

DISCIPLINING SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Reducing Acquisition Costs and Increasing Student
Engagement in Continuing, Professional, and Online Education

COE Forum

Project Director

Melanie Ho

Lead Consultant

Julianne Helinek

Contributing Consultant

Karishma Furtado

Executive Director

Chris Miller

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Reducing Acquisition Costs and Increasing Student Engagement in Continuing, Professional, and Online Education



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About the COE Forum

Serving Continuing, Professional, and Online Education Leaders

Our Parent Firm: The Advisory Board Company

Founded in 1979 to serve hospitals and health systems, the Advisory Board Company is one of the nation's largest research and consulting firms serving nonprofit, mission-driven organizations. With a staff of over 1,800 worldwide, including 1,150 in Washington, D.C., we serve executives at about 1,800 member organizations in more than two dozen countries, publishing 50 major studies and 15,400 customized research briefs yearly on progressive management practices.

Our Work in Higher Education: The Education Advisory Board

Encouraged by leaders of academic medical centers that our model and experience serving nonprofit institutions might prove valuable to colleges and universities, the Advisory Board launched our higher education practice in 2007. We are honored to report over 700 college and university executives now belong to one of our Education Advisory Board memberships.



RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS

Continuing, Online, and Professional Education

The COE Forum provides breakthrough practices and market intelligence to help colleges and universities develop and grow continuing, professional, and online education programs.

Academic Affairs

The University Leadership Council provides strategy advice and research for provosts, deans, and other academic leaders on elevating performance in teaching, research, and academic governance.

Business Affairs

The University Business Executive Roundtable provides research and support for college and university chief business officers in improving administrative efficiency and lowering costs.

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COE Forum members have full and unlimited access to the range of supplemental materials and implementation guidance on our website (<http://www.educationadvisoryboard/coe/>).

Website resources include:



Health Care Online Resource Center

- Draws upon our firm's work with 60,000+ senior hospital and health system executives
- Suite of tools to conduct rigorous new program market research with limited staff time



Engaging Faculty in Online Education:

Breakthrough Practice Publication and Implementation Toolkit

- Innovative and cost-effective approaches to working with faculty to migrate courses and programs online
- Recommended investments in infrastructure, right financial incentives, and faculty support services



Over 100+ Custom Research Briefs

Wondering what questions other institutions are posing to the forum? Example projects include:

- *Considerations for Developing a Health Care MBA*
- *Intellectual Property Policies for Online Courses*
- *Models of Self-Service Student Advising*
- *Profiles of Distance Learning Fee Models*
- *Granting Academic Credit for Prior Learning*



Webinar Registration and Archive

Register for upcoming sessions or access our archives. Many of our members convene their teams to listen to recordings and brainstorm ideas. Some titles include:

- *New Roles and Skills Requirements in the Wake of Health Care Reform*
- *Engaging Faculty in Online Education: Innovative Budget and Instructional Design Support Models*
- *Retention Disciplines for Continuing and Online Learners*



A Unique Approach

Research Identifying Breakthrough Practices

Beyond Averages: Over 100,000 Interviews across the Firm

Education Advisory Board research focuses on answering one question: “How have successful organizations anywhere—whether in higher education or not—solved the pressing problems facing our members?” To that end, our analysts and consultants are dedicated to finding the most progressive and successful practices, never simply reporting what peer colleges and universities are doing. While relying on member surveys that solicit “best” practice ideas might be easier, this method cannot surface truly breakthrough ideas. Across the firm, our staff completes more than 100,000 in-depth interviews each year, probing for innovative new ideas, tactics, and strategies worthy of member time and attention.

HOW WE CONDUCT A STUDY

Literature Review and Expert Interviews

A massive literature review and extensive interviews with all relevant experts, in and out of sector, provide a deeper understanding of root cause problems and help identify potential new ideas.



Exhaustive Screening for Breakthrough Practice

Interviews are conducted with hundreds of colleges and universities to isolate the few dozen that have pioneered truly innovative practices and can show demonstrable results.



In-Depth Case Study Research

Multi-day interviews and onsites are completed with exemplar institutions to understand practices in detail and the implementation requirements, benefits, and potential drawbacks of each.



Rigorous Analysis and Advice

The research team spends several months synthesizing the research and preparing detailed recommendations to guide members on how to implement the practices and strategies uncovered in the research.



Advisors to Our Work

Today's study is based on Forum understanding gained through conversations with over 150 institutions and experts. We are grateful to interviewees for allowing us to benchmark practices and garner institutional insights into the challenges of implementing social media strategy.

With Sincere Appreciation

Lee Aase
Director, Center for Social Media
Mayo Clinic

Kevin Abbott
Project Lead, Special Projects, Office of
Information Technology
Western Michigan University

Kurt Ackman
Executive Vice President of Sales and Academic
Relations
GoingOn, Inc.

Jackie Anderson
Communications and Social Media Specialist
College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University

Elizabeth Apelles
CEO
Greater Than One, Inc.

Ryan Badowski
Online Marketing Strategist
Golden Gate University

Marni Baker Stein
Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum and
Instruction
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Lauren Barber
Marketing Account Manager
Effective Student Marketing, Inc.

Brian Baute
Business and Technology Applications Analyst
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Claudia Bean
International Recruitment Coordinator
Eastern Michigan University

Anna Behar-Russell
Marketing Manager
California State University, Long Beach

Marty Bennett
Marketing Coordinator
EducationUSA

Kristine Billmyer
Dean
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Benjamin Blair
Internet Technology Specialist
Philadelphia Biblical University

Laura Blanchard
Alumni/Development Officer
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Karlyn Borysenko
Director of Social Media
Southern New Hampshire University

Simona Boucek
Marketing Project Manager
Extended Campus
Oregon State University

Mary Ellen Brewick
International Marketing and Recruitment
Coordinator
University of Idaho

Danielle Brigida
Digital Marketing Manager
National Wildlife Federation

Katharine Brodock
Executive Director of Digital and Social Media
Syracuse University

Doug Burgett
Creative Director, Admissions and Records
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Josh Burgher
Associate Dean of Finance and Administration
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Alexandra Burki
Social Media Community Manager
Booth School of Business
University of Chicago

Daniel Bursch
Director of Admissions and Recruiting, MBA
Programs
The Carlson School of Management
University of Minnesota

George Calderaro
Director of Communications
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Jorge Camargo
Director, Product Strategy and Development
Apollo Group

Luis Casas
Director of Executive Education
IESE Business School
University of Navarra

Andy CasIELlo
Associate Vice President
Distance Learning
Old Dominion University

Dayna Catropa
Associate Director, Research and Marketing
Programs
Division of Continuing Education
Harvard University

Rob Chabot
Associate Director, Graduate Programs Office
Smith School of Business
Ohio State University

Heather Chakiris
Director of Advising and Learner Success
World Campus
Penn State University

Sharon Chen
Enterprise Limited Shanghai Representative
Birmingham City University



Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Rahul Choudaha
Director of Research and Advisory Services
World Education Services

David Cillay
Executive Director
Center for Distance and Professional Education
Washington State University

David Comp
Associate Director for International Programs
Booth School of Business
University of Chicago

Nyleva Corley
Web and Social Media Manager
University of Texas at Austin

Jon Corshen
Chief Executive Officer
GoingOn, Inc.

Kathleen Cozzi
Marketing Analyst
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Kevin Currie
Executive Director,
Northeastern University Online
College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University

Don Devilbiss
Assistant Dean, University College
Widener University

Jessica DuPont
Director of Marketing
Extended Campus
Oregon State University

Michael Edson
Director of Web and New Media Strategy
Smithsonian Institution

Kenneth Elmore
Dean of Students
Boston University

Jonathan Endicott
Director of Graduate and
Degree Completion Admission
Fresno Pacific University

Angela Ferragamo
Director of Marketing and Communications
The Graduate School of Political Management
George Washington University

Lydia Fine
Associate Director,
MBA Recruiting and Admissions
Tippie School of Management
University of Iowa

Teresa Flannery
Executive Director of
Communications and Marketing
American University

Bruce Floyd
Social Media Specialist
University of Florida

Linda Fogg-Phillips
Author and Speaker
Fogg Phillips, LLC

Eric Friedman
Associate Director of the
Office of Distance Education
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Tom Garriepy
Director of International
Development and Abroad
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Stephanie Geyer
Executive Consultant
Noel Levitz

Darlene Giraitis
Director of High School Programs
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Barbara Goen
Assistant Dean for Communications
Rossier School of Education
University of Southern California

David Theo Goldberg
Director of the University of California
Humanities Research Institute
University of California

Christine Graue
Senior Product Manager
Hobsons, Inc.

Ananda Gunawardena
Associate Teaching Professor
of Computer Science
Carnegie Mellon University

Craig Haines
Assistant Director of Immigration
University of Findlay

Jay Halfond
Dean
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Fred Hamden
Marketing Director
UC Berkeley Extension
University of California, Berkeley

Keith Hampson
Consultant
Contact North

William Hampton
Associate Vice President,
Marketing and Enrollment Management
**Embry-Riddle Aeronautical
University Worldwide**

Tom Harford
Associate Dean for Student and Alumni Affairs
and Interim Executive Director of
Summer Session
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Wendy Harman
Director of Social Strategy
American Red Cross

Katherine Hasenauer
Assistant to the Dean of Students
Boston University

Chris Hendree
Associate Director of International Recruitment
Grand Valley State University



Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Mary Higgins
Associate Dean of Continuing Education for
Academic Administration
Division of Continuing Education
Harvard University

Les Hollingsworth
Assistant Professor of Marketing
University of Wisconsin-Platteville

Sarah Horn
Executive Director, Student Success Services
Ivy Bridge College
Tiffin University

Bryan Howard
Vice President, Training Director
Learning and Performance Solutions
JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Scott Hutchinson
Program Director, Visual Arts
UCLA Extension
University of California, Los Angeles

Stefan Hyman
Web and Electronic Information Coordinator
Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Stony Brook University

Glenwood Irons
Director of International Marketing and
Recruitment
Brock University

Syed Khalid Jamal
Technology and Multimedia Manager
EducationUSA

David Jarmul
Associate Vice President for News and
Communications
Duke University

Bob Johnson
Founder
Bob Johnson Consulting

Lisa Juarez
Director of Marketing
UCLA Extension
University of California, Los Angeles

Stephanie Judge
Director of Marketing
College of Business
Butler University

Michael Kaltenmark
Director of Web Marketing and Communications
Butler University

David Kaufer
Professor of English
Carnegie Mellon University

Andy Kelley
President
Effective Student Marketing, Inc.

Walter Kimbrough
President
Philander Smith College

Jeff Kirchick
Universities and Independent Schools Specialist
SCVNGR

Tom Krieglstein
CEO and Founder
Swift Kick

Sarah Krznarich
Assistant Director of Student Engagement
ASU Online
Arizona State University

Jake Landis
Assistant Director of Online Learning and
Engagement
College of Liberal and Professional Studies
University of Pennsylvania

Nora Lewis
Vice Dean and Executive Director
College of Liberal and Professional Studies
University of Pennsylvania

Jill Lingard
Associate Director for Online Programs
Warrington College of Business
University of Florida

Daniela Locreille
Marketing Director, Student Marketing, Higher
Education
Hobsons, Inc.

Ethan Logan
Director, Undergraduate Admissions
Texas Tech University

John Lucas
Senior University Relations Specialist
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Jennifer Maden
Associate Dean for Strategic Enrollment
Management
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Paul Marca
Deputy Director
Stanford Center for Professional Development
Stanford University

Alan McCarty
Assistant Vice President, Learning Technology
eCornell

Denise McCashen
Market Research Manager
UCLA Extension
University of California, Los Angeles

Thomas McClintock
Chief Operating Officer
NSI Partners

Matt McGann
Associate Director of Admissions
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Paul McNeil
Vice Dean
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Tom Melcher
Senior Vice President, International
Chegg Inc.

Frank Merendino
Senior Admissions Director
University of Cincinnati

Alison Merzel
Director of Recruiting and Admissions
Smith School of Business
The Ohio State University

Bibek Mohanty
Market Research Manager
Distance Learning and Professional Education
Georgia Institute of Technology

Heidi Morris
Web Site Administrator
Distance Learning
Old Dominion University



Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Kevin Morrow
Executive Director of External and Public Affairs
Strategic Communications
Syracuse University

Jack T. Murphy
Director of Marketing and Human Resources
T. Colin Campbell Foundation

Jennifer Murphy
Senior Director of Strategic Communications
and Emerging Markets
College of Continuing Education
California State University, Sacramento

Ivan Muzychka
Associate Director, Communications
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Jeanna Nixon
Director of Marketing and Engagement
Colorado State University OnlinePlus

Daniel Obregon
Vice President of Marketing
Intelliworks Inc.

Peter Panepento
Assistant Managing Editor
The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Anthony Pappas
President
Pappas Group

Bob Patterson
Director of Admission
Stanford University

Emily Phillips
Marketing Project Manager
Division of Continual Learning
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Kay Marie Platt
Assistant Dean, University College
Widener University

Chris Proulx
CEO
eCornell

David Quinn
Director of the American Language Program
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Larry Ragan
Director, Faculty Development
World Campus
Penn State University

Emily Richardson
Dean, University College
Widener University

Nicole Ritterbeck
Assistant Director of Academic Advising
Widener University

Jennifer Roccati
Assistant Director of Development
Miriam's Kitchen

Cara Rousseau
Social Media Manager and Public Relations
Specialist
Duke University

Wesley Roy
Director, International Admissions
Roger Williams University

Adrian Sannier
Senior Vice President of Learning Technologies
Pearson Education

Roxolana Sawchuck
Director of Marketing
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Elizabeth Scarborough
CEO and Partner
SimpsonScarborough

Jodi Schafer
Director, Admissions and Financial Aid
Tippie School of Management
University of Iowa

David Schejbal
Dean
Division of Continuing Education, Outreach, and
E-Learning
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Penny Schouten
Co-Chair, Technology Special Interest Group
NAFSA

Anna Schryver
Public Relations Consultant
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Charlie Schwartz
Assistant Director
International Admissions
University of Cincinnati

Dean Schwartz
Partner, Director of Strategy
Greater Than One, Inc.

Rick Shearer
Director, Learning Design
World Campus
Penn State University

Christine Skelly
Associate Professor, Department of Animal
Science
Michigan State University

David Smith
Executive Director of Graduate Programs
Smith School of Business
Ohio State University

Wayne Smutz
Executive Director
World Campus
Penn State University

John Soltice
Assistant Director, International Relations and
Recruitment
University of Alberta

Patrick Spenner
Managing Director
The Corporate Executive Board Company

Roseanna Stanton
Associate Dean and Chief Strategy and
Communications Officer
School of Continuing Studies
Georgetown University

Michael Staton
Chief Evangelist
Inigral, Inc.

Suzy Stein
Executive Director of MS Programs
School of Continuing Education
Columbia University

Michael Steinmann
Project Coordinator, ERASMUS Mundus WISHES
Project
University of Paderborn



Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Eric Stoller
Blogger, Student Affairs and Technology
Inside Higher Education

Jennifer Sullivan
Senior Student Services, Office of Distance
Education
Metropolitan College
Boston University

Melora Sundt
Associate Dean for Academic Programs and
Professor of Clinical Education
Rossier School of Education
University of Southern California

Maya Suraj
Deputy Director of Admissions and Special
Projects
Stuart College of Business
Illinois Institute of Technology

Chalimar Swain
Associate Director, the International Center
University of Utah

Ruth Marie Sylte
Social Media Director, Author of Blog (Manitou
Heights)
GoAbroad.com

Shelby Thayer
Online Marketing and Web Strategist, University
Outreach
Penn State University

Dayle Thorpe
Director, Academic and Professional Programs
Division of Professional and Continuing Studies
University of Delaware

Jonathan Tice
Senior Vice President
Destiny Solutions Inc.

Jaap-Jan van Duin
Director of Marketing and Communications
Division of Continual Learning
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Linda Venis
Program Director, Writer's Program
UCLA Extension
University of California, Los Angeles

Cassie Viau
Senior Manager of Client Services
Effective Student Marketing, Inc.

Loan Vo
Assistant Director of Marketing and
Communications
Extension
University of California, Irvine

Barbara Wallace
Director, Communications and Marketing
Carey Business School
The Johns Hopkins University

David Wegner
Director of Communications, Marketing, and
Public Affairs
McCombs School of Business
University of Texas at Austin

Matthew Weidman
Director, Exton Campus
Widener University

Lena West
CEO and Chief Social Media Strategist
InfluenceExpansion.com

David Wheeler
Managing Editor
The Global Chronicle
The Chronicle of Higher Education

Rita Wilds
Director of Public Relations and Advancement
Brandman University

Joel Wilkinson
Student Success Centre Director
University of Calgary

Helen Williams
Marketing Manager
UCLA Extension
University of California, Los Angeles

Randy Woodruff
Assistant Vice President for Video and Electronic
Marketing
Baylor University

Beth Xie
Director of Marketing Strategy and Sales
Enablement
eCornell



Top Lessons from the Study

The Challenge: Achieving Impact with the Resources at Hand

1. **The Social Media “Catch-22”:** COE deans describe their social media challenge as an irresolvable Catch-22; absent a track record of business impact, COE units are unwilling to commit additional resources to social media efforts—and yet, without additional resources, business impact is unlikely
2. **Over-Focus on Vanity Metrics:** First-generation social media experiments in higher education have done little to allay skeptics’ concerns about ROI; most efforts overemphasize “vanity metrics” (i.e., sheer number of likes, fans, and followers)—easy to obtain, but difficult to connect to any measurable impact on branding, recruiting, or student success
3. **Good News—Success Not a Function of Size:** Social media ROI decidedly not correlated to size of marketing budget or staff; many of the most impressive results are from the least resource-intensive ideas

Fast-Payback Social Media Strategies

4. **Our Purpose with This Report:** This study’s objective is to help members understand what’s working (and not) in social media: identifying the most attractive COE business goals accomplishable through social media while also focusing on ideas achievable without unrealistic levels of spend or staff time
5. **A Handful of High-ROI Disciplines Come into Focus:** Based on 150+ interviews, Forum research uncovered seven strategies pursued by organizations successfully using social media to recruit and retain online and adult students:





Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Increasing Lead Volume and Quality

How Can Social Media Identify and Convert Prospective Students?

Leverage “Tight-Fit” External Communities

- 6. Far Cheaper and Faster to Leverage Preexisting External Communities:** The first step for social media lead generation is to monitor and influence *already existing* online communities segmented by profession or niche interest (i.e., project management professionals, wellness enthusiasts); participating in external networks is far more cost effective than building and curating new pages or sites
- 7. Where to Look, How to Converse:** Not uncommon to find hundreds of relevant sites for any given field, and difficult to determine right contributors due to a fundamental mismatch in staff knowledge and incentives; social media experts (marketers) lack content expertise, while subject matter experts (faculty and program directors) lack time and interest to generate consistent content

Breakthrough Practices

- 8. Use Social Sites’ Tools to Select Best-Fit Communities:** Concentrate staff monitoring and posting on a handful of professional/niche-interest communities, using site demographic data to pinpoint communities whose participants disproportionately match the program’s target student profile (i.e., by gender, location, title, employer, educational attainment)
- 9. Create Reusable Templates for Non-expert Contributors:** Develop FAQ libraries with responses designed to steer readers to program websites and events; responses must include valuable, discipline-specific information “beyond the sell,” since online community members have low tolerance for direct sales interruptions
- 10. Use Alumni as “Signal Amplifiers”:** Develop “easy ask” ways to tap alumni social media networks, such as Twitter retweet campaigns and Facebook status donations; exemplars also post alumni accomplishments on college and university sites to encourage a quid pro quo effect



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Nudge Prospects from Free to Paid Content

- 11. Handful of Exemplars Piloting “Destination Sites”:** Colleges and universities should use pre-existing sites for near-term lead generation, but organizations only pursuing this approach risk being left behind as the market evolves; leading COE units already seeing up to 30% enrollments generated through creation of new proprietary sites
- 12. The Common Theme—Pathways from Free to Paid Content:** Exemplars drive prospects from free to paid content by helping students feel reduced “risk” in their educational investment, designing proprietary website material to address adult student decision-making questions (“Will I like this course?,” “Can I do the work?,” “How will this program help me advance or change careers?”)

Breakthrough Practices

- 13. “Permission” Push Messages:** Acquire students’ permission to “opt in” to weekly announcements related to the program’s aspirational brand identity (e.g., “Entrepreneurship”), combining expert insights with reminders of upcoming deadlines and events
- 14. “Freemium” Content:** Use social media to promote free webinars and trial courses that can be applied towards a program should students formally enroll; sample courses assist students with evaluating their level of interest and aptitude, as well as course time commitment and quality
- 15. Career-Planning Tools:** Create career-advising communities that combine fact-based licensure and professional advice, motivational peer conversations modeling successful career progression, and match-making assessments to help students reduce uncertainty around potential career changes
- 16. Multi-audience Community-of-Interest Sites:** Build sites with content spanning all levels of interest—from hobbyist to professional to degree-seeker—to establish trust and thought leadership in niche fields, designed to attract corporations and academic research sponsors, as well as prospective students



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Maintain Momentum with International Prospects

17. **Solving Many Challenges in Recruiting Internationals:** Technologies largely ineffective with domestic students (i.e., chat rooms) provide a superior alternative to costly in-person recruiting efforts abroad; chat technologies are more popular internationally and are uniquely suited to applicants' higher comfort level with written English (versus spoken) and expectations of fast, frequent communications
18. **Perfecting "Chat" Critical, but Requires Moving Past One Size Fits All:** Although a powerful tool for expediting international applicants' decision-making process, chat technologies paradoxically become counter-productive if too successful at drawing a crowd; overcrowded chat rooms leave visitors disappointed by fragmented discussions and unanswered questions

Breakthrough Practices

19. **Develop Discrete Chat Pathways around FAQs:** Create instant chat specialized "lines" based on common inquiry areas assigned to topic experts for rapid follow-up
20. **Create Chat Breakout Rooms to Run Deep on Complex Questions:** Equip international informational chat rooms with breakouts for students to run deep in specific topic areas (i.e., visa, financial aid) without derailing overall session
21. **Design Virtual Tours with Parents in Mind:** Increase parent comfort level with campus through virtual tours featuring multiple languages and video clips; for certain offerings (e.g., pathways programs), parents are critical to the buying decision
22. **If You Must Do Virtual Fairs, Use a Vendor:** Select vendors for virtual fairs based on demonstrated ability to attract students through in-country social media; maintain momentum by immediately connecting with attendees on social media platforms post-event
23. **Make Sure You Are on Target Country's "Locally Dominant" Social Site:** Learn social media demographics and usage patterns in target countries in order to develop country-specific social media presences (i.e., Renren in China), recognizing that Facebook and other U.S. sites are not always the most popular (or even permitted) platforms abroad



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Elevating Student Engagement

How Can Social Sites Improve Retention and Prevent Stop-Outs?

24. **Community More Differentiating than Content?:** For-profits publicly predicting that student community will be a greater differentiator than unique content in adult and online education in five years time, backing up the sentiment with multi-million dollar investments such as PhoenixConnect
25. **Virtual Campus Still Elusive and Expensive:** A handful of early adopters (for-profit and not) seeing benefits of increased peer interaction; however, most social media pioneers attest to the challenge of motivating and sustaining social site participation among adult students lacking time and interest for “socializing” online
26. **“Practical” Sites Faring Better than Recreational:** Exemplars focus institution-led communities on pointers for academic and career success, not social support; adult students are attracted to “practical” content initially (i.e., course advice), but see value of social support (i.e., work-life-school balance) after witnessing online peer interactions over time
27. **“Closed” Communities” Getting More Traffic than “Open”:** In contrast to “open” sites for prospects, online communities for current students are typically “closed” as an exclusive program benefit; occasional exception is full or partial access to alumni and industry experts for networking and outreach

Create Incentives for Social Site Registration

Breakthrough Practices

28. **Make Registration Obligatory or Ultra-Easy:** Allow for one-click registration and request students’ permission to pre-populate social networking profiles with information from enrollment data; mandate or incentivize professors to host some course activity on social site
29. **Broker Peer Introductions Among “Neighbors” and “Study Buddies”:** Promote student introductions around tasks (“Who else is writing a term paper now?”) and geography (“Is anybody else in my area taking evening courses so we can coordinate childcare?”)
30. **Prevent Stop-Outs Through Personalized Administrative Reminders:** Individualize content feeds based on preference and behaviors; leading institutions prevent stop-outs through proactive reminders of administrative deadlines, and use social media conversations and student success data to recommend students for the “next logical course”
31. **Enable Students to Build e-Portfolios on Social Sites:** Incorporate networking, e-portfolio, and capstone project contests into social media sites, affording students and alumni the opportunity to interact with industry experts and potential employers



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Reward High-Quality Contributors

32. **Student “Super-Connectors” Make or Break Social Sites:** The utility and “stickiness” of social community discussion boards disproportionately hinges on the contributions of a select few super-connectors who post high-quality comments, promote institutional messages, offer peer support, and encourage classmate participation

Breakthrough Practice

33. **Create High-Visibility Contributor Status Tiers:** Create incentives and public recognition for the most active and highly networked students (“super-connectors”), ranging from official student government positions to peer ranking systems, digital badges, and “beta” access to new platform functionalities



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Low-Cost Staffing Models

How Can We Scale Social Media Activity without (Many) More FTEs?

Ensure Consistency of Student and Faculty Volunteer Contributors

- 34. Students Lack Expertise, Faculty Lack Incentive:** Social media success can hinge upon faculty (for content expertise) and students (for authentic voice), but these part-time contributors are often inconsistent in the quality and frequency of postings and lack insight or incentive to link social media content to business objectives

Breakthrough Practices

- 35. Pose “Crowdsourced” Questions That Can Be Repurposed as Social Content:** Post focused questions about academic and career advice to Facebook and Twitter, compiling best responses into blog and website content
- 36. Live-Blogging VIP Access:** Provide privileged access to events (i.e., VIP seating, speaker access) in exchange for “live” blogging or tweeting; attract strong contributors by offering opportunities and training for students to build digital “bylines” useful to later job search
- 37. Student Social Media Career Ladders:** Improve student employee retention by creating tiered development opportunities, first by identifying promising candidates through performance in relevant courses, then designing volunteer and eventually paid positions by which students can “advance” an internal ladder
- 38. Host Faculty Administrative Tasks on Social Site:** Familiarize faculty with platforms by moving some “mandatory” administrative activities online (i.e., committee discussions); faculty are more likely to participate in non-required activities after experiencing the platform’s functionalities and benefits firsthand
- 39. Provide Faculty “Digital Brand” Counseling:** Develop support services to help faculty build their digital reputations through social media, providing examples of how social media can help faculty advance their academic careers (i.e., publications, scholarly collaborations)



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Focus Cross-Functional Social Media Teams on Critical Business Metric

40. **Cross-Silo Teams Usually Dysfunctional:** Social media efforts inherently necessitate cross-functional collaboration—bridging marketing, admissions, content, and student support silos—but the typical cross-silo “working group” quickly loses momentum with staff too overstretched in their day jobs and unable to coalesce around the same objectives

Breakthrough Practices

41. **For Shoestring Outfits, Charter Virtual Teams Around Single, Critical Business Metric:** Elevate the typical “working group” by focusing all cross-functional team discussion on how social media can improve one single, vital business metric (e.g., student retention), with all staff proposing ways to contribute to the solution
42. **For Larger Operations, Task Centers of Excellence with Brand-Building and Market Research:** Create centralized social media staff tasked with monitoring brand mentions and mining stakeholder conversations for new product concepts; although requiring dedicated staff, “listening” to organic customer conversations seen as worth the investment among organizations desiring to innovate more quickly



Throughout our profiles of university best practices, this symbol will alert the reader to any relevant tools available in the “Implementation Toolkit” at the back of this book.



Top Lessons from the Study (cont.)

Quick Wins and Long-Term Differentiators

Recognizing dispersion in available resources among institutions, and that many members must pursue excellence without more time, budget or staff than they currently have, the Forum has distinguished Quick-Win practices (incremental change to current practice; minor investment; fast results) from Long-Term Differentiators (potentially transformational, more speculative; require meaningful investments in technology, expertise, or cultural change). For members unable to invest in long-term differentiators immediately, the Forum recommends that quick-wins may help generate the resources needed to fund longer-term activities.

	Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality	Leverage “Tight-Fit” External Communities: Monitor and influence already existing online communities segmented by profession or niche interest (i.e., project management professionals, wellness enthusiasts)	Nudge Prospects from Free to Paid Content: Drive students from free to paid content through proprietary material that helps students feel reduced feeling of “risk” in their educational investment
Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation	Expand Capacity for Real-Time Communication: Utilize technologies (i.e., instant chat, chat rooms, virtual fairs) uniquely-suited to applicants’ higher comfort with written English and expectations of fast, frequent communications	Tailor Presence for Different Influencers and Geographies: Learn social media demographics and usage patterns in target countries in order to develop country-specific social media presences (i.e., Renren in China)
Elevating Engagement and Retention	Create Incentives for Social Site Registration: Focus institution-led communities on pointers for academic and career success, not social support; adult students are attracted to “practical” content initially, but see value of social support after witnessing online peer interactions over time	Reward High-Quality Contributors: Create incentives and public recognition for the most active and highly networked students (“Super-Connectors”) to contribute quality content, promote institutional messages, offer peer support, and encourage classmate participation
Increasing Capacity with Current Resources	Ensure Consistency of Student and Faculty Volunteer Contributors: Attract strong student contributors by offering opportunities and training to build digital “bylines” useful to later job search; familiarize faculty with platforms by moving some “mandatory” administrative activities online (i.e., committee discussions)	Focus Cross-Functional Social Media Teams on Critical Business Metric: Elevate the typical “working group” by focusing all cross-functional team discussion on how social media can improve one single, vital business metric (e.g., student retention), with all staff proposing ways to contribute to the solution.



Member Implementation Guide

- Defining Social Media
- Assessing Your Current Practice
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Supporting Members in Breakthrough Practice Implementation



Defining Social Media

A Note on Platforms

In the pages that follow, we describe some of the most interesting ways that continuing, professional, and online education units are using sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, but we also discuss websites and technologies that might not be conventionally defined as major social media platforms. Rather than uphold a strict definition of “social media,” our objective is to highlight breakthrough practices from organizations that are using new forms of technology to communicate and interact with prospects, students, and alumni in a more scalable way.

Members often ask us: “What platforms should we be using?” Across sectors, leading social media organizations caution that this is the wrong question to begin with—the right platform depends on both the objective and audience segment. In each case study in this publication, the university’s choice of technology—whether it be Facebook, a chat room, or an open source course—was uniquely relevant to the organization’s needs. For more information on the problems of pursuing a platform-led strategy, see pg. 38.

For information on specific platforms, we recommend using the chart below to identify any relevant case studies or tools in this publication that provide insight into a specific platform’s successful applications. In the **Implementation Toolkit** at the end of this publication, we’ve also included a **Major Platform Comparison Chart**, describing the relative strengths and disadvantages of the three major platforms (pg. 143); **Key Performance Indicators Builder**, outlining metrics across several platforms that would be useful to collect (pg. 221); **Faculty How-to Start-up Links**, providing several online resources for introducing beginner faculty and staff to the basics of creating accounts on major platforms (pg. 213); and a **Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary** as a basic reference guide for administrators, faculty, and staff new to social media (pg. 227).

Technology or Site	Access Relevant Case Study or Tool
Facebook	FIU Business case study, pgs. 54-55 College of Creative Studies case study, pgs. 98-99 Tool #9: University of Phoenix Most Popular Posts pgs. 155-157 Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas, pgs. 160-162
Twitter	University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management case study, pg. 52 Syracuse University and Boston University case studies, pgs. 109-110 Boston University case study, pg. 119 Tool # 4: Joining the Twitter Conversation with Hashtags, pg. 139 Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas, pgs. 160-162
LinkedIn	UW-Platteville case study, pgs. 47-49 Tool #5: Major Platform Comparison Chart, pgs. 143-144
Blogs	eCornell case study, pgs. 50-51
Videos	Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas, pgs. 160-162 Tool #11: Developing and Using Online Videos, pg. 163
Discussion Forums	eCornell case study, pgs. 50-51 Michigan State University case study, pg. 60 Arizona State University and the University of Phoenix case studies, pg. 115
Online Assessment Tests	FIU Business case study, pg. 54 UCLA Extension case study, pg. 59
Webinars and Sample Courses	Stanford University Center for Professional Development case study, pg. 56 Test Drive College case study, pg. 57



Assessing Your Current Practice

The following categories are designed to guide member evaluation of their current social media strategies. These categories should be used to spotlight tactics that map to institutional challenges.

I. Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality		Yes	No
1.	Has the organization analyzed user demographics of prominent social media sites to decide which sites are best suited for recruiting students to particular programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Has the organization established guidelines for recruiters to select and continuously refine which external communities are worth the time for regular monitoring and posting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Does the organization provide recruiters with an FAQ database to expedite social media communications with prospective students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Do FAQ templates include subject-matter-specific content, vetted by program directors and/or faculty, to allow recruiters to avoid a “direct sell” approach when posting on external online community sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Does the organization devote staff time to monitoring “listening tools” to track and build on word-of-mouth buzz about particular programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Does the organization connect social media to in-person recruiting by building information session RSVP forms into popular social media sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Does the organization regularly use “easy ask” methods of encouraging alumni to post about the institution on social media, such as Twitter retweet campaigns and Facebook status donations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Do recruiters use a “permission marketing” approach to prompt prospective students to opt into their social media communications, combining both programmatic information (i.e. events, deadlines) with non-sales-related, industry news?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Are free “trial courses” and webinars tailored to address common sources of uncertainty for adult students, such as unfamiliarity with online delivery or a hesitancy to change careers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Does the institution provide assessment questionnaires and other information to help prospective new students determine whether a new career change is right for them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Does the organization use its content expertise in a particular area to attract both academic and nonacademic constituencies to an online “destination site”?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to pg. 43.

II. Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation		Yes	No
1.	Has the institution created distinct “instant chat specialized lines” that allow prospective international students to self-direct questions to representatives best suited to answer them, rather than to a “one-size-fits-all” chat account?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Does the institution have a query-able FAQ database that prospective students can access themselves and is updated regularly to account for emerging questions and topics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Assessing Your Current Practice (cont.)

II. Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation (cont.)		Yes	No
3.	Are scheduled chat rooms equipped with individually staffed breakout rooms that allow students to run deep in specific topic areas (i.e., visa, financial aid) without derailing the entire session?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Has the organization selected the appropriate country-specific platforms to maintain social media presences in target countries, based on the respective usage patterns in each country?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Has the organization articulated a strategy for following up with prospective students they encounter at virtual fairs on country-specific social media platforms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, please turn to pg. 63.

III. Elevating Engagement and Retention		Yes	No
1.	Has the organization created or purchased a closed, exclusive online social network for current (not prospective) students, either for the organization as a whole or for specific programs or disciplines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Does the organization have a communications strategy for encouraging site registration that focuses on the site's practical (i.e., academic or career) benefits, rather than social opportunities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Do private academic social networks offer one-click social profile creation to registered students to maximize registration rates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Do academic social networks include an automatic chat rollover feature, allowing students in the same course to continue communicating with one another beyond the end of the term?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Does the organization provide a mobile app for online students to locate other students in their geographic regions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Does the organization have formal mechanisms for thanking and encouraging strong student contributors, such as official student moderator positions or "beta" access to new platform functionalities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Do discussion boards on academic social networks incorporate a peer voting process by which students can highlight particularly helpful questions and responses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Does the organization's social network allow users to customize updates according to their interests and preferences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Does the organization's social network contain a course recommendation engine for alerting students to interesting new courses based on past activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Has the organization created a digital archive for its career fairs and uploaded videos of panels and employer presentations for students unable to attend in person?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Is the organization awarding digital "badges" for individuals who demonstrate specific competencies valued by employers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, please turn to pg. 81.



Assessing Your Current Practice (cont.)

IV. Increasing Capacity with Current Resources		Yes	No
1.	Has the organization taken steps to filter crowdsourced content to feature high-quality submissions from volunteer students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Does the organization incentivize strong student contributors to volunteer to post on social media by providing privileged access to events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Do staff posting from organizational social media accounts identify themselves by name to convey personality behind the account?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Has the organization established career ladders for student workers contributing to social media in order to improve student employee retention?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Are “mandatory” administrative tasks for faculty (i.e., committee discussions) built into the organization’s internal social network in order to familiarize faculty with the platform?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Does the organization provide faculty new to social media with a DIY Toolkit for introducing them to basic platforms and strategies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Does the organization promote real-world examples of faculty using social media to advance their academic careers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Are cross-functional social media “working groups” designed to focus on how staff across silos can collaborate to improve one single business metric?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Do staff monitor external social media communities to accelerate the new product development and market research process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to pg. 103.</i></p>			



Frequently Asked Questions

Throughout the course of our conversations with COE Forum members, we found that continuing, professional, and online education units looking to discipline their social media strategy often started by asking the Forum the four questions below. For each question, the Forum has identified the specific breakthrough practice or other component of this publication that will be most useful for members in designing an implementation plan.

What social media platforms should I monitor or join?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the “Defining Social Media” chart on pg. 26 to pinpoint relevant references to specific platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) throughout this publication.• Learn about leading institutions’ breakthrough practices for identifying, monitoring, and participating in external social media communities on pgs. 47-52.• Access our “Making Monitoring Easier” and “Platform Prioritization Guides” toolkits on pgs. 129-171.• Consider platforms especially relevant to international students on pgs. 65-78 and 173-180.
What type of content is most likely to yield conversions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read about the value of the “soft sell” when contributing to external online communities on pgs. 48 and 51.• Understand how institutions use free content to drive prospects to paid content through the breakthrough practices on pgs. 56-58.• Access our “Value-Added Content Creation” toolkit on pgs. 151-171 for advice on how to design engaging content (i.e., Facebook, contests, video) and recommendations on the best times and dates to post.
How do we ensure that distributed staff, faculty, and students contribute quality and consistent content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read pgs. 108-119 for breakthrough practices for increasing threshold quality and consistency from volunteer contributors.• Consider ways to incentivize and encourage student “super-connectors” to post and encourage peers (pgs. 95 and 109).• Use our “Policy Development and Brand Management” toolkit to provide guidelines on how to post on behalf of the institutions and respond to negative posts (pgs. 181-193).• Access our “Staff and Faculty Training and Development” toolkit for bootcamp materials, job descriptions, and guidelines for selecting student workers (pgs. 195-213).
How do we know if we’re succeeding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read our caution against the counter-productive pursuit of Vanity Metrics (pg. 39)• Look at the results data for many of breakthrough practices (i.e., pgs. 49, 50, 55, 56, 59, 72, 75, and 78) for examples of how institutions focus on key business goals, rather than vanity metrics.• Access our “Measuring Business Impact” toolkit for leading private-sector approaches to measurement and a list of commonly-used metrics (pgs. 215-226)



Supporting Members in Breakthrough Practice Implementation

Beyond This Publication

We see this publication as only the beginning of our work to assist members with better leveraging social media to recruit and retain students. Recognizing that ideas seldom speak for themselves, our ambition is to work actively with COE Forum members to decide which practices are most relevant for your organization, to accelerate consensus among key constituencies, and to save implementation time.

For additional information about any of the services below —or for an electronic version of this publication—please visit our website (<http://www.educationadvisoryboard/coe/>), email your organization’s dedicated advisor, or email researchedu@advisory.com with “COE Forum Social Media Request” in the subject line.



Implementation Road Map and Tools

Throughout our profiles of social media breakthrough practices, this symbol will alert the reader to any corresponding tools and templates available in the “Implementation Toolkit” at the back of this book. These tools, along with additional online resources, are also available on our website.



Recorded and Private-Label Webinar Sessions

Our website includes recordings of four hour-long webinars walking through the practices highlighted in this publication. Many of our members convene their teams to listen to recordings together; COE Forum experts are also available to conduct private webinars with your team.



Unlimited Expert Troubleshooting

Members may contact the consultants and analysts who worked on any report to discuss the research, troubleshoot obstacles to implementation, or run deep on unique issues. Our staff conducts nearly a thousand telephone consultations every year.



Facilitated Onsite Sessions

Our experts regularly visit campuses to lead half-day to day-long sessions focused on highlighting key insights for senior leaders or helping internal project teams select the most relevant practices and determine next steps.



The Challenge—Disciplining Social Media Strategy

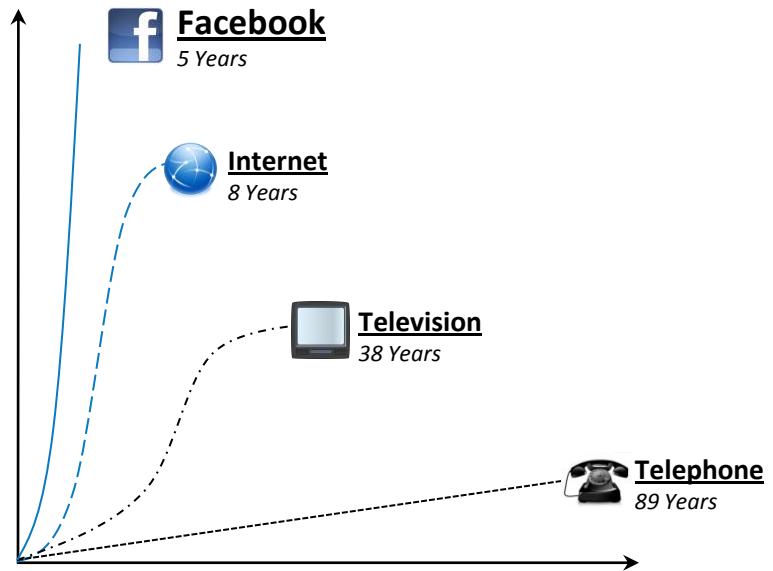


Social Media Now Too Big to Ignore

With over one billion active users, social media—initially dismissed by many as a passing fad—has become a deeply embedded component of the internet’s landscape. The speed with which social media has achieved this permanence is stunning: whereas the telephone reached 150 million users nearly 90 years after its invention, Facebook accomplished the same a mere five years after its founding. Given the rapid rise of social media, higher education institutions worry that a failure to participate will result in significant competitive disadvantages that will only grow larger with time.

Many Institutions Worried About Falling Behind

Time to 150 Million Users



A Game-Changer in Higher Education?

How Do We Get Students?

- Social media displaces advertising spend
- Truly global outreach possible
- **Recruiting Economics Transformed**

What Is Our Product?

- Virtual quad for adult and online students
- Retention and student success
- Richer alumni engagement
- **Redefining the Student Experience**

Source: Hempel, Jessi, "How Facebook Is Taking Over Our Lives," <http://money.cnn.com/>, (accessed November 22, 2011); Elon University School of Communications, "Imagining the Internet," <http://www.elon.edu/>, (accessed November 22, 2011); Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



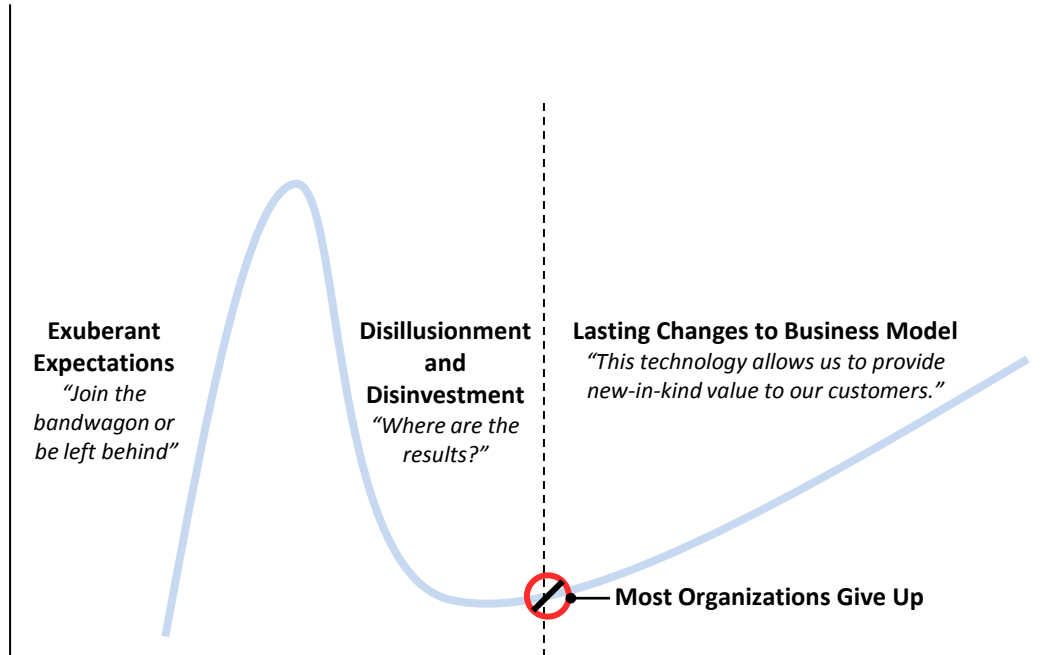
Poised for Disillusionment?

Continuing, professional, and online education leaders worry that, much like in the early days of the e-business era, organizations will lavish unsustainable amounts of money and time on social media experiments—only to end up abandoning efforts after not seeing results. The Technology Hype Cycle (pictured at right, and originally developed by Gartner, Inc.) depicts the typical pattern for how new technologies are adapted and evolve: at the beginning, initial enthusiasm is extremely high, but quickly gives way to disillusionment when organizations fail to see immediate results, often giving up on the new technology altogether. Meanwhile, a smaller number of more disciplined organizations make it past the dotted line pictured at right; they use the technology to set new competitive standards in their industries that severely disadvantage those organizations that disinvested too soon.

Our objective in this publication is to help COE Forum members “curve jump”: in the pages that follow, we profile the “quick wins” that can be gained from social media in the near term, while also providing advice about the “long-term differentiators” that will be necessary for remaining competitive in the future.

The Skeptic’s View—We’ve Seen This Story Before

The Technology Hype Cycle



Key Mistake: Most Organizations Overestimate the New Technology’s Near-Term Benefits

Key Mistake: Most Organizations Underestimate the New Technology’s Long-Term Impact

How do we “curve jump”?

