



The Official Guide to **Launching an Employee Advocacy Program**

www.oktopost.com

Table of Contents

01

Introduction to Employee Advocacy

PAGES 03 – 08

- › What is employee advocacy
- › The benefits for companies and employees

02

Jump-start Employee Advocacy in 6 Steps

PAGES 09 – 23

- › **Step 1:** Outline your program strategy
- › **Step 2:** Choose your initial advocates
- › **Step 3:** Gain employee buy-in
- › **Step 4:** Launch your program
- › **Step 5:** Measure program results
- › **Step 6:** Maximize employee engagement

03

Get Started with Oktopost

PAGES 24 – 28

- › Easily provide employees with pre-approved content
- › Make it easy and fun for them to share
- › Measure your program to optimize results

04

Summary

PAGES 29 – 30

- › Turn employees into your biggest marketing asset



CHAPTER
01

Introducing Employee Advocacy

PAGES 03 - 08



Employee advocacy:

empowering employees to amplify your company's message to their personal social networks.

When establishing a social media presence, every like, click, or conversion is of the essence. But your own corporate accounts – be it on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn – may not be able to do all the heavy lifting.

In the digital age, **42% of B2B buyers distrust brands**^[2] – and their distrust is growing stronger and stronger every day. So how do you get your message out there? Surprisingly, your biggest form of support may come from your own employees.

Each employee has his or her own network, which is not only made up of family and friends, but also former colleagues, customers or prospects, and generally speaking, like-minded professionals.

1) Weber and Shandwick: Seizing the Opportunity in Employee Activism

2) Marketing Week: 'Arrogance' Around Brand Purpose Making Consumers Distrust Ads



50% of your employees already post messages, pictures or videos on social media about their company while

39% have shared praise or positive comments online about employer.^[1]



In other words, your employees are the underlying foundation for humanizing your brand voice and making waves on social media. And the best part is, employee advocacy typically emerges from the bottom-up, where 50% of employees actively post messages, pictures or videos on social media about their company. So all you have to do is seize the opportunity with the help of this guide!

Employee advocacy is the **new wave of B2B social media marketing**

Empowering employees to share company content is one of the best solutions to authentically spreading your brand's message. But don't take our word for it – here are real-life examples of employee advocacy in action.



Since launching Oktopost's employee advocacy solution, we have not only seen a clear increase in the amount of branded content that employees share, but also in the breadth of audience touch-points we are able to reach.



MYA ACHIDOV

Social Media Manager at Sisense



Sisense Launches an Employee Advocacy Program on a Global Scale

Sisense, a business intelligence software company, launched a fruitful employee advocacy program across New York, Arizona, and Tel Aviv. With advocates sharing 67% more content than the company's corporate channels, Sisense was able to reach 177K more audience touch points and generate an average of 69% more clicks.



Accelo Generates \$40,000 in Annual Revenue with Employee Advocacy

For Accelo, a global technology platform, Oktopost's employee advocacy solution helped to outperform the company's conference objectives for INBOUND 2017. Employee-powered sharing under the #INBOUND17 hashtag helped generate 12K more impressions and over 1,000 clicks. Furthermore, Accelo earned thousands of dollars in additional annual revenue. These impressive results not only justified the value of employee advocacy as a B2B strategy, but also the ROI of the conference itself.



Trying to separate yourself from the crowd at a marketing conference can be quite challenging – especially due to the tremendous volume of posts coming out with the same hashtag. That's why employee advocacy is not only a strategy to boost our brand awareness, it's also a solution that helps increase and prove the value of the conference.



JENNEVA VARGAS
SEO/SEM Specialist at Accelo



If, for example, LinkedIn charges 4 EUR per click on a sponsored post campaign, we can calculate the earned media value of our employee advocacy program based on the clicks our employees are earning. Therefore, the current ROI of Oktopost's employee advocacy is 360%



DANIEL KLAUS

Former Senior Manager of Global Digital Marketing at Fujitsu



Fujitsu Gains a 360% ROI in 6 Months with Employee Advocacy

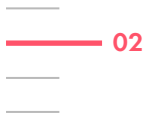
Fujitsu quickly came to the conclusion that employee advocacy is a much more cost-effective strategy than social advertising. After 6 months of using Oktopost, employees shared 10X more posts, increasing Fujitsu's social reach by 70%. To top it off, Fujitsu also calculated that, for the same money spent on paid social, employee advocacy gave them a 3.6 times better ROI value.



