

# International School Showcases

A selection of snapshots of thriving **online school communities**, from international schools around the world



# Building a global network with your international school community

International schools face unique challenges when building their school community; the global nature of their parent, student and even staff cohorts can make it difficult to arrange in-person events, and makes engaging in a hybrid format of online and in-person even more important.

In this booklet, you'll find snappy case studies from international schools around the world who are making an impact and bringing together their school communities. From tips on virtual alumni reunions, to supporting alumni entrepreneurs, these showcases offer inspiration and practical advice for overcoming the challenges international schools face and creating thriving communities that give back.

International schools in this booklet are using ToucanTech to engage their global school communities, through both a private portal and main school website, backed up by a powerful CRM and robust database to share the latest insights.

# “

We launched our community platform this year with ToucanTech – it's amazing! The ToucanTech team have been so supportive and we have now invited our whole community to be part of this networking platform. We have 1,000 members from our alumni, parents, staff and senior students, all together in one place.”

## Deborah Eleftheriou

Head of Development,  
St Catherine's British School,  
Athens, Greece





## St Catherine's British School

### About St Catherine's British School

St Catherine's British School is an inspiring international school based in Athens, Greece. Teaching over 12,00 children and young people from across the world, the school is the heart of a global alumni and parent community who now have the opportunity to engage and network on their new online digital space. StCatsConnect, powered by ToucanTech, is a private portal for members of the school community to create online profiles, connect with other members, seek or offer career support, and stay up-to-date with all the latest school news.

The Development team has worked together with the community to create a space that will enable all the different groups in their school community, including parents, alumni, staff, governors, and senior students to come together in so many different ways.

"It is a dream come true to be able to provide a digital space to connect our whole global family. This year especially during COVID, StCatsConnect played a vital role in keeping our community connected. In just one year, it has been an amazing journey of the minds of all our community coming together and engaging with each other, all we did was to provide the tools to make this possible. We have had so many wonderful compliments, especially on how so many new friendships have been made and old friends found, this is what is important to us as a school."



Deborah Eleftheriou  
Head of Development

### St Catherine's British School Community Stats



Launched alumni network with ToucanTech: **2020**



**900+** online members



**850+** photos shared on their site



**200+** stories published on their site

### Catering for different audiences with one platform

They recently launched their private community portal; over 700 members have joined the platform already, with many final year students joining prior to leaving the school. As part of their continued efforts to engage alumni, they have created a dedicated alumni 'hub' to share news, events, alumni spotlight for achievements and successes, and photo galleries of so many memories.



## Peer2Peer works every time!

As an international school, their final year students will soon be heading to universities all over the globe. This year they made an extra effort to provide them with a support network in universities, as many students had not visited their 'soon to be new homes' due to COVID and set up mini communities for popular alumni locations and universities. They shared an article of the university destinations of their class of 2021, and encouraged all the alumni to join.

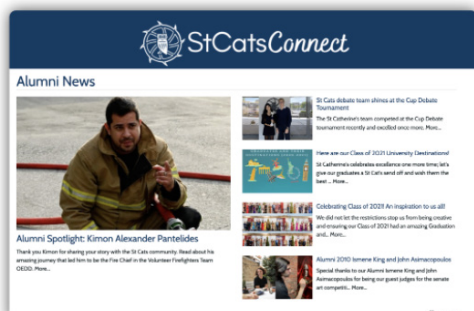
Each group has a feed to start discussions which proved really popular with the graduates and created a network of support uniting generations of St Cats alumni.

## Working collectively to add value for students & the wider community

E-mentoring, now a student-led project linking senior students to alumni for careers and university advice, is always a popular programme for alumni to engage with the students. StCatsConnect has now widened the opportunity for parents, alumni and staff to become mentors/mentees. They believe 'everyone

has a passion and expertise to share' and have created guides to help different members of their community understand how they can support others and take advantage of the mentoring programme.

