



How to Use LinkedIn to Grow Your Jewelry Sales

THRIVE BY DESIGN WITH TRACY MATTHEWS

"I used to be in the media and I know how much the media use LinkedIn to find sources and experts, and so I also really love it because just because the diversity of the kinds of people that are on there you don't really have on the other sites."

You're listening to Thrive-By-Design business marketing and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to flourish and thrive. Let's get started.

Intro: You're listening to Thrive by Design, business, marketing, and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to Flourish & Thrive. Let's get started.

Tracy: Welcome to the Thrive by Design Podcast episode 171. Today I have an awesome guest on the show, we are talking about a different topic today, and it's all about LinkedIn and using a LinkedIn strategy to grow your business. I am super excited because one of our coaches over here for our SOS coaching program, Melissa Anicich, Melissa Camilleri Anicich, who you've heard on this show before, introduced me to Becky Mollenkamp a couple of months ago, and as you're going to see when you listen to this episode Becky is really concise and to the point, she has a background in journalism, and in research and writing, and she's going to share with you some of the ways that you can use LinkedIn. This interview went a little bit differently than I was expecting because I learned a ton of new stuff about how to use LinkedIn for a jewelry brand, how we can use LinkedIn over at Flourish and Thrive, and how you can start using even video on LinkedIn. So it's not just a research tool, there is so much more, and Becky has generously offered an amazing little freebie cheat sheet you can grab over at the show notes, and it's "10 Ways That You Can Use LinkedIn To Grow Your Jewelry Brand", so make sure that you check that out. You can head straight over to flourishthriveacademy.com/linkedin to check that out, or you can head on over to episode 171 on the podcast show notes and grab it over there. Alright so, without further ado I am going to dive into the show but first, let's take a word from our sponsor.

Today's Sponsor is ninadesigns.com. Savvy, savvy jewelry designers, are you looking for sustainable product, are you looking for sustainable findings, are you looking for a jewelry supplier dedicated to small business



and your success? Well if that's the case I would love to tell you a little bit more about ninadesigns.com because they have been committed to sustainable and fair trade practices before it was even a thing. Head on over to ninadesigns.com and check out the beautiful supply of materials and supplies that they have for you to actually build beautiful collections for your jewelry brand. If you're heading to NYC this year for our Live event you'll get to meet Nina in person, and she's just an amazing person. She's really committed to small business and as we like to say over here; we like to buy amazing beautiful materials for our collections and to design with, but more importantly we love to buy from amazing people and Nina is one of those people. So, head on over to ninadesigns.com and as your gift Nina is offering you \$15 off on your order of \$50 or more. So you can type in ninadesigns.com , type in the code as you check out FLOURISH2018 and get started. You're going to love what you see over there.

Okay, we're going to dive in in just a second but you know I always like to start these things with a fun little formal introduction so you get to know Becky a little bit more. Becky Mollenkamp is the creator of the "Own It Crush It" movement. With nearly 15 years of experience as a business owner she helps women navigate the mindset and tactical struggles of self employment through her courses, exclusive membership community and group program, Becky has mentored hundreds of women to own it and crush their boss status. I love it. I'm just like, literally so excited for this interview today because what Becky's going to teach you is going to blow your mind, you're going to be super surprised at some of these tactics and how easy using LinkedIn might be, and then we decided to even have a follow-up interview which you will find out why at the end of the episode. Okay, so let's dive in.

Tracy: Well today we're bringing in a different kind of expert. I'm really excited because you guys who are in the Flourish and Thrive community and listen to the Thrive by Design Podcast surely know my friend Melissa Camilleri Anicich. Melissa sent me a text, probably a couple of months ago now because Becky and I first talked a little while back, and she's like, "You've got to talk to this girl Becky, I think that she'd be so helpful for your community, and she is an expert in something that you never talked about: LinkedIn," and so I have invited Becky Mollenkamp onto the show today to talk a little bit about how you can own it and crush it on LinkedIn as a jewelry designer. So, Becky, thanks so much for being here.



