

Content Marketing Best Practices

HIGHER EDUCATION AND NONPROFITS

Building your content strategy

Using content to boost recruiting and fundraising

Who's winning with various content strategies



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INTRODUCTION

Universities and nonprofits share two major challenges: recruiting students or supporters and raising funds to fuel their mission. Falling short in either goal can significantly affect the quality and effectiveness of their programs by tightening already limited budgets.

So how do nonprofits choose the most cost-effective strategies in an ever-changing media landscape? One goal of this ebook is to show how content marketing can elevate awareness, increase recruitment and bolster fundraising efforts.



INTRODUCTION

Not only is content marketing more cost-effective than traditional marketing, but it also works better. If you're still not sure it's the right answer for your institution, please consider this statistic:

Content marketing costs 62 percent less than outbound marketing and generates three times as many leads per dollar spent. (Source: Demand Metric).

To get perspective, brush up on the fundamental elements of a sound content strategy — and see who in the field is succeeding at theirs.



COMMON CHALLENGES

Recent reports from the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) show college enrollment is dropping, down 1.3 million students from 2013 to 2015. In addition to the dip in enrollment numbers, the [U.S. Department of Education](#) also reports an increase in the total number of accredited schools — up to nearly 40,000 institutions in 2016 from 36,000 in 2014. Fewer students and more options create a competitive enrollment environment for universities seeking to attract top students.

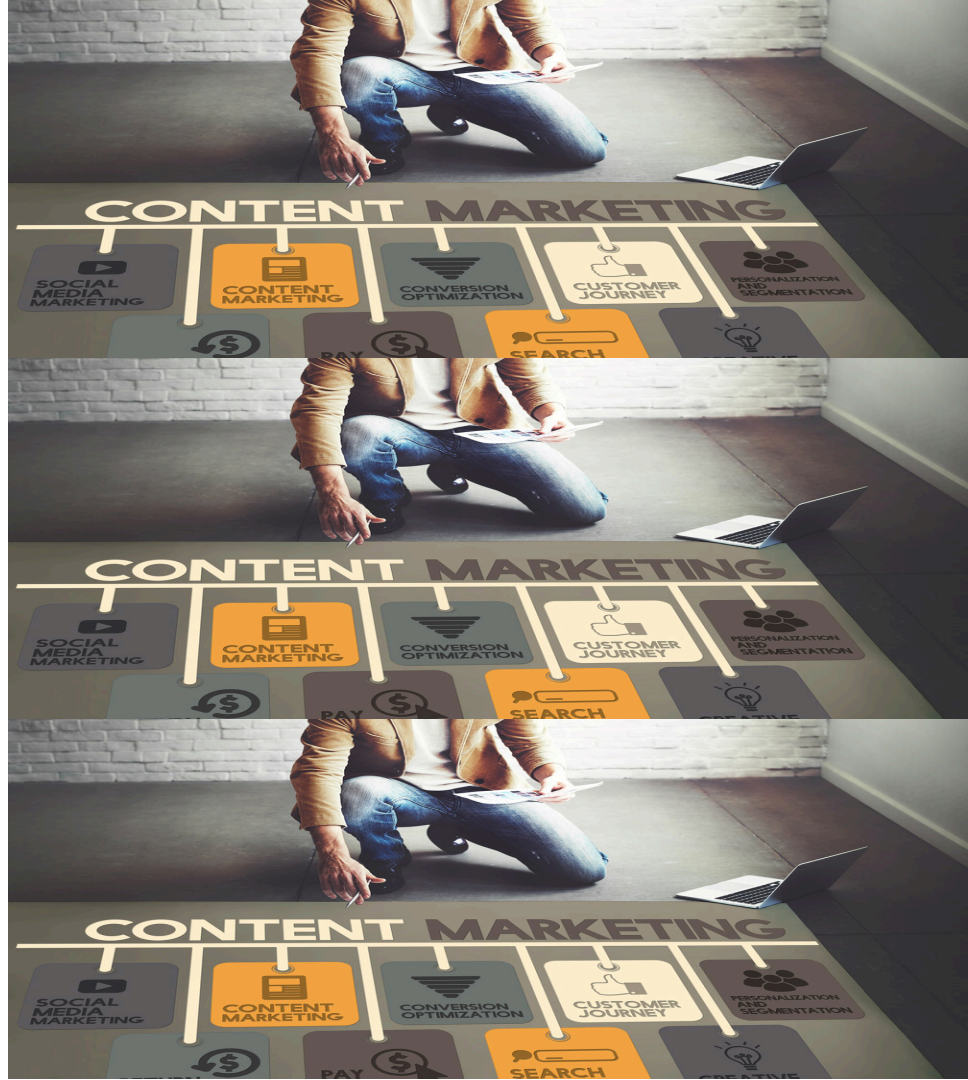
Nonprofits face a similar problem. New overtime laws, an ever-changing economy, and the rise of crowdfunding have created a challenging fundraising environment.



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

In 2016, only 25 percent of nonprofits reported they had a documented content strategy, according to [Content Marketing Institute](#). Without a documented plan for success, how can you measure if all your efforts are working? You can't.

If you already haven't developed a dynamic content strategy, let's walk you through eight key steps to building one.



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

1

Identify Your Target Audience

Who are you seeking?

For content marketing to be effective, it must be personalized and authentic. Therefore, it is vital to determine exactly who your target audience is by using solid data. The simplest method to identify your target audience is by surveying current students or donors. Use a survey tool like [Survey Monkey](#) to create a short survey to gather the following information: age, geographic location, family size, income, etc. Or hire experts like [SimpsonScarborough](#) to do research.

Add additional questions that make sense for your organization. For example, a local university might be



interested in what other schools a current student considered. A nonprofit organization supporting schools in impoverished countries might want to know the average level of education of their donors.



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

2

Develop Brand Style and Voice Guidelines *Who are you?*

Is your organization's tone buttoned-up and professional? Do you want to be perceived as young and progressive? [Outlining brand style and voice guidelines](#) makes it possible for multiple people within your organization to produce content that is on-brand.

Three things that should be included in your style guidelines: a description of your brand voice, content examples, and editorial guidelines.

For instance, if you're a small nonprofit dedicated to helping women in third world countries build their



businesses, you might focus on being honest, driven and helpful. You might link to examples that closely capture your voice or vision. And for editorial guidelines, you might use AP style and develop contextual guidelines for your organization.

[Here's a great post on developing guidelines.](#)



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

3

Audit Your Current Content

How are you doing now?

Which of your content initiatives are working and which are not? To create a content strategy, you need to start by looking at what you have already done so you can do more of what is working and less of what isn't. Here's how the process should go:

- Pull all your current content links into a spreadsheet. We suggest using [Screaming Frog](#) for this step.
- Create columns for title, target keywords, page visits, social shares, backlinks, and any other parameters you consider an indicator of success. Pull this data from tools like [Google Analytics](#) and [Mozscape](#).



- Analyze content based on indicators of success: Which posts got the most traffic? Which posts drove the most email signups? Which pieces of content got the most social shares?

[Look at step-by-step instructions for performing a content audit.](#)



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

4

Do Search Keyword Gap Analysis
What are you missing?

Do you have content that speaks to popular keywords relevant to your offerings or cause? Or are you missing related content that might drive traffic to your primary focus?

A keyword gap analysis looks for gaps in your content that your target audience might be looking for information about. Any gaps represent an opportunity for you to create high-quality content that will rank well and drive organic search traffic through better SEO.



Try this template from [Smart Insights](#) as a good place to start for an in-depth keyword gap analysis.



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

5

Perform Competitive Analysis

How do you compare?

While your goal should be to stand out, you can still learn a lot from looking at what your top three competitors are doing. Are they using newer formats, like video, that are getting shared a ton? Did they create a snazzy infographic that went viral?

For a quick start, just look at the top five search results for your top three target keywords. To do an in-depth analysis, here's a great post from ClearVoice: [How to Do Competitive Analysis to Build a Content Strategy](#)



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

6

Differentiate Your Strategy

How do you stand out?

Looking at your competitors' successes is a starting point to creating content that works. Don't copy what they're doing, however; instead, look at how you can build on their success and create even better content.

After doing your keyword gap analysis and your competitive analysis, answer these questions:

- What topics are we not covering?
- Are our competitors covering those topics?
- If so, how can we be better? (Consider making yours higher quality or using a different format.)



- How are we different from competitors X, Y and Z?
- How can we leverage this?
- Are there niches in our field that our brand is uniquely qualified to cover?



BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

7

Identify Clear Goals for Your Brand

What's your measure of success?

Arguably the most important aspect of your content marketing plan is defining what success looks like for your institution.

Here are some of the most common goals:

- Increase website traffic
- Increase brand awareness
- Increase newsletter sign-ups
- Increase social followers and engagement
- Educate on a specific topic



Once you have laid out your broader goals, you need to determine what your success parameters are and [how you will measure them](#).

BUILDING YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

8

Document Your Content Strategy

What's your plan?

Outline one to five content initiatives that fill gaps you uncovered in your keyword and competitive analysis. These initiatives should speak directly to your target audience using your brand voice. In your strategy document, outline how these initiatives will help you reach your goals.

Clearly organize and communicate all the elements of your strategy within a cohesive plan that's readily accessible and relatable to other teams in your organization.



CONTENT INITIATIVES

Examples, Winning Strategies and Tools

Who's winning with content marketing? What kinds of strategies and content initiatives are popular in higher education and nonprofit organizations?

