

Social Media For Your Business

Social Media Success Using Twitter

A Special Report – by Margaret Adams



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About This Guide

This guide which has been designed to help you to use Twitter effectively in your business is one of a series of guides produced by The Adams Consultancy Ltd.

Our guides are written for businesses. We help businesses with a complex offer to find the best ways of building their presence and their sales in their marketplace. We help consultants, people in professional practices and other experts to use social media to get more clients and to build their businesses quickly. **This guide will help you to accelerate the sales process in your business.**

About Social Media

The problem with social media is that most of the applications, blogging, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, wikis and forums . . . and so on, are all so new that there just aren't rulebooks you can read and then follow. This is definitely the case with Twitter.

Therefore, when you decide that you're going to do something with an application, you either have to learn everything yourself and make lots of mistakes along the way, or you use a guide like this to help you to get started. I'm pleased you've decided to take a look at our guide to using Twitter well because that means you will save yourself a lot of time and you'll learn the Twitter basics faster. . . . So let's get started!

Margaret Adams

November 2010

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Users of this guide say . . .

Business Biscotti
{networking • done}

Sue Reeves - Sales and Marketing Director

Business Biscotti Ltd

<http://www.businessbiscotti.co.uk/>

“I love the twitter guide. It’s simple to understand but comprehensive enough to be able to build a strategy from it. It should have wide appeal to large companies as well as small ones.”

Rory Breen - Breen IT Solutions Ltd

www.BreenITSolutions.co.uk

“Excellent and concise guide to using Twitter, I’m a newbie and I’m confident it will help me reach more customers. I recommend it to both new and seasoned tweeters.”

Anonymous comment – anonymous for obvious reasons:

“I like it! Essential reading for twitter twits like me.”

Cathy Clark - HIPTAC Services Limited

www.hiptacservices.co.uk

“An invaluable guide to Twitter that not only explains ‘ Why ’ you should be using Twitter but more importantly ‘ How ’ to use Twitter effectively for your business.”

Tony Silver FCMI - Virtual Account Manager

“I recently received a copy of this guide and found it invaluable. A truly well written and useful document from a lady that not only knows her stuff but can translate it into easy absorbed material.”

Greg Hanrahan - Learning Solutions Director, Learning World Group

“As ever you take a complex subject and make it not only accessible but something that those looking to develop their networks and communities can add to their arsenal.”

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What's All The Fuss About Twitter?

Twitter Statistics

You must have heard of Twitter. These days Twitter is too big to ignore.

- There are more than 75 million Twitter users worldwide and 106 million accounts
- 15 million of those users are active on Twitter.
- There are approximately 1.3 million tweets per hour – and the number is rising.
- Twitter gets 180 million unique visitors per day.
- There were 93 billion tweets in June 2010.

And there's more . . .

In the UK approximately 11% of adult web users use Twitter. In the USA approximately 12% of adult web users use Twitter. Use of Twitter is growing and it's rapidly becoming a mainstream communications channel. It's no longer just for the early adopters.

Twitter is serious business.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform.

It allows users to post short text messages or "tweets" of up to 140 characters in length.

Users can upload their messages to Twitter from their web browsers or from their mobile phones.

All tweets are public. They are visible to any one and to every one.

Why use Twitter at all?

Reasons for using Twitter

Just because other people are using Twitter doesn't mean that you should. There are, however, some compelling reasons why you need to consider very seriously the benefits your business will gain from being on Twitter.

1. You can help to build your authority in your niche via Twitter.
2. You can build your network of contacts using Twitter.
3. Twitter is an additional communications channel that your business can use. You can get your messages out to more people by using this additional channel.
4. You're likely to encounter different people on Twitter. You'll be reaching a different element of your market if you tweet.
5. You'll be offering people an easy way of conversing with you in an informal way.
6. You can keep in touch with what's happening in your industry and to your customer group using Twitter.
7. Twitter can give your business a human face.
8. You can give spontaneous, instantaneous, "real time" responses to questions using Twitter.
9. You can ask questions of people who you might not have access via other communications channels using Twitter.
10. You can ensure that more people know about you because you're active on Twitter.

