build your

EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

and

Transform Your Workforce into
a Social Media Powerhouse
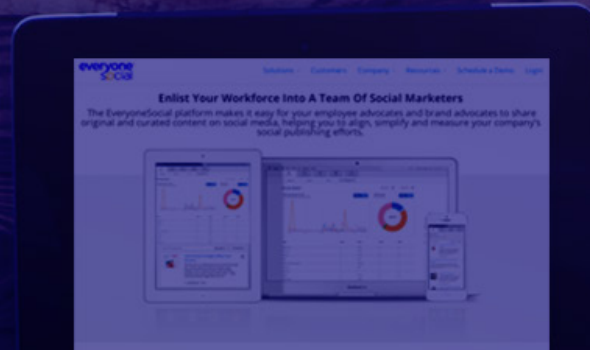
everyone social™

INTRO

Your team is the heart and soul of your business. You've gone the extra mile to attract great people — who regularly go above and beyond their everyday responsibilities to take your company to new heights.

If only you could channel that energy into something more — a new type of influence and engagement engine that transforms raw passion and everyday enthusiasm into a structured form of brand building. What if you could harness the collective energy of your employees' existing social media activity?

It's this vision that has sparked a new field of social marketing called 'employee advocacy' — a marketing channel based on your workforce's already present enthusiasm. In fact, employee advocacy is more than marketing, driving loyalty, sentiment, and customer service.
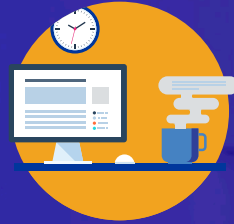
Team members curate content produced by your brand and thought leadership in your industry. They may decide to comment upon and talk about this content internally.

Team members then share this content on their personal and professional social media channels including LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

As a result of this sharing activity, employees steadily develop a reputation as thought leaders — while driving traffic to your company's website.

Over time, your advocacy marketing program generates quantifiable ROI through direct traffic, earned media value (EMV), Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) and sales.

Your company becomes a social media influencer — resulting in higher levels of organic website traffic and instant thought leadership within the communities that you serve.

As a social media leader within your organization, you know how important it is to keep your entire company engaged with your content marketing efforts. You're constantly asking team members to share your content, promote your marketing efforts, engage with customers, and stay as connected as possible to the conversations you're sparking on social media.

You also know that's incredibly challenging to keep your workforce engaged with your social media strategy. It's a tough balance to strike — often, social media leads don't feel comfortable asking team members to share content. It simply feels inorganic and inauthentic. Not to mention, it's incredibly awkward to ask employees to half-heartedly share content. Not to mention, team members have varying levels of social media experience — whose responsibility is it to provide coaching on how much branded vs. general industry content to share?

And then there's the toughest part — structure and management. Social media managers don't have the bandwidth to help team members curate content to share — or to measure performance from an employee advocate program. Spreadsheets won't cut it.

That's why we wrote this guide: to empower social media leads with the resources they need to implement an end-to-end employee advocacy program. To get started, you'll need a marketing plan and workforce engagement plan. You'll also need a set of resources to execute initiatives quickly, manage operations, and manage the success of your program.

SO LET'S GET TO IT >>>

II. BUILDING THE BUSINESS CASE

WHY EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY

1. YOUR WORKFORCE IS AN UNTAPPED CONVERSATION ENGINE
2. ADVOCACY MARKETING INSPIRES EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
3. RESULTS WILL BE MEASURABLE, YIELDING A DIRECT IMPACT TO YOUR BRAND

NO LONGER CAN A BRAND SIMPLY
RELY ON BULK ADVERTISING,
AS CONSUMERS AND BUSINESS
PROFESSIONALS ALIKE PROBE AND
RESEARCH YOUR PRODUCTS AND
SERVICES LONG BEFORE ARRIVING
AT YOUR DOOR. IF YOU'RE NOT IN
THE CONVERSATION
– YOU DON'T EXIST.

"

YOUR WORKFORCE IS AN UNTAPPED CONVERSATION ENGINE

Your employees are conversation starters, and the following stats illuminate why.

84%

According to research from Nielsen, **84% of people trust recommendations from friends and family above all other forms of marketing.** The same study found that content–based advertising was the second most trusted advertising source.

