

The Ultimate Guide to Employee Influencers

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO TURN YOUR
EMPLOYEES INTO CONTENT CREATORS AND BRAND
ADVOCATES FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

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About This Guide

The Ultimate Guide to Employee Influencers is intended to serve as the definitive companion for anyone looking to explore the power of employee influence for their organization. Tapping into the combined efforts of an organization's most valuable asset - the employees, to maximize message reach, boost engagement rates, drive influence, and crowdsource authentic content.

Whether you intend to dip your toes, find out the benefits, or need a helping hand through the launch process, this guide is here to help guide you every step of the way.

To summarize, we will cover:

- What are Employee Influencers?
- The key benefits Employee Influencers will have on your business
- The business case for Employee Influencers
- A step-by-step guide to ensuring success from your Employee Influencer program
- What the future of employee influencers and influencer marketing looks like

So, let's get the ball rolling, shall we?

What are Employee Influencers?

When discussing Employee Influence, many people immediately associate it with employee advocacy. In a way, advocacy plays a vital part in the role of an employee influencer, but influencers are oh, so much more.

In its purest form, **Employee Influence is defined as when an employee both advocates for their company, and creates on-brand content for their company and colleagues**, which can then be shared with their professional networks.

If we think again about employee advocacy, it is the promotion of a company or an organization through its employees. Though this plays a vital part in their role, an employee influencer goes beyond just sharing brand-approved content to also creating original and authentic on-brand content.



So, now we know what Employee Influencers are, how do you know if you've already got them within your ranks?

There are various steps along the employee influencer journey, and not every employee within your organization will be the ideal influencer. Some may not have or use social media, and those that do may not have the social following to justify an influencer program. However, you should take into account that you may already have your next engagement-driving blog writer or photographer just waiting to display their talent!

Call upon your most socially active and creative employees. The ones who are already talking about your company and/or highly active on social media.

Perhaps they are contributing to your blog or Instagram page already. These employees may already be generating engagement on your brand content. They could be the superstar employees that will prove to be an invaluable resource as you look to introduce an employee program.



Quick tip: Search your company name or campaign hashtags on social media. You'll quickly be able to identify the employees who are already talking about your company without any prompting.



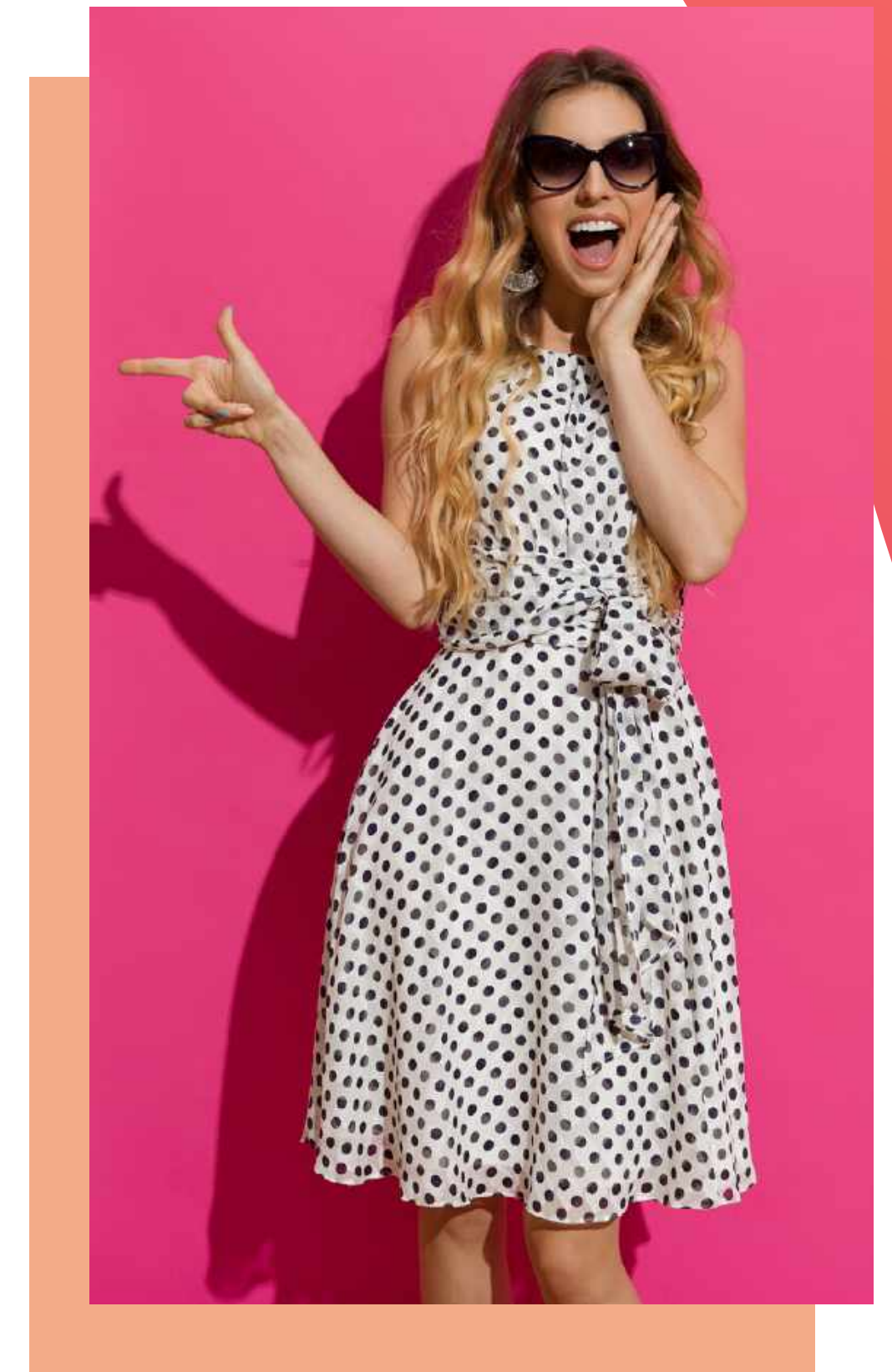
Why is Everyone Talking About Employee Influencers?

Employee Influencers are a buzz phrase right now, and employee influencer tools and tactics are set to be a **big trend in 2020**, but what is all the fuss about?

You have probably heard of employee advocacy and employee communications, which are both rapidly becoming an essential part of employee influence and corporate strategy.

However, companies seldom consider how they can **leverage the power of employees' voices** to impact their brand positively. Significantly increasing sales opportunities, employee retention rates, and authentically showcase company culture, among many other benefits.

Here is a helpful list of trends that have helped put employee influencer programs at the forefront of everyone's minds, including marketers, human resource professionals, sales teams, and thought leaders.



Trend: Demand for Employee-Generated Content

A jaw-dropping **92% of buyers** say they trust content from friends, peers, and family above any other forms of brand messages, so it would seem to be a no-brainer to get your employees talking and creating for you. Many companies are empowering their most influential employees to share and create company-related content, incentivizing the process to reward consistency and drive motivation.

Writing blog posts can be both time-consuming and strenuous, and remains a tricky practice at scale for organizations both big and small. However, written content remains an essential factor in boosting your site's SEO (*Search Engine Optimization*) ranking and driving organic traffic. It also allows companies to **exercise industry knowledge** and cement a place as a thought leader in their field.



Quick Tip: *Crowdsourcing written content from your employees is an excellent way of scaling your content efforts while adding a more authentic perspective.*

Trend: People Want Trust and Authenticity from Brands

The **2019 Edelman Trust Barometer** showed that trust in brands among customers in 2019 is fleeting, while authenticity and trust are becoming more important for both millennial and Gen-Z buyers.

With the recent soar in social media influencer marketing, buyers are becoming much more in tune with traditional influencer marketing tactics.

Despite this, brands still intend to **increase their influencer marketing budget by 63%** in 2020. While they were once considered a form of advertising that was more organic and reputable, social media influencers are now struggling to gain traction as changes in guidelines have made the process more transparent.



● Trend: Companies Want Content Engagement

This one seems something of a no-brainer. Still, as social media becomes ever more prominent in daily life, marketers are eager to ensure their posts are driving maximum engagement on social media.

Studies show that company content from corporate pages **drives significantly less engagement than that of its employees' accumulative efforts**. At OsloMet, Norway's third-largest university, 15 individual shares by student and employee advocates had the same social reach as a post on the university's Facebook page, which had 30,000 followers!

Engagement also plays a vital role in battling social media algorithms as posts are more likely to appear on users' feeds when they consistently engage with your content.

So, don't put your content performance in the hands of the algorithm gods, mitigate the risk by tapping into the power of your employees professional and personal networks to drive success!



Trend: Battling the Algorithms

Due to *(seemingly constant)* changes in the algorithms of social media platforms, organically reaching your company's followers is proving **increasingly difficult**. LinkedIn alone has changed its algorithm more than three times in the last three years!

Typically, your posts are most likely to appear in the feeds of your audience when they are **consistently engaging** with your content. Algorithms are put in place to ensure that a user only sees content that the platform deems is relevant and that the user will enjoy based on previous engagement.

The new LinkedIn algorithm is often referred to as a **'points-based'** system, in that specific user actions will score a post and ultimately determine its fate on the platform.

Employees can be brilliantly effective at amplifying a brand's message, driving engagement, and beating social media algorithms. If people are more likely to interact with posts from friends, family, and peers, then employee posts are more likely to generate the kind of engagement that will score your posts highly to beat algorithms.

Trend: Social Selling

If you work in sales, social selling is probably something you're all too familiar with. However, for the unacquainted, **social selling is achieved by harnessing the power of social media to listen to, engage with, and build rapport with prospective clients.** This has become an essential selling tactic that ensures you are the first person or company that comes to mind when a prospect is ready to buy.

Employee influencers are successful social sellers because they are actively advocating for their company in the eyes of their professional and personal networks, by regularly sharing the latest company news. **This establishes the employee, and often their company, as an industry thought leader.** A successful employee influencer program will involve sharing more than just company content and should include industry news and reports, professional opinions, and original content creation.



Trend: Social Selling

When employees share industry news and company content with their networks, they are establishing themselves as industry experts and thought leaders in their field. This is more than noteworthy when you consider a **recent report from LinkedIn**, that found:

92%

of B2B buyers are more likely to buy from someone who has established themselves as a thought leader.

Trend: Companies Want an Engaged Workforce

Employer brand and employee influence go hand in hand, which may explain why companies are pushing for a more socially engaged workforce. Brand-perception has never been more relevant than in the age of social media, and every successful company will have accounts on most major social networks that allow them to display their company culture.

96%

of companies believe employer brand and reputation can positively impact revenue.

50%

reduction in hiring costs for organizations with a strong employer brand.

There's no better or more organic way to showcase your company culture than through your employees. Employee influencers are brilliantly effective in helping boost your employer brand!

Trend: Reducing Media Budgets Without Compromising on Performance

Employee influencer tools are also becoming an invaluable asset for companies wanting to reduce their media and production budgets, **amplify existing activity**, and increase **spending efficiency**. Companies are using these tools to transform their employees into content creators, helping to scale internal content production while reducing the budget needed to create and promote it.

Despite the declining trust in social media influencers, companies are still increasing their influencer marketing budgets every year. Often spending more but generating less impact than in previous years.

Though the demand for social media influencers doesn't seem to be going anywhere, it may be time to consider what the most effective form of influencers is.

4%

Only 4% of people now trust social influencers online.

63%

of businesses that incorporate influencer marketing intend to increase their budget for it in 2020.

Trend: Employee Engagement & Empowerment

A company's employees are its most valuable asset, so it pays to invest in them. Your employees want to enjoy their time at work. It's no secret that happy employees are more productive employees, and productive employees are essential to your company's growth.

When employee influencer tools offer an internal comms feature, it can be utilized to communicate your company **values** and **mission**. Your employees can then share your values and feel confident to advocate on behalf of your brand.

A program with an effective internal comms tool, and clearly curated content, provides clarity to your employees on what can be shared to social media in a simplified manner. As more and more brands move away from 'do not post on social' to 'post on social' employee strategies, it's vital that the right support, communication, and tools are in place to ensure success.



Trend: Creating Content at Scale



In the age of mass content and short attention spans, one of the biggest challenges facing companies of all sizes is creating content at scale.

Large companies will have a marketing team and/or a marketing agency that is strong in numbers, and typically includes writers, graphic designers, video production, editors etc. Yet, even they often struggle to **generate the engagement** and return that their investment warrants.

Algorithms take no prisoners, and perhaps this is why industry experts such as **Gary Vaynerchuk** are telling businesses they need to be putting out **one hundred pieces of content per day**, with twenty-five on LinkedIn alone.

Employee influencer platforms serve as the perfect aid in achieving your content production goals at scale without reducing the quality of your content output. With solutions such as **DSMN8**, you can add multiple preview images, titles, and post captions to ensure that your content is always unique.

Consider this: Adding just 5 alternatives for images, post text and preview titles creates **125** unique content previews for the same piece of content.



Thought Leader Snapshot: **Samantha Stone**

1. In the next few years, what do you think the future of employee influencers will look like?

The way we work has shifted significantly. My grandparents' generation worked for the same company their entire professional life. My parents did the same job for different organizations. And now, many of us have second careers in our lifetime. The pace of change will only grow. The individuals who are able to transform their skills into new and exciting opportunities will become more adept at building influence quickly. It's a skill I hope to see more employers tap into.

2. What are the most important things you have to keep in mind in order to be successful with employee influencers?

The most important thing to remember is that your employees are people. They are motivated by different things, they care about different aspects of your business, and they want to feel good about the communications they share. We have to stop treating employee advocacy as a chore, and instead showcase it as an opportunity to support an employee's personal goals.

3. What should you focus on when selling an employee influencer program to your executive team? What are some things that might resonate with a CEO, CFO, or Sales?

If your employees won't advocate for your company, how can you expect your customers to do it? It's not hard to convince the C-suite that employees can and should play a role in building trust between your company, and your community. What takes work is showing them the value in building employee advocacy infrastructure to scale your efforts. I've found that pilot programs with a small group of employees can be a tremendous way to prove the return on investment before asking for a significant infusion of resources.

THOUGHT LEADER

Samantha Stone

ROLE


Founder

COMPANY

The Marketing
Advisory Network

AUTHOR

Unleash People

A woman with glasses is looking down at a blue box she is holding. The box has the text 'BLINKTRIP' and 'GLASSES' on it. The background is a blurred outdoor setting. There are decorative shapes in the corners: a red circle in the top right and a teal shape in the bottom left.

We mention social media influencers a great deal, so you may be wondering how employee influencers differ. Sound about right?

Let's break it down, just to be clear!

Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

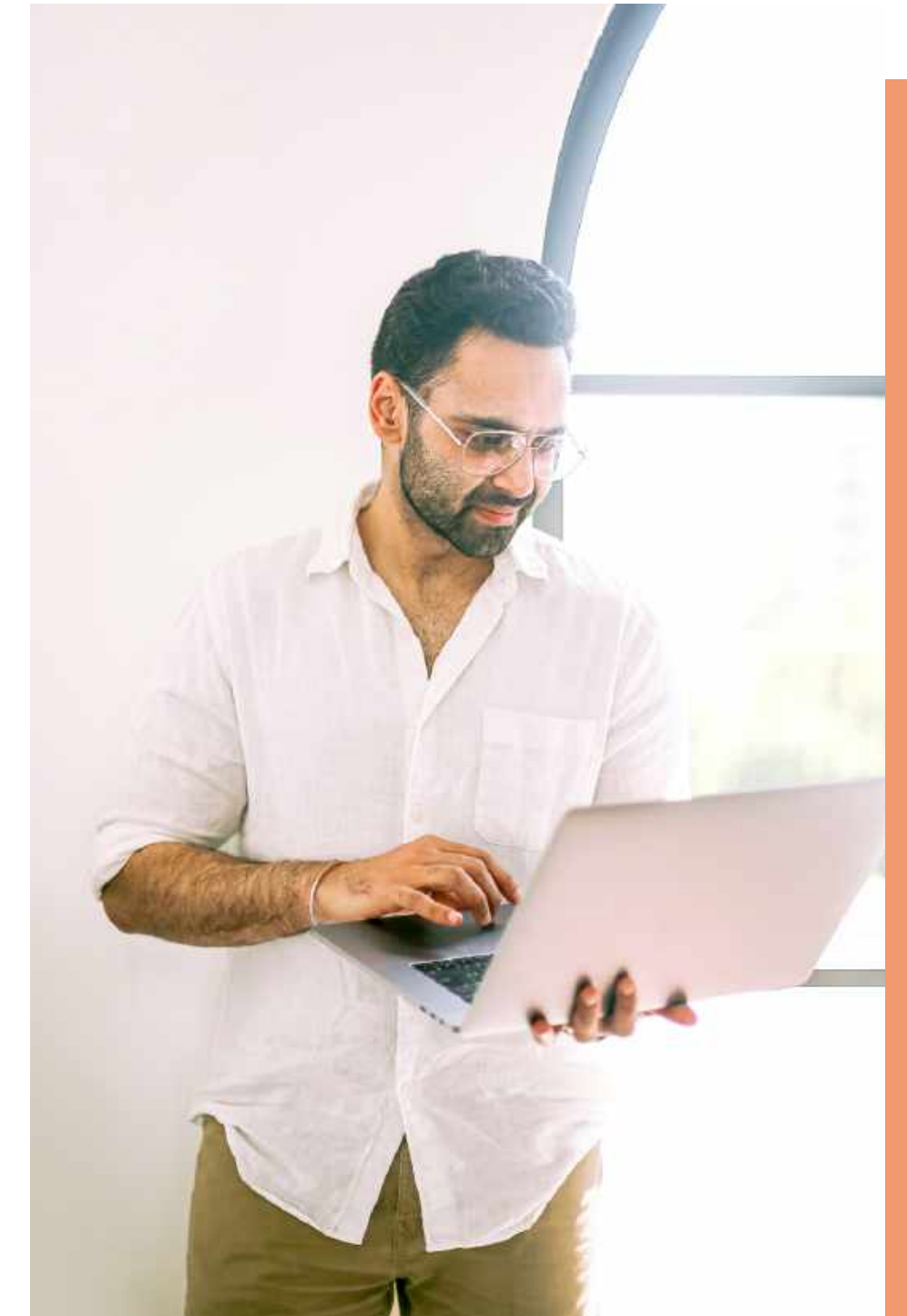
One explanation for confusing the two might be the fact that they both fall under the umbrella term of **'Influencer Marketing'**, as of course, they are both influencer marketing tactics.

What is Influencer Marketing?

Influencer marketing is a form of social media marketing that involves the promotion of a product, service or organization by influencers.

Now, anyone with a laptop or mobile phone and internet access can build a significant following on social media, generating engagement and influence and considered an online influencer. And as we move into 2020, they continue to remain a hot topic.

The difference? Employee influencers are far superior. Okay, there's more to it than that... **let's compare.**



Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

Why Social Influencers?

The use of social influencers actually helps build a brand's credibility in the eyes of the consumer. Say, for example, a beauty influencer is endorsing a product on their Instagram page. This person's followers likely follow them because they believe that **they are an expert in a certain field**, and so any recommendations from them will be seen as trustworthy and viable.

According to Twitter, users are **5x more likely** to make a purchase based on an influencer tweet.

40% of people have made a purchase as a direct result of an influencer's endorsement.



Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

It's also worth considering that when social influencers promote content, it doesn't come across as pushy or as in-your-face as brand marketing. Their followers have chosen to follow them and their content, and so are less likely to be phased when they post branded or sponsored content.

However, it's not always plain sailing with influencer marketing, as there have been many widely-publicized instances of poorly executed influencer marketing campaigns. In 2018, the ASA, in collaboration with CAP, **set out new guidelines for influencer marketing** that made it even more difficult for influencers to promote branded content in an authentic way.

Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

Why Employee Influencers?

Okay, so let's compare. Why are we so confident that **employee influencers are the future** of influencer marketing?

You can increase the organic reach and engagement of your content

Your employees provide your company with the ability to reach and engage a much wider audience in a more **organic** way. Studies show that consumers are more likely to be influenced by people they know compared to brand marketing. Thus sharing through your employees is statistically more effective than sharing through your corporate pages or individually paid social influencers.

90% of your employees network is new to your brand. Meaning you'll open up a previously untapped audience.

Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

Why Employee Influencers?

Okay, so let's see the numbers.

Social Media Today

79%

of people say user-generated content profoundly impacts their purchasing decisions.

MSL Group

84%

of consumers value recommendations from friends and family above any other form of advertising

MSL Group

77%

of people say they are more likely to purchase after hearing about it from someone they trust.

Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

Why Employee Influencers?

Adopt Social Selling Practices to generate inbound leads and strengthen existing relationships.

An employee influencer program will maximize employees' social selling capabilities, with **63.4%** of social sellers reporting an increase in company sales revenue. By sharing company content, employees are visibly exercising their knowledge of your company to their networks. In doing so, they are establishing themselves as **industry experts** in the eyes of their prospects.



“*Our sales consultants have evolved into modern social sellers with the help of our advocacy program and the DSMN8 platform. They now adopt a short and long term approach to sales that has paid off and now sees business come to them.*”

- **Marten Poot, Marketing Manager (Krauthammer)**

Social Influencers vs Employee Influencers

Why Employee Influencers?

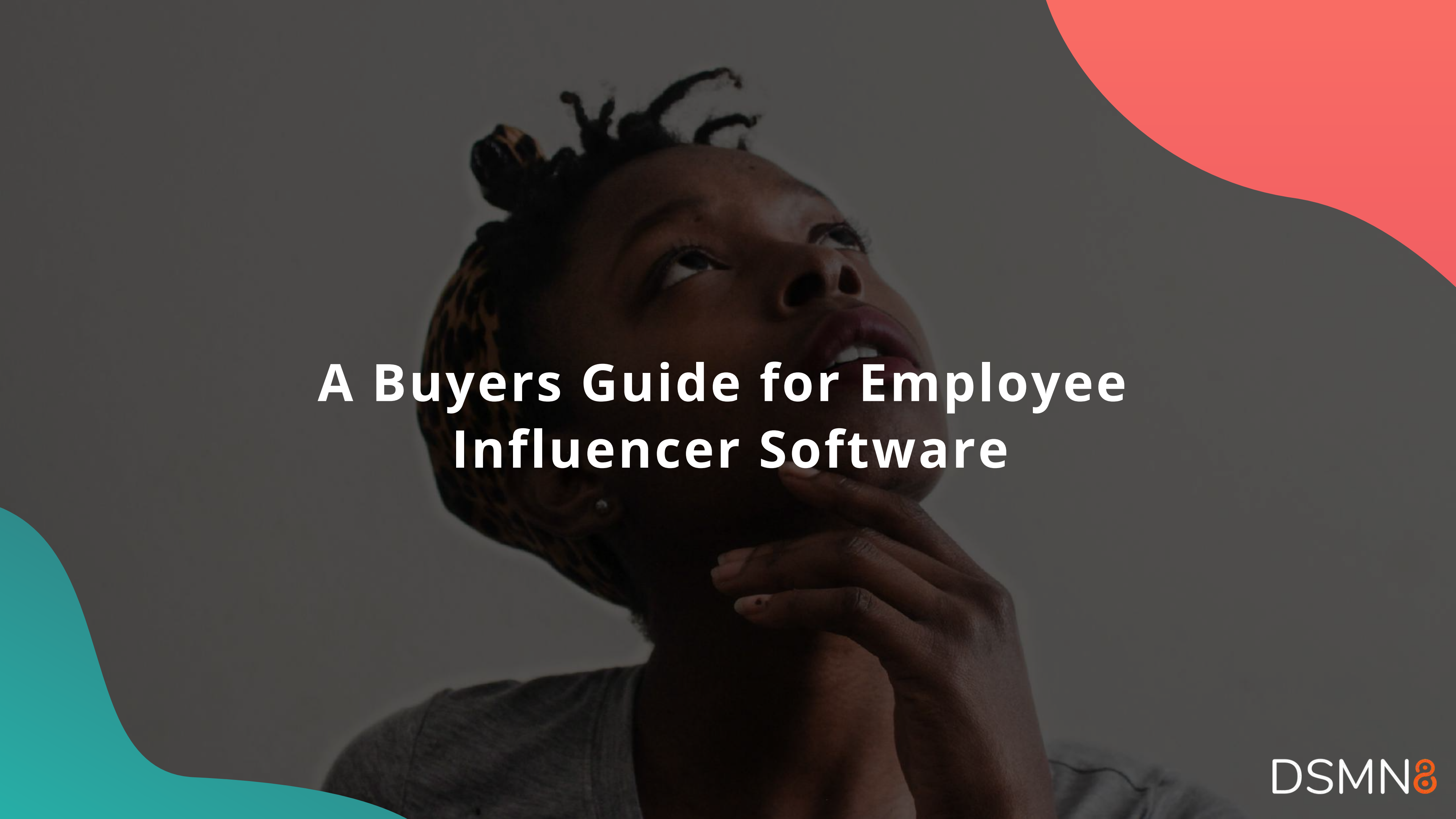
Reduced Costs to Hire

Hiring is never a cheap nor easy process; a recent report from Glassdoor states that **76%** of hiring decision-makers say attracting quality candidates is their biggest challenge.

Employee influencers posting job opportunities directly to their social media communities is a more proactive and cost-effective way of filling a position. In 2019, Employee referrals account for only **7% of all applicants but 70% of all hires.**

It's clear that both social influencers and employee influencers are effective forms of influencer marketing, and each can be tremendously useful when appropriately implemented. That said, it's hard to ignore the change in public perception of social influencers, along with changes in guidelines and legality are making it harder than ever for brands to utilize social influencers in an authentically.





A Buyers Guide for Employee Influencer Software

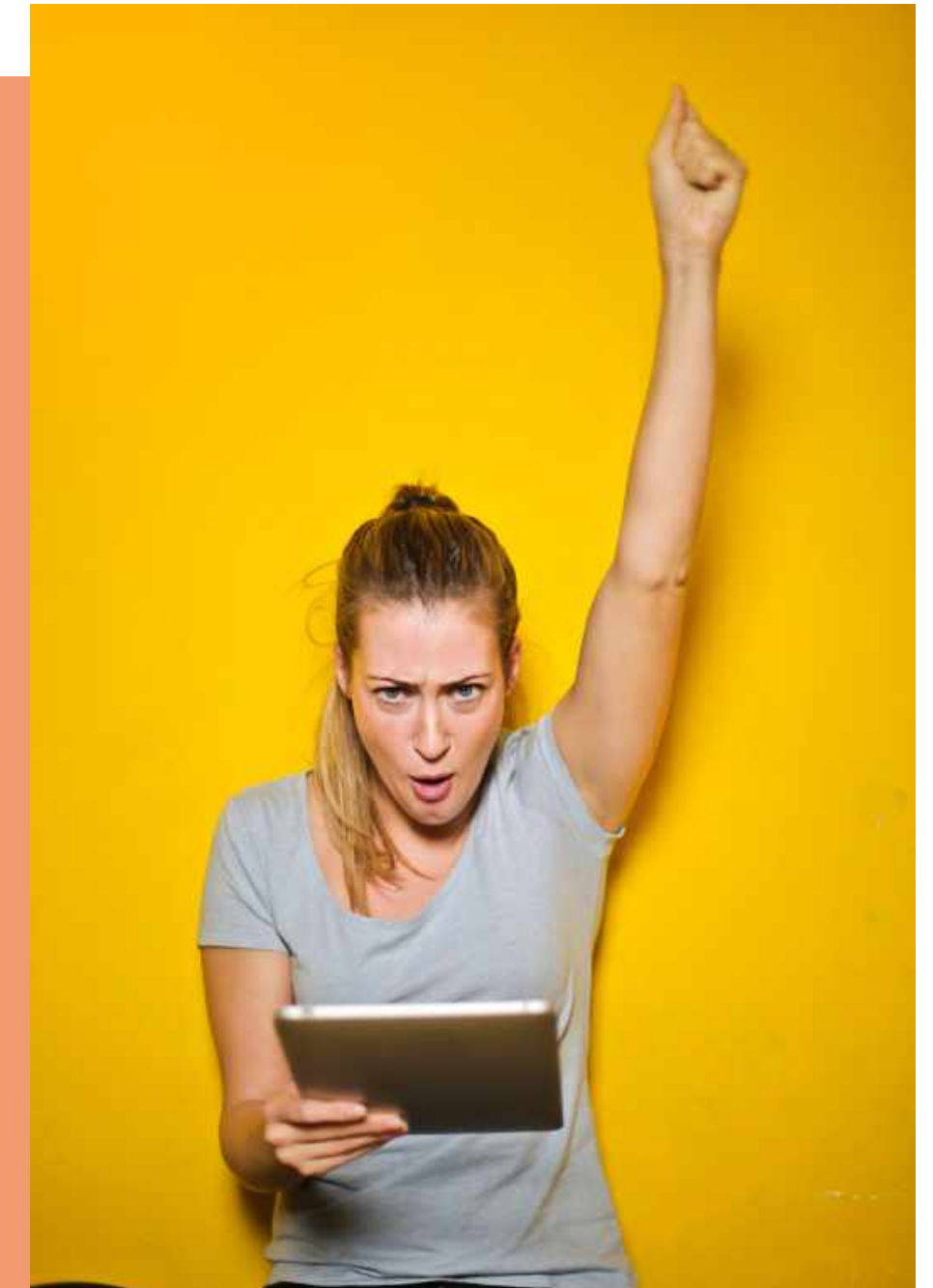
Buyers Guide for Employee Influencer Software

We may be slightly biased, but we believe that if you are looking to implement an Employee Influencer program, you should look no further than **DSMN8**.

Alright...

If we put our bias aside, we'd recommend following our buyers guide over the next few pages to make sure your vendor has everything you'll need to ensure success for your program.

Before implementing a program or deciding on a vendor, you must consider the elements and features that will play a pivotal role in its success. Not every vendor will offer everything you need, so here's a helpful list of what we believe to be the essential success-driving elements of any employee influencer program.



1



Does it incorporate leaderboards and rewards?

Offering rewards is one of the most effective ways of motivating your employees to both share and create content. By having prizes up for grabs, it can entice users who might otherwise have been skeptical about using the platform to sign up.

Gamification **makes the process fun** by incorporating leaderboards. Employees want to be seen to be performing well, and the friendly competitive nature of winning, coupled with the desire to win a prize, will encourage further activity within the platform.

A brand that championed this is Chinese tech-titans **Huawei**. Recognizing the power of their employees to support business objectives, they offered up their latest smartphones as rewards for top-performing employees, along with shopping vouchers and exercise-tracking accessories.



Quick tip: Incorporate smaller team-specific leaderboards and multiple prizes to maintain motivation and incentivize participation!

