

A THRIVEMATTIC RESEARCH STUDY · 2026

DEEP-DIVE REPORT 04

# SERP & Brand Protection

For the Indian private-university cohort, aggregators and Wikipedia own the brand search. For foreign-university India campuses, the picture inverts — the official site wins position one almost every time.

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Cohort **18 India campuses**

SERP collected **19 May 2026**

Query "[University] India"

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Prepared for foreign-university India launch teams. Figures verified 19 May 2026 against a fresh SERP collection.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The official site **wins position one**

A fresh SERP collection (19 May 2026) measured the Google result for each campus's "[University] India" brand query. The finding is decisive — and it is the opposite of the Indian private-university pattern, where aggregators and Wikipedia dominate. Here, the campus's own domain takes the top result almost every time the query returns data.

**14**/<sub>18</sub>

campuses own Google position 1 for their India brand query; 15 sit in the top 3 (Aberdeen Mumbai is #2). Three return no SERP data — all pre-launch or crawler-blocked.

## METHODOLOGY

### What feeds this report — and what it does not

Google SERP was collected fresh on **19 May 2026** (the 2026Q2 first cut was an empty run; this report supersedes it). For each campus a single brand query — "[University] India" — was issued and the top-10 results, position-1 ownership, Wikipedia presence and official-channel social presence recorded. 15 of 18 campuses returned data; **3 returned no data** (Deakin GIFT City — crawler-blocked; Lancaster, La Trobe — pre-launch). **Scope caveat:** only the brand query "[University] India" was measured. The higher-intent buyer queries — "[University] [city] fees", "GIFT City university fees" — where aggregators historically compete are *not* covered in this cut and are flagged as the next measurement.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Three things the data **makes plain**

#### FINDING 01

#### Brand-India search is owned, not contested

Of the 15 campuses whose query returned data, **14 hold position 1 and the 15th (Aberdeen Mumbai) holds position 2** — every measured campus is in the top three for its own "[University] India" search. The aggregator-dominance threat that defines the Indian private-university SERP does not hold at the brand-query level for foreign campuses.

## SERP position for the "[University] India" query

18 campuses · share by best position · collected 19 May 2026.



■ Position 1 — 14 campuses (78%)   ■ Position 2 — Aberdeen Mumbai (6%)   ■ No SERP data — 3 (17%)



### FINDING 02

## Wikipedia is not the competitor here

Only **3 of 18 campuses** surface a Wikipedia entry in the top results for the India brand query — Illinois Tech, UNSW Bengaluru and UWA. For the rest, the official campus domain is the top result, not a third-party encyclopedia page. This is a structural advantage over the Indian private-university cohort, where Wikipedia routinely outranks the institution: a foreign campus's brand SERP is the campus's to lose, not to win back.

### FINDING 03

## The real exposure is the three dark campuses — and the unmeasured buyer query

Deakin GIFT City, Lancaster and La Trobe return **no SERP data** for the brand-India query — pre-launch or crawler-blocked. Their brand search is uncontested and unclaimed: the cheapest position-1 in the cohort, available now. Separately, this cut measured only "[University] India". The higher-intent queries an applicant actually types — "[University] [city] fees", "GIFT City university fees" — are where aggregators have historically competed and are not yet measured. Owning the brand query is necessary, not sufficient; the buyer-intent query is the next contest.

THE FULL DATA

# All 18 campuses

CAMPUS	SERP POSITION	TOP 3	WIKIPEDIA	SOCIAL PRESENCE
Bristol	1	Yes	No	3
Coventry	1	Yes	No	2
IED Italy	1	Yes	No	3
Illinois Tech	1	Yes	Yes	1
Liverpool	1	Yes	No	2
Queen's Belfast	1	Yes	No	3
Southampton Delhi	1	Yes	No	2
Surrey	1	Yes	No	2
UNSW Bengaluru	1	Yes	Yes	2
UWA	1	Yes	Yes	2
Victoria	1	Yes	No	3
Western Sydney	1	Yes	No	3
Wollongong GIFT	1	Yes	No	4
York Mumbai	1	Yes	No	3
Aberdeen Mumbai	2	Yes	No	3
Deakin GIFT	—	No	No	0
Lancaster	—	No	No	0
La Trobe	—	No	No	0

A "—" position means the brand query returned no SERP data this cut (pre-launch or crawler-blocked), not a measured low rank. Social presence = count of official channels surfaced in the brand SERP.

BEFORE AUGUST 2026

## Three moves that **compound**

- 1 Protect the position-1 you already own.** Keep the India campus page canonical, fast and the clear best-match for "[University] India" — a strong owned result is cheaper to defend than to recapture. The advantage here is real; the risk is complacency.
- 2 Claim the brand SERP for the three dark campuses now.** Deakin, Lancaster and La Trobe have uncontested, unclaimed brand searches. A single indexed India page pre-launch takes a position-1 that currently belongs to no one.
- 3 Extend ownership to the buyer-intent query.** Owning "[University] India" is the floor. The applicant types "[University] [city] fees" and "GIFT City university fees" — measure those next and build the India fee/admission pages that win them before the aggregators consolidate.

## See exactly where your campus stands

Request a per-campus scorecard: your brand-SERP position, Wikipedia exposure, and the buyer-intent queries you don't yet own — free for any campus in the 18-campus cohort.

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Growth systems for universities and schools — search visibility, enrollment clarity, and original research across foreign-university India campuses, NIRF private colleges, and private universities.

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