



Case Study: Using Social Media to Drive Customer Confidence, Connection, and Conversion | HCTC

Problem:

HCTC engaged Taylor Marketing Works in 2017 to develop and execute a multi-faceted B2B and B2C rebranding effort. The initial campaign focused on traditional and digital marketing, advertising, and PR. Social media oversight remained in-house. Our strategic campaign efforts met and exceeded HCTC's objectives, which was no small task in a highly regulated industry. With this success, HCTC realized the importance of integrating social media to help drive customer relationships outside of the traditional sales process. HCTC also understood the data insights, lead generation, and customer conversions that a well-executed social media campaign could offer; however, with little bandwidth to handle such a targeted effort — and building on the growing foundation of our strong partnership — they turned to us in May 2019 for social media support.

Action:

We mapped out a solid tactical social media strategy to offer real help and support to HCTC's customers through focused, value-added content. We targeted several clear objectives: 1) provide thought leadership content around relevant tips and trends, 2) educate and inform customers of products and services that would best fit their needs, 3) highlight HCTC's corporate culture, humanize their brand, and showcase community involvement, and 4) feature customer testimonials, and monitor and reply to customer service issues in real time.

We designed visual templates reflecting HCTC's brand persona and messaging. We developed a months-long content calendar, approved by HCTC, to support the social media objectives. We also created a well-received Employee Spotlight series to introduce HCTC's customers to hard-working staffers they may not normally meet.

We published consistent twice-weekly posts on HCTC's existing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Google My Business channels, bolstered their existing YouTube channel with newly produced B2B and B2C videos (which we recirculated across their social media), and launched HCTC's LinkedIn account. We told HCTC's story while also creating a sense of exclusivity, personalization, targeted calls to action, and connection. Telecom customers are most apt to switch providers based on emotion (e.g., frustrated with customer service, breaks in service, pricing, etc.), so we optimized our social media efforts to build customer trust and rapport. This better positioned HCTC to handle issues in real time when service issues temporarily arose across HCTC's network.

HCTC witnessed the return on their social media investment in late June when they experienced an unprecedented upstream disruption that limited telephone and Internet services for a portion of their service areas. We were able to leverage HCTC's social media platforms to communicate with customers via real-time updates, quell concerns, and assure them of HCTC's around-the-clock attention to restoring service. HCTC's customers provided valuable feedback and support that we were able to relay back to HCTC's corporate team. Perhaps related, just one day later, we reached the milestone of surpassing 2,000 Facebook page followers.

Result:

We believe the impressive social media results we've generated in less than four months are a result of the combination of a focused strategy, consistent posting, and customer loyalty that's indicative of the Hill Country community spirit.

Each social media channel has an across-the-board standard of what constitutes an average engagement rate (follower actions like “likes”, “shares”, and comments divided by total followers) for a brand. ***Our campaign has yielded higher than average engagement rates for Facebook and LinkedIn, and early increases in Instagram and Twitter engagement rates indicate continued efforts will yield similar results over time.***

HCTC’s customers are listening and joining in our social media conversations. We will continue working with HCTC to leverage and deepen these social connections, and mining them for future targeted relationship marketing opportunities. Below are highlights of customer/potential customer social media engagements:

- **Facebook:** One month after transitioning social media management to our team, HCTC’s Facebook page surpassed 2,000 organic followers (an 8% increase over prior efforts); increased engagement rate to 4.8% (avg FB engage rate = 3.91%)
- **LinkedIn:** While HCTC’s LinkedIn profile previously existed, no posts had been placed on that platform. We began posting to HCTC’s LinkedIn profile on 5/22/19, generating almost 150 followers in less than 4 months. We established a solid follower engagement rate of 2.7% (average LI engage rate = .054%).
- **Instagram:** Increased engagement rate to 3.6% (avg IG engage rate = 4.7%). Continued efforts should yield greater engagement, as we see the engagement rate trending in the right direction.
- **Twitter:** Grew impressions (number of times a tweet is seen) by 20% and engagement rate by 5%; saw substantial increase in follower actions (likes, shares, re-tweets)
- **Google My Business (GMB):** In the past quarter, customers conducted 14K+ total searches for HCTC, resulting in more than 1,500 website visits, and nearly 1,400 phone calls. (Owned by Google, the largest search engine, GMB is not a social media channel to be overlooked. Businesses that build an active GMB profile rank higher in search results.)