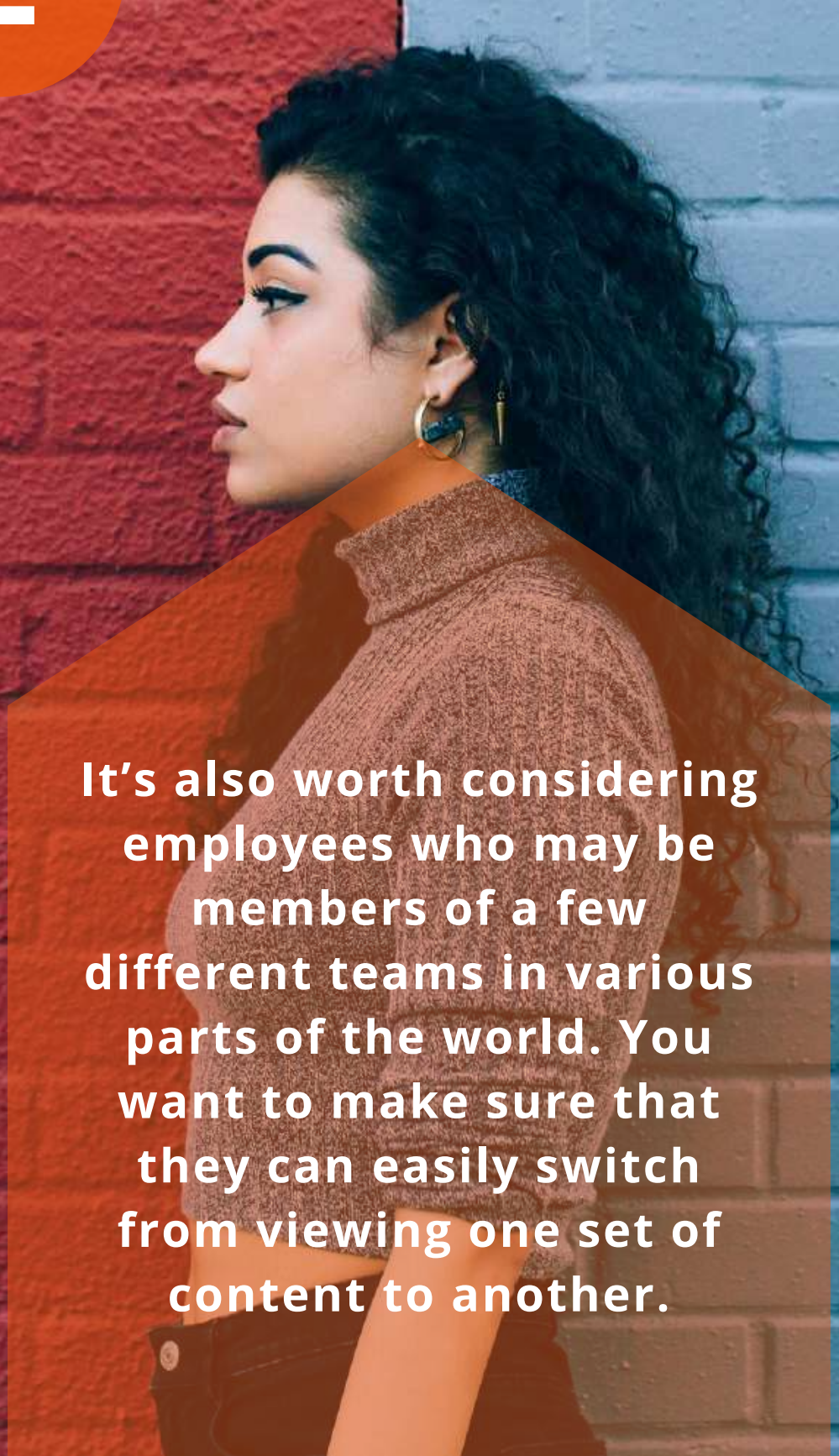
Can you segment both users and content?

If you're part of a large company, or if you have various different departments, then you'll want to consider **segmenting content and assigning team leaders** to specific regions and departments.

This ensures that users have **localized content that is relevant to them** and their networks, no matter their role, language, or geographical location. You want users to be sharing content within their professional networks that will be relevant to their connections and followers.

You are also evenly dispersing the workload to ensure that the platform does not become the burden of one program manager. After all, that one user may not specialize in all departments, and you don't want the global admin managing users and content that they may be unfamiliar with.

2



It's also worth considering employees who may be members of a few different teams in various parts of the world. You want to make sure that they can easily switch from viewing one set of content to another.

3



Does the platform offer content customization?

Unique and authentic-looking content is a must-have for any employee advocacy program. Top vendors will enable admin users to include **multiple imagery and post copy**. This enables the syndication of content at scale in a unique way, removing in-feed duplication.

Naturally, a lot of your employees will share connections in their professional networks, so by adding multiple images/post copy; you are **removing the possibility of duplicated content** across different employees' feeds, which removes authenticity and validity in the eyes of their networks.

Consider here Netflix's method of increasing engagement rates. Netflix doesn't just use a film or show's original poster artwork; it **employs an algorithm** to source high-quality images from those films and TV shows. Netflix then changes their movie preview artwork, users who were not attracted to the old imagery can be enticed by the new. The same process can be applied to social sharing through advocacy with multiple preview images, titles and post copy

Is there a mobile application?

A mobile application will significantly increase your employees' use of an employee influencer platform.

Most top vendors will offer both desktop and mobile applications, as your employees will then be able to **engage with the platform on-the-go**.

There's also huge benefits here if your vendor has a **push notifications feature**. This will encourage employees to return to the platform as they will be immediately notified of things such as: when new content is available, if they're mentioned/tagged, or perhaps even if a colleague has shared something.

Due to their accessibility, mobile apps are rapidly becoming the primary focus for major social networks and marketers alike. So much so that **94%** of Facebook's advertising revenue now comes from mobile use alone.

4



5

Does it offer a managed service & Customer Success?

Before you implement an employee influencer program, it's vital that you have an effective plan in place to ensure it's a success.

Without proper guidance, this can be a tricky process. However, a great vendor will guide you through the process from inception to post-launch, and typically you will have a **dedicated customer success manager** to help you through this.

Top vendors such as DSMN8 will offer a **fully managed service**, taking on tasks such as approving content for sharing so that you don't have to.

In other words, customer success will do all the "heavy lifting" so that you can refine your strategy, focusing on the more important tasks such as onboarding new users, content strategy, and gamification.

6

Is there an SSO integration?

Single Sign On makes it easier than ever for employees to log in, as it allows a single username and password to access a number of different products on a corporate scale. SSO is a key feature to seek as it provides a smoother and secure login experience to help **increase usage**.

7

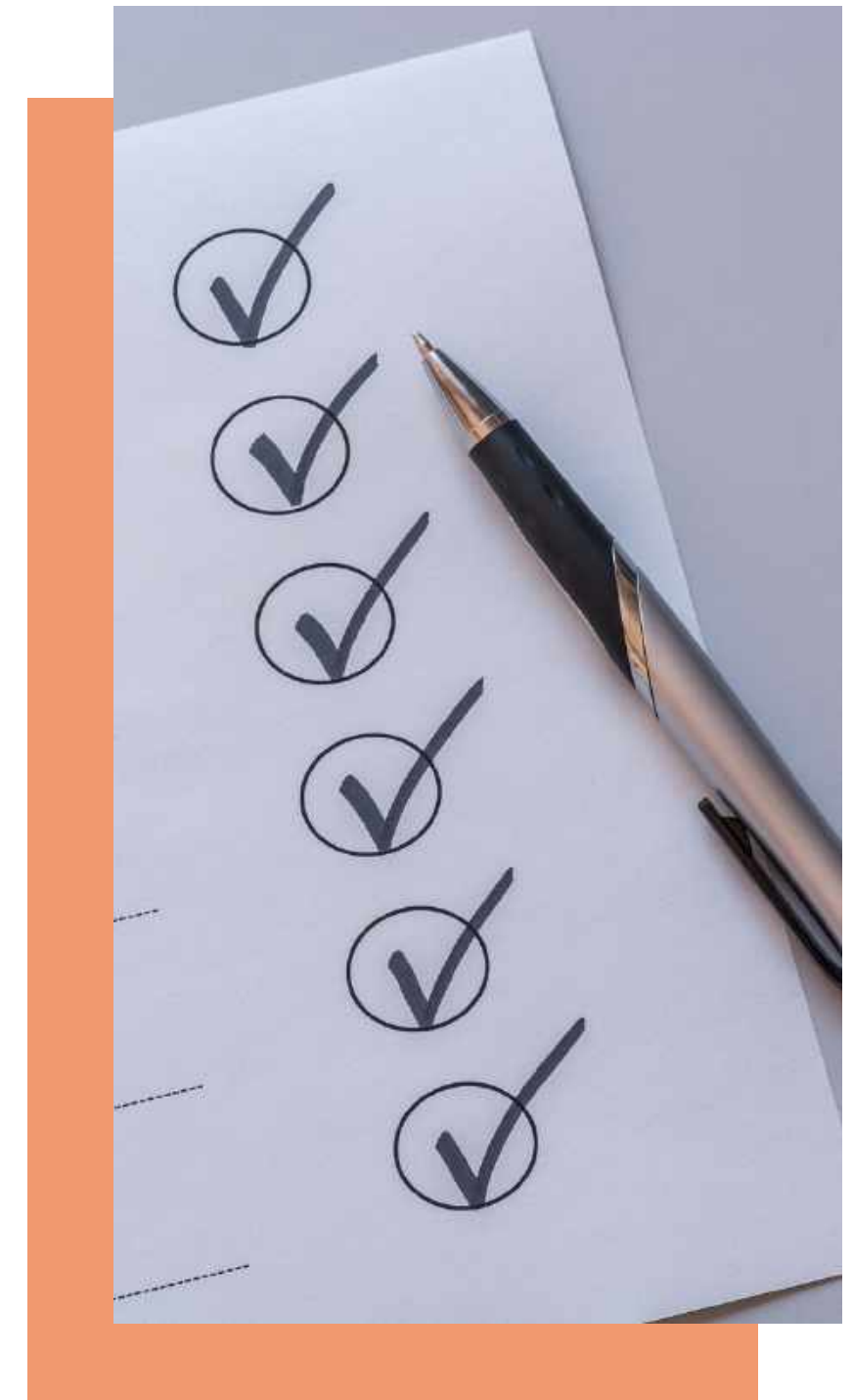
Is there a notifications feature?

Notifications will be vital in maintaining usage. In using them, you are effectively prompting users to return to the platform as they will receive notifications when they are tagged or mentioned. Keeping your number of **active users** where you want it to be!

8

Does your vendor have multi-lingual capabilities?

This is a feature that we've rightly come to expect from any software, but alarmingly, a large number of companies fall short of this feature. Sure, today you may be launching the program in the US, but make sure your vendor will support you when you come to expand into non-English speaking nations!



Feature	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3	Vendor 4	Vendor 5	Vendor 6
Gamification?						
Content Segmentation?						
Content Customization?						
Mobile App?						
Customer Success/ Managed Service?						
SSO Integration?						
Notifications?						
Multi-Lingual Capabilities?						



Thought Leader Snapshot: **Amy Robertson**

1. In the next few years, what do you think the future of employee influencers will look like?

From an employer branding perspective, we will experience the most authentic employee influencers sharing increasingly personal stories about themselves and how the workplace supports them to be successful. I believe today's workforce wants to commit soulfully to their employers, and in order to do that, you must have trust. I see the best workplaces creating this blanket of trust. So I believe you will see individuals attributing their lifestyle and personal achievements to the ecosystem supporting them – their coworkers, their managers, and the mission of the company.

2. What are the most important things you have to keep in mind in order to be successful with employee influencers?

Employee influencers must be natural leaders and well respected within the organization. This doesn't mean they have the loudest voice or most prominent personality. But they are the people who consistently set the best examples for company norms and values, especially when they think no one is looking. When these people speak, others tend to listen carefully.

3. What should you focus on when selling an employee influencer program to your executive team? What are some things that might resonate with a CEO, CFO, or Sales?

From an employer branding perspective, being able to illustrate the headcount capacity savings is essential – these are real budget numbers. There's often a duplication of effort between the People team and the Marketing team when it comes to curating content for talent attraction and retention. For example, each team may hire local professional photographers or have an extremely manual process for reviewing and approving social media content. Quantifying these savings or future cost avoidance is a must to getting the attention of a CEO or CFO.

THOUGHT LEADER

Amy Robertson

ROLE

Founder & CEO

COMPANY

Soul Advantage, LLC

A man with a beard and brown hair, wearing a red sweater, is shown from the chest up. He has his eyes closed and a wide, joyful smile, with his mouth open as if laughing or shouting. His arms are raised, and his hands are clenched into fists in a celebratory gesture. The background is a blue brick wall. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue filter. There are decorative elements: a large red circle in the top right corner and a teal shape in the bottom left corner.

How to Crush it with your Employee Influencer Program and Guarantee Success!

Before Launch

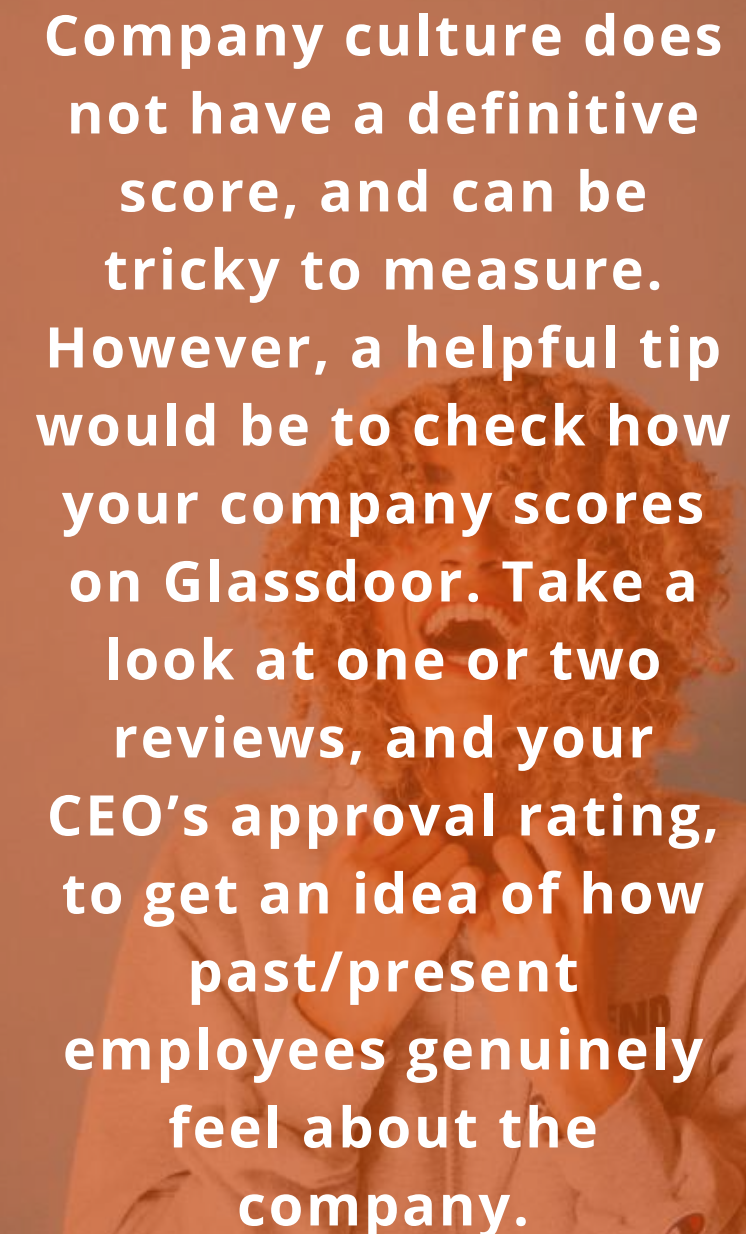
To determine if an employee influencer program is going to be right for your organization, these points should be checked and ticked before you consider implementation. Its success can be dependent on just a few key contributing factors.

