

2021

Higher Education Social Media Engagement Report

Full Higher Education Social Media Rankings

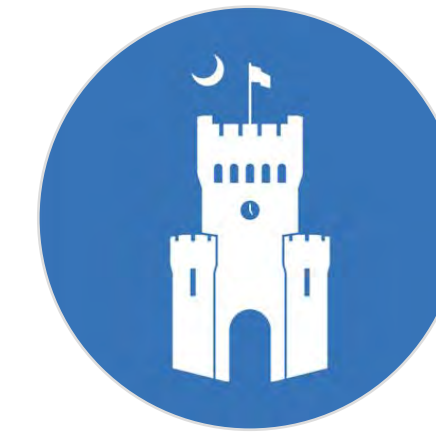


2021 Higher Education Social Media Engagement Report

Everything your school needs to rock on social 🎓

We've got the full rankings for every D1 college and university on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter so you can see exactly how your school measures up.

Read on for the full rankings and a spotlight on what made the top 10 schools shine on social.

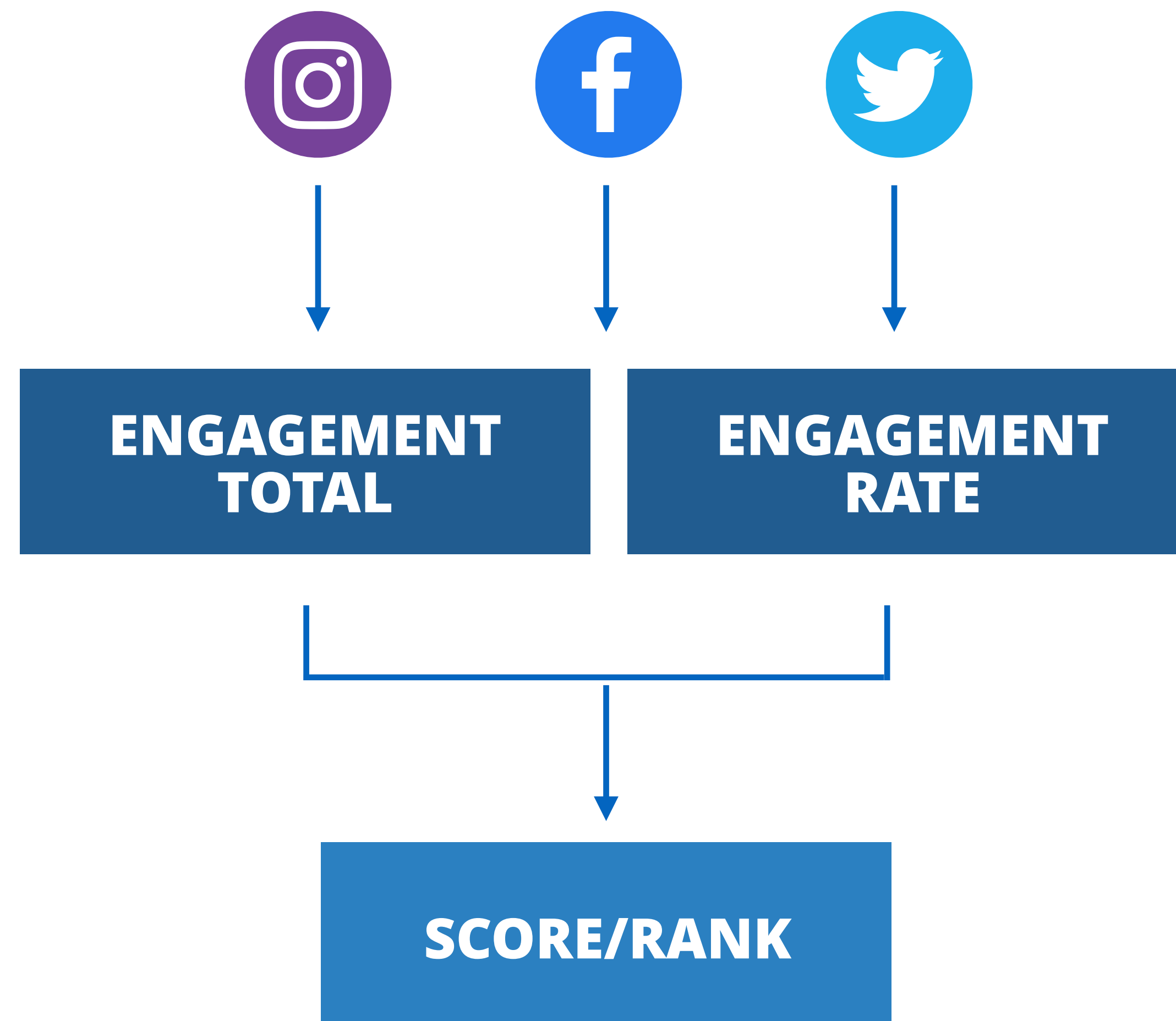


Rankings and Methodology

We surveyed 353 D1 colleges and universities between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021 on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Using this data and a weighted formula, we generated an overall engagement ranking for each school **that blends total engagement and engagement rates.**

The top-ranked colleges and universities on social media have high engagement rates with average or better audience size and posting volumes.

[Read the full report online »](#)



What Did We Analyze?

DATA SET INCLUDES

353

D1 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

IN BETWEEN THE MONTHS OF



COMPRISING

659K
POSTS

166M
ENGAGEMENTS

High Performing Campaigns from the Top 10 Colleges and Universities

HIGHER EDUCATION SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT REPORT | JUNE 1, 2020 TO MAY 31, 2021

