

Kglobal's Practical Guide
to Twitter



Handbook

The Basics:

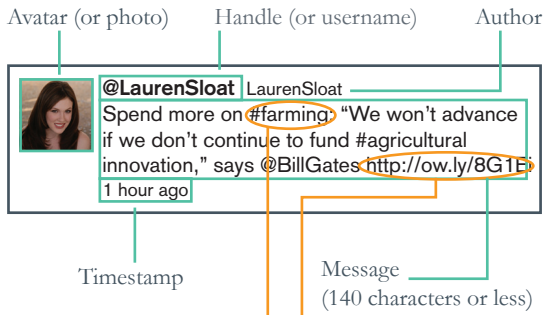
twitter [n.]

a website that offers a social networking and microblogging service, enabling its users to send and read other users' messages called tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to **140 characters displayed on the user's profile page**. Tweets are publicly visible by default, however senders can restrict message delivery to their friends list. Users may subscribe to other users' tweets—this is known as following and subscribers are known as followers. You view tweets from the people you follow on your timeline.

All users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, compatible external applications (such as for smartphones), or by SMS/text.

Since its launch in July 2006, Twitter has gained popularity worldwide and currently has more than 100 million active monthly users who generate 65 million tweets a day and request more than 800,000 search queries per day. It is sometimes described as the "SMS of the Internet."

Example tweet:



Hashtag

(a hashtag is used within a tweet as a way to categorize a message and participate in a particular conversation on Twitter. For example, when you add `#farming` to your tweet this adds you to the overall conversation about that topic.

Shorten URL

(many free services like <http://bit.ly/> offer a way to shorten a link to help keep your message under 140 characters)

MISSION NOT IMPOSSIBLE

Twitter is about sharing media and commentary as well as positioning yourself in your field of expertise. Don't overthink, don't think Twitter is not for you, just do it.

Register an account today.

Overview: A Practical Twitter Plan

1. Get on Twitter

That's it. Start by setting up your Twitter handle (that's Twitter for username.) It's easy — go to: <http://twitter.com> and create an account. Make your username/handle anything you want (but remember: the fewer characters the better so that you have more room to write your message).

2. Listen

You don't have to tweet to use Twitter. When you sign up, find 10 people you are interested in — other folks at your company, leaders in your field, news sources, organizations you like, etc. Check out your Twitter timeline a few times a day and see what they tweet about. It's a good way to get a feel for how it works and what's interesting.

3. Get your tweet on

Incremental is the idea. Once you're familiar, start tweeting. It can be as simple as linking to an article that your friend emailed you, or expressing a thought about big news. Set up a schedule (two tweets per day, 10 tweets per week) and try to meet it. Later in this document, you'll discover additional guidelines for constructing your tweets, if you need inspiration.

4. Step up your game

Once you start feeling a little more adventurous, start using lists, own the # hashtags and make the @ symbol cower before your iron Twitter fist. Go crazy, go nuts, and start using all the supplementary features that really take it up a notch.

