



## BOOST YOUR BRAND WITH TWITTER – FANTRUST’S TOP TIPS

*Twitter: small talk – amplified.*

### WHAT IS TWITTER?

Like Facebook and other social networks, each person’s experience and content is highly personalized, as each user “opts-in” to follow only the individuals and companies that he or she wishes to track.

Twitter is a microblogging tool – like a blog, anyone can read what you post (unless you make your account private), but the “micro” element means that your posts are limited to 140 characters. Another great way to think of Twitter: “public instant messaging,” notes user @redkitdesign.

### WHY USE TWITTER?

Thanks to many Twitter functionalities like linking and “retweeting” (more on this later), Twitter can be great for viral marketing and content sharing. Web measurement firm Hitwise reported recently that 20% of Twitter’s traffic-driving was to entertainment sites.

Twitter now has more than 7M users, a more than 1000% growth rate year-to-year, and shows little signs of slowing down. In short, Twitter is increasingly the medium of choice to build audience, drive business and track competition.

Here are FanTrust’s top tips for deploying real-time short messages to advance your brand in the marketplace.

### HOW TO USE TWITTER

**Find and connect** – connect with current fans, as well as influencers/ possible customers. “Following” influencers and possible customers raises awareness of your brand. Interested individuals may follow your brand on Twitter, purchase your products, or blog/tweet about you, boosting your profile.

Connect using:

- Email address books & your company’s mailing lists (automated for popular web-based email programs)
- Use Twitter search function (search.twitter.com) or a Twitter client (Tweetdeck, PeopleBrowsr, etc.) to find people tweeting about keywords/ topics of interest
  - “Follow” consumers, fans and/or influencers – ascertained by searching bios, tweet topics, locations for keywords



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- Follow executives/ companies met at conferences as well as prospective clients, for intelligence purposes and for promotion
- Follow industry blogs/ publications with Twitter accounts
- Go through the “following” list of the individuals you already follow (logic: if you find someone interesting/ relevant, you may find that the people they follow are also interesting/ relevant)

***Listen to what people are saying about you*** – know who @ replies to you or is talking about you (use a Twitter client or search.twitter.com; new service Backtweets unpacks shortened URLs so you won’t miss out on any mentions of your URL)

- Respond back – if a tweeter is critical of your brand, use discretion about whether to connect via public forum or direct message (DM)
- Thank customers for supportive messages (public)
- Take note of what interests your followers: What are they replying to? What is being retweeted the most? What is creating a bang within your network? Knowing what’s most popular allows you to better target your tweets

### ***Listen to what people are saying about your competitors (and to what your competitors are saying)***

- Track your competitors (Do not follow publicly, use Twitter client or search.twitter.com)
- Search who @replies or talks about your competitors, what’s being said
  - If person is dissatisfied with the competition, and you know you can offer a better product/ service experience, respond to the person and let them know about you! Consider offering a trial/ demo for free ...
  - Follow people who are talking about/ to a competitor or affinity brand

### ***Use Twitter as an informal focus group or research assistant***

- Ask questions. Answer questions. Listen. For example, what content and technologies are your followers linking to and raving about?

***Drive online sales and downloads*** - drive people to a website where they can purchase content and merchandise

***Share your work in progress*** – tweet about projects that the team is working on; include URL links

***Share announcements*** – tweet about deals signed, upcoming media interviews, press coverage, upcoming conferences, new video/ online content

- Ask people to retweet (Please RT) a post if it is important, timely (e.g. asking a question, offering a time-limited promotion). Do not ask people to RT a personal/ company plug



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**Share and promote other people** – promote others, don’t just push yourself via “one way” conversation

- Retweet posts that you find valuable/ interesting, links to interesting online articles, photos and videos that you find

**Offer ‘exclusives’ through Twitter** – announce discounts, contests, giveaways, private sales

**Announce site/ tech issues** – let people know you are aware of and fixing problems

**Have non-business conversations as well**

**Add your Twitter ID to all of your signatures** – email, blog comments, if you friend someone on another social network, add a personal message which includes your Twitter ID

**Put a Twitter logo or widget on your website** – link to your Twitter page



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### **TWITTER 101**

#### ***Shortening URLs***

You only have 140 characters to express yourself. Shorten long URLs with a service like [TinyURL.com](http://TinyURL.com)

#### ***Retweeting (RT)***

- It’s like forwarding, but for Tweets instead of emails. If you see something really cool from one of the people you follow, you may want to Retweet it so that the people following YOU (and not the original person) can see it
- Formula for getting retweeted: Ensure whenever possible that your messages are under the 140 character limit. You need to allow space for an '@' symbol, your username, the letters 'RT', and 2 spaces (one after RT and one after your username)

#### ***Other acronyms:***

OH – Overheard: Things you heard (with your ears, as opposed to read on Twitter)

HD – Heard Through: Indicates that you found something out through a twitter user

@ - reply: The reply will show up on the person’s Twitter stream

#### ***Hashtags (#)***

Twitter messages may be tagged using *hashtags*, a word or phrase prefixed with a #, such as #beer. This enables tweets on a specific subject to be found by simply searching for their common hashtag, provided that the user has tagged their tweet. Hashtags are often useful around tech conferences or time-based events (e.g. #miptv, #Oscars) – all event-related discussions can be easily tagged and found by others

### **GREAT TWITTER-RELATED SITES TO VISIT OFTEN**

- Search.twitter.com
- Alltop.com (all-Twitter news headlines, like an all-Twitter RSS feed)
- Twitip.com (blogs often, offering Twitter tips)

### **ABOUT FANTRUST ENTERTAINMENT STRATEGIES**

FanTrust helps entertainment companies grow in a digital world, positioning our clients for new revenues, investors, partners and fans.