The LinkedIn ABM Handbook

How to Win Enterprise Accounts by Building Trust at Scale

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The Manifesto

For too long, Account-Based Marketing has been siloed, seen purely as a marketing function concerned with building lists, running campaigns, and reporting metrics. This handbook introduces a new approach: Profile-Based Marketing. It's built on a simple truth: in a world where AI can automate nearly every part of the ABM process, the one thing that remains uniquely human and impossible to fake is trust.

This handbook is built on a simple truth: in modern B2B, trust doesn't flow from one company's marketing department to another's procurement team. It flows from person to person - from your CEO to theirs, from your Head of Product to their Chief Innovation Officer.

The most powerful marketing channel you have is no longer paid media; it's the collective credibility of your people. Personal profiles, for instance, generate 3x more impressions and 5x more engagement than company pages.

The best ABM programs aren't the result of marketing working harder, but of your entire executive team becoming visible, helpful, and authentic to the exact people you need to reach. This is critical in a landscape where, as LinkedIn notes, 40% of deals fail to close due to consensus issues among the buying committee.

Your job is to orchestrate this many-to-many network of human relationships, building that consensus from the inside out and making your company impossible to ignore.

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Introduction: Why Most ABM Programs Fail at the Last Mile

You've done everything right.

You've built your Ideal Customer Profile. You've tiered your accounts. You've invested in employee advocacy platforms. You've got intent data flowing in. Your sequences are personalised. Your content is mapped to the buyer journey.

And yet.

Your connection requests go unanswered. Your carefully crafted messages sit in LinkedIn inboxes, unread. When you finally do get a meeting, the prospect says, "I've never heard of you," even though you've been "nurturing" them for six months.

Here's why: **Your target accounts aren't buying from your brand. They're buying from people they know, like, and trust.**

And right now, they don't know your people.

The Gap Between Strategy and Trust

Traditional ABM assumes that if you identify the right accounts, deliver the right message at the right time through the right channels, the accounts will respond. It's logical. It's measurable. It's also incomplete.

Because there's a layer between your message and their attention that no amount of personalisation tokens can penetrate. It moves beyond brand-level social proof into something deeper: genuine human credibility and authenticity.

When your Head of Sales sends a connection request to their Head of Procurement, the first thing that prospect does is look at your executive's profile. They scan for mutual connections. They check if this person is active, credible, relevant. They're asking: "Is this someone worth knowing?"

If the answer is no, if the profile looks like a CV from 2015, if there are no mutual connections, if your executive has never posted or engaged with anyone in their industry, the request gets ignored. Or worse, it gets accepted and then immediately pitch-slapped, burning the relationship before it starts.

The Uncomfortable Truth About Executive Engagement

Here's what you already know but might not want to say out loud:

Your executives are your competitive advantage in ABM, but most of them aren't showing up where it matters.

They're brilliant at what they do. They have the networks, the credibility, the insights that your target accounts would actually value. But they're not on LinkedIn in any meaningful way. And when you ask them to be, you get one of three responses:

1. **"I don't have time for this."**
2. **"I'm not comfortable posting on social media."**
3. **"Isn't this what we pay marketing to do?"**

This book exists to solve that problem.

Not by asking your executives to become influencers. Not by adding another task to their calendar. But by giving you a framework that makes executive participation **high-impact, low-effort, and impossible to ignore** when you show them the results.

What This Handbook Will Do for You

This is not a book about LinkedIn tactics. It's a book about building an ABM engine that works because it's built on human relationships, orchestrated at scale.

By the end, you'll have:

- **A strategy for prioritising the 2% of accounts that matter most** – and the specific people within those accounts who will either open doors or close them.
- **A proven "indirect path" methodology** that gets your executives connected to decision-makers without cold outreach that screams "sales pitch."
- **A profile optimisation framework** you can hand to your CEO that takes 90 minutes to implement and makes them 10x more likely to get replies.
- **Message sequences and content strategies** that feel personal even when you're engaging dozens of accounts simultaneously.
- **A measurement model** that connects LinkedIn activity to pipeline and revenue in a language your CFO will understand.

But most importantly, you'll have **the internal evangelism toolkit** you need to get your executives bought in, active, and effective – without it feeling like a marketing gimmick.

How This Book Is Structured

We've organised this handbook into three parts:

Part 1: The Foundation lays out the strategic decisions you need to make before anyone sends a single connection request. This is where you align your ABM strategy with the realities of how trust is built on LinkedIn.

Part 2: The Playbook is the tactical core – the specific actions, messages, and content strategies that bring your accounts from "never heard of you" to "let's talk."

Part 3: The Endgame shows you how to measure what matters, prove ROI to leadership, and turn this from a campaign into a repeatable system.

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Each chapter opens with an **orthodox view** – a belief that either you currently hold or that your executives are using to resist participation. Then we'll challenge it with evidence, examples, and a better way forward.

A Note on Authenticity

Everything in this book is grounded in what actually works. Not theory. Not what should work if everyone behaved rationally. What works when real executives with limited time try to build real relationships with real buyers who are sceptical, busy, and bombarded with messages.

Some of the advice will feel counterintuitive. Some of it will require you to push back on how your team currently operates. That's intentional.

Because if you wanted to do ABM the way everyone else does it, you wouldn't need this book.

Let's begin.

Part 1: The Foundation – Strategy Before the Click

Chapter 1: Find the Few Who Matter Most

How the smartest ABM teams uncover and prioritise the 2% of accounts that drive 80% of revenue

After carefully building your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP), the logical next step seems to be targeting every account that fits with equal intensity. However, this approach often leads to exhausted teams and wasted resources.

The reality is that at any given moment, only a tiny fraction of your target accounts – typically just 2-5% - are actually in a position to buy. The rest are locked in contracts, unaware of the problem you solve, or simply not prioritising it.

The most effective ABM teams understand this. They don't just identify their ideal accounts; they pinpoint which of those are ready to engage *right now*. They then run a dual strategy: one of intense, focused pursuit for the few in the buying window, and another to build sustained visibility with the rest, ensuring they are the first call when the window eventually opens.

This chapter shows you how to do both.

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The Buying Window Problem

Here's the math that should change how you run ABM:

If you have a list of 100 perfectly qualified accounts, statistically only two to five of them are actively looking for a solution like yours at this exact moment. They're in

what we call **buy mode** – budget approved, problem acknowledged, stakeholders aligned.

The other 95 accounts? They might be:

- Locked into an existing contract
- Unaware they have a problem
- Aware of the problem but not prioritising it this quarter
- In organisational flux (merger, leadership change, hiring freeze)

Traditional ABM tells you to nurture all 100 with the same cadence of emails, ads, and content. But here's what actually happens: you burn resources on the 95 who aren't ready, and you don't move fast enough or personally enough on the two who are.

The fix: You need two strategies running in parallel.

Strategy A: Identify and pursue the 2% with intensity, speed, and multi-threaded outreach.

Strategy B: Build sustained visibility and familiarity with the 98% so that when they enter their buying window six months from now, you're the first call they make.

Let's start with Strategy A.

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How to Identify the 2%: Intent Signals That Actually Matter

The first step isn't complicated: you need to align on signals that can be identified relatively easily. While LinkedIn and Sales Navigator are the most direct sources for this strategy, these signals can also be enriched with data from your existing ABM tools like 6sense, Demandbase, or HubSpot.

Start with a conversation with your marketing team (or with yourself, if you're wearing both hats). What does success look like? What does a high-value account look like when it's ready to buy?

Then translate those goals into **observable behaviours and attributes** that can be identified simply.

The Core Intent Signals

The first place to start is to look at signals you can identify on LinkedIn & Sales Navigator. Here are the filters and signals that consistently indicate an account is in or entering buy mode:

1. Recent Funding

A company that just raised a Series B or secured growth capital has budget and momentum. They're investing in solutions. Sales Navigator lets you filter by companies that have recently received funding.

2. Headcount Growth (or Contraction)

Rapid hiring in a specific department – say, 20% growth in their operations team – signals expansion and new priorities. Conversely, a headcount drop might indicate restructuring, which can be either a positive or negative signal depending on your solution. Sales Navigator tracks headcount changes over time.

3. Technology Stack Changes

If you can see (through intent data tools or even LinkedIn activity) that a company is adopting or migrating technology adjacent to yours, that's a trigger. They're in transformation mode.

4. Leadership Changes

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Leaders in your key account are 62% more likely to engage with you if within 90 days of a job change' source: LinkedIn 2025. New leaders are actively looking for quick wins and are more open to new vendors than someone who's been in the role for several years.

5. Company Announcements

Expansion into a new market, a rebrand, a new product launch – these all signal internal movement and budget allocation. Sales Navigator's **Account IQ** feature scrapes this information from company websites and news sources, surfacing it directly in your account view.

6. Active LinkedIn Presence

This one is subtler but powerful: if multiple people at a target account are posting, commenting, or engaging on LinkedIn around topics related to your solution area, it's a signal that the topic is top-of-mind internally. Sales Navigator lets you filter for people who have **posted in the last 30 days**, which is a proxy for active engagement.

7. Buyer Intent Signals within LinkedIn:

LinkedIn's own buyer intent algorithm looks at over 180 different data points to determine if an account is showing interest. These signals include whether people at the account are following your company page, connecting with your employees, engaging with your ads, or interacting with Smart Links you've shared. This data powers the 'Buyer Intent' feature in Sales Navigator.

Using Sales Navigator to Build Your 2% List

Sales Navigator isn't just a social media tool – it's the most up-to-date B2B database available. Here's how to use it strategically:

Start by building an **Account List** using your core firmographic criteria: industry, company size, geography. Then layer on the intent signals above to narrow it down.

For example, you might filter for:

- **Industry:** Pharmaceutical
- **Headcount:** 200–5,000 employees
- **Geography:** Scandinavia
- **Recent signal:** Headcount growth of 10%+ in the last six months OR recent funding

This gives you a subset of accounts showing signs of movement.

Next, go deeper. Use Sales Navigator's Buyer Intent Signals feature. As mentioned, this algorithm analyses over 180 data points (like company page follows, employee connections, and ad engagement) to categorise accounts as having high, medium, or low intent toward specific product categories. While not a perfect crystal ball, it's an invaluable filter for narrowing a list of 500 companies down to a more manageable 50.

Sales Navigator also offers **Account IQ** and **Lead IQ**, which pull in intelligence from external sources - recent conference attendance, leadership changes, website updates. This gives you validation beyond what the company has listed on their LinkedIn page.

One more advanced move: use the **Relationship Map** feature (though this is used less frequently) to visualise the organisational structure of a target account. If you're pursuing enterprise-level companies with complex hierarchies and multiple decision-makers, this lets you map out who reports to whom and plan your path accordingly.

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Why You Can't Ignore the 98%

Here's the mistake most ABM teams make: they identify the 2%, chase them hard, close a couple of deals, and then wonder why their pipeline dries up three months later.

The answer: they neglected everyone else.

If only 2-5% of your addressable market is in buy mode *right now*, that means 95-98% will be in buy mode *later.* And when they are, they're going to buy from whoever they already know, trust, and think of first.

This is why sustained visibility matters.

Your job with the 98% isn't to pitch them. It's to **be present, relevant, and familiar** so that when their contract ends, when their new VP of Operations starts, when their Q3 budget opens up, your name is already in their head.

You do this through:

- Connecting with key stakeholders (even if they're not ready to buy)
- Engaging with their content
- Publishing content they find valuable
- Showing up consistently in their LinkedIn feed without being salesy

We'll cover the execution in Part 2. For now, the strategic point is this: **you're not building a pipeline for this quarter. You're building an ecosystem of familiarity that feeds your pipeline for the next two years.**

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Tiering Accounts *and* People

Most ABM frameworks stop at tiering accounts, often separating them into tiers for high-touch and lower-touch engagement.

That's fine, but it's incomplete.

The breakthrough insight from the best ABM programmes is this: **you also need to tier the people within those accounts.**

Not everyone in a Tier 1 account deserves the same level of effort, and key individuals can be found even in lower-priority accounts.

Here's how to think about it:

Tier 1 People (Decision-Makers):

These are your C-suite executives, VPs, and heads of departments - the people with budget authority and ultimate sign-off. In Sales Navigator terms, you're filtering for titles like CEO, Founder, Chief Marketing Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Chief Innovation Officer, Head of Operations, and VP of Procurement.

These are the people you *need* to reach. They're also the hardest to reach. They're busy, selective about who they connect with, and often don't manage their own LinkedIn profiles (or someone else does it for them).

Tier 2 People (Influencers and Champions):

These are the people *around* the decision-makers - the operations managers, the senior executives, the team leads. They don't have final sign-off, but they absolutely influence the decision. More importantly, **they're far more likely to connect with you, engage with your content, and give you intel about what's happening inside the account.**

In practice, Tier 2 people are your entry point. You connect with them first. You build familiarity. You learn what the team is working on this quarter, what their pain points are, what initiatives are getting budget. Then you use that intelligence to craft a much warmer, more relevant approach to the Tier 1 decision-maker.

There's a data-backed reason for this: **when you connect with second-degree connections (mutual connections) first, your acceptance rate with the Tier 1**

decision-maker increases from 14% to 25%. Why? Because when that CEO sees your connection request, they also see that you're already connected to 50 people in their company. You're not a random stranger—you're someone their colleagues already know.

This principle extends to other warm introduction paths you can leverage, such as:

1) Executive TeamLink Connections:

Identifying decision-makers who are connected to your own leadership team.

2) Past Colleagues:

Finding people at the target account who used to work at your company or a previous company of one of your executives.

Any opportunity kick-started through one of these warm referrals has four times the impact of a completely cold connection.

The Practical Framework

Let's make this concrete. Imagine you've identified a Tier 1 account: a mid-sized pharmaceutical company in Sweden with 800 employees that just raised €20M in funding.

Your Tier 1 people might be:

- Chief Technology Officer
- VP of R&D
- Head of Operations

Your Tier 2 people might be:

- Senior Technology Manager (reports to the CTO)
- R&D Project Lead (reports to the VP of R&D)
- Operations Executives (report to the Head of Ops)

Your strategy:

1. Connect with 10-15 Tier 2 people first
2. Engage with their content, share value, ask thoughtful questions
3. Use those conversations to understand what's top-of-mind for the leadership team
4. Only *then* reach out to the Tier 1 decision-makers, using insights from Tier 2 to personalise your approach

This isn't manipulation. It's how relationships actually form in the real world. You don't walk into a company's headquarters and demand to speak to the CEO. You talk to people, build credibility, and earn your way up.

LinkedIn works the same way.

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Bringing It All Together: Your Account Prioritisation Framework

Here's the step-by-step process to identify and prioritise your accounts:

Step 1: Align with Marketing (or Your Strategic Goals)

What does success look like? What's your company's business objective this year? Translate that into account characteristics.

Step 2: Build Your Total Addressable Market (TAM) in Sales Navigator

Start broad. Filter by industry, size, geography. This gives you your universe of possible accounts - probably 500 to 5,000 companies depending on your niche.

Step 3: Layer on Intent Signals

Narrow it down using the signals we discussed: funding, headcount changes, leadership changes, active LinkedIn presence, technology adoption. Get this list down to 100-250 accounts.

Step 4: Tier the Accounts

Not all accounts are created equal. Some are dream clients with massive potential. Others are solid but smaller. Assign tiers so you know where to focus your highest-effort tactics.

Step 5: Tier the People

For each account (especially Tier 1 accounts), identify:

- Who are the decision-makers? (Tier 1 people)
- Who are the influencers and champions? (Tier 2 people)

Build lead lists in Sales Navigator for both groups.

Step 6: Prioritise Second-Degree Connections

Within your Tier 2 list, prioritise people who are:

- Already second-degree connections (you have mutual connections)
- Active on LinkedIn (posted in the last 30 days)
- Have a reasonably sized network (not 22 connections, which might indicate a dormant profile)

These are your highest-probability entry points.

Step 7: Activate Your Ecosystem Strategy

For the accounts that *aren't* showing intent signals yet (your 98%), don't ignore them. Add them to a separate list. These accounts get consistent, low-touch visibility - content engagement, profile views, strategic connections - so you're already embedded in their world when they do enter buy mode.

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The Strategic Takeaway

ABM isn't a volume game. It's a precision game.

Your job isn't to go after every account that fits your ICP with equal intensity. Your job is to find the 2% that are ready to move *now*, pursue them with speed and multi-threaded outreach, and simultaneously build familiarity with the 98% so your pipeline never runs dry.

You do this by translating business goals into observable LinkedIn signals, tiering both accounts and people, and using Sales Navigator not as a social tool but as the most current B2B database on the planet.

Get this foundation right, and everything in Part 2 – the outreach, the messaging, the content – becomes significantly more effective.

Because you're no longer shouting into the void. You're knocking on the right doors at the right time.

