



JSG RESEARCH REPORT

# Leverage Social Selling for Channel Partners

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# FOREWORD

Ashlyn Szilva, PhD

VP Partner Ecosystem  
Strategies and Research



*As we navigate the intricate landscape of the IT-Telecom channel ecosystem, it becomes evident that social selling has never been more pivotal. Our esteemed partners—distributors, resellers, service providers, and integrators—are at the forefront of delivering cutting-edge technology solutions to an ever-evolving market. With their deep expertise and extensive networks, these channel partners ensure that innovation reaches those who need it most.*

*The digital age has not just influenced, but it has empowered the metamorphosis of the B2B buyer journey. Buyers now have unprecedented access to information, which has given them a significant role in the more complex decision-making process. They are leveraging many online resources, and the rise of social media as a tool for business research and networking marks a significant shift in how B2B interactions unfold.*

*This report delves into the **benefits of social selling within the IT-Telecom channel ecosystem**. Through rigorous analysis and insightful perspectives, we explore how platforms like LinkedIn, X, and Facebook are reshaping the buyer-seller dynamic. By understanding these trends, we can better equip our channel partners to not just survive but thrive in this digitally driven marketplace. Our findings underscore the urgent need for a robust social media presence, not just as a marketing tool, but as a cornerstone of modern B2B engagement.*

*In compiling this report, we draw from a rich pool of data and contemporary research, providing a comprehensive guide for those looking to harness the power of social selling. We invite you to journey with us through these insights and understand the transformative potential that social media holds for the IT-Telecom channel ecosystem.*

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Ashlyn".

## EXPERT OPINION

### Vladimir Krause-Halabi

Director of  
Social Media



*Having had the privilege of working with over 100 companies within the IT-Telecom partner ecosystem, I've seen firsthand how social selling can transform a business's digital presence and demand generation. In an industry where relationships are the backbone of success, leveraging social media is not just a strategy—it's a necessity. Social selling is the next tool in the modern B2B seller's toolkit.*

*Over the years, I've helped businesses build their social media presence, craft compelling digital brands, and generate leads through targeted social selling efforts. I've seen what works, and more importantly, what doesn't. Social selling isn't about simply having a presence; it's about strategically engaging with your audience, providing value, and establishing yourself as a trusted authority in your field.*

*Throughout this report, you'll hear from various stakeholders who've experienced the shift in their sales processes thanks to social selling. Their stories, combined with the insights shared here, will illustrate why embracing social selling is essential for thriving in today's competitive IT-Telecom landscape.*

*As you read through this report, I encourage you to reflect on your own strategies. How can you and your team leverage social selling to drive growth and build stronger relationships? **The future of sales is digital,** and those who adapt will be the ones who lead the charge.*

*If you're ready to take the next step, [let's connect](#)—I'm here to help you navigate this new frontier.*

*Vladimir*

# INTRODUCTION

The IT-Telecom channel ecosystem comprises various intermediaries, including distributors, resellers, service providers, and integrators, who are pivotal in delivering technology solutions to end customers. These channel partners are integral to vendors' success, bridging the gap between product development and market consumption. Their extensive networks and specialized knowledge facilitate the seamless distribution and implementation of complex IT and telecom solutions.

The B2B buyer journey has undergone significant transformation in recent years. With their increased autonomy and discernment, today's buyers are more informed than ever. The advent of the internet and the proliferation of digital touchpoints have shifted the locus of control from sellers to buyers, respecting their decision-making process. According to recent studies, B2B buyers conduct extensive online research before making purchasing decisions, often engaging with multiple sources of information across various platforms.

One of the most notable trends in the modern B2B buyer journey is the increasing reliance on social media. Platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook have become critical tools for business research and networking, understanding and catering to their needs. B2B buyers use these platforms to seek product recommendations, read reviews, engage in discussions, and connect with industry experts.

This shift underscores the need for B2B marketers and sales teams to establish a strong presence on social media to meet buyers where they are.

