

# Transportation Librarians Roundtable Transcript

April 9, 2026

**Bob Cullen:** There we go. The red light's on. OK. All right, so. I'll be brief because I know all of you are logged in here today for our speakers. It's unnecessary to hear me take up a good part of the hour talking. The subject of LinkedIn is something that I've been hoping to pursue for quite a few years. Looking through my files just yesterday, I would say that it became more of a focus for me going back to about five years ago. It was during the 2021 Special Libraries Conference. I believe it was actually a virtual conference because we were still pretty much in the shadow of COVID. Anyway, the closing keynote address for the conference that year was given by Deborah Jasper, who at least at that time was the CEO of Mindset Digital. She gave a worthwhile, thought-provoking talk about LinkedIn and how that network can be most effectively leveraged by librarians for themselves and on behalf of those whom they serve. She really gave us a lot to think about and really did jumpstart my thinking that we really need to get a TLR presentation on this. I didn't entertain any hopes I could get a CEO like Miss Jasper to agree to come here on a volunteer basis and speak to us.

But I really was hoping at some point along the way I could find some worthwhile speaker and that did not happen. I actually found two very worthwhile speakers, and it was people with whom I work here at AASHTO: Lexi Berkeley and Tierra Whitmore. I think it was a year ago or so they gave an excellent overview presentation to all of us here at AASHTO about LinkedIn and its potential and how it can be effectively leveraged to our professional advantage and also on behalf of other people as well. They gave such a great presentation; I knew I found my LinkedIn presentation. So when I asked them a few months ago if they could serve as speakers for the TLR and share their information and insights with all of us, they without hesitation said they'd be glad to do so. I'm very thankful that they did say yes to the invite.

Let me go ahead and I'll introduce the speakers. I'll mention, talk about anniversaries that are tough to forget even when sometimes you want to forget about them, today actually is the 30th anniversary of when I started working at AASHTO many years ago—the last century, for crying out loud. But I've enjoyed working here so far at AASHTO and one of the key reasons why—I know it is a cliché—but I really do feel it's because of the wonderful people I've had the opportunity to work with here over the years. I certainly count Lexi and Tierra right up there at the top of the list, and I feel very fortunate to be working with them because they're on a personal level great people. But even from a professional standpoint, they really give 110% each to getting the work done here and helping the rest of us do our work as effectively as possible too. I think that'll come out during the course of the presentation over the next hour or so.

Having said that, I just wanted to state first of all, as I've already mentioned in email announcements leading up to today, that the title of the presentation is "LinkedIn Unlocked." I like that title and I'll go ahead and start off with the bios here and then they can go ahead and launch into the presentation and I will take it from there. Then, fingers

crossed, we'll have a robust Q&A towards the end after they have concluded their presentation.

Let me start with Lexi. Lexi Berkeley is a senior marketing specialist here at AASHTO. Originally from the Eastern Shore of Maryland—a great part of the world, by the way—Lexi started with AASHTO in 2022. From emails, social media, and newsletters, Lexi handles all marketing efforts for AASHTOWare, a technical service program with AASHTO. Quite a few of you are familiar with that program. Lexi is passionate about utilizing data to make marketing decisions that increase awareness of the capabilities of AASHTOWare products.

Tierra Whitmore—I'll introduce her now—is a communications and marketing specialist at AASHTO managing social media and collaborating with technical service programs to create content that connects with transportation officials nationwide. Tierra works closely with AASHTO Technical Training Solutions, product evaluation and audit solutions, and various AASHTO committees and programs. I should add that I especially appreciate all the help Tierra extends to me on a daily basis with respect to the AASHTO Transportation History blog posts. She's always very helpful essentially disseminating those blog posts by way of social media. I always marvel at how effectively and expeditiously she handles it and how patient she is sometimes when I'm a little behind schedule trying to get those posts completed and ready. So I did want to add that too. Tierra, I think Lexi started in 2022. You've been with AASHTO since 2023. Am I remembering that correctly?

**Tierra Whitmore:** Yep, since February of 2023.

**Bob Cullen:** OK. That's great. It occurred to me among the three of us, we've been at AASHTO collectively 37 years altogether, although I guess I can count for a couple of those decades. Yeah. So having stated that, I'll now go ahead and hand the microphones over to Lexi and Tierra for their presentation, "LinkedIn Unlocked." All yours.

**Alexis Berkley:** OK. Thank you, Bob. I'm going to go ahead and share my screen. We are super excited for everyone to join us today to go over some LinkedIn basics. We're going to do the purpose of LinkedIn, uses of LinkedIn, talk about setting up a LinkedIn account, and then also some content best practices. And then, like Bob said, any questions that you have we'll cover at the end. So please jot them down during the presentation and let us know what you have for us at the end.

