

# Using Social Media for B2B Businesses

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## Introduction

Since their inception two decades ago, social media platforms have become significant channels for both B2C and B2B marketers. The ability to reach large audiences combined with the option to target based on consumer interests and profile has made social media channels an integral part of any marketing strategy. As paid media channels, their impact can be maximised by using content that shares original value, taps into audience motivations and evokes positive emotional responses. Understanding how people use and are influenced by the diversity of platforms is important and can help marketers identify the best channels to meet the brand's objectives. To summarise, social media channels for B2B marketers are important as they:

- Help us to reach the right customers and consumers, at the right time with the right product.
- Focus us on the opportunities & activities which will allow us to win, profitably.
- Guide our choices around people, resources, asset and capability development.
- Allow us to track how we are doing and course correct if things don't go according to plan.

Both LinkedIn and Twitter offer B2B marketers a unique opportunity to tap into large decision making audiences in a professional space compared to other social media platforms. With over 675 million members and 10,000 articles shared every day, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network. You can tap into the 65 million business decision-makers and 10 million C-level executives who regularly use LinkedIn, making it a prime platform to utilise as part of your digital strategy.

Often dubbed the 'now network' Twitter gives us the opportunity to enter into a real-time dialogue with engaged users. With 54% of daily Twitter users questioning how important a breaking news story is if they can't find it on Twitter, it's no surprise that 67% of B2B businesses use Twitter as part of their marketing strategy.

## Section 1: Social Media & Paid Advertising

With organic content sharing, you can reach users that follow your social media pages. If those followers decide to engage with your content, their followers, in turn, might see your content organically.

However, paid advertising can be implemented when we use a specific budget to reach users outside of our following or inside a specific group of users we decided to target.

You don't have to place a budget behind every piece of content that you share on LinkedIn or Twitter - so how do you know when to utilise paid advertising?

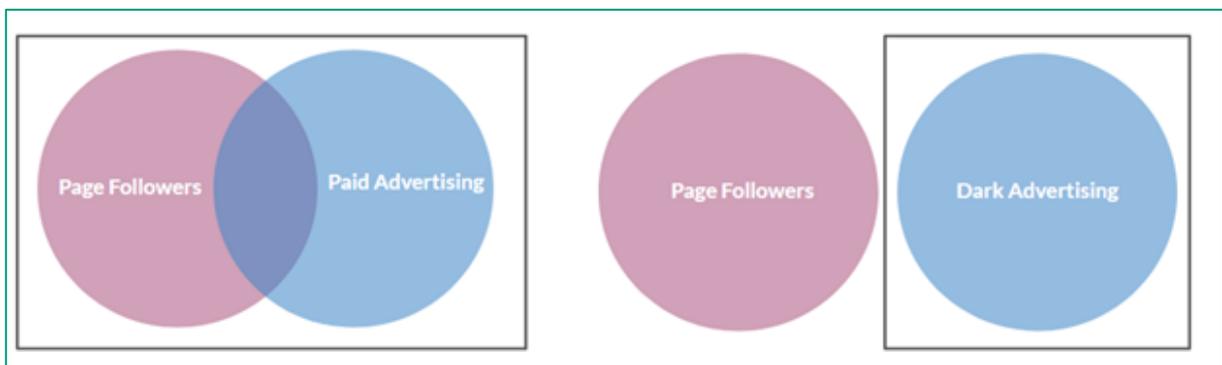
1. You should be placing advertising spend behind a post if it contains an important message you want to reach a large audience with.
2. You can also utilise paid advertising if you have content that you only want to be seen by a specific audience.
3. If an organic post of medium-high importance is doing well organically (getting higher levels of reach, engagement or clicks) you might choose to sponsor it.

There are 3 criteria that affect how often/how many users see your ad. How much you are willing to **bid** (the budget), the **relevancy** score (the positive and negative feedback an ad receives from the target audience) and how many **actions** users are taking on the ad, for example, if you're optimising an ad for clicks and many people are clicking, the platform will show your ad to more users.

## Section 2: Dark Advertising

Most often we'll publish content directly to our social media page which will then get shown to our page followers. We might also decide to place an advertisement behind this content to boost its reach to a wider audience. Now, both our page followers and those we target will see the content.

However dark advertising is when we create an ad within the social media channel's ad platform (e.g. LinkedIn's Campaign Manager or Twitter's Ad Manager) and choose to only show that ad to a specific audience group we decide to target. This targeting can be based on several variables, such as age, gender, or areas of interest. This content never appears as a published post on our social media page but only appears as an ad to those we've targeted.



