

# OCTOBER 2020 COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

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**UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October, the COVID-19 pandemic continued on across the country, while political campaigns geared up for the November election. Across nearly all platforms, readership and engagement declined, likely a result of a news cycle inundated with election and COVID-19 related content.



Month over month, UVA Today pageviews declined, while year over year pageviews were almost the same. Cumulatively, for FY21, UVA Today has earned 2.28 million pageviews through October, up 12% from FY20. The Daily Report saw a slight decline in Open and Click Through Rates, as did the Research Digest and UVA This Month. Social channels also average post reach and engagement rate decline in October.

**Key Takeaway:** Due to the current state of the nation, it is possible that it will take some time for readership and engagement to rebound, especially as we move into the holiday season, and with COVID-19's continued presence. Acknowledging that this is a possibility, and planning for ways to mitigate these impacts will be crucial in meeting FY21 goals.



The most-read UVA Today story this month was 'What Happens When the Paint Peels Off Beta Bridge?' Three of the top ten stories this month were football related. Our most-read content in October did not focus on the pandemic or the election, aside from a couple of operational updates regarding COVID-19. Stories that focus on student and alumni successes, or lighthearted UVA content may be the most desired content by our readers at this point in time.

**Key Takeaway:** Currently, readers are engaging with some lighter content, unrelated to COVID-19. While major updates related to the pandemic will be necessary, understand that readers may be experiencing fatigue from these types of stories.



Using RivalIQ benchmarks and landscape averages, we are able to view UVA social media performance compared to other universities. In October, average engagements and engagement rates declined month over month for our ACC and competitor landscapes.

**Key Takeaway:** Declining industry averages support the current trends in user behavior beyond our owned platforms. Monitoring these trends over time will help indicate whether our performance is on par with competitors, or if our performance is unique to UVA.



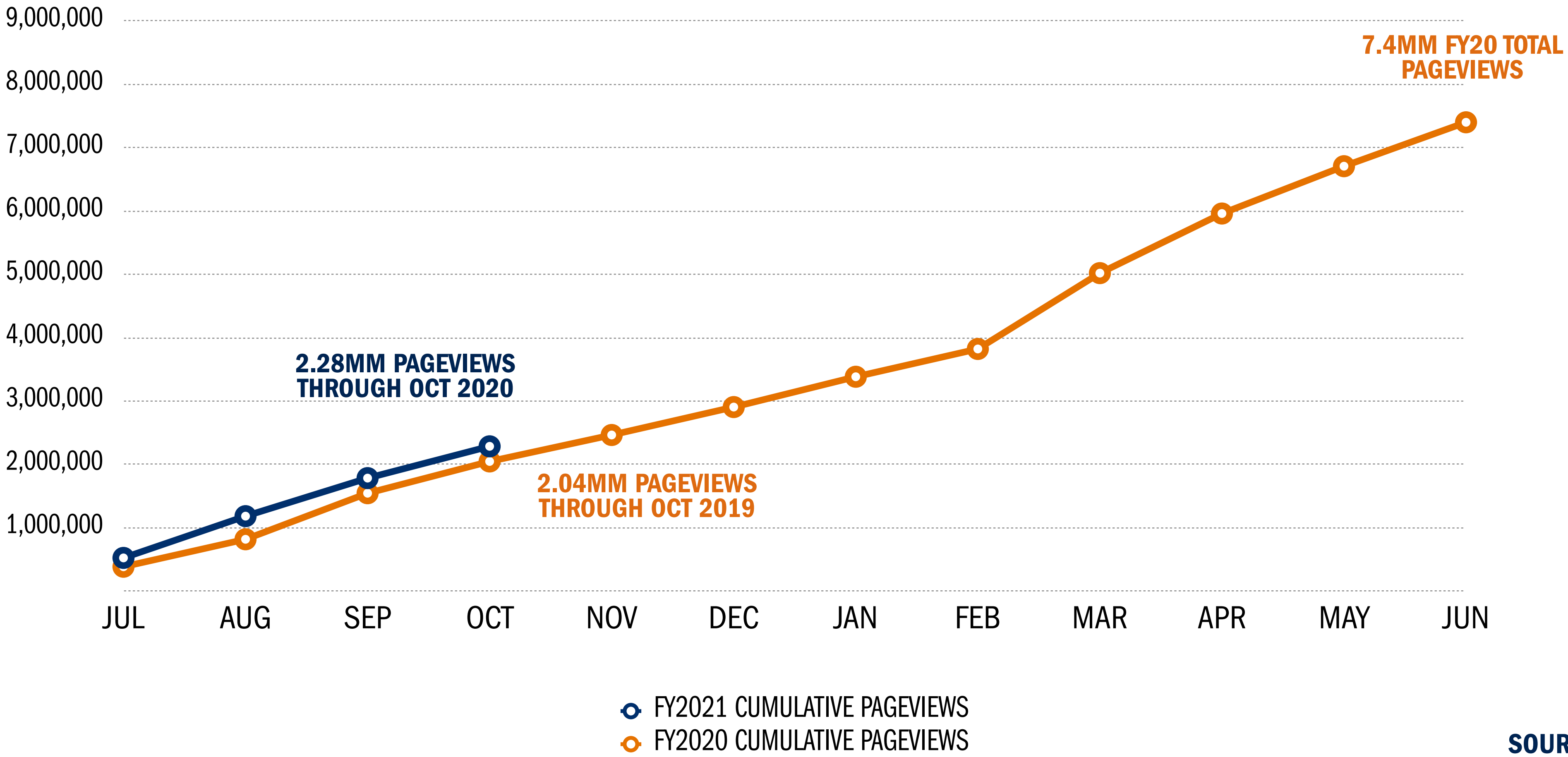
On social media, photos of Grounds shared across channels on October 6 were top performing in terms of engagement rate on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. On LinkedIn, two football related posts were top performers.

**Key Takeaway:** Monitor trends in what type of content is working on what platforms. While we know that posting photos of Grounds will typically result in high engagements, and we can't post that type of content every day, continuing to mix in this type of content every now and should help boost overall platform performance, as the social channels all have algorithms that favor accounts with high engagement rates.

# UVA TODAY

# UVA TODAY PAGEVIEWS - FY21 VS. FY20

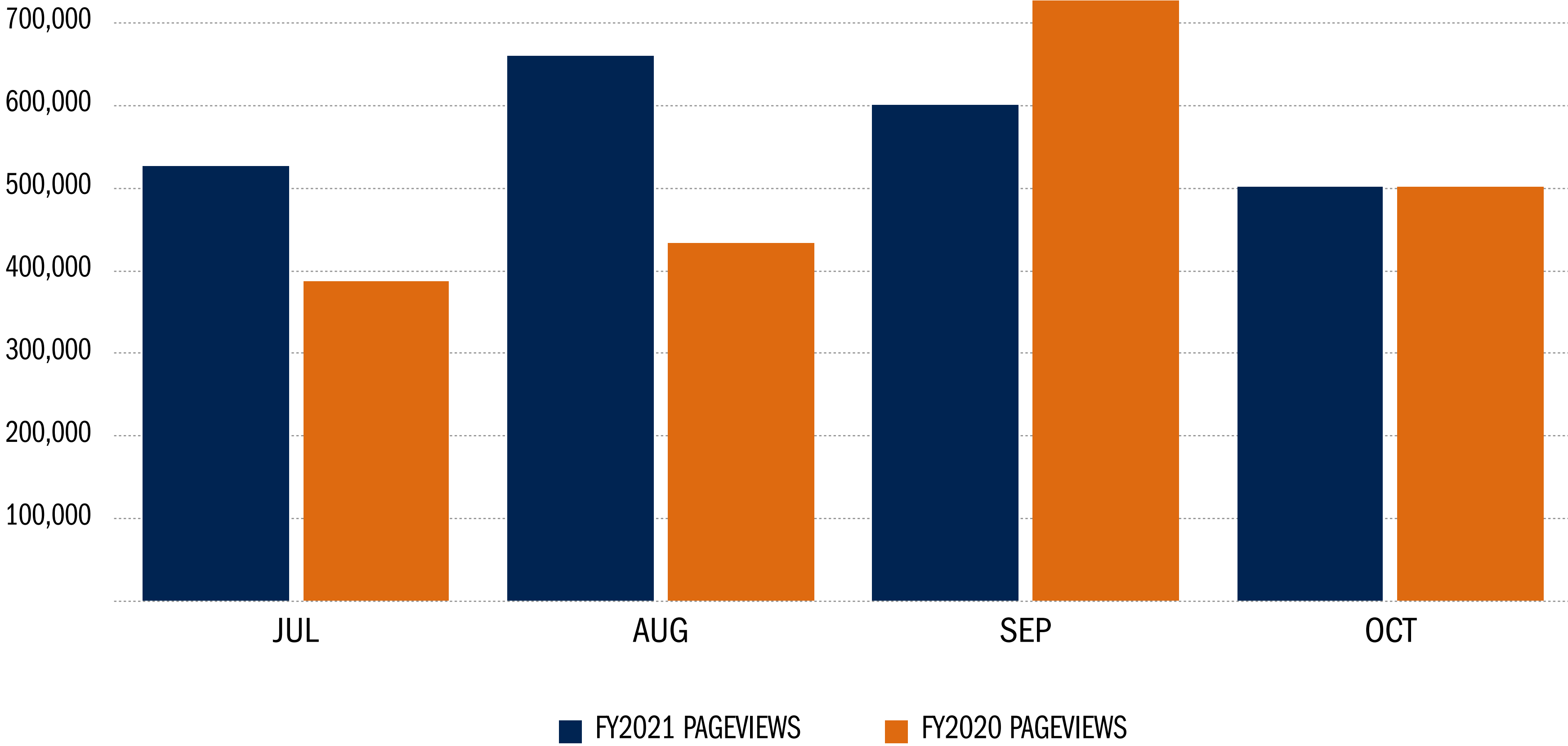
The below graph shows FY21 vs FY20 cumulative pageviews



**SOURCE:** Google Analytics  
**DATE RANGE:** 7/1/19 - 10/31/20

# UVA TODAY MONTHLY PAGEVIEWS - FY21 VS. FY20

*The below graph shows FY21 vs FY20 pageviews by month*



**SOURCE:** Google Analytics  
**DATE RANGE:** 7/1 - 10/31

# TOP PERFORMING UVA TODAY STORIES - OCTOBER 2020

*Below are the top 10 stories by pageviews on UVA Today during the month of October\**

STORY	PAGEVIEWS
<a href="#">What Happens When the Paint Peels Off Beta Bridge?</a>	18,028
<a href="#">President Jim Ryan: Great and Good, Revisited</a>	13,853
<a href="#">UVA Announces Plans for Spring Semester, Pre-Holiday Virus Testing</a>	11,546
<a href="#">Hoo-rizons: Former NFL Alum Now Making Educational Impact as a Stanford Professor</a>	10,088
<a href="#">The Microbiome: Tiny Bacteria, Lifelong Impact</a>	10,050
<a href="#">UVA to Test Dorm Residents More Regularly, Relaxes Restriction on Gatherings</a>	9,657
<a href="#">A Data Science Student's Algorithm Has the NFL's Full Attention</a>	9,550
<a href="#">A Hoo Without a Name – Just the Way He Wants It</a>	7,731
<a href="#">Back to School: 20 Years After Duty Called, a Father Joins His Children at UVA</a>	7,595
<a href="#">Q&amp;A: What's Included in UVA's Virus Contingency Plans</a>	7,507

\* This includes of the top stories by pageviews during the month of October regardless of when the story itself was published.