41%

Edelman's 2013 Trust Barometer points out that **41% of people think a company's employees rank higher in public trust than a firm's PR department, CEO, or Founder.**

40%

Sales reps using social media consistently outsell their peers. According to a recent study, **more than 40% of salespeople said they've closed between two and five deals as a result of social media.** More than 10% of the respondents indicated that social media was directly responsible for their sales success.

KEY STATS: EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY PROGRAMS ARE CRUCIAL TO YOUR BOTTOM LINE

According to research firm Gartner, advocacy marketing is one of the biggest trends of 2014. In this particular article, Gartner specifically references a specific type of advocate marketing program — one built around your customers' communities.

The concept makes sense. When people love your brand, they're more likely to talk about it — a dynamic that ultimately leads to more sales for your company. Gartner's observations should come as no surprise: the smartest brands in the industry know that social media is a powerful marketing force.

Wharton professor Jonah Berger has committed his entire academic career to breaking down the science of word of mouth marketing. His takeaways?

1. Some brands generate more buzz than others. It's not luck or lightning in a bottle. It's a science.

2. Most new (and established) ventures don't have a big advertising budget. They need to grow organically.

3. Word of mouth is a marketing force of nature — directly tied to revenue and results — and the foundation of history's most timeless brands.

Social media takes word of mouth to the next level — conversations are happening at massive scale, all over the world. It's important for your brand to be a core part of the dialogue — to actively share content and create content that audiences are actively sharing.

The barrier to entry; however, is high.

Consumers are bombarded with more information than they can handle. Noise tends to be the norm rather than the exception. Every brand in the world is competing for the same sets of eyeballs.

Your marketing strategy needs to stand out — and it's your team members who will stand behind the thought leadership that your brand puts forward.

Your team members are also consumers. They're conversation starters and representatives from your brand. Employee advocate programs can kick start dialogue and drive results in our increasingly connected economy. No longer can a brand simply rely on bulk advertising, as consumers and business professionals alike probe and research your products and services long before arriving at your door. If you're not in the conversation – you don't exist.

ADVOCACY MARKETING INSPIRES EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

According to Gallup's 2013 State of Global Workforce Survey, only 13% of employees consider themselves engaged at work. A shocking 63% of those surveyed consider themselves to be actively disengaged.

State of the Global Workplace Gallup 2013

13%
of employees are engaged

63%
are not engaged
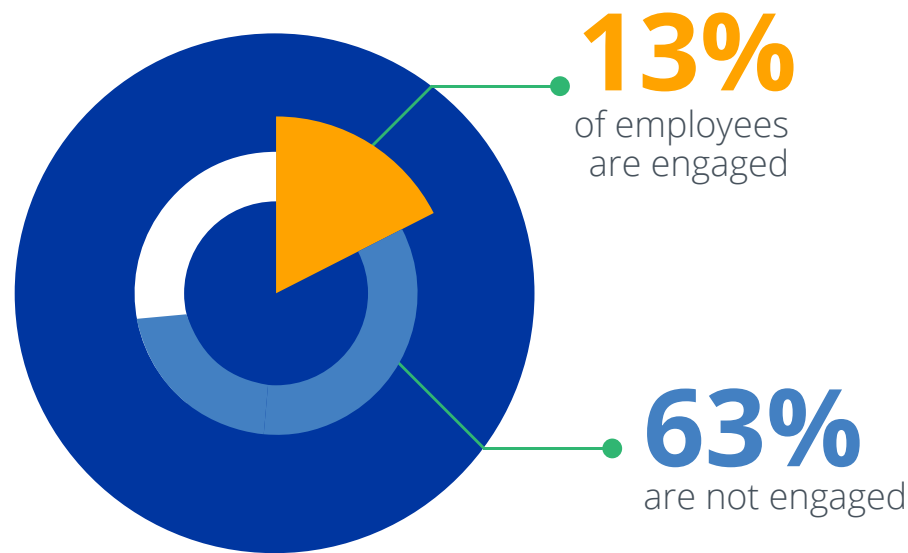
These trends present a major problem. Gallup estimates that actively disengaged employees cost the U.S. economy between $450 billion and $550 billion each year in lost productivity. These stats are your HR team's worst nightmare. The more disengaged your employees feel from your brand, the more money your company is likely losing – both in terms of lost productivity and opportunity costs from diminished motivation.

Companies need to take steps to keep team members happy and engaged. As a social media or community management team lead, you're in a unique position to lead your employer through the crucial first steps of this process.

