



A GUIDE TO BUILDING YOUR PROFILE ON LINKEDIN

Social Networking For Business Professionals

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Get started on LinkedIn

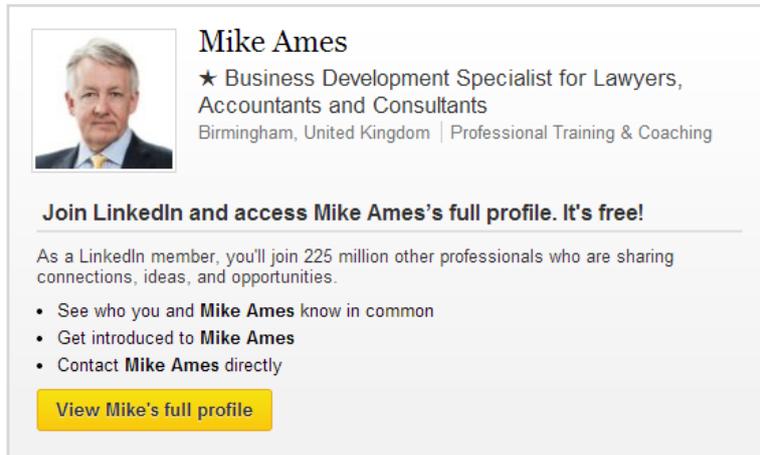
For those that don't already know, LinkedIn is a professional networking site and really is a great business tool. It is free to join and a new member is joining every second; when I first wrote this guide in August 2010 there were 75 million members, now in November 2013 there are over 225 million. It has become the most popular 'virtual meet and greet' site for business professionals with members from every industry sector and profession. A basic LinkedIn account is free and is fine for most people but more applications are available if you decide to become more proactive and you can easily upgrade your subscription to obtain these.

Although LinkedIn began as a sort of online CV it is much more than that now. Many people research those they are dealing with by looking at their LinkedIn profile so it is vital to make sure your profile is in top form. **It is actually your own personal website and should be viewed as such.**

Many people have added themselves but are not sure if they have done it right and what they should do with it, so here is a short guide to get you started.



Public Profile



Mike Ames
 ★ Business Development Specialist for Lawyers, Accountants and Consultants
 Birmingham, United Kingdom | Professional Training & Coaching

Join LinkedIn and access Mike Ames's full profile. It's free!

As a LinkedIn member, you'll join 225 million other professionals who are sharing connections, ideas, and opportunities.

- See who you and **Mike Ames** know in common
- Get introduced to **Mike Ames**
- Contact **Mike Ames** directly

[View Mike's full profile](#)

Mike Ames's Overview

Recommendations **43** people have recommended Mike
 Connections **500+** connections

Mike Ames' Summary

Whatever you feel about the activity of selling you cannot ignore it. These days the only way to be completely secure is to have total control over the capture and cultivation of your clients which depends more on organisation and control than it does on talent.

My Public Profile Page

First things first...

One of the very first things that you should do is customise the URL for your public profile. Use your own name and do this now before somebody else takes it.

- On your LinkedIn home page you will see your public profile URL shown underneath your photo. To change it either go to the menu bar and click on **Profile** then select **Edit Profile** from the drop down menu.



Or click on the grey **Edit** button next to the **Improve your profile** button:

