



TwitterWatchdog.com 
watching out for you one tweet at a time
by Skeeter Hansen & Al Ferretti

Twitter Success Guide 2.0

By Al Ferretti
&
Skeeter Hansen

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Understanding Twitter

Why all the buzz?



Twitter is a service that allows users to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question:

What are you doing?

It's a real-time short messaging service that works over multiple networks and devices.

In countries all around the world, people follow the sources most relevant to them and access information via Twitter as it happens — from breaking world news to updates from friends.

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Microblogging

Why is Twitter different?

Twitter is based on the concept of “micro-blogging” — that is, creating entries that are limited to a certain number of characters. This limits the amount of information users can post in one “Tweet.”

The limits on length make Twitter the ultimate real-time information stream. It’s the quickest way to deliver information, a piece of news, or interesting link. It enables conversations between users, encourages pass-along through “retweeting” (more on that later), and it all happens as you watch.

It’s a simple platform, which is being used in more and more interesting ways.

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Getting Started

Setting up an account

First, pick a name.

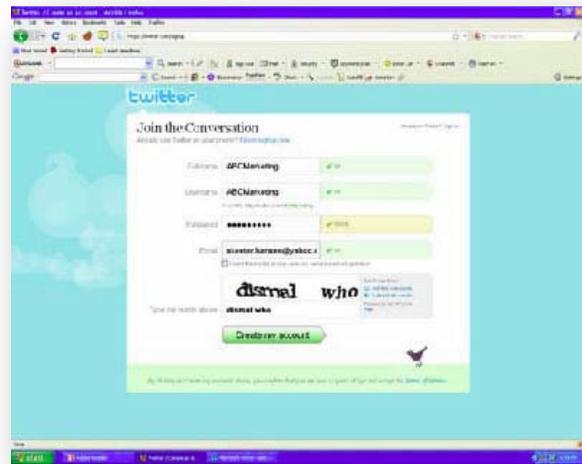
Your name should be easy to remember and easy to find. This will become your Twitter URL, the form of <http://twitter.com/USERNAME>

Create Your Account:

Click the “Join” button on the homepage, and then fill out the form.

Find Friends:

Use the Contact import function to find people you know who are already using Twitter. Follow them! (This means that you have subscribed to this user and you will be able to see their update “Tweets” on your homepage.)



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Getting Started

Setting up your profile

Your profile information appears in the upper right corner of your Twitter homepage, and gives users a brief description about who you are.

Add your profile information.

Add a quick bio for your company. Click “Settings,” then fill in the “One Line Bio” field. The limit is 160 characters. Use the most relevant keywords that pertain to who you are and your mission.

Give your location.

This will help local users find you in searches.

Then, add your website URL.

So your followers can learn more about you.

Getting Started

Photo & Background

Customize your background:

Twitter has pre-made templates for your backgrounds. A custom design is a great way to give your Twitter page a unique look, a more personal feel.

List Information on your Background:

Check out these Twitter users for some examples of ways to use your background to list information about yourself or you business.

<http://www.twitter.com/dixiedynamite>

<http://www.twitter.com/sarahstanley>

<http://www.twitter.com/carltonf>

Upload a photo:

Your photo will be next to all your Tweets in followers' Twitter homepages. Insert a photo of yourself—it's a more personal feel.





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Getting Started

Locate people to follow

Build an audience.

The golden rule: The more people you follow, the more followers you're likely to get. However, it is very important to target the right audience.

Here's how.

Hopefully you're already following people you found through your email contacts. The next step is to look for people in your field. Search for popular players in your industry using the "Find People" function, and then look at the lists of people following them.

For example, if you're in the wellness industry, go to the [@drsusanbiali](#) Twitter feed. Add the list of people who are following [@drsusanbiali](#) updates. These followers already show interest in your industry and by adding them; you are widening your potential client spectrum. Your Tweets will reach the right audience — people in the wellness industry.

