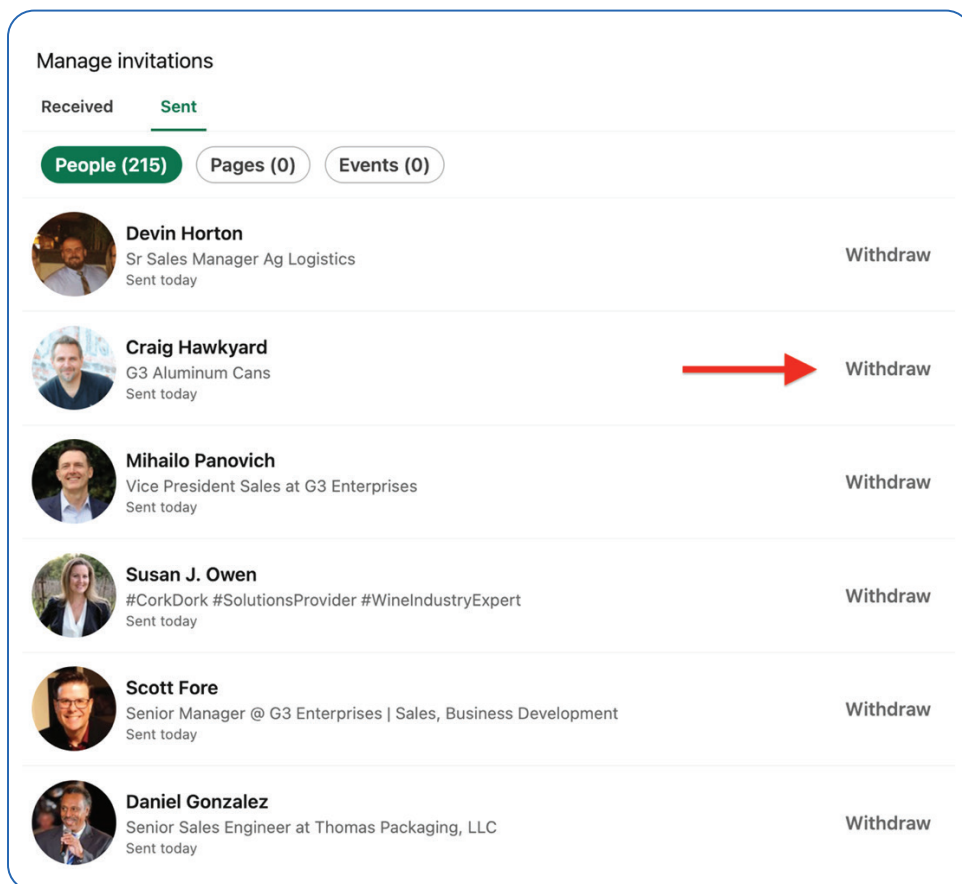
Reserve time on your schedule every week to run these searches and max out your connection requests for the week. Over time, you'll build a network of thousands of qualified prospects.

Once you've amassed an audience of qualified prospects you're able to help, it's time to speak to them.

Tip

LinkedIn's algorithm does not like to see a high volume of unanswered connection requests and can limit your weekly connections based on this.

To make the most of your connection requests, you can "withdraw" any pending requests that have gone unanswered after one week.



Withdraw connection requests by clicking "My Network" then "Manage"

II. Speaking to Your LinkedIn Audience



LinkedIn is a powerful way to build trust and credibility with new prospects, while also helping you stay top of mind with your current customers.

Many companies invest major advertising dollars in the Google and Facebook advertising platforms, hoping algorithms will deliver their message to the right audience of prospects.

In contrast, LinkedIn allows you to market directly to your hyper-targeted ideal customers for free, so long as you're willing to spend the time to strategically build out your network.

The next step is to post highly valuable and relevant content so you can market to this network.

The quality of your content is critical as this will define your personal brand. Through your posts, cold prospects will over time recognize you as an authority in your space. This builds an initial level of trust and understanding for you and your products.

