



HOW HOOTSUITE **GREW ITS ADVOCATE PROGRAM SEVEN-FOLD IN LESS THAN A YEAR**



1700
Enterprise
Customers

1700
Enterprise
Customers

10M+
Users
Worldwide

10M+
Users
Worldwide

800+
out of the
Fortune 1000

800+
out of the
Fortune 1000

For Hootsuite – the most widely used platform for managing social media – sparking online conversations and building brand love go hand in hand. Peer-to-peer connections have been the cornerstone of Hootsuite’s growth, helping the company attract more than 10 million global customers since its launch in 2008.

"Hootsuite is a community-powered brand," says Dee Anna McPherson, Vice President of Marketing at Hootsuite. "We are fortunate to have a passionate group of customers and fans who we want to nurture and empower."

A professional headshot of Dee Anna McPherson, a woman with long, wavy blonde hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a dark-colored top. The background is a plain, light grey. A solid blue horizontal bar is positioned at the bottom of the image, containing white text that identifies her name and title.

Dee Anna McPherson
Vice President of Marketing at Hootsuite

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Vice President of Marketing at Hootsuite

Mobilize global advocates and boost social engagement

In early 2014, Hootsuite had a small but mighty contingent of 84 loyal brand fans scattered across the globe without a unified platform to connect to one another. *“As passionate as our Ambassadors were, we knew we could do more to facilitate their engagement on social. We wanted a single platform to empower them,”* says Justine Velcich, Global Community Programs Manager at Hootsuite.



The Hootsuite community team surveyed the Ambassadors to ask what they liked and didn't like about the program. The team learned that Ambassadors wanted more opportunities to connect with each other and the Hootsuite team.

Based on this feedback, Hootsuite set a goal to increase the program's social engagement by 30%. This would help Hootsuite retain more Ambassadors, attract other social media experts to the flock and boost customer advocacy.

HOOTSUITE'S CUSTOMER ADVOCACY GOALS

- Boost social engagement by connecting a community of global Ambassadors
- Generate buzz in specific regions through local Hootups
- Ask advocates to create content about Hootsuite
- Improve customer support by asking Ambassadors to answer questions in support forums
- Collect feedback on new product releases and features

"Advocates were eager to support all aspects of the business – from marketing to product development to customer support."

— Dee Anna McPherson
Vice President of Marketing

Hootsuite's secret sauce: Getting internal buy-in to boost advocate engagement

The Community team knew that the program's success hinged on getting internal buy-in. So, they rebranded how their colleagues perceived the Ambassador program internally.



Prior to the re-launch, the Community team independently managed the Ambassador program. Wanting Hootsuite's company culture to be reflected in the rebrand in order to ensure success, they opened the floor to the larger organization to create activities and challenges for Ambassadors. Seeing such a positive response from the Ambassadors created a sense of involvement, and Hootsuite employees became invested in the program.

The result? "Hootsuite now has the best Ambassador program hands down," says Dee Anna.

ADVOCATE RELATIONSHIPS ARE A TWO-WAY STREET

Hootsuite re-launched the Ambassador program in February 2014. A few months later, the team started using Influitive's AdvocateHub to mobilize Ambassadors more efficiently and at a greater scale.

Hootsuite offers Ambassadors a number of perks for joining, such as:

- Free access to Hootsuite University
- A Hootsuite Pro subscription
- A discount towards the Newhouse Advance Social Media Strategy Certificate
- Exclusive Hootsuite swag
- Early access to Hootsuite's latest features
- An official "Hootsuite Ambassador" title that they can share in their LinkedIn profiles and resumes

Education

Become an Expert with Hootsuite University

People who've done this challenge:

🦉 30

Points earned after completion:

🦉 30

Stay up to date in today's rapidly changing media landscape through social media education and industry-recognized certification. Lucky for you, you can access Hootsuite University for free as an Ambassador!

Check out what Hootsuite University has to offer and complete a few courseware and exams!



Hootsuite University, Social Media Certification

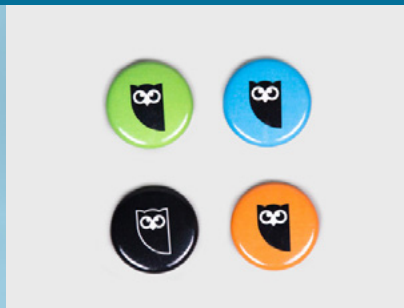
The Hootsuite University program is designed for professionals seeking to increase skills in Hootsuite and other social media tools and tactics. The multi-faceted program is ideally suited for agencies, consultants, and in-house marketing teams looking to learn tools such as

