

KTI Report

Knowledge Transfer Community Workshop: Social Media Marketing

Date: Thursday, 22 January 2015

Time: 9.30-13.30

Venue: Carlton Hotel Dublin Airport, Old Airport Road, Cloghran, Co.Dublin

The first Knowledge Transfer Community Workshop of 2015 was on the topic of Social Media Marketing and was held on January 22nd at the Carlton Hotel Dublin Airport, County Dublin. The workshop explored two key channels, LinkedIn and Twitter, why use them and how to integrate them into a marketing and communications strategy.

The attendees were predominantly those in the role of marketing and communications and business development within the technology transfer offices (TTO) at Irish research performing organisations.

Micéal Whelan, Communications Officer at the Research and Innovation arm of University College Dublin, who began the workshop on the topic 'Developing a communications strategy and the role of social media.' The key learnings from his presentation were:

- A social media policy: It is important to have a social media policy before starting down the social media road. Assign certain people in your organisation to use your social media channels in compliance with your policy
- Advantages: Social media has the ability to create a buzz, especially around events; social media can be used as a gateway for driving traffic to your website; it encourages people to engage with your organisation and it also helps an organisation to brand itself online
- Things to remember: Don't post as yourself but as your TTO or organisation; remember to tweet or schedule tweets outside of the working day and working week; and make sure there are sufficient resources to cover the social media channels you have chosen to use

Our second speaker on the day was Stuart Allcock from ReallyConnectIreland.com who spoke on LinkedIn. The goal of Stuart's presentation was to give attendees a greater understanding of LinkedIn and how one can reap the benefits of using it. The key learnings from this talk were:

Stuart explained the three core strategies that should be implemented depending on what your goals are when using LinkedIn:

- The 'passive' strategy includes creating a company page or personal profile and posting updates rarely. This is used to showcase or find basic information like job postings, news, products, and services
- The 'active' strategy includes organisational updates and personal updates with active talent searching or active connection sourcing. This strategy also includes an active presence in industry groups with regular posts and opinions
- The 'proactive' strategy is for people or institutions who are seeking new customers, new stakeholders, new licensing opportunities or new employees
- The real power of LinkedIn is in the second degree – everyone has an average number of 250 first degree connections but every one of those 250 knows an average 125 people you don't know. Through these first degree connections it is easy to receive introductions, increasing the size of your network

Our third speaker at the workshop was Conor Lynch, a digital business expert from SocialMedia.ie. Conor spoke about Twitter and associated applications, and how best to use them. Here are some of Conor's top tips for using Twitter:

- **Content and engagement:** Include more #hashtags in tweets to tap into generic searches by Twitter users. i.e #research #technologytransfer– users searching 'research' or 'technology transfer' will be likely to come across your tweet and might subsequently follow your account. Send tweets with .@username / @username to stimulate more discussion online

- **Frequency and timing:** Post at least once per day. This shows users that you are active and this is crucial for branding purposes. Test the best time of day to send tweets to followers and schedule tweets via Hootsuite. Your Twitter account analytics can also be monitored via the dashboard within Hootsuite – a useful application for managing your social media channels
- **Branding:** Update your Twitter profile photo and background regularly, use impactful photography and post short 'snack-able' content which makes it easy for others to retweet and favourite

Our final speaker on the day was Kevin Ennis who is the Industry Marketing Officer at Trinity Research and Innovation, Trinity College Dublin. Kevin spoke on the topic of marketing and the role of social media in a technology transfer office. The key takeaway points he imparted were:

- Tweet success stories from the technology transfer office and link those tweets back to your own website. This shows you're an active institution on social media focused on driving traffic to your website
- Kevin emphasised the importance of tracking, measuring and optimising all your digital marketing efforts to refine your marketing efforts
- Kevin stressed 'quality over quantity' and he too urged the audience to consider their resources before creating accounts on every social media network

