

I acknowledge the Gadigal peoples of the Eora nation, Sydney, as the traditional custodians of the land upon which I now stand, and pay my respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

TWEETING INTO THE VOID

Is there sufficient evidence to support the use of social media by Australian academic libraries?

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WHY PRACTITIONER-RESEARCH IS HARD: A SOB STORY IN 3 PARTS

- New system launch
- Changed roles
- Tech fails



Meme from KC Green's 2013 webcomic "On Fire"

SETTING THE SCENE THE LITERATURE

- Twitter and Facebook the most popular social media platforms for academic libraries (Brookbank, 2015; Collins & Quan-Haase, 2014)
- Academic library accounts in English-speaking countries are less likely to perform reciprocal interactions with users and more likely to broadcast (Deodato, 2018; Huang, Chu, Liu & Zheng, 2017)
- Student engagement with library accounts is minimal (Al-Daihani & Abrahams, 2016; Chu & Du, 2013; Jones & Harvey, 2016)
- Students more likely to follow institutional accounts or lecturers, not library accounts (Jones & Harvey, 2016).
- Institutional accounts the most influential account in an academic library's network (Yep, Brown, Fagliarone & Shulman, 2017; Young & Rossmann, 2015)

SETTING THE SCENE THE LITERATURE

- Student reluctance to use social media for academic purposes is changing over time (Brookbank, 2015)
- Libraries may be creating social media accounts because of *institutional isomorphism* – the tendency to copy what other libraries are doing (Harrison, Burrell, Velasquez & Schreiner, 2017). Multiple articles call for adopting social media accounts only after careful consideration is given to the library context, the purpose of the account and how it will be implemented and maintained.
- The opportunities of Library 2.0 – the participatory social web – are largely being ignored (Deodato, 2018)

OVERHYPED FAD OR MISSED OPPORTUNITY? JOSEPH DEODATO (2018)

- Conflict between principles of traditional librarianship:
 - Intellectual property
 - Privacy
 - Expertise
 - Authority

