



Togethr

Introduction to
EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY

Work together to Share your brand to Grow your business



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Togethr

Togethr is the one stop shop for employee advocacy.

The **Togethr Hub** provides resources, how-to guides and templates. The **Togethr App** is a high performance advocacy platform. Togethr has been created by the UK's most experienced employee advocacy team.

Togethr Hub wearetogethr.io/togethrhub

PREPARE toolkits

Intro to employee advocacy

Employee advocacy advance check

Business case builder

LAUNCH toolkits

Recruiting and onboarding

Content and comms planner

Motivation and rewards

Reporting and measurement

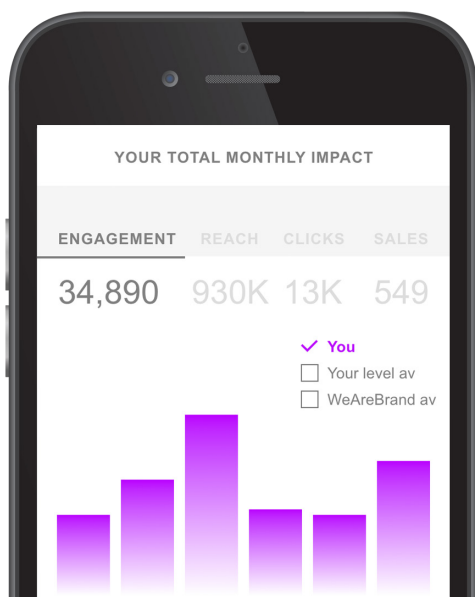
SCALE toolkits

Scale an employee advocacy programme

Convert from manual to tech

Create a power user programme

Togethr App wearetogethr.io/togethrapp



Employees

Share quickly and easily on behalf of your company

Work together to create impact

Build your skills with sharing tips

See your impact with personal feedback

Advocate manager

Target activity to different segments

Optimise performance with ready to use report templates

Automate common actions based on different triggers



Executive summary

Employee advocacy empowers your own employees to share content on social media, as themselves, about the brand, products, company purpose and working culture.

By activating conversations across the business, and aligning employees with the business purpose, you build trust with customers, communities and new audiences through meaningful, relevant and timely conversations.

Since the Covid-19 global pandemic began, companies of all sizes have had to respond in real-time to the impact of lockdown and changing customer behaviours. As people spend more time online, companies are looking at increasing their digital marketing activity including social media.

2020 has signalled a tipping point for employee advocacy. Since lockdown started, significantly more employees are sharing stories on social media of how they have supported their colleagues and customers, how their company helped the NHS and more people talking about which companies are ethically, environmentally and socially sound and those that are not.

Encouraging your own employees to share genuine stories and engage with people on social media matters now more than ever if you are to reach new audiences and retain loyal customers.

Harvard Business School: Employee Advocacy in the context of the crisis

55% perceived that brands responded more quickly and effectively to the pandemic than their government did, demonstrating the faith that consumers have in their brands and the companies that stand behind them. Employee advocacy programs can help a company communicate their actions towards the pandemic.¹

¹ <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/what-customers-need-to-hear-from-you-during-the-covid-crisis>

PART 1

Understanding employee advocacy

1. What is employee advocacy?

Employee advocacy happens when employees in a company are empowered to become trusted ambassadors for the brand, sharing or creating content on their own social media platforms, as themselves.

Employees have a high degree of trust in their individual networks and are able to talk with integrity and authenticity about the company they work for, the brand and their products.

Employee advocates are people within the company who are willing to talk about brand purpose in a genuine way, and share their knowledge and expertise to new and existing audiences on social media.

People trust people like themselves over brands, CEOs, corporations.

Edelman Trust Barometer

Prior to lockdown, **Edelman Trust Barometer** cited in January 2020 the following influencers as holding the most sway with customers:

Company technical expert	68%	(+3% YoY)
Academic expert	66%	(+3%)
A person like yourself	61%	(+0%)
Regular employee	54%	(+1%)
Government official	33%	(-2%)

2. How employee advocacy increased during Covid-19

Since the outbreak of Covid at the start of 2020, businesses have experienced major disruption to how they operate. Marketing teams are restrategising to adapt to changing consumer needs and behaviour.

With more people browsing on social media, it's the right time for brands to engage with prospects and customers online.

With the impact from Covid-19 on businesses, we are seeing a tipping point, where employee advocacy is rapidly maturing.

- More companies have activated their employees in 2020 to reach customers in new ways.
- Employees are demonstrating the extent to which they can influence customers on social media through authentic, meaningful conversations on social media. [See case studies library]
- With more employees working remotely, advocacy programmes are also offering a way to align employees around messages and support them to do their job more effectively.
- A new type of employee advocate is emerging - less sharing curated content, more brand ambassador/micro-influencers in their own right.

