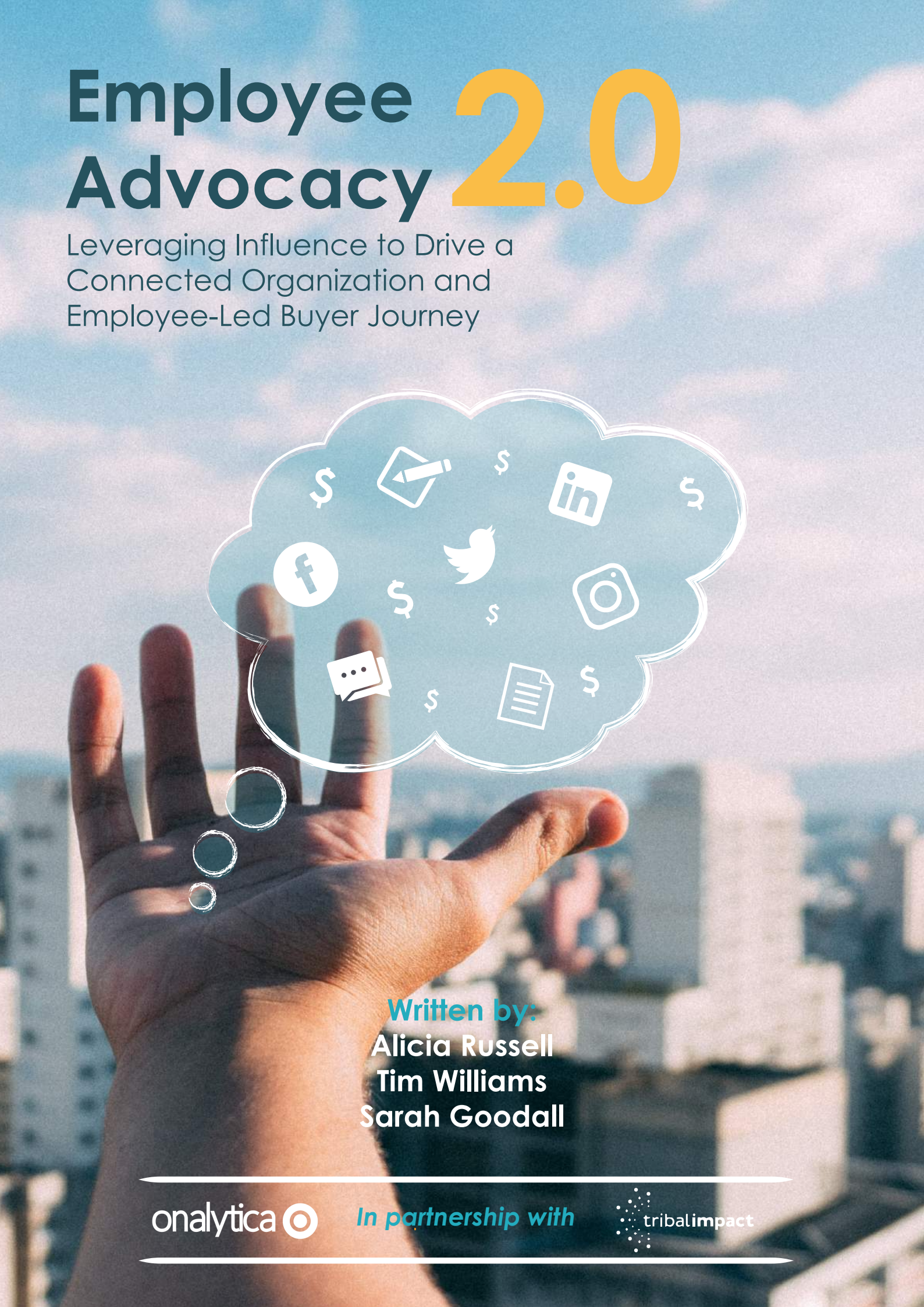
Employee Advocacy 2.0

Leveraging Influence to Drive a Connected Organization and Employee-Led Buyer Journey



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onalytica *In partnership with* tribalimpact

CONTENTS

1. **Background & Opportunity** 1
   - 1.1 What is Employee Advocacy? 1
   - 1.2 Why Employee Advocacy? 2
   - 1.3 The Opportunity for Brands to Activate Their Millennials' Voices 14
   - 1.4 Earned, Owned or Paid Media? 15
   - 1.5 Which Department owns Employee Advocacy? 17

2. **A Connected Organization & Employee-Led Buyer Journey** 19
   - 2.1 What do we Mean by 'Connected'? 19
   - 2.2 How Employee Advocacy Drives a Connected Organization & Employee-Led Buyer Journey 19
   - 2.3 The Evolution of Employee Advocacy 21

3. **The Four Stages to Employee Advocacy** 23

4. **The Integrated Model** 24
   - 4.1 Looking at The Employee as an Influencer 24
   - 4.2 Employee Evolution Examples 28
   - 4.3 Influencer Personas 30

5. **Optimizing Content Marketing** 33
   - 5.1 How Important is Content? 33
   - 5.2 Content Types 34
   - 5.3 Sharing Content with Target Audiences 36

6. **The Similarities & Differences Between B2B & B2C** 39

CONTENTS

7. Setting Objectives 41
7.1 Business Objectives 41
7.2 Program Objectives & KPIs 42
7.3 Employee Objectives & KPIs 42

8. Employee Motivation & Enablement 43
8.1 Employee Limitations 43
8.2 Definiting the 'What's in it for me?' 43
8.3 Activating Different Personas 45
8.4 Creating a Social Culture 45
8.5 Social Media Training 47
8.6 Social Media Policy 48
8.7 Make it Easy - Technology 48

9. Measuring Success 50

10. Conclusions 53

11. About the Authors 54

12. About Onalytica 55

13. About Tribal Impact 55

14. Key Contributors 56

Executive Summary

> *Consumers are disappointed by brands. Trust in brands is lower than ever and the flipside of that is just as important, that people are trusted more. The reason people are trusted more than advertising is that there is no financial stake in the outcome.*
> **Jay Baer, Founder, Convince & Convert**

In 2017 and 2018 brands have consequently accelerated efforts to roll out Employee Advocacy programs to drive more brand awareness, consideration and trust. A high proportion of these programs have resulted in employees sharing more branded content but is this really what the brands are looking to achieve and is this really motivating employees?

In truth, these marketing-led Employee Advocacy programs have hit some serious roadblocks as employees try to navigate how to use social media and brands try to understand the motivations of their employees and how to leverage these programs to drive business outcomes.

This guide will look at new frameworks and provide practical action plans on how brands can run integrated Employee Advocacy, Influencer Marketing and Social Selling programs with their employees, with content being at the heart of the strategy.

Social media has an ever-increasing importance in brands' marketing strategies. It is a place to share content, latest news, product releases and events and is also a place where brands can engage directly in real-time with external influencers, their target audience and customers.

Social media is where the modern-buyer feels comfortable, particularly millennials, who are just beginning to enter key decision-making roles of large corporates. Millennials also have an inherent lack of trust in brands and traditional advertising which has been transplanted into trusting people more. By people we do not just mean the people we all know personally such as friends, family and colleagues or

with – the employees.

The fact that, according to Statista.com , the number of smartphone owners world-wide is expected to reach 36% during 2018, having grown from just 10% in 2011, is enough to show that social media has become ubiquitous. This is a resource that is crying out to be harnessed but organizations firstly need to communicate the "what's in it for me" to their employees. This changing landscape can be a threat or an opportunity for brands. Those that embrace these changes will find a new and extremely effective way to reach and build real relationships with their new and existing audiences that caters to these changing behaviors of the modern buyer.

Employee Advocacy entails switching the focus from the brand logo and a content broadcasting strategy to instead having the limelight on employees. It is about giving employees a voice and leveraging the influence that they hold

But for us at Onalytica and Tribal Impact, it goes deeper than this. Employee advocacy focuses on the internal influencer community within organizations, but where does the external influencer community fit in? How can brands integrate their employee advocacy program with their influencer marketing program into one advocacy program and achieve maximum influence over the market place?

Employee advocacy 2.0 will explore the whats, whys and hows when it comes to holistically linking up Employee Advocacy and Influencer Marketing programs. The focus is shifting from employee communication, brand promotion and branded content amplification to helping employees become influencers themselves by connecting them with the external influencer community.

> *Brands are buying Employee Advocacy software and rolling out social media training as a tick box exercise, but this tends to result in an amplification of branded content rather than employees creating content that increases trust and impacts the buyer journey.*
> **Tim Williams, CEO, Onalytica**

1. Background & Opportunity

1.1 What is Employee Advocacy?

Many brands believe that employee advocacy is about getting employees to promote their brand organically through their social media channels. It is so much more than that!

Employees are a company's greatest asset – an engaged, motivated and aligned workforce is essential to create quality products, sustain high morale, deliver exceptional customer service and build positive brand reputation in the marketplace. If brands put the employee first and invest in them then, in return, brands will be rewarded by employees becoming fans of the brand and delivering better results all round.

From a brand's perspective there are 5 main motivations behind encouraging employee social media use today, with the first two being more commonplace:

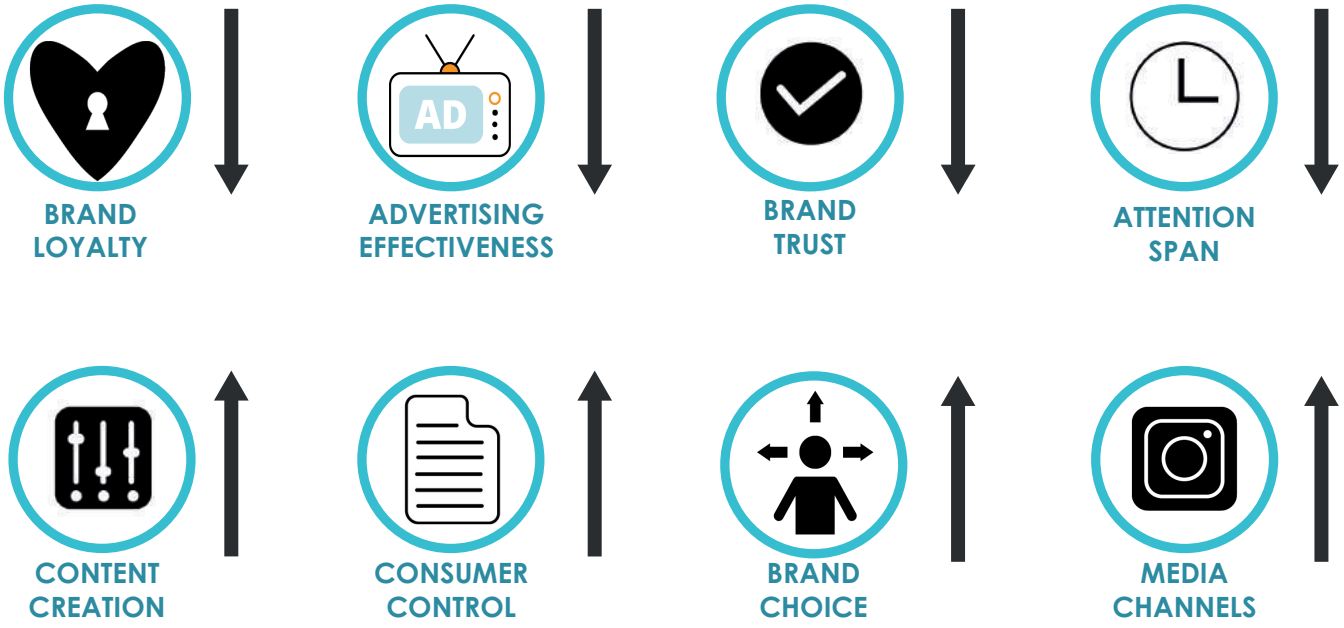
1. Encourage employees to share **branded content** to increase content reach and access new audiences.
2. More effective 2-way channel to **communicate** with their employees than the traditional intranet.
3. Increase **staff retention** by helping staff to develop and build their personal brands.
4. Encourage employees to create their **own content** online to increase awareness and drive consideration in the marketplace.
5. Connect employees with external **industry influencers** to increase engagement and influence in the marketplace offline and online.

