

Nigeria's Most Active UNIVERSITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Data-driven Ranking of Universities Based on
Social Media Engagement and Influence



Introduction



Universities worldwide are increasingly using social media as a strategic tool to build reputation, attract students, engage alumni, and communicate research impact (Fayaz, 2024). In an era where digital presence has become inseparable from institutional credibility, global higher-education systems now view social platforms not as optional extensions, but as core components of institutional identity and competitiveness.

As Kemp (2025) notes, the growing fusion of digital influence and educational branding has redefined how universities communicate value, showcase achievements, and differentiate themselves in a crowded global marketplace.

In Nigeria, where higher institutions compete for visibility in a digitally connected youth market, social media performance has become a proxy for influence and innovation. Digital engagement now shapes how prospective students form impressions of institutions long before they ever visit a campus or attend an open day. This shift makes social media analytics critical for understanding institutional relevance, responsiveness, and storytelling power within Nigeria's increasingly competitive higher-education ecosystem (Kemp, 2025).

Introduction

Why Social Media Matters as a Metric for Higher Institutions

Around the world, social media has become an essential metric for evaluating how universities communicate, attract talent, and maintain global relevance. Unlike traditional university rankings, which often emphasise research output, citations, and infrastructure, social media engagement offers a real-time, people-driven measure of institutional impact (Manca & Ranieri, 2017).

This matters for several reasons:

- **Prospective Students Use Social Media as Their First Point of Contact**

Gen Z and Gen Alpha depend on digital channels for educational decision-making. Studies show that over 70% of students explore an institution's social platforms before visiting its website (StudyPortals, 2023).

- **Social Media Shapes Institutional Reputation**

Strong digital engagement increases global visibility and signals a vibrant academic culture. Universities with high social-media influence often see increases in international applications, philanthropic interest, and alumni engagement (Veletsianos & Kimmons, 2020).

- **It Reflects Institutional Transparency and Agility**

In times of crisis, policy changes, or achievements, platforms like X, Facebook, and LinkedIn reveal how responsive, student-centric, and communicative a university is (Wang & Zhou, 2021).

- **It Humanizes Academic Brands**

Social media enables institutions to highlight student stories, celebrate research, showcase campus life, and build communities around shared values.

Thus, social media is not merely a marketing tool, it is now a recognized indicator of the vibrancy, credibility, and social relevance of modern higher-education institutions.

Introduction

Global Benchmarking: What Leading Institutions Are Doing

Globally, institutions such as Harvard University, Oxford University, Stanford University, and the University of Cape Town consistently rank among the most influential universities on social media.

These institutions demonstrate that digital storytelling is now a core part of global academic leadership.

Their strategies include:

- Real-time research communication (Harvard & Stanford)
- Human-centred student narratives and campus life documentation (Oxford)
- Strong visual storytelling and community culture (University of Cape Town)
- Highly responsive communication during national/global events (University of Melbourne)
- Alumni-success amplification and mentoring communities (MIT)

According to RivalIQ's Higher Education Social Media Engagement Report (2024), universities that invest in consistent, strategic digital presence outperform peers by up to 5x in engagement. Globally, the institutions with the strongest influence share traits like consistency, authenticity, and community-driven content.

This is the benchmark Nigeria must measure itself against, not just in academic outputs, but in digital influence and global visibility.

Introduction

The Nigerian Context: Why Adoption Is Now Essential

Nigeria hosts one of the youngest and most digitally active populations in the world. With over 70 million social-media users, most of them under age 35, the online environment is the primary space where university reputations are shaped (Kemp, 2025).

Several Nigerian universities have begun leveraging this opportunity. Some institutions are increasingly investing in digital presence to strengthen brand positioning and student engagement. Studies indicate that these institutions outperform peers largely due to posting consistency, audience responsiveness, and ability to turn academic culture into relatable digital narratives (Amali et al., 2018).

Yet, the majority of Nigerian universities still underutilize social media (Amali et al., 2018). Many maintain social accounts but lack:

- consistent posting strategy,
- modern visual design standards,
- student-centred storytelling,
- real-time responsiveness,
- data-driven content planning.

In a world where perception often precedes reality, these gaps can erode competitiveness.

