Reaching Out to a Global Audience on Facebook

by
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A World of Babies,
2nd Edition

→ cambridge.org/authorhub
In partnership

We work closely with our authors to maximise the reach and impact of their publications, by combining our collective marketing efforts. In this case study, we illustrate how the partnership worked for one of our Anthropology books, providing examples of effective book promotion and some invaluable words of advice from the authors themselves.

Key successes

Although the book has only recently published, we’re already seeing some of the benefits of the marketing strategies that we and the authors put in place:

1. A Facebook page was created and has been very successful reaching 56,000 Facebook users. The Facebook page now has over 1,470 followers and was only set up a few months ago.

2. A simple, effective content plan was developed with extracts from the book posted each week with lots of engagement.

We began posting daily posts about the book, starting about two months before the official publication date.

The first week of posts introduced the book in general, and included some excerpts from the Introduction.

After that, each week featured a new chapter. We highlighted the chapters in order of appearance in the book—anywhere from seven to fourteen posts for each chapter. The first post about each chapter provides a brief biography of the chapter’s author (since this is an edited collection). The second post introduces the place that is the focus of the chapter. The succeeding posts (usually between five and ten more) highlight specific points and passages in that chapter, with a couple of sentences as an overview, and a few more sentences of excerpt. Each post also features one main visual image that appears when a reader first encounters the post, and 1-2 more images embedded in comments beneath the post where we’ve provided links to other websites of relevance to that day’s post.

Once we completed a set of these posts for a chapter, we followed up with a post that did not focus on the book, but that highlighted issues relevant to the book, relevant to contemporary news. Then we returned to a week or so of new posts about the next chapter.

We paid $2 per day to “boost” each post. For each chapter, we targeted relevant readers by reference to location and issues: anywhere from 6-15 locations, and anywhere from one to four dozen interests.

As you use the Facebook tools for creating ad campaigns like these, you discover that the tools have pre-set locations and issues. After a short while, you’ll get the hang of coming up with relevant locations and issues that are likely to be featured in the drop-down menu of options.

We monitor viewership daily and click on the “Like” button to see who has “liked” a given post every day. The list of these “Likes” includes an “Invite” button. If you click that, an invitation is sent to the person to “Like” the overall Facebook page for the book (not just that day’s post). We’ve gotten many hundreds of new “Likes” for the book’s Facebook page this way.
From the authors

What social media platforms did you use?
Mostly Facebook (also LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Research Gate, and my own website—www.almagottlieb.com).

What did you do?
We created a separate Facebook page for the book at www.facebook.com/WOBBook

How successful was it in reaching and connecting with more readers?
So far, so good. Even before the book was available for purchase the page had been seen by about 56,000 Facebook users, and it’s accumulated 1200 “Likes” for the book’s overall Facebook page. We’ll see how that translates into sales...

Would you recommend this channel to other authors?
Sure—but it does take time.

I had an undergraduate student who set up the initial page and help me draft all the posts. It was a great experience for her, and saved me an enormous amount of time.

Any other words of advice?
Most people under the age of 40 nowadays live on social media. If we’d like our work to reach readers who are under 40, resisting promoting our books on social media will consign us to the Endangered Species list.

This Facebook project has proven unexpectedly great fun. It’s really pushed me to think about how to connect with broad ranges of readers well beyond the academy.

Alma Gottlieb, co-author of A World of Babies: Imagined Childcare for Eight Societies.

From the marketing team

How did you work with the authors?
We worked with the authors to devise a social media strategy for the book and are currently campaigning this in the EMEA, US and Asian regions via email campaign, targeting individual buyers and lecturers. The media team has also worked closely with the authors, securing press coverage in major publications, including parenting magazines, blog and radio shows, as well as parenting sections of local newspapers. This book will also be showcased at the up and coming American Anthropological Association. We will continue to work closely with the authors to push this into the right marketing channels.

James McKellar, Marketing Executive and Diana Rissetto, Senior Media Associate

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