



HOW TO

# Launch a Social Selling Program for a Financial Institution



**Whether you're in banking, wealth management, insurance or mortgage, relationships are the bedrock of your business.**

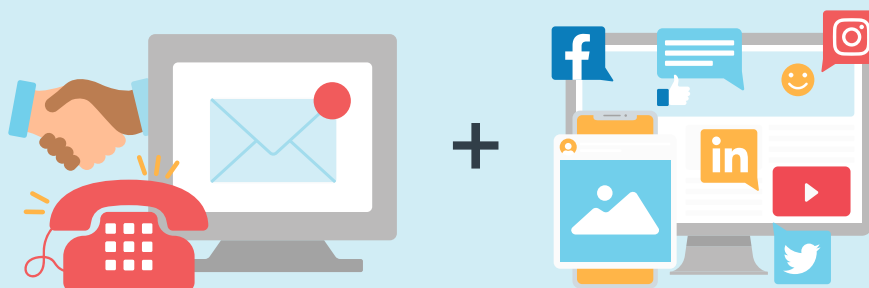
Considering clients in these industries are handing over the keys to their personal kingdoms, it's no surprise that trust and connection matter. That's why successful sales strategies for these industries are focused on building long-term, trusted relationships. While this has traditionally been done in person for financial services, the digital landscape offers endless possibilities for relationship building.

By now marketers and business leaders are familiar with social media and see the opportunity to build their brand, but most have only scratched the surface. To truly unleash the potential of social, financial institutions need to use social media as a sales tool.

**It's called social selling and it works.**

## What is Social Selling?

Social selling is just what it sounds like: using social media to sell a product or service. It's leveraging social to build personal relationships, showcase thought leadership, engage with prospects, interact with existing customers, and ultimately build trust and rapport that will eventually lead to sales.



Social selling is the perfect crossroads of marketing and sales. It enables intermediaries – like loan officers, financial advisors and insurance agents – to add value to the customer journey where there wouldn't otherwise be an opportunity. Savvy marketing and sales teams unlock the power of relationships with social selling, enabling intermediaries to compliantly communicate, share and sell on the social channels of their choice.

### **My brand is on social media, so we're social selling, right?**

Not quite. If your brand is active on social media, you're off to a great start, but you're leaving opportunity on the table if you're not empowering agents, loan officers, advisors and more to share on social. If you only have brand pages, you're not social selling yet.

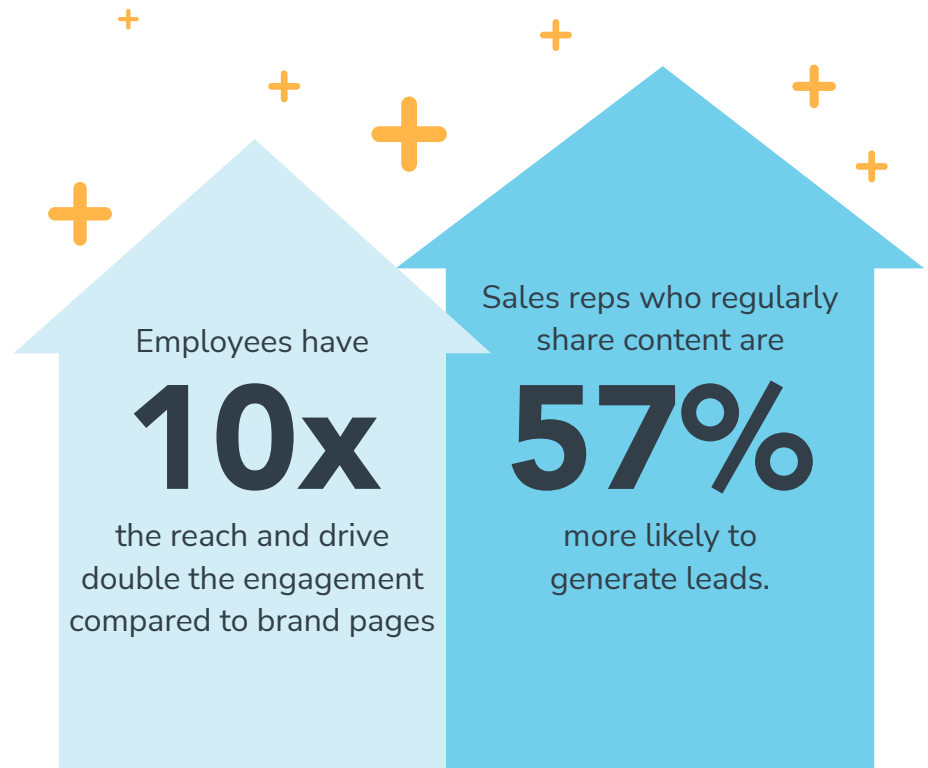
Consider this: employees have 10x the reach and drive double the engagement compared to brand pages on social media. But it's about more than likes and comments, social selling can transform social media into a revenue driver for your institution. Sales reps who regularly share content are 57% more likely to generate leads.