An employee advocate is someone that can stimulate engagement and grow brand awareness among their audience through their digital media, social media or offline channels. They have an audience that follow and trust their opinion. There is also a huge opportunity for employees to create their own content and increase their overall influence in the marketplace by engaging and building relationships with assigned influencers. This is an area in which employee advocacy overlaps with influencer marketing.

> *Employees have a unique perspective on company values and culture, and the ability to speak with authenticity that can only be earned by their tenure with the brand.*
> **Eric Fuessel, Senior Account Executive, EveryoneSocial**

1.2 Why Employee Advocacy?

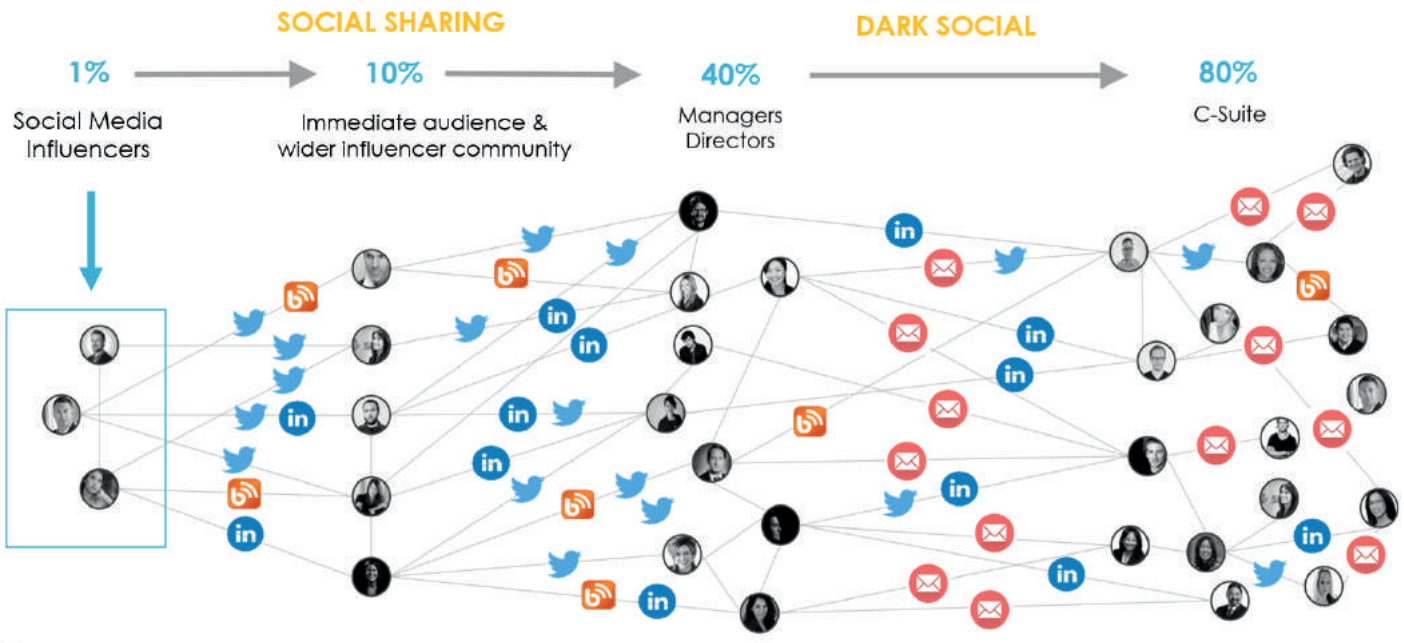
The Market has changed



Regardless of which market we look at, brand choice and therefore competition for attention is increasing and providing more options to consumers; content is also in abundance and much easier for consumers to access. As stated by Buzzsumo: "*If you are sticking with your content approach from three years ago, it is now 50% less effective. Our review of 100 million articles published in 2017 found that social sharing has halved since 2015*".

In B2C there is a wide acceptance that increased positive exposure on social media channels will drive more commerce. In B2B there are still some who question whether organic social media awareness delivers an impact on the bottom line.

A large proportion of B2B employees and marketers therefore question why they should invest time and money to post content on social media channels when they cannot see their key decision makers on platforms such as Twitter or Instagram. Many of these key decision makers also have inactive LinkedIn and Facebook profiles. The B2B model below shows how the C-Suite are being influenced by employee-influencer content.



Engage the top 1% market influencers to influence up to 80% of your target audience through Social Sharing & Dark Social (e.g. Email, Text, Word of Mouth, Phone).

When social media influencers post content on their personal blogs, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, their immediate audience and wider influencer community share and spread their content on the same channels. This content in turn influences predominantly mid-level decision makers such as managers and directors (C-Suite if you are lucky) who use social media and follow market influencers.

What happens next is that the mid-level decision makers or "recommenders to the C-Suite" share the content by email, text message, LinkedIn or WhatsApp for example. They also share and influence offline over the phone and even face-to-face. This social activity is called "Dark Social" as it cannot be tracked and is therefore a major challenge for marketers looking to prove a concrete ROI.

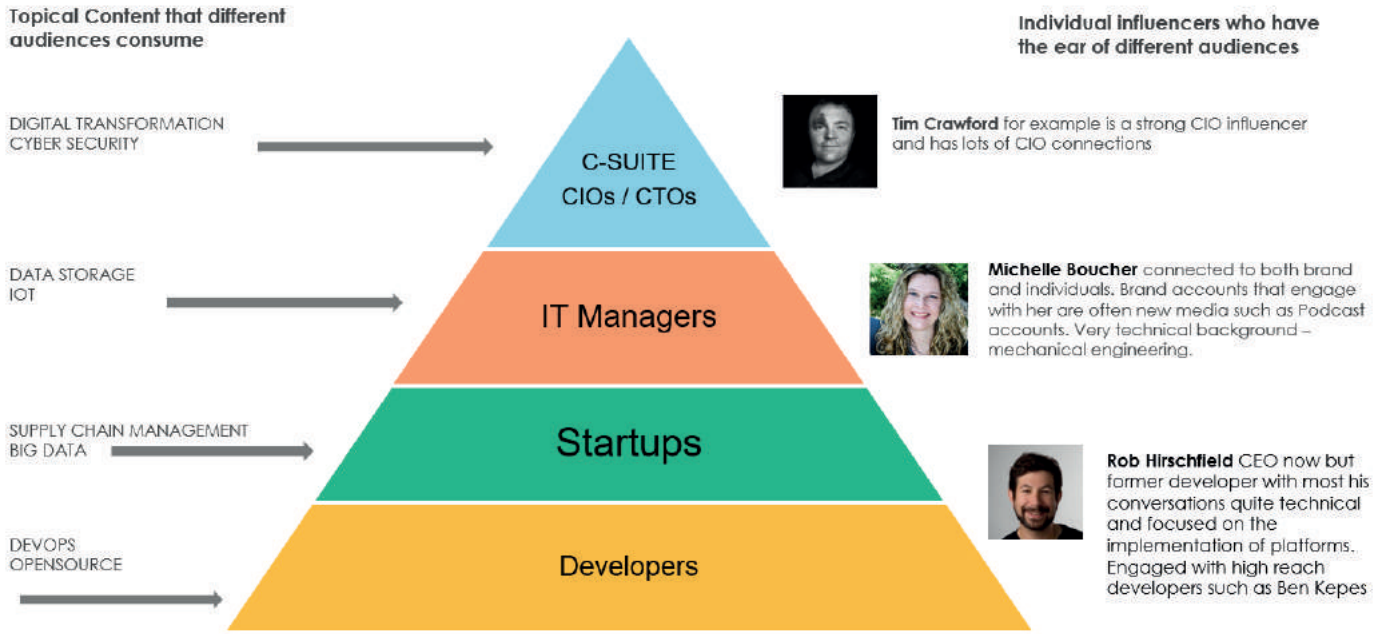
Taking this model a stage further, there are often multiple personas or target audiences for B2B marketers and they can be influenced through organic social media activity in 2 ways:

1) Create topically relevant and engaging content that is shared through influencers' social networks
2) Build relationships with and influence specific influencers who have the ear of your target audience, their direct audience both offline and online.

In the example below on the left-hand side, the C-Suite are more interested in Digital Transformation whereas Data Storage content is consumed by IT Managers and posts around DevOps are picked up by developers.

On the right-hand side there are 3 example influencers that each have a different target audience. Tim Crawford is a CIO advisor; Michelle's technical background enables her to share her deep technical expertise on a peer-to-peer level with IT Managers and Rob is a CEO/developer who can influence both start-ups and developers as he has walked the walk and is trusted in his field.

The exciting reality is that B2B marketers can now influence up to 80% of their target market through creating content on social and building relationships with influencers.



Employee advocacy can unlock a tremendous amount of value as employees are the ones behind the everyday and know all the intricacies of their brand and product. Employees have the potential to be brands' biggest brand champions and can be the key connectors between your brand and the market influencers.

> *Employee advocates are the new authentic marketing channel for brands. By sharing helpful content that engages communities, employee advocates encourage others to share and amplify their brand's message, leading to increased social chatter, web traffic, and sales.*
> **Cheryl Burgess, CEO, Blue Focus Marketing**

Traditional Activities are no Longer Working

Gone are the days when marketing would seek out leads and then hand them over to sales to negotiate the deal. Social Media has been a game changer for sales and marketing, who now need to work together across all levels of the sales funnel.

Around 65% of these new, more proactive buyers felt that vendor content had an impact on their final buying decision. An organization's ability to create a connected, inclusive employee advocacy program, where all employees can contribute to brand reputation, keep its products front-of-mind, and showcase themselves as experts in their field, is critical to its future marketing and sales success.

When sales, marketing and social activity is all focused on 'inbound' i.e. attracting leads through an Integrated Model, silos are removed to leave a more connected organization.

Inbound leads are also higher quality; with Deloitte reporting that customers referred by advocates have a 37% higher retention rate. Compare this to the less targeted, traditional, outbound marketing approach. A hit-and-miss marketing technique made especially difficult since the recent implementation of the GDPR. Often little more than 'cold' email campaigns that were not always well received.

This is perhaps unsurprising given that we know that 75% of B2B buyers use social media to sup port purchase decisions and, according to LinkedIn, 90% of B2B buyers are more likely to engage with sales professionals who are viewed as thought leaders in their industry.

Because advocacy carries greater trust and credibility, it will inevitably increase trust and authenticity associated with the brand. According to LinkedIn, employee-shared content is regarded as being three times more authentic and therefore typically sees a click-through rate that is twice as high as when the corporate mouthpiece shares the same data.

> *Anyone can throw advertising dollars out there but very few understand how to truly connect with buyers. Companies have an army of people at their disposal to do this when they're trained and empowered to do so.*
> **Melonie Dodaro, CEO Top Dog Social Media**

> *Everybody knows that advertising is created to incentivize an outcome, so consequently, it makes it inherently less effective.*
> **Jay Baer, Founder, Convince & Convert**

People buy From People, not Logos

Ultimately, people – especially buyers – trust the opinions and reviews of individuals far more than those of an entity or brand. Edelman's Trust Barometer holds 2018 up as the year of the 'battle for truth' and, what seems certain is, there has never been more importance placed on truth and authenticity. Edelman's 2018 report states that nearly 7 in 10 respondents highlighted 'building trust' as the number one priority for CEOs; ahead of high-quality products and services.

> *Brands have been using digital and social media to distance themselves from the consumer, asking them to sign up to email lists and to do things that are very programmatic and distant from the consumer. It is very hard to build trust in that way of doing business. But, brands can now use digital if they empower employees and influencers correctly to shrink that distance back and regain that trust that has been lost over the last 8 or 9 years.*
> **Brian Fanzo, Founder & CEO, iSocialFanz**

For the employee voice to deliver this credibility and authenticity, and for trust to be conveyed, the organization must be well connected both in terms of the internal sharing and understanding of information and its links with the external audience.

Employees are perceived as more credible content sharers and they have loyal networks which give them greater reach and greater influence. It is a positive investment for brands to put their employees in front of their logo.

> *In a world where buyers trust their barista and used car salesmen more than marketers, brands desperate to find effective ways to engage with new customers are beginning to realize the solution is right in front of them: employees. Research has shown customers trust employees more than ads or formal marketing messages. Inspiring employee advocacy means brands can enlist those closest to knowledge of the company's solutions to make genuine, authentic recommendations that people want to hear.*
> **Lee Odden, CEO, TopRank Marketing**

With the right foundations in place, brands can begin to build credibility with buyers. Employee advocates become known as experts in their field and can remain

'front-of-mind' with their social networks. This positions them to deliver information and advice to prospective buyers as and when – or even in advance of when – it is needed.

