So terrible metaphor aside? Put attention and intention into your social media and watch the glamour happen. But more on this later.

**GARNERING ATTENTION + AFFECTION IN 140 CHARACTERS OR LESS**

Twitter will get you shit tons of publicity. You need to be on it. And you need to use it the right way. Period.

If you’re active on Twitter already, you’ll want to skip ahead, because I want to make sure that everyone understands exactly what Twitter is and how it works, before we talk more strategy jazz, so we’re going to take it slow to start. If you’re not on Twitter, you’re in for a wild ride, cowboy. Buckle up!

While some of this advice isn’t directly copy-related, think of it as the champagne frosting of Twitter tips to your delicious, strawberry copy cupcake. Also, I’m sorry I just said copy cupcake. Never again, promise.

**TWEET IS A STUPID WORD. WHAT THE ****?**

Alright. So, unless you’ve been living under a rock, or in Oklahoma, you’ve heard of Twitter. (Gosh, that was such a low blow! I’m sorry, Oklahoma. I didn’t mean it. Love you long time.)

I mean, I can see how those of you who have resisted the Twittersverse could be justified in your feelings; I mean, you want to punch that bird in the face. However, we will not punch him in the face, because he’s your new best fucking friend.

(Oh, look at me drop an F-bomb. I’ve been a good girl during the majority of the course thus far, but today I’m feeling especially racy. Good thing you are buckled up.)
Most people who aren’t on Twitter typically into one of the following two camps:

1) Look at Twitter from a personal perspective, and can’t understand how nonsensical tweets talking about what you’re eating could benefit your business. They think it’s a waste of time.

2) View it as a tedious chore that they don’t want to have to add it to their already growing to-do list.

I’ve got news for you - Twitter has a lot of unsuspecting depth, and if your ass isn’t on Twitter, you’re rapidly losing free marketing. Just imagine yourself standing in the middle of New York City, and all the sudden, hundred dollar bills start falling from the sky all around you! There’s so many of them! They’re everywhere! They’re yours for the taking!

But instead of just reaching out and grabbing them, you decide to duck and run for cover under some dumbass hot dog stand.

That’s pretty much what you’re doing if you aren’t on Twitter. There are no ifs, ands or buts as to whether you should be on Twitter. It is not optional. You do not get to choose. This is not a democracy. This is modern business, and it’s smart business, and we’re going to talk about why.

First of all, Twitter is often touted as a “micro-blogging platform,” and this description makes me want to gouge out my pancreas. Yeah, there’s a 140 character limit, which makes it micro, but the way you use Twitter is nothing like blogging. The parallel probably stems because both foster a sense of community, and both are outlets for your thoughts. But that’s where we draw the line, because Twitter is not a blogging platform.

I think this misconception is what has many people up in arms, or at least hesitant, about joining Twitter. The one thing that comes up time and time again is...What am I supposed to tweet?!?!?! They’re nervous, thinking that they need to be tweeting out the world’s next
great philosophy to rival the likes of Thoreau. And that is simply not the case.

**SO WHAT IS TWITTER, THEN?**

Twitter, my friends, is the world’s sexiest saloon--except instead of it being full of a bunch of drunk old men, it’s full of YOUR IDEAL TARGET MARKET. And standing in this saloon with a bunch of your peeps? Gives two choices.

1. You could run to the Dollar General and buy a big ass megaphone, run back to the saloon, stand up on a table, wildly wave your arms around like a lunatic, try to get everyone’s attention, and then shout, “I’M A WEB DESIGNER, EVERYBODY! LOOK AT ME! I CAN DESIGN YOUR WEBSITE AND I PROMISE IT WILL BE THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO YOU, YOUR MOM, HER MOM, AND their 318 LOVERS COMBINED!!!!!!! Please hire me!”

2. You could mosey around the room, starting conversations, being helpful, asking questions, providing value, buying a few rounds, doing a few body shots (what?), and generally having a blast while getting to know the people in the room.

Which, do you suppose, would be more effective if terms of scoring you a few clients during the course of your little saloon rendezvous? Obviously the guy with the microphone would be tomatoed, and people would go out of their way to ignore him.

They might even key his car.

The other guy, on the other hand, would be praised for his usefulness and maybe his personality, if he turns out to be a cool guy. Which, obviously he would be, because this is my scenario.

So, as it turns out, the same exact mentality applies when you’re hanging out on Twitter. It’s
no different. Twitter is not a place for you to spam people by sending out spammy, look-at-me tweets to everyone, nor is it a place for you to “blog,” but really, it’s just a platform for having saloon conversations. Conversations being the key word here.

Twitter is a conversation tool, one more gorgeous thing to add to your brand’s repertoire. You use it to connect with your ideal target market, and you use it to connect with other influential people in your industry, because in the world of online business, you have no competitors--only allies. Remember that.

