

HOW  
TO USE  
LINKEDIN  
TO SELL  
MORE  
BOOKS



VICTORIA IPRI  
AND AUSTIN BRIGGS

# **How to Sell More Books Using LinkedIn**

*By Victoria Ipri and Austin Briggs*

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“Today, authors have an amazing advantage. Not only are there millions of bloggers whose collective audience is larger and more engaged than that of the traditional press, there are also millions of consumers who are one click away from sharing your work with their friends on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Power to the people! If you can make it easy for people to share and get excited about your book, you won’t need to spend big bucks or hope you make the list of some old newspaper no one really reads anymore.”

Michael Stelzner

*Launch: How to Quickly Propel Your Business Beyond the Competition*

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# *Introduction*

You've written a book. It's been the labor of a million cups of coffee, late nights, sweat, tears, aggravation, and possibly even the cause of some dark dreams. That was the hard part, right?

But now you want to sell the book, and you can feel the anxiety creeping in. It's as if the old monkey had moved off your back only to sell space to its family on the way out the door.

"What-ifs" start creeping in: *What if* no one likes my book? *What if* no one reads it? *What if* people do read it but then don't recommend it?

We've got some good news for you. LinkedIn, the social network, gives you access to over 200 million readers. Somewhere among those 200 million+ people are a reasonable number who will want to read what you've written and who will enjoy it. That means your marketing doesn't need to be as scary as you might think.

However, we'd be liars if we said that marketing your book through LinkedIn would be a stroll in the park. This book is designed to make the process simpler, but it can't eliminate all the effort. Ideally, we'll put that monkey's family to sleep long enough for you to start making sales, and then they'll move on for good.

Let's get started.

# *Are You Ready to Publish?*

*“If there’s a book you really want to read but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”*

Toni Morrison



Before you start marketing your work on LinkedIn, it’s a good idea to decide whether or not you’re ready to publish. Why? If you’re successful with your LinkedIn marketing, you might end up with a tidal wave of interest. That’s brilliant if you have a completed work in your hands to shield yourself with, not so brilliant if you end up drowning in enquiries but unable to turn them into money.

So let’s get started with publishing. Spend a little time researching the world of publishing. Which route are you going to take—self-publishing or publishing house? How will you ensure that your book achieves what you want it to achieve?

Start by familiarizing yourself with your niche in publishing. Which houses are out there? How do they operate? This can be found out using a little Google and a lot of bookmarking. If you don’t want to drown in information on your

browser, why not use a social bookmarking tool to do the hard work here?

Next, it's time to look at your genre in detail. Who are your competitors? What makes your work different from theirs? How do you see your book competing with their products? Most importantly, which of these other authors would it benefit you to network with? An introduction to your book from a successful author can add instant bottom line benefits, for example.

Finally, get realistic. J K Rowling didn't become a billionaire overnight. In fact, she did a lot of hard work in a coffee shop, because she couldn't afford office space. That means you want to take a long, hard look at "fame and fortune" as your short-term goal and ditch it in favor of "getting noticed." If you think about it, catching someone's eye is much easier than getting them to marry you, isn't it?

# *Understanding the LinkedIn Platform*

It's easy to build a house, if you know how. If you don't, you may find that it's *not* so easy to stand in the rubble and realize you should have gotten some help.

LinkedIn offers you the opportunity to market your book and build a solid presence. If you don't know the etiquette, or understand how to use it properly, it also offers you the opportunity for endless frustration and embarrassment.

That means, if you've never used LinkedIn before, you need to stay with us through this introduction or you could end up alone with your monkeys in the rubble of your reputation.

What is LinkedIn? It's a social network for professionals. The vast majority of people on LinkedIn are in the Business-to-Business world. They aren't on the platform to chill out with their friends. They use Facebook for that, just like everyone else. They use LinkedIn for professional networking, that is, to develop job opportunities, business opportunities, and to learn a little from other people. The good news is that these people don't tend to share pictures of kittens very often, so you can drop those from your LinkedIn marketing plan immediately.

To get started on LinkedIn, you need to register and create a profile. You can't do anything on LinkedIn without a profile, so it's always the first order of business.

Don't get caught up in the idea that a profile on LinkedIn is "just an online resume." It has the potential to be much more when it comes to marketing yourself and your products. So make sure that you take the time to fill it out completely—LinkedIn will tell you when you reach 100%. Also, be aware that LinkedIn profiles get a lot of Google love, and when someone Googles your name, it may well be your LinkedIn profile that they find first.

# *Is LinkedIn Marketing For You?*

*“The number of self-published books produced annually in the U.S. has nearly tripled, growing 287% since 2006, with 235,625 print and e titles released in 2011 . . . ”*

PublishersWeekly.com



When everyone is joining the publishing bandwagon, it means two things: (1) there are great opportunities, and (2) you’re going to have to work hard to make yourself heard with all that background noise. Remember your monkeys? You don’t have to spend your time worrying about them. You could channel that energy into motivation instead, and that might just give you the push you need to succeed.

Now, take a deep breath. There are three rules that you have to play by to make a success of LinkedIn marketing:

**Rule 1: Engage Your Audience.** If you want to be a success, you need to encourage your audience to come with

you on your journey. Take an active interest in your audience, in addition to the active interest you're taking in your book.

