How to Use Twitter for Business:
An Introductory Guide

Getting Started With Twitter to Achieve Business Goals

HubSpot

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Section 1:
Introduction to Twitter

Inbound Marketing & the New Rules

The majority of today's "traditional" marketers use outbound marketing to reach their audiences. For message distribution, they use print media, radio, and TV advertisements. For lead generation, they use direct mail, cold calls, and email blasts. While these methods may have worked in the past, by using tools like TIVO/DVR, email spam-blockers, and caller ID, now consumers can easily block messages they don't want. People are in more control over how they consume media and what messages they care to hear.

But don't worry -- all is not lost! Consumers still want to learn about the best products and services for their needs. It's just that these days, they want to find this information on their own, most often by using the internet to conduct research and make better educated decisions about their purchases. For example, someone might peruse the blogosphere to find out about others' first-hand experiences with a particular product or service. Maybe that person will also search for reviews online or engage with others in social media to learn about other views and opinions.

This changing nature of consumers' shopping habits means that instead of continuing to *push marketing messages out*, effective marketers must adapt to consumers' new behavior by creating marketing campaigns that *pull people in* to their business. This strategy is called inbound marketing. Inbound marketers offer useful information, tools, and resources to attract people to their business and its website, while also interacting and developing relationships with consumers on the web. The three key inbound marketing tools are blogging and content creation, search engine optimization, and social media marketing.

Twitter is one of the most powerful social networks for your business. For the purposes of this ebook, we'll discuss in more-depth how you can get started using Twitter to achieve your business goals.

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Twitter 101

So, what is Twitter?

Quite often, people's gut reaction to Twitter is, "No one needs to know what I'm doing," or "I don't care what other people are doing."

These views are common among those who just don't understand the value that Twitter can provide for business. In the words of marketing expert Chris Brogan, Twitter is a useful communication tool that allows you to interact with people around the world in three different ways:

1. Send a short message to a bunch of people publicly

2. Send a short message to a specific person publicly

3. Send a short message to a specific person privately

Twitter is also referred to as a "micro-blogging" service, meaning you can post short updates limited to 140 characters or fewer. Why? Originally, this character limitation was implemented to make Twitter compatible with mobile phones and text messaging. Now, it's a useful characteristic that allows users to receive rapid-fire, concise information from many, many people!

Twitter Vocabulary

For people who are just getting started, it's useful to first grasp and familiarize yourself with some of the common terminology associated with Twitter.

Twitter Vocabulary:

Twitter Handle: Also known as a username. This is the name you select to represent yourself on Twitter.

To Follow: To subscribe to someone's updates on Twitter. You do this by clicking the "Follow" button on that specific person's Twitter page, which can be found at http://twitter.com/USERNAME. (Insert the specific person's username into the URL, like http://twitter.com/HubSpot). When you follow someone, their updates will be displayed on your Twitter homepage so you know what they are doing.

To Follow Back: To subscribe to the updates of someone who has recently started following you. In Twitter's notifications settings, you can indicate whether you'd like to receive an email alert whenever a new person follows you receive. In the email, there will be a link to that person's profile. By clicking the link, you can check out who they are and decide to follow them back or not. It is not required to follow everyone back, but many people like to.

Follower: A person who has subscribed to receive *your* updates. You can view your total number of followers on your Twitter profile page.

Update: Also known as a tweet. Each update can be no longer than 140-characters. (Later we will talk about different types of updates.) You can post an update in the white text box under "What's Happening?"

@Reply: A public message sent from one Twitter user to another by putting @USERNAME anywhere within the body of the tweet.

Direct Message (or DM): A private message sent from one Twitter user to another by either clicking the "message" link on their profile or typing D USERNAME. Think of it as Twitter's version of an email/inbox.

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Twitter Stream: A list of a person's real-time updates. Every time you post an update, it goes into your Twitter stream, which is found on your account page also at http://twitter.com/USERNAME.

Tweet-Up: An event specifically organized for Twitter users to meet up and network, usually informally.

Hashtag (#): A Twitter tagging system used to aggregate the conversation surrounding an event, topic, or theme. Hashtags can easily be created by combining a # with a word, acronym, or phrase (#WORD) and used as a tag within tweets.

Retweet (or RT): To repeat what someone else has already tweeted. People do this if someone has said something especially valuable and they want their own network to see the information too.

> Example: Retweet @USERNAME: Check out this cool resource

Twitter Lists: Public lists that any Twitter user can create. Twitter Lists generate Twitter streams that include specific Twitter users.

> Example: One list HubSpot has created displays tweets from HubSpot employees who tweet: https://twitter.com/#!/list/HubSpot/hubspotters

Trending Topics: Displayed on the right-hand side of your Twitter homepage, trending topics are words, phrases, or hashtags that are popular (trending) on Twitter at a given time. These can be organized by location and are updated in real time.

Promoted Tweets: Tweets that have been supported and promoted by paid marketing efforts. Think of them as the pay-per-click of Twitter.

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Twitter From a Business Perspective

In short, Twitter is a relationship-building and relationship maintenance tool; the most obvious business use of Twitter is to meet potential customers and leads the same way you would at networking event or tradeshow.

However, You Can Also Use it To:

1. Develop and promote your brand

2. Interact with your customer base

3. Track what people are saying about your company and brand

4. Create buzz around upcoming events

5. Help individual employees act as liaisons to the public

6. Promote other content you've created, including webinars, blog posts or podcasts

7. Develop direct relationships with bloggers and journalists for potential PR placement

8. Generate sales leads for your business

This ebook will first explain the steps to get involved in Twitter and then explore how to fully utilize it from a business perspective.

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Section 2:
Setting Up & Optimizing
Your Profile

Step 1: Sign Up for Twitter

So let's get started with Twitter! The first thing you'll need to do is get signed up for an account!

Before signing up, decide whether you want a personal or a business Twitter account. Both are good for a company to have, but each serves different purposes.

Company account: Represents the company as a whole. Use this type of account to:

- Keep your customer base up-to-date on your events
- Promote recent blog articles or news
- Update your consumers about products/services
- Give real-time updates at conferences and events
- Offer customer service and support

Personal account: Used by an individual employee at the company. This account type is more personalized, can be used to talk about non-company related things, and is better for direct relationship building. Use this type of account to:

- Act as a liaison to the public for your company
- Update people on what you're working on
- Share tidbits about your personality
- Expand your company's network and make connections

For the purposes of this ebook, we'll walk through the steps for creating a personal account. The setup for a company account works almost exactly the same. However, the username for the account should be the name of the company, the picture and profile should reflect company information, and the content of its updates should not include individual or personal information.

