

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**Central Executive Committee (CEC)**

19 – 21 July 2019

ANALYTICS

The CEC is asked to: -

- i) **note** analytics for the website, The Hoot and social media.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Going forward, a regular analytics report will be produced to evaluate the success of engagement on our platforms. This will allow us to improve our content and approach, utilising more information about our audience and their activity on our online platforms to support evidence-based decision-making. The reports will include general information on oustudents.com, The Hoot, Facebook and Twitter.
- 1.2 All data is collected anonymously to protect the privacy of our members.

2 Key findings

- 2.1 Our highest percentage of users during this period identify as female and are between 25 – 34, with the majority living in the United Kingdom. Though it is crucial to remember that our members' ages, gender identities and locations largely vary, it is interesting to note that such a large percentage of members engaging with us online share these same characteristics.
- 2.2 Across the board, our audience engages most with content that is both interactive and is closely related to their interests – polls, quizzes and videos with a pop culture slant perform well regardless of platform.

3 oustudents.com

- 3.1 The date range for this report is 1 March – 18 June 2019.
- 3.2 50% of traffic to the site is from organic searching, meaning our site is optimised efficiently for search engines. This means links to our site are being served at the top (or close to the top) of the search results for people looking for the Association or its activities.

- 3.3 Understanding what devices our audience are using to view the site is important to ensure our pages and content are accessible and display correctly on all devices. Desktop usage has increased recently (with 22,402 users), despite mobile device usage steadily growing up until this point. Given the time range, we expect this increase to be because of the exam season - students accessing past papers via the site.
- 3.4 We had 42,062 users during this period. However, only 18.2% of these users returned to our website. In addition to this, the bounce rate - the percentage of visitors who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page - was 57.92. This is most likely due to the high proportion of traffic resulting from organic search – users arrive directly onto the page they were looking for, then leave the site. We would like to reduce our average bounce rate and session duration by the end of the year.
- 3.5 Behaviour tells us what our users are engaging with the most and shows their journey through the website. Our most view pages either provide a service or an offer for students such as the OU Students Shop and TOTUM, or helpful advice, for example Fees and Funding advice.

4 The Hoot

- 4.1 Please note that for this section, the data ranges from 90 days prior to 18 June 2019 due to the settings available for WordPress analytics.
- 4.2 As expected, our launch month received the highest number of views due to the large amount of promotional activity taking place. Steps are being taken by the Digital Communications team to ensure that the site grows in visitors and content submissions.
- 4.3 Our most viewed article to date is Cath Brown’s brilliant module codes quiz, which performed significantly well. This shows a trend in engagement with articles that invite users to interact - two of our Top 5 articles are quizzes and the others are fun, thought-provoking topics. In addition to this, a large amount of social media buzz accompanied the quiz, allowing it to reach more people.
- 4.4 Going forward, we encourage users to utilise all available article formats when creating content – specifically the quizzes and lists to receive higher user engagement – in addition to the more traditional story format when appropriate.

5 Facebook

- 5.1 The prime time for posting was between 9am – 2pm. This is interesting as we’ve previously noticed that our audience engage with our Facebook posts in the evening. With this new insight, we plan to continuously reconfigure our posting schedule to match our audience’s preferences.
- 5.2 Compared to similar accounts, we have a high number of followers, but we’re very aware that we’re not reaching all our members. Additionally, our engagement rate (number of engagements compared to number of views) is relatively low – though it should be noted that this is becoming more common for branded Facebook pages.

5.3 Our Top Facebook post of the month was a Game of Thrones parody teaser trailer for Freshers, combining the use of popular culture references and a video format to create our most successful type of post.

6 Twitter

6.1 Please note figures from Twitter range from 28 days prior to 18 June 2019.

6.2 Twitter mirrors much of the findings from the website and Facebook, including demographics and engagements.

6.3 Using Twitter Analytics, we can see what our audience's interests are. For our followings, dogs are listed as the top interest – therefore students sharing study buddy photos, animal memes and gifs work well with our audience.

6.4 Our most engaging tweets require audience interaction, include a social trend and provide services for students – methods we will be using more often to grow our engagement and reach.

7 Next steps

7.1 The Digital Communications team will continue to utilise consistent analytics reporting to evaluate the success of content and modify our planning accordingly on our platforms.

7.2 Going forward, an annual report will be made available to the student leadership team. An interim paper will be shared if we note any significant changes to our audience's demographics or content preferences.

7.3 For any queries, please contact the Digital Communications team.

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