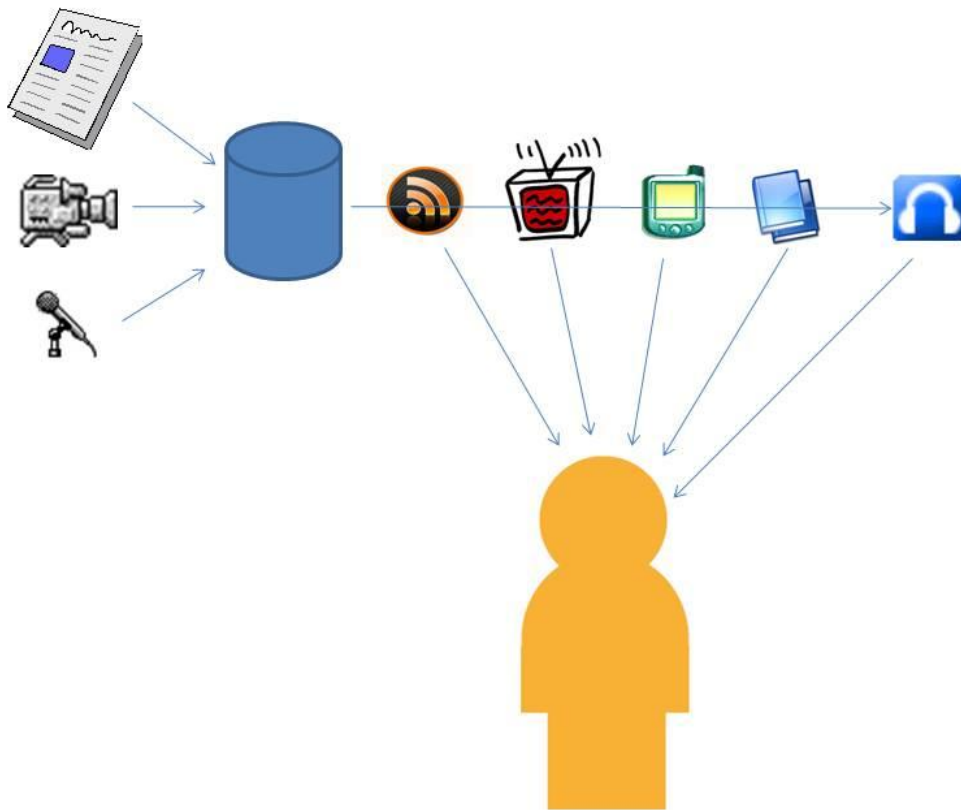


Market Successfully In Today's Interactive Environment

[A My Creative Team White Paper](#)



Your Social Media Attack Plan

In our blog, we have previously talked about the [strategic and tactical nature of social media](#) and we looked at [some social media questions](#) the marketer needs to ask as he plans his approach. Today, let's summarize and put together a simple approach to your social media attack plan.

Research – look at all the options available and determine which is right for you: [wikis](#), [blogs](#), [forums](#), [social networks](#), [social bookmarking](#), [product reviews](#), and multimedia sites like [Flickr](#) and [Youtube](#).

Goals - are you developing a social media plan for brand building, reputation management, customer service, or community building? Don't try to do all of these at once unless you have a team assisting you. Otherwise, you will be overwhelmed. Once you have decided upon one of these, set clear, definable and measurable goals.

Define Audiences – who is your social media program for: employees, customers, strategic allies? What are their interests, ages, gender? Once you define your target then go find them online. Professionals may be on [LinkedIn](#), IT folks may be on [Twitter](#), musicians on [MySpace](#) and your college friends may be on [FaceBook](#).

Measurement - We mentioned goal-setting, such as brand building. Whatever your goals, they must be achievable, aligned with business objectives, and measurable. Melissa Barker talks in a recent blog post about [setting measurable goals](#). She says:

The challenge for some of these goals, such as engaging with consumers, is to make them specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART). In addition, objectives must be established for each type of social media platform in order to maximize results. The following are examples of SMART goals for four popular social media platforms: blogs, microblogs (Twitter), social networking sites, as well as image and video sharing sites.

