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Search

Researcher Tools Review: Kudos

There are tools that exist on the web right now that you can use to help readers find your work: whether colleagues, researchers outside of your field, the scientific news media, or the general public. Here, we review Kudos, an online platform for this purpose.

Amy Beisel, MA

MA, Latin American Studies
University of Chicago

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Congratulations–you're published!

Your research team put thousands of hours into this project. You carefully wrote up the results, polished your manuscript through rounds of revisions, and received the good news that your article was accepted and published. You sit back and wait for the world to discover your groundbreaking work.

You could wait, or you could act.

There are tools that exist on the web right now that you can use to help readers find your work: whether colleagues, researchers outside of your field, the scientific news media, or the general public.

One of these web-based resources is Kudos, which aims to help authors increase readership. Rather than waiting for people to find your article or hoping that your journal will effectively promote it, you can use a tool like Kudos to increase your article's reach. It is currently free for authors and paid for by participating publishers.

We met Kudos co-founder Melinda Kenneway at the 2014 Society for Scholarly Publishers (SSP) conference in Boston, where Kenneway said that she wants to give authors more "control" over the post-publication reach of their work. In a follow-up email, Kenneway explained the problem Kudos is trying to solve:

In the past, authors were almost entirely dependent on their publishers to make sure their work gets found, read and cited. But with almost 2 million new articles being published every year, it's becoming ever more critical for authors to use their own networks and expertise to ensure their publications get noticed.

We tried Kudos to see how it works and what you can expect when you get started.

From the home page, you can search for your publications using the built-in search feature. You should be able to locate any publication that has a registered DOI (digital object identifier) in CrossRef. To then manage your publications in Kudos, you will need to create a user account and click a simple "claim" button next to each of your articles. Claiming an article moves the title to your account dashboard.

Programmable Removal of Bacterial Strains by Us...	.ıl	2014	✓	✗	✗	✓	0	1	1	0	15	15	165	EXPLAIN NOW
Synthetic control of a fitness tradeoff in yeas...	.ıl	2009	✗	✗	✗	✗	0	0	0	0	0	?	-	EXPLAIN NOW
The Base-Pairing RNA Spot 42 Participates in a ...	.ıl	2011	✗	✗	✗	✗	0	0	0	0	0	?	-	EXPLAIN NOW
Trade-offs in Engineering Sugar Utilization Pat...	.ıl	2014	✓	✓	✓	✗	0	0	0	0	4	?	1	SHARE NOW

Above: Kudos account dashboard

Your account dashboard displays a summary view of your claimed publications; the actions you have taken to enrich and share each publication; and various measures of your publication's reach, including article views, article downloads, and Altmetric score (more on that in a moment). From your account dashboard, you can click through to your article's profile page hosted by Kudos.

Your article profile page includes several components: title, authors, and journal; a link back to the article's version of record on the publisher's website; and editable fields where you can place additional context to help readers understand the importance of your article.

These are Kudos' current features, which we tested

1. Explain your work. Using an editable plain-text field, you can add a non-technical summary to your article profile page so that people outside of your field can easily understand your main findings. You can also add a short title and impact statement to help readers quickly grasp why your study is important.

Add a short title
Adding a short title to your publication will help make it easier to find and can help increase citations. Learn more.

> Using native sugar utilization pathways as inducible systems

Tell readers what your publication is about
Adding a simple, non-technical explanation of your publication will make it easier to find, and more accessible to a broader audience. Learn more.

Tell readers the significance of your publication
Adding an explanation of what is most unique and/or timely about your work, and the difference it might make, will help increase readership. Learn more.

Editable plain text field in Kudos

2. Enrich your article. You can add links to data sets, images, media coverage, and other types of content to provide context for your work. If your journal offered limited space for supplemental material, you can use your article profile page to link to it instead. If your article has received press coverage or blog mentions, this feature offers a great way to point readers to those non-academic sources.

What else might be of interest?

