**How to Connect with Any Potential Customer, Referral Partner**

 Thank you for joining us. I'm excited about this this is my second presentation for SCORE and I had a great time last time. So I am excited to do this. This is How to Connect with Any Potential Customer, Referral Partner, or Influencer . We will cover a lot in 40 minutes and we will have a lot of time afterwards for Q&A. If you have any questions, enter them into the chat and we will cover them. Who is this for and not for? This is helpful if you are a business owner and you want to go, you have the ability to handle more leads, more capacity so you are not constrained by capacity. You could use more qualified, targeted leads for your business and not everyone wants or can handle that. If you want to focus on serving clients and having conversations with qualified prospects and letting others do the tedious marketing and lead generation judge work, this will be helpful for you. If you know the kinds of ideal clients you serve but you just don't know how to get more of those clients contacting you, this will be helpful although I will address a little bit how you can get more clear on what ideal client you should target big also if you realize your time is money, you save money by delegating task, you realize that, what do you do , I would love to know, you can just type into the chat what your business is and I would love to know a little bit more about that. So this is not going to be valuable for you if you do not see value in connecting with other businesses that could refer you business, if you have a low lifetime value for your customers like if you are selling a five dollar widget or $10 e-book or something like that, this is going to be less helpful for you, and also if you do not have the bandwidth to handle new leads coming in to your business, and icy a lot of people saying we have software developers, appraisers, , direct sales, virtual legal assistants, document management, a variety of different backgrounds, so I think you for sharing that. So what we are going to do is share our system that we developed over the years. I will show examples and tablets of how these lead generation strategies work and all of this is based on my business partner and our combined years of implementing the strategies for ourselves and for clients as well. I just want to take you , paint a picture for you. Imagine waking up at it's a pitiful weekday morning unlike today in the Midwest where it is in the below zero range and you are sipping your cup of coffee 40 and you open up your phone and you see a string of incoming messages from people. All these messages are fun targeted, qualified, high-caliber potential clients who want to connect with you. How would that feel? That would be pretty amazing, right? These leads are qualified prospects maybe by industry or geography or roles within the organization, business lifecycle, they are excited to hear from you, they are motivated to help you and connect with you and they are open to further discussion about ways you can work together in a client relationship. That is an ideal scenario. We will talk about the number one lead source that we personally believe you must focus on . We talk about the most important missing piece that will present thousand people from working with you if you do not get this right. And then we will talk about the simple three-step process for generating 80 to 100 call fight leads per week and we will also give a case study in how to go from new lead to pain client without being sales-ish so it about building a real relationship and will have plenty of time at the end for Q&A. First about me, that is me with three of my kids who just had another one about two months ago so we have up to 4 now and three boys and a girl and finally nailed it on the fourth try which is a charm. When I was a kid, I went to six different schools before high school and my parents got laid off on multiple different occasions and we had to move around the country and that really influenced to I am today. And so I really put a premium on relationship building and I realize how important that was and as a result of that, I had amazing opportunities in my career including working as a writer in the Clinton White House , speechwriter to a governor of California, early employee of DreamWorks, I ran my own boutique law firm in the same Cisco San Francisco Bay area and also founded a blog called Spark business revolution which I continue to run to this day . So after years of trying every different type of lead source, today I kind of refer to myself as a recovering attorney analytic on legal clients and I could choose which class I work with in which I do not and I am generating over 60,000 email subscribers and over what 30,000 social media follows and gives me greater freedom to spend and choose what I want to do and spend time with my family and that is really ultimately what it is all about. So first let's talk about why so many businesses struggle to connect with potential customers, referral partners, and influencers today. Number one is the roller coaster effect. The roller coaster affected like this. First you got to hustle because you have no consistently source. This is Richard. He's an executive coach. He served corporate clients and is very busy and we got busy, he did not have time to market his business, business will go down, and each type is a slowdown, you would have to hustle to get a client any basically had the scenario that so many of us experience. The key point is getting we can be difficult if you are trying to do anything at once and 80 to put in a repeatable system that keeps working even when you get busy and that is consistent. The second major reason why so many businesses struggle to get consistent qualified leads is the marketplace is more crowded than ever and competition is incredibly fierce today. The question becomes how do you stick out in that competitive marketplace. There are three reasons why competition is so fierce today. One is there is an endless supply of marketing tactics and your competitors are using all of them. It is incredibly competitive to breakthrough all of that noise. Business is moving faster every day. The pace of technological adoption is increasing companies can get up and running faster than ever so your competitors are popping up right and left. And then third, competition is global. It is on the other side of the country [ audio cutting in and out ] so your competition is not next-door and it is not across the street. It might be on the other side of the world, even if it's some traditional industry. Watch printers started new businesses in 2017 that in the previous 4 years. The average Internet user gets around 11,000 ads per month. So sticking out from the crowd is becoming more difficult. The point here is you cannot out hustle your competition. You need to our smart them. You need a lead source that is a competitive advantage for you. We talked about why getting leads is so hard today. Now let's take a look at five strategies for getting more qualified [ audio cutting in and out ] targeted outreach, reaching out to your exact, ideal customer. Number two is referrals. You ask most business owners and they will say referrals is their number one source of business. Often they do not know how to get more of those referrals. So they acknowledge it that referrals is number one in terms of new business but they do not know how to rinse and repeat. Third, speaking, I put these all together, speaking, workshops, virtual presentations, webinars, they speak to a larger group of people and get new leads in the door and there are present cause to that, especially if you do not like speaking. It requires a lot of effort. It's often hard to get these speaking gigs. It is traveling a lot. Another one is content marketing. There are articles, audio, video, and a lot of people do not get a lot of good feedback from that. They do not enjoy doing those things. They don't enjoy writing articles or creating audio. It's one of the things in your to do list but you do not really engage in it that often. So many people say I know I should blog or create videos and they never get to it. So that's reasonable. The last one is generally advertising. Today, that means Facebook or YouTube ads or Google ads. And the truth about those is they are very expensive if you don't know what you are doing. A lot of people see these things and think I will try it and they spend $1000, $2000, they don't get any results, and it's just, you might as well have just burned your money. It was not a very good use of your money. For a variety of reasons, we believe should focus on proactive, targeted outreach but do it in a smart way which is why I am here today and why I will explain to you how that can work. First of all, why focus on proactive, targeted outreach?

