

Using Social Media in a Crisis: Higher Education Results

The results of a survey of CASE-member institutions on the current use of social media platforms in crisis communications



In partnership with the *Council for Advancement and Support of Education* (CASE)

February 2012

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Background

This research is the result of a partnership between the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and CKSyme.org, a crisis and reputation communications practice specializing in education. The inaugural study is the first of its kind to survey education institutions worldwide in their use of social media in crisis communications. Third Sector Consulting was part of the CKSyme.org strategy team for this project.

The purpose of the study was three-fold:

- To establish an accurate report on the state of readiness of education institutions to use digital and real-time communication channels to monitor and mitigate crisis situations.
- To establish some best practices by finding majority-use practices in digital crisis communications.
- To begin the process of collecting case studies highlighting how education institutions have used social media to monitor and mitigate a crisis.

Definitions

The following terms are used in this report:

- Social Media: Refers to any online platform that allows potential interaction between an institution and a reader/fan. These are to be distinguished from broadcasting channels such as emergency text message systems, batch email, or dark websites. They may include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, live blogs with comments, MySpace, and other customized community channels designed to foster interaction in real time.
- Crisis: The survey did not attempt to offer a finite definition of crisis, but used the phrase “university-defined” crisis. For our purposes, a crisis is an event that has a potential negative impact on reputation, forces a change in business processes, or results in financial or physical harm. It may or may not be magnified by social or traditional media. A crisis may be an operational event such as a bomb threat or shooting, or it may be a real or perceived moral failure such as financial fraud or an abuse scandal.
- Social media policy: Refers to a policy or guidelines, whether documented or understood, that describes acceptable use of social media channels on behalf of an institution.
- Official social media channel: Refers to one channel in a specific platform, such as Facebook or Twitter, that aims to represent the institution in an official capacity. This is to be differentiated from other departmental, unit, or personal social media channels that are also under the umbrella of the institution.
- Social media manager/moderator: Refers to a person or persons responsible for monitoring and posting to a specific social media channel on behalf of the university.

About the Survey

The survey was sent to senior communications professionals at CASE member institutions (N=2,274) via email link. Of that number, 219 responded for a response rate of 9.6 percent. The demographics of the respondents are included within the top line findings beginning on p. 12. The window for the survey was November 2011-December 2011. Statistics were analyzed by CKSyme.org and edited by Third Sector Consulting in Bozeman, Mont. Results were rounded to whole numbers.

The sections of the report under “Key Findings” beginning on p. 5 pertain specifically to the 106 respondents that indicated an affiliation with a higher education institution in the United States or Canada.

The sections under “Top Line Findings” beginning on p. 12 break out the results of all respondents into four categories: All respondents, U.S. and Canadian institutions of higher education, international institutions of higher education, and independent schools. A separate snapshot of the findings for independent schools is available at www.case.org.

CKSyme.org is a communications consultancy based in Bozeman, Mont. The agency works with organizations in the areas of crisis communications, reputation management, social media integration, and policy writing. Third Sector Consulting specializes in prospect research and grant writing assistance. You may contact Chris Syme at chris@cksyme.org or call 406-599-6079.

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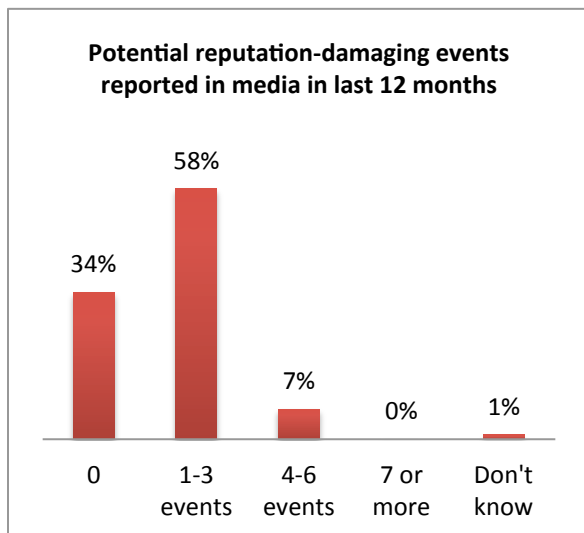
Key Findings: U.S. and Canadian Higher Education

The majority of educational institutions worldwide are using social media to broadcast news, engage brand ambassadors, improve their brand image, and increase awareness about their institution, according to the 2011 CASE/mStoner/Slover Linett Social Media Survey.

