



Social Media Enters the Mainstream:

Report on the Use of Social Media
in Advancement, 2014

by Jennifer Mack and Michael Stoner



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The Fifth Annual Survey of Social Media in Advancement conducted by CASE, Huron Education, and mStoner.

LINK TO THIS PAPER:
mstnr.me/CASESM2014

If you want a single data point that indicates how entrenched social media has become in advancement, external relations, and marketing in education, consider that **46 percent of presidents, chancellors, and other institution heads use social media in their official roles.**

The fact that CEOs are now convinced that this form of communication is important enough to spend their time on it indicates that social media have arrived.

Indeed, CEOs are not alone in recognizing the importance of social media. Here are some other key indicators of how crucial these channels have become to advancement—and of the growing confidence of school, college, and university staff in using and managing them:

- This year, 59 percent of respondents to our annual survey said they were using social media in campaigns (not just campaigns to raise money, but any “broader, planned campaign to achieve a specific goal”). That proportion has increased every year for the past three years.
- Institutions feel comfortable enough with “traditional” social channels like Facebook and Twitter to experiment, and achieve success, with emerging channels such as Instagram and Vine.
- And, institutions are raising money through their social media initiatives, providing real return on investment. The number of dollars raised isn’t large yet, but this success is beginning to validate the use of social media and is starting to convince skeptics of its worth.

This year, the fifth in which we’ve conducted this survey of social media in advancement, we focused on these key questions:

- How much, and in what ways, have leaders established a presence on social media?
- What channels are most commonly used—and most successful—for meeting advancement goals?
- How are institutions using social media in fundraising and stewardship?

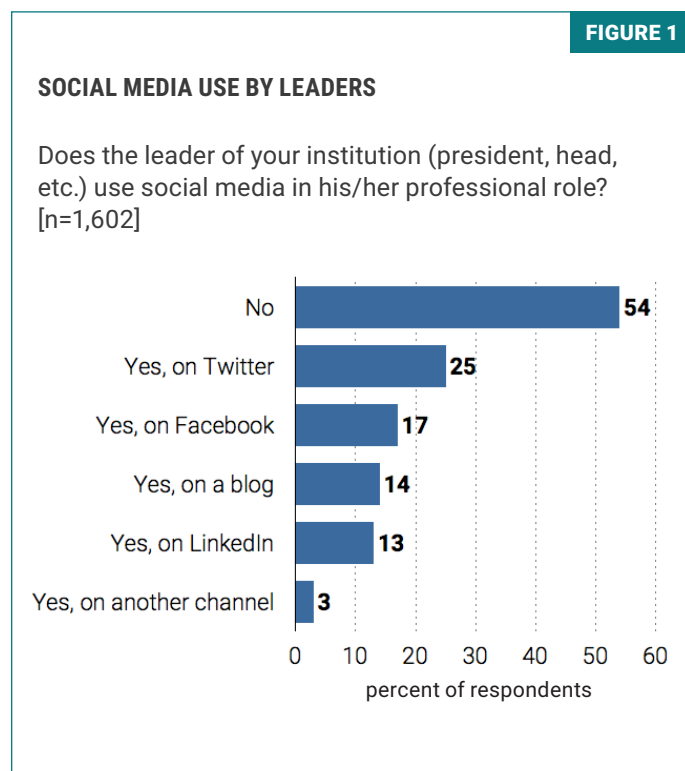
In this report, we’ll review our findings and explore some characteristics of institutions that are particularly successful in their use of social media for advancement.

I.

Leaders and Social Media

There's plenty of evidence of the adoption of social media by independent school heads and college and university leaders over the past three years, including profiles and reports in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and *CASE CURRENTS*, as well as posts on various blogs. In fact, we've reprinted an article from *CURRENTS* about leaders and their use of social media in the appendixes to this white paper, along with short profiles of some active presidents.

We wanted to see just how prevalent social media use by leaders was, so in this year's survey, we asked, "Does the leader of your institution (president, head, etc.) use social media in his/her professional role?"



The answers surprised us (see fig. 1). While 54 percent don't use social media professionally, 46 percent do. Twitter is the most commonly used channel (with 25 percent using it); 17 percent use Facebook, 14 percent blog, and 13 percent use LinkedIn; a few are using Instagram. Note that some presidents use multiple channels: For example, Paul LeBlanc, president of Southern New Hampshire University, combines a blog, where he can share his thoughts about campus or broader higher-ed issues, with Twitter, which enables him to reach well beyond campus (see Appendix 3).

Is what these leaders are doing helping their institutions? The jury's clearly out (see fig. 2): 68 percent of respondents said their institutions make no attempt to measure how effective these efforts are. Those that are doing some sort of measurement are primarily counting numbers of friends, followers, or comments (24 percent) or paying attention to anecdotal feedback (16 percent). A few—12 percent—are tracking click-throughs to a website.

We note, though, that while institutions may not be doing formal evaluations of leaders' use of social media, leaders themselves are keenly aware of whether or not they are gaining value from their activity on Facebook, Twitter, or other social channels. Presidents who are active on social media can cite anecdotes demonstrating the value of their interactions with a range of constituents, as did Santa J. Ono, president of the University of Cincinnati, in an interview with *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Here's one example he shared:

"I was tweeting with an alumnus before I was going to a trip to California, and I didn't know that [he was] a senior manager at NASA Ames Research Laboratory, and he invited me to tour [it]. And when I went there, I met the director of NASA Ames, and that resulted in the University of Cincinnati becoming a Space Act Agreement University, which opens the resources and facilities and funding from NASA up to our faculty and students. So that started because of a Twitter interaction."¹

¹ Sara Hebel, "Getting Personal on Twitter Pays Off," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 1, 2014; chronicle.com/article/On_Leadership_video/145585.

I.

Leaders and Social Media

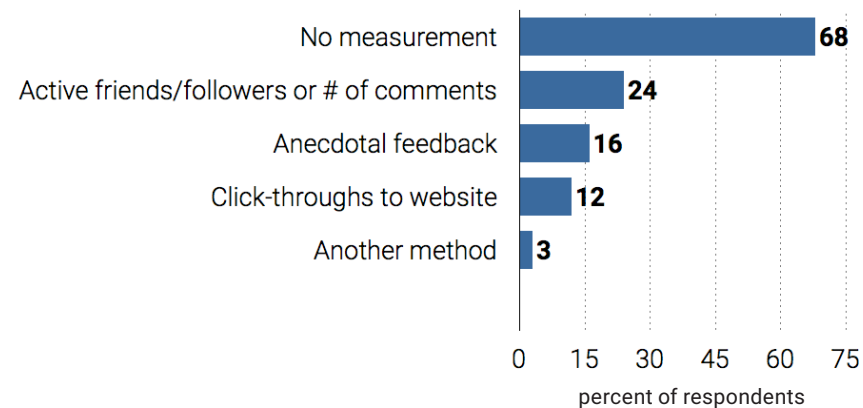
Perhaps it's not surprising that respondents who consider their institutions to be successful in using social media are slightly more likely to have a leader who uses social media (47 percent vs. 44 percent) and more often reported that their leader has a voice on Twitter (31 percent among the very successful, compared to 23 percent among all others). And they are more likely than their less-successful peers to measure the success of their leader's use of social media: 39 percent, compared to 28 percent.

