



**ISCA & AHISA  
Education Forum**  
A national perspective

## **ISCA & AHISA Education Forum: *A National Perspective***

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Audio Transcript: Presentation and Panel Session

**Presenter: Trevor Young** (Founder, Digital Citizen)

**Panellists: Karen Spiller OAM** (Principal, John Paul College)

**Simon Gipson** (CEO, The Song Room)

**Briony Scott** (Principal, Wenona School)

Trevor Young: Good day everyone, I hope you're having a terrific conference thus far. Now, what we're going to be talking about a lot today is social and content and I will use those two words interchangeably, which will become obvious as I go through the presentation. So all about the opportunities to use social and content to deepen the connection and engagement that you can have with your school community.

Trevor Young: I wanted to focus today on all the opportunities and the positive things with social, because I know when the word social media comes up, people start thinking about the fears and the risks, and I'm not to denigrate the fears and the risks because we all know what they are. And we won't be covering and getting into the rabbit hole of governance and doing social media policies and guidelines. Suffice to say, a number of you have probably already got them in place as it is. If you haven't that's probably something to think about when you go back to the office.

Trevor Young: The other part of it is, if you have got them in place, it definitely might be time to review if that were put in place a number of years ago. And the other side of things is, social media crisis management procedures. So, we're not going to delve deep into that, although on the panel if you have questions around those types of things let's certainly hear them, that would be a very open forum for all of that as well. But before we get going, I just want you to put the tools to one side for the moment, because when it comes to social media, we just gravitate and become obsessed with the tools, and the technology and the platforms and the apps, and they're cool, and they're good and they're important, but they're just the enabler. Without social, they're just media.

Trevor Young: What we want, what's more important, is your heart and your spirit. The passion you have for education, for your school, for the students, for the teachers and for the broader school community. What we want is to hear your stories and ideas, your philosophy around all things education. We want you to share your experience and wisdom that you've gathered over the years. And



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again, to be enabled by social media, it's the amplifier. It's the mechanism through which we can kick start really important two-way conversations with the people who matter the most to the success of their school.

**Trevor Young:** So, mastering social media, social media success is actually not about mastering the tools, and it has everything to do with having the right attitude and mindset. There is a bestselling author, a real digital guru called J Beaf, and he once said that the goal is not to be good at social media, the goal is to be good at business because of social media. In your case, the goal is to be good at running a school because of social media. So, that's a theme we want to get going for the whole time.

**Trevor Young:** As Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop once said, leadership is communication, and that's the broader thing. We are talking about communication, yes, it's around social media and online publishing platforms, but it still is a leadership issue. Okay. So, three parts to today's presentation. So, at the start, what situation we all find ourselves in? We're all having to get a message out there, we all need to tell our stories, we all have information we need to impart to our desired target audiences.

**Trevor Young:** So, we'll have a little look at the landscape, and the situation and the things that are impacting us doing that effectively. Secondly, we have the solution, and what are some of the things, how can we plan for, how can we be smarter around how to get through this noisy landscape that we're going to talk about. And finally, we'll look at some inspiring examples of people, some you will know, some you won't know. Some examples around schools and educators who are doing some really interesting stuff around social media and content, plus I'll have a couple of ones that have got nothing to do with the education system at all, but I think they're doing a pretty good job, just to give an example outside of our field of endeavour.

**Trevor Young:** Okay. I love this quote. Back in 2004, Thomas Friedman bestselling author wrote a book, "The world is flat." He said, when I sat down to write the world is flat, Facebook didn't exist, Twitter was a sound, the Cloud was in the sky, 4G was parking place, and for most people Skype was typo. Boy, things change. So, let's look at the five shifts that are now having an impact on how we communicate. Number one is the incessant noise, the explosion of online channels is really causing a tsunami of content that we're all consuming. It is making it very hard for everyone who has that message or that story to tell, to cut through.

**Trevor Young:** Now, even though we probably think that people have got limited attention spans, what we have got is that there is a lot of noise. We don't want to be adding to that noise, is more important. Because if you are interesting and



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relevant to a particular target audience group, then you will be relevant and you will cut through the noise. What we don't want is just to be adding to that noise. We've got information pipelines coming through to us all over the place. We're our own editors, we're blocking stuff we don't like or that is not relevant to us. We're becoming very good, we have to, otherwise we go nuts. And we're choosing to get our news and information from any number of sources. And for your target audiences, you want to be making sure that your school is one of those sources of information.

**Trevor Young:** Shift number two, lack of trust. Huge issue today in business organisations across all institutions. A lack of trust is going down ... trust is going down the gurgler. I'm not sure if you've heard about the Edelman trust barometer, it's a year upon year in depth study that measures the people's trust in the four institutions of government, media, non-profit and business. And they do it for Australia, they do it for other countries around the world, they do it globally.

**Trevor Young:** This is a massive issue, for the second year in a row it's down right across the board. Even non-profits, non-government organisations, people are lacking trust in them. In other parts of research, CEOs particularly and leaders, we don't trust. They are right down the bottom. We're not trusting the media, we're not trusting anyone. So, this is not, "Oh, let's put our head in the sand," this is about, how can we now use social media and content to be more trusted? When others are not being trusted, how can we stand above the pack?

**Trevor Young:** Number three, we are all publishers, we know that now. Everyone with an iPhone is a potential publisher, has a global influence that can build over time whether they're doing it from a café, or whether they got a full studio set up. It doesn't matter the tools and the technology are here with us today and there is the positives of this and there is the negatives of this, that's what we talked about at the start. The positives being, we can now become our own media channel. The negatives are, that people can say things about us that aren't so positive and glowing. That's a fact of life, it's a reality. But the opportunity here is to tap into these publishers and these content creators.

