

How to Use Social Proof to Close Deals Faster

The internet has made it easier to find customers and close sales, yet it has also driven competition to new heights. Considering that, the internet also enables you to leverage social proof to prove your credibility and expertise.

Due to the stiffness of competition, it's vital to build trust with prospects and customers quickly. Social proof can help shorten your sales cycle by tapping into the opinions and experiences of other customers.

We'll explain what social proof is, how it can contribute to your marketing strategy, and how you can maximize its potential.

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What Is Social Proof Marketing?

People commonly make a habit of checking out what others are doing off and on throughout the day. This is a form of social proofing. If others are doing something, it must be okay.

Here are some typical actions you might take that indicate social proofing:

- You are in a populated public space and are unsure where to go, so you follow the crowd.
- While waiting in a line to be served, you notice a different line is moving faster than the one you're in, so you move to the faster line.
- While at a party, people start leaving, so you decide it's time to go.

These are prime examples of social proof. Without thinking, we inherently assess others' behavior to help us make decisions on the spot.

We encounter social proof every day. Here are some specific types of social proof that should seem familiar to you:

- Actions of a crowd
- User-generated content
- Customer testimonials
- Expert endorsements
- Celebrity endorsements
- Industry certifications

By definition, social proof is a [psychological concept](#) that refers to copying someone else's actions to conform to acceptable behavior.

The Benefits of Social Proof Marketing in Sales

Social proof in marketing helps build trust and credibility, produces a sense of urgency, addresses common objections, and impacts perceived value.

When someone we know has faith in a product or service, they have validated its usefulness. While we may still do a bit of research to ensure we're making the best decision, we can easily put our trust in a product or service someone else has had a good experience with.

It works the same way when we read a positive review or testimonial. When others have good things to say about a product or service, we can easily imagine ourselves having much the same experience. Positive consumer reviews also tell us we can trust the person selling the product or service.

Learning about a positive sales experience can be the tipping point where someone makes a decision to buy. It motivates them to make the buying decision faster, which [shortens the buying cycle](#).

Consumers also look for information in reviews and testimonials to help resolve common objections. Learning that a product or service resolved someone else's problems is a testimony that it can do the same for anyone.

When an industry expert or celebrity endorses a product or service, we often equate it with quality or value. These characteristics motivate people to buy and, perhaps, even pay a bit more.

Social proof can be crucial in closing deals, and we'll explain how to use it effectively.

Social Proof: The Role They Play in Closing Deals

Social proof marketing is a powerful tool for driving conversions and increasing revenue. By getting positive feedback from existing customers, you will be lending credibility to your business and influencing prospects.

Prospects will trust in genuine customer experiences more than unquestioningly putting faith in a vaguely presented sales pitch. In essence, social proofing is real-world validation.

Let's look at how you can use social proof marketing to close deals faster.

How to Gather Effective Testimonials

Your existing customers are often happy to help you build your business by sharing their experiences. They'll want others to have the same positive experience they have. Reach out to them and ask for specific feedback on how you or your business has improved their lives.

It's okay to give them a few prompts, such as asking about increased efficiency, improved health, or cost savings.

Salespeople often get good testimonials by asking customers directly, sending them a post-purchase survey, or sending them an incentive (if it's allowable within the industry).

Be sure to get their permission to use their names or publicly post their testimonials.

Testimonials should be clear, relatable, and authentic. For maximum impact, be sure they target your intended audience.

Placement and Usage Tips

Once you've collected reviews and testimonials, place them strategically across various touchpoints.

Here are some effective places to showcase social proof:

- The pages of your website (home page, product pages, landing pages, etc.)
- At the bottom of email campaign messages
- As part of your sales presentations
- In social media posts

Be sure to display your testimonials in visually appealing ways. Use a mix of short quotes and add customer photos (with your client's permission) or ask them to record a short video to display.

You could also dedicate a section of your website to a few concise summaries and link them to more detailed case studies on another page.

Any of these ideas can be a lead-in for your persuasive sales strategies.

Social Proof: Leveraging Case Studies

Case studies are effective as social proof because authentic accounts by real people are hard to dispute. They help consumers see your product or service as a practical application that will aid them in their everyday lives.

A start-to-finish story about how your products and services solve problems proves that your sales pitch is worth hearing.

Case studies can also address potential objections and highlight features and benefits that may not be readily apparent by your ads and sales presentation. A well-written case study will help persuade prospects to move to the next step in the sales process.

How to Create an Impactful Case Study

A customer who has a compelling success story with your product or service is sure to make an impactful case study.

