How to Promote Your Published Work

Publishing a book or an article is a great achievement that comes through years, months, and countless hours of research and revision. However, the publication of your book or article isn't the last step in the long process. Instead, think about how you will get the word out about your research after it's published and make sure it has the impact you desire. APSA interviewed three public relations, communications, and marketing professionals about the steps newly published authors should take.

1. Define your goals

Camille Gamboa, PR, public affairs and conventions manager at SAGE Publishing, says this is the most important part of the process for newly published authors. "We recommend authors take inventory of what their goals are. Is it to get their research out to the public so that it has impact, or to policymakers, so that it has impact in the policy world, or is it to get citations and to get their research out to their colleagues and the research community? Starting with that question really shapes the path you want to take."

Political scientists generally seek to promote their work to three different audiences:

- The public: If you answer in this way, it may be helpful to be a bit more specific. Do you want to engage middle and high schoolers? Adults in a particular geographic region? Members of specific communities?
- The media: Which media fits your research best? Is your piece newsworthy for a national publication, or likely to be of greatest interest to local papers? If it’s not newsworthy now, might it be later? Are there reporters or news outlets that cover your area of expertise well?
- Other scholars: Promoting your work through non-academic channels can open up opportunities for collaboration across disciplines and increase citations.

Determining your ideal audience will help you figure out the best mediums for your promotion and engagement.

2. Determine your comfort zone

Although there are many tried and true methods of promoting your work, that doesn’t mean all of them are right for you. "Do you enjoy posting on Facebook? Then push [your article or book] out via Facebook. If you just love to write, do that. If you're kind of a funny person, try YouTube videos," said Michael Todd, a manager of social science communications at SAGE Publishing. "There’s definitely a ‘best way’ to get your work out there, but if you’re not comfortable doing it, it doesn’t really matter." If you recoil at the idea of joining another social media platform or happily pass your time scrolling through a Twitter feed, let these instincts guide your choice in platform.

3. Start small

There are a few small things you can do that fit in nearly all comfort zones. Put a link to your article or book in your e-mail signature. Let your institution’s communications or government relations department know about your publication. These offices keep track of opportunities to share your work with local media and alumni, or can effectively direct your research to local or federal officials who may be interested in your work.
Upload your article details to Kudos. The Kudos platform also integrates with Altmetric, a service used to track the impact of academic articles in the social web. Kudos also helps users to automate promotion of publications in advance. “The steps that the Kudos system takes authors through, writing a lay summary and impact statement for their article, and then systematically distributing them via social media, are ones we’d encourage all researchers to consider,” said Marisa Starr, a marketing manager at Taylor & Francis.

4. Blog about it

Blogging about your research and area of study is an excellent way to bring attention to your research, reach a broader audience online, connect with students, and practice translating scholarly activities into plain language. Cambridge University Press has a quick guide to launching and maintaining a blog.

However, creating your own blog requires a significant investment of time. “The Internet is littered with academic blogs which started with great enthusiasm but fizzled out quickly. There are plenty of good reasons researchers should consider starting a blog, including building up a ready following for their published research,” said Starr. “But you do need to make sure you have the time and enthusiasm to keep it going.” If you are not ready to create your own blog, considering pitching to political science blogs or academic platforms that accept outside submissions, such as The Conversation, the Oxford University Press blog, Political Violence at a Glance, and the Monkey Cage. Make sure you review each outlet’s pitching guidelines before you proceed. If none of these opportunities feels right for you, you can also post your piece to a social media platform you use regularly to get the attention of your professional network, like LinkedIn. Once your blog goes live, share it with APSA on Twitter using #APSAPressGallery or via email at press@apsanet.org.

5. Get social

Twitter is a prominent platform for scholars engaging in public, and can serve users in many ways: as a marketing tool, a community, and a space for real-time analysis of news. However, as Cambridge University Press notes in its Twitter guide, “the best time to set up a Twitter account is prior to publication, so that you already have an established audience to talk to during the main promotional period for your publication.” Todd also says connecting with journalists on social media should be approached the same way, providing commentary and insight in advance, without expectation of publicity: “You don’t buy insurance the day the house burns down. You buy it in advance.” Twitter isn’t the right platform for everyone. You can also bolster your online presence by creating an Amazon author page. If your specialty has an existing entry on Wikipedia, add your article or book as a source. Gamboa said this approach is specifically helpful for promoting books: “The reality is that students are going to Wikipedia as a first step.”

6. Make a splash with a video abstract or introduction

Starr noted that starting and maintaining an academic blog is a large time commitment. Creating a video abstract or introduction to your research is a shorter-term commitment, but may require a new set of skills or outside resources. “A video abstract doesn’t take as long to produce, and the final video itself needs to be quite short, but you do want something that is going to be well made and which will do your research justice.” said Starr. She recommends checking if your institution has multimedia services you can use to produce the video. Gamboa and Todd said a lack of production value, such as using your laptop’s camera to record a video, can be balanced out by an abundance of personality. If you’re considering the platform, Todd says, get to know it. “Take a look through YouTube and ape the style you like.”

7. Take advantage of publishers’ guidance and support

If your research hooks into a newsworthy issue, you can take advantage of your publisher’s media office through press releases and other press opportunities. Publishers’ marketing offices may be able to help you create a
marketing plan for your book before it is published. Each publisher offers unique support. Cambridge will help authors edit video abstracts, Taylor & Francis provides free e-prints of articles so authors can share their work with key audiences beyond a paywall, and SAGE creates email marketing campaigns for authors. Beyond that, publishers create many useful resources for authors looking to amplify their work and web presence. See a few noteworthy guides below:

- Cambridge University Press: [A Guide to Author Videos](#)
- Cambridge University Press: [A Guide to Using Twitter](#)
- SAGE Publishing: [Author Guide to Promoting your Book or Article](#)
- Routledge (Taylor & Francis): [Promoting Your Book](#)
- Taylor and Francis: [Ensuring Your Research Makes an Impact](#)
- Taylor and Francis: [Tweet Your Research: A How-To Guide](#)

Developing a plan for promoting your published work requires precious time and effort, but is an essential step for authors who seek to have their work read and shared inside and outside the academic community. For more tools and tips for public engagement, see APSA's [webpage](#).