

11 STEPS

to Enterprise Social
Media Advocacy





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Introduction

Altimeter Group defines the culture of content as breaking down company silos through content. Content is a strategic business initiative that expands way beyond marketing. With the right culture, employees want to showcase where they work.

Employee Advocacy programs encourage employees to participate in communication efforts. When culture, content, and social media sharing fall into place, your company achieves advocacy, and becomes a true social business.

Social media education is a top priority for most companies according to Altimeter Group. However, there's a huge knowledge gap where employees are not comfortable sharing content to social networks (mostly because they're scared that what they're saying is not OK).

On top of that, most companies do NOT have a social media education program in place. In order to retain employees and invest in their professional development, you need to invest in training and new skills.

Employee Engagement & Advocacy programs help with the on-going training and habit forming of day-to-day social media use, while building the thought leadership of your employees and achieving your strategic business goals.

With an employee social media program, you can showcase your culture and employer brand, improve brand health, increase lead generation, find better sources for talent, improve efficiencies in work and communications, and have an on-going investment in employee knowledge.

It's clear to most companies that Employee Advocacy programs are crucial to keep employees engaged in this digital age. So how do you get started?

In this guide, you'll get a better understanding of what to prepare before launching an Employee Advocacy program, what goals to measure, how to set-up KPIs, how to train employees, and how to launch and scale the program globally across your enterprise.

Are you ready? Let's go!



Goal Setting

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Goals and objectives are the starting point to a successful program. In one sentence, try to articulate the high-level outcome you'd like to achieve. This helps with understanding when your program is successful, and when you're running into roadblocks.

BEST PRACTICES

To make it easier to set goals, break up high level objectives into quarterly milestones. This helps keep everyone on track, especially when you are involving multiple business units.

Align your program goals to organizational goals. This helps with getting buy-in from the company when you're evaluating the performance of the program. Involve an executive or multiple executives from each department so that your strategy is holistic.

DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE HR, MARKETING, AND SALES OPERATIONS (TRAINING).

The focus of the program is on content and social media, but looping in team members who can help train and engage employees will ensure that the program kicks off strong from the start, and that everyone is aligned on goals and objectives.



Some Goals to Consider:



Employee Engagement &
Social Media Adoption



Improving Brand Health



On-going, Real-time Social
Media Training & Education



Improving Employer Brand
and Talent Acquisition



Increasing Lead Generation
and Sales Enablement

Program Branding

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Successful advocacy programs are strategically branded. Branding gives your program personality and makes employees feel like part of a larger team effort.

BEST PRACTICES

When you're creating your Employee Advocacy program, remember to brand it specifically for your people, not your clients. Your employees are the "customers" in this case - make it fun for them to join.

