

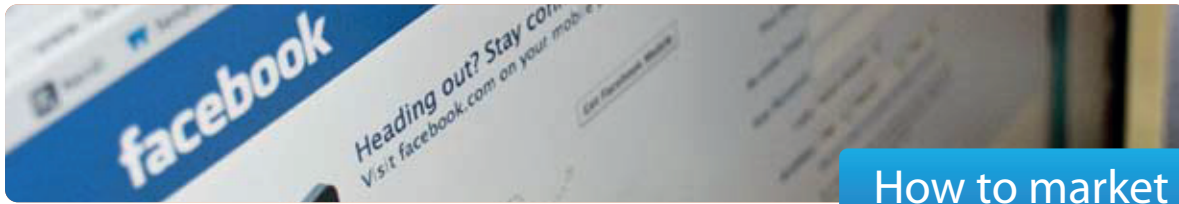
How to Market Yourself



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How to market yourself

1.0 Introduction into Internet Marketing

The internet has completely revolutionised business communication and made marketing yourself easier than ever before. It has dramatically increased the ability to get your message across and to target a specific audience relevant to you. There are many internet marketing tactics you can use:

These include:

- Social media: with the likes of Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, You Tube and LinkedIn
- Email Marketing
- Search marketing and building your own website

The internet is now an ordinary part of life for many people and it's normal to use it both for business and personal communication. This makes it an ideal tool to help you secure more contracting work.

Social Media

Most people are now familiar with the idea of social media, though many use it as a way to communicate with family and friends rather than as a business tool.

Sites like LinkedIn, which are specifically created for business provide a valuable tool for all types of businesses, but many are surprised to learn that other social networks like Twitter and Facebook can be used to promote your services as well.

The reality is that success in marketing is about interacting with people in a way that suits them. If your potential clients are spending time on social media, then you have to be there too so they can find you. The average person has five social media accounts and spends an hour and forty minutes each day browsing social media, so it's important to be present and visible in that space.





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2.0 Contractors Guide to using Facebook

Facebook is possibly the most familiar and widely used social network of them all. It's estimated that more than half the UK population will be Facebook users by 2020; that's 35.4 million people, just in the UK.

Facebook did start out as a personal networking site, but it's now established as an important marketplace, with number of business pages hitting 50 million in 2015.

Facebook is completely free to join and you can be active and visible at no cost so there's no reason not to give it a try.

The first thing you'll need to do is set up a Facebook business page. It's much better to create a dedicated page for your contracting services, rather than using your personal account. This will allow you to control your Facebook presence, and execute your strategy in a professional way.

Your clients need to see you in the best possible light. By keeping your business and personal information separate and posting relevant content that your audience wants to read you can create authoritative relationships on Facebook that benefit your bottom line.



Setting up your business page is easy:

- You must have a Facebook profile in order to create a business page - if you don't, simply register for one online.
- You need to assign an "administrator" for the business page. This is the person who will control posts, comments and likes.
- Click on the Create a page link - this can be found on the Facebook homepage or in the "help" section of the site.
- Ensure you make your business page "public" by clicking this option in your settings



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Now you've set up your business page, you need to customise it. The basic Facebook applications available are as follows, but you can add more should you want to.

- **Discussion Board:** Enables your audience to share their ideas on your page. Discussion boards let you know what your clients and customers think and want.
- **Events:** Promote your gatherings or let people know about upcoming events.
- **Notes:** Share your business news or engage your audience through written entries.
- **Photos:** Upload photos to your page promoting your services.
- **Reviews:** Your clients and customers can leave honest opinions about your work.
- **Video:** A high quality video platform - this is useful for demonstrations
- **Wall:** The Wall is an open forum for your audience to leave comments, thoughts and ideas on your page or profile.

You control what users can see on your page, and which posts are included. Individual posts on Facebook are not ranked in Google searches, but your profile is. How you name your page is critical; there should be no question about what you do.

Once this is complete you're ready to start searching for relevant people and inviting them to like your page. Start by inviting people you know, as they will naturally help you kick off your Facebook community.

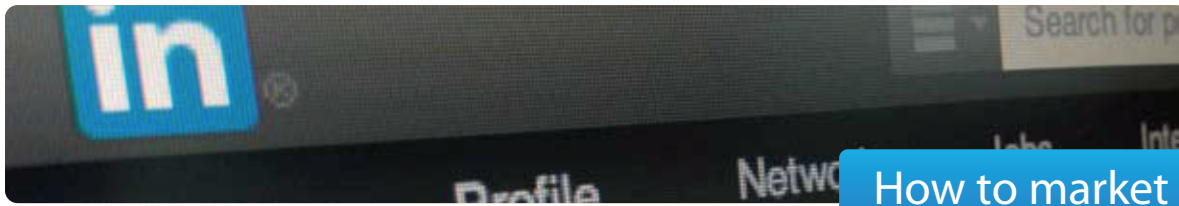
It's a good idea to add a link to your page from your website if you have one, and in your work email signature. You might also want to sync your Twitter and other social media accounts, which will help you cross-market your different social channels.

