

# New Trends in Research Communication

## INTRODUCTION

The health science research is an important aspect in the evolution of medical field and hundreds of articles are published in peer-reviewed journals annually. The number of submission is monstrous and the acceptance rate in top journals is low. The journals also need to place a stringent peer-reviewed process so that good research is disseminated to the medical fraternity and public at large. The medical publication field also undergoes changes according to the prevalent fervor of the research milieu and a working knowledge of important changes is essential to keep abreast of things in vogue. The communication of research findings is instrumental for wider readership and citations. The need to “stand out” and be heard is always desirable for any author and use of available avenues or resources helps in the process. A working knowledge of the current trends in the research communication field that is becoming the norm should be of interest to both a novice and an active enthusiast alike. A few notable ones are described below.

## INFOGRAPHICS

Information graphics or infographics are a method for communication of information by means of visualization and use of interesting imagery.<sup>[1]</sup> Audience recall and comprehension are increased with the use of images and this medium and thus are preferred by authors as well.<sup>[2]</sup> Leading journals such as *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons* or the *Bone and Joint Journal* (previously *the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* [JBJS] Br), among others display, encourage, and promote infographics. JBJS American also supports infographics and video summaries.<sup>[3,4]</sup> All leading publication houses are making spaces for and few are actively asking for supplemental infographics from authors.

## NEW AGE ABSTRACT

### Graphical abstract

The findings of the article in a single image are gaining extensive popularity as it is easy on the eyes and works well for a quick comprehension of the key findings of the study. There are various types of graphical abstracts such as flow diagrams, visual system models, and visual representations.<sup>[5]</sup> Flow diagram consists of depiction using shapes such as squares, arrows, and crosses and indicates methodology, results, or interaction of variables. Visual system models focus on bigger picture of the concerned research work. Visual representations, on the other hand, include infographics or comic representations with creative inputs by the authors.

## Video abstract/video summaries

In an attempt to showcase key aspects and findings of published article, short multimedia videos with graphics, footage, or PowerPoint presentation can be used. Aimed for better promotion of the article and including a narrative of the research work, these short videos are apt for wider dissemination across online platforms. Various types such as whiteboard explainer videos, PowerPoint presentation, animations, author-talking or self-recorded videos, and motion graphics are available for use as per the requirement.

## RESEARCH NEWS STORIES

The findings of the research should be communicated to general public and now many journals/publication houses like Wiley also offer services to create research news stories. Skilled science writers prepare drafts for general audience to understand the research work and its nuances. The use of attention-grabbing headlines or images can be done for the news-story ready to be popularized either through a press release, blog post, news articles or a newsletter.<sup>[6]</sup> Social media hashtags are also key elements and the links to the articles from all these postings can be done through the digital object identifier (DOI) of the article.

## LAY SUMMARY/LAY PERSON SUMMARY/PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

The medical research results are often too complex information for the general public and the wider interest is marred by extensive technical terminology and jargons. More and more journals are now game for undertaking efforts to simplify medical information for the consumption of general public.<sup>[7]</sup> Lay summaries thus lead to a wider dissemination of the information and various resources and journal articles are available with information to authors to help create good layperson summary.<sup>[8]</sup>

## NEWER AVENUES FOR RESEARCH PROMOTION

### Podcasts

The fast life of contemporary times and less attention span calls for information ‘on the go’. The people can subscribe, download, listen audio content over mobile phones, and the rise of podcasts has transformed their reach and convenience. These avenues can be utilized for promotion of research contents for medical education purposes through innovative skits, narration, and stories.<sup>[9]</sup>

### Online engagements

#### Personal blogs

The blogs can be used to communicate about specific or general research communication with the audience and help raise

visibility. Summaries of research with links to the article such as DOI number or webpage universal resource locator address make seamless viewing and downloading of the article. Besides it, critical comments can be sought and can be responded for better audience engagement. Regular posting is vital to remain relevant and make a mark.

### Social media sites (Instagram/Twitter/Meta (erstwhile Facebook) etc.

Various fora for online social communication can also be used for publication alerts and research promotion.<sup>[10]</sup> Links, abstract, or images of the work can be uploaded along with other events like conference presentation for a particular research work. The groups of like-minded colleagues and other researchers can be followed and constant updates in respective fields can be shared globally. Separate author page for professional use can be made along with personal page for better impact.

Update on research also is frequently shared on Twitter with Retweets and important feeds contributing to online buzz around the articles to help gain readership.

### Personal website

Personal website can host various elements such as abstracts, full-text downloads, presentations, or videos summarizing key research finding for a wider distribution. All social media accounts that articles can be included with appropriate links. Domain registration, website creation, hosting, and maintenance can be done by self or by a facilitating service provider. One key point is that number of visits and readings can be seen to gauge user traction and engagement that also helps track the trends.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, a good research should reach the worthy readers and wider population. With increasing body of evidence and surge of research articles, the race to grab the eyeballs and occupy the mind space has become more challenging. Suddenly, just doing great research seems not enough. Promotions strategy akin to that of an upcoming entertainment project may sound audacious, but the time for adapting to big changes seems pretty close.

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