Twitter Fast and Easy

Unleash Twitter to Promote Your Business

FOLLOW ME!

Twitter Fast & Easy

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What Is Twitter?

Twitter is a micro-blogging social network that allows you to send 140-character messages called "tweets" to answer the question, "What are you doing?"

As you post updates to your followers, responses to your post happen almost instantaneously. But, only the people who *(unwanted followers can be blocked from seeing your updates)* follow you can see what you post and vice versus. Your tweet can potentially reach thousands of customers or business prospects, driving them to your website or blog, and drawing attention to your products.

Twitter is gaining approximately 10,000 new users *every* single day making it a fantastic way to meet other people online with similar interests. Twitter's extremely simple interface and ease of use is probably one of the reasons why it has caught on like crazy.

It's also important to understand why – and how – Twitter works… and what is making it so successful; the hidden qualities that fooled so many busy nay-saying "experts".

- It operates immediately, in "real-time". Even people on dialup can post a tweet pretty quickly (compared to the interminable steps to get to the point of posting on Facebook).
- Participants actually drive the ship. It's **personal choice-based**, rather than solicitation based
- It's 140 character limit and micro-blogging format make it sync perfectly with the modern "no time to breathe" mindsets and lifestyles
- It's all about communication and connection.

All these factors can be used to your advantage when you plan your Twitter marketing strategy. But above all, **never lose sight of #4**: Get that right, and you've got a Twitter presence that people will (pardon the pun) flock to!

There are two key elements to Twitter Marketing: the way you approach it, and the tools you use.

Let's start with how to approach making your Twitter presence a powerful marketing aid...

Why Bother Using Twitter

Here are just a few things you can do on Twitter…

- **Find friends, family and those who you look up to -** Celebrities, pop icons, politicians or even news personalities are all online, easily accessible to anyone.

- **Establish repertoire with your followers** - Twitter allows for a bit more personal, more fun mode of communication. Making it easy for your followers to connect and relate to you on a personal level by catching a glimpse of the real you.

- **Stay up to date on breaking news -** A variety of news organizations are using Twitter as a way of displaying the latest and most "breaking" news stories they have.

- **Keep your followers updated -** You can send a handful of tweets per day, keeping your followers "in the loop" and reminding them of your existence.

- **Build a loyal, steady client-base -** Your followers will see all of your tweets and digest its information in about half a second and if you include a link, they probably won't get offended. Chances are, if you include an eye-catching description with a link they'll probably click it!

- **Build up excitement for a product launch -** By keeping your followers updated about your projects, you can let them know when you are starting a new project and steps along the way. You can offer freebies and cool stuff that they'll appreciate, to build trust and anticipation.

- **Drive traffic to your website -** You can instantly notify your followers each time you update your blog.

- **Build relationships with business contacts -** Twitter makes it easy to keep in touch with business partners and contacts.

- **Find service providers and vendors to hire -** It's very easy to find people to handle those freelance jobs you need. You can get to know them and their services easily.

- **Crowd-sourcing -** By listening to the crowd, you can figure out the exact thoughts, needs, and wants of your client base. In this way, innovative new ideas and strategies are born that are guaranteed to fall in line with the desires of your clients.

- **Learn something new -** If you have a question you can easily throw it out there and most often, there will be an answer.

Twitter will help you…

- Find new business contacts and JV partners

- Find more clients

- Stay on top of trends

- Clue you in quickly to breaking news

- Focus your networking

- Build trust and authority

- Discover the latest Twitter marketing tools and tips

- Establish your brand

- Drive traffic to your articles, blog(s) and website(s)

And it will do all this and more as long as you **remember the social interaction component is a vital key**.

You see, one of Twitter's biggest secrets – and it's as plain as the good old proverbial nose, there's no excuse for not catching this one – lies in the fact that *everyone is so busy tweeting*, *they often forget to respond*.

And that's inexplicable.

Getting Started With Twitter

Create Your Account

Fortunately for you, Twitter is probably one of the most user-friendly websites out there. It is practically impossible to get lost or confused when creating an account or setting up your profile. Nevertheless, I've provided a simple walkthrough for you.

Step 1: Navigate To Twitter

Go to http://twitter.com and click the signup button to begin the process

Step 2: Add Your Basic Account Info

You will be taken to a form where you will be asked to add a variety of information.

▪ Add your full name so people can find you by name.

- Include a user name. This could be your own name, your blog's name, your product's name, your business name, domain name or some variation. Whatever "brand" you want to build, use that as your username.

  - **Important Note:** you can change your user name anytime you want just by entering your password. However, this can cause your followers to become confused about who you are, so changing your name is not recommended.

  - You can, of course, set up more than one Twitter account *(you'll need to use a different email address for each account you create)*. So I suggest that you do so for each business, and also have one for yourself personally.

- Choose a strong password. Most places suggest one containing 7 or more letters (upper and lower case), numbers and special characters like an asterisk, exclamation point, etc.

- An email where you can receive notifications such as direct messages from followers and notifications that you have a new follower. (All of these can be configured in your account.)

- Read and agree to the terms of service.

- Click the button to create your account.

- Fill in the captcha form and submit.

In the example below, there were no errors or problems with the info submitted so there is a green check mark to the right. If there were errors, the user name or email was already in use, etc., you would see a message and asked to correct the errors.

Next you'll be taken to a page where you can find select topics of interest, find friends, and search for people.

Step 3: Find Sources

To browse topics of interest, click on the categories listed and "follow" accounts that are related. If you want to skip this step for the moment, you can click the next button at the bottom of the page. You will be able to return to this later.

Topics of Interest

Click on the listed topics or categories to find a few accounts you may want to follow. Depending upon whether this is a business account or a personal account, you may want to check out a variety of complementary categories.

Find Contacts To Follow

Find contacts from your email or linkedin lists. Just supply your email and password to search your lists for addresses that are also used on Twitter. Then follow these friends. To skip this step, click the next button at the bottom of the page. You will be able to return to this later.
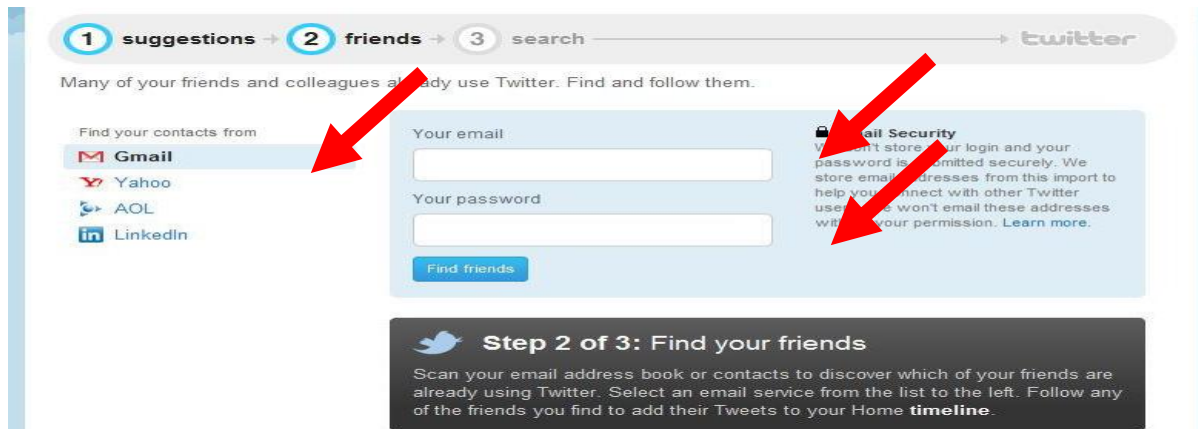
Search For People

To look for people by name or business name, just enter the name in the search box and click the search button.
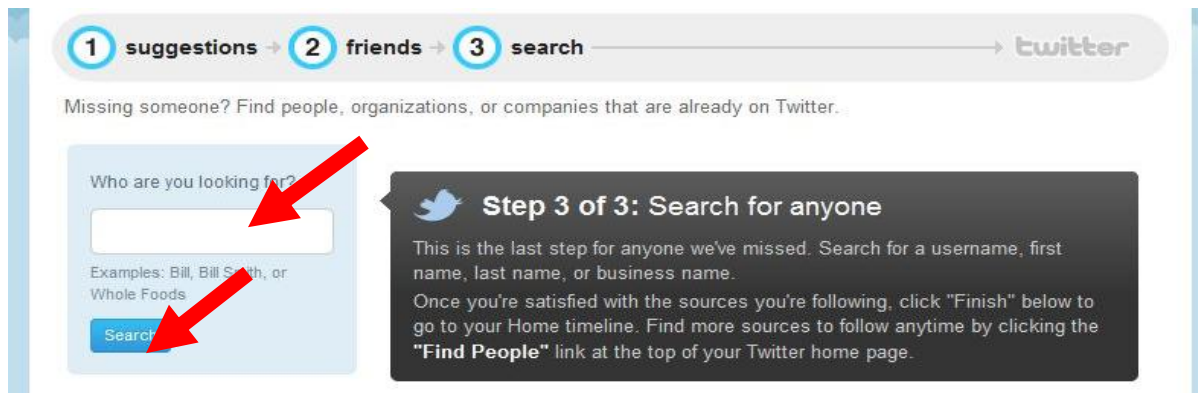
Click the next step button to complete the basic setup process.
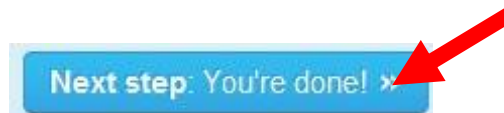
Don't go overboard when it comes to following or you'll soon find that your Twitter page is far too "noisy" – you might miss the good Tweets among all the noise and clutter. Only follow people if you have a legitimate reason for doing so-- don't follow a bunch of strangers.

