NOWSPEED

Social Media Competitive Insight for Private Educational Institutions

Introduction

The top private educational institutions have learned how to effectively use social media. This report will show how they've built their followers and used content to gain an advantage in the marketplace.

Nowspeed conducted extensive research on the social media campaigns of the top private educational institutions in all 50 states in the USA, and uncovered:

- The best content they use to drive engagement
- The optimum posting frequency across channels
- The number of followers they've gained on the major platforms

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Executive Summary

Social Media Analysis of Top Private Educational Institutions

- Top private educational institutions are promoting their brand on social media by sharing student success stories and school events through branded posts.
- Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the most popular platforms in the private education industry, followed by Instagram and YouTube. Out of the top 100 private educational institutions reviewed for this report:
    - 99% use Facebook
    - 95% use LinkedIn
    - 93% use Twitter
    - 85% use Instagram
    - 69% use YouTube

In terms of number of followers on each platform, we noted that there is only minor fluctuation when comparing each school's follower size.

When comparing the content published by each institution, there is only a slight variation in the amount of content being pushed out. The majority of the top 100 institutions use branded content as the key driver of engagement. This content is focused on current students, alumni, faculty, and school events.

Social Media Marketing Strategies

Social media allows you to engage and interact with your audience and become part of the conversation that may be happening around your brand. It's important to maintain a regular posting schedule and post with some degree of frequency to stay relevant and consistent for your audience. If remembering to post one or more times per day seems daunting, consider scheduling your posts in advance. Facebook has a scheduling feature built right in and there are many free third-party tools available that will allow you to schedule posts for other social media platforms. Scheduling also allows you to reach your target audience at the times they're online, even if that time is inconvenient for you to post regularly.

Branded content includes blog posts and white papers that are written and posted by firms themselves. Branded content is a useful tool to provide quality information to your audience without being seen as disruptive direct selling. In terms of private educational institutions, branded content often takes the form of student stories or school events, such as an award ceremony or sporting event.

A second type of content firms post on social media is industry content, which are articles pertaining to their industry written by a third party such as a media analyst. While you may not necessarily want to promote a direct competitor, third party content provides the opportunity for you to share content from a trusted source that aligns with your brand's personality and showcases you as an influencer within your industry.

Another type of content is community posts. These can be produced internally or written by a third party about a topic not directly related to your industry. A common community post is promoting an event happening in the firm's local area. Community posts are a great way to build a positive brand persona and engage with your local community.

Social Media Analysis of Top Private Educational Institutions

An analysis of the top 3 private educational institutions uncovered the optimum posting frequency, and best types of content for the private education industry. On average, the three private education institutions posted 6 times on Twitter, 4 times on Facebook, and 0 times on LinkedIn each week. Each of these three private education institutions focus on their school's unique students, events and personal brand. They commonly post branded content focused directly on their students, alumni, faculty, and school events.

Phillips Academy Andover

Phillips Academy Andover's content strategy focuses on branded content promoting school events, as well as posts about the accomplishments of current and former students and faculty. In an average week, Phillips Academy Andover posts about 8 times on Twitter, 3-4 times on Facebook, and 0 times on LinkedIn.

	Social Media Followers				
Institution	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
Phillips Academy Andover	27,437	7,541	2,667	6,399	1,146

Social Media Analysis of Top Private Educational Institutions

Phillips Exeter Academy

Phillips Exeter Academy releases similar content to that of Phillips Academy Andover. Most of their posts focus on student and alumni success. In an average week, Phillips Exeter Academy posts about 4-5 times on Twitter, 3 times on Facebook, and 0 times on LinkedIn.

	Social Media Followers				
Institution	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
Phillips Exeter Academy	15,027	6,283	2,950	2,897	266

Social Media Analysis of Top Private Educational Institutions

The Lawrenceville School

The Lawrenceville School has a slightly different content strategy. They post about current students and school events on Facebook and Twitter, but focus their LinkedIn content on alumni, using the phrase “Alumni Spotlight” in every post. This strategy is likely based on the users of each platform as Twitter and Facebook draw a younger crowd while LinkedIn is utilized more heavily by professionals. On average, The Lawrenceville School posts about 5-6 times per week on Twitter and Facebook, and 1-2 times per month on LinkedIn.

	Social Media Followers				
Institution	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
The Lawrenceville School	8,245	2,491	5,364	3,816	1,031

Social Media Followers of the Top Private Educational Institutions Reviewed in this Report

Note that although Phillips Academy Andover, Phillips Exeter Academy, and The Lawrenceville School are at the top of their industry, they don't always have the largest social media following. Lakeside School is another notable social media account, leading the industry in Facebook followers with 31,011. Deerfield Academy's social following is similar to some of the top private educational institutions, with 5,358 Twitter followers, 8,318 Facebook followers, and 6,151 LinkedIn followers. Both accounts publish posts with similar content and frequency as the top 3 in the industry.