Clients of **Togethr** saw 100% increase in engagement in first month of lockdown, and an increase of 80% in impressions in month 2.

Your employees offer a clear route through to sharing authentic stories, and breathing life into brand comms to reach new and existing audiences.

COVID-19 case study | John Lewis & Partners

John Lewis & Partners mobilised personal stylists to engage customers via video chat. During lockdown John Lewis started offering virtual appointments on Instagram using video calls to run styling appointments with personal stylists and customers. Following a trial they ran earlier in 2020, pre lockdown, as part of their #WeArePartners employee ambassador programme, they were able to respond to the Covid situation by scaling up the service across multiple teams with hundreds of customers signing up.

COVID-19 case study | ST Engineering

During lockdown, Sophia Ong, VP of marketing, Electronics at ST Engineering shared insights with Marketing Interactive² into how their employee advocacy programme was adapting to lockdown.

“ST Engineering’s Electronics sector has taken customers and employees engagement online in light of the pandemic. It hopes to provide value to customers by engaging its ambassadors who are involved in projects to help solve current challenges and preparing for the new norm. Some adjustments were made in terms of the type of content it puts out to customers, Ong said.

“Being mindful about the crisis and its impact, we looked at what content should be paused and what can be emphatically pivoted to help support our customers. We also looked at how we can lend optimism, hope and humanity through the voices of our employees,” she explained.

We looked at how we can lend optimism, hope and humanity through the voices of our employees

Sophia Ong, ST Engineering

² <https://www.marketing-interactive.com/how-your-employees-can-ignite-optimism-hope-and-humanity-for-customers>

COVID-19 case study | Waitrose

In July 2020, Vogue UK³ broke new ground putting key workers on their cover. One of those selected was Anisa from Waitrose, the leading UK supermarket with a well established employee advocacy programme, #WeArePartners, launched by the Togethr team in 2017.

Anisa described the whole experience as “Crazy - but so nice to be appreciated in this way! It’s nice being a key worker. My job was not something that was that big of a deal before. But now it’s like we’re important. We have to be here, regardless of what’s happening in the world. It’s more than just a job now.”



Crazy - but so nice to be appreciated in this way!

Anisa, Waitrose

³ <https://www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/media/press/y2020/waitrose-cashier-turns-british-vogue-cover-star.html>

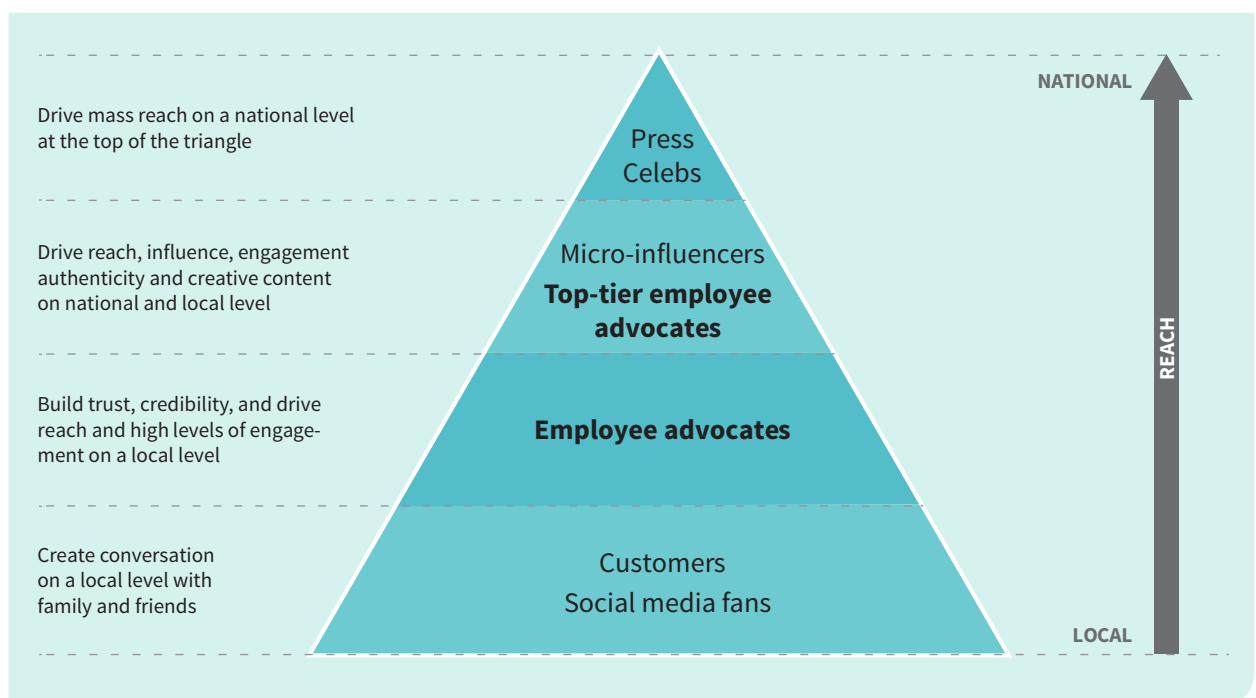
3. How employee advocacy integrates with other marketing?

