

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

For Authors

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INTRO

As an author, you can play an important role in marketing your book on social media in coordination with the University of Texas's efforts. We have seen great results come from authors who are active on social media and engaged in promoting their own book. That said, being active on social media *is not* essential. This guide is designed to:

- *Help authors get started on social media to build an author platform,*
- *Provide tips and best practices for growing your audience and enhancing content,*
- *Suggest opportunities to promote your book WITHOUT being on social media!*

The University of Texas Press currently promotes its mission, books, and authors on the following social media channels:

- Facebook: facebook.com/utexaspress
- Twitter: twitter.com/UTexasPress
- Instagram: instagram.com/utexaspress
- Pinterest: pinterest.com/utpress
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/utexaspress>
- Spotify: <https://spoti.fi/34IfUKA>
- Blog: <https://utpress.utexas.edu/news/>

We will be promoting your book leading up to and after its publication date alongside other books and content, but we encourage you to help spread the word about your book on social media on your own. Large trade publishers like Penguin Random House post helpful content to their authornews.penguinrandomhouse.com and have top tags with

advice on topics like Facebook, video, and social media generally. Although we are happy to jump on a phone call with you to discuss these matters, this guide is designed to help you discover best practices on your own.

If you'd like to give us content to share on your behalf, that is fantastic! There are so many options available to authors. We would love to work with you on audio, video, Q&A, a playlist, current event commentary, infographics, anything! Or keep it simple: sharing a picture of you holding your book is VERY effective. Jump to the blog, audio, and video sections for more information on how to collaborate with us on enhanced book content.

If you are not a social media user, it may not be worth your time to set up accounts just to promote your book. That's fine! In the real world, as in the digital world, awareness about your book is all about making connections. Word of mouth is incredibly powerful, so please don't be shy—tell your colleagues, family, friends, anyone, that you have a book. You never know what it might lead to, or who they might tell. Here's where to start:

1. *Add a link to your book's page on www.utexaspress.com to your email signature, faculty page, or Academia.edu profile.*
2. *Share a link to preview your book—book cover, table of contents, a short excerpt, and purchase options—with your friends and colleagues. Email info@utpress.utexas.edu and we can provide this link for you.*
3. *Recommend your book to your library. Librarians rely on teaching staff recommendations, so please speak to your librarian and encourage colleagues to recommend your book as well.*
4. *Ask friends and others to review your book on Amazon and Goodreads.*
5. *Send a pub date email to your entire network! Read some great tips here: <https://authornews.penguinrandomhouse.com/how-to-write-a-great-pub-day-email/>*

More author resources—including this guide—can be found here:

<https://utexas.box.com/v/author-resources>

BEST PRACTICES

Social media can be an important way to promote your work and your book to a wider community of readers and scholars. This type of promotion is most effective when coming from an author or editor as an **expert in the field**. The purpose of social media as a marketing tool is not to build an enormous following in the thousands, but instead to leverage your network as well as your expertise to create **knowledge evangelists**, spreading awareness of your book and work by **digital word of mouth**, so to speak.

Audiences on social media are looking for **connection, insight, and engagement**. Take pictures and post about other books or media that you are reading. Comment on a **current event or anniversary** that ties into your research or writing. Give readers an insight into the **behind-the-scenes** life of you as an author, artist, researcher, or instructor. Keep it casual! Posting content on social media can be trial and error, and audiences respond to personality over perfection. Don't be afraid to take risks. Most platforms provide easy-to-understand metrics on how well your posts perform, so it's easy to gauge the content that works best, and then repeat it.

We are more than happy to help create design collateral for you to use on your social media profiles. We're happy to create the following types of graphics for you:

- *Twitter and Facebook banners*
- *Blurb or review quote graphics*
- *Event or discount graphics*

If you'd like to get creative on your own, [Canva](#) is one of many free and easy-to-use online graphic design tools.

SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS

Hashtags: When you click on a hashtag, you navigate to a list of all posts across either Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook that include the hashtag. They're used as a way to search for information on a particular topic. Type a “#” right before any key words. This way, users interested in those topics are more likely to see your post. *Tip: Keep an eye on Twitter's “Trends” column to identify popular hashtags.*

Mentions: On either Facebook or Twitter, you can type an “@” in front of a username to mention another account in a post. This user is then notified about your post and may decide to share it with their followers. *Tip: If someone is on Twitter or Facebook, a Google search for their name will usually find their account(s).*

Keep reading for advice by platform—Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook—that you may find useful. We are happy to assist you in evaluating what is reasonable, given your time and attention.

