

# SOCIAL SELLING STARTER GUIDE



**KATHI KRUSE**

**KRUSE**  
CONTROL  
INC.

# **Social Selling Starter Guide**

**Written by**

**Kathi Kruse**

Kathi Kruse

Kruse Control Inc.

714.251.6440

Website: <http://krusecontrolinc.com>

Email: [kathi@krusecontrolinc.com](mailto:kathi@krusecontrolinc.com)

# Introduction

Promising something to a reader is a big undertaking. This book steps up to that challenge and promises to change your life, and at the very minimum increase your overall sales success.

Yes, a book like this doesn't pretend to be a "wave of a magic wand" kind of book. If you're already striving to meet and exceed your sales goals then you are no stranger to hard work. What this book will afford you is a heavy dose of how to *work smarter* by using social selling techniques and practices that will help you navigate the world of social selling and apply its principles to your sales process.

Today's sales landscape is changing for the better by way of refocusing efforts to reach the customer where they congregate: in the virtual space. Trusted relationships are the paramount concern for every consumer. Customers aren't drawn to the value of a product or service alone. The value of a trusted relationship is the magic glue that keeps any sales machine moving into a sustainable future.

You don't need to be everyone's friend, but you will need to come to terms with the idea that establishing and maintaining trusted relationships IS your platform upon which to grow your sales to a superior level. Becoming a trusted resource is an extremely fulfilling outcome.

This book will help you craft your Social Selling skills into a system that will foster a strong referral network, master networking and technology and leave you enjoying a pipeline full of prospects.

Let's get started!

## Chapter 1

### Social Selling: It Starts With...Why?



Social Selling should be an integral part of any salesperson's daily regimen. To master the art of social selling and networking is to live and breathe the idea that ***relationships drive business***. You have to be visible in the community. You have to get out there and connect with people. It's not called net-sitting or net-eating. It's called *networking*. You have to *work* at it.

Social Media has expanded the marketplace. As a salesperson, Social makes it easier for you to connect with people without interrupting their lives. Where before you were able to maybe touch base with a customer once a month, now you can reach him or her on a daily basis without disturbing them. In fact, in some cases, they may find themselves *wanting* to hear from you.

**Why would a prospect look forward to hearing from a salesperson?**

**Answer: When they believe what you believe.**

Social selling affords a great opportunity although you must recognize that Social tools are merely amplifiers. If you're a smarmy, self-oriented, dirt bag who only cares about himself in real

life, you are those things on the social channels. If you're a thoughtful, caring, trustworthy value creator in real life, you're that on the social channels too.

### **If you suck in real life, you suck on Social Media.**

How do you keep from sucking? The secret to success in Social Selling begins with your, WHY? Ask yourself these 2 questions: Why do I do what I do? What are my intentions when I speak with prospects?

Sure, the ultimate goal is to close the sale but how do you deliver your message? What are your true intentions – for yourself and your customers?

### **Those who start with WHY never manipulate, they inspire.**

And people follow them not because they have to; they follow because they want to. When you know exactly what you believe you can inspire others to believe what you believe.

The awesome Simon Sinek, author of, "Start With Why," says, "For those (customers) who are inspired, the motivation to act is deeply personal. They are less likely to be swayed by incentives. Those who are inspired are willing to pay a premium or endure inconvenience, even personal suffering. Those who are able to inspire will create a following of people—supporters, voters, customers, workers—who act for the good of the whole not because they have to, but because they want to."

Before you can attract people to inspire you must first be inspired yourself. It takes courage to find the one thing that drives what you do, inspires you, that makes you stand out from the others. I recently heard Simon Sinek being interviewed and he shared a simple exercise to help you discover your WHY:

**Question: Of all the events in your career, name something that you absolutely loved being a part of. Be specific.**

**What was the most fulfilling part about this event?**

**What specifically did you love about it?**

More than likely, you've discovered something relationship-based – either with yourself or someone else. What was it about this person or group that made you want to connect? Now, look for other "data points" that align with that same feeling or outcome. Identify the pattern and you will most likely see (find) the one thing you're good at.

When you've identified the one thing you're good at you can start articulating why you do what you do. A bond will form with your customers and prospects in real life and on Social Media. People will be drawn to you because you're good at the one thing. You can provide evidence

and use Social Media to amplify it. You can share content that communicates your WHY.

**People will start believing what you believe.**

I have a deep desire to work with clients who put people before numbers. I have a visceral reaction when I'm around those who put profits before people (and animals for that matter). Everything I do is devoted to creating new ways to make a positive impact on the car business. Sometimes it means not doing something that may be really profitable because it will put me off-course.

**What's your one thing? Why do you do what you do? Successful Social Selling always starts with...WHY?**

## Chapter 2

### Social Selling: A Merciless Exercise in Genuine Engagement



*"Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work." ~Stephen King*

Relationship marketing is not for cheeseballs. Social Media makes it easier than ever, but it's still hard work. Perseverance is something we all have in us but many are just too tempted to take the easy route. In Social selling you get results commensurate with the hard work you put in.

A recent Social selling study found that *78.6% of salespeople who use Social Media as a selling tool outperform those who don't*. It's time for you and your team to develop ways to successfully use Social Media.

There are so many people – business owners, salespeople, even marketers – who try to game the system. It's human nature to try to find the easiest way to get to a goal. But try as you might, selling products and services to people requires a dialog. Sellers must ask questions and engage the prospect to help them decipher their thoughts around the purchase.

I recently spoke to a group of car dealers about Social Media marketing. Whenever I can I like to incorporate examples of the audience's social presence to see if the whole group can learn from one individual dealer's wins and losses. Doing my research one night I pulled up a Los Angeles dealer's Facebook page and gasped. They had 29,000 likes on their Facebook page with less than 0.05% engagement. I can smell a gamer from a mile away so I clicked on the fans tab and sure enough, the city where the bulk of their fans reside is in Egypt.

When the dealer heard about this during my presentation he immediately texted his, "Facebook marketing provider." You're going to love what happened next. The provider texted back that the reason the bulk of their likes were from Egypt was because Egypt is a very disruptive society and therefore a great place to use Social Media to advertise the dealership. That may be so but not one of them is going to buy a car from this dealer!

It was clear that this provider was buying Facebook likes. The dealer disclosed that he was spending \$1,500/month in, "Facebook Like Acquisition" and he mentioned they're not running any Facebook ads. It was also clear to me that this provider never defined a Facebook marketing strategy for this dealer.

Social selling, the act of using Social Media to nurture leads which ultimately result in sales, is not conquered by paying for worthless likes.

The number of likes matters only if those likes are in your (or your competitor's) market area. In successful Social selling you build a community on Social Media to mirror your community in real life. Community members buy from other community members. Conversations happen and it takes a master networker to see results.

I've been talking about fake likes for over 4 years now and there are many dealers and their staff who still don't know about this dangerous practice. If you're new to Facebook marketing please review these main reasons **why NOT to buy Facebook likes**:



1. Facebook is cracking down on fake likes. About a year ago Facebook realized this problem and took steps to remedy it. I'm not the betting type, especially when it comes to my brand's reputation. If you get caught your page is deleted – without warning.
2. Facebook promoted posts become worthless. The higher your like count the more you pay to promote a post. A page that has 3,000 likes could pay \$30 to boost a post to 10,000 users. A page that has 29,000 likes could pay upwards of \$500 to boost the same post. ***You're paying more to reach fake people.***
3. Facebook ads become worthless. When you run campaigns targeting fans and friends of fans, you're wasting your money. Advertising to fake fans "and their friends" is an exercise in futility.
4. The FTC just cracked down on 19 companies who had purchased fake reviews. They fined those businesses \$350,000. Yes, it was the businesses who received the fake reviews, not the fake review providers, who got the bill. All points lead to this happening with Social Media likes and followers. There is a huge push from Google and Yelp to "verify" users and I can see this coming very soon for users of Social Media.

