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# Social media guide for journal editors

How to plan, grow, and maintain  
a journal social media account

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Taylor & Francis Group



Taylor & Francis Group  
an informa business



# Researchers tend to access journal content at least once a day<sup>1</sup>

## How do you make sure your journal's articles are the ones they read?

As a journal editor, your subject-matter expertise makes you ideally placed to promote your journal's content on social media.

This doesn't mean much, however, unless the community you want to reach sees the interesting and relevant posts you can craft around your journal's content.

On Facebook and Twitter, for example, the posts at the top of people's feeds are from the profiles most likely to interest them, based on each social network's algorithm. So even if a person follows your account, they might not see the content you post unless you have proven yourself relevant and engaging.

And that's what this guide is here to help you with: [how to cut through the noise and make sure your messages get seen by the right audience](#).

These guidelines walk you through how to create a strategy, build a community, write compelling posts and maintain an account that will get your messages, and therefore your journal, in front of the right people at the right time.

We're here to support you and, once you're up and running, we'll help you to keep the conversation going. At Taylor & Francis Group we're committed to disseminating research to the widest, and most appropriate, audience possible.

With article downloads from Taylor & Francis Online occurring at an average of three per second<sup>2</sup> we want to ensure that the research published in your journals is read by the audience you want to reach.

We have a clear social media strategy and engagement across a range of platforms and channels. We work with journal editors and authors to reach a global digital audience daily through a network of subject- and audience-focused accounts that stretch across Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

If you'd like more advice on setting out your social media strategy, then please contact your publisher who can put you in touch with our team of social media specialists.

<sup>1</sup> 'Exploring academics' changing use of Loughborough University Library's digital resources'; Walton, Brewerton, Cunningham, Leahy and Parry; April 2014

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2016 Taylor & Francis Online data



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## Before you create your accounts

There might be 2.789 billion people<sup>3</sup> using social media today, but that's no help to you or your journal if you can't reach the slice of that two billion who find your journal relevant.

The secret to using social media is **defining your audience** before you start trying to reach them. After all, how can you plan a journey without knowing your destination?

Once you have that definition, you can tailor your content and build a **high-quality network of followers and fans** who are genuinely interested in the content you post.

### Case study: My role as a social media editor: one year on



*Q&A with Claire Sewell, Social Media Editor, New Review of Academic Librarianship*

*What do you wish you'd known when you first started?*

It is important to have a good strategy, rather than just posting content you hope is working; taking the time to think things through can be hard when you are eager to jump in and get started, but I think this planning time is a great investment.

Moreover, knowing at the outset that it is important to ask for help and use the skills of others has been an important personal lesson for me. I'm a classic perfectionist and sometimes struggle to admit that I need help, but the support I've had from fellow board members and Taylor & Francis has been amazing.

[Read the full interview on Taylor & Francis Editor Resources.](#)

### Creating your reader persona

Create a document that details the **specifics of your preferred audience**: it's important to be able to return to this as you develop and execute your social media strategy.

#### Quality not quantity

You might have more than one reader persona – that's fine – but we suggest you start with just one (two at most). It's better to build up a smaller, high-quality network of followers and fans who are engaged with your content than to try to talk to everyone and have no one listen.

Use your **knowledge of the field**, talk to colleagues, students, and friends and try to answer the following questions about your preferred audience with as much **detail** as possible:

- What is your preferred audience's background?
  - What's their demographic?
  - Are they an established researcher who submits their work to the journal?

<sup>3</sup> [Digital in 2017: Global Overview](#), We Are Social, January 2017



- Are they an industry reader who uses the research in their workplace?
- Are they PhD students?
- What other industries and interests do they interact with?
- What kind of time pressures do they have?

**This is one way your expertise in your field of study brings real value to your social media channel.** You know your readers well – you work with them, talk to them and understand them. **Use this insight as you build your reader persona.**

- What problems are they looking to solve by searching for journal content?
- What do they want to achieve? What are their goals?
- Where do they usually go to find journal content? Do they talk to colleagues? Do they follow certain field-specific news aggregation sites?
- What social media platforms do they already use? Do they use them personally, professionally or both?

It can be helpful to build out a semi-fictional character to represent this audience – a **reader persona**. This isn't a real person but it's based on real, specific details about a typical reader of your journal.