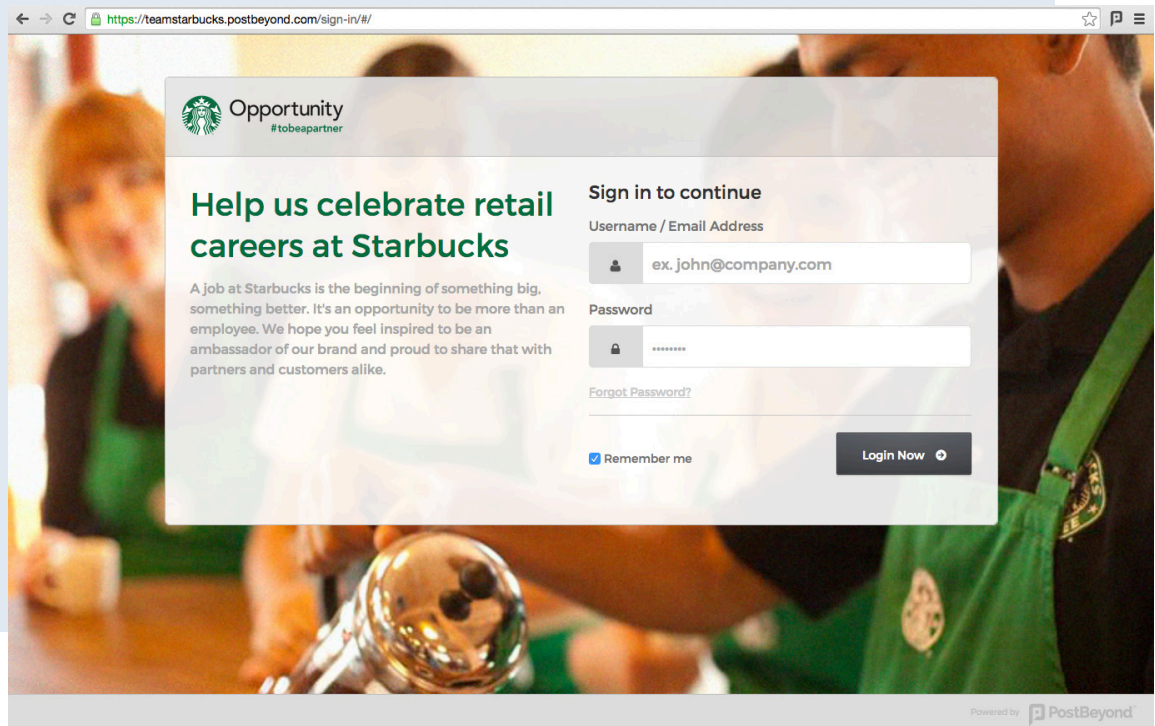


CATCHY

SHORT

FUN

Ask your employees what they prefer! Send out a survey with a few program branding options and see what resonates with the team. The whole point of an Employee Advocacy program is to start collaborating more across departments.



Including employees from the start will help with user adoption later on. Consider branding the program around an internal company initiative that employees are already familiar with. This will make it easier for employees to adopt.

***NOTE: Stay Clear from any time-sensitive branding.**

It's tempting when launching an Employee Advocacy program to want to brand it around the campaign, and not the employer or cultural look and feel of the company. Resist, as if the campaign fails or stops, your program will be associated with the campaign.



Content Strategy

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Content is your marketing currency. Think about what content best supports your advocates, breeds thought leadership, and starts conversations.

BEST PRACTICES

When thinking about the content strategy for your Employee Advocacy program, think about the following questions:

-  Do you have existing content you can use?
-  What kind of content will help build the thought leadership of your employees?
-  What kind of content will make your company stand out?
-  What are recruits interested in?
-  What are your customers interested in?
-  Will you be curating industry content?
-  Do you have experts internally that can help with content creation?

- How much time is required to create new content?
- How many people are on your content marketing team?
- What's your content marketing budget?
- Will you have to create new content specific for your employees' interests?





Analytics/KPIs

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Your advocacy program will grow and evolve, but only if you measure your results and improve through analytics.

BEST PRACTICES

Think big. What are our **business objectives**?

- Increase visibility & brand reputation: Brand mentions, positive brand sentiment
- Drive employee engagement: Content shared, suggested content, leaderboard stats, number of advocates actively sharing content
- Track social media ROI: Earned media, lead conversion
- Generate insights to determine content effectiveness: Top shared, top interactions

Recognize the numbers you'll be reporting on from the start so that you can start to identify trends as results come in. This way, when you adjust and optimize the program later on, you'll know which activities impact results that matter most to you.



Engagement of Employees

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Based on your goals and key metrics, you must strategize on how to motivate your advocates to participate in your program. Leaderboards and email notifications are two key ways to keep them engaged and informed.

BEST PRACTICES

When recruiting your advocates, **try asking who wants to join the program by sending out a company wide survey.** This generates buzz and excitement, and sets the precedence that everyone has the opportunity. You'll always get the people most excited about the program. If they're excited and feel empowered, they're more likely to adopt the program long-term.

When setting-up a long-term communication strategy for the program, **think about how often you are going to push notifications to your advocates:**

- Daily or Weekly digest to notify employees that fresh content is available
- Program update monthly newsletter
- Quarterly Business Review results shared with the team members

Employees will be most engaged with the program if it's accessible at any place, any time. **Think about what devices your employees currently use most:**

- Your Employee Advocacy platform should be available on web and mobile
- Your mobile apps for the program should be designed for quick content consumption and sharing when employees are on the go



SUCCESS STORY

When Melisa Chung first launched Molson Coors' Employee Advocacy program, she aimed to sign up 500 employees in Canada within six months. But employees quickly embraced the customized content portal. Within two weeks, she got 500 employees signing up to be Beer Champion Advocates.