**SOURCE:** Google Analytics  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# PARSE.LY TAG PERFORMANCE

*The following two slides contain Parse.ly tag performance year to date and for the month of October. Included are top-performing tags by total pageviews, avg. pageviews/post, and total number of posts. Below are some notes outlining how this performance is compiled.*



Data for these slides reflect pageviews for stories that were published within the respective timeframe (year to date, during the given month). It does not contain data for stories published outside of those date ranges. Pageviews are counted during the given date range, and do not include latent pageviews beyond the current month (October).



Pageview data for a given page are collected from the time a tag is applied to that story. For this reason, if tags are added to stories retroactively after they are published, Parse.ly will only report pageviews from the time the tag was applied, and not total lifetime pageviews for that story. Stories may be tagged in multiple categories, which is why different tags may have the same top performing story, as there is overlap.



Due to differences with Parse.ly tracking and Google Analytics tracking, data included in these slides will not exactly match other reports that utilize Google Analytics data.

## TOP TAGS BY TOTAL PAGEVIEWS - YEAR TO DATE

TAG	PAGEVIEWS	NUMBER OF POSTS	AVG. PAGEVIEWS/POST
COVID-19	2,833,177	337	8,407
University News	2,407,818	313	7,693
Crisis	2,121,552	212	10,007
Faculty	1,986,822	329	6,039
Students	1,963,222	319	6,154
Health/Medical	1,960,001	259	7,568
Research	1,495,968	282	5,305
Community	1,441,788	261	5,524
Research & Discovery	1,038,724	205	5,067
Staff	959,285	140	6,852

**SOURCE:** [Parse.ly](#)

**DATE RANGE:** 1/1/20 - 10/31/20

\* This report includes Parse.ly data from January 1 - October 31.



# TOP TAGS BY TOTAL PAGEVIEWS - OCTOBER

TAG	PAGEVIEWS	NUMBER OF POSTS	AVG. PAGEVIEWS/POST
Students	120,696	35	3,448
Faculty	96,654	47	2,056
COVID-19	82,401	30	2,747
University News	80,698	27	2,989
Community	78,305	27	2,900
Health/Medical	56,629	29	1,953
Student Experience	55,991	17	3,294
Research	55,519	32	1,735
Arts/Humanities	53,129	26	2,043
Building Bridges	52,855	21	2,517

**SOURCE:** [Parse.ly](https://parse.ly)

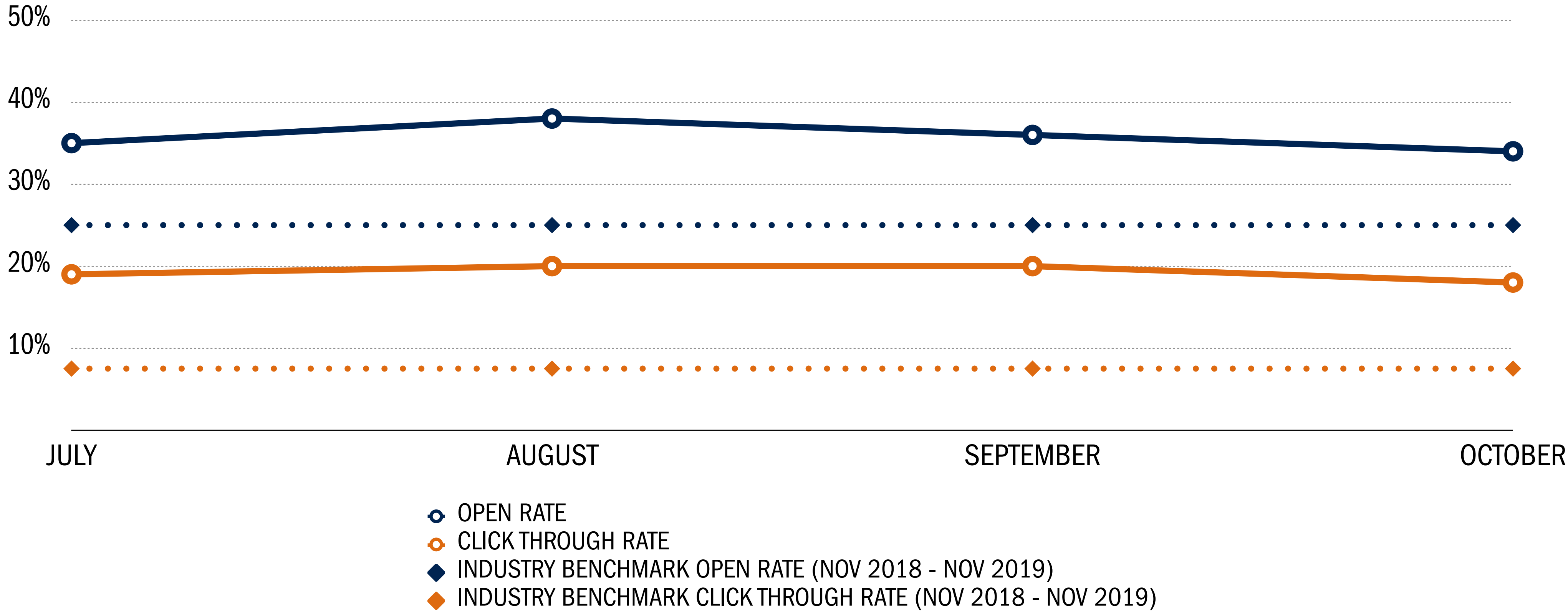
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

\* This report includes Parse.ly data from October 1 - October 31.

# DAILY REPORT

# DAILY REPORT PERFORMANCE

The below graph shows the Daily Report Open Rate and Click Through Rate for FY2021 through October. Open and Click Through Rates softened slightly in October, though both remain above industry benchmarks.



\* Open rate is calculated by dividing unique opens by total delivered emails, CTR is calculated by dividing unique clicks by unique opens. Education industry benchmark from HubSpot Email Benchmarks, reflecting period November 2018 - November 2019.

