



How to Get LinkedIn

Guide for the Beef Industry
2012-2013



**Young Producers'
Council**

National Cattlemen's Beef Association



YPC LinkedIn Guide

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Letter from the YPC Chair

Dear YPC members,

One of the great things about the NCBA Young Producers' Council is how it brings together full-time and part-time cattle producers as well as people involved just beyond the pasture gate. Regardless of the day-to-day tasks that might consume YPC members, the common goal to work on policy issues, member recruitment, personal development and networking creates focus for the organization.

The leadership committee has a variety of activities planned for 2012 that will provide purpose and direction for the group, and I want to encourage everyone to look for ways to get involved. There is an opportunity for our generation to get involved in NCBA, network with older producers and become engaged in policy discussions. I understand the family and financial burden it takes to leave an operation for a few days to become engaged in an organization like NCBA.

Airline travel, hotel reservations and convention registrations certainly present a financial burden to many young producers trying to establish their own operations. On top of that, many producers in their 20s and 30s are the only source of labor for their operations. They often have to leave those operations in the hands of extended family and friends. These are challenges of involvement for any producer, but the stakes are often raised for young producers that have young families depending on them.

I bring all this front and center because I truly believe the YPC can find answers for these challenges.

First, the YPC provides opportunities that might not require a large travel commitment. The mentor program that was unveiled during the Nashville meetings is a perfect start. You can be paired with a mentor in your state who is willing to be a sounding board as you look for guidance and advice.

Also, membership education and recruitment is an opportunity that exists on nearly a daily basis, and policy and beef quality assurance issues are something that producers can champion regardless of timing and location.

Those elements of YPC and NCBA involvement definitely help people stay engaged, but I also think it is important for us to address the challenges of involvement at the national level. The cost to travel to national-level meetings is significant, and YPC took steps toward addressing this in 2011 with its convention registration scholarships.

The council wants to build on this 2012. I believe there are ways YPC can help members overcome these trials, but we need members to be involved in the discussions. Keep watching your e-mail to get involved in the upcoming YPC task forces. Details will likely also be shared through the YPC blog and Facebook page as we get more information.

Healthy discussion regarding these challenges will help YPC work toward reasonable solutions to encourage involvement at summer meetings in Denver and the 2013 annual meeting in Tampa.

Best regards,
Lance Zimmerman
(2012-2013 YPC Chair)



What is the Young Producers' Council?

by Holly Foster

Young Producers' Council (YPC) was established during the 2008 Cattle Industry Summer Conference in Denver and was initiated to help NCBA members ages 18 to 35 develop their leadership skills and become more involved in NCBA policy development.

The group also helps provide networking opportunities, continuing education and professional development activities to its members.

YPC members elected their first slate of officers at the 2009 Cattle Industry Annual Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

The executive committee and members of the YPC board members also serve as liaisons for YPC to the following NCBA committees:

- Agricultural Policy
- Cattle Health & Well Being
- Federal Lands
- Live Cattle Marketing
- Membership
- Property Rights & Environmental Management
- Tax & Credit Resolutions

The immediate past chairman serves the board in an advisory capacity. YPC members are also active in several task force committees to coordinate specific activities, such as public relations and the group's Cattle Call blog.

Membership in the council is free to current NCBA members. For more information, become a fan of the Young Producers' Council on Facebook or visit www.BeefUSA.org/ypc.

Mission Statement: The Young Producers Council will be an active player in National Cattlemen's Beef Association policy development and will work to cultivate more peer members, as well as serve as industry advocates.

2011 Executive Committee

Chairman - Ben Neale, Tennessee
Vice Chairman - Holly Foster, California
Secretary/Treasurer - Cari Rincker, New York
Agriculture Policy - Evan Tate, Kentucky
Live Cattle Marketing - Travis Hoffman, Colorado
Membership - RaeMarie Gordon, Colorado
Property Rights & Environmental Management - Lance Zimmerman, Colorado
Cattle Health & Well Being - J.W. Wood, Colorado
Federal Lands - Sarah Baker, Idaho
Tax & Credit - Phillip Weltmer, Kansas
Resolutions - Tonya Amen, Georgia
Public Relations Task Force - Jesse R. Bussard, Kentucky
Cattle Call Blog Task Force - Lauren Chase, Montana

2012 Executive Committee

Chairman- Lance Zimmerman, Colorado
Vice Chairmain - J.W. Wood, Colorado
Secretary/Treasurer - Travis Hoffman, Colorado
Agriculture Policy - Faustine Curry, Texas
Live Cattle Marketing - Ansen Pond
Membership - Jen Livsey
Property Rights & Environmental Management - Evan Tate, Kentucky
Cattle Health & Well Being - RaeMarie Gordon, Colorado
Federal Lands - Sarah Baker, Idaho
Tax & Credit - Margaret Ann Smith
Resolutions - Jaclyn Wilson-Demel
Immediate Past Chair - Ben Neale, Tennessee
Public Relations Task Force - Lauren Chase, Montana and Brandi Buzzard, Kansas

*"YPC was established to help younger producers gain more effective leadership skills and to give them an opportunity to become involved in NCBA. This is our chance as young members to learn about the grass roots workings of NCBA from the ground up and gain valuable experiences that will benefit our industry and the association in the future."
-Ben Spitzer, 2010 YPC Chairman*

What is LinkedIn? Why Use It?

by Jesse Bussard



LinkedIn is the world's largest professional networking site with over 100 million users. This site allows users to develop contacts with people in their industry and establish a list of connections. It provides a useful tool for users to find jobs. Additionally, employers may list jobs or search for potential candidates using LinkedIn. LinkedIn is also beneficial if you're targeting professional or business audience (e.g. dietitians, nutritionists, medical professionals) and can be a useful in determining new groups to advocate to.

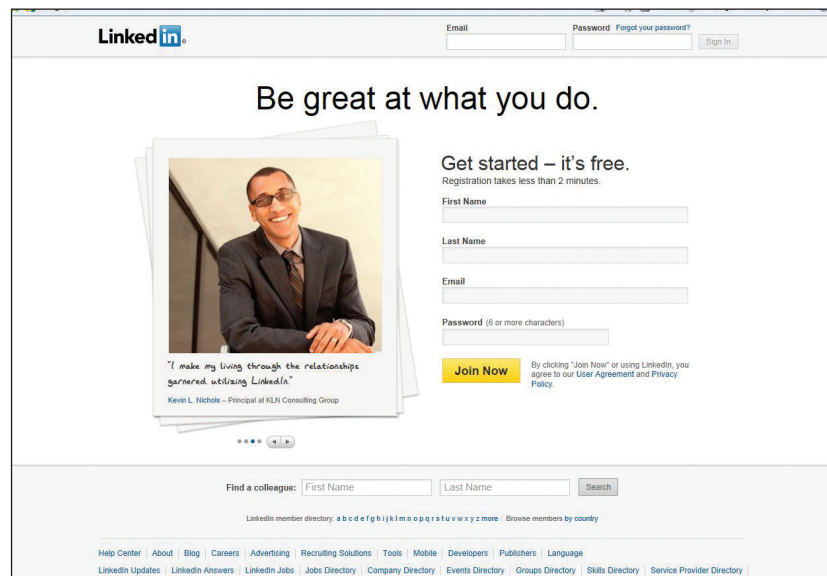
How is LinkedIn Useful For YPC Members/Cattle Industry Folks?

by Jesse Bussard

LinkedIn is a valuable resource for cattle producers. Opportunities to develop relationships among other producers and members of various other segments of the cattle industry exist in the form of discussion forums, individual connections, companies, and job opportunities. LinkedIn also serves as another avenue for producers to connect with consumers and advocate for the beef industry.

