

What is brand awareness and why is it important?

One of the marketing team's goals is to build awareness for Vision's brand – and we primarily do this through publishing blog posts, articles, checklists, eBooks and case studies, sending emails to prospects, exhibiting at and sponsoring industry conferences, issuing press releases and posting to social media.

We publish marketing materials on our website and create links back to them using posts to our social media accounts. We know that local government agencies are generally in the market for a new website solution every 4 to 5 years which means that only 20% of agencies are actively engaging in a buying effort at any given time. In between buying cycles, our awareness efforts are meant to keep the Vision name in front of the market, to set up Vision as a trusted thought leader in the digital government space, and to make sure that Vision is on the short list for every new opportunity that comes up.

In simpler terms, brand awareness is the buzz that gets the market talking and thinking about us even when they aren't buying anything.

How much awareness are we generating?

In a typical month, the marketing team publishes 4 to 6 blog posts, 6 to 8 marketing emails, 20 LinkedIn posts and 80 tweets on Twitter.

In total, we generate about 75,000 impressions of our content (not counting our email list):

- Website – 9,000 visitors and 16,000 pageviews
- LinkedIn – 15,000 impressions from about 20 posts
- Twitter – 45,000 impressions from about 80 tweets
- Email – 13,000 prospects on our contact list

Can we improve on our engagement?

While fresh content is posted every day on our LinkedIn company page, the average number of likes and shares on our page is fairly low compared to the number of Vision employees. We currently average about 5.7 interactions per day with 3-4 of these interactions coming directly from the marketing department. This means that we are getting engagement on LinkedIn from *less than 10% of our employees*.

With focused efforts, we can easily double this number. In an experiment conducted in August we received 28 interactions (Likes, Shares and Clicks) and more than 4x the number of average impressions on a single LinkedIn post when we sent an email asking everyone to specifically like or share the post.

The logical place to start building more awareness is to leverage what we do on LinkedIn as it is the leading professional social network with nearly 400 million users reaching nearly 40% of the digital population in the US. Most of our customers and contacts have an account on this platform and usage is growing in the local government space. With more than 60 Vision employees LinkedIn profiles, we have at least 60 opportunities to make sure we're marketing Vision in a consistent manner too.

What can I do to help with Vision's brand awareness efforts?

The good news is that helping build awareness is relatively easy and will take just a couple of minutes per day once you get in the habit, and the impact has a multiplier effect that will further build Vision's reputation and brand awareness.

Here are 4 things everyone can do to amplify our message at Vision:

1. Maximize your LinkedIn profile
2. Like and share our LinkedIn company posts
3. Continue to increase your network
4. Tell others about the great things we share on social media

What's in it for me?

People are looking at your profile every day and you want to make sure that it portrays you in the best possible light. You want to be seen as an expert and thought leader in what you do, and you want to make sure that your personal brand and everything you've accomplished are highlighted. A well-crafted LinkedIn profile will brand you as knowledgeable and trustworthy while a poorly done or incomplete profile can raise doubts about your how you approach your work.

Since your LinkedIn profile serves as your professional online brand and also represents Vision to the rest of the world, having an optimized professional profile and being active on LinkedIn will benefit your career in the long run while helping build the Vision brand today.

Maximize your LinkedIn profile

To help you with improving your LinkedIn profile, we created a cheat sheet along with an illustrative LinkedIn employee account that you can use as an example for how you can improve the personal and corporate branding on your own LinkedIn profile.

Here are the details for the 8 simple tasks highlighted on the cheat sheet to maximize the effectiveness of your LinkedIn profile. Note that this is a one-time task that should take less than 15 minutes to complete. To edit your profile, go to the Profile menu in LinkedIn and select Edit Profile option. Click on the little blue pencils to edit a specific field.

On page 5, you can also view the LinkedIn Profile Cheat Sheet which summarize these tasks on a single.

1. **Profile Picture** – Your profile picture should represent you as a professional. It's a best practice to use a picture that is a well-lit headshot with a straight-on picture of you smiling. It's not appropriate to have other people, pets or props in your picture. Note that LinkedIn uses square pictures for the profile picture, and displays an image that is 200x200 pixels square.
2. **Headline** – The Headline appears under your name. By default, it will be the title of your most recent work position – but you can change it to whatever you want. Many people use their headline to grab attention.
3. **Personalized URL** – A personalized LinkedIn URL is like a friendly URL that's easy to remember and share. A best practice is to try to get a URL that includes your first name and last name and/or some variation if your name is common.

4. **Contact Information** - Complete your contact information with your phone number, email address, company websites, etc.
5. **Summary Section** – The summary section is where you can create an overview of the rest of your profile giving highlights of who you are, what you do and why someone should connect with you. You can also list your skills and the best way to contact you. For formatting purposes, use all CAPS for section headings and bullets for creating lists.
6. **Top Skills** – Think of skills as the keywords that people will use when they are searching on LinkedIn. LinkedIn users who list skills in their profile are 13x more like to have their profile viewed. You can add up to 50 skills, and LinkedIn offers suggestions when you start typing into the “What are your areas of expertise?” box in this section. See the LinkedIn Profile Cheat Sheet for examples of skills that are appropriate for Vision employees.
7. **Experience Section** – First, you should make sure you have entered our company name correctly. If you see the purple Vision logo in your profile, then you have added the company correctly.

