

**2025 CONTENT BENCHMARKS REPORT**

# ***SCHOOLS & EDUCATION***



**sproutsocial**



# Dear education marketers, audience engagement is no longer *extra credit*

Per [The Sprout Social Index™](#), **86% of social users will maintain or increase their time spent on social platforms in 2025**. As engagement surges, an interactive, audience-centric social strategy will become an absolute necessity for the education industry.

Social is where all of your diverse audiences are—future applicants, current students, faculty, alumni and donors—each with different expectations from your school. At the same time, platforms are reaching peak saturation, and treating social as a broadcast channel only creates more noise.

There is no shortage of content inspiration in the education space, from campus life and school history flashbacks to faculty accolades and athletics highlights. However, teams that strike the right balance between publishing and engaging—while partnering with the right departments—will win over students, staff and alumni for life.

The right content performance data, however, gives education marketers a view into what resonates and what doesn't—insights that can refine everything from recruitment and marketing plans to fundraising strategies.

Our 2025 Content Benchmarks Report turns the spotlight on how education institutions' content performed in 2024 across networks, the types of content audiences want today and how to build a stronger social strategy for the year ahead.



# 2024 content benchmarks for education institutions

Brands across industries published an average of 9.5 social posts per day across networks in 2024—a slight dip from 2023. While slightly lower than the average, **education institutions’ publishing averages held steady from 2023 at 7 posts per day.**

Even with publishing volumes unchanged, inbound engagements are up slightly from 24 to 26 per day—which proves that posting more isn’t necessarily the key to more meaningful interactions. Outbound engagements are only slightly below average (1 per day).

With social media becoming younger generations’ preferred discovery channel—more so than traditional search engines—showing up in the right channels is essential to reaching today’s and tomorrow’s student population. But it’s increasingly important to not simply post, but invest in proactive audience engagement strategies as well.

Social users value both the originality of a brand’s content and how they interact with audiences, according to our Index research. Audience growth and retention require delivering human-centric content that demonstrates you’re paying attention to your community. Posting constantly won’t endear people to you. It’s more important to interact with them, and craft content that feels human, aspirational and shareable—not forgettable or stiff.

## Industry publishing and engagement benchmarks

Industry	Avg. posts published per day	Avg. inbound engagements on content per day	Avg. outbound engagements per day	Avg. daily inbound engagements per post
All brands	9.5	83	2	14
Schools & education	7	26	1	5

# Video & multi-image content make the grade

Even as the social network landscape diversifies, Facebook, X and Instagram remain the core platforms where education institutions maintain profiles. That said, there was a bump in teams joining TikTok—where 27% have a profile, up from 22% in 2023.

But across almost all platforms these days, algorithms and social media users alike play favorites—with video continuing to be a top pick. Across channels, education teams made incremental increases in their video content over the past year.

On Instagram, education institutions are moving away from single-image posts in favor of multi-image posts and carousels, as well as (more) video. Single image posts on the platform decreased by over six percentage points from 2023 to 2024.

But every network plays by its own slightly nuanced rules, and education marketers are taking note. There was a slight uptick in plain text posts on Facebook over the past year—which makes sense, given that consumers told us it’s the brand content format they’re most likely to engage with there.

## Education content types across networks

Facebook	2023	2024
% image posts	50%	49%
% video posts	15%	17%
% plain text posts	20%	22%
Instagram	2023	2024
% multi-image posts	27%	30%
% single image posts	51%	44.5%
% single video posts	21%	24%
% multi-media posts	1%	1%
X	2023	2024
% multi-image posts	10%	11%
% single photo posts	52%	52%
% video posts	6%	7%
% plain text	9%	8%
% no media (link post)	20%	18%



# Meeting audiences where they want to engage

Overall engagement is the primary metric marketing leaders will use to measure social media success in 2025, per the Index. Education institutions receive an average of 26 inbound engagements per day, with 5 average engagements per post.

But when it comes to interacting with brand content, not all networks are created equal. Education institutions receive over 60% of their daily engagements on Facebook and Instagram. From 2023 to 2024, Facebook engagements remained the same while X engagements dipped slightly, and Instagram and TikTok activity rose.

Contrasts like this make it even more important for marketers to keep close watch on where their audiences spend their time, and where they don't. Making thoughtful decisions about where your brand shows up on social media can free up resources to dedicate to more original, compelling content.

