

A Beginner's Guide to Using & Marketing with...



twitter

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Introduction

Here's a quick marketing question for you: How often do you tweet? If you don't know what I'm talking about, you're missing out on one of the hottest marketing tools on the Internet today - Twitter.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a micro-blogging site - meaning you can state your thoughts, views, opinions and links, but in a super-compact way. In fact, with Twitter, you only get to use 140 characters for each post, affectionately known as a tweet. At first glance, you may think 140 characters can't possibly give you enough room to say anything of value, but once you jump into the flow, you'll be amazed at the way Twitter can change your social media marketing world.

How Does it Work?

Twitter works as a real-time social media platform for users to update their followers with tidbits of information, chitchat, tips and tricks and other short messages that are broadcast to a group of users who have chosen to stay updated to your messages. While there are over 6 million users on Twitter, according to the latest statistics, individuals choose who they want to interact with by "following" them.

Every user gets a profile page, with room for a short bio, a photo and a link to the site of your choice. Your profile page also includes a button people can click on to begin "following" you - which means they will have access to all of your updates.

The more followers you acquire the stronger your networking capabilities become on Twitter. Twitter functions as an ever increasing network as each person interacts with their following, who then connects them to their own group of followers and on and on it grows.

Let's break it down a bit.

When you create your user account and choose some people to follow, they have the opportunity to follow you back. As your followers start to get to know you, they will look to you to promote other people on Twitter and when they find people they relate to, they will begin following them as well. This "tell two friends who tell two friends who tell two friends" networking will expand your network faster than you can possibly imagine.

Who Uses Twitter?

At the rate Twitter is growing, it won't be long before the answer to this question is EVERYONE! Twitter is growing at a pace of over 7500 users every day, with a total right now of over six million users! Twitter is a great place to connect, both in business and personally, for anyone who is looking for a platform where they can reach out to a wide network of people at one time.

Twitter is popular with many different kinds of people. In business, you'll find lawyers, realtors, writers, web designers, Internet marketers, coaches, entrepreneurs, bloggers, small business owners, large corporations, politicians - even the President of the United States! You'll find famous people, infamous people, unknown people - the truth is, Twitter is being used by folks from every walk of life you can imagine to connect with others and market their businesses.

Why is Twitter So Popular?

One of the reasons Twitter is so popular is that Twitter is so popular! In other words, so many people are using Twitter that it is rapidly becoming THE place to connect on the web. In fact, mainstream media has started using Twitter- and talking about it. CNN and Fox News both discuss Twitter and use it as a way for viewers to offer input on various stories. In the recent Presidential election, President Obama's campaign used Twitter as part of their massive campaign efforts - with obvious success!

Twitter's popularity comes from its ease of use. It's also quite addictive! Many people who questioned whether Twitter was worth the effort find they love the fast-paced interaction of the site. Twitter is all about immediate connections and real-time relationship building. Human beings are social animals who thrive on relationships and interaction with each other. Twitter provides immediate contact with others- no waiting for return emails or finding people on various Instant Messengers. You can jump on Twitter any time, day or night, and connect with someone immediately. Often, just taking five or ten minutes to tweet with others is all it really takes to build your followers, bring people to your website or break through a struggle.

Why Twitter Works for Marketers

Twitter works for marketers for a couple of reasons. The first, and most important one, is Twitter is different from a lot of marketing techniques. It really is all about making connections and creating relationships. Yes, it sounds impossible to believe that communicating in short little bursts can actually foster real relationships, but it's true. Perhaps it's because of the real-time interaction.

It could be because when you have to focus on your word choice, with only 140 characters, you take the time to make sure every word counts. It could come down to the fact that Twitter is downright fun - and addictive!

Of course, some folks will tell you Twitter is a great marketing tool because you can find a targeted audience who CHOOSE to follow you and read your messages and they'd be right.

The truth is Twitter works for a variety of different reasons. The good news is, those reasons all add up to the reality that Twitter DOES WORK! Even though it is a serious marketing tool, there is something about the way people get real on Twitter that you just don't see in many other platforms, that lets you get to know people's real personalities. That is what inspires trust and creates bonds that lead to sales.

Let's look a bit closer about how to get started on Twitter, so you can begin using this amazing networking tool in your business today.

How to Get Started on Twitter

The easiest way to get a real understanding of the power of Twitter is to create an account and get started. It only takes a few minutes to set up your account, so let's get started.

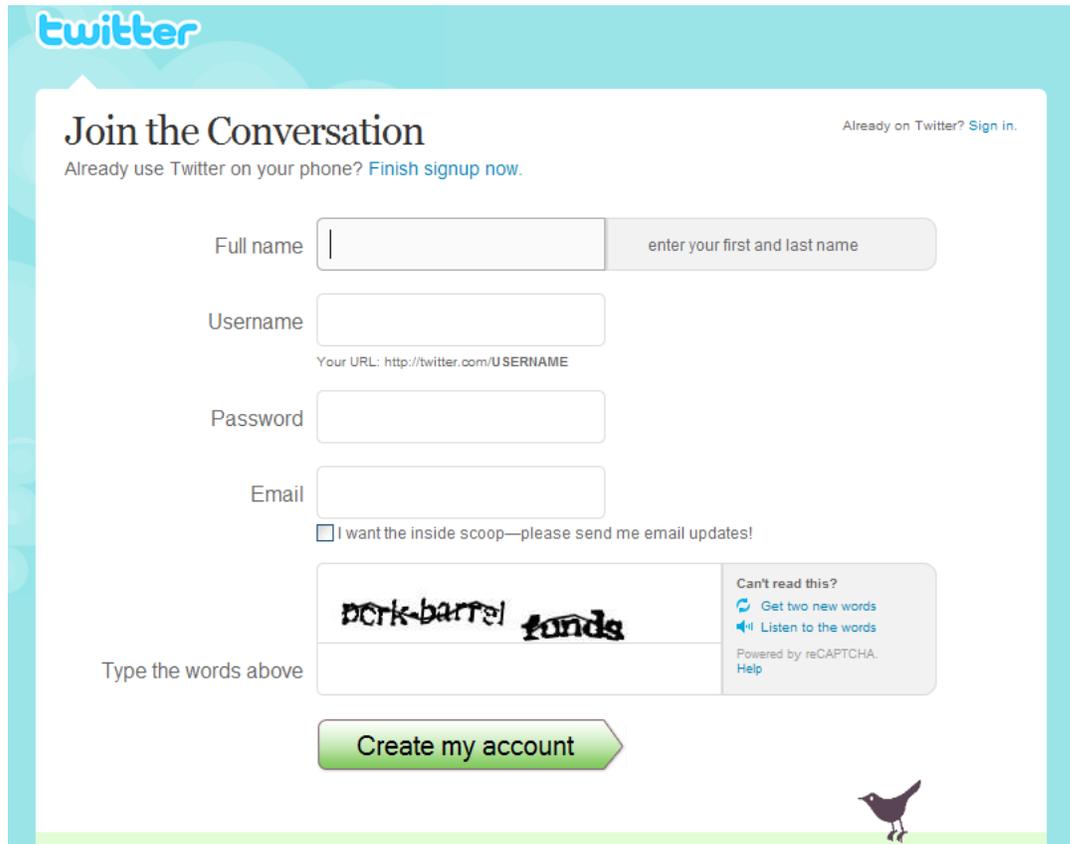
Setting up an Account

Go to <http://www.twitter.com> and click on the "Get Started - Join" link.