Institution Name	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
Phillips Academy Andover	27,437	7,541	4,159	6,399	1,146
Phillips Exeter Academy	15027	6283	6146	2897	266
The Lawrenceville School	8245	2491	5364	3816	1031
Harvard-Westlake School	4227	3183	1524	1942	129
St. Paul's School	1826	2965	2419	1713	-
Horace Mann School	2756	2304	638	-	-
The College Preparatory School	1852	474	999	342	142
The Harker School	4448	1116	1938	1012	440
Lakeside School	31011	1290	1232	803	-
Stanford Online High School	7803	297	-	271	322
Trinity School	654	109	-	201	-
Polytechnic School	4963	645	9559	-	-
The Hotchkiss School	280	4188	1490	3950	-
Sidwell Friends School	5212	1780	1360	333	-
Choate Rosemary Hall	6272	2813	7358	2761	405
Winsor School	1515	1942	511	1155	-
Castilleja School	2528	607	983	818	-
St. Mark's School of Texas	2710	756	646	-	-
Cranbrook School	6480	3019	675	2223	41
St. John's School	894	-	972	621	-
National Cathedral School	2166	1106	594	571	89
Deerfield Academy	8318	5358	6151	4175	237
The Branson School	806	1300	973	-	97
Flintridge Preparatory School	1202	610	484	1189	-
The Westminster Schools	6101	2828	1943	3124	-
Groton School	3625	4137	826	2583	148
Dalton School	1120	950	1619	-	-
Hopkins School	1611	453	1640	1061	-
Collegiate School	963	330	171	437	-
Detroit Country Day School	2693	2138	-	1013	115

Institution Name	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
Regis High School	3424	1958	-	932	115
Middlesex School	3517	3561	453	3022	177
Riverdale Country School	1843	1672	1448	1059	-
Ransom Everglades School	1641	501	445	1070	-
Milton Academy	4205	2740	1382	2633	58
University of Chicago Laboratory School	4929	670	26	-	72
Cate School	3286	492	321	711	149
Crystal Springs Uplands School	912	234	258	349	-
Lake Forest Academy	2322	766	666	666	119
The Hockaday	4883	1958	796	2261	125
Menlo School	1636	802	956	335	27
Lick-Wilmerding High School	743	134	2233	-	-
The Taft School	3601	4945	1105	3293	316
Buckingham Browne & Nichols School	2676	499	729	458	9
The Roxbury Latin School	1711	1464	918	714	62
John Burroughs School	3027	1387	375	-	-
St. Stephen's Episcopal School	1839	931	318	-	165
The Bishop's School	1795	-	496	616	92
Newark Academy	1411	1010	912	764	47
San Francisco University High School	1429	-	1294	-	23
Marlborough School	2216	610	439	-	-
St. Andrew's School	3393	1113	424	1653	231
Noble & Greenough School	1702	1110	584	1874	150
Greenhill School	3154	1822	1139	-	-
The Pingry School	1679	1365	713	1282	194
St. Albans School	2909	2197	880	28	27
North Shore Country Day School	1655	709	474	593	77
Rye Country Day School	225	228	449	611	48
Germantown Friends School	4082	1159	751	1333	136
The Thatcher School	3311	1122	572	1843	203
The Overlake School	1354	498	45	450	53
The Chapin School	612	188	959	577	-
Hackley School	1579	1487	958	-	-
Peddie School	4509	3237	787	2328	307
Packer Collegiate Institute	1128	387	106	-	-
The Latin School of Chicago	1375	784	755	571	98
Westridge School	2010	336	426	684	-
University School of Nashville	2929	1233	652	1277	56
The Blake School	2703	2156	999	1264	98
Holton-Arms School	2207	1834	585	463	381
The Loomis Chaffee School	4932	4703	2356	2807	122
Oregon Episcopal School	2372	664	454	897	269
Mary Institute & St. Louis Country Day School	5223	2352	963	762	162
Francis W. Parker School	649	759	2784	111	-
Greenwich Academy	1397	1430	356	575	51
Cistercian Preparatory School	920	-	184	-	171
The Kinkaid	1136	1556	749	1288	220
Albuquerque Academy	1816	1324	410	482	84

Institution Name	Facebook	Twitter	LinkedIn	Instagram	YouTube
Francis Parker School	2212	1102	547	592	132
Head-Royce School	1022	572	1102	395	133
Sacred Heart Schools Atherton	1201	1124	715	540	1159
Delbarton School	1942	1716	1430	2323	535
Commonwealth School	-	1096	153	359	75
Brunswick School	1119	1606	425	1295	-
The Episcopal Academy	2507	3031	958	1923	54
Pine Crest School	5805	1268	1423	494	-
Brentwood School	695	1201	507	716	82
Chadwick School	2116	378	864	700	211
Princeton Day School	3049	2613	823	707	103
Poly Preparatory Country Day School	3887	2015	988	1007	141
Rochelle Zell Jewish High School	1227	414	19	261	39
The Potomac School	1740	1569	545	360	-
Hathaway Brown School	2945	2302	939	1578	60
St. Luke's School	3096	744	577	835	70
Greenhills School	1313	334	205	70	123
Wheeler School	2573	941	595	412	51
Windward School	1016	296	528	167	72
Riverstone International School	713	-	-	445	472
Keystone School	1598	-	97	313	-
Phoenix Country Day School	1547	-	291	581	-