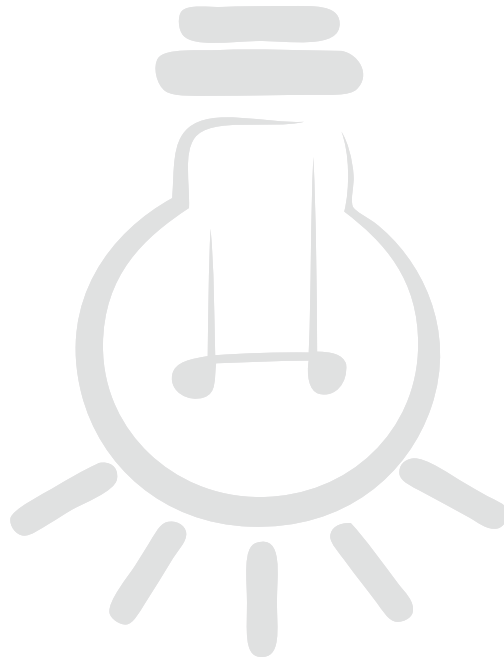




**PRIVATE
SCHOOL
MARCOM
SURVEY
REPORT**





PREFACE

InspirED wants to make your job easier.

InspirED School Marketers developed the Private School MarCom Survey to help private school marketing professionals benchmark your work against others, assess allocations of resources, highlight trends, and give you information to take to leadership to get more support for your office.

Think of this as an “advocacy document.”

Thanks for downloading the Report and for being a valuable part of the InspirED community. You are brilliant.

Let’s create some sparks with this information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Norman".

Rob Norman
Best Boy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liza".

Liza Fisher Norman
Master Electrician



Thanks to **Finalsite** for sponsoring this project.

2020

INSPIRED SCHOOL MARKETERS PRIVATE SCHOOL MARCOM SURVEY REPORT

Brilliant Ideas and Brain Food
For Private School Marketing
and Communications

We Make Your Job Easier

inspiredsm.com



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INTRODUCTION

Inspired School Marketers first developed the Private School MarCom Survey in 2017 to learn about the state of private school marketing and communications and share this information with school marketers for free.

2020 is the third time InspiredED has conducted the survey which gives us the opportunity to be able to compare year-over-year changes.

Since the survey is anonymous, we don't know how many participated in multiple surveys, but

there were a similar number of respondents each year (200 in 2017, 190 in 2018, and 209 in 2020).

The survey focuses on the MarCom office and its responsibilities, yet much of what Admissions and MarCom do overlaps especially in the area of enrollment, so we welcomed input from Admissions professionals as well.

What follows are the results of the 2020 survey, which closed on July 1, 2020. For reference, the Covid-19 pandemic began in March, 2020.

Notes: For the purpose of this report, we are using the term "private school" to represent both independent schools and other non-public schools. In some instances, percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



Chapter 1

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Two hundred and nine people took the 2020 survey, the vast majority of whom are full-time, **female directors of MarCom** who report to the Head of School.

Salaries range widely. As with findings in previous surveys, the majority receive salaries of \$90,000 or less per year without benefits (2020—68%). We were encouraged in 2018 when we saw an increase to 39% of respondents who were paid more than \$90,000 versus 28% in 2017, so it was slightly disappointing that in 2020 the percentage dipped to 32%.

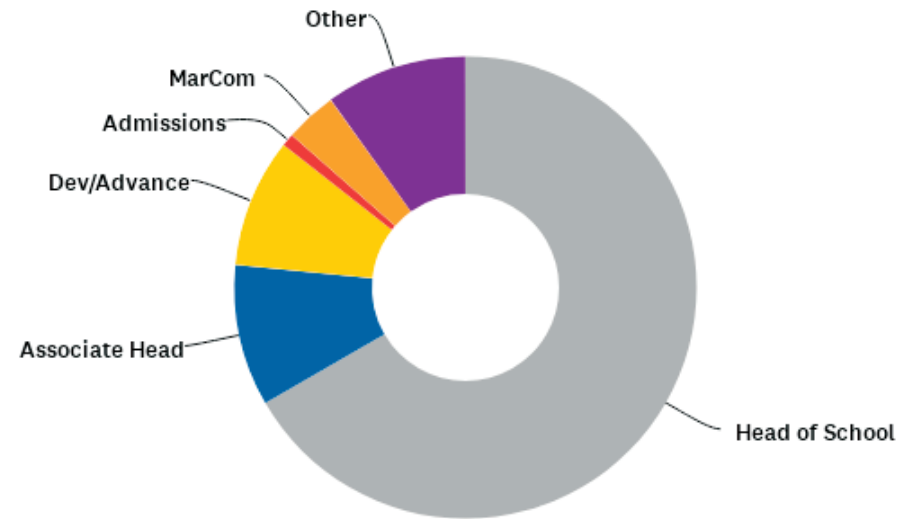
In 2020 35% of respondents have been in their **current job** less than two years. Similar to previous years, 43% have worked in academic MarCom for five years or less. The highest percentage of respondents, 30%, worked at a for-profit organization before their current job. (2018—35%, 2017—29%) When that is added to the 10% who came from higher ed, 14% from a non-profit organization, and 13% from “other (government,

self-employed),” 67% of respondents came to their current position from other than a private school. This continues a trend we noted last year: There is an influx of new MarCom talent from outside the private school world. (In 2018 this was 60% and in 2017 it was 63%.) We believe this to be a positive trend as schools fill new MarCom positions with experienced personnel not currently found at schools.

We asked **how qualified** respondents felt they were in skills and particular areas of expertise. Their notable responses were almost the same in all three years. They rated themselves highest in communication, both written and verbal, and writing, and lowest in inbound marketing such as SEO and SEM. The continuation of this trend may be an indication that these are functions that schools are willing to outsource or not execute at all.

TO WHOM DO YOU REPORT?

Head of School.....	67%
Associate head	10%
Director of Development/Advancement or that office	9%
Director of Admissions or that office	1%
Director of MarCom or that office	4%
Other	10%



WHAT IS YOUR JOB TITLE?

Director of Marketing and Communications	54%
Director of Admissions	9%
Director of Development/Advancement	3%
Webmaster.....	3%
Head of School.....	4%
I work in the MarCom office	10%
I work in the Admission office	0.5%
I work in the Development/Advancement office.....	0.5%
A combination of the above functions	12%
Other.....	4%

WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

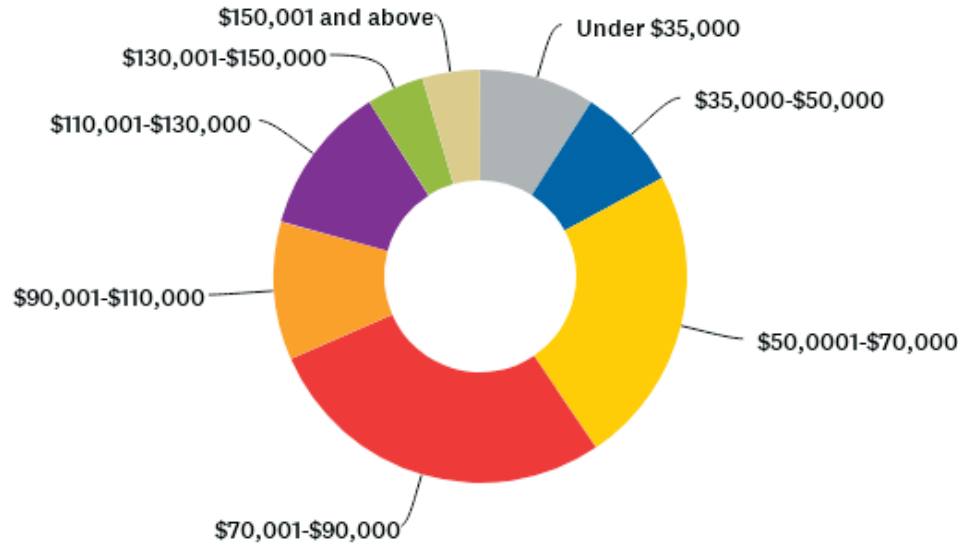
Female.....	82%
Male	18%

DO YOU WORK FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME?

Full-time.....	93%
Part-time.....	7%

WHAT IS YOUR SALARY RANGE WITHOUT BENEFITS?

Under \$35,000	9%
\$35,000-\$50,000	8%
\$50,001-\$70,000	23%
\$70,001-\$90,000	28%
\$90,001-\$110,000	11%
\$110,001-\$130,000.....	12%
\$130,001-\$150,000.....	4.5%
\$150,001 and up.....	4.5%



MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
9 Signs You Need to
Have a Talk with Your
Head of School About
Marketing

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR CURRENT POSITION AT THIS SCHOOL?

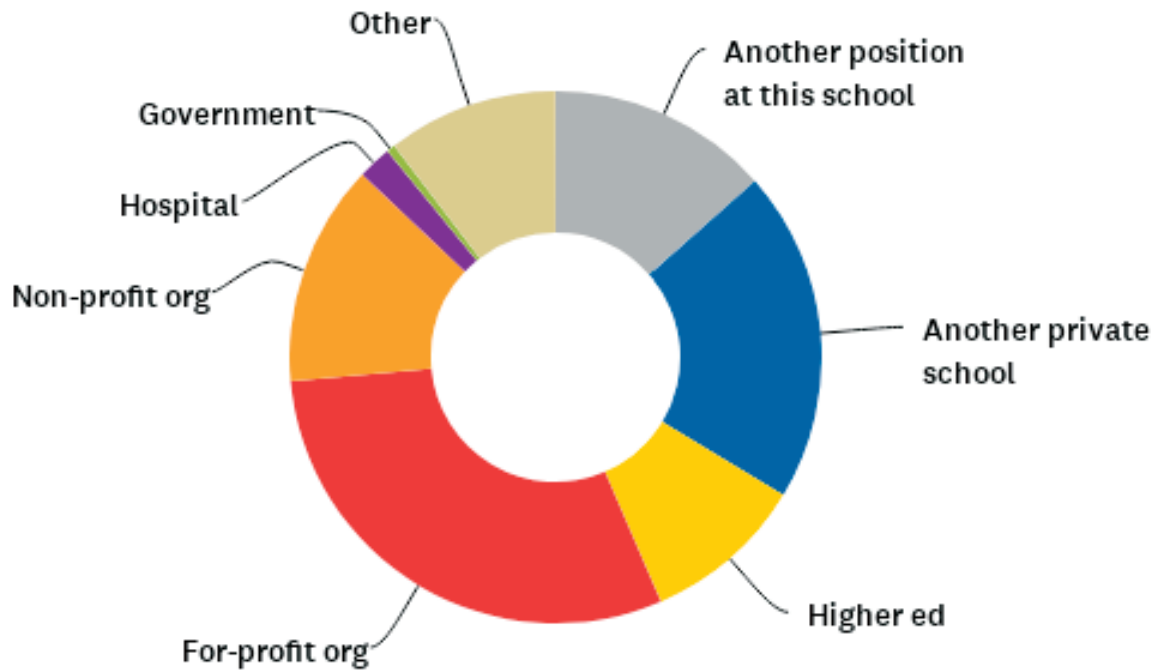
0-2 years.....	35%
3-5 years.....	35%
6 years or more	30%

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU WORKED IN SCHOOL/COLLEGE MARCOM OVERALL?

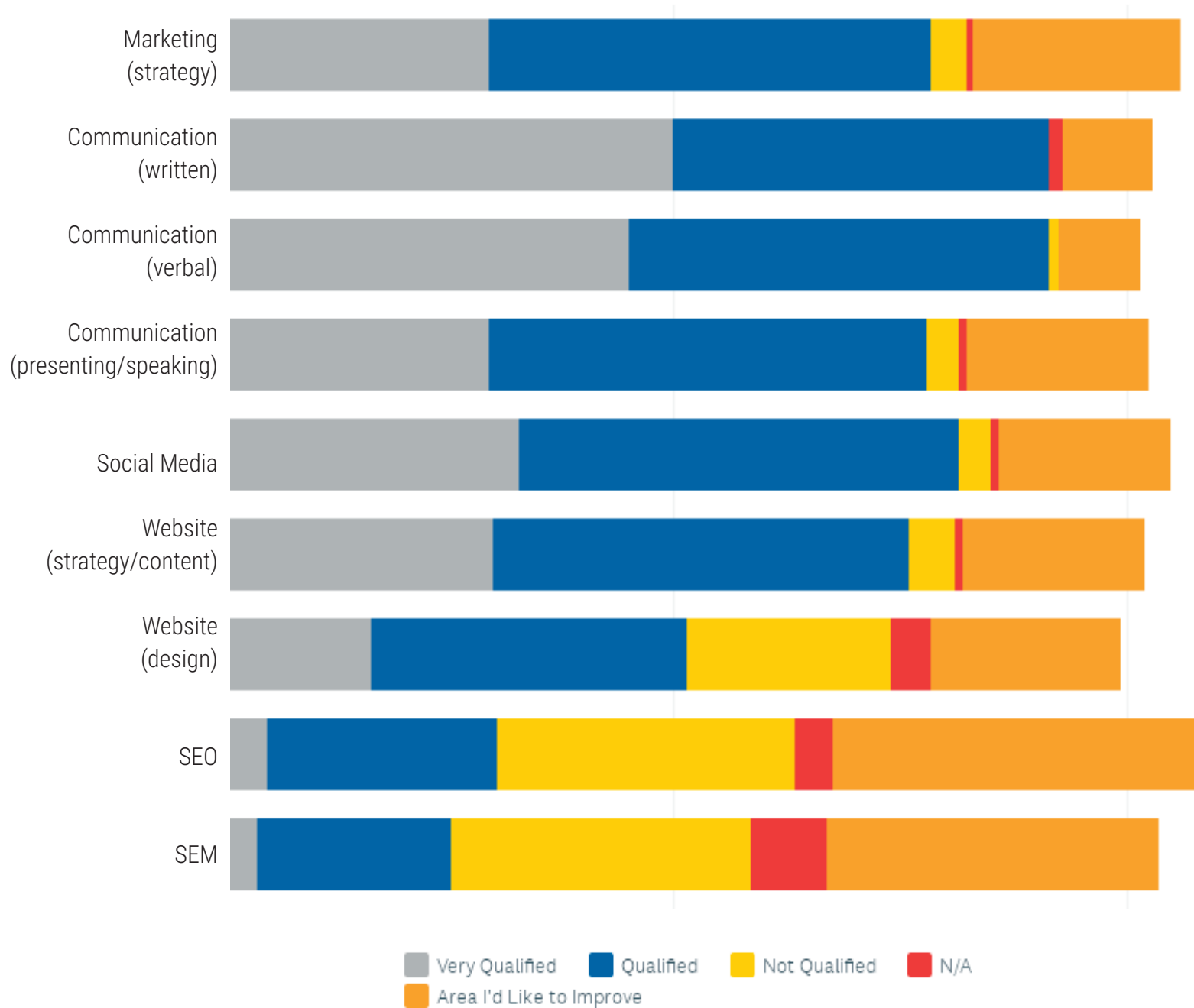
0-2 years.....	20%
3-5 years.....	23%
6-10 years.....	27%
11-15 years.....	21%
16 years or more	9%