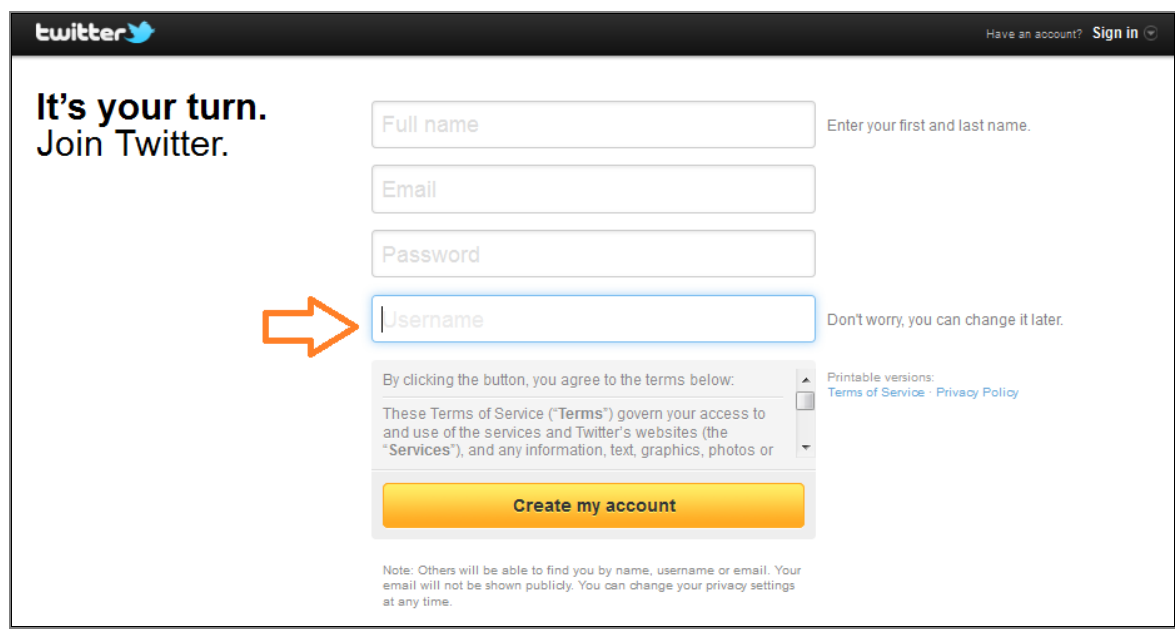To get your own account, go to http://twitter.com and click the "Sign Up" button.

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Clicking this button will bring you to a page where you will select your username and password.

Your username is very important. This name will be how people refer to you on Twitter and potentially how people will acknowledge you if you ever meet any of your Twitter followers offline. Think of your username as your personal brand name. That's how important it is.

Ideas for Twitter Usernames:

1. Your full name (JamesDean)

2. A variation of your name (JDean)

3. A combination of your name and your company (CompanyJane)

4. A combination of your name and your industry (MarketingJane)

Making your Twitter username as close to your name as possible will make it easier for people to recognize you at offline. That said, sometimes people will even put their Twitter handles on their nametag at events to avoid confusion.

Using your real name on Twitter helps you look like a real, authentic person if someone stumbles upon your profile.
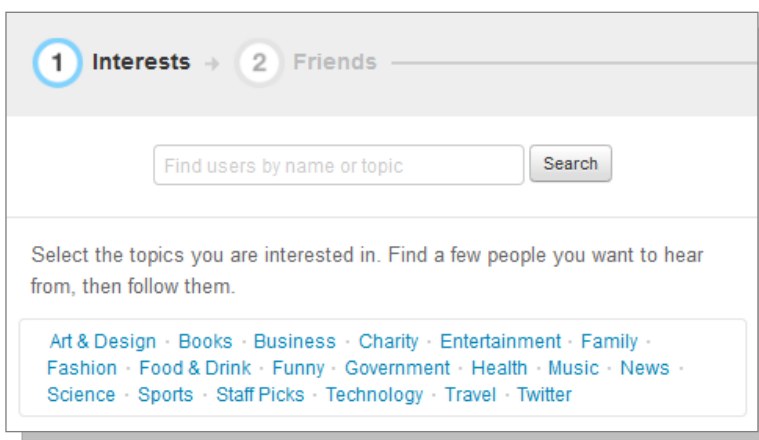
If you will be the only person representing your company on Twitter—and you do not plan to make a company Twitter account—why not use the third option, and make your username a combination of your name and company? Don't feel obligated to do this; you will have the opportunity to indicate the company you work for in your profile (explained in the next section).

Twitter Handle DON'TS:

1. Don't make your Twitter handle something completely random (TigerMan). This is a lost branding opportunity for you and your company.

2. Don't use numbers (Joanne123). Unless there is a reason for the specific numbers, it looks juvenile. It also conjures the old AOL chat room days. It gives you the appearance that you aren't putting thought into your username, and it looks unprofessional.

3. Don't use an underscore (PR_Max). Using an underscore won't hurt you, but be aware that it generally is never done, and you'll be at risk of seeming unaware of the "social norms."

After you choose your username and click "Create my account," Twitter will launch a screen that gives you the option of choosing people to follow based on your topics of interest. We actually recommend that you personalize your profile – Step 2 – and start tweeting – Step 3 – before you start following people. Refer to those sections first. You can always come back to this step by accessing the "Who To Follow" Link in your Twitter toolbar. We'll also cover this in more detail in Step 4.

![Twitter setup screen showing step 1 Interests and step 2 Friends, with a "Find users by name or topic" search box and Search button. Text reads "Select the topics you are interested in. Find a few people you want to hear from, then follow them." Topic links: Art & Design · Books · Business · Charity · Entertainment · Family · Fashion · Food & Drink · Funny · Government · Health · Music · News · Science · Sports · Staff Picks · Technology · Travel · Twitter]

The next step in the Twitter setup process will ask you to check if any of your email contacts are already on Twitter. This is not a required step, so fee free to skip it if you desire. That said, if you have Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, AOL, or LinkedIn accounts, you can check to see if anyone you know is already signed up for Twitter, which can be useful when searching for people to follow. If you *do* decide to check, be aware that Twitter will ask if you'd like to invite these contacts to Twitter. This will send a message all your contacts. Only do this if you want to.

