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9 Higher Education Marketing Trends and Pro Tips for 2024

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[9 Higher Education Marketing Trends and Pro Tips for 2024](#)



By Intelligent Relations Team

October 20, 2023

[Author's Page](#)

There are a lot of challenges when it comes to marketing for higher education.

First, prospective students have plenty of choices. Second, maintaining a strong online presence is crucial.

Plus, demographics are changing. More non-traditional and international students from diverse backgrounds are looking at getting degrees.

To market your institution as desirable and unique, you'll need to think outside the box and employ emerging strategies. It's not enough to spend a large sum of money on advertising.

You'll need to look at marketing and PR strategies that adapt to market changes and fit the interests of individual students.

The higher education marketing trends outlined in this article can help you achieve all of the above. They help differentiate your institution from the competition and capture the attention of the modern, prospective student.

Best of all, you don't have to operate by the book. Read on to identify which of these 9 marketing trends in higher education will work best for you.

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a look at your current strategies and see

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Our 9 Higher Education Marketing Trends 2024

PR for Reputation Building

Higher Education Thought Leadership

Micro-Influencer Collaboration

Short-Form Video Marketing

PPC Advertising

Content Personalization

SEO Marketing

LinkedIn Social Media Marketing

Student-Focused Content

1. PR Helps Build a Positive Image Around Your Institution

PR is one of the best higher education marketing trends for spotlighting your institution. (833) 377-6278

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Higher education PR is all about managing your institution's image and reputation. Plus, it showcases your institution's strengths and values.

To build a positive image for your institution, try using alumni success stories to showcase the real-world impact of your institution's education. Demonstrate to prospective students the value of your programs and the opportunities they can unlock.

You can also showcase the expertise of your faculty members through interviews, op-eds, and expert commentary in media outlets. Plus, you can use press releases to inform the public about new milestones, initiatives, and steps you're taking to address concerns.

Here are a few reasons why PR is one of the most important higher education marketing trends:

Enhanced Reputation and Credibility: PR efforts in higher education can help build and maintain your reputation. This helps foster trust and credibility within the community you serve.

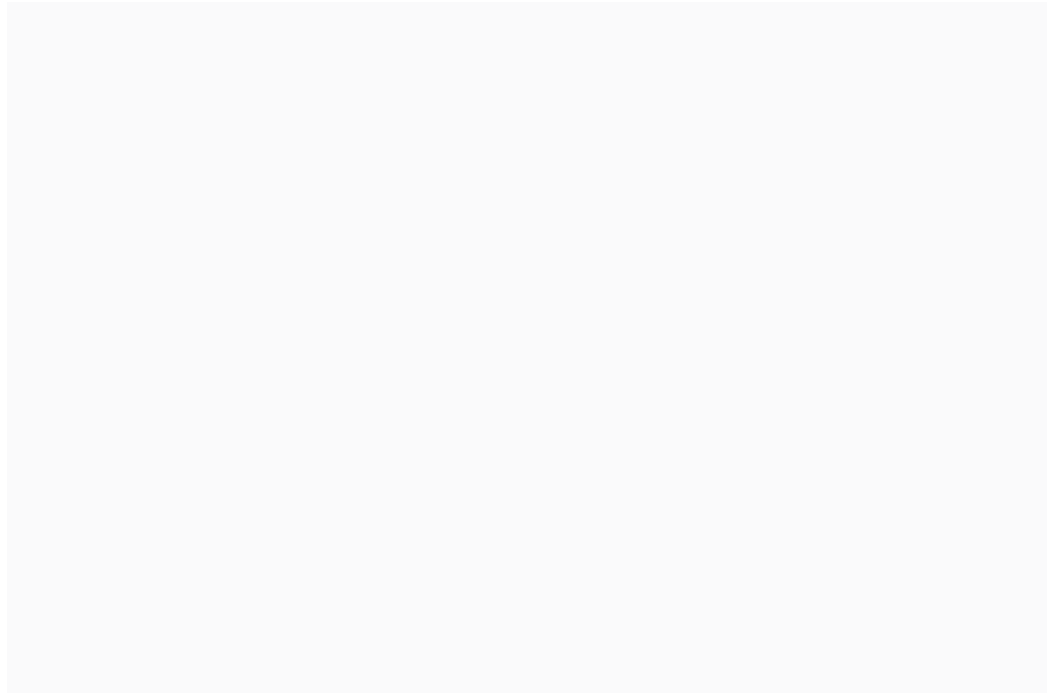
Increased Visibility and Enrollment: Effective PR strategies can boost your institution's visibility in the media and among prospective students. This helps drive higher enrollment numbers and supports long-term growth.

