

Andrew: Hi, there everybody. This is Andrew Anderson and I have Dave O. from HootSuite on the line. Dave, how are you doing?

Dave: Great, man. I think this is my fourth time on the show. Do I get some special jacket or something now?

Andrew: You do, it's in the mail and there are several other goodies. So, you should receive them any day now.

Dave: Wonderful man, well it's great to be back to chronicle the continued adventures of HootSuite with you.

Andrew: Yes. A couple of topics today that I'd like to go over if you don't mind with your permission, your international growth which is like it's going through the roof; the app directory stuff that you've got going on and what's with the Hoot ups?

Dave: Yes.

Andrew: So, we can start anywhere you want to, how is that?

Dave: Well, they all kind of have a common thread about an international component. It's the way that we've used social to build out HootSuite around the world. Over the years as we've talked together Andy, that I think the first time that we did one of these half million users or something like that, of course it was mostly in North America. Over the last few years we've really made great strides in bringing HootSuite to users all around the world.

It's something I'm personally really passionate about. When I first got on the internet and I was looking on the island of Guam and I didn't know how to connect with other people, there was no way, I was still using postcards.

Then one day I saw the internet and it changed everything for me, I realized that it makes the world so awesomely small because you can connect with all these people so rapidly. So, I've always kept an eye to the international markets and with that we've done a few things.

One is we continued to translate HootSuite into different languages and two days ago, we released Russian which is our 13th language other than English that we've fully

localized the web and mobile dashboards forces — very exciting for us to open up a whole new market.

In the last few months we've done Korean, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, German, Dutch, Italian, French we've gotten out there. Indonesian is done, so one by one we've kind of cracked the code for these countries but we take a real grass roots approach to it.

Andrew: Interesting. Is Japan still going crazy?

Dave: Japan is still trekking along for us but it's been a little bit of a different puzzle. Some countries will get a lot of free users but not a lot of pro users and other countries the overall numbers won't be huge but the percentage of pro users is much more significant.

So, because we really have a few different products with the free, the pro and the enterprise, in every country it's a little bit of a different mix. The Germans are different than the French, and different than the Japanese and so on.

So, we go to the countries and we take the approach that we wanted, approach the market on their terms — what do they care about, how do they want to be marketed to, how do they want us to act towards them and try to respond to that rather than going in guns blazing?

One of the ways we do that is the app directory, as you mentioned. When we go into the market, localization and translation sometimes kind of get conflated and translation is really a subset of localization.

There are all sorts of things involved, truly localizing your product and your service which for us it's little simple fun things like having an owl for each country that we go into — they get their own owl and we work with the audience to develop how that should look like. We used Pinterest boards and survey and all that kinds of stuff.

But also it goes up to much more complicated things like integrating international social networks for them. So, great examples just this week, I mentioned a Russian language. We didn't just do Russian language, we also released an integration with vk.com which is the leading social network in

Russia — 200 million users, more users than Facebook and Twitter together in Russia.

Andrew: Wow!

Dave: So, we did an integration with that that came out just the other night and it's been great to see the reaction. Of course we set up our presence of vk.com and so we have another place to hang out with those users.

Then earlier this week we did the same thing for a social network with 700 million users although you got to know in this business never to truly trust the numbers, but Tencent Weibo who is another Chinese social network, which is our third integration for Chinese specific social networks with Sina Weibo. The word Weibo it just means micro-blogging service.

Then RenRen, which is kind of Chinese Facebook so to speak. So, it shows the countries that we're paying attention to them. It's kind of a sign of respect and we've done this now with tools all around the world.

Andrew: Cool. Can I stop you there for two seconds? I, as the host forgot one of the basics. For the people that don't know who or what he is, what do you guys do? What do you do?

Dave: We just jumped into this like old pals, don't we?

Andrew: Yes.

Dave: So, we created a social media dashboard, it's a web based and mobile based tool that brings together all your different social network channels. So, you have your Twitters and your Facebook's and your LinkedIn and your G Plus, and all these other ones in it.

We have our free product which I mentioned which gives you up to five social networks, and then there's the pro which gives you an unlimited amount and an enterprise so if you have a big brand and you need specific security and safety and workflow features.

But the secret thing that we really bring to the table is this team workflow, the ability to monitor and listen to all the

different conversations going on about the stuff that you care about and bring it all into one place. One tab to rule them all.

