



A Marketer's Guide to
**Getting Sales to Buy
Into Social Selling with
Employee Advocacy**



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brought to you by:  GaggleAMP®

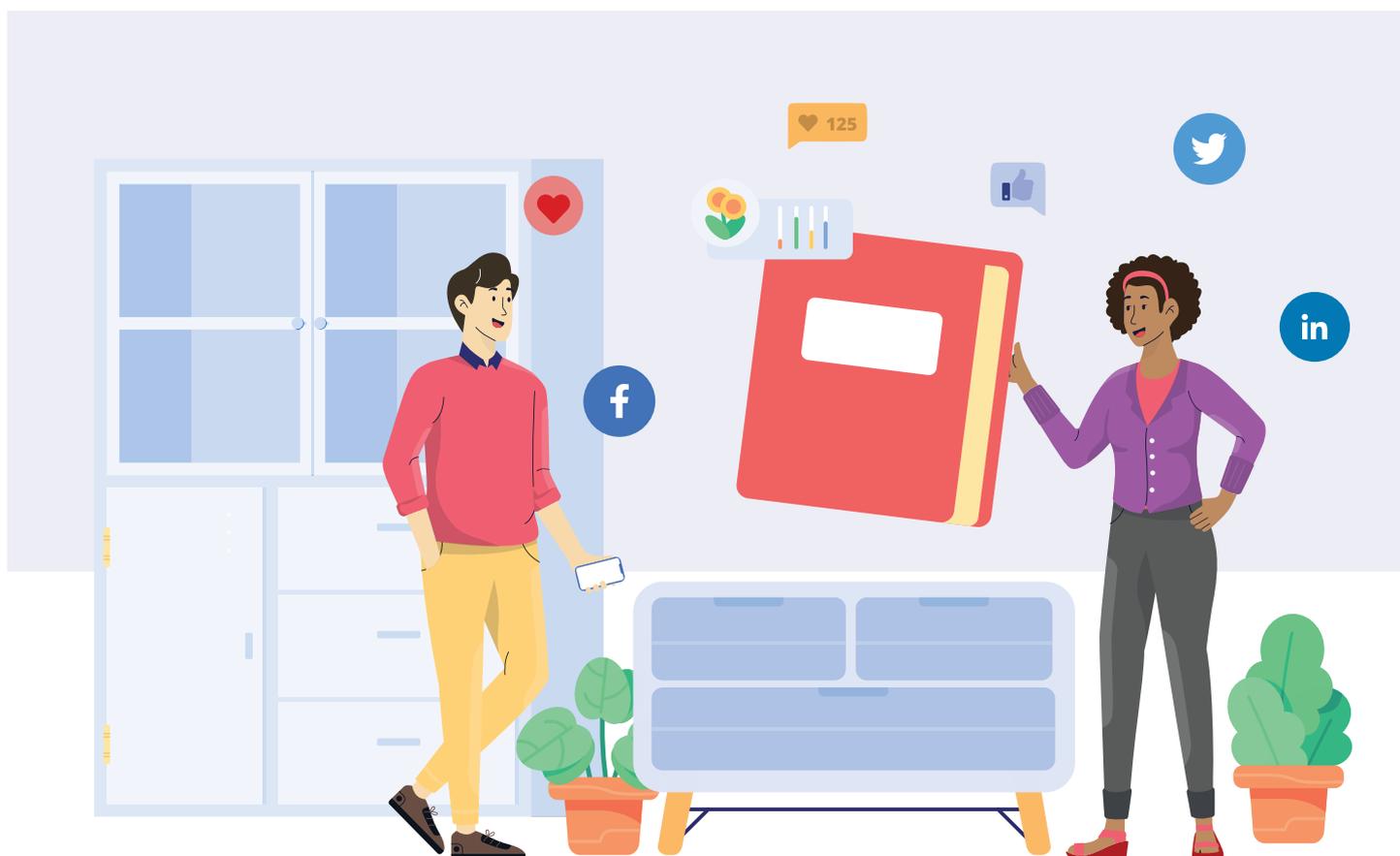


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Advantages of Getting Employees Active on Social Media

Social selling is for more than just the sales department. It helps sales to generate better quality leads, boost their pipeline, and generally results in higher deal volume but also has a lasting impact on the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and brand awareness.

