

# Embracing Twitter

**...SO IT'LL EMBRACE  
YOU BACK**

*An Advice  
Handbook  
for the Wary*

**Edited by Ben Henick  
and Justin McCullough**  
Introduction by Liz Strauss

[WWW.EMBRACINGTWITTER.COM](http://WWW.EMBRACINGTWITTER.COM)

JANUARY 2011  
VERSION 1.0

# Embracing Twitter... So It'll Embrace You Back

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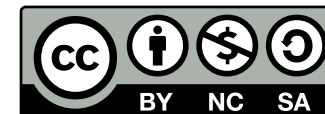
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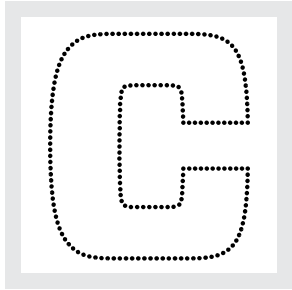
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## Liz Strauss

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# An Introduction to Twitter

WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME “WHY TWITTER?” I often think to myself, why email? Why telephone? Why networking events? Why paper and pencil? Why talk?

Twitter is a communications hub that pulls together key features all of these media and extends them with the speed and reach of the Internet. The beauty of Twitter is in its simplicity and versatility. Keep your eyes on a Twitter stream for a while, and you’ll find that the same kinds conversations occur between people, anywhere people gather.

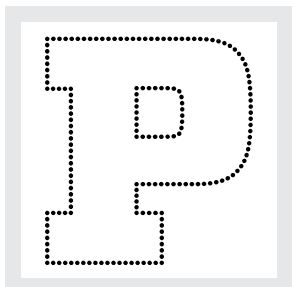
Twitter is the world’s largest networking room. The people I choose to follow on Twitter are the people who are interested in business, strategy, and making the most of their lives. At any time of day or night, I can sign in and have an intelligent conversation, to answer a question about how I might approach something I’m launching online. I might share a job description that I’ve heard about or pass on a great article on how to make better client relationships. When someone comments with a thoughtful answer, you can bet that it won’t be long before we talk offline. That’s how business happens on Twitter.

Twitter is the new water cooler and the new executive washroom. The people who connect on Twitter tend to be of “like mind.” We share information and news; we pass it along with our “like minds” at the front of our thoughts. With so many friends sharing information, I feel secure that any industry news relevant what I’m doing will make its way to me on Twitter, so in effect, Twitter makes me more valuable to my clients. I also work with people I know on Twitter to launch new programs and celebrate new victories, in ways that highlight the fundamentals of great business relationships.

This week someone called me their favorite professor at “Twitter University.” It makes me smile when I think of the Twitter chats that start every evening when people meet under hashtags (meta-data), such as [#leadershipchat](#) or [#blogchat](#), to share strategies and describe successes. We’re all learning together, and getting better *in real time*.

When someone says “I don’t have time for Twitter,” I reply, “folks once didn’t have time for email, either.”

Why “Twitter?” Give it a sincere effort for a month and see how it changes your business and your life.



# Preface

**W**ITHIN THE PAGES OF THIS BOOK, YOU WILL learn best practices and recommended uses of Twitter. This book is intended for those learning how to get the most from Twitter, but it also serves as a guide through the world of social media in general and conveys many of the intentions and attitudes of users who participate in online conversations. This book is also useful for experienced users who want a better understanding of tools, structure, and activities that create an optimal Twitter experience. After reading this book, you will understand why Twitter continues to grow in popularity among all types of social media users.

For those unfamiliar with Twitter terminology, we have included a brief description of the most common terms used in this book.

**Tweet(s)** are Twitter updates or status updates limited to 140 characters.

**@PERSONSNAME** is the username or “handle” for a person on Twitter, and is case-insensitive.

An **@reply** or **at-reply** is what you create when you include someone’s username at the beginning of a Tweet, signaling that you are addressing that user directly.

A **mention** is created when you write a Tweet that includes someone’s username anywhere in the Tweet. These are often used like they would be in an email’s CC line, since all Twitter users have near-instant access to all recent Tweets that mention them personally.

**DM** stands for “direct message”—a private message that is only visible to a single intended recipient.

**RT** is an abbreviation of **Retweet**, a Tweet that copies one posted earlier by another Twitter user.

The **#** symbol, when placed at the beginning of a word, creates what is called a **hashtag**, a way of indicating that you would like that word to be easily searchable.

When you mark another user’s Tweets for inclusion in the timeline of Tweets you want to read, you become one of that user’s **followers**. You can follow most users without requesting approval. Mentions of “following” and “unfollowing” often refer to this process.

The **#ff** and **#followfriday** hashtags refer to a Twitter tradition in which users go out of their way to mention other users who make good use of Twitter, or to introduce new users.

*(continued)*



This book took shape over a period of six months by asking my (Justin's) friends within the Twitter community to share their insights and experiences. The result is more than 30 thoughtful submissions from social media experts at Fortune 500 companies, Social Media Club chapter founders, published authors and professional speakers, business owners, bloggers, educators, consultants, marketers, web professionals, and all-around good people. By collecting as many experienced voices as possible, and asking them to speak up about the subject of using Twitter well, we were able to create this shared source of information. Lots of names are in this book, and they're all attached to people who have learned valuable lessons about social media through effort and experience.

For everyone in this book, the return on investment comes not just from some sort of crazy altruistic warm-fuzziness, but from the same notions of community and communication that drew us to Twitter in the first place. Twitter at its simplest is based on sharing.

We all contributed with thoughts of newcomers who want to better brand themselves or their businesses. That starts to happen once you've built a network of trusted followers, who all make

a point of sharing information with you and with one another. This book discusses how you can most effectively build that network and gain, both personally and professionally, by respecting and adding to its value through your own effort.

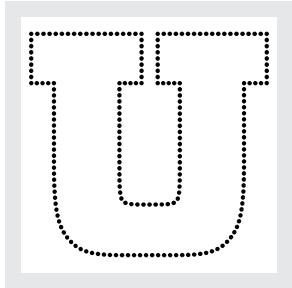
The social media platform works because people can contribute whatever they want to it, whenever they want, and in so doing provide information of interest to others. The sooner we get the newcomers "over the hump," the sooner they start contributing... and the sooner they start contributing, the sooner the entire community benefits from their participation.

So goes the momentum that this book wishes to create.

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**A technical note about this eBook:** This book contains at the bottom of each page links to its Table of Contents, Contributor Summary, and the adjacent pages. You will also see underlined links that are similar in appearance to links found in Tweets; these will take you to Twitter user pages, Twitter search results, and external web sites. For more information about how the links to Twitter appear, consult the previous page.





# A Note About You, the Reader

**Y**OU'LL KNOW THAT THIS BOOK IS RIGHT FOR you if you find yourself answering yes to any of the following questions:

- Are you not sure what Twitter can do for you?
- Are you concerned about Twitter's reliability?
- Are you avoiding Twitter because it requires too much time?
- Concerned that you aren't the sort of person who would be on Twitter?
- Do you feel discouraged or out of touch because of all of the "buzz" about Twitter?
- Are you already on Twitter, but not getting much out of it?
- Do you think Twitter is a hipster toy and nothing more than a distraction?
- Are people telling you that you *must* join Twitter?
- Do you want more traffic for your website, videos, or other online content?
- Do you want to know when someone is talking about you or your business?
- Do you want to be where your customers are?

You are not alone. I believe that everyone on Twitter—except the guys who built it—has answered “yes” to at least one or two of these questions, too. This eBook intends to answer those questions.

## Share This Book!

**This entire book was created on the premise of sharing in order to help others embrace Twitter. Please continue this by sharing this book with your friends, coworkers, and community.**

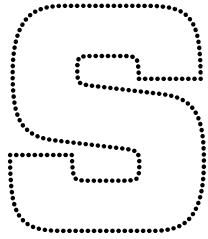
**It's Easy: Click Click. Shared.**

You can help share and spread this book by:

- Emailing the entire book, or just a download link, to a friend.
- Tweeting the web site link or download link.
- Sharing or liking the web site link on Facebook.
- Bookmarking the website in [StumbleUpon](#), [Delicious](#), [Reddit](#), and many others.

Doing it now is better than doing it later. “Later” is where distractions live and intentions die, at the feet of new priorities. So please, share this today!





[Hover your mouse over a name or title to read a summary here, then click the name or title to go to that article.]

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# David Murray

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HIS BIO: Speaker. Social Media Club Detroit founder, [@FutureMidwest](#) co-chair, [@BrandCampU](#) organizer; I do social/digital marketing for [re:group, Inc.](#)

# Ready to Shake Hands?

## HOW DO YOU DEFINE A HANDSHAKE?

That's an easy question to answer, right? I mean, to nearly all of us, a handshake is physical ritual. It's a greeting, or the conclusion to the exchange of dialogue or ideas—the physical representation of *connecting*.

How does a handshake translate to the digital world?

That's a question that may not be so easy to answer. Or maybe it is, because our physical, personal behavior translates to the digital world. If we think of a handshake as the initial greeting before a conversation, then a digital translation is not out of reach.

Let's use Twitter as an example. Twitter is one of the fastest ways you can shake hands digitally. A conversation's happening—you just need to make your introduction. Sign up, write a profile, and you're ready. The application itself is the handshake.

