



WHITE PAPER

10 Tips for Running Your First Campaign

A Hootsuite Campaigns White Paper

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There's so much opportunity to connect with customers through social media campaigns that it can be hard to know where to start. If you're ready to start using social marketing apps and contests to generate leads and user-generated content with your fans, there's no time like the present to try Hootsuite Campaigns.

Social media campaigns have proven themselves to be up to 60% percent more effective than traditional advertising campaigns.¹

So if you're on the verge of starting your first campaign, or even just thinking about it, we've got 10 tips to help you scale the learning curve and begin setting up and launching your first campaign, contest, or promotion.

¹ McKinsey Global Institute, "The social economy: Unlocking value and productivity social technologies", July 2012, pg 65.

Tip #1: Set your goals

Before you even fire up your campaign platform, think carefully about what you want. Are you looking to grow your audience, or make the most of the audience you have? Depending on what kind of campaign you choose to run, you can achieve very different goals. If you want to build up leads, look for a kind of campaign that will encourage customers to provide their contact information. Social sweepstakes are particularly good at lead generation. If you don't want to assess what prize to give away on your very first campaign, you can run a sign-up service, such as a newsletter. Seeing who signs up for special offers and advanced sneak peeks of what's coming will provide you with a vivid picture of who your most loyal fans are.

On the other hand, if you're satisfied with how your user base is growing, you might consider a user-generated content (UGC) campaign. User-generated content is key for maintaining brand engagement. Brand engagement rises 28% when consumers are exposed to both professional content and user-generated product video, and four out of five social media users look up information and get recommendations from social networks.^{2,3} UGC is a particularly great way to engage with Millennial customers. 66.3% of Millennial social media users have shared photos and/or thoughts when trying a new product or service.⁴ There are many kinds of campaigns that can generate this content: a social gallery can aggregate photos and videos that have been

tagged with the hashtag of your choice. Or you can run a contest, for photos, video, or Tweets, to inspire your fans to create branded content.

No matter what your goals, make sure that your target is both inspiring and attainable. You should want to do the very best you can do; wanting a million entries for your first campaign can be a stretch goal, but it's more important that your first campaign set a standard and a precedent than a world record.

Tip #2: Review your branding

When your fans think of your brand, what comes to mind? When you think of what your brand should mean, what words pop up in your head?

Your social media campaign will connect best with your customers when it comes from the heart. Once you've chosen what kind of app to run and when, you still have to make sure it matches your brand's image and the interests of your target demographic. The campaign's branding should be thorough; from the filters on the imagery to the tone of your default "Thank you" messaging for entering, cohesion is key.

Say you want to run a Halloween-themed photo contest. There's plenty of different concepts you could call on. A straight-up costume contest? The best—or maybe the worst—pumpkin carving? The options are endless.

Depending on the tone of your brand and the mindset of your median customer, you'll want to design different campaigns. The campaign you'd run for men aged 18-25 has very little in common with a campaign for women aged 30-45. Social media campaigns need to connect to their targets to inspire them; aim, and then fire.

² ComScore, "comScore Study Finds Professionally-Produced Video Content And User-Generated Product Videos Exhibit Strong Synergy in Driving Sales Effectiveness". March 28 2012.

³ Mavrck, "The Power of User-generated Content". November 25 2014.

⁴ SparkReel, "5 Reasons to Consider User-generated Content in Your Marketing Plan".

Choosing the right campaign

CAMPAIGN TYPE	BEST FOR
Sweepstakes	Acquiring email addresses of leads
Instagram Contest	Aggregating user-generated content
Polls	Quick feedback and fan engagement
Social Gallery	Visualizing social photos, videos, and tweets
Quiz	Fan engagement
Commenting Sweepstakes	Customer feedback and crowdsourcing

Tip #3: Find a home

Once you've decided how you'll campaign and what the social marketing app will look like to users, you need to decide where they'll find it. 40% of all campaigns traffic now comes from mobile devices: making your campaign mobile-friendly is essential.

