

The Source

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## Master Your LinkedIn Presence: Crafting Your Distinctive Brand

In the December 2023 edition of "The Source," we explore the art of digital self-representation and personal branding on LinkedIn, a key platform for professionals. This issue focuses on empowering readers to excel in mastering their LinkedIn presence and developing a unique personal brand.

George Brandon

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In the realm of today's interconnected professional landscape, utilizing LinkedIn is no longer just an option—it's a strategic necessity. The platform now has over 900 million members. In order to harness its potential, it is vital to comprehend how LinkedIn operates and how its algorithm plays a pivotal role in showcasing your profile.

### Decoding the Algorithm

LinkedIn's algorithm isn't just a behind-the-scenes operation—it's a dynamic force that shapes what your connections see. The algorithm, which handles billions of posts every day, considers all sorts of factors. The process has always been a bit of a mystery, but in June 2023, the algorithm underwent some key changes:

- Your connections and followers will now see your posts first
- LinkedIn will highlight more expert content
- New metrics:
  1. Relevance—the relevance of the post to a specific audience
  2. Expertise—the author's expertise in the post's subject area
  3. Engagement—the presence of "meaningful comments" from people who are historically interested in your post topic

The promise of the revised algorithm is that if you create content to a specific audience, they will see your content. The reverse is true for audiences: what they engage with is what they will see.

## Let's break down the algorithm's four-step process:

1. **Initial Filter:** Whenever you post on LinkedIn, the system scrutinizes the content, classifying it as spam, low quality, or approved.
2. **Audience Testing:** The second filter assesses the response of a sample audience to distinguish between low quality and approved content. This sample audience is tailored based on factors such as their past interactions, likes, shares, and engagements.
3. **Content Scoring:** Following the audience test, your content is scored by LinkedIn. Different user actions carry varying weights in the algorithm. A 'like' might earn your content one point, while a 'comment' could net you two.
4. **Editor Assessment:** Manual spot checks by LinkedIn employees can influence whether your post remains in the news feed.

LinkedIn's algorithm places a premium on personal connections tied to interests. But how can you improve your reach within this algorithm? Three factors stand out: your engagement rates, the relevance of your content, and the depth of your connections.

## Content Scoring

### The Relevance Score: Maximizing Your LinkedIn Visibility

LinkedIn's Relevance Score is a crucial yet often overlooked factor that significantly influences your visibility on the platform. Each member has a unique relevance score, determined by a variety of actions and engagements, which directly impacts how you rank in search results. Understanding and leveraging this scoring system can greatly enhance your presence on LinkedIn.

### Understanding the Point System

The relevance score is based on a point system, with different types of content and interactions carrying varying weights. Here's a detailed breakdown:

- **Video and Long Form Text Content (+15 points):** Combining video with long form text is highly valued, because it engages users with both visual and detailed written content. This format is especially beneficial for comprehensive explanations, storytelling, or showcasing your expertise.
- **Video and Short Form Text (+13 points):** Short form text with video is also effective. This format works well for quick insights, updates, or highlights that capture attention while providing concise information.
- **Native Video Uploads (+12 points):** Videos uploaded directly to LinkedIn, rather than shared from external platforms like YouTube or Vimeo, receive a higher score. Native videos typically have better engagement because they are more seamlessly integrated into the user experience.
- **Long Form Text Posts (+10 points):** Posts longer than three lines are valued for their potential to provide insightful, thought-provoking content. They offer more space to delve into topics and share expertise.

- **Short Form Text Posts (+8 points):** Posts under three lines are still valuable but score slightly lower. They are ideal for quick updates, engaging questions, or brief insights.
- **Articles (+5 points):** Articles published on LinkedIn demonstrate thought leadership and expertise, and contribute significantly to your relevance score.