A "digital" handshake is still about making *connections*. However, like any initial greeting and conversation, it can't be one sided. The same practices and courtesies that govern our relationships in the physical world... apply online. When you put your hand out for an online handshake, you still need to give people a reason to take it.

To do that, provide an atmosphere where a healthy conversation is encouraged. Others should feel that their ideas are welcome, that you truly care and want to listen. This sincerity drives successful communities, especially social media communities.

You can't expect to walk up to someone, shake their hand or slap them on the back, and just walk away. That doesn't work in the physical world, and it won't work online.

Chew on this thought: over the course of your lifetime, think about all the hands you've shaken. How many of those physical handshakes turned into meaningful relationships, and ultimately business opportunities? With that thought in mind, think further about all of the potential on-line connections you might make in communities that that are waiting for you to extend your hand.

Are you ready to shake hands in the digital world? *I thought so.*

**Think of online conversations as being no less personal than verbal ones.**

**Sincerity is the first step to building trust.**





# Gurus Aren't Built in a Day

William C. Reichard

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WEBSITE: <http://will.crosscutcommunications.com>

LOCATION: Albuquerque, N.M.

HIS BIO: MBA, (e)WREI, idea addict; fan of anthropology, technology, cooperation gain, [#SMC](#), and coffee. Almost like the guy on Star Trek. How can I help you?

THE BEST ADVICE I COULD GIVE FOR THOSE just starting on Twitter is this: *Twitter can be incredibly fun, but it's going to take a little time.*

I was a social media skeptic, and got involved only when the second major wave of Twitter started.

In the beginning, it's best of think of Twitter as pure entertainment. Just plan to wander (happily) for a while amid scenes of incredible bustle as you get your legs. At first, it's a little like being teleported to Times Square after growing up on a deserted island. You need to know that there are riches to be found there, that it's safe, and that—over time—you can find some amazing resources.

You can get all kinds of information, feedback, interpersonal connection, and personal and professional support from Twitter. It's different from almost anything you've tried before, so plan to give yourself some time to truly evaluate it.

Explore a little before leaping in head-first.

Look for the people who make it a point to help others, and they'll help you too. It's a remarkably friendly and polite culture. In fact, one of the great strengths of Twitter is that it doesn't require relationships to be two-way, so you can meet new people very easily—that feature is built into the platform and culture.

Find the users who share, and share back.

Twitter rocks if you can invest a little time in learning the ropes! I hope you can join us!



## Erno Hannink

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Doetinchern, Holland

HIS BIO: I help independent professionals use social media to get more clients. Expert in online marketing, Facebook, and WordPress. Active with SMC Holland and WordCamp NL.

# The *Why* Is More Important Than the *How*

THE “WHAT” OF TWITTER IS EASY TO EXPLAIN, and there are plenty of books and articles you can find that explain the “how” of Twitter. The most important question is why you would use Twitter, and that one is a little more difficult to answer.

The answer to *why* you use Twitter relates to why you are in business, and why you get out of bed in the morning.

What do you bring to the world to make it a better place for the people around you? When you have the answer to *that* question, you’ll know why you would join Twitter.

Twitter is a great platform for spreading your message and finding “fans.”

You don’t want to rely on a platform you don’t control to build a community around your brand. That platform might disappear or change drastically with the press of a key. Instead your website or blog is your first platform, your hub, where you work hardest to build a solid community around your message and brand. Twitter works well for your second platform because everything’s kept short and sweet (well, mostly sweet). The 140-character limit takes care of that!

**The “how” of Twitter is easy, but first you need to figure out the “why.”**

**Use social media (which you can’t control) to invite readers to your own sites (which you can).**

**The 140-character limitation is a tiny curse and a huge blessing.**

Writing a book is easy once you’re used to the workload, but it’s difficult to “omit needless words” so that the book becomes outstanding. Twitter takes that to an extreme, which means that you put a lot of thought into every word you put into a good Tweet.

Opportunities come from earning the trust of others, and on Twitter you do that a little bit at a time... but first you need to attract your future fans.

To do that, and communicate your entire message, you need to follow a three-stage strategy:

1. Answer the question of why you want to be on Twitter.
2. Build your own site—your *hub*—where you can spread your message.
3. Attract fans on social media platforms like Twitter, and invite them to your “hub.” This way you will build trust with your followers. When people trust they care, and when they care they listen... when you have something important to say.





# Kneale Mann

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LOCATION: Ottawa, Ont.

HIS BIO: Marketing + Social Media Strategist | Writer | Speaker. Helping you integrate all you do with all you do.

# Don't Crash the Party

PEOPLE ARE CONSTANTLY DOING BUSINESS ON Twitter, but all of those people have taken the time to get to know each other, just like they do on other social networking platforms.

Twitter is simply a conduit to new relationships—an easy one to learn and use, but a mere conduit nonetheless. Respect and decorum go a long way, just like they do when you're starting an interpersonal relationship in any other setting. The axiom "treat people how you want to be treated" is just as valid online, as in life.

On the "social web," each of us is a part of a much larger conversation. That means listening is just as essential as participation. Twitter isn't just a bunch of people holding conversations about what they ate for lunch. A lot of conversations with substance are held on Twitter.

However, as in "normal" life, you cannot skip steps, and the quickest way to alienate people on Twitter is to start with an unsolicited business offer. Those don't work any better on Twitter than they do offline.

Think of Twitter like this: imagine that a friend invites you to a backyard barbecue, and they are the only person you know at the party. You wouldn't show up with a box of business cards and start talking about yourself. You would *introduce yourself* to people and hold conversations.

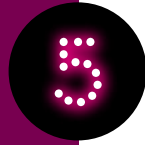
If you put in the time, be yourself, and stay curious about others, you can find people from all over the world who share your interests. Magic happens when you join Twitter, listen, and have something to say in reply.

That magic is the reason for this book: we've all gained and learned from the interpersonal relationships we started on Twitter, and we want to share that with people who haven't even joined Twitter yet!

**There are no shortcuts, but the rewards come in proportion to the effort.**

**Twitter is full of people who share your interests, but you'll only find that out if you treat them with the same regard you would offline.**





## Justin McCullough

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OUR NOTE: This book is Justin's project. He called for submissions, compiled them, and provided the high-level editorial guidance that led to what you have in front of you right now.

# Wax On, Wax Off

I'M AT MY BEST WHEN I'M IN A POSITION TO practice "thought leadership." However, that's not the natural state for the beginner, and I was no exception I first joined Twitter. Like the Karate Kid I went through a "wax on, wax off" phase, and had to get past some fundamental knowledge gaps. If the following questions and answers had been available to me on an FAQ page, that early phase would've ended sooner.

*How do I know who to follow?* By all means, follow the contributors of this book, and you'll be on the right track—but don't stop there. Be sure to check out the followers of the people who invited you to use Twitter. You should also ask them whom they consider "must-follows." Finally, you can use keyword searches and tools like Twellow.com to find new faces outside your circle of "usual suspects."

*How do I know what to say?* Casual users have a lot of freedom to babble, but professionals need more focus and direction. First, you need to choose a voice and stick to it; second, you should choose areas of specific interest to Tweet about and stay on message. I post inspirational messages, business and social media how-tos,

and personal business insights—many in Retweet form. I also share occasional personal details, like news about my newborn son, to show that there's more to know about me than the way I do business.

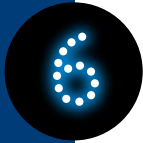
*How do I get x out of Twitter?* The most important requirement of getting anything out of Twitter is to put in time and respect. Take the high road, stay positive, and get to know people instead of leaping straight into your pitch. Once you've gotten these rules down, Twitter can be a great place to do business.

*How much time will it take?* You need to manage your time, but the work that goes into holding conversations and building relationships on Twitter will take more of your time... not less. You can't just spit out the occasional Tweet and expect solid results. Visibility means activity. To gain followers and potential business associates, you'll need to spend time paying attention and making dialogue.

**You get out of Twitter what you put into it.**

**You have strengths and a personal voice; figure out what they are and put them across in your Tweets as best you can.**

**You'll make friends before you make deals.**



## Amber Osborne

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HER BIO: Destroyer of Social Media Boredom. Blue Haired Blogger. 'Best of The Bay Winner: Tampa's Best Twitter Personality.' Nothing Is Impossible.

# Choosing and Adopting Your 'Twitter Family'

I BET THAT YOU'VE ASKED YOURSELF, "How can I rock the Twitterverse?" I came to my answer for that question by traveling a rough road.

After losing my job, I didn't have much hope until I started chatting with people on Twitter. It was the best way to network, even in my underwear! These are people that successfully work for themselves, or are creative, passionate gurus about life.—and they're a really positive driving force in mine.

By reading blogs, I found a few inspiring "Tweeps" who started me on my search for interesting, intelligent and inspiring minds. I've seen the connections grow much more quickly than I expected, because so many of the people I've found mention my website, and point me at *other* interesting people whom they follow, and they've become a sort of second family that lends me great advice and confidence about my future.

**Reach out to people with whom you interact in social media, both on- and offline.**

**Seek out people to follow whom you find interesting, and don't be shy about expressing that interest.**

**Be polite.**

**Used well, social media can be the launching point for new friendships and big life changes.**

Twitter has changed my life, since without it I doubt that I could have met so many amazing people, despite the allure of my yam cakes. So many of them go out of their way to help people just because they can, and that says more than words to me.