Interestingly, public institutions are more likely than private ones to have a leader who uses social media (50 percent among public vs. 42 percent among private). This gap is made up almost entirely by the difference in the percentage who use Twitter (29 percent among public vs. 22 percent among private). 📊

FIGURE 2

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY LEADERS

Has your institution attempted to measure whether these efforts by your leader are successful? [n=1,005]



II.

Goals and Channels

One of the constants in our survey data for the past five years has been the set of goals institutions have for social media.

In both 2013 and 2014, these were the top five goals:

- engage alumni (in 2014, 84 percent)
- create, sustain, and improve brand image (77 percent)
- increase awareness, advocacy, and rankings (61 percent)
- engage current students (56 percent)
- build internal community (49 percent).

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube topped the list of tools most often used for advancement—as they have in the past four years (see fig. 3). What surprised us is Instagram’s rise: The percentage of institutions using it jumped from 27 percent in 2013 to 42 percent in just one year, making it the fifth most commonly used social tool. This was the first year we asked about the use of Vimeo and Vine; they are used by 16 percent and 9 percent of institutions, respectively.

The use of a social media aggregator on the institution’s website declined again this year (19 percent reported using one in 2014,

compared to 34 percent in 2013 and 43 percent in 2012). One reason for this, perhaps, is that many websites now incorporate social media directly into relevant pages on the site, rather than linking to a page aggregating social feeds. Or, they use icons from channels such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram on web pages to link directly to those channels without presenting actual content from them on the page.

One of the changes that has happened over the past five years, as institutions have spent more time deploying and managing social media, is that they can now learn from their own experience—not just from social media “experts.” The ability to draw on their own experience; feedback from their friends, fans, and followers; and data has enabled institutions to refine the way they deploy the tools available to them, resulting in more segmentation and experimentation with newer channels such as Instagram and Tumblr.

For example, many have learned firsthand that both prospective and current students are using Twitter, as one person indicated in an open-ended response: “When we started using Twitter, most of our engagement was with businesses and community influencers/resources (chambers, associations, libraries,

school districts). Almost overnight in fall semester 2011, we noted that incoming and current students began using Twitter to ask questions and comment on experiences (good and bad), and they had an expectation that we would engage with them.”

Interestingly enough, some have discovered that those audiences have also moved away from Facebook: “Facebook is ineffective for reaching students, but a good place to engage with the community, parents, and especially alumni. ... YouTube is helpful across the target audiences, and we share videos on other channels as appropriate, depending on the target audience.”

Experience has also given institutions the confidence to explore new channels, especially those that can help them reach a specific audience segment (see fig. 4). Instagram is a

MOST-USED CHANNELS

What are the most commonly used tools for advancement? [n=1,882]

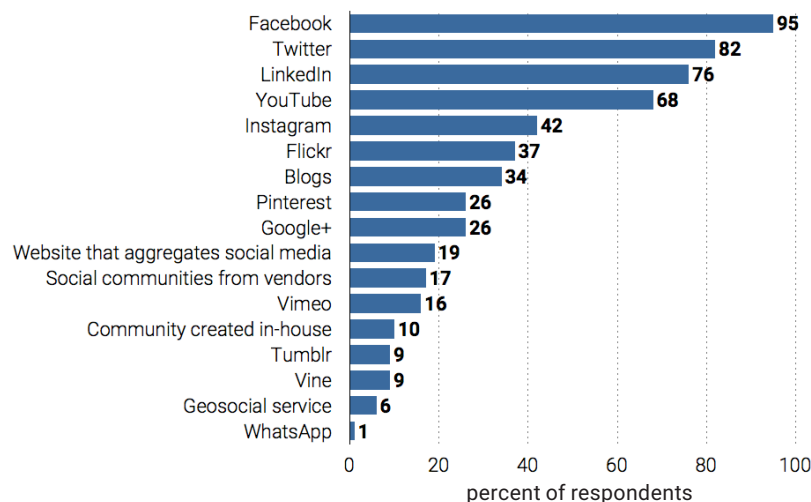


FIGURE 3

II. Goals and Channels

great example. One respondent noted, “We launched Instagram in fall 2013 and saw it grew creatively to more than 800 followers by the end of the semester. Although it’s much smaller than our followings on both Twitter and Facebook, our followers there seem more engaged and representative of our current students.” And another noted, “Instagram has been a huge success for us—but we specifically target current students, high school students, and young alumni.”

But advancement is learning a lesson long understood by marketers in other sectors. Audiences disperse their attention across many sources of information—not only the web, email, and other online channels, but also more traditional ones such as print and broadcast media and postal mail. These other channels become significant because they can be used to reinforce key messages or calls to action that are initially shared via any social channel or channels. Given how much information we’re all exposed to, and how little attention we pay to the overwhelming bulk of it, it makes sense that a multi-channel approach would be more effective than one that depends solely or primarily on a single channel, whether offline or online.

In previous reports,¹ we’ve looked at how institutions rely upon multiple channels to achieve their goals by combining social

¹ See our white papers from 2012, “#SocialMedia and Advancement: Insights from Three Years of Data”: mstnr.me/CASESMA2012; and from 2013, “#SocialMedia, Advancement, and Fundraising in Education”: mstnr.me/CASE2013.

MATCHING CHANNEL AND AUDIENCE

Which types of social media do you (your unit) use for each of the specific audiences below? [n=1,698]

	Alumni	Students	Parents	Donors
Facebook	90%	72%	54%	57%
Twitter	73%	63%	43%	47%
LinkedIn	73%	34%	15%	28%
YouTube	56%	54%	40%	44%
Instagram	32%	33%	16%	15%

media with other channels, some of which might be considered legacy media. It’s clear from anecdotal reports that these channels (print, face-to-face contact, telephone) can play a big role in some types of campaigns.

Many consider email a legacy medium, asserting that it is being replaced by SMS (texting) and other messaging tools that make possible short, immediate exchanges. Still, there is plenty of evidence from marketers outside education that email is an influential channel and one that moves people to take action.

In fact, when asked to compare email to social media for its success in meeting unit goals, 46 percent of this year’s respondents confirmed that they considered email more effective than some social media channels, and an additional 31 percent rated it over all social media (see fig. 5).

Within education, we’ve seen that email plays a crucial role in the efforts of online ambassadors to recruit their fans, friends, and followers to share and donate in initiatives like Columbia’s Giving Day² or Florida State University’s Great Give.³

² See the case study in “#SocialMedia, Advancement, and Fundraising in Education”: mstnr.me/CASE2013.

³ See Justin Ware’s case study of this campaign, “The Great Give Online Goes Viral: Florida State University”: mstnr.me/FSUGrtGive.

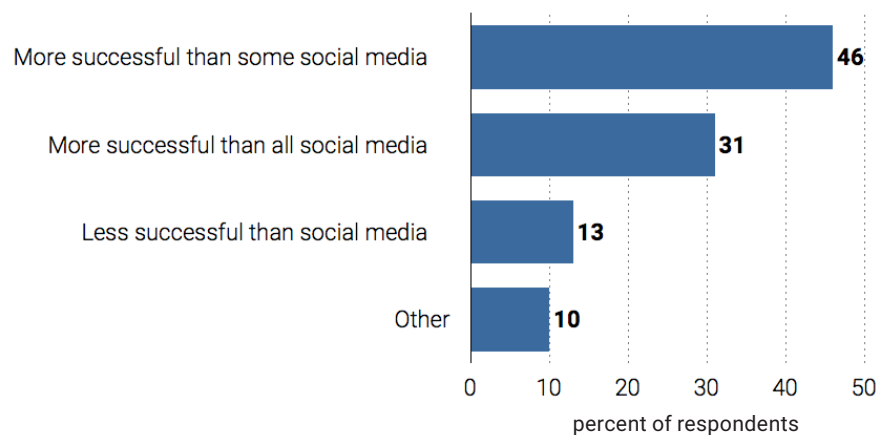
II.

