
Accelerating Social Selling Adoption Using Salesforce and LinkedIn Sales Navigator

LinkedIn®



The science of social selling (the “why”)

We know that social selling is a vital component of success for many sales organizations; salespeople who excel at social selling create more opportunities and are 51% more likely to hit quota. It’s because of this massive potential that measurement of social-selling efforts is critical.

How do you drive adoption when behavior change is hard? And how do you measure results and the bottom-line impact of your efforts?

Though you may believe social selling is imperative for your organization, it can be challenging to drive adoption and measure the results of a new way of selling. That’s where Salesforce and LinkedIn Sales Navigator come into play. With Sales Navigator, organizations can track adoption and gauge the impact on pipeline and revenue.

It’s a given that you can’t change what you don’t measure. And when it comes to social selling, you’re changing sales reps’ behavior. You need a way to measure how well you’re doing that.

With the right skills, training, and technology, you’ll realize the tremendous impact that social selling has on your pipeline and revenue.

FAST FACTS

Sales professionals spend the most time using social-selling tools and CRM – and believe both deliver the highest value.

More than 70% of sales professionals use social-selling tools such as LinkedIn, making them the most widely used sales technology. Specifically, sales professionals see relationship-building tools as having the highest impact on revenue.

— LinkedIn Sales Solutions, “The State of Sales” 2016.

Measuring and improving performance with LinkedIn

How It Works

The Social Selling Index (SSI) is an important tool for sales professionals who want to go beyond social-selling activities and measure how those individual efforts add up.

SSI measures progress against the four elements of social selling: establishing your professional brand, finding the right people, engaging with insights, and building relationships. It then assigns an individual score from one to 100 based on effectiveness across all four elements.

Seeing how your SSI performance on LinkedIn changes over time can help you create a benchmark for your social-selling activities, set goals for where you want to be, and track your progress. It will also let you see how your ranking changes compared to your peers, keeping you motivated in your social-selling efforts.

The Impact of a High SSI

So what is the significance of a high SSI score? LinkedIn conducted research comparing social-selling leaders with an SSI of 70+ to social-selling laggards with a score of 30 or below. Compared to laggards, the leaders see twice the number of new clients, meetings secured, and opportunities generated via the LinkedIn platform.

Because only 1.4% of all sales professionals score an SSI of 70+, the top social sellers are creating an edge for themselves and by extension for their companies. The good news is that in the past year, we've seen sales reps as a whole move from SSIs of 21 to 28 on the scale. In other words, on the adoption curve, social selling is moving into early mainstream.



How to improve your score

Creating a Professional Brand

- Establish a professional presence on LinkedIn with a complete profile.
- Is your profile complete?
- Do you include rich media in your profile?
- Are you receiving endorsements?
- Are you publishing long-form posts?
- Are you gaining followers from posts?

Finding the Right People

- Prospect efficiently with powerful search capabilities.
- Are you logging into LinkedIn daily?
- Are you using LinkedIn Search?
- Are you viewing other LinkedIn profiles?
- Are you viewing third-degree connection profiles?
- Are people viewing your profile?

Engaging with Insights

- Discover and share valuable information to initiate or maintain a relationship.
- Are you engaging with people's posts (via likes, comments, and shares)?
- Are people engaging with your posts?
- Are you joining LinkedIn groups?
- Is your InMail response rate at least 10%?

Building Strong Relationships

- Expand your network to reach prospects and those who can introduce you to prospects.
- Are you connecting with second- and third-degree connections in your network?
- Are you connecting with VP+?
- Are you connecting with co-workers?
- Is your acceptance rate when sending connection requests at least 20%?



Accelerate your social selling with CRM

Combining social selling with your CRM immediately multiplies pipeline impact. With these two tools, you can merge data from any social media source with prospect information. This is then translated into opportunities, threats, trends, and news, which leads to improving your organization's sales performance.

Along with deep insights, CRM gives you a comprehensive, real-time view of everything your sales reps are doing, which is critical for coaching. With visibility into individual-specific revenue performance, training can be tailored for certain areas of improvement. Ultimately, your entire team benefits from this level of detail, leading to performance at the highest level.

Once the new practice has some momentum, share these CRM insights with your key C-suite decision-makers for executive buy-in, giving your social-selling initiatives even greater

momentum. As Koka Sexton, Head of Social Media at LinkedIn, puts it, "Once you're able to show the revenue impact and the pipeline that you're able to drive by using social media, you go to the top; that's all the CEO really cares about."





ASK THE EXPERT:

Q&A with Sacramento Kings

Phil Horn, VP of Ticket Sales and Service for the Sacramento Kings. He leads a team of 70 people focused on selling out 41 home games every season – a challenge that will only get bigger when the team opens its new arena for the 2016 season.