If your business is local, you can search for users by location. Find all the Twitter users in your town and follow them. If they don't already patronize your business, they're likely to be interested in finding out who you are.

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Getting Started

Security and email settings

If you need to, protect your Tweets.

If you're using Twitter internally or do want everyone to be able to see you're Tweets you can protect them. (This requires potential followers to send you a request before they're allowed to follow you.)

You can enable protection by clicking the "Settings" button on the right side of the page. To enable, check the form on the bottom of that says "Protect My Updates."

Get notifications by email.

You can stay up to date on follow requests, new followers, and direct messages and get Twitter newsletters by email by going to the "Notices" tab under "Settings" and checking the boxes for "Email Notifications" that you would like to receive.



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Getting Started

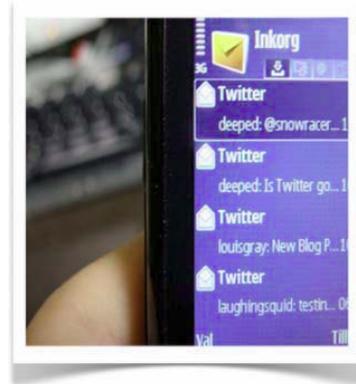
Phone Settings

Stay connected to Twitter on your phone.

Twitter allows you to post Tweets from any SMS-enabled phone. To enable the mobile feature, go to the “Devices” tab under “Settings.” Add your phone number and set up your preferences for receiving messages.

When you want to post an update but are away from your computer, send the update in a text message to 40404. It will automatically post as a Tweet to your page.

If you have a Smartphone, like a Blackberry, G1 or iPhone, you can download applications to send and receive tweets from your device. Click on the “Apps” link on the footer of any Twitter page to find the right app for your Smartphone.



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Getting Started

Basic Commands (Part 1)

@Replies

An @reply is a public message sent from one person to another, distinguished from normal updates. You can change whether you see @replies between your friends on the “Settings” page.

Direct Messages (DMs)

Direct messages are private messages sent directly from one user to another.

What is the difference between an @reply and a direct message?

If you send a @reply, other users are able to see your Tweet. If you’re discussing someone who is already on Twitter, you can use a @reply to communicate with them quickly and publicly. By doing so, it is possible to spark the interest and build interaction with other Twitter users.

For example: “He’s no Al Bundy [@davetheshoeguy](#). Check out Dave and his classy shoes”



Getting Started

Basic Commands (Part 2)

What does RT mean?

RT is short for re-tweet. This isn't an official Twitter command or feature, but people precede their updates with RT to indicate that they're re-posting another person's Twitter update.

For example: “RT [@drsusanbiali](#)”

HashTags:

HashTags indicate that your Tweet is discussing a particular topic. When a user searches for updates related to that topic, yours will be included if the HashTags command is used. You can use the search function to find interesting groups and current Twitter events. For example, some groups schedule live “tweetups,” where people come together to discuss a topic.

Examples of HashTags: #baseball #marketing #socialmedia



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Stop Thinking Like a Marketer

Over promoting isn't the answer

It is possible to market through Twitter, but it requires a bit of a shift in thinking. Twitter is all about simple conversations; you can't use press releases, marketing copy and other one-way communication tactics and expect results. People want interaction — with you and with each other.

Twittering is one-to-one, with the benefit of being in a public space where other people may overhear your conversation and interact with each other on your behalf.

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Understanding The Rules

Connect with your neighbors

Every community has it's own set of rules and Twitter is no different. Before you jump into the conversation, spend some time watching and learning.

You'll find that most people are very friendly and supportive, but it's best to learn the ground rules first. The easiest way to jump in is to ask for help. It might seem like you are making yourself vulnerable, but this is what makes social media grea

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Connecting Person to Person

People talk to people, not logos/icons.

It doesn't matter how large your company is; on Twitter, people want to connect to a person. They are not interested in talking to your 'logo/icons.' Make your updates personable and human, not scrubbed and polished like a press release. Just be yourself.

