

# **DIGITAL BOOST**

power up your business

# **LINKEDIN FOR BUSINESS**



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## SECTION 1

# WHAT IS LINKEDIN?

LinkedIn is a business-orientated social networking platform, designed specifically for the business community. The functionality of the platform allows users to establish connections and build professional networks.

LinkedIn is the largest professional network on social media with over 400 million users in 200 countries.

There is a strong, engaged network of people who log on every day. There are more than 100 million monthly active users and 40% check in on a daily basis.

In order to use LinkedIn most effectively for your business it is important to consider what you want to gain from it. This will inform a strategy to ensure you are utilising the platform in the best way for your business needs.

### FIRST YOU NEED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What are your aims?
- Who do you want to connect with?
- Who do you want to monitor?
- What information do you want?
- How can you gain competitive advantage?
- What do you expect of your employees?

## SECTION 2

# HOW TO OPTIMISE YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

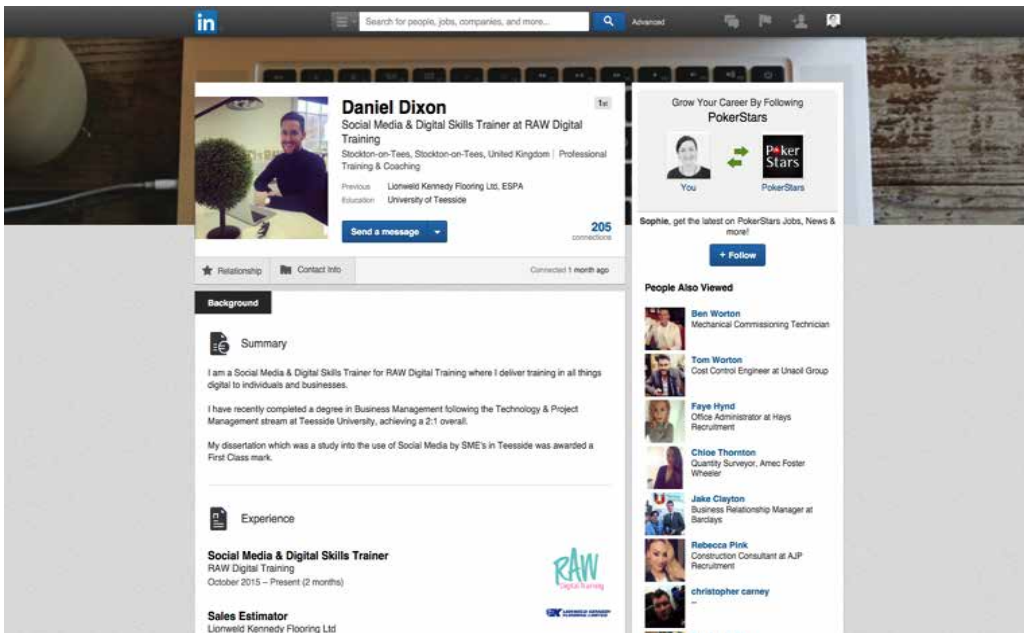
LinkedIn profiles vary in standard, and are graded with a star rating by the platform. Profile users should aim to gain 'all-star' status. In order to gain this there are certain actions to put in place.

Gaining 'all-star' status has many benefits for your page. Only around 50% of people have a completed profile, but users who do have them are 40 times more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn. The more information you include the better reach your page will have.

Your profile page is an opportunity to showcase who you are, your strengths and your experience. It should be treated like an 'elevator pitch'.

### YOUR BASIC PROFILE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Profile picture (your profile is 11 times more likely to be viewed if you include a photo)
- Name
- Job title
- Personal summary
- Background image (optional)



## TOP TIPS FOR YOUR PROFILE PHOTO:

- Appear approachable
- Make sure it is of you, and you alone
- Keep it up to date
- Look the part
- No obvious selfies

## ALL-STAR PROFILE

In order to gain 'all-star' status you must include the following within your profile:

- Your industry and location
- Your current position with description
- Two previous positions
- Your education
- Your skills (minimum of three)
- At least 50 connections

