[s m k]

International Science Council

Module 2: Developing a Social Media Strategy for Scientists
16th October 2024
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Strategy overview

- **Creating a successful social media strategy for scientists and/or institutions involves more than just posting content; it requires thoughtful planning and strategic alignment with key objectives.**

- In today's digital age, scientists and institutions have a unique opportunity to share their work with a broader audience, including peers, policymakers, industry leaders, and the public.

- An effective social media strategy must address the specific goals of scientific communication, engage diverse audience segments, and ensure consistent content creation across multiple platforms.

- Whether aiming to disseminate research, engage with the public, or build professional networks, a strategic approach to social media will elevate scientific visibility and foster meaningful interactions in both Western and Chinese digital environments.

Strategy optimisation

Image source: Unsplash

Understanding strategy

Wikipedia

"Strategy is important because the resources available to achieve goals are usually limited. **Strategy generally involves setting goals and priorities, determining actions to achieve the goals, and mobilising resources to execute the actions**.

A strategy describes how the ends (goals) will be achieved by the means (resources). Strategy can be intended or can emerge as a pattern of activity as the organisation adapts to its environment or competes. It involves activities such as strategic planning and strategic thinking."

A lot just *do* social media

Too much focus is on superficial KPIs

Vanity Metrics

VS

Actionable Metrics

Feel good to look at but lack guidance for next steps

Can be used to inform better business descions.

ProductPlan

Tactical thinking dominates

- Commonly there are three parts of any strategy:
  1. A diagnosis of your challenge
  2. A guiding policy for dealing with the challenge
  3. A set of targeted actions that are necessary to accomplish the policy
- Sadly, this level of thinking is often lacking in social media activity
- **There is often too much focus on tactics in social media strategies because tactical actions are often more tangible and easier to measure, while strategic planning requires a broader and more abstract long-term vision.**
- This overemphasis on tactics can stem from several reasons, each contributing to an imbalance in the overall social media approach.

Instant gratification

- **One of the main reasons for the heavy focus on tactics in social media is the drive for immediate results.**

- Tactics like posting content, engaging with followers, or running paid ads deliver measurable outcomes quickly, such as likes, shares, comments, or clicks.

- These metrics are often viewed as indicators of success because they provide instant feedback, allowing individuals and organisations to track short-term progress.

b power thesaurus

Synonyms for Sounds good

sounds great   sounds nice   sounds fine

sounds pretty good   sounds right

Quick wins

- For instance, a scientist posting a research update on Twitter might receive immediate likes or retweets from their peers or followers, reinforcing the value of that activity.

- Similarly, institutions running paid social media campaigns to drive event sign-ups or newsletter subscriptions can quickly see click-through rates, registrations, or conversions.

- **The immediacy of these results feels productive and offers clear evidence that social media activity is having an effect, which can be especially important when justifying social media spend or effort.**

Good things take time

- **However, this focus on short-term metrics like engagement rates or click-throughs can often come at the expense of more meaningful, long-term objectives.**

- Short-term successes, while valuable in their own right, don't necessarily contribute to broader, long-lasting goals like building a reputation as a thought leader, fostering collaborations, or enhancing public trust in science.

- These long-term goals require a more strategic and sustained effort, which is often harder to measure in real time.

- For example, consistently sharing valuable insights on LinkedIn may not yield immediate likes or shares but can, over time, establish a scientist or institution as a trusted authority in a specific field.

"Long-term results cannot be achieved by piling short-term results on short-term results"

Peter Drucker

It pays to play the long game

- The overemphasis on short-term metrics can lead individuals or institutions to focus on actions that deliver quick wins but do not necessarily align with their larger communication objectives.

- This can result in a tactical approach that prioritises quantity over quality, valuing posts or campaigns for their immediate engagement rather than their ability to contribute to long-term success.

- **Scientists might post frequently to gain more likes and retweets, but without careful consideration of how each post fits into their overall goals, they risk becoming noise in the digital space.**

- **Similarly, institutions might invest heavily in social media ad campaigns that generate high click-through rates but do little to build sustained relationships or trust with their audience.**

Some activities are powerful, but slow burners

ANY PIECE OF MARKETING ACTIVITY ALWAYS HAS TWO DIFFERENT BUT RELATED EFFECTS

Bigger immediate effect, but decays quickly

Smaller immediate effect, but decays slowly

Sales uplift over base

Time

Source: Les Binet
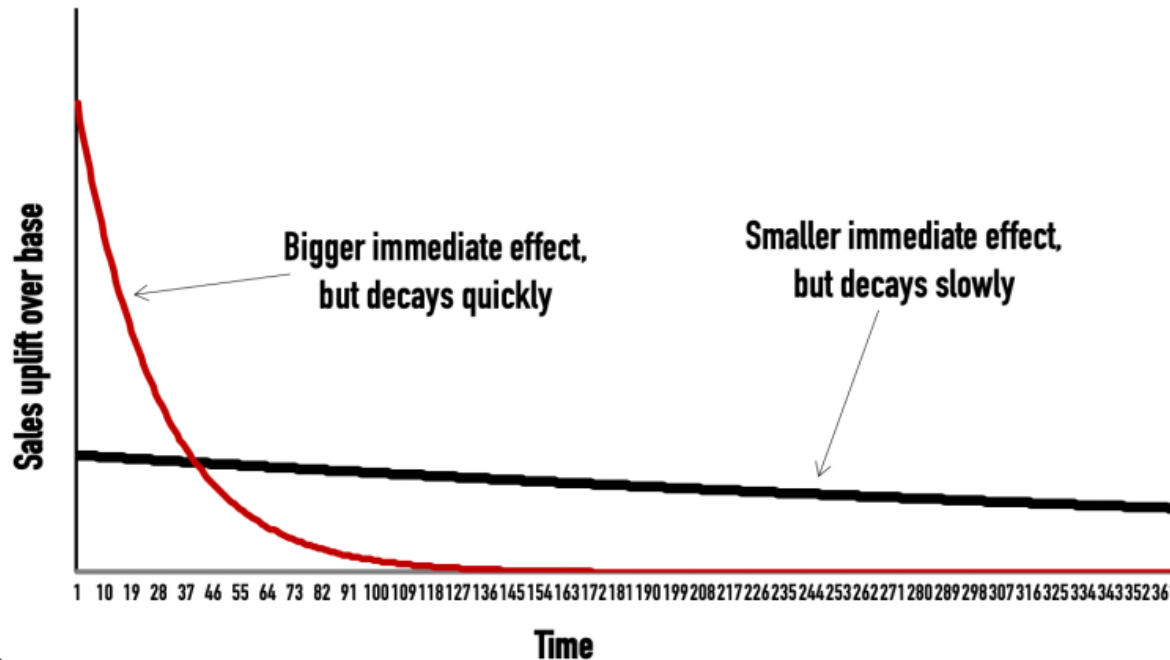
We are easily distracted

New isn't always better

- The fast-paced nature of social media platforms, with constant updates, new features, and emerging trends, often tempts users to jump into the latest tactics to stay relevant.

- Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and WeChat regularly introduce new tools (e.g., Reels, Stories, Spaces), which can encourage users to focus on these tactical elements at the expense of broader strategic objectives.

