CONSULTANCY
SERVICES
PORTFOLIO

Bespoke data-driven insights and expert guidance

THE

INTRODUCTION

For **50 years**, Times Higher Education (THE) has been a leading global authority in higher education around the world through powerful insights, analysis and news. Since launching the World University Rankings in 2004, THE has collected more than **9 million** individual datapoints from **3,500+** universities in over **100 countries** and regions, creating an unrivalled proprietary dataset and establishing THE as a world leader in higher education analytics.

Coupled with a website reach of more than **30 million** annual users, THE is best-placed to support you with understanding and achieving your strategic goals.

Trusted by governments, higher education institutions and organisations, our solutions have been specifically developed to inform, measure and support your strategic and tactical goals, from **data benchmarking** to **marketing** and **recruitment**, both domestically and on the **world stage**.

This is product pack **4 of 4** covering **THE's Consultancy Services**.
You can find information relating to the rest of our solutions through these other three product packs: Hiring, Branding and Data

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DATAPOINTS	**HIRING SOLUTIONS**	**BRANDING**	**CONSULTANCY**
PRODUCT	**PRODUCT**	**PRODUCT**	**SERVICES**
PORTFOLIO	**PORTFOLIO**	**PORTFOLIO**	**PORTFOLIO**

"THERE IS NO WORLD DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, BUT TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IS DOING A REAL SERVICE TO UNIVERSITIES BY DEVELOPING DEFINITIONS AND DATA THAT CAN BE USED FOR COMPARISON AND UNDERSTANDING."

LYDIA SNOVER
Director of institutional research,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

01

STRATEGIC SOLUTION DESIGN

"
Our consultancy practice harnesses THE's strong network in the global higher education sector, combining engagement of global stakeholders within our analyses
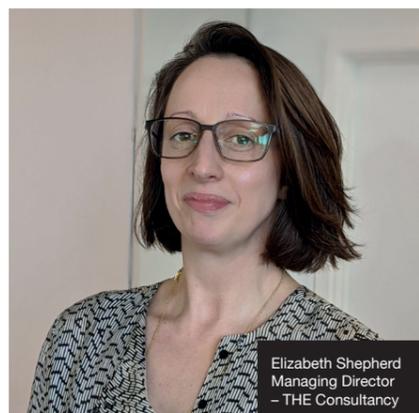
THE CONSULTANCY

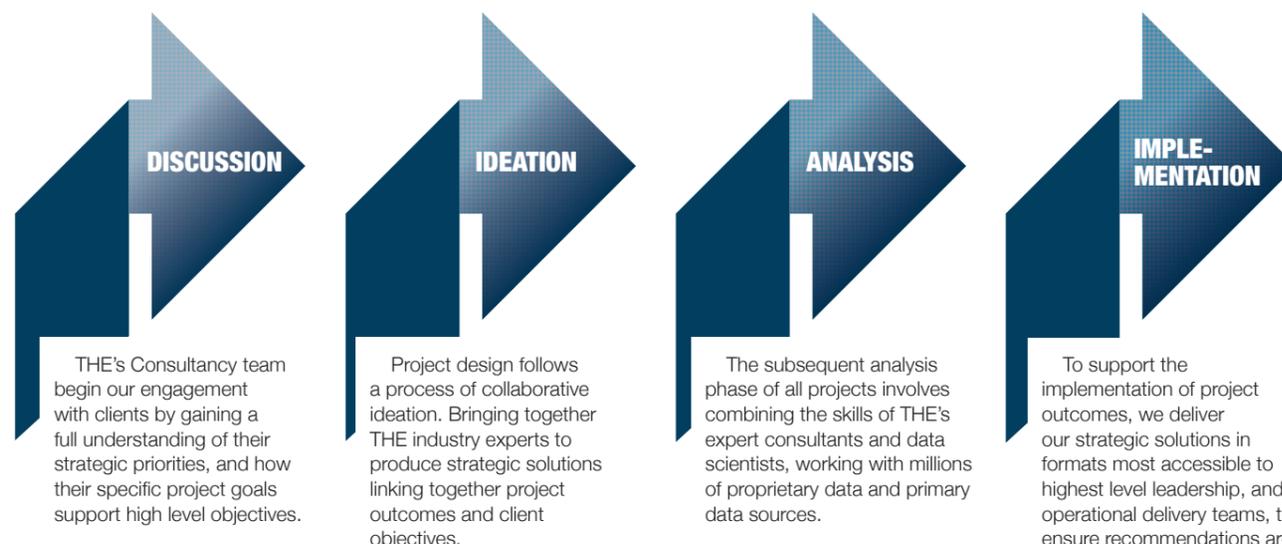Supporting global higher education leaders to achieve sustainable growth and strategic impact.

