

Ten years on, how are universities using Twitter to engage with their communities? #LoveTwitter LSE Round-Up

Amy Mollett, Social Media Manager at the London School of Economics, rounds up how LSE currently uses Twitter for sharing research, interacting with students and alumni, and promoting events. She also looks at what the future of academic social media might look like. For #LoveTwitter day she digs into the altmetrics and shares the most tweeted about pieces of LSE research.



It's Twitter's tenth birthday today and for the many tweeters in the research and university community, it is an opportunity to think about how we use the platform, how successful it has been for sharing academic research and making stepping stones to impact, and how it might (or might not) continue to be an effective platform for engaging in HE conversations.

"Ten years ago today, it began with a single Tweet. Since then, every moment of every day, people connect live about the things they care about most — all over the world." – [Twitter Blog](#)

This is an overview of how LSE has used Twitter to promote its blogs, events and research.

Blogs and Twitter at LSE

Across LSE, we have a very active Twitter community, taking in our public-facing blogs including [British Politics and Policy](#), [LSE Review of Books](#) and the [Impact Blog](#). Twitter drives a huge chunk of the hits to these blogs, which now run to 100,000 views each week and represent around 1 in 9 visits to the LSE website overall. The blog editors see a lot of commentary and conversations about blog posts taking place on Twitter rather than on the blog comment sections.

For these blogs, Twitter remains the number one way of updating followers and tracking engagement and interaction. Thinking about the future of this interaction, this might change if the mostly academic audience shift in vast numbers away from the platform.

Events and Twitter at LSE

Elsewhere the @LSEPublicEvents feed promotes the School's public lecture programme. With over 45,000 followers it's one of the largest events Twitter feeds out there and sees lots of hashtag engagement every night. The team can also use it as a customer service tool to inform followers about new speakers, re-scheduled events, and a large podcast archive.

Over the next few months we'll be exploring how we can use more images in this feed and make increased use of other platforms like Instagram, where event attendees love to share photos of the excitement on the night. Twitter will remain an important platform, but with so many students using photo-based apps to share their experiences, this is something that we have to react to.

Research and Twitter at LSE

We also have Department feeds and our own official @LSENews and @LSEalumni accounts that keep students and our community up to date about achievements and new research. Research is proving to be an area around

which we're seeing increased engagement; we know there are lots of conversations going on all around the world about LSE-authored research and we get involved with those when it makes sense. A recent example is the interest in CEP report on the consequences of Brexit for UK trade and living standards.

Part of my role is to use professional social media listening tools to understand what these conversations and sentiments look like. Altmetric Explorer is one of these tools (for wider discussion on altmetrics, see [here](#)), and for #LoveTwitter day we've taken a look at the most tweeted about pieces of research with an LSE author.

1. 1,478 tweets about [Comparative effectiveness of exercise and drug interventions on mortality outcomes: metaepidemiological study](#) by Huseyin Naci of LSE Health and John P A Ioannidis of Stanford Prevention Research Center, published in the British Medical Journal (Clinical Research Edition)
2. 555 tweets about [Drug harms in the UK: a multicriteria decision analysis](#) by Prof David J Nutt FMedSci of Imperial College, Leslie A King of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, and Lawrence D Phillips of LSE Department of Management, published in The Lancet
3. 493 tweets about [The UK and 'genocide' in Biafra](#) by Karen E Smith of LSE Department of International Relations, published in Journal Of Genocide Research
4. 470 tweets about [Adaptive Pacing, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Graded Exercise, and Specialist Medical Care for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis](#) by Paul McCrone of KCL, Michael Sharpe of University of Oxford, Trudie Chalder of KCL, Martin Knapp of LSE, Anthony L. Johnson of institute of Public Health, Kimberley A Goldsmith of KCL, and Peter D White of Queen Mary University of London, published in PLoS ONE
5. 426 tweets about [Genome-Wide Association Study of 126,559 Individuals Identifies Genetic Variants Associated with Educational Attainment](#) by Cornelius A. Rietveld et al., including Jan-Emmanuel De Neve of LSE Centre for Economic Performance, published in Science

Twitter and student-focused campaigns at LSE

Students are a huge part of life at any university, and we want to make sure they feel represented and celebrated around campus. Over the last year we've increasingly found ways of using social media to help us reach this goal, using images shared through official social media accounts and from our students in physical spaces. For example, in the LSE old Building, we've used the #partofLSE hashtag alongside portrait shots of students with mini interviews about what being part of LSE means to them. Working with staff in the Design Unit, Student Recruitment team, Internal Communications, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiative, we managed to curate an amazing selection of images. However, instead of Twitter, we shared these through Instagram, which is our main channel for driving on-campus engagement.

This post presents a quick snapshot of how universities are using Twitter to engage with their communities. Does your university use Twitter in a way you've found useful or engaging? How are you using Twitter for research and teaching ten years on? Let me know [@amybmollett](#).

Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the Impact of Social Science blog, nor of the London School of Economics. Please review our [Comments Policy](#) if you have any concerns on posting a comment below.

About the Author

Amy Mollett is *Social Media Manager at LSE*.

- Copyright 2015 LSE Impact of Social Sciences - Unless otherwise stated, this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Unported 3.0 License.