Easy Social Media Management

with Hootsuite

There are many different types of social media management systems and tools. They help you keep track of your many different social media networks, enable you to monitor social media better, and give you a way to respond faster. Whether you manage updates for your own business or you manage updates for someone else's business, you need a simple way to monitor all the various social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, WordPress, Foursquare and more. Currently, one of the most recommended tools to use is HootSuite.

You already likely know the benefits of using social media for your business. But let's have a bit of a refresher.

Better Branding

Hardly anything is more important than branding your business well. Sometimes it's hard to understand the concept of branding, but essentially a brand is how your customers (and potential customers) see your business. What promise do they feel like you're making to them? Remember, you control those promises by getting to know your audience well enough that you can explain the promise to them in multiple ways.

Your brand might signify value, honesty, superiority, exclusivity, high-quality, or something else. Make sure that you choose wisely and appropriately for the size of your business. For instance, you don't want to be the low cost value brand if you're a super small business. You simply cannot compete with a large business in this area.

Manage Your Online Reputation

Whether you are using social media or not, if you have sold to anyone then you have an online presence already, which means you also have a reputation. Even if currently it's only a reputation with five people, it's an important thing to realize that you need to manage that reputation. You have a lot of control over the perception of your reputation if you know how to properly manage it. Using social media, you can be the beginning and the end of the conversation about you, provided you are able to manage it.

Provide Better Customer Service

Consumers today expect customer service to be a unique and personal experience. The idea of the "customer of one" has arrived. With social media you have a great opportunity to provide exceptional customer care experiences, but only if you can monitor your social media accurately and not miss important comments and questions that require a response from you. It's important to respond to every last consumer who reaches out to you via social media, whether positive or negative.

Generate More Leads

Social media is an excellent lead generation system. Think of your website or blog as the centre of all your online marketing efforts, and social media as the means by which you can distribute all the information that you have. With the right calls to action, and the right fan base, you can be shared multiple times over, thus generating more traffic back to your online assets and more leads.

Effective Research Tool

Social media is an excellent research tool when it comes to really and truly getting to understand your audience. Even if you don't have your own audience yet, you can find and interact with your competition's audience. Read what they have to say, get ideas on content that you can produce, curate and share. Lean how your competition and their audience interact on social media. Find links outside of social media to more online assets that can give you the information you need to expand your knowledge and then pass it on to your own audience.

Branding, customer relationship management, and reputation management are important aspects of doing business today. There is no better way to manage all of these than using social media, in the best possible ways, to accomplish more than you ever thought possible. But, to be successful with social media, and to realize all your goals and objectives, it's imperative that you find a way to manage the social media monster. And, make no mistake, when used incorrectly social media can become a monster. It is a time-sucking monster, a reputation-ruining monster, and a complete waste of time without a plan and a way to manage that plan.

Benefits of Social Media Management

By managing your social media better you'll be able to work smarter, instead of harder, gaining knowledge about your company, your competition and your audience. Just being part of social media isn't enough for your business. You really need to know how to use it properly as well as knowing when and what content to post, whether as new content or as replies to consumer-generated content.

Due to the proliferation of multiple social media networks it's getting harder and harder to properly manage all the outlets that exist. It's not enough to say that you're on social media. In order for it to provide a return on investment of the time and resources used it's important that you truly manage each social media network that you choose to be a part of. If you manage your social media channels correctly you will see a better result from your efforts.

- **You'll Be Able to Get More Done –** Using a social media management software like HootSuite will enable you to get more things done. You can do it yourself or you can hire someone to manage it for you, enabling you to get even more done than before. Time saved from social media is time that you can be spending creating products and services to benefit your audience and doing all the other things that you have to do as a business owner.

- **Keep Tight Control on Your Reputation –** With a system like HootSuite you'll be able to monitor many social media networks at once. You'll therefore save a lot of time and you won't skip anything and miss out on some important ways that you can manage your reputation. You'll never miss the need to respond to a potential customer or an actual customer. You will be able to keep track of all the buzz about you in a simpler more organized manner.

- **Your Customer Service will Improve Dramatically –** By using a system to manage your social media networks you'll catch customer service questions faster and be able to contact the customer or answer, when appropriate, the customer service question directly on the social media channel. Plus, when you can respond so much faster with a software system that helps you, you'll seem like a social media rock star.

