From academic blog to academic job: using Scoop.it to showcase your work online shows others the value of digital communication skills

by Blog Admin   November 10, 2011

Early career researchers should look carefully at the benefits of incorporating social media into their academic work, writes **Sarah-Louise Quinnell***, whose use of blogging and social media tools in her PhD has led her to find her first academic post.*

In my previous posts here, and on Networked Researcher, I have taken time to emphasise how social media can be used for professional development purposes. The goal for many early-career researchers, especially those who have recently completed their PhDs, is to gain the first academic position. I have always said that I believe a well developed online identity will assist in promoting your work, and you as a researcher, and I can now say that I have gone from academic blog to academic job: I will soon start my new role as E-learning Development Advisor within the Graduate School Researcher Development Unit at King's College London.

When I initally completed my PhD I was somewhat concerned that I was becoming better known for my work with and in social media than I was for the conceptual topic of my PhD i.e. the role of capacity-development in the implementation of multi-lateral environmental agreements. However, to complete this research I had used a number of social media tools and applications and was aware of how important they were and what they could offer to academic research. It seemed then, that I brought something different to the table in that I came to discuss social media and its use in academic research from personal experience of using it to collect and present my own PhD data. To be able to advise people on how to use social media as a research and professional development platform it is necessary to be able to illustrate to prospective students and staff what can be done with this new technology and how it can be *integrated* into the research process rather than another add-on.

I spent a long time thinking how to illustrate my ability to do the above prior to my job interview by presenting my online profile in a way that showed varying types and levels of impact and engagement without giving the interview panel a long list of links. I tried different types of web portfolio software and had varying degrees of luck, however none of them illustrated the material in the way I wanted. Twitter followers recommended I create a Scoop.it, which works as an online scrap book where I could literally scoop examples of my work online and put them together as a collection or portfolio.

My Online Portfolio

"This scoop.it provides an illustration of the work i've been doing online post-PhD" ■

Curated by Dr. Sarah Quinnell

? Dr. Sarah Quinnell curates this topic from blogs, tweets, videos and much more: find out how!

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Dr. Sarah Quinnell - October 9, 2:45 PM

Dr Sarah-Louise Quinnell | Life & times of an aspiring academic

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My personal web site / blog provides an introduction to me and my research. I believe strongly that my research is part of me. It results from my likes and dislikes, my interests and my approaches to different topics. Therefore in creating this site I give people the opportunity to learn something about the person behind the research. It also enables me to have a degree of control over the content that is written about me online and establish my own research 'brand'.

From this I get to write guest posts for other blogs interested in my opinions like:

This post on the origins of my PhD

http://fromtweettothesis.wordpress.com/2011/08/31/from-dancing-to-doctorate/

and this opinion piece on my response to the HE White Paper

http://www.wonkhe.com/?p=789

I was also invited to be a panelist at the Royal Geographical Society Post Graduate Forum Annual Conference Training Symposium this year to talk about using social media for professional development and the importance of blogging responsibly

http://www.rgs.org/WhatsOn/ConferencesAndSeminars/Annual+International+Conference/Programme/Postgraduate+Forum+Annual+Conference+Training+Symposium+%28PGF-ACTS%29.htm

My personal blog has also been archived as part of the British Library UK Web archive project (http://www.webarchive.org.uk/ukwa/)

Source: www.sarahlouq.co.uk

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The Guardian Higher Education Network Post-Doc Diaries - Don't doubt the value of blogging in academic publishing

"Responding to Leonard Cassuto's recent blog post about the value blogging in academic publishing, Sarah-Louise Quinnell explains why a

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LSE Impact Blog - From blogging to print: My journey to creating impact

I have been contributing to the LSE Impact of Social Sciences Blog since July 2011. My posts focus on ways of using social media to maximise impact. My post views and tweet outs since the start of October 2011 are as follows:

'From blogging to print: My journey to creating impact': 217 pageviews, 3 tweets.

'The use of social media in higher education can be a positive step towards bridging the digital divide, but it is not a fail-safe measure': 100 pageviews, 23 tweets.
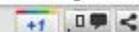
These posts can be viewed here (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/tag/dr-sarah-louise-quinnell/)

'Becoming a Networked Researcher - using social media for research and researcher development': 131 pageviews, 20 tweets.

This can be viewed here (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/07/07/becoming-a-networked-researcher-using-social-media-for-research/)

I have also been referenced in their guide to using twitter for academic research which can be downloaded here (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/09/29/twitter-guide/) I am also on their 'favourite academic tweeters' lists (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/09/02/academic-tweeters-your-suggestions-in-full/)

Source: blogs.lse.ac.uk

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Networked Researcher | Supporting & promoting the use of social media in academic research & researcher development

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Using a Scoop.it I could add notes about what I had done and why as well as links to other articles etc. My Scoop.it portfolio is also completely interactive, allowing readers to follow links, rate, 'like', rank my page, and leave comments.

Five years ago, when I started developing a website to conduct my PhD research I was viewed as being

slightly mad and the work was not seen to hold any value. In some areas it was thought unlikely that these methods would deliver a quality PhD. Now, it is becoming obvious that more universities are recognising that digital communication skills are increasingly important across the board, particularly when it comes to research, research communication and institutional marketing. Talking about the application of social media in research and researcher development is not talking about the *future* of research, it is talking about research *now.*

Related posts:

1. Running a successful academic blog can make you feel like a rock star: authenticity and narrative are essential for forging your own digital identity
2. Academics and universities should embrace blogging as a vital tool of academic communication and impact
3. Becoming a Networked Researcher – using social media for research and researcher development
4. Designing scholarly communication for the digital age
5. The use of social media in higher education can be a positive step towards bridging the digital divide, but it is not a fail-safe measure