And . . . Your customers are using Twitter. Your competitors are using Twitter. The thought leaders in your industry are using Twitter. . . Shouldn't you be using Twitter, too?

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Twitter Basics (1)

Things you need to know

You can follow and be followed by people you do not know.

People can subscribe to your Twitter updates using the RSS feed.

Every one who is following you can read your updates.

The majority of Twitter users access it via their mobile 'phones.



What are the implications for you?

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Twitter Basics (2) – What can you do with Twitter?

Tweeting

Traditionally the Twitter question that you answer has been either:

What are you doing?

Or

What has your attention?

You answer that question in 140 characters or less.

However, if you think about these questions in the context of what your chosen audience might want to hear about, you will avoid telling the world about the filling in your sandwich or if the train is crowded today.

Think about what your Twitter network – your customers, your colleagues, your business associates, the people you want to connect with – would like to hear about and tweet about those subjects.

My tweets

I tweet for consultants, coaches, organisations selling professional services etc. My customers are businesses with complex offers to promote. They want to learn how to use social media to help them to get their messages across faster. To help them to do this:

- I tweet useful hints and tips.
- I ask relevant business questions: “Should you work when you’re ill?”
- I let my readers know what I’m reading at present – and why.
- From time to time I also mention our offer or our latest events.
- When someone has said something nice about what we do I thank them via Twitter.

See how I do this at:

<http://twitter.com/BMargaretAdams>

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Twitter Basics (2) – What can you do with Twitter? – Continued

You can do a lot more with Twitter than simply tweet.

Retweeting (RT)

You might find an interesting tweet that you think would be of interest to your network. If you do, you retweet it.

Don't worry about duplication. Your network is probably different from other people's. Your network with probably not have seen the original tweet so you can retweet it and help them by passing on useful information.

Most blogs include options that allow you to tweet and retweet a blog post to your followers. Look out for this button on blogs. (You'll find it on my blog. Please use this function to tweet about posts you like.)



Retweeting – an example

Here's one of my retweets. I know my audience is keen to make the most of social media, including blogs. Here I'm retweeting something from a real "prologger". I also let my followers know why I'm retweeting.

RT @ProBlogger How I Make Money Blogging: Income - Aug/Sept 2010 <http://bit.ly/a8mumP> - fascinating to see how bloggers earn their money
4:14 PM Oct 11th via web

Notice the "bitly" reference in the post. That means I have shortened the original name of the post using a URL shortener. The original post was called:

<http://www.prologger.net/archives/2010/10/12/how-i-make-money-blogging-income-split-for-augustseptember-2010/>

That's too long to put in a tweet.

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Twitter Basics (2) – What can you do with Twitter? – Continued

Here's still more you can do with Twitter.

@ reply

You can reply to a tweet posted by another user. This means you can reply to a question or just continue a conversation that someone has started. As soon as you highlight a tweet you'll be given the option to retweet or to reply. Just choose reply.

Remember though that the conversation takes place in public. Your followers will see what you have to say whether they are following the recipient or not.

Direct Message

If you want to send a private message, then you must send a direct message (DM).

However, you can only send direct messages to people who are following you. The DM process is not a means of broadcasting to the world. DMs are not really the same as tweets.

Hashtags

You can include keywords in your updates in order to associate those updates with a particular event, movement, current trend or issue.

Do this by adding a hash sign (#) in front of a word or phrase.

I use #startingaconsultingbusiness to help to draw together all my tweets in a long-running series of posts I am writing for people who are just starting their consulting business.

Follow Friday

One of the most popular hashtags is: #ff or #followfriday. On Friday – and only on Friday – you tweet about who you are following using either or both of the above hashtags. The results can be viewed if you search for the hashtag. There are lots of results to see.