- **Get to Know Your Competition Better –** Using social media tools to enhance your understanding of your competition is an important way to use a system like HootSuite. You can find out how many likes they have, what sorts of things they share, how much engagement they receive and more. You can learn how to do better than they do by observing their social media activities.

Being able to do all this on social media is a boon for small businesses everywhere. Face it, using social media can be a huge time suck. If you want to avoid that sucking sound as you sign onto each social media network, then using a system like HootSuite will help. Avoiding the time suck will make a huge difference in giving you the ability to reach your goals and objectives.

Why Use HootSuite?

Using a system like HootSuite you'll be able to view streams of activity from all your social media accounts in one dashboard. You'll also be able to use the software to reply directly when needed. Since it's a cloud based tool you can use it from any computer and any location with an Internet connection.

Being able to schedule updates for future publication, post updates live, and more with HootSuite will save a lot of time and effort. If you can save time, that will give you more time to do other things that will enable you to earn more money.

- **Save Time** – No matter what you do there are still only 24 hours in a day. And you have a lot to do in those 24 hours. You have to take care of your family, your home, participate in your community, and sleep. Work is the means by which you can afford to do all of those things. Because those other things are so important, your work should not be taking up too much of the time in your life. Anytime you can find a way to work smarter and save time, you free up time for other activities.

- **Outsource Easier** – If you have a good organizational system, you can outsource more easily. Many business owners struggle with the idea of outsourcing mainly due to lack of organization. Being able to use software to organize all your marketing and publicity is a great start in enabling you to outsource.

- **Terrific Dashboard** – HootSuite is always upgrading their dashboard to make it easier to use, and to create better reports so that you can better identify various metrics. You'll be able to manage all your social media in one place, connect all your social media profiles, schedule updates, communicate and collaborate with your team, and get all the reports you need. You'll literally be able to use HootSuite for most of your social media needs.

- **Mobile App Available** – We all know that being able to do things on the go is an important component of making your business more flexible. You can get HootSuite for mobile, and it works on iOS and Android systems. It can do most of the features of the PC based dashboard from analytics, to scheduling, handling multiple networks, searching, and more.

- **Offers a Custom Link Shortener** – Working with long URLs for your blog posts, products and services can be made easier with a link shortener. URLs can help encourage clicking on links. Using special links can help keep better metrics, allow you to post more information about each link (due to the space limitations of some

social media outlets), and get more information out to your followers. By using the shortener from HootSuite with Ow.ly you can get a better idea of how your links are working.

- **Keeps Track of Keywords, Topics, Hashtags** – Using HootSuite you can keep track of the keywords, topics, #hashtags and searches. You can even use HootSuite and RSS feeds with Twitter on multiple accounts. This is going to make it a lot easier to conduct research, post information to your accounts and more.

- **Integrates with Google Analytics** – You can boost your social media efforts by having an understanding of what you're doing by looking at the analytics. Since you can integrate Google Analytics with HootSuite via your HootSuite account by opening your HootSuite account and going through the process to add your Google profile.

Using a tool like HootSuite can make it easier for you to get done all that you need to accomplish using social media to make your business better. Creating goals and objectives is only part of what you have to do when trying to manage your social media accounts. You also have to find a way to manage every aspect of your social media in an easy way.

How HootSuite Works

Social media management is an important activity that you must accomplish if you want your social media activities to be effective. HootSuite gives a lot of flexibility to the user. You can do a lot in a short period of time from one dashboard, including:

- Scheduling Posts
- Posting Messages Live
- Monitoring Social Media Accounts
- Analysis and Reporting
- Keeping Your Activities Organized
- Keeping Track of Contacts

Whether you're interested in social media marketing, social customer service, social selling or over all social media management, HootSuite can help you do it. Many companies large and small use HootSuite to manage their social media, and you can too.

- ✓ **Free Version** – Good for an individual with up to 5 social profiles, some limited analytics and reports and scheduling of messages.

- ✓ **Pro Version** – You can get this right now (as of the date of this report) for as little as $8.99 a month when paid in advance. You can use 50 social media profiles for this price, along with enhanced social media reports, message scheduling, team members, app integrations, RSS, security and more. There is also an enterprise version with even more features, but you'll need to call for pricing options.

When you choose the Pro Version you'll be prompted to provide your credit card number and some information, but your card will not be charged until your free trial period is over. You can also use your PayPal account as well.

