



7 WAYS SALES PROFESSIONALS DRIVE REVENUE WITH **SOCIAL SELLING**



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THE NEW REALITY OF SELLING (IT'S SOCIAL)

It's becoming almost impossible to ignore the impact social networks are having on sales. Much of the face-to-face networking that took place at trade shows and conferences are now happening online, and many introductions are happening via social connections.

The reality is, salespeople who ignore social networks are not going to scale their businesses as effectively as they could.

In the pages that follow, you'll discover...

- Seven ways LinkedIn Sales Solutions can drive more and bigger deals in the 21st century economy;
- Why the "proven" methods of just a few years ago are no longer effective; and
- What you can do to develop a social selling strategy that will help you crush your quota.

7 TIPS FROM KOKA



Koka Sexton

Koka Sexton has been a thought leader in the social selling space for over four years and is on the LinkedIn Sales Solution's marketing team. You can find more social selling insights from Koka within this ebook and his social footprint here:

#1 ADDRESSING CHANGING BUYER BEHAVIOR

Researching a purchase used to be remarkably time consuming, especially in the business-to-business world. The Internet and professional networks like LinkedIn have changed this for good.

Now, when a prospect is considering making a purchase, he can find out everything there is to know with a few keystrokes. That's why, according to a 2012 Corporate Executive Board report, **57% of every buying decision is already made before there is any sales rep involvement.**

Plus, buyers no longer have a compelling reason to take a salesperson's call during their research phase. A recent IBM Preference Study showed that cold calls are ineffective 97% of the time, and this number has been increasing by 7% every year since 2010.

COLD CALLS



INEFFECTIVE 97% OF THE TIME

It's in the space between quantity and quality of information that social selling can give you a tremendous advantage. Social selling lets you provide the right information at the right times.

- Demand Gen Report



Koka's Tip: Leverage social selling to build relationships with your buyers early-on; create trust and value before you have a dialogue about price.



#2 SALES REPS OWNING THEIR LEAD GENERATION

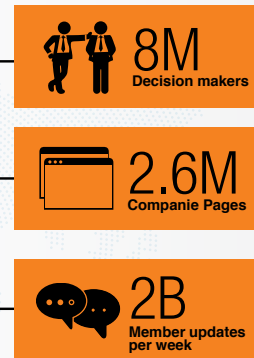
There is often a strict division between marketing and sales when it comes to revenue responsibility.

Despite recent advances in the effectiveness of marketing, a recent study conducted by CustomerThink determined that on average, marketing is still only responsible for 30% of lead generation for sales.

LinkedIn helps remove that divide by enabling sales professionals to access a network of more than 200 million members who generate over 2 billion status updates per week. You're now able to identify and engage with more prospects than ever before.

LinkedIn: World's Largest Professional network

200M+
Members World Wide



Jan 31, 2013

Sales reps on average have to generate 70% of their own sales leads if they want to achieve their goals.



Koka's Tip: Leverage professional networks like LinkedIn to drive your own lead generation. Your buyers are already there and engaging with others and content on the platform. **You must tap into this.**



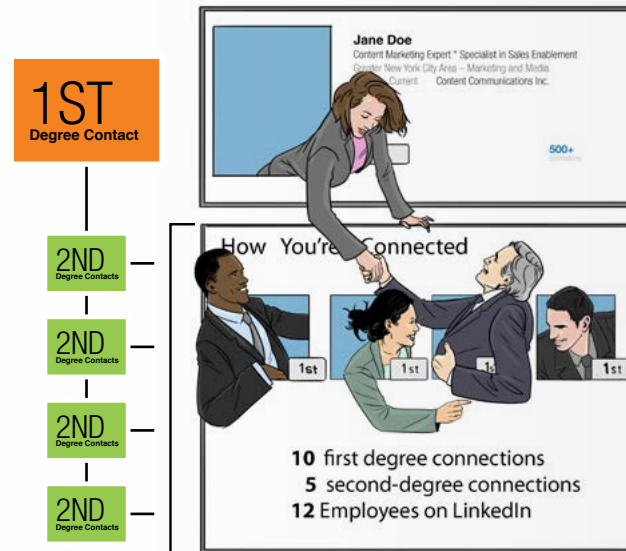
#3 IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN TARGET ORGANIZATIONS

Building out a target account list is time consuming and difficult. **Even after your accounts are identified, which people should you approach within?**

Enter social selling.

LinkedIn enables you to **take a personalized approach to prospecting** within the massive universe of 200 million members on the platform.

For example, **leverage powerful search capabilities within 1st and 2nd degree connections to find a starting point for your reach-out efforts.** Search by geography, title, and most importantly, your relationships to prospects within your professional network.



Social selling on LinkedIn changes the game from a cold numbers approach to a high-quality, low-volume, trusted approach. Leverage personal relationships within your professional network to drive sales results.

- Ralf VonSosen
LinkedIn Sales Solutions



Koka's Tip: A few methods of finding the best prospects: (1) Do a quick search of your immediate 1st and 2nd degree networks on LinkedIn to see which of your buyers are easily accessible. (2) Leverage LinkedIn Sales Navigator's Lead Builder feature to efficiently run and save searches of your buyers.