When posting on LinkedIn, your message should always have a purpose. The purpose can be to inform, promote, or to entertain, with an emphasis on the former two options.

For example, you won't get much traction by posting a shamrock gif, wishing everyone a Happy Saint Patrick's Day.

Yet this is the content we consistently find while scrolling through the news feed.

By posting quality content, your aim is to stand out from the field by sharing value-added insights that prospects can actually benefit from.

Because you spent time outlining your ideal customers on the forefront, you are acutely aware of who your new connections are, what keeps them up at night, what questions they need answered, and how you can help them.

With your customer in mind, you will share information based on your unique experience in the industry. A marketing technology firm ran a study that found B2B buyers consume an average of 13 pieces of content before selecting a vendor. This is why highly specific and relevant content is critical in today's buyer's journey.

The quality of your posts will allow you to gradually build trust and credibility within your given market. This is the process of building a brand for yourself online.

"But what do I share?" one of the biggest stumbling blocks for salespeople is coming up with ideas for content.

The simplest answer is to look for inspiration throughout your workday. Gary Vaynerchuck's book *Crush It!* has a helpful concept of "documenting content" rather than "creating content".

Meaning, reflect on some of the ways you've been able to help your customers throughout your career and document them on LinkedIn for others to learn from.

Keep LinkedIn in mind after your real-world customer conversations and think "could the information I just shared with my customer benefit others?" If yes, you have a perfect topic for a LinkedIn post.

When posting, don't hold anything back. Pull back the curtain and spill the beans. The more inside insight you can expose, the more valuable people perceive it to be and the more trust you'll gain.

Resist the urge to self-promote in every post. This is important in order to maintain credibility.

A majority of posts on LinkedIn today are pseudo-ads, salespeople posting deliveries and sharing company promotions. This creates a lot of noise on the platform that a majority of people will scroll past. These posts don't bring much value to the everyday prospect.

The more objective and genuinely helpful you can be, the more impactful your posts and the more trust you'll build. You'll breakthrough some of the noise on the platform. As a general rule of thumb, less than one third of your posts should be self-promotional.

Content Format

Video content is most compelling and will have the biggest impact in terms of views and engagement.

That said, you don't need a whole production crew to start recording videos. Often, the more "organic" the better. Meaning, all you need to do is flip your phone camera around and start sharing your message. These videos are perceived as authentic and can really drive engagement to the post.

If sharing a video to thousands sounds terrifying, don't overlook the value of well-written text with a personal photo.

The more personalized the better (ie. Your face in the photo). If you're camera-shy, you need to push yourself to be uncomfortable. "People buy from people" and this is the way to market yourself online.

Over time, you'll get more comfortable with posting yourself online. Once you start seeing results, any hesitation will be an afterthought.

The length of the posts can vary based on the purpose. At times, you may be able to deliver your message in just a few sentences, while others may require a longer format.

A note on "delivery day" posts – these are great for social proof and to highlight recent wins. That said, they are starting to flood the news feed and every sales rep says about the same thing. If you're sharing a delivery day post, put in the extra effort to make the post stand out and actually have a purpose.

Example – Post a mini-case study by briefly telling your customer's story. Highlight the before and after and how the machine will take their business to the next level. Why did they choose that machine? Ask your customer if they would say a few words and record a quick testimonial on your phone. Capture their excitement as the rigger pulls up to the building. This only needs to be a 10 second clip, but getting the real-time testimonial would be 100x more powerful than a simple delivery post with a photo of the machine on the floor.

They say people make decisions with emotion and then justify with logic afterwards. A video testimonial from delivery day can be a powerful way to document and tap into emotional influence.

Always remember your audience of qualified prospects. As Dale Carnegie once said “everyone’s always tuned into WIIFM -What’s in it for me?”.

One strategy is to ask yourself “so what”? Put yourself in the shoes of the target audience who will be scrolling their feed. What does this mean to them and how can it help them?

