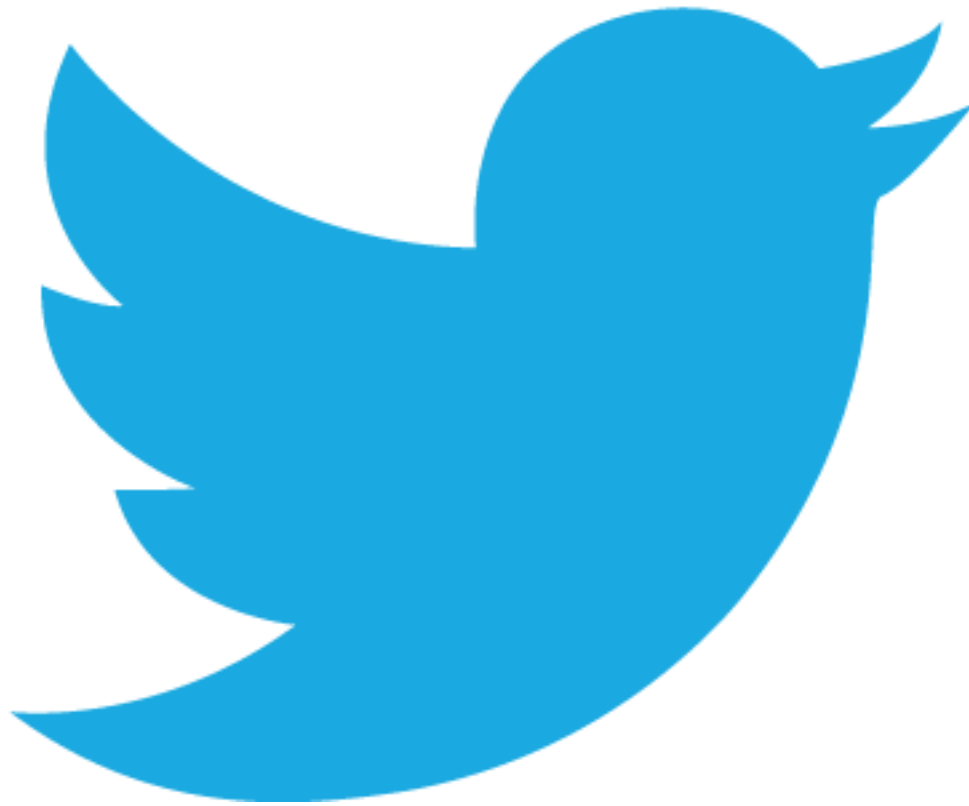


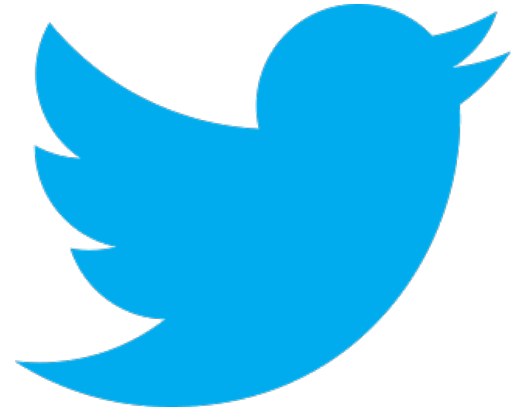
How to Use Twitter to Grow Your Small Business



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Twitter could quite possibly be the most important social-media marketing tool that you use to grow your business, according to [BusinessWeek](#). With an average of 5,000 to 10,000 new people joining Twitter each day and the potential to reach more than 500 million Twitter users, the opportunities to introduce your brand to prospective customers are huge.

Twitter's format is incredibly attractive to people in business; it's essentially a micro-blogging platform that allows you to connect and keep a constant stream of communication open with your followers without investing too much time. It's a great resource for asking questions directly to your target audience to gain powerful insights and can also function as an informal press release system when you have exciting news to share about a new product or service. Not only can you use Twitter to position yourself as an expert in your industry, but it's also an effective tool for humanizing your brand and deepening relationships with existing and prospective customers.



If you're reading this, you probably already know how valuable of an asset that Twitter can be to your business. The goal of this white paper is to help you go beyond the basics with advanced techniques, tools, and strategies that will help you build a solid base of Twitter followers who are more likely to convert to customers.