For example, you might have Erica, the early-career researcher:

### Reader persona

**Name:** Erica

**Age:** 24

**Occupation:**  
PhD Student

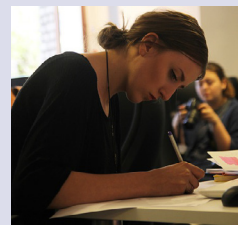


Image source: us1kajme/pixabay

**Bio:** Erica is two-thirds through her PhD and although she has a year left, she is conscious that she needs to start looking for a Postdoc position. Currently her network doesn't extend much beyond the university community.

**Networking:** Erica has recently started using LinkedIn to build up a network of useful academic contacts and as a backup in case she wants to move into industry after her PhD. She will occasionally promote something she or her colleagues are doing on LinkedIn.

The University have paid for membership to a couple of societies and Erica follows and engages with those societies on Twitter. She has also started following accounts relevant to her field, including those that share ECR advice and tips for overcoming common PhD and Postdoc challenges.

**Challenges:** Like most people, Erica is short of time. She wants to invest in her development and stay on top of the latest research in her field but she also has her own work to worry about and writing-up is looming large.

She wants an effective and simple way to network in her field and not feel overwhelmed with content she hasn't got time to read.



## Choosing the best channel

Different audiences prefer different social media channels. Don't feel pressured into creating accounts just because other journals have one on the same platform.

Use your time effectively and **focus on the one or two platforms** where you are most likely to find your reader persona.

Facebook and Twitter are well-known social media channels, but would LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Google+, or a personal blog be of more use to your preferred audience?

Speaking of LinkedIn, while it's certainly growing in importance as a networking tool for academics and researchers, if you're looking to drive downloads of your journal's articles a LinkedIn Page may not be the best answer. As a content platform, LinkedIn tends to be a poor traffic driver for other publishers.

Before you launch a new social media channel, look at the assets you already have.

- Are you a well-established author and editor in the field?
- Do you have a significant online presence?
- Do you already post about research activities and other professional content?

Then it might be just as effective to use your own social media channels to promote journal content, differentiating them with a specific journal hashtag, rather than trying to build a new following from scratch.

A LinkedIn Group, on the other hand, could be a good way to generate discussion and buzz around the research your journal features and encourage submissions from new authors.

Use the answers from your reader persona document as a starting point to dig a little deeper. Search for your subject area on different sites and see what kind of interactions

there are. Don't just look **where** your persona is, but look **where and how** they are **actively engaging** with content.

Also look at:

- What format of post your persona prefers (e.g. video, text, audio)
- How often they are active on social media
- What length of content they tend to prefer and engage with

Finally, be sure you can actually provide the **kind of content** your chosen channel prefers at the **frequency** it demands. Twitter, for example, moves very fast and you need to maintain regular posts throughout the week. Other sites, like Instagram are image based – can you communicate the topics in your journal easily in picture form or are the topics too abstract?

## Setting some goals

Often a journal editor will launch a social media account because they want to increase downloads or get more submissions. These are perfectly reasonable long-term goals, but you need to think about what needs to happen to get from where you are now to where you want to be.

You need to set ongoing targets around your new account that allow you to track your progress and make sure you're using your time and efforts as effectively as possible.

Set specific targets around the kind of metrics that will tell you if you are successfully working towards your end-goal. That might be follower numbers, shares, likes, or comments.

Be sure to make your goals **SMART** though. This means:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**elevant
- **T**ime-bound



Follower numbers, for example, might be a useful metric if you want to grow your journal audience, but if half of the followers you've gained are bots, that's no use to you at all. Saying you want "x researcher followers in y months" is much more specific and relevant, not to mention time-bound and measurable.

**AUTHORSERVICES**  
Supporting Taylor & Francis authors

 Taylor & Francis Group  
an informa business

## Using social media to promote your research

 From just one article Taylor & Francis has seen:

More than  
**143 tweets** from  
130 accounts, reaching  
over **180,000**  
combined followers

Posts on **2**  
 **Facebook walls**  
from **2** different accounts

Appeared in **162**  
**news stories**,  
including *The New York Times*  
and *National Geographic*

Resulting in over  
**12,400 article views**  
since January 2017

What are Taylor & Francis authors doing?

   
**43%** of authors are planning to share their **free eprints**

   
**30%** are announcing the publication of their article on **social media**

   
**29%** are updating their publication history on **LinkedIn**

   
**12%** are mentioning their article publication in their **email signature**

   
**9%** are posting a link on share services such as **Reddit**

Taylor & Francis  
Author Survey, 2016

 Want to know more? Read our tips on promoting your research.