- **For instance, an institution may put excessive effort into creating TikTok videos to align with current trends, even if their primary audience (researchers or policymakers) is more active on platforms like LinkedIn or Twitter.**

- **Similarly, individual scientists may spend time trying to perfect Instagram Stories or participate in viral challenges rather than focusing on sharing their research in formats that align with their long-term goals.**
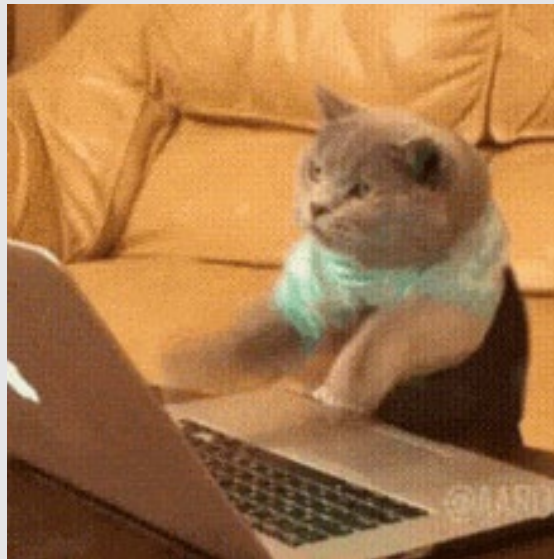
Quality can suffer with quantity

- **Social media rewards frequent activity and consistent posting.**
- **The pressure to maintain a constant presence often drives users to focus more on how much they're posting rather than why they're posting.**
- This leads to a tactical approach that prioritises volume over quality and alignment with long-term goals.
- A scientist might post daily updates, articles, or photos simply to stay visible on Twitter, without much thought to whether these posts contribute to their overarching strategy of, say, becoming a thought leader in climate science.
- Similarly, an institution might fill its social media calendar with content but neglect the strategic storytelling or value that resonates with its audience.

Posting volumes are almost daily

f Facebook activity

Posts per week

The median across all industries is **4.69** posts per week

Industry	Posts per week
Alcohol	2.6
Fashion	4.3
Financial Services	4.7
Food & Beverage	2.2
Health & Beauty	3.7
Higher Ed	6.2
Home Decor	4.0
Influencers	3.9
Media	64.6
Nonprofits	6.0
Retail	5.1
Sports Teams	24.3
Tech & Software	4.4
Travel	3.1

4.69 Median
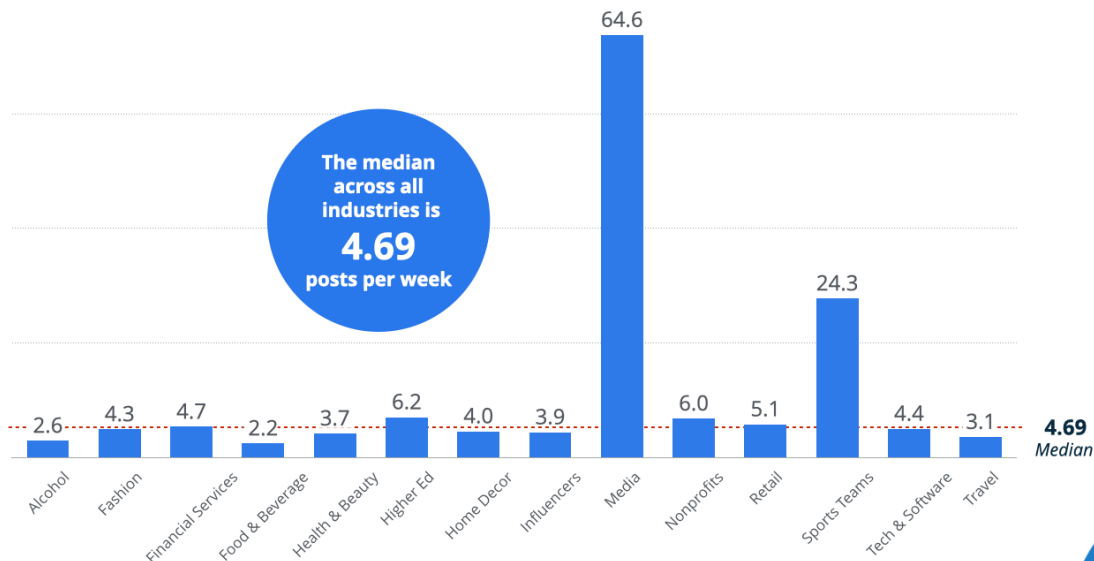
Rival IQ
A QUID COMPANY

Source: 2024 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report

Posting volumes are almost daily

Source: 2024 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report

X has dropped in recent times

Source: 2024 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report

TikTok is coming from a lower base

Source: 2024 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report

Misalignment between goals and execution

- **In some cases, the focus on tactics stems from a lack of clarity or understanding about the overarching strategy.**
- **Without a well-defined strategy, individuals or institutions can fall into the habit of executing tactics without considering how these actions fit into their long-term goals.**
- An institution may spend a great deal of effort engaging in social media challenges or trends on platforms like Weibo or Instagram without a clear sense of how these tactics support broader goals like increasing public understanding of their research or attracting industry partnerships.
- While a scientist might be tweeting regularly but not targeting the right conversations or communities that would help advance their career or research impact.

Difficulty in measuring long-term success
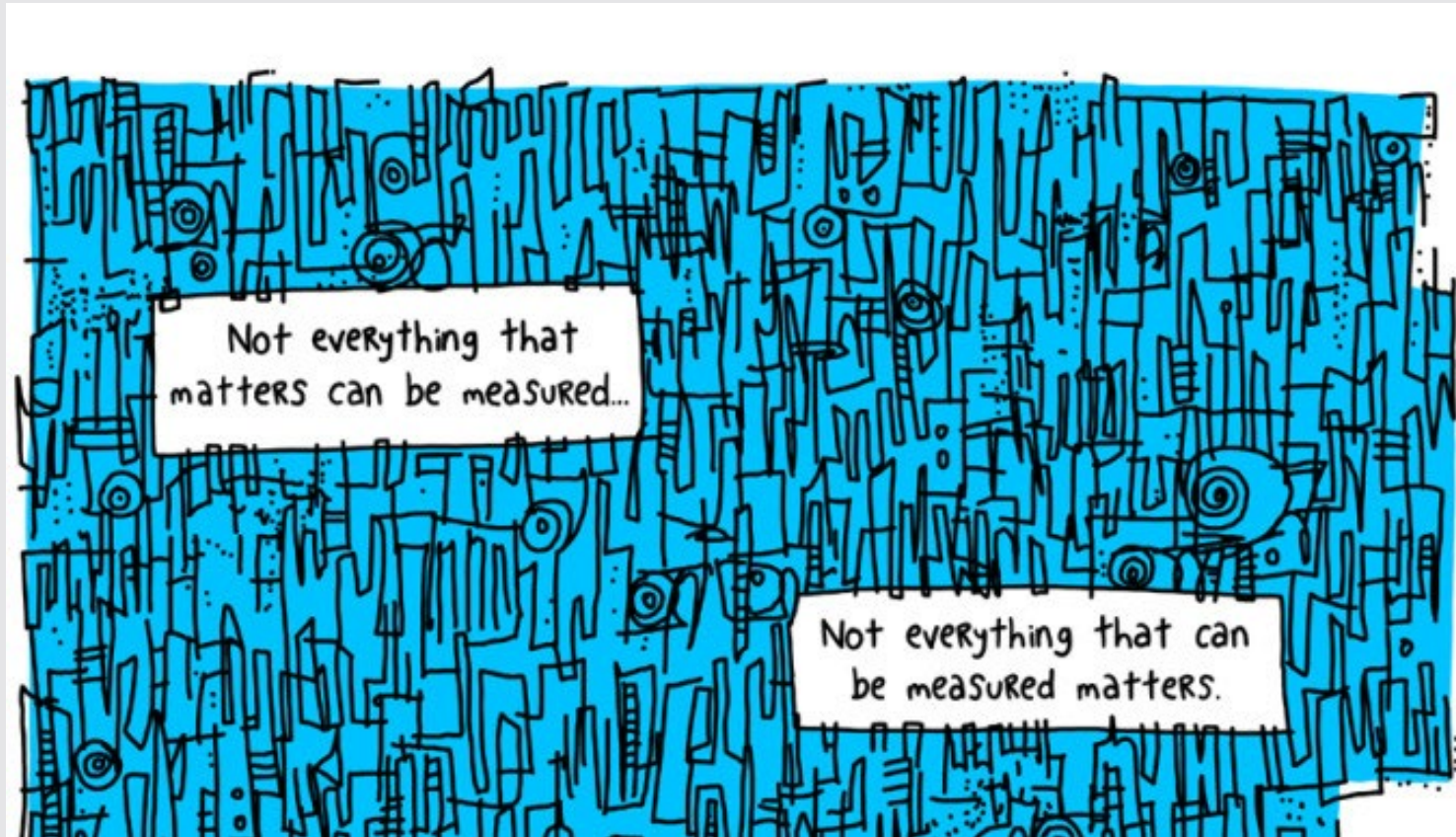
Image source: Marcus Guest