## SKILLS & ENDORSEMENTS

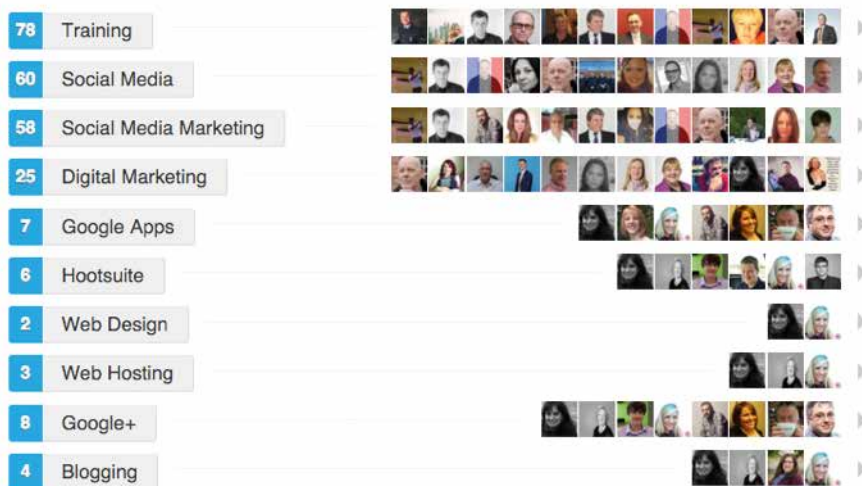
Your profile is three times more likely to be viewed if you add your skills to your page.

It's important to list only the skills you have, and only endorse others for skills you know they have and would recommend.

For organisations with more than one staff member, it is worth considering what type of endorsements are appropriate for your staff to be giving out on behalf of your organisation on LinkedIn. This means being sensitive to not revealing strategic relationships or 'trade secrets' which may jeopardise competitive advantage.

## Skills & Endorsements

### Top Skills



## PERSONALISE YOUR URL

Personalising your URL means you can include it on business cards. It is also more memorable and easier to share on other promotional material where appropriate. This can be a great way of making your LinkedIn profile easy to find for your clients.

To personalise your URL click 'edit' next to your URL on your LinkedIn profile.

**For example you could change it from:**

[www.uk.linkedin.com/pub/Kassie-eldrige/2a/748/401](http://www.uk.linkedin.com/pub/Kassie-eldrige/2a/748/401)

to

[www.uk.linkedin.com/pub/Kassie-eldrige](http://www.uk.linkedin.com/pub/Kassie-eldrige)

## SECTION 3

# COMPANY PAGES VS PERSONAL PAGES

LinkedIn has a strong emphasis on individual personal profiles and their interactions. However, it is advantageous to have a company page on LinkedIn, even if it is just a source of information for your company, including your address, website link and an overview of the products and services you offer.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER

While developing your business LinkedIn strategy, bear in mind that LinkedIn puts a stronger emphasis on individuals and their profiles than it does on company pages, so think about harnessing your own presence and your staff's presence on LinkedIn, making sure all activity is in line with your business strategy.

A personal profile allows for personal interactions and relationship building, and it is a requirement to have a personal LinkedIn account to create a company page. A company page can operate as a point of reference, providing information and signposting people to your website.

Those who follow your company page will expect to see content directly relating to your business activity, or wider industry.

As with all social media and digital marketing activities, it is important to consider how your efforts on LinkedIn can be integrated with your wider efforts on other platforms, your website and email campaigns.

**In order to maintain your profile effectively, consider the following tips:**

- Build a multimedia profile (images, links, videos)
- Include detail
- Write a concise and interesting summary
- Make connections
- Network in LinkedIn groups
- Give recommendations and endorsements to the relevant connections
- Ask for recommendations
- Keep your page organised and easy to read

## **COMPANY PAGES**

There are more than 4 million LinkedIn company pages. While LinkedIn is focused mainly around individual profiles, companies do tend to have a presence. Company pages tend to serve as a source of information whereas the more strategic relationships emerge from the interactions of individuals using their profiles to speak to other individuals.

Having a company page gives your organisation a presence on LinkedIn and allows your staff to list the company page as their employer. This means visitors to your personal profile and your staff's profiles have a clickable link to your company page, providing information about your organisation.

