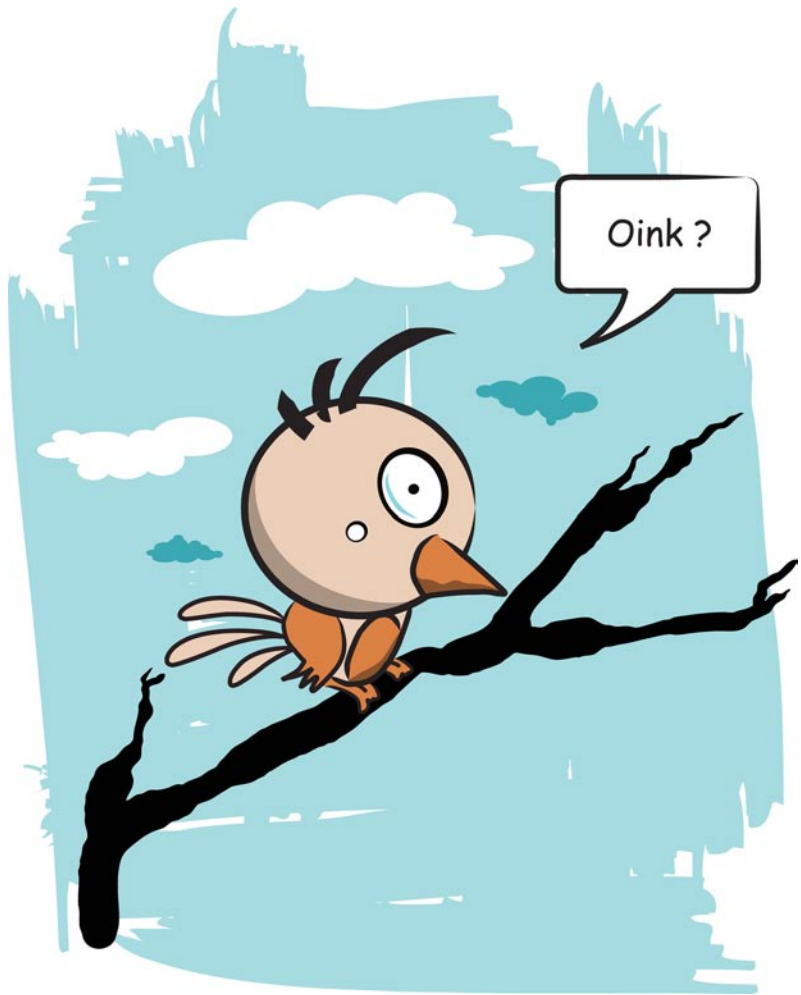


# Beginners Guide to Marketing on Twitter

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Twitter is one of the fastest growing websites on the Internet. With over 105 million users, the potential to grow your business on Twitter is enormous. Utilizing this Beginners Guide to Twitter Marketing, you will be able to do just that. Learn what services Twitter provides and how to use them to your advantage as well as third party software and websites that will give you a leg up on your competition. Follow this guides easy steps and your business will be sounding like a songbird, not like a pig on Twitter.

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It seems these days the two most spoken words when referencing the Internet are Twitter and Facebook. Both provide ways to communicate with hundreds, thousands, and in some cases millions of people at one time. With so many potential customers on these two website, it is difficult not to consider these avenues for marketing your services or products. In this beginners marketing guide, I am going to cover marketing to individuals whom use Twitter. I assume you already have a twitter account and are looking for ways to increase your return on investment (time spend on Twitter resulting in an increase in your bottom line). All websites and program I will cover in the marketing guide are free to use, this guide covers no pay per use services.

In this marketing guide, I am going to cover topics such as why sprucing up your twitter profile page is important, stand alone programs you can use to access Twitter, and online tools you can use to maximize your Twitter usage. I will just be covering the basics of each of these topics, but I'll go deep enough that you will find valuable tips and tricks to assist you in your marketing on Twitter.