CHAPTER
02

Jump-start
Employee Advocacy
in 6 Steps

PAGES 09 – 23





By now you should be convinced that launching an employee advocacy program is one of the most cost-effective and ROI-positive things you can do as a B2B marketer. But there are several things to consider when embarking on a program. First, understand that while social media dominates a large portion of employees' daily lives, many of them need to be formally trained and sold on the concept to ensure long-term adoption.

Secondly, your c-level executives may not be immediately sold on employee advocacy. In this respect, you'll need to provide them with a clear program plan for implementation, scalability, and growth to gain their support. **Luckily, this guide will take you step-by-step through the process of creating an employee advocacy strategy to scaling and measuring your marketing efforts.**

Step 1: Outline your Program Strategy

Establishing a strategy is the single most important component of an employee advocacy program. Without a clear plan, you won't be able to communicate the value to employees or the success to executives. Start by defining your program goals.

Identify Program Goals and KPIs

Before getting employees to share content, you need to set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound) goals – as well as the metrics you'll use to track those goals.

In other words, what do you want to achieve through employee advocacy? And what does 'success' look like for your marketing team and company at large? The good news is, if you already have a solid social media strategy, all you need to do is align them with your employee advocacy program.

Here are some examples to get you thinking about your employee advocacy program's goals:

- ✓ Reach more of your target audience
- ✓ Drive higher content engagement
- ✓ Garner more qualified leads
- ✓ Recruit new talent for the company

Next, you need to tie those goals to measurable metrics. There are four categories of metrics you can focus on:



#1 BRAND AWARENESS

Employee advocacy serves as a strategic gauge for understanding brand awareness. If this is one of your goals, track *reach* to quantify how many people viewed your content, or *impressions* to understand how many times your content has been displayed in people's feeds.



#3 BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Understanding how employee advocates affect revenue metrics such as *leads*, and *closed deals* will help you demonstrate the program's true ROI.



#2 CONTENT ENGAGEMENT

Monitoring *likes*, *shares*, *clicks*, *retweets*, *comments*, and *link clicks* can help you understand which topics resonate with employees' target audience, which formats spark back and forth conversations, and which messaging are most effective.



#4 EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Monitoring metrics such as *platform sessions*, *sharing rates*, *content shares*, and *active advocates*, will provide insights into internal employee engagement.



Determine content types

Above all, you need to identify and create content that is both snackable and aligned with what your employees are interested in sharing. Instead of using employee advocacy as yet another channel for echoing your corporate voice, strive for the **6-3-1 content rule**: for every 10 pieces of content you provide to employees, 6 should be curated, 3 should be owned, and 1 should be promotional.

✓ Owned content

From eBooks to white papers, blogs, and webinars, 'owned content' refers to online pieces that are original and unique to your company.