## It's Better in the Light

Those businesses that practice their merciless exercise in genuine engagement reap the benefits of getting the sale. Not everyone will succeed every time but that's no reason to try to take the easy road. The robots this dealer has acquired will NEVER buy from him. Make connections with the people who WILL buy from you by practicing relationship marketing.

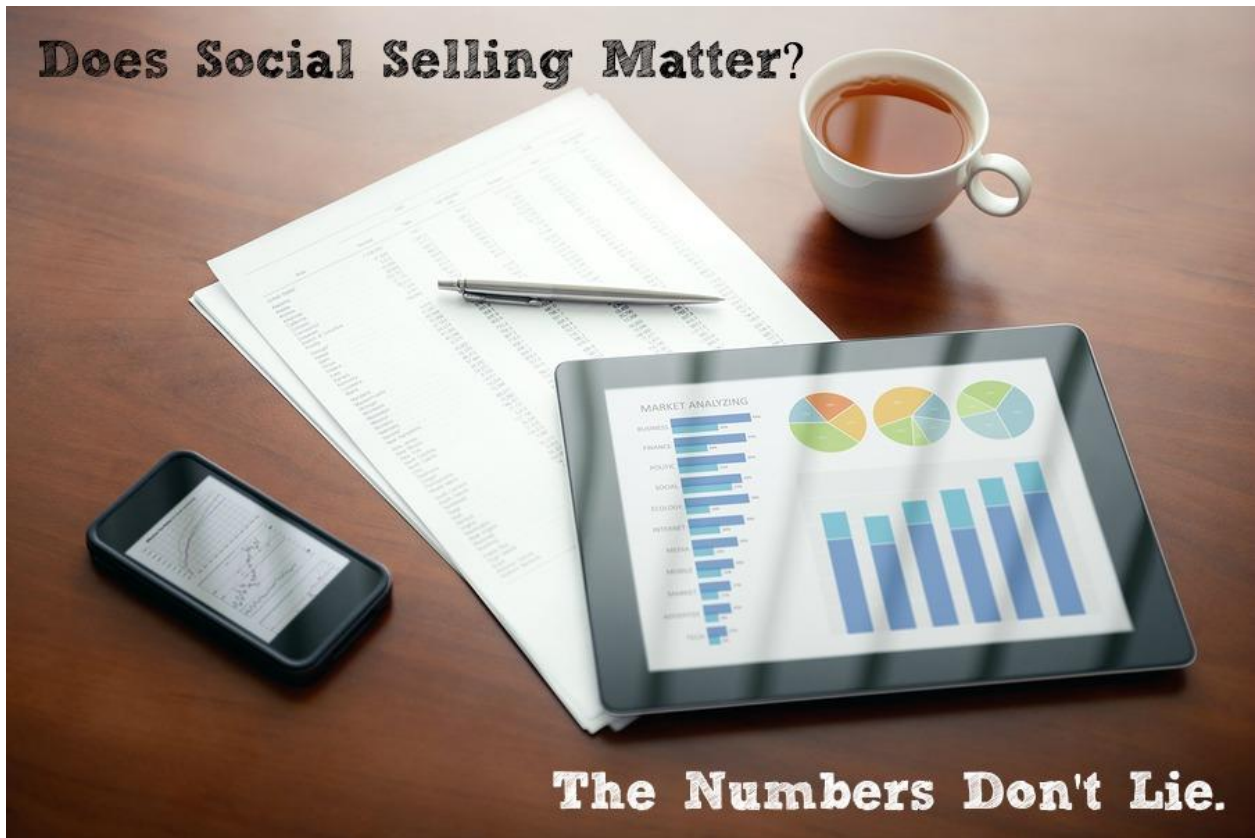
By the way, I just checked in with that same dealer's Facebook page and guess what? They magically have another 1,000 fans 24 hours after my delivery of the news. Miraculously, the most popular city is now Los Angeles. While it's sad that this dealer will continue to think that he's winning on Social Media, I hope this story will inspire you to pursue more for yourself and your business.

Good thing I took a screenshot.



## Chapter 3

### Does Social Selling Matter? The Numbers Don't Lie



Does Social Media factor in the sales process? If you talk to the many naysayers, the answer is no. However, there were two major studies published recently that show all points leading to Social Media as a crucial factor in prospecting and cultivating leads and sales.

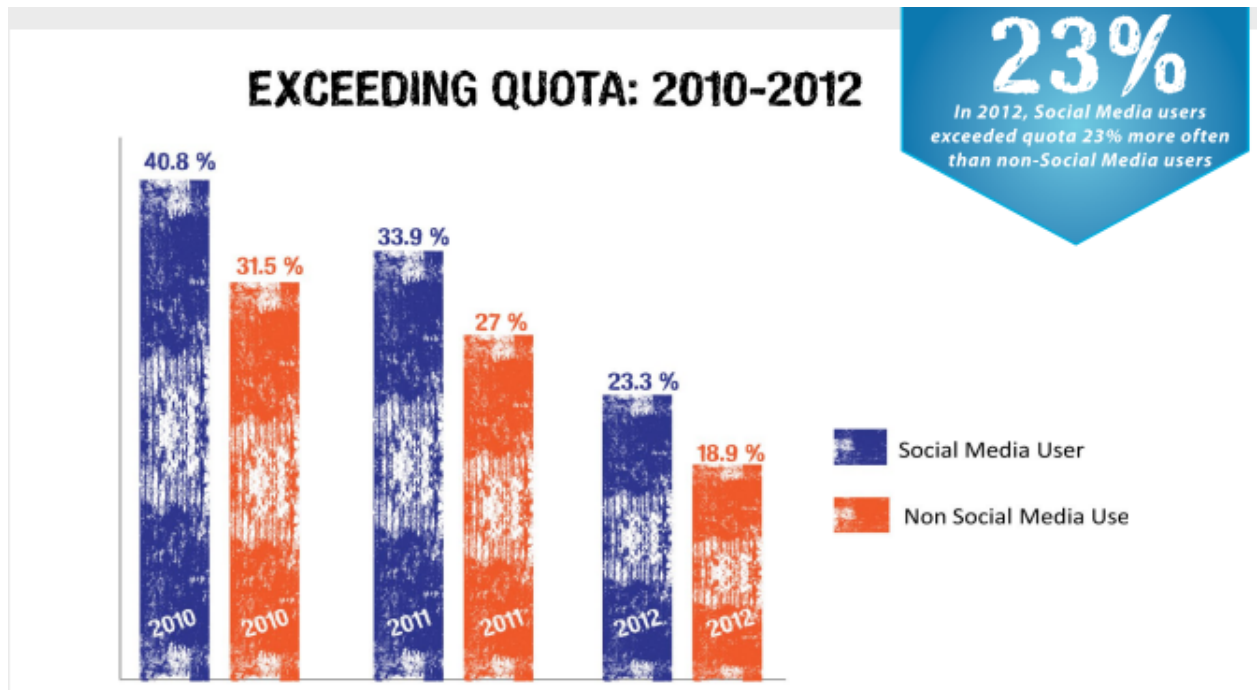
EBay Motors published their study showing that 9 out of 10 Millennials turn to the Internet when shopping for a car. Millennials skip the showroom and ask their Social Media network for advice. In fact, the majority of buyers now go online to begin the purchase process. Is your business equipped to handle this type of communication with your potential buyers?

