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LET'S CONNECT

SC Press Author's Guide to Using Social Media

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WHY?

Social Media is a free and effective way to market and sell your book. Social media platforms are great for tapping into niche audiences, cultivating community that translates into readers, and announcing new work as it's published. With a strategy based social media plan, you can meet readers where they already are.

THE PRESS

NEED SOME EXAMPLES?

Follow USC Press on our channels for examples of the types of content and features to use.



GENERAL RULES

1. The Profile

Your profile is the equivalent to your first impression. Be sure to have a clear picture for your avatar, a short bio, and a link to your latest release with SC Press.

2. The Audience

Search for and follow leaders in your field, relevant institutions, and journals or magazines that have reviewed your work. Social platforms will recommend your account to users with interests that are similar to yours and based on who you interact with and follow. Your following can help you get exposure to the audience you want. Think of this as building a personal brand by association.

Be aware of and build your audience. Family, friends, and colleagues may be following your accounts already. Personal connections are important for effective social strategies, so it's good to include these people in your audience.

GENERAL RULES CONTINUED

3. The Content

Tailoring your content to your audience is key. Each platform's best performing content type differs, however photos and videos always perform well. Written posts should be limited to a few lines.

While content should be personal, stay away from oversharing. Keep in mind that social media is now a professional tool. Focus on your writing, books you're reading, academic work that you've enjoyed, and other topics of interest that relate to your work or audience. A good rule of thumb if you're not sure how to tailor your account to promoting your book: use a personal tone to comment on professional or relevant topics.

4. The Community

The most effective accounts don't necessarily have the most followers, or even the most advanced multimedia. If you're looking to generate sales, it is more important to have an engaged audience than a large audience. The more your followers interact with your posts (likes, comments, shares, etc.) the more likely they will follow a sales call to action. "Like" other posts, comment, begin discussions, and respond to other users' content to create a more connected network.

THE BREAKDOWN

Facebook:

The original social networking platform, posts are written and can include photos, videos, or links to websites. Users can like, comment, or share posts. We recommend that you create a Facebook page that is used for your book promotion rather than using your personal account. Readers "like" the page as opposed to "friending" the personal account. This way, readers can see posts without the author having to "friend" them back. [Click here for instructions on how to post a photo to Facebook.](#)

Instagram:

With this photo-sharing platform, you post pictures and have the option to include a caption. You can also post photos that expire (disappear) after 24 hours using Instagram's 'Story' feature.

[Click here for instructions on how to post a photo to Instagram.](#)

Twitter:

This platform lets you share short posts no more than 280 characters, links, breaking news, and engage in discussions.

[Click here for instructions on 'tweeting.'](#)

Others:

LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Snapchat are other frequently visited platforms, however they are generally not recommended for book promotion.


HASHTAGS EXPLAINED

The symbol # is commonly known as the number sign, pound sign, or hashtag. In 2007 it was introduced on social media platforms to identify or tag posts as a way to link common threads or ideas.

When placed in front of a word or phrase a # collects every post with that tag on the platform. You can click a hashtag to view a page with all the posts with that hashtag.

Hashtags are great for gauging public interest or discourse on a particular topic, and for finding niche interest groups. Hashtags can gain much more exposure for your posts than if they were void of tags. You can create your own hashtags to create a category for your posts or adopt one that has an established following. For example, the Press uses **#USCPress** on most of our posts for brand awareness.

Think of hashtags as a way to measure what's relevant, to join popular conversations, to tap into special interest groups, and to make yourself stand out on social.

The Facebook logo, a white lowercase 'f' inside a light blue square, is positioned on the left side of the page. To its right, the word 'FACEBOOK' is written in a large, bold, dark red, sans-serif font.

FACEBOOK

Post Type: longer written posts, videos, pictures, and public event notices

Best For: All authors because both written and multimedia content are important for posts. This is the platform for calls to action. We recommend that authors create a business page for their books.

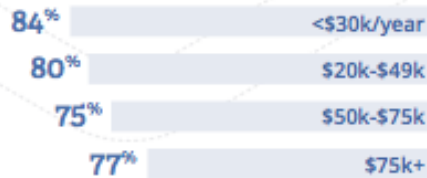
Additional Features: Facebook business pages cost nothing to create and offer excellent low-cost marketing tools. You can run promotions and ads, provide product links, and create event pages to let people know about author signings or readings. The 'Events' feature is unique to Facebook, and highly effective.