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Tweak Your Settings

Once you've registered your account and you've logged in, it's very important that you edit your settings. You will find access to this at the top right of the screen, fourth link from the left.

The information you entered during signup is already there, but you want to make it easy for people to find you on Twitter, and you can do that through your settings. Other Twitter users will use the information you enter here to decided if they want to follow you or not, and this info is also searchable on Twitter and through various third party applications.

Double check the information there and add or adjust any that are important:
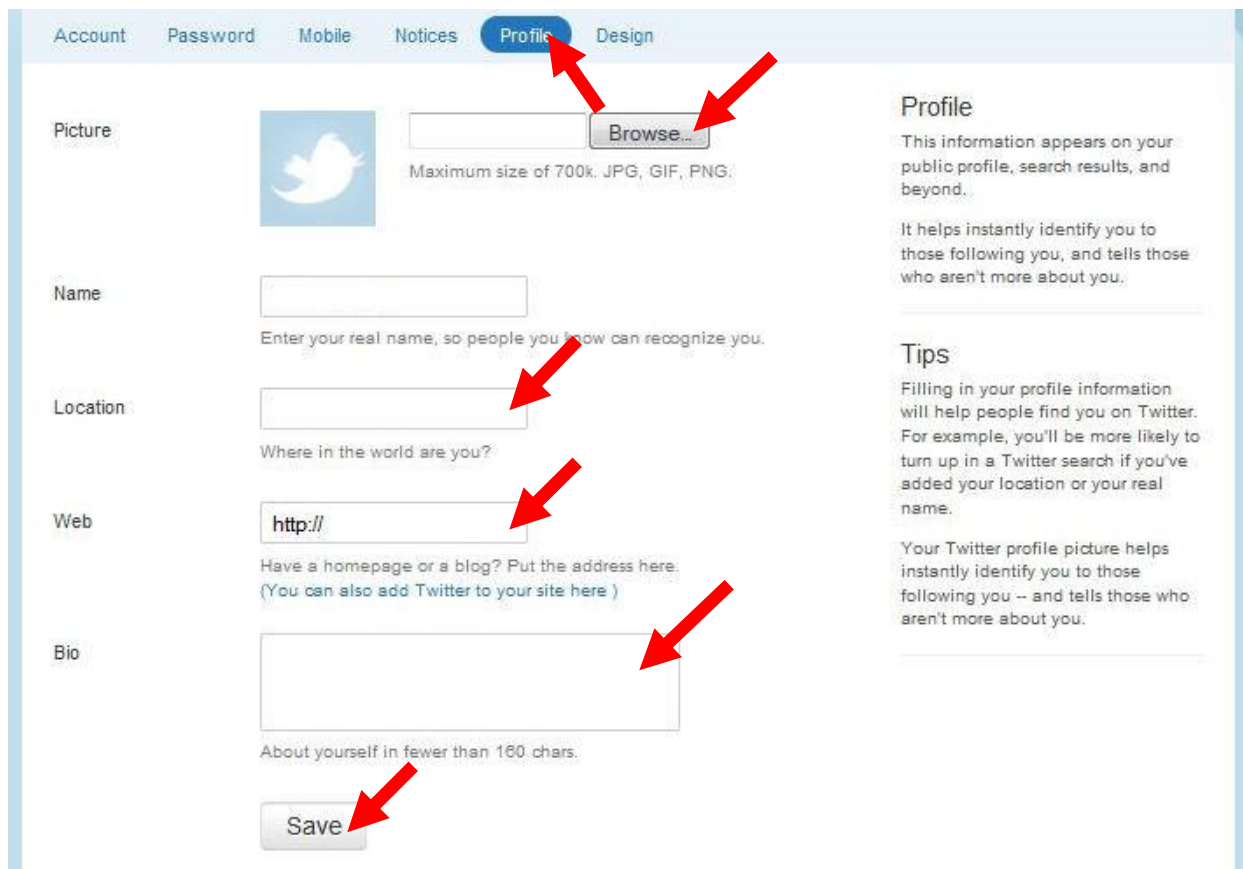
- **Time Zone** - Add or adjust your local time zone for accurate updates.

- **Location** – Add location if it's important to your target market.

- **Privacy setting** – If you protect your tweets, you lose some of the advantage of having a Twitter account; however, there may be some circumstances where it would be appropriate. Do not protect your account if you aren't sure which to choose.

- Click save.
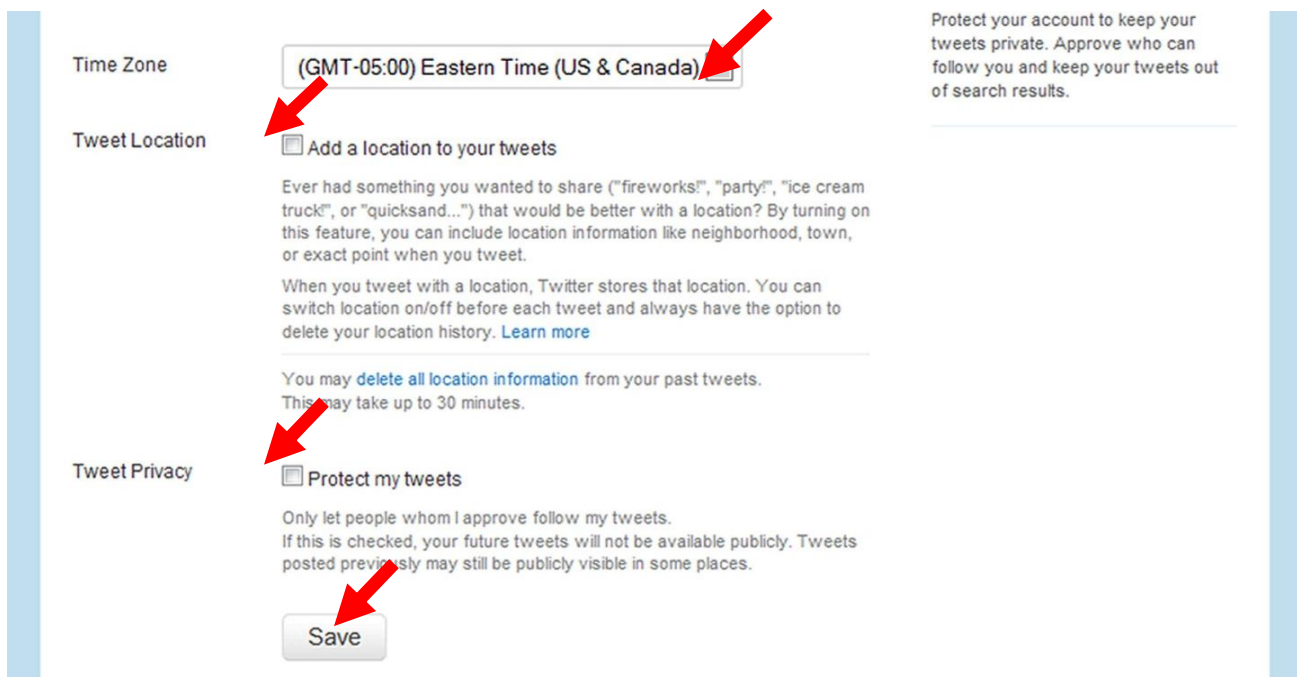
If you wish to stand out on Twitter, **it's recommended that you customize your profile.**

- Click the profile link at the top of the screen.

- Replace the default picture. Browse your computer and upload a small picture of yourself or a business logo to help followers spot your tweets easily.

- Add your location. Be as general or specific as you like.

- Add your website or blog URL. Make sure you include the http:// prefix to the address.

- Add a short bio that includes keywords to describe yourself and tweet topics. You're allowed 160 characters.

- This is the most important step in your settings because this is what will "sell" you to potential followers.

- Then – and this is a REALLY crucial step – when you've said what you want to say **professionally**, go back over it and make your bio feel more **personal** than business

- Start of your bio with "I am" and then describe who you are and what you do. **For instance** - I am an avid book of the month reader who helps women start profitable service-based businesses.

- Everything should fit the image/persona you want to reveal. Your **logo or picture**, your profile page **colors,** your **profile photo** – all should reinforce your brand.

- Click save and you're finished with fine-tuning your profile.

It is also possible to change the background of your Twitter profile. Go to the "Design" tab under "Settings" and you can either select one of Twitter's default backgrounds or upload one of your own. If you want to truly stand out, I recommend uploading one of your own.

Setup Your Profile Background

Everybody starts off with the same light blue background. But, you don't have to keep it, you can stand out from the crowd by choosing from about 11 other standard designs or by creating a custom background.

To customize your Twitter background:

- Log in to your Twitter account at www.twitter.com

- In the top navigation bar, click **Settings**

- **Then c**lick the furthest tab on the right, labeled **Design**

- **Select a template** by clicking on it, or upload your own background image by clicking "**Change background image**."

- **Save** your changes when done
- If you want to customize the sidebar and font colors of your page, click "**Change design colors**"
- Click any of the boxes to change your colors; click **Done** when you're finished.
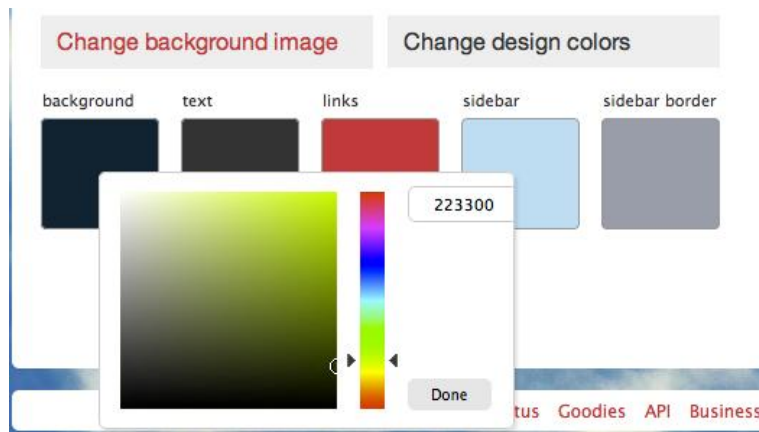
Note: Background images must be in PNG, GIF, or JPG format, smaller than 800k. You want your Twitter background to be about 1600 x 1200 pixels, and work correctly on screens of 1024 x786 and up because according to w3schools.com then 36% of users are at 1024 x 786, and 57% are at an even higher resolution, so you need to make sure you cater to the majority.