THE Consultancy provides strategic, data-driven guidance to universities and governments globally. Building on our vast sector expertise and long history, we support our partners to build effective and sustainable strategies aligned to their unique mission.

Understanding that all organisations are unique, we combine proprietary and primary data to design customised solutions. Our consultancy practice harnesses THE's strong network in the global higher education sector, combining engagement of global stakeholders within our analyses. Offering both short-term and long-term solutions, our expert consultants diagnose areas of strength, and provide evidence-based guidance on implementation of recommendations for improvement.

Elizabeth Shepherd
Managing Director
– THE Consultancy

DISCUSSION

THE's Consultancy team begin our engagement with clients by gaining a full understanding of their strategic priorities, and how their specific project goals support high level objectives.

IDEATION

Project design follows a process of collaborative ideation. Bringing together THE industry experts to produce strategic solutions linking together project outcomes and client objectives.

ANALYSIS

The subsequent analysis phase of all projects involves combining the skills of THE's expert consultants and data scientists, working with millions of proprietary data and primary data sources.

IMPLE-MENTATION

To support the implementation of project outcomes, we deliver our strategic solutions in formats most accessible to highest level leadership, and operational delivery teams, to ensure recommendations are embedded across all crucial stakeholder audiences.

WHAT WE DO:

INSTITUTIONAL **RANKINGS PERFORMANCE** ANALYSIS

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS **ANALYSIS**

INTERNATIONALISATION **STRATEGY**

GLOBAL ACADEMIC **REPUTATION ANALYSIS**

STRATEGY **EVALUATION**

BRAND HEALTH CHECK

RESEARCH **NETWORK** ANALYSIS

02
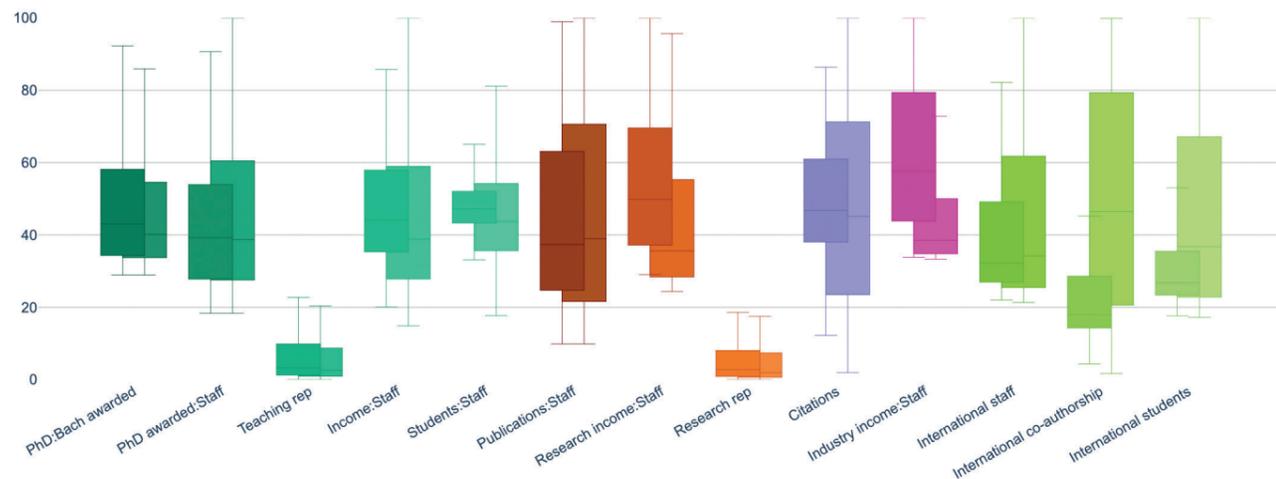
INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

An in-depth analysis of institutional or subject level performance in THE's suite of global rankings.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a private university in Guayaquil, Ecuador, to assess its institutional performance. The university has a mission to become a centre of teaching, research and community engagement, creating a learning environment that will help to advance Ecuador's development.
　The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand its institutional performance, with a view to entering the THE World University Rankings (WUR) in the future.

