

FINAL PROJECT: SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN FOR SNOW COLLEGE

A Capstone Project submitted to Southern Utah University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree  
Master of Arts in Professional Communication

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We certify that we have read this project and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Professional Communication

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## Introduction

To finish my master's coursework, I decided to do a project for my capstone because of the hands-on nature that is associated with a project-based capstone. It has been a goal of mine throughout the master's program to incorporate as many hands-on-experiences as possible into the academic curriculum. I recently completed an internship where I was able to incorporate knowledge I gained in the program into a practical setting. I am grateful for the things I have learned over the past few years and hope this information will assist me in achieving great things as I move forward in my life.

In this project I worked with Snow College to create a social media marketing plan. Currently, Snow College has a formal marketing plan in place, but has yet to develop a formal social media aspect to its marketing strategy. Although Snow College has used social media tools in efforts to communicate with prospective students, they have only been used loosely with no real consistent or strategic approach. The development of a social media plan will improve communication and marketing techniques to Snow College's target audience.

I would like to clarify and improve upon the how and why social media is being used specifically for the recruitment efforts at Snow College. Over the past few years the popularity and growth of social media has fascinated me. Initially, I was intrigued by how so many people flocked to social media sites for various reasons. However, the area of the social media boom that has drawn most of my attention is the immersion and growth of social media within businesses and higher education for marketing purposes. I have long been skeptical of the true value that comes from an organization putting time and resources into sites like Facebook to market themselves. As I've tried to catch the

vision of what everyone around seemed to see and understand about using social media to better market organizations, I decided I wanted to find out for sure. It started with a conversation and question to every person I felt may be able to enlighten me on the matter.

Many people have told me how social media is necessary for all new marketing practices, but all failed to provide any support with their explanation. Web searches followed with similar results. It seems people all around me, and the search engines I explored all gave me what I had been hearing all along, “social media is a must for your marketing or you’ll be left behind.” And yet I could not find any concrete reason why it was so necessary or if it was working to improve marketing. Eventually the frustrations of not understanding why everyone was jumping into social media marketing led me to this project idea.

Through the course of the project, I gathered data from high school seniors who were registering for their freshman year at Snow College, along with many of their parents. The created survey was used to help understand both student and parents prospective on social media. This data was then implemented, along with research to create the social media marketing plan. As much as I would love to study an in depth analysis of social media marketing across many different types of organizations, I decided to focus on higher education, specifically with Snow College and its marketing. After gathering the data I was also asked to present at a conference of admissions and recruiting personnel from all the different higher education institutions in the state of Utah. The experience was enlightening. I will report more on the conference in the conclusion. The process has been exciting, exhausting, mind-opening, frustrating and

rewarding, but I feel that I have successfully accomplished the objectives and goals I set out to complete.

Social media in the general field of education has been approached with some caution. The use of technology in education is ever growing popular among teaching professionals through platforms such as e-learning, but many in the education field have not yet harnessed many potential opportunities of using social media. This reluctance on behalf of educators is partially due to the challenges of merging an open-ended social media world into a rigid structure of the learning environment (Lewis, Pea & Rosen, 2010).

When referring to higher education Rae Goldsmith, vice president of advancement resources at CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education), explained, “Social media is something that professionals in all disciplines—fundraising, alumni relations, communications, marketing, advancement services—are struggling with. It’s a universal advancement issue” (Slover-Linett & Stoner, 2010, p. 3).

In 2010 Stoner and Slover - Linett Strategies approached CASE with a plan to better understand how advancement offices in higher education were using social media. The lack of data available on understanding how social media was being used to achieve goals provided sufficient rationale gather data. The survey’s primary objective is to obtain a better understanding of the needs and resources that would be most effective to higher education offices (Slover-Linett & Stoner, 2010).

Distinctly different from other traditional marketing channels, such as mail or email, is social media’s interactive nature; that is the ability for users to provide responses or content to the communication that comes from an original source (Ha &

James, 1998). The high school senior has become accustomed to the conveniences of having instant access to information and communication by means of the Internet and cell phones. Social media provides a communication platform to connect with this audience quickly and easily, whereas email, standard mail and others means of communication simply don't accommodate for immediate enough access. For example Lewis, Pea & Rosen said the following (2010):

For example, one student described how for her generation "email is too slow". Obviously she is not talking about the technology, but her own attention economy, within which there is no surplus to be spent on checking communications that are disconnected from her favorite social networking site, where 'important things may be happening'. (p. 355-356)

The discernment between consumer and producer is quickly growing more blurred with social media. The obscuring of the two once definitive terms has resulted in a new concept call 'prosumer.' Prosumer describes the users' or consumers' ability of gaining control over the content being distributed by the producer. (Toffler, 1980). Bain and Company (2011) found that more than sixty percent of internet-connected individuals in the United States are engaged in social media platforms every day. The ability for consumers to have speedy access to information has made consumers more demanding. Expectations have evolved to include real-time customer service as well as rapid responses to customer questions through online feeds. The shift to customer empowerment brings with it enormous opportunity and risk. Leaders in social media understand the need for change in order to "pursue integrated social media strategies, with a more holistic assessment of the value that social media can create across the

businesses, and with efforts directly tied to strategic business objectives” (Barry, Markey, Almquist, & Brahm, 2011, p. 3). Survey’s done by Bain and Company show that customers engaged with a company through social media will spend forty percent more annually with that company than other customers that are not engaged through social media (Barry, Markey, Almquist, & Brahm, 2011). The control consumers have taken and received from social media has evolved expectations among consumers that cannot be fulfilled through traditional media types. This change in market expectation has prompted change in organizations to determine the types of new media platforms that provide their target audiences the most media gratification (Lin, 2001).

Social media users tend to use more than one source or type of social media as a way of communication (Quan- Haase et al., 2002). While one type of social media may be preferred, this does not suggest that other forms of social media will be replaced. The social media use takes the numerous types of social media tools they use and combines them into ‘bundles’ of media uses (Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004; Quan- Haase, 2007; Squires, 2003).

Current data surrounding social media as a marketing tool among higher education institutions is conflicted. Much of the data supports implementation (often as a primary form of communication with prospective students) of social media in marketing plans. While other data suggests that college and university social media plans are not effectively reaching the students they are hoping to reach with social media. The results from the survey, along with the literature review will influence the strategies in developing a social media marketing plan for Snow College.

## **Literature Review**

### **A Time for Change**

Change will, and must happen. It is in the best interest of organizations to pursue continuous change and proactively design strategies for change. Organizational change takes both planning and management (Shockley-Zalabak, 2006). Those willing to accept and plan changes will bury organizations that ignore this important business dynamic. Changes occur everywhere around us. Most organizations have created a system or group to plan for continuous improvement and change. Upon accepting the need to anticipate continuous change, every organization must then determine its own method of dealing with the modifications. Shockley-Zalabak (2006) stated, “how change is handled, the amount of change, who decides what to change, and a host of other issues are part of the pervasive pace of change that almost all of us experience” (pg. 385).

Change is undesired by most, in an organization and can cause confusion and delay. Richmond, McCroskey & McCroskey (2005) describe the anxiety felt by change as follows:

Why is it that when someone in an organization says the “c” word, people immediately start hyperventilating? The word change always seems to invoke feelings of anxiety, hostility, and frustration. Probably the primary reason people have such feelings when the word change is mentioned is that they have been through many changes that were total disasters (p. 154).

Change is difficult to face and challenging to overcome, however, organizations cannot overlook the need to plan for strategic changes to maintain a competitive edge over competition.

In the increasing globalization of our world, organizational environments are constantly under rapid change and unpredictability. Globalization has increased competition, technological development and customer demand. Organizations must maintain a sense of flexibility, ensuring quick adaptation to the challenges they are facing. The most common changes that modern organizations undergo are relatively similar. They are changes in programs focused on customer service, organizational quality, and teamwork. Organizations in all sectors today tend to mimic one another's actions of change to remain competitive, making it critical for organizational innovation, new ideas, and practices vital to success (Zorn, Page & Cheney, 2000). Snow College is no exception in the need to change and continually adapt to new marketing practices.

It is necessary to continually monitor the market of any particular organization and its needs. A constant observation of the market will ensure the elimination of excess waste, while increasing productivity. Studies have noted the importance of having "talented employees, innovation, leadership, and mergers and partnership," (Nohria, Joyce, & Robertson, 2003, p. 213) in order to make certain efficient change and adaptation to the ever-changing market. Nohria, Joyce, & Robertson (2003) also discuss the need to look outside in, as a resource to decision making. Listen to employees, customers, partners, and investors. Democratic structure within an organization will assist in change efforts (Zorn, Page & Cheney, 2000). Customer service is perhaps the most efficient form of democracy. What could be more democratic or more direct than giving people what they want? Give the frontline employees more freedom to decisively react to the changing market conditions as they see necessary. Operations of an organization are not only overseen by managers alone, but have a collaboration of

managerial and lower level employee input (Shockley-Zalabak, 2006). Snow College is fortunate to have leadership willing to see the importance of having the input of the employees. With the growing popularity of social media, Snow College management saw the potential value in the new form of communication. The managers began attempting to implement social media tools as a way to improve marketing, yet were open to the idea of learning more through this proposed project.

### Social Media

The term social media encompasses a large range of communication, social networking, sharing and community tools that are consistently being updated and changed. The wide variety of social media platforms have become more popular among a broad spectrum of organizations. The notion of social media may bring to mind many of the larger, perhaps well-known platform such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, as well as the general term Blog. These are, however, just the beginnings of a massive list of social media options available today for organizations. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (p. 60). Given this definition, some of the possible social media tools currently available for use and definitions can be found in appendix B. This is just the beginning of a social media list that changes day to day. New sites and tools are added almost daily, while others become obsolete just as quickly.

The influx and demise of social media platforms puts organizations attempting to stay atop the latest social marketing trends flustered to keep up. It is critical for organizations to change with the growing use of social media or it jeopardizes the

company's success by remaining stagnant. By continuing to rely on the "traditional website" alone, a business is harming its future success. A successful organization embraces the "openness" and "sharing" aspect of social media (Bradley, 2010). Bradley (2010) said that, "Reputation is no longer based on what we know, but on the extent to which we can freely make it available" (p. 251).

Whether organizations like it or not a reality facing them is a lack of control over content being distributed. Social media channels have provided an easy way for consumers to create and distribute information when and how they want. Neff (2011) said, "It's been a bedrock principle of social media marketing that marketers can't control the message" (p. 9). The "fickle nature" of social media may be its greatest pitfall. Between the rise and fall of sites like MySpace, the future is anything but certain. However, what may be certain is the interest of marketers to find an "adoring and responsive crowd." Right now social media is the place to find that crowd (Lee, 2011).

In 2006 the Interpublick Group of Companies set up a lab that found that people are using media more and more to avoid distraction. It showed that about one fourth of the adult population avoided live TV regularly. Those studied used other internet options in place of live TV because online sources provided more control of their viewing experience such as skipping unwanted advertising and customizing the viewing to be exactly the way they wanted. A large number of the national population has changes their views regarding media. Media is now less of a "guiding authority" than it once was (Lee, 2011).

Lee (2011) wrote:

Brian Monahan, exec VP at the IPG Media Lab and a former media buyer with

Universal McCann, said of the results, "My sense of it is, consumers are wading through all of this stuff, and they're embracing the technology to feed their brains as efficiently as possible," he said. "They want to watch what they want, how they want, and when they want it. And guess what: Advertising is low on that list." He went on to offer a gut summation: "I feel like people are looking for more authenticity with their media; they're consuming it ... with more intent; they want it to better represent who they are." (p. 9)

Establishing a person or organization as an expert is more critical than ever before in history. Information is abundant and free everywhere we look. The plethora of web-based information begs a question of authority. Who is distributing quality and who is just blowing smoke? Social media plays a critical role in the building of an organization's social authority (Brauer & Bourhis, 2006). Within the social media conversation an individual or business does not have the luxury of taking complete control of the information as he or she once did. The conversation is opened and shared, and the business or individual is simply a participant. It is through the social conversation that an organization hopes to establish itself as a significant authority in their area of expertise (Rutledge, 2010).

SelectShops.com uses social media not only to resolve issues that customers have with their products, but also as a means of establishing themselves as a social authority. Customers can use conversations on Facebook to see how the company handled problems as well as how the customers experience the problem reacted to the help received from SelectShops.com. This interactive exchange has established a stronger social authority for SelectShops.com through their use of social media (Kennedy, 2011).

Trust is essential. The current culture of the audience wants to have control over the information they see. People want to actively participate in the conversation. It cannot be assumed that organizations know what the consumers want. Social media is the perfect platform to gather information about exactly what is expected from the consumer. Skoler (2009) said, “we need to listen, ask questions, and be genuinely open to what our readers, listeners and watchers tell us is important everyday” (p. 39). Social media helps to create a partnership between the customer and the organization rather than strictly preaching. Social media is a guide to understanding what is most valued by today’s consumers. One of the most incredible results of social media is to add clarity to understanding exactly what the customer wants. Knowledge about customers that has only been based upon loose assumptions for years can now more concretely be understood (Skoler, 2009).

At Snow College we are always trying to find and use the best and most effective techniques for our marketing efforts. The growing popularity of social media, especially among high school students, and growing collection of research done in the field of organizational use of social media provided significant rationale for this project. Better understanding who we marketing to is critical in the objectives of the College’s marketing goals.

Websites are but a small piece in a new world of marketing and organizational communication. Social media platforms are the other pieces necessary to complete the puzzle. The way in which information is shared with consumers has changed and it is through an open, sharing channel that the customer looks to gather the necessary data in establishing the social authority of a company. Social media tools should act as devices that lead people back to a website. The more routes to which consumers can get back to a

website, the better off an organization like Snow College is. More traffic and exposure leads to more prospective students and growth for the college. Phil Bradley (2010), wrote “in the old days websites and web pages were the electronic version of stone tablets; unwieldy and difficult to change” (p. 252). Social media tools have transformed our ability to make rapid changes to web presence, allowing quick changes and immediate customer participation as the organizational world fights to become influencers and experts in their respective fields.

Ultimately organizations use marketing to drive some sort of action by the consumer; but is it follower numbers alone that representative the influence of social media tools like twitter? Justin Bieber, a well know teen pop star, has over six million followers on Twitter. Is that number reflective of influence or popularity? Ironically, it was through social media that Justin Bieber became the pop icon he is today; influence or simply popularity? Creamer (2011) said, “a marketer has to wonder what all that information means, if it adds up to anything more than a popularity contest and what, exactly, does a tweet influence a person to think, believe or do?” (p. 2). Creamer, (2011) also contends that social media like Twitter may be compared to the way the Princeton Review feels about the SAT when they said “It doesn't measure intelligence. It can't possibly measure your future success in college. The SAT measures one thing, and one thing only: how good you are at taking the SAT" (p. 4). Similarly Twitter does not measure actions that take place beyond Twitter, and therefore cannot be used as a standard of influence (Creamer, 2011).

Despite contentions about the influence of social media, data shows a growing user base in the social media arena. The 2011 Super Bowl, a marketing oasis, showed

dramatic increases of both references to social media in TV commercial and use of social media throughout the weekend events. Social media components are gaining momentum in the Super Bowl “multi-week buzz.” Marketers are no longer relying solely on time showing of advertisements the day of the game. Combining the “digital and social initiatives” the already planned TV advertising will boost the value of the high priced advertising. The data on Super Bowl social media demonstrates the growing trend and need for marketers to take another look at use of social media. Sterinberg (2011) said,

The social-media maneuvers simply signal advertisers are following consumer behavior. A recent survey from Lightspeed Research estimated that nearly two-thirds of viewers aged 18 to 34 who plan to watch the Super Bowl also plan to make use of a smartphone. Of those with a smartphone, 59% will be sending emails or text messages about the game, 18% will be checking out ads online from their phones, and 18% will visit advertiser websites. Almost a third, or 32%, will be posting comments about the game on a social network, according to the survey.