Here are three effective ways to find good people like these to follow:

- Use local Twitter search sites like [Twellow.com](http://Twellow.com).
- Attend local Tweetups and other network events.
- Read [Mashable.com](http://Mashable.com) to find out about upcoming local social media events.

I also have what I call my ABC's for earning attention from the people I follow:

- *Ask questions.* If they're doing something that interests you, ask about it.
- *Be nice.* Don't be pushy, give compliments, and provide good advice.
- *Connect* by relating the interests that you have in common with others.

These actions will make the difference between you and any person who has silently "followed" you for months, or never replies with anything but a simple "yeah, that's cool." Truly personal touches like handwritten notes make you stand out even more.





## Amy Domestico

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HER BIO: Paving the road between Social Media and Brands.

# Don't Worry About the Grammar

DO TYPOS REALLY MATTER, WHEN YOU'RE "speaking" in 140 characters or less? I don't think so. I see billion-dollar companies shortening "you" to "u" all the time.

Not everybody uses txt-spk when they write Tweets, but plenty do. I imagine archaeologists finding an old PC in a few thousand years, trying to decipher Twitter like it's in a unique code. Let them figure out this Tweet, evidently posted by [@aplusk](https://twitter.com/aplusk) (Ashton Kutcher):

RT [@verolaza](https://twitter.com/verolaza): come out and play!  
[@sadaoturner](https://twitter.com/sadaoturner) [@ryanseacrest](https://twitter.com/ryanseacrest)! we have [#giltcitytreats](https://twitter.com/giltcitytreats) for you from [@giltcityla](https://twitter.com/giltcityla)!  
<http://twitpic.com/2mi274>

It won't make much sense, unless—maybe—they still have cupcakes in a few thousand years.

Consider hashtags, like [#giltcitytreats](https://twitter.com/giltcitytreats) in that quoted message. They don't make much sense until you get familiar with Twitter, but once you do, you realize that they provide metadata and make it easier to search for Tweets about specific topics. An important hashtag you'll see is [#ff](https://twitter.com/ff) or [#FF](https://twitter.com/FF), which stand for "Follow Friday"—a Twitter tradition where users call attention to their followers just because they can.

If you read through other essays in this book, you'll find a lot of enthusiasm for replies and Retweets. These all include a Twitter username that starts with "@," just like in that quote. Other users can search for Tweets that mention them in this way, and third-party Twitter software will display those Tweets as soon as they're posted.

An important and common abbreviation you'll see is "RT," which means "Retweet." That's what you call it when you want to share someone else's Tweet with others.

If you get tired of trying to decipher crazy abbreviations and symbols, you can always just say what's on your mind in *your* style... and if you have any followers at all, you'll find yourself having *conversations*, 140 characters at a time. If you're *still* uncomfortable with that limit, there are also services like [Cinchcast](https://www.cinchcast.com) where you can record an audio message and link to it on Twitter. Just *talk*, if that's what it takes to get comfortable.

**Sometimes you need to be creative about compressing what you want to communicate into only 140 characters.**

**Twitter, like all social media, is all about communicating with other people.**





Chris  
Garrett

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HIS BIO: Web geek and co-author of *ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure Income*.

OUR NOTE: *ProBlogger* has earned 48 five-star reviews from Amazon as of this writing.

# My Day Never Has More Than 24 Hours in It, Either

WHEN I CONSULT SMALL BUSINESSES, THEY tell me that they are short of two important things:

...Time and money.

Is this a familiar situation for you, maybe?

The “free” aspect of social media, and of Twitter in particular, might sound appealing, but that shortage of time can take some of the shine off, so to speak.

Social media isn’t a lost cause for small businesses, though. In working with my consulting and coaching clients I’ve worked out that it’s definitely possible to get a great return on your investment of time in Twitter, if you make a habit of giving it 20 minutes of quality time every day.

**Look before you leap, and you’ll waste less time.**

**Steady wins the race; don’t flood timelines.**

**You are a person, even if you represent a business. Act like a person, not a business.**

Here’s a short list of ten ways to get the most out of the time you spend on Twitter:

1. If you’re thinking of following someone, read their recent Tweets first.
2. Don’t hesitate to un-follow someone if they generate more noise than value.
3. Remember that Twitter is for communication, not measuring popularity.
4. Give as many details in your Twitter “bio” as you can without feeling like you’re giving away too much privacy.
5. Be friendly.
6. Don’t feel obligated to reciprocate when people follow you.
7. Don’t spam or flood; always post information that will be valuable to at least some of your followers.
8. Engage people with dialogue, not broadcasting.
9. Be patient with the “Fail Whale.” (Errors are never your fault on Twitter.)
10. Find third-party tools that look interesting, and learn to use some of them.







# Six Ideas for the Newcomer

Michelle Mangen

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WEBSITE: <http://www.thevirtualasst.com/blog>

LOCATION: Neenah, Wisc. and Venice, Fla.

HER BIO: Professional virtual assistant. Expert with social media, WordPress, Quickbooks, Excel, and bookkeeping.

IF YOU'RE A NEWCOMER TO TWITTER, consider the following advice...

1. Commit to *spending at least two 15-minute blocks of time* on your account each day. The best ways to spend that time include finding new people to follow, Retweeting stuff that resonates with you, jumping into a conversation, or reading—and publicly commenting upon—one of your followers' blogs.
2. Find a *third-party tool* such as [HootSuite](#), [MyVBO](#), [Pluggio](#), [TweetDeck](#), or [Seesmic](#) that works for you, and learn how to use it. Many of these tools also allow you to manage accounts on multiple social media services.

**Manage your social media time closely.**

**Utilize third-party tools that can make things easier.**

**Invest good energy in finding and reaching out to others.**

3. If you're interested in finding people to follow, set up a *keyword search*. Use [SocialOomph](#) or a similar service, if Twitter's keyword search feature doesn't meet all of your needs when it comes to tracking your interests.
4. Once you follow someone, quickly *reach out* to them by sending a meaningful reply to one of their recent Tweets.
5. They might be cliché, but *affirmations and aphorisms* are some of the most Retweeted items.
6. *Share your thoughts* instead of merely broadcasting them. Don't be pushy.





## Kelly Olexa

HANDLE: [@KellyOlexa](#)

WEBSITE: <http://www.kellyolexa.com>

LOCATION: Chicago, Ill.

HER BIO: Sales and Marketing Diva, Fitness Fanatic, Starbucks Addict, Social Media Cupcake: Ford Fiesta Movement Agent, Sears Fit Club Partner. Show me the sushi.

# Money Can't Buy You Influence (On Twitter)

THE MOST COMMON QUESTION THAT I'M ASKED about Twitter is, "how did you get so many followers?" The answer is simple: when I'm on Twitter, I talk to people. I talk to everyone, about everything. I don't target people. I just talk and share information the same way I do offline.

People sometimes look at how many followers they have, and equate that with influence worth paying for. There are countless options out there for those people; if I wanted to, I could adopt any number of software options for gaining followers, and within a month, I'd have tens of thousands more followers if I wanted to go nutty.

However, these numbers mean nothing. When you start counting people like that, you're treating them like they're on a mailing list. Is everyone on that list sitting at their mailboxes, waiting breathlessly for your envelope to arrive? I doubt it. That doesn't stop some people from taking the nuttiness a step further by using software to auto-post Tweets, instead of writing Tweets themselves.

Think about that. If you buy "access" to random followers, then use an automated service to send out messages that you didn't write, then...

No one is paying attention. Your followers didn't choose to follow you, so your total number of followers is nothing more than a meaningless number.

Twitter is fantastic for making connections with new people, because it takes a lot of the work out of conversation and allows people to be themselves. There will always be people with more followers, or less. There will also be no shortage of people ready to hold a conversation on Twitter, so focus on talking with others, getting to know them, learning from them, and sharing information with them.

I promise that if you keep a focus on conversation, it will change the entire landscape of your personal network of contacts. I've made more new contacts in two years, using Twitter, than in the rest of my career altogether.

Get on Twitter and just be yourself. Talk like you do in person. Reach out and chat... um, Tweet, I mean.

**Twitter is about people talking to people. Don't make the mistake of letting software talk to software.**

**You can't buy the achievement of your social media marketing goals; you need to put in the time.**





## Stephanie Molina

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LOCATION: Beaumont, Tex.

HER BIO: Mom, PR & Tourism professional, Creative, graphic designer, and tech nerd. Marketing Director of the Beaumont, Texas Convention & Visitors Bureau. Note: switches roles often.

**B**E INTERESTING. BE COMPELLING. BE RELEVANT. And, for the love of all things holy, if you're going to talk about your PB&J, say something to make me want a bite. Try not to just talk *at* people, but *engage* them.

**Be interesting.**

How do you engage on Twitter? Learn the game by playing along. Follow people you can grow from, either someone in your industry or someone whose experience is completely different.

**Seek out people from whom you can learn.**

# Engagement

Listen in on their Tweets, and then try Twitter out yourself. In the realm of social media, you just do it. That's how you learn.

Be polite.

...And remember that what you share is being read by lots of people.



Becky McCray

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LOCATION: Alva, Okla.

HER BIO: Rural entrepreneur. Teaching new marketing with [TourismCurrents.com](#). Learning from small town businesses about survival and community building.