From Penguin Random House:

- [The Waiting Period: Five Tips for Maximizing Your Presence Before Book Promotion Begins](#)
- [Following the Buzz: Being Reactive on Social Media](#)
- [Everything You Need to Know About Cover Reveals](#)
- [5 Social Media Tips for Authors in 2022](#)
- [How to Build Your Online Author Community](#)
- [Using Instagram Stories to Build Engagement](#)
- [What you Need to Prepare for Your Book Launch](#)

BLOG

We welcome guest author blog posts written for a general audience and under 2,500 words. Don't worry if your expertise is not pop culture. Try to find a connection between your book's content and a trending news story, an anniversary, or a thread of discourse pertinent to an issue in your field. Commentary posts on prominent national and international issues work very well. If your book contains surprising facts or hidden histories, try to find an interesting angle for a "listicle."

Listicle

In journalism and blogging, a listicle is a short-form of writing that uses a list as its thematic structure, but is fleshed out with sufficient copy to be published as an article. [Wikipedia](#)

Below are some examples of our best-performing posts, showcasing the variety of approaches you may take when composing blog posts.

CURRENT EVENT OR ANNIVERSARY COMMENTARY

- [Douglas Haynes on Surviving Disasters](#)
- [The Case Against Deporting 200,000 Salvadorans](#)
- [Andrew Smith on the 25th Anniversary of George Foreman's Historic Heavyweight Title](#)

Q&A

- [Q&A with Brook Muller on Water Sustainability and Architectural Design](#)
- [Q&A with Dr. Anna Peppard on Sexuality, Fantasy, and the Superhero](#)

- [Q&A with Elaine A. Peña on Celebrating Washington's Birthday at the US-Mexico Border](#)

LISTICLE

- [Six Things We Weren't Supposed to Know about Early TV Viewers](#)
- [Twelve Things You Didn't Know About Screenwriter Warren Skaaren](#)
- [Top 10 Feminist Moments in Women's Comedy](#)

SCHOLARS IN CONVERSATION

- [Media Studies Scholars on Cycles, Sequels, Spin-offs, Remakes, and Reboots](#) with Amanda Ann Klein, Will Brooker, and Jonathan Gray

ESSAY

- ["Mexicans Made America—in So Many Ways. Why Do We Treat Them as Alien Invaders?" by John Tutino](#)
- [Birding and Writing with Victor Emanuel](#)
- [Reading Comics Like a Grownup](#)

SPOTIFY PLAYLIST

- [Nicholas F. Centino's Author-Curated Razabilly Playlist](#)
- [Annotated Playlist by Casey Rae for 'William S. Burroughs and the Cult of Rock 'n' Roll'](#)

If you'd like to collaborate on a blog post, please email Bailey Morrison at bmorrison@utpress.utexas.edu!

TWITTER

If you're looking to prioritize which social media platform would be the best use of your time in book promotion, Twitter is really where you can leverage your contacts and target influencers in your field. To make sure someone specific sees your tweet, you must include their Twitter handle (@utexaspress, for example) in your tweet or reply. If you lead a tweet with a mention, only the followers who follow both accounts will see the tweet; it will not be public. To make it public, put a "." in front of the mention.



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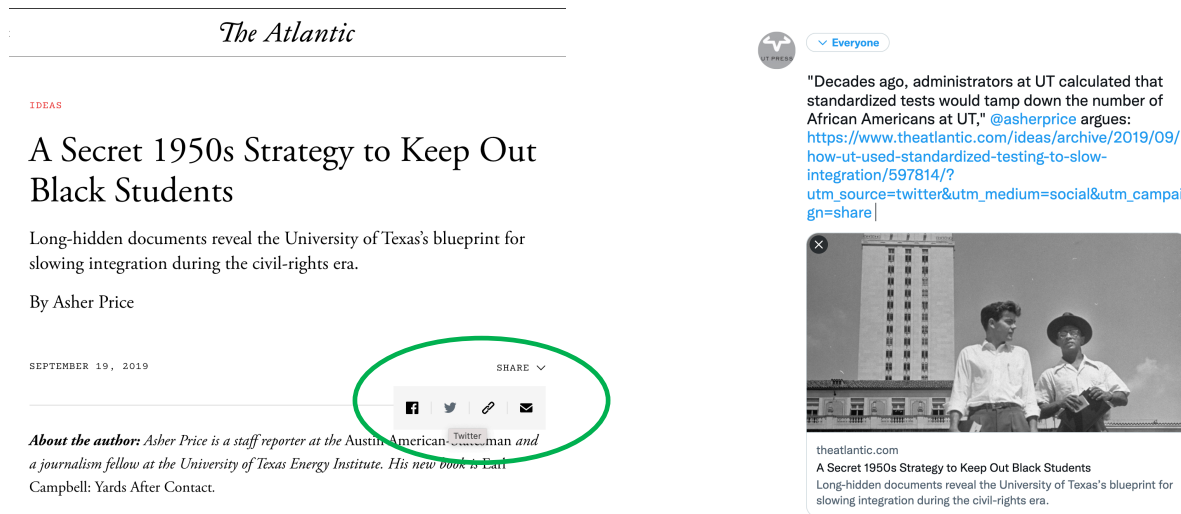
.@thejemimacode explores the forgotten women of Southern cookbooks. Listen: bit.ly/18z3Usb Thanks, @gardenandgunmag, @potlikker!

