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INTERVIEW SERIES

**How To Network The Easy Way  
With LinkedIn.com**

*Michael Senoff Interviews LinkedIn Expert*

 Michael Senoff's  
**HardToFind Seminars.com**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com).

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

*Michael Senoff*

Founder & CEO: [www.hardtofindseminars.com](http://www.hardtofindseminars.com)

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## How To Network The Easy Way With LinkedIn.com

I recently discovered the power of LinkedIn.com. If you haven't heard of it, it's a social networking site for professionals, and it's quickly becoming the preferred way to form business relationships and make deals. So in this interview, you'll hear from a LinkedIn expert named Chip about the ins and outs of the site – how it works, what it has to offer and how to make the most of it.

According to Chip, before LinkedIn, he would spend a monumental waste of time going to networking events in order to try to drum up business. But he'd usually find himself in a room full of people trying to sell him something. It was uncomfortable and unproductive. Now his productivity has increased substantially. In fact, he says in the last week alone he's landed six potential JV deals through his contacts on LinkedIn.

And with more than 17 million registered members from around the world, the sky is really the limit with this relatively new networking site. But you don't want to jump in without knowing what you're doing. Chip says that people who make the mistake of using LinkedIn to gun for prospects will find themselves ostracized and reported. There's a right way to do things on this site and it's important that you know it.

### Key Concepts You'll Hear In The Interview

- What the different "tiers of communication" are for the site, the benefits of each and ways to move up in tiers
- Ways to use LinkedIn to increase your credibility – most people on the site don't even know to do this, so you can be ahead of the crowd with this one tip alone
- How to use the question-and-answer section of the site to increase your visibility on the net. Because this section is published on search engines, you can easily increase your own website traffic using LinkedIn
- What the different toolbars and features are on LinkedIn, how to use them and the benefits of each
- How LinkedIn can specifically be used for consulting practices to generate the kind of buzz and interest that will bring prospects looking for you

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LinkedIn seems to be an easy way to increase visibility and save time. Chip says he's halved his sales process using LinkedIn because he now spends less time looking for clients and more time closing deals.

But you have to make sure you play by the rules on LinkedIn, and this interview will definitely get you going in the right direction.

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Chip: One of your questions to me was, how has it helped me? I've had people contact me to do contract work who said, "I've been reading the testimonials on your profile, and I want to work with you." That's how they open our conversation.

My sales process has just been – I would say more than halved, which means I spend less time getting new customers and more time closing more customers.

Music

*Hi, it's Michael Senoff with Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com). I just learned about an absolute incredible website called Linked In. Now, we've all heard of these social networking sites like MySpace and FaceBook, but the Linked In is a little bit different. It is a social networking website, but it's specifically for serious business professionals. There's over 17 million members signed up, and it is an unbelievable tool. I just learned about it, and in my quest for more knowledge, I searched the world's foremost expert on Linked In and how to use it to generate more contacts and generate more qualified relationships using business social networking tool. At the end of this interview, we'll offer even more detailed training for those of you who are really serious of using the power of this website. If you're one of my HMA Marketing consultants, I know you're going to find this tool extremely valuable in creating new relationships to get new clients. Let's get going.*

Michael: What is online social networking? A lot of us have heard of that. What is it, and how long has this been going on online, and what's going on with it today?

Chip: Well, social networking in and of itself has been around time immemorial, just to be straight. You've got any assembly where people get together and they're social in a social network. There are groups

out there that have been using face-to-face, rotary, the freemasons, chambers of commerce, associations, etc, that that's been going on forever.

In terms of online networking, the first real big online network that got any kind of notice was MySpace, where it turned into a social network where people could display the social parts of themselves and connect with people online in joint interest groups, etc. Frankly, it just mirrors what's going on in the real world.

Well, when you go online, add people's propensity to browse, it works kind of in the way our minds work which it's chaotic, it's random. We can follow a thought and follow an interest, and it will lead us to other interests and discover things.

So, what's happening is that as these groups come together, people are able to reach out beyond the natural boundaries of their geographic location, and they're starting to meet people in other countries, and they're starting to meet other people with the same kinds of interests, and they gravitate to these groups.

If you look at MySpace or FaceBook or Friendster, or even everybody who is on Plaxo is begin to see Plaxo transform itself into a social network. All you're doing is you're getting a deeper and deeper sense of the people that you know, and frankly discovering things that they may never have disclosed to you in personal conversations because they put it up on the internet. Now, all of a sudden, that's an opportunity to go deeper into your relationships.

Michael: Now, how did you first get involved with this online social networking? Where did this all start for you where you became an expert trainer in this networking and the online social networking especially Linked In that we're going to talk about?

Chip: My background was as an analyst for a hedge fund, building relationships with banking organizations around the globe. So, I have these set of skills that allow me to pick up the phone or go to a road show and meet people and begin to build relationships. I was introduced to Linked In, I guess I received one of those invitations.

