

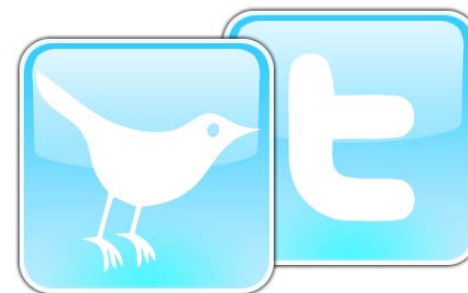
twitter

For Business

**A Three Step Approach and Strategy to Maximize
Twitter for Your Business**



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Introduction

NOT YOUR TYPICAL GUIDE

Let me get this right out in the open – this will not be your standard Twitter eBook. I won't be telling you exactly what to do and when to do it. Basically, I don't believe in teaching someone to fish. Huh?

You heard right, and it all starts with a saying I heard as a kid:

If you give a man a fish he eats for a day. If you teach a man to fish he eats for a lifetime.

But I don't buy it.

I mean, who's to say the way I fish is the right way, and how would I know if my method will benefit you the most? You won't find me giving away many fish, nor teaching fishing anytime soon.

However, I do believe in explaining how prosperous the act of fishing can be. Demonstrating the many advantages it has, providing a framework and philosophy for fishing, and then pointing them in the direction of the most heavily populated fishing hole in the area.

AND THAT'S HOW THIS GUIDE IS DIFFERENT

I won't be showing you how to cast and reel, but I will certainly explain the benefits of Twitter for your business and point you towards a very good fishing hole.

This is a simple 3 step approach, and a framework to strategically maximize Twitter. It will be up to you to take what you've learned here and apply it in a manner that best fits your business, and personality.

You'll find that integrating Twitter into your model doesn't need to be overwhelming or intimidating, and this guide will prove that.

Before we move on:

I'm assuming you have a level of familiarity with Twitter already. If that's not the case I suggest you read over some of the free resources on the internet then come back to this guide.

Let's get started.

Part 1: Join the Conversation

EXCITING TIMES

The proliferation and growth of Twitter has been nothing short of fascinating. People are engaging in real time conversations, about what is of interest or importance to them. This is healthy from an interpersonal standpoint and a gold mine for marketers and business owners trying to expand their reach and customer base.

NO NEED TO BE OVERWHELMED

The fluidity and speed at which information is being transferred is what makes it exciting and daunting all at the same time. It's no wonder you get the feeling of being overwhelmed !

But it doesn't have to be overwhelming, you just need a system to get you comfortable and partaking in the conversation.

If you want to develop a long lasting relationship with your customers, help them understand your business, and build a level of trust and familiarity with them that keeps them coming back for more...we can certainly help you in achieving that.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The first thing to keep in mind is that Twitter is beginning of a long conversation with your customers and target market.

Sure it's a fast paced communication medium, but the conversations you foster should be much longer. Twitter offers a host of possibilities to get the word out about you and your business, and the benefits are seen in the long term conversation.

I want to see you do this right, which means joining the conversation not with the end in mind, but with a sense of relationship building and purpose.

If you want to invest time in the conversation you'll be rewarded with a lasting impact to your business and bottom line.

If you are only looking to tweet about yourself, I'm afraid much of the power in the medium will be lost. Consider the following...

More to Life Than Life Insurance

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Think about your neighbor, the one you see periodically at the mailbox, or as you're getting into your car to go to work in the morning.

Now, think about how irksome it would be if every time you saw them they came up and tried to sell you life insurance.

They sell life insurance for a living, and they just can't think of anything else to talk about, plus they aren't one to let a golden opportunity to make a sale pass them buy.

You never get a word in edgewise, and have never heard them utter a single word about anything other than life insurance and about how they want to get you hooked up with some term life.

How long would it take before you went out of your way to avoid this neighbor?

Probably not long at all until you start avoiding them like the plague! Not only that, but you'll probably alert the other neighbors to stay away from him as well.

SO WHAT?

What does an irritating neighbor have to do with you, your business, and Twitter? Well, while having a neighbor such as the one I've described above is slim, that neighbor exists on Twitter more than you'd expect.

There are plenty of businesses who feel the only thing they should, or need, to talk about is themselves. If they're not pushing a product or service, they are telling you how great they are.

The Only Twitter Rule

DON'T BE THAT GUY!