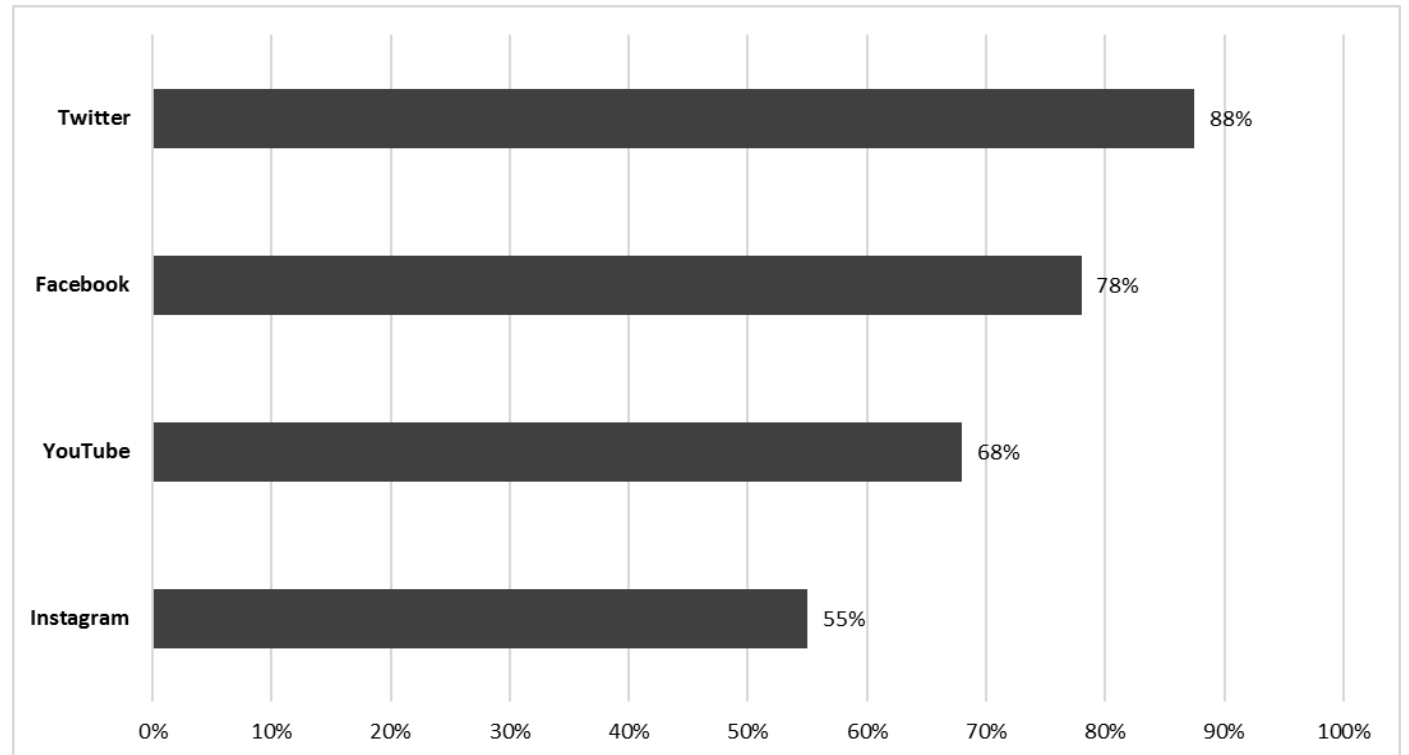
... and the social web

- We can't let go of our gatekeeping copyright-enforcing roles enough to embrace what social media has to offer us and our users

SETTING THE SCENE

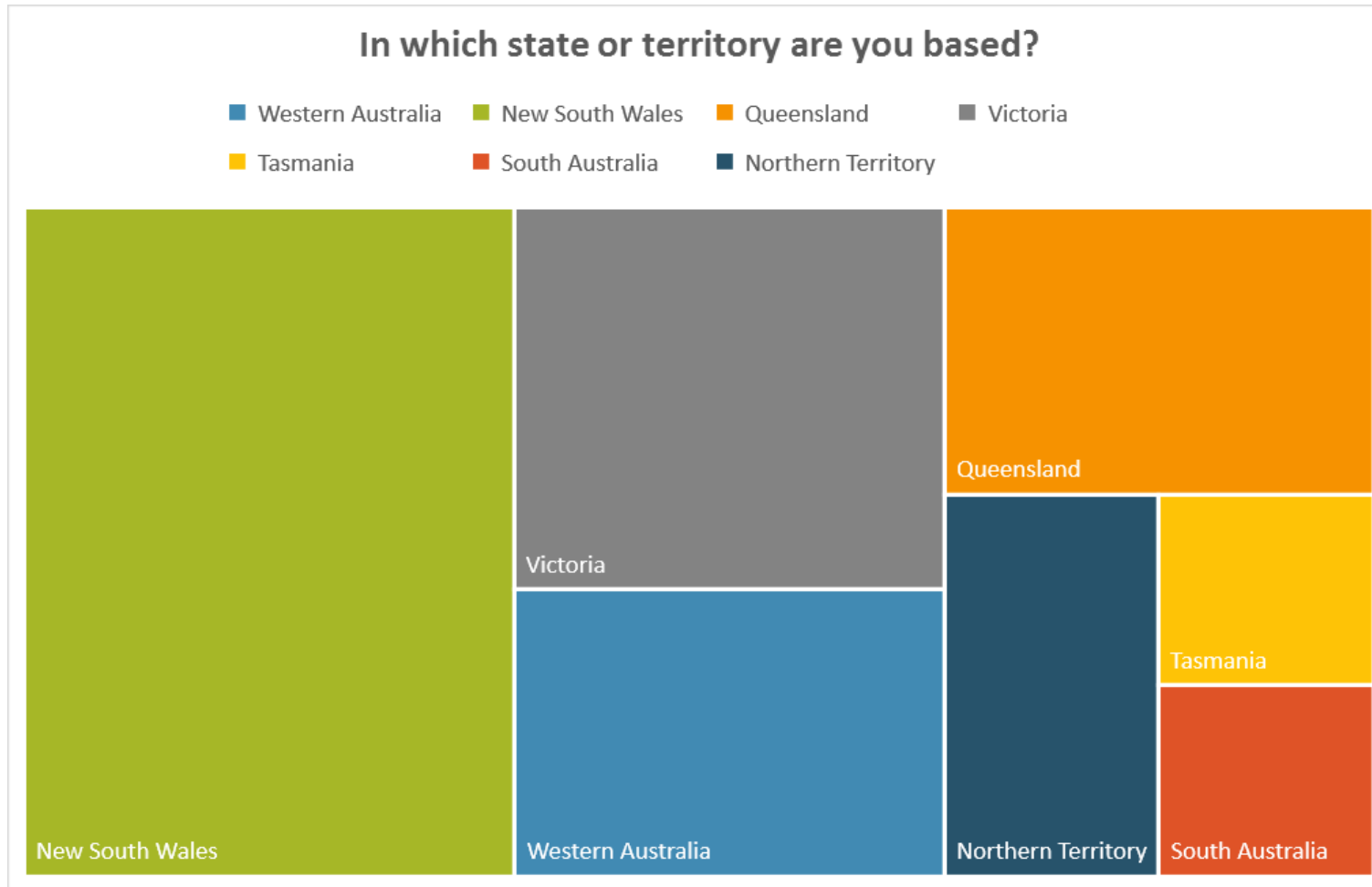
THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Percentage of Australian academic libraries with Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram



