Capturing Impact from Social Media

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Outline for Today

• Identifying useful impact data for your social media channels.
• Tools and approaches for capturing evidence.
• Understanding the data, and how it indicates impact.
• Reflecting upon and benefitting from impact data.
• Building the evidence for an impact story.
• Resources associated with today can be found here: http://bit.ly/ImpactSocMed
Some assumptions...

• You are currently using social media in your research communications.
• You have access to the appropriate social media channels – with at least 2 people having access to monitor, manage, etc.
• You are aware of the UoE Social Media Guidance (http://bit.ly/edinburgh-social-media)
• You are working on research projects and are looking at impact in the context of REF, reporting to funders, etc.
So, first... a few things that are NOT useful social media impact

• Data and/or standard metrics from social media channels without indication of context or meaning.
• Sharing, likes, follows, and other lightweight engagement, unless supported by richer interactions or a trail of evidence of change, impact, etc.
• Descriptions of engagement without evidence to back it up – URLs, screen captures etc. These should be in PURE.
What is useful relevant impact in the context of Social Media?

• Something meaningful – engagement beyond likes, shares, etc.
• Something tangible – which means capturing screen shots, capturing appropriate data, understanding the process and relationship between different types of interactions and resultant impacts.
• Something well evidenced – with URLs, documents, screen captures, etc. in PURE.
• Something that tells a compelling and coherent story... Which sometimes requires you to play detective...
• For ideas, there are a range of social media examples (some very good) in the REF2014 Impact Case Studies: http://impact.ref.ac.uk/CaseStudies/Results.aspx?val=social%20media.
What does (social media) success look like?

• What are the key goals and expectations of your project or research team?
• Which audience(s) are you trying to reach?
• What kind of impact are you trying to achieve?
• What would a successful outcome look like?
  • How would you know you had achieved this goal?
  • When would you know that you had achieved this goal?
• How does impact fit into the wider project?
  • How does a successful outcome fit with the research objectives or outputs?
  • What reporting is required as part of the core project work?
What are your goals and “Key Performance Indicators” for social media in your project?

• You can capture MUCH more information than is actually useful.

• Establishing SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) goals for a project will help you decide on appropriate KPIs to measure progress towards those goals.
  • Goals should be about real change, impact, (not usually numerical).

• Setting KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) early on, and reviewing them regularly, will help you capture and track progress and impact.

• Scheduling and documenting your process will ensure you and your colleagues can maintain records and tracking of your project over time – and build evidence for your impact story.
REF Impact Definition (for REF 2014)

“an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.”
Indicators of success in social media include...

• **Indicators of real engagement** – contributions to a hashtag, comments, replies, write ups, genuine participation. E.g. comment threads, a group of tweets to a hashtag, etc.

• **Data with context** and a relationship to other richer engagement with your project, or of acting upon that project by taking the research out into policy, the community, etc. E.g. a blog post describing these impacts.

• **Evidence of change or meaningful engagement** – e.g. indications of an action after having been part of a social media dialogue, citing of social media posts/videos/information in another document or report; participation in an event promoted via social media.

• **Stories of change, success, influence** – these may be self evidenced through social media, reported or shared there, etc. e.g. an Instagram post on a personal change; a Facebook post sharing a newspaper article on the project with commentary; a very impactful tweet by a notable figure resulting in an action.
Discussion: Understanding Success

Think about a project you are currently working with.

• Who is/are the intended audience(s)?
• What are the funder-agreed objectives for the work?
• Are there other goals or expectations from the project team or their audience(s) or stakeholders?

• **What would success look like?**
• What kind of impact would that involve?
• Are there existing KPIs for this work?

See also this document: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/download/attachments/311151998/ERI-Impact-UnderstandingSuccess-20160524.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1464170807000&api=v2
Capturing Evidence of Social Media Impact

Plan out...

• What you are going to measure (KPIs)
• When/how often you are going to capture data against your KPIs
• Regular reflection points that will allow you to review your practice, to analyse the data, to understand if you are reaching your goals.
• When you will report on your social media impact (regularly, at set intervals, at the end of the project)?
• How will you be reporting your impact? What else do you need to capture?
• How will your social media and online impact be reflected on PURE for the organisation and REF impact stories?
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

• Tend to be numerical.
• Are used to track against project goals and objectives.
• Are a useful structure for capturing evidence of impact.

KPIs for social media activities could include things like...
• Number of (non spam) @replies on Twitter, indicating a genuine response to a post (weekly).
• Number of new email queries about participation in the project triggered by clicking through from a Facebook page (monthly).
• Number of visits to the project website triggered by social media amplification of a conference (over the course of 5 days).
Setting KPIs for Social Media & Online Activity

• Start with what you would like to capture.
• Look at what you can capture in the particular space/with readily available tools.
• What essential or additional evidence you would ideally want to gather.
• What is a realistic target for this KPI?
• What would a stretch target look like?
• What is the minimum activity/activity to justify this activity?
• Can you schedule the time and staffing to capture the data? Think about what is absolutely essential.
• How confident are you of the data? What are the health warnings or qualifiers?
A bit of homework: KPIs

Think about a current/recent project...