Why This Report Matters

This study is important because social media has become one of the most influential drivers of university visibility, student attraction, and institutional competitiveness. In a landscape where prospective students rely heavily on online platforms when choosing where to study, universities that invest in strong, data-driven social media strategies gain a clear advantage. Effective use of social media platforms can greatly enhance a university's attractiveness, reputation, and ultimately its enrollment rates (Tomaszewicz, A., & Chrqchol, U., 2024).

This study provides universities with evidence-based insights into how well they are performing online compared to their peers. It highlights gaps in digital communication, content consistency, engagement quality, and audience reach. By tracking metrics such as followers, engagement rates, platform diversity, and the ranking gives institutions a clearer understanding of their digital footprint.

The findings also matter for alumni engagement, donor relations, brand perception, and global competitiveness. Research shows that universities with strong digital storytelling and active engagement record higher alumni participation rates and stronger brand loyalty (Chapleo, 2010). For institutions trying to gain international recognition, a robust social media presence supports global rankings, partnerships, and cross-border recruitment.

This report ranks Nigerian universities based on their verified digital footprints, focusing on how effectively they engage audiences across leading platforms. By combining reach, consistency, and interaction metrics, it offers a data-driven perspective on which institutions are shaping Nigeria's digital academic landscape, and which are yet to fully maximize their online engagement potential.

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Executive Summary

This report analyses the social media performance of Nigerian universities across Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn. Fifty universities were reviewed, focusing only on verified official accounts linked from their institutional websites. Using data from their last 30 posts, we evaluated metrics such as followers, views, likes, comments, and reshares to determine overall engagement and influence.

Findings show that Nigerian universities are increasingly leveraging social platforms for visibility, student recruitment, and alumni engagement. Institutions like the University of Ilorin, Covenant University, and the Federal University of Technology Akure; emerged as top performers, distinguished by consistent posting habits and high audience interaction.

The study also highlights how different platforms serve distinct purposes. Facebook drives the highest engagement, fueled by alumni and community participation, while X remains the go-to channel for real-time conversations and thought leadership. Instagram dominates in visual storytelling and student culture, and LinkedIn continues to grow as the platform for institutional credibility and professional connections.

Private universities tend to excel in creativity and posting frequency, while public institutions benefit from wider audiences and strong legacy networks. Together, they reflect a higher education landscape that is becoming more digitally mature, one where communication, consistency, and authenticity are as essential as academic excellence.

Disclaimer

This report is based on DataLeum's independent research and proprietary methodology. Differences from other findings may arise due to variations in data sources and analytical approaches.

Methodology

This report ranks the top universities in Nigeria based on their performance across major social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn. The goal is to identify which institutions are most active and engaging online, using measurable data from their verified official pages as listed on their websites.

Data Collection

To ensure accuracy, fairness, and methodological transparency, this study followed a structured and ethically grounded data-collection process. Social media data was gathered for 50 Nigerian universities, selected based on the Top 50 Nigerian Universities in 2025 as ranked by EduRank. Data collection occurred between October 13th and October 31st, 2025. Only verified official social media accounts explicitly linked from each university's official website were included. This criterion was applied to eliminate impersonation accounts, reduce misinformation risk, and maintain authenticity and comparability across institutions.

For each verified account, the 30 most recent posts as of the end of October 2025 were analysed. The selected metrics included:

- Number of Followers
- Post Views or Impressions (where available)
- Likes or Reactions
- Comments
- Reposts

Using the 30 most recent posts provided a balanced sample size that captures both recent engagement trends and sustained posting activity, while minimising the effect of outlier or viral posts that could skew results. This approach ensures fair comparison across universities regardless of their posting frequency.

In addition, examples of notable alumni were collected for the top 10 universities to highlight their broader social and professional impact. Alumni examples were selected using random sampling, ensuring gender balance, two male and two female alumni per institution. This approach allowed for diversity and fairness in representation while keeping the selection process transparent and unbiased.

Methodology

Metric Weighting

Each social media metric was assigned a specific weight to reflect its importance in measuring engagement and visibility:

Followers	25%
Views/impressions	25%
Likes	20%
Comments	15%
Reposts	15%

For platforms (e.g LinkedIn), where “Views/Impressions” data are not available for public viewing, the weights were redistributed proportionally among the remaining metrics to ensure a fair comparison:

Followers	30%
Likes	25%
Comments	25%
Reposts	20%

Normalization and Scoring

To ensure comparability, all data were normalized on a 0–100 scale. The university with the highest number for each metric received a score of 100, and others received proportional scores relative to that maximum.