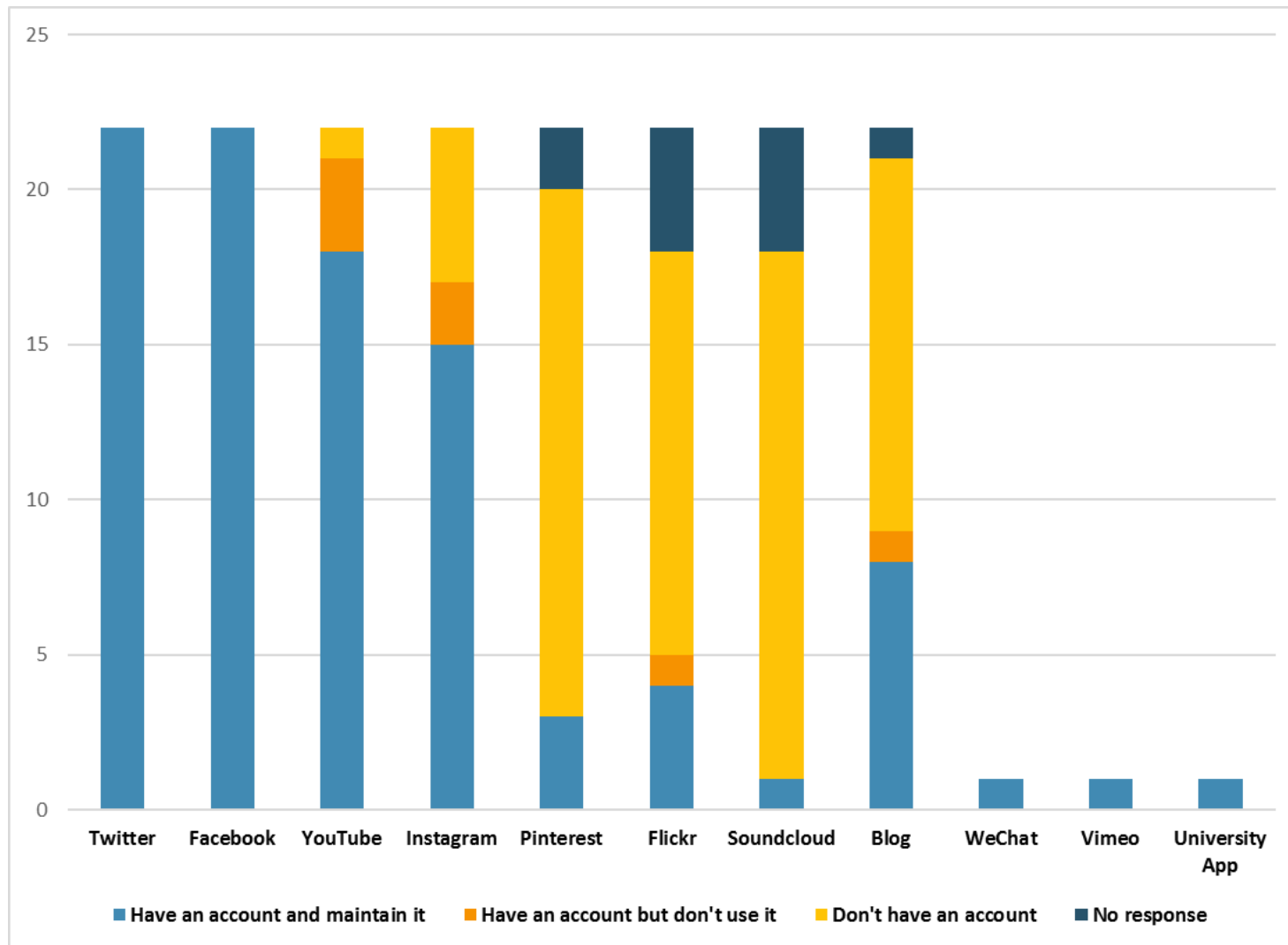
5/40 Australian academic libraries do not have a social media presence at all