*"Social selling is no longer just a buzzword—it's a game-changer for B2B businesses in the IT-Telecom channel. Our industry thrives on relationships and trust, and social media platforms have become the new handshake."*

*By leveraging these digital touchpoints, we're not only meeting our buyers where they are but also anticipating their needs, fostering deeper connections, and driving more meaningful engagements.*

*In essence, social selling is the force that turns connections into conversions and clicks into client relationships."*

**Janet Schijns, CEO JSG**

# SOCIAL SELLING 101

Social selling is a strategic approach that leverages social media platforms to build relationships and generate leads within the IT and Telecom industry. Social selling goes far beyond social media marketing. Unlike traditional cold-calling, emails, and social media advertisements, social selling focuses on building trust with potential clients through meaningful online interactions.

It allows the seller to tap into the existing conversations and customer needs on social media, which they already trust and engage with. To effectively implement social selling, professionals should target the right audience by identifying decision-makers and influencers on platforms like LinkedIn. Becoming a thought leader is essential, sharing valuable industry insights and participating.

## *Core Principles of Social Selling*

- |                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Target the Right Audience</i> | 4. <i>Showcase Solutions</i> |
| 2. <i>Become a Thought Leader</i>   | 5. <i>Social Listening</i>   |
| 3. <i>Build Relationships</i>       | 6. <i>Employee Advocacy</i>  |

### *1. Target the right audience*

Social selling is about finding and engaging with the right audience for your brand. This means identifying the key decision-makers and influencers who can make or break your sales success. Whether you're selling B2B or B2C, knowing where to find your target buyers is critical. With platforms like LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and Facebook, there are plenty of opportunities to connect with potential customers.

For B2B sales, X and LinkedIn are essential channels for reaching C-Suite level executives and other decision-makers. Researchers use social media during their buying process. To maximize your social selling results, targeting the right audience and using the proper channels to reach them is crucial.

# SOCIAL SELLING 101

## 2. Become a Thought Leader

Becoming a thought leader is a critical element of a powerful marketing and sales strategy. Not only does it generate visibility for the brand, but it also establishes the individual employees and experts in their industry. Being a recognized thought leader on social media can bring immense benefits to B2B sales teams, as [92% of buyers](#) are more likely to engage with someone perceived to be an industry expert.

Being a thought leader is all about expertise, insights, and ideas worth sharing with others. Developing and sharing your unique perspectives on relevant topics within the IT channel industry is vital to gain credibility and establish yourself as a leader.

## 3. Build Relationships

While social media was once seen as a distraction from business goals, it has emerged as a powerful tool for building relationships with potential customers. In fact, [54% of sales reps](#) acknowledged the benefits of technology and social media in building better customer relationships.

*[82% of social selling pros](#) state that building relationships with prospects or connections is their job's most essential and enjoyable part.*

By establishing a solid network of connections on social media within your industry, you can gain valuable access to content and insights that can help you better understand your audience and their needs. The key to successful social selling is **building trust** and providing value to prospects before you try selling to them.

## 4. Showcase Solutions

Presenting your IT or telecom solutions genuinely and heartfully helps build trust with your audience. It can be challenging to avoid sounding like a telemarketer when discussing a product. Still, by using specific examples and case studies, you can show your audience that you're not just trying to sell them something. Instead, you're genuinely interested in their needs and interests.

Highlighting how your solutions address specific industry challenges is a great way to showcase your product's authenticity. Taking time to build authentic relationships with your customers makes showcasing and presenting your solutions and products much more efficient.

# SOCIAL SELLING 101

## 5. Social Listening

Social listening is a practice that has gained increasing value, according to nearly two-thirds of marketers. This process involves monitoring social media channels for mentions of your brand, competitor brands, and related keywords. Social listening allows you to conduct real-time market research and improve your understanding of customer thoughts and competition.

Social listening involves three steps: tracking brand mentions, analyzing sentiment, and using insights to make data-driven decisions. Unlike reactive social monitoring, which only tracks specific brand mentions, social listening provides a holistic view to understand your intended audience better. A solid social listening strategy offers many benefits, from improving customer relationships and acquisition to identifying potential collaboration opportunities and market trends.

## 6. Employee Advocacy

Employee advocacy can be a game-changer when maximizing your reach and credibility. Encouraging employees from all departments, not just sales, to share company content and insights on their social media platforms can help build brand trust and establish your company as an industry leader. This can positively impact various aspects of your business, from marketing to employer branding to recruitment.

