- direct**scale**

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SELLING



























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INTRODUCTION

In this eBook, you can read about essential social selling strategies that will help you turn social media followers into loyal customers. Moreover, you will have the opportunity to read about social selling case studies that demonstrate how successful brands use this strategy to their advantage.

With so many brands fighting for people's attention on social media, customers are becoming pickier about who they trust, but social media is an essential 21st-century selling tool. To help you gain your audience's trust and increase sales, the DirectScale team has created this ultimate guide to social selling.

And in case you have any doubts about the power of social media, take a look at 50+ mind-blowing statistics that prove the fantastic ROI of social selling.





HOW TO WIN OVER

CUSTOMERS WITH SOCIAL SELLING

Win over customers with social selling by using the following **five-step process** to gain credibility and generate more sales.

- 1. Choose the Right Social Media Platform
- 2. Create Engaging, Useful Content
- 3. Build Credibility
- 4. Get Creative
- 5. Be Consistent



Generating leads (and good quality leads at that) is one of the most frustrating sticking points multi-level marketers face today.



What are your company's top marketing challenges?

Generating traffic and leads	63%	
Proving the ROI of our marketing activities	40%	
Securing enough budget	28%	
Identifying the right technologies for our needs	26%	
Managing our website	26%	
Targeting content for an international audience	21%	
Training our team	19%	
Hiring top talent	16%	
Finding an executive sponsor	7%	

SOURCE

Let's face it: cold calling doesn't work like it used to, and direct sellers are turning to other tactics to reach more people.

It's even more frustrating when you consider that consumers are savvier than ever in today's selling landscape and the vast majority are skeptical of brands who come at them with the "sell, sell, sell" mentality.

Instead, consumers are looking for trustworthy relationships with brands they can relate to and connect with. For businesses, this means meeting customers where they are rather than forcing them to leave their comfort zone.

As a result, we've seen a dramatic rise in social selling in the multi-level marketing world.

This simply refers to the act of selling your products via social channels through educational, entertaining, and engaging content. These are the platforms where consumers are already hanging out and interacting with their friends, family, colleagues, and favorite brands.

The Power of Social Selling

According to an **Aberdeen Group study** on the impact of social selling, sales teams that use this tactic find **45%** more opportunities than those that don't. Social selling also helps cream of the crop companies to achieve a **16%** gain in year-on-year revenue.



SOURCE

If you're thinking "not another marketing technique to implement!" you're not alone. It really does seem like there is a new, "must-do" method popping up every day, and it can be overwhelming trying to fit them all into your strategy.

However, social selling is quickly pushing its way to the top.

In fact, it's the third most important priority for sales teams this year according to the Aberdeen Group study - if you lag behind, you'll miss out on prospects that are ready and waiting to buy from their social channels.

Here's the catch: only one in four marketers know how to use social media for sales, leaving the vast majority floundering on platforms they don't fully understand with no return for their investment.

So how can you make sure you're one of the few salespeople that does know how to use social media for selling? How can you rise to the top and win customers over with this activity?

There are five key elements involved

in creating a successful social selling strategy that wins customers over:



Target market research and identifying key social identifying key social problems



Building credibility through thoughtful discussions



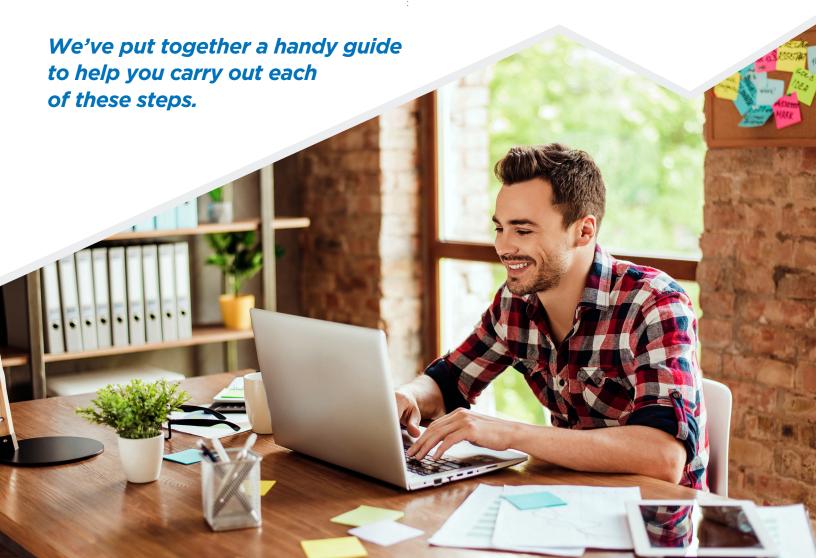
Creating engaging, valuable content that tackles consumer problems



