

# Meliã Hotels International

## LOCATION

Palma de Mallorca,  
Spain

## PRODUCTS USED

Hootsuite Enterprise  
Hootsuite Amplify  
Hootsuite Impact  
Talkwalker

## INDUSTRY

Hospitality,  
Travel and Tourism

## COMPANY

With more than 380 hotels in more than 40 countries, Meliã Hotels International is the third-largest hotel group in Europe and the world's largest resort chain.



# *How Meliã's social-first strategy built customer loyalty and business resilience during a crisis*

The company used social listening, engagement, influencers, and advocacy to strengthen brand awareness and loyalty throughout the COVID-19 pandemic—building the foundation for business recovery.



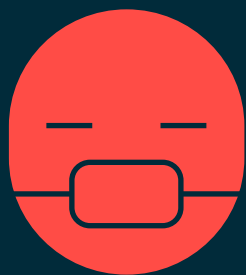
When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, tourism and hospitality were among the hardest hit industries. And while Meliã Hotels International was no exception, the company had an advantage that helped it mobilize its crisis management strategy quickly: a social-first communications model.

A Hootsuite customer since 2014, Meliã recognized the power of social media to maintain customer connections and build loyalty, even in a time of social distancing. Using every tool in its arsenal—from social listening and engagement to a centralized social inbox for customer service—Meliã rolled out a five-stage strategy to stay connected with customers every step of the way.

1.8M engagements on social influencer posts

4X return on social influencer campaign

6.5K social shares by digital ambassadors on Amplify



### **Stage 1. Shock and adaptation**

Amid fear and uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic, Meliã kept its focus on sharing information with customers to make sure their immediate questions were answered about topics like date changes, cancellations, and plans for opening hotels and destinations.

### **Stage 2. COVID-19 peak**

With audiences feeling fearful and isolated during the height of lockdown measures, Meliã shared uplifting and helpful content to keep the tone positive, such as live streams of activities like yoga, meditation, food and cocktail recipes and advice from its entertainment team on how to keep families entertained during the lockdown.

### **Stage 3. Aftermath**

As lockdowns began to lift across the regions it serves, Meliã focused on

communicating safety measures for travellers with its #StaySafeWithMeliã health and safety protocols developed and certified with international health organization, Bureau Veritas.

### **Stage 4. Rebirth**

Meliã used social media to acknowledge and reward health workers and security forces for their work throughout COVID-19, giving away 20,000 nights to essential workers of Spain's medical and security forces to recognize their efforts during the pandemic.

### **Stage 5. Dream again**

As hotels began to open their doors, Meliã launched a new campaign: "When You Come Back, Stay Safe With Meliã" to stimulate demand, showcase its hotels and destinations, and recover business in key destinations.



## How they did it

From reassuring customers during the initial panic to proactively engaging with and entertaining them during lockdown, social media played a central role in Meliã's revised 2020 communications plan. And as the "new normal" unfolded, Meliã engaged social influencers to help communicate hotel safety measures, celebrate frontline workers, and welcome guests back safely to their hotels around the world.

## Building confidence and connections with social customer care

With travel bans and cancellations escalating as the pandemic spread, Meliã saw a 170% spike in social media mentions and a 154% increase in inbound direct messages, while also maintaining a message negative sentiment below 5%.

With hundreds of hotels around the world—127 of which use their own social profiles—Meliã decided to centralize its communications and unify all content in Hootsuite, using Hootsuite Inbox to ensure timely and accurate responses to customers.

The team created further efficiencies by using saved replies in Inbox to quickly answer questions about cancellations, refunds, general procedures, travel restrictions, and other topics. This made it faster

and easier for team members to deliver accurate and consistent answers, saving time and freeing up valuable resources to deal with more complex inquiries.

## Listening and engaging with customers to build brand loyalty

Using the Talkwalker integration in Hootsuite, Meliã analyzed social media mentions alongside mentions in blogs, news, and other online media to track customer sentiment and report on it internally.

With customers struggling to cope with isolation during the crisis, Meliã used social media to deliver entertaining and informative content, sharing tips on topics like making cocktails at home and ideas for entertaining children indoors. The team also used social media to celebrate and reward frontline workers.





Customers were pleased with the helpful and entertaining content and Meliã's philanthropic efforts—and this customer satisfaction was reflected in positive conversations about Meliã online.

### Amplifying positive messages through its influencer and ambassador networks

As lockdowns began to lift, Meliã worked with 34 influencers over a two-month period to communicate its #StaySafewithMelia campaign. The campaign showcased the new procedures and protocols in place to keep guests safe and encouraged customers to start returning to Meliã's hotels.

Restrictions made it impossible to record new video content for the campaign, so user-generated content (UGC) from travelers and influencers was key.



Macro influencers (with more than a million followers) created videos to demonstrate safety measures in public spaces and hotel rooms, and micro influencers shared promotional discount codes. The campaign generated 1.8 million engagements—and drove new bookings that generated more than four times the total cost of the campaign.

To further expand the reach of its campaign, Meliã relied on its digital ambassador program powered by Hootsuite Amplify. The #StaySafewithMeliã campaign saw 6,500 shares by employees for a potential reach of 5.6 million. Meliã CEO Gabriel Escarrer Jaume led from the top on social media, participating in Instagram Live sessions and online panels and sharing company stories on Twitter and LinkedIn.





## The results

Like every business in its industry, Meliã Hotels International faced trying times when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. But with a social-first strategy, the company was well prepared to adapt quickly to the rapidly changing situation and act fast.

Through effective social listening and engagement, strong advocacy and influencer strategies, and the guidance and support of a social-first CEO, Meliã was able to stay connected with its strong base of loyal customers and ensure that they were excited to return. The road to recovery is a long one—but Meliã is well on its way.



A big part of being a social-first company is ensuring that the whole organization is bought into it. Hootsuite Amplify has really helped us drive an employee advocacy program to show our customers exactly what we stand for. However, none of this would be possible without a social-first CEO. Without a leader who understands the value of social media, we would never have been able to get such buy-in from the organization.”

**Santiago Garcia Solimei**

Global Director of Social Media, Meliã Hotels International

## The global leader in social media management

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