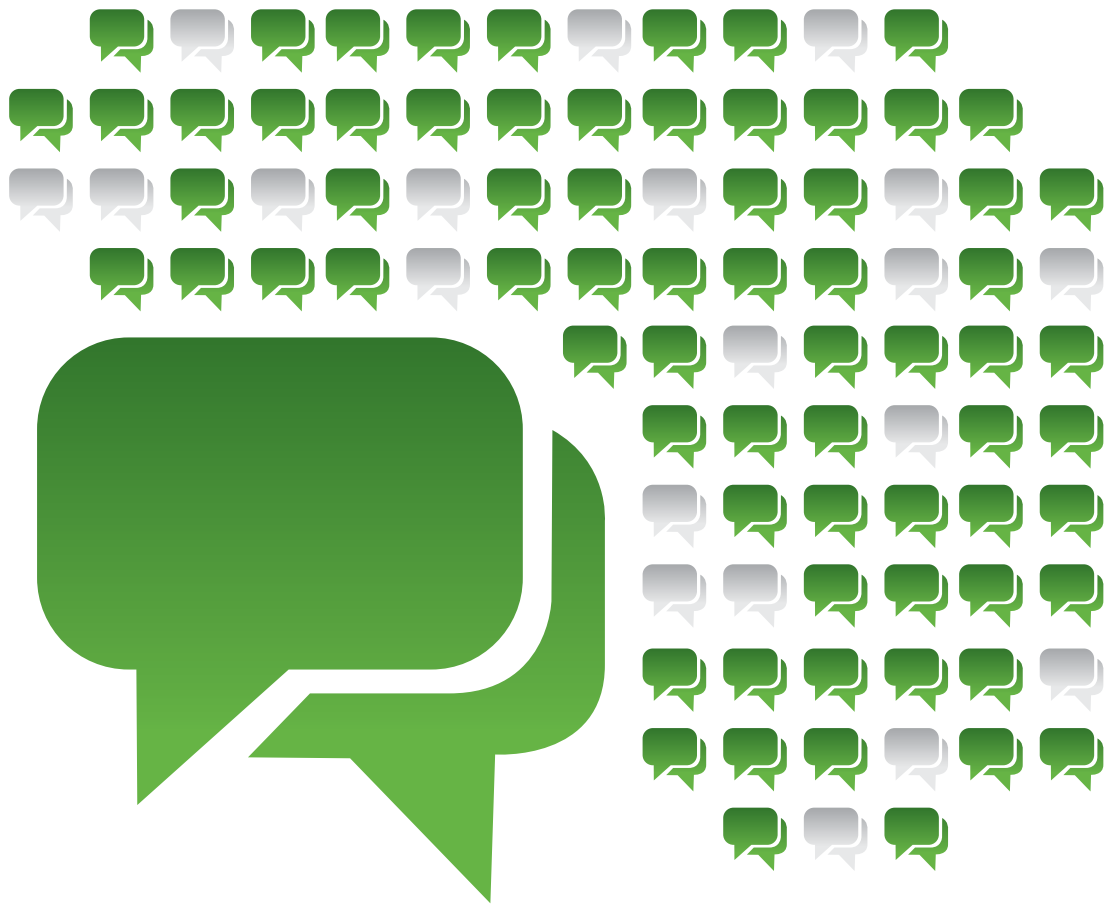


White Paper

# SOCIAL COMMERCE

What It Means To Your Business



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## Abstract

In today's online social era, social commerce has evolved to include a plethora of social media tools and strategies that can be used in the context of e-commerce. Prior to 2005 when the term "social commerce" was introduced by Yahoo!, most online marketing strategies focused on maximizing and building a solid email list and obtaining cheap keywords through ppc advertising. Today, you hear buzz words such as "Groundswell", "C2C Marketing", and "Word of Mouth Advertising" that embody characteristics of social intelligence and what influences consumers' purchasing decision.