Creative campaigns that stand out and make a difference



A consistent strategy that continues to bring in new customers



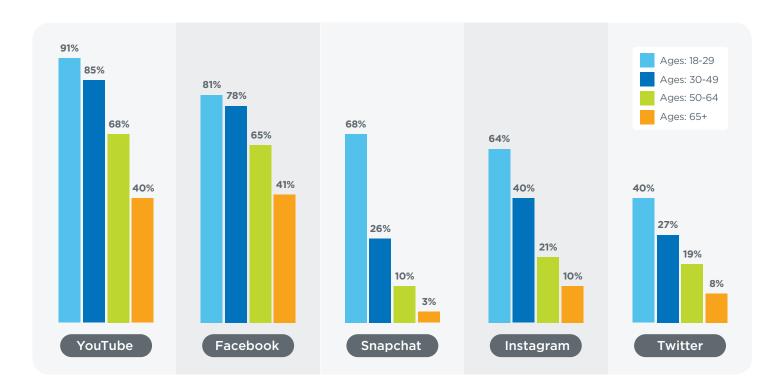




Choose the Right Social Media Platform

It's no secret that different social media channels attract different audiences

Snapchat and Instagram are renowned for being favored by younger demographics, while Facebook is predominantly used by older generations and *decision makers primarily log in to Twitter and LinkedIn*.



SOURCE

The key to finding the right platform for you and your business is getting to know your audience and identifying which platforms they hang out on the most.

This means you can join them there, start conversations with them, and contribute to discussions in a place that they're already comfortable with.

If you're not sure where your audience hangs out, try the following simple approach:

- Determine your top two to three competitors
- Check out which social channels they're most active on
- Voila! If you have the same audience as these competitors, you can copy the social platforms they use the most
- After a while, you'll get a feel for where you're getting the most interaction and can increase your time spent on those channels





Create Engaging, Useful Content

Gone are the days when marketers touted their products on social media over & over again

You know the ones: they've just launched the new "best thing ever" and they've already shared fifteen Tweets about it in the last hour. They've crammed the post with hashtags and haven't even bothered to change the copy in each Tweet to make it unique and different.

Somehow, this method used to work. Now, it doesn't.

Instead, brands are striving to build a loyal following of prospects who will consistently buy from them. This involves establishing a sense of trust, which can be sparked through engaging content that solves a key problem the audience has.

There are a few steps you can take to get started:



STEP 1

Check out what kind of content your audience is already interacting with on social media (stalk your competitors for inspiration here if you need to)



STEP 2

Identify your customers' key pain points by scouring forums, listening to questions they're asking on social, and digging into reviews of products like yours or similar

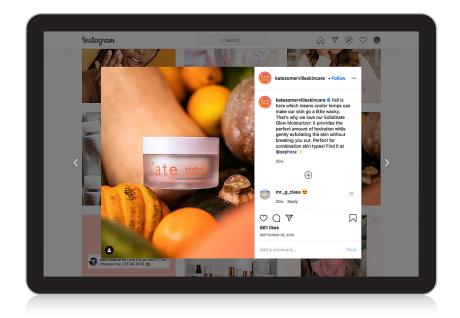


STEP 3

Create content (or find content to share) that provides a solution to their most pressing pain points

Beauty brand Kate Somerville tackles dry skin in cooler temperatures - a struggle their customers are likely facing.

Not only will this help build trust between you and your buyers, but it will also establish you as an expert in your industry and will help you be seen as the "go-to" brand for that topic.





Build Credibility

It's all about becoming a trusted, reliable, and consistent source of information

Once you've got your baseline of useful content for your audience to consume, it's time to start cementing that trust and building credibility - in the end, this is what will win over customers on social media.

Think about it: say, for example, you're looking to buy a course that shows you how to effectively use email marketing.

Are you more likely to buy it from someone you've never heard of before or someone who regularly posts content about the biggest struggles you have with email marketing and offers a solution to those problems?

We're willing to bet it's the latter.

Although this is a very basic example, you get the gist of how important credibility is in winning over customers on social media.

So how do you create a credible image of your brand?