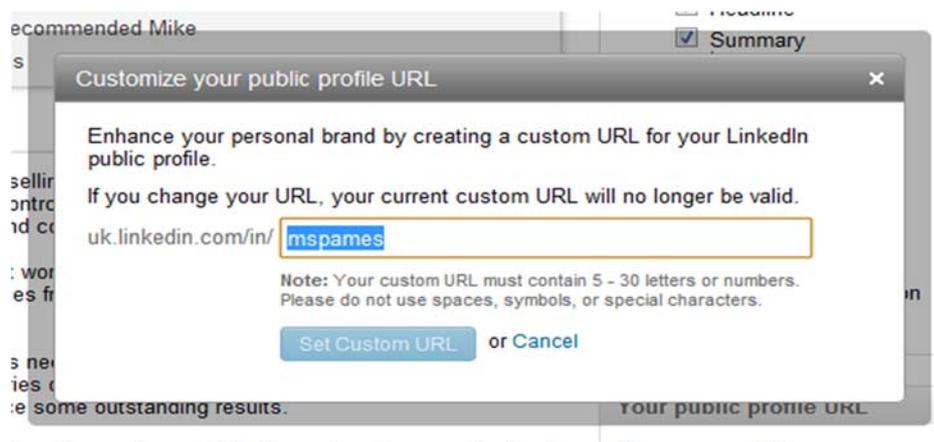


Either option will put you into edit mode

- Once in Edit mode you will see **Edit** appear next to your current URL - click on this.
- You will now see your Public Profile screen. Half way down on the right hand side you will see your Public Profile URL box with your current URL displayed. Underneath you will see the **Customise your public profile URL** link. Click on this link.



- A pop up window will now appear where you can customise your **public profile URL**.



- You'll see the base URL of www.linkedin.com/in/ followed by an empty box. Type your desired URL (just the end portion, i.e. your name) in this box.
- Click **Set Custom URL**. If nobody has already claimed your name then that's it done. If your name is already taken you may need to add initials before you get a unique URL. LinkedIn also provides some suggestions for you to choose from.

Your public profile can be seen by anyone on LinkedIn. You can select which items from your profile you want to appear on there. Public profiles are picked up by search engines and contain a lot of Google-juice so you may find that you turn up on the first page of Google!

Tips for Building Your Profile

- Make sure your Summary and Specialisations are written as though prospective clients (as opposed to employers) are going to read them.

- Be sure to include keywords in your headline, summary and work history, this will increase your LinkedIn-juice which will help you become more widely recognised.
- Make clear the great things you have done in your career and also what you aspire to do.
- Reflect your professional interests and ambitions.
- Put in areas where you are looking to develop in the future as your LinkedIn network could help you here.
- List all your jobs, but be brief, remember this is not just a CV. Include everything that is relevant and will show you in a good light.
- This is not Facebook, so no funky photos of yourself doing weird things on holiday - use a clear up to date and smiling photo, a head shot is preferable, make sure that the photo is appropriate to use in a work setting.
- Remember - A good profile not only makes you look good it provides you with the means to open doors.
- What makes your profile complete? LinkedIn prompts you for the necessary information, and highlights areas where you need to add information in order to complete your profile, but basically you need to include:
 - Your current position
 - Two past positions
 - Your education
 - Your profile summary
 - A profile photo
 - Your specialties
 - At least three recommendations

Profile Strength



Recommendations

- Request and give out as many true recommendations as you can. Avoid "I'll do you, if you'll do me" - it looks contrived.
- Offer to recommend people that you have worked with.
- Ask for recommendations which specifically concentrate on how you added value to a client or a project.
- Ideally your recommendations will give a 360 view of you.



Let other people's words guide people towards choosing you for their business needs.

Above all else remember that honesty really is the best policy when it comes to giving recommendations. Only vouch for people you are familiar with and make sure you maintain your integrity – do not be tempted to “enhance the truth”.

A final thought before we move on: users with complete profiles are 40 times more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn. So it really is worth putting in the time and effort and getting it right.

For further information on setting up your profile look at <http://www.learn.linkedin.com>.

Using LinkedIn

Once your profile is complete you need to begin to draw people towards it – one easy way would be to add a LinkedIn profile badge to your email signature, that way you can passively build your network and make it easier for people to connect with you.



The code for the profile badge can be found on your Public Profile screen as before.