If you choose the monthly, option the fee will be more than if you pay yearly but it's still a bargain (as of this writing) at $9.99 per month. When you first create an account you'll get a free trial, and then after the trial you'll be able to use the Pro Version. As noted above, there is a Free Version for individuals but it is limited compared to the Pro Version.

Software Walkthrough

Once you first set up your account, as you sign in you'll be promoted to increase the security of your account. This is a good idea because you will be running all your social media accounts (or most of them) through HootSuite. Security is important don't skip this step.

Security Set Up Prompt
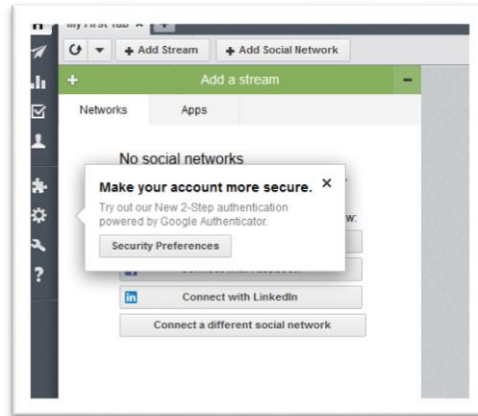
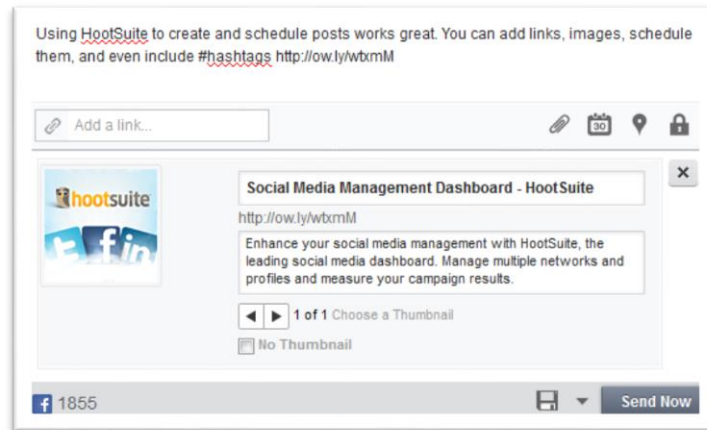After you set up your security take the time to look at how the Dashboard looks.

The Dashboard

At the top of the page you'll see your photograph and then to the side a box labelled "Compose message," as well as several icons and the ability to click to see select messages.

This area allows you to perform a few different activities such as:

- **Compose a Message** – If you click in this area a window comes up where you can type or paste a message.
- **Attach a Picture or File** – When you compose a message you might want to include a picture or other file with it.
- **Schedule the Post** – If you want this post to go out some time after you create it, you can use the calendar to schedule the post.
- **Add in a Location** – Want to localize your post? You can by adding a location to your post.
- **Choose From Various Privacy Options** – Depending on your other settings you can choose various privacy options.
- **Send the Message** – Using the Send now Button you can send the message but first you have to choose the social network.
- **Choose the Social Networks** – The right side of the area is where you choose which social networks you want your message to go to. You should have already signed up and connected with them to be able to choose them.

Using HootSuite to create and schedule posts works great. You can add links, images, schedule them, and even include #hashtags http://ow.ly/wtxmM

Add a link...

hootsuite

Social Media Management Dashboard - HootSuite

http://ow.ly/wtxmM

Enhance your social media management with HootSuite, the leading social media dashboard. Manage multiple networks and profiles and measure your campaign results.

◄ ► 1 of 1 Choose a Thumbnail
☐ No Thumbnail

f 1855

Send Now

Further to the right of the "Click to select a social network" area there are two icons:

Quick Search – You can use this icon to search for Twitter or Facebook content from your HootSuite Dashboard. If you click the magnifying glass you'll bring up a window that looks like this:

Quick Search

Trending on Twitter

#EnEsteMomentoQuisieraQue

#AskSaraB

#GülmekİçIn

#SöyleyinOna

#TheIsland

Feliz Cinco de Mayo

GülenÖrgütünden İşadamlarınaŞantaj

Love & Hip Hop

Hi Sara

Tris Prior Is Back
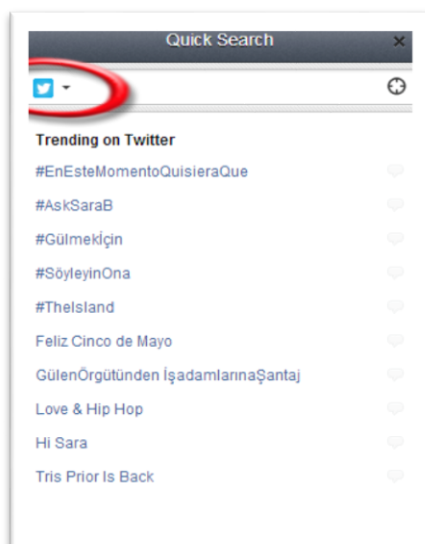
You can click the little down arrow beside the Twitter icon and it will give you choices for searching Twitter, to finding Twitter users, to also searching Facebook.com. Choose the one you want, and type in your keyword to the right of the circled icon.

You can also choose to search only in your location, or to conduct a broader search. This is what a result looks like for the term "content marketing" on Twitter.
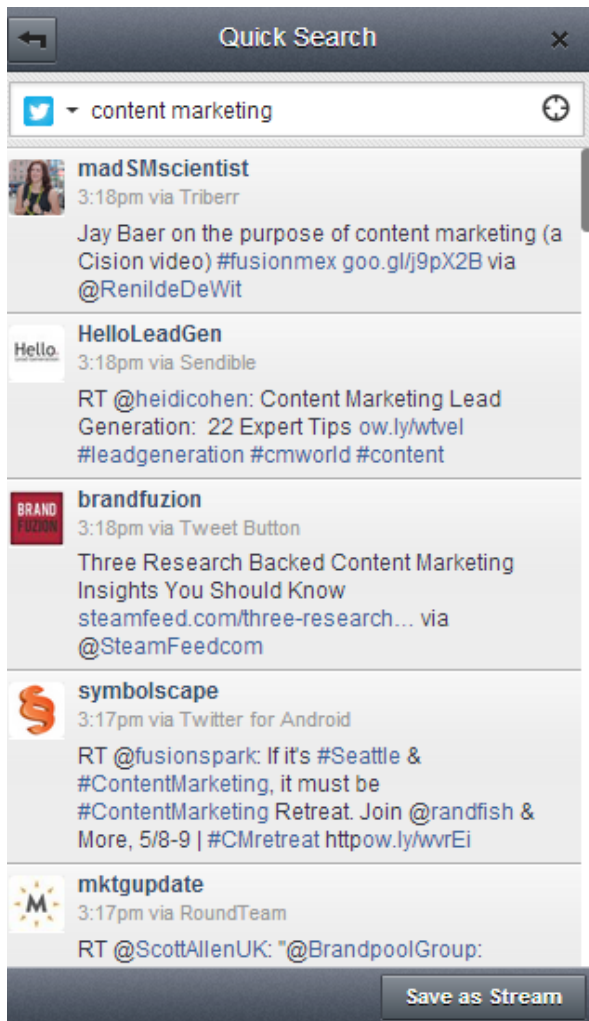
Notice that you can click "Save as Stream" if you want to keep this search going for a longer term.
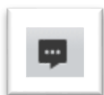
 Conversations – This feature is a way to have conversations with anyone internal or external to your organization. This feature makes collaboration really simple. To get started just click on the icon pictured to the left, and then click "**get started now**" if this is your first time using it. The screen looks like this.
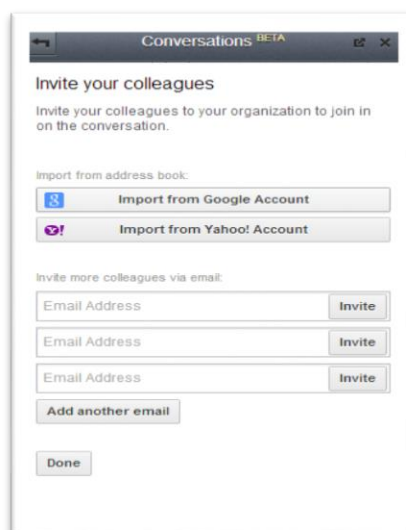
As you can see you can invite colleagues automatically by importing their contact info you're your Google Mail or Yahoo! accounts. But you can also enter their email address in to invite them even if they do not have either of those types of email accounts.
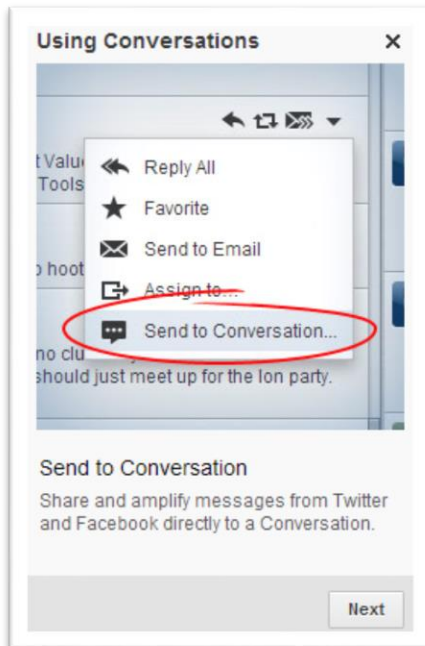
When you invite them they will become a member of your organization. Now when you click on a comment you'll have a choice to "send to conversations" so that you and your team can discuss a particular comment or update from social media.