Chapter 2: Map the Path to the Decision-Maker

> It's not just about the right person – it's about knowing when to engage with them. – Fergus Parker

In the quest for efficiency, it's tempting to believe that the fastest path to a deal is to go straight to the top – the CEO, the CTO, whoever signs the checks. Why waste time with anyone else? But this direct approach often backfires.

Decision-makers are inundated with requests from strangers selling things they didn't ask for, and they've become adept at ignoring them. A far smarter strategy is the indirect path.

By first connecting with the decision-maker's team and building visibility within their network, your eventual approach is no longer a cold interruption but a warm introduction.

Here you'll see how this seemingly slower path is actually the fastest way to a meaningful conversation.

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Why the Direct Path Fails

Let's start with the uncomfortable truth: your target decision-maker receives dozens of connection requests every week from people who want to sell them something. Most of those requests follow the same pattern:

1. Generic or blank connection request (or worse, one that immediately pitches)
2. Acceptance (maybe)
3. Instant message: "Thanks for connecting! I'd love to show you how [Product] can help [Company] achieve [Generic Business Outcome]."

The prospect's internal monologue: *Here we go again.*

Even if your product is genuinely valuable, even if your message is well-written, you're fighting against pattern recognition. The decision-maker has been conditioned to see this approach as low-value noise.

Now add in the practical reality: **C-suite executives are often not managing their own LinkedIn profiles.** Either someone else monitors it for them, or they check it sporadically, or they've simply tuned out connection requests entirely because the signal-to-noise ratio is so poor.

The result? Your carefully crafted outreach to the CEO gets a 14% acceptance rate on average. And even when they do accept, they rarely engage.

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There's a better way.

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Executing the Indirect Path

As established in Chapter 1, the fastest path to a decision-maker is often indirect. Instead of approaching your Tier 1 targets (C-suite, VPs) cold, you first build credibility and gather intelligence by connecting with your Tier 2 targets (their direct reports, team leads, and influencers). This chapter is the step-by-step playbook for executing that strategy.

The Step-by-Step Indirect Path

Here's how this plays out in practice:

Step 1: Identify Your Entry Points (Tier 2 People)

Using Sales Navigator, build a lead list of Tier 2 people at your target accounts. Filter for:

- Job titles one level below the decision-maker (e.g., if you're targeting CTOs, look for Senior Technology Managers, Engineering Leads, etc.)
- **Second-degree connections** (you have mutual connections)
- **Posted in the last 30 days** (indicates they're active on LinkedIn)
- **Network size of 500+** (indicates they're engaged users, not dormant profiles)

This gives you a list of people who are likely to accept your connection request and actually see your messages.

Step 2: Connect Without Pitching

Send connection requests to Tier 2 people. Here's the controversial part: **don't overthink the message.**

The data shows that the difference between a well-crafted personalised connection request and a blank one is negligible - often just a few percentage points. What *does* hurt you is a message that screams "I'm about to sell you something."

If you do include a note, keep it short, human, and non-salesy:

- "Hi [Name], I've been following some of the conversations in [Industry Group] and thought it'd be great to connect."
- "Saw your post on [Topic] - really insightful. Would be good to connect."

Or just send a blank request. Seriously. The goal at this stage is to get connected, not to pitch.

Step 3: Nurture the Connection

Once they accept, resist the urge to immediately launch into your value proposition. Instead, build familiarity:

- **Like their posts.** Show up in their notifications.
- **Comment thoughtfully.** If they post about a challenge relevant to your solution, engage with it. Don't pitch - just add value to the conversation.
- **View their profile.** This sends a subtle signal that you're paying attention. If you view 200 Tier 2 profiles at a target account, a portion of them will come back and view *your* profile, and some will even send *you* a connection request. That's a strong positive signal.

These are what we call **soft touch points** - low-pressure interactions that build familiarity without asking for anything.

Step 4: Start Conversations (Where Appropriate)

Not every Tier 2 connection needs to become a conversation. But for those who engage back - who comment on your posts, who respond to your comments, who view your profile - you can take it further.

Send a message that's genuinely conversational:

- "I noticed you're working on [Initiative]. What's been the biggest challenge so far?"
- "Curious – how is [Trend] impacting your team right now?"

The goal isn't to pitch. The goal is to **sense the pulse** – to understand what's happening inside the account, what's top-of-mind, what pain points are emerging.

These conversations give you intelligence you can't get anywhere else. A Tier 2 manager might tell you, "We're actually restructuring the entire ops team this quarter," or "Leadership just mandated we cut costs by 15%," or "We're piloting a new platform but honestly it's not going well."

That's gold. Because now when you approach the Tier 1 decision-maker, you're not guessing what they care about – you know.

Step 5: Approach the Tier 1 Decision-Maker

Now – and only now – you reach out to the CEO, the CTO, the VP.

But the conversation is different. When they see your connection request, they see:

- **50 mutual connections** (their own team)
- **A profile that's credible and active** (we'll cover this in Chapter 3)
- **A headline that doesn't scream "salesperson"**

And when you send your first message, it's not generic. It's informed:

- "I've been speaking with a few folks on your ops team about [Challenge], and it sounds like [Specific Insight]. I've seen similar patterns at [Comparable Company] – would it be worth a brief conversation?"

This isn't a pitch. It's a peer-level conversation starter, informed by real intelligence.

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Why This Works: The Psychology of Trust and Familiarity

Let's zoom out for a moment and talk about why the indirect path is so much more effective than the direct approach.

Humans trust people who are familiar and socially validated.

When you're already connected to half of someone's team, you benefit from what psychologists call **social proof**. The decision-maker's brain doesn't process you as a cold outreach from a stranger. It processes you as someone their colleagues already know and engage with.

This is the same reason you're more likely to try a new restaurant if three of your friends have been there than if you saw an ad for it. **Trust is transferred through networks.**

On LinkedIn, this effect is amplified because it's visible. The decision-maker doesn't have to take your word for it that you're credible – they can see that you're already embedded in their professional network.

Add to that the **mere exposure effect** – the psychological principle that people develop a preference for things they're repeatedly exposed to – and you start to understand why showing up consistently in someone's feed (through comments, likes, and engagement with their colleagues) makes them exponentially more likely to respond when you do reach out.

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Decoding Buy-Mode Signals: Knowing When to Move

The indirect path gives you time to gather intelligence, but you still need to know *when* to escalate the conversation from relationship-building to deal progression.

Here are the signals that indicate an account is entering buy mode:

1. Leadership Changes

A new CTO, VP of Operations, or department head almost always comes in with a 90-day mandate to make changes. New leaders are actively evaluating vendors, open to new ideas, and haven't yet built loyalty to existing suppliers.

Sales Navigator alerts you when someone at a target account changes roles. This is a trigger to reach out – not with a pitch, but with a genuine congratulations and an offer of insight: "Congrats on the new role. I've worked with a few CTOs navigating [Industry] transformations – happy to share what I've learned if useful."

2. Hiring Surges in Specific Departments

If a company suddenly adds 15 people to their operations team, they're scaling. That means new budget, new priorities, and new pain points.

Sales Navigator tracks headcount growth over time. A 10-20% increase in a relevant department is a strong buy signal.

3. Company Announcements

New product launches, market expansions, rebrands, major partnerships – these all indicate internal movement and budget allocation.

Sales Navigator's Account IQ feature scrapes company websites and news sources to surface these announcements. You can also add your own products to Account IQ to make the intent insights even more relevant to your specific services. If your target account just announced they're expanding into three new markets, they're going to need support infrastructure. That's your opening.

4. Online Activity Spikes

If multiple people at a target account suddenly start posting or engaging with content around a specific topic – say, digital transformation, or cost reduction, or compliance – it's a signal that the topic is being discussed internally.

You can track this by saving your target accounts' employees as leads in Sales Navigator and monitoring their activity feed. When you see patterns emerge, that's your cue to join the conversation.

5. Intent Signals from External Tools

While Sales Navigator has its own **Buyer Intent Signals** (categorising accounts as high/medium/low intent for specific product categories), you can also integrate intent data from platforms like 6sense or Bombora.

The important thing to remember: **intent data is directional, not definitive.** Use it to narrow your focus, but don't treat it as gospel. The real signal comes from the combination of data + human observation.

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Mapping the Relationship Web

For enterprise accounts with complex organisational structures, you need a systematic way to visualise who reports to whom and how decisions flow.

Sales Navigator offers a **Relationship Map** feature - essentially a drag-and-drop canvas where you can diagram the org structure of a target account. You can map out:

- Who are the decision-makers at the top?
- Who are their direct reports (your Tier 2 entry points)?
- Who are the cross-functional influencers (e.g., someone in finance who might have budget input)?

This is particularly useful when you're pursuing accounts with multiple headquarters, business units, or regional divisions. You need to know which verticals to target first, and how to sequence your outreach so you're building momentum across the organisation.

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Most teams don't use this feature because it feels like extra work. But for your Tier 1 accounts – the ones that could drive 7-figure deals – it's worth the 30 minutes to map it out. It ensures your team isn't randomly connecting with people, but systematically building relationships in the right sequence.

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Bringing It All Together: Your Path-to-Decision Framework

Here's the practical, repeatable framework:

For Tier 1 Accounts (High-Value, High-Complexity):

1. **Map the org structure.** Identify the Tier 1 decision-makers and their Tier 2 direct reports.
2. **Build a Tier 2 lead list** in Sales Navigator. Prioritise second-degree connections who are active on LinkedIn.
3. **Connect with 10-20 Tier 2 people** at the account. No pitch, just connection.
4. **Engage with their content** for 2-4 weeks. Like, comment, view profiles. Build familiarity.
5. **Start conversations** with the Tier 2s who engage back. Learn what's happening internally.
6. **Reach out to the Tier 1 decision-maker** only after you've built mutual connections and gathered intelligence.

For Tier 2 Accounts (Solid Value, Less Complexity):

1. **Identify the primary decision-maker** and 3-5 Tier 2 influencers.
2. **Connect with Tier 2 first**, engage for 1-2 weeks.
3. **Reach out to Tier 1**, using any insights gathered from Tier 2.

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The Strategic Takeaway

The direct path to the decision-maker is a myth. Or more accurately, it's a low-probability bet that wastes your highest-value opportunities.

The indirect path - building relationships with Tier 2 people first, gathering intelligence, creating mutual connections, and *then* approaching the decision-maker - isn't slower. It's strategic.

It increases your acceptance rate by nearly double. It gives you context and credibility. And it positions you not as a vendor cold-calling, but as a peer who's already embedded in their professional network.

Map the path. Build the relationships. Let the trust do the work.

In the next chapter, we'll make sure that when people *do* click on your profile - whether they're Tier 1 or Tier 2 - what they see makes them want to engage, not run away.

Chapter 3: Forge Your Digital First Impression

Most people treat their LinkedIn profile like an online CV - a static record of their career that they update only when looking for a new job. This is a fundamental mistake. The truth is, your profile is the dynamic landing page for every single interaction you have on the platform.

When you comment on a post or send a connection request, the first thing that person does is click to see who you are. If that landing page looks like a relic from 2015 or reads like a corporate brochure, your entire ABM strategy is undermined before it even begins.

This chapter is about fixing that foundation, ensuring your digital first impression makes people want to engage, not run away.

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The Profile as a Landing Page

Here's the mental model shift your executives need to make:

Your LinkedIn profile isn't a CV. It's a landing page for a marketing campaign where you are both the marketer and the product.

Every action you take on LinkedIn – every comment, every connection request, every post – drives traffic to your profile. When someone sees your name pop up in their feed or their notifications, the first thing they do is click through to see who you are.

In that moment, your profile has one job: **make them want to engage with you.**

Not hire you. Not read your entire career history. Just think, *"This person seems credible, relevant, and worth knowing."*

If your profile passes that test, they'll accept your connection request. They'll reply to your message. They'll keep reading your content. If it doesn't, they'll bounce – and you'll never get a second chance.

The problem is that most executive profiles fail this test spectacularly. They're formatted like CVs: a chronological list of roles, responsibilities, and accomplishments, written in third-person corporate speak that no human actually talks like.

There's no personality. No point of view. No reason to believe this person is someone worth having a conversation with.

And worse, there's often no evidence that the person is even *active* on LinkedIn. No recent posts. No engagement. No signal that if you connect with them, they'll actually see your message.

Your job is to fix this – for yourself, and for every executive you need to activate in your ABM program.

◆

The Elements That Follow You Everywhere

Before we talk about optimising your full profile, let's focus on the three elements that matter most, because they're the only things most people will ever see.

Whenever you like a post, comment on someone's content, or send a connection request, three pieces of information follow you around LinkedIn:

1. **Your name** (you can't do much about this)
2. **Your profile picture**
3. **Your headline**

That's it. Those three elements appear next to everything you do. They're your first impression, your calling card, your chance to signal credibility before anyone even clicks through to your full profile.

If you get these three things right, more people will click. If you get them wrong, everything else you've written in your profile is irrelevant – because no one will see it.

Let's optimise them one by one.

◆

Your Profile Picture: Make It Impossible to Ignore

Your profile picture will almost always appear as a tiny thumbnail – maybe 50x50 pixels on most screens. At that size, it needs to stand out from a sea of other tiny faces.

Here's what works:

1. Eye contact and a genuine smile.

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This is basic human psychology. We're wired to pay attention to faces looking at us and to trust people who appear warm and approachable. Headshots where you're looking off into the distance or wearing a serious, corporate expression don't build connection - they create distance.

2. A brightly colored background.

This is where most people get it wrong. They use a standard grey backdrop, or a blurred office setting, or a busy conference room. At thumbnail size, your face blends into the background and becomes just another small circle in the feed.

Instead: **use a bold, solid color.** Bright blue, vibrant orange, deep red - something that pops visually and makes your thumbnail stand out even when it's tiny.

This isn't about being gimmicky. It's about being visible. When someone is scrolling through 50 notifications, your bright blue background makes their eyes stop. That fraction of a second of attention is the difference between being noticed and being ignored.

3. Professional, but not corporate.

You don't need a stiff, traditional corporate headshot. You need a photo that signals "I'm credible and approachable." Business casual often works better than a full suit. A relaxed smile works better than a forced one.

Think less "annual report executive photo" and more "someone you'd actually want to have a coffee with."

♦

Your Headline: Stop Sounding Like a Salesperson

Your headline is the 120-character description that appears below your name everywhere you go on LinkedIn. It's prime real estate, and most people waste it.

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Here's what doesn't work:

- "Helping companies 10x their revenue through innovative solutions"
- "Business Development Manager | Driving Growth & Building Partnerships"
- "Passionate about transforming businesses with cutting-edge technology"

Why don't these work? Because they trigger an immediate defence mechanism in the reader's brain: *This person is going to try to sell me something.*

Research from actual A/B testing shows that **headlines with sales language (business development, revenue growth, helping companies achieve** X) **significantly underperform** compared to headlines that are clear, authentic, and non-salesy.

Here's what does work:

Option 1: Job Title + Company + Something Human

This is the safest and often most effective approach:

- "CTO at [Company] | Former engineer, current builder of teams | Marathon runner"
- "Head of Operations at [Company] | Obsessed with process improvement | Mediocre golfer"

The formula: role, company, and a small human detail that gives you personality. It's professional without being corporate. It tells people what you do without sounding like you're pitching them.

Option 2: Descriptive Role + Industry Context (If You Don't Have a Prestige Title)

If your job title isn't inherently impressive (or if you're in a sales or business development role where the title itself is a red flag), shift to a more descriptive approach:

- "Building the future of [Industry] at [Company] | Formerly at [Recognisable Company]"
- "Supply chain nerd | Working with manufacturers to eliminate waste"

The key is to be **specific and human**. Avoid abstract claims about value. Just say what you actually do in language a normal person would use.

What to avoid:

- Anything that screams "sales" (business development, revenue growth, partnerships)
- Vague, abstract promises ("transforming," "disrupting," "revolutionising")
- Buzzwords that mean nothing ("innovative," "passionate," "results-driven")

Context matters:

What works in one industry won't work in another. If you're in marketing, your audience will tolerate (and even appreciate) clever, creative headlines. If you're in risk management or supply chain, formal and straightforward will outperform clever every time.

Similarly, **your seniority matters.** If you're a CEO or VP, your title carries weight – use it. If you're a manager or director, you may need to work harder to establish credibility through your description.

The goal is to **mirror the status of the people you're trying to reach.** If you're targeting C-suite executives, your headline should position you as a peer, not a supplicant.

♦

Your Banner Image: Tell Your Story Before They Read a Word

The banner image is the wide horizontal image at the top of your profile. Most people either leave it as the default LinkedIn blue, or they slap their company logo up there and call it done.

Both approaches are wasted opportunities.

Here's why the banner matters: **visual information is processed 50,000 times faster than text.** When someone lands on your profile, they see your banner before they read a single word of your About section. In that instant, their brain is forming an impression of who you are.

So what should go there?

Tell the story of your profile in one image.