Follow Twitter accounts related to your work and your field: academics, departments, institutions, societies, etc. Some will follow you back. Connect with any authors or scholars you've worked with in the past. *Tip: If you run out of ideas, go to popular accounts related to your field and browse through their followers/followees.*

CONTENT IDEAS

The best way to learn how to use Twitter is to consume it. What catches your eye? Which tweets would you want to share with your followers, students, peers, etc.?

A quick way to share content is to post relevant news articles directly from the outlet. Many news sites and blogs that you may read on a regular basis will have “Share This” functionality; click on the Facebook, Twitter, or other social channel icons to quickly and easily share an of interest on your own social media feed. Many outlets helpfully provide automatic language that populates a draft tweet for convenience. You can use this language or amend to add commentary, hashtags, or tag other profiles before you post:



Tweets with photos tend to get more engagement, so keep that in mind when crafting tweets. Tweeting your book cover is a start, tweeting a selfie of you holding your book is even better, but also if you have **interior images (permission permitting)** that you couldn't use in the book or that you think would be interesting to share, go for it.

KEY TIPS (Features change frequently.)

1. *Tweets cannot be edited, only deleted.*
2. *You can preschedule and track tweets using TweetDeck:*
<https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>
3. *Posting at least three times a day is recommended.*

EXAMPLES

- [Karen Tongson @inlandemperor](#)
- [Frank Guridy @fguridy](#)
- [Kyle Anderson @kyleanderson](#)
- [William Hogeland \(@WilliamHogeland\)](#)

EVENTS

If you have a book event or are giving a lecture, announce it on your social media accounts, and on Twitter in particular, tagging event hosts and other panelists, using local or topical hashtags, or tagging organizations you work with and your university or department.

CONFERENCES

Most academic and professional meetings these days have a conference hashtag for attendees to use when sharing observations about the event. Contribute to the conversation by sharing photos, your opinion on presentations, the time and location of your own panel, etc.

FURTHER READING

From Penguin Random House:

- [How to Win at Twitter by Benjamin Dreyer](#)
- [You Are What You Tweet: Twitter Dos and Don'ts](#)
- [What's New on Instagram and Twitter](#)

From the American Historical Association:

- [Mapping the History Twittersphere](#)
- [Tweeting to Find Community](#)

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a visual platform and is mobile-driven which means its functionality works best on your mobile device. Instagram works wonderfully for books and representing readerships. Create an Instagram account on your phone: [How do I create an Instagram account?](#)

CONTENT IDEAS

The goal of every Instagram post should be to encourage engagement between the photo, the people who are looking at it, and the person who is taking it. Audiences want to feel like your account is not just shoving photos in their face. Users track certain hashtags to find other community members like #readersofinstagram. Readers “show off” their lifestyles and have become influencers in the book-buying community. Posting your book cover is a start, and **interior images (permission permitting)** are wonderful, but inviting engagement and community with real-life content is important. Users are more engaged and vocal if they feel a kindred spirit in your account.

Instagram Stories are useful—not a waste of time—in their non-permanence. (Posts only stay public for 24 hours). Posting polls, questions, behind-the-scenes photos, and in-the-moment action are popular ideas for Stories and Reels.

EVENTS

If you have a book event or are giving a lecture, post Stories and photos from the event, tagging your host institution or bookstore.

KEY TIPS (Features change frequently.)

