

Georgia State University

LOCATION

Atlanta, Georgia

PRODUCTS USED

Hootsuite Enterprise

Hootsuite Amplify

INDUSTRY

Higher Education



ORGANIZATION

With seven campuses in metro Atlanta and more than 51,000 students, Georgia State University was ranked the #2 most innovative university in the United States in the 2019 Best Colleges edition of *US News & World Report* magazine.

How Georgia State University built a global community of brand advocates

Discover how one of America's most innovative universities united their brand storytelling with #TheStateWay.



Georgia State University, which ranks as one of the most innovative institutions in the US, has invested in designing and implementing a social media strategy that would scale across their institution.

For the last two years, Georgia State's #TheStateWay campaign has been a vibrant channel for sharing news, insights, and stories—communicating to audiences a unique spirit that is changing the higher education landscape.

2.4M social media impressions

#2 ranking on list of most innovative universities

90% social media adoption rate among university executives



When we wrote the campaign, our team wanted to approach our work with the same commitment to innovation as the academic side of the university. Moving from four to two in the innovation ranking became something we all could be proud of because we were using our skills to best support the goals of the university.”

Terry Coniglio

Director, Content Strategy, Georgia State University

How they did it

Empowering teams with centralized content and processes

Georgia State University uses social media to expand its reach beyond its staff, faculty, and 51,000+ students. On social platforms including Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, the university focuses on forging relationships with technical visionaries, learners, researchers, and thought leaders around the world.

Achieving success on multiple platforms at this scale is both a challenge and opportunity. As a critical first step, the university's director of content strategy Terry Coniglio and her team sought to align creative thinking with structured processes and dedicated resources. Within the university's public relations and marketing communications division, there are two full-time staff devoted to social media, plus photographers, videographers, writers, designers, analysts, and a web editor who all contribute content for social media.

With social media operations falling under three main categories—communications, marketing, and customer service—the team turned to Hootsuite Enterprise and Hootsuite Amplify to centralize messaging and communications on a single platform. Now, stakeholders from each group can contribute their perspectives in a unified way to tell the university's story and strengthen its reputation as one of the most innovative institutions in the world.



Prior to this program our leadership team was hesitant to use their personal social media. The app has been critical to getting them comfortable with the idea of posting and engaging on social media.”

Terry Coniglio

Director, Content Strategy, Georgia State University

Uniting diverse conversations within a single campaign

In 2017, the division launched #TheStateWay, a brand awareness campaign that reflects the University's culture of experimentation and commitment to closing the achievement gap among all students.

"It plays off our university identity and defines how we set ourselves apart with innovations in our approach to student success, the classroom, our connection to Atlanta and in our research," says Coniglio. "#TheStateWay is more than a tag

line—instead it has become the way that our community encompasses the personality and difference at Georgia State. The State Way has become part of the lexicon here."

The campaign aims to embody the unique spirit of Georgia State and show how the university is changing the face of higher education and the student experience, as well as the city of Atlanta. It covers a range of topics that mirrors— but is not limited to—those covered in the university's online news hub, including diversity, entrepreneurship, and global citizenship.





The four pillars of the campaign are Atlanta, research, classroom technology, and student success.

Making it easy for brand ambassadors and influencers to spread the word

#TheStateWay is just one component of Georgia State's social storytelling strategy. The university also taps into the power of brand advocacy, using Hootsuite Amplify to make it easy for employees, students, and influencers to share on-brand content from their mobile devices.

"The busier the person is, the more they love it," says Coniglio. "People at the director-plus level love it because they don't need to sift through content on traditional social networks to find Georgia State stories.

Strategic use of our campus influencers has brought more visibility to the university's story."

Amplify enables students and staff who weren't previously posting on social media to become more active. Each person receives training before accessing the app, and then receives content tailored to them that they can share. For example, faculty influencers don't receive the same content as students. Once they have access to the app, advocates can select topics of interest to follow, such as politics, science, or the arts.

"Our team adds content to the app that is relevant and written for each audience so the wording looks natural when they share to their personal accounts," says Coniglio.

The results

The Georgia State University team measures campaign success based on university rankings and third-party endorsements. So far, the #TheStateWay campaign has been a resounding success with improved year-over-year rankings, plus more than 6,500 social shares and millions of impressions across social networks.

With an innovative social media strategy and an active and growing community of brand advocates on social, Georgia State University is well positioned to inspire the leaders of tomorrow with the spirit of innovation.



Social media is one of the most effective tools we use to promote the Robinson College of Business. It helps me to reach a wide variety of stakeholders, including current and prospective students, alumni, and corporate partners, as well as deans at other business schools. It's a valuable and efficient way for me to engage constituents, align with our brand promise, and at the same time optimize my investment of time."

Richard D. Phillips

Dean and C.V. Starr Professor of Risk Management and Insurance, J. Mack Robinson College of Business & Georgia State University

The global leader in social media management

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

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