Michael: Let me ask you this. When you were handling these bank relationships, before you found Linked In, were you doing it the hard way? What frustrations were you experiences doing it that way before you found Linked in, any?

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Chip: A lot frankly. Number one, when you're out there and you're meeting these people, they're from all over, whether it's international, a lot of my relationships were international. It's hard to keep in touch with people. It's all by phone. Sometimes, it would be you would show up to an event. The event itself didn't bring itself to being social. So, being social looks like being an event or to a road show or to a bar afterwards, but it's limited in its scope and its steps.

So, managing it the hard way is pretty much how everybody does it. It's a shot gun approach. It's random and chaotic, and it's pretty hard to manage.

Michael: Were you traveling all over the world?

Chip: I was. I was traveling all over the United States and Europe, and then I had relationships in South America as well in Brazil and Argentina.

Michael: How old are you?

Chip: I'm 34.

Michael: Then, you were invited to Linked In.

Chip: When I got on Linked In, I didn't really get it, but as I started to play with it, and I started to search and understand the power of Linked In a lightbulb went on where I could begin to sort and be getting updated information and be able to touch base with people via email. As Linked In has more, I can now do a lot of that inside the Linked In system and keep track of it, which has been extraordinarily powerful for my relationships.

Michael: Can you attribute Linked In to an increase in business and productivity for yourself?

Chip: Absolutely. In the last week alone, I've had six contacts from my Linked In network that are potential joint ventures, that are potential business relationships, requests for expertise and consulting. Positioning myself well on Linked In as well as using some of the trust and authority of the Linked In platform, I've made myself much more findable via search engines as well writing and having it connected with my blog and my website, and that social web that the search engines love. So, I'm more and more findable using Linked In as my hub.

Michael: Let's talk in reference for my HMA Marketing consultants. We have marketing consultants who provide marketing consulting services, and we have consultants from all over the world, and you would categorize yourself as a consultant.

Chip: I would, yes.

Michael: Your niche is networking and training on Linked In, correct?

Chip: Well, let me clarify that. When most people say networking, they get this horrible image in their head of large people and a waste of time. I don't do any of that. There are people out there who specialize in that. I don't.

Michael: Let's confront the negative stereotypes of networking. When people hear that, what are most people thinking about when they hear the word "networking"?

Chip: I think they're thinking about the monumental waste of time when they go to an event, and get a stack of business cards and never follow through. They go to events looking for business, and don't find it, or it's a shot gun approach. So, they spend a lot of time with a very low return on their investment. So, they stop doing it.

The only reason they were there doing it in the first place was because people said it was important. They couldn't say why it was important, but they said it was important so they're there.

You've got a room full of people looking for business. Some of them are explicit about it. Some of them are being very casual about it, but they're there to get business. Put that picture in your head say with a room full of 400 people looking for their business. They're trying to sell everybody there, and it gets very uncomfortable. I would say that is the stereotype that I come up against everyday in what I do.

Michael: So, how have you positioned yourself in the marketplace? What's your elevator pitch if someone says, "Chip, what do you do?"

Chip: I help people unlock the value of their networks. I work with people who have established businesses that are successful already, but they know that they're not going to be able to outperform themselves now, meaning the strategies and tactics that got them successful are not going to take them to the next level.



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So, they've got this book of business. They've got these relationships with clients and vendors, etc, but they've never really looked at how their positioned in their network. They never really thought about the next piece of their growth. They've plateaued in their performance, and they can no longer continue their growth.

What we do is we go in and analyze with them their networks, how their positioned, what their goals are, and whether the people in their networks are positioned to help them to get their or not. If they are, training those people how to interact, training and finding staff, looking for and uncovering resources that they need that they're already sitting on top of it and they don't know it, and rearranging their network resources to actually pull them into that next level of performance.

Michael: Tell me what is Linked In, and how does it differ from the other social networking sites that you've seen?

Chip: Fundamentally, Linked In is a tool, and it's a tool that allows you to connect with the people in your already existing network and discover connections and pathways to resources and people that you need to get where you want to go. So, here's how it's fundamentally different from say a Facebook or a MySpace.

Number one, Linked In is primarily a business to business network, meaning they're professionals that are in this network. The stats off of the Linked In site itself, last time I looked which I must admit it's been a little while, but the average income I believe was \$133,000, average user experience was 15 years of experience. So, it's a very specific demographic, and these people are serious about business. They're serious about growing their business. They're serious about their careers. They're business people.

When you go to FaceBook or MySpace, MySpace is like the wild, wild west. If there's something that you could be offended by, you can find it on MySpace. FaceBook was designed for college students primarily, and while they've got an open platform, and they're trying to make a jump into the business to business space, the people who used Linked In and go to look at FaceBook can't make the shift. It's too social. It's not a bad thing, but it's not business oriented.

That's where Linked In really positions itself or finds itself positioned. I don't know if they did that purposely, but that's where they find themselves positioned in that space of social media and social networking.

Michael: What about Spoke?

