

Business Research Tips is a monthly email with practical ideas for managing business information and research. Please feel free to forward this newsletter on to friends.

## Are you LinkedIn?

LinkedIn < [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) > is a cross between biographical information and a social networking site. Users post their career profile information to LinkedIn, and can then make contact with a network of LinkedIn users. Based on the adage of six degrees of separation, users can contact other LinkedIn subscribers through a network of connections that are described as 1st degree (people they know personally), 2nd degree (the network of contacts their 1st degree contact knows), and 3rd degree (the extended potential network of contacts that they may connect with through mutual connections).

LinkedIn boldly claim that their site isn't networking, instead "it's what networking should be". For users that are looking to extend their professional circle, LinkedIn is a very good tool that may complement their other networking options. It is an icebreaker that may open up an extended network of people in various cities for business or employment opportunities.

To get the most out of your LinkedIn profile, it is suggested that LinkedIn users:

- » add some spice and personality to their LinkedIn profile;
- » have a catchy summary of their experience, that is similar to the introduction spiel they may use in face to face networking;
- » include keywords describing their specialties;
- » seek recommendations for their work from LinkedIn colleagues;
- » include details of their web or blog sites, activities, interests and awards;
- » create a web searchable profile by using the personal URL option, such as [www.linkedin.com/in/heathercarine](http://www.linkedin.com/in/heathercarine).

LinkedIn is a useful site for freelancers that may not have a website to promote their expertise, and improve their page rank in search engines. Similarly, for employees working for companies that don't profile their staff on their company website, a LinkedIn public profile is an opportunity for them to broadcast their expertise via the web.

LinkedIn is growing rapidly, and now has over 9 million subscribers. Successful networking via the online world is the same as in the "physical world". Making the link may be difficult, but it is only the first step, and you still need a lot of skill and charm to get to the second step.

## Online Currents

This month's tip is a summary of Heather's review of LinkedIn, published in *Online Currents*, March 2007.

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