

# SOCIAL BUSINESS JOURNAL

## SAVVY SOCIAL SELLING THE SAP WAY

BEST PRACTICES  
THAT WIN CUSTOMERS

VOLUME 11



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# Introduction

By Arif Johari (AJ)

Despite folklore, the oldest profession in history is sales. Each technological era has impacted how the salesperson sells. Only recently has technology impacted how buyers buy.

Planes, trains and cars have enabled salespeople to cover more territory. The advent of the telephone, followed by email enabled salespeople to reach prospects and customers without any travel. The Internet and social media have given sales representatives even more ways to engage prospective and current customers.

While each era's technological advances brought new power to the salesperson, the advent of social media has shifted the power from the seller to the buyer. Peer-to-peer communication coupled with easy access to information enables buyers to search for enterprise solutions using the same method used when shopping for a garage door opener on Amazon.

Sales organizations that still rely primarily on traditional sales methods are at risk of missing buying signals and relationship building potential with the modern buyer in social media channels.

This Journal explains how SAP has made the paradigm shift to a social selling culture that benefits SAP sales and marketing teams as well as the customer.



**Arif Johari (AJ)**  
GLOBAL HEAD OF  
COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL  
SELLING, SAP

# Why Social Selling?

SAP is the market leader in enterprise application software and is at the center of today's business and technology revolution. However, the company experienced disruption in the B2B buyer's journey firsthand.





**The Situation:** An HR executive of a mid-size company was looking for answers to a problem she was facing. She was in the early stage of exploring new HR software systems. She turned to her network on LinkedIn to seek out answers and connect with her peers who may have recently faced similar solution rollouts.

**The Lost Opportunity:** Not one sales rep from any HR software company responded to this buying signal. Instead, her peers entirely controlled the conversation and the resulting influence on her buying journey. Her network of influencers provided insight, feedback, and suggested potential HR software solutions. Luckily, someone recommended SAP along with competing offerings.

**The Result:** This experience is representative of the reason SAP has made a commitment to a social selling program as described in this Journal. SAP has planned, launched and maintains a global social selling strategy that is robust and successful by all measures. This Journal explains the strategy, execution and results.

# Social Selling Goals at SAP

SAP is a 46-year-old enterprise software company focused on transformation. The organization's offerings have evolved from on-premise software to a cloud-oriented suite of solutions to meet client needs. Similarly, SAP's sales force has also transformed to adapt to the needs of the modern B2B buyer through social selling strategies.



# Getting Commitment to Social Selling Adoption

SAP set clear goals and expectations to help guide its sales team to achieve revenue targets using social selling techniques. SAP sales reps must be skilled at:

- identifying buying signals in social media platforms,
- engaging prospects in sales conversations,
- differentiating themselves and SAP from the competition,
- leveraging a technology-driven sales process,
- and closing deals

while developing a personal brand that earns respect, trust and credibility among prospects and customers. Social selling is an ambitious undertaking for SAP considering the breadth of its product line and a global sales force.



The global social selling program is a driving force behind SAP's vision 'to help the world run better and improve people's lives.' Creation of more relevant customer experiences, ones based on trust and credibility established by SAP representatives, makes doing business with SAP easier and more pleasant. By training and enabling the Marketing and Sales teams to engage more efficiently and effectively with buyers at all stages of the buying journey, SAP creates better quality leads with greater value at a higher volume. A commitment to training also ensures increased adoption and adherence to social selling program guidelines.

# Scaling Social Selling

Training programs and technology both play a role in scaling social selling at SAP.

On the training side, the organization has rolled out a Train-the-Trainer program combined with ongoing communication with the sales organization to get more reps trained, reinforce social selling principles, and ensure long-term program participation. You'll learn more about SAP's training initiatives in the next section.



Advanced technology allows SAP sales teams to strengthen the quality and experience of customer engagements. From the demand generation stage to evaluation, selection, and implementation, SAP implements a world-class sales technology stack that helps deliver a digital-first buying journey for customers. Without this technology stack, efficient and productive social selling at scale would be nearly impossible.

## Results

Since inception of the social selling training program over 12,000 people have been trained and close to 15,000 LinkedIn Sales Navigator licenses have been issued. SAP's social sellers convert opportunities up to 4.2 percentage points higher, lift opportunity value by 46%, resulting in deals that are 516% larger in revenue on average. To date, over two billion Euros in pipeline have been attributed to social selling.

**SAP sales reps with a strong Social Selling Index (SSI) are 3.4x more likely to hit quota, achieve 55% boost in sales performance, and achieve 3.6x more closed deals. Through training and enablement there has been 46% Social Selling Index (SSI) growth globally and 56% growth YoY in profile views among all LinkedIn Sales Navigator users since January 2016.**

# SAP's Social Selling Strategy

As much as 70% of a buyer's journey and up to 90% of a decision can be influenced before customers are ready to talk to SAP sales.





"I take that social listening approach that we talk so much about here at SAP and apply it when training on social selling; what are they reading, what are they following, what are their needs and then based on those needs or their personal career interests, I customize my approach with them. So, I make social selling relevant to their specific situation, because if you make social selling a generic situation or a solution, you'll lose a ton of people."

**Charrele Robinson-Brown**

Head of Global eLearning and Gamification  
for Social Selling, SAP

The social selling culture at SAP puts salespeople in a more proactive and engaging mode in social media channels. Instead of waiting for customers to directly express interest in SAP software, reps use their social listening skills to gauge buyers' online behavior so that they can engage in ways that build trust and credibility much earlier in the buyer's journey. At SAP, this called for top-down and bottom-up support of social selling strategies, retention through recognition and rewards, as well as integrating proper tracking in SAP's CRM/C4C systems.

