

To Tweet or Not to Tweet? That's NOT the Question.

By Lori Hood Lawson, @WorkingLori

Tis nobler to...just lurk? Back in 2009, David Lawson and I presented a workshop on social media at APRA's PD conference. About 60 people were in attendance, and the mood of the room was generally skeptical, but, of course, curious, about this new data source – social media. Was it all fluff? Just silliness? Why in the world would anyone of major gift significance be participating in this craziness? In that workshop, I asked a question regarding who was currently on Facebook – about 5 people raised their hands. Twitter? That was a big zero.

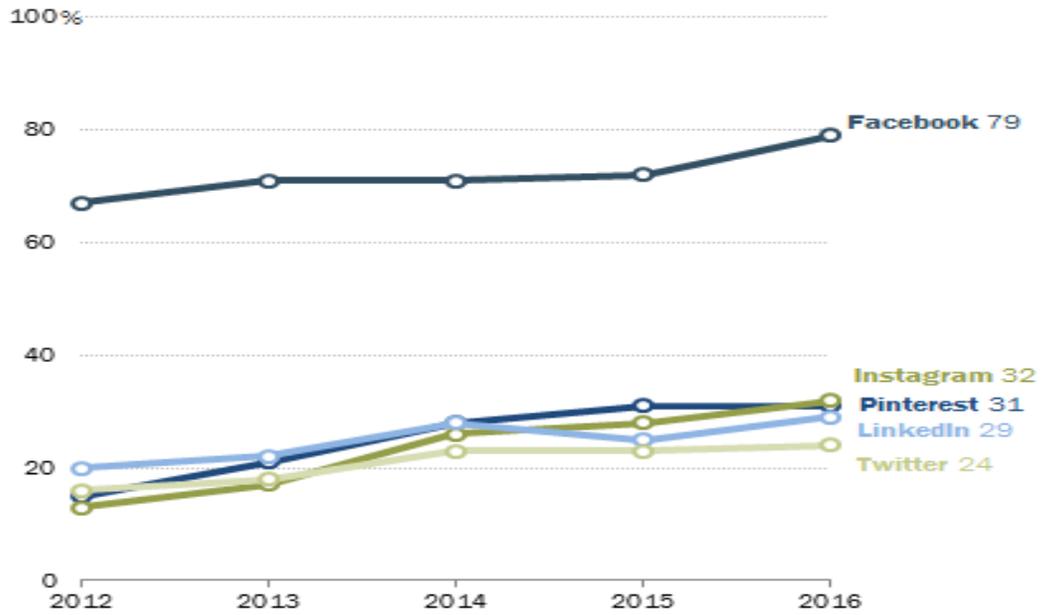
My, how times have changed! Now when I ask that question about Facebook, 100% of the attendees will raise their hands. Twitter? Well, not quite 100% in terms of actively using Twitter but most will absolutely agree they use Twitter in their research practices. So, what are you missing out on, if you do not actively participate in Twitter?

I personally have met several of my dearest friends (example: @erejman) first on Twitter. I have deepened relationships with casual acquaintances because of our discussions via Twitter (example: @sarahconner, who is also one of my dearest friends). And this still continues, using Twitter to have conversations with people I deeply respect but do not see nearly enough IRL (oh, sorry, there's an acronym – "in real life" – but you're probably like IKR?). Twitter has gained recent notoriety because the new @POTUS used tweets via his personal Twitter handle to communicate his thoughts throughout the campaign and still continues to do so – now he has two handles. But, what do we really know about Twitter?

The Pew Research Center released its "Social Media Update 2016," on November 11, 2016. Among its survey findings, it found that, among online adults in the United States, Twitter usage is dead last:

Facebook remains the most popular social media platform

% of *online* adults who use ...



Note: 86% of Americans are currently internet users
Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.
"Social Media Update 2016"

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Pew further broke out Twitter usage as follows:

24% of online adults (21% of all Americans) use Twitter

24% of online adults (21% of all Americans) use Twitter

% of online adults who use Twitter

All online adults	24%
Men	24
Women	25
18-29	36
30-49	23
50-64	21
65+	10
High school degree or less	20
Some college	25
College+	29
Less than \$30K/year	23
\$30K-\$49,999	18
\$50K-\$74,999	28
\$75,000+	30
Urban	26
Suburban	24
Rural	24

Note: Race/ethnicity breaks not shown due to sample size.

Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 4, 2016.

"Social Media Update 2016"

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Source: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/>

Statistic Brain (yes, a website) shows that 11% of people GLOBALLY who use social networks use Twitter. 58% of people GLOBALLY use any social network. (<http://www.statisticbrain.com/social-networking-statistics/>) As of June 2016, Twitter boasts 313 million monthly active users.

(<https://about.twitter.com/company>)

A recent study showed 22% of advisor-dependent millionaires check Twitter 2 – 5 times per day.

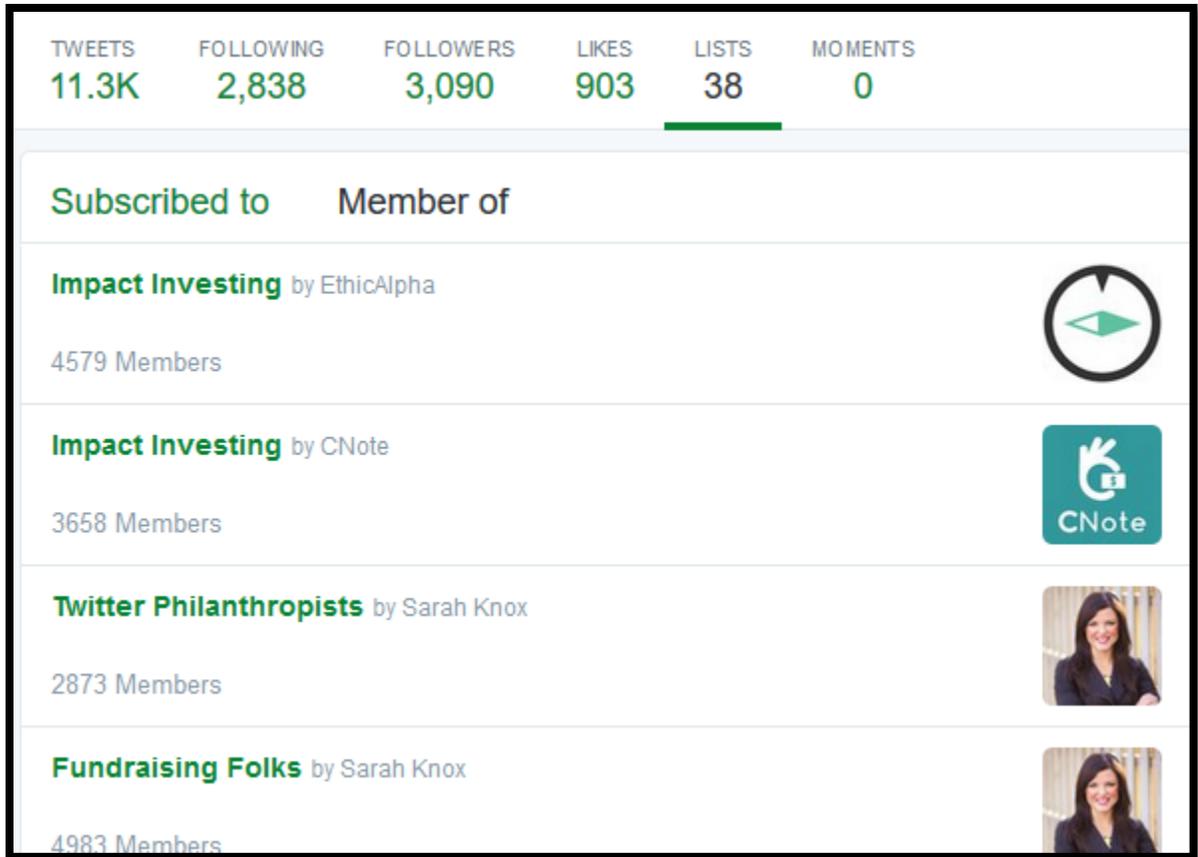
Additionally, the study found engagement with Twitter generally increases with wealth.

