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Finding Your Twitter Niche: Engaging with a Targeted Academic Audience

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Abstract: In this study, an academic library pivots their efforts on Twitter from content directed to their entire academic community to content for a group within the community. To do so, the library's social media committee formed a team with the goal of increasing faculty and staff engagement with the library's Twitter feed. Tweets from a typically engaging month, from two different years, were selected and compared. Several sources of analytics were contrasted in order to determine whether the change influenced followers and engagement. Although the target audience shifted, the content remained consistent. While the library experienced a decrease in follower numbers, the project was ultimately a success in that it led to a deeper engagement with the intended audience. The initiative provided a more accurate snapshot of the situation and equipped the team with new social media strategies for the future.

Introduction

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library began to heavily focus on social media as a communication tool in 2014. Although it had accounts on Twitter and Facebook for several years prior, it was at this time that the library began to plan strategically. The initial social media goals were to gain followers and likes from any members of the academic community,

whether they be students, staff or faculty. Eventually the library created a social media team. This team dedicated a great deal of time to reviewing social media best practices, library and information studies literature, following social media trends, and trying to replicate the successes of other libraries. In very little time, they realized that for each platform there was a need to focus efforts on one specific segment of the academic community. For various reasons, Instagram and Facebook became the platform for students, and Twitter, as will be outlined in the following study, shifted to a platform specifically for faculty and staff.

Initially, having been unsuccessful at connecting with students on Twitter, the team thought that perhaps they were doing something wrong. It seemed that many academic libraries were making huge communication gains on this platform and much of the literature pointed in the same direction (Decker, 2019; Ewing, Wilson, & Pruneda, 2019; Jack, 2019; Kathuria & Clay Powers, 2019). Twitter is amongst the most popular social media platforms utilized by academic libraries (AlAwadhi & Al-Daihani, 2019). A quick Google Scholar search using general search terms such as *'social media' AND 'academic library' OR 'college library'* results in many articles about how to connect with students through various platforms, including Twitter. However, at Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library, it was becoming clear that attempts to engage with this user group on Twitter was not an effective use of time. In the spring of 2018, the team took a step back and asked: Why?

The team realized they were practicing something called *new institutionalism* or *neo-institutionalism* in relation to the Twitter feed. Essentially the concept means that an institution adopts the practices of its peers even if it results in less efficiency or effectiveness. According to Harrison, Burress, Velasquez, and Shriner (2017), it is common for libraries to observe one another for support in making decisions and this notion extends to the use of social media in academic libraries. At times, Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library, like many others, does fall into the comfort of neo-institutionalism. So even though the library and the patrons are unique, when the staff are very busy, they tend to look to colleagues in the library world for inspiration.

After realizing this, the team determined it was time to stop looking at what others were doing and to start utilizing the platform in a way that was unique to their institution. If that did not work, it was time to get rid of Twitter. The project began with an examination of who the library's Twitter followers actually were. This revealed that only three were identifiable as students and the remaining 375 followers included companies (local and non-local), libraries, mystery followers (i.e., those they could not identify) and Saskatchewan

Polytechnic staff. So, although engagement on Twitter had, up until this point, been decent, it was not the type of activity that fulfilled the library's goals. The library's posts had always created a fair amount of buzz, but it was largely local community organizations or other libraries who were most actively engaged with the feed. This led the team to wonder: How does this engagement serve the library and more importantly the broader Saskatchewan Polytechnic community?

An opportunity arose when the examination of followers revealed that 42 were identifiable as staff members (either faculty, professional services or upper management). With this, the focus changed. The time had come to start tailoring Twitter posts to those user groups. The team decided that posts would become more purposeful, linking to themes that were relevant to faculty and professional staff. The ultimate goal would become building a communication channel with those patron groups. The research study was initiated in tandem with this new direction in September 2018. It focused on these research questions: Can a library successfully engage with a specific audience within the academic community? Can a library break away from the social media niche that academic libraries tend to fall into and select a new target user group?

The research team consisted of three library staff members who were (and still are) very connected with Saskatchewan Polytechnic academic community. The new content for the feed would be tailored to their perceptions of key areas of interest for faculty members and to a lesser extent professional staff. Pulling from the collective experience working in the Learning and Teaching Division, they designed topics with a focus on the concept of scholarly communication. They hoped that in doing so they could support and empower faculty at their institution, and according to the literature, this was possible. Atkins, Koroluk, and Stranach (2017) examined how Canadian post-secondary institutions are using Twitter for scholarly communication, noting that outreach efforts can bring a myriad of resources to the attention of the collegial staff, potentially resulting in improved teaching practice. This is what the team hoped to accomplish.

Literature Review

Twitter has become a well-known and widely used tool among libraries in general and academic libraries in particular. VanScoy, Hicks, and Cavanagh (2018) examined the motivations of patrons who connect with libraries on Twitter. Their study indicated that academic libraries have low engagement on Twitter. Other studies have supported this

finding, particularly those with a focus on Canadian institutions. Not only was the extent of the platforms' use by Canadian academic libraries called into question (Verishagen & Hank, 2014), but also student engagement with the platform (Al-Daihani & Abrahams, 2016). Winn, Rivosecchi, Bjerke, and Groenedyk (2017) found that Twitter was not an effective way to connect with students at any of Montreal's four major universities.