Rival
IQ

#1



University of Iowa

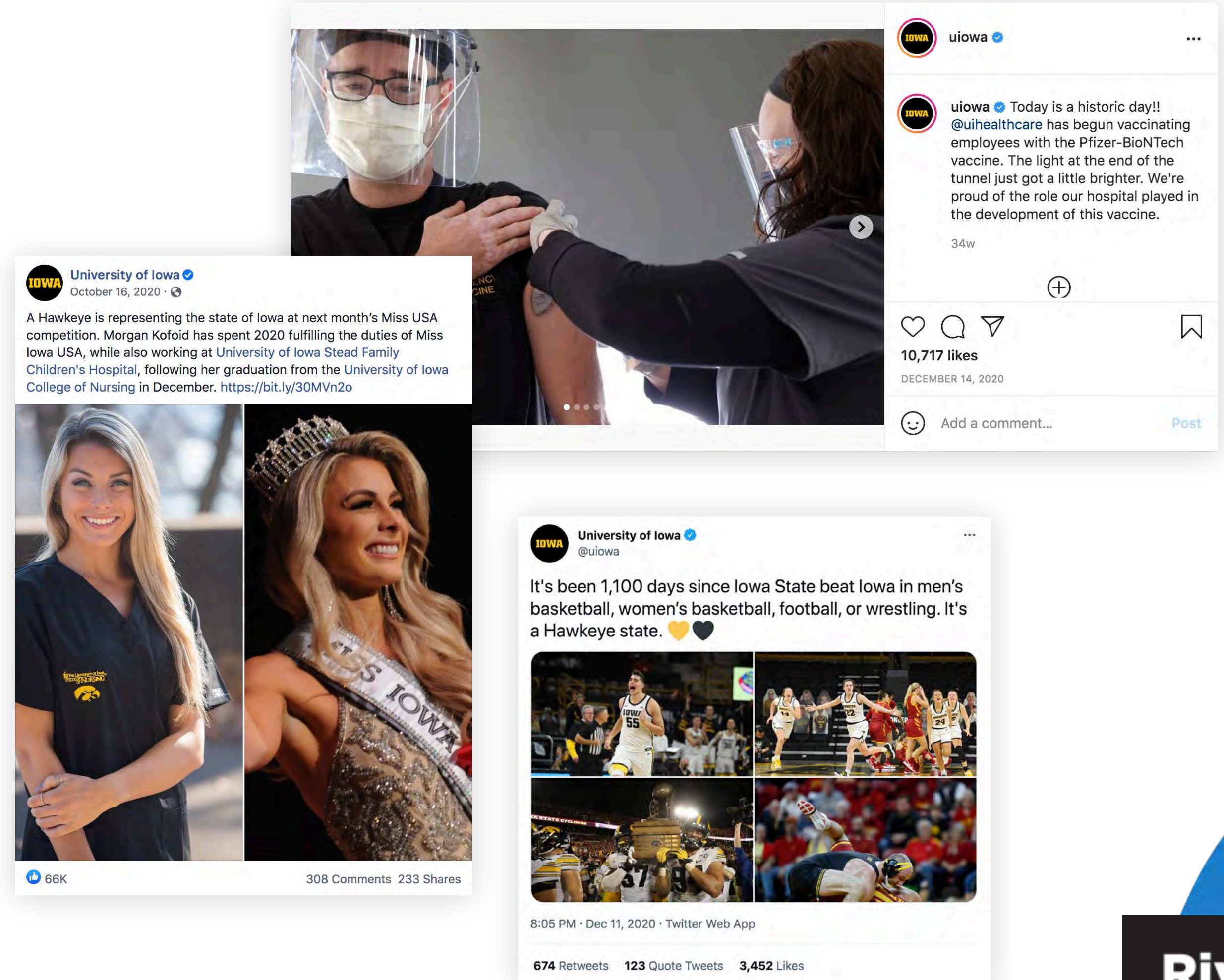
Instagram #9

Facebook #1

Twitter #13

The Hawkeyes grabbed the overall gold for the third year in a row thanks to strategic posting on all three channels and an extremely engaged audience. From hopeful and inspiring COVID-related posts to campus nostalgia to standing up against racism, University of Iowa's posting embodies the rubric by which all other D1 schools should be ranked on social. Add in a few dynamite sports wins and a strong carousel game on Instagram and you've got yourself the D1 🐐.

	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	4.89%	1.00%	0.18%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	822.7K	681.9K	240.7K