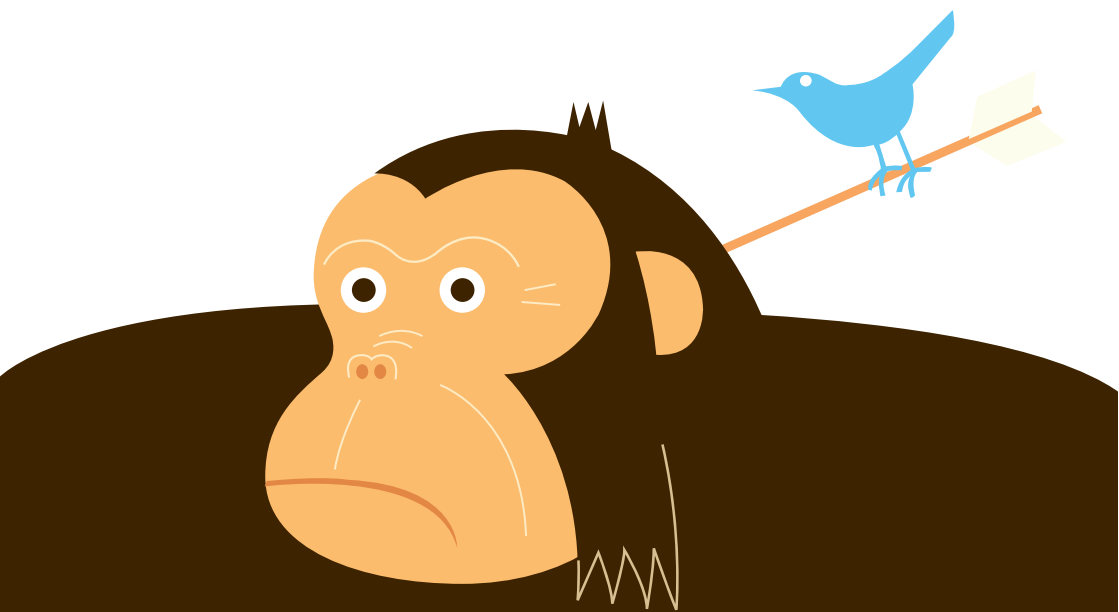
Don't worry, all this Twitter speak will come in time. Most important thing is to just start using it!

START

GET STARTED

WE SHOULD ALWAYS KEEP THIS IN MIND

What do you want to get out of Twitter? Do you want to attract business? Do you want to start a conversation? Do you want to serve as a resource for information? Actually, you can do all three.



Introduction:**Why we should care about Twitter?**

A Twitter strategy is essential to any company or organization. It allows you to:

- Build credibility
- Establish an identity both internally and externally
- Disseminate information cheaply and quickly
- Connect with leaders
- Identify influencers
- Become an industry leader
- Start a conversation with existing and potential clients

Background:**The business of Twitter**

There are a number of brands that have incorporated Twitter successfully:

<http://mashable.com/2009/01/21/best-twitter-brands/>

However, virtually all of these brands are B2C and focus their Twitter on customer service, announcing deals, giving rebates, etc.

A slightly different approach is needed for a B2B business. Two quick articles on running a B2B Twitter account:

<http://www.wordsellinc.com/blog/social-media/twitterfor-b2b-starts-with-strategy/>

<http://smallbiztrends.com/2009/08/tips-b2b-twitterfollowing.html>

Vision:**A Humble k-glo Twitter plan for world domination**

A simple, realistic vision for the any Twitter presence:

1. We are humans. So instead of corporate, generic office accounts, consider using individual human accounts. This'll give your company a more human and conversational presence on Twitter, allowing clients to get to know your members.

2. We have our own interests. Each person should tweet and follow others according to their own interests. This will display the diversity of your backgrounds and areas of expertise, while also providing some content that's relevant to your work. For example, tweet about branding, but also tweet about sports (if that is something of interest).

Remember: Quality is better than quantity. One or two quick tweets a day is a good start.

Think about meeting someone at a cocktail party — would your conversation be 100% about business? Or would you talk about other things, getting to know the person? Twitter's the same way.

The hashtag

A hashtag is an easy way to categorize conversation on Twitter.

Someone can click on that hashtag and see any tweets (from you or others) that include that hashtag, giving them a clear stream of the ongoing conversation.

Creating a hashtag specific to your company or organization (or even specific to an event or team) is a good way to start and track a conversation about your brand or mission.

Structure:**Guidelines for avoiding bitter Twitter face**

Okay, so you're ready to start tweeting. What are some general rules to follow?

1. Stay Focused.

Twitter can seem overwhelming at first. An unfocused Twitter feed is a useless Twitter feed. The focus is on quality, not quantity. Don't be overambitious, and do not try to cram the entirety of our business into one Twitter feed.

2. Be Constructive.

Twitter is a tool — it's meant to be used. When it comes to a business' Twitter feed, the ones that are successful are the ones that offer something to the reader. You can be conversational, but also informative. You may not have coupons or new products to offer — but you do have ideas, and you can link to articles or your own blog posts and other sites that are related to those ideas. You can be a resource.