However, niche audiences within the Twittersphere may be interested in connecting with certain libraries. VanScoy et al. (2018) found that public libraries have the potential to develop a high rate of engagement with not only library users but also people who do not use the library. According to their study, many individuals who were otherwise not connected to libraries still often tweeted, retweeted, and engaged in other ways with library posts. The authors showed how the popular perception of libraries as community hubs carries over to the Twittersphere (VanScoy et al., 2018).

A common goal of academic libraries is to become a community hub not only for students but also for faculty and staff. Making Twitter an extension of that hub is an obvious, albeit lofty, ambition. Gruss, Abrahams, Song, Berry, and Al-Daihani (2020) discussed the concept of community building with students on Facebook. They defined key dimensions of community as mutual interdependence, a sense of belonging, common expectations, and among other things, shared values and goals. Any person working within an academic community can attest that faculty and staff generally work together for many years, rely on other departments for support, and understand the benefits of community building. According to Xie and Stevenson (2019), one of the reasons for a library to adopt Twitter is to develop a community among the library and its users. Regardless of whether a patron is working, studying, and communicating within the library building or on the web, it is the job of the library to continually support them.

How are scholarly communities currently engaging with Twitter? And what can the academic library offer them? As Gruss et al. (2020) aptly asked, how do libraries "tap into the shared norms, values, concerns and symbols of the university" (p. 209)? Li and Greenhow (2015) provided a snapshot of how scholars used Twitter at an educational research conference. Through qualitative interviews with graduate students and faculty members, they pondered whether Twitter could be used to facilitate deeper understandings and more participation in research and scholarly conversations. Both graduate students and faculty members reported low use of Twitter when participating in conferences; however, interesting trends emerged among those who did use Twitter. Graduate students indicated

that they used it to network, to gather information, and sometimes to fulfill required job duties. One participant indicated that he used Twitter to initiate scholarly relationships, which in some instances became a substantive conversation in a different medium (e.g., email) following the conference.

In the same Li and Greenhow study (2015), faculty members used Twitter more as a tool for self-promotion, to express ideas, and to enhance their presentations. Both graduate students and faculty also indicated negative aspects of using Twitter as a conference back channel, including the fleeting nature of tweets, which could result in missing important content, and the impact of negative tweets on a presentation. Faculty members specified that they thought tweeting at a conference was pointless, and many expressed that attendees should not be distracted with social media but instead should pay full attention to speakers. Perhaps faculty resistance to the use of Twitter indicates a need for greater awareness of and training with the tool—the study by Atkins et al. (2017) showed that "not knowing how to utilize social media tools can be an obstacle preventing academics from using these tools" (p. 255).

LaPoe, Carter Olson, and Eckert (2017) examined how scholars used social media platforms to engage with their peers and the public. Their study discussed the professional tension between a perceived need to participate and a general skepticism of the incorporation of social media into academic work. Scholars who embraced social media benefitted from increased exposure of their research, expanded professional networks, mentorship and career advancement. The study also showed negative aspects that should not be ignored, such as the often blurry line between professional and personal content that can lead to disagreements regarding academic freedom and social media use. Most of the individuals interviewed in the study were open to participating in social media platforms; despite the potential for backlash, they felt it was a necessary communication channel. Ultimately, ongoing study of the evolving uses and importance of social media in academia is vital. Academics must continue to explore the safest and most effective ways to utilize these tools. It is important to consider how faculty might benefit from using Twitter and from following their institution's library. That said, there is also a need to understand the technical issues that might emerge from inexperience, lack of knowledge or fear.

Scholars have also looked at how academics' use of institutional social media is influenced by the institution's strategic communication goals. Is the strategy to create a narrative for the institutional identity and to market institutional brand, or is it to foster

meaningful conversations with stakeholders and create two-way interactions (Verishagen &
Hank, 2014; Veletsianos, Kimmons, Shaw, Pasquini, & Woodward, 2017)? Verishagen and
Hank (2014) pointed out the importance of this communication distinction in their study of
Canadian academic libraries' use of Twitter, showing that some chose to use it for
broadcasting purposes, while others attempted to develop two-way communication. Palmer
(2014) reviewed engagement between a library's social accounts and target audiences,
acknowledging that simply having an account does not equal interaction or participation:
"Use of social media channels by organizational stakeholders is voluntary, so it is important
for an organization to attract a critical mass of members and facilitate their active
participation in an online community" (p. 613).