1. *When you start typing a hashtag in Instagram, it will tell you how many posts have been tagged with that hashtag, so you can see which hashtags are more popular.*
2. *If you tag someone in your caption and then edit the caption after posting, the person you tagged in your caption will be re-notified that you tagged them.*
3. *Posting at least once a day is recommended, and using Stories boosts your regular content, so try not to ignore this functionality.*

APPS FOR INSTAGRAM:

- Boomerang – [Google:Play](#) | [iTunes](#)
- Repost – [Google: Play](#) | [iTunes](#)
- Layout – [Google: Play](#) | [iTunes](#)

EXAMPLES

- Felipe Correa ([@felipecorrea_sc](#))
- Hanif Abdurraqib ([@nifmuhammad](#))
- María Hesse ([@mariahesse](#))

FURTHER READING:

- [How to Repost on Instagram](#) from Buffer
- [Instagram and Social Media Strategy](#) from Smart Podcast, Trashy Books

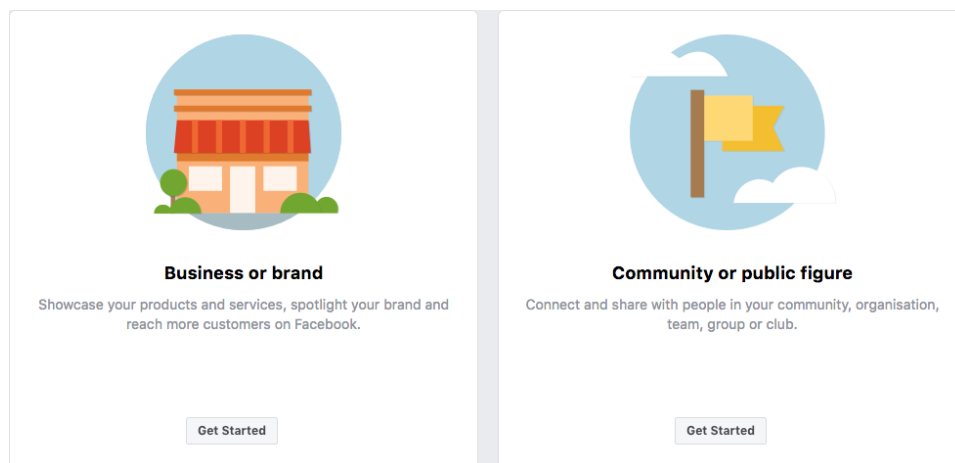
From Penguin Random House:

- [Using Instagram Stories to Build Reader Engagement](#)
- [Four Tips on Creating Your Own Bookstagram](#)
- [Engaging and Collaborating with Influencers](#)

FACEBOOK

There are two types of Facebook accounts, personal and Pages, but you must have a personal account to create or manage a page.

Create a page here:



https://www.facebook.com/pages/create/?ref_type=registration_form

If you choose to create a page for yourself as an author or for your book, you must make the effort to post regularly. For that reason, creating a page as an **author** is recommended over creating a page for your book unless the content of your book lends itself to a continuing conversation long after publication. We cannot create and maintain a page for you. If you already have a following on your personal Facebook profile, you can convert this profile to a Facebook page, which behaves as a “business” or promotional account.

How to convert to a page account: [Converting Your Profile Into A Facebook Page](#)

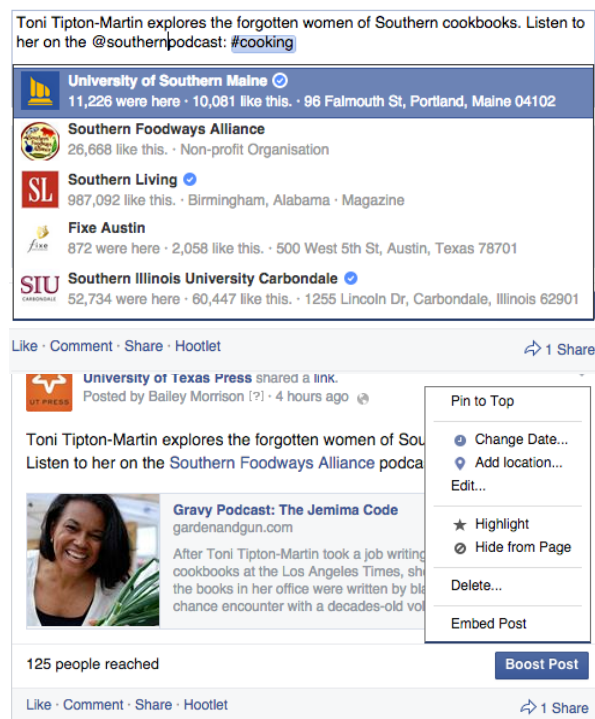
Learn more how-to's and tips: [Facebook's Pages Help Center](#)

CONTENT IDEAS

Not all of your posts need to be “hard sells” encouraging people to buy your book. In fact, you should keep hard sells to a minimum. Share the news stories that you are reading that may relate to the content of your book. If you place op-eds or receive book reviews, feel free to share those, but look at your content as engaging in a **conversation** with your readers.

