



WHITE PAPER

# The Power of Employee Advocacy

18 stats that show why employees are the next big trend in social

**Hootsuite**<sup>™</sup>

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Employees collectively hold more power and reach than brands on social media channels. In this resource, you'll discover compelling statistics that reveal the influence and social media reach of employee advocates.

## 3 key takeaways

1. Employee advocates help your organization reach new audiences online.
2. Employees want to share content from their organization—not supporting and encouraging your social employees misses one of the biggest opportunities in social media.
3. Employee advocacy helps to retain and engage employees, especially Millennials who expect digital connection with their leaders, community, and peers.

### What is employee advocacy?

With employee advocacy, your employees are invited to participate in your organization's communication efforts.

Whether you need help from your workforce to amplify a product launch on their personal LinkedIn profiles or are looking to better engage staff with your corporate responsibility initiatives, employee advocacy programs increase your social reach and boost employee engagement.

# Employee advocacy helps brands increase social reach.

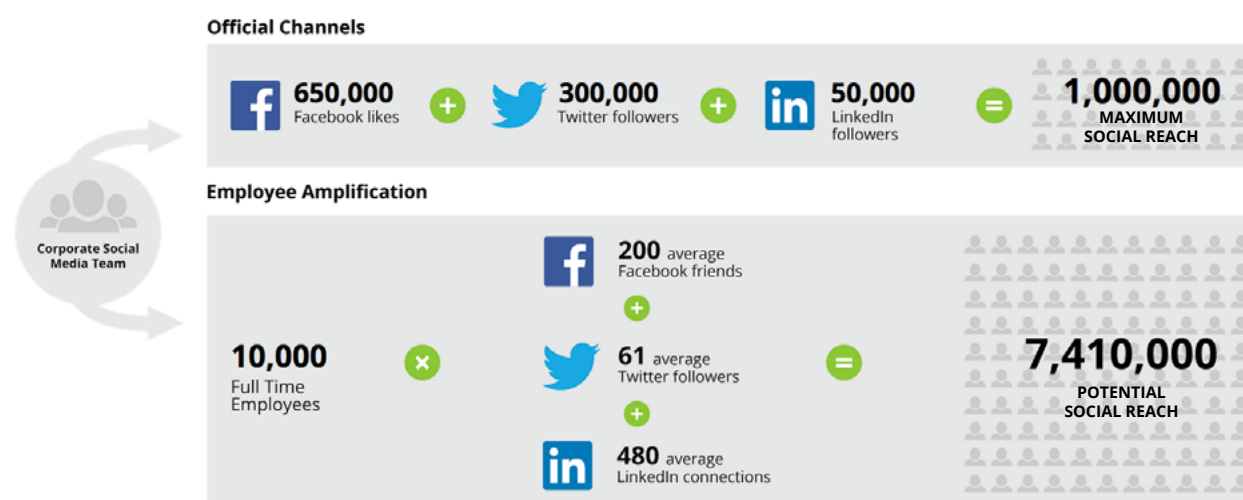
Social networks such as Facebook favor messages sent by personal profiles rather than corporate blasts by brands. A study by Social@Oglivy found that for Facebook Pages with more than 500,000 likes, organic reach hit a new low of two percent.<sup>1</sup>

## But employees offer significant social reach, especially in large organizations with global workforces.

- **Eight times more engagement.** An employee advocate program at Whole Foods found that content shared by employees gained eight times more engagement than the same content shared on brand channels.<sup>2</sup>
- **Increase in social media reach.** If an organization has 10,000 employees and each employee has an average of 200 Facebook friends, 61 Twitter followers, and 480 LinkedIn connections, the potential reach is 7,410,000.

In this example, the organization would gain a 741% increase in reach, compared to only using their official corporate channels.

- **Employees are trusted more than your CEO.** 72% of the general public trust social media content shared by friends and family, according to a global study by Edelman. Employees are trusted more than CEOs, well-known online personalities, elected officials, and celebrities.<sup>3</sup>



## Organizations that invest in employee advocacy increase leads, loyalty, and talent.

LinkedIn and Altimeter Group analyzed the top 100 most socially engaged companies on LinkedIn. Their global study looked at organizations with more than 1,000 employees and found that employee social engagement drives real business outcomes.

- Socially engaged companies are 40% more likely to be perceived as more competitive.<sup>4</sup>
- 57% more likely to get increased sales leads.<sup>5</sup>
- 58% more likely to attract top talent.<sup>6</sup>

### SOCIALLY ENGAGED COMPANIES ARE:



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Source:  
LinkedIn and Altimeter Group



## Organizations that don't invest in employee advocacy miss opportunities to connect their workforce to their company mission.