Branding Your Business on Twitter

A quick word about your Twitter page and profile...

The world won't end if you don't totally customize your Twitter profile page – but why would you put real effort into your profile pic and bio – and not tweak your Twitter pages to match the image you want to project?

When it comes to your background, at the very least, change the default colors to your company colors. In addition to the basic Twitter background templates, you can access **independent sites like the ones listed below to help you "one-click" change your default Twitter background to a more customized theme**:

- **TweetXilla**, http://www.tweetxilla.com. Creates custom Twitter background for companies and businesses who advertise on Twitter. Price at time of writing: $95.00 USD – though they also have a good selection of free backgrounds.

- **Twitter Gallery**, http://twittergallery.com. Similar to TweetXilla. Great selection – and many "Follow Me On Twitter" buttons too. Price at time of writing: $50.00 USD for custom background.

- **TwitterGraffiti.com**, http://www.twittergraffiti.com. For the Creative. Allows you to create your own custom/personalized Twitter Background/Wallpaper.

Using Twitter

Reading Your Twitter Timeline

To read your Twitter time line, simply log in, Your home timeline is a long stream showing all Tweets from those you have chosen to follow on Twitter. Newest messages are at the top.

Just hover your mouse over a tweet to reply or retweet to that tweet.
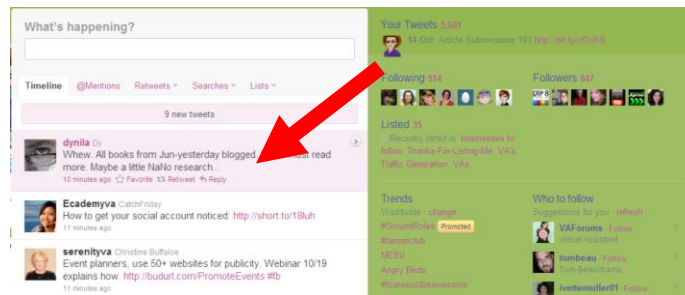
Clicking on a tweet will open a sidebar that shows everthing related to that tweet including other tweets, hashtags, replies, photos, video
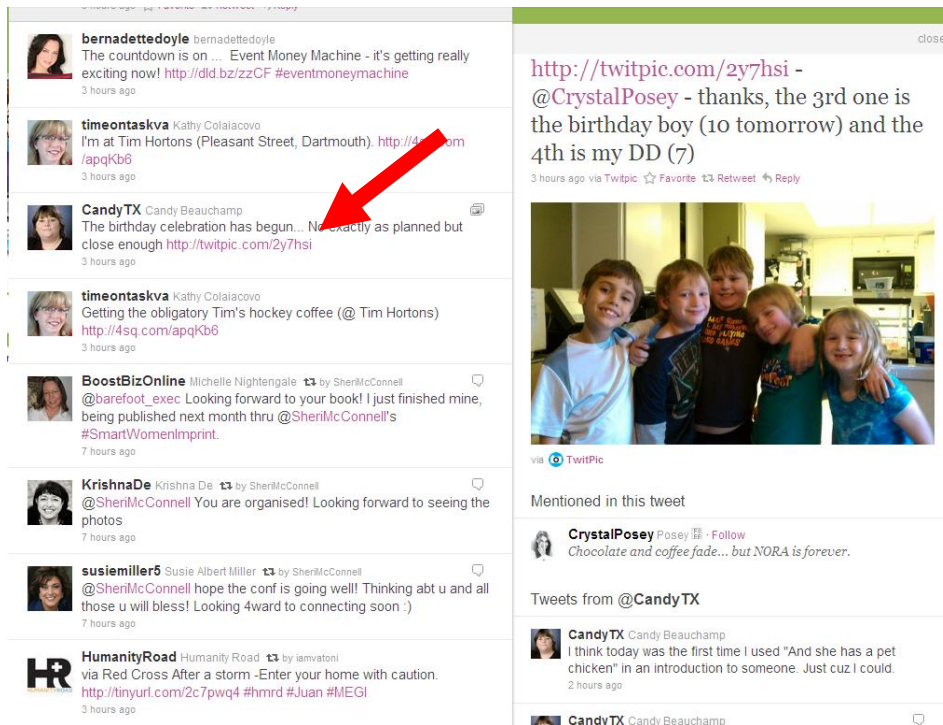
Twitter Client Applications

Twitter is fantastic, but using the standard Twitter web application is a pain because you have to literally watch your replies and Direct Messages in real-time because you can only see the main Tweetstream on the screen. Another limitation is that it only displays approximately the last 20 tweets, so if you want to see older ones, you have to keep clicking on MORE to view back pages.

That's where **Twitter client applications come** in, like…

- **Tweetdeck**, http://www.tweetdeck.com. The great thing about Tweetdeck is that it displays the Tweetstream, your replies and your direct messages all on the one screen. The message columns allow for 500 tweets as a default, so scrolling down allows you to view tweets from awhile back. The screen also has a continuous right hand scroll, so you can set up different groups and their tweets will appear in that column. That way you don't miss important tweets from people who are more important to you than others.

- **Twhirl**, http://www.twhirl.org. Twhirl connects to multiple Twitter, laconi.ca, Friendfeed and Seesmic Video accounts, displays notifications for new messages and shortens long URLs. You can also cross-post your updates to other sites via Ping.fm.

- **Twitbin**, http://www.twitbin.com. Firefox plugin that allows you to monitor your Twitter conversations from a sidebar in your browser. A great way to multi-task and keep an eye on your Twitter account while you're busy doing other things.

Twitter Terminology

As with most modern inventions, there is a certain "language" you'll have to learn when it comes to using Twitter.

- **Retweet (RT) –** The reposting of someone else's tweet so that your followers can read the tweet

- **Hash tag (#) -** Typing # followed by a keyword will categorize your Tweet so that others can easily find it by performing a search

- **@ symbol -** Placing the @ symbol directly before a username shows that you are directly addressing that person (but the Tweet is still public).

- **Direct Message (DM) -** Typing d followed by a username will allow you to send them a message directly to that person rather than having your Tweet appear publicly.

- **Overheard (OH)**: Typing OH at the beginning of the Tweet means that you overheard something funny/interesting that is not your own original idea.

Followers

Okay, so now you've setup your account and created your profile. You understand the basic terminology so; the next step is to start following a few people.

Since Twitter is all about connecting with people Twitter is totally useless as a marketing tool if you don't have followers, so your main objective should be following people and being followed by people.

- Begin by following the movers and shakers in your industry as well as your favored mentors.

- Follow the people you already know…
    - Go to Facebook, Myspace, and any other social networking sites you use and post a link to your new Twitter account in your status update, urging people to follow you
    - Put a link to your Twitter profile in your email signature
    - If you have an email list, send out a blast talking about your new Twitter account and encouraging your subscribers to follow you
    - If you have a blog, write a post that gives your readers a link to your Twitter profile and ask them to follow you

- Basically, you want to make your Twitter profile visible wherever you have an internet presence

Ultimately you'll build a following based on your interactions and tweets.

- **Tweet often**. Like any other type of social media, the only way to be successful at it is to actually use it often. People remember names and faces only when they see them enough.

- **Retweet.** Another way to grow the number of people who are following you on Twitter is to actually Retweet those you are following. Retweeting is an easy way to communicate with others and help you to gain respect with them, which aids in growing your business.

- **Interact with others**. Respond to others when they are talking. Interact with them by leaving a message about their update.

That being said, you should consider implementing a plan where you add a few new followers each day or each week.

- You can add followers by following people. When you follow someone, they are notified by email. Very often, they'll be curious about you, check out your profile, and likely follow you back.

- However, you have to be strategic. Don't expect results by following celebrities or extremely popular users, as they probably won't even notice you. Don't follow random strangers – why on earth would they be interested in you or what you're selling anyway?
    - One awesome function of Twitter is the ability to search for people based on what they are talking about. For instance, if you have a blog about gardening, you can search for the keyword "gardening" and it will pull up everyone Tweeting about gardening.
    - You can even search for phrases such as, "need help gardening" or "plants keep dying", etc. This way, you can find people in your niche who are suffering from a problem that you can (hopefully) resolve.

- Twitter also allows you to upload contacts from your contact lists.

- Keep in mind that Twitter doesn't have a follower limit but, there are a few regulations until you reach both the 2000 & 10,000 follower milestone

There are various programs and online services that make following and unfollowing people easy. My preference is Twellow.

Using Twellow to Find to People to Follow

Twello at http://www.twellow.com is great way to find people to interact with; and it's organized in a way that makes it easy to do so.

People are categorized into different areas of interest, so when you do a search you can quickly and easily find those with pursuits that you are interested in. The main page lists the various categories, which then have sub-categories. You simply click on a category, and a list of people is displayed.

You don't have to be registered with Twellow to be displayed, and at the time of this writing there were nearly two million people showing on the site, so you will have plenty to choose from. By all means though, register yourself and set up a profile so others can find you.

When you click on a category, Twellow displays a list of people in that category and they are ordered by the number of followers they have. If you are already logged into Twitter via the web, (not Tweetdeck), you will be able to follow people directly from the screen where their profiles are displayed.

