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**EMAIL · SALES EMAILS**

# Improve your cold email response rates with these social proof techniques

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When you send a sales email, you could have the most compelling subject line. The most enticing content. The most exciting CTA. But if I don't know you and your company, I'm always going to be left with one question: Why should I trust you?

If you want to get a better response rate for your sales emails you need to answer that question. And one of the best ways to do that is with social proof.

Today, I'm going to answer every question you could possibly have about social proof in sales emails, from what it is and what kinds of social proof you could (and should) use, to where to place it and what to do if you don't have any.

Want more tips on sending cold emails that generate hot leads? [Download your free copy of Cold Email Hacks today!](#)

## **What is social proof and why does it matter for sales emails?**

Social proof is proving your credibility by pointing to other people or organizations you've worked with that already have credibility with your prospect. It's the quickest way to go from a random name in someone's inbox, to a person they trust and want to work with.

I can't stress just how important this is.

If you've spent hours writing the best subject line, clearly articulated your value prop, and given me an exciting call to action, you *have* to make me feel comfortable and confident in taking that next step. Without social proof, your sales emails are a lost cause.

## The three levels of social proof you need to show

Social proof is a simple concept. But it can be deceptively complex to get right. You can't just *tell* me to trust you. You need to show it to me. More than that, you need to show me social proof on multiple levels:

- 1. Company credibility:** Who have you worked with that I know and trust?
- 2. Product credibility:** What verifiable results have you created for people with your product?
- 3. Personal credibility:** Who are you and why should I trust you?

Each of these levels of social proof is important in their own right. And while you might get away with using just one, the best sales emails [pitch social proof on all three levels.](#)

## What types of social proof can (and should) you use?

There are tons of ways to show social proof and which one you choose will depend on what you have available. However, before choosing any type of social proof to

include in your sales emails, you need to ask two questions:

First, **does this social proof resonate with *this specific prospect*?** Your prospect has to be familiar with the person, organization, or press you're talking about and believe that your association with them shows credibility.

Next, **will the prospect *perceive* this social proof as credible?** Bad social proof is worse than no social proof at all. If you link to some random blog article or namedrop someone I don't know or think is spammy, that's worse than not including anything.

With that in mind, here are the best ways you can show social proof in your sales emails.

## Your customers

Happy customers are the best source of social proof. Instead of you telling a prospect all of the value they're going to get, they get to hear it from someone they know who has already gone through the process.

But not all customer social proof is equal. To be impactful, the customer you use has to be **relatable** (i.e. can I picture myself getting the same results as them?) and/or **aspirational** (i.e. are they someone I aspire to be like?)

You have a few options when choosing the right customers to use for social proof:

1. **Famous and popular brands:** If you've landed a huge client, show them off.

Name recognition can be hugely aspirational and build a lot of trust.

2. **Companies in the prospect's market:** Even if you don't have a massive customer, people who are known in your prospect's market can be a great option to create relatability.

**3. Local companies they might be familiar with:** Especially when selling to international clients, make your social proof relatable by picking a customer that is local to them or in the same country.

You can use customer social proof by talking about them in the third person. However, whenever possible, try to include a direct quote from them, such as:

*"This customer [who you know and recognize] uses our product. Here's what their head of marketing has to say about the results..."*

## Common connections

If you don't have any customers or any you feel confident highlighting, you can create social proof by showing a common connection you have with the prospect. Not only does this let you piggyback on the credibility that connection has, but it reminds them there's a human being behind those words on a screen:

*"I'm reaching out because I know you and Steli have done business in the past. We've worked together as well and he mentioned you're doing some incredible work that I think we can help you with."*

However, you have to be careful here. A common connection isn't just one of 5000 people on your LinkedIn or Twitter. It has to be a real connection you both know and trust. Before you use that connection's name, make sure they actually know your prospect and have social capital with them.

## Revenue and profits

Money talks. And highlighting *verifiable* monetary success is a great way to prove your legitimacy.

Have you done some impressive numbers in the past year? Did you just close a big round of funding with a credible VC firm? Or pass a major milestone?

Again, you can't just say you're one of *Inc.*'s fastest growing companies or that you hit \$100 million in profits last year. Any monetary social proof has to be verifiable by another source or else it's useless.

## Press

Press doesn't carry the same social status as it once did, but it's still a great way to show you're worth talking about. You can assume your prospect will click any press links you include. So make sure you're only using outlets your prospect will find impressive (in other words, no random blog articles or product roundups).

## Associations or former employers

In certain situations, the places you've worked in the past or where you went to school can be used as social proof. Are you building a highly technical product and your entire product team comes from MIT? Or maybe you're building search technology and your full of ex-Google employees.

## Accomplishments

Again, in certain circumstances, relevant accomplishments or personal awards can help build your personal or product credibility. If you're building design software and your founder received a well-respected reward in the industry, that can work as relevant social proof.

## Whatever social proof you use, assume your prospect will try to verify it

No matter what social proof you give, it has to be honest and verifiable. You can say whatever you want, but in 99.9% of cases, your prospect will do a bit of digging on their own. That means if you link to a press article, it better be good. If you mention

a customer, you should have them on your website. If you list accomplishments or associations, someone should be able to find that.

Beyond that, your personal online presence needs to have credibility as well. Most people will check your LinkedIn or social media profile to see who you are. And if those pages are shady or unprofessional it can kill any social credibility you've developed with them.

Always assume your prospect is intelligent, savvy, and will do their due diligence. So make sure whatever they find about you and your company amplifies your social proof.

## Where to place social proof in your sales emails

The next question after what kind of social proof to use is how do you use it? The short answer is: It depends.

**If people are abandoning your emails early on:** Add social proof to the beginning to grab their interest and engage their imagination.