In the early days of Amazon, Jeff Bezos left an empty chair in the conference room and visualized the customer sitting in their meetings. This way, all decisions were weighed with the customer in mind. Use this same visualization with your ideal customer when posting content on LinkedIn.

The Power of Leverage

Most salespeople don’t recognize the power of leverage. Imagine cloning yourself 2,000 times over and sending this “army of you” into the marketplace in order to generate more business.

You can only work so many hours, drive so many miles, and see so many customers in person.

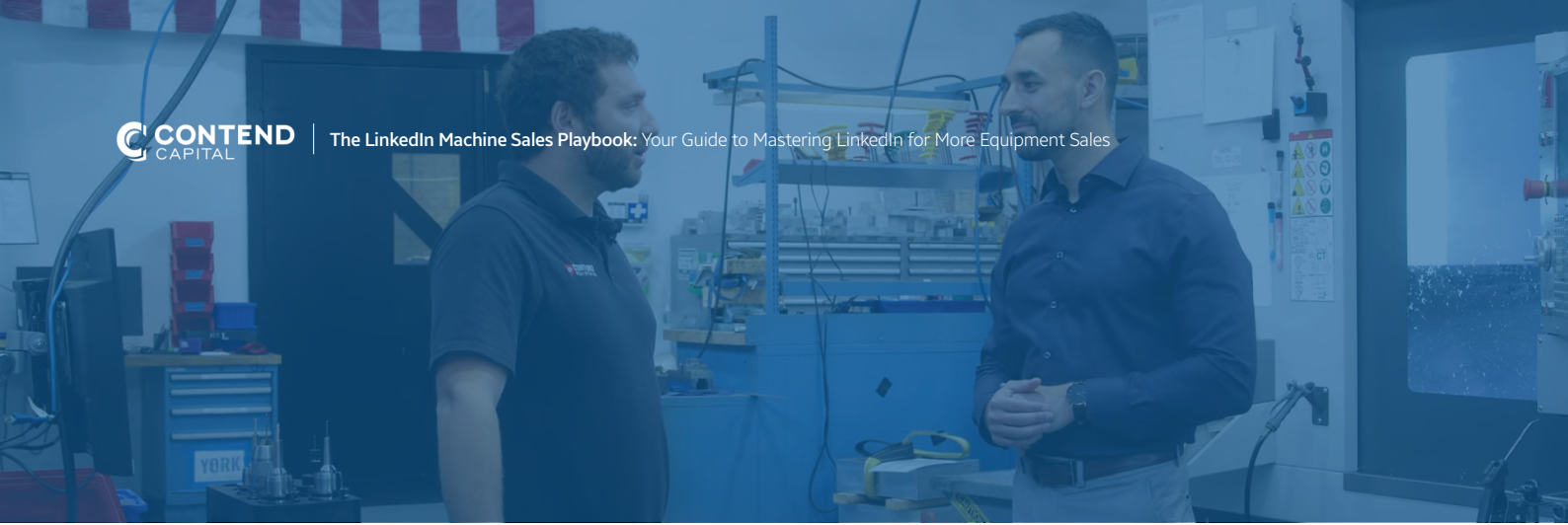
The ability to be omnipresent with your prospects at scale is the true power of LinkedIn. With the right effort, LinkedIn will add leverage to your business development activity, outside of the 1:1 effort (one call, one customer). This is because your one piece of content will show to thousands of prospects.

To tap into this leverage, set a goal to post once a week and hold yourself accountable. Building a LinkedIn brand can be incredibly powerful, but it will take time to see results. Don’t let self-doubt or a “busy schedule” stop you from posting. Reserve time every week for your posts.

After a few weeks, push yourself to turn up the volume to 2-3x a week. The key balance is increasing the quantity without jeopardizing the quality of the posts. Always ask yourself “What is the purpose of this post” “Why is it important?” and “Who would get value from seeing this?”

Tip

LinkedIn has a “schedule post” feature which allows you to draft posts and schedule them to automatically post later on. Use this feature to “batch process” multiple pieces of content on a Sunday and schedule them for distribution throughout the week.