With more and more data showing that Social really does drive sales, it's especially true for salespeople, according to this 2nd new report. Jim Keenan, (asalesguy.com) published his company's report, Social Media and Sales Quota, showing that salespeople who use Social Media, outsell their peers.

***79% of salespeople who used Social Media as a selling tool outperformed those who didn't.***

I've seen evidence of this in my daily communication with savvy dealership salespeople. Many of them reach out to me saying their boss forbids them to use Social at work and thinks it's stupid. The numbers don't lie, Baby. It's time to embrace Social Media and take advantage of the value (read "sales") it delivers.

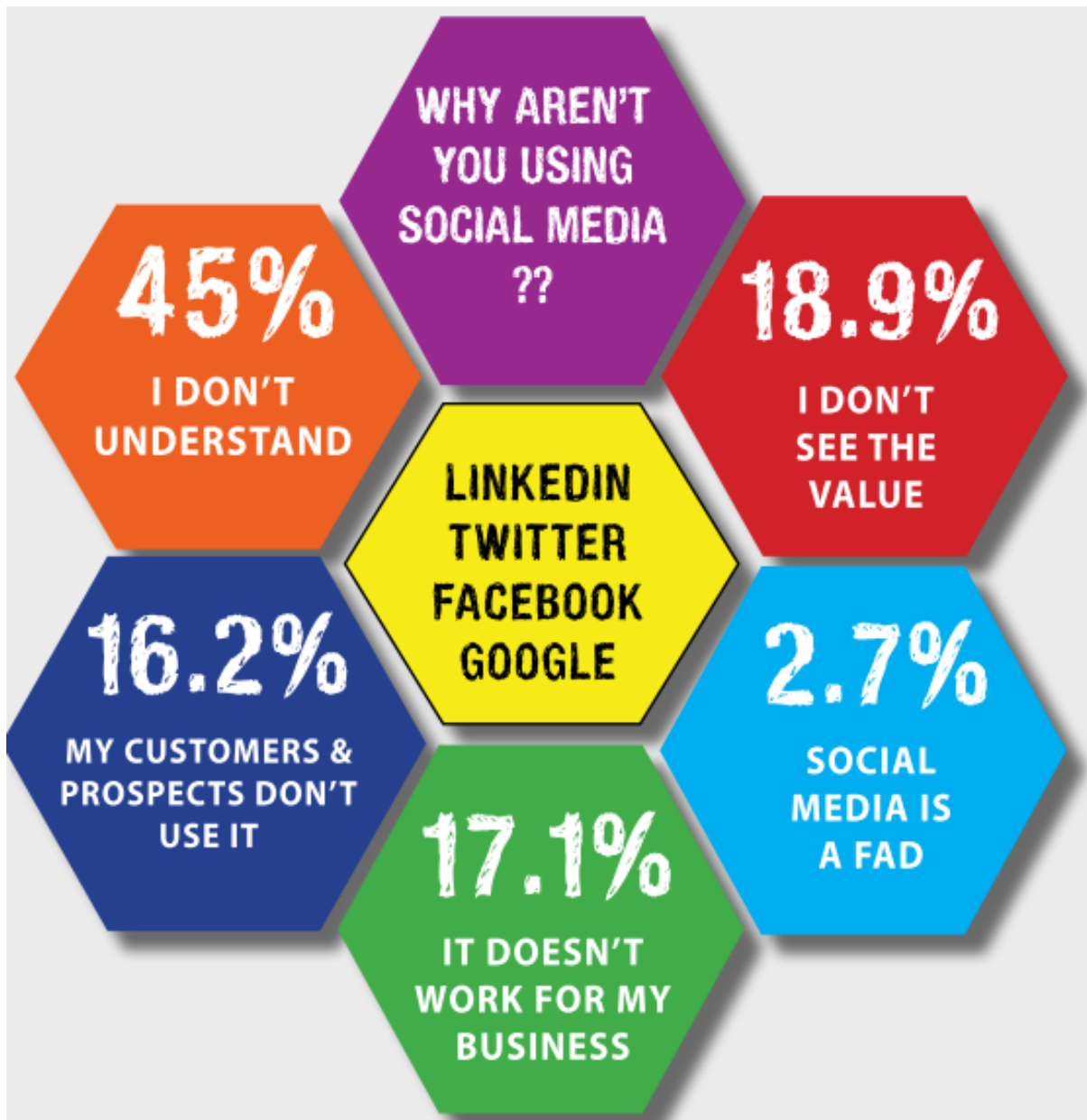
Get ready for this one: Social sellers were 23% more successful in exceeding their sales quotas by more than 10% compared to their non-social peers, as pictured below. That's quite an achievement for something that many dealers still show disdain for.



So, if the numbers don't lie, why aren't more dealers and salespeople welcoming Social Media with open arms?

22% of salespeople stated that they don't use Social Media as part of the selling process. Those respondents were asked, "Why aren't you using Social Media?"

1. 45% of those salespeople stated the reason was "I don't understand it."
2. 19% said they "Don't see the value in investing sales energy in Social."
3. 17% said, "It doesn't work for my business."



The study suggests (and I concur) that the lack of investment in formalized training is the root cause of these issues. The more you know about Social, the more valuable it becomes. The numbers of this study do not surprise me at all. I've witnessed and been a part of Social Media working for many. Isn't it time to get it working for you and your team?

Jim's findings bring up a number of challenges to the daily operation of a car dealership (or any business for that matter).

Everyone wonders where Social Media makes a difference, where is it most effective? Those respondents who do practice Social selling were asked "What do you use Social Media for?" Not surprisingly, networking and prospecting are the two most common uses of Social Media for

salespeople. Developing a trusted network of friends, family and prospects can become a bone of contention when your employee terminates his/her employment.

With solid training and/or coaching in place, you must also provide specific guidelines to your employees. Outline how employees should create Social profiles for themselves, what can be said, what happens when something goes wrong and how you want things handled if they should decide to leave. A solid Social Media policy will always serve you when these unique and new situations arise.

Social Media is not only a factor in the sales process; it can be the *reason for the sale*. We've seen the numbers and they all point up. It's up to you to hit the launch button.

## Chapter 4

### Social Networking: Dig Your Well Before You're Thirsty

#### Social Networking



**Dig Your Well Before You're Thirsty**

***“If I had to name the single characteristic shared by all the truly successful people I’ve met over a lifetime, I’d say it’s the ability to create and nurture a network of contacts.”***

***~ Harvey MacKay***

Do you ever wonder why some people are more successful than you? Why they always seem to get better deals, more sales, and better customer reviews? This is especially frustrating if you feel you’re better qualified, have more skills or offer a better product. You may be tempted to explain away their success as a simple run of good luck or the result of being in the right place at the right time but we all know it’s much more than that.

Scratch the surface and you’ll discover that most of these highly accomplished people are just ordinary folks – people like you and me – who happen to possess highly refined networking skills. These ordinary people achieve extraordinary results as they team up with other ordinary people and engage in the very human activity of networking.



