

PR & SOCIAL MEDIA

COMM 384 – George Mason University

BUZZFEED

HEADLINE: THE TOP 8 THINGS EVERY COLLEGE STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE STATE OF SOCIAL MEDIA, RIGHT NOW, IN 2022, AMIDST THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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Why should a college student care about social media trends? Because when it comes to social media, YOU are the brand, and you want to be in control of your online presence. According to a 2018 CareerBuilder survey, 70% of employers review the social media presence of their candidates and, of those, 57% have chosen not to hire a candidate due to what they found (Tarpey, 2018). Take control of your social media brand, so employers see what you want them to see. Here are eight hot social media trends for 2022 to get you started taking control of your brand:

1. Short-form video content will be the medium du jour.

TikTok is not just for crate climbing and dance challenges anymore. Short-form video is the perfect medium to capture your audience's attention in 2022. TikTok is still the platform to beat, but other platforms are joining in the fun: YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and even Reddit (video is soon to be an iOS user feature).



Image courtesy of 24SevenSocial

2. Video makers will choose vertical video formats.

Where are your users watching these videos? 83% of social media users access content via smartphones exclusively (Chaffey, 2021). It's easier to watch a vertical video on a smartphone, so consider filming portrait style rather than landscape. An extra video-making tip: many users watch without sound, so consider captioning your videos.

3. Brands will be more aware of social responsibility.

According to Forbes (*Social Media Trends Taking Off In 2022 [And How To Leverage Them]*, n.d.), brands will focus on their charitable contributions in the upcoming year. As a student, proudly supporting your favorite charity shows what you care about in the world and gives a glimpse into your values. So whether you walk dogs at the shelter or give blood every week, share your experiences on social media. Then, run a fundraiser for your favorite cause on Facebook.



Image courtesy of Giving Tuesday

4. Authenticity is the key to establishing trust.

Skepticism runs high among social media users. “Fake news” proliferates. Showing your human side helps show your personality and establish trust. Share that unfiltered selfie, be genuine, and use your own unique voice. Remember that life isn’t a highlight reel, so your social media presence shouldn’t be either.

5. Businesses will seek more user-generated content.

Watch for opportunities to get involved with businesses you support as they ask for user-generated content to help spread their message. Micro-influencers are becoming as important as macro-influencers.

6. LinkedIn will become a Creator space.

When you think of LinkedIn, you think of resumes and businesses. This year will be the rise of the “LinkedInfluencer” (Thomas, 2022). With the introduction of Creator Mode in April 2021, more creative content can be shared on the platform. Using Creator Mode to boost your professional image could be an excellent tool for students entering the job market to showcase their skills and personality.



7. Businesses will utilize live audio chat rooms.

Video may be the hot commodity, but businesses will also be investing in live audio chat with Clubhouse and Twitter Spaces. Look for ways to communicate with potential employers via audio channels. Consider whether these audio channels might work for your own brand, too.

8. Augmented and virtual reality use will increase.

AR and VR might not be something you’d think you’ll use in your personal branding but look no further than Snapchat to see AR at work. Look for businesses to find new ways to integrate AR and VR into their social media campaigns in 2022.

Leveraging these tools for your brand will show your personality and keep you at the forefront of the competition when job-hunting starts.

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