**If people are reading your emails but not responding:** Add social proof right before or after your call to action so people feel confident about responding.

There's one more place you should use social proof that is so underutilized. **Your signature is a social proof machine.** Everyone includes a signature in their email, but few optimize it to build credibility and show social proof. I do this shamelessly by linking to my podcast, book, and popular keynote speeches. These are things I *know* people are clicking and checking out and help build my own social proof.

[Our CRM with built-in emailing](#) enables you to easily create customizable templates that have social proof placed at just the right position in your cold emails.

With Close's built in reporting, you can keep tabs on your email response rates for different emails and optimize those that perform the best.

The screenshot shows the Close.io CRM interface with the title "Sent Email Report | NPI | Close.io". On the left, there's a sidebar with navigation links: Opportunities, Tasks, Leads, Reporting (Activity, Pipeline, Sent Email), and SMART VIEWS (More than 3 calls/active pop, Follow up Qualified Leads, Qualified Leads, Active Opps Last Contact Feb, Called less then 2 Doctors to call, All Leads, Has Notifications, Recently Created, 11 more...). At the bottom of the sidebar is a "+ New Lead" button. The main content area is titled "Sent Email Report" and "All Users' Report for All Time". It displays three sections: "All Emails", "Demo this week?", and "Touching In". Each section has five metrics: Sent, Opened, Open Rate, Responded, and Response Rate. The data for "All Emails" is: Sent 172, Opened 40, Open Rate 23%, Responded 25, Response Rate 15%. The data for "Demo this week?" is: Sent 115, Opened 43, Open Rate 37%, Responded 15, Response Rate 13%. The data for "Touching In" is: Sent 27, Opened 7, Open Rate 26%, Responded 5, Response Rate 19%.

	Sent	Opened	Open Rate	Responded	Response Rate
All Emails	172	40	23%	25	15%
Demo this week?	115	43	37%	15	13%
Touching In	27	7	26%	5	19%

If you're looking for a CRM with built-in email features that are specifically designed to help sales people close more deals, definitely give Close a try. Here's just 3 reasons why sales reps love using Close:

- Sales emails reach your prospects' primary inbox, instead of getting lost in the Promotions, Updates, or even Spam folder)
- Close's email sequences helps you to automate your follow-up with prospects so no lead ever falls through the cracks
- Send highly personalized sales emails at scale, based on dynamically created custom lead lists, so that the right prospects hear from you at just the right time.

Sound good? You can [learn more about our CRM and how it helps sales people close more deals.](#)

## What do you do when you don't have any social proof?

Social proof is a powerful sales tool. But if you don't have any yet, there's still a few options you can use.

First, you need to recognize that **personal social proof is important to everything you'll ever do as a sales rep and an individual**. Your brand and reputation will follow you everywhere you go. And while it takes time to build, it brings massive returns in the long-run if you keep up with it.

Next, **honesty and openness can be just as strong as social proof**. If you try to fool someone with some embellished (or completely fake) social proof, you're going to destroy your reputation. Instead, if you don't have any good social proof to show, just be transparent about your situation:

*"Hey! I just launched this incredible thing. You're one of the first people I'm asking for advice and feedback from so I don't have a lot of proof that it's working. But I'm dedicated to this vision and solving this problem and would love to have 10 minutes of your time."*

This kind of vulnerability can be incredibly powerful and make someone want to trust you, even if you don't have the proof to back it up yet.

## Always remember, if I don't trust you, I won't talk to you

You wouldn't let a complete stranger into your house, so why should a prospect reply to your sales email if they don't know you and trust what you're saying?

With social proof, you give your prospects a reason to believe. It's the foot in the door that lets you use every other [sales technique and strategy](#) you have to close the deal. We all have some form of social proof we can use. So find it. Use it. And build that trust. Because without it, I don't have a reason to talk to you.

Social proof in sales emails by @Steli from Close.io



Want to level up your sales emails? Get the new and improved edition of my book *Cold Email Hacks!*

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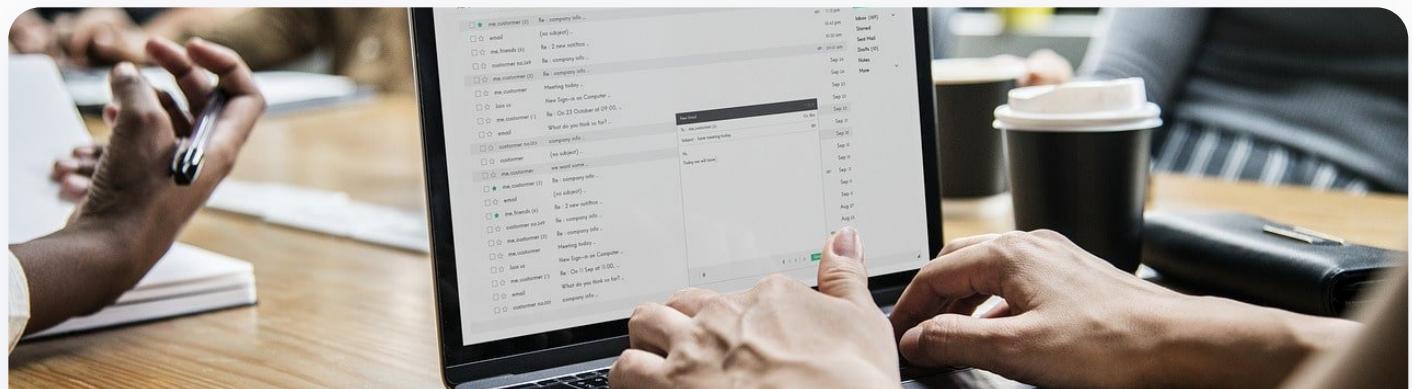
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