Brands being able to nurture relationships in this way and guide the buyer to their products or services at as early a stage as possible is the new differentiator. Success does not stop during the relationship-building stage: because of the improved perception and greater credibility of posts by individuals over brands, the content shared by employees receives, on average, 8x more engagement and is then re-shared 25x more frequently than the same content shared by official brand channels.

Further along the process, a fully-embedded and successful employee advocacy program becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Employees can better understand their business; higher quality information and knowledge is shared; individuals associated with the brand command more credibility with their audience; confidence and engagement levels increase; thought leadership contributions grow; the brand is commonly associated with expertise in the field, remains front-of-mind for buyers and is differentiated from competitors.

> *Real influence is the ability to affect or change behavior. It is not popularity (like much of influencer advertising). Employees have this ability to influence, so when they are harnessed in their thousands it drives huge levels of authentic awareness and engagement.*
> **Caroline Jory, Engagement Director, Qubist**

> *Even though people trust people more than they trust brands – which is true and proven in copious studies – this often doesn't include the c-suite. Of course they're going to sing the company's praises, that's their job. But when you get an employee that's an enthusiast, who becomes an influencer internally and externally, they can have a lot of influence.*
> **Tom Augenthaler, The Influence Marketer**

The Modern Buyer Journey

The modern buyer journey is changing and becoming increasingly more digital with many more touch points both before and after the purchase takes place. So, brands must work harder to remain a part of the journey.

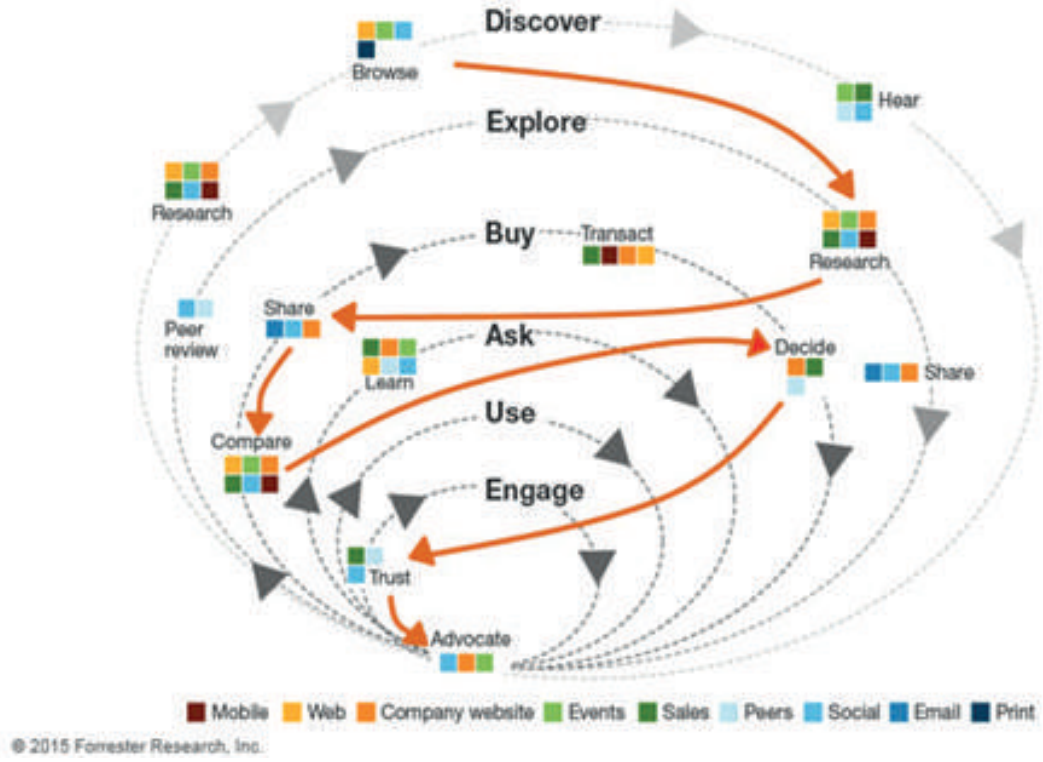
These changes are due to changing attitudes and behaviors prompted by advances in technology. With the decreasing trust towards traditional advertising and logos, consumers are turning to the internet and people. Before they make a purchase, they are asking their friends and family for advice and recommendations; they are venturing online and seeking tutorials & unboxing videos from YouTube Influencers & bloggers and sites like Amazon, Trip Advisor & Trustpilot.com with transparent ratings and customer reviews.

> *People want to read reviews and recommendations from trusted sources and will make informed choices based on those recommendations from their network. That is friends, family and peers. Word of mouth has always been the most powerful form of advertising – the current shift is that it is now tech enabled.*
> **Caroline Jory, Engagement Director, Qubist**

At every stage of the journey customers are exposed to content, opinions and experiences of other people just like them; no longer is the only information from the brand themselves, but it is from the brand and everyone else. Social media can be the making, or the breaking of a brand.

It is becoming more commonplace for today's buyers to begin their journey online, namely among social networks. Whether it is as close-knit as asking a specific group of friends for recommendations, or broadcasting on social for the public opinion, it is imperative that brands have an opportunity to be a part of the conversation. Employee Advocacy helps drive this journey.

Eric Fuessel, Senior Account Executive, EveryoneSocial



Let us use shopping as an example that everyone can easily apply to their own lives. Before the advent of social media and online shopping, consumers would head straight into store with the intent to buy and make a purchase there and then. Sure, they may ask the in-store sales rep for help and maybe seek recommendations from their friends and family beforehand (influence has always existed!), but it is a relatively quick journey and limited to that store's availability.

Compare this to a journey on Amazon – not only are customers able to browse multiple options at different price points from different brands to compare, but they're are able to view a top-line rating out of 5 and detailed customer reviews. They can also easily access blog posts and YouTube videos from influencers and experts that have tried and tested the products for them to further validate their decision.

Customers can make their purchase with confidence and minimal risk because they have conducted their research before-hand. And this is not just applicable to B2C, but it is mirrored in B2B too. As a consumer, this is great; as a business, this can be a nightmare if not leveraged correctly.

> *Your employees are the heart and soul of your company – who better to talk about you? Coach, train, enable and incentivize your colleagues to talk about your brand to generate valuable impressions that are impossible to replicate with company posts. Why? Because people trust people. They are far more likely to believe a positive statement written by a person they know than an advert served to them by a company they've only just heard of.*
> **Sonia Rosua-Clyne, Global Employee & Partner Advocacy Manager, Sage**

Thanks to the democratization of content and technology advancements (namely smart phones), consumers have more control, are savvier than ever and already have a pretty good idea of what they want before they even speak to a sales rep.

Search engines and social media algorithms are also getting smarter too and only putting content that the user is likely to find useful in front of them. Facebook is a great example of this, whereby they altered their algorithm at the beginning of 2018 to favor content from their Facebook friends, over liked company Facebook pages.

Brands cannot just create great content that they are confident their target audience will find useful, they must be far more strategic and work around the smarter algorithms and decreasing trust in brands and advertising to get this content in front of their target audience, before their competitors do.

> *The nice part about employee advocacy is that it actually shrinks the distance between the brand and the customer, but at the same time it allows the brand to reach more people and have a much more humanized voice.*
> **Brian Fanzo, Founder & CEO, iSocialFanz**

> *The democratization of information, communication and influence leads to more players in the room and therefore each one gets heard a little bit less. But for influencers that are YouTubers or Instagrammers - they started out with zero, so they are acquiring new market share.*
> **Neal Schaffer, CEO, PDCA Social**

This is where employee advocacy (including social selling) and influencer marketing comes in to play – all three are tied together by people and the influence that they have. The main benefits to brands are:

Increase reach – on average, employees collectively have 10 x the reach compared to brand handles.

Increase engagement – not only do employees have larger audiences, but they are more engaged too. On average, content shared by employees receives 8 x more engagement than content shared on brand channels and is 25 x more likely to be reshared by their audience.

Increase brand awareness – 65% of brands report increased brand recognition from their employee advocacy program.

Influence the buyer journey – It is now more important than ever to focus more time and attention on the earlier stages of the buyer journey as 85% of customers seek out trusted expert content when considering a purchase and 84% of C and VP level buyers use social media in their decision-making process. Because of this, 70% of the

B2B buyer's journey is complete before they even reach out to sales.

Increase lead conversion – 84% of B2B buyers start the purchasing process with a referral and leads generated through employees have been found to convert 7 x more than any other lead gen source. Social selling also offers a great solution to the decreasing effectiveness of the cold call.

Improve brand perception – engaging and associating with industry influencers is a very effective method of changing and shaping brand perception.

Increase brand trust and confidence – people are much easier to trust than logos. The humanization of your brand by your employees being the face of your brand will enable customers to trust and feel a connection with your brand.
Improve staff retention - increase job satisfaction and create a rewarding corporate culture.

Attract new talent – gain more visibility as a desirable place to work.

> *If done right, employees can be activated to be brand storytellers and influence others through the purchase funnel. They can also be used to respond to customer inquiries online, thought leadership and overall content engagement. From a business perspective, employee advocacy also promotes a healthy work environment internally.*
> **Michael Brito, EVP, Zeno Group**

1.3 The Opportunity for Brands to Activate Their Millennials' Voices

Firstly, millennials will represent 75% of the workforce by 2030, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Millennials are vocally opinionated and are not afraid to voice those opinions on their social profiles with their audiences. Millennials also like to feel as though they are contributing to the wider success of an organization, so being a part of an employee advocacy program will be highly appealing to them.

In a study conducted by Hinge Research Institute, they found that millennials came out on top for recognizing the benefits of employee advocacy compared to Baby Boomers and Gen X: 46% of millennials saw employee advocacy as an opportunity to develop skills high in demand; 39.4% access to more job opportunities and 38% differentiation from peers. This level of enthusiasm and excitement is just the mindset that brands want, as it can easily be reflected in their advocacy of the brand.

Millennials are also extremely experiential, so they see the value that employee advocacy can bring to the customer experience, as 75% of millennials are willing to spend money on an experience over a product. They are savvy, on social media and keen to network and build their profiles, so selling in the concept of an employee advocacy program will not be such a challenging feat compared to the older generations within the workforce. In fact, an integrated employee advocacy and influencer marketing program will make the opportunity appear more worthwhile to them thanks to the prospect of improving their personal brand.

Brands starting with their millennials as part of a pilot program is a great way to get and demonstrate early success to on-board more employee advocates.

