

Twitter – What It Is, How To Use It, And How Not To Be A TwitterTwit

A Brief and Ever-Evolving eBook About Twitter Brought to You By BoneHeadSEO.com

A Disclaimer

First off let me say that what you're about to read is probably the most ill thought out and unorganized eBook you'll ever read.

That being said, you will learn a few things about Twitter, you'll also learn a few things about what NOT to do (e.g.: piss people off), and you'll learn how to set up an account the right way. I sincerely hope you enjoy it and I hope it makes sense to you.

Also, this is also a VERY DIFFERENT sort of book. It's what I like to call an "ever-evolving" book. Here's what this means...there are so many people who have really no clue as to what Twitter is all about, much less use it so not only am I giving this away for free (the NYTimes Bestseller that it is), I'm allowing ANYONE who downloads it to make updates as they see fit.

The key term there being "UPDATES".

I know that someone else out there knows probably fifty times more than I do about Twitter. So, here's how this works:

1. I'm trusting you, reader.
2. This is an unprotected ebook, that means that you can make **ADDITIONS** to it wherever you want. Those additions should be useful information for Twitter users, after all, that's what this is about. Feel free to add your information to your additions, save it, and then give it away to whomever YOU want.
3. **NOTHING CAN BE REMOVED.** However you get this book, is how you must keep it, even if your competitor has already made updates to it. The only thing you can do with it is make updates and add your own information. You cannot take anything away from the already-existent text.
4. You may not use it for unworthy purposes. It's meant to be a group product ABOUT TWITTER.
5. You can give it away to anyone you wish.
6. You may not sell it.
7. You can give this away to whomever you like but you cannot sell it, break it apart into articles, use it for web content or use it for blog posts. You may not make a video out of it, audio out of it or Origami out of it.
8. This license must remain IN-TACT.
9. Yes, this is quite possibly the stupidest thing (or the most brilliant thing) I have ever done.
10. Enjoy!

Yes, I know that there will be some jerks out there who will try to claim this for themselves, and yep, I'll catch you because I have a secret weapon. But, this is also one reason why you need to sign up to get the book in the first place.

That's it. Have fun!

End Disclaimer

You no doubt have heard all of the buzz around Twitter. In fact, some of your friends might be using it, you might have received an invitation from a fellow marketer that you know, or just stumbled across it one day and wondered "what's the point?"

I was one of those "What's the Point?" people but since I began posting Tweets (the small, short updates about what's going on in my life), I now realize that Twitter is quite different from any other application I've ever used online. Twitter allows me to connect with people in a more personal way than I would have ever been able to before. People *want* to know that you are a real person and that you have a real life.

That being said, let's get on with it...

How Does It Work?

Perhaps the best way that I've ever seen the overall concept of Twitter explained is through one of those fantastic CommonCraft videos which you can view by visiting the following link. When you're done, head back here to learn some of the small but important nuances about Twitter.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddO9idmax0o&eurl=http://blogs.bnet.com/businessstips/?p=1399&feature=player_embedded

Signing Up

Signing up to Twitter is fast and free. Simply visit Twitter.com and create an account.

The first thing I suggest when setting up an account with Twitter (and this is one of those little nuances you'll want to make note of), is to use either your real name or use a name that people associate with you personally.

For example, my Twitter name is KristineWirth – simple, easy, it's my name, nothing complicated about it.

Another example is EzineArticles. Even though this isn't the "name" of a person, it is a name that you're very familiar with.

What you want to refrain from is creating a username such as “InternetMarketingStud” or “CureCancerTips” or “ViagraRocks”. (By the way, as of this writing no one is using these names but I wonder if someone will after they read this.)

Here’s why you don’t want to use these incredibly wonderful kinds of names.

Twitter is more personal than most online applications that you use. It’s not a place to SPAM, it’s not a place to constantly plug your own personal business, it’s a place where you socialize with like-minded people.

The whole point of Twitter is to allow people who are interested in what you have to say, follow you.

If you want followers in Twitter, then you must be someone worth following and it’s highly unlikely that someone will want to follow a person whose entire identity is “ViagraRocks”. It goes without saying that it’s unlikely someone will follow you because they just *know* that they’re opening themselves up to spammy comments.

But I get ahead of myself here.

Once you’ve chosen a username and password for yourself then you’ll want to set up your profile.

Setting Up Your Profile

Now, your profile is a spot where you can quietly market yourself.

More Info URL: Here, you can enter in the URL of your website that interested people might want to visit.

One Line Bio: Here, you can give yourself a little tag line that tells more about yourself. In my case, I’ve been in the SEO line of work for 8 years and so my tag line says “8-Year-Veteran of SEO and Online Marketing”.

Location: Enter in where you are. This is important because when you first start with Twitter, you’ll need to get some people following you and one of the best ways that I’ve seen so far is to simply enter in your location. When you enter in your location, other people who are in your same city or even in your same State will find you and start to follow you. By adding your location, you instantly have something in common with someone you probably never even knew before. A great way to meet some new friends.