*LinkedIn company pages are also very SEO friendly.*

## **COMPANY PAGE BENEFITS:**

- Give your company a presence on LinkedIn
- Give you the ability to use LinkedIn paid advertising
- Link together all of your employees
- SEO friendly



## SECTION 4

# SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

### PERSONAL PROFILES

LinkedIn profiles are highly optimised for Google's search algorithm, so having a strong LinkedIn profile is beneficial for personal branding as it will help with Google ranking when people search for your name.

When you publish posts on LinkedIn your network will be notified. These posts are highly optimised for SEO, both on LinkedIn and Google.

### COMPANY PAGES

Optimise your company page SEO by including a company description using keywords and phrases throughout. Keywords should be seeded in with a natural writing style.

## SECTION 5

# RESEARCH USING LINKEDIN

LinkedIn can be a powerful research tool and can be used to search and view information on competitors, current and prospective clients, current and prospective employees, industry leaders and peers.

## SECTION 6

# PAID-FOR ADVERTS ON LINKEDIN

LinkedIn has a focused audience for business-to-business marketing and relationship building.

The platform has a wide range of powerful targeting options that can be utilised within paid advertising, allowing the user to target messaging towards specific demographics. Because all LinkedIn members list their job title, a LinkedIn user can easily target an advert towards relevant audiences.

LinkedIn also offers 'native' advertising – paying for the sponsorship of a LinkedIn post and targeting it towards the relevant audiences' timelines. This is similar to boosting posts on Facebook.

## SECTION 7

# BUILDING YOUR COMMUNITY

The LinkedIn community is made up of connections which are categorised into the degree of connection.

### 1ST DEGREE

A 1st degree connection are people who you have directly connected through the acceptance of an invitation to connect. You can send messages to 1st connections, write them recommendations, endorse them, see their updates in your LinkedIn feed, and receive notifications when they publish a post.

### 2ND DEGREE

A 2nd degree is someone who is connected to one our your 1st degree connections. You can send them an invitation by clicking 'Connect' or contact them through an InMail.

### 3RD DEGREE

A 3rd degree is someone who is connected to one of your 2nd degree connections. You can send them an invitation by clicking 'Connect'. If only the first letter of their last name is displayed, clicking Connect isn't an option but you can contact them through an InMail.

## CONNECTING TO SOMEONE YOU KNOW

Your network is made up of your 1st-degree, 2nd-degree, 3rd-degree connections, and fellow members of your LinkedIn groups.

## PEOPLE YOU MAY KNOW

People you may know will be suggested to you based on commonalities, shared connections, experiences, industry and education. Your screen will be populated once you have a some 1st degree connections.

## LINKEDIN INVITATIONS

A personalised invitation is more effective and shows genuine interest in your connection.

### Personalised

Invite Kassie to connect on LinkedIn

How do you know Kassie?

- Colleague
- Classmate
- We've done business together
- Friend
- Other
- I don't know Kassie

Include a personal note: (optional)

Hey Kassie,

I was one of the training providers on your North East project and we worked together on the Pathfinder project. I wanted to reach out and connect so I could stay in touch with you.

- James Lane

**Important:** Only invite people you know well and who know you. [Find out why.](#)

[Send Invitation](#) or [Cancel](#)

### Generic

Invite Kassie to connect on LinkedIn

How do you know Kassie?

- Colleague
- Classmate
- We've done business together
- Friend
- Other
- I don't know Kassie

Include a personal note: (optional)

I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn.

- James Lane

**Important:** Only invite people you know well and who know you. [Find out why.](#)

[Send Invitation](#) or [Cancel](#)

## AVOIDING BUSINESS RELIANCE

It's important to avoid becoming reliant upon any one feature within the LinkedIn platform. As with all social media, changes can be made to the platform and mobile app with no notice at all.

This has included the adding and taking away of different features which can change the dynamic within the platform. It is advisable for your business not to become too reliant upon specific features within LinkedIn.

## SECTION 8

# CONTENT FOR LINKEDIN

When posting content on LinkedIn consider the following:

- Share articles from credible sources
- Industry insights
- Business insights
- Share good news (business-focused, awards etc)
- Publish articles
- Avoid being 'salesy'
- Avoid anything overly political or controversial
- Maintain professional tone of voice
- Share other people's articles from Pulse

## FREQUENCY

Similarly to Facebook, LinkedIn is partially algorithmic, so not everyone you are connected with will see every post you share.

