



The Business of Influence in Financial Services

Building trust and enabling buying
decisions through influencer marketing.

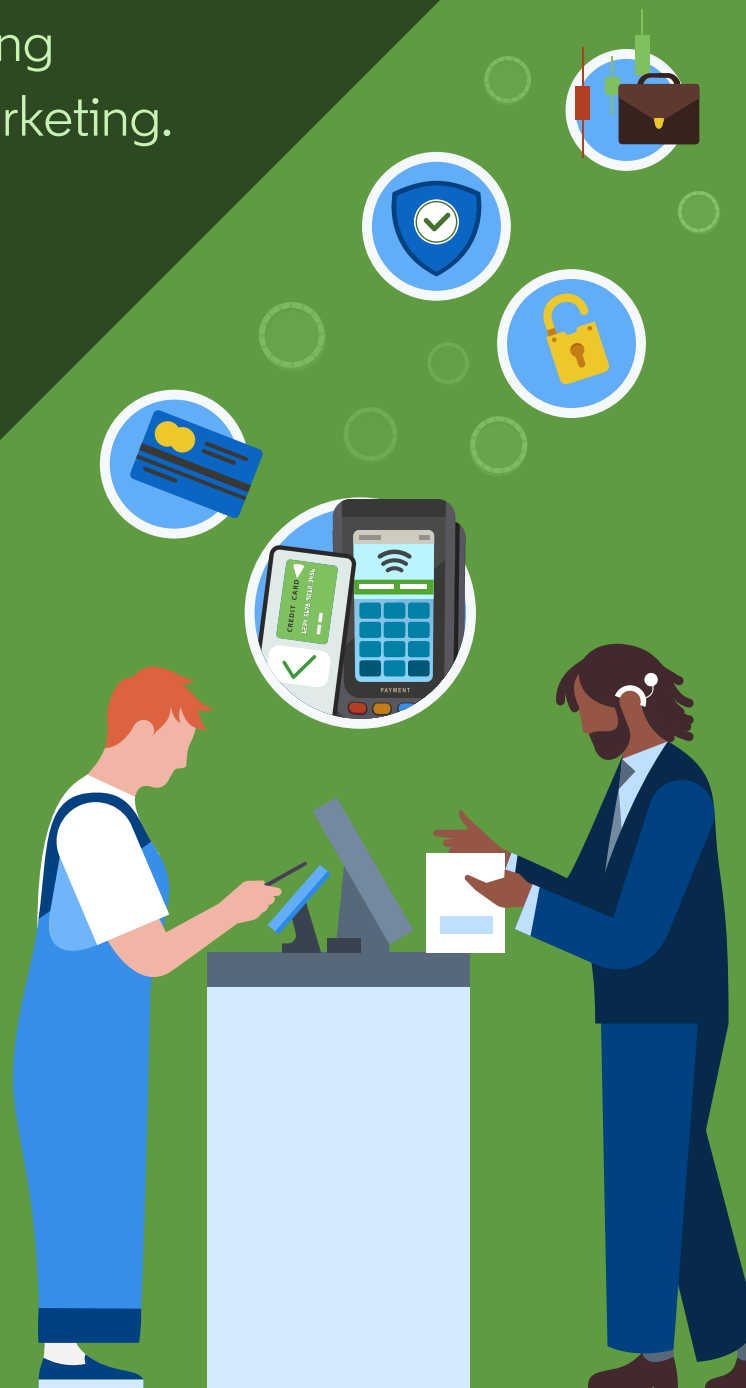


Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

Chapter one:
How influence helps financial services buyers to buy.....4

Chapter two:
The influencer landscape for financial services brands.....6

Chapter three:
The ecosystem of B2B influence on LinkedIn9

Chapter four:
Activating and engaging financial services influencers on LinkedIn11

Conclusion.....14

B2B buyers don't choose financial services solutions just because an ad tells them to.

