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A MAISTRO GUIDE

LinkedIn After AI

The right way to win clients

> Consistency beats volume, and please... start conversations rather than pitches.



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Why I wrote this

I ran a LinkedIn agency for about eight years. We wrote posts by hand, built networks by hand and sent messages by hand, and we charged about two grand a month for it.

Then AI arrived. My own team was using it to write, and I felt a bit like a fraud charging agency fees for work a machine could draft in seconds. So I rebuilt the business around a simple idea: let the technology do the heavy lifting, and keep humans checking rather than humans writing.

Along the way I have had the same conversation with hundreds of consultants, coaches, contractors and fractionals, and the people who run small professional firms. This guide is that conversation, written down. It is my view of the right way to do LinkedIn now. If you read it and agree, we should talk. If you disagree, you will at least know why we do things the way we do.

> **Keep humans checking rather than humans writing.**

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01

LinkedIn has changed, and most people have not

Everyone I speak to says the same thing: "I know LinkedIn is important." Then they get busy delivering for clients, and LinkedIn slips.

Business comes from referrals, until the referrals slow down. It is, to use a well worn phrase, feast and famine.

At the same time, AI has changed the platform in three ways:

- **There are far more posts.** Anyone can produce a post in ten seconds, so feeds are fuller and each post reaches fewer people.
- **Inboxes are full of spam.** Automated tools send four messages in 12 days, "bubbling things up", "checking in", "circling back", and then disappear. People have learned to ignore them.
- **People can spot AI writing.** One client told me that when they see a "not this but that" sentence, they know it is "GPT slop".

Here is what has not changed. People still value helpful content from someone who knows their subject. Clients still want to know who is behind a business, and they buy from the person they trust.

> **The job is the same as it always was: get useful things in front of the right people, again and again, until the timing is right for them.**

As a British person, I know we are awful at promoting ourselves. People tell me they don't want to post because they might look silly, and they don't want to message their network because they might look spammy. The approach in this guide is built for exactly those people. None of it needs you to shout.

02

Start with a plan

Everything starts with a plan. Not a 40-page document, but clear answers to five questions:

1. What do you sell?
2. Who do you sell to?
3. What problems do they face?
4. How do you help them fix those problems?
5. Why are you different?

From those answers comes a core message: the one thing you want to be saying to people time and again. Mine is consistency. Be consistently visible and active, because that is what most people fail at.

The plan then drives everything else. It decides your **themes**, the handful of subjects you post about. It decides your **audience**, the people you invite. And it decides your **messages**, what you say when you get in touch. Without a plan, posting becomes "scatter gun", as one person put it to me, and outreach becomes guesswork.

Turn your clients' problems into posts

The easiest way to never run out of things to say is to start from your clients' problems. Take one problem and pick one small angle of it. Then write about one of three things:

ANGLE 1	ANGLE 2	ANGLE 3
The cause of that problem	**How to fix it**	**The benefit of fixing it**

Ten problems, three angles each, and you have 30 posts that are useful to the people you want to work with.

Think companies first

When you decide who to target, start with companies, not people. Build a list of about 1,000 companies that fit, and add or remove companies every quarter.

Why companies? Because companies have budgets. A company has the problem you solve, and it has the money to fix it. People have problems too, but people change jobs. When your contact moves on, the company and its problem are still there, and so is the next person in the role.

A company also has more than one person who feels the problem. The more contact points you have within a target company, the better. You go in at one level, a colleague goes in at another, and the conversations support each other.

If you are not sure where to start, start with who you already work with. One client of ours worked with Disney and wanted to target a whole new sector. I said, hold on a minute: you have Disney as a client. Start with other parts of Disney. Then go to the companies most like Disney. Then go broader.

03

Post consistently, not to go viral

You are not going to go viral. That is fine, because going viral is not the point.

LinkedIn rewards argument. If I post "my favourite vegetable is a tomato", I get loads of comments from people telling me it is a fruit. That proves my point: you can write something helpful, or you can write something that gets lots of attention, and never the twain shall meet.

Posting has a different job. When someone you have invited or messaged visits your profile, they should see that you are alive and kicking. They should see what you know, and that you are a real person rather than an empty profile. Posting is table stakes. It gets you known. I really don't think it's ever made a sale on its own.

So what does good look like?

- **Once or twice a week** is enough. Few people choose an adviser from reading a stack of LinkedIn posts. They want to see that you have knowledge and help to offer.
- **Lower reach makes consistency more important, not less.** If fewer people see each post, the profile visit is where they meet you, and the profile needs to be current.
- **Forget likes as a measure.** Content on its own gets you pats on the back and a few likes. You feel the endorphins, but you don't make any money.

Never start from a blank page

There is no point spending three hours writing a post from a blank piece of paper. Let AI draft it, then review it. That is copy editing, not copywriting, and it takes a couple of minutes per post.