Chip: Spoke is more of a sales platform, and what Spoke does is it collects business information so that you can prospect, and that's really their proposition. Their value proposition is that they've got current contact information for people that you want to prospect.

Social media and social networking is very different than the traditional sales approach. As a matter of fact, sat down yesterday with a sales trainer who sees it coming and he's beginning to look at how he's going to position himself to leverage social media because it's a very different approach. As a matter of fact, a lot of people make the mistake of using Linked In as purely prospecting platform, and they find themselves ostracized in the chat groups and the My Linked In power forum. They'll be talked about. People talk about how so and so has been bothering them. They find themselves reported to Linked In and their account is shut off.

It's a very different space, and traditional direct mail marketers and email marketing people are having a very tough time understanding social media for that very reason because they can not stand people. They've got to be much more creative to intrigue people and to have people opt in and want to be part of the groups that they're creating.

Michael: So, give a warning to anyone who thinks that they're going to go into Linked In and be able to search out professionals, maybe in their network within the same industry and be able to prospect promote. Give a warning, and just clear up a little bit of maybe misconceptions that people may have of how they're going to be able to use this Linked In.

Chip: Linked In is about relationships, social networking about relationships. If you approach this and depersonalize it, you'll be shut out, not only shut out, but shut off. So, if you're planning on using Linked In to build your relationships and to find relationships that will help to get where you want to go, you're on the right track. If you're using it purely for prospecting without any intention of building relationships, you're going to be very frustrated.

Michael: Linked In has within it tools that inhibit people from using it in a spamming type of way.

Chip: Exactly, they have several features. You can report as spam in their internal communication systems, and they also in the connections

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section, the “I don’t know” button. If you get “I don’t know” five times, Linked In will suspend your account. If you get reported for spam more than a couple of times, Linked In will suspend your account. They just won’t tolerate it.

So, before you get gung-ho about Linked In, read the terms of service so you understand social media is not the same as advertising. It’s not the same as traditional marketing or mass marketing. You’ve got to be very, very good at engaging people to really leverage Linked In.

Michael: Can we go through some benefits of being involved with Linked In?

Chip: I can share my personal experience for sure.

Michael: Let’s do it.

Chip: I’ve connected some of the generous giving people frankly in the world, and it’s been through developing relationships over time, connecting, participating in online as well as offline discussions, helping people get where they want to go, making connections for people. So, bottom line, right now, Linked In is at roughly 17 million users world wide, and over the last three years, I’ve made about 1,500 connections, and I have access to about 5.4 million people in the Linked In network.

Michael: That’s incredible. Explain what a direct connection is.

Chip: A direct connection is someone that you’ve met personally. You extend an invitation to connect with them. They accept. That is a first tier connection, one that you have direct access to.

Michael: How do you benefit by having a direct access connection compared to indirect access connection?

Chip: Well, again, it’s a matter of the scope of the network. When you’re directly connected to someone, you have access to communicate with them.

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Michael: What I was thinking in my head, is a direct connection gives you access to communicate with that direct connection’s connections, where an indirect does not, right?

Chip: Well, the other thing that it does is when you move them from a second or a third connection to a first connection, it grows your network, and you'll reach an order of magnitude. If they're a third tier connection, and they become a first tier connection, you could not see their second and third tier. So, once they're in your first tier, you can see their second and third tiers.

Michael: Just like with you. Why don't we use an example of exactly how we're talking right now? I'll give a specific example. I learned about Linked In about a week ago. I was looking for an expert to interview. I searched the Linked In database, and I found that you were in my network. I think you were a third tier through Wayne Mansfield. I asked Wayne to give us an introduction, which he forwarded, and basically gave a quick endorsement of me. You got back to me with your phone number.

The power of that endorsement and power of probably my bio page, and you saw what I did, and offered to do an interview, instantly got you to get back with me.

Then, I moved you once we had a chance to talk the other day, and build a little bit of a relationship and schedule an interview. I invited you and moved you from a third tier to a direct connect. So, what that did for me is it gave me access, an indirect access to your network.

Chip: Did you happen to notice what happened to your stats when you connected with me?

Michael: I didn't do a compare. I'm sure they went up. I'm already at like access to 1.5 million people. It's pretty incredible, and I'm sure you're probably a big part of that.

Chip: Right, and that's because I understand how the system works. I understand how to position myself. I know the ethical ways to build my network both breadth and depth. So, these are all things that I teach based on fundamental network building skills.

Michael: So, is it a realistic goal for people within Linked In, and maybe it's different for everyone to get as many connections as possible. You don't just want as many connections as possible just to have them.

Chip: No, let me back up and say that it's my feeling that there are people out there that are doing that. However, they dilute the power of their network by doing that. Yes, there's an upside to doing that in that of course, you do a search and you get a lot more search results if you

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have a larger network like that. Downside is if you don't have a lot of the people that you're connected to and you forward a request, they may or may not even respond to you if they don't know you well.