Don't have a Facebook page yet?
[Click here for a step-by-step guide.](#)

2 Billion
Monthly Active Users¹



Income of internet users who use Facebook¹



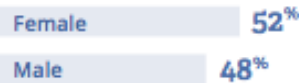
30% of retail shoppers who recently made a purchase discovered a new product on Facebook²

Age of internet users who use Facebook¹



Network where millennials and Gen X are most likely to share content³

Gender¹



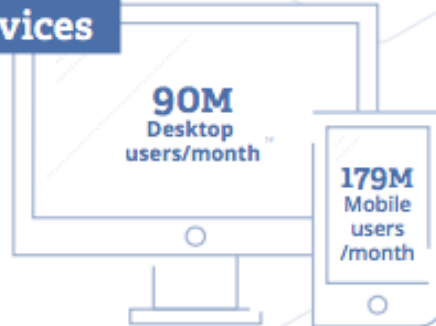
Users spend an average of 2.5 seconds with a piece of content on desktop

Time



75% of users spend over 20 minutes per day on Facebook¹

Devices



Users spend an average of 1.7 seconds with a piece of content on mobile¹

WHAT TO POST

Here is a sample of the kinds of content you could post or share on Facebook:

- Links to reviews of your book
- Blog posts featuring your book
- What you're reading right now
- Pictures of your book on store shelves
- Articles or publications you think are interesting
- Literary events in the community
- Pictures of family, friends, or readers with your book
- Posts about your writing process
- Pictures of your desk/ where you work
- Event pages that provide information on book signings, appearances, book club meetings, etc.
- Anecdotes about publishing, writing, researching, etc.
- Tips for authors or questions for readers

When you're stuck, you can always share posts from the USC Press Page!



Post Type: 280 characters maximum. May include short looped video clips (gifs) or photos

Best For: Witty humor, joining popular conversations, political or social discussions, and engaging with academic writers, journalists, popular figures, etc.

Additional Features: Twitter is known for the spread of memes: ideas or images that are shared by many people; a process called "going viral." The 'moments' tab highlights the latest relevant conversations users are having about pop culture, political events, entertainment, sports, etc. The 'retweet' button on Twitter is much like the share button on Facebook and allows for conversation threads that mimic dialogue between users.

Don't have a Twitter page yet?

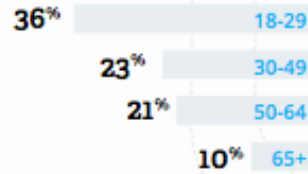
[Click here for a step-by-step guide.](#)



317 Million

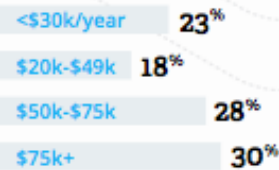
Monthly Active Users¹

Age of internet users who use Twitter²

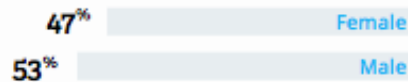


29% of Americans with a degree use Twitter³

Income of internet users who use Twitter⁴



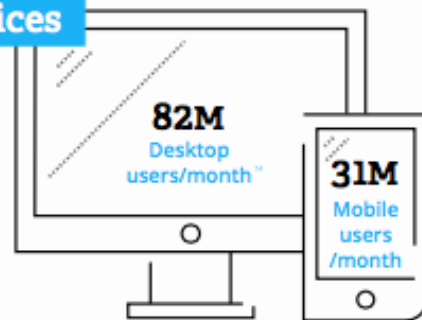
Gender⁵



Time



Devices



79%

of Twitter users retweet SMBs⁹

84%

of Twitter users use Twitter to find coupons, deals, reviews, and ideas¹⁰

75%

of Twitter users check the site daily to get their news¹¹



WHAT TO TWEET

Twitter is great for conversations. Here's how to engage...

- Retweet reviews or blogs about your book.
- Tweet what you're reading right now, and ask followers for suggestions.
- Retweet articles or publications that interest you. Feel free to 'retweet with a comment' and add a short comment to the post when sharing the article.
- Respond to other authors, journalists, scholars, and publications when they tweet relevant content related to your interests or work.
- Engage in conversations using popular hashtags (#) for more exposure
- Have a quick wit? Share humor about writing or life.
- Engage with popular writers, publishers, or prominent figures in your field.
- Retweet content from @USCPress

The Instagram logo is a stylized camera icon with a white outline, set against a purple-to-orange gradient background. The word "INSTAGRAM" is written in a bold, dark red, sans-serif font, overlaid on the logo.

INSTAGRAM

Post Type: Photos, illustrations, and short videos (30 seconds or less). Highly visual medium.