As with every story, a case study has a structure with specific components.

Be sure to incorporate the following elements into your case studies:

- Begin by outlining the customer's challenges. What was their life like before using your product or service?
- Describe how your product or service provided a solution to their challenges and made their lives better.
- Point out specific, measurable results such as savings, increased wealth or health, improved efficiency, etc.
- Add visuals such as charts or before/after comparisons to clarify their results.
- Wrap up your case study with a call to action, highlighting how others can achieve similar success by buying your product or service.

Examples of Effective Social Proof Strategies

[Apple](#) put together an impactful video of customer testimonials to increase sales of their Apple watch. The video follows several people who found themselves or their family members in various life-threatening circumstances. With the help of their Apple watches, they were able to save a life.

Apple [sold 26.7 million watches](#) from January of 2023 to September of the same year with the help of this testimonial video.

[Hubspot](#) is another company that leveraged a video to build faith and credibility with its customers. The company put a video together using its employees and their roles within the company. The goal of this video was to allow customers to hear about the excellent work their employees do and how it helps the company reach its goals.

Hubspot's video is also instrumental in showcasing how happy Hubspot employees are and the company's investment in their careers and personal happiness. It speaks to the company's culture and how its employees serve their clients around the world. The way Hubspot treats and views its employees is a testimony to the kind of care its customers can expect.

As for accolades, Hubspot received multiple top honors in G2's annual [Best Software Awards](#).

The mention of Hilton hotels speaks to a high-end hotel with customer service to match. Hilton's advertising, including customer reviews and testimonials, helped the company earn a solid reputation in the industry. Hilton owns over [8,000 properties](#) around the world. The Blackstone Group purchased the company from the Hilton family in 2007 for \$26 billion.

The Impact of Industry Recognition and Certifications

Awards, certifications, and endorsements demonstrate excellence and can influence buyer decisions. Customers prefer to buy from companies that can demonstrate their worth by highlighting evidence of their achievements.

Industry awards prove that a company has already achieved a level of success in serving its customers. Display them proudly and prominently. It's something that may differentiate your business from your competitors.

Certifications affirm that a product or service meets specific standards or regulatory requirements. A display of certifications will reassure buyers that the company did its due diligence in areas such as safety, reliability, or performance.

Endorsements from respected industry experts or influencers can further validate your products and services. Potential buyers will view your partnerships positively, which will help reduce any perceived risks.

While customers will certainly take note of your achievements, certifications, and endorsements, it's also important to provide context, as customers may not fully understand the significance. Customers will likely be interested in the criteria and process for your company's achievements, particularly if the company was chosen among a large number of businesses or has won an award many times.

As your company achieves new milestones, be sure to update your website, brochures, and social media platforms accordingly to maintain relevance and credibility.

Social Proof: Overcoming Common Challenges

Unfortunately, social proof is not always foolproof. While your company's testimonials and reviews may be authentic, they may fail to impress the most discerning buyers. Yet, there are ways to address skepticism over social proof in your sales activities. The key is to demonstrate genuine relevance.

Demonstrate relevance by highlighting the most credible testimonies and case studies that have proven successful in the real world. Emphasize that your customers' experiences reflect actual customer satisfaction and product value.

Being consistent and transparent with your social proof strategies will alleviate any doubts, reinforce your credibility, and, ultimately, drive sales.

To avoid overshadowing your product or service's intrinsic value, balance social proof with the value your product or service delivers. You can accomplish this by making sure your endorsements and testimonials complement the value of your product or service.

For example, you could highlight the features and benefits of your product or service and follow it with a testimony on how a customer made use of those features or realized those exact benefits.

This approach will validate and affirm your claims as true statements. In this way, you are successfully keeping the focus on your product or service while supporting its value by leveraging social proof. In doing so, you create a well-rounded persuasive argument.

Key Takeaways on Leveraging Social Proof for Sales Success

Social proof complements and enhances your other sales strategies, making them more effective.

It can take the form of customer testimonials, expert or celebrity endorsements, user-generated content, industry accolades, and the wisdom of everyday people.

Social proof builds trust and credibility in your brand while helping customers resolve objections enough to consider buying your product or service. Also, social proof lends itself to quality and value in your business, as it provides real-world validation.

Awards, recognition, and endorsements make a difference in the eyes of your customers, and they are something to be celebrated.

To successfully overcome social proof objections, be sure to keep your case studies relevant by tying them to your product or service's features and benefits.

The information we've provided here should inspire you to start implementing social proof techniques into your sales strategies to help you close deals faster and increase your revenue.