Engagement and Alumni Relations: PR initiatives can strengthen alumni engagement. This fosters a sense of pride and connection to the institution. Plus, it can lead to increased donations, support, and ongoing involvement.

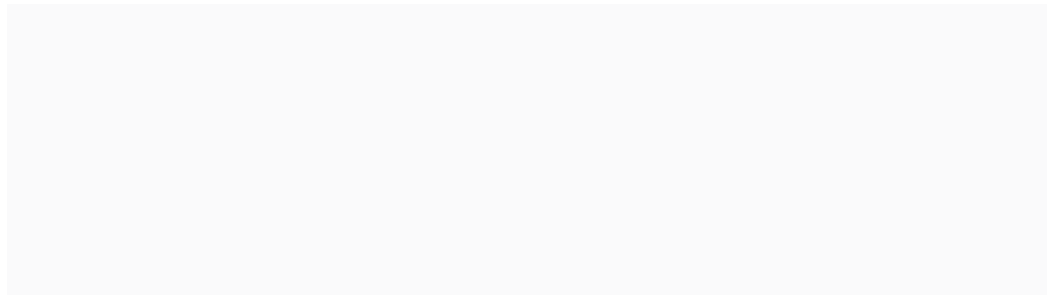
The University of San Diego just released their 2023 State of Non-profits and P... A new report is a new, worthy event, s... [press release](#) on their website:

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After, the findings in the report were picked up and highlighted in an [article by the Times of San Diego](#):



Pro Tip: PR isn't just about pitching press releases. It's about crafting compelling stories. It doesn't matter if you're telling that story with research like USD or focusing on the human-interest stories of students, faculty, and staff. These stories humanize your institution and create emotional connections with your



audience, including journalists and your

Community.

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Learn how to make PR part of your strategy by reading our comprehensive guide: [How to Write an Effective PR Plan \[Tips + Examples\]](#)

2. Thought Leadership Can Establish Your Institution As a Leader in the Industry

Thought leadership isn't just about following trends. It's about setting them. That's why thought leadership content is one of the most effective higher education marketing trends.

Thought leadership content helps you demonstrate your institution's expertise. This helps attract students who want to learn from the best in their chosen field.

To make thought leadership part of your strategy, identify faculty members who are subject matter experts (SMEs). Especially those who are published or already known in their field.

Encourage them to share their insights and research through thought leadership content. This can include articles, webinars, or podcasts.

Consider reaching further afield and collaborating with experts in your community, network, or city. Think about

topics that are most relevant to your institution, mission, and recruitment goals. [833\) 377-6278](tel:833-377-6278)

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You can also address timely and relevant topics in higher education. Stay up-to-date with industry trends to create marketing and PR content that demonstrates your institution's relevance and commitment to addressing important challenges.

Here are a few reasons why thought leadership is one of the most impactful higher education marketing trends of 2024:

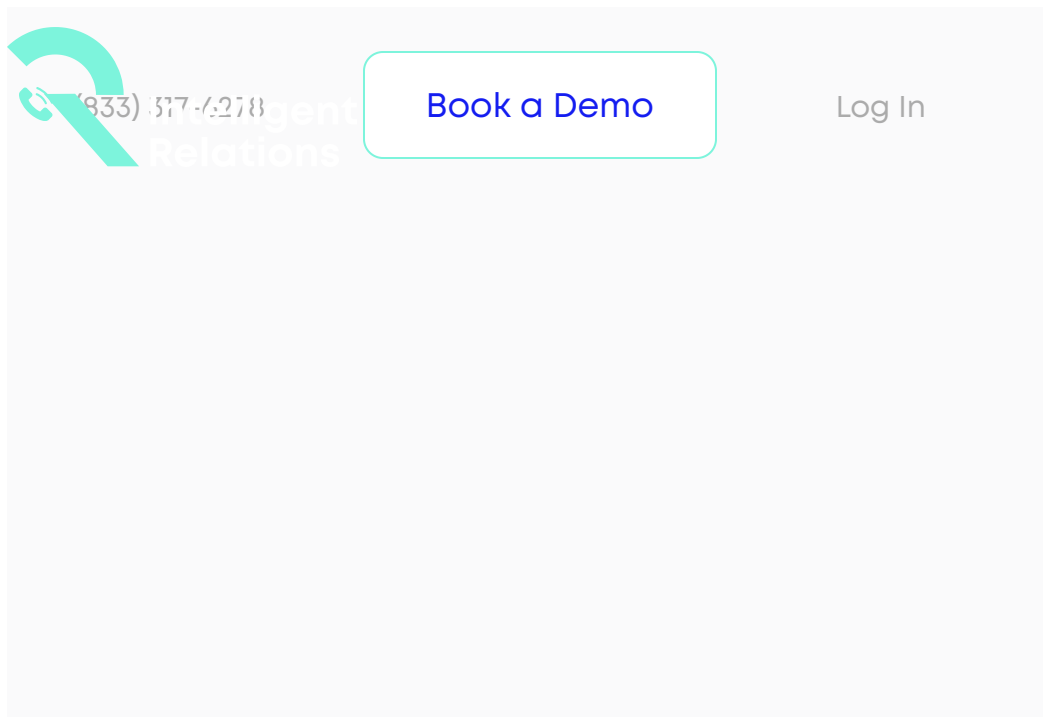
Enhanced Reputation and Credibility: Thought leadership content positions your higher education institution as an authority on various topics. This helps boost your institution's reputation and credibility.

Attracting Top Talent: Showcasing your institution's expertise through thought leadership can help attract high-caliber educators and researchers.

Increased Engagement: Thought-provoking content can captivate your target audience. This helps lead to higher engagement rates and more meaningful interactions with prospective students.

What does thought leadership in higher education marketing look like?

MIT's Office of Sustainability runs a thought leadership blog. They partner and collaborate with SMEs on campus, in Boston, and around the world to create content and discuss opportunities and issues. Here's what [MIT's sustainability thought leadership content](#) looks like:



Pro-Tip: Foster discussions and engagement around your thought leadership content. This can be done by encouraging comments, questions, and sharing on social media. Interact with your audience, answer inquiries, and use feedback to refine your thought leadership strategy.

To learn how to leverage thought leadership, check out our guide: [*Thought Leadership Strategy: 14 Steps to Balancing Authority and Authenticity \(+ Examples\)*](#)

3. Micro-Influencers Can Help You Reach and Engage Prospective Students

Sometimes the smallest voices have the biggest impact. That's why working with micro-influencers has become one of the most prominent higher education marketing trends.

In higher education, micro-influencers can include professors, students, student ambassadors, or other individuals with a passion for education. Collaborating with them can help you reach niche audiences.

To effectively market higher education, collaborate with micro-influencers whose audience aligns with your institution's programs. For example, if you offer a STEM program, partner with micro-influencers who are passionate about science or technology.

When working with a micro-influencer, encourage them to share their genuine experiences with your institution. This can include campus tours, student life, or personal stories.

Here are a few reasons why working with micro-influencers is one of the most current higher education marketing trends:

Relatability: Micro-influencers often have a genuine connection with their niche audience. Their endorsements of higher education institutions are more relatable and trustworthy.

Cost-effective Outreach: Collaborating with micro-influencers is often more budget-friendly than working with macro-influencers. This allows you to reach a wider and more engaged audience without significant costs.

Niche Expertise: Micro-influencers tend to have specific expertise or interests. This makes them ideal for promoting specialized programs, courses, or academic offerings.



Pro Tip: Establish partnerships with micro-influencers for long impact.

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Instead of one-off promotions, consider ongoing collaborations where influencers become brand ambassadors for your higher education institution.

To learn more about how to leverage influencers in your field, see our article: [9 Top Influencer Marketing Trends Shaping the Industry in 2024](#)

4. Short-Form Video Marketing Can Highlight the Benefits of Your Higher Ed Institution

Let's face it; attention spans are shorter than ever and prospective students prefer to get information on the go. That's why short-form video is one of the top higher education marketing trends.

In general, consumers find [short-form video](#) far more engaging than long-form video. It's often shared on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. These videos can give a glimpse of what students can expect and help build excitement.