Creating Groups On Twitter

Twitter Groups at http://www.jazzychad.net/twgroups allows you to tag each person as they follow you, and assign them to a group. You can then send a message to the group, without needing to send the message to each person one at a time (It's a great way to Tweet your list!). Along with keeping track of your different segments, you need to analyze:

- Trends
- Data
- Tweeter behavior
- Effectiveness and click-through rates of your tweets
- Effectiveness and click-through rates of your keywords
- Market segment attracted to your Twitter presence

(This is somewhat different from grouping your actual different Twitter accounts using an application like HootSuite, but we'll get to that shortly.)

Should You Protect Your Messages Or Not?

Twitter gives you the option to protect your messages but, do you want to? This is a question that is dependent on how you plan to Twitter and how much information you plan to position yourself in front of. For most people, do not protect your messages right off the bat. Rather, give yourself time to build up a following and then make the decision after you see just how you will use the service.

What Does Protecting Do?

When you protect your Tweets you simply limit who can view what you are writing. For example, those who follow you on Twitter are able to see what you saying. They can also see your replies to others, too. This is beneficial because it allows people to find you and talk with you. For example,

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suppose you are making a statement about a local news story. This is seen by others and they can let you know of similar stories near them. Soon, everyone is able to communicate easily about the topic at hand.

Why protect?

There are some times when you may wish to block your Tweets from being read by other people. Like when…

- You are a private person and just want to talk to those you already know and you are not interested in other people finding you
- You want your Tweets to only be visible to a specific group of people,

You may have your own reasons for not tweeting your messages out to the world. It is your right to do so or not.

If you would like to meet new people, promote your business, and/or share the information that you have with a larger group you want to think twice about protecting your Tweets. It will limit those who can follow you and those that can hear what you have to say.

Following

If you plan to return the favor of those who follow you, I suggest you visit their Twitter profile to see if they're a good fit for you.

Do they share the same interests? Do they fit into your business market?

There's no point in following someone just for the sake of adding another number to your following – if there isn't any value in it for you or them, then don't follow!

What Makes You Un-follow?

The goal of Twitter is to interact with other people. It goes without saying that you do need to follow at least a few people so that you could interact with them. But, there comes a time when you may have to un-follow someone. **The most reasons to un-follow are**…

- You just do not like the person
- You are not interested in what the person is saying

If you are using twitter for the business you may want to un-follow some because…

- they are not your ideal client
- they are not your competitor
- they are not someone you want to learn from
- they are not selling something you want to buy
- they don't fit your brand or image

There are two things to consider first though. **One,** When & Why should you un-follow and **Two,** What should you avoid doing so that people don't unfollow you.

Adding A Tweet

To tweet, just type your message in the box, up to 140 characters – including spaces, and press the tweet button.
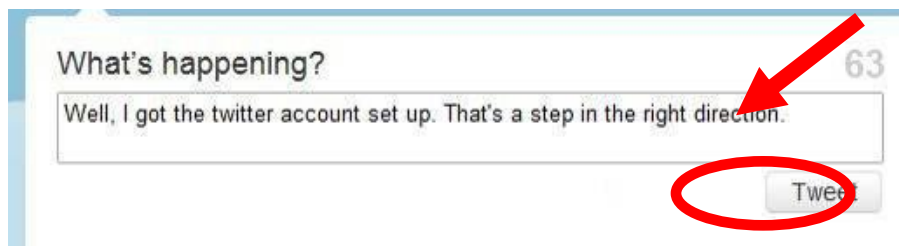
Replying To A Tweet

When you find a tweet you'd like to reply to, mouse over the bottom right corner and several buttons appear. Click reply to respond to the comment or question.
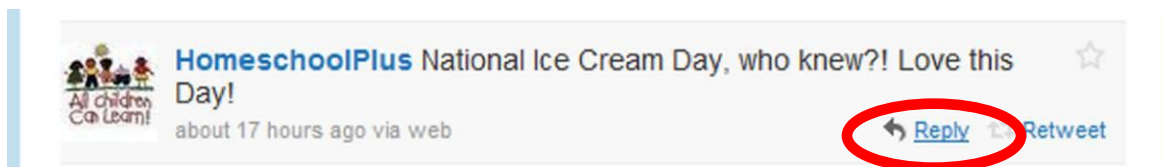
You will be taken to the tweet box at the top of your screen where the name of the person will automatically appear (@HomeschoolPlus). Add a message to the person who wrote the original tweet in your timeline and press Tweet. You've just made a reply.

If you just want to make a comment to someone that is not related to a tweet, you can go to the tweet box and add @theirusername and just type your message.

Reply to HomeschoolPlus: 35

@HomeschoolPlus Isn't it great?! You can get so many teachable moments with a subject like ice cream. ;)
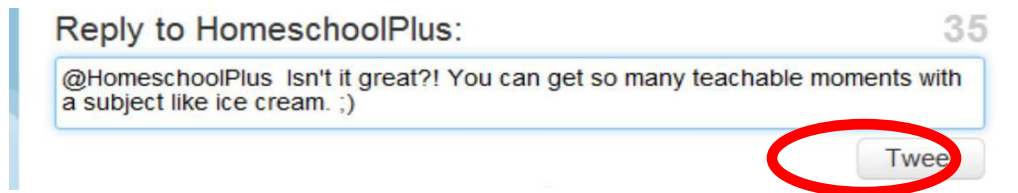
Twee

Reading @ Replies

Not everyone who makes a comment or reply to your tweet can be seen on your home page. Only the people you follow can be seen in there. Ignoring the people/mentions you don't follow is bad for business so you'll want to make sure you read those as well. After all, they are potential clients, customers, and followers.

In order to see the tweets that mention your name, simply click on your @Mentions in the timeline menu. There you will see everyone who mentioned to you, even if you don't follow them. Reply to these as usual.

Timeline   **@Mentions**   Retweets ▾   Searches ▾   Lists ▾

Retweeting

There are two ways to retweet a message. You can use the retweet button or do it manually.

Automatic Retweets

To retweet automatically, simply click the retweet link found when you mouse over the bottom left corner of a tweet and then confirm by clicking the yes button.

smallmemories The United States is called a "giant melting pot" because people from all over the world have come t..
http://tinyurl.com/c98z8q
5:17 PM Apr 4th, 2009 via twitterfeed   ↩ Reply ⇄ Retweet

kitsingleton I wish I could   Retweet to your followers?   Yes
11:01 AM Mar 28th, 2009 via we

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Manual Retweets

To retweet manually, go to the tweet box at the top of the screen type in RT (space) @theusersname (space) and the original tweet, with or without a comment like "cool" as seen below.

Unless you want to include a comment, it's probably better to use the Retweet button.

Keeping Tabs On Retweets

Keeping up with retweets can be very important. To do this, click on "Retweets" in the sidebar. You'll be able to check retweets by others, retweets you made, and your retweets, retweeted.
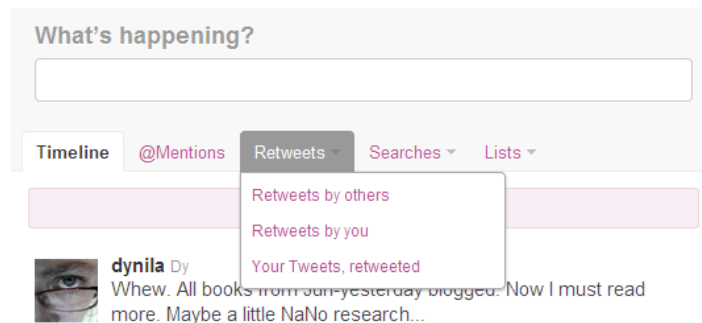
- **Retweets By Others** – When you follow people (sometimes called tweeple) and what to check out what they have retweeted, click on the "Retweets" button in the sidebar. You'll get a list of retweets from everyone you follow.

- **Retweets By You** - To find out what offers or items you've retweeted to your readers, click the "Retweets By You" tab. This helps you to space things out so you don't retweet the same offers or messages too often and helps to make sure that you tweeted a time sensitive offer.

- **Your Tweets, Retweeted** - If you reward affiliates or contest entrants for retweeting you need some way to keep up with who retweeted something you wrote. As seen on this last tab, kitsingleton (mouseover picture to see name) retweeted something written by tools4teachers.

Direct Messaging

There are actually two forms of direct messages, public and private. A **public** direct message just involves typing the @ (at symbol) directly in front of the user name like @tools4teachers. When you use this method, the two parties do not have to be following each other to see the message in their mention or @ timelines. In the case of the **private** direct message, both parties must be following each other to see the message in the DM or direct message area.

To send a private direct message:

- Click the "Messages" button on the top menu bar of your page.

- You'll land on a page showing your private messages history. Click the "New Message" button, highlighted below. Click to send a new message.

- In the pop-up box, type the name or username of the person you wish to send to.

- Enter the message you wish to privately send, and click "Send."

