World Campus Social Media: Creating the Penn State Experience

Kate Elias, Student Communications Coordinator
Matt Rupert, Academic Adviser
Doug Smith, Academic Adviser

May 16, 2011
Background Research

• Tinto (1993 and 2006)
  – Academic + Social Engagement = Retention
  – Co-curricular practices need to encourage students to learn together in a contextualized environment. Both faculty and student support specialists must create this environment for maximized student persistence.

• Rovai (2002)
  – Students who possess strong feelings of community are more likely to persist. To increase retention, provide students with connections to other learners—this applies to both in and out of class experiences.
Background Research (continued)

• McMillan and Chavis (1986)
  – Shared emotional connection “seems to be the definitive element for true community.”

• Kuh (2005)
  – Must cultivate an atmosphere in which a group of strangers will listen attentively to others with respect, and challenge/support one another to previously unimagined levels of [success].

• Geiger (2005)
  – “Collegiate Ideal”: Co-curricular activities as important as academics in engagement and cultivation of alumni who donate back into the institution
# Background Research (continued)

- **Competitors (May 2011)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>FB</th>
<th>Flickr</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WCampus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capella</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes—Last Update &gt;1 yr.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeVry</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drexel Online</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes—1 Photo</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes—Last Update &gt;1yr.</td>
<td>Not for Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaplan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strayer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMass Online</td>
<td>Not for Online</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes—27 members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **WCampus**
- **Capella**
- **DeVry**
- **Drexel Online**
- **Kaplan**
- **Phoenix**
- **Strayer**
- **UMass Online**
Strategy 1: Who Is Our Audience?

- Prospects
- Applicants and New Admits
  - Average Age: 33 (UG); 36 (GR)
  - Gender: 52% female; 48% male
  - Geographically dispersed
  - Most will never visit a Penn State campus
- Alumni
  - 63% membership rate in Alumni Association
    - highest membership rate of any Penn State campus
Strategy 2: What Are Our Goals?

- Recruitment
- Conversion
- Engagement
- Retention through Completion
- Alumni Ambassadors and/or Donors
Strategy 3: Align with Strategic Goals

- Penn State Strategic Plan
  - 1.3: Improve Key Student Transition Experiences
    - Newly admitted WC students frequently use our Facebook page to ask questions and connect with other learners in their programs
  - 3.5: Increase International Student Enrollments
    - Almost 10% of World Campus Facebook fans reside outside the United States, providing an opportunity to engage with an increasingly international audience.
Strategy 3: Align with Strategic Goals

- Penn State Strategic Plan
  - 6.1: Expand World Campus
    - A visible and approachable community presence for prospective students to discover that Penn State has an online campus and to ask questions in a safe environment
    - Facebook and Twitter users can see that their friends have joined or posted to World Campus pages, providing an opportunity to indirectly reach those individuals via “word of mouth”
  - 6.3: Become More Efficient
    - Answers to questions reach broader audience
    - Ability to track frequent questions/concerns and feed them back to World Campus units and into KnowledgeBase
Strategy 3: Align with Strategic Goals

- Academic Outreach Goals
  - Doorways of Opportunity
  - Success, Not Just Access
  - ONE Penn State
  - Innovative, Value-Added Learning
  - Lifetime Learners
  - Impact PA, Serve the Nation, Reach the World
Strategy 4: The Penn State Voice

• Proud
• Unifying
• Class
• High standards
• Family
• Respect
Strategy 5: Data Driven Always

- Current WC Social Media Sites
  - Facebook
  - Flickr
  - LinkedIn
  - Student Blog (Corner of College & Allen)
  - Twitter
  - YouTube

- Second Life island closed in July 2010 after tracking user data and costs for a year.
WC Social Media (Monthly Data, 3/11)

• YouTube
  – Majority of video views coming from embedded player on WC Web site
    • 72 subscribers (41%↑ since 4/10)
    • 1,590 new video views (54%↑ since 4/10)
    • $0.01 per view; $0.23 per subscriber

• Twitter
  – Respond to students; promote blog posts, career and sports info; deadline reminders; Penn State news
    • 749 followers (36%↑ since 4/10)
    • $0.05 per follower
WC Social Media (Monthly Data, 3/11)

- Student Blog (Corner of College & Allen)
  - 2,135 total visits (41%↑ since 4/10)
    - 416 (19.5%) of total visits are internal to Penn State
  - 1,610 new visits (46%↑ since 4/10)
  - 64.4% bounce rate
    - Measures visit quality (goal is to see a steady rate)
  - $0.21 per visit
- Top March Content
  - Blog Home Page
  - Important Dates and Events
  - Virtual Career Fair
  - Photos after Snowstorm
- Top Referring URLs in March
  - Google
  - WC Home
  - Facebook
WC Social Media (*Monthly Data, 3/11*)