Several discussion forums such as Cattle Ranchers Professional Networking Group, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, BEEF Magazine, American Meat Institute, and Meatingplace exist and allow for cattlemen to discuss topics ranging from cattle management to policy issues. These groups also connect cattle producers with others across the country. For young producers seeking employment, many cattle industry companies are listed on LinkedIn. Job search capabilities provide another useful resource.

LinkedIn provides cattlemen and women with the ability to establish a professional network of their peers in the industry. Through this network, activities such as job searching, marketing, developing relationships with other producers and connecting with consumers is strengthened.



Setting Up Your Profile

by Katy Starr

Setting up your LinkedIn profile can take a little time, but is worth the effort. To get started, fill in the information under “Join LinkedIn Today.”

Actually creating your account is fairly easy: just follow the steps. LinkedIn was created to be a professional social networking site, whether you are currently employed, looking for a job, or still a student in college or high school.

With the email address entered when signing up, LinkedIn will ask to search your email contacts to see if they are using LinkedIn also. This will get you started with your connections on your profile. Once you confirm your address, you will be asked, “Do You Know These People?” Check mark the ones you know and add connections, or you may skip this step and add connections at a later time.

For the next step, you have the option of having a Premium Account or Basic Account (which is free). For this section of the guide, select the Basic Account.

Select the “Profile” link to get started building your profile.

On the right side of your profile, you will see the percent completeness of your profile. Your goal is to reach 100%, which can be done by importing your resume, adding previous job positions (for experience), describe the current position you hold, add skills (e.g. Excel, PowerPoint experience), education (i.e. high school and college), a professional photo, and connections (people you know who also have profiles on LinkedIn). By importing your resume, it will save you some time/work by automatically putting your resume information into your current job position and past positions, so upload your resume.

For each job position, you have the option to include recommendations.

This is the equivalent to including references with your resume for an interview. If someone you have worked with on a past position has a LinkedIn account, ask them if they will write an endorsement for the work you do. This also can be done for schools you have attended. Find your university professors on LinkedIn and ask them to write a recommendation for the work you

This screenshot shows the initial LinkedIn sign-up page. At the top, there are input fields for 'Email' and 'Password', with a 'Sign In' button to the right. Below these is a blue header for 'Join LinkedIn Today'. The form contains fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Email', and 'Password'. A note indicates the password must be '6 or more characters'. A green 'Join Now *' button is present, along with a link for 'Already on LinkedIn? Sign in.'

This screenshot shows the 'I am currently' section of the LinkedIn profile creation form. The 'I live in:' dropdown is set to 'United States'. The 'ZIP Code:' field is empty, with a note: 'e.g. 94043 (Only your region will be public, not your ZIP code)'. Under 'I am currently:', the 'Employed' radio button is selected and circled in red. Other options are 'Job Seeker' and 'Student'. Below are fields for 'Job title:' and 'Company:', with a checkbox for 'I am self-employed'. A blue 'Create my profile' button is at the bottom.

This screenshot shows the 'I am currently' section of the LinkedIn profile creation form. The 'I live in:' dropdown is set to 'United States'. The 'ZIP Code:' field is empty, with a note: 'e.g. 94043 (Only your region will be public, not your ZIP code)'. Under 'I am currently:', the 'Job Seeker' radio button is selected and circled in red. Other options are 'Employed' and 'Student'. Below are fields for 'Most recent job title:' and 'Most recent company:', with a checkbox for 'I am self-employed'. A 'Time period:' section has two dropdown menus for dates. A blue 'Create my profile' button is at the bottom.

Continued: Setting Up Your Profile

do in class and/or involvement in on-campus activities or clubs. A great way to get recommendations is give them. Surprise colleagues or fellow YPC members with a recommendation. They may just reciprocate the effort.

The bottom left of your screen included additional and personal information you may include, as well as reasons to contact. Just like on a resume, it is good to include organizations you are involved in (such as YPC) and honors or awards for achievements. If you are only looking for career opportunities or job inquiries, people will know to contact you for only those reasons and not for business deals or consulting offers. As mentioned previously, be sure to upload your resume first, as it will upload some of your information automatically.

I live in:

ZIP Code:

e.g. 94043 (Only your region will be public, not your ZIP code)

I am currently: Employed Job Seeker Student

College/University:

Dates attended: to

Current students: enter your expected graduation year

[Create my profile](#)

[Improve your Profile](#) [View profile](#)

[Import your résumé](#)
[Ask for recommendations](#)
[Create your profile in another language](#)

30% profile completeness

Complete your profile quickly
Import your résumé to build a complete profile in minutes.

Profile Completion Tips (Why do this?)

- Add another position (+15%)
- Describe your current position (+5%)
- Add your skills (+5%)
- Add your education (+25%)
- Add a picture (+5%)
- Add connections (+10%)

Your Account is Set Up — Choose Your Plan Level

What Do You Want to Do? <small>What's this?</small>	Premium	Basic (Free)
Create a professional profile and build your network	✓	✓
Join industry or alumni groups	✓	✓
Search & apply for jobs	✓	✓
See who's viewed your LinkedIn Profile	✓	Limited
View the professional profiles of over 135 million people	✓	Limited
Send messages to people you aren't directly connected to	✓	
Premium search filters & automated search alerts	✓	
Save profiles into folders	✓	
Add notes & contact info to any profile	✓	
Reach out to over 135 million users	✓	
	Choose Premium <small>Plans starting from \$24.95</small>	Choose Basic <small>Free</small>

[Skip this step](#)

Managing and creating connections on LinkedIn

by Brandi Buzzard

LinkedIn is a great online networking tool that can help young cattle producers expand their professional network, get a job and stay connected with other young industry leaders. The purpose of this article is to briefly explain how to add and manage connections on LinkedIn.

Adding Connections

It is quite easy to start adding connections to your profile. After creating your profile, you can search for people you know in the search box. People who fit the search criteria will be listed on the results page. To add them you can either click 'Add to Network' next to their name or if you would like to view their profile first, you can click on their name and on their profile page click 'Connect.'

In addition to finding connections through the search feature, if you look to the left hand side of the home screen LinkedIn will suggest 'People You May Know', very similar to Facebook. You can add these connections as you have others or choose to ignore them.

LinkedIn has three degrees of connections. Someone who is your personal connection is a 1st degree connection. A 2nd degree connection is someone who is a 1st degree connection with one of your 1st degree connections. Similarly, a 3rd degree connection is someone who is a 1st degree connection to one of your 2nd degree connections. You can contact 2nd and 3rd degree connections through InMail or by 'Getting Introduced'. The different degrees of connections are indicated through logos by the person's name. It is also interesting to see the common connections among your professional network.

If you want to contact a LinkedIn user who is a 2nd or 3rd degree connection, you can 'Get Introduced'. Introductions allow you to further broaden your network by utilizing your current connections. This is the LinkedIn description of Introductions:



Introductions

Introductions let you contact users in your network, through the people you know. If you want to contact a LinkedIn user who is two or three degrees away from you, you can request an introduction through one of your connections. Your connection will, in turn, decide whether to forward it on to the desired recipient (if in your 2nd degree) or to a shared connection (if in your 3rd degree).