✓ Curated content

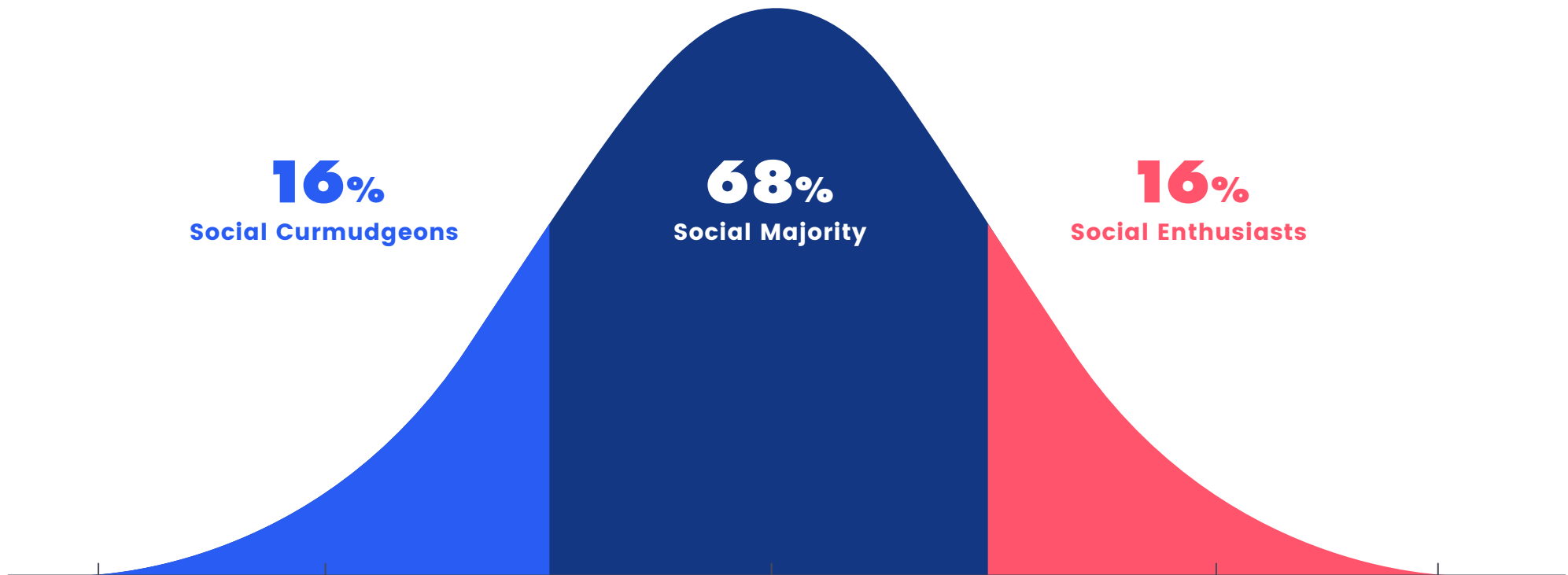
Materials that are published by relevant and authoritative sources in your industry. This may be an individual, organization, or publication that your employees find valuable.

✓ Promotional content

Any content that highlights your company's success, such as press releases, awards, employee spotlights, and CEO interviews. Be mindful of the self-promotional tone by making room for employees to celebrate the excitement with you.

Step 2: Choose your Initial Advocates

Once you have your goals and content strategy in place, you can determine the best employees, teams, and departments to deliver your message. Ideally, you'd want every employee to participate, but realistically, you should aim for a distribution like this:



Naturally, some employees are going to share more, some employees are going to share less, and others will share nothing.

For a healthy advocacy program, you need to identify and embrace the culture that exists within your organization:

- ✓ **Social Enthusiasts (16%):** Comfortable communicating on social media and have the most appetite for sharing. They tend to be customer-facing employees and c-level executives who have pre-established professional networks.
- ✓ **Social Majority (68%):** The big chunk of employees who feel optimistic about content sharing but won't go the extra mile toward being creative or original in their posts.
- ✓ **Social Curmudgeons (16%):** Those who work behind-the-scenes. They demonstrate the least amount of motivation for participating. Nevertheless, don't underestimate their power!

To hit the ground running, start with a pilot program, focusing on your Social Enthusiasts. Not only will they be easier to onboard, they are your best bet for demonstrating

success from the get-go. Once your pilot is in full swing, you'll be able to get buy-in from the Social Majority who will ultimately set a positive example for the Social Curmudgeons – your least social-savvy employees.



Targeting individuals in senior positions and customer-facing roles, such as sales, account management, and delivery teams, enabled us to lay a strong foundation for a wider program, as well as attract the curiosity of other departments.



COLLEEN SWANGER, Sr. Director
Global Digital Marketing at Ensono.

For your less socially-active employees, participation in advocacy will seem like a big commitment. Spark their interest by showing them real use-cases of other employees who saw success with the program.



According to MSLGroup, **77%** of buyers are more likely to buy from a company whose CEO uses social media. Therefore, gaining support from higher-ups in your company will make it easier to obtain buy-in from everyone else.

Step 3: Gain Employee Buy-In

Employee advocacy is a two-way street. While B2B companies benefit tremendously from implementing a program, now it's time to carefully demonstrate the value to advocates. Without employee buy-in, participation will be limited, and adoption will become costly.