Marketers, who for years past have only used social media as a small supplement, have placed stronger emphasis on social media tools as they see the use of social media increase (Steinberg, 2011). Snow College is a perfect example of an organization that has simply used social media as a supplement. The college has put little to no active effort towards making social media a primary tool for marketing to students. The project is the ideal start to developing an effective and formalized plan for implementing social media into marketing practices.

## Social Media and Teens

When examining social media and adolescents, studies have shown that adolescents display a variety of set patterns in their interactions among peer groups. Adolescents are capable of differentiating between a very close friend, someone who would be just considered a friend or an acquaintance. This is important in determining who to share intimate information about and who is simply apart of a generic social circle (Cotterell, 2007). The difference between the strong and weak ties of an adolescents' social circle is important to understand. Those friends classified as "strong ties" will likely meet more frequently and have many similarities, where as a casual acquaintance would be at best infrequently seen, have many differences and be a part of other social circles (Van Cleemput, 2010). There is, however, important significance to those weak ties also among adolescents. It is through the weak ties that adolescents gather information and resources beyond what can be found in their direct social circle alone (Grannovetter, 1983). The use of social networks like Facebook provides a perfect platform to maintain weak ties with those "weak tie" individuals. The weak relationships related to social networks are potentially a great place to increase Snow College's marketing and communication with high school students. Gaining a better understanding of how the prospective students are using social media/networks will improve our ability to more effectively communicate and recruit students to Snow College.

Researchers in communication have shown the link between certain types of technology and the strength of relationship. Cell phone, mobile email and landline phone are linked to strong relationships (Boase et al., 2006; Ishii, 2006; Kim, Kim, Park, & Rice, 2007). Email is a preferred channel for weaker relationships (Boase et al., 2006;

Kim et al., 2007). Instant messaging has been shown to be more of in between communication medium because it is used for both strong and weak relationships (Kim, Kim, Park, & Rice, 2007). Social networking is associated with weak or “latent” relationships. People within these social networks share a connection of some type, but do not necessary have any kind of strong relationship (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Teens, specifically at the high school age, are involved in a lot of what Kim, et al. (2007) called “overlapping relations.” This term is used to describe how this age group uses a wide range of communication channels to talk with their friends. This is in direct contrast to their adult counterparts who use a specific set of communication channels when they talk. Specific studies on teens and social media have shown that teens use “multichannels,” or in other words all available communication media, and show preference for cell phones, instant messaging, and social networks instead of face-to-face and landline phone communication (Lenhart et al., 2007).

A study by Van Cleemput (2010) showed that email is not a desirable means of communication for the teenage audience unless for more official business, such as a school newsletter.

Although e-mail did fit in this Guttman scale, in the multidimensional scaling it seemed to stand out a bit (especially for the nonschool solution). A possible interpretation is that teenagers do not truly regard e-mail as a medium for social interactions. In in-depth interviews with some students from this network, they indicated that they did not like e-mail. They considered it a medium to communicate with teachers, youth movement leaders, and sport coaches. They

only used it among friends when necessary (for sending documents, group work) or for sending chain e-mails. (p.79).

Email is currently one of Snow College's principal communication methods with prospective students. However, if social media provides a more effective form of distributing information, it is in the best interest of the college to modify current communication practices and begin implementing what is most effective to the target audiences.

Social media has a specifically different impact on the high school age kids versus adults or younger age children. The networks that are formed through these virtual social sites create an environment of continuous feedback and self-reflection. Lewis, Pea & Rosen (2010) said, "Continuous feedback is the keystone. Cycles of reflection and production are rapid and intertwined, as youth engage in a form of identity management work through collecting feedback on their selves and their communities" (p. 355).

Through continual feedback within their communities a teenager begins to generate an image of himself and online reputation that is sustained by comments and feedback through online social networks (Boyd, 2007; Coiro et al., 2008; Stern, 2007). Teens report that feedback they receive from social networks is crucial in forming their own understanding of themselves within a social context and their place within their social circles (Lewis, Pea & Rosen, 2010). This value placed on the online social environment has tremendous impact on their "obsession" to monitor these communities. Lewis, Pea & Rosen (2010) said, "In addition to exploring a sense of self in their online images, youth describe an expanded sense of community and a more persistent awareness

of their relationships. They attend to this sense of belonging by monitoring friends' activities frequently, even obsessively" (p. 355).

Each small bit of information that teens gather from social media combines to have a significant influence on their decision-making and future plans. Without any real plan for social media use, Snow College is not efficiently gaining any kind of marketing advantage from social media. Every small piece of influence that Snow College can disperse among high school students helps to impact recruitment efforts. Lewis, Pea & Rosen (2010) wrote the following:

The fragmented forms of micro-communication serve a sampling function of the social ecosystem – allowing people to collect lots of small bits of information about people or communities to give them insights into patterns and truths that inform future choices and interactions. The time cycle is necessarily rapid. For example, one student described how for her generation 'email is too slow'. Obviously she is not talking about the technology, but her own attentional economy, within which there is no surplus to be spent on checking communications that are disconnected from her favorite social networking site, where 'important things may be happening' (p. 356).

The online social communities that teens gather and participate in provide them an easily accessible, one-stop location to acquire information, communicate, and share without having to move from one communication platform to another.

Educational research suggests that social and collaborative situations improve the dynamics of learning (Barron, 2003). In the broad social environment, situations are

questioned, problems are conceptualized, solutions are created, reinterpretation of the old happens. A social network environment is a prime location to gain support, grow and learn while in a continually interactive state (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006). The interactive nature of social networks is something that Snow College is only sporadically pursuing. The lack of a structured plan and understanding of how to utilize social media with prospective students has left the institution unable to gain any real value from social media use. This project is specifically designed to gather info from the potential students to create and then implement an effective plan to use social media in the marketing and recruitment process.

### Social Media in Higher Education

The number of students enrolling in college is increasing. By the 2016-2017 school years, it's anticipated that there will be a 26 percent increase in bachelor's degrees conferred within the United States (Hussar & Bailey, 2007). The increase offers new opportunity for higher education institutions around the county. The nature of these students over the next few years has also changed significantly from previous generations. This group of students is known as the millennial generation. They are students that have been described as "smart, practical and techno-savvy". Students from the millennial generation have colleges and universities feeling pressure to change and adapt their marketing strategies to better appeal to this group. Many colleges and universities have started to integrate technology into the admission process (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). A study done in 2008 by Noel-Levitz reported that over 50 percent of colleges and universities that responded were using technology with the recruiting process (Bishop, 2008). Though evidence supports the notion that higher education

offices are changing to incorporate more and more technology, there has been very little evidence to support the effectiveness of the various types of technologies on student recruiting (Strauss & Howe, 2007).

Colleges and Universities have increased their use of social media with potential students. In 2007 the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research completed one of the first statistically-significant studies on the usage of social media by higher education admission offices. The study examined the primary question: “How does a college or university recruit in this new, highly networked, constantly ‘on’ world?” The results showed that in 2007, 32% of the colleges and universities sampled were using some sort of social media tool/s. The same study was done in 2008 and 2009, each year increasing. In 2008 the data showed that 41% of colleges and universities were using social media in their admission process, and that statistic increased to 51% in 2009. All three studies show an increased use of social media among higher education institutions. Specifically the study documented the increases in higher education offices familiarity to social media tools, as well as the increased use of different types of social media tools (Barnes, & Mattson, 2009). It seems for years social media has been the elephant in the room for Snow College. Faculty and Staff have watched social media use increase among the current students on campus and within other colleges and universities. The inconsistency in use and lack of comprehension has stunted growth and implementation. There is strong sense around campus that if Snow College adopted a strategic plan and provided rationale for the plan, that the college would finally be able to embrace social media and begin utilizing it effectively.

In 2010 Stoner and Slover Linett Strategies approached CASE (Council for Advancement and Support in Education) with a plan to better understand how advancement offices in higher education were using social media. The concern came from the lack of data available on understanding how social media was being used to achieve communication goals of higher education. The group developed a survey with the primary intention of obtaining a better understanding of the needs and resources that would be most effective to high education offices (Slover-Linett & Stoner, 2010).

Slover-Linett Strategies Inc. and Stoner partnered with CASE again in 2011 and released another survey to higher education offices around the globe. They reported their findings in an article titled: Best Practices in Social Media: Summary of Findings from the Second Comprehensive Study of Social Media Use by Schools, Colleges and Universities. The survey was distributed to a random sample of approximately 18,000 CASE members, admissions and enrollment departments in both the US and abroad. The data from the study provides supporting evidence that the use of social media within higher education offices continues to grow. The results show that 56% of schools use social media to communicate with prospective students. Sixty two percent believe that social media was somewhat successful in achieving their goals, 22% said social media was very successful in achieving goals, and 3% said that their use of social media was a model for successful use of social media in achieving goals. The principle reason for the study was to, as the title suggests, establish a best practices for use of social media in higher education (Slover-Linett, 2011).

Other studies on social media in higher education have also shown the financial benefit to the new marketing technique. A study done during 2011-2012 academic year

by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research found that the school reported spending 33% less on print marketing, 24% less on newspaper ads, and 17% less on radio and TV ads. All decreases attributed to an increased use of social media marketing. From the same study 33% of surveys school believed social media to be more effective at reaching their target audience. While many of the schools did not have formal social media marketing plans in place, many of them planned to adopt specific social media policy for the future. More highlights of the 2011-2012 University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research study can be found in Appendix H.

Varsity Outreach is a company that creates customized Facebook communities for undergraduate and graduate institutions. Their research has shown Facebook to be the number one social media site used by undergraduate as well as graduate institutions. The data was gathered through surveying college and universities around the nation Varsity Outreach (2011). Without a clear understanding of how to use sites like Facebook higher education institutions are seeking assistance from companies like Varsity Outreach to develop and implement a social media marketing plan. This is precisely the goal behind the project.

Noel-Levitz research administered a survey to 1,000 college bound high school students in 2010. The survey asked the student what social media source they used; Facebook was the easy winner, winning 76% of votes. Following this data and other studies showing growing popularity in higher education as well as the overwhelming popularity of social media, especially Facebook, among high schools students, it seems clear that social media is an excellent option for higher education recruiting and

admissions. However, missing from the equation of research and information is the perspective of the students being targeted. It's fine to see that there is a growing trend of social media within higher education, but has that growing trend effectively accomplished what it has set out to accomplish? The survey for this project is directed at prospective students for this specific reason; to find out how they are utilizing social media as they seeking information about their higher education decisions. By doing so a social media plan can be tailored directly at their needs and not based on assumption.

One thing unique about all of the evidence supporting social media in marketing for higher education is that not one study asked high schoolers if they used sites like Facebook to gather, interact or seek information about college. In March of 2010 *The Hobsons report* was conducted in partnership with Eduventures. The survey was given to 65,130 prospective undergraduates and recently reenrolled college students around the United States. A total of 1,082 students completed the survey. Students were asked, "Which sources/tools did you find most effective when developing an interest in college? (select up to three)." Facebook received only 1% of the votes; video clips or YouTube received 2%, and other online communities or social networks were at only 4%. Students were also asked, "Which sources/tools did you find most effect when deciding where to apply? (select up to three)." Again scoring at the bottom of the votes Facebook received 2%, video clips and YouTube 3%, and other online communities or social networks 4%. The survey also shows these social media tools are among the least popular as far as credible sources and communication preferences.

*Stamats TeensTalk* report gathered in 2010 surveyed 500 college bound high school students nationwide. The survey measured both the acceptable and preferred types

of communication both before and after a student applies for a college or university. The data correlated very closely with the Hobson report. Social media was among the least popular forms of acceptable and preferred methods of communication between high school students and colleges. In many categories Facebook received 0% of the student votes. The project's primary objective is to gather information directly from prospective students and their parents to determine how they are using social media and sites like Facebook in their efforts to seek and receive information about higher education.

### Summary

Social media has grown to a point that it cannot simply be ignored. People from all types of different demographics are using social media each day. And so it makes sense to use the social media platform for marketing purposes. Businesses from small to large as well as higher education institutions have begun implementing social media into their marketing. Studies show that higher education institutions are using social media more and more each year; convinced that the social media marketing techniques are both less expensive and a more effective way of marketing to prospective students. However, those prospective students don't feel the same; this is where the challenging disconnection takes place. Various national surveys show that high school students not only don't use social media as a means of gathering information about college, but that they also prefer to receive information from colleges and universities through channels other than social media (primarily email, mail, etc according to surveys). Is social media really an effective tool for colleges and universities to implement into their marketing strategies? Contradicting information may suggest otherwise.

## Rationale

In an effort to best improve Snow College's social media marketing efforts compounded with the conflicting data on the use of social media in higher education led to a survey of high school students and parents. The survey was specifically generated to better understand how incoming Snow College students had used social media tools to obtain information about colleges, as well as, how they preferred to receive communication from colleges. The results from the survey, along with the literature review influenced the strategies in developing a social media marketing plan for Snow College. The literature review led to the following project objectives:

### Research Objectives:

**Primary objective of the project:** Create a Social Media Marketing Plan for Snow College based on data gathered from high school seniors that have been accepted to Snow College and are meeting with an Academic Advisor to register for freshmen level Snow College classes. Data will also be gathered from these students' parents. Data gathered will shape the development of a social media plan for the future.

**Secondary objective of the project:** Provide data to Utah higher education institutions about how to more effectively using social media communication with high school seniors.

1. Gain a better understanding about how high school age students view social media communication from colleges and universities.
2. Provide other colleges and universities with helpful communication tools and information about the way high school students use social media

## Method

As a part of my capstone work, I incorporated a research piece to the project. The goal of the research was to determine the type/s of social media communication platforms that high school seniors and their parents, prefer to use to collect information about colleges and receive information from colleges. The survey was given to seniors that had been admitted to Snow College and were preparing to register for their freshmen level classes. During the same time the survey was given to parents of the students. The results taken from the survey were analyzed and were implemented into the social media marketing plan developed for Snow College.

The sample group of students and parents came from three geographic areas around the state of Utah; Weber, Salt Lake, and Utah Counties. On Tuesday April 24 Snow College held a Registration Open House in Ogden, Utah. This event was designed to have all admitted students to Snow College in the Ogden, Weber County go to a central location and speak with an Academic Advisor and get registered for classes. Prior to speaking with an Academic Advisor each student 18 years and older was asked to complete a survey about social media and how they like to seek and receive information about colleges. Parents also in attendance were also asked to complete the same survey. The following two nights, Wednesday April 25 and Thursday April 26, the same event was also held in Sandy and Orem, Utah sequentially. Each event once again designed for admitted Snow College students in the Salt Lake and Utah County areas. From the three events a total of 119 students and 83 parents completed the survey. All students were high school seniors 18 years or older approximately one month from completing their

high school career. All parents were attending with students that were at the event to get registered at Snow College.

As students and parents entered the events they were asked to participate in the survey on a volunteer basis only (no compensation was offered or given), as means to improve communication between Snow College and future prospective students. Students and parents who were willing to do take the survey were taken to a student survey table or a parent survey table and given an informed consent form to read. The ten question survey was then administered on iPads (attached in Appendix A). Both students and parents had the same questions. On average students and parents finished the survey in around ten minutes or less. Upon completion of the survey students and parents were escorted to another area of the room to meet with an Academic Advisor.

### Results and Analysis

A total of 119 students completed the survey. All of the students were in their last month of high school or had finished in previous years. Eighty-three parents finished the survey. Similar to other studies from the literature review that asked students directly if and how they used social media tools for communicating or seeking information about colleges, students did not acknowledge social media as a tool they used. Questions on seeking information about colleges referred to the three largest social media sites as cited from various sources in the literature review: Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Each of the three social media tools ranked lower than college websites, and not just a little bit lower. Both from the student and parents perspective these social media platforms appear to have little to no value when seeking information about colleges. Other online tools

ranked above Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. However in a follow up question the survey asked students and parents to site other online tools used in seeking information about colleges. With the exception of a few scholarship sites, such as fastweb, students and parents mentioned sites like google.com, school websites and advice from friends and family among many other responses that wouldn't qualify as online tools for seeking information about college.