## SAP's Social Selling Approach

- Connect with potential buyers on social platforms
- Listen and learn about problems buyers are facing to identify buying signals
- Humanize the experience
- Provide relevant content
- Maintain relationships through consistent engagement

# The Training Program

SAP provides an extensive social selling training program that positions trainees for success. Sales and Marketing team members learn to optimize their social profiles, remain consistent

across all social media platforms, set themselves apart as a trusted advisor, listen for social buying signals, and convey their knowledge of SAP products to prospects. SAP's training program leverages continuous communication to ensure best practice principles are always top of mind for the trainees.

## Social Selling – Thinking Out of the Box

"A sales rep got an extra copy of a book on Thought Leadership on Procurement. He decided to post a picture of it on LinkedIn with a question asking who was interested in receiving his extra copy of the book. He got quite a few responses from others, including CPOs, that were interested in receiving his extra copy.

He picked the first person that responded to be the winner of the book. He responded back to them with "Congratulations, I'm coming over to bring you your book. By the way, let's have a cup of coffee too."

**Niels Hoogkamer**

Sr. Field Marketing at Concur an SAP Company

SAP designed the training program not only to teach SAP employees to be good at social selling but to also help them build their personal brands. Individuals take an average of three-to-six months to become full-blown masters of social selling at SAP, depending on their initial skill level. Here is a breakdown of the areas covered during the training program.

"I think that the first step to transforming people's mindset is just to showcase some of the results that are already out there, and they are out there."

**Niels Hoogkamer**

Sr. Field Marketing at Concur an SAP Company

## Review Social Selling Basics and Goals

The first step in training a new social seller at SAP is to ensure they have a clear understanding of what social selling is and what SAP's goals are for social selling.

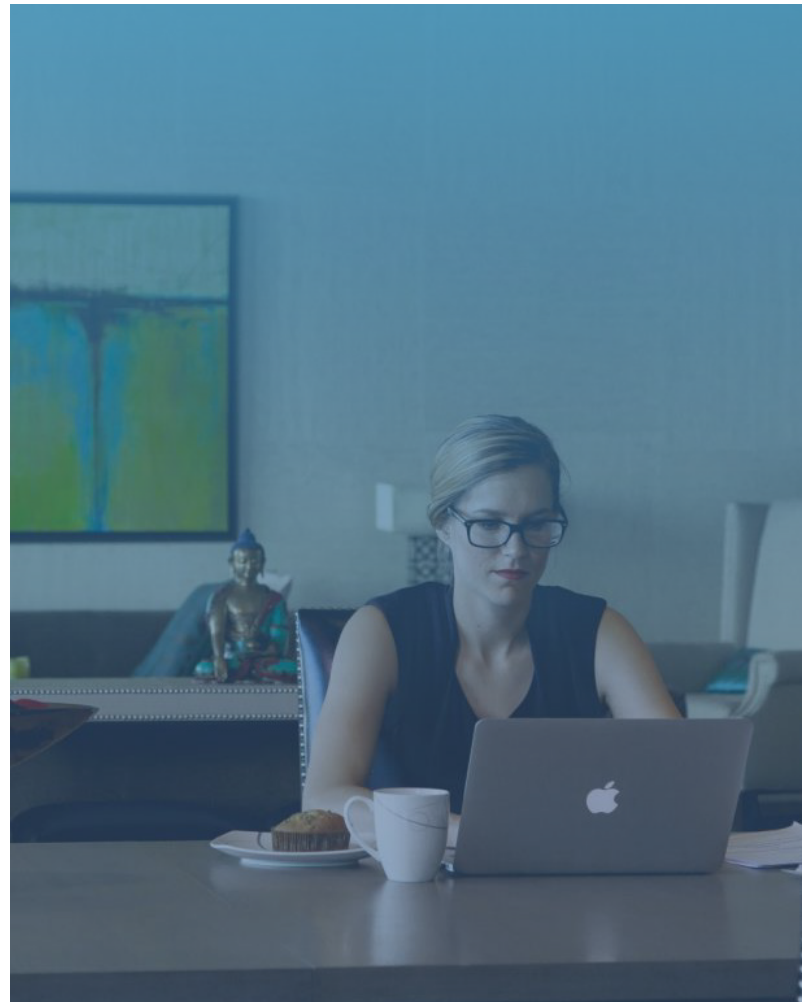
"The global social selling program team at SAP has a solution for everyone: sales, service industry, and business services. The program is easy to understand and adopt, we have proven results, and we offer an extremely high level of training and support. We do one-on-one training, we do small and large group end user training, we have intimate settings, where we teach trainers to teach end users. And, we teach the social selling program manager the training program. Additionally, we have eLearning and we also have virtual training."

**Charrele Robinson-Brown**

Head of Global eLearning and Gamification  
for Social Selling, SAP

## Build Professional Social Branding

Social selling begins with the individual's social profile. A social profile should not read like a resume. It should speak to how you help customers achieve their goals or address their pain points. SAP training helps sales reps develop a social profile that resonates with their target audience.



## Personalize Each Training Session

When training someone who's new to social selling, examples are important. Trainers use real-life examples by using social selling techniques on the trainee. Before training sessions, an SAP trainer often takes steps to learn about the trainee's interests and what he or she talks about on social media. The trainer then applies the information found on social media about the trainee to personalize the training session.