Step 2: Personalize Your Profile

Now that you have your account, you need to personalize it. It is important that you personalize your account before you begin interacting with and following people. Before you add your information, your account will look inactive, and if you start following people without a personalized profile, your chances of being followed back will decrease dramatically. Other users may even mistake you for a spammer, which is definitely not something you should shoot for.

Your profile is the place where you can reference your company, your blog, your location, and interests. Let's get started!

Click the "Edit Your Profile" on your profile page, which can be found at http://twitter.com/USERNAME (insert your Twitter handle in place of USERNAME).

The first order of business is your picture, also commonly referred to as your **avatar**. It's very important to put a face to your name. For this step, click on the "Browse" button and select a nice, smiley photo from your files to represent you. (If you're creating a company Twitter account, use your logo.)
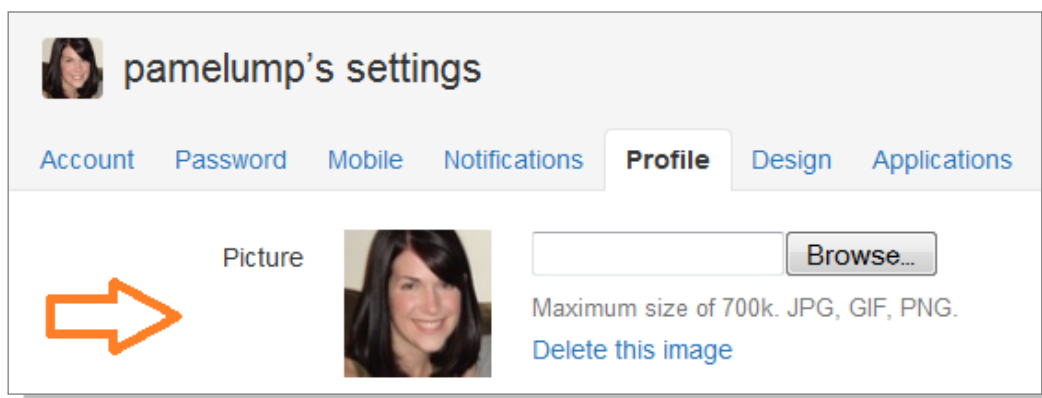
Next up on your profile is your name. Always list your real name when using Twitter for business. You wouldn't introduce yourself with a fake name at a tradeshow. Why should you do it here?

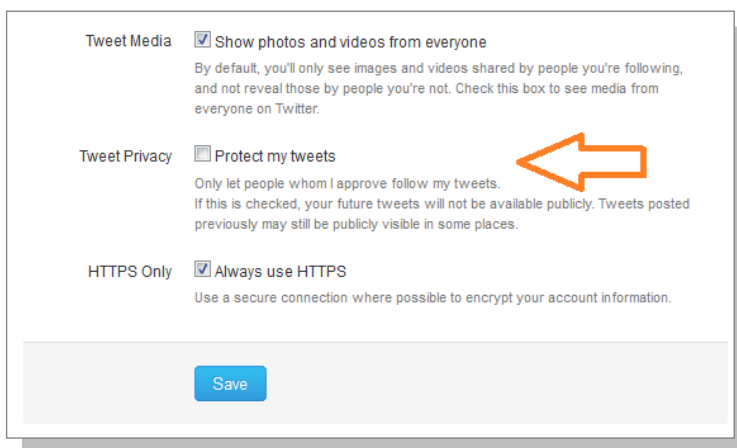Then, add your location so people know where you're based!

For your URL, or web address, it's always best practice to include a link. Put a link to one of the following:

- Company website
- Blog
- Personal website
- LinkedIn Profile
- Dedicated Twitter landing page (more on this in Section 3 on using Twitter for lead generation)

In the "Bio" section, be as descriptive as possible. This is your elevator pitch—your opportunity to convince people to follow you back. You're only allowed room for 160 characters, so consider it a snapshot of your background. You can include:

- Your company
- Your position
- Your hobbies/interests
- Your specializations
- Your recent projects

The last option under the "Account" tab within your profile settings is the "Protect my tweets" box. By clicking this, your Twitter stream will be private, and no one will be able to see your updates without following you. We do not recommend checking off this box to protect your updates. Many people judge whether to follow someone back by evaluating that user's tweets. You are as

valuable as your updates, so don't keep people from getting a peek!

If you're worried about strangers seeing your updates, remember that you are in complete control over everything you tweet. At the same time, you should feel comfortable being yourself.

How to Customize Your Twitter Background

One of the great things about social media is that many of the tools are free. This also happens to be one of the worst things about social media. Free tools mean the barrier to entry to use a platform like Twitter is low. This low barrier attracts spammers and other less than reputable people. As a business that wants to use Twitter to drive revenue, you have to take your presence to the next level. While anyone can quickly set up a free account, few take the time to customize that account.

Customizing the actual background of your Twitter profile is a significant step in bolstering your credibility and educating new and potential followers to the content and products your business provides. In 2010, Twitter launched a redesign of its website, which caused some changes for folks who had done a custom profile previously. However, if you are just now starting on Twitter, you can follow these simple steps to customize your Twitter profile page. When customizing your Twitter background, you will need to have a tiny bit of design skills and access to Adobe Photoshop or be willing to pay a designer to help with the project.

Above is an example of a background for a company Twitter account, but the same logic can easily be applied to a personal account. Follow the steps below for a more professional-looking Twitter background.

Step 1: Understand Your Brand on Twitter – Before you can create a custom profile, you first must decide what you are trying to communicate to people on Twitter. While you understand your prospects and customers, it is important to note that Twitter might be the first place that many new prospects discover your business. In your background, make sure to communicate information that appeals to prospects who are extremely new in the buying cycle.

Step 2: Beware of the top tool bar – As is evident in the above example, Twitter has a toolbar at the top of the page that is 40 pixels tall. Be aware of this element when creating a design for your Twitter background, and be sure to leave head-room for the toolbar.