Twitter Basics (3) – Using Twitter - Examples

Here are some examples of these features in action. They are best viewed on screen.

Asking questions which refer to a blog post, using a URL shortener

Should you work when you're ill?
<http://bit.ly/bwZ4OL>

about 5 hours ago via web

Replying to questions


The @ symbol shows you're replying to or mentioning someone.

This seems to work, Roz @dirtywhitecandy <http://bit.ly/coX8Ta>
8:25 AM Oct 26th via web


Using hashtags to collate information

Realtime results for #startingaconsultingbusiness

 **BMargaretAdams** #startingaconsultingbusiness Should you work when you're ill? <http://bit.ly/bwZ4OL>
about 2 hours ago via web

 **BMargaretAdams** Are you limiting the hours you work? #startingaconsultingbusiness <http://bit.ly/9d3mei>
6 days ago via web

Retweeting interesting tweets

 **CKAcademy** Our house bound lady looked amazing today! Pictures taken of her active in the studio Evening Echo are printing her story! Inspirational!!!
8:37 AM Nov 5th via web
Retweeted by **BMargaretAdams**

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Twitter Basics (4) Are you using lists?

About lists

You can organise the Twitter users you follow, or even those who you don't follow, into groups, or lists.

Especially if you follow a lot of people, lists help you to create some order in your Twitter stream. Lists help you to preserve your sanity when you're on Twitter.

Create your own lists and you will be able to see the updates of the people you're really interested in quickly. You can also see which lists you are on.

Creating lists

You need to log into Twitter to create lists and make sure you are on the "home" page for your account. .

The easiest way to create your list is to click on "lists" in the Twitter sidebar over on the right-hand side of the screen. You'll then be given the option of creating a new list.

Give your list a name. You can make the list public or keep it private. Then think about who to add to your list.

✓ You created this list



Find people to add to your list:

Search for a username, first or last name, business or brand

You can also add people from your [Following](#) page or anyone's profile page.

So Now You Need A Twitter Strategy

Now's the time to start to think seriously about why you want to be on Twitter and how it will help your business.

Goals/Objectives	Metrics
Extend the reach of your existing messages online - web updates, YouTube Videos etc by building relationships with relevant audiences – including journalists and bloggers	Number of followers Type of followers Influence of followers Links/referrals from Twitter to your website
Show that you're up to date and you haven't been left in the twentieth century	Feedback from followers RSS feeds (a means of publicising your tweets) Getting mentioned in more places on the blogosphere
Develop and build your on-line brand	Getting mentioned, getting quoted, getting interviewed, being recognised by more people etc
Build relationships – provide ways through which people can interact with you	RSS feed, numbers of replies, direct messages, growth in numbers of followers
Increase mentions of your business on Twitter and elsewhere	Use your analytics package, plus Google alerts etc to measure trends and growth
Provide immediate updates – live coverage of your business's activities	Number of events covered, feedback and replies etc.

Of course, you could add some more.

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Commit To Gather Evaluation Data

Decide which metrics you will use and which are the most important to you.

Web
Analytics

Followers

Clickthroughs from
URL shorteners

Twitter
data

Twitter surveys
(our own)

Unfollows

Clickthroughs
from URL

Retweet
Analysis



*Evaluating your
Twitter Success*

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Ready to get started?

You've read quite a bit about Twitter so far. Now's the time to take the plunge and get started with Twitter. If you've already got a Twitter account, review your approach to using Twitter as you work through this section.

Set up your account or review your account

Just do a little bit of thinking before you take action. Remember that people who see your account won't stay for very long if they don't think you're the sort of person they want to follow. Think about what will attract the attention of the people you want to follow you.

Issues:

Will you use your own name or a brand name or your business's name for your Twitter account? Do you want to build a following for you as an individual or for your company? How are people most likely to find you? What sort of picture (avatar) will you upload? What will you say about yourself and your business in your profile? Which website will you add to your profile? Go to <http://twitter.com/> and sign up once you're happy with your choices.