Attribution can be tricky

- Strategic success is often more difficult to measure than tactical outcomes.
- **Long-term goals, such as establishing thought leadership or improving public understanding of science, can take time to manifest and are not always directly tied to immediate, quantifiable actions.**
- **This makes it easier to focus on tactical, short-term wins rather than tracking progress toward strategic objectives.**
- A scientist may find it challenging to measure their growth as a thought leader in environmental science. In contrast, tracking the number of Twitter likes or LinkedIn post views is straightforward, so the latter might take precedence in day-to-day efforts.
- An institution may similarly focus on generating website traffic from a social media post, as it's easier to measure than long-term goals like building sustained partnerships with industry leaders.

Marketing
Strategy vs. Tactics
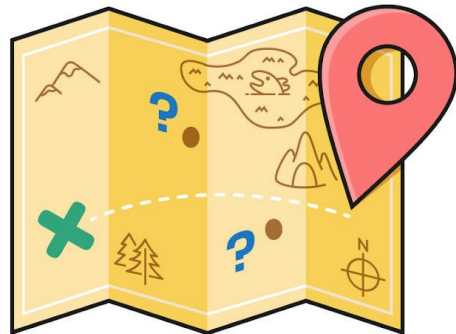
Strategy

Your high-level battle plan for guiding marketing tactics.
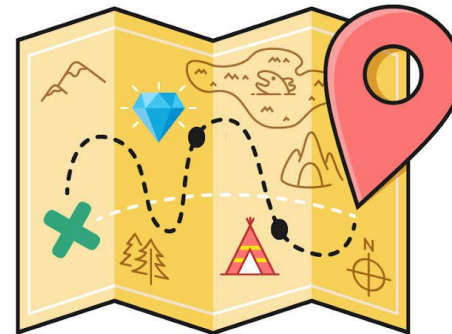
Tactics

Specific actions that help execute your marketing strategy.

ahrefs

Thinking big and small

- **Strategy and tactics must work together in order to achieve success.**
- Without a strategy, tactics may become disjointed and lack direction, potentially wasting resources and efforts.
- On the other hand, a strategy without well-executed tactics can remain theoretical, without producing any real-world impact.

THINK BIG.
START SMALL.
ACT FAST.

- **Strategy Sets the Vision, Tactics Drive Execution:**
  - Strategy provides the vision and goals, while tactics are the specific actions needed to turn that vision into reality.
    - For example, a scientist may have a strategy to become a leading voice in climate science. Tactics to achieve this might include posting weekly updates on climate research, engaging with prominent environmental influencers, and sharing relevant journal articles with their audience.

- **Strategy is Long-Term, Tactics are Short-Term:**
  - While a strategy offers a long-term roadmap (e.g., raising public awareness of scientific research over the course of a year), tactics are short-term actions that push the strategy forward on a daily or weekly basis (e.g., creating a Twitter thread summarising a new research paper or hosting an Instagram Live Q&A).

- **Strategy is Stable, Tactics are Flexible:**
  - Strategies are generally stable and offer consistency in direction, even when the social media landscape or audience interests shift. However, tactics are flexible and can adapt to changes.
    - For instance, if a specific post format is getting more engagement than expected, tactics can shift to include more of that content type, all while still supporting the same strategic goals.
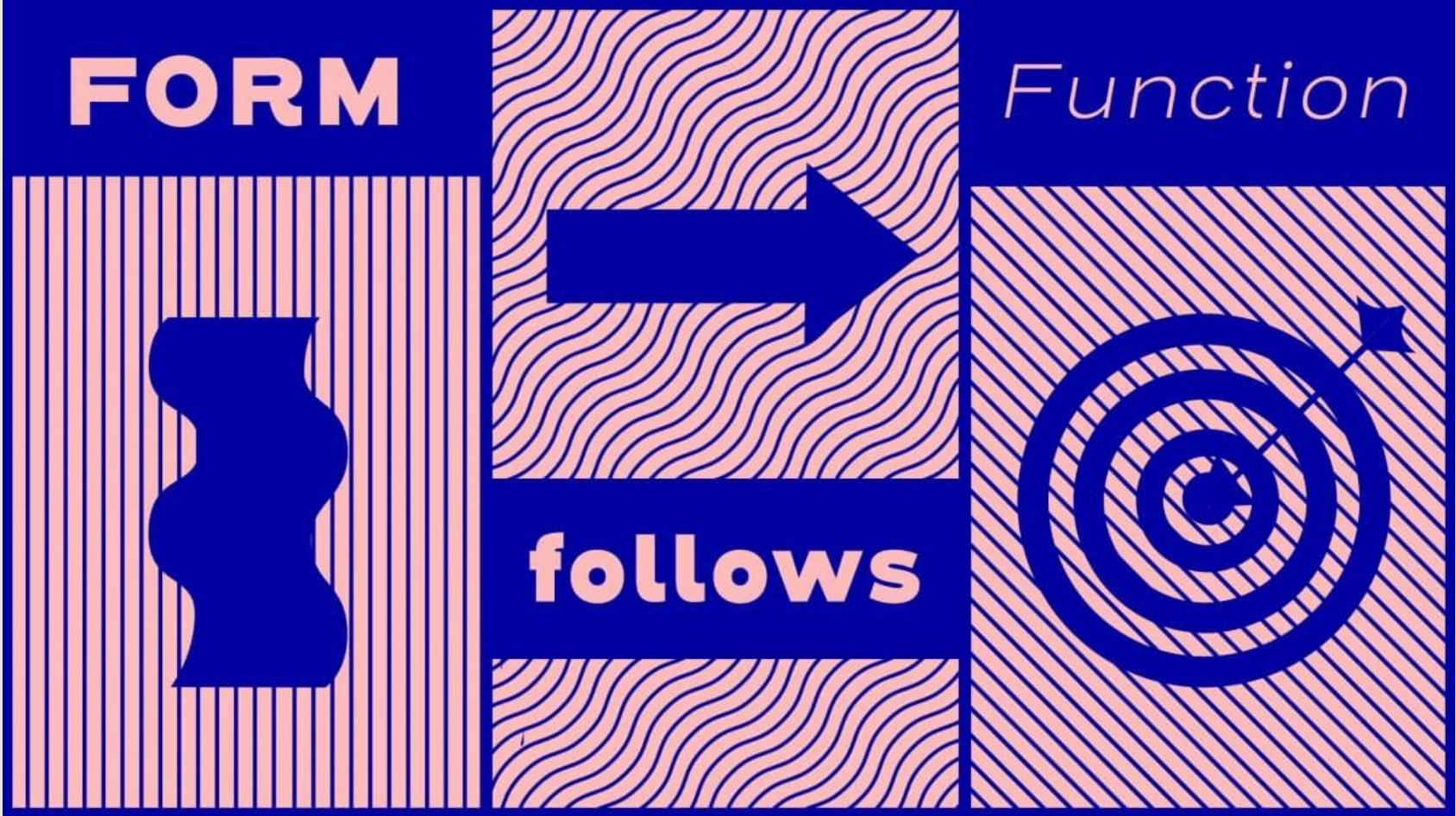
Documentation needs vary

- **The level of formality in social media strategy documentation varies between scientists and institutions due to differences in their scope and organisational complexity.**

- For individual scientists, documentation can be flexible and adaptable, often taking the form of simple one-page plans or tracking tools like Google Docs or Trello.

