



Grow With Confidence



A Crawl-Walk-Run Guide to Marketing on LinkedIn for Small Businesses

You're doing the job of three people with a fraction of the budget. Every dollar has to work, and every hour matters. Use this guide to build a LinkedIn marketing strategy that grows with you—no matter your budget or resources.

Why use LinkedIn for marketing?

You don't have budget to waste on platforms where your buyers aren't paying attention. LinkedIn is different—and it's built for businesses like yours.

Here's the reality:

Your buyers are on LinkedIn when they're thinking about business problems. They're not scrolling mindlessly—they're researching solutions, evaluating vendors, and looking for credible partners. That's your window.

LinkedIn is a fit for you if:

- You sell to businesses (or high-consideration consumer products)
- Your sales cycles involve complex decision making and influencing multiple stakeholders (a buying group).
- You need to reach specific buyers or buying groups.

LinkedIn helps small businesses grow by:

1 Reaching the right decision makers

130 million decision makers around the globe are on LinkedIn. Our targeting lets you reach them based on job title, seniority, company size, and even specific skills. That means your budget is going to people who can actually say "yes" to a deal.

2 Building credibility in a trusted environment

For B2B buyers, trust matters more than price. When your content appears alongside industry insights and thought leadership, you're not just reaching people, you're building credibility by association.

3 Capturing high-quality leads that drive real ROI

This is where targeting and trust pay off. You reach decision makers at the right companies and capture accurate data. Your pipeline is filled with leads that will convert, not cheap dead ends that waste your time.

4 Optimizing in real-time to get the most from every dollar

See what's working without spending hours in a spreadsheet, or needing to be a marketing wiz. Adjust targeting, creative, and budget on the fly to get the most out of every campaign. LinkedIn's AI helps you optimize toward your goals. **And when you're lean, that agility is everything.**

What does this mean for you?

These aren't just platform features—they're how you compete. Precision targeting, trusted context, quality leads, and real-time optimization mean you can go head-to-head with bigger competitors who have bigger budgets. You're just playing a smarter game.

Set Your Baseline

Successfully growing your business on LinkedIn comes down to understanding what works for your business before you scale it. Whether you're just getting started or ready to amplify what's working, this audit will help you identify your strongest foundation to build from.

Section 1 Do you know what success looks like for your business?

- ✓ I can describe my ideal customer(s) in 2-3 sentences
- ✓ I can explain how we'll measure success beyond "likes" or "clicks"
- ✓ I know which business outcomes matter most right now:
 - More people need to know we exist (awareness)
 - We need to build credibility with our audience (consideration)
 - We need qualified leads/conversations (conversions)

Section 2 Review your organic presence to find your strengths

About your content:

- ✓ Are you posting consistently?
- ✓ Which 3-5 posts got the most engagement in the last 30 days?
- ✓ What do they have in common? (format, topic, tone)
- ✓ Who engaged? (Are they your ideal customers or random connections?)

About your network:

- ✓ We're actively growing our Company Page followers, giving us greater reach
- ✓ We've identified our "internal thought leaders"
- ✓ Employee profiles are linked to our Company Page

About your foundation:

- ✓ LinkedIn Page is complete (logo, banner, description, CTA button)
- ✓ At least 2 people post regularly
- ✓ We've posted 8-12 times in the last month

Now, hit the ground running from the right baseline:

Define your goals and build momentum

[Jump to page 4](#)



Amplify what's working with boosting

[Jump to page 7](#)



Optimize and scale your results

[Jump to page 10](#)



CRAWL:

Build your foundation and learn what works



Organic content is your testing ground—it teaches you what resonates with your audience at no cost. Whether you’re just starting out or preparing to scale with paid, your organic content gives you an open loop to continuously learn what works, so you can invest smarter.

 2-4 hours upfront

Focus on 4 key steps:

STEP #1

Set Up Your Company Page

Make sure your LinkedIn Company Page is complete with a logo, banner image, compelling description, organization details, and call-to-action button to prompt action (such as “Request a Demo” or “Learn More”). **Pages with complete profiles get 30% and create a stronger first impression when people click through from your ads.**

Bonus:

Connect employee profiles to your Page

It amplifies your reach and adds credibility when people research your company.