Source: Fenn, Jackie and Rasking, Mark, *Mastering the Hype Cycle: How to Choose the Right Innovation at the Right Time*, Boston, MA: Gartner, 2008; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

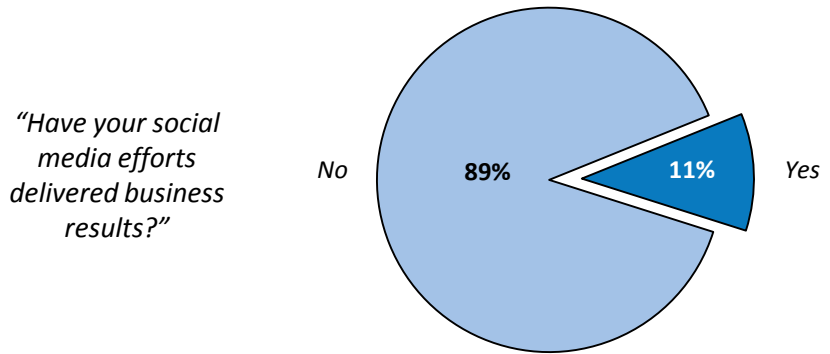


Social Media ROI a Challenge Across Industries

Although social media ROI remains an elusive goal for many businesses, resource disparity does not appear to play a large role in distinguishing exemplary organizations (those seeing results) from the rest. A recent survey of over 250 Global 2000 corporations indicates that exemplars are not spending significantly more budget dollars on social media than average brands, nor are exemplars more lavishly staffed.

Most Companies Not Seeing Results

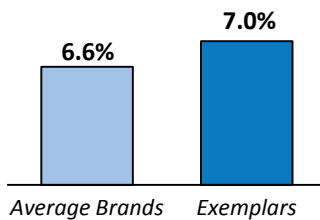
Corporate Executive Board Survey of 250+ Chief Marketing Officers



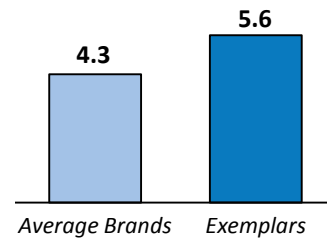
What distinguishes the 11% from the rest?

The Good News: Resource Intensity Doesn't Matter

Social Media Spend As Percentage of Budget¹



Social Media FTE Headcount



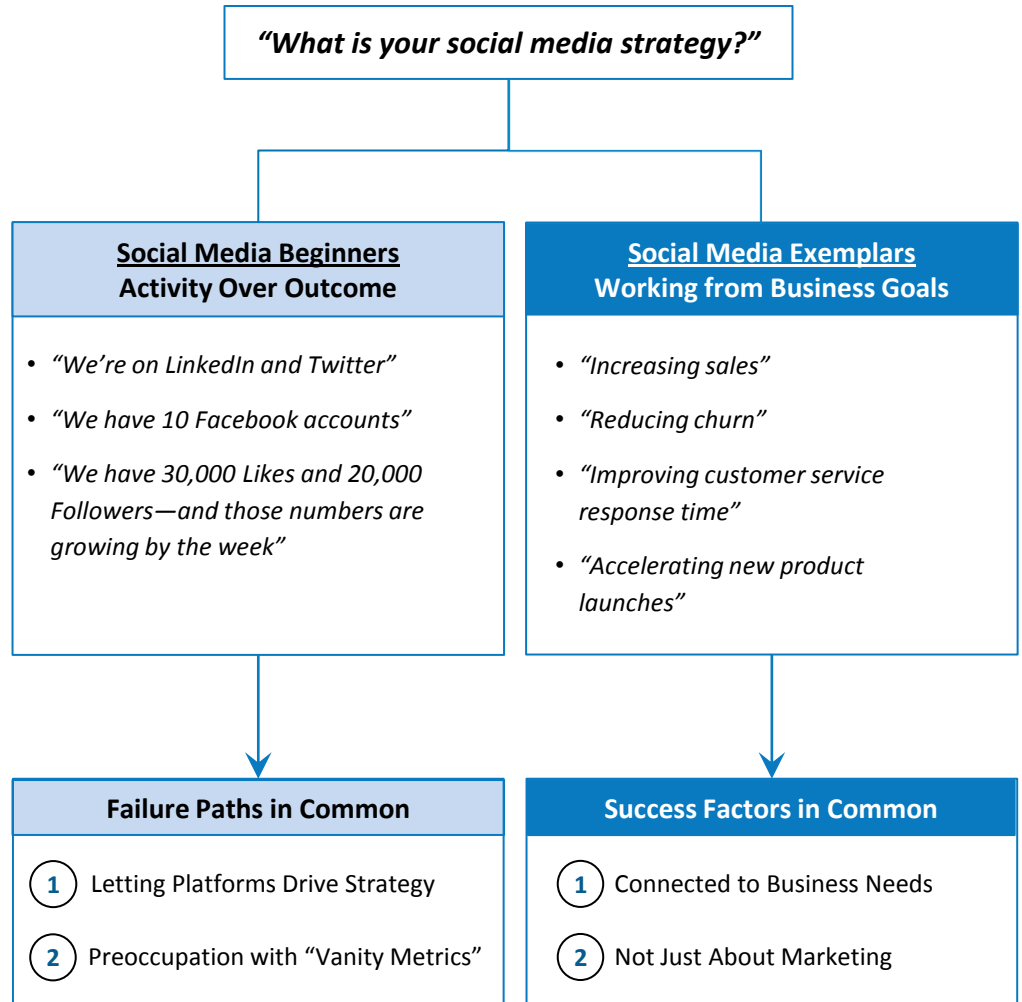
1. Projected 2011 spend based on 2010 survey



What Do Exemplars Do Differently?

Social media exemplars begin by defining what business objectives they would like to accomplish in concrete terms before assessing how social media could be used to achieve those ends. In contrast, organizations new to social media often make the mistake of first creating accounts on popular platforms without a definable strategy in mind, and then collecting basic activity metrics to justify the time and effort expended.

Social Media Consultants Can Predict Whether an Organization Is Seeing ROI by Posing a Simple Question





The Wrong Question: What Platforms Should I Be On?

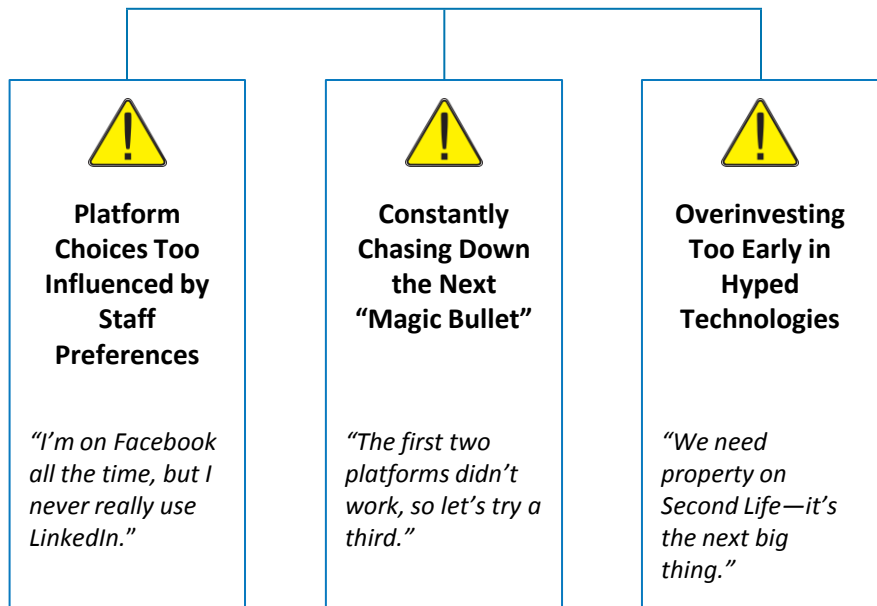
Many colleges and universities undermine social media effectiveness by letting platforms, rather than audience needs, drive their social media strategy. The most common sign of a platform-led strategy is that staff determine which platforms to pursue based on their own interest and comfort level. When institutions focus their energies on popular platforms because staff know those platforms well, they often neglect opportunities presented by less-popular platforms that would nonetheless be better suited to their audience objectives. Other signs of a platform-led approach include “platform-chasing” — constantly testing new platforms when current platforms aren’t producing results, in the hope that the next site will be the “magic bullet” — and overinvesting too early in hyped new technologies.



For additional clarity on the scope of the study’s definition of “social media” as well as a map of platform-specific cases studies and tools, see pg. 26, Defining Social Media.

*Mistake to Focus on Capabilities of Tool,
Rather Than Audience Needs or Interest*

Signs of a Platform-Led Strategy



Source: Hof, Robert D., “My Virtual Life,” http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_18b3982001.htm, accessed November 22, 2011; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



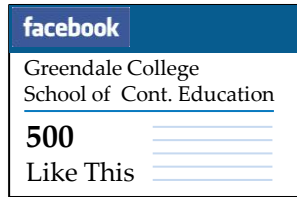
The Wrong Objective: Preoccupation with “Vanity Metrics”

Too often, colleges and universities experimenting with social media make the mistake of over-focusing on “vanity metrics” — tallies of friends, followers, comments, and the like — as key indicators of an account’s success. While vanity metrics are easy to obtain, their value is less decided; a high fan total does not necessarily mean that those fans are engaged with the page. In fact, pursuing vanity metrics at all costs can prove detrimental to follower engagement: growing large online communities often requires appealing to a diverse range of constituencies, making it harder for posts to attract the interest of all members. A small community of engaged followers will nearly always be more useful than a large community of people who visited once and never returned.



For a tips on measuring the business impact of social media efforts, see Relative ROI Metrics (pg. 217), Bridge Objectives (pg. 219), Selecting Key Performance Indicators (pg. 221), and Measuring Social Media Community Health (pg. 223).

How Many Likes, Friends, Followers, and Fans Do **You** Have?



Large Number of Followers, but Diverse Constituencies

- Creative writers
- Accounting students
- Summer sessions

Two Undesirable Options for Content



- Trying to be all things to all audiences leads to “lowest common denominator” posts
- Most posts irrelevant to most followers



Large Numbers Join, but Don’t Return or Share Content with Friends



Underestimate Value of Both “Long-Tail” and “Closed” Communities

The “Lost Keys Under the Lamppost” Problem

“When people lose their keys at night, they tend to look under the lamppost, not because they think they dropped the keys there, but because it’s the only thing they can see. It’s easy to obsess over something like how many Facebook ‘likes’ you have since that’s the easiest data to get.”

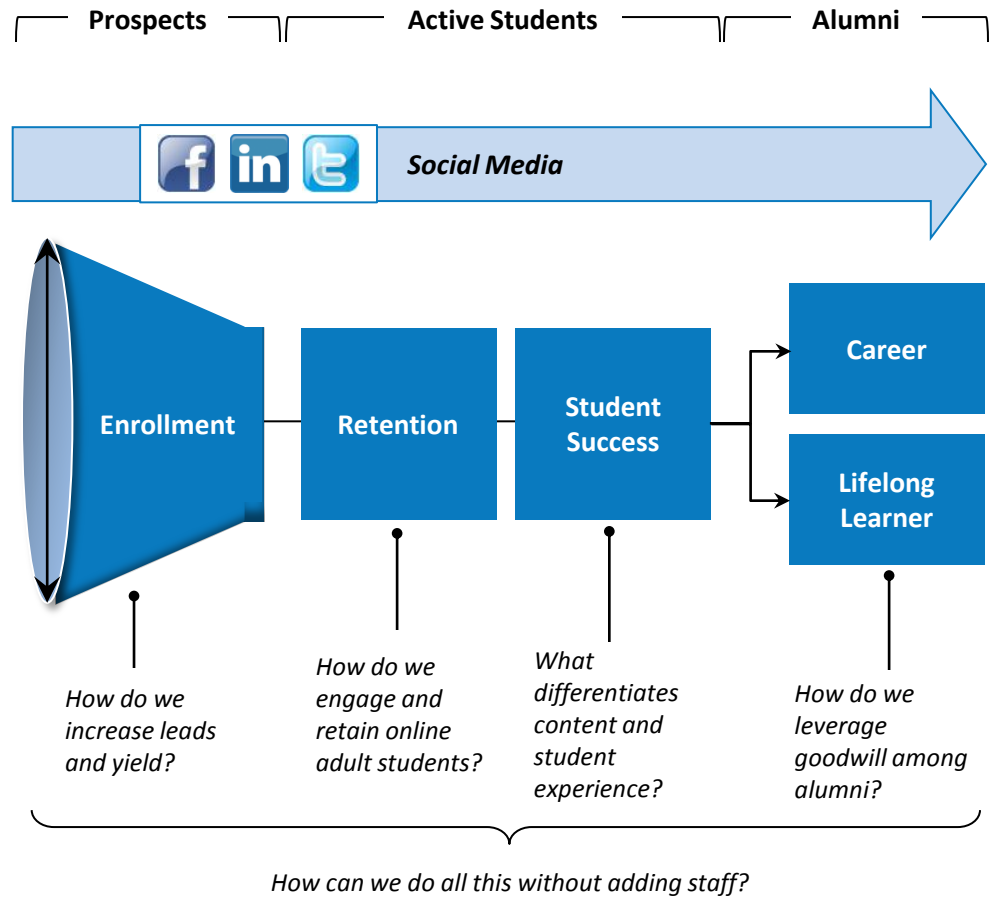
Social Media Consultant



Disciplining Social Media Strategy

This book endeavors to look beyond platform capabilities and vanity metrics to help continuing, online, and professional education units understand how social media can be used to improve outcomes across the student lifecycle. We will address social media's potential for impacting enrollment, student success, and alumni engagement, and offer suggestions for pursuing these objectives without increasing staff capacity.

Improving Outcomes Across the Student Lifecycle





Sound Familiar?

The novelty of social media technologies disguises a fundamental truth about its utility: social media is most useful when amplifying activities colleges and universities have already been engaging in for decades. Social media experts encourage institutions to think of their activities in terms of relationship principles they already use for relating to their students (e.g., leveraging preexisting communities and emphasizing thought leadership). Continuing, professional, and online education units are already pursuing these relationship principles through traditional channels (e.g., encouraging referrals through alumni networks, or emphasizing thought leadership through conference presentations). Social media can benefit organizations by allowing them to pursue those relationships faster, more often, and with greater reach.

New Technologies Simply Amplify Activities You Already Do

<u>Relationship Principle</u>	<u>Traditional Channels</u>
Leveraging Preexisting Disciplinary Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional journals• Industry events
Encouraging Referrals from “Trust Network”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alumni networks• Advisory boards
Emphasizing Thought Leadership in Content Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conferences• Faculty speakers



How do we use social media to amplify the ways that we already relate to students...

- Faster?
- More Often?
- With Greater Reach?



Disciplining Social Media Strategy

Our 50 ideas for disciplining social media strategy in continuing, professional, and online education are the product of over 150 conversations with social media administrators and experts, both within and outside of higher education. Each idea will be addressed in more detail in the following pages.

The majority of the tactics profiled in this publication are from organizations dedicated to continuing, professional, and online education. However, at the encouragement of members, we also included innovative ideas from other organizations within higher education (such as business or education schools) and from the private sector in cases where the lessons would be especially useful and transferrable for continuing, professional, and online education.

50 Ideas for Continuing, Professional, and Online Education

<p>I Increasing Leads</p>	<p><i>Leveraging Preexisting Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Networking Groups • Online Affinity Communities • Alumni Retweet Campaigns • Weekly Permission Marketing Updates 	<p><i>Modeling the Student Experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Course Sample Webinars • Outsourced Trial Courses • Lead-Generating Open Source Classes • Career Planning Tools • Career Matchmaking Diagnostics • Thought Leadership Destination Site 	
<p>II International Applications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant Chat Specialized Lines • FAQ Virtual Advisors • Rotating-Theme Chat Rooms • Chat Breakouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vendor-Managed Virtual Fairs • Parent-Friendly Virtual Tours • Country-Specific Platform Audit 	
<p>III Engagement and Retention</p>	<p><i>Registration Incentives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Social Media Testimonials • Student Moderator Personal Greetings • Course Success Advice Forums • Social Profile Creation Waivers • Mandatory Social Media Curriculum Requirements <p><i>Career-BUILDER Tools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree Cluster Communities • Career Fair Digital Archive • Location-Based Alumni Maps • Capstone Project Contests • Digital Competency Badges 	<p><i>Targeted Peer Introductions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Success Coaches • First-Semester Support Forums • Automatic Chat Rollovers • Online Students-Near-Me Mobile Apps • Study Partner Finders <p><i>Customized Feeds</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized Live News Streams • Daily Digest Emails • Tiered Site Access Levels • Early Warning Retention Outreach • Course Recommendation Engines <p><i>Contributor Status</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Student Moderators • Platform Pilot Functionality Privileges • Contributor Peer Rankings • Social Media Contribution Badges 	
<p>IV Increasing Staff Capacity</p>	<p><i>Students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowdsourced Blog Posts • Live Tweeting Incentives • Social Media “DJ” Shifts • Social Media Internships • International Ambassadors 	<p><i>Faculty</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media-Hosted Administrative Tasks • Digital Brand Support Services • Dedicated Social Media Contributor 	<p><i>Organizational Models</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Centers of Excellence • Critical Metric Virtual Teams



I. Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality



Key Insights

Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality

Leverage “Tight-Fit” External Communities

1. **Far Cheaper and Faster to Leverage Preexisting External Communities:** The first step for social media lead generation is to monitor and influence *already existing* online communities segmented by profession or niche interest (i.e., project management professionals, wellness enthusiasts); participating in external networks is far more cost effective than building and curating new pages or sites
2. **Where to Look, How to Converse:** Not uncommon to find hundreds of relevant sites for any given field, and difficult to determine right contributors due to a fundamental mismatch in staff knowledge and incentives; social media experts (marketers) lack content expertise, while subject matter experts (faculty and program directors) lack time and interest to generate consistent content

Breakthrough Practices

3. **Use Social Sites’ Tools to Select Best-Fit Communities:** Concentrate staff monitoring and posting on a handful of professional/niche-interest communities, using site demographic data to pinpoint communities whose participants disproportionately match the program’s target student profile (i.e., by gender, location, title, employer, educational attainment)
4. **Create Reusable Templates for Non-expert Contributors:** Develop FAQ libraries with responses designed to steer readers to program websites and events; responses must include valuable, discipline-specific information “beyond the sell,” since online community members have low tolerance for direct sales interruptions
5. **Use Alumni as “Signal Amplifiers”:** Develop “easy ask” ways to tap alumni social media networks, such as Twitter retweet campaigns and Facebook status donations; exemplars also post alumni accomplishments on college and university sites to encourage a quid pro quo effect



Key Insights (cont.)

Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality

Nudge Prospects from Free to Paid Content

6. **Handful of Exemplars Piloting “Destination Sites”:** Colleges and universities should use pre-existing sites for near-term lead generation, but organizations only pursuing this approach risk being left behind as the market evolves; leading COE units already seeing up to 30% enrollments generated through creation of new proprietary sites
7. **The Common Theme—Pathways from Free to Paid Content:** Exemplars drive prospects from free to paid content by helping students feel reduced “risk” in their educational investment, designing proprietary website material to address adult student decision-making questions (“Will I like this course?,” “Can I do the work?,” “How will this program help me advance or change careers?”)

Breakthrough Practices

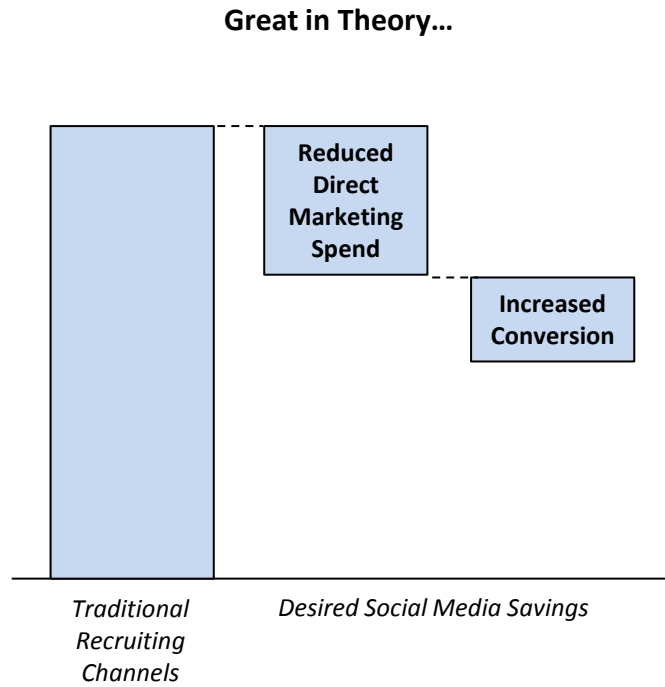
8. **“Permission” Push Messages:** Acquire students’ permission to “opt in” to weekly announcements related to the program’s aspirational brand identity (e.g., “Entrepreneurship”), combining expert insights with reminders of upcoming deadlines and events
9. **“Freemium” Content:** Use social media to promote free webinars and trial courses that can be applied towards a program should students formally enroll; sample courses assist students with evaluating their level of interest and aptitude, as well as course time commitment and quality
10. **Career-Planning Tools:** Create career-advising communities that combine fact-based licensure and professional advice, motivational peer conversations modeling successful career progression, and match-making assessments to help students reduce uncertainty around potential career changes
11. **Multi-audience Community-of-Interest Sites:** Build sites with content spanning all levels of interest—from hobbyist to professional to degree seeker – to establish trust and thought leadership in niche fields, designed to attract corporations and academic research sponsors, as well as prospective students



A Dream Delayed

While continuing, professional, and online education units have been initially optimistic about social media’s potential to reduce marketing spend, most have yet to see concrete results in practice. Two early ideas for recruiting on social media—tapping into external, pre-existing communities (e.g., discussion forums revolving around specific professions or niche interests) and creating new social media pages (e.g., university-curated sites or blogs)—have proved more challenging than expected. Both strategies are typically hindered by limited staff time and resources and an unwillingness to engage on the part of prospective students.

Social Media Not Yet Impacting Acquisitions Economics for Most



Joining Preexisting Communities

- No time to identify or monitor external communities
- Users on social communities resist commercial promotions

Creating Your Own Page or Site

- Expensive to generate compelling content
- Hard to get weakly-attached prospects to join online community before they’ve enrolled



Selecting the Right Industry Groups to Monitor

The first step for social media lead generation is to identify and influence already existing online communities (i.e., based on specific professions), since participating in external networks is more cost effective than maintaining new pages or sites. However, recruitment staff can quickly become overwhelmed by the plethora of external online communities inviting monitoring and response. In order to conserve recruiter time for only the highest-yield online communities, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville began by analyzing the user demographics of LinkedIn, a popular online professional-networking site. Based on LinkedIn demographics, UWP first identified three degree programs for which the highest number of prospective students were likely to be congregating on LinkedIn.

Next, the institution needed to identify the most promising groups for recruiters to join – not an easy task, given the high volume of user-generated LinkedIn groups for any field. The University of Wisconsin-Platteville selected groups with consistent activity (regular postings by group members) and members with job titles similar to those of the programs’ target students. The University also avoided job-seeker groups, recognizing that members of those groups are typically more interested in immediate employment opportunities and less interested in pursuing additional degrees.

For more information on monitoring, see the Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide (pg. 131), Google Alert Optimization Tips (pg. 133), and the Key Influencer Identification Worksheet (pg. 137).

Marketing UW-Platteville’s Online Degrees on LinkedIn



1
Understand Platform Dynamics

Who Uses LinkedIn?

- Gender**
60% male
- Education Level**
Majority BA holders
- Industry**
Engineering, IT, Finance

2
Identify Best-Fit Degrees

- Criminal Justice
- Business Administration
- Engineering
- Adult Education
- Organizational Change
- Project Management

3
Select Groups for Monitoring



Thousands of LinkedIn groups with “project management” in the title or description.

Right Job Titles
Align with student profile

Consistent Activity
Regular postings

Avoid Job Seeker Groups
Less interested in degree



Making Monitoring Scalable

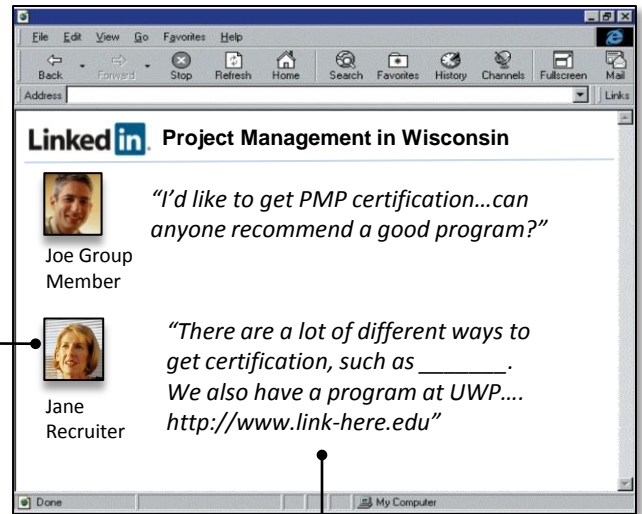
After selecting the most promising LinkedIn groups, University of Wisconsin-Platteville recruiters minimize the staff time required to monitor group activity through several automated response tools. First, recruiters sign up to receive the LinkedIn groups' daily digest emails to keep abreast of general group discussion topics. When a group member posts a relevant question or comment, it appears in the daily digest email, and University of Wisconsin-Platteville recruiters can respond on the LinkedIn group page. Effective responses avoid a "direct sell" approach and typically address the member's question more broadly before mentioning the University's programs at the end. A library of about a dozen templated responses to frequently asked questions across disciplines also helps recruiters speed up the response process: they can simply tailor a pre-drafted message to a specific group member question instead of responding from scratch with every interaction. Connecting with prospective students in this way requires an average of no more than 10 minutes per recruiter per day.

In Less Than 10 Minutes a Day



Realistic Targets

- Eight recruiters; responsible for 20-25 groups each
- ~20 postings per month; 2,000 per year
- Only three hours per month



Automated Response Tools



Daily Digest Emails

Automatic notifications to new group discussion postings



Templated Responses


Contain useful information beyond "sell"; ~12 FAQs applicable across disciplines

Source: Hollingsworth, Leslie, *Using LinkedIn to Reach Adult Prospects and Applicants*, http://www.academicimpressions.com/events/event_listing.php?i=1050&t=Overview, February 16, 2011, accessed November 22, 2011; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis;



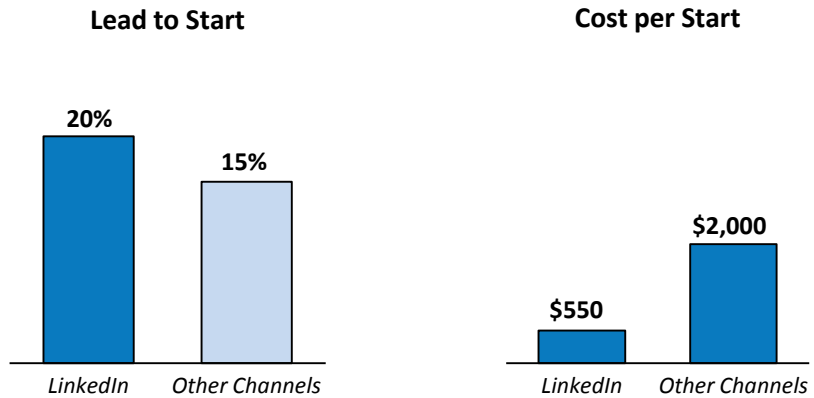
Undeniably Cost Effective

Monitoring select industry groups on LinkedIn has proven to be an effective recruitment method for the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, and at a far lower cost per start than other channels. Their LinkedIn practices have led to around 100 additional enrollments per year, generating almost \$2 million in tuition revenue.

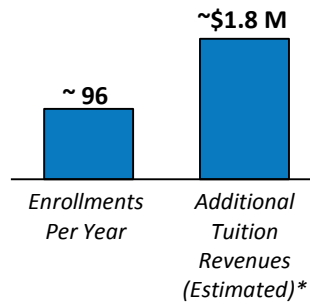
 For an expansion on measuring the impact of social media efforts, see Relative ROI Metrics (pg. 217) and Bridge Objectives (pg. 219).

Improved Acquisition Economics for Targeted Marketing

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
PLATTEVILLE



Significant Revenue Growth



*Advisory Board tuition estimate based on 96 new enrollments per year, each committing to a program requiring an average of 30 credits at \$610 per credit.



You Can't Buy This Kind of Sales Force

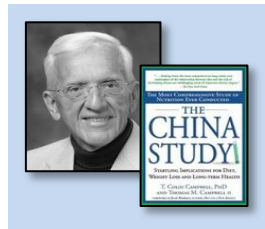
A mass-market program with high enrollment potential such as the University of Wisconsin-Platteville's project management program is not a prerequisite for generating valuable social media buzz; under the right conditions, a small niche program with a passionate fan base can experience just as much, if not more, success through social media. eCornell's plant-based nutrition certificate is one such niche program, built around Dr. T. Colin Campbell's bestselling book on the topic and co-branded with the professor's foundation. Due in large part to Dr. Campbell's popularity, the program garners an impressive number of mentions on blogs and forums dedicated to healthy diets, where current and former students testify about positive experiences in eCornell's program. Word of mouth and other non-paid sources have generated a staggering 89 % of eCornell's leads for the program, and have quickly made it the organization's second-most popular offering.



For more information on monitoring the web 2.0 space, see the Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide (pg. 131), Google Alert Optimization Tips (pg. 133), and Key Influencer Identification Worksheet (pg. 137).

Word of Mouth for eCornell's Certificate Program in Plant-Based Nutrition

Online Community Buzz



Based on a Bestseller

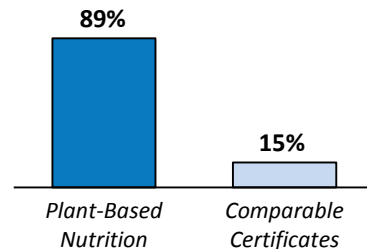
- Three-course certificate built around Dr. T. Colin Campbell's *The China Study*
- Co-branded with professor's foundation



Success with Minimal Advertising

- Second-top eCornell program
- Only one monthly advertisement (*VegNews*)
- 40% wellness professionals; 60% enrichment students

Unprecedented Percentage of Organic Leads




Source: eCornell, available at: <http://www.ecornell.com/>, accessed on June 10, 2010; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



Are Your Ears Burning?

Leading social media organizations build on organic word of mouth by using “listening tools” to track internet mentions of programs and enter conversations when appropriate. Ranging from free tracking services (e.g., Google Alerts) to more expensive tools with advanced functionalities, listening, or monitoring, tools can be configured to provide organizations with an automatic alert whenever a certain phrase (i.e., institution or program name) is mentioned online.

 For more information on selecting and using listening tools, see the Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide (pg. 131), and Google Alert Optimization Tips (pg. 133).

Use “Listening Tools” to Make Most of Organic Conversations

Hundreds of Tools




Free Tracking Services

- Notifications when program mentioned on the web
- Examples: Google Alerts, Wildfire, Social Mention

Pay for Advanced Functionality

- Easy interface for multiple platforms
- Push content at scheduled intervals
- Data analytics
- *Examples:* Radian6, Sysomos, Vocus

Encouraging Recommendations (Illustrative)

 Exciting week! I have just received a certificate for plant-based nutrition...




 Congratulations! Thanks for blogging about the program. We have another session starting in a few weeks and are looking forward to another good group. I see you’re in Chicago—Dr. Campbell is speaking in person at the Health Expo downtown next week.

Jane Recruiter
<http://www.programwebsite.com>

“Soft sell” – website link just included at the end



 Thanks! I learned a lot—will recommend to friends.

Encouraged to post again




Leveraging Alumni Digital Footprints

While current and former students can be very effective program advocates, alumni often don't think to tout their positive educational experiences on social media without prompting. The University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management employs a simple quid pro quo strategy to encourage relevant alumni posts on Twitter. The Carlson School MBA account frequently tweets about alumni accomplishments, which serves two main purposes: it shows prospective students that Carlson School graduates go on to experience career success, and it reinforces graduates' loyalty by mentioning their names to over 1,500 followers. Alumni who are mentioned by the Carlson School on Twitter (or see their friends mentioned) are then more likely to tweet about the Carlson School themselves—and many reach a significant base of prospective students when they do.

 For additional guidance on how to identify relevant Twitter dialogues, see *Joining Twitter Conversations with Hashtags* (pg. 139).


Drawing Upon Your Best Brand Representatives




 **Retweet:** Forwarding another user's Twitter post to your entire network; their username and picture are included in the forward.

Tweet About Your Alumni...

...And They'll Tweet About You

 **CarlsonMBA**
 Congratulations to MBA alum @LisaWilliams on her promotion to Senior Director!

 **LisaWilliams**
 So proud of my alma mater! RT @CarlsonMBA Carlson ranked #1 for MBA job placement by Businessweek

 **SarahWisey**
 Interesting post on engaging former board members: <http://fb.me/1caFQ>
 Retweeted by **CarlsonMBA**

 **MikeJonesJr**
 Just got offered my dream job! Thanks to the folks at @CarlsonMBA for the degree and the great interview advice!

Alumni mentioned to @CarlsonMBA's 1,500+ followers

@CarlsonMBA mentioned to Alumnus's 2,500+ followers

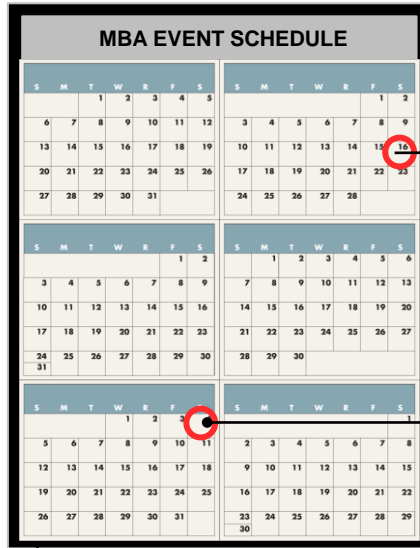


Depending on Calendars to Line Up

Even in an increasingly online world, attending an in-person recruiting event remains one of the best predictors of whether or not a student will apply to a program. Many programs aimed at adult learners struggle to attract prospective students to in-person recruiting events, even when students are truly interested in learning more about the program. Often, one of two roadblocks is responsible for a student's failure to attend: either the student is not aware that an event is taking place, or the student is unable to attend on the date the event is being held. Among programs that offer a limited number of events per year, those common roadblocks can lead to significant missed recruitment opportunities.

To solve this problem, many organizations hope to increase their total number of in-person events offered each year, but worry about the high costs associated with advertising for and holding additional events that may not draw sufficient attendance. Leading institutions are looking to social media as a mechanism for increasing event frequency and attendance without adding unsustainable advertising costs.

Typical Challenge to Recruiting Students to In-Person Events



Attend Our Event This Saturday



Sees print ad for open house



But unavailable that date



Available to attend



But didn't hear about it

Two events per year; number limited by resources to promote

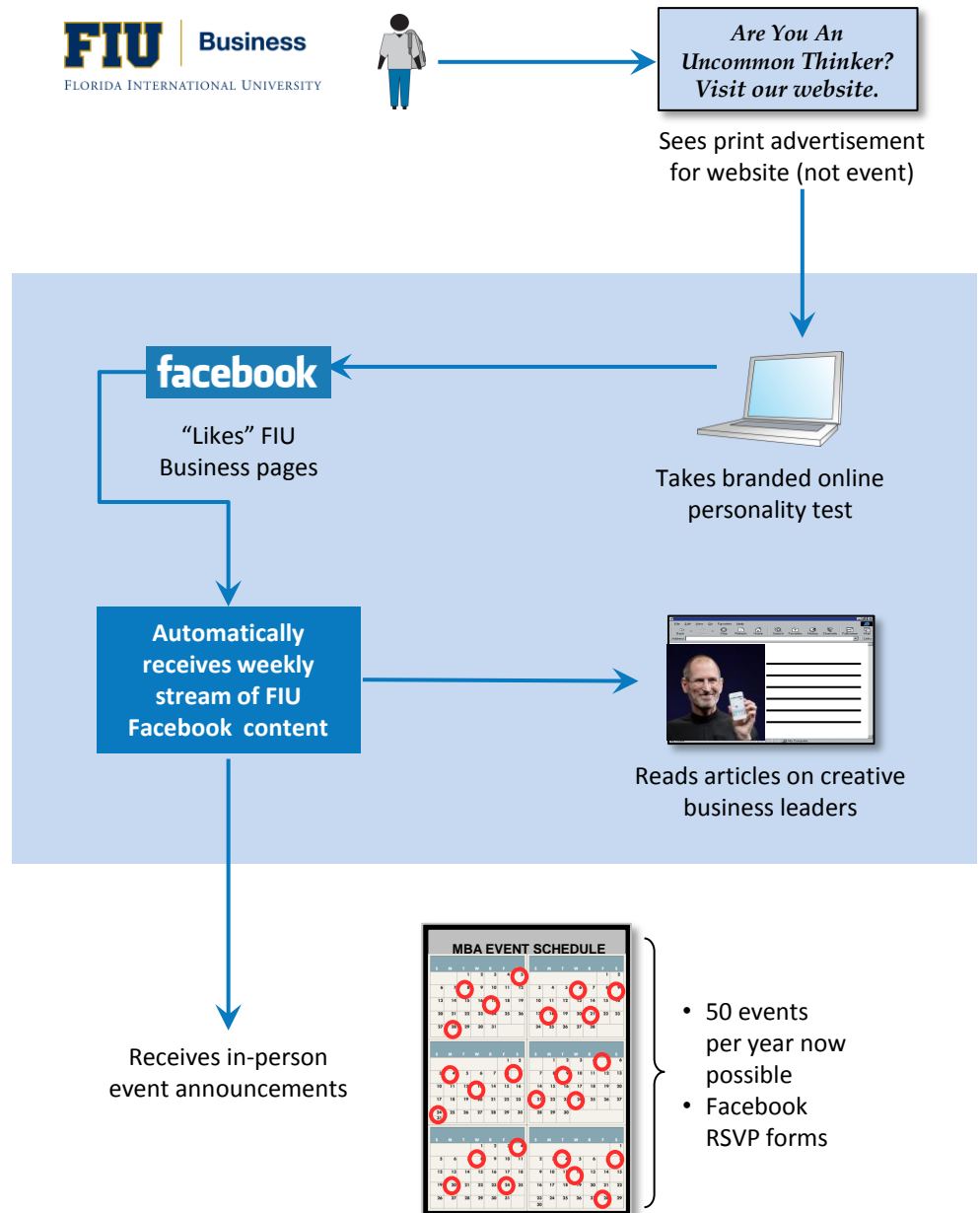


Expanding from Two Events per Year to Fifty

To improve attendance at MBA recruiting events, Florida International University's College of Business Administration has eschewed traditional "interruption marketing" — promoting sessions through unprompted print, radio, and television advertisements and hoping that prospective students notice them—in favor of "permission marketing" on social media, inviting prospective students to opt in to future communications from the university.

All FIU Business marketing is tied to its recent rebranding campaign, "Uncommon Thinkers," which celebrates the school's spirit of entrepreneurship. Print advertisements invite students to take an online personality test ("What type of Uncommon Thinker are you?"); test-takers can then "like" the FIU Business Facebook page and receive a stream of updates from the school, including articles on creative business leaders (reinforcing FIU's entrepreneurial value proposition) and announcements about now-frequent prospective student events. FIU Business has expanded its in-person event offerings from two per year to 50 by simplifying the event format (abandoning large open houses in favor of smaller, shorter panels), and interested students can RSVP directly on Facebook.

Florida International University Business School's Rebranding Campaign



Social Media a Catalyst for Improving Economics of Traditional Marketing Activities



Uncommon Success

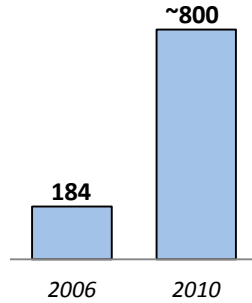
Engaging in social media permission marketing has paid off for FIU Business: they have seen increases in attendance at prospective student events, overall enrollments, and even student standardized test scores since the start of their Uncommon Thinkers campaign in 2007. Although there are likely other factors contributing to the campaign's success, their results nonetheless suggest that social media—especially when used to drive increased attendance at in-person events—can be an effective tool for recruiting students.

Results of FIU Business Branding Campaign, Launched in 2007



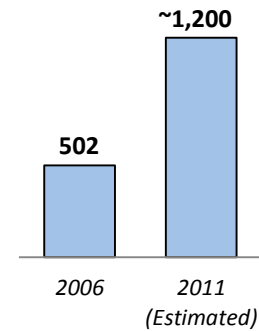
More Interest

Prospective Student Event Attendance



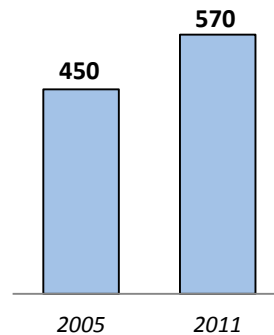
More Students

New Graduate Student Enrollments



More Qualified Students

Average Student GMAT score





Sampling Course Format Delivery, Not Just Content

Many programs are curious about the recruiting potential of free online course samples, but unsure if the number of new enrollments is likely to be sufficient to justify the cost and effort to create content. Offering free online webinars has been a boon for Stanford University's Center for Professional Development, the online and professional education organization housed within Stanford's School of Engineering, which generated a half-million dollars in webinar-sourced enrollments between September 2008 and April 2010. More significantly, nearly two-thirds of those enrollees registered for a course in a subject different from the webinar they viewed, indicating that prospective students use free webinars to preview the school's overall quality and delivery method, not specific course content. Stanford University's example suggests that institutions need not be concerned about the high cost of creating new, separate webinars for a large number of subject areas: a small number of representative sample webinars should suffice for encouraging enrollments in a wide range of topics.

Allocate Resources to a Few Broader-Themed Webinars Rather Than Every Subject



STANFORD UNIVERSITY

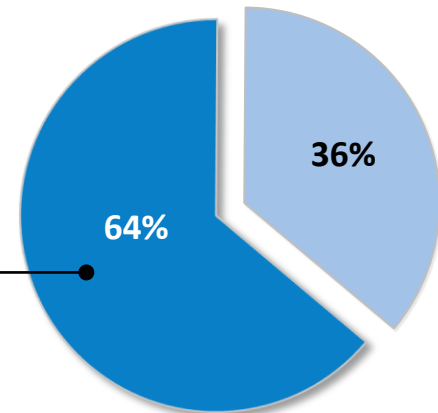
Stanford Center for Professional Development

Pick a Topic, Any Topic

- 131 webinar-sourced enrollments from September 2008 to April 2010
- \$500,000 in revenue

• 64% signed up for a course that did not match the webinar content area

- Sample webinar topics: Aeronautics, Design, Electrical Engineering, Management, Statistics



- Webinar and course in different disciplines
- Webinar and course in same discipline

Source: Little, Carissa, and Marca, Paul, "Managing Engineering Education in Turbulent Times," Stanford Center for Professional Development, 2010; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



The Future of Lead Generation?

Students new to online learning are often unfamiliar with online course structures and unsure if the format is right for them, and sample content like the webinars offered by Stanford University can go a long way toward reducing registration hesitancy among prospective online students. A few universities are taking Stanford's approach a step further by recruiting through Test Drive College, a service that allows prospective students to pilot the format of an online course before deciding to enroll in a full online program. One of Test Drive College's aims is improving student retention, but another is more commercially motivated: the service is owned by EducationDynamics, a lead-generating company that currently partners with nine institutions who pay a fee per inquiry and promise a streamlined transfer process for Test Drive courses into their degree programs. Given Test Drive College's ambitious plans to expand in the next year, many are wondering if this "try before you buy" approach represents the future of online lead generation websites.

Test Drive College Allows Students to Try Online Course Before Buying

The Advertising Campaign



Free Online Course

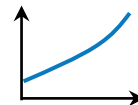
- Five-week course in one of five broad subject areas (*Composition, Intro to Business*)
- Receive a letter grade and three credits (accredited by ACE)

Improve Online Retention

- Experience time commitment
- Determine whether online is good fit

Behind the Curtain

EducationDynamics™



Owned by Well-Known Lead Generator

- Also owns eLearners.com, EarnMyDegree.com
- Transfer process streamlined for nine partner institutions
- Fee per inquiry

Ambitious Growth Plans

- 180 more staff, 24 in B2B marketing
- 50+ students join per week
- 12 more subject areas
- Recently launched Test Drive Graduate School

Source: Education Dynamics Plans to Hire 180 fir Test Drive College, available at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/print-edition/2011/01/07/education-dynamics-plans-to-hire-180.html?page=all>, accessed November 21, 2011; Test Drive College, available at: <http://www.testdrivecollege.com/>, accessed November 21, 2011.



Poised for a Commercial Release

In the Fall of 2011, Stanford University offered a free online open source class on artificial intelligence that drew over 160,000 students from 150 countries. Press releases highlighted the interactivity between professors and students made possible by Google moderator service technology, and the course’s awarding of tiered credentials based on homework and test performance. However, in the fine-print terms and conditions of use for the course, language indicates that the artificial intelligence course was being used to “beta” test a future commercial offering—making the Stanford course yet another example of free content offered with potential lead generation aims.

The Unreported Story of Stanford’s Open Source AI Class

From the Press Release



Dr. Sebastian Thrun
Stanford University



Dr. Peter Norvig
Google

Unprecedented Size and Interaction

- 160,000 students; 175 countries
- Google moderator service technology
- Hundreds of grassroots study groups

Awarding “Credentials”

- Statement of accomplishment
- Advanced track students receive percentile ranking; top 10% get one-year subscription to top AI association

Behind the Curtain

KNOWLABS, INC

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE

“Beta” Access for Future Commercial Offering
 ...We will provide you with, and you desire to receive, the first publicly available access to the Online Course on a non-commercial basis (i.e., “beta” access) **to assist us in developing and evaluating the Online Course prior to any commercial release of the Course (“Initial Course Offering”)**...

