



Social Media for Engagement and Influencing in Livestock Research for Development

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The Challenge

- If *news media* carries an institutional voice, *social media* carries an individual voice—it's personal, conversational (not institutionally vetted; everyone does it)
- News media has moved to *social media*—As many people follow journalists now as follow the media
- Everything is changing, evolving; new channels arise—*by the day*

The Approach

- Be social on social media channels—
Be responsive, generous, acknowledging
- Engage rather than push information out
- Go where the action is
(it usually won't be your website)
- Get on Twitter!
- (that includes directors!)
- Target your messages to speak directly to others

Do's and Don'ts

DON'T

- Overwhelm yourself and your staff with too many social media channels: Be selective
- Worry about your institute's reputation (apologize when you gets stuff wrong and move on)
- Use honorifics: e.g. Dr, Mr, Ms

DO

- Choose 5–10 social media channels—
e.g. Wordpress, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Slideshare—
and use these well and regularly
- Check out a few of the newer channels:
e.g. Pinterest, Storify, Instagram, Medium
- Remember email; it's a workhorse; use it as one

Insights Gained

- Content is still king
- Tagging is now queen
- Visuals matter—much more than we think
- Shorter is usually better
- But long-form journalism is making a comeback
- Frame livestock messages
so they speak to larger issues
- Don't assume anyone is interested
in our science

Key Lessons

- Listen
- Respond
- Engage
- Be humorous
- Be human
- Be interesting
- Be truthful

Links

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