The image shows a screenshot of the Twitter homepage. At the top left is the Twitter logo. In the top right corner, there is a "Select Language ..." dropdown menu. The main content area is titled "What is Twitter?" and features three tabs: "What?", "Why?", and "How?". Below the tabs is a graphic of a yellow bird on a branch with a scroll of tweets. The tweets include: "Ev Waited all morning for PC&E, who didn't without power or Internet, let me get some over, back at office. 2 minutes ago from tvt.", "Maggie just landed in LA. 2 minutes ago", and "mollydotcom wishes she could sleep recovering from trauma. 2 days of dr web ::". Below the graphic, the text reads: "Twitter is a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: **What are you doing?**" At the bottom of this section is a green button that says "Get Started—Join!". To the right of the main content is a "Please sign in" section with a red button "Watch a video!". Below this are input fields for "user name or email address:" and "password:", a "Remember me" checkbox, and a "Sign In »" button. At the bottom of the sign-in section are links for "Forgot password? Click here." and "Already using Twitter from your phone? Click here."

You'll be taken to a form to create your account that looks like this, where you'll enter your first and last name in the Full Name box. (Easy so far, right?)



The image shows the Twitter sign-up page titled "Join the Conversation". At the top left is the Twitter logo. Below the title, there are links for "Already on Twitter? Sign in." and "Already use Twitter on your phone? Finish signup now." The form includes several input fields: "Full name" with a placeholder "enter your first and last name", "Username", "Password", and "Email". Below the "Email" field is a checkbox labeled "I want the inside scoop—please send me email updates!". A reCAPTCHA challenge is present, showing the words "dark-barrel" and "funds" in a distorted font. To the right of the reCAPTCHA are links for "Can't read this?", "Get two new words", "Listen to the words", and "Powered by reCAPTCHA. Help". At the bottom of the form is a green "Create my account" button and a small bird icon.

Then follow the steps to create your username. Your username is the name everyone will know you by, so give some thought to the name you choose.

Every time you post a message, known as a tweet, on Twitter, your name and profile picture will be displayed, so you definitely don't want to choose a username made of random numbers and letters.

Twitter lets you use up to 15 characters (with no spaces) for your username, so use them wisely. If you choose not to use your actual name, try to create a name that tells people what you do. You can use your business name, but very often, something a little more personal is more effective. Remember the key to social media is the social part, so you want to choose a username that lets people relate to you as a person. Keep in mind, also, that if you choose a random username made up of assorted letters and numbers, people may think you are a spammer and block you.

Your next step is to enter your email address. Make sure you enter an actual email address that you use on a regular basis. Twitter will not send you spam email, but they will use your email address to alert you to new followers and direct messages, if you choose to be alerted later in your profile. You will also be notified, via email, if you lose or forget your username or password.

Once you create your account, you will be taken to a screen where you can check to see if anyone you know is already using twitter based on various email address. We'll skip this step because well, almost everyone is using Twitter! 😊

Next is a screen with some suggested followers. You can scan through if you'd like or you can choose to skip this step as well.

Now we've reached the area that will help you market yourself and your business. This is where you start personalizing your profile.

The screenshot shows the Twitter homepage interface. At the top left is the Twitter logo. In the top right, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Profile, Find People, Settings, Help, and Sign out. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a text input field with the placeholder text "What are you doing?" and a character count of "140". Below the input field is an "update" button. Underneath the input field is a section titled "What to do now:" with a list of three items: 1. Tell us what **you're** doing in the box above, 2. Find some friends and follow what **they're** doing, and 3. Turn on your mobile phone to update your friends on the go. The right column displays the user profile for "All4UMarketing" with a profile picture of a brown square containing "o_o". Below the profile name are three buttons: "following", "followers", and "updates". The right sidebar contains several menu items: "Home", "@Replies", "Direct Messages" (with a count of 0), "Favorites", "Everyone", "Following" (with an "add" button), "Device Updates" (with a link "Set up SMS updates"), and "RSS feed". At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with copyright information and various links: © 2009 Twitter, About Us, Contact, Blog, Status, Apps, API, Search, Help, Jobs, Terms, Privacy.

In the upper right hand corner is your navigation panel, with links to move around the backend of your Twitter account. Click on "Settings" to continue personalizing your Twitter account.

twitter Home Profile Find People Settings Help Sign out

o_o

Account Password Devices Notices Picture Design

Name: Will Be Filled In
Enter your real name, so people you know can recognize you.

Username: WillBeFilledIn Your URL: <http://twitter.com/WillBeFilledIn>
Available!

Email: Will Be Filled In

You must re-enter your password to change your screen name or email address.

Password: [Forgot your password?](#)

Time Zone: (GMT-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada) ▾

More Info URL:
Have a homepage or a blog? Put the address here.
(You can also add [Twitter to your site here](#))

One Line Bio:
About yourself in fewer than 160 chars.

Location:
Where in the world are you?

Language: ▾
What language would you like to Twitter in?

Protect my updates
Only let people whom I approve follow my updates. If this is checked, you WILL NOT be on the [public timeline](#). Updates posted previously may still be publicly visible in some places.

[Delete my account.](#)

Account

From here you can change your basic account info, fill in your profile data, and set whether you want to be private or public.

Tips

- Filling in your profile information will help people find you on Twitter. For example, you'll be more likely to turn up in a Twitter search if you've added your location or your real name.
- Change your Twitter user name anytime without affecting your existing updates, @replies, direct messages, or other data. After changing it, make sure to let your followers know so you'll continue receiving all of your messages with your new user name.
- Protect your profile to keep your Twitter updates private. Approve who can follow you and keep your updates out of search results.

Once you reach the settings page, you'll notice some things are already filled in for you. Your name, Username (this is what makes up the URL to your profile page) and your email address. If you want to change them feel free to do so now. You'll need to re-enter your password if you do.

After you get those items they way you want them, there are two important fields you need to fill in so that people can find you and your business.

1. The first is the "*More Info URL*." Use this to add a link to your website, blog, Facebook page or any other significant link you have that gives people an opportunity to find out more about you and/or your business.
2. The other field you need to fill in is the "*One Line Bio*" field. Here you have one line (160 characters) to share some more information about yourself. Make this as interesting as you can in the space allotted. This bio will be one of the ways people decide if they will follow you or not, so tell them who you are and what you do.