They do so by engaging with a diverse network of influencers: the connections, colleagues, and content creators, curators and experts whose views they trust.



These influencers help to inform buyers' choices – and reassure them and their colleagues that they've made the right one. They play a crucial role in helping buyers navigate an increasingly complex landscape of banking, payments, insurance, investments and financing services, where the pressure to innovate meets a pressing need for reassurance on reliability, security and data compliance. By building consensus and providing trusted, third-party opinions, they help buying groups make the confident choices they need to.

Smart B2B marketers have long known the value of partnering with opinion leaders who can help to build awareness and explain their propositions in clear and credible terms. Today, that value is growing.

87%



of B2B buyers say they prefer consuming content from trusted industry influencers.¹

85%

of B2B payments buyers use information they find on LinkedIn to help guide their choices.²

61%

of B2B leaders say they will increase spend on influencer content this year.³

39%

of B2B marketers describe influencer marketing as the element that contributes most to the success of their strategy.⁴

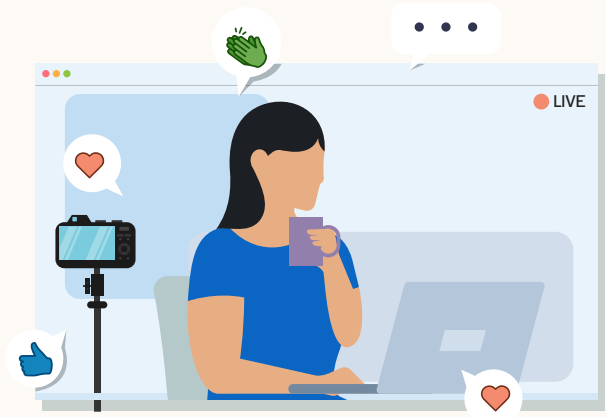
In this report, we'll explore the increasingly important role that influencers now play in B2B financial services purchases. We'll look at the types of influencers that buyers turn to for support and advice, and the central role that LinkedIn plays in this process. We'll also share the strategies that B2B marketers are using to work with influencer networks, share their messages in an authentic way, and empower confident buying decisions.

Chapter 1

How influence helps financial services buyers to buy

Influencer marketing is growing in significance for B2B buyers in all categories, and it has a particularly central role when it comes to decisions about financial services.

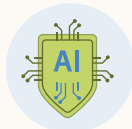
In a fintech-driven world where traditional brands rub shoulders with emerging ones, and solutions connect different areas of financial services in new ways, influencers help buyers to navigate categories, understand new features and differentiate their options.



Financial services buyers must balance different priorities. When it comes to buying payment solutions:²

78% of B2B buyers

say AI is essential



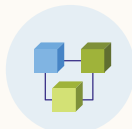
46%



say that the most secure product is the most favorable

67% of B2B buyers

demand other fintech innovations

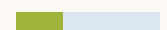


35%



prioritize trustworthiness

32%



stress reliability

Navigating these different considerations leads to a more complex buying process, with 49% of financial services customers saying purchases take longer to complete and 47% saying their buying committee has grown.

With so many new providers and innovative solutions, distinguishing between options is a challenge. In fact, 75% of buyers admit they struggle to tell payments solutions apart.

In this situation, the value of influencers stems from their ability to perform multiple roles simultaneously. They help to map out the supplier landscape, build brand awareness, provide trusted endorsements and explain complex solutions in clear, relatable terms. In LinkedIn research, 82% of B2B buyers say they're influenced by B2B influencer marketing, and 79% say they engage with it at least monthly.

Among financial services buyers of payment solutions:²



say that social media helps their selection process.

53% of B2B buyers

acknowledge the role of influencer content in their decision-making.⁵



have discovered new brands through it.



have learned about industry trends.



have visited a vendor's website as a result.

44% use thought leadership that they find on LinkedIn to help guide their choices.

39% pay attention to thought leadership created by providers.

