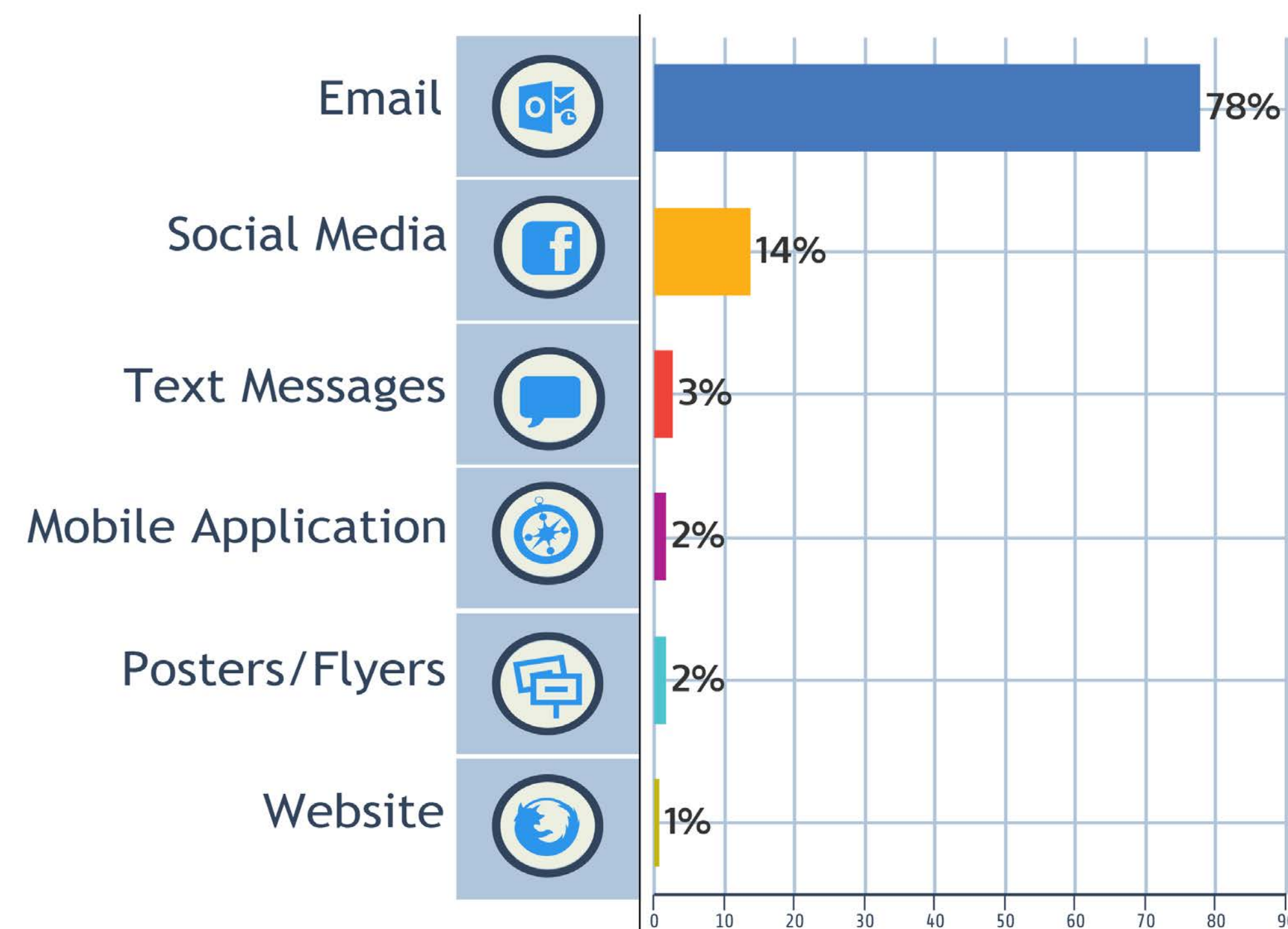


Background: Social Media as Main Information Source

Social networking is the most popular online activity and increasingly where students, health professionals, and patients get information¹.

In 2015, 730 Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) students were asked,

What is the most effective way to communicate with students about programs, events, and services for students?



While email had a significant lead, social media was the second most preferred method of receiving communication. When it comes to connecting with a student audience, social media is critical. It is increasingly a way to connect with colleagues, patients, and other stakeholders as well.

Background: Visual Content, No Longer Just a Suggestion

Visual content has become an invaluable tool for communicating in an easy and impactful way. This is reflected in the increasing emphasis of visual content in the news media and the rise of Instagram and Snapchat, among other examples. Here are 2016 statistics that further demonstrate the impact visual content has on audience engagement:

If written information is paired with relevant images, people retain **65%** of that information three days later, as opposed to only 10% without an image.

Visuals with color increase people's willingness to read information by **80%**².

