**Be Social. Stay Social. #UMSocial**

In the last 15 years, social media has created a world of instantaneous interconnectivity that was previously unimaginable. By placing a global megaphone in every person’s hand, these communities have had tremendous impact on society, both good and bad. And like the social media platforms we oversee, #UMSocial—the “front door” to the University of Michigan—continues to grow and evolve. The first place people connect, complain and celebrate, social media has also clearly established itself as the first line of defense in communications. With every post, publication, share and comment, the critical importance of a solid, strategic and collaborative communications team has never been more apparent.

In the last year, #UMSocial has disseminated more than 4,300 pieces of unique content, curating and sharing the university narrative seven days a week, 365 days a year. Each visually dynamic and diverse piece of content is designed and shared with the goal of educating online users, strengthening our brand voice, providing customer service and mitigating institutional risk.

With a thriving global community, the University of Michigan is one of the largest, most recognized brands in the entire world. These passionate students, staff, faculty, alumni and fans actively leverage tools like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as part of their daily lives. The #UMSocial team is dedicated to strategically cultivating relationships through dynamic content across a range of social media platforms with the intent to engage and educate consumers on the breadth and depth of our institutional excellence.

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**“This just makes me wanna go to Michigan even more! C’mon senior college apps!”**

**“You know when UofM joins a challenge, it’s gonna be good. 😊”**

**“Show this to mom.”**

**“This is SO cool! I LOVE MY SCHOOL. 💕”**

**“Khair Mubarak! This is such a nice post!”**

**“Love it. Wolverine pride. Forever maize and blue.”**

**“Man, it seems like it was only yesterday that I graduated from the amazing place that is @uofmichigan! Congrats all! #ForeverGoBlue”**

**“I cannot wait to apply! Reading this makes me so excited!”**

**“Already feeling ho^e-y.”**

**“We go to the coolest university in the 🌍.”**
With over 77% of the global population currently active on social media, the potential for the University of Michigan to reach, engage and impact a wide array of stakeholders has never been greater. Each year our communities continue to grow and thrive, offering a diverse range of strategic content created to educate users on our research, highlight our academic excellence, honor our history and celebrate our spirit. By 2020, nearly 3 billion people will leverage social media to connect with others and conduct their daily lives. Since 2012, #UMSocial has increased the collective university online community from 496,700 to 1,145,533—an increase of over 130%.
Instagram

uofmichigan

Ranked 4th among peer institutions
395 new posts 27,324 new followers

University of Michigan
The official Instagram of the Leaders and Best.
#GoBlue #UMSocial

More than 34% of U-M social media followers are between 13 and 24 years old, making Instagram a clear favorite for prospective Wolverines, enrolled students and our young alumni. The platform’s continued evolution and rapid adoption of popular features from similar social tools has made it a one-stop shop for engaging this very important higher education demographic. In the last year, #UMSocial has placed enormous focus on improving the visual quality, brand unity and innovative storytelling of our Instagram account. Additionally, as one of the last frontiers of user-generated content, we continue to collaborate both internally and externally to leverage images and videos that depict all that encompasses our leaders & best life.

1.8M Likes
12.7K Comments
3.8M Views

55° in January

Top Posts:
That’s Pure Michigan

So long Snapchat

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but in the case of Snapchat, it has also been their demise. As Instagram increased the prominence of stories, filters, geotagging and stickers, it was only natural to adapt our content strategy to a larger, more established community that also provided more analytics and customer service than its counterpart Snap. Over the last year we have not only relocated our internally sourced story content and regular takeovers from Snapchat to Instagram, we have also expanded our offerings and debuted multiple new collaborations. The ability to provide click-through links to websites and articles has also proven to be a direct contributor to increased traffic to our university sites and original content.

Give a little, get a lot

The increased prominence of Instagram has also prompted a more strategic approach to its growth. Historically a yearly top performer for increased followings, by intentionally expanding the demographics present we can ensure that more stakeholders come in contact with the dynamic and high-quality university content. Beginning in 2018, #UMSocial has used creative and timely giveaways, internet video trend adaptations, even meme culture elements to spur activity and broaden follower interactions. This approach is advantageous not only to content consumption but also to more robust conversation and message retention. Most recently we leveraged ‘National Book Lovers Day’ as a chance to highlight U-M alumni authors, giving away four various titles written by graduates on a wide range of topics, from a diverse set of backgrounds and program areas. The post resulted in 500 new followers and 78 people who shared the content to their own personal profiles, including one in particular who boasts over 40,000 followers.
Double the fun! In November 2017 Twitter expanded its character count limit from 140 to 280. This change afforded us the luxury of more detailed storytelling, tagging and link sharing as our UMich Twitter channel continues to be the platform we are most active on across the university. The ease of sharing and the fast-paced environment serve as perfect catalysts for multiple news updates, customer service exchanges, live event coverage and collaborations.

