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Module 1 – Digital Skills for Green Entrepreneurs

Unit 6: Social Networks

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Unit 6: Social Networks

By the turn of the 21st century, social media had become a growing global force as technology advanced, the cost of digital devices dropped, and the percentage of people using social media increased. Indeed, interest in creating digital profiles, building relationships and collaborating on content online has grown worldwide, especially among young people. This phenomenon caught the attention of many educators, prompting research and experiments on the educational uses of social media.

The term "social networking" came into use in the mid-1990s, and various Internet thought leaders took credit for coining it. Among them was Darrell Berry, a Tokyo-based web strategist and founder of a digital environment. He used the phrase "social networking spaces" in a 1995 essay predicting how the Internet would evolve.

However, many academics date the official beginning of social networking to 1997, when CompuServe created a short-lived social network called SixDegrees.com. This site provided features that would soon become hallmarks of social networking sites: user-generated profiles and a visible list of connections. Registered users could create a profile and a public list of friends, announce their school affiliations, and send instant messages to other users. At one point, SixDegrees.com had over a million registered users; however, both CompuServe and SixDegrees.com emerged during the Web 1.0 era, before people were used to interacting in digital spaces. SixDegrees.com closed in 2002, considered by many to be technology ahead of its time.

Social networking gained popularity in 2003 with the creation of the Friendster social networking site, which quickly grew a following. That same year also saw the launch of the social networking sites "LinkedIn" (a space for professional networking) and "MySpace" (a space for musicians, artists, and general socializing). In 2004, "Facebook for Harvard Students" was created as an extension of the print "facebook" for college students. Soon after, more social platforms followed, quickly making an impact on popular culture. "YouTube" (launched in 2005) became a prominent space for video sharing. "Twitter" (launched in 2006) is an indispensable platform for microblogging. "Pinterest" (launched in 2010) is considered a prominent place to curate visual information related to a topic of interest. "Instagram" (launched in 2010) is a famous place to share photos and short videos.

Although social media is often associated in popular culture with youth, its use is also growing rapidly among older people. For the first time in 2015, more than half of all American adults 65 and older who were online were members of Facebook. That represented almost a third of the elderly in the country. However, the largest percentage of social networking users are teenagers, already in the United States, 71% use more than one social networking site.
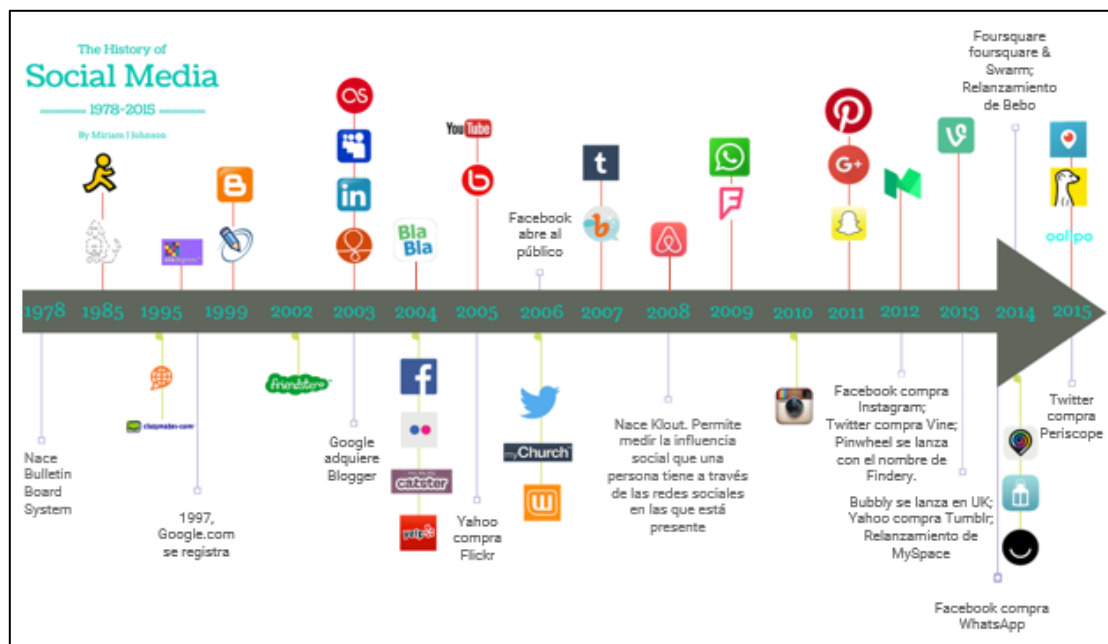
Image 1: Evolution of social networks. Source: Future Marketing

1. Uses and utilities of social networks

1.1.   Uses of social networks

Although social networks are difficult to define because these technologies change frequently due to use, many agree that social networks include digital technology, in which users connect with other users by sharing content.

In general, the different types of social networks are:

- Wikis (for example, Wikipedia);
- Blogs (for example, Blogger);
- Micro-blogging services (for example, Twitter).
- Video sharing services (for example, YouTube).
- Photo sharing services (eg Flickr).

The inclination towards a social network for a company is not a matter of choice, but rather of necessity. For this decision to be productive and transmit the best image of the business, it must be relevant, in terms of the quality of its digital presence. In fact, no social media is the same. The choice of network is directly tied to the DNA of your business and the types of content you want to promote and the audiences you want to reach. Therefore, before deciding to create an account or page, you have to think carefully about the relevance of the media that allow you to transmit your content and reach your audiences.

Image 2: Social media overview

Source: Aprovéchate de social media

Below is an overview of the most used social networks today:

Facebook: It is a social network that allows you to share any type of content (texts, videos, images, share links, etc.) and have a conversation with your audiences.

Twitter: The public that uses it, is generally young people between the ages of 15 and 34. Almost 70-80% of journalists are on Twitter and the majority are men: politicians and public authorities, actors, athletes, etc. Twitter has become one of the main sources of information in real time. All events are visible and it is what gives this platform both power and risk. This is a micro-blogging platform, which means that your posts are limited in characters, about 160 symbols to make a message.

LinkedIn: Professional network par excellence. In addition to working on your employer brand, it allows you to distribute quality content, directly or indirectly related to your business, with professionals and prospects (information) from your sector of activity, providing greater visibility through your collaborators.

Google+: Since its launch in 2011, this network has been thought of as an alternative to Facebook. Despite Google's efforts to enforce it, Google+ hasn't really captured the attention of its audience. With 300 million accounts worldwide. But user activity is still relatively low, except in some sectors such as digital marketing or new technologies.

Pinterest & Instagram: They are applications that allow the distribution of information under a visual that is experiencing strong worldwide growth in terms of use, mostly by young people. Very useful, therefore, for a company with a visual activity and for e-commerce. Like Twitter, fashion and sports celebrities (as

well as reality shows) have a large presence on Instagram, among other things, with the in order for your audience to follow your activities. It is a platform that allows you to create your content in the form of images, videos, but also to broadcast an event live.

YouTube: Since its creation in 2005 and its subsequent acquisition by Google, the platform has been gaining ground thanks to its video content. Today, YouTube has one billion users around the world. An advantage that makes it an essential network in the daily life of Internet users. The number of hours of playback per month on YouTube increases by 50% every year, while every minute 300 hours of video are uploaded to the network. It is a useful platform for sharing and promoting your videos.

1.2.   Uses of social networks

Social networks create the potential for users to meet and connect with new people. The structure of many social networking sites centres on the profile of a user and their "friends". This label may be inappropriate, as users are often not friends with each other in the traditional sense of the term. The reasons why people connect through social networking sites vary.

Many social networking sites have features that allow users to write messages to their friends, either publicly or privately, and occasionally make new connections. In addition, these sites are increasingly being used for less personal projects, such as promotional campaigns that spark mobilization at local, national and international levels. Which has made them gain popularity as spaces to meet, collaborate, create and learn.

Among the main utilities of social networks, the following can be mentioned:

- **Create link:** This is the main reason for a company to invest in social networks. Create a link with your community, to request it, ask for its opinion, ideas, participation in events, etc., also becoming a reliable and credible source of information for them, by answering their questions and interacting with it.
- **Keep touch:** Among the people who follow each other on social networks, all kinds of profiles are "hidden". Volunteers, partners, other companies, journalists, people simply sensitive to your issue, etc. Maintaining contact through social networks increases the possibilities of collaboration and exchange.
- **Create a potential distribution network:** Your followers are ambassadors of your company. Your contacts include people "capable of" and "prepared to" spread your messages and comment on your products. Thanks to them, their social networks can gain popularity and interaction. Ambassadors do not exist if their presence on social networks is not qualitative and regular.
- **Communicate at a lower cost:** Of course, with "social" communication, there are no printing costs. However, this communication requires a time-consuming presence on social networks, because without this, you will not be able to create links, maintain contacts, create a potential distribution network.

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2. How to do business on social networks?

2.1. Steps to follow before doing business on social networks

Before embarking on an unfamiliar environment, it's important to explore the platforms and spaces you want to get started with. Also, it is important to know the objectives to be achieved, to allow a better definition of the tool and the social network that best suits the business. This implies a preliminary analysis, which will allow you to orient yourself in the right direction and at the right pace, addressing the right people. The steps to follow would be the following:

1- Analyze the environment.

2- Understand how it works.

3- Know your strengths and weaknesses.

3- Identify the audiences you want to reach.

4- Define the objectives to be achieved: For example: create a community of supporters (fan club), federate the community, make yourself known, promote social or expiration actions, run campaigns, etc.

5- Make an inventory of your digital tools (websites, social networks, blogs, etc.).

6- Understand and manage electronic reputation to be able to interact directly with Internet users, but also to be prepared for any type of criticism.

2.2. Electronic reputation management

Electronic reputation (also called cyber reputation) is an extension of company reputation, and reflects what is being said about you on the Internet.

For example, a company that invests a lot of money or effort in the local development of its country, but because it does not have social networks or does not communicate it well in them, nobody will be able to find out who it is and what it does, or worse, it is transmitted a false image of what it contributes to society, which generates negative criticism.