Stand out and build credibility

With a Premium Company Page, you can expand your reach and stand out to decision makers. You’ll be able to auto-invite engaged prospects (and followers of similar pages) to follow your page. Plus, you’ll get exclusive placement to increase your visibility.

The result:

Small businesses who have a Premium Company Page grow their page followers

6.7x faster.¹

STEP #2

Use your organic presence as a springboard

You don't need to start from zero. Audit what's already working in your organic posts and use those insights to inform both your organic and paid content strategy.

Ask yourself:

- ✓ **What posts are getting engagement?**
Look at the last 30 days. Which got the most likes, comments, or shares? What topics, formats, or angles worked?
- ✓ **Who's connected to your target audience?**
Which team members have active profiles? Whose posts get traction from potential buyers?
- ✓ **Are you building a personal network?**
Do you have page followers?
Who's following you—are they your ideal customers? What new audiences can you grow into?

No organic presence yet?

Your company page and organic posts are critical to your credibility. Spend 4-6 weeks posting 2-3x/week from your Company Page (and encourage your employees to post, too). Track what gets engagement to gain the insights that make your paid strategy efficient. And even once you begin with paid ads, continue using your organic posts to build your presence—pages that post weekly have 6x more followers (and their followers grow 7x faster than those that post monthly).¹

As you begin posting, remember that your authenticity and expertise is your strength.

Keep these tips in mind:

- **Write like you talk**
- **Share what you know**
- **Start conversations** by asking questions
- **Be helpful, not promotional**
- **Make it easy to read** by leading with the point and using line breaks

STEP #3

Define your business outcomes

What are you trying to achieve? Pick one primary goal to start:

If you need...	Your outcome is...	You'll focus on...
More people to know you exist	Brand Awareness	Reach, impressions, followers
To build trust with your audience	Consideration	Engagement, content downloads, video views
Qualified leads or sales conversations	Conversion	Lead generation, demos, pipeline

Set yourself up for success

While it can be tempting to jump right into generating leads, most small businesses need to build awareness and trust first. You can't convert people who don't know you exist, or believe in your product. Start by nurturing your audience with organic posts. Once you see strong engagement, begin retargeting those engaged audiences with boosting, highlighting offers and content (such as a helpful guide or free consultation) to drive conversions.

STEP #4

Set KPIs and embrace a test-and-learn mindset

Identify which KPIs will help you reach your outcome, and commit to testing as you go. Every test teaches you something that will make your campaigns even stronger and more efficient.

Business outcome	KPIs to track	What to test
Brand Awareness	• Impressions • Reach • Follower growth • Engagement rate	• Industries vs job functions • Image vs video content • Thought leadership vs product posts
Consideration	• Click-through rate • Content downloads • Video completion rate • Time on site	• Different content offers • Carousel vs Document ads • Educational vs case study content
Conversion	• Lead gen form fills • Conversions • Cost per lead • Form completion rate • Lead quality/SQL rate	• Number of form fields • Different CTAs • Different retargeting segments • Gated or ungated content

You'll get the most from your "walk" when:

- ✓ You've defined your primary business outcome and KPIs.
- ✓ You have 3+ organic posts that performed well with your target audience.
- ✓ You know who your ICP is, and what topics and content resonate with them.
- ✓ Your Company Page is complete and you're growing your followers (or you're ready to boost the page itself).



WALK:

Amplify what works with Boosting



You've got content that works, an idea of your audience, and your core goals. Now it's time to reach the people who matter most to your business by amplifying what you already know works with small, low-risk bets. Boosting lets you test messaging, validate audiences, and extend your reach to grow your business.

 1-2 hours/week

Why boost?

Think of boosting as the easiest way to extend the reach of your best performing content.

In fact, users who Boost typically see 3-6x more reach (with top campaigns achieving up to 8-12x), depending on their campaign objective¹. You take a post that's already crushing it on your Company Page or from your personal page* and put a small budget behind it to reach beyond your current network. It's a real ad, shown in the LinkedIn feed, but you can create, launch, and measure it from your page.