Source: Free Stanford AI Class Is a “Beta” for a Commercial Launch, available at: <http://dltj.org/article/stanford-ai-class-is-beta-for-commercial-launch/>, accessed November 21, 2011; Stanford Engineering’s New Online Classes: Hugely Popular and Bursting with Activity, available at: <http://engineering.stanford.edu/stanford-engineering-new-online-classes-hugely-popular-and-bursting-with-activity>, accessed November 21, 2011



Do You Have What It Takes?

In many cases, adult student uncertainty around enrollment stems from more than unfamiliarity with online course formats. Prospective students looking to start or change careers are often particularly hesitant to enter a new online program, and seek reassurance that a program will be a worthwhile investment for their professional aims while accommodating their busy schedules. The University of Southern California's online master's program in teaching aims to inspire student confidence through its Teacher Certification Map website. The site's overt purpose is to provide prospective teachers with certification information and career advice, but it also contains an inquiry form inviting visitors to learn more about USC's program. Currently, 20% to 25% of MAT@USC enrollments are sourced through the Certification Map.

Similarly, the University of California, Los Angeles Extension has partnered with a top Hollywood talent firm and a Silicon Valley entrepreneur to form Empowered, a for-profit company offering career-changing certificates for Baby Boomers. The company has hired engineers from eHarmony (a dating website) to create career assessments to help potential students determine which career changes might be most suitable for them, and to direct them to the corresponding certificate.

Helping Prospective Students Reduce the Risk of Career-Changing

Career-Planning Tools

MAT@USC Teacher Certification Map



- Top Google result for "How to Become a Teacher"
- Testing requirements and salaries by state
- Broad information about Education masters degrees
- Monthly newsletter subscription allowing students to "opt in" to continued updates

20-25% MAT@USC enrollments

Matchmaking Technology

Empowered and UCLA Extension



UCLA Extension

- *Tagline:* "UCLA + Silicon Valley + Hollywood"
- Career-changing certificate programs for 47-65 age group
- Hired engineers from dating website; career assessment determines right certificate

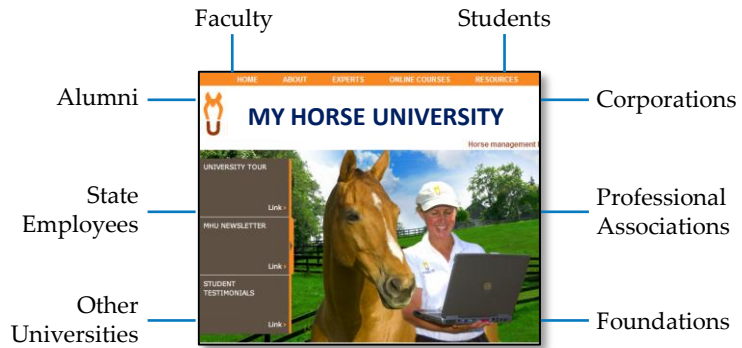
Minimum \$5M royalties to UCLA over five years



The Future of “Destination Sites”

In order to affirm their thought leadership in a particular field, higher education institutions are looking to create “destination” sites that attract multiple stakeholders, ranging from hobbyists to practitioners to academic experts. An early exemplar, Michigan State University has a built MyHorseUniversity.com, a site where diverse constituencies interested in equine research can converge to receive information and share ideas. In attracting a diverse range of horse enthusiasts to the site, MSU hopes to drive traffic from free content (i.e., social media sites and sample webinars) to revenue-generating content (i.e., paid courses and degree programs).

Michigan State University’s MyHorseUniversity.com



Driving Traffic to Open Source and Revenue-Generating Content	
Enthusiasts	Webcasts, e-tips newsletters, Facebook pages
Scholars	National experts database by institution
Professionals	DVD and online course sales
Research Sponsors	Look to MSU first for applied horse management research



Quick Wins and Long-Term Differentiators

Recognizing dispersion in available resources among institutions, and that many members must pursue excellence without more time, budget or staff than they currently have, the Forum has distinguished Quick-Win practices (incremental change to current practice; minor investment; fast results) from Long-Term Differentiators (potentially transformational, more speculative; require meaningful investments in technology, expertise, or cultural change).

At the end of every section of this publication, we have included a table separating profiled ideas into quick wins and long-term differentiators. For members unable to invest in long-term differentiators immediately, the Forum recommends that quick wins may help generate the resources needed to fund longer-term activities.

	Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Increasing Lead Generation Volume and Quality	Leveraging “Tight-Fit” External Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Networking Groups (pg. 48) • Online Affinity Communities (pg. 50) • Alumni Retweet Campaigns (pg. 52) 	Nudging Prospects from Free to Paid Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Permission Marketing Updates (pg. 54) • Online Course Sample Webinars (pg. 56) • Outsourced Trial Online Courses (pg. 57) • Lead-Generating Open Source Class (pg. 58) • Career-Planning Tools (pg. 59) • Career Matchmaking Diagnostics (pg. 59) • Thought Leadership Destination Site (pg. 60)



II. Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation



Key Insights

Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation

Maintain Momentum with International Prospects

1. **Solving Many Challenges in Recruiting Internationals:** Technologies largely ineffective with domestic students (i.e., chat rooms) provide a superior alternative to costly in-person recruiting efforts abroad; chat technologies are more popular internationally and are uniquely suited to applicants' higher comfort level with written English (versus spoken) and expectations of fast, frequent communications
2. **Perfecting "Chat" Critical, but Requires Moving Past One Size Fits All:** Although a powerful tool for expediting international applicants' decision-making process, chat technologies paradoxically become counter-productive if too successful at drawing a crowd; overcrowded chat rooms leave visitors disappointed by fragmented discussions and unanswered questions

Breakthrough Practices

3. **Develop Discrete Chat Pathways around FAQs:** Create instant chat specialized "lines" based on common inquiry areas assigned to topic experts for rapid follow-up
4. **Create Chat Breakout Rooms to Run Deep on Complex Questions:** Equip international informational chat rooms with breakouts for students to run deep in specific topic areas (i.e., visa, financial aid) without derailing overall session
5. **Design Virtual Tours with Parents in Mind:** Increase parent comfort level with campus through virtual tours featuring multiple languages and video clips; for certain offerings (e.g., pathways programs), parents are critical to the buying decision
6. **If You Must Do Virtual Fairs, Use a Vendor:** Select vendors for virtual fairs based on demonstrated ability to attract students through in-country social media; maintain momentum by immediately connecting with attendees on social media platforms post-event
7. **Make Sure You Are on Target Country's "Locally Dominant" Social Site:** Learn social media demographics and usage patterns in target countries in order to develop country-specific social media presences (i.e., Renren in China), recognizing that Facebook and other U.S. sites are not always the most popular (or even permitted) platforms abroad



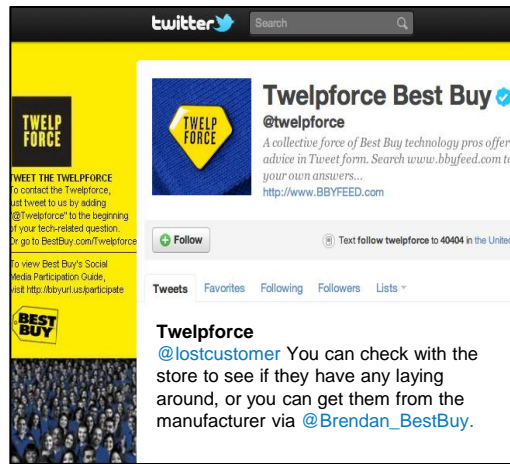
A Surprise “Killer App” — Customer Service

The private sector has found some of its greatest social media success stories in improving customer service response time. Best Buy, for example, has crowdsourced customer service to the “Twelforce,” a cadre of 2,500 retail and technical support employees who volunteer to answer questions submitted via text. Companies such as Best Buy use social media to provide higher quality and lower-cost assistance for a buying decision (a technology purpose) that is complex, infrequent, and expensive—and, therefore, is especially benefited from fast and frequent communications.

The same descriptors—complex, infrequent, and expensive—apply to the typical international prospective student’s decision to pursue education abroad. Institutions seeking to attract these students should consider how they can use social media as part of their recruiting strategies, especially to simplify the decision-making process.

Private Sector Delighted by Social Media’s Impact on Costs and Quality

Best Buy’s Twelforce: “Tech Advice in Tweet Form”



Better, Faster Answers at a Lower Cost

Customer Service via Twitter

Best Buy uses traditional media to steer customer inquiries to www.twitter.com/twelforce for “crowdsourced” support

Tapping Frontline Expertise

2,500 Blue Shirts (retail staff) and Geeks (central technical experts) reply to inquiries—explicitly *not* promotions engine

Impressive Volumes at No Incremental Cost

20,000 questions answered in first three months

Source: Corporate Executive Board, Marketing Leadership Council, “Closing the CMO Leadership Deficit in Social Media, July 2010; Twelforce Best Buy on Twitter, available at: <http://twitter.com/#1/twelforce>, accessed November 23, 2011; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



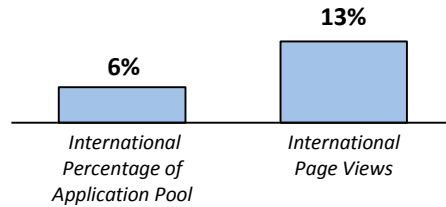
A Surprising Number of Hits

An unexpected finding from Forum interviews: many institutions have found that social media sites—initially intended for domestic students—have attracted a disproportionate number of visits from prospective international applicants, who benefit from technologies such as virtual tours and blogs as a way to experience a closer look at the institution without needing to visit in person.

Disproportionate International Interest in Social Media

Higher Virtual Tour Participation

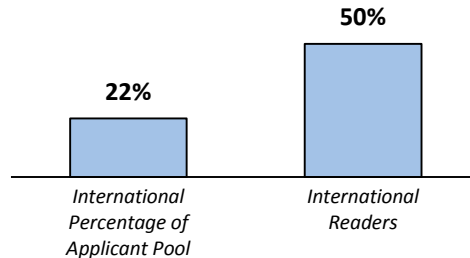
SUNY-Stony Brook



Spend approximately twice as much time compared to the average U.S. visitor

More Attracted to Blogs

Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Source: MIT Admissions website <http://mitadmissions.org/apply/process/stats>, accessed November 21, 2011.



A Natural Fit

To date, the most advanced practices in international social media recruiting (profiled in the pages that follow) have manifested largely from institutions recruiting undergraduates to campus-based programs; however, practitioners believe online and graduate students share similar characteristics that are particularly conducive to social media. Irrespective of delivery format or educational offering, international prospective students typically face a unique set of obstacles when making their buying decision that stem from language and geographic barriers. Social media can help make these obstacles more manageable while also meeting students' expectation for a high-touch application process.

Typical Recruitment Challenges Solved by Social Media



International Student Characteristics

- More comfortable with written English than spoken
- Different time zones make phone communication difficult
- Limited network of peers/mentors to learn about U.S. universities
- Cannot "experience" campus through traditional means
- Expectations of fast and frequent communications



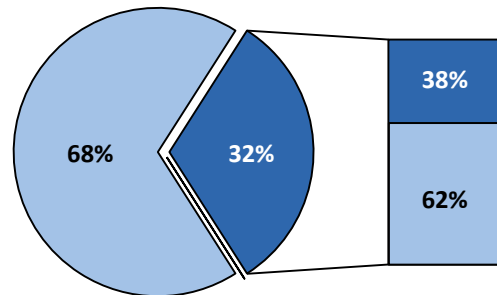
A Tool Awaiting the Right Market

Finding limited success with the use of chat technologies (i.e., chat rooms, instant chat), many institutions have mistakenly abandoned these tools altogether, failing to realize that technologies that aren't effective in the U.S. might turn out to be very effective abroad and vice versa — audience habits and needs are different. While chat rooms may not impress the small percentage of admissions departments that use them to recruit domestically, research suggests that chat technologies (including instant chat and chat rooms) have much greater utilization abroad. Of particular note, chat technologies are far more popular in such key graduate-level international recruitment markets as India, China, and Brazil than in the U.S.

Potential for Real-Time Chat Technology in Key Source Countries

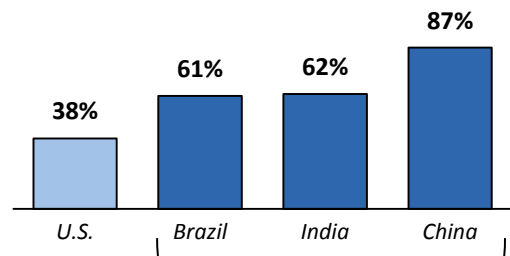
Tendency Might Be to Dismiss ...

Small Percentage of U.S. Institutions Finding Admissions Chat Rooms Effective



...But Chat has Greater Utilization Abroad

Percentage of Chat Users in U.S. Much Lower Than in Other Countries



Even higher percentages of users among Millennials, who prefer chat to email

Source: BCG, China's Digital Generations 2.0, 2010, available at: www.bcg.com/documents/file45572.pdf, accessed November 21, 2011; Noel Levitz 2011 Marketing and Student Recruitment Practices at Four-Year and Two-Year Institutions, available at: <https://www.noellevitz.com/papers-research-higher-education/2011/2011-marketing-and-student-recruitment-practices-report>, accessed November 21, 2011.



Keeping Up with the Questions

Instant chat provides prospective international students with an instantaneous, high-touch means of getting answers to their questions; it also appeals to their preference for written rather than spoken English. However, managing the chat lines can be time consuming and distracting for admissions staff. The process can be made more manageable by allowing students to self-direct their queries to the appropriate individual and to find answers on their own more efficiently.



For additional guidance on using an aggregator to streamline instant chat, see the Meebo User's Guide (pg. 179).

Deploying Real-Time, One-on-One Chat Without Overwhelming Staff

Difficult to Respond to Instant Chat Volume



Single Designee Hard to Scale

- Distracted by queries
- Lacks expertise for all questions



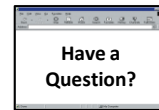
Response Teams Difficult to Coordinate

- Each question sent to whole team
- Delay as staff decides who responds
- Non-responders still interrupted

Directing Students to Different "Paths" Based on Common Queries

Chat with an Admissions Advisor

Chat with a Visa Advisor



Instant Chat Specialized Lines

- Areas requiring specific expertise, interest to large volume of students
- *Visa, immigration, financial aid*

FAQ Virtual Advisors

- Range from topic lists to query-able databases
- Most traffic during weekends/off-hours
- Questions updated monthly
- 20%+ reduction in email traffic



Not Necessarily the More the Merrier

While instant chat is one-to-one, chat rooms afford the opportunity for group discussion and therefore can be a more efficient means for recruiters to communicate with a larger number of students. However, if not carefully managed, the larger audience can too often prevent substantive and satisfying discussion. Chat participants join with potentially disparate goals for the conversation; some may want to network, others will have program-specific questions, yet others will have queries regarding the application and other administrative issues. Chat room moderators must be prepared to address all of the questions in a timely and organized fashion, or participants will leave dissatisfied with the conversation.

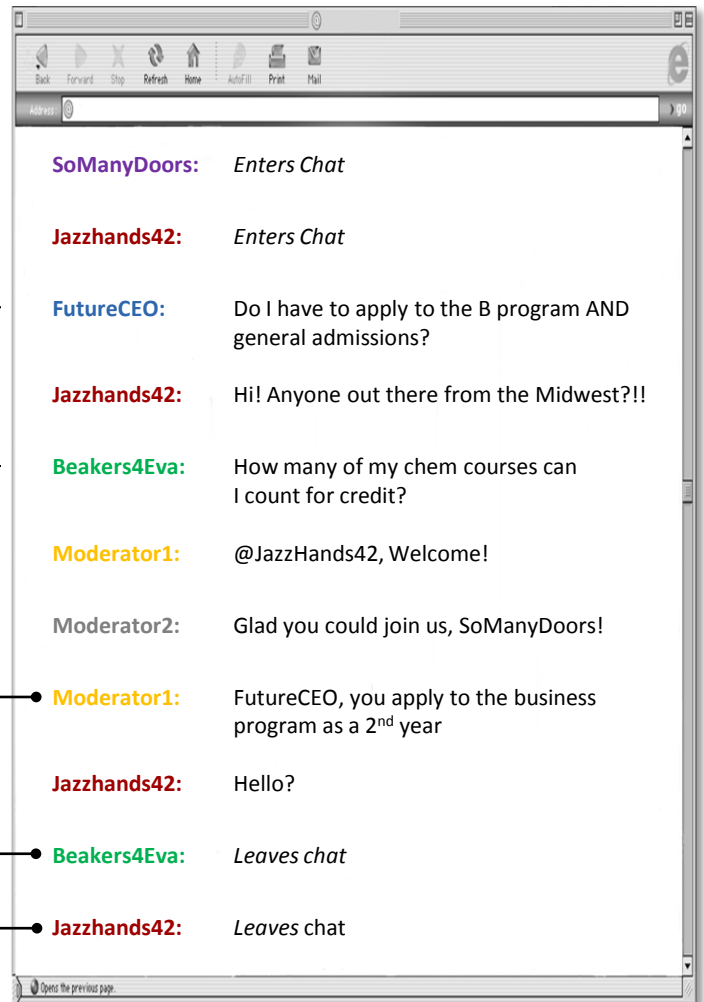
Typical Chat Room Experiences Disappoint Due to Too Many Topics

⚠ *Difficult for moderator to respond to unrelated questions; substantive discussion unlikely*

⚠ *Struggling to catch up*

⚠ *Question unanswered*

⚠ *Hard to meet people*

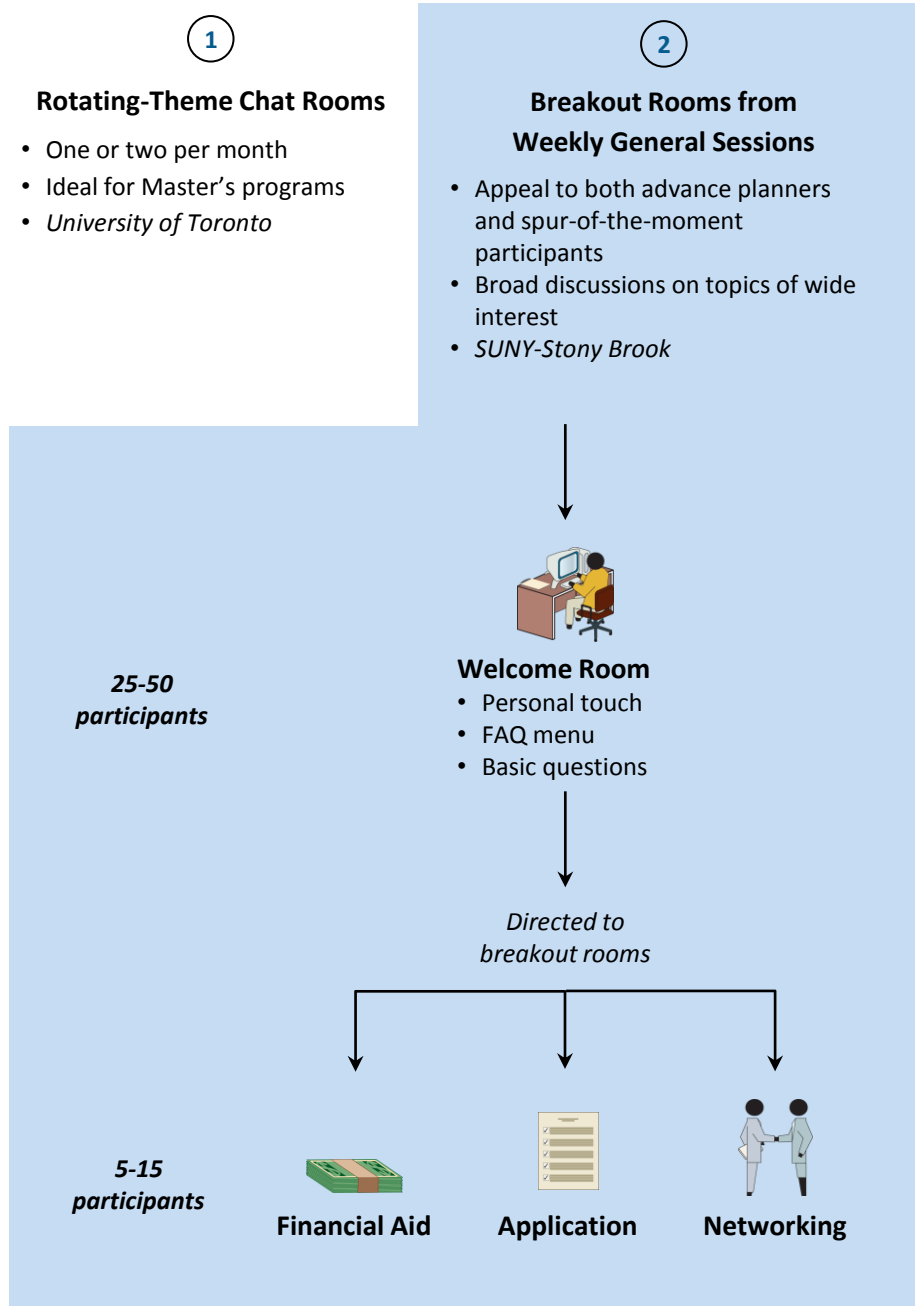




Bringing Order to Chaos

The University of Toronto and SUNY-Stony Brook streamline their prospective student chat rooms by narrowing the scope of the conversation. Whether by hosting sessions around specific themes, as done at the University of Toronto, or hosting more frequent sessions with intra-session break-out rooms, as Stony Brook does, containing the breadth of the conversation simplifies the moderator's job and encourages more meaningful connections with and among participants.

Organizing Discussions Around Prospective Student Interests





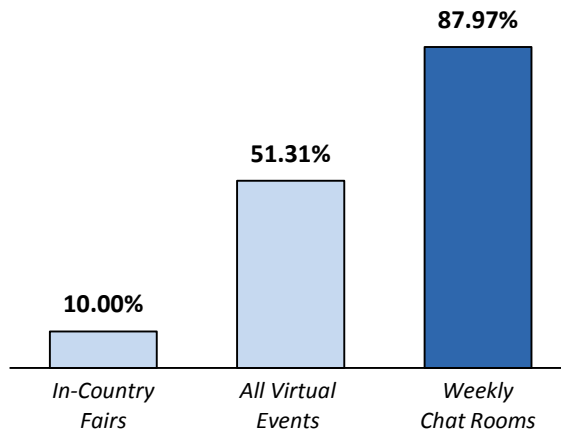
A Cost-Effective Addition to the Recruiting Toolkit

SUNY-Stony Brook’s chat break-out rooms have proven to be a valuable component of the institution’s international student recruitment process. The conversion rate is close to 90% among chat room attendees, a striking contrast to the 10% conversion rate among attendees at expensive in-country fairs. Though there are likely confounding factors that make chat room attendees more likely to apply and be admitted, the unique value-add of chat rooms is difficult to argue. They provide a relatively high-touch interaction with prospects at a low and stable cost.

Chat Room Attendees More Likely to Convert at SUNY Stony Brook



Strong Conversion Rates



Per-Student Cost (Conservative Estimate)

Per-Session Costs

Setup	\$20
Moderators (2)	\$80
FAQ development	\$20
Cost Per Session	\$120

x 25 sessions/year

\$3,000

Platform Costs \$2,500

Total Cost \$5,500

÷800 participants

\$6.88/student



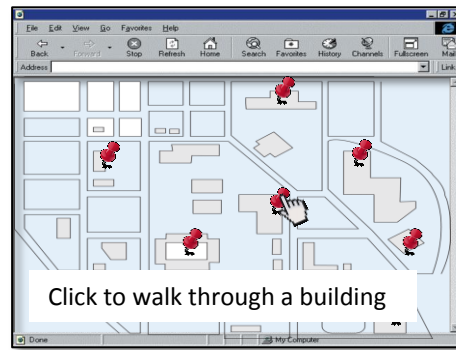
Imagine Yourself on Campus

Realizing that many international prospective students' buying decisions are heavily influenced by parents, the University of Cincinnati designed its virtual tours website to cater to parents' questions, concerns, and accessibility needs. Content should focus on top priority topics for parents including safety (for campus-based programs), costs, and career resources and job prospects; should be entirely in native languages (parents may not speak English, even if their children do); and should be arrayed in convenient (and obvious) locations on the website and relevant social media channels, like YouTube.



For additional information on developing recruiting and marketing videos, another parent-friendly medium, see *Developing and Using Online Videos* (pg. 163).

Making Virtual Tours International Student (and Parent) Friendly



Increase Parent Comfort Level

360° videos give parents knowledge of campus services, sense of safe environment.



Accessibility in Multiple Languages

Tours and instructions offered in 10 languages, including Arabic, Korean, Chinese, Turkish, and Vietnamese.



Easy to Find and Navigate

One click away from admissions homepage; tour platform enables auto-play or self-guided click-throughs to different locations.



Integration with YouTube

Next steps: student and faculty testimonial videos; mini-courses.



Making the Most of Vendor-Managed Virtual Fairs

In-country recruiting has been a difficult expense to justify in light of budget cuts across the postsecondary education space. Some institutions are foregoing some or all of their in-country recruiting in favor of virtual options. Virtual fairs, offered by such vendors as Hobsons and CollegeWeekLive, professional organizations like NACE, and governmental agencies like the U.S. Commercial Service, allow institutions to recruit internationally from the comfort of their base campuses. Equally appealing, host organizations employ robust in-country marketing campaigns (often including social media) in order to guarantee high attendee counts. Although vendor-managed fairs are an attractive option due to economies of scale, many colleges and universities leave disappointed in their investment as they see other booths attracting more virtual visitors, or when enrollments fail to materialize afterward. To solve this problem, Eastern Michigan designed new collateral, a staffing plan, and a follow-up strategy to ensure the most return from their participation in two of Hobsons' international student recruitment fairs.



For assistance assembling a team of student workers to participate in recruiting activities like virtual fairs, see *Advice for Selecting Student Workers* (pg. 197), *Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions* (pg. 201), and *International Student Ambassador Job Postings* (pg. 207).

Economies of Scale Bring Hundreds into Pipeline with Each Event

Vendor Absorbs Marketing Expense



- In-country direct marketing to schools, students, and parents (including through social media)
- ~60 universities per fair
- 4,000-12,000 participants
- Institutions can expect 150-400 visitors

Standing Out in the Crowd



Eight-person team, including students, faculty, and staff



Produce high-quality, language-specific collateral for Virtual Fair e-Library



Recruit attendees into University booth from networking spaces



Immediately afterwards, connect to students on in-country social media



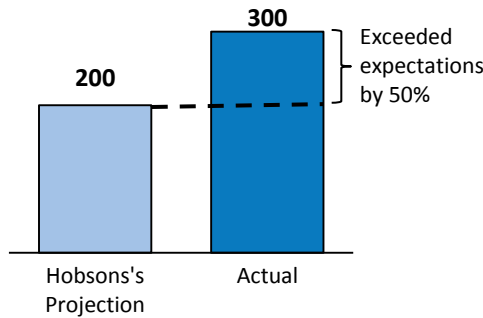
Promising Early Returns

Eastern Michigan University anticipates significant returns on their \$5,000 investment in two virtual international student recruitment fairs. By employing a large set of fair staffers, disseminating high-quality collateral, and encouraging continued conversations on comfortable channels, they engaged with more visitors than expected, which they anticipate will lead to increased enrollments at a low cost.

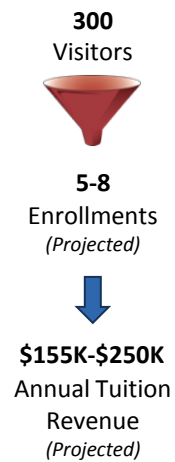
Projected International Enrollment Growth at Eastern Michigan University

Greater-Than-Expected Traffic

Number of Visitors to EMU's Booth

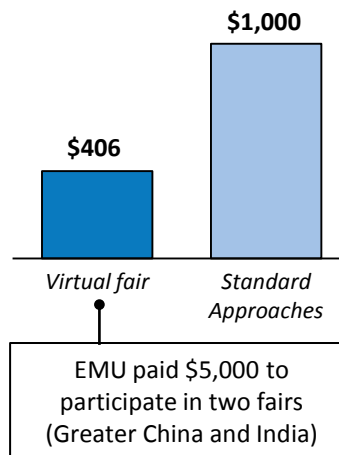


Anticipated Yield (Per Fair)



Considerable Savings


Cost per Anticipated Enrollment



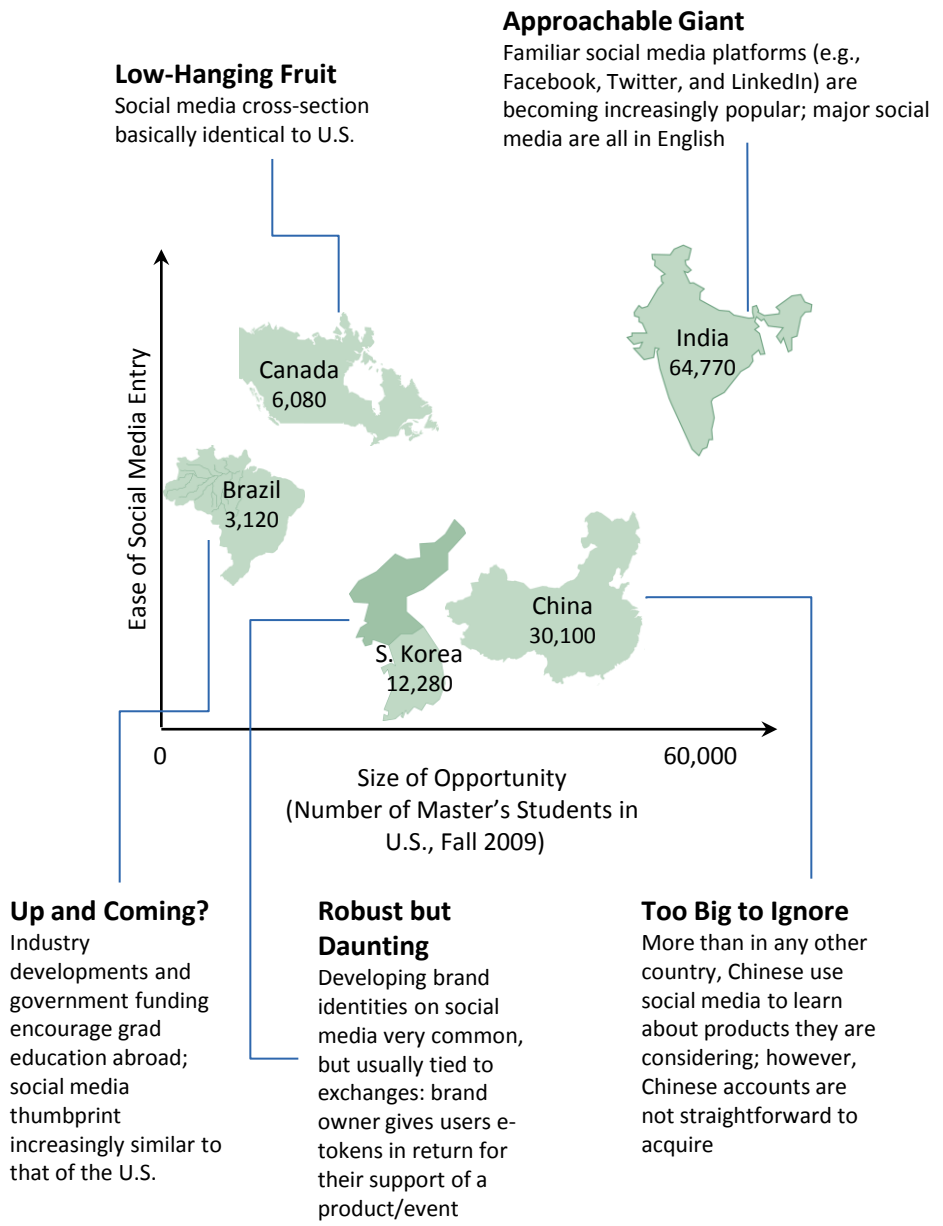


A World of Opportunity

Although U.S.-based social media sites (i.e., Facebook) enjoy global audiences, these platforms are not necessarily the preferred (or even permitted) method of communicating with students in target countries. However, learning the unique social media platform capabilities and audience preferences for multiple countries is too time-consuming for most higher education recruiting staff. Investing in foreign social media is only advisable when the size of the potential market for continuing, professional, and online education is adequately large and/or the social media cross section is comfortably familiar. The COE Forum sized the opportunity for international social media in the matrix at right; note that since the size of the continuing, professional, and online education market can vary significantly based on each institution's unique offerings (i.e., degree level, discipline, etc.), at the suggestion of members, the Forum used the number of master's students in the U.S. as a rough proxy for opportunity size.

 For additional information about social media landscapes in two prime student markets, see Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in China (pg. 175) and Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in India (pg. 177).

Handful of Countries Make Compelling Cases for Entry





Two Questions You Need to Answer

Institutions looking to launch a country-specific social media campaign must answer two questions: First, what platforms does the age group of interest use most frequently in the country? And second, what are the user habits and preferences associated with each platform?

Before launching a Chinese social media presence, Brock University conducted an analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different platforms. In particular, Brock formulated a plan based on the fact that different Chinese social media platforms are better suited for different purposes.



For additional information about China's social media thumbprint, see the Country-Specific Primer (pg. 175).

Critical Information to Launch a Country-Specific Social Media Presence

1

What platforms does each age group of interest use most frequently?



14-22: Social networking site (Renren)



22+: Social networking site (Kaixin001)



All Ages: Instant messaging client (QQ) and microblogging platform (Sina Weibo)



All Ages: Bulletin Board Systems (BBS)

2

What are the user habits and preferences associated with each platform?

Used by younger individuals similarly to Facebook

Used to share information found elsewhere, not personal information

Used to discuss products and culture

Used to discuss products and services anonymously



Brock's Plan: Different Channels for Different Purposes

- Renren account to attract students and receive questions, QQ and Weibo accounts to answer questions and engage in conversations
- Trained student ambassadors answer questions live
- Students available during peak activity hours (9-11 p.m. CST/9-11 a.m. EDT)

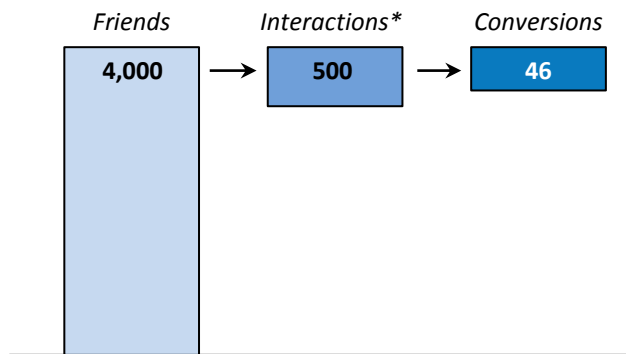


Two Questions You Need to Answer

Brock has experienced impressive success using their Chinese social media strategy; conversion rates using it are approximately twice their rates for other international recruitment methods. Moreover, as Brock's Chinese social media presence is based on such a thorough understanding of the space, it is projected to become a mainstay of the international recruitment toolkit.

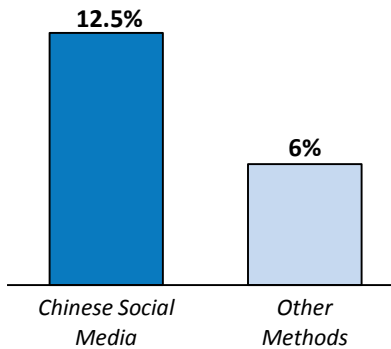


Healthy Path to Conversions Over Three Years



*Email exchanges, phone conversations, Skype conversations, etc.

Twice as Effective as Other Channels Conversion Rates



Brock's Future Vision:
Social media will account for one-third of international conversions.



Quick Wins and Long-Term Differentiators

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	Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Reducing Costs of International Lead Generation	Expanding Capacity for Real-Time Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant Chat Specialized Lines (pg. 69) • FAQ Virtual Advisors (pg. 69) • Rotating-Theme Chat Rooms (pg. 71) • Chat Breakout Rooms (pg. 71) 	Tailoring Presence for Different Influencers and Geographies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent-Friendly Virtual Tours (pg. 73) • Vendor-Organized Virtual Fairs (pg. 74) • Country-Specific Platform Audit (pg. 77)



III. Elevating Engagement and Retention



Key Insights

Elevating Engagement and Retention

What Social Community Features Are Most Attractive to Working Adult Students?

1. **Community More Differentiating Than Content?:** For-profits publicly predicting that student community will be a greater differentiator than unique content in adult and online education in five years time, backing up the sentiment with multimillion dollar investments such as PhoenixConnect
2. **Virtual Campus Still Elusive and Expensive:** A handful of early adopters (for-profit and not) seeing benefits of increased peer interaction; however, most social media pioneers attest to the challenge of motivating and sustaining social site participation among adult students lacking time and interest for “socializing” online
3. **“Practical” Sites Faring Better Than Recreational:** Exemplars focus institution-led communities on pointers for academic and career success, not social support; adult students are attracted to “practical” content initially (i.e., course advice), but see value of social support (i.e., work-life-school balance) after witnessing online peer interactions over time
4. **“Closed” Communities” Getting More Traffic Than “Open”:** In contrast to “open” sites for prospects, online communities for current students are typically “closed” as an exclusive program benefit; occasional exception is full or partial access to alumni and industry experts for networking and outreach

Create Incentives for Social Site Registration

Breakthrough Practices

5. **Make Registration Obligatory or Ultra-Easy:** Allow for one-click registration and request students’ permission to pre-populate social networking profiles with information from enrollment data; mandate or incentivize professors to host some course activity on social site
6. **Broker Peer Introductions Among “Neighbors” and “Study Buddies”:** Promote student introductions around tasks (“Who else is writing a term paper now?”) and geography (“Is anybody else in my area taking evening courses so we can coordinate childcare?”)
7. **Prevent Stop-Outs Through Personalized Administrative Reminders:** Individualize content feeds based on preference and behaviors; leading institutions prevent stop-outs through proactive reminders of administrative deadlines, and use social media conversations and student success data to recommend students for the “next logical course”
8. **Enable Students to Build e-Portfolios on Social Sites:** Incorporate networking, e-portfolio, and capstone project contests into social media sites, affording students and alumni the opportunity to interact with industry experts and potential employers



Key Insights (cont.)

Elevating Engagement and Retention

Reward High-Quality Contributors

9. **Student “Super-Connectors” Make or Break Social Sites:** The utility and “stickiness” of social community discussion boards disproportionately hinges on the contributions of a select few super-connectors who post high-quality comments, promote institutional messages, offer peer support, and encourage classmate participation

Breakthrough Practice

10. **Create High-Visibility Contributor Status Tiers:** Create incentives and public recognition for the most active and highly networked students (“super-connectors”), ranging from official student government positions to peer ranking systems, digital badges, and “beta” access to new platform functionalities



Not the Right Vehicles

Given the prevalence of leading Learning Management Systems (such as Blackboard), many institutions initially hoped to achieve their social networking objectives on their LMS—only to discover that LMS functionalities too often fall short in terms of capabilities for student community-building. For example, most Learning Management Systems currently limit their inter-student communication functions by the course and by the current term; students can only connect with other students enrolled in the same classes at the same time. Additionally, adult students who stop out of a program often have little to no access to an institution's LMS during the stop-out period.

Many higher education institutions have similarly looked to public sites (such as Facebook and LinkedIn), but have also found these to be less conducive to community-building than they initially hoped. While these popular social networking sites offer an opportunity for lasting contact that Learning Management Systems do not, they also come with their own caveats: for example, faculty and students prefer not to manage academic activity on sites designed for other uses.

Leading Sites Off-Mark Creating Adult Student Community

Blackboard Too Course-Centric



- Students only able to communicate directly with those in their current courses
- No way to meet students online not in the same class
- No capabilities in between terms or for stop-outs
- No way to stay in touch after the term

Lacking in Discussion Features



- Both faculty and students unwilling to blur lines between school and life on Facebook
- Facebook and LinkedIn discussion features insufficiently robust for organizing large number of topics and users
- Difficult to customize pages



Lots of “Buy” Options Emerging

The community-building deficiencies of existing sites have created an opening in the market that several companies are presently trying to fill. The vendors cited here are building private, academics-focused social networks that experts predict will become necessities for continuing, professional, and online education programs within the next five years, redefining the student experience and reducing stop-outs.

Community-Building Tools Specific to Higher Education

Inigral



- Schools have their own application housed within Facebook
- *Clients:* Brandman University, Stetson University, Columbia College Chicago
- \$5M+ in venture capital funding; \$2M Gates award

GoingOn Networks



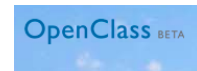
- Private-label, customized platform for schools to create private social network
- *Clients:* Penn College of Liberal and Professional Studies, ASU Online, Saint Leo University
- Monthly subscription service

Classroom Salon



- Built primarily around courses (users interact around specific texts), but with plans to expand
- Gates and NSF funding to study effect on retention at University of Baltimore (\$500K combined)

Pearson OpenClass



- Free cloud-based LMS by Pearson integrated with Google Apps for Education
- Plans to include social networking features
- *Clients:* Columbia University, Arizona State University, UW-Extension

“I can’t imagine how continuing and online schools will be able to recruit students in four or five years without the tools and infrastructure of an academic social network. They’ll be at a huge competitive disadvantage.”

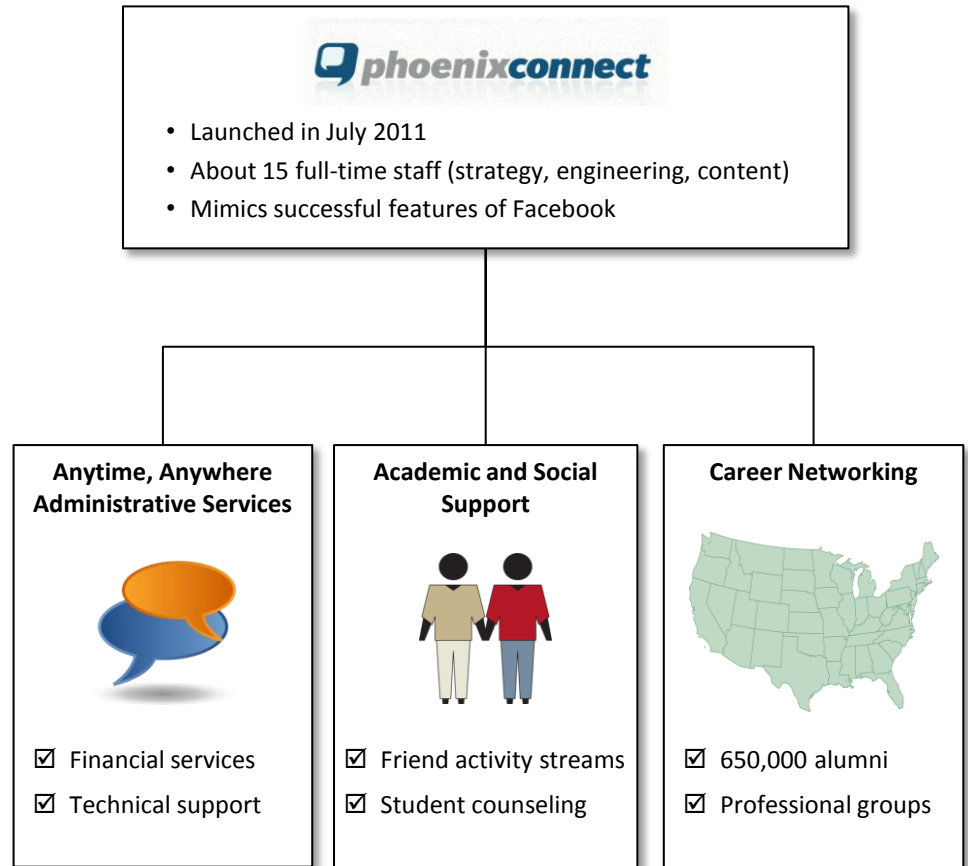
Jon Corshen, CEO, GoingOn Networks



For-Profits Setting New Standard?

One early adopter of an internal, private social network is the University of Phoenix, which hopes that its proprietary PhoenixConnect network will positively impact retention by engaging students more fully with the institution. PhoenixConnect mimics many of Facebook's most successful features (for instance, it includes a chat client and a live news feed), but the site is also uniquely tailored to the needs of University of Phoenix students, with around-the-clock access to administrative services, social support, and a network of over 650,000 alumni.

Social Media Part of University of Phoenix's Retention Strategy



Phoenix Connect users spend 25% more time on student site than average student



A Homegrown “Build” with Impressive Results

Without the budgets of large for-profit institutions, many nonprofit universities will need to be more resourceful to create and manage robust private social networks. The University of Florida’s online undergraduate business program has built and administered such a network entirely through the efforts of student and alumni volunteers, at no expense to the University. The Gator Online Student Association, or GOSA for short, is a Facebook-like interface through which students can connect with classmates for academic, social, and professional support. GOSA utilization is linked to student success: the average GPA of GOSA members is higher than the GPA of non-GOSA members, and drop rates in the program’s most difficult finance and economics courses decreased substantially after GOSA’s implementation.



For more guidance on identifying important-to-track metrics, see Relative ROI Metrics (pg. 217) and Bridge Objectives (pg. 219).

A Student-Built Academic Network



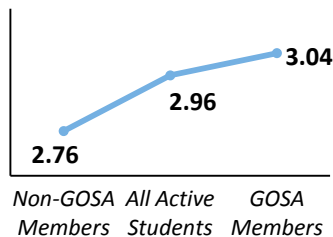
Gator Online Student Association (GOSA)



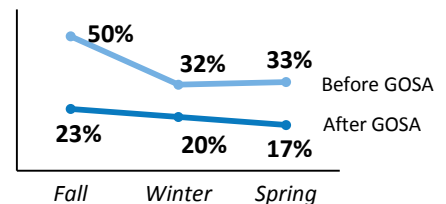
- “Facebook” for online undergrad business program
- Built and managed by volunteer students and alumni using open source programs
- Peer-to-peer academic, social, and job-search support
- Advisor’s Corner for staff to answer questions and receive private messages

Improving Grades and Persistence

Average GPA



Difficult Course Drop Rates





If You Build It (Or Buy It), Will They Come?