Negative reviews can degrade a brand, and affect member trust. Therefore, a reputation management policy must be implemented, based on the following points:

- **Have a positive media impact:** It is very important to have a good relationship with the press and maintain permanent contact to communicate about your products and services.
- **Take care of its members:** The members that make up the digital community are the ambassadors of the company/organization/association. You have to take care of them and listen to them, since they have the ability to impact reputation towards a positive or negative image. This audience is important to your digital image.
- **Analyze the contents and statistics carefully:** In order to know the digital reputation that the company has, it is necessary to analyze the behaviour around previous publications, as well as the statistics of the page.

2.3.   Communicate on social networks

Before communicating on social networks, a strategy must be put in place, which allows the sharing of global and relevant linked content. Therefore, a series of questions must be answered:

• Why am I doing a digital strategy? What do I want to achieve? Notoriety, brand, publicity…etc.

• Who? Who do you want to address? Several target audiences => messages adapted to their needs and objectives.

• What? It is what defines the editorial line of the page

• What can be published? Current affairs, articles, events, videos, photos, testimonials, storytelling, etc.

• When? The frequency of transmission of the message.

Indeed, it is very important to target the audience you want to talk about, so you have to know its members and partners. In this case, the free Google Analytics tool can be used, which allows to know the age, the distribution by sex, the interests of the visitors, the geographical area. This information is very important for defining the digital communication strategy and allows you to personalize messages, establish the tone, content, formats and more, and defines the editorial line of the page.

The content to be published must always follow the same tone and the same direction, avoiding deviations from the predefined editorial line. It is important to explain what the company does, define its purpose, defend its values and expose its services and products. You have to humanize the relationship with Internet users and speak from the heart to the audience, and take into account the comments that allow you to develop visibility and increase the identification of the page.

Undoubtedly, you must have representative images and photos, since they allow you to attract a larger audience, but beware of image rights problems. The same happens when studies or statistics are chosen, you always have to contextualize them and cite the original sources.

Examples of publications that can be made: Interviews, the photo of the week, business successes, press articles related to the product or service, etc.

When preparing the content, you can also list the people who can get involved to give the content a boost, such as influencers, sponsors, or volunteer helpers.

It is important to remember the need to maintain good relations with the press, since a large percentage of journalists have accounts on social networks.

As for the frequency of transmission, there is no rule, it generally depends on the country, the age and behaviour of the visitors, the content and the objective you want to reach. The same happens with the schedules, a specific time cannot be defined, although many studies favour the schedule between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and on weekends, with an average of 3 publications per week. For this reason, an agenda for

publications (Editorial Calendar) must be put in place to plan publications, whether free or paid.

Also, it is highly recommended to use social networks for content planning and organization, such as Tweetdeck and Hootsuite, which allow content to be curated and broadcast through an editorial calendar.

Examples of mistakes that can be avoided:

- Texts that are too long.

- Not having the same editorial line for the same business in the different social networks.

- Spelling errors or poor writing quality.

- Use a writing/content format similar to press releases.

- Address issues that are not current.

Frequent questions:

Q: Is it better to post a video on Youtube or directly on Facebook?

A: Better directly on Facebook because autoplay drives more views, and Facebook streams more videos uploaded directly to the site than links from Youtube.

Q: What elements should be taken into account when preparing the content?

A: The sociodemographic description of the usual audience, the originality of the text, the statistics to see the peak hours, the relevance of the content. It is important to be aware that you are writing to humans and not to Google robots, you have to vary the words and avoid texts that are too long. This turns the Internet user into a sensitive volunteer, who will make the publication more visible.

Q: What is the best social network to promote your business?

A: There is not really a good and a bad social network, it depends more on the public you want to reach and the goal you want to achieve. If the objective is to find work partners or recruit them for your business, the best option would be LinkedIn, if the objective is to advertise a product or service, Facebook or Instagram are considered good options, even if they are not directed to the same category of people. If the idea is to give the business more visibility with the help of the press, you have to choose Twitter.

3. How to create a page on social networks?

3.1. Create a Facebook page

Before we begin, the first thing we should know is that currently it is not possible to create a Facebook page for companies without it being associated with a personal account or profile (which will be designated as owner/administrator).

First we have to create a personal profile, which will later manage the company's Facebook page. Facebook is free, they only charge us when we advertise. We must bear in mind that in order to open a Facebook page, the first thing we need is a Google account, that is, an email from gmail.com, so if they do not have it, they must be created.

With Gmail we can now open a Facebook account. In the browser, we put "Facebook", and we access the one that tells us to register. We follow the steps that they tell us by adding what they ask for, it is important that at the end of everything they are accepted: the conditions. They will send us an email to the email with a key.

The page is already created, we have to complete the profile:
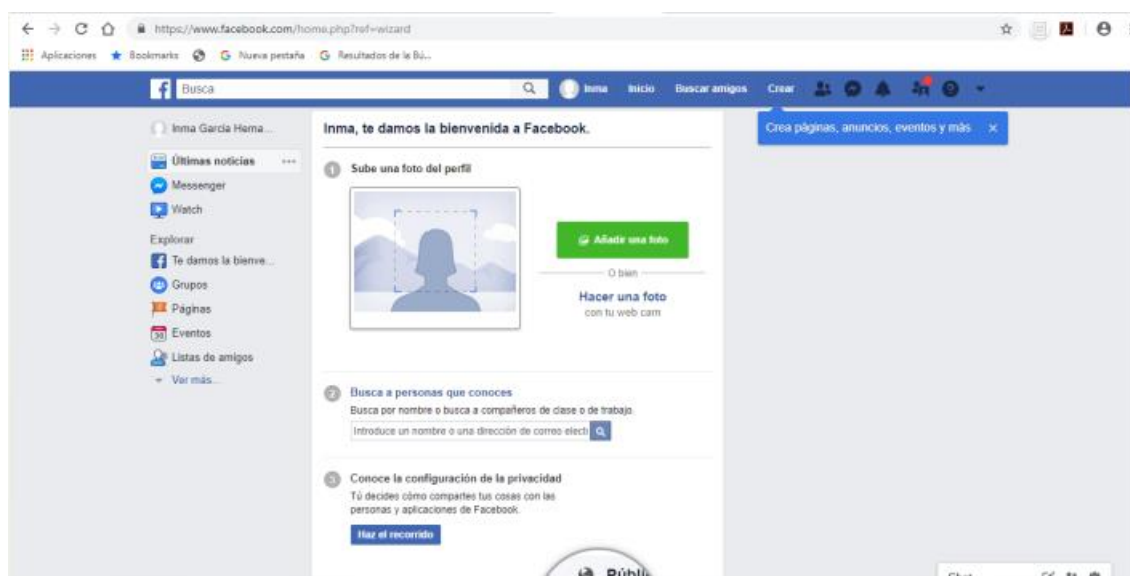
Once the profile is created, they can put a photo, if they wish, what is important is to configure the privacy to authorize and prevent certain people from accessing their data.

In the following image, it is specified how privacy is edited:

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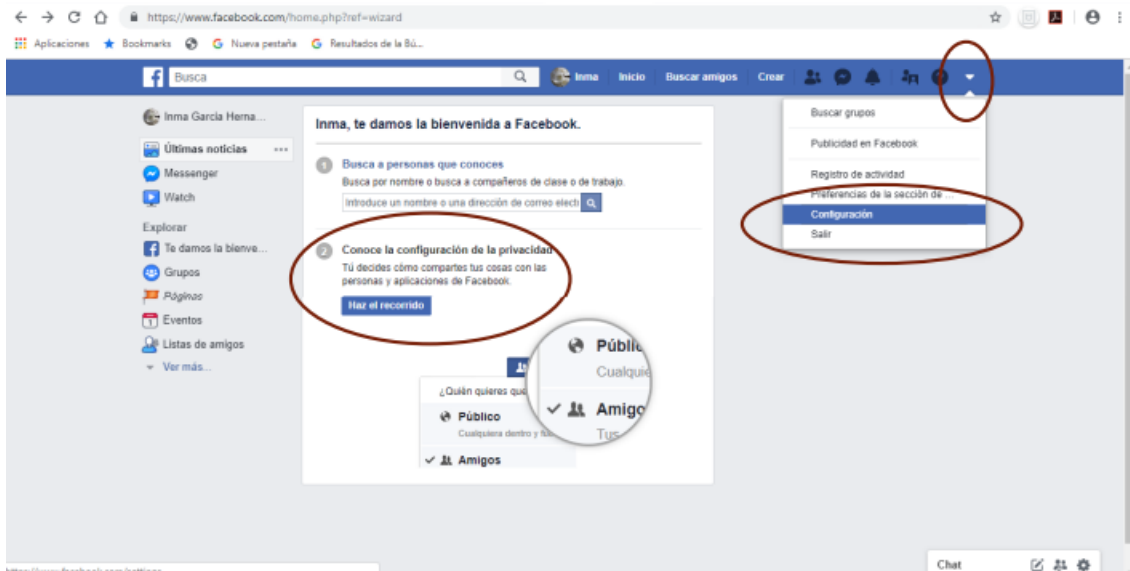
Once you access the privacy tools, you can edit and choose the most appropriate privacy for us.
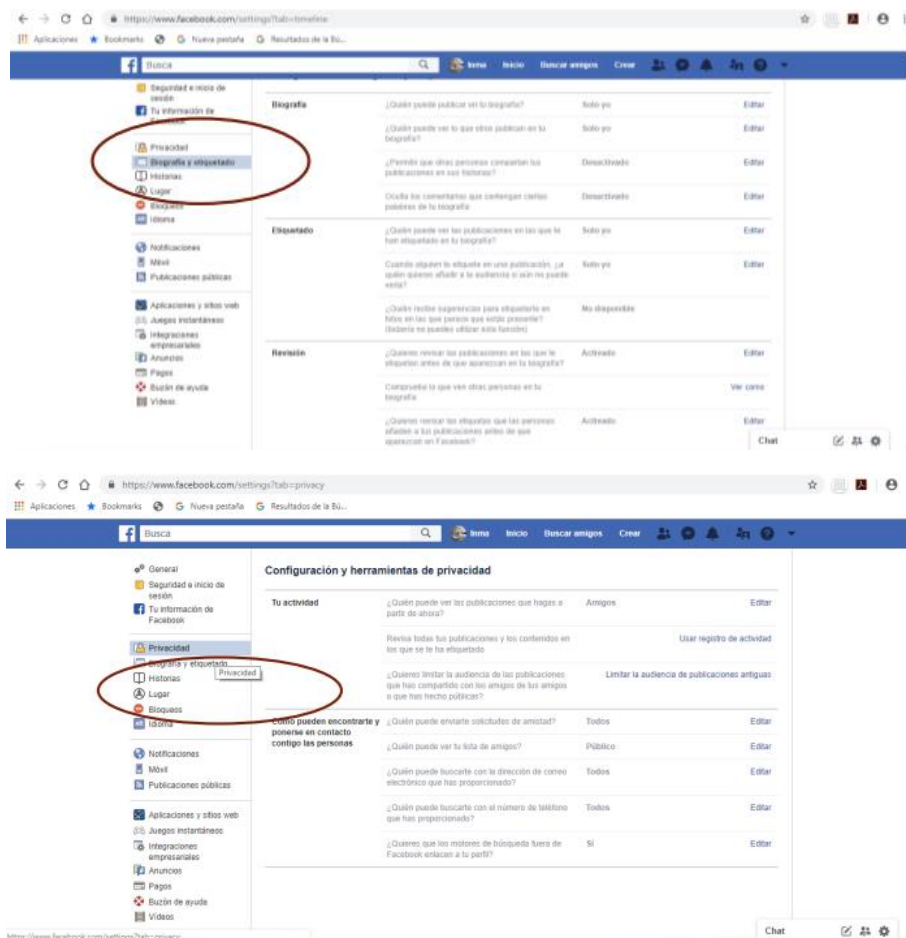
It is also advisable to enter the biography and modify who can publish on your account. This allows everything to go through you before others can see it and avoids problems if someone does not want to share certain information with your entire contact list.
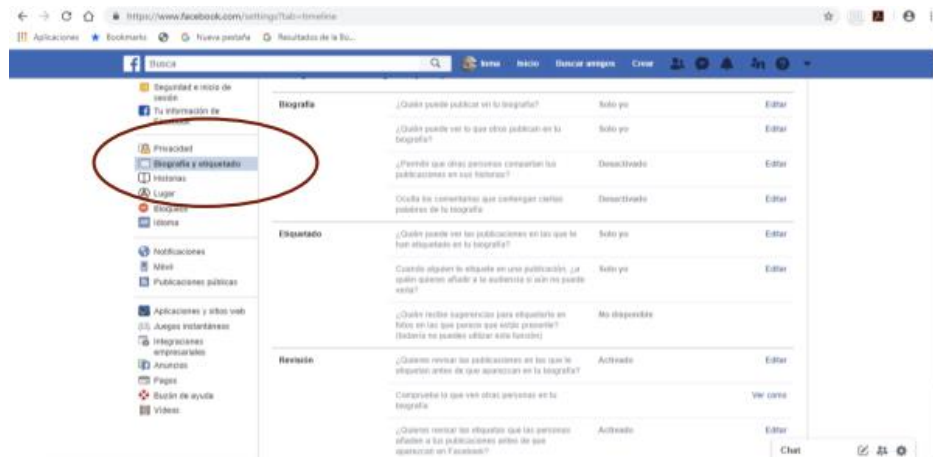
One of the most important things that you also have to indicate is if you want notifications to reach you, or not, and in what way.
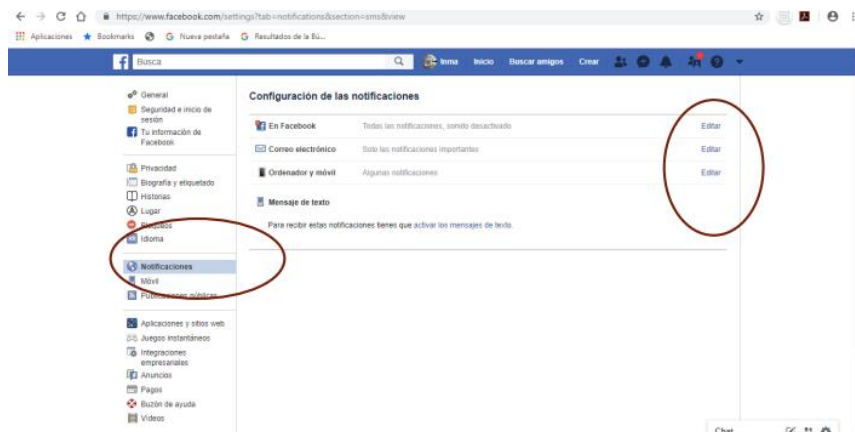
It is important to remember that these first stages are related to the creation of a personal account, which will serve as the administrator account of the professional page.

Now we are going to create the company page that will be associated to this personal account that we have just created and also to the associated gmail email.

To do this, we are going to enter the personal Facebook profile created with the username and password that have been chosen and click on "Create":

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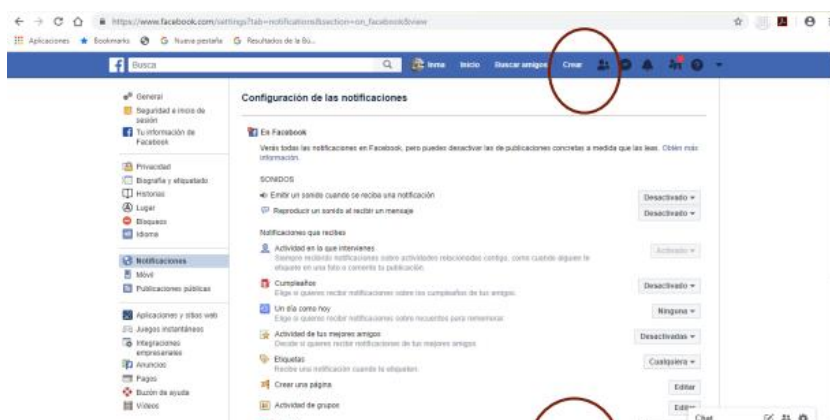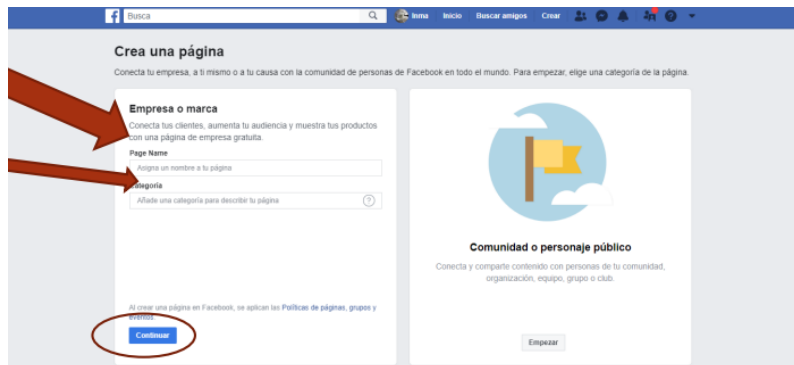
The next step is to go to "Create page":
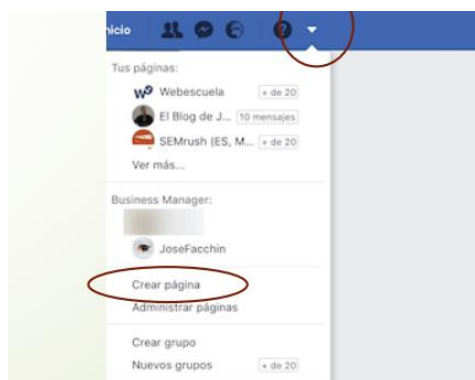
In this example, a Facebook page of a dental clinic is created, so you have to mark "Company":

The first thing would be to assign a name, and it is advisable that it be exactly the same as the name of the business created.
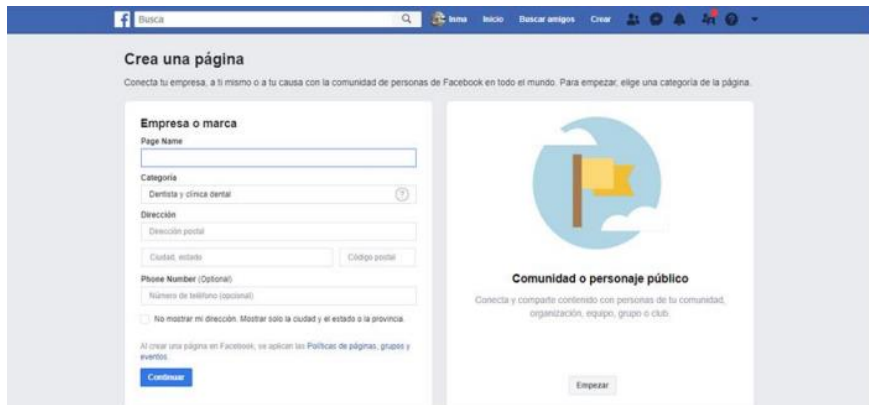
Now, it is about filling in the information that they ask us:

In addition to the company data, it is required to put a cover photo and a profile photo on the page.

The photos must represent the identity of the company; therefore, it is recommended that they be attractive photos of the company or the team. If you don't have photos available, you can post them later.

Be careful! Facebook may ask you to verify your account, for this they will send you an SMS with a code to your mobile.
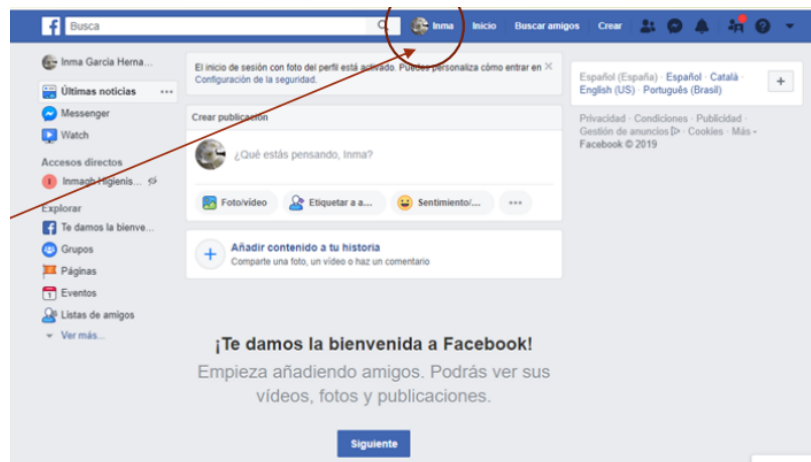
You already have the two profiles created. Remember one is personal (Account) and the other (Page) is from the company. Both appear in the upper bar with our photo.