They're going to be reticent to put their reputation on the line if you're going to be harassing the people they introduce you to.

Michael: That's right, so with Wayne, if I didn't feel like I had enough of a relationship with Wayne Ansfield, I probably wouldn't have asked him to introduce us. I may be would've chosen doing a direct in mail, contacting you directly.

Chip Which is a paid feature, you've got to be a paid user to do that, but yes absolutely. Doing that is reaching out and talking to people. I'm a firm believer in if you've got value to bring to someone and you can build a relationship around that value, reach out by all means, but if you're just there to produce a transaction, that's going to cause problems for you on the Linked In system.

Michael: Let's go through some of these items here that we're going to talk about, some of the advantages and benefits of Linked In. Let's start with some of these items here. Can we use Linked In to increase one's credibility?

Chip: Yes, absolutely.

Michael: How do we do that?

Chip: Number one, it begins with a rock solid profile. The majority of people on Linked In have not done any kind of work on their profile. When you do your profile work, when you write a good summary, when you talk about your specialties, when you talk about what you're looking to accomplish, and then you start to get recommendations from the people in your network, there's a tremendous amount of credibility that gets built in especially with the people that already know you and that are connected to you.

As you're network gets updated, and I constantly am updating my profile so that it sends a message out to the people in my network that my profile has been updated.

Michael: So, explain what this profile feature is at Linked In. Linked In offers every user to have a profile.

Chip: Yes, it allows you to put all of your information, links to your website, links to your blog, personal information in the summary section. There's a specialty section where you can talk about what you specialize in. You can put all of your education in there, any training that you've done. You could put your experience in there, past jobs, etc. When you've done a very good job of putting your profile together, people can find you.

If you've worked with people in the past, let's say at IBM, and they see that you're on Linked In, and you remember them, you can connect to them. I was at a function last night here locally, and one of the guys came up to me. He went through my Linked In 101 Workshop, and he said, "I got contacted with a guy that I worked with twenty years ago, and he gave me a glowing recommendation because I'm now looking for work. That recommendation has already gotten me three interviews."

Michael: That's great.

Chip: Yeah, so in terms of your credibility, when other people are talking about you, when they can go in and look at you before they ever contact you, basically Linked In is acting as you in virtual reality. It gives people a place to come check you out before they contact you.

Michael: So, other than entrepreneurs like ourselves, there's a lot of professionals in the workforce, and this profile somewhat acts as an online resume.

Chip: It does, and as a matter of fact, I've had privilege to talk to a lot of recruiters, and a lot of the recruiters that I've talked to are almost exclusively using Linked In now to source candidates, almost exclusively.

Michael: Really?

Chip: Yeah, they said they stop going to the job boards.

Michael: Because it makes their job so much easier.

Chip: So much easier. Not only that but they can develop relationships with people who are currently employed or underemployed before they ever even extend a job offer.

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So, if you're listening to this interview, and you're out of work, it's absolutely critical that you get on to Linked In and you do a rock solid profile. Folks who are looking for you are going to Linked In.

Michael: At the end of this interview, we're going to make a special offer for any of the listeners that's going to offer some advanced training on how to do this. So, at the end of the interview, we'll give you a link where you can get more information on how to create a rock solid profile. Let's talk about increasing your visibility through Linked In.

Chip: It works a lot the same way except now that you're network building, the one thing that I didn't say prior was that Linked In actually sends your profile out to the search engines.

So, as you're interacting inside of Linked In, you've got your profile done. You're using Linked In Questions and Answers. You're participating. You're joining groups. What happens is you become more and more findable.

So, I say earlier as well that you can put links to your blog. You could put links to your website. You could put links to anywhere that you want to send people right inside of your Linked In profile.

Well, the search engines crawl those links, which makes any other properties that you have much more findable because they're linked through Linked In, which has tremendous trust and authority inside of the search engine world.

Michael: I'll give you an example. I was playing around, and there's a feature Questions and Answers where people within your network are asking questions, say in my network, related to marketing and advertising. You can participate as a Linked In member, and answer the questions of people within your network.

I was able to answer several questions and directed them to my website, [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com) with a specific interview that would cover the answer in even more detail. The following day, I did a search on Google, and it was in the Google rankings, just 24 hours later.

Chip: Exactly, because what Google loves is new content. They're publishing the stuff to their search engines. You're becoming more and more visible, and the great thing about the Questions and Answers is where you can really increase your visibility. I talked to a guy and partnered with a guy recently who saw a 25% increase in his jump in traffic at his website as he started to participate in Questions and Answers because

you can put your website links up in your profile and also in your Questions and Answers, ultimately more findable.

Michael: As an example, when I was looking for an expert in Linked In, and I searched Linked In expert within my network. That's how I found you. So, these keywords, if you're involved in an industry – for instance what I'm doing with audio marketing interviews, advertising – in my profile, I want to make sure I'm using keywords, just like I would be optimizing key words from my natural listings in Google. You want to do the same thing strategically for within Linked In.