**Trevor Young:** You've probably got teachers in your schools who are really good content creators. Are you giving them the opportunity, are you imparting them to? Do you even know who they are? I once worked for an organisation, a big design organisation, global company. And I discovered that one of the young consultants actually had a YouTube channel with absolutely millions and millions of views on it. She was right under their noses, and they didn't know for about a year. Have you got people who have YouTube channels right under your noses? It could be students, can you tap into them?



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**Trevor Young:** The swap speed of communication is a real issue from the fact that we now need to be agile and responsive. If something happens and you need to get on the front foot of an issue, you can't just put out a press release. We need to be agile and fast, because the people we're communicating with are agile and fast with their thumbs. For example, every minute, 1.1 million swipes of Tinder. Like that's what you're competing against, or maybe not just Tinder. The big shift is, the media are now using Twitter, they're using social media, they are doing more desk research, there is less journalists doing more work than ever before. They haven't got the luxury of going out onto the bit and specializing deeply on a lot of topics because there is less of them.

**Trevor Young:** And as we know, they're looking at Twitter, what's going on, what stories are happening? They'll go and check your website, they'll do desk research, will what they find validate in their minds of what they originally thought? What's your body of work look like on social and on your website and on your blog and YouTube channel? Okay. Now, the solution. Let's get into some of this.

**Trevor Young:** The solution, what are some of the things that we can do and how are we planning this correctly to make sure we get the value? We can either be this, who here has got social media in their school? Everyone pretty much. I haven't looked at all your pages, but I've looked at a smattering. Everyone is doing social media, it's across business as well, and organisations, everyone is doing stuff. Some are doing it better than others, some have lucked on to doing it better than others, some have planned at doing it much better than others.

**Trevor Young:** But, the problem is, with social is sometimes, "Yeah, let's do because we have to do it", but we still don't really want to embrace it. We're just putting it at arm's length. We're there but we've never fully got into it. And what I want to today to be about is embracing the opportunities. The opportunities to open dialogue at a more granular level with your school community. The opportunity to be more open and transparent and connected and relevant and authentic. The opportunity to become your own media channel, the opportunities to be that absolutely smart and connected school where people love you because they know about you, they can drop in and read about you, watch your videos, hear your podcasts and look at your photos.

**Trevor Young:** The opportunities to embrace versus push away. That opportunity is to become your own media channel. Two-way media channel, not one-way. And to develop a story telling culture within your organisation. Now, we've gone from a period of time where we used to tell my background story. We used to tell one big story to as many people as possible, that's traditional media. One big story to as many people as possible. Let's get that fantastic big reach. But now we've also got to be adept at telling lots of different stories, little stories to lots of



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different people and empowering them and encouraging them to pass all of that content and share it with their personal networks; friends, families and peers.

Trevor Young:

So, it's a whole different mind shift set to do a story telling culture. And this is the real opportunity to have a content culture within your school where every opportunity is a story opportunity, the teachers are involved, where students love to tell stories. How can you embrace that? And what we're trying to talk about here is doing this, deepening the connection with everyone, a connected and engaged school. And all the benefits that come with that and the positives. So I said earlier that I talk about social and content, because without the social, without the content, we've just got media. And the wonderful thing with content is it fuels so many things. It fuels connection with people, it sparks conversation, and it is very much a part of collaboration. If you're collaborating with students, content is a big part of that.

Trevor Young:

Community, it fuels community, it helps you build community, and gives people things to talk about and share, to comment upon. And yes, you want enrolments, you want people joining your school, you want new students all the time. And so, being able to interest students and parents and convert them into payment is also part of the deal. So, content can do all of these things, not by itself, but it needs to be embedded in your organisation ongoing. This is to a campaign.

Trevor Young:

And when we look at content, it's not just a video, it's not just a Tweet, it's not just a Facebook post, although they're all really good content formats. Look at all of these things, video live streaming, a slide share presentation, which is like a PowerPoint that can be embedded into your website or blog. We've got webinars, podcasts, micro videos, research reports. I know a lot of you do magazines and publications, even a humble gif.

Trevor Young:

But, open your mind to the types of content that can be produced. And again, you've got one story, but it might be told across multiple different formats. It's about doing things smarter. If you do one thing, can it be broken down into social for another three weeks? Success requires planning, and the more I go through this, what I do in my day-to-day gig is I do strategy and I do go and advise, and I do go and see companies, some companies have been doing this for eight years. And I'm thinking, "Now we need to go back and plan again, and review, and audit, and what are we doing." Because you need to really go back to scratch, "Why are we doing what we're doing?"

Trevor Young:

Couple of things, what are your goals? In fact, what are your communications goals, but even more broadly, what are your goals for your school organisationally? What are your commercial goals? What are you trying to



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achieve, what does success look like? When it comes to social media, it's part of your marketing communications mix, it probably drives it. I believe in content first, content is the driver of all your comms. So, that being the case, why are you doing it? Go back, if you know yourself that's fantastic, if you don't you need to ask people who are doing your social media, why are we doing this? What are our goals, and what we're doing on a day-to-day basis and spending time and effort on is it going towards those goals?

Trevor Young:

Sounds simple, never gets done. We turn on objectives, what are you trying to achieve? What are your flags in the ground? What do you stand for? Every school here stands for something. Now, it might be as much as the values of the schools that you want to articulate and communicate to the broader community, and the school and the students, it might be, you might have ... sport is a really big part of your school, and so, we want to be known for sport. We might be known for a particular type of sport that might be your flag in the ground that differentiates you from everyone else.