## What is Twitter?

Twitter is a microblogging and social networking website. It allows any of its members to post a short message (no more than 140 characters) to share with their followers. Like many social networking website, Twitter does not require someone to be your friend to view what you post (tweet). Twitter allows anyone to follow you (as long as your profile settings are not to private or you are block by a member). You have the ability to follow anyone or any company that has a twitter account. You in theory could have 100,000 followers (individuals following you) and only 1 following (an individual you are following). *Note: I do not recommended though.*

One of the major advantages of using Twitter is it requires people to get right to the point. With only being able to tweet (a post on twitter) 140 characters, it doesn't leave a lot of room for fluff. Twitter also provides individuals the ability to find information quickly. It allows real time search results. If you want to know what is going on in the city you live in right now, you can do a search on Twitter for your city and see what people are saying. You may find out events happening around the corner from you that you had no idea was taking place.

## Why market on Twitter?

One of the biggest reasons to market on Twitter is the ability to reach such a large number of new customers. Twitter boasts over 105 million users. Twitter allows you to discover new customers in your own neighborhood or on the other side of the country on one website.

Twitter also provides an excellent way to interact with your current customers. Your current customers are most likely your best source for new customers, so interacting with them is very important. Having a presents on Twitter can make it easier for you customers to help spread the word about your business (or Twitter user name) to their followers. Twitter is also able to serve as a great customer service tool.

When marketing on any social networking website, it is important to understand **how to market** to users on each of these websites. In a recent USA Today Snapshot (March 31, 2010), 70% of small-business owners who use social networking sites to market their business said they were satisfied with their efforts. Sixty-one percent said it helped identify and attract new customers. Fifty percent stated using a social networking website used up more time than expected. Following the steps in this guide will help you better manager your time on Twitter (some of these tips can be used on other social networking websites) and will provide a positive result to your business's bottom line.

## Twitter Website and Services

### Sprucing up your Twitter profile page

I do think Twitter has done a nice job with providing some very nice themes for user's profile page background. The problem with using one of these for your business Twitter account is it **does not provide** any form of marketing for your business. This Internet real estate is very valuable and you need to take advantage of it. The way to do this is by creating an image that will market your business, a service you provide or a product you wish to market.

Here is an example of a background I have used for one of my twitter accounts. As you can see, I listed my name, where I am located, my website address, my email address and a short description of what my business primarily does. You may or may not want to list all of these items, but here is a list of some you should consider:

- Business's name
- Website address
- Methods to contact your business (email, phone number)
- Physical address of your business
- Other social networking website you have an account on (facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, etc...)
- An image of yourself or your business (This helps to build trust)
- A short description of what your business provides



The reason it is important to create a background image that is focused on marketing your business is that this is your landing page for any member interested in learning more about you on Twitter. How often have you seen on a website or in an email a link that looked similar to this: <http://www.twitter.com/joeperricomLLC>? When an individual clicks on that link, he/she lands on my business Twitter profile page. Should not that person see something that lets him/her know about your business and what services/products your business provides?

It's important to fill out your profile. Information you enter will display on the right side of your profile and is searchable within Twitter. Fill in all fields to help ensure the maximum number of Twitter users can find your business. You are limited to 160 characters that you can use in your bio, so make sure to use keywords for your industry. In addition, make sure you include your website address in the proper field. This is very useful when a potential new customer wishes to learn more about your business. This also will ensure search engines find your business's website.

Another excellent tip for good marketing is having a profile picture. It also not a bad idea to change this picture every now and then. By change your image, people that may have been over looking what you have been tweeting may take the time to check it out because they see a new profile image in their streams.

#### Additional Information:

- You background image can be no larger than 800kb and must be saved in a .jpg, .gif, or .png.
- A background image alignment is set to the top left corner of a users screen.
- Background images on Twitter are stationary. They do not scroll when you move the page up or down.
- Not everyone has the same size monitor, so what may look good on your screen may not display properly on somebody's screen. It is good to check how your background image looks on several different size monitors.
- Avoid Tiling your image. What may display properly on your monitor may not on a different monitor.



