



NAVCA Barking Owl session: LinkedIn (23/04/24)

At the last Barking Owl meeting, we spoke about not letting social media stress us out. When I came back to my LinkedIn notes from training that I had delivered to the NAVCA team, I realised that (in my opinion), two good ways to limit being stressed about social media are to 1) have a clear purpose for each social media platform you are using, and 2) use social media to engage people into spaces that we do have control over e.g. website, events, i.e. spaces that are not dictated by an algorithm.

Breakout rooms for discussion: what's one thing you are going to try with LinkedIn now? It could be anything from setting up a profile for the first time to trying a different kind of post. Think about your aim and audience.

LinkedIn:

LinkedIn is a social media platform, it runs similarly to other platforms in that you can follow other accounts (of individuals and organisations), connect with and message people, post photos or text, comment and react to posts.

Why use LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is growing; Your audience is in the right mindset – professional, there to learn, in the business frame of mind, no one really goes to scroll mindlessly compared to Instagram/Twitter/TikTok, and LinkedIn content feels more purposeful.

Setting up a page as an organisation or an individual:

There are clear benefits to setting up a page as an organisation, people can follow you, keep up to date with your organisation's work. There are also benefits to having individual profiles – you can build more personal connections, put a name to a face, people are usually more ready to engage with another human rather than a faceless organisational account. You need to set up an individual account to be an admin for the organisational account.

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/create-a-linkedin-profile/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a554351>

Why staff involvement?

- Profile photo and make sure all the details on your profile are updated, putting faces to names helps to humanise your organisation so that people can connect with us better.
- You already have so many personal connections, make the most of them!



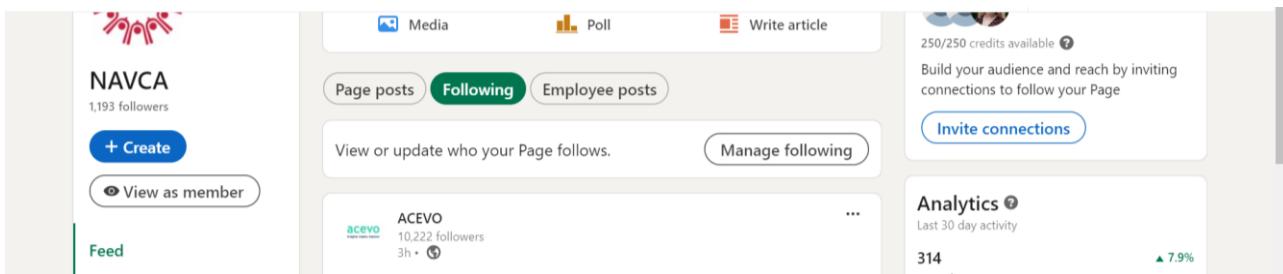
- You can drive people to the organisational page so that they follow you (You can invite 100 people per month to follow the organisation's page if you are an employee, here's how: <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a1313099>)
- Positives to using your own profile – can engage and comment as a person. See what is working and trending, can find curated content to share.
- Searching for people to follow – you can search by 'connection level', location, company, lots of filter options.
- Getting staff and volunteers involved: getting buy-in. What is holding them back from connecting with us on LinkedIn? Ask for ideas and sell the benefits of being involved. Create assets that are easy to use. Be supportive and engage with their content, say thank you and make them feel validated and appreciated. Offer a training session (you can use these notes!)

Some tips:

- Find and engage with super connectors – someone who has a similar audience to you and is really active on LinkedIn – 'influencers'. Leaders of large charities, local councillors/politicians, campaigners, governing bodies, network organisations.

Following as an organisation

You can follow pages as an individual or as an organisation. To follow them as an organisation, go to your admin profile and click 'Following', then 'Manage Following'.



Jobs:

You can post jobs on LinkedIn, free for a certain amount of time. Paid services offer a more personalised approach e.g. recommending your job to people, putting it at the top of search engines.

You can also advertise jobs on the NAVCA website free of charge here:

<https://www.navca.org.uk/members-job-adverts>

Purposes of LinkedIn (from the NAVCA perspective, but yours may be similar):



- Keeping up to date with member news – what is going on at our member organisations? What is popular? What content might we create to engage with members or local communities?
- Increasing member engagement – getting to know members on a more personal level in between our regular networks and meetings.

Engagement and the dreaded algorithm: what makes an effective LinkedIn page?