In practice, log in once a month, check the next few weeks of posts, add a picture if you like, and you are done. That is about 15 minutes a month. Most people find they have the consistency they never managed on their own.

3 hrs
Writing one post from a blank page

2 min
Reviewing a post AI has drafted

15 min
A month, to keep your profile current

If it sounds like AI, it hasn't been trained

You don't want to sound like every other AI person. You want to sound like yourself. When people say a post "sounds like AI", it means the AI has not been trained on you properly.

So train it. Give it examples of your own writing: articles, emails, a chapter of your book, case studies. Tell it when a draft is wrong and why. The more feedback you give it, the more it sounds like you over time. Some of our clients now post in their own language, Swedish, Arabic and Polish among them, in their own voice.

And check everything for accuracy. AI likes a good story and will sometimes invent one. Nothing should go out without a human reading it first.

04

Build your network: an invite is a hello, not a pitch

The conversations that win clients start with people who know you. So the next step is to build your network with the people on your plan.

> **Build the network, say hello. That's it.**

It doesn't mean following up four times over 12 days, sharing your calendar link and spamming people. You are getting on their radar, nothing more.

Don't over-filter

Your audience needs to be roughly right, not perfect. I see this too often: filter, refine, filter, reduce the list, filter again. Someone takes a week and ends up with 100 people. Meanwhile, they could have invited 100 people that week.

LinkedIn's own filters can be awful, so don't rely on them alone:

- "Charity" is not a LinkedIn industry. Andrew Millet of Millet Audit, an accountant who serves charities, found his first campaign returned the wrong people until we searched for "nonprofit organizations" instead.
- You cannot pick a county such as Hertfordshire as a location with the standard version of LinkedIn.
- Many sectors sit in the wrong industry codes: care, space tech, manufacturing.

Use other data sets alongside LinkedIn. Sophia Harris of Contesto built her list from 7,000 care providers on the Care Quality Commission register. Others use the FCA register, a trade body's member list or a tool like Apollo to find the managing directors of the companies on their list.

Make every invite count

LinkedIn gives you roughly 100 invites a week, so you want to make them count. The best filter is not job title. It is activity.

- If your audience is large, only invite people who are active on LinkedIn: they have posted recently, have more than 500 connections or hold a premium account.
- If your audience is small and precise, every managing director of a retail business in Maidstone, say, invite them all.

35% vs 15%

Richard Huldisch, The Huldisch Group: invites accepted when he targeted active users, against without the filter

36%

Mark, a security governance consultant: accepted by Heads of Risk with the 500-connection filter

Don't delay

Because an invite is only a hello, there is no reason to wait. You do not need the perfect message or the perfect list.

Every day you delay is about 20 fewer people invited, and 5 or 6 fewer connections. A month of polishing costs you around 100 new connections. Jobs change and needs are often unclear, so you will never know in advance which of those people would have become a client.

Keep the first message soft. Leave the note off the invite. When someone accepts, say hello, introduce yourself, and stop there.

05

Nurture: more precise, more regular

This is the part most people skip, and it is the part that makes money.

The conversations start when you reach out to the network you already have. You have built up a huge tank of connections over the years. Invites keep a little tap dripping, adding more people. Nurture is what you do with the tank.

Most of the people I speak to have 1,000, 3,000, sometimes 10,000 connections, and they never message them. What is the point of having them in your network if you never get in touch?

Send something helpful, not "let's have a call"

Nurture follows two rules:

When you spot someone with a need, message them.

A new role, a promotion, a company growing, a post about a problem you solve: these are reasons to get in touch now.

When you have no clue, send them something helpful.

Pick something that helps them think about a problem you solve: an article you wrote, a checklist, a framework, a short video, a case study, or an invite to an event or webinar. It does not need to be long. It needs to be useful to the person reading it, and easy for them to reply to.

Rather than annoying people with "let's have a call, let's have a call", you share interesting things over time. They get to know you. Then, when the time is right for them, they reply: good timing, let's have a chat. Maybe they got a promotion, changed jobs, or fell out with their current supplier. It may not be tomorrow, it may not be next week. You don't know whether it will be one month, six months or 12 months. That is why you keep going.

> **In effect, every message says: remember me, and here is something of value at the same time.**

Help them assess their own needs

Right now, the most popular helpful thing to send is a self-assessment. People love them. A short quiz or scorecard, "is your LinkedIn profile working as a business development tool?", does two jobs. It helps the person who takes it, and it tells you something. If someone takes it, that is a sign they need some help.

Richard Huldisch swapped a long PDF for an interactive quiz for exactly this reason: a PDF link gives you no idea who opened it.

For years clients told me, "I haven't got anything interesting to share." That excuse has gone. AI can now draft a checklist or a quiz from your plan in minutes. You review it, put your branding on it and send it.