## Introduction Into Social Commerce

So what exactly is Social Commerce and how can this emerging digital trend help your business build meaningful relationships with your target audience and close more sales? Put simply, social commerce mirrors a perfect marriage between "social media" and "e-commerce" which involves leveraging social media and social interactions to help promote the buying and selling of products and services online. Business owners, CMO's and other C-Suite level executives are now shifting their online marketing strategies and allocating funds to leverage social commerce to increase sales and brand awareness.

This social commerce white paper will examine the underlying significance and meaning of social commerce while highlighting 3dcarts evolution to provide its clients innovative and easy to use social tools. We will analyze the term "social commerce" so that you can more easily determine its importance to your business and its potential impact on your bottom line. It should also assist you, the business owner in understanding why it makes commercial sense to find out where your customers are congregating online and provide them the opportunity to connect with your brand to make purchases, provide feedback and to recommend your products or services to others in their social graph. This will give your business a distinct strategic advantage; the opportunity to reap the rewards of a powerful insight led social commerce strategy, as opposed to merely thinking of social commerce as a set of tactical tools. As we take a closer look at social commerce, we hope to plant new ideas and creative ways for you to monetize your current marketing efforts.

## The “Social” In Social Commerce

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## The “Commerce” In Social Commerce

Now let's examine the second word of social commerce: “commerce.” Commerce, is an appropriate term for the strategy of connecting customers to other customers and leveraging those interactions to sell your products and services. Why is this strategy important? It's important because commerce should be closely aligned with your business objectives. Commerce by itself should not imply that you are concerned with social media, Facebook fans, tweets, YouTube videos or customer reviews nor do any of these “social” elements remind us that measurement and ROI is important.

Commerce does however remind us that P&L does matter and that the CFO's office is probably right down the hall. Today, in order to succeed as a VP of Marketing or Marketing Director, it is essential that you are focused on marketing initiatives and strategies that are aligned with overall business objectives and ROI.

Strategy execution and accurate measurement of results cannot be blinded by hype or the promise of a positive outcome that has no economic value. Commerce should reinforce the thought that any social strategy must directly have an impact your bottom line.



## Your Social Commerce Strategy

When developing a social strategy for your business, one should consider to what degree “socialness” will impact your business. Some businesses are hesitant to utilize Twitter or Facebook because of the possibility of having to address negative comments or bad press. Negative comments should be looked upon as an opportunity to answer questions directly, clarify misunderstandings, provide support and personally engage your customers in a meaningful way. Many companies are already seeing positive benefits of connecting with their consumers via social networks.

An example would be Dell, who stated between 2007 and 2009 earned over 3 million dollars in revenue simply by leveraging the opportunity for social interaction through Twitter, a popular social network with over 180,000,000 unique visitors per month. They accomplished this by offering coupons, rewards, answering questions and responding in real time to help solve customers' computer related issues. Your strategy should be properly planned, measured and optimized to ensure that you can meet your customer at some point along the path within the marketing funnel.

## Social Commerce Conclusions

In the end, it may not be that simple to define "social commerce" so if you're still unsure as to the interpretation, forget the term and remember these 8 important principles:

- Consumers want to participate in your marketing initiatives
- Consumers are utilizing social tools and platforms along with interactive experiences to voice their opinion about your products and services
- Social Commerce is about customers having the means to interact with one another in order to make better buying decisions
- Social shopping (method of e-commerce in which consumers shop in a social networking environment) is the new engine driving the social commerce trend
- Your social commerce strategy should be structured so that it has a direct impact on P&L and ROI; if not, redefine your strategy until it does
- Social Commerce solutions present a cost effective way to capture traffic and market reach
- Social Commerce represents an important aspect of social learning by which consumers utilize the knowledge and experience of others they trust to influence their purchasing decision
- As a business if you are not actively engaging your target audience where they congregate online, your competitors WILL