- Becky: Thanks for having me. That Melissa sure is sweet. I appreciate it.
- Tracy: She sure is sweet. We love her around here. She's the best. So, but now we're going to also love you and so you're going to be the best too.
- Becky: Perfect.
- Tracy: Anyway, Robin, my cofounder over here at Flourish and Thrive, is a huge fan of LinkedIn. In fact she uses it for a lot of her sales research, and you are a huge fan of LinkedIn too and you've seen it work so well. I'd love to just kind of get a little backstory about you. Like how'd you get obsessed with LinkedIn, and like a little bit more about your journey and your history and what brought you to where you are now.
- Becky: Sure, so my background started in the media, I'm a writer by trade and training. I started out working for newspapers and then magazines. I was an editor at Better Homes and Gardens Magazine, which at the time was the largest magazine in the country. Since then I think things have changed because no one seems to read print magazines anymore.
- Tracy: I know right, it's so different.
- Becky: It's so sad but, I've been self employed since 2005. I left Better Homes and Gardens to work in my pajamas and continue doing writing or magazines, until people stopped buying magazines and then I shifted to doing more corporate writing, and that's really what I've done for the bulk of my career until the last couple of years when I've been shifting a little bit again and doing more coaching for women business owners now that I've been in business for 15 years and have seen through recessions and all kinds of changes in the world. I have a lot of things to share, but LinkedIn really was what help me grow that business originally, and I started with LinkedIn very early, when most people probably didn't know what LinkedIn was, long before. It was actually the first social media site, if you can call it social media I guess, but I was a part of, long before I started doing Twitter or Facebook or anything else, I was on LinkedIn. So, I've always loved it and have always used it, and I really know the power that it can offer to people. I believe in it so much that I've created a course all about it, because I don't think enough people are talking about LinkedIn. We hear a lot about Instagram, and I love Melissa and Instagram is amazing and I think it's great, but I think that we sort of forget about LinkedIn because it's kind of boring. It's not pretty and I know that. It's hard selling people on a LinkedIn course because they're like, "Eh, it's just



not very fun,” and it isn’t very fun, I will agree, but there is amazing potential with LinkedIn to really stand out and get found, and the kinds of people that are using LinkedIn are not the same people that you find on some of the other social media sites.

Tracy: That’s so cool, and I have a feeling that I’m going to learn a lot about my own businesses about using LinkedIn in different ways besides just research, so I’m excited about that. So, as we just basically qualified you’re a LinkedIn expert which is pretty awesome, and you used it to actually like, grow and start your coaching business, actually I’m sure you were using it to do research and find people when you were writing full time as well. Why do you love LinkedIn so much?

Becky: I love LinkedIn because it’s the kind of network that when people are using it they are strictly in business mode. While I love Pinterest and Instagram and Facebook, people are usually straddling both business and personal when they’re on those sites, but nobody really goes to LinkedIn to like, look up cat memes or post photos of their lunch, that’s just not what we do on that site. It’s really a strictly professional networking site. So, I love that when I’m on there I can just be on business mode, and I know that when other people are on there looking for me they’re in business mode, and so that’s really powerful because it removes a lot of that confusion about “Well, somebody looked at my profile, but was it because they were interested in hiring me or working with me, or was it because they wanted to see who I’m dating,” or, you know anything like that. So, I really love that it’s really professional and also the kinds of people that are using LinkedIn, a lot of bigger companies but also medium sized companies. Although there are plenty of self employed folks on LinkedIn, and I think everyone should be, a lot of the people that are on there looking for people to work with are from companies with bigger budgets, and so that’s something really that’s powerful that you don’t necessarily have everywhere else, and then the other big thing is I used to be in the media and I know how much the media use LinkedIn and trust and rely on LinkedIn to find sources and experts, and so I also really love it because the diversity of the kinds of people on there is just something you don’t really have on the other sites.

Tracy: Amazing, amazing, amazing. Which is so true, I’m excited to kind of dive in on some of this stuff. So, you know, obviously we match our jewelry brands over here, in particular our independent brands, and so there’s probably



so many ways to use LinkedIn for your brand and for research. So, let's dive into some of those ways. Like, what's the best way for a designer to use it?