To quickly capture viewers' attention, start with a compelling hook, an intriguing question, or visually appealing content. Use eye-catching visuals and concise messaging to maintain engagement.

Showcase authentic student experiences and success stories. Also, share key day-in-the-life videos, or stories of students to demonstrate the value of your education.

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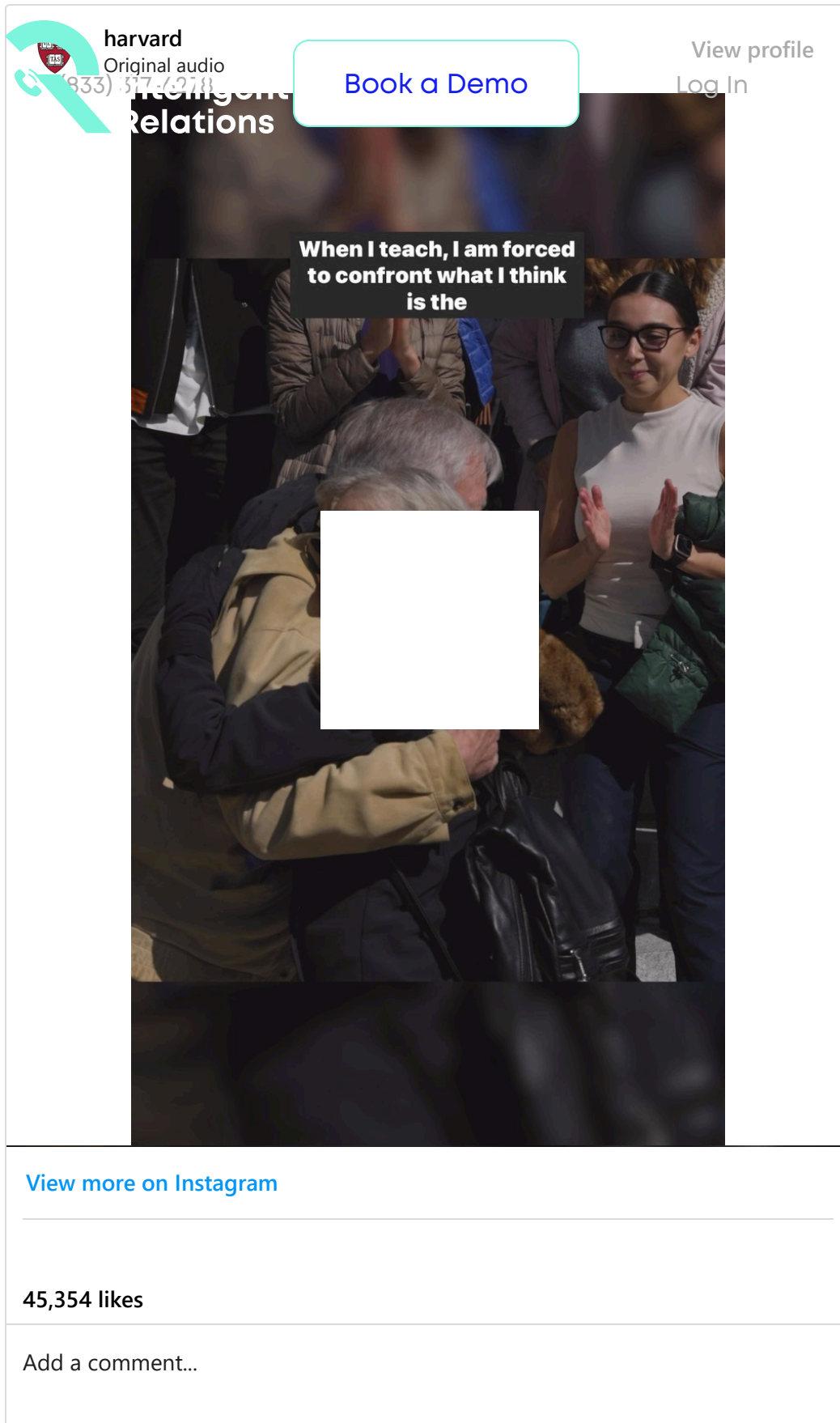
Here are some key reasons why short-form video is one of the most important higher education marketing trends:

Engagement: Short-form videos capture and maintain the attention of the modern, short-attention-span audience. This makes it an effective tool for conveying important information.