HER NOTE: Credit goes to Doug at Authentic Seacoast ([@AuthenticCoast](#)) and Shannon Lane ([@Cajun\\_Mama](#)) for the discussion that led me to write this tip.

# Make It Interesting

**M**AKE YOUR STREAM INTERESTING; INCLUDE the details that bring things to life.

It's not enough to tell us that you are eating a sandwich. Tell us that it's a local specialty like a lobster sandwich. Tell us about the really cool local cafe where you got it. Include a [TwitPic](#). Now we're starting to get hungry!

**Don't hesitate to share interesting details.**

**Focus on the things that really stand out.**

Apply the same thinking to any topic you talk about. If you mention a local business, tell what is special about them. Reading a great post? Distill out one point to share.





## John Antonios

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LOCATION: Egypt and Lebanon

HIS BIO: A passionate, creative, & dedicated social media & personal branding consultant. Always interested in learning and sharing what I learn with you!

OUR NOTE: The original version of this essay can be found on John's blog, titled "[Twitter—The 10 Commandments.](#)"

# The Twitter Ten Commandments

WE SEE THE TERM "FOLLOWERS" ON TWITTER all the time, and that leads me to think of religion. When I imagine what the two have in common I discover—much to my surprise!—that the precepts of the world's religions can be applied to the way we use Twitter.

Since social media has more devoted participants than many of the world's religions, I want to present Ten Laws in an unequivocal voice, like those used for *mitzvot*, *sharia*, and *dharma*, and apply them to Twitter.

**Be true to yourself in what you share.**

**Be courteous to others as a matter of course.**

**Express gratitude to people who share with you.**

**Always remember that Twitter and social media are about the people who use it—they're not just new marketing platforms.**

1. **Be true to yourself** and others.
2. **Do not claim the Tweets of others** as your own. When you read an interesting Tweet and find it worthy of being passed on, give credit to its source.
3. **Honor your followers**, and those whom you follow. Learn and work to live up to their expectations.
4. **Do not Retweet articles unread.** Careless Retweets can harm your personal brand.
5. **Express gratitude to all who praise** you and your contributions.
6. **Do not settle for Retweets** and at-replies alone.
7. **Do not follow and engage solely for profit.** Instead, follow and engage to learn and share.
8. **Do not auto-follow**, auto-reply, auto-message, or auto-*anything*. You are Man; speak unto others in Man's voice.
9. **Do not act like, much less employ, bots.**
10. **Do not spread rumors.**





# Mohammed Al-Tae

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<http://altaeeblog.com>

LOCATION: Washington, DC

HIS BIO: IT visionary, project manager, and social media leader open for opportunities.

# Anyone Not Busy Learning Is Busy Dying

HERE'S A QUOTE FOR EVERY USER of Twitter to remember:

"Anyone not busy learning is busy dying." —*Felix Dennis*

I have three pieces of advice.

1. When other users mention you as someone to follow, add those to your Twitter favorites so that you can refer to them on your résumé or blog. If you Tweet for quality over quantity, and reach out to your followers effectively, you'll definitely get great testimonials that you can include in other media.
2. Include your Twitter feeds with the rest of your website content. There are a number of tools out there that you can use to make that work.
3. Make each Tweet memorable. Don't just say "thanks" or "hi"—you've got 140 characters, so use them to ask a question, share an idea, or tell another user why you enjoy reading their Tweets.

**Focus on quality over quantity in all things social media.**

Finally, those three pieces of advice are my most important...but here are four more:

4. If an opportunity to reference a recent dialogue presents itself, then take it.
5. Use a background on your Twitter page that will stand out, without being annoying.
6. Make sure that a meaningful link to outside content *about you* is part of your profile.
7. Tweak your Twitter "bio" so that it provides a concise description of what you do.

**Put special effort into being memorable, but not at the cost of being annoying.**



# A Spiritual Guide to Twitter

Misako Lauritzen

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LOCATION: Los Angeles, Calif.

HER BIO: I am an advocate for life's unlimited possibilities. Also an editor at The Linchpin Way Japanese blog: <http://ameblo.jp/thelinchpinway>.

OUR NOTE: The original version of this piece was published [at Misako's blog](#).

**G**O WITH THE FLOW. AVOID TWEETING "IN ORDER to." Twitter is at its most enriching when you approach it in the spirit of fun. It may ultimately lead to marketing or personal branding, but consider such things as added benefits.

Twitter is a great self-discovery tool. Listen and engage, and soon you will discover who your tribes are and what makes you tick.

*Be yourself.* You might think, "I have nothing to Tweet about! I haven't done s\*\*t!" Do not be concerned whether you have something remarkable to say. Tweet what you are having for lunch if you like. Tell us what you're listening to. Tweet random thoughts. Twitter is a human-centric medium. Humans are multidimensional, so Tweets should be multi-dimensional, too.

**Be genuine.**

**Place quality over quantity.**

**Reach out to others with good content and good manners.**

*Be generous.* Share news that you consider important to your "tribes." Give your advice and references freely. Do not hesitate to talk to strangers. Give for no reason. Be generous with acknowledgments. Introduce remarkable people you follow. Retweet to help a movement forward. Tweet "thank you." Let people know if their Tweets move your heart. Make a habit of expressing your appreciation every day, online and off.

*Bigger is not better.* Do not get wound up about having more followers. Follow and be followed by people who matter to you. Build your tribe. A handful of followers who enthusiastically spread your ideas are better than a thousand phantom followers.

*Go to the people.* Listening on Twitter allows me to benefit from people's brilliance every day, and I feel humbled. It inspires me to go out and do great work for my family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and the greater world... and I have my fellow "Tweeple" to thank for that inspiration.





## Chris Garrett

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LOCATION: Calgary, Alta.

HIS BIO: Web geek and co-author of *ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure Income*.

OUR NOTE: *ProBlogger* has earned 48 five-star reviews from Amazon as of this writing.

A list of tools and services is provided on the [last page](#) of this eBook.

# Take the Best and Throw the Rest Away

**READ FIRST.** FIND INTERESTING PEOPLE, AND see how they use the service. Work out the style and flow of Twitter before you wade in, so that can learn how to use it efficiently.

**Audition new contacts.** If someone comes across as spammy or noisy, drop them. Your time is too valuable to waste on leeches!

**Twitter is not a popularity contest.** People who follow many contacts tend to have a greater number of followers, but you want to maintain a good “signal to noise ratio.” Otherwise, Twitter becomes unworkable.

**Set preferences and details that introduce you well.** That way, a casual visitor to your Twitter page will know your name, location, your web site address, and other important facts from the beginning. You’ll be able to avoid conversations that start with “so... what do you do?” and get straight to the interesting details.

**Be friendly.** The whole point of Twitter is to communicate and make connections.

**Reciprocation is optional.** Don’t be upset if someone doesn’t follow you back! You have limited attention to spare, so you cannot possibly follow everyone—but neither can they.

**Don’t spam.** Post *useful* information. If you follow too quickly or post tons of links without engaging other users, your account might be flagged for possible removal. Your return on investment in Twitter comes from people finding value in your contributions, not from bombarding followers with links.

**Engage people in conversation.** Ask interesting questions, and you’ll get interesting answers. Don’t be afraid to answer others’ questions. The worst that can happen is they aren’t paying attention and won’t reply—but they won’t be annoyed, either.

**Twitter’s buggy!** The system drops a lot of messages, and randomly unfollows without your intervention. Then there are the other users, who are of course human and do things like misspell your name. If things seem to be broken, step away and try later.

**Try some tools.** Once you get used to using the Twitter web site, try a desktop Twitter client, or configure the service to send Tweets to your phone. There are all kinds of tools and services out there that help you search and manage your time on Twitter.

People hold the conversation, but software makes it possible—and software breaks.

There’s more to Twitter than just the site.





## Sheila Scarborough

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LOCATION:  
Round Rock, Tex.

HER BIO: I'm a writer specializing in travel, tourism, the social web, and NHRA drag racing. [@TourismCurrents](#) cofounder.

# Getting In...and Getting Out

**T**WITTER IS YOUR OWN HAND-picked group of interesting people, Tweeting interesting things, across all time zones, in most countries, all day and night.

This way of being always-on is what makes Twitter a magnificent source of knowledge, and the most powerful network you've ever had—if you pick the right people to follow.

Twitter is also a magnificent, enormous time-suck that can pull whole hours out of your life.

**Twitter is not just a source of conversation, but a constant source of conversation.**

**If you're an information junkie, Twitter will tax your self-discipline and time management skills, and should be integrated into your life carefully.**

**The best information will find you.**

When you visit Twitter, it's *always* active. If you're in the United States, Europeans are five-plus hours ahead in Tweeting cool stuff when you're just waking up... then if you're up too late, the fun Aussies and everybody in Asia pile on Twitter and can keep you awake all night with their links and insights.

Twitter will make it impossible for you to manage your time, if you aren't careful.

Get in, but set a timer, and get out when you need to. I speak from extensive and regretful experience of *many* wasted days and wasted nights.

If it's important enough, and you're following the right plugged-in people, *that key link or nugget of info will find you*, even when you have things to take your focus away from social media. Trust me.





# Bernie Borges

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WEBSITE: <http://www.findandconvert.com>

LOCATION: Tampa Bay, Fla.

HIS BIO: Social media evangelist, Inbound Marketing agency CEO, blogger, podcaster, speaker, entrepreneur, left my heart in Silicon Valley.