Use this guide to align your social selling opportunities with that of your employee advocacy campaign and see lasting, long-term results.



A PRIMER:

What is Social Selling?

Social selling is a modernized way to connect with people, identify new prospective buyers, and build relationships with them to reach sales goals.

It allows sales reps to engage with potential buyers in a casual way, rather than cold calling or being pushy. It effectively helps sales teams:

Gain brand awareness
in your target market

Establish the sales rep
as a thought leader in
their market



**Social
Selling**

Create relationships
and opportunities
with their audience

Engage where their
prospect already is



Although social selling is a great method for sales teams to practice, it can be infinitely more effective with the use of an [employee advocacy program](#) to support social selling efforts.

How Does Employee Advocacy Impact Social Selling Efforts?

Marketing teams create content, like blog posts, podcasts, videos, and case studies (or even ebooks like this) to support our sales teams and drive leads. The content consumed helps sales teams understand where someone is in the buyer's journey and in turn helps marketing to understand the buyer's journey.

But, what about those that don't know of your solution and how it may solve their problem? This is where social selling combined with employee advocacy can help.

When members of an employee advocacy program post content on social media, it casts a wider net for interactions, shares, and engagements than a branded social media handle.

Amplifying content on an [employee advocacy platform](#) helps to connect and engage your organization with potential buyers. And, elevating those employee voices allows sales people to share their insights and attract new buyers with their views and perspectives.

For sales, social selling can:

Draw in leads

Create opportunities to engage in conversations they might not otherwise engage in

Help nurture prospective buyers down the funnel



You might be surprised to learn that many sales reps don't share marketing content on social media, and they spend a great deal of time each month coming up with something witty to say alongside the content they will post. This establishes a tiring cycle, wasting both time and resources from your sales teams.

"Most marketing organizations are spending a tremendous amount of time and resources putting together really great content - yet they stop short of amplifying that content to help get an audience to consume that content." - Glenn Gaudet, CEO of GaggleAMP.

Why Would Sales Be Afraid of Social Selling?

Sometimes sales representatives will push back on social selling, but why? Sales teams are usually not involved in the content creation process, which can create a clear lack of alignment between marketing and sales messages. Oftentimes, both departments are working towards the same goal, but are not on the same page.

The Result?



This is an easy fix. Bring sales into your content creation process so they can better understand why the content was created and what problem it is trying to solve. When they can answer this question, it improves their confidence in leveraging content for social selling.

Work with your sales team so you're on the same page, and empower them to practice [social selling](#). Practicing social selling is a huge benefit to your organization as a whole in addition to individual salespeople.

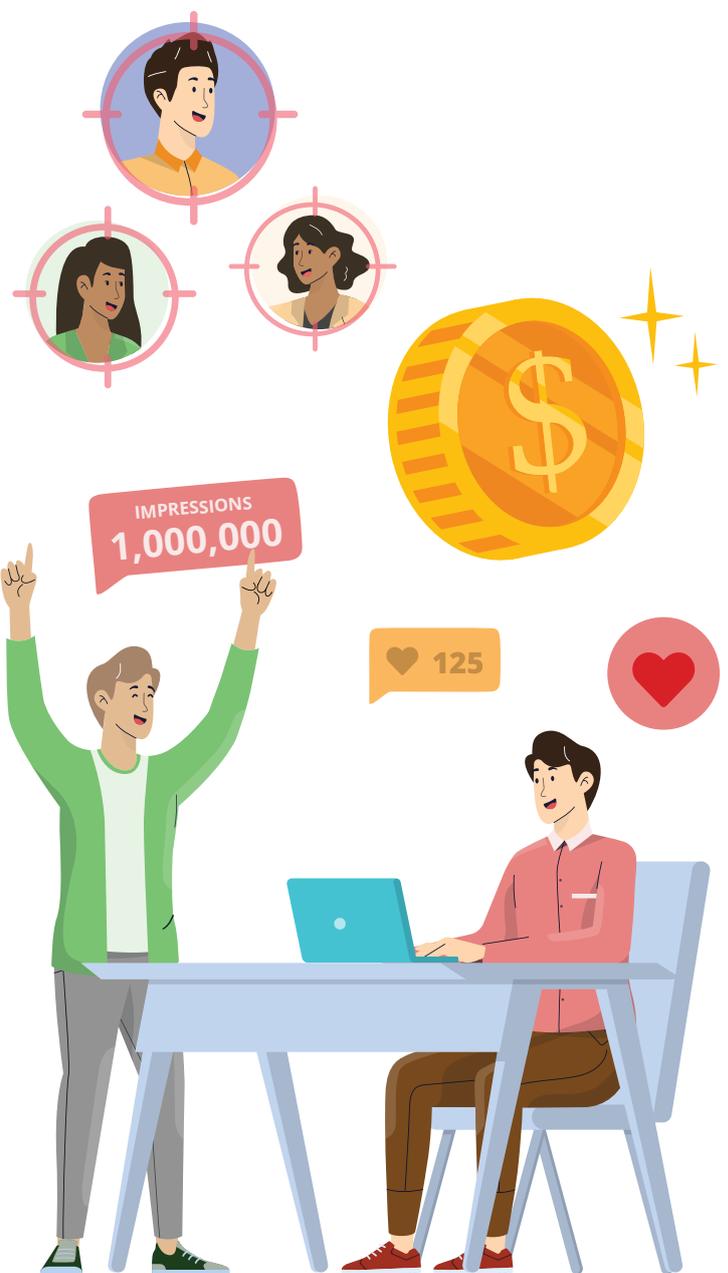
How Do You Get Salespeople to Buy Into Social Selling?



