



# Twitter: A Beginner's Guide

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# **A Beginner's Guide to Twitter:**

## **How to use Twitter to Promote your Business**

You have probably heard a lot about Twitter but like anything, until you know how to use it, it can seem daunting. This guide will give you a brief overview of Twitter, how to get set up, what to tweet about and how to increase your number of followers.

So, let's start at the beginning. Created in March, 2006 by *Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone* and *Noah Glass*, Twitter was launched four months later. By December 2014, there were 280M active users with 23% of adult internet users having twitter accounts. So you might be asking, why would my business benefit from using Twitter?

Twitter is a real-time social media platform which you can use to increase your brand awareness, driving traffic to your website and reaching a wider audience. It's like micro-blogging or sending public text messages and like many social media platforms, it has its own language. I'll begin by running through a few definitions before showing you how to set up a twitter account and then give you some tips on how to run a successful twitter campaign as well as sharing some of the risks involved.

# DEFINITIONS

Twitter as many of the other social media platforms has its own language. Here are a few definitions to help you start:

**Tweet:** a message of up to 140 characters that you send out to your followers

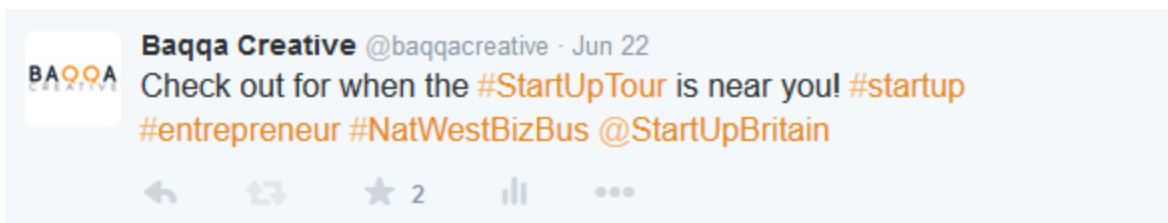
**Retweet:**  sending a tweet you receive to your followers

**Followers and Following:** as the name suggests, these are people who either follow you or you follow

**Direct Messages:** Twitter now allows you to send a DM to anyone, even if they don't follow you although there is a setting to disable this if you do not want to receive DMs from non-followers. And they also recently increased the number of characters for a DM to 160

**#:** Hashtags are used to link together conversations about certain topics

**@:** Your @username can be up to a maximum of 15 characters and is used to link others to your profile



## SETTING UP AN ACCOUNT

Here are some guidelines about setting up a Twitter account:

1. Go to [www.twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com) or download the free Twitter app on your mobile and sign up and follow the instructions
2. Choose your @username as well as a name to appear next to it. Some businesses use the same as their @username or something different. If your business's name is too long or someone else is already using it, try abbreviating it or varying it slightly
3. Upload a picture of yourself or your brand logo – photos can be in any of the following formats: JPG, GIF or PNG. The image will appear alongside every tweet
4. Write a profile of your business using no more than 160 characters. Make it clear what you do and who you are and if relevant include opening hours and the location of your business
5. Include a link to your website. You want to make it as easy as possible for people to find your website from your Twitter page
6. Use a header image that represents your brand as people who visit your profile page will see it
7. Customise your profile page: once you've set up your account, you can make changes to your profile page by clicking on "Settings" and then choosing "Design". This can be anything from adding a background image to changing the colours of any links to your page

# TWEETING

OK, so you have set up your Twitter account, but what should you tweet about and when?

## 1. Style

Think about tweets as a conversation between you and the public so use a conversational style. Make them authentic and friendly and include a call to action such as “Discover....” – people are curious and will want to click on the link to see what you are offering them.

## 2. Content


Here are a few suggestions about what you can write about:

- ❖ Include a link to your blog or post on your website and Twitter will automatically alter it to 22 characters even if the link is shorter than that.
- ❖ Share amusing quotes or inspiring speeches
- ❖ Always tweet about something that is related to your business. For example, you might be interested in bee-keeping or politics but don't share this with your followers
- ❖ Respond to your clients' tweets; hopefully the majority of the comments you receive will be positive but if you do receive some negative feedback, you could send a DM to your client and ask them to give you a ring personally so you can sort the problem out
- ❖ Share any discounts or offers
- ❖ Don't oversell. People aren't on Twitter to be sold to, so a softer approach is needed
- ❖ Check out the #s that are relevant to your business and get involved in the conversation.

- ❖ Before using any # in your tweet, always check the content first. You don't want to enter a conversation before you know what's being talked about!
- ❖ Test different content and see what works for you

### 3. When?

- ❖ Tweet regularly: Think of Twitter as a networking event –if you never talk, nobody is going to want to engage with you! Start with 1-2 tweets a day and gradually build it up to around 10. There are tools like [www.buffer.com](http://www.buffer.com) which can schedule your tweets for you in advance which means you can write your tweets in one sitting but don't forget to check your account several times every day just in case you need to respond to some feedback. If you are away from the office, it's a good idea to download the Twitter app to your mobile.
- ❖ What time of day? Although stats say around lunchtime is good for tweeting, carry out some [A/B Testing](#) - read our article for some more information

 **Baqqa Creative** @baqqacreative · Jun 24  
Great talk yesterday by Dr. James Bellini #loE @TEN4biz

← ↻ 1 ★ 1 || ...

 **Baqqa Creative** @baqqacreative · Jun 24  
Five ways to make a small business brand successful #startup  
#entrepreneur #smallbiz [bit.ly/1ML9iq2](http://bit.ly/1ML9iq2)

← ↻ ★ || ... [View summary](#)

## INCREASING YOUR FOLLOWERS

You've set up your account but how do you build your followers?

- ❖ Join a twitter chat: you will probably find that your local area uses a # to let followers join a conversation at a certain time each week. For example if you live in the London area, you could join the chat #LondonHour – every Monday evening between 7.30pm – 8.30pm
- ❖ Use the search function: try searching for keywords in your Twitter bar that might be related to your business e.g. accountancy Dorset. You might find someone who has tweeted about finding an accountant in your area so that you can send them a tweet (using their @username) telling them about your services
- ❖ Interact with people: don't just wait for people to find you, go out there and start introducing yourself
- ❖ Mention others: if you meet future clients or other businesses at a networking event, mention them in a tweet. Hopefully they will retweet it to all their followers
- ❖ Make sure your number of followers is about the same as the number of people you are following otherwise you could fall foul of Twitter's Best Practise Rules and never buy followers as it could violate Twitter's Ts and Cs.
- ❖ Be polite! Send people a DM to thank them for following you

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TWEETS	FOLLOWING	FOLLOWERS	FAVOURITES
274	108	97	11

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**AND FINALLY...**

enjoy it! And make sure that you link your Twitter account to your website and all of your other social media sites. If you have any other Twitter related questions or would like us to manage your Twitter account for you, just get in touch 01722 671971 or by email [hello@baqqa.com](mailto:hello@baqqa.com)