Social media also ranked lowest with regards to how students preferred to receiving information about colleges. Again the results were surprisingly similar between the students and parents preferences. Both ranked email as the most preferred method of receiving information about colleges. Standard mail followed in second, followed by in person contact (college representative or high school counselor), phone call or text, and last social media; very last. The results gradually went down then took a dramatic plunge from the fourth most preferred phone calls and text to social media.

What about parental influence on all of this? Only two of the 119 students said their parents were the primary decision makers on choosing a college. No surprise there perhaps. There were only nine parents that said they, as parents, were the primary decision makers on choosing a college. The rest supported their students saying it was the students' decision.

The open-ended responses came from two questions asked to both students and parents. "List other online tools you use to seek information about colleges," and "what is the single most important message from a college that would help you decide to attend?" The online tools focus also solely on institution websites and search engines, primarily

Google. While there were a few mentions scholarship website and blogs like Fastweb, the majority of answers stayed true to websites and search engines. No mention of social media of any kind was present in the open-ended responses. When it comes to the most important messages from colleges, answers varied. The trends concentrated on costs, scholarship opportunities, and majors/opportunities for the most part.

Results were unexpected, yet right on course with other sited nationwide students surveys on their use of social media in planning and communicating with higher education institutes (all results are found in Appendix B).

## **Snow College Social Media Marketing Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

Social media has grown to a point that it cannot simply be ignored. People from all types of different demographics are using social media each day. And so it makes sense to use the social media platform for marketing purposes. Businesses from small to large have begun implementing social media into there marketing and so have higher education institution. Studies show that higher education institutions are using social media more and more each year; convinced that the social media marketing techniques are both less expensive and a more effective way of marketing to prospective students. However, those prospective students don't feel the same; this is where the challenging disconnect takes place. Various national surveys show that high school students not only don't use social media as a means of gather information about college, but that they also prefer to receive information from colleges and universities through channels other than social media (primarily email, mail, etc according to surveys). Is social media really an effective tool for colleges and universities to implement into their marketing strategies? Contradicting

information may suggest otherwise.

Given the data on social media, both from research and project surveys, the following is plan create to use social media in marketing Snow College to prospective students.

#### Objective

Utilize Social Media and other technology to increase Snow College enrollment.

Begin enrollment growth by building an inquiry pool of 5,500 – 8,500 students then convert these inquiries into 1,500 – 2,500 admitted students. Based on several years records we expect from these admits, that 50 percent or 750 – 1,250 will enroll. The following is a list of activities and programs that we will complete this year to increase precious number. Social media and other technology will be utilized to bring admitted numbers from 1,500-2,500 students to 2,000-3,000 students. Then increasing the student yield form 50 percent to 60 percent. To meet our objective a strategic plan of social media and other technology will assist to increase the numbers to the desired outcomes.

#### Measurement Benchmarks

Overall benchmark measurement will be measured against total student enrollment change after one year of social media plan implementation.

Enrollment numbers will be compared using third week report numbers. The goal is to increase enrollment by atleast 500 students. in one academic recruiting year.

Monthly measurement will be based on increase subscription and followers numbers on all social media platform and will be measured at the end of each month.

Facebook- Increase “likes.” Increase at least 20 new “likes” per month

YouTube- Increase “subscriber.” Increase at least 10 new subscribers per month.

Blog- Increase page views. Increase at least 50 new page views per month.

#### Gaining Active Users

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts have already been created. These platforms will function as the major social media platforms to be used by Snow College. Each will have active content feeds. Icons and links will be added to all email correspondence and on the Snow College webpage to promote growth and active user base. All publication and presentation will include an invitation to join all of the social media platforms mentioned. Prospective students will be encouraged to use the social media platforms as a means of communication as well as a way of gathering information about Snow College.

#### Generating Content

Content is the key to success social media. Without effective content active social media user will disappear. Content for all social media platforms should be based on the following guidelines:

1. **Relevant and Valuable Information.** The information provided should help social media users with what they are seeking. Begin content creation with the prospective Snow College students in mind. What information will that person find most valuable? Information on getting accepted, how to complete an online application, commonly asked housing questions, where to find the best deal on books, and so on. Ensure that the information is consistent and relevant to the

audience.

2. Images. Images are highly effective and should always supplement written content. Images stand out and help attract attention and understanding to content.
3. Unique. Making the content unique not only demonstrated the uniqueness of Snow College, but also keeps users engaged. Regurgitated content is uninteresting and easily dismissed as unimportant.
4. Share Worthy. Content that carries social value will be interesting enough for current users to share or pass on to others. Shared content is how connect goes viral and how to best increase active users.

#### Platforms for Plan Strategy

Email is an important part of this plan because of the survey data taken from income Snow College freshmen. Although not considered part of a social media platform email was highly valued by the survey group. Email will provide the primary source of communication between Snow College and prospective students. Email will also be a method of growing users within other social media platforms.

Facebook is a social networking site designed to build relationships. Facebook is a platform designed to post information both written and image based to promote the individual or business. Facebook is highly visual and should be used as such.

YouTube is a broadcasting channel where users can subscribe. Video content can be one of the most effective ways to Snow College to distribute information and provide a virtual experience for prospective students.

Blogging is an online journal of information. Current Students, faculty and staff can use this platform to give a day to account of the Snow College experience and share thoughts and ideas for prospective students.

Twitter is micro blogging platform to disperse micro bits of information. This a great platform for providing valuable information and linking users back to the website. It is also retweeting other people posts that are relevant to specific goals. (Twitter is an optional platform due to lack of interest from student and parent surveys. For this reason it is not included on the weekly post schedule)

Examples of Social Media Posts (how to post with each social media platform)

Facebook

*What:* Provide little known information to prospective students about Snow College

*Why:* Help students to understand value of Snow College

*Example:* “The average class size at Snow College is only 20 students!” Accompany this post with a image of an actual class.

Twitter

*What:* Information about an upcoming event

*Why:* Quick, short and easy way to get out the information, drive traffic to website for the details and drive attendance at the event.

*Example:* “APPLICATION FEE WAIVED. Scholarship open house this Tuesday in Sandy” with a link the event web page.

#### YouTube

*What:* Provide a tutorial on filling out the online application.

*Why:* Visual step-by-step help that can be stopped and replayed as needed.

*Example:* A screen cast of someone filling out the application with verbal direction through the process.

#### Blog

*What:* A day in the life a Snow College freshmen.

*Why:* Give a Snow College student perspective on what a average day is like at Snow College.

*Example:* A Snow College student uses images and text to recreate what he/she does during a regular day of classes, etc.

#### Strategy Overview

##### Email

iPad data gathering. Information cards that have traditionally been paper based will now be on an iPad. The use of iPads to gather information will allow quicker access to data gathered, or more timely email correspondence.

##### Email Schedule:

Upon completing an information card students will receive email information in the following schedule:

	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
<b>Email Sign-Up</b>							
<b>Admission Process Email</b>							
<b>Campus Visit Email</b>							
<b>Admission Scholarship Email</b>							
<b>Campus Visit Email</b>							
<b>Scholarship Deadline Email</b>							
<b>Housing &amp; Registration Email</b>							
<b>Registration Email</b>							

Email 1: Day of encounter with student

Thanks for your interest in Snow College email- Contact Info, phone and website.

Email 2: One month after initial contact or October of senior year

Admissions email- Outline the admission process and how-to YouTube video link.

Email 3: Two months after initial contact or November of senior year

Campus visit email- Link to sign-up for campus visit, with link to YouTube campus visit video.

Email 4: Three months after initial contact or December or senior year

Reminder about admissions and scholarship deadline of March 1- Outline the admission and scholarship process and how-to YouTube video link.

Email 5: Four months after initial contact or January of senior year

Another campus visit invitation and invitation to like Snow College on Facebook- provide a all contact info (email, phone, address, YouTube and

Facebook link) as a way for student to ask questions in the format they prefer most.

Email 6: Five months after initial contact or February of senior year

Scholarship deadline reminder-have link for how-to apply for scholarships  
YouTube video.

Email 7: Six months after initial contact or March of senior year

Housing and registration info-links to housing contact info and a how-to registration YouTube video link.

Email 8: Seven months after initial contact or April of senior year

Registration email- Reminder about registration days and an outline of the process for registration with a link to how-to registration YouTube video.

Email 9: Eight months after initial contact or May of senior year

It's not to late email- An overview of all the necessary steps to go from high school student to Snow College registered student. Admission, campus visit, housing and registration.

#### Other Emails

Birthdays-all students will receive a happy birthday email on their birthday. General question emails will be responded to on a daily basis.

#### Web Presence

Home page (snow.edu) will be updated to include the following:

- Snow College Facebook, YouTube, and Blog links
- A Snow College YouTube video will be on the home page a rotate on a weekly basis
- Contact form for perspective students to fill out on home page.
- Apply Now button for a one click route to admissions application
- Live video chat option. Click and chat live with a person in “Skype” format

### Facebook

Facebook will be updated at least 2 times per week

Updates will be relevant to the email schedule and/or campus events or other noteworthy situations. Photo and video are preferable for updates as often as possible

Students will be hired to work two hours a day Monday-Friday to monitor questions or other interaction via Facebook and also follow any buzz or relevant info to Snow College.

### YouTube

Snow College YouTube Channel will produce one student made video per week. Video will come from video production classes.

Weekly YouTube video will also be hosted on home page (snow.edu) for one week at a time.

A series of how-to video will be added on every step necessary for a perspective student to get to Snow College. Videos will be used in email communication with perspective students.

How-to Videos:

Admissions Application

Applying for Scholarships

Academic

Departmental

Private

Diversity

Athletic

Leadership

Campus Visit

Finding Housing

Registration

Moving in



Blog

Snow College will maintain a student run blog. The purpose of the blog is to profile the students' experience.

One blog will be posted per week

Students will submit blogs posts to a filtering committee. The committee selects one blog post per week and pay contributing students.

### **Social Media Weekly Posting Schedule**

*Schedule represents minimum number of posts and can be exceeded*

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Facebook							
YouTube							
Blog							

### **Implications**

It's time to really look at what is being done with social media. The growing trends of social media are all around without a question. Higher education is no exception to this new movement. Throughout the literature review evidence supports the growth and use of social media to market and connect with students, yet very few have asked the target audience about all this marketing effort. We assumed, as did so many universities

and colleges, that if prospective students are actively using social media, why not tap into those platform for our marketing efforts; makes perfect sense. And yet it does not.

Students don't want it, at least not from the higher education world. No matter how trendy or cool it is, or how much sense it makes in theory, students are not using social media to seek or communicate with colleges. It is time to reevaluate how and why social media is being used. I believe there is a place for social media in the higher education setting. I still believe it is important to have a presence on at very least the larger social media sites (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter). If for no other reason they're a few students out there who did use these resources. However, the time and effort put into these communication platforms should be reduced to a minimum. Marketing efforts should be ranked in importance according on the desires of the student and parent feedback, leaving social media at the bottom no matter how you look at it.

I developed a social media marketing plan for Snow College; or perhaps a better way to describe the marketing plan would be to say we developed a marketing plan that included minor social media strategies. Different from the original intentions of the project, the marketing plan focuses more on communication with students through email and mailings, with a small social media presence to supplement the main marketing tools. The complete marketing plan is attached as Appendix D.

#### Limitations and Future Research

Perhaps the whole process of social media is being done incorrectly by higher education? There are a number of different directions future research could take to better understand the use of social media in higher education. Social media cannot be

completely ignored, but the question is where and how can higher education use it to be most effective.

The survey questions did not address current, if any, interaction from colleges or universities. Perhaps the students are not receiving information from higher education institutions and therefore don't know whether they would prefer it or not. With no experience there may have been a default to other preferences that are more familiar such as email. I believe information about their current experience with social media and higher education could have a dramatic impact on responses. There is no question that prospective students are using social media, so why are they not mixing this addiction with higher education information gathering? A great follow up to this survey would be to find out why students have chosen to stick with email and other communications tools with regards to higher ed. By gathering a more detailed background of the students' current understanding and situation, a social media plan could be more effectively constructed.

Is advertising on the social media platforms that offer advertising effective at reaching the prospective students attention? Sites like Facebook offer advertising. Would a student that clicks on a Facebook advertisement be more likely to interact with a college or university through Facebook? I think that the advertising piece plays an interesting role in how institutions attract the attention of students.

I would like to see a comparison between higher education institutions and other private businesses on Facebook. What private companies do potential college students "like" on Facebook and why did they decide to like them? The rationale behind "liking"

something or someone on Facebook, or on other social media sites for that matter, is intriguing. Determining a common reason for these decisions could help increase connections to high school students through social media.

On the note of Facebook, it would be interesting to see how the implementation and growth of “groups” within a Facebook page would change prospective higher education students’ use of the social networking site. For example, when a high school senior is admitted to a college or university they are immediately invited to join a group on the college or universities Facebook page called, “class of 20XX” group, based on their assumed graduation date. The group would provide a community location for new students to interact with other new students prior to actually attending the college or university. The students are instantly linked with a huge group of other like-minded people preparing to begin a similar experience. The implications of a group like this also carry far beyond perspective students. As those students graduate and move on they have a continual community to interact with past roommates and friends. The group then becomes valuable for the alumni office to keep in touch with former students.

There is much to be learned from this relatively new means of marketing and communication. Much of the challenge we face in understanding how to best use these tools is the frequent evolution that social media has notoriously become known for. A key piece to comprehension and effective use is understanding the user and avoiding the pitfall of assumption and trends that have no support or evidence. Unfortunately this process is ongoing, and will only be successful with constant data gathering and adaptation.

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## Appendix A

### Student and Parent Survey

I use Facebook to seek information about colleges.

**Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never**

I use Twitter to seek information about colleges.

**Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never**

I use Youtube to seek information about colleges.

**Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never**

I use websites to seek information about colleges.

**Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never**

I use other online tools not mentioned to seek information about colleges.

**Always 1 2 3 4 5 Never**

Please list OTHER online tools you use to seek information about colleges.

---

Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges.

1=I prefer most 6=I least prefer

**Electronic Mail (Email) 1 2 3 4 5**

**Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc.) 1 2 3 4 5**

**Mail (Standard Paper Mail) 1 2 3 4 5**



## Appendix B

### Student Survey Reponses

# 119 responses

Who is the primary decision maker about choosing a college?



Student going to college	<b>117</b>	98%
Parent of student	<b>2</b>	2%

I use Facebook to seek information about colleges.



1 - Always	<b>3</b>	3%
2	<b>5</b>	4%
3	<b>23</b>	19%
4	<b>38</b>	32%
5 - Never	<b>50</b>	42%

I use Twitter to seek information about colleges.



