EBOOK

The All-in-One Social Media Strategy Workbook

The tools, networks, and tactics
you need to succeed

Hootsuite™

Getting Started

In this chapter, you will learn about:

1 Four key points you need to consider before you create a social media strategy

2 The differences between popular social media networks

3 Best practices for the top social networks

4 key strategy considerations

Understand who your customer is and where to find them online. *My audience is comprised of women aged 25 to 35, so the primary social networks I should focus on (at least initially) are Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram.*

Create a mission statement for each social profile's purpose, tying this back to your business goals. Ex: I will use Twitter for customer service in order to promote customer loyalty.

Set a goal for each social profile and identify benchmarks for success. Ex: I want to increase new follower count on Facebook by 50 each month to amplify my brand and drive foot traffic to my brick-and-mortar business.

Develop a content strategy for each profile. Ex: I want to post 2 unique images on Instagram each day to increase engagement and positive sentiment around my brand.

Popular social networks

	Network	Number of users	Demographic information		More information
f	Facebook	1.28 billion users	65% female / 35% male	48% of users aged 18-34, 31% aged 35-54	Social network leader with largest audience, large focus on interaction with friends and family
Twitter	Twitter	255 million users	62% female / 38% male	66% of users aged 15-34	Open network geared towards conversations via short messages (140 characters maximum)
in	LinkedIn	300 million users	39% female / 61% male	60% of users aged 25-54	Social network geared towards building professional connections to aid career development
g+	Google+	1 billion users	30% female / 70% male	All users have Google accounts	Social network arm of Google's product offering, heavy visual focus.
P	Pinterest	70 million users	83% female / 17% male	45% of users between 35-54	A place to build virtual collections of visual content pertaining to personal interests
Instagram	Instagram	300 million users	68% female / 32% male	90% of users under 35 years old	Platform for sharing visual content
YouTube	YouTube	1 billion users	Reaches more U.S. adults than any cable network	Predominant user base is 18-34 years old	Platform for hosting and sharing video content
Foursquare	Foursquare	45 million users	40% female / 60% male	80% of users between 18-43 years old	Social network focused on geo-location based interaction

Best practices for top social networks

	Network	Focus	Frequency	Tip
	Facebook	Quality	5-10 per week	Aim for 2 posts per day to keep audience interested
	Twitter	Quantity	3-5 per day	One per hour is optimal
	LinkedIn	Formal, technical content	2-5 per week	LinkedIn posts get more traction during the work week
	Google+	Content relevancy	1 per day	Your posts give Google more content to index and enhance SEO rankings
	Pinterest	Compelling storytelling through images	3-4 per day	Pin both original content and repin engaging content from other users
	Instagram	Rich imagery	1-2 per day	There is no real fatigue with posting but ensure consistency week after week

Getting started with Twitter on Hootsuite

- Hootsuite allows you to work with multiple Twitter accounts in one place, making it easier to set up and view multiple streams and tabs. Hootsuite allows you to use Twitter functions like quick search and saving streams as you normally would, but with visibility into numerous accounts.

- Long-time Twitter user? Grade your Twitter in terms of social media marketing with Hootsuite's Social Grader tool. You can measure your reach, engagement, profile, and receive an overall grade on performance. Social Grader will also provide practical tips on how to improve your score.

- Pictures can help increase engagement and make your posts stand out. Post photos directly from Hootsuite by updating your picture upload preferences to pic.twitter.com. Photos posted through Hootsuite using pic.twitter.com will be automatically included in your Twitter profile's photo gallery and will be displayed at the full resolution supported on Twitter.com.

- Set up monitoring streams for your company's influencers, competitors, keywords, and your own brand. Streams are valuable for basic social listening, and help you track the social activity around your business and industry.

- Geo-filter or geo-locate your searches to listen to relevant conversations in a local area—specify the range of geo-tagged Tweets from 5km to 25km, for example (or the equivalent in miles). Narrow your search to industry-related topics, terms, or brand mentions within that range so you can deliver localized content that resonates with the right audience.

Anatomy of a great Tweet

Keep Tweets between 100 and 120 characters so others can modify or add short notes before retweeting.

Take the time to write a proper sentence (yes, including grammar and punctuation) that fits within the character limit.