Goals and Channels

EMAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

FIGURE 5

Compared to social media, how successful is email in meeting your unit's goals? [n=1,611]



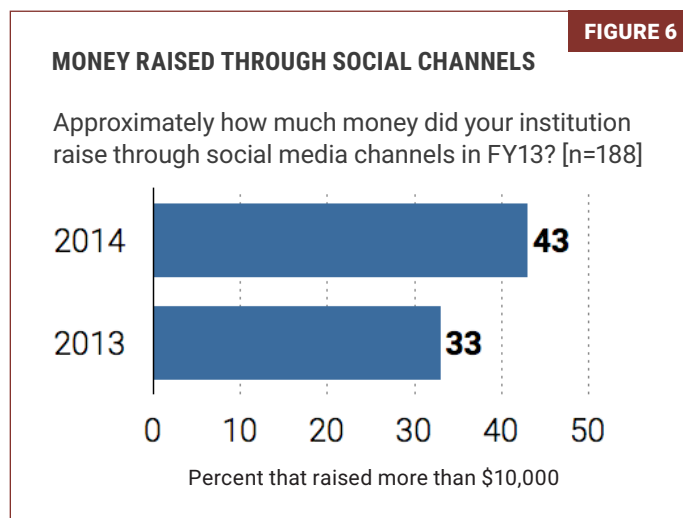
Multiple channels continue to be important for contact and follow-up, as one commenter remarked: "The older alumni want to know that we use these media because it shows we are keeping up, but they still prefer snail mail or email. So, segment the alumni into groups (snail, email, social media) and target them differently. Time-consuming but more effective."

Finally, this year 59 percent of institutions reported using social media as part of a campaign (a concerted effort to reach a goal), up from 54 percent last year. 📈

III.

Social Media in Fundraising and Stewardship

Last year, we explored how institutions were using social media to raise money, profiling half a dozen institutions using various channels and approaches in their fundraising initiatives. This year, we wanted to explore how common some of these practices were.



A growing proportion of institutions—47 percent this year, up from 41 percent in 2013—are using social media to raise money. And about half of private institutions (51 percent) are using social media to raise money, compared to 43 percent of public institutions.

The majority of respondents said that their institution raised less than \$10,000 with social media. But the proportion that raised more than \$10,000 has risen to 43 percent, up from 33 percent in 2013 (see fig. 6). This year, we also asked what percentage of total fundraising income came through social media; most respondents (82 percent) said 5 percent or less. So it is a small, but growing, part of the fundraising pie.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the social channels most used for fundraising mirror those used overall (see fig. 7). While many of them are considered effective for other purposes, few are yet particularly useful for raising money. Respondents are nearly as likely to see Facebook and YouTube as useful for fundraising as they are to see them as successful for their overall goals. On the other hand, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram are much less commonly seen as useful

for fundraising—though they have served this purpose for some institutions.

Facebook is considered the most effective tool for fundraising by far—by 81 percent of respondents.

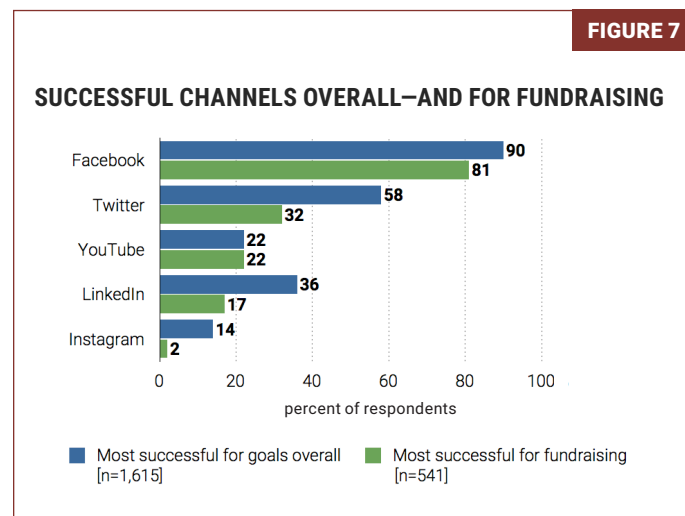
At the moment, most institutions are using social media for purposes related to their annual fund (for example, most “giving day” initiatives are part of annual fund appeals). So we asked how institutions were using social media in their annual giving programs:

- 78 percent of respondents used social media in solicitations.
- 70 percent thanked donors using social media.
- 87 percent used social channels to keep donors up to date.

By contrast, very few institutions are using social media for major or principal gifts right now. Its primary use for both is to keep donors up to date on news and, less commonly, to thank them (see fig. 8).

In fact, most institutions use multiple channels to thank donors and to share news and updates with donors, even those who gave to a campaign based on outreach through social channels (see figs. 9 and 10).

Based on analysis of the open-ended responses, here are some emerging trends in fundraising that we’ll follow up on next year:



III.

Social Media in Fundraising and Stewardship

- **Greater use of ambassadors:** Successful initiatives like the ones at Florida State University and Columbia University encouraged active alumni to marshal their own networks to further the university's fundraising goals. This year, 43 percent of institutions reported using ambassadors to promote their social media activities.
- **Direct giving functionality:** We want to learn whether many institutions have used the Facebook donate button or similar functionality in their campaigns.
- **"Giving day" campaigns:** Columbia University's Giving Day, which raised more than \$8 million in 2013, showed how effective a well-planned, concentrated effort could be, and other institutions are following Columbia's lead with successful giving days of their own.
- **Kickstarter-style crowdsourcing:** Cornell and other institutions are experimenting with platforms that allow donors to identify needs and mount campaigns encouraging others to support specific programs. 🎮

MAJOR AND PRINCIPAL GIFTS

For which of the following types of fundraising does your institution use social media? [n=654]

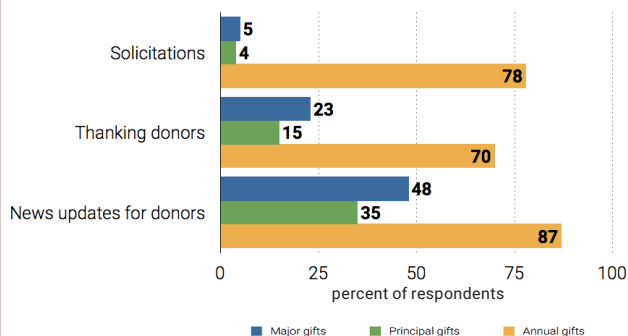


FIGURE 8

CHANNELS FOR THANKING DONORS

What channels does your institution use for thanking donors who gave to a social-media-based fundraising campaign? [n=566]

