



**How Innisfree Hotels Surprises and Delights Guests
Using Sprout Social**

322%

increase in total Twitter
engagements

889%

increase in organic Twitter
impressions

1,459%

increase in total Instagram
engagements



Hotel guests aren't just paying for a room, they're paying for an experience.

It's a truth that Julian MacQueen, Founder and Chairman of hotel management and development company [Innisfree Hotels](#), takes seriously.

"We know one thing for sure," MacQueen said. "Every guest that comes into our hotel will have an experience. We decide what that experience will be."

That's why Innisfree uses social media to surprise and delight guests at every opportunity, across its dozens of properties throughout the U.S.

From marketing to customer care, Innisfree turns to social media to gain an edge and differentiate itself from competitors. And Sprout Social acts as the organization's always-on social concierge.

Over the course of eight months using Sprout, Innisfree's properties have experienced a 13.4% increase in total followers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, helping drive more than 58 million impressions, 604,000 engagements and 147,000 link clicks.

Starting with Sprout

Alyssa Townsend was familiar with Sprout Social before she became the Director of Social Media at Innisfree Hotels.

"I worked in marketing and communications at my last job and they used Sprout," she said. "I worked mostly with the reporting functions and loved it, especially the way you're able to tailor them, displaying data in these really nice, intuitive graphs that make it easy to evaluate and adjust strategy."

When she joined Innisfree's in-house marketing agency, Bee Loud, it was using another social media management platform. However, the team quickly outgrew it.

"We wanted to expand our social strategy, and that's when we started looking at other platforms," Townsend said. "Sprout really aligned well with our vision."



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Director of Social Media, Innisfree Hotels

Tag, You're It

Sprout's **tagging** features immediately caught Townsend's eye. Sprout users are able to tag outgoing social posts for easy categorizing and tracking, helping brands measure how different types of posts perform with target audiences.

“I love it because it really gives insight into which posts are performing well, and beyond that, why different posts might be performing well,” Townsend said. “Then, we can use that data to create more of the content that’s resonating with our audience—whether it’s a beach video, listicle, food picture, etc.”

Tagging also comes in handy for the organization’s [user-generated content](#) strategy.

“We’re really heavy on UGC,” Townsend said. “We have guest engagement campaigns at almost all of our properties, but even if we don’t have a campaign going, we still solicit, save and repost UGC because we want that word-of-mouth marketing. It’s also helped us strengthen relationships with our guests and save time on our end as guests turn into content producers. UGC gives us the opportunity to showcase the experience we offer, but through our guests’ eyes. Sprout’s helped us pull and organize all of the submissions in one place.”

Through Sprout’s tagging features, Townsend can compare how UGC performs versus the content produced in house. She can also rely on [Sprout Queue](#) and [ViralPost](#) to quickly line up multiple posts for different social profiles and have them published automatically throughout the day, as well as ensure they’re posted at the optimal time to maximize audience engagement.

“It’s been so helpful,” she said. “And then you have the reporting and analytics features. Tagging is super easy, not only when creating a post, but also when exporting a report and being able to retroactively tag posts. Sprout is just very intuitive. And when you’re scheduling 100 to 125 posts a week, having Sprout to not only help schedule content but also know when the most optimal time to publish is, depending on the page or platform? It’s a game changer.”

And with so much content to create, Sprout’s [collaboration and workflow tools](#) are essential.

“Sprout’s editing and message approval tools have saved us so much time,” Townsend said. “We have one person who schedules posts and two people to review them, so being able to reject and give feedback quickly and easily on Sprout has really streamlined a lot of our processes. The volume we deal with was probably my biggest challenge coming into this role, and Sprout really helped me get a handle on it. There are all these things that need to happen on a daily basis to keep things running smoothly—or ‘keep the hotel open,’ as we call it. The other day, our CMO was saying, ‘We’ve never really been able to do that until now,’ and I think Sprout has been a huge asset in accomplishing that.”



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Creating Fun, Memorable Experiences

Townsend is focused on delivering exceptional online service to guests and fans alike, something that’s very much in line with Innisfree’s motto: “Creating fun, memorable experiences.”

“At every touchpoint on social media, we want you to have that fun and memorable experience—whether it’s before you come to stay with us, while you’re staying with us, or even afterwards, when you’re thinking about how much you wish you were back on vacation,” she said. “We use social to really drive that home and underline the experience throughout the whole course of the customer journey.”

Through Sprout’s **social monitoring** tools, Townsend and her team are able to discover new opportunities online to proactively engage guests. Sprout’s Brand Keywords feature enables organizations to monitor social for words and phrases directly associated with their brands, such as product or service names and geographic locations.

“We recently opened The Mercantile Hotel, an all-suites boutique hotel in New Orleans, and it was a new challenge for us,” Townsend said. “We used social to find folks tweeting ‘New Orleans’ or ‘New Orleans hotel’ or sharing posts in the area and were able to authentically jump into relevant conversations as a resource. ‘Looking for a place to stay? We know a spot. Best po-boys? This is our staff’s favorite. #UnlockNOLA with us,’ and so on and so forth. We used social and Sprout to search for those conversations, help guests and demonstrate our value.”

Social monitoring is even more effective when it provides Innisfree a chance to wow customers with a meaningful gesture.

“If someone is celebrating any kind of milestone – major or minor – we want to celebrate with them,” Townsend said. “And so when people post about a birthday or an anniversary, Fido’s first day at the beach or a graduation, we pass it on to the general manager to surprise and delight the guest. Whether it’s a card, a cake, dog treats or balloons, we can use social monitoring to enhance our guests’ stay and ensure their experience is fun and memorable.”



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The Measure of Success

For Innisfree Hotels, going the extra mile on social is well worth the effort.

If smiling guests and glowing reviews aren’t enough, the organization’s social growth is a prime indicator.

Eight months after signing on with Sprout Social, across all its profiles on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, Innisfree Hotels achieved a 13.4% increase in total followers. It’s also seen significant growth in impressions and engagements on Twitter and Instagram, including a:

- 889% increase in organic Twitter impressions
- 322% increase in total Twitter engagements
- 1,459% increase in total Instagram engagements

For more than three decades, Innisfree Hotels has provided outstanding guest experiences, whether by partnering with some of the world's most recognized hotel brands or at its own independent hotels and restaurants.

The organization is committed to replicating its offline success online using Sprout Social.