

Cashing in on TWITTER



*Presented by
Women in Ecommerce*

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WHAT IS TWITTER?

Recently the media has been talking about Twitter. It seems I can't watch more than a few minutes of news without hearing a reference to "Follow me on Twitter", or "I tweeted this today". So what in the world is Twitter? And what the heck is a "Tweet"!?!

Twitter is actually an incredibly powerful marketing tool, and if you are not harnessing its power, you are missing out on a huge opportunity. The things Twitter can do continue to astonish me to this day. This guide will teach you the ins and outs of Twitter, and how you can use it to further your business (or create one!). Let's start at the beginning with a definition of Twitter.

According to Wikipedia, Twitter is a "free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as "tweets".

Twitter is a place where you create a profile for yourself (similar to Myspace or Facebook), but the focus is on interacting with others through sending out short (they can only be 140 characters long) bursts to everyone that is "following you".

At first glance, it might sound kind of strange. Honestly, the first time I heard of Twitter I thought to myself, this sounds silly. But it works, it really does. People are crazy into this stuff!

At this point I recommend that you view Video #1, to hear a bit more about what Twitter is, and watch as I visit the site.



WHO IS USING TWITTER?

Twitter is taking the internet world by storm. It seems as though just about every popular person is “tweeting” these days. Who exactly uses Twitter? Well, President Obama of the United States does. In fact Twitter was an important part of his presidential campaign. People currently using Twitter include:

- Internet Marketers
- Celebrities
- Journalists
- Industry Leaders
- Anyone looking to create a following

As you can see, just about everyone is using Twitter these days, and there is a reason for that....because it works!

To hear me talk a bit more this, be sure to check out Video #2.





A CLOSER LOOK AT TWEETS

Before we step in and start using Twitter, I would like to talk a bit about tweets.

Sending tweets is what drives Twitter. It is how you keep in touch with people and let them know more about your business. Understanding tweets will help you better understand how Twitter works, and why it works so well.

Things to keep in mind:

- May contain up to 140 characters
- May contain URL's or links
- May be sent via SMS (text message) and additional platforms
- Delivery may be restricted or open

Please refer to video #3 to see me view a few tweets. This will help you better understand what this is all about.



WHY SHOULD YOU USE TWITTER?



Since you purchased this video series, I can only assume you are seriously considering using Twitter in your business. Simply put, it is a very powerful marketing tool. Reasons to use Twitter include:

Twitter Benefits

- Very, Very Popular
- It is one of the most effective online marketing tools available today
- It is simple and easy
- You can do it as often or little as you want
- You can find targeted traffic for your niche

To hear me talk a bit more these benefits, please refer to Video #4.

SIGNING UP FOR A TWITTER ACCOUNT

So how much does it cost to sign up for this advanced marketing tool? Why it's free of course! Signing up is simple, you will just need a valid email address. I suggest that it be one that you check quite a bit, so you can receive notifications if you wish. Just go here to register:

<http://twitter.com/signup>

I suggest that you review Video #5 right now, to see me signup for a Twitter account.

CUSTOMIZING YOUR PROFILE



Before we start tweeting and looking for followers, it is important to spend some time setting up your profile. Don't worry, this is actually pretty simple, Twitter keeps everything pretty straightforward.

You are allowed to add a short bio, your location, your "real name" (important to do, so people can find you if they do a search), and one URL, which can be the business you are promoting.

One of the first things you should do is upload a nice picture of yourself. You can also change the background image, even upload a custom one if you like. I suggest doing this, it helps you stand out more.

You also have the option to protect your tweets. Do not check this! One of the important marketing aspects of Twitter is keeping it so everyone can see what you are doing. No need for privacy here folks!

There are also options you can set to be updated by email whenever someone starts following you, sends you a message, and so forth. This is entirely up to you.

Please review Video #6 to watch me customize a profile.

UNDERSTANDING THE PUBLIC TIMELINE

The public timeline of Twitter is a fascinating way to get better acquainted with the service. It is located here:

http://twitter.com/public_timeline

Whenever someone posts a tweet, it appears here for the world to see. This is a great way to get a feel for what people are tweeting about, and how Twitter works. It is also a good idea to notice the types of things that jump out to you as interesting, because there are people that go here looking for interesting people to follow. Neat huh?

Please review video #7 to see the public timeline in action.

IDEAS FOR YOUR FIRST TWEETS



Now that you have a Twitter account, its time to start thinking about how you are going to communicate with the community. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, studying others is a great way to learn how things work on Twitter.

Here are a few important things to keep in mind when trying to come up with your own Tweets.