Becky: I think a lot of people, and I understand this because obviously our biggest number one goal is always, "How do I get people to buy from me," right, and so we try to concentrate a lot of our efforts into, "Where are my clients living," and I think that's really smart, but even if your client isn't necessarily, your customer isn't using LinkedIn to buy jewelry, there are still so many great potential opportunities there for you because the people that you need to have as suppliers, wholesalers, vendors, all of those kinds of business relationships that are important to growing a business, those folks are there and then also, like I said, if you're somebody who wants to maybe get media attention, the media are there and using that source to find people to interview, so I think that's really powerful as well, and then it's also just a great way to become more of a voice in your industry because industry folks when they want to learn about their industry, of all types, are going to LinkedIn. I mean, that's kind of where we turn to for thought leadership. When we're looking at, "Who are the people that are rising above and talking to us about this business," and if you want people in your industry to start to pay attention to you as somebody who knows what they're talking about it's also a really great space to really put some time and energy.

Tracy: Awesome. So, you talked about a couple of things that you can use it for. You know, one of the things that we talk about a lot is like, finding people. I mean like, literally finding people. Are there other things that you think you could use LinkedIn for to get the message out about your business or your brand, to position yourself in a different way?

Becky: Well, I'm a big fan of using LinkedIn to showcase your knowledge, your brain, and your brand, and doing that through content, so creating content and putting it out into LinkedIn. We all create tons of content but sometimes we don't think about putting it out into LinkedIn, but you know, LinkedIn is its own search engine just like all of the other social media sites that are out there, so if somebody goes into LinkedIn that is in your industry or outside your industry but wanting to learn about it if they type in jewelry, jewelry business, how to run, how to start, all the things around that stuff, what's going to come up? Not your content unless you're contributing there.

Tracy: It's not.



Becky: You know, and so I think contributing content, for me, that's been the most important thing I've done. More than, and I think there's real power in learning how to use search, how to make connections, you know, I talk about all of those things in my course, but frankly nothing has been more valuable to me than the content I have created and shared on LinkedIn. Some of it's just copied and pasted from other places, some of it's original to LinkedIn, but that is the stuff that brings people to my profile, and then ultimately to find me as a business coach, or to join my community, or you know, any of the other things, to buy my courses. So, getting that content out there so people learn to know who you are and like you and trust you, that's really valuable.

Tracy: Do you have a LinkedIn business page?

Becky: I do have a LinkedIn business page. I don't use it much.

Tracy: I'm curious. Like, is it important?

Becky: Yeah, and I go into it and, of course, it kind of depends where you're at with your business. If you're still in that independent and smaller stage of business where it's you and maybe one employee it's not as important. The bigger your business becomes and the more employees you have the more it becomes important because you want your employees to act as ambassadors for your brand and they really need to be doing that by showing your company page on their profile, and the only way they can do that is if you have one. The only reason I have one is because it makes my page look a little more polished, so that if people go and look at my present employer, which is me, they could click on that and it looks like a real business versus when it's just you know, me saying it without it going anywhere. So, I think it becomes more important as your business grows.

Tracy: Okay, cool. I'm going to go find your business page. Don't look at Flourish and Thrive Academy's because it's not great.

Becky: Well, don't look at mine because it's not all that great either, because I am a business of one and I am my brand I really use my personal profile to interact on LinkedIn, and I think that's really the best practice because people tend to, in all things, respond better to individuals than brands just because they want to know the individual. So, the smaller you are then that becomes even more important. They want to know, "Who's the person behind this brand," rather than interacting with a faceless brand. So, for me that's what it's really about. Now as your business grows, or you



have multiple employees, or you really become a brand versus the person behind the brand, then you do need to worry more about your company page.

Tracy: Okay, that's cool. Good to know. So when you're using LinkedIn there's different sorts of plans, like there's a free plan and there's a paid plan, what's the difference between the two and when would you need one or the other.