Sales reps who practice social selling saw two-to-three times the company's average sales growth in the last year.

Getting salespeople to buy-into social selling can be a journey of creating a close relationship between marketing and sales. You must find common objectives and goals that are mutually beneficial to hit, or it's going to be difficult to get sales on board to leverage your content. Content should be aligned with the needs and goals of your sales team and your target audience, which gives them a reason to want to participate in social selling.

If content meets the needs of their audience, and they feel empowered to share on social media, they'll have the opportunity to be successful. So much so that salespeople who excel at social selling create more opportunities for themselves than those that don't, and are 51% more likely to hit their sales quota, according to [LinkedIn](#).



CASE STUDY

Colonial Life's Hunt For An Employee Advocacy Platform

Colonial Life used GaggleAMP across their organization but emphasizes social selling through their employee advocacy efforts to expand their sales team social media presence.

Colonial Life recognizes that when sales reps leverage employee advocacy, they can build new connections, boosting their credibility and influence by sharing valuable information for their target market and engaging with prospective

clients. Social selling is a major part of any modern-day social media savvy sales department, and a successful employee advocacy program greatly strengthens any social selling effort.

**Active Users**

500

Pilot Program Messages

50

Potential Audience Reach

16 Million

Growth by Sales Reps

2x-3x

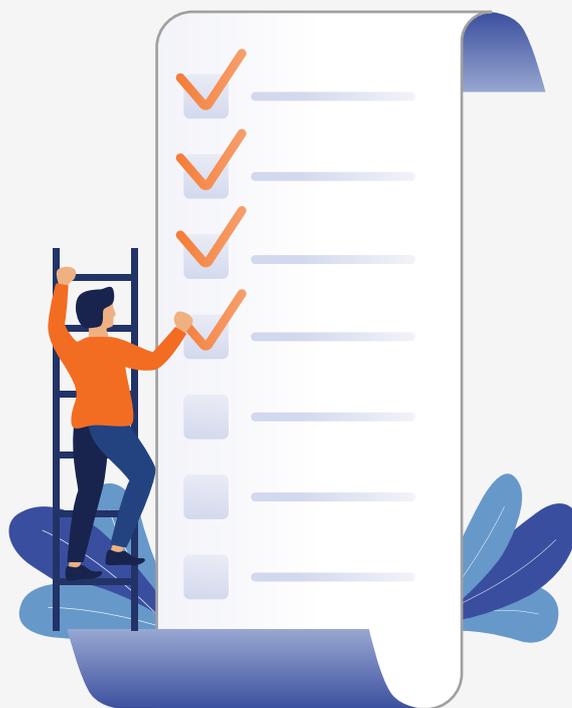
“Successful sales people know that they need to be engaging on social media. It’s helping them market themselves and our company. It’s incredibly important.” - *Chris Winston, Former Director of Corporate Communications at Colonial Life*

What's In It For the Salespeople?