**SOURCE:** Marketing Cloud  
**DATE RANGE:** 7/1/20 - 10/31/20

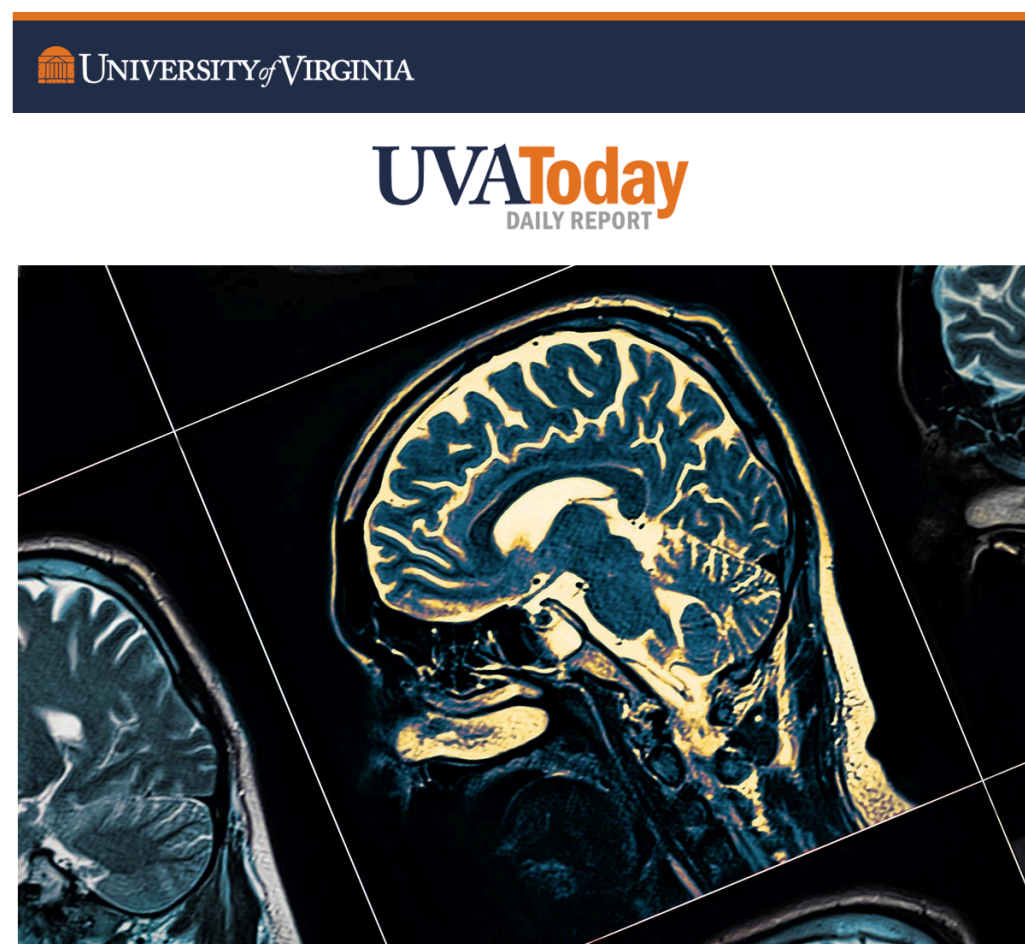
# OCTOBER TOP PERFORMING DAILY REPORT DISTRIBUTIONS

THE DAILY REPORT WITH THE HIGHEST OPEN RATE WAS SENT ON **10/19/2020**

THE DAILY REPORT WITH THE HIGHEST CLICK THROUGH RATE WAS SENT ON **10/23/20**

**38% OPEN RATE**

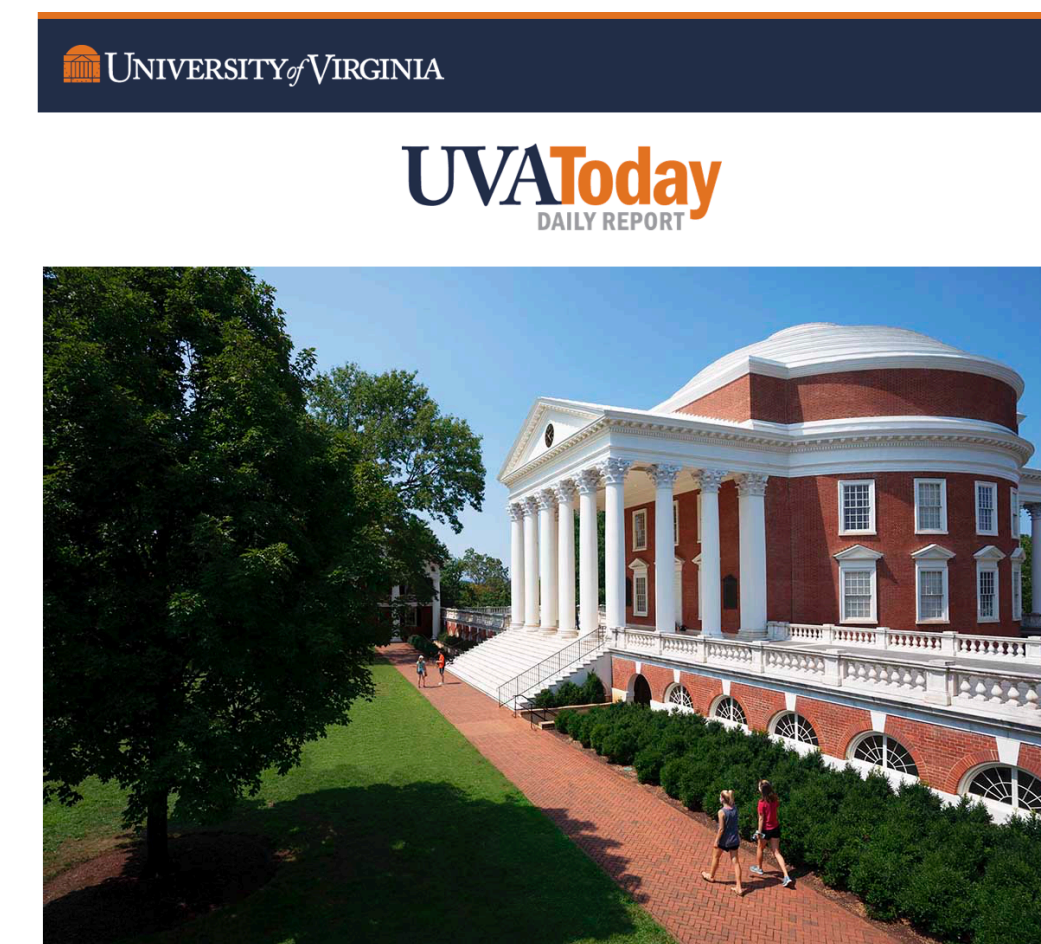
**20% CLICK THROUGH RATE**



**Dementia Deaths Rise During the Summer of COVID, Leading to Concern**

Dr. Laurie Archbald-Pannone discusses some of the factors behind this summer's troubling rise in dementia-related deaths, including the effect of pandemic-related isolation. [MORE >](#)

**SUBJECT LINE:  
TROUBLING TREND, SUSTAINABILITY PLAN, DATA FOR GOOD**



**UVA Announces Plans for Spring Semester, Pre-Holiday Virus Testing**

The instructional approach for the spring semester will resemble the current semester, with both in-person, online and hybrid classes. [MORE >](#)

**SUBJECT LINE:  
SPRING SEMESTER, DRIVE-IN FILM FEST, LAWN MEDITATION**

**34% OPEN RATE**

**24% CLICK THROUGH RATE**

**SOURCE:** Marketing Cloud  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# UVA THIS MONTH

# OCTOBER 2020 UVA THIS MONTH



## UVA This Month

*Editor's note: This month, take a look at fall 2020 at the University of Virginia, from familiar sights like pumpkin carving on the Lawn to less familiar routines of COVID-19 testing. Learn more about plans for the spring semester, meet one dad who is using this strange time to go back to school – with his Hoo kids – and see how the Virginia Film Festival brought a little Hollywood magic to Charlottesville, with drive-in movies in the Southwest Mountains.*



(Video by Vinny Varsalona, University Communications)

### FIRST, READ THIS

- It's Halloween on Grounds, and although quieter than usual, students have gotten in the spirit. Check out some of the [pumpkins on the Lawn](#), and the [spooky carved pumpkins](#) haunting library windows.

RELEASED ON **OCTOBER 31, 2020**  
**260K** TOTAL EMAILS DELIVERED

### TOP 5 STORIES WITHIN OCTOBER UVA THIS MONTH BY CLICKS

PUMPKIN CARVING ON THE LAWN

BACK TO SCHOOL: 20 YEARS AFTER DUTY CALLED, A FATHER JOINS HIS CHILDREN AT UVA

UVA POLITICS EXPERTS DISCUSS THREE KEY TRENDS FOR TUESDAY'S ELECTION

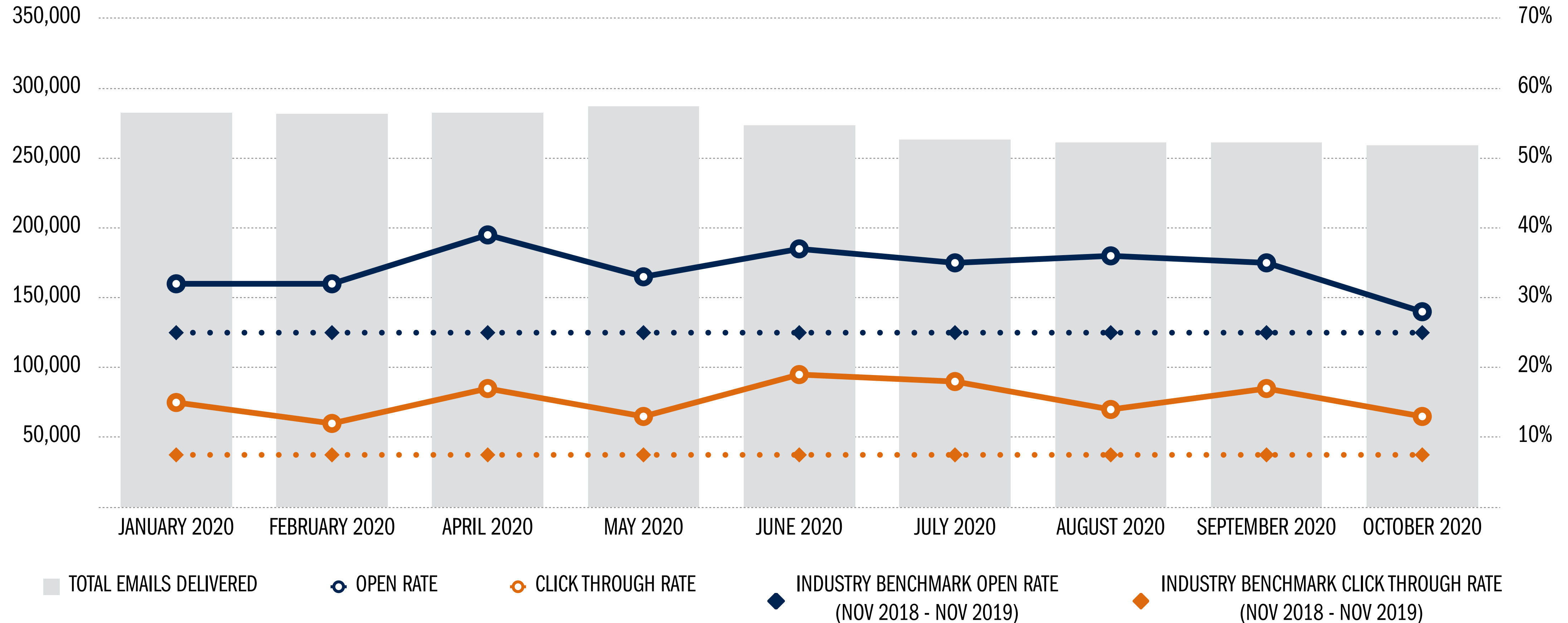
EXPLORING THE DESIGN OF UVA'S MEMORIAL TO ENSLAVED LABORERS

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE PAINT PEELS OFF BETA BRIDGE?

SOURCE: Marketing Cloud

# YEAR TO DATE UVA THIS MONTH PERFORMANCE

*From September to October, Open and Click Through Rate declined for UVA This Month*



\* Click through rate is calculated by dividing unique clicks by unique opens.

SOURCE: Marketing Cloud

# RESEARCH DIGEST



# OCTOBER 2020 RESEARCH DIGEST EMAIL DISTRIBUTION

**UVA**Research  
DIGEST

*Editor's note: A mother's microbiome can affect her children even before birth. An unhealthy, inflamed gut can cause breast cancer to spread more quickly. And probiotic bacterium in yogurt was found to reverse depression symptoms in mice. Our feature story focuses on research coming out of UVA's new Trans-University Microbiome Initiative and provides tips on improving your own gut health.*

*Also in this issue: an infectious disease doctor offers hope for a COVID-19 vaccine, a demographics researcher suggests working from home might be here to stay long after the pandemic ends, and a group of UVA students may have found a \$70 billion health care solution.*

Read on for our latest top research stories, and don't forget to [subscribe](#) to keep up with future UVA discoveries.