Trevor Young:

What are those flags in the ground? Is it debating? Is it maths and science? And I know you're going to say it's probably all those, that's cool. But it's hard to be known for all things, sometimes it's good to stop and think a little bit more strategically and bring it back, what do we want to be known for? What are your values, do you just tell people what our values are or create content around those values. If you want to be known to be the best whatever in the area, do you create content that continually reinforces that narrative in the community? This is where we've got to start thinking a little bit smarter.

Trevor Young:

You don't necessarily need to do this, you need to at least be across this and empower your other leadership within the school to be part of this. I like how Strathcona, and disclosure, my two girls went to Strathcona and my second child has finished last year. Their examples of, they're all about one of the values is about being brave. So, here we have content, some of the content that's been produced, some other people's content like a Huffington Post article, some sayings around what it is to be brave. What does that mean to be confident, to be bold?

Trevor Young:

So, it's showing not telling. Every school should be doing this. And three, who makes up your core target audience groups? Now, we've hold up the sign core target audience groups, but you can probably segment them, do you prioritize them? Of course, it's the students, of course it's the teachers, of course it's the parents and then the broader community. But do you stop and think about them, what are the questions they ask? What are their content requirements? What do they want more information on? What do they ask questions around? What are their challenges when it comes to the school that you can help



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address those challenges and pain points through the provision of timely and relevant content? Understand your audiences.

**Trevor Young:** You might say as part of your strategic thinking, we actually want to spend 50% of that content is going to be for the students. And if you've got a reason for that, that's fantastic, because if your goal is to build more connection with your students, then how is your content going to be relevant to that? Therefore, you have to prioritize and that means that maybe 50% of your content efforts that go through social media are aimed at your students. Does that make sense? The whole thing is to join them together. It's not overcooking, we're not building a massive plan that sits on, you know, you print out once and it holds open the door. What we want is just to be a little bit clearer and have everyone on the page with social and content in your school.

**Trevor Young:** The third one is the inspiration. So, great examples, so we've got three fantastic panellists coming up shortly after this, and I'm going to show a couple of their, by way of introduction, some of the content that they've been creating, which is terrific. And then I've got a couple of others to show you. So, let's have a look at that first, Simon Gipson.

**Simon Giopson:** (Rap/Singing video)

**Trevor Young:** That's terrific. It went viral, so quite a few of you have probably seen it, but I didn't ... you know, I want to make sure that everyone has seen it, because it's really terrific. Now, am I saying you have to go up and rap?

**Trevor Young:** No, I'm not. These are just examples, you don't have to do any or all of these. These are just so you can see the nuance and the authenticity of content when it's done really, really well. I love that. We'll talk to Simon a bit later on that as well. Okay, this is Karen spiller.

**Karen Spiller:** (Video playing)

**Trevor Young:** Nice one. See, what I like about it, is it's real. You got people talking in the background. Like video producers hate that, they are like, "Get rid of those kids in the background, they're making too much noise." But Karen does these in different parts of the school, so you can get to see other elements. She's not doing it from her office, she is getting out and amongst it. But we'll ask Karen a little bit more about why she is doing those things. Now, onto Briony Scott.

**Trevor Young:** So, Briony is doing quite a bit with social, particularly Twitter. Wenona school is doing quite a bit of content generally, but Briony has got the Principals, principal at Wenona, Instagram. And I'm going to read some of this, because if you can't



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read it in the back, just fantastic. This is best practice Instagram, I love this. All right. You might not be able to see these kids over here because they're in camouflage. So, Briony wrote, "Dropped in to Shore today to check out candidates but couldn't see them anywhere." Nice. Very dry, very dry, Briony. "Here at science outside my office I haven't quite got to the bottom of it, but a virtual reality treasure hunt maybe."

**Trevor Young:** Again, just lovely little snapshots about the school and through Briony's eyes. This one's a good one and on choosing colours to paint the school. "Now, how hard could that be." So, just in that you know that the school's going to be painted. What's going on? Action, activity, fantastic. Could take it further, could have a poll for the students, get to pick... We don't necessarily have to go for the most popular colour, but a bit of fun. Once you go there in this path, all of these little doors of opportunity for content and interaction and engagement open up. 103 likes. These are brilliant. These have got a message in them.

**Trevor Young:** Okay, I'm going to read this, this one to the left. "Not sure what this is, you have a whole two days to explore and find out, black shoes by Tuesday." Nice one. I remember Kiwi shoe polish. And this one here, "we also have an anti Cyclops policy, true. Two eyes to be seen at all times with hair pin back off the face. And if you don't know what a Cyclops is just yet, I wouldn't necessarily Google images, it's a bit gruesome, but picture a one-eyed minion." Very nice, very funny, and certainly suits Briony's personality to a tee.

**Trevor Young:** So, just great examples, very different examples, you might say, but great examples of content that people are engaging with, that have got key messaging in it, but captured in such a way that is fun and engaging. And we'll talk further with all three in our panel. So, if you got any questions around these things, please feel free to put your hand up when we do that. All right. Now, I'm going off education completely, and we'll play this one and then we'll just have a quick talk about it.

**Jacinda Ardern:** (Video playing)

**Trevor Young:** She's just fantastic with social, but she is just fantastic anyway. And that's a Facebook live, it's on her phone, no gimmicks, no makeup. Now, I know our prime minister doesn't wear makeup, but still. But you never really see, politicians do that, not really, not as often as we'd like. We love the rawness, the authenticity. She could have had lights, camera, action, everything, and we'd have got less views. That was real, we feel that and we connect with that emotionally, and that's why she does social better than most leaders in the world. And she is doing that all the time, by the way, Facebook live. A little bit scarier, push the button, you are live. Hence the name Facebook Live.