#2



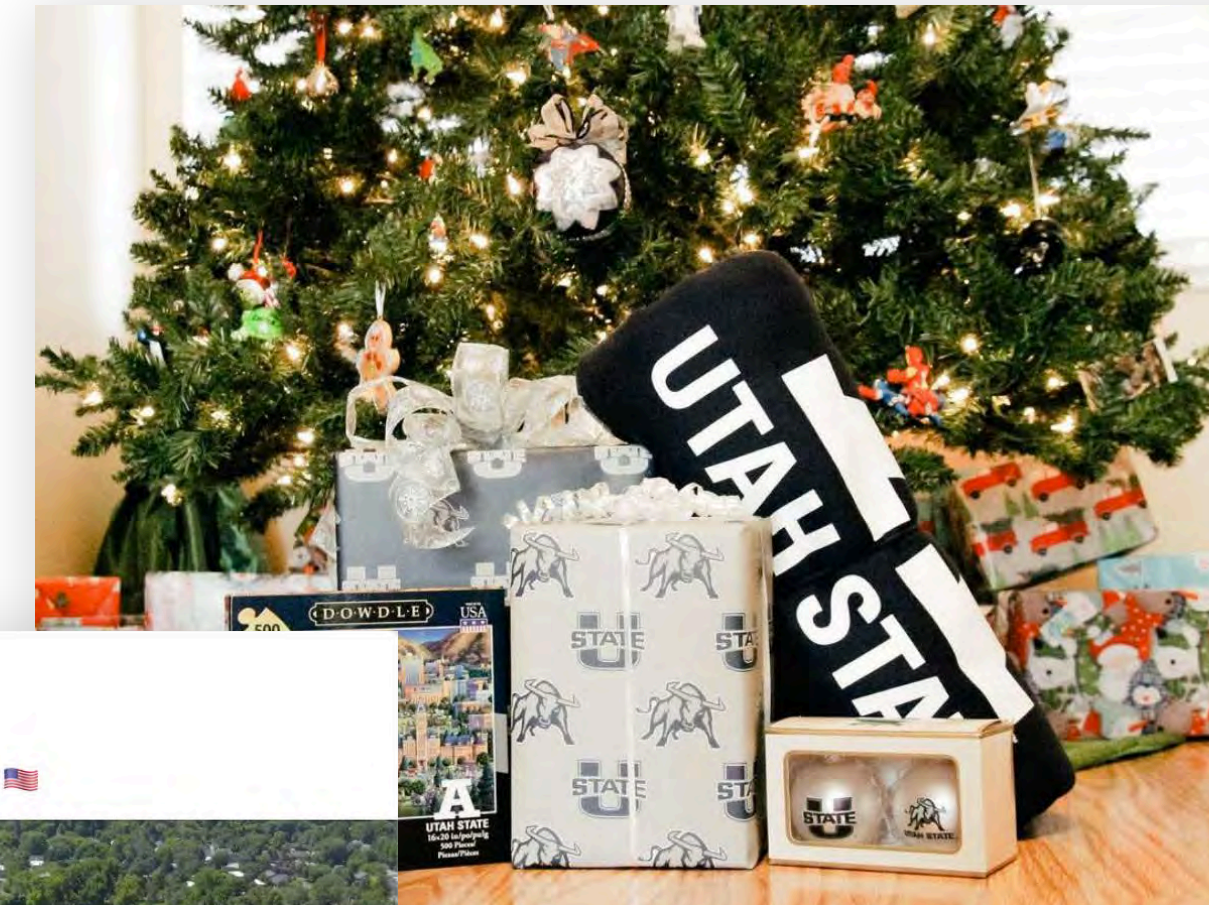
Utah State University

Instagram #19

Facebook #13

Twitter #5

The Utah State Aggies leaned hard into the campus glamour shot vibe on social this year, using the natural beauty of the Logan, Utah scenery to engage students, parents, and alumni. When the Aggies weren't posting stunning aerial shots of campus in every season, contests and a few well-timed memes (Bernie Sanders on the quad, anyone?) helped clinch top 20 spots on all three social channels.



	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	10.63%	0.76%	0.35%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	247.2K	114.4K	49.1K

#3



Texas A&M University

Instagram #7

Facebook #8

Twitter #27

Texas A&M soared to the top of the class, especially on Facebook and Instagram, thanks to dynamic performances from the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, gorgeous shots of campus, and a hefty dose of their new collie Mascot, Reveille X. (Every marketer knows cute dogs are basically free likes on social media.) The school focused its tweeting more on sports with a little university nostalgia to round things out.



	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	4.48%	0.39%	0.12%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	2.48M	1.18M	439.8K

#4






Ohio University

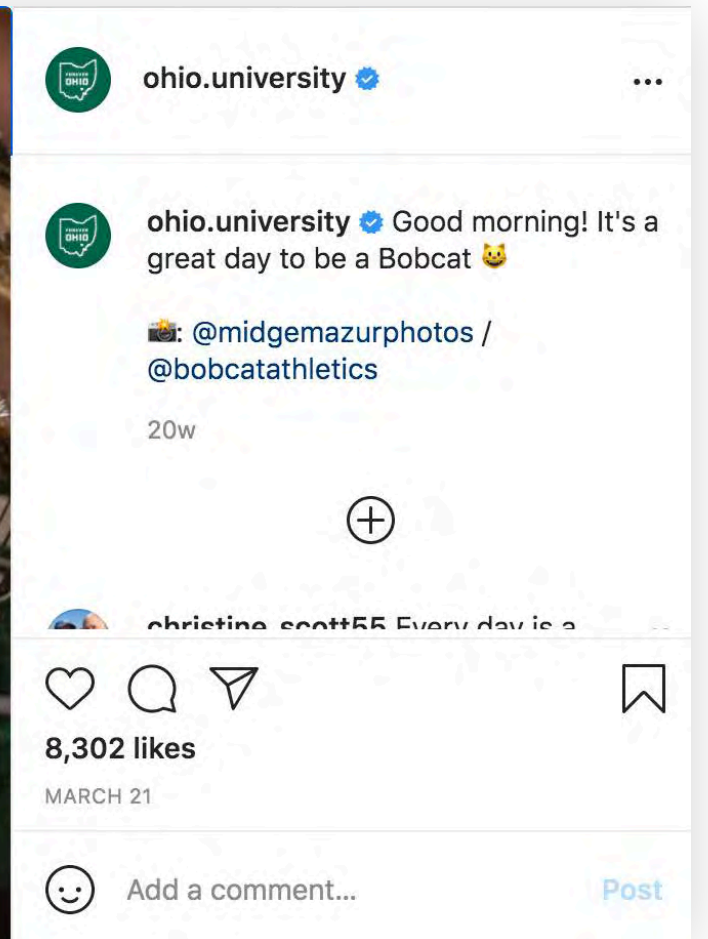
#43

#6

#4

A quick glance at Ohio University's social media photo posts will tell you that these Bobcats bleed green. This school finished in the top 10 on Facebook and Twitter with oodles of vibrant photos that popped thanks to vibrant Bobcat green, helping anyone scrolling snag a taste of what it feels like to be on campus. Why no channel threepeat? Ohio University struggled a little on Instagram with a below-average follower count.

			
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	4.05%	0.46%	0.22%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	882.9K	329.6K	105.3K



