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## Role of social media for creating brand of technical educational institutions

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### Abstract

Globalization has increased demands on higher education and university competition. As a result, universities have started to see their online presence as a potential competitive advantage. The purpose of this article is to compare and Analyse Facebook activity and posts from the top 10 universities worldwide. Professional social media analytics tool Social Bakers is used to track activity and collect data for analysis. To determine the top 10, Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) University Rankings are utilized. Four sections comprise the findings: fan count analysis, content, style, and post-promotion. per university that is being looked into publishes content at least once per day. A few posts might be used as examples of best practices based on study findings, inspiring other academic institutions to improve their brand image and social media communication. Social media provides a plethora of particular information on the Behaviour of students and other stakeholders as well as the efficacy of advertising tactics. To effectively utilize social media, it's critical to compile and evaluate the available data to obtain information that can be used to create an appropriate social media strategy.

**Keywords:** Face book, YouTube, instragram, google, social media; Facebook, social marketing, online marketing, degital marketing, educational institutions, universities.

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### Introduction

Higher education was impacted by a significant shift in society that occurred at the start of the twenty-first century. The pressures on higher education and university rivalry intensified as a result of the labour market's globalization and the ongoing digitization of most parts of our life. Higher education institutions began to view their online presence as a possible competitive advantage as a result. Colleges and universities are aware of the social media in particular as well as the broader marketing and branding possibilities of the internet. Nevertheless, studies show that these organisations frequently fail in their attempts because they don't have a strong social media plan that is tailored to their intended audience.

There were 3.9842 billion active social network users in 2022. There were 2.234 billion Facebook users worldwide in 2022. Social media use is common among the target audience of students and potential students; among those between the ages of 18 and 29, 90% frequently use social media. Young adults utilise Facebook and other social media platforms including Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram. The most popular social network in Japan is called Line, while the most popular social media platform in Russia is called VKontakte.

Weibo is the most widely used social network in China because Facebook and Twitter are prohibited by the government due to concerns about internet security. College students utilise social media on a regular basis, according to statistics. Students and alumni alike report utilising social media platforms like Facebook to maintain relationships with their fellow classmates. In particular, first-years and prospective students utilise social media to make connections with people and get helpful information as they acclimatise to their new environment.

Social media offers opportunities as well as challenges, so creating and carrying out strategies effectively calls for in-depth knowledge. Consequently, scholars have devoted countless hours to classifying, identifying, and understanding social media networks and their relationship to marketing.

The information provided lends credence to the notion that social media has grown in importance as a platform for colleges to cultivate brand loyalty and increase awareness of their image—that is, to foster a feeling of a sense of community surrounding a certain university. Despite this, research indicates that many educational institutions offer a confused brand image on social media and do not use it to their advantage, which ultimately has a detrimental rather than a positive impact.

Because the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings are among the best worldwide rankings gauging the stature and effectiveness of universities worldwide, this paper uses them to determine the top ten most influential universities in the world. It then examines these universities' social media activity while taking into account the following research questions: What kind of social media presence do these colleges have? How frequently do they post, and what kind of information do they create? Do they converse and engage with their users in a proactive manner? Lower-ranked universities struggle to compete as university rankings are generally constant and do not fluctuate significantly from year to year. These establishments might benefit from influencing their pupils and enhancing their reputation.

### Literature Review

Let's first define the important terminology that will be used in the discussion that follows for the purposes of this study. The study focuses on universities and their social media behaviour as higher education institutions (HEI). In the European setting, postsecondary or tertiary educational institutions are referred to as higher education institutions (HEIs). Both conventional, academically oriented universities and vocational, career-oriented institutions are included in the phrase. Considering that they are nonprofit institutions pursuing often-complex and sometimes-conflicting missions, public colleges have a special status. This is a result of their attempts to satisfy the needs of many stakeholders, which might lead to internal conflicts and undermine any one overarching goal. Given these facts, it is clear that public institutions, in contrast to corporations, are unable to evaluate their performance in relation to their objective. Global factors that impact higher education institutions' performance include global R&D funding availability and publishing companies' regulations. The idea that globalisation, especially the growing dissemination of information through online publication, is a phenomena that categorically democratises knowledge is called into question by the fact that these and other global impacts are not always favourable. Evidence demonstrates that the effects of globalisation may not always be positive, despite the fact that the internet and other global technologies are undoubtedly helpful for spreading information. The ability for scholars and students to work and study anywhere is one thing that globalisation has enabled, though. Universities now have to operate in dynamic and demanding contexts, so having a solid marketing plan is essential to attracting and keeping professors and students.