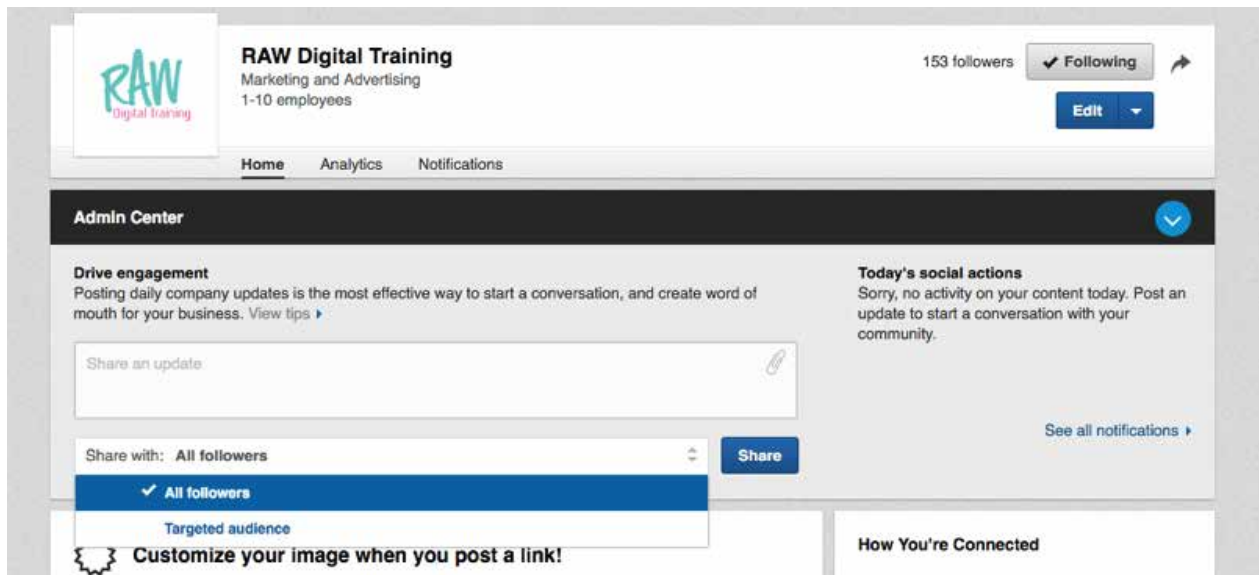
It is important to share content that is engaging as this will receive more reactions from your community and be more visible to a wider audience in the news feed area of LinkedIn.

## POSTING FROM YOUR PERSONAL PAGE

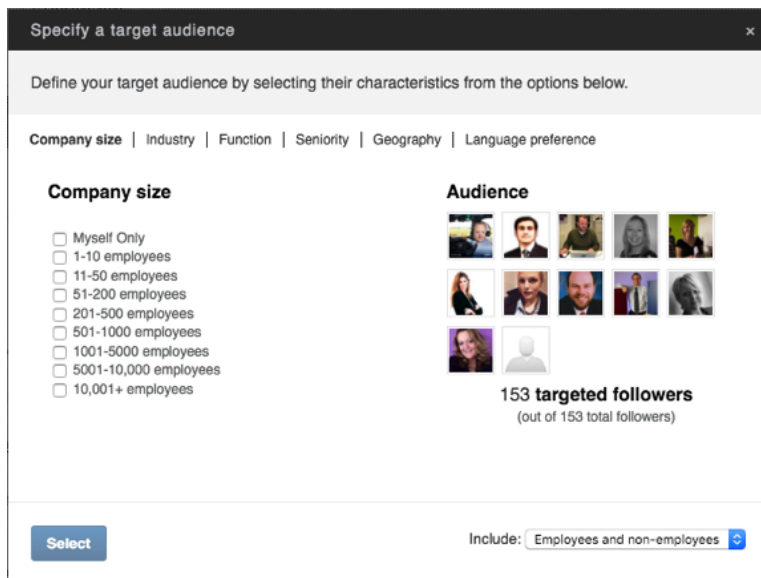
**Share an update** – This is similar to sending a tweet or posting a status on Facebook. Short nuggets of information will be sent to your followers' news feed.