The numbers check out, but social selling is also about building the intangible relationships that are the lifeblood of the industry.

## The Intermediary is Here to Stay

Products are increasingly digitized and direct-to-consumer business is on the rise, but that doesn't mean the role of the intermediary is going away. It's just changing. The way agents, loan officers and advisors interact with digital products will look different from the past, but the role of the advisor will always be needed. Human connection will remain a meaningful part of financial transactions.

As expectations change, marketing and sales teams need to meet consumers on the channel of their choice. Social media isn't going anywhere. It's where consumers are interacting with each other, looking for advice, and looking for thought leadership on important life topics. This means intermediaries and producers have to be there.



**Social Selling is a  
non-negotiable to  
drive a modern  
marketing strategy.**



## 1 ALIGN WITH YOUR TEAM ON THE DEFINITION OF SOCIAL SELLING

As a marketing pro, you know what social selling is by now, but what about your team? This step may sound obvious, but you need to work to define social selling in your organization and differentiate from brand social media. Intermediaries may have less experience with social selling. Take the time to talk about what social selling can do and educate your teams on using social media as a sales tool. This time spent learning a new marketing tactic is very much worth your loan officers', advisors' and agents' time, too. Prove it to them by sharing meaningful stats on the benefits of social selling.

### This is one of our favorites:

LinkedIn's **2022 State of Sales Report** found the most successful sellers at large companies — those reaching more than 150% of quota — routinely use technology to build human connections with buyers.

It's your job to continually highlight the value social selling has for both your institution and individuals. Thankfully, this is one of the easier parts of selling social selling: The stats can do all the heavy lifting for you.

## 2 EDUCATE YOUR SALES TEAM

Remember that social selling isn't just marketing's responsibility. It's an effort that should be supported by both marketing and sales. If you're in a marketing role looking to launch social selling for your advisors, loan officers and/or agents, take the time to educate your sales partners on social selling. Craft your elevator pitch on how

social helps intermediaries meet customers where they are in the digital landscape and how enabling them on social helps amplify your brand messaging.

Keep in mind that social media in a heavily regulated industry can feel risky, and adding it to the mix of sales tactics that have "always been done a certain way" can feel like a huge change. Patience is key! Own the narrative around social selling, build your group of internal champions to help with this culture shift, and invest time in change management and your communication plan.

## 3 FIND YOUR SOCIAL SELLING TECHNOLOGY

Once you've got your internal teams aligned on launching social selling for your producers, it's important to find a tech solution to make it all easier! Seek a solution that creates efficiencies for the administrators of your program and your users. For instance, does your platform account for compliance coverage? Does your vendor understand the nuances of your industry? As you're evaluating potential platforms, make sure to consider both the administrative and end-user experience, as well as both organic and paid capabilities. A holistic social selling platform will include all these things.

### Spoiler Alert:

At Denim Social, we do all these things! We specifically support the financial services industry, understand **your compliance needs**, and, most importantly, understand the impact intermediaries can make through social selling. More on us later...

## 4 IDENTIFY SOCIAL MATURITY

So you're changing the narrative, gaining buy-in, and you've got the right tools to help you — what's next? It's time to dig into your user group to identify social maturity. You don't have to do it all at once — a phased approach with folks of different social maturity levels will make this easier to learn and scale from.

Start by simply searching for your intermediaries on social media. How easy is it to find them? Are their pages updated and on brand? Is their “about” info robust and accurate? Have their profile photos been updated in the last decade?

If you are answering “yes” to a lot of these, you already have a great start. Those are your people. But if you aren't, that's OK — you'll just need to start with some generalized social education and profile optimization to get your group started. Taking the time to deliver this education is critical in making social selling stick.

## 5 TRAIN AND TEST YOUR USER GROUP

Once you've identified agents, advisors or loan officers who are either already active on social or ready to be active, start communicating. Let your whole organization know that you're launching a social selling program. The more folks who know, the more they can [support your work](#). Then, communicate with your first user group; let them know what to expect throughout the launch, including your level of support and upcoming training to get them started.

And finally... train! Depending on the level of social maturity of your launch group, this might mean starting with the

basics of each social platform, as well as the basics of organic and paid social. If your users are super ready, it could mean jumping right into your social selling tech solution.

