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Press release

Social media: researchers use Wikipedia the most Goportis presents results of social media survey

Wikipedia, tools for sharing and exchanging data, and professional and research networks – these are the three most frequently used social media by researchers in their everyday work

As part of the national online survey “The use of social media services in science”, Goportis – Leibniz Library Network for Research Information explores which social media tools scientists use in their professional day-to-day work.

The result: when it comes to the professional use of social media services, Wikipedia comes top of the list. 84.7 per cent of the 1,354 respondents use Wikipedia: the online encyclopaedia is usually used passively for reference purposes and to read contributions, but also actively – to a much lesser extent – to create input. Tools for sharing and exchanging data such as Dropbox came second; these are used by 63.4 per cent of the scientists surveyed. Third place was taken by professional and research networks (55.6 per cent) such as ResearchGate, XING and LinkedIn. Scientists use such networks to maintain contacts and establish new ones, demonstrate their presence and find out about new publications and topics.

Ms Maker, Mr Tech, Mr and Ms Classic and Mr Nerd: the four social media types in science

The latest survey picks up from where the 2013 Goportis study left off. The findings generated by the previous study are now differentiated: this year’s Goportis study focuses on how researchers use six selected social media services in their professional everyday lives, which providers they use, and how these web-based tools shape and change the professional environment for scientists. The four social media types in science, identified using the results of the 2013 study, were confirmed in the new study that is hot off the press: Ms Maker, Mr Tech, Mr and Ms Classic and Mr Nerd.

As was the case in 2013, Mr Nerd is the driver of the social media world. He actively writes content for Wikipedia, other specialist wikis and social networks. Ms and Mr Classic, who mainly use social media tools passively, form the antithesis to Mr Nerd. Ms Maker and Mr Tech make average use of social media tools, putting them somewhere in the middle between Ms and Mr Classic at one end of the scale and Mr Nerd at the other.

For this study, the three Goportis partners, namely the German National Library of Science and Technology (TIB), ZB MED – Leibniz Information Centre for Life Sciences and ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics, surveyed a total of 1,354 scientists from their respective target groups (science and technology, medicine and life sciences, and economics) to find out which social media tools they use at work.

Go to brochure “Nutzung von Social-Media Diensten in der Wissenschaft” (The use of social media services in science) – brief overview of the results of the study

http://www.goportis.de/fileadmin/downloads/Goportis_SM_Handout_final_komplett.pdf

Go to detailed study report

http://www.goportis.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Bericht_Goportis_Nutzung_von_Social-Media-Diensten_in_der_Wissenschaft_Daten_und_Ergebnisse_2015.pdf

About Goportis

Goportis is the strategic association of the three German National Libraries: ZB MED – Leibniz Information Centre for Life Sciences, ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics and TIB – German National Library of Science and Technology. Goportis develops new solutions for today’s and tomorrow’s challenges concerning the provision of information for researchers and practitioners.

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