1. Demonstrate your understanding of your industry on social media by sharing relevant articles and adding thoughtful insights to conversations



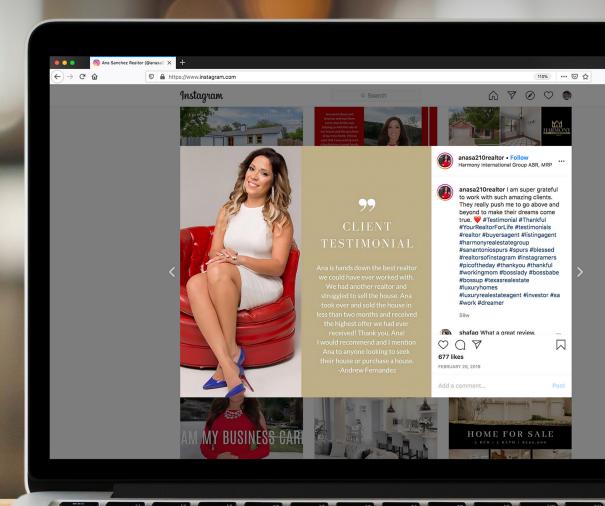
2. Participate and engage in discussions that are already taking place to prove your authority on the topic and simultaneously spread the world about your brand



3. Share case studies, testimonials, and reviews from other customers who can vouch for your business

Testimonial

This realtor *shares* a client testimonial on instagram to boost their credibility







Get Creative

Staying active is the key for modern consumer brands, but you have to cut through the noise

Just like cold calling doesn't work any more, neither does sharing generic fluff about your products. Remember those old-fashioned brands we mentioned before? Don't use their example as an excuse to shout into the void about your products on social media.

If you want to win social media users over, you have to create customer-centric campaigns that really resonate with them - and don't be afraid to get creative here.

People are far more likely to remember a brand that went all out with their social strategy and did something different than a brand that followed the crowd and played it safe.

Thankfully, social media is packed full of features that can help you bring your brand to life and make it stand out:



1. Tap into the power of Instagram Stories to share the "human-ness" of your brand and to go behind the scenes (consumers love to take a peek behind the scenes)



2. Use features like Facebook Live or IGTV to share in-the-moment announcements and snapshots of advice that provide quick wins to your audience



 Re-share content that your audience have posted themselves to create a sense of community and encourage more of your followers to get involved





Be Consistent

To win over customers with social selling, it's important that you show up

Consistency is king!

Once you start showing up in user feeds regularly with quality content and useful, credible information, your followers will start to actively expect you to pop up. As a result, they're more likely to interact with you as they become more familiar with who you are and what you're selling and, to top it off, are more likely to buy from you.

Don't Miss Out On the Power of Social Selling

Social selling is one of the hottest marketing trends right now - and for good reason. It gives brands the chance to meet and hang out with their customers in a place they're comfortable with and join in conversations.

Selling is no longer a game of who can shout the loudest; instead, it's about nurturing audiences, showing you understand their struggles, and providing solutions to those pain points that enrich their lives.

Tap into the power of social selling by ensuring you're visible on the right social platforms, sharing relevant, engaging content, and getting involved in discussions. The more you show up and cement your credibility, the more trust you'll build, and the more customers you'll get flocking to your products.





5 BRILLANT EXAMPLESOF SOCIAL SELLING

Get inspiration for totally do-able social selling ideas from real-life brands, like Bombas, BATOKO, and Sephora.

Riviera Maison's 131,000 Instagram followers get home decor inspiration pumped into their feeds every day.

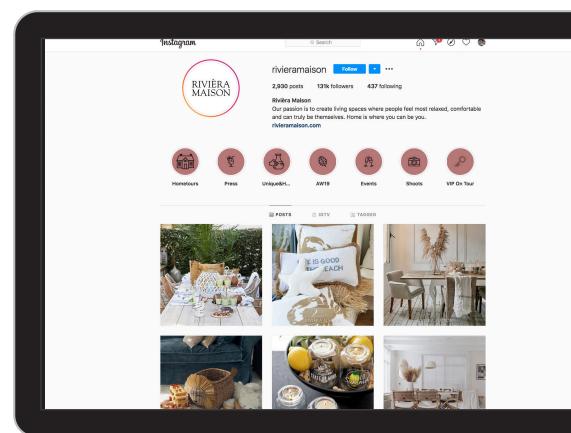
For high-end brands like Rivera, giving customers the chance to see what their products look like in situ is an important step in the sales cycle. In the past, this would mean hiring a professional photographer to capture a few studio-style shots for the website.

Today, the possibilities have been blown wide open.

Riviera Maison shares photos from customers that have already bought their signature velvet sofa, mahogany sideboard, or luxurious winter blanket to provide endless decor inspiration for future prospects.

And this isn't a one-off.

In fact, the rise of social commerce shows us that shopping is (and always has been) an inherently social experience. Social commerce sales are on the rise even in spite of a dropoff in in-person shopping. Ultimately, conversations about brands and products are still happening— in fact, they're happening more often than ever before with social media.





ESTIMATED US SOCIAL COMMERCE SALES: **BILLIONS (\$)**



Note: The top 500 retailers are defined by total retail sales in the US. **Source:** Business Insider's intelligence estimates, Technavio. Cited by Bloomberg, Internet Retailer, US Census Bureau, 2019.

