



GO THE DISTANCE

How to Make Your Employee
Advocacy Program Last
Beyond the First Mile



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A RELAY, NOT A MARATHON

Some say that employee advocacy is a marathon, not a sprint. But it's better to think of it as a relay race.

To maximize performance you need training, coordination and planning before the starting gun. Once you're up and running, it's a group effort that can take your organization farther than any individual runner could go.

It's important to design your program to last for the long haul. The benefits are well worth a little extra planning: On average, employees have 10x more followers than their corporate social media

accounts. To reach that new audience with paid advertising would take quite an investment: Research shows that employee advocacy programs with 1,000 active participants can generate \$1.9 million in earned media value¹.

So get your runners on their marks, and make sure you get set before you go. This eBook will help you design and implement a strategic, sustainable program that's ready to go the distance.

Employees have **10X** more connections on average than a corporation has followers.



SET THE PACE WITH YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Your employees are likely already active on social media. But they may hesitate to share on behalf of the brand. Either they're afraid of a slip-up that could damage the brand, or they're not convinced the benefits are worth the effort.

Social media training, grounded in a solid social media policy, can help them overcome hesitation and get enthusiastic about being a brand advocate.

Your social media policy should include:

- **Your Company Values and Culture.** Make sure your employee's voices reinforce your brand messaging by clarifying what your company stands for.
- **Legal Requirements.** Make sure any applicable laws, rules and regulations are summarized in your policy.
- **Expectations of Privacy and Appropriate Behavior.** Cover how employees can set privacy settings and encourage separating professional and personal profiles.
- **Crisis Management.** Detail who is responsible for speaking on the brand's behalf during a crisis, and how employees should deal with someone hostile to the brand.
- **What and How to Share.** After providing guidelines, get positive: Give employees permission to share their unique perspective and insight, telling the stories they're uniquely equipped to tell.

Rackspace saw a **4X** increase in Company Page views through their employee advocacy program.

“

We worked with our employees before we launched a formal program, so it was much easier to get them on board when we introduced one. It wasn't the first time they were hearing from me.

Elizabeth Jurewicz

Social Enablement Strategist, Rackspace

GET YOUR SOCIAL STARS ON THE STARTING BLOCKS

It's important to start your program with those who are most likely to see early success. That means people who are already active on social media with engaged networks. These "Social Stars" can give your program an early burst of speed. Their early successes will give you results to report back to management, and inspire other employees to join and share.

Your social stars can be found anywhere in your organization, not just in sales, marketing, or management. Every employee has the potential to engage an audience. So judge by their connections and level of activity, not their place in the org chart. LinkedIn Elevate, LinkedIn's employee advocacy

solution, can help you identify the right place to start. Once you identify who you're starting with, train them in how to effectively use the platform. And help them spiff up their social media profiles—their sharing is going to earn them a lot of attention, and they need to be camera-ready.

Australia Post saw an **8X** increase in employee sharing through their program.

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Don't make assumptions about who will be successful. Anyone who is active, encourage them to participate.

Matt Lucas

Head of Content, Search & Social, Australia Post

GET TRACTION WITH INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

It may seem like gamification is the best way to keep people enthusiastic about advocacy. Leaderboards, trophies, and prizes are great for creating initial excitement. But they're not great at inspiring long-term dedication. More importantly, these external rewards send the wrong message about your employee advocacy program.

You want your employees to be excited about social sharing, not excited about winning a coffee shop gift card. External rewards send a clear message: “There is nothing in this for you, so I’m bribing you to do it.”

Instead of ordering trophies, explain the benefits that employee advocacy holds in and of itself:

- Increased visibility on social media
- The chance to become an expert and develop thought leadership
- The chance to build a professional brand
- An expanded network of meaningful business connections
- The ability to contribute to everyone’s success in a measurable way

Philips Lighting saw a **2X** increase in employee connection requests.

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We told them it was an easy way to grow their network, own and expand their professional brand. We knew sharing would get them recognized, that their peers would take notice. In addition to the benefits for the company, it was about what’s in it for them.

Dana Hyland George

Manager of Employer Brand & Recruitment Marketing, Philips Lighting

PROVIDE HIGH-ENERGY CONTENT

Once your employees are trained and motivated to share, make sharing easy with engaging content. The majority of your content should be non-promotional, curated to pique employees' interest and provide value for their target audience.

The right platform can help you curate content based on your employees' interests. While your content should be relevant to your industry, it helps to provide a variety of options based on topics around your central messaging.

LinkedIn Elevate takes content curation to the next level—the platform analyzes content performance on LinkedIn, and suggests content that is likely to resonate with your audience.

Use these sources to keep your queue full of quality content:

- Industry news sites
- RSS feeds
- Twitter lists
- Content from customers & prospects
- Influencers on LinkedIn

DocuSign saw **3X** the engagement with employee shares versus before Elevate.