## 6 MEASURE SUCCESS AND OPTIMIZE OVER TIME

Once you have momentum, fuel that success with regular content. It takes time: Start simply by creating versions of your brand content for individuals and add this content to your content planning processes (for instance, you might craft language your agents can use to share branded social posts). One of the perks of Denim Social? We curate your library with our [content integration](#).

Finally, measure your success and share it with your internal champions, teams, and leadership. Your measurement might just consist of basic content usage and engagement at first, but it will ultimately grow to measuring return on ad spend and leads generated. Take the time to celebrate small wins and educate your internal partners on the growth of your social selling program. Check in with your social sellers to make sure they're understanding the value and celebrating with you.



# Social Selling In Action

We've talked about the process of social selling, but what does it look like in daily practice? Social selling requires continual care and management, but it's worth the investment of time, budget and effort when your producers use social to drive business results. A daily social selling routine helps your agents, loan officers and advisors in so many ways and managing a program doesn't have to be overwhelming. Here's where to get started.

## Optimize Profiles

Before your team even gets to posting, it's important to take a look at your social sellers' profiles. Whichever social channel mix you've decided is right for your institution, you always want to make sure your brand is consistent and robust across each channel. That sounds easy but there are a few things to consider to ensure your identity is clear and consistent for your intermediaries.

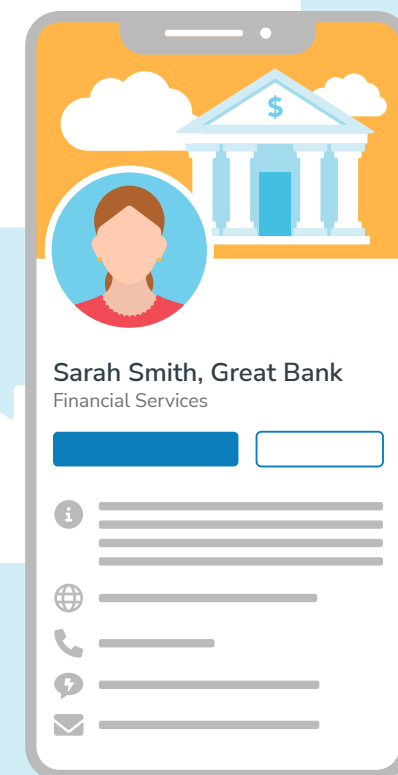
**Be sure to check these boxes:**

### ✓ Profile Images

Ensure your advisors, loan officers and agents are easily recognizable in their profile pics. Whether it's a professionally taken photo or a well-lit high-res image taken on a smartphone, producers should be friendly and familiar looking.

### ✓ Cover Images

Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter all have a space for a cover or background image. Be sure you have a cover image that is consistent with your brand and that you have rights to use it for promotion.



### ✓ About Sections

Today's consumers use social media like Google, so About pages are more important than ever. Sections vary across social channels, but be sure About copy is accurate and reflective of your institution. Pay special attention to institution description, location information and hours of operation. Those can go out of date without anyone realizing it.

## Post Meaningful and Relevant Content

Let's get to the good part... social media content! It's not only important for your social sellers to be posting regularly, they need to be posting with purpose. Agent, loan officer and advisor social profiles should be an extension of who they are in real life. Authenticity always wins in social media.

### Deep Breaths

If the idea of producers posting themselves gives you marketer night sweats and compliance jitters, remember that it's authentic content that drives social selling success. And don't worry, Denim Social tools can help ensure nothing problematic is ever posted.

There is no magic formula for how often you should post, but consistency is key. It's important to give posts a few hours to generate engagement. If you see a post getting higher than usual engagement, let it run before posting something again. This helps your posts continue showing in your audience's feeds because the algorithm knows your content is liked!

Each platform has optimal times that drive the most post engagement. A classic morning post is a great place to start. Once your social selling program is up and running, Denim Social can help your team be more playful and schedule posts during the optimal times.

But what should your team post? You aren't the first marketer to feel overwhelmed by this prospect. Successful social selling programs offer a variety of organic content. The mix looks different for every institution, but commonly a healthy and informed mix includes brand, industry and most importantly, personal/community content from your social sellers.

Let's dig in more there:

### Brand Content

Your institution is likely already creating social posts for brand channels, but it's time to think about how those assets can be customized and used by your social sellers. Denim Social's platform offers content libraries that allow admins to distribute pre-approved brand content for use by intermediaries.

