

ROCKABLE



Mini-Book Series



how to market your
business on **Twitter**

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ROCKABLE✱

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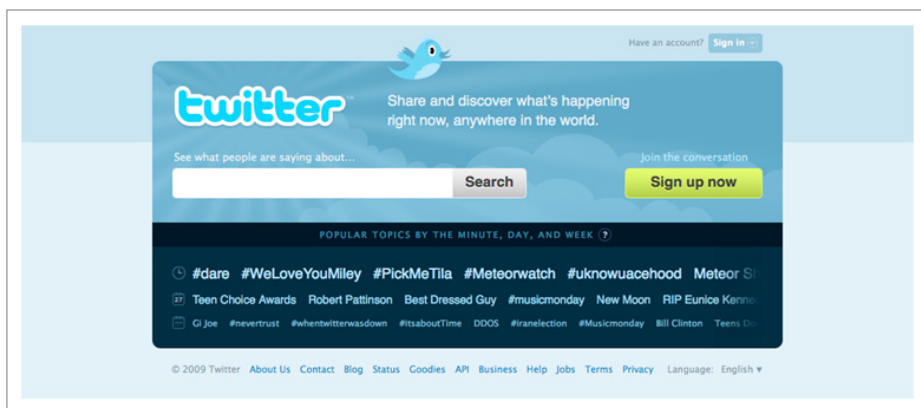
AN INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Twitter, Twitter, Twitter! Everybody seems to be talking about Twitter, and it's definitely become the social media craze everyone's using. Even news reporters have started to base a lot of their reports on information gathered from Twitter, and it has established itself as a powerful social media tool which is here to stay. A lot of my friends (some of whom are small business owners) have asked me what Twitter is all about, and whether I think it's something they should start using – my answer is always “yes”. This book will teach you how to use the service, and explain how Twitter can help your business. Let's get started!

What Is Twitter?

If you're reading this book, you probably already have an idea of what [Twitter](#) is, but just in case, let me give you the rundown. Twitter is the most popular online micro-blogging service. What is micro-blogging? Just what it sounds like: short, small snippets of online writing. With Twitter, you can publish updates of up to 140 characters, and these updates will be read by anyone who wants to see them.



The Twitter.com homepage

Twitter is a simple service that lets you follow anyone. Anyone literally means anyone: you can follow your friends, your family, companies or even celebrities like Barack Obama or Britney Spears. Because of the way it's designed, one person (for example, Britney Spears) can send out a message from his or her phone and every single follower will receive the message. Users can respond to each other's messages and interact via the website.

On its surface, Twitter is just a place where you can send short messages to other people. Deeper down, Twitter is a place where you can market your company, share information, and get advice quickly and easily. Twitter is a way to connect with other people.

How Can Twitter Help Me?

“So, how does the ability to send tiny messages to followers help me?” you might be asking. I know it seems like the same effect could be achieved by other means, but understanding the power of Twitter is a bit like trying to solve an optical illusion – you can’t see it until you discover it, but you’ll never forget it once you do. This book will help you discover the power of Twitter.

Twitter can be used for tons of purposes such as connecting with friends, marketing your company, and responding to customer service requests. In this book, we’ll discuss methods in which you can utilize Twitter personally and professionally. We’ll go over some examples including:

- How [Zappos](#) (Twitter: [@Zappos](#)) is using Twitter to connect to customers and offer customer service even quicker than a phone call.
- How [Ford](#) (Twitter: [@ScottMonty](#)) is using Twitter to generate buzz about their new products.
- How [Comcast](#) (Twitter: [@Comcastcares](#)) is using Twitter to quickly solve customer complaints.

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Twitter users use many different words and acronyms. Here are a few common ones:

- *Tweet - a single Twitter message.*
- *DM - Direct message, a message that can only be seen by you and a friend. Send a DM by tweeting ‘d @friend [message]’.*
- *RT - Retweet, when you forward an interesting message from one of your friends to the rest of your followers. Many times people will request this by typing ‘Please RT’ before the message.*

This book will take you on a journey from initially creating your Twitter account, learning how and who to follow, how to get others to follow you, and how to use your tribe of followers to grow your business.

Why Should Businesses Pay Attention to Twitter?

Twitter is a new frontier in communication. If you went back a couple of hundred years ago, you had to literally go out and meet your customers if you wanted to get in contact with them. Then, the telephone allowed for telemarketing and customer service, television allowed for TV ads, and the invention of the Internet has made it possible to market through banner ads and handle customer service via email. Twitter is the next iteration in this exponential curve of innovative modes of communication – now customers and businesses can communicate more quickly than ever before, whether it relates to customer service, advertising, or sales.

What does this mean? For the first time, you can easily keep tabs on indirect mentions of your product. In the past, most of the customer feedback you received came through direct emails from clients, or by searching blogs and websites for mentions. Now, with Twitter, you can easily and quickly keep track of people who are talking about your product or business. You can also quickly get in contact with people who are mentioning competitors or have needs that your product can fill.

Twitter puts you in the position of a direct marketer and customer service representative. You can listen in and see what people are saying. You can discover how to improve your product without having to set up focus groups. Thus, Twitter can help you improve your business.

Which Businesses Will Benefit from Twitter?

Just about every business can benefit, in one way or another, by using Twitter. What kind of business are you running?

Freelancer – Freelancers can use Twitter to connect to clients and learn from other freelancers. For example, just recently, I posted a message on Twitter asking for Virtual Assistants to get in contact with me. I immediately received a few responses from assistants who sent me a proposal, and helped me get set up! If you are a freelancer of any variety (web developer, graphic designer, virtual assistant, or copywriter), Twitter is a great way to get in contact with tons of potential clients or those who can help you achieve your goals.

Product Marketer – Twitter will let you connect with large groups of potential customers. Through Twitter, you can market your products, post links to interesting related content, and help grow your user base.

Business Owner – Any business owner will appreciate the ability to handle customer service with Twitter. Because it's faster and more open than email, you can allow your customers to send you messages, get back in contact with them, and solve their problems quickly and efficiently.

What Will I Learn in This Book?

In this book, you'll learn enough to go from beginner to power user. In Chapter 1, you'll learn how to set up your Twitter environment; that is, create an account, get started with Twitter, and download some cool Twitter programs. In Chapter 2, you will learn how to find interesting people to follow on Twitter. In Chapter 3, we'll talk about

how to deliver value to your users. In Chapter 4, you'll learn how to get lots of people to follow you. Finally, in Chapter 5, you'll learn specific strategies about how to use Twitter to market your business.

I hope you're ready! You can find me on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/maneeshsethi>.



Setting Up Your Twitter Environment

Do you have a Twitter account yet? If not, get yourself over to <http://twitter.com/signup> and create one. Before you create your account, however, you might want to consider your options.

Creating Your Twitter Account

When you first go to the Twitter signup page, you'll have a few options that you can choose from. Think carefully about your username because it will stick with you for a very long time. Here are some guidelines I follow:

1. Keep your username short: you want people to be able to message you, but they only have 140 characters available. If your username is long, their messages will have to be shorter. This is one mistake I made (my username, [@maneeshsethi](#), is twelve characters plus one for the '@' sign). Keep it short and relevant.
2. Consider whether or not you need to use your business name for your account. In some cases, your followers may prefer to hear from a real person, not just a company name. By using your own name, your followers may feel much more of a personal connection, however business branding should stay consistent. If you have to use your business name, there's nothing wrong with that. Check out the sidebar for some exceptions to this rule.
3. Don't make it boring or embarrassing. When my sister entered university, she chose an embarrassing email address only to find that she was unable to change it forever. Be sure that you are willing to stick with your username because it will likely last forever.

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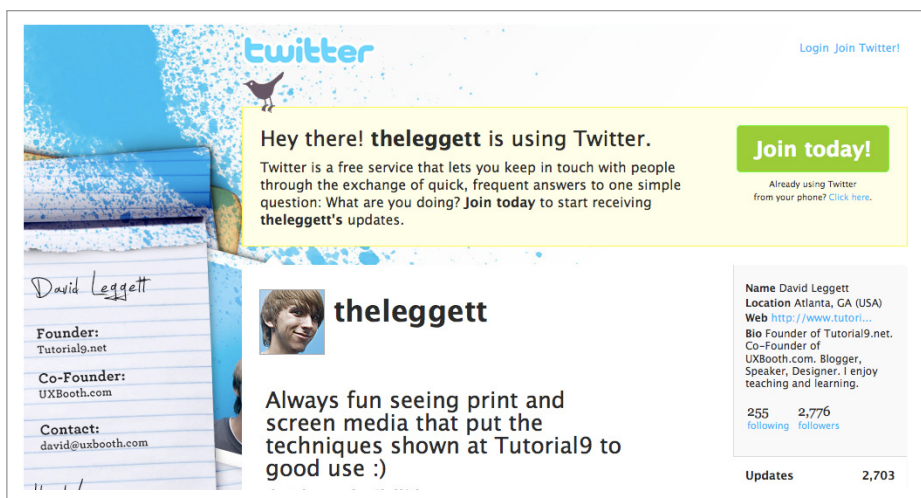
Reasons you might use a business name over a personal name:

- You've built a strong brand for your company or product that you'd like to reinforce (such as [@tutsplus](#), [@comcastcares](#), [@jetblue](#))
- You plan to have several people from your business using the account.

Your Personal Profile

Twitter lets you build your profile by writing a short biography, by displaying a photo, and by showing your current location. You can either make your profile based on you as an individual, or you can build it around your brand name or company, unless of course you are your brand. Here are some quick tips related to building your profile as an individual, and I explain how to extend your brand to Twitter in the section after this.