**Publish a post** – A longer form post, once posted, will be shared with all of your connections, who will receive a notification. The post will also be indexed within the LinkedIn Pulse platform.

## POSTING FROM YOUR COMPANY PAGE



Targeting to a specific audience from your company page post:



## PUBLISHING WITHIN PULSE

LinkedIn Pulse collates articles written by LinkedIn members into subject areas.

Anyone with a LinkedIn account can post to Pulse, and LinkedIn is actively encouraging users to publish their thoughts to over 30 million users. With a fantastic reach, this allows users to showcase their knowledge in a specialist field to a large potential audience.

## SECTION 9

# LINKEDIN ANALYTICS

The Analytics tab provides companies with metrics and trends about their company page. Company page administrators can view rich data about their company page divided into specific sections: **Updates, Followers and Visitors.**

### UPDATES

A table showing the most recent updates and the following data.

#### PREVIEW

Shows the first few words of your post if it included text. If only an image was posted, the administrator will see the image's alt text or file type.

#### DATE

The date on which each update was posted.

#### AUDIENCE

Indicates whether the update was targeted or sent to all followers.

#### SPONSORED

Shows which campaign(s) you've sponsored an update in, if any. Learn about sponsoring updates.

#### IMPRESSIONS

The number of times each update was shown to LinkedIn members.

#### CLICKS

The number of clicks on your content, company name or logo. This doesn't include interactions (shares, likes and comments).

#### INTERACTIONS

The number of times people have liked, commented on or shared each update.

#### FOLLOWERS ACQUIRED

How many followers you gained by promoting each update.

### **ENGAGEMENT RATE**

This percentage shows the number of interactions plus the number of clicks and followers acquired, divided by the number of impressions.

### **REACH**

A graph showing the trend on the number of times your updates were seen both organically and through paid campaigns on a daily basis.

Use the dropdown on the left side of the page to change the date range.

### **ENGAGEMENT**

A graph displaying the number of times members clicked, liked, commented on and shared your content in both organic and sponsored campaigns. You can adjust the date range with the dropdown on the left.

## **FOLLOWERS**

The Followers section is divided into four areas and provides information on where followers are coming from, their demographics, trends and competitive comparisons.

### **TOTAL**

The total number of LinkedIn members following your company page. The number displayed here is updated only once a day, so it may be different from the current number on your Overview tab, which is updated in real time. Organic – Followers you gained naturally, without advertising. Acquired – Followers you gained through sponsored updates and/or company follow ads.

### **FOLLOWER DEMOGRAPHICS**

A breakdown of who's following your company using five types of demographic data. Use the dropdown menu on the right to see seniority, industry, job function, company size and more.

### **FOLLOWER TRENDS**

Showing how your number of followers has changed over time. Use the dropdown on the right to select preferred date ranges.

### **HOW YOU COMPARE**

Your number of followers compared with other companies.



## VISITORS SECTION

The visitors section contains information on visitors and viewers of your page. This information was previously available under Page Insights and was moved into the Analytics tab. It has four main areas.

### PAGE VIEWS

A graph showing how many times your Company Page was viewed. If you have a Career Page, you'll see page views for this too. You can adjust the date range with the drop-down menu.

### CAREER PAGE CLICKS

If you have a career page, this graph shows you how many times viewers clicked various elements of it. You can adjust the date range with the dropdown above.

### UNIQUE VISITORS

A graph showing how many LinkedIn members visited your page. This is similar to page views, but removes duplicate visits to a single page such as when a member refreshes your company page or navigates away from it, but returns later. You can adjust the date range with the drop-down menu.

### VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS

This is a graph showing a breakdown of who's visiting your company page using five types of demographic data: seniority, industry, function, company size.

## PULSE ANALYTICS

Pulse analytics break down the amount of views your content has had, charting peaks and troughs in engagement.

It also displays demographic information on your readership, informing you who is reading your content, where they are from, which industry and job title they have, and how they reached your content.

This then informs any future content in terms of what you write about, how you share it and who you are writing to.

## SECTION 10

# LINKEDIN GROUPS

### WHAT MAKES A GOOD LINKEDIN GROUP?

The quality of content will determine whether or not your time is worth spending within a LinkedIn group. Good quality discussions and high quality content mean you are spending your time efficiently.