Encourage conversation and build your audience by posing questions to elicit curiosity, quoting others (with proper citation), and thanking those who mention you or pass your message along.

Twitter is the birthplace of the hashtag in modern social media usage. **Use the hashtag often,** and wisely. (Don't overdo it with the number of hashtags, though, or your Tweet won't get as much traction.)

Shorten links to get the most out of your Twitter real estate. Hootsuite's Ow.ly shortener doesn't just look pretty, either—it's a powerful tracking tool to see who's clicking on your messages, and from what region.

Bright, strong images that accompany Tweets increase engagement and retweets.

Maintain your own personality. You don't want to sound like a robot!

Hootsuite @Hootsuite   22h
What goes with rum and eggnog? An owl of course!
http://ow.ly/Gpvhm #holidayowl

Expand   Reply   Retweet   Favourite   More

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Getting started with Facebook on Hootsuite

- [Create a Facebook profile](#) if you haven't already. You will then need to create a Facebook page for your company. [Click here](#) to learn the difference between a Facebook profile and a Facebook page.

- Add your Facebook company page and any relevant Facebook groups to your Hootsuite dashboard. That way, all of your Facebook pages, groups, and (if you prefer) personal profile are all in one place.

  Note: You don't need to connect your personal profile to be able to manage your company page.

- Create streams for "Inbound posts", "My posts", and "Messages" using the "Add a Stream" guide. You will be able to view, like, and comment on content posted to the company Facebook page, see what you've posted, and review and reply to any private messages sent to your company page.

- Add the "Unpublished" stream via the "Add a Stream" guide so you can manage Facebook ads directly in Hootsuite. Click the tab hosting your Facebook content in your streams, then add a new stream. Select a Facebook profile that will stream content, and finish by clicking the plus button inline with Unpublished.

- Customize link previews and text for any URLs you are sharing. This will avoid sharing links that look like they come from an untrusted source or that simply pop into their stream without additional information. Instead, you can build trust and engagement by pointing out the value of a specific URL to your audience.

Anatomy of a great Facebook post

Facebook has changed over the years from primarily text-based communication to a mixture of all kinds of media. Successful posts use short, interesting "teasers" (usually 2 or 3 sentences) for context along with colorful images, short videos, and links to other good content that followers will enjoy.

Stay positive. Facebook users tend to share and interact with inspiring, funny, and life-affirming pieces. Get creative by building your own memes with text overlayed onto unique images.

Pose questions, tell stories, and use language that encourages commenting and interaction with your page.

Images sized to **403 x 403 pixels** or higher will look the best in the newsfeed column.

Interact with your followers and fans, as well as other people who comment on posts in your feed. Organic conversation is a great way to increase engagement and build a loyal fan base.

Add comments to your older posts to bring it up in the newsfeed again. Great posts can have more than one chance at viral appeal.

Post often, but not too often. Use Hootsuite Analytics to research the perfect number of messages to post per day, and use AutoSchedule to publish them during optimal times.

Getting started with LinkedIn on Hootsuite

- If you haven't already, create a LinkedIn company page for your brand, with a focus on visual appeal. If no one at your company has prior experience on LinkedIn, there are structured training courses available. Hootsuite University offers a number of resources with information on how to manage and maintain your LinkedIn company page.

- After you've connected your LinkedIn company page to your Hootsuite dashboard, you can customize the streams to monitor your company, personal, and scheduled updates, as well as any relevant keyword searches.

- You can also separate important discussions that happen in LinkedIn Groups into individual streams. This way, you can monitor those discussions without the risk of having them pushed down in the stream as new discussions come in. To create individual streams, hover your mouse over the message you'd like to separate, click on the arrowhead, and then click Save Discussion as Stream. The stream will populate on the far-right side of all streams with "Comments" as the heading.

- Engage with your followers by starting a conversation. Post status updates that either link to rich content, invite discussion, or include creative and thought-provoking images, but be sure to stay on-brand and industry-relevant with every post.

Anatomy of a great LinkedIn post

LinkedIn is a business- and career-centric platform, so welcome the opportunity to offer your expertise on a subject that relates to your audience. Pretend it's a company dinner party—maintain your real, but professional, voice and don't be boring.

