



Case Study: City University London

City University London attracts and engages students with informed content marketing

City University London wanted to improve student services, boost engagement, and share content that showcased the university and the city of London on social media. Discover how they exceeded their goals, despite a lack of resources, by developing a collaborative strategy and integrating Hootsuite.

City University London

Founded in 1894, City University London is a leading international academic institute in the heart of London. The school has five faculties spread across the city of London and hosts approximately 17,500 students in any given term.



**Attracted
over 63,000**

*Facebook and Twitter
fans—with Facebook
seeing a 71% growth
in 2014*



5

*teams across the
organisation use
Hootsuite*



Over 100

*student entries to
#CityPhoto14 social
photo contest*



What They Did

The university wanted to create a greater sense of community for its current students, staff, and alumni. The hope was that by showcasing various campus activities through great content, that fans and followers would want to amplify and connect with that content. This would then reach a greater, more engaged audience and help the university stand out against competition. All of these steps support the main mission of attracting superior talent and students each year.

But with over 20,000 people employed at or attending the university, City University London's social and marketing teams are challenged to monitor, measure, and control all social content and conversations. For a university like City, the weight of the challenge varies season to season. For example, during critical times such as mid-August when places are secured for the following semester, social media becomes significantly more important for answering questions and engaging with new students. The rest of the year, social media plays an important customer service role and helps promote awareness and campaigns for various faculties.

In order for the university's social media officer, Sabrina Francis, to overcome these challenges and support the mission, she integrated Hootsuite across the university and faculties.

How They Did It

Improving student services with secure collaboration

Hootsuite Teams and permissions allow Francis to collaborate more effectively by granting access to five seats to other team members who can listen and share on official channels. With keyword and @mention search streams, they are on the lookout for brand or industry-related conversations. And by collaborating in one dashboard with other teams, Francis allocates any customer service issues that arise to relevant team members. Team collaboration allows for accurate responses in real time. For example, if a student tweets, "Thinking of registering for university, any suggestions?" Francis is listening to university-related conversations and can jump in right away to make a connection.

"Even if we weren't active in the social space, our students are, and the best way to help them and improve their student experience is to know what they're saying. We use Hootsuite to gain insights into what prospective and current students want. Beyond that, keeping up with press coverage and providing great customer service are just a few of the benefits we've seen since actively engaging on social media."

*Sabrina Francis, Social Media Officer,
City University London*



Using social data to inform new, more successful content

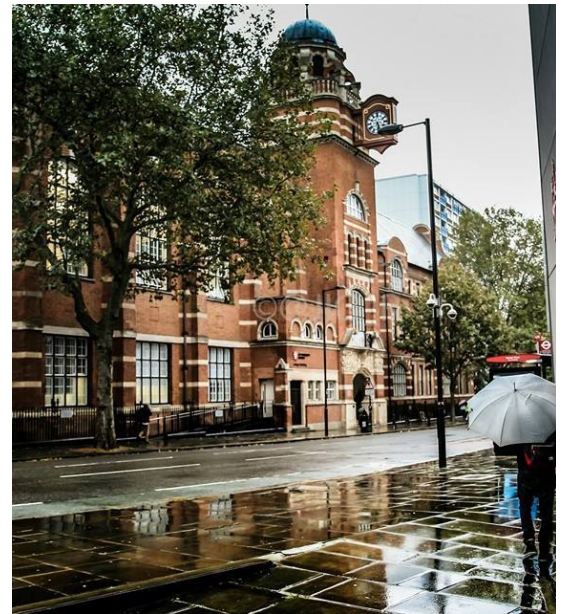
When posting images and video content that showcases the university, the team uses performance monitoring tools in Hootsuite to accurately measure their success. Measuring engagement allows them to track what content works best and the reactions they get from students. For example, once they had a better understanding of what content resonated most with students, they decided to create an interactive, virtual video tour for newcomers to become acquainted. Analytics showed that this was a huge success, and was even shared by prospective students—extending the reach of the content and the university even further.

Boosting student engagement with a friendly competition

In October 2014, City University London decided to boost student engagement by running a photography competition across their social channels. The objective was for students share inspiring and creative images of the campus and facilities that helped promote the culture of the university. The winners would receive gift cards to a local department store and have their photos featured by the university. Using the hashtag #CityPhoto14, the team launched and tracked the competition across social channels with Hootsuite. They had over 100 entries and were able to use them to showcase the university, attract new students, and increase student involvement.

Results

Most importantly, the team's social strategy now supports real-time responses to enquiries from the public or prospective students and allows them to assign difficult questions to relevant team members. Hootsuite security features allow the small social media team to relinquish some control of channels in order to collaborate internally and provide accurate responses much faster. This frees up valuable time and resources, letting Francis focus on developing engaging content that supports their goal of building an online community and attracting students and talent.



Hootsuite allows Francis to better understand and adjust to the types of conversations taking place around the university's target audience. As a result, City University London has developed their own set of social media guidelines that helps protect the brand, but also promote marketing content that works.