> " The consultancy engagement included an in-depth presentation of the WUR methodology to explain why the university didn't meet the eligibility criteria at the time

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

The report produced for the client provided a simulation of the university's performance in the WUR, benchmarking its simulated performance against other universities that were already included in the ranking. The consultancy engagement included an in-depth presentation of the WUR methodology to explain why the university didn't meet the eligibility criteria at the time. We then carried out a detailed discussion of the client's simulated performance in each of the WUR metrics, relative to its comparator institutions.

THE METRICS WE ANALYSED WERE:

- **Teaching environment**
- **Research**
- **Citations**
- **Industry income**
- **International outlook**
- **Reputation**
- **Subject rankings**
- **Performance in THE Impact Rankings**

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussion during the consultancy session, as well as analysis of the data collected, the resulting recommendations included:

- **Continue developing the university's doctoral degree programmes to increase doctoral student numbers**
- **Monitor the quantity and quality of publications by subject area to better understand why its research output lagged behind competitors in some cases**
- **Encourage academics to develop external collaborations and track the impact of these collaborations**
- **Adopt consistent naming conventions across all of its research output**

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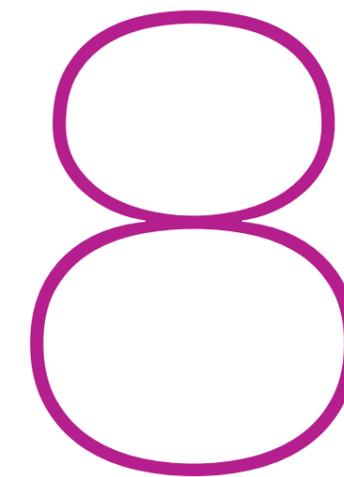
METRICS ANALYSED

03

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Competitor analysis across various characteristics, utilising THE's extensive wealth of data, including academic and research excellence, inclusivity, internationalisation, and employability.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a leading provider of flexible and innovative distance learning, which operates in the UK and internationally. The institution's award-winning distance teaching credentials have resulted in more than 2 million students receiving an education that would otherwise be denied to them at campus-based universities.

With a mission to transform lives through education and reduce barriers to entry, the client sought THE's consultancy service to understand how it could best achieve this aim, including the measures it could take to do so, and the ways in which its competitors were also working towards similar goals.

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

The report produced for the client compared its performance with similar institutions, chosen as a broadly representative sample of UK providers. The report highlighted the best-in-class institution for each brand characteristic the client chose to focus on, as well as ranking the client in relation to its competitors.

The narrative of the report focused on the competitors identified by the institution, however other best-in-class examples were also identified and included in the chapter summaries, providing a comprehensive overview of the sector.

The data used to make these assessments comprised a combination of student perceptions, perceptions of academics, data sourced from national statistics, and metrics from Times Higher Education's University Impact Rankings and World University Rankings.

11 BRAND CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSED

18 COMPARATOR INSTITUTIONS ANALYSED

" Our analysis enabled the institution to fully develop their brand identity and market itself to key international and domestic stakeholder audiences

Specifically, THE Consultancy analysed the following brand characteristics:

- Academic excellence
- Research excellence
- Supportiveness
- Social opportunities
- Employability
- Flexibility
- Inclusivity
- Innovation
- Lifelong learning
- Value for money
- Heritage

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

THE Consultancy found that the institution performed well for employability, academic excellence and research excellence, but compared less favourably for the brand characteristics of supportiveness and social opportunities. We identified best-in-class institutions for these characteristics, both from the list of providers the client chose to focus on and others operating in the market. Our analysis enabled the institution to fully develop their brand identity and market itself to key international and domestic stakeholder audiences.

04

STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION ANALYSIS

Insights into the perceptions of stakeholders that are strategically important to your institution, including internal and external stakeholders.

With a mission to be a university that is the pride of Taiwan, the client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand how it is perceived by academics around the world and the measures it could take to better align its reputation with its brand identity and goals.