### Industry Content

Industry articles and insights from trusted third-party news sources can help your intermediaries establish themselves as experts in their fields. Denim Social and partner, UpContent, integrate to offer teams curated collections of relevant, high-quality and compliant social media content, so you never have to spend time combing through news sites.

Want to know more about the best post times? [Click here to connect with the Denim Social team](#) for additional resources.





## Personal/Community Content

The power of social selling is in personalized content from loan officers, agents and advisors. This is where your producers should be themselves and bring their expertise to social media. It's also where your institution is likely to see the most engagement. The post possibilities are endless, but encourage your social sellers to post localized, community-centric content. They should use their personal content to tell a story about what they do and why.

A healthy organic content mix can help your social selling program be authentic, engaging and manageable. The Denim Social platform is built to make organic publishing easy and scalable. From scheduling to approval workflows, financial institutions can stay in control.

## Interact with the Community

Social media is a two-way conversation and that means your social sellers need to be interacting with followers. In other words, don't post and ghost.

Social selling is about listening, responding and engaging. It's a conversation, so intermediaries should be promptly responding to comments and direct messages, showing their connections that their inquiries and concerns matter. Social sellers should also be proactive too – connecting with prospects on LinkedIn, reacting to posts from prospects and commenting on client updates.

Listening is an important part of the social media interaction too. Producers can learn a lot (and scope out key opportunities) from publicly shared life events on social.

# Supercharge Social Selling with Paid Social Advertising

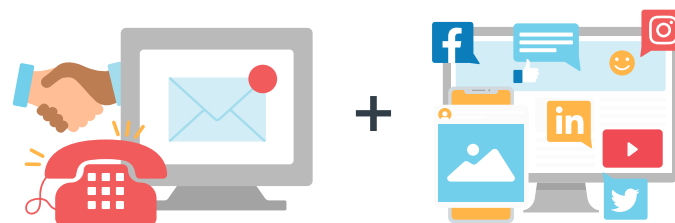
The foundation of a successful social selling program is intermediary-led organic social media publishing, but that should not be your sole strategy. Cultivating organic posts from your producers' accounts is a great way to add context, richness, and humanity to your brand, while “verifying” credibility for prospective customers.

However, an organic-only strategy doesn't provide value for top-of-funnel leads — those who don't know anything about your institution yet. According to a recent study, only **2.2% of your followers** see your posts on Facebook, 5.5% on LinkedIn, and 9.4% on Instagram. Paid social media advertising is one of the most effective ways to introduce people who aren't yet following your producers, loan officers, or advisors to your institution at the right place and the right time.

## Organic and Paid: Better Together

Organic and paid social have a symbiotic relationship. Organic social builds first-degree connections and facilitates awareness, engagement, and branding, while paid social provides reach larger, more tailored audiences.

For instance, if you're working for a wealth management firm, your top-of-funnel prospects are unlikely to find your firm by searching Facebook, but if they happen to be scrolling and see a Facebook ad for a financial advisor's retirement planning services, they are more likely to navigate to your brand's social and landing pages. There, your organic posts, which have been building over time, can show off the legitimacy of your brand and your advisor's expertise.



When you use organic and paid together, you will have a strong social selling strategy that is authentic and reaches more customers.

## Scaling Paid Advertising

Does this mean all of your intermediaries need to become paid social media experts? Nope. At Denim Social we recommend producers stick to creating personal/community organic social content, while marketing admins run paid campaigns. Denim Social's Ad Manager, one admin can launch micro-targeted campaigns at the brand, branch or user level. Our tools enable marketers to scale optimized ads with ease.

Want to learn more about paid social media advertising? Check out our guidebook, **Getting Started with Paid Social Media Advertising for Financial Institutions.**

# Don't Go It Alone

Whether you're feeling overwhelmed or excited about social selling, remember that you don't have to do it alone. Denim Social is here to partner with marketing pros like you create and execute social selling programs that empower your team on social media.

The Denim Social platform can help your institution:

- ✓ Easily create and deliver social media content.
- ✓ Simplify and scale advertising.
- ✓ Build no-code landing pages.
- ✓ Stay in compliance.



Ready to get started with social selling? Let's do this!  
[Sign up for a Denim Social demo today.](#)



# Elevating the Way People Connect and Sell on Social Media

Denim Social is a Software As A Service (SaaS) provider that powers social selling programs. Our platform helps brands empower their producers to compliantly communicate, share, and sell on their social channels of choice. Denim Social partners with forward-thinking marketing teams in regulated industries including banking, mortgage, insurance and wealth management. Our social selling platform is used by corporate level admins and local producers to amplify brand messaging and power sales on social media.

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