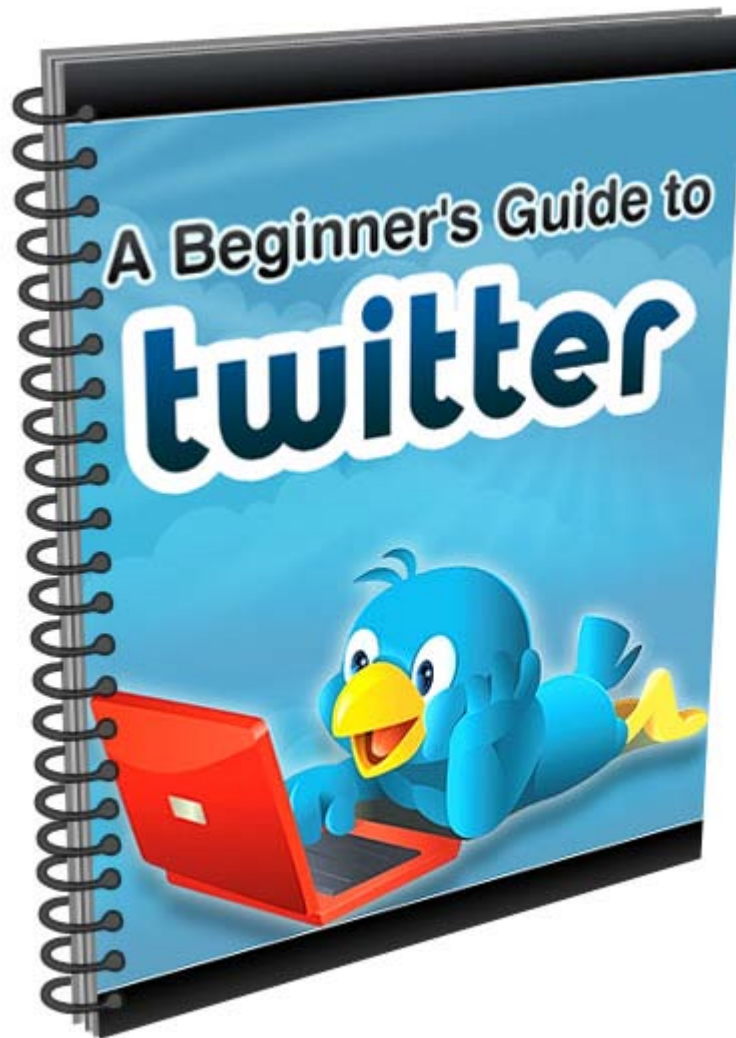


A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO TWITTER



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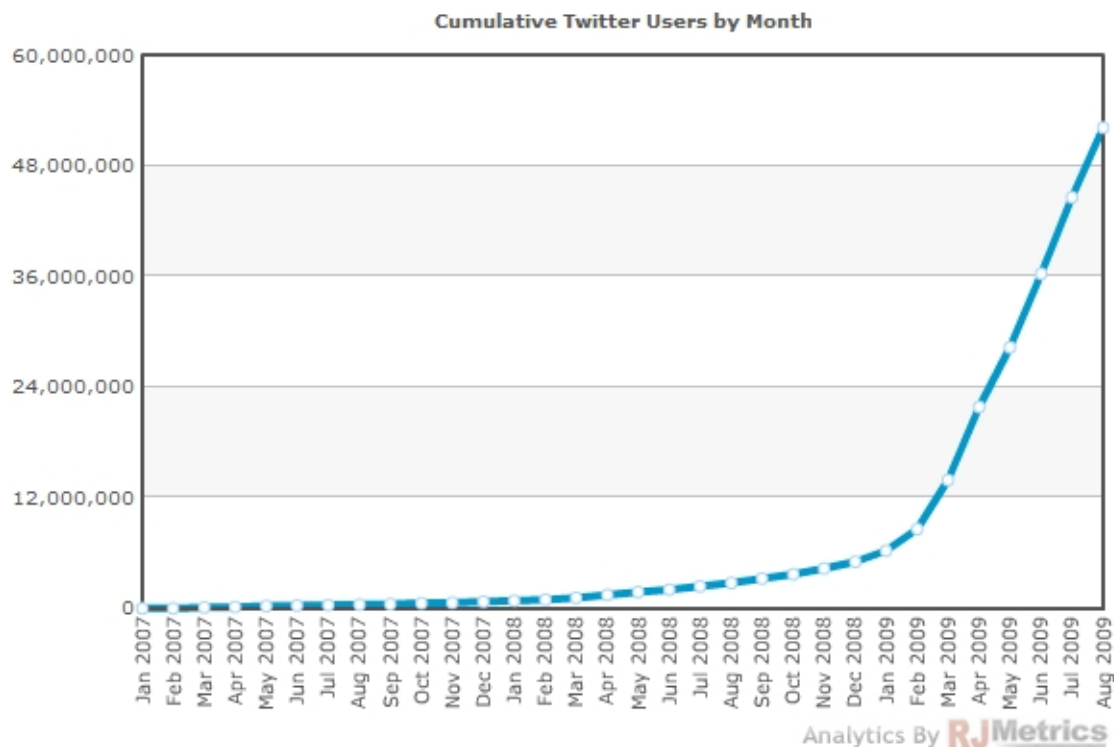
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1 Introduction to Twitter for the Affiliate Marketer