The settings page also allows you to add your time zone and your location. So be sure you complete those too.

Finally, on the bottom of the page is a box you can check if your want to protect your updates. If you check this box, people will only be able to see your updates if they have special permission. This option is not recommended - especially when you are trying to build a network of followers. Unless you plan to use your Twitter account to communicate only with a select group of people, you should leave this box empty.

When you are finished filling in your settings, be sure to click on "Save" at the bottom of the page. Let's navigate back to your home page now.

Using Twitter with Your Cell Phone

On the right hand side of your home page, you will see section towards the bottom labeled Device Updates with a link "Set up SMS Device."

The screenshot shows the Twitter user interface for a user named 'o_0'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Profile, Find People, Settings, Help, and Sign out. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for Account, Password, Devices, Notices, Picture, and Design. The 'Mobile Phone' section is active, displaying a message: 'Twitter is more fun when used through your mobile phone. Set yours up!'. Underneath, there is a 'Mobile Phone' heading and a text input field for a phone number. A 'Save' button is located to the right of the input field. Below the input field, there is a checkbox labeled 'It's okay for Twitter to send txt messages to my phone. Standard rates apply.' To the right of the main content area, there is a green sidebar titled 'Twitter with SMS'. This sidebar contains three paragraphs of text explaining that updates are sent via SMS, that it's all done through text messages, and that Twitter doesn't charge for this service. It also mentions that users in Canada, the United States, or India can receive updates via SMS and can text 'OFF' to stop receiving and 'ON' to start again.

If you want to send and receive your Twitter messages from your mobile phone or an instant messenger, you can add that information here. Keep in mind however, if you use your cell phone to communicate on Twitter, you may be charged standard text messaging rates for your tweets.

Notification Options

Click on the "Notices" tab and you will find options for receiving email notifications when people follow you or when you receive a direct message. A direct message is a private message sent from one follower to another, without showing up in the general stream of tweets for others to see.

Twitter

Home Profile Find People Settings Help Sign out

o_o

Account Password Devices **Notices** Picture Design

Nudge me if I haven't updated in 24 hours
Auto Nudge: This will send a txt to your phone.

@ Replies: Show me [What is this?](#)

New Follower Emails: Email when someone starts following me

Direct Text Emails: Email when I receive a new direct message

Email Newsletter: I want the inside scoop—please send me email updates!

Save

Notices
These settings control how much we bug you about various things.

Tips

- Nudge only works if you have a registered device and it is on.
- The @ Replies setting can be confusing. Read the [help article](#) if you're unsure.
- Be sure your email is correct in [account settings](#) to receive emails.

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It's a good idea to select the email option for direct messages (or DM's, in Twitter-speak) as you don't receive any other notification that you have one. All DM's you receive do show up in a special section on your home page (labeled Direct Messages) but other than checking this area periodically, you won't know they are accumulating without the email notifications.

It's also nice to receive an email when you get a new follower so you have the opportunity to follow them back and/or send them a "welcome" message. (This is a great opportunity to let them know a bit more about you and your website, but don't make it too sales pitchy. After all, you've just met! 😊)

Show 'Em Who You Are

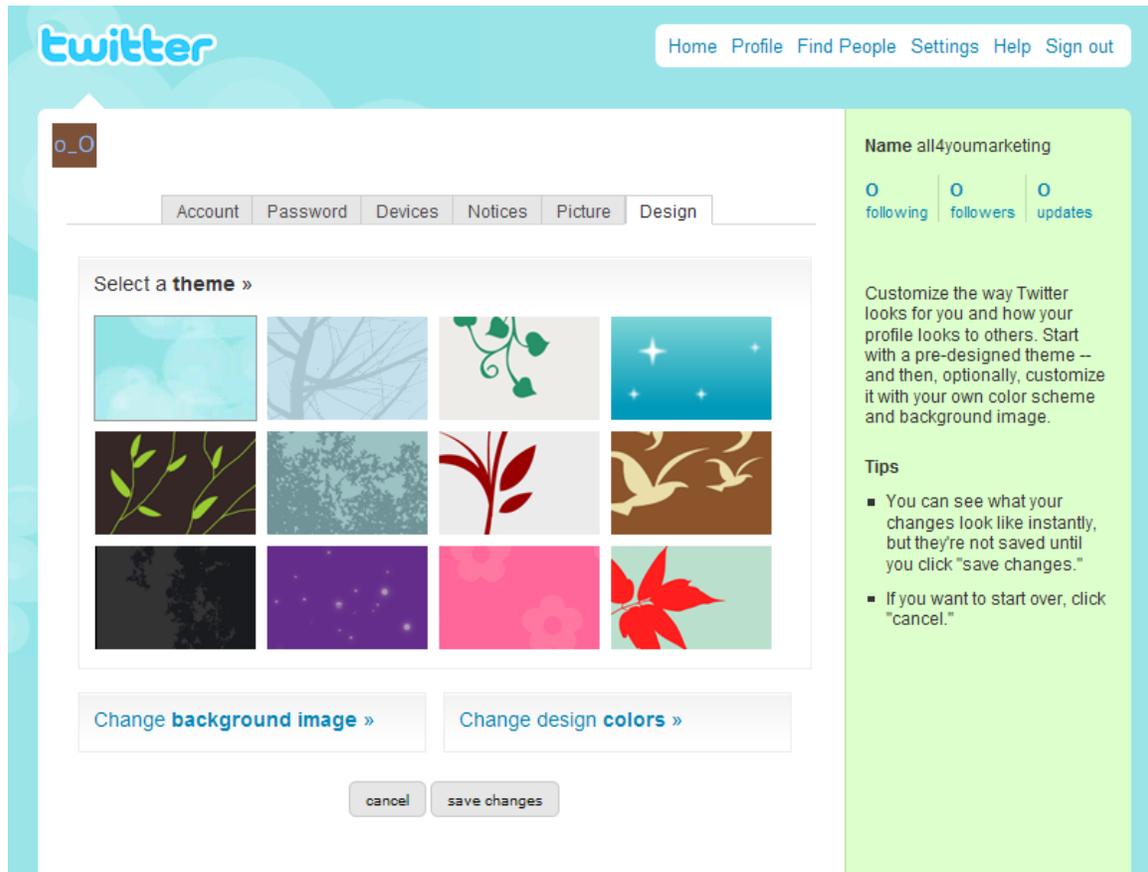
Your next step in preparing your Twitter profile is to upload a picture to be shown with your tweets and on your home page. Click the "Picture" tab and upload your photo of choice.



This isn't the time to be shy. Use a real photo of yourself. You want your followers to see you as a real person, so they choose to interact with you and a real photo goes a long way toward helping people connect with you. It helps to use the same photo you use on other social media sites as well as on your own site or blog.