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**Trevor Young:** I remember when the live apps, there used to be one called Meerkat, came out a few years ago, and it didn't last long, but it was the first live. So, you could press the button, you are live on your phone. And I was listening to a podcast of a guy who runs a very big PR agency in Canada, and he was saying, "Oh, yeah, I was experimenting with this new app called Meerkat. And, it's a Sunday morning and I'm in my pyjamas in bed and, "Oh my God, I'm live to the world." So, you got to know when you're live and when you're not, but she obviously knows.

**Trevor Young:** Shane Elliott from ANZ, again, he is the CEO, massive change going through ANZ. He is not the type of bloke that you'd expect to kind of get out there and be front and centre, but he is doing some tremendous stuff. He's got his own Facebook page, he uses social media well, and he uses Twitter very well. When he's going to meetings he is on a tram. He does selfies with his executives, he looks okay, they look uncomfortable, that's alright. But he is a little daggy, he puts the pink shirt on, not great production values, but his audience is customers, but also very much the ANZ people.

**Shane Elliott:** (Video playing)

**Trevor Young:** Right. So, he's got massive change going through the organisation. Again, leadership is communication, he's communicating. And he's getting better and better and better. So, he takes people behind the scenes, and I think that, that's a great opportunity for any organisation. That's why we like reality TV even though we know that it's about as far from reality as it can get, but it's still the notion of that, probably that little bit more behind the scenes type of video that we gravitate to.

**Trevor Young:** This one is the Proctor Academy in New Hampshire. What I like about them is that you just have to look at their website and you get a real feel, looking at their content, of what they're all about. And I put this one in mainly because it covers quite a few different elements. And again, it's the body of work, it's not "Hey we're on Facebook and I'll be great," it's the body of work across multiple channels and the consistency of stories and message. So, just quickly go through some, you can always go back and have a look at Proctor Academy. But, they call this the buzz. So, this is their sort of hub. And so right at the top there you enjoy your window into the proctor community provided through assembly podcast video, student and faculty blogs, new stories and images of day-to-day-life on the campus.

**Trevor Young:** So, they have a mission, they know what they're doing. And therefore they create content rather than thinking, "Oh, geez, we haven't got any content for next week, what are [we] going to do?" Head scratch. They know what they are



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doing, and they planned. And so, you can listen to assembly podcast. I know everyone is going to be thrilled about that. But at least they give you the opportunity. The Queensland police are one of the best organisations in social media. They are just brilliant. If you get a chance have a look at their Twitter and Facebook. They are so funny, most of their stuff is serious, and then they just start dropping in these hilarious Tweets.

Trevor Young:

But they used to record their press conferences, and not a lot of people are going to sit there and listen to a press conference, but at least they've got a record of it. So, sometimes the audio can be quite powerful. They do a lot of live streams, they got a video library that they've really built up over time, a lot of blog posts. They seem to have quite some good themes and focus around what they're doing from a blog point of view, they do a lot of profiles. So, I think, again, humanising the school is so, so important and subscribe to email updates, getting people to subscribe is always good to opt in, check out the photos on Flickr, so again another social platform for photography.

Trevor Young:

So, again, it's not one thing, it's the body of work and how they integrate. Tweets are all fed through this hub, and their Instagram account even though they're doubling up and their Instagram account. So, a little bit of content, a bit of content going out straight there. But you can go there and see everything and choose and, do you want news, do you want sport, do you want updates, what do you want, and you can find what you want.

Trevor Young:

Again, with people wanting different types of information in different formats, and are you giving them that content in such a way that they can digest it and consume it. And this is their live streams. So, they do a lot of events and sports and stuff like that, and you can sit at home and watch them, or watch them later, not all the kids go back and watch if they won, they go back and watch. And the Americans love doing this. My daughter Ruby, a couple years back, she went to America on a basketball tour, and wasn't with the school. But they did play other schools.

Trevor Young:

And, one of the schools had a live stream of it, so we could sit back here and watch them get flogged. Mind you, the team that she did play they had one of the best players in America, school-aged players. So, it was always going to be a difficult task to win, but the fact is we could watch them play over there through their news streams, the live streams the school did. Just little things that over time can work really effectively. So, I've got some kick start ideas, again, this is all about, what are some things that you can do? We're going to get a little tactical here. Again, not saying you have to do any or all of this, just ideas.



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- Trevor Young: What I'm going to do put up later is just a URL, a web address. If you want to jump onto that and ping me, and put an email in then I've got an article that's sort of all across this stuff and I'll do a checklist of some of these things. But have some more ideas of things that you can do. So, if you want me to send that to you, you'll see that shortly. I grab half a dozen of them and we can just give you a bit of an idea.
- Trevor Young: The first one and the one I really want to push because I haven't seen much of this, is a content hub. Everyone is doing social, everyone has got stuff here, we might have a blog we might be doing, you know, Twitter out here or whatever. Some schools don't actually put their Twitter handles, you can't even find them. So, if we're after the information we want to grab the information that we seek, are you making it easy for people to find that information? You go to the effort of making it, but then it gets lost in the ether.
- Trevor Young: So, with your website, can you create and the technology is there, a content hub where everything comes through. So, here is another example, this is Baylor School in Chattanooga, TN is Tennessee I'd imagine, news and events, sports updates on social, publications. Everything into one place. So, as a parent, you want to go in and deep dive, you can go and find information, as can students, as can prospective students and prospective parents of students, more importantly.
- Trevor Young: So, create a content hub, talk to your IT people, and find out what you're doing now and can you at least aggregate all that good work that you're doing and the better work you will be doing in one place. Facebook live, once a month maybe. Now, this could be with ... again, I like talking about everything comes from the top, that's you guys, but you have other leaders, you have boards of directors, you have all sorts of advisors, you have all sorts of talent. You have school captains, get them involved, maybe they'll get interviewed. Let's see the whites of their eyes, let's see the whites of your eyes. Facebook live, very powerful, it's live, people can ask questions then and there.
- Trevor Young: What a great way to interact with people. Might be on a really broad topic, might be on a contentious issue, doesn't matter. The fact of the matter is you're making an effort and that sends a terrific message that you're open and out here, and we want to engage with people and interact with them. You can ask your questions, we'll answer them, live now. And then that goes on Facebook and stays there, it's archived. Facebook loves Facebook live, they love videos, you might be aware that Facebook has kind of strangled the organic reach of a lot of their pages. So, if you've got 2,000 likes or people following your page, your content is not going out to 2,000 people. It might be going out to 1 or 2% of those 2,000 people.



