

ACQUISITION OF LYNDA.COM FURTHERS LINKEDIN'S MISSION OF CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- TARYN OESCH

This spring, LinkedIn announced its \$1.5 billion acquisition of Lynda.com, an online learning company co-founded in 1995 by Lynda Weinman and Bruce Heavin. The deal, which is the largest acquisition in LinkedIn's history, is expected to close this year.

Lynda.com's video library of more than 6,300 courses and 267,000 video tutorials provides training in business, software, technology and creative skills to its subscribers. The company is known for its high production quality. [According to one Lynda.com instructor](#), presenters must pass a screen test before they are brought on board, and a team of producers and editors works on each video.

A NATURAL FIT

While some may have been surprised by this acquisition – and its size – both Lynda Weinman and LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner have commented on the compatible visions of the two companies. In a [LinkedIn post](#), Weiner described LinkedIn's "fundamental value proposition" as "connecting people to opportunity." Weinman also noted in a [LinkedIn post](#), "Jeff Weiner...and I both believe that the skills gap is one of the leading social issues of our time."

Both companies help fill this skills gap in different, but complementary, ways. LinkedIn connects jobseekers with opportunities, and Lynda.com helps them obtain the skills they need for those opportunities. With the acquisition of Lynda.com, LinkedIn will also be able to help

people not only find new jobs but become better at the jobs they already have.

Jeff Weiner's ultimate goal for LinkedIn is to create what he calls an [economic graph](#). The economic graph will digitally portray economic connections and identify trends in real time. In other words, it will show jobs, the skills they require, the companies offering them, the people qualified for them and the combined knowledge of those companies and people.

LinkedIn's current capabilities include posting jobs and information about companies and individuals. This year, the company also expanded its ability to share knowledge by enabling any user – not just "influencers" – to create and post content through [LinkedIn Pulse](#).

By acquiring Lynda.com, LinkedIn has moved closer to creating a full economic graph by expanding its content offerings. With Lynda.com, the site will connect its users to more content and a different type of content: video.

BRINGING LEARNING TO TALENT ACQUISITION

LinkedIn is known as a professional network and source of talent acquisition. As LinkedIn's largest acquisition, the acquisition of Lynda.com demonstrates the importance LinkedIn places on learning, especially as a component of talent acquisition.

Integrating e-learning with job seeking has important implications for the

industry. As [Ryan Roslansky, LinkedIn's vice president of product management](#), wrote, "Imagine being a job seeker and being able to instantly know what skills are needed for the available jobs in a desired city...and then being prompted to take the relevant and accredited course to help you acquire this skill."

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Now, LinkedIn's 350 million members will be able to access these courses – and they will be able to do so on the same platform where they find new jobs. Meanwhile, we can speculate that employers may be able to see on their profiles what Lynda.com courses applicants have completed, helping them see what skills the applicants have.

Incorporating Lynda.com's e-learning products brings learning to the forefront of talent acquisition, especially online. As interest in e-learning grows, the importance of integrating online learning content with other online professional resources will also become clearer. With its acquisition of Lynda.com, LinkedIn is taking a big step in this direction, filling the skills gap with members who now have increased access to training that will help them accomplish their professional goals. [🔗](#)

Taryn Oesch is an editor at Training Industry, Inc. [Email Taryn](#)