

# Utilizing online social networking sites

Business



Social Networking is the most common method of communication in individuals of all ages in today's generation. These sites help individuals with common interests and experiences achieve the personal and business relationships quite easily and inexpensively. These social networking sites are becoming more popular, therefore, more relevant and useful to persons. Most users of these websites tend to visit their favorite network website regularly just to get the latest updates from friends or their professional groups. LinkedIn is among the most popular Social and Professional networking website. It allows its users to search for jobs, find consultants, business partners and employers to find potential employees with over 70 million registered users in its domain. The social and professional networking sites are ideal for business. They have a variety of specifically designed features that appeal to professionals, who want to advance their careers and, improve their contact list. Another service allows one to add contacts they know and also seek out others using the site in order to establish working relationships.

One can also see how other members are associated to him. It is possible to refer a user to your contacts or be referred to other users by your contacts. Many recruiters use these websites to advertise job vacancies and, this makes it easier for one to search for their positions with ease. As a job seeker, one only needs to create an account with your education, qualifications, current work, any previous positions, your complete skill set and abilities. For new applicants with no experience of using the site, there is always an online training tutorial in order to improve your skills.

The three reputable LinkedIn groups under Information Technology are, Information Technology: Networking, Forum and Jobs, Information Technology (IT) – Job & Career Network, and HealthCare Information Technology. The group meetings are held a number of times in a year depending on the member's preferences. They organize a group meeting inviting all the group members for professional and motivational talks or seminars. They announce the meeting, the venue and time within the group page or the discussion forums. LinkedIn group training is also available within the site. The groups provide these services to the group members.

That is why LinkedIn is the best tool for a business and a professional. The groups are excellent place to find and connect with potential business contacts. Groups like Information Technology: Networking, Forum and jobs; offers the training services. What happens is a group member advertises of the training so that people can enroll to do it. For example, within the mentioned group Anuja Buch invites others for Java training services that are in house, On-site corporate, or Web based.

. The training offered by these groups, for professional business, focus on opportunities available for this people. LinkedIn group professional training can be accessed online or physical and on the real-time basis. The training within a group is based on individual category, for example, IT Training, managerial training and so many others. Both the online and physical training are excellent.

By discovery, most of these social networks are used as a recruitment agency for most employers. They are an excellent tool in recruiting.

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However, with this activity there are some challenges and advantages. One main concern is the validity and reliability of candidate information.

According to Lyubenko (2010), these social networks comprise of similar individuals and employees refer people they know with same characteristics and skills. This could expose the organizations to discrimination.

During the study carried by Lyubenko, there are several advantages and disadvantages of recruiting using social networking sites. As an employee or employer, one needs to use LinkedIn community well in order stay connected with other human services professionals. There are several ways of doing this effectively. The first way is, filling the profile, using widgets and publishing your LinkedIn URL on all the marketing collateral for clients to learn more about the business. The second method of growing your network is joining groups and industries related to the nature of your business. The third way is updating your status and linking it with other social accounts like Twitter or Facebook. Link your activities or answers to questions with other accounts and this will market the business services or products to other clients. The fourth point is starting groups and fan pages for your company or brand. It is also advised to share information that is useful and of interest to clients and prospects. From your customers, it is advised to request LinkedIn recommendations from them as a testimony, for other clients to see.

The fifth point is, use LinkedIn on a regular basis. It is also advisable to set up an alert to receive notifications in your email, when new messages are sent in order to respond immediately. If other social sites are used often than

LinkedIn, then export your contacts to those sites. The sixth way useful to a recruiter is posting job listing so that qualified candidates are found.

According to a freelance journalist, Terry, these social websites sites not only allow one to post work experience, but also allow connecting to other professional persons. One only needs to contact them in their profile page or through a shared connection.

LinkedIn is commonly known as an ideal social network site for businesses to promote themselves, look for talented candidates, get business software or receive training from experts and get friendly professionals. Other than Social networking websites, companies have access to other telecommunication tools in their daily business activities. The most essential tool is a landline, which is used for taking calls and receiving inquiries from clients. The Second tool is mobile phones. Today's mobile phones can be used to send messages, email and surf the internet. Another telecommunication tool is audio conferencing.

It allows businesses to carry out meetings over the phone. The fourth tool is Voice Over IP, where calls are made but over the internet. An example is the use of Skype to make calls. VOIP is cheap compared with the traditional phones. The Fifth tool and the most common one is email. Through email, employees can communicate and share files within the organization.

The last method is instant messengers that allow employees to communicate instantly with their colleagues, which is also known as IM clients. Businesses and professionals depend on communication for most of their business operations. This ranges from communicating sensitive information to

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instantly sending critical information. Technology is there and, it still is evolving. They come with their advantages and disadvantages, but it everyone's duty to embrace the technology and use it to their benefit.