Using these features will bring added functionality to your HootSuite account because you can use it for research as well as communicating within your team in a new and more productive way.

More Dashboard Information

On the left of the screen you'll see various icons starting with the "Stream" button that looks like a house. These icons have a vertical instead of horizontal orientation.
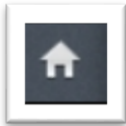
Home / Stream – By clicking on the Home / Stream button you can add streams, create tabs, and organize your streams however you want. For instance, you can organize tabs by topic, network, search terms, campaigns and more. It's up to you.
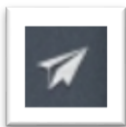
Publisher – Under the publisher tab you can organize and schedule your messages. You can even schedule bulk messages using the bulk upload tool, which allows you to arrange messages according to date, time, network and more. You can even see a schedule of past messages, add an RSS feed or view an RSS feed.
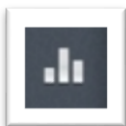
Reports – One of the most important aspects of any social media marketing campaign is being able to analyse the work that you do. If you can view the data, and quantify the results, then you can be an even better marketer. It's hard to know if you've succeeded with your goals if you don't have the data. Thankfully, HootSuite makes it simple.
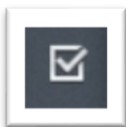
Assignments – To add assignments you must first have an organization. Your organization includes teams, team members and networks that are relevant to a particular project or business. You might have a different team for each business you manage, for instance.
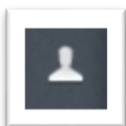
Contacts – From the contacts menu option you can see all your contacts in each network and any lists you have created in HootSuite. You can follow and un-follow, and connect with your Google+ page contacts as well.
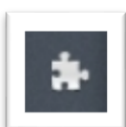
App Directory – You can add apps to increase the functionality of your HootSuite account. There are both free and premium apps to choose from. Some examples of apps are YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, RSS Reader, MailChimp, WordPress and others.
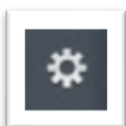
Settings – This is the area you complete your profile, upload a picture, write your bio and fill out your preferences, posting schedules and more. You can also modify or upgrade your plan from the settings area.
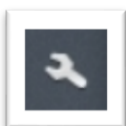
Tools – From here you can view HootSuite University, partner programs, mobile apps, extensions and downloads as well as install an add-on for your browser to help you "hoot out" pages that you visit easily.
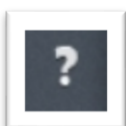
Help – Anytime you need help you can go to the help area of HootSuite by highlighting the Help icon, then clicking what you need. Your choices are: Help Desk, Feedback, Blog, FAQ, Company, About, Terms, and the all-important Privacy Policy.

Any time you are doing anything in HootSuite you can always go back by using the icons to the left. Once your security settings are done, you can move on to setting up the different social media networks you use.

Add Social Media Streams
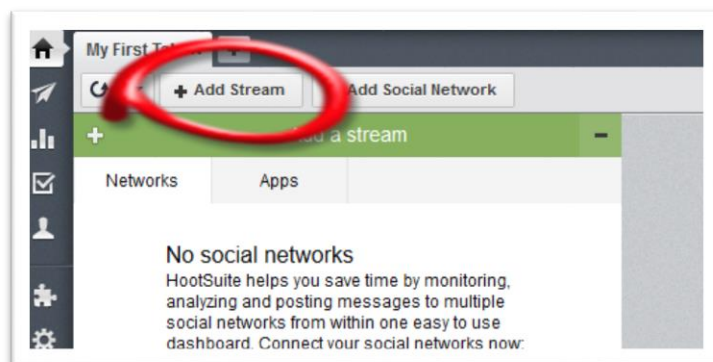
Click "Add Stream" as circled above in order to start adding your different social media streams to HootSuite.