- These documents outline key objectives, preferred platforms, and audience engagement strategies.

- Scientists may also document content ideas and best practices informally, allowing for agility as they balance social media efforts with research responsibilities.
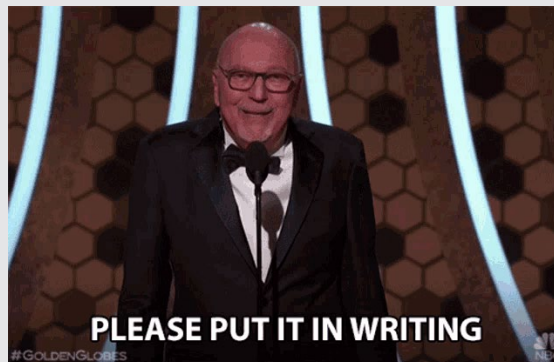
Institutions have their work cut out

- **In contrast, institutions require highly formal and structured documentation due to the involvement of multiple teams, such as communications, public relations, and research departments.**

- Comprehensive documentation includes detailed content calendars, campaign guidelines, and platform-specific strategies, ensuring that brand consistency is maintained across all channels.

- Institutions also include formal policies on tone of voice, crisis management, and engagement rules to ensure alignment across various stakeholders, including communications teams and legal departments.

What's the point?

Focus varies

- The foundation of any social media strategy is defining clear, measurable objectives that drive activities and guide content creation.
- Without well-articulated goals, social media efforts can become unfocused, reducing their overall impact.
- **Social media strategies for scientists tend to be more flexible, personal, and focused on building individual credibility, sharing research findings, and engaging directly with peers and the public.**

You know, I'm something of a scientist myself
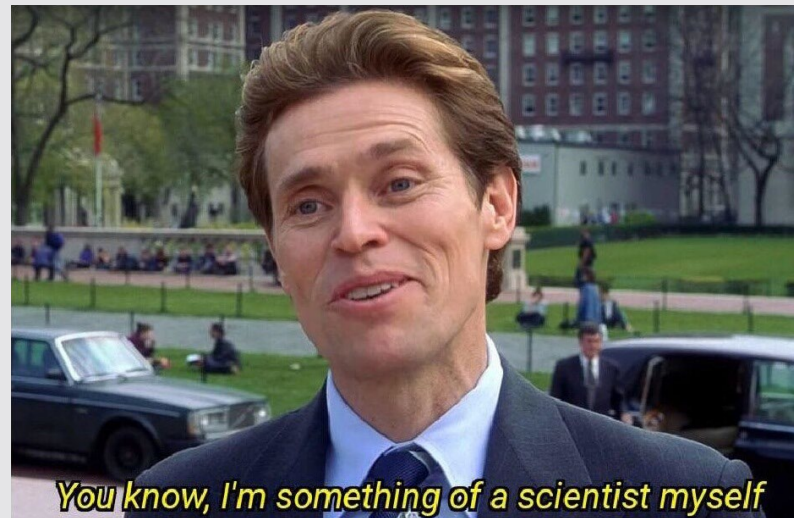
Personal body of work

- **Scientists typically aim to disseminate their work, network with collaborators, and contribute to public education.**

- Their content often includes research summaries, behind-the-scenes looks at their lab or fieldwork, and simplified explanations of complex topics for a non-expert audience.

- Platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn are ideal for professional networking, while Instagram and TikTok help reach the general public.

- **Scientists usually manage their own presence, so strategies are more adaptable and centred around individual goals.**
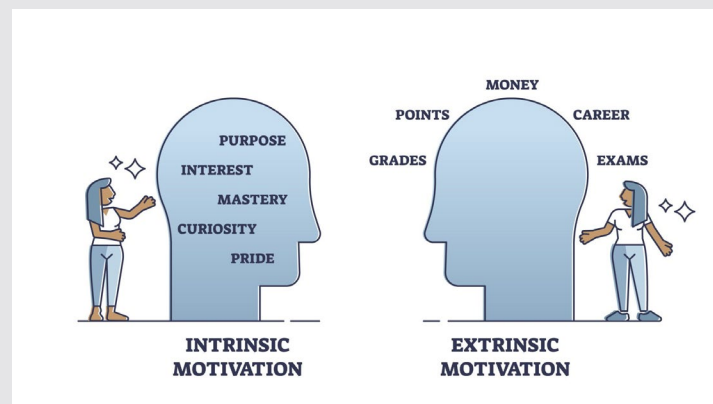
Institutions require significant planning & resources

- **In contrast, institutions require more formal, structured social media strategies due to their broader goals, larger teams, and multiple stakeholders.**

- Institutions aim to highlight collective research, build brand authority, promote large-scale public engagement, and advocate for science-based policies.
  - Their content is typically planned well in advance and includes formal announcements, public education campaigns, and collaborations with partners.

- Institutions utilise platforms like LinkedIn and Weibo for professional communications, and platforms like YouTube and Instagram for broader public outreach.
  - Their strategies must account for multiple departments and long-term objectives, ensuring consistent messaging and brand alignment across channels.

Objectives can vary widely

Raising brand awareness	**Student recruitment**	**Drive behaviour change**
Website traffic	**Research grants**	**Some kind of action?**

Setting objectives

- Without well-articulated goals, social media efforts can become unfocused, reducing their overall impact.

- <u>For Scientists:</u>

  - **Disseminating research findings is often the primary goal.** Social media provides a platform to share discoveries beyond traditional academic circles, making science more accessible.

    - A molecular biologist might disseminate new findings on WeChat for Chinese colleagues while using Twitter or ResearchGate to engage an international academic audience.

  - **Building professional networks is another key objective.** Networking with peers, potential collaborators, and influencers in the field can open doors to new opportunities like co-authored research papers or speaking engagements.

    - LinkedIn is an excellent platform for this purpose, where scientists can connect with thought leaders and experts in adjacent fields.

  - **Engaging in science communication with the general public is growing in importance**.

    - Scientists increasingly recognise the value of educating non-expert audiences on critical issues like climate change, vaccines, and biodiversity.

    - For example, using Instagram Reels or TikTok to create short videos explaining research concepts can help raise public awareness and combat misinformation.

