Engage with your Readers on Twitter

by Evelyne Schmid

Author of Taking Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Seriously in International Criminal Law

→ 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 Law books, providing an example of how one author used Twitter to reach readers and build a community of fans.

Key Activities

The author set up a Twitter account a few months prior to publication and now uses it regularly for academic purposes. Evelyne’s Twitter handle is @SchmidEvelyne. Evelyne used the book cover as her Twitter picture and included “author of X” in her Twitter biography.

From the author:

Through Twitter I try to seriously engage with news related to my book topic. I don’t just post a link to the book, but analyse current events and other relevant topics and relate them to my work, engage with questions asked at conferences and respond to them on Twitter.

I used a link shortener to customise a link to my book and include it wherever appropriate to encourage readers to find out more information about the book and hopefully to make a purchase.

I posted a list of all book reviews on my website and posted full texts where possible (see here). I asked Springer and the authors for permission to upload two additional review; they said yes.

In the months after publication, I referenced the new book in my email signature.

I sent an email with the discount flyer to personal contacts and other academics I met at conferences. In each email I included personal notes to each group of recipients, including details on how and when we met, how they helped with the book and so on.

I organized book launches, spoke at conferences, summer schools, and organized a book discussion symposium on a blog. Whenever there was something upcoming, I posted about it on Facebook and Twitter.

Together with Cambridge University Press, I also submitted the book to competitions and was successful in winning a book award, which helped extend the reach of the book and raise its profile.

I tried (unsuccessfully) to motivate a journalist to write about the research in a newspaper. This only seems to work if there is an obvious link to a current event.

I tried to make sure people who expressed interest in reviewing had a copy of the book.

I often include “author of the recently published monograph X” in speakers’/authors’ bios.
From the authors

What social media platforms did you use?
I used Twitter mostly, supported by my website, events and emails.

How successful was it in reaching and connecting with more readers?
It is hard to say, but it was often very rewarding to get responses as people were really showing interest and engaged with my findings.

Would you recommend this approach to other authors?
Yes, it is a bit of extra work, but it would be a pity if interested potential readers out there don’t find out that the book exists!

Did you use any of the Author Hub Guides and if so were they helpful?
Yes, especially the one on how to use Twitter effectively.

From the marketing team

How did you work with the authors to promote this book?
We used the full marketing mix to promote the book from print mailings to email ‘cluster’ campaigns and support at launch events. The book was included in online collections as part of our promotion of Human Rights Day 2015 and the book also benefited from an increased marketing push as part of our celebrations of the 70th anniversary of our Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law series. The book sold very well and is now available in paperback format (July 2016).

Sian Welch, Marketing Executive

From the author

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Author Hub

Every Cambridge author is assigned a dedicated marketing specialist who works alongside the editor and the sales team to develop and implement a marketing plan. In addition, every author has access to Author Hub, a website that provides resources and tools to interact with the academic community online, engage with readers and find new audiences.

Visit cambridge.org/authorhub to get started today or email us on authorhub@cambridge.org with any questions.

Connecting with readers on Twitter is a bit of extra work, but it would be a pity if interested potential readers out there don’t find out that the book exists!