An employee advocacy program is, at its heart, a relationship between your company's leadership team and workforce. According to research from Altimeter Group and LinkedIn, employees at socially engaged companies are more likely to feel optimistic about their companies' futures, more likely to feel inspired, more likely to stay at their companies, and more likely to feel connected to coworkers beyond their core teams. Employees want to be an active participant in the content creation process they don't want to be told what to do.

20%
more likely to stay at their companies

20%
more likely to feel inspired

15%
more likely to feel connected to co-workers beyond their core teams

27%
more likely to feel optimistic about their companies' future

1.
GREAT
CONTENT

2.
A SOLID
MARKETING PLAN

3.
GREAT
SOFTWARE LIKE EVERYONESOCIAL TO BRING YOUR **VISION TO LIFE**
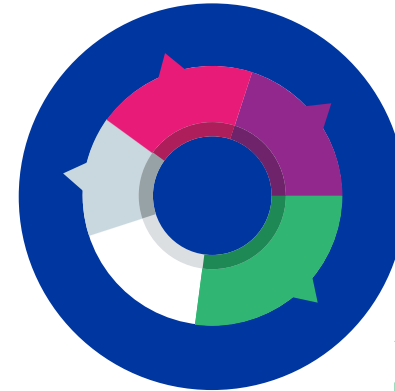
An employee advocacy program has value beyond your company's marketing department. The community you build will be the single most important tool for keeping your entire workforce engaged.

As a community manager, you're uniquely positioned to inspire and empower your teammates. You just need three things to make it happen.

RESULTS WILL BE MEASURABLE, YIELDING A DIRECT IMPACT TO YOUR BRAND

Over time, an employee advocate program will yield a direct benefit to your organization. There are four KPIs that your program will influence:

1. Referral Traffic:

Web visitors who come to your website through social media. This metric tells you that your content is generating awareness on social media.

2. Direct Traffic:

Audiences who visit your website by typing your URL into your browser. This metric tells you that your brand is memorable.

3. Net Promoter Score:

This metric measures loyalty between brands and their customers. This metric is based on the direct question – "How likely is it that you would recommend our company/product/service to a friend or colleague?"

4. Exposure to New Audiences

Content will quickly become your brand's engine for growth. An advocacy marketing program can help your business uncover new customer acquisition and conversation channels.

In addition to the four KPIs listed on the left, social media marketers can pay attention to the following metrics:

Average Shares Per Employee

This metric is important for both marketing and HR goals and will provide an indicator of your workforce's engagement level. The more content that employees are able to share, the more influence your company's marketing message will yield.

Proportion of Web Traffic From Employee–Sparked Efforts

Content can help boost relationships with existing customers. Your client service, account management, and sales teams are at the front lines of your organizations – and these individuals will be hubs for distributing content.

Average Pieces of Content Read By Employees

The reason why we recommend this metric is to help organizations monitor the full spectrum of social media user types. Some of your team members will enjoy sharing while others will prefer to just lurk. They are still engaging with and absorbing with your brand's content – they are just internalizing the information.

III. CREATING CONTENT THAT EMPLOYEES WILL LOVE SHARING

1. WHAT WILL TEAM MEMBERS ENJOY SHARING?
2. THE PRACTICAL SIDE TO SHARING

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AS MUCH AS YOUR TEAM
MEMBERS LOVE YOUR
COMPANY, THEY DON'T
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SOCIAL NETWORKS WITH A
SALES PITCH.

WHAT WILL TEAM MEMBERS ENJOY SHARING?

The simple answer to this question is that employees want to share content that is personally relevant to their interests, values, and career aspirations. As much as your team members love your company, they don't want to be blasting their social networks with a sales pitch.

Rather, they view social sharing as an opportunity to build thought leadership and delight their own audiences with valuable information. Their roles within your organization is a crucial part of their personal journey and story. That's why it's important to share a mix of industry-related and branded content.

What's the ideal ratio?
EveryoneSocial recommends the following mix for an effective employee advocacy program:

70–80% INDUSTRY CONTENT / 20–30% BRANDED CONTENT

With EveryoneSocial, employees can suggest content for team members to share. The tool to do it is fun and takes less than 30 seconds to use. All employees can be an asset to your core social media team.