**Tierra Whitmore:** So why LinkedIn? First, we want to think of your LinkedIn profile as kind of like your professional storefront but online. It's often the first place someone goes to learn who you are and what it is that you do. Before anybody meets you or emails you or interviews you, they may have already formed an impression of you based on your LinkedIn profile if you have one, or any other profile if you have those out there as well. But a lot of your professional interest will come from your LinkedIn profile. A couple of those benefits to having a LinkedIn profile is that LinkedIn is an extension of

your professional and personal brand. Every single person has a brand and your LinkedIn profile is genuinely an extension of that brand and it tells a story when you are not in the room. Everything from your photo to your bio and summary contributes to how others perceive you when you're not in the room. A strong profile can help you control the narrative instead of letting others fill in those gaps or assume about your own professional journey. Another reason to have a LinkedIn is it's an effective tool to help elevate your brands and to connect with other industry partners or even help you find a job. It can make you more visible to the right audience. It helps you connect with industry partners. It helps you build relationships beyond your immediate workplace, and it can even position you for new opportunities, whether that's growth, collaboration or, as I mentioned previously, a new job. Another reason you should consider a LinkedIn account or why one can be beneficial is because it's a good research tool. People don't just use LinkedIn casually; they use it to research. Some common examples are looking up companies before meeting, looking up jobs before an interview. Sometimes jobs and recruiters will even look for your professional LinkedIn profile and make some decisions and assumptions just based off of that. Sometimes your profile can be viewed before anybody even speaks to you.

LinkedIn versus the rest of the social media platforms out there. LinkedIn is very similar to Facebook in structure-wise—in the aspect of profiles, connections, and posts—but the intent is very different. Think of LinkedIn more as your professional alter ego whereas Facebook is your personal one. LinkedIn is like Superman and then Facebook is your Clark Kent. Essentially, LinkedIn is where you highlight your career accomplishments, your expertise, and industry interests. With Instagram, that is more of a visual and image-driven platform. Content here tends to lead more personal or lifestyle focused even when it's work-related. It's great for storytelling and visuals, but it doesn't really replace LinkedIn when it comes to professional networking or credibility. When it comes to X, formerly known as Twitter, Twitter is much more news-oriented and fast-paced. It's known for hot takes, quick reactions, short opinions, and comments. Typically content here moves quickly and posts have a very short shelf life. Overall, LinkedIn is where you want to be. I also want to point out that from what I've noticed within the transportation industry, LinkedIn at AASHTO is our most engaged platform. We know when we show up on LinkedIn, we're meeting our audience where they already are. That's where a lot of state DOT officials are. That's where a lot of industry partners are. They're already there and active. And that's some of the big reasons why LinkedIn is definitely the most effective platform for you to have a professional presence.

**Alexis Berkley:** A lot of people naturally think—myself included before I started at AASHTO—that LinkedIn is just for searching for a new job. But a lot of people who are on it aren't really looking for a new job; they're actually building their personal brand. So there's job hunting and then there's networking. A lot of people think that it has to be you're looking for a job or looking to connect with people dealing with the job. But in today's world, a lot of people are using LinkedIn to grow their personal brand network and make connections just on a personal level, whether it's at a conference or if you're posting about an achievement or a common interest like a charity event or volunteer

experience. A lot of those things are great to post on LinkedIn and build your network because you never know who could be important later down the road. It doesn't have to be looking for a job right now; it could be in the future. Some people think they're staying somewhere forever and then things happen and it's always just good to build that network outside of conferences but also on LinkedIn. Posting things regularly can really help make those connections that might help you in the future.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Setting up a LinkedIn account—I get it, I know at one point I feel like LinkedIn has been pushed from all of us and we've kind of set up an account, were on there for like three days, kind of went away and we're like, "No, we're good." But hear me out. Setting up a LinkedIn account isn't too crazy, but I do want to give you guys some tips for when you do set up a LinkedIn profile or even if you're interested in updating your LinkedIn profile. The first thing I want to go over is our profile pictures and why they matter. Your profile picture is one of the most important elements of your LinkedIn account. It's often the very first thing that people notice before they read your name, the title, or even your experience. LinkedIn did their own research and they found that profiles with an actual photo are 14 times more likely to be viewed than accounts without a photo. In many ways, your photo sets the tone for how approachable, professional, and even credible you appear. Your profile picture can reflect how you show up day-to-day, whether that's put together, organized, approachable, kind, and professional. It doesn't have to be overly stiff or corporate, but it should still feel polished. You always want to try to use a photo that is as sharp as possible and it doesn't have anybody else in it. As long as your face takes up about 60% of the frame, you should be good to go. As far as professional headshots go, I personally believe that they're often the best option, but I also understand that professional headshots aren't always available or accessible. That's not a problem. You can still get a really good headshot. I was once a girl with a dream and nothing but a white blank wall and a ring light, and that was the way I took my professional photo at home and used it for cover letters and resumes and even my own LinkedIn profile. You just want them to be clear, clean, and distraction-free. You just want to make sure your face is right there in the frame. Another thing that I really want to touch on is filters, especially with AI becoming a really big tool today and using a lot of the things that we do. I just want to caution you against overusing a filter or overusing an AI filter. Filters should be used to enhance, not alter, your appearance. You only want to use filters to adjust the lighting if you have a darker photo, maybe improve some of the clarity and contrast in that photo. But most importantly, you want to use filters to set more of a professional tone in your photo. The goal is realism, not perfection. You just want to look like a real person. So yeah, you want to look like Lincoln or Matthew McConaughey on LinkedIn and keep your real life over there on Facebook.