Be sure to update your page regularly, we suggest at least twice a week. We also suggest you join other communities similar to yours and participate on discussions and groups.

You can post links to content around the web that your audience will enjoy or find useful. Things like industry news, answers to common questions and specialist information will all reflect well on you and increase engagement with your page.

You should also post about anything positive that has affected your work; for example a prestigious contract, client testimonials or an event you attended. Wherever possible take pictures and post them.

Your business page should capture your personality and give your clients and customers an easy way to interact with you. Be sure to respond to any queries, and keep your posts up-beat, informal and positive.



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3.0 Contractors Guide to using LinkedIn:

There are now over 20 million LinkedIn users in the UK, bringing the network's reach to more than half of the country's working population. That makes it an important part of the landscape, and an invaluable tool for professional networking.

The main reason for contractors to use LinkedIn is to find new contracts. Many companies advertise jobs on LinkedIn, and you can usually either apply directly from the site or follow a link to the client's own application process. Recruiters use LinkedIn as well, for networking and for advertising contract roles, so it's a good place to be active and visible.

Your visibility on LinkedIn depends very much on your profile. Someone looking for your particular skills can enter a search, and where you rank in the results will depend on how well "optimised" your profile is.

Ideally your profile should contain:

- A profile picture. This should usually be a picture of you in a suit or other "business dress".
- Your latest 3 appointments
- A list of your skills. Think about what your ideal client might be searching for and use industry specific keywords where appropriate.
- Recommendations from your existing connections. Don't be afraid to ask for these where you know a client or colleague was happy with your work.

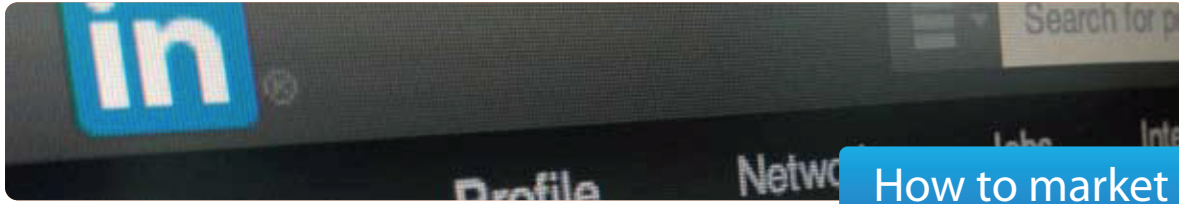
Asking for recommendations

You can request recommendations either from the recommendations section of your own profile, or from the profile of the connection you'd like a recommendation from.

It's important to only ask for recommendations from people who genuinely know you and are in a position to recommend you. You should also back each request up with a personal message - you're asking someone for a favour, so the least you can do is address them personally.

This may seem obvious, but it isn't uncommon to receive requests that have clearly been sent to every connection in someone's network. You shouldn't expect blanket requests to be effective.





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Ways of increasing your connections:

You can insert the LinkedIn icon into your website and your email signature. This will give your audience an easy way to connect with you on LinkedIn without having to search for you, or find you by chance. You might also consider creating a QR code for your profile, which you can include on leaflets and business cards. You can create a QR code for free here:

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>

When you make a new connection, take a look at their connections and add any that you know.

Answer Questions and take part in Discussions

LinkedIn automatically gives you a higher ranking in search results if it sees you as a “participator” and your connections will naturally see more of you as you participate. Search for questions you can answer and answer them. One or two a week should be enough, but try to make your answers as complete and helpful as possible. Reading closed questions can give you an idea of what kind of answers people are looking for. It’s also a good idea to join relevant groups and participate in discussions.

Use the right words to describe yourself

Activities worth considering are:

- Look at LinkedIn adverts for jobs you could apply for and check the keywords they use. Search for those keywords to see how you rank, and adjust your profile to improve your ranking.
- Repetition of keywords appears to improve your ranking in search results, but remember your profile needs to read smoothly too. Try to strike a balance.
- Look at the profiles of colleagues with the same background to see how they describe their skills, and if you’ve missed anything.

Update your status at least twice a week

It’s important to stay active and post regularly, particularly when you’re looking for your next contract. Make sure the people in your network know when your current contract is coming to an end, and what kind of work you’re looking for. Keep your posts positive and upbeat. Talk about how much you enjoyed working on your current contract, how much you learned, the great people you met etc. This is not the place to vent if you had a bad time or you’re not happy about how it worked out.

At other times, post updates about events you’re attending, link to relevant content on the web or comment yourself on issues that affect your clients. Even just a short post thanking someone for helping you or recommending a colleague can be well worth your time.

LinkedIn is a powerful snooping tool, allowing you to check out an organisation and its culture before attending an interview. Remember it’s likely that interviewers will check your profile too, so make it something you want them to see.