Platform-Level Scoring

Each platform’s total score was calculated using the assigned metric weights. For example (Facebook):

$$\text{Platform Score} = (\text{Followers} \times 0.30) + (\text{Likes} \times 0.25) + (\text{Comments} \times 0.25) + (\text{Reshares} \times 0.20)$$

This produced a composite score out of 100 for each platform.

Methodology

Overall Scoring and Ranking

The Overall Score represents the average performance of each university across all platforms, that is, Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Instagram.

This was calculated as:

$$\text{Overall Score} = \frac{(\text{Sum of Platform Scores})}{4}$$

Finally, universities were ranked from highest to lowest based on their overall composite score.

Theory of Sample Size: Why 30 Posts?

The study uses each university's most recent 30 posts to measure performance because this number gives a fair and balanced view of current engagement. Analyzing 30 posts provides enough data to show consistent patterns, not just one-off spikes or unusually low results. It also focuses on recent activity, ensuring that each university's score reflects how they currently perform on social media.

In short, 30 posts capture both consistency and recency; ensuring every university is evaluated fairly, regardless of how often they post.

Limitations

- Only website verified official pages were analyzed.
- Engagement metrics were based on the latest 30 posts, which may not fully capture long-term performance.
- Some universities had missing or inactive pages on one or more platforms, which affected total data availability.
- Alumni selection was illustrative and based on random sampling for gender balance, not exhaustive representation of all graduates.

Methodology

Ethical Considerations in Alumni Selection

Beyond institutional social-media evaluation, a sample of notable alumni was compiled for the top 10 universities to contextualize broader social, professional, and cultural impact. The alumni-selection process followed a structured and ethical approach:

- Random sampling was used to minimize researcher bias.
- Gender balance was maintained, two male and two female alumni per institution, to ensure fair and inclusive representation.
- Publicly available information only was used, respecting data-privacy standards and avoiding extraction of private or unverifiable details.

This method ensures that alumni representation remains transparent, equitable, and aligned with principles of diversity, fairness, and academic neutrality.

Commitment to Accuracy and Transparency

All data used in this report was collected manually and cross-verified to ensure reliability. No personal data or private user information was accessed, and no automated scraping tools were used in ways that violate platform terms of service. The analysis is based solely on publicly available content and institutionally verified accounts, upholding ethical standards in digital research and reporting.

Overall Best ➤➤➤

To ensure comparability, all data were normalized on a 0–100 scale. The university with the highest number for each metric received a score of 100, and others received proportional scores relative to that maximum.

	University of Ilorin	60.28 %	
	Covenant University	34.13 %	
	Federal University of Technology, Akure	25.62 %	
	Redeemer's University	22.84 %	
	Lagos State University	22.19 %	
	University of Lagos	17.40 %	
	Veritas University	16.30 %	
	University of Port-Harcourt	16.19 %	
	Pan Atlantic University	15.18 %	
	Osun State University	12.31 %	

Most Followed



These institutions have built vibrant online communities, engaging thousands of students, alumni, and prospective applicants through storytelling, updates.