Company Culture

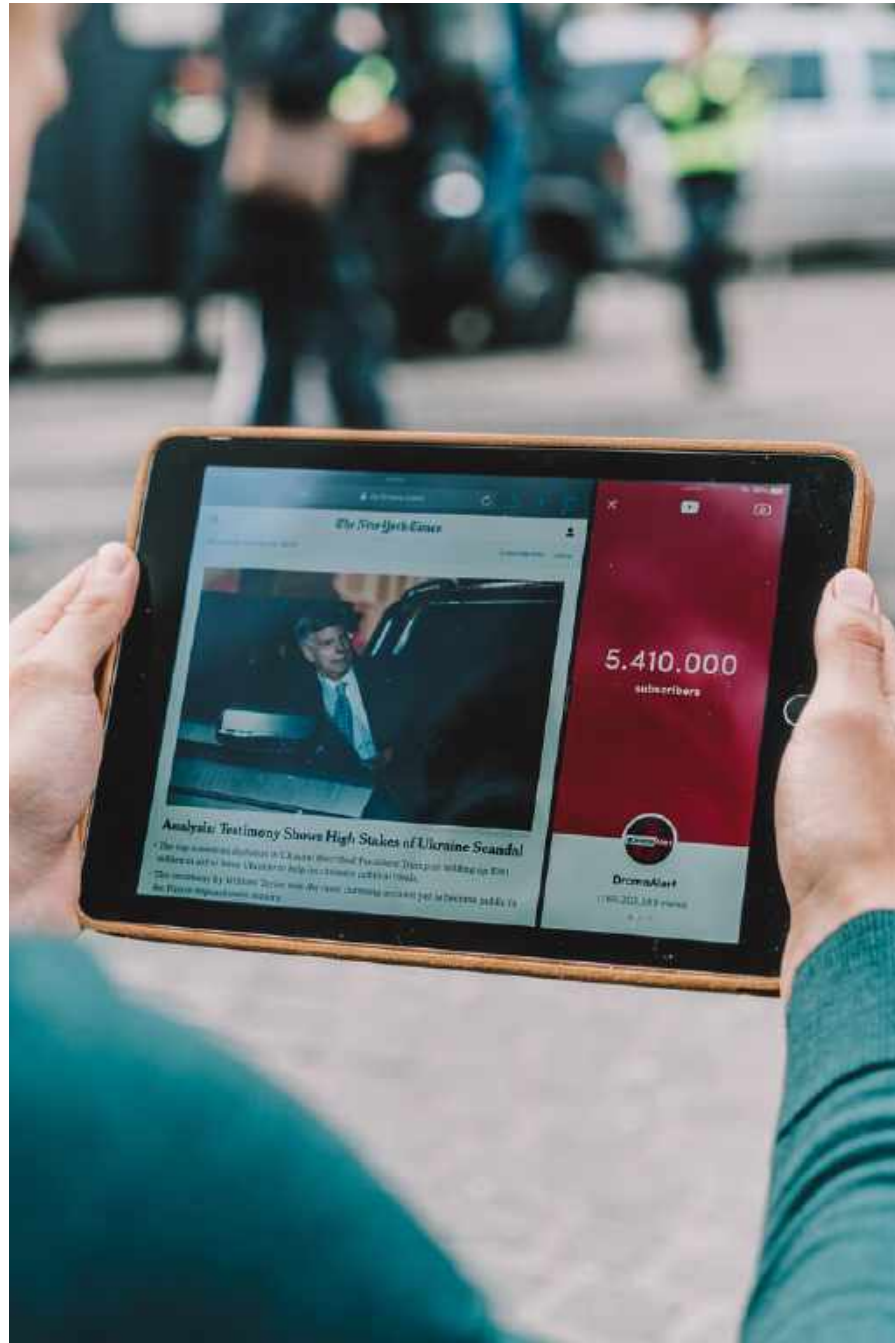
Ultimately, the essential factor in getting your employees to **create** and **share** on behalf of your brand is good company culture. Company culture is very much the personality of your brand and defines the environment in which your employees work.

In many ways, you should consider your company culture before you even consider implementing an influencer program, as **it can play a pivotal role** in its success. After all, employees will be much less likely to share/create on behalf of a company they don't enjoy working for.

Good/productive company culture is not something that can be achieved overnight, so you must consider and get a feel for this before launching your influencer program or trying to find influencers within your ranks.



Company culture does not have a definitive score, and can be tricky to measure. However, a helpful tip would be to check how your company scores on Glassdoor. Take a look at one or two reviews, and your CEO's approval rating, to get an idea of how past/present employees genuinely feel about the company.



Do You Have Content?

Company content comes in various forms. It could be a blog, a press release, a video or coverage from your latest event, among other things. It's vital that content is **readily available** and that you have new content being created regularly.

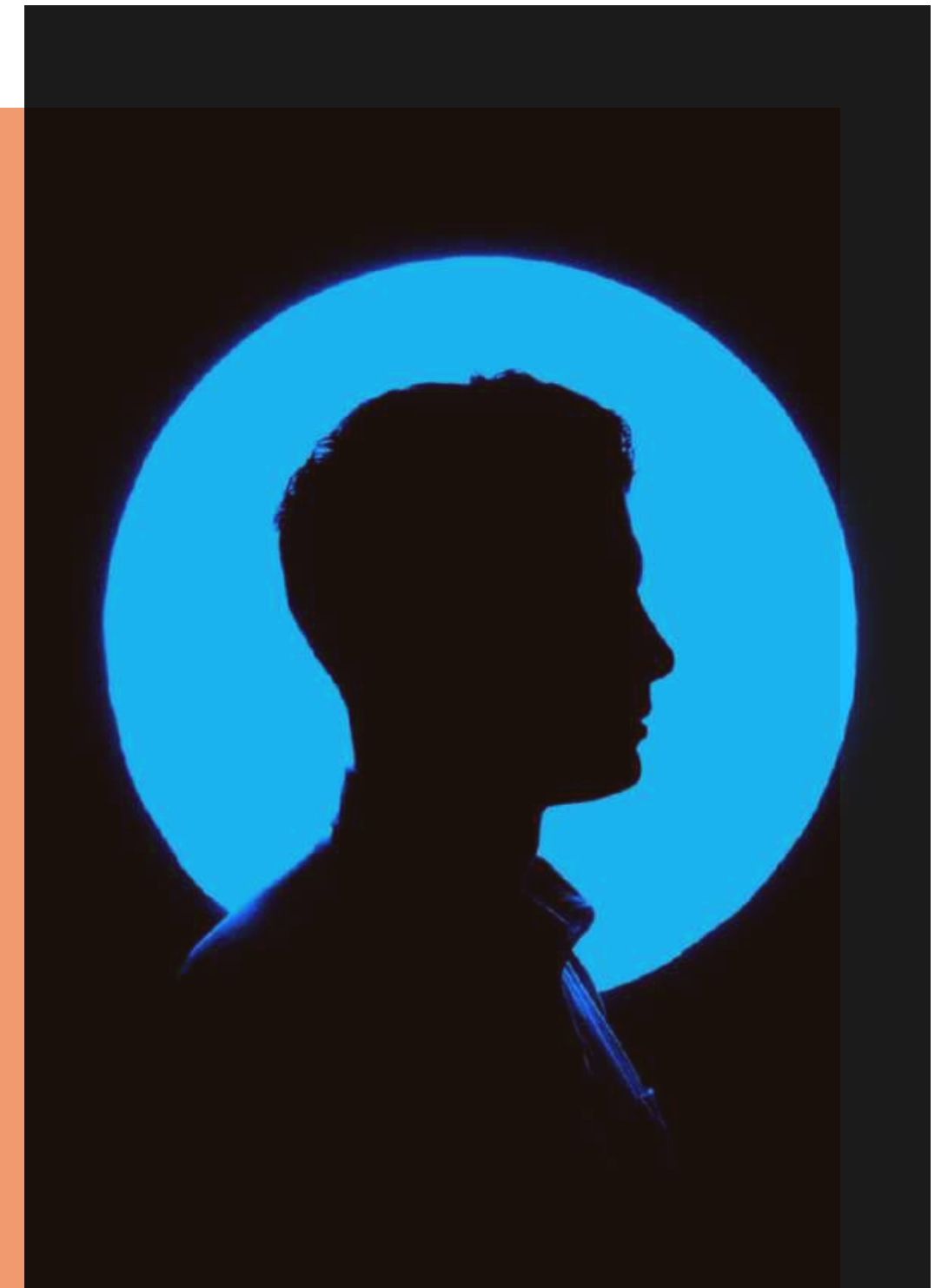
If sharing your company content and driving engagement is the main goal for your influencer program, then having engaging content is an essential factor to consider before you think about launching. After all, what will your employees be sharing if you do not have consistent content that adds value to audiences?

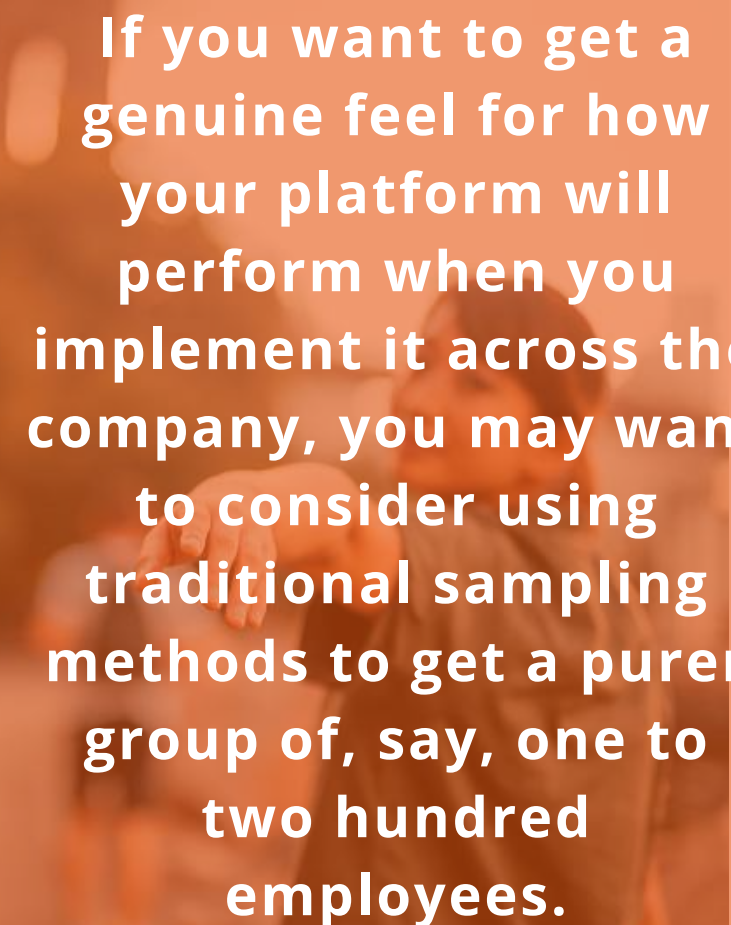
Perhaps you're starting an influencer program in order to increase your content output in a more cost-effective, organic way. In such cases, employee influencers will truly prosper with content creation tools, which allow your employees to **create authentic content** and share it on behalf of your company.

Platform Identity

Have you considered what you are going to name your platform? A platform name will be an important **buzzword** that you can put into your communications before launch. Try to think of something that incorporates your brand, while making it clear what the platform hopes to achieve. You'll want to ensure that it's perceived as a company-wide initiative and not just another piece of software.

Brands like **Adobe** have perfectly executed this with their 'Social Shift' program, asking that employees take part in order to become 'Adobe Brand Champions'. The program name identifies a goal, while the 'Brand Champions' aspect empowers employees to want to become brand ambassadors.





If you want to get a genuine feel for how your platform will perform when you implement it across the company, you may want to consider using traditional sampling methods to get a purer group of, say, one to two hundred employees.

Who Will You Ask to Join?

If you're planning to start a trial before you officially launch, it will be worth considering who you are going to invite to participate.

Finding socially active employees can seem like an impossible task, especially if you're an enterprise brand with thousands of employees. Fear not, as social media can be an invaluable asset to identify them! Try **searching your company name** on sites like LinkedIn and Twitter to find out which employees are already sharing off their own back. If you're a brand that frequently uses hashtags, use these to your advantage when searching for active employees.

For the reasons mentioned above, we believe that **getting senior leadership involved** can be the most effective way to hit the ground running with company-wide adoption. For example, a short personalized mobile video message from the CEO inviting employees to the program would both incentivize them and generate excitement.

One of the most effective ways to ensure a successful launch process is getting senior leadership buy-in from the start. Naturally, employees are more likely to get involved when they see influential/senior members of staff actively participating and leading by example.

Strong Opening Communications Before Launch

Pre-launch communications will prove to be an effective way of getting employees **excited** and **curious** about the initiative before you begin a company-wide rollout. It may consist of an email program leading up to launch, or driving awareness via your existing internal comms tools.

This would be another chance to leverage the influence of senior leadership by asking them to endorse emails or announcements via internal comms tools.

However this works best for your organization, including this as part of your pre-launch, and ongoing program activity will prove to be a great way to **boost awareness** and maximize user adoption.





How are you going to launch?

Your launch method will tie in with your communications before launch, but deciding how you are going to launch your influencer program can **positively affect adoption rates** and enthusiasm from users.

Consider here how the company has launched and announced previous initiatives. Which ones were the most successful/well-received, and why?

It's not always necessary to reinvent the wheel, so to speak. Traditional forms of communications, such as dotting posters around the office, can be just as effective at raising awareness and encouraging signups. **Lunch and learn** events can be equally effective too, so don't overthink it!

Swiss-based training consultancy, **Krauthammer**, is a shining example of how to launch effectively, as **82%** of employees registered at the launch event

Quick tip: Never underestimate the power of video! If senior leadership gets on board, leverage their influence by getting them to announce the program launch with a video release.

During Launch

So, you've followed each of these steps, ticked each one-off, and you're now ready to launch. In many ways, this can be the vital step in ensuring success with your influencer program, as it will set the precedent of how the initiative will be managed, and give employees an idea of what to expect moving forward.

Have Content Ready to Share

When you launch your program and employees begin signing up, they'll likely want to start exploring the platform and sharing content straight away. Top vendors will allow you to **schedule content** into the platform for future use, which will reduce the number of times admin users will need to spend on it each week.

Quick tip: *Try to incorporate an even amount of third party industry-relevant content from reputable sources. Avoid the hard sell by sharing content from your industry's most reputable thought leaders.*

Team Leaders

If you're a larger company that operates in various corners of the world, or if you have various/very different departments within your company, then you'll want to consider assigning team leaders to specific regions or departments. In doing so, you are ensuring that users have **localized content** that is relevant to them and their networks.

You are also evenly dispersing the workload to ensure that the platform does not become a time-consuming burden of one admin user.

Program Manager?

A program manager can monitor the program's progress/success, and ensure that all team leaders and users are aligned.

If you're a larger company, and you choose to incorporate team leaders, then it may be worth considering a dedicated program manager. Consider how you're currently managing any other media programs you might have within your organization. Whether it's your CRM, social, or company email, you'll typically find that one or two senior employees oversee its upkeep.

Gamification

One of the best ways to ensure employees start creating and sharing is gamification. Incorporating **leaderboards** and **rewards** is an excellent way to do this, as it makes the process fun, and the friendly competitive nature of winning will encourage further activity within the platform.

Rewards can also be a fantastic way to bring in employees who might have been skeptical about joining the platform. They'll likely hear about it from participating employees, as it generates something of a buzz within an office environment and **raises awareness** about the initiative.

Incentivize employees to create original content for your brand by offering more points for doing so. If you incorporate leaderboards and offer ten points for sharing content, consider offering double this, or more, to get employees creating original content on behalf of the company.



Rewards could be anything from Amazon vouchers to charity donations. A brand that championed this is Chinese tech-titans Huawei, offering up their latest smartphones as rewards for top-performing employees, along with shopping vouchers and exercise-tracking accessories.

Success Post Launch

This is the most crucial part of maintaining a successful employee influencer platform, as without continued management, new incentives, and content creation opportunities, employees may begin to lose interest or fail to see the long term value. Consider how you may run your CRM, social community or loyalty programs, all will require continued nurture and management to truly maximize your returns.