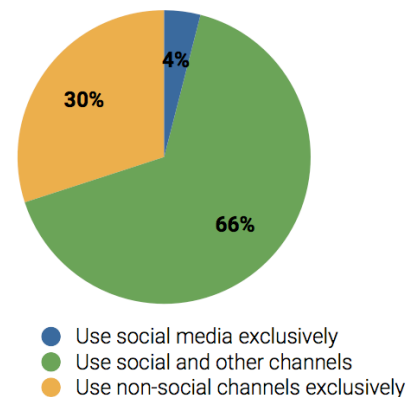


FIGURE 9

CHANNELS FOR UPDATING DONORS

What channels does your institution use for sharing updates and institutional news with donors who gave to a social-media-based fundraising campaign? [n=540]

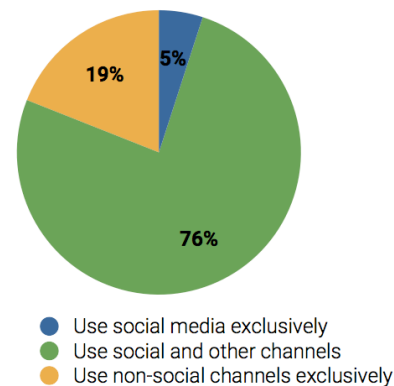


FIGURE 10

IV.

Characteristics of Institutions That Are Successful with Social Media

Which types of social media do you (your unit) use?
Please select all that apply.

TABLE 1

	Most successful n=381	All others n=1178
Facebook (create/manage communities within Facebook)	99%	94%
Twitter	93%	79%
LinkedIn (create/manage communities within LinkedIn or manage university page in LinkedIn)	81%	75%
YouTube	83%	65%
Instagram	62%	36%
Flickr	50%	34%
Blogs	45%	30%
Pinterest	40%	21%
Google+	40%	22%
An institutional website that is an aggregator of social network sites	25%	17%
Social communities provided by vendors through proprietary software (such as Harris Connect, iModules, etc.)	22%	16%
Vimeo	21%	14%
A community created in-house by your institution	11%	10%
Tumblr	15%	6%
Vine	18%	5%
Geosocial services (such as Foursquare or SCVNGR)	14%	3%
WhatsApp	1%	1%

We began this white paper by observing that more and more institutions are starting to feel that they are successful with their use of social media for outreach and engagement. Overall, a greater feeling of self-confidence and ownership of social media emerged this year from the answers to the survey questions and in the open-ended responses. We wanted to explore in greater depth some characteristics of institutions and departments that consider their social media outreach and engagement to be successful.

They cast a wider net. Respondents who consider their institutions to be most successful in social media use more channels and make far greater use of Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and blogs (see Table 1).

They set goals. Respondents who see themselves as most successful in social media have a larger or better-defined set of goals than those who feel less successful. For example, one commenter remarked, "Having a social media plan—which includes objectives, strategies, and tactics—has been extremely helpful. Connection and engagement have been our biggest goals that social media has allowed us to achieve, in addition to presenting our college as thought leaders. We've continually created quality content that drives traffic to our websites, launched a successful quarterly e-newsletter (mainly sent to alumni), and have been simply doing more of what works (and less of what doesn't!). Our social strategy also includes live tweeting

IV.

Characteristics of Institutions That Are Successful with Social Media

events and utilizing the 50/25/25 rule (50 percent our content, 25 percent others’ content, 25 percent fun stuff, contests, etc.).”

They find social media to be more successful than email.


Overall, about one-eighth of the respondents to the survey see their social media outreach as more successful than their email. But among those who see themselves as most successful in social media, 22 percent said decisively that social media is more successful for them than email (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

Compared to the social media you selected above, how successful is email in meeting your unit’s goals?

	Total	Most successful	All others
	n=1,611	n=376	n=1,167
Email is more successful than some of them	46%	48%	46%
Email is more successful than all of them	31%	16%	35%
The social media selected above are more succesfull than email	13%	22%	10%
Other	10%	14%	9%

They’re led by people who themselves use social media.

Respondents who consider their institution to be very successful in social media were more likely to report that their leader is active on social media, particularly Twitter (31 percent, compared to 23 percent) and are more likely than their less-successful peers to measure the effectiveness of their leader’s use of social media (39 percent, compared to 28 percent). 

Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Process, Demographics, and Other Survey Details

This was the fifth annual survey of Social Media in Advancement sponsored by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), Huron Education, and mStoner, Inc. The survey was mailed to 61,220 CASE members in January 2014, resulting in 1,963 responses.

The respondents roughly mirror CASE members: 85 percent were from the United States and Canada; 52 percent from public institutions, 48 percent from private institutions. They represented a range of sizes of institutions and various departments in advancement, with communications/marketing staff the largest group responding (66 percent total).

Figures 11 to 13 illustrate the breakdown of respondents by advancement areas and their institutions by institutional size and type.

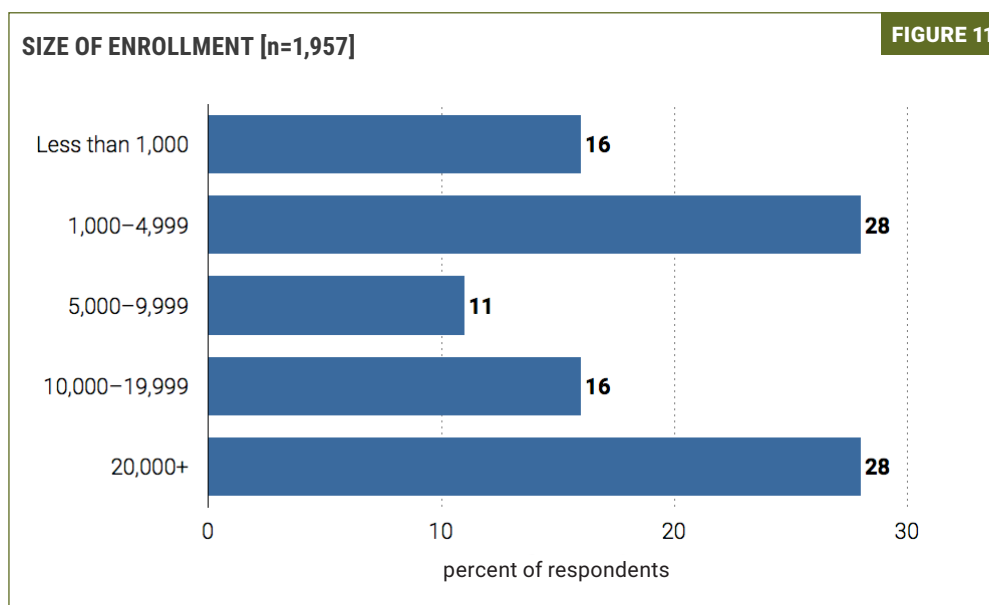
For a complete look at the data and differences between groups, see these appendixes:

The **Survey Data by Institution Type** addresses size, public compared to private, geography (North America compared to abroad) and K-12 compared to higher education institutions.

