

Top 5

Twitter
www.twitter.com

1 Navigating the Twitterverse

Does Twitter feel alien to you? If “tweeting” seems overwhelming, start by creating a powerful **public** profile that will set the tone for your Twitter image. Upload a professional photograph or logo to use as your profile image. Create a @username that clearly identifies you and your purpose for being on Twitter. Refrain from tweeting personal information (family pictures, personal details, etc.) and attaching a location to your tweets. This will help you maintain professionalism and safety. In your profile, provide a 1-2 sentence description of your professional role or organization, and link to a professional/organizational website.

2 Making a difference (in 140 characters or less)

What makes Twitter a unique social media application is its ability to allow virtual interaction in real time. Be current. Know what’s “trending.” Shoot for tweets that are 120 characters in length (including spacing and punctuation). This will provide the character space needed (from the 140 max) for a follower to retweet your message using your @username. Reduce your URL link (using a free service such as bit.ly or tinyURL) and acronyms or abbreviations when possible.

3 Tweet this, not that

When you tweet, aim for an overall balance between content, retweets, and personal responses/replies. A “retweet” (RT) is when you share someone’s tweet with your followers. A “direct message” (DM) is a private message that can be sent to a follower’s private Twitter inbox. A basic “reply” is a public tweet that includes a @username. Refrain from posting personal biases, political views, or anything that could be seen as unprofessional, crude, or offensive. Always give credit to your sources by linking to their @username. Make your content current, creative, credible, and interactive.

4 Hashtags, Retweets, and mentions, oh my!

Posts tweets that are #interesting, #educational, and #relevant. Use # “hashtags” to mark key words in your tweets that are categorized during Twitter searches. Also, consider hosting/attending a “live” twitter event or theming a social media campaign using #hashtags. “Mention” users in your tweets using their @username. Thank new followers using @username mentions. Follow interesting (credible) users who regularly post facts and links that you can RT to your followers. Don’t want to RT? Then quote the tweet instead, and use forward slashes // to add a personal comment.

5 If you tweet it, they will follow

Don’t worry if at first you only have a few “followers.” Your list of followers will grow once you begin tweeting. Initially, follow a few credible users and begin tweeting (and retweeting). Grow your “followers” by following users who follow you (after browsing their profile and gauging their authenticity, credibility, etc.). “Block” spammers and fraudulent accounts, as well as anyone who tweets offensive material using your username. Follow more users as your account grows. Promote your @username on other websites or social media applications that are professionally linked to you/your organization.