Guidance, developments, news and ideas for Taylor & Francis authors

 @tandfauthorserv  tandfauthorservices  authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com



## 2

# Building your community

You know who you want to reach and where they are. Now you need to know how to reach them.

Your social media account is an excellent tool for promoting your journal, but there's no point firing off posts into the ether. You need a plan to develop, grow and maintain an engaged community around your account.

## Spreading the word

When you've created your account, 'follow' or 'like' the Taylor & Francis or Routledge subject accounts, as well as industry experts, influencers in your field of research, and related businesses, professional bodies and societies.

Spread the word among your **peers and colleagues** and ask other **board members** to do the same. **Follow** them, share their content and encourage them to **share your content** in return.

Placing links to your social media profiles in your email signature is a great way to make people aware of your accounts.

You should also make the most of **conferences**. Visit all **relevant booths** and collect social media account details of bloggers, societies, and groups and then follow up by following, liking, sharing, and engaging with them. To engage while you are at the conference, be sure to use **event hashtags** and comment on conference content.

## Case study: Creating an online identity: a social media editor's perspective



*Miles Richardson,  
Multimedia & Social  
Media Editor of  
'Ergonomics' shares  
his expertise*

**Finding partners** – getting off the ground and some gaining 'critical mass' is difficult. Try to engage the support of professional bodies related to the journal. And make social media users in the discipline area aware of your presence – simply by following them when you launch is one first step.

[Read the full article to discover more of Miles Richardson's top tips](#)

## Working with your Taylor & Francis contact

Don't forget to let your publisher know when you create a new social media account. Taylor & Francis Group is invested in helping your journal's social strategy and **we can help you** in several ways, including:

- **Promoting the journal account** from the Taylor & Francis/Routledge subject account, encouraging people to 'follow' or 'like' your journal's social media accounts.
- **Sharing and engaging** with the content you post.
- **Hosting** an interview/Twitter chat between the journal account and the Taylor & Francis Group subject page.





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## Populating your account

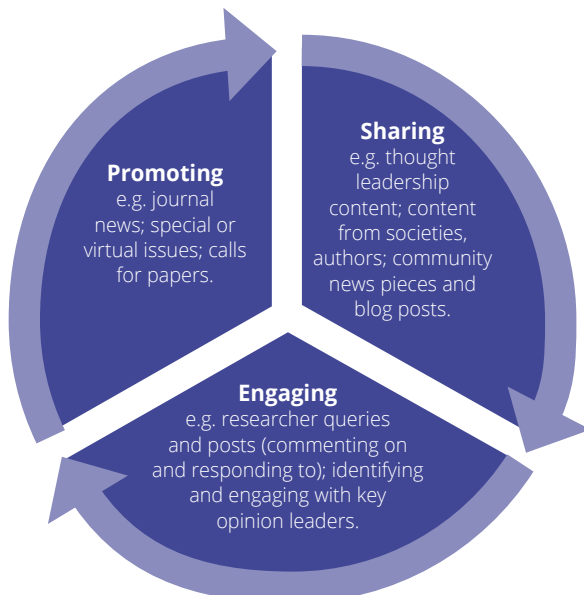
When planning what content to post to your social media accounts, think about what will be the most effective format for meeting your reader persona's needs.

### Balancing your content

As with any social account, you should aim to **balance your posts** so that you don't spam your audience with too much self-promotional content.

Think of it like being at a party. Who wants to hang around with the person who just talks about themselves all night?

Aim to post both content that focuses on **promoting your journal** and content that focuses on **maintaining your community**. Here at Taylor & Francis Group we aim to follow the rule of thirds:



You need to **engage in conversations with your audience**, especially **key influencers** in your field. This is key to forging relationships and building a **high-quality network** of 'followers' and 'fans'.

You can **create lists** of key groups, societies, and people to follow so that you can join in their conversations by commenting and reposting content from their feeds. Their feeds will also tell you what kind of content people like and interact with the most.

**Top Twitter tip:** If you're hoping your post gets retweeted then don't use up the full 140-character limit. Instead leave room for people to add a comment when they RT you. 120 is the new 140.

And remember the value of **reciprocity**. Does someone engage and re-post your content a lot? Then comment and promote their content in return.



