2019 SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

@YOUNGSTOWNSTATE
Overview Analysis

With over 4.8 billion internet users worldwide, social media is one of the top communication and marketing methods. Youngstown State University currently has an active profile on each of the top social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and, most recently adopted, TikTok. This report will provide an overview of where we stand at the end of the 2019 calendar year, and what our goals are for 2020.

In this report we'll measure followers (total audience), engagements (likes, comments, and shares on a post), reach (how many individuals the post was served to), impressions (how many times the post was served), and engagement rate (the percentage of potential users who interacted with a post).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL FOLLOWERS on all accounts</th>
<th>TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS on all accounts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>148,131</td>
<td>370,259</td>
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Facebook: 54,966 Followers, 47,122 Engagements
Instagram: 14,673 Followers, 119,559 Engagements
Twitter: 18,263 Followers, 195,215 Engagements
YouTube: 1,235 Subscribers, 219 Reactions
LinkedIn: 58,802 Followers, 7,231 Engagements
TikTok: 192 Followers, 913 Engagements
We rounded out the year on Facebook with a total of 54,966 followers. This was an increase of 3% from 2018. With 193 posts, our engagement rate dropped a bit due to some content choices. Top posts included a video of Nathan Mays being escorted onto the football field for his final snap of his college career, professor Shelley Blundell’s prestigious award, and the Commencement photo album. Posts that had a lower engagement rate included event promotions, and announcements that could be categorized as internal (deadline reminders, on-campus special events, etc.). Rather than posting these to social media in 2020, we will look at internal options like e-mail and the university website.

2020 will focus heavily on only posting content that is relevant, timely, and intriguing to our audiences. Posts will be well-thought out, and only those who comply with ADA and are using accessible content will be approved for shares on our Institutional social media accounts.

### NUMBERS TO NOTE:

**FOLLOWERS**

54,966  
+3%

Followers are always slow to gain on Facebook, especially with the platform pushing groups lately. Pages seem to be making a comeback in 2020, however.

**ENGAGEMENTS**

247 per post  
+30%

An engagement on Facebook is any reaction, comment, share, or link click. Creating more audience-centered posts will increase engagements.

**REACH**

8,158 per post  
+21%

Facebook reach is the number of people the post was served to. Facebook’s algorithm change has hurt page reach for the past few years, but it’s starting to make a comeback!

**ENGAGEMENT RATE**

2.84% per post  
Goal: >3.5%

The engagement rate is the percentage of users that engaged with the post after it was served to them. Industry standard is 3.5% — we came in a bit under.

### VIDEOS:

In 2019, we posted 23 videos to the Youngstown State Facebook page. There was a total of 130,215 minutes viewed between January 1 - December 31, resulting in an 53% increase.

The top video of 2019 was the final total reveal for Youngstown State’s Dance Marathon event. The video was recorded using a cell phone and was directly uploaded onto Facebook. There was no editing involved — raw, authentic, and in-the-moment content won.
Instagram is one of the fastest growing social media platforms due to its capabilities and user demographic. With their robust story options, we chose to scrap our Snapchat plan and focus primarily on getting more savvy with Instagram stories, and sharing content centered towards student-age audience members through Instagram. The outcome was positive, with a 55% increase in engagements across our 149 posts. User-generated content was a huge part of increased engagements, and will play a major role in our 2020 plan as well.

The top post of the year was a collaborative contest with Youngstown Clothing Company. The second top post was an aerial photo from 680 Aerials depicting the Y Live with Blake Shelton concert in September. Lowest performing posts were encouraging attendance to events. Instead, we will look to post about events in the stories and leave the feed for aesthetically pleasing campus photos.

**NUMBERS TO NOTE:**

- **#YSUGRAM REGRAMS**
  - 36 total; 10 more than 2018
  - The #ysugram initiative invites students and community members to share their photos of YSU. We then share the best ones, and the ones that fit our aesthetic.

- **ENGAGEMENTS**
  - 802 per post; +23%
  - Engagements on Instagram are any like, comment, bookmark (save), share, and click on a photo that is posted.

- **REACH**
  - 6,394 per post; +3%
  - Instagram's reach is the number of individuals your post was shown to. At least 36% of our followers are being served posts.

**IGTV**

We introduced IGTV during the 2019 calendar year, allowing us to store longer form video on the platform. Reception to IGTV was positive, and we've noticed an uptick in video views because of it.

Out of our 8 IGTV posts in 2019, the top performing video was the day in the life vlog, featuring Alyssa Osman. The video was also posted as a preview to our Instagram feed, driving users to continue watching on our IGTV channel. The preview was one of the main reasons this particular IGTV video performed the best.

We choose event recap videos and vlogs to share on IGTV due to the demographic on Instagram.
It was a big year for us on Twitter, after coming in 1st in the state of Ohio as the top NCAA Division I Twitter account during the 2018-2019 academic year. This achievement was unlocked by providing exciting, entertaining, and pop-culturally focused content.