#4 UNLOCKING THE POWER OF CONNECTIONS TO ACCESS NEW ACCOUNTS

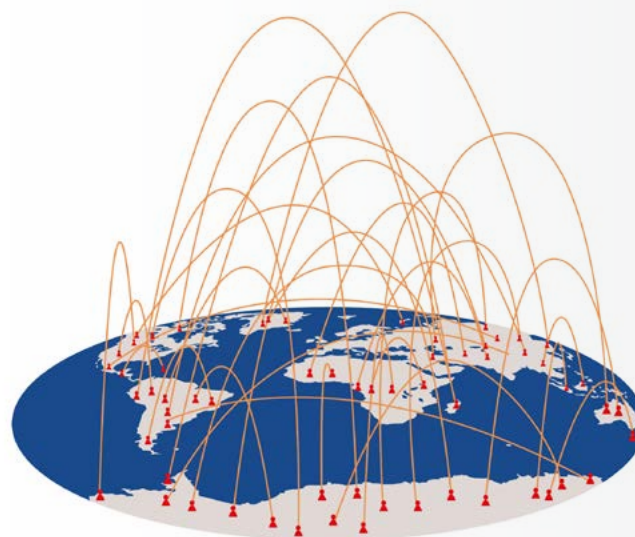
Personal connections on LinkedIn are the best way to build a pipeline full of people most likely to turn into new customers.

- **A warm referral increases the odds of a sales success 2x-4x;**¹ and
- 53% of sales professionals have received introductions to new opportunities from their coworkers.²

Easily prompt introductions on LinkedIn to key decision makers from people who know and trust you. Tap into your entire network of contacts to uncover opportunities.

¹ 5 Opportunities to Profit From Social Selling, CustomerThink

² LinkedIn Charter Customer Survey, Nov. 2011



To understand spheres of influence of your buyers, try to determine if you're connected to people in their networks.



Koka's Tip: Ask 1st degree contacts to introduce you to 2nd and 3rd degree contacts. One way to scale this approach is with LinkedIn Sales Navigator, a premium solution for salespeople.



#5 TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TEAM BUYING

While there is often one final decision maker, there are almost always other influencers in a major purchase that make the difference as to whether or not it ultimately happens.

A 2012 survey of B2B buyers conducted by Demand Gen Report uncovered that...

- Buyers who say they involve more team members in the buying process jumped by more than 67% over a similar 2011 study; and
- 50% more decision makers seek the input of more internal members during the decision making process, compared to 30% of buyers surveyed in 2011.

With social selling on LinkedIn, you can easily enact a “multi-thread strategy” by targeting the primary decision maker and identifying the influencers connected to that buyer.



Back when many businesses had a command-and-control management structure, reps could squeak by. But in the current “decision-by-committee” environment, ignoring ancillary decision makers and influencers is a recipe for disaster.

- Demand Gen Report



Koka's Tip: Use the connective capabilities of LinkedIn to request warm introductions from existing contacts, or initiate communication based on commonly shared interests and goals. You'll quickly get in touch with every member of the group that influences a buying decision.



#6 IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT TOPICS TO TALK ABOUT

Above all else, sales is about establishing relevance.

If you could somehow ensure that you'd be in front of people at the exact moment they needed to solve the precise problems that your product addressed, you'd close deals 100% of the time.

Social selling on LinkedIn gets salespeople closer to this than ever before.

Establish yourself as a “social citizen.” Regularly interact socially on LinkedIn, where people who make decisions in your target industries spend time and explore solutions to their most pressing challenges.

Active social citizens receive a steady stream of information about what is top-of-mind for the decision makers in their networks.



Buyers expect you to be prepared before the meeting. Even if that just means a quick glance at their LinkedIn profile.



Koka's Tip: Become a trusted information source by: (1) Regularly posting third-party articles, blog entries and studies that speak to the pain points and desires of potential customers. (2) Interacting with connections by commenting on their observations and answering their questions. (3) Joining industry-related groups and interact.



#7 DRIVING BUSINESS RESULTS

Social selling allows modern reps to combine the best of building relationships and providing thought leadership to drive deals.

Take Jill Rowley, Eloqua's top salesperson. When she began using social selling, her numbers went through the roof.

"Everyone I meet I add on LinkedIn," Rowley says. "Before a meeting, I'll look up each person and find one piece of information I'll relate to them with so that I'll stand out from the crowd. They'll remember meeting me."

Eloqua has seen significant business as a result of adopting social selling using LinkedIn Sales Navigator, including:

- Increased conversion rates of leads to opportunities by 25%;
- Increased more than 15% of reps exceeding sales quotas; and
- Had average sales cycle time decrease of 20 days.



Effective use of sales intelligence increases revenue productivity per sales rep by 17%. With social sales intelligence, you can reach buyers at exactly the right moment.

– Eloqua Grande Guide to Social Selling



Koka's Tip: Becoming adept at social selling should be done in stages. Jill Rowley has steadily built up her social selling practice over time. To get started, you should focus on these areas: (1) Building your network on LinkedIn. (2) Identifying your prospects. (3) Engaging with them.



ABOUT DEMAND GEN REPORT

Demand Gen Report is a targeted e-media publication spotlighting the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and, ultimately, drive growth. A key component of our coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts. For more information, visit www.demandgenreport.com.

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ABOUT LinkedIn Sales Solutions

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