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**Trevor Young:** And less people are engaging, sharing, commenting, liking. If they're doing that, they're watching your videos, they're signals to the Facebook algorithm that people are interested in your content and then all of a sudden your organic reach goes up. We're seeing this with some clients, we're going to need 25% to 30%. We have to build up to it with really good content consistently put on that people are engaging with and then it goes up. That's the best position. Facebook live has got tremendous applications across a lot of things. Just maybe look into it with your social media team if you're not already doing it.

**Trevor Young:** Start a podcast. Again, I think audio has some tremendous applications. It can be an ongoing podcast, there is a platform called SoundCloud, which is kind of like YouTube for audio, and you'll have your SoundCloud page, but you can take the SoundCloud player and embed it into your blog or website so people can listen to it. Sometimes it's easier to do audio, and we know with podcasts what people are getting. Audio is becoming more and more and more popular. And now we have Alexa. "Alexa, tell me about this school," see what Alexa does. Voice and audio are becoming very big, but there might be some opportunities there for you. Again, talk to your team.

**Trevor Young:** Hand over your Instagram account, we can talk more to Briony about this. This is what they do at Wenona where the students handle the content for the sports Instagram account. And what does that mean? This is the guts of today, is that empowerment of people. Everyone's a publisher, and instead of saying, "We haven't got enough budget to put on people to create content," you've got a whole school of them. You know some of your schools might be teaching media studies, so you've got students who are itching to create, give them a forum to create it.

**Trevor Young:** Number five, turn long form content into micro content. Everyone here has got a long form publication of sorts, some are printed, which I love by the way. I love the counter intuitiveness of it. Because no one gets stuff in the mail, apart from junk mail, no one gets stuff in the mail any day. We love the tactile. Hard copy books are making a comeback, as are LP records, Vinyl. What's old is new again. It's fantastic. But you go to all the effort of creating, whether it's online, or it's a hard copy only or a combination of two, all the efforts going in to creating these stories and content and putting photos in and doing all that stuff. So, why not grab the interesting parts of it and there is two months' worth of content on social media. Your social team can do this, ask what they can do. Get them to trawl through, all the stuff you've already done and what are some quotes and some comments, things that are going to build the narrative that you want out there in the community.



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- Trevor Young: Again, you've got to know what your narrative is, what are you trying to achieve, what's your story, but this is where I might help do that. And I alluded to this earlier and so people's most frequently asked questions. If you do nothing else, but create a series of micro videos, again, it can be over a phone, an iPad, just need a little microphone, 50 bucks, and answer people's questions. Your target audience groups, so let's say parents. What are the 20 most frequently asked questions you get asked again and again and again and you probably do not answer them, and if you do, they're on your website buried down below at a frequently asked questions with one pithy, one liner, which is the answer? Not good enough today. Give them a video, give them a micro video and it's either yourself or someone else from within the school answering those question.
- Trevor Young: No one ever went wrong being useful and helpful, no one. Can't go wrong. But this is a great, great opportunity to be useful and helpful, and to help people find the information. They are not going to ring you up, if they're prospective student and the parents of a prospective student. They are not going to ring you up, chances are. They'll look around, don't try and find their answer they might ask people. Why don't you to own that space, why don't you take control of that space. This is all social media, told you content, social they're all intertwined.
- Trevor Young: I'm not saying you guys have to do everything, obviously you're busy, you've got other things, but it does start at the top communication. Leadership is communication, you need to embrace it. And you probably already do to a degree, I mean fully embrace it. Get involved, try and be part of that planning, strategic planning to make sure that you've got direction for the content, the social, all the efforts going in. Some of you might not have much resources at all, some of you might have more resources. But is everyone working together? Have you got a sort of a social media working group that sort of looks at different parts of the school that represents different parts of the school plus the students. And then what's coming up that you can create content around? I've always found that you want to plan a little, and have that stuff that really is going to tell your story.
- Trevor Young: You need to be agile and responsive for when the good stuff happens. Like just a great photo, "Oh, we won this, this happened. One of our students just won a major prize," that last minute stuff that you don't hear about. You want to be responsive to be able to do that as well. But you also want to build that strong spine of content that's going to build your narrative, reinforce it and tell your school's story out there. Because, this is where I'm going to talk about that risk. The risk and the issues and all of those things that we're all fearful of and they are real, the best defence to [inaudible] an open and connected school. The best defence is to have a body of work. Online evidence, social proof that this is who



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we are, this is what we stand for. So, it leaves no one under any illusion of what it is that you are all about, start some talk.

**Trevor Young:** So, if you want some more information I've got an official article I can send you and a checklist that will cover a lot of these things with a few more ideas. Just plug in, it's a shortened URL and I'll email that to you. And if there is any questions we've got the panel in a tick, and I'll be around at the dinner tonight if you want to have a chat about any of these elements as well. Thank you. Okay. So, can we please have Simon, Karen and Briony up on the stage please.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA PANEL

**Trevor Young:** We introduced these three wonderful panellists during the presentation. But I'll get them to talk a little bit more about themselves. But, Simon is the former head of St. Michaels Grammar School in Melbourne and now the CEO of the Song Room, which is a non-profit organisations that provides music and arts program for disadvantaged children.