The sent message will show up in the sent "folder". Click the sent tab to see all sent messages.
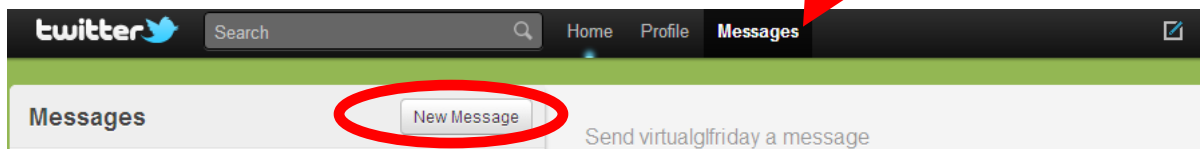
When someone replies to your DM (direct message) you will be able to see it in the side bar as in the picture below. To read the message, just click on the DM link in the sidebar and you will be taken directly to the inbox.
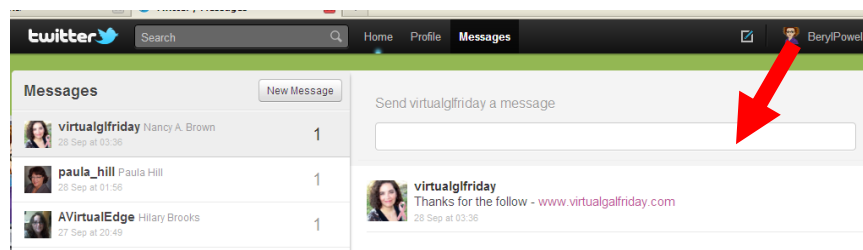
Why Use Direct Messages?

There are many times when you will want to use direct messages instead of posting the information directly on Twitter's boards. For example, let's say that you want to find a ghostwriter so post that you that you are looking for help writing. Instead of having people send you "@" messages, you tell them to

send you direct messages. The **benefit here** is that you will be easily able to share your message with whomever wishes to read it but, can interact one on one with those who respond.

There are some situations in which you should always use a direct message…

- You are sending private information to someone that you know.
- You want people to share personal information with you.
- You need to talk about a private topic.
- You want someone to read something but do not want to allow others to do so.
- You know the person and want to say hello, personally.

Direct messages can only be sent to those people who are following you. If you want to send a DM to someone that you do not know, you first have to request that they follow you, usually using the Twitter "@" function.

Direct messages can be abused by some people. If you are getting too many from one person and you do not want to communicate one on one with that person, you may wish to un-follow them, which will stop the messages from coming through.

Using Hashtags

Twitter hashtags are a way to organize or group "tweets" around a specific topic. If you've been using Twitter a while, you've probably seen a word preceded by the hash symbol # (i.e. #superbowl).

Step 1: Search Twitter for Existing Hashtags

Before you create a new hashtag, you'll want to do a little research on Twitter to see if the topic already has one.
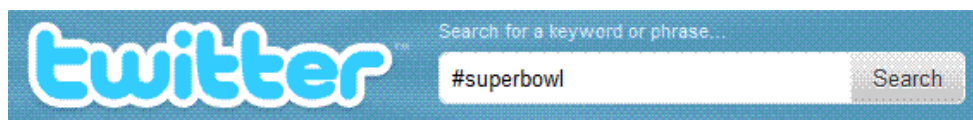
Here you can see that someone has already created hashtags for this topic. Simply preview the tweets to ensure the topic is on target with what you want to discuss, and then add that hashtag into your update.

Step 2: Create a Hashtag

Create a hashtag by adding a hash symbol (#) to the front of a keyword as you write your update. Make sure you only tag quality keywords.

Step 3: Tracking a Conversation with Hashtags.org

You can track conversations in a couple of ways. The first is by using http://hashtag.org. This site is useful if you are not a Twitter user or not signed in to your account but want to follow a conversation. It allows you to read tweets from a web page.

Example: To follow a conversation about Superbowl, enter #superbowl into the search box….

This renders the page below which lets you view recent tweets using that hashtag.

hashtags.org/superbowl

| Home | About | Advertise | Follow Us |

Trends in Twitter   Powered by **Trendistic © Flaptor**

■ **Superbowl** [Hours displayed in CDT]

User	Message/Tweet	When
@AntEscrow	WTF? RT @TIERRA226: @AntEscrow So you stupid, huh? Ravens all day! #SuperBowl	about 1 hour ago
@TIERRA226	@AntEscrow So you stupid, huh? Ravens all day! #SuperBowl	about 1 hour ago
@brownsbarbq	I feel that to be #followed is to have #relevance to any one persons thoughts or visions #bbq #food #tailgate #superbowl #usa #tx #money	about 1 hour ago
@Sunguh_Storm	#Colawars return as #PepsiMAX takes on #Coca-ColaZero with revamped #SuperBowl ad http://bit.ly/9jjZds	about 1 hour ago

Step 4: Tracking Multiple User Conversations with BlastFollow.com

While using hashtag.org is good for when you're not logged into your Twitter account, most people would prefer to "mass follow" those who discuss a certain topic. To do this, you can use BlastFollow.com

To use http://blastfollow.com simply enter the hashtag in the box & click "Get Users

After a few seconds, it will show you how many users have tweeted with that hashtag recently. To follow all of those users, you simply enter your Twitter name and password and click "Blast!"

START HERE!

Hashtag: #superbowl   Get Users!

We found 125 users with hashtag: #superbowl.

Twitter Name:
Twitter Password:

Blast!

Tips for Using Hashtags

- Tag sparingly & only when it adds value to your update.

- Only use one or two hastags in an update.

- When the tag has more than one word, start each word with a capital letter as it is easier to identify… #TennesseeTitans rather than #tennesseetitans

- If you aren't sure what a hashtag means, you can visit http://hashdump.com

Communicating on Twitter

Creating Your Twitter "Lunchroom"

There's an important concept to understand about Twitter mentality. The best way to explain it is to give you a real-life analogy…

If any members of your family are employed by a department store, factory or large company, you may have noticed this family member tends to come home at night and tell you about something they think is humorous or interesting they heard in the lunchroom or cafeteria that day.

They usually repeat someone's small happening, joke (that you think is lame) or some piece of absolute useless trivia – yet the importance your family member seems to attach to it and the pleasure they obviously got out of the exchange seems disproportionately great, considering we're basically talking about superficial social interaction.

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To understand why lunchroom interaction carries such weight with people, you have to understand what it does.

It creates bonding and a sense of belonging/community among a group of people from:

- Widely different social or cultural backgrounds
- Widely different hobbies and interests
- Widely different age groups
- Widely different positions in the company hierarchy

All these people may have only one thing in common – they all work for "the Company".

Yes, there's the company president and a few key top executives who would never mingle with the common man. But what many don't realize is, these top guns have their spies in the lunchroom too, just keeping a finger on the company pulse.

Your Twitter community isn't that much different.

In your case, your "company" is your market. Your "lunchroom" is Twitter. In the real world, you'd dodge in there, blow off a little steam, give one of your buddies a tip about how to make the floor sweeping machine work better, crack up the room with a stupid joke and scurry back to your shift.

What are some of the things you don't do in the lunchroom? What absolutely wouldn't work?

Think about it. You walk into the lunchroom, which is about 2/3 full. You pipe up and say "I'm wearing a green t-shirt, and my favorite sneakers."

Half of the people sitting there ignore you, and a few of the others Look At You Funny. A couple inch away from you along the bench. Why? Because they can see perfectly what you're wearing. Because "who cares" if you're wearing a green t-shirt. You're stating the obvious.

It's pretty darn boring. And there's just nothing to say, in response.

If you're really, really lucky, the motherly cashier in Lumber will pipe up kindly: "These floors sure are hard on your feet. I wish they'd give us stools behind the cash register."

And suddenly there's a discussion going on, all about being expected to stand on concrete all day; how bad liniment smells and why you can't use it when you're going out in public; the down side of anti-inflammatory medication; and which shoes work better than others.

And then they're gone, back to their shifts.

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Meanwhile, even though it was actually your comment that triggered the discussion, no one will go home and say you "really got everyone going in the lunchroom today". Why? Because you didn't engage anyone. Kindly Cashier did, when she voiced a common problem that wasn't being dealt with by the Company – how hard it is to stand on concrete floors all day. Her comment naturally and organically triggered a spirited discussion.

Notice one other thing about Kindly Cashier – she really knew what she was talking about. She'd experienced it. She'd lived it. She wasn't a back office worker trying to bond with the people on the factory floor without having a clue what they go through, day to day, in their routines (down to the smallest detail): She was one of them. Her feet were killing her even as she was speaking.

Now, granted, social networking is a little different. For instance, there is a whole group of 18 to 27 year olds absolutely dedicated to describing their designer clothing in blow-by-blow detail. Also, in an online community where people can't physically see you, it's perfectly okay to give them a mental "snapshot" by saying something like: "I'm wearing my jammies this morning" or "Eating pizza right now.".

But does it matter to people? Will they really identify with you, if you make comments like this? Will your tweet trigger memories of the last time they ate pizza, or prompt them to disagree with your approach and let you know that they wear work clothes and get up at 6 a.m. every day, even though they don't have to?

Online, it just might.

Your best bet is to see what works for you. Take the "pulse" of your Twitter "lunchroom". If you comment that you're lying on the beach getting a suntan while tweeting on your iPhone, and you're met with a resounding Silence, take note.

Read all the other comments from your group and see what subjects triggered more activity. Is your group all about what they ate for lunch? Do they seem to get excited about iPhone apps? Is it the subject of children who trigger the most response?

But regardless of all this, when it comes to your Twitter presence(s), do your best to be like the Kindly Cashier: Don't just comment on what you're wearing – **make an observation about it that demonstrates a common problem, feature, or goal**. "I'm eating pizza" won't provoke much of a response, but: "I'm eating pizza. Mmmm… roasted red pepper!" just might – if people love or hate roasted red peppers. In other words…

Do your best to trigger feelings with your tweets. "Sneakers just don't cut it on concrete floors" is more likely to pique people's interest and trigger feelings than "I'm wearing sneakers today."

Don't just send messages similar to what other people are talking about. Go ahead and find something completely off the wall to talk about. This is much more likely to get people talking to you. For example, if you want to talk to a sports player (who is on Twitter), you could say that you love them. Rather, if you want them to respond to you, make a comment about a specific play or a product they are promoting.

Be specific. Even "I'm wearing Nike sneakers" has a better chance of provoking interaction than merely "I'm wearing sneakers". Could be your Twitter buddy has strong positive or negative feelings about that brand.

