

LinkedIn Trends and Cool New Features

With in-person networking grinding to an abrupt halt, digital platforms are taking over as the primary channels to engage with other business professionals. Social media sites are now the virtual places to conduct meetings, find jobs, sell services and learn new skills. As office environments moved online, LinkedIn – the number one social media platform for professionals – saw a substantial rise in activity. In Q3 FY20, LinkedIn **reported** a 21 percent increase in year-over-year revenue, reflecting the increased interactions on its platform.

Contributing to this influx of social media activity are professional services firms, which have ramped up their presence on social media to stay top of mind with clients by sharing engaging, informative and substantive content. These firms are incorporating social media trends that are developing in light of the pandemic. The following are some of the ones that represent the shift in professional services social media strategy. I also discuss new LinkedIn site features that professional services firms can leverage and provide brief instructions on how to make use of them.



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Social Media Trends in a Coronavirus World

- Being on every platform can dilute marketing efforts. Professional services companies are re-evaluating which platforms to focus on so they can concentrate efforts on the key places where their audiences are hanging out.
- People are becoming more selective in their interactions with brands and focusing more on person-to-person interactions and engagement. Because restricting sharing to brand accounts is limiting, firms need to turn to their professionals who are active on LinkedIn to help establish connections and expand the reach of firm content.
- Video content continues to boom. Both long-form and short-form videos are among the most-shared content on social media. People do not expect a high level of production quality with social media videos; however, videos do have to convey authenticity, creativity and authority on a subject.
- Measuring social media campaigns by soft metrics like impressions and clicks, while valuable in a comparative sense, is being replaced with **sentiment analysis** to understand people's reactions to content as opposed to just their engagement.

LinkedIn's New Features

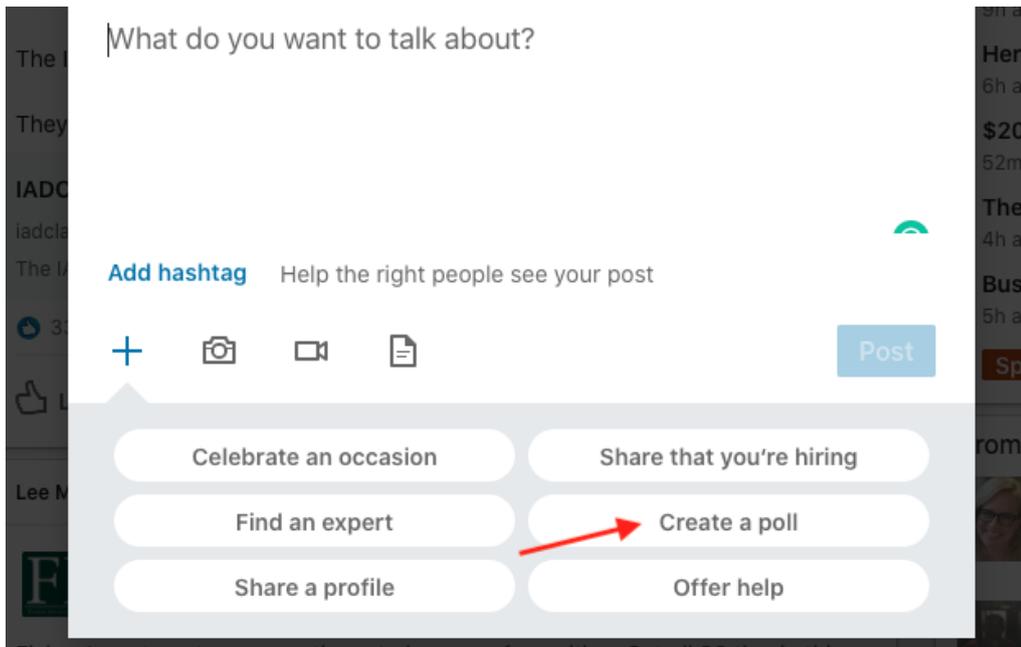
The LinkedIn site also has new features that professional services firms can leverage – read on for brief instructions about how to make use of them. With social media usage among professionals increasing at a rapid pace, LinkedIn is "growing up" to become more than just a recruiting and job searching platform. According to Business Insider Intelligence's **Digital Trust Report**, LinkedIn is three times more trusted to deliver worthwhile content than any other social platform.

To support the growth in content delivery, LinkedIn has rolled out several important new features and functionality.

