

Communicating Research: How to Leverage Social Media

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Why Use Social Media?

- **Visibility:** Increase your visibility and citation metrics by building your online researcher profile.
- **Reach:** Communicate research to a wider audience and raise your profile outside of academia.
- **Network:** Develop relationships with other researchers, including potential collaborative partnerships.
- **Discover new research:** Find new research in your discipline and follow or contribute to discussions.
- **Promote:** Share your research to engage a wider audience and create more impact.
- **Quick distribution:** A quick and easy (and free!) way to get your message out there.



Getting Started

- **Platforms:** Consider which platform(s) will work best for you and your area of expertise.
- **Profile:** Build out your profile (handle/name, profile photo, bio, website link, etc.).
- **Follow:** Make connections by following colleagues, industry leaders and specialist media.
- **Engage:** Stay active and engage regularly.

Platform Considerations

When selecting which social media platforms to use, consider:

- What are you hoping to achieve?
- Which platforms are used by other researchers in your discipline?
- What type of content are you wanting to communicate?
- Which audience(s) are you hoping to reach and engage?

Types of Social Media Platforms

- **Social networking**

- LinkedIn
- Facebook

- **Microblogging**

- X (Twitter)
- LinkedIn

- **Photo sharing**

- Instagram

- **Video sharing**

- YouTube
- TikTok



LinkedIn

A professionally-focused platform that can be used to present your:

- Career history
- Academic employment and experience
- Research interests

LinkedIn is also great for:

- Connecting with other researchers or professionals in the industry
- Joining groups related to your research/discipline
- Sharing resources, including research publications and blog posts

 LinkedIn has a journalist program and media may use this platform to identify experts.

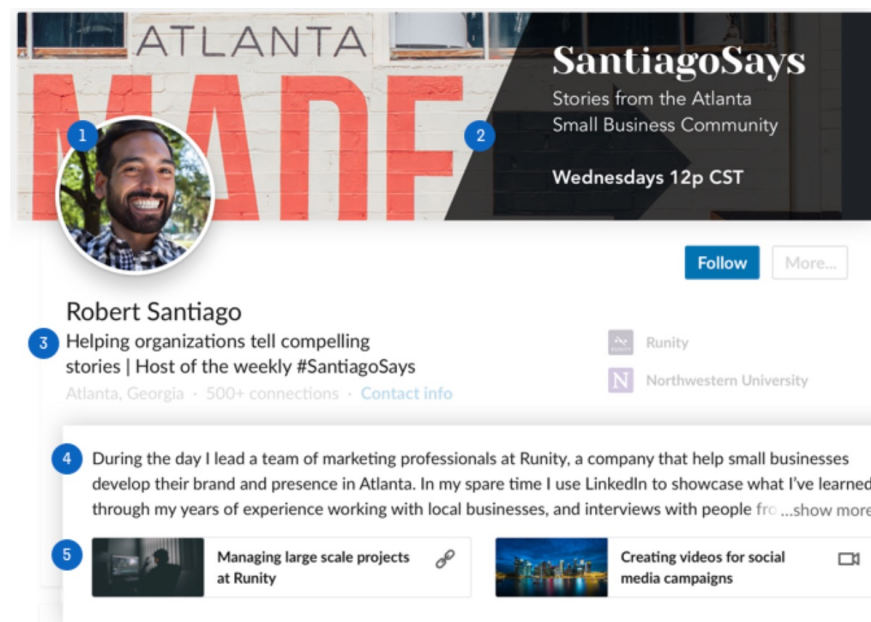


Fun fact: 2024 social media trend reports show LinkedIn increasing in popularity.

Optimize Your LinkedIn Profile

When [optimizing your profile](#), include:

1. Profile photo
2. Cover photo
3. Headline
 - Make this reflect what you want to be known for
 - Include relevant keywords to help users find you
4. Summary of your experience, expertise and interests
5. Highlight your best work
 - This could include photos, videos, websites, presentations, articles, etc.



LinkedIn Best Practices

- **Treat each post as a conversation:** Try posting things that encourage a response and reply to each comment to keep your audience engaged.
- **Diversify content types:** Share a mix of articles, videos, photos, etc. to find out what works best for your audience.
- **Post frequently:** LinkedIn recommends posting 4x a week.
 - Tip: LinkedIn has a feature to schedule content
- **Focus on niche topics:** LinkedIn users prefer deep dives into topics they're interested in (ex. performance management > management).

LinkedIn Best Practices (cont'd)

- **Use hashtags and mentions:** Include relevant and niche #hashtags and @mentions to reach the right audience and encourage engagement. The more specific, the better.
- **Utilize LinkedIn groups:** Search for groups related to your research interests or discipline.
 - In addition to sharing content with your connections (followers), you can share your content within groups.
 - Can't find a relevant group? You can [create your own LinkedIn group](#).

X (Twitter)

Allows users to create short posts containing text, links, photos or videos.

