

LinkedIn:

With ambitious goals, competing priorities and limited time, successful fundraisers know to rely on efficient tools to get the job done. In researching donors and prospects, social media is such a tool, placing data about donors' backgrounds, actions, and preferences right at your fingertips. These facts prepare you to concentrate on those with an affinity for your cause and the means to contribute. Social media also reveals personal and professional relationships, so you can identify common connections for referrals and introductions.

According to the company itself, LinkedIn is the top rated social network for lead generation, making it a great source for fundraisers looking to find targeted, motivated prospects for their organizations. I'm going to share five reasons why LinkedIn is so special.

#1: LinkedIn has a huge reach. With nearly 800 million members, LinkedIn makes up more than 50% of all social traffic to websites and blogs. This means chances are good that you'll find the information you need and connections to the right people.

#2: Overall member demographics reveal an ability to give and an interest in learning. Users are high-income earners, well educated, with most aged 46 – 55, though millennials make up about a quarter of the platform. Ninety-one percent of senior business leaders list LinkedIn as their top place to find quality content.

For specific prospect research, utilize the career information posted on LinkedIn as a starting point for determining a capacity to give. If the prospect works for a company with a matching gift program, you may be able to double the impact of their donation.

#3: LinkedIn users are about 44% more likely to donate to a charity, than users of other social media platforms. Also, the people who work with and for major donor prospects will most likely have LinkedIn profiles. By joining the right groups, especially around philanthropy, social impact, and charities, you can find, learn about, and engage donors.

#4: LinkedIn is also great for maintaining comprehensive, accurate information in your nonprofit's donor database. This includes specifics on employment, location, contact details, interests, and more. While constituents may not update your nonprofit with these details, chances are they will update their LinkedIn profiles. LinkedIn can help you to verify, update, or uncover a prospect information.

#5: Information about professional and personal networks can reveal mutual contacts who might introduce you to prospects and help cultivate donor relationships.

In addition to using LinkedIn for donor prospecting and stewardship, consider the platform for finding and engaging potential partner organizations, sponsors, volunteers and new staff.

As I've shared, there are many possibilities for integrating LinkedIn into your work. Which will you try?