Share opinions and be respectful of other's opinions. You can and should interact with people that have an opinion different from your own. You may find these conversations to be the best ones had.

Use the "Lunchroom Test" to help you decide if a Tweet is going to add some fun to your Twitter community – or stand out like a lame duck, swallowed by a vast pool of Silence.

Above all, **live among your Twitter community**. Walk the walk – don't just talk the talk.

Then you won't have to consciously think up "good" comments at all. Because **you'll be so in tune with your Twitter community**, having chosen the people you follow and attracted like-minded followers so wisely that your interactions are absolutely natural.

Moral of my story?

Never Tweet just for the sake of tweeting. **Put some thought in it.**

And don't force it.

Tweeting

On the Twitter home page, it asks, "What You Are Doing?" But, quite frankly people really don't care what you're doing until you've built a relationship with them as a result of following. Just as with your blog, website, and forum posts, your main goal on Twitter should be to provide value. **However, there are some good ways to get started.**

- You can start by posting links to interesting blog posts. For example: "Interesting post on building a profitable mailing list: Link".
- Make sure you always include http:// in the link and not just www so the link is clickable in the Tweetstream.

- Another good way of start tweeting is with funny, profound and inspiring quotes. Do a search for some quotes of interest and tweet those. Personal development ones and quotes by famous people always work well.

- Here's one I just found in the Tweetstream as an example: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." — Aristotle.

- Do a quick Google search for quotes and you'll find plenty to choose from.

- Praise your clients

- Retweet an interesting update from someone that you're following

- Let your staff know they are doing a good job

- Comment on current events / news.

- Offer links to free and interesting stuff like articles, pictures, podcasts and videos (not all your own stuff though)

- **A Word Of Warning:** Never start posting sales tweet after sales tweet, otherwise your Twitter experience will be short-lived, and people will start un-following you in droves.

- Twitter is about engagement, value, and a social experience. This doesn't mean that you can't post links to your products and sites, just keep it minimal – save sales tweets for something really good!

Writing Tweets

Writing a great tweet is rather like Haiku poetry: It boils everything you want to say down to one or two short lines that really pack a wallop and grabs your followers by the eyeballs.

The other thing people often miss about tweets… they're cumulative. You may not think it's exciting when you write: "Sitting on the patio watching a dragonfly" – but personal tweets like this mixed in with a healthy balance of business or marketing oriented ones gradually give your followers a real feel of who you are as a person – and reinforce why they like to follow you. It helps them to actually care if you tweet: "Broke my ankle! Got a turquoise cast. Looks like modern sculpture" and forgive you if you tweet anything as utterly banal as: "Eating toast."

With tweets like these mixed with the serious business of marketing, you're injecting…

- Personality

- Humor

- A little zaniness

- Human contact

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- Friendliness

These small nuggets of information about you – including the business ones – can say more about who you are than entire biographical essays.

But how do you make them interesting, and not yawn-making mundane? Writing eye-catching, interesting tweets involves the same general concept as writing strong e-mail headlines. You must **pique their interest** and **make them curious** to see what you have to offer. There are **a few tricks and tips you need to master to write great tweets**…

- If you're tweeting an URL, always include a short phrase letting the reader know what to expect
- Do your best to pique their curiosity
- Be sparing with the "@[someone]" tweets. If it's just between the two of you DM's (direct messages) would be better
- Don't ever give people tips about Twitter. Chances are, they know better than you what works and what doesn't. And besides, they don't know you very well, yet – right?
- Don't send multiple tweets all in a row! You'll look like you're hogging your Follower's page – and you are
- Remember the old adage: "Less is more" – that's certainly is true for Twitter
- Don't ever retweet a Direct Message
- Don't send only links to your affiliate products or sales pages
- Don't send only endless personal comments about things like you brushing your teeth and putting on your slippers
- Do remember to actually answer some of the tweets you get!

If you've ever written your own sales copy, **treat your tweets like headlines.** You have only a second or two as people skim to grab their attention strongly enough to make them stop skimming – and click on your link.

Again, it's like any form of professional copywriting: **Think "benefits" for your "target market".**

What are you giving your Follower? Is it…

- What she most needs?
- What she's most interested in?
- What she hasn't got – and wants?

Do your best to help your Followers, whenever you can (without, of course, being a know-it-all).

Some types of tweets, to **help you figure out what to write**…

- Ask provocative Questions

- Answer Questions

- Ask for advice

- Write a headline that sounds like news. "New Twitter software revolutionizes social networking!"

- The Up Front approach ("50% off my eBook today only - in honor of my mom's birthday")

- The "latest" tweet – a juicy tidbit of up-to the minute news

- The "Do it" tweet – Similar to the Up Front – only you're telling your Followers to do it. ("Head over to my [URL of website] and download my free tools right now".) (Be smart about it: I once unsubscribed because a marketer was silly enough to say "I command you to…" in his very serious-toned letter.)

- Blunt, direct statements. "Free CPA Short Report – No Optin Required"

- Lists. "Ten Reasons Why You Need To Trash Your Iphone"

- How-to tweets. "How to get 1000 visitors to your blog – overnight!"

Tweeting Regularly

The standard web application of Twitter only shows the latest 20 tweets. The older ones are lost to you unless you search for them. This means that you must be alert enough to catch the tweets and respond to them as they arrive. This is how Twitter can eat up your time if you are not careful.

Being active can be achieved in 60 minutes a day by setting aside 30 minutes in the evening and 30 minutes in the morning to reply to people who have sent you messages/replied to your tweets and also to reply to other people's tweets. **To give the illusion of being active the rest of the day you can…**

- **Install a Twitter Client** – Like Snitter, TweetDeck, twhirl.com, Twitterific or HootSuite.com

- **Automate Twitter** - Twitter can be automated to send out scheduled tweets by using cool apps such as SocialOomph.com and HootSuite.com

- **Use Tweetscan.com** – Tweetscan can help you keep track of keywords and watch the tweets of other Twitter users

Automating Twitter Posting

- **SocialOomph**, http://www.socialoomph.com. Use this twitter tool to send your new followers and instant message the moment they "follow". This message should be a quick note thanking them for following you, and also including a link to a free offer of interest.The click through rates you get on these initial messages can really be high.

- **TwitterFeed**, http://twitterfeed.com. Twitterfeed updates Twitter with your blog posts RSS feed

- **GoTwitr**, http://www.gotwitr.com. lets you send automated invitations to easily invite people to your Twitter community based on Keywords. GoTwitr also let's you group your followers so that you can send a DM to the entire group

- **Tweet-U-Later**, http://www.tweet-u-later.com. Schedule tweets 1 minute or 1 year in the future. Recurring message feature by the day, week, month or year so complete advertising programs can be planned in advance. Access via web browser or via your unique securely encoded email address. Full functionality is free.

Tools That Help You Tweet Effectively

Here is my personal recommendation for **basic "must-have" organizational tools**, to keep your marketing efforts efficient…

- **BubbleTweet**, http://www.bubbletweet.com. Lets you post a short video "bubble" that opens in a pop up from your profile – how's that for boosting your web presence? (Works like a dream, too.) At time of writing, this app was running second (behind TwitPic) on Dean Hunts "Best Application" blog contest.

- **Future Tweets**, http://futuretweets.com. Automatic Tweet scheduler, rather like WordPress' ability to pre-schedule posts.

- **HootSuite**, http://hootsuite.com. If you have multiple Twitter accounts, this is the ultimate tool for you! In addition to managing multiple accounts, this free service also allows you to track or shorten keywords, create groups and schedule tweets in advance. You can also organize Twitter streams, and send pings.

- **Tweepler**, http://www.tweepler.com. Ever been annoyed by having to visit every new follower's profile, before you decide to block or unfollow them, or follow them back? Tweepler allows you to instantly see relevant stats on them. Can save a lot of time, if you're constantly fielding follow notifications

- **TweetDeck**, http://www.tweetdeck.com. Highly popular app that allows you to visually organize Twitter users into different desktop categories.

- **TwitPic**, http://twitpic.com. An incredibly easy, fast way to share photographs. And when your follower comments on one in your blog (if that's where you're linking to), the comment will also appear in your timeline as a tweet.

Twitter Etiquette

You should treat Twitter seriously, just as you do all of your other marketing strategies. Learning proper Twitter etiquette is an important aspect of this.

- **Don't tweet constantly!** This should be obvious, but it's remarkable how many people tweet dozens, even hundreds of times in a single day. **Be strategic with your tweets.** There is no "magic number" – just use your intuition and you should be fine.

- **Stay consistent.** Tweet every day, or at least every other day. **Tweeting once a week or once a month will not accomplish anything** – it kind of defeats the purpose of being on Twitter altogether. People will forget who you are and why they decided to follow you in the first place.

- **Only tweet about things that matter.** The occasional "Wow these french fries are tasty" is fine – it shows your followers that you're human and that there's more to you than selling and marketing. But do NOT go overboard.

Usually the people who tweet dozens or hundreds of times a day are tweeting about trivial subjects that no one cares about. If you feel the need to tweet about your shoelaces or the zit on your cheek, register a second, personal Twitter account to share this kind of stuff with friends/family only – NOT your customers or business prospects.

- **If you want to use Twitter like an instant messaging client, make sure that you are sending Direct Messages rather than publishing your tweets publicly**. Chatting with someone over Twitter will clog up your followers' feeds and can be very, very annoying. Users may unfollow you as a result. So use common sense and download MSN or something if you want to chat in real time.

- **No hard selling.** Constantly tweeting "New blog post", "New ebook buy it now!", "Great software, check it out", etc. etc. will not yield great results. Your followers will start viewing your tweets as SPAM. You will not gain a good reputation, you will not build trust, and you will not sell anything. Sorry. Twitter is meant for the SOFT sell – so you'll have to work on that.