If you can, identify a real person to write the updates to give a face to your Tweets. For example, Comcast's Twitter account ([@comcastcares](https://twitter.com/comcastcares)) is headed by Frank Eliason, Director of Digital Care. Frank even lists his direct email and personal website on his profile, which not only gives a human face to the company, it helps build trust in the conversation.

By using Twitter, Comcast is offering an alternative, less corporate-confined outlet for customers to receive support. Customers are able to ask questions and be communicated with on their own turf; no more having to wait in long lines, no need to press 4 for more options!

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Start a Conversation

Twitter is a two-way street

Some marketers might eye Twitter as another ‘channel’ to conquer. This kind of thinking is dangerous with interactive marketing. Social media is not about building a channel, it’s about creating a conversation. Your job should be to get people talking by posing questions, asking for input and connecting people as a trusted third party.

Creating a conversation requires something that many marketers are not used to: actively listening to customers. This back and forth motion is what makes social media wonderful and helps build an emotional connection between your product and customers. Since customers now have more choices and are able to jump from company to company in an instant, this relationship has become more critical than ever.

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Offer Value

Give people a reason to follow you

People love to pass on information and if people are following you on Twitter, they are already showing an interest to your message. So why not reward them? Offer inside information, special offers or just one-to-one conversation with customers who follow you through social media.

Once you have been using Twitter for a while, you'll notice key people that like to talk about your mission. These people are worth more than you can imagine! Encourage users by converting them into affiliates: Invite them to your private product launches, let them contribute to new feature requests, ask them how you can improve. Not only will you gain firsthand, unfiltered information on how your products are used in the real world, you'll also activate a network of affiliates to give you the best thing you could ask for: positive word-of-mouth.

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Your website and Twitter

Integrate your messages

Twitter is a very flexible technology – that is what makes it so powerful. The fact that Twitter can be set up to automatically update your followers every time you post a blog entry or that any RSS feed can be re-broadcasted through your Twitter postings, are great examples of Twitter's strengths. However, be careful not to abuse this, as too many automatically generated posts will make you lose that all-important human factor.

Another great option is the ability to add buttons, badges and widgets to sections of your other sites (articles, pages, etc.) so that visitors are able to “Tweet” its contents. Each article or page can be linked with a button that allows customers to send an update to their followers with a quick blurb and a link to your page. Again, people generally only Tweet interesting or compelling content and a list of products or features may not be very intriguing to them.

Find cool add-ons here: <http://twitter.com/badges> and <http://sharethis.com/>

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Tracking Tweets

Listen and Learn

By using the @reply feature, it's easy to discover people talking about you. The Twitter search function also allows you to search by your company or product name. Use these tools to discover the things being said about you in real-time.

More advanced tools also exist that allow you to graph conversation activity over time, as well as monitor positive and negative sentiment among users. [@skeeterhansen](#) and [@alferretti](#) use these tools and monitor Tweets to provide more in-depth understanding about what people are saying; this helps them develop better conversations.

Stay on top of what's being said about you by frequently checking your @replies; you might be surprised by what you find.

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Be successful on Twitter

People that use Twitter effectively

Dave The Shoe Guy (<http://twitter.com/davetheshoeguy>) - Dave generated more than 6,000 targeted followers from all over the world on Twitter in 60 days.

Only 2 Degrees (<http://www.twitter.com/only2degrees>) - Lisa and Darcy leverage Twitter to expand their Internet Radio Show and beyond.

*Tweeting about mainstream news that directly relates to your business provides an opportunity for users to participate in discussion.

*If you've got inside information that you don't mind sharing, provide value – people appreciate it.

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Twitter Applications

Connecting Twitter and Work

GroupTweet

If you're using Twitter for internal communication and want to keep messages private, this app lets you broadcast Tweets only to a group of specified users.

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

gTwitter

If you use Linux, there's a desktop client for you, too.