Give Your Page Some Personality

Finally, you can customize how your homepage looks under by clicking the "Design" tab. This feature allows you a small amount of flexibility in the look of your homepage.



There are a few default design backgrounds you can choose and you can change the colors of your background. It can be helpful to use colors that complement your website or blog colors as part of your branding strategy. The design feature in Twitter is pretty limited. If you are interested in a custom background, you can design your own in Photoshop, hire a designer or use a service like [TwitterWebs.com](#) or [TwitDesign.com](#) for a custom Twitter background.

If you have a custom background made, you can share more links with the people who view it. Although these links are not clickable, your background is a place you can at least let people know how they can connect with you. It's a great place to share your other social media profile names or links, like Facebook and LinkedIn. You can post a phone number if you like or any other information about your business. While it's good to have clear information available so people can find you if they like, be careful not to let your background become too crowded or cluttered. Keeping it simple is the best route to go.

Here's an example of a custom background made by TwitDesign.com for the user [NicoleDean](#).

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter profile page for a user named NicoleDean. The profile has a custom background with a blue and green pattern and a photo of NicoleDean. The profile information includes her name, location (Florida), website, and bio. The bio mentions her roles as a marketing professional, mother, and wife. The profile also shows statistics for following (2,578), followers (2,377), and updates (796). The main content area displays several tweets, including a quote by Robert H. Schuller and a tweet about a free blog install. The right sidebar contains sections for Updates, Favorites, Actions, and Following.

Nicole Dean **twitter** Home Profile Find People Settings Help Sign out

NicoleDean
Following - Device updates OFF

Name NicoleDean
Location Florida
Web <http://www.Nicole...>
Bio I (heart) Marketing! Work at Home Mom. Wife. Goofball. Affiliate Manager to Jimmy D. Brown.

2,578 following 2,377 followers 796 updates

Updates

Favorites

Actions
[message NicoleDean](#)
[block NicoleDean](#)

Following

ONLINE BUSINESS IS NEVER BORING WITH THIS MOSTLY-SANE MARKETER

- Successful Internet Marketer
- Cutting Edge Affiliate Manager
- Content Expert
- Outsourcing Success Story
- Heckuva Writer
- All Around Fun Person To Know ;)

DON'T MISS OUT! GRAB MY RSS FEED AT NICOLEONTHENET.COM

"Let your hopes, not your hurts, shape your future." Robert H. Schuller #quotes - What are your hopes?
about 13 hours ago from web

@rsonline Interesting. I'll have to check it out. Writing this week for OutsourceWeekly.com about Twitter Efficiency. so good research!
about 16 hours ago from web in reply to rsonline

Answering questions about the free blog installs at <http://tinyurl.com/ox7sl5> from newbie affiliate marketers.
about 16 hours ago from web

Hmmm.. this fish has more followers than I do. **@ericasfish** Maybe this human could learn a thing or two from him.
about 18 hours ago from web

"It drinks the wine"... Night all. Thanks for an day of inspiration, laughter, amazement, thought, talking cats, creativity, and learning.
12:36 AM Mar 16th from web

@nathangilder - I like you already! Stay in touch, please. :)
12:13 AM Mar 16th from web in reply to nathangilder

All my tweeps --> don't forget to submit your tags to <http://wefollow.com> - it's a TwitterDirectory that's based on #hashtags.
12:06 AM Mar 16th from web

RSS feed of NicoleDean's updates

Now that you've created your account and customized your profile, you're ready to get started using your Twitter account. In other words, it's time to tweet!

Tweeting – Get Social!

There is an art to using Twitter to its full capabilities. The most important thing to remember is to be social and really interact with people in a new way.

The quickest way to ruin your Twitter credibility - whether you are a new user or a seasoned vet - is to use Twitter as a platform to hype your sales pitch and hawk your products. Twitter is about networking - not about direct sales. It's Twitter, not Tupperware. Your goal isn't to see what the tally is at the end of the day. Instead, your goal is about how many people come to the convention - your website. Well, if you've ever dealt with an over-zealous party planner, you know you love to hear about what they do, but not every time you hear from them and certainly not several times a day.

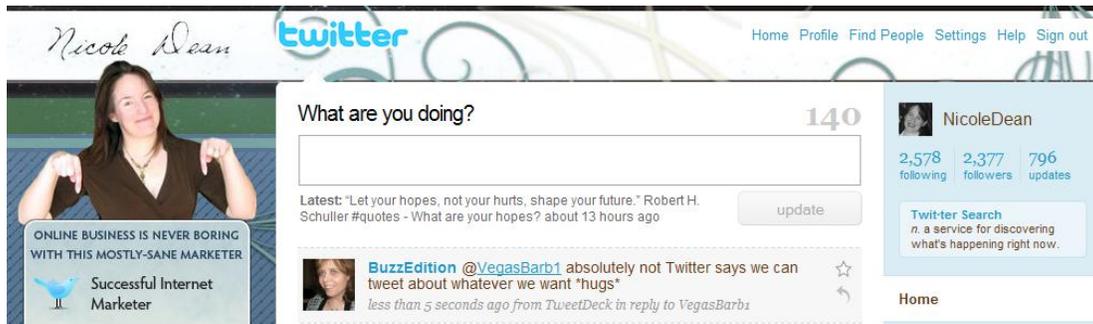
Disclaimer: Of course, sales are the lifeblood of every business and whatever industry you are in, if you can sell aggressively and deliver what you sell, you're on the road to mega-success.

My point is Twitter is not the store front. It's the vehicle that takes you to the storefront. And on Twitter - is all about the ride on the way to the sale. So get tweeting and have a little fun, while connecting with people for a bit before you try to sell them your products and services.

To tweet most successfully, vary your messages between encouraging and uplifting others, offering helpful tidbits in your area of expertise, sharing a bit about your real life and the occasional offer or link to your site. You should consider a ratio of about 20 to 1. In other words, for every sales tweet, you need 20 interactive tweets without pitches or site links. The exception to this is if you have a blog with frequently updated content. There is nothing wrong with letting people know you've posted to your blog, but it is critical that you are also posting the other types of tweets.

Answering the Ever Popular Question, "What Are You Doing?"

To post a tweet (or message) on Twitter, select the Home link from your navigation links. Fill in the box that asks "What are you doing?" Remember, you only have 140 characters to work with so make it count!



Type in your answer letting others know what you're up to. Click the "Update" button. Your message has now been sent and others will see it.