- **Respond to @ responses and direct messages.** This shows that you aren't just using the service for your own personal gain. Yes, you may be, but remember the goal of marketing through Twitter is to do it subtly.

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- **Keep it professional.** Since your main goal of using Twitter is to promote your business, it is important to stay professional. Yes, you do want to be friendly and promote healthy conversations, but do not mix too much business with pleasure.

Using Twitter for Business Research

Twitter is a valuable source of information. You can use it to track trends, sentiment, and to conduct keyword research.

Keyword Research on Twitter

Earlier we mentioned the hashtag# function. Hashtags are a word or phrase preceded by the hash symbol # (i.e. #superbowl). When applied to a term, the term becomes searchable. The most popular hashtags are listed on your home page on Twitter. They're listed, along with the popular terms for the day, on the right hand side of the page.

If you want to know what's popular **you can search by hashtag** and get an idea of how to tag your comments for more followers and website traffic. The hashtag function enables you to attract your prospects to specific posts.

You can also **use Twitter Search Engine** to evaluate keywords.

Once you're logged into Twitter, in the right hand column you'll see a search bar. Like a typical search engine, you simply enter your keywords and click for the results.

However, unlike a standard search engine, Twitter search results are displayed chronologically, most recently posted first, and they include all Tweets, not just those from the people you follow. This is a useful tool not only because it enables you to hone in on a topic and create posts that will attract attention, it also helps you find other people to follow and connect with.

You can also take advantage of the advanced search option which enables you to sort for more criteria than a single keyword.

Tracking Trends on Twitter

Another potentially useful function of Twitter is the ability to track trends. When you know what's popular right now, you can use that information to create highly targeted messages. These messages can be used to drive traffic and of course increase your profits.

In addition to looking on your Twitter home page to see what the popular search terms and hashtags are for the moment, you can use a service like **Twendz to track and analyze trends**.

Twendz updates every minute and evaluates up to 70 tweets at a time. It looks for sentiment and tracks trends. They also offer a Twendz pro service that monitors, measures and analyzes strategic brand effectiveness. http://twendz.waggeneredstrom.com

Tracking Sentiment

Sentiment is how people feel. It's their attitude, emotion or opinion as it relates to a subject. In this case you can track sentiment on a number of things. As is the case with anything related to Twitter, there are a number of tools you can use to evaluate your brand, your competition or the emotions around a subject or topic.

Twitter Sentiment at http://twittersentiment.appspot.com, was developed to track brand mentions, you enter a term in the search bar, and the tool highlights all positive and negative tweets that contain that term. It also places them in a chart for easy comparison. It even color codes them – green for good sentiment, red for bad – so that you can then see how your tweets are being received by your audience.

Social Mention at http://www.socialmention.com, allows you to track search terms or company names to find out if you're being talked about online. It then ranks the term by:

- Strength: the likelihood your brand is being talked about
- Sentiment: A ratio of positive to negative sentiment
- Passion: Measures the likelihood that people will talk about your brand repeatedly
- Reach: Measures your range of influence.

It also lists unique authors, how long people talked about the search term and top users. Like Twitter Sentiment, it lists the tweets that it used to create the data.

You can also check out:

- **Twitrratr** at http://twitrratr.com, helps you discover what people are really saying on Twitter.

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- **Twitter Groups** at http://twittgroups.com/index.php, join and create groups to motivate a following for a specific niche.

- **Twitter Grader** at http://twitter.grader.com, tells you how you're doing in comparison to other Twitterers and offers suggestions for who you might want to follow.

- **Social Too** at http://socialtoo.com automates following those who follow you and can send you a daily report of who has followed or unfollowed you on Twitter. It also filters spammers and offers a survey function.

Twitter Analytics And Tracking Tools

There are number of handy tools you can use to analyze and track the effectiveness of your Twitter campaign.

- **cli.gs**, http://cli.gs - Useful for tracking click rates re: shortened URLs

- **TweetEffect**, http://www.tweeteffect.com - Matches tweet timeline with gain/lose followers timeline to determine which tweet made you lose or gain followers. You should be aware that a tweet alone might not be what lost or gained a follower – but it's interesting, nonetheless.

- **Tweetburner**, http://tweetburner.com - Helps you track your tweets – and links. (Does shorten URLs).

- **Tweetscan**, http://www.tweetscan.com - Sends you an email alert, when your keywords are mentioned on Twitter. (NB: Can be very annoying, if they're mentioned a lot. Only you can decide if this is worthwhile.) No spam, no ads, and you can turn it off at any time. 14 day free trial; after that, $20/year.

- **Tweetstats**, http://tweetstats.com - Shows Twitter user tweeting patters. Presents Twitter activity data in visually easy-to-grasp graphs. Has Tweet Timeline that shows month-by-month total tweets since you joined Twitter. Also shows…

- Total tweets by day, by the hour and over a 7-day period

- Top 10 persons you've replied to and Top 10 clients used to access Twitter

- **Tweet Cloud**, http://tweetcloud.com – Allows you to see which words you tweet are more popular (does a Hashcloud as well, if you've used hashtags)

- **TweetVolume**, http://www.tweetvolume.com - A search tool that allows you to see how frequently a name (person, product, API, et cetera) is referred to in Tweets.

- **Twitalyzer**, http://www.twitalyzer.com - Easiest Stats/Analysis app – produces a graphical representation of progression on various measures including…

- Influence score - your popularity

- signal-to-noise ratio

- how many times you 'retweet'
- velocity – how often you update
- clout – how many cites you get in other people's tweets.
- **Twitter Connections**, http://twitter.com/account/connections - Allows you to see which app sites have direct access to your Twitter account

Marketing Your Business on Twitter

Marketing Strategies for Twitter

Tips and strategies you can employ to boost your marketing on Twitter…

- **Run both a business and personal Twitter account.** This allows you to invite people you have built relationships with to join your personal "inner circle", thus strengthening those relationships even more (as well as allowing you to discuss subjects too specialized or not quite right for a more public forum).
- Set it up so that tweets that contain links to your blog posts automatically turn into comments on your blog, and vice versa. (Don't forget to point out that your tweeters will get "double exposure").
- Do you have a new product or something else you can give away a few copies of for free? **Then run a contest!** Announce it to your followers a few days before it happens, which also gets put into the public timeline so hopefully you'll gain the attention of new people - who will then follow you.
- Post about it a few times a day - you know, 'Been working hard on the contest page - check it out here' and 'I have just added some more cool prizes to the contest!'. Build up anticipation and you stand more chance of snagging people from the public timeline as they want to be a part of it.
- Then on the contest day/week etc use questions or tasks for people to choose a winner, like the first person to answer a question correctly, or the first person to tell you who is wearing a green t-shirt on a certain website, anything like that.
- Interact with your followers by replying to their tweet, and asking them a question.
- Here a few **marketing and promotion tools** that will directly benefit your marketing efforts…
- **Twitter Safe**, http://www.twittersafe.com. One-click back up that restores your list, if it's ever compromised for some reason

- **Twit This**, http://www.twitthis.com. A popular application that allows visitors to your website or blog to instantly post Twitter messages about you or your business. Insert the TwitThis button on your website/blog pages along with the instructions and coding that TwitThis provides on their site. (Many people get great testimonials this way.)

Generating Traffic on Twitter

There are a number of effective ways you can use Twitter to generate traffic to your website. To be effective with any Twitter for traffic strategy, it's important to create a plan. Decide what you're going to Tweet, what your goal is and how you're going to measure success. **Here a few ways to use Twitter to generate traffic…**

- **Ask a Question.** Post a question or a statement with a link to a website article or blog post that addresses that question. The author of "The 4-Hour Work Week" Tim Ferris has conducted some research on most popular Tweets and found that posts which contain "how to…, best, most, worst, and great" are found in the most popular posts. Additionally, **questions often trigger a click through or a response**. People love to share their experiences, advice, and opinions.

- **Announce Contests and Sweepstakes.** Contents and sweepstakes are an instant opt-in list builder and traffic generation tool because **people love getting things for free and winning**. Use Twitter to announce a contest and then link to the contest announcement on your website or blog. You can then also ask permission to send them marketing messages.

- **Provide Valuable Information.** This is essentially what social networking is all about. Use Twitter posts to provide relevant and valuable information to about what you help your clients achieve. Posting this information **helps you become a credible authority**. People will follow you because you're in the know.

- Then you can weave them into your posts, link to important and relevant information which can be found on your own site.

- You can also write blog posts that provide valuable information and then link to them on Twitter. The key is to **earn credibility and trust by becoming a source of information**.

- **Partnerships**. Twitter is a great tool for identifying potential partnerships. You will find when you're interacting that you connect well with some people. If they work in a complimentary business, consider approaching them with a partnership offer. Likewise as you establish credibility and attract attention on Twitter, expect that others will contact you with potential partnerships and opportunities.

- **Share Pictures or Videos.** Twitpic and Twiddio offer you the ability to post pictures and videos to connect personally with your audience. Video marketing is a great way to build a brand and provide beneficial information. They also arouse curiosity.

- For example, you could post a picture of you with other associates at a conference. When people start clicking through your pictures, it'll make them more curious about you and your business. It often leads to a follow and a visit to your website.

- **Make an Offer.** Now, we mentioned that blatant self promotion is hardly ever acceptable on social media sites. However, if you can **position your message so that it offers benefit or value** to your prospects it may be more warmly accepted.

- For example, instead of "sign up for my opt-in list" which will get you shunned from the very people you're trying to reach, you can post a message that offers value. "Looking for some extra cash? Free report shows you how you can create a new revenue stream this week." Include a link and you're good to go. Of course don't make a habit of these types of posts, use them wisely when you really want to drive traffic to a page or an offer.

