CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORY OF LINKEDIN

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LinkedIn has well over 600,000,000 members and is growing every single day.

The network started off in the living room of co-founder Reid Hoffman (previously on the board of Google, eBay and PayPal). LinkedIn's founders were Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly and Jean-Luc Vaillant.

Launched officially on 5th May 2003 it was mainly used for professional networking and connecting job seekers with employers. At the end of its first month of operating it had just 4,500 members. In 2004 they added a key new feature, the ability to upload your address book and invite people to connect with you. This helped boost membership to 1,217,647 members.

In 2005, they launched jobs and also paid subscriptions. As the team and platform grew, so did members, growing to just over 4,000,000. The year 2006 was the first year that LinkedIn turned a profit and was also the year that they added the recommendations feature (one of my personal favourites) and also the 'People you may know' function.

Between 2007 and 2008 membership continued to grow and reached over 33 million members. Then, in 2009, as membership grew past 55 million, Jeff Weiner joined as President and CEO. After settling in, moving into 2010 saw LinkedIn grow past 85,000,000 members, 10 office sites and over 1,000 staff.

In 2011 things started to get very serious as LinkedIn got listed on the New York Stock Exchange at a value of $45 per share. They had now grown to over 135,000,000 members. The years 2012 and 2013 saw the professional network grow even more, jumping to 186 million and then to 225 million members. When it got to 2014, they had 5,400 staff and over 300 million members.

Jumping to 2016, Microsoft acquired LinkedIn in a deal worth $26 billion with the following year seeing LinkedIn grow to 500,000,000 members.

LinkedIn is now used by job seekers looking to secure their next role, by employers searching for the best talent, salespeople trying to reach their prospects, businesses looking to reach their target audience, marketers sharing content and entrepreneurs building their brands.

It's become THE professional social network, the place where professionals can share, engage and do business. It's like attending a physical networking event, but with over 600,000,000 attendees. It allows anyone in the world access to so much opportunity through their laptop, PC or even their phone.