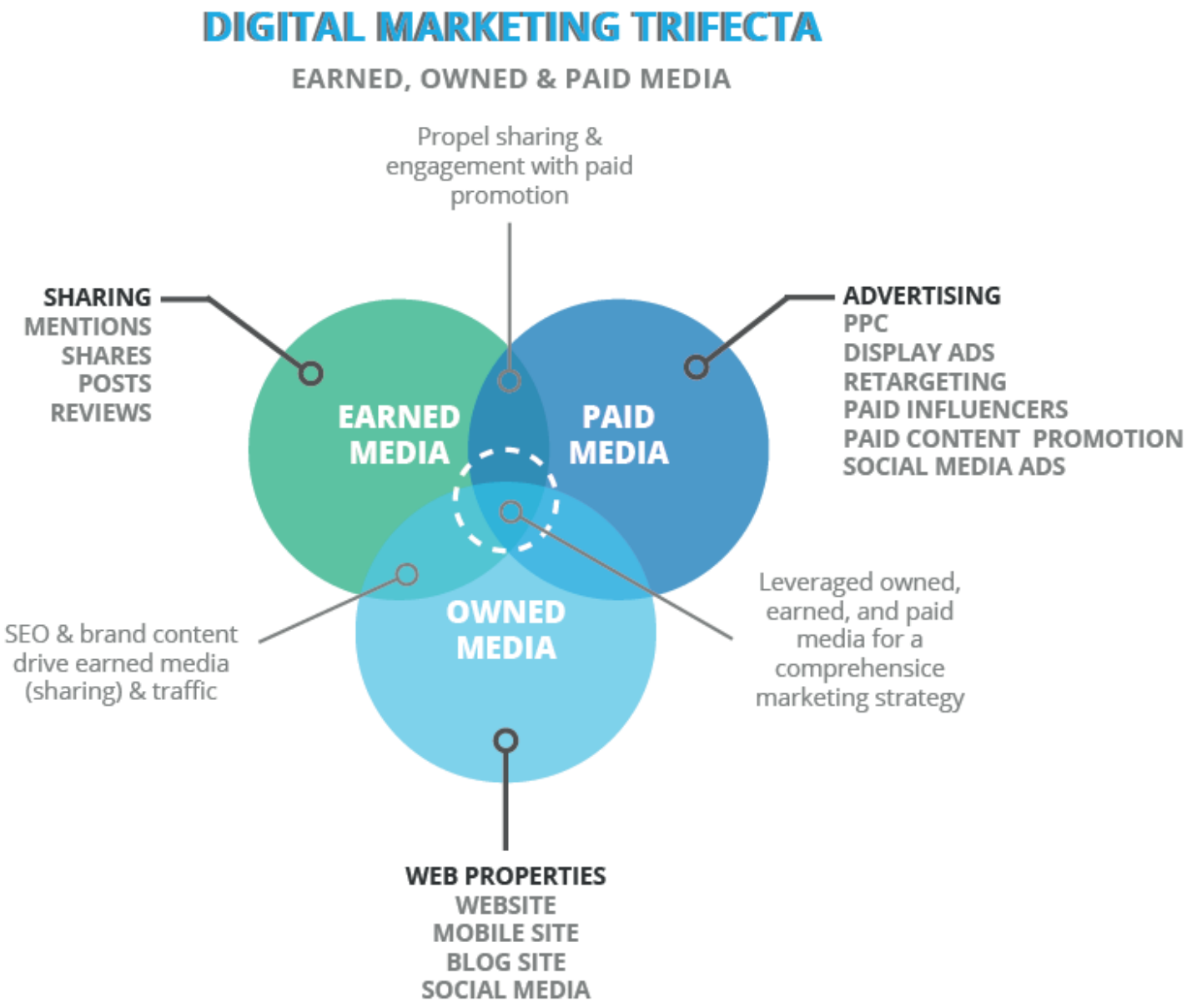
> *The difference with millennials is that they are not afraid to voice their opinion and say that they want to be acknowledged. I also think it comes down to transparency - millennials don't want to know that they got 23 tweets, they truly want to know that they're helping the business.*
> **Brian Fanzo, Founder & CEO, iSocialFanz**

1.4 Earned, Owned or Paid Media?

Employee advocacy in its most common form falls into the 'earned media' part of the earned, owned and paid media model, which encompasses all elements of sharing such as brand mentions, shares, blog post and reviews.

Sitting alongside (and relevant to) employee advocacy in **earned media**:

Influencer relations – building organic long-term relationships with influencers
Content marketing – amplifying earned media value of your content
Political lobbying – convincing influencers to help change policy
Media relations – influencing the media & high-profile influencers



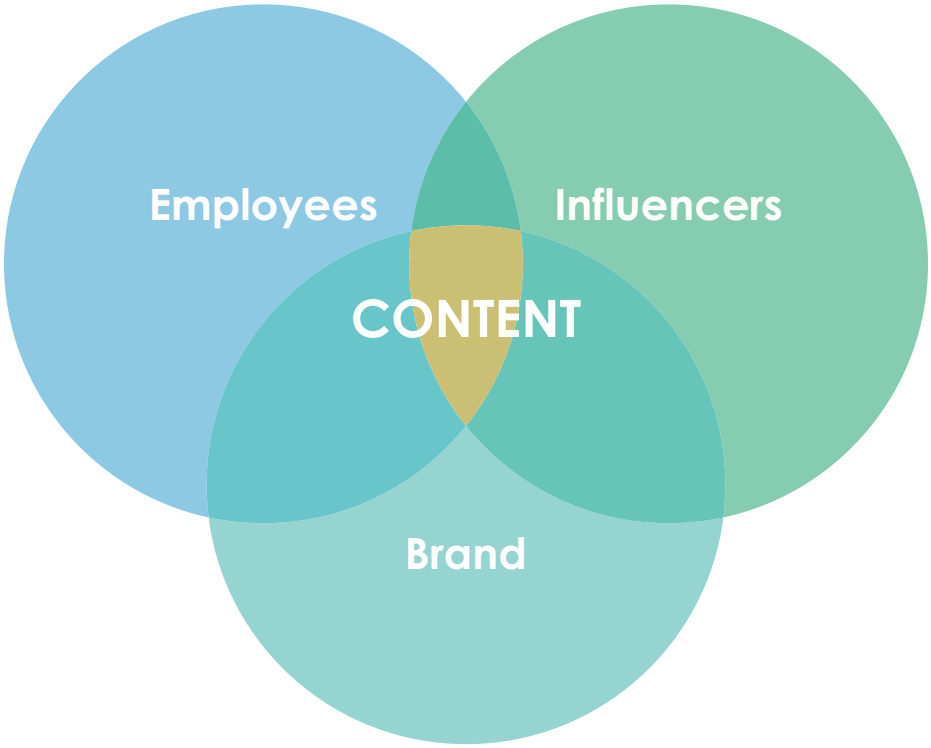
> *Many marketers think of employee advocacy as falling into the 'Owned' Media category and employees' social networks as a resource that can be 'summoned' on demand when needed. Genuine employee advocacy though, is in fact 'Earned' Media just as much as any third-party advocacy. Treating employees' advocacy as something that needs to be earned will change the mindset of the marketer and results in much more effective, genuine advocacy.*
> **Alistair Wheate, Head of Product, Onalytica**

Earned media is complementary to both Owned and Paid media. While both Paid and Owned remain integral to the overall marketing mix, Earned media makes up for the areas in which they lack, particularly the lack of trust in traditional advertising and even the increasing skepticism towards content on brands' Owned media channels too, which mainly comprises of brand-biased content.

> *Brands have a huge opportunity to amplify their brand message and visibility by allowing employees to take part in the amplification. Employee advocacy is about allowing employees to be brand ambassadors.*
> **Melonie Dodaro, CEO, Top Dog Social Media**

Shared Media

An extension to the model is the idea of 'shared media', in which there are multiple parties that benefit. An example of this would be a brand collaborating on some content with an influencer. Both the brand and the influencer benefit from the other's perspective, expertise, but also through increased exposure, shares and access to their audience. We will discuss content later in the report.



1.5 Which Department owns Employee Advocacy?

Depending on the objectives of the program, it is often led by Marketing, Digital, Social Media, Communications, PR and HR, with the following objectives:

Marketing – an increase in content views and shares through the employees' audiences; an increase in MQLs and SQLs generated through their audiences & passed onto their sales team and an increase in lead conversion due to more qualified and nurtured leads.

Digital & social media – increase reach and engagement on social media profiles through employees' audiences.

Communications – positive brand perception and sentiment online compared to competitors due to employees' visibility.

PR – increase brand awareness compared to competitors through your employees' social media presence and activity.

HR – aid with recruitment, staff retention and job satisfaction.

According to Employee advocacy research by the Hinge Research Institute, 51.7% of employee advocacy programs are led by marketing (number 1), whereas 'no specific department' comes in at number 2.

Furthermore, if you search for job titles with 'employee advocacy' in them on LinkedIn, the LinkedIn categorized industry **Marketing & Advertising** comes in at number 1 with 1,607 individuals globally; **Human Resources** at number 2 with 1,459 and lastly 989 in **Media and PR.**

However, regardless of which team this sits with, it will always span much further than that, as employee advocates can be anyone from receptionists to software developers. Employee advocacy programs are usually opt-in programs whereby employers simply ask their employees if they would like to be involved, or, in cases where it is done well, where the employees advocate voluntarily or even ask the employer to join the program. This requires a shift in corporate culture and a good explanation from the employers to effectively articulate the 'what's in it for me'.

For an employee advocacy program to be successful, a centralized team from all relevant functions should be formed. For example, the program may be led and managed by marketing with the overall objective of increasing MQLs, SQLs and lead conversion, but with PR and communication's input on brand messaging; the dos and don'ts for social media policy from the legal team, as well as the content team supporting on the content front to ensure that employees' feed can easily be populated with relevant, high quality content.

Department heads/executives also need a seat at the table to ensure maximum buy-in to the program. Executives on social media will lead by example. This will strengthen brand reputation online and contribute to a social culture which will help get employees on board.

2. A Connected Organization & Employee-Led Buyer Journey

2.1 What do we Mean by 'Connected'?

A connected organization is the opposite to the traditional, divided organization. A divided organization is hierarchical with the C-Suite being barely visible to the front-line staff. A division of labor approach led by tasks and processes means staff will tend to stick to their department and team and get their job done down to the last letter on their job description. This is a common model for many large organizations.

A connected organization however in its simplest form is commonly referred to as a holarchy, deriving from 'Holon'. A Holon refers to something that is simultaneously a part and a whole. If we apply this to the workplace, it is each department and business function being a whole, but part of something much bigger – each department interacts with and connects to one another as part of a much larger, complete network.

2.2 How Employee Advocacy Drives a Connected Organization & Employee-Led Buyer Journey

A truly connected organization today is one that is digital and social. Where the C-suite lack visibility in a divided organization, a connected organization thrives when the C-suite are on social media and have a presence within the market place. Where distributed teams truly feel that they are part of the same organization as they are connected through posting and sharing content online. Employee advocacy is a great facilitator of this.

Any good content marketer will invest time and money conducting persona analysis to truly understand their customers' pain points and frequently asked questions to feed into their content strategy. But what is the point in doing this if content is not reaching them in the first place, or they are turning a blind eye to it as it is just branded content? Amplifying branded content through internal and external influencers is a great way to drive awareness and action through the consideration phase of the buyer journey by intercepting buyers, to educate them on what solution they need. We are more likely to read content that is from a person, rather than a brand.

> *The challenge is to provide content that stands out versus content that is typically ignored. Authentic content created or shared by employee advocates is more likely to stand out and to be acted upon in the buyer's journey.*
> **Cheryl Burgess, CEO, Blue Focus Marketing**

> *Employee advocacy has the ability to affect the buyer journey by making sure that at every step of the journey, the potential buyer is exposed to the brand's content. What that content is, is something that companies invest in for their content marketing and content strategy to try to figure out how that content gets shared to the ideal buyer at the ideal position in their buyer journey. And this is something that only the salespeople, marketing (account-based marketing) and a data driven approach can tell*
> **Neal Schaffer, CEO, PDCA Social**

Employees can respond to customers and prospects online in real-time meaning that problems, queries and purchases can progress far quicker. Not only does this humanize the whole process, but it is efficient.

It is so easy to forget the true power that speaking to an actual person can have! Just think, people much prefer it when they call customer service and are answered by an actual, real person and not an automated switchboard.

People are far more likeable than logos! Customers also love it when they feel like a brand representative has gone above and beyond for their needs.