THE SURVEY



- **22 respondents ($n=22$)**
- **Sample population = 35**
- **19 individual institutions represented**
- **54% of the sample population represented**

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ARE WE USING?



- 100% ($n = 22$) have Twitter and Facebook accounts and maintain them
- Adoption and maintenance of other platforms is inconsistent

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

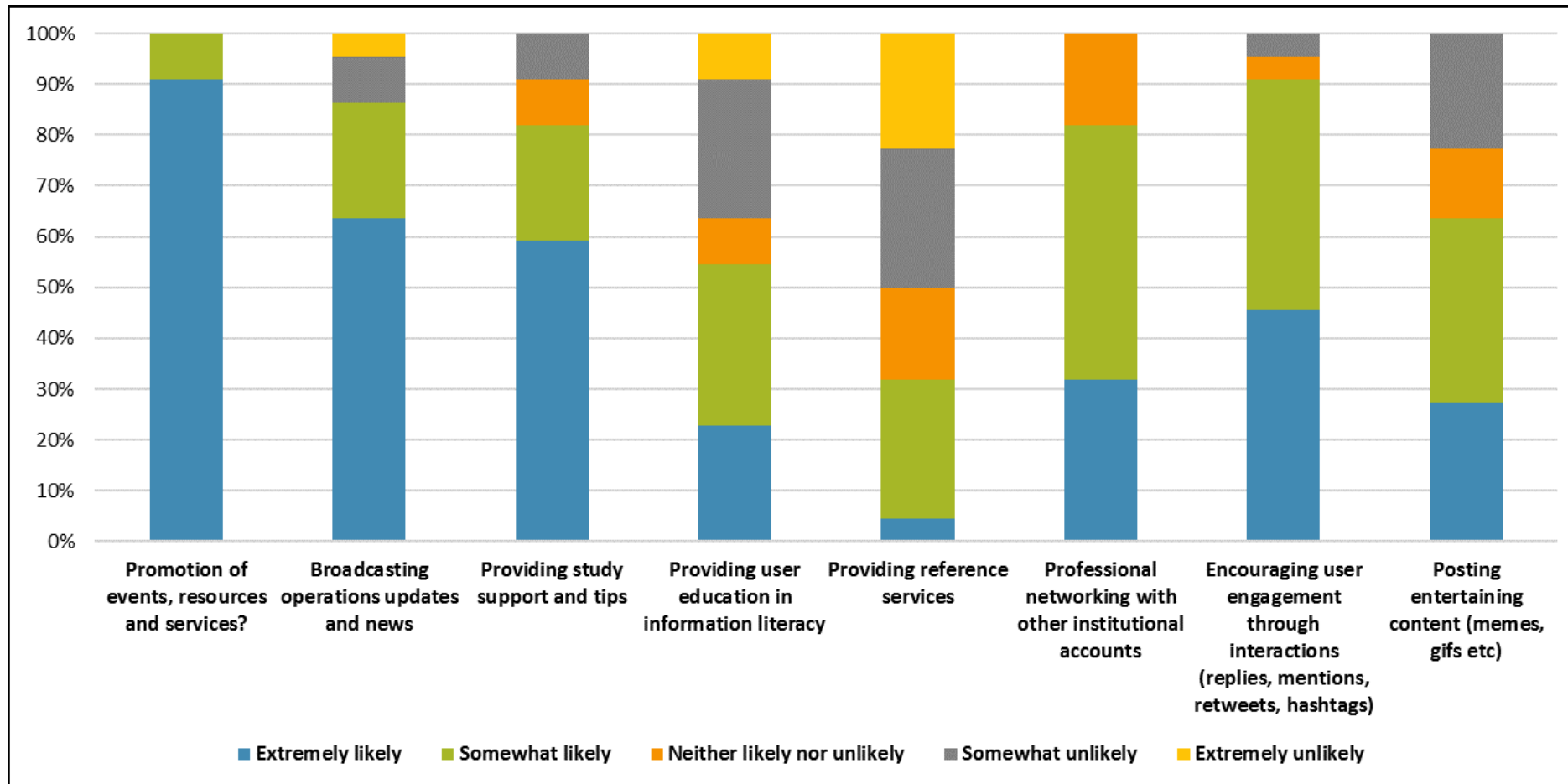
16 (73%, n=22) respondents say their library has a formal strategy for social media