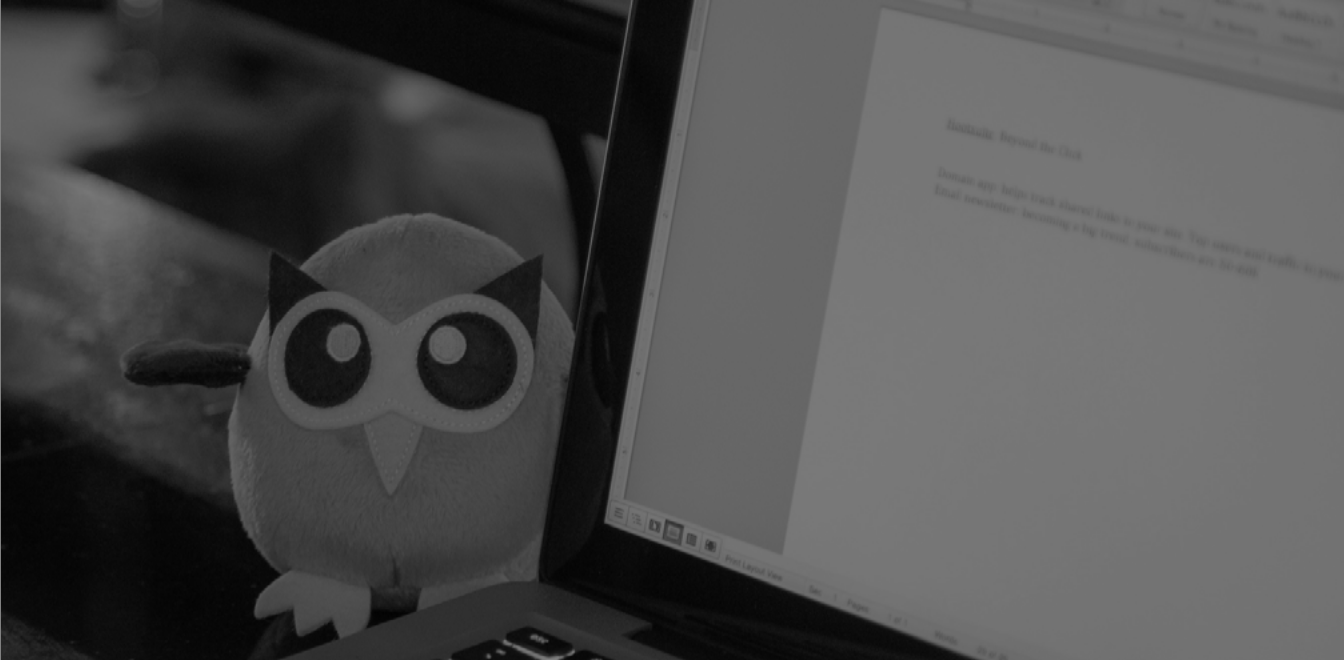
Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.

Dismiss Challenge

Go there

Done





One key to Hootsuite's success is that the company cares about its Ambassadors and their personal growth. It's not just about asking them to promote Hootsuite's product and content.

The Hootsuite team puts Ambassadors first and believes they are part of their global family. For example, the community team will ask Ambassadors to publicly welcome the newest members each week on Twitter. They also encourage Ambassadors to interact, learn from one another and share each other's content. They use the **#HootAmb** hashtag to stay in touch and track these conversations.

"Building a global advocacy program is a marathon, not a sprint," says Dee Anna. "But Influitive has allowed us to mobilize our Ambassadors quickly and at a much greater scale. We have seen a huge increase in the number of advocates that we recruit, the activities they participate in and how they directly impact our business."

UNCOVERING CUSTOMER ADVOCACY: Influitive AdvocateHub app for Hootsuite

The Hootsuite community team was also able to utilize the new Influitive AdvocateHub app for Hootsuite to help drive more referrals, references, reviews and ambassadors. The community team received early access to the integration and provided invaluable feedback on development of the app integration. The ability to have everything in one dashboard made the community team more efficient and allowed them to:

- View a feed of recent events that have occurred in the Hootsuite your Ambassador program AdvocateHub
- Nominate new advocates to the your AdvocateHub program from their profile picture in Hootsuite
- Create a reply-to-tweet challenges in the Hootsuite Ambassador hub your AdvocateHub directly from a tweets in Hootsuite

Learn more about the Influitive AdvocateHub app for Hootsuite in the Hootsuite app directory.



A single piece of advocate-created content gets 16,000 views on SlideShare

One of Hootsuite's top goals was to get advocates to write articles about its features. In 2014, they wanted Ambassadors to publish 100 articles in a variety of languages.

To achieve this goal, Hootsuite shared inside information on their product roadmap, and added challenges in the Hub based on creating content about their product.

"Most of our Ambassadors were excited about the idea because they're always looking for new topics to write about and felt privileged to be the first to share our new releases," says Justine.

At the end of 2014, the number of articles published by Hootsuite Ambassadors tripled, including regular blog posts, podcasts and video tutorials.

The top piece of content in 2014 however, was the Ambassador Yearbook. Ambassadors jumped at the challenge to showcase their efforts by uploading their best memories as a Hootsuite Ambassador to a shared Google presentation.

"In just five days, the presentation deck organically grew to 57 pages filled with kind words about Hootsuite, our Community team and their experience," says Justine.

Hootsuite published the final presentation on SlideShare in December 2014. To date, the Ambassador Yearbook has gathered **more than 16,000 views** and **768 shares**. It also motivated **over 200 people** to express interest in joining the Hootsuite Ambassador program.