You can choose from Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, WordPress, or mixi (a social network popular in Japan), and other apps. Choose which one you want to add, then click **Add Profile**.
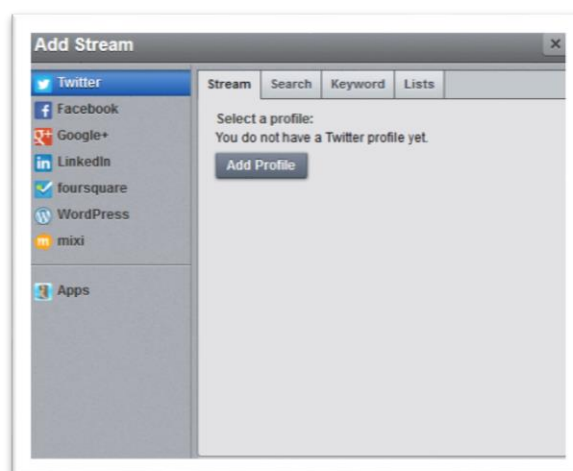

Once you click **Add Profile** you'll follow the prompts, as HootSuite leads you through how to do most things. Just follow along, and if you're not sure what something is you can check out the **Help Section** and the FAQ. Add all the profiles you want to add so that you can keep track of your social media in one place.

Plus, until you add various social media accounts to your profiles you can't open up all the features and functions. After you add your Facebook account, for instance, you might see a screen like this below:
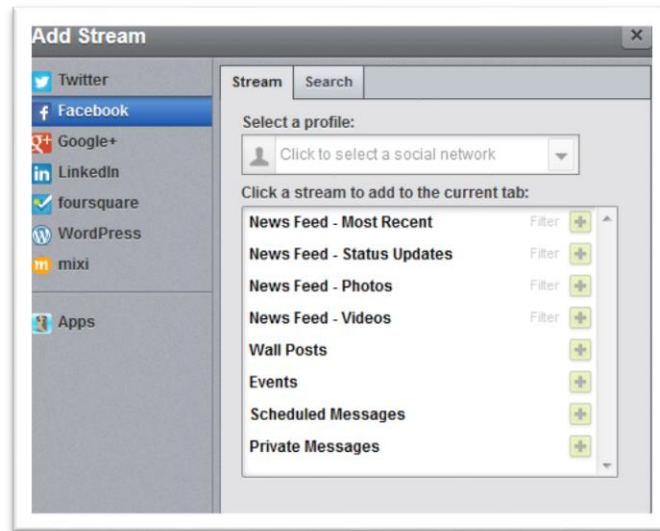
You can now add different streams to your tabs based on the profile you choose. You can also add a search query by clicking on "Search" and choosing a profile then entering a search term. See below:
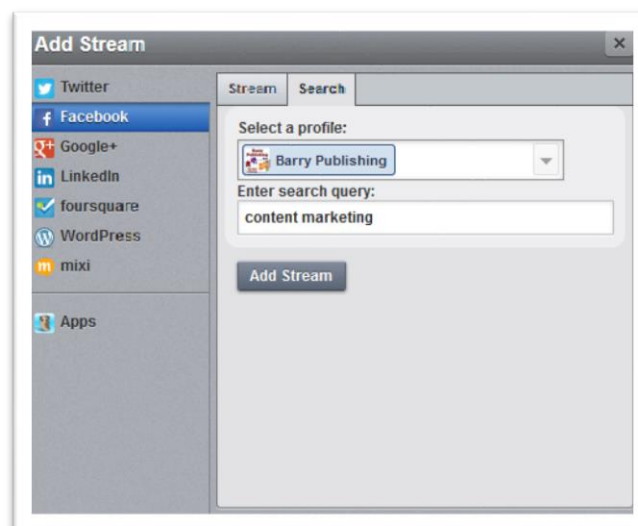
Once the above search query was added you'll find another tab appears like the one below (yours will look different based on your own networks). The result may or may not be relevant, as it's only going on the keyword.