Best For: Children's books, art books, illustrated or photo-heavy books, books appealing to Millennial generation and younger

Additional Features: Instagram is saturated with bloggers and "Influencers"- users with large to medium followings that treat the platform like a multimedia blog or diary. Bloggers are typically young women. Books are often used in photos to feature the aesthetic value of reading and a literary lifestyle.

Don't have an Instagram account yet?
[Click here for a step-by-step guide.](#)



Instagram

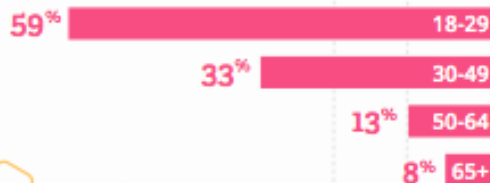
800 Million

Monthly Active Users**

500 Million

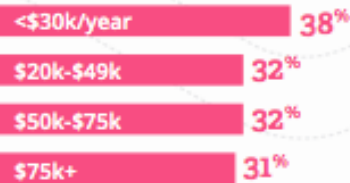
Daily Active Users

Age of internet users who use Instagram*



53% of teens say Instagram is the best platform to tell them about new products**

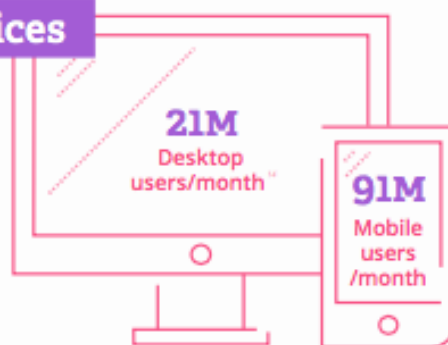
Income of internet users who use Instagram*



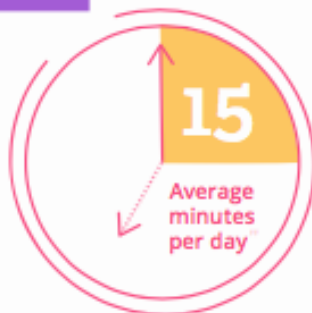
Gender**



Devices



Time



53% of users follow brands*



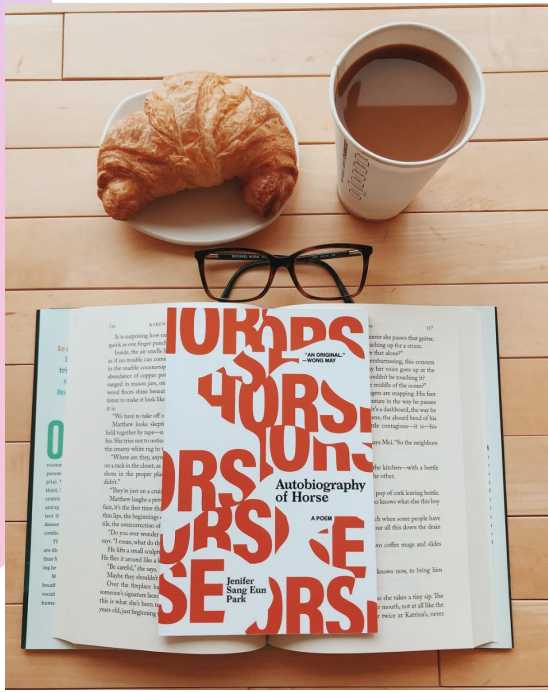
WHAT TO GRAM

As the most visual platform, the most successful accounts post almost exclusively clear, quality photos. These can be achieved with a phone and natural light, or higher quality cameras. Ideas for what to post include:

- Photos that highlight the aesthetic value of your book or writing life, including photos of your desk or work space, favorite places to write and read, photos of your book against interesting backgrounds, photos of your book with interesting props, etc. (Examples on the next page.)
- Photos from signings, events, book clubs, or speaking engagements
- Pictures from your favorite libraries or book stores.
- Photos of friends or readers with your book
- Photos of your book in your community (for example, a person reading it at the park or a local coffee shop.)
- Photos that give a personal look at your life as a writer, illustrator, photographer, curator, etc.
- any relevant photos shared by SC Press!

Extra Tip: If you post from a local business or community hot spot, tag their account in the photo and in your caption. They may repost and get you more exposure. Always tag @USCPress so we can share your content.

EXAMPLES



herbook.shelf • Follow
Chicago, Illinois

herbook.shelf Thank you to @gaudyboysu for this review copy!

I woke up feeling really ill this morning, so I don't foresee a ton of reading getting done today. Still, I can't wait to dive into this one!