By placing the trainee in a position similar to that of a prospect, the trainer helps the social selling newcomer understand how social selling can improve relationship building and establish credibility. This approach is one of the best ways to ensure new reps understand the importance of social selling in modern business.



"I love to introduce them to some examples, making themselves the customer and asking them how they used to buy products and services in the past and using that example but doing the same in today's social selling environment."

**Marco Argáez**

Director Digital Transformation &  
Social Selling Partner Program Head  
Partner & SME Strategic Global Initiatives, SAP

# Train-the-Trainer Program

SAP recognized the need to scale the social selling curriculum for widespread implementation and adoption across its global sales force. In 2014, SAP Marketing's social selling team partnered with Global Customer Operations (GCO) stakeholders to deliver formal training and enablement pilots across the company. They began scaling the social selling curriculum with a unique Train-the-Trainer program. The goal is to help SAP's workforce transform marketing and selling behaviors in greater magnitude.

Through the Train-the-Trainer program, anyone at SAP can become a Social Selling Certified Trainer to help SAP's workforce transform marketing and selling behaviors in greater magnitude. SAP currently has more than 150 trainers worldwide who roll up to about 30 regional program managers - 100% voluntarily!



"Social selling is basically using the capabilities of social media to interact with your prospects. You need to provide value by answering the right questions and offering the right content until the prospect is ready to buy. This is why it's very important that the marketing messaging is 100% aligned with sales and their mission."

**Dr. Marcell Vollmer**

Chief Digital Officer, SAP Ariba

# Sales, Marketing & Company-Wide Alignment

Conventionally speaking, sales and marketing have had different roles. The marketing team was focused on building the corporate brand and publishing materials to generate interest and generate leads. The goal of marketing has traditionally been to deliver the message to as many relevant people as possible resulting in mostly top-of-the-funnel leads.

In the age of the modern B2B buyer where close to 70% of the buying journey is completed before a first meeting occurs, sales reps need to get engaged as early as possible to maximize trust and consideration of SAP solutions.

With so many ways the buyer can block meeting requests by salespeople, SAP reps need to be equipped with digital selling tools and distinctive content that will attract the buyer to engage in conversation.

"Marketing is generally focused on content and awareness building on a broader audience compared to a sales team or a salesperson where they have a focused set of accounts or industry.

"Making sure the alignment is clear and how we take the large part of the funnel and drive it into the specific needs of a particular segment is important, especially for acceptance by sales."

**Matthew Iacoviello**

Head of Sales Technology and Support, SAP



## Content Influenced by Buyers' Needs

### Sales and marketing at SAP use the same

**messaging.** Whatever marketing creates as the overall message for a product or service is in sync with what sales communicates to customers and prospects when engaging in social media channels. The messaging isn't limited to features and capabilities of SAP products; it also reflects "the way" that SAP sells.

As illustrated in the opening story of the HR manager in search of answers, customers have changed how they buy. Today's B2B buyer emulates consumer buying habits even in search of enterprise solutions. SAP customers and prospects consume the messaging that marketing delivers, and they talk to other people about their experiences with the brand. Prospects conduct extensive research online before and along the way send buying signals. So, the need for sales and marketing alignment at SAP is critical to enable reps to engage with consistent messaging as produced by the marketing team.

SAP sales reps are prepared and knowledgeable to answer questions accurately and quickly in online channels. Reps are equipped with content produced by marketing that helps establish the rep as a subject matter expert.

### Bring the Messaging to Life

"If SAP marketing is advertising something that's very easy to work with, to understand and has an intuitive user experience, then SAP sales should have exactly the same message as marketing. Sales should be able to demonstrate the messaging in real life situations."

**Dr. Marcell Vollmer**

Chief Digital Officer, SAP Ariba

"The content that marketing people are producing has to be relevant and address the questions the salespeople are getting in the field."

**Phil Lurie**

V.P. Sales Technology, SAP

## Relevant Content for Each Target Market

Social listening is one of the most effective ways to identify buying signals from prospects and customers. SAP sales reps have been trained to “listen” effectively and respond with content that is relevant to their needs.

The content produced by the marketing team is relevant and is used by SAP salespeople to answer questions and start conversations. By sharing value-added and thought leadership content, SAP marketers have a significant impact on how salespeople interact with customers.

Through strong sales and marketing alignment and a keen understanding of the buying journey, the content the sales team has at their disposal is helpful and personalized to each buyer.

“A lot of our consumers are getting so much content from when they get up in the morning to late at night. We need to be absolutely spot on in the message we’re getting across to them.”

**Neil Howarth**

Sr. Account Executive at SAP Hybris

### Dealing with Skeptics

“We eat our own dog food when delivering training sessions. Just to give you an example, our trainer delivered a training session in Indonesia, and the people were very skeptical about social selling working for them. They didn’t think their customers were on social media. So, at the training site, we did a quick study. We showed them that there were more than one hundred thousand decision-makers on LinkedIn and most are their customers or prospects. The sales reps never knew this, and when we showed this to them, they got so excited about it. It’s like a new realm for them to explore. So, we definitely use Social Listening when designing our training.”

**Marco Cai**

Global Head of Social Enablement/Training,  
SAP

## Company-Wide Alignment

When it comes to social selling success at SAP, alignment occurs across many departments -- not just sales and marketing. To improve customer awareness and retention, messaging and communication is consistent throughout the customer's life cycle.