It's also important your sales team understands the WIIFM of social selling. After all, participation in an employee advocacy program is a sales pitch centered on the successes seen with an employee's personal brand. If they can't see the WIIFM, they'll be hard-pressed to participate.

WIIFM Sales Teams Checklist

- ✓ Understand Your Sales Team and What Defines Success
- ✓ Quantify What Success Looks Like
- ✓ Speak to Sales Team Pain Points by Selling Your Sales Team
- ✓ Develop a System to Make Social Selling Easy
- ✓ Train Your Salespeople to Use a Social Selling Platform
- ✓ Launch Your Program
- ✓ Reinforce Your Program
- ✓ Measure and Calibrate Your Program





Onboarding Your Sales Team

Now that you have your marketing and sales teams harmonized and contributing to mutual goals and objectives, we're ready to roll, right? Not quite.

Ask your sales team to share content themselves on their own social media pages. But how do you get them to buy in? And what are the benefits?

These next steps will help lay the foundation of a successful engagement.



1. Understand Your Sales Team and What Defines Success

Sales and marketing are two very different departments. Yes, both are working towards the same goal, but the ways they arrive at that goal are very different.

As a marketer, it's your job to support your sales team, arrive at your own department's goals, and supply salespeople with content to share. If salespeople are not using your content or marketing materials, then something is amiss on your content or delivery.

Maybe your content does not address an important issue and that's why your

salespeople don't want to use it. Maybe your sales reps simply don't know when your content comes out, and there is a lack of communication. Maybe your content is great but your sales team is misunderstanding your messaging and it's purpose.

Clear this up with your sales team. This is why marketing-sales alignment is so important for every organization. Problems like this could be a huge detriment to your efforts, but they're easily solved with open dialogue between the two departments.

Quantify Success

What does success look like for you? Start by figuring out how many deals sales needs to close in a quarter, and how many qualified leads you need to pass to the sales team to meet that goal. It's best to know this number upfront so that you and the sales team can fill in the gaps and adjust your efforts accordingly.

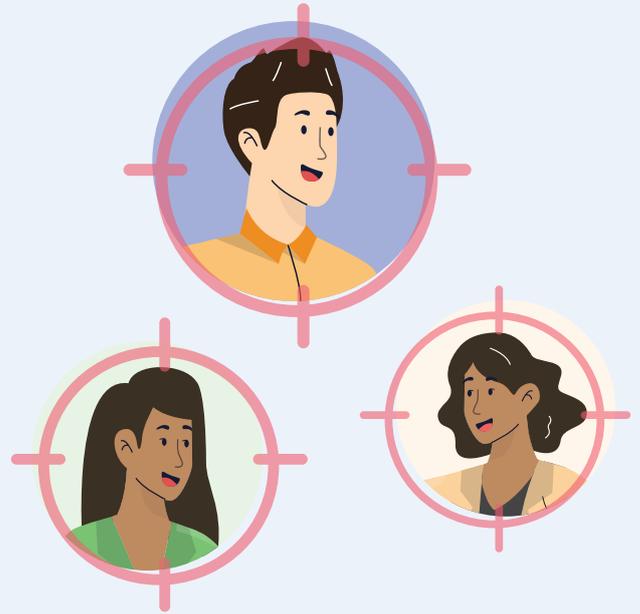
Content Marketing Sales Funnel



Source: [Jeff Bullas](#)

Identify the Target Audience

Next, you need to know who your target audience is. What does your ideal customer look like? And what problems are they trying to solve that you can help with? Take the time to fully understand who your customers are and what they care about. For example, content directed at a user of your product or service is very different from content directed at a budget holder who is not the user.



