

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE SCIENCE LIBRARY: HOW IT REALLY WORKS





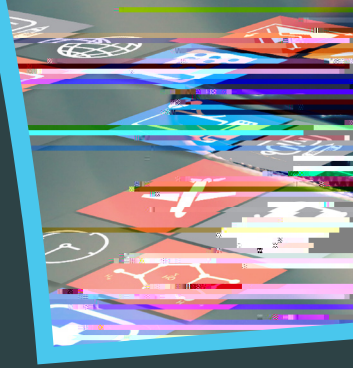




## MICHELLE BOND

Faculty Librarian  
Faculty of Science  
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echoing in Higher Education.

Posts that evoke memories or feelings tend to be really popular – we post images from graduation, for example. We did a Throwback Thursday post last year that was really popular. We posted pictures of our library before it was refurbished and had lots of likes and people reminiscing about their time studying here. I made sure to respond to each comment we got on the pictures to encourage further interaction – it was actually really fun! For me personally, having our library assistants suggest ideas for posts has been really memorable, as they haven't been involved in the social media team so far, so it shows they're interested and what we're doing has an impact.



## ARIEL ANDREA

Chemistry Librarian  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Ariel's background is in inorganic chemistry. As Chemistry Librarian, she provides instruction and reference support to the Chemistry Department.

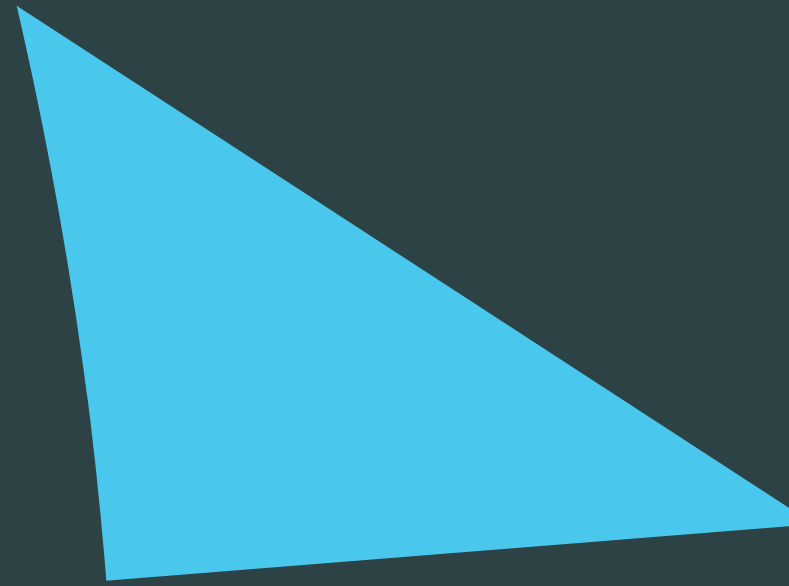
The UW-Madison Libraries have many social media accounts, and they encourage the branch libraries, like mine, to have social media accounts as well.

I use Twitter because it is a quick and easy way to send out timely messages about workshops or other events. Twitter is used by many academics as a source for networking and news, and that's the audience I'm interested in. I find that posts about events, and posts that include an image, tend to get shared more.

I also use Pinterest – chemistry can be a very visual science, and so I try to show that off in one of the boards, [Lab Beautiful](#). I also have a popular board that highlights chemical errors in media and TV, [Cringe Worthy Chemistry](#).

## Key tips

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The most common remark we hear from patrons is that they would like greater accessibility to our collections (we have closed stacks). Enter social media as a tool to achieve such accessibility!

## VICTORIA L ORZECZOWSKI

Librarian  
Othmer Library of Chemical History,  
Chemical Heritage Foundation

Victoria Orzechowski earned her MSLIS from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA, in 2013. She is currently a Librarian at the Othmer Library of Chemical History. Her responsibilities span both public and technical services, including administration of the library's social media accounts.

## Key tips

- 1. INITIATE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR LIBRARY USERS TO FIND OUT WHAT CONTENT THEY WANT/NEED.**
- 2. RESPOND PROMPTLY TO QUERIES TO SHOW THAT YOU'RE DEPENDABLE AND ACTIVE ONLINE.**





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Responding promptly to users is a priority for us since timely responses do much to communicate to users that we are dependable and engaged online. As such, when questions are received, they are sent immediately to the appropriate staff member for response. As the administrator, I check with the staff member to make sure that a response was sent. I keep track of these exchanges in my monthly social media report.



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## MAK JIE YING

Assistant Librarian  
National University of Singapore

Jie Ying is a Chemistry Resource Librarian at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Libraries. Since joining NUS Libraries in 2014, she has been exposed to various roles such as cataloguing, reference services and learning support. She holds a BSc (Hons) in chemistry from NUS. Her areas of interest include digital scholarship and citation metrics.

The NUS Science Library caters to the Faculty of Science which comprises six departments and more than seven thousand staff and students. We currently blog and run social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, Foursquare and YouTube.

The Library Communications Team uses these networks to disseminate information on services and upcoming events, share photos from past events, and repost articles on the university's research breakthroughs.

I get to know my users by conducting information literacy programmes and outreach activities several times every semester for undergraduates and graduate students.

I currently receive enquiries mainly through online chats, emails and face-to-face interactions. As the Chemistry Resource Librarian, I intend to explore new ways in engaging the users to promote chemistry resources and learning support programmes.

The posts that currently do best and get the most responses for us are the ones that showcase the exhibits and events in NUS Libraries, as well as certain reposts of light-hearted articles and videos.

### **Beyond my library**

My personal favourites include Instagram posts by [New York Public Library](#). blic Library

## Key tips

- 1. GET YOUR AUDIENCE TO FEEL LIKE THEY'VE VISITED BY SHARING EVENTS AND EXHIBITS.**
- 2. DON'T RESTRICT YOURSELF TO THE MORE COMMON CHANNELS – IF FACEBOOK'S NOT WORKING FOR YOU, TRY FOURSQUARE OR YOUTUBE.**

## Summary of key tips

- Set up notifications so that you can respond quickly when a library user asks you a question through social media
- If your subject has visual appeal, take advantage by posting to image-based social media platforms like Pinterest or Instagram
- Think like a marketer: catch your audience's eye with a good image and think of the 'call to action'
- Keep your posts varied: experiment with news, fun facts or useful information to find out what gets the best response from your library users
- Get your audience to feel like they've visited by sharing events and exhibits
- Don't restrict yourself to the more common channels – if Facebook's not working for you, try Foursquare or YouTube
- Don't be afraid to show some personality
- Create a list of links or articles to post intermittently – useful when time is short and it means you don't have to think up new messages every time
- Mix up your own content with things that entertain or inspire you
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