It is a work in progress and they learn everyday how they can best evolve and support their community by giving them the opportunity to give feedback. The community appreciates the investment by the school and implementing so many best practice initiatives continues to build a thriving international school community for their alumni. We have full confidence that they will reach the 1000 community-member mark in the very near future!



"Keeping our alumni connected with the school is important to who we are and strive to be. We love to share and celebrate alumni news, achievements and successes. Alumni students, staff and parents give back in so many ways in support of the next generation; including mentoring, Careers Day, events and so much more.

Thank you to the ToucanTech team who have been a valuable source of support in ensuring a smooth transition."



Deborah Eleftheriou  
Head of Development





## Concord College

### About Concord College

Concord College is a leading international day/boarding school located in Shropshire, England. It welcomes students from all over the world to its vibrant and varied community. With its exceptional alumni living globally, Concord College runs a stellar development programme to keep in touch and find out about the wonderful achievements of their former students.

Concord College brings its alumni together with a range of annual and biannual events, and have hosted reunions all over the globe, including Dubai, Singapore, Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Kazakhstan, Bahrain and back at Concord College. They also fundraise for the Concord College Anthony Morris Foundation – a foundation named after former Principal Tony Morris, that raises fees to enable students to study at Concord whose families might not otherwise be able to afford the fees.

We caught up with Joshua Coffey, Digital Marketing Officer, to find out how ToucanTech has helped to boost engagement within their alumni community.

### Concord College Community Stats



Launched alumni network with ToucanTech: **2014**



**2400+** online members



**70% of all alumni** with an email address have signed up to the online community



**900+ posts and comments** in the community portal



**84 class of 2020 alumni** signed up to the online community after promotion in school



Over **700** monthly news story reads





## Joshua Coffey

Digital Marketing Officer  
Concord College

### How have you improved the user experience on your community site for your alumni?

Lockdown gave us a great opportunity to give our community site a complete digital audit, and I've found that dedicating time each week to test new features and see other schools' best practice examples helps to better the alumni network and strategy at Concord College.

We've added new features to engage alumni such as the Digital Magazine Archive to access old Concord College magazines, as well as a termly newsletter to round up all our latest events and stories.

We have also created a better user experience by simplifying the layout of our site; using drop-down menus to avoid cluttering our main menu, and creating a straightforward fundraising page and payments system to make it even easier for alumni to support their college.

### Do you have any tips for other schools that are developing their alumni relationships - how can they make their admin and interactions efficient?

One of the main ways that we ensure a high level of engagement is by only sending content that is relevant and of interest to our alumni. This means we're targeting alumni based on numerous criteria, and we show them that we understand what they want to hear about when we contact them, e.g. saying 'We thought you might like this article about a medical breakthrough from another one of our alumni because you are listed as a Concord doctor'. We can also share applicable content through the clubs we have set up, such as the entrepreneur network or one of our university buddy clubs.

This level of targeting gets even easier when you have advanced email filters in place, so that you can easily find the right segments. We make sure to save our commonly used email filters on our ToucanTech system so we can quickly put together communications.



We also gather alumni updates efficiently, by using the ToucanTech inbuilt forms, so that all the data goes directly into our database, and we can use this content to produce our catch up series with alumni; finding out about first steps in careers in our Rising Stars or prominent leaders in their fields in our Notable Alumni.

### Which activities have you found work best for encouraging your alumni to visit their community site?

We've been focusing on a range of social media tactics to encourage alumni to log into their community portal. The highest engagement has so far come from our weekly '#ThrowbackThursday' which focuses on alumni facts and figures, as well as a few fun challenges. We also launched a dedicated hashtag, #ConcordAlumni, and we encourage alumni to use this on their own social posts, so that we can interact with them and help to promote interesting news stories or upcoming events.

