

### Introduction

The most important thing to remember when you start a Twitter conversation is to always be conversational. This is a 'one-to-many' medium and not a 'push' medium. Marketing, advertising and branding within Twitter are done through real conversations with your customers, called "**tweets.**" Your customers' tweets to you should be responded to immediately and with the utmost respect. Consider tweets to be no different than having a conversation about your company in a room full of people – what you say will not only be noticed, but will also be the key to creating brand loyalty and customer trust.

### Twitter – “the Basics”:

**140 Characters** – Twitter posts, called “tweets” have a maximum limit of 140 characters. If you need to say more, there are other services such as 140it.com that can truncate words for you. On Twitter, any messages exceeding 140 characters will not be shown within your tweet.

**“@” handles** – These include your name and the names (or “handles”) of other tweeters. When you post a response or comment on another tweet, you can include their handle. For example, “I agree with @ACMECOMPANY that you must always be consistent in what you say about your brand”

**DM, or “direct message”** – once you’ve acquired a base of followers, you can tweet to them directly and privately, without allowing access to others. To send a direct message, place a “D” prior to your post to the selected recipients. For example, “D @ACMECOMPANY Sure let’s meet to get on the same page for tomorrow’s presentation”

**RT, or “retweet”** – Use this feature to push someone else’s tweet to your follow base. A retweet is also acknowledgment (or credit) of where you got your information. For example: “RT @ACMECOMPANY – here’s a great resource for new tweeters <http://Twitter.com/Twitter101>”

**Trending Topics** – this is an area on your Twitter dashboard that shows you the most popular topics being discussed on Twitter at that time.

**“#” Hashtags** – Hashtags allow people to search for tweets that share a common topic. They are also used by people in the same vicinity who are all talking about a specific topic; such as a seminars, conferences or a trade-show. For example: “I found @ACMECOMPANY at booth 123, they have great new products! #automotive #SEMA”

**Tweetup** – A tweetup is a meeting of tweeters in “real life.” Tweetups are often used at seminars, conferences or a trade-show to meet after hours and discuss the day’s events.

**Shortened URLs** – When you add links to your tweet, they can use up a large amount of your 140 character limit. Fortunately, there are numerous websites that can shorten your long URL to a more manageable size.

Here are some of the more popular URL shorteners:

- TinyURL
- Bit.ly
- Is.gd

**Following** – When you open a Twitter account, it’s important to seek out other tweeters with similar interests and criteria that you can “follow” and engage in conversation with. For example, if you search for “photography,” a large list of similarly interested tweeters will appear. You can read their tweets and follow them if you wish (make sure they tweet often, since it’s better to follow active tweeters). This will help you build a group of tweeters that is not only knowledgeable about topics you like or are involved with professionally, but often they return the favor by following you.

**Followers** – Followers are people that are following your tweets. There are a couple of important rules to follow when someone follows you. First, thank them for following you and secondly, return the favor if you feel they would make a suitable contribution to the growing list of tweeters that you are following.

**Avatar** – Your Twitter profile picture. Along with this, include in your Bio and/or custom background the names (or @usernames) of the people Twittering from your company account. It’s also a good idea to include additional contact info, like email addresses.

**“Tweet Stream”** – This is the list of tweets produced by a tweeter.





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# Twitter for Business

## THE "TWEET" CHEAT SHEET

### Traffic-driving strategies:

Here are just some examples of traffic-driving strategies:

1. Create an online tool/application and promote your Twitter profile within it.
2. Buy a banner/blog ad (Facebook or Google Ad Word) to target savvy audiences and link it to your profile.
3. Use Twitter as a tool for tech/customer support. Support it vigorously, as your customer base will become dependent on it.
4. Create and launch contests and campaigns through your Twitter profile.
5. Always add links to your profile in email/forum signatures.
6. Evangelize Twitter on your blog/other blogs and include a link to your profile. Market your blog further through Facebook blog networks.
7. Link your blog and other social media profiles to your Twitter page.
8. Tweet other Twitter influencers with your articles relevant to their interests.
9. When you pitch or perform in speaking roles, make sure your materials are branded with your Twitter contact.
10. Ask another user to recommend your profile or exchange recommendations.

#### Twitter Applications:

<http://Twitter.com/downloads>  
<http://twapps.com/>

#### Twitter Real-World Business Case Studies:

[http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case\\_dell](http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case_dell)  
[http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case\\_jetblue](http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case_jetblue)  
[http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case\\_pepsi](http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case_pepsi)  
[http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case\\_levis](http://business.Twitter.com/Twitter101/case_levis)  
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### Best Practices for businesses who Twitter:

**Be authentic**, as well as positive, transparent and on brand

Be mobile with your conversation – tweet not only from your office, but also from your phone and while at seminars, conferences or trade-shows.

**Engage In Conversations** – Tweeters take note of tweets that are conversational, as well as those produced only to 'push' a message. Twitter is about interaction, discussion, sharing information and establishing/maintaining relationships. It's no different than being in a room full of people – you wouldn't want to spend much time with someone who has a blatant sales agenda.

**Establish Yourself As The Authority** – Tweeting as the voice of authority within a category is always important. Be prepared for having people ask you engaging questions about your company, product and services in order to define you as an authority.

**Tweet Useful Content** – It's always best to tweet conversations that are beneficial to your followers. Remember to keep on point of your brand. And while it's good to be unique and authentic, don't stray too far from your conversational messaging.

**Tweet with frequency** – Not tweeting is one of the biggest turn-offs to a follower. It's much like a company that comes out of the woodwork only when times are bad and needs help. Consider tweets like newsletters, emails and face-to-face discussions with your clients.

**Check your facts before you tweet** – just because you heard something from someone else, doesn't mean it true. It's important that you get it right the first time.

Respond quickly and transparently – if someone reaches out to you with a DM or a public @ posting, you should try to respond as quickly as you can. "Transparency" is the truthful and open approach to messaging about your company. In this day and age where facts can be checked within seconds, don't make false claims. Instead, tell your follower that you'll get them more information ASAP!

**Tweet your RSS from your company's blog** – Use Twitter as a conduit for people to connect with your other messaging. If you post a video to YouTube, upload a new blog post, launch a new website or service, or want extra traction for your PR efforts, tweet your followers to it.

Make sure your tweets provide real value. Here are a few examples to spark ideas:

- Incentivize: Offer Twitter exclusive coupons or deals
- Take people "behind the scenes"
- Tweet about successes & failures
- Recalls, renewal and warranty information
- Post pictures from your offices, stores, new products, etc.
- Share sneak peeks of projects or events in development

Do not put important tweets out on Fridays. Twitter has many more visitors Monday – Thursday, with the highest traffic on Wednesday and Thursday. Optimize around these days as key times for most important tweets. Also remember to tweet in the time zone of your customers. If you're on the east coast, your west coast clients might miss a great post if done too early.

#### Self Monitoring & Optimization:

- Search for your company name, product names or acronyms to learn if other tweeter are having good/bad experiences, and respond to them. Reach out – this is your chance to make rapid improvement with people engaging in your business in real-time.
- Consider establishing multiple accounts to represent your company. This can be very effective for local audiences who are interested in very local information or for followers only interested in one specific product or service.
- The number one rule is to listen to what others are telling you and adjust appropriately