### Why is Dark Advertising Important?

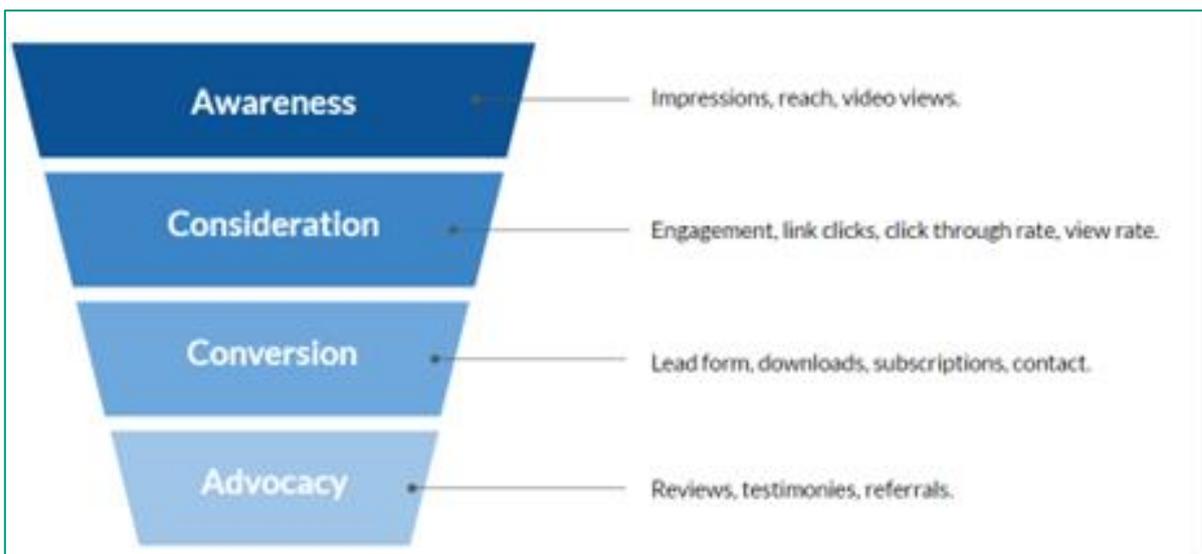
- Dark advertising and precision targeting enable you to segment your messaging and speak specifically to those who are most relevant. Your budget is therefore only used to engage the specific target audience you want.
- It opens up options for A/B testing, which again will help you refine your messaging, content and ads and make them more cost-effective.
- It enables you to share more content, without spamming your page followers with content that may be irrelevant to some of them.

## Section 3: Campaign Objectives & The Audience Funnel

Your content should reflect what stage of the funnel your target audience is at. You should utilise different messaging or incentives for each stage



What stage of the funnel your content and ad are focused on will determine what metrics you should be noting and optimising for?



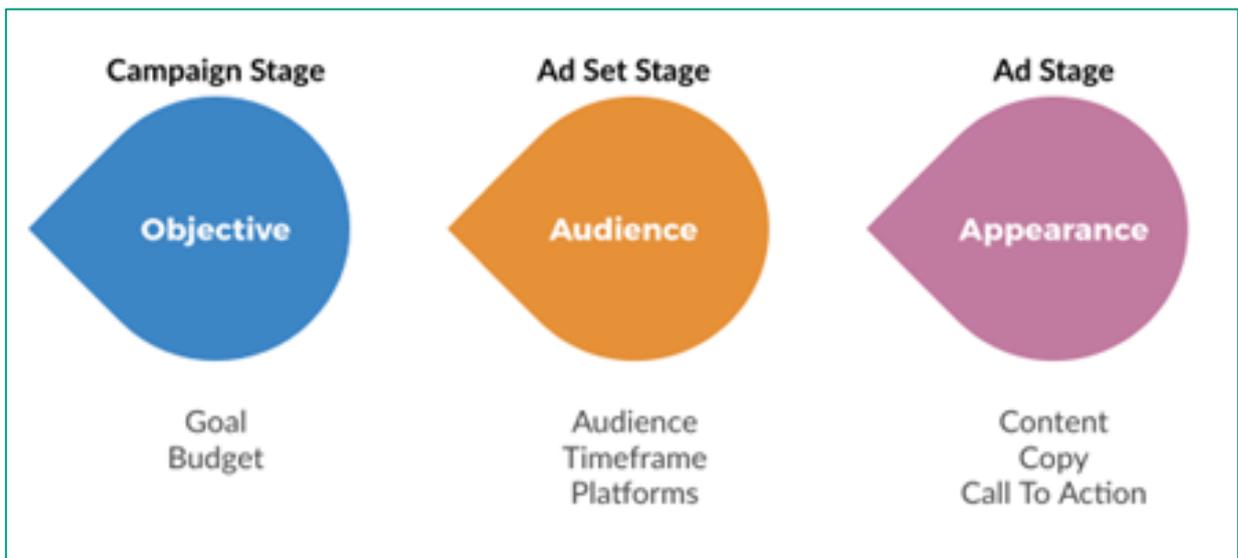
Utilising these average platform benchmarks can help you plan and set your social media KPIs. Once you've created and run your own paid campaigns, revise these benchmarks based on your own results.

