

HOW TO MOBILIZE YOUR SALES TEAM ON SOCIAL

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO ENSURING
YOUR SALES TEAM IS ADOPTING
SOCIAL SELLING



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Introduction: How to Mobilize Your Sales Team On Social Selling

Word has gotten out: social selling is now a critical sales skill.

Today's technology-enabled buyers do their own research before calling a sales rep. They use blogs, discussion forums, Twitter, LinkedIn, and even Facebook to frame business issues, identify options, and evaluate solutions. According to the Corporate Executive Board, the average buyer completes nearly 60% of the decision process before contacting anyone in sales.

Great Salespeople look, sound, act like experts on social media, which can often be a challenge for sales newcomers. FRONTLINE's State of Social Selling Report found that while 76% of B2B sales reps recognize the value, **only 24% of B2B sales professionals feel they know how to use social media for selling**, and when companies offer social sales training to their teams, the number of reps who say they use social networks as part of their sales process jumps from 28% to 74%.

Change requires a program. Whether your company has five, 500, or 5,000 Salespeople, you know that changing sales behavior can be a challenge. It's not enough to tell Salespeople what to do. You need to educate, motivate, recognize, and evaluate them in order to create meaningful and ongoing change. That requires planning, strategy, and execution.

We've taken the process of deploying social selling and boiled it down to 10 basic steps. This ebook lays out the step-by-step program for introducing social selling into a sales organization. It gives practical, hands-on advice based on FRONTLINE's teams experience launching hundreds of social selling programs at the world's largest companies and professional services firms.

Continue reading to learn each step towards mobilizing your sales team on social, as well as expert tips on executing these action items.

Step One: Engage Sales Leadership

Before you get too far down the road, engage Sales Leadership in your own social selling program. If you are in Sales Leadership, then you've already done your job. Box checked, let's move on to Step 2.

However, if you're in Marketing or Digital Strategy, getting Sales Leadership on board is key to your success. Great social selling initiatives are seen as a team-wide initiative. If the Sales team sees it as a Marketing or a Digital Strategy initiative, they won't take it seriously. Encourage Sales Leadership to talk the talk and walk the walk.

- **Talk the talk:** Be visibly supportive of the initiative. Communicate the value and encourage competition. Share success stories company-wide.
- **Walk the walk:** Model the right behaviors for sales teams. Sales Leaders are at the front of the line. Updating their profiles, sharing content, and building out their networks will show the way for the teams they lead.

Expert Tip: Provide your Sales Leaders with "white glove" coaching to make sure they're modeling the right social media behavior for their teams.



You're not launching social selling for the sake of social selling. You're launching social selling to achieve sales goals.

- Michael Idinopulos, CMO, FRONTLINE

Step Two: Define Your Business Goals

Look deeper than the generic goals that could apply to every business (increase sales, win new accounts, etc). Tie your social selling initiative back to broader sales and/or corporate strategy and goals. What is it about your business at this moment in time that makes social selling a priority for the sales team?

Here are some real goals from real companies to help get your thoughts going:

- **Communicate with the buyer on the buyer's terms.**

Quote from financial services firm: "Salespeople are used to cultivating relationships on the golf course. But the next generation of clients aren't hanging out on the fairway. They're online, and that's where we need to be."

- **Invest resources into building out online networks for sales reps and training them how to use social media efficiently.**

Quote from high-tech company: "We can't compete on marketing spend, especially competitors with 3-5x the budget. Instead, we're investing where we have competitive edge: the expertise and networks of our reps."



Step Three: Communicate The Value

Social selling is a foreign concept for many Salespeople. You are, quite literally, asking them to change the way they work. Position your social selling program as an employee benefit. You're helping your team use tools and techniques that will make them better Salespeople. You're helping them make quota.

Communicate three main points:

- **Social selling is important.** Give reps the broader context and help them understand that their world is changing and they need to change with it.
- **Social selling helps reps make quota.** Make it real: talk about their current sales process, help them envision a world where online social networks are part of that process. Invite high-performing reps to share stories about how they've used social to find a lead, get a meeting, or cultivate a relationship.
- **You're launching a program.** Describe the training and tools that you'll be providing them, what they can expect, and when.

Deliver these messages at a big splashy sales kickoff or in informal lunch-and-learns. Do it in person if everyone is together, or via webinar if your reps are distributed in the field. Whatever the medium, keep your communications short, direct, and to-the-point.

Expert Tip: Describe your social selling program as an employee benefit, not a sales requirement.



Whether it's LinkedIn, Twitter, or other social networks, the profile is the cornerstone of every salesperson's social media presence. It's the digital business card.

Step Four: Clean Up Their Profiles

This is your first big opportunity to deliver value to your reps. You'll help them create personal brands that are genuine, compelling to buyers, and consistent with your company brand. Start this phase by designing how you want your reps' social profiles to look. Here are a few questions to ask yourself before training your sales reps on how to make their online profiles even better.