3. Have a Perspective.

Be yourself. Think about the cocktail party metaphor. Don't be afraid to include your honest opinion.

The big finish:

Go forth, young padawans, and bring glory to your company.

Remember, keep it simple.

- 1. Start your account.**
- 2. Snaz up your profile.** Upload a photo and write a quick bio.
- 3. Start following some folks.**

Q&A

For the Intermediate Tweeter

Q: WHO SHOULD I FOLLOW?

A: Your friends, your colleagues, clients and leaders in your field (one way to find them is with Twellow or other online directories of Twitter users, categorized by niche or profession). Here are a few kglobal handles to get you started — follow our staff for opinions on social media, communications, public affairs and more.

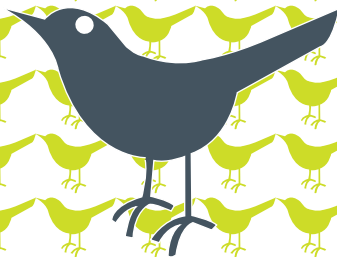
Click on “Who to Follow” at the top of your page to find others.

Follow kglobal's tweet team:

@LaurenSloat
@TomOnEdge
@DCLance
@typemonster
@HethaS9
@RANDYdecleene
@ClaireTonneson
@lisanovak
@ejcwalters
@msmirnio
@pcallen1
@darrenkatz

Q: DO FOLLOWER NUMBERS MATTER?

A: Yes and no. The easiest way to make a snap judgment about online influence is to see how many followers a person has. While big numbers look impressive, that's not often the full story. In reality, the most important number is the number of followers YOUR followers have — that maximizes your potential reach. For superficial reasons, though, building your following is a good goal.



Q:

SO HOW DO I GET FOLLOWERS?

OR

A: Be an active user.

Following others is a good way to start, but directly engaging them is even better. Mention them in a tweet, or retweet something interesting they tweeted themselves. Ask them questions, too. You can also use Twitter search (twitter.com/search) to find people talking about a topic to which you want to contribute.

A: Add your profile to

(free) online directories such as Twellow, Twiends and WeFollow. This helps other users find you based on your interests or tweet content.

Q: WHAT'S THIS HOO-HA I'VE HEARD ABOUT FOLLOWER LIMITS?

A: Twitter monitors accounts for practices called “aggressive following” and “follow churn”—essentially, people who indiscriminately follow thousands of users in the hopes of building their own followings, or people who follow (and then unfollow) large amounts of users in a short amount of time in the attempt to manipulate their follower-to-following ratio.

To circumvent this, there are rules:

- *Every user can follow 2,000 people total*
- *As Twitter explains it: “Once you’ve followed 2000 users, there are limits to the number of additional users you can follow: this limit is different for every user and is based on your ratio of followers to*

following. When you hit this limit, we’ll tell you by showing an error message in your browser. You’ll need to wait until you have more followers in order to follow more users—basically, you can’t follow 10,000 people if only 100 people follow you.”

Q:
**SO WHAT HAPPENS
IF I REACH THAT
2,000 LIMIT?**

A: You may consider un-following people who have not reciprocated by following you back. Of course, Justin Bieber or Barack Obama will probably never follow you back, but those are handles you'd want updates from no matter what. With some users, though, you should have a mutually beneficial relationship, and if time goes by and they haven't followed you back, it may be time to pull the plug. Refollow (Refollow.com) is a great online application that will help you un-follow anyone who is not following you back.

Q:
**WHERE CAN
I FIND TWEET
INSPIRATION?**

A: It's OK to Tweet about a mix of personal and professional interests. This could include something about the score of your alma mater's football game, a current situation your field/industry and your take on the matter, an article you find compelling, or something interesting one of your colleagues are doing. You probably already subscribe to email newsletters or blogs about your profession or areas of expertise, and you probably have opinions about (or sometimes just want to share) the information they contain. This is a great place to start.