<http://code.google.com/p/gtwitter/>

Seesmic & Twhirl

Similar to TweetDeck, Seesmic and Twhirl are desktop applications that also allow you to manage multiple accounts, so you can separate your work and personal accounts, for example. <http://twhirl.org>,

<http://seesmic.com>

TweetDeck

TweetDeck is a desktop application that lets you organize your follows into groups and tracks your @replies and direct messages.

<http://www.tweetdeck.com/beta/>

TwitterMail, TwitterIM, and OutTwit

Tweet from your email, IM and Microsoft Outlook. <http://www.twittermail.com/> ,

<http://www.twitterim.com> , <http://www.outtwit.com>

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Twitter Photo and Video

How to use photos and videos to engage

MobyPicture

Directly share photos with all popular social sites: Facebook, Twitter, flickr, blogger, Vimeo, and more.
<http://mobypicture.com>

TweetTube

Share your favorite videos quickly with short URLs. TweetTube allows you to track the visits and comments from the people that follow you on Twitter.
<http://www.tweetube.com/>

Twiddeo

Twiddeo is a powerful but simple service that allows you to do one thing very well: Twitter updates with video. Upload from the web, your camera phone and record from your webcam.
<http://beta.twiddeo.com>

TwitPic

Share photos with your friends on Twitter with Twitpic. No sign-up is required, just log in using your established Twitter account. TwitPic is the most popular, but you can also try these other photo sharing services: Twitxr and 2Tweet. <http://twitpic.com> , <http://www.twitxr.com> , <http://2tweet.com/>

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Twitter And Your Phone

Sending Tweets On the Go

jibjib

jibjib is another open source J2ME Twitter client designed for all Twitter-ers on the road. One hand controls the wheel and another hand Tweets along the road.

<http://sugree.com/project/jibjib>

PocketTweets

PocketTweets is a Web-based Twitter client for the Apple iPhone. See the latest Tweets from your contacts, update your status remotely, or see what's happening around the world by viewing the public timeline.

<http://pockettweets.com/>

Tweetie

Tweetie is a fast, full-featured Twitter client for iPhone and iPod Touch.

<http://www.atebits.com/software/tweetie/>

Twitterberry

TwitterBerry is a mobile client for posting updates to Twitter. It works over the data network, so you don't need to use SMS.

<http://www.orangatame.com/products/twitterberry/>

Twitterfon

Another Twitter app for the iPhone. This one is free! <http://www.twitterfon.com/>



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Twitter Analytics

Analyze and Track Your Progress

Tweetburner

Track the links you share to see if your followers are interested.

<http://tweetburner.com/>

TweetStats

Graph your Twitter statistics.

<http://tweetstats.com/>

Twitalyzer

Plug in your username for quick statistics on your clout, influence, and the quality of your Tweets.

<http://twitalyzer.com/twitalyzer/>

Twitterholic

Find popular Twitter users (and check out their methods).

<http://twitterholic.com/>

Twit(url)ly and Twitmeme

Find the most popular links on Twitter. <http://twitturly.com/> , <http://www.twitmeme.com>

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Having Fun with Twitter

Tweeting For the Fun of It

LOLWRUS

Combine Tweets and Flickr images to create funny photos (similar to LOLCATS).

<http://lolwr.us/>

The Twictionary

From Attwaction to Twoosh, keep up on all the Twitter lingo, both common and obscure.

<http://twictionary.pbwiki.com/>

Twitstori

A beautiful real-time stream of users' Tweets. <http://twistori.com>

Twittearth

See Tweets from all around the globe.

<http://twittearth.com/>

Twittercal

Automatically add events to your Google Calendar by DMing them to @gcal.

<http://twittercal.com/>

TwitterFone

Send Tweets via voice. <http://www.twitterfone.com/>

Who Should I Follow?

Get personalized recommendations to find new friends.

<http://whoshouldifollow.com>

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