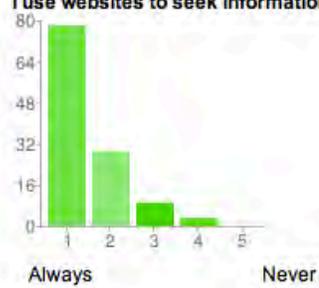
1 - Always	<b>0</b>	0%
2	<b>1</b>	1%
3	<b>1</b>	1%
4	<b>5</b>	4%
5 - Never	<b>112</b>	94%

**I use Youtube to seek information about colleges.**



1 - Always	<b>0</b>	0%
2	<b>3</b>	3%
3	<b>12</b>	10%
4	<b>23</b>	19%
5 - Never	<b>81</b>	68%

**I use websites to seek information about colleges.**



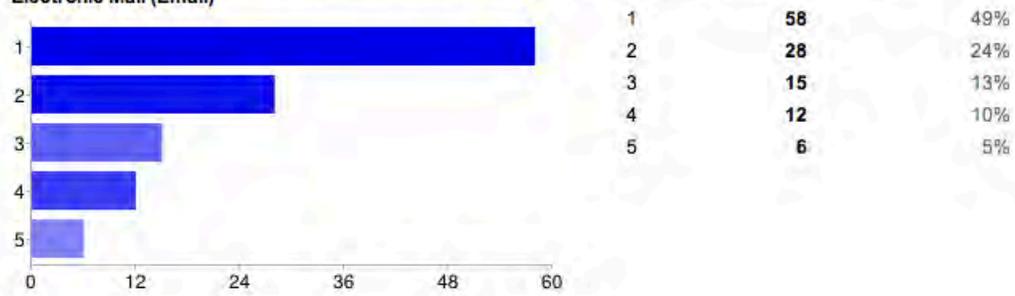
1 - Always	<b>78</b>	66%
2	<b>29</b>	24%
3	<b>9</b>	8%
4	<b>3</b>	3%
5 - Never	<b>0</b>	0%

**I use other online tools not mentioned to seek information about colleges.**

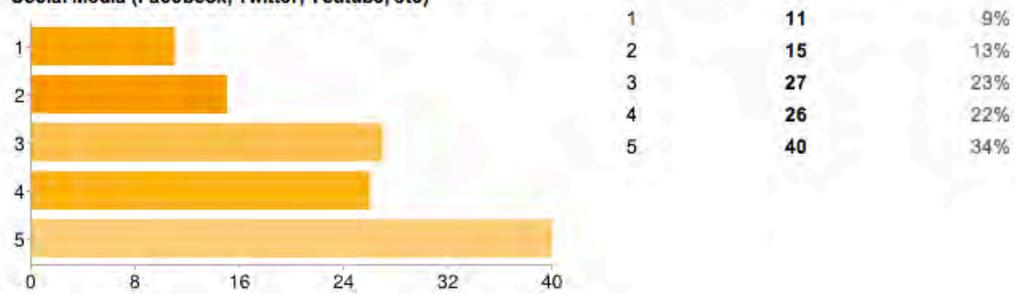


1 - Always	<b>13</b>	11%
2	<b>18</b>	15%
3	<b>29</b>	24%
4	<b>20</b>	17%
5 - Never	<b>39</b>	33%

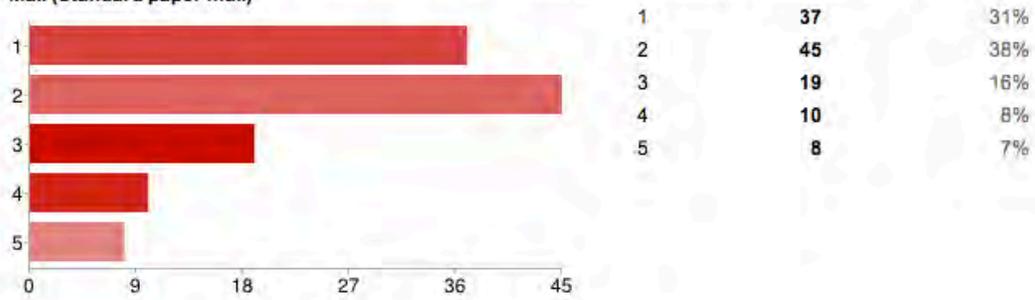
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Electronic Mail (Email)



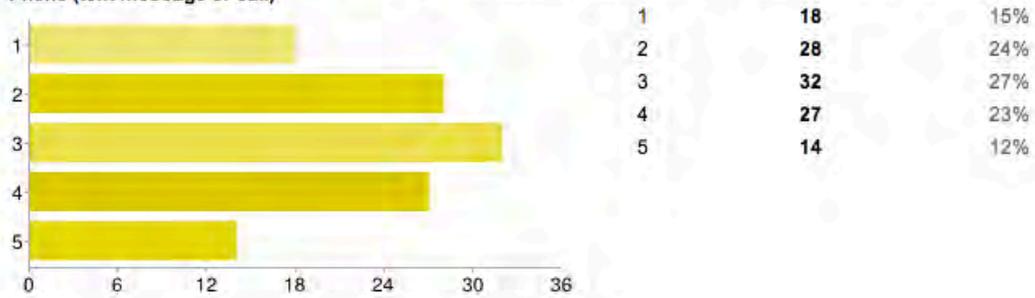
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc)



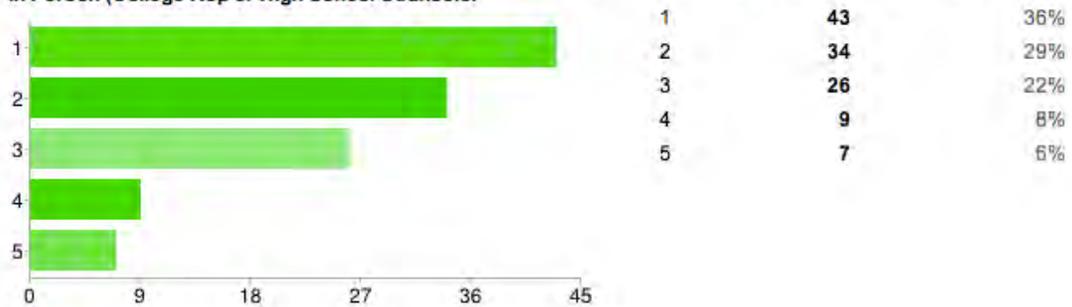
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Mail (Standard paper mail)



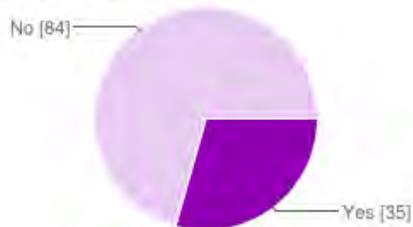
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Phone (text message or call)



Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
in Person (College Rep or High School Counselor)



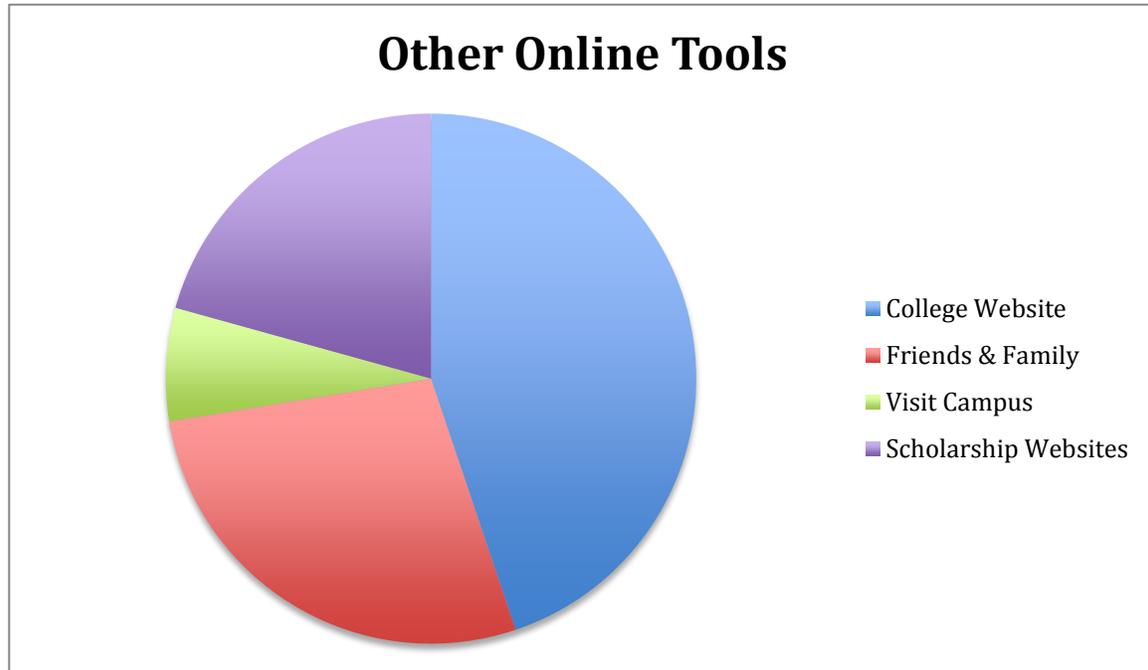
Do you have a Smart Phone?



Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	35	29%
No	84	71%

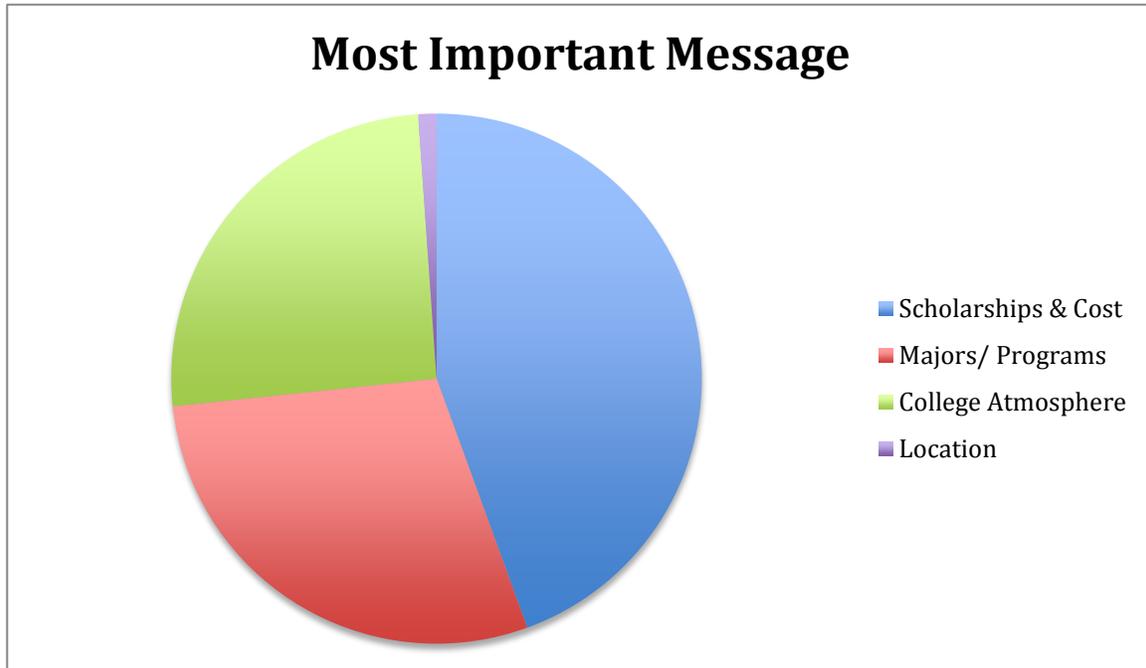
Student Responses to: “List other online tools you use to seek information about colleges?”

The following is a summary of most commonly mentioned topics:



Students Responses to: “What is the single most important message from a college that would help you decide to attend?”

The following is a summary of most commonly mentioned topics:

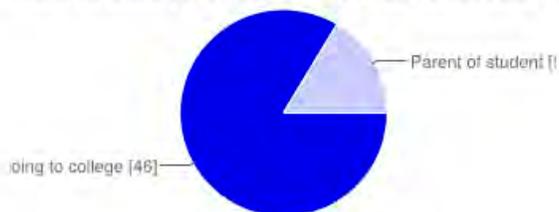


## Appendix C

### Parent Survey Responses

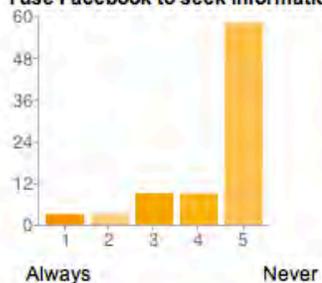
**83** responses

Who is the primary decision maker about choosing a college?



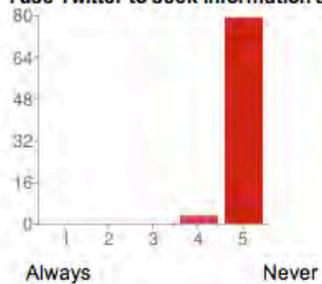
Student going to college	<b>46</b>	55%
Parent of student	<b>9</b>	11%

I use Facebook to seek information about colleges.



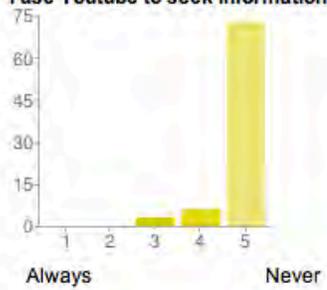
1 - Always	<b>3</b>	4%
2	<b>3</b>	4%
3	<b>9</b>	11%
4	<b>9</b>	11%
5 - Never	<b>58</b>	70%

I use Twitter to seek information about colleges.



1 - Always	<b>0</b>	0%
2	<b>0</b>	0%
3	<b>0</b>	0%
4	<b>3</b>	4%
5 - Never	<b>79</b>	95%

**I use Youtube to seek information about colleges.**



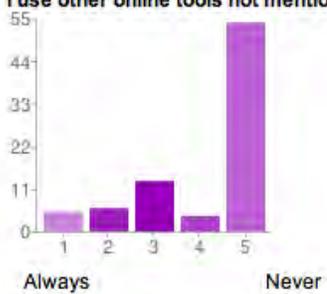
1 - Always	<b>0</b>	0%
2	<b>0</b>	0%
3	<b>3</b>	4%
4	<b>6</b>	7%
5 - Never	<b>73</b>	88%

**I use websites to seek information about colleges.**



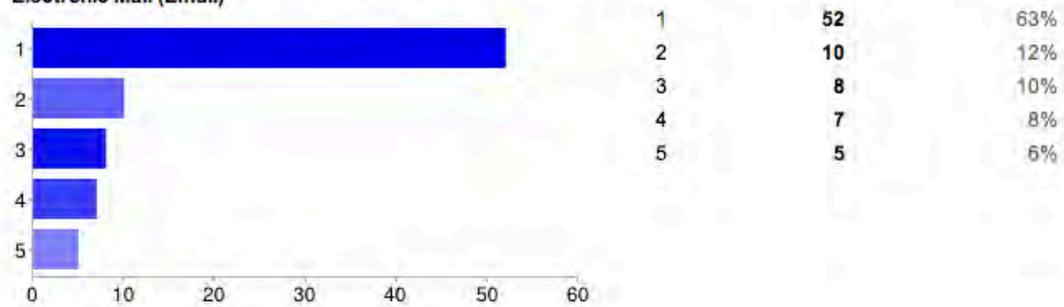
1 - Always	<b>40</b>	48%
2	<b>21</b>	25%
3	<b>12</b>	14%
4	<b>4</b>	5%
5 - Never	<b>5</b>	6%

**I use other online tools not mentioned to seek information about colleges.**

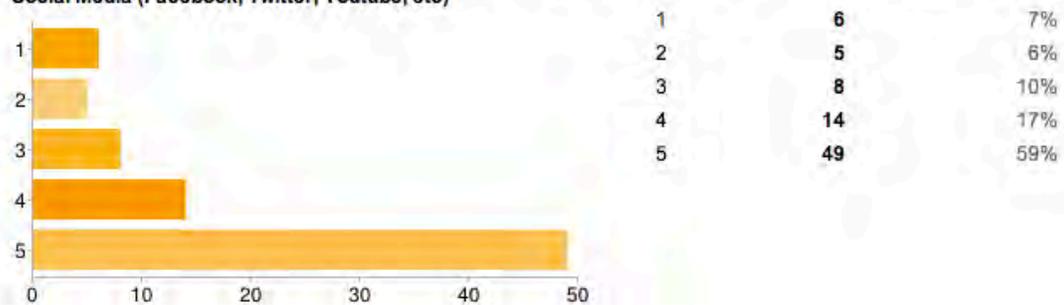


1 - Always	<b>5</b>	6%
2	<b>6</b>	7%
3	<b>13</b>	16%
4	<b>4</b>	5%
5 - Never	<b>54</b>	65%