Another aspect of library social media communication involves an effort to connect
not only with individual staff members at an institution but also with institutional
departments. Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library is part of a larger Learning Commons model
that provides services to students, as well as faculty and professional staff. With that in mind,
the team chose to research academic libraries that were using Twitter as a tool for
disseminating information to a specific population, along with uses of social media in
scholarly communication, internal or external to the library. The literature supports the
notion that knowledge of one's target audience and the creation of an effective strategy are
critical in successful social media engagement. Targeting faculty and staff through Twitter is
a logical communication strategy. Kim, Abels, and Yang's (2012) study measured Twitter
activity over a network of academic libraries and found that "the primary groups
disseminating the tweets of academic libraries are units within universities and students"
(Kim et al., p. 1). The study looked at retweet activity of active Twitter users without
stipulating that they follow the library. The authors' findings support those of Shulman, Yep,
and Tomé (2015), who determined that by engaging influential users, a library can broaden
its reach and ensure its information is seen by more users. University departments can
support each other's work by sharing one another's content and cross promoting accounts
throughout the university community (Shulman et al., 2015).

Shulman et al. (2015) also confirmed that the creation of a network and cross
promotion with other institutional accounts is an effective method of social media
communication. They stressed the importance of exploring which social media channels to
invest in, knowing who one's audience is, and utilizing effective networks and social media
tools. Their study focused on networks that can be built on Twitter within an academic
institution. They set out to find the most influential players within their organization based

on the findings of Kim et al. (2012), who found that accounts from colleges, departments, programs or "university organizations are responsible for the majority of cross-posting and sharing of library content within an institution" (Shulman et al., 2015, p. 179). Shulman et al. (2015) postulated that these influential organizations could be recruited to promote the library through retweeting or engaging with the content and that "partnering with the appropriate accounts can quickly direct information to a target audience" (p. 184).

Methods

This study features two month-long snapshots of the @saskpolytechlib Twitter account. The first is from February 2018, when efforts were targeted at a more general audience and favoured student promotion. The second snapshot is from February 2019, when the library strategically pivoted engagement efforts towards staff and faculty, utilizing new content area categories. The team selected February because it is a month within which there is typically higher engagement on social media due to various popular library events. As these same events are held every year, the team could essentially duplicate efforts from one year to the next, allowing for measurement of Twitter engagement on similar content at the same time of year, but directed at a different audience. Since the very beginning of the library's presence on Twitter, it has had strong February engagements. But could this sustain itself with a newly established group of focused followers?

Two events, both of which are made possible by funding from Provincial Library Organizations, occupy much of the social media team's attention and efforts throughout the month of February (not to mention the weeks or months of planning that precede them). Indigenous Storytelling and Freedom to Read Week are programs that not only enable the library to fulfill the strategic priority of "creating a dynamic community environment" (Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library, n.d., p. 6), but they are also responsible for a remarkable increase in social media engagement due to online promotion, local interest and popular trending hashtags, such as #IndigenousStorytelling, throughout the local and national library community.

Saskatchewan's Indigenous Storytelling is important for libraries throughout the province. Over time, it has become Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library's signature event, as it closely aligns with the library and institution's strategic directions. Not only are the events highly attended across the four campuses, but also a large amount of online promotion occurs leading up to them. The social media buzz has always been an exciting component of this

provincial effort and has attracted Twitter users both within the institution and throughout the larger community. Freedom to Read Week, a national event that is commemorated mostly in the digital environment, is an opportunity for libraries to celebrate literature, have discussions about banned and challenged books with the academic community, and highlight the impact of the written word on society.

Content Categories

Although much of the subject matter remained consistent from 2018 to 2019, particularly related to the abovementioned events, in order to focus on engaging with faculty and staff, it was necessary to frame content in a new way. The team identified eight target content areas within two broad categories, academic interest and general interest, and created a calendar outlining post frequency. They used these to guide all posts created for the Twitter feed in the 2018/2019 academic year. It should be noted that although professional staff were included as a part of the data for the study, the topics had much more traction with faculty, so consequently, that group became the main focus.

Academic Interest.

1. **Scholarly Communication:** Included explanations of the term and how it can be defined in professional work, with a concentration on research and publishing.

2. **Academic Profiles:** Examined tools for creating a profile, including Google Scholar, Academia.ca, ResearchGate and Mendeley.

3. **Online Content Information**: Included how to use videos, images, web resources in classroom activities; copyright, open education resources and open access were covered under this theme.

4. **Teaching Tools:** Showcased tools of interest to college instructors, including content shared by other departments, such as Learning Technology and the Instructional Learning and Development Centre (workshops and sessions).

General Interest.

1. **Staff Professional Development:** Promoted opportunities and activities, such as Indigenous workshops, and shared staff achievements.

2. **Learn About Our Library:** Featured databases, resources and library services.

3. **#AcaDownTime:** Provided a chance each Friday to share staff hobbies and interests.

4. **Book Recommendations:** Offered recommendations from staff, promoting a community of sharing.

These newly focused topics resonated with the new audience and resulted in some unanticipated and well-received Twitter events. The team also continued to use Twitter to broadcast general library announcements such as holiday closures. This additional category of posts, which could have been grouped in a "General Information" content area, was not included in the list because it did not come under consideration at the beginning of the study.