ADD

New York Times CRISPR article
The New York Times profiled this mBio study and other recent applications of CRISPR.
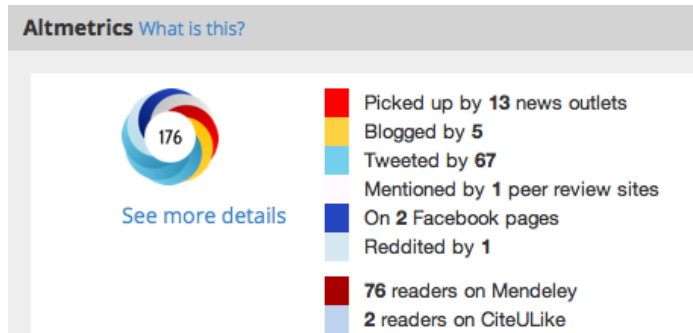
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Supplemental links using Kudos

3. Share your findings. Kudos has integrated social media tools, including Facebook and Twitter, so that you can easily share a link either your enriched Kudos article profile page or directly to the version of record on the publisher's website. (Your contacts' ability to read the full text of the article depends on the publisher's policies.)

I'm experimenting with a new post-publication tool (Kudos.com): see my latest publication at http://goo.gl/V8wrSo.

Like · Comment · Share

Facebook status update from Kudos tool

4. Measure the impact. Pulling from publisher data as well as activity on your own article page, Kudos shows you the number of times your publication is viewed and downloaded. It has also integrated with Altmetric, a service that quantifies interest in your article beyond citation metrics. For each publication you've claimed on your Kudos dashboard, you can view its Altmetric score and the various inputs into that score, including blog posts, tweets, and comments on publisher sites that mention your article. Kudos does not yet report article citation data but has projected that this feature will be available later in 2014.

Altmetrics What is this?

176
See more details

Picked up by **13** news outlets
Blogged by **5**
Tweeted by **67**
Mentioned by **1** peer review sites
On **2** Facebook pages
Reddited by **1**

76 readers on Mendeley
2 readers on CiteULike

Altmetric metrics

Conclusions

- We found the Kudos interface intuitive and simple to use, particularly the search and claiming functions, as well as the editable fields on the article profile page.
- Sharing to Facebook was also straightforward, although the default option to share a link to the publisher's page rather than to the enriched Kudos article profile page was surprising given that readers clicking directly to the publisher's article page may not see the "enriched" information the author has provided on the Kudos article profile page.
- Some publishers have partnered with Kudos to add the author's enriched information directly on the publisher's website; however, we did not see direct evidence of that feature for our publications in this initial exploration of the service.

Chemist Antony Williams tried Kudos for an article he published in *PLOS ONE* and created a video in which he narrates his use of the tool, which he calls "very simple, very intuitive." (You can view Williams' video here) For this publication, Williams used Kudos to add a lay summary, impact statement, and links to supplementary information, then distributed the article's Kudos page link via Twitter and Facebook. Within 3 days, his article's Kudos page had 200 views.

> "The early results are very positive," Williams said in the video. He also envisions using the tool to increase visibility for older publications. "What I really like about this [tool] is some of my best science from earlier in my career that is not as visible…I would like to reinvigorate that. So what I'm going to do now is … breathe some fresh life into my historical articles. I'm going to bring them back and put them on Kudos."

Some additional potential evidence

Kudos provides tools to promote your work, but will undertaking these additional efforts really make a difference?

Kudos aimed to answer this question during a 2013 pilot phase and found that "researchers using the Kudos sharing tools saw an average increase in downloads of their publications of 19% compared to a control group" (source: Kudos FAQs). A 2012 study published in the journal Clinics found that publications with short titles describing results are cited more often, thus suggesting that Kudos' "add a short title" feature may help authors increase their citations (source: NCBI).

As research outputs increase and megajournals proliferate, many researchers are wondering if their publications will receive the attention they merit. If your goal is broad impact, tools such as Kudos may be able to help you reach a larger audience.

To learn more about Kudos, visit www.growkudos.com or follow them on Twitter @GrowKudos.

Share with your colleagues

-

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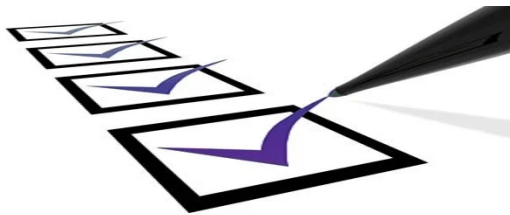**Related Articles**

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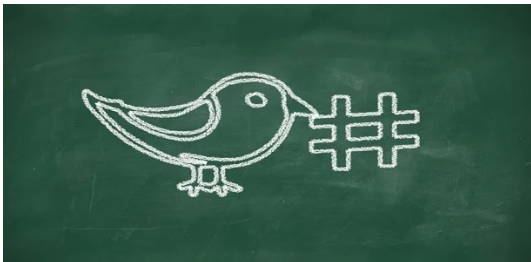
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