- Fill out the Bio section: make it interesting. The Bio is one of the few things your potential followers will see when they click on your profile. Talk about who you are, why you are using Twitter, and include some cool facts about yourself.
- Use a good photo. Don't use a logo if you can help it – people are turned off by profiles with logos because it doesn't feel like they are interacting with a real person.
- Link to your blog or website, if you can.
- Consider changing the background of your Twitter profile as well. The default is boring, and having a good customized background will give your profile more personality and will help you stand out. It may also allow you to display more information than a standard profile provided. Check out some of these examples on the web: [@theleggett](#), [@anousone](#), [@BizCoachDeb](#). They look good and display more information than what is available by default on Twitter.



@theleggett's well designed Twitter profile

Branding

Setting up your Twitter profile in a way that represents your company is extremely important for developing your brand. Let's look at this in more detail.

What is branding? Branding is the act of setting up your various mediums, whether it's your website, your Twitter profile, or your products to be associated with one another and therefore presenting a cohesive business image. Therefore, having similar design, content, style, and themes in all of your communication methods is critical.

By building a brand, people will be able to associate your business and products with a certain distinct image and feel that makes you more memorable. This means that users will be able to identify you whether they're on your website or Twitter page. When you try to pitch your product or service in the future, they will be much more likely to consider buying from you if they already trust your company's brand. For example, if you read *How to be a Rockstar*

Freelancer from Rockable Press and found it useful, you should be able to easily identify other Rockable Press products and be more likely to buy them.

Even if you're a freelancer, you need to create a consistent brand to market your products and services. Building a strong brand is the basis for social media networking.

Extending Your Brand to Twitter

Extending your brand onto Twitter is no different than adapting it for any other platform. Here are a few steps to help you extend your brand to Twitter:

1. **Make your business obvious on your Twitter profile** – Consider using your business name as your Twitter profile name, unless your own name is your brand or carries a lot of weight in certain circles of interest. Add your URL to your Twitter profile, and make sure your bio clearly describes what you or your business does or is. Remember that your bio is one of the few pieces of personal information on your profile page and is an important opportunity to grab a new visitor's attention.
2. **Make your Twitter background similar to your website's theme** – Creating a good-looking visual background is an important step in branding your profile. It may be worth hiring a professional designer for this. Check out [this article from SpoonGraphics.co.uk](http://www.blog.spoongraphics.co.uk/tutorials/twitter-background-design-how-to-and-best-practices) (<http://www.blog.spoongraphics.co.uk/tutorials/twitter-background-design-how-to-and-best-practices>) to learn more about creating a good background design.
3. **Make sure the writing style of your tweets are consistent with the style on your blog or website** – If your company is known for mischievous humor or

informal writing, carry this on in your tweets. If your company has a more formal tone, make sure you don't tell too many jokes on Twitter! Basically, your tweets should reflect the image of your company.

Having Multiple Accounts

Many Twitter users often wonder if they should create separate accounts for business and personal use. I only have one account, because I am developing a personal brand. However, if you often tweet content you wouldn't want all of your clients to see, you might want to consider having multiple accounts.

For a business owner, it is often necessary to have several accounts, although definitely not required. Web applications such as [CoTweet](#) offer a service that make it easy to manage multiple accounts. This is also an excellent service if you have more than one person working on the same profile.

Now that you've built a decent profile, let's look at some ways to keep track of your Twitter universe.

Twitter Applications

There are plenty of competing Twitter applications available for download. By the time you've finished reading this book, I'm sure a bunch of new applications will be available and the existing applications would've added more features. Do some of your own research when choosing the right application for you. In the

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Why a brand matters

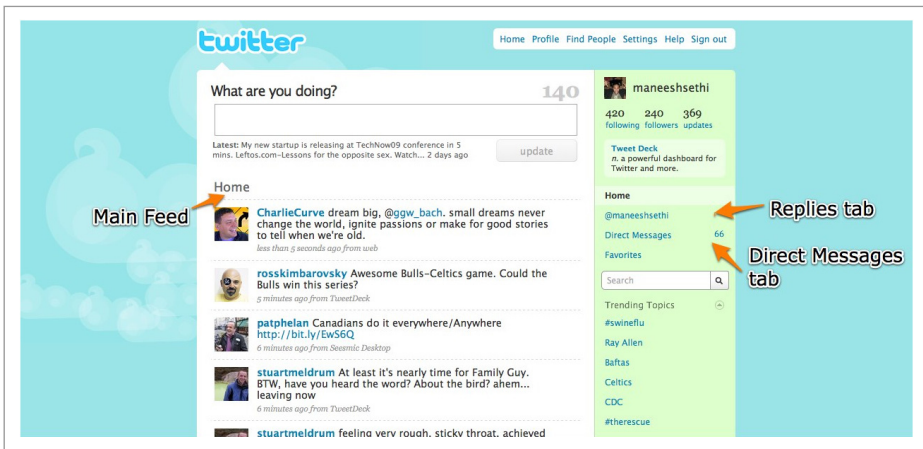
So why is a brand important? By building a brand, your customers will associate your Twitter persona with your business. As they begin to trust your Twitter persona (or Facebook, or blog, or anything else), they will begin to trust YOU more. Thus, you will find it easier to sell products to followers, to pitch services, and to connect with them on all levels.



meantime, here are a few to get you started:

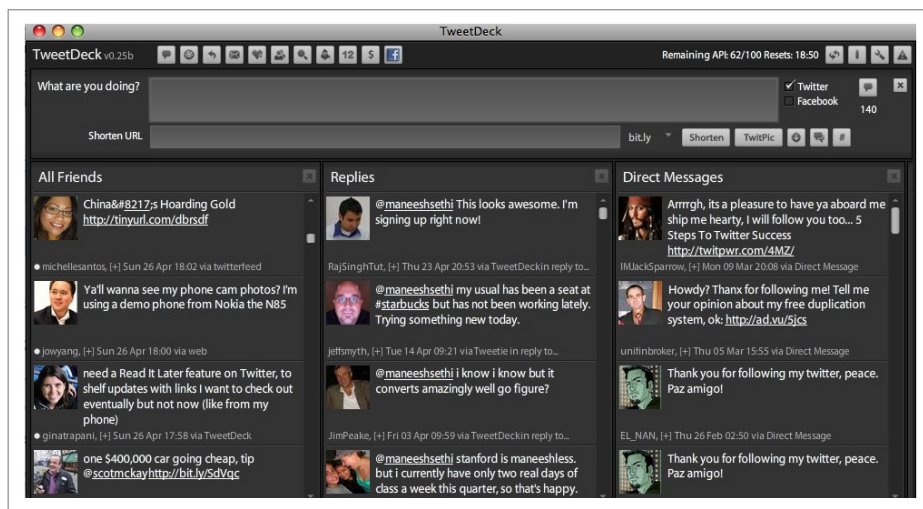
1. **Twitter.com** – Accessing Twitter via the website is the most common and simplest way to use the service, but it isn't necessarily the most powerful. When you are just starting to use Twitter and you have very few followers and aren't following many people, [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) is enough. However, as you become a more active user, you might require more features than the website provides.

The [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) website offers links for various activities. The main feed shows your *tweets* (Twitter slang for 'posted messages') as well as your friends' tweets. You can click the replies tab to see any messages sent with your '@Nickname.' (Messages containing your @nickname are called replies, and you can reply to other people's tweets in the same way). You can also use the 'Direct Messages' tab to see any private personal messages sent to you by your friends.



The sections of your Twitter profile

2. **Twitterific (Mac only)** – Twitterific is a simple and lightweight application that can be downloaded from <http://iconfactory.com/software/twitterific>. With this application, you can post and receive Twitter messages directly to your desktop. This application is for more basic use. It isn't great for power users so if you are following more than a few hundred people, you might find it too limiting. However, it is great if you are following only a few users. It's very simple to use and doesn't take up too much memory. However, once you find that you need a better, stronger application, I recommend TweetDeck.
3. **TweetDeck (all platforms)** – TweetDeck is the Panzer Tank of desktop Twitter applications. TweetDeck will keep track of all your conversations, DMs (direct messages), and friends' tweets. Additionally it will automatically shorten URLs for you and allow you to search through the program interface. TweetDeck can be a little bulky, but it is my program of choice. It offers a lot of bang for the buck and best of all, it's free!



4. **Seesmic Desktop (all platforms)** – Like TweetDeck, this application runs on Adobe Air (which means it works on all platforms and is a good alternative to TweetDeck. If you're going to be posting plenty of images, Seesmic offers more photo sharing options than TweetDeck. See [here for Mashable's in-depth review](http://mashable.com/2009/06/16/tweetdeck-vs-seesmic-desktop-2) (<http://mashable.com/2009/06/16/tweetdeck-vs-seesmic-desktop-2>) between the two.

Twitter Phone Applications

There are tons of applications that let you interact with Twitter via your mobile phone. Let's look at a few now, but remember that these applications are constantly changing and being updated, so make sure you do your own research to see what has been released and which works best for you.

1. **Tweetie** –
Tweetie was one of the first popular Twitter applications on the iPhone. It has a very simple interface, reminiscent of Apple's visual style. Because it is rather simple, running complex actions like posting links can be a little tiresome. This application costs \$2.99.