Q:
**IS THERE ANY WAY I
CAN CREATE SEVERAL
TWEETS FOR THE
DAY OR WEEK AND
SCHEDULE THEM
TO BE POSTED SO
THAT I DON'T HAVE
TO KEEP THINKING
ABOUT IT?**



A: Why, yes there is! While it's advisable not to completely check out of Twitter for an entire week (you want to engage in the real-time conversation with retweets, replies, etc), it can be helpful to schedule tweets in advance as a way to keep your account active when things get busy! Try Hootsuite (hootsuite.com), which is an online application with all sorts of fun and fancy tools. It's free to create an account (you'll just need to enter your Twitter account information) and then you can:

- *Write tweets in advance and schedule them to post whenever you want*
- *Easily view your Twitter feed, mentions, direct messages and sent tweets from the dashboard*
- *Manage your Facebook account*
- *Manage more than one Twitter handle*
- *Save searches (for your name or a keyword in your industry, for example) in an updated stream*
- *Similar applications include TweetDeck, CoTweet and Seismic*

Q:

I REPLIED TO SOMEONE ON TWITTER WITH SOMETHING REALLY WITTY AND AWESOME, BUT NOT ALL MY FOLLOWERS SAW MY TWEET. WHAT THE HECK?

A: A “reply” is when you respond to another tweet, and always starts off with @username. By contrast, “a mention” is a tweet that contains your username somewhere in the tweet but does not start the tweet. A key difference: People will only see others’ replies in their home timeline if they are following both the sender and recipient of the update. What that means: Your reply tweet (ex: “@TomOnEdge Office lunch today!”) will only show up for people following both you and Tom. Of course, it will show up on your Twitter profile, which anyone can access as long as its public... so it’s not a private conversation. This just means that to maximize the reach of a Tweet, be sure it doesn’t start with a reply (unless the conversation

would be pretty uninteresting to most of your followers). If the sentence only makes sense to start with a reply/username, use a “:” in front of it. (Ex: “:@TomOnEdge office lunch today!”)

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER WORDS OF WISDOM?

- *A word about bios: Writing your bio requires creating a narrative from the many people you are. It also requires character. Remember: The most important story you tell is your own. Also: Your photo speaks volumes about who you are. Consider using the same photo across multiple platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) as your calling card.*
- *A word about personal branding: Having your own Twitter handle adds a human level that turns a faceless company into actual people. Hybrid handles—that is, Twitter handles that you use for both personal and work reasons—are very valuable.*

Twictionary



DM: Stands for “direct message.” Beginning any message with a “d” followed by a user’s handle means it’s a private message that will only go to that user. You can also write a DM by clicking on “messages” from your twitter page and then “new message”. The catch: In order to send a DM, the recipient must be following you... which means you can’t send a direct message to Justin Bieber or Barack Obama unless they happen to be following you, too.

#FF: Stands for “Follow Friday.” Twitter users often suggest who others should follow on Fridays by tweeting with the hashtag #FF.

Hashtag: The # symbol, called a hashtag, is used to mark keywords or topics in a tweet. It was created organically by Twitter users as a way to categorize messages. People use the hashtag symbol # before relevant keywords in their tweet to categorize those tweets to show more easily in Twitter Search. Clicking on a hashtagged word in any message shows you all other tweets in that category. Hashtags can occur anywhere in the tweet. Hashtagged words that become very popular can become Trending Topics.

Mention: A mention is any Twitter update that contains @username anywhere in the

body of the Tweet. (Yes, this means that replies are also considered mentions.)

Reply: A Tweet posted in reply to another user’s message, usually posted by clicking the “reply” button next to their Tweet in your timeline. Always begins with @username.

RT: Stands for “retweet.” Any message beginning with “RT” means it’s a duplicate of a tweet written by someone else. This is like forwarding a really good email from one friend to several of your other friends, only this forward will go out to all of your followers.

Trending Topics:

The most popular words or phrases happening in current Twitter conversations. Find a list of trending topics on the right-hand column of your Twitter page.

Find more information in the Twitter Glossary:

<https://support.twitter.com/articles/166337-the-twitter-glossary>

Sites to check out and bookmark:

<http://twitter.com/search>

<http://bitly.com>

<http://refollow.com>

<http://hootsuite.com>