Background photos—these are not a must-have, but it's something that's nice to support your profile picture. It kind of holds it up. A strong background photo, otherwise known as a header, should be clean, visually interesting, and align with your role or industry. If you looked at my LinkedIn account, my header photo—which is just the long photo right behind your profile picture—is just a cityscape and it has AASHTO at the top of it and then my job position. I've seen some of my coworkers who work more on the

rail side have tracks or passenger trains or freight trains as their headers. I think it's just a good element to elevate your brand and show more about what you do and what you're passionate about. Your header should support your professional story but it should still be quiet in an effective way. There are a lot of tools out there where you can create stunning and great headers and some of them even have templates. Canva is a great tool; they have a great free option to create headers for LinkedIn. So is Adobe Spark—it's a free version of Adobe similar to Canva. I've seen some people do some crazy things with PowerPoint when it comes to headers, so that's always an option as well.

And your bio. Your bio is also a key part of your first impression on LinkedIn after your photo and your header. This is where people go to understand who you are, what you do, and what you care about professionally. This is where your profile really starts to sound like you. You want to be concise and engaging, but you still want to be yourself just professionally. The best LinkedIn bios feel authentic; they don't sound overly corporate or stiff. They get straight to the point and they tell the most necessary things about yourself. You can use humor in them too if humor is a part of who you are. It's OK to include that as long as it stays in that professional realm and it still touches on what it is that you do and what you like to do. The goal here is to sound like a real person that somebody would want to connect with. This goes along with creating that credibility and trust when you're thinking of what you want to go into your LinkedIn profile. You also want to make sure you're building out your current work information and your experience. This is really good for people who are looking for jobs. It's easier when all of your experience is spelled out because it puts your page in front of the correct audience and in front of the correct people in the correct industries. OK. Very good. Yeah, I think I just touched on that. Perfect.

**Alexis Berkley:** Perfect. Sorry about that. I think my Internet is getting a little laggy, so I'm going to turn my camera off just to ensure you guys can hear me. OK. Apologies about that. The next part of this is going to break down why we post on LinkedIn. As marketing professionals, we're constantly asking "the why." What is the why behind what we're marketing? That relates to LinkedIn because you're building your personal brand, so you should always think of that and when you're posting, ask yourself: Why am I posting? Is it to increase engagement on my profile? Do I want to make more connections? Is that a goal I have for myself over the next few months? Is it to increase awareness for a specific group? Am I attending a conference and they have low engagement on their page, so I'm sharing with the colleagues that I have that might reshare? Is it to help promote a product or organization that you feel passionately about? These are all things to really think about before you post, so your post will be clear, concise, and to the point. People are going to connect with it easier that way; it'll be more organized. So it's always important to ask yourself that when you are posting on your LinkedIn profile. When you're sharing things on LinkedIn, one of the things that we like to always remind everyone about is that you're not only posting something that's going to reflect you, but it's also going to reflect your employer. We try to remember that you're an extension of your employer in a lot of ways. With your Facebook and Instagram, those are personal accounts, but a lot of times when you have listed that you

work in an organization on LinkedIn, your posts are going to come up automatically on other people's feeds when you tag that organization. It's important that if you make those connections, you're posting things that represent you and your company in a professional manner just so you don't get any negative repercussions from that in a larger scale. If you ever have any questions, I know our HR team is really great about that, so I would definitely just contact a manager or HR to ask. It's always better to ask than get in trouble later. So that's what I always say.

Some of the things that you can share on LinkedIn include recent meeting highlights. I know AASHTO in particular has a ton of committee meetings, so a lot of us, when we attend a meeting, share how that went and what we did. Any industry-related meetings, if you go to the bigger regional meetings, those are always great to post about. It could also be non-work-related meetings if you are volunteering for something or if you are really passionate about an organization and they have a certain cause going on. That's always something nice to post about. Like Tierra said, it's just a reflection of you in a professional manner but also that personal side of you. If you were looking to make more connections, people who see that on other people's feeds when they repost it will connect with you based on that personal element as well. So don't be afraid to post about non-work-related meetings as long as they represent everyone in a good light. Another thing that you could post about are professional achievements. If you get a promotion, that's really great to post on LinkedIn. Like I said, you never know if you are one day finding yourself looking for a new job. It is really important that employers can see the path that you've gone—kind of similar to your resume, but it's a really quick, one-stop-shop type of situation. They can pull up your LinkedIn profile and see everything there. They can see your certification completions and trainings. That's a really great place to kind of brag about yourself. Let people know that you're actively getting more educated and you're doing things in your career. It's great to share. People are excited for you. You'd be really shocked at how many people reshare a comment which also builds engagement on your page. I also really like to post things that you feel passionately about, so those organizational initiatives, industry-related success, or external companies. Just keep an open mind as long as it reflects everyone—including yourself and your employer—in a positive light. It's always something good to post to build engagement.