OUR NOTE: Bernie is the author of *Marketing 2.0: Bridging the Gap between Seller and Buyer through Social Media Marketing*, published in July 2009. As of this writing, it has earned 28 five-star reviews on Amazon.

# Sharing

**B**E INTERESTING. POST REMARKS THAT OTHERS may find interesting. No one is interested in where you are, unless you have news to share.

Share links, too. Post links to good articles. *Share, share, share.* Mom taught you that, didn't she?

You show Twitter love through the Retweets. Retweets are Twitter's ultimate compliments.

Use DMs sparingly, but wisely.

Don't auto-DM new followers with a sales pitch. I often unfollow someone as fast as I followed them, if they DM me with a sales pitch and a link to their get-rich-quick scheme.

Barf!

**Share everything you can, especially information and attention.**



## John Stone

HANDLE: [@JohnStone](#)

WEBSITE:  
<http://makingtheexpert.wordpress.com>

LOCATION: Philadelphia, Pa.

HIS BIO: Just your average communications & marketing professional trying to master the Marketing 2.0 world.

HIS NOTE: These tips were originally offered on my blog, at the above URL.

# Twitter PR

**B**Y NOW, YOU HAVE THE BASICS OF NAVIGATING the world of Twitter. Let's take it a step further and give a moment to what I like to call "Twitter PR."

...What is Twitter PR?

Imagine that you're at a party alone, and you're trying to make a friend.

Suppose you see another person standing alone by the punch bowl.

You walk over and say, "hello, my name is John."

Then they respond, "Hi, my name is Matt."

...And then you stare at each other for the rest of the party. Fun!

That sounds silly, right? ...But believe it or not, the equivalent of this exchange takes place all the time online. The beauty of online socialization often lies in anonymity, which happens to be an absolute plague on social media strategy. If your goal is to attract customers, donors, business partners, or even friends, you need to recognize and take advantage of the give-and-take options available on Twitter.

**Silence in social media isn't actually any less awkward than in the real world.**

**When someone follows you, follow them back with sincerity.**

Practicing give and take on Twitter really isn't that hard. Whenever you notice that you have a new and interesting follower, follow them back. Once you do that, you can then send them what's called a "direct message" or DM to thank them for following you.

Once you click on the name of a user who follows you and display their profile in the right column of the web interface, you'll find the [Direct] Message button between their "bio" and recent Tweets.

When you send a direct message, it's really the same as a private e-mail. Only you and the recipient can see it, and like normal messages it's still limited to 140 characters. Just say something like, "thanks for following. I look forward to reading your Tweets." Be creative with these direct messages, and let your personality shine.



## Brendan Wenzel

HANDLE:

[@BrendanWenzel](#)

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LOCATION: Tamarindo,  
Costa Rica

HIS BIO: Life is great!

# Making Friends Before Money

**O**NE THING THAT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER with all social media is to answer the questions that people ask. On Twitter, they ask “what’s happening?” Simply share what you’re doing, and provide context. Don’t over-complicate this.

*Be social!* Read other people’s Tweets so that you can respond to them, Retweet them, and be part of the community. People will not listen to you if you are not listening to them. This is one lesson that I had to learn the hard way.

In your Twitter bio, send people to a page related to social media or Twitter specifically. It’s always important to have your landing page be as specific as possible to the person who’s visiting your site. For example, my landing page discusses my take on advice that was posted by Scott Stratten, who goes by [@unmarketing](#) on Twitter.

Cultivate your own greatest interest not in what you want, but instead what your market (or audience) wants... just as you would offline. People want to be listened to. They want others to interact with them. Give that freely and sincerely, because it will come back tenfold in the end.

Don’t expect to sign up for Twitter and make thousands of dollars in one day. Social media in general doesn’t work that way... and neither does Twitter. You must build up your social credibility before you ever expect to “monetize” social media.

The goal of Twitter isn’t to make money, but to *make friends who will do business with you anytime they need your service or product.*

**Build your credibility before you build your expectations of social media platforms.**

**Make friends first, and money second.**





# What to Share on Twitter

Mike Merrill

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WEBSITE: <http://mikemerrill.com>

LOCATION: Dallas, Tex.

HIS BIO: Mike is the president of the Social Media Club of Dallas, the Director of Marketing at [ReachLocal.com](http://ReachLocal.com), and describes himself as a “Chief Bacon Maker.”

HIS NOTE: The original version of this piece is also available [on my blog](#).

I ENJOY A LOT OF SUCCESS FROM FOLLOWING THE “80/20 Rule” on Twitter.

My basic premise is that 80% of the time, you should be talking about someone other than yourself or your business. The other 20% you spend sharing your own content.

When I look at a business new to Twitter, I often discover that they are primarily sharing their own content such as promotions, press releases or events. However, they aren’t engaging by Retweeting others’ content, replying, or offering general outreach to users via social media monitoring.

Your first goal should be to share content from other sources via Retweets, replies, or direct links to their content.

**Follow an 80/20 Rule and give the better part of that investment to responding to others.**

**Identify the interests of the customers who are following your Tweets, and address those interests when you post.**

The Twitter reply is intended to connect to folks directly in hopes of answering a question, solving a problem, or commenting in general. Go take a look at someone new to Twitter, and see how often they send “@replies” and Retweets. If it appears that they are not that active, and only sharing their own content, they truly do not see the value in Twitter; nor have they made the right time investment. Furthermore, they may see Twitter as just another channel for press releases and promotions. Twitter offers such an effective way to touch potential consumers and influencers that it’s worth a small investment of your time to find the approach to Twitter that works for your business.

...Assuming that you have already researched where your existing and potential customers are spending time online, you can then use that insight to find and create content that would be relevant to them. For example, if I was an IT services provider, I would provide content relevant to the potential end user of my services, such as a Systems Administrator. Why not share server maintenance tips to demonstrate the expertise you have on staff?





# Using Twitter for Business

Mark Brimm

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WEBSITE:  
<http://marcana.com>

HIS BIO: President at [123interface.com](#) & [SocialLabsMedia.com](#). Co-author of AdWords University: The Complete Guide to AdWords. Founder and editor of [Marcana.com](#).

OUR NOTE: Brimm's book, *AdWords University: The Complete Guide to AdWords*, is earning an Amazon rating in excess of four stars as of this writing.

IF YOUR GOAL IS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS through social media, a big temptation you experience when you first join Twitter is to reach immediately for ambitious goals, and learn the ropes later. You can do this, but it's better to slow down and experiment a while, in a safe environment.

The important thing is to keep your focus away from ramping up followers and subscribers like a superhero out of the gate. Quality follows are everything, but software can't teach you how to use it wisely. Slow down for the good of your cause. Your most important focus stays on what you hope to accomplish with social media tools like Twitter, and to have fun learning. If you are in business for yourself — or want to be — listen to me carefully:

*You are not "doing it wrong!"  
It doesn't matter what anyone tells you!*

Never let anyone stunt your creative process.

People aren't born finished; they *become*.

No two people use Twitter in the same way, because we're not robots, we're individuals. Any social media guru worth listening to will empower and energize you, so that you'll be excited to explore your own style and what will work for you. A true guru will not attempt to shut you down with preconceived, static rules based on their own personality type and inner resources.

Here's my four-step Twitter learning process for the easily stressed, designed to impart the ease of learning—and using—Twitter to reach your goals:

1. Experiment with every new social media item that comes out... under an experimental profile, not your "main" one.
2. Learn from your experiments, and from the experiments of others.
3. Plan your "big" social media projects *after* you have your bearings, not before.
4. Lather, rinse and *repeat!*

**When following other users, focus on quality over quantity.**

**Don't allow naysayers to talk you out of executing your ideas.**

**Learn from both failures and successes—others' when you can, and yours when you must.**





# Nathan Hangen

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LOCATION: Fayetteville, N.C.

HIS BIO: Entrepreneur, author, and doer of great work. The world is my oyster, and I'm building an empire inside.

PEOPLE OFTEN MISTAKE MEANINGLESS Retweets (RTs) and replies for communication that engages your community. Although RTing and replying are part of what you need to do to engage well, there is a difference between doing something so that you have an excuse to talk about yourself more, and doing it because you want to interact with your followers.

Engaging with a community requires effort and understanding. You should be asking questions, replying to feedback, and above all, following up. I try to keep a list, either mentally or on paper, of people I interact with on Twitter. Sometimes I will group them, but more often than not, I simply make a mental note of people I've talked with on a daily basis. I try to remember to bring up earlier conversations down the road, because that shows that I actually pay attention. It also demonstrates that our conversations matter to me, and that my conversational partner is not just another face in the crowd.

I also try to engage those whom I have yet to talk to personally. I'll visit their blogs and comment,

or answer questions that I find relevant to their Twitter "conversations"—ongoing replies, sometimes amongst multiple users—that address a single topic. The key is to participate actively on Twitter, not just use it as a way to promote yourself.

Once you build a Twitter audience and start to get a handle on what they like about you, you can then refine your messaging to bring similar users into your audience.

Sometimes, although we think our ideas are great, our customers' ideas are better. Don't be afraid to change, to be flexible and dynamic, and to let others influence the flow of Twitter conversations.

If you're actively listening then you'll know how to do this, but if you're not, then you'll send a broader message that your customer might not want to hear.