Upload a picture of yourself! I can’t speak for everyone (but I’m pretty sure I speak for a lot of people) when I say that keeping the default Twitter photo in your profile means that you’re either lazy or just simply don’t really want people to know the real you.

If you’re uncomfortable uploading a picture of yourself, then pick an icon, a funny photo, just pick something but do not keep the default Twitter icon.

Personally I never give someone using the default Twitter icon a second glance. It says to me “Yep, I’m on Twitter and I heard it was a pretty cool thing but I’m not all that serious about it and you probably won’t hear much from me.”

Lastly choose a background theme. This can be one of Twitter’s own default themes or one of your own. I would suggest one of your own that displays your business information. For instance, my background for Twitter is my BoneheadSEO.com logo for my SEO classes.

You can view it here:

<https://twitter.com/KristineWirth>

Other’s have similar backgrounds such as:

Mashable’s - <https://twitter.com/mashable>

Joel Comm’s - <https://twitter.com/joelcomm> and

ProBlogger’s - <https://twitter.com/problogger>

By using a screenshot of your business or by having some contact information about you here, whenever someone visits your personal page on Twitter, they’ll be able to see this information at a glance. Subtle marketing at its best.

And that’s all there is to setting yourself up on Twitter.

Making Posts

After you set up your account you’ll want to start posting a few Tweets.

And when I say post a few Tweets, I don’t mean things like:

- “Hey, I just found this great new program! Check it out (affiliate link here)” OR
- “Check out this new blog post I just made about (self-serving money-making link here)”

This is not to say that you shouldn’t post links; even self-serving links once in a while. But whatever you do, don’t make it the basis of your overall purpose for being on Twitter.

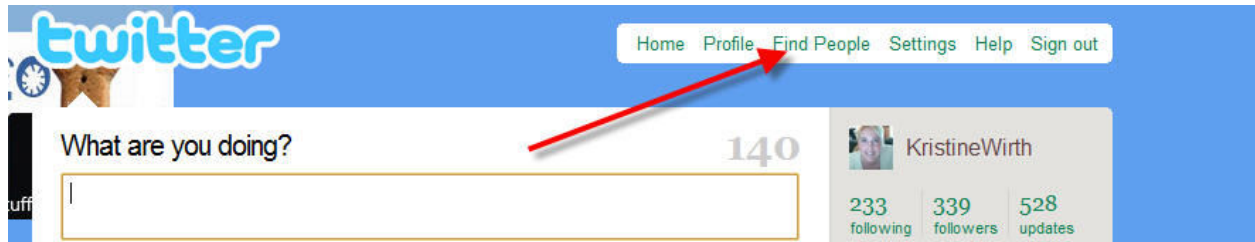
When you’re first starting out, and you want to get people following what you have to say, you don’t want to come across as someone who is walking on the thin line of being a spammer. Just get real, BE real. What’s going on with you today? Are you shoveling snow? Did you find a funny article at TheOnion.com? Did you find a website that you think might help other Twitterers? (I don’t even know if that’s a word).

The bottom line is, people expect you to be a real person, they expect you to be entertaining, informative and helpful. And don't stretch it by thinking that posting an affiliate link right off the bat is actually "being helpful".

Getting Followers

Once you have a few posts under your belt, you can start to search out others that you'd like to follow.

First, login to Twitter if you haven't already done so. Now, click on the link at the top of the page that says "Find People" it will look like this:



Next, Twitter will ask you to enter in your email address from Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, MSN, etc. (Don't worry they don't store this information). Twitter will then check out the contacts in your email account and give you back a list of people that you likely already know on Twitter. With one click you can start to follow them.

Another way to find people to follow is to see who is talking about the subjects that interest YOU. To find out this information, head to: <http://search.twitter.com/>

Enter in a phrase like your location for example and see who else is talking about it. Search for terms and phrases like SEO, iPhone, Christmas, New Year's Eve, Summer, it doesn't matter. Whatever interests *you*.

When you find a person who has used that term, click on their icon and take a look at the rest of their posts to see if it looks like it would be someone you'd like to follow. If so, click on "Follow" just underneath their icon and just like that, you'll get all of their updates on your own Twitter page as well as all of their previous posts.

Often, but not all the time, the person you chose to follow will end up following you back. Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't. If they don't, don't take it personally. We'll get into the whole "follow me and I'll follow you" phenomenon here in just a bit.

Getting Followers Of Your Own

The absolute best way to get followers of your own without having to seek out people is to just post great content. Entertaining content. Stuff that people really care about that you think they might find interesting. The more posts (Tweets) you make the more people will find you and the more followers you'll get, easy as that.

Some Quick Twitter Tips

1. If you want to respond to someone directly via Twitter, use the @ symbol and then their username. For instance, you liked what XYZ just posted and so you'd like to thank them for that post. To do that you'd write: @XYZ – great post! You Rock!

NOTE: When you do this, keep in mind that this is PUBLIC. Which means *everyone* will be able to see it – especially your followers so if you don't want everyone seeing your personal message then use direct messaging which is below:

2. If you want to send someone a direct message, the easiest way in my opinion is to click on your “Direct Messages” link while within your Twitter and then choose the person from the dropdown list at the top of the page to send a direct message to. This IS private.

