

Making the most of LinkedIn

For many, LinkedIn has become the de facto tool for professional networking. It's a convenient way to stay connected to current colleagues, people who you've worked with in the past, and peers who work in similar jobs or with the same technologies that you do. This effectively creates an inventory that can be used across various jobs, personal interests, and affiliations. LinkedIn isn't only a tool for individuals however; organizations have also found ways to use the popular connections site.

Here are five ways organizations and individuals can benefit from LinkedIn:

1. Groups. What better way to keep professional members of the online community informed about products and company information than a group? LinkedIn groups function as a forum for members to have real-world conversations about products, issues, opportunities, events, and referrals of information. Here, discussions on real-world scenarios offer good information to members on topics ranging from problem-solving to company news and job opportunities.

Why not join our **CIPD SE Wales group** on LinkedIn to start networking and sharing with fellow professionals?

2. Events. LinkedIn event creation is a newer offering that allows you to create events. LinkedIn Events correspond to real events, such as tradeshow, conferences, and training events. This emerging segment will become a mechanism for events to be accessible to networks of members where professional interests align.

3. Company profiles. LinkedIn offers company profiles that can be modified by members. Companies are making it a priority to see that these descriptions, information, and company logos are used correctly on LinkedIn. Social media and marketing groups try to ensure not only that the information is accurate but also that it is the kind of information that best promotes the company. A word of warning: while LinkedIn requires a company e-mail address for contributors to be able to edit a company profile, that doesn't necessarily ensure that it is a company-authorized individual making them.

4. Jobs. LinkedIn has job information. Ensuring that your advertised positions go beyond job boards and into LinkedIn is an extra step that can use the leverage of the LinkedIn network. The beauty is that if one person is not interested in the position, the position can be referred to someone who might be a good fit for the role. This extra link can assist in finding the right candidates in a tough hiring market.

5. The price is right. Most of LinkedIn services are **free**, so why not take advantage of the extra placement? While the risk of not embracing social media for organizations is not quantified, the cost of embracing it is low.

So join today, at <http://www.linkedin.com>, it's free!