Having employees involved in creating and sharing content can expand your online presence and develop a sense of community, highlighting your team's talents, skills, and expertise. With employee advocacy, your company has the potential to reach new audiences and solidify your social selling reputation.

*"Employee advocacy is the secret weapon behind successful social selling. When team members share their expertise on social media, it amplifies an organization's brand and builds authentic connections.*

*Think of it as deploying an entire fleet of brand ambassadors, each enhancing your company's reach and credibility. Empowering employees to become advocates boosts engagement and fosters a culture of trust and transparency.*

*In social selling, employee advocacy is the key that propels your organization's mission forward, turning every post into an opportunity for growth and success."*

**Vladimir Krause-Halabi, Director of Social Media JSG**



# SOCIAL SELLING 101

## *From Cold Calls to Clicks: Traditional Sales vs. Social Selling in the IT-Telco Channel*

Traditional B2B sales are product-centric, prioritizing features and quick conversions through cold calls and presentations. Social selling flips the script, “Social selling is part marketing, part nurturing, and part compelling change.”

Here, the focus is on building relationships and understanding customer needs. Social selling makes the earliest interactions with potential customers natural. Traditional methods like cold calls and emails have become unappealing with social media and social selling.

For example, 90% of decision-makers will never answer a cold call, but 75% of buyers use social media, highlighting the importance of a social selling strategy. Social media becomes the battleground, where valuable industry insights and helpful advice are shared to build trust and establish expertise.

The sales cycle lengthens as nurturing leads takes precedence over immediate conversions. However, using social selling and social media can reduce the time it takes to find potential leads, according to 39% of B2B professionals.

Engagement with content and qualified leads become the key metrics, with technology playing a more significant role in targeting prospects and tracking interactions. Unsurprisingly, 78% of salespeople engaging in social selling outperform those still relying on traditional methods. Overall, social selling fosters long-term, trusted advisor relationships, a stark contrast to the transactional nature of conventional B2B sales.

*“One of the aspects of social selling I find most valuable for my business is that it generates free customer leads without the need for cold calling.*

*Prospects and customers come to me for my expertise, and they even refer me to other potential clients. JSG’s Social Selling Boot Camp has revolutionized how I attract and engage with customers.”*

*[Simon Robert](#), [CEO Of NovBox](#)*



# SOCIAL SELLING 101

## ***Empowering Channel Partners: The Unmatched Benefits of Social Selling***

Social selling empowers IT and Telecom channel partners to take their business to the next level. By leveraging social media platforms, they can expand their reach beyond existing customers, fostering brand awareness and establishing themselves as trusted authorities.

Social selling isn't about aggressive pitches but building relationships and offering valuable industry insights. "75% of B2B buyers and 84% of C-level or vice-president level executives use social media to make purchasing decisions."

Sharing informative content and success stories attracts potential clients seeking solutions, while social listening allows partners to target qualified leads with specific needs. The importance of an online presence lies in the fact that 68% of consumers follow brands on social media to stay updated about new products and services, exclusive deals, and promotions.

Furthermore, social media becomes a platform to showcase expertise and participate in industry discussions, positioning channel partners as thought leaders. This credibility makes them the go-to resource for potential customers. Social selling even strengthens relationships with vendors.

Partners demonstrate their commitment by engaging with vendor content and collaborating on initiatives, fostering a mutually beneficial partnership. Social media is unique because you can share quick comments, likes, and shares, showcasing the community amongst vendors, sellers, and buyers.

In addition, it increases your brand's interactions and exposure, leading to a win-win outcome. Social selling equips channel partners with the tools to generate leads, build brand awareness, and achieve significant business growth.

*"So, where are consumers going for trusted information about brands and services?  
Overwhelmingly, respondents trust friends and family (93%)."*

# ALIGNING WITH B2B BUYER BEHAVIORS

It is no secret that B2B buyer behavior has had to adapt and overcome current industry trends. The pressure is on due to an uncertain economy, layoffs, increased inflation, and sky-high interest rates. This has caused many changes in who controls the B2B buyer budget, which has become increasingly focused on price, outcome, and ROI. This squeeze is causing B2B buyers to spend less time with sellers, with customers time spent with sellers coming in at only 17% this shows how critical it is for salespeople to try new methods for connecting such as social selling .

