LinkedIn Hiring Marketplace: User Personas and Sizing

Pre-research hypotheses | October 29, 2026

> **Status.** The Pluang personas were built from 10 user interviews. These are not: they rest on one informal conversation with a LinkedIn Principal PM, public data, and first-hand use of the product. Treat the personas as hypotheses to test, and every size below as a guesstimate with a stated range.

1. Scope

The personas cover the hiring marketplace only: people who look for jobs and people who fill them. Buyers of Marketing Solutions, Sales Navigator users, and creators are real LinkedIn segments but sit outside the hiring problem in the prioritization document, so they are counted only as "no hiring intent" in the sizing.

2. Is the user data already available?

Only in part. LinkedIn publishes registered members, not active users, and publishes nothing by persona. The member count can be used as a base; active users, persona shares, and hirer counts have to be guesstimated. The table shows what exists and how far to trust it.

Metric	Published?	Best available figure	Confidence
Registered members	Yes	LinkedIn states "more than 1 billion" members. Third parties cite 1.2 billion or more, and one cites 1.3 billion or more. Base case uses 1.2 billion.	Medium. Registered accounts, not people who use the product.
Monthly active users	No	No official figure. An older 310 million figure was self-claimed in February 2023 and is flagged as unreliable on Wikipedia. Base case assumes 30% of members, or 360 million.	Low. This is the key assumption in the sizing.
US members	Third party only	About 257 million.	Medium. Aggregator figure, not verified.
Job applications	Partly	8,200 per minute (Statista, March 2026) to 11,000 per minute (reported via NYT, July 2026), up 45% in a year. Base case uses the midpoint, 9,600 per minute.	Medium. Two sources disagree by about a third.
Hires	Dated	About 7 hires per minute, roughly 3.7 million a year.	Low. Undated aggregator figure that likely undercounts.
Premium subscribers	No	LinkedIn disclosed $1.7 billion of Premium revenue for 2023 and subscriber growth of 25% year over year, but no subscriber count. A circulating "175 million subscribers" figure implies about $10 a year per subscriber, which is not credible against paid tiers priced in tens of dollars a month.	High on the revenue, low on any subscriber count.
Split by persona	No	Nothing published.	Not available. Everything in Section 5 is a guesstimate.

3. User personas

Six personas in the Pluang structure: four job seekers and two hirers. The Size row links each persona to Section 5.

	Job seekers				Hirers	
User Personas	**Volume Applicant**	**Targeted Seeker**	**Early-Career Entrant**	**Passive Professional**	**In-house or Agency Recruiter**	**Hiring Manager or SMB Hirer**
Behavior						
Search and hiring intensity	Very high. Applies broadly and fast.	Moderate. A few well-matched roles at a time.	High, but inexperienced. Applies widely to entry roles.	Low. Open to the right offer, not searching.	Very high. Many open requisitions at once.	Low. One or two roles a year.
Career situation	Between jobs, underemployed, or needs visa sponsorship. High urgency.	Employed or recently laid off. Has time to be selective.	Student or new graduate. Thin network and track record.	Employed and stable. No urgency.	Salaried. Measured on time to fill and quality of hire.	Leads a team. Hiring is a distraction from the day job.
Platform fluency	Intermediate. Knows the features and how to game volume.	Intermediate to advanced. Uses match details and saved searches.	Beginner to intermediate.	Beginner. Rarely opens Jobs.	Advanced. Recruiter, filters, Hiring Assistant.	Beginner. Needs a simple posting flow.
Background	Career changers, international applicants, users of auto-apply tools.	Mid to senior professionals, MBAs, product and tech roles.	Students, new graduates, bootcamp alumni.	Employed professionals with a maintained profile.	Talent acquisition, sourcers, agency recruiters.	Managers, founders, small-business owners.
Aspirations	Any offer, fast.	The right next role with better scope and pay.	A first job in the chosen field.	Stay visible and keep options open.	Fill roles quickly with qualified people.	Fill the seat with minimal time spent.
Size (global, monthly)	10.8M	32.4M	43.2M	208.8M	0.37M	0.84M
Lifestyle						
Needs	- High throughput - Visibility into application status	- Transparency on match - Early alerts and referral paths	- Guidance on entry roles - A way to show credentials without work history	- Low-effort profile upkeep - Relevant inbound only	- Qualified shortlists - Filters that cut noise	- Simple posting - A short ranked list of applicants
Typical LinkedIn behavior	Applies in batches, often evenings. May use automation. Sends many connection requests.	Daily saved-search emails. Applies early. Reaches out for coffee chats and referrals.	Browses jobs on mobile. Follows companies. Messages alumni.	Scrolls the feed, answers recruiter messages, updates the profile now and then.	Works in Recruiter daily. Sends InMails. Reviews the inbox in bulk.	Logs in when a role opens. Reviews applicants in short bursts.
Excitement	A reply of any kind.	An interview at a relevant company. Seeing "high match".	The first recruiter reply.	A relevant offer arriving unprompted.	A strong pipeline early and a fast hire.	A good candidate appearing with little effort.
Worries	Silence after hundreds of applications. Account restrictions.	Being buried as applicant number 100 behind volume.	Being invisible with no experience to point to.	Spam, scams, and who can see their profile.	Noise, AI-generated applications, missing the best candidate.	Wasting time sifting. Hiring the wrong person.