Managing Connections:

After you have added some connections you can categorize them according to similar interests, educational backgrounds or as colleagues. By clicking the 'Contacts' tab at the top of the screen you will be taken to a screen like the first image.

As you can see on the right hand side, the first image, there are various tags that can be applied to your connections so that you can easily filter through your network. You can enter the name of a specific contact into the filter box and that will allow you to edit their tags, send them a message or visit their profile.

After you have assigned tags, you can evaluate your network by using "Network Statistics". This is located under the 'Contacts' tab and statistical breakdown of your connections and how many other potential connections you have access to through 2nd and 3rd degrees. You can also view information about what regions your network is more heavily concentrated in and what kind of industries you have access to through your network.

Through expanding and creating a broad network, young cattle producers can more easily connect with other members of the beef industry.

LinkedIn Home Screen and Updates

by Jena Swanson

Home Screen

The LinkedIn Home Screen provides a hub of information and actions going on within your professional network. LinkedIn makes navigation easy with tabs and buttons to effortlessly take actions on managing your network. The top of the screen includes the following buttons: **Home, Profile, Contacts, Groups, Jobs, Inbox, Companies, News, More**. Click on any of these buttons to further manage or grow your network. In addition, the People Search field is located at the top of the page for quick searches.

A function I find extremely helpful is the **“People You May Know”** box. The box provides a rolling view of people that I may already know, or might be helpful to connect with based on my current connections, groups, previous employment and more. I like this tool, because it suggests several cattle industry folks that would be beneficial to network with.

YPC members should feel comfortable connecting with anyone on LinkedIn that they would feel comfortable exchanging a business card with.

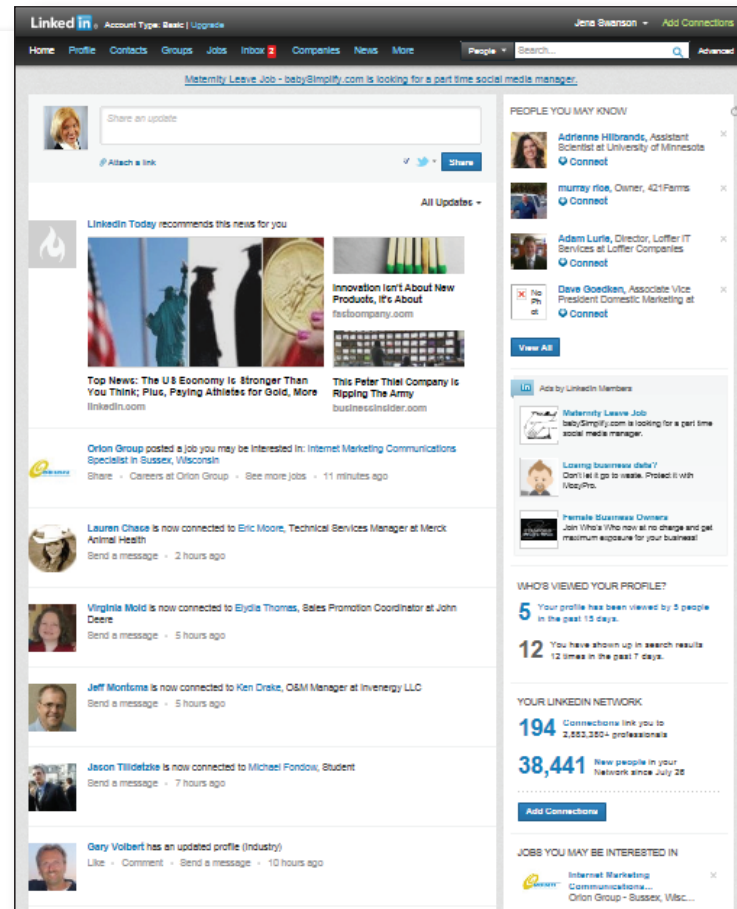
Other tools that are intuitive to your profile and industry networking are the **“Companies You May Want to Follow,” “Groups You May Like,”** and **“Jobs you May be Interested In”** boxes. These areas also flow information that may positively contribute to your networking needs, as well as alert you of areas you weren't aware of.

Industry statistics boxes are continually updated to alert you of your network size, and well as viewers of your profile. These stats are quite significant when actively seeking employment through LinkedIn.

The LinkedIn today banner provides headlines related your industry and can be customized to your specific area, such as, Marketing and Advertising. These headlines provide you with quick and timely news that can directly affect your industry and career.

Updates

The updates section on the home screen is what most LinkedIn users find the most helpful. This provides a streaming view of all your connections' activities. These updates can prompt you to congratulate a connection on a change in employment, alert you to an event that you and a connection will both be attending, provide you with interesting news and information, alert you to a job opening in a group you are a member of and more. These updates are exceptionally helpful when actively networking. I've used the update tool often to tell my connections of events I'll be attending, and found it as a way to meet up with connections at the event, or prompted a discussion with the connection. Updates can be categorized for ease of viewing into the following areas: **All, Groups, Profiles, Companies, Applications, Recommendations, Photos, Connections, Recently Joined, Additional Views, Customize and RSS**.



Continued: LinkedIn Home Screen and Updates

You can share an update easily by writing your update in the box at the top of the screen. In addition, you can attach a link, and share via Twitter simultaneously. Updates in LinkedIn are typically conservatively-toned, and relate to only professional activities. It is important to remember to keep this in mind, especially if you are linking your Twitter feed into LinkedIn. YPC members can use the update feature to network with other cattle industry people, and share cattle industry information.

The LinkedIn home screen and update feature have a short learning curve for users of other social media such as FaceBook. This area is extremely intuitive, yet beneficial for YPC members and cattle industry folks in search of building and learning from their professional network.

Authors Highlight



Jena Swanson was raised on her family's Red Angus beef cow/calf and cash crop operation in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. As a cattle producer, Jena has been involved in several industry organizations, including the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association (WCA), Wisconsin Cattlewomen's Association (WCW), National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), Young Producer Council (YPC), and Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC). Jena currently serves as Secretary on the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Board of Directors, and Vice-President on the Wisconsin Cattlewomen's Association. She serves on the YPC Public Relations committee, and helped develop the Twitter social media guide.

Jena graduated from UW-River Falls with a BS in Marketing Communications. She was previously employed by Central Livestock Association/CRI, a livestock marketing cooperative based in South St. Paul, Minnesota, as the TEAM Marketing and Administration Manager. Jena is currently employed by Bader Rutter, an agri-marketing agency based in Brookfield, Wisconsin, as an Account Executive.

Tips for Young Producers on Utilizing Groups on LinkedIn

by Brandi Buzzard

The “Groups” feature on LinkedIn is an excellent way to network with connections that are involved in the beef industry and have similar interests. Groups can also be utilized to find jobs, broaden your network and create lasting professional connections. This article will provide the young producer with tips on how to utilize the features that groups can offer.

What are groups?

LinkedIn groups allow you to network, search for career opportunities and discuss ideas or topics with other group members in an open forum. To join a specific group, type the name of the group in the search box and click “**Join Group**”.

You can also click on “**Similar Groups**” to find groups that have similar membership bases and discussions.

Some groups require an invitation or your request to join a group must be approved before you will have access to other group features.

Within groups there are several different areas to explore which can be accessed by the tabs at the top of the group’s page.