Setting objectives

- <u>For Institutions:</u>
  - Institutions often have broader goals, including **enhancing public understanding of science and raising the institution's profile**.
    - A university or research institute might aim to build credibility by regularly showcasing its breakthroughs or highlighting the societal impact of its research, positioning itself as a thought leader.
  - **Advocating for science-based policies** is another goal, particularly for institutions involved in healthcare, environmental research, or public health.
    - Their social media strategy might involve reaching policymakers, demonstrating the importance of science-based legislation, or promoting solutions to global challenges.
  - **Attracting funding and partnerships is critical for institutions.** Through consistent communication of research successes and future projects, institutions can use social media to connect with potential sponsors, partners, and governmental bodies that might fund collaborative efforts.

MY PEOPLE! I HAVE FOUND YOU!

imgflip.com

Target audiences

- Identifying and understanding your target audience is crucial to shaping effective communication.

- Scientists and institutions often have multiple audience segments they need to reach, including peers, policymakers, collaborators, and the general public.

- **Audience segmentation allows for more targeted communication, ensuring that each group receives content that is tailored to their level of understanding and interest.**

Common audiences for scientists

- **Peers and Collaborators:** Engaging with peers and potential collaborators requires technical, data-driven content.
  - Scientists could use X (Twitter) for academic conversations and WeChat for more direct, one-on-one interactions within research groups.
    - Example: A data scientist shares complex graphs and in-depth research updates on Twitter, tagging collaborators and using hashtags like #SciComm and #DataScience. They also participate in WeChat group chats with colleagues, sharing more informal updates and research questions.

- **General Public:** Simplified, accessible content is needed to engage the public.
  - Platforms like Instagram and TikTok allow scientists to share visual content that educates and informs without overwhelming non-expert audiences.
    - Example: A chemist creates short, engaging TikTok videos where they perform basic chemistry experiments and explain the underlying principles. They use Instagram Stories to give a behind-the-scenes look at their laboratory work.

Common audiences for institutions

- **Policymakers and Industry Leaders:** Institutions must present evidence-based content that highlights the relevance of their research to policy and industry.
  - LinkedIn and WeChat are ideal for distributing reports and case studies that demonstrate the real-world application of their research.
    - Example: A research institute posts a detailed LinkedIn article explaining how their recent study on sustainable agriculture could influence new farming policies. They distribute the same report on WeChat, targeting industry stakeholders and agricultural policymakers.
- **The General Public:** Institutions should aim to educate the public about scientific topics in a way that fosters trust and engagement. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Weibo are perfect for creating visually engaging, easy-to-understand content.
    - Example: A university shares an educational video on YouTube explaining the effects of climate change on coastal communities, aiming to reach a global audience. Meanwhile, they run a Weibo campaign, posting a series of infographics about their environmental research, hoping to engage Chinese audiences.

Audience avatars

- Creating an audience avatar, also known as a persona, is a helpful step in understanding your target audience and tailoring your efforts to match their interests

Common audiences for institutions

- **Creating audience avatars, or buyer personas, is a valuable exercise in social media strategy and digital marketing because it helps to humanise and better understand your target audience.**

- Audience avatars are semi-fictional representations of your ideal audience segments, built from data and insights about their needs, behaviours, motivations, and challenges.

- Whether for scientists looking to connect with peers or institutions aiming to engage broader publics, creating audience avatars allows for more precise, relevant, and engaging communication.

- Audience avatars allow for highly tailored communication. **Instead of creating generic content, you can craft messages that speak directly to the specific needs, concerns, and interests of each group.**

- **Audience avatars help guide your content strategy by clarifying what type of content will resonate with different audience segments and what tone of voice to use.**

VINNIE VETERAN

EXPERIENCED GAMER

age:
38

title:
Jr Software Developer

employment:
Entertain-o Inc

gender:
Male

industry:
Entertainment/Computer Gaming

location:
Montreal, Quebec

"Raargh!!! I love MMORPG gaming! I love killing things!!! I have a cat named Gandalf!!!"

Vinnie spends a lot of time gaming on a weekly basis, probably 25 hours, even while working a full time job. Though he was in good shape in his 20's, he has added a lot of weight during his 30's as he has become more sedentary and started eating poorly. He has expressed an interest in exercising, just feels it is hard to get motivated.

Vinnie actively plays World of Warcraft, Guild Wars 2 and Skyrim. His favorite game of all time was Fallout 3 "I thought fighting the mutant bosses at the nuclear reactor at the end of the game was one of the coolest

description:

Vinnie is a 38 year software enigneer working in the video game industry. His primary hobby is MMORPG gaming, though prior to working in his new company culture he also was an avid biker and rock climber. He feels poorly about his weight and doesn't like talking about it

Employment

Gary works as a software developer for a mid sized video game company.

Tech Ability

He is very tech savvy and frequently installs mods and other tricks in his games.

Some Core Values

- Have a good time

- Hang with friends

- Things are easy to do

Adding value is a must

- **If the information you are sharing is not consistent with the interests of your stakeholders you will NOT build an audience**
  - Will thousands of marketers choose to follow SMK on LinkedIn if each of our posts are sales messages?
  - Sadly not ☹
- Generally speaking it is advisable to follow the 80/20 rule
  - Your content should be 1 part self-serving / 4 parts non-self-serving
  - Or variants there of
- A **unique point of view is also paramount**
- Don't be just another 'me-to', **take a different stance**
- If you have to conform on topic, find a different tone/angle

Good content is often reverse engineered
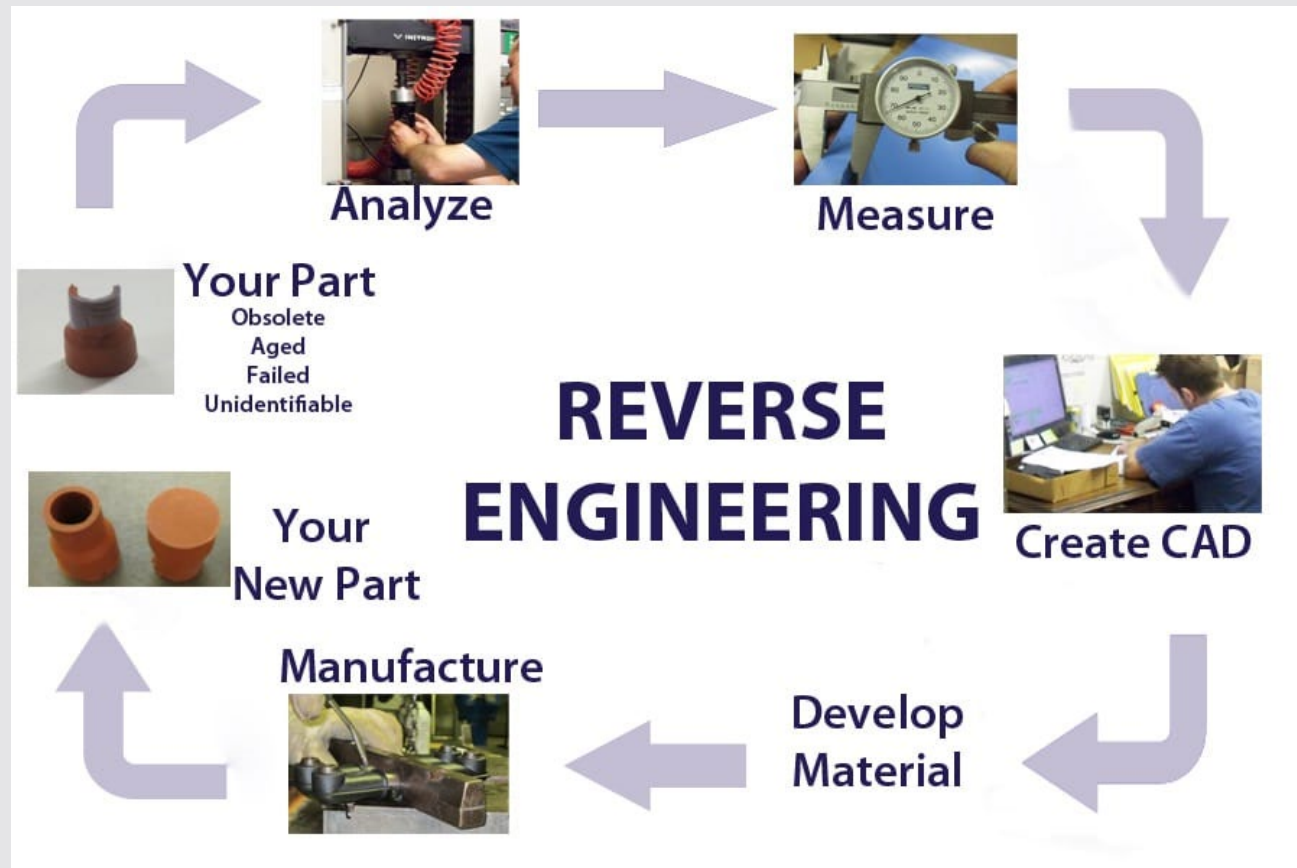
Platform selection