Hootsuite Campaigns offers three potential locations for your campaign. No matter what kind of campaign you choose to run first, your campaign can live on Facebook, a microsite, or as a plug-in to your own website. You can choose to run your campaign across as many of these options as you like. Generally speaking, if you already have an established Facebook presence, it's good to take advantage of that. Facebook is still the most popular social network in the world, and if you promote via Facebook you don't have to leave the social network. Alternatively, building your campaign into your website gives you the benefit of added traffic.

Tip #4: Put it in context

Once you've picked a concept, you should then consider how well it fits with the rest of your organization's marketing initiatives. If the rest of your branded initiatives aspire to be heart-wrenching calls to action, a lighthearted campaign might seem out of touch. If you can synergize the two, both will wind up more effective. This is also the time for you to consider who you can call on to sponsor a campaign, if a prize is on the line. Proper integration of a sponsor can lead to greater leads and UGC than either one of the organizations could win on their own.

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You should also decide how long your campaign is going to run. Larger companies can afford to have a two week sweepstakes; they have the built in audience to spread word of the campaign, fast. Smaller organizations should give social media users time to catch up with them. We recommend 6 weeks minimum for a smaller organization's first campaign. You can always have

campaigns running back to back; once you get the hang of social media campaigns, you'll be in their world to stay.

Tip #5: Promote

Even before the campaign officially launches, you should be teasing your fanbase and letting them know that something big is coming. Anything you can do to generate anticipation is a good idea; if you can get relevant media talking about the campaign on the day it's launched, even better.

And once the campaign has been launched, this promotional support becomes mandatory. Promotion of the app can take many forms, depending on the social marketing app's location, its type, and your budget. If your campaign is built into Facebook or a microsite, dedicate some of your website's real estate for promotion, or consider setting up a permanent page on your site to direct customers to contests and promotions.

Whether you use your social media management platform to set up a queue of Tweets or Facebook statuses or dedicate half an hour each day to write them in real time, it's an essential part of the campaigning process.

How you foster engagement is up to you; if you have the budget for it, devote some of your marketing budget into promoted posts. On Facebook, promoted posts have become less of an option and more of a necessity. In 2013, 9% of all Facebook page posts were promoted. In 2014, that number doubled to 17%.⁵ The market is competitive.

If you're going to post promotional media to Facebook, choose video. Photo content has become common on Facebook: stand out from the crowd with video content, which has become more and more effective. A video post on Facebook now has twice the organic reach as a photo (8.7% vs 3.7%).⁶

Promoted Tweets are another possible investment for your campaign. There are key differences between promotion on Facebook and promotion on Twitter. Facebook Pages serve as company hubs in a way that

⁵ Lara O'Reilly, "Posting a photo is the worst way to get people to see your Facebook posts", *Business Insider*. February 16 2015.

⁶ *Ibid*

Twitter profiles just don't. Promoted Tweets are at their most effective when you have a thorough understanding of your fanbase—what keywords would they use frequently? Where do they live? Once you do have your audience, there are some other things to keep in mind when composing your promoted Tweets. Tweets that are 100 characters or less win 18% higher engagement than those around the full 140 mark. It's always good to have a photo, but it's better to have more than one. Tweets with a photo series have +173% the engagement rate of Tweets with only one; Tweets with Vines have a +256% engagement rate than one-photo Tweets.⁷

How you choose to promote is entirely up to you; there are tons of options so you can experiment and explore to find the best mix and optimize for your audience.

Tip #6: Engage

Your social campaign is running, and you're getting your first entries. It's flattering to know you have fans who care enough to take time to enter; flatter them right back. Reach out to them, and thank them for their effort. If a customer has provided their email, update them on the progress of the campaign. If you're running a contest, tweet at and with the most active participants. A little can go a long way: replying to other Twitter users boosts your engagement on promoted Tweets by 18%.⁸ Use social media to show how proud you are of your fans.

Anything you can do to make your campaign run more smoothly is a good idea. But a personalized Tweet a little late is better than a faster canned one. Engagement is more important than efficiency.