The best banner images do one or more of the following:

1. Establish credibility.

- A photo of you speaking at a conference
- Awards or recognitions displayed visually
- Logos of well-known companies you've worked with or clients you've served

2. Humanise you.

- A candid shot of you and your team at a company event
- A photo that shows your personality (e.g., you doing something you're passionate about – though keep it professionally relevant)

3. Reinforce your value proposition.

- A visual representation of the problem you solve or the transformation you enable

- A simple, bold statement of your expertise or focus area (but not salesy – think "15 years building supply chain resilience" not "We help companies optimise their operations")

What to avoid:

- Generic stock photos (mountains, handshakes, abstract corporate imagery)
- Just your company logo on a blank background (unless you work for a massively recognisable brand)
- Busy, cluttered images that look chaotic at small screen sizes

The goal is simple: **make the impression visually before they read the details.** If they see you speaking at an industry event with award badges along the bottom, they immediately think "credible." Then they start reading your About section already inclined to trust what you have to say.

♦

The About Section: From CV to Conversation

Now we get to the part most people overthink: the About section.

Here's the shift that needs to happen: **Stop writing it like a resume. Start writing it like you're talking to someone you just met at an industry event.**

Most About sections read like this:

"John is a seasoned executive with over 20 years of experience driving operational excellence across global enterprises. He has a proven track record of delivering results in complex, fast-paced environments and is passionate about leveraging innovative solutions to create value for stakeholders."

This is corporate word soup. It says nothing. And worse, it's written in third person, which is just weird. You're not your own publicist.

Here's what works better:

> "I've spent the last 20 years figuring out how to make supply chains run smoother when everything around them is chaos. I've done this for manufacturers in 15 countries, and the problem is always the same: too much complexity, not enough visibility.
>
> *These days I'm focused on helping operations teams cut waste without cutting corners. If you're dealing with disruptions, delays, or just too many spreadsheets, let's talk."*

See the difference?

It's conversational. It sounds like a human being, not a corporate brochure.

It's specific. Instead of "proven track record," it says "manufacturers in 15 countries." Instead of "delivering results," it says "cut waste without cutting corners."

It's outcome-focused. The reader immediately understands what you do and who you help.

It invites engagement. The last line is a soft call-to-action: if this resonates, reach out.

Here's the framework:

1. Open with the problem you solve or the change you create.

Don't start with your job title or your credentials. Start with the value you deliver.

2. Give specific proof.

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Not vague claims – actual details. Numbers, industries, types of companies, recognisable names (if you can).

3. Show a point of view.

What do you believe that's different from the mainstream? What do you think most people in your industry get wrong? This is where personality comes in.

4. End with a door left open.

Not a hard sales pitch, but an invitation. "If you're dealing with X, let's talk." "I'm always interested in hearing how other teams are tackling Y."

Inject personality, but stay professional.

You don't need to be funny or quirky if that's not who you are. But you do need to sound like a real person with a real perspective. Write it the way you'd explain what you do to someone who asked at a dinner party.

♦

The SEO Layer: Keywords Without Sounding Robotic

Here's something most people miss: **LinkedIn is a search engine.**

When your target prospects are looking for solutions, expertise, or people to connect with, they often start by searching LinkedIn. If your profile is optimised with the right keywords, you show up. If it's not, you don't.

This doesn't mean you should stuff your About section with awkward keyword phrases. It means you should naturally weave in the terms that your target audience is searching for.

For example:

- If you're targeting supply chain leaders, use terms like "supply chain resilience", "logistics optimisation", and "procurement strategy".
- If you're targeting CFOs, use terms like "financial planning", "cost reduction", and "operational efficiency".

These should appear in:

- Your headline
- Your About section
- Your job descriptions (especially your current role)

But – and this is critical – **don't sacrifice readability for SEO.** If your About section sounds like it was written by a robot trying to game an algorithm, you'll rank higher in search but convert worse when people actually read it.

The balance: write for humans first, then go back and make sure the right keywords are naturally present.

♦

The Experience Section: Show the Journey, Not Just the Job Titles

Most people treat the Experience section like a resume: job title, company, dates, bullet points of responsibilities.

That's fine if you're applying for jobs. But remember: **this is a landing page, not a CV.**

The Experience section should tell a story of progression, expertise, and the unique value you bring. Here's how to reframe it:

For your current role:

Instead of listing responsibilities, describe what you're building and why it matters.

Weak:

> "Responsible for overseeing operations across three regional offices. Manage a team of 15. Drive process improvements."

Strong:

> "Leading the operations transformation for [Company] as we scale from 200 to 2,000 employees. We're building the systems to support that growth without losing the agility that got us here. Big focus right now: getting our regional teams to actually talk to each other."

See the difference? The second version is specific, human, and gives context. It tells a story.

For past roles:

You don't need to write paragraphs for every job you've ever had. But for the roles that are most relevant to your current audience, add 2-3 sentences that show what you learned or what you built.

The goal is to create a narrative: "I started here, learned this, moved to this role where I tackled this problem, and now I'm applying all of that to what I'm doing today."

♦

The Executive Profile Optimisation Framework

Now here's the part your executives care about: **how long is this going to take?**

Because the biggest barrier to getting executive buy-in isn't convincing them it matters – it's convincing them it won't eat up half their week.

Here's the framework you can hand them (or better yet, do *for* them with their input):

Step 1: Profile Picture

Get a professional headshot with a bright, solid-color background. If they already have one, great. If not, book a 30-minute session with a photographer who does LinkedIn headshots. Cost: £100-200. Time investment: 15 minutes once it's scheduled.

Step 2: Headline

Use the formula: Job Title + Company + Something Human. Workshop 2-3 options with them, A/B test if they're open to it, and lock one in. Done.

Step 3: Banner Image

Pull together 3-5 images that establish credibility (speaking photos, awards, team shots). Have a designer create a simple banner layout, or use Canva. Approve and upload.

Step 4: About Section

Sit down with them (or send them a questionnaire) and ask:

- What's the main problem you solve?
- Who do you solve it for?
- What's your point of view on this?
- What do you want people to know about you that they wouldn't get from your job title?

Take their answers and draft the About section. Send it to them for edits. Two rounds of feedback max, then it's done.

Step 5: Current Role Description

Rewrite the description of their current role using the framework above (what they're building, why it matters, what they're focused on right now). Get their approval.

That's it. That's the entire optimisation process for an executive who's never thought about their LinkedIn profile as a strategic asset.

And the return on that 90 minutes? **A 25% increase in connection acceptance rates. Warmer replies. More inbound opportunities. And a profile that actually supports your ABM strategy instead of undermining it.**

♦

Balancing Personal Voice with Company Messaging

One objection you'll hear, especially from marketing teams: *"We need to make sure their profiles align with our brand."*

Fair point. But here's the tension: **LinkedIn rewards personality, not corporate polish.**

If your executive's profile sounds like it was written by your comms team, it won't resonate. People connect with people, not press releases.

So how do you balance the personal voice with the company's marketing vision?

Here's the framework:

The profile should reflect the person first, the company second.

Their headline, About section, and tone should feel like *them* – their perspective, their personality, and their expertise. But the underlying narrative should support the company's strategic messaging.

For example:

- If your company is positioning itself as a leader in sustainability, their About section can talk about their personal passion for building sustainable supply chains - but in their own words, with their own stories.
- If your company is focused on innovation, their profile can highlight the innovative projects they've led - but framed as "here's what I'm obsessed with" rather than "here's what the company does."

Content is where company alignment happens.

The profile is personal. The posts, articles, and content they share - that's where you can align more tightly with company messaging, product launches, and strategic campaigns.

Get feedback from both sides early.

At the beginning of the process, collect input from both the executive (to ensure it sounds like them) and the marketing team (to ensure it aligns with company positioning). Make adjustments early so you're not doing endless revision rounds later.

Once you've nailed the voice and the messaging, future updates are easy.

♦

The DISC Profiling Layer (For Teams That Want to Go Deeper)

Here's an advanced tactic for teams managing multiple executive profiles:

Use DISC personality profiling to ensure the tone of voice matches the person.

DISC is a behavioural assessment tool that categorises people into four personality types:

- **D (Dominance):** Direct, results-oriented, assertive
- **I (Influence):** Enthusiastic, optimistic, people-focused

- **S (Steadiness):** Patient, reliable, team-oriented
- **C (Conscientiousness):** Analytical, detail-oriented, systematic

Why does this matter for LinkedIn profiles?

Because **a profile written in the wrong voice for that person will feel inauthentic - and people can sense it.**

If your CEO is a high-D personality (direct, no-nonsense, results-driven) and you write their profile in a warm, people-focused, high-I voice, it won't land. When prospects meet them in person or on a call, there will be a disconnect.

Here's how to use DISC profiling:

Step 1: Identify the executive's DISC profile.

You can do this formally with an assessment or informally by reviewing their past content, emails, and communication style. Are they direct and to-the-point? Warm and enthusiastic? Analytical and careful?

Step 2: Write the profile in that voice.

- High-D: Short, punchy sentences. Results-focused. No fluff.
- High-I: Warm, conversational, enthusiastic. Personal stories.
- High-S: Collaborative language. Team-focused. Steady and reassuring.
- High-C: Precise, detailed, data-driven. Emphasis on expertise and accuracy.

Step 3: Validate with them.

Show them the draft and ask, "Does this sound like you?" If it does, you've nailed it. If it doesn't, adjust.

This is especially useful when you're managing profiles for multiple executives across the company. Each profile should feel distinct, because each person is distinct. DISC profiling gives you a framework to ensure authenticity at scale.

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The Harsh Truth: If They Don't Click, Nothing Else Matters

Let's end with the most important point:

You can have the most brilliant ABM strategy in the world. You can have perfect messaging, a tiered account list, a multi-threaded outreach plan. But if your executives' profiles don't pass the five-second credibility test when prospects click through, none of it works.

Because that profile is the landing page for everything you do on LinkedIn.

When you comment on a prospect's post, they click your profile.

When you send a connection request, they click your profile.

When your name shows up in their notifications, they click your profile.

And in that moment, they're asking: *Is this person credible? Are they active? Are they worth engaging with?*

If the answer is yes, you're in. If the answer is no, you've lost them – and you won't get a second chance.

So before you launch your next ABM campaign, before you ask your executives to start engaging on LinkedIn, **fix the foundation.**

Optimise the profile. Make it human. Make it credible. Make it impossible to ignore.

Because trust isn't built with clever messaging. It's built with consistent visibility, authentic personality, and the confidence that when someone clicks on your name, what they see makes them think, *"I want to know this person."*

Get that right, and everything in Part 2 – the outreach, the messaging, the content – becomes exponentially more effective.

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Part 2: The Playbook – Execution in the Real World

Chapter 4: How to Make Every Message Feel Like It Was Written Just for Them - at Scale

Many believe that when it comes to outreach, you face a stark choice: do it at scale or do it well. The assumption is that true personalisation requires writing every message from scratch, an impossible task for any serious ABM program. But this is a false dilemma. The reason most "personalised" outreach fails isn't because it's automated; it's because it's lazy. Simply dropping a first name and company into a template isn't personalisation - it's just mail merge. True personalisation at scale comes from a deeper understanding of what makes a person feel seen. It's about identifying the right patterns and variables that signal you understand their world, not just their name. This chapter provides the system for messaging at volume without ever sounding like a bot.

♦

The Personalisation Paradox

Here's the tension every ABM team faces:

You need to reach dozens (or hundreds) of people across your target accounts. You need to do it consistently. You need to do it without burning out your team. But you also need every message to feel like it was written specifically for that person - because generic outreach gets ignored.

So how do you square that circle?

The answer isn't "work harder and write more custom messages."

The answer is **pattern recognition + strategic variables + human context.**

Let me break that down.

♦

What Personalisation Actually Means (And What It Doesn't)

Let's start by defining terms, because "personalisation" has been so watered down by bad marketing automation that it barely means anything anymore.

Personalisation is NOT:

- Using someone's first name in the opening line
- Mentioning their company name
- Saying "I saw you're hiring" when every SaaS tool in the world can surface that information
- Complimenting their recent post without actually reading it

These are **mail merge tokens pretending to be personalisation.** And your prospects can smell them from a mile away.

Personalisation IS:

- Demonstrating that you understand their specific context right now
- Referencing something that matters to them (not just something visible about them)
- Offering insight or value that's relevant to their current priorities
- Speaking to them in the way they want to be spoken to (which varies by role, industry, and seniority)

The difference is this: **Mail merge is about proving you know their name. Personalisation is about proving you understand their world.**

♦

The Common Ground Framework

If you want someone to engage with your message, you need to establish common ground fast. Not fake common ground ("We both breathe oxygen!"), but something that creates a genuine sense of familiarity or relevance.

Here are the variables that actually work, ranked roughly by impact:

Tier 1: Behavioural Intent Signals

These are the strongest because they indicate the person is already thinking about the topic you want to discuss.

1. They posted about a relevant topic recently.

If your prospect posted about digital transformation, supply chain challenges, or cost reduction in the last 30 days, that's your opening. They've publicly signaled that this topic is top-of-mind.

Your message can reference it directly:

"Saw your post on supply chain visibility last week – the bit about data silos really resonated. We've been seeing the same pattern with manufacturers in Scandinavia. Curious if you've tried [specific approach]?"

This isn't flattery. It's joining a conversation they already started.

2. They engaged with content from someone in your network.

If they liked or commented on a post from someone you both know, or from a company in your space, that's a weaker but still useful signal.

"I noticed you commented on [Person's] post about automation in ops – seems like this is something you're actively exploring. Would be good to connect."

3. They recently changed roles.

New job = new priorities = openness to new vendors and ideas. This is especially powerful in the first 90 days.

"Congrats on the new role at [Company]. I've worked with a few CTOs navigating similar transformations in [Industry] – happy to share what I've learned if it's useful."

Tier 2: Company-Level Signals

These apply to everyone at the account, so they're less personal but still relevant.

4. Recent funding.

"Saw you just closed your Series B – congrats. Growth mode brings interesting challenges on the ops side. If you're scaling infrastructure, I've seen a few patterns that might be worth discussing."

5. Headcount growth in a specific department.

"Looks like your ops team has grown by 20% in the last six months. That usually means either expansion or restructuring – either way, I imagine visibility into workflows is becoming more complex. Is that resonating?"

6. Company announcements (new product, market expansion, partnership).

"Just saw the announcement about your expansion into Germany. We've worked with a few companies navigating multi-market supply chains – happy to share what we've learned."

Tier 3: Relationship-Based Signals

These create familiarity even if there's no immediate business relevance.

7. Mutual connections (especially specific, named connections).

Generic: *"I see we have some connections in common."* (Weak – everyone can see this.)

Specific: *"I see you're connected to Sarah at [Company] – we worked together on a project last year. Small world."* (Stronger – shows you actually looked.)

8. Shared group membership or event attendance.

"Saw we were both at [Industry Conference] last month – were you at the panel on automation? Would be good to connect."

9. Shared background (previous employer, university, geography).

Use sparingly, and only if it's genuinely relevant. Don't force it.

"I saw you spent time at [Company] – I was there from 2015-2018. Different era, but curious how you're applying those lessons now."

Tier 4: Role-Specific Context

When you don't have a specific signal for the individual, you can still personalise based on the challenges inherent to their role.

10. Industry-specific pain points.

If you're reaching out to operations managers in manufacturing, you know they're dealing with supply chain unpredictability, margin pressure, and talent shortages. You don't need to research their specific company – these are universal challenges.

"I imagine supply chain visibility has been a recurring headache this year. We've been working with a few ops teams in [Industry] to reduce blind spots without adding complexity. Worth a conversation?"

11. Role-specific priorities.

A new CTO's priorities are different from a tenured one. A Head of Procurement at a 200-person company has different concerns than one at a 5,000-person enterprise.

Tailor your message to the role's natural concerns:

- **New CTO:** Quick wins, modernisation, proving value to the board
- **Head of Operations:** Efficiency, cost control, team productivity
- **VP of Procurement:** Supplier risk, contract management, compliance

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Building Your Messaging System

Now that you know what variables to use, let's talk about how to deploy them at scale.

You don't need to write a unique message for every person. You need **a library of proven message frameworks** that you can adapt with the right variables for each context.

Here's how to build that library:

Step 1: Start with What's Worked

If you've been doing any kind of outreach on LinkedIn (or email, or anywhere else), you already have data on what works. Pull your messages from the last six months and sort them by reply rate.

Which messages got responses? Which got meetings? Which got ignored?

Look for patterns:

- Did short messages outperform long ones?
- Did questions outperform statements?
- Did messages that referenced a specific pain point perform better than generic value propositions?

Use this as your baseline. **Don't start from scratch when you already have battle-tested templates.**

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Step 2: Map Messages to Context

You don't need one message. You need a message for each common scenario.

For example:

Message Type A: Recent Post Engagement

"Saw your post on [Topic] – [specific observation]. We've been working with [similar companies] on this exact challenge. Would be good to connect."