Brand Visibility: Sharing short videos on social media platforms your institution's visibility among younger demographics. This helps to establish brand recognition.

Quick Information Delivery: Short videos condense complex information into easily digestible content. This makes them ideal for conveying concise key messages, program highlights, and specific aspects of campus life.

Here's an example of how [Harvard University used Instagram](#) to create a short-form video after Professor Claudia Goldin won a Nobel Prize:



harvard
Original audio
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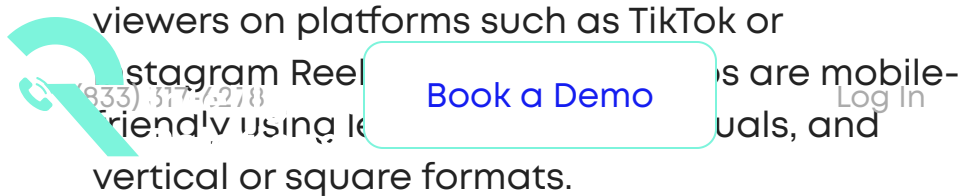
When I teach, I am forced to confront what I think is the

View more on Instagram

45,354 likes

Add a comment...

Pro Tip: Aim for videos under a minute in length. This aligns with the attention span of many



Want to leverage short-form video? You can get some ideas from this article: [Top 10 Video Marketing Trends for 2024 \[+ Tips\]](#)

5. PPC Advertising Can Produce High-Quality Leads

Your institution deserves more than just clicks; it deserves conversions.

Pay-per-click advertising is an effective way to make every dollar in your marketing efforts count. In the US alone, educational institutions spend [well over \\$1 billion](#) on advertising.

That's because PPC campaigns can help drive traffic to your institution's websites and increase enrollment inquiries.

To maximize the effectiveness of your PPC campaigns, focus on targeting the most relevant keywords. Research and identify keywords that potential students are likely to use when searching for educational programs or institutions.

Ensure that your ad text highlights the unique selling points of your institution or program. This can include accreditation, faculty expertise, or career outcomes.

Make your ads stand out by including ad extensions like site links, callouts, and [Book a Demo](#) ads. [Log In](#)

Here are a few reasons why PPC remains one of the top higher education marketing trends:

Targeted Audience Reach: PPC advertising allows you to target prospective students precisely. This can be based on demographics, interests, and search behavior.

Immediate Visibility: PPC campaigns can quickly increase your online visibility. This provides an effective way to reach students searching for educational programs or institutions.

Measurable Results: PPC platforms offer robust analytics tools. This enables you to track the performance of your campaigns in real-time. Plus, you can make data-driven decisions to optimize their strategies.

Pro Tip: Tailor your ad campaigns to the locations that align with your recruitment goals. Additionally, use ad scheduling to display your ads during the times when your target audience is most active. Use both search and social media platforms for ad targeting.

6. Personalization Helps You Reach the Right Audience with the Right Strategies

The one-size-fits-all model is outdated. That's why personalization has become one of the most essential higher education marketing trends. [Book a Demo](#) [Log In](#)

In higher education, personalization can help universities provide relevant information to prospective students. It enhances the user experience and builds a stronger connection.

Personalization in higher education marketing begins with understanding your audience.

Segment your prospective students into groups based on demographics, interests, and academic programs. Also, include where they are in the enrollment journey. Create content that targets different personas at different stages of the marketing funnel.

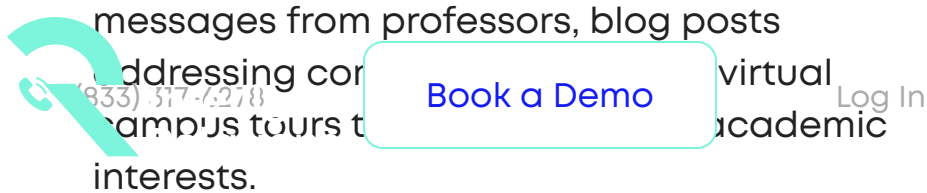
Want to know why personalization is one of the top higher education marketing trends? Here are a few reasons to consider:

Improved Engagement: Personalization in higher ed marketing leads to higher engagement rates. Prospective students feel a deeper connection when content is tailored to their interests and needs.