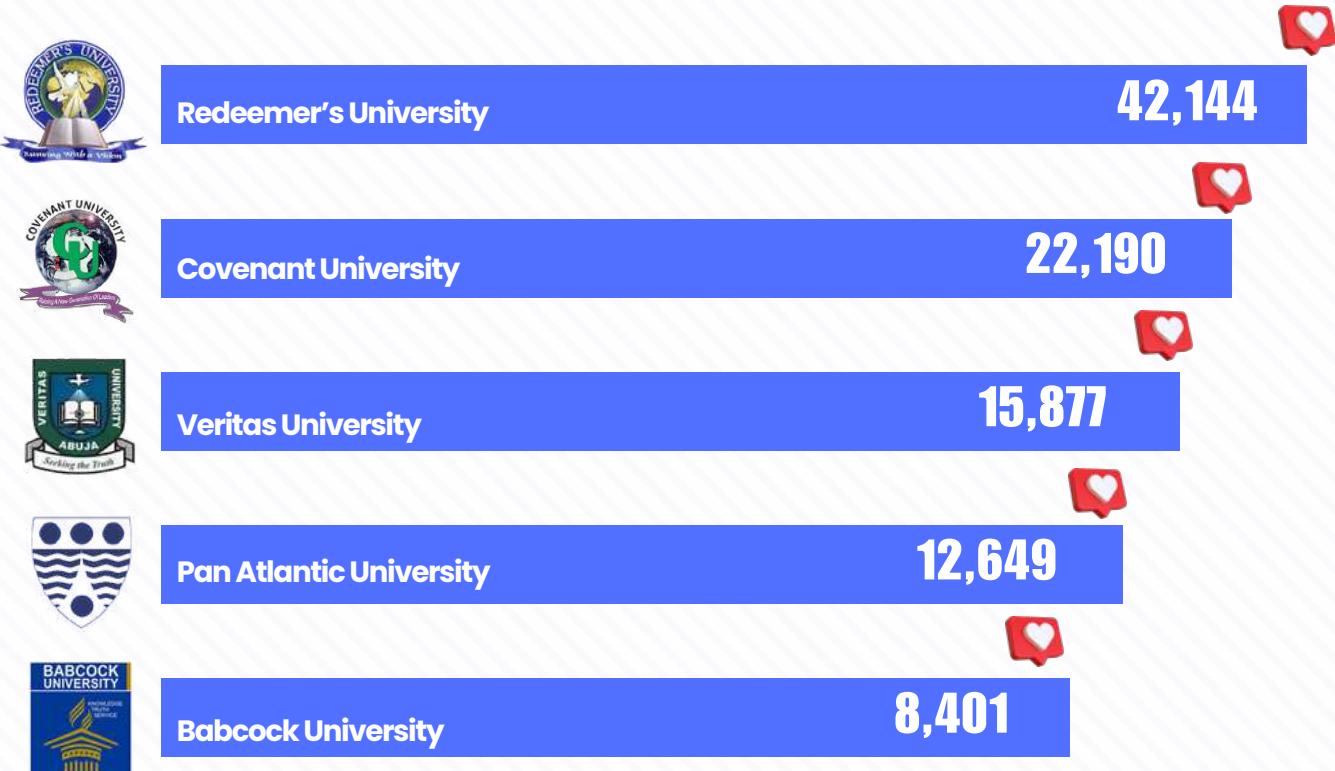
Here's a look at the most followed Nigerian Universities on Social Media.

	Ahmadu Bello University	588,037	
	University of Lagos	430,100	
	Federal University of Technology, Akure	425,158	
	University of Ilorin	349,500	
	Lagos State University	249,300	
	Covenant University	227,904	
	Nnamdi Azikiwe University	176,321	
	University of Benin	149,038	
	American University of Nigeria	131,000	
	University of Port-Harcourt	130,224	

Social Media Performances

Some universities do not just show up online; they dominate the conversation. These institutions prove that visibility is not just about having followers, it's about meaningful engagement and community impact. Let's take a look at the universities setting the pace on social media based on their **likes** and content interactions.

Instagram



The Instagram ranking is led almost entirely by private universities

This suggests that private institutions are investing more in visual storytelling and community engagement on social media platforms that appeal to younger audiences.