## The Microbiome: Tiny Bacteria, Lifelong Impact



*(Illustration by Meredith Michael Smith, University Communications)*

Story by Caroline Newman • Design by Meredith Michael Smith

RELEASED ON **OCTOBER 17, 2020**  
**265K** TOTAL EMAILS DELIVERED

### TOP 5 STORIES WITHIN OCTOBER RESEARCH DIGEST BY CLICKS

THE MICROBIOME: TINY BACTERIA, LIFELONG IMPACT

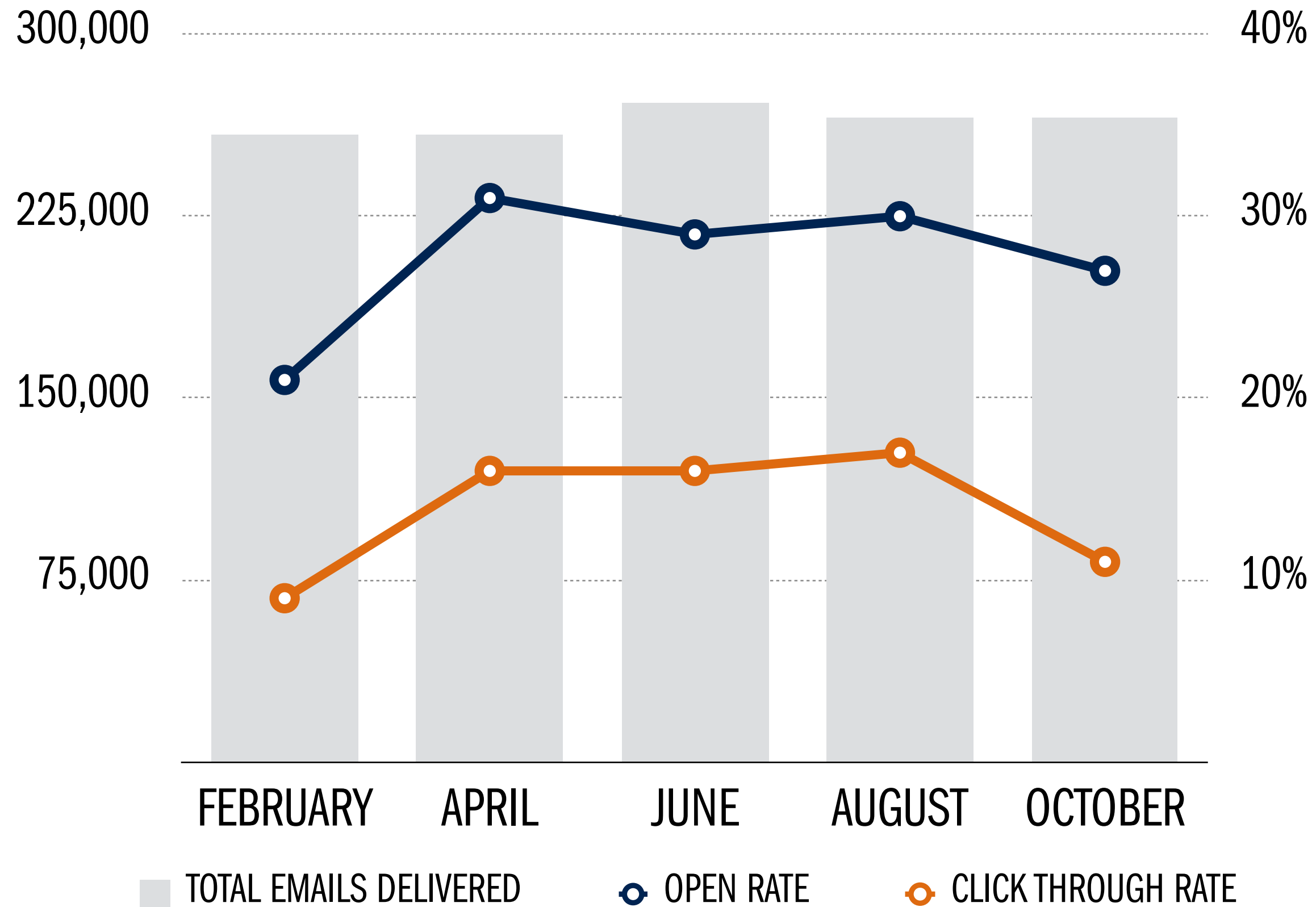
DOES FORGETTING A NAME OR WORD MEAN THAT I HAVE DEMENTIA?

HOW, AND WHEN, WILL WE KNOW THAT A COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE AND EFFECTIVE?

UVA REVEALS HOW GENETIC DIFFERENCES IN FAT SHAPE MEN AND WOMEN'S HEALTH RISKS

CONCUSSION DISCOVERY REVEALS DIRE, UNKNOWN EFFECT OF EVEN MILD BRAIN INJURIES

# YEAR TO DATE RESEARCH DIGEST PERFORMANCE



**RESEARCH DIGEST OPEN AND CLICK THROUGH RATES BOTH DECLINED FROM AUGUST TO OCTOBER**

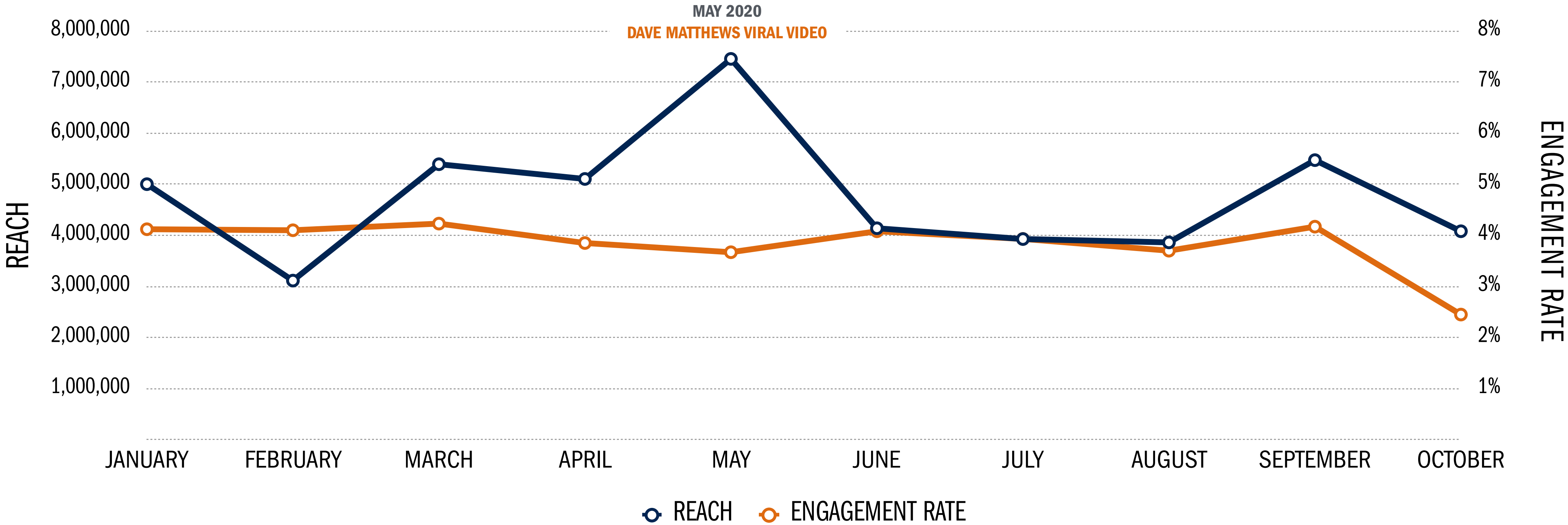
**OCTOBER OPEN RATE DECLINED 11% FROM AUGUST (30% TO 27%)**

**OCTOBER CLICK THROUGH RATE DECLINED 34% FROM AUGUST (17% TO 11%)**

# SOCIAL MEDIA

# SOCIAL MEDIA REACH AND ENGAGEMENT RATE - YEAR TO DATE

*The below graph shows year to date reach and engagement rate for Social Media content. Total reach and engagement rate declined in October. This is likely a result of election season and the resulting advertising and media coverage taking up inventory in user news feeds.*

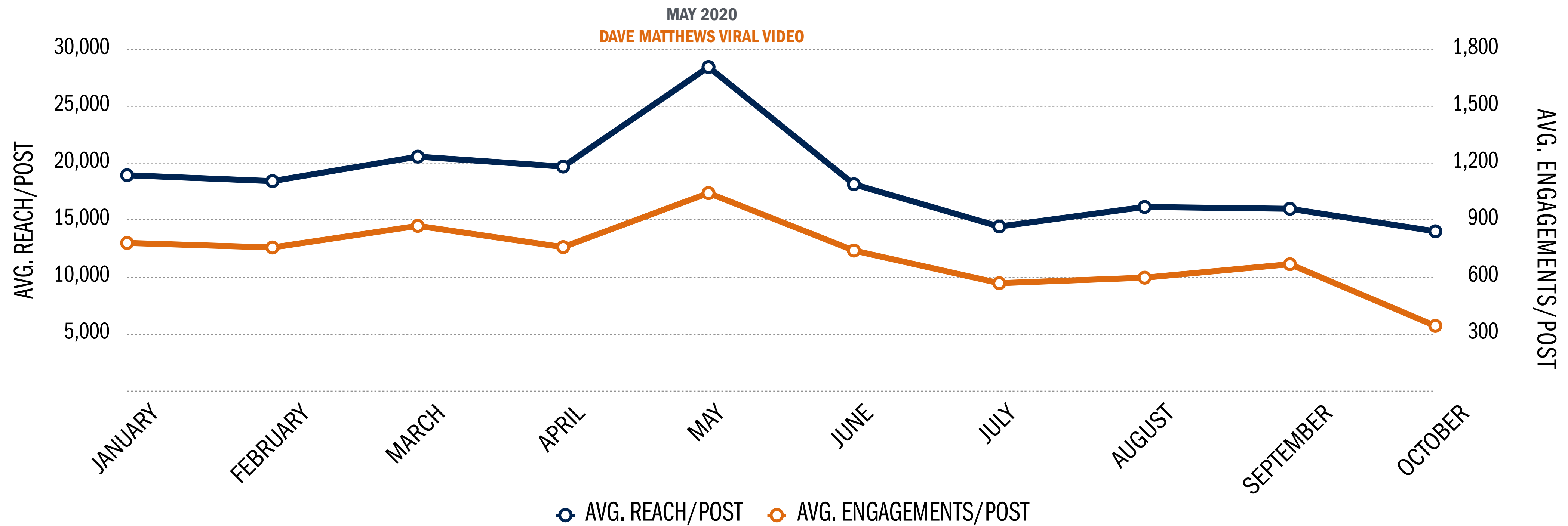


\* Includes reach for posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn posted during each month. Twitter and LinkedIn track Impressions instead of reach, so for these platforms, Impressions = Reach for measurement purposes. Does not include Instagram Stories data.