Out of the **773 total tweets**, we earned a total of **195,215 engagements** (including likes, retweets, link clicks, and media views). The **best performing posts** were those that included YSU-focused media (raw videos and photos of students and campus, YSU's take on a popular meme, etc.). While these are considered "fun" posts, having our content choices centered around our campus allows us to market the University, and our people, in the way Twitter's demographic consumes content.

**NUMBERS TO NOTE:**

![FOLLOWERS](image)

18,263; +5%

Our follower count typically surges during the summer, with the new incoming Freshguin class. It tends to level off during the spring.

![ENGAGEMENTS](image)

247 per post; -2%

Engagements include post likes, replies, retweets, link clicks, media clicks (clicks into our posted photos/videos), and profile clicks.

![IMPRESSIONS](image)

4,532 per post; -7%

Impressions is the number of times a post is served in total. This could include the same person several times.

**TOP POSTS**
Our YouTube strategy took shape during the 2019 calendar year. With the addition of social media ambassadors, creating student-centered vlogs became a reality. A total of 14,690 views spread across 26 public videos that were posted during the calendar year (this number is organic only and does not include videos used in paid advertising).

As we move into 2020, the idea is to focus more on videos that prospective students would be searching for — informational videos about campus, student vlogs, and answers to everyday searches.

### NUMBERS TO NOTE:

**SUBSCRIBERS**

1,235; +13%

*We officially broke the 1,000 subscriber mark in 2019, and just kept going! Subscribers are those who wish to follow our channel.*

**HOURS WATCHED**

10,715; +8%

*This is our channel watch time — the amount of hours users spent watching our videos. This includes public, private, unlisted and deleted videos.*

### #MYPENGUINVIEW

A student vlog was one of the main initiatives introduced across social media this year. Social Media Ambassadors (soon to be known as Guinfluencers) created content for a YouTube series called My Penguin View. Five vlogs were released during the fall semester, focusing on a day in the life of a YSU student, the dorms and apartments on campus, food reviews of campus eateries, and penguin game-day. The top vlog was the apartment/dorm tour by Katie Biller. 47% of the views on this particular video were from an organic YouTube search.

Tips for surviving college, things to do in Youngstown, and a Freshguin's review of their first year, as well as updated food review and dorm tour videos are in the works for 2020.
Over the course of the past few years, LinkedIn has become a Facebook for professionals. Between sharing updates, blog posts, and opportunities/achievements, the platform is a gold mine for content engagement.

For Youngstown State, we have a healthy following of 58,802 (an increase of 2,796 from the year before). News stories and campus updates are the types of content that reign across the LinkedIn platform. Nostalgia runs deep as the largest following demographic is alumni of YSU.

**TOP POST**

A total of 23 posts were shared on the Youngstown State LinkedIn page in 2019. The goal for 2020 is at least one per week (52).

The top posts for the 2019 year on LinkedIn included announcements that indicate an update for, or improvement of, campus — like the SMART2 addition, President Tressel’s contract renewal, and the Cafaro Family Field inclusion.

The number one post, however, was the drone photo of our 2019 Freshguins in their block Y formation during IGNITE!
One of the more exciting social media adoptions of 2019 was the creation of a Youngstown State TikTok account. TikTok is popular amongst the 13-18 year old population (otherwise known as Gen Z), and thrives off creating the newest pop culture phenomenon on social media. Think of the "Git Up" challenge or the bottle cap challenge — both were products of TikTok before hitting other social media channels.

Youngstown State started an account in August of 2019. Almost immediately, our videos were showing up on the For You Page — a trending page for users when they first open their app. The channel has grown quickly, and a major focus in 2020 is going to be finding influencers across campus familiar with the app, and have them create student-centered TikToks for the prospective population.

Marketing on TikTok is very different from marketing on other accounts. It’s subtle and doesn’t require a major call to action, but gets the campus in front of a population we wouldn’t otherwise hit.

### NUMBERS TO NOTE:

**# FOLLOWERS**
- 192 total

**LIKES**
- 913 total

**POSTS**
- 16 total

Followers grew quickly on TikTok with many finding us solely from our videos appearing on the For You Page. This is a totally unique and different audience than on other social platforms. A lot of our followers have never heard of us before.

TikTok displays the sum of how many likes you receive on your videos right on your homepage. It’s almost like a Rite of passage for TikTok creators, as they battle to get over a million likes.

Posts are a combination of 15 - 60 second videos. There are a number of effects, filters and songs that can be applied to each production.
2019 brought the birth of the social media ambassador program (in 2020, they will be known as Guinfluencers — pronounced like 'influencer', but with ‘Guin' replacing the first half). In March of 2019 the program started with 10 ambassadors. Each was given their own branded “@ysugram” Instagram account, and the ability to produce content on our main Instagram account as needed. Over the summer and fall, we added nine more for a total of 19.