SOURCE

In the current digital landscape, brands have a wealth of tools and opportunities at their fingertips. Savvy brands leverage their social power and build deeper connections with their buyers through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Starting conversations and engaging with customers online doesn't just generate valuable feedback and loyalty; it inspires current consumers to share what they love about the brand.

With more than 50% of all shoppers following their favorite brands on social media for the sole purpose of seeing new products, there's no point denying the impact social media can have on sales.

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"Shop Now" Insta Ads from Bombas

Don't miss out on high-value targeting potential and in-app shopping on Instagram

Bombas Socks taps the power of Instagram ads by encouraging shoppers to buy products directly through the social media app itself.

Each ad is designed to stand out in a prospective customer's feed, employing bright colors and quirky styling, and using the "Shop Now" call-to-action banner that Instagram ads provide.

As a result, shoppers can make their purchase in one window, without ever having to leave Instagram, reducing friction that might otherwise decrease the likelihood of a sale. Once the purchase has been made, they can continue to scroll through their feeds.

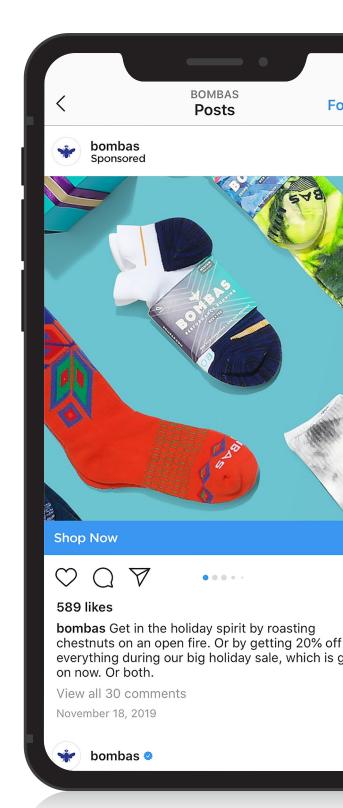
The in-built nature of buying through social media demonstrates just how much online shopping has become a part of everyday life. Consumers can now impulse buy like never before with just a few clicks.

⊗ KEY TAKEAWAY FROM BOMBAS

Studies show that 60% of users learn about new products through Instagram. Online communities have evolved, and consumers are now open to purchasing through channels that were originally reserved for interacting with friends and keeping in touch with family.

In fact, one-third of Instagram users have actually bought something through the platform while on their mobile device.

Take Bombas' example and serve stand-out ads that link directly to an in-app purchase window, making it as easy as possible for potential customers to make a purchase while going about their everyday activities on Instagram.







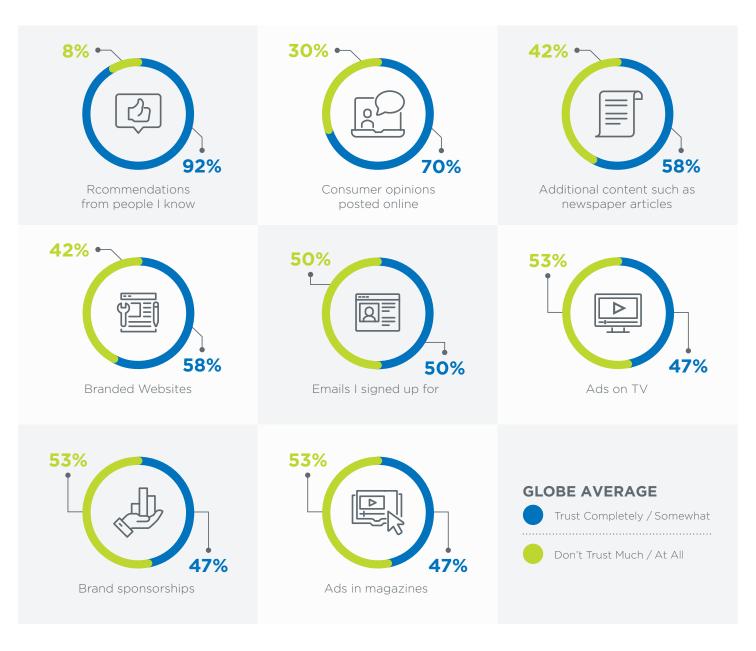
Shareworthy Giveaways by Friend's Beauty

Nothing gets people excited quite like the prospect of free stuff

The main goal for social media savvy eCommerce brands is to generate engagement and interaction. The more buzz that's created, the more chance they have of reaching new audiences and creating a loyal following that continues to buy their products.

Increasing engagement is the exact outcome Friend's Beauty wanted to achieve by hosting a giveaway. They encouraged their Facebook followers to comment and share their giveaway post, ultimately increasing its reach on the platform.

As a result, the brand created a digital version of word-of-mouth marketing (which still remains one of the most effective forms of marketing ever).