Replies & Direct Messages

One of the best ways to use Twitter is to reply to other people's tweets. When someone asks a question or makes a comment you can answer or respond to, use the @ sign before their username to reply to them. Here's an example:



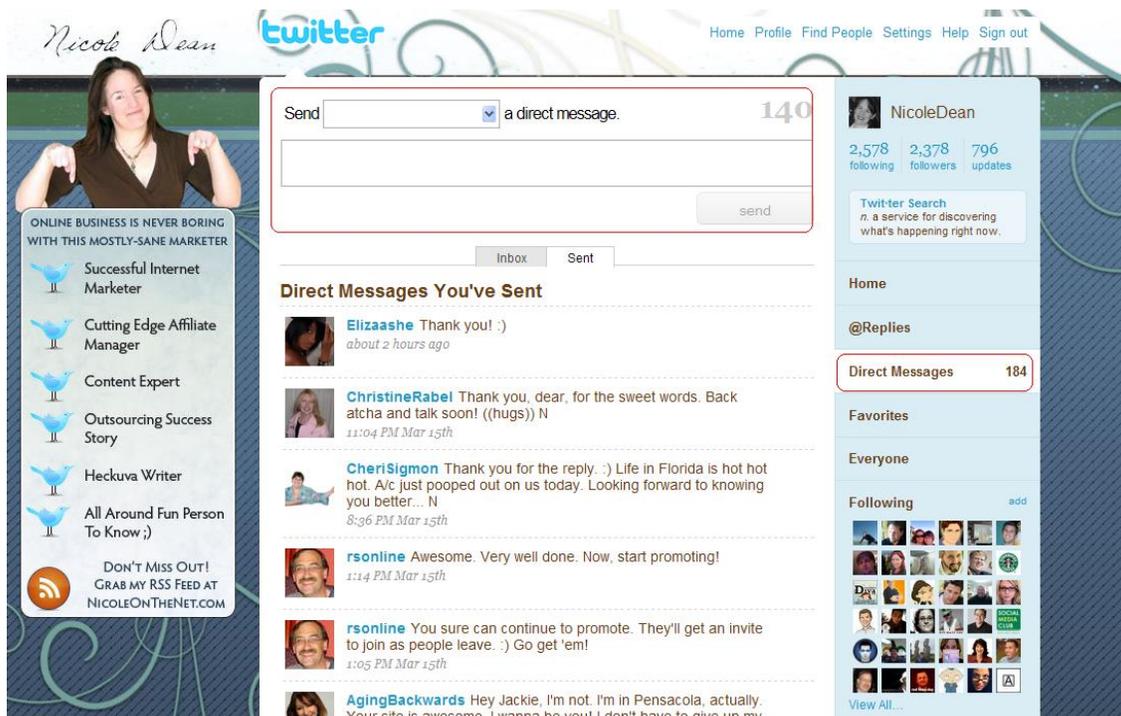
Notice how all the tweets directed to the user NicoleDean had the @symbol before her username? You can check all of your own replies by clicking the replies tab on the right side of your homepage.

You can also click on the small arrow at the end of the user's tweet you are replying to. When you reply to someone in this way, others can see what you are saying as the reply shows up on the Tweet timeline.

So, what do you do if you want to send a private message to someone without everyone else on Twitter seeing it?

If you want to carry on an exclusive conversation with one person for more than a few tweets, it's a good idea to use the direct message (DM) feature. This allows for privacy (great for things like getting email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) from the entire Twitter universe (Twuniverse).

You can go to your DM folder from your Twitter home page by clicking the link on the right hand side of the page. Once you're there, you will see a drop down list of the people you can direct message.

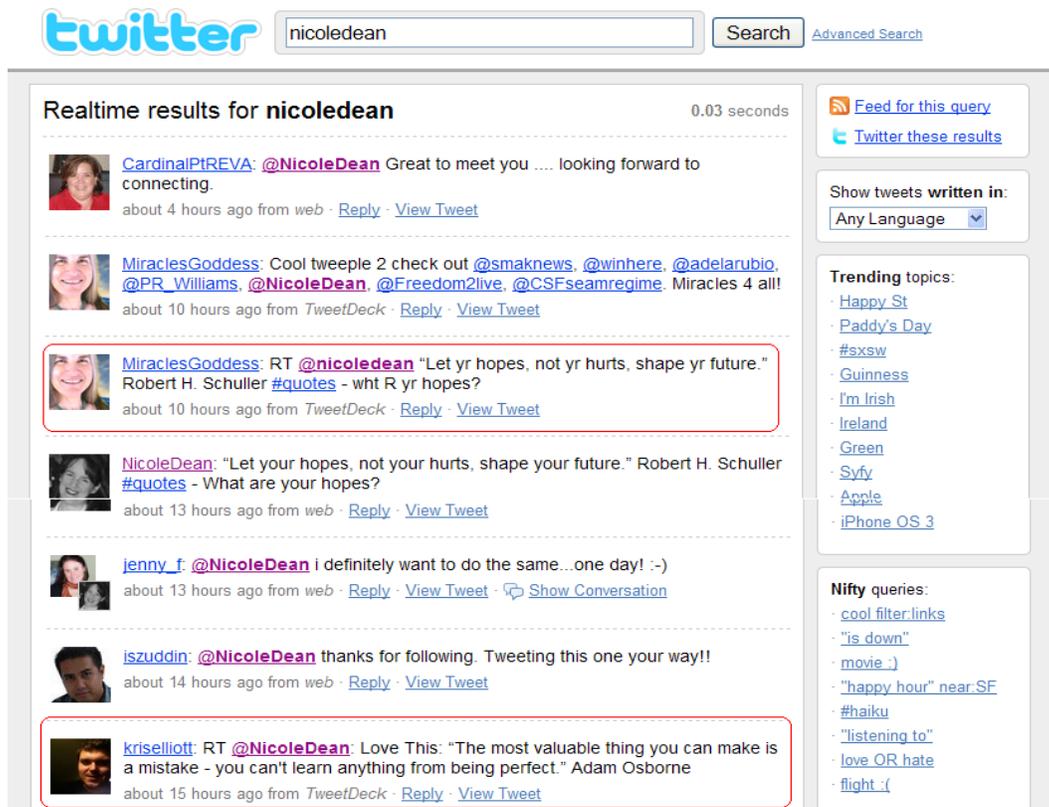


Note: The only way this feature works is when both parties are following each other.

The other way you can direct message someone is by typing the letter D, leaving a space and typing the username - without the @ sign preceding it in the text box of your home page. Example: D username

Re-tweeting (RT)

One way to interact on Twitter is by re-tweeting something someone else has said. Re-tweeting is simply repeating what another user has said, preceded by an @ and their username. If you want to re-tweet something a particular user has said simply type the following, like in this example!