Step 3: Design for Minimum Monitor Sizes – The left-hand side of the Twitter profile is prime real estate for a company logo, company description, or important links. However, it's important to note that the dimensions of the left- and right-hand columns are fluid and change with the size of the user's browser window. Design for smaller monitor sizes in an effort to keep all of your design elements in full view. Designing for larger size monitors might result in elements being partially cut off on some users' screen.

Step 4: Don't Tile Backgrounds – Due to the columns layout, background images should be one image instead of tiled. One core image is better at handling the transitions from the columns on the page.

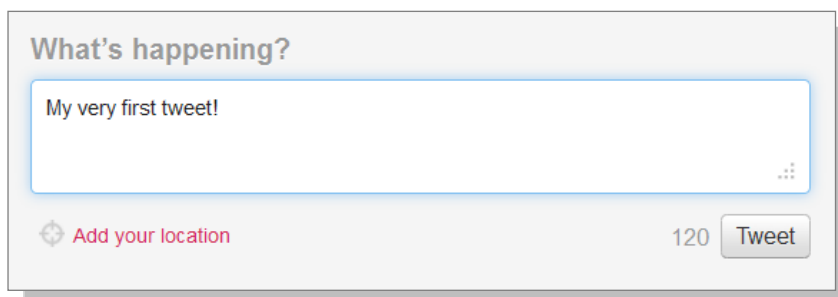Use the advice from these steps to create an awesome custom background image for your Twitter profile. When you have the image, you can visit your Twitter account settings and, under the "Design" tab, click the "Change background image" button to upload your new image to your account. If you are looking to stay clear of Photoshop, Themeleon has some great Twitter themes for customization.

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Step 3: Start Tweeting

Even before you start
finding people to
follow, we recommend
tweeting a few times
to give potential new
followers an idea of
the type of content

> **What's happening?**
>
> My very first tweet!
>
> ⊕ Add your location   120 [Tweet]

you will be sharing. Your most valuable asset is the information you provide, and
it will often be the deciding factor for whether another user decides to follow you
back.

So, what can you tweet about?

Types of Tweets:

1. **An Observation:** Tweet about what you're doing, thinking or feeling.

2. **What You're Reading:** Post a link to an interesting blog post or news article.

3. **What You're Watching:** Post a link to a cool video from Hulu or YouTube.

4. **What Events You're Attending:** Share a link to the next conference you plan to attend.

5. **Your Content:** Post a link to your most recent company or personal blog article.

6. **Someone Else's Content:** Post a link to someone else's blog article as a helpful resource.

7. **Chat With Someone:** Direct messages to other Twitter users using an @ sign. (We'll cover this in more detail in Step 6.)

8. **Retweet What Someone Else Has Tweeted:** Retweet (using 'RT' or 'Retweet' at the beginning of the message or clicking Twitter's Retweet button) to repeat to your followers what another user has tweeted

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If your profile is all set up, [click here for a great first tweet](#) about what you are reading right now!

Remember that everything you say is public! Don't say anything you wouldn't say at a networking event. Even if you delete a tweet, it might still be archived on the internet with the potential to get found.

Step 4: Find People to Follow

Building your network is the most challenging and time-consuming part of using Twitter. Expanding your network doesn't happen immediately; you need to commit the time to use Twitter effectively.

By following people, you will be able to view their updates in your Twitter stream. This is your chance to learn more about them: their lives, the blog posts they are reading, the types of links they like to share, the people with whom they interact. Following a decently sized and interesting community can be valuable and fun!

But where can you find people you would want to follow?

1. **Use Twitter's "Who to Follow" Feature:** Twitter offers its own "Who to Follow" tool, which you can access by clicking the link in your Twitter toolbar. Choose a few of Twitter's highlighted topics or search using your own keywords to find and start following interesting people relevant to your business and industry.
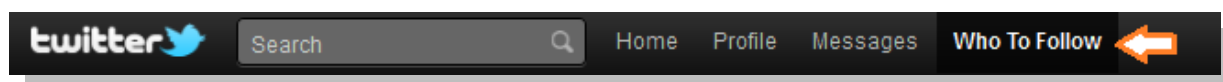
2. **Tweet Grader (http://tweet.grader.com):** This is a free resource offered by HubSpot. You can use it to discover the "Twitter Elite" for your city or search for people with interesting information in their profile. For example, find people who list "software development," a specific company, or a location in their Twitter profile.

3. **Twitter Search (http://search.twitter.com):** This free resource is a search function that helps you find people who are tweeting about specific

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words. For example, you can find people who have tweeted about "public relations." Follow people talking about the topics you enjoy. Also, use Twitter Search to see who has tweeted about your company.

4. **Follow People Your Followers are Following:** Once you begin receiving updates from a handful of people, watch to see whom those people chat with by looking at @replies. Maybe it would make sense to follow that person as well!

@bhalligan
Brian Halligan

Great post from @guykawasaki how to think about your "business development" function: http://bit.ly/4rOS04

13 Jun via TweetMeme ⭐ Favorite ⇄ Retweet ↩ Reply

5. **Follow Thought Leaders and Bloggers:** See if any of your favorite bloggers are on Twitter. Many bloggers include a link to their Twitter account in their blog's sidebar or personal info section of their website.

6. **Collect People's Twitter Names at Events:** Like we said before, many social media-savvy people will include their Twitter handle on their nametag at an event. Write down their usernames and follow them later. You can locate their Twitter account by replacing their username in the following URL: http://twitter.com/USERNAME. For example, if someone tells you to "follow HubSpot," you can type http://twitter.com/HubSpot in your browser's navigation bar to find us. If you are not sure if someone you just met is on Twitter, ask!

7. **Follow Hashtags (#) at Events:** At many events, the organizer will establish and publicize a hashtag (e.g. we're using #HUGS2011 for this year's HubSpot User Group Summit), so anyone tweeting at the event can tag their tweets with the hashtag. Use Search.Twitter.com to follow tweets using the hashtag, and follow those people who are attending the same event as you who you may not have met in person. (Hashtags will be explained in more detail later in this ebook.)

Following Don'ts:

- **Don't follow too many people at once:** Best practice is to follow no more than 25-50 people a day, because there will be a time gap between following people and when they follow you back. If your profile says you are following 2,000 people and only 30 followers have followed you back so far, it appears that 1,970 of the people you followed chose not to follow you back. This unfavorable ratio won't help boost your credibility and may negatively affect people's decisions to follow you. Therefore, give your followers some time to follow you back before finding a new batch of people to add to your network.

