



An Introduction to Twitter Marketing

No matter what type of business you're running, it's crucial that you have a strong presence on Twitter. Twitter is an incredibly important and powerful social media network that is one of the largest on the net with approximately 316 million monthly active users and about a billion registered users. Like Facebook, Twitter has grown to become a household name and needs no introduction. It has become a part of our everyday lives, even featuring in movies and TV shows as a prominent plot point; and its marketing potential is *gigantic*.

Apart from its size and prominence, Twitter benefits from a number of features that make it perfectly tailored for use as a marketing tool. While some businesses will certainly be better suited to its unique advantages than others, there is no denying that every type of company can benefit from it in some way or another. In the best case scenario, it could help you to improve your customer relations, to provide a better service and to greatly increase your leads, your turnover and your profits. In fact, some businesses will find that they actually can't *cope* with the amount of business that comes their way as a result of a new Twitter campaign. If you get 'Retweeted' by a prominent user, or if one of your posts starts 'trending', then you can find yourself inundated by a swarm of new customers. This can be a little like opening 'Pandora's Box' and it's not always so easy to put the Genie back in the bottle...

But having 'too many customers' is definitely a unique complaint and for most of us this kind of growth is pretty much the stuff of dreams.

So if you do *want* to open that Pandora's Box, consider this your key to unlocking it. In this book, we'll go over everything you need to know about Twitter. That means we'll cover the basics but more importantly, we'll be looking at the best strategies and approaches you can use to really tap in and harness the power of Twitter. This book is about getting the best possible results in the minimum time and with the minimum effort. If you're currently just treading water on Twitter, this will help you to start seeing *massive* growth and to have fun doing it – whether you run a small business, a blog or something else entirely.

Are you ready?



WHY TWITTER IS PERFECT FOR DIGITAL MARKETING

Just before we jump in and start looking at all the strategies and hacks you can use to get ahead on Twitter, let's take a moment to examine what it is about Twitter that's so perfect for helping you get the word out. At the same time, we'll be looking at what it is about Twitter *generally* that has helped it to get to the point where it is.

Low Time Investment

The key idea behind Twitter is really that it limits the number of characters you can post or 'Tweet' (to 140 to be precise). What's interesting about this concept is that on the face of it, it sounds like a limiting factor. Twitter has *restricted* its users and made that a 'feature'.

But this is a stroke of genius in an age where we're constantly pushed for time and constantly inundated with things to do. And from a marketing standpoint it's amazing because it takes literally a few seconds to send out a Tweet, versus uploading a blog post. That Tweet has the potential to be seen by thousands, if not millions of people but it took you only seconds to write. That's a *huge* payoff for a very small amount of work, which makes it massively scalable, even for a tiny company.

At the same time, the short amount of characters means that people will read the entire Tweet without getting bored and it means that you can convey a large amount of information in a very short timeframe. Tweets force you to be witty and to really make sure every word counts, which means a dense amount of information in a short space – great for someone in a rush.

Another stroke of genius is the hashtag. With a hashtag, you can convey the subject matter of your Tweet in another convenient way. A post about a beautiful sunset then could end with '#beauty' or '#sunset'. Better yet, you can use the hashtag to discuss something that is currently being discussed a lot or that is very contemporary. For instance, if you see something in the

news, you can comment on that news using the right hashtag. This means that people who are interested in that subject can then search for the keyword and see all the posts on that topic – it's a great way for people to find what you've been sharing! You can also tag other users in your comment with the '@' symbol, which is a great way to get their attention or to discuss something they have said or done.

Finally, Retweets mean that anyone who enjoys your content can share it with their followers. Like the best social media sites, this allows Twitter to take full advantage of the viral potential of any social network. In theory, a very well-thought out Tweet can be Retweeted multiple times, allowing it to spread exponentially through networks of users. If you share a Tweet with 2,000 people and 200 of those re-share, and 50 of *each of their users* reshare... you're starting to reach a *gigantic* audience.

Additional Features

On top of the core features of Twitter, the platform has also grown to present many more opportunities that we digital marketers can make use of. There are tons of apps, widgets and other platforms for instance that make it very easy to enjoy Twitter in a convenient and bite-sized format. Mobile users can even receive Tweets from users they're following as notifications, giving you much more direct access to your audience. Likewise, embedding Twitter into the sidebar on your website can also aid growth considerably, as can using one of the countless tools that allows you to automate the publishing of Twitter content. And that's before we've even mentioned the formalized advertising platform...

We'll look at how to use all these features and much more over the coming chapters. For now, the point to keep in mind is simply that Twitter has grown beyond its origins and is now an incredibly *flexible* tool. In fact, it is perhaps the *most* flexible social network, thanks to its minimalistic nature.



CHAPTER 2

BUILDING YOUR BRAND AND CREATING SYNERGY



Some people reading this eBook will no doubt be looking to get involved with Twitter for the very first time, which is great. The vast *majority* of you though will already have Twitter accounts and will already be posting away. The problem then is instead that you're not gaining the traction you want to online and perhaps that it feels like you're just treading water.

This is the status quo for a lot of small businesses and even bloggers who understand the basics of Twitter but don't understand what it really takes to have their content 'explode' on the platform.

See if this sounds familiar:

- You created an account 1-5 years ago
- You started Tweeting regularly at first
- But you didn't really know what to Tweet...
- Most of your Tweets were things like 'Looking for great legal advice? Come check our site!'
- You managed to gain 25 followers in your first year
- It's year 4 and you now have 27 followers
- After a while you gave up and went 'silent' on Twitter
- Every now and then you try again but quickly get disheartened
- You don't understand what the hugely successful Twitter accounts are doing differently...

If this does sound like you, then don't be too disheartened. The above describes 90% of businesses on Twitter.

The problem is, Twitter success is not a matter of 'build it and they will come'. To be successful on Twitter, you need to understand the psychology behind *why* people join in the first place.

