

## 12 Page Leave Behind

### Research

The client brief showed data comparing the percent of people A18-24 who say they would consider Indeed, LinkedIn or ZipRecruiter when looking for their next job, and share of consideration among these 3 job sites in the US. While Indeed may be the #1 job site in the world overall, LinkedIn is making small gains against them. However, LinkedIn also faces aggressive competition from ZipRecruiter. The brief touched on a few challenges that LinkedIn is facing with the target audience, A18-24, post-pandemic. The oversharing on LinkedIn<sup>1</sup> has caused tension for the platform, such as recruiters using other platforms to recruit Gen-Z talent<sup>2</sup>. With the challenge being to increase unaided consideration (UAC) among US A18-24 by at least 5 percentage points by the end of 2023, we jumped right into conducting research to uncover Gen-Z's feelings towards LinkedIn.

Through talking to 8 different individuals that fit in the audience about their thoughts regarding LinkedIn and conducting secondary 4C's (consumer, client, culture and category) research, we discovered that one thing comes to mind when Gen-Z thinks of LinkedIn: social media. It's not seen as a black and white fit in the category of "job seeking platform." Because of its profile and posting features, LinkedIn is the most akin to a social media platform out of its category. Post-pandemic, LinkedIn users began to share more personal posts, making this association even stronger. Through our conversations, it was clear that there were also a few other associations that came along with LinkedIn's social-media-like quality: inauthenticity, fakeness, superficiality, and comparison. Our interviews revealed that users felt like the posts from their peers were inauthentic and fake. Their peers' posts have this air of professionalism that feels superficial. Being able to see other's profiles and posts about what they were doing to further their careers led to comparison. For some interviewees, it was so overwhelming that they avoided looking at others' profiles or going on their LinkedIn feed.

We knew we couldn't change the features of LinkedIn, and despite the associations Gen-Z has with them, those features are what set LinkedIn apart from its competition. So we dug back into our 4C's research. Contrary to what interviewees said about not liking the social media aspects of LinkedIn, social media was actually a useful tool in the job searching process for Gen-Z. Nearly half of Gen-Z has applied to jobs they found on social media<sup>3</sup>. This provides evidence that they are open to using it as a tool within their job searching wheelhouse.

Another interesting thing that we found occurring in culture was the changing definition of professionalism. "The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted workplaces and changed how people view professionalism in the workforce," said Nadia Ibrahim-Taney, a University of Cincinnati professor whose research focuses on workplace professionalism<sup>4</sup>. It's empowered people to open up more about their personal lives.

---

<sup>1</sup> NYTimes, 09/16/2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/business/linkedin-overshare.html>

<sup>2</sup> YPulse Daily, 09/20/2022, <https://www.ypulse.com/newsfeed/2022/08/18/recruiters-are-ditching-linkedin-and-looking-to-tiktok-and-instagram-for-gen-z-talent-instead/>

<sup>3</sup> PR Newswire, 08/23/2022, <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/nearly-half-48-each-of-gen-z-and-millennials-with-work-experience-have-applied-to-jobs-they-found-via-social-media-301610609.html>

<sup>4</sup> UC News, 04/20/2022, <https://www.uc.edu/news/articles/2022/04/pandemic-has-changed-how-people-view-professionalism.html>

This change clearly manifested itself on LinkedIn, with the general increase in oversharing and personal posts on the site. Yet, from talking to interviewees, it was apparent that they still felt they had to fit their profile and posts into this cookie-cutter idea of professionalism. Our strategy was born out of these tensions.

### **Strategy on a Page**

*LinkedIn* is struggling to fight off both established and new competitors, particularly Indeed and ZipRecruiter, among adults 18-24, especially those who are not college educated.

*The problem is* that Gen-Z users feel overwhelmed by LinkedIn due to the social media aspects of the site because it leads to users comparing themselves to their peers.

*However*, the definition of what is professional is changing. It's becoming more acceptable to be more open about who you are outside of the office. As a result, recruiters are increasingly looking for what's unique about a candidate.

*We need to* highlight that LinkedIn's social aspect is what allows users to show a little personality in this new era of professionalism.

*So that* consumers feel empowered to use LinkedIn to show who they are beyond their resume.

*Helping to* increase unaided consideration (UAC) among US A18-24 by at least 5 percentage points by the end of 2023.