The “**Discussions**” tab is a forum for idea and thought sharing on topics in the industry. You can reply directly to the discussion thread or send another member a message.

Under “**Members**”, you can see how many members are in the group and who has been the most active or influential in the group.

The “**Promotions**” tab allows you to get updated on conferences or activities that may be taking place within the group’s respective industry.

Under the “**Jobs**” tab, you will find recent listings of any career opportunities that are available in that specific group. Members can post jobs in the thread and also search for similar jobs.

What to Join?

You should join groups that you find interesting or which can be advantageous to your network or job search. Potential groups to join:

- Alumni group from your university
- Industry groups, (e.g. National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, Cattle Ranchers, *Beef Magazine*)
- Groups that specialize in posting job opportunities, (e.g. Agri Jobs)
- Alumni and networking groups, (e.g. Future Farmers of America – Alumni and Networking)
- LinkedIn may suggest groups on the ‘Groups You May Like’ tab. These suggestions are based on your professional network and groups that your connections have joined.

There is also a ‘Groups Directory’ that features popular groups on the LinkedIn network. LinkedIn caps the number of groups that an individual can have membership in at 50, so choose your involvement wisely.

Continued: Tips for Young Producers on Utilizing Groups on LinkedIn

How to Set Up a Group

If you'd like to set up a group you can do so by clicking the 'Groups' tab and then 'Create a Group'.

You will then need to provide all the information that will be associated with the group: logo, name, type, a summary and description of the group. You will also need to provide your email address and create privacy settings for the group in terms of whether the group will be open or if it will be by invite and approval only.

It's important to note that groups on LinkedIn are very different from groups on Facebook. Groups on LinkedIn should be professional in nature and should not be discriminatory. Additionally, when you are participating in group discussions or forums, always maintain a level of professional courtesy which you would like to be returned to you.

By following these easy tips, you can get involved with groups on LinkedIn to broaden your network and maybe even find your dream job!

Authors Highlight



Brandi Buzzard is a native of Colony, KS where she grew up rodeoing and showing livestock with her family. A passionate agriculture advocate, she spreads the story of agriculture through public speaking events, blogging and in print. She attended Kansas State University where she earned her B.S. in Animal Sciences and Agriculture Economics and her M.S. in Animal Behavior, Well-Being and Health. Currently, Brandi works with producers, academics and students through K-State Research and Extension promoting agriculture training programs.

Brandi is active in a variety of agriculture organizations including the Kansas Livestock Association, the National Pork Board's Operation Main Street, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Young Producer's Council and Food For Thought. Outside of her professional interests she enjoys spending time with her husband and family, rodeoing, working on the farm and globetrotting

Companies

by Jena Swanson

The “Companies” section offers users the ability to search and follow updates from different companies. It is easy to access, simply click on the “Companies” tab at the top of the screen. This function allows users to follow companies, access their profile, and get a streaming view of their updates. This is a great tool to access all industry companies, and get a quick view of who is hiring. Many times, jobs will be only posted on the company page, not within a group. So it is a good idea to search for agricultural industry companies that you may have interest in either learning more about, or seeking employment.

LinkedIn has two boxes that provide suggestions unique to your profile, and interests, this includes: “Companies You May Want to Follow” and “Companies Hiring on LinkedIn.” Again, these are only options that may be of interest to you, to expand your growing professional network.

The Companies section is an easy, yet relevant tool that allows users the ability to learn more about industry companies, and another route to search for a new career.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn interface for the 'Companies' section. At the top, the user's name 'Jena Swanson' and account type 'Basic | Upgrade' are visible. The navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Profile', 'Contacts', 'Groups', 'Jobs', 'Inbox 2', 'Companies', 'News', and 'More'. The 'Companies' tab is selected, and a search bar is present. Below the navigation, there are three main sections: 1. 'Search for Companies' with a search input field and a 'Search' button. 2. 'Followed Company Updates' showing a list of updates from Pfizer and Bader Rutter & Associates. 3. 'Companies You May Want to Follow' featuring logos for Proxima, Union Group, Anderson Partners Advertising, IPA, movéo, The Ardent Club, H CENTRAL, Spiky Montréal, and Davidoff Communications. At the bottom right, there are 'Ads by LinkedIn Members' for 'Plant Breeding & Genetics' and 'Track Customers'.



Katy Starr (formerly Wunsch) was raised on a small cattle ranch and tree farm in Central Oregon. She participated in 4-H and FFA growing, participating in public speaking, livestock judging and livestock showing. From a young age, she has always had a desire to live and, one day, work in agriculture.

Katy graduated from the University of Idaho with Bachelor's of Science degrees in Agribusiness and Animal Science – Production. She was greatly involved in the school's Agribusiness Club as the President for two years, as well as the Student Idaho Cattle Association, Sigma Alpha (Professional Agricultural Sorority) and CFFA.

Katy currently works for the Oregon Cattlemen's Association as an Administrative Assistant planning meetings, coordinating membership, accounting and works on their Positive Producer Image Campaign. She has also started "Oregon Raised for Schools," which is a program based off of the National Farm to School program, in hopes to educate Oregon's youth about where their beef comes from and how ranchers care for the land, their livestock and the environment.

Involvement with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Young Producer's Council (YPC), Oregon Young Cattlemen's Association and the Jefferson County Cattlemen's Association has kept Katy busy the last few years. Her passion for the cattle industry compels her drive to share positive stories about agriculture with the rest of the nation whenever she has the chance.



Cari Rincker is the owner of Rincker Law, PLLC, a national general practice law firm concentrating in food and agriculture law. She is currently the Chair of the American Bar Association's General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division's Agriculture Law Committee and serves on the New York State Bar Association's Agriculture & Rural Issues Committee.

Cari's passion for agriculture issues is deeply rooted. She grew up on a seedstock Simmental cattle operation in Shelbyville, Illinois where she spent significant time working on her family's farm. Cari went on to receive her Associate in Agriculture Science from Lake Land College and Bachelors of Science from Texas A & M University. She continued her education back home at the University of Illinois to complete her Masters of Science in Ruminant Nutrition. Due to her passion for agriculture law and policy, Cari decided to complete her Juris Doctor from Pace University, School of Law, in White Plains, New York. At Pace, Cari completed certificates in both Environmental Law and International Law.

Cari continues to have her boots planted firmly in agriculture and enjoys judging livestock shows and taking pictures of the livestock industry and rural life. She is the coowner of Rincker Cattle Co., a SimAngus operation in Shelbyville, Illinois, and is on the leadership board for National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Young Producers' Council. She is the Past-President and Founding Member of New York Agri-Women and is a Director for the New York Simmental Association.



Jesse Bussard is a Pennsylvania cowgirl currently living in the Bluegrass State to attend graduate school. Her family owns a small cow-calf operation in south central Pennsylvania where they raise cross-bred Hereford-Angus beef cattle and sell beef locally. Jesse grew up showing livestock in 4-H and competing in many equine events.

She graduated with a B.S. in Animal Science from Penn State University and is currently pursuing her M.S. at the University of Kentucky in Crop Science. Jesse's graduate research focuses on the soil-plant-animal relationship with an emphasis on forage crops and livestock grazing systems. Upon graduation she hopes to continue working in agriculture to help farmers and ranchers solve problems at the farm level in both their forage production and livestock grazing systems.