Your page: Overview/About: Mission and vision, break down into clear paragraphs. Clear CTA (call to action) in the About section e.g. go to our website to find out more. Speak directly to your audience. Complete profile with audience in mind. Think about SEO (search engine optimization) in tagline and About section. Be strict about brand guidelines.

What makes an effective LinkedIn page? – helps meet marketing goals e.g. increasing funding, raise awareness, recruitment; events; build communities; network; reach different audiences; increase website traffic. – tailoring content to address goal.

Engagement is really key – comments are the most important (comments of more than five words are best!), but LinkedIn also measures ‘dwell time’, reshares/reposts and likes/other reacts. Engagement = ranking system, the algorithm will see that content as valuable and surface it to more users. Can help us grow our accounts and reach more people.

- What community are you building? – identify the community you want to build.
- Is the audience volunteers, staff, donors, local community, corporate partners?
- Building authority in the space, so all content contributes directly to this. Sharing things that are valuable for the audience that they've cultivated. Understanding what audience wants and what they find useful.
- **How will your audience discover you?** – directly look you up; someone in their network engages with your content; show up in search, hashtags, people, jobs.
- Get ideas from competitors to see how they are growing followers and keep up to date with sector trends.
- **Run a follow campaign.** CTA at end of newsletter. Add LinkedIn button to website. Create content that lets you tag people – mention names specifically e.g. who took part in an event.
- Who the audience is and why they're on the platform.

Content:

- Audience have small pockets of time and are distracted – grab their attention.
- Think about what your audience want and need. Problem-solving: adding value and providing solutions.



- Be on brand, represent your audience, show faces.
- Think about how you want people to respond when they've finished reading.
- People like to share things that show something about themselves – create content that gives your audience the opportunity to look: informed; forward-thinking; compassionate; active; helpful.
- Planning content: what's popular? Feel-good content. Connect to what's going on in the world.
- Promotional content: events, donations, recruitments.
- Positioning: getting yourself out there as an authority. Behind the scenes at events, sharing research that you've done, giving your opinion on what's going on in the world.
- Using a namedrop – tagging people who have good connections, establishing authority if they work with a trusted company.
- Use bullet points. Be brief and to the point. One CTA per post – don't make it confusing for people.
- Spotlighting a member is an option.
- Always reply to comments. Engage with other accounts. Test and learn from your analytics.

Analytics:

- Think about goals and how we can show we are meeting the goals.
- Look at top 3 best-performing posts and bottom 3 posts, shows what audience is enjoying and engaging with.
- Visibility: followers, shares, search, unique visitors.
- Relationships: comments, likes, mentions.
- Conversion: link clicks, custom button clicks.
- Engage with other posts before and after you post.

Exercise to try with your team:

Quick exercise: Audience-finding. Think of three or four people that you speak to regularly in a work capacity. Maybe they are members or project partners. Maybe they provide us with a service such as insurance or finance. Write down their name, job role and organisation – write one person per line or leave enough space as we are going to be adding a sentence for each person.

For each connection, write WHY they might be an important connection. Try to go beyond 'they are a member' – what specifically about them makes them important to you?

- They are connected to a lot of people I want to connect to.



- They could be interested in a network or event.
- They are a voice of authority on a subject I am interested in – could we work together to say something unique?
- They are a regular attendee of my network and I want them to stay engaged.
- I want them to give us funding!
- Their work is interesting to me and could influence the work that we do.

The people we have thought of might not even be on LinkedIn, but if they are – why not connect?

Staying on or leaving Twitter?

When considering whether to stay or leave Twitter/X, consider your hopes and fears for the future. You could use a matrix for decision-making, listing the negative impact and reputational risk for what you know.

If you are planning to stay but preparing to leave (this seems to be the consensus):

- Think about where your audience are in terms of alternative platforms.
- Think about your objectives including metrics and engagement.
- What are the other options?
- Where are your stakeholders?
- What ethical considerations do you need to make?
- Have a clear strategy e.g. blog post announcing that you are leaving Twitter, making a list of key followers, directing people to where you are now.

Follow NAVCA on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/navca>

Useful LinkedIn articles:

<https://www.classy.org/blog/ways-use-linkedin-for-nonprofits/>

<https://charitydigital.org.uk/topics/topics/why-more-charities-should-be-using-linkedin-7609>

<https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/linkedin-tips-for-nonprofits>

<https://www.nptechforgood.com/101-best-practices/10-linkedin-best-practices-for-nonprofits/>