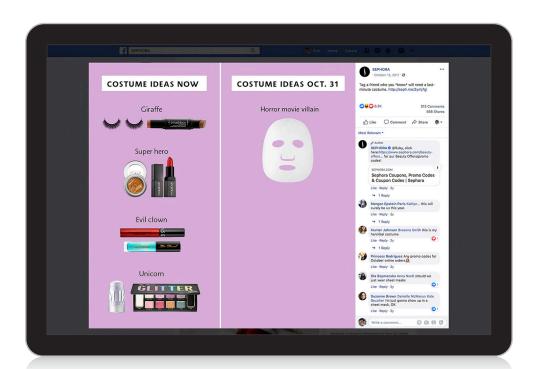


(*) KEY TAKEAWAY FROM FRIEND'S BEAUTY

Sharing is a core part of social media. People who use Facebook are primed to share content with their friends list that either makes them look good, is entertaining, or has some kind of potential personal benefit (in the case of the Friend's Beauty giveaway, the chance to win an eyeliner and brush set).

Take advantage of users' innate need to share on social media by generating posts that encourage word-of-mouth marketing.

This might come in the form of a giveaway, or it might simply be a "tag a friend" post, like Sephora does here:





SOURCE

Today's consumer relies heavily on peer recommendations simply because there are so many brands out there to choose from. (*Read more on consumer decision fatigue* in the December 2019 edition of Direct Selling News, authored by DirectScale CEO Rodger Smith)

They tend to lean toward companies that come recommended by friends and family, because they trust those people more than the word of businesses themselves.





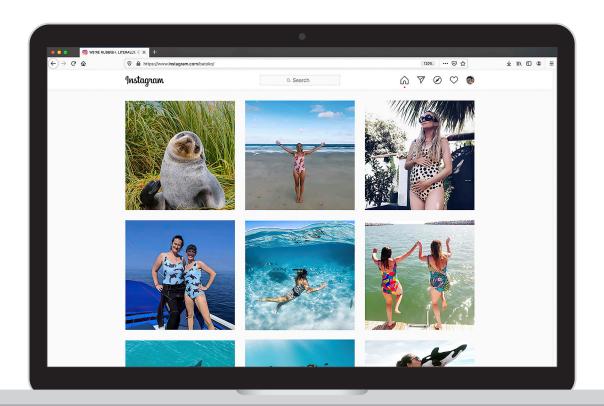
Customer Created Content by BATOKO

Re-sharing content from your customers gives an authentic look at the brand

In an age where consumers are cleverer than ever, *creating human connections has never been more important*.

Brands are turning their backs on highly-polished marketing campaigns and are instead showcasing content that's been created by their very own customers.

93% of shoppers note that user generated content helps them decide whether to buy a product, and brands like BATOKO are tapping into this powerful trend.

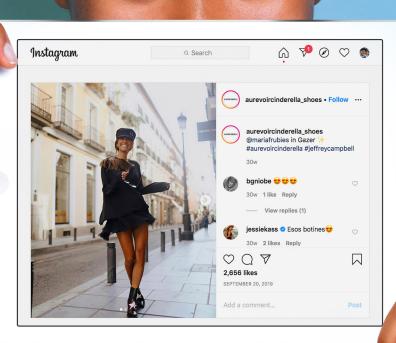


The recycled swimwear company exclusively shares customer photos on their Instagram feed.

Not only does this show their products in a range of different environments and on a range of different bodies, but it also works as unbeatable social proof. It says "Hey, look at all the people who've bought from us already and love our product!"



You can encourage users to send in their photos using a specific hashtag, or you can bring influencers on board (like Au Revoir Cinderella does here) to solidify your social proof.



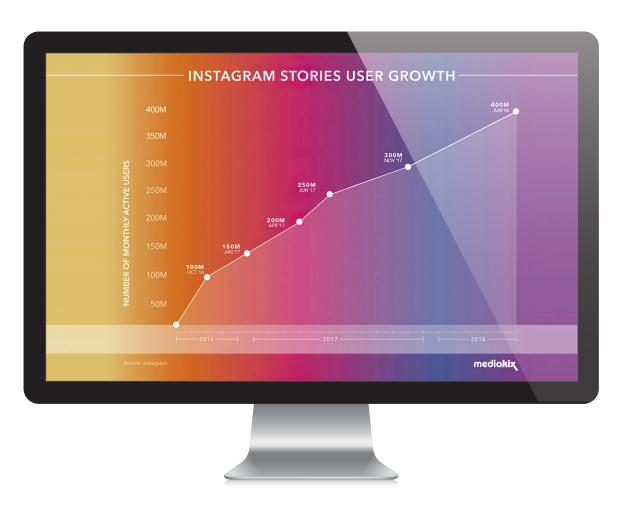


Getting Real With Stories by ZitSticka

The "Stories" feature started on Snapchat, but its introduction on Instagram brings authenticity

Instagram Stories are on fire.

