

LinkedIn helps students network to make the post-graduation job search easier

Lindsay Kimble
Copy Editor

LinkedIn is an effective way for students to market themselves and network with future employers, according to Elon alumni. The website, a social network for the corporate world, helps connect businesses with potential employees and vice-versa.

LinkedIn users create a profile and can then connect with other users. Connections are like friend requests on Facebook, and users are prompted to indicate how they know the person they wish to connect with. LinkedIn also offers the opportunity for users to sync their Twitter account to their profile. Users can also upload their resumes.

Many Elon students are unaware of the benefits LinkedIn offers.

"I was encouraged to make a profile by an organization I was in," said Jen Cox, an Elon junior majoring in psychology. "I realized that my parents had accounts and that they felt it was a great way to network with friends and other students."

Cox said her actual usage of LinkedIn is minimal.

"Once I get a job, I don't know if I'll need it," she said.

Crystal Grandison, Class of 2008, strongly suggests LinkedIn to students. She still maintains the LinkedIn profile she created while at Elon. Grandison said LinkedIn helped her get her current job as a community manager for Schoology.com, a social networking website for teachers and students.

"While interning in NYC with

another education technology company, I did a search on LinkedIn for similar companies hiring in the New York City area, since LinkedIn also has job postings," Grandison said. "After applying to a few jobs via LinkedIn, I came across Schoology."

Grandison said the networking site gave her background information about the company and linked her to the company website. She said there were no available positions at the time on LinkedIn, but she still sent in her resume and a month later was given a position.

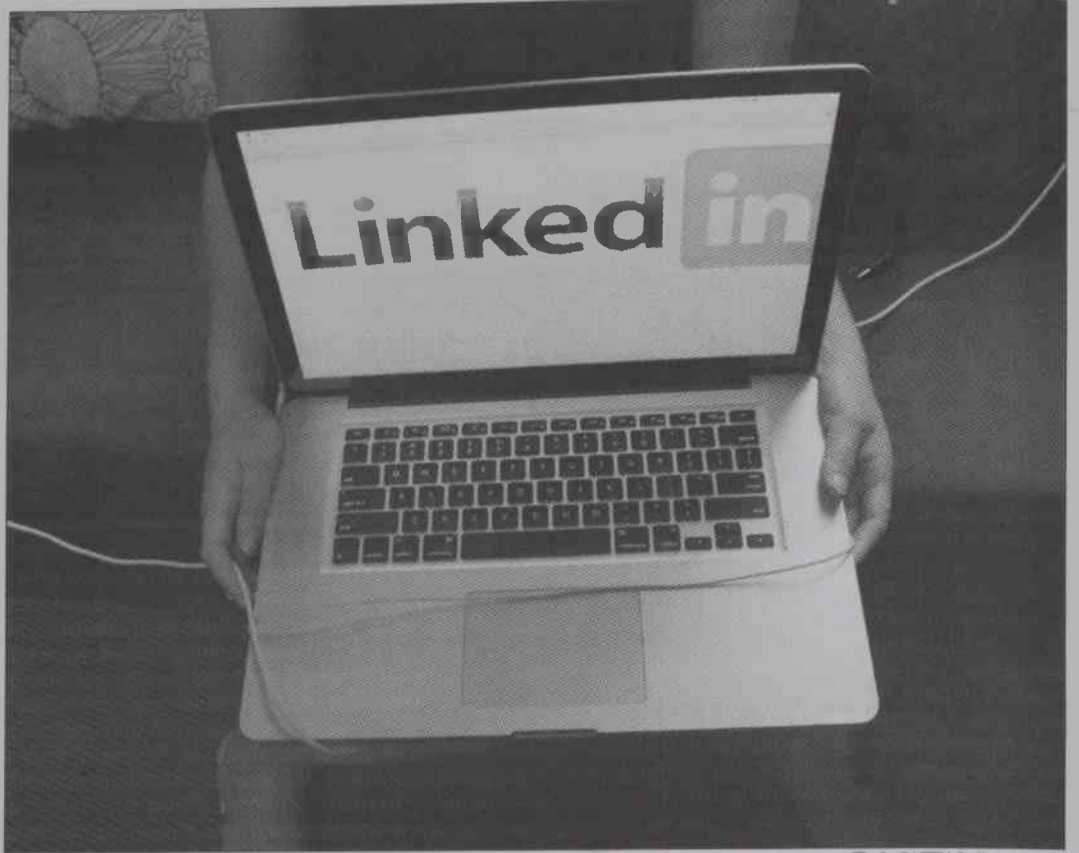
"If it wasn't for LinkedIn, I may have never discovered this company," Grandison said. "Since Schoology is a growing company, I have used LinkedIn to post our job openings."

Megan Schneider, Class of 2010, is a current graduate student at James Madison University serving as a graduate assistant in Judicial Affairs for Civic Learning Programs. Schneider first created a LinkedIn profile while at Elon and still maintains her page.

"I do not find myself actively searching, since I am in graduate school," Schneider said. "But I do keep my information up-to-date. Also, every few months I will add new trainings that I may have completed, or presentation information and conference attendance."

While Schneider did not use the website while applying for graduate school, she said she expects to utilize it more during her second year in order to look for a job.

Grandison said Elon should



TRACY RAETZ | Staff Photographer

LinkedIn is a social network for the business world. Elon alumni suggest the site for students looking to increase their marketability.

require students to create LinkedIn profiles with at least five teacher recommendations through senior seminar classes.