Here is where social selling is revolutionizing the B2B buyer journey. Social selling allows you to be seen as more than just a seller. Focusing on curating your brand and presence to be an industry leader and sharing trends, data, and insights while authentic promoting your products and services is critical for B2B commerce.

Social selling ditches the interruptive tactics of traditional sales and allows channel partners to meet buyers where they're already engaged online. Today's buyers actively research solutions on social media platforms before purchasing, as illustrated by "54% of Social Browsers using social media to research products."

By having a presence on these platforms, channel partners can connect with potential customers when they're seeking information. Social media allowed brands and thought leaders to respond to comments in real time, adding to the authenticity and emotional connection between buyer and seller.

Social selling goes beyond being present; it's about tailoring content to address buyer pain points and interests. Sharing relevant industry trends, success stories, and helpful content positions the channel partner as a valuable resource.

Social media also fosters two-way communication, allowing partners to answer questions, participate in discussions, and build rapport with potential customers. Industry-specific groups and communities on social media platforms provide another avenue for connection. By engaging in these groups, channel partners can directly connect with buyers actively seeking solutions within their niche.

One of the best platforms for these groups is Facebook, with 75% of salespeople reporting that they discovered new prospects through the platform. With millions of active users, there are limitless opportunities to find, curate, and engage with your target audience.

# ALIGNING WITH B2B BUYER BEHAVIORS

## ***Engage and Educate: Leverage Social Content to Attract Customers***

IT-Telecom channel brands looking to maximize their social selling efforts and attract potential customers must focus heavily on creating social content. B2B marketers rely heavily on [LinkedIn \(84%\)](#) and [Facebook \(29%\)](#), followed by [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [TikTok](#) to showcase their content.

By sharing industry insights, product demos, and customer success stories, you can position yourself as a thought leader and grab attention. It doesn't stop there because bite-sized explainer videos and live Q&A sessions can further educate viewers, addressing their pain points and building trust.

Real-world examples like Cisco Meraki's industry insights on LinkedIn, Verizon Business's explainer videos on 5G, and Tech Data's cloud solution case studies showcase the power of social content.

## ***What content is the right content?***

As stated above, content comes in many different forms. From case studies to demos to testimonials, there are many ways to showcase your products and services. Research from the [Content Marketing Institute](#) has found that the most popular forms of B2B content are short articles and posts (94%), videos (84%), and case studies/customer stories (78%).

These are followed closely by long articles, visual data, and white papers. Regarding efficiency, case studies and customer stories take the cake, followed by videos, thought leadership e-books, and white papers. However, the key is that [90% of B2B marketers](#) use social media to share this content, further solidifying the need for an online presence and thorough social selling plan.

By continually delivering high-quality, relevant content, B2B companies can attract and educate potential customers, leading to informed purchasing decisions and long-term customer relationships.

## ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

In today's digital landscape, building relationships and fostering trust through social media interactions is crucial for success in B2B sales, particularly within the IT-Telecom industry. Research on social media marketing and B2B sales highlights the shift from transactional interactions to relationship-driven approaches. Here's why this social selling strategy is so important:

***Buyers Rely on Social Proof:*** Social proof is looking at what others are doing and saying about a brand, product, or company. Social proof is significant in B2B sales. Studies by [Forrester Research](#) show that B2B buyers place a high value on social proof before making a purchase decision. Positive social media interactions, testimonials, and industry recognition build trust and establish credibility for channel partners.

Businesses want to see that others have succeeded with your products or services, alleviating doubts before purchasing. For instance, “[88% of consumers trust user reviews as much as personal recommendations](#),” while [92% of B2B buyers](#) are convinced after reading a trustworthy review. Diving deeper, [95% look at reviews written by actual customers](#), solidifying the need for customer testimonials.

***Social Listening Creates Deeper Connections:*** Social media platforms allow for social listening, a technique highlighted in research by [Edelman Trust Barometer](#), where brands can understand customer needs and concerns. By actively listening to online conversations, channel partners can tailor their social media interactions to address specific pain points and build rapport with potential customers.