Illustrate the Value to Employees

Be it through emails, slideshows, or videos, clearly outline the benefits to every employee:

- ✓ **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP:** 68.9% of employees say social media helped their career. Sharing quality content helps employees increase profile visibility, connect with influencers, and establish credibility.^[3]
- ✓ **LEAD GENERATION:** When employees share valuable content, they garner more qualified leads, which supports the company's growth.
- ✓ **SALES ENABLEMENT:** 78% of salespeople who utilize social media as part of their sales techniques outperform their peers and exceed quota by 23%.^[4]
- ✓ **SOCIAL RECRUITMENT:** Sharing HR-related content attracts new talent. 48% of candidates use social media when seeking a new job.^[5]
- ✓ **CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS:** Educating customers with content fosters greater trust while improving existing relationships.
- ✓ **EXECUTIVE BRANDING:** Social-savvy executives elevate their own leadership status. They also directly impact the company's bottom line: 77% of B2B buyers are more likely to buy from a company whose CEO uses social media.^[6]

3) Hinge Research Institute and Social Media Today: Understanding Employee Advocacy on Social Media

4) A Sales Guy Consulting: Social Media and Sales Quota [Study]

5) Jobvite: Social Job Seekers Getting Ahead [Study]

6) B2B Marketing: Social News [Research]

Run a Pilot Program

The easiest way to gain leadership support for your program's budget and resources is by demonstrating quantifiable results.

Start with a pilot program, focusing on a selected group of no more than 10 advocates where you can immediately prove results. To maximize the pilot, make sure to do the following:

- ✓ Provide employees with ample training, tools, and support to lead them in the right direction.
- ✓ Let the pilot program run for at least a month before measuring results.
- ✓ Hold weekly feedback sessions to identify opportunities for improving content and employee experience.



Hold Social Media Training

72% of employees^[7] have not received any type of social media training. From newbies to pros, be sure to arm employees with the right tools and skills to become top employee advocates.

Your training should include:

- 1. A tour of the company's social networks:** Give an overview of your social media goals, target audience, competitors, content tactics, custom hashtags, etc.
- 2. Practical tips for building a top-notch profile:** Uploading professional profile images and covers, crafting a compelling 'about me' section, connecting with users, engaging with the community.
- 3. Review of company guidelines and policy:** Employees should understand what is expected of them and how to best carry the company's name online.

4. On-demand videos of employee advocacy platform:

Implementing an employee advocacy platform like Oktopost can speed up the process of discovering, filtering, editing, and sharing content. Walk employees through every technical stage.



Set a Launch Date

It's time to set a timeline. Depending on the size of your program, you can send a personal message or organize an offsite event, announcing the exciting news and informing employees of the date at which they will start sharing content.

7) Hinge Research Institute and Social Media Today: Understanding Employee Advocacy on Social Media



Step 4: Launch your Program

You've set your strategy and trained employees, now it's time to go live! Here are five key elements to incorporate into your action plan:

1. Create a smooth onboarding experience. Your employees shouldn't feel forced or rushed into this program, and your marketing team should have the resources they need to ensure a fun onboarding experience.

2. Give employees an advocacy toolkit. This should include educational materials that reinforce the personal benefits and expectations, for example: an invitation to start sharing, short demo of the platform you're using, program rules and rewards, as well as social media best-practices.

3. Offer support whenever needed. Create a unified channel where employees can easily turn to you for advocacy-related questions. This could be done through email, Slack channels, or monthly roundtables.

4. Segment your advocates: Different groups of employees require unique types of content, incentives, and recognition. It's best to segment them by team or seniority level to accommodate those varying needs. For example, even if you have one place for employees to discover ready-made content, segment your content by topics so advocates can easily share what's relevant for them.

5. Get leadership involved. Senior leadership can serve as great role models for employee advocates. Propel them to share relevant materials, empower them with speaking opportunities, and constantly ask for their feedback.



Step 5:

Measure Program Results

You can't improve what you can't measure!

Once your employee advocacy program is running, it's critical to measure its performance every step of the way. Remember those goals you set at the beginning? In this step, you'll use those KPIs to understand the success of your program across three levels:

1. Employee Engagement

Some employee advocates are more active than others. Drill down your social analytics to identify employee participation levels, program leaders, and engagement by content type.