## Using Lists



Lists are ways for you to organize Twitter users. You are able to add any Twitter user to a list, even Twitter accounts you are not following. The maximum number of list you may have under one account is 20. If you need assistance setting up list, you can find help on Twitter's website @ <http://help.twitter.com/entries/76460-how-to-use-twitter-lists>.

One of the major advantages to set up a list is to **keep track of what your competitors are Tweeting**. A list allows you to do this without having to follow them, allowing you to keep track of your competition without them even knowing. Remember to set this list to private.

Another handy use for lists is to keep track of Twitter users in your general location; whether that is the city you do business in. Being able to keep track of what individuals are tweeting in your area can provide you an advantage over your competition. Say you business is a restaurant. You see a local Twitter user tweet that he/she are hungry and deciding what to have for dinner. Here is a great

opportunity for you to reply to their tweet with a suggestion to come to your restaurant for that night's special. Maybe you own a lawn care service. You see someone tweet about how he/she dislike cutting their grass every week. This is another great opportunity to interact with a local resident. One of the most over looked marketing opportunity on Twitter by many businesses is the ability to interact with current and new customers on a more personal level.

Lists provide a powerful tool to keep track of Twitter users. It is definitely something worth setting up. You will be surprised at the results you will gain from such a simple method to keep track of information in your area and by your competitors that use Twitter.

## Using Search

Search allows you the ability to see if anyone has tweeted about a certain keyword or key phrase that is important in your industry. Search for these keywords or key phrases can help you to connect to others that are interested in the services or products your business offers. It also can be use to discover individual twitter users that are located in the same city as your business.

To search for other businesses or residents in your area, you will need to click on Find People in the menu at the top of any Twitter page. To search for a keyword or key phrase, you will need to go to your Twitter home page, in the right hand menu is a search box. Use that search box to conduct this type of search.

## Find People

Find people allows you to discover individuals, businesses and organizations that are Twitter users. This feature also allows you to search for Twitter users in the city your business is located. This is a great way to find new customers in your area. I have used this feature and found several free local business directories that I listed my website and what services I provide. You never know where your next customer is going to come from. Maximizing your business exposure is a very important part of attracting new customers.

The Find People feature also allows you to search for individuals you may know, but have not started following on Twitter yet. You can also use it to invite friends and current customers to be a part of your Twitter network. This is important because these people are more likely to retweet what you post, giving you exposure to their network of followers on Twitter. **You cannot go wrong with free marketing!**



## Twitter Applications (Stand-Alone Programs)

A stand-alone program is one that does not require you to have your web browser open to use it. The advantages of a stand-alone program to interact with your Twitter account are you do not have to go to

Twitter's website every time you want to tweet and being able to take advantage of feature these programs provide.

Most run on Adobe Air. Adobe Air is a free program from Adobe and usually when you download one of these programs; it will ask you to install Adobe Air when you install that program.

### **Twihirl (<http://www.twihirl.org>)**

Twihirl is a very easy to set up and use. It runs on Adobe Air and operates on both Windows and Mac computers. It allows you to use a single account to tweet as well as follows post of those you are following.

Advantages:

- Easy to use and set up
- Shorten long URL automatically (uses digg.com, bit.ly, snurl, twurl, or is.gd)
- Allows you to post images via yfrog
- Search tweets using Twitter Search and TweetScan, and follow topics in near-real time with saved searches.
- Displays notifications of new tweets (from people you are following)
- Allows cross-posting to website such as Facebook and LinkedIn

### **TweetDeck (<http://www.tweetdeck.com>)**

TweetDeck is the most popular Twitter stand-alone client. It runs on Adobe Air. This program is also easy to use and set up. The program runs on Windows, Mac, and Linux computers. TweetDeck allows you to manage more than one Twitter account. *(Note: To do this and use some of the features, you have to sign up for an account with TweetDeck, but it is worth it.)*

Advantages:

- Easy to use and set up
- Shorten long URL automatically
- Allows you to post images
- Manage multiple twitter accounts
- Manage lists
- Allows cross-posting to website such as Facebook, LinkedIn and MySpace
- Manage conversations
- Sync between multiple computers
- Displays notifications of new tweets (from people you are following)