Proactive outreach can be ramped up or down. That's a really up on point because if you get busy with client work, that might get in a way and equally, if you slowdown and you are not as busy, then you want to be able to put an injection of new leads into your business. With proactive outreach, you decide how your network grows. This is critical. It is not you reacting to others coming to you. You are determining, you are deciding who

 are the types of leads I want, who are the types of business clients that I want, who are the types of peripheral partners that I want. This is one of my biggest messages that I share my blog and podcast. Be proactive about determining how your network grows. Let your network happen to you. Proactive targeting outreach does not require an advertising budget and you don't have to have any special technical skills. Pieces of it can also be delegated. So that's really powerful as well. There's also a huge market place filled with active business people who are perfect for proactive outreach. It's a little website called LinkedIn. Why do I say LinkedIn is what you should use? Nearly half of U.S. adults say they have googled someone for doing business with them. I'm sure you've done this. You hear someone same, you immediately Google that person's name and if you have a link to profile, there's a 75% chance it will be on the front page of Google or even higher, so often, so frequently, I Google peoples names and these are people who got names and have a web presence yet there LinkedIn page comes first and here actually is my business partner. Business partner has been podcasting, releasing two podcasts a week for 8 years now so there's a tremendous amount of content and there are multiple different websites . In spite of that, we Google his name and the top result is LinkedIn. So what does that mean? Most people are clicking on that result. Most people are googling you when they hear your name and click on that resulted they are judging you based on that. And that is really powerful. You need to understand that spirit those people are making a judgment based on whether they want to proceed further with you based on a website and a page that you might set up 6 years ago and don't you remember how to log into it. That's not a good thing. So wiling to? There are a number of other reasons why pick in 2017, LinkedIn had 250 million active users and it's three times what it was a year earlier so they are really hitting this hockey-stick growth. Also another reason is high income. 44% of Lincoln users are more than $75,000 a year which is much above the average. 41% of millionaires use LinkedIn. So there's very high caliber people on there. And more than 100,000 organic articles are published weekly on LinkedIn so they are actually growing their content platform aggressively, including with video as well. There's just a couple of headlines from having imposed and others talking about the power behind LinkedIn. So Jay's an account to we were talking to recently and he was skeptical. These are some things he said to us. Isn't LinkedIn just for getting a job or hiring which is admittedly how it started out but not how it exists today and another thing he said was every time I log into LinkedIn, I just have a lot of people trying to sell me because that is the people that are reaching out to him which is not what we recommend focusing on. We recommend on your own, focusing on your own proactive outreach. And then he also said how would I even get customers or clients on LinkedIn which is a valid question and that is what we are going to talk about. So LinkedIn is excellent for strategic partnerships and for targeting specific professions. For example, days best referral partners are financial advisors and you can use targeted outreach to connect and form relationships with financial advisors all around the country as long as you do it the right way, as long as you are not leading with a sales pitch or anything like that. Here's just a quick screenshot example we did, asserts looking for financial advisors on LinkedIn. You have 492,000 results , and insane amounts, and you can slice it went eerily but that's just a lot of people that are active and present on that platform. The next question becomes how do you manage your proactive outreach so it's effective it doesn't take a ton of your time. It is a legitimate question. Here is the three-step process you need to focus on. Some of this is counterintuitive. First, so it doesn't take a lot of your time, you need to make sure you put your best for forward and that