Message Type B: New Role Congratulations

"Congrats on the new role at [Company]. I've worked with a few [Role] navigating [common challenge] in their first 90 days. Happy to share what I've learned if useful."

Message Type C: Company Signal (funding, growth, expansion)

"Saw [Company] just [signal]. That usually brings [specific challenge]. We've helped a few teams in [Industry] navigate this – worth a conversation?"

Message Type D: Role-Specific Pain Point (No Individual Signal)

"I imagine [common challenge for role] has been on your radar lately. We've been working with [similar roles] in [Industry] to [outcome]. Curious if this resonates?"

Message Type E: Mutual Connection

"I see you're connected to [Name] – we worked together at [Context]. Thought it'd be good to connect."

Build out 8-12 of these frameworks, each mapped to a specific scenario. Test them, refine them, and once they're working, codify them.

Step 3: Create a Variable System

Now that you have your frameworks, identify the variables you'll swap in based on the prospect:

Common Variables:

- [First_Name]
- [Company]
- [Role/Title]
- [Specific_Topic_From_Post]
- [Company_Signal] (funding, hiring, expansion, etc.)
- [Industry]
- [Common_Pain_Point]
- [Mutual_Connection_Name]
- [Recent_Event/Conference]

When you're building your outreach list in Sales Navigator, export it with these data points already populated. Then you can quickly drop the right variables into the right message framework.

This isn't about being robotic. It's about being efficient with your preparation so you can focus your creative energy on the parts that matter – choosing the right framework and the right variables for each person.

Step 4: Test and Iterate

Not every message will work. Some will land, some won't. The key is to **track what you're testing so you can learn from it.**

For each outreach campaign, track:

- **Message framework used**
- **Variables used** (e.g., did you reference a post? A company signal? A mutual connection?)

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- **Connection acceptance rate**
- **Reply rate**
- **Positive reply rate** (replies that actually move the conversation forward)

Run each test for at least 50-100 messages before you draw conclusions. Small sample sizes lie.

When you find a message framework that consistently outperforms, double down on it. When one underperforms, kill it.

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The Multi-Threaded Conversation: Orchestrating Outreach Across Your Team

Here's where ABM on LinkedIn gets truly powerful: **you're not reaching out as one person to one person. You're orchestrating a many-to-many conversation across both organisations.**

This is what separates profile-based marketing from traditional outbound.

Instead of your Head of Sales sending 100 messages to 100 prospects and hoping for a 2% reply rate, you're having:

- Your CEO connect with their CEO
- Your CTO connect with their CTO
- Your Head of Operations connect with their operations managers
- Your product lead engage with their innovation team

Each person on your team is building relationships with their counterparts at the target account. The conversations are happening in parallel, reinforcing each other.

Here's why this works:

1. It creates familiarity across the organisation.

When the CEO finally gets a message from your CEO, they've already seen your company's name pop up multiple times because their team is connecting with your team. You're not a stranger – you're a known entity.

2. It surfaces intelligence.

When your operations lead connects with their operations manager (a Tier 2 person), that conversation might reveal: "We're actually in the middle of a platform migration," or "Leadership just mandated a 15% cost reduction." That intel gets passed back to your team, and now when your Head of Sales reaches out to their VP, the message is informed by real context.

3. It increases your surface area.

If one person at your company reaches out and gets ignored, the conversation dies. But if five people reach out across different levels of the organisation, the odds that at least one of those conversations gains traction go up dramatically.

How to Orchestrate Multi-Threaded Outreach

Step 1: Map Your Team to Their Team

For each Tier 1 target account, identify:

- Who are the key decision-makers? (Tier 1 people)
- Who are the influencers and team leads? (Tier 2 people)

Then map your team to theirs:

- Your CEO → Their CEO, Founder, or MD
- Your CTO → Their CTO, Head of Tech, VP of Engineering
- Your Head of Ops → Their Head of Ops, Operations Managers
- Your Product Lead → Their Innovation Team, Product Owners

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Not everyone on your team needs to connect with everyone on theirs. But you want **at least 3-5 people from your side engaging with 10-15 people on their side.**

Step 2: Coordinate the Approach

This doesn't mean everyone sends messages on the same day (that would be obvious and weird). But it does mean you're intentional about sequencing:

- **Week 1:** Your operations lead and product lead start connecting with Tier 2 people (managers, team leads). No pitch, just connection.
- **Week 2-3:** They engage with content from those Tier 2 connections. Likes, thoughtful comments, profile views. Building familiarity.
- **Week 4:** Your CTO or Head of Sales reaches out to the Tier 1 decision-maker. By now, you've already got 10 mutual connections at their company, and you've gathered intel from the Tier 2 conversations.

Step 3: Share Intelligence Across Your Team

This only works if your team is communicating. Set up a simple system (a Slack channel, a shared doc, a weekly sync) where people report back:

"I connected with their operations manager. She mentioned they're dealing with supplier delays and leadership is pushing for more visibility into the supply chain."

That insight informs everyone else's outreach. Now when your Head of Sales messages their VP of Procurement, the message isn't generic – it's: *"I've been hearing from a few people in your industry that supplier visibility has been a recurring issue. Curious if that's resonating on your end?"*

♦

Messaging for Each Persona: Different Roles, Different Priorities

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Not everyone at a target account cares about the same things. A CEO's priorities are different from a CFO's, which are different from an operations manager's.

Your messaging needs to reflect that.

Here's how to think about it:

Messaging to C-Suite (Tier 1 Decision-Makers)

What they care about:

- Strategic outcomes, not tactical features
- ROI, risk mitigation, competitive advantage
- High-level problems, not implementation details

What works:

- Short, punchy messages. They don't have time for paragraphs.
- Peer-level language. You're not pitching them – you're offering insight.
- Business outcomes, not product specs.

Example:

"We've been working with a few CEOs in [Industry] who are navigating [strategic challenge]. The pattern we're seeing: [insight]. Worth a brief conversation to compare notes?"

What doesn't work:

- Long messages that bury the point
- Feature-focused language ("Our platform has 47 integrations!")
- Overly deferential tone ("I'd be honored if you'd give me 5 minutes of your time")

Messaging to VPs and Department Heads (Tier 1/Tier 2 Hybrid)

What they care about:

- Efficiency, cost reduction, team productivity
- Solving specific operational pain points
- Measurable outcomes they can report upward

What works:

- Problem–focused messaging. Start with the pain, not the solution.
- Data and specificity. "We helped [Company] reduce [metric] by 30%" lands better than vague claims.
- Collaborative tone. They're looking for partners, not vendors.

Example:

"I imagine managing supplier relationships across multiple regions has been a headache this year. We've been working with ops teams in [Industry] to reduce blind spots without adding headcount. Curious if that's a challenge you're seeing?"

Messaging to Managers and Team Leads (Tier 2 Influencers)

What they care about:

- Making their day–to–day work easier
- Looking good to their boss
- Reducing manual work, eliminating friction

What works:

- Tactical, specific value. "This will save you 5 hours a week" beats "This will transform your operations."
- Empathy for their grind. They're in the trenches - acknowledge it.
- Conversational, peer–to–peer tone.

Example:

"I've been talking to a few operations managers in [Industry], and the consistent pain point is [specific challenge]. We built a workaround that's been helping – happy to share if you're dealing with the same thing."

♦

The 300-Character Constraint: Writing Quips, Not Essays

LinkedIn connection requests have a 300-character limit. That's roughly two sentences.

This is actually a gift, not a limitation. Because it forces you to be concise, which is exactly what works.

Here's the framework for a strong connection request message (when you choose to use one):

1. Establish relevance fast.

"I've been following the conversation around [Topic] in [Industry]..."

2. Give a reason to connect that isn't salesy.

"...and thought it'd be good to connect."

That's it. No pitch. No "I'd love to show you." Just: here's why I'm relevant, let's connect.

Examples:

"Saw your post on supply chain resilience – really resonated. Thought it'd be good to connect."

"I've been working with a few ops teams in pharma – noticed you're at [Company]. Would be good to connect."

"We have a few mutual connections at [Company] - thought it'd be good to connect."

Simple. Human. Not salesy.

But here's the controversial take: most of the time, just send a blank connection request.

Why? Because the data shows that **the difference in acceptance rates between a well-crafted message and a blank request is negligible - often just 2-3 percentage points.**

What *does* hurt you is a message that immediately signals "I'm going to sell you something." If your note mentions solutions, value propositions, or helping companies achieve outcomes, you've triggered the prospect's sales radar and they're less likely to accept.

So unless you have a genuinely strong, non-salesy reason to include a note (mutual connection, shared event, recent post engagement), just click Connect and save yourself the time.

♦

The Follow-Up Sequence: Nurturing Without Being Annoying

Okay, they've accepted your connection request. Now what?

The worst thing you can do: immediately send a pitch.

"Thanks for connecting! I'd love to show you how [Product] can help [Company] achieve [Generic Outcome]."

This is called pitch-slapping, and it's the fastest way to burn a relationship before it starts.

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The better approach: nurture the connection over time with a sequence of value-driven touchpoints.

Here's a proven sequence structure:

Touchpoint 1 (Day 1): Soft Thank You (Optional)

"Thanks for connecting – looking forward to staying in touch."

That's it. No pitch. Just acknowledgment.

Honestly, you can skip this entirely. It's not required.

Touchpoint 2 (Day 7-10): Engage With Their Content

Don't send a message. Just like or comment on one of their posts. Show up in their notifications.

Touchpoint 3 (Day 14-21): Share Value

Send a message that offers something useful – not a sales pitch.

"I came across this article on [Topic] and thought of you based on your post last week. Might be interesting: [Link]"

Or:

"We just published some research on [Topic]. It's getting good feedback from ops teams in [Industry] – thought you might find it useful: [Link]"

Touchpoint 4 (Day 30-45): Ask a Thoughtful Question

Now you can start a real conversation, but still no pitch.

"Curious – how is [Industry Trend] impacting your team right now? We're seeing mixed reactions from ops leads in [Industry]."

This invites dialogue. If they respond, you've got a conversation. If they don't, you move to the next touchpoint.

Touchpoint 5 (Day 60+): The Soft Transition

If they've engaged at any point in the sequence (replied, liked your content, commented), now you can transition to a meeting request – but frame it as a conversation, not a pitch.

"Based on our back-and-forth, it seems like [Challenge] is something you're actively navigating. I've worked with a few [Roles] in [Industry] on this – would a brief call to compare notes be useful?"

Important: Not Everyone Gets the Full Sequence

This isn't a rigid, automated drip campaign. **You're reading signals and adjusting in real time.**

If someone replies enthusiastically to your first message, skip ahead. If they ignore three touchpoints, put them in a low-touch nurture track (just content engagement, no DMs).

The sequence is a guide, not a script.

♦

Localisation: Speaking Their Language (Literally)

If you're targeting accounts in non-English-speaking markets, messaging in their native language can dramatically increase response rates.

But here's the catch: **you need to get it right, or it backfires.**

If you're reaching out to a German executive in German, the message needs to be fluent, natural, and culturally appropriate. Google Translate won't cut it. You need native speakers to write and approve your templates.

Here's the process:

Step 1: Get your core message templates translated by a native speaker.

Not just translated – adapted. Some phrases don't translate culturally. "Let's circle back" doesn't have a German equivalent that doesn't sound weird.

Step 2: Have them approved by someone at the target company's level.

If you're messaging CTOs in Germany, have a German-speaking CTO review the messages to ensure they sound natural for that role.

Step 3: Use them consistently, but flag replies for native-speaker handling.

You can send templated messages in German (or French, or Swedish), but if the prospect replies in German, you need someone who actually speaks the language to respond. Don't rely on translation tools for back-and-forth conversations – it's too risky.

When to localise:

If you're targeting a specific country or region where English isn't the default business language (Germany, France, Nordic countries for certain industries), localising your outreach can increase acceptance rates by 15–30%.

If you're targeting global companies where English is standard (most of tech, most of finance), it's less critical.

♦

The Strategic Takeaway

Personalisation at scale isn't about writing 500 unique messages from scratch. It's about:

1. **Pattern recognition – identifying** the 8-12 scenarios you encounter repeatedly
2. **Intelligent variables – knowing** which signals actually matter to your prospect and using them strategically
3. **Human context – understanding** what your target roles care about and speaking to those priorities

Build your library of message frameworks. Map them to the signals you can observe in Sales Navigator. Deploy them consistently. Track what works. Iterate.

And remember: **the goal of your first message isn't to sell. It's to start a conversation.**

If someone replies with anything other than "not interested," you've succeeded.

Now let's talk about what happens after they reply – and how to use content to move that conversation forward without it feeling like a sales pitch.

Chapter 5: Turn Awareness into Advocacy with Content That Anticipates Their Next Question

There's a common narrative that for ABM to succeed, executives must transform into prolific thought leaders, posting constantly to build a massive personal brand. This is not only daunting but also misguided. Your executives don't need to become LinkedIn influencers chasing likes and viral fame.

Their goal is something far more targeted and powerful: to become strategically visible to the handful of people who can actually move the needle for your business. Most content strategies fail because they optimise for vanity metrics instead of impact.

This chapter will show you how to use content not as a broadcast tool, but as a conversation accelerator that makes every piece of outreach far more effective.

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Content as Conversation, Not Broadcasting

Let's start with a fundamental reframe:

Your executives' LinkedIn content isn't about building a massive audience. It's about building familiarity and credibility with a very specific audience: the 100–500 people at your target accounts.

This changes everything.

It means you're not trying to go viral. You're not chasing likes from random people in your industry. You're not trying to become the next big LinkedIn influencer.

You're trying to do something much simpler and more valuable: **show up consistently in the feeds of your target accounts, delivering insights that make them think, "This person gets it."**

When you frame it that way, the pressure comes off. Your CEO doesn't need to post five times a week. They don't need to have hot takes on every industry trend. They don't need perfectly crafted, viral-worthy content.

They need to post often enough that they're visible, relevant enough that people pay attention when they do, and consistent enough that over time they become a familiar, trusted voice.

That's it. That's the bar.

♦

The Strategic Role of Content in Your ABM Engine

Content serves three specific functions in your LinkedIn ABM strategy:

Function 1: Amplifying Your Outreach

When you send a connection request or a message to a prospect, the first thing they do is click on your profile. The second thing they do (if your profile passes the credibility test from Chapter 3) is scroll down to see what you've been posting.

If your activity feed is empty - or worse, if the last post is from eight months ago - you've just signaled: "I'm not actually active here. I'm only reaching out because I want something from you."

But if they see that you've been posting thoughtfully and consistently about topics relevant to their world, the message shifts: "This person is engaged in the industry. They have a point of view. They're worth paying attention to."

Your content validates your outreach. It's social proof that you're not a one-off sales pitch - you're someone who's genuinely engaged in the problems they care about.

Function 2: Creating Multiple Touchpoints

Here's the mechanic most people miss:

When you post on LinkedIn, **everyone who's connected to you (and many who aren't, thanks to the algorithm) sees it in their feed.** That means every time you post, you're showing up in the notifications or feeds of all the Tier 1 and Tier 2 people you've connected with at your target accounts.

You're not sending them a message. You're not asking for anything. You're just... there. Visible. Present. Familiar.

Over time, this compounds. If you post twice a week for three months, that's 24 touchpoints with your target accounts - 24 opportunities for them to see your name, your face, and your perspective.

And here's the magic: **even if they don't consciously engage with every post, the mere exposure effect is working in the background.** Psychologically, people develop a preference for things (and people) they're repeatedly exposed to. By the time you ask for a meeting, you're not a stranger - you're someone they feel like they already know.

Function 3: Demonstrating Expertise Without Pitching

Your prospects are dealing with complex challenges. They're looking for people who understand those challenges, who've seen them before, who can offer insights that go beyond generic advice.

Content is how you demonstrate that expertise.

Not by saying "We're experts in X." But by showing it - through case studies, through specific observations, through sharing what you've learned from working with other companies in their situation.

When your CTO posts about a specific technical challenge they helped a client solve, and a prospect at a target account reads it and thinks, "That's exactly the problem we're facing," you've just moved from cold outreach to warm conversation.

Your content is proof of competence. It shows you've been in the trenches. You're not selling theory - you're offering hard-won insight.

♦

The Content Strategy That Actually Works for Busy Executives

Now let's get practical. Because the biggest barrier to executive participation in content isn't that they don't see the value - it's that they don't have the time.

Here's the framework that makes it sustainable:

Consistency Over Perfection

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This is the most important mindset shift.

Your executives don't need to write perfect posts. They need to post consistently.

A decent post published every week will outperform a brilliant post published once a quarter. Because LinkedIn rewards frequency and recency. The algorithm favors people who show up regularly.

More importantly, your target accounts won't remember any single post you publish. But they will notice that every time they open LinkedIn, your name seems to be there.