Just as when you do a search with Google, the results sometimes aren't pertinent. But it is a good way to search on your social networks so that you can monitor the buzz about your industry, topic, and learn insights that you can use to better serve your audience.
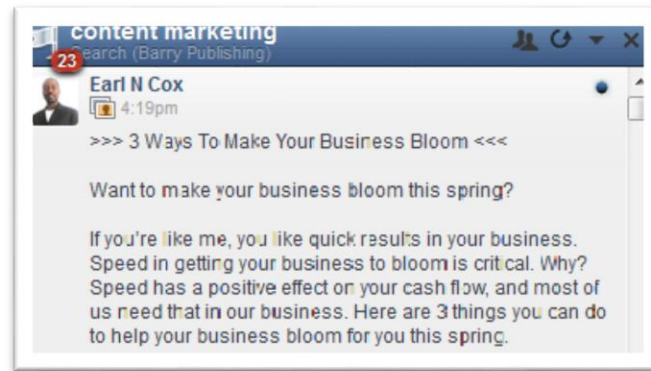
You can have many searches to help you find discussions that might be relevant to your needs. This type of information can help you find ways to market your business better. Researching the competition is an important component in using HootSuite to its maximum capability.

As you go through the list, adding the different social media accounts to tabs, you are essentially creating your dashboard. You can also change the name of tabs easily by simply clicking on them, highlighting and then typing in a new descriptive name.

You can make a different tab for each social network, and then see in one glance the wall posts, search terms, messages and events for each. Here is an example of a set up to monitor a group owned by someone else. You can watch the stream, search the group and see any of your scheduled posts.
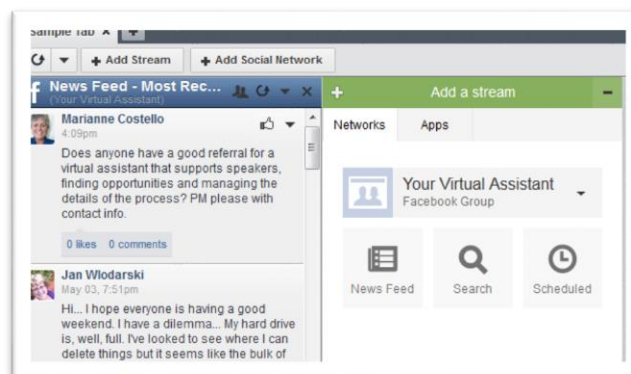

If you want to "like" the post from here you can do so by clicking the little "thumbs up" icon.
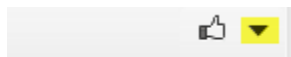
If you click the down arrow that's highlighted above, you will bring up a short menu that allows you to perform other actions, such as; creating a comment stream, sending to email, assigning it to someone on your team to deal with, or sending the conversation to an organization that you have set up. By using the **"Add a stream"** button in green on the right, you can add more networks to this one tab, or a new tab, or add apps like Instagram, YouTube.com and Google Drive.

If you create a comment stream from any page or group that you have followed, joined or liked, then you can easily comment on any of the discussions right from the HootSuite Dashboard.

It will create a new area that looks like this:
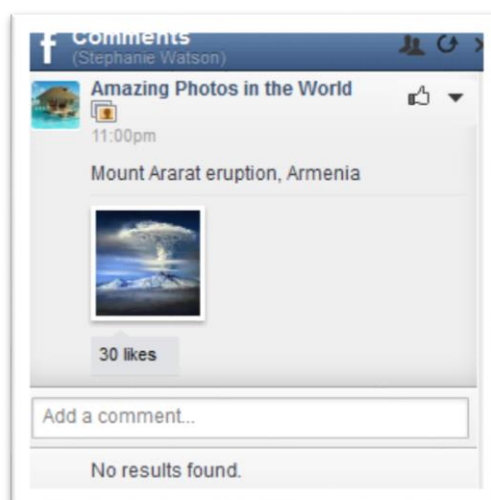
A comment stream opens up the ability to comment on any post right from HootSuite. Instead of having to go sign into the particular account that you want to send a message from, you can just do it right from the HootSuite dashboard.

HootSuite is a very powerful social media management tool. It is likely that you could use it for a solid year and still not realize all the powerful potential that it has. What's important is that you take the time to try it out and experiment with the different functions, to find out how you can best use it for your needs.

