Thoughts about “How Influencers Create Buzz”

Steve Savage
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POPAgriculture Podcast
My first attempt to “create buzz”

• High School 1972 via mimiograph

• Critique of “School Spirit” by “Iconoclastes”

My first attempt at buzz for Ag

• Started in 2009 out of frustration about rampant disinformation

• “Myth busting” attempts about composting
  – SCRIBD
  – Sustainablog
Evolving Effort

• Using multiple sites
• Lots of “unlearning” about how to write
• Discovering a community
• Opportunities arise
  – Speaking invitations
  – Forbes contributor
  – Hawaii trips
So what is my niche?

• Diverse exposure over time: crop, geography, technology
• Owning my “industry insider” status
• Not subject to FOIA attacks
• Being able to talk about the real people behind technologies
• I enjoy crunching big data sets from public platforms (USDA-NASS, PDP, CalPIP, FAOstats…)
• A goal to educate biotech types about CP products
• Enjoy storytelling
• Willing to challenge the myths surrounding organic
Working with CropLife

• Early contact from Jay Vroom
• 2016: Invited to join CLF and lead the CPBRI
• Hard to fill the shoes of Leonard Gianessi
• Looking for ways to create “buzz”
  – “Better Food Stories”, “Putting Pesticides in Perspective” – focus on stories
  – Interested in Podcasting
Launched POPAgriculture: 35 segments since July 2017

• Using pop-culture references
• 10-15 minute stories, casual style, humor
• Some interviews, hope to do more
• Posting every two weeks
• Some learning curve issues
• Now adding back text versions with pictures and links
Audience?

- Commuters, joggers etc
- Consumers who still have an open mind or who are skeptical
- People who are challenged by the busting of a myth
- Young people from outside of normal pathways now entering the CP industry
- Students in ag classes
- “The Choir?”
Realizing the importance of also “preaching to the choir”

• Great video piece by Nick Saik about why is the “choir also important”
  – The choir usually stays for the “sermon”
  – Spreading the word isn’t just the job of the “pastor”
The importance of the “agvocate” community

- The need for multiple distinct and unique “voices”
- Keeping each other informed and helping us get out of our “silos”
- A helpful sounding board
- Some hope against the “whack-a-mole” nature of the opposition
- Leveraging each other’s audiences, trust circles, networks...
- Support and encouragement – likes, shares, comments, emails, FB groups
- Freedom to also do the “day job”
Thanks!