

## Creating content marketing for libraries

*Gali Halevi, MLS, PhD; Robin O'Hanlon, MIS*

See end of article for authors' affiliations.

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Content marketing can be a powerful tool for marketing the services of academic and health sciences libraries. Competing for the attention of busy students and faculty, the library must develop its own channels of engagement, which makes content-driven activities essential. A common example is resource licensing. Once a library licenses a new resource, driving or encouraging usage is a challenge. Traditional communication efforts such as email blasts are usually not sufficient as busy users tend to use resources that they are already familiar with. Creating content-driven marketing around the availability of library resources is an innovative way to create long-term engagement with users and reinforce the availability of new resources. Yet creating content for marketing is not an easy task, especially when librarians are already busy with managing their libraries' daily operations and a variety of projects.

There are different types of content that can be used for marketing, including social media content and content created for publications such as newsletters and blogs. These content types are distinct in nature; the former is preferably visual and concise, while the latter is more elaborate and topically diverse [1]. Regardless of the content type, content should be interchangeable and communicated across different platforms and channels.

### THE KEY TO CONTENT CREATION: ENGAGEMENT-BASED WORKFLOW ACTIVITIES

For decades, the Levy Library was a relatively small health sciences library serving the faculty, students, and staff of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine (now the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai [ISMMS]). However, as Mount Sinai expanded into a sprawling health system and a flourishing research facility, the library has transformed to serve all communities in the system. These communities include researchers, clinicians, medical students, graduate students and postdocs, fellows, and house staff across several hospitals and research centers. To

create activities that interest all of our communities, we took stock of our current activities and identified those that we had not yet served: faculty and clinicians. While we had traditionally worked closely with the medical and graduate schools to provide information literacy and evidence-based medicine instruction, we did not have a wider potential audience there.

As a starting point, we focused on two types of content: an educational series and research reports.

### EDUCATIONAL SERIES: THE LEVY LIBRARY RESEARCH INSIDER

By developing a branded educational series, we were able to create content for social media marketing. In July 2015, we created the "The Levy Library Research Insider" seminar series [2] and blog [3]. The purpose of the series was to bring together researchers, clinicians, information technology (IT) professionals, and the library to highlight the latest innovations in various scientific fields as well as library resources and services. To feature valuable and relevant content to all intended audiences, we collaborated with various departments in the organization. The seminars enabled us to create stories around the topic, speakers, and event itself. Our first seminar, "Rx in the App Store: Current Issues in Health Care Apps" [4], featured a Mount Sinai emergency room (ER) doctor who invented an asthma app, an IT director who is working on medical apps, and the deputy director of Mount Sinai Health System Libraries, who manages licensing of resource apps for the Levy Library.

Before the event, we broadcasted a series of tweets focusing on medical apps and about app development at Mount Sinai. Announcements and images of the seminar's posters were uploaded to all our channels including Facebook, Twitter, and the Research Insider LibGuide on our website. During the event, we took pictures and live tweeted them, along with quotes from our speakers. After the event, we posted an event summary on our Facebook page, complete with photos, tagging individuals where appropriate. These activities drove users to

engage with us by retweeting and liking our posts, thus expanding the impact of our social media networks considerably. Following the event, we wrote a recap article that included photographs. The promotional cycle continued when we then tweeted about the event blog post and posted it on Facebook. The event was also recorded, which gave us the opportunity to introduce our YouTube channel [5] to our users and provided us with additional content to tweet and post about.

All Research Insider seminars have a tie-in to the Levy Library, relating to promotion of specific resources, services, or staff expertise. For “Rx in the App Store,” we took the opportunity to promote specific apps that the library provided access to, such as clinical decision support tools like UpToDate and VisualDx. These types of “content stories” (i.e., seminar themes, posters, photos, quotes, videos) were a direct result of the seminar and resulted in an increase from 70 to over 200 Twitter followers in a matter of weeks. Finally, we saw a surge in the number of users downloading library apps in the weeks following the seminar.