The ambassadors have created content for YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and an upcoming blog on the YSU website. Coming this Spring, they’ll serve as student ambassadors for a new platform, ZeeMee, which will introduce prospective students to a community full of other interested students. The ambassadors will serve as the voice for YSU, uploading one-minute videos weekly about their life as a student.

They’ve been an integral part in showcasing a students' perspective of life as a YSU Penguin, and have been able to answer questions for interested and future penguins. We look forward to how this program continues to grow in the 2020 year.

**2020 PLAN OF ACTION**

- **Replace Guinfluencers on a rolling basis.** There are about six ambassadors set to graduate in the spring — replacements will be interviewed and hired during the spring 2020 semester to begin their position over the summer.
- **Continue creating content on YouTube and the website.** Students love to hear from students, so the more our ambassadors have a voice to speak about their time at YSU, the better. Their content will continue to work as a peer-to-peer marketing piece.
- **Have 2-3 ambassadors set as influencers on ZeeMee**, a new platform that will allow us to set up a community for interested students.
- **Getting each ambassador to find their content niche.** They're all so different, and capitalizing on those differences will show a more diverse student population on our social media.

"Being a part of the ambassador program has far exceeded my expectations! I've loved bonding with other YSU students in a unique way while also strengthening my skills in social media communications. It has helped me venture outside my comfort zone and has provided so many once-in-a-lifetime experiences."

- **Francine Hazy, Counseling (Student Affairs)**

"The Ambassador Program has allowed me to interact with the YSU community in a whole new dynamic. I have been able to master skills relevant in the social media industry, which I can apply to full-time positions after university."

- **Tony Nakley, Finance**

"Being a social media ambassador for YSU has been such an amazing experience. I've discovered I'm good at creating content and connecting with students all around campus. It also helps me gain experience for future employers."

- **Janae Johnson, Business**
Impressions on Twitter are the number of times a tweet is viewed overall. In 2019, President Tressel’s tweets were put in front of Twitter users over 13M times.

Engagements are any like, reply, retweet (share), link click, or profile view on a tweet. President Tressel’s brought in over 300,000 for the year.

In 2019, President Tressel’s follower count increased by 1.3%. In December, @JimTressel5 became an official verified Twitter account, earning him the blue checkmark and authentic account status.

President Tressel’s Twitter is a key social media channel for the University. Sharing campus updates and exciting announcements from the President’s voice is a powerful contribution to our social media strategy. In addition, President Tressel’s audience stretches far and wide, allowing Youngstown State to reach millions.
Influencer marketing will continue to rise. One of the main reasons we chose to identify ambassadors in 2019 was because of the influencer marketing trend. We can market the University on social media all day, but when it becomes a peer-to-peer conversation, there's a more relaxed and positive interaction for younger users. Not only will we continue to utilize our social media ambassadors, but we'll identify students who are vloggers and social media influencers on their own accounts to continue to help us tell our story.

2020 TRENDS

Ephemeral content will continue to gain popularity. Ephemeral refers to posts that have a very short shelf life, like Instagram and Snapchat stories (which are available for 24 hours). In 2020, we will focus heavily on creating a more robust Instagram story strategy. This includes a weekly "What's Happening at YSU" highlight, Q&A sessions for students to ask us questions, and important information about resources on campus.

Niche platforms will perform better than the big two - Facebook and Twitter. This means you can expect to see more engagement on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn for major brand accounts. While departments and colleges will be encouraged to stick with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, the University will utilize Tiktok on a broader basis to market to prospective students, and continue hitting an audience we otherwise wouldn't. Expect to see the social media ambassadors, as well as other students across campus, creating video content for the platform.

Instagram will begin removing the number of likes a post receives for public consumption. While there are mixed reviews about whether or not this will be beneficial for Instagram accounts, we anticipate an increase in engagement. Often times users are reluctant to react when something is public and visible to their followers, so this will take away that hesitation. In addition, it will create a healthier social media platform for younger audiences who often compare their post likes to others.

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There will be more regulation and security adoption across social media. We saw it throughout 2019 — social media giants misusing user data. In 2020, expect to see tighter regulations and social media platforms taking the security of user data more serious. At Youngstown State University, it's important all of our social media users are cognizant of the changes in terms of service to each platform so we can continue to be digitally responsible.

Social Media Communities will soar. Think online message board interactions. Users want to be heard, and they want to communicate effectively online. With this trend increase, we'll continue to find ways to join the conversation within those spaces. This includes creating a community for prospective students by testing out a platform called ZeeMee, and being more present on Reddit; a platform that is often used universally to discuss the college decision and application process amongst prospective students.
SOCIAL MEDIA

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