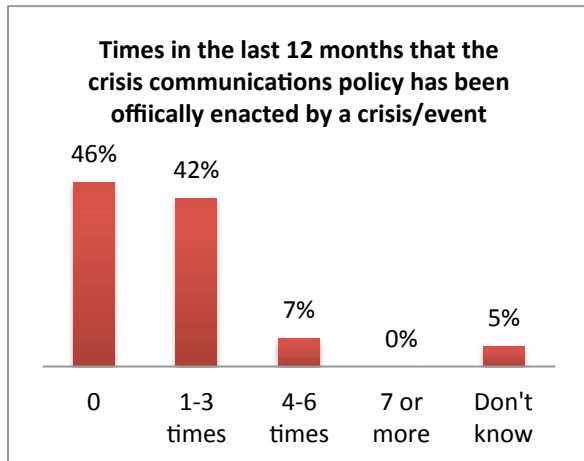
Increasingly, institutions are also using social media to distribute real-time information and keep stakeholders informed in the event of a crisis. The [Altimeter Report on Social Readiness](#) and [research done by Weber Shandwick](#) suggest that social media can help mitigate a crisis faster, create brand advocates in the event of crisis, and even help maintain reputation during these critical times. But most importantly, the real-time nature and reach of social media can help institutions be the go-to source of information that stakeholders, the general public, and media look to in the event of a crisis.

In a survey conducted by CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) and CKSyme.org. in fall 2011, senior-level communicators were asked about their use of social media in crisis as well as about crisis communications planning in general. Key findings for institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada, as well as best practice takeaways, follow.

The State of Crisis in Higher Education



In the last 12 months prior to the survey, 65 percent of the respondents experienced at least one event reported in traditional media (television, radio, newspaper) where there was a potential of damage to the institution's reputation.

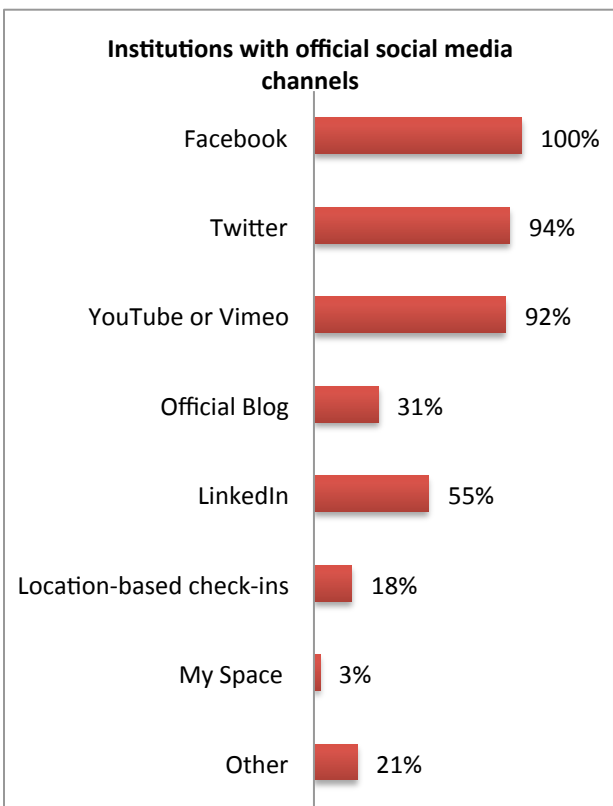


In the last 12 months, 49 percent of responding institutions have had to enact their crisis communications plans as the result of a crisis. It should be noted that 85 percent of the responding institutions have a crisis communications plan, and 37 percent of those plans are implemented by the campus communications department.

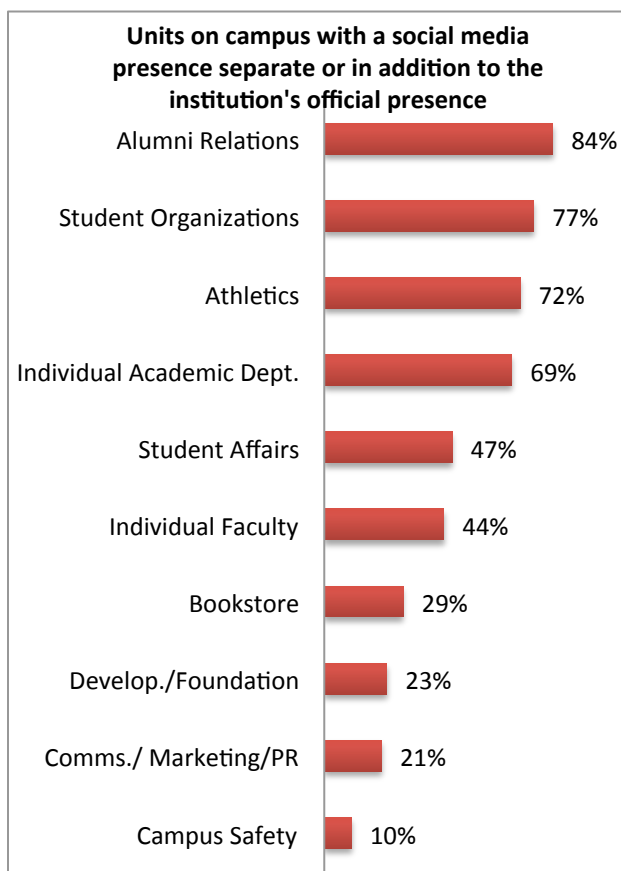


In the last 12 months, 66 percent of institutions reported that potential reputation-damaging events were discussed in social media channels. More research needs to be done in this area to determine how institutions were made aware of these discussions and what type of monitoring systems, if any, universities have in place for traditional and online media.