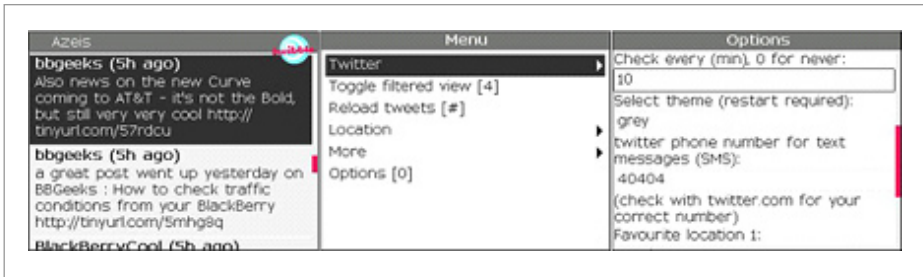
Tweetie

2. **TweetDeck** – Instead of oversimplifying TweetDeck to fit the iPhone, they tried to remake their application with all of the columns of data intact. Because of this, TweetDeck makes advanced actions easier. Best of all, it's free.



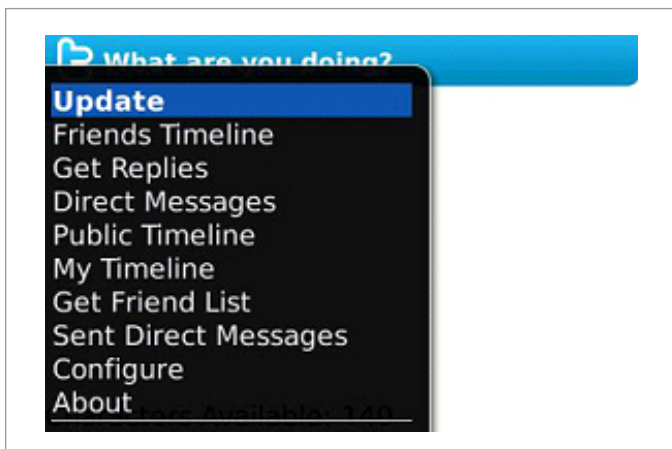
TweetDeck.

3. **Twibble** – The Twibble app is a great application for any Java-enabled device (such as the BlackBerry and the Nokia N95). One of the coolest things about Twibble is that you can set it to automatically tweet your GPS location, so long as your phone is location aware. It has a simple interface, and best of all it's free!



The Twibble Interface

4. **Twitterberry** – This is a popular Twitter mobile application for Blackberry that is free. It is easy to use and allows you to access your timeline, direct messages, and other main Twitter features. You can also use it to easily upload images from your Blackberry to Twitter.



The Twitterberry interface

2

Finding People to Follow

Twitter allows you to network in two ways: first of all it allows you to find individuals that you want to connect with and follow. Secondly, it allows other people to find and follow you. In this chapter, we are going to talk about how to find these interesting people. Using Twitter, you can find people with similar interests who will share links, information, and a network of other interesting people with you.

When you first arrive on Twitter, your profile will look very empty. So what should you do? How about starting by finding some people to follow!

Following Others

Who first introduced you to Twitter? Who do you personally know that already uses Twitter? When joining, it's very common to first add your close friends and family. In the initial stages, it's helpful to get used to the service with a group of people that are close to you.

Go ahead and add your friends and family. Now that you've started following others, what's next?

The Two Phases of Twitter Usage

Most Twitter users go through two distinct phases.

- **Phase One** – When most users join, they add their family and friends and keep up with only a few dozen users, at most. During this period, users often chat about daily activities and personal stuff, and they tend to read every single update that their friends post.
- **Phase Two** – As users begin to follow more and more people, it becomes less important, and much more difficult, to track every single tweet. Instead, they focus on reading Twitter when they are able to, rather than reading everything. Additionally, users begin to tweet on subjects more relevant to their followers' interest; that is, they are more likely to share an interesting article than mention how they picked up their kids from soccer practice.

Finding Twitter Users You're Interested In

With the sudden surge in popularity of Twitter, everyone seems to have a Twitter account. Go through your RSS feeds and the blogs you read – chances are, your favorite online writers also have Twitter accounts. The cool thing about following writers you already read is that they'll refer you to new content sources on the topics you enjoy, since these writers will often link to articles and blogs that interest them.

For example, I often read Tim Ferriss's blog, and he tweets a lot of links and content that I'm interested in. Think of other authors, web users, bloggers, entrepreneurs, and business' that you would be interested in keeping track of, and search for these people. Once you are following a group of Twitter users that you find interesting, take a break and use Twitter for a while. You can focus on learning the conduct and norms of Twitter at this time.

There are plenty of people who try to immediately jump on the Twitter bandwagon and follow thousands of people. Don't be one of them. To experience the power of the service, you need to learn how to use it organically – not by just jumping in and befriending 10,000 people. People who jump into power-using Twitter often don't understand the subtle rules of Twitter because they haven't used it enough. Take your time and get used to the service before moving to Phase Two.

ROCK* TIP

Finding Interesting Twitter Users

Here are a few online tools you can use to find Twitter users you might want to follow:

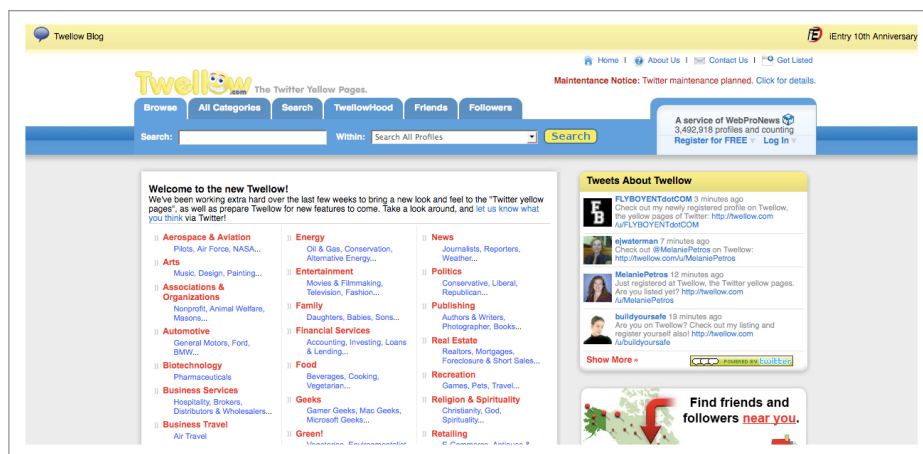
- *WeFollow – Twitter directory and search*
- *Twitterel – find Twitter users with related interests*
- *Twitterholic – find top twitter users and stats*
- *Just Tweet It – a Twitter user directory*
- *Tweetmondo – search local Twitter users*

Expanding Your Follow Network

Now you have added your personal friends and family to your Twitter network, so let's look at how to find more people worth following.

1. Find out who the people you are following have added themselves. Do you remember when you first discovered Facebook and looked through all of your friends' friends in order to find people you knew? With Twitter, you can do the same thing to find people you might know or be interested in.
2. Look through the profiles of people you are interested in (authors, bloggers, etc.) and see who they are following. Popular Twitter users often follow people with the same ideas and interests as them. Read these people's profiles and tweets to see if they are a good match for your network. If so, follow them!
3. Look at the people following the people you're interested in. Often, the users following your friends will be interested in the same sort of stuff you are. For example, people following Michael Arrington ([@TechCrunch](#)) on Twitter are likely to be posting content related to Web 2.0 Startups. People following [@britneyspears](#) probably like popular culture news and celebrities. Continue this process until you're happy with your list of friends. By continually looking through the people following and being followed by your friends, you will find lots of potential Twitterers who can provide you with a great network.

4. Use Twitter Search to find people writing about topics you want to know about. Go to <http://search.twitter.com> and check out the search box. Seems simple, right? Search for what you want and get results. It's more powerful than it looks at first: with Twitter Search, you can subscribe to the results of the search page and continually track who is saying what. The easiest way to track the results of the search page is by using RSS. As you might already know, RSS is a simple way to continually download information from a site – for example, articles from a blog or relevant tweets from your Twitter search – so that you can easily keep on top of your content. You probably already have an RSS reader (such as [Google Reader](#) or [Bloglines](#)), which you can use to keep track of these Twitter Search results. Learn more about RSS at whatissrss.com. Twitter Search is one of the coolest parts of Twitter, and we will be talking about it even more in the next chapter.
5. Use a service like Twellow.com or JustTweetIt to search for other people in your area of interest. Twellow, the Twitter yellow pages, allows you to search Twitter by subject to find people who are interested in the same topics as you. For example, you can look up all users in the category 'Vegetarian' if you run a vegetarian food blog. JustTweetIt is a directory of Twitter users. By adding yourself to the directory, it will help others find you!



The Twellow.com Yellowpages

You can also use Twitter Search to subscribe to the results of specific searches. How can you use this to follow interesting people? Simple. You can continually look up who is talking about specific topics. While this is very useful for creating conversations with people who are talking about your company (as we'll discuss in the next chapter 'Delivering Value'), you can also use it to find people of interest.

First, make a list of topics you're interested in. For example, I'm interested in travel, freelancing, SEO, metrics, and Brazil (where I'm currently living). By searching for these specific topics, I can create RSS feeds that allow me to follow users tweeting on these subjects. I then review these feeds periodically and decide on who I want to follow.

A final service you may want to look at is [CityTweets](#). This site lets you find people who live in your area. Using this site can help you make connections with potential customers in your area. In an [article on TwiTip.com](#), [@nhangen](#) explains how operating online only can hurt your business while organizing Twitter meetups on a real and local level can be extremely beneficial and separate you from your competitors.



CityTweets.net

Lastly, check out the comments on TwiTip.com, where people submit lists of Twitter users who are experts in many specialties.

