

# Twitter For Local Small Business



Mass Exposure At An Affordable Price



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## What Is Twitter?

What is Twitter? Well, Twitter has been one of the fastest growing sites on the web today. It is taking the internet by storm and there are around 10,000 new users per day signing up to participate in this internet revolution.

Twitter is best described as a micro blogging platform. You are limited to 140 characters messages each time you send a message to your followers, which initially, may seem a small amount. However, as you become more experienced, it's just amazing what you can fit into 140 characters.

That said, Twitter is much, much more than that. It is like one huge global chat room, but then again, it doesn't have to be. It all depends on how many people you follow on Twitter. If it's in the thousands, then your "Tweetstream" will be running fast and furious with everything that's coming in. If you are only following a few hundred, or even less, then things are much easier to keep up with.

Twitter is also a great way to meet new people online, particularly those with similar interests to you. Small businesses around the world are making connections on Twitter, because it is the communication platform that lets them stay connected to their customers through those 140-character messages.

Twitter has increasingly become the number one online marketing destination for local businesses to build their brand, market their products and services, and create communities for their followers. Having the opportunity to market products or services to customers within a few blocks is a remarkable opportunity, and a great way to receive valuable feedback and build long lasting customer relationships using Twitter as a conversation tool.

## Getting Started With Twitter?

Setting up your business on Twitter can be easy, but there are a few things that you should be aware of when organizing your account. This can apply even if you already have an existing account too, so consider these tips and it can improve your entire Twitter experience.

The first thing to do if you don't have an account is go to <http://www.twitter.com> which is the home page of Twitter. You will be asked to either login or register. If you don't have an account, then of course you will need to register. So let's go through the registration process and explain it all here.

### Registration

You will probably want to register your business name, but make sure you use your own name in the sign up process so you are identifiable and connected with the business name you register. The concepts and reasons for operating under each type of registration will be discussed later.

The next screen will ask if you want to add any of your friends from the popular web based email programs. You may want to do this if you have a customer list started or get your account seeded with the friends and family in your contact list.

### Your Business Profile

First things first: Write an engaging profile. The business profile should include location, telephone, email and website address if available.

Remember, this is about building relationships with customers, not a corporate information sheet. Keep it simple and easy, but share your personality.

You have 160 characters here to "sell" yourself. Take some time over it and do it well. Don't simply enter a bunch of keywords as they appear totally uninteresting to people, although they may get you found.

Use keywords by all means, but start your Bio with the words “I help” and then describe the product or services you provide. Using my Local Internet Marketing Business as an example:-

I help small businesses get more customers by making them findable on the online when local consumers are looking for their products or services.

Now that description is only 143 characters, so you could still get some more keywords in the profile.

### Picture Tab

This is really important. When you open this page you will see the small avatar on the screen which is the default for Twitter. If you want new followers, putting a company logo or photo of business is imperative.

But just put something so you can be identified in the Tweetstream by your followers. The graphic is often more important than your name when people are scanning Tweets and you will stand out for yours.

### Design Tab

Here you can change the background of your Twitter page from the default. Twitter provides a number of alternatives that you can select or you can upload your own background. You can also change all the colors if you wish. Again, whatever you do, just change it so you are not running the default. It shows you have taken some time setting up your account.

This one component of your presence on Twitter that is worth doing well.

If you need help managing your Twitter or any Internet Marketing for your business you can find my contact information at the end of this report.

## Your Tweets

Promote products and services

One of the simplest ways to effectively use Twitter as an online marketing tool is to tell followers about what you do and who you are. Tweets should be informative and not overly promotional.

Use casual and friendly language and don't think of Twitter as a bulletin board, but as a way to have a conversation with your customers. Your first goal should not be to sell, but rather to get people interested in your services and products. So be helpful, listen and give your followers relevant and useful information.



@JadeTeahouse  
Jade Teahouse

Lucy's in a baking mood, check out her new chocolate chip cookies, madeleines, and cup cakes (carrot, red velvet, and coconut).

19 Jan 10 10:46 AM · Favorite · Retweet · Reply



@emersonsalon  
Emerson Salon

It's Friday! Perfect time of the week to get your hair looking perfect for going out tonight and tomorrow. Swing on by for a great new cut!

8 Oct 10 10:46 AM · Favorite · Retweet · Reply

Examples are from Jade Teahouse (@JadeTeahouse), Portland, Oregon whose social media marketing campaign allowed them to become one of Portland's most popular lunch destinations within a year of launching, and Emerson Salon in Seattle (@emersonsalon), a hair salon with one of the highest number of followers within the hair salon list. Currently over 14,000 followers.

## Create talk in the local community

Before the Tupelo restaurant in Boston even opened their doors, the word spread among their followers on Twitter (@tupelo02139), where they posted updates on everything from inspections to paint choices. On opening night the place was packed.