The State of Social Media in Higher Education

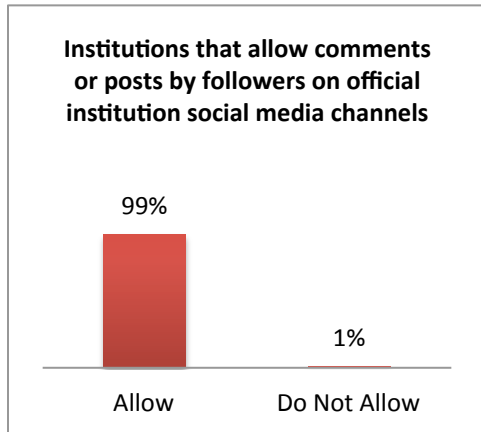


Official institution channels are those main accounts that represent the whole university in an official capacity. All respondents had at least an official Facebook page. Most popular "other" official channels were Google+, Tumblr, and Flickr. Campus communications offices were most responsible for maintaining these accounts, with the exception of LinkedIn, where the development/alumni relations offices maintained the majority of accounts for that channel.

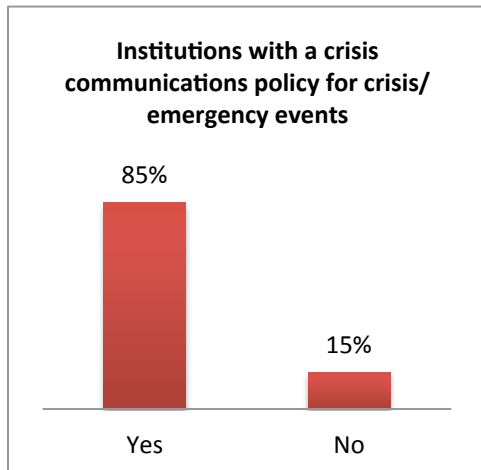


*All campuses reported additional social media accounts on campus in addition to the official presence. For all responding institutions, only 40 percent of these accounts are managed/maintained by campus communications units. **And only 26 percent of institutions reported requiring registration or training for users who represent the institution on social media channels.***

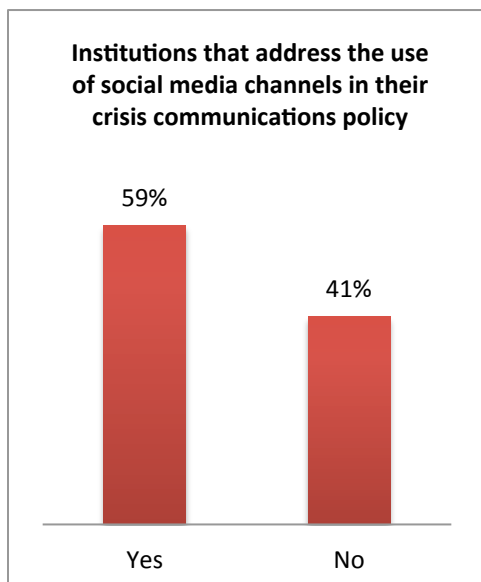
The State of Crisis Communications in Higher Education



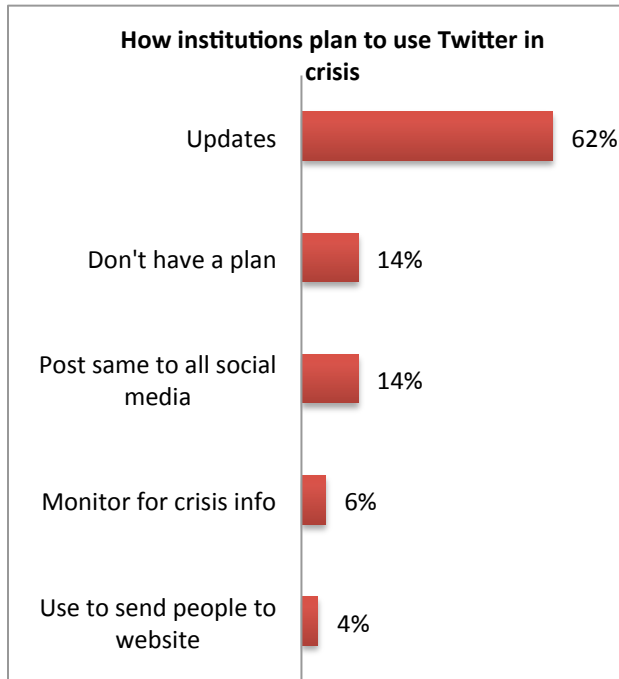
*Almost all institutions allow followers to post or comment on official social media channels. Of those, **70 percent have a policy for dealing with negative comments/posts or blocking posters.***



