

TWITTER SETUP CHECKLIST

Sign up & choose a username.

Sign up at www.twitter.com. Now is the time to think about your **branding**. Are people most likely to find you by your name, your business name, or a key phrase? It needs to be as short as possible while still conveying your message. (Note that you can change it later if needed.)

Upload a profile picture.

A business logo is okay if you're known widely by the brand, but usually it's best to use a nice picture of yourself. Casual pictures are okay here; just make sure it's a fairly full headshot. People like to know who they're talking to!

Add your location.

List your city (so people nearby can find you) and main website link.

Add a bio.

Be descriptive of what you do for business, but also include something unique or intriguing (business or personal) that will draw people in to connecting with you. Only 160 characters are allowed.

Change your background.

Create a custom one if you can (see <http://www.twitterbackgrounds.org> or <http://twittergraffiti.com>). Items to consider including in the background: Logo, website address, call to action.

Post your first updates.

Update your new account with 2 or 3 posts before you start connecting with too many people. Most are receptive to posts saying "I'm new and just learning". If you can post a couple of items that will be of interest to others (links, articles, tips, etc.) that's good too – it gives people an idea of your personality and what you'll post in the future.

Get in the know.

Review the etiquette and terminology of Twitter so you'll be in the know.

Be a follower.

Find people that you know personally and follow them. Send them a message (type @username before your message) letting them know you're on Twitter and would love to connect. They will likely follow you back.

Search out more to follow.

Search for and follow a few leaders in your industry or target market as well as a few business owners who are in your city. Don't follow too many celebrities until you're more established or valuable business contacts may be put off. **Important:** Don't follow more than 10-20 new people per day; otherwise you run the risk of being flagged as a spammer. Plus you may be overwhelmed by how this all works and need time to weed through your follower's posts.

Check your Twitter settings.

Privacy: It is not recommended to protect your tweets – leave this unchecked.

Mobile: If you have an Internet enabled phone (iPhone, Android, Blackberry, etc.) there are many applications that are preferable to this Twitter service. Recommend not activating.

Notices: This is a great way to know if someone has messaged you or mentioned you.

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Set up Twitter lists.

Add people to lists as you follow them. You can make lists public (the whole world can view – good for establishing yourself as a valuable person to follow) or private (only you can view – makes it easier to track people you want to see as your following numbers grow). Examples of lists: Industry experts, XYZ town businesses, Attendees of XYZ conference.

Find your Twitter program.

While you can follow everyone from the main Twitter page, as your numbers grow you'll want to filter out certain people (see lists above), keep up on keyword searches, and have more control over what you do and don't see. There are many programs to help with this - experiment and decide if a desktop or in-browser program works best for you. (Tweetdeck, Hootsuite & Seesmic are top ones.)

Find a scheduling tool.

Set up a future-tweet tool – this allows you to schedule your outgoing informational & announcement posts so they're spread out over time and not clustered together. (See Hootsuite & Socialoomph.)

Create a plan.

As with any marketing effort, it's best to have a plan for your Social Media initiatives.

- How often each day will you check in? (1-2 times is good, don't let it hog your day.)
- What's the purpose of your outgoing tweets? (Brand awareness, product promotion, building relationships, being known as a leader in the industry?)
- How many times per day or week will you post? (No more than a few times/day of promotion, tips, 3rd party info; direct interactions/conversations with others can be more.)

Find sources.

Look for material to post. RSS feeds, newsletters, other Twitter users, etc. that relate to your target market or niche.

Check Mentions & DMs.

Check daily for any mentions of you and respond as appropriate. Also check daily for Direct Messages (though most will be auto-responders that you can ignore).

Evaluate.

Schedule time once a month to evaluate your progress and range of influence.

Need more direction? Download our Twitter Essentials Resource Guide to learn more about the intricacies of Twitter and get links to the top Twitter tools and applications.

Need help implementing or maintaining your Social Media presence? Schedule your free 30 minute consultation to learn how we can help!

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