Things to “ Tweet ” About

- What you are currently doing
- Tell a joke
- Link to an interesting website
- Link to your own content or website
- Reflect on the news

To hear a bit more about these ideas, I suggest reviewing Video #8.



KEEPING YOUR TWEET SHORT



One challenging aspect of Twitter is that your communications need to be short, very short. A single tweet can only be up to 140 characters in length. That's not a lot!

I think this is one of the selling points of Twitter. You won't get lost in long messages. Everything is short and to the point. Remember, the point of your tweets is to draw people in, and get them to learn more about you and take action (visit your website, and buy something from you of course!)

So how do you keep your tweet short but also effective?

Short Tweets

- 140 characters is not a lot!
- Know your audience, use abbreviations
- Chop out wordiness!
- Shorten your URL's

Please review video #9 to hear me talk a bit more about this challenging limitation.



PROPER TWITTER ETIQUETTE



Before you start tweeting away, it is important to be aware of the guidelines and etiquette of Twitter. After all, if you don't follow the rules it will be harder, if not impossible to build a healthy list of followers. Twitter is composed of a certain culture of people that communicate in a certain way, and the last thing you want to do is offend anyone!

Etiquette

- Don't spam!!!
- Don't overdo it!!!
- Be a fit to your target audience
- Give proper credit when due
- Don't mislead

Please review video #10 to hear me talk a bit more about proper Twitter etiquette.



PERFORMING YOUR FIRST TWEET



Okay it's magic time! Let's go ahead and start "tweeting".

Please refer to Video #11 to watch me create a tweet and post it.

MANAGING PAST TWEETS

Every time you tweet, it is added to your profile page. There is room to display the last twenty tweets you have sent out.

Once a tweet is posted, it is not editable! The good news is, if you make a mistake, you can delete it and then simply post a new one. There may even be a reason from time to time to delete old posts if you find them being no longer relevant (new followers may scan your entire tweet backlog).

You also have the option to label certain tweets as your favorites.

To watch me over my shoulder as I manage tweets, please view Video #12.

REVIEWING TWITTER RESPONSES

Whenever you send out a tweet, people on your list will have the option to respond to you. Replies are actually stored in a separate section on your Twitter account, which can be found by clicking the @Replies tab in the Home sidebar.

Of course from here you can then respond back to what was sent to you. Twitter is not a one-way street, by communicating back and forth with people on your list, you will be able to engage and draw them in. I would encourage you to respond to messages on a regular basis if you can. Nothing is worse than following someone who you know won't take the time to respond to you!

Please review Video #13 to hear me talk more about these reviewing twitter responses.

USING THE TWITTER SEARCH ENGINE



Now that you have an understanding of how to tweet and communicate with others, it is important to start finding people to interact with! Fortunately Twitter has a search engine in place, allowing you to do exactly that.

<http://search.twitter.com>

This URL will allow you to perform a search for whatever you want. There is even an advanced search option that allows you to specify all kinds of things, including words to include/exclude, tweets referencing certain people, etc. There is even an option to search for tweets from the same geographic location as you!

There are also additional ways to search Twitter, provided by companies outside of Twitter. Here is an example of a popular search engine:

<http://tweetscan.com>

To see me search Twitter, be sure to check out Video #14.

FINDING PEOPLE TO FOLLOW

So how do you start building up your Twitter list? By following people of course. Often times, if you follow someone, they will follow you back. The best way to start doing this is to find people (such as through the search engine) that you feel would be a good match for you, and start following them.

Here's a super effective method: If you are able to, find an established Twitter user in your niche, and start following his or her followers. Think about this for a second, these are people that you know are interested in your market. Your competitor has already built them up, but now you can step in and get involved as well.

This is the marketing equivalent of walking into a competitor's business, and walking out with their mailing list. Now that's what I call marketing!



And don't feel bad about doing this, it is just how Twitter works. When you get an accomplished following, I'm sure someone else will do the same to you. So what is the difference then in who will be successful? That comes down to your skills as a marketer and your ability to engage your audience of course!

Please view Video #15 to hear me talk about this crucial step.

HOW TO FOLLOW SOMEONE

Now that you have started finding people in your niche, it is time to start following them.

To watch me over my shoulder as I follow people, please review Video #16.

HOW TO SEND A TWEET THROUGH YOUR PHONE

Twitter is addictive. Some people like to provide updates on the go. Fortunately Twitter gives you the ability to tweet from your mobile phone!

All you have to do is "activate" this feature on your account. Once this is setup, Twitter will provide a special phone number for you to text your messages to. There is no charge from Twitter to do this, however you will incur standard texting fees from your phone provider. If you are currently on a plan that has unlimited text messaging, this won't impact you.