- **LinkedIn**
  - 257 total group members (80%↑ since 4/10)
  - 86% of group members are students
  - $0.07 per group member

- **Flickr**
  - Graduation, All University Day, and holiday decorations accounted for new views in March
    - 620 new views (63%↑ average monthly views since 4/10)
    - $0.03 per new view
WC Social Media (Monthly Data, 3/11)

• Facebook
  – 1,509 total fans (78%↑ since 4/10)
    • When we migrated to a fan page in 12/09, we lost the ability to track how many fans are WC students (without manually researching every single fan).
  – Engagement (BlueFuego formula)
    • # likes + # comments ÷ # of fans = % engagement
      – Blue Fuego best practice is 1% minimum.
    • WC engagement for 3/11 = 2.69%
  – $0.13 per fan
Facebook

• Able to measure the most through Facebook
  – Fan Demographics *(Facebook analytics, March 2011)*
    • Majority are between 25–34, followed by 35–44
    • 56.53% female; 41.02% male
    • Geographic distribution
      – United States (top 20 cities by state) = 92.6%
        » Pennsylvania (non-UPark)
        » Upark
        » Georgia
        » Illinois
        » New York
      – International = 7.4%
        » Canada
        » Germany
        » Washington, D.C.
        » Washington
        » Texas
        » New Jersey
        » Tennessee
        » Philippines
Facebook

• Analysis of Wall Activity (3/1/11–3/31/11)

Penn State World Campus Facebook Wall Participants, 3/1/11 to 3/31/11

- World Campus Staff (86)
- Faculty/PSU Staff (0)
- Prospect/Applicant (26)
- Admitted (32)
- Current (86)
- Alumni (4)
Facebook

• Analysis of Posts (3/1/11–3/31/11)

Penn State World Campus
Facebook Wall Topics, 3/1/11 to 3/31/11

- Community/Activities (24)
- World Campus/PSU Info (14)
- Technical/Access (5)
- Textbooks/Materials (1)
- Degree/Course Info (12)
- Financial Aid/Tuition Bills (3)
- Admissions/Applications (12)
- Graduation/Alumni (5)
- Complaints (1)
Sample Post: New WC Admit

David W Strausser
I am proud to say that I have been accepted in the PSU family and have proudly scheduled my first courses!!!
March 18 at 5:12pm · Like · Comment

5 people like this.

Penn State World Campus Congratulations, David! We're thrilled to have you join our worldwide family network of Penn Staters! -- Heather, director of Advising & Learner Success
March 18 at 5:31pm · Like

Bernice Gist Congratulations David. All the best! - from a Penn State Senior.
March 18 at 6:21pm · Like · 1 person

David W Strausser Thank you all! I'm sooooo stoked! I never thought I would actually do this!
March 18 at 7:27pm · Like

Write a comment...
Sample Post: Facilitating Connections

**Jackee Noble Sturgeon**
So how many classes do you all take at a time online? (What if you’re off for the summer? What type of graduate credit load do you think would be too much?)
March 24 at 6:28am · Like · Comment

**Penn State World Campus** Jackee- we will post your question in our status line, and hopefully some other students will chime in. Meanwhile, you should consult with your advisor (if you haven’t already) for their advice as to the number of classes that would be best. - Bobbi, student communications
March 24 at 5:04pm · Like

**Toni Stephens** I had off during the summer, but still only took one or two classes over each summer. I have a couple of kids and considered them and the specific courses I was contemplating. For example, the one summer I took a course requiring heavy research and writing. That was the only course I took that summer, but the next I took two that were not as heavy. Hope that helps! Good luck!
March 24 at 5:20pm · Like

**Jamie Reed** I’m currently taking 2 courses and this summer I’m planning on taking 3. The only reason I’m taking more is because the courses I’m taking should be fairly easy because the content covers information that I use on a daily basis at work. Otherwise, 2 courses per semester for me.
March 24 at 7:07pm · Like

**Jackee Noble Sturgeon** Thanks ladies! I was debating between 3-4 b/c I have to have 22 credits in before next winter and I’d rather not take too many during the school year as I’m an elementary teacher and I already have to bring a lot of work home with me durin…
March 25 at 5:30am · Like

**Jackee Noble Sturgeon** The classes are all towards the Technology Integration Certificate which is something I’m already passionate about and doing, so like you Jamie that’s why I was considering 3-4 and not just 2…
March 25 at 6:07am · Unlike · 1 person

Write a comment...
Sample Post: Answering Questions

Stephen Michael Verigood
HELP!!! I recently upgraded my internet to Firefox 4, and now my Angel is not supported with Firefox 4!!!! I tried to re-install Firefox 3, but they are soon not going to be able to do anything support wise on Firefox 3. Is Angel going to be updated to support and allow us to use it on Firefox 4???? I have to use Internet Explorer to access my angel now, but I love my Firefox. Any suggestions?