**Trevor Young:** Karen is the Principal of John Paul College in Queensland, and Briony is the Principal of Wenona School in Sydney. Welcome. So, I wanted to give some examples of what other principals are doing, but I might start off with you Simon since you're the first doing the rap, and we want to hear a rap from you for this answer, but how did that come about? I mean, it's not a natural thing to say, I want to do a rap video and I want to go through YouTube and go viral and it's going to get a lot of attention. Just tell us a little bit of the back story on it.

**Simon Gipson:** Well, before I do, I just want to say, 18 years as head of St. Michaels and that's my legacy. I have to confess that I had a group of students come to see me, and to put it in context, every year St. Michael has had it ever since I was there, 18 years, May was designated as Merry Month of May, and it was a fundraiser. And the school leaders would always select four charities who they were going to support that year. And this particular group of school leaders came to see me and said, you know, "We'd really like you to raise awareness and to introduce the Merry Month of May to do a rap we've written for assembly. And, so, really, if we're going to go to all that trouble, let's just video it. You never know, it might go viral, which it did. And the only thing that stopped it actually continuing was, there is a word of advice here, is make sure you deal with the copyright on the backing track.

**Simon Gipson:** Because we thought we had, but we hadn't dealt with it well. But, when we sat down and I was talking to this group of kids, and bear in mind, I have to say we



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shot that in 45 minutes. So, it was a reasonable investment. But we decided that what we'd really like to do is to get some sort of national recognition for the charities. And as a consequence of this, that video, it was picked up by channel Seven's morning show. And one of the creators, Matt Newman and I sat there, and were interviewed by, I understand his name is Koshy. And so, we actually achieved what they set out to. And we had wonderful response from the charities, which actually made a huge amounts to the students, because it suddenly became clear to them what they could achieve.

**Simon Gipson:** So, it was all the things that Trevor talked about, it was authentic, it was student generated, it certainly involved some risk, but with that risk was the accompanying sense of trust that we put in the students to actually be responsible in the way in which they did it. And the delivered, they really did.

**Trevor Young:** Thank you. Karen, so you're recently new to your school, so part of your Principal's Voice video series, which goes up on Facebook, is so people can put a face to the name because you're new. Now, often you go to a new school the good part, this is a great idea so people to get to know you a little bit better.

**Karen Spiller OAM:** Absolutely. Excuse me. So, after 21 years in one school and 18 of those as principal, it's really important for my new community to know that I'm both very committed to that new community, but also that I've got an educational background in terms of understanding some broader issues and also representative at both the State and the national level. So, that particular clip goes out on a weekly basis, probably in a 10 week term I will do seven or eight of those. And then the other two or three would be done either by students or other members of the senior staff picking up some key issues that we want to get messages across. As Trevor suggested, I've done some, just before, the "We Will Rock You" a very successful musical where I was wearing the We Will Rock You t-shirt and singing with students performing. I've done one just before students have gone into swimming carnivals. All those kinds of things so that I can be seen in all different contexts.

**Karen Spiller OAM:** And, also making sure that on my Twitter feed and also Facebook, I will say, you know, I'm at the year seven debating, "oh, by the way we just won." "I'm at the cheer rehearsal, oh, and they've just won a competition on Saturday." And again, so parents and the school community can see that I'm getting around to the broad range of co-curricular activities.

**Trevor Young:** And obviously, you know, change is part of school life, you need to articulate change. Have you found that those videos has been helpful in that?



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- Karen Spiller OAM:** Absolutely. Whenever you're bringing around change, it can be rocky for some people, not least the principals. So, it's really important for that sense of credibility. So, I've recently been elected as chair for the state branch in Queensland of AIS, and it's really important for the community of John Paul College to know that I'm respected in that sense of the state and then the national level. And that then gives some credibility to some of the changes that I want to bring within the school because it says that you know something about education at both as I said, the state and the national level.
- Trevor Young:** Briony you've got some tremendous ... I love your Instagram feed. Do you, how much is planned, you're out and about often, you obviously do shoot on the fly, you should have taken something you did the photo, and do you think about it later and then publish, or is it on the spot, or is it just agile and responsive?
- Briony Scott:** It tends to be spontaneous. And the reason I did it, and I made it very clear that it's actually not a deliberate part of our marketing process to the school as I was very conscious that I spend more time with these children than their parents do at times. You know, by the time they get home after sport or they've been in evening college centre or whatever, often parents might only get half an hour or an hour, and I get the privilege of watching these kids on a daily basis in a way that makes most parents incredibly envious.
- Briony Scott:** So, it's just trying to catch our little sense of what goes on in the school on a daily basis. It also enables me to control the narrative a little bit. So, yes, we do the victories, but we also do the defeats, and we talk about what it's like to lose, and aren't they legends because that was such good sport, and I get to convey and send out little messages that's not lecturing, it's normalising what happens in the school environment, so that the parents who get half an hour over dinner at night time, they only get one perspective, and the whole point of this was to kind of round it out a bit.
- Trevor Young:** And it is interestingly set to private to it's just for students and parents?
- Briony Scott:** Well, yes. So, I do set it to private, because it means that I can see who is doing it, but I can always tell from the handle who's coming into it. What it allows me to do, like I post a photo up, and I did a little while ago, is to say who is liking it half-way through period three. That's always fun, I find that really interesting. And I'll just go to the timetable and I'll go, "English with Mrs. Jones, so interesting." So, I'm interested in that. I'm also really interested in the kids who ... because everyone wants it, it's got a cult following in the school now. So, if you get your photo on principal one on Instagram account you've like made it. But, what I'm interested in the kids who have 1,057 friends. I go, "Okay," you know. And so, we just start to hone in because they don't have 1057 friends. So,



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there is a whole conversation that I have insight into in terms of how safe they are online as well. So, it's a conversation sort of.