About @HubSpot

8,076	31,794	122,334	5,704
Tweets	Following	Followers	Listed

- **Don't follow hundreds of people at once and remove all who don't follow you back:** Although many people do this in order to have a "valuable ratio" (or more followers than people you're following), it is artificial network building and not a best practice.

Step 5: Get People to Follow You

Following people and viewing their tweets is great, but in order to have valuable two-way conversations, you want people to follow you back and view your tweets too. This is why it's so important to get your profile fully set up before reaching out for new connections. If you follow someone who doesn't already know you, you need to display sufficient information about yourself in your profile so he or she can make an informed decision of whether to follow you back.

Attracting a followers is important because they will serve as your network who will view your tweets. Think of your total number of followers (AKA your following) as your Twitter reach.
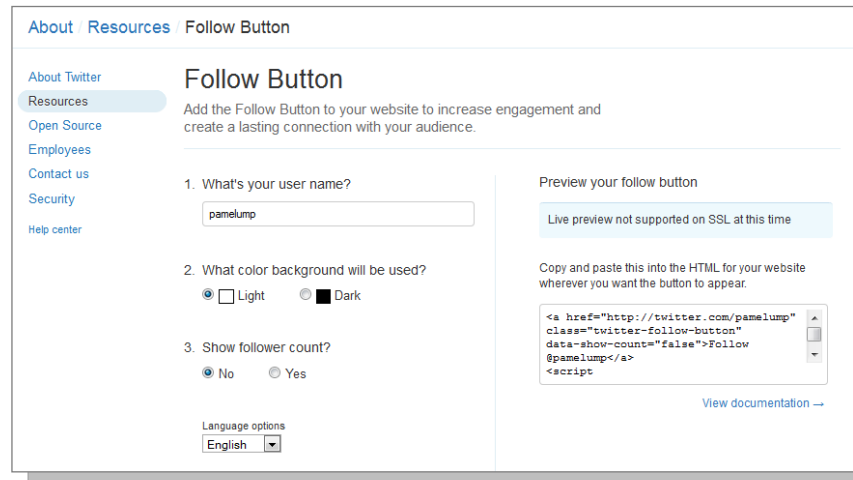
Tips for Attracting New Followers & Increasing Twitter Reach:

1. **Make your company's Twitter usernames easy to find.** Create a page that lists all the Twitter handles of the people in your company. By giving your customers an easy way to interact with individual people, it helps them get to know the type of people who work at your company. It also gives them insight into your brand!

   HubSpot has a page showing our presence on Twitter at www.HubSpot.com/Twitter, and Zappos is another example of a company with an excellent Twitter page.
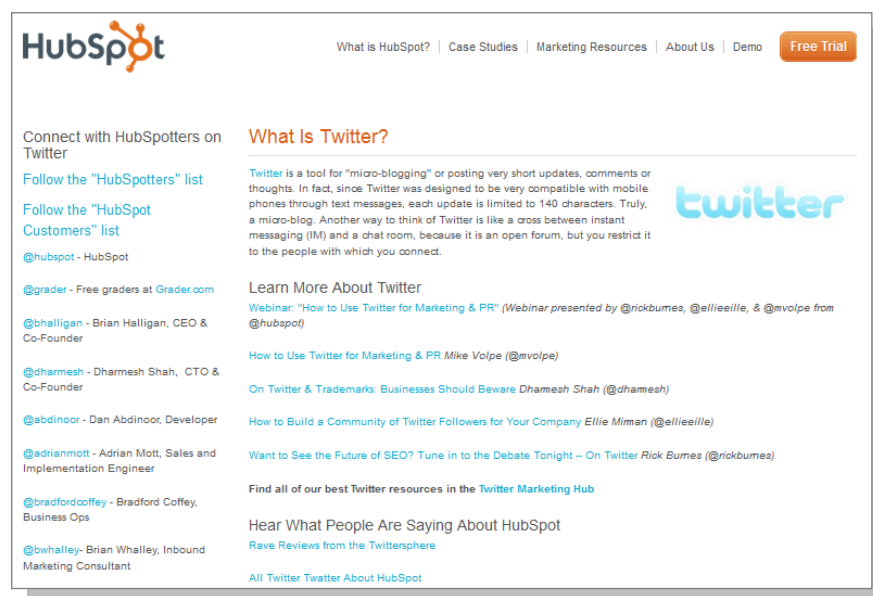
2. **Place "Follow" buttons on your blog and various pages of your website.** Make it easy for people to find out if your company has a Twitter account. Visitors to your blog and website might like your content and want to subscribe to your tweets, so add Follow buttons to your site so people can easily find you. Twitter recently came out with an [official Follow button generator](#), or you could create your own and simply link it to your Twitter page.

3. **Make your tweets useful resources so people need you.** You are what you tweet. People will want to follow you if they think they will get value from your tweets. Avoid making your Twitter account a purely promotional tool. Would you subscribe to a newsletter if it didn't have anything useful to say? What specialty knowledge do you have that you can share?

4. **Interact with those people you follow who don't yet follow you back.** Make sure to monitor your Twitter stream and comment on what other people are saying. Give feedback; compliment people. The key is to engage. This will give them incentive to follow you back.

Step 6: Engage With Your Network

So how do you tweet at a specific person?

In order to send a message to another person on Twitter, you need to use an @ before the person's username anywhere within the tweet. Think of it as the "address" for the tweet. Remember that this type of message is still public or viewable by anyone in the world, even if they don't have a Twitter account.

Note: To make your tweets as visible as possible, avoid putting @USERNAME in the very beginning of your tweets. Adding the @USERNAME to the very beginning will make your tweet viewable only in the Twitter streams of people who follow you *and* the user to whom you're tweeting (see below examples).

Here is an example of how you would send a tweet to HubSpot:

Example: What's up @HubSpot? (viewable to everyone)

Not Recommended: @HubSpot What's up? (only viewable in Twitter streams of users who follow you and also follow @HubSpot)

By putting @USERNAME within your tweet, Twitter knows who to send it to. This type of tweet is also called a reply or @reply (pronounced "at reply"). All of the @replies you receive will go into your @Mentions tab.