> *At Sage, we train and encourage our colleagues to do the right thing and reply to any questions or queries they might see online regarding the company, so it can be quickly solved or escalated there and then.*
> **Sonia Rosua-Clyne, Global Employee & Partner Advocacy Manager, Sage**

2.3 The Evolution of Employee Advocacy

Employee communication has changed a lot, as has the content approach and employee engagement levels. There have been three main evolutions to date:

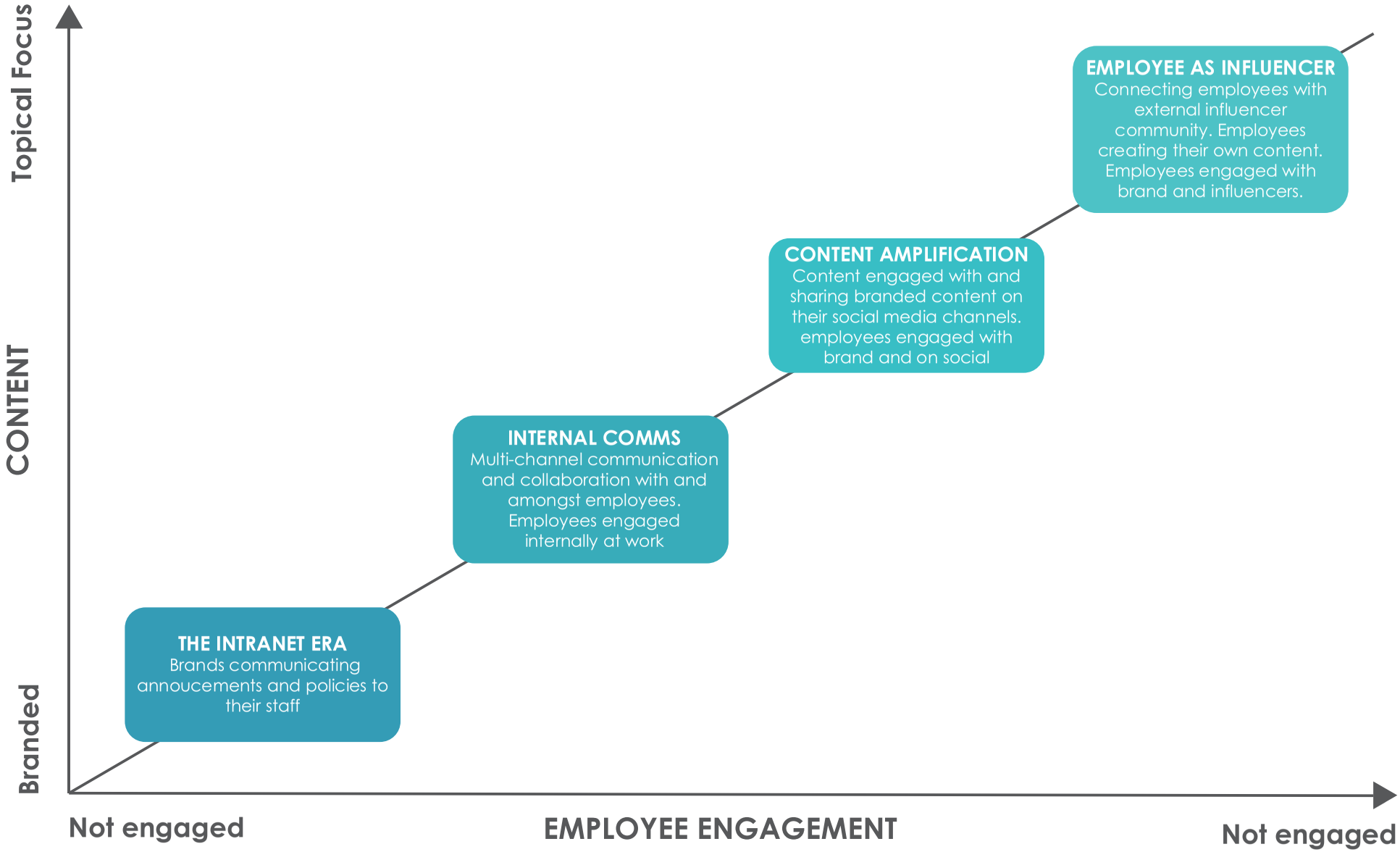
The intranet – an internal site for brands to communicate policies, news and big announcements with their employees. Usually not very interactive or inclusive.

Internal comms – a more advanced and complementary version of the intranet in which employees can communicate and collaborate with one another effectively. This was a great step to create a consistent and connected work culture, resulting in employees being more engaged with each other and their work.

Content amplification – the typical employee advocacy model that we see today in which employees share and amplify branded content on their social media profiles, with their audiences.

Employee advocacy 2.0 is the next step in this evolution in which we consider the employee as an influencer, by marrying up the internal influencer community (employees) with the external influencer community (our topical/brand influencers). Most brands are currently sitting somewhere between internal comms and the content amplification stage which is essentially a broadcasting model – controlling the message, not disrupting the brand monologue.

Employee advocacy 2.0 describes the movement needed to evolve this into employees disrupting the monologue and creating a dialogue. This is done by creating their own content and engaging and building relationships with their audiences and external market influencers.


Topical Focus
CONTENT
Branded
THE INTRANET ERA
Brands communicating annoucements and policies to their staff
INTERNAL COMMS
Multi-channel communication and collaboration with and amongst employees. Employees engaged internally at work
CONTENT AMPLIFICATION
Content engaged with and sharing branded content on their social media channels. employees engaged with brand and on social
EMPLOYEE AS INFLUENCER
Connecting employees with external influencer community. Employees creating their own content. Employees engaged with brand and influencers.
Not engaged
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
Not engaged

3. The 4 Stages to Employee Advocacy

STEP 1: AUDIT

Analyze your employees to understand their different online personas

Discover your relevant External Market Influencers

Measure your employees' internal social media engagement and market influence over the past 12 months to benchmark future performance

Understand relevancy of employee debate vs. external influencers and target audience

Compare employee social media engagement & market influence to that of your competitors

Match and assign your subject matter experts with external influencers or thought leaders on specific topics so that they can build on-going relationships

STEP 2: PLANNING

Set program KPIs for Employee Advocacy & Influencer Marketing based on benchmark data and future goals

Integrate and manage this program alongside any other influencer marketing, social selling, ABM strategy or PR strategy

Discuss your challenges that might prevent success and unlock these to give your program the best chance of success

Attract visibility, approval and sponsorship from senior management so that the program is accountable at the highest level

STEP 3: ACTIVATION

Presentation to motivate employees on personal branding and explain the program goals

Create playbook to document how to get started and the 3-5 easy steps employees can follow

Workshop for each persona group to explain how employees can progress from one persona to another

Circulate and make people aware of your social media engagement policy so that they can follow guidelines and have the confidence to speak out without getting into trouble

Separate workshop to assign your subject matter experts to external influencers and train them on how to best engage with influencers on Twitter, LinkedIn and their personal blogs

Create and manage program activity surfacing opportunities for your employees to engage with influencers and to share and write relevant and engaging content

STEP 4: MEASUREMENT & SCALE

Track the following metrics:

- Employees moving through persona stages
- Number & quality of employee influencer relationships
- External Influencer engagement
- Content Shares
- Brand Awareness
- Brand Share of Voice
- Brand Perception
- Referral Site Traffic from Program

Optimize through sharing great employee work and encouragement across the program

4. The Integrated Model

Employee advocacy, social selling and influencer marketing are becoming increasingly popular and common strategies for brands to reach and share content with their target audience.

However, they are usually interpreted and operationalized as separate tactics, within different teams. When we look at what each of these have in common, it becomes apparent that people, the influence they have and brands' lack of are what make each so effective.

Content also has a really important role in the success of all three – so why aren't more brands integrating them?

> *Any great brand today goes far beyond their marketing and sales team. And that is what employee advocacy, social selling and influencer marketing ultimately does – it allows marketing to leverage what a great brand is, and I think great brands are great because they have great employees, not great products.*
> **Brian Fanzo, Founder & CEO, iSocialFanz**

4.1 Looking at the Employee as an Influencer

A major difference between the standard employee advocacy program and employee advocacy 2.0 is a change in mindset; shifting from viewing employees as a broadcasting channel to recognizing employees as the largest pool of potential brand advocates and influencers.

The first step towards transitioning employees into advocates and influencers is to first conduct an audit based on employees' audience size and social activity to identify which persona category they are currently in. The idea is to help employees simultaneously increase their network size and social activity to transition diagonally to the right and up.

However, it is important to bear in mind that not all employees will move to the 'influencer' persona, and that is not just ok, but it is totally normal and to be encouraged.

The idea is to get inactives to start participating, networkers to become connectors and enthusiasts to become thought leaders and influencers. The difference between the persona groups also comes down to what they do with their networks and how active they are with both branded content and industry content.

Sales reps tend to mainly sit in the top-left section, with large, unleveraged networks, whereas social sellers tend to sit in the top-middle section, where they actively read, share and engage with content and their network. Where the true magic happens however, is in the top-right section, where social sellers and employees start creating their own content to truly influence the market place.



Employee Persona Definitions:

Persona	Description	Data-Led Analysis
Inactives	Do not have much of an online presence. LinkedIn is normally activated only when they are looking for a new job. May be very active on social networks that would be considered more personal e.g. Facebook and Instagram.	• No social posts on topics that drive advocacy for the brand • No social engagement with other employees • Audience size: Up to 1,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Networkers	Typically, more active on LinkedIn but no other platform other than personal social networks. They will often accept invitations online and may even occasionally send invitations to others. (a lot of sales people sit here).	• LinkedIn and Facebook Accounts but no Twitter or Instagram account • Shares occasional brand content on LinkedIn • Publishes 1-10 social media posts per month on LinkedIn • Audience size: Up to 2,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Connectors	Large network on LinkedIn and always know someone who knows someone else who can help. They actively connect people together because they know that sharing is caring.	• LinkedIn and Facebook Accounts and possibly a business Twitter or Instagram account • Shares occasional brand content on LinkedIn • Publishes 1-10 social media posts per month on LinkedIn • Audience size: 2,000+ online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Participators	Relatively small network, they are beginning to dabble in social networking. They are testing the water by engaging with others online e.g. liking and commenting on content.	• 2+ social engagements with employees per month • 10+ social media posts per month (LinkedIn and Twitter combined) • Audience size: Up to 1,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Broadcasters	Been "dabbling" for some time by engaging with other people's content and are now starting to share other people's content to their network.	• 2+ social media interactions with employees every month • 4+ Internal or External Influencers' content shares per month • No 2-way interactions with External Influencers • Audience size: Up to 2,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined

Collaborators	Broadcast less and appreciate feedback more. Typically, employees in this space have a large network, they have been through the engaging and sharing stage and are now starting to formulate opinions themselves and seek to listen to others.	• Minimum 10 social media interactions with employees every month • 4+ Internal or External Influencers' content shares per month • Evidence of 2-way interactions with External Influencers on LinkedIn and Twitter • 2+ Original Posts per month • 500+ LinkedIn Connections • Audience size: 2,000+ online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Enthusiasts	Highly active on social media. Anyone this far right on the model will be actively out there creating their own content and formulating their own opinions. However, they may have a relatively small network.	• Minimum 20 social media interactions with employees every month • 4+ Internal or External Influencers' content shares per month • No 2-way interactions with External Influencers • 20+ Original Posts per month including longer form Blog / LinkedIn Posts • Audience size: Up to 1,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Thought Leaders	Considered the knowledge experts within an organization e.g. product marketing, pre-sales, sales consultants and they hold an enormous amount of credibility with customers. They do not actively network (often they don't have time) but they may blog or tweet when they can.	• 2-way social media interactions with employees every month • Share External Influencers' content circa once a week • Up to 10 social media interactions with External Influencers (LinkedIn and Twitter) • 10+ Original Posts per month including longer form Blog / LinkedIn Posts • Audience size: Up to 2,000 online (LinkedIn and Twitter combined)
Influencers	Highly active networkers and content creators. Social has become part of their daily routine – part of their DNA if you like. They are considered influencers in	• 2-way social media interactions with employees every month • Share External Influencers' content circa once a week but little to no interactions • Up to 10 social media interactions with External • Audience size: 2,000+ online (LinkedIn and Twitter Combined)

4.2 Employee Evolution Examples

When training and motivating different employee personas it is important to give them guidance on how well they are currently doing, how to get started on optimizing their performance and what success looks like. This will give them the understanding, action plan and motivation to succeed.

The objective is to help them build their network, create more relevant content and engage with the right people so that they move up and right through Tribal Impact's Advocacy Maturity Model.

