

GUIDE

Cross-Campus Innovation

A Guide to Social Media Strategy for Australian Higher Education Institutions



Cross-Campus Innovation:

A guide to social media strategy for Australian higher education institutions

Recent research has revealed that while the top-ranked schools globally, such as Harvard, Cambridge, and Stanford are highly active on social networks. Australian institutions are yet to capitalise on the opportunities which social media can provide across campus and throughout the student lifecycle.

The decentralised nature of the higher education industry can pose significant challenges to social innovators. A focus on best practices, a scalable framework to ensure consistent brand messaging, and institutional policies for social media provide a strong foundation to drive social media innovation across campus. By adopting this approach, higher education institutions can become true digital campuses, in which each department uses social media to accomplish its individual objectives, while working toward broader organizational goals.

This guide provides you with insights and tactics for Australian education institutions. By using Hootsuite's Enterprise platform, you can implement a campus-wide social media strategy to increase enrollment applications, improve student engagement satisfaction, raise donations, and build institutional reputation.

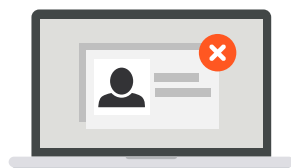
For more insights on the potential of social media for higher education institutions, see the Hootsuite research white paper [The Social Revolution: redefining the student experience in Australian higher education institutions](#).

Build a foundation for social success

While a majority of Australian institutions have already captured an audience on social media, less than 30% of institutions are actively engaging their audience more than once a week. Institutions looking to maintain or build their reputations with students and recruits cannot merely dabble in social—they must dive in, posting relevant, targeted, and reliable content paired with comprehensive strategies for keeping followers engaged.

Here are the steps that all departments should take to build a foundation for social success:

Remove rogue accounts



Without the right tools, it is next to impossible for large institutions with several departments to get control of all your social media accounts—especially with the risk of misrepresentation through rogue accounts. In Australia, there are an average of 4.57 social media accounts for each Australian university, while 15% of Australian universities have over 50 social media accounts representing their institution. Hootsuite Enterprise provides a thorough social account audit, which will allow you to uncover all of your brand-related social profiles, including unauthorized and fraudulent accounts.



Educate your team

Enhance your skills and knowledge on social media and Hootsuite by enrolling your team in Hootsuite Academy. For more advanced education for your social leadership team, consider the [Advanced Social Media Strategy Certification](#), developed by Hootsuite and the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.



Unify your social strategy across departments

Only 40% of Australian universities have centralised social media publishing activity. Get your entire team on the same page to ensure consistency in your messaging and overall approach to social. Hootsuite allows you to manage multiple team members on one account, enabling you to assign tasks, collaborate on campaigns, manage approvals, and monitor messages from a central source.



Monitor online engagement

Use the Hootsuite dashboard to set up search streams filtered by keyword and focus on the conversations that matter most. Connect to an unlimited number of profiles on over 30 social media networks, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Foursquare.



Measure your social ROI

With over 40 analytics modules and customisable reports, Hootsuite Enterprise enables you to measure your performance according to your unique objectives.

- Use the Ow.ly URL shortener to track how many people are clicking on your links. It will provide insight into the type of content users are responding to and engaging with, which you can use for future posts.
- [Integrate Google Analytics](#) with Hootsuite for a powerful combination of social data that provides a wealth of insights into how social content is driving your traffic. Monitor how visitors get to your sites, how long they stay, and what they read when they get there. Then, adapt your content to those key performance indicators.
- Measure and report on changes in performance over time, using Hootsuite's intuitive visual reports. Discuss results with your team and make subtle shifts in your social strategy or execution to see how outcomes improve.

Set a framework for brand consistency

University communications: establishing guidelines and policies for social success

As the voice of your institution, the communications department has the challenging task of balancing competing objectives.



Maintain control of all messages broadcast from university-branded social accounts.



Give other departments space to conduct their own communications and establish their own ways of working.



Hootsuite Enterprise enables higher education institutions to align your social policies with your brand guidelines to deliver a unified voice. It connects all departments on a single platform, giving each team the ability to conduct campaigns while providing the Communications department with overall control and a secure set of standards.

Set cross-departmental standards for social media use and brand guidelines

If you do not have a set of social media standards, we can help. Hootsuite Enterprise enables you to establish and implement policies that can be adopted by all departments that use university-branded social media accounts.

Enterprise customers have access to a dedicated Customer Success Manager, who works with you from day one to understand your business objectives and match them with the capabilities of your Enterprise account.

“With over 400,00 students across NSW it’s important we have a variety of ways for our students to connect and an “always on” approach to support our students. If our students know we are always here when they need us, we become more than just an education provider. We become an intrinsic part of their support network and cheer squad.”

Brendon Walker, Manager, Online Engagement - TAFE NSW

Share campus-wide news, events, and culture

Make the most of Hootsuite’s demographic targeting options to deliver your message to the right audience.

Ready to get the word out? Try [Hootlet](#), a browser add-on that allows you to easily share content to all your social networks, from anywhere on the web.

Your students and alumni can come from all over the world. To reach a specific sub-group of your audience, and understand the culture of each campus or club, Hootsuite Enterprise customers can use [geo-targeting](#) to segment by location and language for Facebook Pages and LinkedIn Company Pages.

Want to find student stories from a particular campus? Use geo-located searches to filter according to distance, and discover the social messages sent from a certain area. Or refine your search to according to keywords like “library,” “parking,” or “wifi.”

Implement social across the student lifecycle

Admissions: recruit the brightest outstanding talent

- Like the sales department in a company, admissions is focused on building relationships and making conversions—in this case, from prospects into students—by enhancing enrollment applications. Hootsuite's platform enables you to stay in control of incoming messages, using team assignments to help identify and engage prospective students quickly.