#5



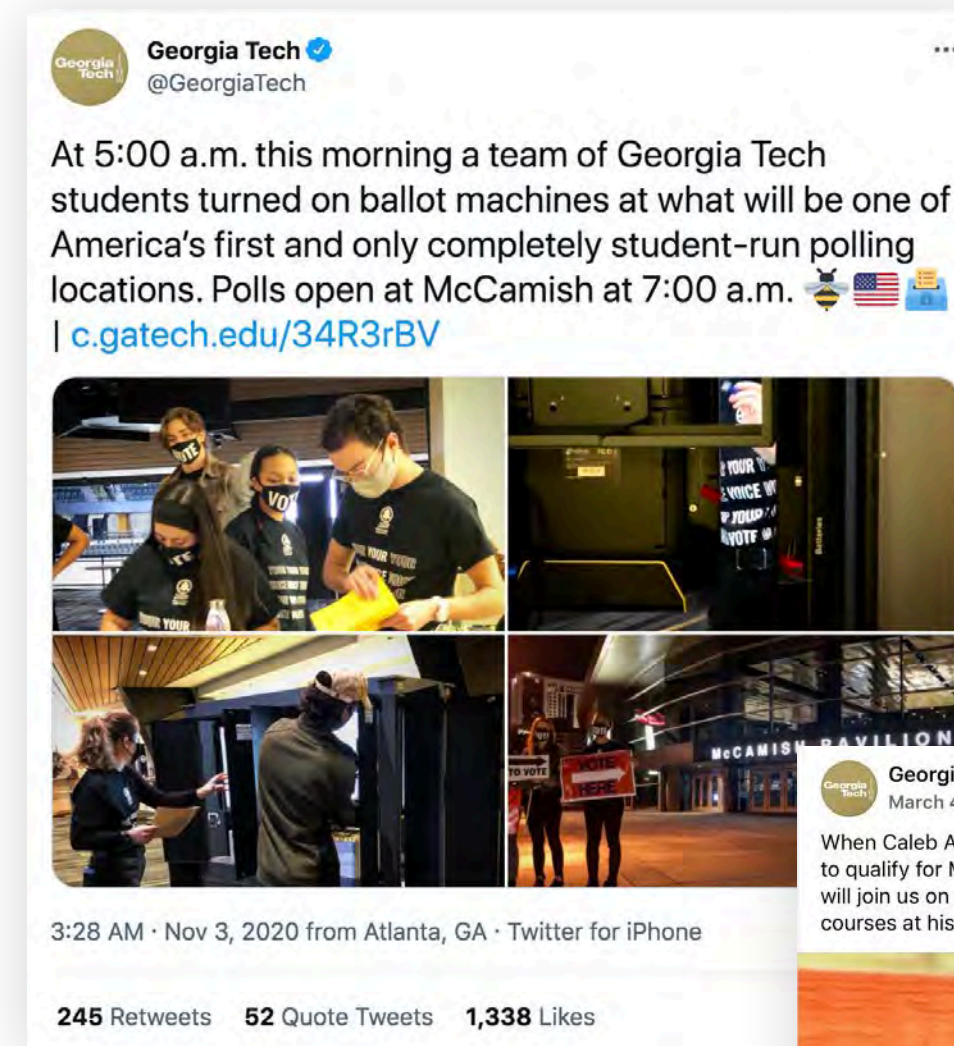
Georgia Institute of Technology

Instagram #25

Facebook #3

Twitter #30

Some top-ranking universities kill it on social with varied content on each of their channels, while Georgia Tech ranked fifth overall by taking content that's working well on one channel and amplifying it on others. Georgia Tech saw serious success when posting inspiring stories about notable alumni and recent grads, and scored extra points in our book for featuring one of the most diverse makeup of students we saw in our study.



	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	4.30%	0.69%	0.14%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	1.02M	278.8K	113.8K

#6



Abilene Christian University

Instagram #35

Facebook #5

Twitter #25

The ACU Wildcats dominated on the baseball field, the basketball court, and social in the last school year. Universities with big sports wins often rake in the social media engagement, and ACU leaned hard into showing off its first-ever Southland Conference baseball win and strong March Madness NCAA performance. When not posting about sports and Wildcat fans, ACU found success on social with contests and student stories.

	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	6.05%	0.60%	0.73%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	250.1K	183.2K	21.9K



#7



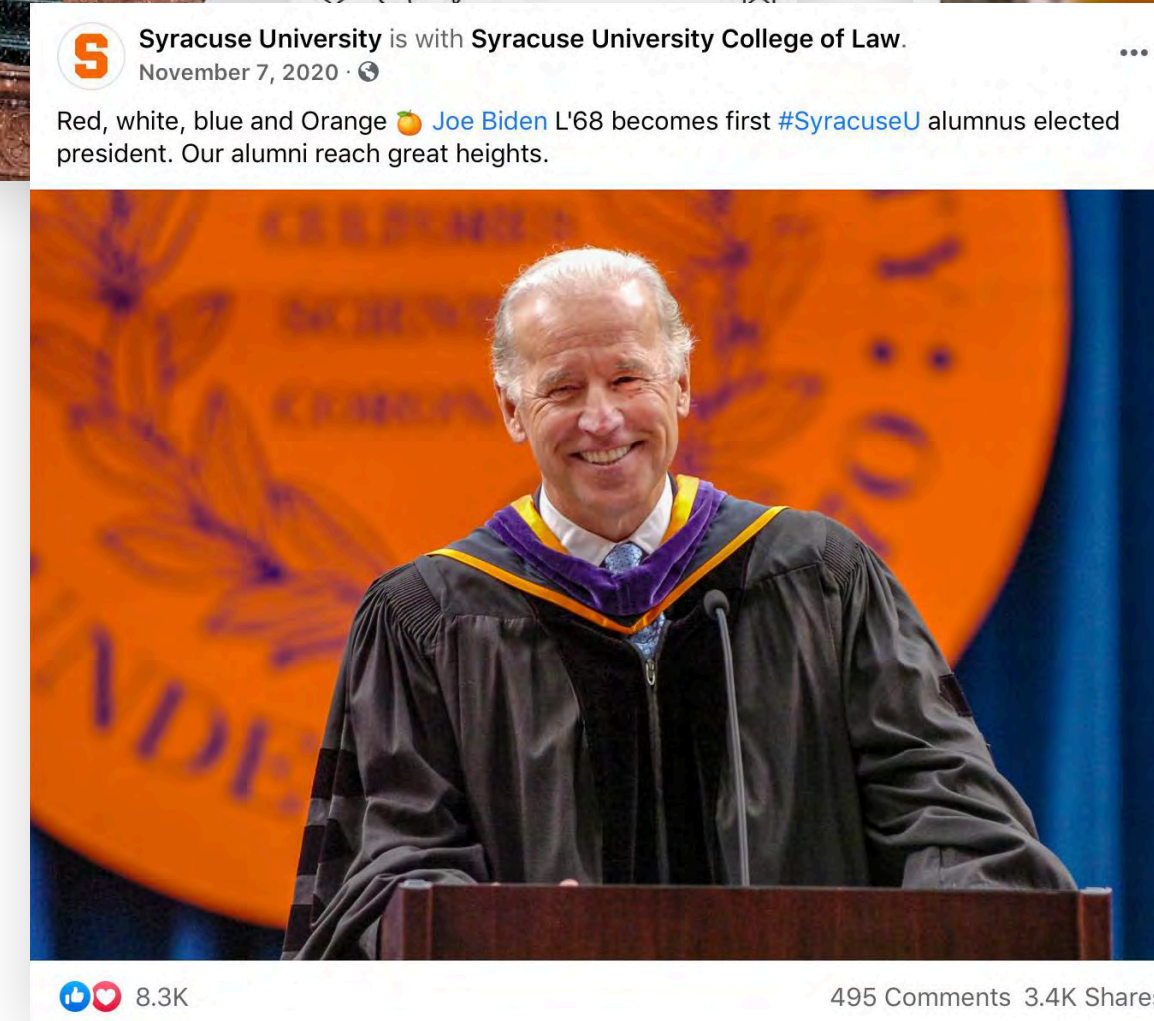
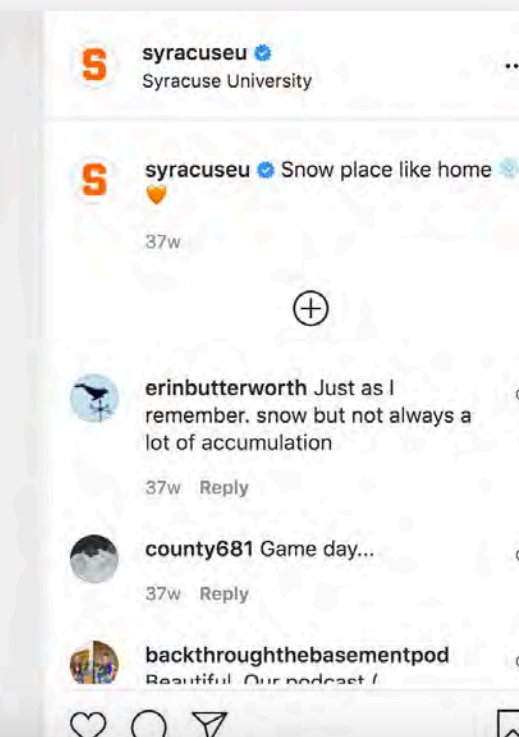
Syracuse University