When it comes to employee advocacy, your employees shouldn't be forced into sharing — they should feel inspired. Your brand can encourage sharing by producing the following types of content:

1. Employee-Generated Material

Employees will share what makes them proud. That's why you should make content production a group effort. In addition to hiring content producers, you can also encourage employees to share their own thoughts on your company's blog. Give your team members an opportunity to share what makes them most proud.

2. Powerful Human Stories

Work has value beyond what we sell. What we build at the office is often an extension of who we are as people. That's why it's so important for your company to showcase its extremely human side. Who are the minds behind your brand, and what has been the emotional journey that has led you to where you are now? Your employees are a part of these stories — they'll want to tell them firsthand.

3. Content that Educates

Content consumers are hungry for knowledge. They're looking to teach and to learn. If you create content — infographics, webinars, and blog posts — with strong educational value, your employees will notice. They'll be excited to keep the conversation going as educators and ambassadors — from your brand.

WHAT WILL TEAM MEMBERS ENJOY SHARING?

In a recent study of almost 10,000 companies, Wharton professor Jonah Berger and his colleague identified six characteristics of highly sharable content. These dimensions must be built into your company's brand advocacy program. Build an amazing social sharing program by creating and promoting content with the following traits:

1. Social currency:

We are what we share. People are more likely to promote content that makes them look good. Employee advocacy programs are most successful when team members feel empowered to build their personal brands.

2. Top of Mind:

We want to speak what's on our mind. If we're actively thinking about a particular topic, we're more likely to talk about it. That's why content curation is so important for your company's employee advocacy strategy – team members will want to share content that's relevant to what they're already thinking about.

3. Emotion:

We care about what we're sharing. That's why it's so important for companies to curate and create content that aligns with team members' values. Encourage your fellow employees to participate in your content marketing efforts by blogging on topics that they care about.

4. Publicity:

People imitate what they admire. They're likely to share what their colleagues and favorite thought leaders are sharing.

5. Practical Value:

People want to do more than look good – they genuinely want to help others. Useful = highly shareable.

These six characteristics outline the framework for highly shareable content. They won't guarantee success, but they're a starting point for getting your employee advocacy program off the ground. Speak to your team's hearts in addition to their heads.

6. Stories:

Employees might love their companies, but they don't want to be walking billboards. They'd much rather build thought leadership as part of a larger narrative. Your brand's content needs to drive thought leadership in your industry.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE TO SHARING