On the buyer journey, people want to read reviews and recommendations from trusted sources and will make informed choices based on those recommendations from their network, including friends, family and peers.

Word of mouth has always been the most powerful form of advertising, never more so than in 2020. During lockdown billions of people moved to online conversations and buying.

The social influence triangle shows how advocacy fits with the wider earned media, influence framework.

Forbes cites a study by Kantar of 25,000 consumers across 30 markets showing engagement increasing **61%** over normal usage rates.⁴



⁴ <https://www.kantar.com/Inspiration/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Barometer-Consumer-attitudes-media-habits-and-expectations>



PART 2

5 reasons why brands need to consider employee advocacy

1. Employees play a key role in humanising your brand

The most successful employee advocacy programmes are born from companies that have:

- a clear purpose
- a strong brand with great story to tell
- are already empowering their employees and celebrate a strong culture at work
- have a large proportion of employees who are customer/client facing

Main use cases for employee advocacy:

Marketing
Talent acquisition
Social selling
Distributed marketing

The most successful programmes in 2020 cross multiple sectors and use cases.

Most often seen in the following sectors:

- Fashion
- Retail including supermarkets
- Health and beauty
- Professional services and consultancies
- Financial services
- Legal services
- Travel

Sectors with untapped potential include leisure and hospitality, education, environmental, franchises

2. Transform results across the buying journey with employee advocacy marketing

Brands need ways to engage with customers online now more than ever. Word of mouth is helping customers decide which brand to buy.

Brands have been switched onto the impact of digital word of mouth on consumer decisions for a few years now. For brands optimising their customers' experience across the buying journey, earned media plays a key role at the awareness and consideration stages. It is now imperative for brands looking to convert new customers and maintain loyalty with existing customers.

But where influencer marketing and customer advocacy in the form of reviews has dominated, 2020 is the year we've seen the maturing of employee advocacy.

Web browsing and social media usage has seen a massive spike in 2020, due to the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown. A recent survey from Kantar found that web browsing is up by 70% and social media usage is up by 61% since the lockdown. Your audience is more present than ever before and so, having the right brand messaging is integral.

A clear majority of consumers expect advertising to make a positive contribution to society during Covid: 'Talk about how the brand is helpful in the new everyday life' (77%) 'Inform about their efforts to face the situation' (75%) and 'Offer a reassuring tone' (70%).⁵

⁵ <https://www.kantar.com/Inspiration/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Barometer-Consumer-attitudes-media-habits-and-expectations>

3. Consumers trust people like themselves more than brands

There's been a radical shift in how people want to communicate and in the type of content they want to consume on social media. The desire for more authentic, raw content and wanting to engage with people like themselves is now well established.

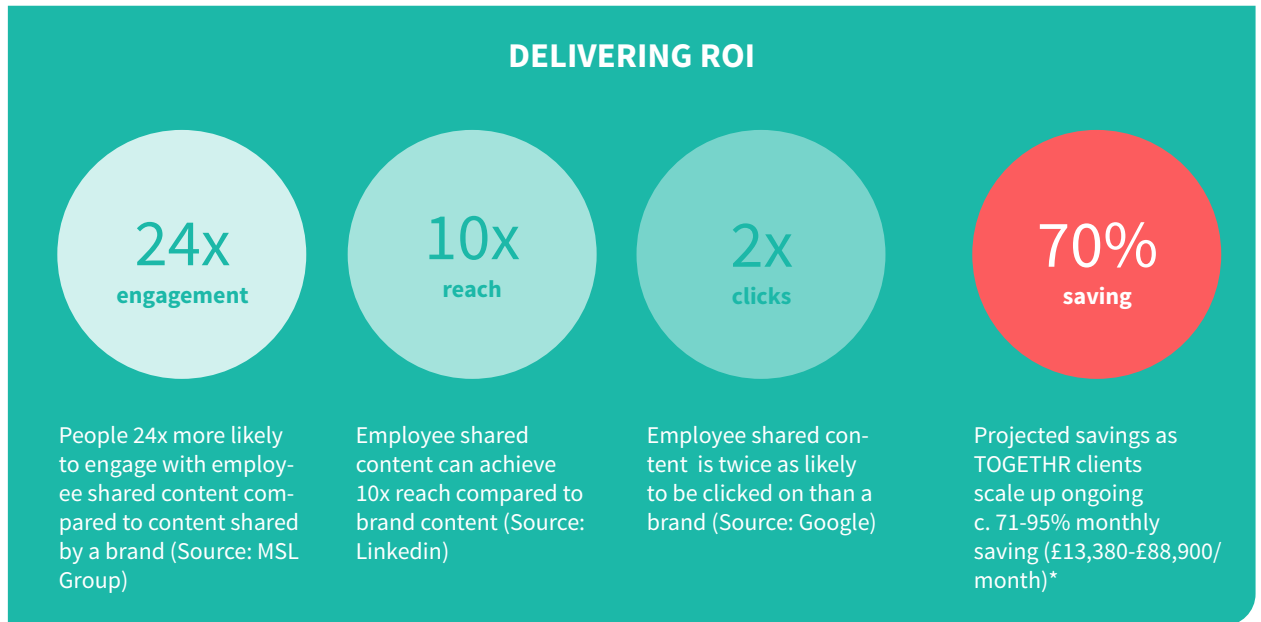
There's a strong sense of community rising on social media. At it's best, social media connects people with people. It offers a channel for brands to create a more authentic story and employees are a part of this. Employees are able to contribute to brand building to reach relevant audiences and create meaningful relationships with customers to ultimately drive business growth.

