

Twitter and Micro-blogging in more than 140 characters

note: Many of these links and tips appear in the *Twitter Book* by Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein (2009, O'Reilly Publishers) - Get it! Its great!

Why Twitter?

Easy to compose - 140 characters or less

For success its good to be interesting because of its brevity

Easily integrates into workflows. Sip or gulp from the Twitter stream.

Good for maintaining what is called "ambient intimacy" with people you really want to hear from.

Ideal platform for commentary, sharing expertise/ideas and news. Poster child for the Real Time web, which is becoming an important component of the overall Web.

Good for sharing business related info., common ideas and gauging how people feel about issues, asking questions, finding answers, links to information

Powerful Q and A system. Breaking news. Links to interesting things. Many post to Twitter first before blogs.

Quick Basics

Opening an Account on Twitter.com

Keep user name short so it does not take up lots of characters. You only have 140 characters (including spaces) so chose wisely.

Add a short profile and a picture. This makes it seem real to other people and attracts their attention. Bio 160 characters or less.

Asymmetric following: Don't have to agree to follow someone. Can be a one way street that leads to meeting new people and also challenges you to be interesting.

RSS feed can allow you to follow someone without them knowing.

RSS feeds are found on the users Twitter page and yours as well. Can also be used on Twitter searches.

140 character limit and URL shorteners for long links
Use Search tools to find people to follow.

Advanced Search is at
<http://search.twitter.com>

The #HashTag

Use to categorize messages for a topic or event. Append to a question or opinion/
experience

Several Good websites can also help follow this: Shows Stats and Usage
<http://hashtags.org>

Search hashtags
<http://search.twitter.com>

What a hashtag is about.
<http://whatthetrend.com>

<http://tagal.us>

@replies/@messages

- Use to send a message or reply to someone. - Use to credit or mention someone in a
tweet. Using @ with their user name links to their account. Essentially a trackback link
to them.

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VERY IMPORTANT: If you use @username at the beginning of the Tweet only the
people following that person will see it.

If you are following one of the people in the conversation, but not both then, you won't
see this dialog between them. To avoid this, put a comment BEFORE the @username.
Then all your followers will see it.

"When you sign up for Twitter, it's set to show you only the @messages between people you're
following. For example, if you're following Jane but not Joe, you won't see any @messages
between Jane and Joe. Conversely, if you're following both Jane and Pete, you'll see the
@messages between them." - Twitter Book pg. 143.

LISTS

Consider using lists to organize Tweeters by subject and groups. Lists can be created by users
of people they follow grouped around a specific topic for example. This list can then be shared
for others who can follow the people in the list simply by subscribing to the list. Or Lists can
remain private for your own use.

You can find lists of topics and subscribe to these list members. You can select all or some of
them to follow. This makes it easy for you follow a lot of people with the same interest. You

don't actually follow all these people, but rather the list. This makes it easy to keep up with lots of Tweeters without following them.

For more on Lists see: <http://mashable.com/2009/11/02/twitter-lists-guide/>

Retweet (RTs)

Include person's account using the @username RT @username then their message (via @username) at the end of a tweet. Can also be someone who is not on Twitter.

General Rule: RT @username then the content if you are directly quoting.

If you add your own comments then put these first and then (via @username) at the end or RT @username after your comments.

Direct Messages (DM)

Type d followed by username, no @ needed in the Twitter webpage. -Send from Twitter.com -Send from your account page Send from Twitter apps

Can't send to someone who you are only following, but those being followed can send a direct message to followers.

TweetUP

Potentially helpful in education. Brings together people in person who are on Twitter <http://twtvite.com> can organize a TweetUp

Who is Following Who or YOU?

<http://www.doesfollow.com> - Does an person follow you?

<http://friendorfollow.com> - See followers and friends

<http://www.twittersheep.com> - Creates a tag cloud of what your followers are interested in

Fail Whale

Twitter can get overloaded, sometimes frequently so you will see the Fail Whale. It may become your friend.

Location

You can activate geo-location in your account settings to tweet from your exact location. This feature is turned off by default.

Help for Twitter

<http://help.twitter.com> <http://getsatisfaction.com/twitter>

GATHERING INFORMATION

Twitter lists the most popular 10 words or phrases, called Trending Topics. Good gauge of what most people are Twittering about. This appears on right side of search page in your Twitter Account. Real time updates so it changes regularly.

Follow @TweetingTrends to get updates on new trends as they appear
<http://whatthetrend.com> - Good for explaining what the trends are why they are trendy

<http://twitscoop.com> - good for seeing trends and finding topics before they get officially trendy.

<http://twopular.com> - shows trends over 2 and 8 hrs, day, week, month and beyond

Searching for Information

Twitter has extensive Advanced Search. Can search for People, Places, Attitudes, Links and more. <http://search.twitter.com>

Some things to search for: Your Name, Account Name, company/organization, competitors, etc.

Multi-column twitter search - quite useful. Screen capture stills or video for research purposes.

