

# How to Use Twitter

## Expert Tips for Social Engagement

Twitter is on the way to breaking the stereotype that the network is simply a broadcast of people's personal thoughts. Show your supporters that Twitter is a way to update them, to receive their feedback, and to constantly progress toward your common goals.

### Develop Your Brand

- Everything you tweet is representative of your organization's culture and brand. Choose a voice that is best for interacting with your specific audience and make sure each tweet contributes to the vibe you want your organization or project to give off.
- Don't be too serious and only tweet commands, be sure to be fun and change up your content.
- Make sure you utilize the bio section on your Twitter profile so users can get a snapshot of your cause, organization mission, website, and the best way to contact you to learn more (max characters is 160).

### Collect Feedback

- Get your audience's opinion for free. Take advantage of asking questions as you build your brands logo or choose your next program location. Users love being involved, and their perspective is invaluable!

### Build a Following

- Follow others that are tweeting about topics relevant to your cause and your followers. Engage with other smaller and develop your network.
- It will be a slow process, and initially you might feel like you're tweeting and no one is listening, but keep going and build your content and followers. Eventually other users will tweet back at you and others will retweet you. The more this happens, the more users will follow you.
- Don't be discouraged; building a twitter following can take anywhere from 3-6 months just to get several hundred followers.
- Include your Twitter handle in your email signature, business card, and other outbound communications.

### Drive Traffic

- Send your followers to your site or new page of content.
- You can also ask your followers to RT (retweet) specific posts in hopes of getting their friends to follow you, too.
- Set up a bit.ly account to shorten URLs and track clicks, referrals, and other useful data insights.

## Engage

- Have fun and talk with your followers and those you follow! Ask questions, share facts, or use a hashtag (ex. #DSU).
- You can set small goals and rewards like, “our 150th follower gets a free DVD of Waiting for Superman.”
- Compliment, agree, disagree, or RT those you follow or who tweet at you.
- Remember, Twitter is meant to be a two-way communication platform. If your Twitter feed doesn't include frequent @replies or retweets you're doing something wrong. For the most success, actively engage with other users and their content.
- Easily search and engage with conversations about your cause by going to Twitter Search.

## Targeted Search

- Use helpful Twitter directories like We Follow to search relevant keywords based on your cause. You can easily search Twitter users based on influence and number of followers.
- Many users create Twitter lists for specific verticals, such as “cause” or “non-profit.” Click on lists created by Twitter users to easily follow a specific set of Twitter users. You can create a list of your own to better network within Twitter and become a resource for your specific cause.

## Helpful Applications

- A majority of Twitter users do not use Twitter for Desktop. They tend to access Twitter using a third-party application like TweetDeck, Twhirl, HootSuite, or a mobile phone application. These applications are helpful because you can view multiple streams simultaneously, set up specific search terms, and even schedule out your social media ahead of time. They're also simple to setup and free!

## Find People

- Need a new volunteer director or marketing director? Why not seek applicants that already follow you? Tweet opportunities.
- Ask for help with smaller things, like spiffing up your logo! Twitter can help you find free or cheap help.

## Stay Up to Date

- Follow news sources that will keep you in the loop on your cause nationally and internationally.

## Network

- Twitter can be a casual way to introduce yourself and your org to higher profile people. Work to connect with industry leaders and establish the start of a relationship.

## Cover an Event

- Are you attending a conference? Live tweet some of the highlights of the event as it happens. Share the experience and tweet great content. Don't forget to use the conference hashtag.

## Mix it Up!

- Share videos, infographics, other websites, and more fun material. This content can be your own or other great stuff you find.
- You don't always have to share your own content on Twitter! In fact, if you don't have the bandwidth to always be a content creator, it's best to be a content *curator*. Spend your time finding the best pieces of content and information to share with your followers and promote the work of other like-minded organizations on your Twitter feed!

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