

Twitter



Introduction

Today I plan to start by going back over some Twitter basics.

I'll also drop in some useful tips and tricks I've picked up along the way.

I'll then move on and hopefully show you something new, or at least an element of Twitter or a tool that you didn't know about or hadn't considered.

I'll also talk about automation, a tool that becomes ever more important as your Twitter presence grows.

I will round off the session by going through some handy analytical tools that you can use to monitor your Twitter presence, measure impact and plan for future campaigns.



Back to basics

What's the difference between a @reply and a @mention?

When a message begins with a @username and is then followed by the post itself, it's a @reply.

A reply is a direct tweet to another user and it appears on your and the other person's public timeline.

It will only be seen by the person you replied to and the people following both of you.

If the @username appears at any other part of the post, usually at the end, it's a mention.

What's the difference between a @reply and a @mention?

If you want your reply to be seen by more people, simply put something in front of the @username to effectively turn it from a reply to a mention.

A lot of people do this by simply putting a full stop at the beginning of a tweet, but this can come across as lazy.

Personalise it by putting a greeting or a thank you, this shows that you've taken the time to read the tweet before responding.

Example

Hello @LGBTConsortium and thank you for your tweet, we would love to be involved in your upcoming event! #GetInvolved

#Hashtags

People throw around hashtags like they're going out of fashion, but does anyone know what they actually mean or do?

"A hashtag is simply a phrase or keyword that is preceded by a (#) symbol and used by the micro-blogging community to create a thread of conversations around a specific theme or topic."

In recent years, hashtags have become more popular within mainstream media often appearing in adverts and live TV shows.

The purpose of the hashtag is to categorise topics, bring ideas together, inspire exchange and encourage others to join in.

It's great for campaigns where you want everyone to share a single message.

e.g. **#LGBTResilience**

#Hashtags

Hashtags do have their limitations though, such as;

- Length – Twitter experts recommend keeping the keyword under 6 characters where possible.
- No spaces.
- No special characters – Characters like; “!, ?, £, %, &” will not work, but you can put them after a hashtag to emphasise it, e.g. #LGBTResilience!
- Can’t start with or use only numbers.
- Be careful with slang – Hashtags can easily go global and someone in another country might not understand what you mean.
- Use capital letters to break up the hashtag and make it easier to read, especially if it’s a longer one e.g. **#VoteWithPride**

Unique #hashtags

A unique hashtag is quite simply a hashtag that has never been used before.

It's very easy to check if a hashtag you have come up with is unique, simply search for it in Twitter.

If no results come up, it's unique!

Have a go at creating your own for your next campaign.

#LGBTResilience is a unique hashtag!

Retweet or Retweet with comment?

That is the question...!

If you agree with something that someone you follow has said and you want to share it with your followers, then by all means Retweet it.

But sometimes you want to add your own comment, and that's easy with Twitter's 'Retweet with comment' function.

Whereas before the quoted tweet would take up your available characters, it's now summarised in a handy little box that doesn't use any of your available characters.

That leaves you plenty of space to say something about it and add your own hashtags and mentions.

You can now also add your own media, GIF's or emojis.



Something new?

Something
new?

Notifications

If you are particularly interested in a person or organisation then you never have to miss anything they tweet again, by turning on mobile notifications. This can be done via web browser or the app.

Twitter polls

If you've got a question or dilemma that involves your followers, let them decide! You can set the choice of answers and how long you want the poll to run for.

TinyURL

Not so relevant these days as Twitter will automatically shrink any URL to the minimum 23 characters, but still handy if you want to create a custom URL. Visit www.tinyurl.com to find out more.

Something
new?

Bookmarks

There isn't always time to fully explore all of the Tweets you want to on your timeline, but now you can save them for quick access later and they will be stored in the 'Bookmarks' tab of your profile.

Pinned tweets

Sometimes you've said something really important and you don't want it to disappear into your Twitter feed more and more every time you tweet.