That can be a lot of work when you spread yourself over dozens of social networking sites. So ask yourself the question: "Is LinkedIn the right place for my book marketing?" If it is, you'll need to commit 100% to making time to talk to the people who are interested in you. Have a word with your monkeys and see if they're prepared to help motivate you on this.

**Rule 2: Get In with the "In Crowd".** You can't reach 200 million people by yourself. Don't try. What you are going to do is be selective about the people you reach out to— influencers in your field, reviewers with a sympathetic approach to new authors, etc. These people can take your work to much larger audiences.

You need to give this time. You don't become popular overnight anywhere. It takes real relationships. You eat an elephant (and probably a family of monkeys too) one bite at a time.

**Rule 3: Network.** Hang on a second—isn't LinkedIn for networking? It is, but you need a little real world credibility to make the most of your online networking. You can build a reputation solely online, but that's a long, hard struggle and there's no need to make it that much work. Get some face time with local media, local business groups, etc., and then use that to leverage additional credibility online.

Meetup ([www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)) is a great place to start, as it's the world's largest network of local groups. You can work with over 9,000 local groups or even start your own group, to build some support you can take with you onto LinkedIn.

# *Making the Magic Happen: LinkedIn Connections*

*“Traditional publishers pretty much do nil when it comes to marketing a book, unless you’re Stephen King or happen upon a hit about sparkly vampires. We have to turn to resources like social media to get the job done.”*

*Erika Napoletano,  
The Power of Unpopular*



## **If you are a LinkedIn user with a decent network:**

It’s time to reach out to your existing contacts. Are there some key people you can work with in your network already? If there are, then it’s time to reach out to them. Send 4 or 5 notes a week to reconnect with these people. It’s much easier to do this than to try and “cold call” new connections. Can you feel the monkeys quieting down as you give yourself a great head start?

## **If you have never used LinkedIn (or rarely log on to the platform):**

It's time to focus on your profile. You wouldn't buy a book with a terrible cover and blurb, would you? You wouldn't buy a million dollar house right next to a busy highway, would you? Your profile is your biggest advert, so you want to take the time to create a strong, welcoming presence that suggests your book contains valuable information for readers. Skimping on your profile tells your readers that you don't care whether they read your work or not. That's a recipe for gorillas on your back as you start marketing. No one can carry a gorilla.

Then it's time to start reaching out to people you know. Use your profile and some of LinkedIn's direct introduction tools to connect with people you know in real life—your friends, family, present and former colleagues, trade organizations you belong to, etc. These are known in the world of LinkedIn as *1<sup>st</sup> connections*.

The real magic comes after this, with *2<sup>nd</sup>* and *3<sup>rd</sup> connections*. These are the people your people know.

Sound complicated? It's not so bad. Here's how it works:

- ✓ **1<sup>st</sup> connections:** These are your fellow LinkedIn members you actually know. They are the building blocks of a much bigger network.
- ✓ **2<sup>nd</sup> connections:** These are the *1<sup>st</sup>* connections of your *1<sup>st</sup>* connections. That means, they're the people your *1<sup>st</sup>* connections actually know. They are an introduction away from you. You can ask one of

your 1<sup>st</sup> connections to help you connect with a 2<sup>nd</sup> connection and thus build relationships that are valuable to your book marketing.

- ✓ **3<sup>rd</sup> connections:** LinkedIn members to whom you are only vaguely connected, perhaps through several layers of other people's networks. These LinkedIn members may have a great impact on growing your book marketing campaign.

On LinkedIn, you are allowed to send messages to any of your 1st connections. All you need to do is use the message icon on their profile.

Traditionally, we have had 3 options for contacting a 2<sup>nd</sup> connection: (1) get an introduction to them from a 1<sup>st</sup> connection, (2) join a group they belong to and initiate contact there (we'll look at this again later), or (3) if you've paid for premium membership, you can send them an "InMail" directly.

Today, there is a 4<sup>th</sup> and pretty exciting option . . . a new LinkedIn tool that makes it really easy to not only find valuable, targeted connections but actually . . . well . . . connect!

Here's the simple 6-step process in a nutshell:

1. Visit the profile page of any one of your 1st connections. (Just pick any one — for demo purposes.)
2. Scroll down the profile page until you see the section entitled "Connections".
3. To the right of "Connections" is a magnifying glass. (Whenever you see the magnifying glass, it indicates a searchable item.)
4. Click on the magnifying glass.

5. A little window opens, into which you can type any keyword of your choice. Type in “marketing”, “finance”, “real estate”, etc. (Any criteria you wish. For demo purposes.)
6. Hit ‘enter’, and you’ll now see a complete list of your connections’ connections who use the keyword ‘marketing’ within their profiles. (Just below the word “Connections” is the number of connections meeting your criteria.)

Awesome, huh? But wait . . . there’s more!

See the little “advanced search” link? Here’s where the fun really begins.

Click on “advanced search” to sort through all of your connection’s connections based on a wide variety of criteria. For example, if you want to work for a specific company, search by company name, or search for recruiters in your industry. Want to see a list of your peers, competitively? Search using your job title and variations. The options are endless. You can even search across group members.

And here’s another tip: When you’ve identified 2nd and 3rd connections you might like to meet, differentiate yourself. Don’t send an Introduction request through LinkedIn like everyone else does. Instead:

- 1) Call your 1st connection
- 2) Inquire about the person and the relationship
- 3) Get your connection’s opinion regarding this person’s value to you.

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