How to Create the Perfect Tweet to Drive Results

For many business owners, perhaps the biggest challenge to using Twitter is [creating the perfect Tweet](#) that will drive results. Creating a well-crafted tweet is an art, and here are some useful tips for doing so from our team of social media experts:

- First and foremost, consider the readability and "retweetability" of your tweet. Is it informative, yet to the point? Is your tweet worthy (meaning that it offers useful and interesting information) of a retweet by your followers?
- Before creating a tweet, think about the intended audience. Will this appeal to them?
- Browse through your Twitter feed and take note of the tweets that stand out to you. What is it about these tweets that has captivated your attention?
- Use strong headlines that actually give your audience a reason to click on a link included in your tweet.

- Take into account the magic number for an original tweet (120 characters) for maximum retweetability. With an original tweet of 120 characters, your followers can retweet your tweet and add a little something of their own.
- Make a habit of shortening all of your links with Bit.ly. As a rule of thumb, you should keep the length of your links under 20 characters.
- As always, proofread your tweets for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors.
- Naturally, you will also want to build in a call-to-action, which will motivate your followers to further engage with your content by clicking on a link, visiting your website, or sharing your tweet with their network. Adding a hashtag also helps to introduce your tweet to a stream of potential followers and expand your reach on this social networking site. Never use more than two hashtags per tweet.

Best Practices for Using Twitter for Lead Generation

Ultimately, the goal of creating carefully crafted tweets is to generate more qualified leads for your business from Twitter. According to a [recent study](#) shared by Mediabistro, 82 percent of leads generated using social-media networking come from Twitter. An even more powerful statistic that this study revealed is that when it comes to lead generation, Twitter outperforms Facebook and LinkedIn by a margin of 9 to 1.

Outlined below are some [best practices for using Twitter](#) that your business can take advantage of to be more intentional and effective with generating new leads:

- Optimize your Twitter profile with keywords that describe your business and industry to help your brand to be more easily found.
- Make a habit of following colleagues, customers, industry influencers, and people who choose to follow you on Twitter.
- Browse through tweets that include keywords relevant to your interests or industry, and reply to those tweets to show the person that you have something in common with them.
- A useful tool for sifting through tweets is [Hootsuite](#), which is a social media management dashboard that will allow you to track tweets based on specified keywords and phrases. Embracing this tactic is an effective way to gain new followers that you may not have known otherwise and position your brand as a thought leader in your industry.





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- Occasionally mention specific followers in tweets and make a point of retweeting content from others often. You can bet that the followers that you have given a virtual shout out to will return the favor. As a rule of thumb, use the 4:1 ratio.
- Take the time to develop a regular tweeting schedule. According to [TrackSocial](#), brands that tweet 4-5 times per day get more retweets. If that sounds overwhelming to you, consider scheduling your tweets in advance to help accomplish this goal. Also, partnering with a social media agency can help to ensure that your brand has an active presence on Twitter.
- Create a dedicated Twitter landing page. Tweeting about this a few times a week at various times can help your business to attract new leads.
- Tweet links to other landing pages that you have created as well to be more effective with capturing valuable lead information.

Advanced Twitter Techniques to Assist with Lead Conversion

To further elaborate on lead generation using Twitter, it's only appropriate that we discuss some advanced techniques for how you can more successfully convert these leads to viable customers. Discussed below are some proven strategies for doing so, and you will probably find that the majority of other business owners in your industry are not "in the know" with these tactics and tricks:

Use Twitter Lists

Twitter allows you to create lists that contain a select group of users, and organizing your followers into Twitter lists will allow you to see a stream of tweets from each individual list. For example, if you created an industry specific list, at any point in time you can click on that list to see what all of the current buzz is about in your industry. A Twitter list can be a very powerful tool in determining content to create and retweet.

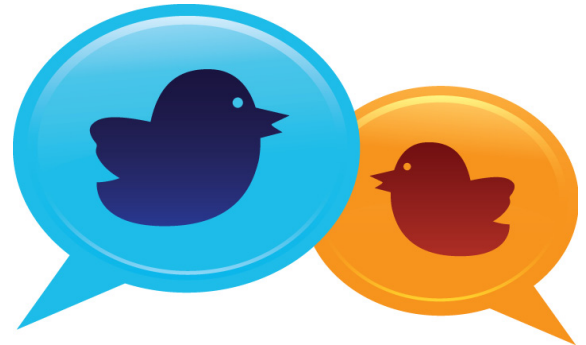
To create a Twitter list, go to your profile page and click “create list.” Assign a name to your list and specify if you want your list to be public (anyone can subscribe to your list) or private (only you have access to the list). When creating these lists, it’s a good idea to sort them by keywords, area of expertise, and thought leaders in your industry. At any given time, you can add or delete members from your lists.