SAP's success in social selling doesn't end with the individual sales representative. The company ensures other departments understand how to share the SAP story and engage customers in meaningful and consistent ways. From human resources, product development, and even administrative staff, SAP employees have access to training and tools to engage in on-brand conversations with potential and current customers.

### Social Selling is Not Just for Quota Carriers and Salespeople

"I think it's very important to communicate, that even though it's called social selling it is not only for quota carriers or salespeople, it is for everyone! So, I think a majority of people may resist the idea of social selling because they either feel like it's a hard methodology to adopt or because they don't think that it is relevant to their business."

**Charrele Robinson-Brown**

Head of Global eLearning and Gamification  
for Social Selling, SAP



# How SAP Stimulated a Cultural Transformation

SAP wants employees to view social selling as a requisite sales skill -- not something that requires an unreasonable amount of time. Social selling incorporates social media as a sales communication channel to help representatives connect and communicate with their prospects and customers.

Observing the digital world and how people engage was a necessary first step toward social selling adoption at SAP. By studying the buyer's journey and where the salesperson can fit into that journey, social selling helped increase the awareness of SAP to customers and prospects. For example, the reach of an online banner ad is only limited to the number of impressions the budget allows, but by leveraging the reach of employees' personal social profiles, the potential reach is exponential.

When a new employee starts working at SAP, they become an ambassador for the brand, both in person and on social media. During onboarding, SAP informs the employee of how his or her appearance on social media links back to the organization. New hires update their social media profiles in alignment with SAP's social media guidelines.

"Social selling expands people's field of knowledge and builds their network outside the normal area where they usually make touch points. They learn and get different perspectives from the contacts they build outside of their own organization. It's a big opportunity not only for organizational development, but also for individual development."

**Enrico A. Palumbo**

HR Director of SAP Switzerland

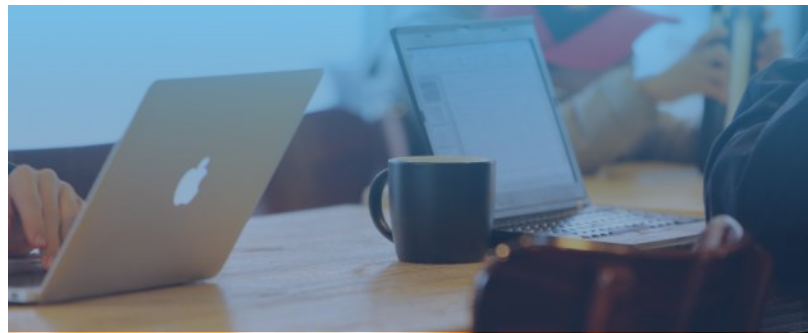
While SAP doesn't require its employees to be social media experts, it provides them with education and ongoing communication to help employees become better at social media. The company's global trainers and program managers also address regional and cultural considerations such as region-specific social media platforms, cultural sensitivities, and role-specific elements. Training, communication and a consistent flow of share-ready content has helped build a social business culture at SAP.

## Reverse-Mentoring with Millennials

Millennials comprise a significant portion of the SAP workforce and have the advantage of growing up as digital natives in the era of the smartphone. They know how to use different social media channels and are proficient at communicating in this fashion.

Non-millennials are familiar with both sides of the coin. They know what it was like to be in sales before the smartphone and social media, but they also understand the importance of evolving with technology. Generation X and baby boomer sales professionals may not be as proficient in using all of the various social media platforms,

SAP also encourages more experienced social media users to partner with and mentor newcomers to the social selling program. These role models help to create unstructured momentum. This approach to social selling for newcomers allows employees to ease into it instead of having it forced upon them.



but they have more business experience and knowledge in the art of selling enterprise solutions.

Through reverse mentoring, these younger and more seasoned sales professionals can have a profound impact on one another's performance. Millennials at SAP help train the non-millennials on how to use the different social media platforms and provide tips and tricks to make life easier. In return, the non-millennials share their experience and advice to help the millennials learn about selling. This powerful combination contributes to a successful social selling program at SAP.

## Visible Leadership Support

Leaders in the organization have also shifted their mindset to embrace a culture of social selling. A relationship-focused and content-oriented social selling mindset has trickled-down from the top leaders at SAP. Without strong support from executives, a social selling program would not realize its full potential.

"At the very beginning, we wanted to get management fully on board with social selling. So, we got an endorsement from management and that has created energy from the top down."

**Marco Cai**

Global Head of Social Enablement/Training,  
SAP

"I think just as our behavior changes as consumers in the way we interact; we want to do more online, we want to be informed online....So, more and more of traditional sales is moving into the online domain. So, I couldn't stress more the fact that if you are still questioning the power of social selling and networking, ***now is the time to wake up.*** Because there is a huge shift coming and you better make sure you don't miss this boat."

**Niels Hoogkamer**

Sr. Field Marketing at Concur an SAP  
Company

## Motivating with Proven Results

Salespeople are motivated by compensation and success. They want to maximize their earnings potential. SAP communicates success statistics to those salespeople who are not yet on board with social selling. These statistics help the sales team understand the potential impact of social selling on their sales results. For example, reps can have 3x better pipeline and a 50% better close rate with social selling practices. These numbers provide compelling motivation. They help persuade SAP sales reps to embrace social selling.

# Sales Academy

About five years ago, SAP started [Sales Academy](#). The program was created to integrate entry-level professionals into the SAP sales force.