Your employees are incredibly pressed for time. As much as they would like to build their personal brands and reputations as thought leaders, they don't have time to filter through email distribution lists and share everything that your team is publishing. Your team members do; however, want to be closely involved.
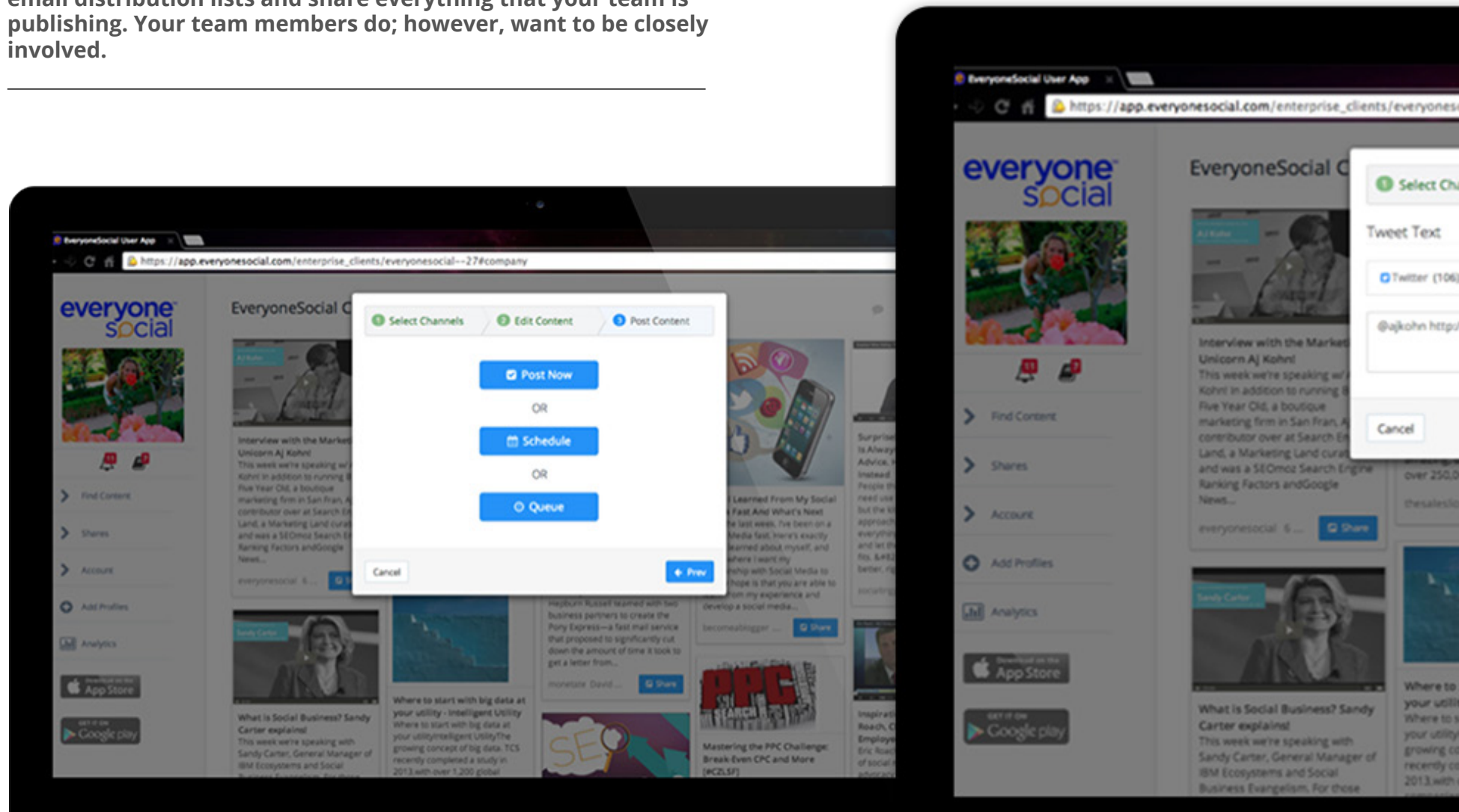
Employees are 38X more likely to share content via the EveryoneSocial app. vs traditional email request.

This is a pain point that social media and community managers face over and over. It's also the reason why we built EveryoneSocial – software that's designed to complement natural sharing activity. We make it easy for employees to discover great content, and share that content with their social media communities. With just a few clicks, your team members will be up, running, and ready to post.

THE FACT IS THAT SOCIAL MEDIA
IS AN ORGANIC PROCESS. IF
YOU TELL EMPLOYEES WHAT
TO SHARE, THEY'LL INSTANTLY
FEEL TURNED OFF. THE DESIRE
TO SHARE MUST COME FROM
WITHIN – HOWEVER, YOUR
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MEMBERS HAVE ENOUGH
DIRECTION.

"

III. HOW TO GET STARTED

1. START WITH A CLEARLY ARTICULATED SOCIAL STRATEGY, ALIGNED WITH YOUR BRAND PRIORITIES
2. CREATE AND DISTRIBUTE A COMPANY–WISE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
3. NOMINATE AND TRAIN TEAM MEMBERS TO PILOT YOUR PROGRAM
4. HELP TEAM MEMBERS BUILD THEIR PERSONAL BRANDS
5. HOLD TRAINING SESSIONS TO MAKE IMPLEMENTATION EASY

HOW TO BUILD A HIGH PERFORMING EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

STEP 1

Start with a clearly articulated social strategy, aligned with your brand priorities

The key to getting started with an employee advocacy program is structure – but not in the way that you might be thinking about it.

Successful employee advocacy programs are structured without being too rigorous. You want to make sure that you tie your efforts into your company's long–term branding goals with a framework for measuring results.

What you don't want to do is micromanage the day to day sharing activity of your team. Give employees the space that they need to share what they want, when they want, and how often they want.

Just make sure that you know what goals to measure (in terms of metrics and overall corporate branding objectives), and keep your fellow employees looped in.