	Twitter	LinkedIn
Average Cost Per Mille (CPM)	€4.25	€7.00 - €15.00
Average Cost Per Engagement (CPE)	€1.15	€2.45
Average Cost Per View (CPV)	€0.03	€0.04
Average Cost Per Click (CPC)	€0.49	€2.72
Average Click Through Rate (CTR)	0.86%	0.26%
Average Cost Per Lead	n/a	€63.00**

*\*All averages sourced from AdStage Q1 2020 report*  
*\*\*CPL fluctuates based on value exchange*

## Section 4: Creating Your First Paid Advertising Campaign

Across Twitter and LinkedIn, the process is the same. You'll first decide your overall goal or objective and how much you're willing to budget, this is called the **Campaign** stage or level. The next step will be to create an **Ad Set**, this stage will include your target audience, timeframe and sometimes, what sections (placements) of LinkedIn or Twitter you want your ad to appear on. You can choose to have multiple Ad Sets within each campaign which is how you can A/B test different audience groups. Finally, at the **Ad** stage, you'll select existing content (like a post on your social media page) or create a post from scratch. Depending on the type of Campaign you've chosen, you may also be asked to include a headline, link or Call to Action. Just like with the Ad Set stage you can include multiple Ads within each Campaign and each Ad Set.



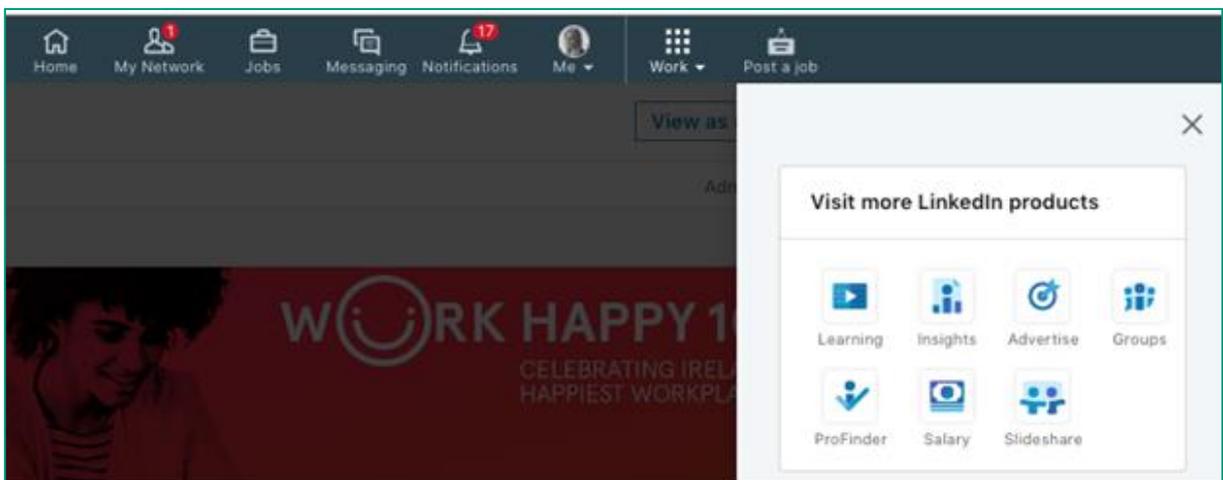
## Section 5: LinkedIn

### Campaign Manager

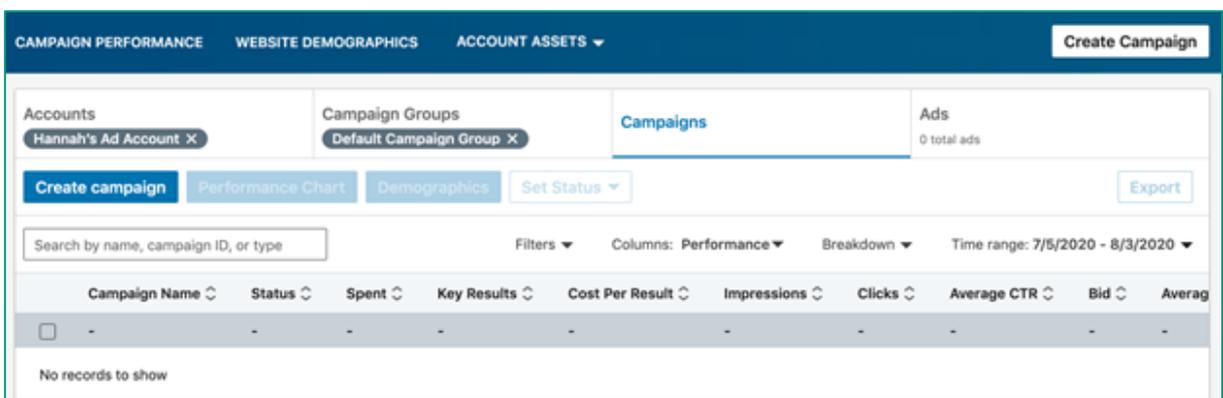
Let's take a more in-depth look at creating your paid campaign on LinkedIn. You'll first need to locate LinkedIn's Campaign Manager - which is the platform you'll use to run your paid ads.