Other activities that have helped to drive a high level of engagement are our fundraising events: we're always thinking about ways to get creative and get people involved. We have hosted a few auctions, including the Concord 70th Birthday Reunion, where alumni offered prizes and could bid to win some high value experiences such as holidays. Concord also supplied archive memorabilia such as old pin badges, scarves, ties, and a signed box of Shrewsbury Monopoly by Principal, Mr Neil Hawkins (as Concord features!).





## St Joseph's Institution International

### About St Joseph's Institution International

St Joseph's Institution International is one of seven Lasallian schools in Singapore, providing a life-changing education to Singaporean and expatriate children. SJI International leaves a lasting connection with their graduates, supporters, friends and staff members, and every student or faculty member who leaves SJI International becomes an automatic member of the SJI International Alumni Association.

SJI International set up their ToucanTech community platform in 2019 and their global community has grown rapidly. SJI's aim with their community site was to provide a place for alumni to interact, support and learn from one another that they could access all around the world, and to form the bridge between the alumni and the whole SJI community.

### Shining a spotlight on their alumni achievers

SJI International proudly shares the achievements of their alumni through their spotlight articles. They make it easy to gather many alumni features by providing two quick ways to share their stories: either by getting in contact directly with the development office, or by writing answers to the guiding questions on the website – and they include a reminder to add photos! Check out their questions for inspiration on what to ask your own alumni; engaging your alumni by making them feel valued and honoured by their alma mater is always a good idea, and being on the lookout for your own alumni success stories is very resource and time efficient.

### SJI Alumni Community Stats



Launched alumni network with ToucanTech: **2019**



**400+** members have joined their online community



**850+ visitors** monthly to their community site



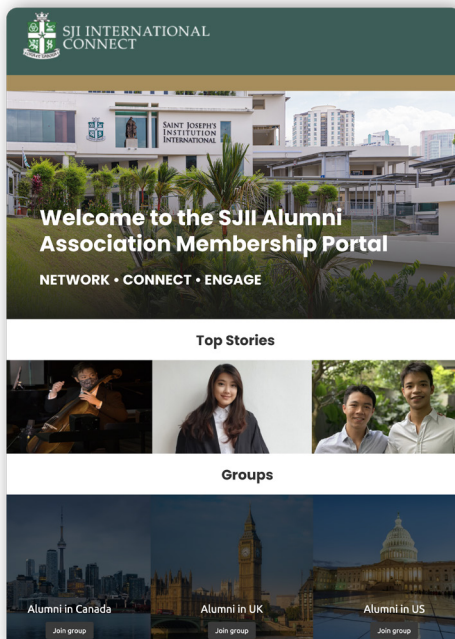
Over **13,000** news story reads on alumni spotlights



## Reminiscing through digital yearbooks

No more losing your memorabilia down the back of cupboards, only to be discovered when moving every few years! A lovely initiative that SJII has established is to upload a digital copy of the yearbooks for all previous cohorts to their community website, so they can reminisce anytime they want. They can also leave comments and interact with other classmates, and the development team can share a link to the yearbooks when promoting reunion or gatherings, giving alumni a reason to log in and share their memories.

SJII have worked hard to populate their site with rich, engaging content and made the most of every feature on their website. They initiated some great ideas for saving time and resources while producing excellent features that their peers will want to read.





### About International School of Paris

Welcoming the class of 2020 to their community site with a video to show each student from their early years to graduation, the International School of Paris (ISP) goes the extra mile to engage their alumni from the moment they arrive. Located in Paris, but with students from across the world, the ISP alumni community is thriving in their new virtual home.

The International School of Paris recently launched their new alumni community, sending a mass email to their 500 contacts and inviting them to take a tour of the Virtual ISP. They communicated the numerous benefits for their members to sign up effectively, offering alumni the chance to sign up to a brand new mentoring programme, get access to an abundance of photo albums and news stories to instill nostalgia, and to ensure that members continue to receive updates about reunions and events.

The latest newsletter sent from International School of Paris Alumni Community had an impressive 75% open rate. To encourage user engagement, the newsletter highlights two pieces of functionality. Users can share their own stories on the site and can help spread the word by inviting their friends to join via email – these are signposted with clear button links in the email to direct users to the site.