Growth Planning

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Your advocacy program isn't going to scale to your entire company overnight. You'll need to start with a core group and expand over time. But it's important that you identify how to scale the program when you first start.

BEST PRACTICES

When thinking about on-going recruitment for the program, most larger organizations may already have brand champions identified. This can also be anyone who speaks on behalf of the company at conferences, anyone who has written a blog for the company. Try adding employees that are already somewhat comfortable sharing on social media as a starting point. Once others see their success, you'll be able to recruit more people.

When preparing for growth, make sure that you have buy-in from department managers. They have the most influence on their team and can help with project planning, timelines, and what their team really cares about.

When growing the program, it's all about positioning and messaging. How are you going to sell the program internally?



Program Management & Team

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Maintaining your advocacy program takes time and effort. Make sure you know who is responsible for each key part of your program, and communicate those responsibilities clearly at the outset.

BEST PRACTICES

When thinking about who will manage the program, answer the following questions:

-  Who manages the platform?
-  Who creates new content?
-  Who creates program reports?
-  Will there be managers from multiple departments?
-  Who makes decisions for the program?
-  Who communicates the program to employees?

Workflows

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Documenting key workflows is a great way to help your advocates and managers visualize what they need to be doing to make the program a success.

BEST PRACTICES

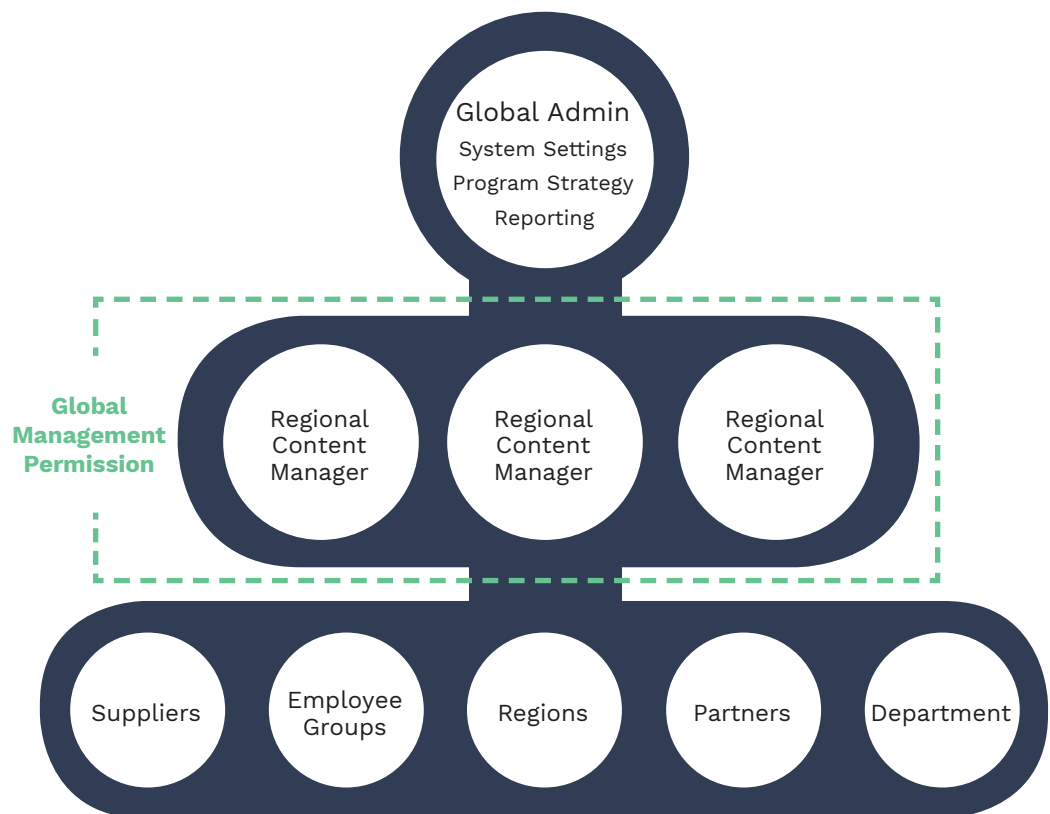
Understanding there are multiple workflows between Employee Engagement program managers and employees. Mapping out each workflow is key to success.