To see the company page, we have to go to the upper bar, click on the arrow and we can start entering information.

Important things to remember:

- The e-mail that you have created, and your password ARE IMPORTANT, there you will receive all notifications from both Facebook and friends.
- To enter the company "Fan Pages" you must first enter your personal profile with your chosen username and password, as you always do in your profile.
- Already in your profile, with the upper left arrow (as we have seen in the last slide, we enter our Fan Pages.

3.2.   Create a page on Linked In

LinkedIn is a corporate, business and employment oriented social community. Starting from the profile of each user, which reveals their work experience and skills in a true work curriculum, the web connects millions of companies and employees.

Founded in December 2002 by Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly and Jean-Luc Vaillant, this network was launched in May 2003, and has always been geared towards professional groups.

LinkedIn has had significant growth in recent times and has evolved from being a social media channel dedicated to recruitment to one where value-added information from different professions is shared.
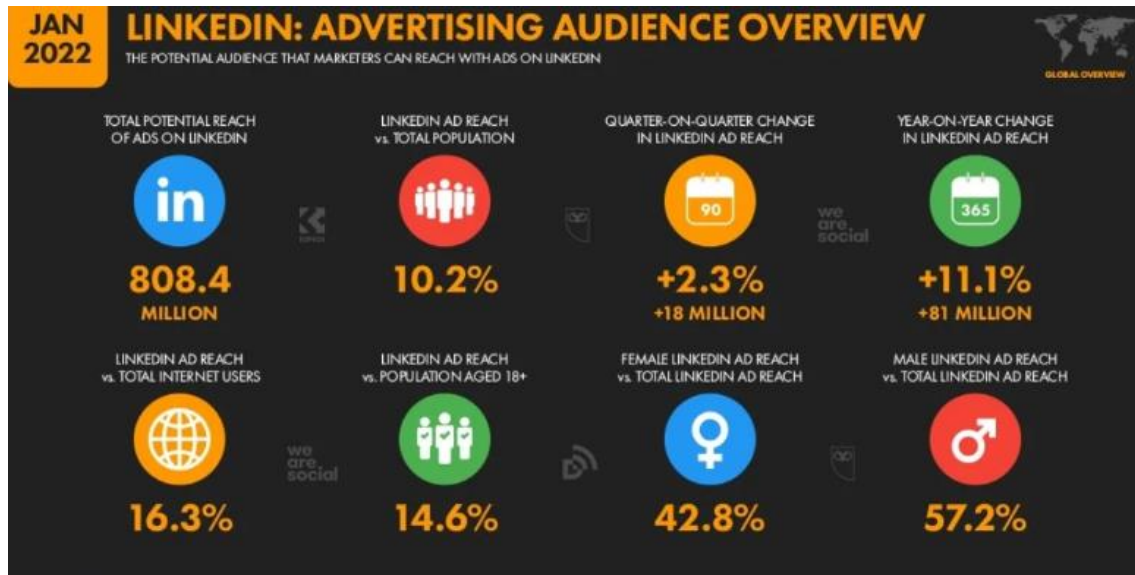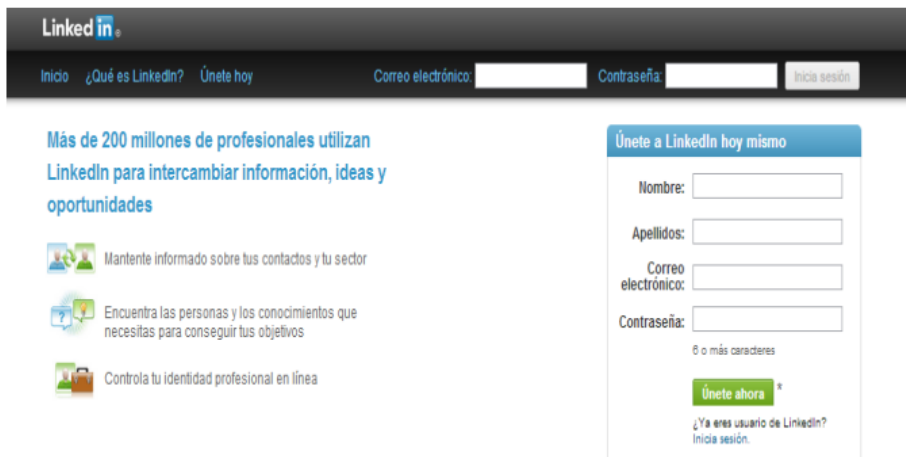
Image: LinkedIn Stats
Source: Hootsuite Digital Report

LinkedIn is a necessary social media channel for all companies that want to use this channel as a communication and marketing channel.

The most important age range for this social network is from 25 to 34 years.
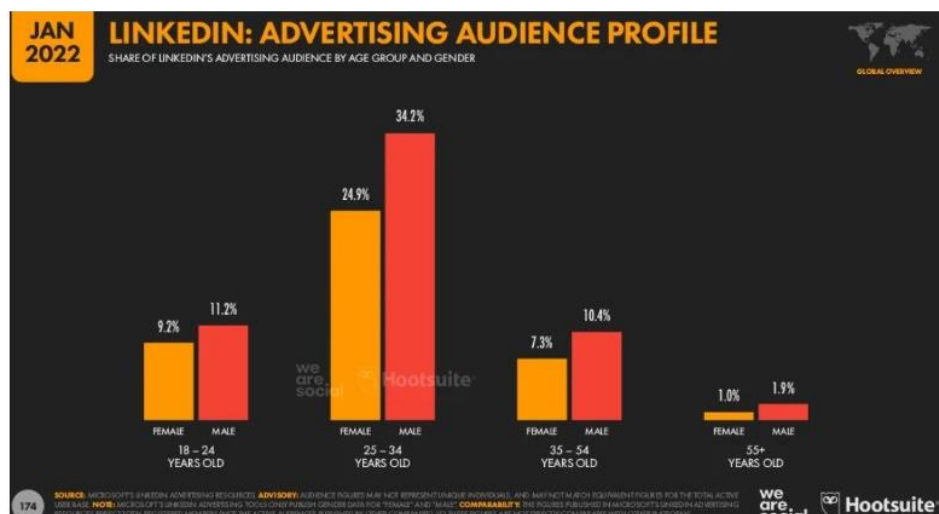
To use LinkedIn, the first step is to register at the following link: www.linkedin.com

After filling in your information, Linked In will ask you if you want to know which contacts from your email are on LinkedIn, you can complete this step or ignore it by clicking on "Skip this step".
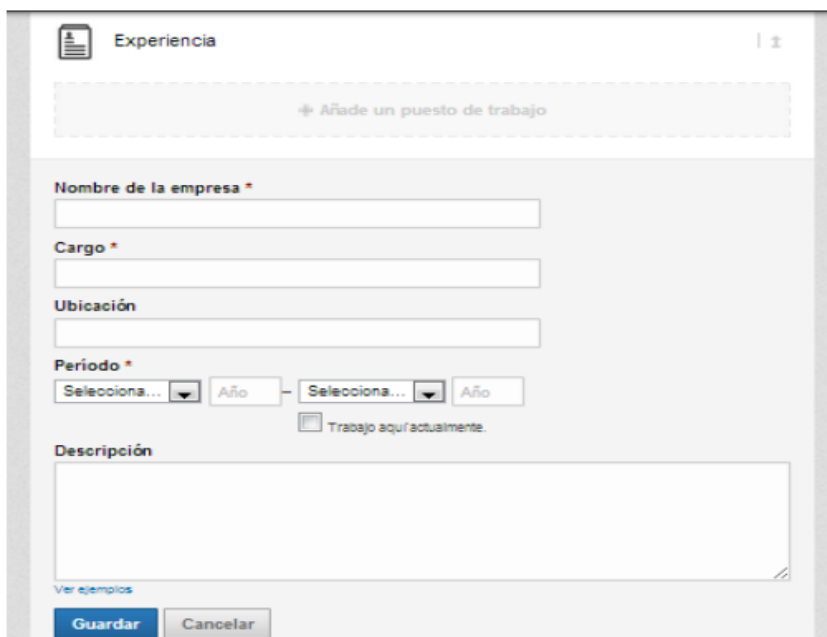
The next step is to fill in the details of your location, profession, and place of work.

