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John T. Lawlor
Higher Education Marketer,
President of The Lawlor
Group, Publisher of The
Lawlor Review, Social
Entrepreneur
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 Featured discussion

What is the number one obstacle for getting colleges & universities to participate in social media?

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

Comments (45)



Jonathan Florin
Marketing and Advertising
Consultant
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Mr, Lawlor,
As a former Advertising and Marketing Director for a for profit college I find that the main obstacle is human resources. Since my department and position was eliminated I have been implementing managing Social Media campaigns for numerous clients including colleges and universities.

Best,
Jon
<http://www.shoutlet.com>

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)



Debra Strick
Communications Consultant
at Lacoste Gallery, Concord,
MA
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As a "boomer" who is wild about the positive societal transformation that social media allows (note the grammar here), I find that clients often need a complete shift in thinking.

Hands-on participation helps clients who were not "born digital" understand that marketing is no longer "outbound". Everyone needs some training to be prepared for these dramatic shifts, and it is important to allocate budget towards those ends.

Obstacle #1: Fear of losing control

**Sue Downing**

Higher Ed and Web Marketing
Consultant

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Fear of losing control of "the message" and not understanding that the conversation is going on whether they want it to or not...

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**Vicky Phillips**

CEO & Chief Education
Analyst ~ GetEducated.com,
LLC

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I'd agree that what we see as the number concern is fear and uncertainty about letting go of "control," which institutions have enjoyed for a century in terms of how they "present" themselves. The message that social media may be "good" for colleges and universities has not yet entered mass consciousness. Mostly there is still "fear" and a need to work on developing a new attitude and understanding of how to use social media to build and protect brand.

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

Obstacle #2: Lack of understanding

**John Goodwin**

VP Business Development
and Client Solutions (Call
Center BPO)

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Understanding it (technology and uses) and resources.

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

**James Maraviglia**

Assistant Vice President,
Admissions Recruitment &
Financial Aid Cal Poly

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to many greybeards who don't know how to communicate with today's students on their turf with their toolsets!

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

**Michael Ryan**

Dean of Hospitality & Service
Occupations at South Seattle
Community College

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Older administrators, faculty, and staff who are not used to adapting quickly, don't understand marketing in relation to academia, and haven't embraced technology in general.

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

Obstacle #3: Lack of time

**Nancy Weber**

Vice President for Continuing Education and Institutional Advancement at Technical College of the Lowcountry
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Human resources. It is a time issue for current staff and funding is not available for new staff.

Posted 8 days ago | [Reply Privately](#)

**Melanie Thomas**

Manager in Information Technology
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Even if you get buy in from everyone, it takes more time that people realize to keep up with the postings needed to keep things fresh. We find that those without a dedicated person - the postings slow and get stale & repetitive.

Posted 1 day ago | [Reply Privately](#)

Obstacle #4: It's unproven

**Louis Gudema**

Vice President of Business Development at Magic Hour Communications

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All of the above, but importantly: it's new and unproven. Doesn't fit into the traditional media mix for marketers. It requires a whole new way of thinking and a willingness to experiment: WHICH of the tools will be best for reaching which audience and achieving certain objectives?

And although there may be few dollars needed to implement a social media strategy, a large amount of time will be required and people have too much to do already (especially with staff cutbacks during this recession). So given that you don't have a good basis for how to predict, or in some cases even measure, success, people may not be willing to invest that time.

Posted 21 days ago | [Reply Privately](#)

**Les Hollingsworth**

Training Experts in Project Management and Engineering

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I think with many administrators it's about the demonstrable ROI or value that comes from it. Everyone's always short on time and human resources; even in happy times. Yes, they know that it can be productive but is it as productive as tried and true activities? That is still to be determined (and I'm talking true outcomes, not just the "reach" that social media offers). If someone could demonstrate that social activity "X" is better than tried and true "Y", that would be a prime motivator.

Also, social media requires HUGE amounts of experimentation to be successful whereas more traditional activities have already been baselined to provide a standard value or ROI. In tough times like now, that's a far leap of faith to move into the unknown.

Posted 2 days ago | [Reply Privately](#)

Obstacle #5: Lack of human and financial resources

**IRENE FLORES**

Human Resources Recruiter
& Yoga Instructor

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We are typically short staffed and rushed with jobs and cannot participate in social media affairs as much. We may also have computer use policies that do not allow the participation.

thanks

Posted 1 month ago | [Reply Privately](#)

**Manish Gosalia**

Faculty / Consultant at MIT
Institute of Design

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The college that I am associated with believes that setting up a social media domain will require additional hiring and staffing and hence I believe our management is reluctant to add additional resources (read recurring costs)

Posted 10 days ago | [Reply Privately](#)