WHERE DID YOU WORK BEFORE YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

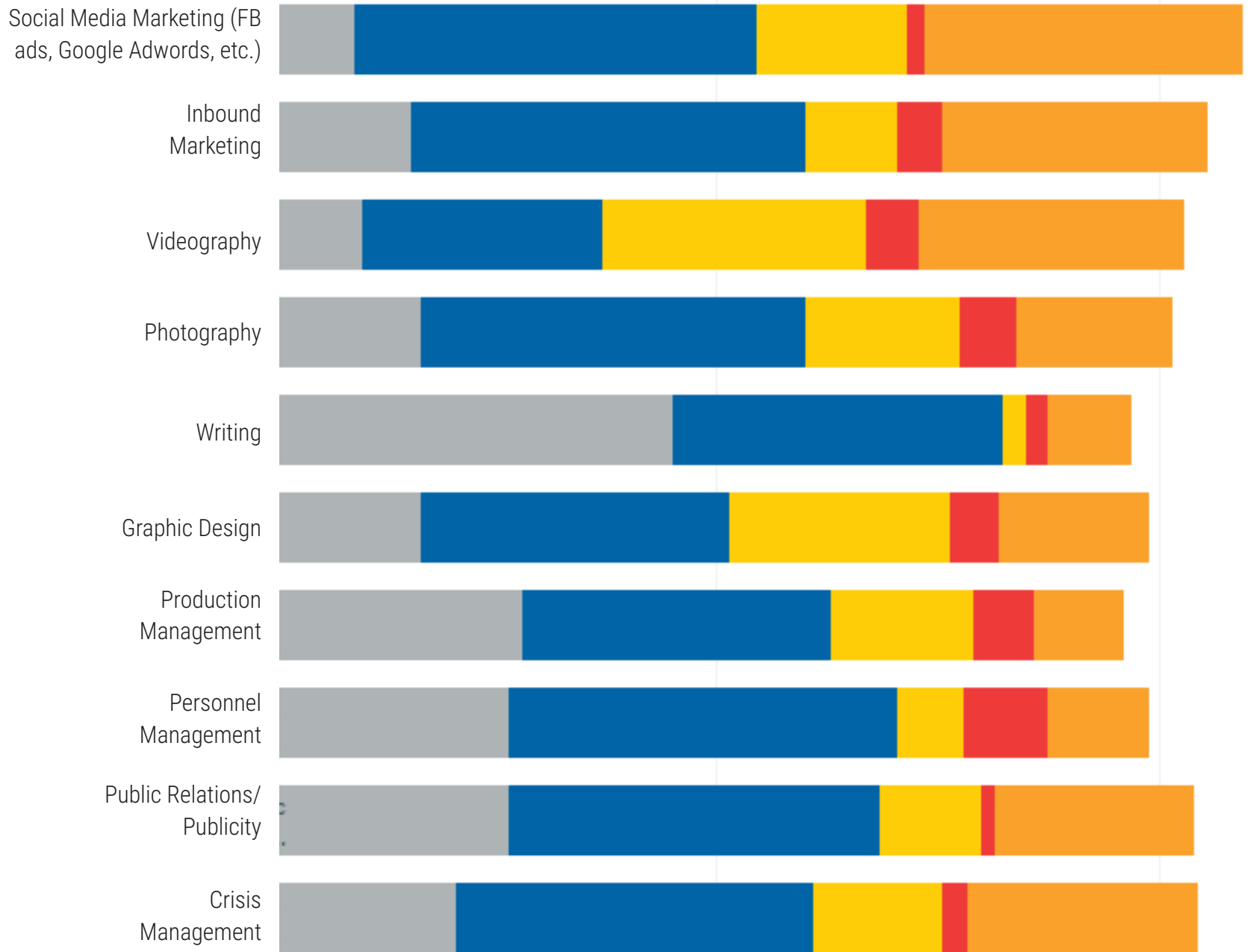
Another position at this school.....	13%
Another private school.....	20%
For-profit organization	30%
Other non-profit organization.....	14%
Higher ed	10%
Hospital	2%
Government5%
Other	10.5%



INDICATE YOUR SELF-PERCEIVED LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION AND NEED TO IMPROVE IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS.



Continued on next page>



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Chapter 2

MARCOM OFFICE PROFILE

In 2017 we were surprised to find that 28% of the responding schools did not have an official MarCom office, but that number has not changed much in the ensuing years. In 2018 33% of respondents said they did **not have an official office**, and in 2020 respondents told us that 31% of them did not have one. One has to wonder if dealing with the difficulty of communicating during a pandemic will influence the way schools view the importance of this office.

Of the schools who said they have an official MarCom office, 88% said they have a full-time director of MarCom, very similar to the 91% in 2018.

Of those who do have a MarCom office, 34% have one full-time person in the office, 24% have two, 22% have three, and 11% have four. Only 8% have five or more people in MarCom. Compare this to Admissions offices where 24% have five or more staff members, and Development

where 29% have five or more. You can see where schools are committing resources. (See chart on page 10.)

When it comes to MarCom directors presenting at **board meetings**, there is some very good news. In 2018 28.5% of respondents said MarCom present at board meetings, up from 25% in 2017. But in 2020 we saw a big jump to 41% saying that MarCom presented at board meetings. It's hard to gain awareness and support for the efforts of your MarCom office if you don't have an opportunity to address leadership, including the board. This is a point we have been making for years. The fact that over 40% of this year's respondents said they are presenting is great, but it still is a low percentage. There is still a lot of work to be done in educating leadership about the critical importance of the MarCom function.

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A MARCOM OFFICE?

Yes 69%
 No 31%

WHO WORKS IN THE MARCOM OFFICE AT YOUR SCHOOL?

Full-time director of MarCom..... 88%
 Part-time director of MarCom..... 6%
 Full-time associate director of MarCom 49%
 Part-time associate director of MarCom 7%
 Full-time digital marketing manager..... 15%
 Part-time digital marketing manager..... 7%
 Full-time photographer/videographer 11%
 Part-time photographer/videographer 9%
 Full-time social media manager..... 12%
 Part-time social media manager 9%
 Full-time graphic designer 17%
 Part-time graphic designer 5%
 Full-time writer 12%
 Part-time writer 11%
 Full or part-time volunteer 2%

DOES THE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ATTEND AND/OR PRESENT AT BOARD MEETINGS?

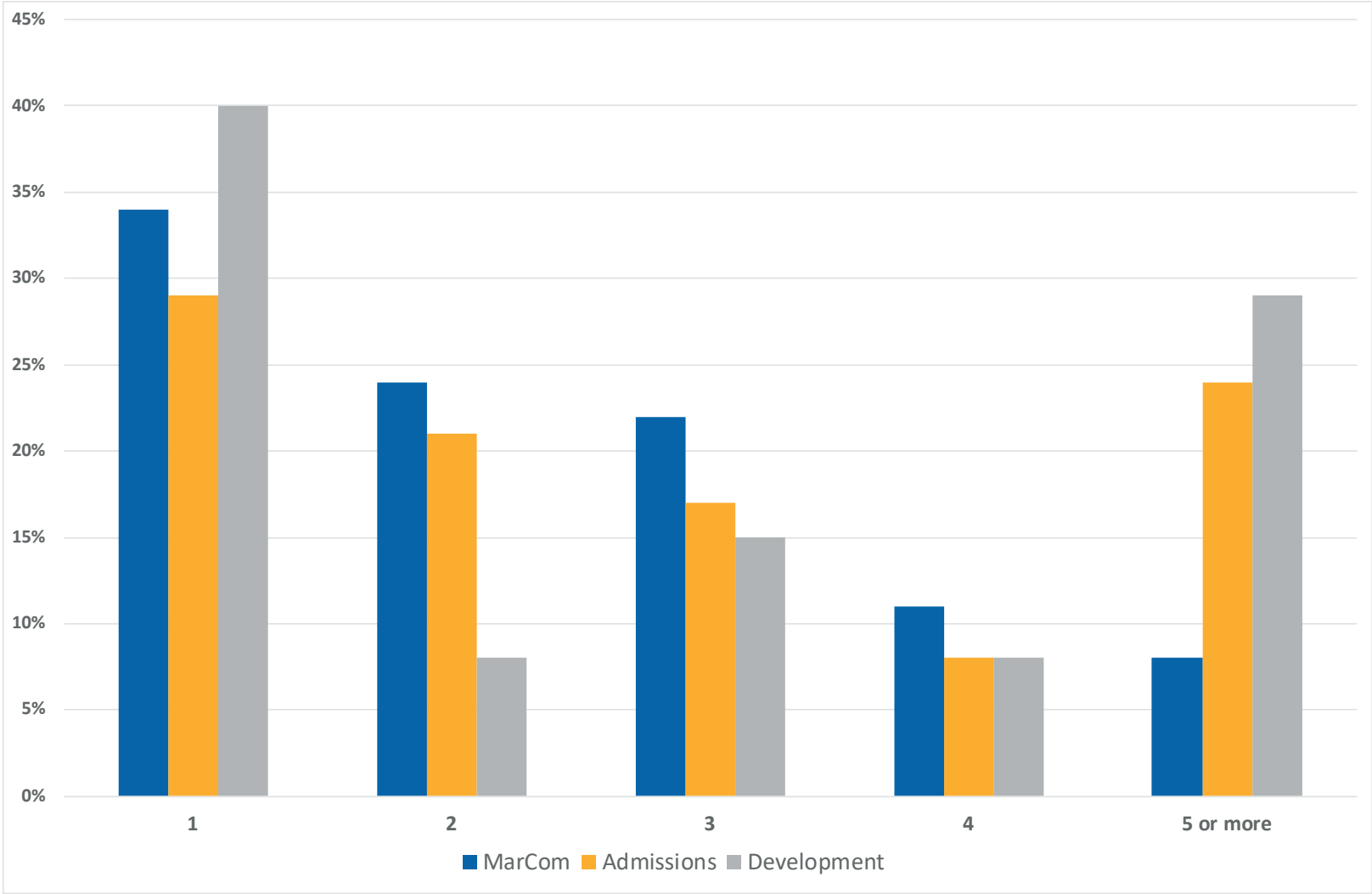
Yes 41%
 No 37%
 Sometimes..... 23%



WHO CONTROLS THE SCHOOL'S MARKETING BUDGET FOR THE YEAR?

MarCom..... 34%
 Admissions 7.5%
 MarCom and Admissions 16%
 Development/Advancement 3%
 MarCom and Development/Advancement 8%
 Head of School..... 11.5%
 Some combination of office above 17%
 The requesting department 0%
 Other 3%

HOW MANY FTE EMPLOYEES WORK IN THE MARCOM, ADMISSIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICES?





Chapter 3

SCHOOL PROFILE

Of the schools represented in the 2020 survey 84% are coed schools and 81% are day only. As with previous surveys there is a remarkably even distribution in enrollment size from less than 200 to more than 1,000.

It has always been a difficult task to compare disparate schools, especially when it comes to financial comparisons. Location, size of the student body, demographics of the local and school communities, tuition, size of the endowment, length of time in existence—all of these attributes and more make any comparison tricky.

Yet we wanted to devise a uniform way to measure and compare the participating

schools' implied financial capacity to spend on marketing, so we asked participants to divide their school's total revenue (as listed in its most recent annual report) by the total enrollment (total revenue/ total enrollment), producing total revenue per student.

While this number does not specifically address a school's ability or desire to spend on marketing, we felt it could provide a method for comparison. However, in 2017, 77% answered \$50,000 or less for total revenue per student, in 2018 the percentage was 78%, and in 2020 it was 70%. In future surveys, we will break down the categories further to see if we can produce a more nuanced result.



WHAT IS THE GENDER BREAKDOWN OF YOUR SCHOOL?

All girls	9%
All boys.....	7%
Coed.....	84%

IS YOUR SCHOOL BOARDING OR DAY?

Day only	81%
Boarding only	1%
Day and boarding (mostly day)	11%
Boarding and day (mostly boarding)	7%

WHAT IS THE RESULT WHEN YOU DIVIDE YOUR SCHOOL'S TOTAL REVENUE BY YOUR SCHOOL'S TOTAL ENROLLMENT?

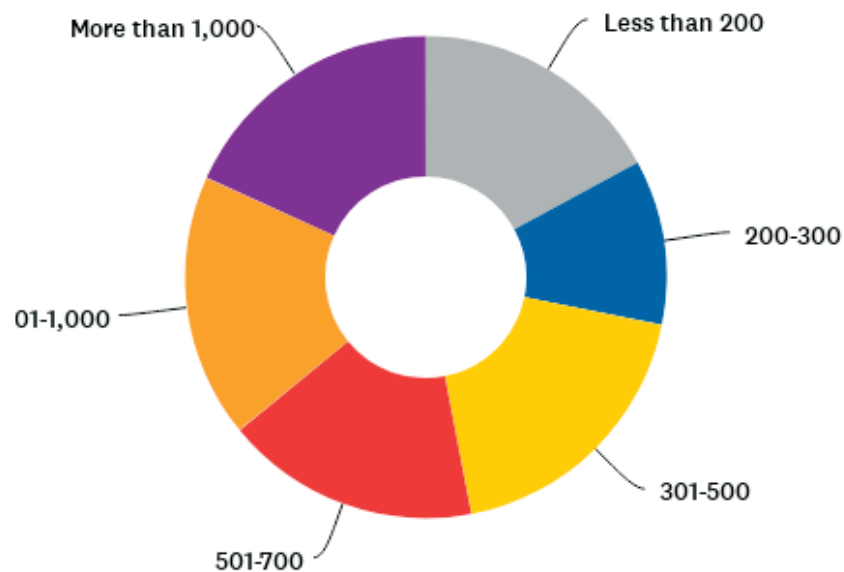
Less than \$25,000	45%
\$25,001-\$50,000	26%
\$50,001-\$75,000	16%
\$75,001-\$100,000	6%
Over \$100,000	8%

WHAT GRADES DOES YOUR SCHOOL SERVE?

Lower ONLY (up to grade 5 or 6)	4%
Middle ONLY (grades 6, 7, or 8)	2%
Upper ONLY (grades 9-12 or PG)	13%
Lower and Middle (up to grade 8)	24%
Middle and Upper (grades 6-12 or PG)	12%
PK-12.....	45%

WHAT IS YOUR SCHOOL'S ENROLLMENT?