Measuring Success

As you post you'll receive instant feedback from likes and comments on the platform.

When people engage with your post, it's a nice feeling of validation. That said, this isn't Instagram or TikTok, so our end goal is not to collect likes and feel pretty. Therefore, this isn't an accurate scoreboard to measure your success.

Rather, the more important metric to watch is "Impressions". **Impressions is the total number of exposures to your content, meaning the number of times people have seen it.**

Your posts will regularly receive thousands of impressions. If you've followed step one and built your network out properly, a majority of these impressions will be from qualified prospects in your territory.

Meaning, you now speak to thousands of qualified prospects with one post. Compared to individual calls or emails, your input is the same (one message) with 1000x output. This type of leverage is what makes LinkedIn a secret weapon for salespeople.

While only a few people may acknowledge the post through likes and comments, there are thousands of others consistently viewing your content.

So don't be surprised when your customers mention "I see you everywhere on LinkedIn" or your connections begin to reach out seemingly out of the blue.

Of those reach outs, you'll begin to see more leads and opportunities. If you've shared value added content and branded yourself as an expert in the space, it's only a matter of time before connections ask for your help.

Through the above consistent and deliberate action, LinkedIn will produce a return in terms of new business. If you take the time to cultivate the platform, it will serve as a highly effective channel for machine sales.

The best part is, your results will compound as you establish new connections, post more content, and build your brand. So long as you continue to put quality effort into the platform, you'll reap the perpetual rewards.

Log-Off

Once you've sent your connections and posted/scheduled your posts on LinkedIn, log off immediately.

This is an important step in terms of getting the most out of the platform, while blocking out the bad.

LinkedIn is a very effective social media platform for business, but it's still a social media platform. By nature, it's designed to keep you engaged by mindlessly scrolling and consuming content.

This can be very dangerous if you're spending valuable hours throughout the day distracted on the newsfeed. You may feel "productive" because it's business content, but the reality is, you're wasting your time.

Be a creator and not a consumer. This means, post what you need to post, send your connection requests, and then immediately log off.

Don't dabble and get sucked into comments on a controversial post, or let your attention get mis-directed.

Below are three helpful ways to combat distraction:

⌚ **Don't download the phone application – You don't need it.**

You can do everything (connect, post, message, etc.) from the desktop login of LinkedIn. Keeping the app on your phone is asking for trouble as it will lure you back in when your mind is idle.

⌚ **If you must download the phone application, turn off all notifications.**

Don't interrupt a work meeting or family dinner with a notification stating John Smith is celebrating 34 years at Honeywell. Make sure your notifications are completely off.

⌚ **Schedule LinkedIn sessions.**

Once you start posting, you'll be tempted to check for likes and comments every few hours. Don't do it. Schedule time each day to work on LinkedIn and stay disciplined so you can go about your day and perform your other sales responsibilities.

Conclusion



With the right action, LinkedIn can be an incredibly powerful tool for machine sales.

In the modern work environment where it's typical to work all hours of the day, putting thousands of miles on your car while trying to keep up with an overflowing inbox of emails, we simply can't be physically everywhere at once.

Fortunately, LinkedIn helps us extend the reach our of our "digital presence" through the high leverage activities of making quality connections and sharing valuable content. With these concepts aligned, you will benefit from a consistent flow of new business opportunities within your territory.

Hopefully you've found this guide helpful in building your LinkedIn strategy. If you have additional questions on implementing any these concepts, feel free to contact me directly, via [LinkedIn](#).

All the best,

Greg Paldino

[Contend Capital](#)

P.S: Volume II of "The Machine Marketing Playbook" is in the works. This will cover how to find more machine buyers outside of LinkedIn. In tandem with the LinkedIn Playbook, you won't have any trouble acquiring new customers if you follow the steps in both guides. If you'd like to receive a copy, message me on LinkedIn to join the waitlist.

