

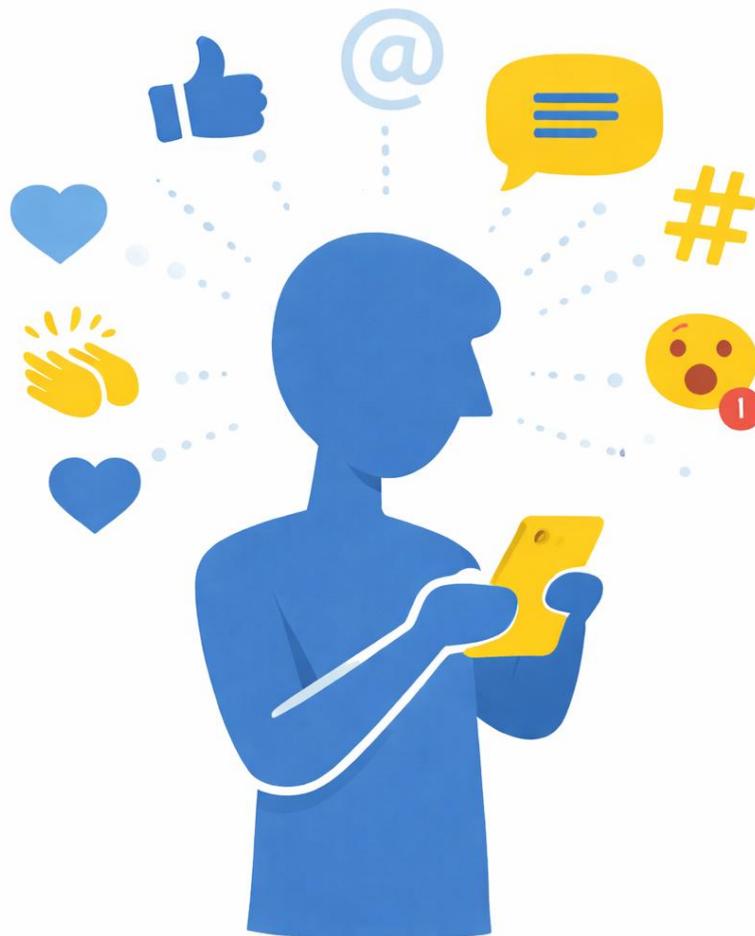
# #PostwithPurpose

## A guide to using LinkedIn to further your Interreg programme goals

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By people not working in comms; for people not working in comms

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## Introduction

#PostwithPurpose was a social media experiment, in which two Interact staff members not working in communications were challenged to see whether using LinkedIn could help them better achieve their work goals.

The guide is the outcome of this experiment.

## Premise

The #PostwithPurpose experiment was based around the following premises:

- Premise 1: Increasingly, people are using social media as their main source of information. Even information about work. To this extent, websites, emails, newsletters can also start to be seen as "traditional media"
- Premise 2: Your programme's targets groups are people too 😊
- Premise 3: Even if your programme has dedicated communication staff, they cannot communicate on everything. Also, they don't have the detailed knowledge of your field as you do
- Hypothesis:
  - It's a missed opportunity not to use social media to make your programme information more available. You can't just leave this to programme communication staff. You should get involved as well.

## Method

We chose LinkedIn as the platform to test our hypothesis. This is because currently it is the platform most used by Interreg programmes for professional exchange.

The two non-communication staff members followed the [#PostwithPurpose 30-day challenge](#). This was a menu of simple tasks prepared by one of Interact's communication experts, who also provided mentoring supporting during the 30 days.

# Findings

## The benefits

- Benefit 1: Social media can make information already in the public domain more accessible
  - By posting "highlights of" and "links to" information already in the public domain, you can make your programme materials more visible and more likely to be read.
- Benefit 2: Social media can help to shape your stakeholder's perception and attitude towards your programme
  - The way you present yourself and your organisation on social media can help to build a frame through which wider activity of the programme is perceived
  - For instance, if posts on social media create an impression of you and your programme as well-informed and proactive - this establishes a good foundation for more in-depth professional relations to be built on
- Benefit 3: Social media can be an alternative platform for exchange
  - Platforms like LinkedIn complement your programmes existing mix of events, webinars and online materials as a place for your stakeholders to share and exchange.

## The downsides

- Time
  - Being active on social media is often perceived as "free". This is not the case. Engaging, thoughtful content requires time and effort. If your programme is serious about encouraging its staff to use social media for work purposes, this needs to adequately resourced.
- Work-life balance
  - Social media is designed to be addictive. Doom-scrolling and "Like"-chasing can happen even on platforms like LinkedIn.
  - Platforms like LinkedIn can blur the lines between the personal and professional. "Am I posting on behalf of my organisation? Or myself?" This question can be hard to navigate, especially for staff not used to working in communications.
- "Fight not with monsters lest ye become a monster"

- Platforms like LinkedIn can (often fairly) be perceived as the realm of superficial, shallow, self-promotion.
- Is there a risk that by being active on social media you and your programme will be "tainted by association"?

## Conclusions

Imagine a document that your programme has worked on for months. You've invested time and effort into making it the best quality you can. You publish it on your website - where it sits, unnoticed and unread. We think most programmes can empathise with this situation.

If social media can provide a means for this document to be accessed more widely, so that the hard work it entailed actually has an impact among its intended readers - surely this is a clear case for you and your programme to at least consider social media as an option for making your work more visible.

Interact's experience during the #PostwithPurpose challenge showed that social media isn't for everyone. Of the two staff members who took part in the experiment, for one the "fight with the monster" came at too high a cost.

But whether or not you want to give LinkedIn a go - we encourage non-communication staff to at least reflect on what you can do to give their great work greater visibility.

## Hints and tips

- Worried about posting on LinkedIn taking up too much of your time?
- Worried that you might also succumb to writing meaningless, self-obsessed nonsense?
- Lacking inspiration for what to post about?
- Worried that no-one will like your posts?

Well, the hints and tips from the #PostwithPurpose team may help.

1. Be clear about what your objectives are for using LinkedIn
  - This will help you stay focused, not waste time, and for your contributions to stay valuable
2. Does my post add value?
  - Ask this every time you write something on LinkedIn - this way can be sure you've post has "purpose" and isn't pointless
3. Be yourself
  - We found this hard advice to follow. Posting on LinkedIn can feel performative even when you don't want it to be. But keep trying - the more you post the quicker you'll find your voice.
4. Turn off notifications
  - Set aside dedicated time to work on social media. And then for the rest of the week don't be distracted by notifications. The best way to do this is by switching them off!
5. Two easy types of post
  - The "post-event" post
    - You've attended an event and you're traveling back by train. A perfect time to make a post about one or two of your key take-aways from the event. Not only will it help you to organise your own reflections; it may also help others too.
  - The "post-upload" post
    - Every time you upload something to your website, make it a habit to make a short post about it. Don't summarise the whole thing, just one key highlight.

This serves as a signpost to help your stakeholders know where they can find the new material. It can act as a teaser for what other useful information they can find.

6. Likes don't matter

- Especially at the beginning, posting can feel like talking into a void. It takes time but if you keep at it, people interested in the same things as you will want to communicate with you.
- In any case, never focus on Likes, focus on what you want to say.

7. You don't have to post

- LinkedIn can also be a resource of information and potential contacts. Spending your time working out who you find interesting and hearing what they have to say is also important. You can save your posts for when you really have something to say.