Andrew: Yes, let me give an explanation that's more on my level here because I'm kind of slow for these things. Basically, what allows you to do is you log in to one service and then you can watch and view and interact with Google and Twitter and Facebook and LinkedIn. You don't have to go to each individual service and you can control and interact from one place, is that correct?

Dave: Yes.

Andrew: The only reason I say this because I still get clients that are not on any social media yet. Amazing! I mean we're talking big ones, small ones, multi-million dollar ones and moms and pops or just getting started still to this day, so that's what it is.

Also, just for a full disclosure we have been a user since, I don't know, pretty much since you guys got going. Still use it, still love it and that's about it. I think we're your affiliate although we don't push that, I just want to get people new product I don't know if we make money off it honestly.

People need help in this area and you guys have come through a lot of the tools out there folks, if you're not familiar with this and have gone by the waste side and there's a lot of loaded ones, you guys are still wanting a nice clean machine that's easy to use even if you're just getting started or if you're running a big social media site for a large company.

So, it's a great tool, so I'll keep up plugging it for you guys. So, let's continue to go on already here.

Dave: Well, before I do that I just want to say thanks for all those kind words and we do take a lot of pride in making this tool for users rather than for technically minded people, because we want marketers and mom and pop shops. I want the dentist to be using them and the pet shop owners, as well as these huge corporations and multi-tiered organizations, so it is really important to us.

Andrew: Right, and folks too, if you are after and you are not on the social media, you're missing the boat because you'll get clobbered and the people that are on social media — your competition — they will kill you. They will just kill you so you might as well just retire if you don't get involved in this stuff.

Dave: Yes, and I was thinking especially with small businesses, whatever you're doing, whatever you started business about, you must be passionate about it. So, you want to be out talking to people about that area of interest. If you have a pet food store, you want to be out talking about pets all day long — it's your passion thing.

So, social media gives you a wonderful way to do that and sometimes people get really overwhelmed thinking it's a technology thing, but really social media is the communication in the story telling thing, it's not a technology thing.

Andrew: I agree. You're right. The other thing, too, is even if you don't want to get involved in regular basis, there are people talking about you whether you know it or not. I've run into some things where these guys have great marketing plans and they got all the stuff going on SEO and SEM and then you go look in what's being said about them on social media.

Just a couple of well-placed comments where they've never bothered responding say, "Hey, you guys suck big time!" I'm not kidding, that's what it said, "You guys suck." They never responded to it and they can't understand why their business isn't as good as it could be.

All they have to do is say, "Hey listen, did you try and help us," and get involved with the conversation. You can't get rid of those comments but you can at least detract from because you don't want to let them paint you as a bad person, when in fact they may even have commented on the wrong site — for all you know.

Dave: Yes, you could really get those things by responding to them publicly into a positive thing and then it keeps the conversation cleaner because people know you are paying attention and it allows other potential customers to realize that you're there to help them, that you're a human being

behind that. You're not just a Twitter avatar, you have arms and legs and everything behind the scene.

Andrew: Exactly! The other thing too I've noticed is when there's big blank spots like that, if they're not active on Twitter or Facebook or they're not up to speed on this, what else are they not up to speed on? From a customer service standpoint or anything else, it's like "Wow, do I really want to do business with these folks?"

Dave: Yes, it totally looks like you might not have it all together.

Andrew: Yes, exactly. Anyway, that's the negative side of it but the positive side is easy. Get on HootSuite, even use the free version and you can see what's going on and at least get involved in the conversation seriously.

Dave: Sure, and one of the gateways for a lot of people who don't really think of themselves as technical people, is Instagram. Instagram and Pinterest have been sort of like the side door access to a lot of these things, and so recently in the after act, we've added Instagram. So, it allows you to also set up a stream to monitor all the mentions of your brand.

This was so handy for [inaudible 00:10:20] by Southwest, when we wanted to track all the pictures that are coming out of [inaudible 00:10:25] in our campaigns down there. So we just set up another stream in HootSuite, not have to go bounced over to Instagram and be capturing all the pictures and be commenting on them, liking them and so on. That's now one of the 50 apps we have in the app directory.

Andrew: Name them all off! No, I'm just kidding. So, you've got Twitter, of course you've got Facebook. You've got Instagram now, Google Plus, what else?

Dave: Linked In is in there, YouTube.

Andrew: YouTube, great!

Dave: Flickr, Tumblr.

Andrew: What can you do with YouTube? Explain to people what you can do with YouTube on there.