A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY SHOULD

1. EMPOWER YOUR EMPLOYEES WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR COMPANY'S BRAND COMMUNICATION GOALS.

2. PROVIDE DIRECTION AS TO WHAT YOUR COMPANY STANDS FOR AND HOW YOUR TEAM MEMBERS CAN BE SUPPORTIVE.

3. BE OPEN ENDED ENOUGH TO KEEP TEAM MEMBERS FEELING INSPIRED RATHER THAN CONSTRICTED.

4. WELCOME FEEDBACK FROM SPECIFIC TEAM MEMBERS.

STEP 2

Create and distribute a company–wise social media policy

The EveryoneSocial team often hears two common concerns about employee advocacy programs:

1. People often tell us that they're worried about the risks of on-the-job tweeting

2. People tell us that they're not sure about how to set standards and specifications for what employees should (and shouldn't) be sharing

The fact is that social media is an organic process. If you tell employees what to share, they'll instantly feel turned off. The desire to share must come from within – however, your company does need to take steps to ensure that team members have enough direction.

"We look at it as a collaborative tool to help better serve our customers, our partners, our investors and our employees...and to LISTEN to them as well. There, of course, have to be guidelines and employee training around the use of social media. Within our company culture of transparency, we thought we'd make our newly updated internal Social Media handbook available for everyone. We don't claim to know everything about Social Media, but we do know that the wisdom of the crowd is generally better than the wisdom of the few."

John Earnhart, director of corporate communications (the Cisco blog)

So how do you provide employees with enough direction without completely turning them off? One example company to follow is Cisco, a company that actively encourages team members to participate on social media. What Cisco realizes is that employees need guidance, not boundaries. Since the very early days of social media (2010) Cisco has given its employees a comprehensive social media policy. It's available online for anyone to view.

Remember that you're not alone. EveryoneSocial's support team is available to answer your questions, share best practices, and walk you through every step of the process.

Different employees will be communicating in different communities. You want to give guidelines, suggestions, and best practices. You need to make sure that they are getting the right support. Ask yourself how to create a program that helps them educate their communities and answer questions – to keep the fuel in the fire.

STEP 3

Nominate and train team members to pilot your program

An employee advocacy program is a significant undertaking that requires patience and practice to refine. You may not want to roll out the program to every team member at once – or you may want to limit the program to employees who opt in.

One way to get started – and to practice before you release – is to nominate specific team members who might be interested in participating and actively providing feedback in your employee advocacy program.

Make sure to provide ample training so that team members have a strong sense of direction.

STEP 4

Help team members build their personal brands.

EveryoneSocial's most successful customers are positioning their employee advocacy programs as a way for the employee to build their own personal brands and profiles in the social space. Employees love the idea of being positioned as subject matter experts – and having the company support to successfully do it.

Emphasize the direct benefit that employees should expect to see – visibility inside and outside of an organization as well as the opportunity to become a recognized subject matter expert. Show that your social media team is available as a support system.

Don't just unleash people. Think deliberately about what you want the employee to do on behalf of the brand. If you're not serving the employee and helping them get value for themselves, you'll ultimately have a failed program.

STEP 5

Hold training sessions to make implementation easy

With the right structure and plan and place, most EveryoneSocial customers are up and running within a few hours. Our software works right out of the box and doesn't rely on IT resources you can get right to setting up email distributions and workflows while quickly onboarding your employees.

Advocacy program managers have to have a strong policy and governance model. They need to understand how these programs to their overall business model. What do you want their employees to do on behalf of the brand? What's in it for the employees? How can organizations build a sustainable program?

Not sure how to get started? The EveryoneSocial team can help. Jump to the end of this guide to read about our client onboarding process it's custom tailored to every marketing team.

WITH THE RIGHT STRUCTURE AND PLAN AND PLACE, MOST EVERYONESOCIAL CUSTOMERS ARE UP AND RUNNING WITHIN A FEW HOURS.

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IV. EVERYONESOCIAL'S PROCESS

1. SOFTWARE THAT'S OPTIMIZED FOR TEAMS
2. PROCESSES DEFINED FOR HUMANS
2.EVERYONESOCIAL'S PLANNING GUIDE

SOFTWARE THAT'S OPTIMIZED FOR TEAMS

We've created an advocacy marketing platform that is custom tailored around the needs of organizations, social media teams, and employees. Rather than create one-size-fits-all software for employees and customers, we've done the due diligence to (1) examine the needs of social media teams and (2) study the sharing behaviors of employees within companies of all sizes. We designed our software around natural content curation and sharing behaviors – and then created systems to help social media leads execute and measure their goals.