In the next section we will:

- Breakdown different types of content: blogging, video, email campaigns, Facebook, Twitter, newsletters, contests, online courses and webinars, influencer programs, and infographics
- Discuss what is currently working
- How it can be implemented in the education and nonprofit sectors
- Provide tools and resources you can use to develop your own content



BLOGGING

The Tried and True Starting Point

A blog is the starting point for many organizations in their content marketing journey, and with good reason. You likely already have a blog, or adding one to your website would be quite simple. Content from your blog can be shared on social media and in newsletters and referenced in other content.

While it is an obvious place to start, being successful at blogging requires a defined strategy, one that includes creating content consistently and effectively. Let's look at what successful blogging looks like in the nonprofit sector.



BLOGGING

Who's Doing It Well?

The [University of Louisiana at Lafayette](#) worked with Up&Up Agency to drive enrollment and increase brand awareness. Through a carefully defined content marketing strategy, the university was able to increase website traffic, decrease site bounce rate and increase traffic from social media, according to a case study published by the agency. How did they do it?

They realized stuffy academic writing was no way to go when targeting their audience. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette used compelling visual content, such as bold images and funny GIFs and memes, to entertain and educate. These types of content work well for college-age students. Instead of boring how-to articles or dull academic papers, they used [listicles](#), [quizzes](#) and [Instagram takeovers](#).



[Home](#) » [Blogs](#) » [UL Grad School's blog](#)

The 11 (Real) Best Things About Grad School

UL Grad School -- 09/28/2016

Wonder what it's like being a grad student? A few weeks ago we did [a post about some of the "best" things about grad school](#) that really weren't all that great. This time we actually have some things that are great about being a grad student.

1. You have a purpose.

The work you're doing makes an impact, and that's something you can hang your hat on at the end of each day.



BLOGGING

Who's Doing It Well?

The university's [listicle about grad school](#) (pictured), complete with 30 Rock and Obama GIFs, is a fantastic example of content marketing that's effective, enjoyable and shareable.

"While we dug deep into keyword research to help promote multiple grad programs, we knew we needed content beyond just curriculum and courses to keep the audience interested," said Matt McFadden, the Director of Marketing Strategy at [Up&UpAgency](#).

"The content strategy allowed us to highlight key features of the programs and university, but we were able to do so in a way that was much more entertaining and captured the fun-loving spirit of the university and Louisiana."



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BLOGGING

Winning Strategies

Consider Your Audience

What types of content will your audience be interested in and willing to share? People share posts their friends will find useful, so focus on creating useful content and not just talking about yourself.

Blog Consistently

If you are working with a limited budget, writing consistently might seem overwhelming. Instead of having one person responsible for all the blog posts, reach out to other departments, board members and partners to tell their stories. Here's good advice on getting [employees to contribute content](#).

Optimizing Your Posts

The best content in the world is useless if no one reads it. Make sure each post focuses on a specific keyword — and include it in your title, meta description, and a few times in the post. Yoast makes an [easy-to-use plugin for WordPress](#) that checks for blog post optimization.



BLOGGING

Top Tools and Resources

Driving enrollment from a university or nonprofit blog is all about paying attention to the platforms and content types your target audience is interested in. Here are a few tools and resources you can use to spice up your blog posts:

- [GIPHY](#) — To find related GIFS
- [How to Create Instagram Stories](#) — To create engaging Instagram stories
- [QZZR](#) — To create and embed quizzes on your site
- [Yoast](#) — To optimize posts for SEO
- [ClearVoice](#) — To manage content creation workflow and recruit freelancers all in one place

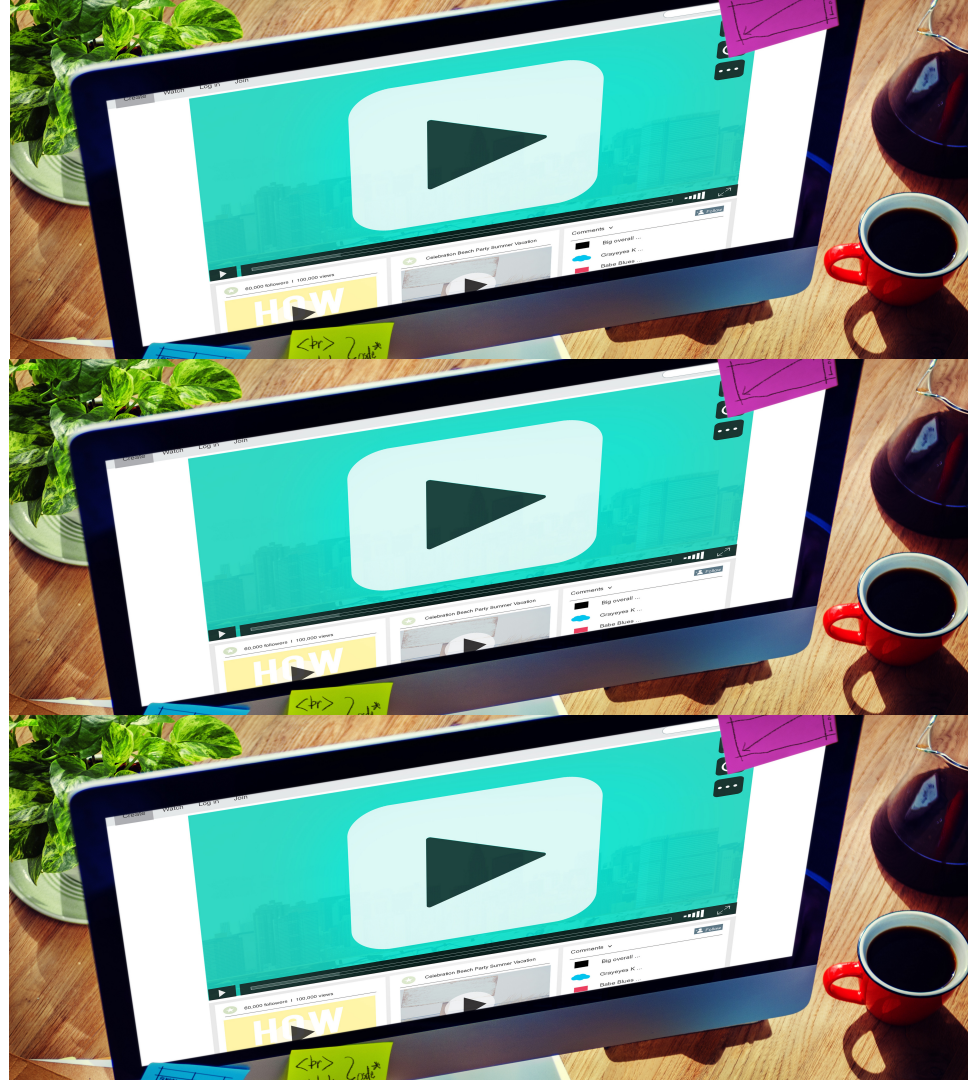


VIDEO

It Killed the Radio Star for a Reason

Video is an ideal format for nonprofits and universities working with limited resources to attract limited attention spans. In addition to being highly effective, just [one minute of video is worth 1.8 million words](#), according to Forrester Research. A few other reasons video should be part of a winning strategy:

- All the major social platforms support video.
- You no longer need fancy equipment to create good ones.
- According to Cisco, **video content will account for 79 percent of the world's total internet traffic by 2020**. (Of course, how much of that will be Netflix wasn't specified. But still.)



VIDEO

Who's Winning at Video?

[Princeton University](#) has embraced the video format with two channels on [YouTube](#) and hundreds of videos. Having two channels enables them to focus one on academic topics and another on lighter cultural events. Many of those videos are also posted on their [Facebook page \(selections at the right\)](#), where they garner thousands of views.

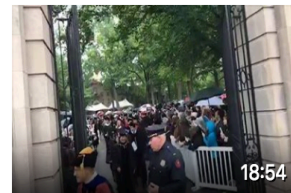
Princeton University has a lot of academic information to share, through visiting speakers and professors at the top of their field. But, they don't let the dry academic content dominate their video strategy. Their videos include a range of topics, from winners of the Annual International Eye Photo Content to a video of snow falling on campus.



Reimagining space with public art
Today · 2K views



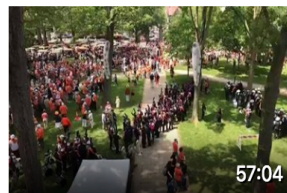
Highlights from Graduation 2017
June 8 · 14K views



We are LIVE as graduates from the Great Class of 2017 walk...
June 6 · 20K views



We're live at the end of the Princeton Reunions P-rade!
June 3 · 11K views



We're live at the P-rade!
June 3 · 15K views



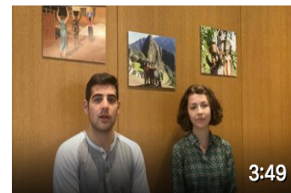
Princeton University Band performs at Princeton Reunions
June 2 · 7.2K views



The Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs'...
May 31 · 6.9K views



Why apply to Bridge Year?
May 20 · 4.2K views



The Impact of Bridge Year
May 19 · 4.2K views

VIDEO

Winning Strategies

Cover Multiple Topics

Don't assume your videos need to be about one specific topic. You can post a well-edited video about your work in African villages and still share your favorite clips from a live symposium about a water shortage. You can also mix up the formats. For example, you could post a documentary-style video to your YouTube channel and host a live Q&A on Facebook.

Use It Across Platforms

Once you have a video recorded, you can use it over and over again. Post it to Facebook. Post clips on Instagram. Edit it in with other videos to create a montage. Make sure you share the content on multiple platforms — don't assume your job is done once you post it on YouTube.