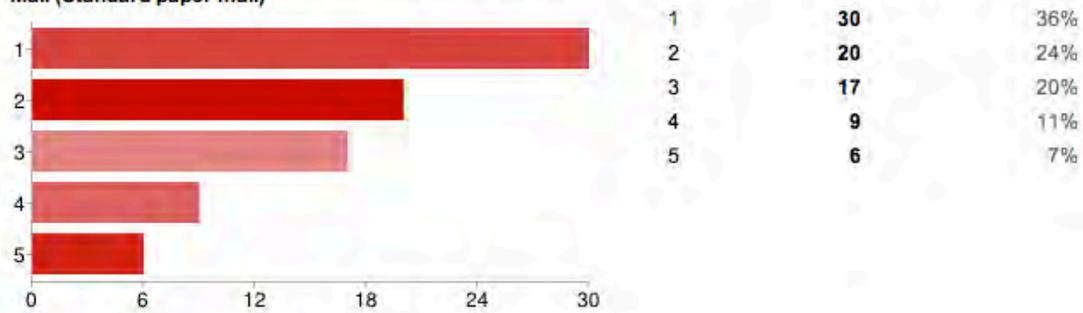
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Electronic Mail (Email)



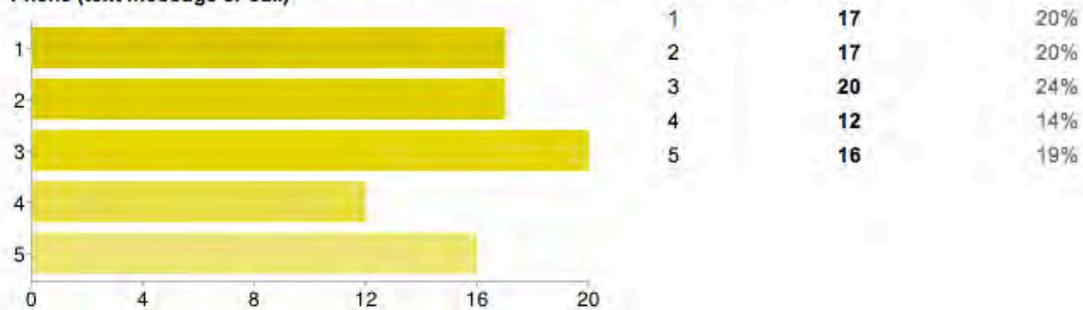
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc)



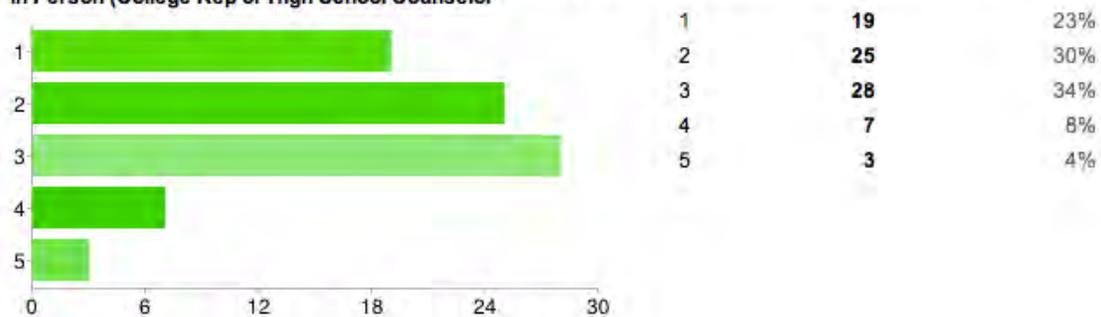
Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
**Mall (Standard paper mail)**

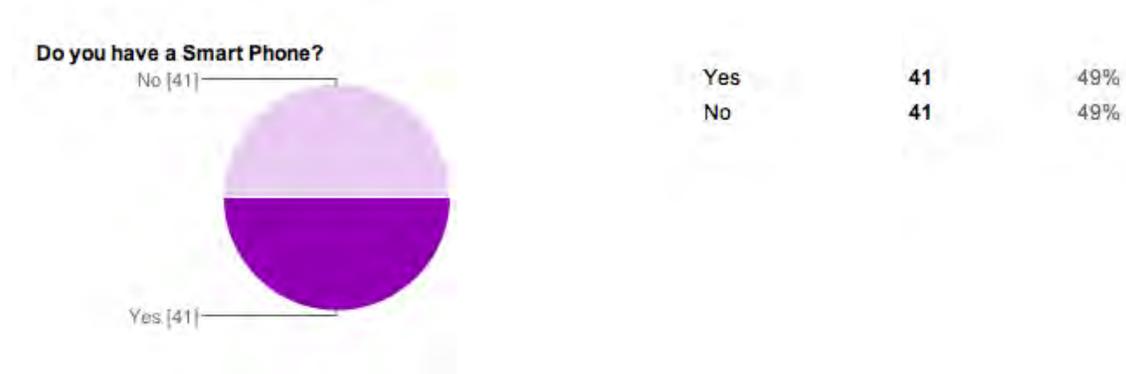


Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
**Phone (text message or call)**



Use numbers 1,2,3,4,5 to rank ALL options below on how you prefer to RECEIVE information about colleges. -  
**In Person (College Rep or High School Counselor)**





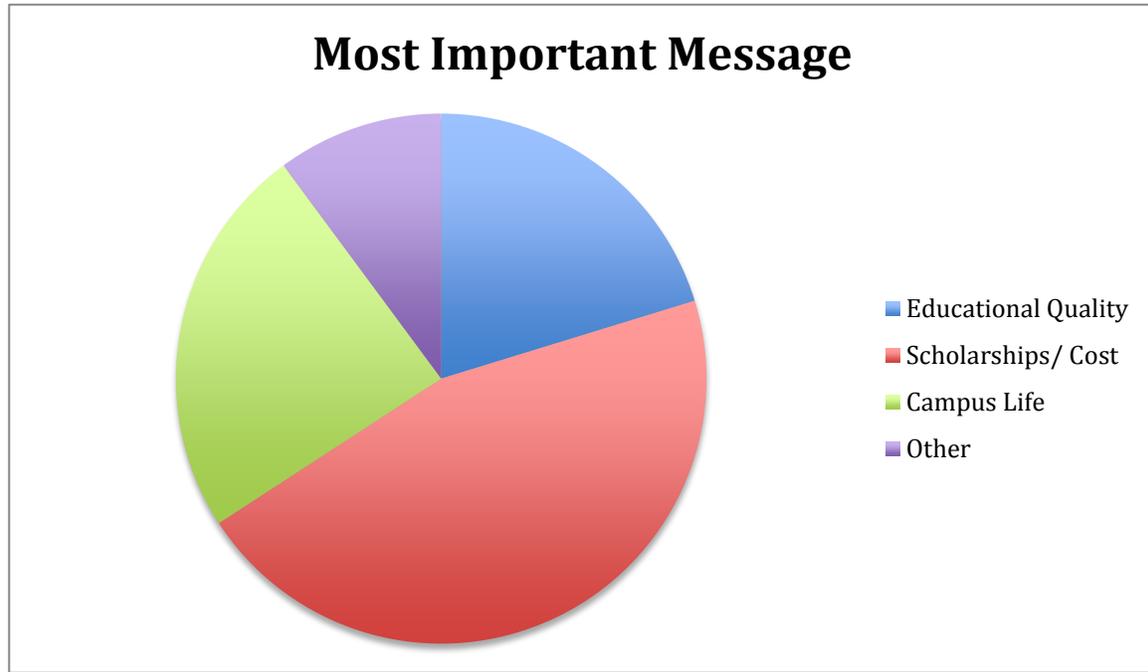
Parent Responses to: "List other online tools you use to seek information about colleges?"

The following is a summary of most commonly mentioned topics:



Parent Responses to: “What is the single most important message from a college that would help you decide to attend?”

The following is a summary of most commonly mentioned topics:



## Appendix D

### Social Media Definitions

#### Communication Tools:

**Blogs:** A blog (a portmanteau of the term web log) is a discussion or informational site published on the World Wide Web and consisting of discrete entries ("posts") typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first).

Examples: Blogger, ExpressionEngine, Word Press, Xanga

**Microblogging:** a broadcast medium in the form of blogging. A microblog differs from a traditional blog in that its content is typically smaller in both actual and aggregate file size. Microblogs "allow users to exchange small elements of content such as short sentences, individual images, or video links". These small messages are sometimes called microposts.

Examples: FMyLife, Twitter, Tumblr, Google Buzz, Qaiku

**Social Networking:** an online service, platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections.

Examples: Facebook, MySpace, Ning, LinkedIn, Hi5, XING, Yammer

#### Collaboration/authority building

**Wikis:** is a website which allows its users to add, modify, or delete its content via a web browser usually using a simplified markup language or a rich-text editor.

Examples: Wikia, Wikimedia, Wikispaces, PBworks

**Social bookmarking or social tagging:** is a method for Internet users to organize, store, manage and search for bookmarks of resources online.

Examples: Delicious, Google Reader, StumbleUpon

**Social News:** websites where users submit and vote on news stories or other links, thus determining which links are presented.

Examples: Digg, Mixx, Reddit

## Multimedia

**Photography and art sharing:** is the publishing or transfer of a user's digital photos online, thus enabling the user to share them with others (publicly or privately).

Examples: Flickr, Picasa, SmugMug, Pinterst

**Video Sharing:** Web sites that lets people upload and share their video clips with the public at large or to invited guests.

Examples: YouTube, Vimeo, Viddler, Openfilm

**Livecasting:** Any kind of audio or visual sharing that is done over the Internet.

Examples: Skype, Google Talk, Ustream, oovoo, blip.tv

## Appendix E

Slover Linett Strategies Inc. and mStoner partnered with CASE: This is their research on educational institutions and their social media activities

Slover-Linett, C. (2011). Best practices in social media summary of findings from the second comprehensive study of social media use by schools, colleges and universities. Retrieved August 2, 2012,

<http://www.case.org/Documents/AboutCASE/Newsroom/CASE-2011-Social->

### Best Practices in Social Media

Summary of Findings from the Second Comprehensive Study of Social Media Use by Schools, Colleges and Universities

April 13, 2011

9. Which types of social media do you (your unit) use for each of the specific audiences below? *(Please select each that applies).*

Percent using this type of social media for <u>any</u> audience:	
Facebook <i>(create/manage communities within Facebook)</i>	96%
Twitter	75%
LinkedIn <i>(create/manage communities within LinkedIn)</i>	65%
YouTube	65%
Blogs	43%
An institutional website that is an aggregator of social network sites	41%
Flickr	40%
Social communities provided by vendors through proprietary software <i>(such as Harris Connect, iModules, etc.)</i>	36%
A community created in-house by your unit using a tool such as Ning <i>(create/manage communities)</i>	12%

<b>Percent communicating with this audience at all (using any type of social media):</b>	
Alumni	92%
Friends and Supporters	77%
Current Students	66%
Current Faculty and Staff	62%
Donors	61%
Prospective Students	56%
Parents of Current Students	47%
Media	43%
Parents of Prospective Students	41%
Employers	37%
High School Guidance Counselors	26%
Government Organizations	21%

10. To what extent is each of the following goals for social media a goal for your unit?

Goals of social media	Not at all	Not much	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Extensively	Mean
Engage alumni	2%	3%	11%	30%	54%	4.3
Create, sustain, and improve brand image	3%	4%	18%	40%	35%	4.0
Engage current students	9%	13%	26%	30%	23%	3.5
Increase awareness/advocacy/rankings	7%	11%	28%	32%	22%	3.5
Build internal community	9%	14%	31%	30%	17%	3.3
Engage admitted students	18%	15%	22%	24%	21%	3.2
Engage current faculty and staff	10%	18%	35%	23%	13%	3.1
Engage prospective students	23%	15%	17%	20%	26%	3.1
Engage the local community	14%	18%	32%	24%	12%	3.0
Recruit students	25%	17%	17%	19%	23%	3.0
Engage parents of current students	22%	20%	27%	21%	10%	2.8
Engage the media	22%	26%	26%	18%	9%	2.7
Conduct research on audiences (alumni, students, etc.)	17%	28%	33%	16%	7%	2.7
Raise private funds	23%	26%	27%	14%	10%	2.6
Crisis and issues management	31%	27%	24%	12%	6%	2.4
Recruit faculty and staff	47%	30%	15%	6%	2%	1.9

12. How would you rate the overall success of your unit's use of social media, in terms of achieving its goals?

Not at all successful	3%
Not very successful	10%
Somewhat successful	62%
Very successful	22%
A model for successful use of social media	3%

13. Which of the following do you use the most in meeting your unit's goals? *Please select the three you use the most (Select no more than three).*

Facebook	91%
Twitter	43%
LinkedIn	29%
YouTube	26%
An institutional web site that is an aggregator of social networking sites	18%
Blogs	16%
Social communities provided by vendors through proprietary software (such as Harris Connect, iModules, etc.)	16%
Flickr	7%
A tool like Ning to build social network sites in-house	2%
Other (Please specify)	5%

14. Which of the following do you consider the most successful in meeting your unit's goals? *Please select the three you consider most successful (Select no more than three).*

Facebook	87%
Twitter	27%
LinkedIn	24%
YouTube	21%
An institutional web site that is an aggregator of social networking sites	14%
Blogs	13%
Social communities provided by vendors through proprietary software (such as Harris Connect, iModules, etc.)	13%
Flickr	6%
A tool like Ning to build social network sites in-house	2%
Other (Please specify)	4%

15. Is the use of social media developing spontaneously or is it the result of planning in your unit?

Spontaneous						Planned		
7%	12%	22%	23%	19%	17%	How would you like to see this change in the coming year?		
						More spontaneous	Good where it is	More planned
						12%	23%	65%

16. Is the use of social media by your unit under your unit's complete control or is there a coordinating committee or group for the institution as a whole?

Local				Coordinated		How would you like to see this change in the coming year?		
						More local	Good where it is	More coordinated
39%	22%	11%	11%	7%	9%	7%	57%	36%

17. Is the use of social media at your institution centralized in one institutional unit or is it dispersed throughout the institution as a whole?

Centralized				Dispersed		How would you like to see this change in the coming year?		
						More centralized	Good where it is	More dispersed
15%	13%	12%	10%	17%	33%	35%	54%	12%

24. For each of the following statements about the use of social media, please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Some-what disagree	Some-what agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Top 2 Box
Social media have great potential for achieving important goals in my unit	0%	1%	4%	22%	39%	34%	73%
A champion is essential to the successful implementation of social media in our institution	1%	6%	7%	23%	35%	28%	63%
My unit benefits from institutional support and buy in for social media deployment	4%	10%	11%	30%	32%	13%	45%
It is difficult to measure "return on investment" from the use of social media	2%	12%	18%	36%	25%	7%	32%
Expertise to help our social media efforts is readily available	4%	17%	20%	31%	22%	6%	28%
In the education sector, no one has figured out yet how to use social media effectively	14%	33%	25%	18%	7%	3%	10%
The main reason we're engaged in social media development is because our competitors do it	15%	33%	19%	23%	8%	2%	10%
It's too soon to say whether social media will be useful at all in our line of work	33%	35%	17%	9%	4%	1%	5%

25. To what degree does each of these motivate the implementation of social media at your institution?

Potential Motivators	Not at all	Not much	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Extensively	Mean
Need to sustain and protect our brand	3%	7%	30%	40%	20%	3.7
Demand from alumni or other constituents	6%	15%	31%	35%	13%	3.4
Use of social media by peer institutions	4%	13%	43%	32%	9%	3.3
Strong support from an institutional champion	8%	24%	27%	31%	11%	3.1
Success stories at conferences and conventions	7%	20%	40%	29%	4%	3.0
Potential financial advantages	10%	25%	32%	24%	8%	3.0
Media coverage of social media success	10%	25%	37%	23%	5%	2.9

27. To what degree does your unit or institution have policies and guidelines to address the following related specifically to social media?