### Social Media Technologies

Compared to conventional websites, social networks provide several advantages. The ability to swiftly reach a huge audience is one of the key benefits. At first, monetary donations may increase this. Direct communication with social networking users and receiving their opinions are additional advantages. Companies and organisations may learn more about their candidates and customers while also improving the services they give. The amount of views, comments, and shares a post receives also indicates how interesting it is. In this regard, conventional websites work better to display the business and its offerings in greater detail. One of the drawbacks of social networks is the potential for negative feedback to appear, which can also spread quickly.

Utilising social media is linked to the newest technological developments. VR, for instance, makes it possible to have an immersive infotainment experience. More recently, it has begun to provide the ability to link to motion sensors and interact with items that are displayed on screen. High-end VR developers are attempting to fully take use of this novel approach to content presentation; Facebook and HTC have both started development projects for VR headsets in this regard, with the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive, respectively. A growing amount of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) depend on chatbots.

Chatbots, also known as chatterbots, are computer programmes that mimic human speech and act as virtual assistants. They may respond to the most frequently requested questions by students via text or voice interactions, and they can be integrated into a variety of messaging apps. Chatbots were once limited to modest jobs at universities, assisting students in particular areas. However, an increasing number of institutions are aiming to deploy chatbots more widely for a variety of objectives.

### Brand Management in Higher Education

The majority of research in the area of university social media branding, for example, centres on the viewpoint of students and examines how much a university's social media presence affects how appealing this institution is to students. Social media is viewed as a more practical means of communication between the university and its stakeholders, including current students, prospective students, parents, alumni, and community members. Universities are competing more and more to draw in and keep the finest students. According to Peruta (2017) <sup>[6]</sup>, brand management in higher education is comparable to that of non-profit brands; but, because of the increased level of market rivalry, it might not be appropriate for the particular requirements of the university sector.

Universities are no longer sufficient in igniting curiosity in knowledge, claims. It is necessary for them to acquire competitive business tactics in order to draw in funds and pupils. Social media is an essential tool for achieving these goals.

Social media is a brand-new platform for academic communication and cooperation, and it is steadily altering how scholars across the world publish their work, engage with other researchers, and communicate with the general public. The authors of stress the intense competition in the higher education sector and argue that good reputations and

positive media representation are essential assets for universities. The author provides actual data to support the claim that colleges may outperform their rivals when they have a good brand.

A robust brand is constructed based on the experiences that students have while pursuing their education. When students believe their institution satisfies their needs and interacts effectively with them, particularly through social media, their loyalty to the university rises. Brand marketing, which includes education market companies, is seeing a growing integration of social media strategy. According to the authors, companies initially only considered using social media as a last resort, and their initial social media content was neither essential nor powerful.

But as you can see, social media nowadays is so strong that it can quickly build or destroy a business's reputation, which in turn determines whether the brand succeeds or fails. Even while brand managers at businesses or educational institutions are aware of the potential that social media presents, they surprisingly lack a comprehensive understanding of how to create an efficient digital marketing plan that will help them establish a recognisable brand identity.

Campaigns on social media don't have to be costly. Their performance is dependent more on the caliber of the campaign than the amount of money spent on it. The ability of social media to provide interesting multimedia content—including text, photos, videos, and, when appropriate, gifs or memes—is what gives them their strength. The content shared on social media platforms needs to be captivating, educational, and entertaining in order to pique viewers' attention and foster brand loyalty.

In order to foster engagement with its target audience, Reuben (2008) explains how Ohio State University employs social networking sites including Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Delicious as part of its social media strategy. More than 60% of high school seniors in 2007 said they preferred student and faculty blogs to other information sources, and 80% of high school students said they would read or reply to a message from a college representative, according to the National Research Centre for College and University Admissions (USA) (2016). Furthermore, 57% of students who used the internet said they looked up information on colleges and universities. Social media networks' quick expansion and diversity indicate that aspiring college and university students will be receptive to and supportive.