### **Rationale**

We believe our strategy will help LinkedIn overcome Gen-Z's negative associations with the social-media-esque of the website. Gen-Z sees the posting and profiles as a negative thing not *just* because it clogs up their feeds. Really, at the heart of the problem, is that it leads to comparison. It's overwhelming to be able to see everything your peers are doing, especially in a space as intimidating as the workforce. While we can't change the features of LinkedIn, we can change Gen-Z's perception of these features and that is exactly what our strategy aims to do. We're showing that users no longer need to mold themselves to their pre-pandemic definition of professionalism. They now have the ability to showcase more of who they are. And in the job searching process, this can be a huge positive, especially for A18-24. When you're early in your career, it's normal to be plagued by thoughts that you're not good enough and that you don't have enough experience. Showing who you are beyond the resume can actually help you stand out among the crowd. We're aiming to flip Gen-Z's perception of LinkedIn's social media aspects from a comparison tool to an empowerment tool.

## Comms Framework

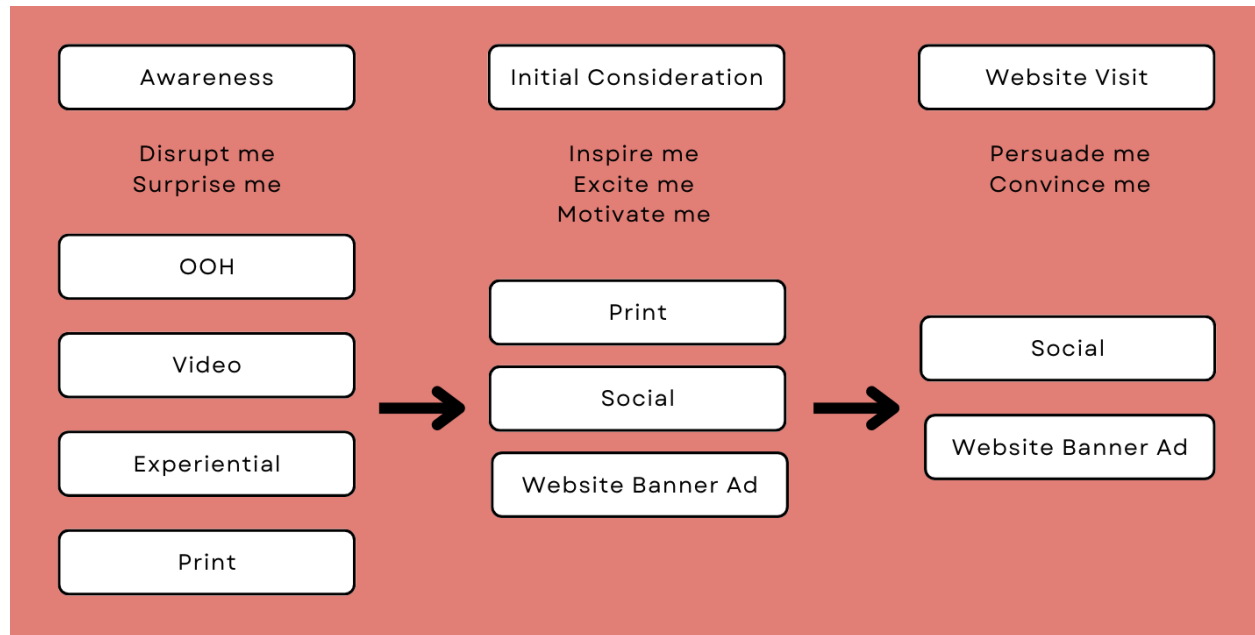
	Barrier	Comms Task	Channels
Awareness	People don't feel like they fit in to the "professional" work environment	What's considered professional is changing	OOH, Video, Experiential
Consideration	LinkedIn is evolving beyond a job searching platform	Job searching is about more than what's on paper	Social, website
Website	LinkedIn is cluttered with personal posts	Showing who you are beyond the resume will actually help get you your job	Social, website

At the awareness level, LinkedIn faces the barrier that people within the A18-24 category don't feel like they fit into the "professional" work environment. At such a young age, when people don't feel like they fit in or have the qualifications for the "professional" work environment, they tend to turn to finding jobs other ways - friends and family connections or help wanted signs. This insecurity prevents people from using job searching platforms because the sites are a part of that professional work environment. So, we're going to show them that what's considered professional is changing and that they belong in spaces like LinkedIn through our out of home, video and experiential advertising.