♡ 404,651

♡ 377,812

♡ 304,570

♡ 262,820

♡ 241,217

♡ 195,758

♡ 192,102

♡ 174,584

♡ 168,559

♡ 136,986

♡ 121,298

♡ 105,717

♡ 103,872

♡ 101,234

♡ 99,600

Platform selection

- Choosing the right platforms is essential to maximise reach and engagement.
- Both scientists and institutions should select platforms that align with their goals, audience demographics, and the type of content they produce.
- Different platforms cater to distinct user bases, offer unique features, and require specific content formats.
- By understanding the strengths of each platform, scientists and institutions can optimise their social media strategies to ensure the right content reaches the right audience.
  - **Scientists need to balance platforms that allow them to engage with fellow researchers and collaborators with those that help them reach the general public.**
    - The choice of platform depends on the audience's professional or public nature, as well as the intended purpose of the communication.
  - **Institutions typically require a multi-platform approach that engages various stakeholders, including academics, industry partners, students, and the general public.**
    - Each platform allows for different types of content that serve unique institutional goals, such as raising awareness, promoting research, or fostering collaborations.

Content strategy

- A well-structured content strategy ensures that scientists and institutions remain active and relevant on social media while achieving their specific communication goals.

- It helps maintain consistency across platforms, ensures that content aligns with audience expectations, and enables both parties to create meaningful engagement.

- **An effective content strategy involves a diverse mix of content types, strategic planning around key events, and consistent scheduling to maximise reach and impact.**

Mixing content formats benefits scientists

- Scientists would benefit from a mix of content formats that cater to either academic peers and/or the general public.

- Content could include:
    - **Research summaries** that distill key findings for academic audiences
    - **Educational videos** that simplify complex scientific topics for broader audiences
    - **Behind-the-scenes** content that offers a more personal, relatable view of the scientific process

- This diversity keeps the audience engaged and helps scientists build credibility.

Research summaries

- **Sharing concise summaries of research findings is a great way for scientists to promote their work to peers and other researchers.**

- Platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and WeChat allow scientists to share key takeaways, data visuals, and links to full papers.

- These platforms are also ideal for sharing live updates from conferences or publishing new papers.

  - **Example**: A neuroscientist posts a weekly thread on Twitter that summarises ongoing research into neuroplasticity, using short, digestible updates with visuals like graphs or brain scans.

  - The same content is shared on LinkedIn, along with a link to the full study, enabling peers to engage in deeper conversations.
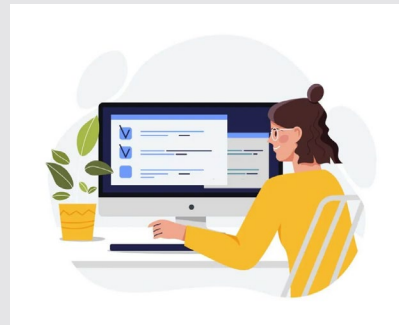
Image source: GradeCrest

Educational content

- **Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are ideal for simplifying complex topics for the general public.**

- Educational videos, explainers, and infographics can demystify scientific topics and make them more accessible to non-expert audiences.

- Videos tend to perform better on these platforms, especially when content is kept short, engaging, and visually dynamic.

    - **Example:** A neuroscientist posts monthly explainer videos on **TikTok**, breaking down the basics of brain structure and function. Each video focuses on a different neurological concept, like memory or neuroplasticity, using everyday analogies to simplify the science.

Behind-the-scenes content

- **People enjoy seeing the day-to-day activities of scientists and their work.**

- Formats like Stories and Reels can be used to share lab tours, fieldwork updates, or "a day in the life" snapshots, giving followers an authentic view of the scientific process.

  - Example: A marine biologist posts a series of short Instagram Reels that take followers on a virtual tour of a coral reef restoration project.

  - The posts show the biologist collecting samples, testing water quality, and interacting with marine life, providing insight into their fieldwork and sparking interest among science enthusiasts.

Content planning and distribution tools

Content planning and distribution tools

- Planning content in advance is crucial for maintaining consistency and ensuring that social media efforts align with key dates such as conference presentations, journal publications, or global science events.

- **Using a content calendar helps scientists schedule posts regularly across platforms, ensuring they remain visible without becoming overwhelmed by the day-to-day demands of social media.**

- Tools like Buffer, Hootsuite, or Later enable scientists to automate and streamline their content distribution.

Content planning and distribution tools

Content planning and distribution tools

Institutions have a broad content mandate

- **Institutions, such as universities, research centres, and non-profit organisations, have a wide variety of stakeholders to engage, including academics, industry professionals, students, policymakers, and the general public.**

- Institutions need to balance academic-focused content with public outreach, making sure their content strategy addresses all relevant audience segments.

- Planning is essential for ensuring institutions consistently share high-quality, impactful content.

Educational videos

- **Long-form content, such as explainer videos or interviews, allows institutions to showcase their research in a way that educates and informs the public.**

- YouTube is a popular platform for institutions to share longer videos that dive deep into research topics, providing insights from top scientists or highlighting the practical applications of research.

  – **Example**: A research university releases a series of videos on YouTube that explains the practical applications of their AI research in healthcare.

  – The series includes interviews with leading scientists, demonstrations of AI technology, and case studies showing how AI improves patient outcomes.

  – These videos are then shared across LinkedIn and WeChat, attracting interest from potential industry partners.

Short-form video

- **Short-form video content is ideal for institutions aiming to engage younger audiences or create public awareness around a particular topic.**

- Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, Douyin and YouTube Shorts are perfect for this format.

- These videos can be as short as 15–60 seconds, making them easily consumable and shareable, which is ideal for spreading scientific awareness or providing brief research updates.

Showcase daily activities

- **Short videos can offer quick, engaging snapshots of everyday life at the institution, from lab experiments to fieldwork.**

- These clips give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the research process, fostering curiosity and humanising the work.

  – Example: A university's research team posts short clips of their environmental scientists conducting fieldwork in a rainforest.

  – Each Instagram Reel showcases different aspects of the expedition, such as collecting samples, measuring air quality, or interacting with local wildlife, providing an engaging and informative peek into the research.

Simplifying complex concepts

- **Short videos are an excellent way to break down complicated research into easily digestible explanations**.