- **Picture:** What kinds of profile pictures do you want? Do you want to encourage uniformity v. personal expression?
- **Company name:** What name do you want reps to use—full name or acronym? Include “inc.” and “corp.”?
- **Headline:** Is there a standard structure you want employees to use (e.g., “Account Executive at YourCo”?)
- **Industry:** What industry categorization should they use? Software consultant, Software sales, or Software?
- **Professional Summary:** How would you like sales reps to talk about your company in their summaries? (Are there images or videos you'd like them to embed?)
- **Skills and Endorsements:** Does your industry prohibit or allow skills and endorsements? Some industries love skills and endorsements, while others (e.g., law) prohibit them.

Expert Tip: Bring a professional photographer to internal sales meetings and take headshots to help your salespeople look even more professional on their social profiles.



Step Five: Remind Them To Connect

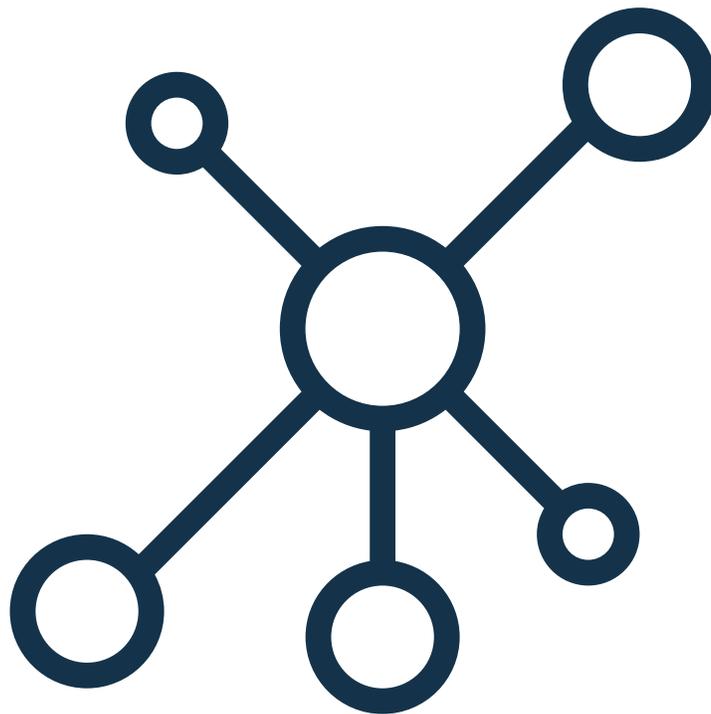
Without connections, your sales reps' social activity is like the proverbial tree falling in the forest, heard by no one. At the same time, quality matters more than size. Your reps need to connect with the right people to drive sales. Tools like LinkedIn and Twitter have auto-recommendation features that will prompt your salespeople to grow their networks. But those automated tools don't know who your buyers are. Or your channels partners. Or industry influencers. You do.

Remind your Salespeople, on an ongoing basis, to use LinkedIn and Twitter to connect with individuals they already know who:

- Work at companies where you're trying to develop deeper relationships
- Have job titles that fit your buyer profile
- Are talking about topics that indicate consideration or buying intent

As your Salespeople nurture these high-value connections, encourage them to leverage the connections they've made by listening, commenting, and posting original content.

Expert Tip: Remind and reiterate to your Salespeople that LinkedIn works better for deepening existing relationships and Twitter works better for creating new relationships.



Step Six: Supply Quality Content

Sharing content on social networks is one of the most effective ways for Salespeople to engage buyers. Encourage your reps to share on social media by making it super-easy for them. Once they've cleaned up their profiles, remove all the barriers to social content sharing.

Here's how:

- **Curate valuable content.** Salespeople don't have time to go looking for interesting, insightful content. Put together a mix of your own company's content, partner content, and third party experts who support your company's value propositions.
- **Manage approvals for them.** The last thing a rep wants is to get called onto the carpet for sharing the wrong content. Make sure your curated content is pre-approved by Marketing, Communications, and/or Legal so that your reps can share with confidence.
- **Ping reps when it's time to share.** Instead of the rep coming to the content, have the content come to the rep. Send them notifications when there's new content to share and make it super-easy for them to complete the sharing action.

Expert Tip: Content isn't a one-and-done thing. Maintain a steady flow of high-quality, company-approved content going forward.



Step Seven: Encourage Competition

Good Salespeople are competitive. They like to win. That's why you hired them. Harness that competitive instinct to drive participation in your social selling program.

To make social selling a competitive sport inside your organization, give your Salespeople a way to keep score. Quantify each individual's activity by tracking and reporting out on such things as:

- **Best profiles:** Who looks the best on LinkedIn? On Twitter?
- **Top sharers:** Who are your most active sharers?
- **Most influential:** Whose shares are driving the highest click-through rates?
- **Most networked:** Who has the most Twitter followers? Who is connected to the most potential buyers on LinkedIn?