At the consideration level, LinkedIn is faced with the barrier that they have evolved past a job searching platform. LinkedIn's competitors, Indeed and ZipRecruiter, are much more straightforward. Post-pandemic, LinkedIn seems more like a social media than other sites. To overcome this barrier, we're going to show that job searching has evolved past what's just on paper, conveying that that's why LinkedIn's evolved platform is the best fit for their job searching process. We'll execute this messaging through social media and websites.

At the website level, LinkedIn is posed with the problem of personal-post-clutter. People's personal posts crowd out job-search related posts. However, we're going to show that these personal posts can actually be a benefit to the user, especially for the A18-24 group who are at the beginning of their career. The comms task of showing that who you are beyond the resume will help you stand out will be carried out on social media and websites.

## Campaign Ecosystem



At the awareness level, we're aiming to disrupt the target audience through print, video, experiential and out of home advertising. We want to stop them in their tracks and surprise them with the messaging that the professional is changing, putting LinkedIn on their radar.

In the initial consideration phase, our goal is to inspire and excite our target audience using print, social and website banner advertising. We want to show that LinkedIn can empower them in the job searching process, motivating them to check out the website.

When users visit the website, this is where we can hook them. We want to convince them that LinkedIn is the place where they can show who they are beyond their resume and that it'll help them land a job. It'll persuade the target A18-24 that LinkedIn is the best job-searching platform, increasing UAC among them the next time they go searching for a job.

## Creative Brief

*Goal:* Increase unaided consideration (UAC) among US A18-24 by at least 5 percentage points by the end of 2023.

*Target Audience:* Young adults aged 18-24

*Problem:* Young adults 18-24 feel overwhelmed by LinkedIn due to the social media aspects of the site because it leads to users comparing themselves to their peers.

*Insight:* The definition of what is professional is changing. It's becoming more acceptable to be more open about who you are outside of the office. As a result, recruiters are increasingly looking for what's unique about a candidate.

*Single-minded proposition:* Show what's beyond the resume with LinkedIn.

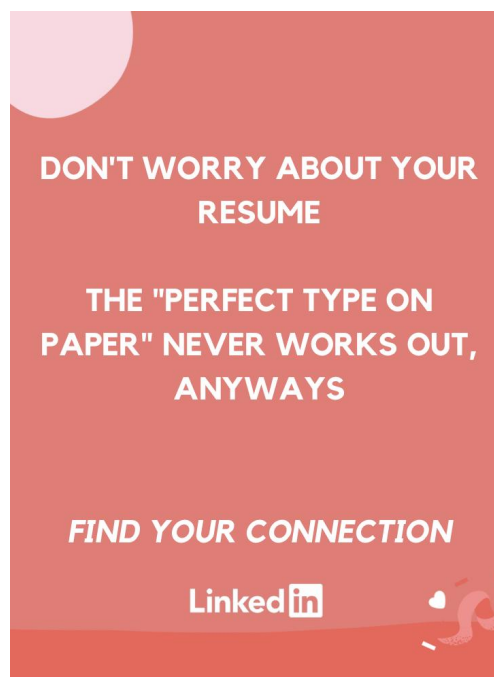
*Action:* LinkedIn wants users to feel empowered using the site to show a little personality.

## **Creative**

### Intro

With the goal in mind of giving potential LinkedIn users permission to show their personality, we wanted to convey through the campaign that the personal is professional. A lot of people think they have to put on an act to show up as professional, but you can show up as exactly who you are and still be professional. Actually, it's better when you show up as who you are, much like the age old dating advice, "just be yourself." When it comes to dating, 18-24 year olds are very familiar with the current internet-centric dating scene. These people are online more than any other age group and use apps for a number of activities, including both dating and job searching. With this campaign, we want to encourage young people to "find their connection" professionally with LinkedIn.

### Print



The print ad is playing on the well known colloquialism of someone's "type on paper" in dating culture. It's equating the perfect "type on paper" to the perfect resume. The print ad could be displayed in out of home settings, such as bus stops, subways, and more.