2. Marketing Objectives

Examine how employee advocacy contributes to your overall B2B marketing objectives. With the right platform, you'll be able to see how your program drives content engagement, website traffic, conversions, and additional sales.

Next, you'll be able to compare employee advocacy to other social campaigns such as original and curated content. The result is a comprehensive overview of your top-performing activities.

3. Program ROI

Revenue will always be the main determinant for program success and resources. For an accurate understanding of how employee advocacy impacts revenue, you'll need to ensure a fully-integrated marketing technology stack.

Connecting the data across your employee advocacy, marketing automation, and CRM platforms will give you a more complete picture of how employee-generated leads impact sales-generated revenue.



Step 6: Maximize Employee Engagement

Employee advocacy is not a one-off exercise; it's an ongoing initiative that requires keeping employees engaged and entertained. There are numerous ways to gamify your program for maximum participation:

1. Reward & Recognize Employees

Incentives go a long way toward increasing employee morale. Offering Amazon vouchers or organizing a nice team dinner is sure to be received with appreciation.

That said, rewards shouldn't come at the expense of recognition. It's extremely important to acknowledge employees for their efforts – especially in a public forum.

2. Simplify Content Sharing

An engaging employee advocacy program makes the sharing process as fast and as simple as possible.

Encourage employees to download Oktopost's mobile app so they can effortlessly share pre-approved content anywhere, anytime. On average, employees share 3X more content with the Oktopost app.

3. Gather Employee Feedback

Run bi-weekly, monthly, or quarterly surveys or sessions where employee feedback can be used to improve content, build a better reward system, and explore new initiatives. Keeping an open-door policy will ensure that your employees remain involved and enthusiastic about sharing content that benefits them and the company.

4. Optimize Content Strategy

Based on your program analytics and employee feedback, look for ways to improve your messaging, content topics, and posting frequency. If you see that employees are sharing a lot of content around Topic A on LinkedIn, empower them with more of the same!

5. Share Data with Advocates

Cultivating a data-driven program, in which advocates see how much impact they're generating across various metrics (reach, engagement, revenue), can dramatically boost internal employee engagement.