Here are 3 example persona transformations that can be achieved within 6 months:



Current	Getting Started	Desired Outcome
Views LinkedIn as a **Digital CV**, with a small network of <500 Present on Twitter and Instagram but with a **small following** of <500 on each channel Shares branded content daily on their social profiles, but does not add **view point** Not much **engagement** Hasn't **actively** connected with any external influencers or like-minded professionals	**Identify** like-minded professionals and influencers to connect with & engage with their content **Engage and share** content that is relevant to industry topics **Tag** influencers when posting content Add **point of view** when sharing branded or influencer content	LinkedIn and Twitter network increased to **1k+** Shares industry articles daily with **commentary** **Creates** their own content and shares on LinkedIn and Twitter, with good engagement on posts Formed **relationships** with industry influencers and co-creating content with them

Networker → Collaborator

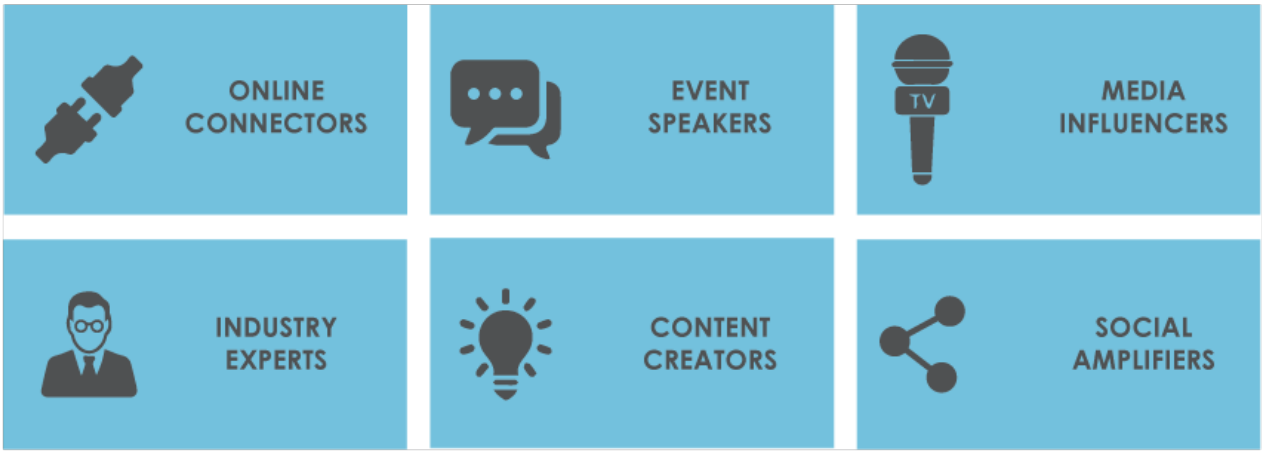
Current	Getting Started	Desired Outcome
Only **reactive** on social channels to notifications Only present on LinkedIn, with a **moderate** network of up to 2k followers Only updates their social profiles when they **move job** Often **accepts** requests and does not proactively connect with anyone other than prospects	**Set up** profile on other social networks **Identify** influencers relevant to their industry **Follow and connect** with relevant influencers Start reading **engaging and sharing** influencer content Start **sharing** branded content on LinkedIn, Twitter	**Established** social media presence Relationships built with **10 influencers** Reading, **liking and sharing** content from influencers and their network on a daily basis adding their thoughts **Creating** and sharing their own content, with influencers contributing

Thought Leader → Influencer

Current	Getting Started	Desired Outcome
LinkedIn and Twitter network of **1k+** **Shares** industry articles daily with commentary **Creates** their own content and shares on LinkedIn and Twitter, with good engagement on posts Formed relationships with industry influencers, that contribute to their content Very well **recognized** internally	**Set up** profile on other social networks **Identify** influencers relevant to their industry **Follow and connect** with relevant influencers Start reading **engaging and sharing** influencer content Start **sharing** branded content on LinkedIn, Twitter	**Established** social media presence Relationships built with **10 influencers** Reading, **liking and sharing** content from influencers and their network on a daily basis adding their thoughts **Creating** and sharing their own content, with influencers contributing

4.3 Influencer Personas

In order to effectively connect internal employee personas with the external influencer community, it is important to understand how influencers are categorized beyond their role (e.g. celebrity, politician, traditional, industry expert, academic, business leader, decision maker, professional, topical community or brand advocate) and type (e.g. everyday influencers, brand advocates, micro influencers, professional influencers, macro influencers and celebrities) to focus on the influencer's persona. By persona, we mean the way in which that influencer shares content with their audience. You can read more on categorizing influencers in our Definitive Guide to Influencer Relationship Management (IRM) report, but below is an overview of influencer personas:



Influencer Definition	Description	Dara-Led Analysis
Industry Experts	Professionals that have worked in industry who can influence key decision makers on a peer level. They have walked the walk, have high authority and very well engaged networks offline in niche topical areas. They often are authors or have published original research. They can be good event speakers, but this is not guaranteed.	• High Topical Authority on niche topics • 20+ Original Posts per month • High Post / Share Ratio • Referenced in news articles, blogs and forums

Online Connectors	Influencers that have the most amount of connections and interactions online within a specific topical community. They are the people who you would want at a party to attract a larger crowd and therefore engaging them initially will help you collaborate with the longer tail.	• Most amount of interactions within the influencer community • Topic Agnostic
Content Creators	People who create and publish original content or thoughts rather than simply sharing other people's content online. Their content gets good engagement from their networks.	• High Average Engagement per post • 20+ Original Posts per month • High Post / Share Ratio
Event Speakers	Expert speakers that may or may not have a large online influence. Likely to have a presence on LinkedIn. They tend to have a large offline influence and get referenced a lot in news articles, blogs and forums.	• High Topical Authority on niche topics • Speaking at events at least once per month • 20+ References per event on Twitter
Social Amplifiers	Present on most social platforms with large audiences with the ability to share content and make it viral. They normally have friends/peers in their network who will also help content become viral within a specific industry.	• High Reach • 100 Posts+ per month • Low Post / Share Ratio

Define your Employees' Personas

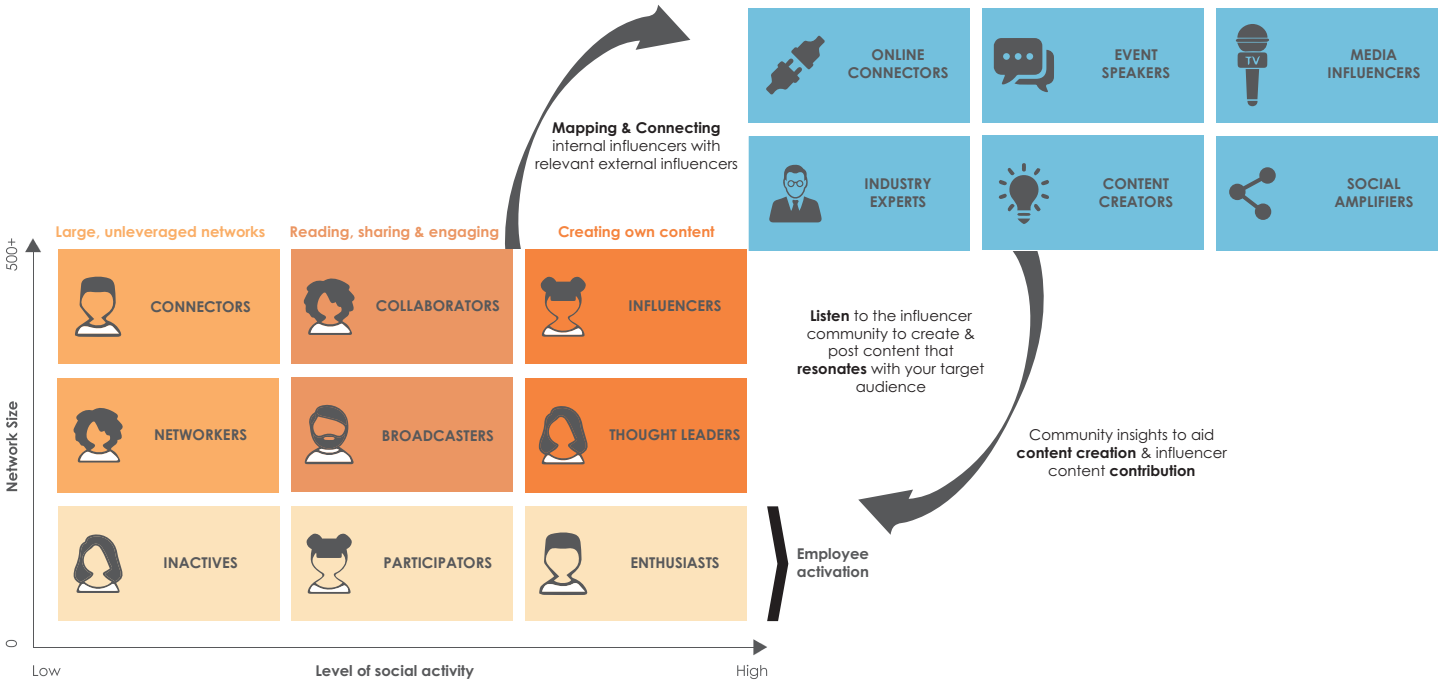
After analyzing the employee personas, it is possible to gauge what influencer personas are most appropriate to connect with the employees. For example, an employee that falls into the 'thought leader' or 'influencer category' would be appropriate to connect and collaborate with a content creator, whereas the social sellers that are regularly at industry and networking events could connect with conference speakers to build relationships offline and online.

Define your Employees' Topical niche

Every employee is passionate and an expert at something that relates to their field and role. This is the basis upon which brands should connect well-aligned influencers. For example: connecting the marketing team with external marketing influencers.

Listening to Influencer Community Insights

This process goes beyond connecting employees with influencers, as it is also highly valuable for brands to monitor conversations amongst the influencer community to understand what topics are trending and resonating with their target audience. These insights can then be fed into the content creation strategy:



5. Optimizing Content Marketing

5.1 How Important is Content?

Both content and having a clear brand narrative are vital. In the world of social media, if brands have no content to share, then they have nothing to say, and if they have nothing to say, no one will listen. Social media is a place to store, share and engage with content. Content is an integral piece of the puzzle.

> *Content is everything when it comes to employee advocacy and influencer marketing because even the most loyal employee cannot simply post "my company is great" over and over – that is not going to work. Content is the raw material of influence. It does not matter if you are internal or external, if you have no content you have nothing. Without content all you are is an advertisement.*
> **Jay Baer, Founder, Convince & Convert**

Integrating employee advocacy, social selling and influencer marketing will open dialogue across teams, making it far easier for brands to align their sales and marketing through content.

However, as ever the focus should remain on quality over quantity. Content is a key enabler of trust and conversation so long as it is adding value to the target audience.

> *We have to move away from creating content for contents' sake and start focusing on content that relates to our audience and that helps solve a problem. Ultimately, the content cutting through the noise is the content that is relatable, real and honorable.*
> **Brian Fanzo, CEO & Founder, iSocialFanz**

5.2 Content Types

Listening to the influencer community enables brands to create content that is going to resonate with the influencer community and target personas. There are three types of content within an advocacy program:

Branded content – Feeding off community insights to guide which topics brands should write branded content about on owned media channels.

Influencer Generated Content (IGC) – referencing relevant influencer content and/or collaborating or getting an influencer to contribute to branded content.

Employee Generated Content (EGC) - Employees creating their own content and connecting with influencers to contribute and share their content.

While branded content remains important, it is highly effective to combine it with IGC and EGC. Employees are far more likely to share non-branded content and in particular content that their colleagues have written. Employees' audiences are also far more likely to engage with content that has been written by a peer within the company over content written by a brand.

> *Content adds value to the social media feeds of employees, whether they are social sellers or influencer marketing (and when I talk about influencers, I mean our 4500 employees who are influencers in their own micro-communities or sector spaces) then content is what drives the conversation.*
> **Keith Lewis, UK Social Media & Social Business Manager, Zurich Insurance**

Advocacy programs thrive when content is focused around innovating and solving industry problems rather than product marketing and driving sales.

When developing your influencer marketing and employee advocacy program, ensure that your staff are part of the content creation process. Find out what their beliefs are, what they enjoy/or don't enjoy. If you work on this together as an organization, you'll see a greater return in employee advocacy.

Chris Richards, Digital Ecosystem Manager, Barclay's Eagle Lab

What if we could run programs that helped people find the information they want from people they trust? This is where influencer marketing has evolved. Traditional marketing is failing to achieve the cut through it has seen; people are gravitating to ad-free environments; trust, transparency and authenticity are a major public concern. Technological innovation is transforming the landscape.

Caroline Jory, Engagement Director Qubist

Only brands with a truly customer-centric mission will attract employee advocates and influencers who want to be part of a platform that seeks to help people. When brands try to sneak in promotional messages, customers tune out, employees disengage, and influencers ask for more money.