They inject a sense of "realness" into a platform that is renowned for intensely edited images that show only the best parts of life.



SOURCE

Since their introduction to Instagram in 2016, Stories have become a tool for eCommerce brands to demonstrate the human side of their business and forge deeper connections with their audience.

In fact, Stories are so successful for online shops, that one in four millennials and Gen Z-ers actively seek out Stories that feature the products and services they want to buy.

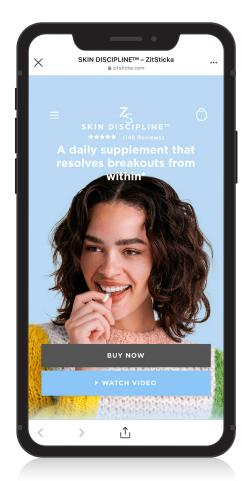
ZitSticka buys into this need by populating their Stories with customer testimonials and real-life stories that lead into a call-to-action (or a "Swipe Up" to buy image).

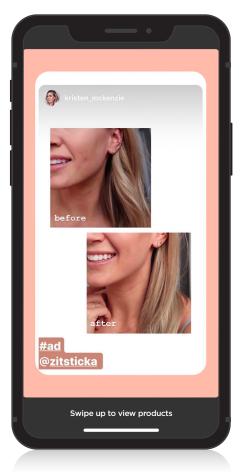
directscale.com



The Stories show the products in action and share testimonials from customers who have bought and enjoyed the product

(which again acts as a form of good old word-of-mouth marketing).







⊗ KEY TAKEAWAY FROM ZITSTICKA

Let customers do the talking for you and incorporate their testimonials and experiences into a Stories thread.

Once you've got viewers invested in the outcome, you can throw in a call-to-action that encourages your audience to "complete the story" by making a purchase.

Stories are a great way to show the behind-the-scenes of your brand (which ultimately builds relationships with customers), so don't be afraid of sharing silly moments, the making of your products, or other raw, unpolished aspects of your brand.





Shop Spring

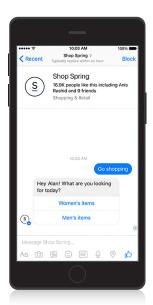
Your customer support team doesn't have to work around-the-clock

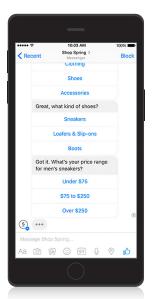
With so many options available today, it's important for eCommerce brands to stand out - and a huge part of that involves making sure your customer service is spot on.

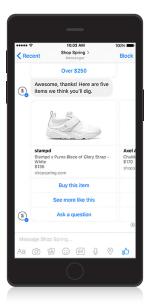
Think about it:

If a consumer lands on your site and has questions about one of your products but can't get an answer, they'll go elsewhere to a place where they can get the answer in a timely manner.

To combat the challenge of site abandonment, many brands are implementing Facebook Messenger or other chatbots to answer simple questions and to personalize the online shopping experience, suggesting products the customer would like based on their interactions with the bot.









Shop Spring's Facebook bot is a prime example

By using a machine-learning powered "robot," Shop Spring answers immediate objections or questions consumers have to keep sales flowing.

Impulse buying is becoming hotter than ever, and if a shopper is in the mood to buy right now, you must be able to accommodate that. Otherwise, the critical moment of impulse will pass, and you've lost a sale.

It's also worth noting that Shop Spring's chatbot is used on a platform that most of its customers are familiar with. It doesn't ask them to submit a form on a page they've never seen before. Instead, it turns up in their Facebook Messenger inbox amongst threads from their friends and family.



