Focus on... Promoting your research on social media

Using social media to raise awareness of your research, find collaborators, and build research networks is becoming more and more important for Early Career Researchers. Navigating the rapidly shifting social media landscape as a researcher can be daunting.

This month we asked two of Macquarie’s prominent researchers, Associate Professor John Dumay from the Department of Accounting and Corporate Governance and Associate Professor Adam Dunn from the Australian Institute of Health Innovation and the Centre for Health Informations, for their top tips on how to harness social media effectively and strategically.

John Dumay’s three tops for promoting academic research on social media:

1. **Ensure you have a Google Scholar account and publicise your account.** It is free! It is also the most widely used resource by scholars looking for research to cite. You can follow researchers and their citations, and they can also follow you. More importantly, Google Scholar can recommend the latest and greatest research based on your profile.

2. **Start to promote your research on Research Gate.** Next, to Google Scholar, it is a prime repository for research used by scholars worldwide. It is particularly used by scholars whose Universities do not have the same access to journals that we enjoy at Macquarie University. It helps boost your citations! Additionally, many scholars will follow your work to keep up to date, and you can do the same and follow other scholars.

3. **Create an account in LinkedIn and join special interest groups.** For example, I am a member of the Integrated Reporting group, which connects me with practitioners, academics and policymakers. A great way to promote your research beyond academic paywalls.

For more enlightenment on using social media in academia see John’s YouTube video and other videos associated with MRES700.
Adam Dunn’s five top tips for promoting academic research on social media:

1. Social media (and Twitter in particular) is about finding your community and creating conversations not just broadcasting. One of the fastest and surest ways to find people with shared interests is to follow people posting about the conferences you attend or would like to attend. I have repeatedly found "the perfect reference" or "the perfect algorithm" by procrastinating on Twitter while I was supposed to be writing a manuscript or writing code to solve a data mining problem.

2. Social media is more than just Twitter but Twitter is currently the most important conduit for researchers. Reddit, blog networks, and to a lesser extent Stack Exchange sites like StackOverflow, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc. may all be useful ways to reach stakeholders outside of your research community depending on what you do. I find that the act of rewriting my research in various forms for people outside my disciplines helps me get better at writing grants, giving presentations, and makes me much more efficient at short deadlines for news media and the never-ending cycle of bureaucracy asking me to justify my existence as a researcher.

3. Social media is not impact on its own, it is a conduit for opportunities in integration and application. Social media gives you direct access to Nobel laureates, vice chancellors, your intellectual crushes, journal editors, journalists, the people who might benefit from the research you do, and a wealth of academic experience in topics you didn't even know existed. As a direct consequence of being on Twitter, I have written or been involved in countless media opportunities, co-authored papers and started new collaborations, was invited to write in Nature, and made an associate editor of a journal. I even tweeted with Margaret Atwood.

4. Social media platforms are full of performative trolling and people emboldened to say things they wouldn't be able to say to your face. Social media can help you feel much less isolated and much more embedded in a community of like-minded people. But you will encounter harassment and this can be especially tough for people who are marginalised at the intersections of gender, race, ability, etc. My advice here is directed to everyone else: if you find yourself often engaging with people who don't engage back, stop, because you might be the troll/mansplainer/whitesplainer. Don't be afraid to block, mute, or ignore people if you don't want to engage with them.

5. Keep track of your Altmetric scores as a n-of-1 experiment and for applications. Know when your research will be online and make use of your new social media contacts to market your research. It can be as simple as a tweet or a full international media campaign but in the week before you make your research public, practice writing your own media release, keep a list of short punchy sentences, relate your work to recent news events. Keeping track of the numbers related to how far your research reaches is useful for (a) fellowship and grant applications and promotions and (b) your happiness: the more impact you have the more you can do to improve society so it is nice to be able to look back and count it up.

To learn more from Adam Dunn about the use of social media for research see his video [here](#).