

GUIDE

# Insurance

9 social media guidelines that drive business success



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Consumers of every age—from Millennials to Baby Boomers—eagerly take to social media networks to share their experiences, both negative and positive, in dealing with your organization, products, and services. They seek out information on social media before making decisions about which insurance carrier or broker to do business with. A recent [Accenture](#) survey found that 48 percent of consumers would consider comments on social media when making insurance-buying decisions.

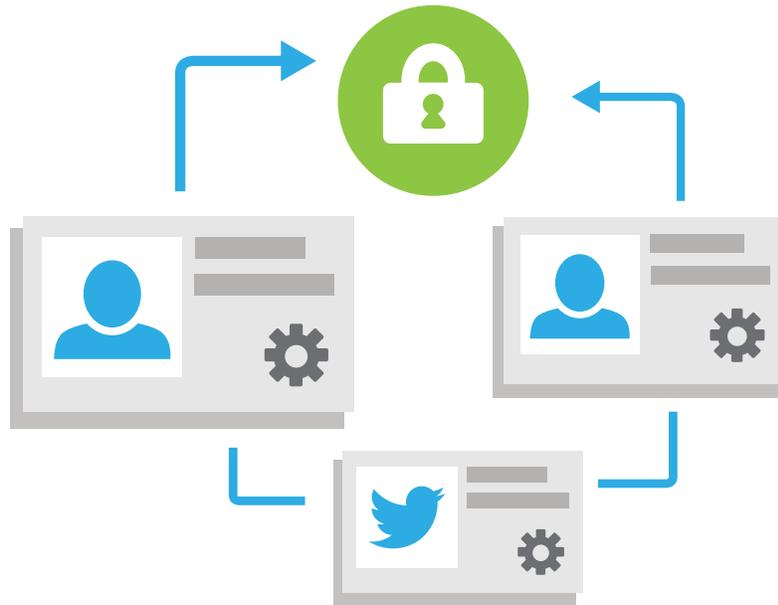
In addition, insurance customers are demanding higher levels of service and convenience. They expect service when and where they want it, using the devices and channels of their choice, which is where social media often comes in. [Edison Research](#) found that 32 percent of respondents who have sought social customer service expect a company to reply within 30 minutes, and that 42 percent expect a response within 60 minutes. [Celent](#) reports that 90 percent of insurers believe their customer service operations can benefit from using social media.

The conclusion is that the insurance industry is ripe for social marketing, social selling, and social customer service. Many insurance companies are already taking action. [Moody's Investment Services](#) recently reported that 86 percent of insurers are increasing their use of social media over the next year. Carriers, brokers, and agents can find unprecedented opportunities on social media to listen to what their customers are saying, provide stellar customer service, gain valuable insight into customer behavior, and promote and protect their brand. Brand awareness and perception, whether

of a local independent agency or of a multinational brand, are important drivers of insurance buying, and social media offers a multitude of brand-building and marketing opportunities for an insurance firm.

There's never been a better time to put social media to work to achieve your business objectives. Any fears or risks you might have had concerning security, regulatory guidelines, or compliance can now be mitigated with the right social relationship platform and workflow processes in place.

Hootsuite developed this guide to help you implement a social media strategy that supports your business goals and delivers measurable ROI, ensures your insurance firm adheres to all compliance requirements, and is backed by a social relationship platform that meets the needs of social media stakeholders across your organization.



### Guideline 1: Take Control of Your Social Media Presence

Many insurance companies may not know the full extent of social media use in their organization. Hootsuite provides audit capabilities and centralized ownership of all social media accounts.

- Inventory all social media accounts associated with your brand, these may include fraudulent or unauthorized. Look for local social media initiatives by brokers or agents, dormant accounts that may have been established for a one-off marketing campaign, and accounts associated with subsidiaries or international offices.
- Centralize ownership of social media profiles. Hootsuite provides centralized account provisioning.
- Protect your social media accounts. Hootsuite enables you to implement secure single sign-on for users and assign permission levels that can be modified centrally.

The average Enterprise has 178 social media profiles



## Guideline 2: Establish a Social Media Strategy to Achieve Business Goals

Bring all departments together, including Marketing, Sales, Customer Service, Human Resources, Compliance, and IT to ensure you have a unified social strategy that meets enterprise needs and supports business goals.