### Engagement Metrics:

- **Comments Received (+5 points):** Comments are a strong indicator of engagement, suggesting that your content is not only being viewed but is also sparking conversation.
- **Likes Received (+3 points):** Likes are a basic form of engagement, showing appreciation or agreement with your content.
- **Shares Received (+2 points):** When your content is shared, it not only increases your reach but also adds to your relevance score.
- **Engagement From Others:**
- **Sharing Others' Content (+1 point):** Sharing relevant content from your network can also contribute to your score.
- **Liking Posts (+2 points):** Engaging with others' content by liking is a simple yet effective way to stay active and connected.
- **Commenting on Posts (+3 points):** Commenting on others' posts is highly valued, as it fosters community and dialogue.

### Strategies for Maximizing Your Score

**Diversify Your Content:** Use a mix of content types to keep your profile dynamic and interesting. Incorporate videos, long and short texts, and articles.

**Engage Regularly:** Consistently engage with your network by liking, commenting, and sharing. This not only boosts your relevance score but also helps in building meaningful connections.

**Encourage Interaction:** Create content that invites interaction, such as asking questions or sharing content that resonates with your audience.

Remember, the key to a high relevance score on LinkedIn is not just about creating content, but also about being an active and engaged member of the community. By understanding and utilizing this point system, you can significantly enhance your visibility and influence on the platform.

### Perfecting Your Profile for Impact

Embarking on the journey to refine your LinkedIn brand requires focus on five pivotal sections:

**Your Photograph:** A professional-looking photograph has been estimated to increase the number of LinkedIn views 14 times! Your photo is the first impression and as they say, a picture is worth 1000 words. Make sure it was taken recently and really looks like you. You can either gain or lose

someone's attention in seconds. Also consider adding an appropriate banner image at the top of the profile.

**Your LinkedIn Profile Heading:** This line of text just beneath your name is a critical aspect of your profile. Not all profile parts are created equal, and your headline is among the most significant. It's a focal point for searches and aims to convey succinctly what you do and your professional essence.

**Hashtags:** There is now a hashtag section as part of the profile. With the new algorithm, I recommend you make full use of this.

**LinkedIn Summary:** About Section: This section allows you to share your professional journey in a compelling manner; transform it into a narrative, showcasing your experience, expertise, and notable accomplishments. Tell your story with passion and highlight examples or stories that amplify your brand.

**Service Page:** Consider creating one to increase your chances of being found in searches.

## Unveiling Your Brand: Tips and Tricks

**Keyword Strategy:** Include keywords in your profile that reflect the skills and experiences you possess. Research reveals that repeating keywords heightens your search result ranking. Delve into your resume and see what words describe your abilities.

**LinkedIn URL:** Personalize your URL to make it more memorable. This can be a valuable addition to your business card and email signature.

**Hashtags for Reach:** Employ hashtags to broaden your content's reach and relevance. Choose wisely, based on your content's focus. Generally, three hashtags are considered optimal.

**Creating New Hashtags:** You can create new hashtags on LinkedIn by using the '#' symbol followed by letters or numbers. However, consider its potential audience before generating a new hashtag.

**Managing Hashtags:** It's beneficial to review and manage the hashtags you're following. You can access this by selecting 'Manage your hashtags' after clicking the three dots next to a hashtag.

**As a LinkedIn Creator:** Think about treating LinkedIn as though it were a work conference—you are there to provide a keynote presentation, to share expert content, and to network with people.

LinkedIn is more than a digital resume—it's a dynamic platform to craft your brand, engage with your network, and build meaningful connections. As you continue your journey through the legal landscape, remember that a well-crafted LinkedIn profile can be a powerful tool for showcasing your expertise, nurturing professional relationships, and expanding your influence. The updates to the LinkedIn algorithm can open the doors for creators with niche interests and expertise.

Stay tuned for next month's edition, where we'll delve into the art of leveraging referrals to propel your legal practice to new heights. Until then, keep refining your LinkedIn presence and building a brand that truly resonates.

Stay inspired and engaged in your unique branding journey!

About the Author:

**George Brandon** is the president of LegalXcellence.com and specializes in law firm strategy, business development, attorney coaching, recruitment and succession planning. He welcomes questions and ideas for future business development columns at [george@legalxcellence.com](mailto:george@legalxcellence.com)