Data Collection

In order to efficiently keep track of new faculty and staff followers, the team used Twitter's "lists" feature to curate a private list. Data was collected from two places, (1) the library's Twitter profile and (2) Twitter Analytics. The Twitter profile was reviewed at the beginning of each week, from July 2018 to July 2019, for:

- Total number of followers

- Total number following

- Number of likes

- Faculty followers (including faculty managers)

- Staff (non-faculty) followers

- Upper management

- Staff (unsure of union)

- Notes: random oddities that could affect statistics such as #DeactiDay (Binder, 2018)

The team placed all pertinent data into a shared Excel document. Beginning December 3, 2018, they began to keep track of total new followers, and used their Twitter

profile to compile and document tweets posted in February 2018 and February 2019, specifically collecting:

- The date the tweet or retweet was posted

- What the tweet looked like (what was said in the body of the tweet)

- Whether an image was posted

- The tweet's impressions, engagements and engagement rate data

- The number of likes, retweets and comments

Lastly, they pulled screenshots of the analytics of each post, along with screenshots of users who liked, commented or retweeted, which helped differentiate who was and was not interacting with posts. Twitter analytics were used to populate two spreadsheets that detailed:

- tweet text
- time
- engagements
- retweets
- replies
- likes
- user profile clicks

- URL clicks
- hashtag clicks
- detail expands
- media views
- media engagements

Twitter Analytics spreadsheets were exported on March 6, 2018 for February 2018 data, and another with February 2019 data on March 21, 2019.

Results

Follower Gains Since July 2018

Since the beginning of this work, the library's Twitter account has gained and lost followers. However, none of the lost followers were from the new target audience (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). This indicates that the new content might have caused people outside the targeted user group to lose interest in the feed.
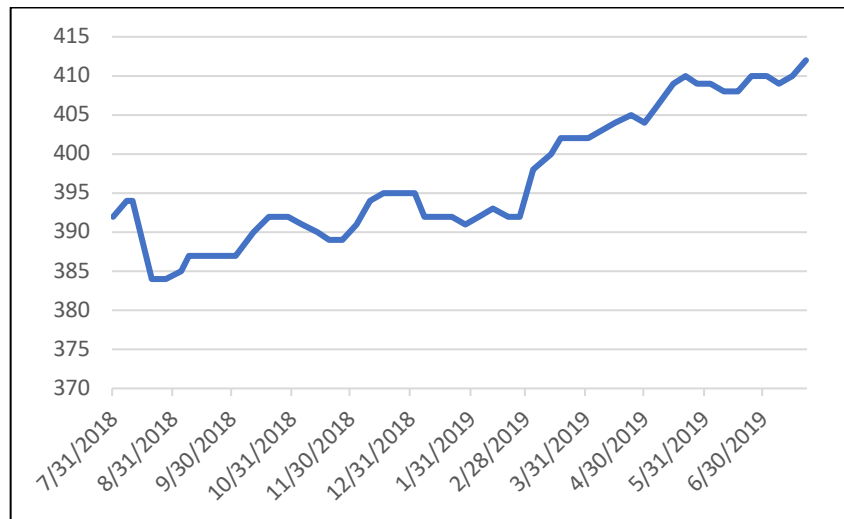
Figure 1: Number of Twitter Followers in a One-Year Period
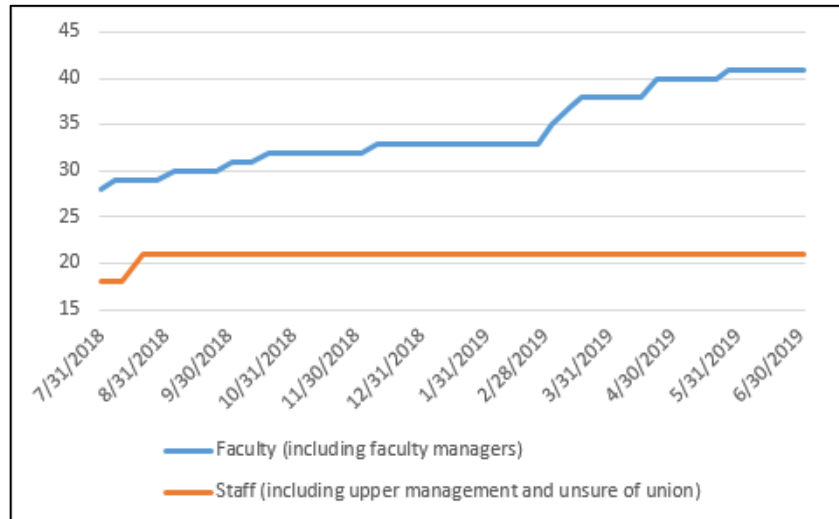
*Figure 2: Number of Faculty and Staff Followers in a One Year Period*

Year-to-Year Comparison – February 2019 & February 2020

As is indicated in Table 1, engagement with content increased from 2018 to 2019. Most notable is the fact that likes by faculty and staff increased by 16% and retweets increased by 23%.