Lively, high-quality visuals can say more about a program than a long description can. This visual shift does present a unique challenge to the health education industry where patient confidentiality and student privacy are priorities and disruption of educational activities by photo taking or video recording can be a concern. Obtaining patient and/or student permission and planning out the appropriate opportunities for taking photos are important strategies to implement in advance.

References:

- Richter, F. (2013). Social Networking Is the No. 1 Online Activity in the U.S. <https://www.statista.com/chart/1238/digital-media-use-in-the-us/>
- Bullas, J., & Mawhinney, J. (2016). 37 Visual Content Marketing Statistics You Should Know in 2016. <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.00001kbb5bfyecddivn7nnbuchdnw>

Description of Intervention: @JeffCIPE

The Jefferson Center for Interprofessional Education (JCIPE) created a Twitter account in August 2015. Our goals were to:

- Promote awareness of internal and external IPE programs
- Drive student attendance at IPE programs
- Encourage continuous interprofessional learning and innovation



We met with University Marketing staff to gain permission of logo use and to learn about University social media goals. Recognizing the effectiveness of visual content, we also subscribed to an online service for creating infographics and other images.

Results To Date:

We currently have 246 followers, with an average of 320 daily impressions (number of times users saw a tweet on Twitter) over the last three months. We share ideas within the IPE community and support internal Jefferson partners. Reinforcing the previously stated data on visual content, in 2016, content on JCIPE's Twitter account containing images received 52% higher engagement from our followers and content with videos had 72% higher engagement as opposed to content without a visual component.

Top Tweets Over 3 Month Period:

Successes and Limitations:

We selected Twitter as our first social media platform in order to connect with the IPE community and internal TJU partners and have built great professional connections. Other benefits are the ease of composing 140 character messages capturing news coming out of JCIPE and the ability to limit our newsfeed of information to solely IPE-focused accounts.

A main limitation is that Twitter is not the most effective platform for connecting with a student population. Students in general are drawn to more visually-oriented social media platforms. In the future, we may expand to Facebook or Instagram to specifically reach students. Another difficulty is lack of an active IPE community on Twitter and so we have tried to find creative ways to engage partners. In addition, JCIPE staff had less experience with social media and a training was conducted to teach staff how to participate. Finally, we will focus more on emailing students regular updates with visual content, as that is their most preferred method of communication at TJU.



Resources: Social Media Tutorials

Social media accounts are only successful when new content is continually being added. It is a full-time job for one person to manage an account. This is why an account manager should elicit support from their colleagues to help gather content. For those less experienced social media users, tutorial resources can empower coworkers to participate. In addition to a tutorial interactive presentation, here are some examples of the written resources developed to educate the JCIPE staff.

Excerpt from "Intro to Twitter" sheet for JCIPE staff:

Terminology:

Twitter Handle: @ + username. A username is how you're identified on Twitter, and is always preceded immediately by the @ symbol. It is how you can direct your tweet at one person. But, only get 117 characters when you include an image or a link.

Retweet: When you repost something from another user, it's a retweet or RT. It is an affirmation of what someone else said & may be rewarded with Favorite or Follow.

Favorite: You can Favorite a tweet by clicking on the star under the tweet. Favorite it when someone retweets your content, that is a great way to recognize someone.

Twitter Best Practices:

- Retweet People (And add your 2 cents worth)
- Share Relevant Content: Share just a few good things from the web.
- Use Relevant Hashtags: to create wider visibility and engage in community

Tweeting at Conferences:

- Use it to network, not just chronicle
- Don't summarize, respond
- Mention keynote speakers & presenters
- Use the conference hashtags
- Post photos and videos

Example of Conference-Specific Resources for Staff Attending Conferences:

Conference Title: Interprofessional Care for the 21st Century: Redefining Education and Practice

Conference Twitter Handle: #IPE2016

Keynote Speakers' Accounts: Sheila Davis- @Sheila_DavisDNP, Lucinda Maine- @LMaineAACCP, Edith Mitchell- @EdithMitcheIMD, Ellen-Marie Whelan- @emwhelan

Relevance to Interprofessional Education

Interprofessional education is increasingly viewed as a standard in health professions education, and collaborative practice as a standard in healthcare delivery. Social media is now the standard way our stakeholders are obtaining information and communicating with one another; thus, it is fitting that the IPE community has a social media presence. Social media can support the culture shift toward collaboration, as it helps to both build awareness and understanding and facilitate collaboration. A social media account can help educators and providers learn about the IPE resources and network available to them on campus and beyond. Visually-engaging content should be leveraged as well to ensure that email messages, newsletters, Facebook posts, etc. are read. Building a wider online community can help with common areas of need such as facilitator and student recruitment, establishing institutional awareness, and finding funding opportunities as well.

Conclusion

Social media can help spread awareness of IPE initiatives and help users connect with their internal and external IPE communities. Visual content increases engagement. A visual component should be prioritized in any communication you want to be sure people read. Social media platforms with more student traffic, such as Facebook and Instagram, could help increase followership among students in particular.