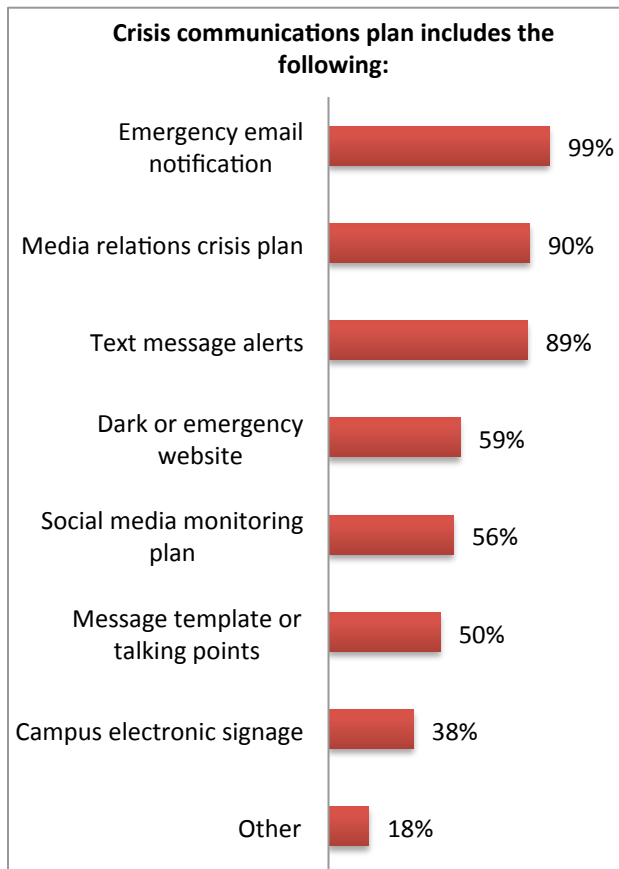
***Eighty-five percent of the respondents have a crisis communications policy.** Of those with policies, 37 percent indicate the communications office is responsible for implementing the policy in the event of a crisis and 37 percent indicated that responsibility falls to a team made up of more than one department. The campus safety office is responsible for crisis communications oversight at 12 percent of the institutions with a policy.*



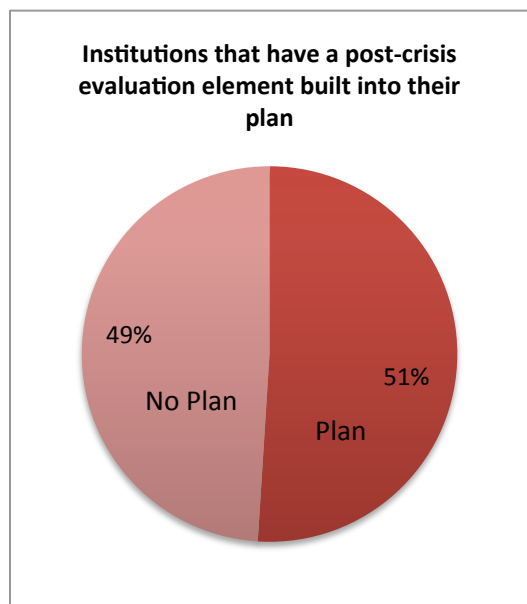
Fifty-nine percent of the institutions with crisis communications policies address the use of social media in that policy.** Of those, 68 percent allocate the duty of maintaining and monitoring social media in a crisis to campus communications or public affairs offices. An additional 15 percent use teams for this duty. **Only 17 percent of the reporting institutions have a plan for "unofficial" social media channels that represent the university.



Some institutions reported more than one use planned for Twitter in a crisis. Only the primary use is reported here.



*Respondents were asked which of the following were included in their crisis communications plans. The statistic that stands out in this graphic is the **lack of a social media monitoring plan that can keep institutions aware of breaking news, online and traditional media mentions, and help institutions manage misinformation**. Only 56 percent of respondents with a crisis plan said they have a monitoring plan.*



Just over half of the institutions with a crisis communications plan have a post-crisis plan to review the effectiveness of the plan following an incident.

Best Practice Takeaways

More than 70 percent of reporting institutions saw potential reputation-damaging events discussed in social media in the 12 months prior to the survey. Almost half reported having to enact their crisis communications plan in the last 12 months for at least one or more incidents. At four-year institutions, less than half have a social media policy. Only 56 percent have a social media monitoring plan. The data suggest that many education institutions are inadequately prepared to deploy multiple communications channels, including social media, as needed in a crisis. Institutions might consider implementing the following best practices:

1. Implement a social media monitoring system. A social media monitoring system can help you keep track of what is being said about your institution in the social media universe, alert you to issues you may not be aware of, and help you gauge public understanding of and sentiment around an issue. There are many good social media management systems (SMMS) that include monitoring as a component. An adequate monitoring system can be pieced together with little or no cost using several applications. [This list of tools from Tripwire Magazine](#) includes some low cost tools and some that are free. Jeremiah Owyang of *Web Strategy* has put together a more [extensive and research-based review of enterprise level tools here](#). The important concept is to build a monitoring system that tracks mentions of your brand in online media. The system can be as simple or as elaborate as you have time, resources, and people for. But experts agree a monitoring system is primary, and the sooner the better.