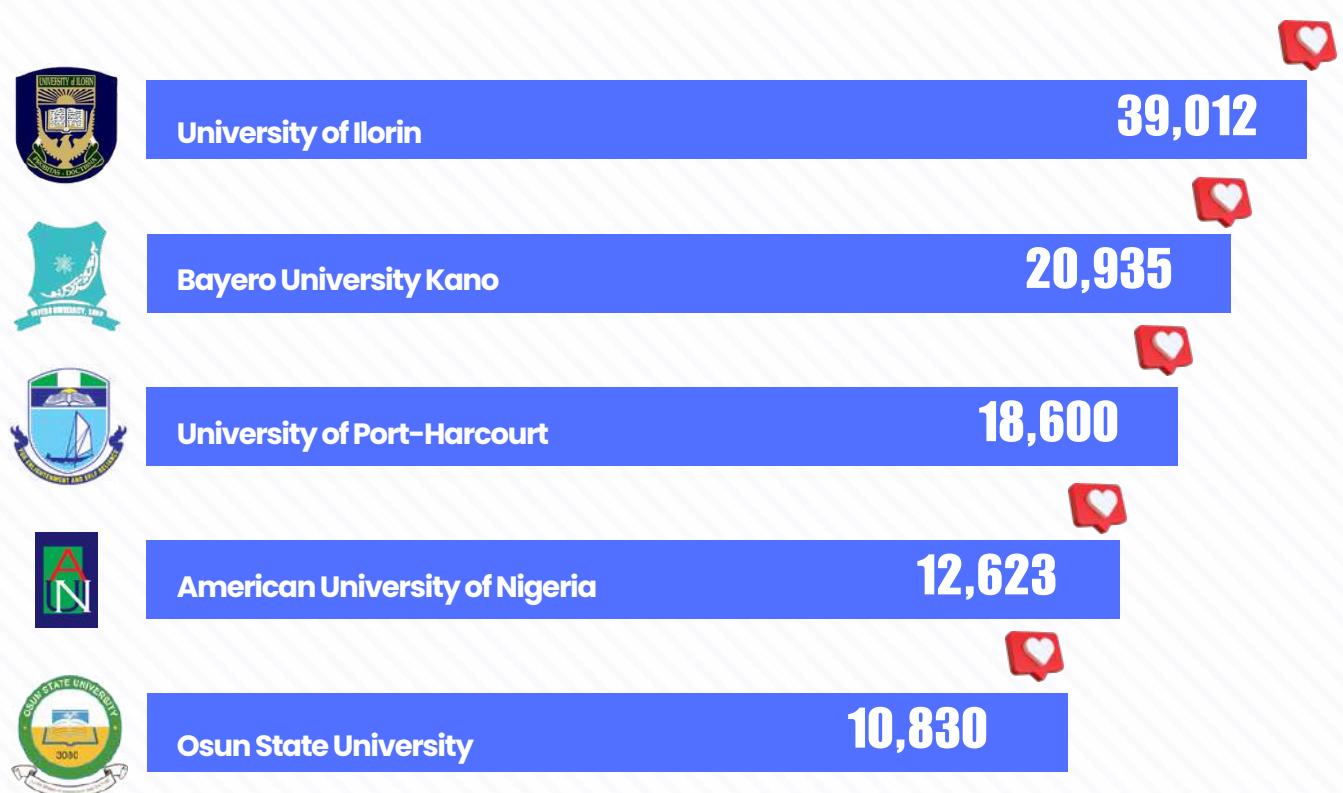
Instagram's visual and lifestyle-driven nature aligns with their brand positioning.

Interestingly, Veritas University appears only on Instagram but still secures a top-three spot.

This could imply that a well-optimized single-platform strategy can yield strong engagement results, especially if the audience is well understood and content is tailored effectively. It's a signal that depth of engagement can sometimes outperform platform diversity.