You can find Campaign Manager via the link here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/campaignmanager> or at the top right of your LinkedIn page.



Below is a look at the Campaign Manager dashboard. You'll see an option to create your campaign in the top right corner. Once you have paid ads running this is where you can view certain criteria like how much budget has been spent and results for each relevant metric like impressions, link clicks or leads.



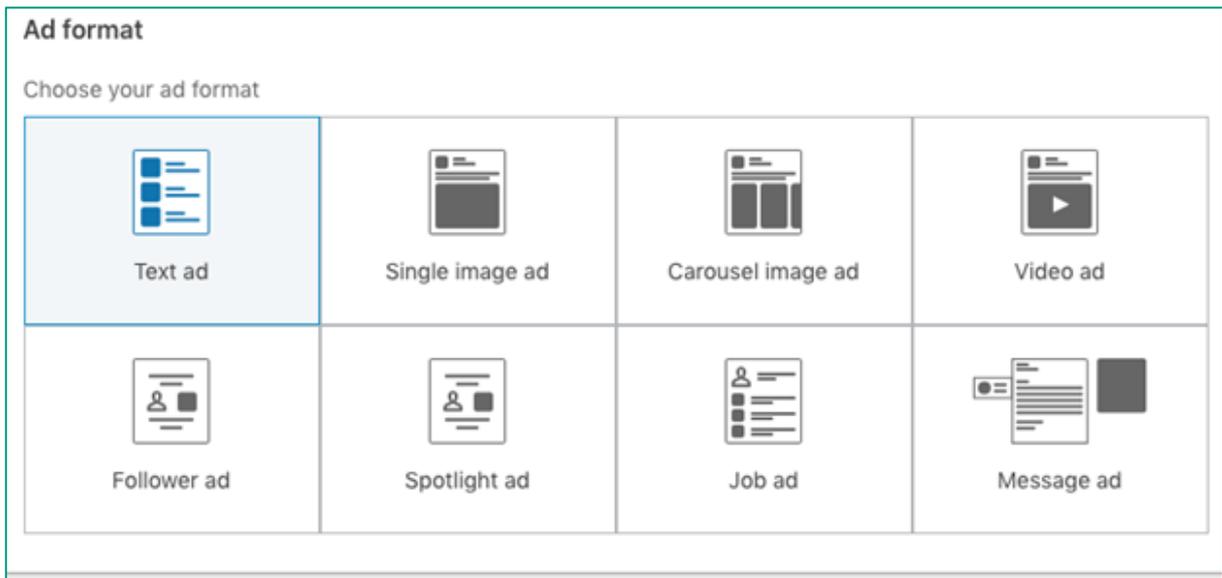
Once you've selected to create a new campaign the first step will be to choose your campaign's objective. Note that this can affect the formats of content you'll be able to sponsor. When targeting a new audience who may not be aware of your brand, you should look to choose an **Awareness** campaign, or likewise if you have enticing content on your website, look to utilise the **Website Visits** goal. Ideally, you may have several campaigns for each goal running at the same time that mirrors your marketing funnel.

The screenshot shows the 'Objective' selection screen in Facebook Ads. It is titled 'Objective' with a help icon. Below the title, it says 'Let's get started! Select the objective that best fits your goals below. Some objectives and ad formats are not yet available in the beta experience.' The screen is divided into three columns: 'Awareness', 'Consideration', and 'Conversions'. Under 'Awareness', there is one option: 'Brand awareness'. Under 'Consideration', there are three options: 'Website visits', 'Engagement', and 'Video views'. Under 'Conversions', there are three options: 'Lead generation', 'Website conversions', and 'Job applicants'. Each option has a small help icon to its right.