Optimize It

Optimizing your videos will help more people see them, and it's simple. YouTube provides guidelines to follow when you upload a video, including a place for tags and a description. Make use of this space and be sure to include keywords that make sense. Or, if your video has speaking subjects, use subtitles for silent viewing (which is a highly popular feature on mobile).



VIDEO

Top Tools and Resources

- [WeVideo](#) — Easy-to-use, cloud-based video editing software
- [RawShorts](#) — For making explainer videos to illustrate processes and products
- [Magisto](#) — When you need professional-quality videos at an affordable price
- [RendrFX](#) — A cheap, simple way to create a lot of beautiful videos with motion graphics and templates
- [Animoto](#) — Turn photos and clips into videos in a easy, fun platform
- [Video Optimization: Do Not Underestimate the Power of YouTube](#) — A guide to optimizing your YouTube videos
- [50 Inch, Universal Smartphone Tripod](#) — Fancy cameras are not required, but a steady hand is

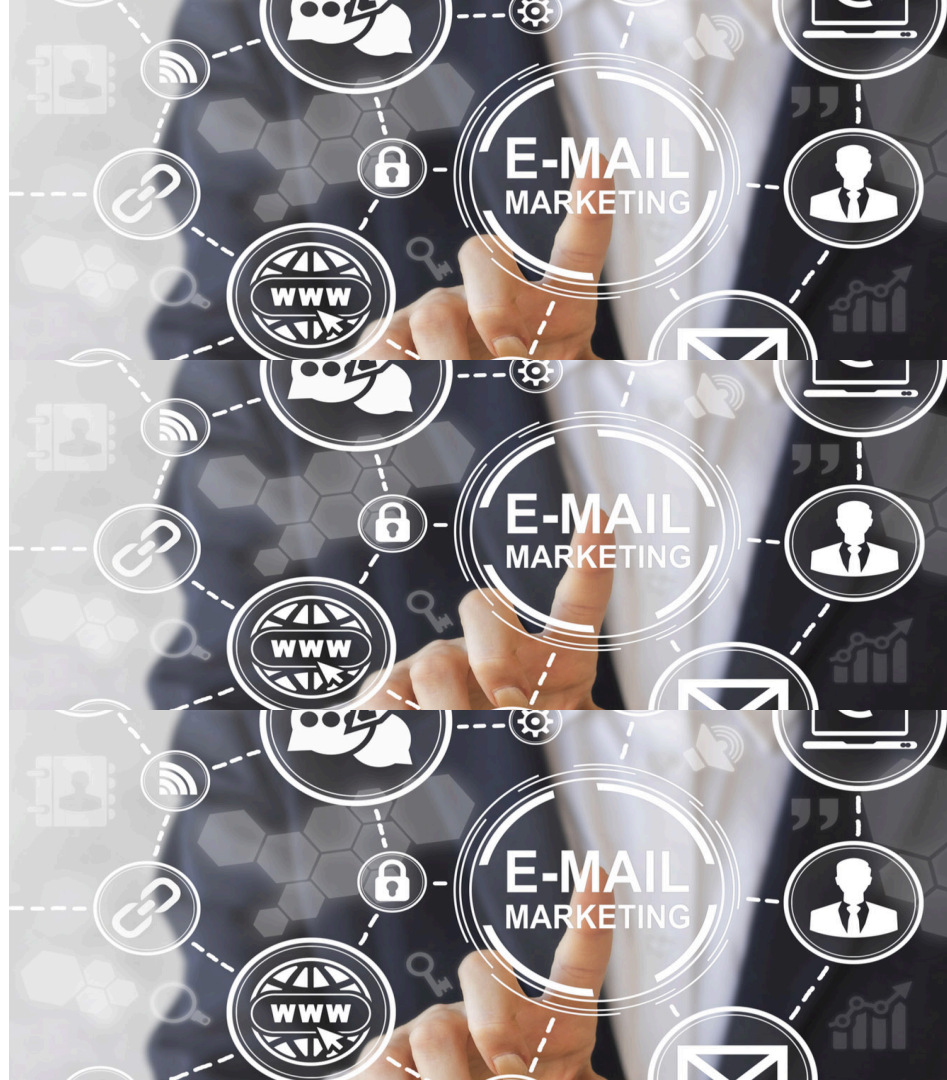


EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

Keep Re-engaging Your Supporters

Email remains one of the most effective marketing strategies. This is likely because, unlike interruptive advertising, people who subscribe to your email list are giving you permission to contact them. They want more information about your brand.

And the metrics... Email affords you some of the clearest metrics on engagement and conversion: open rates, click-through rates, re-engagement rates, time since last engagement, plus an arsenal of tracking metrics based on user groupings or target demographics.



Who's Winning at Email?

What are Ballet BC's keys to success? It is all about sharing real stories. Instead of just sending out updates about upcoming shows, they create a relationship with their audience.

Q—How many cows are in Canada?



Who's Winning at Email?

And Ballet BC's approach is very simple: keep sharing authentic stories to make supporters feel like they are part of a community.

“We sought to reach our supporters who wanted to know what we were doing, keep them engaged between the shows, and make them feel like they were part of our family,” said Alice Ko, former Digital Media Strategist for Ballet BC.

Dazzling Metric: *Email results in about one-third of online fundraising revenue.* - [Salsa Labs](#)

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Annual Fund Campaign

[Performances](#) [Support](#) [Blog](#) [Tickets](#)



Consider supporting Ballet BC's Annual Fund Campaign and help us give voice to artistic excellence and innovation in Vancouver.

This season, your contributions assist our company in making the following possible:

- Collaborations with eight exciting choreographers from around the globe, including some of the best in British Columbia;
- Six world premieres, two Canadian premieres, a BC premiere, a company premiere, and an audience favourite;
- Student and community dress rehearsal, choreographic workshops, and adult ballet classes, among other outreach efforts.

All this can only be made possible thanks to members of the community like you who believe in Ballet BC and stand up for our work.

As one of the world's foremost contemporary dance companies, we are ultimately only as strong as the community right here in Vancouver that contributes to Ballet BC. It is your support that keeps us standing tall and dancing strong.

Donate Now

Our Annual Fundraising Campaign closes **June 30, 2017.**

We appreciate the support from everyone who has already given this year and to those supporting us for the first time. Thank you!

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [Contact](#)

Donate

Ballet BC Dancer Gilbert Small. Photo by Michael Slobodian

"Believes in ghosts"

Last week we went for dinner with company superstar and all around mensch, Livona Ellis. It was the end of a long rehearsal day but before we went into full weekend mode we all sat down over dinner to have a little chat about where Livona comes from, who she is now, and what she is looking forward to.

LE: When I was just my mom put me in dance classes at Arts Unlimited. At that time I was also doing martial arts, and there were a lot of tournaments, which I would always lose (laughs). I really wasn't good. I remember one tournament in particular where I was paired with this boy who was taller than me and every time we approached one another he would just punch me in the head and I would be on the floor. I also did gymnastics from about five years old. I wasn't good at that either because I wasn't very flexible, and I was afraid of heights. The beam was one of the question. I was always calling out to my gymnastics coach while she was busy helping other kids out. "Catherine! Catherine! You spot me!" She was always so indulgent with me when we got to floor routines I was one of the better ones because I loved dancing.

C- Did she then talk to you about being more serious about dance?

LE: Yeah, it was partially my gymnastics teacher but also my best friend Jasmine. She started going to AU so obviously I wanted to do too. After a year at AU I auditioned for the professional program and got in. It was performing that I really fell in love with, and what made me click with it. I used to want to be a coroner, a forensic investigator, brain surgeon, a heart surgeon, and that was up until grade eight, my first year with Any (Athena Gordon) that I knew this was also what I wanted to do.

A: I will never forget my first class with Any so I think I know what you mean. Spending time in the studio with Any has been one of the most eye- and mind-opening experiences of my life, and I am envious of you that you had that interaction from almost the beginning of your training.

LE: Arty to this day is the reason why I'm here. She told me she looks at me in that audition and saw this presence in me and knew that I would do something special. That I was meant to dance. She has believed in me since day one and now we are very close.

➤ I remember growing up at AU and really admiring your relationship with her as you joined Ballet BC. What was it like transitioning to the company and can you talk about your relationship with Emily Mohr?

LE: I met Emily for the first time when I joined the Arts Umbrella Dance Company at age 11. She challenged us in ways I didn't know were possible. As a young kid she treated us like adults and expected things from us that no one else did. There was something about being in the studio with Emily I come from a family of very strong minded and independent women. We are all very close and we look at things like nothing is impossible. Being around Emily reminded me of being around those women. The idea of being in a regular school bored me and somehow we were doing this thing that set us apart from the average kid our age. It made me feel important and special and that, not anyone could do this.

When I was an apprentice with Ballet BC I was just there to work, learn, and push myself. I was so happy to have Emily as my director again because she truly represents what I value as a dance artist. I respected the boundaries of my position but I approached the work like there was no difference between me and everybody else. I looked up to so many dancers in the company but I also felt as though they looked up to me in a way that was such a source of encouragement and support. I have truly found a home at Ballet BC.

A: You mentioned your family being full of strong women. Can you tell us a little more about your family and what it was like growing up with them, in Vancouver?

LE-Family is the number one thing for me. My mom met my biologist father in Israel but raised me on her own in Vancouver. When I was younger I never really wondered about him because my mom made sure I was always loved and I was always being spoiled. I thought the only thing we didn't have was a lot of money, but she made sure my money was always filled with activities. She always said I wouldn't be one of those kids who just killed time hanging around in the mall. My aunt and uncle live here and I would stay with them when my mom had to travel. They were like a second set of parents to me. I was very close with my grandparents and would visit them in Winnipeg every summer and loved spending time there. When I was six my cousin was born and that was very exciting for me. I was obsessed with her. I loved going to play with her from daycare with my grandparents and trying to match my outfit to hers. She is like my sister. My mom met my step-dad when I was 12. He's a bit weird and I consider him my dad.