***Long-Term Relationships Drive Growth:*** [Research by Gartner](#) emphasizes the increasing complexity of the B2B buying journey. Building trust through social media fosters long-term relationships with potential customers, allowing partners to nurture leads and become trusted advisors throughout the decision-making process.

## ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

Social media interactions provide the perfect platform to cultivate these relationships and trust:

**Two-way communication:** Unlike traditional sales methods, social media allows for back-and-forth conversations. Partners can answer questions, address concerns, and offer personalized advice, strengthening connections with potential customers. Active listening is a large part of the conversation. It is essential to understand the core message being shared and respond to it appropriately.

**Transparency and Authenticity:** Sharing behind-the-scenes glimpses and humanizing the brand through social media builds trust and fosters a sense of authenticity with potential customers. Consumers are craving authenticity in an age of consumerism and advertising on every corner.

**Building Communities:** Social media groups specific to the IT-Telecom industry allow partners to connect with potential customers with similar interests and challenges. Engaging in these communities fosters a sense of belonging and positions the partner as a valuable resource within the industry.

Channel partners who are authentic and show that they care about customer needs and interests will have an easier time creating trust and lasting relationships. Authenticity leads to emotional connection, making the customer feel connected beyond a purchase.

Emotional connections built through authenticity can have great returns, with 71% of consumers saying they are more likely to recommend a brand they are emotionally connected to. By prioritizing relationship building and fostering trust through social media interactions, channel partners can move beyond simply selling products and establish themselves as trusted advisors in the IT-Telecom space.

This approach leads to a more sustainable and profitable business model in the long run.

# ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

## *Effective Strategies for Success*

### *Become an Industry Thought Leader*

Participate in relevant online discussions, share insightful articles, and host live Q&A sessions. This establishes you as a trusted resource and attracts potential customers seeking solutions. “76 percent of consumers report that they pay attention to communications from a brand they trust versus 48 percent of people who don’t fully trust a brand.”

### *Respond Promptly and Professionally*

Social media thrives on two-way communication. Respond promptly to comments, questions, and inquiries, offering helpful and personalized advice. This fosters trust and positions you as a reliable partner. “Sixty-three percent of consumers told us they trust what influencers say about brands more than they trust the brand’s advertisements.”

*“79% of consumers view brand content, participate in brand activities, connect on social media, [and] share feedback.”*

### *Run Interactive Campaigns*

Host online contests, polls, or quizzes related to industry trends. This encourages participation, generates social buzz, and allows you to collect valuable data about your target audience.

# ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

## *Real-World Examples:*

**AT&T** uses Twitter chats with industry experts to discuss current trends in cybersecurity. This positions them as a thought leader and attracts prospects seeking secure network solutions.

**HPE** leverages LinkedIn to share case studies showcasing successful cloud migration projects. This educates B2B buyers about the benefits of cloud computing and positions HPE as a trusted advisor.

**VMware** has Facebook groups dedicated to IT professionals to share troubleshooting tips and answer questions. This fosters a sense of community and establishes VMware as a valuable resource.

By implementing these strategies, IT-Telecom channel partners can turn social media into a powerful tool for engaging B2B buyers, building trust, and ultimately driving sales success.

One of our Social Selling Bootcamp's MSP participants discovered that their business' digital marketing was not reaching their target audience where they resided on social media, until they focused their Social Selling efforts on LinkedIn.

Every week, the MSP owner posted engaging video content consisting of them sharing insights of their company's solution sets. By consistently posting this engaging and educational content, the MSP owner positioned themselves as a thought leader. This was a brand building force multiplier as LinkedIn recognized the owner as a Top Voice, featuring them at the top of web searches regarding their solution set.

*"When customers feel connected to brands, more than half of consumers (57%) will increase their spending with that brand, and 76% will buy from them over a competitor."*



## ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

Understanding buyer needs is critical for success. Social listening emerges as a powerful tool for channel partners to achieve this. Here's how:

**Unveiling Buyer Pain Points:** Social media platforms are a treasure trove of customer sentiment and discussions. You can identify specific pain points and challenges potential customers face by actively listening to online conversations, reviews, and social media mentions (not just directed at your brand). This allows you to tailor your communication to directly address these concerns and showcase how your solutions can provide relief.