Enhanced Retention: Personalized communication throughout a student's academic journey fosters a sense of belonging. This reduces dropout rates and improves student retention.

Higher Conversion Rates: Personalized messages and content can increase conversion rates, translating into more enrollments.

Pro Tip: Develop content that speaks directly to the concerns and aspirations of your target segments. This could include personalized video



Content marketing is still an important part of any effective strategy. Check out the top trends for 2024: [7 Top Content Marketing Trends 2024 \[+ Tips and Tricks\]](#)

7. SEO Marketing Helps Drive Organic Traffic for Your Higher Ed Institution

If you're trying to gain the attention of prospective students, you're in for a world of competition. Fortunately, SEO marketing is an effective and inexpensive way to stand out, making it one of the top higher education marketing trends.

To use SEO, consider the demographics, interests, and pain points of prospective students. Conduct thorough keyword research to identify the search terms and phrases potential students are using when looking for educational institutions or programs like yours.

Long-tail keywords specific to your offerings can be particularly valuable. Use tools like Google Keyword Planner or Ahrefs to uncover relevant keywords and phrases.

Here's why SEO is one of the top higher education marketing trends for 2024:

Increased Visibility: SEO boosts your ranking in search engine results. This increases your visibility to prospective students looking for educational information. [Book a Demo](#) [Log In](#)

Cost-effective: Compared to traditional advertising methods, SEO marketing often provides a more cost-effective way to reach a targeted audience.

Enhanced Credibility: Appearing at the top of search results conveys authority and trustworthiness. This enhances your institution's credibility in the eyes of potential students.

Pro Tip: Develop informative, valuable, and engaging content. It should address the needs and questions of your target audience. It can include blog posts, articles, videos, or downloadable resources. Make sure it's well-structured, easy to read, and optimized for keywords.

SEO can also help your PR content perform better. Want to know how? See our guide: [PR SEO: Synergy for Success \[Tips, Tactics, and Best Practices\]](#)

8. LinkedIn is an Effective Social Media Platform for Higher Ed Institutions

Why is LinkedIn one of the most important higher education marketing trends? Because if you use it, your connections aren't just a list of names; they're the key to real opportunities.

Moreover, [one-third of LinkedIn users](#) have a bachelor's degree. Another 23% have a master's degree or equivalent. This makes LinkedIn an ideal place for higher education institutions to stay in contact with previous students and potential graduate students.

To effectively market your higher education institution on LinkedIn, share valuable and relevant content. Publish articles, posts, and updates that showcase your institution's expertise and highlight student achievements.

Also, share industry insights, research findings, and educational trends. Engage with your followers by responding to comments and messages promptly.

These are just a few of the key reasons why LinkedIn use has become one of the leading higher education marketing trends:

Professional Audience Targeting: LinkedIn allows you to precisely target your marketing efforts towards a professional audience. That includes potential students, alumni, and industry partners.

Networking Opportunities: LinkedIn provides a platform to connect with influential individuals, alumni, and industry professionals. This helps foster valuable relationships that can lead to collaborations and opportunities.

Career and Alumni Engagement: You can use LinkedIn to support students and alumni in their career development. This creates a sense of community and