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

The report produced for the client gathered insights from an international academic audience in order to build a profile of stakeholder perceptions. THE Consultancy produced a bespoke academic reputation survey, receiving responses from 250 participants in more than 20 countries and a broad range of academic fields.

The survey asked:

- **The level of awareness of research institutions in Taiwan? Of [the client]?**
- **The perceptions of research institutions in Taiwan? Of [the client]?**
- **The potential level of interest in collaboration?**
- **The potential barriers to collaboration?**

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a public research university based in Taiwan to assess perception of the institution amongst key stakeholder audiences.

The institution is one of the best comprehensive universities in the country and a leader in promoting collaboration between academia and industry. It has consistently been ranked as one of the top universities in Asia.

> "We identified an opportunity for the client to differentiate by improving its engagement with industry

THE'S BESPOKE ACADEMIC REPUTATION SURVEY:

252 RESPONDENTS

23 COUNTRIES

The survey also presented key messaging and trialled positioning statements for future use. THE Consultancy analysed survey responses to reveal insights about the client and its competitor universities, specifically addressing:

- **Awareness**
- **Perceptions**
- **International collaboration**
- **Research profiles**

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

THE Consultancy found that awareness of research-led institutions in Taiwan is relatively low outside the Asia-Pacific region. Awareness of the client was significantly lower than other research-led institutions in Taiwan and international competitors, but higher amongst respondents in leadership roles.

Across the audience surveyed, the study found that perceptions of research-led institutions in Taiwan were generally positive. Such institutions had strong reputations for academic excellence, conducting impactful research and being internationally collaborative. However, perceptions of the client in these areas were generally lower, suggesting that it could improve awareness and differentiate its mission from competitors. We identified an opportunity for the client to differentiate by improving its engagement with industry.

Our recommendations included identifying an opportunity for the client to establish itself as an ideal research partner in the country, making use of factors such as common areas of research focus and reputation for academic excellence.

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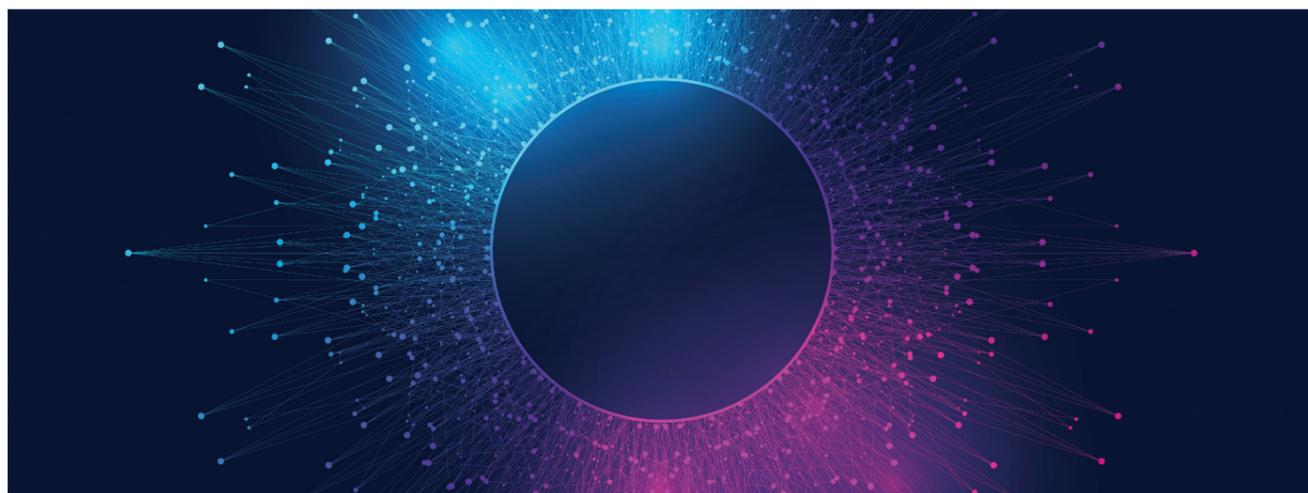
ACADEMIC REPUTATION ANALYSIS

An examination of academic reputation via analysis of evidence collected from researchers globally participating in THE's Academic Reputation Survey.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a private research university based in Seoul, South Korea. The university hoped to build a reputation for quality based on excellence in teaching, research and service to Korean society. The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand its academic reputation and the ways it could be improved.