Fresh Content

Having ready-to-share content is the first step, ensuring that there is always content readily available to share is the long-term goal.

Providing your content creators continue to produce content at the same rate; it is essential that your team leaders/program managers are spending a **sufficient amount of time in the platform** each week to ensure that content is easily accessible to employees.

The most effective way of having on-brand and original content is by leveraging the power of your most valuable assets – your employees/users. Continued incentivization will ensure that your employees continue to create content for your company to share.

Senior Leadership Engagement

As we've mentioned, senior leadership and C-suite staff can have vast amounts of influence on your employees' sharing and creation habits.

These senior users must **continue to participate** in your influencer program as they'll want to lead by example. If employees notice a lack of presence from senior staff, they may be inclined to believe that the initiative is losing traction.

It's also worth noting that senior staff will typically have larger networks on social media, and they tend to be connected to other senior staff members at potential companies of interest, which is a massive incentive for both B2B and B2C brands.

Use Internal Comms Tools to Maintain Engagement

If your chosen vendor offers an internal communications aspect to their platform, it would be a good idea to utilize this in order to keep your employees engaged. These helpful features might be **likes, comments, internal posts, and polls.**

These features are particularly effective when adopted by senior staff as it allows them to show appreciation to their employees, whether it be within the platform or on social media. In a way, it humanizes the idea of senior management and brings them closer to your employees.

By utilizing these tools, you are effectively **prompting users to return to the platform** as they will receive notifications when they are tagged or mentioned. Users will return to the platform through a fear of missing out and wanting to keep up to date.

Individual Case Studies

Have you noticed a particular employee is driving significant engagement on social media? Perhaps they've created blog content or snapped pictures at a recent event that has performed particularly well on your company page.

Well, let them and the rest of your users know by producing an individual case study that **highlights the impact they've had on driving engagement.** Your super users will be hugely beneficial and have a lot of influence on social media. They will also be the ideal employees to approach when you're looking to source original content.

Share Industry News

Sharing industry news, as well as company content, can be an excellent way for your employees to establish themselves as thought leaders on social, which will enable them to **maximize their social selling capabilities.**

This will be especially beneficial for your users who work in sales, as **31% of B2B salespeople** say that social selling tools helped them build deeper relationships with clients.



Display Company Culture

Remember that as a company, it is just as important to showcase your company culture as it is to promote your brand if you want to attract top talent. For many top candidates, company culture is a crucial factor in the decision-making process.

Utilize your employees and super users to create content. Most companies rely on their social media managers to create original content on behalf of the company, but naturally, they can't be everywhere at once. Motivate your super users to take photos at events, staff away days, and charity events.

Analyze Content Performance

To ensure you are sharing only the most top-quality and engagement driving content, you should make use of your platform's analytics tool. Analytics will allow you to assess what content has performed particularly well in your platform and on social media, which will **help you refine what works and what might not work** going forward.

HOW TO CRUSH IT WITH EMPLOYEE INFLUENCERS

So, you've conducted an in-depth review of employee advocacy tools, and you've now identified one as the perfect way to implement your employee influencer program. It's time to ensure you have an effective plan in place to ensure it's a success.



BEFORE LAUNCH

1. COMPANY CULTURE

Assess your company culture before you consider implementing an employee influencer program - its success can be entirely dependent on it. Employees are less likely to share/create on behalf of a company they don't enjoy working for.

2. DO YOU HAVE CONTENT?

If sharing and driving engagement are the main goals for your influencer program, then having content is an essential factor to consider before launching. What will your employees be sharing if you do not have consistent content?

3. SENIOR LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

One of the most effective ways to ensure a successful launch is getting senior leadership involved. Employees are more likely to get involved when they see senior members of staff participating.



DURING LAUNCH PROCESS

1. TEAM LEADERS

If you're a larger company you'll want to assign team leaders to specific regions or departments. In doing so, you are ensuring that users have localized content that is relevant to them and their networks.

2. HAVE CONTENT READY TO SHARE

When you launch your program and employees begin signing up, they'll likely want to start exploring the platform and sharing content straight away, so ensure that you have content ready at their disposal.

3. GAMIFICATION

Incorporate gamification with leaderboards and rewards, it makes the process fun, and the friendly competitive nature of winning will encourage further activity within the platform.



SUCCESS POST LAUNCH

1. UTILIZE INTERNAL COMMS

Utilize your platform's internal comms feature in order to keep your employees engaged. You are effectively prompting users to return to the platform as they will receive notifications when they are tagged or mentioned.

2. DISPLAY COMPANY CULTURE

Most companies rely on their social media managers to create original content on behalf of the company, but they can't be everywhere at once. Lean on your super users to take photos at events, staff away days, and charity events.

3. ANALYZE PERFORMANCE

Make good use of your platform's analytics tool. Analytics will allow you to assess what content has performed particularly well in your platform and on social media, helping you refine what performs best going forward.



EMPLOYEE INFLUENCERS AND YOUR COMPANY

Remember that deciding on a vendor and rolling out your employee influencer platform are only the first steps to ensuring success with this initiative. You must spend just as much time maintaining the program in order to keep employees engaged, sharing, and creating. Employee influence, when correctly implemented, can be one of the most cost-effective and valuable assets to your company, so it's worth doing it right!

EMPLOYEE INFLUENCER PLATFORMS

With the ever-growing prominence of social media, tapping into employees' social networks should be considered by companies of all sizes. As with influencer marketing, companies are drawing on their employees to create content and leveraging the power of their employees' followings to further their reach more organically. Visit DSMNB.com to find out more.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY DSMNB

A person is holding a smartphone in their hand, displaying a social media post on the screen. The post shows a person in a hat and a plaid shirt. The background is a blurred crowd of people, suggesting a public event or festival. The image is overlaid with a dark semi-transparent layer, and there are decorative teal and red shapes in the corners.

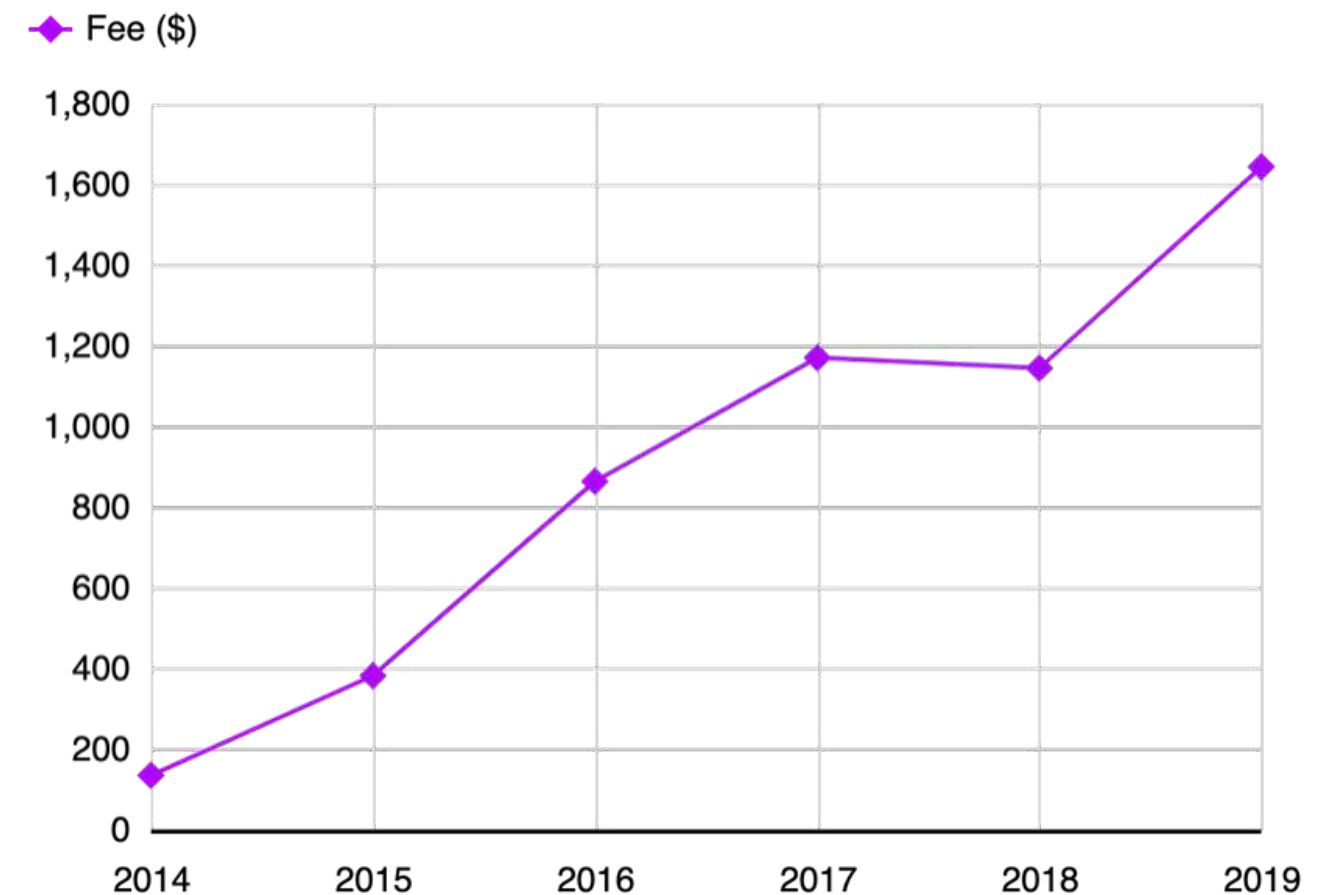
The Future of Influencer Marketing is Employee Influencers

The Future of Influencer Marketing

Over the past decade, traditional influencer marketing has seen **continuous growth**, and at an exponential rate. From sports personalities and A-list celebrities to social media influencers of recent years, influencer marketing has proven to be an invaluable tool for businesses to organically boost their reach and maximize engagement.

However, in recent years, this rapid growth has begun to slow down. Influencers are still as effective as ever, but given its rapid growth and recent changes in consumer attitudes to social media, brands are beginning to rethink who the most effective influencers are.

Graph from BBC shows gradual incline in asking price from social media influencers for a sponsored post.



The Future of Influencer Marketing

Bad practice and poorly executed instances of influencer marketing have forced the Advertising Standards Agency to create a set of guidelines for posting sponsored content online following an investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority into social media influencers. This means that even **reputable influencers are suffering at the expense of all too many mistakes** from others.

With a recent increase in awareness of data capture and ad-tracking, people are becoming more in-tune with advertising tactics and taking steps to ensure they are not bothered. **26%** of desktop users and **15%** of mobile users use ad-blocking technology, which is a massive hit on the investment companies put into display ads.

With all this taken into consideration, what does the future hold for influencer marketing? And with recent changes in consumer attitudes to social media, what will replace social influencers in the age of false advertising? Well, fear not, influencers come in many shapes and forms, and often the ones with smaller followings can be the most reputable and engagement-driving of the bunch.

Monogamous Influencers

Think of a monogamous influencer as one who represents one brand per industry. After all, how many times can a beauty influencer change the brands in their daily make-up routine before their followers begin to question their authenticity? Imagine, in the automotive industry, how an influencer's followers will perceive their content when they promote Tesla one month, and Toyota the next.

In order to achieve this, and for it to be a success, influencers will have to **limit the number of brands** that they work with, and seek long-term contracts and relationships with each brand. This offers security for both the influencer and the brands they represent, as both parties can ensure that their authenticity stays intact.





Micro Influencers

A micro-influencer is one with significant influence on social media, but **with a much smaller following** than the macro-influencers and celebrities that we've become accustomed to seeing/hearing about.

With micro-influencers, **their content tends to surround a niche interest** of theirs and their followers. As result, their followers tend to be more engaged and aware of the industries and products that they endorse. Micro-Influencers are not only relatable people, but they're also perceived as thought-leaders in a chosen field, which makes their recommendation one that matters.



Employee Influencers

Despite the obvious benefits of the aforementioned influencer marketing styles, they all have one detrimental flaw – **authenticity**. Whether it's micro-influencers or one that is loyal to your brand, the fact remains that consumers more switched on to influencer marketing tactics, and trust and authenticity are becoming ever-more important.

Have you considered that the most reputable opinions and recommendations in your company's industry might just be those of your employees? After all, employees aren't forced or paid more to promote their brand. So what could be more organic than them choosing to do so on their own behalf?

In most instances, the people who are most knowledgeable about your industry, and most influential in said field, are a company's employees. If your company promotes good company culture, and your employees are prospering within it, **there's no reason why they wouldn't want to let people know about it!**

Often companies find that their employees are already advocating for their employers on social media, but by giving the platform, means, and incentive to do this at scale will significantly increase the frequency and quality of this.

Employee Influencers



LinkedIn tells us that in 2019, **just 3% of employees share company content** onto their LinkedIn pages, but **these posts alone drive a 30% increase in engagement**, which goes to show that even without tapping into this resource and actively encouraging employee advocacy, employees are generating significantly more engagement than branded content.

So, what does the future hold for influencer marketing? Well, there's no doubt that influencers are still a more effective way of advertising than traditional methods, and according to the BBC, influencer salaries are increasing year on year.

However, despite this, it's important for brands to acknowledge the wants of modern consumers, as **Millennials and Gen-Z buyers rate trust, authenticity, and ethics** as some of their most desirable attributes in a brand.

Influencers aren't going anywhere, but it's time for brands to consider more authentic ways of getting their content the reach it deserves. The future success of influencer marketing lies with more authentic and reputable advocates. What better place to start than with your employees?



Thought Leader Snapshot: **Shane Barker**

1. In the next few years, what do you think the future of employee influencers will look like?

I think employee advocacy is going to be a bigger trend in the future as more and more companies will realize the power of employee influencers. An employee speaking well of their company has a much greater impact than any form of branded marketing. In the next few years, we can expect employee influencers to be a mainstream category of influencers. We can also expect more employee advocacy campaigns and agencies adding employee advocacy tools to their list of products.

2. What are the most important things you have to keep in mind in order to be successful with employee influencers?

The value of employee advocacy programs lies in their authenticity. Therefore, you need to give some creative control to your employees and trust them. An outright promotional piece of content will fool no one, even if it is posted from an employee's account. Therefore, the most important thing for marketers using this strategy is to keep things as authentic as possible.

3. What should you focus on when selling an employee influencer program to your executive team? What are some things that might resonate with a CEO, CFO, or Sales?

The key is to tell them the value of such a program and what it can do for your business. You need to make a list of the benefits of running such a program and the cost. The decision makers in a company need to look at both aspects and should be convinced of the ROI of such programs.

THOUGHT LEADER

Shane Barker

ROLE

CEO

COMPANY

Shane Barker
Consulting



The Business Case for Employee Influencers

The Business Case for Employee Influencers

So, you want to launch an advocacy program into your company, and you are now faced with the familiar and often daunting impasse of approaching your senior management in the hopes of getting it signed off.

Well, before you try to sell them into the idea of an employee advocacy program, it's important that you have the theory and the numbers to make a strong case for implementation.

So, why should you care about Employee Influencers?

With the ever-growing prominence of social media, tapping into employees' social networks should be considered by companies of all sizes. As with influencer marketing, companies are drawing on their employees to create content and leveraging the power of their employees' followings to further their reach more organically.

There are an abundance of benefits of an employee influencer program, but the four key benefits are **amplified content marketing; crowdsourcing content; maximized social selling; heightened employer brand.**

1

1. Amplified Content Marketing

As a department, your marketing team will spend countless hours putting together great content to be shared on social media. Doesn't it make sense to give it the reach it deserves?

An employee influencer platform allows you to tap into your number one asset – your employees, to garner more **reach** and **engagement** on your content. LinkedIn reports that when employees share, they make double the impact of your brand marketing with an average click-through rate that is twice that of their company.

