Automating Your Shiny New Twitter Scripts

From Programming for Marketers

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The Joys of Cron

Automating your Twitter codes is pretty easy.

We're going to create what's called a "cron-job," which is a task your computer runs as frequently as you want for you

It's slightly different on Windows and OS X, So go to the slide for your operating system

Cron Jobs on OS X

A quick note on syntax

When you create your cronjob, you'll need to specify how often it runs.

The job takes 5 inputs, the Minute (0-59), Hour (0-23), Day of Month (1-31), Month (1-12), and Day of Week (0-6)

So if you type in: 30 * * * * the job will run every 30 minutes.

Or: 0 7 * * * will run every day at 7 AM

Or: * * * * 5 will run every Friday

1. Go to terminal, any type in "crontab -e"

2. Press "i" to enter the "insert" mode

3. Then type in your job (the time format followed by
   the directory the program is in), for example:
    0 12 * * * Documents/Twitter/auto_follow.py

4. Press ESC to exit the insert mode

5. Type "ZZ" in capital letters

6. And you're good! If you want to double check it's live,
   you can type in "crontab -l"

Cron Jobs on Windows

Believe it or not, Cron is easier on Windows than Mac for non-developers.

First, open control panel, navigate to "system and security," then "administrative tools," then "task scheduler"

Second, click "action," then "create basic task" and give it a name

Finally, follow the wizard, and Windows will help you get your job set up!

Have fun! We'll be back soon with Lesson 3

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