

Twitter Tips

Twitter = A Conversation

Twitter is (very short) blogging mixed with social networking, creating a simultaneous conversation among many millions of people. Participating in that conversation will get you the most value out of the tool.

Who's on Twitter is More Important than How Many Are

Twitter has a much smaller audience than Facebook, but it's loaded with journalists, bloggers, activists and other influentials. Even a small following can be effective if it's composed of the right people.

Find Your Niche and Add Value to It

Some people can Tweet about trivia and get away with it, particularly if they're famous or hot, but most of us will need to concentrate on a niche and build up a reputation within it. How? By regularly tweeting content that people are interested in.

Tweet Consistently, But Don't Kill Yourself

You'll get more out of Twitter if you use it regularly, but don't sweat it if you have to take a break for a few days. Your followers will still be there.

Follow Strategically

Follow people you'd like to have following you. They won't always do it, but you'll at least know what they're saying so you can watch for chances to interact with them.

Use Retweets and @Replies

Retweets both provide value to your followers and help you get the attention of someone more influential than you. Don't be ridiculous about it, but look for opportunities to retweet people in your space. Same with @replies, which let you address someone in particular on Twitter and are essential for conversing with people in the Twitterverse. @Reply to join in on a thread or to get someone's attention – again, don't be weird about it.

Use Hashtags

#Hashtags are commonly agreed-upon abbreviations that let people know what you're talking about. Watch the hashtags associated with your issues and your communities and use them to help people find your content. Consider inventing your own hashtags for events or issues, but don't try to force people to follow you – listen to the conversation and see what's in use.

Create a Voice, Whether Personal or Institutional

A campaign, nonprofit or corporation is going to have a different style than an individual commentator or activist. Be sure you know what kind of voice is appropriate, then establish your own distinct approach.

Use Management Tools

Twitter Lists and third-party management tools like Hootsuite or Tweetdeck can help you manage followers and your own content, particularly if you're running multiple accounts.

Don't Forget Mobile!

Twitter was designed from the start to work on cell phones, so don't forget the mobile possibilities. Use it to live-Tweet events or to organize communities that rely heavily on cell phones. Twitter can be a great leveler of the playing field.

Get Creative

Don't be afraid to try things out What are tweetchats, twitterviews and tweetups? Find out and see if they work for you!