Policy Areas	Not at all	Not much	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Extensively	Mean
Branding and graphics	11%	12%	27%	33%	16%	3.3
Content management and control	16%	20%	34%	24%	6%	2.8
Privacy issues	18%	24%	32%	19%	8%	2.8
Negative postings	20%	24%	33%	18%	5%	2.7
Ethical issues	22%	27%	31%	15%	5%	2.6
Legal issues	22%	28%	29%	16%	5%	2.5

## Appendix F

Social Media and College Admissions: Higher-Ed Beats Business in Adoption of New Tools. University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research.

Barnes, N. & Mattson, E. (2009). Social media and college admissions: higher-ed beats business in adoption of new tools for third year. Retrieved July 8, 2012, from <http://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartmouth/cmr/studiesandresearch/socialmediaadmissions.pdf>

*Figure 1*

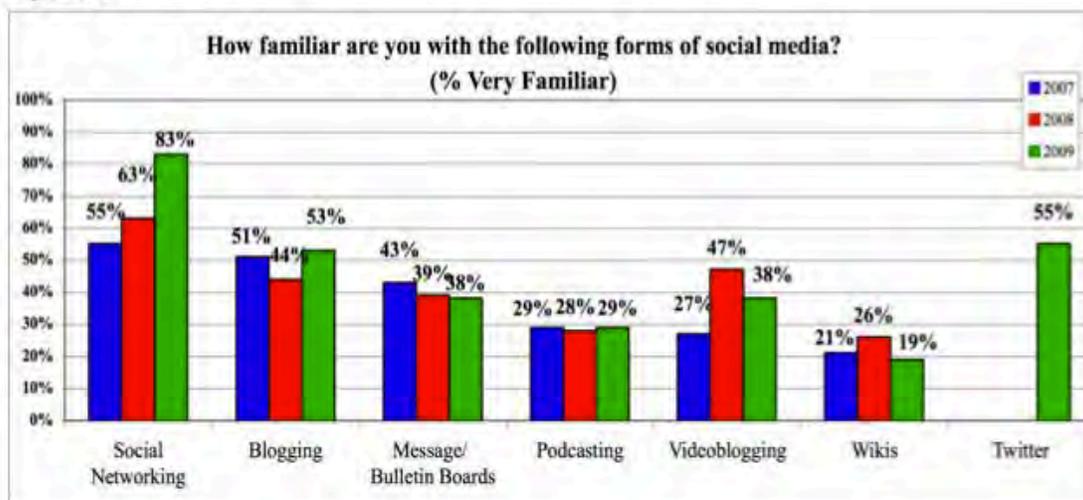


Figure 2

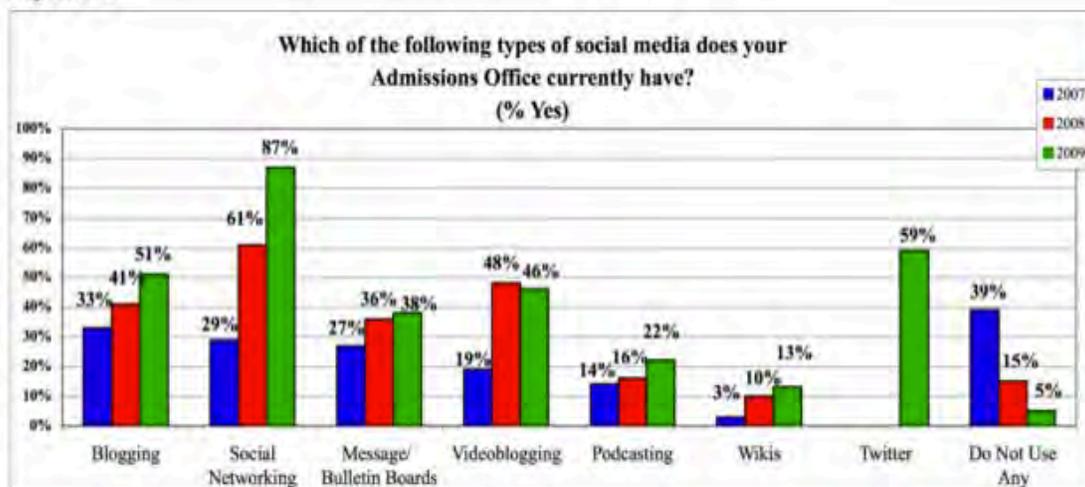


Figure 2a

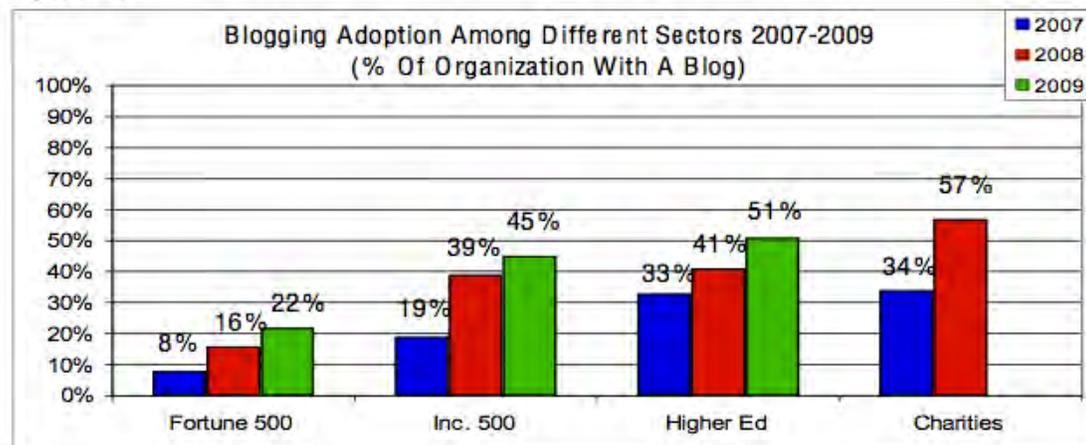


Figure 3

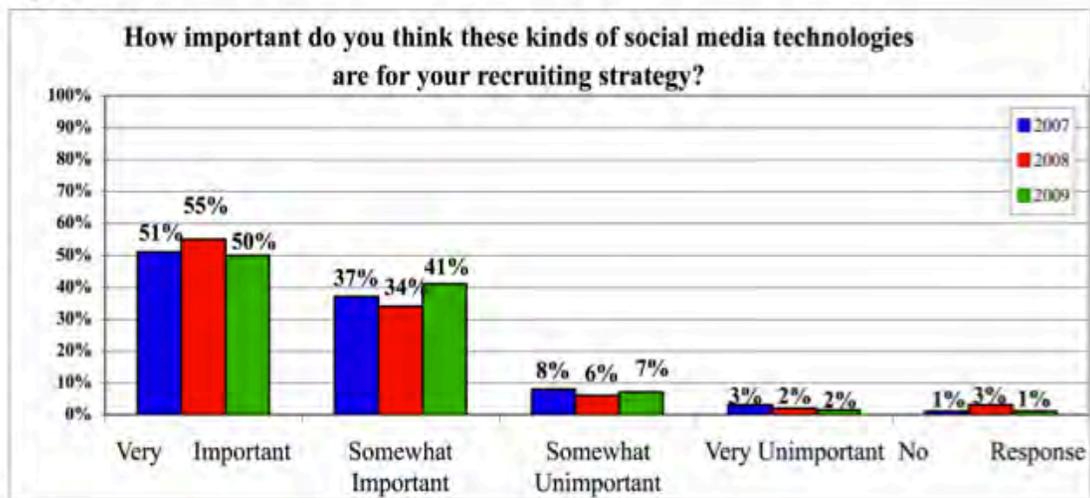
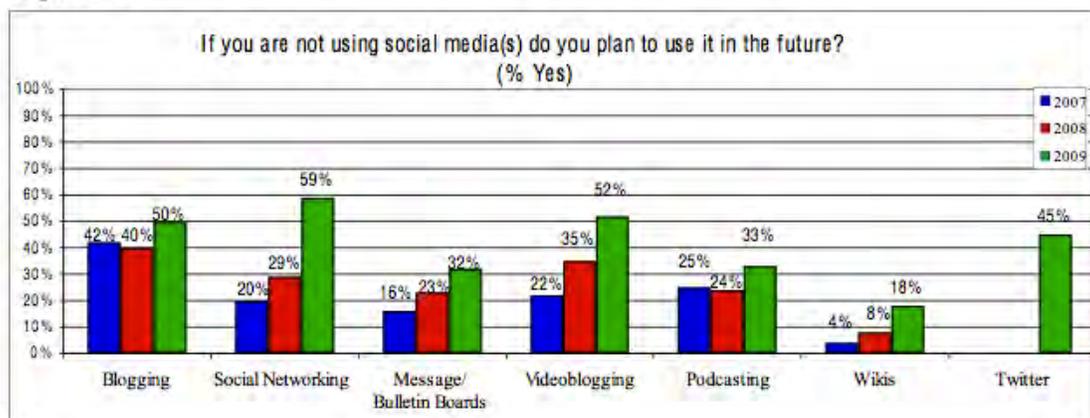


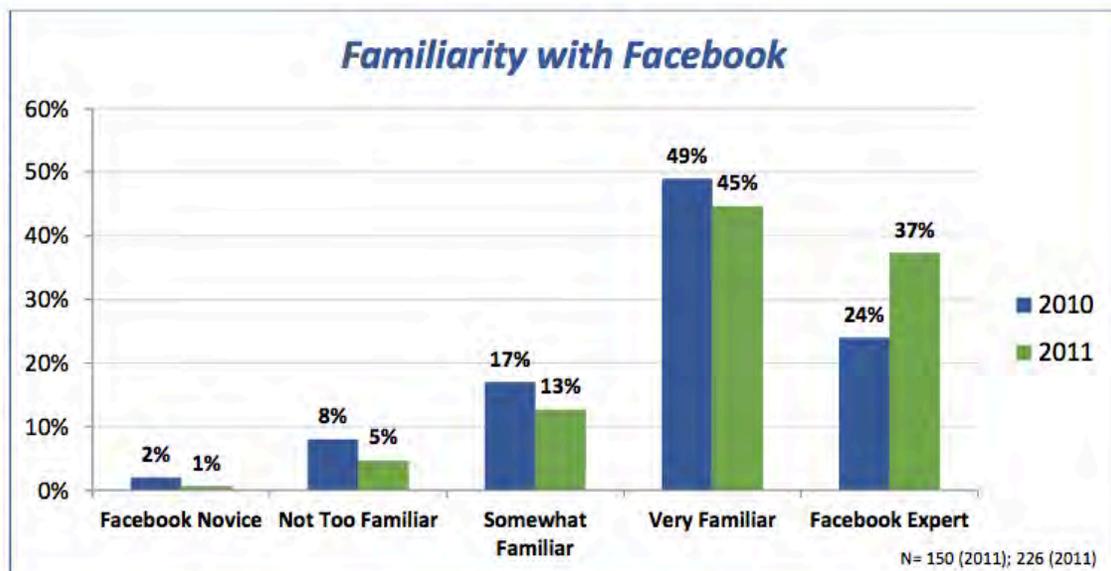
Figure 6

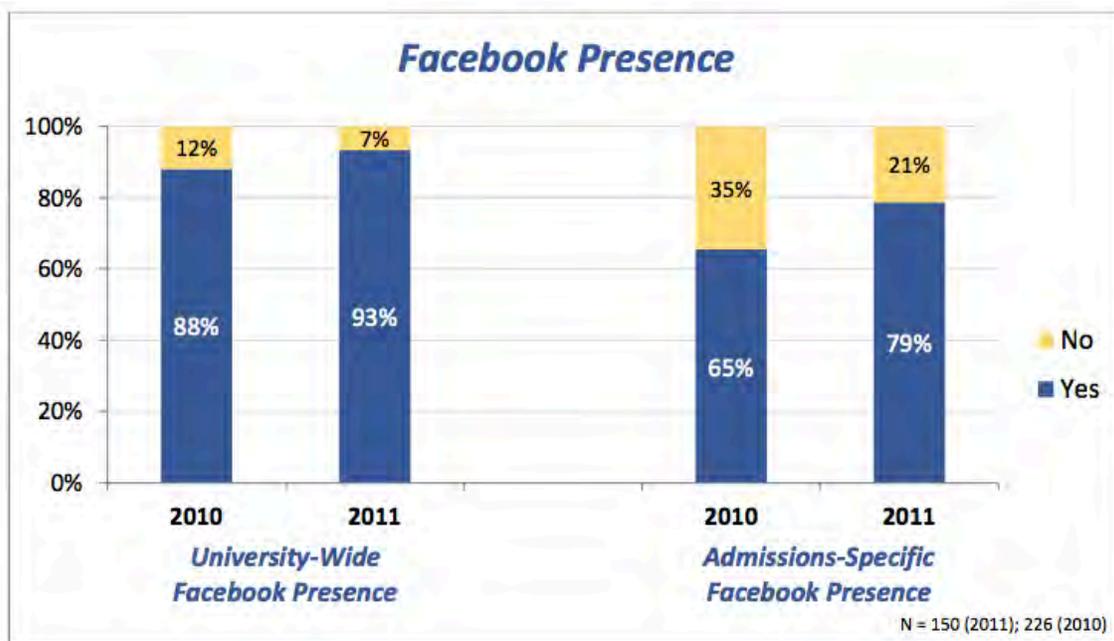
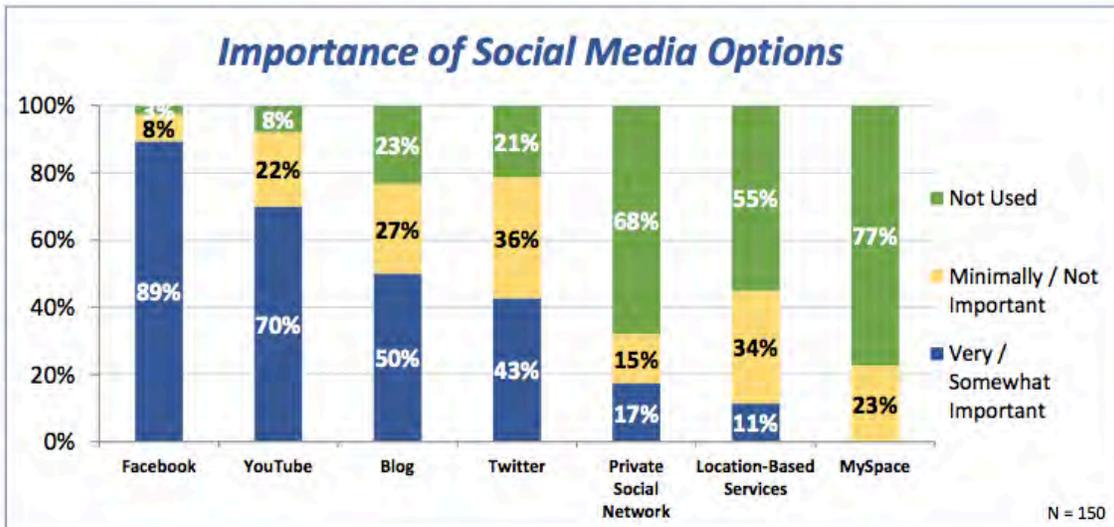


