

Higher Education Marketing during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Facebook Content
Analysis of Middle Tennessee State University and Peer Institutions

by
Jason Wasilewski

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Thesis Committee:

Dr. Don Roy, Thesis Director

Dr. Ennio Piano, Thesis Committee Chair

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APPROVED:

Dr. Don Roy, Thesis Director
Professor, Marketing

Dr. Ennio Piano, Thesis Committee Chair
Assistant Professor, Economics and University Honors
College

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family for continuously providing support as I progress through academia. I am thankful for their years of love and support, fostering an environment that enabled me to become the person I am today. This study would have never been conducted without them.

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Abstract

Postsecondary institutions are faced with countless challenges amidst the COVID Pandemic, causing most institutions to go online in Spring 2020. A year later, with the creation of the vaccine and increasing knowledge of the virus, many colleges looked to a positive future by offering courses and events in-person in Fall 2021. This study examined how universities across the U.S. utilized social media marketing over Summer 2021 to communicate this information to prospective students.

Using a content analysis methodology, the study analyzed Middle Tennessee State University and peer institutions' main institution Facebook posts. Primarily, the author looked at the types of content strategies and message appeals used to communicate the "return to normal" message.

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Introduction

The need for marketing in higher education was first recognized in the early 1970s. Before that time, it was often looked down upon view higher education as a place of business. However, with the growing number of institutions, the need for differentiation was recognized. One of the first individuals who explored how marketing could be effectively applied to higher ed was a business administration professor at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, A. R. Krachenberg. In one of his earliest higher education marketing publications, he mentioned commonly known marketing terms: market research, promotion, distribution, and price, as they could relate to higher Education (Krachenberg, 1972). His article explored how these standard marketing practices could be effectively integrated into higher education recruitment practices.

As time progressed, higher education marketing evolved to match the technological advances in our society. One of the most commonly used promotional tools for colleges/universities is social media marketing. Reports have shown that many college-bound high-school students are becoming increasingly active users on social media sites (Hesel R., 2013; Harvard Kennedy School, 2013; Griffin, 2015). Also, in recent years, our society has seen a rise in the popularity of online institutions such as Liberty University and DeVry University. One of the main contributing factors is the convenience they offer. The days of being forced to move away and start a new journey at a college far away are over since higher educational opportunities can be available right at our fingertips. The National Center for Education Statistics reported in Fall 2018 that more than 6.9 million students, 35.3% of students in the nation, were enrolled in online courses (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

While online institutions presented some challenges to traditional four-year university student recruitment, the challenges were amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic massively affected the traditional college recruitment practices. Events such as college fairs, school visits, and in-person tabling were put on hold due to the restrictive nature produced by COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic started in mid-March, canceling thousands of recruiting events planned by colleges nationwide. As I was gearing up to transfer to Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) for Fall 2020, I saw first-hand the non-traditional practices that COVID-19 forced to be implemented.

As many college students expected, the 2020-2021 academic year looked different from previous years. The commonly known "college experience" was altered due to the countless challenges and restrictions that COVID-19 brought. Looking upwards, with the creation of the vaccine, the following question was raised asked at institutions: how should we market for the following academic year (2021-2022). This study aims to analyze Middle Tennessee State University and its peer institutions to identify the trends and messages they used to market for Fall 2021. Peer institutions will often look at common elements such as institutions of the same size, degree type, public or private, same overall world ranking (Menard, 2021).

As identified by the MTSU Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Research, MTSU's peer institutions are Sam Houston State University, Texas A&M University-Commerce, University of West Georgia, Western Kentucky University, Arkansas State University (Main Campus), and the University of New Orleans. Their public Facebook institutional pages were analyzed through content analysis. This study

identified their "return to school plans," examining the message appeals of the Facebook posts, and noted the types of content strategies used. One of the main drivers for institutions to push these "return back to school" messages is the enrollment decreases in higher education during the COVID-19 era. According to a National Student Clearinghouse report, higher education experienced a 3.5% decrease in student enrollment for spring 2021 (National Student Clearinghouse (a), 2021). This decrease is 1.5% higher than the fall 2021 report (National Student Clearinghouse (b), 2021).

