GET ON AND GET THE MOST OUT OF TWITTER AS AN ORGANISATION

TWITTER IS A USEFUL PLATFORM FOR CONNECTING WITH INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN THE SECTOR AS WELL AS DECISION MAKERS IN POLICY, PARLIAMENT, BUSINESS, AND THE MEDIA.

By harnessing this platform, you can have quick impact and connect directly with influencers outside your usual circle.

For the Twitter basics, we encourage you to explore Twitter's own beginners guide. This will give you an overview of how the platform works and how you can interact with other users.

Twitter can be a powerful tool to mobilise a group or raise an issue of importance quickly and in a way that will be heard by the people who matter.

STA has used Twitter to advocate for STEM many times. A recent example was when the ARC delayed announcing grant funding last year. The hashtag #ARCdelay trended nationally and STA leveraged the hundreds of tweets about the delays to amplify our messages to decision-makers in the Department, the media, Parliament House and the agency. We referenced our Twitter conversations in direct discussions with these leaders, and were able to draw on them for individual and impactful examples of the detrimental effect the delayed announcement was having on both Australia's capacity to continue research, and on individuals.

As a result of this campaign, the announcements were prioritised and grantees informed. At the same time, STA achieved media coverage in major media outlets and received official responses from Ministers and Shadow Ministers.

USING TWITTER AS AN ORGANISATION
There are a few things to consider before you decide to use Twitter for your organisation:

- **Why Twitter and what are you hoping to achieve?**

Is it member recruitment and retention; policy and advocacy; engaging with broader audiences; getting more people to your website; achieving more event registrations; or all of the above? This will shape the way you approach publishing on the platform, and which other users you engage with.

- **Who is your audience?**

You need to decide who you are speaking to as well as what you'd like them to hear. Is your audience members and potential members, the general STEM sector, political or policy decision-makers, media, the general public, or all of them? This might change depending on the message. Knowing your audience(s) will drive the way you position your organisation online and is usually tied to your mission, goals or purpose.

- **How often do you want to post content?**

This will depend on your capacity, but ideally you should post daily on Twitter. Initially, retweet as much as possible (including comments on the items you're retweeting) and engage with other users to establish relationships. This will help get your content retweeted when you begin publishing your own original posts.

- **How will you embed Twitter activity into your broader events and programs?**

Once you have Twitter set up, the best way to ensure its success is to meaningfully embed Twitter activity into your events and programs. Create some hashtags, live-tweet events, engage with participants and members, and consider holding competitions or asking questions of your audience via Twitter.

- **Who will manage the account?**

It's important that your Twitter account is someone trustworthy, who is a good communicator and has intimate knowledge of the organisation and its purpose. Just like any public statements, posts to Twitter can pose problems if used ineffectively, so be sure that whoever is managing the account has a clear understanding of the considerations above, and strategic view of their role and the role of the platform.

MEASURING IMPACT AND REACH

It's important to understand what works, what doesn't, and how your social media activity is contributing to your organisation's success. One of the ways to do this is to meaningfully measure your content – the measurement of impact and reach can be achieved in the following ways:

- **Audience reach and impressions**

Using [Twitter Analytics](), which is free for all Twitter users, you can gather statistics on your impressions. An impression is counted each time your content is viewed by someone. This is a broad way to measure your reach but it doesn't effectively measure your impact (someone doesn't have to read your tweet for it to be counted as an impression, it may just appear as they scroll through their timeline).

- **Engagement with your content**

By measuring engagement (i.e. when people do something with your tweet), you can more meaningfully measure the impact of your content. This can also be measured by Twitter Analytics, or through third-party software like Hootsuite or Buffer.

- **Case studies**

Anecdotal examples of where Twitter has impact can help enrich your understanding of how the platform is supporting your work. For example, are interactions leading to introductions, media interviews, more followers, or angry feedback? By collating these and applying the context, you can learn about what types of content elicit desired outcomes (or avoid undesirable ones).

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES:

- [Video: Twitter Tutorial for Beginners](#), David A Cox

- [19 Social Media Metrics That Really Matter—And How to Track Them](#), Hootsuite

- [How to incorporate trending topics into your Twitter strategy](#), Twitter for Business

- [How to Build a Powerful Twitter Marketing Strategy: A Marketer's Guide](#), Social Bakers

- [A nifty guide for academics on using Twitter](#), PLOS Blog

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