MSL Group reports that brand messages are shared 24x more frequently when shared by employees. This is likely because **84%** of consumers value recommendations from friends and family above all forms of advertising, while **77%** say they are more likely to purchase after hearing about it from someone they trust.

LinkedIn also tells us that in 2019, just **3%** of employees share company content onto their LinkedIn pages, but these posts alone drive a **30%** increase in engagement. The average percentage of employees that sign up to an advocacy platform is somewhere between **20-30%**. When correctly implemented, there's vast potential to expand this organic reach.



2. Maximize Social Selling

In the ever-evolving field of sales, you've probably seen the term 'social selling' floating around. Social selling is effectively harnessing the power of social media to **listen to, engage with, and build rapport** with prospective clients, ensuring that you are the first person that comes to mind when a prospect is ready to buy.

An employee influencer program is brilliantly useful in maximizing your employees' social selling capabilities. By sharing your company content, they are visibly exercising their knowledge of your company to their networks. In doing so, they are establishing themselves as industry experts in the eyes of their prospects.

Creating company content is another fantastic way for your employees to be recognized as **thought leaders** in your industry. Influencer platforms often allow employees to do this by writing blogs, taking photos at events, and creating videos, among other things.

“



DSMN8 has been a phenomenal tool in helping to increase both professional and personal exposure. It has also helped changed the company perception where employees are now proud, proactive and a collaborative force in sharing brand related content.

- **Lesley White**, Deputy Vice President Human Resources (Huawei)

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3. Crowdsource Content

Employee influence is a great way to crowdsource quality content, which will save on both time and costs. It's no secret that companies and even customers use social media to find out more about your organization and your company culture.

Most companies rely on their social media manager to take pictures and videos, but naturally, they can't be everywhere at once.

Employee Influencer platforms allow employees to **capture** and **submit** those special moments within your organization, and provide a more authentic snapshot of what it's like to work within the company. You may have influencers within your company who are already using social media to document life at your company. An influencer platform gives them a chance to **feature** and **be credited** on company pages.

3. Crowdsourcing Content (cont.)

Having a great blog is vital to **boosting your SEO ranking**, and also helps strengthen and develop relationships with existing customers. However, creating authentic content at scale has always been a challenge for organizations big and small, as often freelance writers are brought in who simply don't know the company/industry well enough to add value. Content creation tools are great for crowdsourcing authentic content from your employees.

The reason these tools are so effective is that they're beneficial for both the employer and the employee. As an employer, you're getting high-quality authentic content that you can share, whilst the employee will be gradually building their personal brand and garnering a reputation as an industry expert. In a recent report, Edelman found that **82%** of buyers say thought leadership had increased their trust in an organization.

Empowering your employees by allowing them to create content on behalf of your company gives employees a sense of responsibility, it creates a sense of belonging and builds on company culture.

4. Employee Influence Benefits Your Employer Brand

Employer branding has never been more relevant than in the age of social media. Every successful company will have accounts on most major social networks that allow them to display their company culture, and there's no better or more organic way to showcase your company culture than **through your employees**.

Positive employer branding helps both **attract** and **retain** quality employees, who are crucial to the success and growth of the business. It's also essential for how customers and prospects view your company.

4



5. Employee Empowerment

As mentioned, an employee influencer platform will bring a wide range of hugely impactful benefits to your business. However, companies seldom consider the benefits a program can have for your employees, as a platform will do just as much for them as it will the business.

According to **The Marketing Advisory Network's Employee Advocacy study**, 63% of new employees will never share company messages socially. The introduction of an all-in-one employee influencer platform with clear guidelines on social media use will **relieve any anxiety** employees may feel around sharing company content. Encourage employees to share and create by empowering them with the knowledge, and know-how, all on one easy-to-navigate company-managed platform.

Another advantage for both employee and company is that a platform can be a brilliantly effective way of **training** employees and increasing their **product knowledge**. It's not just your target audience that will be inundated with your content, as your employees will have access to a fully centralized hub full of pre-approved informative company content.



5. Employee Empowerment -

An exceptional example of Employee Empowerment is Swiss-based training consultancy company **Krauthammer**, who launched an employee influencer program with DSMN8 back in 2017.

Krauthammer let go of any legacy fears in regards to employees sharing content publicly. Realising that **the opportunities far outweighed any risks**. Managing this by introducing clear guidelines and internal program owners who could support sales consultants queries. Providing support to employees every step of the way.



6. Employee Influence as a Performance Marketing Tactic

An employee influencer program can be an invaluable resource for lowering your media spend.

LinkedIn, for example, requires companies to bid a minimum of **\$2** for Cost-per-Click campaigns, and the average CPC seen post campaign is around **\$5.26**.

Whereas companies leveraging the power of their employees to generate engagement via DSMN8 are seeing a comparative cost-per-click that is <1\$ on average. AWIN, for example, saw a comparative cost-per-click of **\$0.23**.

With trust, comes engagement, and so it's no surprise that employee influencers generate high referral rates to a company's website at a comparatively lower cost to traditional performance marketing.

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Employee shares on their personal social channels via DSMN8 has become one of the highest referrers of traffic to the AWIN site, securing employee advocacy as a core part of our marketing strategy. Seeing the results further motivates our teams to continue sharing company content.

- **Sarah Ruzgar**, Global Communications Lead (AWIN)

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6



Measuring ROI

It can be difficult to measure the ROI potential of an employee influencer platform, as its success can be entirely dependant on various factors.

In fact, most companies will see ROI from an Employee Influencer program **within a month** of implementation. Don't just take our word for it, let's take a look at the numbers.

Ready? Let's evaluate!



Measuring ROI

Let's say that your company page has 100,000 followers on LinkedIn, 50,000 followers on Twitter, and 50,000 on Facebook. The combined **Total Company Reach** (TPR) is 200,000. Meaning that sharing a post across all three of those social channels could reach up to 200,000 people.

In comparison, the average user has 1,180 connections on LinkedIn. If 170 employees were to share that same social post the potential reach would be 200,600, surpassing your company reach using only 170 Employees! Now if you are a company with 10,000 employees sharing socially the Total Employee Reach (TER) would be 11,800,000.

Working under a conservative estimate of only 15% of a 10,000 strong workforce signing up for your employee influencer program the estimated reach would be 1,770,000. **785% more than a 200,000 Total Company Reach.**

What percentage of your workforce would need to be sharing for you to surpass your company page reach?

Measuring ROI

Companies leveraging the power of their employees as influencers tend to have **20-30%** of their employees engaging with their employee influencer platform. According to DSMN8 data, the average user shares **2.2** pieces of company content per week, and averages an impressive **5 clicks per share**.

But let's say only **15%** of your employees (*1500 employees*) share 8 pieces (*2 per week*) of company content per month (*12,000 shares*), and each generates a conservative average of 5 clicks per share, that would total **60,000** clicks per month, which equates to **720,000 clicks per year**...



Stay with us...



Measuring ROI

If you've dealt with social media advertising in the past, you'll be familiar with **cost per click**. Imagine how much that amount of clicks would eat into precious budget! Let's put it on paper (so to speak), in order to be as transparent as possible.

With LinkedIn ads, the average cost per click ranges between **\$4-7**. To be as fair as possible, let's say you began a campaign with LinkedIn offering \$4 per click. The 60,000 clicks you could have generated in one month through your influencer platform **would have cost your company \$240,000 in comparative ad spend.**

Now, using **DSMN8's** data, the average cost per click from an Employee Influencer program would be somewhere between \$0.50 to \$0.90. This gives you a comparative cost per click that is **88% cheaper than the LinkedIn alternative.**



Measuring ROI

We may be slightly biased, but this seems to us to be something of a “no brainer”.

Ultimately, an employee influencer program will do much more than just expand your reach. It will: save costs on and improve the hiring process; develop your employer brand; maximize employees’ ability to social sell; expand your pool of content contributors; and inundate you with content.

Is now the time to pitch the idea to senior management? We certainly think so!

Now that we know the cost, let’s focus on measuring success.



How to measure the success of your Employee Influencer program

Adoption Rate

One of the most effective ways of measuring success will be monitoring the percentage of your employees that sign up to the platform.

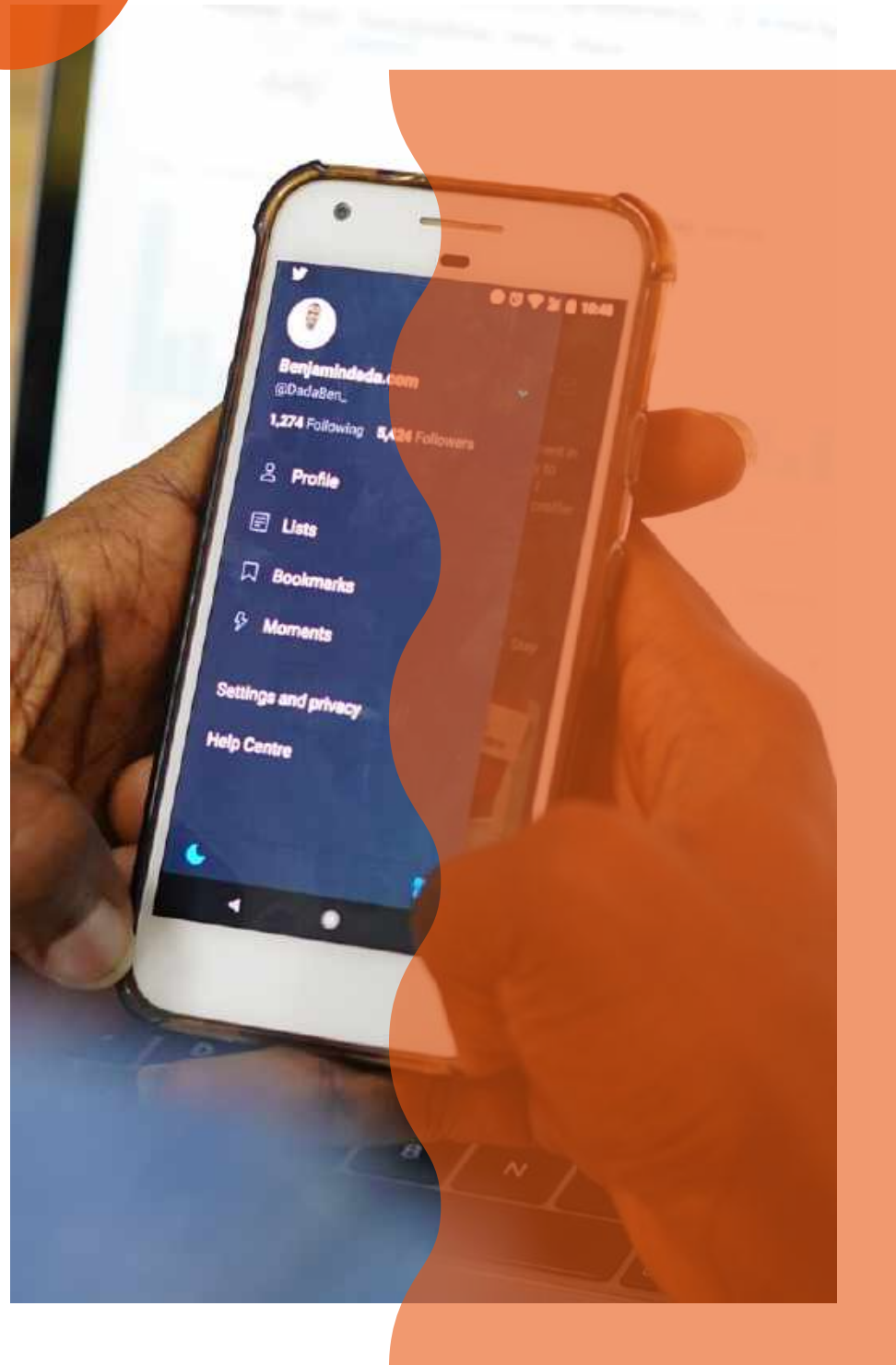
As previously mentioned, DSMN8 has seen an average adoption rate of 20-30% of their total employee count. This alone would have a significant impact on your content engagement and would inundate you with original content, but we say aim high! DSMN8 has seen adoption rates as high as **65%** of a company's total employee count.

Think of adoption rates simply, and remember that the more employees you have engaging with the platform, the higher your engagement rates will be, and your cost per click will be significantly lowered.

1



2



Active Users

Adoption rates are the first step, what's most important is ensuring that employees who have signed up to the platform remain active long after the initial launch process.

Refer to our 'How to Crush it With Employee Influencers' cheat sheet from earlier for best practice on how to keep users engaged.

But the key method of maintaining engagement would be to **incentivize** further use. This can be achieved through senior leadership interactions, gamification, individual case studies, among other things.

Content Uploads

Most employee influencer platforms will allow employees to upload content and/or images to share, so if you're using tools that allow users to do so, such as **Lens**, **Author**, or really an advocacy tool, then you'll want to measure how much content is being uploaded to the platform.

Before rolling out an influencer program, check your blog and social media pages to note and get an idea of how much content is being produced. This will give you a number to work towards improving through employee-generated content.

It would also be insightful for your company if you were to compare employee-generated content against your corporate content.

3

Share Rates

If advocacy, reach, and engagement are your main focuses with your initiative, then you'll want to monitor how many pieces of content are being shared per week.

As always, we say aim high, we believe that users should be encouraged to share as much content as the company sees fit, but always bear in mind that the average seen with DSMN8 is **2.2 pieces of content per employee per week**.

4



Thought Leader Snapshot: **Casey Hall**

1. In the next few years, what do you think the future of employee influencers will look like?

Employee influencer programs will continue to grow in importance and effectiveness. As social media activity moves towards more messaging and private or group communications, the role of branded social channels will diminish. Employee influencer programs, as well as social selling, external influencer, and executive social media programs will become more central. If privacy regulations become more effective and paid advertising becomes more challenging, this trend towards individual engagements between actual people will be where the opportunity is.

2. What are the most important things you have to keep in mind in order to be successful with employee influencers?

Focus on what's in it for the employee. If you treat it as a program that has a primary purpose of benefitting employees, through professional development and personal branding, rather than a marketing tactic, it will be much more successful in both realms.

3. What should you focus on when selling an employee influencer program to your executive team? What are some things that might resonate with a CEO, CFO, or Sales?

If at all possible, get things rolling before worrying about how you can convince your C-suite that your company needs a full scale program. Start with a small group of savvy employees and provide them a high level of support. When they are successful other employees, particularly Sales will want in. A small, proven model for success is more convincing than the perfect power point deck.