What's more, you need to have an *actual strategy* that is going to make your content appealing and sharable.

Even then, success is unlikely to come overnight (though a few growth hacking techniques we'll look at later can help with this). But if you set things up correctly, you'll find that you can reliably gain followers on Twitter over time and that this growth increases in speed gradually and exponentially as you gather more momentum. On Twitter, success *begets* success.



Now get ready for the first sweeping statement and somewhat controversial idea in this book...

You won't be successful on Twitter, without being successful elsewhere.

Yes, this is a big claim and there are exceptions to this rule. Some Twitter users are so witty and so inventive that they manage to gain big followings on Twitter without any other form of digital marketing.

But in most cases? We follow someone on Twitter because we're *already interested* in them, or at least in the topic that they're covering. A Twitter campaign is *muchmore* likely to be successful when it's built synergistically with the right Facebook page, the right blog and the right branding.

To this end, you should think of your Twitter account primarily as a way for your fans and visitors to stay up-to-date with your business and your industry and as a way for them to 'subscribe' to your content when they decide they want to see more of you.

And remember too: people don't tend to become fans of a brand after a single interaction. They need to have *multiple* interactions with your brand before they'll start to get a full understanding

of your mission statement and what you represent. What's more, they need to see you multiple times before they'll properly remember you and thus start seeking out your content actively.

This is why many digital marketers swear by the maxim that you should aim to 'be everywhere'. That means having accounts on all the big platforms and having a strong, consistent branding across all of them.

How do you accomplish this? The following tips will help:

- Create a strong logo that you're proud of. Use this as the heading on your website and as your 'cover image' on your social media accounts.
- Choose a name that's the same as your company name, or that at least echoes it. Use this on all your social media.
- Sign up to as many social media accounts as you can.
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - Reddit
 - Tumblr
 - Vine
 - Google+
 - LinkedIn
 - Pinterest
- Link your social media accounts – include a button on your homepage that makes it easy for people to find your Twitter and sign up to it.
- Have a strong focus and mission statement. Make sure that the topics you write about will always be of interest to the core audience you're targeting.

So let's say that you have a website on fitness that has a unique slant towards an outdoors lifestyle. Perhaps you sell trainers and other equipment as your main form of monetization and maybe you have a blog where you write about things like trail running and different exercise regimes.

The idea then is that people will find your website through Google and other means (perhaps through social media). When they land on your page, they should then *immediately* see what

you're all about from your strong logo and design language. This should then indicate to them whether they might be interested in what you're writing.

Hopefully, they'll read your content and enjoy it and this will leave a good impression on them. And then they'll leave.

Now, if you haven't thought about your branding and you haven't got a Twitter account set up, that might well be the last of it.

But if you've done things right, then eventually they'll be likely to discover your content again somehow. Either they'll land on your website again, or perhaps they'll just see one of your posts on Twitter. Either way, they might now decide that what you're discussing is interesting enough on a regular basis that they should at least click 'Follow My Twitter' on your website, or perhaps follow you directly through Twitter if that's where they've encountered you.

What's more, when they visit your Twitter account, they should see that you have the same professional looking logo, the same great looking cover image, the same cool username... All this will help to cement the idea that you're part of a professional outfit and that you're an authority in your niche.

Of course, it might take many more interactions than just the two before they get to this point. Likewise, it might not be through Twitter that they find you the second time, or that they decide to follow you – it could just as easily be through Facebook, or Google+. The point though, is that you need to keep hitting them with your strong branding and great quality across multiple platforms to get them to consider following you. Twitter should be *one part* of a much broader marketing campaign and it should *start* with your logo and your company name.



The following tips will help you to reach that point where your social media accounts and your blog itself are combined. Some of these will right away take a mediocre and poor-functioning Twitter account and turn it into something that is gradually able to gain momentum.

So after you've followed through on the above advice with a strong brand across all platforms, the next thing to get to work on is setting up these relationships. This is *crucial* stuff, not to be skipped.

A 'Follow Me On Twitter' Button

Even if you are getting only a small amount of traffic for your website, you might be making a big impression on some of those visitors. Adding a button that makes it easy for people to follow you on Twitter, or that links to your Twitter profile, will give those people an easy and familiar way to stay updated and to get more of your content.

A lot of websites will forego this. Too often, bloggers and business owners recognize the importance of letting their visitors share the content they find enjoy but don't give them an easy way to follow them. Add this function and make it prominent though and suddenly you have a way to stay in touch with your occasional visitors and to bring them back more often. This way, even if you were to ignore your Twitter, it would still slowly grow with time.

A Twitter Feed

Better yet, is to add a 'Twitter feed' to your website. Assuming your website is powered by WordPress, then you can integrate this feature very simply by installing a widget plugin and arranging it to appear in your sidebar. If you're unsure, then ask your web designers – but note that this is a two minute job and should be charged accordingly.

Once you have a Twitter feed, you will not only have made it easy for people to follow you if they want to, but you will also have given them a little 'taster' of the kind of content they can expect from you if they do follow. This also has the nice added bonus of keeping your website looking 'active' by filling it with new content.

Social Sharing Buttons

We mentioned briefly social sharing buttons as something most people already know they should do. Just to reiterate though, you *should* do this. Social sharing buttons give your visitors an easy way to share the content they enjoy on your website, even if they aren't following you.

This then means that their entire audience will get to see that content and might be introduced to your brand for the first time.

Instagram

You should link all your different social media accounts but one of the most important ones to look at is Instagram. Why? Because Instagram and Twitter work very similarly and are perfectly designed to go together.

Briefly, Instagram is a social media channel where you can share photos with light effects and ‘filters’ added. It’s popularly populated by photos of sunsets, selfies of people working out and shots of people’s legs on sunbeds.