## **No Matter How Smart You Are, No Matter How Talented, You Can't Do It Alone.**

Successful people do not achieve their success on their own. Instead, they surround themselves with a well-developed, sophisticated support network. Great networkers genuinely like to network. They live and breathe networking. Their core principal is a spiritual ideal common to all the world's great moral systems: the concept of gaining through giving. They believe in cooperating with others and in helping others achieve success.

### **“Giver's Gain” allows you to dig your well before you're thirsty.**

In the old days it would take years to develop relationships and build a network because most of this was done in person. Today, Social networking provides an immediate and vastly-superior way to network. However, trying to sell a contact when you first connect with them is a great way to ruin a potential networking relationship before it begins.

You must first acquire the skills and mindset necessary to be a master social networker. All the tools in the world will never be enough to get you where you want to be. Your words sound hollow unless you operate from the core belief that high trust relationships have a high value in today's business environment. Information comes at a premium and the most effective way to acquire information is often through relationships.

For most people social networking is a learned behavior, like learning to swim. It's a gradual and often painful, even scary process of trial and error, small incremental steps and finally a few breakthroughs. In the car business we have to get away from this old idea that we can quickly and easily sell a vehicle to someone. On average, consumers spend 11 hours online researching their next vehicle. Prospects have their own networks and rely on them for information when they're contemplating a purchase.

### **Practice makes for better social networking. Tap into those communities and conversations. Learn to swim!**

Some of the best sales people I know have relied on their network referrals for years! They work it and it pays off. Some have utilized Social Media and some haven't. The more you exercise your social networking muscles, the stronger they get and the easier it becomes. Thank goodness for Social Media. You can practice your skills every day without ever leaving your office!

I've often heard the rebuttal, “Social Media can't sell cars.” This is old thinking and a dangerous excuse. It goes back to the days then we could broadcast messages to the masses and people would show up on the lot to buy. That forced relationship made it that much harder to close the deal.

Using Social Media to chat, engage and build a relationship with the customer prior to sale greases the wheels of the close. How can you begin to use Social Media to become a master networker?

1. Recognize that everyone in your network is a potential referral. Conduct yourself appropriately.

2. Participate daily. Forget about all the “privacy” threats you hear about in the media. Adjust your settings accordingly and start engaging in conversations.
3. Seek out new experiences and make new contacts. Join Groups on Facebook and LinkedIn and start conversations around the things you’re an expert in. Use Twitter to meet new people and see how you can help them achieve their goals.
4. Learn from those around you. I know many people who’ve become very successful by shadowing a thought leader and offering to help them or support their business. Remember, we all can’t do it alone.
5. Be relentlessly useful. Turn yourself into the, “Likable Expert.” Use Social Media to showcase your knowledge, display your expertise and help people.

Extraordinary people visualize not what is possible but rather what is impossible. Visualizing the impossible they begin to see it as possible. You can think of a million excuses to refrain from social networking. All it takes is one seed to grow your tree. Isn’t it about time you started planting?



## **Chapter 5**

### **Social Selling: 5 Scenarios Prove Hope is Not a Strategy**



In order to be a next generation salesperson you need to master the techniques of Social Selling.

I see a lot of salespeople who use hope as a strategy. They keep hoping that the good old days of 2007 were still here. They resist any mention of Social Media or networking. Every time they get the chance they call it, “a fad.”

Now, even if you are one of those types of thinkers, there’s a voice somewhere in your body that’s telling you that you need to get with the program. Ignoring it doesn’t make it go away.

Networking works! It has for hundreds of years. Even you naysayers have to agree. The world has not passed you by; it’s simply changed in the way we communicate. You used to go to events and collect business cards. Today, you have Social Media to stay in touch with your network and provide value. If you’re not using this tool then you’re most likely leaving money on the table and are slowly being left behind.

## **Hope is not a strategy. Here are 5 scenarios that prove it:**

### **1. Hope does not provide value.**

The right kind of leverage in a relationship allows you to extract value over time. How do you attract that kind of leverage? Be the first person in the relationship to provide value. What's your unique promise of value? The contribution you make is unique to YOU – it's your personal promise – it's what you provide that adds value to the Social Selling relationship.

### **2. Hope does not build your online reviews.**

When I was selling cars, I always found it useful to develop a rapport with my customers so that at the end of our transaction, I could say, "My business is based on referrals. I'd really appreciate it if you would share your experience with your friends and family." Today, customers have a place to go to share their experiences – Social Media. When you're mentioned in an online review on Yelp or Google+Local, your credibility and value increase. Your success in Social Selling depends greatly on what others' say about you. When was the last time you asked your customer for a referral?

### **3. Hope doesn't get customers to refer you.**

Asking others to refer you can be an endeavor filled with anxiety. It doesn't have to be if you practice two very important tactics. Both are keys to successful Social Selling:

- *Give, give, give, then ask.* Gary Vaynerchuk talks about this tactic in his book, "[Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook](#)" (which is an analogy for give, give, give then ask). When you've given as much as you can to a buyer and they perceive your level of service as outstanding, asking for a referral is the next logical step.
- *Practice makes profit.* Getting up the nerve to ask for referrals isn't easy at first. However, it gets easier every single time you do it. Just like everything else that's uncomfortable and very valuable, the result is worth the effort.

### **4. Hope does not grow your network.**

Be where your buyers are. Many studies show that consumers do all of their research online before they think about visiting your store. This is why Social Selling is fast becoming the way to fill your pipeline. Think about how valuable it would be to grow and maintain your own network where you can help prospects with their research. Focus on these specific tactics to grow your network online and off:

- Post highly shareable content on Social Media
- Converse on Twitter
- Start discussions in LinkedIn groups
- Blog about your passions and answer consumer questions
- Promote your Social profiles in your email; ask prospects to connect

## **5. Hope won't teach your customers about your products and services.**

Be the first one in your buyers' network to teach them about your products and services. Now, this doesn't mean blast them with offers all the time. Social Selling serves the customer along each stage of the buying process. A solid content strategy is crucial. Knowing who you are (your personal brand) and who your ideal customer is are both key factors. The more you know about your customers the better your content on Social Media will be. Answer their questions. Help them decide.

Are you a next generation salesperson? Maybe you haven't decided yet. Go on, go for it!

## Chapter 6

# Social Media Prospecting: Every Sale Starts with a Conversation



There are many missed opportunities. I see them every day. Businesses and salespeople post their content on Facebook and forget the fact that it's going out to real people who can respond back. Not like before when you broadcasted to the masses. That was so impersonal. Now we get to have conversations with our prospects using Social Media and when they respond we need to be ready with the right words and actions.

There was a reality show called, "Car Lot Rescue?" Tom Stuker, seasoned car sales guru, finds dealerships that suck...and helps them not suck. In one episode there was a store where the dealer had hired women as greeters and chose to have no salespeople. He was close to losing his business and that's when Tom came to do his magic. When Tom quizzed the dealer on why these women weren't trained to sell the dealer said, "All they have to do is smile." Tom replied, "Well, it takes a lot more than a smile to satisfy a customer and sell them a car."

Tom Stuker's mission then was to take these gals/greeters and turn them into sales people. To illustrate the importance (and the art) of prospecting he took them to a local event, gave them prospecting tips and turned them loose. They started out weak but soon gained confidence and became adept at starting conversations with complete strangers.

One of Tom's tactics needs updating. I suspect (wild guess) it's because he's not a regular Social Media user. He said to these women, "There are only 2 ways to prospect. In person or on the phone." Yikes!

