**2020 Online KT Conference:**

**Social Media Strategies for Knowledge Translation**

*Panel: Social Media: Recruiting, Listening, and Disseminating Knowledge*

Jean Wnuk and Deirdre (Dee) Logan

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>> JOANN STARKS: Well, thank you so much, Jean and Dee. That was a great presentation. I loved all the nuts and bolts you provided for us today. We do have a couple questions that came in. I know you addressed some of them as they came. One was, did your IRB raise any concerns about recruiting via Facebook ads? And the person that asked the question added I can't think of anything other than unwanted ads on Facebook can be annoying.

(laughter)

>> JEAN WNUK: I don't know the answer to that. Do you know the answer, Dee?

>> DEIRDRE LOGAN: I don't, but I would assume they wouldn't be able to do it without permission of course. The ad itself, the flyer that was created went through the IRB as all study recruitment materials should. And I think because they tried to target people so much with the ad that they tried not to have like it get to the wrong group. So hopefully, not many people who wouldn't have been in the target community of focus would have gotten it in their feed.

>> JOANN STARKS: Does anyone else have a question? We did have a comment. Regarding the comment that someone else had made said many researchers may be discouraged by the organizations or federal government from being on social media. And @Robinbrandt responded prior to applying for funds, one could speak to your funding agency about the use of social media. You can write explicitly about your expectations for the use of social media as part of your dissemination campaign and documenting why it's important.

Jean or Dee, do you have any further comment to expand on that?

>> DEIRDRE LOGAN: So, we are on our third cycle of receiving our learning and working RRTC ‑‑ the research and training center, research and rehabilitation training center grant. And in year two, we realized ‑‑ sorry, funding cycle two, we were writing the application, we really dedicated a lot of time to creating a social media plan parsing out what platforms we are going to use. We did end up having some that didn't work out. We tried Tumbler because our community is focused or the center as young adults with serious mental health conditions is one of the main areas of focus. We thought Tumbler would be a great place. No. We were a little too early for LinkedIn. I think it took over a page of our grant talking about the strategy of social media and why it's important.

In our next application we just got funded last year, we said that we would continue with what we’ve done before and expand with Instagram. We were able to show we had growth. We keep metrics on everything.

>> JOANN STARKS: That was helpful. Thank you, so much. I guess we can go ahead and ask our reactors to come on back and turn their cameras on and we will have a little bit more of a discussion from our three reactors about your presentation or about anything that was presented today since we are at the end of the day and wrapping up.

So, a reminder our presenters are Paul Baker, Senior Director of Research and Strategic Innovation at Georgia Tech's Center for Advanced Communications Policy and Chief Operations Officer, Center for Development and Application of IOT technologies. He is also a principal research scientist with the school of public policy and operations manager of the NIDILRR funded wireless RERC.

Marta Garcia is bilingual Information and Media Specialist at National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC). And has expertise in the development of digital content for English and Spanish, social media analytics and account management. Marta oversees NARIC’s Spanish language media accounts and creates content that is seen in the Spanish speaking disability community around the globe.

Hilda Smith is a queer, trans and disabled person in a vanguard of new radical justice work. Focusing on disability, addiction and knowledge mobilization. With a doctorate in critical disability studies from York University, they have become an expert in knowledge mobilization, clear language, event promotion and relationship building.

So, let's see what we can come up with some commentary and some reaction and discussion. Marta, how does NARIC engage people with disabilities with their social media accounts? Are there different strategies with the Spanish and English accounts?

>> MARTA GARCIA: Like I said before, the English is a more formal where the Spanish is not quite so formal. I know one of the things that I do with a Spanish social media is for example, if researchers are recruiting, I'll post a question. Are you a person with autism and want to participate in research? Checkout our friends at whatever NARIC project is looking for those participants. So, because I try to make it formal and post questions. Are you and checkout what these folks are doing kind of situation.

I know with English we promote ‑‑ sorry, it's the end of the day, I must need more coffee. They also promote or we promote research participation. But like I said, they will do it ‑‑ the English is done in a little bit more formally than Spanish.