This early awareness and attention matters, because 75% of financial services buyers say they already know which supplier they want to choose before drawing up a shortlist.²

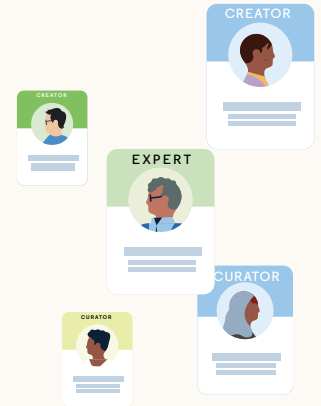
Being one of the brands that influencers know, discuss, explain and recommend can go a long way to building preference across the diverse members of a buying committee.



Chapter 2

The influencer landscape for financial services brands

The network of influence for B2B financial services purchases includes a range of different influencers, with different forms of authority, who take on different roles in shaping the buying process.



CREATORS

Creators make an impact by creating original content for professional audiences with an emphasis on helpful advice, product reviews and how-to guides. They build an audience by addressing hot topics for business decision-makers, and relating their own experiences in an engaging way. Some will have specific expertise in finance whereas others will advise their audiences over a range of different business needs.

They include podcasters, authors, and expert bloggers. Outspoken customers of a brand can also become creators of content that helps to shape perceptions and opinions.

Why creators matter



of people told the 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer⁶ that they would trust 'someone like me' to tell them the truth about innovations and technologies, more than would trust perceived experts and CEOs.

Among B2B buyers, **52% describe Trustworthiness as an important characteristic guiding their engagement with influencers.**

Financial services creators on LinkedIn

Nadia Vanderhall

Financial Planner & Marketer



LinkedIn Top Voice [Nadia Vanderhall](#) is a former financial services marketer turned financial planning consultant and educator. She uses video content on LinkedIn to make topics such as interest rate cuts, estate planning and monthly budgeting both accessible and relatable. Her approach has seen her regularly quoted in the likes of *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek*.

EXPERTS

Experts earn much of their influence from their roles within the financial services industry itself. Some, such as analysts, are recognized for their independent authority. Others, such as high-profile financial services executives, earn it through their seniority and years of experience, which offsets the fact that they represent a particular brand. Employees don't need to sit in the C-suite to act as valuable, expert influencers.

The customer understanding and relatability of financial advisors and customer service agents can earn them an important role in communicating the values and experience of working with a provider.

Why experts matter



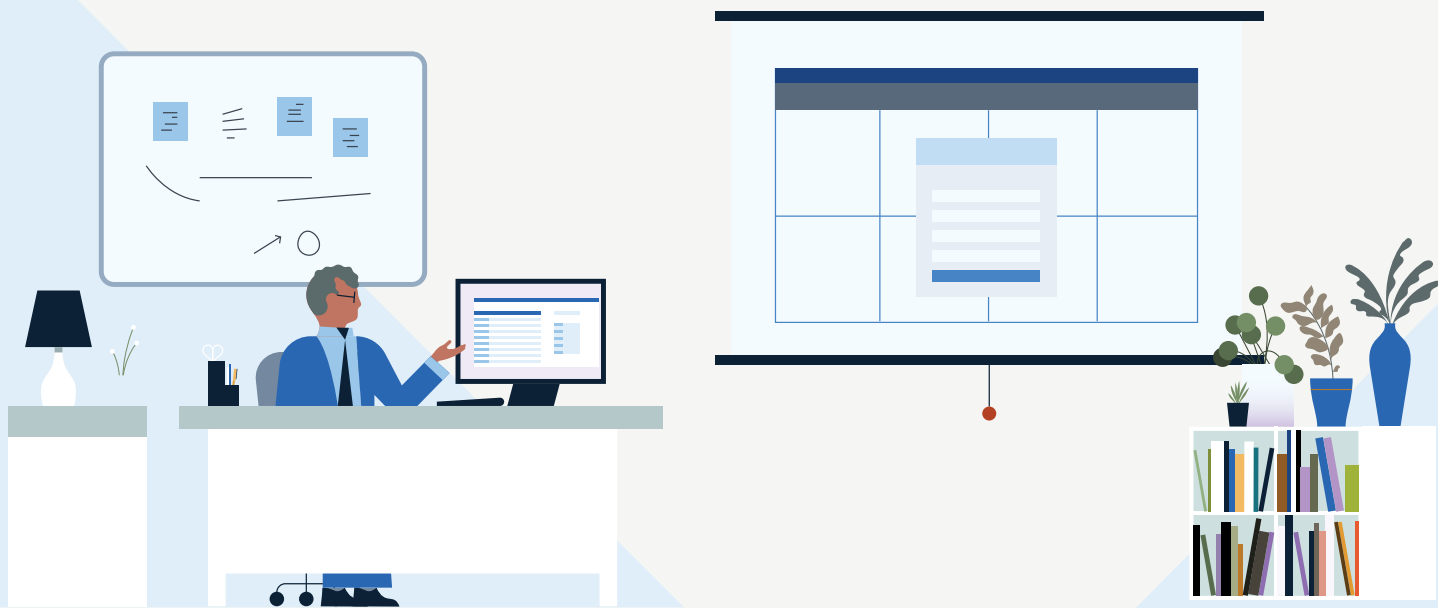
of B2B buyers choose Expertise as a key characteristic of influencers, making it the single most important trait.⁵