We've just covered several effective and actually quite straightforward ways to use Twitter to drive both traffic and profits.

Link Building on Twitter

Don't neglect this important part strategy as part of your Twitter campaign. There are several ways you can build links using Twitter. They include…

Forums - Include your Twitter link in your signature, if the forum allows for it (and it's not against the rules, of course).

Blogs - Include your Twitter link in your signature on blog posts and comments. Besure it's not against the rules of the blog owner first

Directories- Just as you would submit your website to online directories, you can submit your Twitter link in appropriate Twitter directories. There are a few good, solid directories to help with your linking efforts. **Here are 6 popular directories you might wish to start with…**

- **EzineArticles Twitter Directory**, http://twitter.ezinearticles.com. The way to get listed here is to set up your EzineArticles account to automatically post your new, approved articles to your Twitter profile

- **Just Tweet It**, http://justtweetit.com. Not the biggest directory, but easy to use and access. It's very easy to add yourself, and decide what category you wish to appear in. The best part for marketers new to Twitter? It doesn't rank you by number of Followers

- **Topsy**, http://topsy.com/tb/twitter.ezinearticles.com. Subsidiary directory for Ezine Articles authors. You can get yourself listed on Topsy, but to do this, you have to set up your EzineArticles account to automatically post your new, approved articles to your Twitter profile, as above

- **Twellow**, http://www.twellow.com. Twitter yellow pages. Users can search by name, bio, category or location. Downside? Over 800,000 Twits in the database. Plus it does not automatically update your profile. Filter by # of follows, recent activity or verified user.

- **TwitR**, http://twitr.org. This one's a "must". Slick, fast, professional. It wastes no time in displaying your photo, bio, website and Twitter links, # of Followers, and latest tweet. Great use of hashtags.

- **WeFollow**, http://wefollow.com. I don't use this one myself, but it's one of the top 10,000 sites in the world, according to Alexa.

- **ExecTweets**, www.ExecTweets.com. These are all executives who are tweeting.

Launching Your Product on Twitter

Getting ready to launch a new product? Congratulations! You've no doubt put a lot of hard work into your product. Did you know you can use Twitter to help launch it? **Here's how to use Twitter to launch a new product…**

- **Create a build up to the launch event.** Post any sneak peeks, samples, and testimonials for the product a few days before the event. Part of a successful launch is the anticipation of the new product. Twitter is a great way to help create anticipation.

- **Offer special incentives.** You can also offer a limited viewing to the first 100 visitors and post the offer on Twitter. Some marketers request the first 100 DMs, others request retweets - RT, and others just post a link to their website. This is also a great way to gauge interest in your pending product and may provide valuable information about how to fine tune or tweak the product before the official launch.

- **Engage conversation.** Social networking sites like Twitter can be a great place to receive feedback. You can DM, direct message, a few respected and trusted friends from Twitter and ask them to evaluate your product, sales copy or bonus products.

- **Use Twitter to build your opt in list before your product launch.** This will add valuable contacts to your list for better sales once you launch because you will undoubtedly be promoting your new product to your opt-in list. How to do this?

- **Create a free piece of content and market it heavily on Twitter**. Link to it with valuable tidbits of information having the link take them to an opt-in page. Voila, a larger opt in list and more targeted people to market your new product to.

- Blog about your new product and **link to the new blog posts** on Twitter.

- **Publish content relating to your new product and link to the new content on Twitter.** For example, if you're launching a new ebook, you can write an article on one of the topics covered in the ebook. Always keeping in mind that your goal is to help your customers and prospects, to solve their problems and improve their life.

- **Connect with others on Twitter who may become great partners.** They can help you market your new product and you can help them market their new product. Trade advertisements, promotions, links or even skills and services.

- **You can also use a service like adCause to advertise your new product on Twitter**. It's a service that links you with publishers you can choose and also donates some money to a charity of your choice.

Twitter can be a tremendous asset when launching a new product. Take a look at your audience, plan and create a strategy to incorporate Twitter into your marketing strategy. To your success!

Twitter Plugins

Establishing links between all of your online platforms is crucial to building your online presence. Your blog readers can become your followers, and vice versa. **There are several different plugins / widgets to choose from.**

- **Tweetmeme Button**, http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/tweetmeme. Allows your blog posts to be retweeted with the click of a button.

- **TweetThis Button**, http://richardxthripp.thripp.com/tweet-this. Allows users to share your blog posts on Twitter.

- **The Twitter Updater**, http://blog.victoriac.net/geek/twitter-updater. Automatically publishes updates to your Twitter account when new posts or changes are made to your blog.

- **Twitter Tools**, http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/twitter-tools. Integrates your blog and Twitter account, allowing you to easily put tweets on your blog and blog links in your tweets, all from the Wordpress control panel.

- **Twitter Feed**, http://twitterfeed.com. Automatically post your blog updates on your Twitter account.

- **Wicket Twitter Widget**, http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wickett-twitter-widget. Display your tweets on the sidebar of your blog.

- **Twitter for WordPress**, http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/twitter-for-wordpress. Twitter for WordPress displays yours latest tweets in your WordPress blog.

- **Twitter Widget**, http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/twitter-widget. Adds a sidebar widget to display Twitter updates

Marketing Mistakes Not to Make on Twitter

- **No profile photo** (or one that doesn't jive with the persona you want to showcase).

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- **Following 2873 people** – **with only a handful of auto-follows following you back**. Any experienced Twitter user looking at your profile would shudder and click away on the spot, thinking: "Ugh! A spammer!"

- **Automating Twitter functions**. There's absolutely no place for Auto-anything on Twitter – and according to many articles on the net, nothing can be as damaging!

- **Having a "selling" link every 5 tweets (or less!)** Remember that the social part is a huge component of Twitter. Yes, it is about networking – but too much hard-sell will drive people away.

- **Spamming.** Look at the definition for spam: "Unsolicited bulk advertising". And what are all those unrelenting links after links some marketers bombard you with?   Let's call a spade `a spade' here: It's spam, plain and simple. (I just unfollowed a marketer like this right this minute, which sparked this very point here.)

- **Bombarding people with messages – period!** No one likes a Space Hog. If there are 24 tweets from you, bumping out the other people they're interested in, your followers will soon unfollow. (It makes you look really, really egotistical and/or really, really boring.)

- Remember that Twitter is first and foremost about building relationships. Don't do anything that takes advantage of that function and destroys trust.

- **There are 2 more tools I'd like to mention that can boost your Tweeting success**… by helping you naturally attract people you'll find it easy to engage with, or help you capture fleeting thoughts and turn them into real-time Tweets. **I'm including them here in case you're not familiar with them already…**

- **Twitter by Voice**, http://jott.com. Ever think of the perfect Tweet while driving, only to have it go out of your head later? Well, this app lets you speak your thought, and it gets automatically converted into a Tweet. Providing you have Bluetooth technology, this makes Tweeting on the run almost safe. Well, okay: a lot safer than texting your Tweet.

- **Twibes**, http://www.twibes.com. Enter keywords for your target market users to find like-minded people. Follow a few – and hopefully they'll follow you back! **TIP:** Twibes even gives you a list of what's hot right now!

The Single Most Crucial Secret of Twitter Success

The irony of life is, if people sense you're needy or have ulterior, insincere motives, they run for the hills (on Twitter, this translates to Unfollowing).

It's always a good thing to "pre-qualify" your Followers. You really don't want to waste your time chatting with someone who in a million years can't understand where you're coming from, and who is only interested in organic potatoes, when you're selling plastic food pellets. (That is, unless you both are passionate opera aficionados; in which case, take it to your personal account.)

If you put on any artificial character facets, or just generally try too hard, you'll be as convincing as a canned laugh track, so…

Above all, **be yourself**.

Conclusion

Twitter is a fantastic tool to implement into your marketing campaign. It is very easy to use to drive traffic to your website and sell your services and products. In fact, the simple act of getting on Twitter and interacting will likely generate traffic. However, add a strategy, goals and tactics to make those goals a reality and you're going to see tremendous results from Twitter.

The tips and resources mentioned in this how-to guide will help you get started, while making it as easy and convenient as possible.

See you around the Twitosphere!

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Consuelo Meux, Ph.D. started her first freelance job in the eighth grade, turning it into an entrepreneurial venture by the time she reached high school. Over the years she has worked in both domestic and international settings to assist entrepreneurs and leaders to build successful businesses and organizations.

As the owner of **Sterling Training and Consulting**, Consuelo works with mid-life professionals, leaders and executives who are going through the process of change and transition in their personal and professional life. She has earned as an MA in Organizational Behavior, MS in Organization Development and Ph.D. in Human and Organization Systems and multiple certifications including those in Executive Mastermind Coaching, Creativity Coaching, Life and Green Living Coaching. She is completing courses in Holistic Health Counseling. Her professional research has focused on women's leadership styles.

As an expert in systems concepts, Consuelo easily sees patterns and processes in complex ideas. Her support, programs and processes work best to assist unique individuals with a lot of expertise, talents, or ideas who don't fit into pre-packaged, cookie-cutter solutions.

You will be empowered to find your passions, get focused, create intentions, and design structured steps to move forward in your specific, individualized path to success. For more information visit Consuelo's website at Sterling Training and Consulting

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Sterling Training and Consulting offers uniquely designed programs by an expert in change management to assist any stage of your change process.

Please explore our website at **http://www.SterlingTrainingAndConsulting.com** and find a program that works for you. Select from a small group training program to find your specific FOCUS in life, join a consulting membership to encourage confidence in your transition to self-employment, get coaching to find your life purpose or experience personal coaching to guide your most desired life or professional changes.

All programs have a full-spectrum point of view to bring a balance to the spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, relational and professional aspects of your situation.