- Half way down on the right hand side you will see your Public Profile URL box select Create a profile badge



- Invite all your business related contacts and replicate your offline network online, but be careful - avoid competitors and anybody you don't fully trust. The more connections you have the higher your profile will be ranked in LinkedIn's internal search engine.
- Sources: business cards, Outlook, your home address book, your memory: who have you ever worked with?
- LinkedIn ranks you in its own internal search engine, the more connections you have the higher your profile.
- Remember your goal: once you are connected to others put those people to good use.
- Every time you have a new connection check through their network to see if there is anybody of interest to you.
- Before you contact a person for the first time, check them out on LinkedIn looking for anything useful.
- When you meet people who you feel could be of use invite them as a matter of course.
- Re-visit the connections of your first tier connections as they will be adding names to their network too.
- Regularly change something about your profile once a week if possible. It will be noted and publicized by LinkedIn. Just keeps your name bandied about, no bad thing.
- When targeting new people search your network and see who knows them and ask if they will help you to make contact.
- Ask for advice (it can be a good way of attracting attention if you phrase your request correctly). Eg. I'm researching, I'm looking for options regarding I'm writing a paper / article
- Answer questions posted by other members and begin to establish your LinkedIn reputation.
- Publish white papers on your chosen subject.
- Remember to keep it professional – you can be 'social' elsewhere.
- You may consider handing over the management of your LinkedIn account to your PA if you have one.

Using Groups

Groups are a very powerful aspect of LinkedIn and something that you need to think about and explore fully. They give you the opportunity to: -

- Meet the right new people.
- Establish yourself as an expert and so reinforce your credentials.
- See what the hot-topics are in your chosen arena.

- Increase your LinkedIn-juice to become more widely recognised.
- Learn loads of new things.

Try this very simple process.

1. Look at the people you are interested in and see what groups they are members of.
2. Request to join the groups.
3. When you are accepted scan the list of attendees and invite people to connect with you who you feel would be of use. Use a shared group as your connection reason.
4. Follow group discussions and contribute wherever you can.
5. If you establish a dialogue with one or more contributors to the discussion invite them to connect to you.
6. Start your own discussion.

You will find that you make new connections **with the right people** much faster this way.

Multimedia

You can now add media (documents, slideshows, videos etc) to 3 sections of your profile; the Summary, Work History and Education, just remember that any content that you want to add must now have a separate URL address.

Box.net

Adding relevant content to your profile is an excellent way of increasing your credibility amongst your followers as well as publicising your strengths and specialties.

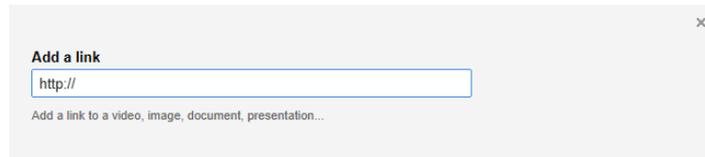
To add box.net files to your LinkedIn profile you first need to add the document to your account at www.box.com. If you are creating an account then follow the instructions and create a LinkedIn folder. Upload all documents as PDF's for LinkedIn into this folder.

Once your document is uploaded go back to your LinkedIn profile and make sure you are in 'Edit profile' mode. Scroll to the section where you would like to add your document.

In '**Edit Mode**' the Summary, Work History and Education sections display an icon that looks like a square with a plus sign, as highlighted below.



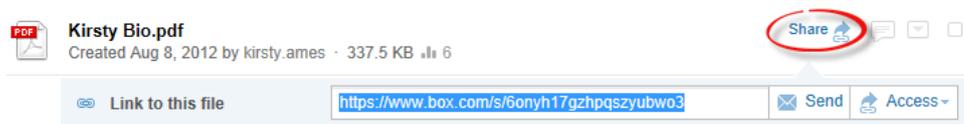
Click on this icon and the following 'Add a Link' box will be displayed and it is in here that you will add the URL to the document. Read on to find out how to get the URL you need.



As your content has already been uploaded to Box you simply have to login to your account at www.box.com and go to the 'LinkedIn Profile' folder where you will be able to see a list of your documents.