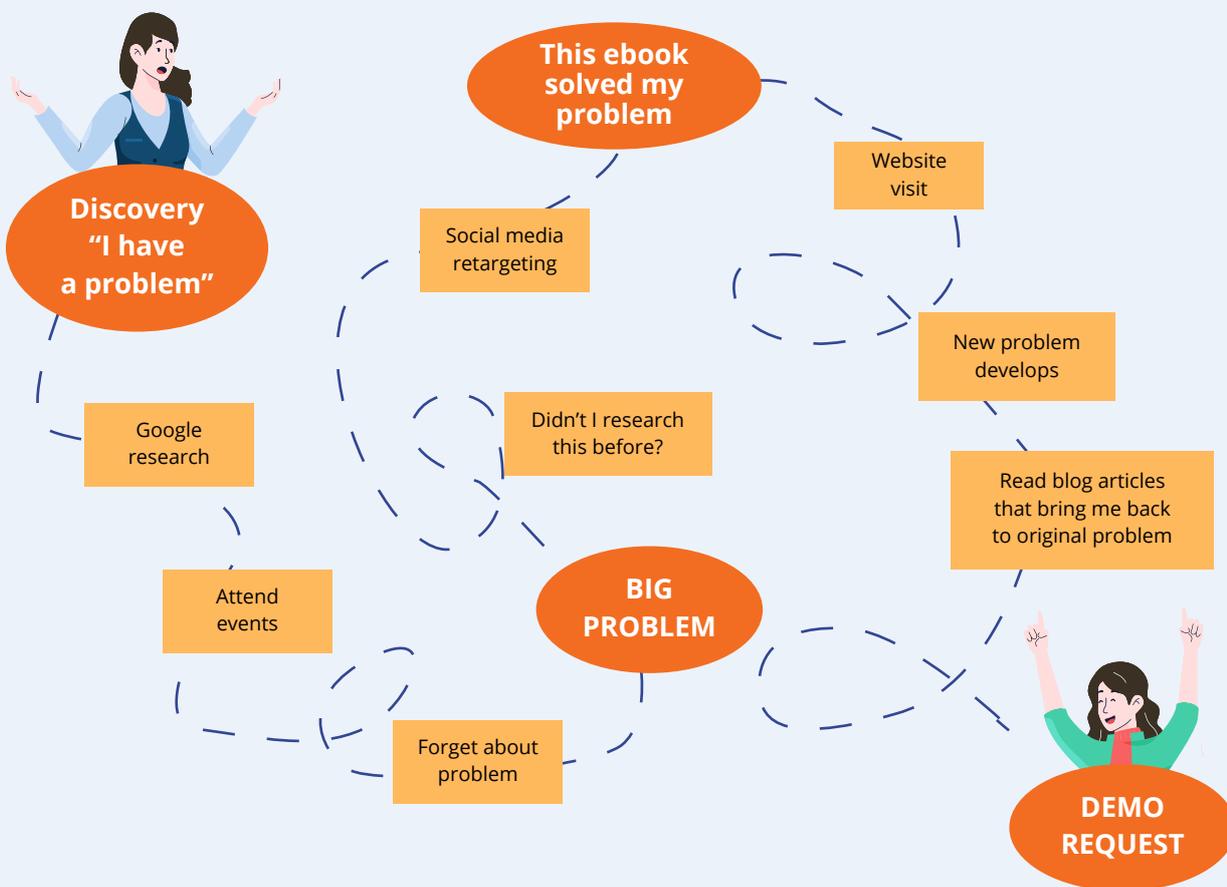
Review the Buyer's Journey

If you want your content to resonate with the sales team's prospects, understand the steps they take during the buyer's journey. If you don't understand what they are going through, you will find it very difficult to effectively communicate with them. Having a good grasp on this makes it easier for you to create content that takes them along the different stages of the buying cycle, including addressing common needs and problems they are trying to solve.

Map the Buyer's Journey

Before you create content, map out the sales and buying process. This will help you build your content calendar of topics that build a roadmap for your target audience, and helps your sales team understand the purpose behind the content. Help your prospective

buyers discover the cause of the problem they did (or didn't) know they had by subtly pointing out the cause of the problem to the buyer. You are also pushing them towards the solution to their problem - your products and services.



Keep in mind that the majority of sales collateral focuses on the product, and doesn't do anything to connect to the buyer. You need to create content that creates discomfort around their problem or brings them back to their problem but then offers solutions to

that problem in the form of your product or service. Make sure that your sales process follows the natural buying progression because you don't want a sales process that pushes people in a direction that is different from what they are interested in.

Connect the Dots Between Content Creation and Salesperson Success

But above all, talk to your sales team and get their feedback. It can't be emphasized enough how important open communication is between marketing and sales. Salespeople are happy to tell you what prospects are looking for, and when what they are looking for changes. It's helpful when you create

content to sit in on sales calls at different stages of the buying process so that you can address problems and solutions in their own words. Your sales team is much more likely to use content helps them address prospects' needs when they feel you truly understand their needs.