THOUGHT LEADER

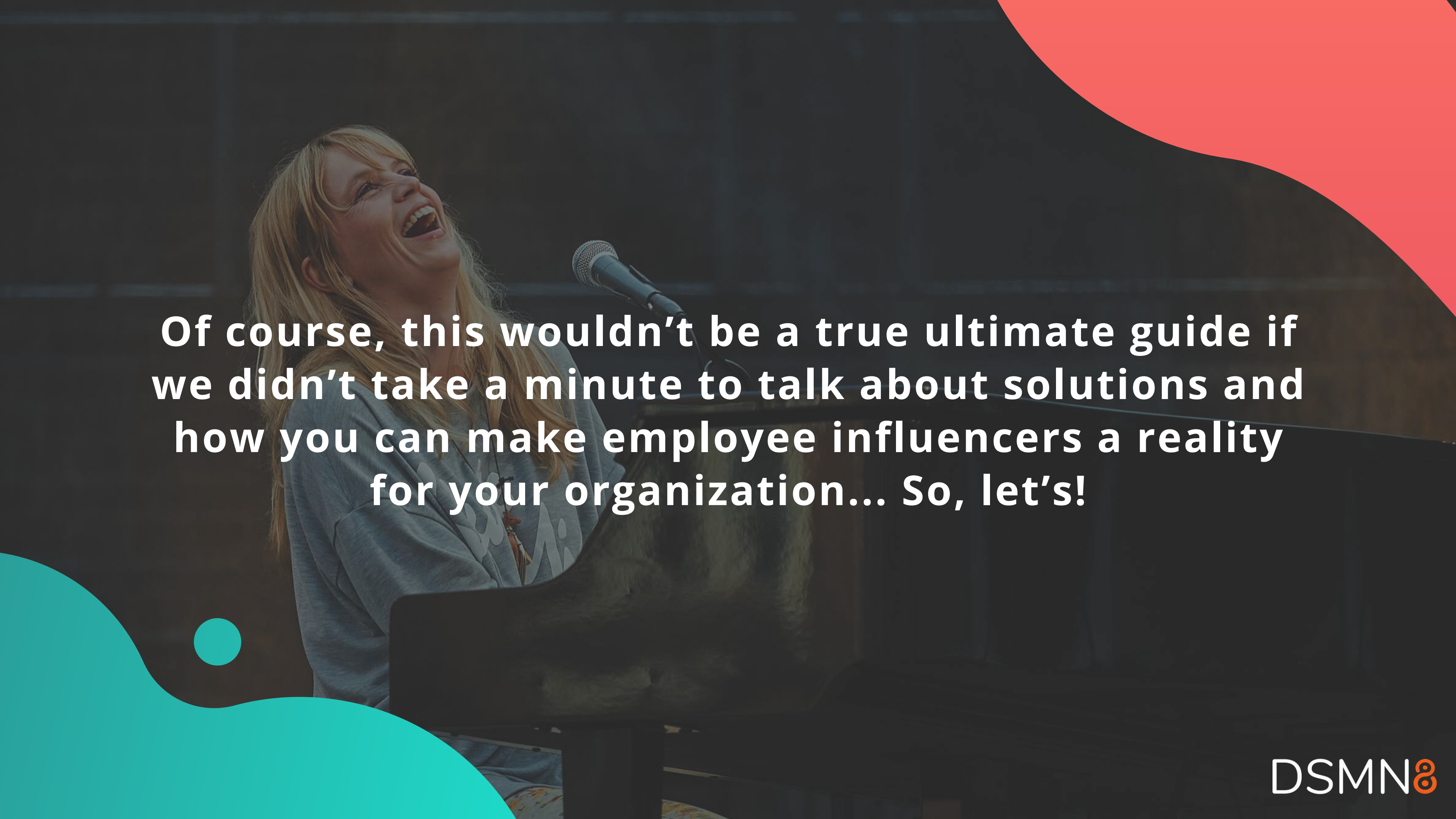
Casey Hall

ROLE

President

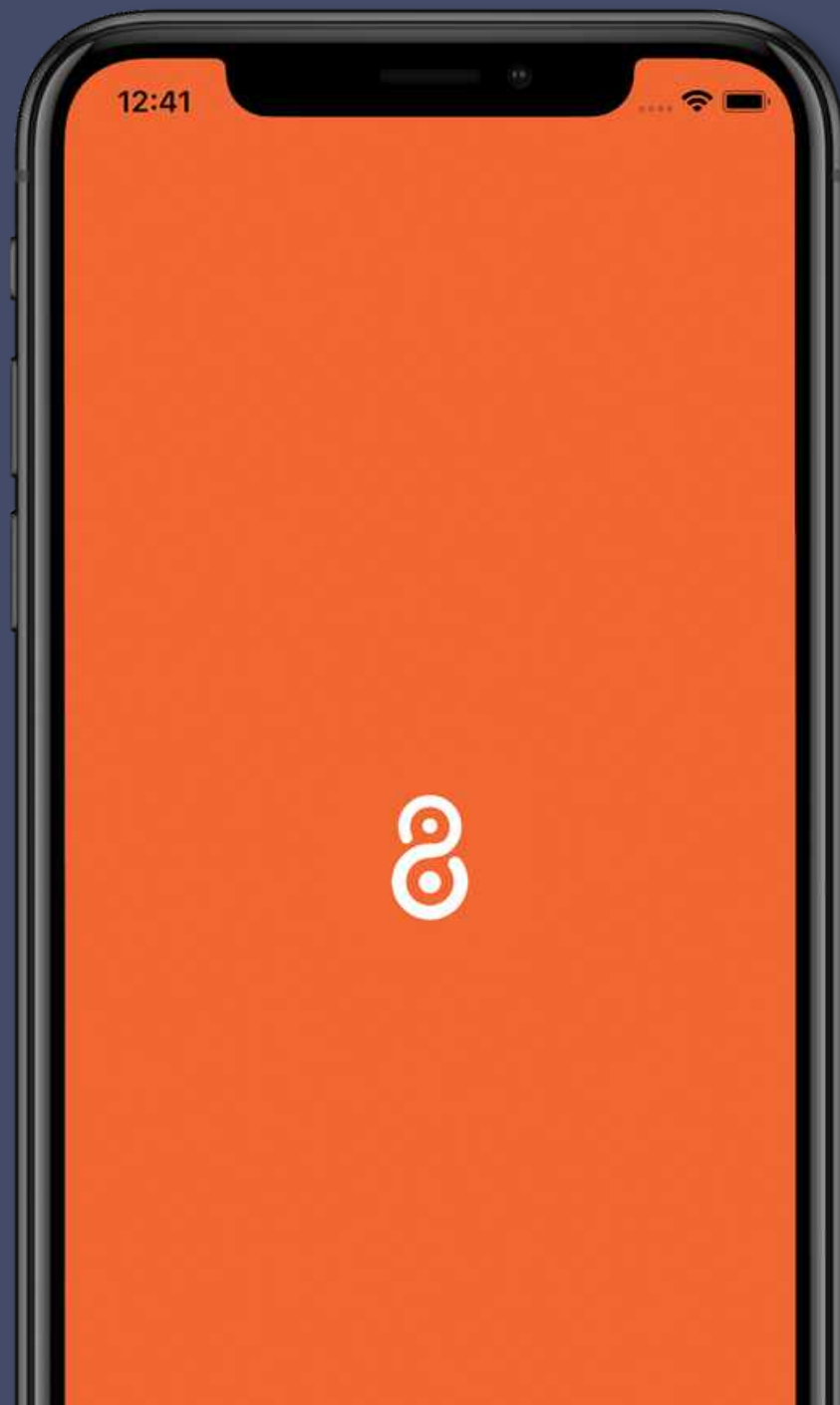
COMPANY

Lumberjack Social



Of course, this wouldn't be a true ultimate guide if we didn't take a minute to talk about solutions and how you can make employee influencers a reality for your organization... So, let's!

DSMN8



DSMN8 The All-in-One Employee Influencer Platform

What do we do?

In short, we make it easy for employees to become **social sellers, publishers, content creators**, and full-blown **influencers**. Our innovative technology helps brands tap into the power of their number one asset – their employees through an all-in-one platform.

How do we do it?

We offer **three unique and innovative solutions** that enable your employees to **Create, Curate** and **Share** company-approved content, all packaged up and rolled into the ultimate all-in-one employee influencer platform.



Advocacy



Lens



Author

Solution: DSMN8 Advocacy

Supercharge your online reach and engagement by converting your number one asset – your employees into social media advocates for your business.

Your employees will have access to both a desktop and mobile application where they can effortlessly share your content across social, messenger, email and SMS — boosting **organic reach** while keeping users up to date with company news and industry trends.

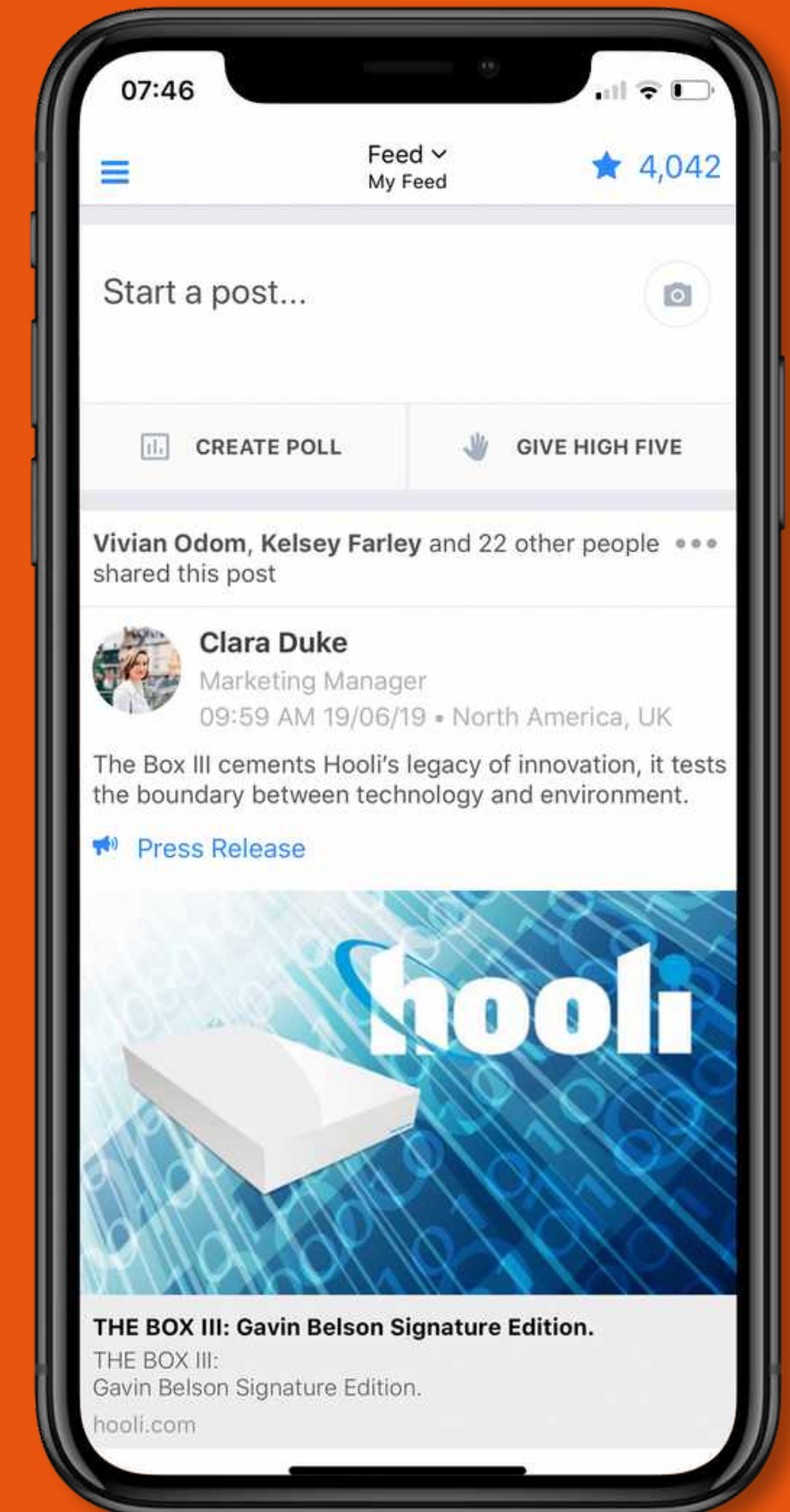
DSMN8's advocacy tool makes it easier than ever to navigate social network algorithm changes, reduce spiraling advertising costs and have more branded content seen through the people closest to your business – your employees.

You can also choose to offer recognition and real prizes through the built-in gamification engine.

DSMN8



Advocacy



Solution: DSMN8 Lens

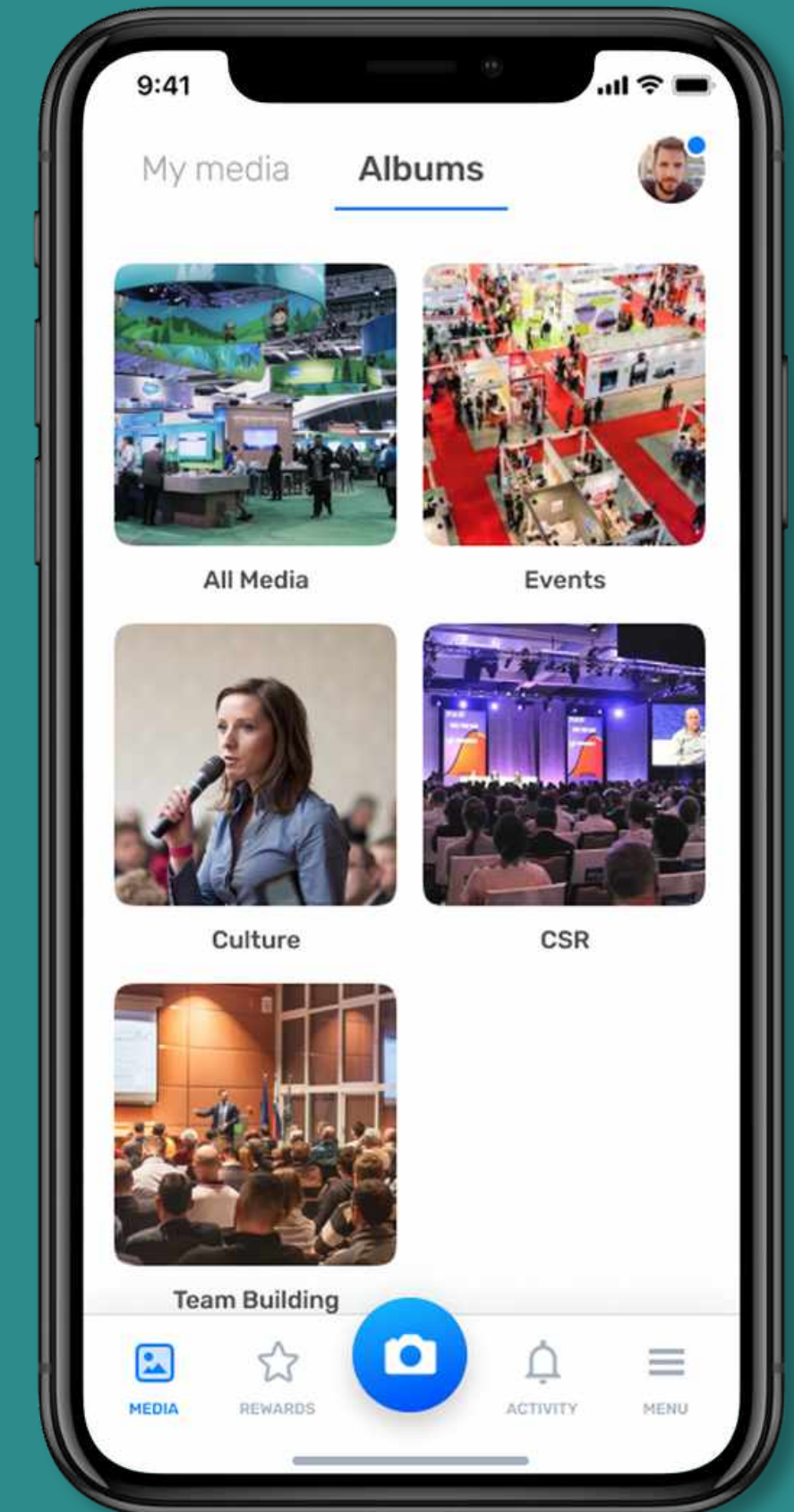
Most companies rely on their social media manager to take pictures and videos, but naturally, they can't be everywhere at once.

Lens allows employees to capture and submit those **special moments** within your organization. From an employee's first day to team away day photos, leaning on your employees for photo content is a fantastic way to crowdsource company-based content for social media.

When they look, what will they see? Will they see anything at all? Will they see staged stock photography, or will they get a genuine window into what life at your company is really like?