**Identifying Industry Trends:** Social listening goes beyond individual customer needs. It lets you stay up-to-date on industry trends, emerging technologies, and competitor activity. This knowledge empowers you to anticipate buyer needs before they arise and tailor your communication to address the latest industry challenges.

**Refining Messaging and Content:** Social listening helps you understand your target audience's language. You can ensure your message resonates with potential customers by incorporating this language and terminology into your social media communication, content marketing efforts, and even sales pitches. This creates a sense of connection and positions you as someone who truly understands their needs.

**Personalization for Stronger Relationships:** Social listening lets you identify specific buyer personas within your target audience. You can build stronger, more personalized relationships with potential customers by tailoring your communication style and content to resonate with these different personas.

**Social Proof and Building Trust:** Social listening helps you identify positive customer experiences and success stories. Sharing these testimonials and social proof builds trust with potential buyers actively researching solutions online.

## DRIVING SALES

Due to its nature, social selling builds relationships with potential customers, allowing businesses to nurture leads easily and move them down the sales funnel. The personal connection associated with social media expedites the sales process due to quickly formed connections rather than the traditional lead generation tactics. Social media engagement resulted in 64% of sales teams hitting their quota, compared to 49% of teams that didn't utilize social selling.

**Here's how social media excels at lead nurturing:** “By using social media, you can reach out to these leads and provide them with valuable content to help them learn more about your business. [...] These steps should be taken to get the most out of social media for your lead nurturing: Target Audience ... Create Content... Engage With Your Audience.”

### Lead Nurturing with Social Media

#### Providing Valuable Content

Sharing informative content like industry insights, case studies, and product demos educates potential customers about their challenges and the solutions the channel partner offers. This positions them as a trusted resource and keeps the brand top-of-mind throughout the buyer's journey.

#### Targeted Communication and Personalization

Social media platforms allow for targeted outreach based on demographics and interests. Partners can leverage this to tailor content and messaging to specific lead segments, addressing their unique needs and pain points.

#### Social Proof and Testimonials

Sharing positive customer experiences and success stories on social media builds trust and social proof. Potential customers can see how the partner has helped similar businesses, increasing their confidence in the offered solutions.

## DRIVING SALES

**Engagement and Lead Scoring:** Social media interactions provide valuable data points for lead scoring. Partners can track engagement with content, participation in discussions, and website visits to identify actively interested leads and prioritize outreach efforts accordingly.

**Nurturing Through Different Stages:** social media caters to different stages of the B2B sales funnel in the IT-Telecom space:

### Awareness

Industry insights and thought leadership content attracts potential customers just beginning their research. This stage focuses on creating various forms of content to help brand awareness, leading to high-quality leads. Showcase how a product or service can solve the consumer's problem and provide them with a point of contact.

### Consideration

When customers consider their options, it is time to show the product's or service's value. Blogs, videos, case studies, and product demos effectively showcase the partner's expertise and solutions, moving leads further down the funnel.

### Decision

Testimonials and social proof build trust and confidence, which nudge leads to a purchase decision. At this point, reflecting on the performance leading up to the decision stage holds valuable insights for B2B marketers. Seeing what worked can help to form campaigns in the future.

**Examples:** [A study by LinkedIn](#) (The Social Selling Index (SSI) | LinkedIn Sales Solutions) found that companies using social selling see a 51% increase in sales pipeline volume.

## DRIVING SALES

Social Selling improves the efficiency of B2B businesses. An MSP participant in one of our social selling bootcamps took all the insights we gave them and transformed their business strategy. Instead of investing in salespeople, they made an investment in higher quality content creation.

The improved content gave the existing sales team more time to sell and the marketing team more time to market. The outcome was 600% sales growth and a stronger competitive presence in the market.

*Here's how other IT-Telecom partners can implement this:*

### **Cisco Systems**

Shares blog posts and articles on cybersecurity best practices, attracting potential customers concerned about data breaches.

### **VMware**

Engages with potential customers on industry forums, offering helpful advice and addressing technical questions, nurturing leads by establishing themselves as a trusted resource.

By implementing a social selling strategy focused on nurturing leads, IT-Telecom channel partners can build stronger relationships, provide valuable information, and convert leads into loyal customers.

