

Interview #1: Ashhad Alam

- Introduction
 - A current MIT senior who uses Twitter considerably
 - From Karachi, Pakistan
 - Studying Computer Science
- Background
 - Go over the purpose and importance of interview
 - Ashhad was perceptive and understood that there are lots of “mixed signals in today’s era” about twitter.
- Build Rapport[followup revealed more stories]
 - Interests
 - We connected over being from Pakistan and speaking another language
 - Bonded over the different Islamic culture
 - He mentioned that the move to the US was hard, but we could connect with family back home with Twitter and Facebook and Whatsapp
 - Talked about classes taking and events that we might go to during the weekend
 - Ashhad is interested in acting, soccer, and food places
 - I followed up with how he keeps up with each of these interests:
 - Acting: follows lots of famous actors/people/influencers on Twitter. He is “fascinated and feels validated when my point of view is similar to the people I follow.” The blue check mark and being verified is very important to him
 - Soccer: he follows many soccer players, organizations, and prominent reporters on Twitter. He loves to watch highlights of his favorite team Real Madrid and players like Benzema. He also watches many different reporters “analyzing a beautiful match after a long day of homework and classes”.
 - Anecdote: Ashhad followed many people in the Real Madrid organization as well, but many of them were not verified and did not have a blue checkmark. Some of them were fake accounts and Ashhad was “very pissed off when there was junk content from some of the accounts”
 - Anecdote: there were rumors going around that Ronaldo would be moving and he found that out via Twitter and almost terminated his account. He eventually started responding to random threads and started to look up on Google some of the credentials of these reporters who were breaking this “news.”
 - Food Anecdote: Ashhad loves following food places as well on Twitter. He especially loves “some accounts that post the best

places to eat in Boston. As a Muslim. I love being able to find halal food in the city since there are not many options usually.” One time, Ashhad saw a bunch of restaurant recommendations on his timeline, but there was not much information on the accounts that the recommendations came from, such as if it's actually Boston or some other nearby city.

- Evoke Stories/Explore Emotions
 - He used to have a public Twitter account, but did not tweet much because it was “very intimidating to share my views or simple things I did in my day to everyone. That’s why I ended up making my account private and started tweeting more to people I knew I could trust. Now, I tweet when I am frustrated with a pset or want to find people to go to a concert with. It’s awesome, except it is hard to keep track of my friend’s tweets or updates when there are so many corporate advertisements or posts polluting my timeline”
 - I followed up on finding people for events
 - He shared that he loves exploring places, so he tweets asking if people are free. He does find it “annoying” that there is no way to see which friends can actually go without reading all of the thread replies and then he needs to confirm if people are actually free or not. He mentioned how he responds to Facebook events a lot and that makes his life easy when coordinating things to do with friends.
- Reflection/Wrap up
 - Overall, he loves using Twitter daily, especially in the context of providing updates for/with friends, soccer, and food. There are a few pain points learned.
 - Thank You’s and Wishing Well