How often

Go back to each relevant connection every month or two. Choose who to message by title, industry or location. Leave out anyone you have messaged or heard from recently. Don't double tap people.

The results come:

36 / 140

Replies to Andrew Millet's messages

~60

Replies to Richard Huldisch's nurture campaigns

57 / 800

Replies in my own account, from founders in professional services

47 / 527

Replies to my September campaign, in its first week

06

The numbers: 100 a week against 100 a day

This is the part that changed how I think about LinkedIn.

100

invites a week

About 25 accept. That is your pool for the week: 25 people who don't really know you yet. Its job is filling the tank.

100

messages a day

To your existing connections. 5% to 10% reply, from people who already know who you are. Its job is starting conversations.

You can send about five times as many messages to existing connections as invites to strangers, and those people already know you. So your existing network is the fastest way to start conversations.

Here is what that looks like in practice. Say 1,000 of your connections are relevant. Message 50 of them a day and you cycle through all of them every month. That is 250 messages a week. At a 5% reply rate that is about 12 replies a week, and at 10% it is 25. Not every reply says "yes, I need your help right now". But two or three a week will say "good timing, let's have a quick chat".

1,000	250	12–25	2–3
Relevant connections	Messages a week, at 50 a day	Replies a week, at 5% to 10%	"Good timing, let's have a quick chat"

Two or three good opportunities a week is what good looks like. Close one or two clients a month and the return is there.

Set your expectations

- I am not going to promise 50 meetings in 30 days. To be honest, you don't want 50 meetings in 30 days.
- If you are building from scratch, it takes time. You invite 100 people a week, wait for them to accept, and build trust.
- If 400 of your current connections are already the right people, it is much quicker. That is why nurture usually comes first.
- This is a high-value, lower-volume approach. It suits businesses where a new client is worth a few thousand pounds or more, and where the audience is large enough to have some misses as well as hits.

07

Where the human comes in

AI can now do most of the work. It drafts your posts, suggests who to target, writes your invites and messages, and is starting to suggest replies to the people who answer. Your part comes down to two things.

Check what it produces.

Whether it is a post, a suggested audience, a message or a reply, read it before it goes out. That takes a few minutes. Tell it what to change, because the more feedback you give it, the better it gets.

Take over when it matters.

There comes a point where a person has to step in: the sales call, the meeting, the proposal. Technology can start the conversation. It cannot sit across from someone, understand what they need and show them how you would solve it. That part is still you. Thankfully!

The point of all this technology is to make you as efficient as possible. Spend your time on the conversations that matter, and on delivering for your clients.

Your profile is important here too. When someone gets your invite, the first thing they read is your headline. Make it describe who you help and how you help them. Otherwise people think, who the hell are you?

08

Your monthly rhythm

With Maistro, most of this runs without you. Here is what a month looks like.

How often	What Maistro does	What you do
Every day	Sends invites to your audience and messages to your connections. Brings replies into one inbox, with follow-up reminders.	Reply to anyone who has replied. A few minutes.
Every week	Publishes one or two posts in your voice.	Nothing.
Every month	Drafts next month's posts and a new nurture campaign, with a resource to send.	Check and approve. About 15 minutes.
Every quarter	Reviews your company list, audience and themes with you.	Agree the changes. About 30 minutes.

In total: a few minutes a day for replies, and about 15 minutes a month.

A quick self-check

Answer yes or no.

1. Can you say in one sentence who you help and how?
2. Do you have a list of companies you want to work with?
3. Have you posted in the last two weeks?
4. Do you invite new people every week?
5. Have you messaged your existing connections with something helpful in the last two months?
6. Do you have a resource, such as a checklist or quiz, that you can send?
7. Do you know which replies you are due to follow up this week?

> **If you answered no to three or more, LinkedIn is probably not working as hard as it could for you.**

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If you agree, let's talk

If this matches how you think LinkedIn should work, that is what we built Maistro to do. The system drafts the plan, the posts, the invites, the messages and the resources. A real person helps you set it up, so you are never left working it out on your own.

See what we'd write for you

Put your website into themaistro.com/try and, for free, you will get your themes, your plan and your first posts, written for your business.

"Before I'd even paid anything, I got this full report about my business." Sophia Harris, Contesto

themaistro.com/try

Then, if you like what you see, start a free trial where we'll execute the plan for you.
Got some more questions? **Book a call** to talk it through.

About Elliot and Maistro

Elliot Zissman ran a LinkedIn agency for eight years before he founded Maistro. He is the author of *Invisible to Impactful: The LinkedIn playbook for B2B leaders*. With over 25 years experience of B2B sales and marketing, he's not as spritely as he used to be, but he's quite enjoying the new AI world and being a "tech-bro". However, he hasn't yet bought a Patagonia gilet.