(*) KEY TAKEAWAY FROM SHOP SPRING

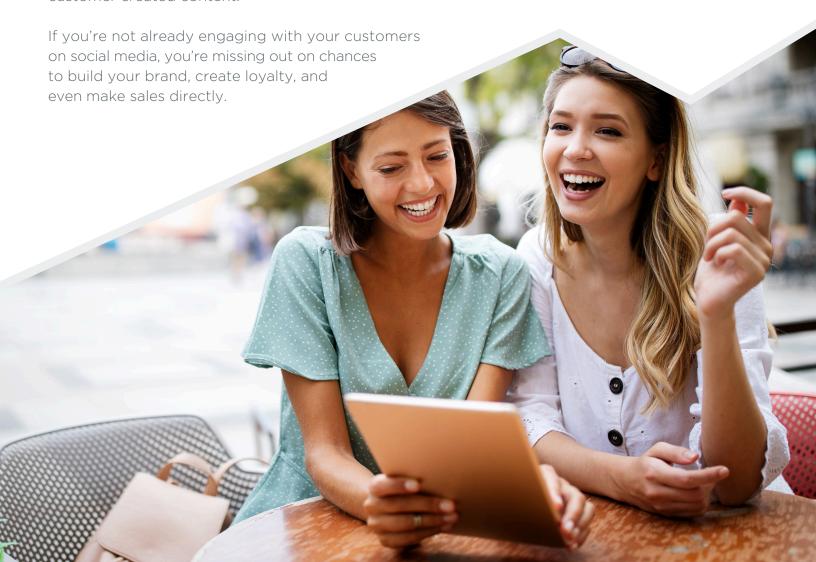
In addition to implementing a customer service portal on a platform that your customers are familiar with, the Facebook Messenger chatbot allows you to personalize the shopping experience.

If you can recommend products they might also like based on their interactions with your chatbot, you are ultimately going to encourage more sales.

Social Selling to Get More Sales!

The evolution of social media means it's no longer just a place for keeping in touch with friends and family. Instead, it provides a platform where users do many other everyday activities without having to leave the safety of a platform they know and love.

As a result, eCommerce brands must grow their social presence and interact with their customers, through mediums like authentic Instagram Stories, Al-powered Facebook Messenger chatbots, or customer created content.



50+ MIND-BLOWING STATS ABOUT SOCIAL SELLING

In a world where social media is becoming more and more important, failing to implement a concentrated strategy on social platforms can lead a business to ruin. Too many businesspeople rely on their gut feeling when it comes to their social selling strategy without considering the data that should drive their decisions.

We've compiled a list of social selling statistics to give you important insights and help you approach your followers the right way: Social selling is the latest wave in the tech-driven consumer revolution, and we think you

should be part of it.





According to **Statista**, 22% of the world's population has a their own Facebook account.

600M

More than 600 million people have LinkedIn accounts across 200+ countries. (LinkedIn)

56%

More than 56% of internet users have more than one social media account. (PEW Research)

22%

According to **PEW**

Research, Facebook is still the most widely used social media platform with 79% of American internet users. 80%

A staggering 80% of the time spent on social media platforms happens on mobile devices.

(ComScore)

3.03 B

Almost half of the entire world's population (3.03 billion people) has at least one social media account.

(Hootsuite)



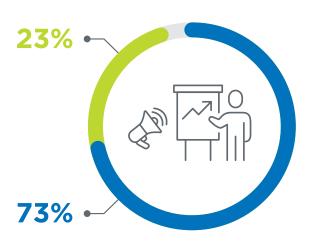
Salespeople who use social media as part of their sales methods outsell 78% of their peers. (A Sales Guy)

90%

90% of top-performing salespeople now use social media as part of their sales strategy. (LinkedIn)

40%

According to <u>SalesforLife</u>, companies who have consistent social selling processes are 40% more likely to hit revenue goals than non-social sellers.



73% of sales representatives using social selling as part of their sales process did better than their colleagues who didn't use social selling. On top of that, they exceeded quota 23% more often.

(Aberdeen Group)

50% of revenue is influenced by social selling in 14 common industries, including computer software, healthcare, and marketing and advertising. (LinkedIn)

54%

54% of sales agents using social media are able to track their social media usage back to at least one closed deal. (A Sales Guy)

56%

77% of B2B buyers claimed they did not talk with a sales agent until after they had performed independent research. (**DemandGen**)



90%

90% of decisionmakers never answer a cold call,



75%

but 75% of B2B buyers use social media to make purchasing decisions. (LinkedIn)

Sales Agents

According to various studies, sales agents with high social network activity achieve 45% more sales opportunities and are 51% more likely to hit their sales targets. (LinkedIn)

561%

Brand messages reached 561% further when shared by employees compared to the same messages shared via official brand social channels. (Marketing Advisory Network)

53%

53% of sales agents want help in understanding social selling better. (Adam Global) **8**x

Employee-generated content receives 8 times more engagement than content shared by brand channels.

(Social Media Today)

93%

93% of sales executives have not received any formal training on social selling. (EveryoneSocial)



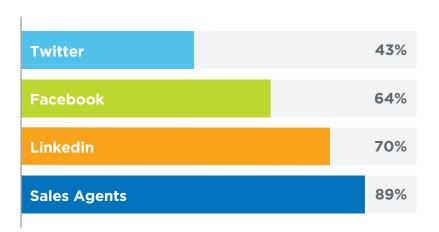


2x Pipeline

According to **EveryoneSocial**, a good social selling program can drive 16% better win rates, 2x pipeline, and deliver 48% better deals.