Becky: The biggest reason to go to a paid plan, well there's really two, one is that you can have more options for mailing people directly versus going through just LinkedIn's communications portal, the messaging system within LinkedIn, if you want to actually email them directly then you need to have a paid plan. That's something that is mostly used by people who do serious prospecting and sales, like b-to-b people that are doing hardcore sales on LinkedIn, they would need it because they're trying to mail tons of people, and also so that you can do more advertising. Which, really, I don't think is all that valuable on LinkedIn personally. I hope they don't get too mad for me saying that, but I've done a little experimenting with it and it didn't really work for me. I think if you had a major budget or a big company that was really in the b-to-b space, particularly I think if you were doing recruiting or something, it makes sense, but for most of us I don't think it's needed, and I have been using LinkedIn for, what, probably more than 15 years now or something at this point, and I did a little bit of experimenting where I paid for a few ads but other than that LinkedIn has never gotten a penny from me because I just don't think you need to. There's so much you can do without having to go to a paid plan that it's really unbelievable.

Tracy: Awesome, awesome. Okay, so I think you mentioned something about emails and so if I'm understanding this correctly; if you have a paid plan you can actually get someone's email address, is that correct?

Becky: Right, you can actually send them an email that goes into their inbox, their personal email inbox, versus going into their LinkedIn message box.

Tracy: Right, LinkedIn messaging or whatever.

Becky: Which I've never done. I've only ever messaged people through LinkedIn. I think, my opinion, cold emails aren't super effective. If somebody doesn't know you they don't tend to respond very well to you showing up their inbox. "How did you get this? Why are you messaging me? This is spam."



So, I'm really in the belief that relationship marketing is far more effective and I really think that's true for almost any kind of business. If you're wanting to connect with someone I recommend connecting with them. So, learn a little bit about them, find out who they are, you know, why do you want to have this connection, what similarities do you have, what common bond do you have, what can you praise them on, find something. Send them a connection request, personalize it, that's a big key, make sure they know that you're not just spamming them, and then get to know each other that way. Have that back and forth conversation through LinkedIn and then move it offline. That's really what I think is the best practice and that's why I don't pay for the bonus of being able to email people because it's just not the approach I take to business. I really think relationship marketing gets you a lot farther.

Tracy: Okay, so this is one thing that I know others are used to getting, just like blindly emailed because that's like, part of their job is to like, search for new product and stuff like that, so let's say someone is really looking for an email address like, what's the best way to figure out configurations on LinkedIn?

Becky: I don't know that you really can so much through LinkedIn. If you're going to use LinkedIn then I would do it through their messaging. If you're wanting to find emails then I would move to Google and try to do your best, or to their website and see if you can do some deducing to figure out, and believe me, I've done that many, many times. Where I've been trying to get a hold of someone, and it's pretty amazing, if you do enough searching and you get a little bit smart about how you search, so use like @whatever.com, whatever their website is and start playing around and using their name and type an email a lot of times you can find people's emails that are very deep in Google if you do enough work. So, I've done that but if you're doing it through LinkedIn, like if you're trying to reach out to a member of the media through LinkedIn, my recommendation is find out who it is that you're wanting to talk to, who is this person that you're interested in trying to pitch to, go to their profile, learn about them, read some of the articles that they've written, reach out to them saying you want to connect, you really love the article they wrote about xyz, give them some praise, then let them connect with you, and then respond to them, don't pitch yourself yet, talk to them a little bit more, ask them about, you know, what they write about, what topics they're looking for, ask them some questions, create a conversation, and then come to them with that pitch. Again, the reason that PR folks, the people charge people



to do PR, have more success than the average person in trying to place a story isn't because they have a big secret, it's because they create relationships with people in the media. They know these people so that when they go to people in the media and say, "Hey, would you consider this story," the person listens because they know them. It wasn't because they knew some secret sauce, I promise, I used to be in the media, I know. It's because they know that person and they trust them. So, you can do the same work by yourself without hiring that PR person, it's just going to take more time because you need to also create and nurture those relationships.

Tracy: Awesome, awesome, okay, cool. Are there any other ways that come to mind to use LinkedIn to actually grow your business?

