

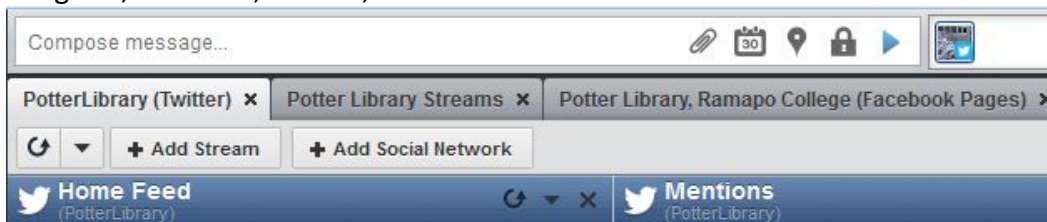
Managing Your Library's Social Media Presence with HootSuite

Find a social media client that works for your library

Social media clients/management software makes it easier to track interactions and streamline posts over multiple social media platforms. While this guide covers the free version of HootSuite, other clients might work better for your library depending on your library's needs. I encourage people to check what's out there. Here is a list of reasons why the Ramapo College library decided to go with HootSuite:

- Platform Coverage: Both Facebook and Twitter were covered (more have been added as new platforms arise)
- Stability: It has been around since 2008 (while many others have come and gone)
- Web-based option: No software download or installation required
- Free plan: Paying monthly fees was not an option for our library's web team

HootSuite is free (premium plans with additional features are also available) social media management software that is available as an iOS app, Android App and a Web App. HootSuite includes the option to link the HootSuite account to Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, foursquare, WordPress and mixi. Through the Apps Directory feature, additional social media platforms can be added, including YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, and Flickr.

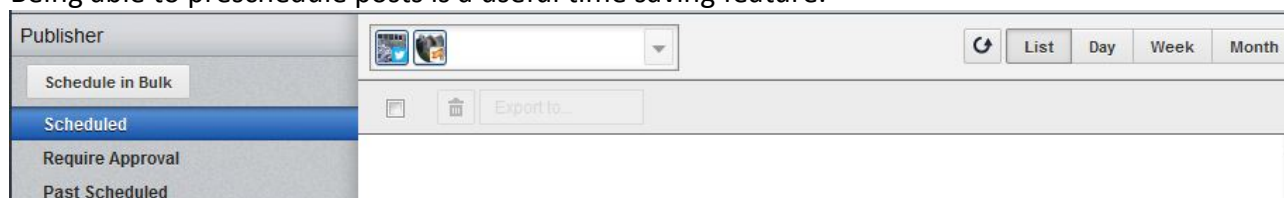


Highlighted Features (Free Version)

- Scheduling
- URL shortener
- Image uploader/hosting
- Streams for saving targeted searches and highlighting account specific features such as Direct Messages, Mentions, Retweets, etc.

Scheduling

Being able to preschedule posts is a useful time saving feature.



The Publisher feature of HootSuite compiles all posts that are scheduled ahead of time. They can continue to be edited and organized up until the time they are scheduled to be shared.

URL Shortener

The URL shortener is particularly useful if your library uses Twitter where every character counts. HootSuite has its own built-in URL shortener called Ow.ly. Hootsuite will also track clicks on your library's Ow.ly links.

Image uploader/hosting

If you post images to your social media accounts, Hootsuite can be used both to upload and host those files. An Ow.ly link to the image can be automatically generated for use in either a post or a Tweet.

Streams

One of the most useful aspects of using a social media management tool is being able to set up targeted searches or alerts for mentions. Hootsuite allows you to create queries for keywords (including hashtag searches) and by geolocation.

Having a Twitter streams set up for the term "library" and your library's geolocation, for example, can keep you informed about what people saying about your library even if they aren't a follower of your library's account or mentioning your library's Twitter handle.

A keyword stream searching for mentions of "library" in our geocode pulls up a tweet asking about library hours:



The college's mascot account tweets about an event at the library:



Shortcomings (Free Version)

One of the main shortcomings of the free plan for HootSuite is the lack of built-in analytics. Reports are available with some variety in the next level up (currently \$9.99 a month), but there are other free options out there, depending on which platforms you use.

Digital Trends has an article on free **Twitter** analytics services:
<http://www.digitaltrends.com/social-media/top-five-twitter-analytics/>
Facebook has their Facebook Insights tool:
<http://www.facebook.com/help/search/?q=insights>