	February 2018	February 2019
Number of tweets	25	22
Engagement throughout the month	147 total engagements	185 total engagements
Average amount of engagements per tweets	147/25 (6 per tweet)	185/22 (8 per tweet)
Number of likes on tweets	26 likes	42 likes
Number of retweets	17 retweets	17 retweets
Number of replies	0 replies	5 replies
Percentage of likes by staff & faculty	4 of the 26 likes (15%) were by staff and faculty (Note: One like was anonymous)	13 of the 42 likes (31%) were by staff & faculty (Note: Four likes were anonymous)
Percentage of retweets by staff & faculty	3 of the 17 retweets (18%) were by staff & faculty (Note: Three retweets were anonymous)	7 of the 17 retweets (41%) were by staff & faculty
Percentage of replies by staff & faculty	No replies	None of the 5 replies (0%) was by staff & faculty (Note: We created three of the replies)

*Table 1: Content Engagement February 2018 vs. February 2019*

Next, the team examined interactions with the Twitter account. Twitter Analytics measures many things, among them *impressions* and *engagement*. An impression is recorded each time a Twitter user sees a tweet. Engagements are more meaningful as they encompass clicks (on tweets, hashtags, links, avatars and usernames), retweets, replies, follows, likes and tweet expansions (Twitter Help Center, n.d.). Engagements give an indication of a user's actual involvement with a Twitter feed and can indicate a level of interest in the content, for example, when someone clicks on a link. For these reasons, engagements became the focus of this study.
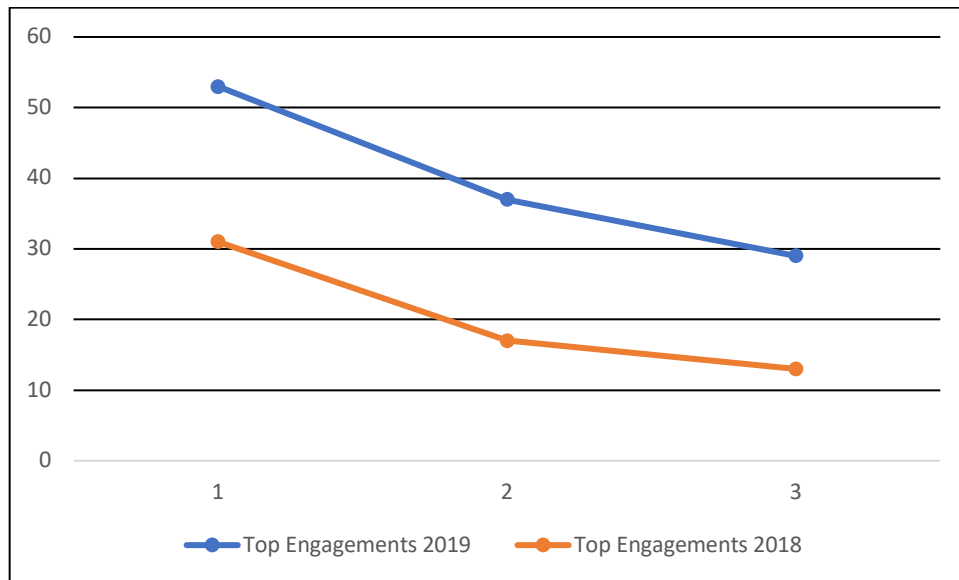
Figure 3: Engagement Comparison for Top Three Tweets, February 2019 and February 2018

	Top engagements 2019	*Top engagements 2018*
First	*53*	*31*
Second	*37*	*17*
Third	*29*	*13*

Table 2: Engagement Numbers for Each of the Top Three Tweets
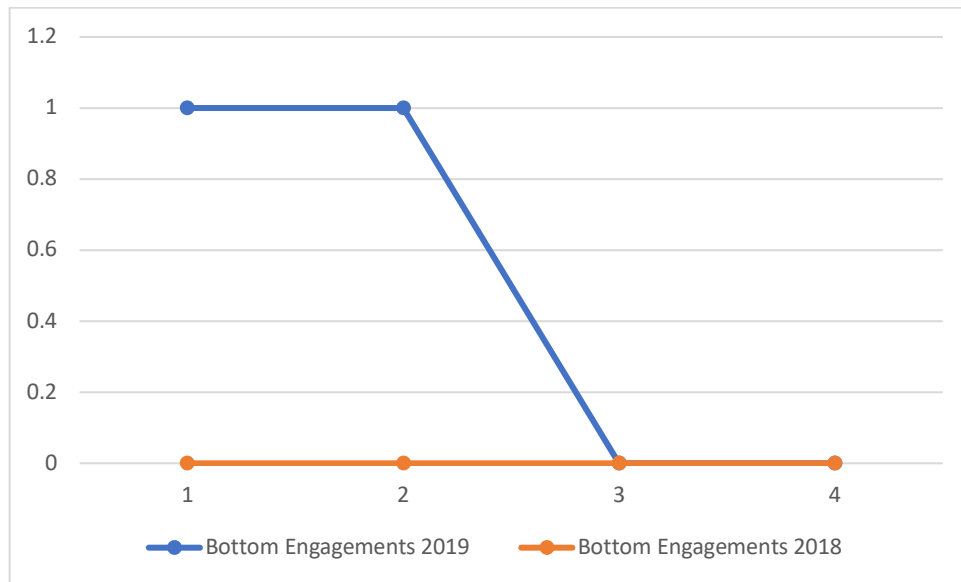
Figure 4: Engagement Comparison for Bottom Three Tweets, February 2019 and February 2018

Bottom engagements 2019	Bottom engagements 2018
1	0
1	0
0	0
-	0

Table 3: Engagement Numbers for Each of the Bottom Three Tweets

Notably in 2019, two of the most engaged-with tweets were personalized, featuring faculty members' accomplishments or recommendations (see Appendix A), and were categorized under "Staff Professional Development." Among the content for the bottom three tweets were general information about a long weekend closure and mentions of film screenings at specific campus libraries—mostly informational tweets meant to promote the happenings at the library (see Appendix C and D). Both the top and bottom tweets contained images, which suggests that what is important is the content itself or perhaps the

effectiveness of the imagery chosen. It would be interesting to compare text-based tweets to those containing images in the future.