A: Are you a sophisticated person?

LE: I believe in ghosts. I knock on wood. The umbrella thing. Ladders. Black cats. Crows freak me out. Before bed I close all closets and can have any open dark spaces.

LE: I like to say witty but also its mostly dumb humor. Immature. I love a fart joke. I also like videos of people hurting themselves. Witty sarcasm. Sarcasm on the line of passive aggression. Actually just being an asshole and laughing about it.

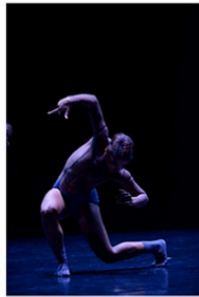
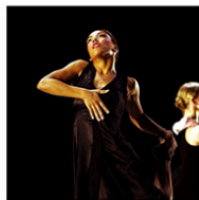
©- What is something you're working on right now – trying to understand in your life or in your work?

L.E.: Well in life, it's related to my work as well, I am working to find the balance between comfort and chaos. In the past when things have been unsettled in my personal life, things at work have been really good for me. I would go into the studio with something to work out. Now things are a little more comfortable for me personally. I'm very happy. I feel like I sometimes create drama just to be able to work through something, so I am trying to figure out why I feel the need to do that in my life. That maybe it's okay.

I've been thinking about what we consider to be "easy" and how in actuality, those things are not always that easy. The easy thing that's comfortable takes a lot of work to maintain. To commit yourself to one thing is a challenge. I'm trying to figure that out. It's so easy to walk away, or find a new spark, or to create drama in order to feel something new. How can I motivate myself without any kind of conflict? If there wasn't any conflict in the world what would that really be like?

Not everyone is going to approach the work in the way I want it to be approached. I am starting to figure out what my tendencies are in and out of the studio. Identifying my patterns without judgment. I am deciding what I can live with and what I want to change.

▲ How many cows are in Canada?



EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

Winning Strategies

Let Subscribers Know What to Expect

When you go to sign up for Ballet BC's newsletter, they immediately tell you what to expect from them: a monthly newsletter with behind-the-scenes info, occasional emails with discounts, and updates on special events. Being upfront and honest can go a long way for conversion and retention.

Tell Your Story

Alice Ko, who managed digital media for Ballet BC, told [The Storytelling Nonprofit](#) that they discovered their audience was interested in the real stories behind Ballet BC. They wanted to know who the dancers were, what their daily routines were like, and what other programs they were involved in. The key here is to offer behind-the-scenes views into how your brand works and create a bond with your audience.

Consider Automation

Nonprofits and universities are often held back by limited resources. Automation is a fantastic way to interact with your audience without overextending yourself. You only have to build an automation campaign once, and the emails drip out, triggered by specific behaviors. [This HubSpot article](#) is a good primer on email automation.



EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

Top Tools and Resources

- [HubSpot](#) — Popular email marketing service provider that makes it easy to send, track and analyze email campaigns
- [5 HubSpot Power-User Secrets](#) — An expert who's logged thousands of hours using HubSpot shares his best practices for email marketing
- [How to Use a Drip Marketing Campaign to Build Trust & Loyalty](#) — A good guide to effective email campaigns
- [What You Need to Know About Email Marketing for Nonprofits by Media Cause](#) — A three-part series on creating engaging email campaigns for nonprofits
- [Boost Email Click-Thru Rates With Cinemagraphs](#) — Martech expert Ben Beck explains how to use Cinemagraphs in your email marketing



FACEBOOK

You Can't Deny the King of Social Media

According to Facebook, [nearly 1.23 billion people are active on the site every day](#). No matter who your audience is, they're on Facebook. And the stats keep growing:

- [UBS Evidence Lab](#), in their most recent annual [social media survey](#), found 65% of US teens use Facebook daily — more than any other social media platform
- Mark Zuckerberg also stated in April 2016, “People around the world spend on average more than 50 minutes a day using Facebook, Instagram and Messenger.”



FACEBOOK

Who's Winning at Facebook?

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research

Research works to raise money and awareness of Parkinson's Disease. Their Facebook page has nearly 800K likes and a high amount of engagement. Their key to success lies in sharing information about many topics related to health care, in addition to their own blog posts and information related to Parkinson's. They do this by using social media to share posts about Parkinson's Disease, Team Fox, the Foundation, or Parkinson's Research, and to push all lead information into their existing Salesforce funnel, according to this [case study from Astadia](#).



FACEBOOK

Winning Strategies

Share Your Own Content

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research often shares posts on their Facebook from their own blog. Sharing on Facebook is one way to increase the reach of your content from other sources or even drive newsletter subscribers (but you have to do more than just share your own content — read on).

Don't Just Talk About Yourself

People visit Facebook to be social and to interact on a personal level. Posts asking for donations over and over again will not work. Instead, share your story and share other information related to the field you are in. Remember that social media is a conversation, not a one-way broadcast.

Schedule Posts to Lighten the Load

Do not try to keep up with social media live, in real time. Instead, use a program like Buffer or Hootsuite to schedule your posts to Facebook (and other social platforms) and analyze what type of content is working.



FACEBOOK

Top Tools and Resources

- [Buffer](#) — Popular platform used to schedule posts and track engagement
- [Hootsuite](#) — Similar to Buffer, platform to schedule posts and track results
- [Edgar](#) — Allows you to mark posts so you can easily reshare, making it easier to keep your scheduled queue full
- [Facebook Marketing Tips For NonProfit Organizations by AdEspresso](#) — Post outlining effective strategies for nonprofits on Facebook
- [How to Build Your Facebook Chatbot in About 10 Minutes](#) — Learn why and how brands are using Facebook chatbots in their marketing



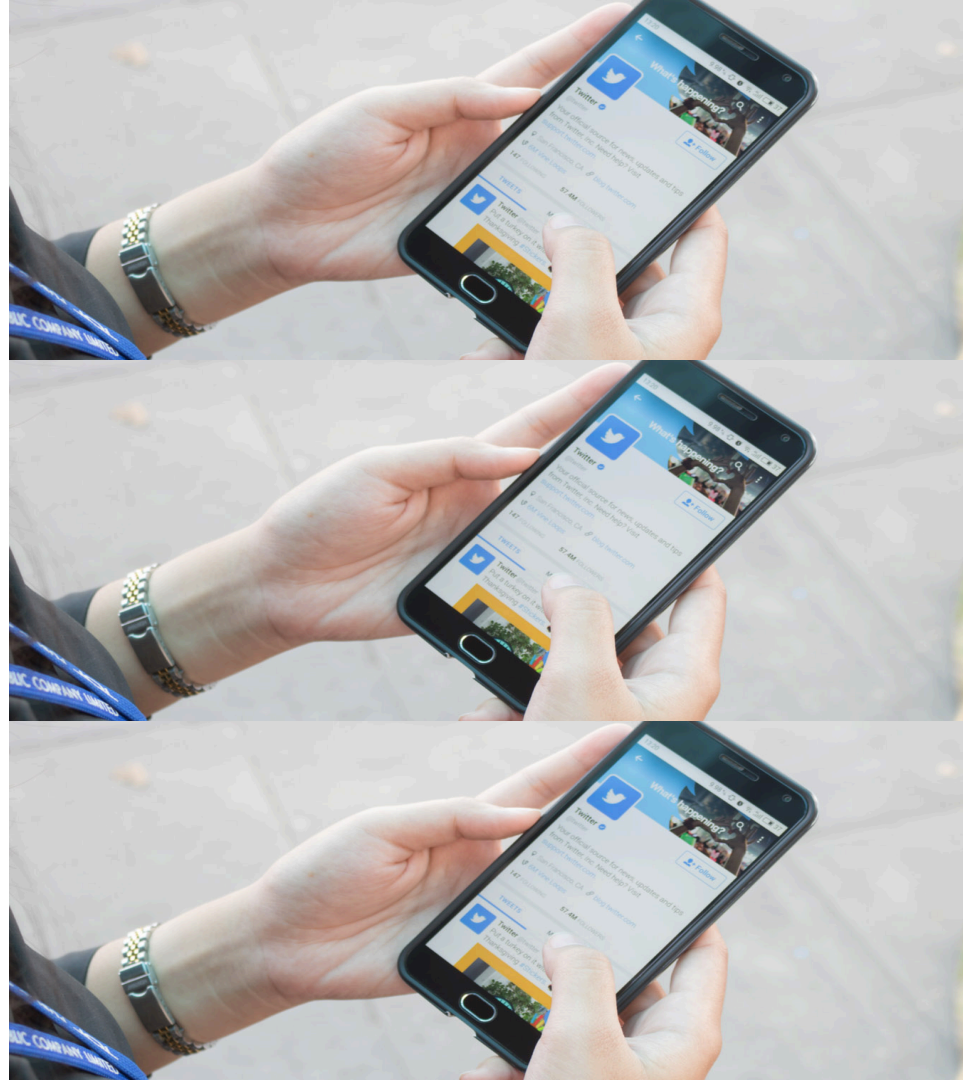
TWITTER

Engaging People Live and in Real Time

With [313 million monthly active users](#), Twitter is a powerhouse in the social media field. Despite its popularity, Twitter is hard for most institutions to use effectively. By nature, Twitter is fast-paced and brief.

More key Twitter stats:

- 1 billion unique visits monthly to sites with embedded tweets
- 82% of active users are on mobile
- 79% of accounts are outside the U.S.