### TV Script

Concept: The viewer is seeing the perspective of an attendee at a "speed dating" event with parallels to the job finding process. Boring men in the same suit keep sitting down across from the camera and asking boring/typical job interview questions. Finally 'LinkedIn' sits down and actually lets their date show off their personality and have fun.

*The text, "job hunting can be like dating" appears on screen. First Man sits down across from us (either wearing a nametag that says 'other job sites' or introduces himself as such).*

#### **First Man:**

"So, tell me about yourself." Pauses for a second. "I don't actually care about that, tell me about your education."

#### **Second Man:**

"Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"

#### **Third Man:**

"What is your greatest weakness?"

*Finally, LinkedIn comes to sit down at the table. He wears something different than the other men, something that shows his personality. The iconic LinkedIn dark blue will be incorporated into his look. He's a lot friendlier/more personable than the other previous men.*

#### **LinkedIn:**

"I'm so excited to meet you. I saw that you just won a ballroom dancing competition. That's so cool. How did you get into that?"

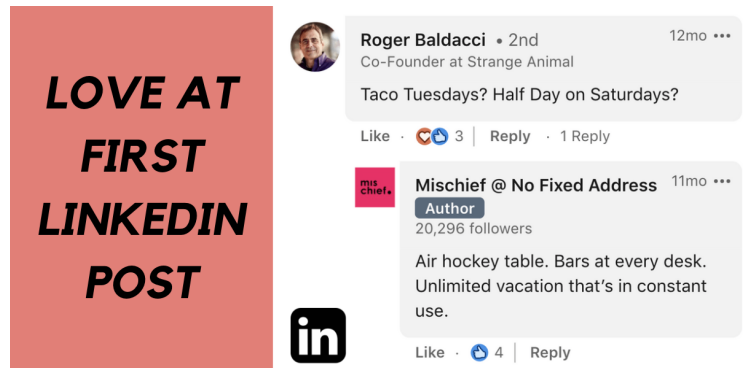
*We finally hear from the date for the first time, and it sounds like they are finally having a good time:*

#### **Date:**

"Oh yeah! I actually started a few years ago when... -"

*The sound fades out slowly and we can tell that the two are hitting it off. "Don't settle. Find your connection." with the LinkedIn logo appears on screen.*

## OOH



Our OOH will showcase different “love stories” on a digital billboard. It will display LinkedIn posts where companies and employees bond over things that are considered “less” professional, showing what the company and the employee have in common outside of traditional work.

## Dating App Advertisement



This advertisement will appear on Hinge. Because dating culture underlies our creative idea and executions, we thought it would be opportune to advertise on a dating app. Dating apps are popular among Gen-Z as well, so it's a great place to reach them.

Experiential



The experiential aspect of our campaign will feature two elements. The first is a partnership with Hinge to make a Hinge profile for LinkedIn. Hinge users within a 10 mile radius of LinkedIn headquarters in Sunnyvale, California can match with LinkedIn, and can receive an invite to the second element of the experiential campaign - a LinkedIn “speed networking” event. Event attendees will participate in a “speed dating” style event but with recruiters from local companies, along with a resume workshop that will explain how to make a resume that stands out while also highlighting the individual. We could also extend this experience virtually, by expanding the radius of Hinge users that LinkedIn’s profile will reach and holding the speed networking event over zoom.



Instagram

LinkedIn Instagram Post



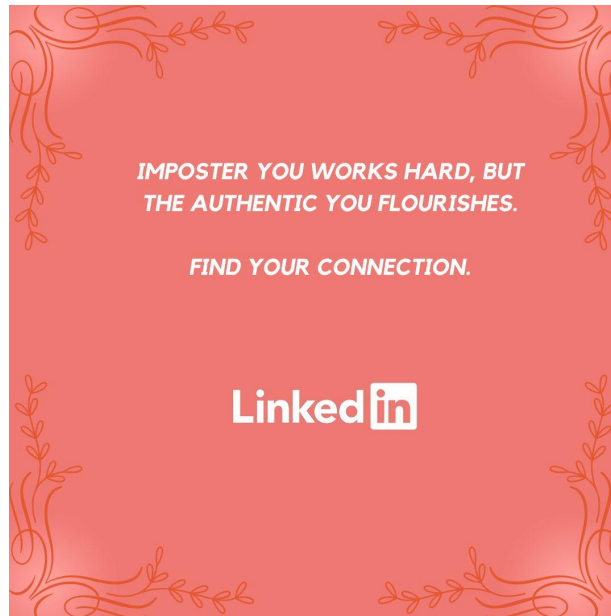
This general instagram post is targeting both college and non-college students. When looking for a job, Gen-Z feels they have to present a different person than who they truly are in order to get it. This ad is empowering Gen-Z to be themselves, even when looking for a job.