Meaningful Spikes

The posts that resulted in the greatest spikes of engagement included those that were linked to national hashtags—for instance, the Freedom to Read tweet showcased in the top three tweets of 2019 (see Appendix A)—and those that featured the accomplishments of, or were authored by Saskatchewan Polytechnic faculty. The former did not align with the goals of the study: The Freedom to Read Week is a national event, and those engaging with the posts were mostly *not* a part of the team's new target audience. The latter shows exactly what the team had been trying to accomplish—increasing meaningful engagement with the target audience—and again, it falls under "Staff Professional Development." Consequently, the team learned that in some instances it is impossible to predict what users will respond to. Since faculty were interested in posts about one another, the team decided to test out some new faculty-led strategies in the Spring of 2019. The following two efforts were not a part of the initial study, but the results tie into the overall goals so well that they are worth sharing.[1]

In March, one month after the data collection and research study, a team member tried *live tweeting* at an event. According to a general social media marketing article on Hootsuite, "live tweeting an event keeps your followers engaged and informed of events they want to attend in person but, for whatever reason, may not be able to" (Tran, 2019, para. 1). The event was a partnership between the institution's Instructional Leadership and Development Center and the library, and it specifically targeted faculty. The activity fell under the "Online Content Information" content area. It took place during Open Access Week and featured a speaker who discussed open pedagogy. Because the institution spans four different cities, the speaker was present in-person on one campus and the session was live streamed to the three other campuses.

To encourage dialogue between the presenter and participants, the library offered a live Zoom chat and encouraged the audience to participate on the @saskpolytechlib Twitter feed. A team member authored 24 tweets throughout the presentation, which resulted in 6,683 impressions and 24 engagements (16 likes, 3 user profile clicks, 1 URL click, 2 hashtag clicks, 1 detail expansion, 1 media view, and 1 media engagement). Direct participation with

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[1] Portions of the information shared here have previously been published in an August 2019 Library Aware blog post (https://libraryconnect.elsevier.com/articles/using-twitter-connect-faculty).

the conversation did not occur, outside of a few tweets from the library's director, but immediately following the presentation, the Twitter account had four new followers, two of whom were Saskatchewan Polytechnic faculty members.

In May, to continue the momentum and in hopes of maintaining faculty interest, the team tried a *Twitter takeover* by a faculty member. In a Hootsuite article, Sehl (2019) writes that, "A social media takeover is when you grant posting privileges to a person of interest like an influencer, expert or professional" (para. 1). During Canada's National Nursing Week, a nursing instructor authored a series of tweets on this topic. Prior to the week, she created five posts (six tweets total). The tweets were prescheduled on the library's account and linked to the nursing colleague's Twitter account (which is relatively popular within the collegial community). Although she had not been informed of the target content areas, her tweets included content that fit well into "Teaching Tools" and "Staff Professional Development." The tweets averaged 432 impressions, 9 engagements, 10 retweets, 3 replies, and 16 likes. The results were quite impressive and the experience itself, of connecting with faculty members on a specific topic, proved to be extremely valuable.

Figure 5: Example of a Twitter Takeover by a Faculty Member

These two activities were so successful and were, quite frankly, so easy that they will help to define the library's Twitter plans moving forward.

Discussion

Although followers were lost throughout this process, this news was neither surprising nor disappointing. As indicated earlier, the team had realized prior to the study that some followers were not helping to fulfill the library's social media priorities. Therefore, the loss of certain followers, such as local community organizations or other libraries, was acceptable. Meanwhile, the new target audience not only continued to follow the Twitter feed, but their engagement with the modified content increased. The followers within the academic community especially connected to posts in the "Staff Professional Development" content area, as well as "Book Recommendations." Although the other content categories did not stand out individually, the overall increase in engagement indicated the strategy had been effective.

Focusing on content from a month within which the team could replicate similar content in both 2018 and 2019 provided the study with a focus and a clear viewpoint of the data. As a result, the team could easily identify the type of content faculty and staff were interested in. Two "Book Recommendations" posts related to Indigenous Storytelling illustrate how the new selection and presentation of content was positively received. Both posts had images and were eye-catching, yet the 2019 book recommendation performed better. For the February 2018 book recommendation post, a member of our Social Media Committee created a tweet showcasing *Diversity and Indigenous Peoples in Canada*[2], a book in the collection that was of possible interest and related to library events. This recommendation received only two retweets, one by another department and one by an anonymous user. In comparison, in February 2019, a post about the book *Medicine Unbundled*[3] became one of the three highest engaged-with tweets. Although this was not an explicit Twitter takeover, it was very similar. The team asked a faculty member for a book recommendation that related to the upcoming Indigenous Storytelling event. The faculty member sent a recommendation and some thoughts, which were paraphrased into a four-part tweet thread that included the faculty member's Twitter handle. The first tweet in the thread had three retweets and four likes by other faculty members. The results show not only an increase in engagements overall, but also that the largest part of the library's identifiable audience was responsive to the altered content.

