

U-Haul



COMPANY

U-Haul is the leading do-it-yourself moving equipment and storage rental company in North America, with a network of more than 23,000 locations across all 50 US states and 10 Canadian provinces.

LOCATION

North America

INDUSTRY

Moving and Storage

PRODUCTS USED

Hootsuite Enterprise

Brandwatch

TINT



U-Haul moves to Hootsuite and Brandwatch for social marketing and customer care

The company lifts brand sentiment and loyalty with smart, responsive marketing, engagement, and customer care



U-Haul has been serving do-it-yourself movers since 1945 and is the leader in its category with approximately 176,000 trucks, 126,000 trailers, 46,000 towing devices, and 825,000 rentable storage units available throughout North America today.

Like Google and Xerox, U-Haul has become a household name and the brand is famous for its do-it-yourself storage and moving business. While this is excellent for the brand, it can make life challenging for its marketing and customer care teams, who need to sift through thousands of social media mentions per day to decipher which posts genuinely need action.

The company's social media platform wasn't meeting the needs of the marketing and customer care teams, so they began evaluating platforms with more powerful social listening capabilities that could handle the volume of content U-Haul manages.

The teams deployed Hootsuite in 2017 and Brandwatch in 2018—and have seen significant improvements across the board.

<10 min first response time

<30 min overall response time

647,000 brand mentions per year

How they did it

With Hootsuite, U-Haul has created efficiencies in many of its marketing and customer care processes. It has streamlined workflows, reduced first response time, and built brand loyalty through a range of proactive marketing strategies.

Streamlining marketing workflows

The marketing team at U-Haul is responsible for all social media content for U-Haul and its subsidiaries Collegeboxes® and Moving Help®. At any given time, the team runs

over 20 campaigns and supports social media content for every department, including human resources, marketing, public relations, and more.

Despite the heavy workload, the team balances everything seamlessly through Hootsuite and Brandwatch.

“The quality of the work increases across the board when you have tools that allow you to do things right,” says Elnora Cunningham, director of social media marketing at U-Haul.

Using features like a customized link shortener, @mentions, and image editing built into the Hootsuite platform, the team has been able to move from a complex multi-level approval system to one that requires just a single level of approval.

Hootsuite helps the team maintain a high standard of social marketing and customer service. Thanks to Hootsuite’s user-friendly interface, other team members can help out without needing extensive training.



Hootsuite has almost stepped in as an additional employee on our team.”

Elnora Cunningham

Director of Social Media Marketing, U-Haul

Reducing first response time to under ten minutes

Daniel, a customer care manager at U-Haul, leads a team of 11 customer care agents who use Hootsuite to deliver customer service via social media. At the start of each shift, agents sign in to Hootsuite to review inbound mentions across social channels and reply to direct messages and comments on social posts.

U-Haul agents pick up each post in Hootsuite Inbox, tag it with the company's prepopulated tags, and respond as required. If the customer replies, the agent can pick it up

again and repeat the process until the issue is resolved.

Daniel uses Hootsuite's reporting features to track individual and team performance, monitoring metrics including customer care volume, first response time, and overall response time.

Focusing on high-influence engagement to lift brand sentiment

The U-Haul proactive marketing team monitors audience sentiment through Brandwatch and uses tactics to improve sentiment if there is ever a dip.

"If our systems are offline for a period of time and we get complaints on social media, we note a negative sentiment score in Brandwatch," explains Elnora. "The following day, our team can tactically have some fun on social media to create positive sentiment and balance things out."

The team also uses Brandwatch to prioritize important mentions. Brandwatch ranks mentions based on an individual's influencer level, helping the team focus on responding to high influencers and build strategies to address medium and low influencers.



Since using Inbox, we've reduced our average first response time to under 10 minutes. This is partly due to how it auto-refreshes so we can see everything in real time. We get customers complimenting our service and prompt response on social media all the time."

Daniel

Customer Service Social Media Manager, U-Haul

Sourcing user-generated content for campaigns

The proactive marketing team runs campaigns to engage with people across social media. In some cases, the team is tagged in mentions by the customer care team via Hootsuite; in others, the team seeks out opportunities for engagement via social listening in Brandwatch.

“If we hear someone talking about U-Haul or moving on social media, we’ll often reach out to them with links to moving supplies or packing tips,” says Erica Merza, senior specialist at U-Haul.