Message appeals reflect the product's attributes, benefits, and brand image to appeal to a particular audience (Copeland, 1924). Message appeals have been identified in a variety of ways in studies. Across the studies, they can be summed up in two common categories: rational appeals or emotional appeals (Turley & Kelley, 1997; Copeland, 1924) or informational or transformational (Cutler, Thomas, & Rao, 2000). For the scope of this study, I will be using the categories: informational and transformational. An informational appeal aims to provide consumers with factual information that the consumer accepts as verifiable (Puto & Wells, 1984).

In contrast, transformational ones elaborate on the experience gained from consuming a good or service (Puto & Wells, 1984). An example of a Facebook post containing an informational appeal would list facts. In contrast, a transformational appeal would highlight the experience a consumer could receive from consuming the good or service.

Literature Review

History of Higher Education Marketing

Looking at colleges and universities today, prospective students have no trouble finding a list of desired programs through the copious amounts of college marketing found on the internet. However, that information was not always readily available for students to find. While the development of the internet influenced accessibility, there was a time when administrators refused to look at higher education as a business that needed to get marketed. Administrators would often rely on the institution's status. As defined by economist Fred Hirsch, he referred to as a "positional good" (Hirsch, 1976). As seen through the lens of his theory, higher education is often seen as a way to establish a better social status. At the time, many large, distinguished universities would solely rely upon their reputation. In the early 1970s, scholars like Fram, Krachenberg, and Hirsch identified a need for higher education marketing.

As Aydar and Svetlana state: "the implementation of higher education marketing strategies should be aimed at potential applicants graduates of educational establishments who want and can obtain higher education" (Kalimulla & Dobrotvorskaya, 2016). As mentioned in the introduction, marketing as a business practice was first cited in higher education by A.R. Krachenberg. He was one of the first scholars to recognize the need for higher education to start marketing themselves. In his article, he links common marketing terms such as target markets, product development, and the "Four P's" (product, price, place, and promotion) with higher education (Krachenberg, 1972). The phrase "higher education marketing" possessed a negative connotation before early citations due to the archaic mindset of colleges and universities not needing to market themselves. Marketing

scholar Eugene Fram identified that higher education institutions and business organizations faced responding to customer demand (1973, p.5). He also stressed identifying target markets, matching segments, and gearing activities towards markets through a marketing plan.

As time progressed, more and more research started unveiling from various scholars worldwide exploring this new marketing application to higher education. One early study explored how marketing strategies and tactics in higher education can be identified through market research (Krampf & Heinlein, 1981). The study examined how ACT profiles can be used to discover what types of needs and wants of prospective students. Information such as general demographics or interest level was received from the researchers, thus helping the university develop geared messages in promotional materials. As more universities began to market themselves, the competition for students grew significantly. Billboards, flyers, and recruitment events began to become standard practice—one of the most significant contributors to the increased competition in the development of social media.

The Rise of Social Media Marketing and the Intersection with Higher Education

Social media was first introduced in 1987 when the National Science Foundation launched a robust, nationwide digital network known as the NSFNET (Maryville University, n.d.). It was not until 1997 that a true social media platform was formed. The first social media platform that incorporated a business element was Facebook. In 2006, Facebook began placing ads for companies to experiment with social media marketing. Other platforms followed in the coming years.

A few early studies examined social media platforms as a potential marketing instrument (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). A common theme present in these articles is that social media can allow businesses to reach a large number of students. It also added an element of flexibility in building relationships with consumers through social media marketing.

Getting on the social media marketing train was crucial for establishing themselves. A study carried out by Valerie Baker (2009) explored how social media affected our society. Her study found that social media use was widely driven by emotions of group belonging and collective self-esteem. Around the time when these studies were published, Pew Research Center reported that 83% of Americans between 18 and 33 years old were already users of social networking sites (SNS) (Pew Research Center, 2010).

As discussed above, social media is a crucial marketing tool to rely on segmented marketing to large consumers. One scholar views the importance of positive perception in higher education (Helgesen, 2008). Their study examined the importance of relationship marketing with prospective students. After the study was concluded, it was identified that the student's perception of the reputation is positively related to student loyalty.