Social Media Performances

facebook



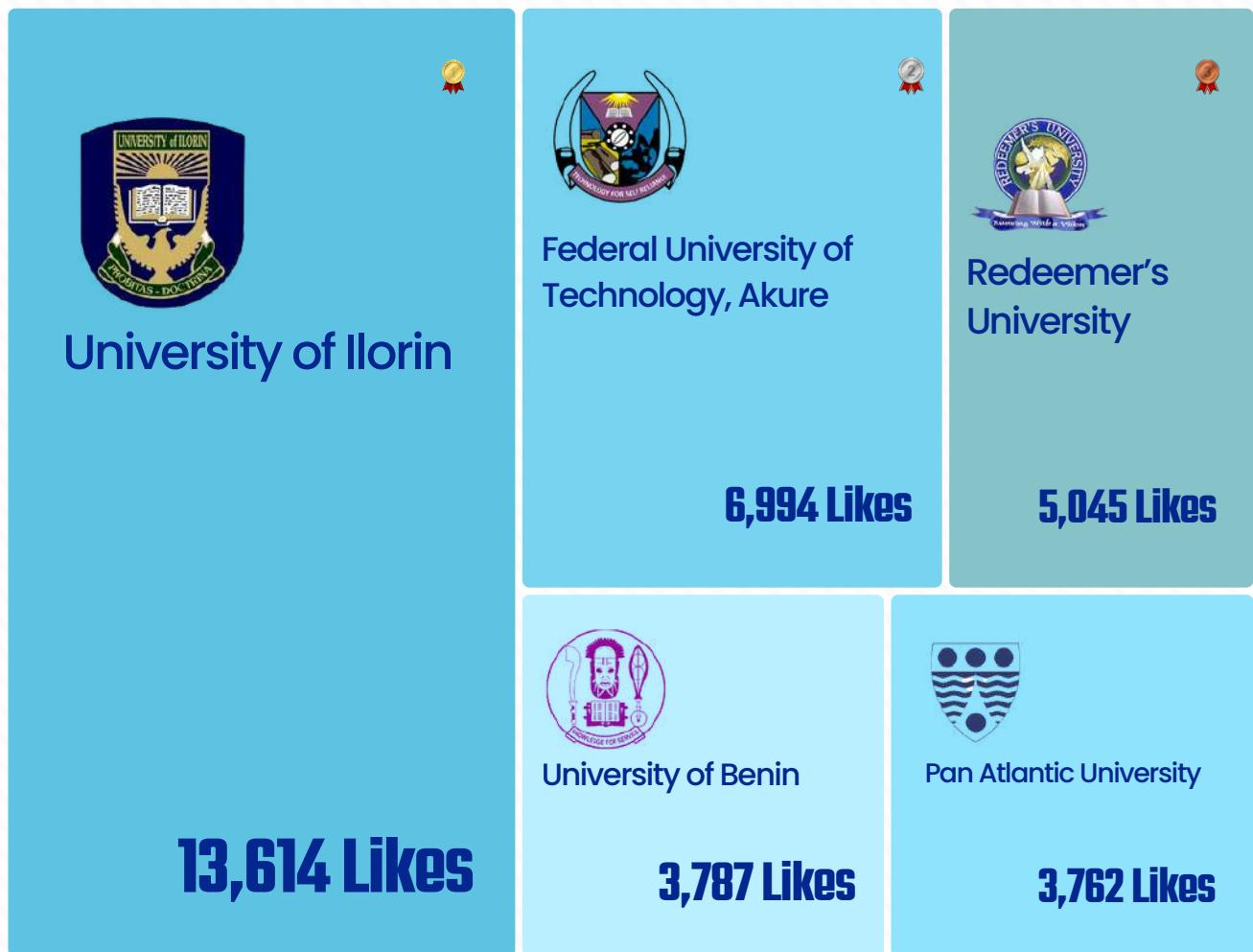
Facebook ranking is led by public universities, with University of Ilorin, Bayero University Kano, and University of Port Harcourt topping the list.

This shows a demographic shift, Facebook remains a stronghold for older alumni networks, parents, and broader community audiences, which aligns more with public university populations.

This suggests universities are leveraging platforms that best match their audience composition and brand tone.

This highlights how understanding audience behavior helps institutions tailor their social media strategies for maximum engagement and visibility.

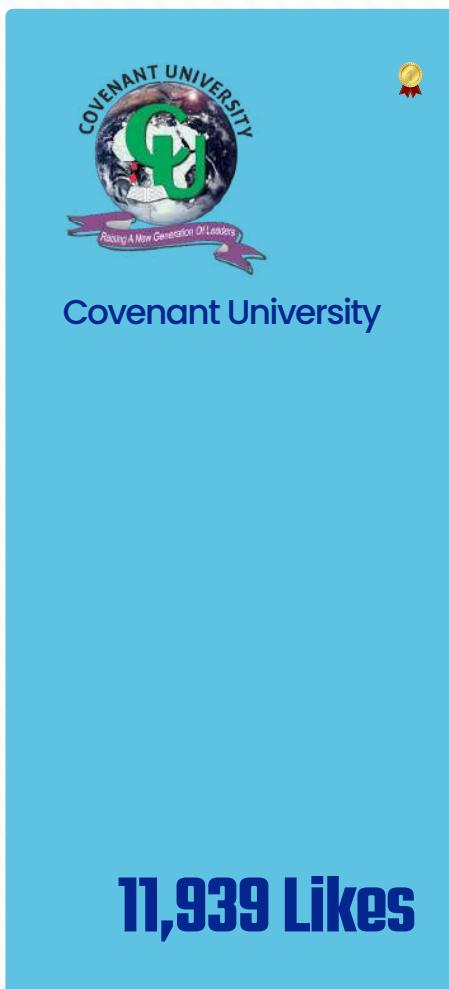
Social Media Performances



The University of Ilorin demonstrates outstanding performance across Facebook, LinkedIn, and X, consistently ranking among the top two on all three platforms.