Dave: You can monitor because we have lots of folks out there making YouTube videos to show how to use HootSuite for example. So we can be monitoring if there have been any mentions of that, plus you can upload your videos, you can do all your descriptions and your Metadata. Now we just did a V2 of that, it gives you a lot more visibility in the statistics and analytics about your YouTube videos, too.

Andrew: Great! Metadata is used for SEO purposes and for making it easy for people to find you. It's these small things that make huge differences too, folks. If you guys aren't doing this, it's amazing the results you can get from just doing the basics here.

Dave: Yes, and you'll be so surprised to see where your customers are coming from and what they're really responding to. Another tool that we recently added that's a really good tool for power users, so some folks out there who have already done the basics and they really want to dig in to their network more, called Socialbro.

It will give you incredible intelligence about your users, who's active, who's not, who's not following you, who you're following, who are the influences. All that kind of inside baseball so to speak about your Twitter audiences — another very powerful one.

Andrew: Right. Does that work for Facebook too?

Dave: No, that's a Twitter specific tool. But for Facebook we have done some more things with Facebook especially about the insights analytics where it has some great Facebook reporting. I think the Facebook reports that get out of Hootsuite look better than the Facebook reports you get out of Facebook.

Andrew: Well, yes, but that's not a big surprise, though. No, I'm not distracting from HootSuite, Facebook sucks from a program standpoint. You know you got to deal with it and I like them but they suck.

Dave: Yes. So, a lot of folks are doing e-mail marketing and you send out a newsletter and you want to be monitoring throughout the day how your open rate is.

Andrew: How does that work? E-mail marketing on...

Dave: Well, what it is, is we have integrations with MailChimp and ConstantContact now. So, you install that app and you set up your account, log in and then it gives you a stream that's basically following an update in your real time stats, what your open rate is, what the reaction is, you can compare to your other campaigns, all from within the dashboards.

You're not having to constantly flip back to that other tab to get a real time update on your stats. So, it's a real handy one and again it's about giving you all the tools you need to do to your job as a marketing manager, social manager, community wrangler — whatever you call yourself — all from one tool so you're not missing anything.

You can be that early responder with the intelligence and the insight to jump right in those conversations.

Andrew: In that being and you guys have an API for that if there was another mail service that say, "Hey listen, we want to get plugged in to you guys," would you help them out?

Dave: Yes, absolutely. We have a whole partner integration team that's dedicated to that. You can ping them at @hootsuite_apps on Twitter.

There's a whole process and mostly these integrations are done by either the end company or a lot of them are done by third party integrators who connect our API with this other API and do some neat stuff in the middle and now we have a framework where app developers can actually sell paid apps within HootSuites and they have a little bit of a revenue opportunity there as well.

Keep in mind most all of our apps are free right now, but in the same way we've done a freemium model for free and pro accounts, you'll start to see a few more options there. Another one I just thought of that I use all the time is SlideShare. Are you a SlideShare fan?

Andrew: Yes, I've been on there once or twice.

Dave: Yes, and Storify. We've started to do Storify's for all our [inaudible 00:14:41].

Andrew: Explain that to the folks out there who've never heard of Storify.

Dave: Storify gives you a way to aggregate and combine all the artifacts that are created from a campaign or an event. So, I'll give you an example of a way I use it a lot. I'll go do a talk somewhere and I have this saying that if it's not on the internet it didn't happen. I might go and talk to a crowd 20 people or 200 people and those people may enjoy it, but it's way better if I can then share what I did with a much wider audience.

So, with Storify we can add all the Tweets, all the Flickr pictures, all the Instagram pictures, whatever the blog post, all the other URLs and everything all into one round up style post that's shareable again. So, it's kind of creating a little micro-archive for various projects or campaigns.

Andrew: Right. It's a wonderful tool that marketing managers out there should be using. You guys can manage that with HootSuite now?

Dave: Yes, and in fact it's built in as an extension, so you go to any tweet in just one of your HootSuite streams and you pull down a little contextual menu and you'll see when it says, "Send to Storify." You can create a new story or add it to an existing story and you can publish your story; there are all sorts of things you can do right from there.

So, you can very quickly assemble even if you have an intern or someone helping you out, it's something that they can quickly go through and in 10 minutes you can have a whole round up of all that stuff. Then it lets people know that you've shared their contents and kind of keeps that virtuous social circle rolling.

Andrew: Right, got you! It's also good for link-backs to your site, too, just in case you have folks out there. Great! That's some fantastic news, I don't know if people can take all these in, but seriously if you guys aren't using HootSuite you're missing the boat here on that. Let's see what else here. So, what else is going on? How was South by South West?