Some of the things that you should include in a LinkedIn post to start are professional photos. I will give you some examples, but think about when you are scrolling through LinkedIn and you see a blurry or crooked photo. You kind of don't even think twice about it; you just keep scrolling because you're like, "What in the heck is that?" But when it's a nice crisp photo or graphic, it really captures the audience's attention more. Proper grammar—I think this is always important. I know nowadays with AI, sometimes a typo can mean "at least they're typing it themselves," but it is really important to always make sure you're proofreading. It is a professional platform, and if there's a typo, it could reflect on you negatively. Tagging people and companies—this is something that not a lot of people think about, but when you tag someone or a company, the people that follow them or are connected with them on LinkedIn will then get your post on their feed. That helps build impressions on yours, which are views. Every single time

that comes up on someone's feed, they see your post, they might like your post, and then actually follow you or connect with it, building engagement on your post. Make sure you're tagging those people and widening your audience for your LinkedIn page; it's very important.

This also is related to hashtags. I know in the past Twitter has been huge with hashtags—I think SNL did an entire bit about this—but it is, in all seriousness, really important. If you're looking to build engagement with a wider audience of people, hashtags help group them together. I gave an example here: "It's excited to connect with transportation leaders at this year's conference. Looking forward to learning in collaboration." I wrote this as someone who might be in the civil engineering field, so they might be a civil engineer at a DOT. The hashtags that I did were transportation, civil engineering, and professional development. Anytime someone searches one of those hashtags, now this post is going to come up on that feed. I in particular do marketing for AASHTO, so my hashtag is constantly "AASHTOWare" because I want anybody who's curious about what AASHTOWare is to be able to search that hashtag and see everything we've done under one page. It's a really great way to boost engagement on your posts and find your target audience in a simpler manner.

I think we all know those people who really write the most lengthy LinkedIn post about a very simple achievement or something very minuscule in general, but they make it seem like they overcame a mountain. Some things to think about when you're writing a caption to avoid people from just scrolling without reading are to clearly state the subject of the post. I like to think of this as a subject line without being so obvious. Just state your subject in the first sentence or two. Are you at a specific meeting? Did you win a specific award? Are you celebrating a cause for a specific organization? Those are important things to highlight in the beginning because if someone is not interested in what you're writing about or it isn't clear, they're going to keep scrolling. Make sure you're stating that subject right away: "Hey, this week I was at the AASHTO annual meeting in Wisconsin," that sort of thing. Some of the key takeaways that you had from that, whether it was the audience, how many people were there, or if it was a specific ballot that got passed on a committee you're on. Things like that can be important. Any industry-related links are important to include if you don't want to make the post too lengthy but you want people to read more. You can write one to five sentences about the event and then add a link to where they can find more information. Or say there's a video to capture it on YouTube; you can say, "Check out more about this event at this link." I really like doing that because I think that it helps people who are actually interested get that external link but also build engagement on your post without making it too lengthy. It's important to ask yourself: Why is this post important to me? Why would it be important to other people? And what is the message that you're trying to convey? Again, going back to that "why," I think this helps your post be more clear and organized. A lot of people also tend to write several paragraphs on LinkedIn, and while it's not X and it doesn't need to be less than a certain amount of characters, I definitely think one to two paragraphs is more of the audience's goal for LinkedIn. People who write four paragraphs sometimes do get engagement, but it's typically not read as often and the engagement is much lower. From experience, you want to keep them short and

concise and to the point. I always like to think the who, what, when, where, why: Who was involved? What is this post about? When did it occur? Where, and why do we care? What are people really going to get from this post and how can I give them more information in a link?

When you are choosing photos, you want to choose the professional picture. You can see on the left I took a photo from the back of the room at one of our meetings last year and it's nice—you can see there's a good amount of people there and it's a panel discussion—but I can't really see much more than that other than some of the logos. But on the right-hand side, you can see a picture that our staff videographer took. I can identify each of the folks on this panel as well as the moderator. I can see every single logo. Now when I'm passing through this post on my LinkedIn feed, I might actually stop because maybe I know someone on this panel and I want to interact with this post now, or I see the logo of a software that I use regularly. It's important to make sure that you're thinking about the photos that you're posting. If they're blurry or crooked, they might not be seen as credible. Slow down, get a little bit closer than you might be comfortable with, and take a nice crisp photo. A lot of phones nowadays have better cameras than you'd really think. Taking a photo in a horizontal fashion is normally great if you're from the middle of the room. If you're really close to someone, a vertical angle is great. If you happen to be posting a video, from our experience, we've learned that posting a thumbnail can help build engagement because when you just post a link to a video, it doesn't actually show up as well in people's feeds. The algorithm is a complex thing, so I am not an expert on that—I've definitely been trying to navigate that and Tierra and I both try to read up a lot on it. But we've noticed that just posting a video link doesn't always capture the audience as well. When you post a video, post a photo as a thumbnail so that it's a regular-sized post instead of just a link.