Fewer than 200	17%
200-300	11%
301-500	19%
501-700	17%
701-1,000	18%
More than 1,000	18%





MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
Small Shop Savvy:
Branding for the
Small Shop

Chapter 4

OVERALL MARCOM INITIATIVES

66% of this year's respondents said they had undergone a formal **brand development** process within the last 7 years. (Very similar to the 66% in 2018 and 71% in 2017.) Of those, 24% outsourced the brand development and 42% did it in-house. What seems difficult to understand is that only 45% of those who did formal brand development said that they have **brand messages** as a result of the process. (See the list of brand messages on page 17.)

Almost the same as previous years, 45% of respondents have a **tagline** they use consistently, and another 27% one they use inconsistently. (See the list of taglines on page 15.) While some taglines are unique and memorable, the majority mean little to the external market. This is why InspirED discourages schools from leaning on their tagline too much, and, instead, encourages a focus on the school's brand to drive enrollment.

79% of responding schools have a **style guide** (similar to 81% in 2018), and 75% said their MarCom office follows the style guide very well. 22% said that the MarCom office itself

either could do better or follows the style guide poorly is very surprising.

As in previous years' surveys, the bookstore and athletics, two departments using school logos and colors all the time, are still a problem when it comes to following the style guide. Only 22% of respondents said their bookstores follow it very well with 35% saying they could do better, and only 17% of athletics departments followed it very well with 53% saying athletics could do better. This doesn't bode well for a school's brand when athletic teams and bookstore swag represent the school externally in a multitude of ways. Uniforms should look, well, uniform, and swag should be consistent. Perhaps leadership needs to step in to ensure adhesion.

Conducting a **MarCom survey** is an opportunity to learn families' preferred communications method. This knowledge is critical to connect with your community and deliver important information. But only 48% of respondents said they conducted a MarCom survey (13% annually and 35% periodically.) This is clearly a missed opportunity to learn valuable information about audience preferences.



DO YOU CONDUCT A MARCOM SURVEY OF YOUR CURRENT FAMILIES (EITHER ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER SURVEY)?

Yes, annually 13%
Yes, periodically 35%
No 20%
No, but would like to 30%
Don't know 2%

HAS YOUR SCHOOL UNDERGONE FORMAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT IN THE LAST 7 YEARS?

Yes (in-house) 24%
Yes (outsourced) 42%
No 18%
No, but want to (in-house)..... 3%
No, but want to (outsourced)..... 8%
We're in a brand Development process now.....6%

DO YOU HAVE BRAND MESSAGES (DIFFERENT FROM YOUR MISSION STATEMENT)?

Yes 45%
No 24%
Sort of 27%
Don't know 4%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A TAGLINE?

Yes 45%
Yes, used inconsistently..... 27%
No 28%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A STYLE GUIDE?

Yes 79%
No 6%
No, but would like one..... 15%

IF YOUR SCHOOL HAS A TAGLINE, WHAT IS IT?

1. Rooted in Community, Strengthened by Diversity, Inspired by Possibility
2. Enter To Learn, Leave to Serve
3. It's a great day to be an Eagle
4. Building leaders for the 21st century,
5. Ask the world why. Ask yourself, "why not?"
6. Our girls change the world.
7. Extraordinary Learning,
8. Educating for Complexity
9. YesSheCan,
10. Follow your curiosity
11. We are What School Should Be
12. Best for the world
13. Ask Our Graduates
14. Wholehearted
15. Men of character from boys of promise
16. Improve Both Mind and Heart
17. It all begins here.
18. We are St. Raphael
19. Forward thinking since 1873
20. Every Student Every Day
21. Striving to be Saints. Scholars. Servants. Champions.
22. From Here, To Anywhere
23. A Voyage of Discovery
24. At Home in the World
25. Wisdom to Follow. Courage to Lead.
26. Amarillo's Only College Preparatory School for Grades 6-12
27. Going beyond
28. From Here to Anywhere
29. Do Well. Do Good.
30. The future goes to Sandia Prep.
31. Promoting Strengths. Supporting Differences.
32. Educating The Mind, Reaching The Heart
33. Achievement Begins With a Decision to Try!
34. Going the second mile
35. Educating tomorrow's industry leaders
36. Lead the Way
37. Where connection is key
38. Boys, Balance, Good Men
39. Love to Learn—Live to Serve
40. Generations of Excellence
41. Know, Care, Take Action
42. Inspiring the curious
43. Small School Feel in a Great Big City
44. Where Tradition Meets Innovation
45. Discover What's Within
46. Forming Men for and With Others
47. Reflect | Embrace | Reach Out
48. We learn not for school but for life
49. Give them the world
50. A place where faith and intellect grow as one

51. Educating minds, enriching hearts, expanding horizons
52. Inspiring Creative Thinking, Passion and Purposeful Action
53. Inspired, Prepared, Empowered
54. The International Choice
55. Leading Women
56. Minding What Matters
57. Doing Everything Right For Boys
58. Faith, Tradition, Excellence
59. Experience is everything.
60. Advancing Independent and Excited Students Since 1944
61. We are so much more.
62. Be who you are, become who you want to be
63. Engaging the mind. Nurturing the spirit. Transforming the world.
64. Rooted in the love of learning.
65. Grow. Learn. Lean.
66. Embrace challenge, discover yourself
67. Independent day & boarding school for college-bound girls
68. Ascende omnem montem
69. Work hard, be kind and smile
70. It's a great day to be a lion.
71. Open Minds. Big Ideas. Infinite Possibilities.
72. To Be, Rather Than to Seem
73. A dynamic community that challenges students to question, imagine, and create in order to contribute boldly to a changing world.
74. No Limits to Learning
75. Learning it all its' dimensions.
76. Mind and soul. Better together.
77. Educating the Mind and the Heart for Christ
78. A bright future, together
79. To be Known, To be Loved, To be Prepared
80. Inspiring the Journey
81. Inspiring excellence. Honoring tradition.
82. Partnering with Parents. Building for Life.
83. Known and loved



IF YOUR SCHOOL HAS BRAND MESSAGES, WHAT ARE THEY?

- Choose Your Path
- High school lasts four years. Community lasts a lifetime.
- JCHS trains students to find meaning in their learning. Not only do they learn “what”, but “why.” Not just “how” but “how come?”
- Ancient wisdom, contemporary values.
- Our girls change the world.
- How will you change the world?
- Faith. Academics. Service. Community. Growth. That’s how our girls change the world.
- Change lives within.
- Explore the Sacred Heart difference.
- Learn for Life
- Think Deeply
- Welcome Everyone
- Relationships Matter
- Live with Purpose



- Curriculum
- Location
- History
- Non-profit
- Cultural diversity
- Learning, inquiry, innovation
- Academic results
- YesSheCan
- Empowering Girls
- Family of schools
- Success without stress
- Follow your curiosity
- Country school in the heart of the city
- We are What School Should Be
- Dream. Learn. Serve.
- Learning in Indonesia to be best for the world
- Cultivating intellect and character
- College preparatory
- Complete, balanced, and inspiring educational program

- Improve Both Mind and Heart
- Leading with Intellect and Insight
- There is No Back Row
- Pray. Play. Learn.
- LIA takes you to the best universities
- Go LIA Hawks
- We are LIA
- Once a hawk, always a hawk
- Safest campus in Managua
- Pioneers in Nicaragua’s catholic and bilingual education
- Every Student Every Day
- Tiger Pride
- Tigers Together
- Unrivaled Education
- Progressive Foundations
- Meeting the needs of children
- Seeing children as powerful, resourceful, and capable
- DIFFERENT MINDSET—BETTER EDUCATION
- We are Severn
- Your Severn Story Begins Now
- One School. Many Voices. Find Yours.

- Nurture the wonder of becoming
- Self-assured kids
- Joyful learning
- Intentional connectedness
- Learn, Achieve, Become... MORE
- We are MORE... Scholars, Artists, Athletes, Leaders
- Building MORE... Scholars, Artists, Athletes, Leaders
- Brotherhood for Life
- Ambitious Entrepreneurial Academics
- School as Family
- Culture of Honor
- Greatness Lives in You
- Filling childhood with meaning
- Empowering excellence since 1899
- From Here to Anywhere
- Not what to think. How to think.
- Not just a campus, but a community.
- Not extra, but essential.(extracurriculars)
- To Know Christ and Make Him Known
- Educating The Mind, Reaching The Heart

- Faith
- Academics
- Service
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Innovative
- Nurturing, Christ-centered environments
- Lead the Way
- A World of Opportunity
- One Community
- Academic Excellence
- Christ-Centered
- Sustainability
- Where connection is key
- Unearthing the treasure in every child
- Personalized instruction through a co-teaching model
- Respect
- Innovation
- Each child, every day
- Moral, academic, artistic and athletic excellence
- Community-centered learning environment
- Challenge
- Learn
- Explore
- Engage

- We're for families who believe that a great education begins in joy and wonder, and that if it begins there, it never truly ends.
- We're for families who want their children to thrive in the nation's most diverse, demanding city.
- We're for families who believe that children learn best when they are known as complex human beings worthy of respect and attention.
- We're for families who expect teachers to have a deep understanding of child development, as well as the capacity—and the freedom—to adapt to each child's strengths.
- We're for families who want their graduates to excel in the most competitive high schools and colleges—and beyond.
- We're for families who know that the most worthy achievements are grounded in compassion.
- We empower students to build a future that fulfills their brightest dreams and boldest plans.
- Love to Learn—Live to Serve



MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
The Enrollment Pandemic
and Prescriptions
for Healing

- Fit to Serve
- Establish Faith, Building Commitment, Training for Service
- Forming men for and with others
- Reflect | Embrace | Reach Out
- Confidence
- Academic excellence
- Community
- NEAL (outdoor education - nature)
- Challenge
- Freedom to Flourish
- Learn with Joy. Grow with Empathy. Explore with Confidence.
- A welcoming school community where all children are encouraged to find and follow their gifts as they become compassionate, bilingual world learners and leaders.
- A place where faith and intellect grow as one
- Experience (school name)
- Name) county's exemplary covenantal Christian PK3-12th grade school
- Voted Best Private School in (name) county
- Educating minds, enriching hearts, expanding horizons

- Educating the whole child and honoring the diversity of each individual from Pre-elementary(age 3) through Grade 8.
- In educating the whole child, Eton School inspires creative, confident thinkers who have an enduring passion for learning and are poised to contribute to the world.
- Our students are inspired, prepared, and empowered.
- We are designed to address your child's specific learning needs every step of the way.
- Educating the Whole Child
- Based on Montessori Philosophy and Educational Research
- I am becoming...
- The premier international school of choice
- Relational Learning
- Traditions Matter
- Character-based education
- Learning designed for boys
- Inspiring Learners, Equipping Leaders
- At Woodward Academy, one size doesn't fit even two.

- We equip children to become curious and passionate learners, creative and confident thinkers, and informed and engaged citizens.
- Utilizing our values: Learning, Character, Individuality, Community
- Be who you are. Become who you want to be.
- We are so much more
- Emphasis on learning
- Emphasis on development of the person



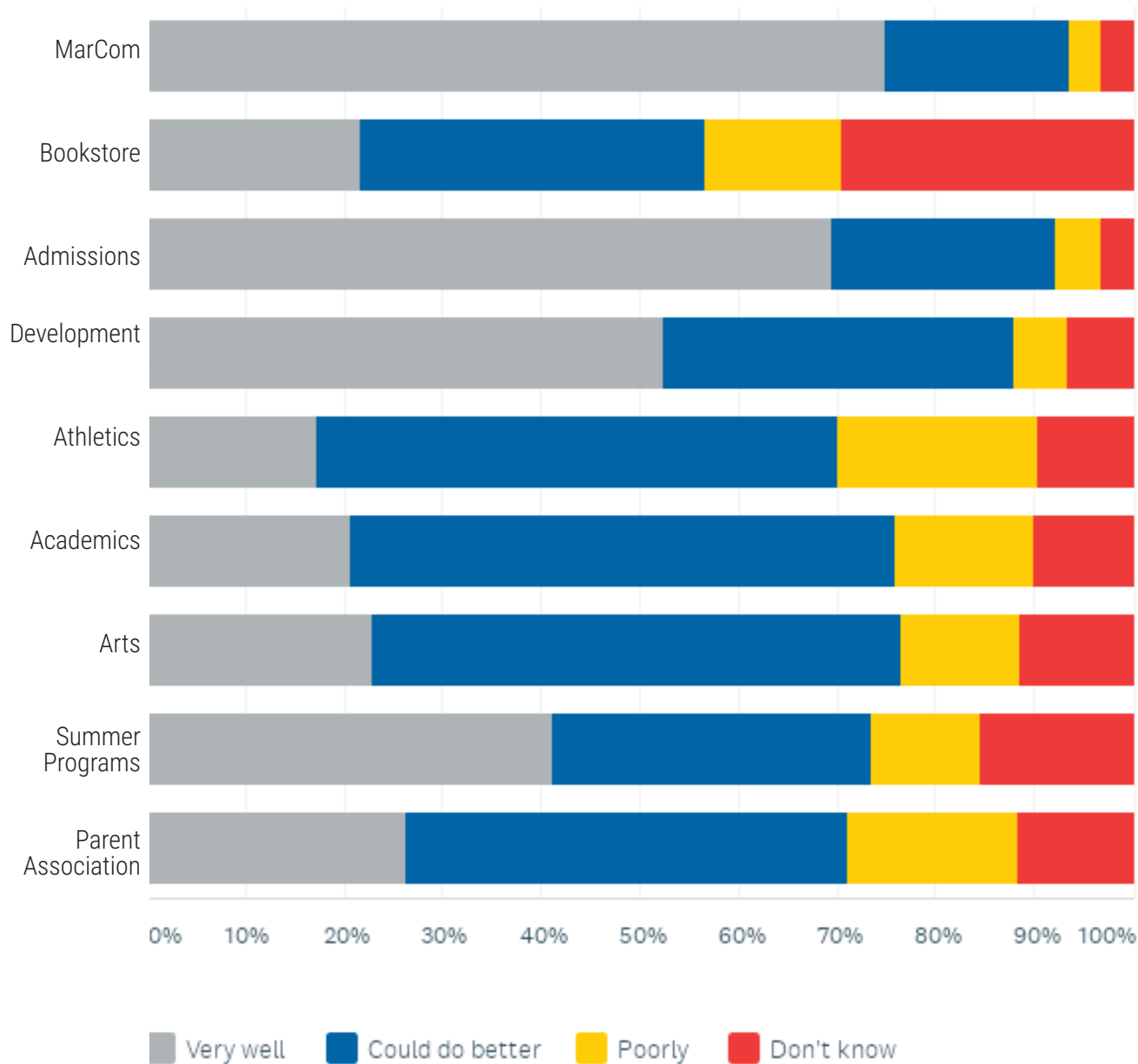
- Focus on next generation education, leadership development, and community strength and service: global citizenship.
- Teachers strive to provide a whole-child approach to the learning environment—one that develops each child’s emotional, intellectual, social and physical being.
- Every child receives a personalized instruction profile that is shared with parents in the belief that a strong education is rooted in strong partnerships between teachers and parents/students
- Be kind, do good, work hard, make the world a better.
- Through internationally acclaimed academics and the nation’s first integrated Pre-K through 8th grade leadership and entrepreneurial development program, our students are empowered to lead purposeful and extraordinary lives.
- Unconditional encouragement
- Dynamic, energizing, inspiring place
- Encouraging each student individually
- Encouraging broader perspectives
- Safe, supportive environment
- Campus is like a vibrant neighborhood all its own
- An Education For Life
- Be Who You Are and Be That Well
- Known, Loved and Challenged
- Intellectual excellence
- Strong character
- Innovation
- Inclusivity

- Student-Centered
- No Ceiling on Learning
- Independent Thinkers
- To Be Faith-Filled
- To Be Just
- To Be Inquisitive
- To Be Innovative
- To Be Independent
- Know the Kid
- Culture of Performance
- Inclusive Community
- Different, not less
- No limits to Learning
- Exceptional Learners with Special Educational Needs
- Moving Forward
- Diversity, courage, thoughtfulness, integrity, resilience, inspiring unbounded curiosity, independent thought, and a quest to effect positive change
- Dunham Prepares
- Dunham Inspires
- Dunham Serves
- Dunham Wins
- Discover More at Shalom Christian Academy
- Servanthood | Community | Academics
- Veritas et Caritas
- Living the Truth in Love

- To be Known, To be Loved, To be Prepared
- Mind, Body, Spirit
- Every Patriot Has a Story
- Every student is known, valued and prepared
- Once a Patriot, Always a Patriot
- Welcoming
- Spiritual
- Successful



HOW WELL DO DEPARTMENTS ADHERE TO YOUR STYLE GUIDE (IF YOU HAVE ONE) OR SIMPLY YOUR GRAPHIC IDENTITY (LOGO, FONTS, COLORS, ETC.)?





MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
 SEO Basics
 for
 Private Schools



Chapter 5 WEBSITE

Everyone understands the importance of having a **currently designed website**, supported by the fact that 50% of respondents say their school has redone their website within the last two years, another 43% within three to five years. This means that 93% of respondents have websites that are newer than 5 years old.

The **platforms** that respondents say their schools’ websites run on have changed quite a bit since 2018:

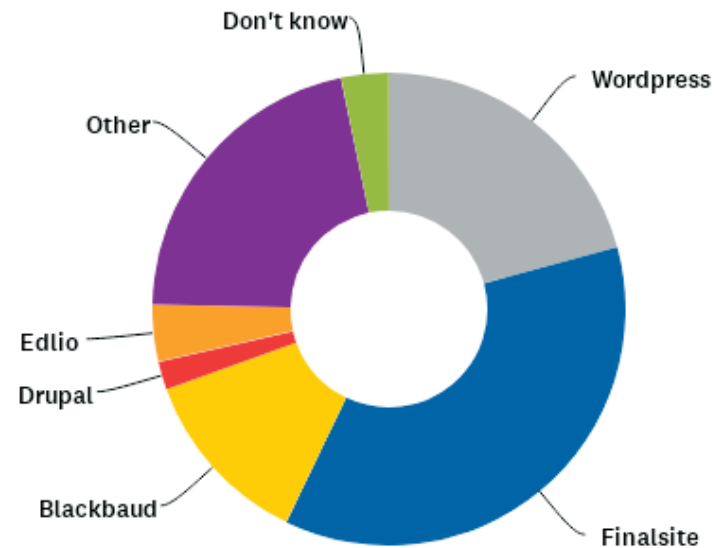
Finalsite	2018-29%, 2020-36%
Blackbaud	2018-27%, 2020-12%
Wordpress.....	2018-23%, 2020-21%
Other	2018 20%, 2020-30%

As in previous years, InspirED asked if schools use a **virtual tour** on their website. Since the COVID-19 pandemic occurred (March, 2020) before the survey closed (July 1, 2020), it’s hard to interpret how much the pandemic affected the responses. The numbers certainly show a dramatic increase. In 2018 only 15% said “yes,” 51% said “no,” and 34% said “no, but would like one.” In 2020 40% said “yes,” 18% said “no,” and 42% said “no, but would like one.”

We assume that these numbers will increase over the next year while schools grapple with the devastating effects of the pandemic.

WHAT IS YOUR WEBSITE'S PLATFORM?

WordPress	21%
Finalsite	36%
Blackbaud	12%
Drupal	2%
Edlio	4%
Other	21%
Don't Know	3%



HOW OLD IS YOUR CURRENT WEBSITE DESIGN?

0-2 years	50%
3-5 years	43%
6 or more years	7%

IS YOUR WEBSITE RESPONSIVE?

Yes	89%
No	6%
Don't know	5%

WHEN IT'S TIME TO REDESIGN YOUR WEBSITE, WILL YOU DO IT IN-HOUSE OR OUTSOURCE IT?

In-house	9%
Outsource	45%
A combination of in-house and outsourced ...	37%
Not sure	9%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL USE A VIRTUAL TOUR ON THE WEBSITE?

Yes	40%
No	18%
No, but would like one.....	42%



Chapter 6

ENROLLMENT MARKETING

Tracking the results of any marketing effort is critical to being able to measure the successful efforts and those that are not. This is especially true when it's about enrollment marketing which feeds the lifeblood of the school. Unfortunately, the results of the question about how well schools track enrollment marketing results are as disappointing as any and are virtually unchanged since 2017.

When asked "How well do you think your school tracks enrollment marketing results?" in 2020 32% of respondents said "very well" or "well." In 2018 it was 34%, and in 2017 it was 31%. InspirED would like to see schools improve tracking results so that they can focus on what works, eliminate what doesn't, and streamline marketing efforts.

The top four marketing efforts that were considered highly effective or somewhat effective are the same in 2020 as in 2018 and 2017—word of mouth, parent direct referrals, Admissions tours, and website. The next two in order (again the same as 2017 and 2018) are Facebook and open houses. In 2020, notably lower than the above in perceived effectiveness are feeder schools, inbound marketing, and social media channels — other than Facebook.

Viewbooks have been viewed as "highly" or "somewhat effective" only 59% in 2017 and 2018, and 57% in 2020, yet many schools continued update them. We base this on 83% of respondents reporting this year that their viewbooks are less than three years old. BUT, continuing a trend, the percentage of schools that said they produce a viewbook has dropped dramatically — 2017-72%, 2018-63%, and in 2020 only 51% said they still produce a viewbook.

91% of respondents hold **open houses**, but of those who hold them, only 65% gave open houses a 4 or 5, the top two scores for effectiveness. Of those who used to hold open houses but no longer do, the reasons reported were low attendance (38%), have a better alternative (46%), and ineffective (23%).

A new question asked in the 2020 survey was "Does your school have a **FORMAL retention strategy** or program in place?" Only 36% of respondents answered "yes." For those who answered "yes" 60% said the strategy was headed by the Director of Admissions/Enrollment Management. InspirED thinks having a formal retention strategy will (and should) become a critical part of enrollment management in the coming years, and it will be interesting to see if future surveys show this to be the case.

DOES YOUR SCHOOL PRODUCE A PRINTED VIEWBOOK?

Yes 51%
No 49%

IF YES, HOW OLD IS YOUR PRINTED VIEWBOOK?

0–3 years..... 83%
4–5 years..... 13%
6 or more years 4%

WHEN IT’S TIME TO REDESIGN THE VIEWBOOK, WILL YOU DO IT IN-HOUSE OR OUTSOURCE IT?

In-house..... 26%
Outsource 30%
A combo of in-house and outsourced 41%
Not sure..... 3%

WHICH OFFICE HAS PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CREATION OF THE VIEWBOOK?

MarCom..... 37%
Admissions 11%
MarCom and Admissions together 41%
Development/Advancement 1%
MarCom and Development/Advancement together..... 3%
MarCom, Admissions and Development/Advancement together.... 5%
Admission and Development/Advancement together 3%



DOES YOUR SCHOOL HOLD OPEN HOUSES?

Yes91%
 No 9%

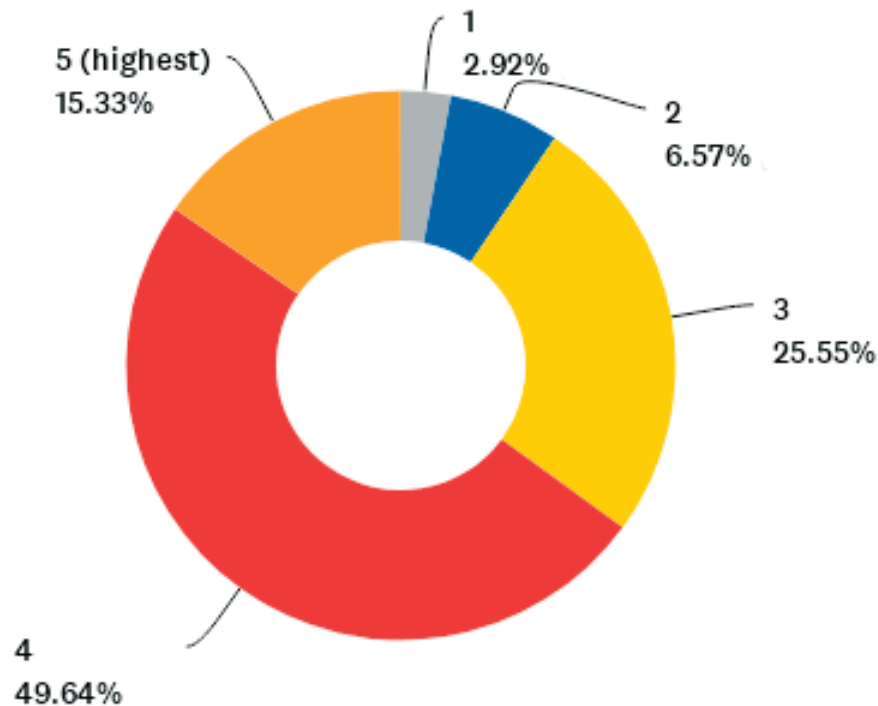
DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A FORMAL RETENTION STRATEGY OR PROGRAM IN PLACE?

Yes36%
 No64%

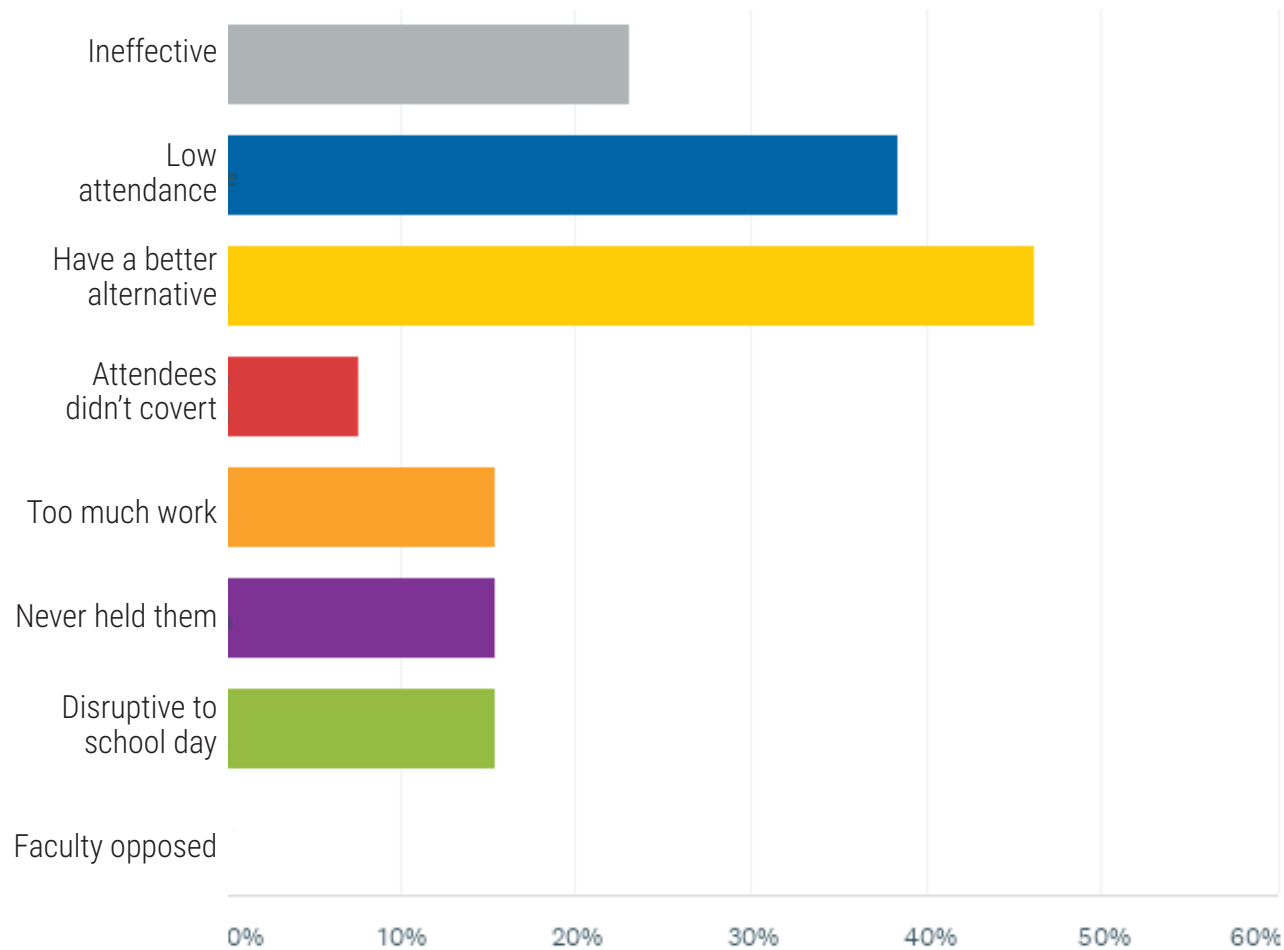
IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO HAVING A FORMAL RETENTION STRATEGY, WHO HEADS IT?