Network engagement trends by industry

Industry	Facebook total engagements per day	Instagram total engagements per day	TikTok total engagements per day	X total engagements per day
All brands	24	27	4	13
Schools & education	7	9	4	6



Within the education sector, brands’ daily response rate to messages and comments was only 5% —down from 7% in 2023. The higher education industry in particular has been in a consistent state of disruption—from funding uncertainty and changing perceptions of the value of a traditional degree, to growing demand for more technical training. Having thoughtful engagement strategies—for each of your distinct audiences—is a must-have to attract future students, support enrolled students and nurture alumni.

### Inbound message & response rate

Total inbound messages per day (2023)	Total inbound messages per day (2024)	Response rate to messages and comments
13	12	5%



# Rethinking the role social media plays: Answering the call for community

Attention has never been harder to earn on social media in the increasingly saturated social landscape. To avoid getting lost in the noise, education marketers must move beyond using social as a broadcast channel. Distinct content and personalized, 1:1 engagement are essential to entice new audiences, improve the current and prospective student experience, and build lifelong loyalty.

Static images of breakthrough academic research discoveries and “welcome back to campus” posts will consistently get attention—but they alone don’t amount to a bold social strategy. Education institutions have an opportunity to seize audiences’ growing demand for connection, and interact meaningfully with your entire school community (no matter where they are).

**But what does that look like in practice?**





# Originality

Second only to the quality of their product or service, consumers say original content is what makes brands stand out on social, according to our Index research.

While consumers—and especially younger demographics—agree brands should keep a pulse on online culture, following every trend or reposting every meme isn't what makes education brands memorable. But they should craft a unique brand voice that distinguishes them from other alternatives.

## What consumers say makes their favorite brands stand out on social

- 1 Quality of their product or service
- 2 Originality of their content
- 3 How they engage with their followers
- 4 How quickly they respond to customers
- 5 Content their employees post



## // INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHT

# Macquarie University

Regardless of where an institution calls home, the audiences they hope to target are often spread worldwide. This is certainly the case for Australia's Macquarie University, which serves over 44,000 current students and 238,000 alumni around the globe.

With so many audiences to serve (across locations, age demographics and interests), most colleges and universities can't afford to take a one-size-fits-all approach to social media. Macquarie takes this to heart with a multifaceted network strategy with content clearly tailored to specific niches of their vast community.

On TikTok, for example, their team leans into meme-style content and man-on-the-street interviews geared toward current and prospective students. On Facebook, however, Macquarie's content is more focused on university-wide news (think commencement highlights, new research findings) for a broader alumni audience.