- Promoting library services, resources and events
- Establishing a positive online library presence
- Improving the student experience, build community and relationships

Content tailored for specific audiences – researchers and academics

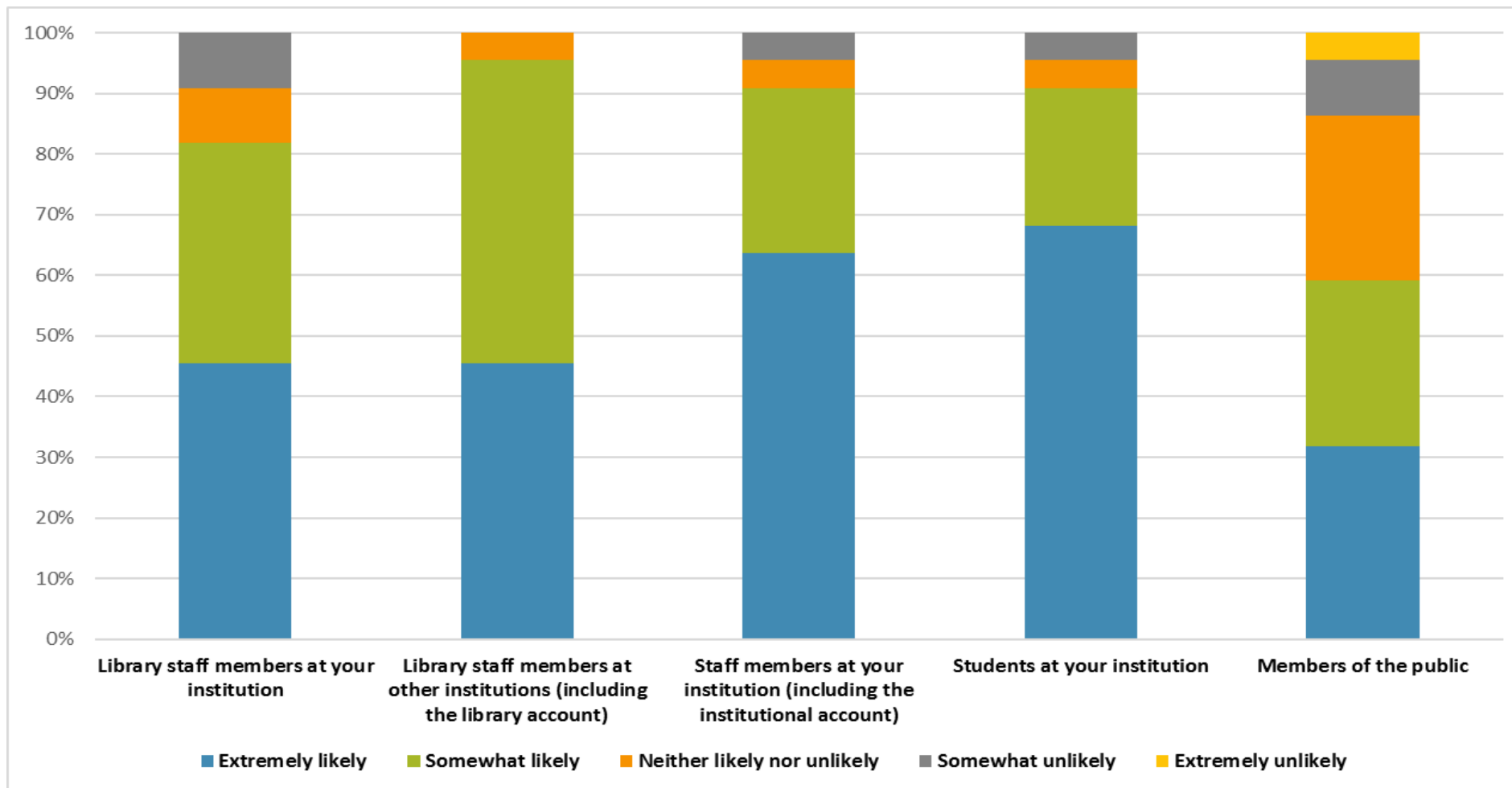
Guidelines for best practice

HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOUR LIBRARY'S ACCOUNT WOULD ENGAGE IN EACH OF THESE ACTIVITIES ON TWITTER?



Academic libraries are **least likely to provide reference services**, and **most likely to promote events, resources and services**

HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOUR LIBRARY WOULD INTERACT WITH THE FOLLOWING GROUPS ON TWITTER?



Academic libraries are least likely to interact with members of the public

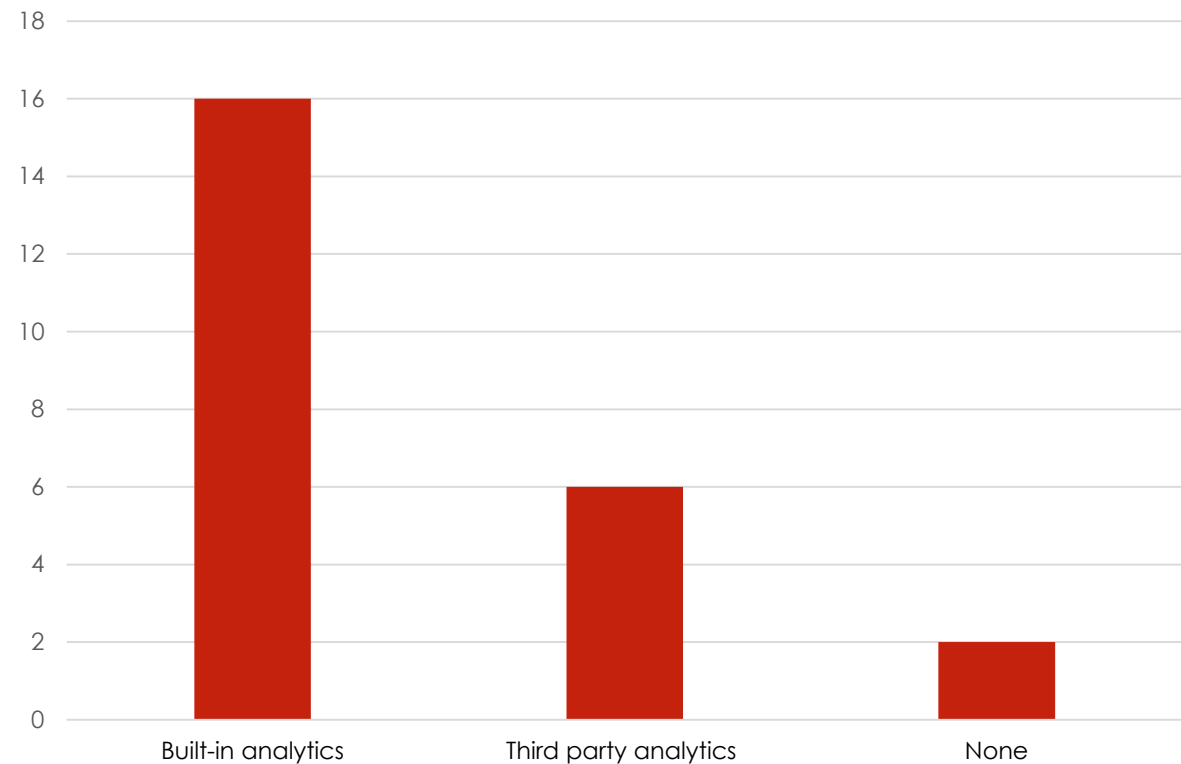
DEFINING SUCCESS

- Increase in: followers, mentions, impressions, tweets (GROWTH)
- “Engagement”
- Meeting client needs (USEFULNESS)
- Contributing to a positive public library image (PUBLIC RELATIONS)
- Meeting benchmarks: replying to comments within a set timeframe; posting content regularly (LIBRARY ACTIONS)