But Instagram can *also* be very useful for marketers. For starters, it’s actually *larger* than Twitter in many ways. At the same time, it makes similar use of hashtags but is actually somewhat more popular for them as people will enjoy looking at photos on particular themes. If you upload a photo of your hotel on holiday for instance, then you might very likely want to see photos other people have recently taken of that same hotel – people who are likely staying there with you right at that moment!

The great thing is, that when you upload to Instagram, you can easily select to post to Twitter as well and it will include the very same comment and hashtag while even showing a link to the image you posted in people’s feeds. This way you can add a more visual element to your Twitter and people can feel as though they’re getting an insight into your daily life, or into the way you run your business.

Auto-Posting

You should also link your accounts by ensuring that can post to one and have that message appear on all your different social networks. For instance, if you update your Facebook page status, then ideally that should appear on your Twitter. Likewise, if you upload a new video, then you should have this appear on your Twitter account too.

You can even set up WordPress to share your new posts with Twitter. This is a great way to save time, while providing great content to your Twitter followers. This feature is built right into WordPress which makes the whole thing very easy.

We're going to get a bit more advanced with this auto posting in coming chapters but at this point the take-home message is that content you post in *one place* should automatically be shared across all your accounts where appropriate.

Discussing Your Accounts

Here's one more way to get people to sign up to your Twitter that often gets overlooked... just ask them to!

If you place a Twitter button in the corner of your website and you find that people *still* aren't signing up then it could be one of two things: either no one knows it's there, or you're not providing enough incentive for people to want to sign up.

So instead of just leaving it to chance, why not say in the occasional blog post something like:

"To stay up-to-date with all of our latest content and special offers, please consider signing up to our Twitter!"

Something like this might just be enough to draw attention to your Twitter and to get people interested. This works *even better* in video, so if you occasionally vlog, you should be sure to ask people to sign up at the end of each video.



CHAPTER 3

DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY CONTENT

With everything we've covered in the last chapter, you should now have a good idea of how to set up your Twitter account for the best chance of organic growth and for synergy across your social media accounts and digital marketing efforts.

Still though, all the synergy in the world won't make up for a lack of content. Ultimately, you need to ensure you are constantly filling your Twitter account with new, information that will make people want to sign up and keep following you.

When we discussed at the start of this book what most companies were doing wrong and where they found themselves, we found that they hadn't done anything to help users find their accounts or to sign up. After doing the above and after promoting their website, they should now have multiple 'in-roads' to help people find their Twitter.

But the other problem was that they didn't know what they were meant to be posting. Here are some examples of the kinds of content you might find an EPOS (electronic point of sale – effectively a checkout system for a shop) company posting:

Do you want to serve your customers faster? Try our #EPOS #PointOfSale #Checkout

Are you ready for the holiday season? Make sure your #EPOS #Software can handle your increased turnover!

We're offering a 10% discount to new clients for this month only! Sign up now bit.ly/12389u7 #deals

Our EPOS software is faster and more reliable than the nearest competition #turnover #security

You get the point...

So what is wrong with this exactly? Well, it would be quicker to ask what's *right* with it! Ask yourself this: would *you* follow that kind of Twitter account? What would be the point?

If you were an existing customer, then seeing adverts for something you were already using wouldn't exactly offer much value. If you weren't an existing customer meanwhile, you'd likely just be frustrated by constant nagging...

So the question you need to ask yourself is: what *would* your customers want to read?



WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?

The first question to ask, is who your customers *are*. The answer in the case of an EPOS company, would be ‘business owners’. This is a fantastic niche! Business owners have plenty in common with one another and a very clear and obvious area of interest. In short, there’s lots of potential for content that is going to be highly intriguing to this audience: posts on customer service, on new business technologies, on social media marketing, on pricing and more. You can provide some *real* value here with business tips and advice and your audience will eat it up.

If you run a fitness blog, then you should provide fitness tips, workout advice, diet ideas etc. If you run a blog on martial arts, then discuss moves and your favorite martial arts films. Think of each Tweet as a mini ‘product’ and try to ensure that the reader benefits from it in some way, whether that’s by being entertained or by learning something. For businesses, industry news can also prove very popular (especially if it facilitates teamwork between brands, which we’ll look at shortly).

The Lifestyle

Another tact to take is a little less ‘on the nose’. Instead of directly discussing your niche, industry or service, you can instead talk about the *lifestyle* of people involved with your topic.

In other words, you try and sell the idea that you are part of a community and you post on subjects that might inspire, or that your audience can relate to.

This would work well for our EPOS company. Likely they’re a small team and they probably work with a lot of other businesses that are also just starting out. This then puts them in the perfect position to Tweet about their business: maybe to upload pictures of the team to Instagram at Christmas wearing Christmas hats, or maybe to show a behind the scenes photo

of a new store that's setting up somewhere. This is *inspiring* and motivating for other young companies and it subtly shows off what that EPOS service can offer without ramming it down anyone's throat.

It can work even better though for some commercial businesses selling useful things. Going back to the 'outdoors fitness' company selling those running shoes, they can easily promote the running lifestyle with Instagram pictures of people running on the beach, or of trainers hanging up covered in snow. They could also Tweet motivational sayings like "Success is being the last person to stop running". Likewise, covering something everyone can relate to might mean something along the lines of "One downside of running: far too many clothes to wash!".

This is a powerful strategy because people will now feel like they're a part of something by following you on Twitter. Instead of a company, you're now a movement and an ideal – and this is where social media can become *truly* powerful.

Getting Personal

There's another strategy that you can also employ with your tweets that will often prove popular: and that's to provide some kind of personal insight into your business or life.

This works especially well for celebrities and for big bloggers. If you follow a very well-known blogger, then you might find that you're interested to get some insights into their lives. What do they do in their spare time? What is their view on X? What do they eat for dinner?