PROCESSES DEFINED FOR HUMANS

As we mentioned in Part 3, an effective employee marketing strategy needs more than just software to be successful. That's why our client service team has developed an onboarding process that's right for you – to make sure that you're ready to succeed and up. Our client service team will work with you, every step of the way, to ensure that you're up and running as quickly as possible. We understand that every organization is different, and we're excited to help you navigate this new, exciting challenge.

everyone social™ | PLANNING **GUIDE**

1
CREATE EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY PROGRAM LAUNCH PLAN

Date _____

- ☐ Kickoff call with EveryoneSocial team and introduction to dedicated Client Success Manager
- ☐ Establish project timeline
  - *For example, customers with a mature social media strategy can typically implement EveryoneSocial within a matter of weeks.*
- ☐ Discuss strategy for employee advocacy program
- ☐ Use an internal social media education program to activate employees for engagement and to help reduce risk.

FOUR KEY STEPS OF THIS PROGRAM INCLUDE }
- ☐ Social media policy training (examples available)
- ☐ Social media introduction
- ☐ Social media user development
- ☐ Executive education/training

- ☐ Formulate program success metrics to benchmark and demonstrate program impact
- ☐ Designate internal champions and program administrator(s)
- ☐ If not already completed, create a strategy for executive buy-in

2
IDENTIFY FIRST GROUP OF EMPLOYEE ADVOCATES

Date _____

- ☐ Locate your most savvy social advocates in three ways:
  - ☐ Evaluate current social usage/expertise
  - ☐ Use an internal survey and invite based on interest level
  - ☐ Find your rising stars – *These individuals are already interested in sharing, and with a little guidance, they can quickly become influencers within their networks.*
- ☐ Determine size of the groups – We recommend a core group of 20-40 to start
- ☐ Determine group types
  - ☐ Will your advocates be organized based on department, functional business unit, geography, topic, or a combination?

3
DEVELOP A CONTENT STRATEGY

Date _____

- ☐ Begin identifying content sources (internal and external). Some examples:
    - ☐ RSS feeds
    - ☐ Blogs
    - ☐ Publications
    - ☐ Company Content
    - ☐ Twitter handles and hashtags
    - ☐ Keywords

4
ACCOUNT SETUP

Date _____

- ☐ After finalizing a strategy and identifying initial advocates, EveryoneSocial will complete an account setup. This will ensure that your account is ready for launch.
- ☐ EveryoneSocial will setup the account and ensure proper functionality of:
    - ☐ Content Curation Streams
    - ☐ Application and Email Settings
    - ☐ Groups and Group Settings
    - ☐ Leaderboards (if applicable)
    - ☐ Reporting

5
ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

Date _____

- ☐ EveryoneSocial will train your program administrator(s).
    - ☐ The walkthrough will demonstrate how the platform operates just as it will on the day of launch.
    - ☐ Training includes:
        - ☐ Full System Walkthrough
        - ☐ Creating and managing employee advocates within the platform
        - ☐ Creating new content streams, managing and approving content to individuals
        - ☐ Setting up additional features (leaderboards, emails, auto-approval, etc.)
        - ☐ Analytics and Reporting

6
EMPLOYEE ADVOCATE TRAINING

Date _____

- ☐ EveryoneSocial will host training via webinar for your employees where the following will be covered in depth:
    - ☐ The value of the program
    - ☐ Program goals
    - ☐ Policies around content sharing
    - ☐ Share best practices (day, time, hashtags, channel usage, etc.)
    - ☐ EveryoneSocial platform navigation and usage

7
PROGRAM LAUNCH

Date _____

- ☐ EveryoneSocial will be with you every step of the way
    - ☐ Assist with initial batch of launch related questions
    - ☐ Help with pulling first set of reports

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8
POST LAUNCH

Date _____

- ☐ Begin measuring against initial goals using ES reporting console
- ☐ Evaluate program participation and engagement.
- ☐ Identify individuals who may need help getting started
- ☐ Begin to work with your ES Client Success Manager to measure performance and identify program opportunities

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9
CREATING SUCCESS AND GROWING THE PROGRAM

Date _____

- ☐ Weekly performance call with your dedicated ES Client Success Manager
- ☐ Expand program usage to other groups or departments
    - ☐ Begin socializing success metrics internally
    - ☐ EveryoneSocial will assist in expansion and follow the same process as initial launch.
    - ☐ Now may be a good time to include the Executive team in the program
    - ☐ Make the EveryoneSocial leaderboard public to create healthy internal competition
- ☐ Hold ongoing training sessions that are both industry and platform focused
- ☐ Highlight/share employee success stories
- ☐ Review soft benefits of the program
- ☐ EveryoneSocial will provide a monthly success report
- ☐ EveryoneSocial will perform a detailed quarterly program review to ensure program success

