

Twitter Engagement Guide: Top 10 Ways to Improve Engagement with HootSuite

Twitter Engagement Guide

You're investing resources in social to increase results and drive demand. To be successful requires a combination of strategy and tactical know-how, but where do you begin?

The following pages will help guide you step by step as you create a strategy and begin to engage on Twitter, using HootSuite.

Step 1: Set your goals

There are limitless ways to use Twitter to help drive your marketing goals. The trick is identifying the near term goals you want to achieve and start to plan from there. Be sure to pair your social media goals with your current marketing goals. You can also run several campaigns simultaneously, using HootSuite.

Step one is outlining your goals so you can measure your results.

My goals are:

- ☐ Growing Twitter presence for overall brand awareness
- ☐ Drive more website traffic & conversions
- ☐ Running a Twitter sale/promotion
- ☐ Engaging customers for feedback
- ☐ Generate leads
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Step 2: Tips on Tweeting

Here are four tips that will help any new business make the most of their 140 characters on Twitter.

1. Tweet like you would talk to a good friend. This is a chance to show off your brand's personality and know-how. Strive for a genuine, approachable communication style. Stay away from "marketing speak"—it'll go a long way in making your voice your own.

Try some sample messages here:

Sample message 1: _____

Sample message 2: _____

Sample message 3: _____

2. Engage your followers. Ask questions. Listen. Then show people you're listening by responding. You'll be amazed at the valuable insights you'll get about your customers.

Types of engagement:

Promote conversation with audiences by requesting feedback or polling for opinions.

Ask questions:

Sample question 1: _____

Sample question 2: _____

Sample question 3: _____

Set up search streams for keywords related to your business or products.

Sample search words:

Respond to customer inquiries.

Anticipated customer questions or complaints:

3. Keep it timely. Twitter happens in real time so there's plenty of opportunity to guide conversations when they are most relevant to users. Keep your messages timely by tweeting relevant Tweets during events or breaking news. Baseball game just let out—Tweet about celebrating or commiserating at your restaurant" You can even schedule tweets in HootSuite to coincide with these events so you don't always have to be plugged in.

Brainstorm relevant events or types of news stories that are appropriate for your business to respond to here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Dive into the inside scoop- Offer exclusive content like employee profiles or behind-the-scenes photos your followers can't find elsewhere. Working on a cool new product? Give a sneak peek—Have a stat from a blog post or infographic you are working on—give a preview. Giving that inside scoop helps drive demand.

Step 3: Breakdown of a Tweet

Some quick tips when writing a tweet that is tied to a marketing objective. Always double check. Are you driving the behavior that you are going to use to measure your success?

For example, if you want to drive traffic to your website, be sure to include a link shortener like Owl.ly which can help you track who is coming from your tweet. You can also tie these back to campaigns in Google Analytics so you can track them centrally. Make sure to think about your tweets as part of a larger campaign.

Think about how 3-5 tweets together can tell a story throughout the day or week. You can draft these all at once and schedule them in HootSuite - set and forget! Brainstorm them here:

Topic or content you want to promote: _____

Tweets about the above that you can promote during the week:

Tweet 1: _____

Tweet 2: _____

Tweet 3: _____

Step 4: Questions: Ask & Answer

If you aren't sure where to start, responding to customers, or prospects' questions are a great way to start getting used to having conversations on Twitter. Plus, you will make a lot of people happy!

The golden rule is variety - try starting questions a different way each time: who, what, when, where and why.