SAP found that the younger professionals were incredibly attuned to digital communications and were able to maximize their productivity through digital functions. SAP had these young reps work

with some of the more traditional sales reps. This experiment resulted in a cross-pollination of the more conventional selling methods with new digital selling practices evolving into a robust social selling program.

Social selling training is for all areas of the business that impact the sales cycle. Social selling is now a big part of the communications and training curriculum at SAP for sales staff across the business.



“We’re finding a lot of implicit knowledge transfer that’s happening between our newer colleagues and our experienced sales reps when it comes to knowledge of SAP and just knowledge of the market and industries that they work in.”

**Marc Havercroft**

COO & Vice President Strategy HCM Cloud  
Digital Strategy & Transformation SAP

# Best Practices for the Social Selling Program at SAP

In this section, we review the social selling best practices utilized by SAP sales and marketing teams across the globe. It's worth noting that these best practices apply across geographic boundaries as explained in the [accompanying podcast](#) conversations with sales reps from North America, Europe and Asia Pacific.

# Maintaining Momentum

A strong social selling strategy requires momentum. Keeping social sellers engaged and excited is a must to ensure the program's success. SAP has launched multiple initiatives to keep salespeople energized about social selling.

"The most important factor for a successful social selling program is maintaining post-training momentum. Once trained, the trainees need reminders of the importance of executing what they've learned and stories of peers who have used social selling successfully; this is when an always-on communication strategy comes into play. We're always in front of the trainees, telling them: 'hey, this thing works!'"

**Arif Johari (AJ)**

Global Head of Communications,  
Social Selling, SAP

## Communication

Communication plays a vital role in encouraging cultural change and maintaining social selling momentum. People can easily forget about the training they've received, so SAP provides constant reminders through various channels like LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, email newsletters, virtual meetings, in-person events, and others. These reminders help keep people engaged in social selling activities.

Through global communication channels, SAP promotes their social selling movement, reaching over 40,000 inboxes and attracting thousands of attendees to bi-monthly All-Hands calls. These channels have played an integral part in social selling adoption and retention across the globe and has led to a 3-year renewal of their 15,000 LinkedIn Sales Navigator licenses.

## Gamification

Gamification motivates social sellers through friendly competition and incentives. SAP holds several contests each year to drive social selling results through competition, creating a fun and exciting atmosphere. The contests are based on pipeline and revenue attributed to social selling and SSI score.

## Public Recognition

SAP also uses recognition as another essential motivational tool. The company shares success stories and features outstanding performance during the global communication all hands calls. SAP also awards badges to social sellers that they can showcase on their LinkedIn profile for personal brand building.

"If someone is determined and keeps practicing and we see success that helps SAP to grow business from social selling, then we make sure that he or she gets recognition from his or her team and country executives. This really, really, excites them. We also give them a LinkedIn badge or something similar to display on their LinkedIn profile to help build their personal brand."

**Marco Cai**

Global Head of Social Enablement/Training,  
SAP

Often, successful social sellers at SAP share their success stories both internally and through external media channels as evidenced by the panelists who were invited to participate in the Social Business Engine UpClose podcast series that accompanies this Journal.

"I think the way that we encourage social selling behaviors and drive that momentum, is through incentive. Gamification is what we refer to it as. We run several contests each year to drive social selling momentum; in addition to that, there are several ways that we recognize social selling champions, like sharing success stories, being featured in some of our global communication and also our global all hands meeting."

**Charrele Robinson-Brown**

Head of Global eLearning and Gamification  
for Social Selling, SAP

# Best Practices for Trainees at SAP

## Personal Branding

Social selling success requires developing an effective personal brand that clearly conveys expertise. An SAP sales rep's LinkedIn profile is fully developed to display the individual's credentials from the buyer's perspective.

Additionally, salespeople regularly share content supplied by marketing as well as curating relevant industry content appropriate for their sales activities. This combination of branded and industry content establishes them as knowledgeable and connected to what's going on in the industries they serve.

SAP reps also focus on continuous expansion of their networks by connecting with decision makers, influencers and industry experts. Reps identify people to connect with by using enhanced search techniques and leverage the strength of their personal brand to increase their networks.

"A good personal brand is dependent on good content. So, sales and marketing teams must be aligned in order to provide the content that establishes the sales rep as a trusted advisor and an expert in their field."

**Phil Lurie**

Vice President of Sales Technology, SAP

## Consistent Social Branding

SAP places a premium on presenting a consistent brand message across all social media channels -- at the corporate level and the individual social seller level. SAP leaders and social selling trainers emphasize the importance and impact of consistency across all platforms. Each salesperson leaves social selling training understanding this core concept, and individuals apply the same principles in developing personal brand consistency across all channels.

## Authentic Engagement in Social Media Platforms

Customers look for genuine, trustworthy encounters. SAP encourages sales reps to display their personality in their communication, keeping things *'human.'* People appreciate authentic engagement in the modern business climate.

When salespeople engage authentically, they can hear firsthand about the challenges and pain points customers face. This information gives them the opportunity to speak to the issues that impact their customers firsthand.

"The client is looking for value, they're looking to be educated. Don't just let them know about your products and services, but other things too so they can see you as a valuable resource."

**Shailendra Kumar**

VP and Chief Evangelist, SAP

"I was successful using contextual information from their profile to start a conversation about the person and not about me or what I wanted to sell to them."