Director of Admissions/Enrollment Management60%
 Director of MarCom16%
 Head of School.....10%
 Retention Committee11%
 Other 3%

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE YOUR OPEN HOUSES FOR ENROLLMENT MARKETING? (5 IS HIGHEST)



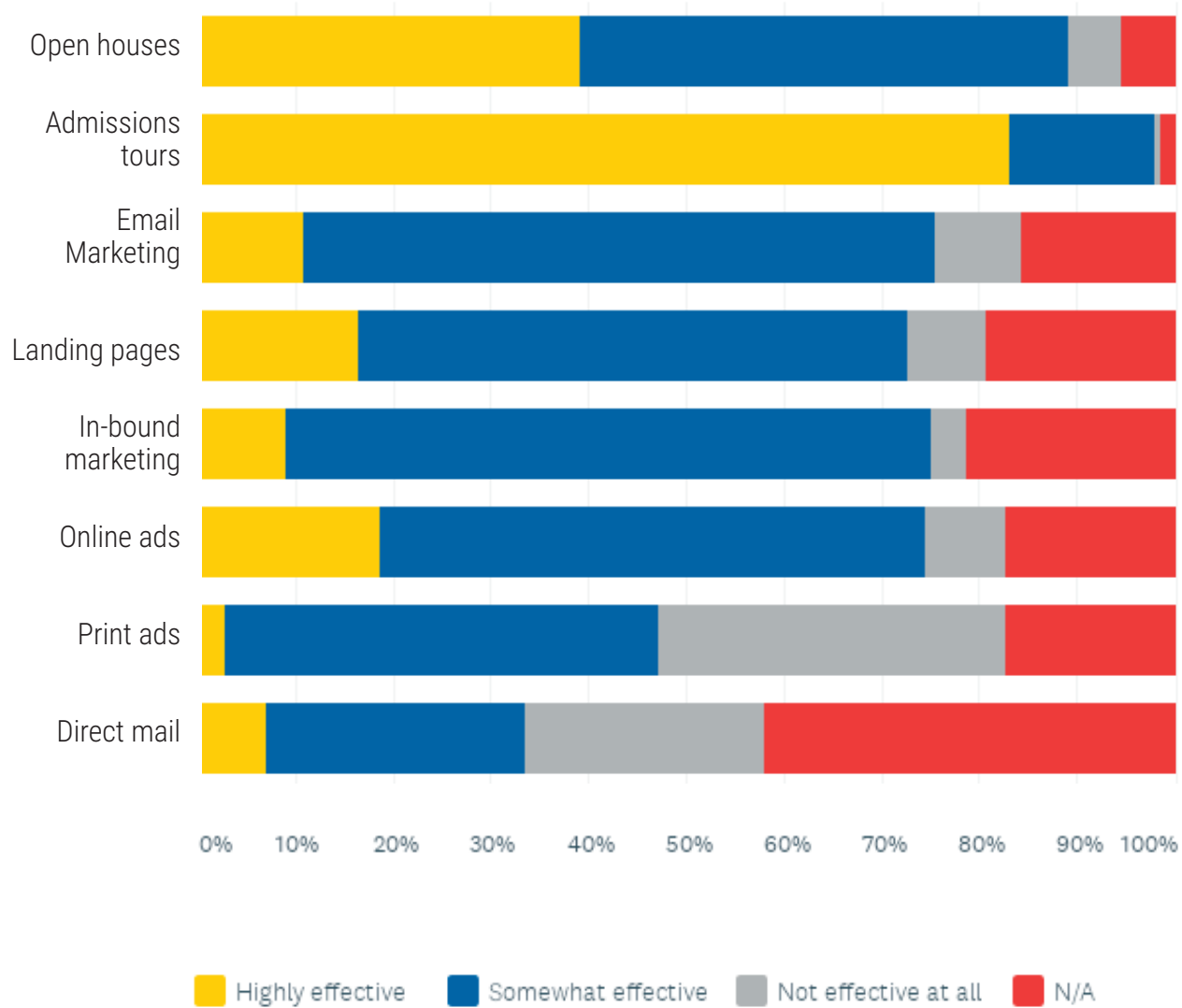
IF YOU NEVER HELD OPEN HOUSES OR USED TO HOLD THEM BUT DON'T ANY LONGER, WHY? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)



MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
Why The Way
You Describe Your Private
School Immediately
Kills its Uniqueness

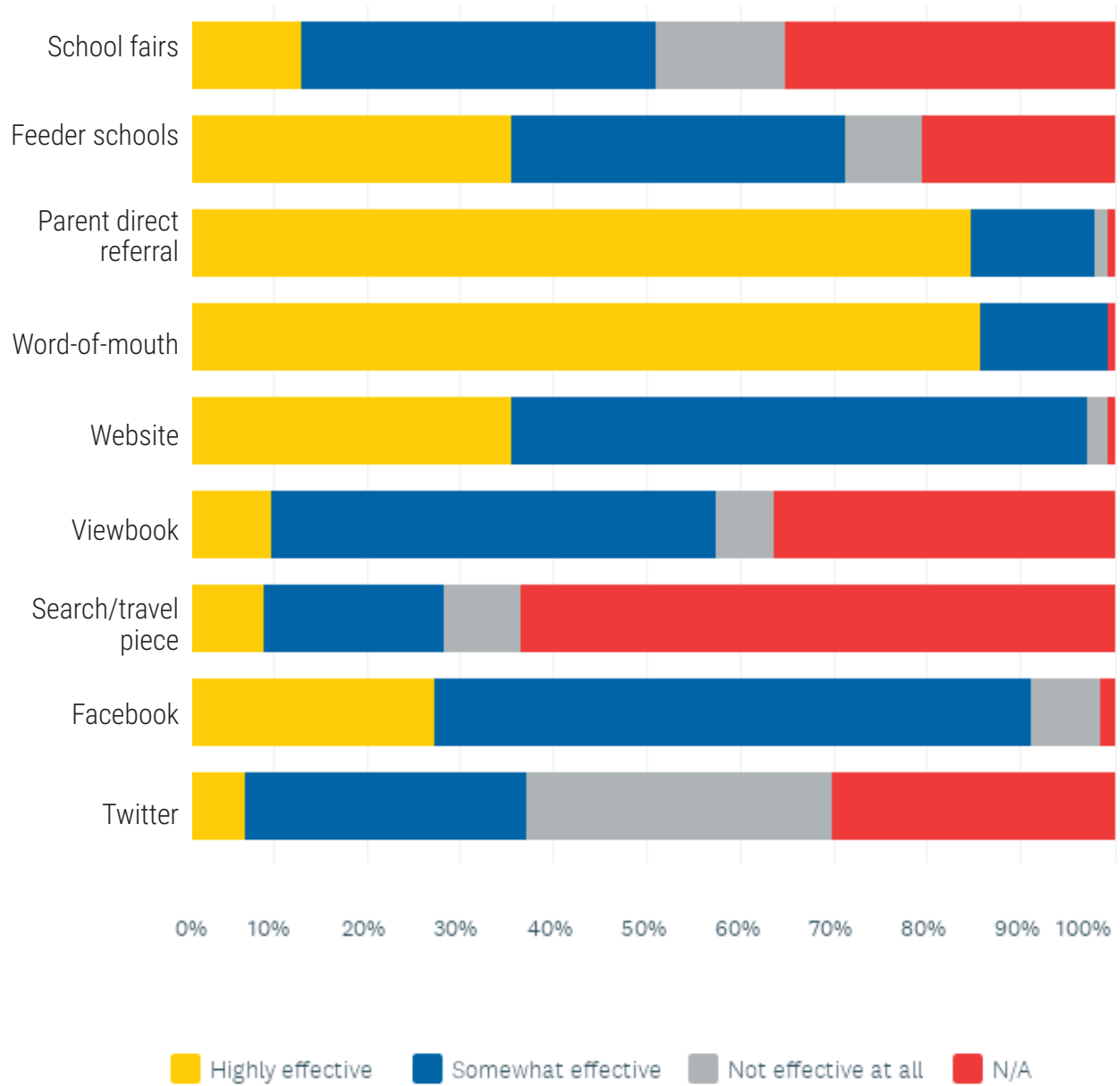
HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THE FOLLOWING FOR YOUR SCHOOL'S ENROLLMENT MARKETING?

("Effective" is however you define it for your school, but we think that if something is effective, it gets the results you want.)



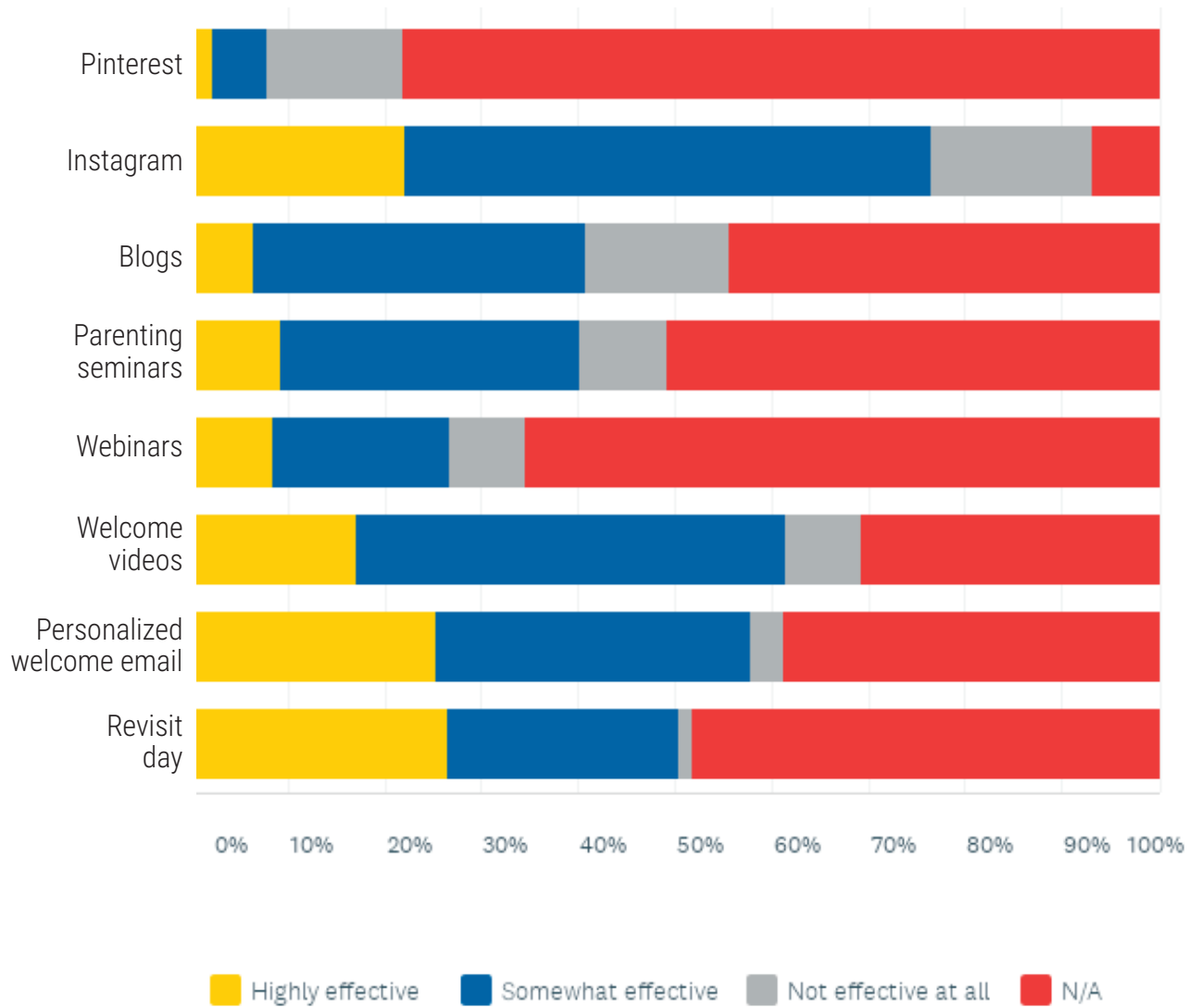
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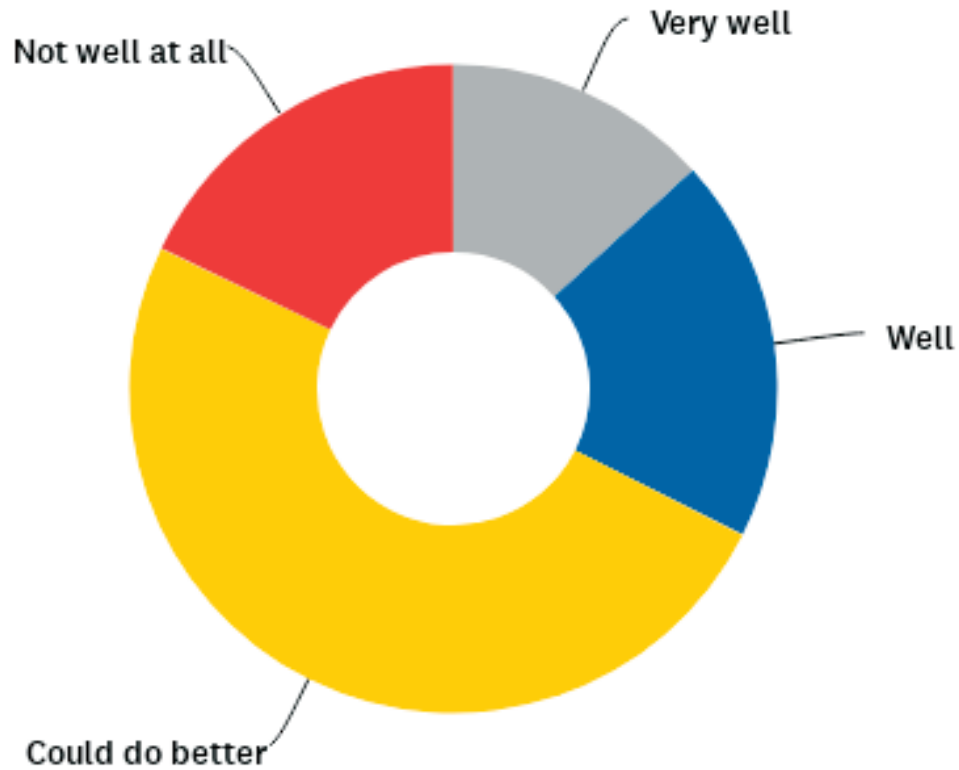


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HOW WELL DO YOU THINK YOUR SCHOOL TRACKS ENROLLMENT MARKETING RESULTS?



MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
Marketing Doesn't
Take Money.
It Takes Mindset.



Chapter 7

DEVELOPMENT MARKETING

In both the 2017 and 2018 surveys 63% respondents said they still produce a printed **Annual Report/Report of Gifts (ROG.)**

This year produced a dramatically different response with only 43% saying they produced a printed ROG. Of those 26% said they also produce a digital version in addition to the print version. 25% said they produce a digital version only, up from 18% in 2018, and 32% do not produce an ROG at all up from 19% in 2018.

Clearly the ROG is on the wane.

We know schools have wanted to **eliminate the ROG** for years due to production costs and time involved as well as its perceived limited value.