Becky: Well I was going to talk about content but I think I did that a little bit already, but I really think again-

Tracy: Why don't we talk about the types of content that you can put on there? Like, let's say you're an independent jewelry brand. What would you put on LinkedIn?

Becky: So, I think you can do a lot of things that show that you know what you're- well first of all I guess I should preface this by saying: You need to know what your strategy is for LinkedIn. Why are you using it? Is your goal to find vendors, wholesalers, media, speaking gigs, what is it that you're looking for? Know that first and try as much as you can to identify sort of a singular goal with LinkedIn if you can, because that's going to dictate the kind of content that you share. So then think about who that person is and what they would be looking for. If it's a member of the media, if they come to your profile how are they going to know that you really know what you're talking about, right, or that you really are creating these great results in people's lives. So, if that's the case you may want to do case studies, you know, or client testimonial kind of things where you talk about your jewelry and you talk about how it has changed someone's life or made their life better, or you want to show off the latest thing that you did. So if you've been on a podcast recently or you've been featured in some other media, people in the media like to know that you have already been validated by other media, so the more you can show that the better that's going to be, but then also just things that show that you are in tune with what's going on in the industry. Whether that's specifically the jewelry industry or the fashion industry, but something that shows that



you are somebody that can speak to topics well and that you understand what's happening, and by the way LinkedIn also lets you do video so that's a really great opportunity at something that's newer with LinkedIn, and I tested it and I can tell you that video, particularly right now because not as many people are using it yet, really increases the number of views that you're getting or the number of touch points that you're getting, but that's a great opportunity to show some behind the scenes so that people can get to know your business and what's happening behind the scenes, or how you do what you do, how you make your jewelry, the things that media are going to want to bite into. What is your story, and then how can you tell that? So the more you can get in touch with what is sort of your hook for the media, whether that's your personal story that led you to create the company, or the types of material that you use and where they come from and how they're sourced, it all kind of... who your client is. So figure that out and then try to figure out how you can tell those things on LinkedIn in a way that's going to get noticed.

Tracy: So when you're using video on LinkedIn, I'm like so fascinated, I'm going to stalking everything on LinkedIn and repurposing content on there, when you're using LinkedIn, I'm curious, like is there a sort of call to action that you want or a specific way to start it specific to LinkedIn?

Becky: I've been sharing a lot of video that is from YouTube.

Tracy: Just like, a YouTube video?

Becky: Well, yeah. So LinkedIn is new to video, and it's slow with video. So if you're trying to do things natively within LinkedIn you can only go up to, I think, 10 minutes and it's very slow to upload. So the fastest way to share videos, if you already have a Youtube channel, to just share those YouTube links and they will play within LinkedIn. So, I do a lot of that. I have shared video natively as well it just takes forever so to me it hasn't really been the best way of doing it. What's worked for me is having things where I'm doing a quick, short, short is better because I don't think people are going on LinkedIn and spending as much time as maybe they would on Facebook so something quick, but I really like to share tips, particularly because of what I do and my audience I think people resonate with that, where I just show them, "Hey, I know my stuff and I can teach you something," but I think for me if it was about the jewelry business I'd be really fascinated to see things that are really more like, behind the scenes, or get to know the people behind the brand, or that kind of thing.



Tracy: Awesome, awesome, awesome. Wow, this is like, so informative. I'm like, so excited to like, start using LinkedIn for both of my businesses, which will be fun. So tell us a little bit more about, you mentioned like briefly that you have a course and you also created a special download for our designers. Tell us a little more about that.

