Social-Media Success Stories

Speakers:
David Bowers
Marketing Manager
Cell Press

Bob Sumner
Editorial Coordinator, Clinical Chemistry
American Association for Clinical Chemistry

Duncan MacRae
Managing Editor, Neurosurgery
Congress of Neurological Surgeons

John E Muenning
Director of Editorial Production Technology
New England Journal of Medicine

Moderator:
Tony Alves
Director of Product Management
Aries Systems Corporation

Reporter:
Elizabeth Gebhardt
Managing Editor, Crop Science and The Plant Genome
American Society of Agronomy | Crop Science Society of America | Soil Science Society of America

Over the last several years, social-media strategies have become common among publishers. However, not all have taken the plunge. During the “Social-Media Success Stories” session at the CSE annual meeting in May, representatives of four organizations talked to attendees about their own social-media initiatives and the road to achieving social-media success.

David Bowers began the discussion by describing his work with 29 academic journals at Cell Press, which includes the flagship journal Cell. Over the last year, Cell Press has revitalized its Facebook and Twitter outreach and enhanced the functionality of its own Web site to allow users to share and add value to their content. Through those efforts, it has increased traffic to its content, provided an outlet for users to interact, enhanced its marketing through user recommendations, and added value to its Web site.

Facebook and Twitter afforded unique benefits for Cell Press’s social-media campaign. Cell Press launched a Facebook page that featured content from each of its 29 journals and two trial pages that featured content only from Cell and Current Biology. The Facebook page is used by Cell Press to feature media coverage, podcasts, free issues, articles, video abstracts, and conference announcements. It has offered successes in the form of driving traffic to the Cell Press Web site (the sixth largest driver of traffic), increasing engagement with readers, and increasing the number of signups to Cell Press events, such as Webinars.

Twitter serves a different function. Through 14 Twitter accounts, Cell Press posts announcements and retweets all other journals on a regular basis. The accounts feature new issues, articles, words of the day, podcasts, and job announcements. Twitter also offers the ability to listen to what readers are saying about Cell Press and its competitors and to address concerns. However, Twitter has not served as a large source of traffic, and results are harder to track.

Bob Sumner continued the discussion by discussing his work with Clinical Chemistry. He focused on his use of Twitter and offered some pros and cons regarding Twitter versus Facebook.

Sumner explained that scientists, specialists, and technicians in all disciplines are using Twitter to share information. Journal content is excellent for Twitter because it is up-to-date, legitimate content that is critical for specialists; the research is vetted for accuracy; and it encourages collaboration, which is similar to how a journal is produced.

He offered guidance for using Twitter—such items as using applications like HootSuite to manage your posts, not resorting to marketing tropes, emphasizing free content, reposting materials from members, and posting material relevant to journal readers. He also suggested updating Twitter accounts regularly, answering reader questions and encouraging feedback, and providing relevant sources for found materials. Building a network of scientists by “following” them is a useful source of information—both for listening to scientists’ comments about your own and related content and for providing content for your Twitter feed when you have exhausted all other resources.

To use Twitter or Facebook? Sumner said that the pros of Facebook include a larger audience, the gleaming of more clicks, and higher character-posting limits. Cons include not reaching all your fans with your posts. Each social-media outlet has benefits, and Sumner advised organizations to play to the strengths of each.

Duncan MacRae offered a different perspective that addressed the issue of limited staff resources to devote to social media. He explained that the goal for his journal, Neurosurgery, was simply to reach a transient social-media audience (one that lies on the edge of a specialty) and increase traffic to Neurosurgery Online. His social-media strategy for Neurosurgery emphasized creating content once with a minimal investment.

The social-media workflow at Neurosurgery consists of a few steps: content from the journal is repurposed and posted to a blog, which feeds to other sources, such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit, and Digg. After a blog post is created and posted, a nominal amount of time is spent in reviewing and tracking the results. Through a 30-minute/day investment, Neurosurgery has increased traffic to Neurosurgery Online (traffic to the Web site increased by 4% from 2010 to 2011), created an effective distribution method, and witnessed continual growth in visits to the blog.