of B2B payment solutions buyers cite the opinions of providers' executives as an important influence on their thinking.²

12x

LinkedIn data shows the average company can reach 12x more people through the networks of its employees than through its own follower network.⁷



CURATORS

Curators act as gatekeepers to both experts and creators, whether through regular newsletters, moderating panel discussions or hosting magazine-type podcast shows. They amplify helpful content, and build trust through the quality of the views and ideas they endorse.

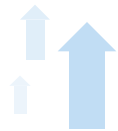
They are the independent editors of the professional social media space, leveraging a combination of paid and organic media to build and monetize their audiences, and earning credibility through being the first to share new insights and updates.

Why curators matter

Curators are an important driver of rapidly growing content engagement on LinkedIn, using a wider range of formats to help their audiences navigate news and trends.

Video is now the fastest-growing format on LinkedIn.

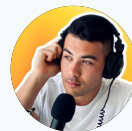
34% year-on-year rise in LinkedIn video uploads⁷



Financial services curators on LinkedIn

Phil Rosen

Co-founder & Editor-in-Chief of *Opening Bell Daily*



Editor in Chief and Co-founder of *Opening Bell Daily*, [Phil Rosen](#) has over 24,000 followers and more than 5,000 daily newsletter subscribers on LinkedIn.

Opening Bell Daily pulls together the latest news and stats for investors in authoritatively concise style. Phil supplements this with regular video posts sharing his experiences travelling between meetings and conferences, plus in-depth LinkedIn thought leadership posts.

