



Bechtle Transforms Sales Thanks to LinkedIn Sales Navigator

**BECHTLE**

"Expanding personalized customer engagement using LinkedIn Sales Navigator is at the top of my agenda."



Thilo Huys

Head of Marketing

Bechtle Systemhaus Holding AG

Headquarters	Germany
Industry	Technology

Employees	15,000
More at	www.bechtle.com



The Challenge

Tradition Meets Transformation

Bechtle, with over 85 IT system houses closely connected to its customers, and IT e-commerce companies in 14 countries, is one of Europe's leading IT companies. Founded in 1983, Bechtle employs over 14,500 people and serves more than 70,000 customers from industry, trade, the public sector, and the financial market by guiding them through digital transformation and offering a comprehensive range of IT infrastructure and IT operation solutions.

Like all companies, Bechtle is adapting to new working processes that have emerged after the pandemic and because of new technology innovations like AI, processes that are changing the sales profession profoundly. "We're talking about a real transformation here," says Thilo Huys, who heads marketing at Bechtle Systemhaus Holding AG.

Traditional sales strategies no longer work like they once did. At Bechtle, this can be seen in the show and no-show rates of customer events, and not least in regular customer surveys: While 64% of all surveyed customers once wanted to be contacted by phone, this figure has dropped to 6% recently. To reach their customers, one must rely on digital channels and techniques. And that's just the beginning: Not only has the method of outreach changed, but also the way a salesperson speaks to them, believes Huys: "There will be no return to the old days. Even the boomers, to which I belong, have now understood this."





The Solution

Unbeatable Together: Modern sales combined with strong local presence

Bechtle has been using LinkedIn Sales Navigator for seven years as digital support for sales. Senior Marketing Manager Judith Fauser has championed the technology at Bechtle from the very beginning, resulting in a comprehensive enablement program for system houses and specialists. From social media readiness and social selling to the Bechtle corporate influencer community. "LinkedIn offers us the optimal platform to meet the new requirements," says Fauser. After all, Bechtle's customers also want to be understood by their service providers: "They want to know that I have am familiar with them, their company, and their challenges."

9,000+ Leads

More than 9,000 leads generated and contacted via LinkedIn Sales Navigator in 2023

80,000+

Over 80,000 searches were conducted in Sales Navigator last year

24,000

new connections made

And there is hardly a more reliable source for this than the information that LinkedIn members provide in their profiles. "As IT solution providers, we should have understood that we need to seize the opportunities of the digital world first," says

marketing manager Thilo Huys. "Our communication behavior in business has changed significantly in recent years." For him, interaction in social media is king: "Where I used to have a phone list and had to call my contacts, it's now about staying in touch and reacting on different channels. That's a big challenge. Because the number of InMail messages on LinkedIn is rising rapidly."

But the success of Bechtle is not only based on its own digital footprint, but above all on the precise market knowledge of its more than 100 locations in Germany. "Our sales professionals know exactly what their customers expect from Lower Bavaria to Kiel," explains Huys. This local anchoring, coupled with a modern sales tool, is the key to successful sales work, Huys is convinced. "Expanding personalized customer engagement using Sales Navigator is therefore at the top of my agenda."

"I don't know of any comparable platform that offers so many applications for companies."



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However, the many system houses and companies of different sizes are also under different management, explains Huys: "Our Bechtle entrepreneurs naturally have more degrees of freedom than is the case in centralized companies. This means, conversely, that top-down does not work here."

So how do you roll out a modern sales program across such a complex organizational structure? To convince more executives at Bechtle of Sales Navigator and its possibilities, Huys relies on persuasion.



The Results

A Journey Worth the Reward

Thilo and his team employ various tactics to demonstrate the value of Sales Navigator internally. Continuous training, a centrally budgeted, speakers from within the company and LinkedIn advocating for the product, and presentations on best practices and use cases at sales management meetings.

Coaching on how to optimize one's LinkedIn profile is particularly in demand, says Huys. No wonder, given how much research customers do before responding to outreach message- about products, but also about their business partners. Those who receive an InMail message typically click on the profile of the contact first, according to LinkedIn data. This means that salespeople who clearly demonstrate on their profile how they can support their customers with tailored products or solutions increase the likelihood that their requests will be accepted.

To further promote usage among their companies, Bechtle also relies on so-called "champions". These are sales professionals who maintain a particularly effective LinkedIn presence and can thus build trusting relationships at scale. They act within the organization as multipliers to help other salespeople achieve a similar level of excellence. Champions are often incentivized with internal competitions.

All this persuasion is not a sprint at Bechtle, but more of a marathon, admits Huys: "But the endurance pays off." This is also shown by internal evaluations at Bechtle: Sales Navigator users at Bechtle have on average almost **3 times as many decision-maker connections as employees without a license**.

The Success Story Continues

The Bechtle team is also looking ahead to the future. Huys says, "The seamless integration into

our in-house CRM system is next on the agenda. This will be another boost to win supporters for the tool. Because with that integration, information about customers, leads, and potential contacts can be exchanged even more easily within the sales teams." A pilot for this is already underway with a test group of salespeople.

Huys himself now uses the LinkedIn business platform as the first source of information for everything related to IT and technology. "And I always stay up to date on developments within my own company," he says, adding, "When I look at the access numbers to our company posts, I see further potential for internal and external communication." He concludes, "I don't know of any comparable platform that offers so many applications for companies."

**BECHTLE**

With more than 85 system houses and IT e-commerce operations in 14 countries, Bechtle is one of Europe's leading IT providers. Founded in 1983, the group is headquartered in Neckarsulm, Germany, and currently employs over 15,000 people.

Bechtle offers its more than 70,000 customers from industry and commerce, the public sector, and the financial market a comprehensive, manufacturer-independent portfolio of IT infrastructure and IT operations solutions.

Bechtle is listed on the MDAX and TecDAX indices. In 2023, the revenue amounted to approximately EUR 6.4B. For more information, please visit www.bechtle.com.