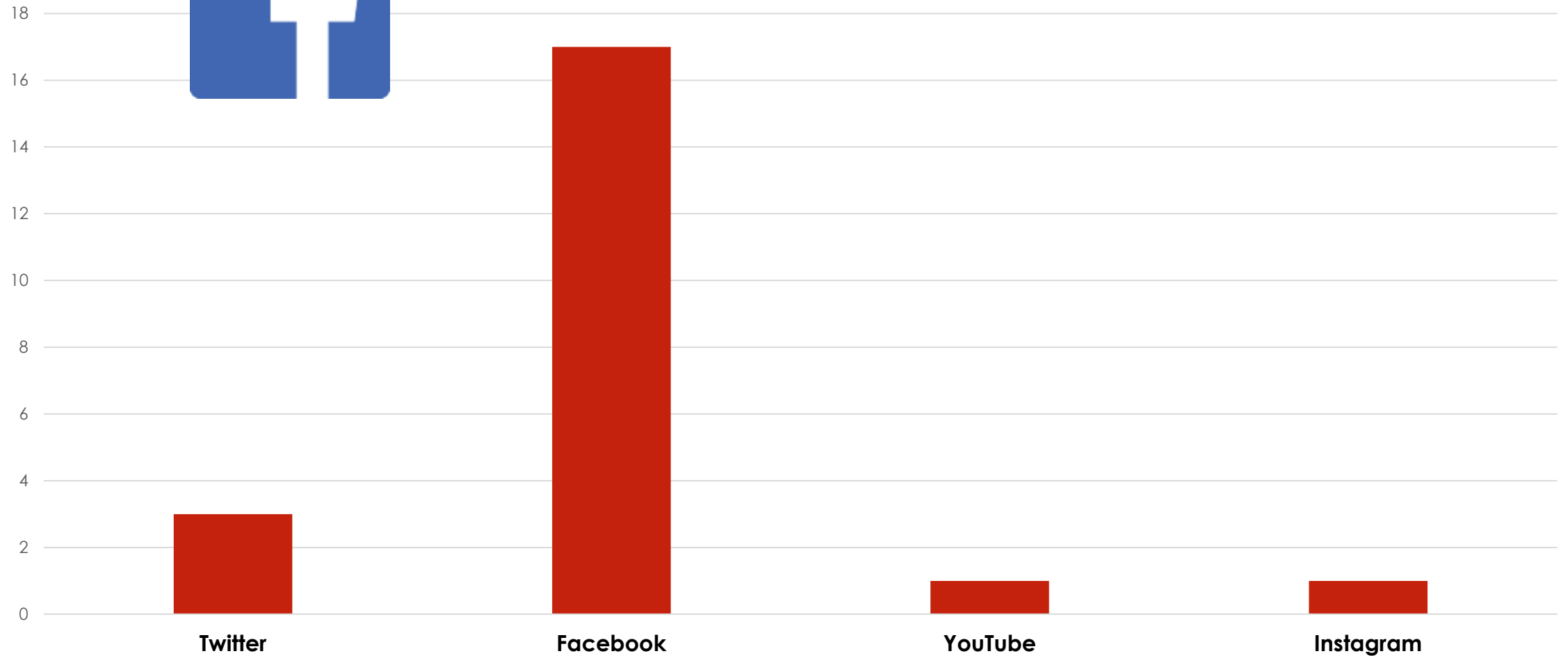
Success defined either as within the library’s control, or based on the actions of or impacts on the end-user (often unknown and out of our control)