**SOURCE:** Facebook Creator Studio, Instagram Insights, Twitter Analytics, LinkedIn Analytics, RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 1/1/20 - 10/31/20

# AVERAGE POST METRICS - YEAR TO DATE

*Looking at reach alone does not tell the full story of Social Media impact, as total reach is dependent upon the number of posts published within a month. If you post more often, reach will increase. For this reason, we also need to look at average reach per post, and average engagement per post.*

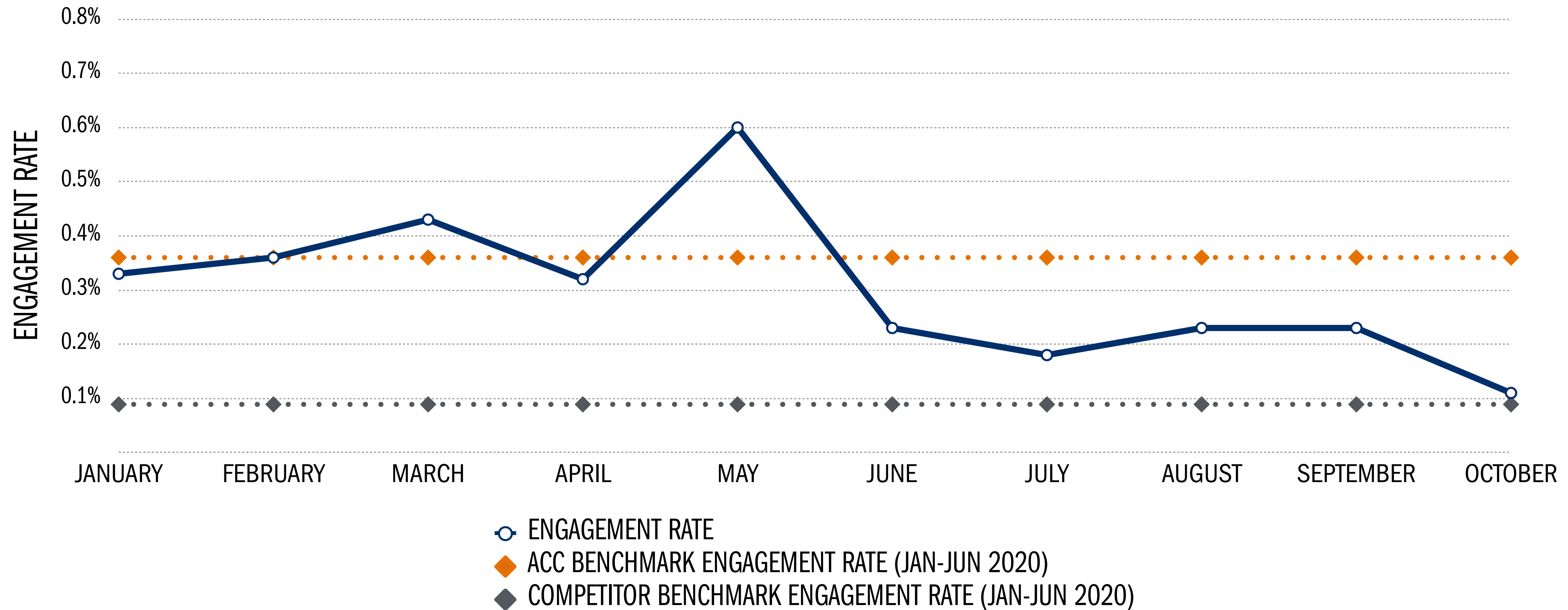


\* Includes reach for posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn posted during each month. Twitter and LinkedIn track Impressions instead of reach, so for these platforms, Impressions = Reach for measurement purposes. Does not include Instagram Stories data.

**SOURCE:** Facebook Creator Studio, Instagram Insights, Twitter Analytics, LinkedIn Analytics, RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 1/1/20 - 10/31/20

# FACEBOOK ENGAGEMENT RATE VS. INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS OVER TIME

The below graph represents Facebook Engagement Rate over time compared to industry benchmarks, which reflect average engagement rates for the period January - June 2020.

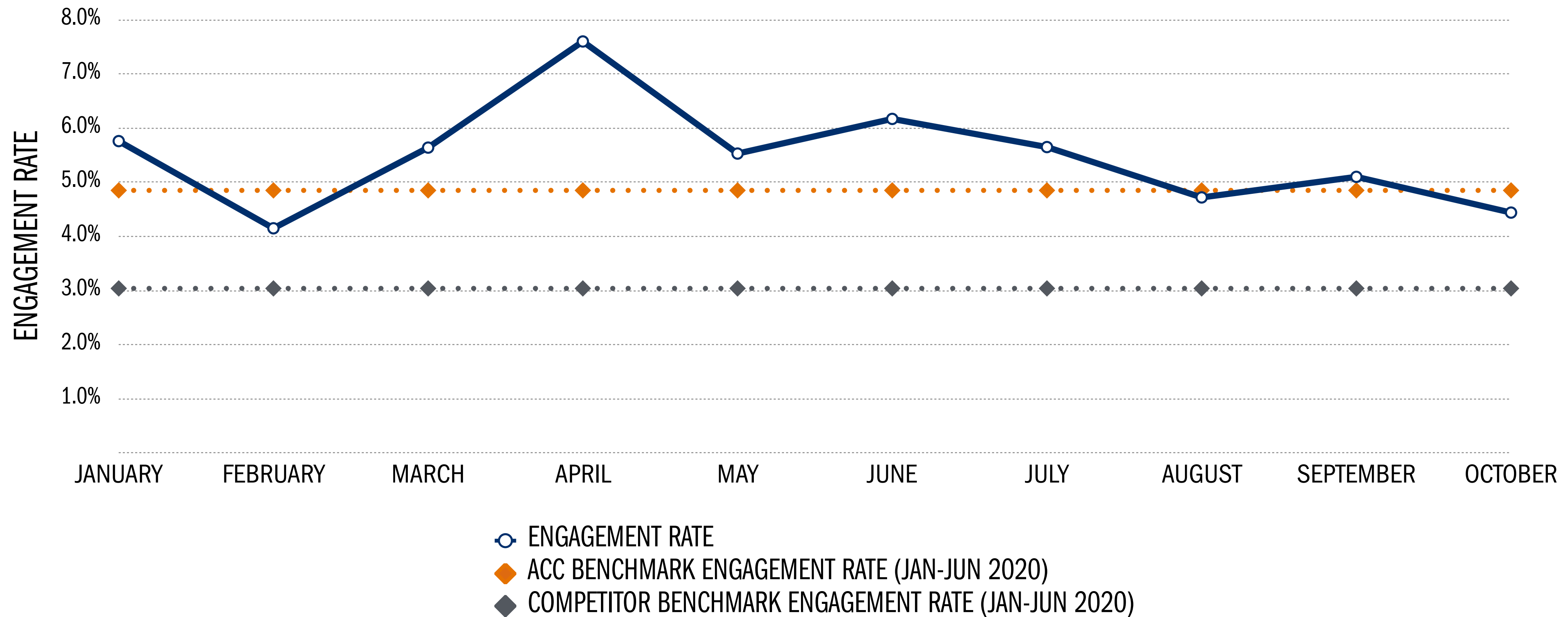


Benchmark engagement rate calculated from time period 1/1/20 - 6/30/20.  
Due to differences in publicly available data vs. private data, reported metrics for our competitive landscape will differ from our private reporting.

**SOURCE:** RivallQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 1/1/20 - 10/31/20

# INSTAGRAM ENGAGEMENT RATE VS. INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS OVER TIME

The below graph represents Instagram Engagement Rate over time compared to industry benchmarks, which reflect average engagement rates for the period January - June 2020.



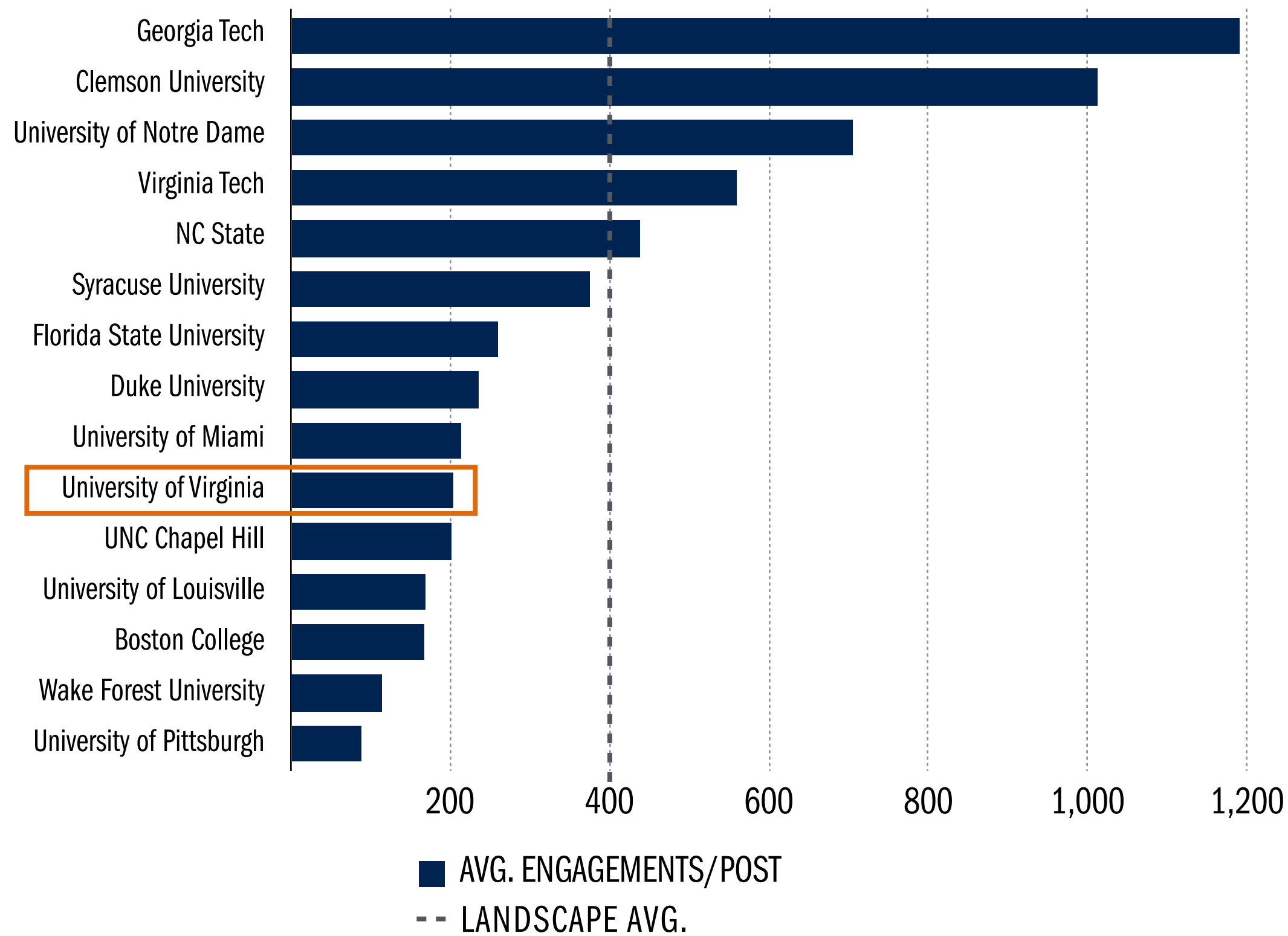
Benchmark engagement rate calculated from time period 1/1/20 - 6/30/20.  
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**SOURCE:** RivallQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 1/1/20 - 10/31/20