#bookstagram #bookstagrammer #bookstagramfeature #books #book #fall #novel #read #reading #reader #reads #currentlyreading #bookshelf #herbookshelf #bookish #bookworm #bibliophile #nonfiction #feminism #feminist #novel #fiction

the feminist reader I'm excited to read this one too! It sounds really unique and interesting 🌟

51 likes
1 HOUR AGO

Add a comment...



dropandgivemenergy • Follow

dropandgivemenergy It's Mondaaaayyyy! Time for another #maddiemooobookreview 📖 Today we are reviewing Sleepover at the Museum from @crownpublishing so head over to dropandgivemenergy.com (Link in bio) to check it out!

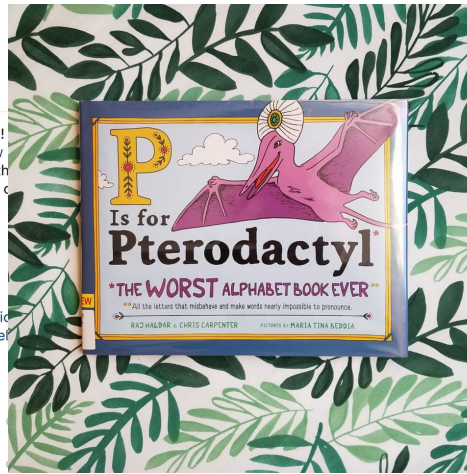
#Book #bookish #bibliophile #bookworm #bookstagram #booklover #booknerd #bookphotography #read #reading #instabook #booknerd #lovereading #fiction #blog #bookblog #bookblogger #bookshelf #bookreview #picturebook #kidsbook #kidsbookstagram #booknerdignans #bookobsessed #bookaddict

shaonthebay I am still distracted by the boots. Want.

sexcellencebook What's the best book you have ever read?

251 likes
FEBRUARY 18

Add a comment...



b.andherbooks • Follow

b.andherbooks My 7yo couldn't believe some of these were actually words! Awesome vocabulary, silly and charming illustrations, and an excellent book to read a-loud with kids and adults!

P is for Pterodactyl from @sourcebookskids #bookstagram #booklover #booknerd #bookstagrammer #reader #bookish #booksofinstagram #bookphotography #librarybooks #picturebooks #readaloud #kidlit #pterodactyl #alwaysreading #instabook

31 likes
5 HOURS AGO

Add a comment...



hotcocoareads • Follow

hotcocoareads I could learn a thing or two from Skippy about how to Sunday pro 🐾

Load more comments

hotcocoareads @neecydee_reads I've heard that too!

outofthexbox Oh my gosh!! I had a cat named skippy once!! Awww!

imworthyandenough Awww!! It's name is Skippy?! 🐾

literaryjourney Yes! Me too!

hannekehermes Such an inviting photo! Today I was lucky enough to snuggle up with Mrs. Jones at my friends house. I might becoming a cat person too

booksterjess What a cozy photo 🧡

1,619 likes
1 DAY AGO

Add a comment...



gaudyboysu • Follow

gaudyboysu I'm rereading a classic this week! I love this beautiful edition of The Joy Luck Club. 📖, Kathryn

"Then you must teach my daughter this same lesson. How to lose your innocence but not your hope. How to laugh forever."

#bookquotes #classics #bookcoverdesign #reading #bookstagram #igbooks #thejoyluckclub #amytan

40 likes
JANUARY 8

Add a comment...



FINAL THOUGHTS...

The most important strategy for succeeding in social is to **engage with your audience**. Begin conversations, like and comment on other users' posts and share compelling content. You don't need to be overly promotional, rather personalize your writing to your convert your audience to readers.

The strategies in this guide are a general introduction to social media. As you become familiar with each platform and your audience feel free to adjust your strategy. Notice which posts that perform well and the trends in your followers' posts to be sure they align with your goals for promoting your book. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for social media, but this information will help you effectively reach more readers.

HELPFUL LINKS

- [Glossary of terms from Hubspot.com](#)
- [Tips for social from The Writing Cooperative](#)
- [How One Academic Created His "Author Platform" - The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)
- [Instagram content tips from Jane Friedman](#)
- [Ingram Spark's social media guide](#)
- [Image/graphics size guide for social platforms](#)
- [Twitter hashtags for authors](#)
- [More hashtags for authors](#)
- [How to create an event on Facebook](#)
- [How to increase your impact as an academic using social networks](#)
- [Become an academic influencer on Twitter - from the University of Bath](#)
- [To tweet or not to tweet: Twitter for academics](#)