### Connecting through COVID

ISP are continuing to connect their alumni despite their cancelled physical events programme, by moving to virtual alternatives. They hosted their first Alumni Zoom event on World Teacher's Day, inviting alumni to come and meet with their teachers from ISP.

### International School of Paris Community Stats



Launched alumni network with ToucanTech: **2020**



**350+** online members



**60%** average email open rate to 4000+ recipients



**700+ monthly visitors** to their community site



Over **700** monthly news story reads



Using their ToucanTech system, they invited their alumni to this wonderful opportunity to reconnect with familiar faces, with former staff, students and parents alongside current students and teachers attending this lively and warm event.

ISP are also creating opportunities for current and former students, with an alumna coming forward to host a workshop on becoming a coach or mentor. Following the event, the ISP development team wrote up her step-by-step process to inspire other students or alumni who may be interested and to promote their future careers events. With the launch of ISP's new mentoring scheme just around the corner, this is a perfect opportunity to recruit any alumni who may want to get involved but are unsure about how to mentor effectively.

### **Sharing the achievements of their community**

ISP has worked hard to populate their community site with tonnes of exciting content for alumni to access when they first sign up. With stories of former students and staff successes to attract and engage their readership, recent leavers can be inspired by the opportunities available to them, and older alumni can see their peers' great achievements.

### **Virtual tours to spark nostalgia**

ISP offers their alumni the chance to take a virtual tour of their campus and explore the old and new buildings to reminisce about their school memories. This also allows prospective students and parents who cannot currently travel to get a feel for the International School of Paris and its wonderful facilities.

The team at International School of Paris have worked hard to make their virtual community a place of genuine value for their alumni, and it is exciting to see their sign up rates growing day by day following their hugely successful launch. Congratulations ISP!





## American School of Barcelona

### About American School of Barcelona

The American School of Barcelona (ASB) is a private, non-profit, coeducational day school serving students from 3-18 years old in Barcelona, Spain. ASB offers a university preparatory curriculum which provides its graduates with access to American, Spanish and other international universities. In 2021, they launched their first online community to keep alumni and former parents and staff informed about ASB, and also to provide a networking platform to encourage connections. In 2022, their website is now the central hub for information, news and events related to their 60th anniversary occurring next year.

### Encouraging sign ups to their new platform

The American School of Barcelona launched their new platform in May 2021, and segmented their communications between alumni and the rest of their community. They sent an email to their community to share the benefits of joining, such as catching up on the latest ASB news, registering for school events, connecting directly with friends, sharing or seeking career guidance and browsing all the photos from ASB events. They also incentivised sign ups with an exclusive Louis-the-Lynx plush toy to the first ten alumni who complete their profile, including uploading a profile photo. Their launch emails had an impressive open rate of 66%, and so far over 20% of their community has signed up to their online community!

### American School of Barcelona Community Stats



Launched alumni network with ToucanTech: **2021**



**400+** online members



**50%** average email open rate



**2000+** views on their news stories



Over **400** monthly visits to their new alumni site



## Creating a home for exciting alumni content

To encourage regular engagement, ASB has been publishing exciting alumni content, with over 70 articles featuring different former students and their achievements since leaving the school. They also share regular updates from the school, including charity drives, sports events and collaborations between alumni and students for careers and university talks.

## Supporting ASB businesses and entrepreneurs

The ASB community is filled with enthusiastic entrepreneurs and thriving businesses. Launching a new business directory will help to promote alumni and community owned businesses and encourage support, provide an important platform for connecting, and share special offers for the ASB community. ASB members can list their businesses for free on the site, after registering an online profile. There are currently 30 businesses listed, with over 1,000 views of different services and products offered.