My Twitter Account

I chose to use my name because I am building a personal brand and I want people to remember my name. Also I know that quite a few people search for me by name. That means my name must figure in my profile.

My Twitter "handle" is:

<http://twitter.com/BMargaretAdams>

This is often written as:

@BMargaretAdams



I have chosen not to put a picture of myself on Twitter but to use an image showing my initials. This helps to differentiate my profile from all those head-and-shoulders shots you see.

The words I use in my profile are:

"I help experts to succeed in business."

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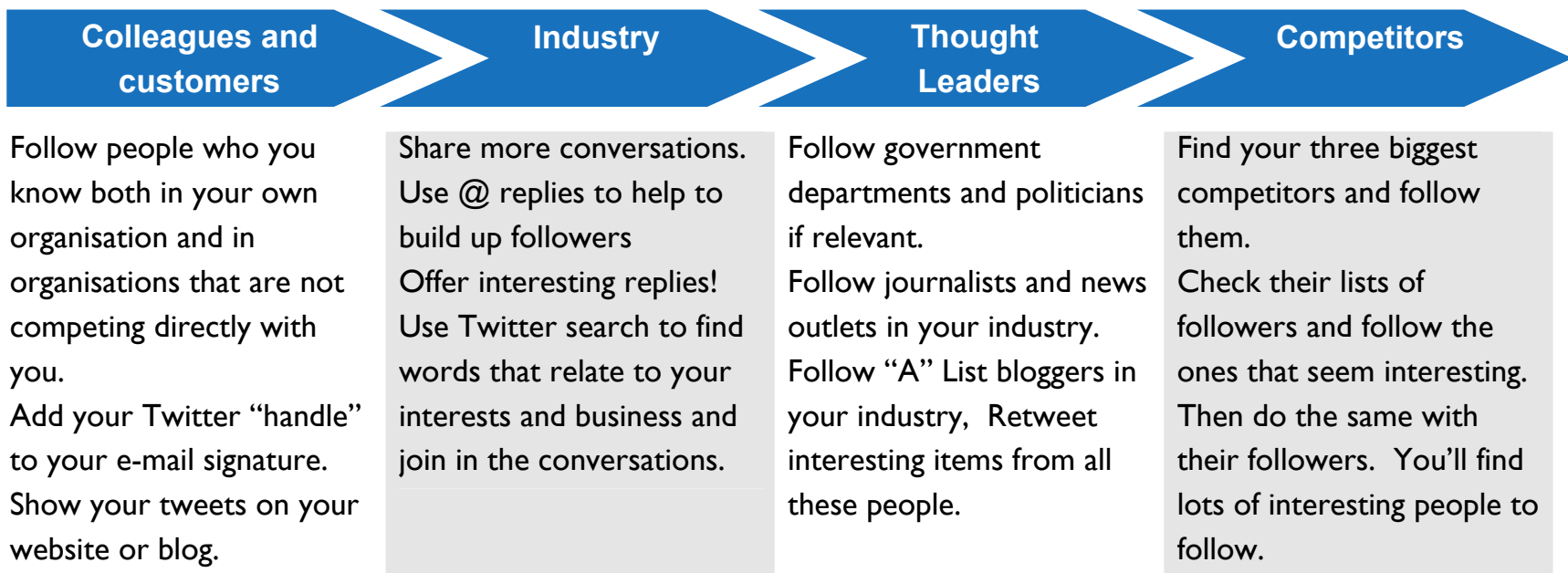
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Now get some followers . . .

Well, once you've set up your account it will be a good idea to put up some tweets – just a few. Then, you need to decide who to follow and how to get followers for yourself.

The first thing to do to help to get more followers is to find people to follow. Quite a few of the people you decide to follow will follow you back. That's part of the emerging Twitter etiquette.

Warning: avoid mass following or paying to get thousands of followers. It won't help your business.