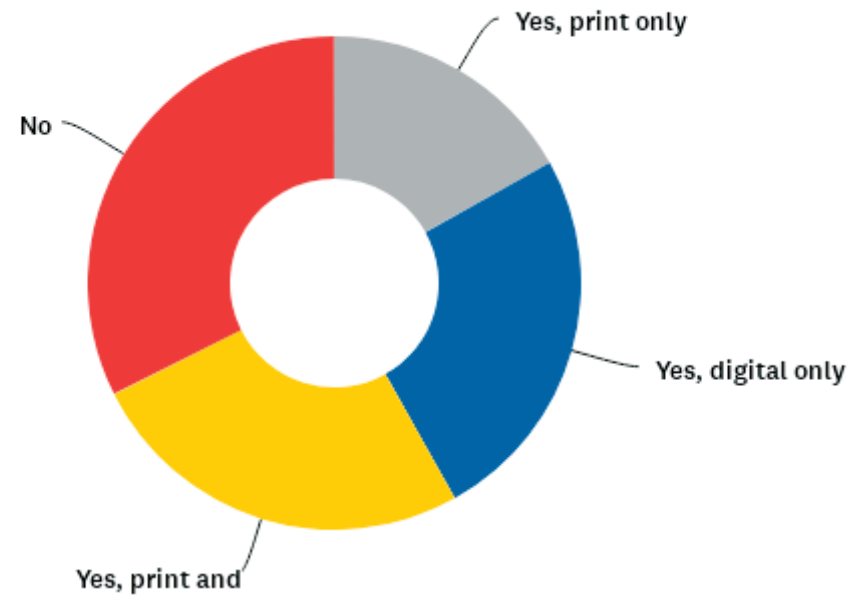
It also appears that **printed annual fund appeals** are slowly being phased out. In 2018 15% of respondents said they do not send a printed appeal, up from 6% 2017. This year 34% said they do not create printed appeals.

Interestingly, the percentage of schools producing **digital annual fund appeals** has also fallen, from 75% in 2018 to 61% this year. We wonder what methods schools *are* using to solicit for the annual fund instead.

When schools send out a **holiday video** or GIF, 84% of the time it does not include an “ask” for a donation. This is higher than we would have thought. Is sending with no ask a missed opportunity or an intentional strategy?

DOES YOUR SCHOOL CREATE AN ANNUAL REPORT/REPORT OF GIFTS?

Yes, print only.....	17%
Yes, digital only	25%
Yes, print and digital	26%
No	32%



IF YOUR SCHOOL DOES PRODUCE AN ANNUAL REPORT/REPORT OF GIFTS, IS IT PRODUCED IN-HOUSE OR OUTSOURCED? (NOT INCLUDING COPYWRITING OR PRINTING.)

In-house.....	48%
Outsourced	29%
A combination of in-house and outsourced	23%

IF YOUR SCHOOL DOES PRODUCE AN ANNUAL REPORT/REPORT OF GIFTS, WHICH OFFICE HAS PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS CREATION?

MarCom.....	20%
Development/Advancement	35%
MarCom and Development/Advancement	42%
Other	3%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL CREATE *PRINTED* ANNUAL FUND APPEALS?

Yes 66%
No 34%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL CREATE *DIGITAL* ANNUAL FUND APPEALS?

Yes 61%
No 39%

WHICH OFFICE HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR *PRINTED* ANNUAL APPEALS?

MarCom..... 11%
Development/Advancement together 46%
MarCom and Development/Advancement together..... 40%
Other 3%

WHICH OFFICE HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR *DIGITAL* ANNUAL APPEALS?

MarCom..... 16%
Development/Advancement together 36%
MarCom and Development/Advancement together..... 46%
Other 2%

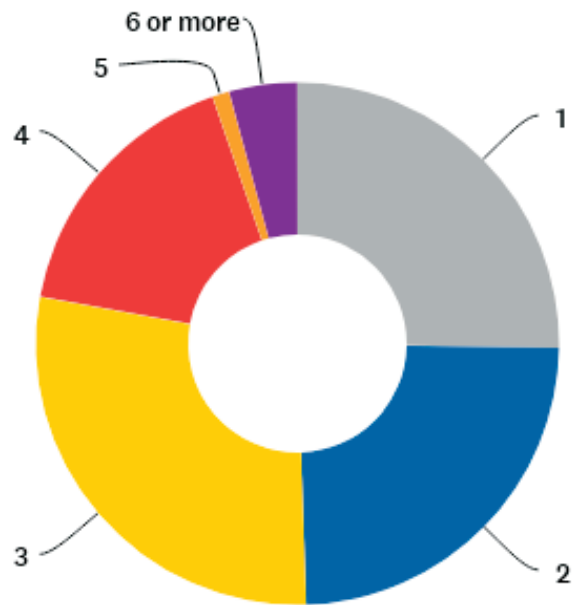
DOES YOUR SCHOOL SEND OUT A HOLIDAY VIDEO OR GIF?

Yes, without an ask..... 42%
Yes, with an ask..... 12%
No 46%



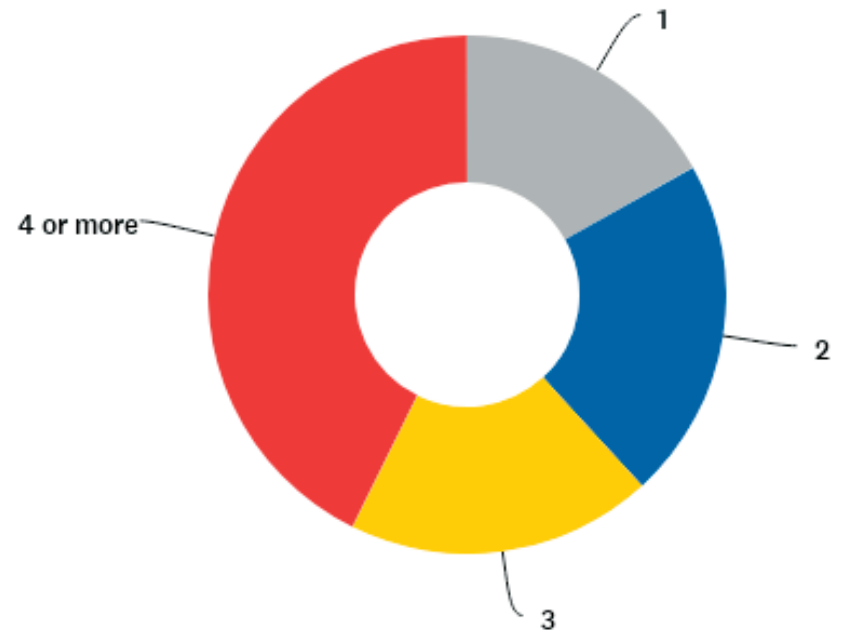
HOW MANY PRINTED ANNUAL APPEALS DOES MARCOM AND/OR DEVELOPMENT SEND OUT ON AVERAGE EACH YEAR?

1.....	25%
2.....	24%
3.....	29%
4.....	17%
5.....	11%
6.....	4%



HOW MANY DIGITAL ANNUAL APPEALS DOES MARCOM AND/OR DEVELOPMENT SEND OUT ON AVERAGE EACH YEAR?

1.....	17%
2.....	21%
3.....	19%
4 or more	43%





MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
How to Create Award-Winning Magazine Feature
Article: National Cathedral School

Chapter 8 MAGAZINE

When it comes to magazines the trend in our surveys is to no longer print them. Respondents saying they still produce **printed magazines** has gone from 69% in 2017, 60% in 2018 to 54% in 2020. Of those who still produce them 79% of them published once or twice per year (last year 86%). Only 25% of respondents produce a digital magazine microsite or web page.

Of those schools that do produce a magazine, 56% use either a freelance **designer** or a design firm, while 37% design it in-house.

91% of schools use **photography** shot by current staff and students, and slightly less than half of schools use the work of professional photographers.

InspirED continues to be surprised by how few schools have conducted a **readership survey** in the last two years, especially considering that schools are making a decision as big as eliminating print versions.

In 2020 only 17% had done a readership survey in the last 2 years, which was up from 9% in 2018 but is still a very low percentage. This seems like a lost opportunity to understand the most effective way to communicate with your community. We think all schools would be best served by conducting a readership survey regularly.



DOES YOUR SCHOOL PRODUCE A PRINTED SCHOOL MAGAZINE?

Yes 54%
No 46%

HOW OFTEN IS YOUR MAGAZINE PUBLISHED?

1 time per year 23%
2 times per year..... 56%
3 times per year..... 14%
4 times per year..... 7%

WHO WRITES THE MAGAZINE? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Marcom Office 43%
Marcom Office and others at school 53%
Development/Advancement Office 20%
Development/Advancement Office
and others at school 9%
Freelance writer(s) 14%
Magazine Editor 11%
Students 9%
Some combination of above..... 15%

HAVE YOU CONDUCTED A MAGAZINE READERSHIP SURVEY IN THE LAST 24 MONTHS?

Yes 17%
No 83%

WHO SHOOTS THE PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE MAGAZINE? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

In-house (faculty, staff, parents, students) 91%
Professional photographer 47%
Other 1%

WHO DESIGNS THE MAGAZINE?

In-house..... 37%
Freelance designer (individual)..... 32%
Design firm..... 24%
Printer..... 3%
Some combination of above..... 5%

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A DIGITAL MAGAZINE MICROSITE OR WEB PAGE?

Yes 30%
Yes, instead of a printed magazine 0%
No 44%
No, but would like one..... 26%



Chapter 9

INBOUND MARKETING AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS



Social media is both a blessing and a curse for most of you. The blessing is that it's a free vehicle (at least in terms of out-of-pocket dollars). It doesn't get any better than free. And because local media rarely covers school activities anymore, the ability to self-promote is a life-saver.

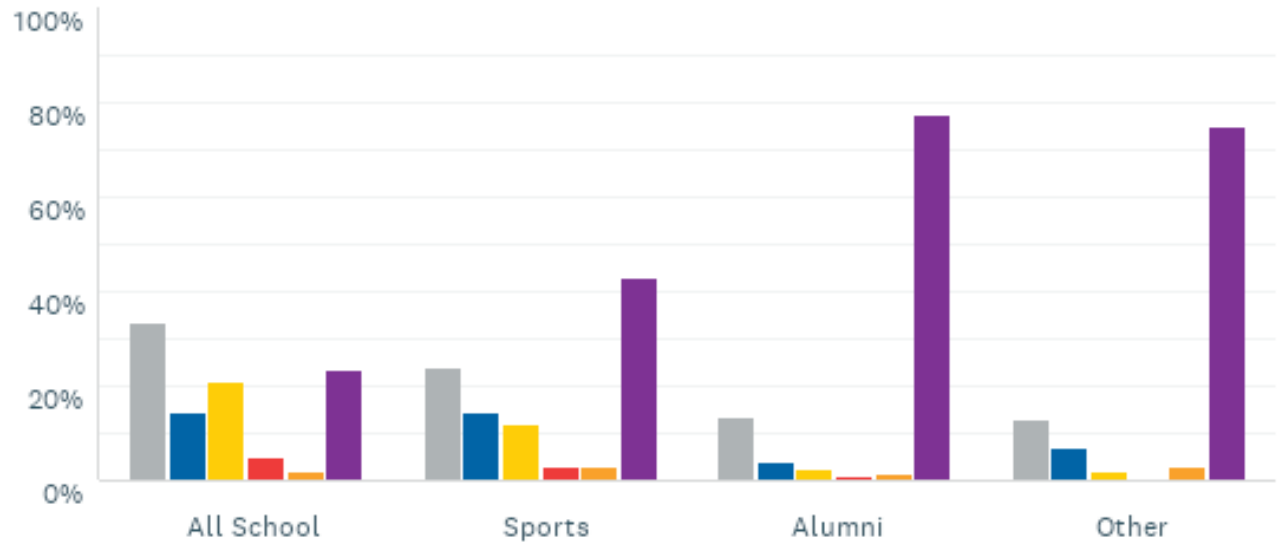
It's a curse in that many (parents, leadership, your colleagues, teachers, alums) want the school to be everywhere and to rapidly adopt the hottest trend. So now it's not so free anymore, because social media is incredibly time-consuming, drawing attention from other duties that may be more beneficial and certainly from precious time to think strategically.

It is not surprising that the responses for what kinds of **social media channels** schools use and how schools use them vary tremendously.

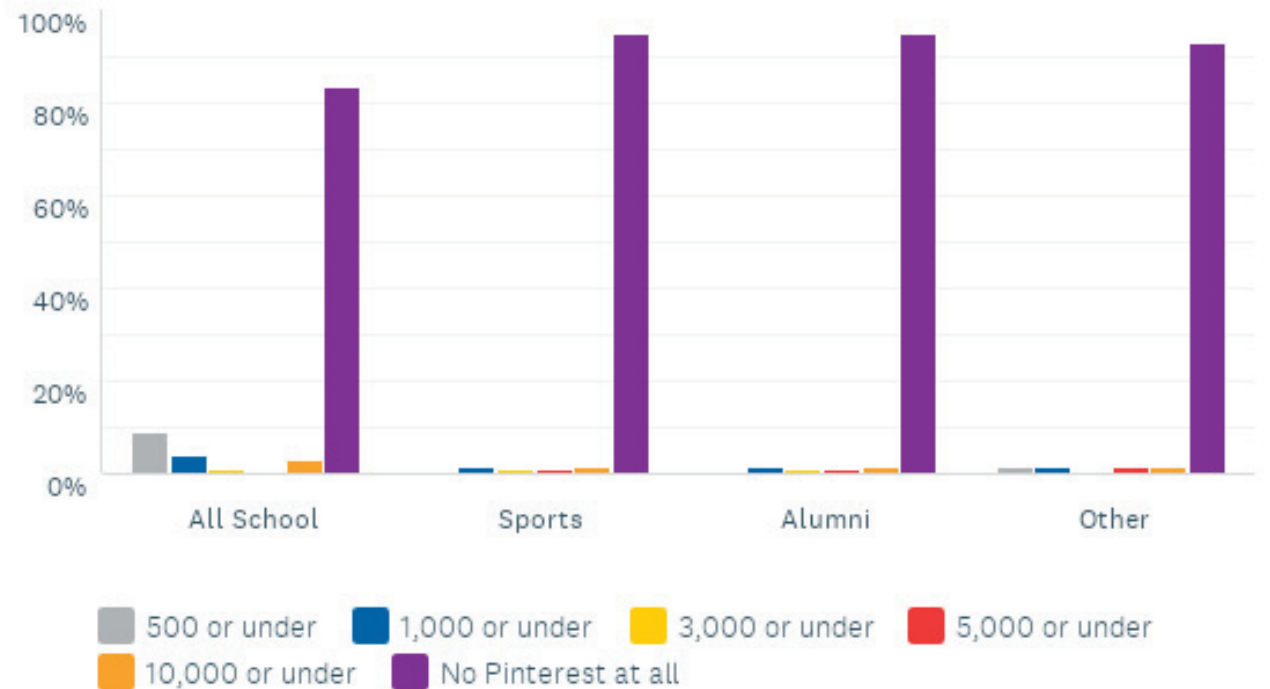
Because of this, definitive trends are hard to discern. But it is clear that **Facebook** is the most popular with 100% of responding schools saying that they have an all school Facebook account, 70% saying they have a sports Facebook account, and 68% have an alumni/ae Facebook account.