It’s all about conversations. And furthermore, it’s about conversations that lead to relationships. Nothing is more aggravating than a “social media consultant” whose Twitter stream (what they tweet) is filled with their own tweets...and no replies to anyone else. This is called social media masturbation.

Why is conversation so important? Because if you’re not conversing with someone, you’re sharing information. You’re sharing blog posts. You’re sharing relevant articles. You’re building your expertise and credibility by association. And this is the key difference between Twitter for individuals who talk about what they ate for lunch (and what most people perceive Twitter to be like), versus Twitter for go-getters with an online platform like yourself.

So even when you share articles, blog posts, and other relevant content around the web, you’ll notice that’s still, at its core, another way of having a conversation. In essence, when you share something on Twitter, what you’re really doing is endorsing it. You’re telling your followers that this is something you recommend paying attention to, or checking out, without explicitly having to say so. By sharing relevant content, you’re starting a dialogue - whether you end up a part of it or not.

You’re continuing the greater conversation.

Now that you understand how important Twitter is to your online success (and the fact that
I might put you in a chokehold if you don’t step up to the plate, we’re going to talk more about Twitter as a marketing platform, and then work our way up to talking about different tactics you can employ to help you utilize it effectively.

First, before we do that, though, I want to point out some things to those of you who are just getting started with Twitter. Originally I imagined setting up a variety of screencasts and tutorials walking you through the set-up process, but I realized that’s a waste of time, because you can find that stuff anywhere all over the net. No need to re-create the wheel. But what I do what to point out are some things you should consider when setting up your account, to make sure you’re able to maximize its potential.

GETTING YOURSELF SET UP WITH A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE IN MIND (A MUST-READ FOR ACTIVE TWITTERERS, TOO)

So, here are some considerations when getting started, so you don’t end up looking like an asshole online, or worse, not leveraging it the way you need to be in order to help build your brand and drive traffic to your site.

1. Your username.

USE YOUR REAL NAME. I made the mistake of not using my real name when I first set up my account years ago, and while I can change it (and might), I hate to do so, because at this point, so many people know me as @TMFproject. That said, use your real name. Why? Because you’re a person, aren’t you? You aren’t your company; you’re representing your company. People don’t want to talk to a company; they want to talk to humans. And since Twitter is a social media tool, it’s intended to be SOCIAL. Use your real name. No cutesy shit. @OrangoutangLoverz is annoying.

Know another reason to use your real name? Because, let’s say you decide to branch out and launch a new enterprise at some point. What are you going to do, manage 8 different Twitter
accounts? This is something that’s come up for me as of late, as I’ve been talking with some agents about some book and even possibly film ideas, but it might not be called The Middle Finger Project. So @TMFproject would never make sense for me to be tweeting under, for those fans. However, @AshAmbirge wins all around.

That said, when you’re using your real name, be mindful of the length. You only get 140 characters per tweet, and your Twitter handle factors into those 140 characters. It may not seem to matter that much if you can fit your tweets just fine, but it matters when other people want to retweet your stuff, and they can’t fit it all, because you’ve got some obnoxiously long Twitter handle. And if they can’t fit it all, it hampers sharing. And by hampering sharing, you’re hampering your brand.

The other thing to keep in mind is difficult spellings. You want to make it easy for people to tweet you. If your last name is Mazickewich... If this turns out to be the case, try shortening it to, “CaseyMaz,” or “CaseyLM,” or something that isn’t difficult to remember, that’s still representative of YOU.

2. Your photo.

Here’s another biggie that some people fudge - when selecting a profile picture for your Twitter account, please, please oh please, I beg you, please use your real photo. NOT your company logo. Or some cute picture of a butterfly. I know that oftentimes, we’re just trying to look more professional, puff ourselves up, and create a “brand identity,” which is why many people make the mistake of using their logos when getting on Twitter. But here’s the thing: Twitter is a very distinct community, and with any community, there comes a set of rules. With the Twitter community, they value transparency. It truly is about conversations and relationship building, and they fully expect real people from your company.

Do this the wrong way, and it will be a complete turn-off for them, and you’ll end up entirely wasting your time. I know something as simple as a photo doesn’t seem that harmless, but
trust me when I say it’s important. People want to engage with you first, and then they’ll think about engaging with you as a company or service provider. And in that sentence lies the secret to mastering Twitter - really being human, and joining Twitter as a member of their community, rather than being a brand, and seeing a bunch of dollar signs on everyone’s heads.

That’s not how this works.

Now that we’ve established that, I’d further like to stress that a professional headshot can go A LONG WAY. Because of the rapid-fire speed and real-time elements of Twitter, first impressions matter more than usual. You’re far more likely to want to engage and talk to the first round of Twitter profiles, based on their photo alone, rather than one that displays a company logo. It’s human nature.