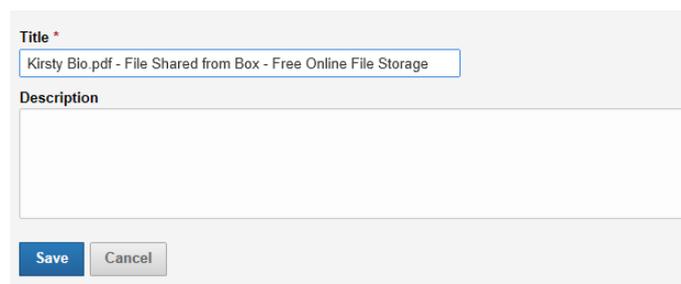


From the list select the file that you wish to showcase on your profile, then click on 'Share'

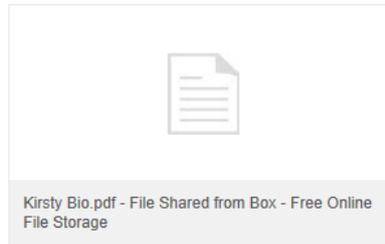


This displays the URL for the document. You now need to copy the URL and then paste this into the 'Add a Link' section on your LinkedIn Profile.

Once you have added the URL into LinkedIn the display will change and you will see the name of the document in the Title box (as below). Remove the additional information – 'File Shared from Box – Free Online File Storage' as this is unnecessary and your document will be displayed as in the example shown on the next page unless you change this.



Finally press the blue 'Save' button. Your document will now be displayed in a new block.



If you have a lot of collateral documents which you wish to display on your profile you may want to consider adding a collateral contents page and display that on your profile. Include all the relevant collateral and ensure that you link it to the relevant items that you have uploaded to your box profile. To see how this looks visit Mike Ames profile - <http://uk.linkedin.com/in/mspames>.

SlideShare

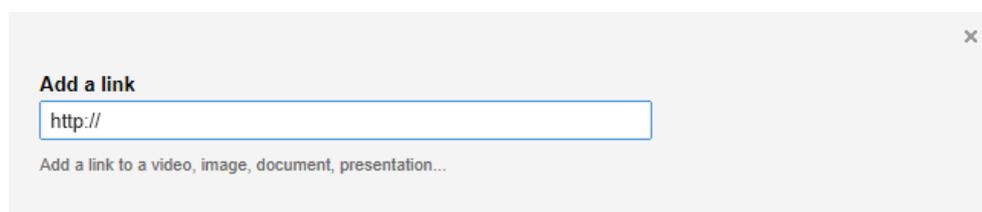
SlideShare has become YouTube for PowerPoint presentations and has the potential to increase the levels of traffic to your website or LinkedIn profile. It is much easier to make a PowerPoint presentation than a video and so is an easy and simple way of delivering information in an easy to digest manner.

To add SlideShare files to your profile you first need to add the presentation or document to your account at www.slideshare.net. If you are creating an account then follow the instructions and then upload your PowerPoint presentations to SlideShare.

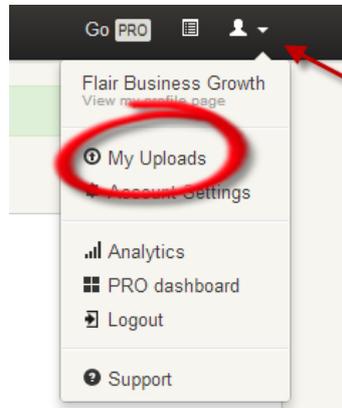
Then go back to LinkedIn and ensure you are in **'Edit profile'** mode. Scroll to the section where you would like to add your additional content. You will see an icon that looks like a square with a plus sign as highlighted below.



Click on this icon and a new box will be displayed, you add the URL to your presentation or video here.



To get the URL you need to log into your SlideShare account at www.slideshare.net. Click on the down arrow as highlighted by the arrow below and the following drop down menu will be displayed. Click on 'My Uploads' to display your content.