Tweet Structure

A common complaint by Twitter users is that users can only see a reply to a tweet if they are following both sides of the conversation. If you want all of your followers to be able to see your replies, add a period before each reply. By doing so, Twitter will not classify your tweet as a reply, and all of your followers can see and be introduced to the person that you are talking to.

Brand Your Own Hashtag

Leveraging the power of hashtags to build your brand on Twitter is a fairly easy task and can allow other users that may not be currently following you to join in on conversations around specific topics. You can also create your own hashtags, which are ideal for hosting online events such as Twitter chats and webinars. When branding your own hashtags, remember that it’s important to make it short, specific, and easy to remember. Always verify that the hashtag is not already in use for another topic before using it to market your brand. To be sure, take advantage of free third-party tools such as HashTags.org to search for your hashtag of choice.



Host a Branded TweetChat

If you’ve taken the time to brand your own hashtag, it’s well worth your while to host a branded TweetChat. A TweetChat is essentially a scheduled chat that happens on Twitter around a certain topic (your hashtag) and links the tweets together to create a virtual conversation. You can choose to lead the conversation or allow for a more informal free flow of tweets between participants. Regardless of the format, TweetChats are an excellent way to engage existing followers and attract new ones. And, we all know the powerful role that engagement can play in the lead conversion process.

Tweet Your Older, Most Successful Content

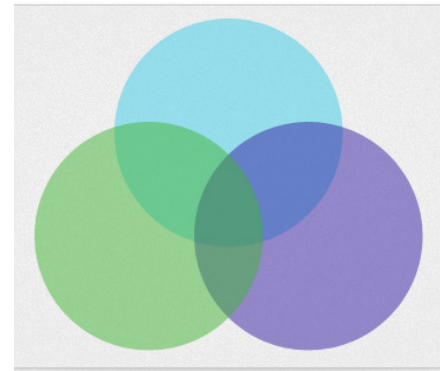
It can be challenging to constantly come up with new and engaging content to tweet, but the good news is that you don’t always have to. If you have a business blog, you can take advantage of the [Tweet Old Posts plugin](#), which will automatically tweet your older blog posts every four hours. This will help not

only to keep your older content alive, but is also very effective for promoting your brand. You can specify the amount of time between tweets as well as the number of tweets that you want to make each day. If you're working on building your brand around certain hashtags, you can specify this in the plugin. It's a great time management tool and very useful with converting leads to actual customers.

Tools to Take Your Twitter Strategy to the Next Level

So now that we've offered some advanced Twitter techniques to assist with the lead conversion process, we also thought it would be worth our while to walk through some tools that can help you more efficiently implement these techniques. Here are a few of our favorite tools and resources to help take your Twitter strategy to the next level (and you will happy to learn that several of them are free):

- [Buffer](#): This [social media management](#) dashboard makes it extremely easy for your business to share content on Twitter and other social media sites by offering the ability to schedule content in advance. Simply load up Buffer with the content that you want to share, and this tool will automatically tweet it throughout the day (or time frame that you specified). A small business Buffer plan starts at \$50 per month.
- [FollowerWonk](#): Sure, Twitter offers analytics, but are you able to use this resource to gain all of the information that you need to continuously improve your strategy? For those looking to dig deeper, FollowerWonk allows you to gain more detailed and valuable information about who your followers are. In addition, you can use this tool to find and connect with heavy hitters in your industry and generate a detailed social graph to help you better compare, analyze, track, and sort your followers. While there is a free version of this tool available, the paid version can provide you access to all of the features.
- [Tweriod](#): In addition to crafting well-written tweets, you need to consider the time to post them. This tool analyzes which day and time your followers' activity on Twitter is the highest to help you get the optimal results with each tweet. This tool is free to use and will allow you to examine up to 1000 followers.
- [Tweeterspy](#): We've talked about how Twitter is more effective than most social networks for generating leads, and this powerful analytics tool allows you to learn more about the Twitter users that are clicking on your links and driving traffic to your website. By knowing which followers are regularly taking action, you can be more successful and intentional with converting them into customers.
- [Tweepi](#): One way to get more followers is to follow those that follow you; however, how can you be sure that the people you are following are following you back? Well, the answer is with Tweepi. This time saving tool can allow you to view this information from its dashboard and allow you to more efficiently manage this process and regularly refresh your list of followers. There is both a free and paid version of this Twitter app.



Summary

While you've already recognized that Twitter is a powerful resource for branding your business, positioning your company as an industry expert, and expanding your online reach, taking advantage of the best practices, advanced techniques, tools, and resources outlined in this article can help you to take your Twitter strategy to the next level. To learn more about how you can use Twitter to grow your business, please contact us at DigitalSherpa.



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