This reflects a well-rounded and diversified social media strategy that effectively drives engagement from both students and alumni.

Social Media Performances



Covenant University takes the lead on X with **11,939 engagements**, just ahead of the University of Ilorin.

This shows how agile Covenant is online, always part of trending conversations and using its voice to drive thought leadership within the academic space.

Old School vs New School

Nigerian universities are not just centers of learning; they have become thriving online communities. From legacy institutions to newer private universities, each generation shows how age, culture, and digital adaptation shape their online influence.

This analysis groups them by year of establishment: from Baby Boomers to Gen Z, to reveal how "Old School" and "New School" universities perform on social media.

Baby Boomers (1946–1964)

Institutions like Ahmadu Bello University (1962) and University of Lagos (1962), both Baby Boomer universities, top the charts with hundreds of thousands of followers.

Their longevity and wide alumni networks give them a strong social media base.



Ahmadu Bello University



University of Lagos

Gen X (1965–1980)

These institutions are leveraging storytelling, campus culture, and consistent updates to maintain relevance.

While their alumni communities may not be as vast as the Baby Boomers', they are more digitally active and responsive to current trends.



University of Benin



University of Ilorin



University of Port-Harcourt

Old School vs New School



Millennials

(1981–1996)

These schools balance academic tradition with modern digital communication.

Their social media strategies often combine event highlights, student spotlights, and industry collaborations, resonating with both alumni and current students.



Lagos State University



Federal University of Technology,
Akure



Nnamdi Azikiwe University

Gen Z

(1997–2012)

Newer universities such as Covenant University (2002) and American University of Nigeria (2004) were born in the digital era.

Their audiences are highly active on Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn. Their pages are more dynamic, visually engaging, and community-driven, showcasing the creativity and social consciousness of today's students.



Covenant University



American University of Nigeria

Alumni Excellence



From lecture halls to global stages, these alumni have turned their education into influence, shaping industries, inspiring others, and redefining what it means to represent their alma mater.



University of Ilorin

Founded in 1975, the University of Ilorin has built a strong digital presence, amassing over **349.500 followers** across its social platforms. The institution consistently leverages its online community to highlight academic excellence, student life, and impactful initiatives, making it one of Nigeria's most engaged universities online.

**Nkem Owoh**

Actor and Singer

Department:

Electrical Electronics Engineering

B.Eng

**Salamat Ahuoiza Aliu**

First female neurosurgeon in West Africa

Department:

Medicine

MD

**Gbenga Olu Komolafe**

Nigerian engineer, lawyer and petroleum and gas industry expert

Department:

Engineering

BEng

**Wumi Toriola**

Actress

Department:

Linguistics

B.A

Alumni Excellence



Covenant University

Founded in 2002, Covenant University has over **227,904 followers** across social platforms. The university continues to stand out as a digital powerhouse, showcasing excellence and fostering strong community engagement online.



George Omoraro

Founder, RAGE Media Group | Leading Africa's Transformation with Innovative Solutions.

Department:

Mass Communication

BSc



Odunayo Eweniyi

Co-Founder/COO, Piggyvest; Co-Founder/GP at FirstCheck Africa

Department:

Computer Engineering

B.Eng



Chike-Ezekpeazu Osebuka (Chike)

Singer, Actor, Songwriter

Department:

Computer Engineering

B.Eng



Simisola Kosoko (Simi)

Singer, Songwriter, Actress

Department:

Mass Communication

B.Sc

Alumni Excellence



Federal University of Technology, Akure

Founded in 1981, the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) has over **425,518 followers** across social platforms. The university maintains an active digital presence and a strong commitment to technological advancement.



Tayo Aina

Content Creator and Travel Vlogger

Department:
Real Estate

B.Tech



Adenike Akinsemolu

Social Entrepreneur and Sustainability Advocate

Department:
Environmental Microbiology

B.Tech



Opeyemi Gbenga Kayode (PepeNazi)

Singer and Songwriter

Department:
Estate Management

B.Tech



Taiwo Odubiyi

Author, Pastor, Counsellor

Department:
Business Administration

B.A

Alumni Excellence



Redeemer's University

Founded in 2005, Redeemer's University has built a strong digital footprint with over **23,377** followers across platforms. The university leverages social media to highlight student achievements, campus life, and boasts a well-rounded alumni community.