The next step is to create your target audience. You can select this based on numerous criteria such as location, language, industry, job seniority or member groups to name a few.

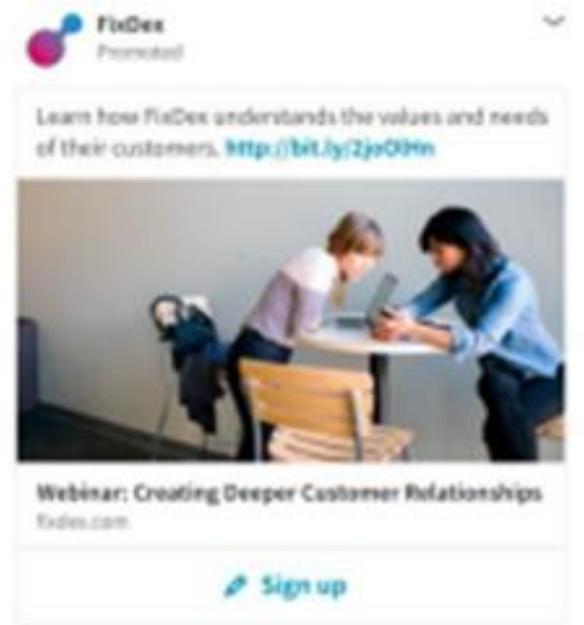
The screenshot shows the 'Who is your target audience?' screen in Facebook Ads. It is titled 'Who is your target audience?'. Below the title, it says 'INCLUDE people who have ANY of the following attributes'. Under this, there is a section for 'Job Seniorities' with five buttons: 'Partner X', 'Owner X', 'CXO X', 'VP X', and 'Director X', followed by a plus sign. Below this is a link 'Add more attributes (OR) +'. The next section is 'AND also have ANY of the following attributes'. Under this, there is a section for 'Company Industries' with three buttons: 'Consumer Electronics X', 'Consumer Goods X', and 'Consumer Services X'. Below this is a search bar with a search icon and the text 'Search'. Below the search bar, there is a list of industries with checkboxes: 'Agriculture', 'Arts', 'Construction', 'Consumer Goods', 'Apparel & Fashion', 'Consumer Electronics', 'Consumer Goods', and 'Consumer Services'. The 'Consumer Electronics', 'Consumer Goods', and 'Consumer Services' checkboxes are checked.

The next step will be choosing your budget type and ad (content) format. For the budget, you can choose to spend a certain amount each day without an end date (**daily budget**) or you can select a total budget with a timeframe for it to be spent within (**lifetime budget**). Your ad format should support your campaign objectives, for example, a video ad is a great way to hit your awareness goals, whereas a single image ad can be an effective format for driving website traffic when you include a link and Call to Action. Another format you may choose to utilise on LinkedIn will be a Lead Form.

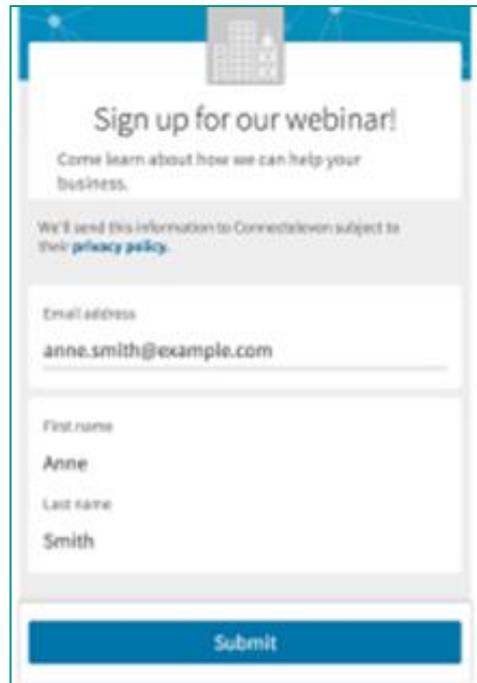


## LinkedIn Lead Forms

LinkedIn lead forms allow you to collect and drive leads directly on the platform as part of your ongoing campaign strategy. By utilising a whitepaper, webinar, report or strong Call to Action, LinkedIn lead forms can help you generate quality leads. Log into LinkedIn Campaign Manager and select the account you'd like to create Lead Gen Form templates for. Under "Account Assets", click "Lead Generation Forms". There are then 3 steps to creating your LinkedIn lead form