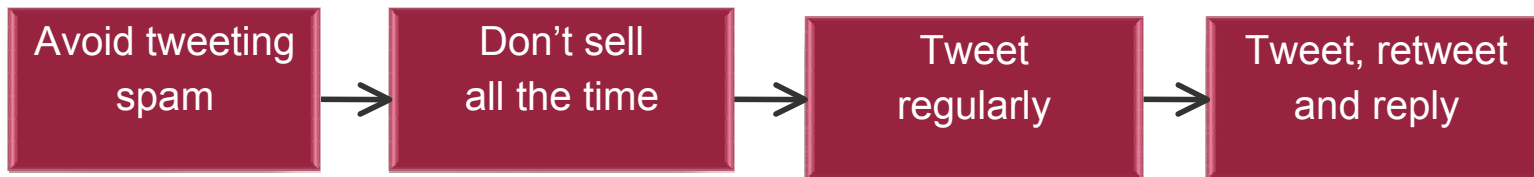


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Encourage people to want to follow you . . .

People want to read interesting things. They don't want to be bombarded with advertising messages. Use the following hints and tips to help you to build up your list of followers. (You decide what tweeting regularly means for you. Once a day, four times a day, twice a week. Make you decision, then stick to your schedule.)



Now you're ready for the advanced stuff

As you might have already begun to suspect there are lots of tools to help you to manage your Twitter account and your life on Twitter more effectively. It's all a matter of taste and inclination so consider which of the following is right for you.

1. Use Twitter Search to find people, subjects, locations, interests and more. Visit the front page of Twitter to find the search facility.
2. Create lists of groups of people you follow. That way you can keep up to date with their tweets more easily.
3. Take a look at Twellow – the Twitter Yellow Pages. <http://www.twellow.com/>
4. Look at Tweetbeep, too. Tweetbeep is like Google Alerts, but for Twitter. <http://tweetbeep.com/>
5. Maybe you want to know about Twitterfeed, if you want to link your blog and Twitter. <http://twitterfeed.com/>
6. You can manage your Twitter experience using some third party applications like Tweetdeck. <http://www.tweetdeck.com/>
7. You'll also need to shorten those URLs and there are lots of ways to do this. Bitly is a popular site. <http://bit.ly/> There is a Google version. There's a shortlink option within Wordpress and there is also Tiny URL. <http://tinyurl.com/>
8. There's <http://twitpic.com/> where you can share photos on Twitter.
9. There are lots of sites to help you to use Twitter more effectively. <http://www.twitip.com/> is one that has a large following and is filled with good advice.
10. . . . And, there's a lot more. Use your Twitter network to find the best applications and the best Twitter practice.

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Building Your Brand



Congratulations!

You've now reviewed some of the ways in which you can use Twitter to develop your business.

I hope you've also extended your understanding of the potential Twitter has for helping your to grow your business and to extend your reach in your marketplace.

Don't stop there. Use Twitter in conjunction with some of the other social media applications:

- Blogging (for example Wordpress)
- Facebook (especially Facebook for Business)
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Forums you belong to
- And many more.

Use Twitter, too, to help you to gain more from your off-line approaches to business communications.

Now it's time to think about the possibilities.

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Would you like some help?

I hope you've found this guide helpful.

If you don't follow me on Twitter already then here are my details.

<http://twitter.com/BMargaretAdams>

Also make a point of visiting my website to download your free social media healthcheck.

<http://www.margaretadams.co.uk/hints-tips-and-more/>

If you'd like to review where you are with social media and get some useful tips about what to do next, book a social media MOT with me. Find the details here.

<http://www.margaretadams.co.uk/coaching/social-media-for-your-business/your-social-media-mot/>

If you'd like to work with me on a **one-to-one basis** then think about asking me to help you with your social media strategy or to run a workshop - a bit like the one you can see in the picture above - to help you and your staff to make the most of Twitter and the other principal social media applications.

Thanks again for reading this document and if you've any questions about Twitter than do get in touch.

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