**Gastón Edreira**

Business Development Specialist of SAP  
Hybris for Latin America & Caribbean

## Professionalism

SAP sales reps exude professionalism. In social selling, professionalism has an expanded meaning to include a professional social profile. Reps are trained to ensure their social profiles demonstrate expertise to the customers, including their headline, summary, experiences, profile picture and content shared.



## Empathy

Sales requires an awareness of the customer's purpose in seeking out a solution. Demonstrating empathy for needs and pain points can shape how SAP reps engage with prospects and customers. The SAP sales rep listens to understand the pain points and engages with empathy. Social selling skills are used to observe online behavior to identify opportunities to start a discussion. Empathy is an important trait to initiate meaningful conversations.

Reps have been trained to dig into a potential customer's social profile to learn what makes the person tick and their interests in order to tailor their communication and to humanize the buying journey. Sales reps use LinkedIn Sales Navigator extensively to discover insights on prospects' profiles and to search, find, and connect with new prospects.

## Engagement Balance

SAP sales teams use social selling as one of several techniques in their sales practice. Salespeople still need to meet with customers face-to-face or on the phone to build strong relationships and dive into deeper discussions about the problems customers face and how SAP solutions resolve them. Social selling is a key element in the SAP sales culture, but the full scope of a sale doesn't happen on social media. People conduct business with people; social selling is a means for people to connect to build relationships, leading to the opportunity to do business together.

Along with balancing engagement types, SAP sales reps also balance the content shared on social media. SAP's rule of thumb is to share 90% non-SAP content that is educational and thought leadership and 10% SAP centric content. The 90/10 approach helps position SAP sales professionals as experts.

# Tools & Technology

The SAP Social Selling program uses advanced technologies to strengthen the quality and experience of customer engagements—beginning at the demand generation stage to evaluation, selection, and implementation that help deliver a digital-first buying journey for customers.

SAP equips sales reps with a robust mix of tools that help internally and externally with communication and organization. One of SAP's priorities is using a technology-driven sales process to help enable an environment of winning.

“The systems need to integrate so whatever you are using on the marketing side to generate awareness and leads, has to integrate with the more rigid systems, like a CRM.”

**Matthew Iacoviello**

Head of Sales Technology and Support, SAP

# LinkedIn Sales Navigator

LinkedIn Sales Navigator is a robust platform used extensively by SAP sales reps in their social selling activities. It is inherently built for sales professionals with an Account Based Marketing mindset who are always on the lookout for opportunities in current and new accounts.

Reps use the LeadBuilder function to identify potential sales leads choosing from more than 20 search filters including company, job function, seniority level, recent job changes, geography, etc. Once a list is created, reps can efficiently stay informed when people on their list post on LinkedIn, are mentioned in the news, or change jobs, providing opportunities to engage.

Reps can also use the TeamLink function to identify team members that are connected to prospects, so that the rep can ask for an introduction to a prospect. SSI scores are available on a leaderboard, providing friendly competition as well as insight into which members of the team are excelling.

Managers can easily check current SSI scores and learn where sales team members are performing well and which elements of their SSI score need improvement. Sales leadership uses these insights to share best practices among the team members for inspiration and skills improvement.

LinkedIn Sales Navigator is a valuable tool in the SAP social selling strategy that enables them to target the right companies and people within those companies and understand key insights that results in personalized engagement opportunities.

“One thing that I found extremely successful is using LinkedIn Sales Navigator for job searches to identify companies that are hiring in certain areas that your solution supports.”

**Alex Hunter**

Account Executive, SAP

# Relevant Social Media Platforms

While there are several social media platforms available to the SAP sales team, LinkedIn and Twitter are the primary channels used. In some regions, LinkedIn does not have as much coverage. SAP's salespeople in those regions use platforms such as WeChat (China) and Xing (mainly Germany). The key is that reps are active where their customers and prospects are active.

## Google Alerts Present Opportunities

"I found out that a supermarket wanted to invest \$10M in new stores from a Google Alert, and through LinkedIn I had a chance to engage the CFO with the article to understand where they wanted to invest."

**Georgia Rita**

Account Executive, SAP



# Other Tools & Technology

SAP understands the need for bridging social interactions with the sales process. To help move prospects through the sales funnel toward a buying decision, SAP has integrated tools that assist reps at various stages of opportunity discovery, engagement and deal flow. Below is a list of tools, all of which are available on mobile devices, used by SAP sales team members to support their social selling activities.

## Dun and Bradstreet 360

Used for account and territory planning and identifying the best prospect companies for reps to pursue.

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## LinkedIn and LinkedIn Sales Navigator

Used for identifying specific individuals at prospective companies to research sales potential and plan social engagement activities.

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## Grapevine6

Used to curate relevant content, share with customers and prospects to boost rep's credibility and stay top of mind to create sales conversations.

Providing social media advocacy tools to employees enables them to share both SAP branded and curated content. SAP trains employees how to use the social media advocacy tools as well as assists them with understanding the type of content that is relevant to their target audience.

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## Google Alerts

Used to source a variety of updates across a wide spectrum of industry topics. SAP sales reps have also used it to help identify potential prospects.

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## CRM/C4C (Cloud for Customer)

Used for customer relationship management and integrated social selling activities in target accounts.

### Harmony (SAP's new C4C and CRM front-end tool)

Used to eliminate some of the complicated calculations and streamlining through intelligence. There are two mobile pieces of the Harmony tool:

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#### Harmony Insight (mobile)

Gives sales reps the opportunity to stay in the loop and find out about customers and how deals are moving along.