> " The university hoped to build a reputation for quality based on excellence in teaching, research and service to Korean society

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

The report produced for the client included analysis of a range of metrics, all of which related to measurements of the university's academic reputation. The metrics we analysed were:

- **The client's performance in business and economics, highlighting the gaps that influence reputation**
- **THE Academic Reputation Survey's methodology, including the mechanics of converting votes into scores**
- **Global and regional data insights, trends and voting patterns in South Korea**

- **The reputation of South Korean universities in the context of top global institutions**
- **The client's performance in the THE Academic Reputation Survey, including benchmarking of comparator institutions**
- **Detailed analysis of the client's performance in teaching and research reputation metrics for business and economics**
- **Benchmarking of the client and comparator institutions in business and economics**
- **The relationship between reputation and other metrics in the THE World University Rankings**

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the report and our discussion with the client, we made a number of recommendations to support the university in achieving its goals. These recommendations fell into two wider categories: quality of research and internationalisation. One of the steps we recommended to support improved research output was prioritising high-quality journals when publishing research. Attracting and retaining talent was also identified as a priority.

By showcasing high-quality research at relevant conferences, it was suggested the client could create vital research networks and partnerships, which could further enhance its academic reputation. To increase its international profile, our recommendations included increasing interactions with international faculty, both in terms of recruitment and collaboration on research projects. Focusing on the development of academic programmes and recruiting international students was also recommended. Finally, the university should bring awareness to its research excellence through an effective branding, marketing, communications and public relations strategy.

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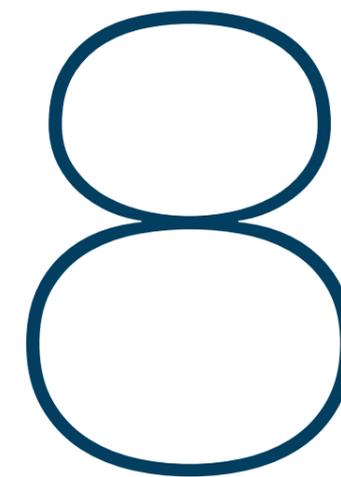
METRICS ANALYSED

06
STRATEGY ANALYSIS

Support to evaluate your current institutional strategy via engagement with key internal decision makers to shape and support future direction.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a multidisciplinary research-orientated university based in Moscow, Russia, to assess its strategy, particularly in relation to the institution's internationalisation strategy.

While the university was considered one of the best in the country, it had comparatively limited international reach. The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand how it is perceived by non-Russian academic audiences and gain recommendations on how it could develop its internationalisation strategy.

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

THE Consultancy carried out a four-part, mixed methodological strategy review and primary data collection process in order to present a comprehensive audit of the university's strategy. The report produced for the client gathered insights from the institution's past and current roadmaps, as well as consulting with the leadership team, staff and students to assess the feasibility of its strategy.

The consultation with the university's leadership team included the following discussion areas:

- **Global competitiveness**
- **5/100 roadmap**
- **Strategy communication**
- **Strategy implementation**
- **Looking forward**
- **Future implementation**
- **Lessons learnt**

The staff survey focused on:

- **Awareness of, and perceptions of progress towards, the 5/100 goals**
- **Awareness and perceptions of the client's 2016-20 roadmap**
- **Priorities for the next roadmap/strategy**
- **Identifying the client's main competitors**

The student survey focused on:

- **Awareness of, and perceptions of progress towards, the 5/100 goals**
- **Awareness and perceptions of the client's 2016-20 roadmap**
- **The student experience (internationalism and independent learning)**
- **Main reasons for choosing to study with the client**

> " The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand how it is perceived by non-Russian academic audiences

> " It had been challenging to ensure consistent understanding of key strategic goals and targets internally

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

THE Consultancy's audit of the client's 2016-20 roadmap found that the main challenges it faced related to citations, publications and research income.

Our consultation with the university's leadership team found that it had been challenging to ensure consistent understanding of key strategic goals and targets internally. The staff and student surveys found that awareness of the previous roadmap was inconsistent and that this was an area for future improvement.