• Write down* three useful KPIs for your social media activity for this project.
  • What will these KPIs tell you? Why are they useful?
  • How will you measure these KPIs? What evidence do you need to capture?
  • How often will they be measured?
  • How will you use the data captured?

You should remember to review your proposed KPIs regularly, reflecting upon the project objectives and thinking about your social media data capture options...

*You can use this template: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/download/attachments/311151998/ERI-Impact-KPIs-20160524.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1464170798000&api=v2
Tools and approaches for capturing & exploiting data

Useful tools include:
• Google Analytics
• Twitter analytics/data
• Facebook Insights/data
• Blog data
• Other relevant sites and tools for your project/community...
• Research impact tools: Impact Story; Altmetrics
• Using PURE to capture social media impact data

See also more detailed slides here:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/download/attachments/311151998/Capturing%20Impact%20from%20Social%20Media-1.pptx?version=1&modificationDate=1464179900000&api=v2
Twitter Impact

• Twitter Analytics provides excellent overview of most successful posts.
• TAGS can capture mentions of accounts, hashtags, search terms. Full tweets are saved to a Google spreadsheet, can create archive and network visualisations through the tools.
• IFTTT can be used to automate further capture or sharing of tweets (and other social media).
• Twitter.com, Tweetdeck or Hootsuite can be used to monitor mentions and dialogue.
• Use URLs (right click on the Tweet timestamp) and screenshots to evidence tweets/discussions.
• Tweets are used for sharing – use Google Analytics with Twitter or TAGS to find influencers, evidence of impact and engagement.
• Lots of 3rd party tools to review activity, e.g. QuillConnect
Twitter Analytics

Get your Tweets in front of more people. Promoted Tweets and content open up your reach on Twitter to more people.

May 2016 Summary

Top Mention
- earned 30 engagements

Top Media Tweet
- earned 1,546 impressions

Top Follower
- followed by 70K people

Stewart Harding
@SimpsonStewart

Kevlar: It’s a fabric that is 5 times stronger than steel but a tenth the weight. Our Kevlar plates for lunch boxes, backpacks, etc.

Nicola Osborne
@NicolaOsborne

Promoted Tweets and content open up your reach on Twitter to more people.

Your Tweets earned 102.5K impressions over this 28 day period.

Engagements
- 193 engagements over 28 days
- 230 engagements over 7 days
- 175 engagements over 14 days
- 367 engagements over 56 days
- 318 engagements over 112 days
- 561 engagements over 280 days
- 457 engagements over 353 days

Clicks
- 220 clicks over 28 days
- 38 clicks over 7 days
- 15 clicks over 14 days
- 28 clicks over 56 days
- 14 clicks over 112 days
- 5 clicks over 280 days
- 10 clicks over 353 days

Impressions
- 94,000 impressions over 28 days
- 230 impressions per day
- 175 impressions per day
- 367 impressions per day
- 318 impressions per day
- 561 impressions per day
- 457 impressions per day
TAGS (https://tags.hawksey.info/)
TAGS Explorer (https://tags.hawksey.info/)
A Cautionary note on Twitter...

• Twitter tools usually use the Twitter API which surfaces “Top Tweets”, a selective capture. Always monitor Twitter accounts more closely for outliers and comments to reply to.

• Tweets are better when fresh – the (free) API has a maximum of 1500 requests per hour, and only makes tweets from the last 7 days available. Older tweets are findable with Twitter.com or via their URLs, sometimes also through web search.

• Automated capture gathers spam as well as valid comments – review TAGS search terms and IFTTT recipes accordingly.
Tracing Twitter Referrals
Facebook Impact

Facebook Insights are the key way to find data on Facebook activity. But...

• They include a lot of unnecessary data.
• The format is complex and has changed multiple times in the past.
• They can be exported for a limited time window (180 days max).
• Use their own terminology, including:
  • Reach – number of people who have “seen” the post in their newsfeed. Combines “organic” and “paid” appearance in the feed. You can promote/boost a post – that is paid reach.
  • Engagement – Divided into clicks on a post (blue) and reactions, comments and shares of a post (pink)
Facebook Insights
Exporting Facebook Insights

Export Insights Data

Select a data type, file format and date range. You can export up to 500 posts at a time.

Data Type
- Page data: Key Page metrics for engagement, like sources and audience insights.
- Post data: Key post metrics for reach, impressions and feedback.
- Video data: Key video metrics including views, unique views, page views and organic views.

Date Range
- April 25, 2016 - May 23, 2016

File Format
- Excel (.xls)

Export data using the old template

Facebook Page Terms

Cancel Export Data
Blogs

• WordPress.com, Blogger, Medium, Tumblr, etc. all have their own stats.

• Use Google Analytics in addition to these.

