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A Daily Game Plan for Keeping Active on LinkedIn

By Erin Tamberella and Rick Wright

It's no secret that many potential and existing clients can be heavy social media users, and one of their top social networks is LinkedIn. Build a system that will lead to quality connections.

Most CPAs are on LinkedIn—but many don't know where to go from there. Most have a profile with hundreds of connections, but few actively post on the social network. Yet studies show that over 90% of high-net-worth investors and 85% of small businesses interact on social media and use it to assist them in making financial decisions.

Small business owners, executives, and other niches actively seek out information, e.g. market and economic trends, commentary, new product information, and company background. LinkedIn can be an amazing tool for building and nurturing new and existing relationships. It is also one of the most powerful platforms for building credibility and establishing yourself as a knowledgeable expert. But where do you begin?

Social media is just that—social, which means it's a contact sport that requires daily commitment and engagement on

your part. Begin by determining in advance how much time you're willing and able to devote to LinkedIn each day. It is a process, and just as in real life, online relationships take time to build. However, because everyone is on LinkedIn for the same reason—business—it allows you to be more direct in your interactions.

To be successful on LinkedIn, you must develop a system for taking full advantage of the tools it offers. A daily to-do list will help to drive you toward LinkedIn success. These are some of the results-oriented tasks you will want to include on your to-do list.

1. PLAN YOUR WEEKLY POSTS A WEEK IN ADVANCE. (1 HOUR PER WEEK)

Plan on posting something of value six days per week and include Saturday. People generally have more time to spend on LinkedIn on the weekends, so capitalize on that by posting content on Saturday. Over time, regular and consistent posting of valuable content establishes your credibility and expertise.

Every Friday, review and choose your firm's articles and reports that you want to post the following week. Preschedule your posts to go out each day so everything is automated. It's far more efficient and a real time-saver when you choose content once a week rather than trying to decide what to post each day.

Put yourself in your client's place and determine what information you think clients and prospects would perceive as most valuable. Remember, business owners and high-level executives look for data on market and economic trends, commentary, new product information, company background, and product performance.

2. LINKEDIN GROUPS ARE A POWERFUL TOOL. ENGAGE! (10 MINUTES PER DAY)

Look for the groups where your clients and prospects are likely to be, not where other CPAs are. Then make a list of your groups to refer to each day. When you post on LinkedIn, start discussions in the groups you belong to by sharing the post in your various groups.

3. READ AND COMMENT ON CONTENT POSTED BY YOUR CONNECTIONS AND IN YOUR GROUPS. (15 MINUTES PER DAY)

This is the “social” in social media.

4. SEND A THANK-YOU MESSAGE TO ANYONE WHO CONNECTS TO YOU. (5 MINUTES PER DAY)

It's also very important to comment back to anyone who comments on your posts and send a thank-you message to anyone who “likes” something you have posted.

5. LOOK TO SEE WHO'S VIEWED YOUR PROFILE AND SEND A MESSAGE TO EACH PERSON WHO DID. (5 MINUTES PER DAY)

Thank them for stopping by and ask them to connect with you. Include a few words about the content you post, giving them a good reason to connect.

6. SPEND SOME TIME EACH DAY REVIEWING YOUR SECOND-DEGREE CONNECTIONS. (15 MINUTES PER DAY)

Make note of people you might want an introduction to, whether that be via LinkedIn or offline.

7. DEVELOP YOUR OWN LINKEDIN DRIP SYSTEM. (10 MINUTES PER DAY)

By spending just an hour a day, you can start to harness the power of LinkedIn to broaden your reach, build and nurture relationships, and establish yourself as the knowledgeable expert you are. An hour may seem like a big time commitment, but it's really not hard to find that time. Besides, successful marketing is a marathon, not a sprint. Commit to your LinkedIn hour first thing every morning.

What will be the ROI on your hour a day? At first, probably nothing. Remember it's not a miracle. It's a process. However, if you are consistent, what usually happens is after a few weeks, you start to see a couple of people “liking” your posts, and you may even receive a comment here and there. Consider these

your LinkedIn building blocks. Use these opportunities to nurture relationships with business owners, business associates, your niche, and clients.

If you commit the time, LinkedIn can become a powerful addition to your business development

activities. All it takes is a system, some discipline, and an hour a day.

Erin Tamberella and Rick Wright are managing partners of the coaching firm Executive Transformations and authors of the book "Plateau to Pinnacle: 9 Secrets of a Million Dollar Financial Advisor," released in January 2015.