April 1 at 8:11am · Like · Comment

Penn State World Campus Hi, Stephen! I've contacted our HelpDesk and let them know about the issue you're having. They will be reaching out to you privately to help. If you need their contact information, you can call them at 1-800-252-3592 (press option 4) or 1-814-865-0047. -- Heather, Advising & Learner Success

April 1 at 9:42am · Like

Stephen Michael Verigood Thank you so much. Spoke to him, and they are working on getting it to work with the new Firefox. I will use the IE 8 until it works with Firefox 4. Great service, and I love having you on my FB. I would be lost without you guys!!!!!!!

April 1 at 10:16am · Like

Write a comment...
Sample Post: Blog Cross-posting

Penn State World Campus
Our learning design unit is looking for student volunteers for a usability study.
http://bit.ly/3D1OjQ \* Liam, student communications

Looking for Student Volunteers for Usability Study | Corner of College and Allen
bit.ly
Learning Design is looking for student volunteers who are willing to participate in a short, online usability activity. If you have 10-15 minutes of your time

2,652 Impressions · 0.23% ReFBback
March 24 at 8:26am · Like · Comment · Share

Ken Kidwell Done. :-)
March 24 at 8:37am · Like

Penn State World Campus Thanks, Ken! -Liam
March 24 at 11:21am · Like

Bernice Gist Completed. Glad to be of assistance.
March 24 at 6:46pm · Like

Penn State World Campus Thanks, Bernice! -Kate, student communications
March 24 at 7:12pm · Like

Jamie Reep Done.
March 24 at 8:25pm · Like

Penn State World Campus Excellent! Thanks, Jamie! -Kate
March 24 at 9:04pm · Like

Write a comment...
Sample Post: Community Building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avatar</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julie Burk Patusky</td>
<td>I'll be in costume as Flo, the Progressive Insurance representative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ken Kidwell</td>
<td>That's awesome! I've got this vampire school girl thing going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jenn Bury Snareski</td>
<td>Abby Scuto from NCIS (see profile pic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Penn State World Campus</td>
<td>Well done Jenn. - Doug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Smearman</td>
<td>I'll be the invisible man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rachel Irwin Clark</td>
<td>My two year old daughter is a Penn State Cheerleader and my 3 year old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa Kinney</td>
<td>Mr. devi seq my profile pic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrie Panama</td>
<td>Requist. My kids are birds and we will be a bird catcher and a bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maryann Davis Spicher</td>
<td>Happy Halloween! and congrats to the victorious!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring FB Impressions

- Post with the highest number of impressions for March 2011

Penn State World Campus
Hey students, Our Learning Design team needs your help. We want to hear from our World Campus students! Help make World Campus’ courses a better user experience by participating in a short online activity. Follow the link to participate. Thank you for your time. -Doug, Advising http://bit.ly/iaUAtQ

Welcome | OptimalSort by Optimal Workshop
bit.ly
Welcome to this World Campus study, and thank you for agreeing to participate! The activity shouldn’t take longer than 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

3,279 Impressions • 930% Feedback
March 15 at 12:00pm • Like • Comment • Share

Stephanie Chambers likes this.

View all 9 comments

Erin McMahon Hansen I have had no issues with ANGEL, and it works great on the iPad in the PDA setting. Blackboard has some nice features, but I like ANGEL’s look and forum design better.
March 16 at 2:14am • Like

Penn State World Campus Thanks again everyone for your time and your input on here. The team received great response and this survey is now closed. Doug, Advising
March 23 at 2:40pm • Like
Strategy 6: Communication

• Annual Communications Calendar
  – Facebook, Twitter, and blog posts are scheduled a year out (with space for new initiatives that arise)

• Track engagement/feedback %’s re: what works

• Communication Benchmarking
  – Kodak (Social Media Tips: Sharing Lessons Learned)
  – Penn State (Social Media Guidelines)
  – Razorfish (Social Influence Mktg Guidelines)
  – University of Michigan
  – University of Phoenix
Communication Strategy