**Boosting your personal posts is still rolling out and is not available to everyone.*

Good for:

- ✓ **Time-sensitive content**
(events, webinars, launches)
- ✓ **Testing what content works** with new audiences
- ✓ **Quick reach when you need it fast**
- ✓ **Learning your cost benchmarks**

Not ideal for:

- ✗ **Complex multi-touch campaigns**
- ✗ **Advanced audience targeting** (retargeting, first-party data attributes lookalikes)
- ✗ **Detailed conversion tracking**
- ✗ **A/B testing multiple variants**

First, choose your goal

What you boost depends on what you're trying to achieve. Match your content to your outcome:

If your goal is...	Boost this type of content	What success looks like
Brand Awareness (Objective: brand awareness)	• Thought leadership posts • Company milestones • Media mentions	• Impressions higher than organic • Follower growth accelerates • Reaching people outside your network
Consideration (Objective: engagement, website visits)	• Blog posts with insights • Case studies or customer stories • Industry reports or research	• High engagement rate • Quality comments/shares • Website traffic from target audience
Consideration (Objective: website visits, lead gen)	• Event/webinar announcements • Product launches • Content with clear CTAs	• Registrations or sign-ups • Form fills or demo requests • Direct business impact

Build your audience the right way

This is where it's easy to stumble. Too narrow and you'll barely reach anyone. Too broad and you'll waste your budget on people who'll never buy.

Zero in on the right audience by using 5 targeting attributes

The Formula:

Job Function

+

Job Seniorities

+

Industry

+

Profile location

+

Language

Don't forget—exclusions are just as important when it comes to targeting your audience. Filter out titles, locations, company sizes and industries you know aren't a good fit for your business.

Example 1:

"Marketing Managers" (job title + function) + "Financial Services" (industry) + "NYC (location)" + "NYC" (profile location) + "English" (language)

Example 1:

"Directors" (seniority) + "Engineering" (job function) + "Companies with 50-200 employees" (company size) + "Software" (industry) + "San Francisco" (location)

Example 1:

"Operations" (job function) + "Manufacturing" (industry) + "Companies with 201-500 employees" (company size) + "Chicago Metro Area" (location)

Hit the Boosting audience size sweet spot

Use the forecast panel in the boosting interface to see estimated reach. If it says “limited delivery” or your audience is under 50K, broaden your targeting.

Audience size	What this means	What to do
Under 10K	Too narrow— limited delivery means lower ROI	Remove one targeting criteria or broaden it
10K-50K	Workable but small— keep an eye on ROI	Good for very niche audiences or retargeting
50K-500K ★	Sweet spot— efficient and focused	Start here for most campaigns
Over 500K	Probably too broad— wasted impressions	Add another attribute to narrow it down

You'll get the most from your “run” when:

- ✓ You've boosted 5+ posts and see clear patterns in what works.
- ✓ You know which audiences engage most with your content (Pro tip: Discover your trends on your Analytics Page).
- ✓ You're ready to drive incremental results with advanced strategies

Need step-by-step help?

For detailed instructions on how to boost a post, check out [LinkedIn Marketing Labs](#) for walkthroughs and tutorials.



R U N :

Grow your business with smart investments



You've learned what resonates and you're seeing results from boosting. Now it's time to make every dollar and every hour work even harder.

This section shows you how to refine your strategy, test smarter, and scale what's working—all without needing advanced tools or a big budget.



2-3 hours/week

Build a retargeting engine

Your best ROI comes from people who already know you. Create a simple three-stage system that warms up potential customers and guides them toward conversion.

THE STRATEGY

Start broad to build awareness, then retarget engaged audiences with progressively stronger calls to action.



STEP #1

Build awareness (weeks 1-4)

What to boost:

Educational content that addresses your audience's pain points or aspirations—not sales pitches. This can come from your Company Page or from your founder and key team members' personal profiles.

Who to target:

Your ideal customer profile.



Why boost personal posts?

When prospects see the real people behind your business sharing their expertise and point of view, it builds credibility and connection in ways corporate content can't. Member boosting helps you reach your target audience with that authentic voice.

Content ideas & hooks:

- “5 mistakes [your ICP] makes when [tackling their challenge]”
- “What [industry leaders] get wrong about [topic]”
- “The hidden cost of [common pain point]”
- “Why [conventional wisdom] doesn't work anymore”
- Quick tips or frameworks (e.g., “The 3-step framework we use to...”)