TWITTER

Who's Winning at Tweeting?

[DoSomething.org](https://dosomething.org) is a "global movement for good" dedicated to helping young people make a difference by supporting a variety of campaigns. Their Twitter profile boasts 808,000 followers, and they're winning by paying attention to their target audience, teens, and posting a variety of content on a near-constant basis.

Twitter has been a growing factor in their success. "(In 10 years)... We went from five to 55 employees, from \$2 million in revenue to \$12 million. We now have over 4.5 million young people participating in our campaigns," said Aria Finger, CEO of DoSomething.org.



For example, this post has nothing to do with teens, being a nonprofit or even doing good. It is, however, timely and uses a trending hashtag.



This post, an article from Teen Vogue, is interesting to their target audience but is unrelated to any of their campaigns.



TWITTER

Winning Strategies

Share Interesting, Related Content

Twitter moves fast, so stick to news, trending topics and/or highly interesting content you know your audience will be interested in. When you do post about your own campaigns, be sure to use relevant hashtags.

Don't Overuse #Hashtags

Hashtags help you increase the reach of your tweets, but too many will take up your precious 140 characters — and, it looks unprofessional. Choose one to three hashtags that make the most sense.

Retweet Daily

Retweeting is an easy way to share even more interesting content with your audience. Plus it increases engagement and makes other users notice you. Hopefully, they will begin to like and retweet your content as well, which will increase your reach.



TWITTER

Top Tools and Resources

- [Crowdfire](#) — This platform uses an algorithm to help you increase followers and engagement
- [Bit.ly](#) — A link-shortening tool that allows you to track clicks on links you share
- [10 Twitter Best Practices for Nonprofits](#) — Guide to getting started and succeeding on Twitter as a nonprofit
- [Tweet Reports](#) — Find Twitter Chats to grow your following and engagement through participation
- [Hootsuite vs. Buffer](#) — A martech experts shares his comparison between two popular tools for managing tweets



NEWSLETTERS

Go Deeper in Detail on Your Impact

A newsletter is an opportunity for your institution to share information, updates and resources related to your institution and goals. When used effectively, newsletters can drive engagement and increase donations — with those most engaged and interested in your mission. Keep in mind, a newsletter might be sent through email or in print.

Dazzling Metric: *Thirty-three percent (33%) of donors indicate if a charity tells them how their donation was spent and the impact it had, they'd be “a lot more likely” to give again in the future.* — [Convio](#)



NEWSLETTERS

Winning Strategies

Use Stunning Images and Graphics

Images and graphics are a simple way to share in-depth information and help your donors feel connected to the people their funds help. Use photos of your institution in action and create graphics to share statistics.

Share Goals and Updates

Your newsletter should not be full of sales pitches or ad copy. Instead, give subscribers an inside look into how your organization is doing. Did you meet your fundraising goals for last year? Were you able to help 1,000 low-income students graduate? Share your successes to keep the momentum going.

Be Consistent

People enjoy routine: It gives them something to look forward to. Plan a newsletter schedule and stick to it. Quarterly, monthly, or even weekly is fine, as long as you have enough interesting information to share.



NEWSLETTERS

Top Tools and Resources

- [Canva](#) — Create stunning infographics with a user-friendly image-editing platform
- [Litmus](#) — Make sure your newsletter looks good on over 70 different platforms and devices
- [HubSpot](#), **Mail Chimp**, **Zapier**, **Constant Contact** — Email platforms with integrated tracking and email-building capabilities
- [5 HubSpot Power-User Secrets](#) — An expert who's logged thousands of hours using HubSpot shares his best practices for email marketing
- [What You Need to Know About Email Marketing for Nonprofits by Media Cause](#) — A three-part series on creating engaging email campaigns for nonprofits



CONTESTS

Play Into Our Competitive Drives

Contests are great tools to raise awareness and cultivate a following. They can be leveraged in a variety of formats, including giveaways, donation contests, photo contests and naming contests — and they don't need to involve prizes.

Dazzling Case Study: *Ninety-six percent (96%) of donors to Give to the Max Day giving contest said they were likely to give additional donations to nonprofits after participating in the contest.* — [The Case Foundation](#)

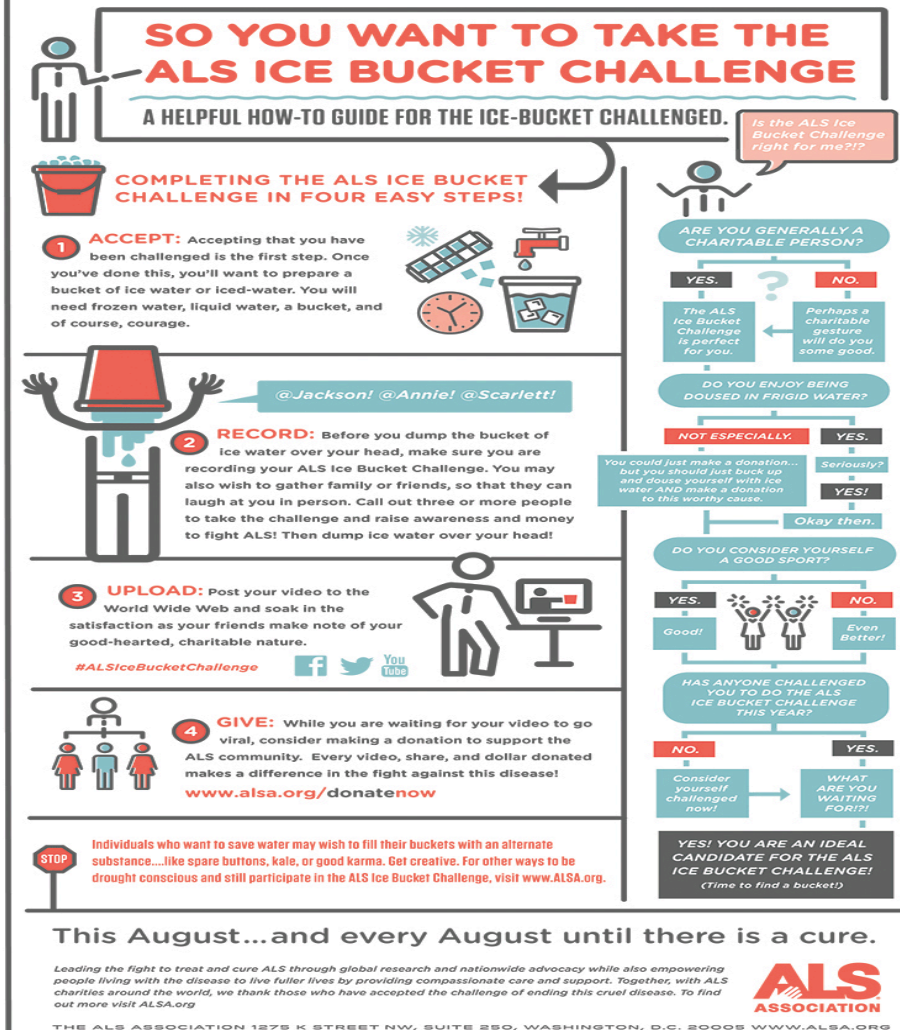


CONTESTS

Who's Winning With Contests?

The most popular contest by a nonprofit in recent memory is the ice bucket challenge, created by [The ALS Association](#), to raise money and awareness for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a progressive neurodegenerative disease).

The premise was simple: Participants recorded themselves dumping a bucket of ice water over their heads, posted it to social media and challenged their friends to do the same. Challengers could choose to dump ice water over their own head or donate \$10 to The ALS Association. Many chose to do both.

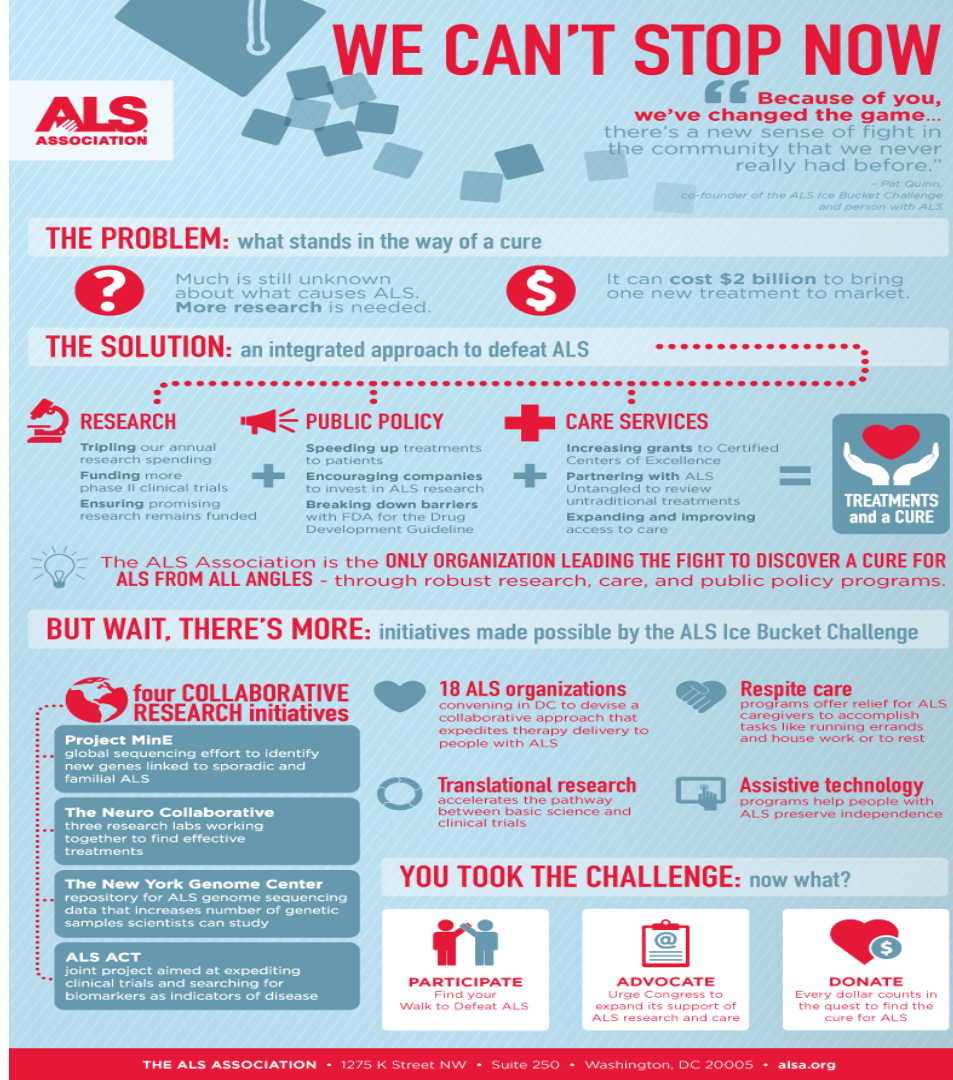


CONTESTS

Who's Winning With Contests?