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#### Harmony Deal Manager (mobile)

Keeps sales reps informed about the status of a deal as well as tracking information.

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#### SAP Jam Collaboration

A project management-like tool for communicating with customers during the deal. This tool controls access and security levels for users. Deal contracts can be managed within it. SAP also uses Jam internally to store information about new products and other information - acts as an internal social media.

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#### Videolicious

Used to humanize social engagement with buyers by creating and sharing personalized videos, e.g., a video business card, a demo video of a solution, or a follow-up video after a meeting.

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#### Virtual Studio

Used to create real-time interactive and immersive meetings with customers. SAP provides conference rooms with medium-level equipment to conduct teleconferencing meetings as well as providing the customer with gear so that both sides get the best experience possible.

# Measurement & ROI

Conventional sales ROI has been measured by KPIs such as pipeline value, average contract value, length of sales cycle, close rates and of course actual revenue.



"SAP has incorporated social selling into all aspects of the sales cycle. The entire customer journey is now affected by social selling: marketing tactics, demand generation, pre-sales, deal closings, services, and support. Social selling within SAP influences each of these different aspects of the sales cycle."

**Kirsten Boileau**

Global Head of Regional Engagement & Social Selling, SAP

Sales teams can easily utilize social selling metrics such as LinkedIn's Social Selling Index (SSI), which measures how well you establish your professional brand, find the right people, engage with insights and build relationships. The SSI is an easy way to start tracking social selling behavior within LinkedIn. Social sellers can get immediate feedback on their activities by monitoring their SSI score. SAP sales professionals can use this information to tweak behaviors in the social selling process.

However, at some point, you have to move beyond the SSI feedback and go more in-depth to show the impact social selling has on the business.

Social selling metrics must take traditional performance indicators into account. SAP looks at social selling's impact on pipeline value. Among the critical indicators that SAP monitors are deal size, volume per sales rep, win/loss and discontinued rates.

"SAP started looking at the impact on the sales pipeline that teams had based on salespeople that had the full social selling training and the LinkedIn Sales Navigator tool vs salespeople that were only provided the Sales Navigator tool. We found that seven times more pipeline came out of the teams that had the full training and tool compared to those that were only provided with the tool."

**Kirsten Boileau**

Global Head of Regional Engagement & Social Selling, SAP

# How SAP Communicates Success and ROI

With a global workforce of almost 90,000 employees, SAP has a tremendous opportunity to reach many people through social media. Social selling and social media advocacy at SAP goes beyond the frontline sales reps to include non-sales staff in other departments across the business including marketing, product development, human resources, and others.

**Social sellers at SAP demonstrate up to 200% more opportunity ownership, six times larger deal size, and a two percentage point greater conversion on pipeline value over non-social selling influenced deals or opportunities.**

“It’s not about the pipeline value or the booked and won volume. It’s about comparing how much better or worse changing your behavior results in real outcome.”

**Michael Labate**

Head of Program Development & Operations, Social Selling, SAP

## Global Communication All Hands Meeting

SAP hosts bi-monthly calls with those employees responsible for influencing the pipeline. At the beginning of these calls, executive stakeholders reinforce “why” social selling is important to the company. Midway through the call, SAP celebrates social selling success by presenting ROI results.

These virtual meetings have become a critical component in how SAP communicates to the executive team about the positive impact social selling behavior has on the business.

# Going Above and Beyond with Key Indices

SAP is taking a deep look at measuring social selling effectiveness with two objectives:

1. Measuring results
2. Scaling best practices globally

The future for measuring social selling performance for SAP is in social selling key indices.

These indices are similar to equity indices like the Standard & Poor's 500 Index. Anyone with a portfolio of stocks can measure the performance of their own portfolio against an index to see how his or her portfolio of stock is performing. The index is a benchmark against which an individual portfolio can be measured. If your stock portfolio performs better than the S&P 500 index, you're doing well, otherwise you can make necessary adjustments to help your performance.

**SAP is using a method similar to financial markets indices to measure the future impact of social selling.**



SAP will have a

- social selling conversion index,
- speed to close index,
- win/loss index
- discontinued index

and more indices so that sales managers can gauge where their team is compared to other regions or across the sales team globally.

SAP's indices will allow sales teams to measure themselves for a particular month or quarter based on their run rate, velocity, pipeline, targets, quota, and more. We help underperformers and learn from overperformers.

These initiatives are being rolled out to the sales teams throughout 2018.

# Future Outlook for Social Selling

SAP is working on exciting innovations  
for its 2018 social selling program.  
Here is a sneak peek.



## LinkedIn Teaming Up with CRMs

LinkedIn is working with many CRM providers to create a working interface that links the two together. Users will soon be able to capture information about potential clients or prospects in SAP's C4C system using LinkedIn, making it easier for reps to network, build pipeline and track all of it in the C4C system.

## Artificial Intelligence

Leonardo is SAP's AI solution. Leonardo will support the sales and marketing teams by improving the routing of leads, and also work as a digital assistant. Salespeople will be able to organize their days more easily, figure out priorities, keep their LinkedIn profiles updated and more with the help of Leonardo. Predictive capabilities will alert sales reps to potential leads faster, resulting in potential competitive advantage.

## Bots

Bots will help create more enhanced voice-to-text capabilities. Sales reps will be able to generate call reports more easily; Reps will spend less time doing administrative work and spend more time in social selling activities.

"This is going to sound a little bit like science fiction, but if we look ten years ahead, what says that we are not having holographic meetings with customers. Where two people don't actually have to leave where they are sitting, right? But they look and feel like they are face to face. I'm not saying that will happen, but it gives an idea of where technology could take us in the selling process."