Becky: Yeah, I put together a little cheat sheet, it's got 10 things that you can start doing now to start increasing your LinkedIn presence and start making more of the site. I do find that when I talk to people about LinkedIn they go, "Oh," like, they kind of go from thinking, "Oh this is really boring," to thinking, "Oh maybe it's still boring but there might be something to this. I should really look into it." So, first of all go and spend some time on LinkedIn and see what's out there and search your industry. I know I did quick search of the jewelry industry and I found a few groups that are specifically around that with a lot of members and I noticed media folks that are in those groups that write about the industry. So, I can tell you that just in my own searching of the jewelry industry that there is stuff happening. There is life on LinkedIn, and the great thing about it is because not as many people are using it, I mean it still has half a billion users, but it's nowhere near the saturation of Facebook, and probably a little less competitive in something like your industry than something like Instagram so you still have a chance to really stand out, and that's what I love. Like, this is a place where there's still and opportunity for you to stand out from all the noise without as much effort or maybe having to spend as much money on ads as it is on some of the other social media sites, so I say go take a look and then decide if this is something you want to invest some time in. Start with the free download, there's some tips there on how to get started, and then if you want to really dig in deep my course goes into much more depth into all these things including groups, which we didn't talk a lot about, making connections, how to have those conversations and all that.

Tracy: Okay, awesome. Do you want to talk a little bit about groups or do you want to save it for another conversation? Let's do another interview with you.

Becky: Yeah, and actually LinkedIn's right now, they just announced I think in the last week that they are actually getting ready to overhaul groups, which is really good news, because groups in LinkedIn have gotten a little bit spammy and just not as dynamic as they are in like, Facebook groups, and so I think LinkedIn has finally figured that out, that Facebook's crushing



them on the groups department, so they are totally overhauling what groups are going to be allowed to- like what they look like, and they're really going to start trying to push groups more. So I think in the coming months we'll see what comes of that and I think, I mean that has the potential to be something really exciting.

Tracy: Okay, so when they launch it we're going to reconnect and have another interview. Does that sound good?

Becky: Yeah, that'd be great.

Tracy: We'll have a discussion about LinkedIn groups and using that for your business. So, you can go grab that amazing free resource by heading over to flourishthriveacademy.com/linkedin . That's flourishthriveacademy.com/linkedin . I will also have a link over at the show notes and share all of Becky's lovely information over there so that you can find her and her course and everything like that. Becky thank you so much for being here today, this was awesome.

Becky: Thanks for having me. I love talking about LinkedIn, I'm that big geek.

Tracy: I love it. We need a lot of geeks on this show so it's perfect.

Becky: Good.

Tracy: I love it too, I learned so much. I'm like, literally about to log into my LinkedIn right now, figure out something I can do.

Becky: Good, well have fun, get started. Really the key to doing anything is just: Go get started. So if you do nothing else today just go log into your LinkedIn and go take a look at your profile and make sure what's out there is something that you would want people to see, because very often people are on LinkedIn, have forgotten all about it, go check it and are like, "Oh, I guess I should probably update this," so start there.

Tracy: Awesome. Well thanks for being here Becky this was amazing.

Becky: Thanks Tracy.

Tracy: Wasn't that awesome? I can't wait to see how you guys are going to use LinkedIn to grow your business, so let's do this. Before I sign off I just wanted to remind you to go check out our sponsor, Nina Designs. Head on over to ninadesigns.com and take a little shop and a little look around



because we all need some really wonderful findings and materials and tools for our jewelry brand to make beautiful designs, so Nina is the place to go for that for sure. If you haven't checked it out yet make sure that you head on over to the show notes so that you can grab Becky's amazing, free resource. You're definitely going to want to check that out because it's going to blow your mind and, you know, help you really crush this LinkedIn strategy that you have, and also I would love for you to share your experience with the podcast. So if you're liking what you're listening to it would be awesome if you just shared this with two of your friends from the jewelry industry or maybe even the fashion industry because people tell me all the time that, "What you're teaching Tracy is not just for jewelry designers. It's general business advice that everyone can use, especially those who have product based businesses." So, if you know someone who could use this and you like what you're hearing here I would love for you to share that with them. We are killing it. The podcast, the show's doing so well and it's because of you, so I want to thank all of you for listening today. Continue doing what you're doing, you're amazing, and if you like what you're listening to I would love a little rating or review. In the meantime I got to go, I got to jam out and get ready for my next episode. I'm excited for what we have in store for you in the coming weeks. Until next time I just want you to take care, and continue to own it, crush it. Let's do this, bye for now.