>> JOANN STARKS: We have several questions that have come in from the audience. Let's take a look at those. Have you had any unsuccessful recruitments of people on Facebook or Twitter? And then what did you change or learn? The person asks in the question said I haven't had any success and I don't know why.

>> DEIRDRE LOGAN: Well, to be honest, Jean and I didn't have a lot to do with the implementation of the Facebook ad. So we don't know all the challenges. But I know when they were looking for a type of persons that recruit and did a study they did have challenges. Facebook doesn't have the answer for everything and doesn't collect data quite on everything yet, thankfully, I think. They were looking for young adults who had been in foster care to recruit in the study. That is not something you can Facebook ad for without putting it in the message itself. So that was a challenge.

They spent a lot of time not using the Facebook ad for that and going other routes with meeting or contacting organizations and agencies they had worked with previously to see if they can help. It's not perfect. It can't get you every person.

>> JOANN STARKS: Sure. Another question that came in is wondering whether you evaluate your engagement and whether there are any benchmarks to know whether or not you are being successful?

>> JEAN WNUK: One of the things we try to do with our social media is that we include a link to something that is posted on our website whether it's a tip sheet or a recording of a webinar or a presentation that we have done.

So, we can follow ‑‑ I think there is two different ways we measure the effectiveness of social media. Neither of them perfect, but it's really the best we can do. The first one is really just looking at whether our fan base is growing and whether our interaction and the comments and shares are growing. The second is how many are landing on Facebook posts or Twitter posts are coming into a page on our website. So, we use Google analytics to measure the success of how many hits we are getting on our individual website pages or the pages that store our tip sheets.

If we can see a direct correlation, if I'm posting a tip sheet about should I tell my boss about my disability and how do I do that? And we see an increase in the number of visitors on your tip sheet that is one of the ways we measure. Can I say, do we plan for any specific goals on a quarterly basis? It's really hard to do with social media. I don't think it necessarily matters. It would be difficult for me to say I'm going to setup a goal of increasing our fan base by 25% this quarter. Often times, that really doesn't mean anything. I think for us what is meaning is if people end up landing on the site and we see they are using the products we are delivering there.

>> JOANN STARKS: That makes sense. Marta, did you have something you wanted to follow up with? If not, I'll ask Hilda or Paul if they have a comment.

>> MARTA GARCIA: One of the things I use to check the benchmarks is at least with Twitter you can use analytics. So that is how I gauge where if a post has been successful or a campaign has been successful is checking the analytics to see how well a particular post did or if we have received more followers. Even just earlier today, during our break I was checking ‑‑ I checked the stats for the week. The conference broke our Twitter. So, yay, thank you.

For example, tweeting about the conference has increased our analytics.

>> JOANN STARKS: That is great. Good to hear.

>> MARTA GARCIA: Thank you. Just to give you an example of a real time example of how analytics and checking the benchmarks can be useful. That is all I had to share.

>> JOANN STARKS: Another question. Wondering how to be able to achieve a little bit of what you describe in listening when you are just a small research lab with limited resources. What you describe seems really resource consuming. Do you have any tips?

>> JEAN WNUK: I do. And I agree with what you were saying. It helps to personally just enjoy the topic at hand because it becomes honestly part of my personal activity that I do. But I think because it's really just one person, me, that is doing this and it's very part time. But we have several different research projects going on at any given time. I usually try really pay attention to just one or two. So, when we talked about ‑‑ when I talked about Twitter lists, at the beginning of the pandemic when there was that huge question of are schools are going to reopen and are colleges going to go back in person or virtually, what is going to happen to the mental health of college students? I really just focused my primary attention on that topic. That is where I try to listen on the transition aged youth closed Facebook pages. That is where I tried to listen into the experts in the field in terms of secondary education on Twitter. So, I totally get what you are saying, and it can be really intensive. So, I do, sometimes, just put on blinders to a lot of the topics other than the one topic. But the second thing I want to say is the product like Hootsuite that allows you to create feeds that just focus on particular topics makes it easier to leave behind the unessential and inessential steps that you see on social media and really hone in on a specific topic or two.

>> DEIRDRE LOGAN: We are trying to train our investigators to send Jean information they want shared about their study or work they have been doing so that it can go out through one person. We are trying to get them used to that. Some are better than others. It's a lot of work, though, definitely.

