

## The Graphic, Pepperdine Graphic Media Pacemaker Submissions, 2020-2021



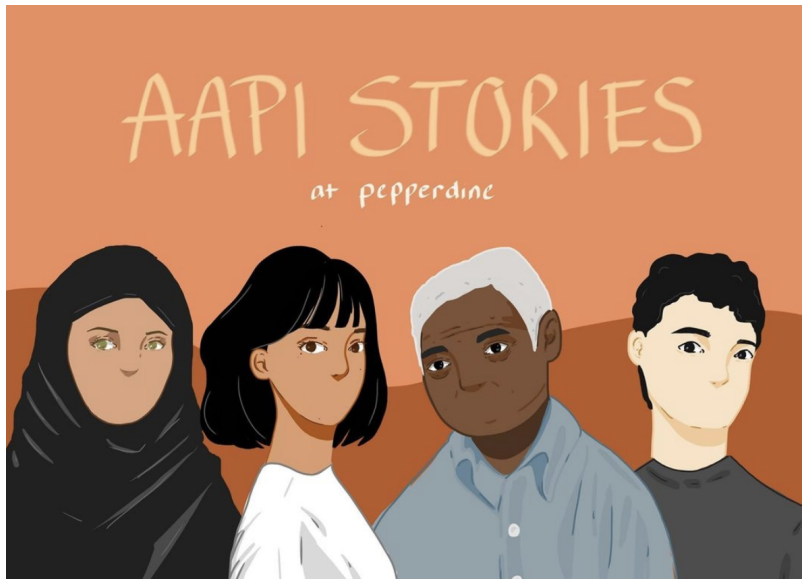
### An all-platform approach

When engaging with our audience, we consider all of our social media channels and our weekly e-newsletter as an all-platform approach. [The Pixel, our weekly newsletter](#), has an average open rate of about 50% across each semester. This highlights content from each section, including our podcasts. Our social media channels are managed with unique calendars for each and a strategy unique to the audience of each platform. Social media traffic provides the majority of our digital traffic. We also require reporters to live-tweet live events they are covering (e.g. student government meetings, sporting events, etc.). These live tweets are also transformed into Instagram stories by our social media team.

Digital Editor Brianna Willis led our entire digital team. Her work includes managing the website and managing all social media channels. Each section of the Graphic includes a social media coordinator for all regular content. That work includes making sure that social media follows the calendar for each platform, writing posts, checking in with reporters and section editors. Breaking news is generally led by Brianna Willis and our News Editor Ashley Mowreader but all social media coordinators are trained to create and post breaking news content for social media.

## Social Media Promotional Highlights:

- Prioritizing trust
- Growth across all social media platforms
- “We’re All in this Together” campaign
- Get to Know the Staff





## Trust

Trust in the news media is dangerously low, according to a 2020 report by Pew Research Center. Low trust and the rampant flow of misinformation may be one of the most urgent problems facing all news media— college newsrooms are no exception. For the past year, the Graphic has worked to increase audience trust as part of our larger news literacy efforts. Social media is where trust in the news is most precarious. As a result, social media is where we feature many of our “trust elements,” which are small supplemental elements or explanations that have been promoted by Trusting News to build audience trust. An example of a trust element is the IGTV post we used to open our [2020 Election Day Coverage](#). This video explained from our reporters and social media team members why and how we would conduct our election coverage. We also use our social media to make sure corrections in our reporting are widely seen (see below).



## Instagram

Followers: 2,298; this is a 13% increase from the previous school year

This year our Social Media team created three new shows for IGTV, exclusively: The Rundown, Weekend Watch and Career Chat. These are short entertainment informational videos that feature bite-sized content for a 2-to-3 minute viewing.

## Twitter

**Followers: 3,446 followers; this is a 10% increase from the previous year**

This is where breaking news will have the most traction (although we see that changing with Instagram). This has been particularly useful and important during an entire academic year of remote reporting when issues of racial justice, COVID-19 closures and university policies have been announced but there has been limited opportunity to get person-on-the-street reactions.

## Facebook

**Followers: 1,997; this is an 11% increase from the previous year**

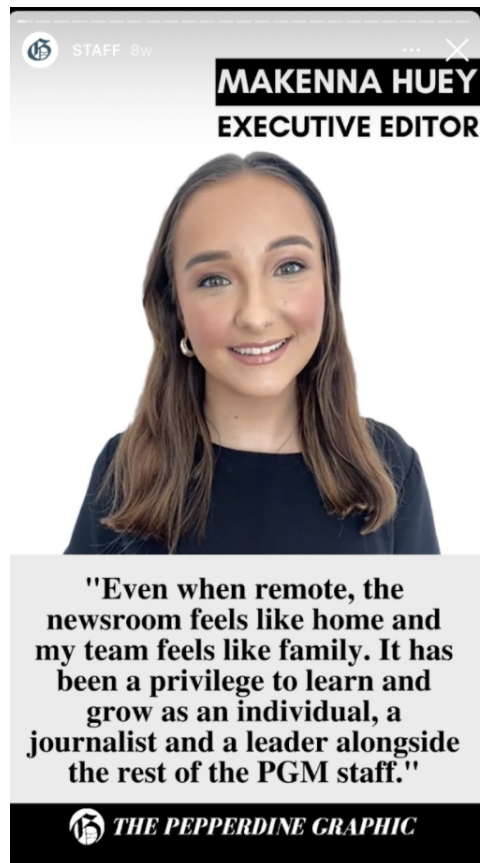
Although we anticipate engagement on every social media channel, when posting a story that will be particularly relevant to parents and alumni, there is always an anticipation of a large volume of responses via Facebook. For this reason, among others, Facebook is still one of our largest avenues for digital traffic.

### “We’re All in this Together” Campaign

In the fall of 2020, the Graphic offered free advertising on our social media channels and in our newsletter. This was featured as the “We’re All in this Together” campaign to support local businesses suffering from COVID-19 closures, particularly in Southern California where COVID-19 cases remained high with strict closures and reductions in place. This was intended to be (and was received) to signal a sign of unity despite the fact that most students were not studying in the area. This was exclusively a social media campaign.



## Get to Know the Staff



Featuring all of our staff members on social media and highlighting their reasons for participating with the Graphic was intended to help our audience get to know the people who produce every aspect of the Graphic, particularly in a remote year. These posts demonstrated high engagement. This was also a cross promotion with our Trust campaign and we informally considered these trust elements, since an audience member is more likely to trust someone with whom they are familiar.