What success looks like:

People engaging, commenting, clicking through.

STEP #2

Earn credibility (weeks 5-8)

What to boost:

Content that builds credibility and shows how you solve problems such as case studies, product explainers, and customer testimonials.

Who to target:

People who engaged with your awareness posts or have visited your website.

What success looks like:

People spending time reading your content or visiting your site.

Content ideas & hooks:

- “How [customer name] achieved [impressive result]”
- “Behind the scenes: How we [solve specific problem]”
- “The difference between [your approach] and [typical approach]”
- “What it actually takes to [achieve desired outcome]”
- Before/after stories or transformations

EARN YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS' TRUST

This stage is about building trust, not closing deals. Give your audience valuable content— templates, exclusive insights, or tips—to prove you know your stuff before asking for anything in return.



STEP #3

Drive conversions (weeks 9-12)

What to boost:

Content with clear next steps such as webinar invitations, free consultations, product demos, or valuable resources that help prospects take action and connect with you directly.

Who to target:

People who have engaged with your consideration posts, downloaded key pieces of content, or visited key web pages (such as a product page).

Content ideas & hooks:

- “Get a free [audit/consultation/assessment]”
- “Join us for a live workshop on [solving their challenge]”
- “See how [your product] works in 15 minutes”
- “Download our [specific, valuable resource]”
- “Try [your product] free for [time period]”

What success looks like:

Leads who are a good fit for your business giving you their contact information.

MAKE IT EASY FOR CUSTOMERS TO CONVERT

Limit your forms to 3-4 fields (such as name, email, company, and a qualifier). The easier you make it for potential customers, the more conversions you’ll get.



Rinse and repeat

Once you’ve run this cycle once, start it again with new awareness content. Each cycle builds on the last, growing your warm audience over time.



Boost to learn, not just reach

You're investing real money into LinkedIn—make sure you're learning from it. What you discover about which customers engage most and what content they respond to doesn't just improve your LinkedIn results. It makes your entire marketing strategy smarter.

Run structure tests

Testing everything within a single boosted post at once tells you nothing—you won't be able to track what ultimately moved the needle. Instead, only change one variable per test to find out what worked.

Here's what to test:

Test type	Example	What to measure
Audience	IT Directors vs. HR Directors	Click-through rate (CTR), cost per click (CPC)
Content format	Video vs. Single Image	Engagement rate, video completion rate
Messaging angle	Problem-focused vs. solutions-focused	CTR, conversions (CVR)
Call to action (CTA)	"Learn More" vs. "Get Started"	CTR, form fills, CVR



Embrace an always-on optimization mindset

Review this quick checklist at the end of every month to spot what's working and where to invest next.



Monthly optimization checklist

Review your top 5 performing posts and answer:

- ✓ What topics drove the most engagement?
- ✓ What content types resonated most? (e.g., thought leadership, case study)
- ✓ What formats worked best? (e.g., video, images, document)
- ✓ What CTAs drove action?
- ✓ Which job functions engaged the most?
- ✓ Which industries showed the strongest interest?
- ✓ What company sizes are most interested?

Put your LinkedIn marketing strategy into action

**You've got your roadmap.
Here's what to do right now:**

- ✓ Take the Readiness Audit ([p. 3](#)) and find your starting point
- ✓ Bookmark this guide - you'll come back to it as you grow
- ✓ Get specific help:
 - Need step-by-step walkthroughs? → Dive into our free [Marketing Lab](#) courses
 - Want inspirational ideas? → Explore our [blog](#)
 - Have questions? → Check out our [Help Center](#)

Remember:

You're not starting from scratch. You're building on the network and trust you're already establishing organically. Your paid strategy helps you go even further to grow your business.



Ready for Advanced Campaign Strategies?

If you're looking for more sophisticated targeting and measurement or want to prove ROI and how you're contributing to your business's bottom line, we can help you take it to the next level.

Download the Medium + Scaling Business Guide to learn how to:

- Scale what's working with Campaign Manager
- Build strategic campaigns with advanced targeting
- Retarget website visitors and engaged audiences
- Track conversions and revenue impact

**Download the Medium +
Scaling Business Guide**