Realtime results for **nicoledean** 0.03 seconds

CardinalPtREVA: @NicoleDean Great to meet you looking forward to connecting.
about 4 hours ago from web · Reply · View Tweet

MiraclesGoddess: Cool tweeple 2 check out @smaknews, @winhere, @adelarubio, @PR_Williams, @NicoleDean, @Freedom2live, @CSFseamregime. Miracles 4 all!
about 10 hours ago from TweetDeck · Reply · View Tweet

MiraclesGoddess: RT @nicoledean "Let yr hopes, not yr hurts, shape yr future." Robert H. Schuller #quotes - wht R yr hopes?
about 10 hours ago from TweetDeck · Reply · View Tweet

NicoleDean: "Let your hopes, not your hurts, shape your future." Robert H. Schuller #quotes - What are your hopes?
about 13 hours ago from web · Reply · View Tweet

jenny_f: @NicoleDean I definitely want to do the same...one day! :-)
about 13 hours ago from web · Reply · View Tweet · Show Conversation

iszuddin: @NicoleDean thanks for following. Tweeting this one your way!!
about 14 hours ago from web · Reply · View Tweet

kriselliott: RT @NicoleDean: Love This: "The most valuable thing you can make is a mistake - you can't learn anything from being perfect." Adam Osborne
about 15 hours ago from TweetDeck · Reply · View Tweet

Feed for this query
Twitter these results

Show tweets written in:
Any Language

Trending topics:
Happy St
Paddy's Day
#sxsw
Guinness
I'm Irish
Ireland
Green
Syfy
Apple
iPhone OS 3

Nifty queries:
cool filter:links
"is down"
movie :)
"happy hour" near:SF
#haiku
"listening to"
love OR hate
flight -/

Re-tweeting helps you out in two different ways:

1. It provides content to your followers.
2. It gets you in with the original tweeter.

Re-tweet fairly often, but keep it for things that are truly worth repeating. Again, don't use this method of communication as your sole type of tweet, but mix it in with your other posts.

Another way to spread the word even more about you (and your business) is to provide your followers with quality information that will have them re-tweeting your messages to their followers!

So, how do you find people to follow and more importantly get followers of your own? After all, no one likes talking to themselves, right?

How to Find People to Follow & Get Followers Too!

Building a network on Twitter starts by finding people to follow. While you want to build a list of followers that is comprised of people in your target audience, you should also include a variety of other people as well.

Twitter is an amazing place to connect with people for new ideas, joint ventures and partnerships you may not find in your other business activities. By following people in your own industry, you can find inspiring ideas, opportunities to help others and the camaraderie of connecting with people who understand the ins and outs of what you do. Every field has specific highlights and lowlights that only others in that same field can relate to and understand. When you get to know people who struggle with the same issues you have, you have the opportunity to encourage each other and offer suggestions for working through the tough stuff. Many people in business online work in a solo enterprise, which can become extremely isolating and stifling. Twitter can be an excellent remedy for this affliction - which can lead to greater productivity and success.

There are several ways you can find people to follow on Twitter. Starting from your home page, you can look to your right and find the link that says "Everyone". This is called the public timeline and it will show you tweets from absolutely everyone on Twitter. Read through these until you find one that interests you. Then simply click on the username or profile picture to go to that person's home page. Read through some of their tweets, go to their website, and read their bio - whatever you need to do to get a sense of who they are. If you like what you see, click the follow link under their picture and voila, you are following someone!

Another way to find followers is to use the "Find People" link. This is at the top of your homepage, in the navigational links. There are four different options in the Find People section.

- *Find on Twitter:* Here you can search for people by their username or their real name. This is great for searching out specific Twitter users.
- *Find on Other Networks:* This feature lets you import names from your Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail or MSN accounts. You do need to enter your email password, but it isn't stored and you won't be spammed by Twitter.
- *Invite by Email:* You can enter email addresses here and send them a pre-written message inviting them to Twitter.

- *Suggested Users*: This little feature will offer you some possible users to follow. Many of these names are celebrities on Twitter - it may not do a whole lot for your business networking goals, but then again, you never know. You might just enjoy what they have to say!

On the bottom of your home page is the "Search" function. You can use Twitter Search to look for a username, a topic or a keyword. Type in your search word and you will instantly get a page of results containing that word. This is a great way to find followers in your niche. Again, when you see a tweet that resonates with you, go to that person's homepage and look around a bit. If you like what you see, add them to your following list.

Once you are following a few people, you can check out their followers! Go to their home page and check out their followers. On the right side of their page, you see a link that says Following, with a block of photos underneath it. Click on the link or on a photo to go to the profile page of that Twitter user.

Finally, you can get followers by adding those who follow you. As you start tweeting and interacting with people, you will start gaining followers of your own. Many people follow everyone who follows them. Other people are more selective and only choose to follow back those who are in their niche. The choice is yours, but don't limit yourself too much. You may miss out on some great new friends, colleagues and customers.

Mistakes to Avoid on Twitter

There is no "right way" to use Twitter. Some people use it as a purely social platform, others use it as a teaching tool and still others use it for both of these reasons - and more. There are, however, a couple of important things to avoid doing on Twitter.

- The biggest mistake to avoid on Twitter is using it solely as a sales platform. If the only tweeting you do is self-promotional, you'll burn your bridges before you have a chance to even build them properly. You need to focus on the networking aspect of Twitter before you try to sell. Spend plenty of your tweet time reaching out to others, sharing useful information and being a social butterfly. If you focus strictly on self-promotion, you will be ignored or worse yet, blocked by other users.
- The other mistake to avoid on Twitter is spending all of your tweets on literally interpreting the "What Are You Doing?" question Twitter asks at the top of your home page. While you can certainly include information about your daily life, don't focus solely on your mundane activities. No one cares if you are brushing your teeth or doing laundry all day long. The primary tactic on Twitter is to be engaged with other people. Ask questions, offer helpful links to things you are reading that might be of interest to your followers and seek out ways you can be useful to other users. Always remember Twitter is a networking tool - not a sales engine.
- Some applications that work in conjunction with Twitter allow you to set up an automatic direct message to be sent to people who begin following you. Although many people use these auto - DM features, a large number of Twitter users frown on them. Several Twitter polls have shown that a large majority of users do not like automated messages.
- If you do send direct messages in response to new followers, sending a link to your website - especially if you are trying to sell something - is a huge No-No! Most folks on Twitter would like to get to know you first before you start trying to sell your products and services.

Additional Goodies for Making Twitter Use Easier

There is no shortage of programs and applications used to make Twitter readily accessible and easier to use. Many of these can save you time and add convenience so you can make the most out of your Twitter time.

Some of the most helpful Twitter tools include desktop clients for accessing Twitter without needing to spend your time on the actual Twitter website. The two most popular desktop clients for Twitter are TweetDeck and Twhirl.

Desktop Applications

[TweetDeck](#)

TweetDeck is an Adobe Air application that can be used on either a Mac or PC. It helps you break down the vast amount of information on Twitter into manageable sized groups, which helps you stay abreast of your conversations. You can split your TweetDeck screen into columns, helping you to sort things out. For example, one column is for your regular tweet stream, much like your Twitter home page. However, you can also set up separate columns for your @replies, your direct messages, designated groups of people or results of a keyword search.

