Podcast #055
How to use LinkedIn Groups

Hello everybody and welcome to another edition of the Marketing Menu podcast with myself, Nicky and hello Liz!

Hello!

So, today listeners, we're going to continue along the theme of LinkedIn and how to raise your visibility on LinkedIn by a) making connections and b) using groups. So Liz, do you want to talk about when you should send somebody a connection request?

I think the easy answer to that is it's whenever you can. It's like everyone, whoever you connect with, either online or in networking groups, anyone you meet in the business world, you need to be connecting with them on LinkedIn.

And indeed when you get into groups, which we're going to talk about, and anybody who likes or comments on your updates.

Absolutely. I think one of the important things to remember about connections is t's about the quality of connection.

So I have a client who has got about 3.500 connections, none of whom he really knows what they do - it's an absolute nightmare. Think about this. Every connection you make, you potentially could see their post on your timeline. If you've got 3.500, you're not going to be getting quality posts to share or comment on. So don't feel that because you've been sent a connection request that you have to accept it. I never accept connection requests from people that don't have a profile picture or any kind of description in their biography. It might be somebody I know but I'm not going to connect with them because I'm not going to be sharing quality information and that reflects on me.

Okay. Interesting. You do get a lot of connections from other countries. I get a lot of website developers or AX developers in India for example. To be honest with you, I see little value for me. So I tend to ignore those requests.

So it is about every new connection you have expanding your network and raising your visibility because, remember, the more first connections you have, the more second connections you have, you're opened up to their networks.

So make those new introductions and leads. Because ultimately what you're going to be trying to do is to drive that all-important traffic to your website and nudge these connections along, hopefully, another step of your sales funnel.

Don't send out random requests to people either. So by the same token as not accepting, don't be tempted to send them out either. LinkedIn does keep account of rejections and you could be blackmarked.

So where possible do try to personalise your connection requests with everybody. If you just immediately adopt the LinkedIn generic message, it's very impersonal. So do, wherever possible, try to look at their profile, think in terms of why should they connect with you?

I think that's the danger is when LinkedIn will suggest people to connect to and you click the connect button and it automatically sends the ' I'd like to add you to my network' and you don't have the option to personalise it, it's already gone. So it's not falling for that. If you see someone's name, then go and search for them, then send them a personalised invitation.

Don't use the invite by email Contact Button. And when you're trying to do this invitation, try to write invitations in terms of different wordings, maybe try writing on different days of the week, even times of day, I know from particular experiences, Sunday evening for me is a really good time to put out connection requests because people are getting back into their work headspace. You're only going to achieve 50-60% acceptance rate, even if you're doing this quite consistently. They may reply even several months later. It could be a good idea also to develop a suite of canned messages that you can maybe adapt over time.

It's definitely worth revisiting your profile on a regular basis so that you can make it easier to read. You know, I think when we first do our profiles, they tend to be quite formal and all about you. You need to make it more relevant to your target audience and you may have acquired different skills, even by staying in the same job, you may have dealt with different customers and different projects. And that all needs to go on there.

The other thing we could quickly mention then is about joining groups. So I know they were everywhere a couple of years ago, but that could just be us with our workload now that we don't revisit them as much. But it does give you a better opportunity to interact directly with your target audience and make a bigger splash in a smaller pond.

Maybe, more importantly, to actually get knowledge from other people?

Yes, there's a lot of knowledge out there on LinkedIn, if you dig around, particularly if you're using the Pulse function. But when you're first looking at groups, do think about who they are targeting and see who the influencers are in those groups and what sort of activity is going on because you don't want to join a stagnant group.

That's right. And also be careful of overzealous group managers. Make sure that you're sticking to the rules of behaviour.

I think that really helps everybody. So what would you say are out Top Three Tips for this week's podcast, Liz?

I think Top Tips are to make sure that you're connecting with everyone you meet either on or offline. So if you're a networking meeting, make sure that you go straight back and you've got the business card, make sure that you connect with them on LinkedIn.

Or use the app on LinkedIn so you can find connections at the meeting. I picked up 60 connections the other day just at one meeting.

Wow! Use the shares and likes and comments to see what works and connect with those people too that are participating in a group maybe. And keep on top of who's saying what to who.

Join us next week for more information.

I think we're going be talking about how to share content.

Until then, it's a goodbye from me, Nicky Matthews.

And a goodbye from me, Liz Gordon. Goodbye.