The real magic of the contest came from its word-of-mouth virility, aided [with a cool infographic with instructions](#) (shown on pervious page). Over a year's time, nearly 17 million people participated in the ice bucket challenge, raising a total of \$115 million dollars, [CNN reported](#).

You also can read more about the impact of the challenge, as captured by the ALS Association's infographic to the right. [See full-size infographic](#).



CONTESTS

Winning Strategies

The Contest Doesn't Have to Relate Directly to Your Organization

The ice bucket challenge drew attention to ALS through its message, but it wasn't all about the disease. In most cases, you will find more success by relating the contest to your institution — but your campaign doesn't have to be all about your cause. For example, [a zoo might have a contest to name a new giraffe](#), or a wildlife nonprofit might host a [nature photography contest](#).

Leverage Word of Mouth and Social Media

The success of your contest will rely on your success at using social media to spread the word. Make sure your contest strategy includes a carefully designed social media strategy that includes live video, hashtags and regular contest updates.

Consider ROI

As mentioned above, contests rely heavily on word of mouth and social media. If you already have a highly engaged audience, a contest will be a great fit. If you have a mediocre social media presence, a contest will help you build your following. But, consider the cost and resources required to manage the contest, make sure to get legal advice, and do not assume your campaign will be a viral success.



CONTESTS

Top Tools and Resources

- [ShortStack](#) — Tool to help create and manage social media contests and giveaways
- [The Ice Bucket Challenge: A case study in viral marketing gold by DigiDay](#) — More background with a few examples from the challenge
- [8 Facebook Contests to Build Your Fan Base, Support Nonprofits by Selfish Giving](#) — A brief summary of the most popular kinds of Facebook contests
- [Not Just a Game: Legal Considerations for Social Media Contests and Sweepstakes](#) — A good starting point to think more about potential legal concerns



ONLINE COURSES & WEBINARS

Engaging Through Education

By sharing in-depth information and training, webinars and courses enable your organization or institution to position itself as a leader in your field and a trusted source of information. Courses and webinars can be used to cover a variety of topics, from showing what prospective students can expect when they arrive on campus to full-fledged courses with college credits.

Dazzling Metric: *Sixty-six percent (66%) of B2B content marketers rank webinars as effective.* — [CMI](#)



ONLINE COURSES & WEBINARS

Who's Doing Them Well?

[Harvard](#) is the oldest and among the most well-known universities in the country. Outside of degree programs, they continue to offer a high-quality education to the general public with their free and paid online courses. In addition to raising the profile of their school, these courses also help them raise funds through webinars and certificate programs.

Top Paid ➤



BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT ➤

HBX CORE

Learn the language of business.

Paid HBX



MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH ➤

Global Health Delivery

Engage with a toolkit of six social theories from a biosocial perspective to understand the interrelated biological and social factors found in complex global health challenges.

Paid GetSmarter



BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT ➤

HBX Managing Your Career Development

Take charge of your career trajectory with insights from HBS faculty experts and like-minded peers from around the globe. All in real time.

Paid HBX



BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT ➤

HBX Leading with Finance

Build an intuitive understanding of finance to better communicate with key stakeholders and grow your career.

Paid HBX

Top Free ➤



MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH ➤

The Opioid Crisis in America

Learn about the opioid epidemic in the United States, including information about treatment and recovery from opioid addiction.

Free edX



COMPUTER SCIENCE ➤

CS50: Introduction to Computer Science

An introduction to the intellectual enterprises of computer science and the art of programming.

Free edX



ARTS & DESIGN ➤

The Architectural Imagination

Learn fundamental principles of architecture — as an academic subject or a professional career — from a study of history's important buildings.

Free edX



GOVERNMENT, LAW & POLITICS ➤

Contract Law: From Trust to Promise to Contract

Contracts are a part of our everyday life, arising in collaboration, trust, promise and credit. How are contracts formed? What makes a contract enforceable? What happens when one party breaks a promise?

Free edX

ONLINE COURSES & WEBINARS

Who's Doing Them Well?

While Harvard uses webinars as both a branding tool and a revenue generator, universities also could use webinars to educate prospective students about available programs, share information about applying for financial aid, or offer virtual tours of their campus and amenities.

Nonprofit organizations could use webinars to train volunteers, share in-depth research with donors, or to host a fundraiser.

Top Paid ➤



BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT ➤

HBX CORE

Learn the language of business.

Paid HBX

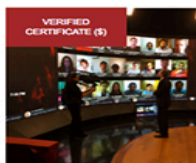


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Free edX

ONLINE COURSES & WEBINARS

Winning Strategies

Practice, Practice, Practice

Have a dress rehearsal with the presenter, the moderator and at least one other person to ensure everyone knows how to use the platform. This will also give the presenter the chance to practice their presentation.

Develop a Promotional Plan

How are people finding out about your webinar? Create a promotion plan, which should include an email blast, blog post and social media strategy. Share what people can expect to learn and highlight the skills and expertise of your presenter.

Record and Redistribute

The usefulness of your webinar doesn't end when the live event is over. Make sure to record the session (most webinar platforms allow this) and distribute the content on other platforms. Turn a transcript into a blog post, turn quotes into graphics for Instagram and Twitter, upload your slides on SlideShare, or use a short video clip to build interest in your next webinar.



ONLINE COURSES & WEBINARS

Top Tools and Resources

- **Popular Webinar Platforms** — [GoToWebinar](#), [Zoom](#), [Cisco WebEx](#)
- [HubSpot](#) — Platform to create a landing page for your webinar registrations
- [Rev](#) – An affordable transcription service to turn webinars into long-form article content
- [14 Steps to Hosting a Successful Webinar by Convince and Convert](#) — A good breakdown of common items to consider when planning you webinar
- [Top Content Marketing Courses for Professionals](#) — Our guide features a number of noteworthy and accredited online, in-person, for-credit and for-fun courses from reputable institutions and organizations



INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

Winning With Word of Mouth

[Influencer marketing](#) leverages well-known people who have sway over a target audience. Think of having Beyoncé post on Instagram about how awesome your university's music program is.

Dazzling Metric: *Marketing-induced consumer-to-consumer word of mouth generates more than twice the sales of paid advertising and... has a 37 percent higher retention rate.* — [McKinsey & Company](#)



INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

Who's Doing Them Well?

According to PR News, **UC Berkeley** developed their [influencer program](#) using a variety of well-connected alumni to raise money and drive recruitment. In addition to using alumni on social media, they also use the Cal Ambassador Network, an app that allows alumni and parents to share, curate and create content related to the school. This network is used to promote fundraising campaigns, including their annual 24- hour fundraiser, Big Give.



"My mom instilled in me that women are equal to men — that it was O.K. to say that and to believe that. I don't really do much protesting, like some Berkeley students, but I love being at a place where students care so much about what's going on in the world. It's exciting. And so the way I carry myself, and the way I want to be respected, comes from an understanding of the history of women who, like my mom, demanded equality." [#GoKristine](#) [#GoBears](#) [#IWD2017](#) [#SheInspiresMe](#)



No Ceilings | Kristine Anigwe

I remember one question after the game, "Do you think 50 points is your ceiling?" In my head I was thinking: No way.

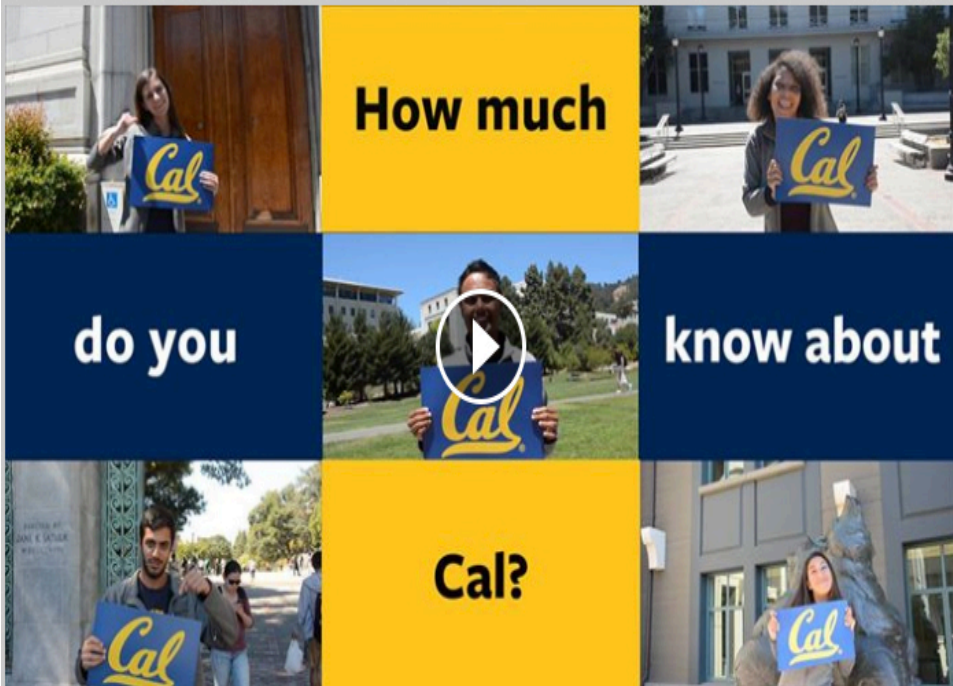
THEPLAYERSTRIBUNE.COM

INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

Who's Doing Them Well?