Creative Uses of HootSuite

Using HootSuite and all its abilities and features will take a while because there is simply so much to learn. But, here are a few truly creative ways to use HootSuite right now.

- **Send a Message** – Now that doesn't seem that creative does it? Well, the fact is, having the ability to compose a message, add in a link and shrink it, as well as add a hashtag, then schedule the message to go out whenever you want and wherever you want it is very creative. It's simple and oftentimes simple is as creative as you need to be.

- **Cross-Pollinate** – Believe it or not you cannot know whether everyone following you on Twitter is also following you on Facebook, and so forth. So using HootSuite to send the same message to multiple social networks is a great idea. However, consider setting them up separately to go out at different times so they can be slightly different and unique so that those who are following you on multiple platforms don't get bored with your updates.

- **Use RSS Feeds** – Distributing blog content using RSS feeds is a great way to use HootSuite. When set up properly, you can update all your social networks with any new blog posts by simply setting up the RSS feeds to automatically post where you choose and when you choose.

- **Get Organized** – With HootSuite you can get super-organized with all your social media. You can create different tabs in your dashboard, and then have several streams within each dashboard. Create a tab for Twitter, and then within that tab

have several streams in order to keep track of mentions about your business. You can separate your tabs in strategic ways to monitor each social media network at a glance, and then activity within each network at a glance.

- **Get Visual** – Today visual content is more important than ever. Get creative with your visual content by uploading pictures and/or screenshots that you take yourself with each update. HootSuite makes it simple to add pictures to your updates for all your social media accounts.

- **Use Apps** – There are many apps that are perfect for marketing, research and more. Try different apps such as [WP HootSuite Dashboard](#), [TrendSpottr](#), and [ContentGems](#), which will up the ante in your online marketing exponentially. Try a couple free apps first, and then move on to some premium ones as you test out their capacity.

- **Stream Information Live** – By using the right hashtags you can set up a temporary stream to watch information being shared about a topic, subject or event. The information that you gather can be fodder for future blog posts, curated content, and other information that you can use to connect to your audience.

- **Manage Lists** – With HootSuite you can use public and private lists with Twitter to keep track of specific people or businesses that you want to follow. This will ensure that you don't miss anything from them. You can even create a list just for @mentions of your business, industry or a particular topic.

HootSuite.com is so useful that you're sure to come up with many creative ways to use it on your own. How you organize and what you organize is completely up to you with HootSuite.com.

Tips for Success Using HootSuite

Using HootSuite to help you manage your social media is really a no brainer. It's inexpensive, effective, and feature rich. Social media is an important element that you must use for all your online marketing if you want to be successful. But, regardless of which social media you use, or even the tool that you use, there are some tried and true tips for success that you need to consider.

1. **Decide Your Goals & Objectives** – Once you try out the different functions that HootSuite has to offer you can set out to create a few specific objectives and goals. For everything you do in your business it is important for you to have a plan, because without goals and objectives it will be hard to move forward.

2. **Develop Your Strategy & Tactics** – Your strategy consists of what you are going to do to reach your objectives and goals. Your tactics are how you will those objectives and goals, including which tools you'll use. For instance, you may have a strategy to improve engagement through social media. The tactics you use might be to implement more commenting on social media, using HootSuite as the tool to do so.
3. **Create a Plan of Action** – No objective, goal, strategy or tactic can be completed without a solid plan of action. By creating actionable steps to do each day to reach your goal you'll be more likely to reach or exceed your own expectations.

When you think about it, anything that you do requires those three considerations. Understand your goals & objectives, know what strategy and tactics you'll use, and be able to share it with your team while creating a plan to follow through until the project is

successful. HootSuite.com can make the process of social media marketing easier by managing your social media in one place, on one easy-to-use dashboard.

Get Started Now

Using HootSuite for social media management is an excellent choice for you to organize, plan, monitor and execute all your social media goals and objectives. Having everything in one place can save time, effort and money. To take the first steps toward using HootSuite, be sure to learn everything you can about the software, or hire someone who is an expert in setting it up and using it.

This report comes to you from Graham Jones, Internet Psychologist. He helps business understand the behaviour of their online customers and has helped several companies use social media tools such as HootSuite as part of their research. Graham is available to run workshops and seminars, or to speak at your conference. He also provides consultancy services to help your business succeed online through the use of psychological techniques.

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