2. Develop a social media policy. There is a misunderstanding among many that a social media policy is a prohibitive document. The best social media policies operate as guiderails that empower people to use social media channels responsibly in a way that highlights the organization's brand. In [Owyang's research on social media readiness](#), every top-rated company in the report had a social

media policy. Those companies with social media policies were also the most successful in crisis and reputation events. The policy should include a training or on-going education element. CASE has a collection of sample [social media policies](#) available to members at www.case.org.

3. Implement a social media management system. A social media management system (SMMS) should have multiple functions that can facilitate monitoring, publishing, lead and conversion tracking, measurement, and customer relationship management, depending on what your institution's social media strategy is (see [Jason Falls' report on management systems](#)). The system may or may not include monitoring, but at its most basic level, it should allow for multiple accounts and administrators to post and manage to your social media channels.

4. Establish registration or affiliation of campus social media accounts. Universities would be well-advised to develop a training program or best practice guidelines for anyone representing the institution in the social media space. Also, establishing a database of administrators and passwords held by a community manager allows the university to remove old accounts or delete or post to any university-related account in an emergency. The majority of reporting institutions do not have guidelines for "unofficial" social media channels representing the university. The majority also did not have a plan for how those accounts should be used in the event of a crisis. Best practices for affiliated social media accounts are emerging from institutions like [University of New Hampshire](#), [Tufts](#), and others who are establishing a center of online connection opportunities affiliated with the institution.

5. Establish a community manager for campus social media. Even though this last takeaway may seem redundant, many reporting institutions did not have one single supervisory department for all campus social media. This does not imply that one department should handle all campus social media, but that there should be a centralized resource that acts as a hub to the campus "spokes" so there is continuity in branding and messaging, especially in the event of a crisis.

Top Line Findings: All Respondents (N=219)

Questions 1-4 report the basic demographic information of the respondents:

1. Your institution is affiliated in:

United States and Canada	83%
Europe	11%
Asia Pacific	4%
Latin America	1%
Other	1%

2. (United States and Canada only) What type of institution do you work at?

Independent elementary/secondary school	31%
Baccalaureate four-year college	28%
Master's college or university	24%
Doctoral/research	10%
Associate's (two-year) college	5%
Special focus institution (law, medical, etc)	1%
Tribal college	0%
Other	1%

3. (All Other Countries) What type of institution do you work at?

Higher education/university	71%
Elementary/primary/secondary/high school	26%
Further education/community college	1%
Special focus institution (business, medical, etc)	0%
Other	2%

4. Please check the category that best defines your total enrollment (full-time equivalent).

Less than 1,000 students	31%
1,000-4,999	34%
5,000-19,999	22%
20,000 or more	13%

Questions 5-12 define the current use of social media in your institution's communications.

5. Do you have an official institution presence on one or more of the following social media channels? Check as many as apply.

Facebook	98%
Twitter	87%
YouTube or Vimeo	84%
LinkedIn	55%
Official Institution blog	32%
Foursquare or other location-based check-ins	13%
My Space	3%
No official social media channels	0%
Other*	15%

*The top "other" social media channels with an official presence (in order): Google +, Flickr, Yammer, Tumblr, and Pinterest.

6. Which office is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official institution social media channels? (top five channels only)

Facebook	
Communications	56%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	13%
Marketing	12%
Admissions	3%
Other or combination of above	16%

Twitter	
Communications	85%
Marketing	9%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	1%
Other or combination of above	5%

YouTube or Vimeo	
Communications	61%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	18%
Marketing	16%
Other or combination of above	5%

LinkedIn

Communications	35%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	25%
Marketing	23%
Career Services	8%
Other or combination of above	9%

Official Institution Blog

Communications	58%
Marketing	17%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	11%
President or head of school	10%
Other of combination of above	4%

7. Which units, divisions, or departments at your institution have a social media presence that is separate and/or in addition to the institution’s official presence? Check as many as apply.

Alumni Relations	82%
Student Organizations	59%
Athletics	52%
Individual faculty members	35%
Student Affairs	30%
Communications/PR/Marketing	19%
Bookstore	18%
Development/Foundation	17%
Campus Safety/Police	6%
Research	6%
Other	14%

8. Does your institution’s communications department manage any of the non-official social media channels in question #7?

Yes	49%
No	51%

9. Does your institution have a formal social media policy for managing/maintaining the social media accounts that represent the institution?*

Yes	48%
No	52%

*61% of social media policy oversight is done by Communications

10. Does your institution require registration or training for social media users who represent the institution?

Yes	24%
No	76%

11. Do you allow comments or posts from followers on your institution's official social media channels?

Yes	95%
No	5%

12. If you allow comments or posts from followers on your official social media channels, do you have a policy for dealing with negative comments/posts or blocking posters?

Yes	62%
No	38%

13. Does your institution have a communications policy for crisis/emergency events?

Yes	86%
No	14%

Questions 14-21 were answered only by the institutions that answered "yes" to question 13.

14. Which department or unit on campus is responsible for implementing the crisis communications policy in the event of a crisis/emergency?

Communications	51%
More than one dept. (teams)	17%
Administration	17%
Campus Safety	12%
Other	3%

15. Does your crisis communications policy address the use of the institution's official social media channels in the event of an incident?