starts with a clear, powerful profile for yourself because that is where people are first going to judge you and you do not want to send people to a page where they are just going to [ muffled audio ] clear on who you want to target and if you are targeting off, you will waste a lot of your time. Third, you want to create copywritten, direct responses, inspired messaging, and follow-up, and you want to lead with a give and not and ask. One big mistake people make when they do this kind of proactive outreach is leading by asking or with a sales pitch, which, as we all know, does not work. So first, number one, a powerful, clear profile for yourself, we call this the missing piece because it will make a major difference in your outreach and so many people, we take a look at their profile which of course is the top result as you Google the name, we take a look at the profile and it's just unclear, ambiguous, not really , it does not clearly articulated a person is in what they are about, this makes a huge difference. There's a difference between a magnet that will draw people to you and a leaky sieve where water leaks through. This is someone, we will give you an example of a profile fail, so this person had a headshot that wasn't that great and had no background so you see this blue background, starry type thing here, that's just the stock standard background and that is really valuable real estate. It is the most valuable real estate in your profile so you want to use that to communicate a message about who you are, what you do. He's got 49 connections and if you have more than 500 , we recommend getting to that point as quickly as possible because then it demonstrates social proof. There's a really boring headline that does not talk to the person who is browsing that page and explaining the benefits. The description doesn't speak to the prospect. It just is kind of a very boring profile pic it does not need to be that boring. So it has no social proof, vague description, no custom backdrop, no professional profile picture, no clear info a company website to direct them to, no clear headline and the description is not written for the target market. Let's take a look at a really good profile. This is Mark. He's a client of ours. He does a great job. You have this backed up here that is of him speaking. He does a lot of speaking. He knows speaking and whatnot. The backdrop shows him speaking on this topic. There's an audience of people paying attention. You've got other social proof elements of the media , respected media publications that he has been quoted in. You've got a clear headline that explains who he is and demonstrates social proof based on his back out in history. You've got some other social proof in terms of connections and you have a good description in the description section explaining what it is he does and why you would want to connect with him. So there's all the different elements, backdrop, benefit , good number of connections indicating social proof, clear headline, engaging photo headshot. The second step is being clear on exactly who you want to target. Focusing on this is the foundation of your business. Hopefully you have a clear idea. Oftentimes, there are very much are businesses that are not totally clear on who they want to target or, in terms of LinkedIn, you might need to clued changes because they are certain restrictions on how you can target people. So something to want to think about when you are thinking about being proactive in your outreach on LinkedIn is who are your favorite past clients, who did you get the best results for comedy love working with, what do you love doing that you would do even if you were not paid to do it, these questions will get you thinking about who is the type of person that you want to target on LinkedIn. For example, Melissa, we were talking to her and she said I serve women entrepreneurs and that is kind of a really broad topic. If you look for that on a massive platform like LinkedIn, you are going to have millions and millions of people. So you can it's down to get a lot more specific. We start talking to her and we said can we get more specific about this and are your women doors writers or web designers, do they own physical store, what is the specific niches, can you bring it down, what type of women entrepreneurs are you getting the best results for. If you think about it, who are the best case studies, the people that really sing your praises? When we dug down with that, she realized that I serve women entrepreneurs who are freelance wedding photographers