Technology has allowed us this wonderful gift of communicating with customers/prospects easily, efficiently, and intimately. Social Media facilitates conversations with people who already know you because they've connected with your brand online – much warmer leads. These people are your prospects.

I have a coaching client who's the Social Media/Digital Marketing manager at the dealership. When she's off work, the sales manager posts on Facebook. It's dangerous because the sales manager doesn't generally use Facebook and his posts get scant engagement. He also isn't participating in our Social marketing strategy meetings or campaigns. Everything you share on Facebook is measured and when your posts get no engagement it works against you.

Here's where a skill in responding counts: The marketing manager posted an update on their Facebook page saying a local food truck was coming to the store for the day. A potential customer commented on the post asking,

**"So if I buy a car, I get free food?"**

Folks, it may not look like it, but that's a lead and responding to it correctly means the difference between making the sale or not. If you had that person on your showroom floor or on the phone, consider what your response would be. The sales manager replied,

**"Sure, everyone gets free food."**

Meh. Not a great response. Why? You wouldn't say that to the prospect standing in front of you on the showroom or service drive. An ideal response is always another question. Keep the prospect engaged, asking questions to help them buy.

- "Yes, you're included. What type of car are you looking for?"
- "Yes, we'd love to have you. When were you thinking of coming down?"
- "Yep, are you in the market for a new car?"

Tom Stuker had the gals on the show starting conversations and asking questions of everyone there at the local event. When they were done, they'd managed to get 20 leads between them. How good are you at spotting opportunities to engage? In real life or on Social Media, every sale starts with a conversation.

## Chapter 7

### 5 Tips to Prevail in the Shifting Consumer Buying Process



Surprisingly, many retail business owners still don't see a lead from someone online as a, "real customer." If you have a bricks-and-mortar store there's a tendency to depend on what's right in your face when it comes to prospects. You open, people come in and they buy.

I recently had an interesting exchange through the comments on one of my blog posts about what constitutes a, "real customer." In automotive retail, prospects are referred to as "Ups." The commenter was trying to persuade me that online Ups are not as valid as "Real Ups" (people that drive by and stop in). I passionately disagree.

The commenter wrote, *"I visit a LOT of dealerships. In most it is difficult to get a real UP waited on because the Gen Y sales staff is busy keeping up with social meeting, texting with both friends and customers, and staying glued to gadgets they think are their salvation."*

Respectfully, there is absolutely no difference between a Gen Y salesperson using their technology and a Baby Boomer salesperson using their preferred technology to connect with customers and friends (ie: networking). So a, "Real UP" is someone that walks on the lot?

Hmmm, I believe a real UP is anyone who the salesperson communicates with about a purchase.

Consumers have changed the way they choose their cars and dealers must adapt. The same goes for most every bricks-and-mortar retail business out there. Radio Shack closed, Loehmann's closed, and the list goes on for those that didn't adapt. BMW's media planning agency Vizeum researched the consumer decision-making process and found that it's very different from even five years ago. It's become more complex and a lot shorter.

Traditionally, a car purchase journey begins with a trigger, such as a new addition to the family or a promotion. Those triggers still exist, but customers today head online rather than to a dealer. Part of that process is asking opinions of their friends and family using social media, then checking out online reviews from consumers like them.

People used to go into dealerships a couple of times before making their choice. Now they're doing all their research online and they're going into the dealership with a clear picture of what they want. To tap into that changed consumer decision making process is a HUGE challenge for dealers.

OEMs and dealers are not providing the expected dialogue ability. The current approach isn't matching the emerging customers' needs. This is an emerging issue and one that I fear may be the death of auto retail as we know it. How can you prevail?

You may like the phone, or in person, to communicate with prospects and customers. Others like email. More and more, consumers prefer social media. It's a matter of your own mindset and what you're comfortable with. However, it's the same for consumers.

It's incredibly short sighted to think that everyone connects in the same way especially if your job is to sell stuff. We must take into consideration how the prospect prefers to connect because that's where the sale happens. Here are 5 social selling tips to prevail in this transitional time for all retail businesses:

### **1. Know your prospect's behavior, inside and out.**

The tendency for dealers (and most all other businesses) is to generalize about who your customer is. We all want to believe that "everyone" is our customer but that's simply not true. The more you identify the behaviors of your ideal customers, the better a marketer you'll be.

### **2. Be where your customers are.**

[70% of customers](#) would appreciate getting advice at a location of their choice. Meet your prospects where they are and lead them down the sales funnel. Whether it's digitally or in real life use good ol' fashioned conversations to connect with them wherever they are in the research/buying process.

### **3. Instead of interrupting what people are interested in, BE what people are interested in.**

Create content that engages at each consideration stage of the buying process. Serve content that answers their questions and converts them into customers.

#### **4. Establish a strong program for Social Selling.**

Superior networking skills have never been more valuable. Today, social media makes it easier to connect and network with those people most likely to refer you and/or buy from you. Turn your salesforce into networking superstars. Training for social selling is certainly an option. To be ahead of the game, implement an internal process for content creation and publication. This will acclimate your salespeople to the medium and provide evidence of how social selling can make a difference in their productivity (ie: sales).

#### **5. Make it difficult NOT to convert.**

One important component of social selling is to attract the lead and escort them down the sales funnel (digitally or not) with optimal conversations. Sales don't happen without these conversations. Ensure your salespeople are adept at asking questions, listening and responding in kind so that your prospects can come to the purchase decision with as much ease as possible.

If you're running social ads, make sure you have a well-designed landing page to welcome people when they click. Converting leads into sales is no easy task so increase your chances of conversion by having the right offer and the right call-to-action.

Social selling is a hybrid of networking, marketing, PR, with a bit of advertising thrown in. It's selling through social media to close more leads. You may still be a bricks-and-mortar store but answer me this: If your customer is online and your inventory is online, then why aren't your salespeople online?



## Chapter 8

### Acquire the Right Kind of Leverage in Online Relationships



The value of every customer you have increases over time. Honoring that value takes commitment and a solid strategy for attracting and retaining customers. Whether you're building online relationships or maintaining them, Social Selling provides value at each stage of your customers' path to purchase.

Customers are the life blood to every business. Smart salespeople work their network to keep the sales pipeline full. Even smarter salespeople use social media to develop relationships online and invest in their own "Social Capital."

***79% of salespeople who use Social Media as a selling tool outperform those who don't.***

## The Power of Social Capital

- It improves your productivity as a sales professional.
- It expands your professional options, putting you in charge of your own destiny.
- It keeps you from feeling isolated and motivates you to reach your goals.
- It can raise your overall quality of life.

In order to leverage your Social Capital you must know your passions and your purpose. Building value-based online relationships starts with you. When you can stay centered on your purpose it comes through in the communication you have with clients, co-workers and personal relationships.

***“The right kind of leverage in a relationship allows you to extract value over time. How does one acquire that kind of leverage? Be the first person in the relationship to provide value.”***  
**~Gary Vaynerchuk**

In a world where 95% of what we're exposed to is noise and 5% is useful relevant information, it's critical to stay focused on your passions and your purpose. By staying grounded in your expertise the next logical step is to ask,

**“How can I serve the customer?”**

**Answer: Provide Value.**

It's simple: people don't buy from those they don't trust. Think about it, do you buy from anywhere or anyone you don't trust? Build trust by providing value. What are some of the ways salespeople and business owners can provide value?

### **1. Listen.**

I worked once with the #1 BMW salesperson in the United States. She knew the first tactic to close any sale was to listen to the customer. When you ask thoughtful questions and really listen to what your customer is telling you the lead happens. This is the groundwork for social selling with integrity.