Much like that annoying neighbor you won't get a word in edgewise with them, and the "conversation" will become tiresome very quickly.

You don't want to be that neighbor in real life, and you don't want to be them on Twitter either.

Now while I'm not big on "rules" when it comes to using Twitter, this would be the closest thing I'd consider to a rule.

Don't be the next door neighbor on Twitter that nobody wants to be around.

Nothing grinds a conversation to a halt quicker than somebody who thinks they are

the most interesting person they've ever met.

Not only will your target customers stop listening, you may be turning them off to your product or service for life.

Probably not the impression you want to make.

A GOOD NEIGHBOR

There is a much more satisfying way to introduce yourself to your new Twitter neighbors and keep the conversation moving along.

We'll get to the three steps you can use in a moment, but first let's look at what is really happening with the Twitter conversation.

The Power in the Conversation

CHATTER, CHATTER, CHATTER

Twitter is a real world conversation happening in real time.

Thousands of conversations are going on right now, about every topic under the sun.

Now while it may be hard to picture thousands of conversations happening simultaneously on the web, if you think about the times you are in a situation with many conversation going on it shouldn't be hard to get the jest of it.

PARTY DOWN

We've all been to a party, networking event, or other large function attended by many (you have been to a party before, right?) Usually there is a room full of people, clustered up in smaller circles, talking.

The larger party gives way to smaller social groups, and whereas a simultaneous conversation with everyone in the room would quickly give way to chaos, the smaller conversation taking place are coherent and beneficial.

This is exactly what is happening on Twitter. And you should approach the conversations in much the same way as that party. You wouldn't barge into a cocktail party and start talking only about what interests you, would you? Probably not.

Twitter is no different. Throwing out an unsolicited tweet that your company is offering a special deal has about as much impact as interjecting in a party conversation about politics that you love chess.

You may get noticed, but quickly dismissed and labeled – you guessed it – That Guy! And what was the one and only rule to Twitter? That's right, don't be That Guy!

Part 2: The Three Step System

A SHORT RECAP

Okay, so we know a little bit about the conversation taking place on Twitter, and the importance of getting into it.

We've also talked a bit about what not to do on Twitter, and how to best approach those people you want to talk to, and better yet be the person they want to talk to, but what next?

MAKING IT EASY

Next you need an simple, straightforward approach to Twitter in order to get you in the conversation and keep you there.

That's where our three step approach comes in. Over the next few pages we'll go over an extremely easy to follow approach – remember we aren't showing you what to do, but explaining the benefits of each step and then letting you apply what you learn in a manner that best suits you.



Step 1: Listen

WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

Okay, let's get down to the 3 steps you will need to do in order to get Twitter working for you.

Shouldn't come as a surprise that with all those conversations happening listening is of utmost importance.

HOW DO YOU LISTEN?

At a party or networking event listening is easy. You just hang out, use your ears, and well, listen. When you hear something of interest your ears perk up and you naturally pay more attention to what is being said.

With Twitter listening happens a bit differently, but the concept is the same.

Short of sitting in front of the computer and watching 100's of tweets scroll across your screen, the main way you listen to the

conversation is through searching Twitter for items that are of interest to you.

NUMEROUS WAYS TO SEARCH AND LISTEN

[Twitter Search](#) - Search Twitter in real time - see what the world is doing right now.

[Twitter Troll](#) - real-time Twitter search engine providing the best way to find new *twitter* friends.

[Monitter.com](#) - Web-based tool that allows anyone to monitor Twitter in real-time for mentions of any words or phrases you choose.

[BackTweets](#) - Search for links on Twitter

For an extensive look at the search options available, have a look at the [How to Search Twitter the Advanced Guide](#) - go ahead, we'll wait for ya'.

Time to Mix and Mingle

MAKING THE ROUNDS

Back already? Okay then, let's get down to business.

So, you've found some conversations of interest now it's time to mix and mingle.

At your last social function you probably made the rounds and joined in on the conversations you found most interesting.

Think Twitter is much different? Well it's not – nope not at all - different than a physical conversation; it's just taking place in a virtual space.

Your job, through searching and listening is to find those groups of people talking about the most interesting stuff. Move around the room, and keep your ears peeled, and get ready to join in.

JOIN THE BEST CONVERSATIONS

Joining the conversations on Twitter can be much easier, and more efficient than in the "real world".