- Find new research
- Share your research (with academic and non-academic audiences)
- Follow and network with other researchers
- Use hashtags to engage in:
 - Academic discussions
 - Conferences
 - Events



Optimize Your X Profile

- Profile photo
- Cover photo
- Bio: 160 characters or less to share about yourself, including:
 - Discipline/research interests
 - Academic affiliations
 - Relevant keywords and hashtags
 - Tip: Use the same hashtags in your posts
- Pin a post: This will be the first piece of content users see when they visit your profile
- Make sure your posts are public



X Best Practices

- **Be concise:** Posts can be up to 280 characters.
 - Have more to say? Create a thread.
- **Use #hashtags and @mentions** to expand the reach of your posts.
 - X recommends limiting hashtags 1-2/post
 - Multi-word hashtags → #UndergraduateResearch
 - Mentions: @UWM vs .@UWM
 - Students @UWM can register....
 - .@UWM students can register...
 - @UWM students can register...
- **Follow other accounts and hashtags** related to your work.
- **Respond to comments** and other posts. X prioritizes two-way conversations.
- **Add a call-to-action** where applicable (ex. “Read the full story!”)

TikTok

The fastest-growing social media app, allowing users to share short-form videos. Also, an effective search engine!

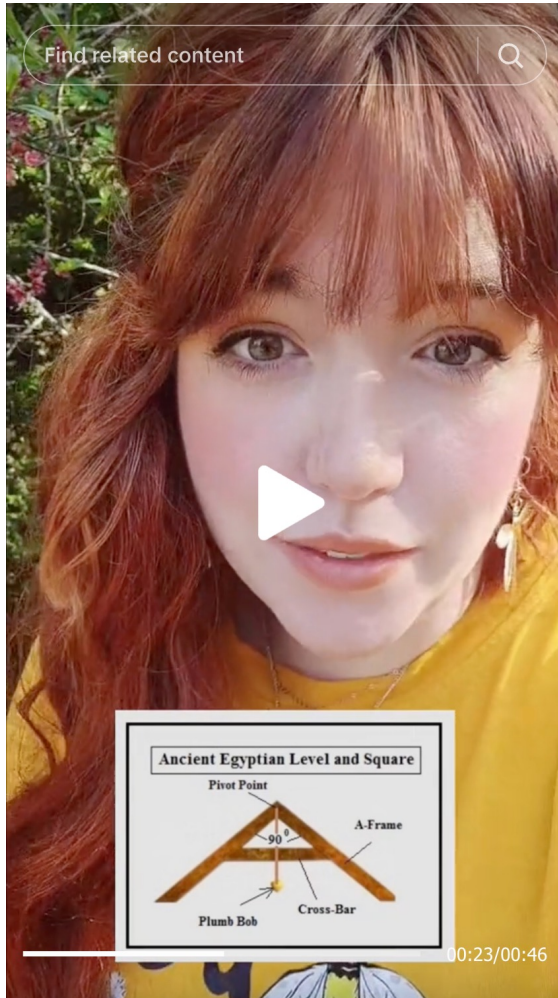
- Fun/creative ways to share your research
- Debunk misinformation in your discipline
- Find audiences with niche interests (especially younger audiences)



Optimize Your TikTok Profile

- Choose a relevant and memorable handle that's easy to read
- Profile photo
- Use your link in bio to drive traffic to your website or somewhere users can find more of your work
- Use your TikTok bio as a headline to summarize your account
 - Include information about yourself and relevant keywords related to your discipline/research interests
 - Don't be afraid to include a few emojis – these can help make your bio skimmable
- Pin a video to let users know what to expect from your account





[@alexandriaartifact](#)



[@helpfulhistory](#)

TikTok Best Practices

- Include a trend or hook in the first 3 seconds.
 - “I’m sure you’ve heard the news...”
 - “What I wish I knew at [X] instead of [Y]....”
- Check out [TikTok’s Creative Center](#) for inspiration.
- Keep it short. TikTok videos can be up to 10 minutes long but viewer attention spans can be short.
- Tap into SEO.
 - Utilize keywords in text overlay, audio name, closed captions, captions and hashtags.
 - TikTok captions can be up to 2,200 characters – make sure to include relevant keywords.

What to Share on Social Media

- Share research findings, publications, conferences and presentations.
- Add reactions and insights to current events or trending topics related to your work.
- Engage with other researchers, institutions and organizations in your field to help build your network.
 - Comment on their posts
 - Share their research
 - Participate in discussions

What to Share on Social Media (cont'd)

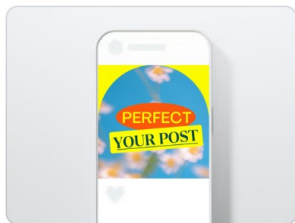
- Share research questions as discussion starters or request input on aspects of your work.
- Express your interest in collaborative projects and connect with other researchers.
- Encourage your audience to engage by sharing questions or polls.



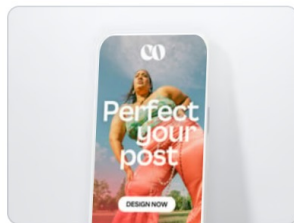
Make Your Content Shareable

Make it visual

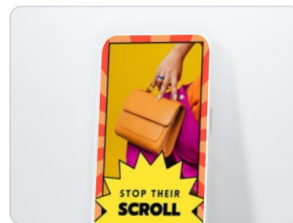
- Content with photo or video = more attention and shares.
- Consider adding infographics, photos of your work, photos from conferences, or a video explaining part of your research.
- [Canva](#) is a free design tool where you can use templates to create graphics and infographics for social media platforms and other uses.
- [CapCut](#) is a free video editing tool that includes trending templates for TikTok and Instagram Reels.