Dave: Well, South by Southwest gets weirder every year for us. I mean the size of our brand continues to increase and so the audience and awareness comes right along with that. But this year we hosted a whole bunch of Hoot ups, and Hoot ups are kind of our user power informal kind of pop-up events that we do and we do those all over the world.

In Austin we did four of them, different themes; localization, higher Ed, one for community managers and one for a kind of social across the business. So, it gives us a chance to really have a discussion about those specific topics. But this year at South by again, we had our Hoot bus.

If you haven't seen pictures of this, I encourage you to throw that in your Google image search. It started its life as an airport shuttle bus but it's been turned into this magnificent rolling giant owl that roams the streets of Austin, taking us our team and our customers and friends out on adventures for tacos and swimming holes and workshops and so on.

There is a disco ball inside and a giant owl in the outside.

Andrew: How can you not love it?

Dave: This year we even added three branded customized bicycles by Republic Bikes who made these beautiful Hoot bikes that were great for getting around the streets of Austin. For anyone who's been to South by, you know the streets get crowded and transportation stops so having the bicycles was having like little escape shuttles from the bus.

But it was another big success for us and we always have a great time to the town of Austin, but it always takes a few days to recover from all of that as well — all that barbeque. It's tough work man!

Andrew: Yes, I'm telling you.

Dave: The things we do...

Andrew: Good deal. The burning question I have for you this time, did you ever get your own desk?

Dave: We still have, we still move around, we still keep it pretty casual. But since we talked last, we moved in to a big new

office. We did this about two months ago and it's a former Vancouver Police Department building. So, it gets all of us back under one roof because we're almost 300 owls now, while last year we're about 70. So, we've grown like gang busters from a personnel standpoint.

So, we now have giant rooms filled with rows of desks that gets filled up rapidly every week. So, if anyone is looking for an awesome gig, especially if you're Canadian and or a developer, we'd love to hear from you. Just tweet at @HootHr and we will see about bringing you on to our wide roller-coaster here.

Andrew: That's cool. I'm glad Ryan actually sprung for some desks for you guys. It's about time though, isn't it?

Dave: Well, it used to be when you first showed up, he was giving you an Allen key and points you to a stack of boxes of chairs and you have to assemble your own chair. It got to a point where we're doubling up and tripling up our desks, but it also kept us in that grass roots, take nothing for granted hassle until we make it kind of a work ethic that we've cultivated here.

Andrew: Right. Now, I know you guys are still private, correct?

Dave: Yes.

Andrew: I'm assuming you're making more money if you're hiring people, so that's good.

Dave: We've done things a little differently than a lot other companies, you don't see a lot of announcements from us about the BC World but you do see a lot of product announcements and you mentioned earlier, our competitive landscape has really changed where the competitors that we were looking out for three years ago are entirely different set that we're looking at this year.

It really shows to a change and maturation of our industry, and it also keeps us on our toes to keep evolving our product and keep staying ahead of our competitors. The things that we've done internationally and with the app directory and especially enterprise safety and security are obviously huge parts of that proposition.

Andrew: Right. You know, when we first started chatting, I picked you guys out of all the ones who are out there and I'm glad that I wasn't wrong, you guys didn't make me look too bad. It would have been bad if you guys weren't in business anymore.

Dave: Part of my job description, make you look smart.

Andrew: Well, cool! I appreciate it. I need all the help I can get there. Let's see here, we're actually going to make this one a little bit shorter because I want to talk to you more often. I want to get back to the practical standpoint but again, just so people that are out there, can you name off some of your customers so they don't feel like you guys are just the local yokels. Throw some big names around. Who would they know? Anybody?

Dave: Yes, for sure. The way I'd like to say it is 79 of the top Fortune 100 use HootSuite, but we also have a feeling that we love all our users equally and we want everyone to feel that these tools are made for them. So, we do have like the biggest organizations and biggest companies in the world in many cases using us, huge government agencies.

But rather than name checking because I always feel bad about forgetting someone but what I would encourage you to do is go to our blog, blog.hootsuite.com, and we do this post called Look who's Hooting? We just go on to the wild and we look at the attribution tag and we build relationships and we're out there interacting with our customers all the time.