This sort of thing sounds trivial and boring but if your fans really respect your content, you may be surprised at how interested they are in these seemingly mundane aspects of your life. It adds a new dimension to your content, it helps them to get to know you and it builds trust and familiarity.

So if you're a fitness blogger, don't be afraid to Tweet a picture of what you're having for dinner. If you're a business owner, don't be afraid to post a picture of your busy commute one morning.

Of course it's important to gauge this correctly and some of you will find it much easier and more suitable to employ this technique than others. If you a part of a multinational corporation, then you may find it's not truly appropriate to be too personal. If you run a small business, then a few

‘personal’ or behind the scenes posts can help people to get to know you. But if you’re a blogger in the same vein as Pat Flynn or Tim Ferriss then feel free to be as personal and opinionated as you like! (Without offending anyone...)

Reacting to the News

Another way to ensure your Twitter is consistently full of interesting, relevant and quality information, is to react to what’s in the news and what’s ‘trending’.

Some commenters have described Twitter as being ‘the pulse of the planet’. What they mean by this, is that the short-form content on Twitter and the large number of users, makes it a great place for ‘qualitative data’. In other words, there are lots of ‘words’ being posted in a format that is easy to interpret and that way you can almost get the *mood* of the internet as a whole.

Likewise, you can find out what is on the mind of the population by looking at what is trending/which hashtags are currently being used most often. In all likelihood, if something big has just happened in the news – say a big celebrity were to have died – then hashtags related to that topic will be among the most widely used at that time. Eventually, one particular hashtag will likely rise to prominence and will come to represent that topic on Twitter.

So if an imaginary celebrity called ‘Johnny Carter’ were to die, then our popular hashtag might be ‘#RIPJohnnyCarter’ or ‘#JC’ etc.

As someone who is trying to build prominence on Twitter, it is always a good idea to comment on these sorts of topics where possible. This is because you can be sure that lots of people will be looking for those hashtags and will be Retweeting that content. What’s more, once you have established your brand on Twitter, people should be interested to see ‘your take’ on the matter. Just make sure you are careful not to be too divisive or offensive (unless this is your strategy...) and make sure that you only comment when you have something worthwhile to contribute.

Note as well that if you comment on something that’s *too* big, you can easily get lost in a sea of other comments. Sometimes, it’s picking up on the ‘somewhat big’ news that will actually get you more coverage. Better yet, picking up on a story that’s big *in your industry* can be a great way to stand out and get noticed. This way, the people who see your posts will also be more

likely to be targeted – meaning they are people who are potential clients and customers and who fall within your target demographic.

Make sure then that you keep one ear to the ground and do everything you can to stay constantly up-to-date with the latest developments. This might mean reading other blogs or industry newsletters. It might even mean following other Twitter users in your niche – notice how useful it is when companies share news!

Finding and Sharing Content

If you run a business with a lot to do, then there's only so much unique content you can likely create in a day and there's probably only so many witty things you can think of to say that your audience will be likely to enjoy.

The good news though, is that a fair amount of your content can be derivative or outright *stolen*.

A lot of business is about connecting a supplier with a consumer. If you run a supermarket for instance, then your job will mainly be to buy cheap groceries and then to sell them for more to your audience. You aren't creating anything new, you're just acting as the middle man and getting paid for it!

Running a Twitter account is often very similar to this and in many ways, your 'job' is now to scour the web for useful and interesting content, news and stories and then to share that with your audience. It might feel odd that you're essentially profiting from someone else's hard work but think of it instead as you're finding an audience for something someone else created, while at the same time curating content for a market you know will love it. That is a great service you're providing!

And it just so happens that this process is also a great way for you to keep your Twitter account active with great new content – and it involves barely any work on your part.

So make sure that you are continuously reading up on topics relating to your business. That means you should be reading other blogs, that you should be following other Twitter users and that you should be reading magazines.

Now, when you find a news item that you think your audience will genuinely enjoy, you should share it with them. Make sure you don't keep sharing from the same place and try to find them things that they otherwise wouldn't have been able to find. If your blog is about fitness, then perhaps you might share the results of a new study looking at a surprising new training method. If you run a B2B business, then perhaps you might share the results of a recent survey on types of businesses.

Note though, that when you *do* share new content, you should always add your own comment on the matter if possible. This way, you personalize that link and if it gets shared even more, then people will be introduced to your brand and your ethos (rather than ignoring who shared it altogether).

So if you found a study on a new muscle-building supplement, your comment might be:

This could certainly help me to lose my spare tyre if it works on humans!
<http://bit.ly/ad87a> #supplements #fitness #fatburning

Or:

Let's see how many con-artists jump on this dubious study! <http://bit.ly/767ada> #snakeoil
#research #fitnessindustry

Either way, you're now not only sharing something that your audience will be interested in but you're also doing it in a way that introduces people to your point of view and your beliefs.

Do note though, that the above posts aren't terribly 'clickable'. If you want more people to take notice of your link and to follow it, then you may need to sell the 'value proposition' a little:

It's early days but the results of this study on mitochondrial function could **completely change** my pre-workout stack! [Http://bit.ly/231hjh](http://bit.ly/231hjh) #excited #mitochondria #fatburning

This will grab more attention because it provides a little more information (we now know it's about mitochondrial function) and because it shows the potential implications and how they might be relevant to your audience. Doing this is important because it will make your feed look more interesting and it will increase engagement with your content so that more people actually read it and come away with a positive experience. Don't go overboard with hyperbole though – if people think you're all hype and no substance they'll quickly stop caring what you have to say.

Note:When you share a link on Twitter, it should automatically shorten, giving you space to add your thoughts. However, you can also use the website 'Bitly' to do it for you (<http://www.bitly.com>).

Obviously, the very easiest way to share content on Twitter though is just to hit 'Retweet'. Again, you can do this while adding your own commentary and it's a great way to encourage more discussion.