- Institutions can create short videos that summarise key research findings or explain scientific concepts in a fun, approachable way.
    - **Example**: A research institute posts a series of TikTok videos breaking down their latest climate change research into simple terms, using graphics, animations, and everyday analogies to explain carbon sequestration and its importance.
    - These videos target a younger demographic, increasing public awareness and engagement with the institute's environmental work.

Promoting events

- **Institutions can use short videos to promote upcoming conferences, webinars, or events, teasing key speakers, research topics, or live demonstrations.**
    - Example: A research centre uses YouTube Shorts to create quick, dynamic promos for an upcoming symposium on biotechnology.
    - Each video highlights a different keynote speaker and showcases clips of past events, building anticipation and encouraging registrations.

Institutional thought leadership

- **Institutions can use LinkedIn to publish in-depth thought leadership articles that showcase their expertise, explain the impact of their research, and invite collaboration with industry leaders, policymakers, and potential funders.**

- These articles help build credibility within professional networks and attract new opportunities for partnerships.
    - Example: A research institute publishes a LinkedIn article that outlines how their AI research is being applied in the development of smart cities.
    - The post explores the technical aspects of their research, highlights its potential impact on urban planning and sustainability, and invites industry partners to collaborate on future projects.

LinkedIn Newsletters and Articles

LinkedIn Newsletters and Articles

Public outreach campaigns

- **For institutions that focus on engaging the general public, platforms like WeChat, Facebook, Instagram, and Weibo are ideal for running outreach campaigns.**

- These campaigns can incorporate a mix of content formats such as infographics, short-form videos, and live discussions to inform and educate the public on key issues such as climate change, healthcare innovations, or scientific advancements.

  – Example: An institution runs a Facebook campaign using a combination of infographics and short-form videos to explain the findings from their latest study on air pollution and its effects on public health.

  – Each video is under a minute long, breaking down the study's key takeaways into simple points and using animations to make the content more engaging.

  – The campaign uses relevant hashtags related to environmental protection, encouraging followers to participate in discussions and share their thoughts on how to reduce pollution.

Planning content is key

- Planning content in advance is crucial for ensuring consistency, relevance, and maximising the impact of social media efforts.

- For scientists and institutions alike, social media is an effective way to engage with peers, the public, and industry, but it can also be time-consuming.

- **A proactive content plan helps to prevent last-minute scrambling, aligns content with key events and milestones, and ensures a steady presence across platforms without overwhelming the social media manager, whether that's a scientist juggling lab work or an institution balancing multiple projects.**

Work smarter not harder

- By planning posts ahead of time and aligning them with important dates, such as conferences, research publications, or global science events, scientists can stay visible, build momentum, and maintain consistency in their messaging.

- This is especially important for managing busy periods like fieldwork, grant writing, or when preparing for major research presentations.

- **A structured content calendar allows scientists to effectively balance their workload with social media engagement and maintain a steady communication flow even when they are focused on other tasks.**
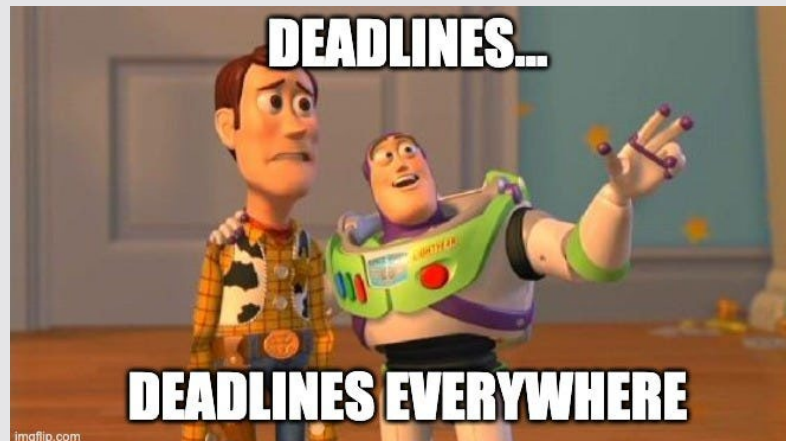
Perfect planning prevents poor performance

- **A content calendar is an essential tool for managing social media efforts, allowing scientists and institutions to schedule posts over weeks or even months in advance.**

- By mapping out when and where to post content, a content calendar ensures that key milestones, such as journal publications, major conferences, or international science awareness days, are integrated into the social media plan.

- This not only helps maintain visibility but also increases engagement by ensuring that content is relevant to ongoing conversations within the scientific community or the general public.

Thinking ahead pays off

- For example, a scientist may align content with key dates like:
  - **Conference Presentations:** Scientists can plan live-tweeting sessions during conferences or schedule detailed post-event summaries to be shared on LinkedIn. This ensures that peers and collaborators are updated in real time and can engage with the presented work.
  - **Journal Publications:** When publishing a new paper, planning social media posts in advance ensures that research findings are shared across platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, or WeChat at strategic moments to capture the attention of relevant audiences.
  - **International Science Events:** Participating in global science awareness days (e.g., International DNA Day, World Environment Day) provides an opportunity to share research that aligns with the broader conversation. This is also a great time to share infographics, videos, or blog posts that simplify complex scientific topics for public engagement.

Scheduling tools

- By using scheduling tools, scientists and institutions can:
  - **Maintain Consistent Engagement:** A scheduled, staggered content plan ensures that posts are regularly distributed without overwhelming followers. This steady stream of content helps scientists stay top-of-mind for their audience.
  - **Optimise Posting Times:** Scheduling tools allow users to post at times when their audience is most active, increasing the likelihood of engagement. For example, posts on LinkedIn or Twitter can be scheduled for early morning hours, while posts on platforms like WeChat or Weibo can be timed to engage a Chinese audience.
  - **Multi-Platform Efficiency:** With scheduling tools, scientists can manage multiple social media accounts from a single dashboard. This is especially useful when managing different types of content across platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter, ensuring that the messaging is consistent and aligned with the overall strategy.

Native social tools also work fine

Measurement matters

- **Measurement and analytics are vital for evaluating the success of social media strategies, whether for scientists seeking to expand the visibility of their research or for institutions running multi-platform campaigns to engage various stakeholders.**

- Regularly tracking metrics such as engagement, reach, conversion rates, and demographic insights ensures that social media efforts are both effective and efficient.

- By using these insights to continuously refine their approach, scientists and institutions can maximise their impact, attract new opportunities, and build lasting relationships with their audiences across platforms.

Social reach data

Impression data

Monitor watch times

Video interaction matters in Instagram

Adam Mosseri, Colin and Samir podcast, June 2024

"More than half the amount of time spent on Instagram is video at this point in most countries. It's not the only thing we do, we try to do it differently than YouTube and TikTok, where I think it's a bit more of a laid-back, passive experience.

We try to create a bit more of a participatory, lean-in experience, one where you're going to discover a Reel and then send it to a friend, and then talk about it with another friend. But it's still a huge part of what we do, because there's a huge amount of demand, and at the end of the day we're a business, and we have to figure out a way to meet demand as demand moves around and shift."

Sharing IS caring

How the AI delivers content to you

We want you to see content that you enjoy and find interesting. To achieve this, the AI system has models that help it make predictions about content you'll find most relevant and valuable. These prediction models use underlying input signals to help select content that you're most likely to engage with.

Below are some of the significant predictions– and input signals that inform them – that we use in this AI system.