Increasing the number of students who join social networking sites is only the first step; many students fail to sign on or spend time on social networking sites after their initial registration. Institutions looking to social media to impact student retention should concentrate on building “sticky” communities—sites which members not only join but also return to frequently. Creating a sticky community is a difficult proposition for any new social media community manager, but it is particularly challenging for units with adult students. For a number of reasons, adult students are less likely than traditional students to devote significant time to an institution-based social network.

Difficult to Grow Members, Achieve “Stickiness”



“I have a job, family, and enough friends—maybe this is useful for 18-year-olds who want to make friends, but not for me.”



“None of these online discussions are relevant to me.”



“I can get all the same information elsewhere.”



“Nobody else seems to be participating on this site—why should I?”



“The only ‘friends’ I have on the site are people I already know—why wouldn’t I just email them?”



Student





Five Critical Functionalities for Achieving Site “Stickiness”

Distilling the “lessons learned” from early innovators, the Forum has identified five critical functionalities that an online community should possess to achieve stickiness among continuing, online, and professional education students: registration incentives to maximize student participation; targeted peer introductions to introduce students to classmates; contributor status recognition to motivate highly active users to post; personalized feeds to tailor network updates to student preferences; and career-builder tools to connect students to alumni and professional opportunities. The COE Forum recommends that continuing, professional, and online education organizations use these five functionalities to evaluate the capabilities and likely effectiveness of social media communities, whether homegrown or outsourced.



For additional information about measuring the performance of social media campaigns, see the Key Performance Indicator Builder (pg. 221) and Measuring Social Media Community Health (pg. 223).

What to Take into Account When Evaluating and Creating Online Communities

	Description	Goal
Registration Incentives	Inducements or prerequisites to create social profile	Maximize student participation
Targeted Peer Introductions	Institution-initiated introduction around information-sharing need	Reduce effort to find relevant peer
Contributor Status	Currency to recognize quality and value of social activity	Leverage “connectors” in social network
Personalized Feeds	Push content based on preference and behaviors	Avoid “newsletter” fatigue
Career-BUILDER Tools	Online communities for networking and e-portfolios	Integrate coursework with career advising



Registration Incentives

Online communities are most attractive to potential new members when a critical mass of users has already signed up for the site, which means that the first goal of any upstart social network should be to register as many users as quickly as possible. In order to incentivize students registration, exemplars reduce the amount of student effort necessary to register (such as through one-click registration or pre-populating profiles with information from enrollment data), focus on the community's academic and career (rather than social) benefits, and encourage faculty members to host some course activity on the social networking site.

Pathways to a Critical User Mass

The screenshot shows a website interface with a blue header and a search bar. Below the header, there are two main columns of content:

- No-Regrets Quick Wins**
 - Student Social Media Testimonials**
 - Orientation panel includes student leaders who discuss positive impact of social networking site on grades and overall university experience
 - Student Moderator Personal Greetings**
 - Likelihood of ongoing site participation increases by 10%-20% with a personal greeting upon site registration
 - Course Success Advice Forums** (shaded box)
 - Advertise portion of website students see as necessary to achieving academic success; they will initially be most attracted to "practical" content
- Long-Term Differentiators**
 - Social Profile Creation Waivers**
 - One-click registration and request for student's permission to pre-populate social networking profile with information from enrollment data
 - Mandatory Social Media Curriculum Requirements**
 - Professors mandated or incentivized to host some course activity on social networking site

For shaded tactics, we have included additional detail in the pages that follow.



Join for Transactions, Return for Relationships

Barriers to registration tend to be higher among adult students, who typically identify less with their institutions and are less eager to form new friendships than their 18- to 22-year-old counterparts. Recognizing this, the University of Florida encourages students to sign up for its Gator Online Student Association (GOSA) network by touting the academic benefits of the community. The University has found that once students use the network for course-specific guidance, they begin to rely on it for non-academic support as well.

The University of Florida's Gator Online Student Association (GOSA)



Students First Attracted to Course-Specific Assistance...

- 15 course-based discussion boards
- Include current students plus those who have formerly taken course
- Self-organized tutoring and study groups
- Faculty direct students to site for group work

...Discover Value in Social Interaction

- Tips for balancing work, family, and school
- Ride share and regional meet-ups
- Students remind each other of deadlines

Firsthand Experience

“Adult students either think something will be so hard they’ll never pass, or they think they wear a cape and can fly—in other words, that they can raise three kids and go to work and take three classes at the same time. On the discussion boards, students hear from each other: they encourage peers to hang in there, or to be more realistic about their schedules. A lot of adult students don’t realize the value of this kind of peer-to-peer discussion until they experience it firsthand.”

*Assistant Dean
Large Public Research University*



Targeted Peer Introductions

Unable or unlikely to meet peers in person, continuing, professional, and online education students miss opportunities to connect with classmates online who may be helpful for academic and professional support. Even when they are members of the same social networking community, students may not have time to search for potential new contacts, or they may be too intimidated to initiate a virtual conversation with a stranger. Targeted introduction tactics aim to identify and connect students to relevant peers with whom they are likely to have something in common, with the hope that these relationships will help sustain students through the program. The benefits of peer interactions can also extend beyond graduation: students who make meaningful connections with other students are more likely to remain involved with an institution as alumni.

Reducing the Effort to Find a Relevant Peer

No-Regrets Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
<p>Student Success Coaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated success coaches for each student introduce individuals with common interests to one another within social networking site <p>First-Semester Support Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion forums created for critical points in student career, such as first semester 	<p>Automatic Chat Rollovers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social networking site chat client automatically loaded with peers in current courses; one-click option to keep classmates in address book after term <p>Online Students-Near-Me Mobile App</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile application allows online students to identify others in their current locations <p>Study Partner Finders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile application allows online students to identify others completing the same activity (e.g., studying for an exam, writing a paper) at the same time



“Have You Met Ted?”

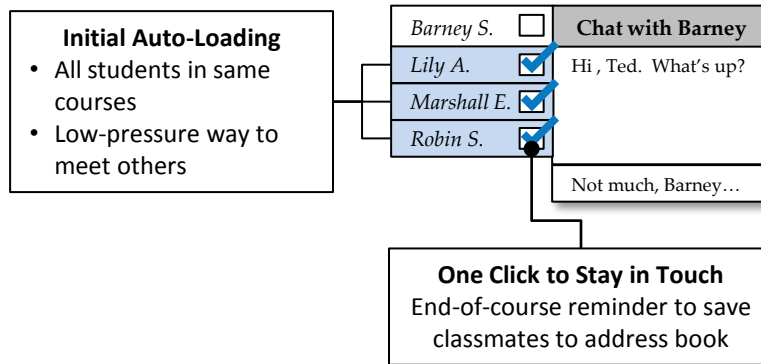
The University of Phoenix’s PhoenixConnect network contains a chat client which automatically loads all classmates enrolled in the same course at the start of a semester, enabling students to chat with peers for the duration of a course. At the end of the semester, students are reminded to save classmates they would like to keep in touch with to their permanent chat address books—thus avoiding the end-of-semester contact cutoff imposed by most current learning management systems.

Arizona State University Online offers a mobile app to help facilitate introductions among online students. One feature allows students to check in by location to find ASU Online students in their geographical areas, a capability it shares with other check-in-based apps—except check-ins here are conducted over a network exclusive to ASU Online students. Students can use the app to connect with fellow ASU Online students who live nearby, coordinating on everything from establishing weekly study groups to carpooling to campus events. Another feature allows students to check in to an activity rather than a physical location—for example, students in different states studying for a test at the same time can review material together.

More Powerful Virtual Introductions Possible on Private Networks

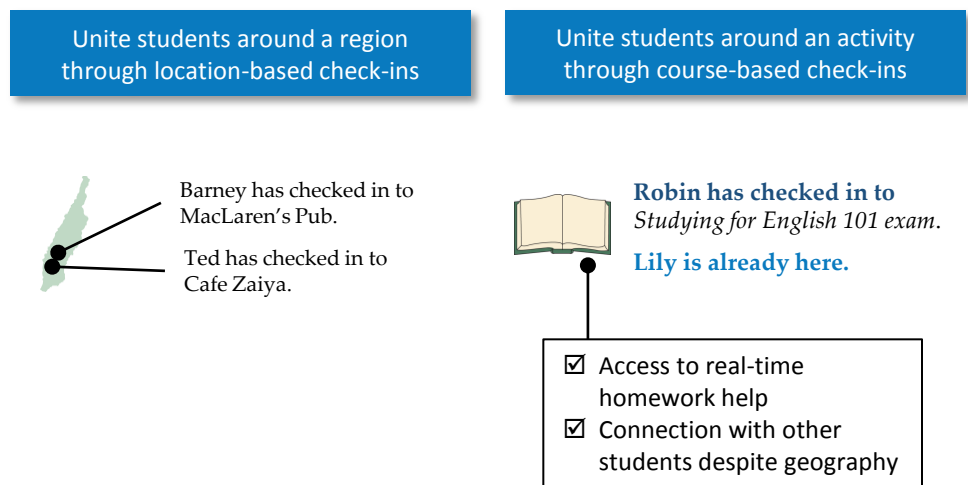
Automated Classmate Connections

University of Phoenix Chat Client



Checking In Beyond Location

ASU Online’s Mobile App





Contributor Status

Although one goal of social media sites is to maximize all user participation, participation in online communities is rarely spread equally among all members. In fact, the most thriving online communities typically rely on a small minority of “super-users” or “super-connectors” — enthusiastic members who assume disproportionate responsibility for generating activity (for example, by offering support to peers). Contributor status tactics motivate continued super-user efforts by rewarding the benefits they provide to the larger community with public recognition and exclusive privileges.

Leveraging the Super-Connectors

A screenshot of a presentation slide titled "Leveraging the Super-Connectors". The slide is displayed in a window with a blue header and standard window controls (minimize, maximize, close) in the top right corner. The content is organized into two columns under the heading "No-Regrets Quick Wins" and "Long-Term Differentiators".

No-Regrets Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Social Media Student Moderators <ul style="list-style-type: none">Frequent student contributors who provide quality advice are thanked by advisors and asked to serve as official site moderators	Platform Pilot Functionality Privileges <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students willing to act as beta testers for a network are granted early access to new features
	Contributor Peer Rankings <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students respond to one another's questions on course discussion board, with peer voting process for designating most helpful responses
	Social Media Contribution Badges <ul style="list-style-type: none">Top contributors receive badges to display on their profiles, signaling to peers their value to the community



Becoming “Mayor” of Your Course

With a ratio of two professors to over 160,000 enrolled students, a mechanism for organizing and encouraging peer-to-peer coursework support was a necessity for Stanford University’s open source Artificial Intelligence class. The course’s online discussion board was designed to identify high-quality contributions: students posted and responded to classmate questions, and the helpfulness of both questions and answers was measured through peer voting, with more helpful posts featured more prominently. Students with consistent records of useful posts were motivated to continue contributing by profile badges and dashboards tracking their rising influence over time.

Incentivizing Heads of the Class to Help Others in a Class of 160,000+

Stanford Open Source AI Class Discussion Board

1 Peers Vote Both Questions and Answers “Up” or “Down” Based on Usefulness

2 Reward Badges Motivate Quality Contributions

- *Good Question*: Question voted up 25 times
- *Great Question*: Question voted up 100 times
- *Pundit*: User has left 10 comments

Can someone recommend prerequisite materials to read before the start of the class?

Asked by **JWilson**

15 (13 Up, 2 Down)

A: Try the Khan Academy lectures.
Answered by **AI SuperFan**

A: Look it up on Wikipedia.
Answered by **WalesJ**

1,527 Karma

Great Question
Good Question
Pundit

3 Real-Time Dashboard Provokes Progress Over Time, Daily Activity

Karma History Recent Activity Feed

(Graph icon) *(List icon)*



Personalized Feeds

Larger online communities with diverse user bases run the risk of losing engagement with posts that are irrelevant to most members. Personalized feeds help communities avoid that pitfall by allowing members and site administrators to customize updates according to their interests and preferences; advanced tactics in this category leverage those preferences to improve student outcomes.

Personalized feeds also draw upon the experience of websites such as Amazon.com, which increases the site's "stickiness" through a combination of "pull" features (whereby consumers can search for and easily find what they're looking for) as well as "push" updates (whereby consumers receive highly tailored information they may not have realized they wanted).

No Longer "One Size Fits All"

The screenshot shows a web application window with a blue header and a search bar. The main content is divided into two columns: "No-Regrets Quick Wins" and "Long-Term Differentiators".

No-Regrets Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
<p>Personalized Live News Streams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> User feeds updated with both self-selected and institution-selected content 	<p>Early Warning Retention Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LMS, social networking, and other student data used to identify at-risk students
<p>Daily Digest Emails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students select which site activities and feeds are automatically pushed to them through daily email notifications 	<p>Course Recommendation Engines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System alerts students to upcoming courses based on prior registrations
<p>Tiered Site Access Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully-enrolled users and unenrolled observers granted differential access to site content 	<p>Device-Specific Messaging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions push content based on different devices likely to be used at different times of the day (i.e., when are users on mobile vs. desktops vs. laptops)



Career-Builder Tools

Offering career assistance through online communities is an especially effective way for continuing, professional, and online education units to build communities that are especially relevant to adult students and simultaneously reinforce a course or program's career-related value proposition. Providing exclusive access to industry-related content and networking opportunities benefits both current students and alumni, and including portfolio-building capabilities on the site keeps alumni returning long after they have left the institution.

Proprietary Career-Related Information

A screenshot of a web application interface with a blue header bar. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "No-Regrets Quick Wins" and contains two sections: "Degree Cluster Communities" and "Career Fair Digital Archive". The right column is titled "Long-Term Differentiators" and contains three sections: "Location-Based Alumni Maps", "Capstone Project Contests", and "Digital Competency Badges". Each section includes a bulleted list of features. The interface also includes a search bar at the top right and a vertical scrollbar on the right side.

No-Regrets Quick Wins

- Degree Cluster Communities**
 - Expand student and alumni networking opportunities by merging online groups for different degree programs with similar professional interests
- Career Fair Digital Archive**
 - Videos of career panels and employer visits posted on the site for students unable to attend

Long-Term Differentiators

- Location-Based Alumni Maps**
 - Alumni and students locate one another via interactive maps, with profile markers for each location
- Capstone Project Contests**
 - University and industry partners create contest for students to answer key industry question; projects posted on Facebook for employers to view
- Digital Competency Badges**
 - Students receive badges to signify competencies gained through formal and informal education; employers view badges on social media site



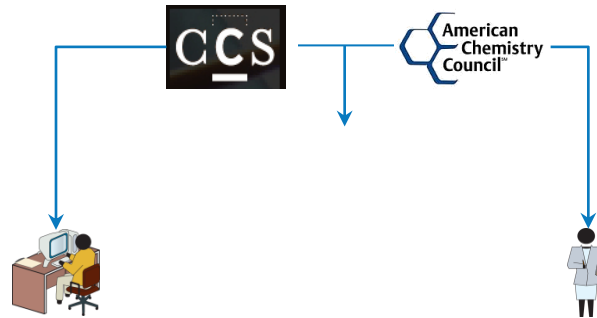
Blurring Coursework, Community, and Career Advising

A small design school in Detroit has used Facebook to provide students with exposure to employers through their capstone projects. The College of Creative Studies and the American Chemistry Council partnered to create a contest in which students contributed ideas for lightweight automotive design to a designated Facebook page, and professors encouraged students to submit their capstone projects for consideration. In return, the American Chemistry Council invited member organizations to critique designs on the Facebook page and employers to judge the contest.

Capstone Project Contests

1 Co-branded Facebook Contest

Trade association and professional school partner on design innovation page

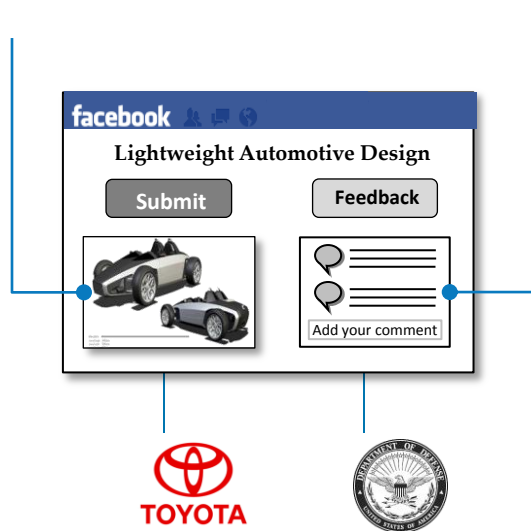


2 Course Capstone

Professors encourage students to use contest entry as end-of-course project

3 Practitioner Feedback

Association encourages members to critique designs



4 Employer Judges

Manufacturers and government agencies evaluate entries

Source: Senior Industrial Design Students Highlight Innovative Use of Plastics in Vehicle Concepts, available at <http://www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu/hs/academics/transportation/news?newsID=117&pager=3>, accessed November 23, 2011; Plastic Cars, available at <http://www.facebook.com/plasticcar>, accessed November 23, 2011; ACC Facebook Page Highlights Potential of Plastic in Cars, available at <http://www.smartbrief.com/servlet/ArchiveServlet?issueid=DD0B3072-CE40-4521-AAFE-42775D3AD1AA&Imid=archives>, accessed November 23, 2011; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.



A Win-Win-Win Social Media Strategy

A Facebook design contest like the one undertaken by the College of Creative Studies has clear and distinct benefits for each of the constituencies involved: the trade association promotes awareness of an important emerging technology; students receive résumé-boosting experience and leads to potential employers as they are graduating; and the institution honors its value proposition and differentiates itself from competitors by providing students meaningful access to expert practitioners.

Capstone Project Contests Benefit Multiple Constituencies

1

For Trade Association

- Promotes awareness and commercial viability of emerging technology

2

For Students

- Coursework easily translates to résumé and e-portfolio
- Warm leads to potential employers

3

For Institution

- Provide students with expert industry practitioner access “on the cheap”
- Program differentiation through practical application of theory

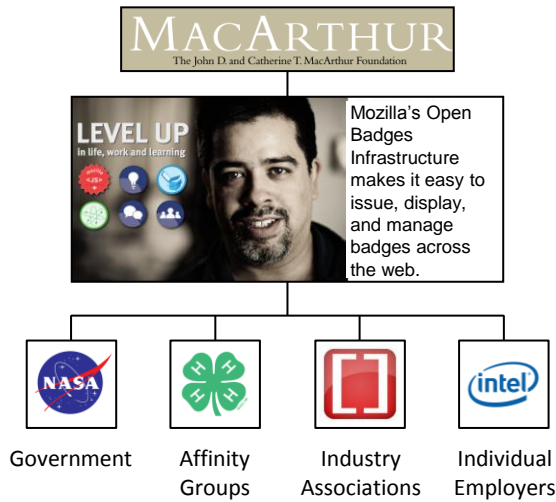


Beginnings of a Marketplace for Digital Badges

The MacArthur Foundation’s new Digital Badges initiative seeks to recognize learning that takes place outside traditional degree programs by awarding online “badges” to individuals who demonstrate certain competencies that might interest employers. Prominent organizations including NASA, 4H, PBS, and Intel have all announced plans to develop badges. Digital badge early adopters believe continuing, professional, and online education units would be ideal candidates for incorporating badges for specific professional competencies into current offerings. Allowing students and alumni to display these badges on social media-based portfolios would provide networking benefits to students and alumni while also allowing prospective students to better understand the skills and knowledge they are likely to acquire.

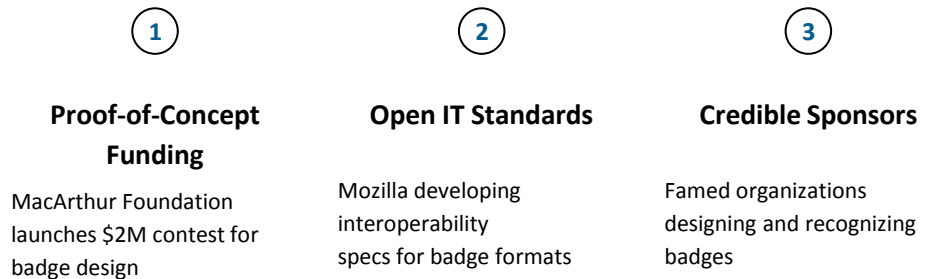
COE a Possible Beachhead for Competency-Based Online Credentials

What’s a Digital Badge?



- Collectable, sharable certifications of specified competencies
- Acquired by examination, demonstration, proof of experience
- Help students find a job, collaborator, or social media followers

What’s Needed for a Liquid Market?





Quick Wins and Long-Term Differentiators

Recognizing dispersion in available resources among institutions, and that many members must pursue excellence without more time, budget or staff than they now have, the Forum has distinguished Quick-Win practices (incremental change to current practice; minor investment; fast results) from Long-Term Differentiators (potentially transformational, more speculative; require meaningful investments in technology, expertise, or cultural change).

At the end of every section of this publication, we have included a table separating profiled ideas into quick wins and long-term differentiators. For members unable to invest in long-term differentiators immediately, the Forum recommends that quick wins may help generate the resources needed to fund longer-term activities.

	Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Elevating Engagement and Retention	<p>Registration Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Social Media Testimonials (pg. 90) • Student Moderator Personal Greetings (pg. 90) • Course Success Advice Forums (pg. 91) <p>Targeted Peer Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Success Coaches (pg. 92) • First-Semester Support Forums (pg. 92) <p>Contributor Status</p> <p>Social Media Student Moderators (pg. 94)</p> <p>Personalized Feeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized Live News Streams (pg. 96) • Daily Digest Emails (pg. 96) • Tiered Site Access Levels (pg. 96) <p>Career-Builder Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree Cluster Communities (pg. 97) • Career Fair Digital Archive (pg. 97) • Location-Based Alumni Maps (pg. 97) 	<p>Registration Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Profile Creation Waivers (pg. 90) • Mandatory Social Media Curriculum Requirements (pg. 90) <p>Targeted Peer Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto-Loaded Chat List (pg. 93) • Regional-Matching Mobile App (pg. 93) • Activity-Based Check-Ins (pg. 93) <p>Contributor Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform Pilot Functionality Privileges (pg. 94) • Contributor Peer Rankings (pg. 95) • Social Media Contribution Badges (pg. 95) <p>Personalized Feeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Warning Retention Outreach (pg. 96) • Course Recommendation Engines (pg. 96) <p>Career-Builder Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Project Contests (pg. 98) • Digital Competency Badges (pg. 100)



IV. Increasing Capacity with Current Resources



Key Insights

Increasing Capacity with Current Staff Resources

Ensure Consistency of Student and Faculty Volunteer Contributors

1. **Students Lack Expertise, Faculty Lack Incentive:** Social media success can hinge upon faculty (for content expertise) and students (for authentic voice), but these part-time contributors are often inconsistent in the quality and frequency of postings and lack insight or incentive to link social media content to business objectives

Breakthrough Practices

2. **Pose “Crowdsourced” Questions That Can Be Repurposed as Social Content:** Post focused questions about academic and career advice to Facebook and Twitter, compiling best responses into blog and website content
3. **Live-Blogging VIP Access:** Provide privileged access to events (i.e., VIP seating, speaker access) in exchange for “live” blogging or tweeting; attract strong contributors by offering opportunities and training for students to build digital “bylines” useful to later job search
4. **Student Social Media Career Ladders:** Improve student employee retention by creating tiered development opportunities, first by identifying promising candidates through performance in relevant courses, then designing volunteer and eventually paid positions by which students can “advance” an internal ladder
5. **Host Faculty Administrative Tasks on Social Site:** Familiarize faculty with platforms by moving some “mandatory” administrative activities online (i.e., committee discussions); faculty are more likely to participate in non-required activities after experiencing the platform’s functionalities and benefits firsthand
6. **Provide Faculty “Digital Brand” Counseling:** Develop support services to help faculty build their digital reputations through social media, providing examples of how social media can help faculty advance their academic careers (i.e., publications, scholarly collaborations)



Key Insights (cont.)

Increasing Capacity with Current Staff Resources

Focus Cross-Functional Social Media Teams on Critical Business Metric

7. **Cross-Silo Teams Usually Dysfunctional:** Social media efforts inherently necessitate cross-functional collaboration—bridging marketing, admissions, content, and student support silos—but the typical cross-silo “working group” quickly loses momentum with staff too overstretched in their day jobs and unable to coalesce around the same objectives

Breakthrough Practices

8. **For Shoestring Outfits, Charter Virtual Teams Around Single, Critical Business Metric:** Elevate the typical “working group” by focusing all cross-functional team discussion on how social media can improve one single, vital business metric (e.g., student retention), with all staff proposing ways to contribute to the solution
9. **For Larger Operations, Task Centers of Excellence with Brand-Building and Market Research:** Create centralized social media staff tasked with monitoring brand mentions and mining stakeholder conversations for new product concepts; although requiring dedicated staff, “listening” to organic customer conversations seen as worth the investment among organizations desiring to innovate more quickly



Corporations Lavishly Resourcing Social Media Listening Posts

Most colleges and universities lack the resources to establish a social media command center similar to Dell's, which works 24 hours a day to start social media conversations about Dell and monitor existing discussions. However, higher education may benefit from imitating Dell's process for involving staff throughout the organization in social media: Dell marketers offer an internal "Social Media University" course to all interested employees, and once employees complete the training, they receive a social media certification that qualifies them to post on social media on behalf of Dell. In providing formalized training, Dell has produced 9,000 employees capable of serving as corporate brand representatives on social media without putting the company's image at risk.

Dell One of Many Establishing Command Centers and Firmwide Training



Social Media Command Center



- 20+ FTEs in North America and Asia
 - *Monitor & Respond*
 - *Educate & Inform*
 - *Establish Thought Leadership*
- Monitors 22,000 conversations daily
- Top brand on China's Renren site—800,000 followers

Social Media and Community University



- Training arm run by Marketing to educate staff and promote brand consistency
- Two-Tiered Certification
 - *Professional*—customer dialogue
 - *Spokesperson*—media and shareholders
- 9,000 of 100,000 employees certified
- 2,000 staff represent Dell on Twitter

Source: Radian6, *Social Media University*, available at: <http://www.radian6.com/blog/2011/05/social-media-university/>, accessed November 22, 2011; Brian Solis, *From Community Management to Command Centers*, available at: <http://www.briansolis.com/2011/01/from-community-management-to-command-centers/>, accessed November 22, 2011.



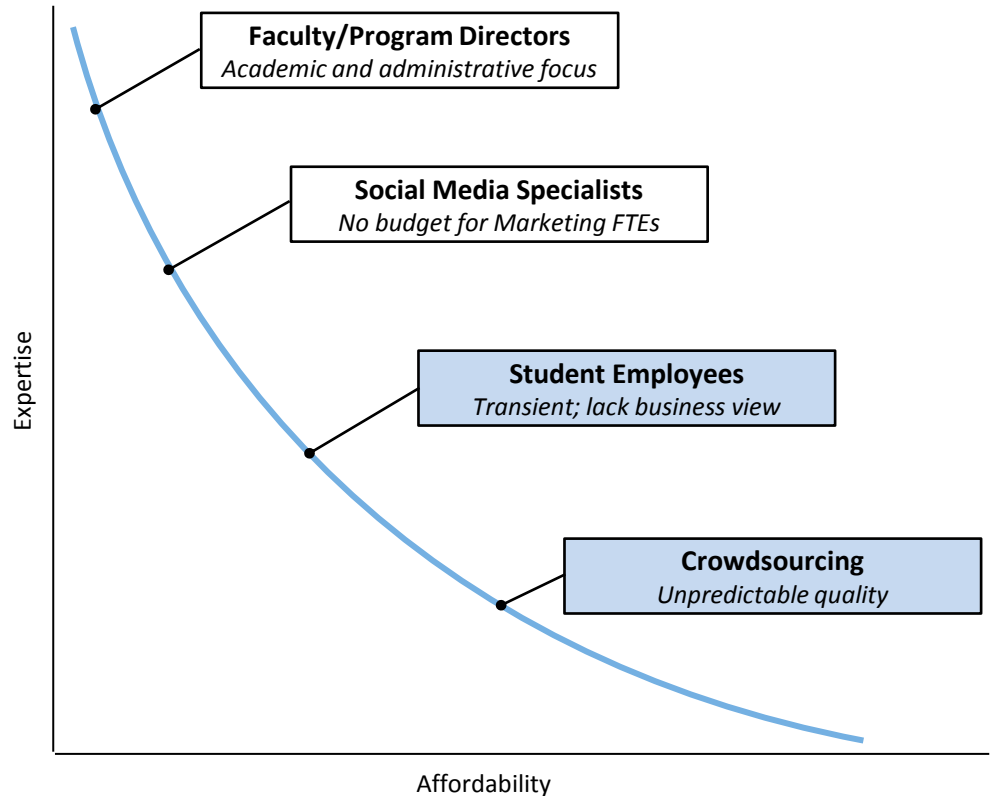
Budget Pressures Keep Social Media “Side-of-Desk”

As higher education institutions attempt to incorporate social media into existing job roles, they face a common quandary: their professors and program directors best positioned to serve as content experts tend to be juggling multiple academic and administrative responsibilities, and therefore the time they spend on social media will be the most expensive for the institution, in terms of both salary and opportunity cost. Conversely, more affordable contributors in the form of crowdsourcing or student employees can be unreliable in both the quality of their contributions and the consistency of their commitment, and such contributors often lack an understanding of the organization’s larger business objectives.



For tips on maintaining a social media presence that is supported by multiple types of contributors, see the Policy Creation Template (pg. 183) and the Centralized Social Media Directory Builder (pg. 187).

Difficult to Fund Desired Levels of Focus and Expertise



Catch-22

“I can’t devote resources to a social media campaign until I see the business value, but I can’t derive business value without devoting the resources first.”

COE Dean,
Public Research University



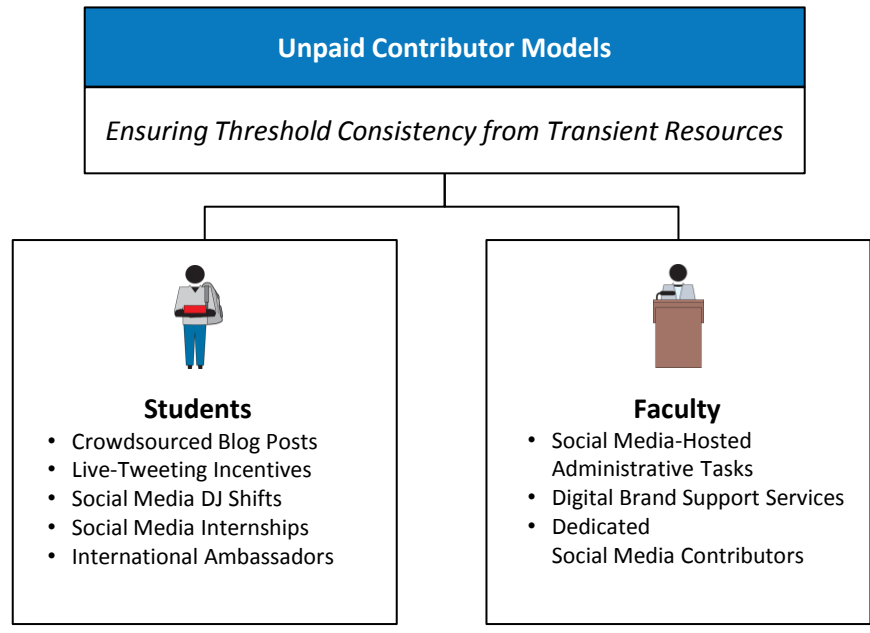
Resourcing the Vision

Many continuing, professional, and online education units still in the beginning phases of their social media efforts currently rely on unpaid contributors—especially students and faculty—for content creation, benefiting from students’ “authentic voice” and faculty subject matter expertise. However, the challenge for institutions is ensuring threshold quality and consistency from these part-time and volunteer resources. [See pgs. 107-116 for breakthrough-practice ideas.]

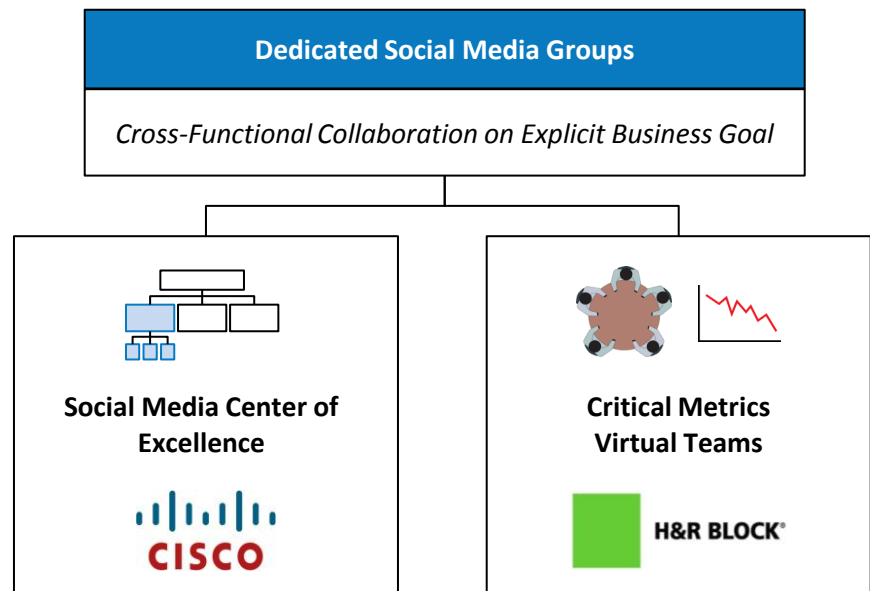
Relying heavily on student employees may be effective for an organization’s early social media efforts, but cannot sustain more ambitious efforts. As their social media efforts mature, higher education institutions seeking staffing guidance are increasingly looking to the private sector, where models for fully integrating social media into strategic plans are more common. Dedicated social media groups in the private sector are built around business objectives, and tend to be more advanced at cross-functional collaboration and coordination across silos. [See pgs. 118-120 for breakthrough-practice ideas.]

 For additional information about assembling a social media team, see *Advice for Selecting Student Workers* (pg. 197), *Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions* (pg. 201), *Sample Social Media Director Job Postings* (pg. 205), and *Faculty How-to Start-up Links* (pg. 213).

What Organizational Models Promote Social Media Scale and Quality?



Unique to Higher Education



Emerging in Private Sector



The Cream of the Crowd

Leading institutions have experienced success with crowdsourcing—extending a general invitation for community members to contribute social media content. When contributions are high-quality, crowdsourcing can reduce the staff time and effort necessary to maintain a social media presence; the challenge is that quality is not guaranteed, and can vary substantially from post to post.

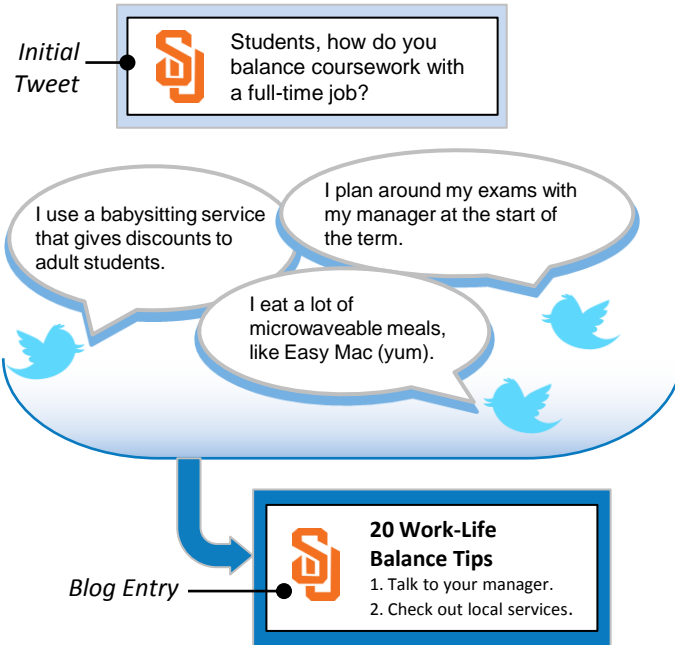
Syracuse University and Boston University solve the problem of variable crowdsourced content quality by issuing focused prompts when calling for community member contributions, and by developing methods to filter and present only the best responses received. Syracuse University posts prompts on Twitter and compiles the best tweet responses into a separate blog post; Boston University pre-selects students from a group of volunteers to live-tweet during campus events and rewards them with special perks and event access for doing so.



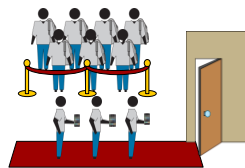
For tips about using student workers and innovative ways of engaging your audience, see *Advice for Selecting Student Workers* (pg. 197), *Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions* (pg. 201), and *Top Ten Contest Ideas* (pg. 159).

Filtering Crowdsourced Content for Quality Contributions

Crowdsourced Blog Posts



Live Tweeting Incentives



- Check RSVP list for attendees with large followings and quality posts
- Provide VIP incentives, such as special seating and exclusive access to meet guest speakers
- Student contributors receive tips on branding themselves on social media for future job searches



Round the Clock

More colleges and universities are recognizing the value in posting with an authentic student voice and personality, and are employing student workers to help maintain social media presences. However, these institutions face the challenge of deciding whether posts should come from university or personal accounts: posting from an official institutional account can dilute the effectiveness of a personality-driven approach, but students are often uncomfortable using their personal Facebook and Twitter accounts for university business.

Syracuse University has resolved this paradox by asking its student social media workers to utilize the main University accounts but to identify themselves at the beginning of their three- to four-hour shifts, signing on and signing off to Twitter and Facebook in a style that mimics that of radio DJs. Putting a name to an official account allows more flexibility for personable posts, and setting a precedent of seamless shift transitions makes it easier for staffers to transfer account management to new student workers when the original students graduate.



For more information about using student workers, see *Advice for Selecting Student Workers* (pg. 197) and *Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions* (pg. 201).

Adding a Personal Voice to Institutional Accounts

Syracuse University's Student Social Media Team

- 8-10 student employees
- 10-15 hours per student per week
- Workers assume content creation and community response duties

• Shifts three-four hours apiece in length; run from 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Seamless Shift Transitions



Hi everyone, Mindy here!
I'll be taking your questions for the next few hours.
3 hours ago



This is Mindy signing off!
My friend David will be taking over next.
2 minutes ago



Adds a human element to an official institutional presence



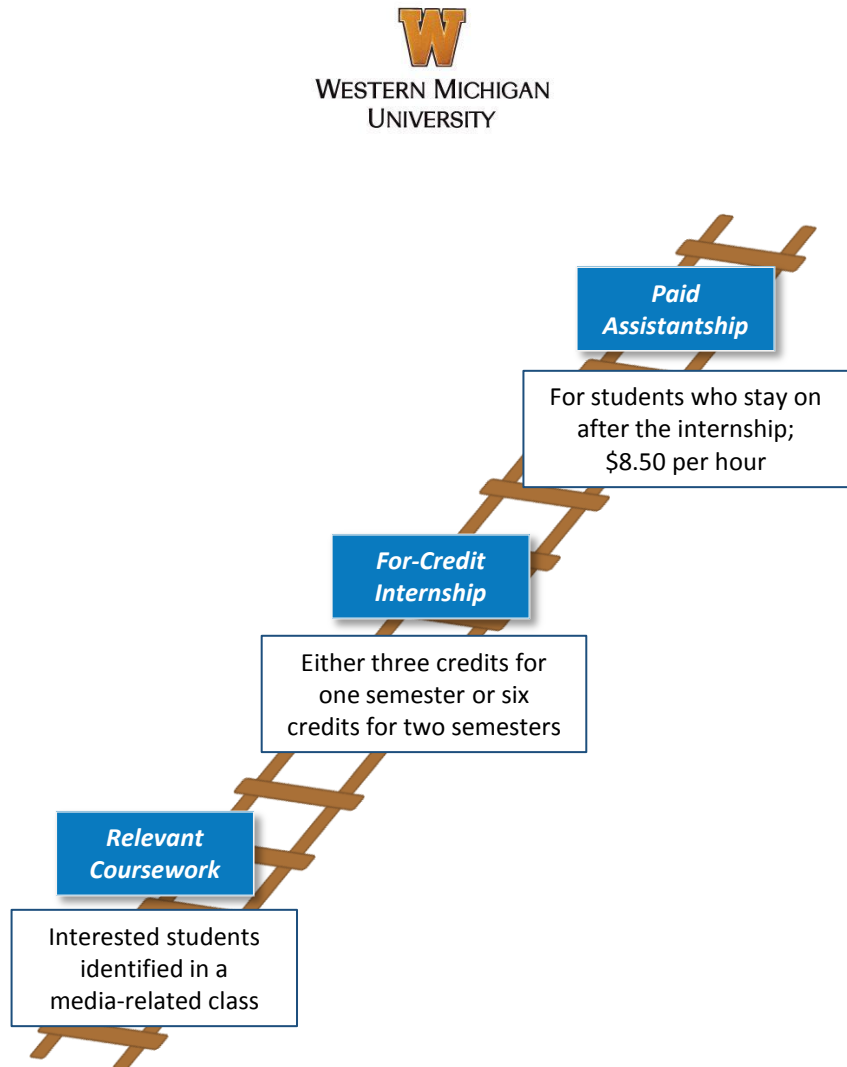
Avoids asking students to conduct university business from their personal accounts



Cultivating (and Retaining) Homegrown Talent

Training workers who are sure to leave in four years (if not much sooner) is an expensive proposition for campus departments that employ students, especially in technology-intensive roles, but increasing student worker retention remains an elusive goal for many. When Western Michigan University's Interactive Media Lab needed to hire students to help manage the University's virtual campus for prospective students, lab supervisors created an internal career ladder to encourage students to stay with the lab for as long as possible. By formally scouting students interested in online media and providing multiple opportunities for advancement, WMU incentivizes longer student worker tenures and rewards students that have been with the lab for a substantial period.

WMU's Interactive Media Lab Provides Continuous Skill Development





Sustaining a Social Media Presence Abroad

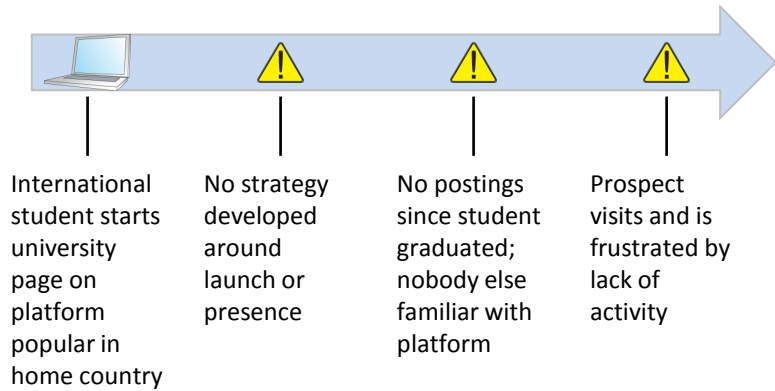
Student workers are a natural fit for conducting outreach to prospective students on foreign social media platforms, but many institutions make the mistake of allowing students to be responsible for developing, executing, and maintaining their international social media strategy. Though students can contribute to the process, they lack insight into the organization’s larger business objectives – and present challenges to the organization when they graduate and leave social media presences abandoned and unmaintained. Additionally, student employees lack insight into the organization’s larger business objectives and needs.

To address these challenges, the University of Cincinnati created a graduate assistant position to oversee its undergraduate student ambassadors. Serving as an intermediary between the marketing director and undergraduates, the graduate assistant provides information about trends upward (i.e., frequent questions and topics surfacing in undergraduate ambassador conversations with prospects) and ensures a smooth transition when students turnover (i.e., through training and reassigning responsibilities).

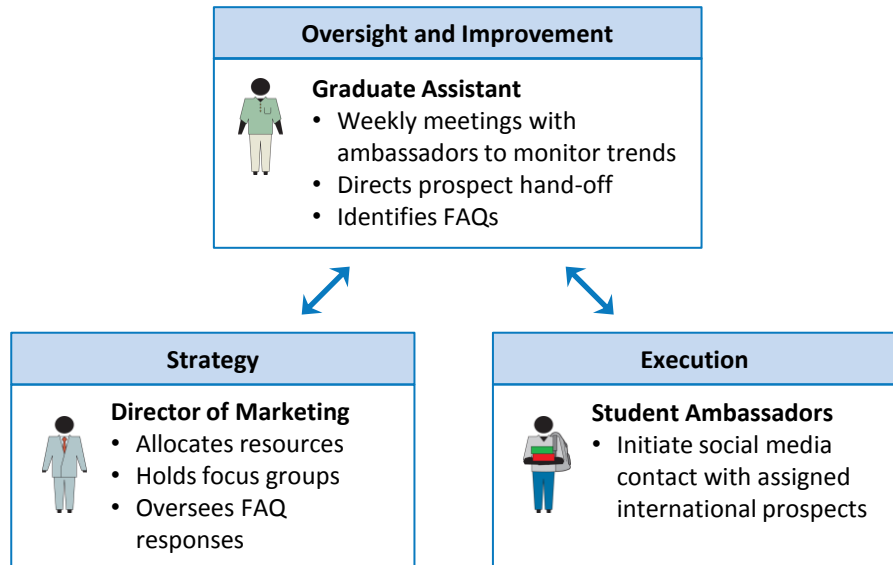
 For more assistance assembling a team of student ambassadors, see Sample International Student Ambassador Job Postings (pg. 207).

University of Cincinnati Ambassador Program

International Strategy Too Often Left to Students



A Critical Bridge Between Senior Leadership and Undergraduate Ambassadors





The (Transient) Face of the Institution

Faculty can play a critical role in encouraging adult student participation in social media communities, since adults often identify more with individual faculty members than with an institution as a whole. Furthermore, faculty are critical to social media strategies focused on promoting the organization's thought leadership in a specific field. Unfortunately, continuing, professional, and online education faculty face multiple demands on their time, and are unable to devote the effort necessary to learn about social media and cultivate online student communities.

The Dilemma of Part-Time Instructors

Critical to Engagement...