Instagram #7

Facebook #47

Twitter #20

The secret recipe for Higher Ed social media success? Just get an alum elected president to rake in the engagement. Syracuse's top post on all three channels celebrated alumnus Joe Biden's presidential election win. When not showcasing one of the most successful Oranges in Syracuse's history, the university was all about gorgeous campus glamour shots and plenty of orange emojis and images.



	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	5.43%	0.23%	0.25%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	670.3K	177.6K	69.9K

#8



Brigham Young University

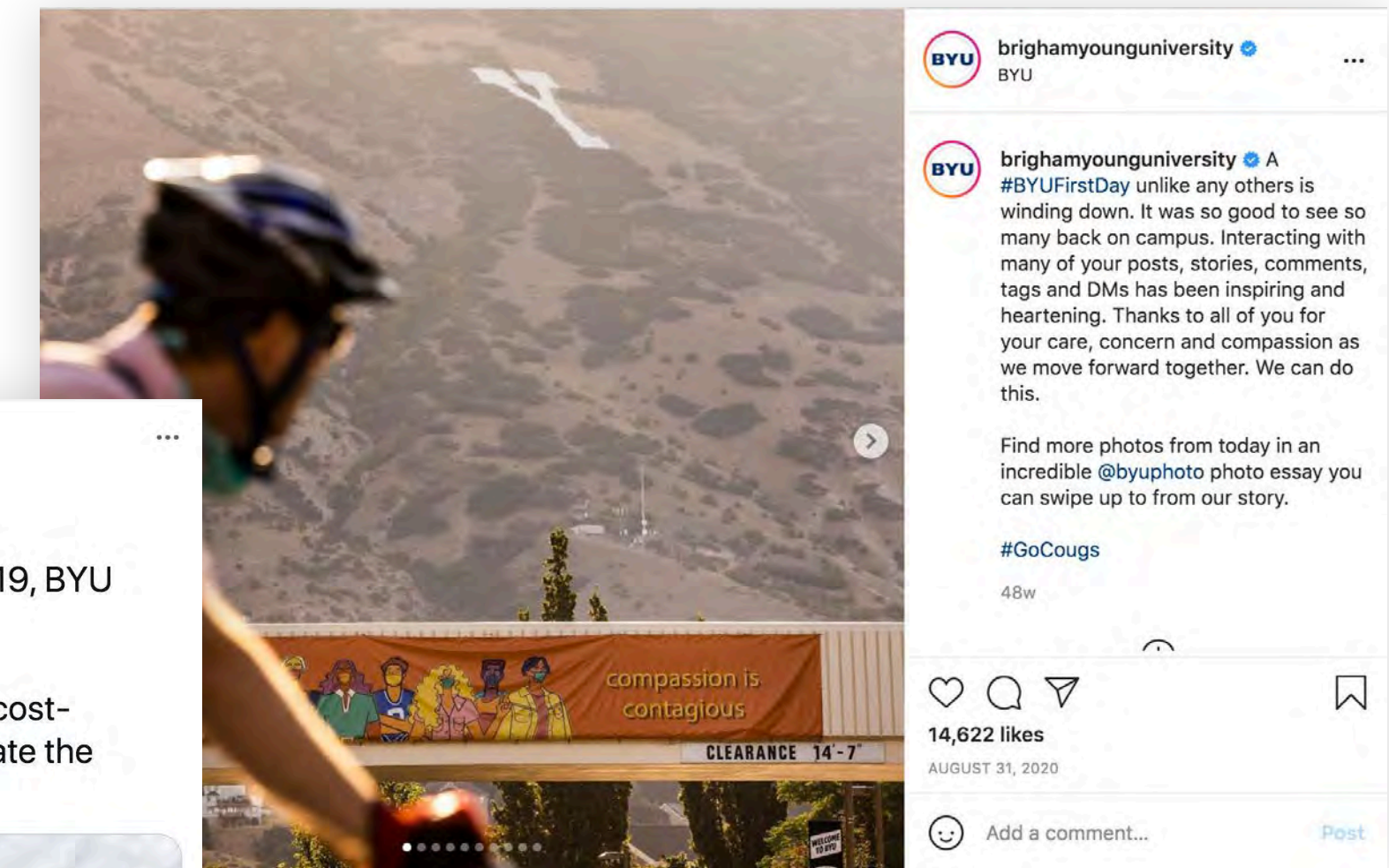
Instagram #14

Facebook #62

Twitter #1

BYU grabbed the Twitter gold and eighth overall with a notable mix of bible verses, quippy tweets, sports wins, and responses to current events. Campus news, COVID updates, and of course a little Provo beauty helped round out BYU's top social posts this year. Not all of BYU's engagement was positive, though—followers took to the comments to object to COVID protocols and standing up for voting rights in several instances.

	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	5.10%	0.33%	0.42%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	627.5K	70.1K	97.9K



#9



James Madison University



#1






#21



#57

James Madison University repeated its Instagram win thanks to stellar engagement this year, but fell in the Facebook and Twitter ranks a bit. JMU has always found particular success on social with stunning shots of its campus, so it's no surprise that these images performed better on ultra-visual Instagram than on Facebook or Twitter. The Dukes had better luck on these channels with posts about current events and campus updates.

