

# Are employees the untapped marketing channel?

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Who knows the company best, who is the company's biggest brand ambassadors, who understand the market best and has high propensity to be on social media? The answer to all of those questions is the team members within any organisation.



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In South Africa, companies haven't activated employee advocacy within their organisations as prolifically as in overseas markets merely because they don't understand the gold they are sitting on, and if they do, they don't have the machinery to bring the gold to surface.

## Activate the skills of employees

The statistics speak for themselves in that most organisations have enough content to share to prospective clients and staff, but they don't have the means to dominate communication channels due to the nature of these being pay-as-you-go or paying media owners. Once payments stop so does the exposure.

It makes sense to consider activating the skills of employees to become more digitally visible, to tap into this valuable communication channel, which is in fact not a pay-as-you-go channel but rather continuous exposure through engagement and re-sharing, therefore delivering exceptional ROI.

Being a completely new form of marketing in South Africa, readily-available statistics are not available, but international statistics are completely relatable. The good news is that most employees are already on social media, so why not tap into that resource?

At the heart of social is the coming together of like-minded people and communities. In fact, 98% of employees are using social media for personal use, while 50% of those already posted about their employers/organisation.



## Employees: credible spokespeople and sources, how to leverage this trust

Deirdre Elphick-Moore 23 Sep 2016



## The old word-of-mouth methodology

“It’s the old word-of-mouth methodology that’s been effectively translated online,” says Kevin Kirby, COO of Nfinity. “84% of customers say that they value the recommendations from friends and family while 21% of customers say that they ‘like’ employee posts about companies.”

Studies show that employees have ten times more social connections than standard brands. An increase of 12% in brand advocacy can lead to 200% more revenue reveals another study.

The reason it works is because people trust content and recommendations from people they know more than marketing messages from companies. In fact, people are 16 times more likely to read a post from a friend about a brand than from the brand itself. Employees are often the best salespeople of a brand (even if they’re not in sales). They have more influence over the products and services their friends and family buy than any piece of marketing material ever could.

Can you afford not to investigate?

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