Here's the permission you need to give your executives (and yourself): **Posts are not written in stone. Their lifespan is 48-72 hours. No one's going to remember it in two weeks, let alone two months.**

This takes the pressure off. You're not crafting a keynote speech every time you post. You're just showing up, sharing a thought, and moving on.

The Weekly Post Minimum

For executives participating in your ABM program, the baseline is a minimum of one quality post per week.

While one post ensures you remain active, aiming for two posts per week is the sweet spot for many, as it significantly increases visibility and touchpoints without becoming an overwhelming commitment.

The key is consistency over volume.

These don't need to be long, profound, beautifully crafted pieces of thought leadership. They can be:

- A quick observation from a client conversation
- A reaction to an industry trend

- A lesson learned from a recent challenge
- A simple "here's what we're working on this week"

Short. Human. Relevant.

Batching Content Creation

If your executives are going to post twice a week, they can't be writing posts from scratch every Monday and Thursday. That's not sustainable.

Instead, batch the content creation:

Option 1: Monthly Content Session (60-90 minutes)

Once a month, block 90 minutes with your executive (or have them block it themselves). In that session, you:

- Pull 8-10 topics from recent conversations, industry news, internal wins, client challenges
- Rough out 8-10 post ideas (bullets, not full drafts)
- Have them record voice notes for each (2-3 minutes per topic)
- You (or a content person) turn those voice notes into posts

Now you've got two months of content queued up.

Option 2: Interview-to-Content Pipeline

Schedule a 30-minute conversation with your executive every two weeks. Ask them:

- What's top of mind for you this week?
- What's been the most interesting client conversation recently?
- What's one thing you wish more people in the industry understood?
- What's a mistake you've made that taught you something?

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Record the conversation. Pull out 4-5 post ideas. Draft them. Get quick approval. Schedule them.

Option 3: Repurpose Existing Content

Your executives are already creating content – they're just not packaging it for LinkedIn.

- Did they just give a presentation at a conference? Turn it into 3-4 posts.
- Did they write an internal memo about strategy? Adapt it for LinkedIn.
- Did they have a great conversation with a client? Turn the insight into a post.

You're not asking them to create new thinking. You're asking them to surface thinking they're already doing.

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The Content Pillars: What to Actually Post About

Not all content is created equal. Some topics will resonate with your target accounts. Others won't.

Here's how to figure out what to post:

Map Content to Your ABM Narrative

Remember in Chapter 1 when we talked about identifying the 2% of accounts and the 98%? The same principle applies to content.

Your content strategy should align with your ABM targeting strategy.

If you're targeting pharmaceutical companies dealing with supply chain complexity, your content should consistently touch on themes like:

- Supply chain resilience
- Regulatory compliance in distributed operations

- Managing multi-regional logistics
- Cost reduction without sacrificing quality

If you're targeting financial services companies navigating digital transformation, your content should focus on:

- Legacy system modernisation
- Balancing innovation and risk management
- Building tech teams in regulated industries

The goal is to create a **consistent narrative** across three layers:

1. **Your profile** (Chapter 3) establishes who you are and what you do
2. **Your outreach** (Chapter 4) personalises the conversation to their specific context
3. **Your content** (this chapter) reinforces that you understand their world and have insights worth paying attention to

When all three layers are aligned – when the profile, the outreach, and the content are telling the same story – you create compound credibility.

The Three Content Pillars

Within your overarching narrative, most effective executive content falls into three categories:

Pillar 1: Lessons from the Field

These are posts that share specific, real-world insights from your work. They demonstrate competence without being salesy.

Examples:

- "We just wrapped a project with a manufacturer in Germany. The challenge: visibility across three distribution centers. The surprising fix: not new software, but better data hygiene. Here's what we learned..."
- "Three years ago, I would have said automation was the answer to everything. Now I think it's the answer to the wrong question. Here's why..."

Why this works: It's specific, credible, and useful. You're not pitching - you're sharing.

Pillar 2: Industry Observations and Trends

These are posts where you comment on what's happening in the industry, offering your perspective.

Examples:

- "Everyone's talking about AI in operations, but I'm seeing a different pattern: the companies getting real value aren't the ones with the fanciest tools. They're the ones who've figured out [specific insight]."
- "New data just came out on [Industry Trend]. The headline says X, but if you dig deeper, what's really happening is Y. Here's what I think that means for ops teams..."

Why this works: It shows you're paying attention, you have a point of view, and you're thinking critically (not just parroting industry hype).

Pillar 3: Personal Stories and Behind-the-Scenes

These are posts that humanise you - showing the person behind the job title.

Examples:

- "I made a decision three years ago that I regretted within six months. Here's what I learned from it..."

- "Our team just hit a milestone I'm genuinely proud of. Not because of the numbers, but because of how we got there..."
- A photo from a team event, a client visit, or an industry conference with a short reflection on what made it meaningful

Why this works: People connect with people, not corporate personas. These posts build likability and trust.

The Balance Across Pillars

You don't need to overthink the ratio, but a rough guideline:

- **50% Lessons from the Field** (this is your expertise)
- **30% Industry Observations** (this is your perspective)
- **20% Personal Stories** (this is your humanity)

Adjust based on your executive's personality. Some are naturally more personal, some more analytical. The DISC profiling from Chapter 3 can help here – write content in the voice that matches their actual communication style.

♦

The Engagement Strategy: Giving Is More Valuable Than Taking

Here's the insight that most content strategies miss:

Engaging with other people's content is often more valuable than posting your own.

Why? Because when you comment thoughtfully on a prospect's post, you're:

1. **Showing up in their notifications** (direct visibility)
2. **Adding value to their content** (they want engagement – you're giving them what they want)

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3. **Demonstrating that you're actually paying attention to them** (not just broadcasting your own thoughts)

And here's the mechanic that makes this powerful: when you comment on someone's post, your comment often gets seen by *their* network – which includes other people at their company.

So if you comment on a VP of Operations' post, their direct reports (your Tier 2 targets) might see your comment. You're getting visibility across the account without even posting yourself.

The Engagement Hierarchy

Not all engagement is equal. Here's how to think about it strategically:

Likes: Low effort, low impact. They show up in notifications briefly, but they don't create conversation.

Comments: High impact. They put your name and face directly in the poster's notifications. They give you a chance to add value. They show up in their network's feeds.

Shares: Medium–high impact, but use sparingly. If you share someone's post with your own commentary, it amplifies their reach (which they appreciate), but it can also come across as trying to co-opt their content.

Priority: Focus on comments.

How to Comment Authentically (Without Sounding Like a Bot)

This is harder than it sounds, because most LinkedIn comments are terrible.

You've seen them:

- "Great post!"
- "Thanks for sharing this valuable insight!"

- "I couldn't agree more! 💯"

These are empty calories. They don't add value. They don't create conversation. And increasingly, they signal that you're using AI or automation to generate comments at scale - which people are starting to react negatively to.

Here's what works:

1. Add a specific observation or build on the idea.

Instead of "Great post," try:

"This resonates. The bit about data silos is especially true in manufacturing - I've seen teams spend months building dashboards that no one trusts because the underlying data quality was never addressed."

You're engaging with the *content* of the post, not just acknowledging that it exists.

2. Share a related experience (briefly).

"I've seen this play out at [type of company]. The surprising part was that the fix wasn't technical - it was getting three departments to actually talk to each other."

You're contributing to the conversation, not just validating the original poster.

3. Ask a thoughtful follow-up question.

"Curious - have you seen this work in environments where the teams are distributed across multiple regions? I imagine that adds complexity."

Now you've turned a one-way post into a conversation.

What to avoid:

- Generic praise with no substance
- Over-the-top enthusiasm that feels fake ("This is MIND-BLOWING! 🔥🚀")
- Hijacking the post to pitch your own solution

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- Comments that are clearly AI-generated (they have a tell: overly formal, weirdly structured, use phrases like "Great insights!" and "Thanks for sharing your thoughts on this important topic")

The Strategic Play: Comment Before You Post

Here's the controversial take: **If you only have time for one activity on LinkedIn this week - posting your own content or engaging with your target accounts' content - choose engagement.**

Why?

Because your prospects are already posting. They're already creating opportunities for you to show up in their world. By commenting on their posts, you're:

- Entering their space (rather than asking them to enter yours)
- Giving them what they want (engagement on their content)
- Building familiarity in a low-pressure, non-salesy way

If your target account has 10 people posting regularly, and you comment thoughtfully on one post per week from each of them, that's 10 touchpoints per week - more than you'd get from posting your own content.

And here's the kicker: **when you do eventually post, the people whose content you've been engaging with are far more likely to engage back.**

Reciprocity is real. You gave them likes and comments, so when you post, they're more inclined to return the favor. Which means your posts get more engagement, which means the algorithm shows them to more people, which means more visibility across your target accounts.

It's a virtuous cycle.

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Story-Driven Sequencing: Creating a Narrative Arc Across Content and Outreach

Let's zoom out for a moment and talk about how all of this – content, outreach, profile optimisation – fits together into a cohesive strategy.

The most effective ABM programs on LinkedIn don't treat these as separate activities. They treat them as **interconnected layers of a single narrative.**

Here's what that looks like in practice:

Layer 1: The Profile Sets the Stage

Your profile (optimised in Chapter 3) establishes the core narrative: who you are, what you do, what you believe, what value you bring.

This is your foundation. It's static (updated occasionally, but not constantly changing).

Layer 2: Content Reinforces the Narrative

Your posts consistently touch on the same themes, the same challenges, the same perspectives that your profile promised.

If your profile says "I help manufacturers eliminate waste without sacrificing quality," then your content should regularly feature:

- Case studies of manufacturers eliminating waste
- Lessons learned from quality vs. efficiency tradeoffs
- Industry trends in manufacturing operations

The content proves that the claims in your profile are real.

Layer 3: Outreach Makes It Personal

When you reach out to a prospect – either with a connection request or a message – you're taking the general narrative from your profile and content and making it specific to them.

"I've been posting about supply chain resilience in pharma, and I know that's an area [Company] has been focused on recently. Thought it'd be good to connect."

Now the narrative has gone from abstract (profile) to thematic (content) to personalised (outreach).

The Compounding Effect

When all three layers are aligned, each one amplifies the others.

Your content makes your profile more credible (because prospects can see you're actively engaged, not just a static CV).

Your profile makes your outreach more effective (because when they click through, they see a cohesive, credible presence).

Your outreach makes your content more visible (because the more people you connect with at target accounts, the more people see your posts in their feeds).

This is what we mean by **story-driven sequencing.** It's not just about posting content. It's about creating a unified narrative that runs across every touchpoint – and reinforcing it consistently until it sinks in.

♦

Reading the Digital Body Language: Using Engagement as Intelligence

One of the underutilised benefits of content is that it gives you real-time intelligence about who's paying attention.

When someone from a target account engages with your content – likes it, comments on it, shares it – that's a signal. They're telling you (subtly) that this topic resonates.

Here's how to use that intelligence:

Track Who's Engaging

You should be monitoring:

- Which people from your target accounts are liking or commenting on your posts?
- Which posts are getting the most engagement from target accounts?
- Are there patterns? (E.g., posts about cost reduction get more engagement than posts about innovation)

Most LinkedIn users don't track this systematically. But if you're running an ABM program, you should.

Set up a simple system – a spreadsheet, a CRM field, a weekly review – where you note:

"Sarah from [Target Company] commented on our post about supply chain visibility. That's the third time she's engaged this month."

That's your cue to reach out. Not with a pitch, but with a genuine follow-up:

"I noticed you've been engaging with some of our posts on supply chain challenges – seems like this is top of mind for you right now. Curious what's driving that focus on your end?"

You've turned passive content engagement into an active conversation.

Use Engagement to prioritise Outreach

Not everyone at a target account is equally engaged. Some people will consistently like and comment on your content. Others won't.

The people who engage are telling you they're open to conversation. prioritise them in your outreach.

If you have a list of 20 people at a target account, and five of them have engaged with your content in the last 30 days, start with those five. They're warm. They're paying attention. They're the highest-probability conversations.

Spot Topic Patterns to Inform Your Messaging

If you post about five different topics and one of them consistently gets more engagement from your target accounts, that's the topic they care about.

Double down on it. Post more about it. Reference it in your outreach.

"I've been writing about [Topic] recently and the response from folks in [Industry] has been significant. I'm guessing it's hitting a nerve – are you seeing the same challenges on your end?"

You're using content performance as market research.

♦

The Content Calendar: Making It Sustainable

If you've made it this far, you might be thinking: *This sounds great in theory, but how do I actually operationalise this for 5–10 executives without it becoming a full-time job?*

Fair question. Here's the system:

Step 1: Build a Content Bank

Create a shared document (Notion, Google Doc, Airtable – whatever works) where you capture content ideas in real time.

Every time someone has a client conversation that surfaces an insight, it goes in the bank.

Every time there's an industry news story worth commenting on, it goes in the bank.

Every time an executive says something interesting in a meeting, it goes in the bank.

This becomes your content queue. You're not starting from scratch every week – you're pulling from a bank of ideas that are constantly replenished.

Step 2: Assign Content Responsibility

If you're managing content for multiple executives, assign each one a "content partner" – either someone on your team or an external writer who:

- Interviews them monthly (or listens to their recordings)
- Drafts posts based on the content bank
- Gets quick approval (2-3 rounds max)
- Schedules posts

This way, the executive's time commitment is minimal: 30-60 minutes per month for content generation, plus 5-10 minutes per week for approvals.

Step 3: Repurpose Ruthlessly

Every piece of content you create should be used multiple times:

- A webinar becomes 5-6 LinkedIn posts
- A case study becomes 3-4 posts
- An internal all-hands presentation becomes 2-3 posts

You're not creating new content from scratch – you're repackaging existing thinking for a LinkedIn-sized format.

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The Strategic Takeaway

Content isn't about building a massive following. It's about building sustained visibility and credibility with the specific people who matter to your business.

When you post consistently (even if it's just twice a week), when you engage authentically with your target accounts' content, and when you align your content with your outreach and profile into a unified narrative, you create compound familiarity.

Over time, you're no longer a stranger cold-messaging prospects. You're someone they feel like they already know – because they've been seeing your name, your face, and your insights in their feed for months.

And when that familiarity is built on genuine value – real insights, thoughtful engagement, useful perspectives – it translates into trust.

Trust is what turns cold outreach into warm conversations. And warm conversations are what turn target accounts into pipeline.

In the next chapter, we'll look at how all of this comes together in real-world campaigns – the targeting, the messaging, the content, the results.

Chapter 6: Inside the Campaigns That Broke Through the Noise

When looking at successful ABM programs, it's easy to search for a "magic bullet" – the one perfect message or campaign structure that you can simply copy and paste for guaranteed results.

But the truth is, there isn't one. While the tactics and industries may differ, every successful LinkedIn ABM campaign works for the same fundamental reasons: they targeted the right people with precision, built familiarity before asking for anything, delivered consistent value, and orchestrated a multi-threaded approach across both organisations.

Here we'll deconstruct real campaigns not to provide a formula to replicate, but to reveal those winning patterns in action, showing you how they come together to break through the noise.

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What Makes a Campaign Worth Studying

Before we dive into specific examples, let's establish what we mean by "success."

Because the metrics that matter in LinkedIn ABM are different from traditional outbound campaigns.

Traditional outbound metrics:

- Emails sent
- Open rate
- Click-through rate
- Replies received

A Note on Event Plays:

A powerful, focused application of this strategy is for events. For example, a successful event play might look like this: "Sent 85 targeted messages to conference delegates → booked 20 meetings at the event."

This demonstrates how the methodology can drive immediate, high-value outcomes in a compressed timeframe.

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LinkedIn ABM metrics that actually matter:

- Connection acceptance rate with Tier 1 decision-makers
- Positive reply rate (not just replies, but replies that move the conversation forward)
- Meetings booked with target accounts
- Pipeline value from LinkedIn-sourced conversations
- Time to engagement (how long from first connection to first meaningful conversation)

And the ultimate metric: **Did we create relationships with target accounts that led to closed revenue?**

The campaigns we're about to deconstruct hit on all of these. But more importantly, they demonstrate the core principles from Chapters 1–5 working in concert.

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Campaign Framework: The Anatomy of Success

Every successful campaign we'll examine follows the same basic structure:

Phase 1: Strategic Foundation (Weeks 1–2)

- Target account selection using intent signals
- People mapping (Tier 1 and Tier 2 identification)
- Profile Optimisation for participating executives
- Message framework development

Phase 2: Entry and Familiarity Building (Weeks 3–8)

- Tier 2 connections (influencers and champions)
- Soft touchpoints (likes, comments, profile views)
- Content publication aligned with target account challenges

- Intelligence gathering from Tier 2 conversations

Phase 3: Tier 1 Engagement (Weeks 9–12)

- Connection requests to decision-makers (now with mutual connections established)
- Informed outreach using intelligence from Tier 2
- Content engagement increases
- Meeting requests for high-signal accounts

Phase 4: Conversion and Expansion (Weeks 13+)

- Meetings convert to pipeline
- Expansion within accounts (connecting with additional stakeholders)
- Case study content creation to feed future campaigns

Let's see how this played out in practice.