If you have to pay to text message, it isn't much, especially if you are just using this feature every once in a while.

To learn a bit more about tweeting through your phone, please review Video #17.

INTEGRATING TWITTER WITH YOUR WEBSITE



Now that you are established on Twitter, it is time to start telling everyone you know about it. One of the best ways to do this is to advertise it on your website.

Twitter makes it easy and provides a link that people can click on to automatically “follow you”.

To create a simple text link that says “Follow Me On Twitter”, just paste this html code into your website:

** Follow Me on
Twitter**

Just replace “yourname” with your twitter name.

If you’d like to get a bit fancier, there are twitter graphics available that you can place on your site. You can find a bunch of great ones here:

<http://limeshot.com/2008/follow-me-on-twitter-badges>

If you have a website, you absolutely do not want to miss doing this. The more followers you get, the better!

To see me elaborate a bit more about this, please view Video #18.

ADDING A “TWEET THIS” OPTION TO YOUR WEBSITE

I’m sure you will be tweeting about your website, but what if you could encourage others to tweet about it too, wouldn’t that be fantastic?

There is a way to actually encourage your website visitors to do this. Just place this html code on your website:

**<a href=“http://twitter.com/home?status=Google
(http://google.com)”>Tweet about Google**



The above example is what you would use if your website was google.com. Just replace your details accordingly.

When a visitor clicks that code, they will be taken directly to twitter, with a tweet all ready to go, with your website entered into their update box. How cool is that?

Please refer to Video #19 to learn a bit more about this exciting concept.

MAKING MONEY FROM TWITTER

Building your list of followers and tweeting away is all well and good, but the whole purpose here is to generate traffic, customers, and money right?

Of course!

Even though making money may be your main goal from the start, it is important that you do not come across too "sales oriented", as this will turn people off. Your approach is very important!

It is also crucial that you understand your followers, and sell to them in a way that they will respond. Here are a few important tidbits to keep in mind:

- Understand the problems and needs of your followers
- Find products that match your clientele
- Research " what 's hot " on Twitter
- Pay close attention to the " selling styles" of others in your niche

I suggest viewing Video #20 to hear me elaborate on these valuable tips.

BUILDING YOUR LIST OF FOLLOWERS



Your success on Twitter depends heavily on establishing a nice list of followers. It is important that you get out there and “pound the pavement” so to speak, to build that list. Ideally, eventually your presence on Twitter will go viral, and your followers will help you grow, but especially in the beginning it is important to do everything you can to get yourself in front of the right people.

Here are a few valuable tips on building your list:

- Find established people in your niche and encourage their list to follow you
- Integrate Twitter on your website, blog, facebook page, etc.
- Give people a good reason to follow you!
- Keep Tweeting!

To hear me review this in more detail, I suggest you review Video #21.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS: TWEETDECK

Now that we’ve covered how to effectively use Twitter as a marketing tool, it’s time to take a look at a few valuable applications that are available that can further enhance your twitter experience.

<http://TweetDeck.com>



TweetDeck is probably the most popular Twitter “enhancement”. It is also very powerful. It is an interface that allows you to manage your Twitter account, but adds a few powerful tools, including:

Tweetdeck Features

- Shorten URLs
- Filter tweets
- Cuts down on spam
- Monitor searches
- Group followers
- More!

To hear a bit more about Tweetdeck, please review Video #22.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TWITTERCOUNTER

Twittercounter is a handy script that allows you to display the number of followers you have on your own website or blog:

<http://twittercounter.com>

Once it is setup, it pulls the data directly from twitter, and you don’t have to do anything to maintain it, it updates automatically.

This can be very advantageous, as the more followers you have, the more credibility you have. This alone will encourage more visitors to follow you!

To hear me talk a bit more about TwitterCounter, please view Video #23.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TWEETWITH.ME



On this site, you can find more info about every Twitter user - worldwide. Simply search the database to find details about any 'tweeter' you want to know more about.

<http://www.tweetwith.me/>

You can also use this site to grow your own list of followers: use your professionally designed profile page as your Twitter landing page and show off your popularity on your blog or website with our easy to use 'Follower Badge'.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TWITTHIS

Do you remember how we talked about the value of encouraging people to tweet about your website or blog? TwitThis is a service that helps make this easier to accomplish

<http://twitthis.com>

Once it is setup, TwitThis makes it easier to encourage others to tweet about your own links. It's pretty neat.

To hear me talk a bit more about TwitThis, please view Video #24.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: APPS FOR WINDOWS

Wouldn't it be nice if you could be connected to Twitter 24/7? Kind of like how you can always have an instant messaging or email window open on your computer? There are actually several windows applications that can run on your computer, and keep you constantly connected to Twitter.