**Trevor Young:** And with the school sport's Instagram, is that 100% managed by the students, and how does that work?

**Briony Scott:** No, it's a combination. So, every student account, every student who has access to account there is always an adult who is an administrator. So, they can post things and so forth, but honestly they don't go rogue, and if they go rogue, we do have an administrator there who can take it down instantly. There was one, the prefects had their own Instagram account, and because they have a theme, and there was one thing I was scrolling through it. And there was a picture of someone in year seven who'd lined up a whole series of tables, and was running from one table to the other in her socks.

**Briony Scott:** And then, of course, got to the last table, kicked off, the whole thing collapsed, she went up in the air. And they all thought it was hysterical until I wrote "Really?" and then within three nano seconds, it had been taken down. They're very aware that I have presence in this world, and so they do it, they post it. But they're not fools, and when they are fools because they're teenagers, then we talk about it. They rarely do things maliciously wrong, they're often just not very wise.

**Trevor Young:** We're going to open up to the floor. So, if you've got a question, put your hand up, while we're waiting for the mics to get around. Simon, we were just talking about earlier and we've had a couple of conversation and you talk a lot about, and you use the word again, authenticity. It's probably a word that's lost a bit of meaning unfortunately in the last few years. But it does mean that, that rawness, that authenticity, so it's not polished. And I think in terms of organisations businesses when it comes to social and content we're crafting the image that we think our audience really wants. But what I really want is you and your personality and whether that's you the principal or it's the leadership or one of the directors of the school. What's your, you know, you are an advocate for that authentic communications.

**Simon Gipson:** Can I go back to one of the points you made in your presentation, which is about the notion of noise that we get. And we are bombarded by communication. And what distinguishes, I think, communications that we buy into are the ones that we perceive as being genuinely authentic. I think gone are the days when we could actually present schools in a very, very glossy way. There is probably still some part of that. I think you mentioned the publications, the prospectus and so on. But I would argue that what parents are looking for and what their sons and daughters are looking for is a really authentic



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presentation of what that school is about. What's the student experience? And the best way to present that is through student eyes, and the best medium for that actually happens to be through social media, and in particular, video.

**Simon Gipson:** And so, I've been an advocate, and I'll come back to Briony's point too about the notion of how much you can actually trust kids. Because you can trust them a lot, and you can take the risk on that trust to present 95% of the time a really authentic, warm, genuine reflection of their experience in school. And you can do that in a really timely way, it can be up for a week, it can go and there is, as you mentioned too, every kid is a publisher now, and it doesn't take a great deal of expense to take a video and edit it, you can do it on an iPhone, an iPad. So, I'd consistently go back to a theme for all communications to be authentic and timely, and to, as far as possible, represent the genuine student voice and experience.

**Trevor Young:** Nice. We had a question over here, please.

**David Sietsma:** Hi, David Sietsma, chair of Arden Anglican School. You mentioned before the privacy setting, I'm just interested in where boundaries are set. So the sports photos, I saw swimmers in there, and where is the legislation at with this? So, I get where the public is at, but where is legislation at?

**Briony Scott:** The legislation is not 'at'. So, what we have to do, you'll notice on my Instagram accounts I never use hash tags, because hashtags bypass all the privacy settings. We have rules about photographing girls and what part of their bodies you can photograph from. I'm on them all and not every teacher has an instinctive sense of that, so we're also educating teachers about what is right. We have 10 girls in the school for whom the parents have said we don't want their photos up on any form of social media. And so if you're going to do that, you need to know who those girls are, and they need to know so that they go, "No".

**Briony Scott:** Even last assembly, I was saying to them, you can take photos, because they're not allowed to have phones and texting and stuff all the time, but if we have a big fundraiser at lunch time, they'll pull out the funds and take photographs. And I go, "You can do that, but you can't do it without the teacher's permission," because this is not just a social thing for them, this is their professional reputation as well. And they might be really happy to get dressed up in a bright pink leotard for the 80s concert, but then not going to want that on social media.

**Briony Scott:** So, there is this constant, constant education about it, that is not, but the conversation allows us to converse not reprimand. And what I'd rather do, which doesn't mean the kids don't make mistakes, but frankly, I think, I see



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more adults make mistakes than the kids do. Because they are at least we are talking to them, whereas people don't talk to the adults as much. So, the legislation, very poor, I will never use hash tags even though you can be very funny with hash tags, but on any account of the students they do allow, you'll be able to do searches to by-pass the security settings.

**Karen Spiller OAM:** I agree some of the greatest challenges is with staff when they make foolish comments, and they actually haven't done their privacy settings appropriately. And then you have to counsel them about that particular management issue.

**Trevor Young:** When I was doing research for this and I was looking at those crises and issues, side of things and nine times out of 10 it was actually teachers making faux pas. So, I think we're all learning together though some of those articles are quite old. I think it's learning everyone is at different levels, you can never assume that people do know. Again, it's show not tell, it's empowering not reprimanding. So, I think they're good words to be using. Who's got a question?

**Briony Scott:** It's a very different conversation if it's a malicious thing. So, a big part of the conversation is if you see a photograph you don't like and you like it, as far as I'm concerned, that's as good as kicking somebody when they're down. So, we have really frank conversations about those kinds of things as well. So, lot of the kids they don't think that, they just think it's a funny photo so they'll like it. And a big part of that I think is going with is malicious intent there or even it's naïve, malicious naivety then we'll go straight for that and we'll address it.