Deals and Offers

There is one type of content that the average business gets right though: and that's to talk about deals. This is something that surveys suggest followers *do* like to hear – because of course it provides them value in the money they can save. This is also a great way to reward your visitors for following you and to make them feel special. If you have a product or service then, make sure you occasionally offer promotions to your Twitter followers, this is also a good way to get Retweets if your followers know others who might benefit from what you sell.

Giveaways are even better. If you can give away a free eBook, a free drink or anything else for nothing then it's bound to grab some attention and win some good will. We'll be coming back to this in a subsequent chapter...

Overcoming the Fear

All this advice should help you to start adding real *value* to your Twitter account which will make a massive difference to the way you're seen by your followers and ultimately to *how many* people choose to start following you. This is *far* preferable to talking entirely about your products and services without actually offering anything in return.

Unfortunately though, some businesses are going to be resistant to this idea. This is a problem that many social media marketing agencies will face – they approach a company like our imaginary EPOS business and present them with a strategy. Problem is, the EPOS company thinks it's unprofessional to talk about business as a whole, or 'off topic'. They don't want to showcase other companies by Retweeting or sharing links. And they *certainly* don't want to be seen to have an 'opinion'.

Don't be that company. Playing it this 'safe' is actually the surest way to appear out of touch, uninteresting and uninspired. It might feel a little risky at first to be conversational or to discuss a wider range of topics but that's precisely what will make you interesting.

What's key is simply that your business has a clear identity and mission statement. As long as you adhere to that at all times, being a bit more adventurous with your content will pay off. If you do choose to use an agency for your digital and social media marketing, make sure they are thinking along these lines.



CHAPTER 4

WORK SMART, NOT HARD

We're three chapters in and already you should have a fairly good understanding of Twitter and how to success with it. You know what Twitter's strengths are, you know how to set up an account and you know how to make this part of a larger brand and synergistic digital marketing strategy.

Likewise, you have created lots of inroads to your brand and ensured there are plenty of ways for people to find you. On top of that, you're now filling your account with great content that will attract more followers, that will keep existing followers interested and that will encourage lots of Retweets and shares.

This alone is enough to ensure that you have a steady momentum and that your blog will grow over time. Unfortunately though, it's still going to be a slow process if that's all you're doing. And it still involves a lot of work.

And that's why *these* two chapters are so important. This chapter is about working *smart* with Twitter instead of working hard. This is about streamlining your Twitter workflow and it's about learning how to get more done in less time. Better yet, the next chapter is about finding ways to 'hack' your growth and to jump straight to the top, leapfrogging your competition along the way...

For those who have read *The Four Hour Workweek*, this approach should be fairly familiar. This is about applying that 80/20 rule to your Twitter marketing efforts and putting more time into the aspects that get the real results.



At the start of this book, we mentioned how Twitter had grown and now came with a host of tools and other features you could benefit from, making it even more powerful.

The following are just *some* tools that you can start using to make succeeding on Twitter that much easier and that much less work...

Buffer

Buffer is a very simple tool that Twitter fans love. The idea is that you can ‘buffer’ your Tweets, essentially by queuing them so that they post automatically at set times.

The thing to recognize here is that having a Twitter account that is completely quiet and empty is one of the worst mistakes you can make. If your Twitter account has been abandoned and you haven’t posted in the last two months, this will lead people to wonder whether you might have abandoned your entire business. In the *best* case scenario, it will look as though you don’t have the resources or know-how to use Twitter, or as though you don’t understand its importance. In short, it will make you look unprofessional and thereby do more damage than having *no* Twitter account!

Buffer gets around this problem by *guaranteeing* a steady flow of content while at the same time reducing the time you spend creating it. That’s because you can set aside a few hours, write 1,000 generic Twitter posts and then let them be published every day for the next thousand days. No matter what happens, your Twitter will never be empty!

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is not one social media tool but really several built into one very convenient platform. And it has a *lot* of powerful features.

For starters, Hootsuite can do everything that Buffer can do. Buffer is better suited to people who don’t want to deal with all the complicated functions available through Hootsuite. At the same time, Hootsuite lets you manage multiple accounts, it lets you see various different social media streams in one place, it lets more than one person log in (very useful for teams who share their social media duties), it makes cross posting useful and it even e-mails you with free reports.

If you’re serious about your social media and you’ve been around long enough to have a basic understanding of how it all works, then you should find that Hootsuite helps to streamline the whole process for you.

IFTTT

Enough good things cannot be said about this incredible tool. IFTTT stands for 'If This, Then That' – a familiar phrase to anyone with a little experience in programming. What this does, is to link all your different social media accounts *and* online apps by creating 'recipes'.

Recipes are comprised of some kind of 'trigger' event and an action that this then causes. So for instance, you can set up a recipe so that every time you post a comment to Facebook, it is also posted to Twitter.

But it gets *far* more advanced than that. For instance, you can set IFTTT up to save all your Tweets into a spreadsheet on Google Drive. Likewise, you could get IFTTT to share Instagram posts with a certain tag to Twitter, so that only certain types of content get shared. You can even do things like controlling the temperature in your house via NEST by sending e-mails.

This is an incredibly powerful tool and has almost unlimited uses. Think creatively and you should find it has plenty of potential for your Twitter marketing campaign.

How about setting up IFTTT so that topics that get upvoted enough in a certain Subreddit get shared to your Twitter? That way you have completely automated and highly relevant content for your Twitter account!

BuzzSumo

BuzzSumo is a tool that allows you to quickly find content in a specific niche that is performing well on social media. Once you're using the tool, you'll be able to browse easily through various different posts that are getting lots of attention and from there you can easily share them to your own social media accounts.

This is useful because it saves time and provides a quick and simple way for you to find more content. What's even better though, is that you know that this content is performing well and getting lots of shares – thus it is likely to get *you* lots of shares too.