## Case study: The role of #Twinterviews



*Learning from the social media successes of the Journal of Sports Sciences (JSS)*

*Q How did you come up with the idea of Twinterviews? Was this an original idea or something that you've seen other Twitter users do?*

*A @grantabt Social Media Editor, Journal of Sports Sciences: I came up with the idea because I think the aim of Twitter for JSS is to add value to what*

readers can already access. While we could just tweet the link to new papers, I don't think this makes use of Twitter's potential. I want readers of the journal to get a "behind the scenes" look at how researchers go about conducting and publishing their findings. This educates the reader about the realities of conducting research and provides insight about why the research was conducted, why it's important, and what the implications of the findings might be. The Twinterview also creates a dialogue between researcher and reader. While this can be initiated via a letter to the editor, the immediacy of Twitter means that readers can get answers to their questions in a very short space of time.

## Creating a content plan

Vary the types of content you post, e.g. videos, infographics, pictures. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Promote articles published in your journal to drive traffic, downloads and citations.
- Provide informative, professional insight on issues your audience is interested in.
- Share interesting infographics, research, or news articles from external sites.
- Share videos, interviews, and press releases featuring your journal's research.
- Provide academic development advice relevant to your reader persona.
- Host open discussions with your audience.
- Promote a key conference or event you are attending.



### 3 top tips for sourcing quality content

**1. Altmetric** shows you the social media activity already happening around your journal's content:

- See which articles are most popular on social media and adapt your posts accordingly.
- Look at who's retweeting and sharing your research to find new people to follow and connect with.
- Learn more about using Altmetric to benefit your Journal with Taylor & Francis Group's Author Services [blog post](#).
- Download the Altmetric [Bookmarklet](#), which enables you to instantly see Altmetric data relating to your journal's research.



**2. Post the most read and most cited content** in your journal by using Taylor & Francis Online's 'most cited' and 'most read' lists, available at the bottom of each journal's home page. Plus, you can sign up to our [Weekly Insights](#) email to get all the latest research and news in your field from Taylor & Francis Group.

**Explore**    Most read articles    Most cited articles

Article
Species identification from archived snail shells via genetic analysis: a method for DNA extraction from empty shells >
Australian land snails: a review of ecological research and conservation approaches >
Fosmid library construction and end sequences analysis of the Pacific oyster, <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> >
A preliminary investigation of diversity, abundance, and distributional patterns of chitons in intertidal boulder fields of differing rock type in South Australia >

**3. Sign up for Taylor & Francis Group Press Alerts** to receive the latest newsworthy research in your field. Sharing the latest press releases as soon as they are published will reflect your academic influence and show people how relevant the research published in your journal is within your field. Sign up here: <http://tandf.msgfocus.com/k/Tandf/pressalerts>.



Once you have decided what you will post, determine **how often** to publish these posts to your social media accounts, and set that as a hard rule.

- How many posts a week will be **promotion** of journal content?
- How many will focus on **engaging** with your community?
- How many times will you **share** posts from recognizable experts?

Finally, create a **content calendar** so you don't miss any important opportunities.

- What subject-specific events occur this year?
- What conferences will you or your editorial board attend?
- What presentations and speaking engagements do you or your colleagues have?
- How many planned engagement events (Twitter chats, interviews, etc.) do you want to host or be a part of? Who else will be involved with these?
- When will the journal have special issues and calls for papers?



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## Ten secrets for writing compelling social media posts

### 1 Define your goal.

What do you want your reader to do in response to your post? Click a link? Share? Comment? Sign up to something?

Tell people what to do. Use the imperative and grab people's attention from the get-go: 'Explore', 'Read', 'Submit'.

### 2 Use images...

to help your post stand out. Use a **screen shot** of the article's abstract or **take a photo** of the event/ person/ place you are posting about.

The free tool [Pablo](#) lets you **overlay text** onto copyright-free images, which on sites like Twitter can give you crucial space to explain the heart of the article you're promoting.

### 3 Use handles...

in your tweets and Facebook posts to engage with others, especially **key influencers** in your field.

You can also **include the handles of relevant people, organizations, or societies** (where relevant) **that don't already follow you** and you may gain them as a follower.



While we're on the topic – only use images that you have **permission** to share, are **copyright-free** or have a **Creative Commons license**, such as those on [Pixabay](#), [Unsplash](#) or [Canva](#).