"When you are on the job hunt, you need to try every trick in the book," she said. "LinkedIn is great because first off, it's free for basic use and there are thousands of professionals already there at your fingertips. You have to start networking somehow and LinkedIn gets your feet wet."

Schneider, on the other hand, said she feels that only those that are going to actively use LinkedIn can benefit from its features.

"I am a strong believer in using social networks if you are going to take the time to stay current and watch your activity," she said. "Otherwise, I think I'd say deactivate your account. I've read many articles that say being present online just to be present can be more harmful

than not being present at all."

Nonetheless, Grandison said it is useful. In regard to Elon in particular, she said she does not remember any faculty or staff member ever suggesting using LinkedIn.

"I sure wish I had something like this during my initial job hunt," Grandison said. "It would have also been great to have all my professor recommendations right there on my LinkedIn profile for professionals to view."

Old verbal agreement complicates towing from local church parking lot

Anna Johnson
Editor-in-Chief

An outdated verbal agreement may have caused Elon University students to be illegally towed from the Elon Community Church parking lot in recent years.

Alamance Towing, the towing company contracted through ECC, has towed students from the church parking lot based off a verbal agreement between the former owner of Alamance Towing and the former pastor of ECC, said Mark Kapler, the current owner of Alamance Towing.

But, it wasn't until mid-January that the current church administration heard about the agreement said Monica Nicholson, an administrative assistant at ECC.

Elon senior Alex Moss complained to Nicholson after she was repeatedly hung up on and rudely spoken to on the phone by an Alamance Towing employee, Moss said.

"I called the church to let them know the towing company they are working with was disrespectful," Moss said. "(Nicholson) said they would never tow people and the minister wanted people to park (in the parking lot)."

When Nicholson contacted Kapler, Moss was refunded her \$80 for parking and Alamance Towing was asked not to tow in the church parking lot anymore.

Written documents regarding the agreement



STUART JONES | Photographer
Cars parked in the Elon Community Church lot may have been wrongfully towed.

could not be produced by Kapler or Nicholson.

Kapler said he wasn't aware the pastor who made the agreement, David Kuhn, had retired. And he didn't have any information on the agreement other than what he was told by the former Alamance Towing owner, Keith Norris.

Multiple attempts to contact Norris and Kuhn to verify this agreement were unsuccessful.

Not many cars were towed from that lot, Kapler said. The cost to be towed from the lot is \$80.

When a vehicle was towed from the church lot, Nicholson said, she assumed Elon University Campus Safety and Police had made the call.

Chuck Gantos, director of Campus Safety and Police, said they never call for a vehicle to be towed from the church parking lot and Alamance Towing does tow vehicles for Elon University.

"We've got an exclusive contract with Alamance Towing," Gantos said. "They've been good for us and we've had no complaints."

Smartpen blends old writing with new technology, skills

Jeff Stern
Online Editor-in-Chief

While a lot of what students write nowadays is typed, a new pen has the potential to change the way students learn.

The Livescribe Smartpen, introduced in 2008, blends old-fashioned note taking with new technology. The pen can record audio and then be synced with notes and queued up just by tapping where the user wrote on the special Livescribe paper.

"I originally thought it was foolish to use a Livescribe pen instead of using a notebook, but then I realized you can never actually write everything that's being said and the pen will capture everything," said David Copeland, professor of communications. "I could theoretically see people using these instead of laptops."

Copeland said he views the pen as a great tool for students, as they would be able to capture an entire lecture and not have to worry about writing down every detail.

The Livescribe software allows the user to transfer the notes from the pen to a computer in a PDF format and then convert the handwritten notes into text, with the purchase of additional software. But Copeland said he believes a student would be more inclined to listen to the audio recording than read the notes.

As a former journalist, Copeland said he also sees

the pen's potential to allow journalists to focus more on the interviews and less on note-taking.

"Nobody could ever tell me that I misquoted them because I (would) have it all right there, right in the context of what it was," he said.

Academic researchers would also benefit from using the pen. Paula Patch, lecturer in English, frequently studies the way students write. Most of what interests her, she said, is not what students write but how they write it.

"The pen would be more of an extension of the student," Patch said.

Compared with using a video camera or audio recorder to capture students' writing methods, Patch says she sees the pen as a noninvasive tool.

"I think it would allow researchers to get closer to a more authentic writing experience," she said.

The Livescribe pen also offers the simple benefit of allowing the user to write by hand.

"There has been research that shows that some people literally think better and have

a more fluent thought process when they write by hand," Patch said.

Freshman Katherine Bain agrees. She said she finds that handwriting allows her to focus better and remember what she has written.

As a freshman Teaching Fellow, Bain said she sees how the Livescribe pen could benefit the classroom.

While Bain said she found the Livescribe to be a really interesting concept, she doesn't think it will ever be used among the majority of her peers.

"It is really expensive for a pen," Bain said. "I probably wouldn't invest the money, but I could theoretically see myself using it in a lecture class to help me remember all I heard."

While the Livescribe pen has not become mainstream, those who have written with the pen appreciate the luxury.

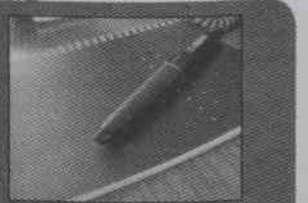
"It hasn't become a life or death property for me yet but I can see the ways it can enhance what I do," Copeland said. "It bridges the gap between old school and new school."

The least expensive Livescribe model costs \$99.95.

MORE ONLINE: NEWS

David Copeland, professor of communications, shows the Livescribe pen in action.

<http://bit.ly/TPOlivescribe>



JEFF STERN | Online Editor In Chief