89% of top-performing sales agents

claim social networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, play a major role in closing deals and are part of their sales strategy. Moreover, 70% of sales professionals are active on LinkedIn for business purposes, compared to 64% on Facebook and 43% on Twitter.





64%

64% of sales agents

that invested in social media hit their quota.



49%

On the other hand, only 49% of sales agents that don't use social selling hit the quota.



45%

Social selling leaders manage to create

45% more sales opportunities than their peers.

97% of consumers go online to find and
research products and
services.

47%

47% of buyers view at least 3 to 5 pieces of content before they contact a sales agent, according to **DemandGen**.

75%

75% of B2B buyers are impacted by social media

when making a purchasing decision.

0.3%

Baylor University's Keller Center for Research reports that the success rate of cold calls to appointments stands at only 0.3%.





92%

A staggering 92% of B2B buyers are willing to engage with a sales professional who is a known industry thought leader.

31%

31% of B2B professionals

claim that social selling has allowed them to build deeper relationships with clients. 10%

More than 10% of social sales agents have closed 5 or more deals due to being active on social media.

76%

76% of buyers are ready to have a social media conversation with potential providers.



80% of companies believe their salesforce would be more productive if they had a greater social media presence, but two-thirds of companies have no social media strategy for their sales organization.

39%

39% of B2B professionals

claimed social selling reduced the length of time they spent researching potential leads.

84%

84% of <u>C-level executives</u>

use social media to make purchasing choices.

33%

33% of users prefer to contact brands through social media over making a phone call.

53%

<u>53% of customer loyalty</u> is driven by a salesperson's ability to deliver unique insight, which is easily done through social media.



50.1%

50.1% of social sales agents spend 5-10% of their time on social media. (A Sales Guy)

61%

According to <u>HubSpot</u>, 61% of US marketers use social media for lead generation.





92% of employees' Twitter followers are new to the brand.

(A Sales Guy)



74%

74% of B2B marketing companies use Twitter to push their content.





81% of people find unsolicited Facebook messages from sales agents creepy.



78%

78% are turned off by friend requests from sales agents.



135 Employees

The reach of 135 employees engaged in employer advocacy is larger than that of a company page with one million Facebook followers, likes, or fans.





<u>98% of sales agents</u> with over 5,000 LinkedIn connections meet or surpass their quota.



65%

<u>65% of people</u> on LinkedIn wouldn't find it awkward if a sales agent sent them a message and they had mutual connections.



98%

There is a grand total of **98% million LinkedIn users** in the US alone.



IBM increased its sales by 400% thanks to its inbound social selling program.

38%

Social sellers create <u>38% more new opportunities</u> than traditional sellers.

69%

Agents who look at the profiles of at least 10 people at each of their accounts were **69% more likely to exceed quota** than those who viewed 4 or fewer.



90%

90% of top performing sales agents use social selling tools,



71%

versus only 71% of overall sales professionals.

100%

Social media has a 100% higher lead-to-close rate than outbound marketing.



63.4%

63.4% of social sellers reported an increase in company sales revenue, compared to 41.2% of non-social sellers.

79%

Sales agents who leverage social selling in their sales process are <u>79% more likely to</u> attain their quota than those who don't use it.



77%

77% of B2B purchasers claimed that they would not even talk to a sales agent until they had done their own research.





You have just learned proven strategies to take your social selling to a whole new level-by choosing the right social platform for your business, creating valuable customer-centric content, and building credibility in the eyes of your customers, you're taking advantage of a powerful channel that meets customers where they are.

Case studies demonstrate the power of social selling done right; you need to keep your customers within the social media apps they use, focus on their needs and questions, create user-generated content, and above all, be creative in all your efforts.

Almost half of the world has at least one social media account and 90% of top-performing salespeople use social selling as a part of their sales strategy- don't miss out on the potential of social selling to increase your sales and grow your business.

This guide is the result of hours of research and years of practice. DirectScale is famous for our experience and constant innovation to leverage industry trends. If you want to discover how DirectScale can help you optimize your social selling efforts, get in touch at **directscale.com**.

About DirectScale, Inc.

Based in Lindon, Utah, DirectScale has been setting the standard for social and direct sales industry software platforms since 2013. DirectScale's powerful SaaS platform boasts fully configurable management tools that are vital to not only running, but to efficiently tracking and growing a business.

With its focus on providing an intuitive and impactful customer experience to both corporate clients and independent sellers, DirectScale has revolutionized the way direct selling businesses can be launched and managed.

The platform is fully extensible using open APIs and therefore able to meet the needs of corporate users and independent sellers. DirectScale is committed to helping both organizations and their distributors plan for and drive growth. Its vast experience in the direct sales and software industries have proven time and again that the company truly understands how to help clients succeed. To learn more or request a demo, visit **directscale.com**.