Engage with prospective students

- Hootsuite has a range of features—including single-click replies, smart scheduling, saving drafts, and precision-targeted posts—to make engagement easy.
- Take advantage of one of the many [CRM apps](#), which can be integrated into your Hootsuite dashboard to help you conduct deep analysis and provide useful insights on your database.
- Use customer service app integrations such as [Zendesk](#) to enhance your ability to respond quickly and efficiently to queries, concerns, and kudos.

Drive traffic to application portals

- The Hootsuite dashboard lets you post messages on all your social networks at once, so you can efficiently create a campaign across multiple social networks, to drive more traffic.

- Create content around applications on your blog and set up an RSS feed to automatically re-post content to your social networks.

- Be sure to track your links to find out the types of messages and the social networks which result in the most traffic.

Create integrated recruitment strategies

- Use the [bulk uploader](#) to create multiple recruitment messages in a CSV file and upload to every network at once.
- Make sure you are engaging the right audiences with appropriate messages by using precision-targeted posts, which can be segmented according to location, language, and demographic.
- Use the [MailChimp](#) app to integrate your social and email campaigns, and manage them both from your Hootsuite dashboard.

Transition from application to enrollment

- Nurture relationships with prospective students through ongoing engagement. Use the [Storify](#) app to turn social media posts into more detailed stories, to share news of students who have decided to enroll and encourage others to do the same.
- Add the [Evernote](#) app to save conversations for future follow up, which you or your team members can reference later. Users can also view, edit, or share from a stream of notes in Hootsuite.

Student services: strengthening campus culture

Student services has a unique challenge when it comes to communication. Not only are they the frontline for interactions with students, they are also required to work quickly, as some on-campus issues need to be addressed in a timely manner. A more satisfied, engaged campus leads to higher performing students, which increases the likelihood of continued support and engagement as alumni.

Respond to on-campus issues in real time

Social media enhances a university's ability to respond to issues—from a serious crisis to a common complaint.

- Monitor student comments on multiple networks from your Hootsuite dashboard, to quickly detect potential trends or issues before they escalate.
- The [Hootsuite Assignments](#) lets you assign messages to the appropriate team member to provide rapid responses. Share tasks with departments and colleges to access their resources and support their initiatives, for a fully integrated approach.
- In the event of a crisis, use your Hootsuite dashboard as a communications command centre, for posting essential information and answering questions quickly.

Strengthen campus culture

Hootsuite has many ways to gather intelligence on student opinions, to help determine what, if any, steps need to be taken to enhance school spirit.

- Integrate a survey app, such as [SurveyMonkey](#), to get a detailed and current snapshot of student opinion.
- Monitor student sentiments using Hootsuite Insights, to see how they shift over time. If a pattern emerges, you can use the research to inform your next campaign.
- Use app integrations like Instagram and Trendspottr to find and share content generated by students and visitors about your school.
- Calculate your Net Promoter Score, to measure changes in student satisfaction and loyalty over time.

Transition from students to alumni

Get students engaged early to maintain a connection with them after they graduate.

- Draw students into niche social networks by supporting and enhancing the online activities of your institution's clubs, teams, and associations.

Alumni: maintaining strong relationships for life

Your alumni represent a knowledgeable network of advocates who can share their stories and experiences with current and future students. Alumni and campus events can be monitored through your Hootsuite platform and social campaigns can be measured with message tagging to help your marketing efforts reach their maximum potential.

Stay connected

Alumni have valuable insights into the student experience at your institution. Here are a few ways to help you keep in touch:

- Filter your search streams by keyword to find conversations on a particular alumni topic, program, team, or graduating year.
- Build a Twitter list for each graduating year, and add students who are sharing online to their appropriate list.
- Use geo-targeting to segment your dashboard search stream by location, and zero in on the community you're trying to reach.
- Use hashtags as catalysts for conversation, and to group posts by subject.

Build career and networking opportunities

Professionals and business people of all types have come to understand the power of social networks for building their careers, whether they're junior staffers or senior managers.

- Publish messages directly to groups on professional social networks such as LinkedIn, useful for targeting particular segments.
- Planning a series of cross-country events? Use geo-based networking events to bring together individuals who are based in the same region but can't seem to connect.
- Use your social platform to facilitate introductions between students and professionals. Closing the deal is up to them.

Social media is at the heart of the modern college and university experience. Its impact begins before students get accepted to a school, and lasts long after they have left the campus and become alumni. The ability of higher education institutions to thrive in the years ahead will depend, in part, on their understanding of the powerful impact of social media on all phases of the student lifecycle.

By embracing the social campus and implementing a robust social relationship platform like Hootsuite Enterprise, all departments can use social media to meet their unique communications objectives while supporting the broader goals of the institution.

About Hootsuite Enterprise

Partner with Hootsuite to accelerate your social transformation



Hootsuite is the most widely used platform for managing social media, loved by over 10 million people around the globe and trusted by more than 800 of the Fortune 1000.

Hootsuite Enterprise empowers organisations to execute business strategies for the social media era and scale social media activities across multiple teams, departments, and regions. Our versatile platform supports a thriving ecosystem of social networks complemented by 200+ business applications and integrations, allowing organisations to extend social media into existing systems and programs.

Along with our channel and agency partners, we help organisations build deeper relationships with customers, stay connected to the needs of the market, grow revenue, and draw meaningful insights from social media data. Innovating since day one, we continue to help organisations pioneer the social media landscape and accelerate their success through product training, group training and tailored organisational training, as well as security and compliance services.

Request a custom demo today by visiting enterprise.hootsuite.com

Trusted by over 800 of the Fortune 1000