Filtering Users

I've been mentioning ways to find other Twitter users who are potentially interesting to you. But how do you know which users are worth following? The advice I mentioned above will give you huge lists of people to follow, but that doesn't mean you should follow all of them. For every potential follower, you should filter through their profile and decide if it is worth your time to follow them.

How do you know whether or not you should follow a specific user? Take a look at an average Twitter profile. The profile lists the user's name, location, a short bio, and a collection of recent tweets. Whenever you find a potential person to follow, whether

through Twitter Search or by looking through follower and following lists, you should take a look at a user's profile and make sure that they will add value to your Twitter experience. Following too many Twitter users who aren't interested will actually hurt your experience in a few ways.

If you add uninteresting Twitter users you will receive boring updates like 'Drinking Coffee! It's delicious!' and waste your time with uninteresting info because you have to filter through the irrelevant tweets. How do you know if a potential Twitter user is worth following? Take a look at his previous tweets. You don't need to spend too much time on each individual profile (especially if you are trying to grow your network), but even a few seconds can help you differentiate between relevant and non-relevant users to follow.

What Makes Someone Worth Following?

Good twitterers have a few things in common. People worth following:

- **Post regularly.** If a Twitter profile shows that the user hasn't posted in 2 months, it's likely that they are not using Twitter very much anymore. If they only post once every few days, they may not be contributing enough to make it worth your while.
- **Post interesting content.** Look at the previous tweets on his or her profile. What does this user talk about? Do they tell you about every little thing they are doing? Unless it's a member of your family or a close friend, you probably don't care what they ate for breakfast or where they are going tonight. However, if the user writes about topics you are interested in, posts links relevant to you, and makes you want to read more, they could be worth following.

- **Reply to followers.** See if there are any replies to other Twitter users on the user's profile page. These replies begin with '@someotheruser'. Does this user help their followers? Does he or she provide good and clear responses to user questions? By seeing how the user interacts with others, you'll get a good sense of how they will interact with you.

By filtering through your potential Twitter contacts, you'll find people who are actually worth following. Don't waste your time with those who post boring or irrelevant content, and who don't respond to their network. They aren't worth your time. Bear in mind that those who post great quality content but only infrequently are fine to follow, as when they do pop up they might deliver some really great thoughts and links.

Summary

By following the steps in this chapter, you will find you are following a good collection of users. By looking through the profiles of friends, family, and other people who write on interesting topics, and people you find through Twitter search, you'll have a solid Twitter network.

In this chapter, we discussed:

- How to build your initial Twitter network
- How to find interesting and relevant people to follow
- How to filter through lists of people and find the most interesting ones

In the next chapter, we'll talk about how, with your growing Twitter network, you can make yourself interesting and worth following. You'll learn how you can provide good content so that people will begin to follow you. This will be the first step to making your business Twitter-worthy!

3

Delivering Value

You've seen it before: spam emails, infomercials, websites that promote a new get rich quick scheme. During your first few weeks on Twitter, you will almost certainly notice some very similar "spam-like" messages from similarly dubious sources: "social media experts" who pledge to teach you the art of Twitter and make you famous.

You'll notice quite a bit of spam as you use Twitter. Spam isn't the path to success on Twitter. The path is reached by providing value. Instead of being an annoying and scammy spammer, the best Twitter users are known for the value they provide to their followers. The best users make their followers happy to follow them. While bad Twitter users continually talk about their own businesses, good users post predominantly about topics their followers are interested in.

Make Your Tweets Useful

What do your followers want you to tweet about? Good users try to stick to the themes and topics they are known for. Let's look at some examples of ways to use Twitter well.

- [@travelzoo](#) tweets travel deals from across the web.
- [@ChrisBrogan](#) offers interesting articles related to social media
- [@TechCrunch](#) links to articles and news related to start-ups.

The tips and tactics you learn in this chapter are important for building a presence on Twitter. Users who find your content interesting will follow you and actually read your tweets. New users will see your valuable content and be more likely to follow you. Let's talk about how you can use Twitter to deliver value directly to your followers.

What Do Readers Want to Read?

Think back to your original reasons for wanting to use Twitter. What are you trying to accomplish? Who is your target audience? In the same way you would write a business plan for a new company, you should have a plan for the content you will tweet to your followers.

Decide upon your target market. Then, think from their perspective: what would you, as a reader or follower of your own site, want to read? What content would a reader want to see from you? Readers want to see content that is valuable to them.

Here are some good examples of content that readers want to see:

Relevant Articles and Links

Articles and links are probably the best way to offer value to your followers. Twitter is limiting in that you can only send updates of 140 characters, but by sharing links (and with the help of URL-shortening services, such as <http://bit.ly>), you can lead them to more content.

There are several Twitter users that do this very well. For example, let's take a look at [@KISSmetrics](#), a Twitter user that offers links every few hours to articles about statistics and metrics for websites. @KISSmetrics offers links guaranteed to be interesting to followers because the theme is always related to metrics.

KISSmetrics

Name Keep It Simple Web <http://kissmetric...>
Bio We are building a customer development platform for startups and online businesses

4,349 following 4,004 followers

Updates 1,470

Favorites

Following

Gio Bautista

It's almost time. Visit us at kissmetrics.com to get early access and see what we've been cooking up.

"The Effective Strategy For Choosing Right Domain Names" – <http://klick.me/D>
26 minutes ago from web

Are You Getting To the Heart of Your Brand? <http://bit.ly/17FPik>
about 1 hour ago from web

Dilbert on Web Analytics (cartoon) – <http://klick.me/Y#wa>
about 1 hour ago from web

Our Custom URL Shortener, klick.me is powered by <http://awe.sm> – they just went public on [techcrunch](http://techcrunch.com) <http://tcrn.ch/1EG>
about 2 hours ago from Tweetie

Segmentation Options in Google Analytics <http://bit.ly/76KmW> #ga #ga
about 2 hours ago from web

RSS feed of KISSmetrics's updates

@KISSmetrics continually offers links to ways to use and measure statistics.

Design companies, such as [@smashingmag](#), link to inspirational designs from around the web. Meta bloggers (people who blog about the art of blogging, such as [@probblogger](#)) can offer links to good examples of blog writing or to articles about blogging.

What does your company focus on? Chances are, if you are interested in what your company does, your readers will be interested in similar things. Tweet links to articles relevant to your business.

Discounts and Coupons

People love deals! If you broadcast coupons and discounts to your service, followers will definitely find value. Other users often share links to coupons and could help drive traffic to your profile (this strategy works especially well if you offer these discounts only on Twitter). Even if your readers don't actually utilize the discount, they will still see the value in continuing to follow you.

Additionally, consider tweeting discounts from related (but not competing) companies. You can do this by looking up coupons online or by using Twitter search. As covered in the previous chapter, you can subscribe to an RSS feed for the results of a specific Twitter search. In the following chapter, you'll learn more about the power of Twitter search, but keep in mind that you can keep track of coupons from other users by building an RSS feed searching for keywords such as 'discount' or 'coupon'.

ROCK* TIP

Don't try to please everyone

When sharing links, it is easy to just try and tweet everything that you come across. Don't forget that you need to find your niche. If you are posting content that is only slightly relevant to your theme, you will put off your true fans. Make sure you build solid, strong relationships by focusing on a single specific theme.



Company Updates

Twitter lets you contact your customers directly and quickly. This means that it is the perfect way to let your customers know about updates or issues with your service. For short updates, posting directly on Twitter is perfect, though updates that require long explanations should point to a blog article or a relevant notification page.

Contests

If you want to gain a sizeable amount of followers, try a contest!

[@bluefur](#) offered a laptop as a prize and gained 10,000 followers. Offer a free month of your service or a donation to a charity, or even a free bobblehead doll – whatever! People love free things and blogs will often promote these contests for free. Just make sure you add ‘Please RT’ to the beginning of your tweet, because you want everyone passing on these messages to their followers.

Please note that while this method may get you a lot of followers, it doesn’t always bring high quality ones. People might just be following you for the free stuff, not to learn more about your service.

ROCK* TIP

What not to tweet

- *Don't tweet about your daily activities - very few people care about where you are drinking coffee or where you are going out tonight. Try to stay on topic about your business, not yourself.*
- *Don't post boring or irrelevant links - if you were inundated by uninteresting links and comments every few minutes by a user, would you continue to follow them? Make sure to only send out interesting content that you would want to read.*
- *Don't talk only about your own business - although you want to promote your services on Twitter, don't overdo it. No one wants to follow spammers who only talk about themselves.*



Responses to Questions

This is very important – if any follower asks you a question or sends a message directed to @you, make sure to respond. The power of Twitter lies in its ability to let users connect directly with each other. If one of your followers asks you a question or sends you a direct message, be sure to give him or her an excellent response. Building your business requires that you make your users happy by building personal connections.