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4.0 Contractor guide to using Twitter:

With around 17 million users in the UK alone, Twitter allows users to send messages or “tweets” of up to 280 characters. Twitter estimate that around 40% of their users tweet, re-tweet and read updates on their phone, making the micro-blogging network perfect for rapid, spontaneous communication.

To get started using Twitter for business, check out this guidance, see some examples and familiarise yourself with the tools you’ll need right here: <https://business.twitter.com/twitter-basics>

Twitter has stated that almost half of its users prefer just to read rather than send out tweets themselves, which means you’ll automatically be in the “top half” of users if you tweet regularly.

Character limits

In 2017 Twitter doubled the character limit from 140 to 280 characters. This can all be text, or it can contain a link to your website, or to useful/interesting content you found on the web.

You can shorten links using bit.ly (<https://bitly.com/>) or ow.ly (<https://hootsuite.com/pages/owly>). Simply sign up for a free account, enter the URL you want to shorten and paste the shortened one into your tweet.

Remember you can tweet links to any kind of content, including other social media pages, blog posts, photos and videos too.

Getting started:

Once you’ve set up your Twitter account, the best way to get followers is to follow people and businesses that are relevant to your line of work, and start tweeting.

As well as making them more likely to follow you, following others in your industry can help you:

- See what others are tweeting about, so you get an idea of the language used, the length of tweets and the kind of subjects your audience engages with.
- You can view their followers and follow any who might be interested in following you.
- You can re-tweet their posts when they share content that your customers/clients might be interested in, making them more likely to engage with you.



Tweet



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Once people start following you, your next task is to keep them interested. If you consistently share information they find useful or interesting they'll re-tweet your posts, and your following will naturally expand.

It's unlikely that your business followers will be interested in the details of your daily life, so we suggest you stick to business type tweets like:

- Industry news articles
- Hints and tips
- Upcoming events
- Updates about your availability

We recommend tweeting at least once a day, which can be difficult if you're not used to doing it. It's often easier if you use a mobile app to tweet from your phone, but you might also consider using an app to schedule your tweets, so you can set them up in advance.

More advanced options

Once you're familiar with the basics you can start using some more advanced options to increase your chances of gaining more followers and interest in your services

Hash tagging - a #tag (hash tag) is added into a tweet so people can find you and your post more easily. For example if you were looking for an IT contract you might add #IT to the end of a tweet so anyone searching for "IT" will see your tweet in their results.

Add the Twitter logo with a "follow me" link to your website, blog, LinkedIn and email signatures to encourage your existing contacts and clients to connect with you on Twitter.





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6.0 Building your website

Why should you make a website?

For anyone who wants to market a product or service, a dedicated website is a very useful tool, and contractors are no exception. It creates a place on the web that's completely under your control, and it makes you easier to find.

It also allows potential clients could find the information you want them to have at any time of day - your website never sleeps.

It doesn't have to be huge, elaborate or expensive. Two or three pages with your CV, a photo of you and a short bio will be enough. It's a good idea to include a blog as well if you can, as this will encourage you to post useful content that will drive traffic to your site, and ultimately clients to your inbox.

Paying a professional to design your website

If your needs dictate a more complex site you can always hire someone to do the design work for you. Obviously this can be expensive and you'll want to control the cost. One possibility is to post details on a freelancer site like peopleperhour.com or upwork.com and invite quotes that you can then accept or decline.

Can you do it for free?

It is indeed possible to make a website for free, and very quickly too if your needs are simple. Content Management Systems like Wordpress and Weebly allow users with no technical knowledge to set up their own website with surprisingly little effort. However, if you want your site to be add-free or you want to use your own domain name you will have to upgrade to a paid service.

The domain name issue in particular could cause a problem. Having an address like youcompany@wordpress.com makes it clear to visitors that you haven't paid for hosting, and many of them will wonder why.

You can buy a domain name from sites like godaddy.com for next to nothing, but you'll usually have to pay for hosting in order to use it.



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Choosing your domain name

You will often have a choice about which domain name you choose. If you're making a site for business we'd advise against being overly creative. If it's available, yournamejobtitle.com or .co.uk is the best way to go. you'll often have access to an email address at your domain name, so your email would be yourname@yournamejobtitle.com, which can only help your credibility and your marketing efforts. If the .com and .co.uk versions are unavailable, consider using .org or .net instead, rather than choosing a different name.

Making the most of your website

Once you have your own website it makes sense to get the most out of it. Use it to post useful content that will encourage potential clients to visit your site. For example, if your clients often have the same questions or make the same mistakes, publish the answers on your website so people with those issues will find you.

When you post new material, use your social media channels to promote it and drive more traffic to your site, and make sure your Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter links are visible on your most popular pages.

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These guide lines are intended to be a rough starter guide for those of you who have not used social media or online channels before or are not familiar with how to utilise social media or online platforms to its full capacity. For a more in-depth tutorial, guidance or instructions please contact an online marketing communications expert.

contact us

To register with **Orange Genie**
or if we can help in any way,
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