Note though that you can't direct message someone unless they are following you as well.

3. If you want to see all of the conversations going on for one person in particular, then use <http://search.twitter.com/search?q=KristineWirth> (once there, enter in a name at the top of the page to follow).

For the record, I didn't even know about this until a couple of days ago when fifty-million of us were trying to figure out what heavy metal album Jason Moffatt purchased when he was 10. So this tip gets credited to him - <http://twitter.com/jasonmoffatt>.

The Follow Me Follow You Phenomenon

Here's something about Twitter that you *absolutely must understand!* And it has everything to do with “followers”.

A lot of people believe that the more followers you have the “cooler” you are or at the very least, the more “popular” you are. While this can be true (just take a look at Matt Cutts - <http://twitter.com/mattcutts>) it's not always the real picture.

Here's what I mean. There's a lot (and I mean a lot) of people who will find you and follow you not because they're actually interested in what you have to say but because they're hoping and praying that you'll follow them back.

You'll also find that after a few days have passed, they will stop following you – and there's a Twitter application that will actually tell you this at <http://useqwitter.com/>.

These are those people who think that the whole purpose of being on Twitter is to get followers. Now, if the followers were worth something like 5 cents each then I could understand this phenomenon,

however, the only reason that people do this is because they think that there's some kind of "status" they get (read "ego trip" into that statement) by having a lot of people following them.

You'll also often find that these same people have crap (pardon the language) for Tweets. Their sole purpose in life is to see how many followers they can get.

Whatever you do, don't take the fact that these people stop following you shortly after they started. It essentially means that they really had no interest whatsoever in what you had to say, they just wanted to pin up another number on their stats.

Oftentimes you'll find that if someone does follow you and you *don't* follow them back, and they STAY following you, then they really are interested in what you have to say, which is a good thing.

And this works both ways too my friend.

If you decide to follow someone, only follow them if you really want to hear what that person has to say. Once you hit a certain number of people you're following, usually around the 150 to 200 range, it's almost impossible to keep up with everyone's Tweets, especially if they post a lot. So just think for a moment how those people who have 1,000, 1,500, 2,500 whatever the number is, followers are actually seeing what you post in the first place.

Lastly, let's talk about marketing on Twitter.

Twitter & Marketing – Oil & Water?

As Twitter has grown in its popularity, you've no doubt seen books, applications and the like become available to help you "market on Twitter" (most of them at a cost I might add).

While there's no harm in posting something a promotional item here and there from time to time, you certainly don't want to use it as the basis for having your Twitter account.

Twitter is so incredibly different, as we mentioned before, it allows you to connect with large groups of people in a way that before was never possible anywhere else. And "connect" is the operative word. You need to think of Twitter like a personal chat room with all of your friends present.

Here's how I like to think of Twitter – if it works for you too, then hey, cool.

When talking with my friends over IM or even via email, I rarely suggest a product. Just think how that conversation would go:

ME: "Hey Friend! How are you doing today?"

FRIEND: "Hey There! I'm Great! What's up with you?"

ME: "I just found this really great program that let's you do this and this and this and save the world too! Check it out at this link.(insert affiliate link here)"

FRIEND: "oh, hey, thanks. Uh, I've got to pluck my eyebrows, we'll catch up later ok?"

Instead, when we talk over IM we generally say things like:

ME: "Hey Friend! How's it going?"

FRIEND: "Great! What's up with you?"

ME: "I'm sick of this snow! We just got 50 inches today!"

FRIEND: "No way! Are you stuck in your house?"

ME: "Not for long, I've got my dog digging a hole that will get us all out right now."

FRIEND: "Cool! How'd you train him to do that?"

And on it goes...

You see, we don't flat out market to our friends. Because...drum roll please...

It wouldn't build the relationship. And believe it or not, relationship building is what marketing (especially online) is all about.

And thanks to Twitter you can now build relationships with people you would have never before had the opportunity to get to know.

That being said, you will find that some people, even though not "marketing" all of the time, tend to be quite reserved and professional when posting on Twitter. Even some very well-known marketers. Each person has their own way of letting you into their own little world and while you'll find some that are just out and out open and honest "Here I am, love me or leave me!" you'll find that others carefully craft their posts with an almost "corporate" feel.

Neither way is right or wrong, it's all how you decide to show yourself to the world.

A Quick List of Twitter Dos and Donts

Here's a quick list of "dos and don'ts" when using Twitter.

- Do create a username that is REAL.
- Do upload a picture of some sort. Even if it's not yourself...just something.
- Do post interesting, entertaining, opinionated, heart-warming, boring, stupid, smart, enlightening, tweets. Do this often.
- Do show your personality.
- Do follow people that you REALLY want to hear from.
- Don't follow someone just for the sake of following them to hike up your "followers" numbers.
- Don't flat-out market, market, market and promote, promote, promote.
- Do feel free to market every so often but be OPEN and HONEST about the promotion.
- Do have fun!

So that's it, my brief, poorly-written short book on Twitter. I hope you enjoyed it . Now go out and have some Tweetin' Fun.