### **2. Be Helpful.**

What are your customers' most frequently-asked questions? Take time to identify every question your customer may have along the buying process and answer it with your helpful content. Analyze your website and all other forms of media you use to attract buyers. The secret to having a successful content strategy (and by extension, success in Social Selling) is to be helpful. Being helpful builds new relationships and fosters better long-term relations with your repeat customers.

### **3. Communicate Your Expertise.**

Everyone wants to buy from people who know their stuff! If your prospect or current customer is already part of your online community, you're half-way there. Use content to demonstrate your expertise and show people what it's like to do business with you.

### **4. Get Good at Social Customer Service.**

71% of those who receive positive Social care are likely to recommend your brand to others. Now that you've developed your network for Social Selling, those members of your network will want to use social media to communicate with you. Pay attention to what's being said about you online and be ready to address customer questions or issues on your various social channels.

### **5. Show Appreciation.**

Put the spotlight on your customers – they're the reason you're where you are. That same #1 BMW salesperson has special ways to show appreciation for every customer she's sold to over the last 25 years. Heck, I did a house deal with her in 2001 and I'm still getting Happy Birthday wishes. Remember, showing appreciation to your customers does not require a monetary gift. In fact, fire up your creativity and do something no one else has done. It's not about the money, it's the impact. Staying in touch with them via Social Media solidifies your relationship and provides value to that customer, who then shares their experience with their own network.

When you look back on the customers you've served over the years, were you the one who was first to provide value? If not, now you can be. When you provide value you grow your Social Capital. Invest in yourself. Take the time to build and maintain those relationships and soon you'll be reaping the dividends.

## Chapter 9

### Practice Makes Profit: The 6 P's of Social Selling



Social Selling is a new buzzword that's being tossed around a lot but many aren't really sure what it is. At its core **Social Selling is your ability to network successfully by leveraging Social Media channels to connect and develop referrals and leads.**

It's a fact that word-of-mouth sales are highly profitable, close faster and have the highest win rate when it comes to customer experience. Building and maintaining a network using Social Media is your best chance to leverage word-of-mouth.

Some sales professionals already got the memo and are launching their own network with their personal brand. Many however, are being held back by either their own fear and apprehension or their bosses'.

Some businesses have even gone so far as to limit salespeople's time on Social Media, mistakenly perceiving it as a playground.

Restricting access to Social Media for salespeople is like unplugging the phone and turning off email. This is how we communicate today. It's how consumers prefer to communicate. If your customer is online and your products are online, why aren't your salespeople online?

If you're ready to jump into Social Selling but don't really know where to start, I've compiled a list of 6 Social Selling tips that lay the ground work for you. It's not easy but anything worthwhile never is. Start here to build strong relationships with those in your sphere of influence.

### **Passion (is contagious)**

*"If you don't live it, it won't come out your horn." ~Charlie Parker*

What are you passionate about? Make a list of at least 5 things that make you excited to jump out of bed in the morning. It might be your job. If so, break down what it is about your job that you love. It might be parenting, or golfing, or running, animal causes or 80's music. Clearly define what you're passionate about because you'll need it for inspired Social Selling. Your passions are what connect you with others. When you're passionate about what you do, it's contagious.

### **People**

Connect with people who share your passions. If you golf you may have a group at the club. If you're into food you may have reviews on Yelp that get liked and commented on. If you're already building your network you probably belong to groups on Facebook or LinkedIn that share your passions. Your network is your net worth and networks are people. If you're starting from scratch start building your network. Seek out those you want to know and meet. Who in your network knows them? Leverage your real-life relationships too. When you can get them to connect with you on Social Media you're constructing a valuable asset from which to cultivate referrals.

## Provide Value

The right kind of leverage in a relationship allows you to extract value over time. How does one acquire that kind of leverage? Be the first person in the relationship to provide value.

Provide value by being the first person to answer your prospects' questions. Become even more of a Social Selling rock star by answering those questions people don't know they don't know. You can first start with Facebook posts or tweets or Google+. Then graduate to a full-blown blog where you'll get noticed by search engines, thereby building even more credibility and value around your personal brand.

## Perseverance

I won't sugar coat this: building relationships online takes hard work and perseverance. You're going to have a lot of false starts and that's a good thing! Every move you make will take you to where you want to go.

## Patience

The old days of having someone buy from you without any prior research are over. The time is now to start building and leveraging your network. Sure there are those that have gone before you but there are many who are lagging. Take action now. Commit to the work, have patience, be diligent and you'll succeed.

## Progress

Once you jump into Social Selling you'll want to set some goals for yourself. When you track your progress it helps keep you motivated to move forward. Use these metrics:

- **Growth of your network.** Make a plan and set objectives to consistently grow your network.
- **Number of Social channels you can handle in your daily routine.** You'll want to start with the one you're most comfortable with and make it the one where your network and prospects frequent. Once you've mastered that channel, move onto the next one.
- **Personal Branding.** Constantly reassess what your personal brand says to your network and prospects. Redefine your unique promise of value on a regular basis.

Use these 6 P's of Social Selling to launch or enhance your own referral network. Make connections, build a valued network and enjoy a steady stream of referrals and leads.

## Chapter 10

### Social Selling: How to Breakthrough Obstacles and Thoughtfully Sell



***“There are 3 things you can do right now to help yourself and/or your business succeed: 1) Figure out what you’re about at your core. 2) Start a Blog. 3) Build your Tribe.”***

***~ Dino Dogan, Founder of Triberr***

Building a tribe has never been easier or more important. Salespeople who use Social Media outsell their peers. Remember our stat: 79% of salespeople who use Social Media as a selling tool outperform those who don't.

**Social Media has become a pivotal part of the selling process.** Your social profiles are where you make and nurture connections and develop the customer experience. Before social, salespeople were relegated to attending sporadic networking events in hopes of making a few good connections. Today, you can attend or even host a networking event every minute of the day online.

**Your blog should be the foundation of your tribe.** It will establish you and/or your business as a trusted resource for quality information about who you are and the products and services you sell. Your blog is an important component of your overall content strategy and publishing it on Social profiles increases your reach and visibility.

Certainly successful auto sales professionals (and others) have always recognized the opportunities in networking and staying in touch with customers. However, being able to carry social selling over successfully to online has two major challenges involving change and human behavior:

**1) Those that are successful in other mediums have trouble adapting to Social Media.**

**2) Those that aren't successful in other mediums have just another way to suck.**

Who's writing your story? You're writing the story of your life. You are the author and protagonist. You're the one making the decisions; you decide where the story goes next. Now, I know you don't wish to suck so let's focus on what you can do to recognize your own obstacles, build your tribe, and master your domain to sell thoughtfully and deliberately using Social Media.

### **You Are Normal**

Resistance to change is a normal response. Your attitude towards the resistance is the key to successfully changing. Do you dwell on the excuses?

1. I'm too busy.
2. I'm too old.
3. It's too late.
4. I don't like Facebook.
5. It's too much money.
6. I don't know where to start.
7. I don't know what to say.

**Trust in your ability to handle the change.** Breakthrough by reminding yourself every time one or more of these talking points comes up that they are not real. They are only thoughts that your head has conjured up to keep you "safe."

