



Hosting a tweetchat for “#WhyWeDoResearch” Tweetfest

What is a tweetchat?

It is a live twitter event, usually moderated and focused around a general topic. To filter all the chatter on twitter into a single conversation a hashtag is used. A set time is also established so that the host or guest is available to engage in the conversation.

How do you participate? To participate, all you need to do is tweet during an agreed, designated time using the conversation hashtag #whywedoresearch.

Guidance

1. Pick a hashtag. Ours is #whywedoresearch. This hashtag needs to be used with every tweet to ensure that questions and comments remain in the thread for all to see. You may use other hashtags within the tweetchat however #WhyWeDoResearch is essential. Be mindful that including too many hashtags can be off putting for your followers.

2. Set the time. You need to be able to inform your followers so that they can plan time into their day to follow your tweetchat. We are conscious of ensuring there is never any overlap when people are hosting tweetchats for #whywedoresearch therefore times and dates must be agreed with @ClaireW_UK. This will ensure you receive the support from our followers in its entirety. For Tweetfest specifically Claire tries to allocate topics so that there is a flow throughout the week – this has been shown in previous years to be useful to the #whywedoresearch community and result in bigger and better tweetchats.

3. Participate before you host. This is advisable just to get a better understanding and comfort level. By doing this you can see how the lead(s) engage(s) with the community and how they respond. For Tweetfest, Claire requires a minimum of two co-hosts per chat; the volume of response and scale of chats are too difficult to keep up with with only one lead. This ensures everyone is supported and also gives a plan B should anyone be unwell and unable to host as planned.

4. Pick an engaging topic & find an angle which will engage your community. The advantage we have is that we have such a big following already with #whywedoresearch. Wherever possible we try to link specialist areas with those areas own awareness days throughout the year. For Tweetfest, topics are scheduled to create a flow for the audience as mentioned in point 2.

5. Promote the tweetchat as a ‘save the date’. We will support promoting your chats ahead of the time so that we can engage as many followers as possible for each topic. You are welcome to design your own tweetchat flyers etc. If you have newsletters etc, please feel free to go ahead and advertise through those or in any way you think will help.

6. Be welcoming and clear. Start the chat by making a brief introduction and encouraging participation. Creating a slide to launch 5 minutes BEFORE your chat commences is worth it as people are often ‘lurking’ at this stage so you can get people to introduce themselves and their roles. This also helps focus the tweetchat hour purely on your questions. You will all have co-hosts so be sure to start the chat together with them and then open things up to others.

7. Set time frames. Tweet chats are one hour in length. Be sure to remind followers from the outset about the length of your chat and how long you will be available.

8. Have some pre-set questions ready in infographic form. Ensure questions are presented as infographics rather than just tweeting the questions as text. Pictures / infographics capture attention



and makes it easier for followers to see when a new question has been posted. There are various apps or tools which create infographics for you, or you can use applications such as powerpoint.

For a one-hour chat, 4 questions will suffice. You could have a fifth question available just in case you feel you need it. The questions help to engage the participants & also to move the conversation along. It will give you opportunities to introduce relevant content to the audience when it makes sense. The chat may meander but a question outline will help you to keep it on track and on time. Once you have decided on your questions, please could you share these (in infographic form) with @ClaireW_UK at the earliest opportunity so that there is a back-up plan in case anything should go wrong at the last minute and you are unable to host your chat – rather than the chat be cancelled, we will be able to continue for those who have tuned in especially. For those of you new to hosting, @EmmaYhnell and I can support creation of questions and chat titles. #WhyWeDoResearch is non-political and entirely voluntary. The idea of Tweetfest is to raise awareness and ask open neutral questions which spark interest and generate conversations. Claire will review questions to ensure they are neutral and provide support where required to alter them if necessary.

9. Use tools. We have added a widget for whywedoresearch hashtag to our website www.whywedoresearch.weebly.com to help spread the word. Michael @keeling_michael set us up with 'symlur healthcare hashtags' back in 2014 which we use to collect data / stats etc from each tweetchat so please encourage followers and those participating to add #whywedoresearch to their tweets so that they can remain fully in the conversation. If you would like to add other hashtags to tweets then of course please do feel free to do so. We will only be analysing information from #whywedoresearch.

Some people like to set alarms on their phone every 12 minutes which act as reminders to tweet questions. There is a tool called 'tweetdeck' through which you can schedule your tweets to launch. This is really useful if you are concerned about setting alarms as reminders. You can register at the following link and the system provides you with a 'how to' tour once set up <https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>

10. Capture the conversation. Tweetchats and tweets can fly by really fast. If you see something that you would like to hold on to or share with someone else later, remember to take some screen grabs. This is particularly important if #whywedoresearch starts trending – which essentially means that at a particular moment, it's one of the most active conversations taking place. It is another reason why we request a minimum of 2 lead hosts for each chat.

11. Set your goals. For those of you leading tweetchats, it is good to consider this beforehand. What are you trying to get out of it? Are you trying to build a connection with your audience? Are you trying to help people answer questions? Knowing your goals will help guide the process.

12. Let the chat live on. Tweet chats are great for making more connections and really great things are likely to have been said. Don't let the conversation disappear, make connections and collaborations.

13. Follow up. If everything went well you've made a new connection or two. Follow up in the coming days with a friendly tweet. Continue the conversation that was started and begin to build the new relationship.

14. Enjoy! Thank you very much everyone