Once the mandatory data is filled in, you must go complementing and editing all the sections of the profile. It is important to remember that this social network is professional, so you must try to put all the details of your professional experiences, educational career, photo, skills and recommendations, details, etc.
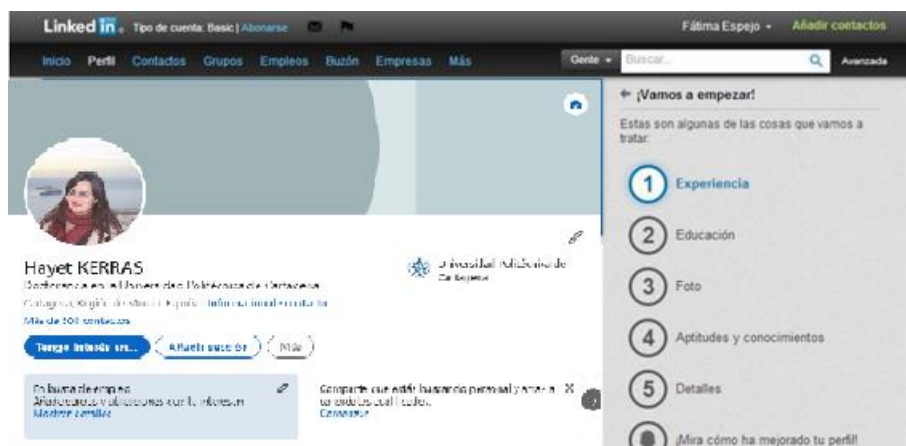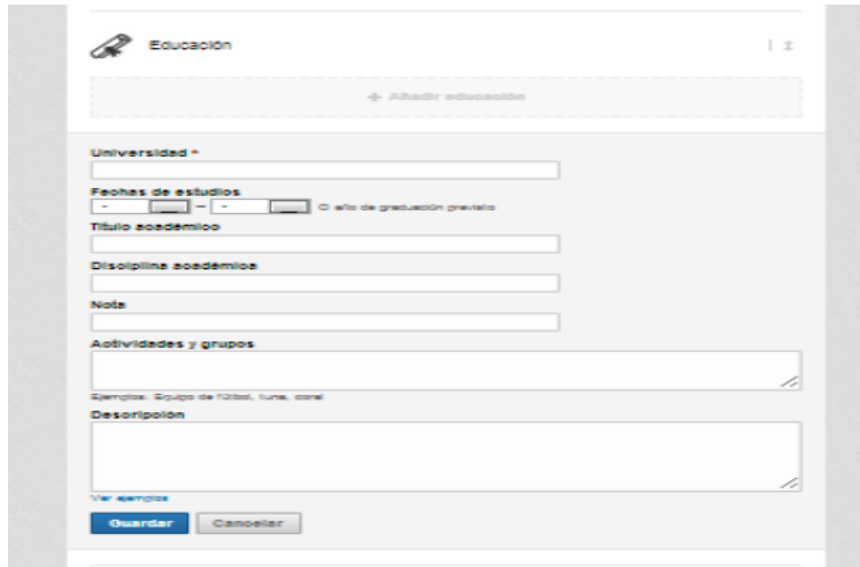
When filling in the professional experience part, you will notice that if the company is registered in the LinkedIn database, it will appear as you type its name. When it appears, you must click on it.
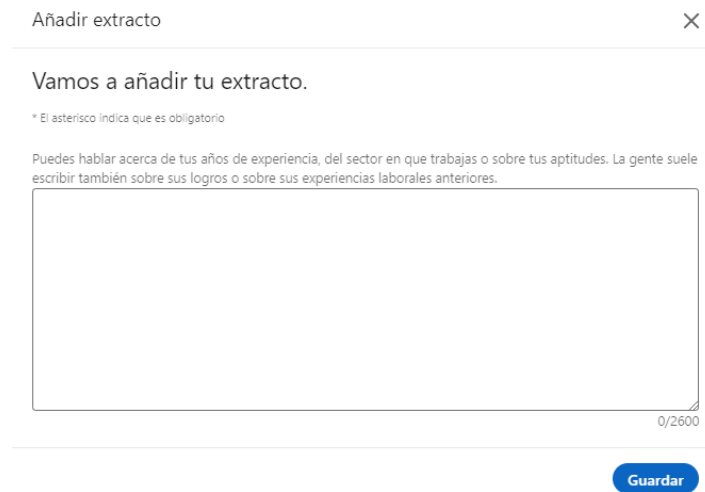
You must know that most of the fields are not mandatory, but the more you specify, the more value is provided.

In the same way that the experience has been completed, we now move on to the part related to academic training:
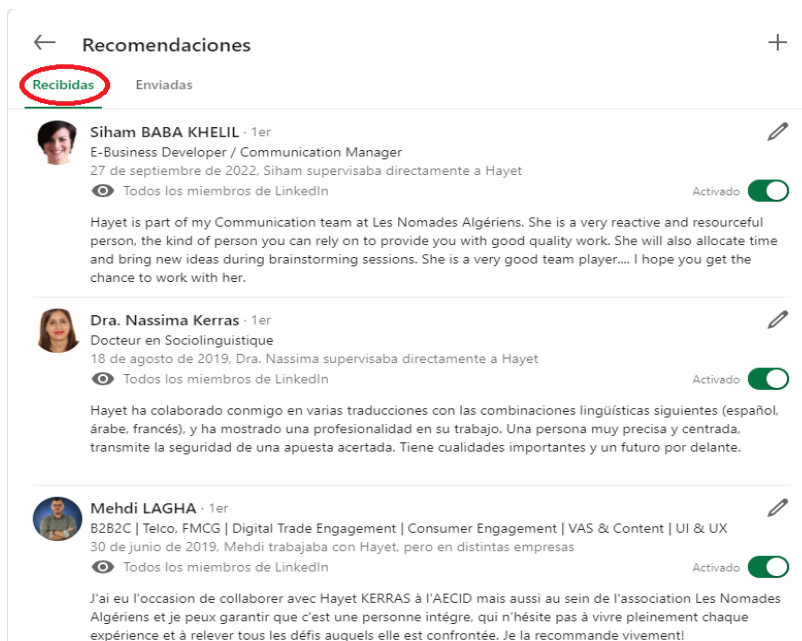
Once this part is finished, we find a tab called "Extract", where we must summarize all the experiences and professional objectives, in addition to the skills and work aptitudes. It is about showing how we differ from another person in a summarized way.

As for the section related to the management of recommendations, it is separated by three tabs "Received", "Sent" and "Request a recommendation / Make a recommendation".

In the case of recommendations received, you always must approve them to make them public or hide them from the profile if you don't want to show them. Also, in this case we have the possibility of requesting that it be modified.

In the same way, in the "recommendations sent" tab you can manage the recommendations written and sent to your contacts.

In the same tab on the right, if you click on the "+" two options appear "Request a recommendation / Make a recommendation" that allow you to ask your contacts to recommend you or make a recommendation. This provides an advantage at search time because people with recommendations appear before people who don't have any searches.

The quality of the recommendation is important, so you must personalize it.

In the case of opting for the "Request a recommendation" option, a tab appears where we are asked for the name of the person to whom we want to request this recommendation, in our case we have put "Francisca Rosique Contreras", and it gives us the possibility to continue:

Solicitar una recomendación ✕

Ayúdanos a personalizar tu solicitud.

* El asterisco indica que es obligatorio

¿A quién quieres pedir que te recomiende?
Buscar a personas*

Francisca Rosique Contreras

1 de 2   **Continuar**

Once the name of the person has been entered, a tab appears in which we are asked to indicate the relationship we have with this person, the position we had at the time of this collaboration and fill in the message that we want to send in a dedicated space. to this person:

Pide a Francisca que te recomiende. ✕

Ayúdanos a personalizar tu solicitud.

Francisca Rosique Contreras • 1er

* El asterisco indica que es obligatorio

¿De qué conoces a Francisca?
Relación*

Selecciona una opción ▼

Cargo en ese momento*

Selecciona una opción ▼

Incluye un mensaje personal*

Hola, Francisca. ¿Podrías recomendarme?

39/3000

2 de 2   Volver   **Enviar**

As indicated above, it is important to fill in the maximum number of fields, even if they are not mandatory because the more information the profile has, the better rating it will have.

Añadir al perfil ✕

Esencial ∧

Vamos a empezar con lo más esencial. Al rellenar estos apartados, ayudarás a los técnicos de selección y las personas que te podrían conocer a encontrarte.

Añadir acerca de

Añadir educación

Añadir puesto

Añadir descanso profesional

Añadir aptitudes

Recomendado ⌃

Al rellenar estos apartados, ganarás credibilidad y tendrás acceso a más
oportunidades.

Añadir elemento destacado

Añadir licencias y certificaciones

Añadir cursos

Añadir recomendaciones

Adicional ⌃

Da un toque más personal a tu perfil. Estas secciones te ayudarán a ampliar tu
red y a forjar relaciones.

Añadir voluntariado

Añadir publicaciones

Añadir patentes

Añadir proyectos

Añadir reconocimientos y premios

Añadir calificaciones de pruebas

Añadir idiomas

Añadir organizaciones

Añadir causas benéficas

Once the previous sections have been completed, it is important to find out if the profile, email preferences, groups, the rest of the information are complete, and the account is configured correctly. The advantage of LinkedIn is that it always offers an assessment of the level of complementarity of the account and suggests some improvements. In the case that follows, for example, it tells us that we have reached the intermediate level and that we are two more steps away from reaching the Star level, so we must specify where I work and add a summary to highlight my personality or work experience "Add extract":
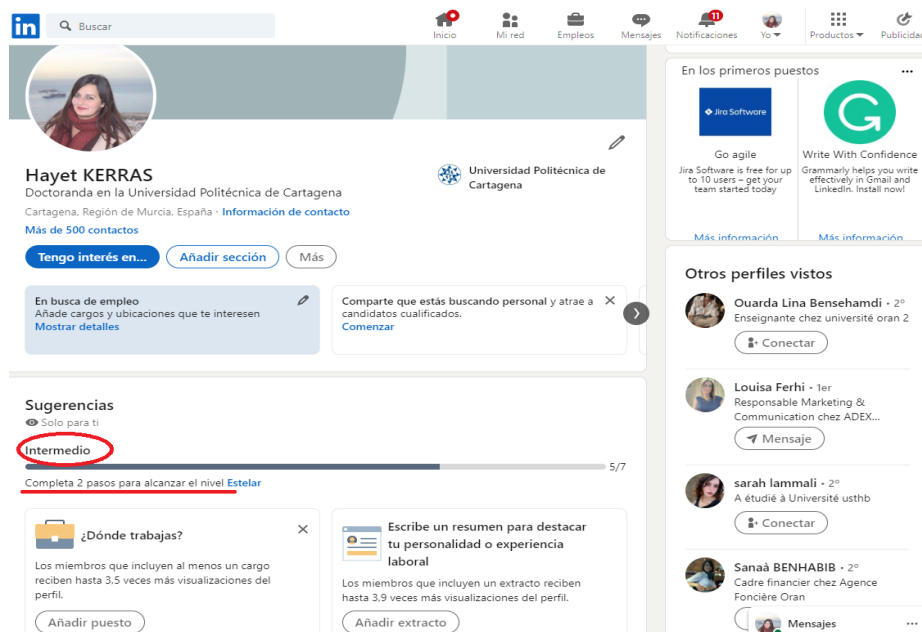
To do this, it would be enough to click on the two boxes to add posts or add extracts:

One of the most important features of LinkedIn is that it allows you to search for contacts and jobs, and that is what we are going to analyze below:

To add contacts, the easiest option is to start with the suggestions offered by the LinkedIn platform. Once you have a few contacts, the social network suggests friends that you select based on its algorithm. In general, they are acquaintances or people that the network believes you are interested in because of their Curriculum or activities like yours.