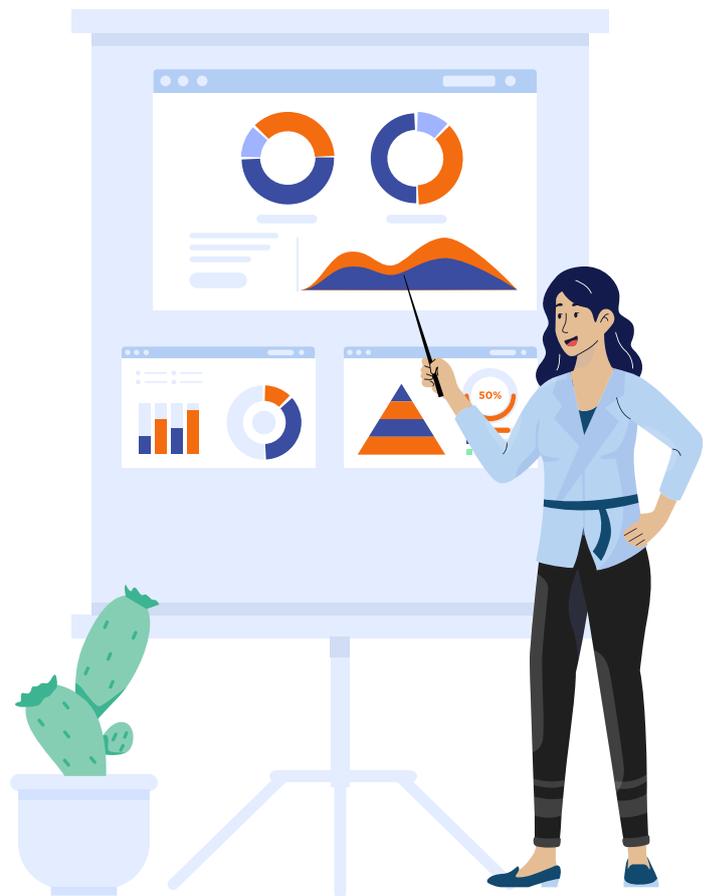




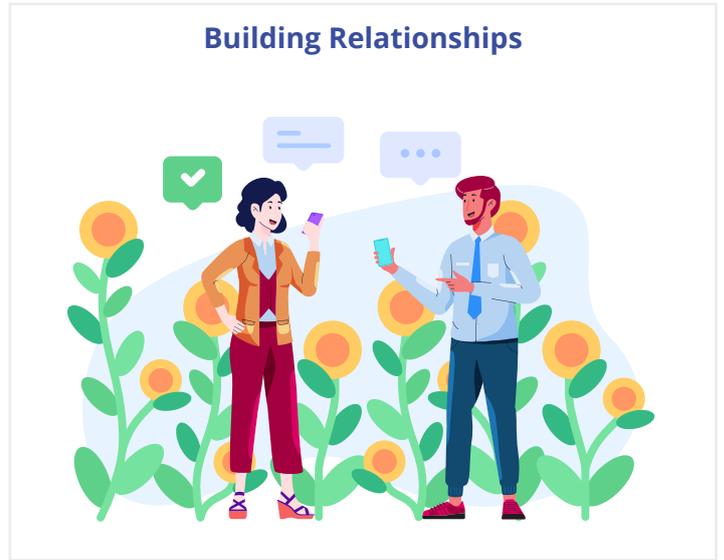
2. Sell Salespeople

The goal of social selling is to connect with people, identify new prospective buyers, and build relationships with them to reach sales goals.

Social selling is a tactic of connecting with people on social media and developing stronger relationships with them as part of the sales process. This could be done through education on a topic or industry (e.g. you content) and engaging with those prospects in a social setting - e.g. social media.



For social selling to work, they need to buy-in to two items:



Without buy-in on these two points, sales will not be successful with social selling.

Today, many sales teams succeed with their initiatives and hit their goals by leveraging content to attract new prospects and advance current deals. You can sway your sales leaders by taking the information you have learn from sitting in on sales calls and interviewing reps.

What are they having trouble with? Speak to their pain points. Tell your sales team what’s in it for them and how they can directly benefit. In essence, sell your sales team on social selling.



When social selling, you are selling yourself in digital form. Make sure your social media profiles, especially LinkedIn if you're selling B2B, are on point.