Job Hunting through LinkedIn

by Jena Swanson

Perhaps the most useful and widely recognized motivator of developing a professional network on LinkedIn is: job hunting. LinkedIn provides several methods of seeking and landing the ideal job. LinkedIn users can customize the route that best meets their searching needs, but as with all of tools on LinkedIn, navigating is made easy.

Jobs Tab:

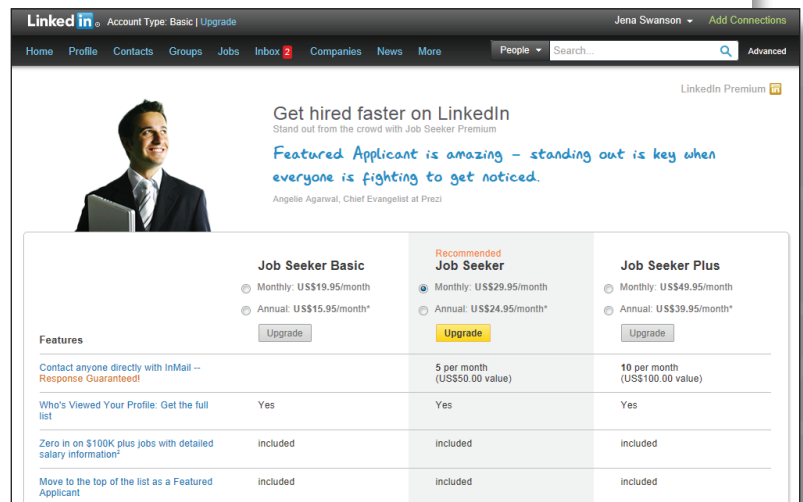
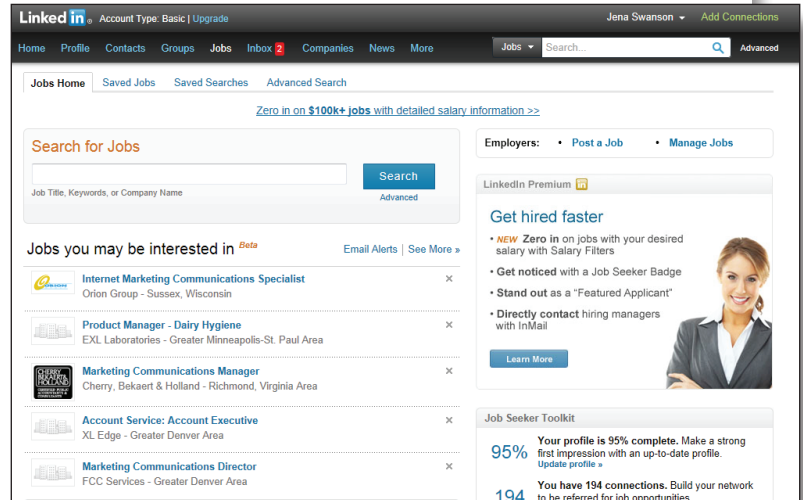
The easiest way to begin job hunting is to select the “Job” tab located on the top of the screen. This opens the job home page, where you can perform jobs searches, save jobs, post jobs and more. LinkedIn also lists several jobs that you may be interested in, depending on your industry.

Recruiters and job seekers may be interested in upgrading their accounts to maximize potential results. There are three levels of escalating services which users may choose on a subscription basis. Once your account has been upgraded as a job seeker, your account is given the job seeker badge, to let recruiters know you actively engaged in seeking employment.

LinkedIn users can continue to actively search through the “Jobs” tab, or they may try several other routes as listed below.

Groups:

Joining groups is an excellent way to find job postings specifically catered to your industry and interests. There are several agriculture industry groups that are excellent for finding jobs related to the interests and career endeavors that are important to YPC members. I have found the following groups to be credible, relevant, and timely at posting great job opportunities: Ag Careers, Agri Jobs, NCBA, UWRF Agricultural Marketing Communications Network (Search for your specific college program), Food Mega group, Meatingplace, and many others. Consider joining these groups, and actively monitor for updated discussions and job postings. You can also follow recruiters who post jobs, because you may be interested in receiving all of their updates. When you join these groups, it may also be a good idea to participate in conversations, as that may contribute to your chances of getting an interview.



Companies

There are several agricultural companies who create profiles on LinkedIn, and continually make career postings. Start by searching agricultural companies you are familiar with, once you locate potential employers, follow the company. You may also search by keyword, for instance, cattle, and a list of companies will appear. Many companies will have a “Careers” tab, which includes recently posted jobs. These jobs may only be posted within the Company’s profile, so it’s important to check on the actual company, as it may not be listed in your Group’s job postings. LinkedIn will provide you with industry statistics on how you are connected to the company. This is where you can utilize your already growing professional network. Click on the first degree connections to see who you already know there. Reach out to those individuals to develop potential references and interviews. The company method of job searching is targeted, yet extremely effective.

Personal Connections

LinkedIn makes connecting with past and current professional contacts tremendously simple, and rewarding. Whether you are seeking former colleagues, classmates or industry friends, grow your network through all routes possible. The larger your network of qualified and credible contacts, the greater your chances will be of making a job seeking connection. As you add new connections, engage with the connection, and fully read through their profile and connections. As with all networking, it’s who you know. Your connections may know of potential job postings either directly through a company or through another contact. It’s important that you stay engaged and actively seek introductions and meetings with your professional network. You never know when or where you will learn of the perfect career opportunity. Stay connected through LinkedIn! Another option for beef producers is to set up your own company page on LinkedIn. If you would like to feature your farm or ranch as a company on LinkedIn, select the Companies tab, and then click on the “Add a company” button in the upper right of the page.

How Do You Network?

by Jena Swanson

LinkedIn makes networking effortless. I like to think of LinkedIn as a virtual rolodex. Instead of gathering hundreds of business cards at industry meetings and events, keep track of your growing network in one easy to manage place.

Here's a real life scenario of building your network:

Attend your state cattlemen's annual convention and meet an industry professional connection. After the meeting, conduct a search for the individual on LinkedIn. Once you ensure you have found the correct individual, send a connection request, and make sure to include a note explaining when you met this person. For example, "It was great to meet you at the WI Cattlemen's Convention this week! I enjoyed our discussion on creating an YPC chapter in WI. Looking forward to connecting with you."

After your request has been accepted, you'll be able to fully view the profile of your new industry connection. Browse through their groups and associations, experience, and connections. It's easy to find similar interests and people you may already know. LinkedIn will also show you groups and connections you share with your new connection. Let's assume you find an individual you would like to network with that's already connected to your new contact. This would be called a 2nd connection. In order to connect with the 2nd connection, click on "Get introduced through a connection." This allows you to get introduced to a new person by leveraging your network. This is a great tool, as opposed to sending a connection request that may never be accepted. This is just one quick and easy example of how you can naturally build your network through LinkedIn.

There are several other useful methods to network through LinkedIn. The most apparent is at the bottom of the home screen page. LinkedIn populates several fields called "Reconnect with colleagues and classmates." These will auto-fill with all your previous employers and colleges. It is an extremely painless way to locate connections you may or may not know.

In addition, groups and events are excellent places to locate industry contacts you may have lost communication with over time, or make new professional contacts. Search through your industry groups such as NCBA, and find individuals with whom you share similar interests.