MEASURING SUCCESS

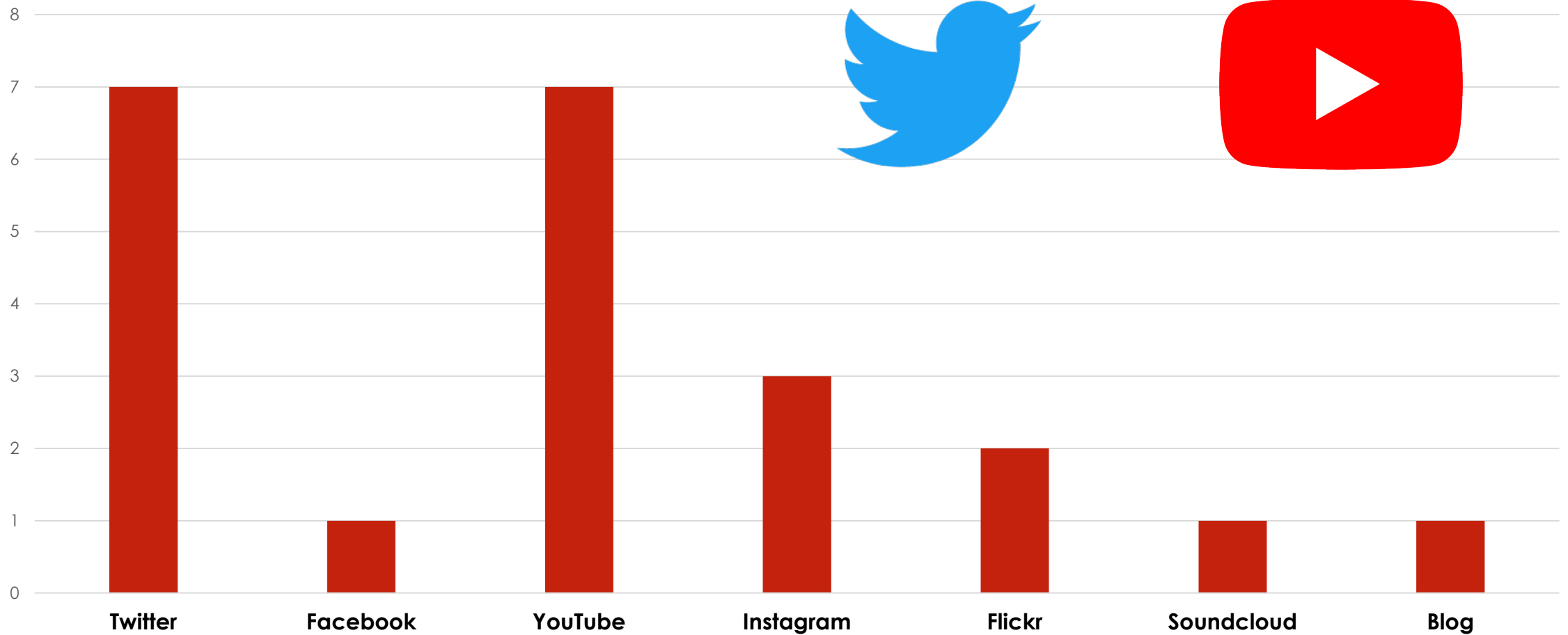
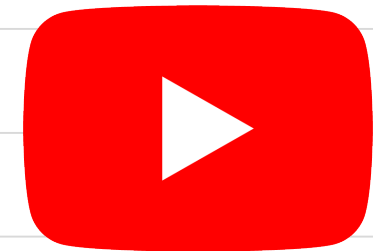
- Analytics = Metrics
- Quantitative data
- Meeting benchmarks
- Increasing on previous figures
- “Other feedback received” – is there a need for qualitative data?



MOST SUCCESSFUL ACCOUNT?



LEAST SUCCESSFUL ACCOUNT?



PLATFORMS TO EXPLORE?



Visual content, short videos 1 min or less, hashtags, interaction possible



Snapcodes function like QR codes to direct students to assistance at point of need, short videos to keep content engaging



Hosts audio, so could be useful for developing podcasts





TWITTER ANALYSIS

- 14 randomly selected Australian university library accounts
- Record follower counts and tweets at beginning and end of capture
- Examine whether the findings of the self-reported survey align with behaviours observed on Twitter.

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