Adults identify with individual faculty members rather than the institution



Faculty already working with students, while advisors must "work to get attention"



Part-Time Faculty

...But Already Overstretched



Little if any training in adult learner pedagogy



Classes often taught by working professionals "in their spare time" or tenured faculty with other commitments



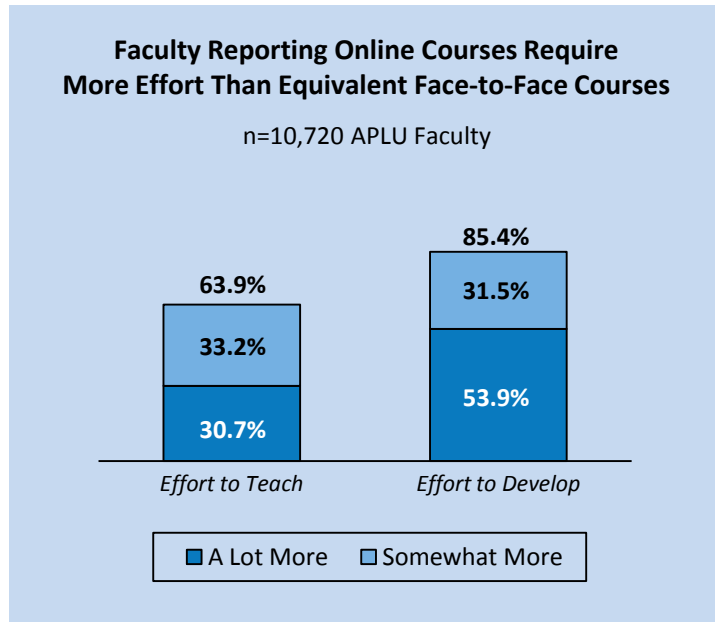
Online courses requiring even more demands



The (Transient) Face of the Institution

As continuing and professional education instruction moves increasingly online, part-time instructors are struggling to accommodate the shift into already-busy schedules. A study by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities has shown that online courses demand significantly more pedagogical effort than face-to-face courses, leaving faculty teaching online with less time for other pursuits—including engaging students on social media.

The Dilemma of Part-Time Instructors



Source: Seaman, Jeff, *Online Learning as a Strategic Asset: Volume II: The Paradox of Faculty Voices: Views and Experiences with Online Learning*, New York City: Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, 2009.



Getting Faculty Familiar with Social Media Platforms

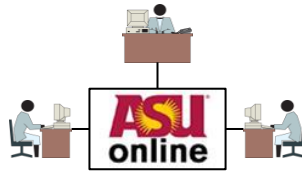
For many less technologically-progressive faculty, a simple lack of familiarity with social media prevents them from wielding it effectively on behalf of their institutions. Both Arizona State University Online and the University of Phoenix have introduced reluctant faculty to social media by embedding administrative tasks into social media platforms. Faculty are required to visit platforms to complete essential administrative functions—such as conducting committee meetings, or reviewing a course design—and gain exposure to platforms’ functionalities and benefits in the process, making them more likely to participate in both required and non-required social media activities later.



For additional assistance with encouraging faculty to engage in social media activity, see Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts (pg. 211) and Faculty How-to Start-up Links (pg. 213).

More Schools Running “Mandatory” Activities Over Threaded Discussions

Asynchronous Committee Meetings



- Virtual committees meet via social media discussion board
- Digital Pedagogy Committee members exchange online best practices
- STEM faculty collaborate on grant proposals

New Course Proposal Peer Review



- Discussion thread critiquing new MBA Business Law syllabus hosted on proprietary platform
- 130 faculty participants; many more viewers
- Electronic record for accreditation



Building Reputation Through Discoverability

Although faculty are more likely to spend time on social media if platforms are incorporated into day-to-day administrative work, at many institutions those administrative activities are valued beneath efforts that benefit professors' academic careers. This reality suggests another potentially effective strategy for increasing faculty buy-in for social media: demonstrating how social media can help professors advance their own academic careers.

A growing number of institutions are assisting faculty development of social media presences by providing do-it-yourself online toolkits and templates, "train-the-trainer" programs for enthusiastic faculty to relate their experiences, and personalized consultations with marketing specialists. Savvy faculty avail themselves of these resources with the expectation that, in the future, prestige and academic reputation will be conferred not only through traditional print publishing success, but through online impact as well.



For additional assistance with encouraging faculty to engage in social media activity, see Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts (pg. 211) and Faculty How-To Start-up Links (pg. 213).

Helping Faculty Go Social



DIY Toolkit

Templates for blog topics and techniques for increasing followers



Department-Level "Train the Trainer"

Create "super-users" who can leverage personal relationships with faculty



Personal Consultations

On-demand strategy sessions with marketing specialists

From Exclusivity to Impact

"In the past, researchers competed on exclusivity, with a few articles getting into a few top journals read by a few specialists. Today, in the age of social networking, it's the opposite. Whoever gets his or her information out to the widest audience becomes the hub of activity and gets the reputation as the person to go to in that field when grants, training, or consulting opportunities surface."

*Chris Geith
Executive Director, MSU Global*



Testimonials from the Frontier

The idea that social media might benefit an academic’s career is more than a vague, futuristic vision—it is fast becoming a reality, borne out by testimonials from faculty already seeing concrete results. Institutions looking to encourage faculty social media activity may consider citing early success stories as evidence of social media’s potential, such as professors communicating with one another on Twitter to develop publication ideas, or connecting with research collaborators across the globe. In a few cases, faculty have even achieved celebrity status in their fields or in the wider culture that is attributable to a well-developed social media presence, ranging from high-profile speaking engagements to regular columns in major newspapers such as the *Boston Globe*.

As with all tactics aimed at engaging faculty, institutions should strive to integrate social media into tasks that are already important or necessary for overstretched faculty, and avoid asking faculty to pursue social media apart from activities they’re already doing.



For an expansion of the examples of faculty social media engagement discussed here, see Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts (pg. 211).

Social Media Savvy Helps Faculty Ascend “Traditional” Scholarly Ladder

Making the Grade



Ideas for Publications

French bioinformaticist publishes articles based on Twitter follower suggestions



Global Collaboration Partners

Genomics researcher finds assistants for project request through social media site



Tenure Fodder

Review committee encourages U.S. professor to include outstanding Wikipedia contributions in tenure portfolio

Achieving Celebrity



High-Profile Speaking Engagements

Hungarian geneticist invited to GooglePlex based on quality of blog



Newspaper Columns

U.S. professor with huge Twitter following offered regular science column in major newspaper



An Emerging Faculty Role?

Social media experts speculate that, in addition to research and teaching roles, a third role may soon emerge for faculty: one focused on using social media to enhance the institution's academic reputation. An ideal faculty social media contributor would possess enough academic credibility to enlist cooperation from tenured faculty, an aptitude for social media, and a desire to reduce his or her overall workload.

While many marketing directors have expressed enthusiasm for this potential new role, most institutions are currently unable to commit resources to such a position. One pioneering institution in this regard is Michigan State University, where Dr. Christine Skelly currently spends 50% time maintaining content on MyHorseUniversity.com, described in greater detail on page 58.



For additional guidance on encouraging faculty contribution to social media efforts, see Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts (pg. 211) and Faculty How-to Start-up Links (pg. 213).

Academic Experts Creating and Repurposing Social Media Content

Ideal Attributes of a Faculty Social Media Contributor



Credible academic able to secure cooperation of tenured faculty



Proclivity and aptitude for social media



Professional or personal reasons to scale back workload

A Real-World Example



- Tenured faculty member
- Works 50% time
- Solely devoted to creating and editing MyHorseUniversity content

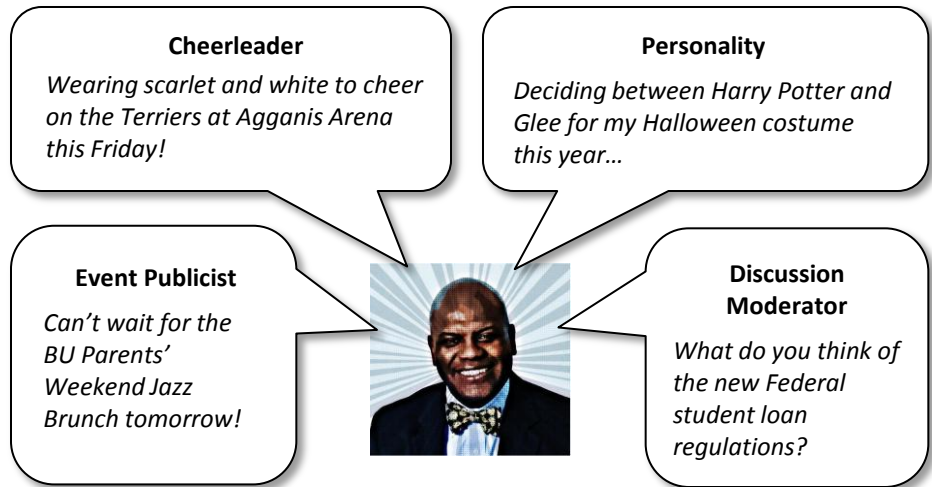
**Dr. Christine Skelly,
Department of Animal Science
Michigan State University**



The Dean on Social Media

Boston University's Kenn Elmore, Dean of Students, is one of higher education's most active administrators on social media, adopting a variety of roles to communicate with his students and build their affinity for the University. While the dean personally replies to as many messages as possible, his staff also steps in to provide responses when message volumes are high, ensuring that students feel their comments and questions are being heard.

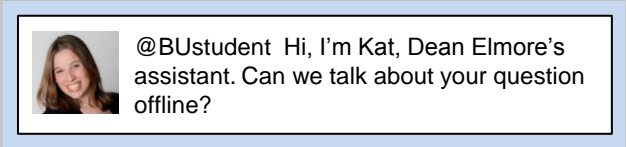
The Many Twitter Roles of Boston University's Kenn Elmore, Dean of Students



8,600+ followers
30 @replies per event

With a Little Help from His Friends

Dean's Office Staff Assists With Response Management



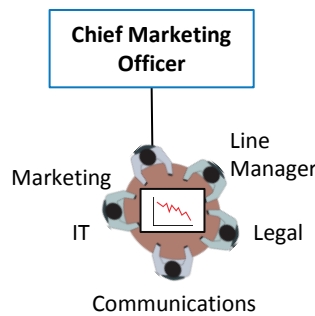


Two Emerging Private-Sector Approaches

Thus far, the private sector has made greater strides than higher education in devising effective organizational models for full-time social media staff. Two approaches we will examine in more detail are a critical-metric virtual team model, in which an influential individual congregates ad hoc teams from multiple departments to address pressing social media issues, and a center of excellence model, in which a permanent social media unit is created within a marketing department.

Private Sector Models Ahead of Higher Education

Critical-Metric Virtual Teams



Description:

- Single person shepherds ad hoc teams to work on social opportunities or crises

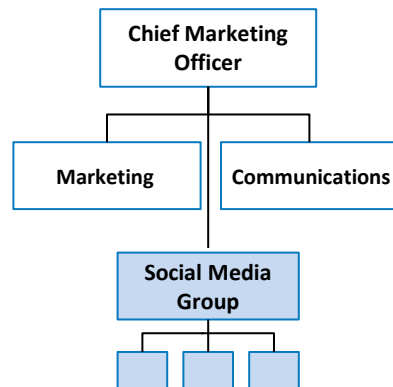
Designed To:

- Use social media to optimize single, critical business metric (often customer churn)
- Close “Say-Do” gap in brand

Limitation:

- Requires charismatic individual to beg and borrow resources across silos

Center of Excellence



Description:

- New VP-level box in marketing organizational structure

Designed To:

- Standardize and hardwire social media behaviors
- R&D for use of social media to create novel customer value

Limitation:

- Implies 5-10 incremental staff and significant leadership commitment

Source: Corporate Executive Board, Marketing Leadership Council, “Closing the CMO Leadership Deficit in Social Media, July 2010.



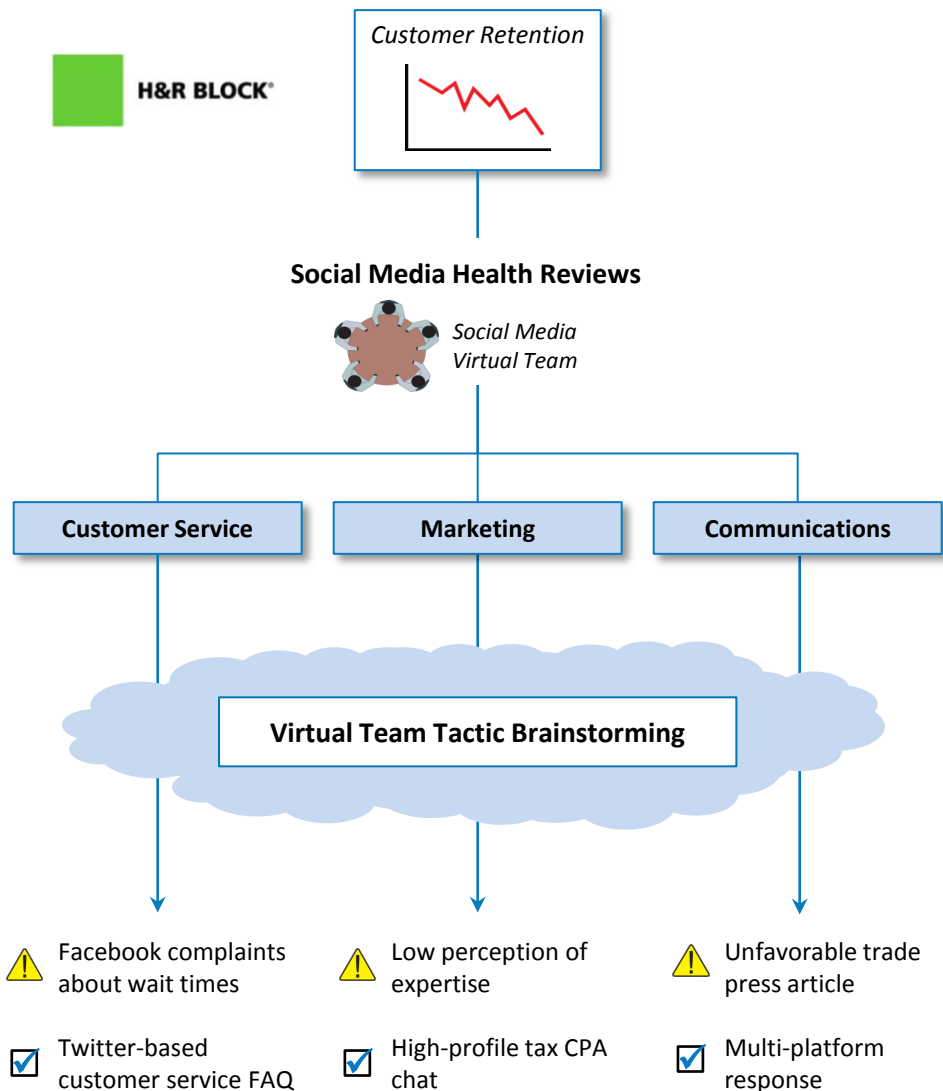
A Single Number We All Care About

Many higher education institutions are experimenting with social media “working groups,” in which staff from different departments divide social media responsibilities. Working groups are cost-effective, as they do not require new hires, but they also lose momentum for social media objectives over time, as team members devote time to other responsibilities and scale back their working group involvement.

To sustain working groups on a long-term basis, they need to be galvanized around a central goal—a strategy exemplified by H&R Block’s social media virtual team. The team’s efforts are centered on one critical business metric, customer retention, and all team discussions relate to how social media can be used to identify troubling customer service trends and solve those problems. By beginning with a metric that the entire organization has been acculturated and incentivized to improve, H&R Block has found an ongoing reason to convene team meetings and avoids the vague and indirect social media approaches that plague the efforts of other organizations, including many in higher education.

Social Media Coordinator Convenes Collaborations Around Essential Business Outcome

Critical Outcomes Metric Dashboard



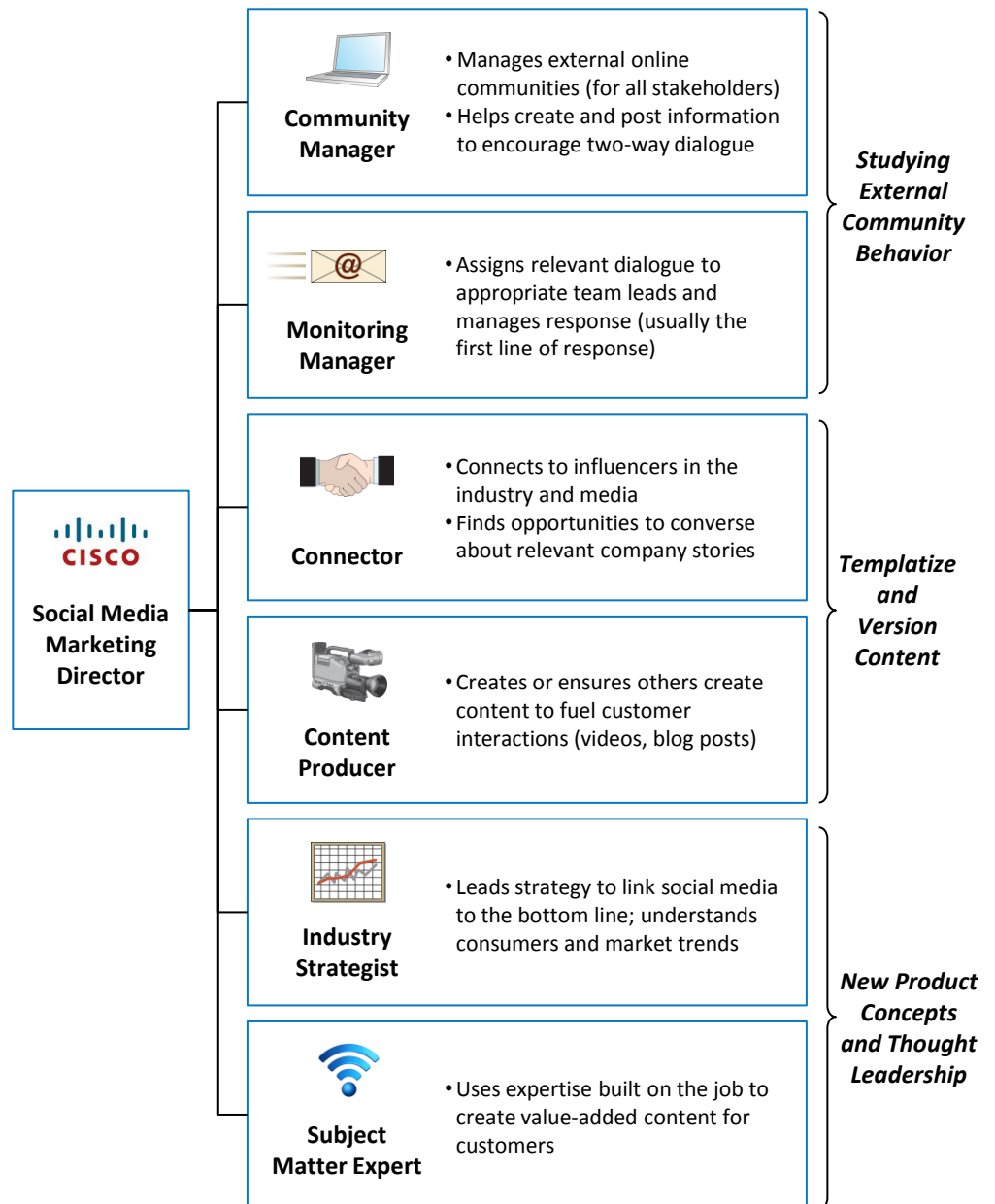
Source: Corporate Executive Board, Marketing Leadership Council, “Closing the CMO Leadership Deficit in Social Media, July 2010.



Social Media Centers of Excellence

The center of excellence organizational model is gaining popularity in innovation-focused industries like technology, in which social media can provide a competitive advantage for companies needing to constantly learn more about its consumers' fast-evolving needs and views. In this model, one group studies external community behavior to learn about consumer opinions of the company and respond accordingly. A second group matches social media posting opportunities with the right internal staffer for each task, and adapts formerly-produced content for social media sites. The third group uses social media to understand new industry directions, leveraging social media to develop new product concepts and extend the company's thought leadership.

High-Tech Companies Investing in Two-Way Customer Dialogue



Source: Corporate Executive Board, Marketing Leadership Council, "Closing the CMO Leadership Deficit in Social Media, July 2010.



Topic for Another Day

Although still a largely unexplored area within higher education, a growing number of private sector companies are using social media to accelerate the new product development process. The customer community on the “My Starbucks Idea” website has actively contributed over 100,000 ideas for new beverages, food items, and store organization. As a side benefit, this “crowdsourced market research” approach enhances Starbucks’ brand identity as an organization dedicated to its loyal and engaged customer community.

Looking to private sector models, higher education organizations are beginning to see the potential in social media for soliciting and testing new program ideas and marketing concepts. Innovators use social media to monitor relevant discipline-specific communities for program/course ideas, to listen to “authentic” phrases that can be transported into communications campaigns, and to solidify relationships with key employers and industry experts.

Fast-Cycling Market Research and New Program Development

Starbucks’s Digital Suggestion Box and Focus Group



My Starbucks Idea
Got An Idea? | View ideas

PRODUCT IDEAS
27,060 Coffee and Espresso Drinks
2,309 Frappuccino Beverages
8,282 Tea and Other Drinks
12,664 Food

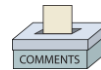
- 100,000+ ideas since 2008 launch
- Users submit ideas (on products, customer experience) and comment/vote for others
- Leaderboard tracks top users by ideas, comments, and votes

Applications for Higher Education Program Launch



Listening Post

“Pain points” for program development; “authentic phrasing” for marketing campaign themes



Soliciting Feedback

Vet programs and curriculum ideas by online industry communities



Networking

Relationships with industry advisors, possible B2B partners



Quick Wins and Long-Term Differentiators

Recognizing dispersion in available resources among institutions, and that many members must pursue excellence without more time, budget or staff than they currently have, the Forum has distinguished Quick-Win practices (incremental change to current practice; minor investment; fast results) from Long-Term Differentiators (potentially transformational, more speculative; require meaningful investments in technology, expertise, or cultural change).

At the end of every section of this publication, we have included a table separating profiled ideas into quick wins and long-term differentiators. For members unable to invest in long-term differentiators immediately, the Forum recommends that quick wins may help generate the resources needed to fund longer-term activities.

	Quick Wins	Long-Term Differentiators
Increasing Capacity with Current Resources	Ensuring Consistency of Student and Faculty Volunteer Contributors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowdsourced Blog Posts (pg. 109) • Live Tweeting Incentives (pg. 109) • Social Media “DJ” Shifts (pg. 110) • International Student Ambassadors (pg. 112) • Social Media-Hosted Administrative Tasks (pg. 115) • Digital Brand Support Services (pg. 116) • Dedicated Social Media Contributors (pg. 118) 	Focusing Cross-Functional Social Media Teams on Critical Business Metric: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical-Metric Virtual Team (pg. 121) • Social Media Center of Excellence (pg. 122)



Implementation Toolkit



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Making Monitoring Easier

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Typical University Challenge

The first step for social media lead generation is to identify already existing online communities around specific professions or niche interests (e.g., a LinkedIn group for project management professionals), since participating in external networks is more cost effective than maintaining new pages or sites. However, staff report feeling overwhelmed by the plethora of online community activity requiring monitoring and response time, with hundreds of relevant groups and sites often existing in any given field.

Summary of Tools

Tool #1: The Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide distills lessons from private-sector marketing executives for selecting appropriate listening tools; it also provides a list of popular tools organized by both function and price point.

Tool #2: Google Alert Optimization Tips helps members craft more tailored Google alerts for meeting branding, market research, and alumni relations objectives.

Tool # 3: The Key Influencer Identification Worksheet provides step-by-step instructions for developing a list of individuals and web presences that are trusted within a particular community or field, have a large online following or readership, and may be helpful for promoting COE programs.

Tool #4: Joining Twitter Conversations with Hashtags explains the benefit of tagging Twitter posts with hashtags and provides directions for using hashtags to weigh in on higher education-related discussions.



Tool #1: Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide

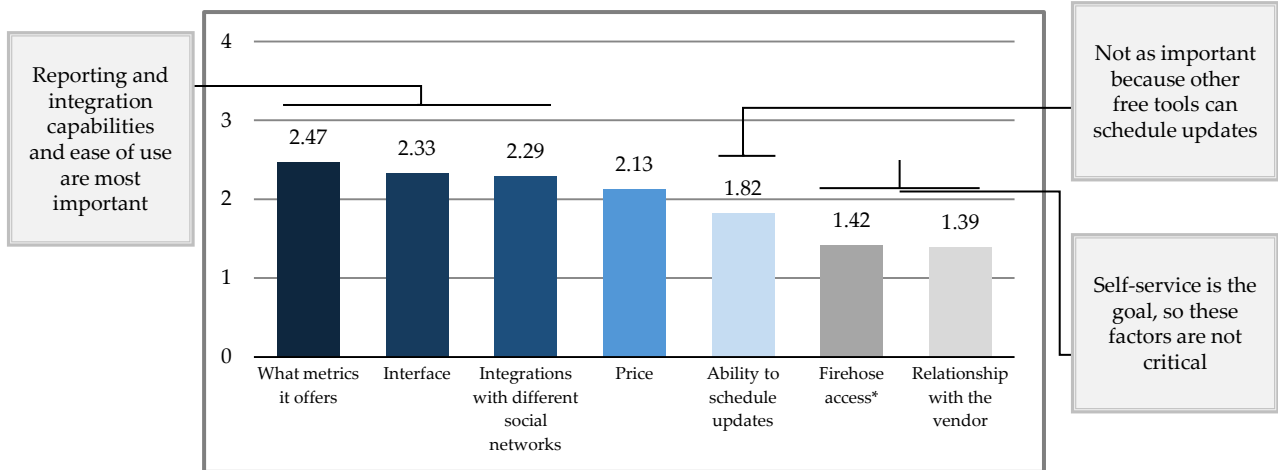
COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

In the past, many institutions relied on external consultants and agencies to monitor the efficacy of social media efforts and alert them to mentions of their brands or discussions of relevant topics. However, a growing suite of online “listening” or “monitoring” tools with self-service capabilities—along with an increasing centrality of social media to overall institutional branding—has rendered it more possible and desirable for marketing teams to purchase tools that allow for in-house social media monitoring.

The data below was derived from a OneForty/KissMetrics survey of 150 private-sector marketing directors.

Factors Universities Should Consider When Purchasing a Listening Tool

Although many free listening tools exist, a growing number of higher education institutions are considering paid options with more advanced capabilities. Survey participants were asked to rate different factors according to how important each factor was when selecting a social media monitoring tool on a scale from 1-4, with 4 being most important. The data for each factor is presented as an average rating.



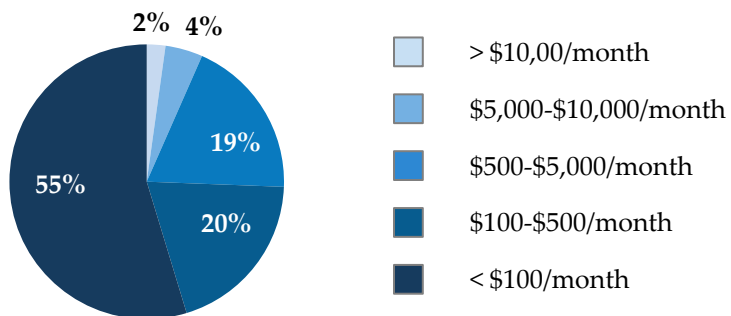
* “Firehose Access” is access to a complete data stream as opposed to a sampling

What Frustrates You about Your Social Media Monitoring Tool? (Top Three Responses)

- ✘ The tool has an excessive lag time and fails to provide reliable, accurate data.
- ✘ The tool has an excessive amount of bugs and is confusing to use.
- ✘ The tool is too pricey; the features do not justify the expense.

Organizing Social Media Listening Tool Options

Monthly Expenditures on Listening Tools:
Most Spend on the Lower End of the Spectrum





Tool #1: Social Media Listening Tool Selection Guide

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Social Media Monitoring Tools by Function and Price Point

FREE		
<p>Monitoring Social Campaigns: <i>(integrated marketing efforts distributed across social media channels)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widfire Social Media Monitor 	<p>Twitterverse Web Apps: <i>(tools that help organize and maintain Twitter presences)</i></p> <p>Real-Time Search & Monitor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitter • TweetBeep • Twitterfall • Twilert <p>Identify Trending Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulse of the Tweeters • TweetMeme • Twitscoop <p>Smart Growth of Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MyTweeple • Mentionmap 	<p>Monitoring Upcoming Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plancast
<p>Monitoring Twitter and Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seismic • HootSuite • Twitter Advanced Search • Facebook Search • TweetDeck • Twitterverse Web Apps 		<p>Monitoring Comments and Forums: <i>(on discussion boards and blogs)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment Sniper • coComment • Boardreader • Google Trends
<p>Monitoring Social Networks and Blogs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Mention • Google Reader • BlogPulse • AllTop • Google Real-time Search 		<p>Monitoring with Social Search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addictomatic • Guzzle • Socialseek • BuzzFeed • Buzzoo • monitorThis • Alterian SM2 Freemium
	<p>Monitoring with Alerts: <i>(search areas range from blogs to the news to video)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Alerts • BackType Alerts • Yahoo! Pipes • Northern Light Search 	<p>Monitoring Influence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PeerIndex • Klout

TOOLS FOR LESS THAN \$500/MONTH

• uberVU	• Viralheat
• Trackur	• HootSuite Pro
• Beevolve	• Awareness, Inc.
• Sprout Social	• Argyle Social
• SugarCRM	• Radian6*

TOOLS FOR MORE THAN \$500/MONTH

• Alterian SM2
• Radian6
• Cision
• Vocus
• BrandChats

*Radian6 offers its services for a 50% discount to not-for-profit organizations; placement into the < \$500 category is contingent upon this discount



Tool #2: Google Alert Optimization Tips

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

Given the high expense of many listening tools, many higher education institutions are attracted to Google Alerts's free service; however, if not designed carefully, these alerts can be cumbersome to manage, providing large volumes of information only marginally relevant to an institution's needs. The COE Forum has compiled the tips below to help members craft more tailored Google Alerts that yield actionable information for meeting COE recruiting and branding objectives.

What Is a Google Alert?

Google Alerts are regular email notifications of the most up-to-date web mentions of specified search terms. They are commonly used by individuals and organizations that want to stay apprised of their reputations, buzz in a relevant field, and competitors. Within the field of postsecondary education, Google Alerts are most commonly used by collegiate athletic recruiters. However, Google Alerts can have further applications for continuing, professional, and online education units:

How Is This Happening?

Google's bots (or "spiders") regularly scrape the internet for new content to index in the search engine. Google Alerts allow users to directly benefit from these additions by notifying them as soon as the bots capture relevant material.

POTENTIAL USES	SEARCH TERMS	BENEFITS
Identifying influencers	Institution name; a specific program name; a topic at the core of or strongly connected to one of your programs	Influencers can help identify trends in your field and can be an excellent target for marketing efforts due to their ability to amplify your message to their network.
Gathering intelligence about current program brand perception	Program name; influencers; your field of interest	This type of Google Alert can help detect perceptions surrounding your program and institution, providing information about target audiences or ideas for program modification or new launches.
Peer/competitor monitoring	Field of interest + competitors or solely competitors	Peer and competitor offerings can help develop your own program's differentiating characteristics.
Tracking alumni and donors	Institution name + alumni/graduate/degree from, etc.	Alumni can be a valuable resource as advocates for your program, future customers, and as resources for current students.
Identifying faculty members with a lot of web activity	Faculty name (start with highly influential/popular professors and expand from there)	Faculty members with large networks can be effective advocates for the institution and program.



Tool #2: Google Alert Optimization Tips

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

How to Set Up Google Alerts

1 Visit <http://google.com/alerts>.

If applicable, sign into the appropriate Google account. Note that a Google account is not necessary to receive alerts, as they can be delivered to any email address; a Google account does, however, give you access to some convenient alert management options and it also allows you to receive alerts via an RSS feed in addition to email. If you anticipate receiving a large number of alerts, it may be wise to create a separate email address to hold them.

2 Enter Preferred Keywords.

A sound starting point would be to set up alerts for the name of your organization, the names of key leadership and faculty members, and relevant keywords in your community. You will need to establish separate alerts for each search phrase; Google allows users to maintain up to 1,000 alerts at one time. To understand the results that might be returned for any given search phrases, run an ordinary Google search with them.

3 Choose an Alert Type.

Type	Searches	Captures
News	News articles	Hits in the top ten results of a News search
Blogs	Blog posts	Hits in the top ten results of a Google Blog search
Web	Webpages	Hits in the top twenty results of a Google Web search
Comprehensive	News articles, blogs, webpages	Hits in the top ten results of any of the above
Video	Videos	Hits in the top ten results of a Google Video search
Groups	Google Groups	Hits in the top fifty results of a Google Groups search

4 Decide on the Frequency of Alerts.

How often you opt to receive an alert should depend on the expected volume of results and the time sensitivity of the topic being monitored. You can choose from among three options:

- As it happens
- Once a day
- Once a week

Even with the “as it happens” options, alerts will only be delivered once Google indexes the content; the speed of reporting depends in large part on the search engine optimization of the referring website. An infrequently updated website may take weeks to be “crawled” by Google’s bots.



Tool #2: Google Alert Optimization Tips

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Determining the Best Search Phrase

Google offers the following tips for honing your search phrase:

- ✓ Be as precise as possible. The more precise your search terms are, the more relevant your alerts will be.
- ✓ Use quotation marks around a group of words if you are looking for them together. *Examples: "white house;" "Mike Smith"*
- ✓ Put quotation marks around a single word to match that word precisely as you typed it, excluding synonyms and spelling variations. *Examples: "foard" (to not include results for Ford); Michael "Jacson" (to not include results for Michael Jackson)*
- ✓ Use a minus sign (-) in front of words that you want to exclude. *Examples: paris -texas; apple -fruit*
- ✓ Use the site: operator to limit your search to specific sites. *Examples: physics site:.edu; congress site:nytimes.com*
- ✓ Use the site: operator with a dash to exclude specific sites. *Example: "joe bloggs" -site:twitter.com*

Implementation Considerations

(adapted from *Measure what Matters* by Katie Delahaye Paine)

- ✓ Expect to discard most findings; too many results are not helpful.
- ✓ Establish a spreadsheet to track items as they are received. Record the date the item appeared, source, author, subject, comments, links, and trackbacks.
- ✓ After one or two months, calculate the ratio of comments to posts (also known as the conversation index) for each eligible entry.
- ✓ Set up RSS feeds for or subscribe to the sources with the highest conversation ratios.



Tool #3: Key Influencer Identification Worksheet

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As a first step, many COE units look to faculty and other subject matter experts, industry advisors, current students, and alumni for the names of social media influencers in specific fields. Additionally, many organizations—especially in fields with a high level and frequency of Web 2.0 activity—find it useful to follow the steps below to ensure identification of all relevant influencers as well as to filter those most useful to cultivate. These steps can be completed as a one-time project (likely stretching over the course of a week), but many prefer to track key influencers over the course of several months.

Case Study: Using an Influencer to Increase Applications

Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business describes a successful case of identifying and utilizing an influencer. A combination of strategic Google Alerts and surveys of current and admitted students led Fisher College staff to a blogger who was considered a go-to source of information on business master's programs and who had briefly discussed their new master's program. Fisher College provided him with more information about the program as well as direct access to program-related questions; the blogger, unaccustomed to this level of attention and professional courtesy, was happy to relay the information on to his readers. Fisher College estimates that it received a few dozen applications from individuals who read the program description and endorsement provided by this blogger.

Search

1. **Search for articles, blogs, discussion boards, websites, and Twitter accounts that mention your institution, program, or field of interest.**
 - Use listening tools to streamline the process. (See Tool #1 on pg. 131 for more information about listening tool use and selection.)
 - Search for competitors and peers; individuals discussing them will also be relevant to your social media marketing purposes.
 - Use Twitter hashtags to identify relevant influencers. (See Tool #4 on pg. 139 for more information on monitoring with hashtags.)
2. **Delete duplicates and anything that is immediately irrelevant.**
3. **In a spreadsheet, record:**

• Date	• Subject	• Number of comments
• Source	• Author	• Number of followers

Verify

4. **Now that you have developed a list of sites or people that mention you or your marketplace, verify that the sources are important.**
 - Rank them according to number of mentions of your institution, program, or field of interest.
 - Assess the writer's authority by looking at his or her biography and the number and quality of comments on the site.
 - Discard any sources that copy material from other sites or otherwise seem obviously trivial.



Tool #3: Key Influencer Identification Worksheet

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Verify

5. Use another spreadsheet to record, for every news article about the institution, industry, or program:
 - Name of the publication
 - Name of the reporter
 - Names of everyone quoted
 - Was it entirely about the institution, industry, or competition?
 - Did individuals quoted refer directly to the institution or was the quote about someone else?
 - Did the article and/or quote contain one or more of your key messages?

Grade

6. Grade your list of influencers by running entries through Blog Grader, Technorati, and Twitalyzer and ranking them in order of their scores.
7. You can also calculate their conversation indices, which are ratios of comments to posts, and rank influencers again from highest to lowest.
8. At this point, you should have three rankings: number of mentions (step 4), their grade rankings (step 6), and their conversation index ranking (step 7). Add the three ranks together and sort them from high to low.

Allocate

9. Staff have limited time to cultivate relationships with all influencers; use the graded list to prioritize attention.

Refresh

10. Every six to eight months, revisit this process to see if certain influencers or types of influencers are particularly helpful (or not) and add new influencers to the list. Readjust outreach and prioritization accordingly.



Tool #4: Joining Twitter Conversations with Hashtags

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What Are Hashtags?

Twitter users employ hashtags (denoted by the number symbol, #, followed by a topic title with no spaces in between words) to mark individual tweets as referencing a given topic. Hashtags help Twitter users identify other people tweeting about their interests and join in on relevant conversations.

Who Sets Hashtags?

Hashtags are not set by Twitter's programmers, but are instead created by users, for other users. Within higher education, a number of entrepreneurial Twitter enthusiasts have taken it upon themselves to establish agreed-upon hashtags for high-interest topics. Some of the most popular higher education Twitter hashtags are listed in the table below.

Hashtag	Conversation Topic
#acadv	Academic advising
#continuingeducation	Continuing education issues
#cuad	College Union and Activities Discussion topics
#distanceed	Distance education issues
#edchat	General trends in higher education; tends to be focused on academic affairs
#edtech	New technology for higher education
#emchat	Enrollment management issues
#mlearning	Mobile education trends
#onlineed	Online education issues
#onlineeducation	Online education issues
#reslife	Residence life discussions
#saass	Student affairs assessments
#sachat	General student affairs issues
#sagrad	Student affairs graduate programs
#sagrow	Matches up student affairs graduate students and student affairs professionals in a mentor-mentee relationship
#satech	Technology for student affairs
#smedu	Social media issues in higher education



Tool #4: Joining Twitter Conversations with Hashtags

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How Do I Use Hashtags to Join These Conversations?

Simply type the hashtag into Twitter's search box and hit Enter, and Twitter will display the most recent and relevant tweets that contain the hashtag. If you wish to add to the conversation, compose a tweet that contains the relevant hashtag. Hashtags can be helpful for joining conversations in a few different ways:

1. **Participate in a scheduled topic chat.** Most of the hashtags in the table on the previous page are associated with specific chat sessions that take place on Twitter on a weekly or monthly basis. For example, one of the most popular higher education Twitter chat sessions revolves around the #sachat hashtag: every Thursday between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. CST and between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. CST, student affairs staffers convene on Twitter to discuss a predetermined topic. Topics are established by the Student Affairs Collaborative, a group of student affairs professionals that organizes and oversees the Twitter chat.

For more information on the #sachat, please visit the Student Affairs Collaborative blog (<http://thesabloggers.org/#>).

2. **Search for a conversation.** Even without a pre-specified chat occurring on a given topic, you can still use hashtags (or general keywords related to hashtags) to search on Twitter for people talking about your areas of interest. A search for #OnlineEd typically brings up the day's highlights in tweets related to online education issues.
3. **Start your own conversation.** Pose a question to your Twitter users and let them know which hashtag they should include in their response tweets. Often, institutions set specific hashtags for community members to use when talking about the school on Twitter; for example, the University of Delaware asks that Twitter users add #UDel to their Delaware-related tweets.

Conference Hashtags: Look to *Inside Higher Ed*

Most major higher education conferences publicize official Twitter hashtags well in advance of the event so that attendees can connect on Twitter and weigh in on issues before, during, and after the conference itself. *Inside Higher Ed* maintains a useful calendar of upcoming higher education conferences and official Twitter chats and their associated Twitter hashtags with instructions for participating in each.

If you're attending a conference in the next six months, check out the calendar here: <http://www.insidehighered.com/calendar/twitter>.



Platform Prioritization Guides

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Typical University Challenge

Confronted with limited staffing resources, higher education institutions realize that maintaining a robust presence on every platform on an ever-growing list of social media sites is infeasible; however, when selecting platforms on which to focus, many institutions' choices are too influenced by staffers' personal preferences, rather than the platforms' suitability for their audience needs and strategic goals.

Summary of Tools

Tool #5: The **Major Platform Comparison Chart** provides an overview of the three best-known social media platforms in the United States: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. It considers the major advantages and limitations of each platform, presents demographic information on platform users, and offers snapshot considerations for COE units deciding where to focus their limited social media time.

Tool #6: The **Social Media Student Preference Survey** is modified from a survey developed by Widener University's University College, its school for part-time adult students. The tool includes a templated survey for gathering information about student social media activity and presents the responses to Widener's recent survey for comparison.

Tool #7: The **Resource Intensiveness Evaluator** is designed to assist COE units in prioritizing social media channels based on two factors: the cost of the channel and the staff time the COE unit has on hand.



Tool #5: Major Platform Comparison Chart

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

A COE-Tailored Overview of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	LINKEDIN
Major Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest user base of any social media platform • Good for leveraging detailed content that doesn't fit on other platforms (e.g., videos) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A syndication vehicle, Twitter is good for simultaneously updating several platforms • Provides the best forum for quick, rapid-fire interactions • Offers institutions the chance to weigh in on topical conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen as the most professional major platform; contains the largest aggregation of professionals on the internet • Professionally oriented audience means that LinkedIn offers the greatest opportunities for targeted, field-specific marketing
Major Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large audience is very fragmented; challenging to identify members and target different audience segments. • Seen as a predominantly personal space, and thus many students and faculty are unwilling to engage on the site for academic or professional purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ill-equipped for communicating large amounts of information at once • Trails Facebook significantly in popularity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board features are limited • Unable to host rich content such as photos and videos
User Totals	800 million+ worldwide users; 150 million+ American users	100 million+ active worldwide users; 40 million+ active American users	135 million+ worldwide users; 55 million+ American users
User Demographics	<p>Users by Age Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A) 12 to 17 ■ B) 18 to 24 ■ C) 25 to 34 ■ D) 35 to 44 ■ E) 45 to 55 ■ F) 55+ 	<p>Users by Age Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A) 12 to 17 ■ B) 18 to 24 ■ C) 25 to 34 ■ D) 35 to 44 ■ E) 45 to 54 ■ F) 55+ 	<p>Users by Age Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A) 18 to 24 ■ B) 25 to 34 ■ C) 35 to 54 ■ D) 55+



Tool #5: Major Platform Comparison Chart

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	LINKEDIN
Other Notable Demographic Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over half of Americans over the age of 12 have a Facebook account 52% of Facebook users are women; 48% are men 65% of Facebook users are white; 15% are Hispanic; 12% are African American; 3% are Asian; and 5% are "Other" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55% of monthly Twitter users are white; 22% are African American; 15% are Hispanic; 3% are Asian; and 5% are "Other" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46% of users are female; 54% are male
Best-Matched Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a preview for prospective students Sharing detailed content (photos, videos, etc.) Connecting distance students to the core campus and to one another Managing recruitment (through embedded inquiry forms and event RSVPs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting back-and-forth conversations with community members Building an industry reputation Outsourcing basic customer service queries Providing up-to-the-minute information Personalizing leaders and administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alumni engagement Career networking Building and aggregating a professional community Identifying potential repeat customers Offering a forum for job searches and job postings not directly affiliated with the institution
Ideal Audience Segments Are...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in specific content that can't be provided elsewhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making heavy use of mobile platforms Looking for quick or on-the-go information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in specific, identifiable career fields
Attributes of Successful Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They provide interesting, value-added content designed to prompt return page visits They tie their Facebook engagement efforts into broader communications campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They avoid a "bulletin board" approach by posting content intended to garner audience interactions They personalize the medium, identifying the person tweeting from a general account and posting some whimsical content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote networking benefits, they create closed communities and encourage more in-depth, personal discussions within the members of those communities They scour LinkedIn for information on alumni occupations
Unanswered Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If students don't want to engage with us on Facebook, can we change their minds? How much does a Facebook page influence prospective students' perceptions of a school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the demographics of a given account's Twitter followers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are students and alumni willing to engage on LinkedIn in a non-professional capacity?



Tool #6: Social Media Student Preference Survey

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

Adapted from a survey administered by Widener University's continuing and professional education unit, University College, this tool is designed to help COE units determine the most attractive platforms to reach current students.

1. Approximately how many hours each week do you spend on the Internet?

- a) Less than 5 hours per week
- b) Between 5 and 10 hours per week
- c) More than 10 hours per week

2. What is your preferred method of communicating with classmates outside of the classroom?

- a) Telephone
- b) Email
- c) Instant messaging
- d) Texting
- e) Personal meeting

3. What is your preferred method of communicating with instructors outside of the classroom?

- a) Telephone
- b) Email
- c) Instant messaging
- d) Texting
- e) Personal meeting

4. How often do you use social networking websites for school, work, or recreation (Facebook, Myspace, Bebo, LinkedIn, etc.)?