When you're scrolling through your feed, it gives you the option to repost or repost with thoughts. If anyone is familiar with Twitter or X, they have retweets—it's the same concept. The difference is that reposting just reposts it on your feed so your followers will now see that. You're sharing something that you feel you want to bring awareness to, but nothing more. When you repost with thoughts, that's actually giving you the chance to voice your opinion on something. If you think someone posts something that is an interesting take on a new white paper, you can add your thoughts on what you think makes this more credible or what you find interesting. That will help build engagement on your post because people might comment and say, "I agree with your opinion," or "I disagree," or "I like that they wrote it this way." Giving it that greater visibility by adding your opinion always makes your followers want to interact more with you than just seeing that you reposted something.

We wanted to give you guys some examples of some good posts. Seeing it in practice is always great. One of our coworkers, Daniel, posted this back when we first did this presentation about a year ago, and he had just gone to a meeting—the DCA legislative summit—which he states in the very first sentence. He also tagged the organization that threw it and said where it was, all really important things if I'm someone reading this and I want to know where to get more information. A couple other things that he did that we

really liked were he tagged AASHTO, so any AASHTO followers will now see this on their feed. Then he used four hashtags directly relating to things that they either talked about or what the organization represents: maritime supply chain, freight, and transportation. Anytime someone searches those hashtags, it's all going to come up. Another one of our coworkers, Ben Sayed, had gone to the Committee on Bridges and Structures annual meeting and he pointed that out in the first sentence. He also used some emojis—these can be a little bit controversial—but when you're scrolling through LinkedIn, emojis can definitely help your post stand out. I immediately see the megaphone and I know he did something exciting or he wants to get my attention. He also lists some of his key takeaways, which I really like because I'm automatically thinking about my response to these, and he ends the post by asking, "Do these ring true in your state?" Naturally, if I'm a state member in the Bridge Department, I'm going to want to answer because I want to get people's feedback as well. It definitely helps build engagement. And then again, he used hashtags relating directly to the meeting and the subject. You're muted.

**Tierra Whitmore:** I know, I just forgot. I got a Teams message. OK. I'm going to quickly go over some social media metrics and reach and why they're just something you should pay attention to, especially if you're putting a lot of things out there on LinkedIn. Social media metrics help us understand how far our content travels and how those people interact with it. They show us what's working and where there's opportunity to improve. An impression is the number of times that your content is seen. That includes multiple views by the same person. If I saw your post in the morning and then I was scrolling through my feed again in the afternoon and I saw your post, that counts as two impressions. Impressions measure essentially the reach and awareness, not whether somebody interacted with it. That is where engagement comes in. Engagement talks about any way somebody engaged with a post: likes, clicking on the links, commenting, viewing the post. Even clicking on the "read more" option counts as an engagement. In turn, an engagement rate measures how much people are actually interacting with your content—that includes the likes, comments, shares, and reposts—but the engagement rate looks at the average number of those interactions compared to the amount of followers you have. This helps level the playing field for smaller accounts. The more a post is engaged with, the more the algorithm boosts and pushes out that post. And finally, guys, follow us on social media. The AASHTO main account is on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and X. Lexi runs AASHTOWare and they are on LinkedIn. We have an AASHTO Resource office out in Frederick—they are also on social media. Then another program that I work closely with, Product Evaluation and Audit Solutions, they also have their own LinkedIn page. So come hang out with us on social media.

**Alexis Berkley:** Do we have any questions?

**Bob Cullen:** Questions. Just do the electronic show of hands and I'll be happy to call on you. We do have one. Eric Schwarz. Go ahead, Eric. Don't forget to unmute.

**Eric Schwarz:** Yeah.

**Bob Cullen:** Go ahead.

**Eric Schwarz:** Let me turn the light on here so I don't look... so thank you both. One of my questions coming into this is can you tell us about if you guys have used the LinkedIn Premium experience, how worth it it is, and what enhancements are available? Is it worth the \$15 or so a month investment for the LinkedIn Premium Careers level?

**Tierra Whitmore:** I can answer this one. I think I've used Premium a little bit in the past. It very genuinely depends on what you want to do with your LinkedIn account. It pushes your account out more for job hunting purposes—it puts your profile in front of more recruiters and more people in your industry. The algorithm does tend to favor Premium because it's a paid add-on, but also one of the biggest attributes Premium has is being able to see who viewed your profile, including recruiters, companies, and industry experts. As somebody who doesn't pay for that, I can't see that; it just tells me somebody's looked at my profile, but it doesn't tell me who. So getting in front of more recruiters and industry partners and then the ability to see who's been going through your profile.