So, we look at these things and we make kind of a little checklist, it might be geographically based or industry based, so everything from financial sector to people in Chicago and every kind of mix in between. All I can say is you're in extremely good company and when you have rock stars and world leaders and major world organizations and dudes like Richard Branson, all using your tool, you know you're doing something right.

But again, I get so excited when I see the dentist and pet shop owners and yoga studios using our tools to increase their bottom line as well.

Andrew: Right. Well, for you folks out there that need some social proof, I'll do Dave's job for him because I'm sure he's wrapped up here. But McDonalds, Pepsi Co., Sony Music, Lamborghini, WWF — Virginia not the WWF one but the other one, and tons of other people, and like you said too, mom and pops and people like me who don't know anything about the internet, I can still use it.

So, it's a great tool. Go out there, they got a free version which will cost you nothing to use, and it works. It is not some lame cut down version or you can go on it and actually help your business using the free tool for sure. Is the upgrade still five bucks? I think it starts five or six bucks or something bucks?

Dave: It's \$9.99.

Andrew: Holy Molly! It's up to \$9.99.

Dave: Yes, that gives you, though — put that checkbook away folks — that gives you unlimited social accounts, all the scheduling stuff and sometimes people get confused its schedule and it's inauthentic. If you're running a worldwide brand, running events, scheduling is critically important for you, and it gives you access to all the apps, all the listening stuff.

So, with that \$10, take that money from what you're spending on the yellow pages advertising right now, and spend it on HootSuite and then absolutely it's going to increase your business and going to make you happier doing whatever it is that you do.

Whether it's a student group, a non-profit, your softball team, or if you're out there listening and you have a fast growing agency or a huge corporation, it's going to fit for all of your and we've really taken the time to create and craft packages that fits literally any kind of organization.

Andrew: Right. I totally agree with that assessment of it. If you can't make your money back within the first week, you're doing something wrong. Give me a call; we'll help you out for free.

Dave: That's right.

Andrew: Wow! It's a good product, you don't have to go on there and dive in to a couple of those things for sure. The fact that basically now you can manage your online social media, whether you're paid or not on there pretty much, I mean at least track it, it's great, including your e-mail stuff too. That's good.

Dave: Yes, one tab to rule them all.

Andrew: So, anything else you want to add? We're going to wrap this up early this time here.

Dave: Well, I'll give you one other thing and that is my community team here, as we've grown internationally we started a program called the Diplomat Program. This is where we find HootSuite super fans, people who are consultants or run agencies or lead students groups — those people that you know in your communities who are like the smarty pants and willing to help in every event.

We love this kind of people and we encourage them to join our Diplomat Program and we help them, we send them a lot of swag to share on with your friends; help you put up these Hoot ups, this user powered events I mentioned. We did a 123 of them last year in 23 countries, by the way.

You can see pictures from them at LifeOfOwly.com and you can also follow my team, get more information about that diplomat program @HootClub on Twitter.

Andrew: Okay, that's great. When we get this up, we will put as many links as you want to send me on the website for people. Here again folks, we've been following these guys for two or three years at least now and it's going strong. It is still the best tool that I know of — a single tool for social media management, period.

Most importantly too for all your folks out there that are business oriented, it will make you money and it's not a waste of time and it's easy to use. Like I said, you can start using it within two or three minutes. I suggest that you watch the videos that you guys have up there — they're super simple. Literally, you can get control of it, you don't have to be afraid of it.

If nothing else, go out there and interact with people and find out what they're saying about you. You may be horrified or pleasantly surprised but either way you need to get involved.

Dave: One way or another.

Andrew: Yes, one way or another. So, I think that's about it there. Dave, as always it's a pleasure — Dave Olson by the way. I call him Dave O, sorry about that.

Dave: Everyone calls me Dave O. I'm Dave O, with Hoots on the Twitter. With a common name like Dave you always have to have a modifier, so I'm always Dave O.

Andrew: His Twitter, @Daveohoots, and hopefully you'll get at least a couple of tweets out there for you guys. Hey, thanks a lot, keep up the good work and then we'll chat soon, and folks there will be a full transcription on the websites for this. Get in touch with these guys and most importantly go out and start using HootSuite if you aren't already so you'll be happy you did.

You guys are one of those nice success stories where the service that you offer is worth 10x what it cost to do.

Dave: OK good, I will add that to your next bill!

Andrew: What's that? Yes, okay. All right, Dave. Thanks a lot, it's always a pleasure.

Dave: All right. We'll see you online and let's talk soon.

Andrew: Okay, thanks.

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Duration: 27minutes 27 seconds