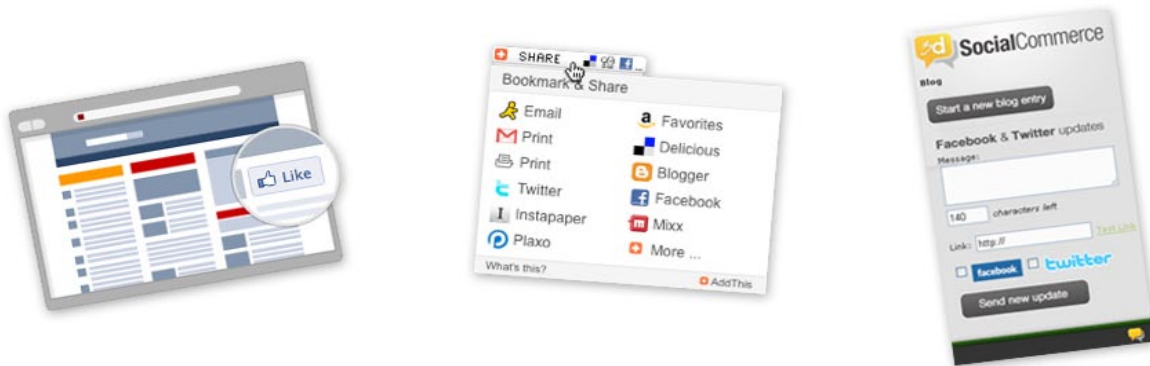


## 3dcart's Definition of Social Commerce

3dcart recognizes Social Commerce as: Engaging and enabling your customers to search, view or add products to a shopping cart within the framework of social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

## 3dcart Provides Social Easy To Use Commerce Tools for Their Clients

Recognizing that social shopping is the new motor driving the social commerce trend, 3dcart has developed a powerful suite of social commerce tools that will allow our clients to tap into the latest social marketing trends to remain competitive, extend their reach and close more sales. The best part is that we've made it super easy to get started.



If you are new to social media and using sites like Twitter and Facebook, you will love 3dcart's new social commerce features. Even if you are well versed in tweeting and updating your Facebook wall, 3dcart provides a very easy way to update both Twitter and Facebook with new products and links back to your store with 1 mouse click. Lets imagine that you just received a brand new product in and want all of your Twitter followers and Facebook fans to catch a peek. Go to the product page (the appropriate boxes are automatically filled with the product information), check mark Twitter and Facebook then click submit. This process will even shorten your long url's utilizing bit.ly for your tweets. It doesn't get any easier than this.

In addition to being able to update your Facebook and Twitter accounts with one click, you can build an extension of your online store through a simple 3dcart Facebook application that will create an "online store" featured as a tab on your Facebook profile. You can choose to display products on your home page, products within a specific category or any product of your choice. You can even decide what page the customer will be directed to once they click on the "buy now" button. They can go to the category page, product page or even directly to the shopping cart so they can pay quickly and easily. Now that's how to garner the power of social commerce using 3dcart.

Most of you by now have probably heard of blogging and may already have an active blog. 3dcarts new version 3.2 comes fully integrated with a cool blog that is very easy to use and manage. Quickly delete comments and blog posts or create new blog posts with a click of the mouse that also inserts a picture and description of the product automatically. You even get full access to the html so that you can change the look and feel of your blog by adding a header or footer. Blogging is an easy way to connect with your customers and keep them posted on company information, new products, and special offers. How's that for being able to leverage the benefits of social commerce?

With one click of the mouse 3dcart clients can:

- Send a product link directly to Twitter
- Send a product link to directly their Facebook page
- Send a product link to both Facebook & Twitter simultaneously
- Create a Facebook store front and offer incentives for customers to become a fan
- Create a blog post that will automatically embed your product along with it's image
- Use the built in blog to speak directly to your customers and allow feedback and comments.

## Conclusion

3dcart has grown tremendously over the past 3 years. Our expertise combined with innovative technology and a passion for delivering real results for our clients has enabled us to become industry leaders in our niche. We help our clients stay ahead of the curve by offering easy to use solutions that leverage new marketing trends and technology. Social Commerce is one such trend that every business owner should be taking advantage of. 3dcart makes it easy to get involved in Social Commerce to aid in the success of your business. Sign up for a free 15 day free trial to see how 3dcart can help take your business to the next level.

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