The key to their success lies in choosing a variety of authentic voices to appeal to the many reasons why a student might consider the school.

Christina Sponselli, Director of Social Media, University of California, Berkeley, told PR News, "For some people, it is the ground-breaking research, for others it is technical advancements or reading the accomplishments of other alums."



UC Berkeley ✓

September 2, 2016 · 🌐

Any other [#BerkeleyMyths](#) that need busting? [#DoTell](#) 😊

(Video by Hanna Juehan Ye '17)

43K Views

294 Likes 23 Comments 46 Shares

➦ Share

INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

Winning Strategies

Outline Your Goals

To be successful, you need to define what success will look like. Choose one major goal. For example, you may wish to raise a certain amount of money for a scholarship. Then, choose finer goals — a certain number of video views or number of hashtag uses. Then, make sure you are tracking results to see what type of content and influencers your audience best reacts to.

Look for Authentic Voices

Generation Z and millennials respond best to authentic interactions, which is why an influencer program can be so effective at guiding their decisions. Look for influencers who are able to speak about your institution in a natural way and, most importantly, are already involved with your brand in some way.

Vet Influencers

Before you begin an influencer campaign, be sure to check out their social profiles and verify their information. Look for red flags that they might not be the best person to represent your brand.



INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

Top Tools and Resources

- [Hashtagify](#) — Use this tool to find related hashtags and influencers in your field
- [FollowerWonk](#) — Find people who are already engaging with you to leverage as influencers
- [Where and How Do You Find Influencers? Marketing Technology to the Rescue](#) — Ben Beck, a martech expert, lays out seven ways to leverage marketing technology to identify and reach out to influencers
- [Influencer Marketing on Social Media: Everything You Need to Know](#) — A good read for background on developing your own influencer program



INFOGRAPHICS

Show, Don't Tell, With Visual Storytelling

Infographics are visual representations of facts and stats (info) in the form of charts or diagrams (graphics). Nonprofits or universities can use infographics to present in-depth or otherwise dull information in an exciting, shareable format. A few good examples would be enrollment statistics for a university or a diagram of how money is spent for a nonprofit.

Dazzling Metric: *41.5 percent of marketers say infographics have more engagement than any other type of visual content.* — [Venngage](#)

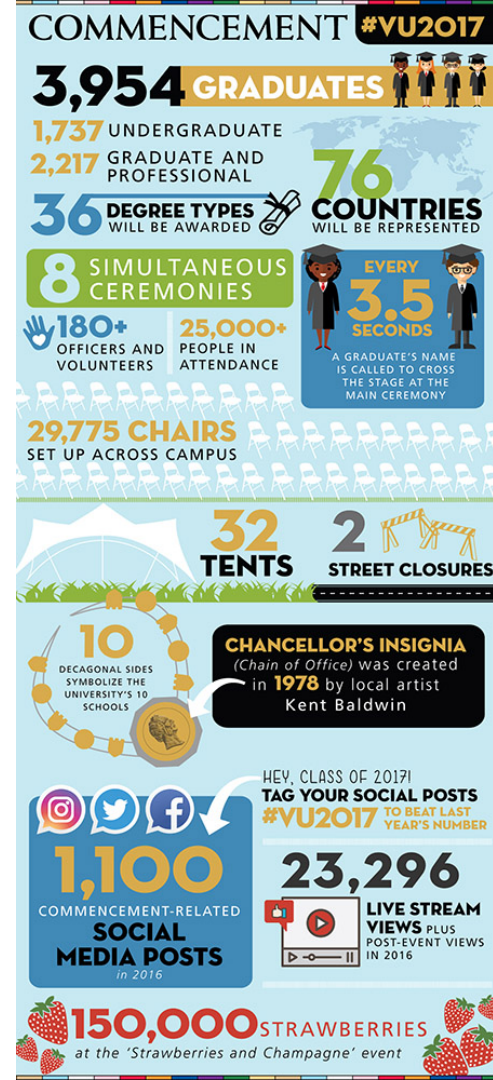
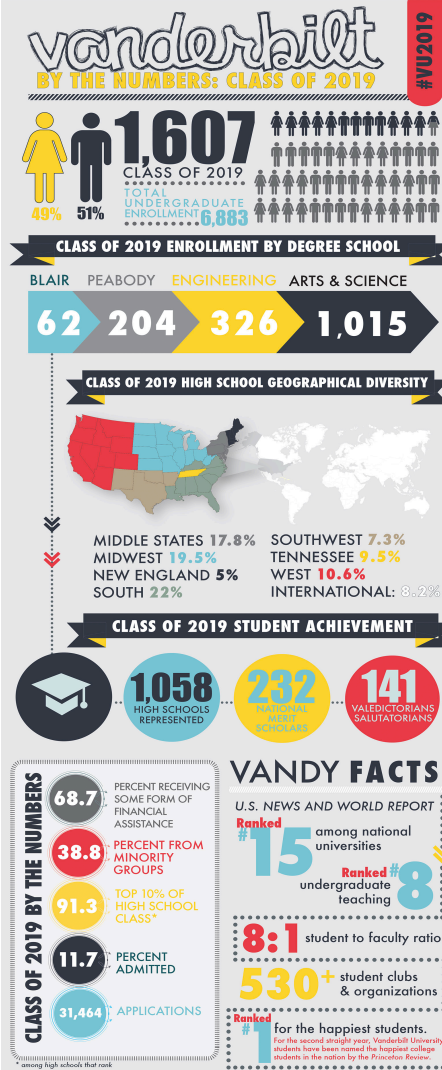


INFOGRAPHICS

Who's Doing Them Well?

[Vanderbilt University](#), located in Nashville, Tennessee, is a private research-focused university with a total student body of around 12,000 students. It is not a large university, but it has found great success through sharing multiple infographics about incoming and [outgoing graduating classes](#), including the one about the [incoming class of 2019](#) (first on right).

The image includes stats about where students are from geographically, how many different high schools are represented and what degree programs they are pursuing.



INFOGRAPHICS

Winning Strategies

Choose Your Topic Wisely

The topic you choose for your infographic needs to be related to your institution but interesting to a wide range of people. The topic should not be too broad, however, or something that has been covered multiple times. Think about what unique information your institution has gathered, including research and internal statistics. Search Google Trends or Twitter hashtags to find a timely, popular topic related to your field.

Use a Professional Designer If Possible

There are many [free tools to create infographics](#). However, if you have the budget, hiring a professional infographic designer can be worth the cost. Their experience will be invaluable not only in the design aspect, but they can also help you choose the best statistics to represent.

Build a Strong Social Media Strategy

Infographics are highly sharable, making social media your top tool for expanding the reach of your infographic. Create a social media sharing schedule over several weeks to ensure the highest possible strategy. Don't forget to include Pinterest in your strategy, as visual images do well on the platform.



INFOGRAPHICS

Top Tools and Resources

- [Visme.co](#) — Makes it easy to create a variety of interactive and engaging visual content, including infographics
- [Visage](#) — Image creation platform that makes infographic creations simple
- [Piktochart](#) — An easy tool for making infographics
- [The Complete Guide to Creating Infographics for Non-Designers by Viraltag](#) — A good read for developing infographics, from what to include to how to create them
- [Piktochart vs. Canva vs. Visme](#) — Martech expert Ben Beck compares three popular infographics tools



FINAL THOUGHTS

Content marketing should be a high priority for nonprofits and universities that need to make the most of limited resources. In addition to being highly effective for the target audiences of most, content marketing is less costly than other types of marketing. However, to be effective at it, institutions must identify their true audience, hone their brand voice, and above all, create a highly detailed content strategy.

Here at [ClearVoice](#), we believe a clear voice can be the most powerful voice, no matter its volume or medium. We wish you success in expressing yours.



