



OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

17 - 19 July 2020

ANNUAL ANALYTICS

The CEC is asked to: -

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Last July, we shared that we would be producing monthly analytics reports to evaluate the success of engagement on our platforms, as well as an annual report to the student leadership team going forward. This allows 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. This is much the same as last year and will be useful during our new website project that we are currently working on. 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 data range for this report is 1 January 2020 - 30 June 2020.

- 3.2. 40% 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 are adaptable for all devices. Overall users have increased significantly in the last year with over 46,639 users using a desktop (this was 22,402 last year). However, the order of devices has not changed with phones being the second most used, followed by tablets.
- 3.4. We had a large increase in users during this period compared to last year (42,062) with 89,666 in total. However, only 16% 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 56.63% which is slightly lower than last year (57.92%) which is what we are aiming for. Last year, we wanted to build up our average session duration by using more engaging content to compare the needs of our users and this has increased from 1 minute 44 seconds spent on a page to 2 minutes 0.8 seconds which is positive. We have exceeded our target of 50,000 users and we still need to work on building up our average session for longer and lower our bounce rate.
- 3.5. Behaviour tells us what our users are engaging with the most and shows their journey through the website. Our most viewed pages have changed slightly over 2020. We still have the regular service pages e.g. the shop, TOTUM & past exam papers appearing high on most visited pages, but there has been a noticeable shift in trend with University Challenge, Elections & Freshers making new appearances this year. This is possibly due to us creating separate microsites for these campaigns and lots of successful social media promotion.

4. The Hoot

- 4.1. Please note that for this section, the data found is since launch in April 2019. Slide 12 includes an overview of figures since launch such as views, comments and most views in one day.
- 4.2. April and December 2019 were our highest viewed months. This doesn't come as a surprise since we launched The Hoot in April 2019 and we ran an advent calendar which published content every single day up until Christmas. In 2020, we are looking at refreshing The Hoot with new content to increase views as this has significantly dropped since 2019. However, Conference 2020 in June has helped increase traffic slightly from a significant dip of 635 views in March to a high of 1,581 views in June.
- 4.3. Our most viewed article to date is still Cath Brown's brilliant module codes quiz, which performed significantly well. This shows a trend in engagement with articles that invite users to interact - three of our Top 5 articles are quizzes and the others are fun, interactive 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 will be continuing to encourage all users to utilise a range of available article formats when creating content. It is worth knowing that specifically the quizzes and lists receive higher user engagement - in addition to the more traditional story format when appropriate.

5. Facebook

- 5.1. Please note figures from Facebook range from the last 28 days leading up until 30 June 2020. Due to Facebook settings we are unable to report earlier than this. We have had 34,356 likes and 35,356 followers to date since the page was created.
- 5.2. The prime time for us posting content is between 9am – 1pm, which has not changed in the last year. We plan to continuously reconfigure our posting schedule to match our audience's preferences.
- 5.3. 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. A couple of examples of engagement are people sharing, commenting on and reacting to posts.
- 5.4. Our Top Facebook post of the month was a post for the Black Lives Matter campaign which received 132 likes and reactions with 6 comments & 9 shares.

6. Twitter

- 6.1. Please note figures from Twitter range from January to May 2020 and a 90-day period for Top Tweets. Slide 19 includes some overall figures from 2020 such as tweets, new followers, profile visits and mentions.
- 6.2. Twitter has now removed audience statistics from their analytics platform so we were unable to receive this information for 2020. However, from the last few months of 2019, our audience and interests did not change. Mirroring much of the same findings from the website and Facebook, with majority of our Twitter followers being female and living in the UK and their top interest still being dogs.
- 6.3. Our most engaging tweets require audience interaction, include a social trend and have visuals such as gifs or images, proving how important our branding is and how we use these methods to engage with our audience going forward.

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. The team will continue to produce an annual report to the student leadership team in order to compare findings each year.

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

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