Once you finally tap into the right blend of what you want and what your audience wants, then you will build a virtual army of disciples at your feet. You will have an audience eager to promote you ... not because you ask them to, but because *they want to*. This is true capital, and the reason why social media is such an exciting power to harness.

**Personal attention makes all the difference in developing what might be called "social media capital."**

**Remember (or keep a record) of exchanges with other users, and refer back to them when it's appropriate.**

**Make a point of learning what your followers want, and Tweeting accordingly.**





## Chris Garrett

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LOCATION: Calgary, Alta.

HIS BIO: Web geek and co-author of *ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure Income*.

OUR NOTE: *ProBlogger* has earned 48 five-star reviews from Amazon as of this writing.

# (Online) Life Outside of Twitter

ONCE YOU'VE GOTTEN USED TO HOW TWITTER works and flows, then you can really start to get some attention with it.

To drive Twitter traffic to your blog or website, try the following techniques.

**Post manually typed Tweets with a link.** Try to make an eye-catching message. Consider using a headline formula. I offer 102 headline formulas at my [socialmediaworkbook.com](http://socialmediaworkbook.com) site, all designed to encourage click-throughs.

**Use Twitterfeed.com or a blogging extension.** These tools will announce new blog entries on your Twitter page, and forward new Tweets to your blog.

**If you want people to share information and opinions, ask!** It's just as appropriate to ask for feedback on Twitter, as it is at your blog.

**Encourage your followers to add your blog entries to social bookmarking sites.** These include [Reddit.com](http://Reddit.com), [Delicious.com](http://Delicious.com), and [StumbleUpon.com](http://StumbleUpon.com).

**Repeat yourself, at least a little.** Vary the text of the first Tweet you posted to announce a new blog post, and post it again later the same day—maybe even more than once. Many followers miss that first Tweet because they're away from Twitter.

**Focus on the recipient!** Learning how to generate leads on Twitter is a lot of work, but one thing that doesn't change is that your audience always asks, "What's In It For Me?"

Twitter's a sociable place, so you get further by being interesting, remarkable, and most of all useful.

**In order to gain followers and value, you need to give value in the form of useful information first.**

**It's okay to be a little pushy, because not everyone will see you repeat yourself, and many people need to be asked for information instead of volunteering it.**







Jeff Shuey

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HIS BIO: Alliance Manager, Microsoft and Tech (ECM & BPM); Mountain Biker; wind and wake surfer; proud dad; SMC Seattle Board Member.

# Corporate Authenticity and Twitter

SUPPOSE YOUR BOSS TELLS YOU, “HEY, WE’VE gotta get on Twitter.” What’s next?

It’s hard to believe, but companies that aren’t in social media are still the majority. This isn’t bad—companies, just like the people who work for them, are cautious before jumping into the deep end of the pool, so to speak.

You’ll start at the shallow end yourself, start to make waves, and then really splash around, so to speak.

Start at the “shallow end” and get comfortable with Twitter:

- Monitor what big companies are saying and doing.
- Monitor how they are responding to comments, critiques and questions.
- See if you can find your competition and see how they interact.

**Allow your social media staff to communicate person-to-person, instead of forcing them to use an institutional voice.**

**Pay attention to what your customers and competitors are saying and doing in the social media space.**

**Steady engagement is a critical activity.**

**Practice good manners; avoid those who don’t respond in kind.**

Once you get comfortable, make your own waves:

- Get creative. Don’t be bound by what’s been done before.
- Remember that Twitter and other social media general allow for new ways to communicate and engage!

Here are a few more things to think about when you get involved with social media:

- *Have a corporate policy.* It can be simple and permissive, but it needs to exist.
- *Tweet wisely.* You can say anything on Twitter; that doesn’t mean that you always should.
- *Engage with respect.* You’re an ambassador for your company; act like one.
- *Engage consistently.* A 24/7 presence is unnecessary, but real availability isn’t.
- *Don’t kowtow to the haters and trolls.* Don’t let them ruin the experience.
- *Be authentic without taking your company’s voice out of the dialogue completely.* I call this Corporate Authenticity... and when it’s missing, people can tell.



## Dave Barger

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HIS BIO: Web designer and strategist, publisher of [SocialMediaExpedition.com](http://SocialMediaExpedition.com).

# ‘Communication, Not Conversation’ Revisited

IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA REALM THERE ARE SEVERAL online “cocktail party” networks, and the biggest is Twitter. Many of Twitter’s experienced users expect to participate, instead of being *broadcasted-to*.

Much of the broadcasting I’m referring to is the online Command Center “one post gets you everywhere” method of getting a message out. These services let you make one update that automatically posts to multiple social networks. In effect, this approach broadcasts an illusion of participation. If you go there, then your content’s not about conversation, or a relationship—it’s just broadcasting. As Joseph Jaffe put it in a podcast with Jeremiah Owyang, it’s “communication, not conversation.”

Because such a broadcaster isn’t actually *in the network* and participating in the conversation, their content’s akin to direct mail, broadcast email or texting. These are far from genuine and authentic.

I’ll cave to the fact that my definition of genuine in these networks may be old fashioned in a traditional “Web 2.0” sense, but right now, I still enjoy remembering that when I’m on Twitter, I am in fact “participating” in conversations.

**If you’re broadcasting your online content in lieu of holding conversations, you’re talking at people rather than talking with them.**

I enjoyed the illusion of seeing a Tweet and thinking “there is a person in this conversation with me,” *not* some “social” version of the “man behind the curtain”

pulling levers and pressing the “broadcast” button.

If your traditional mindset has you viewing these online communities as one more place where you can direct your commercialized ray-gun megaphone, please rethink your approach. Drop your virtual weapons and reach out your hand to your audience. This is not combat. You don’t get to drive or automate the conversation single-handedly.



## Damond Nollan

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HIS BIO: Web Manager at NCCU.edu, Scrum Master, DBA Student at UOP, KAPSI. Board of Director (MEP), father, son, and friend to all.

# It's Not About the Technology

THE TRUE VALUE OF TWITTER IS NOT FOUND IN the technology. Yes, you read that correctly...

Twitter's value lies in allowing us to connect with others. Technology is not the goal of social networking, but rather a tool used to connect people with one another.

Think about it. Email, Twitter, Facebook, and IM are simply applications used to share thoughts, ideas, experiences, and stories with someone else. Without a receiver, a direct message (DM) would be pointless.

For example:

Recently, while eating lunch with a friend, I shared a conversation that touched on topics about the job, food, family, and achievements. Our time together allowed the two of us an opportunity to grow closer and explore a deeper connection.

This friendship began online but continues to blossom offline. As a result, we are able to use technology to keep in touch when meeting in person is not an option. To me, that is one example of value created by using Twitter.

In business, Twitter can be used to strengthen ties between a company and its clients. Similar to friendships between people, technology can empower organizations to better understand the needs of its clients as well as to communicate a message.

Remember: we are all people with feelings, wants, and needs. Worry less about the latest technology trend, and focus on the *people* in your life. With practice, the online experience will be much more fulfilling.

**It's not the length of the message that matters—it's the content.**

**Twitter is no less about relationships than any other online service.**





## Michael Procopio

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HIS BIO: Technologist, Social Media Strategist, speaker—"Social media marketing success is really about marketing and communications discipline—not tactics, platforms, or technology."

# Twitter in Enterprise B2B Communication

I'M A TECHNOLOGIST AT MY CORE. I'VE SPENT most of my career in product management and product marketing, not in marketing or communications. Since I don't know what I can't do, I do things others might not.

Here are two ways to use Twitter in an outside-of-the-box spirit.

### Automation—a no-no that helps:

One of the no-no's of Twitter is "don't just broadcast." Even so, I run nine Twitter accounts, one "master" account and eight sub-accounts, one for each of our product lines. My company also publishes blogs for most of our product lines. Each blog post is automatically announced on its Twitter sub-account, and all sub-accounts are reweeted by the master account. As a result, the blog entries get approximately 30% more visitors, and the earliest visitors are those for referred from Twitter.

That said, I agree that having a real person write Tweets is the way to go, but wisely-deployed automation is the next-best thing when you have a lot of content to announce.

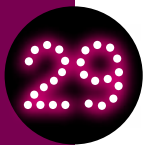
**You might not be using Twitter in the "best" way, but that doesn't mean your way lacks value.**

**Twitter for thought leadership:** If you decide to project thought leadership as a major part of a campaign strategy, how can Twitter help? One way to be seen as a thought leader is to have other thought leaders recognize you. *[This very same approach was used to produce and promote the book you're reading. —Eds.]*

**Use Twitter as a platform to help influencers in your areas of expertise, and let the social capital you earn from that effort make you into a thought leader.**

Achieving credibility as a thought leader is a three-step process. First, use a tool like [Klout.com](#) or [Twiangulate.com](#) to find influencers in your topic area. Next, follow them. When they Tweet a comment or question you can answer effectively, or you've written a white paper about that topic, reply with links to your content. With enough time, effort, and content a time you'll become recognized as a leader, too.





## Trey Pennington

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HIS BIO: Dad to six; marketing pro, connector, storyteller. Author: *Spitball Marketing*.

OUR NOTE: This essay was adapted from an interview given by Trey for this book.

# Help Customers Become Advocates

IF YOU CAN THINK IN TERMS OF *interpersonal* communication, then that will help you understand what Twitter is.