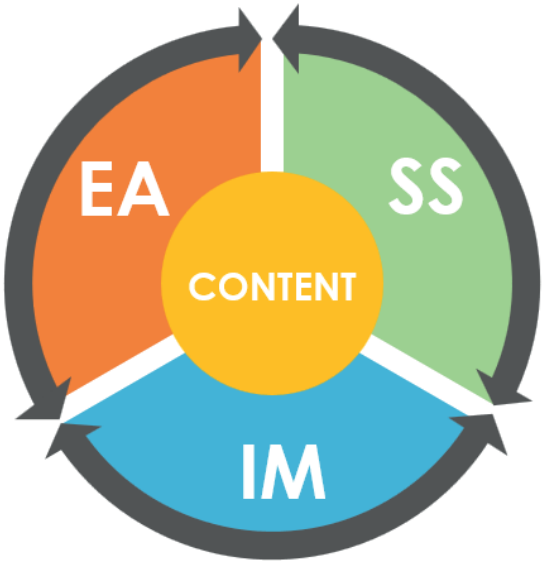
Michael Brenner, CEO, Marketing Insider Group

5.3 Sharing Content with Target Audiences

Once brands have categorized their employee personas and identified their topical focus, they can start identifying and assigning influencers that are relevant to employees. Employees can then start engaging, building relationships and sharing branded, influencer and employee content as a way of generating organic influencer and engagement.

Employee Advocacy

- Listen to the influencer community to share relevant industry and brand content on social channels
- Create employee-generated content with influencers on personal LinkedIn, Twitter, Blog accounts
- Engage with assigned external influencers and interact with their content



Social Selling

- Engage directly with prospects on social media
- Listen to industry influencers relevant to prospects to share relevant industry and brand content on social channels
- Create employee-generated content with assigned influencers on personal LinkedIn, Twitter, Blog accounts

- Analyze the influencer community to align content strategy
- Engage and build organic always-on relationships with influencers on a program level
- Segment influencer groups and assign employees to external influencers
- Connect employees to external influencers and facilitate engagement
- Create hero content with employees and external influencers

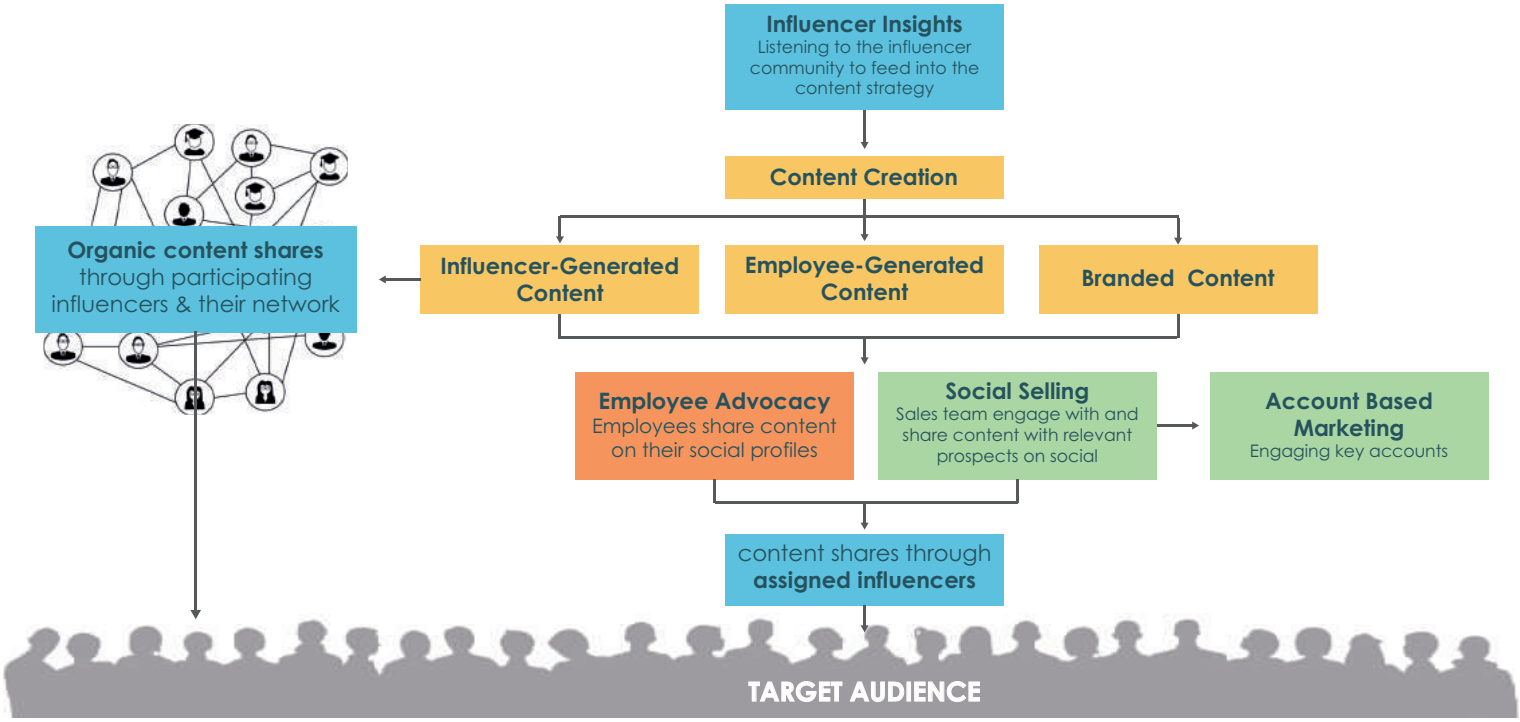
Influencer Marketing

Employee Advocacy, Influencer Marketing and Social Selling are all employee-led programs that have similar characteristics however, tend to be led by different departments. It is therefore imperative to create integrated programs that can feed off the same content base, influencer intelligence and leverage existing relationships. Clear instruction and program management is required so that everyone knows their roles and responsibilities and what is expected of them.

Programs should not be managed in silos. Several times, employee advocacy programs are managed internally by HR, Employee Engagement or PR teams. If that's the case, it's critical that these teams share plans and programs with other internal stakeholders like product marketing, social media, or advertising/media. Smart and innovative brands are integrating employee-driven programs into larger brand activations and influencer marketing programs.

Michael Brito, EVP, Zeno Group

How the Integration Works in Practice with Content



The above visual shows an example of how this can work in practice:

1. **Listen** to the influencer community that comprises of key industry influencers whose insights and content is relevant to the brand and the topics they care about.

2. Use these insights to optimize the brand's **content strategy** to create content that is relevant and going to resonate.

3. **Create content**:
   a. Branded content on owned media channels.
   b. Collaborate on content with relevant target influencers to stimulate organic influencer shares with their audience.
   c. Employee-generated content.

4. **Share** this content with assigned influencers and prospects
   a. Employee advocates to share content with their audiences and assigned influencers as a means of reaching their target audience.
   b. Social sellers to share content direct with key prospects and assigned influencers relevant to their prospects' industry, as part of the wider ABM (account-based marketing) strategy.

> *I think it's really important for employees to be able to add their own voice to branded content – that's what we expect influencers to do when we're doing influencer marketing well. If you're just going to have a load of employees blasting out content that's coming from corporate, that's only going to be so effective.*
> **Tom Augenthaler, The Influence Marketer**

It is worth noting that all of this relies upon not just the brand creating content that is going to resonate (through listening to the community insights), but also enabling employees to easily access, share and create content of their own.

Brands must keep employees' audiences front of mind with content too, as employees are only likely to share content that is going to resonate with their audiences, and to their profession.

6. What are the Similatities & Differences Between B2B & B2C?

When it comes down to the brand motivations behind employee advocacy, they are largely the same. The concept of putting employees in the limelight and humanizing the brand is equally necessary and applicable in both B2C and B2B contexts. Regardless of whether the customer is a B2B buyer or a consumer, they are increasingly trusting brands less and people more.

A major difference between B2B and B2C is that in B2C consumers want to spend money on things they do not need, whereas B2B buyers do not want to spend money on things they do need. This creates a longer and more complex buyer journey involving multiple stakeholders in the decision-making process.

> *B2B and B2C are very similar and the objective is the same – increase reach and connect at a more human level with buyers. However, the content might be slightly different. In B2B it is more thought leadership and productivity content that will engage audiences. In B2C it might be more related to CSR type activity or product related.*
> **Sarah Goodall, Founder, Tribal Impact**

Consequently, this contributes to a very different culture of content creation between B2C and B2B brands. FMCG brands such as McDonalds, Levi's and Chanel are more likely to focus on creating content around being a great brand to work for in terms of environment, great products and social purpose whereas IBM, Schneider Electric, Shell and HSBC will focus on more thought leadership content talking about the issues, challenges and innovations facing consumers in the marketplace.

In terms of social media platforms used to post and promote content, LinkedIn, Blogs and Twitter are more prominent for B2B, whereas B2C is more focused on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Both consumer and B2B brands must build employee programs grounded in trust and transparency.
Michael Brito, EVP, Zeno Group

7. Setting Objectives

It is important to recognize that objectives need to be set to support both individual programs (such as Social Selling) but also the wider business objectives.

Brands must ensure that they keep overall business objectives front of mind so that they are able to speak in terms that senior management can understand and get on board with.

> *For B2B you should absolutely be tracking the impact of advocacy on your website traffic. Look at conversion by source. Is advocacy driven traffic driving higher conversion rates? Are deal cycles quicker? Are deal sizes larger when they come via advocacy? Integrate advocacy metrics into what you are already tracking and see the impact of advocacy vs other sources.*
> **Sarah Goodall, Founder, Tribal Impact**

7.1 Business Objectives

Business objectives can be distilled down into whether brands are looking to improve their **brand equity** or increase your overall **market share**.

Brands must ask themselves the following questions:

- Who do they want to reach?
- What is their target audience?
- Do they want to reach their existing demographic, or do they want to reach a different demographic?
- Do they want to increase brand awareness?
- Do they aim to increase the positive perception towards their brand?
- Do they want to focus on customers (including potential customers)?
- Do they want to drive more traffic and leads?

7.2 Program Objectives & KPIs

As touched on earlier, these will depend on what the overarching business objectives are, as well as which department is leading on this. The below KPI framework will help outline indicative KPIs at each stage of the program:

1. **Outbound** engagements from employees
2. **Inbound** engagements from influencers to employees
3. Number of **relationships** built
4. Demonstrated **advocacy** from influencers
5. **Content** created with influencers
6. **Outcome** measurement against the overall objective

7.3 Employee Objectives & KPIs

Measuring employee advocacy is key to long-term success. Avoid setting KPIs and targets with your employee advocates since allocating mandatory targets avoids the authenticity that advocacy sets out to achieve. Instead, review your analytics on a regular basis. Look out for opportunities to target your training efforts, improve your content mix and build upon your existing community with new users.

Monitor the content that employees like to share and compare that to what employee audiences are engaging with. Sit down with your employees regular This intelligence will give you real insight to refine and optimize your program.

8. Employee Motivation & Enablement

8.1 Employee Limitations

There are three main barriers to employee advocates:

- They don't know what to share or how to share it
- They're not sure what and if they can share content
- The do not see the value in using social media in the workplace

A huge barrier to employee advocacy is employees' apprehension. They are often worried about negatively implicating their employer and feel as though they do not know what they can and cannot say on social media. Something that can easily be rectified through a comprehensive social media policy.

As for not knowing how to share – this is something that social media training and employee advocacy tools can help with.

As for employees not seeing the value, here's where the 'what's in it for me' comes in.

8.2 Defining the "What's in it for me"

This ultimately comes down to the rewards and gains that they can make should they get on board with an employee advocacy program. This is an area that many brands tend to neglect, as they are too focused on: 1) what the brand can gain and 2) deploying a tool.

But without gaining employee buy-in, the long-term impact of advocacy will be limited.

By reward we do not necessarily mean gimmicks such as free parking spaces and gift vouchers but simply outlining the reasons as to why employees should want to do it. Brands should avoid short term motivations such as prizes and leader boards as these are short lived. There is the added risk of demotivating employees that were already active and advocating their brand voluntarily. Talking about how it can accelerate their career and help position them as subject matter experts (SMEs) and thought leaders should be enough to motivate best-fit employees.

By building an advocacy community, others can learn from their peers – especially the celebrated champions and early adopters – and share content ideas. Rewards can then be built into the program: consider things such as time with leaders, assistance with writing, blogging or social media skills, rather than financial rewards. The skills-related rewards mean gains for both employee and organization. They feed into the engagement and continual improvement ethos of a connected organization.