Start Building Your Personal Brand

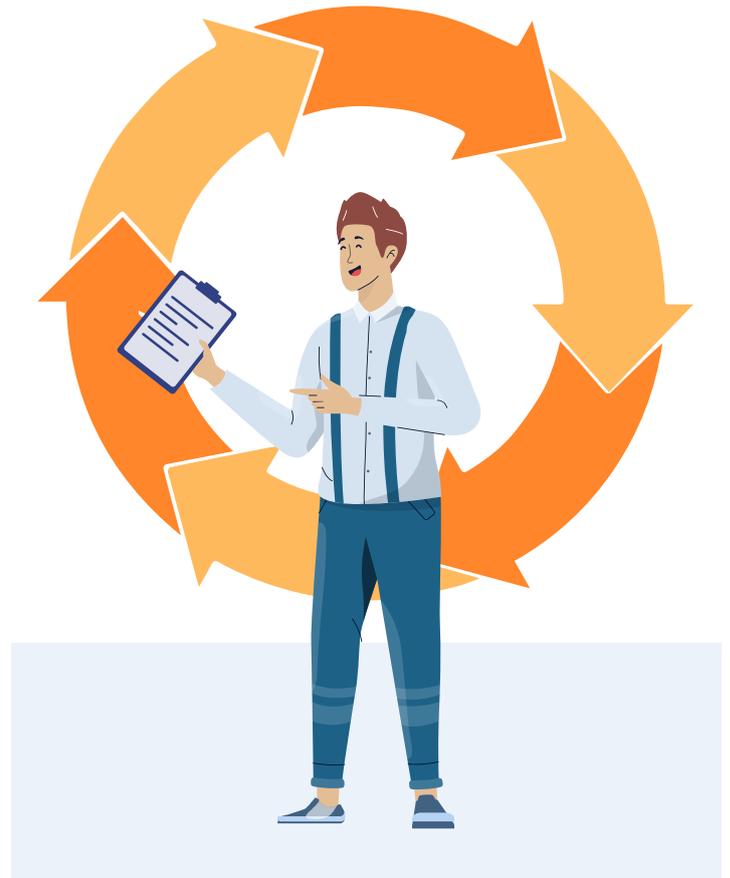
Get Started

3. Develop a System

75% of B2B buyers and 84% of C-level executives are influenced by social media when making purchasing decisions.

When a system is in place to stay consistent with social selling, it's easier for sales reps to stay up on their social selling duties. Your process should include a way for salespeople to find out when new content is available and what they are supposed to do with it. An employee advocacy platform such as GaggleAMP can provide them with social media engagement opportunities and arm them with content for their social selling efforts.

Employee advocacy tools allow you to suggest actions for employees to carry out. This could be connecting with a specific person, commenting on a post, engaging with certain posts, sharing posts or content organically, and more. Each action you suggest to employees is completely voluntary on their end, but if they do just a fraction of them, it helps increase each salesperson's digital presence.



Advanced social selling efforts can benefit from content written directly from the point of view of the salesperson. It leads with their expertise, offering tactical advice and suggestions while highlighting them as a thought leader in their space. This is a huge win-win for you!

4. Train Your Salespeople

It is critical that you effectively train your team to properly use your system



Conduct onboarding sessions to help get them started. Many sales teams have weekly, or at minimum, monthly team meetings. These are perfect for introducing your program. Connect with your sales director and set aside time during one of these meetings to do a hands-on training session to get your salesforce started.

Many organizations kickoff their employee advocacy program by introducing it at their annual

sales kickoff meeting. This is a great opportunity to demo it for everyone at once. Conduct training sessions following the kickoff and go over the basics of how to present yourself on social media, social selling, and employee advocacy.

Work with them to make sure they are ready to act as representatives of your brand by enhancing and optimizing their social profiles.