**Eric Schwarz:** Oh, thank you very much. You may have just sold me on that for now because I am in the job market. So thank you.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Gotcha. Perfect.

**Eric Schwarz:** Thank you.

**Roslyn Alleman:** I've got a question.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you, Eric.

**Roslyn Alleman:** I've got a question for you.

**Bob Cullen:** And next we have... go ahead, Roslyn.

**Roslyn Alleman:** Sorry. Just a quick question. Is 10 years old too old for a profile picture?

**Bob Cullen:** Go ahead. Roslyn, why don't you go?

**Alexis Berkley:** Yes.

**Tierra Whitmore:** I will say the general rule is every five years you should change your profile picture, or if you've made some major changes to your appearance.

**Roslyn Alleman:** What if I still look like that? I just haven't aged a day in 10 years.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Girl, then go off! Absolutely.

**Alexis Berkley:** If you haven't changed... I always think of it as, if you go to a conference and I've never met you in person, will I recognize you based on your LinkedIn profile? That's how I like to think of it. If I will, then I think it's fine. But typically people look a lot different in 10 years. But if you don't, then yeah, go girl.

**Roslyn Alleman:** Hey Cortana.

**Bob Cullen:** All right, thanks. Thank you, Roslyn. Next we have Enid. Go ahead Enid.

**Enid:** Hi, thank you. This was a fantastic presentation. I got so much information out. I'm starting a new business and my LinkedIn account was one that has been sitting; I haven't touched for a long time. So I want to thank you. There's a lot that I need to add to change to do to it. You guys gave me lots and lots of really good tips, so thank you.

**Alexis Berkley:** You're welcome.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Good, we're glad.

**Alexis Berkley:** Congrats on the new business.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Yeah.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you, Enid.

**Enid:** Thank you.

**Bob Cullen:** Any other questions or comments, please? Do the electronic hand and I'll be happy to call on you. In the meantime, I'll just jump in here a little myself. Excellent presentation, Lexi and Tierra. What I really like is how you really did shed some helpful light on quite a few things. Some of the things that really jumped out at me were the caption tips and the asset choosing—very vital when it comes to social media sites. I appreciate what you had to share as far as that goes and also just the overall idea of a need for building engagement there within the parameters of LinkedIn. I really did want to focus on the hashtags—very informative. The way you describe hashtags really brings out the digital immigrant in me. I'm a digital immigrant, not a digital native, and I really struggle, particularly going from one site to another because LinkedIn is not Facebook or Instagram. The dynamics are different and I'm still trying to get my arms around the role of hashtags within the confines of LinkedIn. I guess I'll phrase the question this way: How's it been for each of you trying to effectively deploy hashtags as far as LinkedIn is concerned? Are there any particular trial and error war stories that you'd like to share, or did you find it pretty manageable and easy to embrace and effectively use?

**Alexis Berkley:** I can start. For AASHTO in particular, compared to my personal account, I found that making sure the subject is in fact a broader subject is better. Sometimes when you do too niche of a hashtag, it doesn't amplify like you think it will if

people don't know about the hashtag. That's another thing: you have to make sure that you tell people about it. I've used certain hashtags and I'll search them after to see how many people used it and it didn't really work out, so make sure that you're communicating that you're using that hashtag. Tierra and I have talked about using the same one for every annual meeting to help build that engagement. When people see other accounts using it, that's a really effective way to keep it consistent and allow people to catch on. It can take a little bit of time, but if you stay patient and persistent, it helps.

**Bob Cullen:** Yeah.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Yeah, I think you want your hashtags to not be too niche, but also still very related to the subject you have at hand for sure.

**Bob Cullen:** OK. Great. Thank you both again. Very helpful. I thought what you had to say about hashtags during the course of the presentation I found particularly instructive and it has given me a lot to think about. We still have some time for questions and comments. Just go ahead and raise your hand. I will say also—and I have this not only written down but also highlighted with a circle—"concise and engaging." I think those are two things... "concise" is something, as a lot of the folks here in attendance can testify to, being concise isn't one of my strengths in particular when it comes to email announcements. But certainly as far as what you were emphasizing as far as LinkedIn is concerned, it's good to be concise but also engaging. I really appreciated the point you raised about that and the examples you shared. But I am going to very happily hand the microphone over to Enid.

**Enid:** And you may have answered this—I had to take a phone call for just a couple of minutes and I may have missed it. Do you work with the Premium function and is that worth the yearly fee that they charge?

**Tierra Whitmore:** I think you mean the Premium function?

**Enid:** A Premium. Did I say Premier? Sorry, yeah.

**Tierra Whitmore:** No, it's pretty similar. We touched on it a little bit with Eric, but basically the Premium function depends on what you're doing with LinkedIn. I know that it really serves people who are job hunting. The algorithm favors the Premium accounts; it pushes their posts more on the feed, so you're more likely to get views and engagement. And you can also tell who views your account. If you don't have the Premium function and people visit your account, it just tells you that somebody visited. But if you have that function, you get to be nosy back and see who saw your stuff. So it just depends if it's worth it for you.