Our second seminar, “NextGen: Advances in Nursing Technology and Research” [6], was part of the library’s “2016 Year of the Nurse @ Levy Library” campaign and was a direct result of collaboration with Mount Sinai Health System’s Chief Nursing Office. Prior to launching this campaign, a joint mission statement was produced stating the following:

In 2016, Levy Library at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai is focusing attention on understanding the information and research needs of clinical and research nurses throughout the Mount Sinai Health System. Our hope is that by strengthening collaborative relationships with these richly diverse communities we can elevate institutional support of this surging and vital profession.

The NextGen nursing seminar focused on issues surrounding big data and nursing, nursing informatics, and electronic library resources for nursing. We utilized this seminar to introduce new and existing library resources for nurses. Again, we created a series of articles about the seminar and available resources, and promoted it on social media and our website. We wrote a recap article [7], and the recording of the seminar was uploaded to our YouTube channel [5], which we in turn tweeted and advertised on Facebook. The results of these content-driven messages have been an increased use of

nursing resources, including EBSCO’s Nursing Reference Center Plus, plus a surge in our followers on Facebook and Twitter, including the development of the #MountSinaiNurse hashtag.

### **DEVELOPMENT SERIES: MINDFUL MEDICINE SERIES**

The ISMMS is the first medical school in the United States to offer FlexMed, “an early assurance program that is modeled after HuMed but is open to students of all majors” [8]. FlexMed has allowed the ISMMS “to focus more on evidence of leadership and exceptional performance outside the classroom, in areas like independent research, advocacy and social justice, music, athletics, and achieving success despite significant socioeconomic barriers” [8]. To support the ISMMS Medical Education Department’s efforts with FlexMed, we developed a “Mindful Medicine” series, which presents engaging workshops and seminars that address humanistic and spiritual aspects of clinical practice and the patient experience.

Our first Mindful Medicine event was “Letting Go of Stress: Meditation and Mindfulness for Health Professionals” [9]. The aim of this event was to help medical students find ways to cope with stress during an intense exam period by practicing mindfulness and meditation. This event was promoted by Twitter and Facebook posts and was followed by a series of reports on all channels including pictures, an article, and a YouTube video [10]. This event also resulted in a new partnership with the Academy of Medical Humanities (AMH) at the ISMMS [11]. In addition, the “Letting Go of Stress” event resulted in the library being invited to take part in major committees across Mount Sinai focusing on wellness, and the library will play a major role in creating meditation sessions for various Mount Sinai locations and departments.

### **STRESS RELIEF AND WELLNESS ACTIVITIES: REACHING USERS AFTER (OR BETWEEN) HOURS**

Medical students who live on campus have very few opportunities to unwind due to their intense education training. Consequently, we created a series of short, one-to-two-hour events designed to promote stress relief and wellness among the student community. These include “Tail Tuesdays,” during which we bring a therapy dog to the students’ communal lounge. For an hour, students can pet and

play with a certified therapy dog. To achieve this, we collaborated with the Mount Sinai Volunteering Department, who connected us with their Pet Assisted Therapy (PAT) teams, which consist of volunteers from such organizations as Therapy Dogs International and Good Dogs Foundation. The medical students not only enjoy interacting with the therapy dogs, but are also eager to learn more about the PAT program and how therapy dogs can be used as a therapeutic resource for patients.

Another popular stress relief event is “Snack & Relax,” a by-product of our meditation event. Following the meditation seminar, students asked for support to hold weekly meditation sessions in the library. We collaborated with a second-year medical student who was the leader of a weekly meditation program at Mount Sinai, as well as other members of the Mount Sinai Wellness Committee. All these student engagements activities were used to create social media posts on Twitter [12] and Facebook [13], both before and after the events.