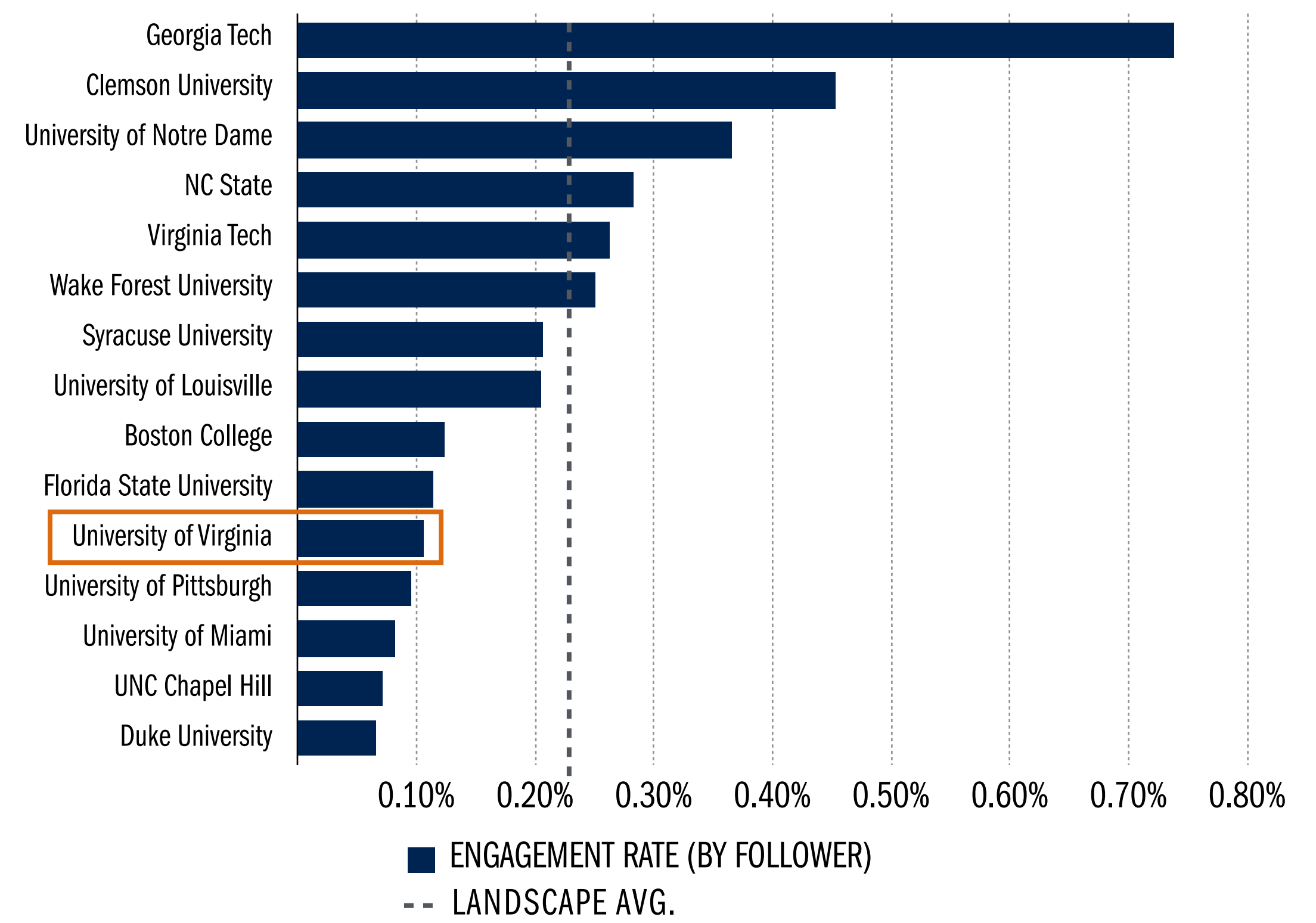
# OCTOBER FACEBOOK PERFORMANCE VS. ACC

*In October, UVA ranked below the landscape average for both engagements per post and engagement rate. Only three schools saw improvements in total engagements and engagement rate from September to October. All other schools saw performance decline month over month.*

## AVG. ENGAGEMENTS/POST



## ENGAGEMENT RATE (BY NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS)



Due to differences in publicly available data vs. private data, reported metrics for our competitive landscape will differ from our private reporting.  
Landscape average reflects average for period 10/1/20 - 10/31/20.

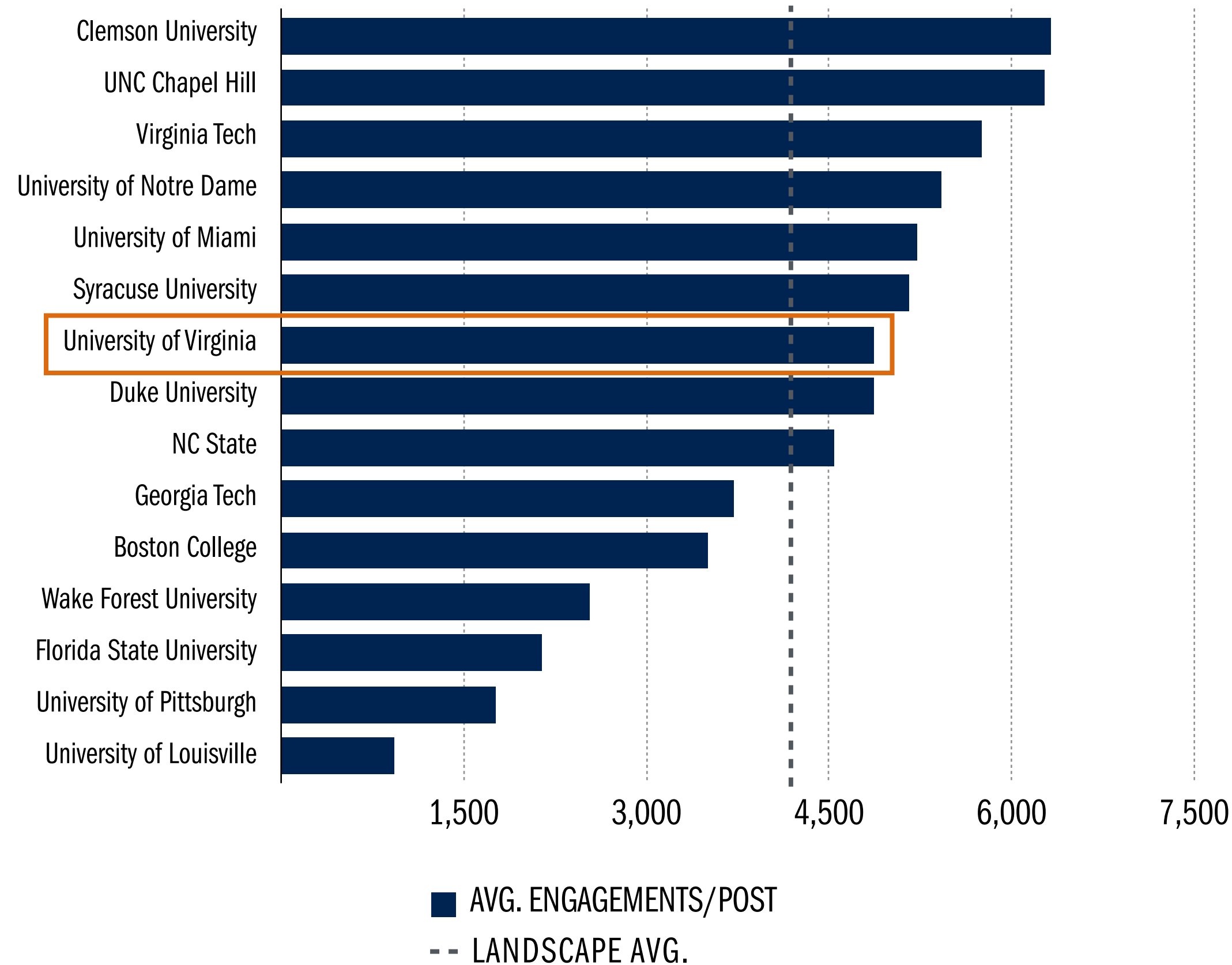
**SOURCE:** RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20



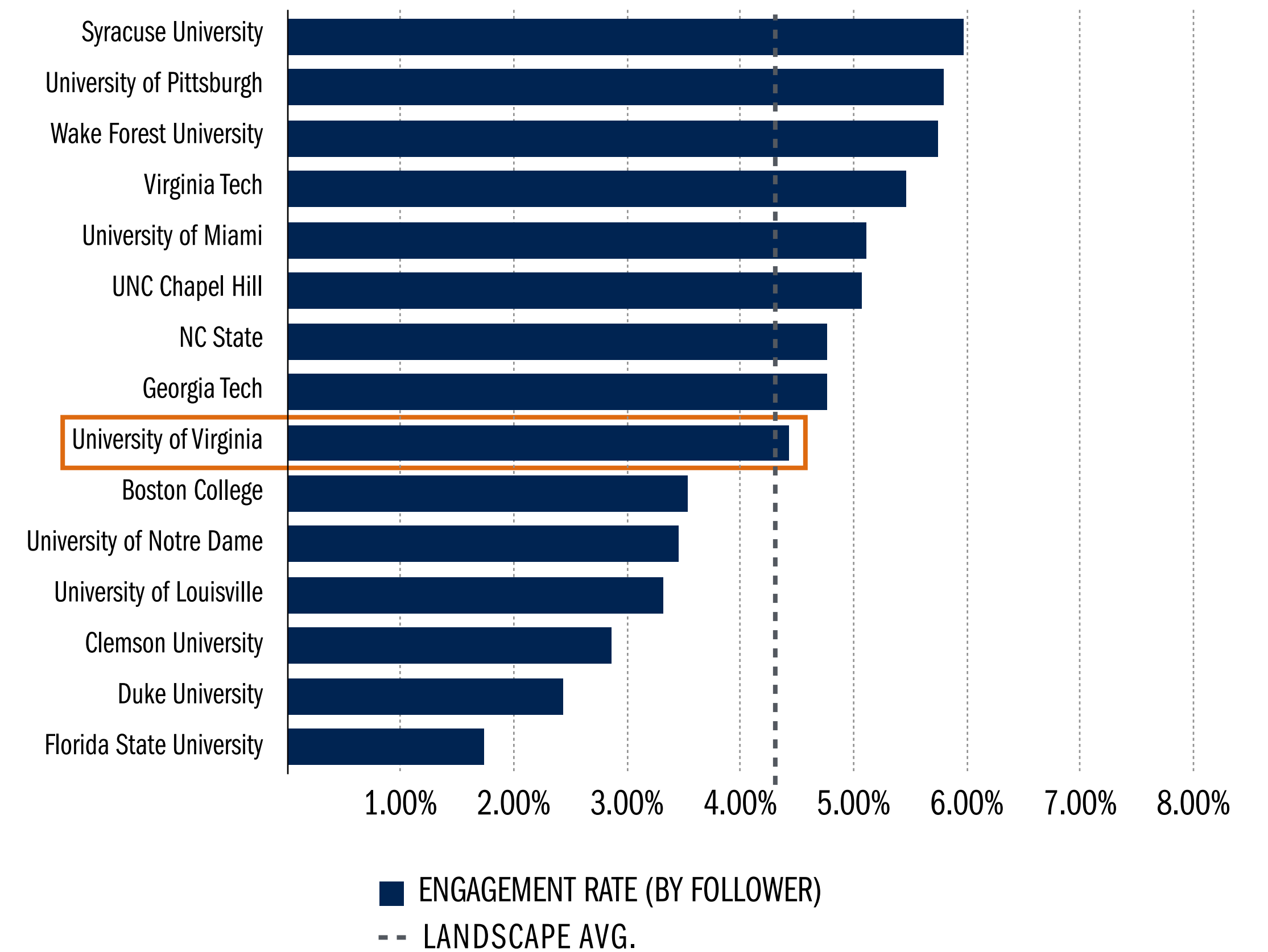
# OCTOBER INSTAGRAM PERFORMANCE VS. ACC

*In October, UVA ranked above the industry averages for engagements per post and engagement rate. Overall, the landscape averages declined month over month, indicating a downward trend in engagement across the landscape.*

