The ATLAS collaboration uses various social media platforms primarily as a method to communicate the research and achievements of the collaboration to a wider public audience. Broadly, our audience include students (potential future scientists), the general public, and policy makers. Each group have different reasons to engage which can include: to be informed and to learn, to feel the "wow factor" of big science, and to justify public funding. Users find our platforms through exposure to, discussion about and interaction with ATLAS content via our initial fan base (see below).

Social media is an important source of information for a large proportion of society now. The aims of the ATLAS social media strategy are:

• We want to show not just what science is being done, but also how it is done.
• To make ATLAS accessible to a wider audience.
• To share information with other physicists on ATLAS research.
• Direct people to the ATLAS website where content is available in more depth.
• To reach future ATLAS students / researchers.
• We want to show not just what science is being done, but also how it is done.
• Social Media currently drives around 10% of our web site referrals.

Facebook is primarily used to connect people to their family and friends. However, ‘Pages’ allow people to follow a business, celebrity, or their favourite science experiment. Text in the posts can be longer than on Twitter, allowing more detailed descriptions, and content such as photos (including 360°) and videos can be embedded. Hashtags were also introduced into Facebook to link common topics. A higher percentage of people following the Facebook page identify as female than on Twitter.

Twitter
37,998 followers
@ATLASexperiment

A very popular social media platform with more than 310 million monthly users according to Twitter themselves. Messages (tweets) are posted on the site with a limit of 140 characters. This platform is particularly good for live events (called live-tweeting) and discussing popular topics (trending hashtags). Photographs and GIFs are popular and can increase the number of times a tweet is viewed, liked or re-tweeted. Hashtags are useful to tag tweets for a specific topic, but an internal study showed that too many reduce the impact. In-built analytics on the platform allows for the monitoring of audience and of tweet effectiveness, shown below.

Facebook
19,002 likes
@ATLASexperiment

An excellent social media platform for ATLAS outreach as it allows the accumulated images on CDS over the past years of ATLAS design, construction, and operation as well as photographs taken by ATLAS collaborators during their time at CERN to be showcased. For engagement, the focus is on images rather than words, highlighting the aesthetic beauty of scientific design and discovery, creating a good entry point for people of all backgrounds. Additionally, by showing images of events at CERN, ATLAS collaborators, and individuals’ photos, we are able to convey the human side of ATLAS research and showcase the multidimensional lives and work of everyone in the collaboration.

This is a new platform for ATLAS, first used in June 2015, so increasing followers and visibility is on-going.

Google+
122,959 followers
@ATLASExperiment

A social media platform which links automatically to the user’s Google account. The posts on the ATLAS G+ account contain the same content as posted onto Facebook.

YouTube
4,087 subscribers
1,103,298 views
@ATLASExperiment

YouTube is a video-sharing platform with a highly active user base and the ability to embed content in to other platforms. This makes it an ideal place to host ATLAS video content. This is an old platform that has been revived recently.

The ATLAS Social Media Strategy for Run 2 (2015)

The restart of the LHC for Run 2 in 2015 and the accumulation of data created a rich variety of ATLAS content to share with the public on our platforms. Efforts to increase the number of images and videos were made. Event displays (example left) were very popular online, and quotes combined with images (example right) increased the likelihood they would be shared and viewed, whilst also overcoming the character limit on Twitter.

An image that was shared widely on ATLAS platforms after the End Of Year Event in December 2015.