 which was a lot better a market for me and when she targeted down and it's down into that, you can target more precisely on LinkedIn. You can do a search, look for wedding photographers, and a popped up a bunch of different results, plenty of results, and then you can narrow it even further by geography. So number one is creating a powerful, clear profile for yourself be clear on exactly who you want to target. And the third critical piece which I will tighten here pretty deep on this one is creating copywritten direct response fired messaging and follow-up and you want to lead with a give. Let's take a look at a few examples of bad outreach messaging and then we will also give you some examples of some good outreach messaging. So some examples of bad outreach messaging, it's a boilerplate stock outreach message with no customization whatsoever. These other ones you probably get all the time. I would like to add you to my professional network pickets not very compelling. It doesn't say yes, I really need to connect with this other professional. Leading with a sales pitch, how much of a turnoff is this, everyone? Are you looking for someone to promote and advertise your valuable podcast? Then you are in the right place. I'm not too sure what that means. Promote podcasting client satisfactions are always my top priority. I always try to provide you best services. This sounds like something you just copied and pasted some boilerplate thing and stuck it in a message and sent it out to people. Do you think this is effective? Absolutely not. It's a complete waste of time. Here's another one also. It's another one where someone just reaching out, trying to get some business that way. Asking for a favor before you have earned it, here is an example where someone reached out and said I was wondering whether you could show me some support by clicking follow on my company page. Here is a link to the latent page of what we do. This person is asking us to do a favor for them . If it's someone you don't know, you are in a deficit. You have not earned anything yet in order to ask that pickets certainly not a great way to ask a favor. It's like walking up to someone at a cocktail party and saying do you mind coming out across the street with me because I need to move this couch and you mind company with the couch across the street and you have not earned that yet.

 Here's another example. Hope you're having an amazing day. We are a fully in-house digital agency focusing on mobile application, branding, marketing, web design, development. They are kind of launching into it's all about them and not about you so people take a lot more interest when you ask about them. And then they bullet out all these different services they offer just in kind of spray and pray hope that this is, that they are going to find someone interested

 in one of these many different things. But it's all focused on the big and this is the first message. Forget about engaging. Imagine again, always picture this, imagine if someone walked up to you at a party and they just started saying this out loud to you. You would just be like who is this weirdo, right? So there's no reason why people should be doing this online if they would not do it off like. There's another example again, just started out good but it says I hope you and your business are doing well and surviving the summer well so it is relevant, it shows that it is particular and uses Jeremy's first name, so it is, they typed that in, and then it starts talking about the company, talks a little bit about what the company does, but not too much. And then it kind of takes a turn for the worse. It says if your facility offers either of these services, your participation in the survey, they are asking us to fill out a survey. Again, they probably do not think that this is an inconvenience or ask that it is. You are asking someone to take time out of their busy day. Everyone is busy. At the bottom, it says the survey should take five minutes. Everyone is busy. They have other things to do. Asking someone you've never met before for a favor is not a great way to start off that relationship. Here's another example of bad messaging. It's boring. As a fellow attorney, well, do they know that I am trying to connect with other fellow attorneys? You need to be more compelling for people to take time to connect and accept that. So those are kind of all the primary different reasons of why messaging , examples of bad messaging. Let's move on to some examples of some good outreach messaging.