4,340 Photos and videos

51 Animations

Trends for you
1 #GoGrad
2 #AMJoy
3 #SaturdayMorning

In the past year, #UMSocial has made image inclusion and animation with each tweet a priority. These additional assets help to better tell the branded story and catch the eye of the user. As a result, we have seen a substantial increase in click-throughs, conversations and positive feedback from those we engage with.

With an equal mix of internally produced content and retweeted assets from affiliate U-M accounts, Twitter remains the best place to find up-to-date information.
By outwardly applying our talents and sharing the knowledge we create, we can make the world better and create greater understanding.”

-U-M President Mark Schlissel

Designed to work directly with faculty and departments to help them apply their knowledge outwardly and more efficiently communicate the public-facing work the university does to a wide audience, the addition of the Public Engagement Communications Manager to #UMSocial was a natural fit.

Built upon the foundation of connecting professionally, our LinkedIn audience is prime real estate for faculty- and research-related content. This community is always eager to read university updates, and the comments section on controversial topics are much less likely to spiral into a cesspool of negativity and trolling as we often see on Facebook or Twitter. In fact, of our 429,500+ LinkedIn followers, approximately 287,000 identify themselves as U-M alumni: a data point that is not readily available to us from other platforms. This concentrated environment of brand ambassadors and educated users has resulted in tremendous increases in reach and engagement since we began to ramp up our content dissemination in March. Additionally, we’ve partnered with U-M Human Resources to bring more career opportunity-related content to the platform as well.

By leveraging the established Social Leadership network, taking over daily management of the professional social network LinkedIn and capitalizing on tools like Facebook Workplace to communicate across the university, much has been accomplished to lay a strong foundation for this Presidential initiative in a very short time.

We continue to explore new avenues to train and educate our faculty on the importance of public outreach and engagement by fostering strong relationships with campus units also passionate about the topic. These collaborations have given life to multiple written articles, videos and even an unprecedented weekend series of live coverage from the Road Scholars tour. This summer, the University Record agreed to partner on a new faculty engagement series of articles, we began recording for the new audio interviews for the launch of the Michigan Minds experts podcast, and saw a LinkedIn post result in a new $35,000 investment to the U-M Business Engagement Center.
Our website, socialmedia.umich.edu, continues to serve as a valuable resource for internal stakeholders and as a destination site for members of the higher education social communications community. Not surprisingly, the strategy page, complete with university guidelines, best practice resources, templates and tools, topped this year’s most visited page on the site.

#HESM Blogs

As a leader in the #HESM (Higher Education Social Media) space, #UMSocial sought to cement itself as an authority in the field this past year by increasing the dissemination of social media industry articles and case studies. The near-weekly blog pieces saw regular pickup by peer institution and higher education publications, including Higher Ed Experts and E City Interactive.

Recognizing the following we have, these resources are designed to promote digital literacy and educate our audiences, both internal and external, on the constantly evolving state of social and digital media.

10 Things to Do Before Graduation

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SOCIAL INTEGRITY
RECLAIM YOUR DIGITAL SPACE

After years of ideation and countless conversations, SocialIntegrity.umich.edu was born in coordination with Social Media Day 2018. This project, championed by #UMSocial and executed in collaboration with the new UMIS Center for Social Media Responsibility, serves as a tremendous example of how our faculty research and OVPC strategic efforts can come together proactively to make a real impact regarding speech, civility and inclusion among our internal and external stakeholders.

Recognizing that there is no single resource for people to obtain expert guidance, educational resources and support to safely and respectfully engage in social media, the new website is designed to offer guidance to help members of the campus community and general public cultivate a more productive online space and empower them to use these powerful tools for the betterment of society.

Formally announced on Saturday, June 30th, recognized globally as #SocialMediaDay, the site was promoted with 94 posts across official university accounts. Its valuable content continues to be shared weekly in a new Instagram story series called IntegrITV and since its launch the site has seen over 2,600 visits before its formal promotion begins this fall.

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In 2017, 40% of U.S. adults experienced harassing or abusive behavior online.
Each year #UMSocial seeks to identify unprecedented opportunities to demonstrate the impact of social communications on our community and celebrate the connectivity these platforms provide for us to engage students, faculty, fans, friends and stakeholders around the world.

In 2018, #UMSocial partnered with U-M Arts & Culture and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts to commission an international street artist to create a UM-centric, interactive mural in downtown Ann Arbor, the Michigan Wings.