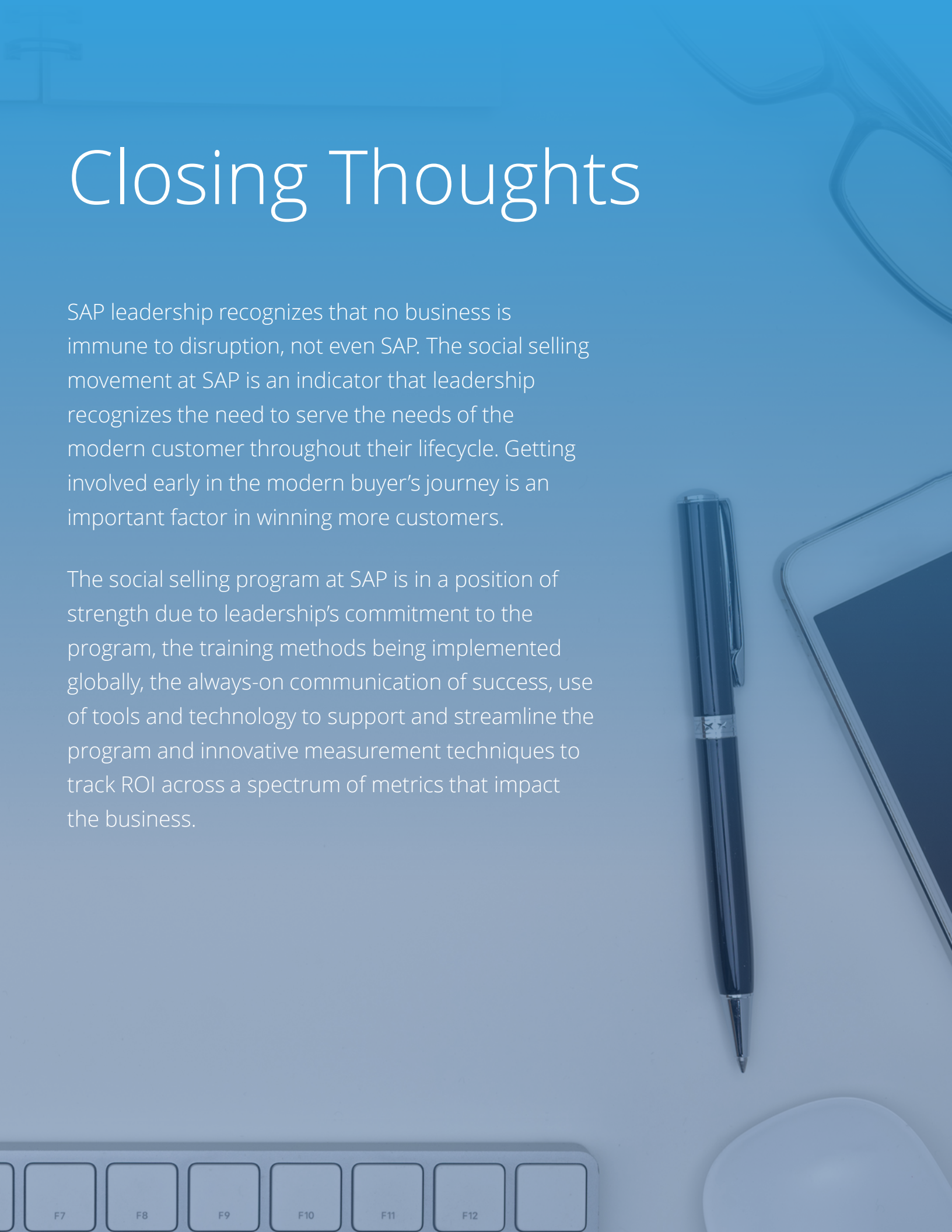
**Phil Lurie**

Vice President of Sales Technology, SAP

# Closing Thoughts

SAP leadership recognizes that no business is immune to disruption, not even SAP. The social selling movement at SAP is an indicator that leadership recognizes the need to serve the needs of the modern customer throughout their lifecycle. Getting involved early in the modern buyer's journey is an important factor in winning more customers.

The social selling program at SAP is in a position of strength due to leadership's commitment to the program, the training methods being implemented globally, the always-on communication of success, use of tools and technology to support and streamline the program and innovative measurement techniques to track ROI across a spectrum of metrics that impact the business.



# Panelists

Hear from these panelists on the [Social Business Engine five episode Upclose Podcast Series](#).



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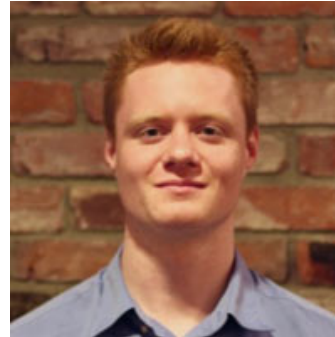
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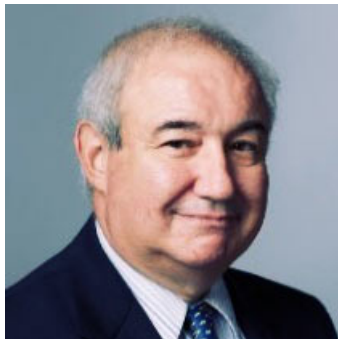
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# Social Selling

has become such a **hot topic** that



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