



# Using Social Media in Research Support Case Study: Cash for Questions

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## Structure of session

- A bit of background
- Why I started 'Cash for Questions'
- Benefits and challenges
  - Twitter persona: personal v. professional
- My attempt to persuade you to set up a professional Twitter account
- Questions



## About me

- Research Manager, Nottingham University Business School since Dec 2009
- Mainly pre-award, supporting grant applications
- Previously Research Institute Manager, Institute of Public Policy and Management, Keele University
- Centre Administrator/Manager, Centre for Professional Ethics, Keele University
- MPhil Political Philosophy, 2002



## About “Cash for Questions” blog

- “somewhere to think out loud and share ideas about research funding for the social sciences, research development, research ethics, higher education, university administration and management”
- Personal, not institutional/official
- Started July 2011, now average 1 post per month
- Single author..... open invitation for guest authors
- [www.socialscienceresearchfunding.co.uk](http://www.socialscienceresearchfunding.co.uk)



## Popular post types

- Annual analysis of ESRC success rates/stats
- Coping with Rejection – what to do if your application is unsuccessful
- Various grant application writing tips
- Off topic – stammering / jobs in HE / UCU
- Consequences of open access



## Why I started blogging

- June 2011, LSE Impact in the Social Sciences conference
- Registrarism – blog by UoN Registrar, Dr Paul Greatrix (now part of WonkHE)
- Line manager/school both supportive
- Didn't initially want to use Twitter
- Research Fundamentals – Phil Ward



## Motivations for blogging

- Learn about social media from the inside
- Share ideas, learn from others
- Networking – continue conversations
- Influence debates and have say
- Career development – online portfolio
- Scratch a creative itch



## Benefits and outcomes so far

- Now part of an informal e-network
- Business School research managers network
- Visibility and profile within own institution
- Led to other opportunities (guest posts, ARMA sessions, THE mentions, Guardian HE network)
- Read by some people in RCUK
- Platform to address other issues





## Things I've found challenging about blogging

- Putting my views out there for criticism
- Opinions of colleagues
- Getting readers
- Writing semi-regularly
- Identifying topics to write about
- Defining my blog – core identity
- How much “inside info” to share



## Things I've found challenging about twitter

- Gaining followers/getting voice heard
- Potential misinterpretation of written word
- 140 characters!
- Time sink/distraction from work
- *Tone and balance of twitter stream*
- *Identity – Personal/Professional/Institutional*



## Twitter accounts types

- Personal – “evenings and weekend Adam”
  - Job often not mentioned at all, poss. anonymous
- Institutional – “just work, no Adam”
  - Suited and booted. Completely impersonal
- Professional – “Adam at work”
  - Smart casual. Limited personal/informal stuff I might willingly share with trusted work colleagues



## What “Adam at work” tweets about....

- Links to my own writing (new or old)
- Links to other people’s relevant, quality content (tweets or re-tweets) / my comments
- Questions I have for my network
- UoN institutional plugs and propaganda
- Helpful retweets (jobs, calls for participants)
- More light-hearted social lubricant stuff



## Why you should have a professional Twitter acc.

- Find funding opportunities
- Can be better than email for quick queries/cold calling.... for now, at least
- If you're involved in impact, you should be familiar with (and use) Twitter
- Trust/visibility/goodwill for multi-partner bids
- Jobs/career development



## Your invitation to join the conversation

- Join twitter/set up professional twitter acc
- Follow funders, research dev professionals, HE journalists, opinion formers
- See who other people follow
- Having something to say but don't want your own blog? Guest posts welcome for C4Q or elsewhere



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