Try a few questions here about your business you could ask on Twitter:

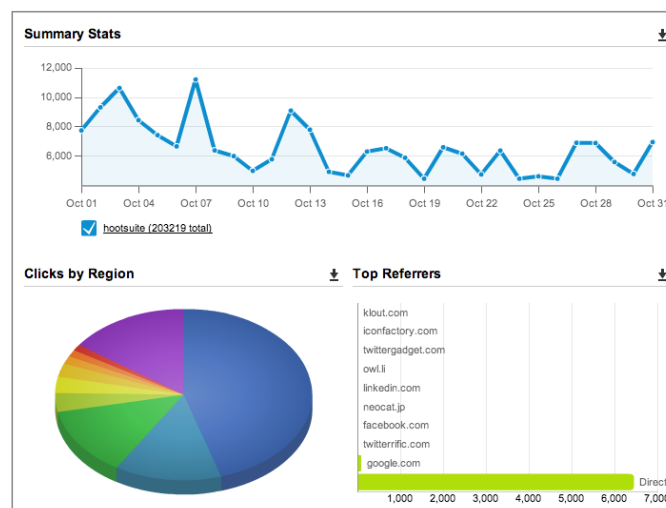
Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____



Example of Ow.ly Summary Report in HootSuite

Additionally, ask questions that are simple to answer, not because your audience is simple, but because they'll be more likely to respond if they immediately know the answer to your question, rather than needing to mull over it for a while. Think of emotive, preference based questions. For example, if you're a restaurant promoting a new lunch special, ask "what's your favorite side? Soup, salad or fries?" it's a simple question, and people will be able to answer easily.

Step 5: Join the conversation

Hashtags; get in on conversations that are relevant to your business. If you aren't finding relevant hashtags or conversations start by creating a search stream in HootSuite. By following and looking at what influencers in your industry are doing you can learn from their example, and start a conversation with them.

Step 6: Be relevant

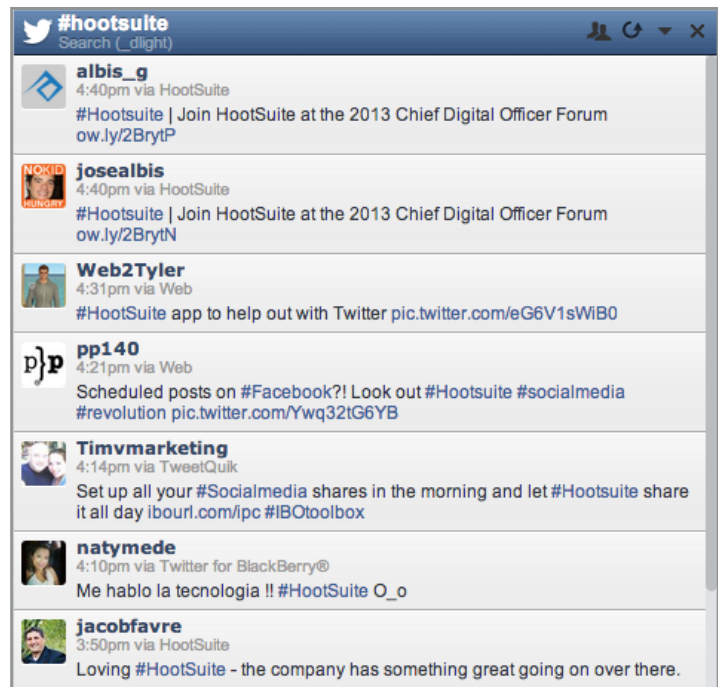
It is all about seizing the moment on Twitter. Whether industry-based, seasonal or cultural, use events to tap into popular conversations and engage followers.

Broaden your content plan to include holidays and seasonal events like New Year's celebrations, Mother's Day, graduation and back to school. Just make sure that what you include can relate back to your business.

Events like these naturally create spikes in conversation around shared experiences, which makes them relevant to just about any business's content strategy on Twitter. Think about how you can participate in these conversations.

There are certain conversations that always come along with re-occurring events. For example, there will always be sporting events or a best and worst dressed list from the Oscars and people will certainly be talking about them on Twitter. When events touch lives on a global and national level, plan ahead for the conversation, then get in on it.

Another quick tip – visit the event website before the event to see if there's a common hashtag that everyone is using so you can schedule tweets with this hashtag.