Chip: Right, and we actually talk about that in the training that we do, but all of that about positioning, about being clear what your keywords are. That's something that's important for you if being findable is important to you.

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Michael: I really like the way you've niched yourself. You've got a great little niche here with just one killer application, and you've positioned yourself as an expert rather than just being a consultant for everything. You've really niched yourself into a great little niche. I don't think there's too many other people doing that.

Chip: There's like four other people nationally doing it, and when I started to really to go to work at creating myself in this niche, I knocked them out of the spots in the natural searches.

Michael: Good job. Okay, we've talked a little bit about increasing your connections. What else can we talk about how you can increase connections using this Linked In?

Chip: Now, this is where we start to get strategic. When you are looking at building your network and increasing your connections, there are a couple of school of thoughts. You can connect randomly with people, or you can start to get very clear about who you need to connect with, do complex searches inside of Linked In and drill down and find the very people that you need to connect with, reach out, start to build a relationship with them, connect with them, and that grows your network with the experts that you need, with the distribution systems that you need, with potential staff that you might need.



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Whatever network you're building, you can get very smart about it at Linked In, and given the way that Linked In works, you'll find pathways to get to people via referral or introduction that you would never have been able to find these people in a million years of networking.

Michael: In your Linked In introduction webinar, you actually take us through and show us screen shots where we can watch you do this. This is all covered in that training?

Chip: We have a series of workshops that we offer. The basic workshop, the Linked In 101 Workshop covers rock solid profiles. It gives you a deeper understanding of sort of the social networking space. We talk about how to build your network, mistakes to avoid that can get you shut out of Linked In network. We talk about basic search features.

By the end of that two and a half hours, you know more than 99.5% of the people who use Linked In.

Michael: Let's talk about increasing your testimonials, and I know on the profile page, there is a place and Linked In has integrated a system for people within your network to endorse you or give you testimonials. How have these helped you, and how do these testimonials or endorsements help one's profile?

Chip: Anybody on this call, I'm sure already knows this, but a third party testimonial is stronger than almost anything that you can say about yourself. Now, the great thing about recommendations inside of Linked In, we talk about this in our 201 workshop because getting recommendations is really about positioning yourself, but you can actually solicit recommendations from people inside of the Linked In platform which is generating testimonials for you and what you do.

One of your questions to me was how has it helped me. I've had people contact me to do contract work who said, "I've been reading the testimonials on your profile, and I want to work with you." That's how they opened our conversations.

My sales process has just been I would say more than halved, which means I spend less time getting new customers and more time closing more customers.

Michael: Can you ever have too many testimonials on your profile page?

Chip: It depends on what you're using Linked In for. If you're looking for a job, and you've got lots of testimonials from past people, I would say

no because what you're looking to do is position yourself as a highly qualified candidate. I don't really see a downside because the way the people look at and use testimonials is for social proof. If you've got lots and lots of testimonials, they don't even have to read them all. They'll read one or two of them, and they'll say, "Look, this is all good stuff. I don't even have to read anymore of this."

Michael: Let's talk a little bit about some of the applications, some of the tools that Linked In has three specifically the Linked In Microsoft Outlook tool bar, and then the Internet Explorer Linked In tool bar, and the tools that make it simple to invite contacts to be members of Linked In. Have the really simplified this process?

Chip: Tremendously. So, the Outlook tool bar and there's the Microsoft Explorer tool bar, and there's a Firefox tool bar I believe as well.

Michael: Let's start with the Outlook tool bar. What is this little application do and how does it work?

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Chip: Outlook tool bar does several things. Number one, it gives you direct access right into your Linked In account through Outlook, meaning that they open up a browser right inside of Outlook so that you're inside of your shell using the Explorer, and you have access to the internet as well as your Linked In account through the internet.

Secondly, there are features that allow you to check through your emails to pull up email addresses of people that you already know and communicate with on a regular basis, which then uploads that to Linked In unless you know who you're already connected to.

The next thing that it does is with every email, there's a little info box in the upper right hand corner of the email. When you drag your mouse over it, it tells you if you're connected to that person, how you're connected to that person, and gives a brief synopsis of their profile. So, you can see all of a sudden you're getting all of these cues about your relationships with people. So, it keeps it top of mind.

There's also what's called the dashboard feature which is on that tool bar, and what the dashboard does is it goes through and it pulls up all the relationship oriented things – birthdays, anniversaries, emails that maybe you didn't respond to that they want to make sure that you're taking care of. There's a feature in there, the "keep in touch" feature,

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which you can set to make sure that if you haven't emailed that person within sixty days, it'll pop up a reminder to say, "Hey, touch base with this person."

Michael: Now, where is this dashboard?

Chip: It's in the Outlook tool bar for Outlook.

Michael: I see it. There it is. That's part of the Linked In.

Chip: Yes it is. These are tools that almost nobody knows about.