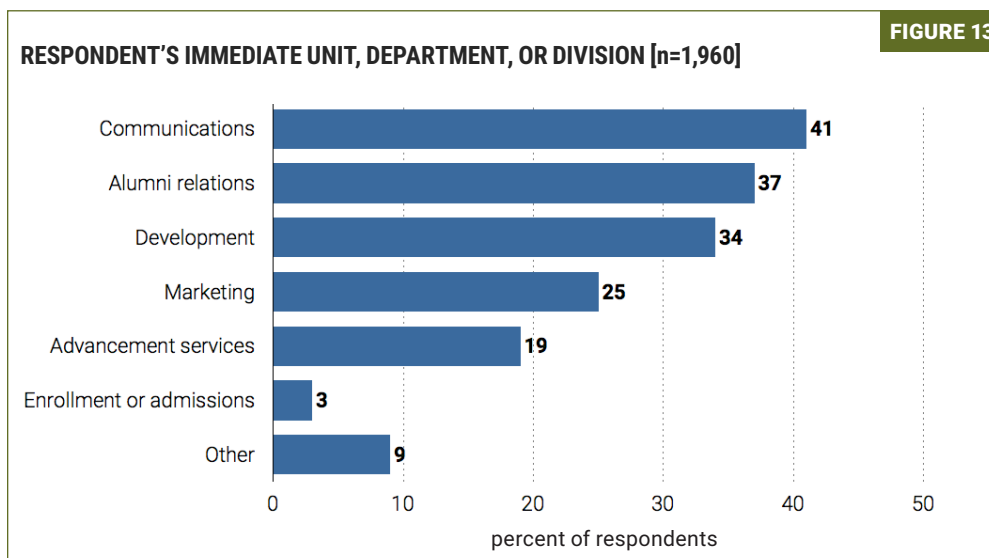
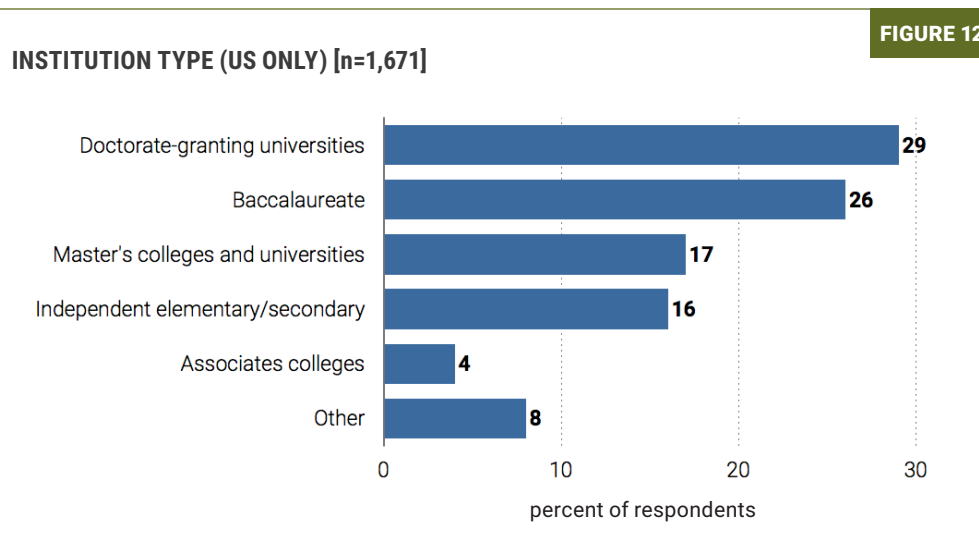
(<http://mstnr.me/CASE2014inst>)

The **Survey Data by Key Uses of Social Media** appendix shows groupings by those with and without leaders who use social media, those who rate their units “very successful” or a “model for successful use of social media” compared to those who rate themselves as less successful, units that handle their own social media compared to those that are less directly involved with social media, and institutions that use social media in fundraising compared to those that do not.

(<http://mstnr.me/CASE2014uses>)



Appendix 1



Appendix 2: Hail to the Tweeps: College and University Presidents Take to Social Media

By Michael Stoner

“If the president of the United States has a Twitter account, then why wouldn’t every university leader?” asks Cheryl Schrader, chancellor of Missouri University of Science and Technology, who tweets as @SandTChancellor. She’s been tweeting for only a few months, but she’s well aware of the positive implications it can have on her institution’s brand, if done right.

Indeed. Engaging with stakeholders on social media channels can burnish a brand’s reputation, according to an early 2012 survey conducted by BRANDfog, a social media branding firm that caters to CEOs. The study found that 82 percent of respondents “were more likely to trust a company whose CEO and leadership team engage in social media.” In addition, 94 percent said that such participation enhances the brand’s image.

Still, few corporate CEOs are active on social media, according to [CEO.com](#). The same holds true for most college and university presidents, at least in their roles as institutional leaders. And like corporate CEOs, college and university presidents cite many reasons for not using Twitter, Facebook, or other social media to communicate with their constituents. Many say they already have enough demands on their time, and they hesitate to spend more of it on social media channels that may have little apparent return. Others are concerned about what might happen if they post or tweet something that could have negative consequences for their institution or for them personally. Some even recount examples of social media interactions that have made headlines and created public relations headaches for other institutions.

While having an active social media presence is not yet part of the job description for institutional leaders, those who have

incorporated such channels into their communications find them valuable for connecting with constituents; sharing their values, insights, and knowledge; and marketing their institutions to a broader audience. Presidents tweet, post, and blog to voice their opinions on current education topics; inform people about campus news and activities; praise students, faculty, and staff; promote faculty research; and highlight campus and alumni events, often including pictures.

Brave new media world

Perhaps the best-known proponent of social media among current presidents is Walter M. Kimbrough, who became president of Louisiana’s Dillard University in July 2012. Eight years before starting his present leadership post, Kimbrough, who has maintained an active Facebook presence since 2007 and blogs at [hiphopprez.blogspot.com](#), was dubbed the “Hip-Hop Prez” by students at Philander Smith College in Arkansas. In late 2009, he adopted the nickname as his Twitter handle—@HipHopPrez.

Savvy presidents appreciate how social media channels can help them connect with different audiences, particularly students. For instance, Robert Wyatt, president of Coker College, credits Facebook with helping him break down barriers with students on the South Carolina campus. Although he initially began using the tool out of personal interest, he soon saw its potential for communicating with students when they started friending him. He’s able to keep tabs on campus issues that he might not know about if he weren’t on Facebook.

“Because students are intimidated by the president, they’re not going to come up to me on campus and talk,” he says. “But on Facebook they do. It allows me to do a virtual walking tour of campus and communicate in a way that I’d otherwise find hard to do.”

Whether Southern New Hampshire University’s more than 45,000 students are enrolled online, at one of its five regional centers, or on its main campus, students can always connect with President Paul LeBlanc, @snhuprez, on Twitter.

Appendix 2

"As my job has become more external, I've found it hard to get to know as many students as I once could," he says. "But they know they can reach me on Twitter and I respond almost immediately. I think it's important for them to know that they can reach the president when they need to."

Leaders can encourage individual students by praising their academic or athletic accomplishments—or advise them when they're doing something untoward by using the direct, private messaging options that social media channels offer.

"Facebook allows you to validate students' hard work and effort by liking what they post," says Dan Porterfield, president of Franklin & Marshall College in Pennsylvania, who also tweets as **@danporterfield**. "When they feel liked and respected by someone they respect, that allows them to take the risk of growth."

As some institutions expand beyond a single physical campus, social media are becoming increasingly important channels. When Webster University President Elizabeth (Beth) Stroble heard Jack Dorsey, Twitter's founder and executive chairman, speak on her Missouri campus in fall 2009, she realized that the platform would be a great tool to help her overcome the challenges she faced in communicating with students and staff at her institution's 100-plus locations in the United States, Europe, and Asia. Within a day, she began tweeting from the handle **@websterpres**.