There are a number of measurement points that make sense for your business. They include:

- Growth in number of followers
- Number of interactions (comments, retweets, shares)
- Blog post ratings
- Website/blog visits from social media

- Conversion rate
- Time spent on site
- Bookmarks
- Feedback
- Use of coupons, promotions delivered by social media

One final thought on goals. Don't just measure and report something for the heck of it. I've had clients who requested monthly reports on things that have no material effect on the success of the program. They just wanted to know that we were spending the "appropriate" amount of time on their account. Make sure what you are measuring aligns with the business objectives you have set for your program.

Tactical Plan – Here's where the rubber meets the road. You are probably not going to have unlimited internal and external resources, so may we suggest that you select three things and do them well. This means focusing your efforts on the three elements that you believe will have the most impact upon your organization.

1. Determine who will perform the tactical aspect of your plan.
2. Get organizational buy-in to ensure that it does dovetail with the appropriate business objectives, and that you'll have the support for program implementation.
3. Then, ensure that your social media program is [integrated with your existing marketing program](#).

Are You LinkedIn?

Twitter and Facebook seem to get all the glory when it comes to social networks, but LinkedIn - with its network of more than 80 million professionals - can be a very important component in any B2B company's business development program. We won't go into detail here on what LinkedIn is, but [here's LinkedIn's explanation](#) of what the platform is about.

In our view, the top uses of LinkedIn for a B2B organization - not necessarily in this order - are:

1. Advertising
2. Branding
3. Business Development

4. Event Promotion

5. Marketing/Sales

6. Recruiting

Let's look at how to set up a LinkedIn account and a LinkedIn company profile page.

First, go to [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com) and sign up for a personal account. This is free, but there are [paid options](#) if you want to consider them

Next, you'll want to complete your profile fully. In essence, it is an online resume and it's important to do this thoughtfully, using keywords and phrases that apply to you and your business. As an owner, you may not be looking for a job, but you are looking to connect with a wider range of people, so fill out the section on hobbies and interests, as well. If you want a step-by-step walk through, [here is a good overview](#).

Your personal account has been established, so let's create a LinkedIn company profile page. This page allows you to publish a company description, a link to your website, and LinkedIn's platform dynamically generates your employee list.

Here are a few examples of company pages if you'd like to take a look before creating your own: [eBay](#), [Google](#), [Yahoo!](#), [Oracle](#).

Now, let's fill out your company profile page. You must have a verified company email address in order to set up the company profile page. By that I mean you can't use a gmail or hotmail account. Once established, you can allow others from your company the ability to administer the account.

Go to the [Company page](#) on LinkedIn. Look to the right of the page. You'll see "Add A Company". Click on that and you'll be taken to a page where you enter the name of the company and your company email address. Since you have already set up your personal page, you'll be taken directly to a page where you can start filling in the profile for your company immediately. An online wizard walks you through all the information you may enter.

When you are finished with the page, you'll click the "Create A Company" button to make it public. Don't worry if you haven't uploaded your logo yet, or left out some key details, you or another employee can come back to edit later.

LinkedIn Advertising

Why should you care about LinkedIn's ad platform? Well, there are 80 million LinkedIn users worldwide; 1.5 million C-level executives; 1.3 million small business owners; 32 million US users. So, I'm thinking you might be able to find an audience here for your organization's message.

[LinkedIn](#) offers a number of ways to reach your audience. There are [display ad](#) options and [sponsorships](#), which are for those with larger budgets.

However, it is the recently improved [self-serve advertising product](#) we'll focus on. This allows companies to create and place highly targeted ads on pages throughout the LinkedIn platform. Your ad can be created quickly to show up on Profile pages, the home page, the inbox page, search results page and on group pages, too.

One of the improvements to LinkedIn's ad platform lets you target by current job title, which helps you build a more precise audience. You can have as many as 100 job titles in a single campaign.