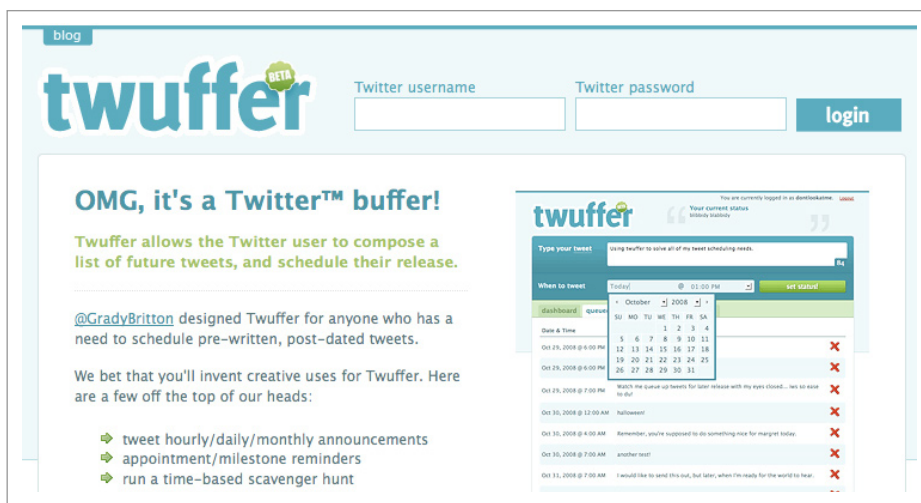
Frequency of Posting

When using Twitter, there is a delicate balance between posting too much and not posting enough. Many times, you'll see users who haven't posted in several weeks, or some that post less than once a week. These are inactive users. Some other users seem to send tweets every few minutes, and they can often be very annoying.

Post high quality content, post often. The worst offenders do not tweet good content or they are completely inactive. Both are sure-fire recipes for Twitter failure.

Twitter is most active during specific times of the day and week, so if you can tweet on a schedule, you want to tweet during working hours. If you're online at midnight and want to post an important tweet, it might be better to wait until the next day.

As with most things, it's best if you can create a routine schedule for tweeting. It can definitely be hard to keep active with Twitter all day, especially because it can divert your attention from other tasks you need to complete. That's why [Twuffer](#) was invented. Twuffer is a great service that allows you to schedule your tweets to be posted in the future.



The *Twuffer* Service.

If you have a lot of items to post, you can schedule them to be posted every few hours, one by one, with Twuffer. This will allow you to batch your Twitter posts without unleashing a flood of posts at the same time.

So what is the optimum frequency of posting? [HubSpot](#) did an excellent survey of [the best number of tweets](#) to post per day and found that 22 posts per day was the optimum amount for the users with the most followers. This is about 3 times per hour if you tweet during normal business hours. Be careful though: don't tweet too much, or all at once, because your users won't be happy. No matter how much you post, don't forget to focus on sending only good content.

Connecting with Your Followers

To truly deliver value, you must make a connection with your followers. You need to open a line of communication with them – easily done, thanks to the nature of Twitter. Twitter lets you ask,

respond to, and comment about tweets from any other user. By talking directly to your followers, you can help create a devoted base of fans with a personal connection to you.

You can do this by beginning conversations with your followers. When your followers ask a question, spend time and send a detailed response. One of the best ways to open a communication channel is to ask your followers a question. You'll discover which of your followers are active and truly paying attention to you if you watch the responses to your questions.

Publicly thank the users who respond to your question by tweeting their names. They'll be glad you did so, and will be a lot more likely to help you in the future. You can help create some very close fans of your service if you can create long term question-and-answer relationships with them.

In addition to Twitter, do you have a blog for your business? If so, feel free to thank your followers on your blog and link to it via Twitter. Show your followers that you care about them.

Remember that Twitter is a community, and like every other community, it depends on the goodwill of its users to be strong. If you show goodwill towards your followers, they will reward you by spreading your message and buying your services.

ROCK* **REMINDER**

Don't be a burden

Freeloaders and spammers are rampant on Twitter. You don't want to be one of them. Make sure you follow these rules:

- *Don't only promote your own services. Talk about things other than yourself.*
- *Don't skip a personal message from one of your followers. Always respond and help.*
- *Don't post infrequently, and don't post irrelevant content.*



Why Delivering Value Will Help Your Company

You might be thinking: delivering value will take time! Is it even worth it to use Twitter, if it will take effort? Why not just post easy, worthless content? By spending time and building a presence on Twitter, you will connect more deeply with your clients. You will be able to provide better service, be able to see what your users want, and be able to market your company better if you have a solid fan base. Twitter lets you turn nameless customers into people who know you as you, not as a corporate figurehead.

By building this personal connection, you will be able to get people to love your service – thereby continuing to market your product by word of mouth. The power of Twitter lies in its ability to provide personal connections.

Summary

In this chapter, I've tried to offer advice on how to post good content to Twitter and make your users happy to follow you. You want your followers to think of you as a valuable member of the Twitter community, not as a spammer. If you continually post good, interesting content, people will follow you and listen to you; if you don't, you'll lose your followers.

ROCK* **REMINDER**

Advice on finding relevant users to follow

1. *See who the people you're following are following.*
2. *See who people in your field are following, and who is following them.*
3. *Use Twitter Search to find people writing about topics of interest.*
4. *Use Twellow.com to search for other people in your area.*



To summarize, here is how you can deliver value to your Twitter followers:

- Decide upon a target market and topic. Try to predominately post content relevant to this market.
- Post excellent links to articles, blogs, and sites on the Web.
- Try to post discounts or coupons, either for your own products and services or those of others'.
- Post updates about your company's work and progress.
- Hold contests for your followers.
- Always respond to messages and replies from your network.
- Ask your followers questions and publicly thank those who answer.
- Post relatively frequently, but not too much. Three per hour is the best.
- Consider creating a backlog of good content and set it to post in the future using Twuffer.

If you follow these tips, your followers will thank you. Delivering excellent value is the key to making Twitter work for marketing your business.

In the next chapter, we are going to talk about how to market by expanding your network. You are going to learn how to attract more and more followers! I hope you're ready.

4

Growing Your Tribe

So you've learned how to use Twitter to find interesting people and how to tweet excellent content. Now it's time to learn how to build your network and get more users!

Your network will grow organically simply by continuing to tweet and actively using the service, but you probably want to grow it faster! There are many methods that will help you speed up this process and get more followers quickly. This chapter will teach you the tricks of the trade. We are going to look at specific techniques to get people to follow you and talk about how to use these techniques to build a huge following.

The Art of Attracting Followers

Attracting followers can be a difficult process and almost all Twitter business users have the same goal: get a huge network of users to help their business grow. However, Twitter isn't a competition! When one person's network grows, so do his followers' networks; that is, Twitter isn't a zero sum game. By building a better network, you are helping to build a true community.

A Quick Review

Before we talk about specific tips and tactics for increasing your Twitter followers, let's take a step back and look at how what we've learned in this book affects the network-building process. When users are selecting who to follow, they don't just follow anyone! Nope, Twitter users will follow people that seem interesting and worth a click. They use all of the information on your page – your background, your Bio, your location, your recent tweets, everything – to make a split-second decision as to whether or not you are worth following.

Setting up an excellent profile, as we did in the first chapter, pays dividends when users are impressed by your bio and background. Having a set of good people you follow, as we did in chapter two, will help you because those people are likely to be the first people to see your profile. Writing excellent content, as we did in chapter 3, will allow new and potential users to see the quality of your tweets.

ROCK* REMINDER

The most important goal

*There is one huge goal that you need to remember:
Get users to your profile.
No matter how good your content is, users won't follow you unless they know you exist, so continually keep pushing to make your profile public. With Twitter, the easiest way to market is to figure out a way to get lots of people to view your profile. Once they know you're there, they are a lot more likely to follow you.*



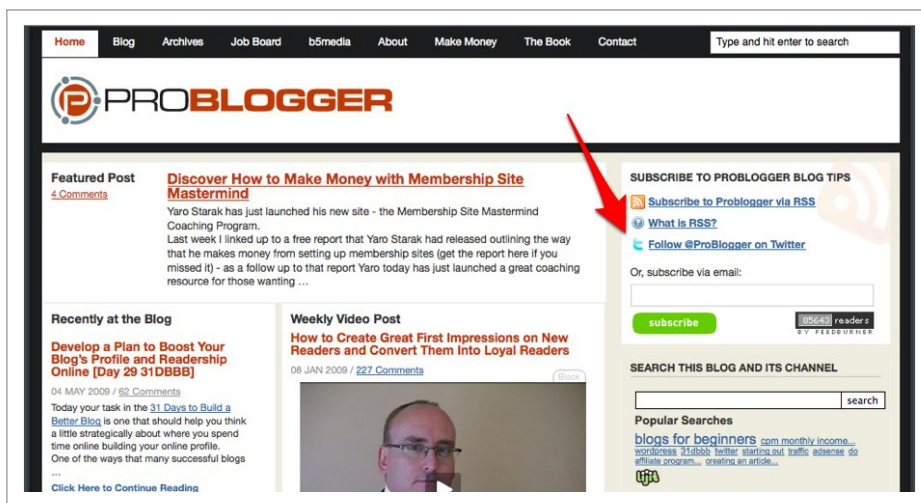
Now that we have completed these steps, we are ready to begin trying to attract new users. Let's find out how.

Using The Outside World

Do you have a fan base outside of Twitter? Many people who are on Twitter already have a blog or some kind of Internet presence. It can be a big help to use this outside presence to increase your follower count on Twitter.

For example, bloggers should frequently mention their Twitter account on their blog. Readers of your blog are your truest followers, and they definitely will want to know how to keep up with you. Provide links to your Twitter profile on your main blog page so that readers can easily find you.

Make sure that you put your Twitter profile on your website, and make it noticeable! Every user who comes to your site should be able to find your Twitter link. Check out, for example, ProBlogger.net, which has a very noticeable link to the site's Twitter profile.



ProBlogger's placement of their Twitter link is very conspicuous (arrow added by me)

Having a Twitter profile link will let visitors, even those who aren't regulars, easily add you to their network. Using your site to advertise your Twitter profile just makes sense. You create a continuous cycle of traffic by directing your website users to your Twitter profile, and Twitter users to your site.