Efthymios and Marc (2011) saw the potential to build such relationships with students through effective social media use in their segmentation study. Their study cited that there were three distinct social media profiles: beginners, social users, and informational users, thus enabling colleges to market to them. While the study was conducted on populations in the Netherland, a similar segmentation practice has been used at American universities. Likewise, Clark, Fine, and Scheuer (2016) concluded that students who

followed a university on social media reported a higher quality relationship, linking it to Helgesen's notion of student loyalty.

Another study analyzed current marketing trends on Facebook during the COVID Era. A prior study looked at 66 universities listed in U.S. News and World Report Best Colleges Rankings for 2014. The top 20 public universities, private universities, and liberal arts colleges were among them. The study found that public and private universities receive less proportional engagement on Facebook than liberal arts colleges (Peruta & Shields, 2016). That same study also noted that public and private universities relied more on photos and videos, while liberal arts colleges focused more on links on external sites.

Similarly, another study explored different categories of Facebook content from universities across the United States. The study concluded that athletics news-related categories, school spirit, admissions, and promotions increased engagement. In contrast, posts including campus events, academic events, performances, exhibits, overall informative, research/scholarly/creative, programming, and administrative and staff showed lower engagement (Peruta & Shields, 2018).

An effective social media strategy is crucial to a company/institution's success. Research shows that consumers' use of social media is on the rise, especially during COVID-19 (Mason, Narcum, & Mason, 2021). There have been a decent amount of research studies that revolved around social media usage in the delivery of academics (Sobaih, Hasanein, & Elnasr, 2020; Camilleri, 2021; Al-Shammari, 2020). However, there is little research on higher education social media usage as a business practice during COVID-19, causing us to ask the following research questions:

RQ1: What content strategies were used to communicate the intent to resume normal campus life?

RQ2: How did MTSU's use of content strategies compare to its peer institutions?

Message Appeals

The scholarly literature on advertising has developed many classifications of message appeals. However, they all fall under two common separations: rational and emotional appeals (Chandy, Tellis, Macinnis, & Thaivanich, 2001) or transformational and informational appeals (Puto & Wells, 1984). This research will examine Facebook posts through the lens of transformation and information. Classifications Puto & Wells define a transformational appeal as:

"1. It must make the experience of using the product richer, warmer, more exciting, and/or more enjoyable than that obtained solely from an objective description of the advertised brand.

2. It must connect the experience of the advertisement so tightly with the experience of using the brand that consumers cannot remember the brand without recalling the experience generated by the advertisement.

In contrast, an informational appeal is:

- a. Present factual, relevant information about the brand.
- b. Present information which is immediately and obviously important to the potential consumer.
- c. Present data which the consumer accepts as being verifiable (Puto & Wells, 1984)."

One study explored the advertisement value of transformational and informational appeals on Facebook. A content analysis of one hundred top-ranked revenue-earning companies determined that Facebook posts containing informational appeals contained a higher advertising value (Cadet, Aaltonen, & Kavota, 2017). This research is consistent with an earlier study that analyzed consumers' perception of informational and

transformation appeals in life transitions (Hadjimarcou, 2012). Their study discovered that consumers in life transitions found informational advertisements to be "good, interesting, trustworthy, persuasive, and believable" (p 60). While their study focused mainly on parents entering adulthood, it can be argued that students entering higher education could be considered "consumers in life transition."

While there has been little research on these message appeals applied to higher education marketing, one study investigated the relationship between message appeal and social media sharing in higher education marketing (Hagen, 2018). The research revealed that the average share rates between emotional and rational appeal messages were equal on Facebook and Twitter. Accordingly, the following research questions were also asked:

RQ3: What types of message appeals were used to communicate the intent to resume normal campus life?

RQ4: How did MTSU's use of message appeals compare to its peer institutions?

Methodology

For this study, I have used a widely utilized research methodology: a conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). My content analysis focuses on the above-mentioned institutional Facebook content (qualitative data) into categories, creating quantitative data for evaluation. I have followed the content analysis steps defined by a well-cited study throughout the research process to ensure successful coding (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005). Below I have applied their steps to my research process:

Step 1 Preparing the Data: My data was already prepared since it is a written form on Facebook.