>> JOANN STARKS: Okay. I see that Paul Baker had posted in the chat box. Paul, would you like to expand a little on your comment useful to keep in mind the demographics of the specific platforms?

>> PAUL BAKER: For instance, one of the things that I hear is I have friends that go across the wide range including some very young people. And I'm 65, so I'm like ancient. I think some of my young friends thinks social media for me means cutting words out of the newspaper and putting them on the refrigerator. But what I hear is like Facebook is for really grandparents. So remember the demographics. Earlier, Heather was talking about the message has to ‑‑ you know, the media and the message. The media has to be tuned. I saw a meme recently where people were asking what is the hand signal to say call someone? They asked boomers who said this. They asked some millennials, and they went what is that? Know your platform. Know your message makes a huge difference.

In respect to the ‑‑ I did want to comment about how you keep track of the stuff. If you aren't careful, social media can be a rabbit hole that goes down and sucks every spare minute of your time. My suggestion on how to make it manageable is three kinds of heuristics. One, if it's a significant part ‑‑ like I said, I manage eight different platform accounts. I do an hour ‑‑ really, I do it before I start my day. I cue messages up using Hootsuite because one of the mistakes people do is say, let's do Twitter. Let's dump five messages at the same time. Your impression is there and gone. Spread it out during the day. Use Buffer or one of the timing devices that allows you to feed it out during the day.

It's also okay to repeat messages. Because the same people ‑‑ when I first started this, one of my colleagues at Edenborough University, I said I can't keep up with Twitter he said that is because you are trying to drink the river. You dip your hand in the river. You can't capture the universe as everything. Don't look at it that way. Set aside an hour or a certain amount of time in the morning and a certain amount of time in the afternoon and don't mess with it between or you won't get research done.

Be disciplined. Number two, in terms of listening, it's how you operationalize listening. By listening you mean are you collecting facts about stuff? In other words, you can use hashtags to give you a sense of what people are talking about. This is listening. By listening, do you mean a conversation like direct messaging? A different kind. My suggestion is if you really aren't doing an engaged conversation, when you made a connection, take it offline so you can do via e‑mail and manage it and you have a record that is more private. That way you don't get stuck in having conversations, not that there is anything wrong with it. Most of us are not doing it full time. It's ancillary. And the third thing is proving it works. My suggestion is go back to your old way of recruiting and see how much better it is. It doesn't have to be this or this. It's this and this. Use the tools that at your disposal. Okay. Gone on too far. Thank you.

>> JOANN STARKS: Those are some great comments. Hilda, I know you are out there. I wanted to follow up with you about the idea of using social media as a listening tool. Could you give us some comments on how you might advise research institutions to recruit stakeholders and authentically listen to them via social media.

>> HILDA SMITH: I will answer that, but I wanted to build on something Paul said first. Paul said know the demographics of the platform. It's also really important to know what the platform is used for. If you are going onto TikTok because you want to connect with a younger audience, you have to ask yourself, what is it used for? Is it used for just having a 30 minute like laugh and that is it? Are they actually going to engage with something, an information in that platform? Like Dee mentioned. I tried using Tumbler numerous times because that is where some of my audience is. But research and organizational information is not suited for that platform. It's not what it's for. So, demographics, but also the use of the platform. What happens on it? What kind of information is being shared is really important in figuring out if it's even worth your time to go to that platform at all.

But now, to get to listening. I think a really important thing and I love the idea of listening. I'm really big into when it's possible to just kind of ghost the communities that you want to engage with before you start reaching out. And ghosting in case people don't know, that just means you are just sitting and watching the tweets. You are seeing the conversations coming up. You are not actually engaging. That lets you know the social norms of how they use social media. What is acceptable? What isn't acceptable? What kind of language is used? That can really help when you reach out or when you are kind of deciding on what that is going to look like for those communities to really be able to build that connection so it's not just coming in as a researcher, but you coming in as an ally or community member to breakdown some of those barriers.