Even if you don't share the actual content on BuzzSumo, you can nevertheless use it just to see what *kinds* of things are performing well. This way, you can get ideas for your own type of content and get a quick overview of how your niche/industry is performing.

A Word of Warning: Don't Overdo the Automation

If you use the right combination of tools and settings, then you should find that you can automate a great deal of your Twitter marketing. Even if you don't write any regular posts anymore, your Twitter will now be populated with content:

- On a recurring basis using Buffer
- Every time you post a new blog
- Every time you post a new YouTube video/like a YouTube video
- Every time something good comes up on Reddit
- Every time you post to Facebook
- Whenever you post to Instagram

Some marketers will even take this one step further and will have their Twitter accounts respond to comments automatically using bots!

That's a lot of autogenerated content, a lot of time saved and generally a great way to maximize your ROI for the time you're putting in.

But don't get too reliant on these methods for filling your feeds. If you do this, then you can end up with a social media channel that's entirely soulless and that doesn't add any real value. Gone will be the personal insights, the tailored content for your market or the 'lifestyle promotion' that we discussed. The same wording will be used every time certain actions happen too:

I liked a video on YouTube: <http://bit.ly/123hjk>

What's worse, you might even end up with duplicates of the same content, or with content that doesn't quite make any sense.

Even if you use Buffer too much, you'll end up with content that doesn't express your mood, that doesn't reflect what's in the news and that is generic. It will lack the spontaneity or relevance of content that you upload yourself. With Buffer the posts come at the same every day as well and even this on its own can be enough to prevent those posts from seeming natural and organic.

People will be able to tell if your Twitter posts have no personality, so don't let this happen and use these autogeneration techniques sparingly. This is for keeping your social media channels active only, the life and soul will come from you actually writing new content and reacting to what's going on in your life.

Apps and the Right Routine

There is a way you can create a compromise situation and streamline the process of uploading content/avoid periods of no new posts, but while still writing it yourself.

The simple trick is to download some apps for your various social media accounts such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (the official ones usually work best). Now, it's really easy for you to just comment on something that's happening or that's on your mind and it should only take a couple of minutes whenever inspiration strikes.

And to prevent yourself from forgetting to do this, you can also set up some times of day and some rules as to when and how you are going to post. For instance, how about making the decision to post new content every time you go into the kitchen to make a cup of tea?

You could even make this easier by having a separate tablet or smartphone *just* for posting to these accounts. Try taking an old Android tablet and keeping it in the kitchen with the Twitter app installed. Or even leaving it on your cistern if you're not too worried about hygiene...



While it's not a separate app or tool, Twitter Analytics is a very powerful force multiplier that belongs in your strategy and which can greatly enhance your effectiveness.

To find Twitter analytics, simply go to <http://analytics.twitter.com>. From here, you'll then be able to find your account statistics which will show you how you've been performing over the last month. This includes the following:

Tweets: How many Tweets you've posted in that month.

Tweet Impressions: How many times your tweets have been shown.

Profile Visits: How many people have visited your profile. If this is much higher than your new followers, you need to ask why your profile isn't converting.

Mentions: How many people have mentioned your brand (more on this later).

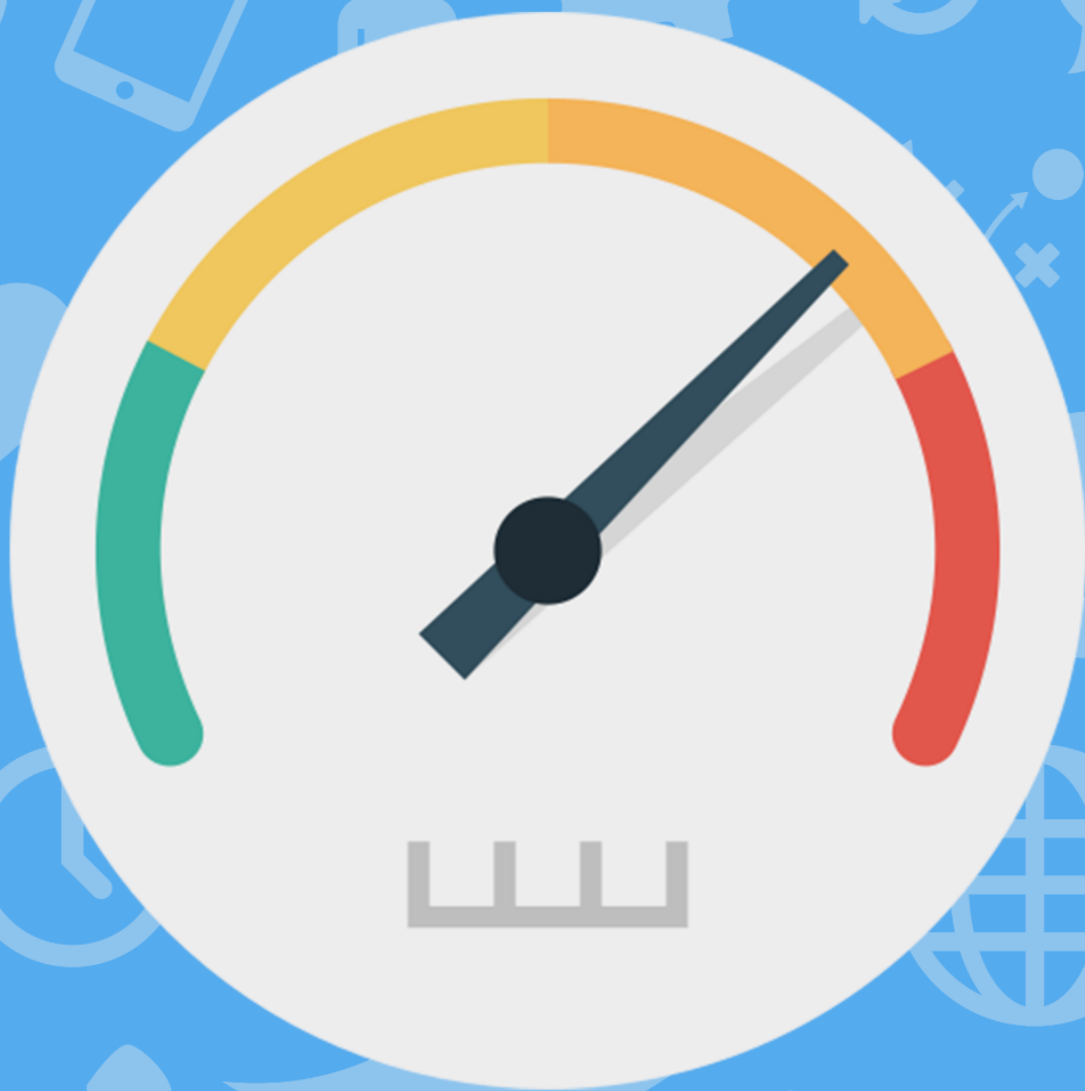
Top Tweet: Which of your tweets got seen the most times.