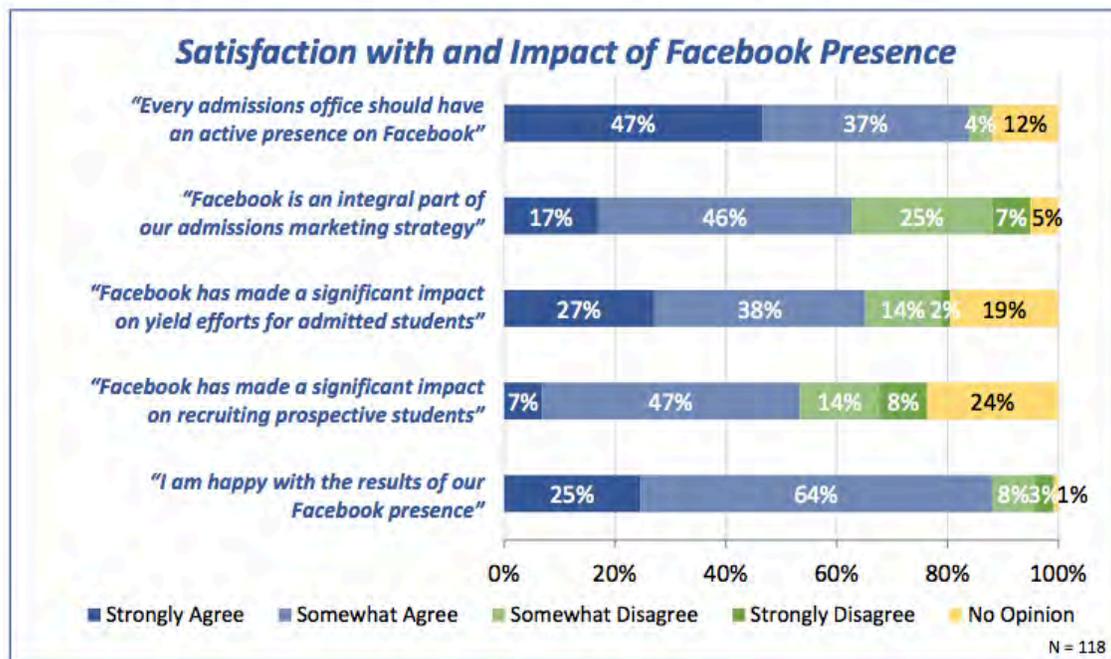
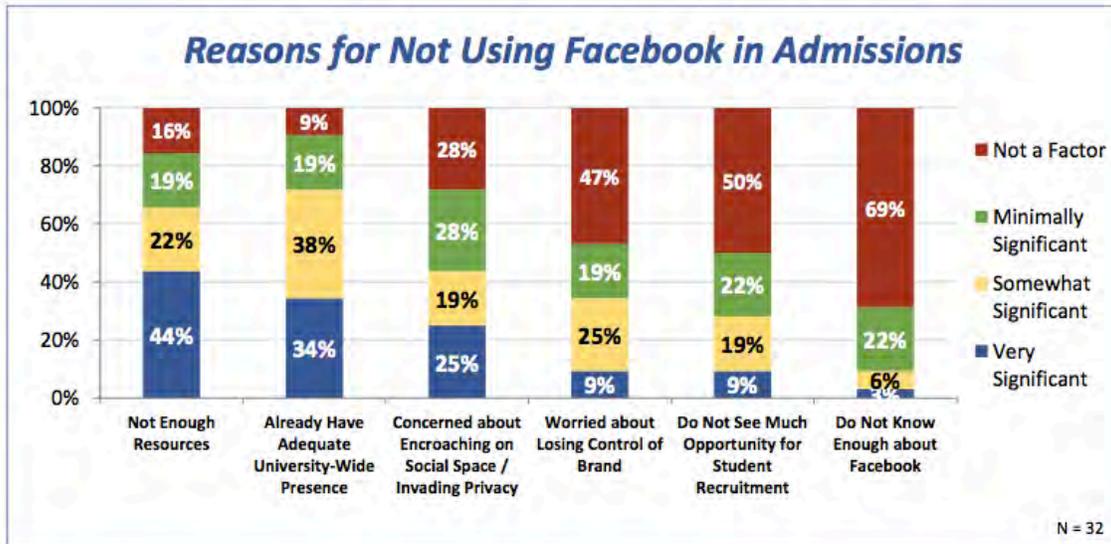
## Appendix G

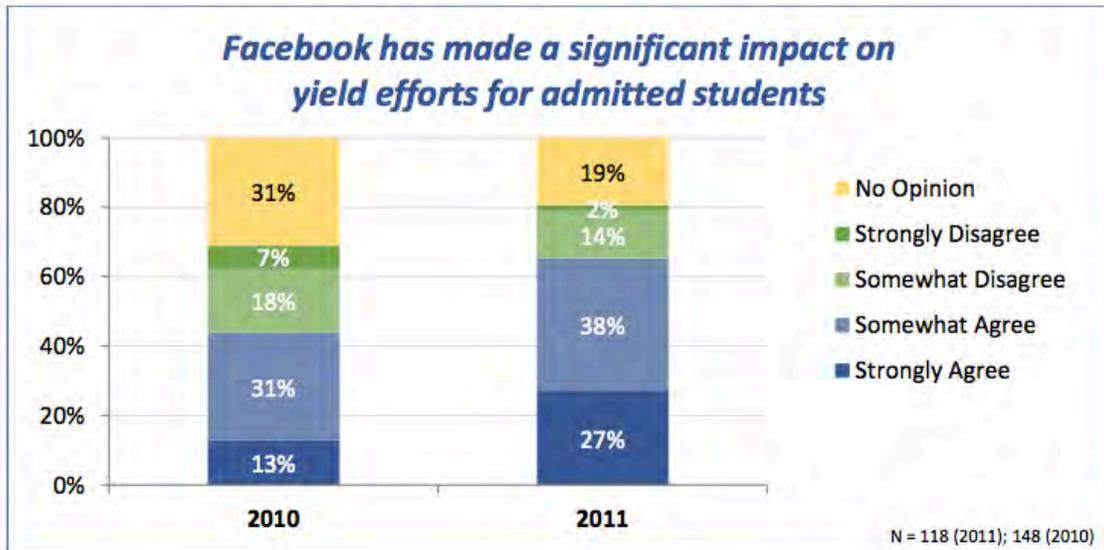
Varsity Outreach's Facebook survey of undergraduate and graduate institutions nationwide.

Varsity Outreach. (2011). Facebook and admissions: a closer look at how college admissions offices use facebook. Retrieved June 21, 2012, from <http://www.varsityoutreach.com/Documents/FacebookAndAdmissions2011.pdf>









## Appendix H

The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research 2011-2012 study of social media use among four year accredited undergraduate schools from all across the country.

Varsity Outreach. (2011). Facebook and admissions: a closer look at how college admissions offices use facebook. Retrieved June 21, 2012, from <http://www.varsityoutreach.com/Documents/FacebookAndAdmissions2011.pdf>

### Key Highlights

- **Reduced costs for traditional media are attributed to use of social media.** Schools report 33% less spent on printing, 24% less spent on newspaper ads and 17% less spent on radio and TV ads.
- **One in 3 schools say social media is more efficient** than traditional media in reaching their target audience (this number increases to 44% for top MBA programs).
- **92% of undergraduate admissions officers agree that social media is worth the investment they make in it and 86% plan to increase their investment in social media in the next year.**
- **The most useful tools for recruiting undergraduates include Facebook (94%), YouTube (81%), Twitter (69%) and Downloadable Mobil Apps (51%).** Mobile apps are a favorite of top MBA programs with 82% citing them as an effective recruiting tool.
- **Monitoring the schools name and relevant online conversation has declined over the past few years.** In 2009-2010, 73% reported monitoring their brand. In 2010-2011, that number dropped to 68% and now is reported to be 47%. This could have consequences for any school that becomes the target of negative online buzz and is unaware of that conversation.
- **Less than half of those surveyed have a written social media policy for their school.** In the 2009-2010 academic year 32% had such a policy. That number increased to 44% in 2010-2011 and stands at 49% now. While this increase is encouraging, it is disconcerting to note that less than half have such

a policy and that 19% of the undergraduate admissions officer report they did not know if any such policy existed at their school.

- **29% of the schools surveyed report having NO social media plan in place for their Admission Office and an additional 15% report not knowing if there is a social media plan in place.**
- **78% report that these tools have changed the way they recruit.**

## Appendix I

The Noel-Levitz researchers surveyed more than 1,000 college bound high school students. The survey asked these students about what they do online.

Bishop, L. (2008). Internet marketing and web development in higher education and other tidbits....social media recruitment: do prospects really use it?? Retrieved

July 21, 2012, from <http://doteduguru.com/id5544-social-media-recruitment-do-prospects-really-use-it.html>

<b>Which social media resources do students use?</b>	
<b>Facebook</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>YouTube</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>MySpace</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Twitter</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Gaia Online</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>High Five</b>	<b>1%</b>

## Appendix J

The Hobsons report was conducted in partnership with Eduventures in March of 2010. 65,130 students from the United States (prospective undergraduates and recently enrolled students) were sent an online survey. Of the students who received it, 1,082 students completed the full survey.

Bishop, L. (2008). Internet marketing and web development in higher education and other tidbits....social media recruitment: do prospects really use it?? Retrieved

July 21, 2012, from <http://doteduguru.com/id5544-social-media-recruitment-do-prospects-really-use-it.html>

WHICH SOURCES/TOOLS DID YOU FIND MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN DEVELOPING AN INTEREST IN COLLEGE? (SELECT UP TO THREE)				
	All	Senior	Junior	Sophomore
Friends/family	44%	43%	45%	39%
College search Web sites	34%	34%	37%	47%
College fairs	28%	32%	25%	20%
High school guidance counselors	26%	25%	28%	27%
Viewbook from the institution	24%	22%	28%	23%
Institution's Web site	23%	20%	24%	36%
College rankings	20%	22%	17%	15%
Campus visit	19%	19%	15%	15%
College guidebook or directory	16%	16%	14%	14%
Online planning and advising tool	11%	12%	12%	14%
Online/virtual tours of a campus	8%	5%	11%	9%
College admissions counselors	5%	5%	6%	0%
Other online communities or social networks	4%	4%	4%	2%
Video clips or YouTube	2%	2%	2%	3%
Facebook	1%	1%	1%	2%
Skype or live video streaming	0%	0%	0%	0%

### Effective Tools: Applying to College

WHICH SOURCES/TOOLS DID YOU FIND MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN DECIDING WHERE TO APPLY? (SELECT UP TO THREE)

	All	Senior	Junior
Campus visit	45%	44%	49%
Institution's Web site	29%	30%	27%
High school guidance counselors	27%	29%	28%
Friends/family	26%	30%	24%
College search Web sites	21%	19%	25%
Viewbook from the institution	21%	21%	20%
College fairs	18%	17%	20%
College rankings	17%	18%	17%
College admissions counselors	11%	14%	11%
College guidebook or directory	11%	12%	9%
Online/virtual tours of a campus	11%	9%	12%
Online planning and advising tool	9%	7%	10%
Other online communities or social networks	4%	5%	3%
Video clips or YouTube	3%	2%	4%
Facebook	2%	2%	1%
Skype or live video streaming	1%	0%	1%

### Credible Sources

PLEASE RATE THE CREDIBILITY OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES FOR YOUR COLLEGE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.\*

	All	Senior	Junior	Sophomore
Campus visit	84%	85%	85%	77%
Institution's Web site	82%	81%	83%	83%
College search Web sites	75%	70%	83%	82%
Friends/family	72%	73%	71%	67%
Viewbook from the institution	72%	71%	74%	68%
College guidebook or directory	71%	69%	72%	74%
High school guidance counselors	70%	68%	78%	71%
College admissions counselors	67%	66%	69%	70%
College rankings	67%	63%	68%	76%
College fairs	62%	59%	65%	68%
Online/virtual tours of a campus	59%	58%	60%	64%
Online planning and advising tool	55%	49%	65%	59%
Other online communities or social networks	25%	28%	25%	17%
Video clips or YouTube	24%	26%	22%	14%
Facebook	19%	22%	16%	12%
Skype or live video streaming	16%	16%	17%	12%

\*Percentages reflect students who rated a source as credible or extremely credible (3 or 4 on a scale of 1-4).

## Communication Preferences

**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE CONTACTED BY OR SPEAK WITH ADMISSIONS COUNSELORS FROM THE SCHOOL(S) YOU EXPRESS INTEREST IN? (SELECT UP TO THREE)**

	All	Senior	Junior	Sophomore
E-mail	88%	90%	86%	91%
During college visits	52%	46%	63%	62%
Telephone	30%	34%	26%	20%
Through one-on-one informational interviews	28%	25%	35%	29%
At college fairs	22%	19%	26%	29%
Through group information sessions	17%	17%	22%	8%
Facebook	10%	13%	5%	11%
Text message	7%	7%	5%	14%
Instant messaging	3%	4%	2%	2%
Skype	1%	1%	1%	0%
Twitter	1%	1%	0%	0%

## Appendix K

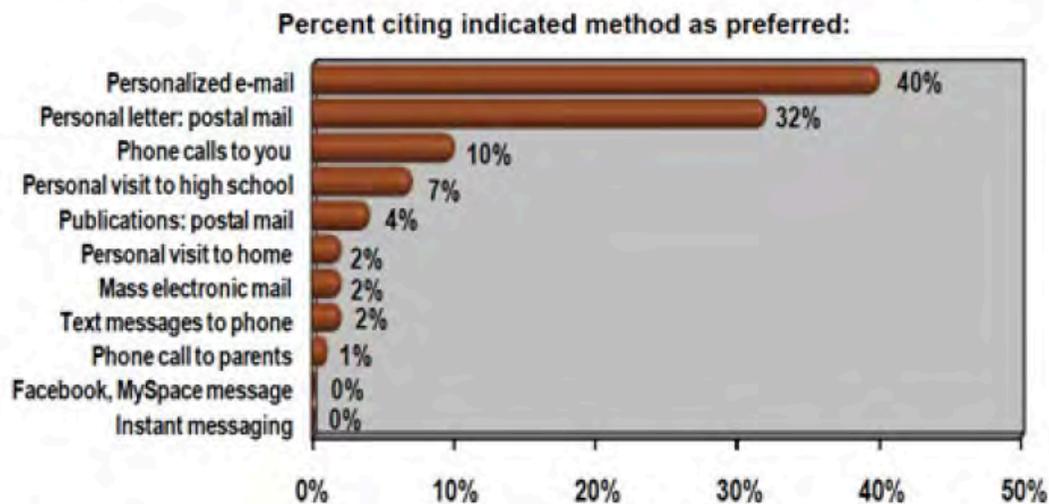
Stamats TeensTalk report was generated from a nationwide survey of 500 high school students who will attend college as a first year freshman in Fall 2010. It was conducted at three times in the recruitment cycle: June 2009 (Summer), November 2009 (Fall), and February-March 2010 (Spring). Stamats measured both acceptable and preferred methods of communication before and after a student applied to a university.