## Building connections with current ASB students

The Professional Learning Programme, developed by ASB Class of 2022 students, aims to create opportunities for high school students to gain work and career experience by collaborating with the wider ASB community. The scheme will offer internships that enable students to learn about specific fields of interest, through experience that can exclusively be obtained through hands-on involvement, helping them attain a competitive advantage in future candidate pools. ASB recently shared an email detailing how the community can get involved, by volunteering as a guest speaker, hosting a site visit, acting as a mentor for students, or accepting high school students for assigned periods of work experience.

ASB has a thriving community that is supporting one another in a number of ways, and we are excited to see their network expand and connect more people.



# Flexible features for school communities



## Database

Import, filter, update and merge records, create custom fields, forms and admin permissions



## Website

Connect your members on a branded network with privacy controls and a mobile app



## CRM

Track activity, measure engagement, capture consent, create postal labels, sync emails



## Groups

Set up club pages where admins can manage their own members, discussions, events



## Email

Design and schedule newsletters, view stats, remove bounced emails, manage unsubscribes



## Fundraising

Process donations and tax relief, set up funds, reconcile payments, run reports, steward donors



## Resources

Upload photos, documents, magazines – tag, categorise, share and track downloads



## Careers

Run a mentoring system, post jobs, publish careers guides, promote business networking



## News

Publish articles, videos, and other content – track views, tag people, share on social media



## Events

Manage your events (online or in-person), invites, reminders, seating plans and ticketing



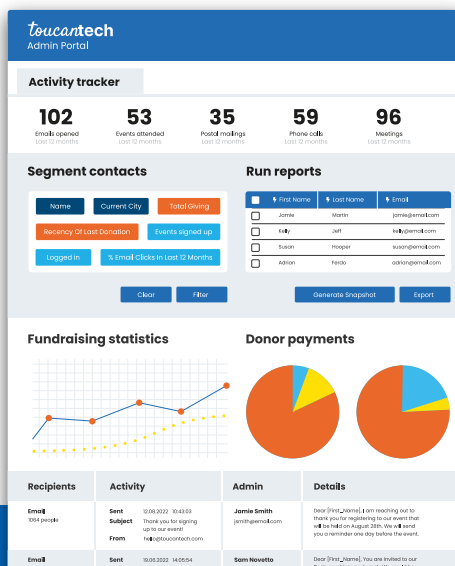
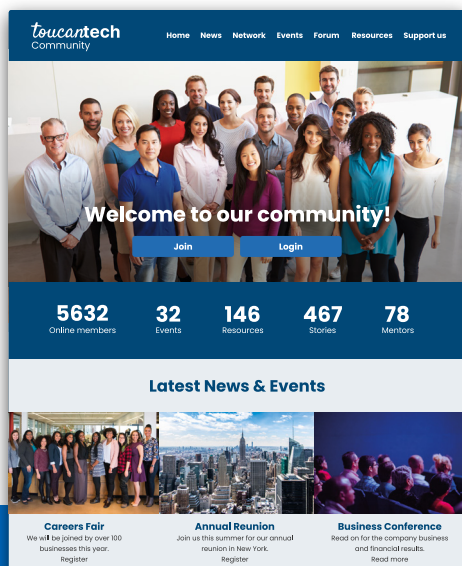
# Find out more about ToucanTech

Get in touch to hear how the development & marketing system can work for your school

*"Not only does the ToucanTech CRM solution enable you to engage your community in an easy, flexible and effective way that suits your audience, the positive impact on the home team, especially one lean on human resource, should not be underestimated. There is an awful lot to do in this job and ToucanTech is saving us a lot of time – from Day 1 of going live, it made us a more productive and happier office!"*

**Nick Smith**

Head of Development, Churcher's College



ToucanTech is an **all-in-one database, website & comms system** designed for development teams, fundraisers & community managers. Choose a public website or private portal, combined with a powerful database, email engine & events management system. Manage all donor & alumni relations in one place, helping to **save time, increase efficiency & boost engagement**.

To get in touch, visit us at [toucantech.com/pages/demo](https://toucantech.com/pages/demo)