With the extensive search functions of Twitter you can tap into the best of the best conversations, while nobody notices you eavesdropping.

WHAT ARE THE "BEST"?

You are searching for people discussing things that are relevant to you. Plain and simple these are the best conversations on Twitter as far as you're concerned.

Searching for your name, company name, products you sell (or would like to sell) and industry chatter are all a great way to start.

This is one time you get a free ride to be vain. Start looking for yourself!

These are the conversations you want to join. These are the people you want to interact with. Your goal is to find people talking about you, your products, business, or services.

It will feel a bit self serving at first, but keep reading because we'll work through that.

Step 2: Respond

HEAR, THEN BE HEARD

After listening to the conversations of interest, it's time to respond and enter the conversation yourself.

Again you are not just barging in, but adding to what is being discussed. This should be very easy since you're following conversations of interest to you and your business, and your expertise in the area being discussed will have something to add.

When responding your first order of business is to ask yourself "Where can I help?" "What value can I add for them?"

Helping could mean passing along expert advice, addressing an upset customer, or giving an opinion of the topic at hand.

Much like the cocktail party, you are integrating into what is being discussed.

Establish a presence in the conversation by being on topic - and always add value to the conversation before expecting the conversation to add value \$\$\$ for you.

When responding you won't be bombarding potential customers with our sales pitches...There is a much better way to go about that, so keep reading we'll cover it.

WORTH REPEATING

Your mission is to provide more value to your followers than you expect them to provide for you.

Embrace the Negative

THEY SAID WHAT ABOUT ME?

In all of your listening you are bound to come across someone who has a less than stellar opinion of you, or what you do.

While mortifying at first, Twitter offers an excellent tool to do service recovery, or image repair with these folks, by offering you an immediate avenue to respond.

If you find a customer who is unhappy with you, your business, or your products this is low hanging fruit in establishing the credibility of your company.

Address these issues up front, and honestly. Take responsibility and make any wrongs right.

TURN IT TO A POSITIVE

You'll go a long way in rebuilding the relationship with those customers and attracting new ones due to your stellar customer service.

Not only that but others across the Twittersphere will see what great service you provide and you'll find them talking about it – complimenting you with their praise for being so great at customer service.

Think about all the great things you've heard about zappos.com the online shoe retailer ([@zappos](https://twitter.com/zappos)), all from providing great service through Twitter.

Negatives can easily become positives as word of mouth spreads around Twitter, embrace it.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Here is a great guide on [using Twitter for customer service](#), along with some best practice examples from some of the largest companies out there.

Step 3: Engage

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

The final step in the process is to engage. By now you've followed the right conversations, and woven yourself into them by responding and adding value.

Remember as you have been listening and responding, others have been listening and responding to you. Engage your audience. Get them involved.

Start new conversations with them by asking questions, soliciting feedback, or asking for advice and opinions.

Retweet their comments, questions, links, or insights. Build your community by making it a two way communication street.

LATHER, RINSE, REPEAT

And now the process repeats itself. *Listen-Respond-Engage*

As long as you continue to listen, respond, and engage your stock on Twitter will continue to rise and the wheels of conversation will continue to spin freely.

The more you listen, respond, and engage, the more credibility you will gain, the more you will learn about your customers and market.

In business you can never learn too much about your customers and market, and Twitter makes a perfect tool for learning.

It's at this point you'll start to see the true benefit from using Twitter for business. Building relationships, building trust, and building a community around yourself and your business.

Putting it all Together

FIRE SALE!

The good news is that as an active Listener - Responder - Engager you will be now able to occasionally share the “Hot Deal” or “Once in a lifetime offer” with your followers and have them actually respond to it.

You won't be That Guy, or the irritating neighbor any more than if your neighbor (the one you actually like) were to come over and give you a tip about how you can save a bunch of money on your life insurance.

You've built the relationship with your followers where this kind of occasional promotion is appropriate. You can sometimes “help them” by “helping yourself” as well.

But tread lightly, as soon as you start expecting more from your followers than you provide for them the value of Twitter for your business will be lost.

PUT IN THE TIME, REAP THE REWARDS

Like anything worth doing, using Twitter for your business will take time and effort on your part.

However, I am confident that if you consistently apply the three steps above you will see a direct, positive impact to your business.

There is opportunity to increase sales, acquire more leads, or have more satisfied customers.