- Identify business objectives first, then determine how social media initiatives can support those objectives.
- Solicit recommendations from all stakeholders in your company, from executives to front-line social media users, then build consensus on the best strategy to adopt.
- Shape your strategy across teams, business units, and regions by tagging keywords and listening to what is being said on social networks about your company, brand, products, services, industry, and competitors. You will be able to uncover opportunities for engaging with consumers and the market.
- Formalize processes and workflows for receiving, sharing, and responding to customer messages over social networks. A message might be directed at customer service, sales, marketing, or other department. Plan ahead to make sure the right people are involved and you respond to the customer in a timely and appropriate manner.



### Guideline 3: Be Proactive About Regulatory Compliance

Insurance companies today are using robust social relationship platforms such as Hootsuite to mitigate risks, ensure compliance, and confidently engage in social marketing, selling, and customer service. Hootsuite offers functionality to review all posts before and after publishing to ensure compliance.

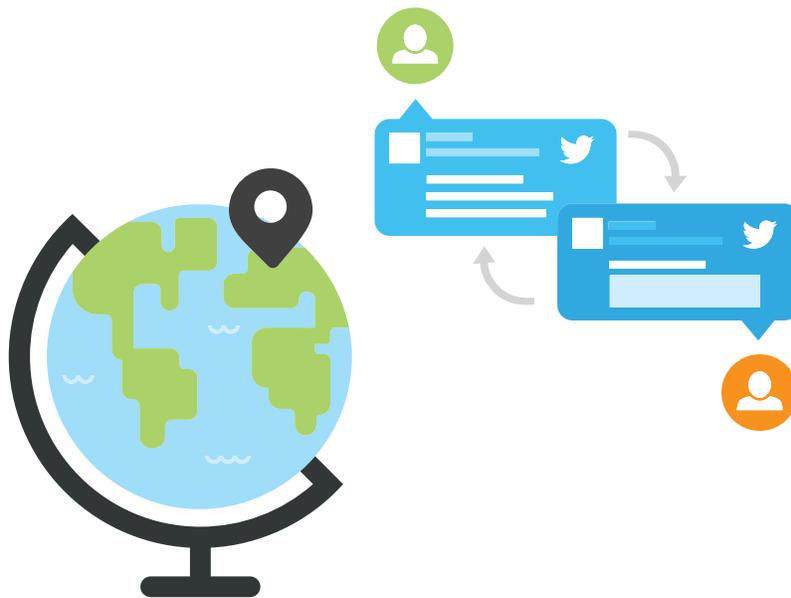
- Become familiar with regulations and recommendations from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, the International Association of Insurance Supervisors, FINRA, the SEC, as well as the regulatory bodies in the individual states and/or countries where you conduct business. Hootsuite keeps up-to-date on insurance industry regulatory guidelines, saving you from having to devote time and resources to do this work.
- Use a social relationship platform such as Hootsuite to create compliant workflows that eliminate burdensome and time-consuming email threads between content producers and compliance officers.
- Categorize and archive all social media content for quick retrieval to meet regulatory guidelines. Archiving can be a complex process given the interactive and real-time nature of social media, but Hootsuite can automatically perform this task.
- Hootsuite can help you develop custom corporate compliance guidelines into your workflow.



#### Guideline 4: Train & Educate the Entire Team

An educated workforce that is well-trained to be social media ambassadors is not just a competitive necessity but a regulatory one as well.