These suggestions are found in the "My network" tab, at the top:

In general, LinkedIn identifies contacts by three degrees of closeness. Those who have a "1°" next to their name are those who are already on the friends list (added previously), those who have a "2°" next to them are friends of their contacts and those who have a "3°" next to the name, they are third-party contacts, that is, friends of the friends of the people who are in your network of contacts.

Otros perfiles vistos

Ouarda Lina Bensehamdi · 2º
Enseignante chez université oran 2

⊕+ Conectar

Louisa Ferhi · 1er
Responsable Marketing &
Communication chez ADEX...

◀ Mensaje

sarah lammali · 2º
A étudié à Université usthb

⊕+ Conectar

Sanaà BENHABIB · 2º
Cadre financier chez Agence
Foncière Oran

⊕+ Conectar

Thanina Takherboucht · 1er
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+ Seguir

The steps to follow to do a search on LinkedIn are simple, first you have to go to "search" and write the name of the person you want to search for, in our case it will be "Francisca Rosique Contreras":

in   Q Buscar   Inicio Mi red Empleos Mensajes Notificaciones Yo ▼ Productos ▼ Publicidad

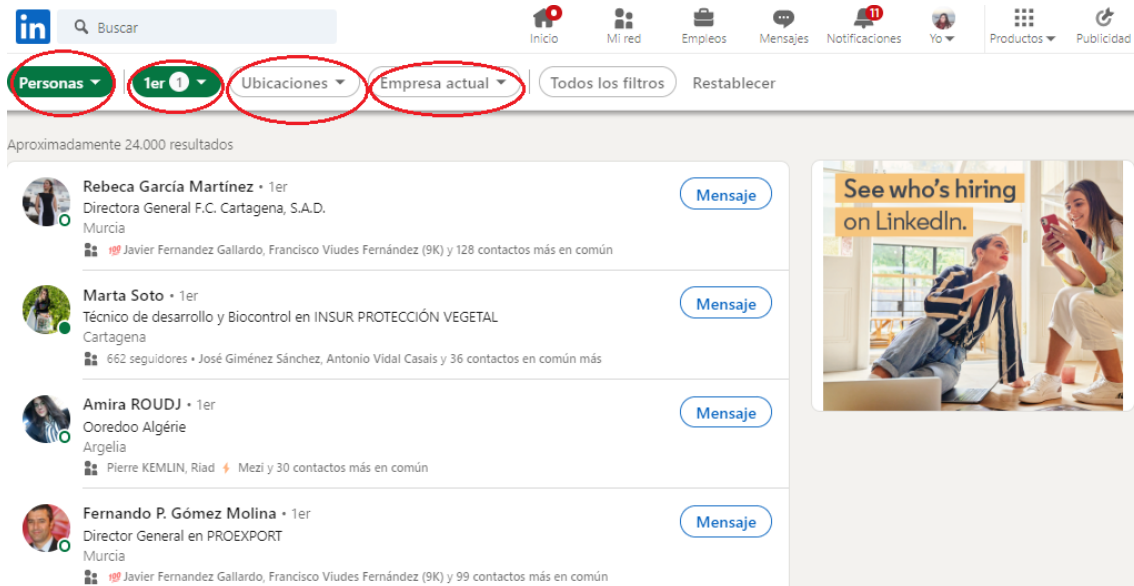Gestionar mi red   Invitaciones   Gestionar

When searching for your name, we will get one or more proposals about this search, with the possibility of further refining the search by people, for example, by publications or using other filters (region, job position, sector of activity, etc.).
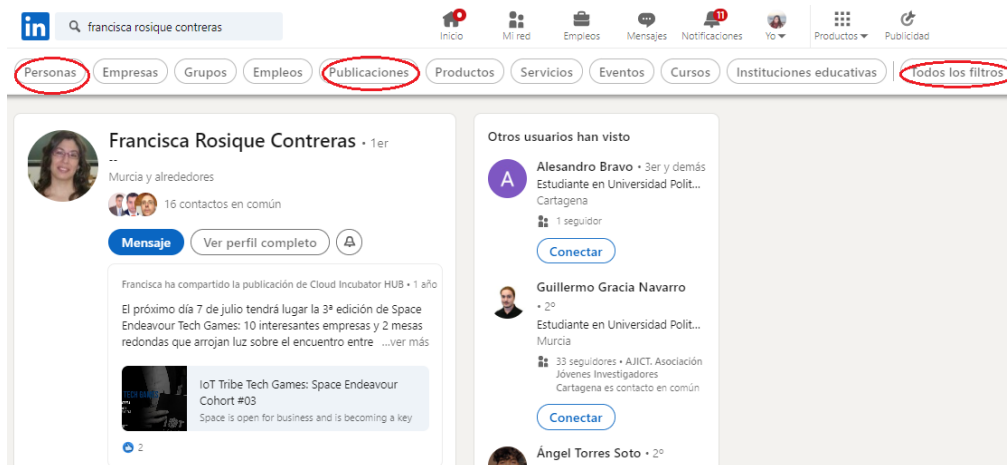
Another of LinkedIn's specificities is that it allows contacts to be classified by labels, within the "my contacts" tab, by type of company, location, sector or recent activity. For this reason, we have to go to "My network", then click on "contact" and choose the option "search using filters":
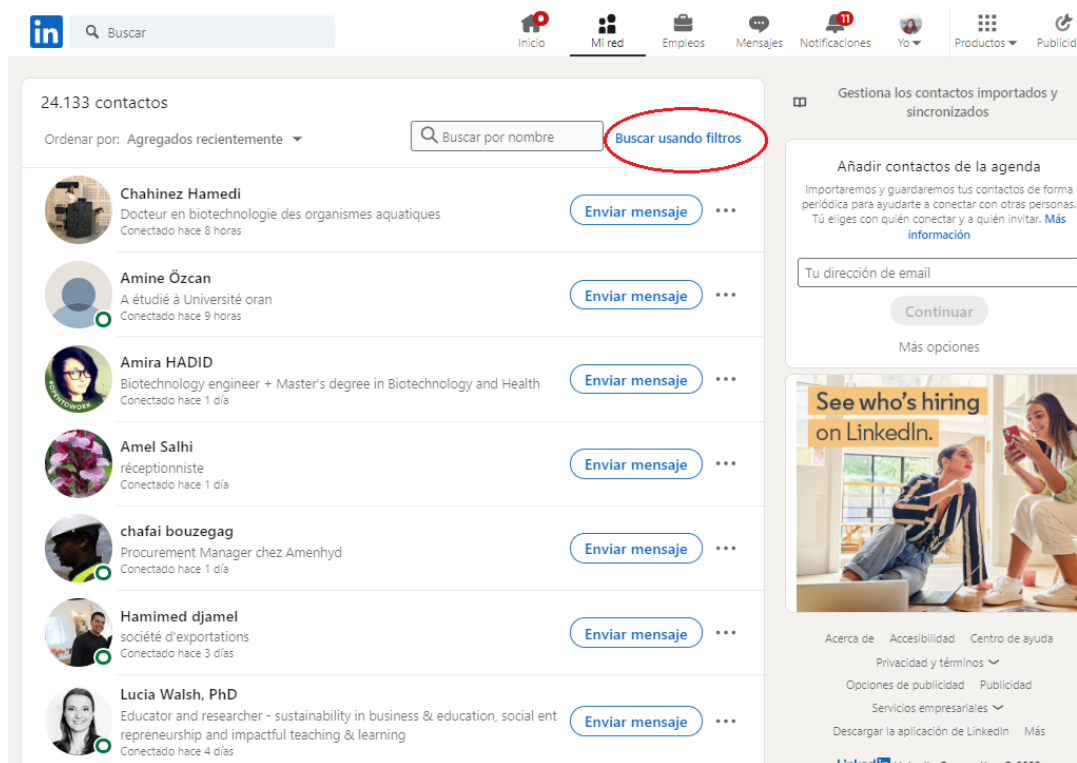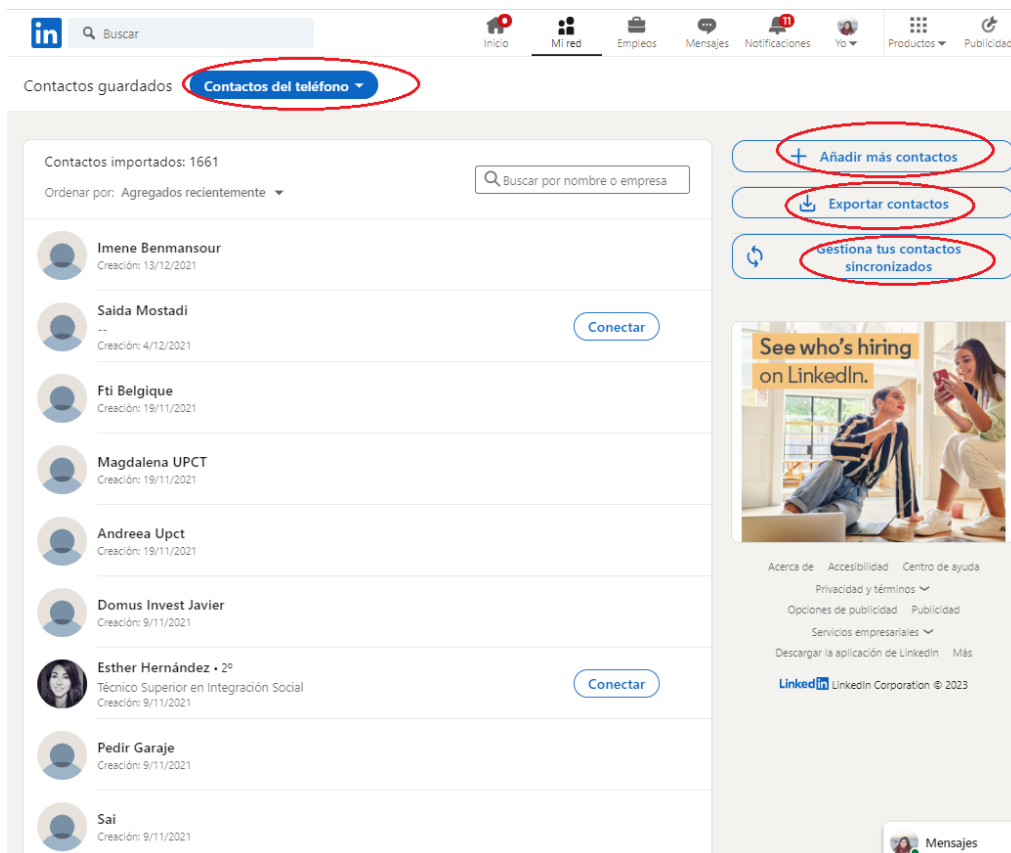

