

Episode 4 Worksheet



Invest in Social Media (Budget)

This worksheet will help you take action after (or along with) tuning in to Episode 4 of Social Strategy Fundamentals. If you've downloaded the [Fundamentals of Social Media Strategy](#) book, chapter four shares more detail about building a budget that supports a successful social media program.

The book and training episode share how social media seems low-investment on the surface, but it's really not. And if you want to be successful, results are largely a reflection of resources.

Most successful campus social media programs have a six-figure annual investment or more. This draft budget helps you understand how to adequately fund everything needed to succeed. The three levels of investment demonstrate the varying amounts a campus may invest after considering their audience size and strategic emphasis on social media. The levels don't necessarily correspond with campus size. The guidelines are a starting point—use them to create a budget, add new line items, or secure management buy-in.

	Level of Investment		
Resource	Low	Medium	High
Staff (Professional)*	\$60,000	\$200,000	\$400,000
	1 position	2 to 4 staff	5+ staff
Staff (Students)	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$25,000
Vendors	\$10,000	\$80,000	\$250,000
	Training, social media account audit, content creation, etc.	Low tier + social listening agency, competitive analysis, or crisis management and response	Medium tier + paid social advertising, social media or strategy research and consulting
Equipment	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
	phone + small annual purchases	low + camera and accessories (e.g., tripod, microphone)	medium + advanced equipment (e.g., drone, podcast equipment or booth, video editing)

Resource	Low	Medium	High
Software	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
	social media management + basic design + apps for mobile editing for each user	enterprise-level management software with basic listening (multiple users); Adobe products	enterprise-level management software, social listening software for large conversations, design, specialty software—all with 12+ users
Props	\$250	\$1,500	\$5,000
Professional Development	\$3,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
Advertising**	\$18,000	\$65,400	\$120,000
	<p>This plan tests the waters with 1 program/audience on 1 platform, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small targeting and/or creative optimizations based on performance • Competing in 1–2 geographies <p>\$1,500/month ensures you can meet platform spending minimums.</p>	<p>This level includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple strategies (e.g., behavioral targeting and retargeting) • More geographies • Secondary audiences (e.g., current high school students and their parents) <p>Depending on the competitiveness of the program promoted, this budget should also support a second platform.</p>	<p>This level has full flexibility to run campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On more than 1 platform • To primary and secondary audiences • Test multiple targeting options that with behavioral, lists, look-alike, or retargeting
Total	\$83,250	\$421,900	\$980,000

* Staff Professional Example: Salaries only, not including fringe or other costs.

** Advertising example is provided for an enrollment marketing budget for one program. A campus-wide budget for paid advertising should be much higher. Estimates provided by Carnegie Dartlet, a firm that assists many campuses with their social media advertising and enrollment marketing. Your budget will vary based on your school size, enrollment goals, precious market advertising, who you're targeting, and competitiveness of promoted programs.

More Deets on Software

There's a lot of software on the market and it's not an area to skimp on. Deployed strategically, it can drastically increase the efficiency and impact of your efforts. Since it's something we happen to know a little bit about, we created a [software comparison](#) to help you understand the differences between social media monitoring and social listening resources.

Budget Template

Use this template along with the more detailed guidelines in Chapter 4 of *Fundamentals of Social Media Strategy: A Guide for College Campuses*.

1. Determine your team or department's level of social media investment. Be realistic about your available resources.
2. Add known costs that don't have flexibility or you don't have control over.
3. Distribute the remaining budget based on your social media goals and priorities.
4. If your needs require more resources, make a plan to request more from your leadership by tying your social media efforts to campus goals.

Resource	Considerations	Budget
Staff		
Professional	How many staff are on your team? Include only their salary.	
Students	If you have student employees, include their compensation.	
Third-Party Services		
Contractors or Vendors	Anyone you partner with and pay for their expertise (i.e., content creation, crisis management, paid social advertising, social listening, consulting, or training).	
Equipment		
<i>Note: Consider budgeting about 25% of your budget for equipment (excluding full-time staff salaries).</i>		
Required	Cell phone	
Optional	Camera and/or video camera, camera accessories, advanced equipment (e.g., drone, podcast equipment or booth, video editing).	

Software

Social Media Management	Basic management software for content publishing, monitoring, and engagement.	
	Enterprise-level management software with basic listening for multiple users.	
	Social listening software or a specialized agency partner.	
Design	Basic design software such as Adobe Spark, Canva, Animoto, or the Adobe Creative Suite.	
	Advanced design software such as InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator.	
Apps	Mobile editing apps to make your mobile phone more efficient.	

Props

Extras	Props that help set the scene for a photo or video shoot.	
Branded Items	Anything to help set the scene for your strategy or to use as promotional items, especially if you have student ambassadors.	

Professional Development

Conferences	Consider one to two conferences a year, either virtual or in-person. If in person, don't forget to include extra funds for travel expenses.	
Classes or Training	Any additional training to supplement your current skills.	
Advertising		
One Campaign	Supports one program/audience on one platform, making small targeting or creative optimizations based on performance.	
Multiple Campaigns	Multiple strategies and programs targeting more geographies and secondary audiences.	
Full Flexible Strategy	Flexibility to run campaigns on multiple platforms to primary and secondary audiences and test multiple targeting options.	
		Total