Harvard Business School: Employee Advocacy in the context of the crisis

63% of those surveyed believe that brands are playing a critical role in addressing the current challenges of COVID-19.

4. Data shows employee advocacy delivers on ROI

Looking at the value brands can harness internally from their biggest influencers, their own employees, is a fast-growing, cost-effective and profitable opportunity.



When employees share content they achieve double the impact of brand marketing with a click-through rate twice of that seen by their company according to LinkedIn.

Because of this it makes a compelling case for why more brands are adopting employee advocacy programmes.

5. The new normal: keeping employees engaged and aligned as remote working continues

Since lockdown, there has been a huge increase in thought leadership articles about how to keep employees engaged and aligned as remote working continues.

Some companies such as Twitter and Facebook have announced employees can now work from home indefinitely forever, others are looking into 2021 or beyond before they bring staff back into the office. For others, it's about changing the purpose of bringing staff together, with an emphasis on creativity and collaboration in the office, with day to day working carried out at home.

The future of the office is uncertain and this is a critical time for companies to keep employees onboard, aligned, and motivated.

An employee advocacy programme can help achieve this.

“The decision to give employees control of marketing its iconic Christmas campaign on social media has not only driven stronger consumer take-up of in-store services for John Lewis & Partners, it's also improved employee engagement.”

CMO Australia⁶

6 <https://www.cmo.com.au/article/657161/employee-social-marketing-drives-brand-engagement-in-store-experience-john-lewis-partners/>



PART 3

Getting started - what to consider

An employee advocacy programme unites colleagues around a brand's vision and values. It also allows you to create and measure what type of content employees like to share on their social networks, helping inform other areas of the business.

Running a pilot or small test group

Starting with a smaller group of 'early adopters', you can run a pilot to establish if an advocacy programme is the right cultural fit for your company, if your employees want to be part of it and share content on an ongoing basis, and what type of content works best for different groups of employees.

Manual programmes vs tech enabled

A pilot can be run manually - with up to 30 or so advocates. Once you are ready to scale, you'll need a tech solution to measure impact and make the running of the programme more efficient. In the Togethr Hub Launch subscription you'll find all the resources you need to run a manual or tech programme, before scaling up across the business.

Building a business case

To get full buy in to roll out and scale up your programme, you will need to present your business case to your Exec team.

In your business case, include stats on expected ROI, what skills and roles you may need in the team to launch, an idea of a roadmap and roll out, budget required. You will find all these resources in the Togethr Hub Business Case Builder toolkit.

Consider:

Running a pilot or small test group

Manual programmes vs tech enabled

Building a business case

Getting buy in from employees

Choosing the right advocacy platform for your organisation

Getting buy in from employees

When you're selling in the idea of an employee advocacy programme to employees, for example when you are recruiting early adopters, focus on what's in it for them. If you don't, they'll lose interest quickly.

Choosing the right advocacy platform for your organisation

If you're using a tech solution, choose one that allows you to offer lots of different content to different groups of advocates. Think beyond just curated content and get creative with the content challenges you ask advocates to share.

Built in gamification such as leaderboards, badges and points keeps employees motivated. Full reporting with a live dashboard and ability to dice data by advocate groups, platforms, date, metrics are all key to optimising your programme ongoing.

[See Intro to Employee Advocacy presentation deck for benefits to highlight].

Togethr

Introduction to employee advocacy

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