FIND A TRAINING FOR YOUR TEAM

Save A Seat



Employee Advocacy Training for the Modern Marketer

brought to you by:  GaggleAMP®



with
Andrew Stewart
Director of Customer Success



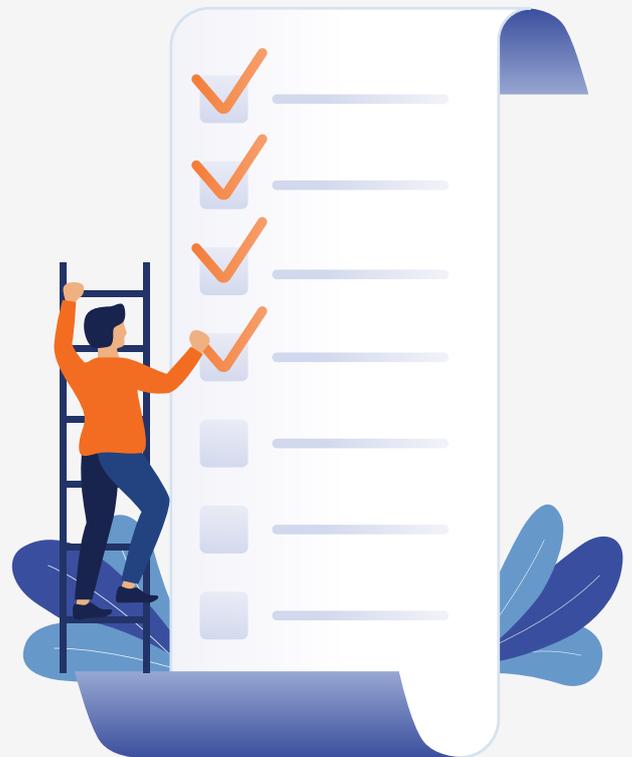
5. Launching Your Program

One reason many marketers fail in their content marketing strategy with their sales teams is that they deploy their efforts too early. If you cannot check off all of these boxes, you are not ready to launch your program.

WIIFM Sales Teams Checklist

- ✓ Do you have buy-in from the sales leadership and salespeople?
- ✓ Does the sales team and senior leadership understand the purpose of the program?
- ✓ Have you aligned your content to the stages of the funnel?
- ✓ Does sales agree your content meets the needs of potential client?

If you can check all of these boxes, you're ready to start a small launch.



*Start with a core group of champions, and show their success to the rest of the company.
This will allow you to recruit more employees and salespeople.*

6. Reinforce Your Program

Like your sales cycle, social selling takes time. The team may get discouraged if they don't see results immediately and may be tempted to revert to old

habits. Don't let that happen. Instead, reinforce your plan as a reminder of the path they are taking and where that path will lead them.

When it comes to social selling, the statistics speak for themselves.



Social sellers have a larger volume of new customers (65% vs. 47%) and better customer conversion (46% vs 31%) compared to those who are not using social media for sales. ([Small Biz Genius](#))



78% of salespeople engaged in social selling are outselling their peers who aren't. ([OptinMonster](#))



Half of revenue is influenced by social selling in 14 common industries, including computer software, healthcare, marketing, and advertising. ([LinkedIn](#))



Testing is part of success, so make sure you build it into your expectations. You are going to try a lot of things, and a lot of them are going to fail. Work together, test a lot of different strategies, and learn from the results before moving on.

"I've seen lots of sales collateral and the focus is 90-95% on the product and doesn't do anything to connect to the people," said Matt Heinz, founder of Heinz Marketing, a marketing agency in Seattle. "The best marketing in the world focuses on people and problems. If you can connect with someone based on what they care about, based on what their needs and objectives are, then, you're getting somewhere."

7. Measure & Celebrate

Establish a baseline on your social media influence. Every company will measure success differently, so establish the right way of measuring for your departments, your team, and individuals.

You might be aiming for more traffic, engagement, or conversions. Measure it and track it. Share success stories with your team, even if it's just one salesperson's success. Recognition is a huge motivator and helps get others to get on board, too.



Running a Successful Program

Involving sales in your content marketing strategy is more than just distributing posting to social media. There needs to be a deeper interaction and integration between your sales and marketing teams.

Make sure that the two departments have the same goals. Don't focus on sales, since you really can't control that. Instead, focus on the buying process and your target audience. How are your customers going to purchase? What exactly do they care about?

Both B2C and B2B organizations deal directly with people making decisions. Focus on creating content that appeals to and resonates with both your sales team and your target audience. The more your content addresses their needs and their phraseology, the more credibility your marketing efforts will have and better success you will see through your sales.

The best marketing in the world focuses on people and problems. When you connect with someone based on what they care about, their needs and their objectives, then you are getting somewhere.