Michael: It's been sitting here. I see the blue in on my Outlook, and I see the dashboard. I just clicked on it. I never even knew what this was. So, tell me what this is in a nutshell – contacts to invite. So, this is similar to if I go online into my inbox. So, contacts to invite, these are new people who are with Linked In, but I haven't invited them.

Chip: Exactly. They call it a dashboard for a reason. It's a relationship management dashboard, and it keeps track of who you've been communicating with and whether you're connected or not, and whether their birthday is coming up, whether there's an anniversary coming up.

It integrates a lot of that social data that underpins relationships and allows you to manage that social data. Then they also give you an option to send people ecards, send people real live cards. I use send out cards. So, it says, "So and so's birthday is in a week." I can pop over in thirty seconds, enter their information out of my Outlook and autopopulate my explorer that's opened up into send out cards with a small transfer feature that's called address grabber, and in thirty seconds, send out a birthday card.

Michael: In the dashboard, where is the birthday information?

Chip: In the upper right hand corner. You've got birthdays coming up. Do you use Outlook?

Michael: Yes, I'm on Outlook.

Chip: So, do you use Plaxo?

Michael: No, what is Plaxo?

Chip: Plaxo is an online database where people subscribe. It's free to subscribe, but what it does is it keeps in contact, and if anybody moves

or if they've got their birthday information in there, it actually automatically populates that information in your Outlook.

Michael: How many millions of people are with Plaxo?

Chip: I don't know. I don't have that, but they've been around for seven or eight years now.

Michael: So, do I need Plaxo to integrate that information with my Outlook?

Chip: Not necessarily. If you're already collecting birthday information from the people in your Outlook, it will autopopulate up there on your dashboard.

Michael: So, that's something I have to set in my normal Outlook, which I don't have. Now, do you cover this dashboard tool in your training?

Chip: In the 201 workshop, yes.

Michael: Let's continue.

Chip: There's also a grab feature in that tool bar, which allows you to take someone's information out of an email, autopopulate it into Outlook, and also into Linked In.

Michael: Tell me how I benefit from that?

Chip: Well, instead of having to retype everyone's information to get them into your address book, you know how people have those signatures at the bottom?

Michael: Yes.

Chip: You highlight the information, grab it and it autopopulates it right into your Outlook.

Michael: I see. So, I open up an email, and I look at their signature, and then I right click.

Chip: You highlight the signature and click on grab.

Michael: This is in my regular email.

Chip: Yes, and the Linked In tool bar there is the grab feature.

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Michael: Where it says "info" over on the right?

Chip: No, in the tool bar.

Michael: I'm looking at an email. So, I've got an email here.

Chip: If you opened it up outside of the pane view, you probably won't see that.

Michael: That's probably why.

Chip: But, if you're looking at it in the pane view, you could highlight the information and click grab, and it'll grab that information.

Michael: That's interesting.

Chip: There are all kinds of little short cuts like this. You asked me if this was a time saver. It's an enormous time saver.

Michael: If you want to master these, these things are important, absolutely. This is the stuff I want to learn. Let's talk about the Internet Explorer tool bar, some benefits of that. One I know you and I talked briefly about about categorizing your contacts.

Chip: Right, and because there's no way to categorize your contacts directly inside of Linked In, the bookmark feature is a great way to save searches, to begin to populate and sort your different contacts into groups.

If you go to my blogs, there's a link there that's called Can, Fan, Pan, Currently active, Formerly active, and potentially active, and it describes a podcast with Christian Miode who is one of the top users of Linked In, and he talks about how he separates and sorts his network.

So, you could put actually categories in Outlook and use your book marks in that tool bar to save your sort, to save specific profiles, etc.

Michael: Let me ask you this. When you're doing a search, like a people search, let's say I'm logged in and I search marketing consultants. Is it only searching through my network, my first, second and third tier?

Chip: Unless you're a paid user, and it'll say your network and it'll say the Linked In network, and it'll make a very clear differentiation between

the people you're connected to and the people you're not connected to.

Michael: So, it makes sense if I want to contact with other consultants, it makes sense to search my network because I have access to them.

Chip: Exactly, you have a pathway to get to those people.

Michael: Now, I am a paid user. Being a paid user, I can search the entire network and still have access to them.

Chip: Exactly, because when you're a paid user, there's a feature called Inmail, and there are advanced features there that will allow you to connect with people that you're not directly connected to via the mail inside of Linked In.

Michael: Talk about the frustration of email today, and I'll tell you one thing I see. I see these closed networks replacing a lot of use for email. People moving their entire connections into a closed source so they can avoid the spam and the frustration of email. Have you found that to be true?

Chip: Well, I can see that it can head that way, and I certainly manage a lot of my communications through Linked In now because I'm protected from spam basically. However, until they've really made a robust back end and relationship conversation management, which it's not that yet, I can't see it replacing it yet.

As they build that interactivity, I can absolutely see it replacing it because it's got a built in spam filter, and I don't know about you, but I've got Spam Arrest, and some of those buggers still get through and I still have almost 100 emails a day that I have to read.