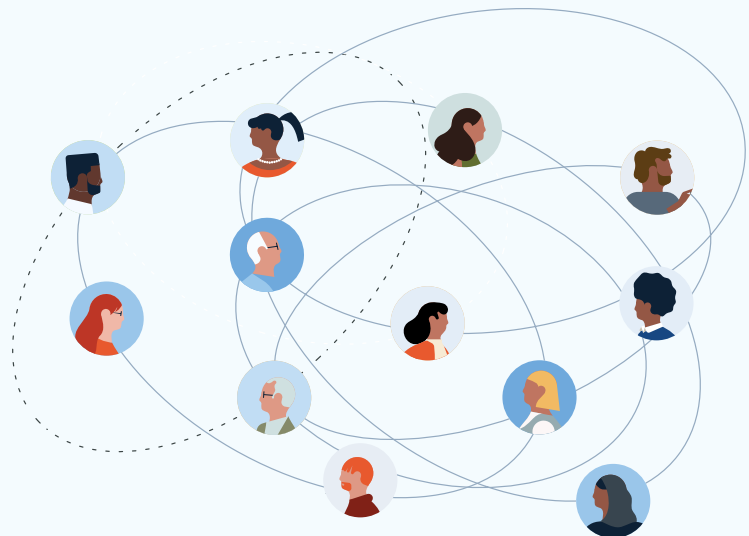
Chapter 3

The ecosystem of B2B influence on LinkedIn

The role that influencers play in financial services purchases depends on trust. Their ability to inform, reassure and build consensus is a direct result of their perceived expertise, authenticity and values – and these perceptions are themselves influenced by the environment in which audiences encounter them.

LinkedIn is not only the world's largest professional network. It's also the most trusted of all the social platforms that financial services buyers and influencers use.

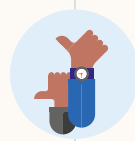
Active LinkedIn members feel more confident and informed after spending time on the platform than they do on any other social network, and describe content they encounter on LinkedIn as the most likely to inform better decisions for their business.



Compared to other social platforms, professionals spending time on LinkedIn are:



More likely to describe the platform as **a good source of information** relating to their work.



More likely than any other platform to **feel informed, confident, motivated and helped** to be the person they want to be.



More likely to **trust the latest financial news** they find on the platform.



More likely to **trust posts from companies** and their representatives in the feed.

This combination of reach and trust is why LinkedIn sits at the heart of the business of influence in B2B financial services, a key element in the creator economy that's predicted to reach \$480 billion in value by 2027.

With over 1 billion members and 68 million companies from around the world, we see influence and conversations playing out thousands of times each minute – inspiring action and generating returns for B2B marketers.

Empowering and enabling this ecosystem of influence has been part of LinkedIn's role from the start, and we've developed a fast-growing set of tools and touchpoints to help bring B2B audiences together with the influencers they trust to inform and guide them:

LinkedIn Top Voices



LinkedIn Top Voices is an invitation-only, expert influencer program with **300 members carefully chosen by LinkedIn's editorial team** for their expertise on different areas of professional life.

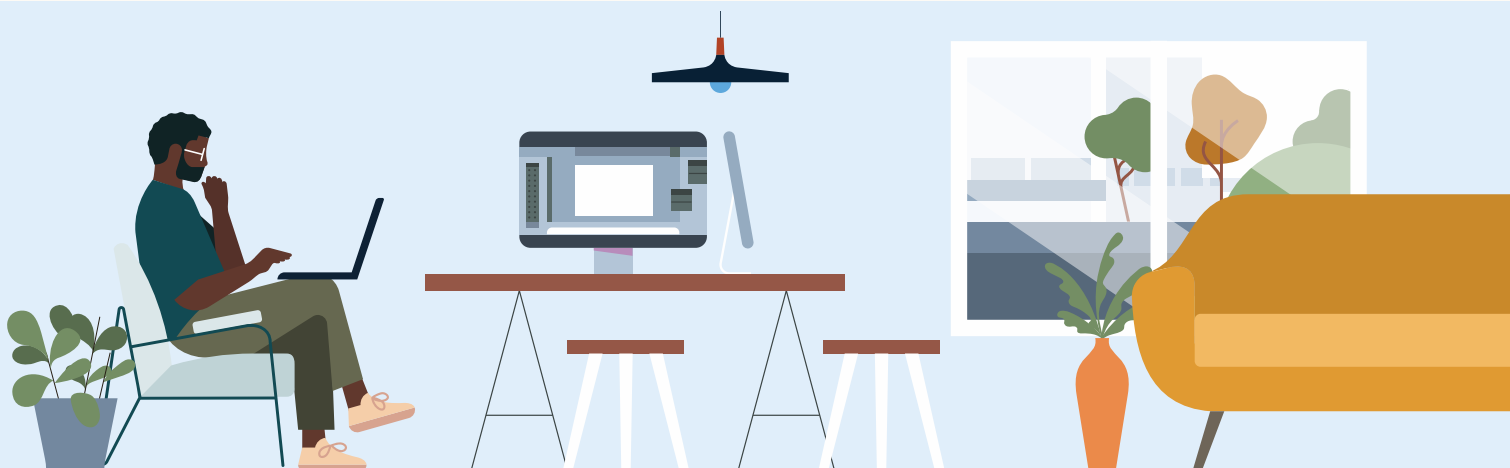
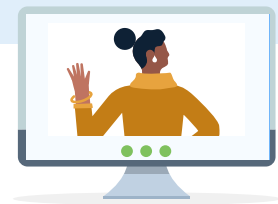
LinkedIn Newsletters