Bishop, L. (2008). Internet marketing and web development in higher education and

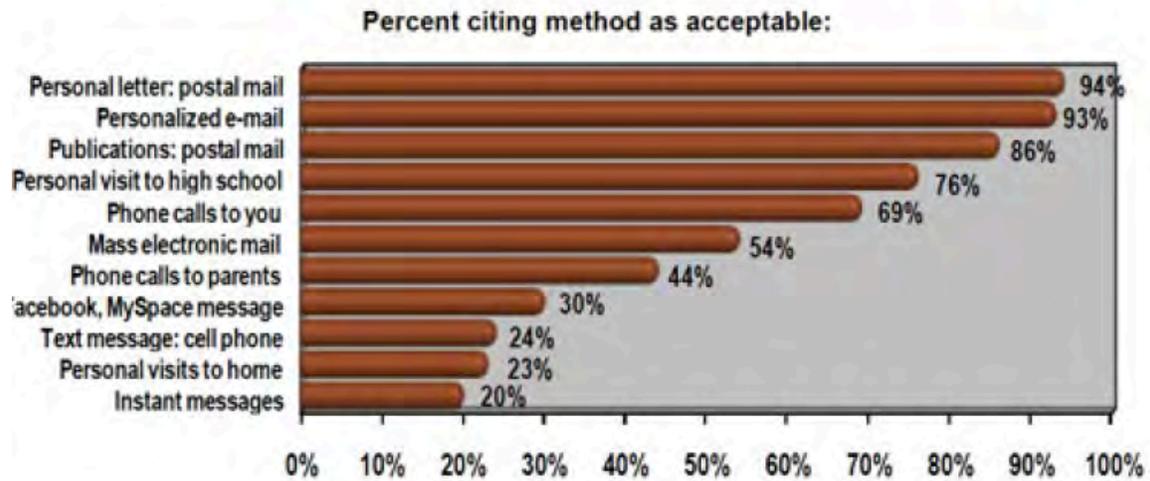
other tidbits....social media recruitment: do prospects really use it?? Retrieved

July 21, 2012, from <http://doteduguru.com/id5544-social-media-recruitment-do-prospects-really-use-it.html>

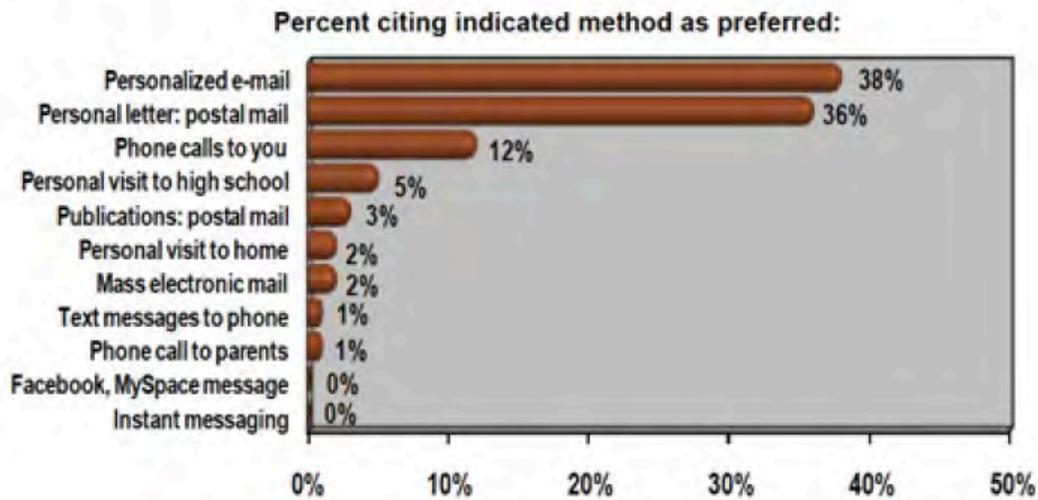
### *Preferred Method of Communication Before Applying*



## *Acceptable Communication Methods Before Applying*

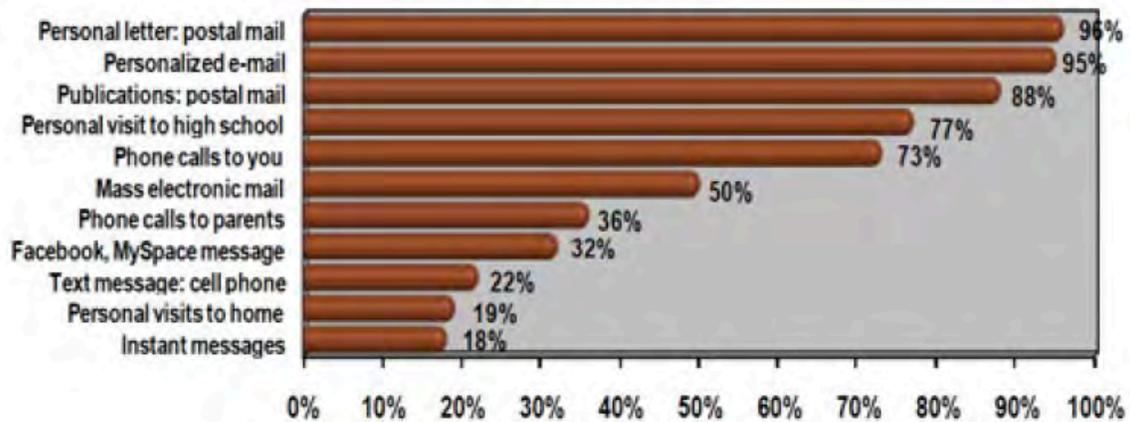


## *Preferred Method of Communication After Applying*



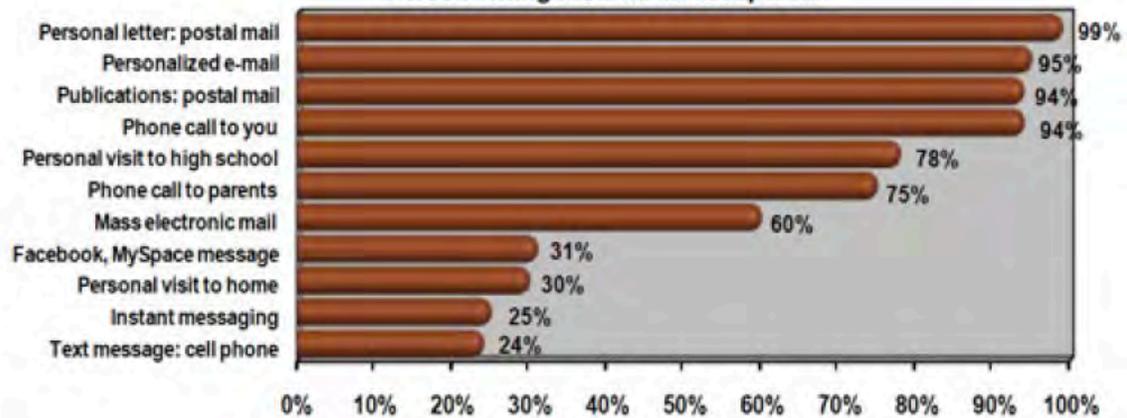
## *Acceptable Communication Methods After Applying*

Percent citing method as acceptable:



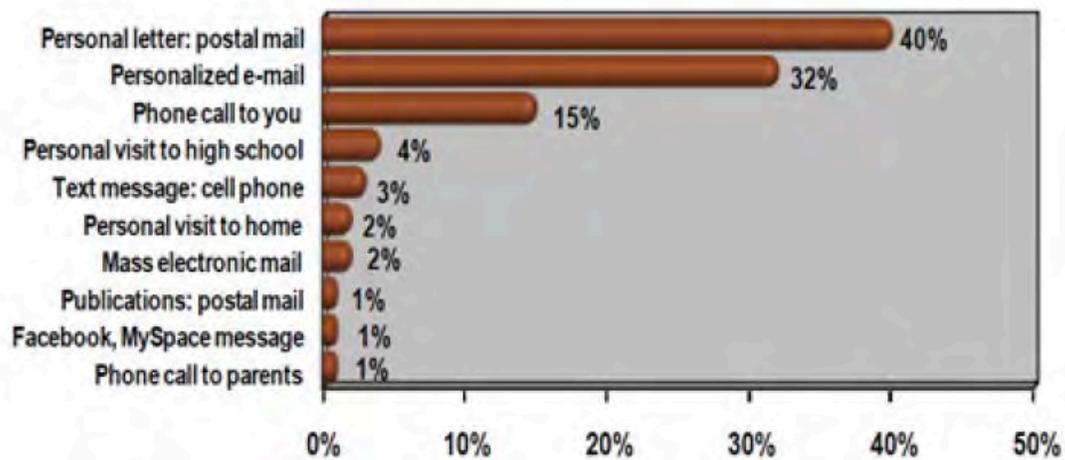
## *Acceptable Communication Methods After Applying*

Percent citing method as acceptable:



## *Preferred Method of Communication After Applying*

Percent citing indicated method as preferred:



Appendix L



social media  
marketing plan

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Social Media Marketing Guide

## Executive Summary

Social media has grown to a point that it cannot simply be ignored. People from all types of different demographics are using social media each day. And so it makes sense to use the social media platform for marketing purposes. Businesses from small to large as well as higher education institutions have begun implementing social media into their marketing. Studies show that higher education institutions are using social media more and more each year; convinced that the social media marketing techniques are both less expensive and a more effective way of marketing to prospective students. However, those prospective students don't feel the same; this is where the challenging disconnection takes place. Various national surveys show that high school students not only don't use social media as a means of gathering information about college, but that they also prefer to receive information from colleges and universities through channels other than social media (primarily email, mail, etc according to surveys). Is social media really an effective tool for colleges and universities to implement into their marketing strategies?

Contradicting information may suggest otherwise.

Given the data on social media, both from research and project surveys, the following is a plan created to use social media in marketing Snow College to prospective students. The implementation of social media is a small supplement to the current marketing efforts and cannot be treated as a primary solution to marketing needs.

## Objective

Utilize Social Media and other technology to increase Snow College enrollment. Begin enrollment growth by building an inquiry pool of 5,500 – 8,500 students then convert these inquiries into 1,500 – 2,500 admitted students. Based on several years' records we expect from these admits, that 50 percent or 750 – 1,250 will enroll. The following is a list of activities and programs that we will complete this year to increase this precious number. Social media and other technology will be utilized to bring admitted numbers from 1,500-2,500 students to 2,000-3,000 students. Then increasing the student yield from 50 percent to 60 percent. To meet our objective a strategic plan of social media and other technology will assist to increase the numbers to the desired outcomes.

## Measurement Benchmarks

Overall benchmark measurements will be measured against total student enrollment change after one year of social media plan implementation.

Enrollment numbers will be compared using third week of school report numbers. The goal is to increase enrollment by at least 500 students in one academic recruiting year.

Monthly measurement will be based on increase in subscription and follower numbers on all social media platforms and will be measured at the end of each month.

Facebook- Increase "likes." Increase at least 20 new "likes" per month

YouTube- Increase "subscriber." Increase at least 10 new subscribers per

month.

Blog- Increase page views. Increase at least 50 new page views per month.

### Gaining Active Users

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Blog accounts have already been created. These platforms will function as the major social media platforms to be used by Snow College. Each will have active content feeds. Icons and links will be added to all email correspondence and on the Snow College home webpage to promote growth and an active user base. All publications and presentations will include an invitation to join all of the social media platforms mentioned. Prospective students will be encouraged to use the social media platforms as means of communication as well as a way of gathering information about Snow College.

### Generating Content

Content is the key to successful social media. Without effective content active social media user will disappear. Content for all social media platforms should be based on the following guidelines:

1. Relevant and Valuable Information. The information provided should help social media users with what they are seeking. Begin content creation with the prospective Snow College students in mind. What information will that person find most valuable? Information on getting accepted, how to complete an online application, commonly asked housing questions, where to find the best deal on book, and so on. Ensure that the information is consistent and relevant to the audience.
2. Images. Images are highly effective and should always supplement written content. Images stand out and help attract attention and understanding of content.
3. Unique. Making the content unique not only demonstrated the uniqueness of Snow College, but also keeps users engaged. Regurgitated content is uninteresting and easily dismissed as unimportant.
4. Share Worthy. Content that carries social value will be interesting enough for current users to share with others. Shared content is how content goes viral and how to best increase active users.

### Platforms for Plan Strategy

Email is an important part of this plan because of the survey data taken from incoming Snow College freshmen and their parents. Although not considered part of a social media platform email was highly valued by the survey group. Email will provide the primary source of communication between Snow College and prospective students. Email will

also be a method of growing users within other social media platforms.

Facebook is a social networking site designed to build relationships. Facebook is a platform designed to post information both written and image based to promote the individual or business. Facebook is highly visual and should be used as such.

YouTube is a broadcasting channel where users can subscribe. Video content can be one of the most effective ways for Snow College to distribute information and provide a virtual experience for prospective students.

Blogging is an online journal of information. Current students, faculty and staff can use this platform to give a day to day account of the Snow College experience and share thoughts and ideas for prospective students.

Twitter is micro blogging platform to disperse micro bits of information. This a great platform for providing valuable information and linking users back to the website. It is also retweeting other people posts that are relevant to specific goals. (Twitter is an optional platform due to lack of interest from student and parent surveys. For this reason it is not included on the weekly post schedule)

#### Examples of Social Media Posts

How to post with each social media platform

##### Facebook

*What:* Provide little known information to prospective students about Snow College

*Why:* Help students to understand value of Snow College

*Example:* “The average class size at Snow College is only 20 students!” Accompany this post with an image of an actual class.

##### YouTube

*What:* Provide a tutorial on filling out the online application.

*Why:* Visual step-by-step help that can be stopped and replayed as needed.

*Example:* A screen cast of someone filling out the application with verbal direction through the process.

##### Blog

*What:* A day in the life a Snow College freshmen.

*Why:* Give a Snow College student perspective on what an average day is like at Snow

College.

*Example:* A Snow College student uses images and text to recreate what he/she does during a regular day of classes, etc.

Twitter

*What:* Information about an upcoming event

*Why:* Quick, short and easy way to get out the information, drive traffic to website for the details and drive attendance at the event.

*Example:* “APPLICATION FEE WAIVED. Scholarship open house this Tuesday in Sandy” with a link the event web page.

Strategy Overview

Email

iPad data gathering. Information cards that have traditionally been paper based will now be on an iPad. The use of iPads to gather information will allow quicker access to data gathered, or more timely email correspondence.

Email Schedule:

Upon completing an information card students will receive email information in the following schedule:

	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
<b>Email Sign-Up</b>							
<b>Admission Process Email</b>							
<b>Campus Visit Email</b>							
<b>Admission Scholarship Email</b>							
<b>Campus Visit Email</b>							
<b>Scholarship Deadline Email</b>							
<b>Housing &amp; Registration Email</b>							
<b>Registration Email</b>							

Email 1: Day of encounter with student

Thanks for your interest in Snow College email- Contact Info, phone and website.

Email 2: One month after initial contact or October of senior year

Admissions email- Outline the admission process and how-to YouTube video link.

Email 3: Two months after initial contact or November of senior year

Campus visit email- Link to sign-up for campus visit, with link to YouTube campus visit video.

- Email 4: Three months after initial contact or December of senior year  
Reminder about admissions and scholarship deadline of March 1- Outline the admission and scholarship process and how-to YouTube video link.
- Email 5: Four months after initial contact or January of senior year  
Another campus visit invitation and invitation to like Snow College on Facebook- provide a all contact info (email, phone, address, YouTube and Facebook link) as a way for student to ask questions in the format they prefer most.
- Email 6: Five months after initial contact or February of senior year  
Scholarship deadline reminder-have link for how-to apply for scholarships YouTube video.
- Email 7: Six months after initial contact or March of senior year  
Housing and registration info-links to housing contact info and a how-to registration YouTube video link.
- Email 8: Seven months after initial contact or April of senior year  
Registration email- Reminder about registration days and an outline of the process for registration with a link to how-to registrarion YouTube video.
- Email 9: Eight months after initial contact or May of senior year  
It's not to late email- An overview of all the necessary steps to go from high school student to Snow College registered student. Admission, campus visit, housing and registration.

#### Other Emails

Birthdays-all students will receive a happy birthday email on their birthday. General question emails will be responded to on a daily basis.

#### Web Presence

Home page (snow.edu) will be updated to include the following:

- Snow College Facebook, YouTube, and Blog links
- A Snow College YouTube video will be on the home page a rotate on a weekly basis
- Contact form for perspective students to fill out on home page.

- Apply Now button for a one click route to admissions application
- Live video chat option. Click and chat live with a person in “Skype” format

### Facebook

Facebook will be updated at least 2 times per week

Updates will be relevant to the email schedule and/or campus events or other noteworthy situations. Photo and video are preferable for updates as often as possible

Students will be hired to work two hours a day Monday-Friday to monitor questions or other interaction via Facebook and also follow any buzz or relevant info to Snow College.

### YouTube

Snow College YouTube Channel will produce one student made video per week. Video will come from video production classes.

Weekly YouTube video will also be hosted on home page (snow.edu) for one week at a time.

A series of how-to video will be added on every step necessary for a perspective student to get to Snow College. Videos will be used in email communication with perspective students.

How-to Videos:

Admissions Application

Applying for Scholarships

Academic

Departmental

Private

Diversity

Athletic

## Leadership

Campus Visit

Finding Housing

Registration

Moving in



## Blog

Snow College will maintain a student run blog. The purpose of the blog is to profile the students' experience.

One blog will be posted per week

Students will submit blogs posts to a filtering committee. The committee selects one blog post per week and pay contributing students.

## Social Media Weekly Posting Schedule

*Schedule represents minimum number of posts and can be exceeded*

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Facebook							
YouTube							
Blog							