Keep it short. Two or three sentences is all you need for an intro before an external link. Give your audience just enough to know why you shared it and what it means to them.

Stay interested to be more interesting. Reply to those who comment on your posts and like any of their content that has value for you. Commenting on your own post can open up conversation as well, which leads to more engagement and increased visibility.

Tagging people or companies that you are connected to adds authority to your posts. Make sure the posts are related and will be welcomed by those you are tagging.

Don't forget the power of images on LinkedIn. When you share a link, the main image is what your audience will see in their feed. A succinct, relevant message with a vibrant image will get more attention than a simple text-based post.

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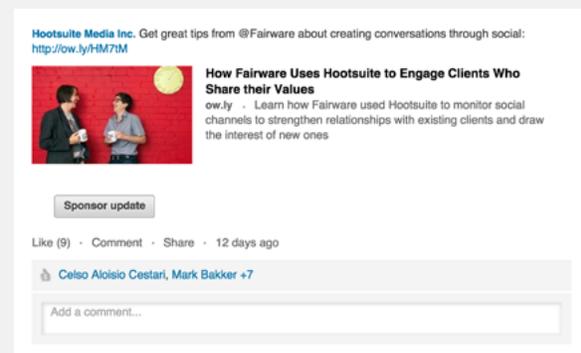
Getting started with Instagram on Hootsuite

- Sign up for Instagram and explore all the ways you can spruce up your photos.

- Download the Instagram app from the Hootsuite App Directory. After you've installed the app, add the stream to a new tab (or if you prefer an existing tab) on your dashboard.

- Add a stream for your own photos. This will make it easy to share and amplify your Instagram posts across your other social networks.

- Create a second stream for any relevant keyword searches you want to monitor. Note: You can be logged into multiple Instagram accounts at a time, which helps if you're managing Instagram for multiple clients or businesses.

- The quickest way to build a following on Instagram is to monitor and engage with different hashtags. To do this, see what popular hashtags your community is adding to their photos and engaging with. Research which hashtags other industry influencers or competitors are using, and then spend time each day monitoring the content of each tag.

- Collaborate with others on Instagram. Whether you're a blog featuring another blogger, a small business featuring another local company, or just an Instagrammer showing off your best friend, collaborations are an organic and natural way to increase followers for both of you.

Anatomy of a great Instagram post

Pictures are the heart and soul of Instagram, but the trick is to tell a story rather than simply focus on a product.

Use block colors ("blocks" of bold, bright shades from a palette of two or more colors) to make your images stand out from the rest.

Develop your brand's own recognizable visual style. You can start by consistently using one or two filters that fits with your company image.

Hashtags are integral to promoting your product, service, or brand on Instagram. Use industry- or location-specific hashtags—do some research on which ones are popular.

Start your own hashtag campaign by getting your friends and followers involved.

Getting started with Google+ on Hootsuite
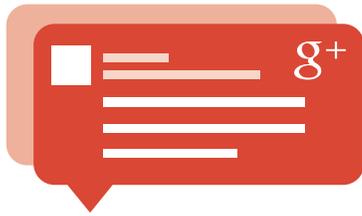
- Like all social networks, Google+ gives you the opportunity to connect with a community of customers and fans on a very personal, social level. Unlike other networks however, Google+ also has significant impact on SEO and search traffic volume for your brand, which is why having a Google+ company page (not just a Google+ profile) is a good idea.

- To create a Google+ page, you must first have a personal profile (create yours here). From your profile you can click "Pages" in the left-hand menu, and you're on your way.

- Once you've created and optimized your Google+ company page, connect it to your Hootsuite dashboard.

- See how users are engaging with your posts by adding an "updates" stream. This will also allow you to respond to comments on your posts directly from your Hootsuite dashboard.

- Don't limit your content to your followers. With Google+ Communities, which you can access from the dropdown menu under your company name on Google+, you can reach a more niche audience interested in your content, products, and knowledge.

## Anatomy of a great Google+ post

Google+ profiles and posts are rich with SEO potential. As Google adjusts its algorithms to reward unique, relevant content rather than keyword-stuffed ad copy, Google+ content is high on the list of discoverable material.

People love images on Google+. Include images wherever you can, and maintain an up-to-date photo gallery.