LinkedIn Newsletters help creators and curators introduce their content to a wider audience on the platform. **There are more than 184,000 newsletters and over 756 million newsletter subscribers on LinkedIn.**

LinkedIn Live Events

LinkedIn Live Events are one of the fastest growing creator formats on LinkedIn.



Chapter 4

Activating and engaging financial services influencers on LinkedIn

An effective Influencer Marketing strategy on LinkedIn involves nurturing a wide range of voices that can speak to financial services audiences on different levels.

This includes elevating your own employees as relevant experts, identifying external creators and curators who have an interest in your solutions and align authentically with your messaging, and building relationships through shared content that can generate value for both your chosen influencers and your brand.

The LinkedIn influencer ecosystem provides a wide range of opportunities for financial services marketers to build these types of relationships and amplify their impact. Here's a five-step strategic framework for exploring and activating the potential of Influencer Marketing on LinkedIn:



Step #1

Nurture and elevate your own expert influencers

From sharing thought leadership to walking through solutions, offering helpful advice and sharing customer stories, employees have a highly valued role as influencers on LinkedIn. Identify those who are well-positioned to act as experts for your brand. They could be senior-level executives whose story and opinions your audiences are interested in. They could equally be dedicated customer service employees who understand your solutions and embody your values.

Generative AI tools like LinkedIn Accelerate make it easy for employees with a point of view to share content on LinkedIn. Thought Leader Ads help you to boost the reach of their content in front of a target audience of financial services buyers.

Step #2

Identify experts, creators and curators with an interest in your business

Build a map of experts, creators and curators who regularly share content that’s relevant to your business or category, or which drives strong engagement among your target audiences. This provides you with a target list of relevant external influencers that you can use as the basis for expanding your strategy. LinkedIn research shows the characteristics that B2B audiences value most when choosing which influencers to follow ⁵:

53%

rate Expertise as important



52%

choose Trustworthiness



52%

look at their Network of Contacts



49%

consider the Diversity of Content they share



44%

look at how they Engage with Followers



36%

prioritize Authenticity



34%

engage based on Reputation



Step #3

Make Influencer impact part of your event planning and broader strategy

When planning content and events, consider the potential for building influencer partnerships. Inviting experts and creators to participate as keynote speakers or join panel discussions is an effective way to encourage them to share content and promote events. Curators are natural moderators, and may well be able to suggest panelists from their network to participate. This kind of proactive influencer collaboration provides an effective starting point for building ongoing relationships. It familiarizes influencers with your brand and helps to identify areas where your interests and messaging align.

Step #4

Invite influencers to contribute to shared content partnerships

Building an audience for owned media assets such as LinkedIn Newsletters, LinkedIn Live Events and podcasts establishes a valuable foundation for collaboration with influencers, whom you can invite to participate as guests and contributors. Research reports and white papers are other options for integrating your target list of influencers into your existing content strategy, as are creative and innovation councils.