4

## Use hashtags...

to make your tweets and Facebook posts findable, though don't use more than two (three at most) per post. Do a search to check for commonly used hashtags rather than making up #obscurephrases.

Use **event-specific hashtags** to engage in conversations happening in real-time and, on the flip side, create a **hashtag for your journal** so that you can keep track of conversations happening around it.

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## Make it easy to understand.

Article titles can often be impenetrable, even to researchers in the field, so don't just copy and paste. Look through the abstract and find a **pithy, catchy way of summing up the key message** or focus of the article. And definitely avoid jargon, academic or otherwise.

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## Respect social media netiquette.

Be **polite, honest** and **respectful**. Use retweets, handles, or comments to give credit whenever appropriate. And don't publish content or material protected by copyright without obtaining written permission from the owners.

Justin Robinson  
@JR\_ManEd

Follow

Bias in #Eurovision? Jrnl. of Applied Statistics paper explains all with a #Bayesian model: [dx.doi.org/10.1080/026647...](https://doi.org/10.1080/026647...) #OA #cartoonabstract

VOTING IN EUROVISION ANALYSED

FAVOURITISM  
DISCRIMINATION

Analysis of patterns over two decades has found that voting is more likely to be driven by positive loyalties based on culture, geography, history and migration.

The researchers used a Bayesian Hierarchical Formulation to model the scores.

$$\hat{\mu}_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{a_{ijk}}{p_{ij}}}{\sum_{j=1}^n \sum_{k=1}^n p_{ij}}$$

Why don't they sing in English?

They took into account

Co-author Dr Gianluca Baio said:  
For example, Turkey seems to be scored highly by German voters, possibly due to the large number of Turkish people who have migrated to Germany... But our analysis found no convincing evidence of discrimination against anyone.

The data suggests that voting congregates within broad groups of nations that tend to give each other points.

FORMER SOVIET BLOC, UK, IRELAND, SCANDINAVIA

Read this

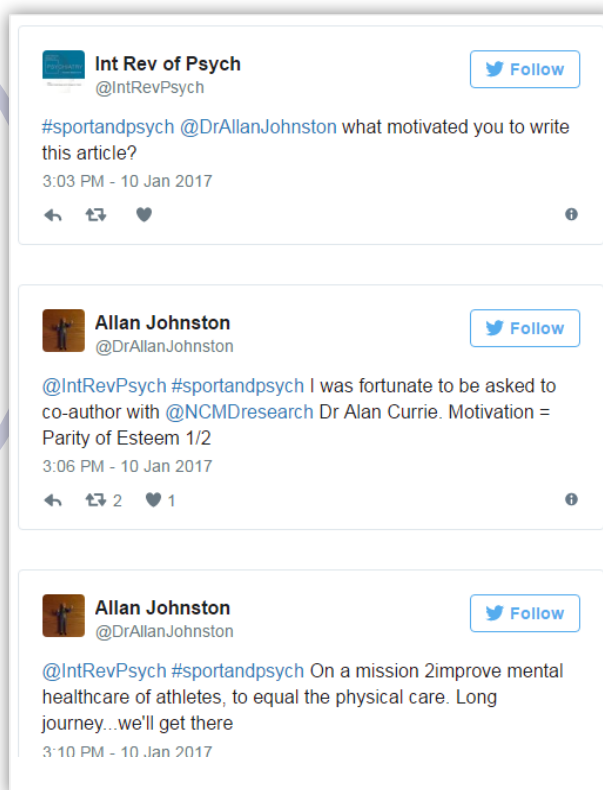


7

## Ask questions...

and **start conversations** to engage with your audience. Just be sure to talk about what you know and avoid commenting on what you don't.

You can also take part in **Twitter discussions**, such as the International Review of Psychiatry's [sport and mental health live Twitter discussion](#) to engage with influencers in your field and to show your own academic influence.



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## Keep it short and sweet.

Online readers' attention spans are very limited so use short, **simple words** and keeps posts **concise**. For example, try to keep Facebook posts to a limit of 250 characters.

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## Proofread.

Measure twice, cut once. Check your handles, your spelling and your links. And if you make a mistake you can delete and redo, but if it's been picked up by someone, **honesty is the best policy**. Hold your hands up, apologize and then redo.

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## And finally – be human.

A friendly, warm and genuine approach will ensure optimum engagement and reach for your messages. Write the way you talk to your colleagues – in a **natural, professional and conversational** tone.





## 5

# Maintaining your account

Action without planning is fatal, but planning without action is futile.