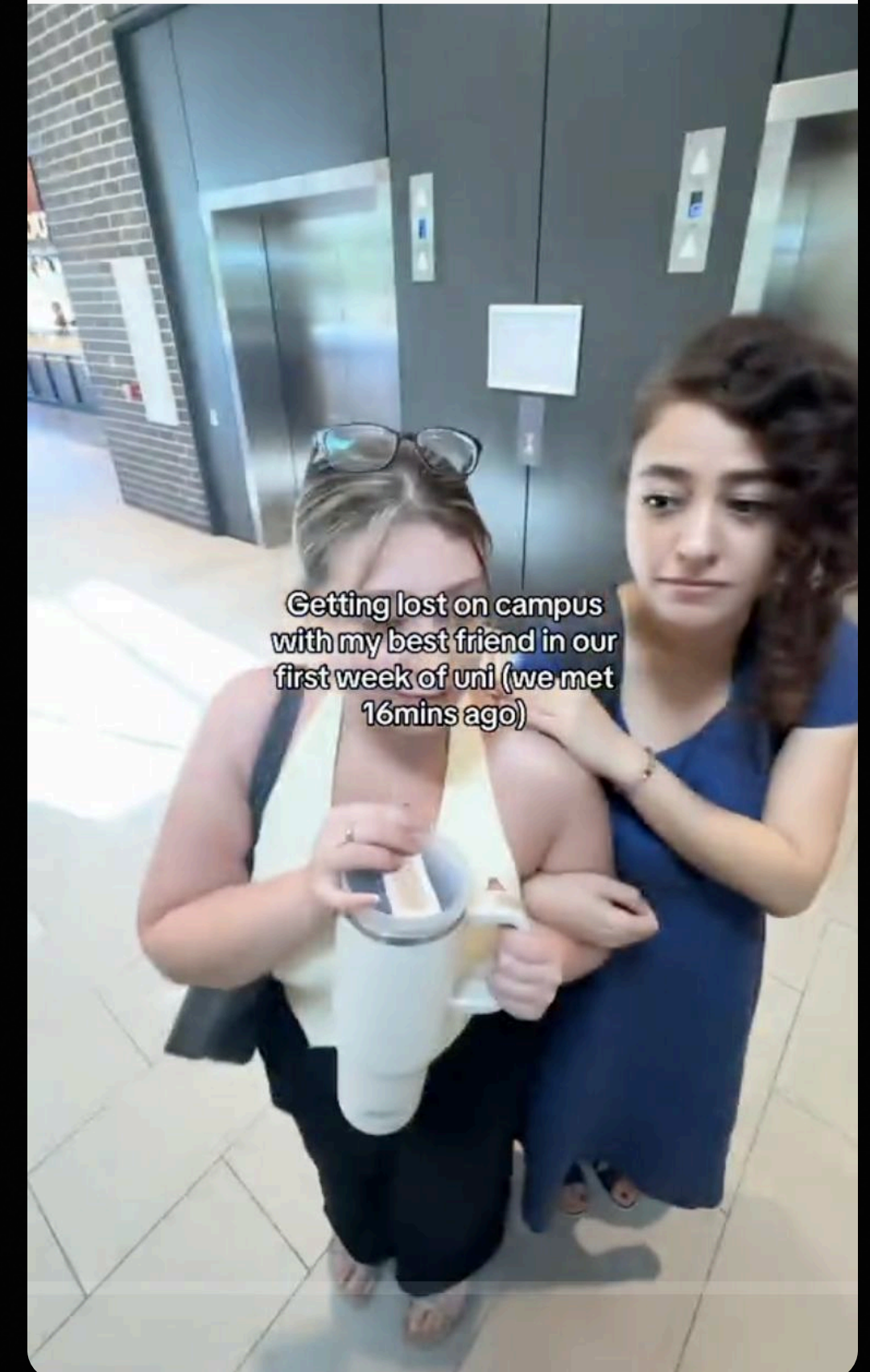


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A big, scary campus isn't so scary with a friend. Say "Hey" in the chat to make a new buddy. [#myMQ](#) [#macquarieuniversity](#) [#fyp](#)



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# Influencer marketing strategy

Marketing teams agree: Influencer marketing isn't a passing fad, it's a proven strategy that unlocks sustainable growth. The Q1 2025 Sprout Pulse Survey found that teams say influencer marketing is essential for boosting brand awareness, building audience engagement and trust, and driving revenue.

Influencer marketing is rapidly becoming part of the curriculum at various institutions—but many schools are still experimenting with how to weave these collaborations into their own social presence. The good news? Between notable alumni, renowned faculty, student-athlete influencers and budding campus creators, there have never been more options for institutions to start investing in these partnerships.

**59% of marketers plan to build out their roster and partner with **more** influencers in 2025.\***





// INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHT

# University of Michigan

Changes to the NCAA's Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) rules in 2021 opened the door to a new subset of the influencer economy: student-athlete influencers. Over the past few years, college athletes across the US have profited from brand deals with major brands from Nike to Nintendo. But the University of Michigan is proving that winning partnerships can also happen much closer to home.

Starting in 2023, U-M established an NIL collaboration with a collection of men and women athletes for a long-term campaign around mental health and campus wellness resources. The content came to life through organic and paid posts on U-M's main social profiles, as well as their Michigan Athletics and Student Life channels.