	Job seekers				Hirers	
User Personas	**Volume Applicant**	**Targeted Seeker**	**Early-Career Entrant**	**Passive Professional**	**In-house or Agency Recruiter**	**Hiring Manager or SMB Hirer**
Jobs to be Done						
Jobs	- Apply to many roles quickly - Learn why I am not hearing back - Avoid being flagged as a bot	- Find the few roles where I am a strong fit - Signal serious interest early - Improve my match with truthful changes	- Learn what entry roles require - Show credentials without work history - Get noticed by recruiters	- Keep a credible presence with little effort - Hear about the right role without searching - Control who can contact me	- Surface qualified, interested candidates fast - Cut screening time on high-volume roles - Trust that applicants are real	- Post a role quickly - See only the best few applicants - Decide with confidence without HR expertise

Row labels adapted from the Pluang format: Risk profile became Search and hiring intensity, Financial situation became Career situation, Knowledge of finance became Platform fluency, and Free time activities became Typical LinkedIn behavior.

4. How the personas map to the prioritized issues

Links each persona to the five issues in the prioritization table. Primary means the persona is most affected or most changed by the fix. Secondary means affected indirectly. These are hypotheses until interviews confirm them.

Issue	Volume Applicant	Targeted Seeker	Early-Career Entrant	Passive Professional	Recruiter	Hiring Manager
Free, noisy application signal (application budget, intent flag)	**Primary**	Secondary	Secondary		**Primary**	**Primary**
Agent access policed by detection, no sanctioned path	**Primary**	Secondary			**Primary**	
AI interviews run on few jobs	Secondary	**Primary**	**Primary**		**Primary**	Secondary
Early-applicant advantage rewards speed over fit	Secondary	**Primary**	Secondary		Secondary	
Match scores give no path to improve		**Primary**	**Primary**			

Reading across: the Targeted Seeker is the persona the most issues converge on, and the Volume Applicant is the persona the root-cause fix constrains most. That tension, between the person the fix helps and the person it limits, is the design problem.

5. Guesstimate of persona scale

5.1 Assumptions

1. Registered members are 1.2 billion. LinkedIn states "more than 1 billion"; third parties report 1.2 billion or more.
2. 30% of registered members are active in a given month, giving 360 million. This is the weakest assumption. The sensitivity in 5.5 shows 25% to 40%.
3. The persona mix of monthly actives is a judgment. The one anchor is that ages 18 to 24 are 20.5% of members (Statista, October 2025), about 74 million at 360 million actives. The Early-Career Entrant share of 12% (43 million) assumes about 58% of that band is actively entering the market.
4. Applications per person per month are assumed for each persona. The Volume Applicant figure is the free parameter, set so persona totals reconcile to observed application volume.
5. The US share of seekers is 21% (257 million of 1.2 billion members). The US share of postings is 30%.
6. Applications per posting average 100. This is a guess: LinkedIn caps the visible count at "100+", and some roles draw over 1,000.
7. Of postings, 70% are managed by recruiters at 8 postings per recruiter per month, and 30% by hiring managers and small-business hirers at 1.5 postings each.
8. A month is 30.4 days. Application counts include repeat applicants.