The goal here is to get targeted traffic to your profile page. People who are interested in you or your business (such as readers of your blog) are much more likely to not only click the follow button, but also to actually pay attention to your updates.

The Follow Back

The fastest and easiest way to get quick followers is by simply following lots of people. Remember in chapter two when I explained how to find interesting people to follow? By now, you've probably noticed that a sizeable percentage of those you started following are following you back. Thus, an excellent way to grow your network is to begin following others. Review the methodology from chapter two (such as looking through the network of people you already follow) and adding people who seem interesting.

However, I'm not talking about simply mass-following thousands of users on Twitter. First of all, Twitter limits you to only following 1,000 Twitter users a day because many spammers have tried this same strategy. This strategy does work to an extent: for example, the user [@osen](#) created a profile solely for testing the refollow percentage of users. He found that, after following over 30,000 users, about 17% returned the favor.

This does not mean that simply following every user on Twitter is a good idea for many reasons. First of all, people tend not to follow people who follow way more users than they have following them. Sites such as [Twerpscan](#) are used to simply identify people in your contact list who have a high following/followers ratio. Additionally, following large numbers of users can seriously dilute the quality

of your Twitter experience: many of the users that follow you back won't be at all interested in what you're writing about. This means that you will just be tweeting your messages into open space.

Instead of following everyone possible, make sure to follow only users who will be interested in what you have to say. I gave advice on how to do this back in chapter two.

Check out [this article](#) on [DoshDosh.com](#) entitled 'Twitter Marketing: Why You Don't Need to Mass Follow Users' for a great discussion on why targeted marketing is better than mass following users.

Once you understand the point of following users, you can look for people interested in what you have to say. Knowing is half the battle: you want good, interested, targeted users, not just anyone online.

Keep looking for people who are worthwhile people to add to your network. A pretty high percentage of the people you follow will follow you back, so it's a great way to seed your network and get your first followers back.

Don't restrict yourself to only following those who have loads of followers. In an article entitled "[Why It Pays to Befriend the 'Little Guy'](#)" (<http://socialmediarockstar.com/little-guy>). Brett Borders talks about why it may not be so wise to only focus your energy on the big players, and why it may be worth your while to focus on the "little guys". He explains that unless you are a significant investor or have a strong personal relationship with these big players, then there's very little chance that they will personally even see your updates or tweets.

Brett gives three excellent reasons why you may want to focus on the "little guys" rather than the big players:

1. The "little guy" is more likely to see your updates.
2. The "little guy" usually has more time to interact.

3. The “little guy” will never forget you when they become “big” and popular online.

Once you’ve got your first friends, you then need to continue to grow your network. Now let’s look at some ways in which we can do this.

Interaction with Followers

Your first followers will follow you because of your external sites and because you followed them. The next step is to grow through Twitter. There are a few ways that people can find you.

Some people will search for profiles, content, and people to add just like you did. People will find you through Twitter search and through the lists of other users. The best way is to get other people to write about you.

The first thing you can do is to have conversations with your users. As you already know, you can send messages to other users by sending a tweet beginning with ‘@username.’ When you tweet something to one of your followers, it appears in their replies list. People who view the other user’s profile can see your name on their Twitter page. Don’t forget that many people look for followers by looking at their friends’ profiles, and if they see your interesting content on their friends’ lists, they could add you as a friend.

To appear on other people’s profile pages, continue to write good content

ROCK* TIP

HootSuite

Don’t want to download and install software but aren’t satisfied with the Twitter.com website? HootSuite may be the right choice for you. It allows you to sort tweets into groups and columns, track statistics on links you shorten through its interface, schedule tweets and post and read from multiple accounts. It’s a true power user’s web interface.



and make sure to reply to questions. If your followers send out an interesting article, reply to the user's tweet and comment about it. If your followers ask a question, make sure you respond to their question. Make your tweets interesting and useful.

A very strong way to connect with your users is by replying to their interesting tweets with useful information. If a user mentions something about a topic you know a lot about, reply to them with interesting info, or with a link to an article that expands on their topic. Your followers will notice your effort and remember you when you need their help in the future.

For businesses trying to find potential customers, look at people tweeting about your product and your competitor's products. Get in contact with them! If you ask a customer who uses a competitor's products for advice on what you can do to make your product more appealing, you are likely to get a potential customer to follow you. Learn about what your potential customers want, and they will help you by following you.

The more personal contact, the more direct messages, the more @ messages you send, the stronger your customer base will be.

Retweeting Content

If your follower writes something interesting, retweet it! Send out the article and mention the author by writing 'RT @otheruser whatever they wrote.' This is a useful tactic for a few reasons. First, if you retweet something, your name will appear in their profile and other people will be exposed to your username. Second, if you do this, the user will notice you retweeting his link and be thankful. The currency of Twitter is goodwill, and if you act nicely and treat your followers well, they will pay you back. In this case, the user will be a lot more likely to retweet your links and spread your username.

Retweeting links is an especially good tactic when the user asks for a retweet. Many users will write 'Please RT: message.' When you see this, retweet the message if you think other people will be interested. The reason for this is the same as above: the user will be grateful and will be likely to retweet messages when you send them.

Let's look at how you can use this goodwill to get users to help spread your message.

Getting Users to Spread Your Message

If you've been following the steps up until now, you will have a decently sized network of a few hundred followers, many of whom are interacting with you often. Your network is growing, becoming stronger, and is getting to the point where it can help your business. If your followers are grateful to you for interacting with them and helping retweet their messages, now you can reap the benefits by using them to spread your message.

The best way to spread your tweets is to ask your network to retweet some of your messages. Of course, you shouldn't do this too often or you will just annoy users; however, if you have a significant tweet to send out, many users will be happy to help you by retweeting it.

The messages that users will retweet are best if they directly involve your company; that is, if it has some information that only you are privy to. A good example of this is a contest you are holding, or a new service you are offering. By writing *'Please RT: MyCompany is offering a contest to win \$1000! Find more information here: <http://link.com>,'* many users will see your 'Please RT,' and help you by forwarding the message to their network. You can do the same for messages about your company (such as news articles

written about you, or new products you are offering). These sorts of messages are the best for asking for retweets.

Additionally, users will naturally retweet very interesting things that you send out. In the same way that you tried to build goodwill by retweeting your followers' interesting messages, they will retweet your most interesting articles without you asking. For this reason, you want to continually tweet interesting articles to your followers, articles that they are likely to want to retweet.

When users retweet any of your messages, don't forget to thank each of them personally by replying to their tweet. This will help your users by putting your name on their profile, and will make them feel happy to help you again. Don't underestimate the power of making your followers happy: they are the only ones who can help you spread your network through Twitter. Don't forget to ask your users to retweet your blog articles! When you write an excellent blog entry, and forward it to your followers, they can help spread your readership by sending the same article to all of their followers. This is a great way to drive traffic to your blog: your follower's followers will see your blog article, follow the link, read your blog entry, and potentially subscribe to your blog or follow you on Twitter if they like your content.

It is obviously better to get users with more followers to retweet your messages than people with fewer followers. If you can get a one of these users with tens of thousands of followers to retweet a link to your article, you will gain a lot of traffic! Maki from DoshDosh.com mentions the following tip for getting high-powered users to retweet your content:

*You should use Twitter as a relationship building tool to extract benefits from a core group of influencers who are relevant to your business/website. Network actively with the right Twitter users, talk to them, spread their links, give them feedback, support their content. **Be a participant in their Twitter experience.***

If you do this long enough, you will eventually make them comfortable with helping you or promoting your stuff either on Twitter or away from it.

If someone talks to me very often on Twitter, shares my content or points me to good resources, I'm more than willing to retweet their stuff. Especially if it's great content. I wouldn't think twice about it. The desire to reciprocate is a very powerful instinct.

The same advice that holds for dealing with regular Twitter users also works for popular users: make a connection, respond to their tweets, and build a relationship. By doing so, you might find that these users will willingly promote your content for you.

Summary

In this chapter, we've talked about how to use your skills from the previous chapters to grow your Twitter network. With what you've learned in this chapter, you will be able to get more and more followers on your Twitter profile, followers that help you achieve your goal of marketing your business through Twitter. Let's take a quick look at the tactics we learned to increase your follower count:

- Remember to set goals about your marketing plan for Twitter. Your major goal should be **“Get users to see your profile”**
- Leverage your outside projects to increase your Twitter followers. Prominently display your Twitter link on your website, on your blog, on your emails, and any other methods of communication you use. I even have my Twitter link on my resume.

- Follow users and they will often follow you back.
- Interact closely with your followers. Message them, reply to their tweets, listen to what they say, and add value to their experience.
- Retweet messages that your followers ask you to retweet. Build goodwill with them.
- Spread your message by tweeting out links and good content. Ask your followers to retweet your most important posts.
- Become friends with high-powered users by following them closely and responding to their tweets. High-powered users can drive a lot of traffic to your blog.

By following these steps, you will be able to grow your network. These steps aren't a one-time action, however – they are a process. You must continually add new followers, tweet good content, and connect with followers if you want to use Twitter to grow your network. If you quit using Twitter and become inactive, you lose all of the goodwill and connections you built up over time. Therefore, the key to growing your network is **continuous and excellent participation in the Twitter experience**.

Can you handle it? If so, you'll find your Twitter follower count growing. As it grows, you can finally leverage your Twitter network to strengthen your company. In the next chapter, we are going to talk about specific methods to actually do this. Get ready!