These are various different messaging approaches we recommend. Shared connections or commonalities, having something in common, that I mentioned summer and that something in common , we are both experiencing the end of summer, MIB we are in a group together or we are both, some organization we will onto or something like that. Another is using an article approach with peers or fellow leaders. This is something that we have used extensively where you write an article about the topic that that person would love to be quoted in with thought leadership being shared. Another what is upcoming industry event. If you are a particular industry, like e-commerce, and there is an upcoming big conference that everyone goes to, it's a relevant question to reach out to people and say are you going to this upcoming conference if there's a likelihood they might be going even if they are not going but they might see it as a good opportunity to engage back with you pick another one is to request profile and feature them in a profile which is published in writing, article, or video. I have been podcasting for about seven or years now and this is a very effective strategy which is less scalable because you can only do so many of them. But interviewing someone is a tremendous tool for getting access to someone, giving them publicity is a tremendous tool for getting access to them and having opportunity to spend some time in the phone with them and then you can publish it. And you can publish it in different mediums. You can publish in writing, article, or video, different ways to do it. Another messaging approach which is good is offering a free sample. Who doesn't like free? A free sample of a product, you know, I had a guy who reached out to me, somehow realized or found out that I have a son who's in the Cub Scouts. And so he has this business that's like eight subscription box for Cub Scout related items. And he offered to send me a free box. I was like great, that's really cool and I'm excited to check that out. And so he said that to me. That's a great way to connect to people also if you have the capacity to do that. Finally, following up to those who accept the connection request but do not respond, this is really important also because, when you are proactive and you reach out to people, a lot of people would just accept the connection request but they will not respond to your outreach messages. Then you go back and you message all those people and you are much more likely to get engagement and get into a conversation with that person. Here are some good messaging examples. This is one we've used. It's very so Saint and to the point. There are a couple different elements working here. A Chris, quick question. I'm curious if you get good ROI from your podcast ? I was reaching out to a fellow podcast or. If not, what have you tried for monetizing it? I'm asking for an article I'm writing. By the way, I've written for Forbes, entrepreneur, business insider, et cetera. That's the social proof element. You don't need to have written for those publications in order to employ this strategy, but if you have other elements of social proof, something that demonstrates authority and social, it's good to include that in there. And a very easy question is the most likely to get people to respond which is why we keep question short. Here's an example of an article that I produced a while back that was employing this strategy. I interviewed, I actually knew many of these people but I did not interview all of them but I included all of them in an article called 25 professional networking experts to watch in 2015. If you Google terms around networking or networking experts, this consistently ranks near the top. What's happening here, and by the way, this is published in Forbes but you don't have to write in Forbes to do this, you are giving people thought leadership, putting them on a pedestal, putting them next to other peers that they want to be compared to. And so I got tremendous feedback from this. People were thrilled to be included in its pick it's a strategy we've used over and over again with different types of articles as well. Here's another good messaging example. It's based on the different applets we talked about. I saw you are in next written e-commerce in LA. I would love to hear what conferences you find are worthwhile so I can check them out. I've got to shop talk and I am going to retail global. I know many come to Las Vegas which is close to LA. It is just a way to engage in a conversation with someone. This is part of an outreach message to someone . They are more likely to respond and accept your connection request and more likely to engage with you , more likely to become a client or referral partner when you lead with something like this. Here's another example as well. This is my business partner, Jeremy, reaching out to someone about being a guest on his podcast. It took a couple of different follow-up messages. But ultimately, it got a positive response from him and he said let's do it, let's be a guest on here, and that was the podcast that resulted. The reason this is so powerful is it gets you access. It is the same principle if you are going to write an article or just record a casual video and put it on your LinkedIn or write an article and post it as an article on LinkedIn . You give someone exposure and publicity and that is a great way to start off our relationship. When you use strong messaging, you get prospects who are excited to connect with you. Here's an example of someone responding back and saying

 maybe we could chat and I could use some direction and input on a few things. I have people that send back their phone number. They say give me a call or they send their calendar booking link or they say are you available this afternoon. This can happen in every different type of field. If you think they are likely to respond to this, there's probably someone who is. Maybe it does not, it never works 100% of the time, but we have seen his work with see sweet executives of companies with 10,000 employees pick we as you work with franchise business owners, people that own 10 Chick-fil-A's or 20 McDonald's or their dizzy, very successful and they will respond to this type of outreach messaging. It can be quite effective. We are getting shorter time. Follow-up is essential. With follow-up, you will get a much better result from this. I was looking at elected account this morning I realized that I had dozens and dozens of incoming messages from people that just said so-and-so is a connection and that means they accepted a connection request but there is no engagement. There's no conversation back and forth. So if you go and message all of these people except the

 action request, now you have the ability to have more of a conversation with them because when you send an outreach message to people, you are limited to 295 characters. That's a very short. There's not much you can say but you have to ? your interest and attention in a very short message.

 It's critical that you continue to follow up with people who accepted connection request.