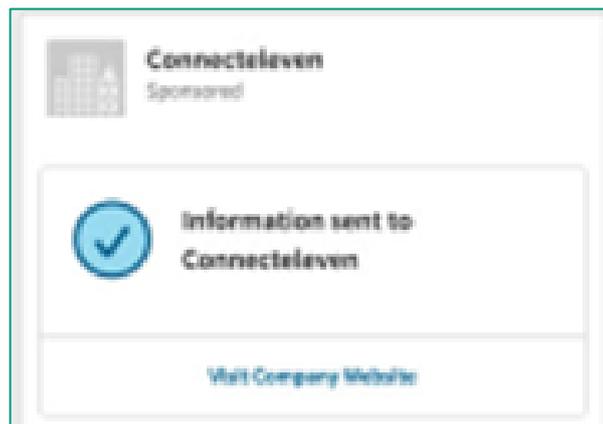


1. Clearly describe your offering. Include a clear headline and give context to your offer.



A screenshot of a mobile-optimized sign-up form for a webinar. The form has a white background with a blue header and footer. The header contains a small icon of a building and the text "Sign up for our webinar!". Below the header, there is a sub-header "Come learn about how we can help your business." and a privacy notice: "We'll send this information to Connectleven subject to their [privacy policy](#)." The form fields include: "Email address" with the value "anne.smith@example.com", "First name" with the value "Anne", and "Last name" with the value "Smith". At the bottom of the form is a blue "Submit" button.

2. Include the required fields you want the user to fill in - you can have up to 7 but aim to keep it short with the essentials.
3. Include a Thank You page for when the user submits their information - you can include any further Call to Actions such as 'visit the website'.



## LinkedIn Premium

If you feel limited by your free LinkedIn account, you might want to consider LinkedIn Premium Business. With two levels (Career and Business) each with associated costs this paid platform

opens up several features not available from a free account including the ability to send inmails to people you haven't already connected with, see who has viewed your profile, LinkedIn learning videos, a Premium badge, additional metrics and insights and unlimited people searches. If you're unsure of investing in either level, you can avail of the 30-day free trial. Note after your trial month you will be billed unless you cancel your membership.

**Premium Business features**  
Premium Business members get an average of 6X more profile views.

<p> <b>15 InMail™ messages</b> Contact anyone on LinkedIn, even if you're not connected</p>	<p> <b>Who's Viewed Your Profile</b> See who's viewed you in the last 90 days and how they found you</p>
<p> <b>Business Insights</b> Get deep insights into a company's growth and functional trends</p>	<p> <b>Unlimited people browsing</b> View unlimited profiles from search results and suggested profiles – up to 3rd degree</p>
<p> <b>Online video courses</b> Get the most in-demand business, tech and creative skills taught by industry experts with LinkedIn Learning</p>	<p> <b>Career Insights</b> See how you compare to other job applicants and get instant access to salary details</p>

## LinkedIn Sales Navigator

Sales Navigator is LinkedIn's sales prospecting tool which allows you to tap into the platform's network to then build and nurture relationships and ultimately, land more high-value deals. There are 3 levels - Professional, Team and Enterprise. Each level has various features and rates such as advanced search filters across roles, levels, industries and positions. You can save these searches, lists and leads, similar to a CRM system, and add tags and notes for later use. You can also avail of job notifications when someone changes their role or company.