In addition to keeping up with constituents, presidents find that Twitter and other social media help them stay abreast of news and research.

"My whole world of understanding and connections has expanded—positively—because of Twitter," says Anne M. Kress, president of New York's Monroe Community College, who tweets as **@MCCPresident**. "Its immediacy keeps me informed on the go and in real time about local, national, and global issues in higher education and in broader terms. ... I would not go back to a pre-Twitter life."

Social media relations

By virtue of their positions, presidents quickly learn that their tweets are often amplified. Soon after Stroble began sharing her institution's stories, she discovered that her tweets were reaching beyond her Webster constituents to a broader audience, notably

journalists, who often use Twitter to monitor news and find story ideas as well as sources. As a result, she was profiled by a local St. Louis business newspaper as the first in a series on local executives who tweet.

Wyatt, who tweets as **@robertlwyatt**, took to Twitter a while after he had been using Facebook and has been surprised by the different audiences he reaches on each medium. While he connects with students and the university community on Facebook, journalists and foundation representatives are more likely to contact him because of something he's tweeted.

Likewise, many of LeBlanc's followers are reporters and policymakers who use Twitter as a way to track what's going on in higher education. In fact, his tweeting has even resulted in an invitation to meet with U.S. Senate staff members, simply because one of them follows him on Twitter.

"There are a lot of people in higher education media and policy who follow me," he says. "Prior to social media, how would I get on the radar screen of people who matter?"

Ferdinand von Prondzynski, principal and vice-chancellor at Robert Gordon University in Scotland, had a slightly different experience in that his blog—launched in 2008 as a two-way conversation with faculty members and students when he was president of Dublin City University in Ireland—was what brought him to the media's attention.

"I started my blog as an internal communications tool to let faculty and students know what was in my mind and allowing them to comment," says von Prondzynski, whose Twitter handle is **@vonprond**. "It was picked up by the media and given more prominence than I had anticipated." His blog led to a column in *The Irish Times* newspaper.

But simply being active on social media channels won't garner campus coverage. A president who wants to connect with reporters needs to share substantive information. Menachem Wecker, a former education reporter at *U.S. News & World Report* and an active Twitter user, acknowledges that while stakeholders may enjoy a president's institutional cheerleading, to him, it's a turnoff.

"I have seen very few, if any, instances of college or university presidents actually using any social media platform whatsoever

Appendix 2

in a manner that struck me as strategic and conversational in the least,” Wecker says. “I’m very unlikely to subscribe to handles of deans and other senior administrators, let alone presidents, because they tend to echo vague talking points, run their updates like RSS feeds of [the institution’s] press releases, only retweet others’ comments, or some combination thereof.”

Tool time

It’s important that presidents find the social media tools that suit their communication style and needs. Most importantly, they need to keep in mind that an essential ingredient for social media success is frequent engagement, according to Kress.

“As my Twitter followers can attest, that’s not an issue for me,” she says. “But if a president would consider it an unwelcome chore, she shouldn’t do it.”

In addition to using Twitter, which allows for quick communication with individual followers and with a wider public audience, Kress and LeBlanc also take time to blog, which gives them the opportunity to write longer and more nuanced communications.

Before Schrader began tweeting, she consulted her communications staff and discussed priorities. “It was her idea to use Twitter,” says Andrew Careaga, director of communications at Missouri S&T. “We worked out some goals, including increasing visibility among current and prospective students, alumni, faculty, and staff; increasing accessibility to those audiences; and increasing awareness of her leadership in STEM.” Both Careaga and Schrader are familiar with the BRANDfog data and hope that her Twitter engagement also will boost trust in Schrader’s leadership and her team.

Although Wyatt, who also blogs for *The Huffington Post*, is a Twitter user, he considers Facebook to be a more effective channel for him. About half of Coker College’s trustees now follow him, he says, and like his fans who are students, faculty, staff, and community members, the trustees enjoy staying on top of what’s happening

on campus. “I pride myself on being transparent, so Facebook is a natural fit for me,” he says.

While Stroble’s Twitter presence has helped garner attention for her institution, lately she has also been looking to Facebook more often to communicate with Webster’s internal audiences.

Social guidance

Presidents who use social media say that the most important advice they can offer a newcomer is to be yourself and be authentic. According to Schrader, authenticity means that campus leaders should not only “avoid institutionalese,” but that they should also author and post their own tweets.

Showing personality and having a sense of humor on these channels also go a long way toward humanizing a president. Followers want to learn more about the human being behind the role—something that’s not always apparent to those who see presidents primarily at commencement, Founder’s Day, homecoming, or other ceremonial events.

“In five years, no one will even think about asking this question...It will be assumed that a president is using social media.”

Jamie Ferrare, senior vice president of the Association of Governing Boards and principal at AGB Search

“Part of my brand is a personal and professional blend,” Stroble says. “I’ll share photos of my family occasionally, but I won’t go into great detail [on] my personal opinions about things. If I wanted to do that, I’d use a different Twitter feed.”


Presidents advise people to remember that when you’re using social media, you are in public. Kress’ motto: “Be yourself, but also be aware of your audience and your role.”

That’s good advice for anyone to follow, but it’s particularly cogent

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for deans, provosts, and others who may be candidates for a presidency. In fact, evaluating a person's social media identity—including his or her Facebook presence, tweets, and blog posts—is now part of the vetting process in presidential searches, according to Jamie Ferrare, senior vice president of the Association of Governing Boards and principal at AGB Search. However, Dennis M. Barden, senior vice president in the higher education practice at the executive recruitment firm Witt/Kieffer, says that a candidate's social media experience isn't something that yet concerns board members, likely because they're not particularly engaged with these channels themselves. "Boards are focused on outcomes," he says, adding that what they want is a president who will strengthen the institution's brand.

While presidents who are active on social media are the exception today, as these channels become more embedded in our lives, social CEOs will likely become the rule. Presidents who are already active are harbingers of the campus CEO of the future.

"In five years, no one will even think about asking this question," Ferrare says. "It will be assumed that a president is using social media." 

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Appendix 3: Profiles of Social CEOs

Anne M. Kress

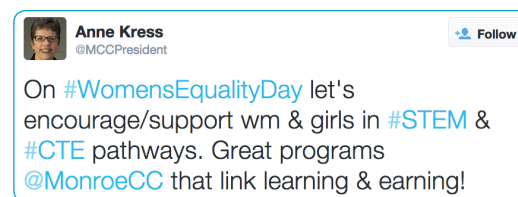
President, Monroe Community College, Rochester, N.Y.



In 2009, when Anne M. Kress was inaugurated as the fifth president of Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, N.Y., she faced major challenges at her institution and in the community. Five years later, there's been substantial progress in overcoming them.

MCC's leader has been just as innovative in adopting social media. She joined Twitter in 2009 at a time when few other college presidents were active in social media. This seemed a logical step for someone who had been an early adopter of Facebook, blogging, and online teaching.

"Twitter seemed like a great way to communicate directly with a wide community about MCC and give insights into both the work we do as a college and the work I do as MCC president," Kress explained. "I wanted to use it to shine a spotlight on MCC and highlight great work in higher education."