The initial throws of enthusiasm make it very easy to set up a social media account with great promise, only to see it dwindle and die as other commitments become more pressing. That's why a strategy for maintaining your account is as important as the plan for getting it off the ground.

## Responsibility assignments

Decide who **will post on and monitor** the account (make sure it's someone who thoroughly understands the journal subject matter). Having a day-to-day **social media editor/s** will help ensure consistent activity and a consistent tone of voice on your account.

This social media editor/s could be:

- You, the journal editor
- A member of the editorial board
- A sub-group of the editorial board
- A mentee or assistant

This person needs to be able to **update the account frequently**: a good rule of thumb is three posts per week on Facebook and three to five messages or RTs per day minimum on Twitter.

And while the social media editor can schedule posts in advance, they need to **check in daily** to make sure the account **replies** to comments and messages as soon as possible.

If several members of your editorial board are active on social media, consider **rotating the role of social media editor**, perhaps monthly, to reduce the pressure on a single person and to

add varied perspectives and personalities to the account.

Alongside your social media editor/s, we also recommend having someone at top-level management of your journal who has access to the social media accounts to:

- Solve any issues or respond to controversial messages. Speaking of which, while legitimate academic debate is a good thing, when it comes to trolls and any offensive posts – it's best not to engage.
- Regularly change the account passwords.
- Occasionally monitor the account for best practices and interesting content to engage with.
- Keep the accounts up to date with website information, the correct journal cover and logos, and any contact details you share.
- Maintain a crib sheet of key account details and responsibilities to help with succession planning should the editorial board change.

## Helpful tools

It's not always easy to give social media accounts the **attention** they require. Without it, however, your community will dwindle. That's where tools like [Hootsuite](#) or [Buffer](#) can help.

These allow you to **schedule content** ahead of time. You can create **curated feeds** that draw in third-party content, which you can then schedule directly into your feed. And you **can monitor messages and mentions** from one place rather than having to log into multiple accounts each day.

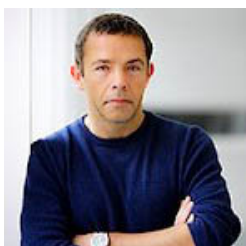




You should also make the most of the [analytics tools](#) that come with your social media account. Both Facebook and Twitter, for example, offer basic insights into which posts have the greatest reach, what the demographics of your fans and followers are, and how you can boost your engagement.

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## Case study: Taking journals out of the library: using Altmetric insight and social media to engage new audiences



*David Chandler,  
Editor of Resilience:  
International Policies,  
Practices and  
Discourses*

We had little idea of the impact of using social media to promote the Resilience journal... We were therefore quite surprised when the Altmetric information was shared with us by Taylor & Francis. Altmetric doesn't measure article downloads and views but the level of social media interest. One of our journal articles scored particularly highly and Altmetric provided a breakdown of how many individuals tweeted linking to the article (95) along with a breakdown of the demographic (U.K. and U.S. largely). This article is currently leading the Resilience "most read" list so we assume that there is a direct link between social media interest and journal readership. [Read more.](#)

The trick with social media is to **rinse and repeat** – in other words, analyze what's working well, eliminate what's not and keep refining as you go.

## Taylor & Francis Group social media channels

- **Subject-specific accounts:** Reach out to your publisher for details of the relevant subject-specific Taylor & Francis Group social media accounts
- **Newsroom:** [@tandfnewsroom](#) Here you can find press releases featuring the very latest ground-breaking research as soon as it is published by Taylor & Francis, Routledge, CRC Press, Garland Science, and Cogent OA. The hashtag [#InTheNews](#) also highlights where Taylor & Francis Group journal content is featured in the press
- **Author Services:** [@tandfauthorserv](#) Offering tips, advice, and support on publishing in a Taylor & Francis journal.
- **Editor Resources:** [@TandFEditors](#) Guidance on topics including: peer review; metrics; editorial development; publishing ethics; marketing.
- **YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/user/TaylorandFrancis/](http://www.youtube.com/user/TaylorandFrancis/) Our channel posts publishing tips, author interviews, video abstracts, conferences highlights and more.
- **LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com/company/taylor-&-francis-group](http://www.linkedin.com/company/taylor-&-francis-group) Learn more about Taylor & Francis Group. We partner with researchers, scholarly societies, universities and libraries worldwide to bring knowledge to life.



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