It's also advised to employ a variety of cutting-edge marketing strategies, such as social utility groups, gaming settings, virtual worlds, interactive promotions, merchandising, and cross-promotions. In the digital sphere, Kurre et al. (2012) <sup>[13]</sup> explore how social media shapes how universities portray themselves to the public, "creating communities of learners where education and contemporary culture intersect." Kurre et al <sup>[13]</sup>. discuss the difficulty encountered by rival schools and universities, which, in the end, provide essentially the same service with very slight variations. Higher education institutions may set themselves apart from the competition on social media by creating and implementing a successful media strategy that engages their audience and fosters brand loyalty. Students in universities and colleges will be accepting of and supportive of their schools implementing these technologies.

## Methods

The study methodology, the sample under analysis, and the variables employed will all be covered in this section. There will be a description of the approach taken and the universities selected.

## Research Design

This article's goal is to examine and contrast Facebook posts and activity from the top 10 institutions in the world. The chosen universities' social media activity was tracked and data was gathered for analysis using Socialbakers, a professional social media analytics platform. The content of particular postings and user interaction with them are included in the analysed data.

## Sample

The QS University Rankings, which rank institutions in six categories—academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty-to-student ratio, foreign faculty, international students, and citations per faculty member—were used to select the top 10 universities in the world. The rankings show which colleges were thought to be the finest in 2020. The rankings provide an overview of the best universities in the world in 52 topics and 8 composite faculty areas. They incorporate both global overall and subject ratings. The most renowned and frequently cited rankings in this field are the QS World University Rankings, which are released once a year. In addition to university rankings that are pertinent to a particular region (such as Emerging Europe, Latin America, Central Asia, etc.), the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy (Academic Ranking of World Universities; ARWU), Times Higher Education (THE), and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) are three other reputable global rankings that have a long history. The majority of these rankings all have the flaw of being skewed towards research output, which they consider more important than university instruction.

One such institution that is notorious for focusing only on research metrics and completely disregarding "the quality of teaching or the quality of humanities" is the ARWU. This is the reason our article uses the QS rankings, which use the most intricate set of criteria to assess a certain university's performance. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is regarded as the best institution in the world according to the QS institution Rankings. Harvard University (HU) is the second.. University of Cambridge (CU) and Stanford University (SU) are tied for third place. California Institute of Technology (Caltech) is ranked sixth. University of Oxford, University College London (UCL), Imperial College London, ETH Zurich—Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, and University of Chicago, in that order, occupy places 6 through 10.

## Data Collection

The gathered data were first exported to an XLS file using the Socialbakers analytics tool, and then they were processed, examined, and arranged in tables to show the findings. When analysing the social media activity of the chosen universities, the following key factors were looked at: the total number of fans; the fans' countries of origin; any notable changes within the specified time frame; the sources of published posts; post content; audience engagement; and the percentage of promoted posts. Four categories were created from the results: fan count, substance, style, and post-promotion analysis. Prior to beginning research, the categories were

chosen based on data from the Socialbakers professional tool and a scan of the literature on the topic to identify the challenges that are pertinent to an organization's social media presence. Results and Findings. We looked at the social networks used by the top 10 colleges in the globe. The universities' official websites were the source of this information. Every university that was chosen has a YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook account.

Every university that was chosen has a presence on YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram. When it comes to Instagram, the university is often described in a single phrase in the account description, which is followed by a website link. Imperial College London is the single exception; instead of including a link to its website, it invites people to tag the university in images. Universities often post one or two times a day on Instagram. Most frequently, these articles show university buildings, highlight student accomplishments, or share biographies of well-known individuals. Twitter activity is similar to Instagram social network activity, but it is enhanced by article sharing, which typically includes an accomplishment of the university or an ongoing event. Additionally, while university activity on YouTube is smaller than on Instagram and Twitter, each of these universities adds a few videos each month; these videos are typically shorter—no more than five minutes—but most of the universities also upload longer videos that contain lectures and presentations. Finally, the Facebook fan bases of the selected universities were analysed, as well as the content of the successful posts. Every one of the chosen colleges has the highest following and is highly active on Facebook. Every day, they upload many posts. They have all also finished filling out a university description and their contact information. Facebook was chosen for a comprehensive investigation for this reason.

Facebook users who "like" a business or organization's Facebook page are called fans. When someone likes a page, it shows that they are interested in the material, special offers, and news that the page posts, as well as that they want to be updated about it. Each post contains a metric number of interactions per thousand followers that indicates the level of engagement. This figure is the total of all interactions (such as likes, shares, and comments) divided by the page's fan count on the day the post was published, then multiplied by 1000.

