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Collaborative Conference Reflections: A Visual Journey

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Abstract

Using imagery from social media in this short piece we present a ‘visual feast’ of fond memories from the Social Media for Learning in Higher Education Conference held on 19th December at Edge Hill University 2019.

Keywords

#SocMedHE19, social media, collaboration, student engagement, learning and teaching.

Introduction

Our journey begins in autumn of 2018 as we made plans to attend #SocMedHE18, organised by the wonderful @RKChallen, held at Nottingham Trent University. Somewhere along the way, in between submitting our abstracts and having them accepted we ended up offering to host #SocMedHE19.



Exhibit A



Exhibit B

We're not quite sure how that happened, however having made our way to Nottingham, after a busy pre-conference evening and a very busy day (Exhibits A and B), we ended a fantastic day at #SocMedHE18 with the 'BIG' Reveal:



Building upon the success and appropriating all of @RKChallen's best ideas (please see Exhibit C) upon our return to a snowy Ormskirk we began planning #SocMedHE19 almost straight away. Not least because @RKChallen had set the bar very high!



Exhibit C.

An appropriated idea: Make your own conference badge

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Aside from being the home of Edge Hill University's award-winning campus, Ormskirk, a market town located in between Liverpool and Manchester and is world renowned for its delicious gingerbread. Hence, in preparation for the conference, we ask HRH The Princess Royal to sample some, and with the royal seal of approval forthcoming, our first decision was to ensure that copious supplies of this lovely treat would be included in each conference goodie bag!



Social Media for Learning in Higher Education @S... · Nov 27, 2019
Looks what's just landed! Come and join us 19th December @edgehill and don't worry we've got one for you @samtwiselton! #awesomgoodiebag @CLTatEHU



This early decision shaped the developing of our ideas and moving forward we decided we needed a conference mascot. Mindful of our links to Education, our institutions name being Edgehill and of course Gingerbread with the aid of an iPad we created 'Ed'.



In the months running up to the event, using social media we used 'Ed' helped to help us to promote the confernece.

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As an event #SocMedHE was established by our wonderful colleagues at Sheffield Hallam University. Mindful to build upon that legacy we sought and secured a small award from AdvanceHE to establish an AdvacneHE Connect platform space, and to support promotion of the conference we are prud to say that we were the very first group to host an AdvanceHE Connect Webinar!



Following the success of the #100TweetChallenge as we moved into the autumn an appropriately dressed 'Ed' continued to make appearances, supporting our call for abstracts.

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Social Media for Learning in Higher Education @So... · Nov 5, 2019
Remember, remember ... to book your place by the end of November... the call for abstracts is open until November 20th but you don't have to present to come and join us! @SocMedHE @edgehill amazing ideas of how to use Social Media for Learning



In addition to the webinar, the AdvanceHE Connect promotion and regular 'tweets' in the run up to the conference we also created an 'EDvent Calendar'. Hidden behind each door was a social media for learning and teaching surprise!

 **Dr Maren Deepwell** @MarenDeepwell · Dec 17, 2019
This is going to be an awesome event - perfect way to celebrate the end of the year.. I loved being involved in the last edition thanks to @SocMedHE and wishing you a wonderful conference #SocMedHE19 from everyone at @A_L_T #altc

The challenges of effective promotion

The promotion worked well, and as we approached 19th December, we encountered a challenge we hadn't anticipated. We received so many fantastic abstracts we found ourselves negotiating additional rooms on campus and juggling a schedule. In order to accommodate every presenter we had to run six parallel sessions!



With 76 delegates we also hit another problem. Our preferred on-campus catering venue could only seat 60 people. With Traditional Lancashire Hot Pot as the star of our menu we needed seating, so thank goodness for the Edge Hill University catering and conference teams who were able to re-locate us to the amazing Garden Restaurant.



So, the 19th December eventually arrived, and we were grateful for the support of Sarah's 'digital leader's' a group of amazing students who acted as Chairs in our sessions and helped delegates to find their way around our award-winning campus.