Q: What were the challenges you were facing?

Well, the team was really close to the point where we almost were moved to Seattle. Technology pioneer Vivek Ranadive purchased the team and secured our future in Sacramento. But what happened was a lot of people disengaged from the team, and we lost a lot of people that were really focused on us every day. So we had to find a way to re-engage the fan base quickly, these thousands of people who once were die-hard, passionate Kings fans.

Q: So you turned to social selling?

We wanted our fans to be part of reigniting this conversation about the Kings. We wanted them to be out there on all the different social media platforms, amplifying this great story where the team had been saved and things were different now and you've got a person in the front office that you can talk to on these platforms. But the traditional sales techniques where you make 100 calls a day and you kind of hope for the best, it's just really frustrating in today's environment.

Q: And Salesforce and Sales Navigator have been your tools of choice?

Salesforce was really the center of our universe, and then Sales Navigator was the first real accelerated prospecting tool we found incredible value in. It's a big part of accessibility with customers, prospects, and buyers, and it's kind of cool to know that you have somebody on the inside that you can shoot an InMail to or hit up on LinkedIn and get a response within seconds. That's really powerful for both the seller and the buyer.

The integration has helped save time when it comes to 'screen hopping.' To be able to seamlessly pull up information from a Salesforce screen link

to Sales Navigator was certainly a win for us. It provides one more level of insight that you wouldn't have thought to find otherwise. And any little detail, any connection to create a warm conversation with somebody is one step further than how sales was done two or three years ago.

Now we're able to create dashboards of a particular activity that a rep conducts, whether that's tweets or using one of our email acceleration tools. How often they clicked or looked at a slide is all integrated into one dashboard that tells us how broad each salesperson's reach is, versus a traditional 'I made 40 calls today'.

Q: What's the biggest advantage of these tools, in terms of how you approach selling?

Well, we can champion all the other great things people can be doing besides calls. Calls will come naturally if you're doing all the other activities, using the other tools correctly and creating warm connections – helping tell our story and amplifying our story through social networks.

Q: How have the results been?

Generally, I'd say sales attributed to what I call 'Sales 3.0' activities are around a 3x jump. And on the whole, attendance is up over the last couple of years. We've increased over 17% in our team attendance, which ranks tied for number two in the league behind the Cavs, who got LeBron James. So without having LeBron James, one of our secrets has been LinkedIn Sales Navigator and Salesforce.



ASK THE EXPERT:

Q&A with Procore Technologies

Bryan Gonzalez, Business Development Manager at Procore Technologies. Bryan's focus is on sales development. He oversees a team of 50 sales development reps, each with specializations, covering everything from pipeline to quote.

Q: What was life like before having the right selling tools?

My direct manager started the org when I was still new. There were lots of stories about him working on card tables with a printed Excel list. He used blogs, purchased lists – that was the only prospecting list. It was 100% on paper, and there was no way to interact with prospects beforehand, so the team went in very unprepared. Really time consuming to have to ask very extensive questions just to get to know each other.

Q: How has using Salesforce and LinkedIn changed things?

It's the complete opposite. LinkedIn helps with buyer research ahead of time. We only sell into the construction industry, so reputation matters. It's a 'handshake' industry, so sales folk need to understand who they're going to talk to beforehand. Figure out what projects the buyer has done, which ones they're proud of. Salesforce and LinkedIn let us go one level deeper and get through the initial cold-calling weirdness. And that research isn't wasted time, because it's captured and immortalized, easy to reference on the next call.

Q: What's working really well in particular?

Well, with LinkedIn we can have more personal conversations. We can cast a wide net with content, which translates into concentrated conversations on the phone. And Salesforce lets us store and organize all our information, so nobody is wasting time by retracing steps.

Q: Does it help with measuring performance?

Definitely. Our golden metric is SAOs (sales-accepted opportunities), which is based on a raw record count and pipe-generated goal. Salesforce lets us calculate these a lot faster and easier.

Q: So is social selling the magic ingredient?

We've found that we can use technology to become social-selling experts, which lets us become subject experts. Nobody selling in our field can succeed without being perceived as trusted experts. We want to be the 'go-to' for construction industry news and thought leadership, and Salesforce and LinkedIn are a big part of doing that.

Conclusion

Organizations around the world are seeing amazing results from adopting a social-selling paradigm. When it comes to social selling, you're changing sales reps' behavior and need a way to measure how well you're doing that. Measurement will help you understand whether or not reps are on the right track and making progress.

If you believe that social selling is inevitable, we can help you on your journey from belief to adoption and then to ROI.

To learn more, check out:

[LinkedIn's Sales Navigator »](#)

[The Social Selling Series Pass »](#)