Because the web can't be separated from its underlying technology, I believe it's easy to forget that the web is about people. Social media platforms, and especially Twitter, put the focus back on communication between real human beings. That easy interpersonal communication can be dangerous to your business... but for each danger, there are many opportunities to improve customer relationships. Even if your company isn't ready for active engagement in social media, you can still *monitor* the conversations that customers have about your business amongst themselves.

Once you're ready to engage your customers in social media, the most important thing to remember is to put yourself across to them in an atmosphere of respect, just as you would in your offline customer interactions. The technology of social media doesn't change the fact that in interpersonal communication, you have a two-way conversation that alternates between paying attention, and communicating.

Another important goal of social media participation is to develop and encourage

customer trust. Many companies are ready to engage their customers, but they still need to do the assessments that will reveal how social media campaigns and conversations can lead to conversions, or turn indifferent customers into advocates for your products.

**Twitter is all about conversations between people; don't mistake it for a traditional broadcast platform.**

Social media platforms, including Twitter, can support the desires of everyone on that continuum. New customers and prospects can learn about what you can do for them, while loyal customers and advocates can use social media to obtain the information that helps them describe their personal identification with your brand and product.

**Customers and prospects lie on a continuum of loyalty, and Twitter is an excellent place to help them all.**

Twitter isn't the best tool for lead generation or closing, but more than makes up for those weaknesses through its strengths in facilitating the rest of your communication with your customers.





## Phil Gerbyshak

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HIS BIO: Professional speaker, author of three books, connector of people and ideas, lover of unique/interesting things, social media enthusiast, always looking for the next fun thing, smiling regularly.

# Four Tools for Twitter Customer Service

IT APPEARS THAT BY APRIL 2011, TWITTER WILL have 200,000,000 user accounts—many of them opened by people frustrated with companies that put obstacles between their customers and their employees. How can your company gain from that trend by using social media to improve its own customer service? I have four ideas.

**Monitor, and respond to, complaints and compliments.** If your company's products are worth talking about, then our customers are already talking about you on Twitter, whether you know it or not! Use [HootSuite](#), [Klout](#), or [Twitter](#) itself to run and retrieve searches for mentions of your company's products, and respond promptly to the Tweets you find. In the case of compliments, remember that gratitude costs nothing but is worth a fortune.

**Create, use, and track hashtags for your products and services.** This allows you and other users to track important discussions without searching far and wide. Some people won't catch on, but enough will to make this a useful timesaver and conversation-tracker.

**Start a weekly Twitter event.** If your customers and prospects know that they can ask questions and expect quick, personal answers, they'll form stronger connections with your business. They'll also discover the opportunity to develop connections to other customers. Events like these are like a professor's office hours: they give people the opportunity to learn and communicate their ideas with a minimum of interference.

**Monitor your Twitter accounts regularly.** While a small number of businesses have made social media a part- or full-time responsibility for at least one employee, you might be able to justify that kind of investment just yet. However, Twitter's on 24 hours a day. If you acknowledge that and engage social media feedback throughout the day, your customers' confidence in your company will grow, along with your revenue.

People are saying nice—and mean—things about your business on Twitter; respond to them.

Twitter is at its best when people communicate with people; take advantage of that strength.

Social media won't turn its back on you, so don't turn your back on it.



# Antony Francis

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LOCATION: Trinity, Tampa and Clearwater, Fla.

HIS BIO: Lover of my wife & kids, Obsessed with Innovation & Social Media Strategy, smarter than some & dumber than others & forever looking to learn more :)

# One Step at a Time

**I** REMEMBER COLD CALLING. I HATED IT, BUT I did it because I knew it brought in customers. Today, instead of cold calling, you can prospect using Twitter.

First, identify your target audience. Consider who your customers are as well as who might refer customers to you. Once you start writing your own Tweets and identifying the right people, you can start adding them as followers and getting to know them, in four steps.

**Step 1:** Try and add five followers a day, or 25 per week. This number might vary depending on your target audience, but set a goal for each week, and achieve it. Find your “prospects” by looking to sites like [Twellow.com](#), where you can find people according to their location and the business they do. Each of those people is connected to others, through their “Following” and “Followers” lists, who might also be good people for you to follow.

**Step 2:** When someone follows you, follow them back. The “follows” I’ve mentioned so far are in your target market—they’re like cold calls. Not everyone will follow you back; many won’t see any value in doing that. If they don’t follow you back, un-follow them, and move them to a *private* list of prospects.

**Step 3:** Find authentic opportunities to *engage* your prospects without trying to sell to them. If you sell them immediately, they will run; and you’ll come off as creepy (or at least annoying). This is even more true if you try too hard, so pace yourself. Eventually, you will find that if they noticed you and you haven’t driven them away, they will usually follow you.

**Step 4:** Now that you’ve established follow-and-follow-back relationship, keep up your engagement, but spend more time sharing Tweets that your prospects will find useful. These light touches encourage your followers to keep you in mind, and when they have need of your product or service, there’s a good chance that you’ll be first person they want to ask for help.

**Know your audience.**

**Business relationships are built on Twitter incrementally, not all at once.**

**Twitter is an outstanding place to help people with unanswered questions and nagging problems.**





## Stephen P. Smith

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LOCATION: Lake Winnepesaukee, N.H.

HIS BIO: I manage a little restaurant now, among other things.

# It's Like Magic...But You Need to Say the Words

Twitter's built-in search tool provides a powerful way to build your business. All you need to do is provide the relevant search term for your line of work, and *voilà!*—a ready-made list of people who will pay for your service or product is lined up in the results... almost. Actually, that list of people includes many who need help with a problem, anything ranging from a wine-stained rug to epic struggles with the law, and you're in a position to render the help they need. When you try sincerely to help them without expectation of payment, you're actually building an interpersonal relationship.

A lot of people still don't know what they can do with Twitter, so they just Tweet whatever the heck is on their minds. Answer them! Let them know that you're able and quite willing to help them. Point them in the right direction to get the help that they need.

Once you've formed several relationships with other users from that starting point, you can draw up a list of those people who might be interested in learning more about you and your business. You're not playing a "numbers game" like cold-callers do; you're building connections and interest. These people hold some revenue

potential, but more important is their potential *social* value, their ability to refer you to others who are also willing to give you their attention.

If this looks like it's borrowed from Seth Godin's Permission Marketing concept, well...

it is. Over time, you can create a circle of people who see communication from you as relevant to what they do. Your Tweets, replies, Retweets, and direct messages are taken personally, meant just for them, as an invitation to participate in a conversation. Your circle of contacts will eventually *expect* this personal communication. That's a small burden but a big opportunity, because that means that their undivided attention and willingness to share your ideas are yours to lose.

Once you've built this network of relationships you'll have your hands on something special, even *amazing*: a prospect who closes deals for you, pre-sold buyer who comes to *you*, wanting to give you their money...not just a customer, but a *fan*.

**Business development on Twitter isn't a numbers game—it's a words game in the form of interpersonal dialogue.**







## Jen Knoedl

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HIS BIO: Executive Producer of JenChicago, 24/7 Chicago correspondent (NBC5), and soon-to-be travel show host. You can also find me at all the usual social media sites!

# A Thousand Words Is Worth at Least Thirty Pictures Per Second

VIDEO—IT'S EVERYTHING.

... *kay*, maybe not *everything*, but video is a powerful medium, and it delivers better Search Engine Optimization results.

Suppose that you have a site, and you want to promote your videos. If you're creating your own, you can use the auto-update function that video hosting sites like [YouTube](#) offer. In that case you might decide to auto-Tweet, but you should still share it again in your own words. If you don't have your own videos, you can embed music videos, how-to videos, webcam essays... it doesn't matter. Google will still love you.

Once you have videos on your blog, you'll want to tell everyone about it, right? Well, Twitter is a great place to do that. I won't go into Twitter etiquette, but the rules don't change just because you're sharing and promoting video instead of text.

**Video is stickier, to both people and search engines, than text alone.**

**When you share your videos on Twitter, you have a fantastic opportunity to be yourself in ways other media don't offer.**

Most video and blog links run long; shorten them for Twitter, to make more room for usernames and explanation. Twitter users are used to seeing shortened URLs, so you won't scare anyone away just because a link is obtuse.

If you're in a video, announce it. People who follow you probably care more about *you* than they do about the people they don't follow, and that means they're more likely to watch your video than most others. If friends appear in that video and they're on Twitter, @-mention them!

If you're not posting content that you created yourself, your commentary will convey its value. Here's a potentially clickable example:

This video made me laugh so hard, milk shot out of my nose! <http://random.url> #scared #dentist

Finally, don't spare the hashtags. When you share a video, put "#video," "[VIDEO]," or "video" somewhere in the Tweet, because people like to know what they're getting into. Don't be afraid to pique curiosity, encourage laughs, or share information.



# Constructive Surveillance

Alexis Lamster

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LOCATION: New York

HIS BIO: I eat food and take photos. I work for Postling.

TWITTER IS NOW ONE OF THE FASTEST REAL-TIME sources of information, in addition to being one of the simplest ways to connect with other people. There's plenty of buzz about businesses and brands on this new medium.

As the online buzz about *your* brand increases, so does the need for monitoring. There are positive reviews, negative reviews, inaccurate Tweets about your business, and so on. Whether the buzz is good or bad, you should be able to "hear" it.