>> JOANN STARKS: Thank you, very much. Let's see, does anyone else in the audience have a new question for us. In the meantime while we are waiting to see if we have another question, I wanted to ask Dee and Jean, do you have any wrap up comments or anything further that you would like to say as we get close to the end of our day here?

>> JEAN WNUK: I failed to put our social media handles in the presentation so I will put that in the chat box for people to visit us.

>> DEIRDRE LOGAN: I realized I forgot one of the other really important ways that persons take part in our work. They really help to look at our work after research is completed and help develop our products, which helps make them so much more useful. You can look at your research and data and writing a journal article, sure, but translating it into something that a young adult could use may not be in that sphere or, you know, Jean and I are no longer young adults. I know, I know. So, you know, getting that voice. I'm not a parent of a young adult. So, having different people and getting the feedback and information and help in developing product or creating presentations and delivering presentations is a really big important part of how our stakeholders take part.

>> JOANN STARKS: Well, thank you very much, Dee and Joan. It was a really interesting presentation. Now I would like to ask our reactors if you have some closing comments, thinking back on the whole day. In the just this presentation but if there is anything else you would like to add? Let's go ahead and start with Marta this time.

>> MARTA GARCIA: I do the social media thing for NARIC every day, but I learned some things throughout the day so thank you. One of the things going back to the list I do have one list for NIDILRR grantees and one for those who have Spanish language materials. So that way I can keep track. But I did want to say do not hesitate to reach out to me if you want to share materials to the Spanish language crowd and I'll be more than happy to help you out and tweet and Facebook things to help you guys out.

>> JOANN STARKS: Great, thank you. Hilda, do you have anything you would like to wrap up with? Your last comments were very on point, thank you.

>> HILDA SMITH: I also want to say this has been a great experience. Having this conference center around social media has been fascinating to see all these different aspects and bring all the different pieces together. The last thing I would leave people with is we have this expectation that social media is a wild place where there is no understanding about how you engage or act. But people develop social norms in social media just like they do in physical spaces. You just have to find a way to identify and find those things. Once you do, it can really help your engagement on those spaces.

>> JOANN STARKS: That is an interesting perspective that a lot of probably hadn't thought about. And Paul, I'll give you a chance to be the wrap up. We have a little bit of time left so don't worry about your time.

>> PAUL BAKER: Are you trying to suggest I go on too long?

>> JOANN STARKS: You are the one that stops yourself each time that says you have gone on too long.

>> PAUL BAKER: One thing that would be really interesting is these are kind of like panels, but it would be quite easy to take and maybe add a workshop component in which people actually practice doing some of this stuff online in real time. It would take a little planning and you probably wouldn't want 150 people tweeting at the same time. But I think to do a workshop where you experiment and train it would be kind of an interesting thing, plus there would probably be a paper out of it. I'm just suggesting. Always an important consideration.

The other thing is an observation. I have always been fairly fearless. I'm a male. I'm of a certain age. I know that there are gender ‑‑ I'm Latino, I'm gay. So, I do kind of have some high risk areas. But I have always been fairly fearless on social media.

I had an experience that brought home it's not as benevolent as I thought it was. I do work in voting machines and accessibility of voting machines. Voting machine ‑‑ supporting voting machines in Georgia is a partisan issue. Liberals tend to hate it. Republicans love it. I love voting machines because of the ability to give to enfranchised people with disabilities. I work with Canadians and one of the complaints is they don't have voting machines and blind voters have a hard time voting. They wish it was there.

A very well‑known person who writes on voting machine and I call them a paper pusher. They want everything on paper, no machines. She posted something and my response was why do you hate voters with disabilities. Holy crap! 130,000 impressions, more than I have ever gotten including threats. This guy is a hack who works at Georgia tech. First time in my life I was every frightened. Because I realize now that I'm a public figure and identifiable. I can be tracked down. I was never scared before. Ever since then I have begun running filters on stuff I post. I don't post anything that I think is going to set someone off, but I'm not a pundit. I'm researcher, I can do things very neutral. My caution is be careful about snark.

>> JOANN STARKS: I think that is a wise comment and probably a good way to end our session today. So, a huge thank you to all of our presenters today and for our three reactors for the fantastic second day of the 2020 Online Knowledge Translation conference.