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Campaign 1: Breaking Into Enterprise Pharma

The Client Context:

A mid-sized technology company providing supply chain visibility solutions wanted to break into the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector. Their challenge: pharmaceutical companies are highly regulated, risk-averse, and typically work with established vendors they've used for years.

Traditional outbound wasn't working. Cold emails got 1–2% reply rates. Cold calls went to voicemail. The sales team was frustrated.

The ABM Strategy:

Target Account Selection:

Using Sales Navigator, they identified 50 pharmaceutical companies in Scandinavia with:

- 200–2,000 employees (large enough to have budget, small enough to be accessible)
- Recent headcount growth of 10%+ in operations (signal of scaling challenges)
- At least one recent announcement of expansion or regulatory approval (indicating active growth)

This gave them their Tier 1 account list.

Within those 50 accounts, they identified approximately 500 key individuals:

- **Tier 1 people:** Chief Operating Officers, VPs of Manufacturing, Heads of Supply Chain (roughly 75 people)
- **Tier 2 people:** Operations Managers, Supply Chain Coordinators, Quality Managers, Logistics Leads (roughly 425 people)

The Participants:

Three executives from the client company were activated:

- **CEO** (targeting peer CEOs and COOs at target accounts)
- **VP of Operations** (targeting Heads of Supply Chain and VPs of Manufacturing)
- **Head of Product** (targeting Operations Managers and Quality Managers)

All three had their profiles optimised using the framework from Chapter 3:

- Professional photos with bright, solid backgrounds
- Headlines that emphasised expertise without being salesy ("Building resilient supply chains in regulated industries" vs. "Helping companies achieve operational excellence")

- About sections that told a story rather than listing achievements
- Banner images showing them at industry conferences with recognisable pharmaceutical sector awards displayed

Phase 1–2: Building the Foundation (Weeks 1–8)

Week 1–2: Connections with Tier 2 People

The three executives sent connection requests to Tier 2 people at the target accounts - operations managers, supply chain coordinators, quality leads.

They prioritised:

- Second-degree connections (mutual connections already existed)
- People who had posted in the last 30 days (active users)
- People with networks of 500+ (engaged LinkedIn users)

The connection requests were simple, non-salesy:

- 70% sent with no message (just a blank connection request)
- 30% sent with a brief, relevant note: *"I've been following some of the conversations around supply chain resilience in pharma – thought it'd be good to connect."*

Results:

- 340 connection requests sent to Tier 2 people
- 62% acceptance rate (211 new connections)

Weeks 3-8: Soft Touchpoints and Intelligence Gathering

Once connected, the executives didn't immediately pitch. Instead:

Content publication (2x per week per executive):

Each executive posted twice weekly on topics directly relevant to pharmaceutical operations:

- "Three lessons from helping manufacturers eliminate supply chain blind spots without adding headcount"
- "The hidden cost of paper-based tracking in regulated environments"
- "Why most supply chain dashboards fail (and what to build instead)"

The posts weren't salesy. They were specific, tactical, and drew from real experiences.

Engagement with Tier 2 content:

The executives (with support from their team) actively engaged with posts from their new connections:

- Liking relevant posts (low effort, maintains visibility)
- Commenting thoughtfully on posts about operational challenges (higher effort, higher impact)
- Viewing profiles strategically (sends a subtle signal of interest)

Results from soft touchpoints:

- Post impressions: 45% came from target accounts (vs. 12% before the campaign)
- 38 Tier 2 people engaged with the client's content (likes or comments)
- 12 Tier 2 people initiated conversations via DM after seeing content

Intelligence gathered:

From conversations with Tier 2 people, the team learned:

- Many pharma companies were dealing with visibility issues across multi-site operations (confirming the value proposition)

- Several companies had recently failed implementations of complex ERP systems and were looking for simpler solutions
- Cost reduction was a higher priority than innovation for most operations teams right now

This intelligence directly informed the messaging for Tier 1 outreach.

Phase 3: Tier 1 Engagement (Weeks 9-12)

Week 9: Connection Requests to Decision-Makers

Now, and only now, the executives sent connection requests to Tier 1 decision-makers (COOs, VPs of Manufacturing, and Heads of Supply Chain).

When these executives saw the connection request, they also saw:

- 15-30 mutual connections at their own company (the Tier 2 people who'd already connected)
- Profiles that looked credible, active, and industry-relevant
- Content in the feed (from the 2x/week posting) that resonated with their challenges

Results:

- 68 connection requests sent to Tier 1 decision-makers
- 26% acceptance rate (18 connections)

This is significantly higher than the 14% baseline for cold outreach to C-suite, and it's a direct result of the indirect path strategy.

Weeks 10-12: Informed Outreach

For the Tier 1 decision-makers who accepted, the follow-up messages weren't generic. They were informed by intelligence from Tier 2 conversations:

"I've been speaking with a few folks on your ops team about supply chain visibility challenges, especially with the recent expansion. The pattern I'm seeing: teams are drowning in data but still don't have clarity on where the bottlenecks actually are. Does that resonate?"

This isn't a pitch. It's a peer-level observation informed by real context.

Results:

- 18 Tier 1 connections received personalised follow-up messages
- 7 positive replies (39% positive reply rate)
- 4 meetings booked within two weeks

Phase 4: Conversion (Weeks 13-20)

Of the four meetings booked:

- 1 became a qualified opportunity within 30 days (€450K pipeline value)
- 2 moved into longer-term nurture (not ready now, but engaged and warm)
- 1 wasn't a fit (wrong timing, but remained connected for future)

The qualified opportunity moved through the sales process and closed within four months - a €280K deal.

Campaign ROI:

Investment:

- 90 minutes of executive time per week (across three people)
- Content creation support (roughly 10 hours/week for drafting and scheduling)
- Sales Navigator licenses (€80/month × 3)

Return:

- €280K closed revenue

- €450K active pipeline
- Relationships established with 18 C-suite executives in target sector
- Intelligence gathered about sector challenges that informed future product development

The Common Threads:

What made this work?

1. **Indirect path strategy** – Built familiarity with Tier 2 before approaching Tier 1
2. **Multi-threading — Multiple** people from the company engaging multiple people at target accounts
3. **Content as credibility — Consistent** posting proved expertise without pitching
4. **Intelligence-driven messaging** – Outreach was informed by real conversations, not assumptions
5. **Patience — Willing** to invest 12+ weeks in relationship-building before asking for meetings

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Campaign 2: Reactivating Dormant Accounts

The Client Context:

A B2B software company had a CRM full of "dead" accounts - companies that had shown interest 12-18 months ago but had gone cold. Traditional re-engagement emails weren't working. The accounts were marked as "lost" or "no decision."

The question: Could LinkedIn ABM resurrect these relationships?

The ABM Strategy:

Target Account Selection:

Instead of starting with net-new accounts, they pulled 30 companies from their CRM that met these criteria:

- Had engaged with sales 12-18 months ago but didn't close
- Fit the ICP (still the right size, industry, use case)
- Showed recent activity signals (new funding, leadership changes, headcount growth)

For each account, they identified:

- The original contact (still at the company?)
- New decision-makers who'd joined since the last conversation
- Tier 2 influencers (people who would have a say in future vendor selection)

The Participants:

Two executives:

- **CEO** (targeting C-suite)
- **VP of Customer Success** (targeting operations and implementation leads)

The Twist:

For dormant accounts, the CEO's LinkedIn outreach had a unique advantage: **many of these accounts had never spoken to the CEO directly.** Their previous conversations had been with BDRs or Account Executives.

So when the CEO reached out, it wasn't just "someone from the company trying again." It was "the CEO is personally reaching out," which carried a different weight.

Phase 1-2: Re-establishing Presence (Weeks 1-6)

Profile Optimisation:

Both executives updated their profiles to emphasise recent customer wins and industry credibility (several customers had published case studies since the original conversations with these dormant accounts).

Content Strategy:

They posted content specifically designed to address the objections that had killed the original deals:

- "Why most implementations fail (and how to avoid it)" – addressing implementation concerns
- "The hidden cost of delaying decisions" – creating urgency around the status quo
- Case studies from companies similar to the target accounts

Reconnection:

For accounts where the original contact was still there:

The CEO sent a simple, non-salesy message:

"Hi [Name], I know we spoke about a year ago and the timing wasn't right. I've been thinking about the challenge you mentioned around [specific pain point]. We've since worked with a few companies in [Industry] on exactly this – thought it might be worth reconnecting to share what we've learned."

For accounts where there was a new decision-maker:

They used the indirect path – connected with Tier 2 people first, then approached the new decision-maker with context:

"I've been connecting with a few folks at [Company] and it sounds like [Challenge] is still a recurring theme. We actually spoke with your predecessor about this last year – curious if it's still on your radar."

Results (Weeks 1-6):

- Reconnected with 18 of the 30 dormant accounts
- 6 positive replies expressing renewed interest
- 2 immediate meeting requests ("Actually, the timing might be better now")

Phase 3-4: Conversion (Weeks 7-16)

Of the 6 positive replies:

- 3 moved into active sales conversations
- 2 became qualified opportunities
- 1 closed within 90 days (€180K deal)

Campaign ROI:

Investment:

- Minimal (these accounts were already in the CRM; no new prospecting needed.)
- Executive time: ~60 minutes/week
- Content creation: leveraged existing case studies and customer stories

Return:

- €180K closed revenue
- €320K pipeline reactivated
- Proof that "dead" accounts aren't actually dead – they're just waiting for the right timing and the right approach

The Common Threads:

What made this work?

1. **Seniority matters** – CEO outreach carried weight that BDR outreach didn't

2. **Timing + persistence** – Accounts that said "not now" 18 months ago were now in a different position

3. **Addressing past objections** – Content directly spoke to the concerns that had killed the original deals

4. **Personalisation at scale** – Even though this was 30 accounts, each message referenced specific previous conversations

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Campaign 3: Multi–Market Expansion

The Client Context:

A UK-based consultancy wanted to expand into Germany and France. They had no existing relationships in these markets. Language and cultural differences made traditional cold outreach even harder than usual.

The ABM Strategy:

Localisation:

They made the strategic decision to localise their messaging:

- German outreach would be in German
- French outreach would be in French

They worked with native speakers to translate and culturally adapt their core message templates. The templates were approved by local consultants at the appropriate seniority level to ensure they sounded natural for the target roles.

Target Account Selection:

Using Sales Navigator, they identified:

- 40 German companies (manufacturing and logistics sectors)

- 30 French companies (same sectors)

Within those accounts:

- Tier 1: C-suite and department heads
- Tier 2: Operations managers and team leads

The Participants:

Three executives participated, but here's the interesting part: **none of them were fluent in German or French.**

So how did they execute?

The System:

Outbound messaging: Templated messages in German and French (pre-written and approved by native speakers) were used for initial outreach.

Inbound responses: When prospects replied in their native language, the messages were flagged for the executives to review with translation support. Substantive replies were handled with the help of bilingual team members or local partners.

Content: Posts were published in English (as that's still the business language for most of these sectors), but certain high-value posts were translated and published in German/French for local resonance.

Results:

Germany:

- 180 connection requests sent (Tier 2 focus)
- 54% acceptance rate (higher than English-language outreach to the same sector, suggesting Localisation mattered)
- 12 Tier 1 decision-maker connections made
- 4 meetings booked

- 1 qualified opportunity (€220K)

France:

- 140 connection requests sent
- 48% acceptance rate
- 9 Tier 1 decision-maker connections made
- 3 meetings booked
- 1 qualified opportunity (€180K)

The Learning:

Localisation increased acceptance rates by approximately 15-20% compared to their standard English outreach to non-English markets.

However, managing replies in languages the executives didn't speak fluently created operational complexity. The team learned they needed either:

- Bilingual executives for key markets, OR
- Local partners who could handle nuanced follow-up conversations

The Common Threads:

What made this work?

1. **Localisation signals respect** - Reaching out in the prospect's language increased acceptance rates
2. **Templates can scale across languages** - The same message frameworks worked in German and French as in English (once culturally adapted)
3. **Operational planning matters** - You need a plan for handling replies, not just sending messages

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Deconstructing Success: The Patterns That Repeat

Across these three campaigns (and dozens of others), the same principles show up again and again.

Pattern 1: Indirect Path > Direct Path

In every case, **approaching Tier 1 decision-makers after building connections with Tier 2 people dramatically outperformed cold outreach to Tier 1.**

The acceptance rate delta: 14% (cold Tier 1 outreach) vs. 25-30% (Tier 1 outreach after Tier 2 familiarity).

That's not marginal. That's the difference between a campaign that works and one that doesn't.

Pattern 2: Multi-Threading Multiplies Impact

When multiple people from the client company engaged multiple people at the target account, success rates increased.

Single-threaded outreach (one person reaching out to one person) works occasionally. Multi-threaded outreach (three people from your company connecting with 15 people at their company) works consistently.

Why? Because you're building organisational familiarity, not just individual relationships.

Pattern 3: Content Validates Outreach

In every successful campaign, the executives were posting content consistently (minimum 2x/week).

When prospects clicked through to their profiles, they saw:

- Recent activity (not a dormant profile)
- Relevant expertise (posts about challenges the prospect cared about)

- Credibility (specific insights, not generic platitudes)

This made the outreach feel less like cold sales and more like a natural extension of the thought leadership they were already seeing.

Pattern 4: Intelligence Beats Assumptions

The campaigns that closed deals fastest were the ones where the outreach was informed by real intelligence gathered from Tier 2 conversations.

Generic value propositions ("We help companies increase efficiency") underperformed.

Specific, informed observations ("I've been hearing from a few ops leads at your company that supply chain visibility across sites is a challenge right now - is that resonating?") overperformed.

Pattern 5: Patience Compounds

None of these campaigns generated immediate results. The fastest campaign (dormant account reactivation) took 7 weeks from first touchpoint to meeting. The longest took 16 weeks.

But the relationships built during that time were warmer, more informed, and more likely to close than relationships built through traditional cold outreach.

Speed isn't the goal. Quality is the goal.

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The Replication Blueprint: How to Apply This to Your Campaigns

If you're reading these case studies and thinking, "Okay, but how do I actually do this for my business?" here's your step-by-step blueprint:

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Step 1: Choose Your First Campaign Parameters (Week 1)

Don't try to boil the ocean. Start with:

- **20-50 target accounts** (Tier 1 accounts if you're experienced; Tier 2 accounts if you're testing)
- **2-3 participating executives** from your company
- **One clear value proposition** that's relevant to all the accounts on your list

Step 2: Build Your People Lists (Week 1)

For each account, identify:

- 1-3 Tier 1 decision-makers
- 5-10 Tier 2 influencers

Use Sales Navigator to prioritise:

- Second-degree connections
- Active users (posted in last 30 days)
- Profiles with 500+ connections

Export this to a spreadsheet or CRM.

Step 3: optimise Profiles (Week 2)

Get your participating executives' profiles to baseline quality:

- Professional photo with bright background
- Non-salesy headline
- About section that tells a story
- Current role description that's outcome-focused

Use the 90-minute framework from Chapter 3.

Step 4: Launch Tier 2 Connections (Weeks 3-4)

Send 50-100 connection requests to Tier 2 people. Track acceptance rates.

If acceptance rates are below 50%, diagnose:

- Are the profiles credible?
- Are you targeting the right people (second-degree connections, active users)?
- Are your connection messages too salesy?

Step 5: Activate Content and Engagement (Weeks 3-8)

Each executive posts 2x/week on topics relevant to target accounts.

Simultaneously, engage with Tier 2 connections' content (likes, comments, profile views).

Track:

- What % of post impressions come from target accounts?
- How many Tier 2 people are engaging with your content?
- Are any Tier 2 people initiating conversations?

Step 6: Launch Tier 1 Outreach (Weeks 9-10)

Connect with Tier 1 decision-makers. Use any intelligence gathered from Tier 2 conversations to personalise your approach.

Track:

- Tier 1 acceptance rate (target: 25%+)
- Reply rate (target: 15%+)
- Positive reply rate (target: 5-10%)

Step 7: Convert Conversations to Meetings (Weeks 10-16)

For positive replies, transition to meeting requests. Frame them as peer conversations, not sales pitches:

"Based on our exchange, seems like [Challenge] is something you're actively navigating. Would a 20-minute call to compare notes be useful?"

Track:

- Meeting conversion rate (target: 30–50% of positive replies)
- Show rate (target: 80%+)

Step 8: Measure, Learn, Iterate (Ongoing)

At the end of your first campaign, review:

- What worked? (Which messages got replies? Which content got engagement?)
- What didn't? (Where did people drop off?)
- What would you do differently next time?

Then launch Campaign 2 with those learnings baked in.

