Public Engagement Through Social Media.

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Key social media stats

**Facebook** 1.2 billion active users, accounts for around 50% of all mobile web traffic, 480 million people use Facebook for an average of 15 minutes every single day, which still makes it the biggest online time-sink

**YouTube** 4 billion videos are viewed every day, it’s also the 2nd most popular search engine online

**Twitter** over 500 million tweets per day, over 230 million unique active users.

**LinkedIn** 260 million users (50% are active daily), majority of users between 30-55 years old

**Google+** 300 million active users, but low amount of meaningful activity.

**Reddit** 70 million unique active users, 37 billion page views in 2012.

**WordPress** 70 million WordPress blogs, 4.1 billion page views per month
Online newspaper readership stats

Top 10 largest online newspapers worldwide

Daily Mail Online – 6.8 million
The New York Times – 5.4 million
The Guardian – 3.5 million
Washington Post – 3.1 million
Telegraph – 2.2 million
The Wall Street Journal – 2.1 million
LA Times – 2 million
The Times of India – 1.8 million
USA Today – 1.6 million
NY Daily News – 1.3 million
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- USA Today – 1.6 million
- NY Daily News – 1.3 million

Mail

6.8 million
daily viewers

Daily captive audience
8.5 million
IFLS – a global science engagement project
Made in Sheffield.

Credit: IFLScience
BUT, before we charge ahead into details about social media, let’s talk about purpose.
Think purpose.

Important point
Social media is massive and very dynamic.
Too massive and dynamic to wield.
You need to focus.
What’s the purpose of social media in the context of academic research?

- Purpose
- Organisation & planning
- Action

If you have hope of doing something well, you’ll need a decent plan.
What’s the purpose of social media in the context of academic research?

You can’t make a plan without a purpose
What’s the purpose of social media in the context of academic research?

Potential purposes of using social media in academic research
Promoting your activity
Learning
Networking with likeminded people
Forming collaborative partnerships
Public engagement
Creating impact
Building your reputation (personal, group, institutional or all)
Social research
Coordinating international research activity
Making money
Job hunting
What’s the purpose of social media in the context of public engagement?

- Inspiring a new generation
- Educating the public
- Improving the accessibility of HE
- Engaging with the public, listening to their views and insights, cocreation
- Fostering partnerships, drawing on a larger pools of local, national & international expertise

...  
- To earn a living and build a career
- To make a name for yourself

...  
- Any combination of the above + more
Do not ever lose sight of purpose. It is your guide.

It is very very easy to slip into the mode of communicating for the sake of it. If this happens, your communications are more than likely going to be rubbish.
How do you create effective public engagement through social media?

The ultimate objective of these two stages is to create a (good) **concept**.
A few great concepts
I’d argue this is probably the best example of online public engagement to date.
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A few key points

50 million total video views
350,000 YouTube subscribers
500 videos

And there’s no reason why it should stop growing.

Low cost & few specialist skills required.

In many ways what they have created has a timeless value. And if something specific becomes out of date, they can always update it.
What’s more –
Classrooms across the world are adopting the resource to create a blended teaching experience that’s more interactive for the students.

The Internet doesn’t exist in isolation – social media’s connection to the real world is often more important than the online activity itself.
Using social media to support real world activity

- Events promotion
- #EventAugmentation
- Real-time feedback and insight capture
- Blended education
- Collaboration & networking
Tools for the job
Reddit, and social amplification

- The front page of the Internet.
- Do you surf the web any more? The chances are ‘not really’ - you bookmark your favourite sites and keep up-to-date with them.
- Isn’t that somewhat limiting given the vast size and scope of the world wide web?
- Reddit is a social news site, or an interest aggregator, where you can share, view & discuss content related to your interest.
- People each have their own favourite bookmarks – Reddit is where it’s all pulled together. ‘Karma’ is the quality regulator.

1) Find and join the communities relevant to your interests
2) Contribute to discussions
3) Create engaging blog/image/video content
The power of integration

- Share it on LinkedIn
- Tweet about it
- G+ it
- Share it on Facebook
- Link it to your website
- Embed YouTube/Vimeo videos on it
- Share it on Reddit etc
- Connect it to Flickr or Instagram
- The Press

Photo credit: Callum Black
Final piece of wisdom (possibly)

In my opinion, the central tenet of communication is:

To be a good communicator you must...
always put yourself in the position of the people you’re trying to communicate with - understand what they’re likely to be thinking about, what they value, and what they don’t.

Often this can be done instinctively using your ability to empathise and sympathise, but it can also help to ask for feedback. Reflect on this and you won’t go far wrong.
Any questions?
If you would like more specific support or advice on social media and video production, please feel free to get in touch:

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