Get creative on how you measure and recognize achievement. Pit them against each other as individuals or as teams. Recognize them with praise, with prizes, or with plaques.

Expert Tip: Keep the competition fun and friendly.



Step Eight: Share Success Stories

While statistics and charts may excite intellect, a good story captures the imagination. As social selling activity accelerates in your organization, you'll start hearing anecdotes about how social is helping reps source and close business. People will start saying things like:



*"I used Twitter to land a meeting with a prospect who wasn't returning my phone calls."
- Software sales rep*



*"Connecting with a current client on LinkedIn led directly to the referral of a new piece of work."
- Law firm partner*

Capture these stories and share them with the rest of the team. Team meetings, company newsletters, video testimonials, and the company intranet are all great places to communicate the successes.

Authenticity matters above all else. Resist the urge to wordsmith or over-produce your success stories. Let Salespeople speak in their own voices to their friends and colleagues.

Expert Tip: An employee survey with a few open-ended questions is a great way to surface success stories, especially from the reps in the field.

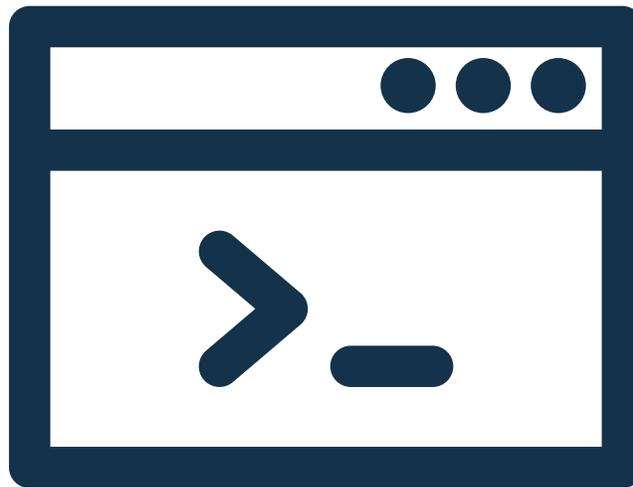
Step Nine: Integrate With CRM

CRM is the key driver of sales process. It's the system of record which captures what your Salespeople are supposed to be doing, and the scorecard which shows what they're actually doing.

For social to be a part of your sales process, it needs to be part of your CRM. Depending on what CRM you use and how you use it, there are several touch-points to consider integrating social data into your process:

- **Activities/Tasks:** Allow reps to track social lead touches just as they would track phone calls, voicemails, emails, and meetings.
- **Contact Record:** Capture social profile data, such as a Twitter handle, in the Contact record.
- **Lead Source:** Allow reps to select LinkedIn and Twitter along with Marketing Campaign, Contact Request, and Conference as a lead source.
- **Opportunity Source:** When an opportunity is sourced or influenced by social selling, let the rep select Social as an opportunity source.

Expert Tip: Measure social actions alongside emails, phone calls, and other core selling activities.



Step Ten: Measure ROI

Social selling activity is up, your team is excited, and you have plenty of success stories. But where's the hard data? What numbers can you show your CEO to prove your program's success?

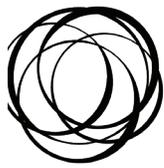
We recommend two methods to quantify social selling ROI: At the rep level and at the opportunity level.

Rep-level ROI is the simplest method for calculating social selling ROI. Identify your most active Salespeople on social as measured by such indicators as sharing, profile quality, engagement, and network size. Then compare your top social sellers' quota performance to everyone else's. If your top social sellers are outselling everyone else, chances are they're doing something right! (Extra credit: Run a before/after comparison on the top social sellers to measure how the social selling program has boosted their performance.)

Opportunity-level ROI is a more detailed method, and also more complex. After integrating social selling actions into CRM (see Step 9), run an analysis that compares the win/loss rates of socially influenced opportunities to the same rates for opportunities that weren't influenced by social activity. If the socially influenced deals are closing faster, more often, or at a higher deal value relative to forecast, that indicates a positive ROI for social selling.

Expert Tip: Wait a few sales cycles before your social selling success shows up in your win rates.





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Conclusion: The Buyer's Journey Has Changed

Today's Salespeople need to engage their buyers on social media. It's a proven, effective channel to reach and engage buyers early in the sales cycle to influence decision-making.

By following this 10-step process, Sales Leaders can help Salespeople adopt the skills, behaviors, and mindsets required for successful social selling. For both the company and the individual Salesperson, the rewards can be great.

Good luck and happy selling!

About FRONTLINE Selling

FRONTLINE Selling's Staccato Social platform enables social selling by guiding sales professionals to demonstrate expertise, deliver insights, and engage buyers using social networks. Our award-winning technology maps to your sales process, integrates with CRM, and measures results. Customers include Fortune 500 leaders in high-tech, finance, manufacturing, and professional services.

Mobilize your team on social today. [Learn more here.](#)