When you separate things into these various columns, you remove a lot of the "noise" from Twitter and can see the information most important to you. This is especially helpful so you don't miss any replies sent to you by other users, as well as showing you direct messages instantaneously. One big frustration with the Twitter webpage is you have no way of knowing someone has sent you a direct message, without continually checking that page. The same applies to your @replies (messages sent to you, but in the public stream.)

When you use Twitter from the website, you need to keep your focus on the page so you can see what's happening. There's nothing wrong with that if all you are doing is tweeting, but many people prefer to multi-task and tweet throughout their day.

TweetDeck lets you continue working on the web, or any other program you may be using and alerts you when you receive messages, with a little chirp and a small pop-up window. Then, with just a glance, you can see if the tweet is a direct message, a personal @reply or a response to a keyword search or simply a general tweet from another user.

Using TweetDeck for its search feature is a great way to keep an eye on your company name, a keyword for your industry or any other topic you want to keep in your sights. For example, if you are selling golf shoes, you can set the search feature for that term and whenever someone tweets about golf shoes, it will show up in your search column.

TweetDeck also helps you respond quickly and easily to other people in a few different ways. When you hover your mouse over a person's avatar, you are given four options: reply, DM, ReTweet or the other actions option. The others actions button offers you a range of choices from following to translating the tweet into another language, among others.

[Twhirl](#)

Another popular desktop client for Twitter is Twhirl. Twhirl is much smaller than TweetDeck and doesn't have as many features, but it does give you a small compact application to tweet and follow your tweet stream. Twhirl will also let you know when you have new messages. It also has a search feature. It also allows you to keep track of some other social networking sites such as Friendfeed, laconi, ca and Seemic. Twhirl will cross post to Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn as well.

Both TweetDeck and Twhirl have built in link-shorteners, which shrink a link to help accommodate your 140-character limit on Twitter. These are only two of the various desktop clients you can use for Twitter.

Other Handy Twitter Apps You Might Find Useful

Many other applications serve to make your Twitter experience more convenient. Several of them allow you to schedule tweets to be posted at a later date and time. There is some controversy over whether these are a good idea or not. Many people feel they sorely neglect the social aspect of Twitter, which is the main point of the site. Other people, however, like the flexibility of being able to schedule tweets for times they are unavailable to do so manually.

[Tweet Later](#)

This is a popular service for scheduling tweets. Tweet Later lets you set up a tweet or a series of tweets and schedule them for broadcast later. Tweet Later will also let you automatically follow anyone who follows you and you can even automatically send a welcome message to your new followers.

[Social Too](#)

This application gives you the option of automatically following anyone who follows you. It will also send you a daily email with the names of everyone who follows you or un-follows you each day.

Some people like to know who unfollows them, as they believe it will help determine if they are tweeting unpopular posts. However, the general consensus is to not worry so much about those who un-follow you. There are plenty of fish in the Twitter Sea and if someone decides to stop following you, it doesn't necessarily have any great impact on you or your business.

[Twitter Grader](#) - There are also some services to help you connect with appropriate people to follow. One of the most popular one of these is Twitter Grader. Twitter Grader calculates the power of your Twitter network based on who you follow, who follows you and how often you tweet. The more popular your followers the higher your Twitter Grade. Twitter Grader also gives you suggestions for people to follow based on your profile and the most commonly used words in your tweets.

[Twitter Buttons](#) – This is a site where you can pick up cute buttons to paste on your website, blog, newsletter and more that encourage people to follow you on Twitter. They're free and updated frequently.

URL Shortening Applications

One type of service many people like to have available on their tool bar is an URL shortening service. Because Twitter limits you to only 140 characters per tweet, posting a link to your website can be troublesome. There are several services that let you type in the URL of any site and will then shorten it into a clickable URL that uses fewer characters.

Here are just a few:

www.budurl.com

www.tinyurl.com

www.snipurl.com

You will find many more applications and services available to help you get more out of your Twitter use. There are new ones being developed everyday. If you aren't sure how they work or which ones are the best, simply ask around right on Twitter itself. You'll find plenty of people more than happy to offer their opinions. In fact, one of the things you will notice on Twitter is plenty of people are more than happy to share all kinds of things.

Conclusion

The atmosphere on Twitter is a bit like a party filled with generous, helpful go-getters who truly enjoy interacting with people and doing all they can to help each other out. THAT could just be the secret power of Twitter right there - real people letting down their guard just a bit and truly enjoying helping each other create successful businesses. There is a genuine cooperative spirit on Twitter that is making it one of the most popular spots to be on the Internet.

What are you waiting for? Start tweeting and join in the revolution. Watch your business soar to levels you couldn't have even imagined.

Twitter Resources & Additional Tools to Make Marketing with Twitter a Breeze

Custom Background Designs for Your Profile Page

[Twitter Webs](#)

[Twit Design](#)

[Easy WAHM Websites](#)

Twitter Desktop Clients:

[TweetDeck](#)

[Twhirl](#)

More Bling for Your Twitter Account:

[Twit This](#) - Let people tweet links to your website pages or blog posts automatically with this. You can copy the Twit This code to almost any website and there's a plugin for WordPress that will add it to each and every post you publish!

[Twit Pic](#) – Share your photos with your tweets!

[Twitter Grader](#) - How cool is your Twitter account? Want to find more people in your target market to follow? Here you go!

[Tweet My Blog](#) – Want to post a tweet every time you update your blog with a new post? This tool does it automatically if you have a WordPress blog. You can even promote it as an affiliate!

[Additional Twitter Applications](#) – From using Twitter on your iPhone to posting badges that pull your tweets over to your blog or website, you're sure to find what you're looking for to make Twitter an even better resource in your business.

Link Shortening Tools:

www.budurl.com

www.tinyurl.com

www.snipurl.com

Tools To Help You Profit From Twitter Fast!

[Twitter Traffic Machine - The Automated Growth & Money Making System.](#) The System Explains How To Grow A Twitter Account Rapidly W/total Automation Via 5 Videos.

[Generate Cash At Will Using Twitter.](#) Using The Turbo Cash Generator You Can Generate Cash At Will Using Twitter. It's All Done Automatically. Just Sign Up, Enter Your Twitter Details And Start Earning.

[Twitter Traffic Exposed](#) Discover How To Tap Into A Massive Flow Of Traffic From Twitter Today & Make More Money In Your Online Business Guaranteed.

[Viral Tweets - Converts Like Crazy!](#) Viral Twitter Traffic Generation System! The Same Software I Used To Make \$4,000 From One Tweet!

[Twitter Affiliate Cash.](#) The Twitter Affiliate Cash Systems Shows You How To Set Up A Twitter Account. Automatically Add Followers And Earn Money From Affiliate Sales. This Is An Easy And Effective System Anyone Can Implement In Less Than A Day!