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[2] *Diversity and Indigenous Peoples in Canada*, by Darion Boyington, Harpreet Aulakh, Shahe S. Kazarian, John A. Roberts

[3] *Medicine Unbundled*, by Gary Geddes

Comparing the top and bottom tweet content, one can safely assume that the followers are less interested in informational tweets, for instance, library closures or events happening at specific campuses. They are more interested in tweets that have a personal touch and an opportunity to participate in online comradery. Two of the top three tweets in 2019 included a celebratory tweet about a faculty member publishing a book and a book recommendation from a faculty member. It seems that faculty enjoy recognizing and hearing from their colleagues. This illustrates the importance, stated by Shulman et al. (2015), of establishing strong institutional networks on Twitter. This point is further emphasized by the successful live tweeting of the Open Access Week event and the National Nursing Week Twitter takeover.

A team member also received in-person compliments on the live tweeting event. Although this data was not captured officially, it indicates that the team's efforts to create a dynamic community environment worked. A staff member discussing a library tweet about open access in the lunchroom is, after all, a huge win for establishing the library brand on campus.

To this end, it is pertinent to emphasize the importance of libraries working with other departmental Twitter accounts within their institution. Activities such as retweeting other departments' content helps to build follow-ship and reciprocal social media relationships. In this study, although the library's Twitter feed did not gain a large amount of traction with other departmental Twitter feeds, the team did build community among a target user groups through a Twitter takeover and live tweeting event, effectively engaging with individual, not departmental, accounts. The team had hoped to see a large spike in connection with other departments' Twitter feeds, but they would later learn that the library is much more active on social media than other departments, making these sorts of relationships less feasible. However, in 2020, with COVID-19 restrictions and the institution's reliance on virtual connectivity, new departmental relationships have begun to develop (see "Further Considerations" below).

Limitations

Collecting data in an ever-changing environment is difficult, and it created certain limitations for this study. Twitter Analytics data are dynamic and dependent on the exact time that reports are generated; because people can view and interact with an account at any time, the data may change from one collection date to the next. Time of data collection can

dilute statistics; for example, there is a slight difference in the data for February 2018 presented in the "Results" section versus in Appendix B. In the initial collection of Twitter Analytics data in March 2018, the top tweet had 31 total engagements, but when the team decided to include a screenshot of the tweet itself, the data changed to include two additional engagements, specifically user profile clicks. So, although an effort was made to collect data within specific timeframes and minimize duplicate efforts, therefore diluting data, it proved very difficult to successfully achieve.

Another drawback of working in the social media milieu pertains to which types of information are accessible on Twitter. Analytics shows who follows an account and when, but it does not tell how active the follower is on Twitter in general. The team came to understand that some social media users are very active—they create unique content, retweet often, and participate in conversations—while others prefer to just view content. Furthermore, some followers may have the library's account muted, meaning they do not see the content at all—and these followers are not disclosed by Twitter. Even though the team may perceive that a follower is likely seeing the content, it is possible that they are not seeing it at all.

Conclusion

Efforts to pivot the library's Twitter content to a specific user base resulted in both losses (of non-target audience followers) and gains (of target audience followers). Some of the momentum gained throughout the study resulted in new ideas. The study revealed that the target audience has a preference for tweets by other staff members with a focus on "Staff Professional Development" and "Book Recommendations." The team also learned that it is pertinent to seize unexpected opportunities and to change direction quickly. Most importantly, the team realized that the library, the social media feeds, and the community are unique, and must be treated as such in order to develop impactful communication strategies.

Further Considerations

As institutions quickly transition to online learning and communication due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become apparent that multiple channels need to be established to spread messaging and information. Some time after the completion of this study, during an interdepartmental Zoom meeting, team members learned that employees at the institution perceive that there are only a few well-established brands on campus who are successfully

using social media, one of which is the library. Consequently, the library has been asked to be a main communication hub for information flowing from other departments and throughout the institution. Students, faculty and staff are regular visitors of the library website and social media channels and as a result many colleagues have asked for assistance sharing their information and events. So, unexpectedly, in this new online learning environment, the library has been given an opportunity to become the community hub it has always strived to be.