At MCC, Kress has focused on improving academic quality and access. In an April profile, *Rochester City Paper* reporter Tim Louis Macaluso

noted, "MCC is increasingly seen as a smart choice—a reliable pathway to a rewarding career and/or a four-year college, minus the high tuition." Last year, the college received \$2.25 million, its largest gift ever, targeted to providing student scholarships. And it announced that it was purchasing property for a downtown campus, capping 20 years of planning and building community support for the project.

Using Twitter, Kress shares insights and comments on community college funding, economic development, student learning, and initiatives under discussion at MCC, as well as on relevant national news. Kress's Twitter followers are aware that her role has expanded beyond Rochester and that she's involved in activities within the state university system and in Washington, DC. And they've also been able to follow the ins and outs of MCC's acquisition of its new campus, a tangible reminder of the college's efforts to create new and innovative approaches to the region's economic development and job training needs.

Kress writes a weekly blog post for the internal college community and sends a weekly email update to MCC trustees. By contrast, she sees Facebook as a way to connect with family and friends: "It is very important to me to keep my professional and personal online selves separate. If you want to learn what I'm reading about higher

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education affordability, follow me on Twitter. If you want to learn what ice cream I'm making this weekend, friend me on Facebook. At least from my perspective, these two don't really cross over."

Kress writes her own tweets. "I was shocked the first time I learned that some folks do not," she said. "I tweet as **@MCCPresident**, so my thought is that it really should be me posting." She averages about six tweets a day and says it takes her about half an hour: "...but only because I'm also including the time it takes to read some of the reports I tweet about."

A screenshot of a tweet from Anne Kress (@MCCPresident) dated August 28. The tweet text is: "The Power of @SUNY -- intern analyzes @nytimes coverage of private v public college, and NYT reports it. So cool! publiceditor.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/08/27/a-t..."

Her Twitter followers include a good representation of Rochester and New York State politicians, business people, educators, and reporters—and other college presidents, reporters, academics, and business people.

Through her engagement with others on Twitter, "My whole world of understanding and connections has expanded," Kress said.

Anne M. Kress, President of Monroe Community College since 2009

Education: B.A., B.S.B.A, M.A., and Ph.D., University of Florida.

More than 20 years in higher education with special interests in student access and success, global education, workforce development, technology, and the intersection between traditional liberal education and essential 21st-century learning outcomes.

Serves on N.Y. Governor Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council and as a trustee of the New York Power Authority. Received many local honors and was named a Woman of Distinction by the N.Y. State Senate.

Serves on national boards, commissions, and councils for organizations including the League for Innovation in the Community College, the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Council on Education, the Educational Testing Service, and the Council on Foreign Relations, and is a frequent presenter at national conferences and meetings.

"Its immediacy keeps me informed—on the go and in real time—about local, national, and global issues in higher education and in broader terms."

She added, "When I was at the Clinton Global Initiative American event recently, I actively tweeted the panels. The CGI reached out to me to see what I would like President Clinton to ask at the next panel. He asked my question and shined a great spotlight on MCC. That was pretty cool and would never have happened without Twitter."

And, she added, "I would not go back to a pre-Twitter life."

Monroe Community College

Enrollment: 34,593 credit students in 2012–2013.

Programs: more than 90 degree and certificate programs.

Ranked in the top 25 in the country among community colleges for associate degrees awarded.

More facts: mstnr.me/MCCfacts

Appendix 3: Profiles of Social CEOs

Paul LeBlanc

President, Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, N.H.



Paul LeBlanc, president of Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) since 2003, has found a combination of social media—an active blog plus Twitter—that allows him the freedom both to share a sense of how his institution is leading in online education and to reveal some of his personal life and interests.

SNHU, which offers traditional undergraduate degrees and face-to-face graduate programs on its campus in Manchester, N.H., is also the third largest provider of online higher education in the country. In 2013, it launched The College for America. Its degrees are competency-based, not tied to credit hours—the first program of its kind approved by the U.S. Department of Education and by a regional accreditor. In *College (Un)Bound*, an analysis of the problems and promise facing higher ed today, Jeffrey Selinger focused on LeBlanc and SNHU as among those leading the way toward new ways of serving the emerging educational needs of students.



Paul LeBlanc
@snhuprez

Follow

At 7:00, raising the national championship flag at the start of first men's soccer game of the season. My job is so fun!

On his blog, called “The President’s Corner” (president.snhu.edu/leblanc), LeBlanc comes

across as good-humored and self-deprecating, friendly, passionate, and committed to his institution and to his family. He’s not afraid to address controversial topics and has shared his views on same-sex marriage and other social issues. And he’s not shy about taking on critics. In a post titled “The emperor wears a bunny suit,” he responded to a critical blog post and a snarky retweet about it with some facts and figures that illustrated how SNHU differs from some of the controversial for-profit online education providers.

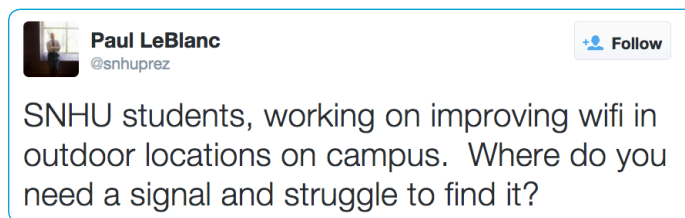
A scan of LeBlanc’s blog offers plenty of insights into his thinking about SNHU’s approach to a new type of education. For example, in “Online learning and civic engagement,” he explained how students in an online, competency-based program begin to demonstrate civic engagement: by showing that they can calculate the impact of plastic water bottles on the environment, for example. (He noted that students in The College for America either pass, or don’t: no B- for them.)

LeBlanc tweets as @snhuprez. He said that Twitter, with its 140-character limit, is a perfect complement to his blog. “I’m a huge Twitter fan, after being a skeptic initially. When it first hit the scene, I thought: ‘What can one possibly say in 140 characters that’s remotely intelligent?’ Now I understand its value: It’s a great news and information source for me based on who I follow. And, from an outbound perspective, I like the fact

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that tweeting is informal and immediate.”

It’s also a way to keep in touch with students and others on campus. “As my job has become more external, I’ve found it hard to get to know as many students as I once could,” he said. “But they know they can reach me on Twitter and I respond almost immediately. I think it’s important for them to know that they can reach the president.”



LeBlanc pointed out that his blog and his Twitter feed enable people to get a real sense of who he is as a person and as the leader of a complex academic enterprise: “If you think about the way presidents get to communicate, there are a fairly limited number of tools. I can only do a little bit of walking around. I can send out formal communications, but they don’t allow me to talk about aspects of my life that are more personal. These channels allow me to reach a lot of people and give them a more personal view of my thoughts and my life. I really love that.”

Paul J. LeBlanc, President of Southern New Hampshire University since 2003

Education: B.A., Framingham State College; M.A., Boston College; Ph.D., University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Author or editor of *Computers and Writing: A History*; *Writing Teachers Writing Software: Creating Our Place in the Electronic Age*; and *Re-Imagining Computers and Composition: Teaching and Research in the Virtual Age*.

Served as president of Marlboro College in Vermont and vice president for new technology at Houghton Mifflin Company.

Listed as one of 15 “Classroom Revolutionaries” by *Forbes* in 2012, featured in Bloomberg TV’s “Innovators” series, and honored with a New England Higher Education Excellence Award in 2012.