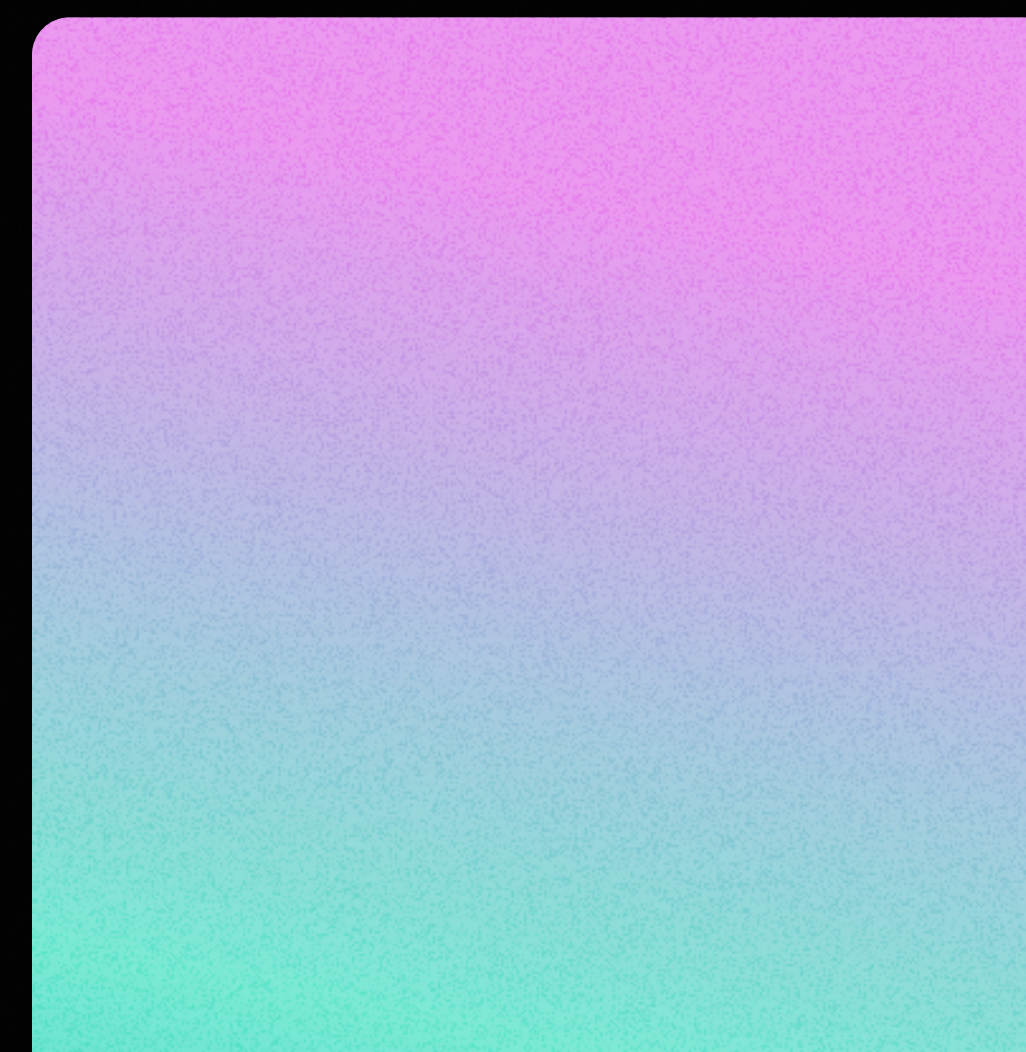
The multi-year campaign has driven over 600,000 impressions and 800,000 engagements, dramatically increasing awareness of U-M's available support services. By amplifying real student-athletes' stories about how they balance school, life and sports, U-M has been able to normalize conversations about mental health.





**umichathletics** Michigan Wolverine senior forward Will Tschetter shares some personal insights on how he proactively takes care of his mental health and well-being.

[#wellbeingcollective](#) [#wellbeing](#)  
[#mentalhealth](#)