Step 2 Define the Unit of Analysis: The unit of analysis for this project are posts representative of MTSU and its six peer institutions. The posts that were analyzed for this project were identified as "Return Back to Normal." Below I have listed the criteria that were followed during the selection process:

- Posts that mentioned a return to normal for Fall 2021
- Posts that mentioned traditional events that would be happening when the semester starts
- Posts that encouraged students, faculty, and staff to obtain the vaccine (These posts were included because higher education relied heavily on their populations to receive the vaccine to return to normalcy)
- Select recruitment posts, such as campus tours, were included in the data set depending on how the posts were worded

The Facebook posts that met the stated criterion were compiled into separate institutions with coder I.D. numbers to ensure the selected codes represented the same posts. The

period in which the analysis unit got selected ended the day before classes started (August 2021). I located this end date by viewing each universities' academic calendar. The end of the period was when the institution initially announced its plans for the fall. The information was either located on their webpage or Facebook page. For the schools that had unidentifiable announcement dates, I selected March 1, 2021, for the date. I chose this date because it landed in the middle of the defined start dates. This process resulted in me looking through a total of 1794 Facebook posts. Once I identified the posts from each Facebook page, I met with my other coder to confirm that they matched the criteria specified above. A total of 113 posts met the above criteria. After meeting with my other coder, it was determined that 112 of my original 113 met the criteria, see Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Posts from Each Institution

Institution Name	Number of Posts Used in the Study
Middle Tennessee State University	42
Sam Houston State University	20
Texas A&M University-Commerce	14
Western Kentucky University	13
University of New Orleans	11
University of West Georgia	6
Arkansas State University	6

Step 3 Develop Categories and a Coding Scheme: I adapted a coder manual from a similar study for this study (Peruta & Shields, 2018) (See Appendix 1).

I recruited another coder to develop better validity, reliability, and objectivity, crucial for a conventional positivist research paradigm (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005). To establish intercoder reliability, I facilitated a training session for the other coder to ensure they fully understood the flow and concepts of this project. Each post meeting the "return to normal" criterion was placed in separate PowerPoints to ensure consistency with coding.

Step 4 Test your Coding Scheme on a Sample of Text: To satisfy this step, I placed a total of 7 posts, representing one from each institution, into the training PowerPoint. As suggested by (Perreault & Leigh, 1989), the reliability index shall exceed .70. If our agreement does not exceed .70, then further training will be needed. After our test, we agreed 100%, indicating that no additional training was needed.

Step 5 Code all the Text: During this stage, the other coder and I independently coded the text. To ensure that our codes corresponded with the same posts, I placed a unique code I.D. with each post, along with making a code for the institution itself.

Step 6 Assess Your Coding Consistency: After both parties finished the independent coding, we got together to discuss the results. See (Table 2) for the calculations. This was crucial because human coders can be subject to fatigue and inconsistency as the coding process advances.

Table 2: Simple Agreement Ratio

Section	Simple Agreement Ratio
Content Category	.74
Content Type	.99
Message Appeal	.73

Only content category, content type, and message appeal were listed in this table because the other codes/information was stated on the PowerPoint provided to the other coder. Since all the simple agreement ratios were above .70, the study could move on to the next step.

Step 7 Draw Conclusions from the Coded Data: This step will be discussed in the next section.

Step 8 Report Your Methods and Findings: The presently written thesis satisfies this step.

Methodological Limitations

One of this study's most significant methodological limitations is using humans as coders. Having humans involved in any conceptual analysis is bound to have misinterpretations or biases that could skew the data. I strive to prevent this by taking corrective measures by calculating the simple agreement ratio (Step 6). Another limitation was the selection process of the unit of analysis. Since I was the only one that went through all 1794 posts, there is a possibility of missing posts.

Also, when working with message appeals and content categories, it was discovered that many of the Facebook posts contained elements of multiple appeals and content, causing it to become difficult to decide on the most dominant one. As illustrated in Table 2, the simple agreement ratio was .73, meaning that there were 30 disagreements out of the 112 observations while there were only 2 options. Due to being heavily reliant on human interpretation, this most likely happened due to different mental perspectives. For future studies involving message appeals, having more in-depth training revolving around message appeals could be a way to minimize disagreements.

Results

This section details the research findings of a content analysis of 112 Facebook posts from 7 institutions examined in this study. SPSS is the statistical software that was used to store and analyze the data.

What content strategies were used to communicate the intent to resume normal campus life?

This paper defines content strategies as the kinds of content categories, types, and message appeals used by institutions. To examine RQ1, the frequency of each section was calculated. Table 3 examines the different content categories used by all the schools.

