

Guide to
TWITTER BASICS



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Twitter Basics

Home Page & Profile Page

Your **home page** shows the tweets of all the people you are following, and has an update box at the top for you to type in your own tweets.

Your **profile page** is what others see when they click on your name. You want to include the following:

- Photo or logo
- Link to your website
- Your location in the world
- An appealing bio. Your bio should describe your business and can also include personal interests.
- Customized colors and background to match your website and branding.

Your sidebar shows how many people you are following, and how many people follow you. You can click on “followers” and “following” to see a list of each.

On the sidebar of your home page you will see @yourname. Click on this to who has mentioned you in their tweets or re-tweeted your tweets.

Tweets

Tweets are 140 characters long – you want to use these micro posts to deliver content and let people know what you’re up to.

Ideas for tweets include:

- Personal status updates
- Business updates – what are you doing related to your business? What projects are you working on? What’s your business philosophy?
- Link to your own web pages
- Link to blog posts
- Link to articles on the web that relate to your industry, product or services
- Upcoming or current promotions
- Sharing ideas or asking for feedback (start a conversation)

- Link to YouTube videos
- News on upcoming events
- Information of value from other sources

Use your tweets for links to your website, blog, or products. You can shorten URLs by going to www.tinyurl.com . Just copy and paste the long URL into the box on tinyurl and it will automatically put the shortened URL on your clipboard. Then just paste the new URL into your Twitter update.

I like using a combination of business and personal tweets. Because you are networking and developing relationships, you want people to get the sense that they are getting to know you. Be yourself!

You want to give people something of value, but avoid only quoting others or “re-tweeting” what others say – don’t YOU have something of value to say?

Replies

To reply to a tweet: start with @ and the Twitter name of the person you want to reply to, then type your reply.

[@rubicamwriting](#) Sounds like you are busy. What’s your secret?

Direct Messages

Direct messages are private. To send a direct message you must be following each other. Go to Direct messages on the sidebar and type in your message and specify who you want to message. You can also message on the other person’s profile page – on the sidebar click on “message”.

Re-tweets

When you read a tweet that you think is valuable and you want to pass it on to your followers, you can re-tweet it. To do this, copy the tweet and paste it into your update box, then go to the beginning and type RT then @nameofperson. So it would look like:

RT [@rubicamwriting](#) The sky is falling!

This is where the viral element of Twitter comes in. When your tweets are re-tweeted to other people's followers, you will gain exposure and followers. Every time @name appears in a tweet, anyone can click on the name and it will take them to that person's profile. They may decide to follow that person.

Following and Followers

You'll start out by choosing who you want to follow on Twitter. You can search for people you know or by Twitter name by using the "Find People" function in the bar at the top of your home page.

You can also search for topics of interest using the "Search" function in the sidebar of your home page. This gives you the most recent tweets that include the words you've entered. Be creative!

Here are suggestions for people to follow:

- Leaders in your industry
- Customers & Prospects
- People interested in what you are offering
- Local media outlets/figures – you never know when they will be looking for a story or a business to profile; plus you'll stay up to date on local news. www.mediaontwitter.com has a list.
- Local publications
- Local businesses or services that you might use – maybe your favorite restaurant tweets nightly specials, or you'll find a landscaper you might use
- Local business networking groups – most will post upcoming networking events
- People who do what you do in other places – compare notes!
- Potential partners – businesses that are related to yours, that you might work out referrals with
- People you meet – a great way to stay in touch
- Social media and marketing professionals – stay current on trends and valuable tips
- People who inspire you personally

Once you've identified some people to follow, go one step further and take advantage of the networking aspect of Twitter. Look at who they follow and who is following them – chances are, you'll find interesting people that you have something in common with, and you can choose to follow them as well.

Hopefully, many of these people will turn and follow you. That's a good start.

Unfortunately, you will get some undesirable followers and spammers following you. You can choose to block these people.

It's good Twitter etiquette to thank people for following you. However, when you start getting a lot of followers it can be time consuming to personally thank everyone. Many Twitter users set up automated responses through sites like www.TweetLater.com. You can also schedule automated tweets here. I prefer personal thank you messages, or even just thanking a group of new followers at once.

One way to recognize people you enjoy following is to include them in your #Follow Friday tweets. Every Friday, you can recommend people for others to follow. Simply start your tweet with #Follow Friday or #FF and list the names.

#Follow Friday @rubicamwriting @madsciencescott @healthandexAZ

When people list YOU in their Follow Friday tweets, you should thank them. You can also re-tweet their Follow Friday tweet. That shows your followers and anyone that happens onto your profile that others recommend you.

There are various applications available to manage your Twitter account. Browse the applications tab at the bottom of the Twitter page, or check out www.tweetdeck.com. Tweetdeck allows you to separate the people you are following into groups for easier monitoring of tweets, as well as many other features.

Promoting Your Twitter Page

To make Twitter part of your social media program, you've got to let others know you have a Twitter page. Don't forget to include a link to your Twitter page in the following places:

- Your website
- Your email signature
- Your blog
- Other social media sites like Facebook and LinkedIn
- Your email newsletter

You can find Twitter badges at www.twittermysite.com.

This should be enough of the most basic information to get you started with your Twitter account. You'll learn as you go, and will find that it's a lot of fun as well as being a great networking tool.

Remember, you are building relationships with Twitter, so be authentic and let people know what makes you and your business special!

Thanks for looking at my guide. Please feel free to send any comments to me at wendy@rubicamwriting.com or better yet, sign onto Twitter and send me a direct message!