**Enid:** OK.

**Tierra Whitmore:** It depends on what you want to do on LinkedIn.

**Enid:** OK. Yeah, no, that really helps out and that's what I thought you were talking about with Eric. But like I said, I've had a couple phone calls and miss sections of it. I'm sorry to make you repeat that again. In fact, as you guys were talking about this, I thought I need to look at my LinkedIn account, and I pulled it up. I found that my account was still linked to my job at WYDOT, so I had to go in and change my email address and my phone number. As I was looking at it, I thought, well, it offers this Premium, I'm not sure. There's a lot of work I've got to do and this was just spot-on the right time for you guys to come up with this. I can't say it enough, I appreciate you getting this information out there. And thank you Bob for thinking about this as a good presentation.

**Bob Cullen:** You're welcome. Thank you, Enid.

**Alexis Berkley:** And here's our information. I'm sorry.

**Roslyn Alleman:** Just a reminder to everybody, but this presentation and the slides and everything will be in Rosa P, probably maybe even as soon as next week.

**Bob Cullen:** OK, wonderful. We have a few more minutes left before we have to adjourn here. I did want to pick up... I'm always more than happy to yield the floor to Enid because she's more focused than I am with the questions and the follow-ups. But I wanted to pick up where I left off before about "concise and engaging." I love the examples you shared from a couple of our esteemed colleagues there. I like Daniel anyway—he's a great guy—and what you had to share for his examples is very helpful. But I especially liked what you shared about Ben there, just the takeaways and the way he had them so nicely broken down and the way it was formatted. I can see it being potentially instructive for just about any of us in terms of what, whether it's a conference that we attend or some other kind of event, just being able to have it summarized so effectively that it really does get a positive response and perhaps even a good bit of outreach by way of LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is still a bit of a learning curve for me too. I can absolutely identify with what Enid was saying about some things that need to be updated in my own profile. I think it was Tierra talking about the headers—my photo is fairly up-to-date, but I think maybe I can be a little bit more intentional and maybe even professional in terms of the headers I have. I usually seem to go with the 19th century paintings and everything, but if it's something that can somehow tie in with my professional experience or aspirations, all the better.

I'll ask both of you this question and preface it with an observation of my own. How was it when each of you first jumped into the whole brave new world of LinkedIn? Did you find it easy to adapt to it, or were there any particular hurdles that you may have encountered? For myself, I really had to get over the fact that LinkedIn wasn't a business-oriented carbon copy of Facebook. Again, as I said before, I've had to learn that each social media site is different in its own way. LinkedIn was the one hurdle I had

to overcome—that it wasn't Facebook for professionals; it had its own unique traits and dynamics. If you have anything to share about your own introduction into LinkedIn.

**Tierra Whitmore:** I'll go ahead. I've always been interested in social media. I kind of always cringed at LinkedIn a little bit just because it was a little more professional and buttoned up. In college, as part of my curriculum, I had to take a couple of classes where I had to work with a couple of the platforms, including LinkedIn. That was helpful for me, but I didn't utilize it too much until I got to AASHTO. It wasn't too hard—I've learned all of these social media platforms have very similar functions. Not to sound super Gen Z, but the difference is the intent and the "vibes" of the platform, honestly. I just kind of had to change a little bit. While it's not exactly Facebook for professionals, a lot of the functions are very similar to Facebook—like posting and having connections and followers like friends. You can even create business pages. What I had to get used to was the way I showed up. I had to get used to thinking of things more from a professional standpoint. I was basically just dressing things up differently for different platforms. I had to figure out how I had to show up and what the vibes and language should be.

**Bob Cullen:** Very helpful. Thank you. How about you, Lexi?

**Alexis Berkley:** I think I always find myself to be a little bit behind my generation for our adaptability to social media. I think I'm a little different than Tierra where I don't love social media, if I'm being quite honest. So it was a little bit of a learning curve for me. But one thing that I'll just kind of quickly add is that there are still things that LinkedIn does that can make work fun. I think talking about professionalism in a fun way—following like a women in marketing page or something related to that and they post relatable content. I think that aspect of social media is still there but in a professional manner. I find myself actually loving to go to LinkedIn on my free time just scrolling through and seeing what people are accomplishing. A lot of times it's really great to see people getting new jobs or getting a promotion. I really like that aspect of it. It can be fun; it doesn't always have to be stiff.

**Bob Cullen:** Well stated. Really appreciate thanks to both of you. We're wrapping it up, however I am going to ask Christine Gomola—she looks like she has a question or comment. Go ahead, Christine. Don't forget to unmute.