Anyone can monitor their brand using saved Searches on Twitter. We recommend a search against your company name. If the name has more than one word, try putting quotes around it, which identifies it as an exact phrase. If you have popular products people might Tweet about, try searching for those as well.

When you go through the results, you'll see things that you may want to deal with. Perhaps someone said something negative that you'd like to address. Try responding to that person. Maybe someone loves your brand and is telling all of their followers about it. Retweet this message so that *your* followers can read those kind words.

There are easier ways to monitor your brand online than staying glued to saved Searches all day. Tools like [Postling.com](http://Postling.com) have web-tracking built into their social media management tools; You can post to all of the social networks where you engage, respond to all comments, see your [Yelp](http://Yelp.com) and [CitySearch](http://CitySearch.com) reviews, and apply analytics to all of the keywords you're tracking, all in one place. That kind of monitoring goes *far* beyond what you can do on Twitter alone.

People are talking about your business—or your competitors—in every corner of the Internet, so coverage in breadth is essential when it comes to brand monitoring. The easier it is for you to find people who care about your brand and acknowledge their interest, the greater the value you can put into your brand. Your customer base will feel closer and more connected to your brand, and enthusiastically market your company for you.

**Your customers are holding conversations about your business, whether you're aware of those conversations or not.**

**Effective tools exist to find, monitor, and participate in those conversations.**

**A customer who receives positive attention from you will tell others about their experience just as loudly as a customer who receives negative attention.**





## Ben Henick

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<http://www.henick.net>

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HIS BIO: Web developer. Spells 'boredom' s-u-c-k-s. Wrote a book. What's next?

OUR NOTE: Ben's book, *HTML & CSS: The Good Parts*, was published by O'Reilly Media in February 2010. O'Reilly contracted Ben's title to capitalize on the success of *JavaScript: The Good Parts*, by Douglas Crockford.

# Integrating Your Site with Twitter

I'VE BEEN A WEB DEVELOPER FOR fifteen years, and I'm a veteran of e-mail lists. That experience meant that when Twitter burst into popularity I was both jaded (by that same experience) and confused (by the message length limit). Almost three years and 4,000 Tweets later, I think that I'm starting to get the hang of it.

While I would never call myself a social media professional—my skills are more generalized—I see a lot of other contributors to this book who believe that blogs have an important place in the social media ecosystem. On the other hand, I also see the opinion that social media platforms are rendering traditional sites obsolete. I would put myself in the first group, not the second.

In any town influenced by Latin ideas of urban design, you'll find a central square, called the *zócalo* in Mexico. Facing its sides are shops, and theatres, and often the local church or cathedral. The *zócalo* is like a social media platform: it's where people encounter one another, especially

on market days (which means every day, on Twitter). Traditional sites, for their part, are like the establishments surrounding that square. All of these places have important purposes, with respect to communication in our case.

The proverbial "door" on your site that opens onto the "market square" of Twitter uses what's called the Twitter API (Application Programming Interface), a tool that allows other software such as third party clients and sites to communicate with Twitter's servers.

[WordPress](#), [Blogger](#), and [Drupal](#) all have popular tools that use the Twitter API; Drupal's

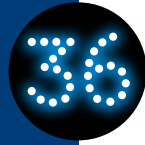
Twitter module also allows you to cross-post content (or links) from your site to Twitter, in addition to displaying a stream of recent Tweets. As I write this, tools that allow blog comments to be posted from Twitter are growing in popularity.

The whole point to the Twitter API is that the service won't confine you to the Twitter site or the third-party Twitter clients; instead, you can publish your social media content on the platforms most appropriate to its length and nature, on a case-by-case basis.

**Twitter and other social media platforms are a virtual gathering place; your own site is where you have full leave to tailor the visitor experience to your needs as well as the visitor's.**

**Through its API, Twitter allows you to create an easily-accessible door between the community of Twitter users and your own site's audience.**





## Pieter van Osch

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LOCATION: Holland

HIS BIO: Customer experience driving business growth... show me the results... professional eye-opener... passionate serial entrepreneur, turning ideas into companies... Apple fanatic...

# Five Pillars of Design

**M**ANY PEOPLE ARE “AFRAID” OF SOCIAL MEDIA because they can’t control it, but that’s actually a *strength* of social media. That lack of centralized control gives people—your customers!—a lot of freedom to express themselves.

If you want control, you need to build your own web site and link it from your social media profiles. Many people do that, but sometimes their sites make want to scream...

*Stop creating ugly web sites!*

Everybody has an opinion about design, your customers included. Some think that good design is a luxury or an accessory, and it’s always judged subjectively, because opinions of design are always about personal taste... but if design communicates value effectively, it works. Aesthetics are a big part of that.

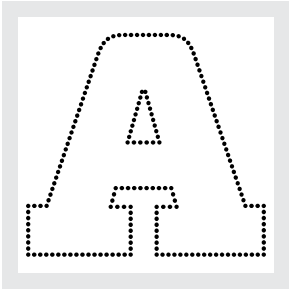
You get the best value from a web site when you remember and apply five basic lessons—which I call “Five Pillars”—about good design:

**Poor design can ruin your entire message.**

**Good design is affordable.**

- *Design matters.* It has a crucial impact on the end result of every customer visit, because customers will accomplish more on sites that make them feel “at home.”
- *Design sells.* Research shows that well-designed, customized site templates enhance conversion rates compared to “cookie-cutter” templates.
- *Design ages.* Just like other artifacts of style, web site designs can go out of fashion, usually after three or four years.
- *Good design does not need to cost more than bad design.* In fact, bad design can be more expensive, because the process that creates it is often more timeintensive. Bad design also often results in a site with a higher Total Cost of Ownership.

Good design is indispensable to communicating with your customers and encouraging them to communicate with you. This is especially true for providers of training, IT/IS, accounting, and legal services, none of which can be performed without detailed and effective communication between vendors and clients.



# Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank **Sean McElroy**, my business partner, for his beliefs, talents, and trust. Without Sean, I would not have been able to dedicate as much time and energy to the management, development, and release of this book. Sean, you rock!

Special thanks go to **Liz Strauss** for sharing in this book and creating SOBCon, which fosters a wonderful community of generous and intelligent people—many of whom appear in this book.

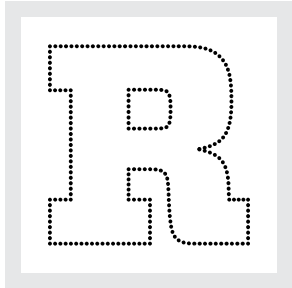
Sincere gratitude and appreciation go to my friends and colleagues who contributed essays to this book. I'm honored by, and proud of, all the authors included here. Your contributions have energized my own desire to help others get the most out of Twitter. Without you, this book would not be here. You inspire me. Thank you.

Thanks go entirely to **Mohammed Al-Tae**, **John Antonios**, **Dave Barger**, **Bernie Borges**, **Mark Brimm**, **Amy Domestico**, **Antony Francis**, **Chris Garrett**, **Phil Gerbyshak**, **Nathan Hangen**, **Erno Hannink**, **Jen Knoedl**, **Alexis Lamster**, **Misako Lauritzen**, **Kneale Mann**, **Michelle Mangan**, **Becky McCray**, **Mike Merrill**, **Stephanie Molina**, **David Murray**, **Damond Nollan**, **Kelly Olexa**, **Amber Osborne**, **Trey Pennington**, **Pieter van Osch**, **Michael Procopio**, **William C. Reichard**, **Sheila Scarborough**, **Jeff Shuey**, **Stephen P. Smith**, **Liz Strauss**, **John Stone**, and **Brendan Wenzel**.

In closing, recognition and high-fives go to **Ben Henick** for his intensive editorial efforts and **Rick Wolff** for his creativity and design leadership—both of whom made this book complete(ly awesome).

— *Justin McCullough* (@mccJustin)





# Resources and Tools Mentioned in Book

[Blogger.com](http://Blogger.com)

[CitySearch.com](http://CitySearch.com)

[Delicious.com](http://Delicious.com)

[Drupal.com](http://Drupal.com)

[Hootsuite.com](http://Hootsuite.com)

[Klout.com](http://Klout.com)

[Mashable.com](http://Mashable.com)

[MyVBO.com](http://MyVBO.com)

[Pluggio.com](http://Pluggio.com)

[Postling.com](http://Postling.com)

[Reddit.com](http://Reddit.com)

[Search.Twitter.com](http://Search.Twitter.com)

[Seesmic.com](http://Seesmic.com)

[SocialMediaWorkbook.com](http://SocialMediaWorkbook.com)

[SocialOomph.com](http://SocialOomph.com)

[StumbleUpon.com](http://StumbleUpon.com)

[Tweetdeck.com](http://Tweetdeck.com)

[Twellow.com](http://Twellow.com)

[Twiangulate.com](http://Twiangulate.com)

[Twitpic.com](http://Twitpic.com)

[Twitterfeed.com](http://Twitterfeed.com)

[WordPress.com](http://WordPress.com)

[Yelp.com](http://Yelp.com)

These resources and many others are listed at [oneforty.com](http://oneforty.com), which provides an exhaustive directory of tools that help users get the most out of their Twitter experience.

Additional information about authors, revised editions, how to contribute or share, questions and answers and contact information is available at [www.EmbracingTwitter.com](http://www.EmbracingTwitter.com).