5.2 Funnel

Step	Value	Basis
Registered members	1,200M	Third-party figure. LinkedIn states "more than 1 billion".
Monthly active share	30%	Assumption. Moves the 2023 self-claimed 310M figure to about 360M, an increase of 16% in three years.
Monthly active members	360.0M	1,200M x 30%
US share of members	21%	257M / 1,200M. Applied to every seeker persona.
Applications per month (observed)	420.2M	9,600 per minute x 60 x 24 x 30.4 days. Range 359.0M to 481.5M.

5.3 Seeker personas

Persona	Share of monthly actives	Global monthly active (M)	US estimate (M)	Applications per person per month	Applications per month (M)
Passive Professional	58%	208.8	44.7	0.1	20.9
Targeted Seeker	9%	32.4	6.9	4	129.6
Volume Applicant	3%	10.8	2.3	15	162.0
Early-Career Entrant	12%	43.2	9.3	2.5	108.0
No hiring intent (out of scope)	18%	64.8	13.9	n/a	n/a
Total	**100%**	**360.0**	**77.1**		**420.5**

Monthly actives are 360 million globally and about 77 million in the US. Job-active seekers (Volume Applicant, Targeted Seeker, Early-Career Entrant) total 86.4 million globally.

5.4 Hirer personas

Persona or step	Global	US	Basis
Postings per month	4.20M	1.26M	420.2M applications / 100 applications per posting. US share of postings is 30% (third-party).
In-house or agency recruiters (monthly active)	0.37M	0.11M	70% of postings, at 8 postings per recruiter per month.
Hiring managers and SMB hirers (monthly active)	0.84M	0.25M	30% of postings, at 1.5 postings per hirer per month.

Range: at 50 applications per posting, hirer counts roughly double. At 250, they fall to about 40% of the base. This side has the widest uncertainty.

5.5 Sensitivity to the monthly-active assumption (millions)

Observed application volume is fixed, so a higher active share would mean lower applications per person, not more total applications.

Scenario	Active share	Monthly actives	Volume Applicant	Targeted Seeker	Early-Career Entrant	Passive Professional
Low	25%	300.0	9.0	27.0	36.0	174.0
Base	30%	360.0	10.8	32.4	43.2	208.8
High	40%	480.0	14.4	43.2	57.6	278.4

6. Cross-checks and limits

- **Applications reconcile, which proves less than it looks.** The persona totals sum to 420.5 million applications a month against 420.2 million observed, a gap of 0.1%. That holds because the Volume Applicant intensity was set to make it hold. The check constrains size times intensity, not either one alone.
- **Implied concentration.** Volume Applicants are 3% of monthly actives but would send about 39% of applications. That supports the "shotgunning" description from the LinkedIn PM, but it is an output of the assumptions, not evidence.
- **Weekly applicants.** About 86 million job-active seekers a month implies roughly 35 to 43 million applying in a given week if 40 to 50% apply weekly. That is near a circulating "40 million apply weekly" figure, which is low quality, so treat it as agreement in order of magnitude only.
- **Premium.** At $1.7 billion of 2023 revenue and an assumed $300 to $450 of revenue per subscriber a year, implied subscribers were about 4 to 6 million, around 1 to 2% of monthly actives. This supports treating the 175 million figure as an error.
- **US usage.** A Pew chart (page dated 2017) reports 28% of US adults ever use LinkedIn. That is roughly 70 million adults, close to the US estimate of about 77 million monthly actives. The source is old and measures "ever use", so it is weak support.
- **Hirer side does not reconcile cleanly.** About 50.4 million postings a year against about 3.7 million reported hires implies a 7% hire rate. Either the hires figure is stale or undercounted, or postings are overstated. Treat hirer counts as order of magnitude.
- **Next step.** Interview 8 to 10 people across the six personas to test the shares and the intensities. LinkedIn's new data insights hub, the renamed Economic Graph, may also publish labor market figures worth checking.

Sources

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