## DRIVING SALES

The IT-Telecom industry thrives on building relationships with high-value clients. Social media provides a powerful platform for channel partners to identify and target these prospects with laser focus. Here's how:

**Leveraging Social Listening:** By actively monitoring relevant industry discussions, hashtags, and online communities, channel partners can identify potential high-value customers expressing specific needs or pain points. This allows them to target their outreach efforts to those most likely to benefit from their solutions.

*“Effectively marketing a product through content such as ads and landing pages involves speaking the audience’s language. This is largely because it shows you understand their common train of thought. As a result, you can better communicate with them. [...]”*

*As you study posts that use your tracked keywords, you may notice that members of your market:*

- *Phrase concepts in a specific way*
- *Use common secondary keywords*
- *Write simple, complex, or somewhere-in-between sentences”*

*“By leveraging social selling, I was able to host an in-person event with 75 attendees. This gave me the opportunity to gain 20 new customers without having to meet them individually.”*

*[Simon Robert, CEO Of NovBox](#)*

## DRIVING SALES

**Targeting by Demographics and Interests:** Most social media platforms offer advanced targeting options based on demographics, job titles, company size, and interests. By utilizing these features, channel partners can tailor their social media campaigns to reach high-value prospects within their ideal customer profile in the IT-Telecom space.

**Identifying Decision-Makers:** Research by [Forrester](#) highlights the importance of targeting decision-makers in B2B sales. “Platforms like LinkedIn allow for the creation of highly targeted campaigns, making it easier for B2B businesses to connect with decision-makers and influencers within their target market.” This empowers channel partners to target their outreach directly to the key decision-makers with purchasing power within high-value organizations.

***“75% of B2B buyers use social media to make buying decisions,  
with 50% using LinkedIn as a trusted source.”***

**Engaging with Industry Groups:** Many social media platforms offer industry-specific groups and communities. Participating in these groups allows channel partners to connect with high-value prospects who are actively engaged in discussions and seeking solutions within their niche area of the IT-Telecom industry.

**Utilizing Social Proof and Testimonials:** Showcase success stories of existing high-value clients on social media. This social proof builds trust and positions the channel partner as a trusted advisor to similar organizations. Targeting high-value prospects with content that resonates with their specific needs and challenges increases engagement and the likelihood of conversion.

# DRIVING SALES

Measuring success requires looking beyond vanity metrics like follower count. Here's a breakdown of critical metrics for social selling effectiveness:

**Number of Leads Generated:** This is the foundation. Track the number of leads generated through social media channels, such as website form submissions, contact requests, or event registrations.

**Lead Quality:** Not all leads are created equal. Analyze the quality of leads generated through social media. Are they qualified prospects within your target audience? Consider factors like job title, company size, and expressed interest in your solutions.

## Engagement Metrics

**Reach and Impressions:** Track the number of people who saw your social media content. This provides a sense of overall reach and brand awareness generated through social selling efforts.

**Engagement Rate:** This goes beyond likes and shares. See metrics like comments, click-through rates on website links, and content downloads. A high engagement rate indicates your social media content resonates with your target audience.

**Social Mentions and Brand Sentiment:** Monitor how often your brand is mentioned on social media and analyze the sentiment (positive, negative, or neutral) of these mentions. This provides valuable insights into brand perception and the effectiveness of your social selling approach.

## Sales Conversion Metrics

**Lead Conversion Rate:** Track the percentage of social media leads that convert into paying customers. This metric directly ties your social selling efforts to sales outcomes.

**Sales Pipeline Value:** Analyze the total value of sales opportunities generated from social media leads. This shows the tangible impact of social selling on your revenue pipeline.

Additional Considerations:

**Sales Cycle Length:** The IT-Telecom industry often has complex sales cycles. Track how social media interactions contribute to nurturing leads and moving them further down the sales funnel.

**Customer Lifetime Value:** Consider the long-term value of customers acquired through social selling. This provides a more holistic picture of your social selling efforts' return on investment (ROI).

## CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

A trend taking place in the channel due to an unsteady economy has been layoffs. In an earlier report by ANS and JSG, we found that 67% of the organizations with layoffs use (54%) or consider using (13%) marketing automation.