The size of the group is a factor to be considered. For example, hyper-locally focused groups will not want masses of people joining, but rather a select few important contributors. On the other hand, a worldwide marketing discussion group will hope to attract thousands of marketers from around the world.

The success of a group is based on its user engagement. We join LinkedIn groups to join in and start conversations, so an active group with engaged users will mean that more quality discussions will take place.

### CREATING YOUR OWN GROUP

#### Tips:

- Invite your peers
- Stimulate relevant, industry-specific conversations
- Solve problems, answer questions
- Become an authoritative voice
- Showcase your skills without necessarily pushing your companies products or services

### JOINING OTHER GROUPS

#### Consider joining:

- Local business groups
- Industry-specific groups
- Groups with a specific purpose  
(job seekers, entrepreneurs, marketing etc)

## ENGAGING WITH GROUPS

Have a look through current 'conversations' and see if any topics fit your expertise, industry, business etc.

You often find people in groups looking for an answer to a problem, or general advice within groups. Help them find the solution or provide the solution yourself.

Within LinkedIn discussions there are lots of points of view on various topics of debate. Consider adding your opinion to the debate, and constructively offer your viewpoint.

Start conversations by posting your own content in groups, then engage with those who comment on it.

## PREMIUM ACCOUNTS

LinkedIn offer basic (free) accounts as well as various upgraded premium accounts.

A basic account is suited to creating and maintaining a professional profile online.

### **Its capabilities include:**

- Building your professional identity on the web
- Building and maintaining a large trusted professional network
- Finding and reconnecting with colleagues and classmates
- Requesting and providing recommendations
- Requesting up to five introductions at a time
- Searching for and viewing profiles of other LinkedIn members
- Receiving unlimited InMail messages
- Saving up to three searches and getting weekly alerts on those searches

A premium account is suited to job seekers, sales and talent professionals, as well as general professionals who want to get more out of LinkedIn.

**Premium account types include:**

**BUSINESS PLUS**

InMail messages, advanced search options and unlimited profile search.

**SALES NAVIGATOR**

Lead recommendations, sales leads and sales intelligence.

**RECRUITMENT LITE**

Candidate tracking – integrated hiring – recruitment specific design.

**JOB SEEKER**

For individuals looking for new opportunities. Features include comparing your profile against those of other candidates.

## SECTION 11

# USING LINKEDIN TO RECRUIT

LinkedIn acts as a strategic tool to help with recruiting new staff, enabling the user to identify, interact and hire well-suited candidates. This can be achieved through a free LinkedIn account. Alternatively, a premium account can be used for companies looking for larger intakes of new starters on a regular basis.

The network of business contacts you have built through LinkedIn connections can help in referring suitable candidates if you put out a request through LinkedIn InMail. In addition to this, a company can post an update sharing news of a new opening with details of the type of person you are looking for.

Once candidates have been identified, check out their profiles and, if interested, you can connect with them via InMail to take them to the next process.

You may also employ the search features discussed earlier in order to drill down and identify a pool of candidates using specific search features.

There are hundreds of LinkedIn groups for job seekers, so another option would be to find the most appropriate group to your vacancy and location and post job details in there also.

## SECTION 12

# BENEFITS OF LINKEDIN

The benefits of using LinkedIn include:

- Generating leads
- Starting and/or joining in conversations with your customers
- Increasing exposure – shows up in Google search results
- Increasing credibility
- Utilising a platform to show off your achievements
- Making a robust network of business connections

**Top tips to remember:**

Focus on the quality of your connections, not the quantity. Through utilising LinkedIn correctly, you can connect with people who you know or would add value to your company – therefore building a focused audience that is relevant and engaging to you and your industry.

An engaged audience can act as a viable referral network of contacts who are willing to endorse you and vice versa. Request referrals from contacts to improve your credibility.

Think of your personal LinkedIn profile as your online CV: it is out there and available to be viewed at all times, so keep it up to date. Showcase your skill set as an individual and for your organisation.

## DIGITALBOOST

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**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS GATEWAY OFFICE**

Get expert advice on this and a wide range of topics for free at your local Business Gateway office.

[bgateway.com/local-offices](http://bgateway.com/local-offices)