I don't have access to any of the social data, but to have relationship based conversation other than what's in my head. I don't know about you but the stuff in my head disappears sometimes.

Michael: Increasing your links to your website, we touched on this a little bit. Can you increase your Google ranking using Linked In?

Chip: Absolutely you can. I contribute to various forums in different industries that I'm interested in, and there are people who once they put their Linked In profile up and get it up and well written, where they were not

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findable before, all of a sudden they came up number one, two or three in a search for their name.

Michael: Not only on Google, but on Yahoo and MSN too.

Chip: All of the search engines. They follow the links. They're constantly looking for new information. You've got to remember that search engines, their whole idea is to index and categorize every piece of information on the planet. That's Google given mission, and they get easily findable. So, what they're doing is they're constantly consuming new information.

So, another way is by using Questions and Answers. They are constantly looking for new information and new ways to find things.

Michael: Let's talk about a hugely beneficial reason for using Linked In is information and that's researching others even before you contact them. How do you train people to use the research options to make direct contacts and indirect contacts?

Chip: Well, the first thing is what I train them to do is get crystal clear about what you're trying to accomplish. I can teach you all kinds of ways to search, but are you actually going to do the searches and are you going to do the right kinds of searches, if you don't know what you're really looking for?

So, number one is get really crystal clear what you need, get crystal clear what you're trying to accomplish because then your searches become very, very effective instead of a big broad search. You can do a very targeted search and narrow it down to five or six key candidates that you need to talk to. That takes the whole overwhelming aspect of the enormity of 17 million people plus, and makes it doable. I would say that's the foundation.

Then, search becomes natural when you know what you're looking for.

Michael: Let me ask you this. On the profiles, many will see all these icons, like there's a [TopLink.com](http://TopLink.com), and then you see all these little images like world management consultant. They're groups and associations, but they're little icons and stuff. Do you know what I'm talking about?

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Chip: Yes, they're the Linked In groups.

Michael: Now, what is that?

Chip: They're Linked In groups, and what they are is basically ways for people to sort themselves and associate in things that interest them.

Michael: Where do you find all the Linked In groups?

Chip: There's no complete category of a Linked In groups. In the 201 workshop, we talk about offline resources that you can use to find some of those groups, but there's an abbreviated catalogue. You go down to the bottom page, and we talked about this again in the 201.

Go down to the bottom page under the you category.

Michael: Bottom page of what, the main Linked In.

Chip: Any page on Linked In, there is a site map at the bottom, and on the second column over, it says "you" and under that it says "groups."

Michael: I've got it, About Linked In Groups, featured groups from your network. So, these groups becoming members of these groups or earning I guess the right to be in a group, you get to take this little logo and put it on your profile, kind of acts as an endorsement.

Chip: Exactly. Not only that, but it gives people cues to understand who you are and what's important to you. When we talking about starting to do advanced search features, which we talk about in the 201, that becomes extraordinarily powerful.

Michael: So, let's give an example for say my HMA Marketing consultants. Let's say they want to look for potential clients. Are there any groups that they can search and maybe give them a better chance of finding a more qualified potential prospect?

Chip: That question comes from a sales mindset. The better question would be, what's your target market, and what groups are around your target market number one, and what groups are around your perfect client, number two?

Michael: I agree. You're right.



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Chip: We're talking about positioning in social media here. We're not talking about the sales process. We're talking about positioning. We're talking about identity building. We're talking about credibility building, being known, generating buzz and interest. I promise you almost no one else is doing this instead of Linked In right now.

What they are doing is they're taking the approach that you just started off with.

Michael: You've got to get out of that sales generate a lead mindset.

Chip: Exactly.

Michael: Instead of go to them, it's got to be them come to you which is good marketing. So, you were going to give me an example.

Chip: For example, if I'm looking for an expert in blogging, I can go into one of the groups that I belong to, My Linked In Power Forum, and search just the members of that group for an expert in blogging.

Michael: Do you have to be a member of the group to search it?

Chip: To search the group, yes.

Michael: How does one become a member?

Chip: Each of those little links of those – let's say that you found someone's profile, and you see a group that you want to belong to. If you click the little icon of the group, it'll take you to the invite page.

Now, invitation rules are set up by the group moderator. Just because you ask to be invited, doesn't mean you're going to be accepted.

Michael: So, it's kind of like Yahoo Groups, but groups within Linked In.

Chip: Exactly, and like I said at the very beginning of this, this is about a mirror of what happens in real life. Bringing the power of search, bringing the power of relationships, bringing all of that into a pool that you can now dip into, and into a depth you can not even begin to comprehend in the real world, in the physical world.

Michael: Can you give me a case study, one of your students, any story that just sticks out in your mind, before Linked In, after Linked In, any one person, and it could be a small thing, a new client, anything you can think of?

