The Social Content Strategy of the ATLAS Collaboration

Why ATLAS Collaboration goes Social?

The ATLAS collaboration uses various social media platforms primarily to communicate the research and achievements of the collaboration to a wider public audience. Audience includes students (potential future scientists), the general public, and policy makers. Each group has different reasons to engage, which can include:
- be informed and learn,
- feel the “wow factor” of big science and fundamental research,
- justify public funding.

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Rise of Mobile Users

Since 2015, mobile devices (including both smartphones and tablets) are now the primary means of accessing the internet for most users, accounting for 73% of internet consumption in 2018. This is up from 70% in 2017 and 65% in 2016. Mobile users are less likely to open webpages, preferring to remain in-app when viewing new content. Ratio of mobile internet access higher in developing countries than in developed ones → Unique opportunity to close the developed vs developing countries gap

Adapting to this new means of consumption is vital for ensuring that ATLAS content reaches its target audiences.

Facebook Notes

Strategy: bring content directly to Facebook users using the note function.

Considerations:
- Facebook users prefer to remain on the facebook platform → use Facebook notes to publish briefings/press statements. Entire content is available without clicking away from Facebook.
- Notes require attractive banners → opportunity to highlight e.g. related event displays

Adapting to the New Normal

ATLAS content is being tailored to each social media platform, addressing the benefits and limitations of each. Focus on making ATLAS content more accessible to mobile users, thus improving its visibility and shareability.

Strategy:

Creating video content tailored to Facebook/Instagram/Twitter. Videos are 1x1 aspect ratio and under 1 minute.

Using Facebook note feature to bring ATLAS content directly to Facebook interface. Users no longer need to leave the app to access content.

Videos

Goal: Creating video content tailored to Facebook/Instagram/Twitter.

Considerations:
- Square videos take up 78% more real estate in the News Feed on mobile than on desktop → create videos with 1x1 dimensions
- Twitter/Instagram have 2min/1min length limit → create videos ±1min
- 85% of Facebook videos are watched without sound → ensure video content has subtitles or captions
- Social media videos tend to be more direct, quick to capture attention → adapt to this style by avoiding traditional “movie” narrative

Statistics

- Published a “Women in Physics” Social Media video for IWD2018. Video has gained 49,000 views on Facebook, 13,800 views on Twitter & 1,300 views on Instagram (May 2018), making it the most popular ATLAS video published since the start-up of the LHC.
- In average, video sharing more than doubled; despite shorter length, more minutes are watched.
- Facebook notes perform consistently better than links to ATLAS website, with an average of 145 readers compared to 90 link clicks.

Bibliography:

“Social Media Use in 2018” Pew Research Center

“Social Media strategy for the ATLAS experiment”, C. Nellist, ATL-OREACH-PROC-2016-008

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WITHOUT GOOD RESULTS YOU CAN’T DO GOOD COMMUNICATION!