• Best measures of engagement and impact are often qualitative – responses, related posts, comments, etc. Often captured via images or in written reports.

• Sharing of blogs (through various channels) can also be a useful measure of engagement.
A word about Google Analytics...

• It is VAST and provides far more types of data than you will need.
• It relies on cookies on your audience(s) devices to work. Not all activity will be captured in the same way because of this.
• Be aware that you can trace referring URLs back to blogs etc., and you can switch on additional features for tracking social media shares.
• You can set your own goals – pathways through the site, campaigns.
• You can annotate your stats – including peaks etc.
• You can create custom dashboards – to view just the data that matters to you.
• You can integrate GA with your blog, MailChimp newsletter, etc.
Using GA to track other social media channels...

### Social Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Network</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>% Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>95.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paper.li</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogger</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delicious</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Social Network

- **Sessions:** 1,602
- **Sessions via Social Referral:** 461
- **Conversions:** 0
- **Contributed Social Conversions:** 0
- **Last Interaction Social Conversions:** 0

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**Acquisition**

- Overview
  - All Traffic
  - AdWords
  - Search Engine Optimisation
- Social
  - **Overview**
  - Network Referrals
  - Landing Pages
  - Conversions
  - Plug-ins
  - Users Flow
GA: Finding Influential Referrers...
Other sites and tools

• All of the usual academic citation data, tools like Academia.edu, Impact Story, Altmetric. **Top tip: always share your DOI!**
• Instagram, Flickr - stats and qualitative measures.
• LinkedIn – profile views, group posts, shares/likes etc. of group content.
• YouTube – Insights provide detailed view of engagement during video.
• Vine, Boomerang, etc. – simple measures of likes/shares.
• Google+ includes analytics type information for groups/pages.
• Media Hopper – analytics per video of views/drop offs/engaged users
• Bit.ly – enables trackable links when sharing in print, on websites, etc.
• GitHub – track code/data use through forks, engagement, questions, etc.
And don’t forget

• PURE and other repository/publication data.
• Social sharing data – if you use AddThis, ShareThis, etc. on websites.
• JiscMail, Sympa, MailChimp, etc. data (sharing, referrals, content)
• Events channel, Eventbright, etc. data (e.g. referrals)
• Events, meetings and other anecdotal feedback – and follow up to this.
• Print and online publications, and how they relate to social media sources.
• Use/reuse of reports or publications – and social media activity, engagement or discovery of these.
• Information that can include capture of social media data – “how did you find out about this project” questions, surveys on engaging in a project, etc.
Reflect on what the data and evidence is telling you...

- Is there more you need to do to make impact visible – bit.ly URLs, use of DOIs in sharing publications, focusing efforts on most effective channels etc?
- Do colleagues/project partners need reminding of keywords, project names, hashtags etc? Are their researcher profiles up to date with appropriate IDs and works?
- Are there champions to identify and engage with? Can they tell you more about the (offline) impacts here?
- Can you engage supporters in social media activity that will bring in new audiences, or increase attention for your project?
- Are you posting at the right time of day, in the right spaces, in the right types of format, etc?
Investigating the data
(AKA Playing Scooby Doo... !)

Stats and obvious feedback are great but you also need to...

• Capture any known impact that isn’t otherwise obvious – e.g. one tweet = new contact = articles and influence of project.
• Investigate Google Analytics data and trace referrals back to their source...
• Google Alerts for project mentions will pick up additional mentions.
• Searches with Bing, DuckDuckGo, etc. will surface more engagement and impacts beyond obvious content.
• SocialMention (patchy but includes exportable data), Social Searcher, etc. find additional information – but likely to be noisier source.
• Storify is a good way to regularly monitor and capture mentions, and follow up leads...
• Searches within social media will capture more data than third party tools.
A successful post... But why? And should it be repeated?

Our most popular post, every year since it went live..

- A niche subject but of high interest.
- Originally timed to fit release of the film War Horse.
- Well publicised and shared on release.
- Well linked to and well tagged – easy to find and well ranked by search engines.
- Included rare content.
- It’s a good post but... We won’t make all our posts the same as it doesn’t fit our wider goals and objectives.

http://mediahub.blogs.edina.ac.uk/2012/02/01/war-horse-highlights-on-jisc-mediahub/
Tell a Compelling Story

Think about how you would make sense of the social media activity you are capturing, and how that explains or constitutes impact...

• What is the story here?

• How can you explain and evidence that impact?
  • Is there quantitative data that supports your case?
  • Is there qualitative data – comments, screen captures, etc. to support this impact?
  • Have you submitted all of your impacts and evidence through PURE so it is REF-ready?

• How will you capture this in Pure and in your project reports?

• Does this feel like a compelling REF Impact Story?

• Is this impact also a news item/follow up piece in itself?
Further Resources

All worksheets and resources from today – plus lots of additional stuff - are available via the Managing your Digital Footprints Resources for Educators wiki page on Analytics and Reporting:


Please do provide feedback, comments, requests for additional information etc.