Moving forward, we suggested that the client should:

- **Prioritise subject-level research strategy for 2021-30**
- **Use strategic planning as an instrument for change**
- **Align its research strategy with global priorities and base in competitive landscape**
- **Focus on staff communications during the change management process, with incentives and change management processes in place**

504
RESPONDENTS TO STAFF SURVEY

2395
RESPONDENTS TO STUDENT SURVEY

07

DIGITAL BRAND DIAGNOSTIC

The brand diagnostic process will give valuable insights into your overall brand performance, considering different aspects of your brand presence, including awareness, reputation and positioning.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW

THE Consultancy worked with a private university in Guayaquil, Ecuador, to assess its digital brand assets. The university has a mission to become a centre of teaching, research and community engagement, creating a learning environment that will help to advance Ecuador's development.

The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand the performance of its online content, including its website and social media presence, focused on supporting the recruitment of future students, in comparison with its domestic competitors.

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY

The report produced for the client included analysis of 70 digital metrics, presented in comparison with regional and global competitors chosen by the university.

THE Consultancy used the data collected to achieve the following aims:

■ **Quantify the client's digital presence targeted at prospective student and academic audiences**
■ **Diagnose strengths and weaknesses of the client's digital content, analysed in comparison with its regional and global competitors**

■ **Learn from competitor best practice when delivering website and social media content. Which channels work best and why?**
■ **Understand the lead generation tools used by competitor universities**
■ **Observe best practice in application of micro- and macro-conversions to support prospective students' application**
■ **SWOT analysis and recommendations**

The digital brand audit presented analysis within the following categorie s:

■ **Traffic analysis**
■ **Social penetration**
■ **Social analysis**
■ **Pay-per-click (PPC)**
■ **Content analysis**
■ **Search engine optimisation (SEO)**

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By developing a comprehensive social media strategy, the university could target a variety of audiences

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The university would benefit from working with an SEO specialist to increase organic traffic and content engagement

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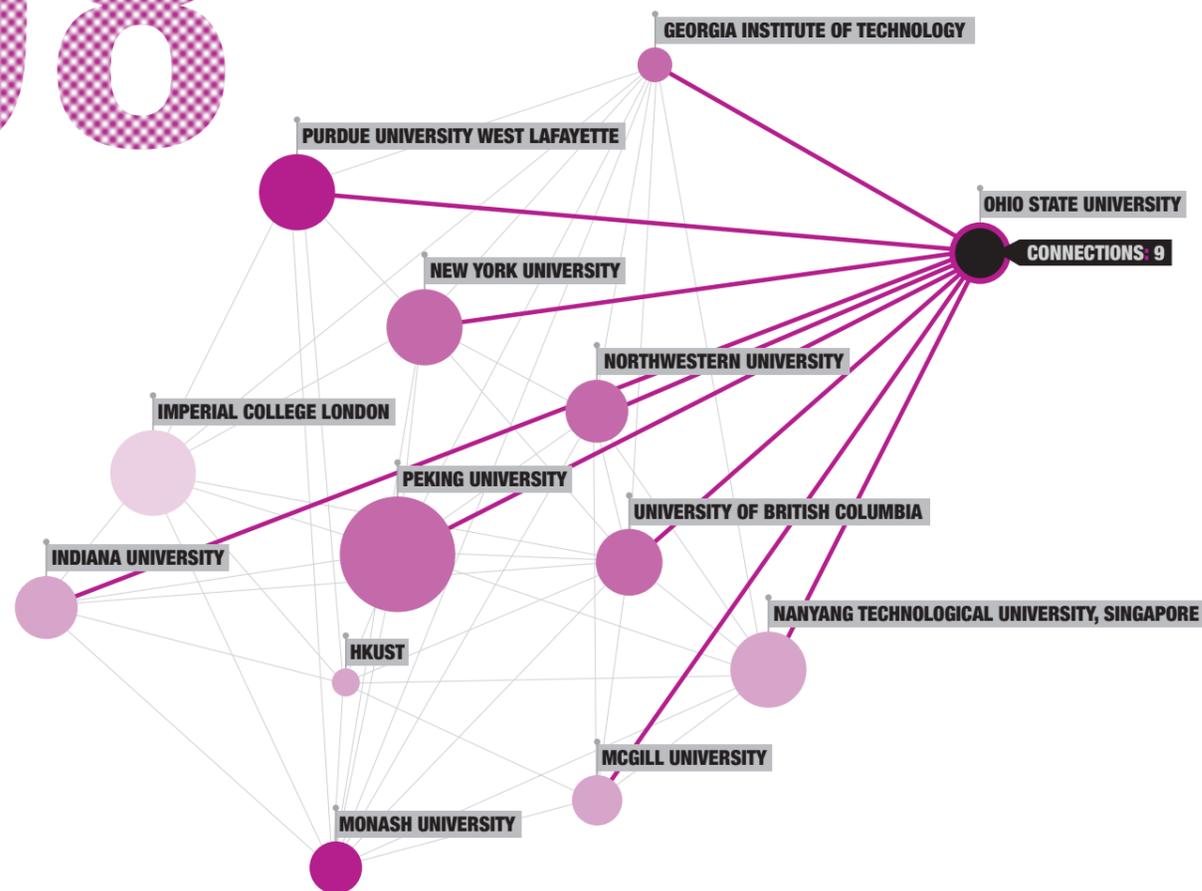
DIGITAL METRICS ANALYSED