When you update your work experience for Vision, you should have at least 2-3 paragraphs. The first paragraph or two should be the standard company boilerplate, and the last paragraph should include what you do and have accomplished.

8. **Education Section** – Complete the education section.

Here is an example company boilerplate you can copy, paste and edit into your own profile:

Vision is a rapidly growing national leader in website development and software solutions for local government. Our mission is to offer municipalities beautiful, highly-functioning and easy to use web-based portals and software tools that empower their constituents to be informed and involved whether they are in front of a computer or on a mobile device.

In 2016, Vision was named to Government Technology magazine's GovTech 100, a listing of leading companies developing innovative offerings to improve or transform government. Vision was also selected as a top 10 company in the ELGL Top Choice Award which recognizes local government vendors.

In my current role, I am responsible for:

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2, etc.

If you want to take your profile to an even higher level or if you have any questions about updating your profile, let us know and we can provide some one-on-one consultation.

Like and Share our Company Page posts

We don't expect everyone to be on LinkedIn every day or to like/share every single post. Instead, it's reasonable for all employees to visit LinkedIn at least twice a week and either like or share one of our posts.

While you're on the LinkedIn website, you may also want to scan your newsfeed for updates from people you've connected with or find some other articles that you find interesting enough to share with your network.

Continue to increase your network

LinkedIn is like a garden and you have to keep nurturing it to make it bloom when you need it most. You should always be expanding your LinkedIn network, especially if you are in a customer-facing role. When you add someone to your network, they are generally a connection for life as it is rare for people to "unfriend" you on LinkedIn. In some parts of the country, there is a lot of movement between different local government agencies, and connecting with someone via LinkedIn is a great way to make sure you will never lose touch with them.

For people in sales roles, are you connecting with all of the key contacts with your prospects? For people in project management or support roles, are you connecting with your customers and contacts that you are in touch with on a regular basis?

Some tips for increasing your network include:

- **Personalize your invitation** - Whenever you send a connection request from the LinkedIn desktop, you should personalize the invitation to increase the likelihood of the person accepting the invitation. Remind the person of how you met or that you look forward to working together in the future.
- **Connect with your co-workers, former co-workers, friends and relatives** – A great way to get a boost in your LinkedIn network is to connect with people you already know personally. LinkedIn makes it easy to find contacts by using your email address.

Remember that whatever you share or like on LinkedIn will appear in your network's newsfeed, which serves to keep Vision's name in front of your connections and keep up our buzz.

Tell others about the great things we share on social media

Finally, remind your customers and prospects about our various social media channels. To get the most out of our content and to make sure they don't miss anything we've published, encourage them to subscribe, follow or like us so our content automatically appears in their newsfeed or in their inbox.

Here are links to our social media channels:

- Website Resources - <http://www.visioninternet.com/resources>
- Vision Blog - <http://blog.visioninternet.com/>
- LinkedIn Company Page - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/vision-internet>
- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/visioninternet>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/visioninternet/>

LinkedIn Profile Cheat Sheet

You can access the example Vision employee profile at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/joevisionary>

LinkedIn Profile Cheat Sheet

Joe Visionary
 Helping Local Government Engage with their Communities
 Greater Los Angeles Area | Internet
 Current: Vision Internet
 Education: Bowling Green State University
 2 connections

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/joevisionary> Contact Info

Summary
 I am curious about applying new technologies, and am driven to solve the most interesting problems. I am analytical, hands-on, strategic, and enjoy sharing my knowledge.
 My latest passion is to help local government agencies innovate and excel in connecting and interacting with their citizens.
 Currently, I am responsible for helping local government [do something] at Vision Internet.
SKILLS
 Web Development | Web Design | Project Management | HTML | Content Management Systems | Other Skills
INDUSTRIES
 Local Government | Software | Professional Services | Web Development | Internet
CONTACT ME
 yourname@emailprovider.com

Experience
Your Current Job Title
 Vision Internet 
 2015 – Present (1 year)
 Vision is a rapidly growing national leader in website development and software solutions for local government. Our mission is to offer municipalities beautiful, highly-functioning and easy to use web-based portals and software tools that empower their constituents to be informed and involved whether they are in front of a computer or on a mobile device.
 In 2016, Vision was named to Government Technology magazine's GovTech 100, a listing of leading companies developing innovative offerings to improve or transform government. We were also selected as a top 10 company in the ELGL Top Choice Award which recognized government vendors.
 In my current role, I am responsible for:
 • bullet 1
 • bullet 2
 • bullet 3
 • bullet 4

Skills
 Top Skills
 1 Web Development +
 1 Web Design +
 1 Project Planning +
 1 Project Management +
 1 User Experience +
 User Interface Design +
 Local Government +
 Web Content... +
 Web Applications +
 Web Content Writing +
 Joe also knows about...
 Analytical Skills + Software Development + Citizen Engagement +
 Quality Assurance + Content Strategy + Information Technology +

Education
Bowling Green State University
 Bachelor's degree, Business, 3.5 
 Activities and Societies: Business Club, Entrepreneur Club, Intramural Athletics

Callout Instructions:

- Add professional profile picture
- Fill out Headline
- Complete Contact Info
- Customize your URL
- Complete the Summary Section
- Describe your Current Position at Vision
- Highlight your key Skills
- Complete Education section

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/joevisionary>