Additionally, you can target:

- By company name
- By LinkedIn groups
- By geography
- By job function and seniority
- By industry and company size
- By gender and age

LinkedIn allows you to pay by clicks or impressions. Your budget may be as little as \$10 per day and you can stop your ads at any time because there are no long-term contracts. For additional information on LinkedIn ads, this [FAQ page](#) answers all of your questions.

Is LinkedIn advertising effective? Here is a [test done by eConsultancy](#) that gives you some data on how LinkedIn performed for them. I have to admit that I'm not completely sold on LinkedIn yet. Users don't stay on the platform very long at any one time and they are not yet used to seeing the small PPC ads.

LinkedIn Branding

Just as LinkedIn offers you an opportunity to build your personal brand, it also provides companies the platform from which to tell their brand story with the [Custom Company Profile](#). You'll find My Creative Team's [LinkedIn Company Profile](#) here.

I would argue that the best way to build the brand you want is to [hire the right people](#). LinkedIn – with its focus on helping people find the right job – is a great place to do just that. Here, you have the chance to showcase the kind of company you are and the kinds of people you have attracted in the past.

And, [according to Mashable](#), the Careers tab allows you to provide applicants with,

...targeted content, better visibility, and more modules. The new and improved company profiles allow for businesses to display relevant career-specific information within its own tab. So now instead of all the company's information jammed on to one page, a job seeker can click the Careers tab to quickly get a tailored view of your online career center.

If you haven't completed your LinkedIn company profile, you need to get to it. Here is an article from [Social Media Examiner](#) about how to do it, as well as information about some of the new features recently unveiled.

LinkedIn Business Development

business development – *n* : business function focused on strategy, creating strategic partnerships and long-term relationships with suppliers and customers. The business development function within a business can be thought of as a jack-of-all-trades position focused on strategic deal-making with an eye toward increasing sales and expanding the company's long-term business success or scope.

Based on the above definition, LinkedIn is the perfect business development platform. How so? Let's say you have an idea for a strategic partnership that would be mutually beneficial to your company and the partner organization you have identified. But you don't know anyone at the company. Here's how [LinkedIn says to proceed](#):

- Performing a [People Search](#) will quickly find the right person at the company and determine who you know in common for a warm Introduction. If this isn't possible, you also have the option to reach out directly via an InMail.
- While reading an article on partner sites (such as [Business Week](#), [CIO](#), etc) you can immediately see how your network can help you get access to that company to discuss an opportunity using Company Insider. Click the icon to see who you're connected to at LinkedIn.
- Viewing your [counterpart's profile](#) can help bridge the gap by providing mutual contacts, background, recommendations, etc.

The above is probably the most often used LinkedIn technique for business development, but there are a couple of other ways to use it. Let's say you have an idea to develop a profit-sharing arrangement that is common in certain industries but not in yours. You can search LinkedIn to find relevant contacts at companies in those industries, so you can reach out to ask them how the arrangement worked for them. Or, consider using Answers to get your questions addressed.

LinkedIn has some pretty powerful business development tools for those willing to do the work. Below are links to additional information on LinkedIn and social media.

[LinkedIn Event Promotion](#)

[LinkedIn Sales](#)

[LinkedIn Recruiting](#)

[Profiling Your Customer](#)

[10 Helpful Social Media Tools](#)

[Demographics In Social Media Networking](#)

[Defining Good Goals](#)

[How To Set Social Media Goals](#)

[Social Media Measurement Checklist](#)

[Marketers Spending On Social Media For Wrong Reasons](#)

About My Creative Team

My Creative Team is a Huntersville, NC-based network of highly experienced and talented independent professionals that gives clients better work that's a better value. The ad agency delivers great work, on time and on target, and that makes the client look good.

Services include turnkey website development and promotion, presentation development, email marketing programs, pay-per-click advertising, advertising, media planning and buying, PR, and video production. Clients range from Irwin Industrial Tool, Momentive Performance Materials and National Gypsum to Nucor and Rubbermaid.

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