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the report, we made a number of recommendations to help the university better understand how to improve its digital brand performance.

We found that the client was not utilising YouTube as much as its competitors, meaning this platform contributed a low proportion of overall social media traffic. By developing a comprehensive social media strategy, the university could target a variety of audiences with dynamic, frequently updated video content that would quickly improve social media penetration. The client's pay-per-click (PPC) usage was also low compared with competitors both in Ecuador and internationally. A targeted PPC strategy could support future social media campaigns.

Our content analysis found that the university would benefit from developing an audience-focused content strategy, which would identify specific audiences to target, link keywords and outline the effective use of social media, video and other types of dynamic content to increase engagement. Improved search engine optimisation (SEO) could also generate financial returns; the university would benefit from working with an SEO specialist to increase organic traffic and content engagement. Finally, the client should implement a micro/macro conversion strategy specifically tailored to its target students' needs.

112
CLIENT ARTICLES ANALYSED

12,074
COMPETITOR ARTICLES ANALYSED

08

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

PURDUE UNIVERSITY WEST LAFAYETTE

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CONNECTIONS: 9

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

PEKING UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE

HKUST

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

MONASH UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC NETWORK ANALYSIS

By analysing several metrics, THE Consultancy supports universities by mapping their global academic network and providing recommendations on how to expand their collaborative reach.

Via analysis of several data sources, THE Consultancy provides universities with findings specific to their unique academic network, empowering them to make the strategic decisions to reach their goals.

CASE STUDY:

OVERVIEW
THE Consultancy worked with a public university based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It has been recognised as a world-class institution, performing well in Times Higher Education's Impact Rankings and Young University Rankings.

> The client sought THE's consultancy service…with a view to improving its international collaborations in research and innovation

The client sought THE's consultancy service to better understand, explore and map its academic network, with a view to improving its international collaborations in research and innovation.

METRICS ANALYSED BY THE CONSULTANCY
The metrics analysed were extracted from the Microsoft Academic Graph, an extensive bibliometric database containing academic publications, as well as authors, institutions, journals, conferences and fields of study. Analysis of this data sought to explore and map the university's academic network.

The first phase of the project involved identifying the university's top five subject areas, which were used to map and visualise its international research partnership network. Phase two of the project involved surveying the university's international research partnership network to better understand the institution's reputation among current and aspirational research partners.

RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the findings of the report, we provided the client with an in-depth analysis of perceptions segmented by country and subject area. We also analysed the gap between the client's vision and mission and the perception amongst their established and aspirational global academic network.

5
TOP SUBJECT AREAS IDENTIFIED AND ANALYSED

> We provided the client with an in-depth analysis of perceptions segmented by country and subject area

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THE is a trusted authority on higher education. This is why the University of Wollongong engaged THE to work with us to gain insights into strategies that will build global visibility and awareness for our research, education and brand. Our consultant added value to our strategy development through his ability to present clear and insightful data about our current positioning and recommended practical strategies to take to market. THE is a great business partner and can be trusted to bounce off ideas in a respected and considered way. I recommend THE to anyone needing strategic marketing advice.

EMILY OSBORNE
Director, Strategic Marketing and Communications
University Of Wollongong, Australia

THE

Contact **consultancy@timeshighereducation.com** to discuss how our team can support you.