[Twitter Rockstar.](#) Authoritative Guide To Marketing Your Brand Or Niche With Twitter. 11 Video's, 4 PDF's, 2 Mindmaps, And A 20 Minute Audio Session, All Conveniently Located In A Members Area For Viewing Or Download. The Most Comprehensive Twitter Guide On The Internet.

[Twitter Annihilation - Hands Off Business Growth.](#) The Only System That Shows You How To Actually Leverage The Power Of Twitter In Every Aspect Of Your Business.

[The \\$5 Twitter Trick.](#) Everyone's Talkin' About Twitter, That's Why This New And *hot* Product Has Super Conversions!

[Twitter Money Tree.](#) Now You Can Grow A List Of People That Will Follow Your Every Word, Buy Things You Recommend, Fatten Your Bank Account - And Be Up And Running In Under 90 Minutes!

[Copy, Paste And Profit With The Proven Automated Profits Machine.](#) Shows Even The Complete Online Beginner How To Profit By Setting Up Multiple, Automatic, Self Operating Money Machines On Twitter.

[The Twitter Report - Free Targeted Traffic From Twitter!](#) Learn How To Get Free Targeted Traffic From Twitter Using Ethical & Acceptable Marketing Practices.

[Twitter Decoded - The Definitive Guide To Marketing On Twitter.](#) Exploit The Power Of Twitter, The Most Popular Social Network Online. Tap Into An Automated Traffic Machine That Will Build Your Lists, Sell Your Products And Grow Your Following In 72 Hours Or Less!

[Get 20,000 Twitter Followers In 90 Days And Earn Income Automatically.](#) Automatic Program Is Set And Forget. Earn Income Automatically From Twitter Or Your Money Back.

[Build An Army Of Twitter Followers.](#) You Already Know That Twitter Is Exploding, But Do You Know How To Turn Twitter Into A Traffic And Cash Machine? That's Where We Come In -- Get All The Products, Read All The Books, Watch The Videos And Test Your Strategies. Ready?

[Twitter Traffic - The Big Twitter Follow Machine For Cash.](#) With A 60% Commission, This Is The One Everybody Is Tweeting About.

[Earn \\$4000 Per Month With Free Twitter Software.](#) Incredible Free Twitter Software

[Twitter Mind Control -- Sells Like Hotcakes!](#) Twitter Mind Control Is The Ultimate Blueprint To Make Money On Twitter. Sales Copy By Million Dollar Copywriter. High Conversions Guaranteed.

[Twitter Fast Cash System - The Fast Making Money System Via Twitter.](#) The System Explains How To Make Money Via Twitter Account Rapidly W/total Automation. High Conversion Of 2.5%, The System Shows You Different Methods Of Making Big Money Via Twitter. With More Than 2 Hours Of Twit Fast Cash Videos.

[Underground Twitter Secret Manifesto.](#) New Sources Of Traffic Revealed For First Time!

[Twitter - Tweet 25,000 People Instantly.](#) Send Your Tweet To Our Network Of Over 25,000 Followers On Twitter. Drive A Surge Of Traffic To Your Website. This Is A Great Way For People To Easily Advertise On Twitter Without Having To Build A Huge Follower Network.

[Twitter Treasure Chest.](#) An Easy To Understand, Helpful And Very Effective Twitter Marketing System Aimed At Internet Marketers / Online Business Owners. Updated With Magnetic New Sales Page And Amazing Bonuses Including Videos.

[The Twitter Technique - Get Mass Targeted Followers.](#) At Last!, A Simple Way To Find Free Targeted Followers On Twitter, Gain A Huge Following, And Prosper Regardless Of Your Niche.

[Don't Get Twitter Slapped!](#) There Is A Right Way And A Wrong Way To Use The New Social Network Site. I Go Over How To Make Money Using Twitter, But Staying Within Their Rules And Terms Of Service.

[Twitter Marketing, Graphics & Monetization Scripts.](#) Twitter Monetization. Quality Scripts, Graphics And Reports For Online Marketers.

[Radically Increase Your Twitter Following.](#) First Viral Word-of-mouth Twitter Tool!

[Ad Marketing.](#) Learn How To Use And Market With Twitter.

[Twitter Profit Maker.](#) Exploit The Twitter Phenomenon And Make \$1000s! Learn The Secret To Making Money Using Twitter

[Artice Czar.](#) Use Your Twitter Followers To Promote Your Website.

[Social Media Realty Pro - Twitter Action Guide.](#) Twitter Is The Hottest Thing For Real Estate Pros To Understand -- And If You Get It Right, Real Estate Success Can Be In Your Future! The Social Media Realty Pro Twitter Action Guide Has Everything You Need To Get Started, Get Noticed, And Be A Pro!

[Your Twitter Coach.](#) How To Build Your Twitter Following Fast And On Auto Pilot

[Twitter Traffic Secrets - Use Twitter To Crush Any Niche.](#) Unleash The Power Of Twitter Using Our Extensive Video Learning System. We Provide Over 2 Hours Of Instructional Videos And Life Time Access To The Members Only Traffic 140 Social Media Community. Leverage Twitter Today To Explode Your Business!

[Small Business Guide To Using Twitter.](#) This Manual Helps Small Business, Home Based Business And Other Entrepreneurs To Get Onto Twitter, Gain Followers And Use Twitter As A Tool For Their Marketing.

[Twitter Success Revealed](#) A Complete Guide On How To Make Serious Cash On Twitter. You Will Learn All The Secrets On How To Build A Targeted List On Twitter. The Goal Is To Generate More Traffic To Your Product, Make More Sales And Dominate The Competition.

[Twitter Traffic Formula.](#) Just Released* New Video Series Reveals How To Use The Power Of Twitter To Create A Massive Flood Of Targeted Traffic, F-a-s-t For

Any Online Venture! Easy, Fun And Powerful! Act Now And Get Two Special Twitter Success Manuals For Free!

[Twitter Estate - *Learn How To Drive Massive Social Traffic!*](#) You Do Know That Twitter Is The Hottest Thing Since Sliced Bread Right?

[Lead Generation Seminar Mindmap.](#) Twitter Is Hot! Earn Easy Money By Helping Others Learn How To Become Their Own Lead Generation Source! Learn Several Techniques Taught By Some Of The Brightest Minds In The Business With Mindmaps Of Their Presentations Of How They Make Money!

[Twitter Treasure Chest.](#) Powerful Guide With Tips And Tricks To Drive Hoards Of Twitter Tweeters To Your Web Site

[Find Tweople To Come To Your Website.](#) We Will Create Beautiful Custom Twitter Backgrounds For You.

[Long John Twitter - Ebook For The Exploding Twitter Market.](#) Twitter Is Adding 2.5 Million Users A Month. Now You Have A Product To Sell To This Exploding Market. Ebook With Step By Step Instructions And Screen Shots.