Questions to answer from an employee's perspective.

- What actions do you want your advocates to build into their routine?
- Do you want your advocates to suggest content?
- What devices are your advocates most likely to share from?

Questions to answer from an Employee Advocacy Program Manager's perspective

- What are the different tools you use to curate content?
- How does content and messaging get approved?
- What are some of the analytics tools you currently use that can help track success?
- Are you duplicating content efforts?
- Who has final approval on content?



EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY PERMISSIONING FOR GLOBAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

Communications & Employee Training

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Once your strategy is in place, your platform and Employee Advocacy program managers are set-up and ready to go, you'll need to train your employees on how to use the platform and participate in the program. At this point, you must create a communication plan that determines when you will initiate the platform to users. .

BEST PRACTICES

You will want to assess your current workforce, and answer the following questions:

- Who manages the platform?
- Who creates new content?
- Who creates program reports?

Now that you've assessed your workforce, **what type of training makes sense?** Consider the different learning styles when doing this:

User Guides

Webinar-Style

Lunch & Learn



Program Launch

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Build buzz leading up to the launch of your social hub by constantly giving teasers and communicating with your teams. Create a nice invite template, and write a blog post. Send out webinar details. You could even do something special for the first month! Make sure user resources are ready to go, and super clear.

BEST PRACTICES

The first 30 days of your Employee Advocacy program is all about team adoption! **Monitor user adoption analytics very closely at the start** to make sure your program kicks off strong.

When the program first launches, **you'll need to send out multiple communications and follow-up with users.** Staying close to the team 7 days, 14 days, and 30 days after training will help make sure nobody is confused, and user adoption is high. You'll need to send out resources periodically to help continuously train your employees.

- Hold office hours in week one to help users get comfortable

Get feedback about the program as soon as you can. Sending out a survey, or booking time with various team members to understand if there are any challenges, misunderstanding, or concerns will make sure that your program is off to the right start. You can make quick adjustments as needed right away.




Review, Optimize, and Expand

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

After launch, it's important to keep in mind that this is an iterative process in which you'll have to constantly re-assess KPIs that are put in place. There is a huge change management element involved with Employee Advocacy programs, and employees need to change habits and behaviours to include social media communications in their daily workflow. Social media and content strategy changes quickly, but it takes time to truly become a social business.

BEST PRACTICES

Take a quarterly reporting approach when analyzing the results of your program. Having a Quarterly Business Review gives you enough data to allow you to take a look at what you should keep doing, start doing, or stop. Once you understand the data, convert that into actionable items.