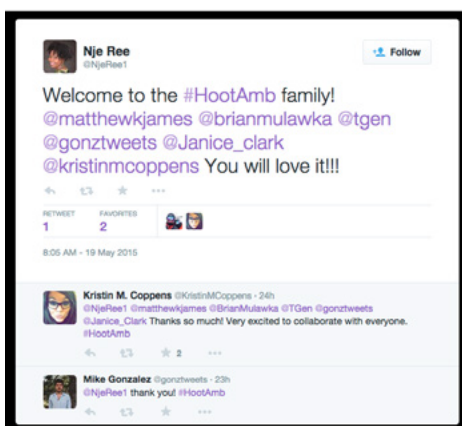
Advocates educate and convert new customers at local events

Using an advocate marketing program has helped Hootsuite target Ambassadors in specific regions. For example, Hootsuite encourages Ambassadors to hold "Hootups" in their local communities. At these events, attendees learn about Hootsuite and share social media best practices.

Hootsuite gives Ambassadors all the training materials and swag they need to host these events, and reimburses them for their out-of-pocket expenses.

Ambassador-led Hootups have attracted many new customers to Hootsuite. Approximately 70% of the people who attend Hootups aren't customers and 13% of them convert to become customers.

In just 10 months, Hootsuite grew its advocate base seven-fold, resulting in 245K clicks



Ambassadors are so passionate and vocal about the program that their networks reach out to learn more about Hootsuite.

By asking Ambassadors to welcome new members on Twitter, Hootsuite decreased its drop-off rate while getting members to connect with each other and build relationships right away.

This also helped Hootsuite's new Ambassadors feel valued and connected to the program.

Through the Ambassador program, Hootsuite also generated the following results:

- 8,000 #HootAmb mentions on Twitter
- 81 million social impressions on Twitter
- 9,000 pieces of content shared
- 3,000 pieces of content – in 15 languages – created by Ambassadors
- 245,000 clicks
- Valuable feedback on new product features and releases

"Hootsuite Ambassadors are highly engaged with each other, and are always ready to share content and contribute to online discussions," says Justine. "They made it easy for us to achieve our goals."

Hootsuite's Ambassadors also jump in to help others solve their support issues. For example, Hootsuite asked its Ambassadors how many questions they could answer in their support forum. Just two months later, Hootsuite increased its "self-solve" rate from 30% to 65%. This eliminated the need for Hootsuite to hire two customer advocates.



"Our Ambassador Hub (powered by Influitive - woot!) helped to evolve the advocate program and is one of the main reasons why our Ambassador program is successful," says Justine. "We increased our number of activities and challenges exponentially, streamlined our processes and tracked our growth – all through the Hub. The Ambassadors also love it because they feel more connected to each other through the Hub's gamified leaderboard and diverse activities."

In the future, Hootsuite plans to bring influencers into the program to drive thought leadership and inspire other Ambassadors to "up level" their personal and professional brands.

"Our customer advocacy program has helped us tie our online interactions to regional expansions," says Dee Anna. "We've taken our fans, and turned them into advocates to build and sustain our community."

WHAT HOOTSUITE AMBASSADORS SAY ABOUT THE PROGRAM

"The Hootsuite Ambassador Community is the best because it provides encouragement, fun and challenges so we can improve ourselves. Hootsuite also offers the best service."

— Chantal Bechervaise, Canada

"The engagement of the Hootsuite community is like no other – only the best of the best!"

— Carolina Sarria, Spain

"I love the Hootsuite Ambassador community and think it's the best. Ambassadors get to participate in fun challenges whilst promoting the brand. There's also loads to learn, as Ambassadors share ideas in the forum. It's a good place to pick up great tips, come up with solutions and just have fun!"

— Rejoice Denhere, United Kingdom

5 keys to growing a global advocacy community: Lessons learned from Hootsuite

1

Building a global advocacy program is a marathon, not a sprint. The longer you're committed, the better your results will be.

2

Deepen relationships with your customers. Always be listening, learning and sharing.

3

Celebrate your advocates. Treat them like they're part of your family.

4

Provide education opportunities. Helping your advocates grow and advance in their careers can increase your engagement.

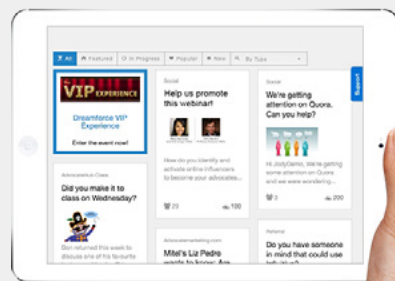
5

Be welcoming. When a new advocate signs up, welcome them to your community and introduce them to other advocates in their local area.

HOW ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS HELPING YOU FUEL YOUR COMPANY'S GROWTH?

The Hootsuite Ambassadors advocate marketing program is powered by Influitive's AdvocateHub, a complete advocate marketing management platform that helps B2B marketers capture customer enthusiasm, and use it to turbocharge marketing and sales efforts.

With AdvocateHub, B2B marketers build advocate communities where customers, fans and evangelists can complete high-impact activities, such as referrals, reference calls, product reviews or social sharing.



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