- a) Never
- b) Once per year
- c) Once per quarter/semester
- d) Monthly
- e) Weekly
- f) Several times per week
- g) Daily

5. Which of the following social networking websites do you use? Please check all that apply.

- a) Facebook
- b) University's Facebook page
- c) LinkedIn
- d) MySpace
- e) Twitter
- f) YouTube
- g) Classmates
- h) Flickr
- i) University's blog
- j) Blogs
- k) None
- l) Other, please specify



Tool #6: Social Media Student Preference Survey

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

6. How do you use social networking? Please check all that apply.

- a) Stay in touch with friends or make new friends I have never met in person
- b) As a forum to express my opinions and views
- c) Share photos, music, videos, or other work
- d) For professional activities (job networking, etc.)
- e) Participate in special-interest groups
- f) Plan or invite people to events
- g) Play games
- h) Follow/interact with University's social/extracurricular activities
- i) Use University's administrative services or communicate with administrative offices
- j) Communicate with classmates about course-related topics
- k) Communicate with instructors about course-related topics

7. How valuable would it be to see more use of social networking sites for communication from the University?

- a) Very valuable
- b) Somewhat valuable
- c) Not valuable at all
- d) Not sure

7. How much would you like to receive regular communication from the University via the following social media sites?

	Strongly dislike	Dislike	Neutral	Like	Strongly like
Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
Twitter	1	2	3	4	5
LinkedIn	1	2	3	4	5
Myspace	1	2	3	4	5

9. What is your major? (enter own response)

10. What is your gender? (enter own response)

11. What is your age? (enter own response)



Tool #6: Social Media Student Preference Survey

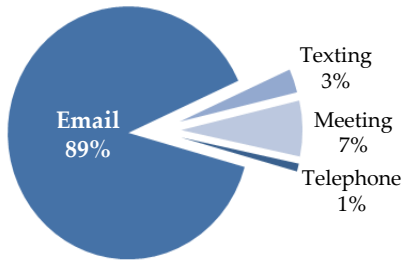
COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Implementation Tip

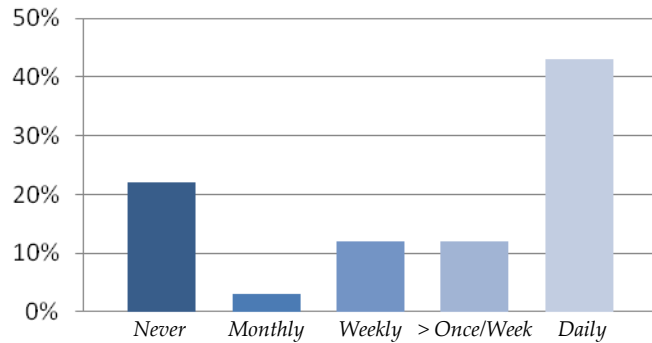
In addition to determining the best platforms for communicating with current students, surveys can also be deployed to identify the most popular external sites and social media influencers useful for reaching prospective students. Especially for COE units with a high percentage of graduate-level courses and programs, survey questions can uncover where students receive information about their industry/profession; specifically listing out different types of channels (e.g., listservs, Twitter accounts, blogs, associations, discussion forums) is recommended for provoking student thinking about all the sources they consult. These industry-specific survey questions can be included in a broader student preference survey for the entire unit, sent separately for a particular program or subject matter area, or included as discussion postings or quick polls on other social media sites (i.e., Facebook or LinkedIn).

Widener University's Continuing Education Student Social Media Profile

Preferred Method of Communication



Frequency of Internet Usage



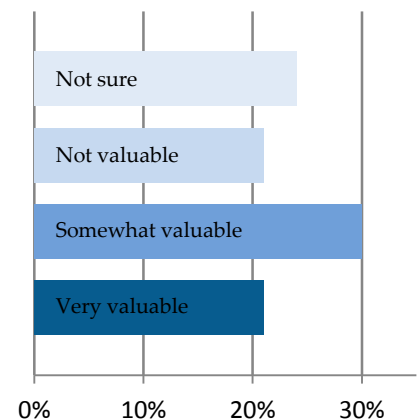
Which Social Networks?

Facebook	70%
YouTube	33%
LinkedIn	22%
University Facebook Page	21%
Twitter	13%
Blogs	12%
Myspace	10%
Classmates	6%
Flickr	3%
University Blog	1%
None	19%

Social Network Activities

Stay in touch with or make new friends	75%
Share photos, music, videos, or other work	55%
For professional activities	39%
Plan or invite people to events	39%
Play games	34%
Follow/interact with University's social/extracurricular activities	25%
As a forum to express my opinions	23%
Contact peers about course-related topics	21%
Contact instructors about course-related topics	21%
Participate in special-interest groups	20%
Use University administrative services or communicate with administrative offices	11%

Value of University Communications through Social Media





Tool #7: Resource Intensiveness Evaluator

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

The Resource Intensiveness Evaluator is designed to assist COE units in prioritizing social media channels based on two factors: the cost of the channel and the staff time the COE unit has on hand.

	Tools	Resources					
		Time/Staff			Cost		
		Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High
	Content Syndication		✓		✓		
	RSS Feeds	✓			✓		
	Image Sharing	✓			✓		
	Podcast Posting	✓			✓		
	Online Video Sharing	✓			✓		
	Widgets ^{1,2}	✓			✓		
	eCards ³	✓			✓		
	Microblogs		✓		✓		
	Podcast Creation		✓			✓	
	Online Video Production		✓			✓	
	Blogs		✓			✓	
	Mobile Technologies/ Texting		✓				✓
	Virtual Worlds		✓				✓
	Social Networks			✓	✓		

¹ Indicates the posting of a widget, not production

² Although the majority of widgets feature embedded content, some may contain an interactive component such as a quiz or a calculator

³ Indicates the sending, not production, of an eCard



Value-Added Content Creation

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Typical University Challenge

Institutions that fail to build vibrant social media communities—sites that users not only join but return to—often err by adopting a “bulletin board approach” to posting, pushing out broad information with no incentives for followers to engage back. Among units that do create compelling content designed for follower interaction, many fail to maximize the content’s impact by posting at times that do not align with audience usage patterns.

Summary of Tools

Tool #8: Ideal Days and Times to Post provides quick tips for improving post timing effectiveness and links to sample posting calendars used by other institutions.

Tool #9: University of Phoenix Most Popular Posts analyzes the Facebook page of the University of Phoenix to identify key components behind its most successful posts.

Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas presents several of the most creative social media contests uncovered during the Forum’s 150+ research interviews; these may serve as inspiration for COE units developing their own contests.

Tool #11: Developing and Using Online Videos offers suggestions for tailoring online videos to appeal to prospective students at different points throughout the admissions cycle.

Tool #12: The Media Campaign Planning Worksheet provides a template with a series of guiding brainstorming questions for COE teams looking to design and execute a targeted social media marketing campaign.



Tool #8: Ideal Days and Times to Post

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

Six Quick Tips for Increasing Posting Effectiveness

- Tweets at 5 p.m. get the most retweets
- Tweets at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. have the highest click-through rates
- Twitter click-through rates are the highest on weekends and at mid-week
- Saturdays are the best days to share on Facebook in terms of comments and “likes”
- Blogs are most commonly read in the morning and, to a lesser extent, in the evening
- New blog postings should be advertised in Facebook and Twitter updates

Sample Social Media Scheduler

The tips listed above have been combined and reflected in the following schedule. It can be used as a bare-bones exemplar for your team’s social media schedule, or as a basic sample of a calendar that your team should develop.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Morning</i>		Blog			Blog		Blog
<i>Midday</i>	Tweet	Facebook update, Tweet	Tweet	Facebook update, Tweet	Tweet	Facebook update, Tweet	Facebook update, Tweet
<i>Evening</i>	Tweet	Tweet	Tweet	Tweet	Tweet	Tweet	Tweet

Tweet every day at midday and in the early evening when people are returning from work.

Update Facebook at least twice during the week and twice leading into the weekend.

Post new blog entries semi-frequently; add them in the morning. Make sure to cross advertise the new posting (on your Facebook updates, tweets, etc.).

Example Scheduling Tools and Templates from the Web

- <http://onehalfamazing.com/blogging/social-media-calendar-template/>
- <http://socialmediatoday.com/bradfriedman/424216/build-your-social-media-schedule-2012>
- <http://www.moosylvania.com/blog/an-editorial-calendar-template-for-you-and-your-sanity/>
- <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/5-easy-steps-to-a-winning-social-media-plan/>



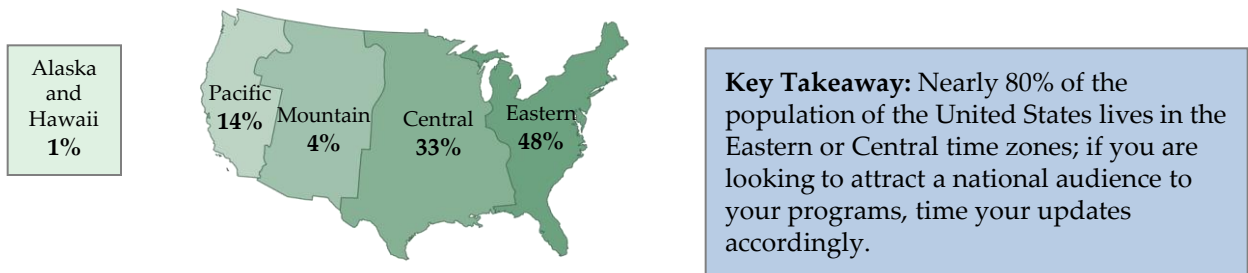
Tool #8: Ideal Days and Times to Post

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Implementation Tip: Posting across Multiple Platforms

Tools like HootSuite allow you to schedule automatic updates to major platforms. Platform integration can vary widely across these tools; HootSuite, for example, can manage updates on several platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and WordPress. Other scheduling tools like CoTweet and Twaitter only work on Facebook and Twitter.

Implementation Consideration: Where Is Our Audience?



Key Takeaway: Nearly 80% of the population of the United States lives in the Eastern or Central time zones; if you are looking to attract a national audience to your programs, time your updates accordingly.



Tool #9: University of Phoenix Most Popular Posts

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

Introduction

In the COE Forum's review of dozens of continuing and online education Facebook presences, the University's of Phoenix's Facebook page stood out for its frequent, diverse updates and generally strong responses from fans in the form of "comments" and "likes." To better understand what types of posts are most likely to engage audience members, the COE Forum analyzed the University of Phoenix's wall.

The Forum collected postings added by University administrators during a one-month period, categorizing each post and assessing its popularity (according to number of comments and "likes") and frequency. Posts were sorted into the following categories:

- **Discussion:** the posting asked an opinion-based question
- **Discussion+:** the posting asked an opinion-based question while also citing relevant information and providing a link
- **Faculty expertise:** the posting highlighted the work of a University of Phoenix teaching affiliate and a link to their work
- **Promotion:** the posting showcased a laudable feature of the University (e.g., green standards, job placement, etc.)
- **General interest:** the posting was usually education-, job-, or health-related, and provided a link to more information; usually the topics were directly relevant to Phoenix's curriculum, programs, or resources
- **Resource awareness:** the posting presented a University resource (e.g., career services, academic advising, etc.) and a link to more information

Lessons Learned from the University of Phoenix

- **Be Relevant:** Discussion is easiest to generate around topics about which audience members have defined opinions. Consider the demographics of your prospective student population, identify what likely matters to them (political events, work-life balance, planning for the future, etc.), and design discussion postings accordingly.
- **Be Green:** Don't be afraid to recycle material. Bringing out popular posts a second or third time will likely still net a healthy volume of engagement. Follow-up posts can also be a good way to keep momentum going from one highly popular post.
- **Be Patient:** Social media expert Ruth Marie Sylte advises that it may take several months of slowly increasing Facebook activity before interaction with and by prospective students builds to a critical mass. Do not view low numbers as an immediate sign to stop; remember that most social media users are "lurkers" and are watching but not engaging.

Most Importantly, Alternate between Discussion-Based and Informational Posts

In addition to instigating discussion, posts should also showcase program features, highlight institution resources, and help students through the application process. A general rule of thumb: **50% of your posts should engage prospects in discussion. The remaining 50% should provide information and awareness of program features or events.** Discussion posts keep visitors interested in returning to the site so that they see other, more informative posts and are more likely to recommend that friends join as well.

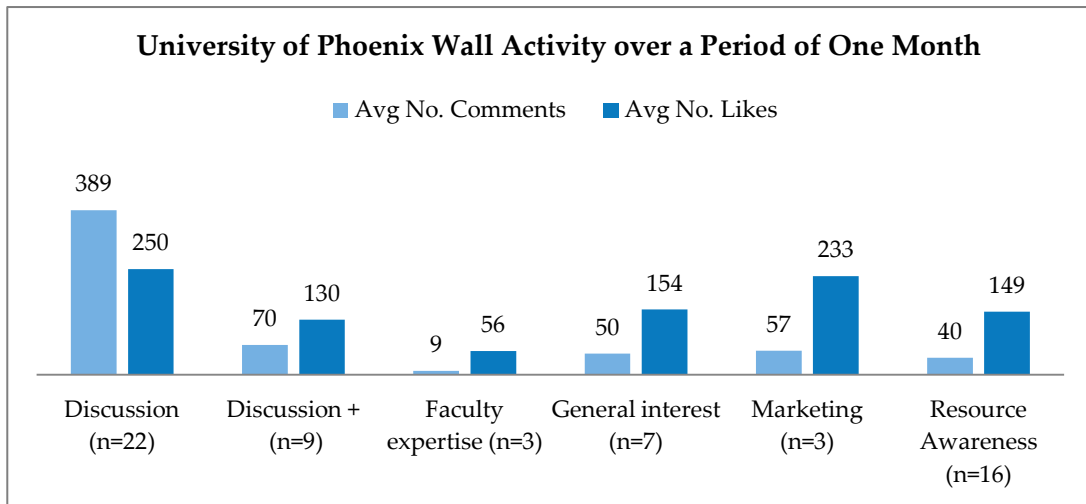


Tool #9: University of Phoenix Most Popular Posts

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

COE Forum Analysis: One Month of University of Phoenix Wall Postings

Category	Count	Total No. Comments	Avg No. Comments	Total No. Likes	Avg No. Likes	Comments:Likes
Discussion (n=22)	22	8,562	389	5,503	250	1.55
Discussion + (n=9)	9	696	70	1,296	130	0.54
Faculty expertise (n=3)	3	28	9	168	56	0.17
General interest (n=7)	7	353	50	1,078	154	0.33
Promotion (n=3)	3	170	57	698	233	0.24
Resource awareness (n=16)	16	642	40	2,386	149	0.27



Top Comment-Earners (all in the discussion category)		Comments
1	If someone offered you \$10,000 to swap your iPhone or Android for a regular cell phone for six months, would you take the deal?	2466
2	How many times a day do you check Facebook?	674
3	What characteristic is most important in a great leader? (repeat post)	554
4	If you could become another person for 24 hours, who would you be?	552
5	What characteristic is most important in a great leader? (repeat post)	495
6	If you could go back and relive a day in your life, which day would you choose? (repeat post)	438
7	Fall is just around the corner— what’s your favorite thing about Fall? (repeat post)	402
8	Fall is just around the corner— what’s your favorite thing about Fall? (repeat post)	391
9	Should public schools require all parents to volunteer their time in the classroom?	371
10	If you could go back and relive a day in your life, which day would you choose? (repeat post)	308



Tool #9: University of Phoenix Most Popular Posts

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Further Food for Thought

- The “discussion” postings were by far the most popular, even when compared to discussion+ postings. Discussion postings were the only category to have a comment-to-“like” ratio greater than one. Roughly 1.5 people commented on discussion postings for every one “like.” Discussion postings tend to be accessible topics, having to do with issues that individuals within the typical University of Phoenix demographic would have an opinion about. What’s surprising is that discussion+ postings are very similar in terms of accessibility. For example, the discussion+ posting “Is it important for leaders to change their style of management during difficult times? [+link]” was met with 70 comments and 120 “likes,” while the discussion posting “What characteristic is most important in a great leader?” received the much higher number of 554 comments and 215 “likes.”
- Postings were added to the University of Phoenix’s wall several times throughout the day, usually around noon and throughout the afternoon. Typically three postings were added each day. One of these postings was always a discussion or discussion+ posting.*
- It is not uncommon for commenters to leave more than one comment (roughly 10% of commenters leave 2-3 comments). The comment streams, however, rarely turn into discourses between two or more people.
- The top comment-earners were non-academic postings that asked about everyday habits, lifestyle decisions, or simple opinions. Two of these postings can be deemed more discussion-instigating than the others because they are more contentious. These two were:
 - What characteristic is most important in a great leader?
 - Should public schools require all parents to volunteer their time in the classroom?
- Of the top ten comment-earners, three postings were repeats (numbers 3 and 5, 7 and 8, and 6 and 10). The range in two of these pairs (3 and 5 and 6 and 10) speak to the number of factors, in addition to the actual prompt, that influence comment rates.

Implementation Tip: Initiating a Discourse within Your Team

The COE Forum recommends that COE teams use this case study as a launching pad for group discussion and brainstorming as to the most effective types of posts for specific program needs and audience interests.

Sample Team Brainstorming Questions

Target Program or Course _____

Relevant Discussion Question Ideas 1. _____
2. _____

Informational Post Ideas (e.g., events, deadlines, services, etc.) 1. _____
2. _____

*Users may be more likely to comment on shorter discussion postings, since (unlike in the case of Discussion+ postings) they don’t feel obligated to click on any additional information before crafting a response.



Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas

COE FORUM | Social Media
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Holding a contest on social media can be an effective mechanism for engaging current followers and attracting new ones. While basic contests (photo contests, trivia contests, and the like) are increasingly common, many members asked the COE Forum about types of contest ideas that have been most innovative and successful within higher education. Here are profiles of ten of the most creative contest ideas that the Forum uncovered through 150+ conversations with deans, marketing directors, and social media experts across the country.

Expanding the Applicant Pool

PROSPECT-RICH EVENT PROMOTIONS

Summary: Brandman University partnered with the Anaheim Angels to organize a Brandman night at the ballpark. For the four weeks prior to the baseball game, the public was encouraged to write essays about a personal “MVP,” or the Most Valuable Person in their lives, and upload responses to the Brandman Facebook page. Facebook visitors voted on their favorite entries, and five winners were chosen to be recognized on the field during the game.

Objectives: Increase general awareness of Brandman and its educational offerings
Associate the Brandman name with feel-good, everyday heroes
Collect leads from fans at the game

Notable Because: Brandman analyzed its target student demographics before the contest and concluded that many of the types of people they were looking for (young to middle-aged adults, those working or raising families) were likely to be among the baseball game attendees. Facebook was utilized as a public platform for promoting Brandman both during and after the contest.

For More Information: <http://www.brandman.edu/PressReleases/MVPContest.asp>
<http://www.brandman.edu/PressReleases/MVPwinners.asp>

Implementation Considerations: Due in large part to contracts with the Angels and two social media marketing agencies, the promotion was an expensive one for Brandman, with total costs exceeding \$100,000. However, officials at Brandman concede that the final price included items that, in retrospect, could have been reduced or eliminated altogether. For instance, Brandman found its own staffers to be much more effective at having conversations with prospective students at the ballpark than an external marketing team that was hired for the same purpose. In the end, despite the steep price, Brandman officials were pleased with the contest, noting that lead-generation results compared very favorably with those of more traditional outreach events they’ve hosted in the past.

“LIKE”-DEPENDENT APPLICATION ACCESS

Summary: Colorado State University Online Plus partnered with the *Denver Post* to give away a free semester of an undergraduate degree. Interested students were required to “like” the Facebook page of either CSU Online Plus or the *Denver Post* to access application materials. Contest entrants had to first apply to CSU Online Plus and be accepted to be eligible to win.

Objectives: Increase Facebook page followers
Increase awareness of CSU Online Plus’s degrees

Notable Because: The contest not only raised local awareness of CSU Online Plus but also compelled a large number of prospective students to read detailed descriptions of the school’s degree and course offerings.



Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas

COE | Social Media
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Implementation Considerations: The first two winners selected by CSU Online Plus appear to have misunderstood the contest, and were uninterested in obtaining degrees from CSU Online Plus once they learned what that would entail. However, officials report a rise in inquiries that coincided with the contest, and for that reason they express plans to put on a modified version of the contest in 2012, perhaps with clearer instructions for entry.

GRADUATION REFLECTION VIDEO BLOGS

Summary: Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Worldwide selected eight students who planned to attend its in-person graduation ceremony to document their journeys as students in the months leading to commencement. Participants in the “Destination Graduation” project were given video cameras and asked to record themselves talking about their favorite campus memories, thoughts on graduation, and future plans. Videos were uploaded to the Embry-Riddle Worldwide Facebook account, and the participant with the most video “likes” was awarded an iPad 2.

Objectives: Add student-generated content to the Embry-Riddle Worldwide Facebook page
Increase the attractiveness of Embry-Riddle to prospective students

Notable Because: In profiling its graduates’ experiences in a rich video format, Embry-Riddle Worldwide was hoping to give prospective adult students a sense of identification with Embry-Riddle as a place where they could succeed.

For More Information: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9A95B1F2943580C7>

INQUIRY FORM CONTEST ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Summary: For its “Be the Boss” campaign in 2010, Florida International University’s MBA program recruiters furnished the inside of a truck to resemble an office and parked the truck outside happy hour events where they expected they might find a number of prospective business students. Onlookers who filled out a recruitment inquiry form could sign up to enter the truck and compete in various office-themed challenges. The videos were later uploaded to FIU Business’s Facebook and YouTube accounts, and the contestant with the greatest number of video votes won an iPad.

Objectives: Increase local awareness of FIU Business’s MBA program
Obtain prospective student leads from in-person contestants

Notable Because: By putting contestant videos on social media platforms and incentivizing them to share the videos with their friends, FIU Business was able to reach a much larger group within their target student demographic than would have been possible at one in-person happy hour alone.

For more information: <http://business.fiu.edu/fiubusiness/betheboss/index.cfm>

Implementation Considerations: Though enthusiastic about the basic ideas behind the Be the Boss contest (e.g., sharing fun videos with a wider audience online), FIU Business officials found it posed a high barrier to entry: participants had to be comfortable both sharing contact information and completing challenges in front of a large group of people and on camera. Hoping to generate more leads per event, FIU Business has since discontinued Be the Boss and replaced it with a similar happy hour promotion in which prospective MBAs are invited to guess the amount of money in a jar for a chance to enter a cash-grab machine.



Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

Building “Sticky” Online Communities

ORGANIC STUDENT CAMPAIGN SUPPORT

Summary: As part of American University’s Wonk branding campaign highlighting all of the impressive content expertise within the AU community, students were asked to take pictures of themselves next to their favorite Wonk ads around campus and upload the photos to Facebook or Twitter. Winners were chosen each week by marketing staffers, and weekly winners were entered into a drawing to win an iPad.

Objectives: Increase traffic to the Wonk website among current students
Increase student awareness of and support for the Wonk campaign

Notable Because: The contest was tied directly to a concrete, larger goal of the University’s: promoting enthusiasm for the Wonk campaign. The contest purpose went beyond simply increasing American’s Facebook followers.

For More Information: <http://americanwonks.com/>

SOCIAL NETWORK STUDENT EVANGELIST PRIZES

Summary: When students at California State University, Long Beach became fans of the Facebook page for the College of Continuing and Professional Education, page administrators promised a bookstore gift card to any student who could convince 10 additional students to become Facebook fans.

Objectives: Increase Facebook fans for the College of Continuing and Professional Education
Encourage students to spread the word about their social media presence

Notable Because: Marketers used a simple yet compelling reward to put students in the position of publicizing their school’s Facebook page.

CURRICULUM-RELATED COMMENT REWARDS

Summary: When University of California, Irvine Extension staff saw enrollments waning for a previously popular film studies class, they began posting movie-related trivia and opinion questions on their Facebook page. Posters with the top-voted responses were given two free tickets to preview Hollywood movies not yet released to the general public—a perk shared with students in the film studies course.

Objectives: Increase engagement and interaction of Facebook fans
Improve enrollments in a film studies course

Notable Because: The UC Irvine Extension administrators used a unique and appealing feature of one of their programs (exclusive access to film previews) to promote both the program and their general social media presence.



Tool #10: Top Ten Contest Ideas

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Curating Loyalty among Graduates

EMPLOYER-JUDGED CAPSTONE PROJECT

Summary: A trade association wishing to encourage the production of automobiles with lightweight, fuel-efficient materials reached out to a design school. Students at the school were asked to produce lightweight vehicle designs and upload the designs to the school's Facebook page.

Objectives: Tap student creativity to solve an industry issue
Provide students with an opportunity to showcase skills to potential employers
Start a conversation about fuel efficiency and energy savings

Notable Because: Both the students and the trade association benefitted by exchanging information: students gained valuable job market exposure and employers received free design ideas.

FOLLOWER-BASED ALUMNI DONATIONS

Summary: The University of Wisconsin-Madison partnered with a young alumnus who is a social media enthusiast and who wished to donate money to the school. For a month-long period called the Bucky Challenge, the alumnus promised to donate \$1 for every additional Facebook fan and Twitter follower that UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Alumni Association received in that time, up to \$50,000. The money went to a scholarship fund for student financial aid.

Objectives: Increase social media followers for UW-Madison and its alumni association
Promote social media engagement among members the University community
Raise money to support financial aid
Showcase the contributions of a young alumnus and encourage donations among other young alumni

Notable Because: The University gave members of its community an explicit and philanthropic reason to follow its updates on Facebook and Twitter. It was able to promote social media engagement, young alumni giving, and financial aid support all with one initiative.

For More Information: <http://buckychallenge.wisc.edu/>

FUNDRAISER TWITTER TABLES

Summary: At its annual fundraising dinner, a nonprofit organization in North Carolina called Thompson Child and Family Focus reserved a special table for Twitter-savvy guests. Twitter table diners were given messages to tweet to their followers during the event, informing them of Thompson's work and asking them for donations. In a few hours, eight tweeters were able to reach 38,000 followers and raised \$4,000 from their efforts alone.

Objectives: Raise money for Thompson Child and Family Focus
Increase awareness of Thompson Child and Family Focus and its mission
Promote Thompson Child and Family Focus's social media presence
Engage potential donors unable to attend the in-person event

Notable Because: Thompson Child and Family Focus identified dinner guests with large networks and gave them a special status and an assignment; as a result, they were happy to help and to extend the reach of the fundraiser far beyond those seated in the room.

For More Information: <http://philanthropy.com/blogs/social-philanthropy/>



Tool #11: Developing and Using Online Videos

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Video Strategy along the Admissions Funnel

	Content Strategy	Marketing Strategy	Example
<p>Top of Funnel <i>Hook students with quick, compelling ads</i></p>	<p>Arrange for a high-profile alumnus or campus representative to deliver a high-level overview. Videos should be short (i.e., 1-2 minutes) and catchy, or longer if they include a live question-and-answer session.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market to prospective students and likely prospective students (e.g., professional and trade societies, local employers, etc.) Promote through Facebook, blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. Host presentations at online events, like admissions webinars and virtual open houses 	<p>Brock University’s promotional video (developed to combat a common misperception about Brock’s academic quality) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AXODCvJS2M&feature=player_embedded</p>
<p>Middle of Funnel <i>Deliver topical information that focuses on programs, resources, and admissions processes</i></p>	<p>Craft topic-specific videos (e.g., career services, alumni interviews, program snapshots) supplemented by overview videos (e.g., how to apply, financial aid, etc.). Videos can be longer (i.e., 5 minutes+).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target database of current prospects Segment emails by demographic and/or interest 	<p>UMBC’s graduate student faculty Q&A session http://www.youtube.com/user/UMBCtube#p/u/0/yjt58NuENak</p>
<p>Bottom of Funnel <i>Encourage matriculation by providing access to administrators, current students, faculty, etc.</i></p>	<p>Provide access to key figures (e.g., directors of financial aid, program directors, etc.) and use current students to explain the decision process. Videos can range in length.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite accepted students 	<p>University of Pennsylvania’s day-in-the-life video http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nGpOizUIY60#t=</p>

Track Success and Improve Future Videos by Measuring:

- The number of times each video has been viewed
- Channel subscribers
- Viewer ratings and comments
- Points in each video when viewership drops off

Quick Tips for Sustaining Audience Attention

<p>✓ Go Short or Go Long</p>	<p>The average video-watcher has a 60-second attention span; videos should either stay within a few minutes of this length or should be significantly longer with the intention of delivering a lot of information. Avoid the 6-8 minute “no-man’s land.”</p>
<p>✓ Front-load</p>	<p>Viewership and engagement drop off with time; assume that you have 90 seconds to communicate your key message or hook your audience.</p>
<p>✓ Be Specific</p>	<p>Every shot should contain specific and new information. Avoid repeating opinions, using similar anecdotes, and making broad and general statements. Identify what your viewers want to know and deliver it to them.</p>
<p>✓ Make It Personal</p>	<p>Weave your main message into personal experiences that draw viewers in; for example, use testimonials from students, alumni, staff, or faculty.</p>



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

For units with a specific event or cause to promote, a well-planned social media campaign can be an extremely effective supplement to traditional marketing methods. The following series of brainstorming questions is designed to guide department marketing staff through the major steps involved in executing a coordinated and wide-reaching campaign using social media.

Implementation Tip: For departments interested in incorporating the worksheet into marketer or program staff training, the COE Forum recommends a training session wherein the team applies the worksheet to a case study. We have included one here from the University of Texas at Austin's Ransom Center (a humanities and research library and museum), which ran a promotional campaign in 2009 for an exhibit of Edgar Allen Poe artifacts and documents.

PURPOSE

What do you want to promote, and why?

How will you brand the campaign? (Come up with both a name and an image for the campaign to be used across multiple platforms.)

AUDIENCE

What is your target audience?

What information can you gather about the past behavior of your target audience? Where does your target audience spend its time?



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

MESSAGE

What is the timeline for the campaign?

What external outlets (i.e., blogs, online forums, and social media accounts not affiliated with your institution) will you target with your message?

How will you utilize internal (i.e., institution-affiliated) social media channels to send your message? Which platforms will be most useful for this purpose? Conversely, which social media platforms are not well-suited to your campaign and your message?

What specific strategies will you use to spread your message to generate maximum interest from your target audience?

BUDGET

What is the campaign budget?

What materials do you have on hand already to help your cause?



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What additional materials will you need to make the campaign successful? How much will these cost?

METRICS

How will you measure the success of your campaign?

What are your end-of-campaign goals for those success metrics?

POST-CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

Which tactics worked well?

Which tactics didn't work?

How will you use what you've learned to improve future campaigns?



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

Poe Mania Case Study: From Goth to Geezer

The following is reproduced courtesy of Jennifer Tisdale, Director of Public Affairs of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Summary

The Harry Ransom Center, a humanities research library and museum at The University of Texas at Austin, sought to bring awareness and excitement among physical and virtual audiences to its fall 2009 Edgar Allan Poe exhibition. Holding one of the world's most extensive Poe collections, the Ransom Center had the opportunity to share the author's manuscripts, books, art and personal effects, with many being displayed for the first time.

Recognizing that Poe could resonate with audiences from goths to geezers, the Ransom Center's public affairs and marketing teams planned and executed a promotional campaign the week before the exhibition's opening that contributed to enthusiasm, word of mouth, and media coverage. Combining outreach to the public and select press through social media and traditional communications channels produced the Center's most successful coverage and awareness of an exhibition prior to its opening.

Situation Analysis

In 1966, the Ransom Center acquired the majority of its holdings that document Poe's career as a writer, his romantic relationships, his mysterious death, the decline and rehabilitation of his literary reputation, and his profound influence on mystery and detective fiction and other genres.

With its first-ever exhibition celebrating Edgar Allan Poe, the Ransom Center believed that it could share and introduce Poe-related content with physical and virtual visitors the week before the exhibition opened.

With Poe being perhaps the most widely read American author of the nineteenth century, the potential audience was diverse in age and also extended beyond those that would be able to visit the exhibition in person. With the Center digitizing its entire Poe holdings, the exhibition provided the occasion to unveil its digital collection of 4,000 images of more than 200 Poe materials. An additional virtual resource to debut alongside the exhibition was the online Poe Project, where people could learn more about Poe's works and submit their own parodies or decode cryptographs.

Research/Planning

Since the exhibition was on display in Spring 2009 at the University of Virginia (UVA), the Ransom Center approached UVA to determine which items resonated with visitors as well as gain feedback and comments.

The Ransom Center's promotional plan included touting the digital collection of Poe materials, the ability to decode cryptographs, the opportunity to parody Poe, a video preview of the exhibition, and behind-the-scenes photographs of the exhibition and its installation.

The Ransom Center researched and devised a target media list, wanting to focus its press outreach on select outlets, ranging from blogs to broadcast avenues. Other research involved reports on search engine keywords and rankings through Marketleap.



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

COE | Social Media
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For its social media outreach strategy, the Ransom Center engaged SocialAgency. With its Spredfast tool, the Ransom Center could manage, monitor, and measure its social media efforts across multiple channels. The tool also allowed scheduled content, real-time monitoring, and select metrics which could track engagement. SocialAgency also researched keywords, search terms, and websites associated with Poe, and provided recommendations for Facebook ad strategy.

For Facebook ads, the goal was to connect with people who were not already associated with the Ransom Center, specifically by touting Poe Mania and encouraging people to become Facebook fans of the Center.

Wanting to give the pre-promotion campaign its own identity, the Ransom Center branded it as Poe Mania, including a graphic identity to appear alongside the campaign content. Limited to a week's time, Poe Mania would divulge daily online content celebrating Poe, with a hyperlink to each day's reveal.

Various distribution channels would be engaged for the daily distribution, and social media posts would be created to tout upcoming reveals as well as the current day's feature. Press outreach would begin one month prior to the launch of the campaign and include mailings and follow-up to select media. An assessment would also be made of which daily reveals would be of most interest to particular media outlets.

Execution

Press materials concerning Poe Mania were mailed to 22 outlets, with the first mailing containing only a small stuffed raven along with a note that stated: "Poe is coming soon..." A few days later, the outlets received a follow-up mailing that included specifics about Poe Mania, including each day's reveal, access to images, and news releases.

Promotion of Poe Mania on the Ransom Center's Facebook and Twitter pages began the Friday before the launch of the campaign with the message of: "Tap, tap, tap...a mere 72 hours until the launch of Poe Mania." Each day's new content was touted on these outlets the day before it became live, thus creating two tweets or Facebook posts for each reveal.

The Ransom Center also promoted each day's reveal on its home page and within global promo boxes on its website. Each day's material was added to the Poe exhibition clearinghouse webpage so that when someone visited the site they were able to view and access the daily content. Communication about Poe Mania also occurred in the Ransom Center's blog, monthly eNews, targeted emails to specific constituencies, and the University's website.

Two of Poe Mania's reveals allowed additional outlets for promotion, including a video posting on the Ransom Center's YouTube channel and photographs on the Center's Flickr page.

On Facebook, paid ads targeted people who lived in the U.S., spoke English, and had noted interests related to Poe, specifically those who like archives, the Baltimore Ravens, classical literature, cryptograms, cryptography, the Cure, detective stories, Edgar Allan Poe, Edgar Allen Poe, education, goth, gothic, horror, Joy Division, libraries, literature, Marilyn Manson, museums, mystery books, Nine Inch Nails, parody, Poe, poetry, raven, reading, reading books, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, short stories, *The Simpsons*, Siouxsie and the Banshees, the Sisters of Mercy, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *Twilight*, the *Twilight* movie, the *Twilight* saga, or the *Twilight* series.



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

COE | Social Media
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Posts on Twitter and Facebook were created with input from a range of staff and planned and scheduled ahead of time. The posts included:

On Friday, August 28:

"Tap, tap, tap...a mere 72 hours until the launch of Poe Mania."

On Monday, August 31:

"Passionate about Poe? This exhibition preview video will get your heart pumping faster...louder...THU-THUMP! <http://bit.ly/16Ygv9> #poemania"

"Even 'The Simpsons' riffed on Poe. You'll have your chance tomorrow. #poemania"

On Tuesday, September 1:

"Parody Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Raven' for the chance to win a Poe-centric prize. <http://bit.ly/1018yQ> #poemania"

"Poe Mania: Stay tuned tomorrow for a sneak peek at the exhibition."

On Wednesday, September 2:

"Be the first to see installation photos of the Poe exhibition. <http://bit.ly/4f5jW3> #poemania"

"Get your detective caps ready! (You'll need them for tomorrow's reveal.) #poemania"

On Thursday, September 3:

"In the spirit of detective-story pioneer Poe, decode cryptographs on the Poe Project website. <http://bit.ly/sjgLU> #poemania"

"Save time tomorrow to view more than 4,000 images of Poe material, including his correspondence. #poemania"

On Friday, September 4:

"Quoth the tweeter, Evermore! Web feature launched: 4,000 Poe images: manuscripts, letters, newspapers, more. <http://bit.ly/cgml8> #poemania"

Evaluation

Poe Mania effectively engaged and energized new audiences, allowed two-way communication, and contributed to the Poe exhibition's reach and exposure. Combining outreach efforts to press and social media, the Ransom Center's Poe Mania campaign achieved and contributed to the following:

- 59% of targeted media covered Poe Mania
- Increased first week's attendance from prior two exhibitions by 52% and 84%, respectively
- Increased Ransom Center's Facebook fans by 39%
- Facebook ads resulted in 745 clicks at an average cost of \$0.54 per 1,000 impressions



Tool #12: Media Campaign Planning Worksheet

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- Surpassed goal for Facebook and Twitter click-throughs by 343%, achieving 1,329 click-throughs during three weeks
- Obtained more than 34,000 page views of the Poe digital collection website during its first three weeks
- Obtained more than 3,000 page views of the Poe Project website during its first three weeks
- Obtained 396 views of a YouTube exhibition preview video during the first two weeks, surpassing the goal of 250 views
- Obtained 4,937 page views to the Poe exhibition clearinghouse webpage during the exhibition's first three weeks, an increase of 60% and 65%, respectively from the prior two exhibition clearinghouse webpages
- Met goal of appearing on first page results for "Poe exhibition" on AOL, Google, Lycos, MSN, Netscape, and Yahoo!
- The first public program relating to the Poe exhibition revealed that attendees learned of the event through varied sources, including word of mouth, the Ransom Center's communication channels, the University, and media

The cost for the campaign was \$992 and included Facebook ads, stuffed ravens, graphic design for the logo, and mailing costs. Absent from these costs is a fee associated with the services of SocialAgency since the Ransom Center served as a beta client.

While pleased with the campaigns results, the Ransom Center learned several things and will address them in future efforts, including placing greater emphasis on Twitter, expanding the campaign from a week's time, planning a hashtag strategy, integrating more calls to action in posts, and incorporating engagement statistics from Facebook (likes and comments) and Twitter (retweets, mentions, and followers) as part of the evaluation. The Ransom Center's team included Alicia Dietrich, Public Affairs Assistant; Christine Lee, Marketing Director; and Jennifer Tisdale, Public Affairs Director. Ken Cho was the primary contact at SocialAgency.



International Recruitment Tools

COE | Social Media
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Typical University Challenge

International prospective students have increasingly high expectations of fast and frequent communications from institutions in the United States—a charge that social media is particularly well suited to meet. However, international-oriented social media efforts can be a challenge to manage as a side-of-desk activity as staff struggle to find the time to master unfamiliar platforms and disparate social media habits and preferences.

Summary of Tools

Tool #13: The Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in China presents key information regarding prospective Chinese students' population size, preferences, habits, and major platforms utilized.

Tool #14: The Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in India outlines the key demographics, preferences, and habits of the social media-using prospective Indian student population.

Tool #15: The Meebo User's Guide provides step-by-step instructions for opening an account with Meebo, a chat aggregator site, and for utilizing some of Meebo's additional features that are particularly relevant for COE units attempting to streamline real-time communication with prospective international students.



Tool #13: Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in China

COE FORUM | Social Media
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The population of social media users in China is large and growing. Compared to the same population in the U.S., Chinese users are more active, more educated, and younger. Chinese social media habits are also significantly different; most users view social media as their primary means of learning about and reviewing products. Furthermore, some platforms (e.g., Facebook) popular in many other countries are blocked by the Chinese government, which has given rise to several China-specific sites.

Features of the Social Media-Using Population

	U.S.	China
Size of online population (2010)	292.5 million (75% penetration)	477 million (30% penetration)
Average age	39.1	28.1
Percentage of users college-age or older	37%	63%
Percentage of medium to heavy contributors (4+ activities per online period)	26%	60%
Percentage that rates or reviews products*	27%	50%

*According to the 2010 TNS Digital Life Report, China has the highest number of netizens who join social networks to find information about brands of any country in the world.

Two Questions to Answer before Entering the Chinese Social Media Space:

	Where Is Your Market? <i>What age groups use each platform most frequently?</i>	How Are They Using the Social Media Channel? <i>What are the user habits and preferences associated with each platform?</i>
Renren	Most popular among 14- to 22-year-olds from large cities; increasingly popular among white-collar professionals	Used similarly to Facebook; highly customizable profiles allow users to share information and extend their networks according to mutual interests
Kaixin001	Most popular among white-collar professionals	Users prefer not to share personal information; addictive games keep bringing users back
QQ	Used ubiquitously by all ages	Used for instant message-type communications; functionality has expanded to include blogs, games, and music; users pay for additional features
Sina Weibo	Familiar to all ages; growing fastest among educated professionals	Used to exchange gossip, opinions, experiences, and insights; increasingly attractive to multinational corporations who use it to market products
Bulletin Board Systems	Popular among all consumers	Used to discuss products and services anonymously



Tool #13: Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in China

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

In order for higher education institutions to develop an effective social media presence in the Chinese social media space, they must first be able to identify the most attractive Chinese-specific platforms for their target students. The table below provides more information about three of China’s most popular social media outlets.

What You Need to Know: Top Chinese Social Media Platforms			
	Renren	Kaixin001	Sina Weibo
Type:	Social networking (similar to Facebook)	Social networking (similar to Facebook with a more adult demographic)	Microblogging (similar to Twitter)
Registered Users:	170 million	90 million	90 million
Active Users:	90 million	45 million	70 million
Acquiring an Account:	Anyone who can navigate the Chinese website can register for an account .	Anyone who can navigate the Chinese website can register for an account.	Anyone who can navigate the Chinese website can register for an account.
Cost:	\$92,000 per year*	\$15,000 per quarter*	Free
Important Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Though it was initially most attractive to high school students, Renren is attracting more professionals. Renren exhorts a mission of facilitating communication among people in China—it will likely not go to extensive lengths to make entry easy for foreign entities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaixin001 experienced a meteoric ascent fueled by features that are no longer as appealing to users as they once were. Renren and Sina Weibo are surpassing Kaixin 001 in usership despite a strong adult user base in metropolitan cities. The primarily adult, professional demographic aligns well with COE units’ target market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fully English platform is being developed as Sina Weibo has a considerable foreign presence. Many technology analysts predict that Sina Weibo will emerge as the predominant social media platform in China due to its willingness to abide governmental censorship and its commitment to offering a free service.
Overall Advisability: Low High			

*Costs for commercial brands; interviews suggest that prices are significantly lower for educational institutions. Personal accounts are free.

Several consulting firms offer Chinese social media entrance and maintenance services:

- Resonance China: <http://www.resonancechina.com/>
- Digital Jungle: <http://www.digitaljungle.com.cn/>
- Publicitas: <http://www.publicitas.com/china/about-us/company/>



Tool #14: Country-Specific Primer: Social Media in India

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

The Indian social media thumbprint (in terms of both channels and language) is very similar to that of the U.S.; however, compared to U.S. users, the Indian social media-using population is more interested in using social media to establish a professional identity and engage around purchasing decisions and brand relations, making social media an especially attractive channel for promoting continuing and professional education programs.

Features of the Social Media-Using Population

	U.S.	India
Size of online population (2010)	292.5 million (75% penetration)	100 million* (8.5% penetration)
Average age	39.1	19-24 (44%) and 25-35 (34%)
Percentage that rates or reviews products	27%	58%

*This is a 23% increase over 2009

Good News for Continuing and Professional Education: The most active age group of internet users tends to be comprised of graduates who are looking for a job or planning further studies.

Predominant Social Media Outlets

For purposes that include social and professional networking, microblogging, and video sharing, the most popular channels in India are identical to those in the United States. Most users navigate these sites in English.

Social Networking

- **Facebook:** The U.S. mainstay of social media is growing quickly in India. It is most popular in Tier 1 cities; 25% of users are pursuing bachelor's degrees and another 37% hold a bachelor's degree.
- **Orkut:** This Google-owned-and-operated social networking site is a favorite in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India. While Facebook is quickly gaining users in India, Orkut is stagnating in part because it was not developed around third-party application integration as Facebook was.

Professional Networking

- **LinkedIn:** With an Indian audience that nearly doubled in 2010, LinkedIn is another up-and-coming social media platform in India; the only country that has more users on the platform is the U.S. Most users are between 25 and 35 years old.

Microblogging

- **Twitter:** The Indian Twitter audience nearly doubled in 2010; most traffic comes from metropolitan cities. Additionally, 65% of users are college graduates.

Video Sharing

- **YouTube:** Driven by the Indian audience's demand for premium content (through legal or illegal outlets), YouTube in India has developed ways of providing viewers with movies and television shows, which has helped grow the Indian YouTube user base.



Tool #15: Meebo User's Guide

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Implementation Toolkit

Many higher education institutions see instant chat as a cost-effective means of meeting international prospective students' demands for real-time electronic communications, but worry that it can be tedious and time-consuming for staff to manage accounts on disparate chat clients. Meebo, a chat aggregator, allows users to manage instant messaging (IM) accounts on multiple platforms simultaneously.

A Goal of Unification

Meebo was designed to allow users to engage in instant messaging communication with others without having to download myriad chat clients (such as MSN Messenger, AOL Instant Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger, and Google Talk). Meebo can also be used to sign users into all of their chat applications with one password, to host chat rooms, and to engage in instant messaging conversations through the user's website.