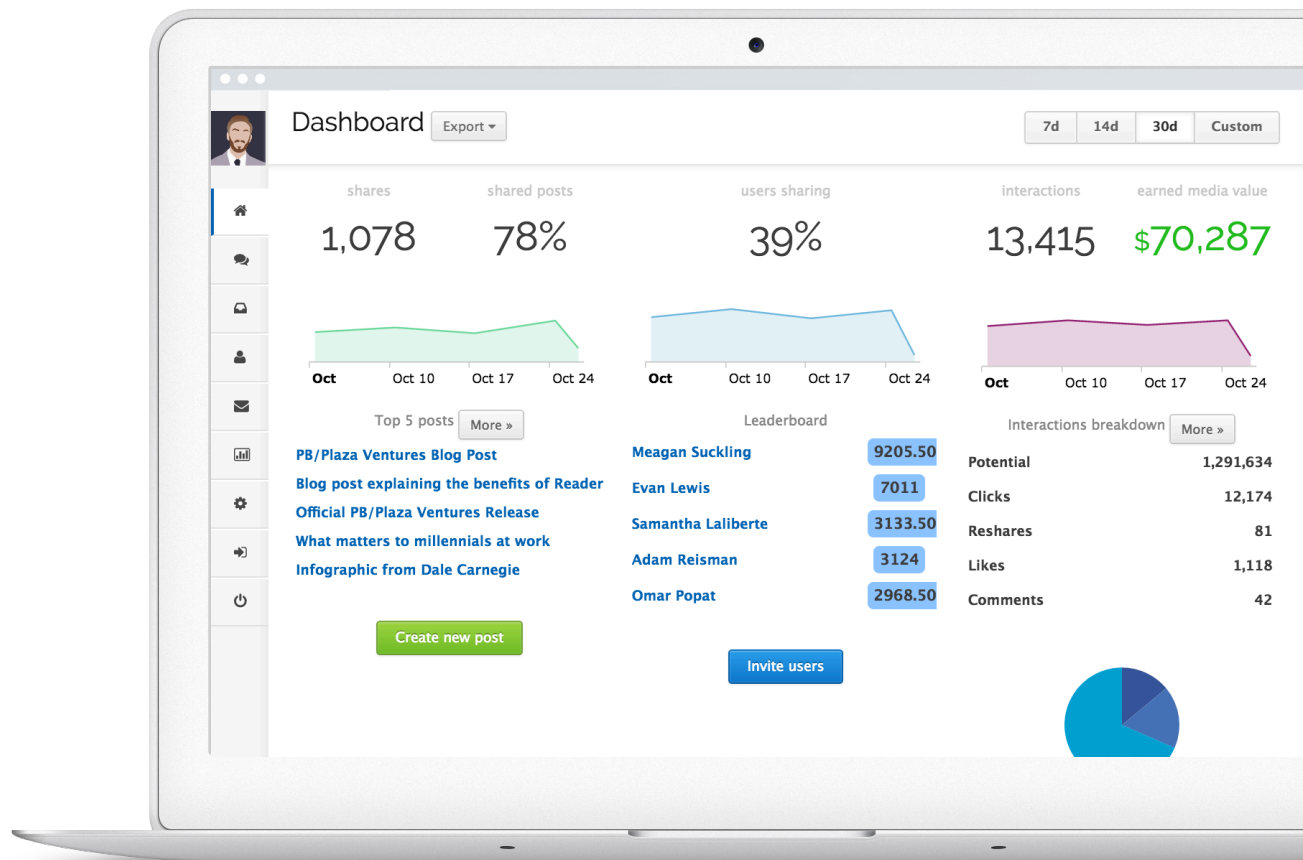
Assess
Content
Frequency

Assess
Content
Calendars

Assess
User
Adoption

Use the program performance to recruit new employee advocates that might have been hesitant to join at first. By showing past successes from other employees, new advocates will be more likely to join.

Use analytics from the program to influence your overall brand content strategy. Using different analytics and insights from the program can help you develop a stronger global marketing strategy overall.





Scaling Requires Time and Help

Social media and content marketing changes at a very fast rate. In order to help navigate this change, your employees will need constant education and real-time training, which is really hard to do at scale. Starting an Employee Advocacy program and working with an enterprise software provider can help you scale your communications globally, and turn your business into a true social enterprise.

" PostBeyond has fueled our relationships, making 'one-to-many' social connections a simple, efficient task for our members to help them retain existing customers and create new ones. "

Joni Lockridge

Director of Digital Strategy, PGA of America

Most technology vendors in the Employee Engagement & Advocacy space have similar features, so the best thing to evaluate when you're considering a vendor for your own program is how they can help with the implementation.

Do they have a strong team that understands this space that can help you with strategy, implementation, and program growth? You need to look more for strategic partners than vendors. Scaling a program to thousands of employees is most likely something the Content or Social Managers at your company have never done, and will need help to make it successful.

Your program will only be as successful as user adoption. If you can't recruit the right advocates, or they won't use the platform you selected, it will be very difficult for the program to succeed. So it's imperative that you have a strong implementation plan from the start.

It's time to turn your business into a social enterprise. Choose the right social business infrastructure and the right implementation partner to help you achieve your goals, right from the start.

**Want to find out how we can help
with your social business strategy?**

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