You can connect with these individuals solely because you are members of the same group. Events offer a way for you to indicate which upcoming industry events you will be attending. This allows your connections to be aware, and also for you to locate new individuals to network with.

As you continue to develop your LinkedIn skills, you'll find there are several methods for you to build and manage your network. Use the above routes as a starting point, and customize your networking to your liking. There is no perfect science for networking, but LinkedIn makes it trouble-free!



Utilizing the Messages Feature on LinkedIn

by Brandi Buzzard

The Messages feature on LinkedIn is an excellent way to contact your connections who are involved in the beef industry and have similar interests. Messages are convenient in that they allow you to contact a connection whose email address you may not have. This article will provide the young producer with tips on how to utilize messages on LinkedIn.

What are messages and where are they found?

Messages are private conversations between you and one or more of your connections. This feature is very similar to your email carrier or the messages feature on Facebook.

You can access your Messages Inbox (where all your messages are stored) by clicking the 'Inbox' icon on the menu bar.

How do I send a message?

To send a new message, click on the Inbox icon on your menu bar – in the next screen you will see a menu bar on the left hand side. Click 'Compose Message'

Next, type in the name of the connection you'd like to send a message. Or you can click the 'IN' icon to the right of the 'To:' box and the list of your contacts will pop up. Simply check the box of the people you'd like to send a message to and then click 'OK'.

Once you are satisfied with your message, click the 'Send Message' icon– done!

How do I look at old messages/conversations?

Easy. Just click on the 'Sent' or 'Archived' tab on the menu bar on the left-hand side of the screen. All of the messages you have sent, received and replied to will be saved for you.

As an added bonus, also under the 'Inbox' tab, you can view invitations from people on LinkedIn. Just click on the tab and based on your judgment, accept or decline the invitation. Remember, be careful of who you connect with – only add people you know and who you're sure you want to allow access to your full profile.

LinkedIn Etiquette for Young Cattle Producers

by Cari Rincker

LinkedIn can be a powerful online networking site to create a professional brand and network with others in your field. It is a great way to advertise your farm, get a job in the agriculture industry, and build a professional network. However, if done incorrectly, your LinkedIn activity could harm your professional reputation. The purpose of this article is to briefly discuss the Do's and Don'ts of LinkedIn etiquette.

The Do's

Do put up a (current) profile picture. A professionally done headshot is preferred, but not necessary. The photo should be a headshot and should look like you. Do feel free to use a photograph with a cowboy hat if you wear one at professional events.

Do complete your profile. Your profile tells your readers about you and is a direct reflection of your professional brand. Your employment history should include no more than the last ten years. Keep your profile up-to-date and don't link to websites that are out-of-date.

Do connect with people you know. Do link with people you know in real-life or have built an online relationship with. Don't be afraid to connect with your "real-world" friends. As a rule of thumb, feel comfortable connecting to anybody that you would exchange a business card with.

Do join groups that interest you. I suggest editing the email options for the groups (e.g., daily digests, individual emails, or no emails). Many people find discussion groups to be an excellent resource and networking opportunity.

Do link your Twitter account(s) to LinkedIn. However, don't send all of your tweets to LinkedIn – be selective.

Do bring in your blog feed into LinkedIn. There are handy LinkedIn applications for several blog platforms (e.g., Wordpress, Typepad) that will automatically pull your blog feed into your stream.

Do recommend respected colleagues. When doing so, keep the recommendations professional. Recommend colleagues without expecting reciprocity.

Do respond to LinkedIn emails like a typical email. People do use LinkedIn as a way to communicate with their professional contacts. Make sure to timely respond to these emails. Make sure to check your email settings so ensure timely notification of receipt.

Do download the LinkedIn application on your smartphone. Using the application makes it easy to manage your account and connection requests on the go. Some allow contact information to synch to the contacts on your phone.

Do spell-check and use proper grammar. Poor spelling and grammar can put you in a negative light.

The Don't's

Don't become an invitation spammer. Don't use the canned LinkedIn invitation if there is a chance that person will not remember you. Tell the potential connection where you met (e.g., NCBA Annual Convention and Trade Show, Illini Elite Private Treaty Sale) or how you know them (e.g., both members of the Young Producers' Council or part of the #AgChat community on Twitter).

Don't post anything that you wouldn't feel comfortable with your employer, client or customer seeing. Don't be afraid to note personal information about yourself such as hobbies and interests – it gives you personality. However, make sure it gives depth to your professional image.

Don't feel pressured to accept every invitation you receive. Beware of LinkedIn spammers. Only link to those people that you would like a professional connection to. Don't be overly concerned about numbers.

Don't confuse LinkedIn with other social networking websites. Use LinkedIn for what it is for – professional networking. LinkedIn is different than Twitter, Facebook, Quora, and YouTube.

Don't ask people for recommendations that do not know you very well. Only reach out to people that know you and have something positive to say about you. Don't make people feel obligated to give you a recommendation. And don't take it personally if people do not wish to give you a recommendation.

Don't overuse punctuation marks!?! or curse &*\$%#. It looks unprofessional.

Don't stalk people on LinkedIn. LinkedIn has a function that shows people who viewed their profile. LinkedIn is not the place to secretly online stalk people on a daily basis. That is what Facebook and Twitter are for.

Don't lie. Make sure the information that you put on your profile is truthful. Lies always come back to bite you.

For more information, find me on LinkedIn at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/caririncker>.

Q & A on LinkedIn

by Jesse Bussard

If you've got a question, LinkedIn's "Answers" application can probably answer it. LinkedIn Answers is a wonderful resource to share business knowledge. It allows users to ask questions and get fast answers from knowledgeable experts within your own network and other worldwide. It also allows you to showcase your own knowledge and expertise by answering questions for others.

Asking Questions?

So how do you ask a question on LinkedIn? It's actually quite easy. You enter your question and select the appropriate category to place it under. Another handy feature allows you to also send your question by email to particular connections you think may be able to help so that they do not miss it.

Sidenote: Answers is not a place intended to recruit, advertise, or announce job searches. These questions are flagged and removed.

After asking a question it will appear in several key places:

- Listed under the "Answers tab";
- On your profile ;
- On the LinkedIn homepage of your connections; and
- In email, if you sent your question to specific connections!

It is also possible to ask questions privately. If you opt to do this your question will not appear on the site and is instead delivered via message to the specific connections you choose.

One other thing to note is with the "Basic" profile option users are limited to asking 10 questions per month.

Answering Questions

Using LinkedIn Answers is a great way to showcase your knowledge and interests. Answers you provide become part of your profile and clearly demonstrate your expertise in a particular area to connections.

Questions to be answered can be found in many places on LinkedIn. When a question is posted by one of your connections a Network Update is shared on your home page. Questions also appear under the Answers tab under "New Questions From Your Network" and also by category. There is also an "Advanced Answers Search" tab with a feature that allows users to search for questions with more specific search criteria.

Once you've chosen a question to answer you can click on it. This will bring up a new page with the question and display any answers that have already been submitted. Your answer will appear in several locations: under the question answered; as a network update on the homepages of your connections; on your profile; and in an email to the person that asked the question.

It is also possible to answer questions privately. Using this option, your answer does not appear on the site. It is instead sent by email to the individual that asked the question.

Expertise

This is a feedback measure from your fellow users featured on the Answers application of LinkedIn. It allows your connections (questioners) to in a way "vote" your answer as the best. This gains you (the answerer) points of expertise in the category of the question. The best way to build your Expertise rating is to answer questions in the areas you are most knowledgeable in. Experts in these categories are then recognized on LinkedIn. Basically, the more points you gain for your Expertise, the higher you appear on the Experts list.