The best colleges in the world have a global reputation and all post on Facebook in English, making it simple for new followers to follow them. In terms of fans, HU has the most on Facebook, while Caltech has the fewest admirers on its page. Upon analysing the fan base's national distribution, we uncover a number of intriguing trends. Caltech, Harvard University, MIT, Stanford University, and the University of Chicago are the five American universities that make up the top 10. On the other hand, the majority of Facebook admirers of two technological colleges, Caltech and MIT, are from India, followed by the USA. Bangladesh is the third-ranked fan country of origin for Caltech, whereas Brazil is the third-ranked fan country of origin for MIT. The USA is where the majority of fans of both Stanford University and Harvard University are from. Additionally, they have sizable fan bases in Mexico, Brazil, and India. The United Kingdom is home to the University of Cambridge. Still, just 4.61% of the university's Facebook admirers are local. India is the most popular home nation among supporters of this university, followed by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, the United States,

and finally the United Kingdom.

### Content Analysis

A page administrator on Facebook has a wide variety of post kinds at their disposal when it comes to publishing material. Pages can post text status updates, images, videos, albums, and links, for instance. Based on post type, content published by the 10 colleges under investigation was examined. In just ten years, technology has played a major part in public relations, with internet information now playing a major role. A link is the most common kind of post content. This kind of information makes up around 60% of all the content produced by the 10 universities under analysis. Together, photos and videos make up around 20% of the posts for each of the colleges that were chosen. While all institutions post at around the same frequency, HU is the most active university in terms of postings across the analysed 365-day period with 581, while SU is the least active with 397. In the table, the fan growth column shows the number of new admirers that a page received between July 2020 and July 2021.

### Post Sypes and Promotion

Facebook has made it necessary for marketers to promote certain posts because of its ongoing decline in the organic reach of page postings. If not, this blog wouldn't be able to reach the same number of viewers as it did a few years ago. If someone wants to advertise on Facebook, they may target the page's ads based on a variety of factors, such as the age, interests, and location of the chosen individuals. Big Facebook pages—those with 500,000+ fans—promote about 25% of their posted content. A unique feature of Socialbakers is its ability to identify sponsored posts. It makes a distinction between three fundamental post types: organic, promoted (paid), and undiscovered. The percentage share of each of these three job kinds taken for the 10 colleges that were chosen, as well as a unique technology that can identify promoted.

Both this market and social media in general continue to be cutting-edge means of university marketing. The table also demonstrates the accuracy of Socialbakers' analytics, which is not 100%. That is, a sizable amount of postings endorsing the university's calibre. Rather, they want to shock, educate, and amuse their fans.

Social networks are intricate systems, and it may be difficult to comprehend all of the relationships and factors that affect them. However, the study presented in this paper indicates that all 10 of the top-ranked colleges engage in certain social media practices that stand out. Using the social media platforms YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Instagram often is one of these commonalities. Posts are frequently added many times a day. The institutions do post a few videos to YouTube each month, but that is the lone exception.

Universities often rely on organic reach and seldom employ sponsored material, according to data from the Socialbakers analysis programme. In a similar vein, research indicates that colleges are more likely to distribute content that includes a photo or video than just text. Posts often highlight the accomplishments of the institutions and frequently make reference to research, celebrities, and novel innovations.

### Summary

The social media accounts of every university under

investigation exhibit a highly uniform posting pattern, with an average of one to two postings each day. The fan bases of almost all of the top 10 institutions are increasing, and just around 3% of these universities' postings are sponsored or promoted. A common feature is the emphasis on visually captivating material. That is, text-only status updates are avoided and the majority of the posts are links, images, or videos.

Additionally, the researched institutions provide poignant content that encourage website visitors to share. These sentimental pieces frequently feature achievements of the institution, biographies of famous people, and novel concepts, discoveries, and research.

The overall number of Facebook fans for each of the 10 institutions that were chosen is correlated with the number of students enrolled; colleges with larger student populations often have higher numbers of Facebook fans. It's fascinating to note that a university's location in the United States or the United Kingdom does not always imply that the majority of its supporters are from those nations. The majority of the Facebook fans of two technological colleges, Caltech and MIT, are Indian.

Despite being based in the UK, the University of Cambridge has more Facebook fans from the USA, Bangladesh, Egypt, Pakistan, and India than from its own nation. Generally speaking, institutions don't post on Facebook using third-party programmes. Instead, they rely almost solely on the Facebook page. MIT has the highest overall engagement rate scores, while Stanford University has the lowest. The examined institutions, in contrast to the majority of consumer businesses, mostly post links on Facebook and do not utilise images or videos as frequently as leading brands, even though images generate the most interaction.