Use social media to show how proud you are of your fans.

Tip #7: Check-in, check up

You've got growing engagement, and you're keeping up with steady promotion. Your team members are high-fiving each other at every opportunity. That's great—but there might be more you can do to optimize your campaign.

⁷ Twitter, "#Tweet Smarter"

⁸ Ibid

Depending on the length of your campaign, you'll want to have a qualified review session at either the halfway mark or at two-thirds of the way through.

When you're reviewing, look at which of your organic and branded promotional Tweets and Updates have gone the furthest with your audience—whatever tone you've used in those is the one you'll want to keep using from this point forward. If you're running a sweepstakes, see if the prize is tempting enough to keep momentum going until the end. If it's not, it's worth remembering for the next sweepstakes campaign or you might consider beefing up the package. If you're running a contest, now is when you might want to compile a list of early front-runners for the prize. It'll make judging quicker and easier, and the lucky winner will find out all the faster.

No matter how well your campaign is doing, you'll find somewhere you can improve your marketing and promotion. And no matter what kind of campaign you've run, prepare to promote it as hard as you can in the last push. We often see the most entries come towards the final stretch of a campaign; amping up the promotion can help make the most of this trend and create a sense of urgency.

Tip #8: Analyze

Your campaign is done; what next? Your digital marketing platform should have an analytics page, and that's where you can find valuable data to break down the success of your campaign.

On Hootsuite Campaigns, for example, the analytics page can tell users how many views, shares, and entries a campaign gets on a daily basis. It can also track whether participants are entering on mobile or desktop, what country they're entering from—and even more through an integration with Google Analytics.

Look at your campaign as clinically as you can:

- Did your campaign connect with your target demographic?
- How did your campaign feel to people outside the target demographic?
- Did you get entries from the countries/cities that you were targeting or expecting to reach?
- What days were the most vs. least active and why?

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- Which of your promotional Tweets (promoted or organic) got the most favorites and Retweets?

If you can answer these questions, you can prepare for what's next.

Tip #9: Learn

It's one thing to aggregate the data; it's another to understand it. Get your team together to review the facts. If you have an offline marketing team, make sure they're included. Ask each other the tough questions and acknowledge each others' hard work. Looking back, was there more you could've done, or were your goals too lofty? Do you think you ran the best possible kind of campaign to achieve your goals?

And if you're happy with your results, celebrate together. You don't have to smash through your goals for a campaign to be considered a success; all you have to do is set a precedent.

Tip #10: Get back to the starting line!

You've done it: you've finished your first campaign. You've got beautiful user-generated content, or dozens (maybe even hundreds) of qualified leads.

What do you do next? The same thing, either way. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again. Social media success is as much about consistency as it is about dazzling content. Your fans want to feel as though you care about them all year round—frequent campaigns help them remember that you do. From running your first campaign, you'll have a clearer vision of your fans' desires, goals, and habits, and if you want lightning to strike twice, you'll be able to launch a second, updated iteration in minutes.

Still feel like there's more to know? Reach out to us for a full demo of what Hootsuite Campaigns can do for you.

About Hootsuite Campaigns

Use Hootsuite Campaigns to increase your social reach



Hootsuite Campaigns empowers organizations to engage with and foster their fanbase through the power of social media marketing. Hootsuite Campaigns has helped launch hundreds of campaigns for some of the world's leading brands. Our versatile campaign management interface allows users to create, manage and promote their social marketing initiatives through integration with Facebook, Twitter, Google + and Instagram. To maximize the potential of social media, Hootsuite Campaigns allows its clients to deploy an infinite number of campaigns at a time.

We strive to help our clients maximize their presence on social media through the creation of smart, fun, and beautiful campaigns. Constantly evolving, we continue to help businesses cultivate and celebrate their online communities through campaigns that speak to the needs, wants, and passions of their fans.

Request a custom demo today by visiting hootsuite.com/products/campaigns

Top Brands Trust Hootsuite Campaigns