Yes	61%
No	39%

16. If yes to question 15, which department or unit is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official social media channels in a crisis?

Communications/Public Affairs	68%
Teams	22%
Other	10%

17. If your institution has an official Twitter feed, how do you plan to use the channel in the event of a crisis?*

Updates	60%
Don't have a plan	15%
Post same messages on all social media	14 %
Monitor for crisis information	6%
Use to send people to website	4%
Communicate with media	1%

*primary use for Twitter (only) reported in results

18. Does your institution's crisis communication policy include any of the following for use in a university-defined crisis?

Emergency email notification	89%
Media relations crisis plan	80%
Text message alert system	74%
Social media monitoring plan	50%
Dark or emergency website	45%
Messaging template or talking points	44%
Campus electronic signage	35%
Other*	21%

*Most popular "other" answers included a phone message alert system and campus-wide emergency audio alert such as sirens or building alarms

19. Does your institution's crisis communications plan include specific lines of responsibility for the components checked in question 18?

Yes	81%
No	19%

20. Does your institution’s crisis communications plan include guidelines for monitoring/posting to “unofficial” institution social media channels during a crisis/emergency?

Yes	15%
No	85%

21. Does your institution have an evaluation element built in to the crisis communications plan to review its effectiveness following an incident?

Yes	51%
No	49%

22. How many times in the last 12 months has the crisis communications policy been officially enacted by a crisis/emergency event?

0	50%
1-3	42%
4-6	7%
7 or more	0%
Don’t know	1%

23. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been reported in the traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)?

0	43%
1-3	50%
4-6	5%
7 or more	1%
Don’t know	1%

24. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been discussed on social media channels by either you or your followers?

0	20%
1-3	63%
4-6	8%
7 or more	2%
I don’t know	7%

Top Line Findings: U.S & Canadian Higher Ed. (N=106)

Questions 1-4 report the basic demographic information of the respondents:

1. Your institution is affiliated in:

United States and Canada	100%
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2. What type of institution do you work at?

Baccalaureate four-year college	48%
Master's college or university	38%
Associate's (two-year) college	10%
Special Focus (law, medical, etc.)	4%
Tribal college	0%

4. Please check the category that best defines your total enrollment (full-time equivalent).

Less than 1,000 students	14%
1,000-4,999	69%
5,000-19,999	10%
20,000 or more	7%

Questions 5-12 define the current use of social media in your institution's communications.

5. Do you have an official institution presence on one or more of the following social media channels? Check as many as apply.

Facebook	100%
Twitter	94%
YouTube or Vimeo	92%
LinkedIn	55%
Official Institution blog	31%
Foursquare or other location-based check-ins	18%
My Space	3%
No official social media channels	0%
Other*	21%

*The top "other" social media channels with an official presence (in order): Google +, Tumblr and Flickr

6. Which office is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official institution social media channels? (top five channels only)

Facebook	
Communications	45%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	11%
Marketing	32%
Other or combination of above	12%

Twitter	
Communications	40%
Marketing	21%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	1%
Other or combination of above	38%

YouTube or Vimeo	
Communications	40%
Marketing	23%
Alumni/Advancement	5%
Other or combination of above	32%

LinkedIn	
Communications	17%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	30%
Marketing	13%
Career Services	8%
Other or combination of above	32%

Official Institution Blog	
Communications	31%
College/Public Relations	25%
President or head of school	6%
Other of combination of above	38%

7. Which units, divisions, or departments at your institution have a social media presence that is separate and/or in addition to the institution’s official presence? Check as many as apply.

Alumni Relations	84%
Student Organizations	77%
Athletics	72%
Individual Academic Departments	69%
Individual faculty members	44%
Student Affairs	47%
Communications/PR/Marketing	21%
Bookstore	29%
Development/Foundation	23%
Campus Safety/Police	10%
Other	15%

8. Does your institution’s communications department manage any of the non-official social media channels in question #7?

Yes	40%
No	60%

9. Does your institution have a formal social media policy for managing/maintaining the social media accounts that represent the institution?*

Yes	55%
No	45%

10. Does your institution require registration or training for social media users who represent the institution?

Yes	26%
No	74%

11. Do you allow comments or posts from followers on your institution’s official social media channels?

Yes	99%
No	1%

12. If you allow comments or posts from followers on your official social media channels, do you have a policy for dealing with negative comments/posts or blocking posters?

Yes	70%
No	30%

13. Does your institution have a communications policy for crisis/emergency events?

Yes	85%
No	15%

Questions 14-21 were answered only by institutions that answered “yes” to question 13.

14. Which department or unit on campus is responsible for implementing the crisis communications policy in the event of a crisis/emergency?

Communications	37%
More than one dept. (teams)	37%
Campus Safety	12%
Other	14%

15. Does your crisis communications policy address the use of the institution’s official social media channels in the event of an incident?

Yes	59%
No	41%

16. If yes to question 15, which department or unit is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official social media channels in a crisis?

