

# Sodexo

## ORGANIZATION

Sodexo is a global food services and facilities management company headquartered in Paris, France. It is one of the world's largest multinational corporations, with 420,000 employees and a presence in 64 countries. Serving 100 million customers a day worldwide, Sodexo is third in its sector on Fortune Magazine's 2021 list of the world's most admired companies.

## LOCATION

Issy-les-Moulineaux,  
France

## INDUSTRY

Food Services and  
Facilities Management

## PRODUCTS

Hootsuite Enterprise  
Hootsuite Amplify  
Professional Services



# How Sodexo leads its industry with social advocacy

## The company transformed its social strategy to win deals by strengthening relationships with its C-suite audience

**A GLOBAL LEADER IN QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICES, SODEXO** delivers a combination of on-site services, benefits and rewards services, and personal and home services to more than 100 million consumers every day.

As a purpose-driven company, Sodexo is focused on doing good, profitable business in a responsible way—and with a workforce of more than 420,000 employees, the company is uniquely positioned to make a significant and positive impact on the communities it serves.

Looking to tap into the power of social advocacy, Sodexo turned to Hootsuite to develop a strategy that would unify its employee voices and create new opportunities to build positive, valuable connections with its clients and communities.

### 2x

growth in number of new followers per month on LinkedIn

### 7.6 M

people reached with thought leadership content

### 30%

of social media traffic to website coming from employee posts



# The challenge

Sodexo wasn't telling a consistent story across its social media channels and driving business results in a clear, measurable way. With this in mind, the company commissioned a social media audit to understand its current social presence, the impact of social on the business, and how best to move forward in building a strategy to support business growth.

Looking to make advocacy a pillar of its new social strategy, Sodexo partnered with Hootsuite to implement an advocacy program that would support its growth goals while also supporting the following objectives:

Build trust both internally and externally

- ✓ Secure brand presence and stand out from industry competitors
- ✓ Help support business development and deepen relationships with existing customers
- ✓ Build the social media presence of executive leaders



“We take a 360-degree approach to our communications. There isn’t a wall between internal and external.”

**KIM BEDDARD-FONTAINE**

SVP DIGITAL & EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS, SODEXO

## How they did it

### Putting advocacy at the heart of communications

Social media at Sodexo sits within the global communications team, which is responsible for both external thought leadership as well as employee engagement on social media. Starting with the recommendations it received from its social media audit, Sodexo envisioned a three-phased approach:

- 1. Fix the basics:** Define the purpose, strategy, and editorial guidelines for different channels
- 2. Build momentum:** Ramp up social presence and build momentum over time
- 3. Move to paid:** With the basics fixed and impact proven, move to a paid media strategy

From the start, the team focused its strategy around building the presence of Sodexo’s executive leaders on social media through an executive advocacy program.

“Advocacy is one of the fundamental building blocks of any social media strategy,” says Kim Beddard-Fontaine, SVP digital and employee communications at Sodexo. “The statistics speak for themselves on why advocacy just makes business sense.”

The team narrowed in on social advocacy as a key opportunity to meet its business objectives—starting with senior leaders and executives.



## Reaching a broader C-suite audience with executive advocacy

Analysis of Sodexo's LinkedIn audiences revealed that the company had a small proportion of C-suite followers. To build its reach with executive audiences and drive greater business impact, Sodexo decided to develop an employee advocacy program designed around the company's own senior leaders and executives.

"Companies will often decide to go with the millennial, digital-savvy employees when launching advocacy programs," says Beddard-Fontaine. "We specifically decided to go with senior executives because reaching the C-suite is so important for us in influencing key decision makers."

Sodexo worked with Hootsuite's Professional Services team to design and deploy its advocacy strategy using Hootsuite Amplify. The team onboarded employees in a multi-phased approach, starting with 250 executives. After expanding the program to a thousand senior leaders, Sodexo found that its global content was reaching 7.6 million people with senior leaders' content, attracting 2.3x as many views as content on Sodexo's corporate LinkedIn page had received with 700,000 followers.

Since the start of its executive advocacy program, Sodexo has seen an increase in its C-suite audience on LinkedIn, showing a strong correlation between its advocacy initiatives and new follower base. It has also doubled the rate at which it attracts new LinkedIn followers—increasing from 7,500 every month to more than 15,000.



## **Using employee advocacy to support large, complex deals**

With Sodexo's business sometimes centering on large and complex deals, the communications team decided to build stakeholder outreach into the core of their social strategy. Using Hootsuite, they ran a highly targeted social campaign aimed at reaching C-level executives at a single organization with social posts to demonstrate its significant and positive impact on the communities it serves.

The Sodexo team extended the reach of this campaign by promoting it with paid social posts, while employees with connections to executives shared campaign content to their personal social media networks to further encourage views. The campaign reached the right people and played a significant role in winning the high-value contract.

## **Focusing on employee success to drive measurable results**

The team at Sodexo saw Hootsuite Amplify not only as a key way to share content externally and drive business impact, but also to engage and inform employees with corporate news and updates. Using Hootsuite's analytics, Sodexo saw that half of employee advocates were reading shared content in Hootsuite Amplify themselves, underscoring the importance of the advocacy program in supporting internal awareness of campaigns and initiatives.

As Sodexo rolls out its advocacy program to more employees, it has continued to work with Hootsuite to develop training materials that support advocates to ensure their success, and has partnered with LinkedIn for additional insights to inform its curriculum. Advocates receive training to help them define their online leadership voice and personalize corporate content to ensure it sounds authentic and is relevant to the audiences they want to reach.

The company's investment in training and supporting employee advocates has paid off, with employees expanding their social reach in a virtuous cycle that drives more traffic to Sodexo's website. Advocacy content posted via Hootsuite Amplify has become the second-highest source of traffic from social campaigns, driving 30% of all website traffic.



# Looking ahead

By bringing multiple stakeholders from across the company to the center of its social media strategy, Sodexo's employee advocacy program has created a cultural shift within the organization. With a social strategy designed to amplify both executive thought leadership and employee engagement, Sodexo continues to break down the walls between internal and external to reach the right audiences and drive business impact.



“Hootsuite Amplify has been very powerful in allowing us to create a culture of sharing content. Those who use it, love it, and it’s driving the majority of our social traffic to our website.”

**KIM BEDDARD-FONTAINE**

SVP DIGITAL & EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS, SODEXO