Table 3: Frequencies of Content Categories

Content Category	Count	Percentage
Specific Campus Event(s)	22	19.6%
Campus Life	22	19.6%
COVID Vaccine	20	17.9%
COVID-19 Campus Protocol	17	15.2%
Admissions/Recruitment	11	9.8%
Orientation	7	6.3%
Athletics	6	5.4%
Move-In	4	3.6%
Student Organizations	3	2.7%
Total	112	100.0%

Looking at the table above, posts that contained "Specific Campus event(s)" and "Campus Life" were the most frequent posts in the data set, with "COVID Vaccine" following closely behind. All those combined made up 57.1% of the data. Table 4 illustrates the content types used in the study.

Table 4: Frequencies of Content Types

Content Type	Count	Percent
Text with Picture	85	75.9%
Text with Video	27	24.1%
Total	112	100.0%

As illustrated in Table 4, Facebook posts featuring text with picture(s) made up 75.9% of data, leaving text with video at 24.1%. The coders manual featured a total of 4 different possibilities for the content type section. However, as highlighted, only 2 of the possibilities were found in the "return back normal" data set.

How did MTSU's use of content strategies compare to its peer institutions?

Table 5 visually represents a cross-tabulation of MTSU and its peer institutions. MTSU was represented in 42 posts in the dataset, making up 37.5% of the total. This leaves the rest of the 70 posts from peer institutions. A Chi-Square test was performed to see if there was a relationship between the content categories/types used by MTSU and peer institutions. The Pearson Chi-Square was measured to be 10.772 (see Table 6), meaning there were no statistically significant differences between MTSU and its peer institutions.

However, some noticeable percent differences were present in the data, as shown in Table 7. Posts classified as "COVID Vaccine" made up only 9.5% of MTSU posts,

while the figure was for MTSU's 22.9% peer group. The results also revealed that MTSU did not have any posts that identified as "Move-In," while the peer group had 4 (5.7%).

Table 5: Cross-Tabulation of MTSU and Its Peers Categories

Content Category	MTSU	Peer Institutions
COVID Vaccine	4	16
Athletics	3	3
Specific Campus Event(s)	6	16
Admissions/Recruitment	6	5
COVID-19 Campus Protocol	8	9
Move-In	0	4
Student Organizations	2	1
Campus Life	9	13
Orientation	4	3
Total	42	70

Table 6: Non-Parametric Statistics on Content Categories

Statistical Test	Value
Pearson Chi-Square	10.772
Likelihood Ratio	12.261
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.723
N of Valid Cases	112

Table 7: Percent Comparisons of MTSU and Peers Content Categories

Content Category	MTSU	Peer Institutions
COVID Vaccine	9.5%	22.9%
Athletics	7.1%	4.3%
Specific Campus Event(s)	14.3%	22.9%
Admissions/Recruitment	14.3%	7.1%
COVID-19 Campus Protocol	19.0%	12.9%
Move-In	0.0%	5.7%
Student Organizations	4.8%	1.4%
Campus Life	21.4%	18.6%
Orientation	9.5%	4.3%

Table 8 illustrates a cross-tabulation of the counts and the percent calculations of the content types used by MTSU and its peer institutions. As shown in Table 8, the Chi-Square was .003, revealing no statistical differences between the two data. Unlike Table 7, the results comparing the percentages of the content types were similar. As demonstrated by the results, "text with photos" appears to be the most common format, leaving "text with video" on the lower spectrum at 23.8% and 24.3%.

Table 8: Cross-Tabulation of MTSU and Peers Content Types

Content-Type		MTSU	Peers
Text with Picture	Count	32	53
	% within Group	76.2%	75.7%
Text with Video	Count	10	17
	% within Group	23.8%	24.3%

Chi-Square: .003

What types of message appeals were used to communicate the intent to resume normal campus life?

Table 9 illustrates the results of the discovered message appeals. The study used only 2 message appeals: Transformation and Informational. While it only contained only 2 options, the simple agree ratio was only .73 (Table 2). The higher number of disagreements between the researcher and the other coder was most likely encountered because one coder had a stronger marketing background than the other coder as one of the coders.