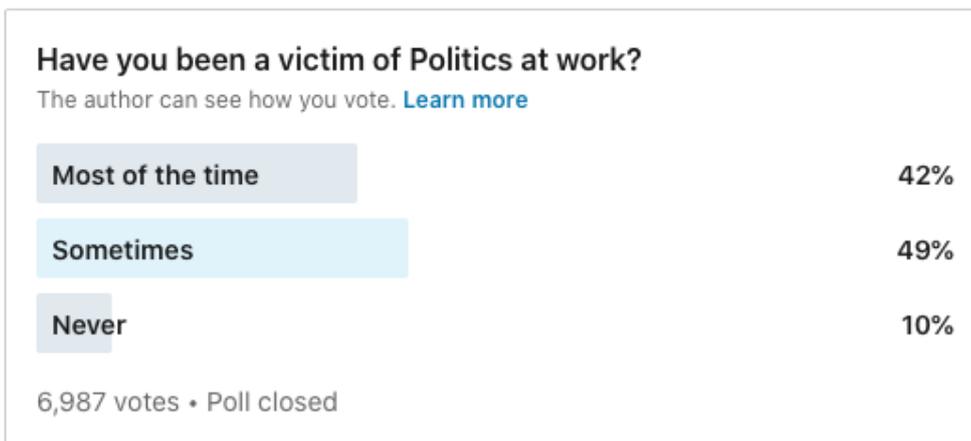
LinkedIn Polls

As a way to ask questions and encourage engagement, LinkedIn now lets you build polls right into your posts. Responding to polls from your news feed is easy. Users can also include comments and reactions in poll posts.

To create a poll, click on the "Start a Post" from your home feed.



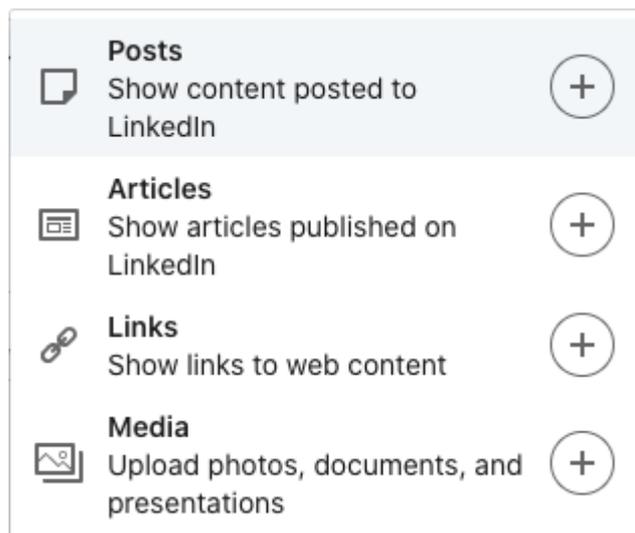
Write a question and three or four responses. Note that the poll results will be publicly visible in the post. (See example.)



LinkedIn Featured

The new [LinkedIn Featured](#) carousel in profiles allows you to showcase your best work. You can select from a variety of options to include in your Featured section that appear at

the top of your profile. Types of content to feature include:

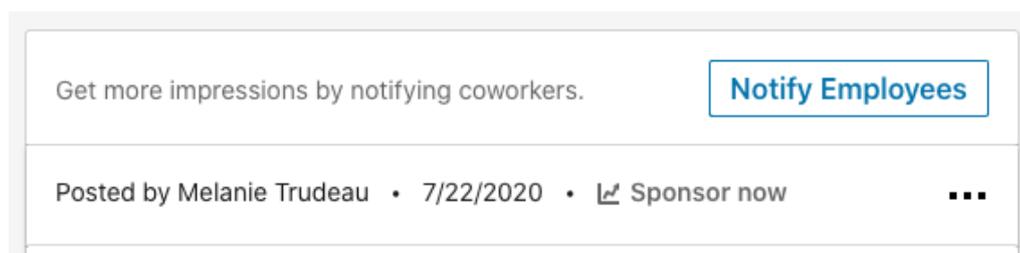


LinkedIn's Invite to Follow

Administrators of Company Pages can now invite their first-degree profile connections to follow their Pages. This functionality has been available on Facebook Pages for some time and is a welcome addition to LinkedIn that can help grow your firm's audience. LinkedIn members can opt out if they don't want to receive invitations.

LinkedIn's Notify Employees of Post

When posts are published on a Company Page, administrators can notify employees who are connected to the Page that something new has published. Simply click the "Notify Employees" button at the top of the post.



LinkedIn Live (Revamped)

Members can now stream LinkedIn Events live to stay connected to their communities and colleagues. By broadcasting video events in real time, LinkedIn can be used to interview an expert, attract new hires, demonstrate expertise and celebrate big moments. [According to LinkedIn](#), firms can "treat LinkedIn Live like a fresh channel for your existing content ideas. Use it to help launch new products, showcase the people behind your brand, or demonstrate your thought leadership."

The functionality is still in beta and companies have to [apply](#) for access to LinkedIn Live to use it, but a full roll-out should be coming soon.

LinkedIn Stories (Coming Soon)

LinkedIn is currently testing its LinkedIn Stories feature in Australia, Brazil, France, the Netherlands and the UAE. Similar to Facebook and Instagram, Stories are ephemeral posts that can be viewed on the LinkedIn app and disappear after 24 hours. The idea behind Stories is that professionals can share images and short videos of their everyday professional moments. By using visual images and video to convey [corporate culture](#) and showcase creativity, LinkedIn Stories will help deepen connections with your audience.

As we anticipate a continued impact from the coronavirus pandemic, embracing digital channels – particularly LinkedIn – will help expand our networks, increase brand awareness, and showcase our knowledge, experience and creativity.

If you have a story to share about trends in social media or how your firm is using LinkedIn's new features, email me, [Melanie Trudeau](#), at mtrudeau@jaffepr.com, or comment below.