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Shamelessly pinching @RKChallen's #SocMedHE18's badge making idea, upon arrival delegates collected their conference goodie bag (complete with an enamel Ed lapel pin, SocMedHE snowflake Christmas tree decoration and edible gingerbread) were tasked with decorating their own conference badge. As word of the badges spread via social media, we even had a number of colleagues who had been unable to attend making their own versions and tweeting images of their creations.



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After a morning of fantastically innovative presentations, snap shots and workshops there was just enough time for colleagues to add to our 'Question Wall' and sneak a few photo's in the conference 'Photobooth' before heading off to the Garden Restaurant for a hot lunch.



Dr Jane Wray @livinginhope · Dec 19, 2019
#SocMedHE19 great day at the conference with @mike_ewen @LeeFallin talking #DigiResHull and despite the distressingly early start we were all still smiling - thanks both #RoadTrip



Kathy Wright @KathyAdvanceHE · Dec 19, 2019
Very honoured that @belld17 was inspired by my table centre pieces! You have exceeded my efforts!
#SocMedHE19



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An Exceptional Keynote

After a hearty lunch we were privileged to be joined by Professor Sam Twistleton, OBE who joined us as our inspirational keynote speaker.



Social Media for Learning in Higher Education @SocMedHE · Nov 26, 2019
We are all really looking forward to welcoming our special guest speaker Professor Samantha Twiselton, OBE from @sheffhallamuni to @SocMedHE on 19th December @edgehill



Trending on twitter!

After bidding farewell to Professor Sam, we continued with more amazing presentations, and in addition to the amazing student mini key note presentation, one of the many highlights of the afternoon was we 'trended' on twitter!



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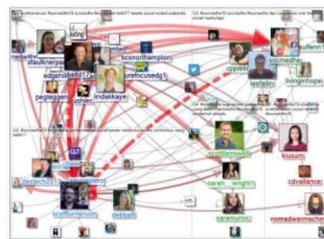
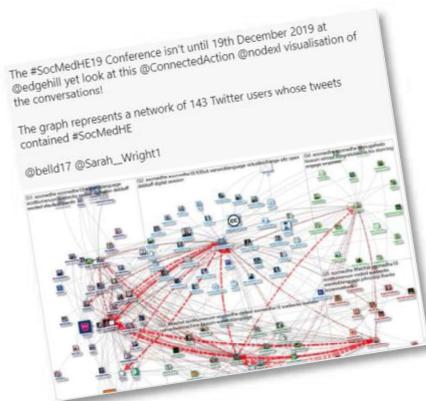


A fab day @SocMedHE mixing with like-minded people. Nice to finally put faces to names. Lovely warm conference and I've come away with some fab ideas and food for thought. 🙌
Thankyou to @bellid17 and @Sarah_wright1 for the invite and for being amazing Hostesses. 🍷 #SocMedHE19



NodeXL analysis

In addition to the Twitter Trending we also welcome Scott's beautiful visual analysis of engagement and impact; further details can be found in the data analysis report Scott and Dave have kindly compiled for the inaugural journal.



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The BIG reveal

So as #SocMedHE19 drew to a close, after a brilliant, inspirational day we were very excited to unveil the venue for #SocMedHE20 and via the 'BIG' reveal introduce our new hosts. An exciting collaboration by our fantastic colleagues from Strathclyde University and The University of Glasgow.



Huge thanks...

And finally, as we draw our visual journey to a close, we want to ensure that we extend our sincere thanks to Edge Hill University's catering staff and conference team. Not forgetting Jane and Lizzy (pictured in the bright blue polo shirts) from our institutions Centre for Learning and Teaching.

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The Conference Committee

And of course, not forgetting the tremendous efforts undertaken by everyone on our fabulous conference organising committee, without who the conference would not have been possible. Your time and support was very much appreciated!

In our role as co-chairs, it has been a pleasure and privilege to host #SocMedHE. We are both looking forward very much to future events, activities, and of course the launch of the groups new journal.

Kindest

Dawne and Sarah.

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