One successful campaign uses the hashtag #UHaulFamous to encourage customers to share their moving stories and images. Participants have the opportunity to have their photos displayed on moving trucks in their city.

This campaign generates valuable user-generated content that the team can use in other campaigns. Using TINT, Hootsuite’s user-generated content partner, U-Haul can find and moderate content and gain legal approval to use the images across multiple channels, such as the U-Haul website and social channels.

“When you have the level of engagement that we have at U-Haul, you need to be able to prioritize where you spend your time. Over the last couple of years, our relationship with Hootsuite has allowed us to create solid social listening strategies that have helped us do just that.”

Elnora Cunningham

Director of Social Media Marketing, U-Haul



Engaging with niche audiences to boost brand loyalty

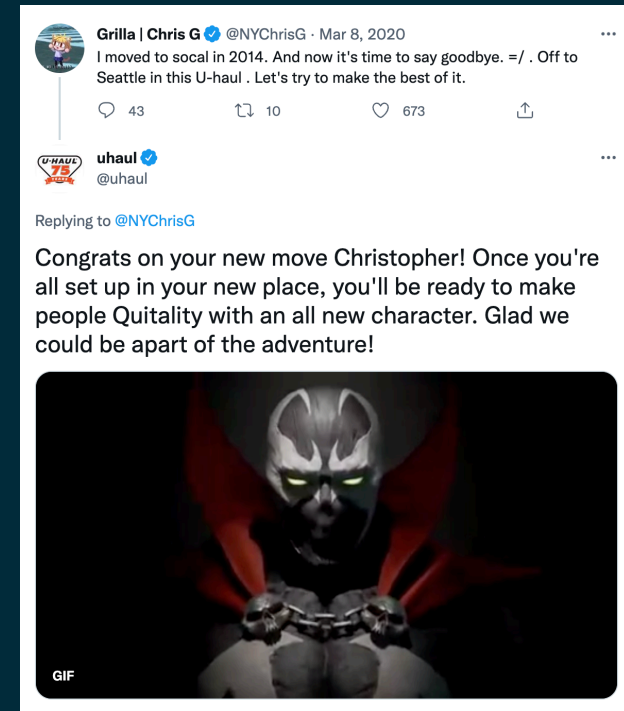
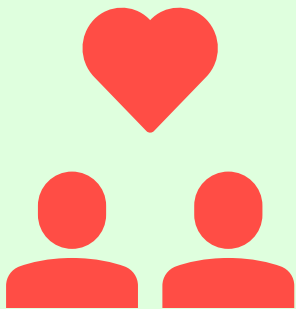
The proactive marketing team uses Brandwatch to spot specific niche audiences that they can hone in on to drive engagement and build brand loyalty. And after identifying a new potential audience, the team is often able to find authentic ways to connect by leveraging one of the company's greatest strengths—a diverse workforce with a wide range of backgrounds and interests.

For example, a team member who is also a video game fan experimented by engaging with gamers online.

People loved the in-jokes and the posts went viral, generating impressive engagement and garnering press coverage in gaming magazine *Don't Feed the Gamers*.

“We identified that this type of engagement can perform better on Twitter, as it's more authentic and less sales-focused,” says Erica.

Because of this insight, the team decided to cut back on scheduled posts and invest more time in proactive engagement to build brand loyalty among niche audiences.



The results

The company's success on social media speaks for itself. The team handles massive volumes of content from campaigns and engages with thousands of customers each day.

"I'm extremely pleased with the platform," says Elnora. "It met the needs of both our marketing and customer care teams and it's very easy to use. We're excited about new features like the pause button that we can use in crisis management scenarios—not to mention the additional queue management

functionality that's being implemented following the Sparkcentral acquisition."

In the future, U-Haul plans to continue to build on its reporting capabilities and explore new use cases with other teams—helping the team sell the value of social media internally and deliver more valuable local insights to teams across North America.



The quality of the work increases across the board when you have tools that allow you to do things right."

Elnora Cunningham

Director of Social Media Marketing, U-Haul

The global leader in social media management

With over 200,000 paid account and millions of users, Hootsuite powers social media for brands and organizations around the world, from the smallest businesses to the largest enterprises.

Hootsuite's unparalleled expertise in social media management, social customer care, and social selling empowers organizations to strategically grow their brand, businesses, and customer relationships with social.

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- ✓ Social customer care
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