• Best Practice Summary from Benchmarking
  – Use codes of conduct to model engagement behaviors; clearly define “right to remove” policy
  – Always thank customers for feedback
  – Be transparent: Let customers know who is managing the account(s); sign posts and (for Twitter) tweets
  – Acknowledge errors and correct inaccuracies
  – Protect the confidentiality of customers
  – Allow subject experts to respond to negative posts
  – Connect to core brand; always remember your posts represent your brand
Handling Complaints/Negativity

• **Mashable** (*How to Deal w/ Negative Feedback in Social Media*)
  
  – Identify Feedback Type
    • Straight Problem
    • Constructive Criticism
    • Merited Attack
    • Trolling/Spam
  
  – Response Options
    • Never let yourself get pulled into a debate
    • Straight Problem: requires response
    • Constructive Criticism: requires response
    • Merited Attack: respond positively and promptly, mitigating problem if warranted
    • Trolling/Spam: ignore and remove immediately
Response Mapping

**Code of Conduct**
- General Comment – No Action
  - A&LS: Respond w/in 1 bus. day
  - Other: A&LS contacts for answer; posts in X bus. day w/ staff name and unit
  - If no stdt response in 1 bus. day: A&LS posts invite for stdts to respond
  - Accurate: Let stand
  - Inaccurate: A&LS posts correction
  - Positive: Thank student
  - Negative: Thank stdt; share w/ unit; track patterns; if fdbk prompts change, post it

- Stdt Q for WC
- Stdt Q for Stdts
- Stdt Response to Q
- Stdt Fdbk to WC

**Student Comment**
- Troll/Spam
  - A&LS Removes Immediately – No Action
  - Wall post; no comments
  - Stdt already warned?
    - Yes
    - Remove stdt and comment immediately; notify A&LS director; post CoC reminder
    - No
    - Comment flame war
      - Yes
      - Remove comment immediately; message stdt(s) privately about CoC; post CoC reminder
      - No
“Don’t bother transferring into PSU, virtually everything counts as an elective since PSU considers their courses superior to everyone else’s. No one told PSU they were nowhere even remotely close to Ivy League.”
Sample (WC Response)

Penn State World Campus There have been some exchanges on our Wall today that have given us pause. The World Campus is proud of Penn State and of what it means to be a Penn Stater -- to be honorable, respectful, and civil to other members of this incredible University family. We will always respect your rights to express your opinions, positive or negative, provided it is done in a way that is acceptable and honorable, in keeping with the Penn State Code of Conduct. We reserve the right to remove comments made that do not reflect the spirit of Penn State and this community. -- Heather

Penn State Judicial Affairs | Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct describes behaviors that are inconsistent with the essential values of the University community. Intentionally attempting or assisting in these behaviors may be considered as serious as engaging in the behavior. A person commits an attempt when with intent to commit a specific v

2,700 Impressions 0.41% Feedback

November 9, 2010 at 6:37pm Like Comment Share Promote

Don Duquette I just started at World Campus in the fall semester and am very proud to be a part of this wonderful community. As with anything in life there will be naysayers and trouble makers that thrive on negativity. Not those of us that are proud Penn Staters, world campus or on campus their negativity means nothing to us, because, WE ARE...!!!!

November 9, 2010 at 6:37pm Like 2 people Flag

Erin McNamara Hansen I love my PN to ESB program.

November 9, 2010 at 6:37pm Like Flag

Patricia Brooks PENN STATE!

November 9, 2010 at 7:14pm Like 1 person Flag

Claudia Mendez Penn state world campus!!! and we rock !!!

November 9, 2010 at 8:59pm Like 1 person Flag

Alicia Phillips I enjoyed this page and I truly hope that students will see it as a place to give and receive feedback in a positive way. There is a lot of good information here and it's fun chatting with other students = hope we can all play. positive and I know I need to work on that myself.

November 9, 2010 at 9:23pm Like 1 person Flag

Jacqueline Wong We Are Penn State!!! I am PROUD to be a Penn Stater!!!

November 10, 2010 at 7:03am Like 14 people Flag

Write a comment...
## Cross-Unit Approach

- To address questions, collaborate on strategies, and ensure communication flow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Representative(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions Services</td>
<td>Apryl Aughenbaugh, Megan Abplanalp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising and Learner Success</td>
<td>Doug Smith, Matt Rupert, Liam Jackson, Kate Elias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Design</td>
<td>Ravi Patel, Wenyi Ho, Patty Gruneberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Heather Torbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Planning and Management</td>
<td>Joann Dornich, Jessica Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment Services</td>
<td>Randy Fisher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you!

Kate Elias, kge1@psu.edu
Matt Rupert, mcr9@psu.edu
Doug Smith, das323@psu.edu

May 16, 2011