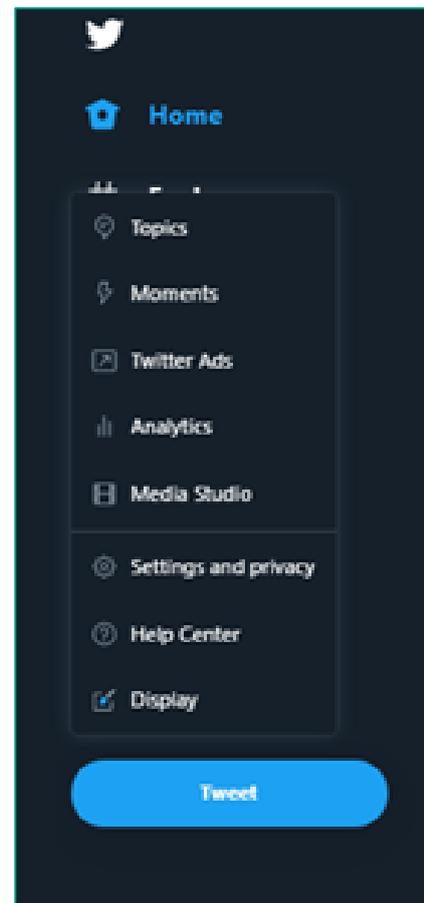
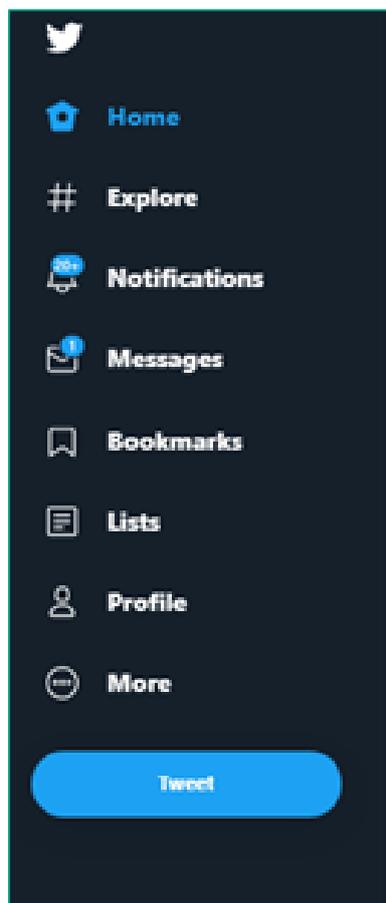
Sales Navigator also offers automated lead generation through recommendations based on your recent searches, profile visits and saved leads. A free version of Sales Navigator is available, which is an ideal option if you don't already have experience building and nurturing a CRM system, but if this isn't the case Sales Navigator can be a great next step for teams who are ready to take their pipelines to the next level.

## Section 6: Twitter

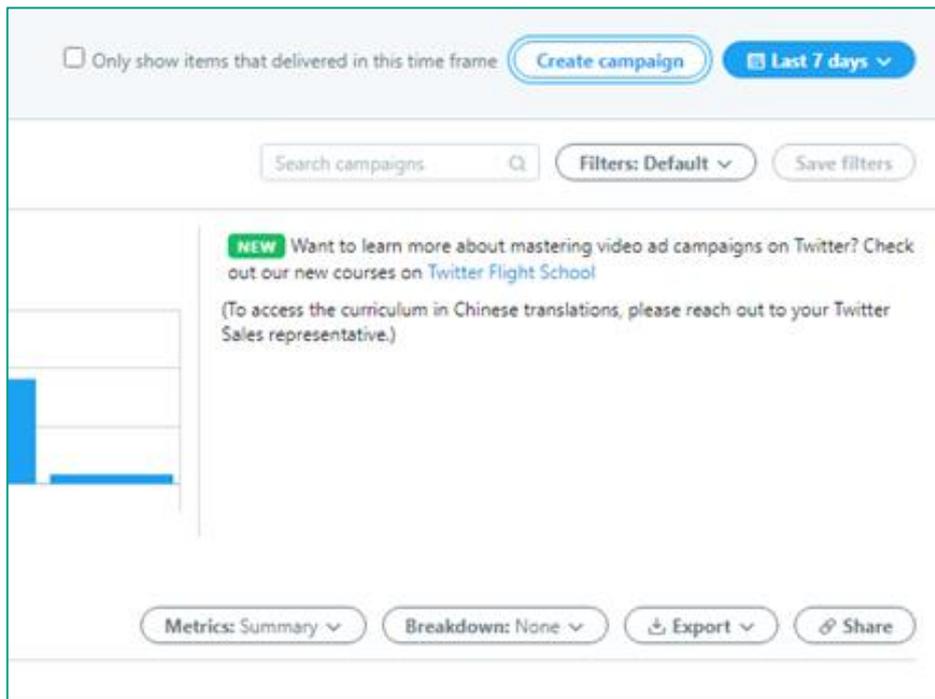
### Twitter Ads Manager

While not as leads focused as LinkedIn, Twitter Ads offer us a very cost effective platform through which we can engage users across a variety of demographics and drive them to take further action. With 7 different campaign options, you can choose one that best suits your marketing objectives from awareness to conversion.