## AVG. ENGAGEMENTS/POST



## ENGAGEMENT RATE (BY NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS)



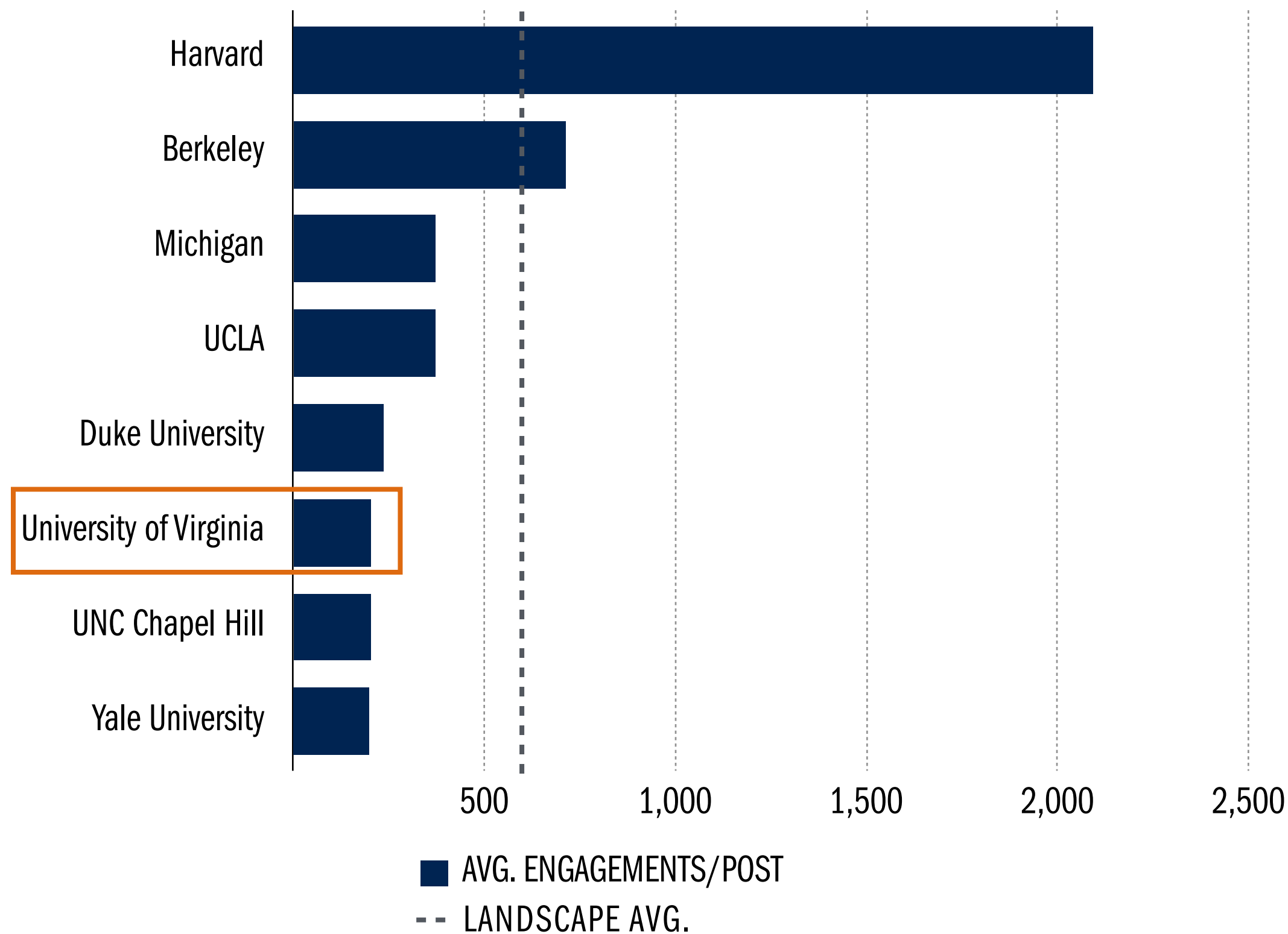
Due to differences in publicly available data vs. private data, reported metrics for our competitive landscape will differ from our private reporting.  
Landscape average reflects average for period 10/1/20 - 10/31/20.

**SOURCE:** RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

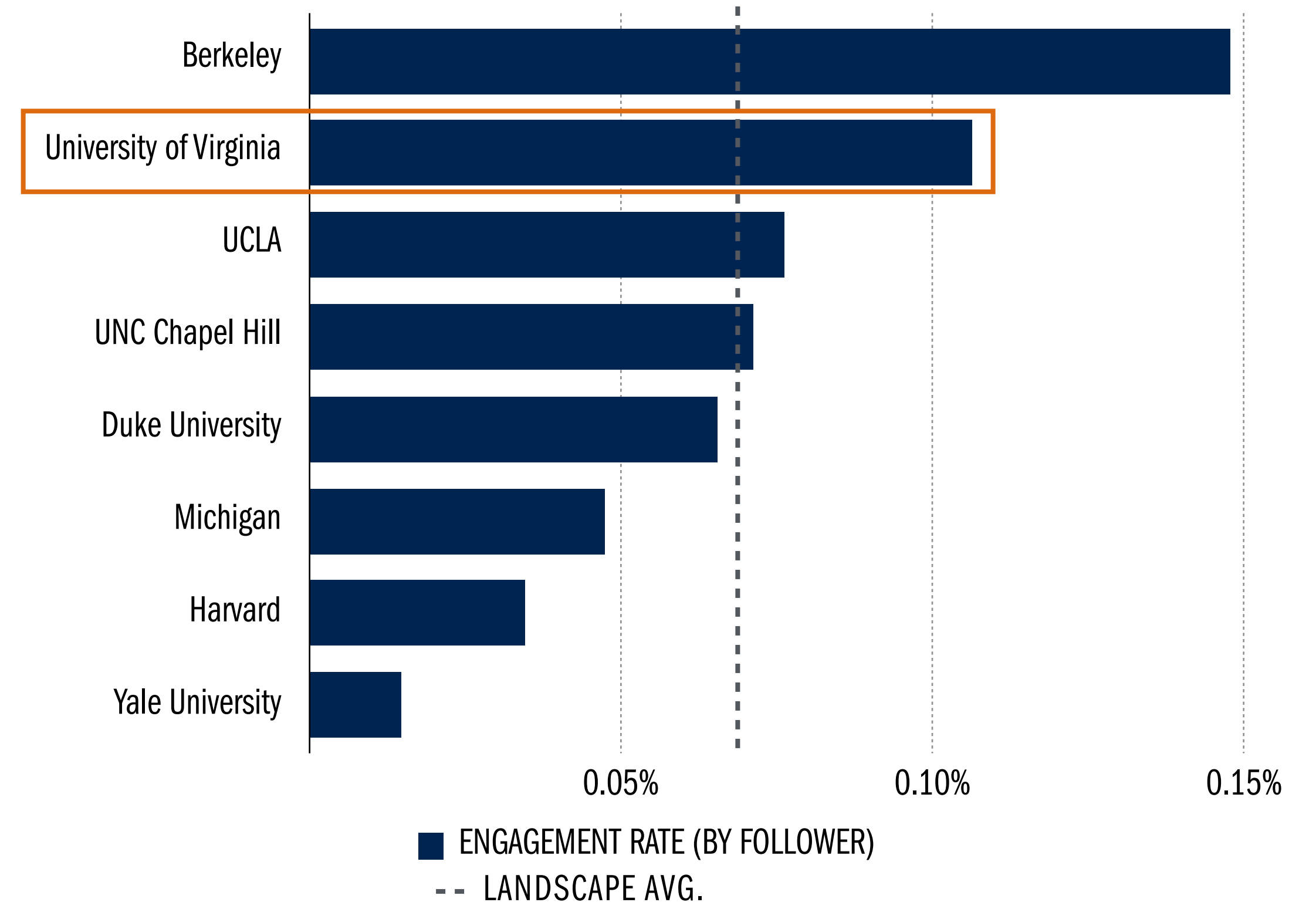
# OCTOBER FACEBOOK PERFORMANCE VS. COMPETITORS

*Among this set of competitors, UVA ranked sixth in engagement per post, but was second overall in engagement rate by follower. This shows that despite having a smaller number of followers, and therefore fewer total engagements, UVA's followers are more engaged overall than many competitors.*