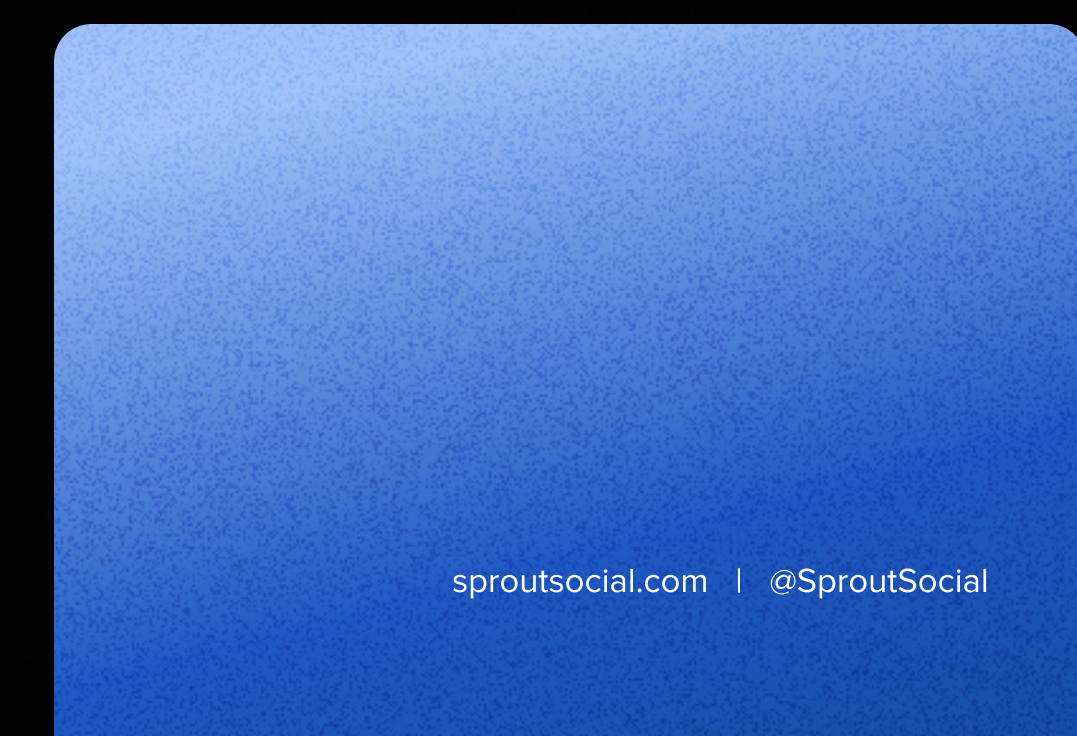


**umichathletics**



**Will Tschetter**

#42 | FORWARD





# Audience engagement

Posting alone won't earn you brand loyalty—only genuine engagement can. In a crowded social space, community interactions are what set brands apart and create lasting connections.

Comments, @-mentions and DMs aren't just conversation starters—they're your audience's go-to channels for connecting with you. And brands that ignore them risk losing loyalty. According to the Index, **73% of social users say if a brand doesn't respond on social, they'll turn to a competitor next time.**

Even the way you handle other students' or alumni inquiries can influence lurking prospects. Every public interaction is an opportunity to build trust, showcase responsiveness and turn casual followers into loyal community members. And every piece of content is a chance to show your students, staff and donors that you're listening.

In 2025, the institutions that resonate won't just post more—they'll connect more.





// INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHT

# King's College London

King's College London was founded in 1829, but their social audience engagement strategy is far from outdated. With more than 33,000 students and 250,000 alumni in its network, the institution leans heavily on social to stay accessible to its diverse, global community.

On Instagram, King's College London maintains a primary profile focused on all things student life—along with niche accounts dedicated toward arts and humanities faculty, their careers & employability office and their residence life team (just to name a few). On Facebook, the institution manages a 53,000-follower strong page dedicated to alumni, from [accomplishments](#) and events to user-generated content. They even offer a WhatsApp number for prospective students to share their admissions-specific questions.

The intention behind all of these specialty accounts is not simply to blast school announcements. Instead, each serves as a more curated space for students, alumni and faculty to cheer on some of their closest peers and get important questions answered in a more closed environment.



lifeatkings

Accommodation applications are now open for all offer holders starting at King's College London in 2025.

Swipe to see this year's residences. Select 'discover King's' from the links in our bio to explore all accommodation options.



adele.prt\_

Hi ! I am an international student and I will be at king's from January to April. During which period I have to get a reservation ?



kingsresilife

@adele.prt\_ Hi there! You'll be able to book your room from November for Term 2. Hope this helps!



lifeatkings  
Londres





# Brands who go *bold* on social earn the highest marks

Students have an unprecedented number of choices when it comes to selecting a school. Institutions that embrace originality and maintain a maniacal focus on audience engagement have the best chance of standing out.

In 2025 and beyond, success for education marketers won't be measured by how often you post, but by how well you connect. This means doubling down on memorable IP and devoting even more resources to community management and personalized interactions with students, alumni, faculty and beyond.

Now is the time for education institutions to keep evolving their presence on social—meeting audiences where they are, and delivering the content and experiences they truly want.





# About the data

The report analyzed nearly 3 billion messages from 1 million public social profiles that were active between Feb 1, 2024 and Jan 31, 2025. Data includes posts from Facebook, Google My Business, Instagram, LinkedIn company pages, Pinterest, TikTok, TripAdvisor and X.

Engagement activities include actions that generate a published message, such as reposting or commenting. Non-publishing activities such as likes and reactions are not included. The top 0.5% of data was winsorized to limit the impact of extreme outliers.

\*The Q1 2025 Pulse Survey conducted online by Glimpse, a global market research firm, on behalf of Sprout Social. Participants included 650 marketers across the US, UK and Australia whose responsibilities include managing their organizations' social media presence and influencer marketing efforts. The survey was conducted from January 9 to January 27, 2025.

For questions about the data, please contact [content@sproutsocial.com](mailto:content@sproutsocial.com).

## Sprout Social

Sprout Social is a global leader in social media management and analytics software. Sprout's intuitive platform puts powerful social data into the hands of more than 30,000 brands so they can deliver smarter, faster business impact.

With a full suite of social media management solutions, Sprout offers comprehensive publishing and engagement functionality, customer care, influencer marketing, advocacy and AI-powered business intelligence. Sprout's award-winning software operates across all major social media networks and digital platforms.

[Learn more at sproutsocial.com](https://sproutsocial.com)

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