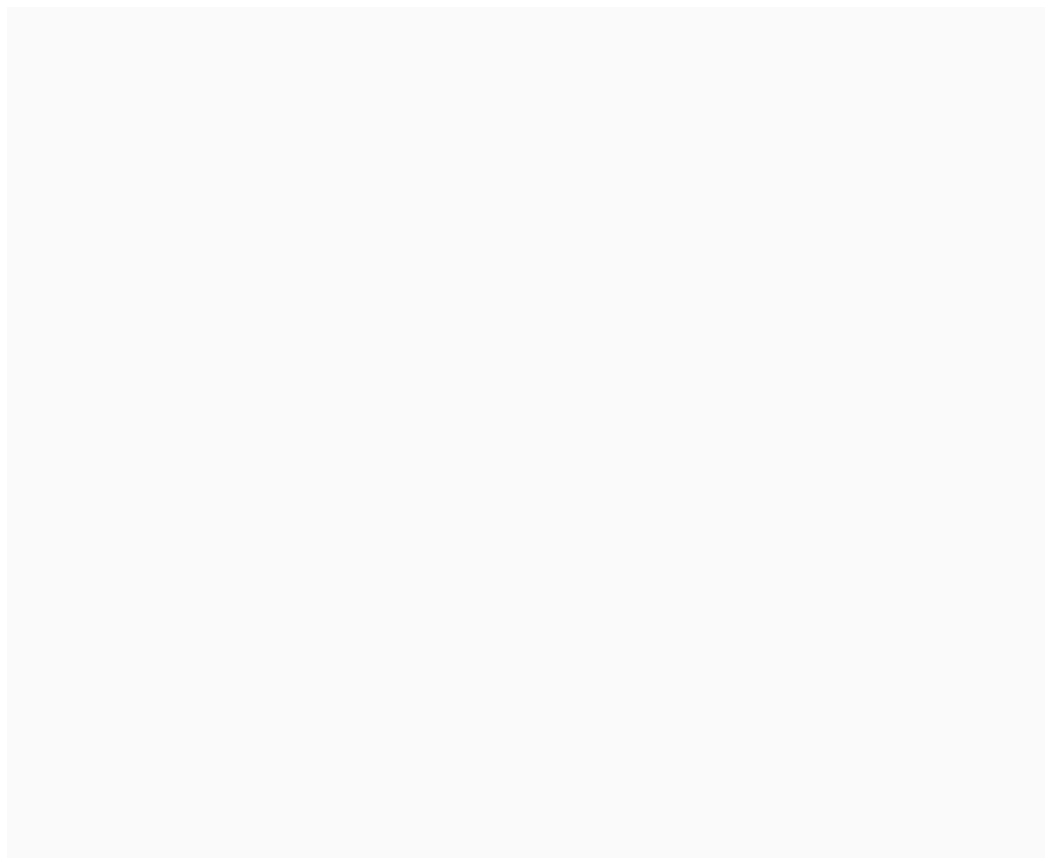
NYU's LinkedIn profile and content:' is visible." data-bbox="175 37 807 125"/>

ongoing engagement that extends beyond graduation.
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Here's an example of [NYU's LinkedIn profile](#) and content:



Pro Tip: Use LinkedIn ads to promote specific programs, events, or campaigns. Take advantage of LinkedIn's robust targeting options to reach the right individuals. This includes job titles, industries, and demographics.

Need some ideas on how to leverage LinkedIn and other social media platforms? Read our guide: [***Social Media PR – 6 Easy Ways to Connect with Your Target Audience***](#)

9. Student Focused Content Can Help Drive Enrollment

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Your marketing efforts should focus on current and prospective students. That's where student-focused content comes in as one of the top higher education marketing trends.

Start by conducting thorough research to identify prospective students' pain points, aspirations, and challenges. Tailor your content to resonate with their specific interests and concerns. Showcase how your institution can address their needs.

Create content that addresses common questions. This can include admission processes, financial aid, campus life, and career prospects. Also, consider creating student-focused guides, FAQs, and webinars

Here are some of the top reasons why student-focused content is one of the leading higher education marketing trends:

Enhanced Trust and Relatability: Student-focused content fosters trust among prospective students. It provides first hand insights into campus life, academics, and the overall student experience.

Effective Peer Influence: Student-focused content leverages peer influence. Current students' testimonials and stories can positively influence prospective students, leading to increased enrollment.

Improved Authenticity: Creating content that reflects real student experiences and perspectives enhances

your institution's authenticity and credibility.

Want to fine-tune your PR content? This guide can help: [PR Writing – Crafting Convincing PR Content for Enhanced Results \[+7 Examples\]](#)

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Key Takeaways on Higher Education Marketing Trends

To stand out in a competitive higher education market, you must think creatively and employ emerging higher education marketing trends and strategies.

Unconventional approaches can help capture the attention of prospective students and set your institution apart.

Plus, you should adapt your marketing strategies to cater to changing student demographics and backgrounds. And you should work on ways to build a positive institution reputation. A strong reputation enhances the effectiveness of marketing efforts and bolsters your appeal to prospective students.

Using these higher education marketing trends together can help you achieve better marketing and PR results and ROI.

Need help getting started on some of these trends? Get in touch! Simply [book a free consultation](#) with us to get expert insight into how best to refresh your current strategy.

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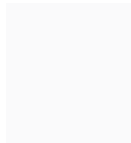
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