Debo Adedayo (Mr Macaroni)

Actor and Comedian

Department:

Theatre Arts and Film Studies

B.A



Judith Kanayo (Judikay)

Gospel Singer

Department:

Theatre Arts

B.A



Wole Odeleye

Microsoft Financial Services Industry Lead

Department:

Accounting

B.Sc



Elma Mbadiwe

Actress

Department:

Mass Communication

B.Sc

Alumni Excellence



Lagos State University

Founded in 1983, Lagos State University (LASU) has built a thriving online community with over **249,300 followers** across platforms. The university boasts of its alumni excelling across diverse industries.



Otunba Gani Adams

Nigerian Activist, Politician, Traditional Aristocrat and the 15th Aare Ona Kakanfo of Oyo Town

Department:
Political Science

B.Sc



Oluranti Adegbola

Deputy Governor of Lagos State (2015–2019), Current Senator (Lagos West)

Department:
Islamic Education

B.Ed



Iweh Pascal Odinaka (Poco Lee)

Dancer, singer, and social media influencer

Department:
Microbiology

BSc



Tara Fela-Durotoye

Founder & CEO, House of Tara International

Department:
Law

LLB

Alumni Excellence



University of Lagos

Founded in 1962, the University of Lagos (UNILAG) boasts over **430,100 followers** across social platforms. The university leverages its digital presence to showcase academic excellence, celebrate student achievements, and strengthen its connection with a diverse and dynamic community.



Adewale Mayowa Emmanuel (Mayorkun)

Musician

Department:
Accounting

B.Sc



Kudirat Kekere-Ekun

Nigerian jurist and Justice of the Supreme Court of Nigeria

Department:
Law

LLB



Professor Yemi Osinbajo

Politician, Former Vice President of Nigeria, Lawyer, Professor, and Pastor

Department:
Law

LLB



Genevieve Nnaji

Film Actress, Producer, and Director

Department:
Creative Arts

BA

Alumni Excellence



University of Port-Harcourt

Founded in 1975, the University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT) maintains an active digital presence with over **130,224 followers** across platforms. The university continues to engage its community through vibrant storytelling and academic excellence.



Goodluck Ebele Jonathan

Former President of Nigeria (2010–2015)

Department:
Zoology

B.Sc



Rita Dominic

Actress and Co-Founder, The Audrey Silva Company

Department:
Theatre Arts

B.A



Julius Agwu

Comedian, Actor, and CEO, Real Laff Entertainment

Department:
Theatre Arts

B.A



Linda Ejiofor-Suleiman

Actress and Producer

Department:
Sociology

B.Sc

Conclusion

Nigerian universities are redefining what it means to stay connected in the digital age. From Facebook communities that bridge generations to Instagram feeds that capture vibrant campus life, social media has become central to institutional identity. It is no longer just a communication tool; it is where visibility, reputation, and engagement converge, allowing universities to tell their stories, shape perceptions, and build lasting relationships beyond the campus walls.

The findings reveal a clear shift in how higher institutions approach digital engagement. Success is no longer measured by large follower counts but by the quality of interaction and authenticity of connection. Universities like Ahmadu Bello, Covenant, and Ilorin exemplify this shift, showing that consistency, creativity, and a deep understanding of audience behavior are what drive real influence online.

Each platform plays a distinct role in this ecosystem. Facebook remains the hub for alumni and community connection, while X thrives as the space for real-time dialogue and thought leadership. Instagram continues to lead in visual storytelling, celebrating student life and campus culture, and LinkedIn strengthens institutional credibility through professional narratives and alumni achievements. Together, these platforms create a dynamic reflection of Nigeria's academic landscape, one that blends tradition with innovation.

Private universities often lead in creativity and agility, experimenting with tone and format to engage younger audiences. Public universities, meanwhile, draw strength from their heritage and vast alumni communities, achieving impact through reach and recognition. This balance between freshness and legacy defines Nigeria's evolving higher education ecosystem.

Ultimately, the strength of a university's digital presence lies not in how often it posts, but in how meaningfully it connects. Social media is no longer an afterthought; it's the heartbeat of communication, culture, and community. And in this new era of digital storytelling, Nigeria's universities are proving that influence is built not just through visibility, but through authentic, enduring engagement.

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