Lens



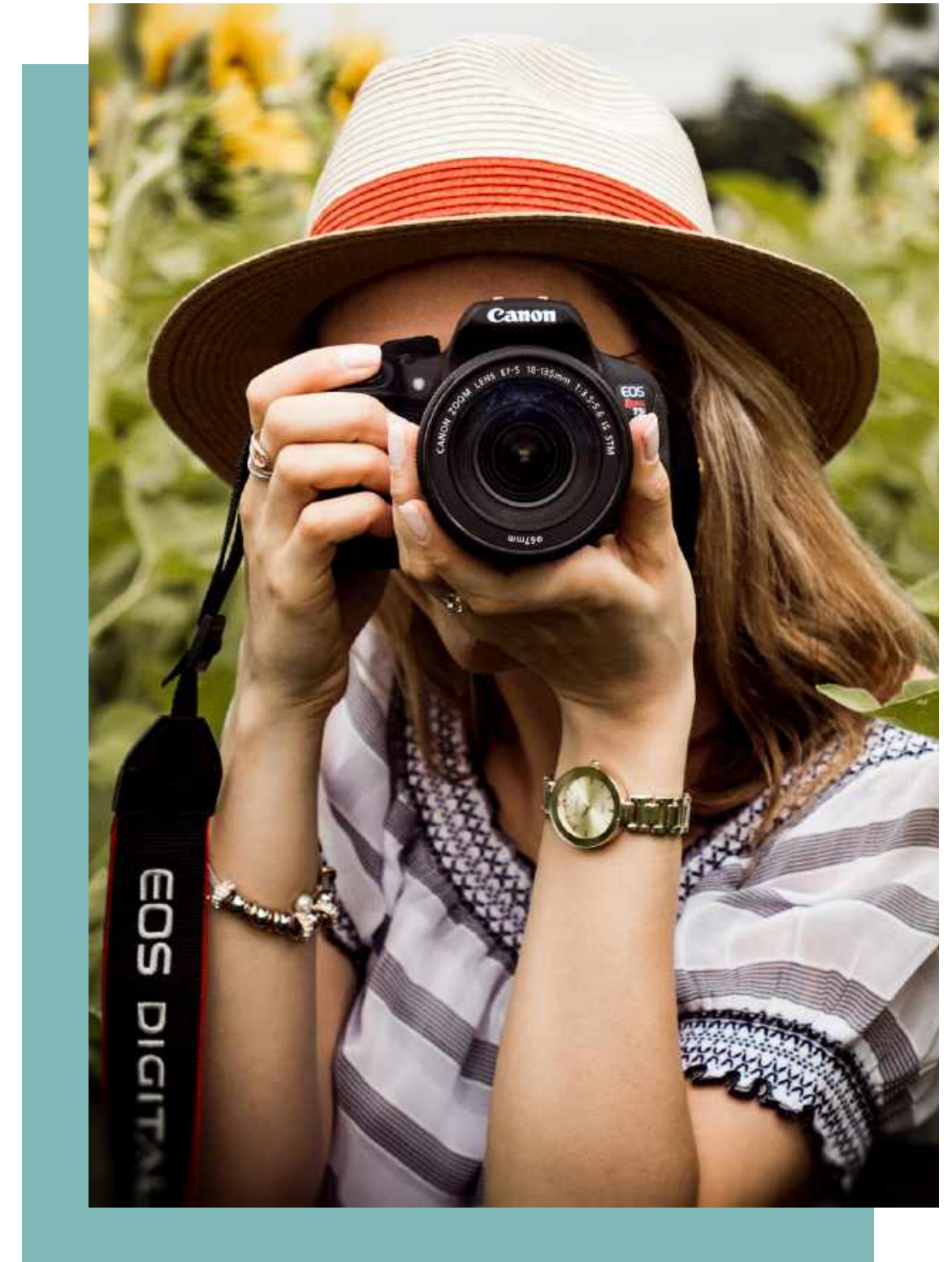
Solution: DSMN8 Lens

Once captured, media files are automatically synced with an online dashboard where you can approve images for use across your own company social media accounts. **The platform even manages the assignment of the rights to your company from the employee.**

Lens also allows users to submit their photos to specific folders. So, for example, if you had a blog post to write about an event your company attended, you could create an event-specific folder for employees to submit their photos to.

Then once used, you can not only credit the employee by tagging them in the post, but you can also assign points that can be exchanged for real prizes such as online gift cards, company perks, and charitable donations.

If you're looking to inject some authenticity into your social media, then Lens is the answer!



Solution: DSMN8 Author

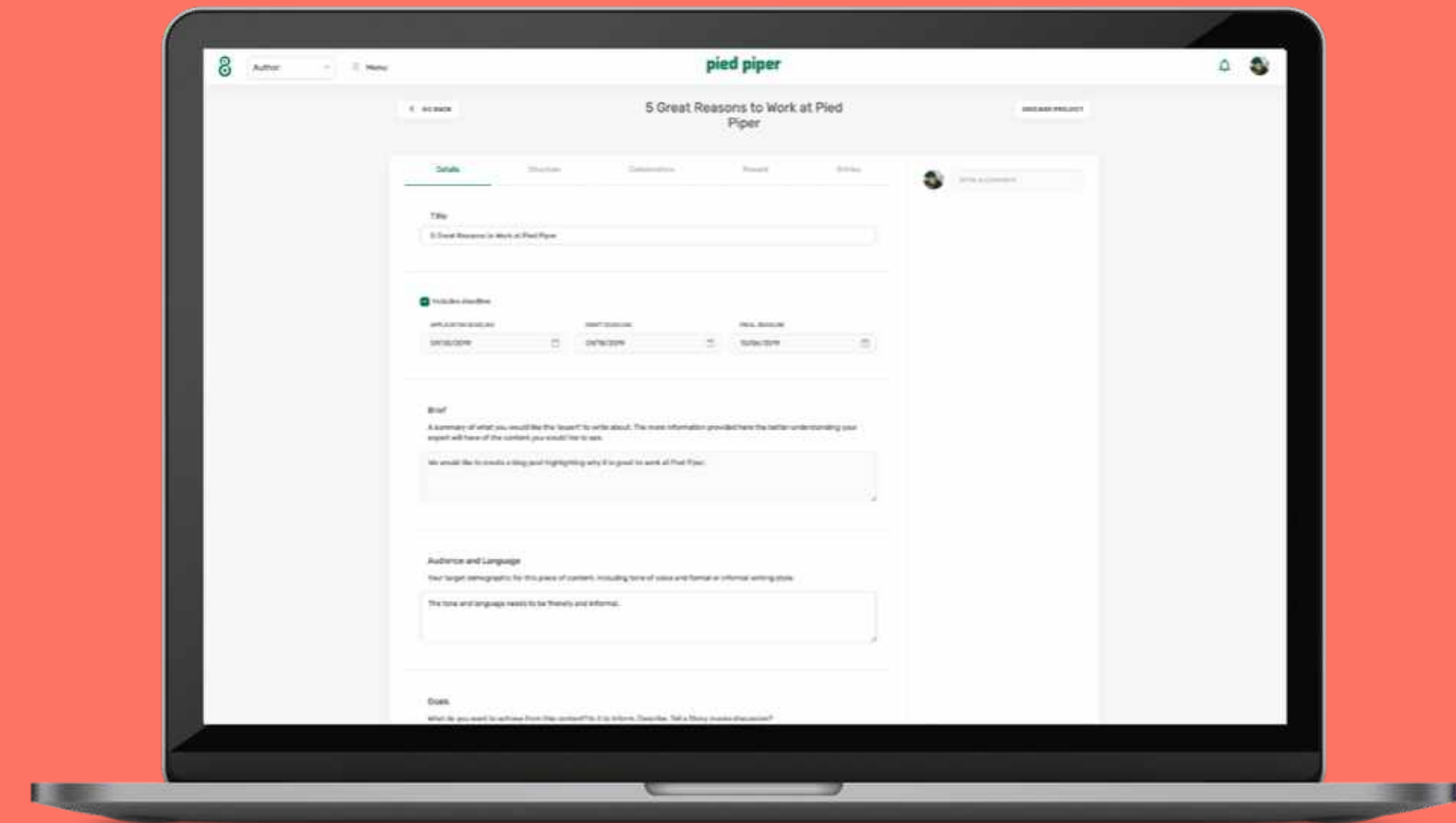
Writing blog posts, or any written content, can be both time-consuming and strenuous, and remains a tricky practice at scale for organizations both big and small.

Content agencies are often too expensive, and freelance writers don't know your business well enough to **add real value**. Well, have you ever thought that maybe your next superstar content contributor is already within your company just waiting to be discovered?

Author makes it easier than ever before to scale your content efforts through the people closest to your business – your employees.



Author



Solution: Author

Having a great blog is **vital to boosting your SEO ranking**, and also helps strengthen and develop relationships with existing customers whilst establishing your company as both industry and thought leaders. However, creating authentic content at scale has always been a challenge for organizations big and small, as often freelance writers are brought in who simply don't know the company/industry well enough to add value.

With Author, you have access to a cloud-based text editor where you can **create, save and collaborate on ideas**. Not only does this include things like track changes, comments and suggestions, but also automated alerts to warn of potential breaches to your companies tone of voice policy.

Want to create more authentic written content for your business while at the same time reducing your reliance on third parties? If so, then **Author** is the perfect solution for you!





DSMN8 Client Success Stories



The Challenge

Before adopting DSMN8, engaging employees to support social media activity by sharing approved content was proving to be a challenge. Without an easy solution in place, employees were reluctant to engage. This was not only due to uncertainty of what content to share, but also because of the perceived effort required to maintain a consistent and high-quality social presence. This was evident in the data, as less than 1% of employees were sharing content before DSMN8's launch.

The Solution

Huawei's biggest requirement was to find a solution that reduced the amount of time and effort required to maintain employees social profiles. The critical components of the success of the program are:

- Automation and Segmentation
- Gamification and Rewards
- Authentic and Unique Content

The Impact

In addition to 75 million content impressions generated through the platform. The average employee generates the following results each month:

26

Avg. items of content shared per user

135

Content Clicks

5

Clicks per share

£0.17

Comparative cost per click

The Results

Huawei has successfully transitioned to a company where employees are eager to share branded content. In doing so, these employees have actively grown their own personal brands, made easier than ever before through the DSMN8 platform. The activity now forms an integral part of the companies go-to-market strategy. With the program driving awareness of key messaging through a previously under-utilised channel.

CLIENT

Huawei

HEADQUARTERS

Dusseldorf, Germany

COMPANY SIZE

188,000 Employees



The Challenge

With an aggressive product roll-out plan and a new life as a dedicated organisation, it was a time of change for Arlo Technologies. Critical to their future success was the ability to ensure all employees had a thorough understanding of their products, services and markets. The challenge was how to engage employees across all areas of the business in an effective, on-going manner that drives business growth through social selling.

The Solution

Having experienced success with the DSMN8 platform as part of Netgear, Arlo decided to implement the solution once again. Introducing an employee advocacy program to make it easy for brand-approved content to be shared with employees across the company. The solution elevated the traditional product training approach and helped turn employees into authentic social sellers. Providing on-going support and a rich resource for employees to utilise.

The Impact

In addition to 35% of employees becoming active users since the platform launch. The program generated the following results over a 6 month period:

24%

Increase In Employees Sharing Brand Content

98%

Increase In Employee Product Knowledge

20%

Increase In Web Traffic

CLIENT

Arlo Technologies

HEADQUARTERS

San Jose, California

COMPANY SIZE

319 Employees



The Challenge

Being one of the biggest outdoor media companies in the world can bring its fair share of challenges. How can you effectively align multiple offices and employees on a consistent basis? How do you motivate employees to become brand ambassadors? Or, how can you really leverage social media platforms without needing to increase your media budget? These were some of the challenges facing OUTFRONT Media. But the marketing team had a plan!

The Solution

After extensive research and evaluation into leading platforms. They selected DSMN8 as their preferred partner due to advance functionality. The automation and segmentation were a key feature for the OUTFRONT Media team, as the team were able to localise content for specific regions and teams. As a listed company, OUTFRONT Media must keep a close eye on what is shared across online channels. DSMN8 enables the syndication of pre-approved content to be easily disseminated across departments, offices, countries and languages.

The Impact

In addition to 78% of users being active users. On average the program generates the following results each month:

1,338

Avg. items of content shared

3,208+

Content Clicks

35

Shares Per Piece of Content

£1.43

Comparative Cost-Per-Click

The Results

OUTFRONT Media have successfully turned their employees into effective brand ambassadors. The company has effectively localised the sharing of content, imagery and key information. The first 3 months of the program saw:

- **400%** Increase in employees sharing employer related content
- **23%** Increase in people following OUTFRONT Media on LinkedIn
- **69%** Increase in OUTFRONT Media's social engagement

CLIENT

OUTFRONT Media

HEADQUARTERS

New York, USA

COMPANY SIZE

2,370 Employees



The Challenge

In essence, the Krauthammer content making and syndication machine had hit a wall. There was demand from the organisation. But finding the right content and insights for employees to use to feed their networks on a consistent basis was becoming a challenge. There was also a growing sentiment from sales consultants who were time poor, reluctant to embrace new technology and doubted the effect such activity could have on driving key results.

The Solution

Krauthammer selected DSMN8 due to advanced functionality versus alternative solutions. In particular, the automation and segmentation features. These allowed teams to set up their own profiles and content preferences. Easily enabling the segmentation of content which was of most interest to each individual team member. Reducing time spent that ensured sales consultants could embrace social selling without it impacting on their existing schedules.

The Impact

In addition to 85% of training and sales consultants becoming active users of the platform. The program has generated the following results over a 12 month period:

86%

Increase In Website Traffic

16,600+

Content Clicks

£0.57

Comparative Cost-Per-Click

The Results

Krauthammer successfully turned their employees into brand ambassadors, increasing team motivation and leveraging personal networks. This built trust in the sales teams and organisation ahead of any initial sale and made conversion easier than ever before. Third party organisations said how impressed they were at how insightful Krauthammer's sales teams were across social channels. Highlighting the consistency and expertise of the organisation which brought business to Krauthammer in the form of increased website traffic and leads.

CLIENT

Krauthammer

HEADQUARTERS

Zurich, Switzerland

COMPANY SIZE

204 Employees



The Challenge

Awin wanted to support and guide their employees to become more socially active and over time transform them into Awin brand influencers. There was also a need to centralise content whilst maintaining local relevance and increasing reach. However, with multiple teams, differing levels of social activity and willingness to share, ensuring smooth integration and adoption was going to be vital to its success.

The Solution

Awin's biggest requirement was to provide a solution which would not only drive employee participation but also support employees. Segmentation and personalisation were key to the success of the program. The organisation was able to curate and serve the most relevant content to each employee. They also tapped into the power of competitive employees via a points-based engagement system. Driven by the support and adoption of key senior leadership.

The Impact

On average the program generates the following results each month:

650+

Avg. items of content shared

4,000+

Content Clicks

15

Shares Per Piece of Content

£0.23

Comparative Cost-Per-Click

The Results

Since implementing DSMN8 and the employee advocacy program, Awin has achieved huge success in bringing social selling and personal branding to the forefront of employees minds. With 40% of employees now actively using the platform, Awin has tapped into the power of employee influencers to help boost its PR and social footprint. The company now sees a higher percentage of employees sharing on a monthly basis when compared to all industry competitors.

CLIENT

AWIN

HEADQUARTERS

Berlin, Germany

COMPANY SIZE

1,000+ Employees

And breathe!

Phew!

That's it. Congratulations on making it this far!

That's everything you need to know about Employee Influencers... **for now**. We know it may seem like a lot to take in, but let this guide assist you every step of the way.

Whether you're a smaller company of <1000 employees, or a global company with >100,000 employees, it's time to consider your employees as your most valuable assets! After all you've learned, why wouldn't you?

Got A Question? Just ask!

Don't hesitate to contact us today if you have any questions or would like to know more about how we can help you guide your employees to become full-blown employee influencers.

To learn more about our products and services, one of our expert team will be happy to set up a discovery call. This call will enable us to understand the exact needs of your business and how we can help you succeed.

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