**Safe is an illusion. Safe keeps you stuck. Safe doesn't sell.**

When negative talk starts don't be lured in. Simply witness it. You are not those thoughts. Make improvements instead of excuses:

**1. Consume content.** Learn everything you can about navigating the platform where your customers are. For most people that's Facebook. There are literally millions of words written about how to maneuver around Facebook. The absolute best way to learn is to experience it. Take baby steps and seek out the help of a Social Media professional who can answer your questions and guide you.



**2. Blog about it.** Everyone has their own genius to share. Identify what yours is and start writing or videoing about it. The best way to find content for your blog is to ask your customers what they want to know about. Each question they have is another blog post. Again, it's normal to have resistance. Fear of failure, judgment, and looking like a fool are very real states of mind. But once you try it, it gets so much better.

**3. Engage regularly with your customers and prospects regularly.** Every sale starts with a conversation. Studies show that those engaged with their customers and prospects on a regular basis are much more likely to sell. The more time you spend developing trust pays off when it's time to close the sale. Listen, engage, and respond. Publish quality content (including your blog posts) that speaks to who you are and is relevant to those you want to reach.

Car dealers and salespeople have a believability issue but they are not alone. There are so many dubious "facts" on the web today that consumers don't know where to turn. Broadcasting messages is futile. Developing closer relationships with prospects using Social Selling is your way in.

**Take a hard look at your resistance and break through the obstacles you've placed in the way of your success. Replace safety with sales.**

## Chapter 11

### The Ultimate Secret to Success in Social Selling



When nearly 80% of salespeople who use Social Media as a selling tool outperform those who don't, you might see this as the right time to jump on the Social Media bandwagon. Many successful salespeople are finding that their leads just aren't what they used to be and they're taking matters into their own hands to generate warmer leads from their respective networks. It's awesome to see these numbers for Social Selling, but the fact is they don't tell the whole story.

Using Social Media to sell and succeeding at it are two very different affairs. Creating a Facebook page is easy (and free) but filling up the real estate, building a trusted network and generating referrals from it are quite difficult. Social is a medium (just like the phone or email). Social *networking* is the act of successfully engaging individuals as customers or referral partners via your personal brand. It takes time, hard work, and seasoned networking ability – just like in real life.

How adept are you at reminding your friends and family that you'd love to be referred whenever they or someone in their network is looking for what you sell? There's a secret to Social Selling

success and it doesn't revolve around how many Facebook likes or Twitter followers you have. It's something much deeper that takes an honest commitment.

### **Show Up to Give.**

Simon Sinek teaches leaders and organizations how to inspire people. He's best known for discovering the Golden Circle and popularizing the concept of, "WHY?" – the purpose, cause or belief that drives every one of us in our career, business or personal life. "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it." Simon's TED talk is the second most popular talk ever, clocking in at nearly 18 million views as of this writing.

Simon was recently interviewed by my friend Srivinas Rao for BlogcastFM. Simon shares his own story and this secret he uncovered on how to succeed at Social Selling (or any selling for that matter):

### **Show up to Give.**

It's a radical shift in thinking and behaving. As humans, it's in our nature to show up and *take*. Showing up to give takes hard work because you must focus on and channel your energy towards *others*. Think about it – isn't that the only true way you'll have lasting sales relationships with your customers and continue to build new ones?

People want to be comfortable when they make buying decisions. When you show up to take, people feel pressured and they don't feel safe.

### **Your selfless approach allows people to accept the idea rather than *reject the person*.**

I'm a Show Up to Give kinda gal. I created Kruse Control out of a mere thought and here I am 5 years later with that thought turning into a growing business. From the start I decided that I wanted to serve others. I got to test this out a few years ago when I was invited to attend a large meeting up in Sacramento CA of the state's most influential car dealers and CA legislators. Due to a mix up in communication, when I arrived at the meeting I was turned away.

I first tried to solve the issue but it soon became apparent that this just wasn't where I was meant to be. I could've fought and/or got upset but instead I called someone who worked in the area who'd wanted to meet with me for a long time. This someone needed my help with something and had said many times, "If you're ever in the area..."

Well, I was now in the area so I called him. I ended up renting a car and driving to their offices. I met with this contact and we developed a great referral relationship between us. Had they allowed me into the meeting in Sacramento, I probably would've never had the opportunity to build such a great connection. That company is now the premier luxury electric vehicle manufacturer in the world and my friend (yes, he's a friend now) has secured himself a vital place in their success.

**Show Up to Give is a not only a radical mindset shift it's a scary proposition...and that's why so many choose to go run the other way.**

Staying stuck or holding onto the old ways may not seem like “taking” but it is. *You're not serving yourself.* “Me? What do I have to give?” might sound like a familiar excuse – especially when you're new to sales. It can feel like you have nothing to give. ALL of us have something to give and there's no time to waste pondering your excuses. In fact, while you're figuring out what you can give take the stance to be radically useful. Soon your expertise will shine. Giving will come naturally and you'll be mastering the art of Social Selling.

## Chapter 12

### 21 Ways to Engage Your Network for Referrals and Leads



Everyone would like to sell more. Not everyone knows exactly how. The answer may be right at your fingertips. Social Selling increases your reach enabling you to sell more by leveraging the trusted relationships you've built up over the last month, year or your entire career.

All selling is social. Always has been. Always will be. Before Social Media, people bought from people in social ways. Today, we have Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and more to connect with prospects and customers during each stage of the buying process.

Many businesses and their salespeople don't feel ready. To help you get ready and take action, I've compiled a list of 21 ways to engage your network for referrals and leads:

## **1. Always start with a plan.**

Set clear goals. Here are some examples:

- Grow my network by 100 connections this month
- Engage with 20% of my network each month
- Convert 20 conversations into leads this month
- Track leads each week
- Earn 5 referrals this month

## **2. Take advantage of free real estate.**

Fill out every one of your social profiles *completely*. You must put your best face forward in all sales situations and Social Selling is no different. Get yourself a great profile pic and keep it the same for each platform. Marketing is about a consistent message and that includes your 'personal brand.' If you're not good at writing your bio (most of us aren't), hire someone to do it. It's reasonable and it's the first place after your profile pic that people will go to check you out.

## **3. Seek out like-minded individuals and groups on social platforms.**

What do you like to do on your days off? Whatever that is, there's a community for it. Engage people in conversations (do not try to sell to them right out of the shoot!). There'll be plenty of time for that later on.

## **4. Practice the art of conversation.**

If you were thrown into a professional environment where your life depended on getting to know people in the room, would you be able to do that? Your life *does* depend on your ability to converse with people – it's how you make a living as a salesperson. Introverts can master this too. How do I know? Because I'm an introvert.

## **5. Consume content from bloggers that inspire you and post comments regularly.**

Make the best of your downtime and spend 20 minutes a day reading inspiring content from bloggers you love. Engage them by asking questions. Share their posts to your network. Develop relationships from the inspiration you've experienced.

## **6. Be the first one in every relationship to provide value.**

Online or offline, the right kind of leverage in a relationship allows you to extract value over time. How does one acquire that kind of leverage? Be the first person in the relationship to provide value.

## **7. Be a storyteller.**

Storytelling makes your marketing and networking come alive. You can be like everyone else....or you can figure out what you do better than anyone else and tell your story.

## **8. Capture the attention of people on your Facebook.**

Chances are you've already started building a network on Facebook. Share at least 2 relevant, interesting, helpful status updates per day on Facebook and engage at least 10 times per day with your network. I've had many salespeople and managers say they sold a car (or two, or ten) to someone they know on Facebook.