(<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/financial-advisor/081616/why-advisors-should-take-twitter-seriously.asp> and <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/financial-advisor/101016/advisors-heres-how-millionaires-use-social-media.asp>)

Sure, you can lurk without having an official Twitter handle yourself. You will not be able to save any searches to monitor. Even if you have a Twitter handle, you can still just lurk, be a never tweeter, but you'll miss out on some great conversations in which you can actively participate, including, especially, #APRAchats and many APRA Chapters, including @APRAUNY.

If you sign up for Twitter, this is what you can and, at the very least, should do:

- (1) **Pick a good handle name.** Yes, you can pick your own. Make it what you want it to be. If you are going to present yourself in a professional capacity, be extra thoughtful about it.
- (2) **Upload a picture, and a cover photo.** Seriously. Don't be an egghead. For the basics about setting up a Twitter account, you can access their help center here: <https://support.twitter.com/>
- (3) **Follow and adhere to APRA's Social Media Ethics Statement.** As my son's high school soccer coach used to tell the team members, "You always represent the high school." Likewise, as someone who works in the nonprofit and fundraising sector, you always represent your organization and, to a certain extent, the industry itself. Sure, be yourself, but be mindful. You can read the Social Media Ethics Statement here: <http://www.aprahome.org/page/statement-of-ethics> (scroll down the page)
- (4) **Follow and adhere to your own organization's social media usage policy.** If you don't know if you have one or not, ask. My favorite professor in grad school would always say, "Grow feet." Grow some feet and seek out your organization's social media manager. Odds are, there is one! If you work within the private fundraising arm (foundation) for a university, you may have two departments – one for the university itself and another for advancement/donor relations. This person (or team) could be within your MARCOM department. I highly recommend inviting the team to a working lunch with your team (your team's treat!) so you all can learn more about what they do, where does all that information from Twitter go (conversations), and how can you better incorporate such within your fundraising and prospecting strategy.
- (5) **Follow people you want to follow.** This will feed your stream. You can find people with similar interests in several ways; once you follow someone on Twitter, Twitter will recommend others for you (follow Neal Patrick Harris, for example, and you'll see similar celebrity accounts to follow). One of my favorite methods: find at least ONE Twitter user who you think you would like to see his/her/its tweets, and then take a look at any lists that Twitter handle is subscribed to or a member of. Simply navigate to the Twitter page of interest and click on LISTS. This is a screenshot of my page, lists, showing which lists I'm a member of:



Then, simply click on any of those lists of interest, such as “Fundraising Folks,” and you’ll see every member of Twitter that, in this case, Sarah Knox put together in one list. You can simply subscribe to that list or you can select which people you may wish to follow. There are numerous lists for prospect researchers and prospect development.

- (6) **Curate.** You can create your own lists of Tweeples – and you can make these lists private if you wish. Simply click on Create List in the right-hand navigation area, name your list, give it a description, and then you can start adding Tweeples to your list.

Create a new list ✕

List name

Description
Under 100 characters, optional

Privacy

Public · Anyone can follow this list

Private · Only you can access this list

[Save list](#)

You can add people to your new list by simply navigating to the Twitter account of interest and click on the gear icon (settings) and click on Add or Remove from Lists:

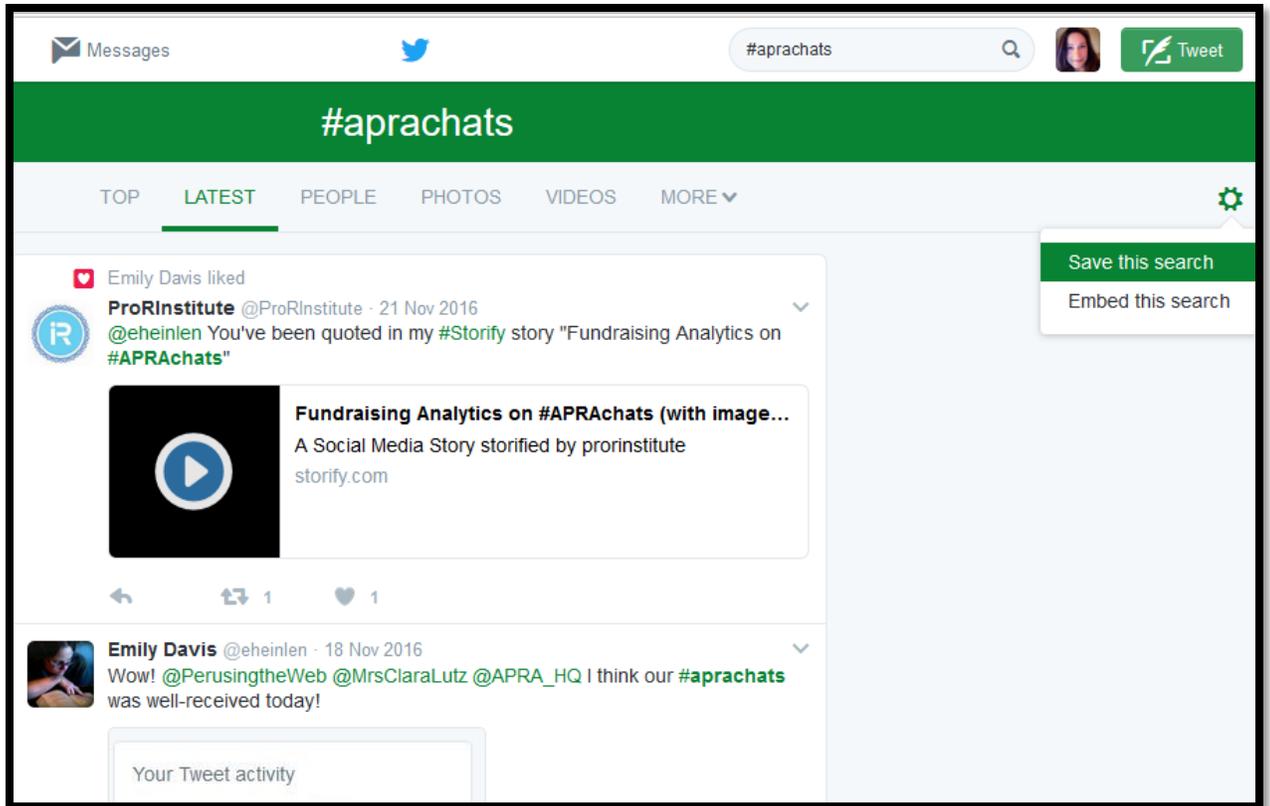
The screenshot shows the Twitter profile of Carlos A. Trejo (@trejopedia). The profile includes a bio: "#Fundraising & communications professional. Co-Chair of @YNPNChicago Exec Board. Chicagoan. Sci-fi nerd. Speak español & français. Views are my own." and a location of Chicago. A tweet from 16 hours ago reads: "Full house at @YNPNChicago's #NPOFinance workshop! #ynpn" with a photo of a workshop. A settings menu is open over the tweet, showing options: "Tweet to @trejopedia", "Add or remove from lists...", "Mute @trejopedia", "Block @trejopedia", "Report @trejopedia", "Embed this Profile", "Vote", and "Follow".

(7) **Save searches.** You can do this within Twitter itself, or you can sign up for the freebie version of a monitoring platform, like Hootsuite, and set up several columns of live feeds based on keywords, hashtags, or even the list you've created on Twitter. Several hashtags of specific