Recognizing user-generated social media has a 4.5% higher conversion rate, the mural allows individuals of all ages to interact with the inspirational piece and subsequently share it on their own personal platforms.

Within the first week content related to the effort reached over 200,000 people as a result of shares and engagements. Countless graduates, families and community members clamoring to have their photograph taken with The Michigan Wings regularly create wait lines and appear in our news feeds associated with the #UMSocial hashtag.

This project will serve as a longstanding testimonial to the importance of public art to society and the prominence of social media in our lives.
In collaboration with Michigan News and other campus partners, we have explored multiple ways to depict stories through eye-catching video, animation and 360-degree access. Aimed at keeping and compelling the viewers’ attention, this approach also allows us to explore a multitude of cinematic tools, fast cuts, panoramas, hyperlapse, aerials and more, to expand the way in which we display our content.

Perfect examples of these efforts to make our videos more trendy include the wildly successful Mcity driverless shuttle release and the recent National Geographic spoof of the Museum of Natural History puma sculpture move.

Initiatives

University President Mark Schlissel developed five key initiatives in order to position the University of Michigan for perpetual excellence and public impact in research, creative work, performance and education. As the unified voice of the university, it is the mission of #UMSocial to ensure that each of these priorities are regularly reflected through our content.

Every day we work with stakeholders and thought leaders throughout the campus community to strategize and create content that includes progress, programming or updates on how we are continuously making efforts to excel and expand these strategies. This includes year-long Instagram story activations, account takeovers, live coverage and, in the coming year, the introduction of a full-time dedicated content specialist to our team.

Innovate Blue

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Stories of our State

Planet Blue

Poverty Solutions

GoBlue Guarantee
The backbone of the #UMSocial content strategy is collaboration. Without the proactive support of a wide range of university stakeholders, it would be an impossible guessing game to determine which messages our communities could benefit from most. Our daily, weekly and monthly interactions with communicators from our Ann Arbor, Flint and Dearborn campuses enable us to not only provide assistance in boosting their discipline-specific content, but also ensure all content aligns with the overarching university brand and objectives. Additionally, this positive exchange and support has solidified a strong network of ambassadors and advocates of our central social communications strategy, best practices and leadership.

"We wanted to share the news that the Campus Farm had been certified to sell their produce to MDining—food grown by students, prepared by students, served to students. On October 4th, the video #UMSocial shared netted over 20,000 views and there was a good amount of positive engagement too. That was a big win for us." - Kate Chan, Student Life Auxiliary Marketing

"Specific successes include a research story that initially received around 150 website visits. When it was shared by #UMSocial with an animation a couple of days later, the number of hits to the story increased fivefold." - Nicole Smith, Michigan News

"We have leveraged the large, established audiences of the UMICH channel for promoting and sharing content as broadly as possible to a range of audiences. Working with central social has brought greater awareness to the brand and Planet Blue initiative, receiving almost 30 times as many impressions and engagements on their posts in comparison to ours. Testing the numbers our accounts were pulling against the central accounts prompted us to close accounts to further utilize @UMich. " - Dana Elger, Public Affairs

"The #UMSocial office partnered with us on an Instagram takeover this summer, where more than 17,000 viewers saw our story. In addition to the exposure on Instagram, each time the central channel shares one of our tweets we gain new followers and see a four- to fivefold increase in impressions." - Emily Kopey, Life Sciences Institute

"An Experience Unlike Any Other:

"The experiences this job has afforded me will forever be my favorite college memories. Whoever gets this internship next, congratulations: you’re about to learn a lot." - Peter Schultz, Intern 2015-2018

"The work we accomplished during my time at #UMSocial truly prepared me for a professional creative position. I knew that I was building my portfolio while I was still in school, and when it came time to interview, the feedback from prospective employers was amazing. One of the greatest aspects of working at #UMSocial was that even as an intern, I always felt my ideas were heard, encouraged and ultimately implemented." - Ames Ghani, Intern 2014-2017

"A supportive, collaborative and creative team makes coming to work enjoyable each day. Also, an influential and innovative leader who inspires and leads by making everyone feel like they are an important part of the team." - McKenna Whipple, Content Specialist 2017-present

"Everyone at #UMSocial taught me something new, and being a part of such an amazing team taught me a lot about myself." - Mackenzie Francisco, Intern 2016-2018

"As a senior intern, I was encouraged to forge my own path and bring my own content & scheduling ideas into my work. I can't articulate enough how much I appreciated the trust that my managers had in me—not just part of what made my job so rewarding is that the work truly felt like mine, not simply an idea that I was executing on behalf of someone else." - Sarah Barnitt, Intern 2015-2017