 I went to three different steps but there's one bonus step which is of equal importance to these other three. Just to recap, create a powerful, clear file for yourself. You want to make sure you have a clear profile. If you do not, people are going to be leaking through and you are going to draw them to your page and they are going to take a look and they are not going to be sure you are or why you should connect they are going to just drop through and not connect with you. Being clear on exactly who you want to target which we talked about different strategies for that and creating copywritten, direct response inspired messaging and follow-up, so that bonus step is consistency. You must be consistent. That is the chore to the roller coaster affect that I talked about earlier. When you get busy with a client work, you have got to keep doing it. When you are slow with client work, you have got to keep doing it. You have got to put a system in place, either you doing this to someone else doing it for you so that you are constantly building relationships work when is the time to stop building relationships? Never. You should always grow your network with new referral partners, new clients, new people, getting to know new people, it is the spice of life. This is the biggest problem people get busy until to proactive outreach and so they are doomed to go back to the roller coaster and when you are consistent, you get

 charts like this where it goes from hardly anything, moving up and up and up and these are the views, these are people checking out your profile, these are people who check you out and learn about you and are more engaged and interested in connecting with you, and then this is the inbox. You start getting all of these consistent incoming messages, people engaging with you , and that is ultimately what it is all about. Okay? So that's it for me. We are here for questions. And happy to take any questions people have about this.

Sounds great. Will go ahead and move into the Q&A segment. During the remaining time, we will do our best to address as many questions as possible. We typically have many more questions than time allows us to address. I would like to encourage you, if we do not get to your question during the segment, connect with a SCORE meant when you can work in with as many as you need for as often as you need. Also, we will be sending everyone a PowerPoint presentation after today's session is over so a little bit later on today. And it does include John's contact information. Should you need further assistance, those are two great options for you to connect with SCORE . With that, let's go ahead and jump into these questions . Our first question , this comes to us from Thomas that LinkedIn seems to be good for B2B but what about B2c , is there a better platform to use? >> I should mention that I will send out, and a lot of times people ask about the tablets, emails, messaging that we mentioned in this presentation, so those of you who opted in to hear from you, I will send copies to you. I think LinkedIn can work for B2C. It's definitely better for B2B. I would focus on referral partners and strategic partners. You have to do deep thinking about who are my ideal referral partners and target those. I would write an article profiling whoever that is if it's realtors or accounts or CPAs, if it's private schools, whatever the business is referring the most to you, those are the ones that you want to build more relationships with. >> How do you recover from bad outreach messaging? You've already done it wrong and how do you say phase into it right?

It happens to all of us. Don't worry. I wouldn't worry about it. I would move on. There are a lot of fish in the sea. We all have something that's a little embarrassing or we are not part of it or something like that so I wouldn't be yourself up about it. Dust yourself off and move on and do it better next time. >> Why go through LinkedIn when you can just pick up the phone or send a personal email to connect easily? >> A lot of people don't answer phones today. Cold calling is not as effective as it used to be. As far as sending email, that can work if you have their email address. A lot of times, you don't. When you see people's profiles on LinkedIn, you need to connect with them in order to get the contact info and email address because otherwise you cannot email them. The other reason is simply is just a huge, massive platform similar to other social media platforms out there. LinkedIn has 300 million active users on their every month which is triple what it was a year ago. People don't realize there's a huge amount of growth and a lot of opportunity out there . If you are diligent and disciplined about using it, it's a great way to connect with people. A lot of people use the inbox and respond to messages they receive on LinkedIn. It's a great way to cut through noise and maybe they get 1000 emails in a day and are not going to respond to the email but they will go through the LinkedIn box and maybe I'm more likely to respond to you there.

What do you do when you are starting and do not have social proof? There's different types of social proof out there. You can have social proof in terms of your past experience, in terms of testimonials who have done work with you. That's a big one. I would just find people you can do free work for or reduced rate work for in a testimonial so you can have more social proof to demonstrate. And can also be from your membership in certain organizations, blowing to an organization could be social proof in your particular industry as well. So you could try a couple of those different strategies.

This is regarding good messaging and bad messaging to reach out on people to people on Lincoln. What would you advise being a magic number for the total sentence of the first email. If the email is too long they me lose the reader . is too short, you may not be able to get the point across.