			
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	7.26%	0.39%	0.15%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	703.8K	157.8K	38.7K



#10



Michigan State University

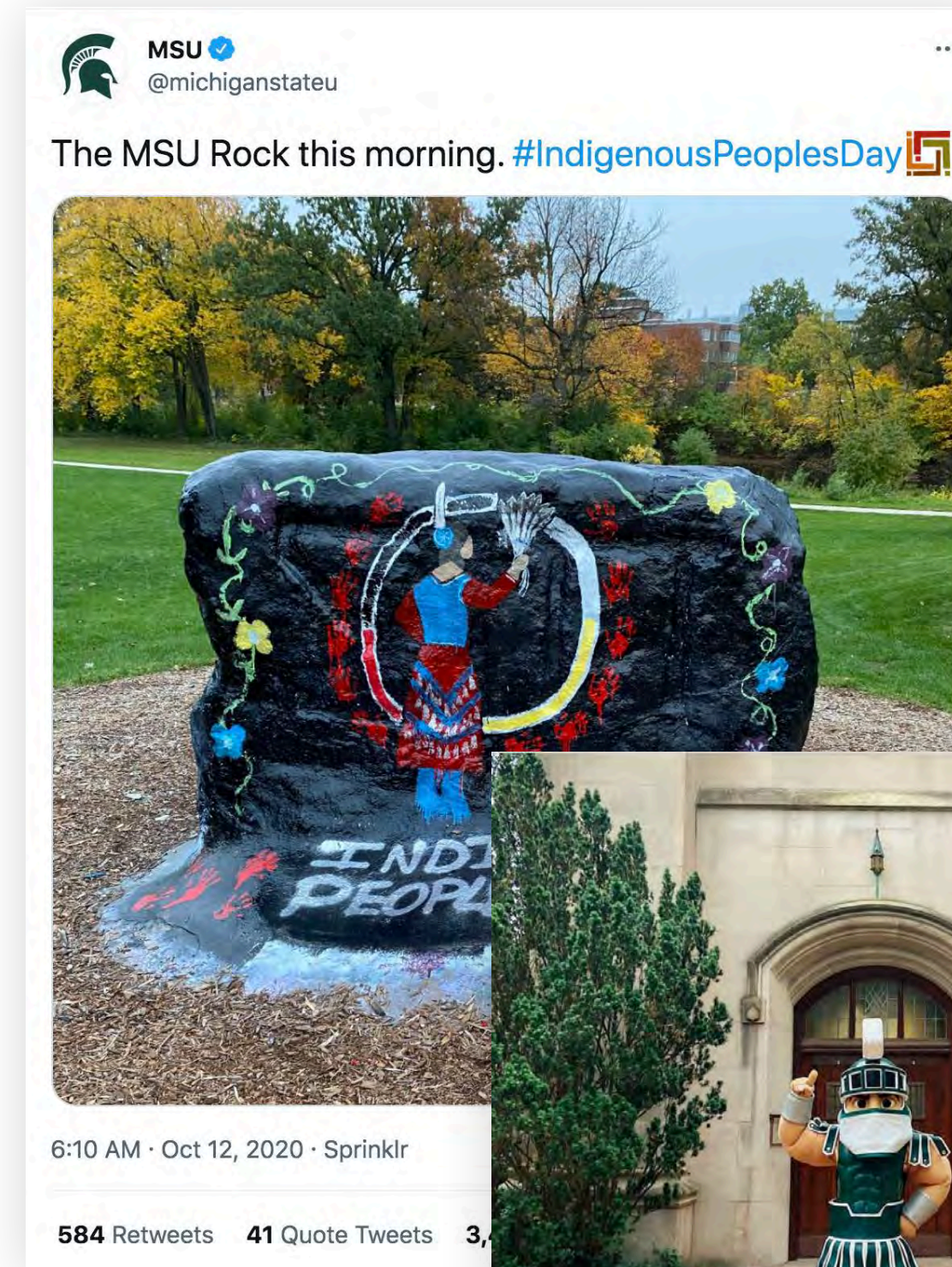
Instagram #61

Facebook #9

Twitter #10

Michigan State University has been steadily climbing the Higher Ed social media engagement ranks for years, and finally broke into the top 10 this year with particularly stellar performance on Facebook and Twitter. The Spartans drummed up tons of engagement with posts that reminded students and alumni about what they were missing on campus like glamour shots, updates about what mascot Sparty the Spartan is up to, and of course tons of shots of the MSU Rock.

	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter
AVG. ENGAGEMENT RATE	3.49%	0.41%	0.19%
ENGAGEMENT TOTAL	1.02M	405.2K	157.0K



Higher Education Social Media Engagement Report Full Rankings









HIGHER EDUCATION SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT REPORT | JUNE 1, 2020 TO MAY 31, 2021

Rival
IQ

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
University of Iowa	1	9	1	13	Baylor University	11	32	35	18
Utah State University	2	19	13	5	U of I, Urbana-Champaign	12	16	19	51
Texas A&M University	3	7	8	27	U.S. Naval Academy	13	52	16	22
Ohio University	4	43	6	4	University of Dayton	13	10	26	54
Georgia Tech	5	25	3	30	Virginia Tech	15	2	50	41
Abilene Christian University	6	35	5	25	The Citadel	16	61	7	35
Syracuse University	7	7	47	20	U.S. Military Academy	17	92	2	17
Brigham Young University	8	14	62	1	College of the Holy Cross	18	23	33	62
James Madison University	9	1	21	57	North Carolina A&T State Univ.	19	100	14	6
Michigan State University	10	61	9	10	Marquette University	20	56	24	50

Full Rankings

									
Clemson University	21	79	22	31	Oregon State University	31	70	88	7
U.S. Air Force Academy	22	85	18	34	Jackson State University	31	138	4	23
Xavier University	23	51	65	26	University of Delaware	33	33	54	79
Butler University	24	61	44	44	Texas Tech University	34	77	53	45
North Carolina State Univ.	25	13	37	102	The University of Tulsa	35	44	78	58
West Virginia University	26	100	11	43	Colorado State University	36	64	19	99
Washington State University	26	27	91	36	Liberty University	37	83	56	49
Gonzaga University	28	89	41	29	University of Notre Dame	38	90	15	89
Northern Arizona University	29	6	81	75	Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln	39	114	78	11
Davidson College	30	58	91	15	The Ohio State University	40	70	104	38

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Stephen F. Austin State Univ.	41	130	63	21	Miami University (Ohio)	51	82	59	119
Wake Forest University	42	37	49	129	South Carolina State Univ.	51	203	17	40
Iowa State University	43	146	28	42	University of Virginia	53	23	72	166
Ball State University	44	65	101	55	Bowling Green State Univ.	54	40	117	107
University of Connecticut	45	5	87	144	Coastal Carolina University	55	174	27	64
Duquesne University	46	112	58	68	Northwestern State Univ.	56	95	65	106
UMass Amherst	47	39	38	162	Providence College	57	38	81	149
Sam Houston State Univ.	48	203	25	16	Creighton University	58	138	84	48
Colgate University	49	33	101	121	University of Mississippi	59	144	93	37
University of Florida	50	95	154	8	Sacred Heart University	60	49	69	159