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Appendix A

Top Three Tweets for February 2019:

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Today, we just want to give a shout-out to our amazing colleague @librarynina who has edited her first published book! This is now in print everywhere and we are proud. #research #awesomework (This title can be borrowed from the library: http://bit.ly/2Ud33FD)
pic.twitter.com/Runzo0SQ4U

Impressions	960
Total engagements	53
Media engagements	20
Likes	12
Detail expands	11
Link clicks	4
Profile clicks	3
Retweets	2
Replies	1

Reach a bigger audience

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Did you know that is #FreedomtoRead week? This week "encourages Canadians to think about and reaffirm their commitment to intellectual freedom" (http://bit.ly/2MyO7PH) What is 1 way to do that? Read a banned book! Here is a list (some may surprise you!): http://bit.ly/2W9WB49
pic.twitter.com/wwJJFj3YeF

Impressions	986
Total engagements	37
Link clicks	20
Media engagements	4
Detail expands	4
Likes	3
Profile clicks	3
Retweets	2
Replies	1
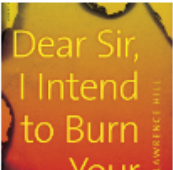
SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
For our #FridayReads we have a #Saskpolytechfaculty #nursing recc by @alexnursingnote! "As a registered nurse, "Medicine Unbundled" gave me insight into the history of discrimination/mistreatment that historically occurred within segregated Indigenous hospitals in Canada. (1/4)
pic.twitter.com/Z3ctbZphHz

Impressions	727
Total engagements	29
Detail expands	11
Likes	6
Retweets	4
Profile clicks	4
Media engagements	3
Replies	1

Appendix B

Top Three Tweets for 2018:

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Happy #ftrw! This week @saskpolytechlib will be highlighting banned books we have in the library. If you're interested in how censorship personally impacts authors read "Dear Sir, I Intend to Burn Your Book" by Lawrence Hill http://bit.ly/2DD0Ak1 #freedomtoread #bannedbooks pic.twitter.com/hCCGNheE1Q

Impressions	959
Total engagements	33
Media engagements	21
Link clicks	4
Likes	3
Detail expands	2
Profile clicks	2
Retweets	1

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Want to #treatyoself? Congrats! @saskpolytechlib has Kanopy: a streaming movie service where you can chill, eat some popcorn and pick a title from the 26,000 films to choose from http://bit.ly/2rL4h1y pic.twitter.com/6EyutuKYT8

Impressions	1,032
Total engagements	17
Link clicks	12
Likes	4
Retweets	1

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
SASKATOON CAMPUS: Join us tomorrow in Room 104 from 11:30am-12:30pm for #IndigenousStorytelling with special guest Randy Morin! Refreshments will be served. #yxe #saskatoon @LSSAP @SaskPolytech pic.twitter.com/tNhJYxUQIs

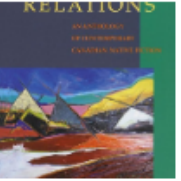| Impressions	914
Total engagements	13
Media engagements	6
Retweets	3
Detail expands	2
Likes	1
Profile clicks	1

Appendix C

Bottom Four Tweets for 2019:

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Saskatoon Campus Faculty/Staff: Come and discuss the film, "It's Time," (http://bit.ly/2CJCAlu) tomorrow in the #IndigenousFilmClub! Hosted by ILDC & @saskpolytechlib in Learning Technologies from 12:05-12:50. pic.twitter.com/vcnp65nPI7

Impressions	365
Total engagements	1
Likes	1

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
Happy Friday!! This is just a friendly reminder that the library will be closed on Monday for Family Day. The library has normal hours throughout the weekend and will re-open at 7:30 AM on Tuesday. pic.twitter.com/tKExrXw7CM

Impressions	221
Total engagements	1
Detail expands	1

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
We are hoping that you are enjoying your day off for Family Day! The library is not open today, but will re-open tomorrow at 7:30 AM with our normal hours, and we will be happy to hang out with you again (#horriblepuns ☎). pic.twitter.com/YhZyTwQiOc

Impressions	221

SaskPolytechLibrary
@saskpolytechlib
PA Campus: Today at 12:00PM, in the library TLSC, join us for a viewing of "Donna's Story" (and free popcorn!), hosted by the Indigenous Students' Centre. This film was chosen in light of the Moose Hide Campaign (more info. here: http://bit.ly/2FLm6DT) #PopcornCinema pic.twitter.com/OrRIISkLMk

Impressions	360

Bottom Three Tweets for 2018:

SaskPolytechLibrary @saskpolytechlib PRINCE ALBERT CAMPUS: Join us tomorrow in the Library from 10:00 am-1:00 pm for **#IndigenousStorytelling** with special guest John A. McDonald! Refreshments will be served. **@SaskPolytech** pic.twitter.com/xoqPcSZxfi	Impressions · 183

SaskPolytechLibrary @saskpolytechlib All My Relations: An Anthology of Contemporary Canadian Native Fiction features works from nineteen contemporary Indigenous writers, including Jeanette C. Armstrong, Beth Brant, Richard G. Green, Thomas King, and Barry Milliken. http://bit.ly/2mzjNb0 **#IndigenousStorytelling** pic.twitter.com/va2GCCzE8A	Impressions · 261

SaskPolytechLibrary @saskpolytechlib In Adultolescence, YouTube comedian **@TheGabbieShow** brings levity to the twists and turns of modern adulthood with a collection of illustrated poetry. http://bit.ly/2ELqy0N pic.twitter.com/XQ5K8uANLN	Impressions · 114