

**BUSINESS EYE**

# Boosting customers

WRITTEN BY

**ALEX PRATT**



Founder of Serious Readers in Birtton and chairman of Institute of Directors South

www.bucksheald.co.uk  
@bucks\_heald

**T**his usual drivel I am about to share with you is being crafted in Scotland where I'm trying to drum up some new customers and thinking about different ways of finding more of them,

I'm writing in the context of the European elections in which we are all offered the chance to vote tomorrow. I have been observing the various runners and riders in so far as how they are promoting themselves.

Without getting into the pol-

itics, one new party has a single message and has shot ahead in the polls. Another new party has a more nuanced approach and is predicted to do much less well.

The established parties are suffering and are predicted to do less well where they are unable to promote a clear simple offer.

So, this is the first lesson in finding customers today. We need to be clear who we are here to serve, and our message needs to be unambiguous and crystal clear or it will simply not punch through the pounding marketing message background noise in which we now all exist.

Here are a few tips that I've picked up recently that might help you find more customers for less, and sometimes for free.

First, LinkedIn has great organic reach and is a great way of creating a beautiful stand-out melody above the crackle.

The trick is to post great content that people will love and

will share with their contacts.

Great quality useful content builds the opening to relationships and creates awareness among many suspects, some of whom will become prospects and later customers.

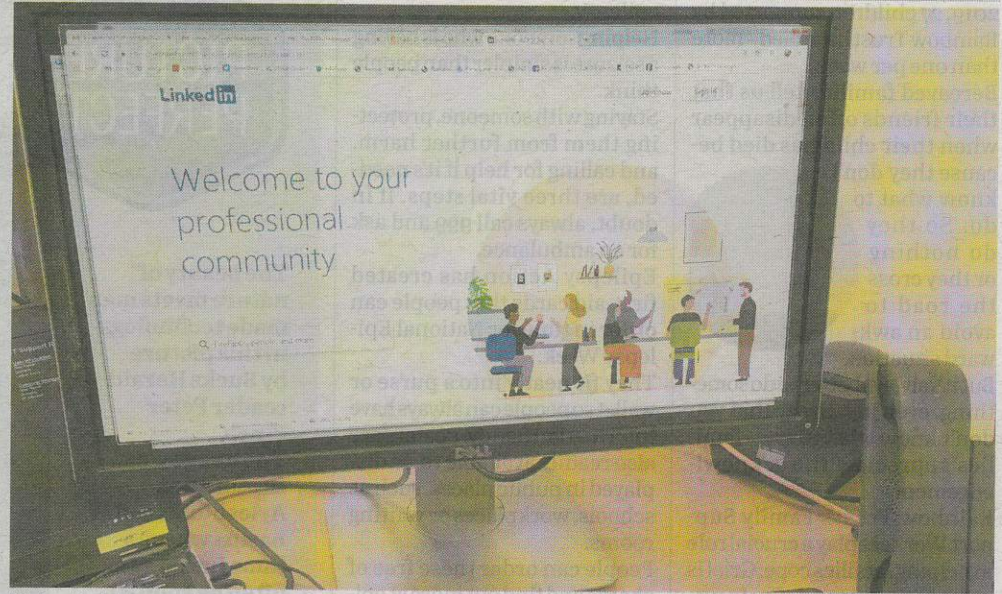
Don't ask for sex on the first date. Be interesting. Be funny. Be useful. Give away great advice. Give and you will receive (later).

The reason LinkedIn is better than other social media platforms is that you don't have to pay for the organic reach. Why not give it a go?

The chances are LinkedIn will want to charge you to post content in future as it follows the path of the other networks, so make hay while entrance to the field remains free.

Newspaper and magazine print readership may be dwindling, but it's still a big market with a lot now reading online, so don't ignore them.

One great way to work with them is to run reader offers by



**LinkedIn is better than some other social media platforms as there is no fee involved ... at the moment**

perhaps running a competition. Not only do you get in print and get all that promotion for free, but for the cost of a product you also get the entry details which is a rich pool of people to

whom you can market.

Finally, it's worth partnering with a well networked, well connected ally who is already in touch with your customer group and to work with them

by giving them something free that adds value to their offer, but brings you customers because they do all your promotion for you. These are just a few ideas. Good luck.