Top Media Tweet: Which of your links got seen the most times.

Top Follower: Which of your followers has the most followers and best engagement (keep this in mind when reading the section on influencer marketing).

Top Mention: Which mention received the most attention and engagement.

Use all this information to ascertain which parts of your campaign are working and which need more work. As a result, you can hone your process to ensure you are maximizing your potential impact.



CHAPTER 5

THE SOCIAL ASPECT AND GROWTH HACKING

You might think we've covered an awful lot of what makes Twitter tick at this point, but you're still missing out something pretty important... the social aspect.

So far we've only discussed *creating* content and putting things out there. But of course Twitter isn't just about output – it's about input too. This is a communication tool and a *social* network – in other words you need to think about responding to comments as much as you think about creating posts from scratch. Better yet, you need to think about how you can encourage engagement and interaction. This will make a big difference to the way people see your brand and it will greatly improve your chances of getting shared and Retweeted.

What's more, by leveraging this social element correctly, you can see sudden growth. This is where the 'growth hacking' aspect comes in. So why don't we start with that?



If you're new to Twitter and you post a Tweet to your audience, then you may get seen by 100 people, maybe 1,000. This is pretty good.

If your post gets Retweeted by one of those 1,000 people and they are an average user, then it may get seen by 100-300 *more* people. On top of your original 1,000, this is also pretty good. Better yet, if someone enjoys that tweet, they might start following you. Thus you got a new follower!

But imagine if your post were Retweeted by Bill Gates. Suddenly, that message would be seen by millions of users (he currently has 24.6M followers), thousands of which would probably retweet to their thousands of followers. Some of Bill Gates' own followers probably have millions of followers in their own right meanwhile, so this effect would be repeated potentially many times over. You would get hundreds of thousands of new followers this way and would increase your influence *drastically* overnight.

That's a 'growth hack' because you've gone to a million followers overnight, instead of it taking you the usual several years. This particular growth hack is using a technique called 'influencer marketing' where you are relying on the influence of someone *already established* on Twitter to give you that boost and that head start.

Now, influencer marketing will always involve an element of luck and you can never guarantee that it will work. Still though, it's well worth a try and by targeting influencers with content tailored for their appreciation – and even sometimes mentioning them in comments – you can potentially see amazing results.

Oh, and a tip? Don't go after Bill Gates right away. Instead, aim to start with smaller 'influencers', such as prominent members of your niche or your industry. Look for someone with 1,000 followers and *then* someone with 100,000 and build your way to the top.

Ad Swaps

You can also get success from mentioning other businesses and having them mention you. That way, you can quickly share your followers with one another. This can even work with direct competitors but you're more likely to be successful with business partners and companies that provide supplementary services to your own. If you build websites, then looking for an SEO company and promoting each other is a good strategy. Again though, aim for people who are on a similar level to you to begin with.

Real World Networking

Here's a quick tip for any kind of influencer marketing: real world strategies *always* work best! Too often, people find the e-mail address or the Twitter account of an influencer and then think 'great, a connection!'. In reality though, that person is *not* a connection. A connection is someone who actually feels they know you, at least a little and who is willing to help you out.

You can accomplish this in two minutes if you meet someone in person, whereas it takes a lot longer to get to that level via e-mails. This is why networking events and tradeshow are so valuable. Find the influencers, introduce yourself and have a human chat: do *not* try and 'get' anything from them. *Then*, a few weeks later, post something related to what you spoke about, or perhaps that you think they'll find interesting and tag them. Don't force the issue, but your chances of a retweet just went up significantly.

Customers and Clients

You can also use your real-world networking skills to get regular followers on board. If someone visits your store, then you can Tweet a photo of them with you, or you can message them to say thanks. People love this as it feels a little like being famous and if you're lucky, they may retweet that message to their followers. This is particularly useful for local businesses, as if they are a local customer then chances are that *their* connections also live locally!

Engagement

You should also be thinking of ways you can increase your engagement with your broader audience. How do you get people to not just glance over your posts but to actually read them? To comment on them? And to view you almost as a contact that they trust, rather than a faceless brand?

Right away, following the advice we've already covered – such as being more personal and open in your posts – will help a great deal. At the same time though, you can also use some of the following strategies.

Follow and Follow Alike

A very underutilized strategy on Twitter is simply to follow people. Because if you follow someone, you gain their attention – especially if they don't have a ton of followers. Suddenly, they feel excited that someone, even a brand, is interested in what they have to say and they check out your page. More often than not, they'll then follow you back.