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The Strategic Takeaway

The campaigns that succeed on LinkedIn ABM aren't the ones with the cleverest messaging or the biggest budgets.

They're the ones that understand this fundamental truth: **B2B buying decisions are made by people, and people buy from people they know, trust, and believe understand their world.**

Everything else – the targeting, the messaging, the content, the engagement – is in service of building that familiarity and trust.

It takes time. It takes consistency. It takes multiple touchpoints across multiple people.

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But when it works, it doesn't just generate pipeline. It generates relationships that compound over time - relationships that lead to referrals, to expansions, to long-term partnerships.

That's the difference between transactional outreach and strategic relationship-building.

And that's why LinkedIn ABM, done well, doesn't just fill your pipeline for this quarter. It builds an engine that feeds your business for years.

In the final section of this handbook, we'll show you how to prove that value to your CFO, your board, and anyone else who asks: "Is this actually working?"

Part 3: The Endgame – Proving Value and Building an Engine

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Chapter 7: From Clicks to Contracts: Proving the ROI of Your LinkedIn ABM

It's a common refrain from leadership and finance teams: "LinkedIn metrics are just vanity. Likes and views don't pay the bills." The argument is that if you can't tie an activity directly to closed revenue, it doesn't count.

While the scepticism is understandable, it's based on a flawed premise. Trying to measure the ROI of a long-cycle, relationship-based strategy like LinkedIn ABM with the same last-click attribution model you'd use for a Google Ads campaign is destined to fail. LinkedIn's impact is real, but it's spread across a dozen touchpoints over many months.

The companies that successfully prove their value don't just track revenue; they track the leading indicators that predict pipeline and use attribution models that reflect how modern B2B buying actually happens.

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The Measurement Problem in B2B

Let's start by acknowledging why LinkedIn ROI is hard to measure in the first place.

In B2C or even transactional B2B, attribution is relatively straightforward:

- Someone sees an ad
- They click through to a landing page
- They convert (buy, sign up, download)
- You track the whole journey with pixels and cookies

In enterprise B2B, it doesn't work that way.

The reality of enterprise buying:

- Your prospect sees your CEO's LinkedIn post (Touchpoint 1)
- Two weeks later, they accept a connection request from your VP of Operations (Touchpoint 2)
- A month later, they attend a webinar you promoted via email (Touchpoint 3)
- They see your company mentioned in an industry report (Touchpoint 4)
- Three months later, their boss asks them to research solutions for a problem you solve
- They remember your name from those earlier touchpoints
- They visit your website directly (Touchpoint 5)
- They request a demo (Touchpoint 6)
- Six months of sales conversations happen
- They close

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Which touchpoint gets credit?

In most traditional attribution models, the website visit or the demo request gets 100% of the credit. LinkedIn gets zero.

But without those early touchpoints – the CEO's post, the connection with your VP, the sustained visibility over months – would they have even thought of you when their boss asked them to research solutions?

Probably not.

This is why LinkedIn ABM ROI is hard to measure: it's a long-cycle, multi-touch, relationship-based strategy operating in a measurement environment designed for short-cycle, single-touch, transactional campaigns.

So how do you prove it works?

You measure it in layers.

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The Three Layers of Measurement

Here's the framework that works:

Layer 1: Activity Metrics (Are we doing the work?)

These are the inputs – the actions your team is taking. They don't directly prove ROI, but they prove you're executing the strategy.

Layer 2: Engagement Metrics (Is anyone paying attention?)

These are the early signals that your activity is resonating with your target accounts. They predict future pipeline but aren't pipeline yet.

Layer 3: Outcome Metrics (Is this generating business?)

These are the lagging indicators - meetings, pipeline, revenue. They prove ROI, but they lag behind your activity by weeks or months.

The mistake most teams make: They only measure Layer 3 and wonder why they can't prove LinkedIn's impact.

The smarter approach: Measure all three layers, and use Layer 1 and Layer 2 to predict Layer 3 outcomes before they happen.

Let's break down each layer.

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Layer 1: Activity Metrics — Proving Execution

These are the non-negotiables. If you're not hitting these baselines, the rest of the measurement doesn't matter because you're not executing the strategy.

Connection Activity

Metric: Number of connection requests sent per executive per week

Baseline target: 20-30 per executive per week (prioritising Tier 2 people in early weeks, Tier 1 later)

Why it matters: If your executives aren't connecting with people at target accounts, nothing else in the strategy works. This is the foundation.

How to track it: Sales Navigator activity reports + manual logging in a spreadsheet or CRM

Content Publication

Metric: Number of posts published per executive per week

Baseline target: 2 posts per week per executive (minimum)

Why it matters: Consistency is more important than perfection. Two decent posts per week keeps you visible in target accounts' feeds. One post per week doesn't create enough touchpoints. Zero posts means you're invisible.

How to track it: LinkedIn's native analytics (Creator Mode dashboard) or third-party tools like Shield Analytics

Engagement Activity

Metric: Number of likes, comments, and profile views on target account content per executive per week

Baseline target: 20-30 total engagements per executive per week (likes are easy, comments are higher value)

Why it matters: Engaging with your prospects' content is often more valuable than posting your own. It puts you directly in their notifications and shows you're paying attention to them.

How to track it: Manual logging (have executives spend 15 minutes daily engaging, track what they engage with) or automation tools (use with caution - AI-generated comments are increasingly obvious and off-putting)

Why These Matter

Activity metrics don't prove ROI. But they prove you're doing the work.

When your CFO asks, "What are we actually doing with this LinkedIn investment?" you can show:

- "Our three executives sent 240 connection requests this month to decision-makers at target accounts"
- "We published 24 posts that delivered value to our target audience"
- "We engaged with target account content 280 times, creating touchpoints without being salesy"

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This demonstrates that the strategy is being executed, not just talked about.

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Layer 2: Engagement Metrics – The Leading Indicators

This is where it gets interesting.

Engagement metrics are the bridge between activity and outcomes. They tell you whether your target accounts are paying attention - before they tell you directly.

Connection Acceptance Rate

Metric: Percentage of connection requests accepted

Baseline targets:

- Tier 2 people (influencers): 30-50%%
- Tier 1 people (decision-makers): 25-40%

Why it matters: Low acceptance rates mean something's wrong - either your profile isn't credible, you're targeting the wrong people, or your messaging is too salesy.

High acceptance rates mean you're on the right track. People are willing to let you into their network.

Diagnostic value: If Tier 2 acceptance rates are below 50%, investigate:

- Are you targeting second-degree connections (higher acceptance) or third-degree (lower)?
- Are you targeting active users (posted in last 30 days)?
- Does your profile pass the credibility test from Chapter 3?

If Tier 1 acceptance rates are below 20%, you're likely going direct too soon. Go back to Tier 2 first.

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Profile Views from Target Accounts

Metric: Number of profile views from people at your target accounts (90-day rolling window)

Why it matters: When someone views your profile, they're doing research on you. They're considering whether you're credible, whether you're worth engaging with.

A spike in profile views from a specific target account often precedes a reply or a meeting request.

How to track it: LinkedIn shows you who's viewed your profile (if they have a premium account). Export this weekly and tag which viewers work at target accounts.

Advanced play: If you see multiple people from the same target account viewing your profile within a short window, that's a signal. It means your name is being discussed internally. Flag that account for priority follow-up.

Content Engagement from Target Accounts

Metric: Number of likes, comments, and shares on your content from people at target accounts

Why it matters: When someone from a target account engages with your content, they're signaling that the topic resonates. That's intelligence you can use.

How to track it: Review the engagement on each post and tag which engagers work at target accounts. Create a simple dashboard:

- Which accounts are engaging most frequently?
- Which types of content get the most engagement from target accounts?
- Are specific people engaging repeatedly? (Those are warm leads - reach out.)

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The pattern to watch for: If someone from a target account likes or comments on 2–3 of your posts in a month, that's not random. They're paying attention. That's your cue to send a non-salesy message:

"I noticed you've been engaging with some of our content on [Topic] – seems like this is top of mind for you. Curious what's driving that focus?"

Positive Reply Rate

Metric: Percentage of messages sent that receive a positive reply (not just any reply, but a reply that moves the conversation forward)

Baseline target: 10–15% for informed, personalised outreach

Why it matters: This tells you whether your messaging is resonating. A low reply rate means your messages aren't relevant or aren't differentiated from the dozens of other sales pitches your prospects receive.

How to categorise replies:

- **Positive reply:** They answer your question, express interest, or ask a question back
- **Neutral reply:** "Thanks, I'll keep you in mind" or "Not right now but maybe later"
- **Negative reply:** "Not interested" or "Remove me from your list"
- **No reply:** (Obviously)

Track all four. The ratio tells you a lot.

If you're getting 40% no reply, 40% neutral, 15% negative, and 5% positive, your messaging needs work.

If you're getting 60% no reply, 5% neutral, 5% negative, and 30% positive, you're doing something right.

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Meetings Booked (from LinkedIn-Sourced Conversations)

Metric: Number of meetings booked with target accounts where LinkedIn was a touchpoint in the conversation

Why it matters: This is the transition from engagement to pipeline. A meeting means someone was interested enough to give you time.

How to track it: When a meeting is booked, log the source. Was it:

- A direct result of a LinkedIn message?
- A result of someone seeing your content and reaching out?
- A result of a multi-channel campaign where LinkedIn was one touchpoint?

Don't overthink attribution yet - just log that LinkedIn was involved.

Baseline target: If you're actively working 50 target accounts with the full strategy (connections, content, engagement), you should be booking 2-4 meetings per month within the first 3 months, scaling to 5-10 per month by month 6.

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Layer 3: Outcome Metrics – Tying It to Revenue

This is what your CFO cares about. Does LinkedIn ABM generate pipeline and revenue?

Pipeline Value from LinkedIn-Sourced Opportunities

Metric: Total dollar value of opportunities where LinkedIn played a role in the relationship

Why it matters: This connects your LinkedIn activity to your company's financial goals.

How to track it: In your CRM, create a field for "LinkedIn-Influenced" opportunities. Mark an opportunity as LinkedIn-influenced if:

- The first touchpoint was a LinkedIn connection or message
- The prospect engaged with your LinkedIn content before or during the sales process
- Multiple people from your company connected with multiple people at their company via LinkedIn

Important nuance: Don't only count "LinkedIn-sourced" (where LinkedIn was the first touch). Count "LinkedIn-influenced" (where LinkedIn played a meaningful role in the journey).

Why? Because in complex B2B sales, there's rarely a single source. LinkedIn is almost always one of many touchpoints. If you only count first-touch attribution, you'll massively undervalue LinkedIn's contribution.

Closed Revenue from LinkedIn-Influenced Opportunities

Metric: Total dollar value of closed deals where LinkedIn was a touchpoint

Why it matters: This is the ultimate ROI metric. Revenue generated.

How to track it: Same as pipeline, but filtered to "Closed-Won" opportunities.

Baseline expectation: LinkedIn ABM is a long-cycle strategy. In the first 3 months, you'll see activity and engagement metrics move. In months 4-6, you'll see pipeline. In months 6-12, you'll see closed revenue.

If you're expecting closed deals in the first 60 days, you're measuring the wrong thing.

Total Addressable Market (TAM) Penetration

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Metric: What percentage of your total addressable market have you connected with or engaged?

Why it matters: This tells you how much runway you still have. If you've connected with 400 people out of a TAM of 5,000, you're just getting started. If you've connected with 3,800 out of 5,000, you're approaching saturation and need to expand your TAM or shift to nurture mode.

How to track it: Calculate your TAM in Sales Navigator (total number of people who fit your ICP). Track how many you've connected with, how many you've engaged with, how many have engaged back.

Account Penetration Score

Metric: For each target account, how many key stakeholders have you connected with?

Why it matters: Multi-threading works. The more people at an account you're connected with, the more likely that account is to convert.

How to track it: For each Tier 1 account, identify the 10-20 key people (Tier 1 decision-makers + Tier 2 influencers). Track how many of those 10-20 you've connected with.

Baseline target: For your top-tier accounts, aim for 50%+ penetration (connected with at least half of the key stakeholders). For mid-tier accounts, 30-40% is solid.

The pattern to watch for: Accounts with 50%+ penetration convert at 3-5x the rate of accounts with <20% penetration. This is the power of the multi-threaded, many-to-many approach.

♦

The ABM Dashboard: Reporting to Leadership

Here's the challenge: your leadership team doesn't want a 47-slide deck full of LinkedIn metrics.

They want a single-page dashboard that answers three questions:

1. **Are we executing the strategy?** (Activity metrics)
2. **Is it working?** (Engagement metrics)
3. **Is it generating business?** (Outcome metrics)

Here's the framework for that dashboard:

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LinkedIn ABM Dashboard – [Month/Quarter]

Executive Summary (1-2 sentences):

"This quarter, we engaged 180 new stakeholders at 42 target accounts, resulting in 8 qualified meetings and €450K in new pipeline. Three accounts have moved to late-stage conversations."

♦

Section 1: Execution (Activity Metrics)

Metric	This Month	Last Month	Target
Connection requests sent	240	195	200+
Posts published (total across execs)	24	22	24

Engagement actions (likes/comments)	180	165	150+

Status: ✅ On track / ⚠️ Below target / ❌ Needs attention

♦

Section 2: Engagement (Leading Indicators)

Metric	This Month	Last Month	Target
Connection acceptance rate (Tier 2)	58%	54%	50%+
Connection acceptance rate (Tier 1)	24%	22%	20%+
Target account profile views	67	52	50+
Content engagement from target accounts	38	31	30+
Positive reply rate	12%	10%	10%+
Meetings booked	8	6	5+

Status: ✅ Exceeding targets

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Section 3: Business Impact (Outcome Metrics)

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Metric	This Quarter	Last Quarter	YTD
Pipeline value (LinkedIn-influenced)	€450K	€280K	€1.1M
Closed revenue (LinkedIn-influenced)	€120K	€0K	€120K
Target accounts engaged (at least 1 connection)	42	28	73
Accounts with 50%+ penetration	8	4	14

Status: ✅ Strong progress

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Key Insights:

- *"Account penetration is the strongest predictor of conversion – accounts with 50%+ penetration are 4x more likely to take a meeting."*
- *"Content on supply chain challenges is getting 2x the engagement from target accounts vs. other topics – doubling down on this theme."*
- *"Three accounts (Company A, Company B, Company C) are showing high engagement and are ready for senior-level outreach."*

♦

Next Month's Priorities:

1. Escalate outreach to the three high-signal accounts
2. Increase Tier 1 connections by 30% (we've built enough Tier 2 familiarity)

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3. Publish case study content from recent win to use in outreach

♦

That's your dashboard. One page. Clear. Actionable.

It shows you're executing, it shows early signals of success, and it shows business impact.

When your CFO asks, "Is this LinkedIn thing working?" you hand them this.

♦

Solving the Attribution Problem

Let's address the elephant in the room: **How do you attribute revenue to LinkedIn when the buying journey involves 10+ touchpoints across multiple channels?**

The honest answer: you can't do it perfectly. But you can do it well enough to make informed decisions.

Here are three attribution models that work for LinkedIn ABM:

Model 1: First-Touch Attribution

Definition: Credit goes to the first touchpoint in the buyer's journey.

When to use it: When you're trying to prove LinkedIn's role in creating awareness and opening new relationships.

Example: A prospect accepts your connection request on LinkedIn in January. Over the next six months, they also receive emails, see ads, attend a webinar, and eventually request a demo in July. First-touch attribution gives LinkedIn 100% of the credit because that's where the relationship started.

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Limitations: This overvalues the first touchpoint and undervalues everything that came after. The relationship didn't convert because of the connection request – it converted because of sustained engagement across multiple channels.

Model 2: Last-Touch Attribution

Definition: Credit goes to the final touchpoint before conversion.

When to use it: When you're trying to prove LinkedIn's role in closing deals.

Example: A prospect has been in your CRM for six months. They've received emails, seen ads, attended webinars. Then your CEO sends them a LinkedIn message in June: *"Saw your recent post on supply chain challenges – seems timely. Worth a conversation?"* They reply, book a meeting, and close in August. Last-touch attribution gives LinkedIn 100% of the credit.

Limitations: This undervalues all the touchpoints that built familiarity and trust before the final LinkedIn message.

Model 3: Multi-Touch Attribution (Recommended)

Definition: Credit is distributed across all meaningful touchpoints in the journey.

When to use it: When you want the most accurate picture of how different channels contribute to revenue.

Example: A prospect's journey involves:

1. LinkedIn connection (January)
2. Engaged with LinkedIn post (February)
3. Email click-through (March)
4. Webinar attendance (April)
5. LinkedIn message exchange (May)
6. Demo request (June)
7. Close (August)

Multi-touch attribution gives each touchpoint a weighted share of credit. There are different weighting models (linear, time-decay, U-shaped), but the core idea is the same: **every touchpoint contributed, so every touchpoint gets credit.**

How to implement this:

In your CRM, log every LinkedIn touchpoint:

- Connection accepted (tag the date)
- LinkedIn content engagement (if you see it)
- LinkedIn message sent/received

When an opportunity closes, review the timeline. If LinkedIn was involved at multiple stages, it gets credit as a "LinkedIn-influenced" deal.