Step #5

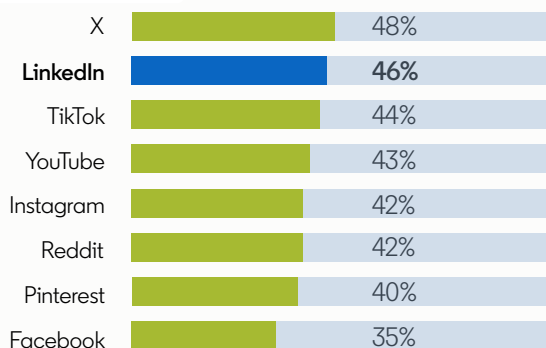
Leverage video to increase influencer impact

LinkedIn research confirms video as the most compelling and most trusted format for influencer marketing on the platform, with 57% of B2B audiences saying that influencer video helps to inform their buying decisions. The last year has seen rapid growth in creators, experts and curators using short-form video on LinkedIn to share ideas in quickfire form. This has made short-form video the fastest-growing content format on LinkedIn with uploads increasing 34% year-on-year.

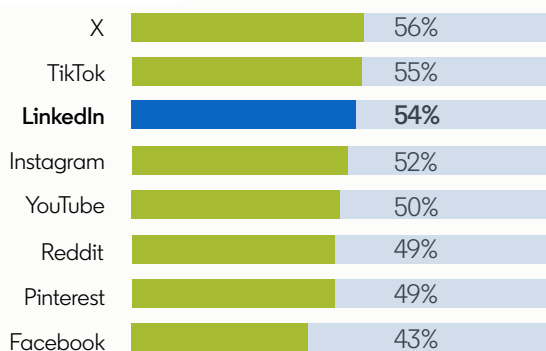
Recent LinkedIn research among social media users found that short-form video content on LinkedIn is as valued as that on TikTok, and considered more valuable than short-form video on YouTube or Instagram.

Shows me valuable video content⁸:

LONG FORM VIDEO



SHORT FORM VIDEO



Step #6

Co-create content transparently, and let your influencers lead on style


The value of influencers stems from being much more than a mouthpiece for your brand’s existing messaging. Co-creating content with them leverages their creativity and deep understanding of their audience to help ideas land in new and authentic ways. Invite influencers to lead on style and format, aligning to their existing content, and disclose the nature of your partnership to maintain trust.

Step #7


Invite influencers to contribute to shared content partnerships

Thought Leader Ads elevate the content of both your external and internal influencers across LinkedIn, and enable you to target a financial services audience. This increases impact for both your brand and your influencers, generating shared value that helps to strengthen relationships.

Thought Leader Ads deliver⁷:

252% 

higher click-through rate (CTR) than conventional single image posts

62% 

lower cost per click (CPC) than conventional single image posts

The moment for influencer marketing in financial services

At a time when B2B decision-makers are crying out for new ways to navigate the financial services landscape, the rapidly growing ranks of financial services influencers on LinkedIn are stepping up to meet demand.

The growth in short-form video on LinkedIn has been driven by creators, experts and curators embracing the format as the most impactful and trusted format for sharing news, advice and ideas with their growing follower bases. It's supported by similar growth in LinkedIn Newsletters, which now reach an audience of over 500 million, and in LinkedIn Live Events.

This trend is only heading in one direction: Gen Z B2B buyers on LinkedIn are the most likely to find B2B influencer marketing influential and to engage with it on a monthly basis.

What's true of all B2B audiences is particularly true for those buying financial services and solutions. They need trusted voices to help them navigate new options, explain new concepts and provide credible endorsements to help simplify the buying process. Influencers on LinkedIn are able to step very naturally into this role, helping to shape buying decisions at every stage of the process. They are multiplying and diversifying the nature of content engagement on LinkedIn, dialling up their activity on the platform in response to the levels of trust that LinkedIn uniquely generates and the thoughtful, positive nature of the communities they can build.

These influencers don't just present marketers with a new channel or advertising format for reaching B2B audiences. They invite brands to engage with those audiences in exciting new ways. Influencer marketing on LinkedIn represents a powerful and timely opportunity for B2B financial services brands. Now is the moment to grasp it.





For more information on how LinkedIn
can help you reach your target
audience, visit marketing.linkedin.com