3. Your bio.

This. Is. Huge. What you say in your bio can be the difference between gaining followers, and gaining none--and so here we are. You’ve only got 160 characters for this, so you’ve got to make it snappy, say something engaging, and at the same time, let your IDEAL TARGET MARKET know that--holy shit--they need to be following you.

So, again, that persona you constructed comes into play. Consider him or her for a moment. What would they be attracted to? What would make them say, “Oooohhh, shiny!”

I have to be honest. Humor goes a long way on Twitter. People love it, and it’s a great way to break through the noise. It’s something that really helps to set you apart from the other 294,205,210,972,952,656,562,652 Twitter users who are also web designers, or writers, or whatever your thing may be.

Look at these sonofaguns and tell me you don’t want to follow them based solely on the
words in their profile.

Noël Rozny
@noelrozny
Web Editor & Content Manager. Practicing yogini. Rabid Wolverine. Lover of the written word, buttercream frosting, and all things social media.
http://www.noelrozny.com

“Web Editor & Content Manager.” Cool, whatever. “Rabid Wolverine”?! SIGN ME UP.
Because who doesn’t want to follow an “incorrigible daydreamer?” Also, his cover pic makes it looks like the Obamas are thinking about him. So points there, for sure. (But that’s beside the point.)
Because who doesn't want to follow the Pope?!
“Giver of Zero Fucks, Ever (Mostly). What *does* she care about? Why won’t she tell me? WHY AREN’T WE BEST FRIENDS YET?!

I mean, clearly, the key here is thinking about how you can really make an impact - and an impression.

You really want to put some thought into crafting your Twitter bio, because for marketing purposes, it’s more important than you ever could have imagined. If you want followers, you’ve got to get their attention, one, and then give them a reason to follow you, two.

**HONING IN ON THE MONEY SHOTS**

Okay. So now we’ve set the stage for Twitter success and it’s time to pop open the hood on this sucker and talk about what you’re actually Tweeting.

Picture this: You’re launching a new product. You’ve invested blood, sweat, and copious
amounts of Belgian chocolates waiting for this moment to arrive. And now that is has? Twitter’s assertively reminding you that if you want your followers to see the link, you have to distill all of your excitement into a tiny morsel of unrivaled genius.

And Twitter’s not the only one. Whether you’re tackling posts via tweet, Facebook update, or a LinkedIn blurb, you need to be short, sweet memorable, and alluringly on-point. Because no one has time for paragraph posts. For 7-part rambling tweets describing your day. For a novel about your lunch.

Your ultimate motivator is to put things out there that matter, but to put them out in a way that people’s eyes quickly dance over them, and they become so filled with all the feels that before they can help themselves? They’ve become a lifelong follower. Because you’re just that good.

Now, the trick is figuring out how to cut the crap out of your copy and leave the concentrated extract of your point behind.

Let’s say I bottle rich, full-bodied wine from my kitchen. I’m looking to announce my newest batch; a deep, sweet red that should be saved for special occasions, but is too delicious to keep corked in a cupboard. I’m nearly overflowing with excitement, (because do you know how many pedicures were ruined in the stomping of those grapes?), and spill my heart in all its full + unedited glory into that little box on Facebook.

“I’ve made the matador of wines. He’ll not only stop the show, but invite conversation, putting on your favorite sevillana and insisting that you dance. The taste on your tongue and the fire in your feet? It can only be his doing.”

This is a decent start, but I want to distill this description, creating a simple post that demands attention and still conveys the same, sultry tone. And where I’ll start? Crossing out every other word and seeing how it reads. Kidding. This isn’t your seventh grade poetry class
and no one will think the end result is **avant-garde** or compelling.

Truth? I wish there was a formula for this, but the bottom line is you’ve got to cozy up with what you want to say, and pluck out the bits that make the cut by focusing on four essentials: message, tone, social media platform, and edits.

**What point do the readers need to understand?** That I have a new wine out.

**What tone am I using?** That of a sexy, dimly-lit Valencia **cantina**. Warm, but not so warm that I’m sweating.

**Am I going to use the same plug on all my social media outlets?** Yes, because I’m a busy woman, so I’d better make it Twitter-appropriate.

**And so begins the edits.** Read it from the eyes of a client. Do they really want to hear about the fire in their feet again? Probably not.

Is the matador of wines really how I want to initially brand it? Do I want to tie my wine to such a strong image of a specific profession? No, on second thought, I **don’t**.

But I love blurring the line between the taste of the wine and the taste of lover, so that part? Stays.

“**He’ll stop the show, put on your favorite sevillana and insist that you dance. That taste on your tongue? Can only be his doing.**”

Same message. Same tone. 130 characters.

Your Twitter feed won’t know what hit ‘em.