The **next most popular channels** (where schools had all school accounts) were Instagram (98%) and Twitter (77%). Only 17% of schools said they had an all school Pinterest account. Other than all school accounts, the only significant percentages of focused social media accounts are alumni/ae Facebook accounts (68%) and sports Twitter accounts (57%.)

WHAT KIND OF TWITTER ACCOUNTS DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE & HOW MANY FOLLOWERS ON EACH?

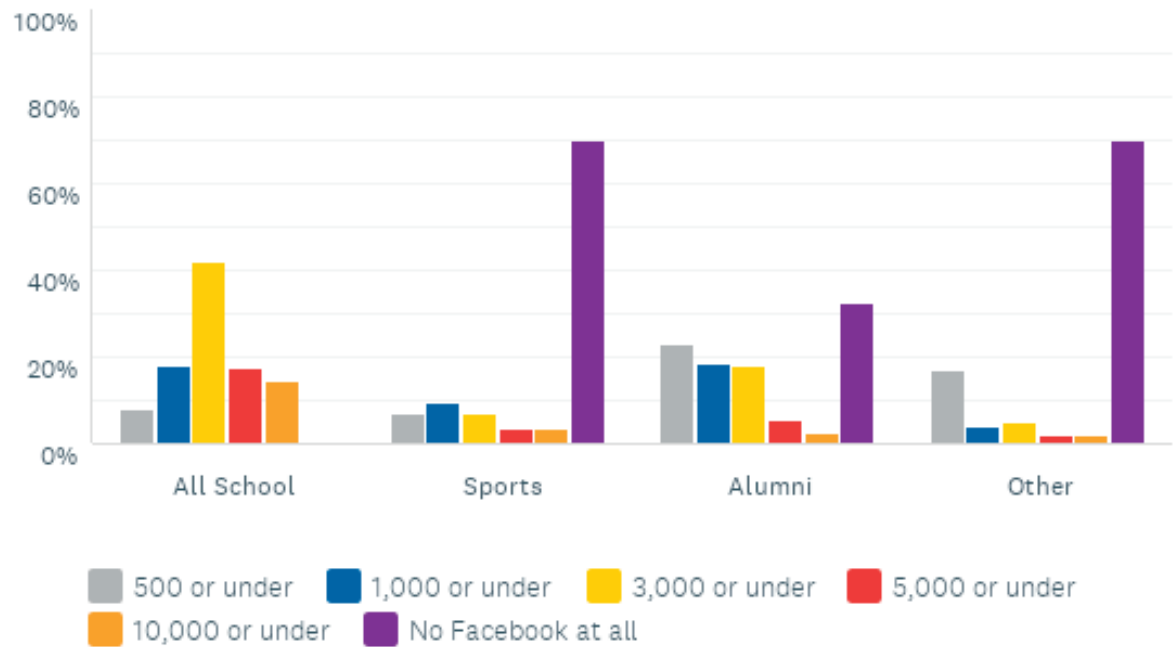


WHAT KIND OF PINTEREST ACCOUNTS DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE & HOW MANY FOLLOWERS ON EACH?

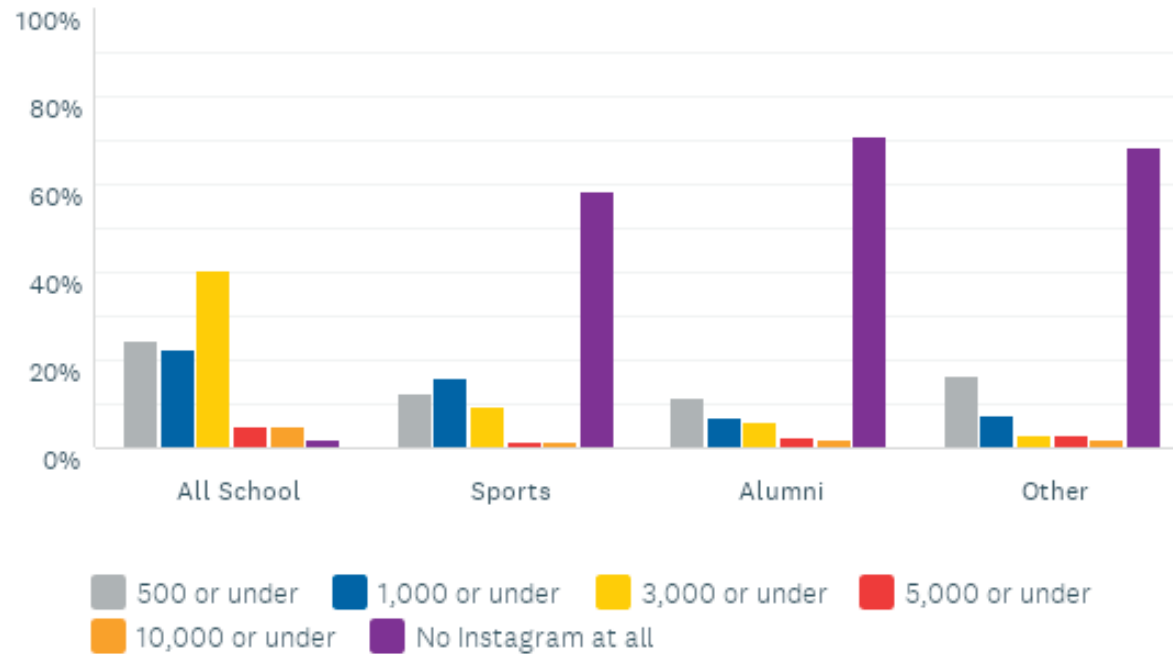


MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
Ask a Guru
Any Marketing Question
and Get Brilliant
Answers from the
Pros. Free.

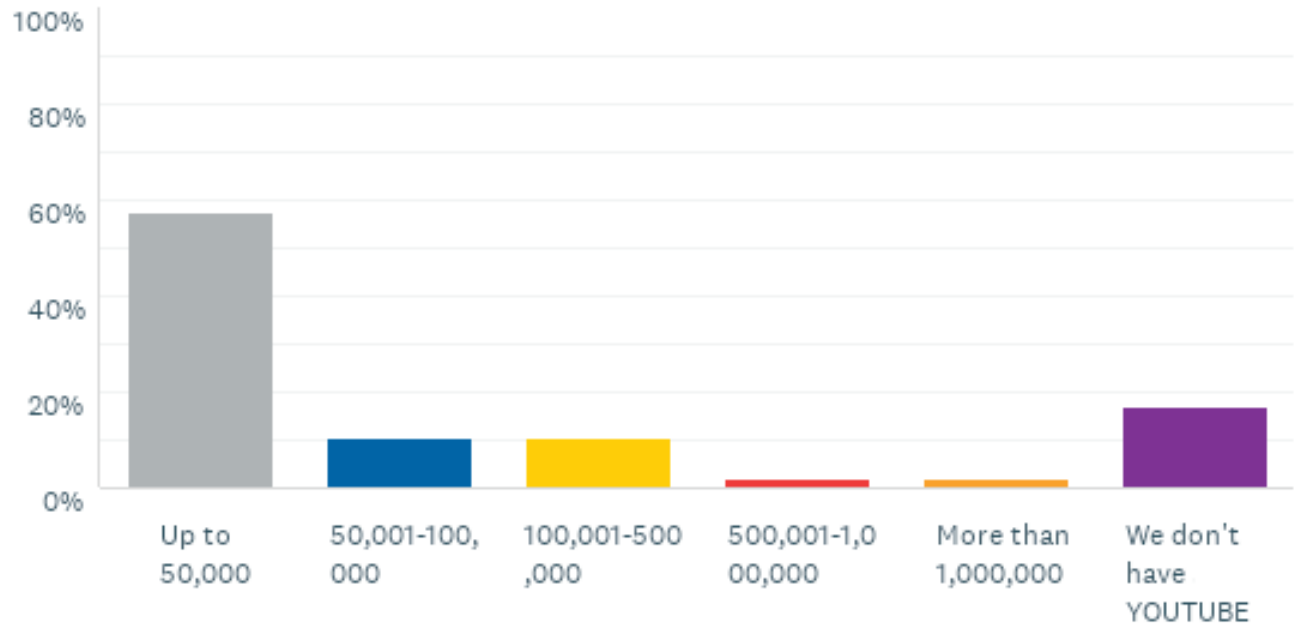
WHAT KIND OF FACEBOOK ACCOUNTS DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE & HOW MANY FOLLOWERS ON EACH?



WHAT KIND OF INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE & HOW MANY FOLLOWERS ON EACH?

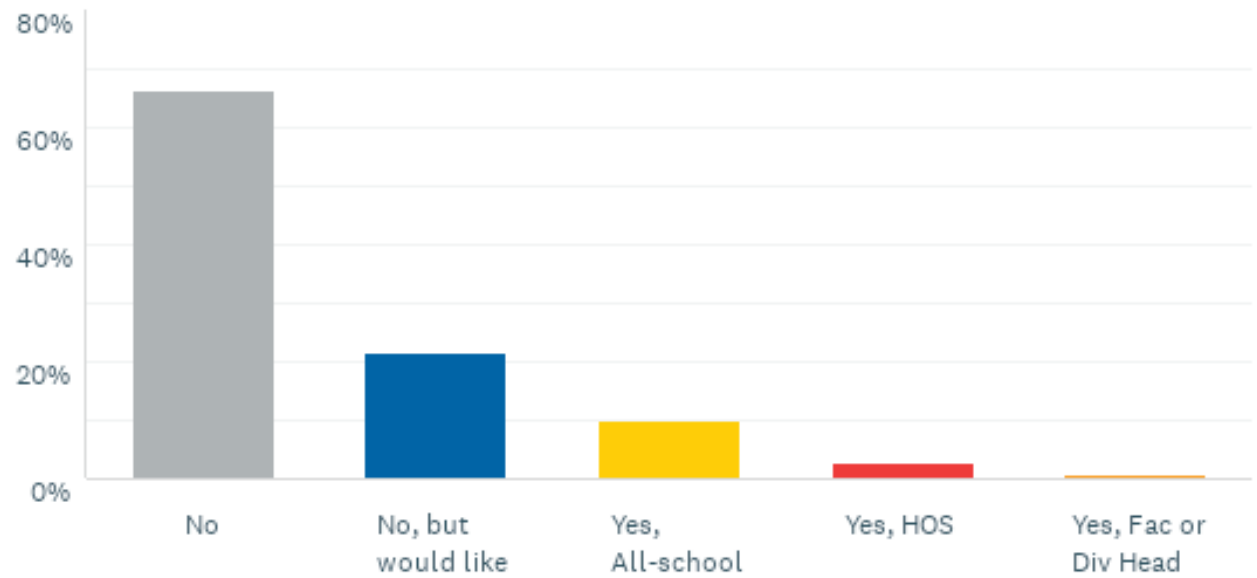


HOW MANY TOTAL VIEWS DO YOU HAVE ON YOUR SCHOOL'S MASTER YOUTUBE CHANNEL?

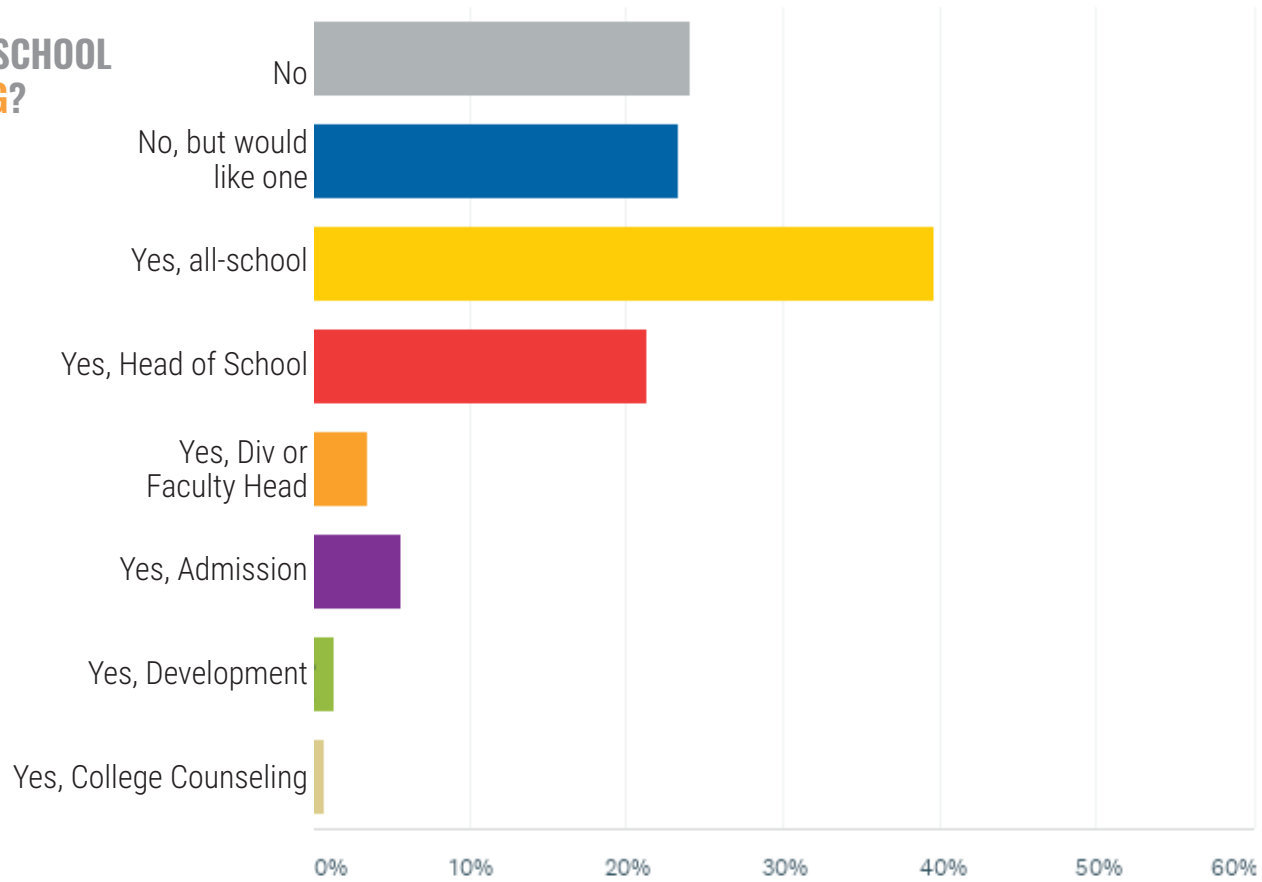


DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A PODCAST?

MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
 How to Win 6 Brilliance Awards in One Year:
 Zehno and Ursuline Academy

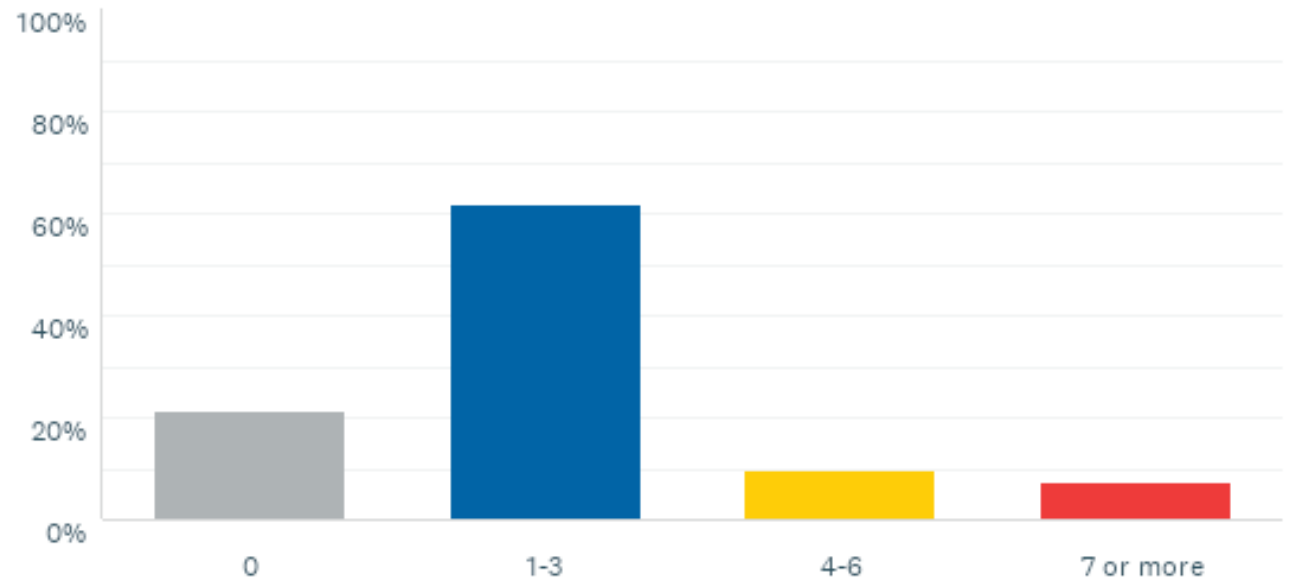


DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A BLOG?

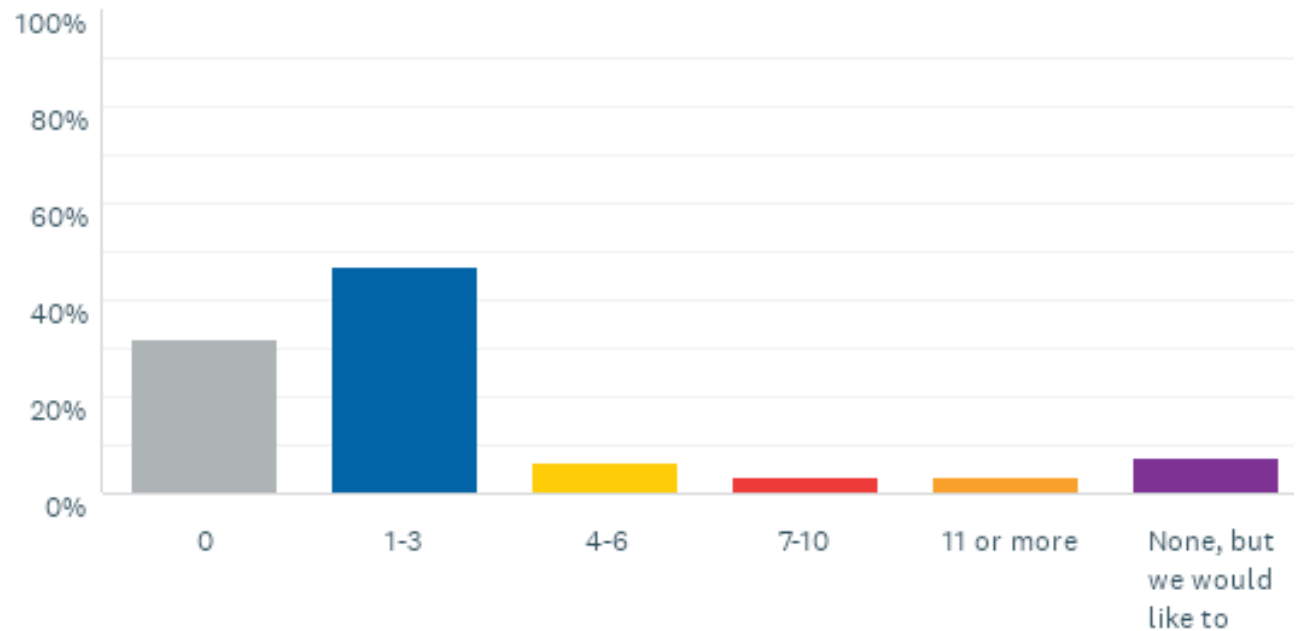


MORE BRILLIANT IDEAS
How to Motivate School
Employees to Up Their
Social Media Game

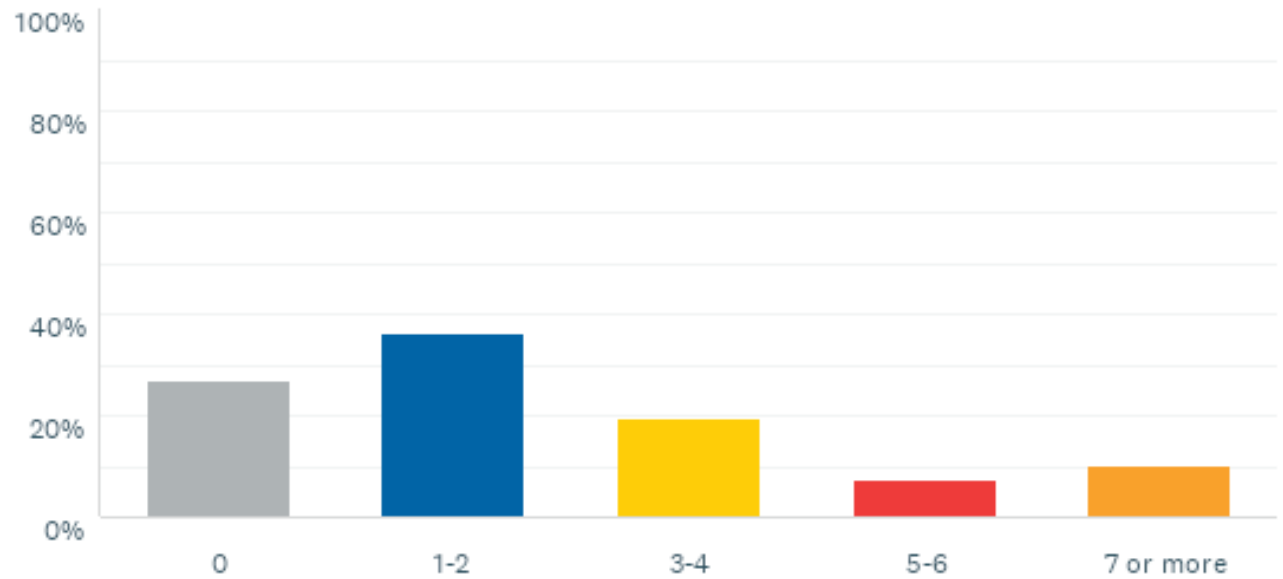
HOW MANY **IN-HOUSE VIDEOS** DOES MARCOM PRODUCE ON AVERAGE EACH MONTH?



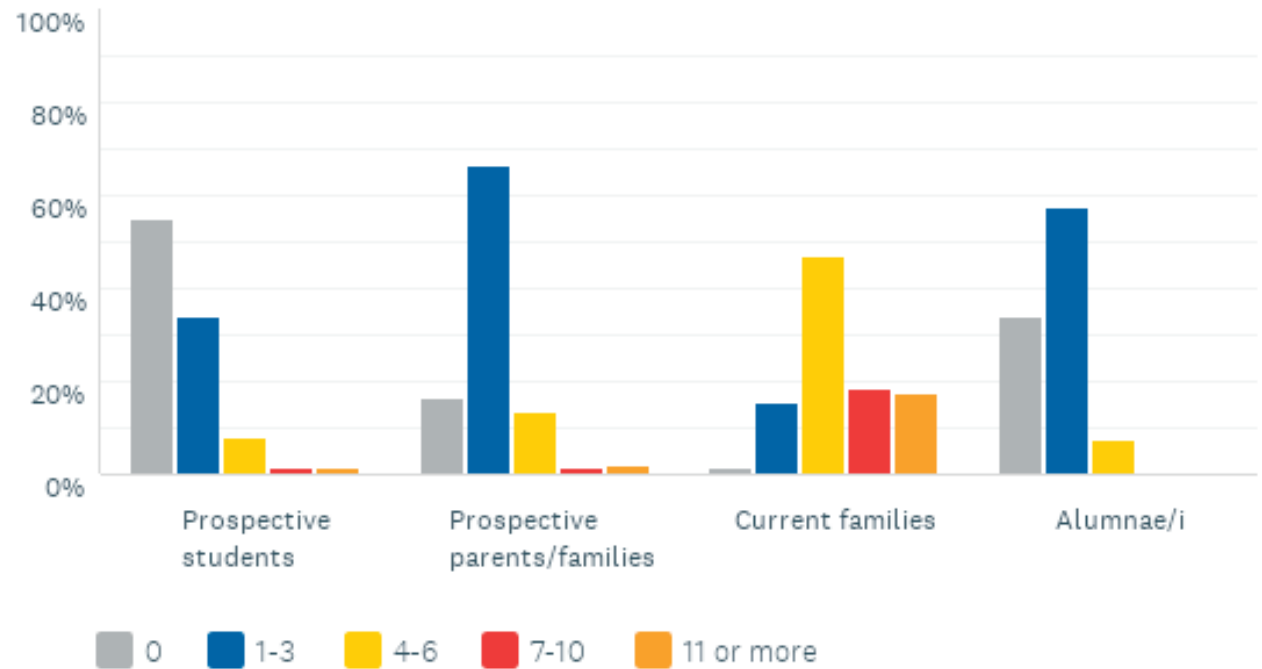
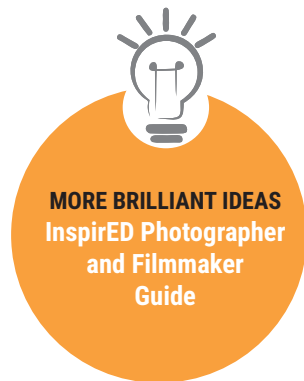
HOW MANY VIDEOS DO YOU OUTSOURCE TO A **PROFESSIONAL FILM-MAKER** PER YEAR?



HOW MANY FULL DAYS DO ALL DEPARTMENTS COMBINED HIRE AN OUTSOURCED **PROFESSIONAL STILL PHOTOGRAPHER** EACH YEAR?



HOW MANY **EMAILS/NEWSLETTERS** YOU SEND EACH MONTH TO...





CONCLUSION

Our goal for this survey was to help you, private school marketers, learn more about the current state of your profession, benchmark your work against others, and see the variety of responsibilities and resources that are allocated to MarCom for enrollment, development, alumnae/i relations, internal communications, community relations and more.

Seeing the trends that have emerged over the years we have been conducting this survey is not only instructive but can help schools understand the direction the private school community is taking with their MarCom efforts.

A huge thank you goes out to the participants in the survey. Everyone reading this report appreciates your time and input.

Last but not least, if you were to write this survey, what questions would you ask? Please let us know. Send an email to rob@inspiredsm.com.



**BRILLIANCE AWARDS COMPETITION. PODCAST. BLOG. SPARKSESSIONS. SPARKTRACKS. SENIOR PARTNERS.
PHOTOGRAPHER & FILMMAKER GUIDE. MARCOM SURVEY REPORT. NON-MATRICULANT SURVEY GUIDE.
DAILY JOLT. CASE STUDIES. ASK A GURU.
WE MAKE YOUR JOB EASIER. VISIT INSPIREDSM.COM**



DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE BRILLIANCE AWARDS?



CELEBRATING PRIVATE SCHOOL
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS WORLDWIDE.

Here are some of the 2019 Brilliance Awards winners to inspire you.

Enter your brilliance for 2020!

30 categories Including
5 for marketing during the pandemic.

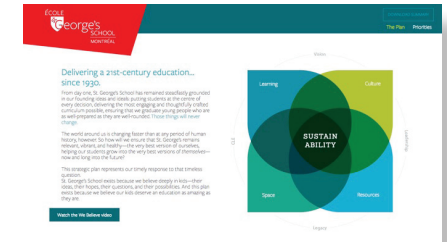
Start Here



GOLD LOGO
Sun Valley Community School
Sun Valley, ID USA
Grades PS-12, Coed Day and Boarding



GOLD SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Choate Rosemary Hall
Wallingford, CT USA
Grades 9-12, Coed Boarding



GOLD SPECIAL EVENT
Firebrand for St. George's School of Montreal
Montreal, Canada
Grades K-11, Coed Day



GOLD WEBSITE, OUTSOURCED
Zehno for Ursuline Academy of New Orleans
New Orleans, LA USA
Grades T2-12, Girls Day



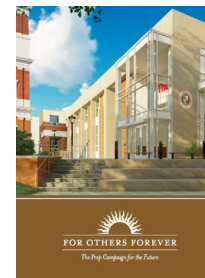
GOLD VIEWBOOK
Leapfrog Group for The Crefeld School
Philadelphia, PA USA
Grades 7-12, Coed Day



GOLD PRINTED MAGAZINE
Westtown School (Winter 2018)
West Chester, PA USA
Grades PK-12, Coed Boarding and Day



GOLD ANNUAL REPORT/REPORT OF GIFTS
Westridge School for Girls
Pasadena, CA USA
Grades 4-12, Girls Day



GOLD PRINTED FUNDRAISING APPEAL
Leapfrog Group for
St. Joseph's Preparatory School
Philadelphia, PA USA
Grades 9-12, Boys Day



GOLD PAID ADVERTISING
Zehno for Ursuline Academy of New Orleans
New Orleans, LA USA
Grades T2-12, Girls Day