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR
WANT TO TALK TO EVERYONESOCIAL?
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
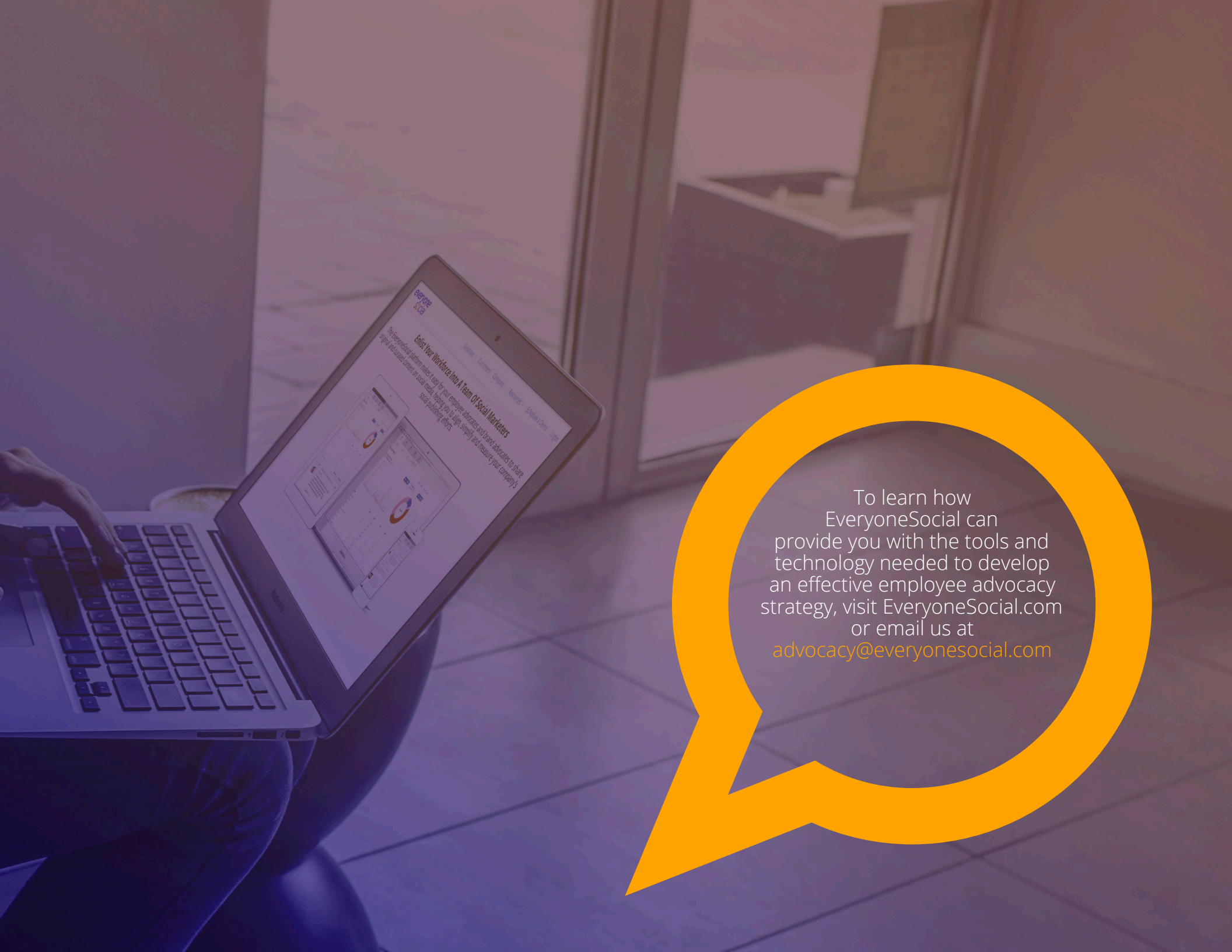
To learn how
EveryoneSocial can
provide you with the tools and
technology needed to develop
an effective employee advocacy
strategy, visit EveryoneSocial.com
or email us at
advocacy@everyonesocial.com

everyone
social

800-630-0508
advocacy@everyonesocial.com