At least half of the restaurant goers were there because of Twitter according to co-owner and twitterer Jean Deaderik. A write-up in The Boston Globe described how restaurants, including Tupelo, were using Twitter as an online marketing tool. Local businesses can achieve such buzz by sharing sneak peeks of projects and events that are in development.



## Offer special discounts and promotions

Use Twitter to broadcast special discounts and promotions, an available appointment or table at a restaurant. Luna Park Kitchen & Cocktails (@lunaparksf) in San Francisco shares tweets with a secret password to entice customers in with 50% off their meal, and True Massage (@truemassage), also in San Francisco, used twitter to announce available appointments.

According to this New York Times article, True Massage often fills its bookings within a few hours of posting. On the other side of the country, in New Orleans, a wholesome pizza restaurant called Naked Pizza (@NakedPizza) decided to track sales driven by Twitter at the cash register and found that one Twitter promotion resulted in a 15% increase in sales that day.



Give great customer service and listen to feedback

Respond to complaints and feedback. When Ramon DeLeon, a Chicago Domino's franchisee, read a twitter post complaining about the late delivery of a Domino's pizza, he and the general manager of the store recorded a video apologizing for their lack of customer service and gave the twitterer a free pizza. Successfully turning an angry customer into an ambassador proves that customer service is equally important online as in the store.

Spread positive endorsement and answer questions and comments directed at you. Use the retweet function to repost an efficacious message from a



customer and take the relationship into the real world. Retweeting positive messages is a great way to spread word-of-mouth advertising and build a memorable brand. Berry Chill (@YogiJones), a Chicago based frozen yogurt shop does this well.



With your customer's permission, sharing a picture through TwitPic of a customer enjoying a milkshake, or their newly painted house, is a useful way to integrate multimedia, showcase your business and build a community. More on TwitPic below.

Use Twitter as a focus group. Dechutes Brewery (@DeschutesBeer) in Oregon will often post new creations and ask for feedback from their followers.



Another good way of starting out tweeting is with quotes. Do a search for some quotes of interest and tweet these. Personal development ones are great and also quotes by famous people.

Here's one I just found in the Tweetstream as an example: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." — Aristotle. There are thousands of these all over the internet that you can use.

Another good idea with your tweeting is to keep religion and politics out of them. These subjects can only alienate followers and you can lose them.

Get local followers, follow locally and join lists

For your local business, the more followers, the better. It's like building any type of prospect and customer list. But first you will have to find some people to follow.

### Gaining Followers

You need to first be aware that rushing out and following a heap of people can make you look like a potential Twitter spammer. Build your following base at a steady pace. As time goes on you will be able to add more at a time, but initially I would suggest you stick to 50 for a start.

The reason for this is that when you follow people, they will most likely follow you back. Many people don't do this automatically, although some do, particularly in the internet marketing space.

Some people will actually go and look at your Twitter home page to decide if you are worth following or not in their eyes. This is where your profile and the settings that you took all the trouble to do will stand you in good stead.

There are some handy applications, and techniques that can assist small businesses in finding local followers. A couple of these applications are referenced to below. For now, let's focus on hashtags. Hashtags are a short

linked words or phrases prefaced by the hash symbol #. If a tweet contains a hashtag that's already in use such as #cupcakes, #Brooklyn, or #gardening, users searching for this will see all recent twitter posts containing this hashtag.

By clicking on the "Tweets near you" tab on Twitter, local tweets containing the hashtag are brought up. Small business owners can use this to target specific users who share their interests. Tweets containing the hashtag will appear in front of people who are not already following you.

Just don't overuse hashtags; your message will be watered down if each post contains these types of links. To research current trends of hashtags visit [hashtags.org](http://hashtags.org) and search for a word or phrase.

Follow with a purpose. Find local Twitter users who share an interest with you, they are the most likely customer, and are also more likely to follow you back.

The Twitter Lists feature allows you to group together, follow, and find Twitter users. You can use lists to organize your tweets into groups based on anything you want: location, subject, company or interest. This is an easy way to find people you are not already following and for them to find your business.

## Replies

You can reply to someone's Tweet simply by putting the @symbol in front of their name. This makes the tweet stand out to them as it appears in their reply column or page instead of in the general Tweetstream. It is a very useful way of starting conversations with people in order to build relationships.

Simply comment on one of their tweets. Retweeting

People appreciate retweets and it is a good way to get noticed by others. All you do is put RT in front of the @username. If other people retweet your tweets, make it a habit to thank them. It's common courtesy. Simply tweet

@username Thanks for RT :-) and send.

You could even have a contest for customers that retweet your specials.

Useful Twitter Applications for Small Businesses

### Twellow

Twellow, at <http://www.twellow.com> is another great way of finding people to interact with. People here are categorized into all different areas and you can search for those with similar interests to your own.

The main page shows you all the categories, which then have sub categories as well. You just click on a category and the list of people in that area are displayed.

You don't have to be registered with Twellow to be displayed, but at the time of writing there were nearly two million people showing on the site, so you will have plenty to choose from. By all means though, register yourself and set up a profile so others can find you.