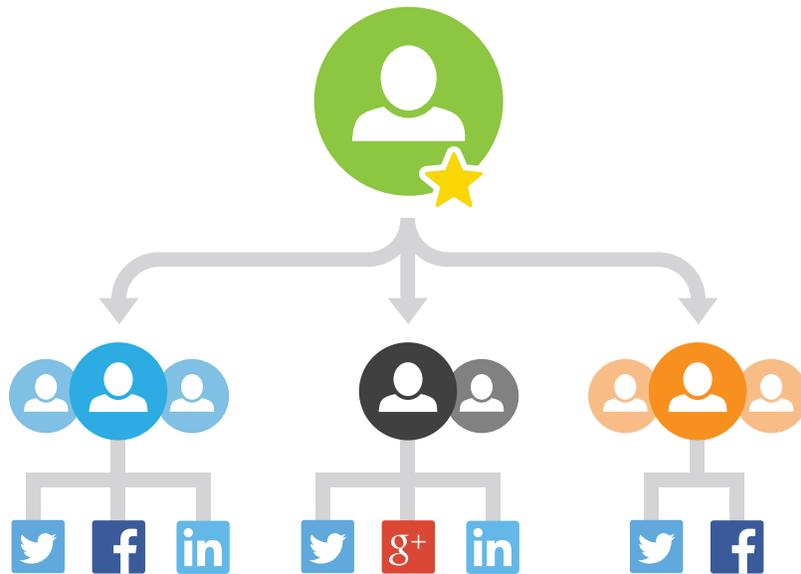
- Create a “playbook” of policies and guidelines for social media usage and compliance.
- Focus training efforts on how to use social media effectively to achieve business goals. Hootsuite offers training and education programs customized for your business needs and social media team.
- Consider an external certification program such as the one offered by the [S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and Hootsuite](#) to provide a formal framework for social media training and strategy.
- Educate executives who can be high-profile leaders of internal social initiatives as well as your best brand ambassadors on external social media.



### Guideline 5: Engage Customers Locally

Whether you are a small regional credit union or a multinational bank with hundreds of locations, most banking is done locally, and you need to connect with customers where they live and work.

- Monitor industry terms or brand mentions based on location using the geolocation functionality offered by Hootsuite. This will reduce incoming noise and allow local social media users to see only local messages.
- Create a virtual perimeter, called a geofence, around a real-world geographic area to target outbound social media messages by country, state, region, or city so followers see content relevant to their location.
- Use demographic targeting to reach specific segments of consumers based on age, gender, relationship status, education level, and other attributes.
- Listen to what your customers are saying on social media. Many of their conversations and posts may be related to insurance needs, such as birthdays, car shopping, house hunting, marriages, and other life events. Using this insight, you can craft intelligent responses.
- Use your social media accounts to communicate information if catastrophic events occur, from safety tips to making claims.



### Guideline 6: Define Workflows to Deliver Better Customer Support

According to [McKinsey & Company](#) social media offers companies the ability to redefine the delivery of service to customers while dramatically lowering costs. It's an opportunity insurance companies should seize. MetLife, for example, has established a goal of responding to [customer complaints on social media](#) within two hours.

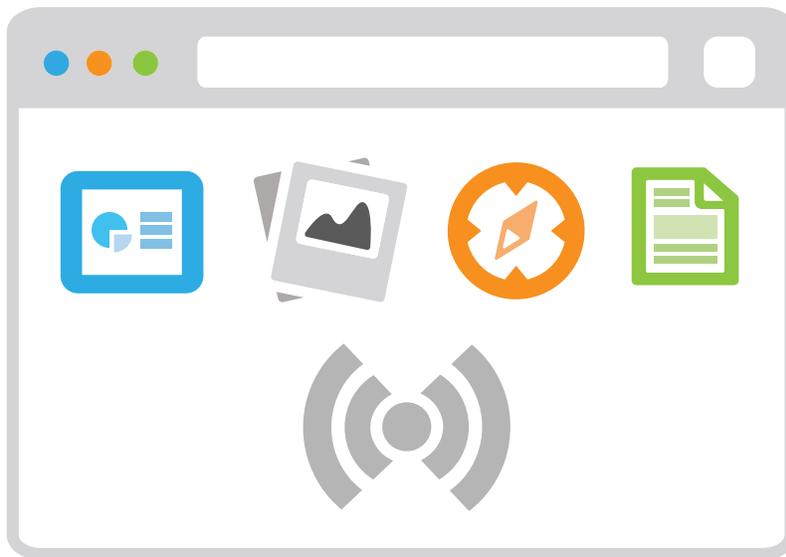
- Use Hootsuite to streamline the workflow of incoming social messages. You can create and document a triage process for categorizing, reviewing, and responding to customer inquiries, comments, and complaints over social media networks.
- Work with Compliance and Public Relations to determine which messages should not be responded to over public channels or responded to at all, or to identify any individuals that should be blocked.
- Protect your customers' privacy by educating your team about when to take conversations off public social media networks and into other channels of communication.
- Respond quickly to customers but avoid stock responses when possible. It's useful to have a library of legally approved content from your marketing department. If possible, respond individually, which carries greater influence and results in stronger customer affinity.
- Consider using internal social collaboration tools to access in-house experts and escalate issues as needed to resolve customer problems..