If you send a connection request on LinkedIn and you add a note to the message, you've got 295 characters that you can use in order to reach out to them, it does need to be supershort. So you have to keep it under that number. It's kind of like the length of two tweets. Keep it short and succinct and to the point and benefit focused. Focus on a benefit to the recipient and don't focus on what you can get from that person. If you do that, then you are more likely to get a response from someone. Once you get a response,

 you can engage in longer conversations and send longer messages back and forth. I still would not send us a long message initially. Once you get a first-degree connection, you can message them . it doesn't mean I would turn around and send a book. I would maybe baby step into it and send longer and longer messages. >> How can you use LinkedIn to market yourself for your site business if you already have a LinkedIn page for your unrelated professional career.?

Some clients have had problems with that. They do not want to next as messages or they are worried about the employer that is going to look into it and what about the site business you're doing as well, that's kind of a branding issue and ultimately, I think, if you are effective in your outreach messaging and you explain the reason for the outreach messaging, people are going to check out your sales page, your profile page to check you out and see what you are about. But if the outreach explain clearly why you are reaching out, then you are still going to get people who will respond and who will connect with you. I had a city manager who reached out to me the other day and it wasn't really clear why that person was reaching out to me. I did not know why they were reaching out so that's why it is really critically important to include a message to explain why you are reaching out to pick if you do that, that should help with some of the ambiguity. >>

 What are your thoughts about texting? Do you feel this is a good way to connect and stay connected?

My business partner is huge into texting. I'm not as begin to it. But I will say, I saw a statistic the other day, I think it was 95% or 98% of tax are opened within three seconds. Maybe it was 30 seconds. It was really fast. The open response rate is tremendous. I think it is a very effective means pick it will not work for everyone. Not everyone will want to text message with you. But to the extent that you can get more people to connect with you and give you their number so you can text with them, it can be highly effective. I would not overdo it. I that happened to me where someone gets my phone number and then they are sending me marketing focused messages pick in that case, I message them back and say can you email me these types of messages and I don't want to receive it as a text message. For me, it's a different kind of medication. But yes, I think that text messaging is quite effective. It's a little more difficult to manage because you have limits in terms of automation . It's limits in terms of how many

 mass messages you can send pickets limited. It's more one-to-one. If you are okay with that, it can be more effective. >>

 Can you give an example of how someone reaches out if they do not feel like they have anything to give yet? >>

 I am a big advocate of the article strategy because that is a gift in itself. When you offer to give someone publicity, you offer to give them exposure and you offer to put them in a piece of felicity that puts them alongside their respected peers and that's a huge gift. I did it with career officers and I wrote an article

 about career officers at universities. When I published this thing, it had about 40 different career officer directors in it and I put it on LinkedIn and I posted on LinkedIn and I tagged all of them and they were thrilled. They were so excited to be included in this article with so many of their peers and it exhibited the thought leadership and anyone can do that. You can use the strategy. You do not need to have any special skills or anything like that pick that is what I would recommend is using that strategy. >> How fast do you send the follow-up message after a new connection is made? >> I don't think it really matters pick if you happen to see it come in and you are right there and then, you could respond right there. I don't think it's quite like dating where you should wait two or three days before calling her back kind of thing. So I would recommend , yes, you can send it right away. I don't think there's any reason not to do that.

Can you recommend or how much time would you recommend interacting on LinkedIn, how much time per day? >> It is rare that the problem is people spending too much time on Lincoln. I think the bigger problem is people not spending enough. Just disciplined about setting aside some time. It could be 15 minutes a day. It could be 30 minutes a day. In many ways, it can substitute for other things that you are probably doing. We had a client who recently called up and he was, he travel to a city to speak . This is a client who frequently complains about not having enough time to get everything done. I was like you left to go speak, he left yesterday, you are out of the office yesterday, today, and tomorrow and you are flying back tomorrow and all of this is for a 20 minute speech so you have to evaluate are the things you are doing now the best use of your time? You have to leave your family go across town in the evening, you go to this event and then you come back and it's a couple of hours and you have three or four conversations and maybe none of them pan out versus targeted proactive outreach targeting your ideal prospects and ideal referral partners. What we found is that this is a better use of your time. Even if you spend 30 minutes a day, if you orient yourselves toward that activity and you cut out some other things that are time-consuming and not yielding good results, then ultimately, it is a really good use of your time. >> Before you text someone, do you need to ask for permission from them to use their number?