Also note, anytime you put an @ in front of someone's username, it automatically becomes a link to that person's profile. This feature makes it easy for you to easily visit those users' profiles and engage with them as well.
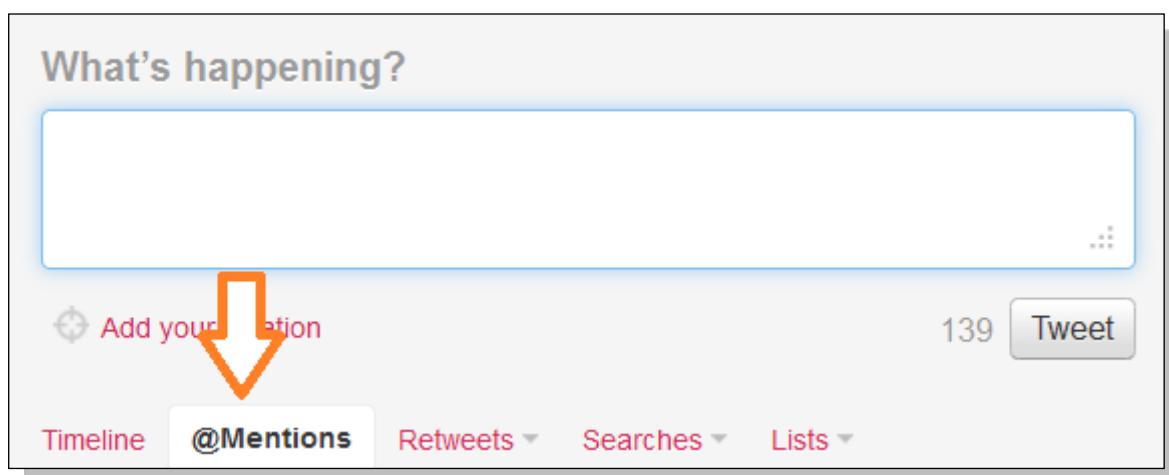
Direct Messages:

It is also possible to send someone a private message on Twitter. These are called direct messages or DMs, and can basically be described as Twitter's version of email. Send a direct message by either visiting that person's profile and clicking the "message" link on the right-hand side of the user's profile or by beginning your tweet with D USERNAME and then including your message.

Example: D HubSpot Do you want to meet tomorrow?

This will be a private message that won't be viewable in the public Twitter stream. You can set up your notifications to receive an email with the direct message, and it will also go into the "Messages" tab in the Twitter toolbar. However, you can only DM people if you follow them and they follow you back, and you're still only allowed 140 characters per message.
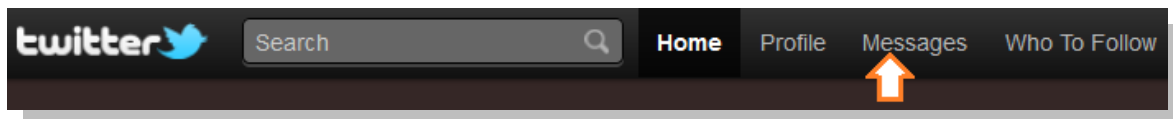
Section 3:
Using Twitter for Business

Use Twitter for Marketing

So what we were getting to by setting you up through the first two sections of this ebook? The point is, Twitter can be a tremendously valuable marketing tool! In this section, we'll explain some specific use-cases of Twitter for marketing.

How to Use Twitter for Marketing:

1. **Use Twitter to drive people to your company's website.** Tweet about interesting resources you've posted on your blog or website. Have you recently published an ebook or recorded a webinar that people can download for free? Tweet about it, linking back to the landing page to download it from your website. If the content on your site is truly remarkable, people may start tweeting about it on their own and sharing your resources to *their* followers on Twitter.

2. **Monitor your brand on Twitter.** Using the aforementioned Twitter Search tool (http://search.twitter.com), you can search and track what people are tweeting about your company, products, competitors, or any other news or trends in your industry. Set up an RSS feed to receive all search results in Google Reader. If you find someone tweeting about your products or a person who is looking for a solution that your product provides, let them know!

3. **Use the Twitter "Favorites" feature as a list of company testimonials.** When you hover your mouse over an individual tweet in your Twitter stream, a few options appear, including the option to "Favorite" the tweet. When you click the little star that appears, it turns yellow, and that tweet gets added to your "Favorites" tab. As you track what people are saying about your company in Twitter Search, add the positive tweet to your Favorites. Public, third-party

testimonials are valuable validations of your company. The next time someone asks about your company, send them the link to your Favorites page. The URL for this page will be http://twitter.com/USERNAME/favorites.

Example: http://www.twitter.com/HubSpot/favorites

4. **Use Twitter to promote events, webinars, and campaigns.** Tweetups are a great way to get to know your Twitter community offline. The next time your company holds an event, fundraiser, or open house, tweet about it! Best practice is to send people directly to an event sign-up page.

Think of a hashtag for your event or webinar before you start tweeting about it. Earlier in the ebook, we mentioned how HubSpot is using #HUGS2011 for this year's HubSpot User Group Summit.
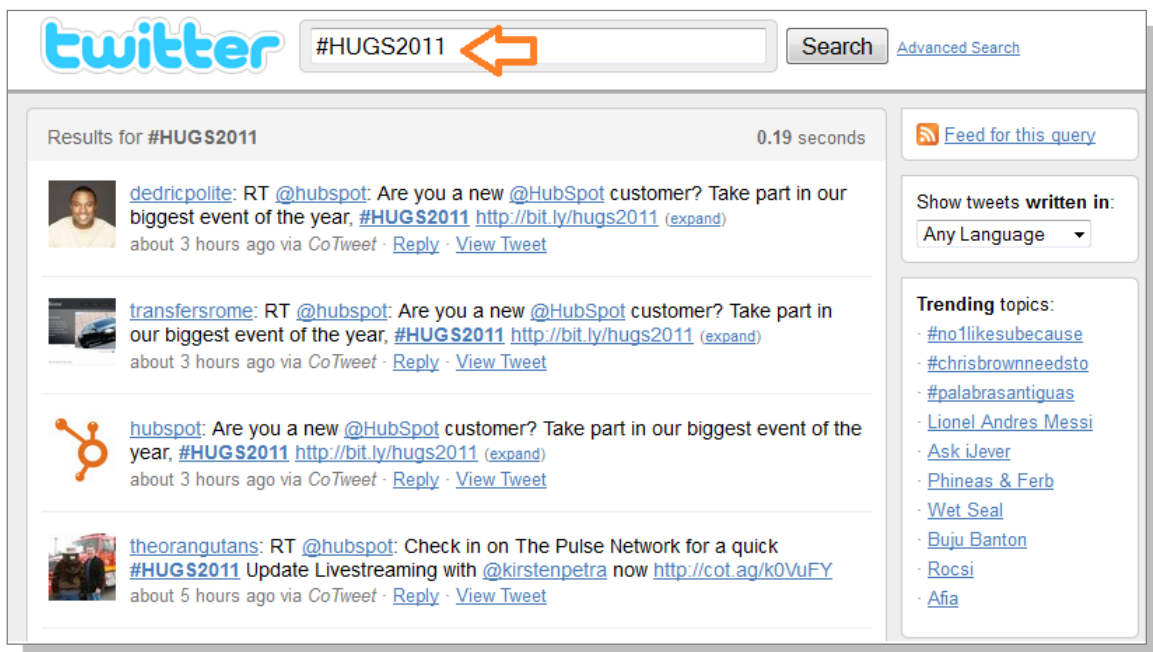
Selecting a hashtag for your own event will be beneficial in a couple of ways:

• During the event, people often use the hashtag while live-tweeting, i.e. tweeting what they see/hear in real-time. The hashtag will tag and aggregate the event's tweets, building an online conversation around the event.

- People who are not at the event might see your hashtag and want follow and/or join the conversation, too. A popular hashtag often sparks curiosity, and people will go to http://search.twitter.com to participate in the conversation around an event.

5. **Use Twitter to promote new tools.** Twitter users love new toys, especially if they create some sort of outcome, grade, or analysis of the person using the tool. Make the results of your tool/grader as easy to tweet as possible. Perhaps you could add a "Tweet this grade" function. Make sure your tool is as easy to share as possible!

6. **Establish yourself as a thought leader in your industry.** By tweeting about useful resources and thoughtful tips, you and your company will eventually develop thought leadership, and people will consider you an expert in that particular subject. Be sure to link to your own resources as well as others.

7. **Use third-party Twitter platforms to divide the work.** Are you thinking that all of this Twitter monitoring and participating sounds like a whole lot of work? Third-party Twitter platforms like CoTweet and HootSuite can make managing a corporate Twitter account much easier. These platforms allow teams to better manage multiple contributors tweeting through one account.

Use Twitter for Lead Generation

Social media marketing is often filled with useless metrics. As a marketer, the metrics that matter for any tactic are leads and customers. If social media marketing isn't driving revenue, then it isn't worth participating in. While it can be a valuable lead generation tool, it is sometimes difficult to start generating leads from Twitter. Use these five tactics for Twitter lead generation as a springboard to help launch a successful Twitter lead generation campaign.

5 Ways to Generate Leads From Twitter:

1. **Create a dedicated Twitter landing page.** One of the most valuable parts of your Twitter profile is the link in your company's profile. Instead of simply pasting in the URL of your homepage, take the time to create a new page on your website specifically targeted toward visitors from Twitter. This Twitter landing page could be a variety of things. It could be an introduction to your company, an offer for a piece of lead generation content, or other relevant content. The important thing to remember is that some aspect of this Twitter landing page should support lead generation.

2. **Tweet links to landing pages**. While most of your Twitter followers probably aren't ready yet for a demonstration of your product, they are likely ready for some of your thought leadership lead generation content. Send out links to landing pages on Twitter for offers that support general education for your followers. Something like "Free Ebook: 10 [Insert Industry] Mistakes to Avoid" will work beautifully!

3. **Monitor industry terms with Twitter Search.** As we mentioned before, Twitter Search is a free and powerful tool for understanding what's happening on Twitter. However, you don't want to use it just to search for mentions of your company name. Instead, search for common industry phrases and questions to help identify prospects. Once you find people

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who could be solid prospects for your business, start a dialogue with them, and share content from your blog to help answer their questions.

4. **Participate in Twitter chats.** Twitter has helped form an abundance of micro-communities that have self-organized around certain topics. They normally discuss industry issues in the form of a Twitter chat. These chats are organized discussions that happen at a set day and time each week. They use a specific hashtag to tag and aggregate the conversation. [This public Google doc](#) is a great resource for determining if your industry has a Twitter chat.

5. **Connect your blog to Twitter.** HubSpot loves to conduct research. We have found that businesses who blog actually have more Twitter followers than businesses that don't. This is likely due to the fact that blogging provides businesses with more interesting content to share on Twitter. Since every business should have lead generation calls-to-action on their blog, connecting your blog to your corporate Twitter account using a tool like [HubSpot](#) or [Twitterfeed](#) can be a great way to drive more leads from Twitter.

Use Twitter for Public Relations

Are you aware that many journalists, reporters, and bloggers make themselves available on Twitter? Using Twitter is a great way to introduce yourself and your company to the media.

But how do you find the influencers in your industry on Twitter? One way is to look for influential blogs in your industry (use blog search engines like Technorati), subscribe to them, and start following their authors on Twitter.

Another way is to start following journalists who target your industry. Then start tweeting with them, but don't oversell your business or product. Develop relationships by tweeting about an article of theirs you enjoyed or ask how they feel about a particular topic on which they write. Sometimes reporters will also use Twitter to broadcast that they're seeking subjects or sources for a particular story they're writing. If it's a fit for you, reply!

Twitter Tools for Finding Influencers:

- **Tweet Grader:** As we mentioned before, Tweet Grader is one of HubSpot's free Grader tools that can help you find the top Twitter users by location and also measure the authority of a particular user.

- **Muck Rack:** Muck Rack is a free website that enables you to search for and locate journalists by source (publication) or by beat (topic).

- **JournalistTweets:** JournalistTweets is a free site that curates tweets from journalists and allows users to filter journalists on Twitter by industry.

So in what specific ways can you take advantage of Twitter for public relations?

1. **Develop relationships with reporters, bloggers and other media people through Twitter.** Reporters and big-time bloggers are incredibly active in social networks, especially when gathering information for stories. Use the resources mentioned above to find media people on Twitter.

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2. **Watch for tweets about editorial opportunities.** Because of the real-time nature of Twitter, it's a great place for media professionals to look for last-minute, additional resources for their stories. When following bloggers and reporters on Twitter, keep close track of their tweets and scan for any opportunities.