### Guideline 7: Measure and Analyze to Demonstrate ROI

Social media lends itself to measurement and analytics because it creates data that can lead to intelligent action. Tie your social media strategy to specific business goals and identify the relevant metrics that will support those goals and deliver ROI.

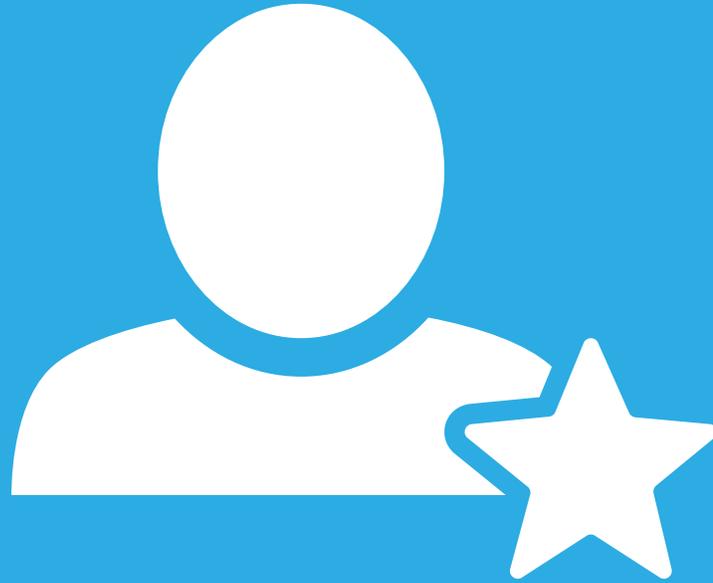
- The Hootsuite social relationship platform integrates with popular analytics packages, such as Google Analytics and Omniture. You can measure not only comments, likes, shares, and followers, but also perform end-to-end tracking of consumer behavior such as click-throughs to your website, campaign conversions, leads, revenue, and other strategic outcomes attributable to social media initiatives.
- Track social media customer care metrics such as response times, time to resolution, and number of case resolutions through a specific social channel.
- Apply the intelligence you gain to optimize programs, hone your message, and invest in social media promotions that deliver the highest return.



### Guideline 8: Develop a Robust Content Strategy

You will likely be using multiple social networks as part of your strategy, including Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and others. You will need to stay active on these networks and develop an effective content strategy to keep your audience engaged.

- Monitor messages and campaigns to discover what resonates with your audience, then spread effective messages across multiple channels.
- Deliver content that highlights your brand attributes and positions insurance agents as experts in customer needs. For example, educate consumers about teen driving, identity theft, fire safety, healthy habits, or other topics related to insurance needs.
- Produce a mix of content for social media publishing. A good rule of thumb is 30 percent original thought leadership/educational content, 50 percent curated content from other sources, and 20 percent promotional content.
- Develop an editorial calendar and publishing schedule. Hootsuite lets you plan social media posts in advance and schedule their automatic publication.



Guideline 9:

# Make the Necessary Commitment to Achieve Success

Savvy insurance companies are committing to the necessary step of using a social relationship platform such as Hootsuite to accelerate and derive measurable business value from their social media efforts. A social relationship platform isn't simply a convenient way to manage social media, it's the foundation of your ability to integrate all stakeholders and to execute an effective and compliant social media strategy in support of business objectives.

Get started today.

# About Hootsuite Enterprise

Partner with Hootsuite to accelerate your social transformation



Hootsuite Enterprise empowers organizations to execute business strategies for the social media era. As the world's most widely used social relationship platform, Hootsuite Enterprise enables global businesses to scale social media activities across multiple teams, departments, and business units. Our versatile platform supports a thriving ecosystem of technology integrations, allowing businesses to extend social media into existing systems and programs.

We help organizations create deeper relationships with customers and draw meaningful insights from social media data. Innovating since day one, we continue to help businesses pioneer the social media landscape and accelerate their success through education and professional services.

Request a custom demo today by visiting [enterprise.hootsuite.com](http://enterprise.hootsuite.com)

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