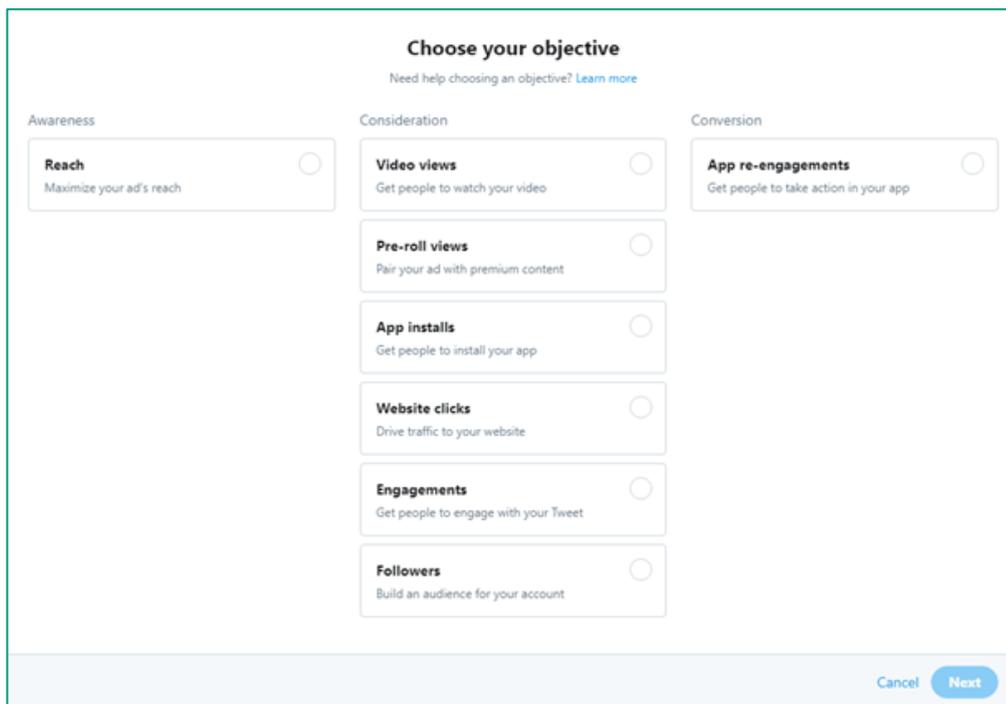
The first step will be to locate your Twitter Ads platform. You can find this here [https://ads.twitter.com/ads\\_manager](https://ads.twitter.com/ads_manager) or via your Twitter page when you click on More > Twitter Ads.



Mirroring the process we took on LinkedIn, you'll first be presented with the Twitter Ad dashboard, and in the top right corner, you can choose to create a new campaign.



You'll then select your **Campaign** objective across Awareness, Consideration or Conversion.



Once you've selected your Campaign objective you'll be brought to the **Ad Set** stage. The first section will require you to choose either a daily budget or lifetime (total) budget and select the

timeframe you want to run the ads for. We recommend when starting out, selecting a lifetime budget as this can help you avoid overspending by mistake.

**Campaign setup**

**Campaign name**  
Untitled

**Funding source**  
Credit/debit card  
Remaining budget: Not available | Runs: Dec 6, 2017 - Present

**Daily budget** ⓘ **Total budget (optional)** ⓘ  
USD 0.00 USD 0.00

**Start** **End (optional)**  
2020-08-08 6:09am EDT 2020-09-01 6:59pm EDT ⓘ

▼ **Advanced**

**Pacing**

Standard (recommended) ⓘ  
 Accelerated ⓘ

While Twitter doesn't offer us many professional targeting options like LinkedIn, we can still create a target audience based on location, age, language, interests, keywords and follower look-alikes. These are similar followers to Twitter profiles you can input and can be a very efficient way of zoning in on a specific audience.

**Locations** ⓘ

Ireland X

**Follower look-alikes** ⓘ

@rteneews X @rte X @RTE2fm X @RTELateLateShow X @RTEgaa X  
@RTE\_PrimeTime X @RTENewsNow X @IrishTimes X @Independent X

**Keywords** ⓘ

construction X building X contractions X contractors X builder X

Once you've selected your campaign objective, budget, timeline and target audience you'll be asked to select your **Ad** format. You have a few options here - you can select an existing post

from your Twitter feed, you can create a sponsored, the only piece of content that will only appear as an ad to the specific audience you target or you can create a Twitter Card which can be optimised for website clicks, video views or app downloads.

Note here that Twitter ads stick to the same character restrictions as tweets and have a 280 character limit. However this shouldn't hinder you too much as the most effective Tweets and ads are short, snappy and engages customers quickly.

### Sponsored Feed Ad



### Sponsored Only Ad



### Twitter Card (Website)



The Barista Bar   
@baristabar

Love coffee? Visit our site to see the full Barista Bar menu and drink specials.

 Promoted by The Barista Bar



The Barista Bar: coffee, lattes, espresso and more!

[Read more](#)

## Additional Think Digital Resources

Click on any of the below guidebooks to find out more:



**[Contact our Think Digital experts on the Client Capability Team here](#)**

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This guide has been produced in conjunction with **Collette Doyle**, founder of **Unfold Digital**

*Unfold Digital is a full-service Digital Consultancy & Agency.*

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