It's also a great idea to send reporters tips to other links and resources simply to be helpful and improve your relationship with them, even if the tip isn't regarding your company specifically. They will be thankful for your help and will be more likely use you as a reference when the subject is applicable to you!

> **@marshallk**
> Marshall Kirkpatrick
>
> Working on a story about @life360 and its plot to use mainstream adoption to radically shake up the location services market
>
> 49 minutes ago via Twitter for iPhone ☆ Favorite ⇄ Retweet ↩ Reply

3. **Direct Message reporters instead of sending them an email.** By sending a direct message, you are forced to create a short, concise pitch that a reporter is more likely to read. Also, direct messages are very casual, and some media folks prefer DMs to email pitches. Also, it saves you the time it would normally take to write a lengthy pitch. Remember, you can only DM people if they follow you back. However, don't pitch too much; they could easily unfollow, you making it much more difficult to connect.

4. **Use Twitter to check in before pitching.** Check to see what the person you're about to pitch is up to before contacting them. In the event that the person is sick, having a bad day, or away traveling, it may be best to contact him or her at another time.

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Use Twitter for Customer Service

Businesses are increasingly using Twitter for customer support by using corporate representatives on Twitter to help support and serve customers. Here are four valuable ways to use Twitter to facilitate customer service:

@HubSpot
HubSpot ✔

@dharmesh @himanshuchanda Glad you liked it! We fixed the slide: http://cot.ag /jwgHbu Do you still see any issues?

1. **Respond to concerns people tweet about your company or products.** Designate a specific person in your company to track your company name and products in Twitter Search (or use a third-party platform like CoTweet or HootSuite). That person can address any negative comments, offer feedback, and help customers solve their products in real time. The speedy response will impress the customer! Comcast, for example, does a great job tracking and addressing customer concern with its account @ComcastCares.

2. **Use your company account to update customers with any temporary down-time.** If you work for a company that offers an online service, let your followers know up-front if you anticipate down-time or if there is a glitch you are working to fix. Your customers will be less upset and more appreciative that your company is trying its best to relieve the problem.

3. **Be sure to follow back everyone who follows your company account.** Although it's acceptable to pick and choose whom you want to follow back in your personal account, there's no reason to limit who your company follows. If you want, set up an auto-follow account with a third-party tool like Tweetlater. Also, the added benefit of following back everyone who follows your company account is the ability to send and receive Direct Messages.

4. **Do not send an auto direct message whenever someone new follows you or your company.** It's easy to fall into the trap of automating your Twitter activity. Many people will set up an auto direct message (or auto DM) to be sent to every new follower. This looks artificial and could make you appear apathetic about building true relationships with your customers. We recommend against this practice.

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Twitter & Social Search

As an online marketer, you are likely acutely aware of the power of organic and paid search marketing. If someone in your organization is solidly educated about search but not about Twitter as a marketing tactic, then this section is for you. Search -- as we know it -- is changing. Major search engines like Google and Bing are quickly updating the signals they use to rank websites for specific keywords. For the vast majority of search engine optimization's short history, getting more "free" search traffic has been about two things:

1. Accurately describing the content of your website in a search engine-friendly way.

2. Increasing the number of inbound links from other websites back to your own.

Twitter's Role in Social Search:

Social networks like Twitter and Facebook change the game for search engines because they introduce additional signals that can be used for ranking content.

Google and Bing both have deals with Twitter to include Twitter messages in their search results. Because they have access to Twitter's data, this also means that they can use information from Twitter to help better rank websites. This is the first round of what is known as **social search**. Social search refers to search engines using signals such as the number of social media shares of a link to determine how that link ranks for a given keyword.

Social media reach matters now more than ever, and the kicker is that it is only going to get more important. Yes, Twitter is a powerful social media platform, but it is also a key to the future success of organic search marketing. Building reach on Twitter through sharing great content, contests, and leveraging offline promotional efforts will not only increase traffic back to your website but will also send valuable signals to search engines.

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3 Simple Ways to Optimize Tweets for Social Search

1. **Use SEO keywords.** This may seem like a simple step, but few companies take the time to think about the keyword focus of their tweets. Not only is focus important, but so is integration. You should have a keyword strategy as part of your search engine optimization strategy. It is important to integrate these keywords not just in your website and blog content, but also into your tweets.

2. **Ask for retweets.** Search engines are looking to see what content spreads through social media, because that can often be a strong measure of credibility of the web page linked to within the tweet. HubSpot's Social Media Scientist Dan Zarrella has conducted some research that shows that one way to get your tweets to spread is to, within the tweet, simply ask your followers to retweet the message. These types of tweets generate 4x more retweets.

3. **Write awesome blog post titles.** Connecting your blog to your Twitter account helps to provide a boost of timely and interesting content shares on Twitter. Your business blog is an important tool for attracting new visitors to your blog. Spreading blog posts through Twitter will help boost traffic from Twitter and search engines.

Track & Analyze Your Campaigns

Now that you've integrated Twitter into different elements of your business, it's important to analyze its effectiveness. We recommend tracking the following metrics to measure the success of your participation on Twitter.

1. **Reach:** Total number of followers. This number is your raw distribution power.

2. **Response Rate:** Average number of @replies per tweet. When you sent out a link or a question, how many people responded?

3. **Branding and Awareness:** How often people reference your company or products. Use Twitter Search to track this.

4. **Tweet Grade:** The overall effectiveness of your Twitter account. Calculates the number of followers and the influence of their followers. (http://Tweet.Grader.com)

5. **Sales Funnel:** Number of visitors from Twitter who visit your company website/blog and convert into leads and customers.

By using the data you gather from tracking these metrics over time, you should be able to make smarter decisions about how to further utilize Twitter in your campaigns.

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Conclusion & Additional Resources

After reading this ebook, you should have the baseline knowledge to get your Twitter account started and begin growing your network. Remember that the Twitter community is a dynamic and rapidly developing space. Be creative, and think of other methods to apply Twitter to your campaigns!

If you'd like more free resources on how to use Twitter for business, access HubSpot's Twitter Marketing Hub.

Free Trial: Try the HubSpot Software Free for 30 Days!

Take HubSpot for a test drive to see how HubSpot's social media tools can help you monitor, participate in, and generate more leads from social media!

Click here to sign up for your free, 30-day HubSpot trial today!