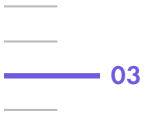




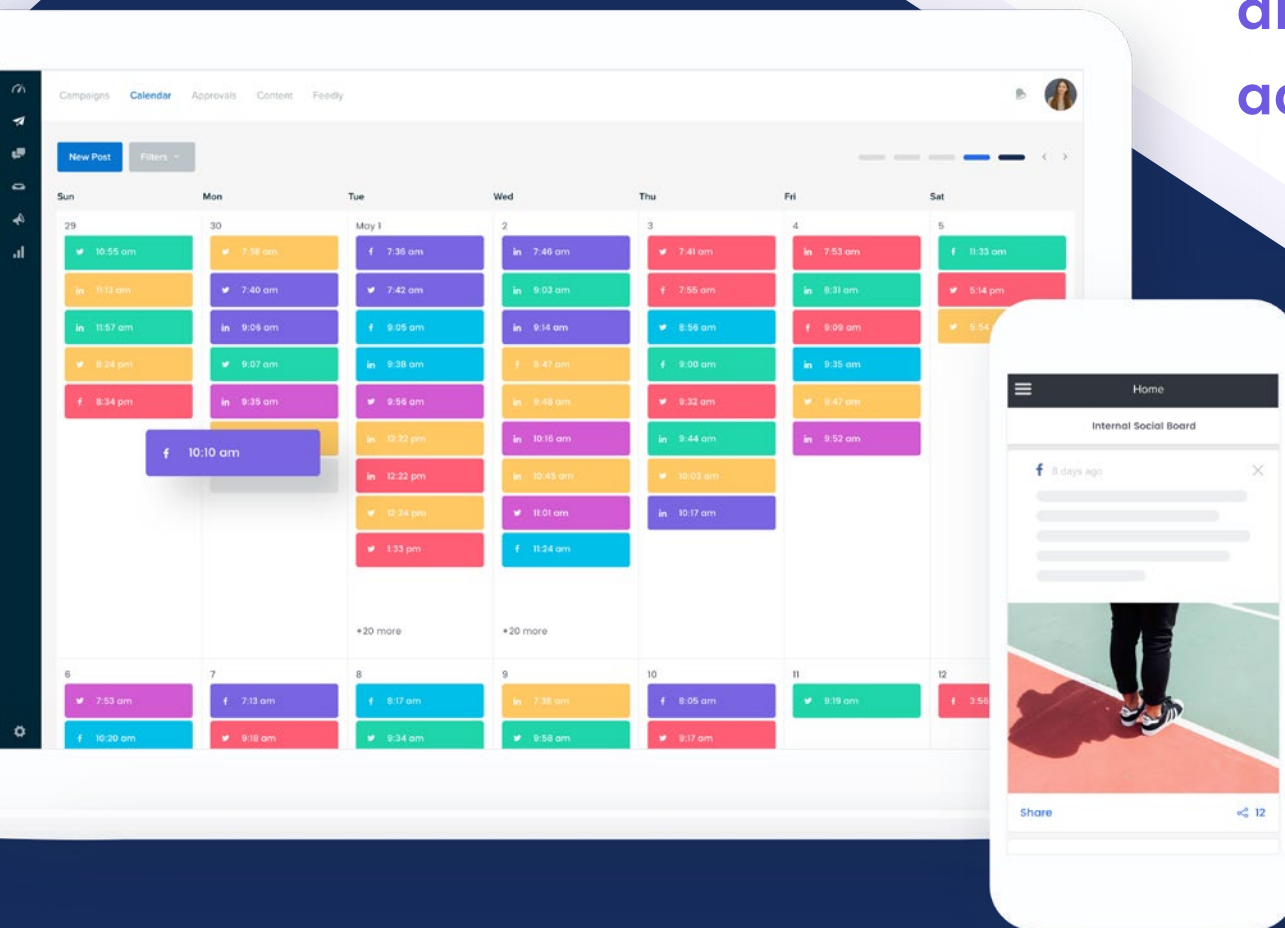
CHAPTER
03

Get Started with Oktopost

PAGES 24 - 28



Oktopost streamlines your corporate and employee advocacy channels so you can **effectively manage, monitor, and measure** all social media activities, from one place.



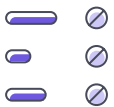
#1

Easily provide employees with pre-approved content



TWO-CLICK PROCESS

Copy the posts from your corporate channels and push them directly to the Advocacy Board, in just a few clicks.



SOCIAL COMPLIANCE

Ban inappropriate or fogue keywords to prevent employee advocates from misusing their handles.



CONTENT SEGMENTATION

Inspire employees to share the most relevant content by tagging them by topics.



EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS

Give advocates the freedom to recommend content ideas so they feel valued and invested.

#2

Make it easy and fun for them to share



INSTANT AMPLIFICATION

Oktopost allows employees to easily share content on a regular basis anywhere, anytime – via desktop or mobile app.



CONTENT RELEVANCY

Position employees as trustworthy voices within a noisy marketing world by sharing content that's super relevant to their role, interests, and target audience..



POST-LEVEL ANALYTICS

Make data available to employees so they can visualize how their efforts drive impressions, clicks, retweets, conversions, and more.



ADVOCACY LEADERBOARD

Spark some friendly competition by letting employees view their program placement in comparison to their peers.

#3

Measure your program to optimize results



UNLIMITED PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

From reach to clicks, and conversions, Oktopost presents data from your corporate and employee channels for a complete picture of your marketing success.



DETAILED ACTIVITY METRICS

Break down employee engagement by identifying social stars and tracking content engagement per employee profile.



SEAMLESS INTEGRATIONS

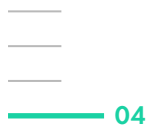
Oktopost natively shares employee advocacy data with your marketing automation and CRM platforms for building highly targeted campaigns.