**Christine Gomola:** I just had a quick question for Lexi. Because Tierra, you talked earlier about being able to kind of snoop back on somebody. So when you two started talking, I immediately opened LinkedIn and Tierra, I found you immediately and kind of snooped through your site. But Lexi, it took me forever to find you because I was working on your Teams name, which is Alexis Berkley. And couldn't get to Lexi until I saw the last slide that said "Lexi." So my question is on LinkedIn, the name you choose to put there is important. Is there a way to link somehow the findability of your site—Alexis versus Lexi, or anybody who uses a middle name as opposed to a first name? Do you have any ideas on that?

**Alexis Berkley:** I actually struggle with this a lot when I'm trying to find people to tag in posts. If we go to a conference and they're in a photo or something like that. And I honestly should change mine to "Alexis." I didn't really go by Alexis until AASHTO's email was "Alexis Berkley." So that was a little bit of a switch for me. But I think making sure the rest of your information is really strong—like where you work and where you went to school—can help someone identify you. If I'm looking for someone named William that goes by Bill and I know he works at Wisconsin DOT, I can search his last name and Wisconsin DOT. Those additional pieces of information and the intuitive nature of LinkedIn will group you in the right section.

**Christine Gomola:** Right. And that's how I found you was actually through AASHTO. I went to the AASHTO site and scrolled through who was there and then I saw, "Oh, this must be her." So my question of is there a way to have both of those names lead to you—it's not a function on LinkedIn at this point?

**Alexis Berkley:** Not to my knowledge. Tierra, do you know any more details about that?

**Tierra Whitmore:** I don't think it is. I actually wish all social media platforms would adopt that function because that would be very helpful.

**Christine Gomola:** OK. Well, are you talking to a roomful of librarians? We're all about findability, right? Anyway, thank you.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you, Christine. Eric, did you have something to share?

**Eric Schwarz:** Yeah, I'm not a LinkedIn expert, but I know Facebook is like this. So I tested "Robert Cullen." I assume Robert is actually your full name, Bob, and he came up.

**Bob Cullen:** That's right.

**Eric Schwarz:** But we're also already connected. My guess is that the programming the algorithm finds Robert and Bob and William and Bill and Tom and Thomas, but maybe not Alexis and Lexi because it's not as common a name or a nickname.

**Alexis Berkley:** Yeah, I probably will be switching my name after this meeting if I'm being honest, because I actually didn't even think about... a lot of people can't find my email, so this is a good conversation for me too, guys.

**Eric Schwarz:** I mean, in your case, I might do Alexis (Lexi) Berkeley or vice versa.

**Alexis Berkley:** Yeah. Great point.

**Bob Cullen:** OK. Great. Thank you, Eric. We're going to take one more question and comment, this one from Ryan Holman. Then we'll wrap it up. Go ahead, Ryan.

**Ryan Holman:** Folks, I actually noticed when I was looking in my LinkedIn to see if I was going to adjust my name, there is an "additional name" field. I don't know if that could be used for something like a maiden name or a nickname or a name you used to go by. That might be able to help here too. I'm not sure how it works in the algorithm, but it's there and it might be worth looking at.

**Alexis Berkley:** Yeah, that's very interesting. Thank you. I'm about to change my last name too, so I will be doing a whole revamp. I'm going to dive into this and if I find any additional information, I'll let all of you know via email.

**Tierra Whitmore:** I will say, Ryan, that additional name line that you're speaking about is a great addition. It will show up underneath when you click to the profile. I wish they had a function where it shows up next to your name on the regular feed, but it is nice to know there's also that option where it'll at least show up on your profile.

**Bob Cullen:** Great. Thank you very much, and thank you Ryan for bringing it up. Roslyn, go ahead.

**Roslyn Alleman:** I did just want to say that if any of you have done TLRs in the past, you can link to them from your LinkedIn profile from Rosa P because we have many of those presentations in there. If there's one that you want to share with people, you can do that that way. And I would just like to say that I have in fact changed my LinkedIn profile photo; it is not in fact 10 years old anymore.

**Alexis Berkley:** Yay!

**Roslyn Alleman:** I had to check.

**Bob Cullen:** All right. Good news. Well, listen, all good things must come to an end. Again, appreciate our speakers today, Lexi and Tierra. Thank you so much for sharing your information and insights with all of us. Lexi, especially appreciate you going over and above the call of duty because you are getting married the day after tomorrow. So thank you so much for setting aside time from wedding preparation to be one of our speakers today. Tierra, I think you're going to be part of the wedding party, so I'm grateful that you're making yourself available today. Thank you so much—this has been a wonderful past hour thanks to what you had to share and to the participation of quite a few of you in attendance here today. We now need to adjourn this month's TLR. Keep on the lookout for information about upcoming TLRs, particularly the next one that's scheduled for Thursday, May 14th. Again, thanks to everyone. Thanks to Roslyn and to our speakers and to all of you, and I hope that everyone has a great rest of the day and great rest of the week. Take care.

**Alexis Berkley:** Thank you guys so much.

**Tierra Whitmore:** Thanks guys.

**Roslyn Alleman:** Thanks Bob. Thanks everybody.

**Eric Schwarz:** Thank you.

**John Cherney:** Thank you.