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You want to make your curator pool as diverse and robust as your participants and the audiences they serve. And you've got to keep the content fresh. It needs to be interesting, important, timely, and authentic to your brand and your audiences.

Greg Perotto

Senior Director of
Global Marketing &
Communications,
DocuSign, Inc.

CHEER ON YOUR RUNNERS WITH REMINDERS

Even the most motivated employees need reminders to keep the program top-of-mind. These reminders should be more than a “don’t forget to share,” though. Use the opportunity to highlight new content, praise your top performers, and share some inspiring results (more on that later).

Your employee advocacy platform should have built in daily emails and notifications. You can supplement these reminders with a weekly e-mail, monthly newsletter, or even one-on-ones with your top performers.

One strategy that has proven effective is to set a twice-weekly reminder employees can add to their calendars. Make sure they know you’re not asking for hours of extra work: Just five minutes to browse and share, a couple times a week, is enough to make a difference.

Rackspace’s program generated over **\$1M** in annualized earned media value.

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We have a multi-channel internal strategy to keep Elevate top-of-mind. One key element is a weekly email highlighting new content, introducing new people on the platform, and giving kudos to our top sharers.

Elizabeth Jurewicz

Social Enablement
Strategist, Rackspace

REPORT YOUR RECORD-SETTING RESULTS

With the right training and continued motivation, it won't be long before your program is running at full speed. Keep the momentum going by reporting on the concrete, measurable benefits your employees are generating for themselves and for the business.

Show your employees the direct results of their efforts, such as how their content shares are generating re-shares, likes and comments. Point out increases in profile views and connection requests.

On the business side, monitor increases in Company Page visits and new followers to your brand's social media accounts. You can even trace new prospects and new business influenced by employee advocacy.

The right platform can help capture these metrics and help you analyze and report on them to your employees and to management.

AccorHotels reached a **55%** larger audience with employee sharing.

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We watch the way people are using the platform, and we can see how much has been shared and what kind of reach we have, including re-shares. We can see it's much more efficient than just sharing on the company page.

Emmanuel Guinot

Brand & Social Content
Coordinator, AccorHotels

ON YOUR MARKS!

Employee advocacy is a powerful way to extend your brand's reach while boosting your employees' professional brands. An employee advocacy program that is designed to go the distance can increase your marketing's effectiveness, help shorten sales cycles, and help your brand attract top talent.

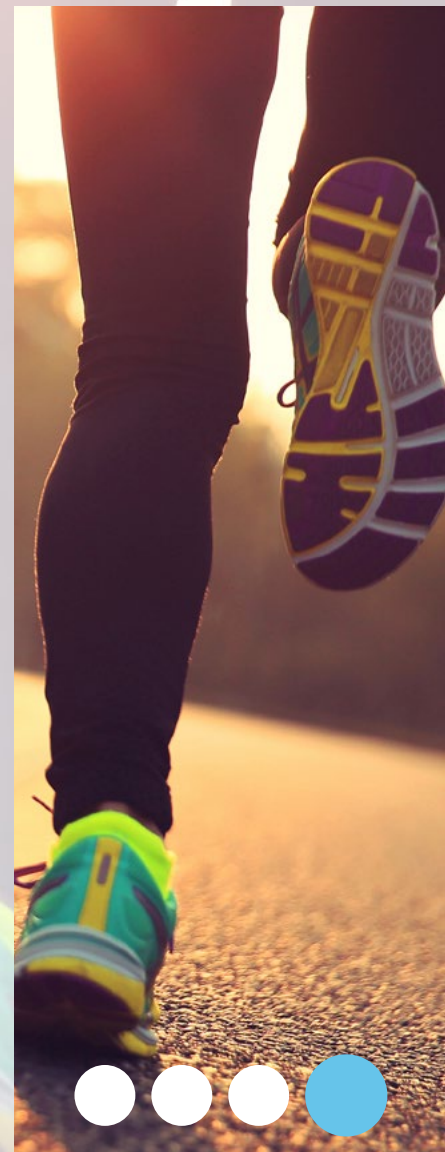
Make sure your program gets off on the right foot: Start with social media training, identify and motivate your social stars, and keep them fueled with relevant, engaging content. When the results start to roll in, make sure everyone knows how great they're doing.

An employee advocacy program that's built to last is a relay race, with your curators handing off to employees handing off to their audience. But there's no finish line—just lap after lap of ever-improving results.

“When we arm employees with the right content, they do the rest. They are infinitely more effective at sharing brand messages than we ever could be at the corporate level.”

Alaynah Tombridge

Communications Specialist GE



LinkedIn Elevate is the only employee advocacy platform that uses data to maximize your performance every step of the way. Elevate can help your company create an employee advocacy program that can go the distance and beyond.

[Click here](#) to learn more about LinkedIn Elevate

LinkedIn Elevate