John Muenning concluded the session by describing his work with the New England Journal of Medicine. He provided insight into the perceptions of social media and offered some tips on using Twitter and Facebook most effectively.

Muenning explained that at first, social media was viewed suspiciously by some

(continued on page 23)
Content Marketing Trends and New Ways to Generate Revenue

Speakers:
Tim Cross
Product Marketing Manager
Allen Press

Lettie Conrad
Manager of Online Product Management
SAGE Publications

Moderator:
Nan Hallock
Director of Publishing
Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening

Reporter:
Heather Grimm
Writer/Editor
Reznick Group, PC

The lifeblood of scientific publishers is the content of journals. This session discussed how that content can be harnessed for marketing and generating new revenue.

Tim Cross offered eight new ways to generate revenue, seven of which cost little or nothing to implement. The ideas are in three categories: offering different subscription models, using new channels to sell products, and repurposing existing content. Alternative subscription models can be used to supplement, and possibly encourage growth in, the traditional model. For example, publishers can offer shorter, online-only subscriptions (a good way to reach more students) or use patron-driven acquisition, whereby the library pays only for the content that patrons are using.

There are multiple ways of selling products. DeepDyve is an article-rental service with iTunes-like pricing, whereby users can rent or purchase articles—a good option for getting content into the hands of students. Articles or highlights can be recorded and sold on iTunes, potentially reaching non-traditional users. Another opportunity to sell products can be gained by offering free trials directly to libraries and faculty or giving out access tokens and thus allow users access to content; both kinds of offerings can expose new users to journals.

And publishers can repurpose existing content by turning journal articles into e-books or publishing new editions of existing books as e-books, selling commercial reprints as enhanced digital reprints, and optimizing Web sites for use on mobile devices. Although the latter is the only approach that comes with a substantial cost, opting to go this route is an investment in the future in that more and more people are reading on their mobile devices.

Lettie Conrad stressed the importance of content-focused marketing. Traditional marketing focuses on casting as wide a net as possible, often using such tactics as print and mail advertisements. If publishers combine advances in technology with the proper use of their content, they can target marketing efforts more effectively. For example, they can offer users single articles or article collections on specific topics as an alternative to a traditional journal. They can also use existing content as part of an effort to leverage social media or create their own specialized Web communities to find and engage users.

The rapid developments in mobile devices (such as mobile-ready Web sites, apps, and QR codes) can help publishers to extend access to existing content and special content to more users in more places and also help to unite print and Web channels. Other initiatives to consider are podcasts and “pocket articles” (small cards with information about an article distributed at an event, which can be sponsored for a new revenue stream and can save the cost of distributing full journal issues) made from existing content. In addition, technological advances make it easier to tailor marketing communications and allow publishers to recruit high-quality manuscripts, increase use, and promote membership, all of which help to keep more content coming in.

continued (from page 22)

scientists, but many have recognized its value. However, many scientists continue to perceive commenting, for example, as apart from their scholarly activities and something that is certainly not considered part of the formal article record.

He offered suggestions for Twitter campaigns. Keep in mind that users are young (half are less than 30 years of age) and want breaking news; the power of retweeting; and openness to new ways of using Twitter, such as posting electronic tables of contents. Facebook can be a unique way of showing a journal’s history through the “Timeline” format and has good built-in analytics.

Muening said that you should lead your social-media strategies with your content, engaging users by curating content that is appropriate for them according to your social-media tool and audience. It is very important to highlight the integrity and excellence of the journal.

Offering several perspectives, the speakers in the session gave a current look at the efforts of publishers to reach audiences through social media. They emphasized creating realistic goals and recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each social-media tool. They also stressed the need to curate content that highlights the integrity of the journal and caters to a particular audience and setting. Perhaps the most important point was that with this knowledge and a little staff time, publishers of all sizes are able to delve into the world of social media.