5

Using Your Tribe to Market Your Business

Over the last few chapters we have learned all of the ins and outs of Twitter: how to get started, how to find interesting people to follow, how to write good content, and how to build your network. If you've followed all these steps for a while, you'll have a great foundation for your business and a pretty solid network.

By now, you should be reading lots of tweets, sending out links to interesting articles, replying to users and offering them good information, and participating in the Twitter experience. As you do this, you will naturally notice ways that you can use Twitter to expand your business. You've probably already started to do this by tweeting links to content you've written or services your company is offering.

In this chapter, we are going to look at some awesome ways for you to leverage your Twitter network and expand your business. Additionally, we will look at some case studies demonstrating how other companies have used Twitter to their advantage. Hopefully, by reading other success stories, you will be able to think up similar ways to help make yourself a Twitter success.

Directing Traffic to Your Site

In the previous chapter, we had one major goal: get users to view your Twitter profile. Only by knowing that you exist can users begin to follow you. Now that these users know that you exist, how can you use your followers to gain more visitors to your actual website?

The best way to do so is to broadcast interesting content that links directly to your site. When you write an interesting article, link to it! Send it to all your followers and ask them to retweet it.

Copyblogger, in an article entitled '[5 Steps to Going Viral on Twitter](#)', measured the power of retweeting. They found that, while the first post may not always be retweeted, every time that it is retweeted the likelihood of it being retweeted again increases. When people see a link retweeted from one of the people they follow, they are much more likely to retweet the post; that is, they are more likely to retweet a message that had already been retweeted.

This effect continued to multiply and strengthen for each successive retweet, so that the more times a tweet had been retweeted, the more likely it was to be retweeted again. This means that if you can get some users to retweet your message at least once, social proof and retweeting inertia will make it more likely that your tweet will get passed on to more people.

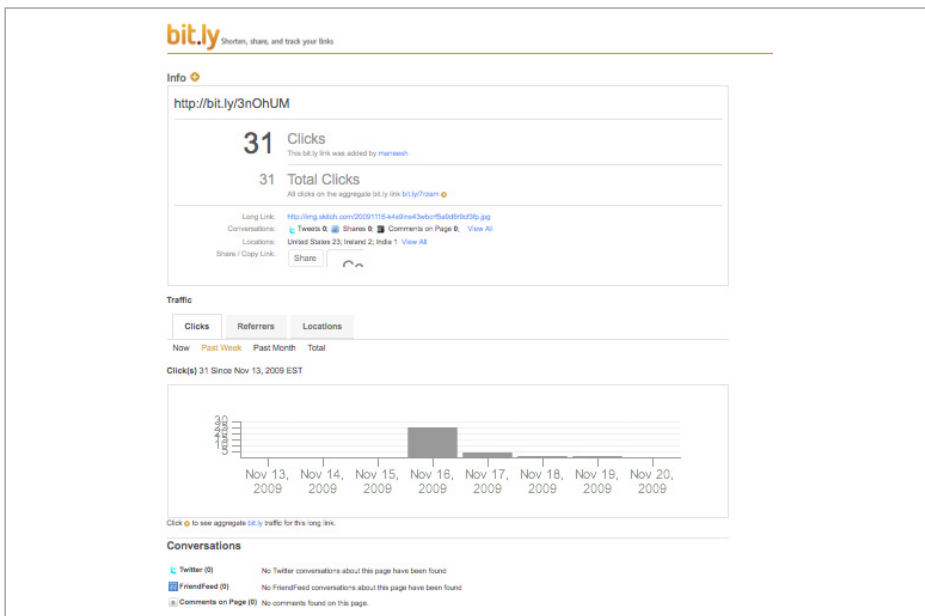
When you write an article that you want many users to see, try to get them to retweet it. Don't hesitate to say 'Please RT' in your message, and for your closest friends on Twitter, ask them to personally retweet the post. If you can get just a few people to begin retweeting your message, a huge number of new people will likely see it.

Finding What Your Followers Like

When building your social media marketing plan, you need to take your users into account: what do they want to read? What do they want to see?

Twitter is a great way to find out exactly what your users want. You can post surveys and questions, or even simply ask them what they would like to read. When posting URLs, you should use a link shortening service that lets you track how many users have come to your site.

There are heaps of URL shortening services around the Internet, and you can read a comparison of a bunch of them at [SearchEngineLand](#). The service I use is <http://bit.ly>, which lets you see which referring sites and geographic locations your visitors have come from.



The *bit.ly* statistics page

The advantage of a service like this is that you can measure which of your tweets are performing better than others, and learn what is required to repeat your successes in the future.

Go ahead and create an account at <http://bit.ly> and hook it up to your Twitter account. It's worth being able to track statistics.

Use Twitter to Help Your Customers

As I'm sure you already know reading this book, the best way to take advantage of Twitter is to create conversations with your customers. By using Twitter as a customer service system, you can interact more rapidly and more easily with your customers.

Twitter also allows you to handle customer service, so if any user has a question or a concern, you can easily solve their problem by messaging them. Don't hesitate to use Twitter for this purpose, because users love being informed as fast as possible, no matter the method. Respond to users who are complaining with information that will solve their problem and help them through any issues. They will only become happier with your service if they are helped quickly and well.

Use Twitter Search and its ability to create RSS feeds based on keywords to keep you informed of customers discussing or complaining about your service, so you can engage with them and solve the problem quickly. Don't forget that you can monitor

ROCK* TIP

Twitter Statistics

Bit.ly is not the only provider of Twitter statistics. Web apps like HootSuite have built-in link statistics if you use their URL shortening services. Here are a few other places for the Twitter statistician:

- *TwitterCounter*
- *TweetStats*
- *Twitter Analyzer*
- *Twitter Stats*

keywords pertinent to your competitors – by doing so you may have an opportunity to let one of their dissatisfied customers know what you have to offer, which could lead to a sale or conversion.

Make sure you announce any sort of service updates to your followers. Twitter allows you to immediately inform your customers of any news from your company. For instance if your service is temporarily down, or there is a new upgrade, then Twitter is a great way to get the word out quickly.

A great example of customer service via Twitter is [@comcastcares](#), the Twitter account for Comcast. In this chapter, you'll see exactly what they did to become an excellent model of using Twitter to assist customers..

Case Studies

Now that you've learned how you can use Twitter to connect with your customers, let's take a look at other companies who have taken these tips to heart and built Twitter into their marketing plan.

1. Comcast

Comcast is a major provider of cable TV, phone and internet services. One of their employees by the name of Frank Eliason, suggested that the company use Twitter to assist with customer service. Now Eliason runs their Twitter account ([@comcastcares](#)), and he uses it to build personal relationships with the company's individual customers and to solve their problems. By using Twitter, Comcast can immediately and effectively interact with its customers, faster than by phone or email, and by using Twitter Search, Eliason can monitor tweets in order to identify

customers who may be experiencing difficulty with their service. Once identified, Eliason can respond and assist those in need immediately. A recent article in BusinessWeek.com (<https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&zx=16s3csekxckuw&shva=1#inbox/123b708d84aa95bc>), describes how it works and how effective this has been for the company. A lot of other companies are now using the Comcast Twitter experience as an example to follow.

2. Zappos

Zappos, the online shoe store that is renowned for its amazing customer service, built an entire subdomain dedicated to Twitter. By navigating over to <http://twitter.zappos.com>, you can check out their interface. Zappos allows customers to view every single one of their employee's tweets in a single web page.

The screenshot shows the **twitter.zappos.com** website. The header includes the site name, a tagline "powered by twitter, Zappos.com, clothing and you.", and a link to follow the CEO on Twitter. Below the header are navigation links for "Zappos Public Mentions", "Employee Tweets", "Employee TweetPics", "Employees Who Twitter", and a "Beginner's Quick Start Guide and Tutorial to Using Twitter".

The main content area displays three tweets:

- jeremyscheller** 08:23 AM Pacific - Thu 05/14/09: "We want to be fanatical with support on par with @zappos #dco | love that."
- PaidVideoGamer** 08:22 AM Pacific - Thu 05/14/09: "Media updates... Zappos executive visits Milwaukee to talk social media: based Zappos.com Inc., .. <http://tinyurl.com/rbr4zp>"
- thevideophone** 08:17 AM Pacific - Thu 05/14/09: "Zappos executive visits Milwaukee to talk social media <http://tinyurl.com/rbr4zp>"

The right sidebar, titled "Other Brands on Zappos.com:", lists various brands: B. Makowsky, Calvin Klein Golf, Christian Audigier, Element, Gifts By Mimi, Giorgio Brutini, Joey O, Lego Kids, LifeStride, M.H. Bertucci, Not Your Daughters Jeans, Oh Deer!, Pollini, Roots, and Samsonite.

The <http://twitter.zappos.com> interface

Zappos allows anyone to see exactly what every one of their employees are thinking and tweeting about because it encourages transparency. People can see that the company they are dealing with isn't just a nameless corporation. It's made up of dozens of real people, each interested in different things. Making it easy for users to follow you and communicate with your employees on Twitter encourages a personal connection.

Zappos even offers a 'Public Mentions' page, which automatically aggregates mentions of Zappos on Twitter. This means that all comments, good and bad, can be seen directly on the Zappos site. They do this because it shows how deeply the company is committed to transparency. People can see the comments, unfiltered, and decide if they trust the service from Zappos.