🕐 **The amount of time that you're predicted to spend watching a reel**

Signals influencing this prediction include:

- The length of the reel
- The amount of time that you've spent watching reels and how many of those were short reels
- How many reels you've watched more than 25% of

♡ **How likely you are to watch a reel more than once and engage with it, such as by liking or commenting on it**

Signals influencing this prediction include:

- The length of the reel
- The amount of time that you've spent watching reels and how many of those reels you've watched twice

↪ **How likely you are to reshare a reel**

Signals influencing this prediction include:

- How far you've scrolled through the sequence of reels that you're viewing
- Where data privacy laws permit, how many reels you've reshared, in total and during your current session of viewing reels
- Which authors you've interacted with

👁 **How likely you are to watch a reel at least once**

Signals influencing this prediction include:

- The amount of time that you've spent watching reels and how many of those were short reels
- How many reels you've watched more than 25% of

Source: Meta, Instagram Reels rankings
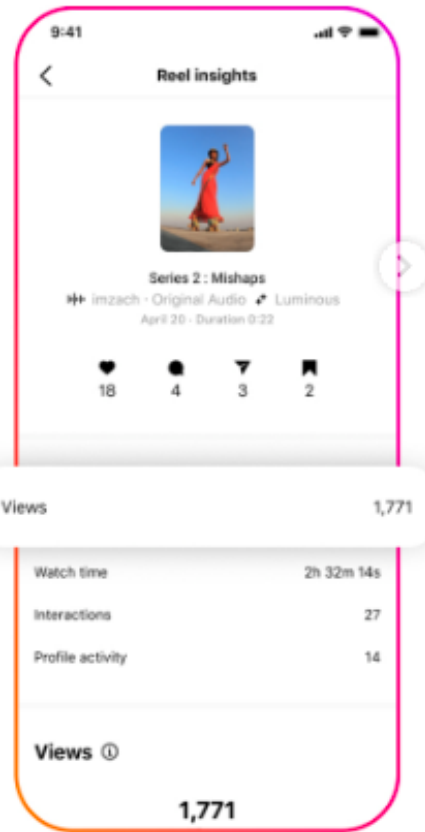
Instagram Insights Updates

In the coming weeks, we are introducing Views as the primary metric across all organic and boosted media formats which includes reels, live, photos, carousels, and stories. Views will measure the number of times a reel started to play or replay and the number of times a non-reel appeared on a person's screen. Views will ensure you have the same metric across Instagram and help you better understand how your content is performing, regardless of its format.

INSTAGRAM INSIGHTS UPDATES

Views will soon be the primary content KPI

For reels, the Plays metric will be relabeled as Views. Over the next month, we will phase out Plays across Insights and will do so in other tools such as Meta Business Suite.

INSTAGRAM INSIGHTS UPDATES

Instagram Insights Updates

For non-reels, Views will be the primary metric to measure how your content is performing though the Accounts reached metric will still be tracked and available in Insights. Impressions, which we also use for non-reels, will no longer appear in Insights but will continue to be tracked and available in other tools such as Meta Ads Manager.
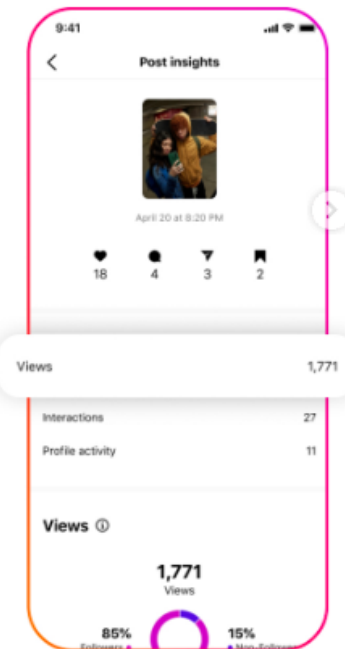
Google Analytics or similar
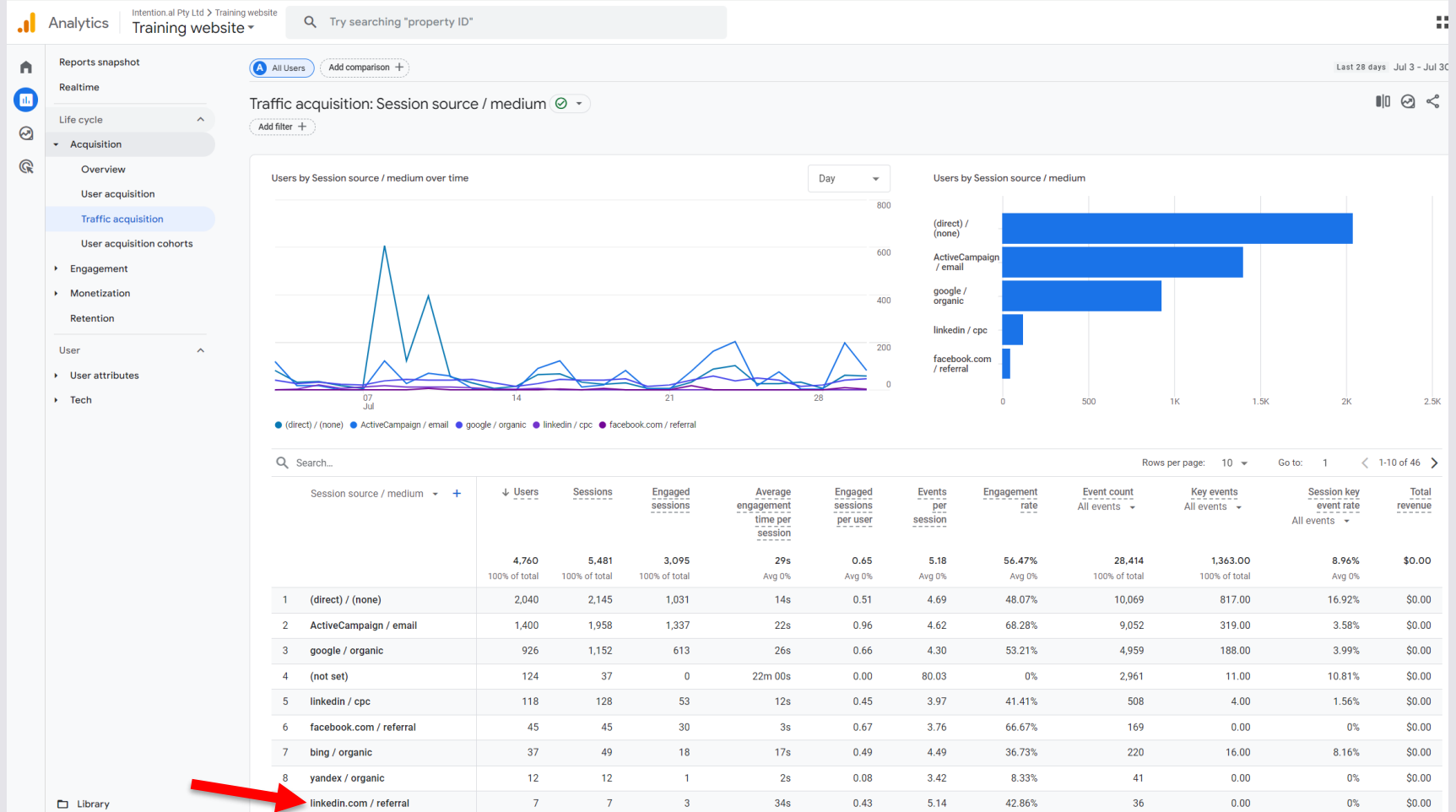
END

- **For further information on:**
  - SMK In-house Training
  - SMK In-house Ideation/Creative Sessions
  - SMK Strategic Reviews
  - SMK CEO & Executive Briefings
  - Questions regarding the presentation
  - Anything else
- **Please ask your trainer**
- **Email questions@smk.co**