Communications/Public Affairs	68%
Teams	15%
Other	17%

17. If your institution has an official Twitter feed, how do you plan to use the channel in the event of a crisis?*

Updates	62%
Don't have a plan	14%
Post same messages on all social media	14 %
Monitor for crisis information	6%
Use to send people to website	4%

*primary use for Twitter (only) reported in results

18. Does your institution's crisis communication policy include any of the following for use in a university-defined crisis?

Emergency email notification	99%
Media relations crisis plan	90%
Text message alert system	89%
Social media monitoring plan	56%
Dark or emergency website	59%
Messaging template or talking points	50%
Campus electronic signage	38%
Other	18%

19. Does your institution's crisis communications plan include specific lines of responsibility for the components checked in question 18?

Yes	85%
No	15%

20. Does your institution's crisis communications plan include guidelines for monitoring/posting to "unofficial" institution social media channels during a crisis/emergency?

Yes	18%
No	82%

21. Does your institution have an evaluation element built in to the crisis communications plan to review its effectiveness following an incident?

Yes	51%
No	49%

22. How many times in the last 12 months has the crisis communications policy been officially enacted by a crisis/emergency event?

0	46%
1-3	42%
4-6	7%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	5%

23. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been reported in the traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)?

0	34%
1-3	58%
4-6	7%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	1%

24. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been discussed on social media channels by either you or your followers?

0	29%
1-3	56%
4-6	7%
7 or more	3%
Don't know	5%

Top Line Findings: International Higher Ed. (N=39)

Questions 1-4 report the basic demographic information of the respondents:

1. Your institution is affiliated in:

Europe	62%
Asia Pacific	27%
Other	8%
Latin America	3%

2. What type of institution do you work at?

Higher Education University	98%
Other	2%

4. Please check the category that best defines your total enrollment (full-time equivalent).

Less than 1,000 students	32%
1,000-4,999	16%
5,000-19,999	27%
20,000 or more	25%

Questions 5-12 define the current use of social media in your institution's communications.

5. Do you have an official institution presence on one or more of the following social media channels? Check as many as apply.

Facebook	92%
Twitter	78%
YouTube or Vimeo	73%
LinkedIn	54%
Official Institution blog	30%
Foursquare or other location-based check-ins	5%
My Space	3%
No official social media channels	0%
Other*	5%

*The top "other" social media channel with an official presence: Flickr

6. Which office is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official institution social media channels? (top five channels only)

Facebook	
Communications	28%
Advancement	17%
Marketing	17%
Alumni	9%
Recruiting	7%
Other or Combination of Above	22%

Twitter	
Marketing	33%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	33%
Other or combination of above	34%

YouTube or Vimeo	
Communications	34%
Marketing	31%
Alumni/Advancement	17%
Recruitment	11%
Other or combination of above	7%

LinkedIn	
Advancement/Alumni Relations	56%
Communications	22%
Career Services	11%
Other or combination of above	11%

Official Institution Blog	
Communications	38%
Marketing	38%
Advancement	24%

7. Which units, divisions, or departments at your institution have a social media presence that is separate and/or in addition to the institution’s official presence? Check as many as apply.

Alumni Relations	93%
Individual academic units	43%
Student Organizations	40%
Individual faculty members	37%
Communications/PR/Marketing	30%
Admissions	27%
Development/Foundation	17%
Athletics	13%
Research	10%
Student Affairs	10%
Other	10%
Campus Safety	3%

8. Does your institution’s communications department manage any of the non-official social media channels in question #7?

Yes	57%
No	43%

9. Does your institution have a formal social media policy for managing/maintaining the social media accounts that represent the institution?

Yes	50%
No	50%

10. Does your institution require registration or training for social media users who represent the institution?

Yes	10%
No	90%

11. Do you allow comments or posts from followers on your institution’s official social media channels?

Yes	87%
No	13%

12. If you allow comments or posts from followers on your official social media channels, do you have a policy for dealing with negative comments/posts or blocking posters?

Yes	59%
No	41%

13. Does your institution have a communications policy for crisis/emergency events?

Yes	78%
No	22%

Questions 14-21 were answered only by the institutions that answered “yes” to question 13.

14. Which department or unit on campus is responsible for implementing the crisis communications policy in the event of a crisis/emergency?

Communications	39%
Marketing	25%
Advancement	14%
Other or combination	22%

15. Does your crisis communications policy address the use of the institution’s official social media channels in the event of an incident?

Yes	43%
No	57%

16. If yes to question 15, which department or unit is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official social media channels in a crisis?

Marketing	71%
Other	29%

17. If your institution has an official Twitter feed, how do you plan to use the channel in the event of a crisis?*

Updates	57%
Use to send people to website	19%
Don’t have a plan	13%
Other	11%
Monitor for crisis information	0%

*primary use for Twitter (only) reported in results

18. Does your institution’s crisis communication policy include any of the following for use in a university-defined crisis?

Media relations plan	74%
Emergency email notification	57%
Social media monitoring plan	47%
Text message alert system	35%
Dark or emergency website	22%
Messaging template or talking points	26%
Campus electronic signage	30%
Other	30%

19. Does your institution’s crisis communications plan include specific lines of responsibility for the components checked in question 18?