## **9. Show another side of your personality on Instagram.**

Here's your chance to tell a visual story. Show another side of your personality.

## **10. Post content from your blog (or other people's blogs) on LinkedIn at least twice a day.**

LinkedIn is doing some really cool stuff. Like all social networks, when you share great content and engage, you move up in search results.

## **11. Reply to other people's tweets.**

Show that you're interested in the things that other people have to say. It encourages them to check out your profile and content.

## **12. Use video in creative ways to show your personality, not just your products.**

Here's another great way to tell your story. If you feel comfortable in front of the camera, use it to your advantage. People want to know about the products you sell but they also want to know about you. They're looking for ways to trust you. Give them some.

## **13. Share content on Google+ that's relevant to your customers' needs and interests.**

Not everyone connects on G+ but if you do, build a trusted network there. Google will notice.

## **14. Develop your Ask.**

Whether it's a referral you're looking for, a lead you've been chatting with or asking for online reviews from your current customers, everyone needs to work up their mojo to ask for what they want. Practice makes profit. Your repeat customers are ideal to ask, "Who do you know who....." They'll sing your praises to their network.

## **15. Don't discount offline opportunities.**

Are you involved with a charity, church, youth sports or other offline events and causes? If you are, set a goal of getting to know someone better in the group. Offer up meeting for coffee or a drink. If you're not involved with a group offline, Meetup.com as hundreds of choices with all types of activities in your area.

## **16. Never underestimate the power of repeat customers as advocates.**

Asking for testimonials should be in your plan. Connecting with your repeat customers on Social Media is a great way to stay in touch. Social Selling is not about you saying how great you are – the power lies in when others say it.

## **17. Be a teacher.**

Content is a sales tool. Excellent content is all about teaching. Keep your ego out of the equation, and always put your buyer first. What do they want to know? What do they need to know? Write the answers to every possible question they might have about your product, service, or industry. Great tip: Write down the 50 most frequently asked questions your sales people get from prospects and buyers. Now write 50 blog posts as answers.

## **18. Always respect your contacts. Never try to sell to people who've never heard of you.**

Just today, I was spammed by someone on LinkedIn. They sent me a message to join their “professional” religious group. The person who sent it is not connected with me nor am I interested in their fee-based group. If you do this, it shows prospects that you spent zero time getting to know them before you reached out and tried to sell them something. Take your time; build trust by working your plan.

## **19. Build loyalty.**

Respond quickly if a customer has a complaint. When you're responsive, open, willing to listen and take action to rectify a customer's issue, your network (and theirs) will witness it. You'll solidify your standing as a trustworthy seller who cares about your customers.

## **20. Connect using humor.**

The shortest distance between two people is a laugh.

## **21. Be helpful.**

This one sounds really simplistic but I want you to think about being helpful in every sales situation you come into. Solving problems and sharing important information that only you, with your expertise, can deliver. With your core intention to be helpful, you'll touch many more people's lives and create the impact you're hoping for with Social Selling.



## Chapter 13

### 5 Top-Notch Tips to Become a Social Selling Rockstar!



The sales game has changed. Cold calling is getting more difficult, while buyers are flocking to social media for answers. If you're a salesperson or you manage a sales team, it's time to leverage the power of social networks and boost your sales performance with Social Selling.

Depending on the industry you're in, there's a very good chance the buyers of your products and services are online researching their best choice. Why not be there, meet them, and help them along the path to purchase with great information and solid advice?

The best salespeople aren't just present on social networks, they position themselves as credible and influential sources on customer networks. Here are 5 top-notch tips to help you become a Social Selling rockstar!

## **1. Cultivate a Social Presence Starring YOU**

***You can be like everyone else....or you can figure out what you do better than anyone else and tell your story.***

Start with the Social selling channels that you're most comfortable with but also factor in where your most ideal customers spend their time. If you already have a Facebook page, Twitter presence or LinkedIn profile, start with one and build as you go.

- Upload a good "branded" profile picture. (I can't tell you how many people want to connect with me that don't have a picture. This is Social, folks. Let people see who you are). A branded picture is a professional shot that helps people see WHO you are.
- Take advantage of the free real estate. Complete all of your profile details. Use keywords in your descriptions where possible so that people who search for the things you sell can find you.

## **2. Master the Art of Networking**

Networking is done online and offline and it's not new. If you're good at it, you have a steady stream of leads in your pipeline.

- Great networking is about being seen and adding value to relationships.
- The term "Mingle as if you're Single" works offline and online. Use your network to TALK to people.
- Engage as a specialist in your industry, become a trusted advisor.
- Listen to what others have to say and ask questions. Nobody likes people who talk constantly about themselves.
- Always be ready to take the conversation to a next step – whatever that may be.

## **3. Provide so much value that people would pay you for it!**

Helping people is the new marketing. What are you doing right now that's adding value to your current and potential relationships? Here's how to add value:

- Post helpful, relevant content on your Social channels.
- Blog about subjects that your ideal customers want to know about, including practical "How To" guides.
- Put yourself in your customers' shoes and post information you'd like if you were considering that purchase.
- Worry less about selling and more about teaching.

## 4. Become a Content Monster

Everything you do and say tells people who you are. If you're a great salesperson with awesome customers and nobody else sees it, did it really happen? Prospects are online today and that's good news. The only way people found out about great salespeople before Social Media was by word-of-mouth through slow traditional channels. Social Media amps word-of-mouth and there's never been a better opportunity to show prospects what it's like to do business with you.

- Blog posts
- Images
- Video
- E-books
- Newsletters

All of these are ways to use content marketing to “sell” your customers’ experience to other potential customers. Let your current and repeat customers do the talking for you.

Set an intention to look for ways to develop content that speaks to your personal brand. It should be subjects that include:

- Questions your customers need answered.
- A snapshot of your interests, communities you're part of, and the things you like to do outside of work.
- Interesting stories about customer experiences, including the negatives that turned into positives.

## 5. Ask for the Sale

Every sale starts with a conversation. Social selling isn't about trying to sell things to people who don't know you. It's spending the time and effort to develop a trusted network from which to retain current customers, attract new customers and garner referrals. You *earn* the right to “ask for the sale.”

Asking for a referral or the sale is where some salespeople get stuck. Get unstuck by:

- Plan your work and work your plan. Take small first steps in conversations. You will fail and that's a good thing. The real failure is to not realize how close you were to success when you gave up.
- Don't try to reinvent the wheel – get some good sales *process* training like Joe Verde. Training increases your confidence and gets you out of your comfort zone.
- Practice makes profit: by putting things into action you'll get better and better. The results will be successful Social Selling.

**Do you feel ready now to take the plunge with Social Selling? If you'd like to know more or get in-depth guidance for yourself or your sales team, contact me today!**

### **About the Author:**

Kathi Kruse is an Automotive Social Media Marketing Expert, Blogger, Speaker, Coach, Author and Founder of Kruse Control Inc. Born in the heart of Los Angeles to a family of "Car People," Kathi's passion for the car business spans a 30-year career managing successful dealerships in Southern California. Her Kruse Control Blog is the leading Automotive Social Media blog in the U.S. and Canada.

### **How to contact Kathi:**

Kruse Control Inc.  
3419 Via Lido, Suite 484  
Newport Beach, CA 92663  
714.251.6440

email: [kathi@krusecontrolinc.com](mailto:kathi@krusecontrolinc.com)

website: <http://www.krusecontrolinc.com>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/kathikruse>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/kathikruse>

Linkedin: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/krusecontrol>