This leads to a decrease in B2B marketing professionals, while AI is also causing an upset. With 43% of these organizations using or considering generative AI, marketing professionals are being replaced by tech. What does this mean for social selling? Simply put, the emotional connection will dwindle. The human element within social selling makes it effective, so reducing that will cause challenges moving forward.

### Resource Constraints

**Limited Bandwidth:** IT-Telecom channel partners often operate with lean teams, making it challenging to dedicate time and budget towards crafting a comprehensive social selling strategy. Research by [Visual Objects](#) highlights the struggle for smaller businesses to allocate resources for social media management.

**Content Creation:** Developing high-quality, engaging content that resonates with B2B buyers in the IT-Telecom space requires ongoing effort and expertise. Research by [SproutSocial](#) explores the difficulty for businesses in consistently producing valuable content for social media audiences.

### Compliance Concerns

**Strict Regulations:** The IT-Telecom industry is heavily regulated, and social media communication must comply with data privacy laws and industry-specific regulations. Research by [Forrester](#) explores the challenges of navigating data privacy regulations like GDPR and CCPA when engaging on social media. These regulations are mandatory and aim to protect individuals' privacy rights. Non-compliance with these regulations can result in severe consequences, including hefty fines, legal penalties, and damage to a company's reputation. [Ensuring compliance](#) with these regulations mitigates risks, attracts more customers, and fosters innovation. Companies must implement critical components such as data inventory, privacy policies, consent management, and data security measures to achieve compliance. Adhering to these regulations protects individuals' privacy and builds trust and loyalty among customers.



# CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

## *Measurement and Attribution*

**Tracking ROI:** Attributing sales directly to social selling efforts can be challenging. Research by [Sprinklr](#) points out the complexities of tracking ROI for social media activities in B2B sales. This lack of clear attribution can make it challenging to demonstrate the value of social selling to leadership.

## *Standing Out in a Crowd*

**Social Media Fatigue:** B2B buyers are bombarded with social media content. Standing out and capturing attention requires a strategic approach. Research by [Sprout Social](#) explores the challenges of overcoming user apathy and information overload on social platforms.

## *Additional Considerations*

**Technical Expertise:** Understanding the nuances of different social media platforms, their algorithms, and best practices requires ongoing learning and adaptation.

**Sales Team Alignment:** Integrating social selling tactics with traditional sales processes is crucial for success. Research by [Hubspot](#) ([How to Train Your Team in Social Selling](#) (hubspot.com)) explores the importance of training and alignment within sales teams to leverage social selling effectively.

**Internal Buy-in:** Obtaining buy-in from leadership and securing resources for social selling initiatives can be a hurdle.

# CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Here's how to address the critical hurdles discussed earlier:

## **Resource Constraints**

**Prioritization and Focus:** Identify critical social media platforms where your target audience is most active and focus resources there.

**Content Curation:** Utilize a mix of curated and original content. Share valuable industry insights, thought leadership pieces, and success stories from reputable sources alongside your content.

**Social Selling Tools:** Explore social selling tools that streamline content creation, scheduling, and social listening. These tools can help manage social media activities more efficiently.

## **Compliance Concerns**

**Develop Clear Guidelines:** Establish your team's clear social media policies and compliance guidelines. These should address data privacy regulations and industry-specific compliance requirements.

**Social Media Training:** Regularly train your sales team on social selling best practices and compliance regulations.

## CONCLUSION

The importance of social selling for B2B sellers in the IT-Telecom channel cannot be overstated. By facilitating personal connections and fostering brand authenticity, social selling aligns with the evolving behaviors of contemporary B2B buyers. It enhances engagements and drives sales by leveraging the power of platforms like LinkedIn, X, and Facebook.

As these platforms become increasingly integral to the buyer's journey, serving as hubs for recommendations, reviews, discussions, and expert connections, B2B marketers and sales teams must prioritize establishing a solid social media presence. Embracing social selling is no longer optional; it is essential for staying competitive and meeting buyers where they are in today's digital landscape.

*"Thanks to the thought leadership and expertise I shared on LinkedIn, I've received several deals directly in my LinkedIn DMs.*

*Participating in JSG's Social Selling BootCamp truly transformed my approach and proved the power of social selling in action."*

**[Simon Robert, CEO Of NovBox](#)**

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