Prior to each event, we posted messages on our Twitter and Facebook accounts, plus our website, which included:

1. a calendar entry on our library events calendar with registration links
2. a series of Twitter posts that captured the event, registration link, venue, and time
3. a series of Twitter posts focusing on the topic of the event
4. a Facebook post featuring the event

These messages were delivered consistently for at least two months prior to each event and were used to build momentum and interest. In addition to our email campaigns, these messages facilitated registration to our events and increased users who were following us on Facebook and Twitter. Following the events, we uploaded the videos to our YouTube channel. Doing so enabled us to create a series of Facebook and Twitter posts announcing the video's availability, attracting new users to our channel and our blog. Announcements and captures of the videos were used in a span of several weeks in our social media outlets.

## BLOGS AND NEWSLETTERS

Creating blog or newsletter content takes more time than social media posts because research and structured writing is required. In addition to creating content around events and seminars, there are at

least two relatively straightforward ways to create original content driven by the library: interviews and white papers.

In our case, we decided to take a strategic approach and focus on certain populations of the Mount Sinai Health System to create a series of personalized interviews with selected staff members. We began with a series of interviews with female scientists in positions of leadership within the health system. Our “Women in [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Medicine] STEM” interview series was built by collaborating with women scientists in different areas and was launched on our Research Insider blog. We used the interviews to feed posts to our social media channels in a series of announcements on Twitter and Facebook, which in turn drew users to our website. The series of interviews was later printed and distributed as a booklet on International Women's Day. The booklet was also uploaded as a downloadable portable document format (PDF) file to our blog and was advertised on our social media channels [14].

Finally, using licensed databases such as Scopus, we created our own short white papers focusing on the Mount Sinai Health System and the ISMMS scientific research and impact. These pierces use simple analytics and feature interesting facts about the research that the institution produced.

In one piece, we featured Mount Sinai Health System international research collaborations [15]. To produce this white paper, we downloaded data from Scopus and analyzed the coauthorships of Mount Sinai Health System with international institutions [16]. We also produced a blog post examining the top-cited researchers and their social media impact [17], and another blog post focusing on the top disciplines and research areas [18]. The blog posts are focused and short, and deliver one main concept that fits the scope of a blog. We promoted the reviews on research blog entries across our social media channels to drive users to our website and especially to our “Research Insider” seminar series and events calendar.

By following a few simple steps and rules, we were able to enhance and expand our library's reach both on campus and online. Steps to creating engagement activities and consequence content are listed in Table 1. Be consistent with your messaging and post similar communications to all your channels to reinforce the message. Make all your content interchangeable by ensuring that messages included

1. Audit existing programs and their target audiences to identify gaps in your community coverage.
2. Don't work in a silo—reach out to your target audience's leadership or existing committees and bodies. Brainstorm ideas for activities collaboratively. Working in this manner will ensure their endorsement and assistance in promoting the activities that you are creating.
3. Use the engagement activities to create short messages for your social media channels as well as post-events reports.
4. Use your subscribed databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science) to produce insightful, focused articles on leading researchers and academic or research trends in your organization.
5. Identify interesting groups in your institution and engage them with interviews or highlight their work while producing stories around them.

**Table 1**

Steps to creating engagement activities and consequence content

in your email campaigns and advertisements are recapped in your social media channels. Reports, photos, and quotes captured during events should appear consistently on all your channels and be translated into short Twitter and Facebook posts, if needed. All messages should be linked, pointing to each other. For example, an uploaded video to YouTube should be mentioned on Twitter and Facebook and on your blog or website in the same way that your video should include links to your website. This comprehensive approach ensures wider reach and inclusion of constituents who use different platforms and creates consistent messaging.

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## AUTHORS' AFFILIATIONS

**Gali Halevi, MLS, PhD**, [gali.halevi@mssm.edu](mailto:gali.halevi@mssm.edu), Chief Director; **Robin O'Hanlon, MIS**, [robin.ohanlon@mssm.edu](mailto:robin.ohanlon@mssm.edu), Public Services Manager; Levy Library, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, 1428 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10029