Advanced Answers Search

This feature allows you to search to see if your intended question has already been answered. It uses a keyword search to find similar questions others have asked in the past and allows you to see if any of the answers shown meet your needs.

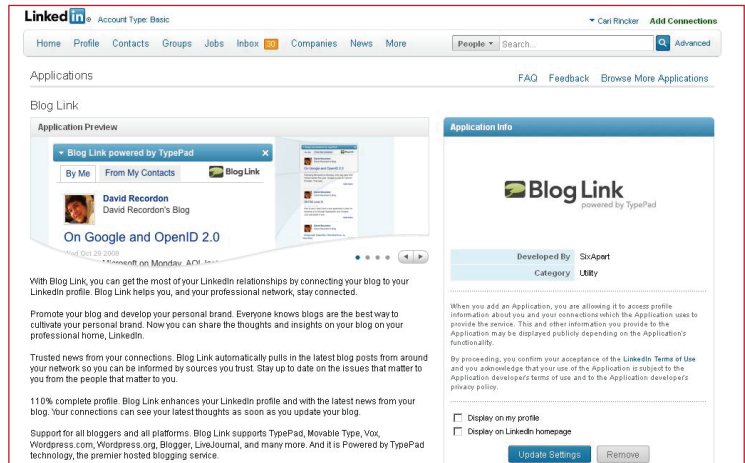
Advanced User Tips for Cattle Producers Using LinkedIn

by Cari Rincker

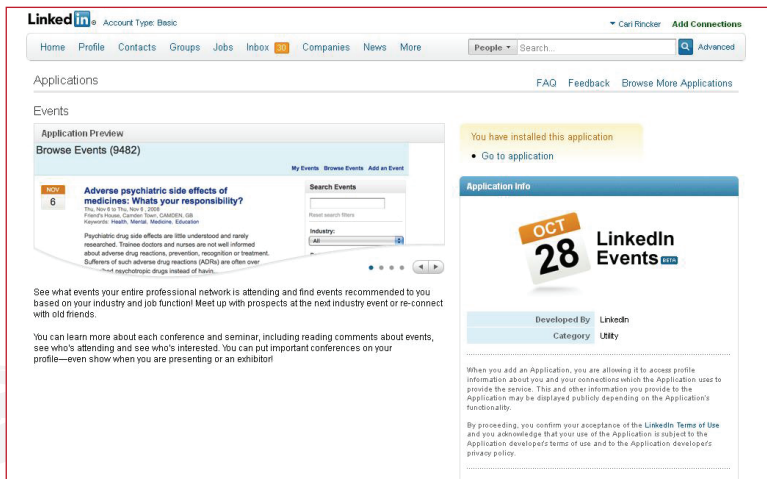
For those cattle producers who are already using LinkedIn but want to “take it up a notch,” I suggest implementing a few select applications for your profile. The key here is to use applications that complement your professional image. Below are some suggested applications to help enhance your brand:

1. Blog Link, TypePad, or Wordpress.

If you have a farm or ranch blog, bringing in your blog posts into your LinkedIn profile is a “must.” It is a simple process requiring the user to download the correct blog application according to the platform and entering in the RSS feed. Professional contacts will stay up-to-date on blog posts and can easily review and share the entire post by clicking on the mini-feed.

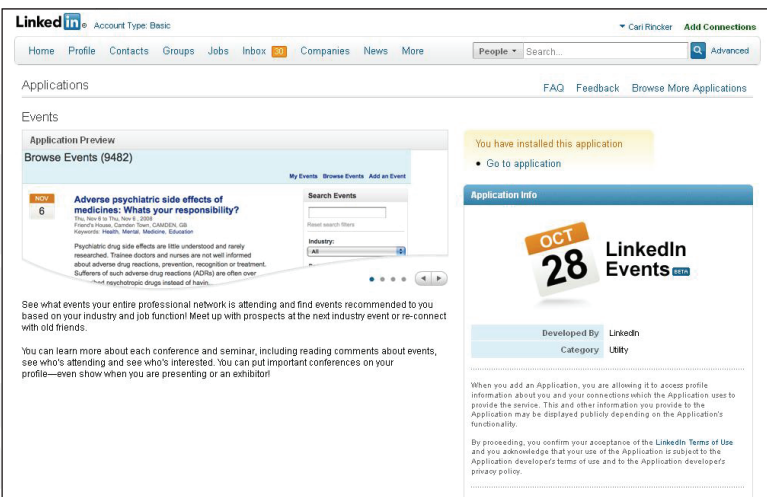
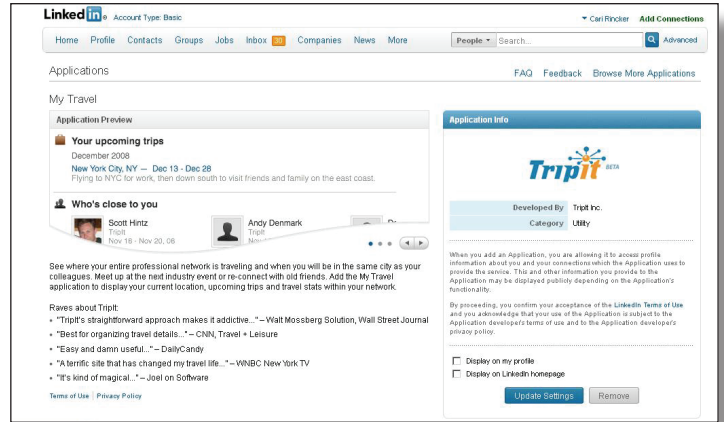


2. Events. The LinkedIn Events application is helpful for three reasons. First, it allows you to see what agriculture events others are attending. Perhaps you will learn about a cattle conference happening in your area that you would like to attend. Second, you can plan to meet other professional contacts if you see you are both attending the same event. Social media is a powerful marketing tool but it is important to take online relationships off-line. Perhaps you can make plan to have coffee with a contact you met via Twitter at the next National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Annual Convention and Trade Show. Third, LinkedIn Events is a great way to advertise events that you are hosting and want others to attend.



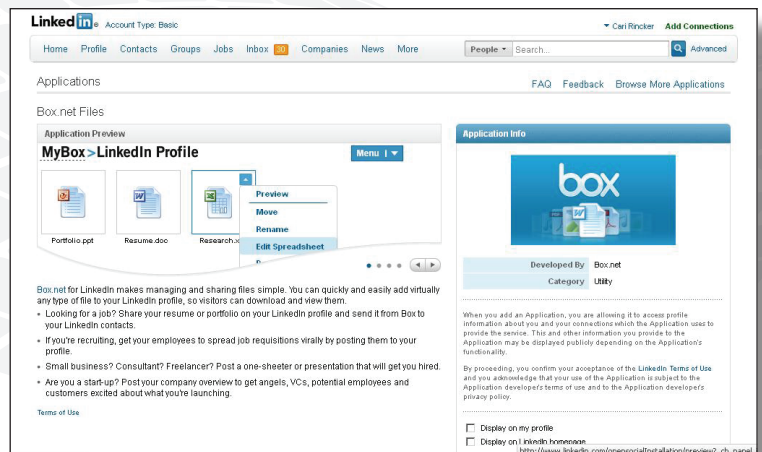
Continued: Advanced User Tips for Cattle Producers Using LinkedIn

3. Triplt. Similar to LinkedIn Events, Triplt not only lets you know whether a professional contact will be traveling to your area but keeps others privy on planned travel. This can be particularly useful if a person travels frequently and wants to make sure to connect with professional contacts in that area.