Example of Search Stream in HootSuite

Step 7: Create Content

If you are just starting off and don't have a lot of content to tweet out there is value being a curator. Once you are better known and have grown your following and content base, start promoting some of your own stuff. If you want to start scaling up, start to monitor which tweets are performing the best and consider promoting these.

Some examples:

1. Maybe you're a realtor who sends out a list of listings weekly. Why not Tweet a link to the top ones you want to feature?
2. You just posted something on your blog, let people know!
3. Consider posting a relevant industry article or RT'ing something from an industry thought leader. Add your own comments to it. Find these thought leaders and create lists in HootSuite so you have a constant stream of content to guide you.
4. Rich media performs extremely well; try posting a photo of your office, a recent update to a menu or a new item you posted online.
5. If you have a large report or important webinar coming up, consider promoting the tweet to increase the reach of your content. This is a great way to get your content shown to the right target audience who are likely to be interested in the topic you are promoting.

Step 8: Additional Ways to Use Content

Often, you can promote the same piece of content at different times of day and the week, with different messages. Chances are, not all of your followers are in their Twitter streams at the time you post your message, and in some cases, they could be in different time zones. By striking a balance between variety and frequency, you will find that you get more exposure for your messages.

Be careful: Start with a low volume and slowly increase. The last thing you want to do is come across like spam.

There are a few strategies that are unique to Twitter that we recommend using when you think about offers.

1. Help incentivize followers to spread your message by retweeting (i.e. sharing) your tweet to receive content i.e. a sale, special product, an early release, etc.

Some tips for running this:

- Establish the offer

Your offer here: _____

- Establish the # of engagements you want – consider how many RT's you might get on a normal piece of content and then decide a stretch #. For example, I could run an offer that says if 50 people RT the tweet your Tweet, I'll offer a 30% discount on all items in my store for the next 24 hours. This tactic works extremely well to drive sales through Twitter.

Goal RTs: _____

% Discount: _____

Time period: _____

2. Post exclusive offers on Twitter that your followers can't find anywhere else. If your content is really compelling, you're more likely to get Re-tweets that could attract new followers. Give your followers value with discounts, promotions and flash sales. Everyone loves a deal. Use unique coupons to track your results and reward your customers. If you have a brick and mortar location, tweet a discount code for customers to redeem at the register.

For online stores, direct message followers with a discount code that you can track at checkout. You could also simply reward users for mentioning your business.

3. Lastly, Twitter is a great way to help feature new inventory and offers. Consider opening up new inventory first to those who follow you on Twitter to make them feel exclusive and build customer loyalty.

Step 9: Promote your event

Twitter can be a great way to get the word out for an event you are trying to promote.

Some basic tips:

- Start Early—make sure you get the save the date out there and let people know it is coming
- Link to sign up forms through your tweet and use an ow.li link for tracking.
- Offer an incentive or content to get people to RT the event to grow your audience (e.g. RT for a chance to win a prize at the event or RT to unlock the next speaker, etc..)
- Amplify your events consider using Promoted Tweets
- Don't forget to keep the conversation going through the event. Use your event hashtag and also live Tweet what is going on. Twitter is also a great resource to interact with those who are interested in your event and couldn't attend – these are still your potential customers!
- Did you get great pictures or video from the event—share that experience with those who couldn't be there by tweeting them out after the event. Use the storify app in HootSuite to gather dynamic content to follow the event. TwitterPeople love pictures!

Step 10: Finding the right audience

Once you start implementing these strategies you will start to see that you are growing engagement and attracting new followers. As we mentioned on some of these examples when you are trying to reach a new audience with your content you can also use targeting with our promoted products to help increase your reach.

Bonus: Getting the most out of HootSuite

Whether you're in day 1 of your social media strategy, or a seasoned veteran, there's always more to learn. HootSuite offers free Social media coaching services for anyone using our Pro trial or Pro plan, which is live training on our social business functionality. Learn more about ow.li links and analytics so that you can develop the best formula for delivering powerful content you can promote.

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