The colleges are not up to date on the newest trends, and it's likely that they don't fully examine Facebook involvement. Thus, rather of posting more interesting stuff, such images or movies, they would rather provide links that direct readers to their websites. Universities, presumably due to more stringent financial constraints, do not advertise as many postings as companies do. Higher education schools that rank lower in the QS University Rankings tend to be less active on social media, especially Facebook, than those in the top ten. Their publishing frequency is around one post per few days. As can be predicted, universities lower in the rankings have less social media followers and typically just provide links, videos, or images. Their postings, however, don't have the same emotional pull as those from the top 10 colleges. It can be advised for them to publish once or twice a day on social media and to include more emotional context in their content. Social media platforms are a very helpful tool for students to learn about a university's objectives, expectations for them, and even how to select programmers, locate qualified instructors, and be ready for classes. Students who use the university's social media platforms can talk to other students about their queries and worries, and occasionally they can even speak with instructors.

### Discussion

Social media experts say that posting news, announcing milestones and accomplishments, organising and promoting events, soliciting student feedback, and curating user-generated material are the newest trends in university social media content creation. It may be concluded that the examined activity of the surveyed universities mainly fits the

patterns of the present. Every everyday, MIT publishes one piece of news or other material on average. CU emphasised its lengthy history by enumerating all significant turning points involving academics or advisers from the university since its foundation in 1209.

The Australian University of Southern Queensland decided to depend on student testimonials and gathered over 500 reviews. Facebook has a dedicated review section where people may rank the page owner's service and the owner can reply to feedback. Managing a Facebook group is a typical aspect of educational institutions' social media communication. It allows for the exchange of useful information and student interaction. Every incoming class of students at the University of California, Davis is assigned to one of these groups. The team assists students in adjusting to their new surroundings and is led by the university's marketing department. Recent data indicates that people in the 16–24 age range spend, on average, almost 2.5 hours a day on social media. This is a significant amount of time, and it presents a great chance for universities to design their marketing campaigns and concentrate their recruitment efforts on social media. Despite the limitations of this study, which focuses in detail on a single social network over one year, its findings are consistent with the results of other similar studies.

The authors also highlight how different university types exhibit different social media participation and Behaviour. Liberal arts institutions post less frequently but garner more attention than public and private universities, which post more frequently but receive less involvement. Because varied institutions offering a range of courses were included in the selection of universities according to their kind, this assertion has not been verified nor refuted in our study. Nonetheless, it has been verified that, in terms of media kind, photographs were submitted the most frequently. Additionally, those with graphics got the greatest interaction. This data backs up the idea that material with graphics often gets more attention than content with text alone. Lastly, it should be mentioned that proportionate involvement was distributed. The optimal policy, in theory, should be to meticulously produce excellent postings that deliver pertinent information in an eye-catching way. On the other hand, it ought to be bad form to compromise quality for numbers. But there are other elements that are out of the institutions' control. These include the year the institution was founded and the year it began using social media, for instance. There is a favourable association between these two criteria and the level of participation. These results imply that social media efforts or rebranding Hilde et al. cannot always improve a university's reputation on the platform. But this is a claim that may be debated..

### Conclusions

Social media, in contrast to most brand communication platforms, may offer a wealth of specific feedback data on the actions of stakeholders, including students, and the success of marketing efforts. Gathering the available data and continuously analysing and evaluating it are essential to using social media successfully and realising its full marketing potential. This will provide you with the knowledge you need to develop a suitable social media strategy.. These days, colleges mostly utilise social media to disseminate the most recent news. Posts that highlight a specific university achievement in a particular field of study or a student success

story tend to do the best. Announcements of the passing of well-known scholars are another characteristic of posts that universities frequently publish. In these announcements, the universities honour the deceased researchers and try to touch readers' hearts. It is yet unclear if it will be easier or harder to concentrate on social media brand-building in the future. Universities may foster open communication and bolster user confidence in social media promotional efforts by promoting user-generated material and fostering word-of-mouth communication. It's difficult to start and keep an honest, open line of contact with both present and potential students on social media. However, because these platforms have such a strong ability to sway users' opinions, it makes sense to allocate funds for a successful social media communication plan.

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