By clicking on search by type of filters, we are offered the possible search options: by person/company, by relationship level, by location, by current company, or using other filters as shown in the following image:

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LinkedIn offers another way to search for people, always clicking on "My network" but this time selecting the "Contacts" option. This action takes us to a management tab for imported contacts, either by phone or by email account, as can be seen below:
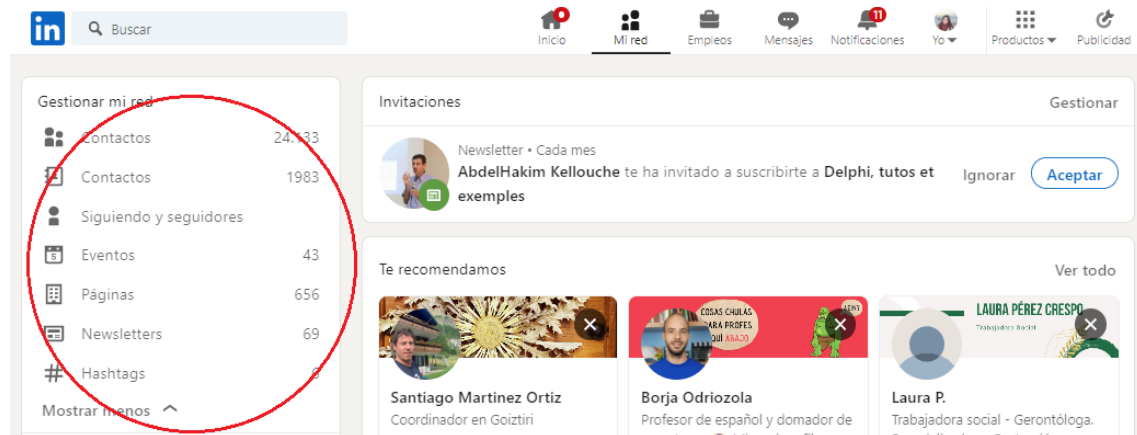
It must be remembered that Linked In not only allows you to search for people, but also for companies, groups, associations, events, etc. For this reason, it would be enough to follow the same steps, first clicking on "manage my network" and then on the action that we would like to manage:


Finally, LinkedIn also offers the possibility to offer or look for work and to consult messages. For this reason, we have to click on the icons that define them in the cursor above:
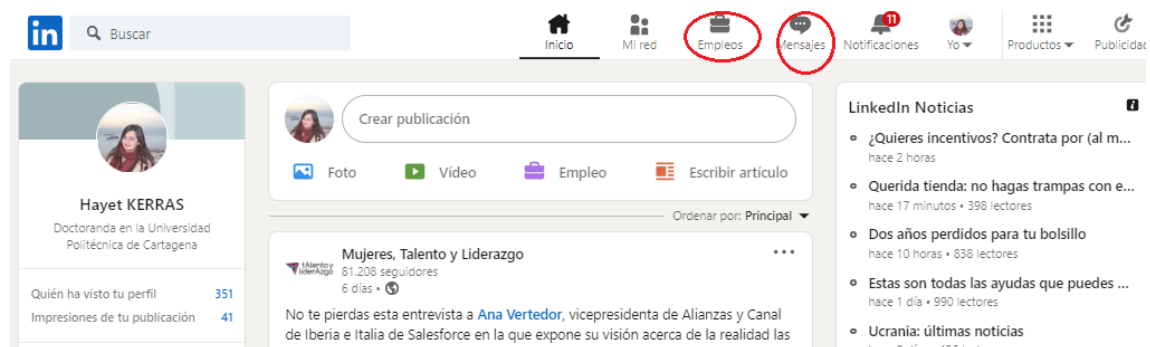
In the tab related to employment, we are offered various possibilities depending on the activity and the need, the most important ones are indicated below in red and consist of viewing job announcements, creating alerts using a filter that allows us to receive notifications each time publish an interesting job offer or publish a recruitment offer to personnel:

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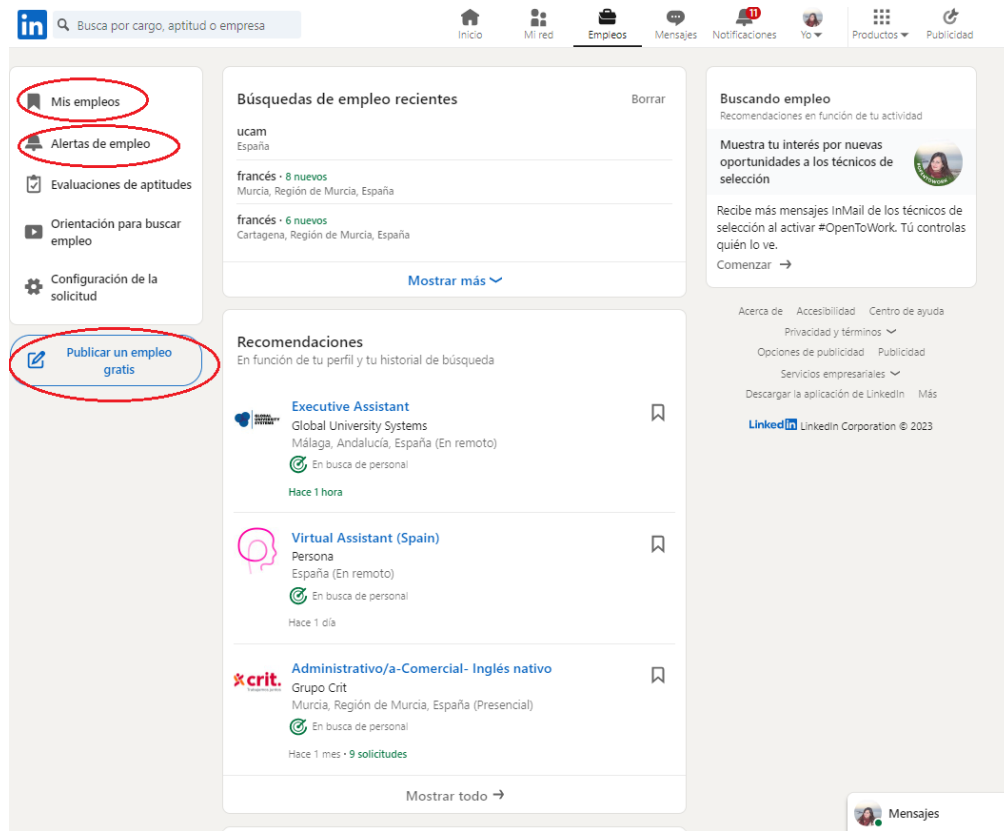
As for messaging, it allows, like many other messengers, to search, send and receive messages from our contacts:
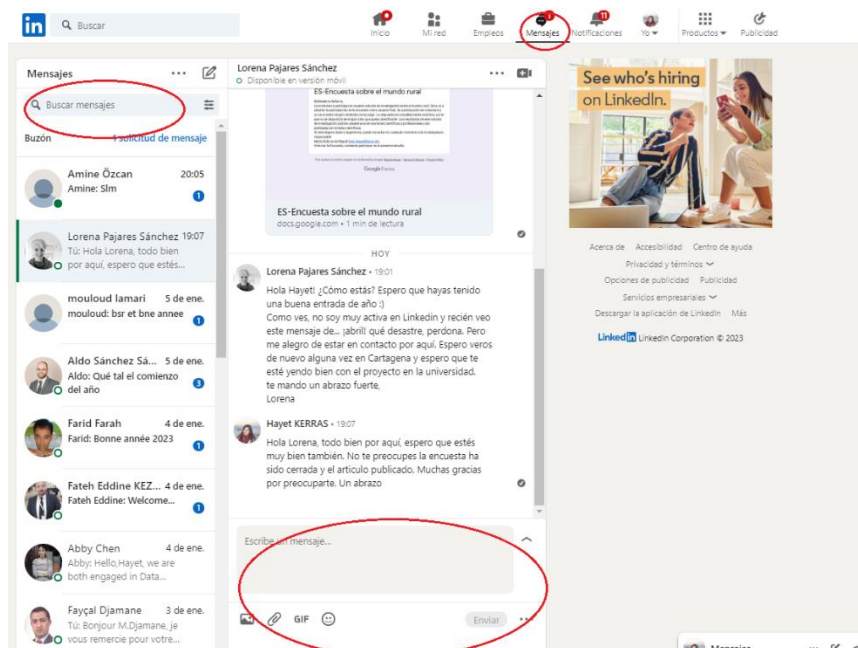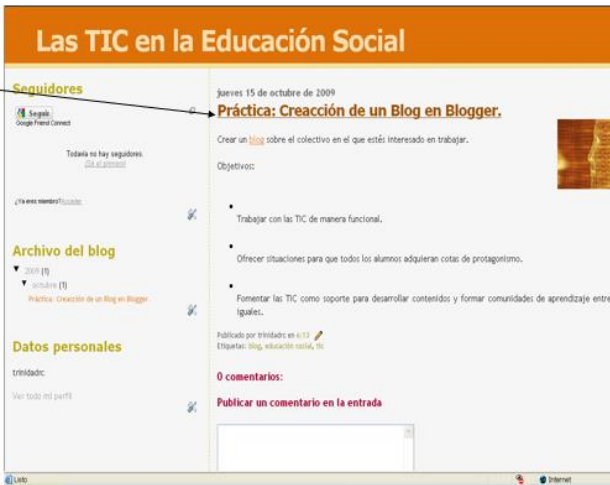
Recommendations to be successful on LinkedIn:

1. Build a professional profile: Take care of the profile photo, fill in the statement, detail experiences and career, value skills, allow people to contact you, highlight language skills and volunteer actions.

