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Reflections on #SocMedHE20

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A long time ago, back when we were able to enjoy conferences face to face, I attended a workshop on the use of Snapchat to enhance engagement with students. Listening to Suzanne Faulkner (@SFaulknerPandO) talk about using social media to effectively engage students really resonated with me. I am the Student Experience Lead in my department however also teach on the Master of Pharmacy programme and am responsible for the alumni provision for our graduates. I had run a graduate platform for networking and support using Project Management software for a few years but had had issues with engagement and I had been toying with the idea of using social media as it seemed to offer a better engagement aspect. So, soon after I established my graduate platform on Instagram and set about adding content.

I would never consider myself a social media whizz, I am learning all the time but am so pleased that I took the step to use Instagram as it has really increased engagement and I wanted to share this with others.

With a little encouragement I submitted an application for the Tweetposium for #SocMedHE20 which I was delighted to hear was accepted.

Preparing for it was a little different from other conferences I had presented at. I had to squish all I wanted to say into 240 characters – how was I going to do it... and fit in the hashtags... and my handle? Well with a little help from the organisers and a bit of creative thinking, I created my tweets and where relevant linked to a Googledoc that then went on to explain a little more about each of my tweets. This was a perfect way to get the core elements of what I wanted to say into the tweet and then expand a bit more in the Googledoc, plus all my tweets were submitted ahead of the Tweetposium date and auto-released for me, letting me get on with responding to comments and interacting with others on the day:





You didn't have to use GoogleDocs, you could link to a pre-prepared video or a presentation or article or even directly link to a TikTok video or platforms such as GatherTown that would showcase your practice. Being able to link to a range of different sources gave a brilliant flexibility for the submission, letting you share practice in the most authentic way for you. Also being on Twitter meant that I could go back to tweets that interested me after conference closed and still have access to all the materials.

The conference was an amazing and rewarding way to share practice with others on a range of different topics. Not only was it fun, but it brought such an accessible and digestible way to learn from others that I would absolutely love to be involved in it again. Being held on Twitter gave me the opportunity to share my work with an international audience and also to dip in and out of other people's presentations, with the added benefit of being able to message people or comment directly if their work took my interest. Never have I had that level of immediate interaction at a conference and it only goes to strengthen the community feel that the Tweetposium had. That and the extra joy that Hamish the Coo brought to the day..... Thank you #SocMedHE20 for having me, I will be back!



Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.