Only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged at work, says Gallup's 142 country study on The State of the Global Workplace.<sup>7</sup>

Weber Shandwick, a global PR firm in partnership with KRC Research, conducted a study of 2,300 employees. The participants were full-time employees between the ages of 18 and 65 at global organizations with over 500 employees.

**"Our analysis identified approximately one in five employees (21%) who feel strongly that they are putting more effort than is required into their job **yet do not feel strongly that they are being valued by their employer.****

**This perceptual gap between giving and receiving on the job is a recipe for resentment that impairs engagement."**<sup>8</sup>

*Weber Shandwick and KRC Research*

Their study found that increased collaboration gives employees the ability to connect and collaborate with each other, as well as with the leadership. This drives "greater alignment with the organization's strategic initiatives."

- Only 51% of employees clearly understand and support the purpose and mission of the organization.<sup>9</sup>
- Fewer than 30% of employees report that they are being communicated with, listened to, and kept in the loop.<sup>10</sup>

- Fewer than 17% of employees are satisfied with the frequency of communication from senior management.<sup>11</sup>
- Only 45% of employees have a clear understanding of what they should and should not do on social channels when it comes to company-related topics.<sup>12</sup>
- Only 43% of employees believe they have an organizational culture of trust and empowerment that supports employee engagement.<sup>13</sup>
- Only 40% of employees can confidently describe to others what their employer does or what their goals are.<sup>14</sup>

### **Without a clear strategy, organizations risk ignoring their most passionate social supporters.**

- 33% of employees post messages, pictures, or videos in social media about their employer without any encouragement from the employer.<sup>15</sup>
- 56% of employees have defended their employer to family and friends or in a more public venue such as on a website, blog, or in a newspaper.<sup>16</sup>
- 39% have shared praise or positive comments online about their employer.<sup>17</sup>

# Looking ahead, employees are a key part of your organization's digital transformation.

Digital transformation requires more than using social media to listen and connect with customers. It also involves a broader shift in how organizations relate to and include employees in their social initiatives.

As the Altimeter Group says in their State of Digital Transformation report, "culture, too, must adapt to symbolize resilience and communicate a renewed vision to employees and the market overall."<sup>18</sup>

## Recommended actions



**Provide a simple way for employees to share your content.** Use a mobile-centric solution such as [Hootsuite Amplify](#) which makes it easy for thousands of employees to share important company messages with their networks.



**Provide clear guidance about social media at work.** What's your official policy? For example, if an employee finds a negative conversation about your product on LinkedIn—should they defend the organization or alert the social team? Write your policy in clear language and empower employees to represent your brand in their voice.



**Reward employees and align advocacy with professional development.** Offer training and courses that teach professional use of social media. This shows employees you value their contributions and are investing in their career. For example, [Hootsuite helped the global publisher Wiley](#) educate more than 200 employees, giving them the skills and confidence to engage their customers on social media.



**Executives need to lead the way.** They can lead the conversation, offer examples of content to share broadly (such as an industry report or mention of your organization in the media), and reward passionate employees with guidance and accessibility to leadership.



[Book your demo now to see Hootsuite Amplify in action.](#)

## How Hootsuite Amplify Helps

With Hootsuite Amplify, it's simple for thousands of employees to share your organization's content, stay connected to your mission, and increase your brand's social reach.

- **Increase your social reach**—a mobile-centric solution makes it easy for employees to see and share your organization's content.
- **Connect employees to your mission**—employees benefit from having one central solution that connects them to the content resonating across the organization.
- **Discover what employees love to share**—you can see top shared content, identify your most engaged employees, and track the best types of content that provide value to both the organization and employee.

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## Endnotes

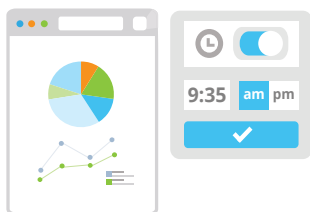
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# About Hootsuite Enterprise

Partner with Hootsuite to accelerate your social transformation

## Social Marketing



## Social Selling



## Social Customer Service



## Employee Advocacy



## Social HR



Hootsuite is the most widely used platform for managing social media, loved by over 10 million people around the globe and trusted by more than 800 of the Fortune 1000. Hootsuite Enterprise empowers organizations to execute business strategies for the social media era and scale social media activities across multiple teams, departments, and regions. Our versatile platform supports a thriving ecosystem of social networks complemented by 200+ business applications and integrations, allowing organizations to extend social media into existing systems and programs.

Along with our channel and agency partners, we help organizations build deeper relationships with customers, stay connected to the needs of the market, grow revenue, and draw meaningful insights from social media data. Innovating since day one, we continue to help organizations pioneer the social media landscape and accelerate their success through product training, group training and tailored organizational training, as well as security and compliance services.

Request a custom demo today by visiting [enterprise.hootsuite.com](https://enterprise.hootsuite.com)

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