One way round this is by pinning the tweet to your profile, that way it will always stay at the top and be the first thing visitors to your profile see.

Please note that you can only have one pinned tweet at any one time, but this is probably a good thing.

Something
new?

Twitter Lists

A List is a curated group of Twitter accounts. You can create your own Lists or subscribe to Lists created by others. Viewing a List timeline will show you a stream of Tweets from only the accounts on that List. Have a go at creating your own List.

Images

Images or photos are a great way to make your tweets stand out and users are more likely to read your tweet and engage with it.

One great tip that you may not know about is you can tag up to 10 other users in a photo!

It's a great space saver when characters are limited and can also make your tweet look neater as all the mentions are effectively hidden as tags to the photo.

Something
new?

GIF's

GIF's are a fun way to engage people.

Simply click on the GIF icon when composing a tweet for suggestions, or if you're tech savvy you can create your own.

Please note that you cannot tag other users to a GIF.

Emojis

Another recent development, you can now add a range of emojis to your Tweets to help them stand out and encourage people to engage with you on Twitter.

Something
new?

Videos

One of the most exciting recent developments to Twitter is the addition of videos.

With video on Twitter, you can capture and share life's meaningful moments – from your perspective.

Now it's simple to shoot clips, make cuts, and share your world in vivid, moving detail – right from your Twitter app on your phone.

You can record up to 2 minutes and 20 seconds of video and it doesn't count towards the 280 character limit in a tweet.

Unfortunately tagging is not available in videos.



Automation



Personal
touch

v

maximum
impact

It's always difficult to find a balance between personally responding to tweets and staying on top of trends, whilst trying to gain maximum impact.

People can usually tell when a tweet is automatic, but in some circumstances it's acceptable and will become inevitable as your Twitter presence grows.

Hootsuite

Hootsuite (www.hootsuite.com) offers a fantastic platform to manage all your social media accounts, share tasks with team members and much more.

They offer a free plan, which allows you to manage up to 3 social media profiles and schedule up to 30 messages at a time. You can also track follower growth and see which content is popular with your audience.

One of the main functions that I find most useful is the ability to schedule and queue up multiple tweets to go out at specific times on specific days, especially at weekends when the office is closed.

Hootsuite can also post your tweet automatically when it determines it will have maximum impact, based on your followers' activity and trends.

Analytics



Twitter built-in

Twitter comes with great built-in analytics that allow you to measure the impact of individual tweets.

The 'Tweet Analytics' feature is available both via the web browser and Twitter apps for all original tweets that you've sent, and lets you know much more than just how many times your tweet has been liked or retweeted.

You can also access a wide range of account analytics and statistics from your Twitter home page, when accessed via a web browser.

TweetReach

TweetReach (www.tweetreach.com) is a free, independent insight tool for Twitter that delivers accurate results.

You can search an account, hashtag or keywords and it will generate a report (snapshot) for you.

This is particularly handy if you want to search for more than just how your own account is doing.

Sign up to a free account and you can download these snapshots as PDF's.

Hootsuite

Hootsuite has a basic range of real-time analytics available on their free plan, which allows you to track your performance on each platform.

They also offer a range of paid plans, which provide advanced real-time analytics that can be accessed by differing numbers of team members at the same time, based on the plan you choose.

The software helps you to build an ongoing, adaptive plan based on your performance.

Weekly reporting

Why not create a quick weekly report to analyse your impact & growth and share it with your team?

Example

We currently have 1,890 followers on Twitter, an increase of 26 on last week.

We have an estimated reach of 30,926 accounts in the last 11 days, with an exposure of 56,687 impressions.

Our biggest contributor is @LGBTConsortium with 20k impressions.

Make a plan

Finally, why not make a plan of what you want to talk about?

Link it to your calendar of events and share it with team members.

Use a combination of personal tweets and automation to maximize impact and get your message out.

Thank you