RESOURCES & LINKS

(1 of 5)

- **10 Twitter Best Practices for Nonprofits** — <http://www.nptechforgood.com/2015/02/08/10-twitter-best-practices-for-nonprofits/>
- **10 Visual Content Marketing Strategies for 2017** — <https://venngage.com/blog/visual-content-marketing-statistics/>
- **10 Ways to Make the Most of a Charity Contest** — <https://www.thebalance.com/successful-nonprofit-charity-contests-2502410>
- **13 Email Workflows You Should Be Using in Your Marketing Automation** — <https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/33635/12-automated-email-workflows-you-ll-kick-yourself-for-not-using.aspx#sm.00000638y8k8s7fftu8w7ii4b3j5h>
- **14 Steps to Hosting a Successful Webinar** — <http://www.convinceandconvert.com/content-marketing/14-steps-to-hosting-a-successful-webinar/>
- **2016 Nonprofit Content Marketing** — http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2016_NonProfit_Research_FINAL.pdf
- **40 Tips for Dramatically Better Emails** — <https://www.getvero.com/resources/guides/email-marketing-best-practices/>
- **53% of Emails Opened on Mobile; Outlook Opens Decrease 33%** — <https://litmus.com/blog/53-of-emails-opened-on-mobile-outlook-opens-decrease-33>
- **8 Facebook Contests to Build Your Fan Base, Support Nonprofits** — <https://www.selfishgiving.com/blog/category/8-facebook-contests-to-build-fan-base-support-nonprofits>
- **A Minute of Video Is Worth 1.8 Million Words, According to Forrester Research** — <http://www.marketwired.com/press-release/a-minute-of-video-is-worth-18-million-words-according-to-forrester-research-1900666.htm>
- **A New Way to Measure Word-of-Mouth Marketing** — <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/a-new-way-to-measure-word-of-mouth-marketing>
- **ALS Association** — <http://www.alsa.org/>
- **BalletBC** — <http://balletbc.com/company/vision/>
- **Bitly** — <https://bitly.com/>
- **Brand Consistency** — Why It's So Important and How to Achieve It — <https://www.clearvoice.com/brand-consistency-why-its-so-important-how-to-achieve-it/>



RESOURCES & LINKS

(2 of 5)

- Buffer — <https://buffer.com/>
- Canva — <https://www.canva.com/>
- Crowdfire — <https://www.crowdfireapp.com/>
- DoSomething.org Twitter — <https://twitter.com/dosomething>
- Facebook Marketing Tips for Nonprofit Organizations — <https://adespresso.com/academy/blog/facebook-marketing-tips-non-profit-organizations/>
- Followerwonk — <https://moz.com/followerwonk/>
- GIPHY — <https://giphy.com/search/gifv>
- GoToWebinar — <https://www.gotomeeting.com/webinar>
- Hashtagify — <http://hashtagify.me/>
- Hootsuite — <http://signup.hootsuite.com/>
- Hootsuite vs. Buffer: We Put These 2 Social Media Posting Tools to the Test — <https://www.clearvoice.com/hootsuite-vs-buffer-put-2-social-media-posting-tools-test/>
- How Giving Contests Can Strengthen Nonprofits and Communities: Learnings and Tips for Giving Contest Organizers and Nonprofits — <http://casefoundation.org/resource/giving-contests-can-strengthen-nonprofits-communities/>
- How to Create Contributor Guidelines That Get You Great Content Every Time — <https://www.clearvoice.com/create-contributor-guidelines-will-get-great-content-every-time/>
- How to Create Instagram Stories — <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-create-instagram-stories/>
- How to Launch an Influencer Marketing Campaign: A Get-Started Guide — <https://www.clearvoice.com/how-to-launch-an-influencer-marketing-campaign-a-get-started-guide/>



RESOURCES & LINKS

(3 of 5)

- How to Perform a Content Audit in 5 Steps — <https://www.clearvoice.com/perform-content-audit-5-steps/>
- HubSpot — <https://www.hubspot.com/>
- Learn How Ballet BC Tells Stories in Their Email Newsletters — <http://www.thestorytellingnonprofit.com/blog/learn-how-ballet-bc-tells-stories-in-their-email-newsletters/>
- Litmus — <https://litmus.com/email-testing>
- Maryland Zoo Giraffe Calf Naming Contest — <http://www.marylandzoo.org/2017/02/giraffe-calf-naming-contest/>
- MeetEdgar — <https://meet Edgar.com/>
- National Center for Educational Statistics — https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_303.45.asp
- National Wildlife Photo Contest — https://photocontest.nwf.org/menu-home.aspx?comp_id=AA757BF0-9221-4B68-9453-A2242755951E
- One Year Later, Your ALS Ice Bucket Money Goes To... — <http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/15/health/one-summer-after-the-als-ice-bucket-challenge/>
- Piktochart vs. Canva vs. Visme: We Put 3 Visual Storytelling Tools to the Test — <https://www.clearvoice.com/piktochart-vs-canva-vs-visme-put-3-visual-storytelling-tools-test/>
- Princeton University Facebook Videos — <https://www.facebook.com/pg/PrincetonU/videos/>
- Princeton University YouTube Channels — <https://www.youtube.com/user/princetonuniversity/channels>
- QZZR — <https://www.qzzr.com/>
- Rev — <http://www.rev.com>
- Screaming Frog — <https://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/seo-spider/>
- SEO Gap Analysis Spreadsheet — <http://www.smartinsights.com/guides/seo-gap-analysis-spreadsheet/>



RESOURCES & LINKS

(4 of 5)

- SlideShare — <https://www.slideshare.net/>
- Splash.org Email Campaign Archive — <http://us7.campaign-archive1.com/home/?u=d765822a600029c63559060b8&id=287dd74edf>
- SumoMe — <https://sumo.com/app/smart-bar>
- SurveyMonkey — <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>
- The 11 (Real) Best Things About Grad School — <https://gradschool.louisiana.edu/11-real-best-things-about-grad-school>
- The 2015 Ad Blocking Report — <https://pagefair.com/blog/2015/ad-blocking-report/>
- The 5 Types of Content Marketing Metrics You Need to Know — <https://www.clearvoice.com/5-content-marketing-metrics-need-measure/>
- The Brief History of Content Marketing — http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/CMI_CM_History_Large2.jpg
- The Complete Guide to Creating Infographics for Non-Designers — <http://blog.viraltag.com/2016/02/02/the-complete-guide-to-creating-infographics-for-non-designers/#sthash.9GeG8vry.fx22uKJ0.dpbs>
- The Hands-On Method to Competitive Analysis — <https://www.clearvoice.com/hands-method-competitive-content-analysis/>
- The Ice Bucket Challenge: A Case Study in Viral Marketing Gold — <https://digiday.com/marketing/ice-bucket-challenge-case-study-viral-marketing-success/>
- The Michael J. Fox Foundation Case Study — http://www.astadia.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Astadia_CS_MJFoundation_2016.pdf
- The Michael J. Fox Foundation Facebook — <https://www.facebook.com/michaeljfoxfoundation>
- The Plight of the Overworked Nonprofit Employee — <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/08/the-plight-of-the-overworked-nonprofit-employee/497081/>
- The University of Louisiana at Lafayette: The Power of Great Content — <https://www.upandup.agency/the-work/university-louisiana-lafayette>



RESOURCES & LINKS

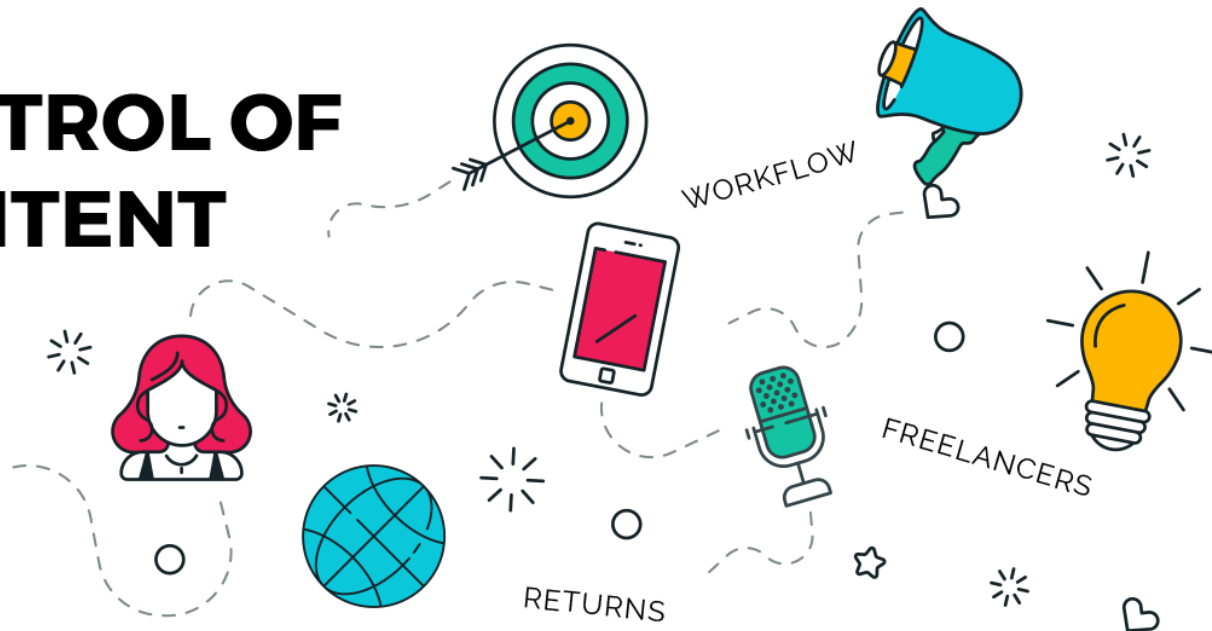
(5 of 5)

- The Wired Wealthy: Using the Internet to Connect Your Middle and Major Donors — http://www.convio.com/files/GD_WiredWealthy_Report.pdf
- Think You're Cut Out for a Ph.D.? Take Our Simple Test — <https://gradschool.louisiana.edu/think-youre-cut-out-phd-take-our-simple-test-now>
- Twitter Chat Schedule — <http://tweetreports.com/twitter-chat-schedule/>
- UC Berkeley's Influencer Program: A Secret Weapon for Recruitment and Fundraising — <http://www.prnewsonline.com/uc-berkeley-influencer-sponselli>
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