## AVG. ENGAGEMENTS/POST



## ENGAGEMENT RATE (BY NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS)



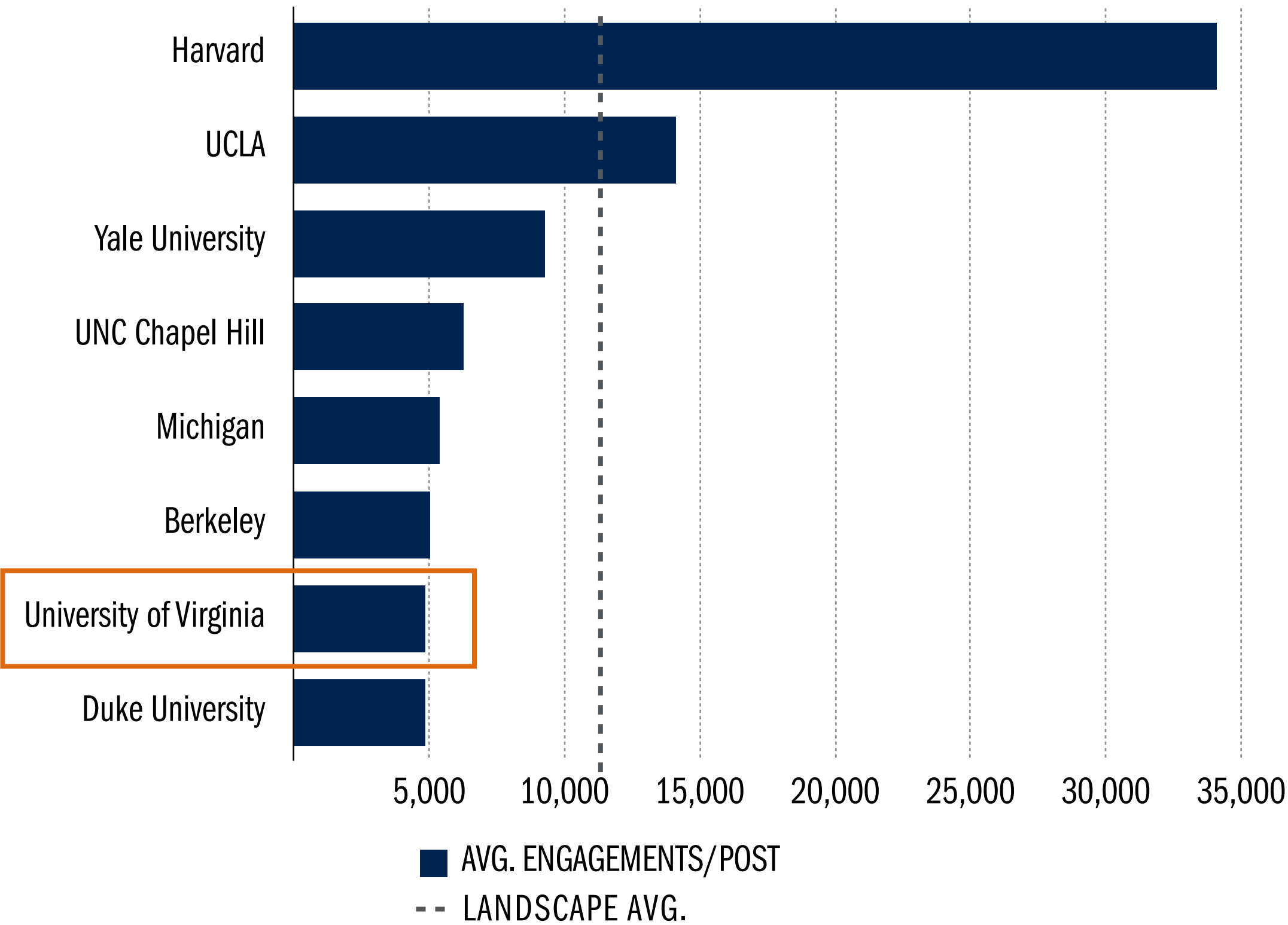
Due to differences in publicly available data vs. private data, reported metrics for our competitive landscape will differ from our private reporting.  
Landscape average reflects average for period 10/1/20 - 10/31/20.

**SOURCE:** RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

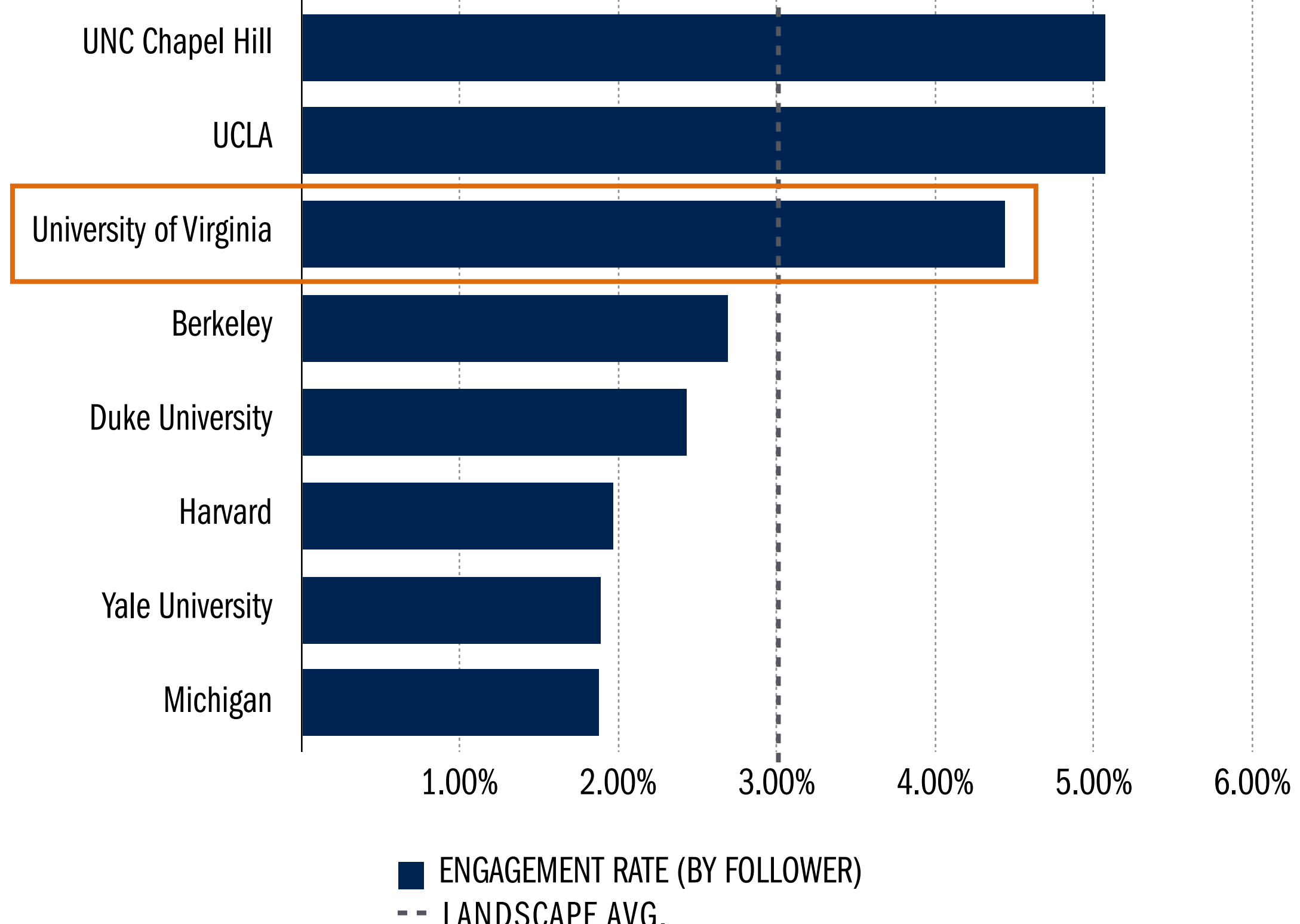
# OCTOBER INSTAGRAM PERFORMANCE VS. COMPETITORS

Similar to Facebook, UVA sees fewer total engagements per post, but as a share of followers, we ranked third overall for engagement rate in October.

### AVG. ENGAGEMENTS/POST



### ENGAGEMENT RATE (BY NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS)



Due to differences in publicly available data vs. private data, reported metrics for our competitive landscape will differ from our private reporting.  
Landscape average reflects average for period 10/1/20 - 10/31/20.

**SOURCE:** RivalIQ  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# OCTOBER 2020 TOP FACEBOOK POSTS

## TOP FACEBOOK POST BY REACH: 10/5/20

 University of Virginia  
Published by Kelly Kauffman [?] · October 5 ·

A Facilities Management crew recently wrestled with a quarter-ton of paint layers that sloughed off Beta Bridge. It was not the first time.



NEWS.VIRGINIA.EDU  
**What Happens When the Paint Peels Off Beta Bridge?**  
A Facilities Management crew recently wrestled with a quarter-ton of...

**54K** USERS REACHED  
**600** ENGAGEMENTS  
**1.10%** ENGAGEMENT RATE

## TOP FACEBOOK POST BY ENGAGEMENT RATE: 10/6/20

 University of Virginia  
October 6 ·

A look at Grounds this week.



**26K** USERS REACHED  
**900** ENGAGEMENTS  
**3.45%** ENGAGEMENT RATE

**SOURCE:** RivallQ, Creator Studio  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# OCTOBER 2020 TOP INSTAGRAM POSTS

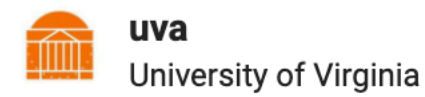
## TOP INSTAGRAM POST BY REACH: 10/22/20



**uva** The University of Virginia announced Thursday that it will begin its spring academic semester for undergraduate students on Feb. 1, 2021 and conclude instruction on May 6. Click the link in our bio for more information about the upcoming spring semester.

**62K USERS REACHED**  
**6.7K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**10.9% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

## TOP INSTAGRAM POST BY ENGAGEMENT RATE: 10/6/20



**uva** A look at Grounds this week.

Oct 6, 2020

**46K USERS REACHED**  
**7.3K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**15.8% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

**SOURCE:** RivallQ, Creator Studio  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# OCTOBER 2020 TOP TWEETS

## TOP TWEET BY REACH (IMPRESSIONS\*): 10/11/20



**87K IMPRESSIONS**  
**2.5K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**2.9% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

## TOP TWEET BY ENGAGEMENT RATE: 10/6/20




**26K IMPRESSIONS**  
**2.3K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**9.1% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

\* Twitter does not report unique reach, only total impressions.


**SOURCE:** RivalIQ, Twitter Analytics  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

# OCTOBER 2020 TOP LINKEDIN POSTS

## TOP POST BY REACH (IMPRESSIONS\*): 10/21/20

 **University of Virginia**  
227,085 followers  
1w · 🌐


Francis A. Pearman II, who starred on the football field for UVA from 2001 to '04, is now making his mark in academia as a professor at Stanford University.




Hoo-rizons: Former NFL Alum Now Making Educational Impact as a Stanford Professor  
news.virginia.edu · 10 min read

**32K IMPRESSIONS**  
**1.5K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**4.8% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

## TOP POST BY ENGAGEMENT RATE: 10/14/20

 **University of Virginia**  
227,085 followers  
2w · 🌐

Alex Stern, currently pursuing his master's degree in the School of Data Science and interning for the UVA football team, wrote an algorithm that got the NFL's attention earlier this year. <https://lnkd.in/gjXhCxb>



A Data Science Student's Algorithm Has the NFL's Full Attention  
news.virginia.edu · 4 min read

**26K IMPRESSIONS**  
**1.4K ENGAGEMENTS**  
**5.3% ENGAGEMENT RATE**

\* LinkedIn does not report unique reach, only total impressions.

**SOURCE:** RivalIQ, LinkedIn Analytics  
**DATE RANGE:** 10/1/20 - 10/31/20

THANK YOU