The test is, of course, how effective these channels are in helping LeBlanc communicate. While he hasn’t measured the results as rigorously as SNHU tracks the learning outcomes of its online students, he has plenty of anecdotes that reveal their impact. For example, he’s often interviewed about his views on online education in part because his followers include a significant number of media people. He was invited to testify on Capitol Hill because U.S. Senate staffers followed him and found his views thought-provoking. And, he said, he learned that a trustee he was recruiting was already reading his blog, which gave the potential trustee some deep insights into the thinking of the university’s leader outside of the formal vetting process.

While LeBlanc is comfortable writing about family vacations and personal travel on his blog, he doesn’t use Facebook in his role as president. “I made a conscious decision to use Facebook to connect only with my family and close friends. This job certainly blurs my public/private life, and Facebook offers such a deep window into our family world—and I don’t want to share that publicly.” 📱

Southern New Hampshire University

Enrollment: 2,920 undergraduates; 45,000 students online.

Programs: 200 undergraduate and graduate programs in business, education, hospitality, community economic development, and liberal arts.

More facts: SNHU.edu

Appendix 3: Profiles of Social CEOs

Kirk and Noel Schulz

President and First Spouse, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kan.



When Kirk Schulz accepted the appointment as president of Kansas State University, some of his colleagues at Mississippi State—where he served as vice president of research and economic development—suggested that he explore using Twitter to communicate in his new post. So he signed up.

That might have been the end of it because, as he admitted, “I really didn’t have a strategy.” But Kirk (@kstate_pres) ended up embracing social media, as did his wife, Noel Schulz (@kstate_1stlady), who, in addition to her role as first lady, is a nationally recognized expert in power systems



engineering. At K-State, she holds a faculty chair in electrical and computer engineering and serves as associate dean for research and graduate programs in K-State’s College of Engineering.

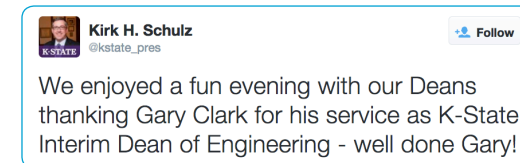
Now, more than five years into Kirk’s presidency, K-State’s first couple are prime examples of a new generation of university leaders who’ve taken up Twitter, Facebook, and other social tools and use them to engage colleagues and constituents with university issues and to describe the demands of life as a high-powered, dual-career couple. Both

find the time to tweet, post photos, and update Facebook because social media is essential in helping them be as transparent and approachable as possible.

“Community members who follow me because I am K-State’s First Lady get to see the faculty/administrator side of my activities and peek into academic life,” Noel observed. In fact, they gain insights into her research, too, because Noel often posts photos and content from conferences she’s attending. And Twitter offers her academic and professional colleagues a glimpse of her other major campus role.

Kirk said that now it’s fairly easy for him to step out of a meeting and tweet about it, post a photo, or respond to his Twitter followers from his smartphone: “It only takes a few minutes.”

He’s found that his tweets and posts help his constituents understand what K-State’s president



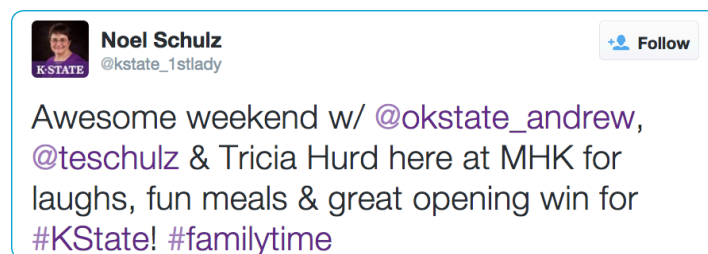
does and the issues he’s tracking—and serve as conversation starters. “People on campus who follow me have some good insights into my travels and what I do. So when I see them, they can comment on what I’m doing, or we have something to talk about,” he said.

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It's also a great way to reach more far-flung constituents: "People walk up to me at alumni events in San Francisco or Seattle and say, 'I feel as if I already know you!' entirely as a result of what I do on Facebook or Twitter. And it's not just people from one demographic—I have 65-year-old alumni who want to take a picture with me, hoping that I'll post it on Facebook!"

Noel primarily uses Twitter because, she said, "It's quick on my phone to send something out. My Twitter feed goes to my Facebook timeline, so it helps populate both. I find I also read Twitter more than Facebook daily, as I can pick the folks I follow to keep up with my topics of interest, and Facebook tends to have more personal information."

One challenge in being so accessible, of course, is that people know where to find you to vent their opinions. For example, Kirk reported



that during one particularly prolonged and pointed exchange about a campus controversy, he spent an hour responding individually to criticisms and comments. That helped to quell the conflict, he said: "People felt heard and appreciated that I took the time to respond."

Jeffery Morris, K-State's vice president for communications and marketing, underscored the impact of the couple's activity on social media during times of crisis or turmoil. "The social platform can be an excellent tool to see how people really feel. Not always positive, but informative," he said. In quieter times, he noted, "Kirk and Noel let the world know what they are doing and where. In my opinion, this goes a long way to shaping perceptions about them and fulfilling their very sincere desire to be upfront and transparent as leaders."

It's often difficult to gauge how effective a social media-based

outreach strategy is, though Morris and the Schulzes can share anecdotes about its positive impact. Still, there's no doubt that both members of the first couple—and the university—are flourishing.

In 2012, Kirk was honored by the Council for Advancement and



Support of Education with the Chief Executive Leadership Award and, in 2013, with the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award from the National Eagle Scout Association. For her part, Noel Schulz, who recruited and mentored women engineers and faculty both at Mississippi State University and at K-State, was named the 2014 recipient of the IEEE Education Society Hewlett-Packard Harriet B. Rigas Award.

Meanwhile, K-State's fundraising, enrollment, and research and scholarship funding have set records. At a complex university, of course, such achievements reflect the work of many people, but energetic, open, authentic, accessible university leadership plays a crucial role. 🧐

Kirk H. Schulz, President of Kansas State University since 2009

Education: B.S. and Ph.D., Virginia Tech.

Research interests focus in the general area of surface science and catalysis. Selected as a fellow in the American Society of Engineering Education and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Served as vice president for research and economic development at Mississippi State University. Faculty member at Michigan Technological University and the University of North Dakota.

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Noel Nunnally Schulz

Associate dean for research and graduate programs, College of Engineering, Kansas State University; Director, Engineering Experimental Station; Director, Electrical Power Affiliates Program; LeRoy C. and Aileen H. Paslay professor of electrical and computer engineering.

Education: B.S. and M.S., Virginia Tech; Ph.D., University of Minnesota.

Teaching and research interests include power systems, energy conversion, application of computer programs to power engineering, application of intelligent systems to engineering problems, fundamentals of electrical circuits, renewable and distributed generation and smart grid technologies.

Kansas State University

Colleges: agriculture; architecture, planning, and design; arts and sciences; business administration; education; engineering; human ecology; technology and aviation; and veterinary medicine.

Enrollment: 24,581 students: 20,169 undergraduates, 3,947 graduate students, 465 veterinary medicine students.

Programs: more than 250 undergraduate degree programs, 65 master's programs, 45 doctoral programs, and 22 graduate certificates.

Athletics: Big 12.

More facts: k-state.edu/about



Social Media Enters the Mainstream:

Report on the Use of Social Media
in Advancement, 2014

by Jennifer Mack and Michael Stoner