

Interested in learning ways to connect to more people in the legal marketing network on LinkedIn?

You can only make your LinkedIn network so big with people that you know. So if you want to grow your network, you will have to start adding connections in the legal marketing field that you may not know. When inviting people to connect on LinkedIn, there are limited options to show your relationship:

- * Colleague
- * Classmate
- * We've done business together
- * Groups
- * Other
- * And I don't know...

Obviously if any of the first three options apply, use them.

*** You can use the “friend” option without knowing the other person’s email address if you haven’t been “dinged” (reported).** Many people don’t realize that if you try to connect to someone you don’t know, and they say they don’t know you, LinkedIn will eventually require that you enter an email address for every connection request you send. You don’t want this to happen. So if you can use the “friend” option, (or any of the other options) make sure you create a personalized message. **Let people know why you are connecting with them.** How did you find them? What about their profile intrigued you? You have a much better chance of getting your invitation accepted, or at the least, not tagged as an “I don’t know” (IDK) or spam if you tell them why you want to connect.

An option I will often use, if it is available, is the “group” option. As long as a LinkedIn member has joined a group that you also belong to, and has not turned off the ability to connect through a group, you can reach out to them this way.

Invitation using “groups” option

* Once you join a group, you might have to wait to be “accepted” by the administrator. After you get “accepted,” you can then send the person you want to connect with (in that group) a message asking them if they will accept an invitation. This is a great way to grow your network. This is more time-consuming, but will not cost you an “InMail” or an “Introduction.” If you ask them first to connect before you send the invitation, you will also be less likely to get spammed or IDK’d.

Your other option, of course, **is to use one of your introductions.** Take the time to fully explain why you want to connect, not only to the end party, but also to the person connecting you.

Introduction on LinkedIn

If you have a paid account, you can use an InMail.

* Some people will put their contact information in the “Contact Setting” at the bottom of the LinkedIn profile – and you can either use that information to contact them directly, or to get access to them as a “friend.” (Once again, be aware that you have a higher chance of getting IDK’d or reported as a spammer if you do.)

Use common sense. The Golden Rule applies to LinkedIn as well. Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. I am a LION, and I will accept your invitation. Others might not. But usually, with the courtesy of a *well-crafted introduction letter and a genuine desire to connect, most people will grasp your outstretched hand and connect.*