The same goes for retweeting. Retweet the things that people have to say and they'll feel obligated to you. Suddenly, they'll be much more likely to retweet whatever *you* have to say – in part simply because they'll feel somewhat obligated to return the favour (obligation/reciprocity is a *very* powerful emotion in business).

Again, this works best if you don't apply it to the huge players who won't even notice you. Do it people who are a little lower down the pecking order than you and try to *benefit* them in doing so. It's no skin off your teeth as long as their post is relevant to your audience and it will still gain you followers when they return the favor. You can then scale this up as you climb the ladder and gain more and more followers.

Inviting People to Join In

Want people to comment and engage you in conversation? Then simply invite them to! Adding a ‘what do you think?’ or ‘opinions please!’ to the end of a message invites discussion and is much more likely to result in proper engagement. Likewise, think about *what* you’re posting about. Does it naturally lend itself to discussion?

And of course to make your account seem active and engaging you should also make sure you answer everyone wherever possible. If you’ve ever read *1,000 True Fans*, then you’ll know what an impact even a single fan can make. Don’t take your followers for granted – they are worth the investment of your time!

Marketing Events

Finally, if you want to draw in a lot of new followers quickly, another powerful strategy is to run some kind of event. This might mean a competition for instance or a giveaway, or it might mean a ‘live Q&A’. Either way, something like this can get people talking, can generate buzz and can be exciting for the followers you already have.

Think about things you can do that will be fun and different and that will stand out. How about challenging your visitors with some kind of brain teaser? Or maybe volunteering to retweet the best comment about your new product? How about letting your users *name* your new comment?



CHAPTER 6

MORE USES AND ANGLES ON TWITTER

We mentioned at the start of this eBook that Twitter was perhaps one of the most *flexible* tools for social media marketing. If you just do everything we've covered then you'll have a very powerful social media account that will grow rapidly, especially if you combine the strategy with great quality content and some creative ideas.

But to get the very most out of Twitter, you should also consider some of its other features. For instance, Twitter advertising and reputation management.



Twitter is a powerful tool for public relations because it gives you a direct means of communication with your audience. This in turn means that you can control the way your brand is seen and it even allows you to respond to comments, criticisms and bad reviews.

One aspect of this is the powerful 'reputation management'. Reputation management is a service provided by many online agencies that changes the way your brand is seen by people researching it online for the first time. This involves the process of responding to reviews and encouraging positive feedback but it can also mean responding to comments and discussions about your brand.

This aspect can be handled very easily on Twitter. To find mentions of your brand on Twitter, you can simply search for it using Twitter's in-built search tool. Hootsuite can do this even better, as can using Twitter's 'Advanced Search' option.

Either way, you can now see when someone is talking about you on Twitter and this gives you the opportunity to respond. Make sure that you write something positive and not defensive or retaliatory, even if it's negative. Likewise, don't ignore the positive comments you receive – instead consider 'favoriting' the comment (which might get you a new follower) or respond to them to thank them for the mention!

You can do the same thing by responding to reviews and putting forward your point of view. Do be careful not to unnecessarily attract more attention to bad press though, it's a fine line to walk!

When Twitter PR Goes Bad...

In fact, there are a lot of ways that Twitter can have the opposite effect to the one you want when it comes to your reputation management and public relations. There are countless examples of celebrities and even business men and women saying things on Twitter and other social media channels that make them look out of touch, petty or stupid. Don't let this happen to you, follow the points below:

- Don't be negative about other brands or users and don't pick fights
- If you are the face of a professional brand, try not to be opinionated on divisive topics
- Stay away from politics and religion, unless you feel very strongly (this is a risk you may still decide to take)
- Research your facts
- Avoid sweeping statements

Twitter Advertising

If you're struggling to get momentum naturally on Twitter, then you can always pay for a little bit of a jumpstart. Twitter advertising is called 'promoted tweets'. This means you'll be able to pay to get your tweets seen by more people. Your tweet will then be seen by more people, though the audience will still be specifically targeted to ensure they are relevant to your niche. You can 'schedule' the Tweet (in a similar manner to Buffer) so it will appear at specific times of day and it will not be shown to your followers unless you want it to be.

Of course you can use Twitter advertising to directly sell a product but very often it can also be used simply to get more people to start following you. This is a great way to get more people to become aware of your brand and while ROI might be slow coming, it can be a great way to attract people you otherwise might not be able to reach if you have the money.

For more advanced marketing though, Facebook ads are far more flexible and powerful, as is Google AdWords. As your social media accounts and blog should all be working synergistically, you might do better to advertise in these places.



CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND A STRATEGY OUTLINE

So there you have it: a complete guide to how you should start getting the very most out of Twitter. Hopefully, this has fuelled you with some inspiration and ideas to help you get started and you should be raring to go.

In case you're a little overwhelmed though, here is an outline for a strategy you can begin employing right away:

1. Create a strong logo and brand – incorporate this across countless social media sites as well as your main blog.
2. Create connections between your accounts so that some content will be auto-generated. Add some content to Buffer to ensure your Twitter never looks 'dead'.
3. Make it easy for yourself to post images and comments with the right apps.
4. STOP posting adverts for your service. Start posting about the niche, lifestyle or industry you deal with. Make sure your content inspires, helps and entertains. Provide *value*.
5. Comment on news and important events. Use the right hashtags to help your content get found.
6. Engage with your audience. Encourage them to join in with conversations.
7. Ad new users and retweet their best content.
8. Use ad swaps and influencer marketing to hack your growth and start getting higher faster.
9. Gradually interact with users that have higher and higher numbers of followers. Utilize the power of your real world connections and work with business partners to access their followers.
10. Launch events and competitions to generate buzz and get people excited.
11. Look for mentions of your brand and respond.
12. Consider promoted Tweets for a boost.

The key, is to make sure you are always providing *value*. Combine this with strong branding and lots of opportunities for people to find your content and you won't go far wrong.

Good luck and happy tweeting!