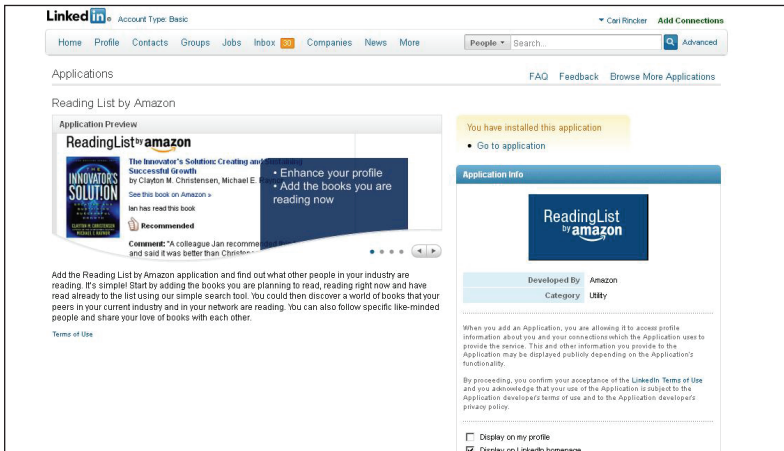


4. Twitter. If you are on Twitter, you might consider pulling in your Twitter feed into your LinkedIn profile. As a caveat, if you tweet frequently, I would suggest only bringing in selected Tweets using the #in hashtag feature. Although frequent tweets are acceptable in Twitterverse, it creates too much noise for social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

5. Box.Net. This third-party application is a useful way to share articles or presentations that you have worked on with your professional contacts. Others can easily view the document from your LinkedIn profile. To illustrate, I have downloaded the other social media guides created by Young Producers' Council.

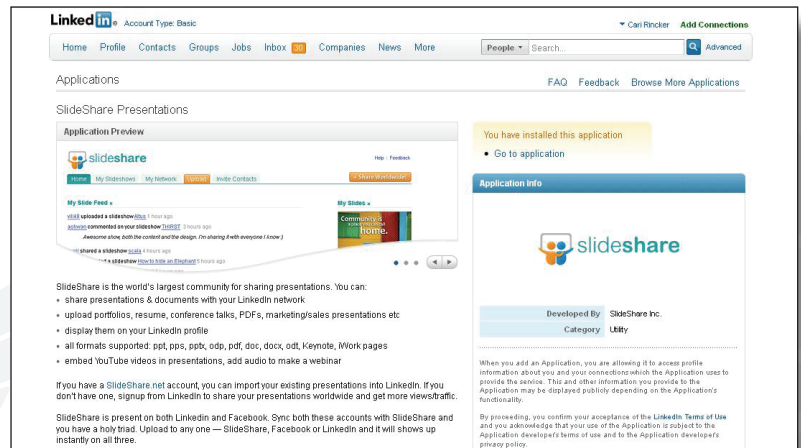


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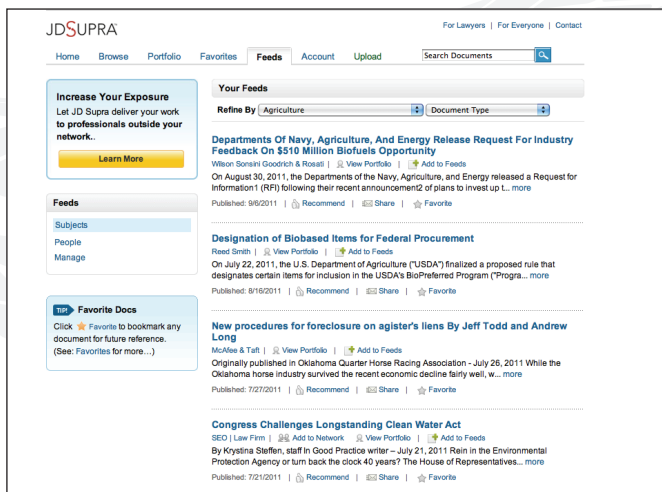


6. Amazon Reading List. This is a fun application to help share books that you are currently reading, have already read, or plan to read in the future. It may spark a conversation with a consumer on a food safety or animal welfare issue to allow an opportunity to be an “advocate.” Furthermore, it helps illustrate that you are keeping up on the relevant reading material for a particular industry. Additionally, the Amazon application recommends books that may be of interest.

7. Slideshare. If you use Power Point presentations then this may be the application for you. Slideshare provides a professional platform to share and review Power Point presentations.

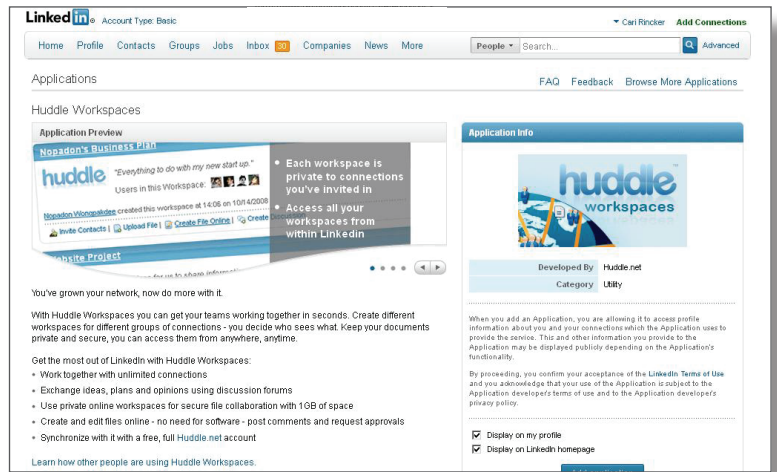


8. JD Supra Legal Updates. This application is primarily used by attorneys but may be useful for non-lawyers as well. For example, you can provide your contacts with updates in certain industries including agriculture or environmental law. Similar to Box.Net, JDSupra allows users to upload articles and forms.



Continued: Advanced User Tips for Cattle Producers Using LinkedIn

9. Huddle Workspace. This application provides users a secure file sharing location. This may be useful for cattle producers working on a project together and would like a secure place to exchange information.



There are many other applications that may be useful for your cattle operation or agri-business including, but not limited to, LinkedIn Company Buzz, Google Presentations, and LinkedIn Polls. I suggest taking some time with each of the applications and pick around two to four that work best to enhance your professional image. Too many applications create clutter in a very clean professional social media platform. As a final suggestion, I recommend keeping your most important information at the top of your profile (e.g., summary and contact information) and moving the applications towards the bottom of your profile.

Final Thoughts

LinkedIn has morphed and grown into a “must-use” social media platform for young professionals. It’s a nice way to (1) showcase your talents and experience (2) build your professional network (3) build your online brand for your professional image, farm or business (4) keep up-to-date on news and events (5) find a job/employee, or (6) obtain necessary information. LinkedIn should be broadly open to professional networks. Folks should feel comfortable connecting with anyone on LinkedIn that they would exchange a business card with. YPC members should become familiar with LinkedIn and its business tools.

Good Luck!