The +1 has become a virtual high-five across all platforms, so don't forget to share the love on Google+. Be generous with your +1s (plus-ones?) to show interest in others and encourage engagement.

Relevant keywords and hashtags are important if you want your Google+ content to be easily found. Hashtags show up in regular search as well as Google+ search, and keywords are still an important part of how Google indexes and uncovers content.

Google+ is better suited to slightly longer posts (four or five sentences) than other platforms because it is more easily picked up by the search engine. Also, it's a great venue to share longer-form content as some argue the attention span is longer (less "noise").
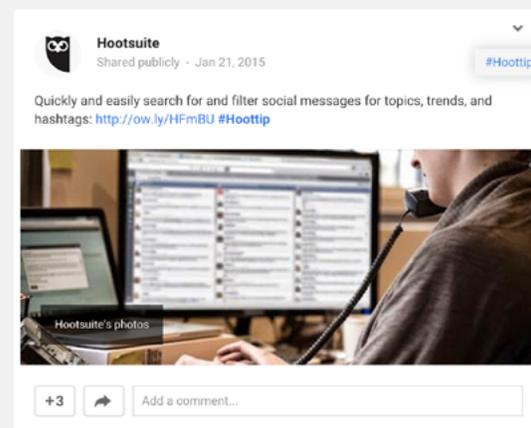
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Scheduling content with Hootsuite

Whether you want to continue publishing content consistently regardless of staff schedules, need to organize your time to be more efficient each day, or are adhering to an editorial workflow that aligns with a content calendar, scheduling your content is an excellent way to keep everything on track.

Not only is scheduling helpful for efficiency and consistency, it also allows you to track how often you are publishing content to keep your followers engaged, not overwhelmed. Here are three ways to schedule social messages with Hootsuite:
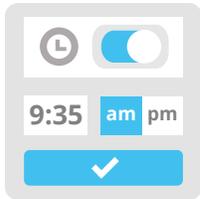
1. Manually schedule a single message.
Click "Compose Message", add your content and any links, then select the profile(s) where you'd like the message to be posted. Click on the calendar icon to select the time and date for your message to the sent, then finish off by clicking "Schedule".

2. Schedule messages in bulk.
By creating a comma-separated value file, such as an Excel spreadsheet or .csv, you can upload and schedule multiple messages at one time (bulk scheduling). These can be created using Google Docs, TextEdit, or TextWrangler. You can schedule up to 350 bulk messages at the dates and times that you specify. Click here for a detailed walkthrough.
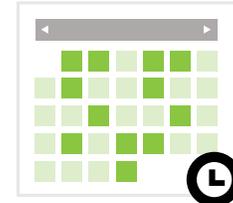
3. Let Hootsuite's smart algorithm pick the best time to send out your messages.
With AutoSchedule, you don't have to guess what times are optimal to post your content. AutoSchedule does the work for you by choosing a time to schedule Tweets based on when they perform the best.

Setting up a profile image

Social media profiles for businesses are like storefronts. Without a professional, brand-appropriate image (along with a short, information-rich bio), your content might not get the attention it deserves. A profile with a strong image can also build trust in your company overall and help maintain the brand's visual style.

We've created templates for the top social networks with the optimal dimensions for profile images.

http://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-set-up-a-social-media-profile/

Facebook

851 x 315
Hootsuite™
Cover Image

180 x 180
Profile Image

Twitter

1500 x 1500
Hootsuite™
Cover Image

400 x 400
Profile Image

Additional resources

Check out these resources for further insight into brand amplification strategies.

Read the Hootsuite blog for more tips and tricks:

Twitter for Business ~ A Guide by the Hootsuite Social Media Coaches

How to Set Up Your Social Profiles

The Purpose of Each Social Media Profile: Blog

How to Create a Social Media Marketing Plan

Log in to Hootsuite University and watch the following videos:

- SCMD 121: Introduction to Social Networks

- SCMD 125: Setting Social Media Profiles up for Business Success

- Lecture Series Webinar: How to Get Your Life Back: 4 Tips & Tricks to Effective Social Media Management

- Lecture Series Webinar: The Google+ Playbook: Building Engagement on G+ Pages & Communities with Scott Wilder from Google