Source: www.meebo.com

How to Acquire an Account

1. Go to www.meebo.com and click on the Meebo box at the far right.
2. Click "Sign up" to open the registration window.
3. Type in an ID name and password. Type the same password again after "Confirm," and click "Next."
4. On the next screen, type your full name and email address (only used in the event that your password is lost). Click "Create Meebo Account."
5. In the New Connection box, choose an IM network (for example, AIM or Yahoo!; you will need an account for each client you want to aggregate), provide your screen name and password for that network, and click "Sign On." Friends from that network will be added to your Meebo list. Users can add their IM networks and access buddies from all of them simultaneously. Guests can use Meebo without creating an account by signing into one of the listed IM networks, but they will not be able to message with friends using other networks.
6. To add another IM network, click on the Accounts icon, and then "Already a User." Add the network with your screen name and password for it and click "Sign On."

Meebo Rooms and Other Features

The additional features that Meebo offers can be used to add dimensions to communication with international prospective students. Chat logs, for example, can be mined for frequently asked questions and answers. The Meebo Me widget and the Meebo Bar allow users to integrate Meebo chat into other social media presences.

Chat Logs

Chat logs allow IM conversations to be saved. This option can be selected from the Preferences menu. Chat log archives can be accessed according to buddy.



Tool #15: Meebo User's Guide

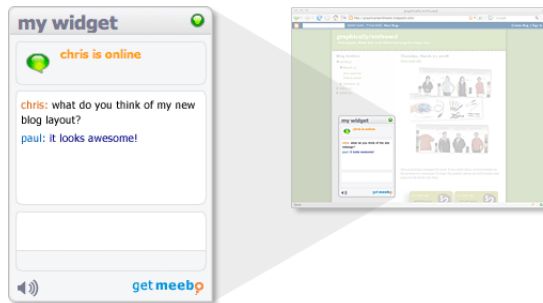
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File Sharing

Meebo users can send files, though there are limitations to file size per transaction and per month. Files can only be sent to other Meebo users.

Meebo Me

Meebo Me allows users to add a chat window to their personal websites, blogs, or social networks. Visitors to those pages will be able to chat with users directly through the embedded Meebo application. The application can be used anywhere that HTML and a Flash widget can be embedded. Guests can engage if the website author is available, or leave a message if the author is offline, even if they do not have an account. Website authors can see visitors to their sites, let visitors know when they are available to chat, and include an optional status message.



To use Meebo Me:

1. Go to Meebo and create a widget, which will appear as a small screen on the website. You'll be asked to title the widget and pick a screen name. You can choose the widget's size and color and customize the text. Click "Next."
2. Enter a Meebo ID and password on the screen and click "Next" again.
3. On the next screen will be a code to copy and paste from a text box into the desired website HTML.

People who visit users' websites will appear on users' Meebo buddy lists as new visitors. They can start a conversation with you by typing a message in the widget's text area.

Meebo Bar

The Meebo Bar is a customizable sharing platform that connects your visitors to their friends on any communication and social network. Positioned across the bottom of every site page, it's there for easy viewing and sharing—your content always stays front and center. The Meebo Bar sends usage metrics to a personal statistics dashboard. Data found there includes: page views, sharing from the user's site, and click-throughs on the customized Meebo Bar buttons. Use of the Meebo Bar automatically comes with instant messaging that can be embedded into the user's site. The Meebo Bar can be added to most self-hosted websites and blogs.

To install a Meebo Bar, go to <https://www.meebo.com/websites/>.



Policy Development and Brand Management

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Typical University Challenge

As a growing number of higher education institutions develop social media presences, organizations worry about the legal and reputational risks associated with new types of online activity. At the same time, institutions pursuing an overzealous approach to social media regulation fail to see positive results as they hinder the organic and frequent interactions that can make the medium most useful.

Summary of Tools

Tool #16: The Policy Creation Template identifies common components of 10 exemplar institutions' social media policies and includes a sample policy component for guiding decentralized units through initial social media page creation.

Tool #17: The Centralized Social Media Directory Builder includes links to directories that organize decentralized social media presences at six universities, calling attention to the benefits and drawbacks of each layout and noting the role of a COE unit in compiling such a directory.

Tool #18: The Web Posting Response Assessment provides a decision tree for determining the appropriate response to comments about your institution posted on social media sites.

Tool #19: Tips for Handling Negative Posts offers basic guidelines to follow when responding to an unusually negative or harmful comment on one of your institution's social media platforms.

Tool #20: Staff Contributor Guidelines suggests commonsense but useful rules for staff and faculty to follow when posting to a social media account on behalf of their institutions.



Tool #16: Policy Creation Template

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

As higher education institutions increasingly recognize the potential benefits of a social media presence, many institutions are also raising concerns about the legal and reputational risks associated with faculty and staff activity on these sites. In over 150 conversations with experts and administrators, the consensus among COE Forum research contacts is that a stringent approach to social media activity with tightly controlled posting permissions is inadvisable for institutions wishing to maximize the value of social media, as social media is most effective when connections and interactions are able to flourish organically. Instead, contacts recommend that institutions develop and publish a set of general guidelines and policies for all institutional representatives posting on social media. While policies often vary significantly in length and content from institution to institution, contacts agree that a well-constructed policy can be an invaluable resource to all institutional personnel, reducing ambiguity about acceptable activity and providing guidance for maintaining a successful presence.

The Forum conducted a review of the following institutions' social media policies; all are publicly available online.

Ball State University:

<http://cms.bsue.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/UMC/WhatWeDo/Web/WebPolicies/SocialMedia.aspx>

DePaul University:

http://brandresources.depaul.edu/vendor_guidelines/g_socialmedia.aspx

Eastern University:

<http://www.eastern.edu/centers/communications/pdf/socialnetworkingpolicy.pdf>

Princeton University:

http://www.princeton.edu/communications/services/social-media/061611_Princeton_Social_Media_Policies.pdf

Tufts University:

<http://webcomm.tufts.edu/socialmedia>

University of Delaware:

http://www.udel.edu/socialmedia/pdfs/SocialMediaGuide_1102.pdf

University of Michigan:

<http://www.voices.umich.edu/docs/Social-Media-Guidelines.pdf>

University of Minnesota:

<http://www1.umn.edu/brand/requirements-and-guidelines/social-networking/>

University of Texas at Austin:

<http://www.utexas.edu/know/directory/guidelines/>

Vanderbilt University:

<http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/>

What Should My Policy Do?

The social media policies surveyed were designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

1 Guide Staff Regulation and Brand Management

- Offer useful start-up advice for social media beginners
- Establish a basic code of social media “dos” and “don’ts”
- Set institutional expectations for page content and management

2 Provide How-to Instruction

- Outline rules and procedures for page establishment
- Provide a collection of best practices for engaging constituencies on various platforms



Tool #16: Policy Creation Template

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

What Should I Include in My Policy?

Most institutional policies surveyed contained several of the following core components:

Objective: Guide Staff Regulation and Brand Management

Branding and Formatting Standards

Setting standards for social media page appearances facilitates cross-institutional branding coordination.
Exemplar Institutions: DePaul University, Princeton University, Tufts University

Best Practices

A section on social media best practices is an essential element of nearly all institutional policies surveyed, offering user tips on transparency, authenticity, post timing, posting etiquette, community interaction expectations, and responding to negative comments. Many institutions also use this section to draw a distinction between expectations for faculty and staff posting as individuals and faculty and staff posting on social media on behalf of the institution.

Exemplar Institutions: Ball State University, DePaul University, University of Michigan

Hashtag Indices

An index of common school-specific and discipline-specific Twitter hashtags is a handy resource for helping tweets on Twitter get noticed in the context of larger, Twitter-wide conversations.

Exemplar Institution: University of Delaware

Objective: Provide How-to Instruction

Platform Overviews

Basic descriptions of the designs and functions of major platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, and YouTube) are helpful for orienting social media beginners.

Exemplar Institutions: Eastern University, University of Delaware, University of Minnesota

Considerations for Starting a Social Media Page

For some departments, a social media presence may require more effort than it is worth; a simple presentation of the demands of social media can help guide departments through the cost-benefit analysis.

Exemplar Institutions: Tufts University, University of Delaware, Vanderbilt University

Startup Handbook

Once a department or school decides to operate a social media presence, a startup handbook can provide step-by-step guidance on basic issues of page registration (where required), management, and promotion.

Exemplar Institutions: DePaul University, Eastern University, Vanderbilt University

Strategy Worksheets

A systematic strategy worksheet can be used by page managers to think through the purposes and goals of a new social media page and to plan posting content in pursuit of those goals.

Exemplar Institutions: Tufts University, Vanderbilt University

Metrics-Tracking Suggestions and Documents

Given that tracking success on social media is a notoriously difficult enterprise for many higher education institutions, it is beneficial to ask new page managers to define success metrics from the outset and to put mechanisms in place to track those metrics.

Exemplar Institution: University of Delaware

Term and Tool Glossaries

Glossaries are handy references for those unfamiliar with common social media platforms and terminology.

Exemplar Institution: DePaul University

External Resource Links

Institutions typically link to helpful external resources at the end of a policy guide to avoid redundancy.

Exemplar Institution: University of Delaware



Tool #16: Policy Creation Template

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Sample Component: Guidelines for Decentralized Social Media Page Creation

Modified from Vanderbilt University's *Social Media Handbook* [<http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/>]

Steps to Getting Started on Social Media

- 1) Obtain approval to start a page from your department head or manager.
- 2) Establish goals for the page by specifying what you would like your page to help you achieve.
- 3) Appoint a page manager who will assume primary responsibility for page posting and monitoring. At this stage, it is also a good idea to appoint and train a backup manager.
- 4) Formulate a strategy for the page based on the goals laid forth in Item 2.
- 5) Familiarize yourself with the conventions of major social media platforms and use what you learn to inform your postings; that is, "become a consumer before you become a producer."
- 6) Identify the best platform for your goals and strategies in Items 2 and 4 and focus on growing out that page first; attempting multiple page launches at once often results in minimal attention paid to each.
- 7) Select a clear and immediately recognizable name for your page—your name should be designed to maximize searchability, not creativity. The Twitter account name for Vanderbilt's School of Nursing is, fittingly, "Vanderbilt Nursing."
- 8) Execute a beta release, sharing the preliminary page with a small group of users who can provide constructive feedback. Use this stage to experiment with different posting personas and content.
- 9) Launch the public version of your page and publicize it to both targeted audience members (e.g., nursing students if you're launching a Nursing School page) and other social media managers with pages around your institution.
- 10) As users interact with your page, continue to adapt new content based on what you've learned about your audience from previous postings.



Tool #17: Centralized Social Media Directory Builder

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Implementation Tip: The social media directories referenced here catalog social media activity for entire universities, and are usually compiled by central university marketing or communications departments. These directories provide students and other stakeholders with a method for more easily identifying relevant social media sites, and also allow staff to look to other sites on campus for ideas and best practices. Given that many continuing, professional, and online education units likewise have multiple, decentralized social media presences (i.e., pages for different COE degree programs or certificates, or separate communities for international or distance students), COE marketing teams should consider creating similar directories for social media presences within the COE unit.

Due to the highly interactive nature of social media directories and hubs, these sites are best viewed on the web, where visitors looking for formatting and organizational inspiration can experiment by clicking on different links and tabs. For each of our directory exemplars, we have provided a link to the directory and highlighted some of its most salient features.

Carnegie Mellon University: <http://www.cmu.edu/social-media/>

- ❖ Carnegie Mellon’s directory is notable for its visually pleasing use of icons; the tables and icons make it easy to determine which school or department has a presence on which platform.

Duke University: <http://socialmedia.duke.edu/>

- ❖ Duke’s hub displays live feeds from its main University Twitter and Facebook accounts, putting content immediately in front of visitors. While the setup has the advantage of simplicity, it also lacks a comprehensive listing of Duke-related social media accounts that is a hallmark of most other successful directories.

Emerson College: <http://www.emerson.edu/news-events/social-media-directory>

- ❖ Emerson College calls attention to its Flickr and YouTube accounts at the top of its directory page, two platforms that tend to be underutilized by other institutions. It also contains separate tabs allowing visitors to search for accounts by department, by platform, or by student organization.

Oregon State University: <http://oregonstate.edu/main/social-media-directory>

- ❖ Oregon State University’s directory is an organizational exemplar: the main page prominently displays links to its central and most-trafficked accounts across a variety of platforms, while a sidebar on the right allows visitors to link to more comprehensive directories of OSU accounts by platform.

Tufts University: <http://socialmedia.tufts.edu/>

- ❖ Like Duke, the main Tufts hub showcases updated feeds from seven social media platforms, visible one-by-one in a tab format. Tufts surpasses Duke in organization with its sidebars for each tab linking to full lists of Tufts accounts on that platform—and taking visitors directly to the platform itself to follow or like a page if they are interested.

University of Texas at Austin: <http://www.utexas.edu/know/directory/>

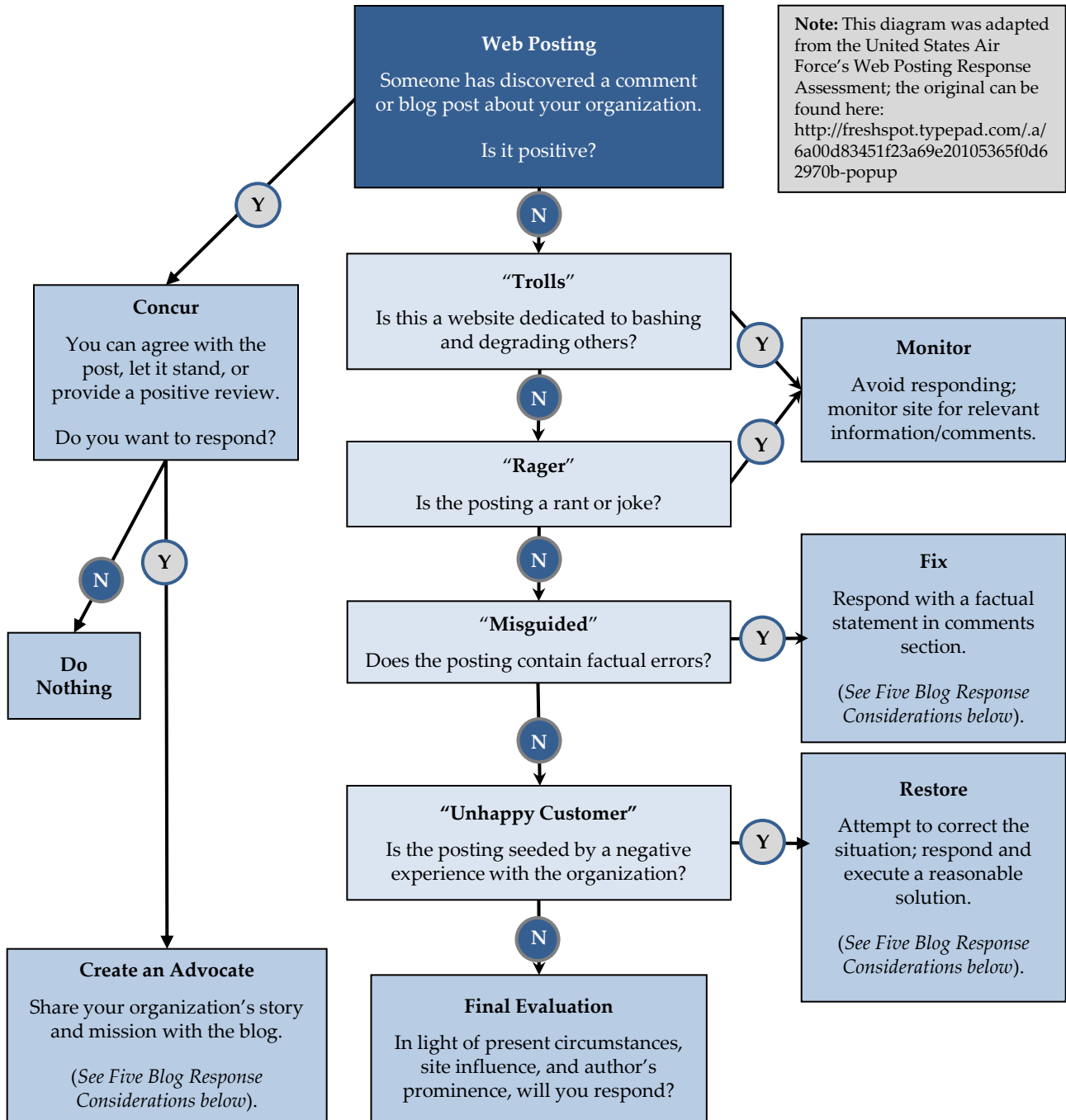
- ❖ UTA’s directory is impressive for its comprehensiveness: administrators have compiled links to several hundred social media accounts and organized them by the units which operate them. Unfortunately, the sheer size of UTA’s collection has hindered its searchability: unrelated accounts within the same broad unit are listed closely together, making locating an account of interest a time-consuming process.



Tool #18: Web Posting Response Assessment

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Note: This diagram was adapted from the United States Air Force's Web Posting Response Assessment; the original can be found here: <http://freshspot.typepad.com/.a/6a00d83451f23a69e20105365f0d62970b-popup>



FIVE BLOG RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS				
1. Transparency Disclose affiliation	2. Sources Cite references	3. Timeline Balance quality & timeliness	4. Tone Approachable authority	5. Influence Pick your battles



Tool #19: Tips for Handling Negative Posts

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The following is reproduced courtesy of DePaul University. The original post can be found at:
http://brandresources.depaul.edu/vendor_guidelines/g_tips.aspx.

When you've developed a vibrant social media community, it's inevitable that you'll get some negative posts. Most of these posts, handled well, create an opportunity to strengthen your community by solving a problem or generating a good discussion. Some may require a team response. Here's an overview of what to do.

- ❖ **Take a deep breath.** It's important to be calm, thoughtful, and strategic when dealing with a negative post. The person who wrote the post is often upset and may have launched a personal attack; never respond in kind. Take the time to consider whether and how to respond.
- ❖ **Analyze.** Look through a *post response flowchart* (see Tool #18 on pg. 189 for an example response flowchart) and decide where the post fits. You'll want to have a conversation, either publicly or privately, with members of the university community. It's fruitless to try to have a conversation with a "rager" (the social media term for a person who is chronically angry) or a "troll" (the term for people who enjoy stirring up trouble). You can usually tell the difference by looking at other posts by that person.
- ❖ **Confirm facts.** Make sure you know the facts and current university policies and procedures related to the post. Contact a supervisor in the affected area. He or she may have handled similar issues before and can help you craft a response. Use your university's information directory to find the right person. In some cases, you may want to send an email to the person who wrote the post to get additional facts.
- ❖ **Sympathize; consider whether to apologize.** Often people who are upset simply want to know their complaint has been heard. Saying, "I'm sorry that you're unhappy. How can I help?" can go a long way toward turning a complaint into a conversation. An apology conveys that the university has done something wrong. If you, your supervisor, and the supervisor of the affected area agree that a mistake was made, then an apology is appropriate.
- ❖ **Consider going offline.** In many cases, the person who wrote the post will be willing to talk with you if you provide your work email address. This is important to preserve people's privacy or to get all the facts before finding a resolution. If you and the person work out a solution, consider whether to add a post noting that you successfully resolved the situation.
- ❖ **Say "Thanks."** Social media depends on conversations to thrive, and one of social media's great strengths is its ability to help identify issues. It's good practice to thank people for their posts, even if their post is a complaint or otherwise negative. Use judgment here—you don't want to thank someone for posting something that violates community guidelines—but saying thanks is a way to underscore your university's commitment to personal attention and civil discussion.
- ❖ **Clarify.** Sometimes social media posts are so brief that they can be misunderstood. Make sure your intent is clear. You also may want to be sure you understood the intent of the person who posted; if the person seems very upset or the topic is sensitive, you may want to do this offline.
- ❖ **Monitor.** Often a broad, hostile statement draws no attention at all. Keep an eye on it, and if no conversation develops, leave it alone. You may want to contact the person privately to see if you can provide assistance.



Tool #19: Tips for Handling Negative Posts

COE | Social Media
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- ❖ **Let your group help.** Frequently, other members of your social media community will spontaneously rise to the university's defense with counterarguments and useful information. Allow time for this to happen.
- ❖ **Use the channel's rules.** Every social media channel—Facebook, YouTube, etc.—has rules in its Terms of Service regarding hate speech, harassment and similar attacks. Cite these rules when you remove such posts and, if necessary, block repeat offenders.
- ❖ **You are not alone.** A number of people at your university likely have experience in social media, crisis communications, and the specific needs of groups such as students, alumni, or community activists. If you are unsure how to proceed, locate an appropriate contact and ask for advice.



Tool #20: Staff Contributor Guidelines

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

The following is reproduced courtesy of DePaul University. The original post can be found at:
http://brandresources.depaul.edu/vendor_guidelines/g_post.aspx.

If you post on behalf of your university...

- ❖ **Be transparent.** If you participate in or maintain a social media site on behalf of the university, clearly state your role and goals. Discuss with your supervisor when you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval.
- ❖ **Be connected.** If you have been authorized by your supervisor to create an official university social media site or a video for posting in locations such as YouTube, please include an approved logo and other images in your presence to ensure coordination with other university sites and content.
- ❖ **Be respectful.** As a university employee, understand the university's commitment to respect for the dignity of others and to the civil and thoughtful discussion of opposing ideas. Some online communities can be volatile, tempting users to behave in ways they otherwise wouldn't. Your reputation, and the university's, are best served when you remain above the fray.
- ❖ **Be thoughtful.** If you have any questions about whether it is appropriate to write about certain kinds of material in your role as a university employee, ask your supervisor before you post. Remember that policies such as FERPA apply to social media.
- ❖ **Know the rules.** Become familiar with the terms of service and policies of sites and networks in which you participate. Pay attention to updates. If the legal language is hard to follow, follow a respected blogger or two who discuss service changes in their posts.
- ❖ **Keep your personal views separate.** Uphold the university's mission and values in your activities. Don't include political comments or comments on social issues except in support of positions your university has already taken. This includes changes to your photo or avatar in relation to political or social issues.
- ❖ **Respect trademarks and copyright.** This is usually part of the terms of service for the social media site you are using as well as part of your university's Acceptable Use policy. You can usually use the university's logo on an official university social media site; contact your university's marketing communications department to get a logo optimized for the site you are using. Many photographs are also copyrighted, including those commissioned by the university. You should only post photos you have taken yourself or have permission from the photographer to use.
- ❖ **Don't endorse without permission.** Don't use a university account to endorse any product, vendor, or site unless you have permission from your supervisor to do so. For more information, review your university's official endorsement policy.



Staff and Faculty Training and Development

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Typical University Challenge

With their deep content knowledge, faculty are especially well positioned to contribute social media content for specific academic programs. Additionally, as adult students often identify more with individual professors than with institutions, faculty can be critical to increasing current student and alumni participation in university social communities. However, most higher education organizations find that few faculty participate in institutional social media presences due to competing demands on their time and lack of comfort and familiarity with platforms.

Summary of Tools

Tool #21: Advice for Selecting Student Workers shares advice from Syracuse University on recruiting top-quality student workers to serve on an institution's social media staff.

Tool #22: Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions presents modified versions of four real postings for open student social media positions. Institutions hiring for student social media workers may wish to tailor one or more of these descriptions for their own recruiting efforts.

Tool #23: Sample Social Media Director Job Descriptions provides two examples of recently advertised social media administrator positions. Institutions looking to hire a social media administrator may modify one or more of the descriptions.

Tool #24: International Student Ambassador Job Postings presents required qualifications and responsibilities of the position at institutions of differing size and status.

Tool #25: Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts includes potential questions, case studies, and reading materials to use in faculty social media training sessions.

Tool #26: Faculty How-to Start-up Links lists several online resources for introducing beginner faculty to social media basics and instructing them on efficient account creation.



Tool #21: Advice for Selecting Student Workers

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

Advice from the Frontline: The following content was originally posted to the blog of Kelly Lux, a social media strategist at Syracuse University. Kelly describes the benefits of Syracuse's student social media team and offers advice for other institutions looking to assemble an effective and responsible student social media staff. The original post can be viewed here: <http://sociallux.com/2011/05/18/student-social-media-strategists-recruiting-your-universitys-team/#more-183>.

One year ago, the first Community Manager position was created at Syracuse University. Before I was hired to fill that position, a student team had been assembled to assist with some of the social media activities that the University was beginning to dabble in. After you work in social media for a while, you realize how the scope of the jobs we have are expanding, and how limited resources are. The student social media team has provided us with a way to expand our presence without having to hire additional professional staff. That strategy has been a double-edged sword at times, but it is one that has paid off considerably.

After building up the team and working with them over the past academic year, I have a pretty good idea what it takes to **recruit, develop and manage** a team of student social media strategists. **This post will deal specifically with recruiting and selecting the team.** For the record, I am assuming that the person doing the selection *has a considerable knowledge of and is utilizing social networks themselves*. Twitter, in particular, is an essential way to interact with college students and your community manager should have an established presence there.

Recruiting Team Members

According to a study conducted at the University of New Hampshire in 2009, 96% of college students use Facebook. Therefore, using Facebook does not make a student social media savvy, or necessarily a desirable candidate for a student social media team. You really should consider the student's overall social media presence when considering who to hire.

- **Certain students just seem to rise to the top on Twitter.** Look for students who are utilizing Twitter not only to interact with their friends, but also to share information and contribute to conversations with professionals in their field, professors, and other staff at the university. Keep an eye on these students. Put them on a special Twitter list where you can easily follow them. Try to identify students who have a decent level of maturity, professionalism, and importantly, personality. It helps if they have interests in a variety of areas and/or are student leaders.
- **Seek out students who are contributing to popular blogs** such as *USA Today College* and *ABC News On Campus*. They have proven communication skills and also the drive to pursue these opportunities.
- **Consider what platforms your university is using or interested in using.** If you're interested in using Tumblr or Foursquare, figure out which students are actively participating in those networks. Again, Twitter is the font from which most of this kind of information flows.
- **Crowdsource your recruiting.** This is one of those areas where having an established presence really helps. Ask your followers to help identify potential student social media team members. Find out specifically who's got a great tumblr, or a must-read blog. What I have found is that once I ask these questions, students self-identify and the conversation develops from there.



Tool #21: Advice for Selecting Student Workers

COE | Social Media
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Next Step: Selecting Your Team

Once you have your candidates in place, it's time to make your final selections.

- **Have each candidate send you a list of the links to their social profiles.** Whether or not you are paying your team (we do), the student's role should be looked at as a job, so their selection as a team member should be treated as hiring. Students who want to be a part of a university social media team should be at the forefront of their peers in their use and application of social media tools. I would expect each candidate to have, at minimum, an active Twitter account and a complete LinkedIn profile. Check each link that is provided for appropriate tone, grammar, spelling, and general communication skills. How engaging are they? Are they simply retweeting others without comment on Twitter? What is their Klout score? Are they producing any of their own content? All of these aspects of the student's social media presence combined will give you a better picture of their overall understanding of the medium.
- **Interview the student face-to-face if at all possible.** While a Skype or email interview might save time, I have found that it is best to interview in person. You will often find that the student's true persona does not match their online presence. You may get an email application that would put you off, only to find that an in-person meeting would have you *hitting* it off. And the reverse may also be true. In any event, **a key element in hiring for your team is that the student is a good fit.**
- **Have other students from the team interview the candidate.** This may not be possible on the first go-round, but if your team is anything like ours, you have what I would refer to as 'anchor' students who are the foundation of your team. They are the first students you thought of when you dreamed up this team, and they are already enthusiastically on board. Make sure all of your students are on the same page with social media, and that your 'anchor' students feel the candidate would be a good fit for the team.

Traits to look for in Team Members

- **Reliability.** This is an absolute must for social media team members. Do they respond to your tweets and emails in a timely fashion? Do they show up for meetings when scheduled? Reliability will become very important when you are scheduling your students to tweet from the university account on a particular shift, or to host a table at your Spring Reception. Unreliability is a deal-breaker.
- **Ability to Communicate in Writing.** You may have weeded out these candidates previously, but make sure the materials they send you as part of the application process are grammatically correct, with perfect spelling, punctuation, and usage. You would be surprised at how many alums will email you when something gets tweeted that is not quite in keeping with the university's reputation as a top-ranked communications school (or whatever kind of school you are).
- **Varied Skill Set.** While I may hire a student with the idea that they will be working mainly on Foursquare, it's always nice to know that they can jump on Tumblr or create a quick video if necessary. This will give you lots of options when creating assignments, and also when something comes up at the last minute and you need someone to fill in. There should be a nice mix of skills (and interests) to choose from.



Tool #21: Advice for Selecting Student Workers

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

- **Interpersonal Skills.** Your student team members will become well-known on campus, and possibly beyond, and will serve as quasi-ambassadors for your school. Make sure the student is comfortable in that role and doesn't always want to stay behind the scenes. The social part of the team is both online and off.
- **Ability to Multitask and Maintain Grace under Pressure.** Many of the students who apply to be on your team will be self-identified overachievers. They will be the ones who are in the drama club, with three majors (graduating a year early), doing guest blogging stints for national blogs, working for the university ambulance service, and interning for network stars in the summer. This is great, but everyone has his or her limit. Maintaining grace under pressure is harder to determine, but suffice it to say that situations will come up on a social network that are best handled by professional staff. Don't let your student team member fall apart before stepping in to take some of the pressure off.

The process of recruiting a team of social media strategists can be both exciting and terrifying, but at some point you have to pull the trigger on it. The reputation of your college or university is, in some respects, going to be in the hands of these young social media staffers, so it is essential that a lot of thought goes into their selection. The great thing about being in a higher education setting is that all of your work is geared towards preparing the next batch of professionals. If something goes wrong, my advice is to always look at it as a teachable moment. The world will not end if an errant tweet goes out from your account. On the flip side, the value of the student voice in your social media will be invaluable.



Tool #22: Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

1. Social Media Intern, Central Campus Administrative Office

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Gather, compose, and publish interesting University-related stories to the University's official Twitter account and Facebook Page
- Monitor and respond to comments on the University Facebook Page and Twitter account
- Contribute to the University's broad social media strategy
- Brainstorm and implement new programming for the University's new media platforms

QUALIFICATIONS

- Current students only
- Excellent writing skills, especially for short, effective messages
- Experience facilitating or organizing an online community, bulletin board, or forum
- Ability to make good judgments in the face of criticism
- Proven track record of engaging peers with posts and tweets on your personal social media accounts

HOURS AND COMPENSATION

- Half-semester commitment of 5-7 hours per week, with the option to extend the position further pending managerial approval
- Compensation starting at \$13 per hour



Tool #22: Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

2. Social Media Marketing Intern, Campus Life Center

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee all social media operations for Campus Life (including its Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blog, and iTunes U accounts)
- Create, maintain, and execute a consistent social media posting schedule
- Compose original content for the Campus Life Center blog and work with the blog content editor to submit new entries on a weekly basis
- Assist with graphic design for the Campus Life Center's website and print media
- Acquire event attendee photos to post on the Campus Life Center's social media pages
- Attend University-wide meetings on social media topics
- Research current and new methods for achieving optimal social media outreach
- Train current staff unfamiliar with social media on platform basics
- Research and implement the latest techniques for achieving blog Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Maintain the Campus Life Center Social Media Operations Manual

QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills; background in writing and/or editing preferred
- Knowledge of HTML, Adobe Illustrator, and Photoshop
- Willingness to work in a collaborative environment
- Knowledge of content creation and maintenance on major social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and blogging software)
- Familiarity with the University community
- An independent, self-motivated, detail-oriented, and responsible personality

HOURS AND COMPENSATION

- May be a work-study position, an internship for course credit, an unpaid internship, or a paid position
- Hours dependent on availability; no intern will work full-time



Tool #22: Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

3. Social Media Student Assistant, Humanities Academic Department

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate updates to the Academic Department website, Facebook account, and Twitter account
- Create regular updates for the department website and develop innovative ideas for website improvement
- Promote upcoming department events on the department's Facebook and Twitter feeds
- When necessary, work with computer design faculty and staff to troubleshoot website issues
- Complete all responsibilities assigned by the department chair in a timely and professional manner

QUALIFICATIONS

- Full-time students only
- Minimum GPA: 2.75
- Preference given to students majoring in humanities-related subjects
- Demonstrated experience working independently, with minimal supervision
- Excellent writing and editing skills
- Proven experience with social networking and website design

HOURS AND COMPENSATION

- Compensation begins at \$8.60 per hour
- Hours are variable, depending on the assistant's availability



Tool #22: Sample Student Worker Job Descriptions

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

4. Social Media Graduate Intern, University Development Office

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitor and manage online University communities on major social networking platforms
- Shape and evaluate new marketing strategies for utilizing social media for fundraising purposes
- Implement online fundraising strategies that engage alumni interest and make use of the latest online marketing technologies
- Design and build webpages for the Development Office website
- Other duties as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- New or recent master's or doctoral student in a communications-related field
- Demonstrated experience with social media
- Passion for designing and executing social media strategies to achieve specific strategic objectives
- Ability to produce creative and effective written communications
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Commitment to University values
- Willingness to work with a team to achieve common goals
- Proven organizational skills and an orientation to detail

HOURS AND COMPENSATION

- Full-time position, working at least 30 hours per week
- Full University employee benefits
- Six credit hours per semester (\$6,000 maximum total for the year) in a communications-related field
- A monthly stipend of \$1,850



Tool #23: Sample Social Media Director Job Postings

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

1. Social Media Director, Large Public Research University

REPORTING UNIT: University Communications

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop and manage a social media and Web 2.0 strategy for the entire University community
- Utilize social media to enhance the University's brand awareness, image, and reputation
- Coordinate with social media stakeholders across campus
- Develop relationships with additional campus stakeholders who could benefit from a social media presence
- Compose a University-wide social media policy that includes examples of best practices for students, faculty, and staff, and oversee compliance with the policy
- Represent the University in media communications about its social media efforts
- Oversee day-to-day social media activities, including email blasts, community outreach, editorial work, and promotions
- Design and execute targeted social media campaigns that support the University's broader social media aims
- Measure and analyze the effectiveness of social media campaigns
- Educate the University community on proper social media usage and cutting-edge practices

QUALIFICATIONS

- A bachelor's degree in marketing, communications, or a related field
- At least five years of professional marketing and/or communications experience
- Past management and leadership experience
- Strong writing and editing skills, with the ability to create engaging web content
- Excellent relationship-building and networking skills
- Ability to make good judgments under pressure and react quickly in the midst of a crisis
- Familiarity and comfort with major social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn
- Adept at learning new technologies
- Experience managing social media channels using a digital dashboard
- Strong analytical and research skills
- Prior experience in a communications and/or social media leadership position at a large organization preferred



Tool #23: Sample Social Media Director Job Postings

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

2. Social Media Coordinator, Mid-size Private Master's College

REPORTING UNIT: Office of Admissions

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee all social media platforms representing the Office of Admissions, including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Foursquare, and YouTube, among others
- Develop and execute an overarching social media strategy plan for the Office of Admissions, with the intention of interacting with prospective students through social media and raising their awareness of the University
- Supervise the content of the Office of Admissions website
- Integrate online and traditional business strategies to connect with a number of constituent populations, including: prospective undergraduate and graduate students; national experts in higher education and/or admissions; alumni; and any other members of the University community interacting with the Office of Admissions
- Devise and oversee a weekly reporting system for social media analytics to measure social media's impact on student engagement
- Plan and execute concentrated social media campaigns
- Coordinate with the Director of Admissions and other campus officials to incorporate social media into a greater number of campus initiatives
- Work with marketing staffers to initiate a mobile marketing strategy
- Educate University faculty and employees on social media uses, best practices, and trends
- Stay abreast of evolving social media capabilities and integrate new technologies when necessary
- Manage online lead generation avenues and campaigns and report weekly on lead generation progress

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree required
- At least one year of experience with one or more of the following: social media marketing; email marketing; lead generation; web analytics; public relations; and brand management
- Familiarity with common social media tools and strategies
- Very strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Strong analytical and research skills
- Attention to detail
- History of self-motivation
- Ability to multitask and to see a long-term project through to completion
- Knowledge of the following technologies: Adobe Photoshop or similar design software; HTML programming; video editing; and Dreamweaver



Tool #24: International Student Ambassador Job Postings

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

1. International Office Ambassador, Mid-size United Kingdom Public Institution

REPORTING UNIT: International Office

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Welcome international students
- Assist with welcome activities for new international students in September and October
- Impart information and answer questions relating to life as a student at the University to school/college students, parents, and school/college staff
- Host University campus tours
- Assist with general office tasks
- Help with University recruitment activities, including open days and school visits
- Compulsory attendance at all training sessions
- Other tasks, as and when required, in keeping with the role of ambassadors
- Write a student profile to be used on the website and other publications
- Possible involvement in activities in your home country

QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Enthusiasm and commitment to helping international students
- Enthusiasm and commitment to the University
- Good problem-solving skills and ability to work on own initiative
- Sensitivity and consideration of peoples' feelings and the ability to empathize with others regardless of race, culture, or religion
- Excellent IT skills

DESIRABLE SKILLS

- Previous experience working with the public
- Customer service skills
- Experience of working and/or travelling outside the U.K.



Tool #24: International Student Ambassador Job Postings

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

2. International Student Ambassador, Small Private Institution

REPORTING UNIT: International Admissions

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist during a prospective international student's visit to campus (bring prospective international students to lunch, escort him/her to meetings with professors)
- Assist with groups visits, including unpaid tours or being on a student discussion panel
- Bring prospective international students to large on-campus events
- Communicate with prospective undergraduate international students via email, phone, or chat to help recruit and share their experiences as a student
- Help maintain the International Recruiting and Admissions website, Facebook Page, and blog
- Engage with prospective students through conversations on in-country social media and discussion boards

QUALIFICATIONS

- Dedicated to the international student ambassador program and enthusiastic about the University
- Desire to represent the University in a positive and respectful manner
- Knowledge of the University's academics, athletics, activities, and international admissions processes
- In excellent disciplinary and academic standing with the University
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills and the ability to work with people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds



Tool #24: International Student Ambassador Job Postings

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

3. International Student Ambassador, Mid-size Private Institution

REPORTING UNIT: International Admissions

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintain communications with a queue of international prospective students (communications may be through email, Skype, Facebook, blog posts, or in-country social media)
- Maintain official notes on communication with prospective students in queue
- Work with International Ambassador Advisor to identify common sources of questions from international prospective students
- Accompany international students around campus should they come to visit
- Help develop the University's international student website, recruiting materials, and social media presence

QUALIFICATIONS

- International student
- Enthusiastic about the University
- Advanced comfort with written and spoken English
- Comfort with social media
- Excellent communication and organizational skills
- Experience with customer service is desirable
- Full-time student
- GPA at or above 2.75



Tool #24: International Student Ambassador Job Postings

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

4. International Student Ambassador, Small Private Institution

REPORTING UNIT: International Office

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Serve as a point of contact for international prospective students via email, Skype, and several forms of social media
- Assist prospective and new international students if/when they arrive on campus
- Aid with general office tasks
- Assist with prospective student resource development (e.g., webinars, videos, chat sessions, FAQ answers, etc.)

QUALIFICATIONS

- Well-spoken, outgoing personality with natural leadership skills
- Intercultural competency, as demonstrated by international or cross-cultural experiences
- International knowledge, as demonstrated by academic major or personal study
- Evidence of living the University mission
- Actively participate in University activities
- Have knowledge of campus and services
- Maintain a GPA of 2.5
- Attend and complete International Ambassador Training
- Attend monthly meetings



Tool #25: Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

Examples

Ideas for Publication	Pierre Lindenbaum, Bioinformatician, INSERM, France Publication in <i>PLoS</i> journals due to suggestions from Twitter followers For more information: http://www.slideshare.net/lindenb/tweeting-for-the-biostar-paper
Ideas for Collaboration	Andrew Su, Associate Professor, Scripps Institute Found global collaborators through social networking site; described experience as “. . . an eye-opener in terms of how effective online collaboration can be” For more information: http://plindenbaum.blogspot.com/2009/09/from-friendfeed-to-nucleic-acids.html
Ideas for Tenure	Michel Aaij, Associate Professor, Auburn University-Montgomery Encouraged by review committee to include numerous high-quality Wikipedia contributions in his tenure portfolio For more information: http://blog.wikimedia.org/2011/04/06/tenure-awarded-based-in-part-on-wikipedia-contributions/
Ideas for Speaking Engagements	Bertalan Meskó, MD, PhD candidate in Hungary Invited to prestigious speaking engagements because of his well-liked genetics blog For more information: http://www.eyeonfda.com/eye_on_fda/2011/11/social-media-stories-in-health-and-medicine-the-webicina-competition.html
Ideas for Mainstream Popularity	Joan Salge Blake, Clinical Associate Professor, Boston University Guest and regular contributor to many popular periodicals and news outlets, including the <i>Boston Globe</i> , thanks in part to her popular blog For more information: http://salge-blake.blogspot.com/ http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/health/blog/nutrition/2011/10/hunger_on_main_street_and_even.html

Discussion Questions

- Share your own stories; how do you use social media to further your professional goals, whether teaching-, research-, or community engagement-related?
- What platforms do you think are “here to stay” vs. temporary trends? What are the advantages and disadvantages of applications that are made for academic users (such as BioStar, Coursekit, or Pronetos)?
- Some say that using social media to engage with literature and its authors is a natural progression of the growing “open publication” culture.
 - Do you have examples of academic discourse shifting to the electronic (primarily social media) domain?
 - What are the risks of literature review and discussion taking place through social media?
- A recent editorial in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research* posits that tweets about articles can predict citations. What are the risks and rewards of departing from traditional metrics of academic success in favor of such “alt metrics”?
- Which of your research projects, findings, or questions would be most conducive to discussion or dissemination to a larger audience on social media?



Tool # 25: Faculty Bootcamp Discussion Prompts

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

Recommended Reading

The articles below (all available online) can be used to seed discussion at faculty social media training sessions; depending on the receptiveness of the audience and the length of the articles chosen, moderators may choose to send articles in advance or distribute them to read and discuss during the session.

Using social media for research (in the sciences):

Dall'Olio, Giovanni M. et al, "Ten Simple Rules for Getting Help from Online Scientific Communities. *PLoS Computational Biology*, 29 Sept. 2011.

<http://www.ploscompbiol.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pcbi.1002202>.

How academics use social media to facilitate research (all fields):

"Social Media and Research Workflow." *CIBER, University College London*. Emerald Group Publishing Ltd, 14 Dec. 2010. <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/infostudies/research/ciber/social-media-report.pdf>.

Potential link between social media success and literature success:

Eysenbach, Gunther. "Can Tweets Predict Citations?" *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 2011.

<http://www.jmir.org/2011/4/e123/>.

Counterpoint to the "Can Tweets Predict Citations?" article:

Davis, Phil. "Tweets, and Our Obsession with Alt Metrics." *The Scholarly Kitchen*. 4 Jan. 2012.

<http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2012/01/04/tweets-and-our-obsession-with-alt-metrics/>.

News piece on using social media for academic purposes:

Kolowich, Steve. "Social Anxiety." *InsideHigherEd.com. Inside Higher Ed*, 3 Feb. 2012.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/02/03/researchers-discover-challenges-debating-scholarly-work-web>.

The philosophy behind alternative metrics to academic success:

"AltMetrics Manifesto." *AltMetrics.org*. <http://altmetrics.org/manifesto/>.



Tool #26: Faculty How-to Start-up Links

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

Comprehensive Platform Introductions

The following guidebooks from Mashable.com offer thorough introductions for platform beginners and include basic overviews, tips for managing accounts, and primers on niche topics for advanced users.

- Mashable Facebook Guidebook: <http://mashable.com/guidebook/facebook/>
- Mashable Twitter Guidebook: <http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/>

Implementation Tip: For units planning to schedule in-person social media training sessions for faculty, the Forum recommends building Facebook- and Twitter- focused modules around the Mashable guidebooks to save time on lesson planning.

Account Creation Cheat Sheets

Vanderbilt University's online social media handbook includes helpful one-page step-by-step guides for setting up accounts on four popular platforms:

- Setting Up a Facebook Page: <http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/appendix-b/>
- Creating a Twitter Profile: <http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/appendix-d/>
- Setting Up a YouTube Account: <http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/appendix-f/>
- Setting Up a Flickr Account: <http://web.vanderbilt.edu/resources/social-media-handbook/appendix-c/>

Blog Creation and Management Instruction

A growing number of faculty members are utilizing personal blogs to spread ideas and start discussions beyond their traditional academic circles. These resources can give blogging newcomers an overview of the blogging process, guide faculty in choosing a blogging service, and provide inspiration from successful faculty bloggers.

- Educause Learning Initiative Guide to Blogging: <http://www.educause.edu/eli/GuideToBlogging>
Note: ELI materials are only accessible online to EDUCAUSE subscribers.
- Overview of Top Blogging Platforms: <http://lifehacker.com/5568092/five-best-blogging-platforms>
- Top Ten Reviews 2012 Blog Service Comparisons: <http://blog-services-review.toptenreviews.com/>
- 100 Best Professors Who Blog: <http://www.onlinecollege.org/2009/10/12/100-best-professors-who-blog/>



Measuring Business Impact

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Typical University Challenge

Most organizations unproductively focus measurement efforts on “vanity metrics,” or accumulating the highest quantity of “likes,” “fans,” and “followers.” Although these metrics are relatively easy to track, they fail to demonstrate (or encourage) tangible business outcomes. Furthermore, the pursuit of vanity metrics often results in social media presences aimed at audiences too diverse to engage around common content.

Summary of Tools

Tool #27: Relative Return on Investment Metrics explains a method—often used within the private sector to “make the case” for further social media investments—of comparing ROI from social media against ROI from traditional marketing channels.

Tool #28: Bridge Objectives illustrates how organizations develop bridge objectives to link desirable business outcomes to attainable social media metrics.

Tool #29: The Key Performance Indicators Builder provides a quick-reference list of over 100 commonly tracked metrics on popular social media sites.

Tool #30: Measuring Social Media Community Health describes the University of Phoenix’s approach for assessing activity levels in their online social community.