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Louisiana Tech University	61	135	98	47	UNC at Charlotte	71	28	152	116
University of Georgia	62	110	80	91	Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville	72	165	100	32
Belmont University	63	53	75	156	Mount St. Mary's University	73	168	38	92
University of Pittsburgh	64	4	160	122	Missouri State University	74	153	81	74
University of Richmond	65	31	46	211	Montana State Univ. -Bozeman	75	44	152	113
University of Louisville	66	150	116	24	Prairie View A&M University	75	270	36	3
High Point University	67	86	23	182	St. Bonaventure University	77	165	90	56
UC Davis	68	103	103	87	University of South Dakota	78	143	61	112
Southern Utah University	69	48	164	82	University of Houston	79	201	107	9
Southern Methodist Univ.	70	26	135	134	The George Washington Univ.	80	11	226	84

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Grambling State University	80	295	12	14	University of Utah	91	142	117	90
University of Miami (Florida)	82	11	240	73	Villanova University	92	94	109	150
University of Vermont	83	3	149	175	Texas Southern University	93	307	29	19
Bucknell University	84	60	52	225	Florida Gulf Coast University	94	209	45	103
Howard University	85	200	126	12	Duke University	95	111	128	120
UNC - Chapel Hill	86	44	169	126	UCLA	95	87	189	83
Rice University	86	54	146	139	Binghamton University	97	20	94	246
University of Montana	88	156	75	111	Southern Univ., Baton Rouge	97	268	32	60
University of Texas at Austin	89	106	160	80	Siena College	99	124	111	127
Boston College	90	47	176	124	University of Central Florida	100	42	176	145

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Florida State University	101	192	55	117	Northeastern University	111	28	201	153
Longwood University	102	215	31	123	Marshall University	112	265	47	71
Florida A&M University	103	226	74	72	Saint Joseph's University	113	16	149	226
Texas State University	103	134	157	81	Elon University	114	172	70	150
Samford University	105	75	128	171	Marist College	114	22	122	248
Texas Christian University	106	95	96	184	Univ. of Maryland, College Park	116	14	137	243
University of South Carolina	107	69	242	66	Purdue University	117	180	111	108
Long Beach State University	108	41	252	86	Wagner College	118	135	128	137
Bradley University	108	123	109	147	Univ. of Texas at San Antonio	119	230	95	76
Virginia Military Institute	110	20	10	351	Loyola University Chicago	120	153	89	165

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
University of Maryland (UMES)	121	286	64	59	Nicholls State University	130	321	43	63
William & Mary	122	55	73	283	Rider University	132	113	180	138
Oklahoma State University	123	289	65	61	UC Berkeley	133	84	160	188
Georgetown University	124	131	208	77	University at Buffalo	134	56	40	338
Indiana University (IUPUI)	124	124	225	67	Quinnipiac University	135	67	30	339
Alcorn State University	126	344	34	39	Indiana Univ., Bloomington	136	74	107	257
Bryant University	127	114	218	88	University of Oregon	136	117	236	85
University of Alabama	128	161	147	114	Fairfield University	138	28	157	258
Alabama A&M University	129	337	56	33	Cal Poly	139	36	166	242
CSU, Sacramento	130	80	140	207	Univ. of Louisiana Monroe	140	246	132	69

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Univ. of the Incarnate Word	141	282	114	52	Campbell University	150	211	128	135
Youngstown State University	142	206	187	65	South Dakota State Univ.	152	288	111	78
Weber State University	143	230	183	46	Stanford University	153	183	201	94
University of Kansas	144	147	208	105	Morgan State University	154	284	168	28
University of Evansville	145	244	77	141	Vanderbilt University	155	161	227	100
Saint Francis University	146	179	97	187	Northwestern University	156	65	229	196
Troy University	147	226	84	157	Appalachian State University	156	109	121	260
University at Albany	148	76	218	174	University of Maine	156	128	86	276
University of Washington	149	131	180	160	North Carolina Central Univ.	159	331	60	101
Tulane University	150	108	156	210	Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison	160	172	122	200

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Robert Morris University	161	202	199	95	California Baptist University	170	119	192	202
Old Dominion University	162	170	258	70	University of Arizona	172	152	142	220
Manhattan College	162	158	147	193	USC	173	59	212	247
Tennessee Technological Univ.	164	180	190	132	New Mexico State University	174	238	230	53
Eastern Illinois University	165	299	41	164	Univ. of Colorado, Boulder	175	49	258	215
Harvard University	166	165	173	167	Oral Roberts University	176	169	204	152
Cornell University	167	120	171	215	Loyola Marymount Univ.	176	145	195	185
University of Maryland (UMBC)	168	248	127	136	Univ. of Alabama, Birmingham	178	293	138	96
Grand Canyon University	169	67	204	241	University of Cincinnati	179	90	224	217
Temple University	170	98	269	146	St. Mary's College of California	180	92	212	229

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Auburn University	181	195	176	163
University of San Francisco	182	70	267	198
Western Carolina University	183	243	71	222
Louisiana State University	184	223	218	98
Iona College	185	196	166	178
Loyola University Maryland	186	148	151	245
Mercer University	187	211	122	212
Boston University	188	127	214	205
University of Oklahoma	189	203	214	130
East Carolina University	190	177	182	200

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
University of Toledo	190	193	198	168
University of Michigan	192	176	216	168
UNC, Wilmington	192	259	140	161
Univ. of Tennessee at Martin	194	279	134	148
Princeton University	195	190	195	177
Yale University	196	164	201	199
Indiana State University	197	312	251	2
Illinois State University	198	222	142	208
Lafayette College	198	103	246	223
Fordham University	200	87	253	233

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Univ. of New Hampshire	201	99	208	268	Valparaiso University	211	290	193	115
Saint Louis University	201	106	172	297	UCI	212	103	264	235
Univ. of Arkansas, Pine Bluff	203	336	51	189	University of North Texas	213	118	142	348
College of Charleston	204	78	240	261	Rutgers University	214	226	125	261
University of Portland	204	156	199	224	Univ. of Southern Mississippi	214	277	159	176
UC Santa Barbara	206	16	294	270	Univ. of Missouri, Columbia	216	161	275	179
University of Kentucky	207	186	228	172	La Salle University	217	189	272	155
Hampton University	208	297	170	125	Bethune-Cookman Univ.	218	340	98	180
Utah Valley University	209	296	117	181	CSU, Northridge	219	158	207	255
Mississippi State University	210	239	164	192	Arizona State University	220	241	184	197