When you click on a category, Twellow displays a list of people in that category and they are ordered by the number of followers they have. If you are already logged into Twitter via the web, you will be able to follow people directly from the screens where the profiles are displayed.

### Mr Tweet

Mr Tweet at [www.mrtweet.net](http://www.mrtweet.net) is another way of gaining new followers. All you have to do is follow Mr Tweet on Twitter and your tweets will be monitored for content and then you will get a Direct Message from "him".

You then go to the site and login and you will get a list of suggested people. You will also get a list of people who are following you that you aren't following so you can then follow them if you choose.

It's a really nifty little site and worth registering at.

### Grader

Grader is on Twitter as @grader, but also online at <http://twitter.grader.com/> and is a site of some interest. As you get going on Twitter, you can get “ranked” by Grader on a score out of 100. It is based on some secret algorithm apparently so people can't game the system.

Apart from that aspect of Grader, you can have a look at who the top Tweeples are in a particular area or even by topic using the search function.

When you use the search function, it will list the Tweeples by their score in descending order. For example, if you search for “gardening” on Grader, you will get a list of all the top 100 people interested in gardening on Twitter. You can see their “bio” from their Twitter account and if you click on their Grader score, it will take you to their Twitter account from where you can follow them. Naturally, you must already be logged in to Twitter yourself to follow anyone.

### Listorious

Listorious has the best Twitter people search on the web so you can find anyone by topic, region or profession -- powered by data from the tens of thousands of list curators.

### Formulists

Formulists is a list creation and management tool that allows users to effortlessly generate dynamic and personalized Twitter lists that continuously self-update. Formulists offers a broad range of stock lists that can help users both manage and expand their Twitter network.

## Tweetworks

Tweetworks is a Twitter application that makes it easy to find and participate in relevant conversations. Enjoy fully threaded conversations, join and create groups on any topic imaginable, and share media with single-click tagging.

## TweetDeck

TweetDeck is a personal browser for Twitter and other social media applications. The desktop application makes it easy to organize lists and followers. TweetDeck is also available for iPhone and other mobile devices.

## Followfriday

Followfriday is one of the most popular hashtags on Twitter. In this format it is a way to get recommendations of who to follow. Followfriday.com has generated a ranking based on these recommendations which makes it easier to follow the most recommended users.

## Happn.in

For each Happn.in city, there is a current list of local Twitter trends. Happn.in pulls out useful information from the noise, specifically, local information.

## TwitPic

Use your phone, computer or email to post pictures directly to Twitter with TwitPic.

## HootSuite

HootSuite is a social media dashboard where you can monitor keywords, manage multiple Twitter, and other social medial application profiles, schedule messages, and measure your success.

## Twaitter

Schedule twitter posts and manage posting calendars with Twaitter. Set up recurring twitter messages and write bulk messages.

## Advanced Tweeting Tips

Once you're all set up, you can get into some advanced Tweeting tips and applications that can really power your Business Twitter usage up.

### Twitter Backgrounds

We discussed earlier about setting up your Twitter background so that it didn't just look like the default Twitter page. Leaving it like that shows a lack of care on your part. You need to distinguish your business from the crowd and attract more followers, or at the very least impresses people with your professionalism.

Now if you're a bit of a Photo software whiz, then you can do your own background, full of bells and whistles and load it up to your Twitter profile. But if you're not, or you just want to save time, then you can contact me to speak about any aspect of your Twitter or Internet Marketing strategy. My contact info is at the end of this report.

### Twitterfeed

Twitterfeed at <http://www.twitterfeed.com> is also a very handy tool. What Twitterfeed does is that you can set up your blog to feed directly to your Twitter account.

So every time you make a blog post, it gets tweeted automatically on your behalf. You can use this in conjunction with Tweetlater with the first post

coming through Twitterfeed and then subsequent ones at times you specify via Tweetlater.

Your Twitter Karma

Your Twitter Karma at <http://dossy.org/twitter/karma/> is a really useful site for having a look at your followers and who you are following. It's great for seeing your account from a followers/following perspective.

### Dont Wait - Take Advantage Today

Twitter is and absolutely fantastic application for local small businesses.

If you have any questions about the tips and resources in this report or if you would like to discuss your Twitter, Social Media or Local Internet Marketing Strategy you can contact me at:

A rectangular advertisement with a black border. On the left is a photograph of a group of people in business attire standing inside a transparent cube. To the right of the photo, the text reads: "MARKETING OUT THE BOX" in large blue letters, "www.MarketingOutTheBox.com" in black, and "702-723-3470" in large black letters. At the bottom, a black bar contains the text "CONTACT US TODAY TO BEGIN GROWING YOUR BUSINESS" in white.

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Local consumers are searching RIGHT NOW for your product or service online...

Are you there?

Sincerely,

SHAUN MADDIX

P.S. Get more customers by visiting me at: [www.MarketingOutTheBox.com](http://www.MarketingOutTheBox.com)