2. Take care of the network of contacts: Validate skills, write and request recommendations, join groups, contact exclusively for professional reasons.

3. Properly manage the content: Publish, share, comment and recommend.

4. The Blogs

A blog is a web page in which short articles with updated and new content on specific or free topics are regularly published. These articles are known in English as "post" or publications in Spanish. It is a two-way communication tool that can also be described as a personal website, in which articles by one or several authors are collected, about their personal stories, current affairs, educational topics, etc. Blogs are usually updated periodically thanks to blog managers such as Blogger or Wordpress.

A business blog is a special section of a company that is updated regularly and provides valuable information that benefits the Internet user and demonstrates the experience and capabilities of the business. In general, on the main page of a blog, you usually see the title of the publication, the post with its date, and have a panel that allows you to consult or configure all the publications.

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4.1. How to create a blog on Blogger?

In general, starting a blog with the intention of doing business is reduced to the following steps, let's see in detail:

1. Consider the different opportunities to make money.

2. Choose an audience to target and serve.

3. Select a blogging platform, a domain name and create your blog.

To create a blog you have to follow the following steps:

Go to the Blogger platform using this link: **https://www.blogger.com/start**

If you already have a Google account, use it to access the blog page, and if you don't have one, create it first. In our case, it has already been created previously, for the Facebook account.
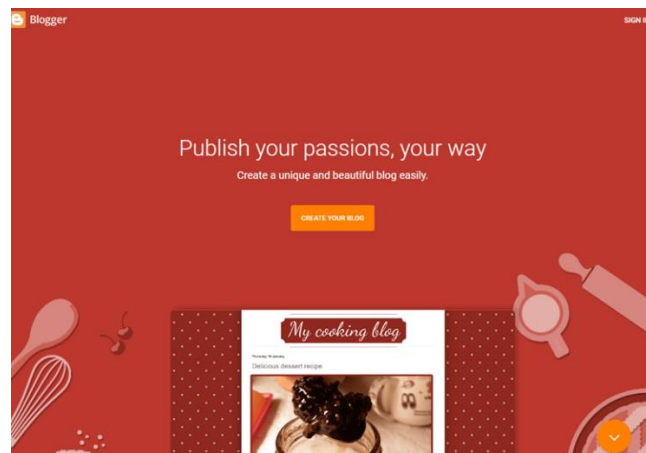
Now that we have put our data, we have to give the blog a name, so it has to be given a title:

Once the name is determined, we can access our Blogger account. The next stage is to create a post. This stage is very simple, from the "Entries" section, we click on "Create new entry".

Intuitively we can give it a title and write the body of the text. You must know that this platform offers several options that appear on the right side "settings". For example, we can insert images, add links, choose a location, etc.
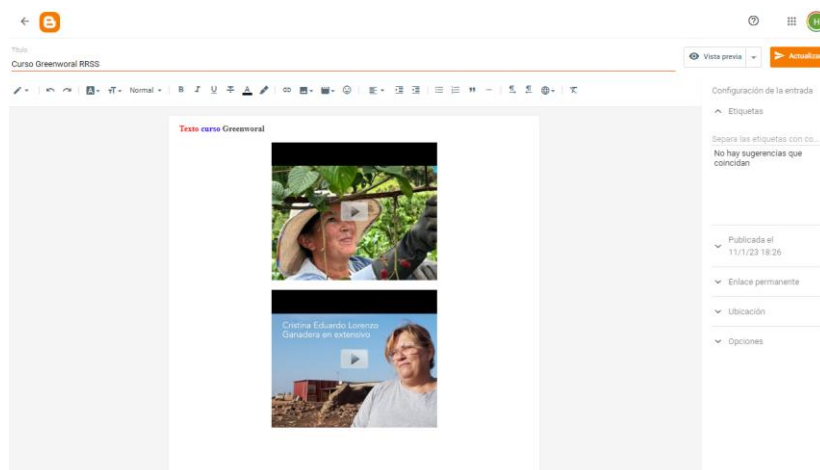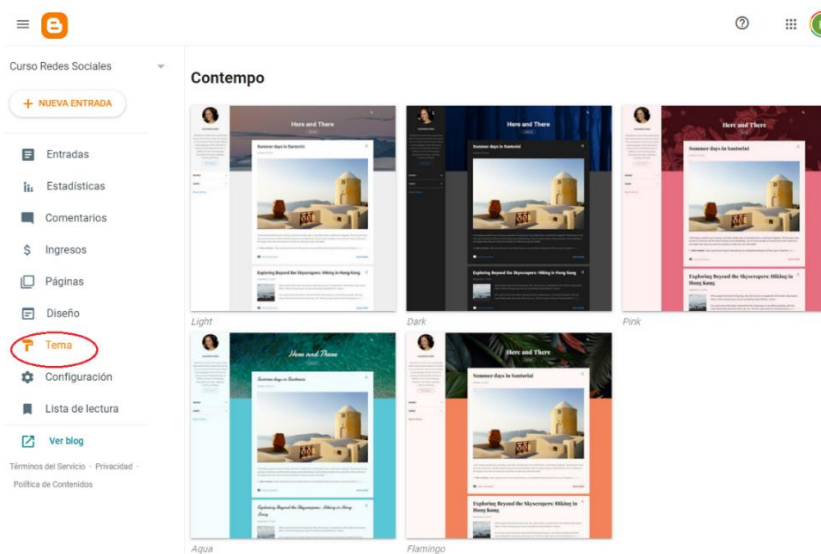

Like the other social networks, Blogger offers the possibility of consulting the statistics of the followers, entries, comments by seasons as can be seen in the following image:

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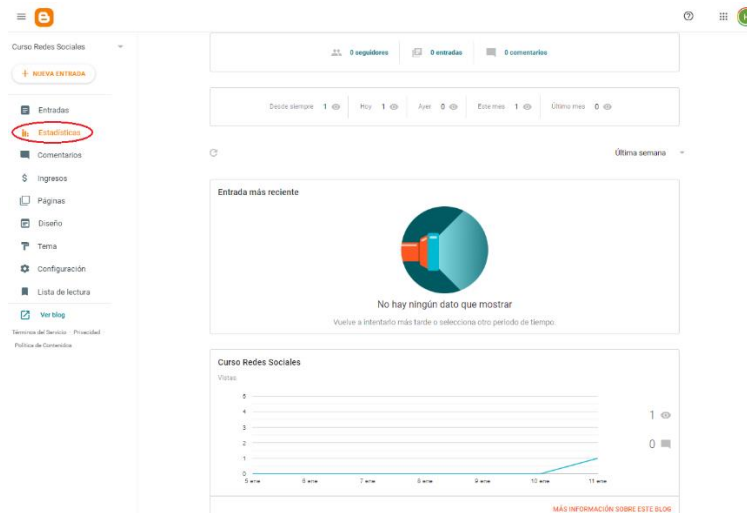
In the same way, Blogger allows you to check comments, manage pages and even modify the design of the page:
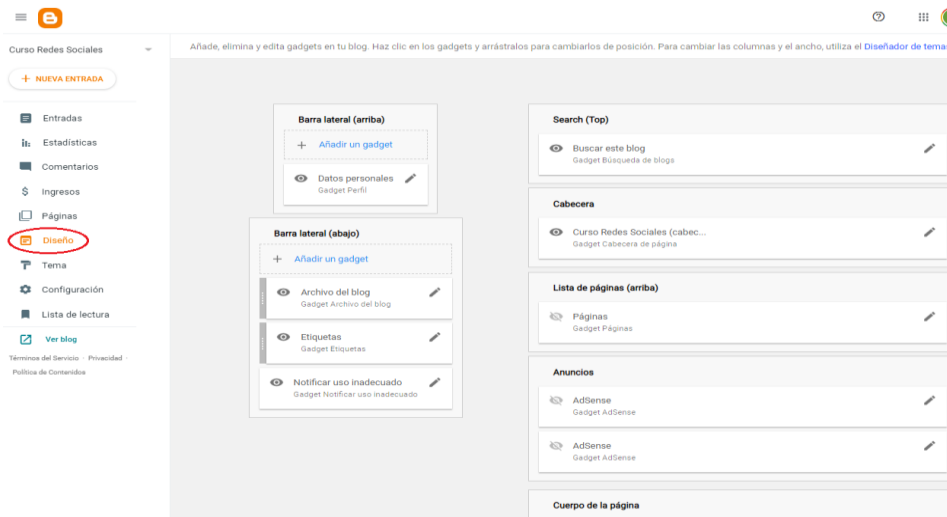
One of the advantages that Blogger offers is that it offers a series of templates that can be used for the publication with the possibility of adapting them to what you want to transmit to the community, for this you must go to "Themes":

Like all social networks, Blogger offers the ability to set up your blog. For example, you can change the language, or activate the "adult content" option, or manage the visibility of who can consult it, etc.

And finally, Blogger gives us the possibility to view our blog by clicking on "View Blog":

In the case of wishing to modify our publication, it would be enough to click on it and make the necessary modifications.

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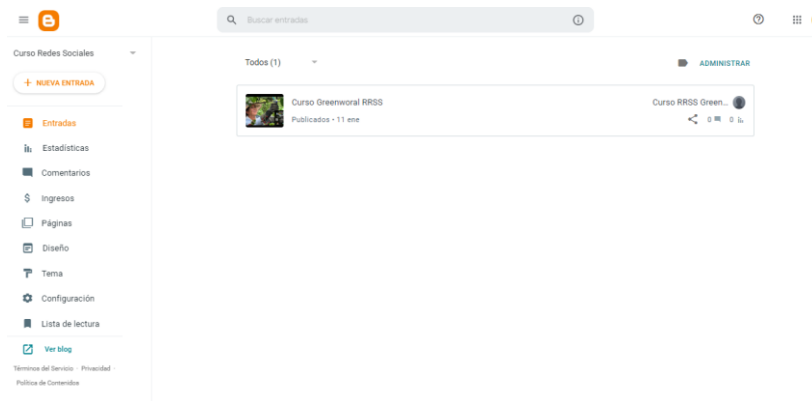
5. Practices:

The exercise related to this unit consists of creating your own blog and your own page on Facebook or LinkedIn.

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