



hootsuite™

By Leann Rich, Manager of Education & External Relations, Mahoning Valley Historical Society, Youngstown

HootSuite is a social media management tool. It allows you to manage your Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, and WordPress accounts all in one place. The platform is web-based, so you can access your account anywhere there is a wi-fi connection. You can also download mobile apps.

HootSuite has a basic free option, which lets you manage up to five social media profiles (“networks”). Each Facebook page that you manage is considered a “network,” so if you have multiple pages you will meet the limit on the free account quickly. They also have a Pro Account for \$9.99/month that lets you manage unlimited social profiles and lets you have up to two users running these accounts. This is really useful when, for example, the management of your company Twitter profile is shared by two different people. HootSuite is easy to use and has nice features like post scheduling, search streams, and analytics.

It is really easy to get started, and there are many online tutorials that can walk you through the basics. The program lets you create an account using your Facebook login information; it then walks you through the process of adding your profiles.

Post Scheduling

HootSuite makes scheduling posts easy to do: choose your network, write the update, click on the calendar icon, and pick your date and time to post. A new feature is “AutoSchedule” technology. The tool uses algorithms to determine the best time to post per network and schedules your post to take advantage of that timeframe. Also, AutoSchedule will stagger posts to more than one network at least 15 minutes apart, making sure that you do not spam a post to multiple networks at the same time.

Twitter Streams

If you are following hundreds of accounts on Twitter, it is easy to feel overwhelmed when reading the home feed. HootSuite has a nice feature to set up search streams and Twitter lists. For example, you can put all the museums or historical organizations you follow together. You will never miss an interesting tweet related to your historic house again! You can also create a stream based on a specific hashtag. For example, last October you could have made a search for #OLHA2013 and would have been able to read all the tweets from annual meeting participants in one place.

Analytics

Each week, HootSuite sends an email with a PDF attachment of “click summaries,” which is information about your audience. HootSuite gives you graphs showing the number of clicks per day,

geographical information on the people clicking through, top referrers, and most popular links. This information is free for all users, and it gives you a brief overview of how you are doing on a weekly basis. Unfortunately, the report will only work for you if you always use HootSuite to manage your networks. This is because it tracks the click-throughs using HootSuite’s own URL shortener. If you use other apps, such as the Twitter or Facebook websites or mobile apps, any click throughs from those posts will not be shown.

HootSuite makes it easy to manage multiple accounts, monitor conversations about your organization, respond to visitor inquiries and comments, and send out important updates to your networks. Visit <https://hootsuite.com> to learn more or get started. ■