Things to Lead with are:

- Growing their **personal brand**
- Growing their **network** with like-minded people in their field and with influencers
- **Recognition** from executives
- Professional **success**
- Being able to directly affect the **bottom line** (through shares, clicks, connections and relationships)
- Social sellers being able to attract and develop **new business and referrals**

> *Celebrate the wins – you have to celebrate those that are willing to put themselves out there. And it could be as simple as the CEO commenting on a LinkedIn post of the brand or resharing the content that an employee has shared. With employee advocacy, it is often the change agents that are already starting to do it that empower the others.*
> **Brian Fanzo, CEO & Founder, iSocialFanz**

> *When employees are given an opportunity to better position themselves as subject matter experts and thought leaders in their space, they are more prone to share content often, add insights, and in fact share MORE branded content in the process.*
> **Eric Fuessel, Senior Account Executive, EveryoneSocial**

8.3 Activating Different Personas

Every organization will consist of active and passive social media users. Every advocacy program will therefore uncover champions and the completely uninitiated: social heroes and social zeros. It is critical to understand where each participant is in terms of their social media maturity: this will indicate the level and type of training that will be needed throughout the launch of the program and beyond.

For example, an employee that fits into the thought leader category already has high levels of social activity and a moderate network – brands are just simply trying to help them grow their network. Compare this to an employee that is inactive – brands will need to help them grow their network before they engage with and share content. It is worth noting here that not all employees will be motivated – employee advocacy programs are not for everyone and that is okay. The sooner brands accept this, the quicker they can progress.

Creating a playbook for each persona is fundamental in making it as easy as possible for them to join the program and transition into the next persona. For inactives this will include instructions such as creating a social profile, uploading a professional photo and writing a concise bio, whereas for thought leaders, the playbook would cover more advanced help such as how to identify engagement opportunities with influencers.

8.4 Creating a Social Culture

Becoming immersed in an advocacy program will help employees to understand their own organization better. An incredible 74% of employees feel that they are missing out on company information and news and only four in ten employees can confidently describe to others what their employer does. In an age where news and information are at our fingertips, these statistics do not reflect connectivity in the workplace. By curating relevant content within their advocacy program, an organization does two things: it helps employees understand not just the facts and figures of their business, but also the ethos and values of the brand. It shows people what sort of content is suitable for sharing.

Employees - particularly millennials, are far more likely to get on board with an employee advocacy program if there is a strong social culture. It is important for C-Suite and senior management to lead by example: sharing branded and industry content and engaging with industry thought leaders.

Brands must clearly articulate what the overall goals of the company are and how their input contributes to this. Brands should celebrate the wins and successes of employee advocates openly too as these will be effective change agents for the rest of the employees.

> *To me it's not about joining an advocacy program, it's about creating a social culture within an organization; it's about educating your employees and getting buy-in by helping them understand what's in it for them.*
> **Melonie Dodaro, Founder, Top Dog Social Media**

> *Creating a culture is more than a poster in an elevator.*
> **Michael Brito, EVP, Zeno Group**

8.5 Social Media Training

Providing tailored training is an important success factor for an advocacy program. For employees to take on the challenge of increasing their social media standing and truly begin to influence the buyer journey, they need to learn in an individual way. Some will prefer face-to-face workshops whereas others will happily complete eLearning training modules via their phone. Blended learning delivery options are key to ensure you onboard as many employees as possible.

> *Employees need training and guidance on how to enhance their social presence, project their expertise, stimulate engagement, and value. To ensure that employees are focusing their interactions where they will drive business outcomes, be sure that workforce enablement is a key part of your integration strategy*
> **Susan Emerick, Senior Manager of Global Marketing & Advocacy, IBM**

Just as important as individuality and choice of learning styles, is sustained availability. People take time to come around to new ways of working. An employee advocacy program will not hook in all employees overnight, or even during the few months of initial launch. A learning program will need to enable everyone from new starters to experts and existing social media users to continue – and refine – their learning journey in their own preferred format and timescale.

Training is an area that is so important yet so neglected by brands – 72% of respondents in the Hinge Research Institute study stated that they have not received any type of training, and out of those that have received training 57% indicated that additional training would have a significant impact on the success of the program.

Social media training can be led by social media or marketing and should cover everything from the basics such as creating a profile, to the specific areas such as:

- Using social media to create engagement
- Best practice for sharing content

- Best practice for engaging with influencers
- Finding their tone of voice that is in-keeping with brand tone of voice
- Generating and nurturing leads on social media
- How to surface content to share with their audiences
- Best practice on responding to questions and queries (both positive and negative)
- Social media training for specific social media platforms (e.g. the differences between LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook)

8.6 Social Media Policy

Any organization implementing an employee advocacy program needs to ensure it sets out the boundaries of what is and isn't acceptable social media behavior. Individuals may be frequent users in their personal lives, but the advocacy program is about creating a connected organization, with one voice, a recognizable brand style and a content stream that will assist and educate prospective buyers.

This is more of a challenge for some larger brands that have stringent rules and regulations from their PR and legal teams. Brands must ensure that they liaise with them to determine the dos and don'ts so that they can effectively put together a social media policy that is easy for their employees to adhere to.

The main tip here is that the simpler the policy is, the better. Brands want to ensure that their employees feel that they are safe so long as they adhere to the policies, but do not want them to feel overwhelmed or intimidated by it. The aim should be that employees don't really have to over-think when it comes to what they're allowed to post as this hinders creativity and personality.

8.7 Make it Easy - Technology

Where they can, brands should implement social listening, content sharing and influencer identification & mapping tools to make this as easy as possible for employees:

1. **Social listening** – listening to and monitoring the influencer community to implement insights into content strategy.

2. **Content sharing** – upload brand approved and vetted content into the portal so that employees can easily share appropriate content with their audience, with their own insights added for authenticity. Employees can also feel safe in the knowledge that the content is ok for them to share.

3. **Influencer identification & mapping** – to identify and map relevant influencer communities so that they are able to easily connect employees with influencers.

The simpler the process, the more likely employees are to participate. This also takes the risk out of the process and enables brands to have better control over brand messaging, while maintaining authenticity.

9. Measuring Success

A great starting point for measuring success is to refer to business and program objectives. Employee advocacy and influencer programs take a while to mature, so regularly measuring success is imperative to ensure that brands can refine what is not working and do more of what is. Brands must start out small, get it right, establish best practice and then use this as an internal case study to onboard more employees.

What success looks like is totally dependent on each brand's objectives, but some guidelines are:

Outputs:

- Number of employees in the program (also note how many ask to join)
- Web traffic
- Content performance (views, shares and downloads)
- Impressions from social media content
- Influencer relationships built
- Influencer engagements
- Social chatter about the brand compared to competitors

Outcomes:

- Leads generated and conversion rates
- Revenue generated from campaigns
- Influencers as advocates
- Shortened sales cycle

Whatever it is that brands are measuring, they must try to not get too lost in impressions and shares as they only tell a small part of the story. Look to outputs as indicators of success and outcomes as evidence of success.

Brands must also remember that 'quality over quantity' remains important here when it comes to measuring influencer relationships and shares. Look at exactly who is sharing and the actions and results that they are driving (for example, one person sharing a piece of content might carry more value and drive more action than 10

people sharing.)

Brands must measure and communicate their employees' individual success so that they are motivated to continue and improve. Calling out individual success stories company-wide can also act as a great change agent to grow the program.

It is also important to note here that like any marketing tactic, it is advised that brands do not start doing employee advocacy at the same time as you do something else radical as it will make their life much harder when it comes to conclusively attributing results to the advocacy program.

INPUTS		OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES			
ACTIVITY		ACTIVATED		ADVOCACY		ACTION	
Program	Number of influencers invited to your influencer program	**Program Influencers**	Number of influencers who have accepted your program invitation	**Brand Attention**	Volume of target influencer posts talking about your brand, sub-brands or products compared to competitors	**Brand Awareness**	Volume of influencer posts from wider influencer community / media talking about your brand, sub-brands or products compared to competitors
Social Influencer Outreach	Number of offline & social outreach posts to target influencers	**Event Influencer Attendance**	Number of influencers attending your events (offline / online)	**Brand Association**	Voume of target influencer posts about your brand or products in association with key themes, product / solution categories or reputation drivers compared to competitors	**Brand Perception**	Change in semantic language from wider influencer community /media around a brand, product, policy or reputational issue
Event Invites	Number of events (offline/online) organised where influencers are invited to participate	**Brand Influencer Engagement**	Number of influencers engaging with your brand, internal SMEs, advocates or evangelists (offline / online) compared to competitors	**Influencer Generated Content**	Volume of content created in collaboration with target influencers on key topics or themes	**Lead Gen**	Volume of site traffic / downloads / subscriptions / user adoption though influencer referral traffic (unique content URLs)
Employee Advocate Recruitment	Number of Internal Subject Matter Experts, Advocates or Evangelists recruited to influence the influencers	**Influencer**	Number of influencer relationships you have developed	**Brand Preference**	Volume of target influencer posts talking positively about or recomending your brand, sub-brands or products compared to competitors	**Sales Revenue**	% of influencer referral site traffic/ total site traffic multipled by conversion revenue OR Number of sales through unique coupon code / landing page used only for program
INFLUENCER PIPELINE							
IDENTIFIED		**ENGAGED**		**ADVOCATE**			

10. Conclusions

- Brands can achieve maximum influence over the market place if they connect their internal influencer community with the external influencers.
- Consumers are trusting brands less and logos more - brands must avoid trying to control the brand message and let employees and influencers remain authentic.
- Brands should listen to the influencer community to create great content that will resonante with their target audience.
- The modern buyer journey is changing and becoming increasingly more social. Brands must be visible on social to remain a part of that journey.
- There is an increase in content and competition and therefore an increasing need for brands to stand out - Employee Advocacy facilitates this.
- Brands should focus on helping employees to become more influential rather than viewing them as a broadcasting channel.
- Stop thinking of Employee Advocacy as an 'owned' media channel. Employees advocating their brand is 'earned' media.
- Encourage employees to engage with industry content and create their own, rather than just sharing branded content.
- B2B and B2C are more similar than they are different in the context of Employee Advocacy - it's all about content, trust and transparency.
- Link your Employee Advocacy targets to business objectives.
- Do not set stringent KPIs for your employees as it defeats what is so great about Employee Advocacy.
- Define the 'what's in it for me' and social media policy; provide the necessary tools, training and content.
- Do not focus on everyone! Focus on those that want to do it- start small and learn.

11. About the Authors



Alicia Russell, Content & Product Marketing Manager, Onalytica

Alicia joined Onalytica in 2016 and manages their educational content strategy, creation and collateral to help new and existing customers get the most out of their influencer programs. She also plays a large part in the design and user experience of Onalytica's SaaS influencer marketing platform, to ensure that the platform best serves clients' needs. Alicia is passionate about educating the industry on organic influencer marketing best practice, one thought leadership blog post at a time.



Tim Williams, CEO, Onalytica

Tim has over 15 years' experience connecting brands with their key influencers across political, traditional media and social media channels. He joined Onalytica in 2012 and became CEO in 2014. Tim has personally led the influencer program strategy and implementation for brands such as Microsoft, Barclays, IBM, Coca-Cola, Thomson Reuters, The Gates Foundation, The British Heart Foundation and RSPB helping them to incorporate socia influencer relations into their marketing & communications strategy.



Sarah Goodall, Founder, Tribal Impact

Sarah leads the tribe at Tribal Impact, who specialize in helping B2B organizations achieve revenue growth through an integrated approach to Employee Advocacy, Social Selling, Content Marketing and Social Media. She has spent 20+ years working in B2B technology marketing, most recently bringing together content, technology and people to maximize the social impact of the SAP brand. She is a classically trained marketer with a strong digital mindset.

12. About Onalytica

Onalytica provides consultancy-led influencer marketing software for marketing and communications professionals looking to identify and engage with social media influencers.

Their software enables brands to implement and run structured Influencer Relationship Management programs with large influencer communities to improve brand awareness, perception and demand generation.

Founded in 2009, and backed by Bebo founders Michael and Paul Birch, Onalytica have created over 1000 B2B and B2C influencer programmes for global clients which include Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Amazon, Lenovo, Centrica, British Airways, IBM, PepsiCo, VMware, Sage and Dell.

13. About Tribal Impact

Tribal Impact's mission is to empower workforces and the wider eco-system to become digital brand ambassadors. They help brands positively impact lead generation, referral recruitment, revenue growth and employee engagement.

Having worked with global brands & humble start-ups and having trained 3,000 employees, they understand that budgets go down, expectations go up and headcount stays flat.

Tribal impact support brands in their transformation by providing the necessary training, tools and content.

14. Key Contributors



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