Tool #27: Relative Return on Investment Metrics

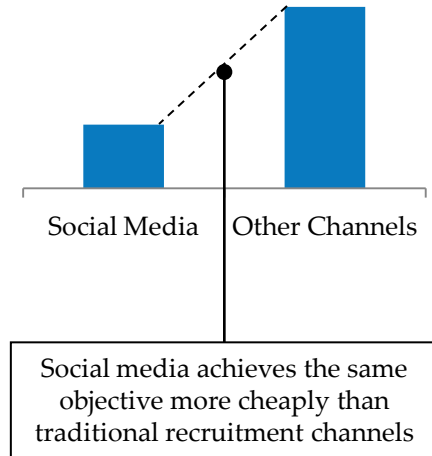
COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

What are Relative Return on Investment (ROI) metrics?

Traditional ROI metrics assess the effectiveness of business practices at achieving their desired outcomes without incurring unsustainable costs; for example, university recruitment teams typically gauge the overall success of their marketing and recruiting strategies by analyzing their costs per each new enrolled student. In order to evaluate whether or not to continue to expand nascent social media efforts, leading organizations use relative ROI metrics to determine how much cheaper or faster a given objective can be reached with social media compared to alternative means. For instance, an institution looking at cost per new enrolled student might examine costs for students sourced from social media against costs for student sourced from more traditional recruiting channels.

Relative ROI metrics are useful for demonstrating the value of social media to key decision-makers throughout the organization. Relative ROI metrics also offer a method for evaluating the efficacy of social media activity without overreliance on “vanity metrics” (see pg. 39 for a brief description of vanity metrics).

Example: Cost per 100 Starts



Relative ROI Metric Brainstorming Tool

The Relative ROI Metric Brainstorming Tool is designed to guide institutions as they select ROI metrics to examine to assess their social media activity. The table below is provided as a model for institutions to follow; it has been filled in with data from Florida International University’s Business School’s rebranding campaign, which is profiled in greater depth on pgs. 54-55. A blank table for marketing teams to use in their own brainstorming efforts can be found on the following page.

Outcome	Metric	Traditional Channels	Social Media
Increase enrollments	Annual attendance at on-campus events for prospective students	184	~800
Increase enrollments	New graduate student enrollments	502	~1,200
Increase student quality	Average student GMAT score	450	570



Tool #27: Relative Return on Investment Metrics

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Relative ROI Metric Brainstorming Tool

Outcome	Metric	Traditional Channels	Social Media



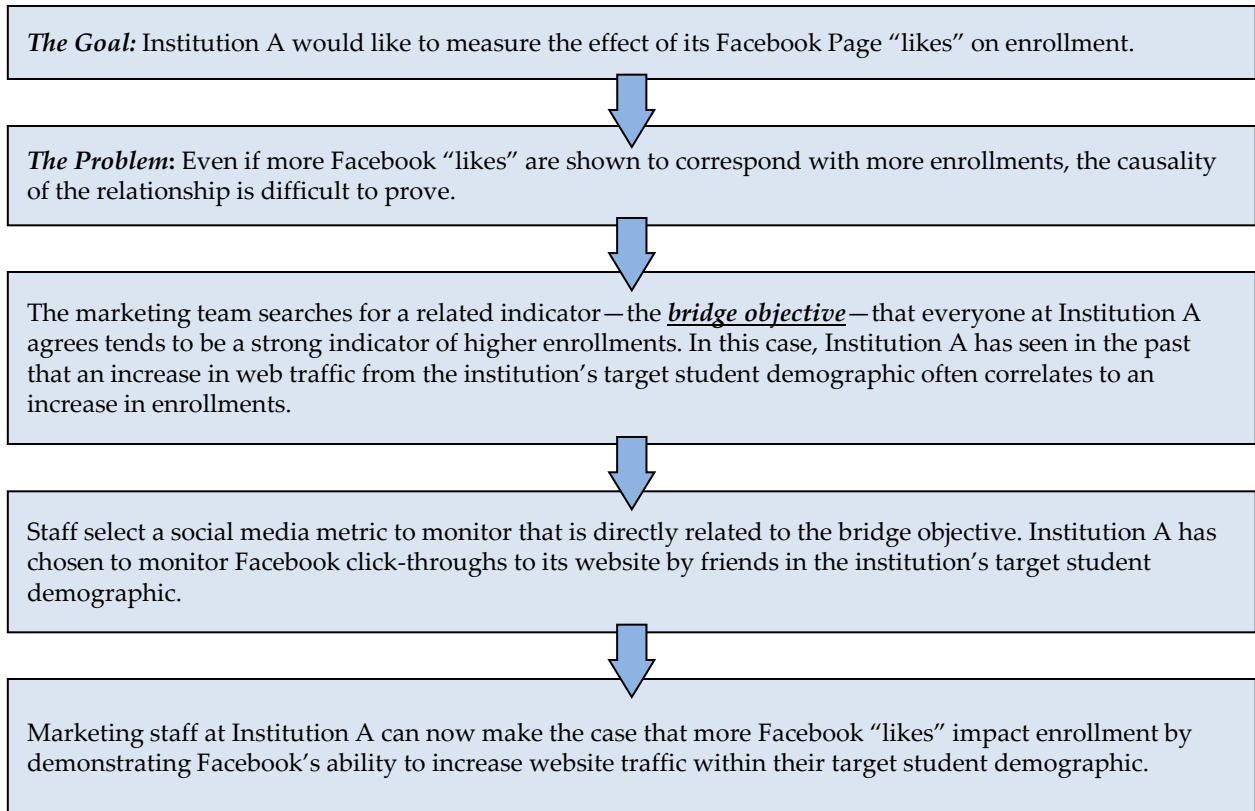
Tool #28: Bridge Objectives

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

What Are Bridge Objectives?

Bridge objectives are generally accepted throughout organizations as strong indicators of business outcomes, and serve to link desirable outcomes back to obtainable social media metrics.

Bridge objectives are often best explained through an example case study:



Why Are Bridge Objectives Valuable?

Even when institutions see correlations between social media activity and desirable outcomes, causation is difficult to prove—that is, it is often hard to determine definitively that good outcomes were the direct result of social media activity. Bridge objectives can therefore help demonstrate social media’s value to an organization when direct ROI from social media efforts is unobtainable.



Tool #28: Bridge Objectives

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Bridge Objective Brainstorming Tool

The following table is designed to guide institutions as they identify bridge objectives for assessing social media effectiveness.

Main Objective	Bridge Objective	Social Media Metric



Tool #29: Key Performance Indicators Builder

COE FORUM | Social Media
Implementation Toolkit

The COE Forum has compiled this list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to serve as an introduction to assessing social media impact. Please note that the KPI Builder is intended to be neither exhaustive nor fixed, especially given that tracking patterns will evolve as new social media platforms and technologies are introduced. Rather, the KPI Builder presents the most commonly tracked social media metrics on major platforms at the time of this publication.

Implementation Tip: Although organized around platforms for ease of use, the KPI Builder will be most useful for institutions that articulate concrete business objectives they would like to achieve with social media before identifying the appropriate platforms for pursuing those objectives. (Read more about the disadvantages of platform-driven strategies and “vanity metrics” on pgs. 38-39 of this book.) Selecting Key Performance Indicators should always be done with business goals in mind for social media efforts—and the time staff spend tracking them—to be maximally effective.

ALL PLATFORMS

- Interaction/engagement rate (total interactions over the number of platform fans or followers)
- Social media preferences of target student demographic
- Geographic locations of social media community members
- Demographics of social media community members
- Leads generated or sourced from social media platforms
- Changes in sentiment about an institution before, during, or after a social media campaign

BLOGS

- Total site visits
- Average site visits per day
- Number of unique site visitors
- Average number of visitors per post
- Number of times blog is linked or embedded on external sites
- Growth rate of site visits
- Number of post comments
- Average number of comments per post
- Number of RSS subscribers
- Click-throughs to main institution website

FACEBOOK

- Number of page likes
- Growth rate for page likes
- Number of page visits per day
- Buzz (the number of people talking about your institution at a given time)
- Number of click-throughs to main institution website per day
- Percentage of page visitors who click through to main website
- Number of interactions per month
- Percentage of community members interacting with page per month
- Number of post likes per day
- Average number of likes per post
- Number of comments per day
- Average number of comments per post
- Number of post shares per day
- Average number of shares per post
- Number of photo comments
- Average number of comments per photo
- Number of photo likes
- Average number of likes per photo
- Number of photo shares
- Average number of photo shares
- Number of photo album comments
- Average number of comments per photo album
- Number of photo album shares
- Average number of shares per album
- Number of recommendations per month
- Number of poll votes
- Number of contest entries received
- Number of event RSVPs
- Average RSVPs per event
- Number of event RSVPs with confirmed attendance
- Number of gifts made
- Number of individual givers
- Total amount of gifts received
- Average gift size



Tool #29: Key Performance Indicators Builder

COE | Social Media
FORUM | Implementation Toolkit

FOURSQUARE

- Number of followers
- Growth rate of followers
- Number of registered check-in locations
- Average number of check-ins per day
- Average number of check-ins per location
- Number of badges earned
- Percentage of followers active on the app (checking in during the past month)
- Number of promotions offered
- Number of promotions redeemed
- Number of tips posted
- Number of tips completed

LINKEDIN

- Number of students and alumni registered
- Number of affiliated groups
- Membership totals in affiliated groups
- Group discussions started per day
- Number of discussion likes per day
- Average likes per discussion
- Number of discussion comments per day
- Average number of comments per discussion
- Rate of group membership growth
- Number of active students and alumni registered
- Average number of connections per student/alumnus
- Number of jobs shared in group per week
- Number of daily updates from group members

TWITTER

- Number of followers
- Growth rate of follower total
- Number of tweets per day
- Number of retweets per day
- Average retweets per tweet
- Number of direct replies per day
- Average number of direct replies per tweet
- Number of favorited tweets by followers
- Average number of favorites per tweet
- Number of click-throughs for articles linked
- Average retweet reach (the number of additional people exposed to a tweet once it is retweeted by followers)
- Number of list inclusions
- Number of hashtag mentions
- Number of click-throughs to main institution website per day
- Percentage of followers who click through to institution website
- Number of customer service requests per day
- Average customer service response time
- Percentage of positive and negative custom service resolutions
- Average number of replies required to reach a resolution

YOUTUBE

- Number of video views
- Growth rate of video views
- Average number of views per video
- Number of channel views
- Number of channel subscribers
- Growth rate of channel subscribers
- Number of video shares
- Number of links to video embedded on external sites
- Number of video favorites
- Number of significant discovery events
- Number of views per discovery event
- Speed of discovery events
- Number of video comments per day
- Average comments per video
- Number of ratings per video
- Average ratio of Like ratings to Dislike ratings per video



Tool #30: Measuring Social Media Community Health

COE | Social Media
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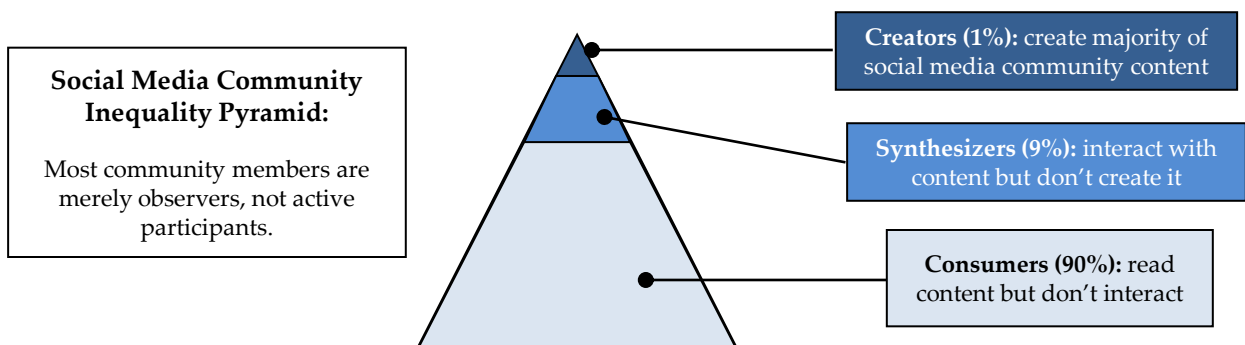
Advice from the Frontline: This article was originally published on September 28, 2011 by Dion Hinchcliffe, an information technology expert who blogs about Web 2.0 innovations for ZDNet.com. It was authored by Jorge Camargo, a former product strategy developer with the Apollo Group. Jorge uses a case study to describe the University of Phoenix's efforts to measure the health of communities on its PhoenixConnect network (for a summary of PhoenixConnect, please see pg. 86 of this book). It is reprinted here with minor modifications. The original post can be viewed here: <http://www.zdnet.com/blog/hinchcliffe/measuring-community-health-achieving-balanced-social-media-growth/1793>.

Conventional wisdom tells us social media community managers should rely on two key metrics to track the success of an online community: membership (*the number of registered users*) and participation (*the number of active users in a given time period*). That's all well and good, but what about measuring the health of the community, not just its size?

Back in 2010, our team at the University of Phoenix created PhoenixConnect, one of the largest academically focused communities in the world with over half a million registered members, 40% of whom are active participants every month. Moreover, students and faculty members who participate in the community spend an incredible 25% more time on site than their unregistered peers. This additional time on site is incremental, meaning that it does not cannibalize time spent in the classroom. As satisfied as we were with these numbers and their impact on our students' engagement, we realized early on that we were only measuring the impact of the community on overall student behavior, not the behavior inside the community itself. The first step towards closing this gap was understanding: Who are these different types of users in our community, and what key indicators should we use to track their behavior within the community?

The Contribution Framework

Back during the "dawn" years of social media, people like Bradley Horowitz (then with Yahoo!) and Jakob Nielsen were already tackling this question and pointing out participation inequalities between community participants, eventually coining the term "participation pyramid" to denote an approximate 1:9:90 ratio between those creating content (creators), those engaging with content created by others (synthesizers), and those simply consuming said content (consumers). The major takeaway both Horowitz and Nielsen left us with back in 2006 was that as social media matured, it was imperative to remove barriers to participation in order to drive growth across all three user segments.





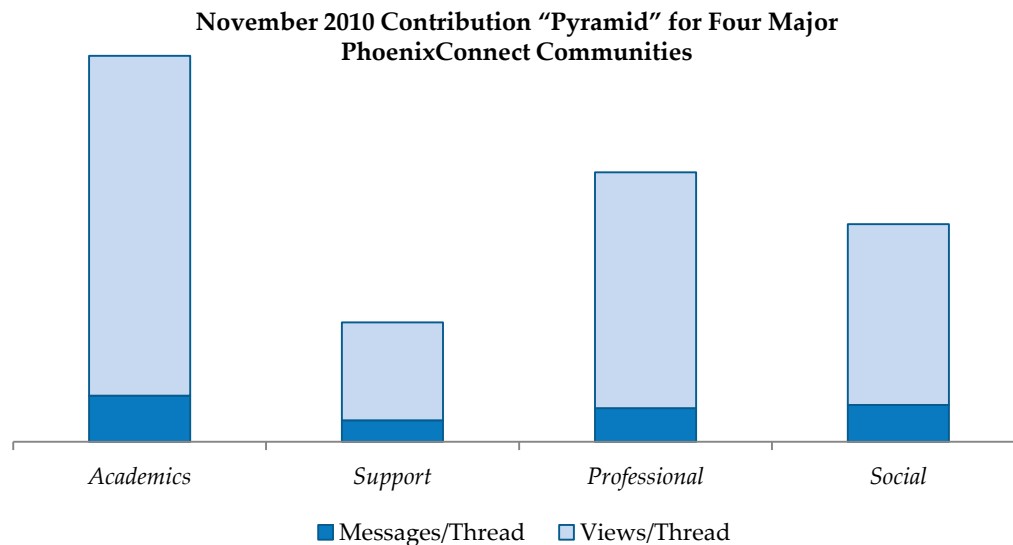
Tool #30: Measuring Social Media Community Health

COE FORUM | Social Media Implementation Toolkit

Our team liked the contribution model outlined by Horowitz and Nielsen, so we used it as the basis for our Community Health reporting framework, iterating along the way. The result is encapsulated in the three maturity stages described below.

Stage 1: Creating the Pyramid KPI and Segmenting Communities

First off, we decided to segment out our KPI reporting into creators, synthesizers, and consumers—a simple enough task given the fact that our Jive SBS platform clearly reports the number of discussions, replies, and views for each community. During the first iteration of our community we did not have the right instrumentation in place to measure unique contributors, so we settled on the number of discussions, messages, and views for a community as good-enough proxies for creators, synthesizers, and consumers, respectively. We plotted the data (messages and replies per discussion thread and views per discussion thread) for our four major communities and came up with the following visualization aimed at allowing us to understand the distribution and behavior of users within each community:



Which community do you think is the most balanced? This is our interpretation, and how we use this data to drive decision-making and investment:

- Support Communities seem to be underperforming relative to their peers, but we quickly abstracted that these communities are clearly transactional in nature (question-and-answer), so we would expect a much shallower degree of engagement here, evidenced by low replies and views per discussion numbers.
- Academic Communities have the highest synthesizer ratio (messages per discussion thread), which is terrific since these communities are aimed at encouraging constructive academic discourse among our students and faculty. However, the consumer ratio is the highest of them all (126 views per discussion), which implies people are viewing the discussions but are not as incented to participate or engage. This insight helps us drill deeper into the behavior inside these communities to understand whether or not we have a content quality problem.



Tool #30: Measuring Social Media Community Health

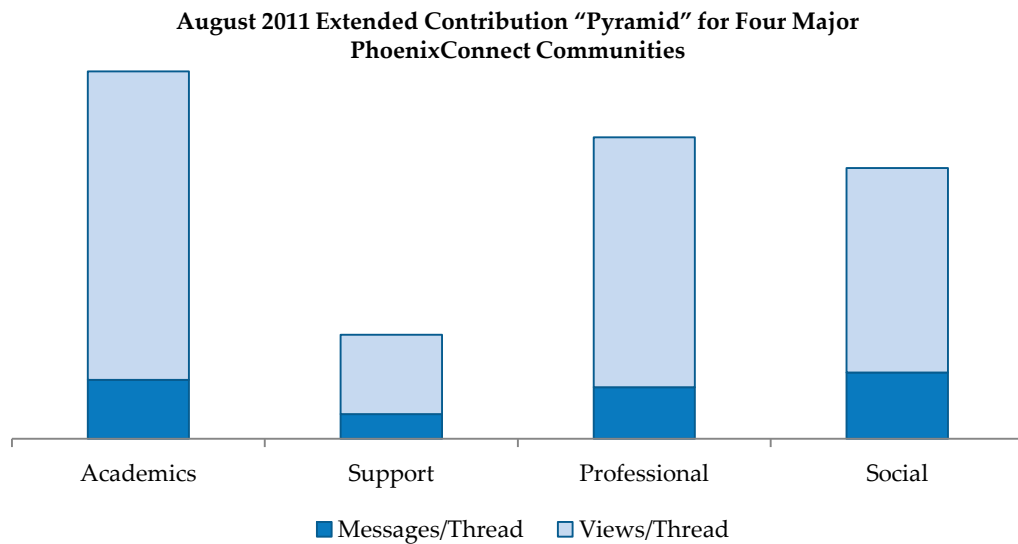
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Stage 2: Removing Barriers to Contribution and Consumption

As we discussed earlier, Horowitz and Nielsen both argued in favor of “removing barriers to participation.” In early 2011 we made two major changes to our community platform that addressed this specific problem:

- We upgraded from Jive 4.0 to Jive 4.5 in order to take advantage of its improved contribution features, particularly the revamped activity feed and the “Like” button (which improves ultra-lightweight participation).
- We surfaced the activity feed to the home page of our student portal in order to increase awareness and consumption of community content.

After enacting these changes, we adjusted our KPI metric slightly (to account for “likes” as indicators of synthesizer contribution). The results can be seen below:



As you’ll notice at first glance, there was a dramatic shift in the ratios: contributions from synthesizers and consumers tripled thanks to these two key enhancements. In short, we were able to see the return on investment in both a Jive upgrade as well as a custom activity feed widget on our student portal page.

But, aren’t these ratios misaligned? The quick answer is yes. Like many first-generation communities out there, PhoenixConnect relied heavily on user-generated content (UGC) to seed conversations. UGC is great to get a community off the ground, but it’s far less effective when it comes to creating a steady seeding of relevant, on-topic, and insightful conversations at scale. Our ability to generate fresh, engaging content could not keep up with the newfound demand from our community. This data-driven insight was used to inform and adjust our community strategy particularly around content creation through a two-pronged approach:

- Create a community content team responsible for generating monthly editorial calendars that will generate a consistent source of new content our community can congregate around.



Tool #30: Measuring Social Media Community Health

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- Break down barriers to content creation by introducing new objects beyond discussions. These include capabilities such as blogs, ideation, and most importantly, the upcoming Jive 5.0 What Matters stream to bring improved discoverability and relevance to status updates.

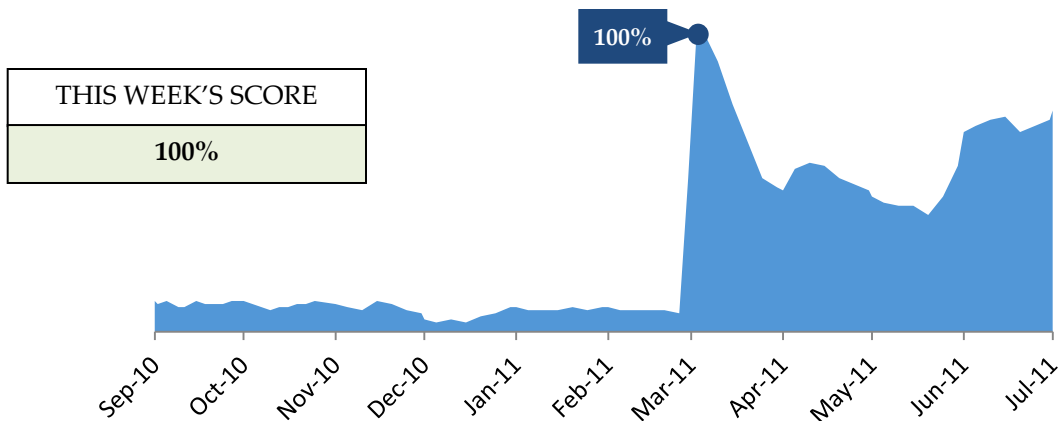
Stage 3: Disseminating Insights and Keeping Your Team Accountable

Constantly pivoting and course-correcting is a must for any social media community manager; however, it can be a dizzying prospect for other people in your organization who don't care or don't need to care about the details. In order to keep a consistent KPI metric for community health that can be disseminated inside of our organization and easily interpreted, we created a simple "score" based on a contribution pyramid-inspired algorithm:

$$SCORE = \frac{(THREADS) \times 100 + (MESSAGES + LIKES) \times 10 - (VIEWS)}{MAX\ HISTORICAL\ SCORE}$$

We made sure we weighed this score against our all-time highest activity day to give us both an easy-to-read percentage as well as a good frame of reference for how active our community is at any given point in time. The graphic below gives you an example of how we report "health" for a particular PhoenixConnect community:

August 2011 Community Active Score for a PhoenixConnect Community



Note that the huge jump in activity in March of 2011 was a result of the enhancements described in Stage 2 above and the ensuing "shiny penny" bump consistent with new features.

Each and every community out there will have its own particular intricacies and your organization will surely require that you adhere to its own KPIs and reporting frameworks. In our case, the content contribution pyramid-inspired reporting model was a very valuable addition to our reporting toolbox. This KPI enabled us to understand variations in context, purpose, and participants within each of our communities while keeping an eye on overall growth trends.











Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary

The following glossary contains over 125 social media terms and vendors commonly found within higher education, and is designed as a basic reference guide for administrators, faculty, and staff new to social media. Please note that this glossary is not intended to provide an exhaustive catalog of all social media vendors serving higher education, and the COE Forum acknowledges that several promising social media vendors may not be listed here. Rather, vendor organizations were chosen for inclusion in the glossary based on questions from our members, prominent mentions during research interviews, and relevance to the breakthrough practices profiled in our study on disciplining social media strategy.

KEY

 Network Builder	 For a Fee	 Organizer/ Aggregator	 Learning Management System
 For Free	 Internationally Predominant Platform	 Listening Tool	 Customer Relationship Manager

1% rule: The theory that in a typical online community, only 1% of all users will contribute significantly to the community's content; an additional 9% will contribute on a more sporadic basis, and the majority, 90%, will merely "lurk" in the community to observe the contributions of others.



2tor: A higher education startup that partners with institutions to build out online degree programs. <http://2tor.com/>



Addictomatic: A free social media and web monitoring service that tracks sites for the latest news, blog posts, videos, and images that are relevant to user preferences. Findings are funneled into a customized webpage for the user to browse. <http://addictomatic.com/>



Alterian SM2: A social media monitoring and customer relations management tool designed to provide visibility into social media and let brands tap into their customers' thoughts and opinions. Alterian SM2 allows marketers to capture and analyze data from social media channels to monitor brands, identify key communities and influencers, address customer service issues, conduct unbiased research, and generate new sales leads. Packages start at \$500 per month, although free, limited accounts are available. Free accounts allow users to search up to five terms with a total limit of 1,000 results. <http://alterian.com/socialmedia/>



Argyle Social: A marketing software company that produces products for social media organization and analysis. Argyle's pricing starts at \$199 per month for a single-user product and \$299 per month for a team-based product. <http://argylesocial.com/>



Aught9: A technology company offering network-aggregating software that leverages information uploaded to social networking sites to update university alumni records or other databases. <http://www.aught9.com/>



Awareness Social Marketing Hub: A social media monitoring and analytics platform that allows users to control their social media efforts, centralize their social media strategy, and achieve social media ROI. Services cost less than \$500 per month. <http://www.awarenessnetworks.com/>

Badge: A public marker of frequent activity or success within a game-based application. Ideally, the possible attainment of badges motivates a player to continue engaging with the game, even though most badges carry no actual material worth.



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Beta testing: A stage in website or software development in which a preliminary or "beta" version of the product is released to a limited group of people to test its user functionality.



Beevolve: A social media monitoring and analytics platform whose features include real-time monitoring, sentiment analysis, competitive analytics, demography and geography filters, text mining, influencer identification, and engagement workflow. Beevolve is available at different levels of membership ranging from free to \$350 per month depending on the number of search terms and conversations monitored and the number of users. <http://www.beevolve.com/>



Blackboard: An education software company that owns just over 50 percent of the LMS market share as of October 2011. <http://www.blackboard.com/>

Blog: A shortening of the phrase "web log," a blog is akin to an electronic journal that others are allowed and encouraged to read. Postings, which are arranged in reverse chronological order, can contain text, images, videos, and music. Blogs can be maintained by individuals and organizations for personal and professional reasons. A person who writes a blog is a "blogger."

Bulletin board approach: A social media posting strategy in which post content is mainly designed for one-way communication, rather than two-way interaction; not recommended for organizations looking to foster user engagement on social media.

Channel: See entry for **YouTube**.

Chat room: An online space where multiple people can electronically converse using a text-based chat application. Chat rooms can be pre-scheduled or perpetually open.

Check-in: See entry for **Foursquare**.



Cision: A social media listening tool designed to help public relations, marketing, and communications professionals engage journalists and social networks, identify online influencers, monitor the effectiveness of their communication programs, and protect and promote their brands. <http://cision.com/>



Classroom Salon: A free social networking application with a pedagogical focus, designed to encourage online collaborations around academic content. Created by professors at Carnegie Mellon University. <http://www.classroomsalon.org/>

Closed community: An online network that requires permission for access; permission may be obtained by proof of membership in a group (e.g., a university email address may be used to enter that institution's network), or it may be granted by a network administrator.



CollegeWeekLive: A vendor that hosts virtual fairs. In addition to hosting institutional booths, CollegeWeekLive's fairs also include keynote speakers, information on financial aid, and insight into admissions trends. Fairs are also often organized around themes such as International Day, STEM Days, and Regional (U.S.) Days. CollegeWeekLive's international fairs are marketed to international prospective students, families, and international education support staff. <http://collegeweeklive.com/>

Connection: See entry for **LinkedIn**.

Creepy Treehouse Syndrome: Refers to the effect that the presence of an official institution or representative may have on students' willingness to engage in a social network; i.e., that the official will be viewed as a "creepy" adult who does not belong in the children's treehouse. For more information, see: <http://flexknowledge.learningfield.org/2008/04/09/defining-creepy-tree-house/>.



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Crowdsourcing: The practice of turning to the collective wisdom of an online community for information, advice, or assistance with completing a large-scale task.



Delicious: An online bookmarking and cataloging service that allows users to archive and organize websites publicly and privately so that they can be accessed from any internet-capable device and shared with others. <http://delicious.com/>



Desire2Learn Learning Environment: An LMS designed specifically for online and hybrid courses that includes a suite of social learning tools. Students may connect their Desire2Learn profiles with their profiles on prominent social networking sites (such as Facebook and LinkedIn). <http://www.desire2learn.com/learningenvironment/highered/>



Digg: A social news website that allows members to submit articles, videos, and pictures found on the web. Items are voted on and the most popular ones are placed on the homepage. <http://digg.com/>

Discussion Board: A section of a website or software application where users can post and respond to one another's comments.



Facebook: A social networking site built around connecting with and sharing information with friends; also the world's largest social networking site, with over 800 million active users as of June 2012. <http://www.facebook.com/>

Facebook Groups: User-managed organizations on the Facebook network typically created around a common interest, such as a sport or a television show.

Facebook Pages: A service on the Facebook network that allows public figures or organizations to create an official presence on the site, usually for marketing and promotional purposes.

Fan: A Facebook user who has liked the official Facebook Page of a public figure or organization.

Friend: As a noun, a connection on Facebook; as a verb, the action of adding a Facebook user to one's network.

Like: A Facebook button that allows users to communicate a positive response to a post; e.g., "Eighteen friends liked Sarah's picture of her new puppy."

Tag: A Facebook feature by which users can indicate that a friend is mentioned in a post or present in a picture; when clicked upon, the tag redirects other users to that friend's profile.

Facebook Groups: See entry for **Facebook**.

Facebook Pages: See entry for **Facebook**.

Fan: See entry for **Facebook**.



Flickr: A popular photo sharing website, with over 50 million registered users as of June 2012. <http://www.flickr.com/>

Follower: See entry for **Twitter**.



Foursquare: A location-based social networking service in which users can notify friends of their current locations or activities through the process of checking in on a mobile phone. <https://foursquare.com/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Foursquare Entries (cont.)

Check-in: On Foursquare, the act of indicating that one is present at a particular location at a given time. Check-in notifications are commonly sent to a user's approved friends, and users are rewarded through a system of points and badges for checking in at various locations, or for checking in multiple times at the same location.

Freemium model: A business model in which a basic level of a service is offered for free, with an option for users to upgrade to higher service levels for a price. LinkedIn and Flickr are examples of well-known sites that operate under a freemium model.

Friend: See entry for **Facebook**.



GoingOn: A technology company that builds private academic social networks for higher education institutions in exchange for a monthly subscription fee. <http://www.goingon.com/>



Google Alerts: A free internet monitoring service provided by Google. When Google discovers new content that contains a specified keyword or phrase, it delivers an alert in a pre-designated timeframe. Google Alerts tracks only content indexed by Google. <http://www.google.com/alerts/>

Handle: Internet slang for a username on an email account or social networking site.

Hashtag: See entry for **Twitter**.



hi5: A social networking site that is most popular with younger users (18 and under) in Latin America. <http://www.hi5.com/friend/displayHomePage.do>



Hobsons: A company that provides postsecondary institutions with support across recruitment, enrollment, and retention functions. Products and services provided by Hobsons include international virtual tours, web chat platforms, and FAQ "virtual advisor" platforms. Hobsons's virtual fairs are geographically concentrated (e.g., they offer fairs for Greater China, India, etc.). <http://www.hobsons.com/>



HootSuite: A dashboard that integrates management of several popular social media sites (including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), with features that allow for multiple contributors to a single account and pre-scheduling of synchronized posts to multiple sites. <http://hootsuite.com/>



HubSpot: Producers of online marketing software that includes features for social media management and monitoring. <http://www.hubspot.com/>



Inigral: A technology startup that has created the Schools App, a Facebook-based application that enables higher education institutions to establish a private social network within the Facebook interface. <http://www.inigral.com/>

Instant chat: See entry for **Instant Messaging**.

Instant Messaging: Abbreviated IM, a form of real-time direct text-based communication between two or more people. Gchat, MSN Messenger, and Yahoo! Chat are all examples of instant messaging platforms. More advanced instant messaging software clients allow enhanced modes of communication, such as live voice or video calling.



Intelliworks: A web-based CRM system for higher education institutions, notable for its integration with popular social media sites that allows institutions to monitor prospective and current student activity. <http://www.intelliworks.com/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)



Kaixin001: A Chinese social networking site with a user demographic that is predominantly white-collar and older. It is known for being the first to clone and deliver several highly popular Facebook applications to the Chinese market. True to that history, Kaixin001's users continue to enthusiastically engage in these games. <http://www.kaixin001.com/>



Klout: A company that measures social media influence by analyzing one's followers and responses on Facebook and Twitter and assigning a corresponding Klout score, out of 100. <http://www.klout.com/home/>

Landing page: A webpage that appears after clicking on a specific online advertisement. A landing page gives marketers the ability to trace advertising traffic from a variety of individual sources, thus providing a method for analyzing the relative effectiveness of each advertisement.

Like: See entry for **Facebook**.



LinkedIn: A social networking site built around professional connections; over 135 million users as of November 2011. <http://www.linkedin.com/>

Connection: A LinkedIn user that has been added to another user's network.

Listening platform: A tool that tracks recent mentions of an entity on a specific site, or across the internet in general. Listening platforms are useful for gauging public sentiment around a person or organization and adjusting messaging accordingly.

LMS: Short for Learning Management System, a software application designed to allow higher education institutions to integrate administrative management and content delivery.

Location-based service: Any service that relies on a user's current geographical location as indicated by a mobile device or a GPS device.



Meebo: A free social platform that connects users with their friends across the web. Meebo began as an instant messaging aggregator that allowed users to manage and monitor multiple IM clients, including Yahoo! Messenger, Windows Live Messenger, AIM, ICQ, MySpaceIM, Facebook Chat, Google Talk, CafeMom, and others. Meebo has since added the Meebo bar, which allows users to chat with their friends on hundreds of websites. <http://www.meebo.com/>



Meltwater Buzz: A social media analytics tool that tracks and analyzes user-generated content on the web. A standard one-year subscription for \$13,000 grants access to three to five users. <http://www.buzz.meltwater.com/>

Mention: See entry for **Twitter**.

Microblog: A broadcasting medium in the form of a blog with significant file size limitations. Examples include Twitter, Tumblr, and the status-updating features on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Mobile app: Short for "mobile application," a software program built for a mobile device. Availability and design of a given app typically vary by the mobile operating system on one's cell phone.



Moodle: A free, web-based, open-source LMS. It includes some basic social networking and discussion features. <http://moodle.org/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)



Myspace: A social networking website owned by News Corporation, Myspace was the most popular social networking site in the United States from June 2006 to April 2008, when it was overtaken internationally by its main competitor, Facebook. Since then, Myspace's popularity has declined steeply, and today it is most attractive to those interested in the entertainment industry. Musical groups commonly post their music to Myspace for fans and guests to enjoy. <http://www.myspace.com/>

Newsfeed: An aggregator of information on a social networking site, typically consisting of chronological updates from sources chosen by the user.

Open community: An online network accessible to the general public.



OpenClass: A free LMS launched by Pearson in October 2011 and integrated with Google Apps for Education. <http://www.joinopenclass.com/open/view/t1/>



Orkut: A social networking site operated by Google, Orkut is one of the most popular social networking platforms in India and Brazil. <http://www.orkut.com/>



Parature: A customer relations management company whose social response management application allows clients to integrate a branded "support" tab into their Facebook and Twitter presences. Customers can post a comment to the organization's Facebook or Twitter Support space, which is then pushed into Parature's software as a ticket. The customer service representative can push an update by responding directly on the wall. FAQs can also be added to the support application. Clients license Parature depending on the number of support representatives that will use the tool, ranging from \$10,000 to a \$1 million per year, with the average client paying about \$50,000. Parature for Facebook costs \$19,500 per year; per Page, it's deployed on as a standalone product and costs \$2,500 for those already licensing Parature's customer service software. <http://www.parature.com/>



Plancast: A free social media monitoring platform that scans for events related to user keyword entries. Users can subscribe to receive an alert on any new event that is found and share those events with others. <http://plancast.com/>

Podcast: An audio or video broadcast published on the web, often in a periodic or episodic format.

Privacy controls: Features on a social networking site that allow users to control the visibility of their personal information and posted content.

Profile: A collection of information about a user on a social networking site.



Qzone: A Chinese social networking site owned by Tencent that allows users to write blogs, maintain diaries, exchange photos, and listen to music. Profiles are highly customizable with music, backgrounds, and select accessories. <http://qzone.qq.com/>



Radian6: A listening platform with a suite of analytical tools designed to give businesses actionable insights on social media conversations. <http://www.radian6.com/>

Real-time e-Communication: Any electronic communication that allows users to exchange files instantaneously (in real time). Examples include chat rooms, text messaging, and instant messaging.

Real-time search: A method of indexing content (or organizing it such that it can be "found" using a search engine) published online into search engine results with virtually no delay. Indexing is completed by the back-end processes of search engines.



Renren: Commonly called the Facebook of China, a social networking site that is most popular among college students. As of June 2012, Renren has 120 million active users. <http://www.renren.com/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Retweet: See entry for **Twitter**.

RSS: Short for Really Simple Syndication, a technology that allows users to collect updates from several different websites in one location (an RSS reader, such as Google Reader). RSS is particularly useful for following blogs, as it lets users receive notifications of updates to blogs without checking each individual blog site repeatedly.



Sakai: A technology community that offers a free, web-based, open-source LMS built around teaching and research collaborations. Sakai's social networking features include blog, chat, and discussion forum functions. <http://sakaiproject.org/>



SCVNGR: A startup that partners with businesses and organizations to create game-based mobile apps intended to increase engagement with the organization by having players complete a series of challenges or tasks. For instance, within the higher education sphere, SCVNGR has helped colleges introduce mobile app games during orientation, in which new students check in at various campus locations and learn about the campus as they go along. <http://www.scvngr.com/>

Search Engine Optimization: Abbreviated SEO, the process of improving the volume or quality of traffic to a website from search engines via unpaid or organic search traffic. SEO can target different kinds of searches, including image, local, and video searches. The optimization process involves considering how the search engines operate, commonly searched-for phrases and terms, and the target market's preferred search engines.



Seesmic: A startup that produces mobile and web applications for integrating social media management; similar to Hootsuite. <http://seesmic.com/>



Sina Weibo: Also called "Weibo" (the Chinese word for microblog), by far the most common microblogging platform in China. The 140 character limitation (a feature it shares with Twitter) adds more flexibility due to the nature of Mandarin and Cantonese, and as a result Sina Weibo hosts a significant brand development presence. In addition to short message communication, Sina Weibo also offers video posting and location-based functions. <http://www.weibo.com/>



Skype: A program that allows users to participate in audio, video, and text chats. Users can also purchase plans to receive phone calls through their Skype accounts. <http://www.skype.com/>

Social media manager: An administrator at a college or university responsible for oversight of the institution's official social media efforts. In recent years, more and more institutions are hiring full-time social media managers.

Social media monitoring: The process of monitoring one's social media presence and relevant mentions across the broad social media space. The process is often facilitated by social media listening tools and monitoring services.



Social Mention: A free social media search engine that searches for keywords on social media platforms—including blogs, comments, bookmarks, events, news, videos, and microblogging services—and provides metrics around keywords and sentiment. SocialMention also provides coding for users own keyword monitoring widgets. <http://www.socialmention.com/>



Sophia: A free, pedagogy-focused online social platform that allows professors to communicate information using a number of different teaching methods. <http://www.sophia.org/>



Sprout: A startup that creates web applications for integrating management of Twitter, Facebook, and other popular social media sites. <http://sproutinc.com/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Sticky content: Web or social media content that increases the likelihood that a viewer will return to that site; construction of such content can be intentional (an online shopping site tells visitors to "check back for a discount coupon in one week") or unintentional (a blog post is so entertaining that it motivates readers to check the blog frequently for similar updates).



SugarCRM: A CRM integrated with major social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn). Sugar's products start at \$360 per user per year. <http://www.sugarcrm.com/crm/>



Sysomos: A social media analytics company that uses content on social media sites to create a real-time assessment of how products, people, and brands are covered in those media sites. In addition to identifying discussion themes and key influencers, Sysomos's assessment also attempts to understand how the sentiment around a subject developed. Sysomos Heartbeat provides social media monitoring and engagement capabilities to communications professionals, brand managers, and customer support groups at an entry-level price of \$500 per month; there is no restriction on the number of users per account. <http://www.sysomos.com/>

Tag: See entry for **Facebook**.



Tencent QQ: Also known as "QQ," the most popular instant messaging program in China. Considered a cultural phenomenon due to the rapidity with which it has grown (currently, it has an estimated 800 million+ users), QQ has evolved to offer several additional features including games and blogs. Several features cost "Q coins," which can be purchased with Chinese currency (RMB). RMB has grown ubiquitous to the extent that it can now be used to purchase small "real" gifts. <http://www.qq.com/>



Test Drive College: A company that applies the freemium model to higher education, allowing users to take free college courses online that may eventually be transferred to any of a number of partner institutions for credit. <http://www.testdrivecollege.com/>



Trackur: A social media monitoring and analytics tool that scans hundreds of social media platforms to identify reputation, influencers, and activity surrounding specified search terms. Results are available in many formats including Trackur's dashboard. Monthly costs range from \$18 to \$377 depending on a user's number of saved searches. <http://www.trackur.com/>

Tweet: See entry for **Twitter**.



TweetDeck: An application for viewing and managing posts to several different social media sites, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Foursquare; acquired by Twitter in May 2011. <http://www.tweetdeck.com/>



Twitter: A social networking site built around sharing short status updates and news items; over 100 million active users as of September 2011. <https://twitter.com/>

Follower: A Twitter user who opts to receive status updates from another user; updates from all followed accounts appear in that user's feed in chronological order.

Hashtag: The # symbol, used to flag a tweet as referencing a particular topic on Twitter; used by Twitter staff to track topic trends across the site. A hashtag directly precedes the topic and encompasses all characters following it until the next space. For example, a Green Bay Packers fan might tweet, "#AaronRodgers is having another great game tonight."

Mention: The referencing of a specific Twitter user in a tweet, done by including that user's name preceded by the @ symbol. For example, a tweet that includes @andersoncooper will be sent directly to Anderson Cooper.



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Twitter Entries (cont.)

Retweet: An action taken by a Twitter user to copy another user's tweet to his or her own feed, thus communicating that information to all of his or her own followers.

Tweet: A single status update on Twitter, limited to 140 characters.



uberVU: A social media listening tool that offers social media monitoring, analytics and reporting, engagement advice, and workflow insight. Monthly memberships start at \$499 per month and increase depending on number of users, data streams and volumes, and nature of access to the platform. <http://www.ubervu.com/>

URL shortening service: A web service that provides shortened URLs (web addresses) to replace traditionally longer URLs. Shortened URLs are particularly popular in the Twitter microblogging community where strict character limitations are imposed.



U.S. Commercial Service: The trade promotion arm of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Association, which is committed to helping U.S. companies and organizations succeed in markets around the world. Within the postsecondary education space, the U.S. Commercial service provides written market assessments of various countries' educational needs and also arranges a B2B model of the virtual fair that brings together institution representatives and foreign education counselors and agents. While most research is free, services and events may come at a fee. <http://trade.gov/cs/>

Views: See entry for **YouTube**.

Viral video: An online video or clip that spreads rapidly through sharing among internet users; viral videos are often quick to accumulate millions of views.



Viralheat: A social media analytics and intelligence platform that delivers real-time data on several social media channels. Services help identify influencers, gauge sentiment, and monitor for specified search terms. Monthly fees range from \$9.99 for a basic membership to \$89.99 for a business membership. <http://www.viralheat.com/>

Virtual fair: A recruiting fair held in a virtual space. Visitors and institution representatives are present as avatars and navigate a computer-generated world that is usually meant to seem like a college campus. In their avatar form, visitors can speak with other visitors and fair staffers, explore the booths, and browse electronic material brought by institutions. Virtual fairs are also increasingly used by employers to recruit employees.

Virtual tour: A tour placed online that visitors can "walk through" at their convenience from anywhere in the world. By using panoramic pictures and video, virtual tours can provide visitors with an in-depth understanding of a campus's features.



Vocus: A social media listening tool whose purpose is to help public relations, marketing, and communication professionals engage journalists and social networks, identify online influencers, monitor the effectiveness of their communication programs, and protect and promote their brands. Its software includes five primary components: a media contacts database, news monitoring and management, social media monitoring and management, reporting and analysis, and press release/pitch distribution. Social media monitoring can be purchased separately for \$3,000 per year; full packages start at about \$6,500. <http://www.vocus.com/>



Web 2.0 Platform Guide and Glossary (cont.)

Voice: The tone that a poster adopts when using social media; it can range from personal and conversational to formal and official.



WatchThatPage: A free web monitoring tool that allows users to keep tabs on any webpage and receive an alert any time a change is made to the page. <http://www.watchthatpage.com/>

Web chat: See entry for **Chat room**.



Wildfire Social Media Monitor: A tool that tracks and compares how an organization's brands are performing on Facebook and Twitter. Wildfire allows companies, small businesses, marketing agencies, nonprofits, and bloggers to create their own branded interactive campaigns, including contests, giveaways, incentive-based surveys and sweepstakes, and to simultaneously publish them in multiple social networks and on their websites. The basic tools are free; premium services are available at a fee. <http://monitor.wildfireapp.com/>



Youku: A Chinese video-hosting service that allows the upload of videos irrespective of length. Due to partnerships with over 1,500 license holders, Youku also hosts regularly updated content provided by television stations, and film and TV production companies. <http://www.youku.com/>



YouTube: A website that allows users to upload and watch videos of up to 15 minutes in length; a subsidiary of Google since 2006. While other sites built around a video-sharing function exist, YouTube is by far the most popular. <http://www.youtube.com/>

Channel: On YouTube, a station associated with a particular user, through which viewers can access all of that user's uploaded videos.

Views: On YouTube, the number of times a video has been watched; however, note that YouTube's algorithm for calculating this metric remains unclear.



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