Chip: The things that really stick out in my mind right now, given our current economy are the job seekers, and also the recruiters. The ones that I've trained have been able to go in, build a strong profile, reconnect with people that they've known in the past, reestablish those relationships, start searching through those networks and finding jobs in a matter of days instead of a matter of weeks or month.

This is difficult to sort of sort through it all because it's all happening so quickly right now.

Michael: Any of my students who are doing audio interviews, this is going to be an amazing tool for me, and it's going to really simplify the process for me getting experts to do audio interviews with me. It may seem easy, but sometimes when you're using direct email or you're doing a cold contact, you never hear back from them. I may have to email ten people to invite for an audio interview, and maybe only one, but I could see this really short cutting process and me getting much more qualified people and interesting for my website.

Chip: I can speak to my personal experience in that I've been looking for joint venture partners, and as I start to look at the different industries where I want to do joint venture partners, as I do keyword searches, people who manage real world offline networks are the perfect people for me to be talking to.

So, I look up network manager or network owner or executive director network. I start to do some natural searches, and I'm meeting people who can put me in front of 10,000 20,000 100,000 500,000 people.

Michael: Yeah, like an association like American Marketing Association or something like that where none of their members are even on Linked In, and they can move that whole network onto Linked In and add value to their association.

Chip: That's actually what I'm doing systematically here in my local market is I'm training the heads of the chambers of commerce here on Linked In, and partnering with them to get their entire organization onto Linked In and trained in how to use it to really unlock the value of the network.

Michael: Let's talk about that. Let's say there's some listeners who have offline networks. What is the best system and the best way to get them linked in? I'll give you an example of what I did. I used the tool. It searched my Outlook. It found 400 and something people who already Linked In

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members, and I automatically sent invites. That's how it got started with me. Is there a right way and a wrong way to do this? Can you give some advice for someone who has an offline network?

Chip: Let me say this. Without properly educating your network to the opportunity, without fully understanding it, at best you're going to have an aborted effort. Part of the challenge that real world networks have is fighting for attention.

So, if you're going to introduce Linked In, and not position it well for the benefit of your members, they're getting lots of information all the time anyway. So, it's really you want to look at how can you position people's participation in Linked In as a value-add for them. What's in it for them?

Once you've got that message done clearly, you don't want to just mass broadcast to people. You actually want to add meetings to begun talking about it. It's all about word of mouth.

These kinds of social networks are all about word of mouth, and the more buzz that you create, the more excited people get. That's why I make myself available to those kinds of groups because if it is not done well, it'll be an aborted attempt.

Michael: Let's talk about Linked In's Questions and Answers. Describe what this is and how we can benefit by using it.

Chip: I'm sure everyone on the call here has heard of Alex Mandosian. If you haven't, he's one of the top internet marketers, and he developed a program called an Ask Database. The whole idea behind this was ask the people in your networks what their problems were, what problems do they have and create products to solve them, and then sell them those products.

Linked In's Questions and Answers are just like that, only you have the potential of being seen by 17 million people in the Linked In networks.

Michael: So, if I'm asking a question, is it open to the entire network?

Chip: It's open to the entire internet because they publish these things to the search engines.

Michael: The questions and the answers.

Chip: Yeah, so if you're answering questions, and you put your websites on there, your email address, your blog, everytime it publishes, that's another link to your website, it's another link to your blog, it's another thing for the search engines to crawl and find.

If you're asking questions, you're getting input from people all over the world so you know how you're doing. You know how to find resources. You can find anything, anything that you need is already in your networks. This is I teach in my business development training. Anything you need is already in your network.

If you number one, know exactly what you're looking for, number two, are crystal clear and communicate it crystal clear, and number three, you get your ask in gear.

Michael: Get your ask in gear.

Chip: That's one of my trademark slogans, "Get you ask in gear." I really think that people have still not even an inkling of the possibility with this.

Michael: Any advanced stuff that just really would blow me away? I'm looking at it right here, Linked In. I'm looking at the services, answers, my profiles, jobs hiring people, what else can you think of that's really cool, that 99.5% of the people don't know about?

Chip: Well, there's a lot of offline resources around Linked In.

Michael: Let's talk about some.

Chip: My Linked In Power forum.

Michael: What is that?

Chip: My Linked In Power Forum was begun when Linked In began by a gentleman named Vincent Wright, and Vincent Wright created this aggregation of people that are power users for Linked In. So, when you become a new user, you can go to Yahoo Groups, type in Linked In, and it comes up with about seven or eight hundred Linked In related groups.

Listen, it's just mind boggling. It's mind boggling the resources that are available when you kind of get a good sense of the space, and you

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understand how social media works, do a little bit of investigation and the whole world opens up to you.

Michael: So, these power users and these Yahoo Groups, these are people discussing advanced ways of using Linked In.

Chip: Not only that, but they're relationship building. They're talking around specific groups and issues and interests and ideas. They're developing new technologies together. It really opens up an entire world that you don't even know exists.

*That's the end of our interview with our Linked In expert.*

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