And as you get better at unlocking the power of Twitter for your business, it is very realistic to achieve all three.

Part 3: Plot Your Course

FAIL TO PLAN, PLAN TO FAIL (OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT)

Now that you're armed with a simple, yet effective, three step approach to Twitter it's time to strategically implement what you've learned here. Don't fail to realize the true potential of Twitter just because you've haven't planned.

Using Twitter effectively will be just like any other facet of your business; you wouldn't set out marketing without a marketing plan – would you? The same holds true for Twitter.

The question is what actions do you need to take in order to get Twitter to start working for your business?

The following are the same guidelines some of the most effective Twitters' use day in and day out.

1st: DEFINE YOUR STRATEGY

Your first step here is to clearly define what your objectives are. You will find you'll achieve more success by asking what purpose you serve to your followers than by looking at what your followers can provide for you.

Some strategies to think about could include:

- Lead generation
- Product and service awareness
- Customer support
- Education
- Mix of all the above

When defining your strategy, keep in mind it's not an "all or nothing" proposition. In fact you may find you'll be most effective blending an approach.

For example your strategy may be geared to generate new leads, while providing top notch customer service for your current customers.

Your Mix & Why It's Important

GET YOUR MIX ON

Your strategic goal is to give people a reason to follow you, now it's time to look at your mix.

By mix we mean how many times you'll tweet each day, what you'll tweet about, and what categories your tweets will fall into.

A suggested mix may look something like this:

- 50% - Useful information for your target market
- 10% - About yourself, your company, your products
- 5% - Thoughtful questions (which create responses)
- 20% - Joining interesting conversations
- 5% - Stuff which can make your followers lives easier
- 10% follow up with appreciation to your followers

Don't think of this as a hard and fast rule, it's offered up to give you an idea of what your overall Tweeting will look like.

KEEP IT FRESH

A good mix will keep your tweets fresh for your followers, open the door for conversation, share valuable information, and set you up to leverage your following without boring them to death or overdoing it in one area or another.

Without an idea of the concepts you want to convey to your followers in a given day you could end up Tweeting about the same topics all the time.

By keeping an eye on your mix you ensure you remain interesting to your followers, and an interesting Tweeter gets the most attention.

Have a Participation Plan

CONSISTENT PARTICIPATION

Plan on setting aside a fixed amount of time each day to implement your strategy, execute your mix, and of course, listen – respond – engage.

When you are consistent you will build up the reputation of being a trusted source. As we spoke about in part 2 building that trust is one of the main keys to being able to use Twitter effectively for your business.

Not only will that help enrich their experience, but you will see a higher rate of acceptance and action when you talk about your business, products, or services.

Have a plan and stick to it. If you are having a hard time sticking to your plan, reevaluate and find a more agreeable participation schedule – one that fits with your business and personal schedule better.

TWO BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATION PLANS

FIRST: It keeps you consistent, and makes Twitter a priority focus for a piece of your day

SECOND: It puts parameters around your Twitter involvement making sure you don't fall into the Twitter suck trap.

Consistency and efficient use of time is very important in the world of Twitter. You'll be building trust and community without climbing down the Twitter rabbit hole.

AT A MINIMUM

Your plan should outline:

- When/what time you'll use Twitter and;
- For how long – 20 minutes a day, 1 hour a day?

Make it part of your daily routine.

Part 3: In Summary

As A RECAP, REMEMBER:

- Twitter is a conversation – treat it like any other
- Don't be That Guy!
- The gears of conversation only continue to turn when you Listen – Respond – and Engage
- Find conversations of interest by searching Twitter with one of the many search tools available
- Respond to conversations by asking yourself “what value can I add for them?”
- Engage your audience by encouraging a two way dialogue
Only after you've built trust with your community should you occasionally “sell”
- Have a strategy for what you want to accomplish with your time on Twitter
- Develop a mix based on your strategy
- Follow a participation plan to make sure you are efficient, consistent, and effective

YOU HAVE THE TOOLS

At this point I believe you have the overall framework to be very successful on Twitter. It's time for you to head to the fishing hole and apply what you've learned. Take these tools, develop your strategy, and work your plan to really leverage Twitter for your business. Keep it real, stay authentic, be consistent and you'll be do just fine.

NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE?

If you have any questions, or need a little more direction don't hesitate to contact me.

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Here's to your success,