To see a list of available applications, head to:

<http://gallery.live.com>

To hear me talk a bit more about apps for windows, please view Video#25.



ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TINYURL

Composing tweets that are short is challenging enough without needing to include a link. Sometimes URL's can be very loooong. Fortunately a free service like TinyUrl can help you shorten it.

<http://tinyurl.com>

All you need to do is use the service and your url's will be converted to a "tinyurl" which will only be a few characters long. Better yet, this helps disguise any potential affiliate links you may have. Outstanding!

To hear me talk a bit more about TinyUrl, please view Video #26.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TWITPIC

TwitPic is a nifty little service that takes the pain and frustration out of tweeting pictures. Normally this is a multi step process, TwitPic helps to streamline that:

<http://twitpic.com>

To hear me talk a bit more about TwitPic, please view Video #27.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: FUTURE TWEETS

It certainly would be nice if you could "queue" tweets to be sent out in the future, wouldn't it? Well fortunately there is a free service, FutureTweets that does this for you. In my opinion it's a real lifesaver.

<http://futuretweets.com>

To hear me talk a bit more about Future Tweets, please view Video #28.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: TRENDISTIC



Trendistic is a very helpful service that helps you analyze current trends on Twitter. This can be invaluable as you search Twitter to learn “hot” topics to promote. It even allows you to dig within niches. I highly suggest you check it out:

<http://trendistic.com>

To hear me talk a bit more about Trendistic, please view Video #29.

ADDITIONAL TWITTER TOOLS: SENDING OUT TWEETS THROUGH EMAIL

I don’t know about you, but I’m not on the internet or my home computer 24/7. That’s why it is incredibly useful to be able to configure tweets to be sent via email.

<http://TwitterMail.com>

Twitter Mail is a free service which will allow you to do just that.

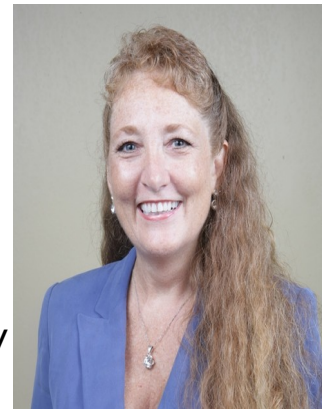
To hear me talk a bit more about Twitter Mail, please view Video #30.

CONCLUSION

I hope you have enjoyed learning about twitter. Once you get the hang of it, the sky is the limit! I still can’t believe how powerful this tool is, and it doesn’t cost a dime! Good luck and see you at the top!



How to Maximize Your Twitter Experience– An interview with Heidi Richards Mooney – named a Twitter Woman 2 Follow by Only2clicks.com



When did you start using Twitter and how were you introduced to it? I was introduced to Twitter by Roy Montero, an SEO expert who suggested I RUN, Don't Walk to grab my Twitter name. That was in February 2008 and for almost a year I let my pages sit dormant only posting maybe once or twice a week. I didn't even complete my profile until January of 2009. Then something happened. I had a new book coming out in February and a friend of mine suggested that I ask a few of my internet buds to help spread the word on Twitter. Because I have a lot of respect for her, I said SURE! And it was the best decision I ever made as far as any other social networking site in which I participate.

What are the main reasons you use Twitter (e.g. business, marketing, fun, community etc)? All of the above but mostly to build connections and learn about great resources that I can use in my business. By sharing my own resources and helping others, it has come back to me tenfold.

What aspects of Twitter do you love? I love the ease of use, it appeals to my short attention span. I love being able to go in and network for a few moments, read a few posts and come back later in the day. If I see a conversation or a post that appeals to me, or to which I could add input then I will spend a few more moments chatting with people.

...and dislike (if anything)? One can get "lost" on Twitter, loose time, loose their place, loose people. By that I mean, sometimes you get on Twitter and you loose all track of time, it has a way of sucking you in, in a way I don't see on other social networking sites. It is easy to get wrapped up in what's going on – take the Top Ten Topics as an example. If you are following any of those, it can be downright addicting to read what everyone else is writing and then responding. As for loosing our place, sometimes I will read a post, respond and then have to go back in the timeline to find the post again. It can be a real time-waster.



To help with the time issue, I have resorted to a timer. I set the timer to whatever amount I want to expend on Twitter and that's it. The REAL CHALLENGE is sticking to it. I have ignored it once or twice ☐. And people... if you have friends on Twitter and they are not using their names but some other moniker, then it is can be challenging to find them if you don't remember their exact Twitter ID. I have learned to save them to my favorites now and can find them more easily. The only problem with that I have so many favorites!