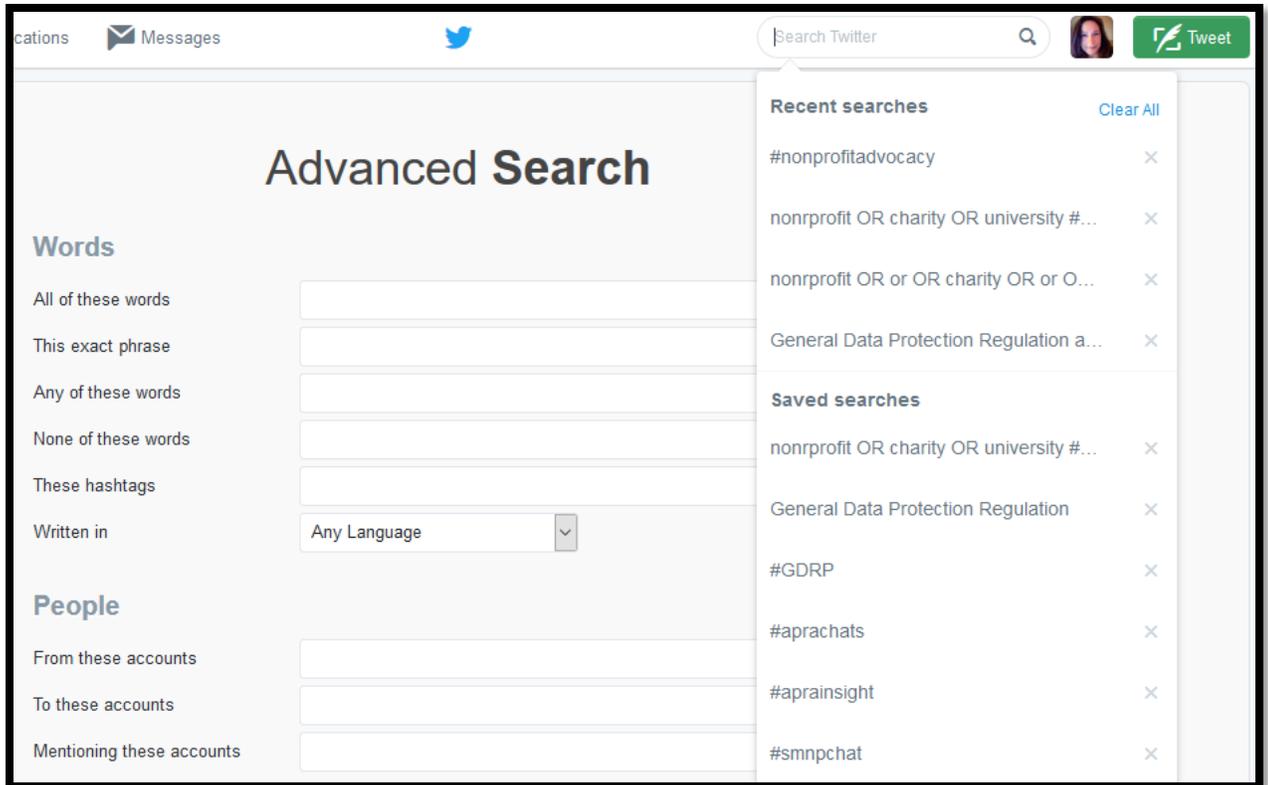
interest include #prospectresearch, #nonprofit, #highered, #charity, #philanthropy, #angelinvestors, #impinv, and, yes, I could go on! Here's a screenshot of one of my saved searches:



Once you have executed your search, either through the general search box or via Twitter's Advanced Search (<https://twitter.com/search-advanced>), click on the gear icon (settings) and select Save Search. Name your search appropriately.



You can then access your saved search at any time you are logged into Twitter by clicking in the general search box and selecting from the dropdown list of saved searches.



- (8) **Participate.** While being mindful of ethics, participate. APRA’s Online Curriculum Committee has extended discussions of sessions into Twitter, using #APRACHats. You can read the discussions which have already happened by simply searching on that hashtag. These chats are announced by APRA and usually are follow ups to webinars and/or conference sessions. It’s a great way to crowd source answers to applicable questions based on the topic of the chat.
- (9) **Use Twitter in your research.** Not all prospects tweet, but when they do they are quite open. Include the prospect’s handle in your research – you can even capture that handle in your CRM. Search Twitter for applicable tweets to advance the relationship between your prospects and your organization’s mission. If you know the prospect’s Twitter handle prior to a frontline fundraiser’s personal visit with said prospect, update your fundraiser on relevant recent tweets from that prospect. Does the prospect follow your organization’s Twitter account? Has the prospect favorited any of your organization’s tweets? Has the prospect retweeted any of your organization’s tweets? Please, though, do NOT request to follow a prospect if his/her Twitter handle is protected (locked). That’s akin to friending prospects on Facebook. That’s a big no-no. If your organization is interested in learning within which social networks all of your prospects/donors participate, there are many vendors within our section (and not within our sector) who are in that business. One such company is TouchPoints (<http://www.findtouchpoints.com/>).

Now, go tweet, yourself!