<http://www.TweetGrid.com>

<http://www.monitter.com>

Save advanced Searches with an RSS feed.

You can use use <http://Tweetbeep.com> to send you email digest of tweet search every hour.

Searching for mentions

<http://backtweets.com> - Can find URLs embedded in Tweets. for URLs that have been shortened in Twitter.

URL Shorteners - these all track click throughs

Can't normally search

<http://Bit.ly>

<http://Tr.im>

<http://Cli.gs>

<http://tinyurl.com>- ??? Early service for this. Now used less. No click through feature as far as I know

To See what Others are Reading - maybe NTSFW

<http://twitturly.com>

<http://tweetmeme.com>

<http://Microplaza.com>- Personalize results to see what others are saying

Who to Follow?

Organize Twitterers by topic

<http://wefollow.com>

<http://twellow.com>

Recommendations

<http://mrtweet.com>

<http://whoshouldifollow.com> - will suggest people based your activity and network

Who is the Most Influential?

Most Retweets

<http://retweetist.com>

<http://retweetradar.com>

Analyzes most influential

<http://twittercounter.com>

<http://Twitalyzer.com> - takes into account followers, retweetability and other factors

3rd Party Applications - Integration with other social apps is the trend. Best for regular users. Google these apps below for more information.

Tweetie for Mac and Twitter iPhone (Mac) - Excellent interface but with some limitations

TweetDeck desktop and iPhone (Adobe Air, Mac and PC, Linux) - Multi column view

Seismic Desktop (Adobe Air app, Mac and PC) - Multi column view Seismic Web (web app for Twitter and Facebook)

Twhirl (Adobe Air, replaced by Seismic Desktop)

Twitterific (Mac) - One of the original Twitter clients for Mac and iPhone app EventBox

(Mac) - Nicely integrated social networking app TwitterBerry - Blackberry TinyTwitter - Blackberry

Twitter's mobile service: <http://m.twitter.com> Can also set up tweets through texting service on your phone through your account.

Multi column Twitter apps are very popular because you can configure multiple columns of information across your screen.

The ability to create Groups is also a popular feature as is the ability to see trends beyond just the top 10 trending topics.

Usage Tips

Linking to blogs is a very common use of Twitter Use as a Q and A system.

Make things conversational.

Clicking on time stamp in tweet will give you a permanent link to that specific tweet.

Images can be posted via <http://TwitPic.com>.

Posts pics as a URL in the Tweet.

Comments by others are sent to the original Twitter account that posted the image.

Live Twitter events - create a hashtag for the event and tell others at your event to use it.

ALWAYS put the hashtag at the end of the Tweet for readability.

New publishing platform - Some Twitter accounts are set up to send out tweets on a scheduled basis. You can do this through <http://Socialloomph.com> and <http://Twitterfeed.com>

FollowFriday has become a tradition for interesting followers every Friday. Search for the hashtag #FollowFriday (caps don't matter)

Integrate with Facebook

<http://apps.facebook.com/twitter/>

<http://apps.facebook.com/selectivetwitter/>

Integrate with other social networking sites

<http://Ping.fm>

How much?

Keep the Twitter stream in mind and dip from it off and on.

5 minute window for people to respond or retweet.

Get used to drinking from the stream when you can. Don't feel like you have to monitor Twitter constantly.

Most people post about 4 tweets day. Heavy users dozens or more. 22 tweets per day may get followers

How many followers? It varies. You should gauge what you are comfortable with. Following 100 or so might be the max. Maybe less? Maybe More?

Use Favorites as a bookmark in Twitter

Unfollowing and Blocking - Person does not know if you unfollow them. Do this through your Twitter page or 3rd party application.

Blocking blocks someone from accessing your tweets or sending you theirs. Essentially removes them from getting any information to or from you. Both can be reversed if so desired.

For Organizations

Use Twitter as a conversation starter with your followers. Don't just think of it as a one way street to push out information.

1. Include names in the 160-character Bio. Use the Name field for the
2. Create a custom background
3. Sign messages with the initials of whomever is posting." - Twitter Book, pg. 199

Archiving Tweets

Evernote @myEN

http://blog.evernote.com/2009/04/14/evernote_twitter/

TweetScan

<https://www.tweetscan.com/data.php>

Spam

Report to: <http://twitter.com/spam>

Block Spammer by visiting their page and blocking it

If following and notice that its getting spammy, unfollow the account

Send Video to Twitter

<http://www.twitvid.com/>

Phone Calls via Twitter

<http://www.jajah.com/products/twitter/>

SIMILAR TWITTER-like SERVICES

<http://Yammer.com> - for businesses

<http://Present.ly> - for business or enterprise applications

<http://Identi.ca> - Open source version of Twitter-like service

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

25 Ways to Teach with Twitter

<http://www.techlearning.com/article/20896>

The World According to Twitter. David Pogue's new book.

Twitip website for Twitter tips. Authored by Darren Rowse of ProBlogger.

<http://www.twitip.com>

The Twitter Survival Guide book. Link found on Twitip.com website.