## LinkedIn Instagram Story



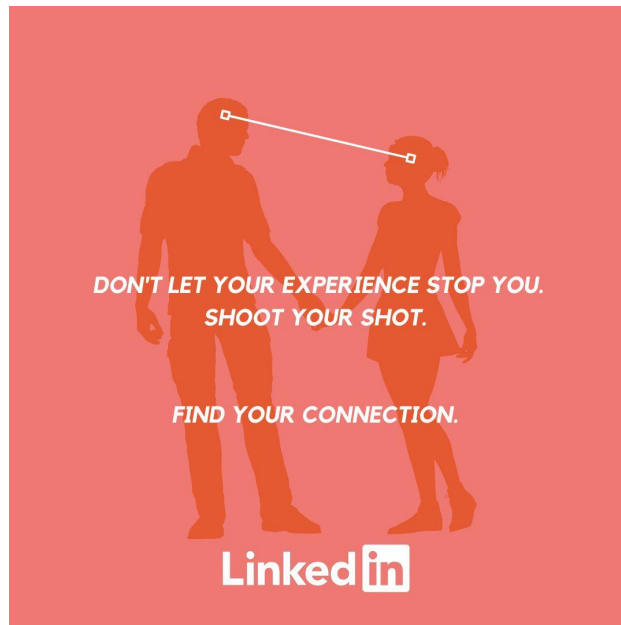
This advertisement idea came from a popular internet meme. The “You versus the one they tell you not to worry about” meme matched our underlying dating theme for LinkedIn’s Instagram story.

## LinkedIn Instagram Ad targeting college-educated individuals



This Instagram ad specifically targets college students. It’s common for a college student to have imposter syndrome when transitioning to the job world, but this ad reminds college students they can be themselves and still land the job they want.

## LinkedIn Instagram Ad targeting non-college educated individuals



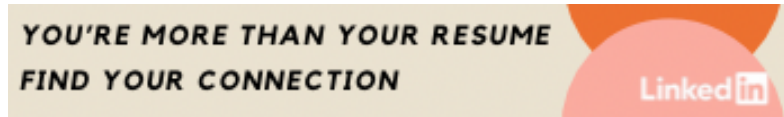
This instagram advertisement targets non-college students. Even if they don't have a college degree, they should continue to use LinkedIn to "shoot their shot," a phrase common in Gen-Z's lingo, and find connections.

## Twitter



These are examples of what LinkedIn could tweet. All 3 of them play into sarcasm and humor, which appeals to Gen-Z's internet speak.

## Banner Ad



The banner ads are meant to spread awareness and gain traffic to LinkedIn from Gen Z users. Using data-based collection and cookies the users agree to, we can target the A18-24 audience specifically. It uses playful patterns and bold colors to capture people's attention.

We will be placing the banners on different websites to target college students and non college students separately, using data from MRI Simmons<sup>5</sup>. Below are example sites that the targeted banner ads will appear on.

Targeting College Students	Targeting Non College Students
Allrecipies.com (25% more likely)	Cars.com (23% more likely)
CBS.com (12% more likely)	CBSsports.com (11% more likely)
CNN.com (25% more likely)	Coupons.com (21% more likely)
ESPN.com (20% more likely)	Gamespot.com (44% more likely)
Washingtonpost.com (55% more likely)	Movies.com (17% more likely)

---

<sup>5</sup> MRI Simmons,  
[https://sakai.unc.edu/access/lessonbuilder/item/3594910/group/8d3602e6-61b7-451d-a32a-64be8a0749e8/shared%20team%20materials/A18-24MRI\\_Simmons.xlsx](https://sakai.unc.edu/access/lessonbuilder/item/3594910/group/8d3602e6-61b7-451d-a32a-64be8a0749e8/shared%20team%20materials/A18-24MRI_Simmons.xlsx)