Assuming you have gotten it asking for their number, then no. It depends on how you attain in a. You've got the number some other way, then yes, you would need permission, but most of the time, at least this is the way we do it, we are usually emailing with someone or we are messing with someone on the LinkedIn platform or through Facebook messenger or something like that and we would just say what is your number so we can give you a call or maybe you're setting up an appointment for were texting this or if they've given you a number, they have given you consent. >> What are your thoughts about investing in LinkedIn premium? Do you recommend this for small businesses? Is there additional connection value?

We use sales navigator. I have not actually used LinkedIn premium. I'm not familiar with all of the different options out there. There are a number of different ones. I can speak to sales navigator which I think is about $80 a month or $70 a month if you pay month-to-month and you get a discount. If you pay for the year, you get a discount pick there are a number of different advantages to it. You can do more searches . If you have a premium account, you can do more specific searches. You can filter it by degree of connection, you can filter it by title and company angiography and you can filter it by engagements so it's a really huge value of sales navigator what you can do a big search with all these different filters and it will say 80,000 results and it will also say posted within the last 30 days and that will narrow it down to 12,000 results or whatever number it is. And that is a huge timesaver because those are people that are more active on LinkedIn because LinkedIn does have a lot of people who set up their account 5 years ago, 15 years ago and they never touch it. If you said proactive messages out to those people as well, then it is a little bit of a waste of time because you will never get a response from those people. If you pay for sales navigator, not only can you talk more precisely, but you will also be able to make sure that you reach out to people that are already engaged on the platform which means that you are more likely to get a response which means that you are spending your time more wisely. So I would recommend, I can recommend sales navigator. It has to be worth your while if that is within your budget.

Do think presence on several social media platforms is a must for small businesses or is it best to only concentrate on one?

There are some who say you need to be everywhere all the time. I do not agree with that. I think you will stretch yourself too thin. Setting up a profile one-time is one thing. But I think you really to focus and double down on something that works for you. Find whatever that thing is that works for you. I think I set up a profile of interest years ago. I have not logged in in a long time. I'm certainly not going there every day and posting. If you have a big social media team, employees working for you, you can create content and then spread it out across multiple different platforms, that's a different matter but that is not the case for a lot of people. If you are thinking should I be on all these different platforms, I would say no, I do not think so. I think you should find one that works for you, that works for your industry and your line of work and that is what you should really focus on and put your efforts and energy into that. Once you have mastered that, you can branch out and tackle another one. >> In regard to putting repeatable systems in place that work for doing outreach, even when you are busy, can you offer a suggestion for how best to do this? >> I think it boils down to it is not any one thing that is going to be the perfect solution. There are a lot of different moving pieces. I did my best to sum it up in 40 minutes. There are certainly other areas that I did not cover. For example, one area we are big believers in is using surveys as part of this outreach to filter down, especially when you are doing the article outreach strategy that I was talking about, you take people and put them , you ask them to complete a survey to be included in article and that's an additional filtering mechanism which helps to identify the most qualified leads and referral partners for you. To answer your question, it is not any one thing. It is a lot of different things, a lot of different moving pieces on the being and working together. It also boils down to the last piece which I mentioned which is consistency, being consistent and disciplined and continuing to do it and continuing to do it even when you are busy and we have other things that are getting in the way because that is what is going to continue to move the ball for your business.

Thank you also much for all your great questions today. If we did not have a chance to address your questions during this live session, we encourage you to connect with a SCORE mentor after today's webinar . Mentors can assist you further with applying the strategies and further with your business needs. As a reminder, a link to the recording of this session will be sent in a postevent email. We are going to send that out in just a couple of hours. On behalf of SCORE, I would like to thank you all for attending today and

 I will give a very big thank you to John Corcoran for presenting with us. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much.

 Our next SCORE light webinar is next Thursday, Fairbury seven, hot businesses, market, and trends for 2019. It will expose what business trends you should incorporate into your company, what markets are driving sales, and how to propel your small business. Thank you, again, everyone. We hope you have a great rest of your day. We will see you next time.

[ event concluded ] >>