Yes	70%
No	30%

20. Does your institution’s crisis communications plan include guidelines for monitoring/posting to “unofficial” institution social media channels during a crisis/emergency?

Yes	16%
No	84%

21. Does your institution have an evaluation element built in to the crisis communications plan to review its effectiveness following an incident?

Yes	61%
No	39%

22. How many times in the last 12 months has the crisis communications policy been officially enacted by a crisis/emergency event?

0	56%
1-3	44%
4-6	0%
7 or more	0%
Don’t know	0%

23. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been reported in the traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)?

0	39%
1-3	50%
4-6	4%
7 or more	7%
Don't know	0%

24. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been discussed on social media channels by either you or your followers?

0	48%
1-3	41%
4-6	0%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	11%

Top Line Findings: Independent Schools (N=74)

Questions 1-4 report the basic demographic information of the respondents:

1. Your institution is affiliated in:

United States and Canada	76%
Other	24%

2. What type of institution do you work at?

Independent Elementary/Secondary	100%
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4. Please check the category that best defines your total enrollment (full-time equivalent).

Less than 1,000 students	67%
1,000-4,999	33%

Questions 5-12 define the current use of social media in your institution's communications.

5. Do you have an official institution presence on one or more of the following social media channels? Check as many as apply.

Facebook	90%
Twitter	65%
YouTube or Vimeo	64%
LinkedIn	43%
Official Institution blog	43%
Foursquare or other location-based check-ins	16%
My Space	0%
No official social media channels	0%
Other*	6%

6. Which office is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official institution social media channels? (top five channels only)

Facebook	
Communications	45%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	35%
Marketing	8%
Other or combination of above	12%

Twitter

Communications	45%
Marketing	35%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	8%
Other or combination of above	12%

YouTube or Vimeo

Communications/marketing	80%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	12%
Other or combination of above	8%

LinkedIn

Communications/Marketing	51%
Advancement/Alumni Relations	49%

Official Institution Blog

Communications	62%
Advancement/Alumni	28%
Admissions	7%
President or head of school	3%

7. Which units, divisions, or departments at your institution have a social media presence that is separate and/or in addition to the institution's official presence? Check as many as apply.

Alumni Relations	80%
Athletics	25%
Student Organizations	21%
Individual faculty members	18%
Admissions	18%
Individual academic or department units	14%
Communications/PR/Marketing	11%
Development/Foundation	7%
Bookstore	2%
Other	23%

8. Does your institution's communications department manage any of the non-official social media channels in question #7?

Yes	60%
No	40%

9. Does your institution have a formal social media policy for managing/maintaining the social media accounts that represent the institution?

Yes	31%
No	69%

10. Does your institution require registration or training for social media users who represent the institution?

Yes	20%
No	80%

11. Do you allow comments or posts from followers on your institution’s official social media channels?

Yes	89%
No	11%

12. If you allow comments or posts from followers on your official social media channels, do you have a policy for dealing with negative comments/posts or blocking posters?

Yes	43%
No	57%

13. Does your institution have a communications policy for crisis/emergency events?

Yes	89%
No	11%

Questions 14-21 were answered only by the institutions that answered “yes” to question 13.

14. Which department or unit on campus is responsible for implementing the crisis communications policy in the event of a crisis/emergency?

Communications	45%
More than one dept. (teams)	33%
Head of school	12%
Other	10%

15. Does your crisis communications policy address the use of the institution’s official social media channels in the event of an incident?

Yes	36%
No	52%
Don't have a policy	12%

16. If yes to question 15, which department or unit is responsible for maintaining/monitoring the official social media channels in a crisis?

Communications/Marketing	100%
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17. If your institution has an official Twitter feed, how do you plan to use the channel in the event of a crisis?*

Updates	68%
Don't have a plan	18%
Post same messages on all social media	14 %

*primary use for Twitter (only) reported in results

18. Does your institution’s crisis communication policy include any of the following for use in a university-defined crisis?

Emergency email notification	86%
Media relations crisis plan	66%
Text message alert system	57%
Social media monitoring plan	47%
Dark or emergency website	26%
Messaging template or talking points	26%
Campus electronic signage	9%
Other	26%

19. Does your institution’s crisis communications plan include specific lines of responsibility for the components checked in question 18?

Yes	71%
No	29%

20. Does your institution’s crisis communications plan include guidelines for monitoring/posting to “unofficial” institution social media channels during a crisis/emergency?

Yes	5%
No	95%

21. Does your institution have an evaluation element built in to the crisis communications plan to review its effectiveness following an incident?

Yes	46%
No	54%

22. How many times in the last 12 months has the crisis communications policy been officially enacted by a crisis/emergency event?

0	62%
1-3	34%
4-6	4%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	0%

23. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been reported in the traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)?

0	69%
1-3	31%
4-6	0%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	0%

24. In the last 12 months, how many potential reputation-damaging events concerning your institution have been discussed on social media channels by either you or your followers?

0	67%
1-3	26%
4-6	0%
7 or more	0%
Don't know	7%