CHAPTER
04

Summary

PAGES 29 - 30



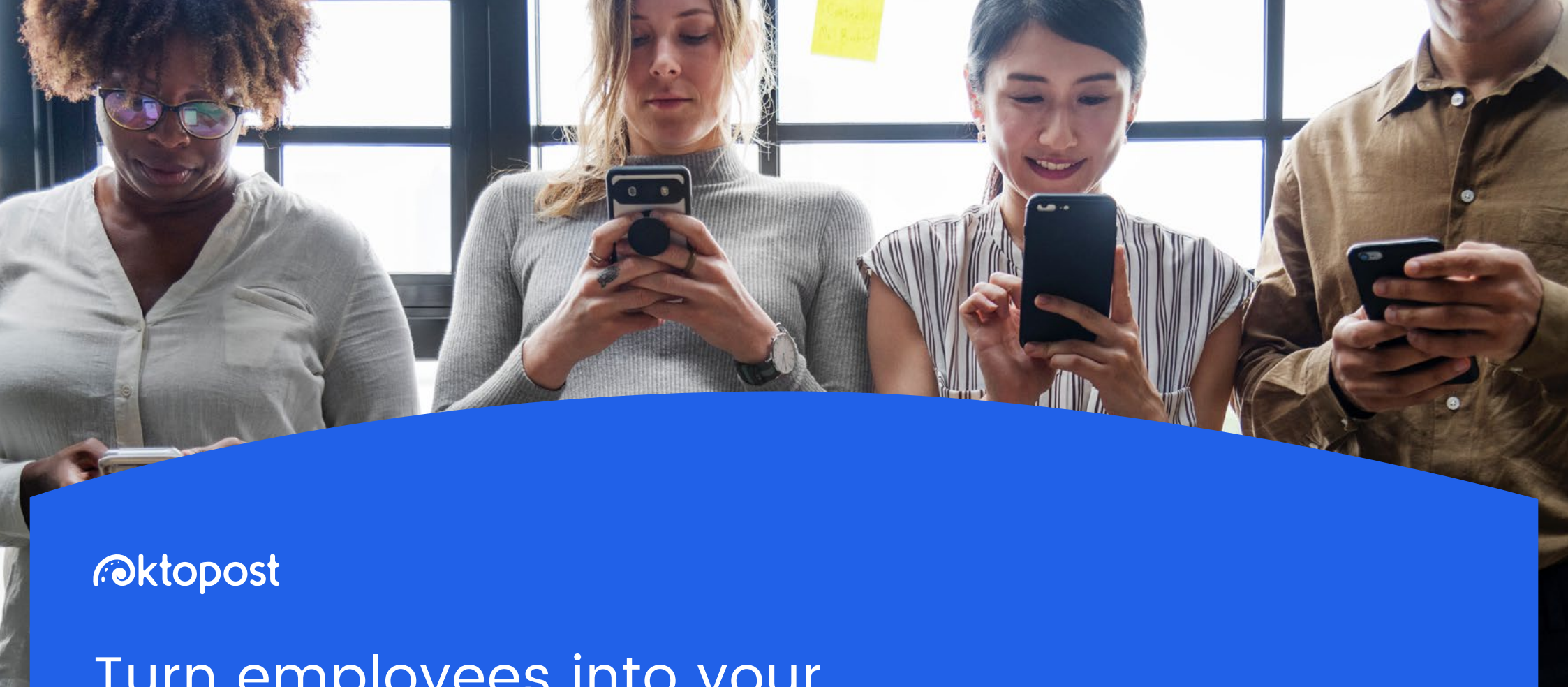
To Summarize

It doesn't matter how great your content or marketing team are, there's nothing more powerful than having employees share valuable content with their professional networks. Employee advocacy is the new generation of B2B marketing, allowing companies to amplify their reach, humanize their brand voice, and drive meaningful business results.

As the only unified employee advocacy and social media management platform, Oktopost simplifies content distribution for marketers while providing them with granular insights into program results. Loved by thousands of advocates worldwide, Oktopost's intuitive and fun platform allows employees to instantly share content, view their success, and become thought leaders.

Best of all, our employee advocacy platform integrates natively with your marketing automation, CRM, and gamification solutions so you get a closed-loop view of your program's success.





Turn employees into your **biggest marketing asset**

Discover how Oktopost can help you launch, measure, and scale a global employee advocacy program for greater social media marketing results.

[Request a demo](#)