Table 9: Frequencies of Message Appeals

Message Appeal	Count	Percent
Informational	64	57.1%
Transformational	48	42.9%
Total	112	100%

The above table shows that informational appeals make up a majority of the total. As seen in the table, the data found that the coders identified 57.1% of the 112 posts as Facebook posts with a dominant informational appeal. In comparison, 42.9% of the posts were classified as transformational. This finding is consistent with Cadet, Aaltonen, & Kavota (2017), strengthening their notion that Facebook posts that contain informational appeal have a higher advertising value.

How did MTSU's use of message appeals compare to its peer institutions?

Table 10 illustrates a cross-tabulation of MTSU and its peer institutions, including the counts and percent calculation of the message appeals identified in the study.

Table 10: Cross-Tabulation of MTSU and Peers Message Appeals

Message Appeal		MTSU	Peers
Informational	Count	25	39
	% within Group	59.6%	55.7%
Transformational	Count	17	31
	% within Group	40.5%	44.3%

Chi-Square: .156

As seen above, MTSU is very similar to its peer institution in percentages. The Chi-Square is measured to be .156, meaning that no statistically significant differences are present in this comparison. Like Section 3, MTSU and its peers have a higher percentage of Facebook posts with informational appeals.

Discussion

Social media marketing is an effective tool for universities, especially during the COVID Pandemic Era. As Hesel & Williams (2009) discussed, large social media platforms such as Facebook are highly used by students during matriculation, making content strategies very important. Given this, it is crucial to understand the best practices for higher education social media marketing. The research goal was to understand how universities worked to communicate the "return back to normal" to prospective and current students.

The research found a higher frequency of posts containing content described as "campus life" or "specific campus event(s)." These findings were consistent with MTSU and its peer institutions, revealing a common trend. Also, the analysis revealed that more than half, 57.1%, of the posts contained informational message appeals. This finding is consistent with previous research exploring the advertisement value of informational appeals over transformational appeals (Cadet, Aaltonen, & Kavota, 2017; Hadjimarcou, 2012).

Another interesting observation during this study was that MTSU had a much larger pool of posts that met the criteria. One reason for this could be that MTSU had a much larger population of posts than the "return back to normal" post. MTSU had 569 Facebook posts, while the second most, Texas A&M University-Commerce, only had 262. Another possibility was that most public universities in Tennessee had plans to return to normal campus operations, making the competition more intense.

Future Research

This research explored how universities across the United States adopted the constantly changing COVID Era. While this study explored the realm of these adaptations, further research will be needed to make deeper conclusions regarding content strategies and message appeals. It is suggested that future researchers analyze the engagement of the posts. Engagement on Facebook are likes, comments, shares, views, and reactions.

Measuring these elements could identify concrete market strategies by determining what content categories, types, and message appeals receive a higher amount of consumer interactions. Another element that could be measured is the time the post got published. Measuring the time could potentially identify key post times for higher education marketers to use to receive the highest level of reach. While this research study measured the date and time posted, it served more to ensure that the correct codes went with the same Facebook posts.

This study only focused on Facebook as a social media platform, while future studies could explore other social media platforms like Twitter. Doing this could identify different trends and strategies. Also, it could open up the possibility of comparing the difference between content dependent on the platform. Another opportunity could be analyzing other institution types. This study only looked at mid-sized public four-year universities, while there are many other types like community colleges and private colleges.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 Pandemic presented unprecedented challenges to the operation of higher education. It isn't easy to encourage prospective students to enroll in college during a pandemic, making marketing very important. Hopefully, the results presented in this study will provide a foundation for the types of content strategies that universities can use. While the COVID Pandemic will eventually end, there may come a time when these practices will need to be implemented.

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Appendix 1: Coding Sheet

Case # (written on PowerPoint Slide)
Date/Time (written on PowerPoint Slide)
Content Category
1 COVID Vaccine
2 Athletics
3 Specific Campus Event(s) [Date(s)/Time(s) or Allusion to]
4 Admissions/Recruitment
5 COVID-19 Campus Protocol
6 Move-In
7 Student Organizations (General Information)
8 Campus Life (General Campus Experience)
9 Orientation
Content Type
1 Text with Picture
2 Picture Only
3 Text Only
4 Text with Video
5 Video Only
Message Appeal
1 Informational
2 Transformational