3. Ford

The Ford Motor Company has created several accounts on Twitter for customers interested in the company as a whole, or in just a single part of the Ford line up. Some examples of their accounts are:

- [@FordCustService](#)
- [@FordDriveOne](#)
- [@FordDriveGreen](#)
- [@FordTrucks](#)
- [@FordMustang](#)
- [@FordRacing](#)
- [@FordRacingNWide](#)

Each of the accounts are run by the team most closely related to the product. The [@FordMustang](#) account is run by the Mustang team at Ford, and posts information related to the Mustang line of cars. Using [@FordCustService](#), you can ask direct questions or get help with your product.

Ford shows how to delegate and create teams of people totally committed to offering useful information and services over social media. By following in their footsteps, you could create several accounts for each of your major products or departments, and continue to help your customers get the service they need.

4. Small Businesses

There are tons of really good examples of how small businesses have used Twitter to grow. LocalGetaways.com, an online travel company, was able to obtain over twenty thousand visitors via Twitter in just a few months. They explained their tactics in a [published case study](#), and I've listed some of them below:

- *Identified, followed and engaged other San Francisco and Bay Area influencers.*
- *Create a consistent flow of information about Bay Area events, deals and attractions whether or not they are on the LocalGetaways.com website.*
- *Track conversations regarding San Francisco and Bay Area travel and participated when appropriate.*
- *Reduce character length to accommodate retweets.*
- *Created three LocalGetaways.com accounts, [@getawayguru](#); [@LocalGetaways](#) and [@bayareagetaways](#).*
- *Utilize Ink Foundry's Twitter accounts where appropriate, remaining authentic to those accounts content focus.*

These are great tactics because they engaged with local users, built a brand that permeated through all of their web properties, and they made sure to track everything that happened.

Another small business, BBGeeks.com, a site providing Blackberry news and information, had interesting results when they used Twitter to market their business. BBGeeks used the following tactics:

1. *One of the BBGeeks.com staff was assigned to become the voice of [@bbgeeks](#) on Twitter.*
2. *We decided that our goal should be for him to become a BlackBerry trouble shooter (i.e. help people) first, promotional evangelist (i.e. drop links) for BBGeeks.com second.*
3. *We pimped the background with a more [Twitter friendly design](#).*
4. *We decided not to have our posts auto tweet and instead decided to take the same approach with dropping links into Twitter that we did years ago with link requests – make it obvious that we were taking the time to do it personally.*
5. *Thanks to a tip from [@graywolf](#), we learned about [Summize](#) (which was later [bought by Twitter](#)) and used it to find BlackBerry users (we'd search for "BlackBerry", "8330" etc.). We'd follow those users and hope that they'd visit our Twitter homepage, see what a great resource we were, and follow us back. And even if they didn't follow us back on first glance, we hoped we would catch their BlackBerry related questions by following them and earn their following if we could help solve it with an @reply.*

6. *The employee running [@bbgeeks](#) (to be clear, he is not dedicated to Twitter and spends about 30 minutes a day on it) was encouraged to also post off topic here and there and to join in the conversation with our followers and people we were following even if it wasn't always BlackBerry related (i.e. we wanted him to get involved).*
7. *We participated in a group effort to post and cross promote guides on Twitter related tools and created a guide to [TwitterBerry](#) (the Twitter application for BlackBerry users).*
8. *Completely of his own idea, the employee running [@bbgeeks](#) started doing small giveaways here and there of branded T-shirts and stickers to followers (**note:** I recommend you get your boss's permission BEFORE doing this). ;-)*
9. *We run occasional "twitter only" discounts at our [software and accessories store](#).*

Summary

As you can see, there are some great ways for small businesses to use Twitter to market their products and services, and grow. We've covered specific strategies you can use, and that other companies are using, to build their business via Twitter. In this chapter, we've talked about the following concepts:

- Using Twitter to direct traffic to your company website.
- Using Twitter to measure what your customers like.
- Using Twitter for customer service.

- How Zappos uses Twitter to encourage a feeling of openness between employees and customers.
- How Comcast uses Twitter to handle customer service.
- How Ford uses Twitter to build focused connections between users and their company teams.
- How small businesses such as LocalGetaways.com and BBGeek.com use Twitter.

Conclusion

Web 2.0 has given rise to social media, an incredible new frontier in communication. Using Twitter, marketers and entrepreneurs can take advantage of social media to increase awareness of their business. Additionally, social media allows you to build personal connections with your employees.

Some of you may be starting a new company at the same time as implementing the tactics from this book, while others may be marketing an established company. In either case, Twitter can help you achieve your goals.

Have fun with Twitter. Learn from it, use it, follow me ([@maneeshsethi](#)), and keep improving. Eventually, Twitter may be the service that helps you make your business successful. Thanks for reading!

Maneesh Sethi

Appendix A

6 Steps to Twitter Success

It only takes a couple months to build a powerful account on Twitter. Follow these steps, and you'll be able to take advantage of the Twitter universe in a short time!

1. **Create your account on Twitter** – Navigate over to <http://twitter.com> and sign up. Follow the advice from the first chapter about creating a bio and getting started on your first tweets.
2. **Get used to Twitter** – Spend your first week just playing around with Twitter. Follow a few friends, download TweetDeck or Twitterific, and start posting some tweets. Talk to your friends about Twitter and read a few articles online. Find people you want to follow. Start adding people you are interested in. Look for people interested in topics that are important to you and follow them. Get used to the customs and norms of Twitter.
3. **Start writing up a Twitter marketing plan** – Now is a great time to brainstorm how you can use Twitter to improve your marketing program. Write out some goals and methods you can use to achieve these goals. Start reading up on how other companies have used Twitter and see how they apply to your company.
4. **Focus on tweeting well** – Once you have a few followers, focus your efforts on producing valuable tweets. Other users will start messaging you – use this time to begin building personal relationships and slowly getting people to follow you.

5. **Build your network** – Begin applying what you learned in Chapter 4 to build a large network. Try getting more followers to read your updates and retweet your posts. Build your follower base.
6. **Implement your marketing plan** – Looking back at your basic marketing plan from the first month, how have your goals changed? What new tactics can you use to help your users? Fully implement your plan now. Set up Twitter RSS results, try to find new customers, and help your other customers in any way you can.

Follow these steps, and you will have a pretty successful Twitter account in just six steps!

Appendix B

Further Reading

Here are some great links to excellent tutorials and advice on using Twitter:

- [The Mashable Guidebook to Twitter](http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter) (*http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter*) – Excellent overview of everything.
- [Twitter Background Design How-To and Best Practices](http://www.blog.spoongraphics.co.uk/tutorials/twitter-background-design-how-to-and-best-practices) (*http://www.blog.spoongraphics.co.uk/tutorials/twitter-background-design-how-to-and-best-practices*)
- [The Ultimate Twitter Tips Resource](http://prevential.com/twitter-tips) (*http://prevential.com/twitter-tips*) – lots of good tips here, I learned a lot from this series of articles.
- [7 Ways Marketers Can Use Twitter](http://www.mpdailyfix.com/2007/09/7_ways_marketers_can_use_twitt.html) (*http://www.mpdailyfix.com/2007/09/7_ways_marketers_can_use_twitt.html*)
- [50 of the Best Twitter Guide and Tips](http://www.etienneteo.com/2008/05/50-of-best-twitter-guide-and-tips-made.html) (*http://www.etienneteo.com/2008/05/50-of-best-twitter-guide-and-tips-made.html*) – A good collection of links to check out.
- [101 Must See Twitter Resources – Apps, Tools, How-To, Plugins, Extensions and more](http://www.askowlbert.com/about-the-topic/101-must-see-twitter-resources-apps-tools-how-to-plugins-extensions-and-more) (*http://www.askowlbert.com/about-the-topic/101-must-see-twitter-resources-apps-tools-how-to-plugins-extensions-and-more*)
- [The Twictionary](http://twictionary.pbworks.com) (*http://twictionary.pbworks.com*) – Definitions and descriptions of Twitter terms.

- [The Big Juicy Twitter Guide](http://www.caroline-middlebrook.com/blog/twitter-guide) (<http://www.caroline-middlebrook.com/blog/twitter-guide>) – Some great tips and lessons on using Twitter effectively.
- [60 Useful Twitter Resources](http://www.hybrid6.com/webgeek/2009/01/a-twitter-mini-guide-60-useful-twitter-resources.php) (<http://www.hybrid6.com/webgeek/2009/01/a-twitter-mini-guide-60-useful-twitter-resources.php>) – A good collection of links for software and Twitter apps.
- [Tons of Twitter Tools, Tips and Resources](http://online-social-networking.com/tons-of-great-twitter-resources) (<http://online-social-networking.com/tons-of-great-twitter-resources>) – Check out this great list of links to articles with Twitter resources.

About The Author



Maneesh Sethi is an author and programmer from the United States - but he's not the conventional type. Passionate about international travel, he moved his business online and embraced the power of Twitter and social media to become completely location independent so that he can work while travelling. He has so far lived in Italy, Spain, Argentina, Brazil and India, and aims to keep adding new countries to this list.

He has written six books to date, and a few titles such as Game Programming for Teens, were bestsellers in several countries in Europe and North America. Maneesh is also a student at Stanford University.

You can follow Maneesh on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/maneeshsethi>, and learn more about him from his website, <http://manee.sh> where you can follow his adventures around the world and watch him do push-ups in ridiculous locations.

In this **Rockable*** Mini-Book, author Maneesh Sethi takes a look at the social networking phenomenon **Twitter** from the perspective of a business owner, and explains how to make the most of the service to boost your company's brand, popularity, and — of course — sales.

By the time you've finished this book, you'll know not only the basics of **Twitter** usage, but how to deliver value in only 140 characters, build a loyal following, and use that following to expand your reach and market your business.

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