### **Mixero (<http://www.mixero.com>)**

Mixero is the program that I prefer to use as my Twitter stand-alone program. It runs on Adobe Air. This program is also easy to set up and use. The program runs on Windows, Mac, and Linux computers. Mixero allows you to manage more than one Twitter account. *(Note: You do not need to set up an account with Mixero to manage multiple accounts.)*

Advantages:

- Easy to use and set up
- Shorten long URL automatically
- Allows you to post images
- Manage multiple twitter accounts
- Manage Groups (similar to list)
- Allows cross-posting to website such as Facebook
- Manage conversations
- Displays notifications of new tweets (from people you are following)
- Allows you to filter content (be notified when someone tweets a keyword, key phrase, or something about your business)

## Twitter Applications (Web Tools)

### HootSuite (<http://hootsuite.com/>)

HootSuite is the website I use the most to interact with those following the Twitter accounts I manage. It allows one to manage multiple Twitter accounts in one location. The interface on this website is very easy to use and navigate. You are able to quickly view past posting, tweets that people replied to you as well as direct messages you received all on one screen. The feature that I like the most is the ability to schedule tweets to post later that day, week, month, or year. Say you have a promotion that you want to have sent out to your followers every Monday at noon. You can do that with HootSuite. It does not allow for reoccurring tweets yet, but using copy and paste, you can set up a month or two worth of tweets for that Monday at noon special within a few minutes. This is much easier than trying to be at your computer every Monday around noon to do this.

Another great feature of HootSuite is the ability to find out which of your tweets were popular. If you post a tweet with a link in it and shorten the URL with HootSuite (turns your link into an ow.ly link), HootSuite will keep track of how many individuals clicked on that link. This allows you to know what messages people are paying attention to that you tweet.

A third feature that I have used is the ability to add RSS feeds. This allows HootSuite to check your blog (if you have an RSS feed set up on it) and send a tweet when you add a new blog posting. You can set HootSuite to check your blog every so many hours for a new posting.

### Twiangulate (<http://twiangulate.com>)

Twinangulate helps you figure out whom to follow. The way it works is like this, you enter up to three Twitter user names and Twinangulate will return the mutual friends or mutual followers. This is useful when you are looking for new customers. You can enter up to three of your competitors Twitter accounts names and discover who is following all of them. This could give you an idea who is interested in the service you and your competitors offer. Knowing who is looking for the type of service you provide, you may be able to sway one of these potential new customers your way by interacting with them.

### Twitdom (<http://twitdom.com>)

Twitdom is a large directory of twitter applications. If you are looking for a particular application to better market your business on twitter, chances are if it's been developed, you will find it here. Keep in mind that some of the applications available on this website are free, while others cost to use.

## Ten Tips for Marketing on Twitter

- Remember that Twitter is a social networking website. **Be social!** Interact with your followers.
- Do not Spam. Nobody wants to see a tweet every minute from you.
- Do not just send out Tweets with advisements, this will make you look like a spammer.
- Remember to thank those who retweet your tweet.
- Remember to follow others. It is important to have a good ratio of followers/following.
- Retweet. Share information others have tweeted that you feel may benefit those that are following you.
- Keep your tweets positive. Do not talk bad about your competition or one of your customers.
- Do not tweet in all caps. All caps mean you are shouting and nobody likes to be shouted at.
- Tweet regularly using words important to your market. There are over 600 million searches conducted on Twitter each day. Having your tweets towards the top of a search results provides a great chance to direct more visitors to your website.
- Use Hash tags. Hash tags are clickable, allowing an individual to view others people tweets that use that same hash tag. (An example would be #webdesign or #FollowFriday)

## Conclusion

Twitter is a great tool for marketing. With millions of users, there is a great potential to increase your business and your bottom line. It may take some time to grow your following, but by using these tips and tools I have outlined in this guide, you can do it much easier and find quality leads. The most important things to remember when using Twitter are to **be social and to have fun**. Now get Tweeting!

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