## Case Study: Purdue University

# How Purdue University used Hootsuite to help raise $28.2M in a single day

Learn how Purdue University used Hootsuite to help make history with the biggest single-day fundraising campaign ever in higher education.

Purdue University is a nearly 150-year-old university based in West Lafayette, Indiana. As a land-grant institution, Purdue has a proud history of making education more accessible to American working families.

Over the past four years, the Purdue community has raised over $67 million through its annual Day of Giving. This has helped the university keep tuition frozen for six consecutive years, reduce room and board fees, award more scholarships and financial aid packages, and fund more semesters abroad.

Purdue Day of Giving is managed by the Purdue Research Foundation's University Development Office, an independent organization that acts for the benefit of Purdue University. Purdue Day of Giving is a testament to the university's history of offering a better, more affordable education. During the event's fourth annual run, Purdue University made it another national record-breaking year. This year's challenge? Beat last year's numbers.



**$28.2 million dollars raised—**
up from $18.3 million in 2016

**275,000+ views**
of a campaign video featured on Facebook

**87 percent**
increase in international donations from 2016

# What they did

Once a year, Purdue Day of Giving invites everyone to come together for 24 hours to help build a stronger Purdue. Each year since the Day of Giving launched in 2014, Purdue's goal has been to surpass the previous year's total in dollars raised while increasing participation by students, parents, and local and international alumni.

That meant finding fresh new ways to interact with its audience. The university used Hootsuite's social listening capabilities to inform their campaign strategy to raise awareness for the event, better interact with supporters, and boost audience engagement before and on the day of the event.

# How they did it

**Targeted events and activities to engage their audiences**
Purdue University refreshed their social media strategy and came up with fun new ways to engage donors and raise awareness. For example, they ran a Snapchat scavenger hunt and posted expanded leaderboard challenges to maintain momentum around the campaign. Both activities encouraged Purdue's Snapchat followers to participate—with the incentive of prizes for them and bonus money for their chosen university participant or student organization—and helped build anticipation before the day of the event.

**Stayed organized with social streams**
Taking advantage of Hootsuite's social listening capabilities, the university set up Hootsuite Insight streams for their hashtags #IGave and #PurdueDayofGiving. These dedicated hashtags and streams allowed Purdue's social media team to monitor all online conversations in one place and target people based on their social media activity. Content from the streams also helped them build their post-event wrap-up campaigns.

> "Hootsuite Insights helped us tap into the valuable conversations that were happening in real-time on Purdue Day of Giving. It helped us engage the right people based on their social media activity and personalize our responses to all of our donors."

*Kate Jolly, Purdue Day of Giving Project Manager, Director of Digital Fundraising, University Development Office*

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## Monitored hashtags

Each time a donor used #IGave and #PurdueDayofGiving in their post, the Purdue team responded accordingly with a personalized thank-you video. By monitoring mentions and facilitating responses, the university boosted engagement and effectively streamlined social media activity during the campaign.

## Ran challenges to increase engagement

Game theory was used to drive competition and donations on the day. Throughout 33 hourly challenges, participants could earn bonus money—which was awarded by the university's development office—for their favorite campus units. During challenges such as "Most Creative Purdue Day of Giving Selfie," users submitted more than 9,000 pieces of user-generated content throughout the campaign.



Having Hootsuite streams meant the team could sort through submissions efficiently and repurpose the user-generated content to generate excitement for the day's activities.

"Partnering with Hootsuite helped us stay organized and saved us hours of time—on a day when every second counts—and we used that time to make this year's individual thank-you videos even more personalized."

*Steve Schlenk, Purdue Day of Giving Social Media, Associate Director of Philanthropic Communications, University Development Office*

### Saved time when it mattered most

With social media posts scheduled in advance through Hootsuite, Purdue could focus on the live event and track audience engagement in real time on a day when every moment counts. Purdue was able to respond to every donor and make the most out of each customized thank-you video.



This year, Purdue University's social team sent out a total of 218 thank-you videos in the form of a short video or an Instagram Boomerang.

## The impact

By finding new ways to reach audiences and doing it in less time, Purdue University beat all of last year's numbers—in dollars, individual donations, international support, and global impressions on their social media content.

This year's Purdue Day of Giving raised $28.2 million—$10 million more than in 2016—and support from international donors increased by 87 percent, thanks to social media and email outreach to alumni living abroad.

Donor engagement was a large part of this year's social media strategy. By better coordinating their social listening efforts—organizing mentions and responses in Hootsuite streams—Purdue University shared 218 personalized thank-you videos and saw a total of 34 million impressions on their social media content.

"This year we had donors from 56 countries, thanks to Facebook targeting and our budding focus on new social media platforms, such as WeChat and WhatsApp, that are popular with international audiences."

*Steve Schlenk, Purdue Day of Giving Social Media, Associate Director of Philanthropic Communications, University Development Office*

"Thanks to our donors, Purdue Day of Giving set the record—for the third consecutive year— for most dollars raised for higher education through a single-day campaign."

*Kate Jolly, Purdue Day of Giving Project Manager, Director of Digital Fundraising, University Development Office*

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