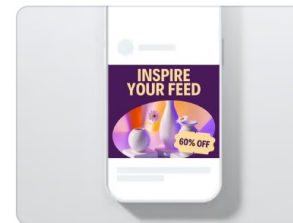
Instagram Posts



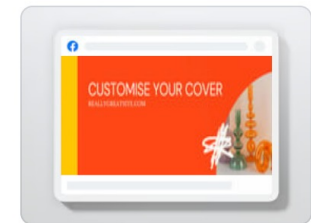
Instagram Stories



Instagram Reels



Facebook Posts



Facebook Covers

Make Your Content Shareable (cont'd)

Make it digestible

- Attention spans can be short on social media, so the shorter the better.
 - Break up lengthy text with slides or threads
- Reframe your research for the audience you're trying to reach.
- Use [Hemingway App](#) to check the readability (grade level) of your post content and get recommendations to edit your copy.

The screenshot shows the Hemingway App interface. At the top, it displays 'Readability' with a grade level of 'Grade 6' and a status of 'Good.' Below this, it indicates 'Words: 151' and a 'Show more stats' dropdown. The main area contains five colored boxes with feedback: a blue box for adverbs, a green box for passive voice, a purple box for a simpler alternative, a yellow box for hard-to-read sentences, and a red box for very hard-to-read sentences.

Readability ⓘ

Grade 6

Good.

Words: 151

Show more stats ▾

2 adverbs, meeting the goal of 2 or fewer.

1 use of passive voice, meeting the goal of 3 or fewer.

1 phrase has a simpler alternative.

1 of 13 sentences is hard to read.

1 of 13 sentences is very hard to read.

Make Your Content Shareable (cont'd)

Cross-promote

- Consider sharing your content on more than one platform.
 - Resize graphics/photos to fit another platform
 - Recycle content - consider creating a TikTok video summarizing an article you wrote and shared on X
- Share content you create to relevant groups on social media platforms (ex. LinkedIn, Facebook).
- Reference your work (better yet, link to it) in comments on related posts.

Find Out What's Working

Review your analytics to identify patterns in your content.

- Which posts received the most impressions, clicks or shares?
- Which types of content (text, link, photo, video) received the most engagement?
- Does content posted on a specific day or at a specific time perform better?

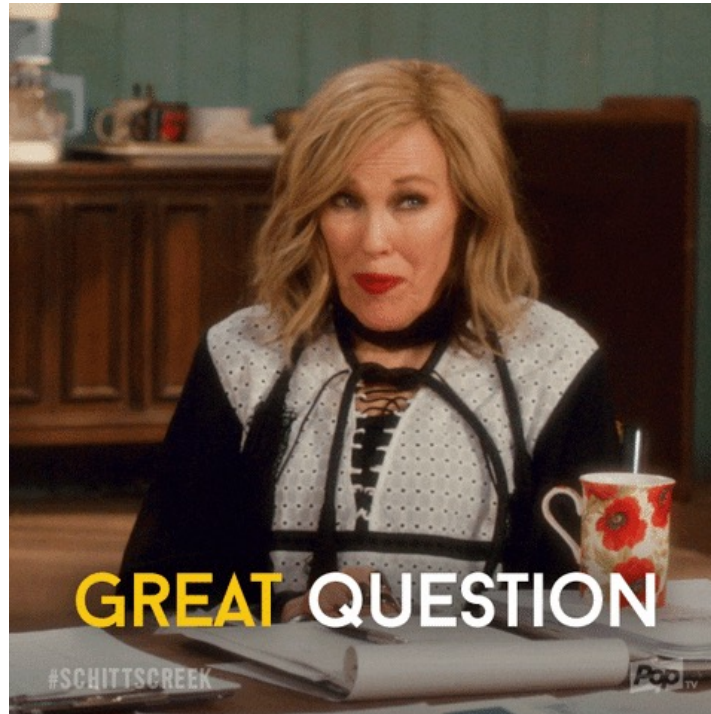
How to use analytics:

- [LinkedIn](#)
- [X](#)
- [TikTok](#)

Make Your Content Accessible

- **Avoid PDFs:** Whenever possible, it's best to link to a web page. Assistive technology, like e-readers, is often unable to read PDFs.
- **Use image alts:** Add descriptive text to images shared on social media. Most platforms include an area to add alt text as soon as you upload your photo.
- **Use closed captions:** When creating video content, be sure to add closed captions for users who are watching without sound. Most platforms offer auto-generated captions to make this easy.

Any Questions?



Additional Resources

- [LinkedIn Help Center](#)
- [How to Publish Articles on LinkedIn](#)
- [X Help Center](#)
- [Academic Research on X](#)
- [Using X for Research](#)
- [TikTok Help Center](#)
- [Beginner's Guide to Using TikTok](#)