From the list click on the image of the presentation that you would like to upload and this will take you through to the Slideshow.

You will see the URL for the presentation in the taskbar – you need to copy this link and then paste this into the 'Add a Link' box in LinkedIn.

Publications

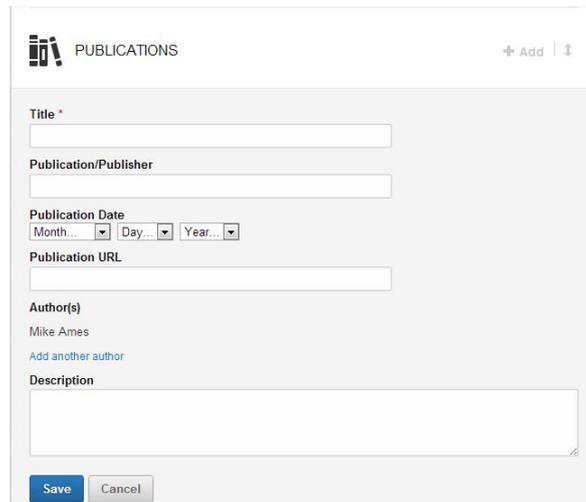
If you have written a paper or contributed to a book which you would like to promote on your profile you need to use the Publications feature.

Please note that your publication will have to be hosted online and you will have to include the URL where people can access your publication in order for this feature to work.

You first need to ensure you are in '**Edit profile**' mode. You will see the following options on the right hand side of your profile.



Click on the plus sign adjacent to 'Publications' and the following screen will be displayed:



The screenshot shows a form titled 'PUBLICATIONS' with a '+ Add' button in the top right. The form contains several input fields: 'Title *', 'Publication/Publisher', 'Publication Date' (with dropdowns for Month, Day, and Year), 'Publication URL', and 'Author(s)'. The 'Author(s)' field is pre-filled with 'Mike Ames' and has a link to 'Add another author'. There is a large text area for 'Description' and 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons at the bottom.

Add the necessary information and then click 'Save'. The publication will now appear on your profile for visitors to click through to.

Blog Content – Wordpress

The Wordpress functionality has now been removed. If you have a Wordpress blog you can publicise it on LinkedIn by using the 'Publicize' function which you can access from the Wordpress Dashboard. From the Settings menu select 'Sharing'



You will see a list of social media networking sites that you can link your blog to. For the purposes of this guide we will connect to LinkedIn. Click on 'Add new LinkedIn connection' and follow the instructions to connect your account.



Add new LinkedIn connection.



Once you have connected your blog to your profile using the publicize feature, whenever you publish a new blog post LinkedIn will post a status update to promote that post automatically for you.

Summary

So there you have it. LinkedIn is a place to develop business, grow your capabilities, demonstrate your differences, learn from your network and promote your projects and events.

It really is your representation to the outside world so it is absolutely vital that you make it as polished and rich as you possibly can. Imagine that your best client is going to look at it – do you think they would be impressed or horrified by what they see. Put the effort in and get the rewards out!

All in all LinkedIn is a great business tool which is only going to grow in importance. Fail to embrace it at your peril and remember if you're not LinkedIn you're LinkedOut!



How to Connect With Us

You can find Flair Business Growth Consultancy on the following social media channels or if you prefer you can connect with Mike personally on twitter and LinkedIn, or do it the old fashioned way and email us directly at coaching@flair.co.uk



Facebook – Flair Business Growth Consultancy



Twitter - Mike_Ames_Flair



Mikeames.wordpress.com



LinkedIn – MSPAmes



www.flair.co.uk Register for our Newsletter



Email – sales@flair.co.uk

The guide may have been updated since publication to reflect any major enhancements or upgrades to the social media channels mentioned or to reflect trends in social media in general. To check to see if there are more recently published versions of this guide please visit our website www.flair.co.uk.