**Trevor Young:** Had a question over here.

**Melise Sutton:** Melise Sutton, Principal at Margaret Jurd College. I understand that on Facebook you can really lock down the capacity for people to comment and to be able to post things within your Facebook account. Do you have the same capacity within Instagram? My school is a very different world, I have kids with mental health diagnosis, parents who would bully, and I'd really love to be able to use Instagram, I quite like the platform. Happy for them to like and which is not to like. But I'd love to be able to get rid of the capacity to comment.

**Briony Scott:** Well, you can, there are options and you can also delete comments as well. Your school world is not withstanding that it's unique, all the schools are dealing with the same thing in terms of the sort of sensitivity, but while you remain the administrator you have control. And that's why with all the accounts there is always someone at school who is actually controlling this kind of thing.

**Paul Chapman:** Hi, I'm Paul from the International Football and Tennis School on the central coast. With all the noise that's out there, we're interested on your opinions on



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how you actually get messages to your parent body when there are messages you really want them to hear. I find that really challenging when there is multiple platforms that we use. And sometimes parents say, "Well, you told us on Facebook, you didn't email us," et cetera. I find that really challenging to navigate, I'd be interested in your approaches.

Trevor Young:

I open that one to the floor.

Briony Scott:

I think every community will be subtly different. I've come into the John Paul College community where Facebook is really, really strong. And we have something like 40 different parent Facebook groups and which one to reign that one in for all the reasons that we've kind of mentioned here. And at one point a couple of months ago we actually closed everything down for 24 hours so that we could gradually release it again. And the backlash of the potential concern from parents that we were closing down the Facebook platform was something that we really didn't understand clearly enough on how to really get on the front foot again to explain why we did that to manage potentially malicious comments. And that we did really did embrace parent contribution. So, Facebook is really, really big at our place and I can guarantee that if we put anything out on Facebook the parents will definitely pick it up. And they love that video content.

Briony Scott:

So, the more we can do about the little primary book club parade, or all those things that you know hit the hot buttons of your parents, the Facebook video content just works a treat for us.

Simon Gipson:

Can I just sort of leap in there. I think that to pick up Trevor's point about multiple mini narratives, I think there are also multiple platforms through which parents will wish to be communicated. And it's actually being very clear about what those are and limiting, I take on board Karen's point about multiple Facebook pages. But being clear about the specific and particular platforms through which you communicate, whether be Facebook, Instagram, email accounts, the website, et cetera.

Briony Scott:

I actually do make the distinction between social media and the more formal communication of the school. So, I will write to the parents every week and that will go directly into their inbox and then we will reflect it down through the social media thing. That's my formal thing. The social media is fun, it's just a really fun way of capturing the complexity and the messiness of school life and it's to move away from this commercial perfectionism that sometimes can be in independence schools, that everything has got to be glossy and beautiful and immaculate. And I don't know about you but we're fighting against that really strongly. We're just going, "You know what? Life is messy, get used to it." It's



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normal to be unhappy, it's not my job to entertain you. Like all those kind of messages I can do more easily through the social media channels, but every week I send them a formal message that is the more formal communication.

Trevor Young:

I'll just jump in there too. I guess with Facebook, as I said earlier, you know, just because someone likes Facebook doesn't mean they naturally get to see, you don't necessarily pop up in their feed, which is an issue that everyone faces using Facebook. But, for a very small amount of money, which is what Facebook obviously wants, is you can pay them to reach your audience for key things that really need to get out there. And we're seeing people to strategically use that, I'm not an advocate for just boosting every single post, but just the ones that really need to, or the ones that start taking off and people are obviously interested in, then strategically give them a boost. And there is question, next.

Elizabeth Rhodes:

Elizabeth Rhodes. I'm the principal at Lowther Hall in Melbourne. I'm just interested, we have some staff amongst our welfare team and our school sites who are dealing often with some girls that really struggle to manage social media addiction and to get themselves into all sorts of messes with specifically the platforms of Instagram and Snapchat. I'm wondering whether there has been any discussion within your environments around the school buying into those platforms for communications with students and whether there has been any productive conversation around something that I think some of my staff will see as a tension where they're trying to get girls to move away from some of those platforms. And if we as school leaders are encouraging them to use them, that that could potentially be seen as conflict of interest or contradiction, I'm just interested in any conversation about that.

Briony Scott:

So, from my perspective, what I find is those students who are struggling in this kind of area, they are struggling in other areas like in life and it manifests itself through social media. The challenge is that the implications of that manifestation are so much greater on social media than they are if they weren't using those mechanisms. So, for us, like many schools, we have a very strong counter point to education about social media goes hand in hand with education on how to get off the grid, how to have time to yourself, how to be comfortable in solitude. Many of us have had to cancel something where you were deliberately now choose sites where there is no mobile phone range because they do not believe us when they say don't bring your phone.

Briony Scott:

There is a magic place in the Colo river where we bus the kids, and they all bring their phones and they do something that we call "the colo wave." They get off the bus, and they pull out their phone out surreptitiously, and it dawns on them that it actually don't have coverage, and they go like this. I kind of get it, and they are like every year. So, we overtly we have to teach strategies. The biggest



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challenge of course is that most adults are incapable of getting off the grid. And so, why we're expecting and wanting and we will continue to do so, behaviours and mindsets in children that we ourselves can't deliver on. We're in a really interesting social experiment and we are all in this series no control grid. So, there is that element of it. In my personal experience the kids who misread massively the social cues around social media are misreading cues across the board. And it's how do you protect them from the manifestations of those kind of things. And that's a really tough gig.

Trevor Young:

Would you please thanks Simon, Karen and Briony. Thank you.