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
St. Francis College Brooklyn	220	209	255	158
Univ. of Louisiana at Lafayette	222	275	238	110
Charleston Southern Univ.	223	199	187	238
Pennsylvania State Univ.	224	178	244	203
Towson University	224	121	232	272
Wofford College	226	206	193	228
Columbia University	227	122	300	209
Norfolk State University	227	310	190	131
S. Illinois Univ., Carbondale	229	244	104	300
Drake University	230	300	117	232





	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Jacksonville State University	231	237	106	307
Gardner-Webb University	232	206	133	312
Alabama State University	232	350	65	236
University of San Diego	234	80	269	305
Hofstra University	235	174	216	266
Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas	236	224	302	133
UC Riverside	237	184	304	173
University of Texas at El Paso	238	270	154	239
George Mason University	238	217	342	104
Kansas State University	240	267	300	97





Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Tennessee State University	240	343	139	182
Western Illinois University	242	251	114	303
University of South Florida	243	153	248	271
University of Northern Iowa	243	221	261	190
Portland State University	245	272	174	227
Lehigh University	246	126	265	284
University of Idaho	246	213	163	299
Eastern Kentucky University	248	304	246	128
Univ. of Central Arkansas	248	315	254	109
Drexel University	250	148	242	290

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
American University	251	70	347	267
CSU, Fresno	252	225	267	195
Santa Clara University	253	140	245	304
Winthrop University	254	261	208	221
Univ. of Texas, Rio Grande Valley	255	311	288	93
University of North Alabama	256	258	136	300
UT, Chattanooga	257	302	277	118
Virginia Commonwealth Univ.	258	185	185	334
University of South Alabama	259	250	221	234
McNeese State University	260	332	204	170

Full Rankings

				
University of Pennsylvania	261	191	276	240
Southeastern Louisiana Univ.	262	335	234	143
Boise State University	263	229	238	249
Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities	263	133	309	274
Saint Peter's University	263	251	261	204
DePaul University	266	102	338	277
Pepperdine University	267	170	279	272
Brown University	268	187	249	287
University of Rhode Island	269	116	280	328
Idaho State University	270	253	261	213

				
Oakland University	271	129	320	282
S. Illinois Univ., Edwardsville	271	261	195	275
Delaware State University	273	329	175	230
CSU, Bakersfield	274	239	310	186
Florida International Univ.	275	248	297	194
Furman University	276	217	221	310
Niagara University	276	232	186	330
Austin Peay State University	278	294	307	153
Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee	279	220	237	298
San Diego State University	280	140	330	286

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦		🏆	📷	f	🐦
Middle Tennessee State Univ.	281	236	176	349	Wichita State University	291	323	221	244
Univ. of Arkansas, Fayetteville	282	263	250	250	Radford University	291	197	282	309
Univ. of Texas at Arlington	283	214	285	265	Monmouth University	293	135	331	324
San Jose State University	284	182	339	251	Cleveland State University	293	247	337	206
University of North Dakota	285	233	287	254	Presbyterian College	295	253	257	281
Fairleigh Dickinson University	286	217	265	293	CSU, Fullerton	296	151	342	302
Mississippi Valley State Univ.	287	348	142	289	Dartmouth College	297	160	327	311
University of New Orleans	288	325	316	140	Lamar University	298	332	325	142
Seton Hall University	289	187	308	291	University of Denver	299	197	314	296
UNC, Greensboro	289	275	231	280	University of North Florida	300	290	290	231

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Georgia State University	301	241	318	256
University of New Mexico	302	216	312	288
Kent State	303	269	282	269
Coppin State University	303	328	233	259
University of Hawaii, Manoa	305	283	286	252
Eastern Washington Univ.	305	253	331	237
University of Detroit Mercy	307	260	256	307
Stetson University	308	234	277	327
Stony Brook University	309	193	312	336
Western Michigan University	310	256	293	294





	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Morehead State University	311	334	234	279
University of the Pacific	312	308	323	218
Jacksonville University	313	306	292	253
Western Kentucky University	314	272	258	322
University of Illinois Chicago	315	305	333	218
Long Island University	316	326	351	191
Wright State University	317	309	271	292
East Tennessee State Univ.	318	278	288	314
Kennesaw State University	319	263	291	333
Texas A&M, Corpus Christi	320	338	272	278

Full Rankings

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Chicago State University	321	349	326	214
Florida Atlantic University	322	234	335	329
Georgia Southern University	322	280	282	336
Murray State University	324	316	272	316
University of Memphis	325	319	322	264
University of Nevada, Reno	326	286	299	325
University of Hartford	327	303	315	295
Lipscomb University	328	290	294	330
Central Michigan University	329	319	280	320
Seattle University	330	257	341	323

	🏆	📷	f	🐦
Univ. of South Carolina Upstate	331	341	321	263
Northern Illinois University	332	265	346	317
North Dakota State Univ.	332	280	303	345
University of Akron	334	313	310	306
Arkansas State University	335	272	327	342
University of Wyoming	336	301	294	350
Southeast Missouri State Univ.	337	298	329	319
Houston Baptist University	338	346	319	285
Canisius College	339	339	306	315
Univ. of Northern Colorado	340	284	340	341

Full Rankings

				
Purdue Univ., Fort Wayne	341	314	344	318
UNC, Asheville	341	326	304	346
Central Connecticut State Univ.	343	342	324	313
Univ. of Wisconsin, Green Bay	344	324	317	340
Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City	345	322	344	321
Northern Kentucky Univ.	346	317	349	326
NJ Institute of Technology	347	350	298	347
St. John's University	348	330	333	335
Univ. of Nebraska Omaha	349	318	350	332
Univ. of Arkansas, Little Rock	350	347	336	344

				
Eastern Michigan University	351	345	348	343



About Rival IQ

Rival IQ is a social media analytics toolkit that helps you:

Supercharge your social landscape

Track results across all social profiles, including engagement, influencers, social bios, and sentiment—for you and your competitors.

Stay ahead of your competition

Conduct competitive analysis in minutes. Monitor your industry, create benchmarks, and evaluate competitor activity in time to respond before the market shifts direction.

Do more with your social data

Dive deeper into your social media analytics for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, boosted post detection, hashtag analysis, and so much more.

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