If you could make changes to Twitter what would they be? I am sure there is a way to "bookmark" topics other than searches and hashtags (#), just haven't figured it out. Not everyone uses hashtags so if you are following a topic and lose it, it is a real challenge to recall. So to be able to save tweets somewhere based on topic or categories would be a help (like a blog cloud or something).

What Twitter apps do you use to Tweet from? (e.g. main Twitter site/ Twitterrific / Tweetdeck etc) Although I don't use a lot of apps I have done research on many. One of my favorites is Twitterfeed (www.twitterfeed.com). I love being able to post articles to my blog and then have them "automagically" show up on Twitter. It is great when I cannot be on Twitter for a while, because there is always "fresh content" in my timeline. Nothing is worse than seeing people who were active on Twitter and then have not posted something in weeks. I am on Twitter 6 days a week (generally taking Sunday off).

The other one I love is Hootsuite (www.Hootsuite.com). I love using it when I have lots of posts to share such as on holidays. Here's an example: July 10th was Smile Power Day. I thought it would be fun to make it an event on Twitter so I did some research and found lots of quotes, articles, tips and trivia about Smile and Smile Power.



I also wrote an article about it on my blog and found some songs with SMILE in the title as well as a couple of really great SMILE videos. The night before, I spent about an hour posting these on Tweet Later. I did approx 12 posts an hour. So throughout the day, every 5 minutes, a tweet was posted in my timeline and my followers received. This allowed me to have a stronger presence on that day while only being there a few times to respond to tweets, thank people for retweeting, etc. It was FUN. On this particular day, my posts were retweeted 137 times! And more than 100 new people followed me. Not bad for being a non-celebrity :).

What are your criteria for following someone? Either I know her or him, am referred by a trusted friend (such as on @FollowFriday) or I read a retweet (RT) someone I am following has posted and I go “check them out.” If I like what I see – they have to have a bio and a photo – then I will follow them. I also follow people based upon their interests and area of expertise so look for people in marketing, social media, professional speakers, business coaches, foodies, authors, publishers and travel experts.

To clarify, I don’t always adhere to this because when a friend joins who does not have a picture I will follow to show support. And then I “hound them” to get a picture uploaded. So far, everyone I have suggested this to has done so. One more thing, I don’t generally follow people who have less than 5 tweets unless again they are new and have only just made an introductory post (and it is current).

What type of behavior would make you unfollow someone?

People who bad-mouth others, negative people (those who complain all the time and never have a positive thing to say or share), people who talk trash and plagiarists.



How do you find new people to follow (e.g. Twellow, Summize, friends of friends etc)?

Mostly friends of friends and again by reading what people post and who they are retweeting. I have found some amazing people by reading the retweets and then following them.

If someone unfollows you do you reciprocate? Not really. I may if I only followed them to reciprocate, but for now have only unfollowed people who have nothing to say that interests me. Someone does not need to follow me for me to follow them. If I like what they stand for and they share information that helps me reach my goals, then it does not matter that they too follow me. Take @Mashable as an example. I follow Peter Cashmore but of course don't expect him to follow me. And Robert Scoble @scobleizer is another one. These guys have followers in the 90's to hundreds of thousands. I am sure they too follow people who add value to their lives or help them with their own goals.

What tips do you have for newbies?

a. Write a meaningful bio – one that will help people find you on Twitter (based upon keywords).

b. Check out Tweet Analyzer www.twitteranalyzer.com. If you want to know about how far reaching your messages on Twitter can expand, just look at mine. I only have 6,500+ followers and on Smile Power day, my reach was over 268,000. It hovers in the hundred thousand range on days when I only post a few times throughout the day. You can see at a glance how well you are doing with followers, being retweeted and more. It will help you visualize the value and influence potential of Twitter.



c. Get known for something. For instance, Carrie Wilkerson @barefootexecutive is known as the Resource for Work at Home Women. She has built a tremendous following on Twitter (almost 65,000) and shares great resources, tools and ideas for the Work at home mom. You guys (Al Ferretti and Skeeter Hansen of Twitter Watchdog) are known for helping people make sense of and effectively use Twitter.

d. Know your goals. What do you hope to gain from participating in Twitter? If you don't know the answer to that, then I suggest you don't spend much time there until you do.

To connect with Heidi on Twitter:

Heidi Richards Mooney @heidirichards or
<http://twitter.com/heidirichards>

Two of her websites mentioned: www.WEMagazineforWomen.com
and www.SpeakingWithSpirit.com



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