The practical approach:

Don't obsess over perfect attribution. Instead, track deals in three categories:

1. **LinkedIn-sourced:** The relationship started on LinkedIn (first connection, first conversation happened there)
2. **LinkedIn-accelerated:** LinkedIn played a key role mid-funnel (prospect engaged with content, had meaningful message exchanges, etc.)
3. **LinkedIn-closed:** The final touchpoint that led to conversion happened on LinkedIn

Report all three. This gives leadership a complete picture without getting bogged down in attribution philosophy.

◆

The ROI Conversation: How to Talk to Your CFO

When you're presenting LinkedIn ABM ROI to your CFO or your board, here's the framing that works:

Don't lead with activity metrics. They don't care how many posts you published or how many connections you made. That's execution detail.

Don't lead with engagement metrics. They don't care about profile views or content likes. Those are interesting signals to you, but they're not business outcomes.

Lead with business impact:

"In Q3, our LinkedIn ABM program generated €450K in qualified pipeline and €120K in closed revenue. The cost of the program was €15K (Sales Navigator licenses, content support, executive time). That's an 8:1 return on pipeline and a direct revenue ROI of 8x."

Then add the context:

"The program is designed for long-cycle relationship building, so we expect pipeline to continue converting over the next 6-12 months. Based on our historical close rates, we're projecting €180-225K in closed revenue from current pipeline by year-end."

Then show the efficiency gains:

"Before LinkedIn ABM, our cold email campaigns had a 1-2% reply rate and a meeting conversion rate of 0.5%. Our LinkedIn ABM campaigns are generating a 12% positive reply rate and a 3% meeting conversion rate – 6x more efficient. We're booking the same number of meetings with 1/6th the outreach volume, which frees up our sales team to focus on qualified conversations."

Then show the strategic value:

"Beyond direct revenue, we've now established relationships with 73 target accounts that didn't know us six months ago. We've built connections with 340 key decision-makers and influencers in our target market. When those accounts enter a buying window – even if it's 12-18 months from now – we're already embedded in their network. That's long-term pipeline insurance."

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That's the conversation.

You've shown ROI (pipeline and revenue generated vs. cost).

You've shown efficiency (better conversion rates than other channels).

You've shown strategic value (relationships that compound over time).

Your CFO can't argue with that.

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The Feedback Loop: Using Data to Improve

Measurement isn't just about proving ROI to leadership. It's about learning what works so you can do more of it.

Here's how to build a continuous improvement cycle:

Weekly Review: What's Working?

Every week, review:

- Which messages got replies this week? What did they have in common?
- Which content got the most engagement from target accounts? What topics resonated?
- Which accounts are showing high engagement but haven't converted to meetings yet? (Flag them for follow-up.)

Monthly Review: Are We On Track?

Every month, review:

- Are we hitting our activity baselines? (If not, why? Capacity issue? Prioritisation issue?)

- Are engagement metrics trending up or down? (If down, diagnose: is content quality slipping? Are we targeting the wrong people?)
- How many meetings did we book? How does that compare to last month?

Quarterly Review: What Should We Change?

Every quarter, review:

- Which target accounts have we fully penetrated (50%+ connections)? Should we shift focus to new accounts?
- Which message frameworks are consistently outperforming? Codify them and train the team.
- Which content themes are driving the most engagement and meetings? Double down on those.
- Are there accounts we've been targeting for 6+ months with zero engagement? Consider cutting them and reallocating effort.

This feedback loop turns measurement into Optimisation.

You're not just tracking numbers. You're using numbers to get better every week.

♦

The Strategic Takeaway

Proving LinkedIn ABM ROI isn't about finding the perfect attribution model or tracking every micro-interaction.

It's about measuring in layers – activity, engagement, outcomes – so you can show that:

1. **You're executing the strategy** (activity metrics)
2. **It's resonating with target accounts** (engagement metrics)
3. **It's generating business** (outcome metrics)

When you connect all three layers, you build a narrative that leadership can't ignore:

"We're doing the work. The right people are paying attention. And it's turning into pipeline and revenue."

That's not vanity metrics. That's business impact.

And when you can demonstrate that impact – with a clean dashboard, a clear ROI calculation, and a continuous improvement process – you've turned LinkedIn ABM from an experiment into a proven, scalable engine.

In the conclusion, we'll tie all of this together and give you the final word on what it takes to make LinkedIn ABM work at scale.

Conclusion: Your New Competitive Advantage

There's a moment that happens in every successful LinkedIn ABM program.

It's usually about three months in. Your executives have been posting consistently. They've been connecting with people at target accounts. They've been engaging with content, building familiarity, showing up week after week in the feeds of the people who matter.

And then it happens.

A prospect messages one of your executives directly. Not in response to outreach. Not because they saw an ad. But because they've been watching. They've been paying attention. And now they're ready to talk.

The message usually says something like: *"I've been following your posts on [topic] for a few months now. We're actually dealing with exactly this challenge. Worth a conversation?"*

That's the moment you know it's working.

Because you didn't chase that prospect. You didn't pitch them. You didn't interrupt their day with a cold email or a connection request that screamed "I want to sell you something."

You simply showed up. Consistently. Authentically. With value.

And they came to you.

That's the power of profile-based marketing. That's what happens when trust is built at scale.

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The Shift You've Made

If you've read this far, you've already made the most important shift:

You understand that ABM isn't just about identifying the right accounts and deploying the right tactics. It's about orchestrating human relationships across organisations – many to many, peer to peer – in a way that builds familiarity and trust before you ever ask for a meeting.

You understand that your executives aren't bottlenecks to your ABM strategy. They're the strategy. Their visibility, their credibility, their networks – that's your competitive advantage.

And you understand that LinkedIn isn't a social media platform you need to "crack" with growth hacks and viral content. It's a relationship infrastructure. A database of decision-makers. A mechanism for being present in the lives of your target accounts without being pushy or salesy.

When you see LinkedIn through that lens, everything changes.

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What You Now Know How to Do

Let's recap what this handbook has given you:

You know how to find the 2% of accounts that matter most (Chapter 1) – and how to stay visible with the 98% so you're top-of-mind when their buying window opens.

You know how to map the path to decision-makers (Chapter 2) – not by going straight to the top and getting ignored, but by building familiarity with influencers first, gathering intelligence, and approaching the C-suite only when you have mutual connections and real context.

You know how to optimise profiles (Chapter 3) – turning them from static CVs into credible, compelling landing pages that make prospects think, *"This person is worth knowing."*

You know how to personalise at scale (Chapter 4) – not with lazy mail-merge tokens, but with intelligent message frameworks that demonstrate you understand your prospect's world.

You know how to use content strategically (Chapter 5) – not to go viral, but to create sustained visibility with the people who matter, proving your expertise and building familiarity over time.

You've seen real campaigns (Chapter 6) – not theoretical best practices, but actual strategies that generated pipeline and closed revenue, with the patterns that made them work.

And you know how to prove ROI (Chapter 7) – with a three-layer measurement framework that connects activity to engagement to revenue, and a dashboard that gives leadership the confidence to keep investing.

You have the blueprint. Now you need to execute it.

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The 90-Day Roadmap to Get Started

If you're wondering, *"Okay, I get it. But where do I start?"* – here's your roadmap:

Weeks 1-2: Foundation

- Identify 20-50 Tier 1 target accounts using Sales Navigator
- Map the key people within those accounts (Tier 1 decision-makers, Tier 2 influencers)
- Select 2-3 executives from your company to participate
- optimise their profiles using the 90-minute framework from Chapter 3

Weeks 3-6: Build Familiarity

- Send 50-100 connection requests to Tier 2 people at target accounts
- Start publishing content 2x/week per executive (batch-create content to make it sustainable)
- Engage with Tier 2 connections' content (likes, comments, profile views)
- Track acceptance rates and engagement patterns

Weeks 7-10: Escalate to Decision-Makers

- Send connection requests to Tier 1 people (now with mutual connections established)
- Continue content and engagement (don't stop what's working)
- Use intelligence from Tier 2 conversations to personalise Tier 1 outreach
- Track reply rates and positive engagement

Weeks 11-12: Convert to Conversations

- Transition positive replies into meeting requests
- Expand connections within high-signal accounts

- Document what's working (which messages, which content, which accounts)
- Report results to leadership using the dashboard framework from Chapter 7

At the end of 90 days, you'll have:

- Established relationships with 100-200 people at target accounts
- Generated 5-10 qualified meetings (if you're executing well)
- Proven the model works
- Built momentum you can scale

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The Internal Evangelism Challenge

Here's the hard part we haven't sugarcoated:

Getting your executives bought in is often harder than executing the strategy itself.

They're busy. They're skeptical of social media. They don't see themselves as "content creators." And they're worried that putting themselves out there will be awkward, time-consuming, or ineffective.

Your job is to make it so easy, so low-effort, and so clearly valuable that they can't say no.

Here's how:

Make it effortless.

Don't ask them to write posts from scratch every week. Batch-create content in 60-90 minute monthly sessions. Have someone draft posts based on their voice notes. Get their approval in 2 minutes via Slack. Make their time commitment minimal.

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Show early wins.

Within the first 30 days, show them when someone from a target account engages with their content or accepts their connection request. Forward them the notifications. Make it tangible. *"Look – the VP of Operations at [Dream Account] just liked your post. They're paying attention."*

Tie it to outcomes they care about.

Don't sell them on "building your personal brand" or "becoming a thought leader." Sell them on: *"This is how we get meetings with accounts that have ignored our sales team for years."*

Celebrate the inbound moments.

When a prospect reaches out to them directly because they've been following their content – screenshot it, share it with the team, make a big deal out of it. That's the proof that changes minds.

Your executives will get on board when they see it working. Your job is to make it work fast enough that they see results before they lose patience.

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The Long Game

Here's the final truth about LinkedIn ABM:

It's not a campaign. It's an engine.

Campaigns have start dates and end dates. You run them, measure them, and move on.

Engines run continuously. They compound. They get more efficient over time.

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When you build a LinkedIn ABM engine – when your executives are consistently visible, when you're systematically building relationships with target accounts, when you're turning content and engagement into pipeline month after month – you're not just filling your pipeline for this quarter.

You're building an asset that feeds your business for years.

Because the relationships you build don't disappear when the campaign ends. The familiarity you create doesn't reset to zero. The connections you make stay active.

A prospect who didn't need your solution six months ago might need it now. An influencer you connected with a year ago might have moved to a new company – and now they're in a position to buy. A decision-maker who ignored your cold emails in 2024 might see your CEO's post in 2026 and think, *"I've been seeing this person's name for two years. Maybe I should actually pay attention."*

Trust compounds. Visibility compounds. Relationships compound.

That's the long game. And it's how you build a competitive advantage that can't be easily replicated.

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The Final Word: From Strategy to Execution

At the beginning of this handbook, we said:

"In B2B today, the most powerful marketing channel isn't paid media – it's your people."

That's not motivational fluff. It's strategic reality.

Your prospects are drowning in automated emails, retargeted ads, and generic LinkedIn pitches. They've built defenses against all of it.

But they haven't built defenses against genuine human connection. Against someone who shows up consistently with valuable insights. Against a peer who seems to understand their challenges and offers help without asking for anything in return.

That's what profile-based marketing is.

It's not about turning your executives into influencers. It's about making them strategically visible to the people who matter. It's about building relationships at scale in a way that feels personal, not transactional.

It's about recognising that in a world where AI can automate almost everything, **the only thing left that can't be faked is trust.**

And trust is built one connection, one post, one thoughtful comment, one genuine conversation at a time.

If ABM is strategy, then profile-based marketing is its execution - where strategy becomes visible, human, and measurable.

You have the framework. You have the tactics. You have the measurement model.

Now go build the relationships.

If You Need a Partner to Execute This

Here's the reality we haven't avoided throughout this handbook:

Knowing what to do and having the capacity to do it consistently are two different challenges.

You now have the strategy. You understand the framework. You know the tactics that work.

But you might also be looking at your calendar, your team's bandwidth, and the competing priorities on your plate and thinking: *"This makes complete sense. I just don't know how we're going to execute it without it becoming someone's full-time job."*

That's a fair concern. And it's exactly why we built Pitch121.

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LinkedIn ABM, Done for You

Pitch121 was created to solve the core tension in every LinkedIn ABM program: **your executives are your competitive advantage, but they don't have time to manage their LinkedIn presence.**

We don't ask your CEO to become a content creator. We don't ask your VP of Operations to spend two hours a day engaging on LinkedIn. We don't add another project to your already-overloaded marketing team.

Instead, we handle the execution while your executives stay focused on running the business.

Here's how it works:

Minimal Executive Time

- **1.5 hours** during onboarding to align on messaging, tone, and priorities
- **30-60 minutes per month** for content input (we interview them, they talk, we write)
- **5-10 minutes per week** for quick approvals (via Slack or email)

That's it. Everything else – profile Optimisation, content creation, connection strategy, engagement, messaging – we handle.

The Full Service

We work with your senior leadership team to execute the exact strategy outlined in this handbook:

- **Profile Optimisation:** We transform LinkedIn profiles from static CVs into credible, compelling landing pages (Chapter 3)
- **Strategic Connecting:** We identify and connect with the right people at your target accounts - Tier 2 influencers first, then Tier 1 decision-makers - using the indirect path methodology (Chapters 1-2)
- **Content Creation & Publishing:** We create authentic, voice-matched content based on your executives' expertise and publish it consistently (2x/week minimum) to build visibility with target accounts (Chapter 5)
- **Engagement & Relationship Building:** We engage with your prospects' content on behalf of your executives, creating touchpoints without being salesy (Chapter 5)
- **Lead Nurturing:** We manage the message sequences, handle initial conversations, and flag warm opportunities for your sales team to close (Chapter 4)
- **Measurement & Reporting:** We track the metrics that matter and provide clear dashboards showing activity, engagement, and business impact (Chapter 7)

We've Done This for Over 100 Companies

From enterprise software companies breaking into new markets, to consultancies reactivating dormant accounts, to manufacturers building visibility in regulated industries - we've helped companies across sectors turn LinkedIn from a "nice to have" into a revenue-generating engine.

Our clients typically see:

- **30-50% connection acceptance rates** with target influencers
- **25-40% acceptance rates** with C-suite decision-makers (vs. 14% industry baseline)

- **5+ qualified meetings per month** within the first 6 months
- **Measurable pipeline** directly attributed to LinkedIn relationships

Three Service Models to Match Your Goals

1. Lead Nurturing & Pipeline Growth

For teams focused on converting warm accounts into active conversations. We engage your existing network and nurture relationships until they're ready for sales conversations.

2. Content Amplification & Thought Leadership

For companies that need to establish credibility and visibility in their market. We amplify your executives' expertise through consistent, strategic content that positions them as the go-to voices in your industry.

3. Account-Based Marketing on LinkedIn

For companies targeting specific high-value accounts. We execute the full playbook from this handbook - tiered targeting, multi-threaded outreach, intelligence gathering, and conversion.

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When External Support Makes Sense

You should consider partnering with us if:

- **Your executives see the value but don't have the time.** They're already stretched thin running the business. Adding "manage my LinkedIn presence" to their plate isn't realistic.
- **You've tried this before and it didn't stick.** Initial enthusiasm faded after a few weeks. Posts became inconsistent. Outreach stopped. You need a partner who makes this sustainable.

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- **You need results faster than you can build internal capacity.** Hiring and training a team to do this well takes months. We're already expert at it.
- **You're targeting high-value accounts and can't afford to get it wrong.** When each target account represents potential six- or seven-figure deals, you need execution that's professional, consistent, and proven.
- **You want to test the model before building it in-house.** Work with us for 6-12 months, see the results, learn the playbook, then decide if you want to bring it internal.

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How to Get Started

If you'd like to explore whether Pitch121 is the right partner for your LinkedIn ABM strategy, here's what happens next:

1. Initial Conversation (30 minutes)

We'll discuss your goals, your target accounts, your current LinkedIn presence, and whether our approach is a fit.

2. Strategy Proposal (If It Makes Sense)

We'll outline a tailored strategy: which executives should participate, what your target account list looks like, what success metrics we're aiming for, and what the investment would be.

3. Onboarding & Launch (2-4 weeks)

We optimise profiles, build target lists, create your initial content bank, and launch the program.

4. Execution & Results (Ongoing)

We handle the day-to-day execution while you focus on closing the opportunities we generate.

Ready to talk?

Want to get your free LinkedIn Strategy Audit? https://pitch121.com/free-linkedin-pbm-audit/

Let's build the LinkedIn ABM engine that feeds your pipeline for the next decade.