KEY TIPS (Features change frequently.)

1. *There is an edit option for changing a post you have already published.*
2. *Tagging entities, using hashtags, and mentioning trending topics in your post help boost its visibility.*
3. *You can preschedule posts to publish in the future to keep a steady stream of content going. Posting at least once a week is recommended.*



EXAMPLES

Author pages:

[Stephen Harrigan](#)

[Sarah Bird](#)

[Refusing to Forget](#)

FURTHER READING:

- [Why You Need a Facebook Author Page](#)
- **Important:** [How to Protect Your Safety and Security on Facebook and Instagram](#)

AUDIO

An easy way to provide engaging content to help us promote your book is to record yourself talking about it. If we have a quick 30-second to 3-minute audio clip of you discussing your book, we can make a brief video to tease on social media using the book cover, approved interior images, animation, and stock photography and video.

EXAMPLES

- [Kavitha Davidson on Her Life as a Sports Fan](#)
- [Lance Scott Walker on DJ Screw's Impact](#)
- [Dawoud Bey on his photography](#)

Most phones have a voice-recording feature, so it is quite easy to record and send a quick audio file. When recording audio clips for your book, answer the following questions:

- *What is the elevator pitch for your book?*
- *What is the relevance of your book?*
- *Do you have a personal connection to your research?*
- *What do you hope readers will take from your book?*

Send your audio files to Bailey Morrison at bmorrison@utpress.utexas.edu.

From Penguin Random House: [Using Social Audio to Connect with Your Readers](#)

VIDEO

These days, short videos are social media gold. Large scholarly publishers have found that students use video as an initial way of researching a topic. Producing video can be time-consuming, but it is a great way to put a face and a voice to your work.

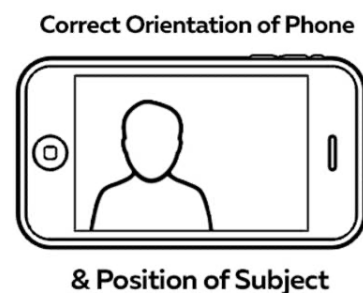
We've done short book trailers to promote our books and have linked to some examples below. If you are interested in making a video for your book, please take some time to view the examples below to get a sense of our house style. We also ask that you use the UT Press logo in your video. Logo image files and guidelines are here:

<https://utexas.box.com/s/zusnpazvmrng6s6vplrkoawlgw1fxp5>

The most basic form of video content you can create to promote your book is to have someone interview you about your work on any smart phone. Below are some guidelines for capturing basic interview style videos:

VIDEO GUIDELINES (ANY SMART PHONE)

1. Rotate the phone to be **horizontal**, or *landscape*, rather than vertical.
2. Position the phone far enough away from the subject being recorded so that the subject fits at least from their head to the bottom of their chest with space above their head. Position the subject to the side of the screen to allow room for any text to go on the screen later. (See below.)



3. Phone can be handheld, but keep the phone in one place. Avoid shaky camera.
4. Record in a room with a door and close the door during recording to eliminate noises.
5. Make sure the room has carpet and at least some furniture (desk, bookshelves, etc.) to help absorb the sound. A small office works best.
6. Silence cell phones while recording. They should not even be on vibrate. Either place them on Silent or Off.

EXAMPLES

- [Felipe Hinojosa Tells the Story of Latino Freedom Movements](#)
- [Darius Atefat-Peckham reads from My Shadow is My Skin](#)
- [Rosalynn Vega on her book](#)
- [L.L. Wynn on her book](#)
- [Michael Crouser on photographing Mountain Ranch](#) (*produced by the author*)

CAPTIONING

Adding captions to your videos is not just important, it's essential. On Facebook, for example, eighty-five percent of videos are played without sound.

The best time-saver for all captions is a script. YouTube and Facebook have features to auto-generate captions. With a script, you can add the correct spelling and proper names with ease.

Please send video to [**bmorrison@utpress.utexas.edu**](mailto:bmorrison@utpress.utexas.edu) to have your footage edited to include your book's information and add additional polish for sharing!

FURTHER READING/TUTORIALS

From Penguin Random House:

- [Creating Subtitles for Your Digital Video](#)
- [Adding a Little Flair to DIY Videos](#)
- [Lighting 101: Quality of Light](#) *from RocketJump Film School*
- [How to learn filmmaking fast](#) *from D4Darius on YouTube*