The hype is justified

Over the course of this year, the popularity of Twitter has sky-rocketed. In March 2009 a Nielsen.com blog reported that Twitter had an incredible monthly growth of 1,382%. As recently as August 2009, there were a reported 50 million users of Twitter.



An internal leaked document published by Techcrunch reported that Twitter is planning to add a **billion** users by 2013. To put that into perspective, **a billion people today is one sixth the world's population.**

So you need to pay attention when I stress that, for the affiliate marketer, Twitter is absolutely an essential tool.

For those who are already on board, congratulations. In this manual I'm going to expand on the techniques and strategies you can use to fully leverage Twitter. By now you should have a method which monetizes the strength of your following on Twitter. I'm going to explain how you should develop that following so that it

continues to grow and complements your other marketing tools to ensure your affiliate income also grows.

If you're a newcomer to Twitter, or have heard about it (who hasn't?!) but haven't quite got round to opening an account, not to worry. I'm going to take you through the basics so you too can reach a level of understanding that the more experienced "Twitterers" possess. From setting up an account to cashing in on affiliate sales from your following, you'll have a far superior knowledge of how to exploit Twitter for online income.

A basic insight

Twitter is a means to send short updates ("tweets") to people who want to receive them (your "followers"). The simplest way to do that is to log into your Twitter account on the Web and type your tweet into the text field. Any person who views your profile on Twitter can see all your outgoing tweets as they are publicly viewable. Followers can also see a list of tweets from everyone they follow when they log into their Twitter home pages.



The image is a screenshot of Barack Obama's Twitter profile page. At the top, there is a blue header with the Twitter logo and a 'Login Join Twitter!' button. Below the header, a yellow banner reads 'Hey there! BarackObama is using Twitter.' and includes a 'Join today!' button. The main profile area shows Barack Obama's profile picture, name 'BarackObama', and a verified account status. His bio reads '44th President of the United States'. The page displays two tweets: one from October 23rd about Michelle Obama's health reform discussion, and another from October 21st about a call tally. On the right side, there are statistics for 752,588 following and 2,507,415 followers, 390 tweets, and a 'Following' section with a grid of profile pictures.

These updates cannot be longer than 140 characters. Whilst this may seem restrictive, especially if you're used to 400-500 word blog posts, it is the key to Twitter's success. Limiting the number of words you can tweet makes Twitter

very easy and quick to use. **It's what is commonly known as the art of "microblogging"**.

There are many ways to use this tweet "restriction" to your advantage and I'll expand on these methods a little later in this manual.

For those who enjoy using social networking applications on this mobile phone, you can send and receive tweets equally well as on your computer.

Essentially, the point of a tweet is to make it interesting. People can follow you if they find your tweets interesting and vice versa. When you tweet, your message appears in your followers' Twitter account. You can insert links in your tweets (more about that later) or you can simply send messages without any links.

It's the **real-time value** of tweeting and Twitter that makes it such a unique social networking tool. The ability to write quick, easy to read messages, viewable in public is what differentiates Twitter.

This is what the affiliate marketer needs to understand...and exploit.

2 Getting Started – The Simple Steps

Signing up to an account on Twitter

This is a very simple process. Simply click on the green “Sign up now” button on the homepage...



...and then enter basic details for the fields: Full name, Username, Password and Email.

Your Username

A word of caution here: unlike other sites you may join, **the Username is crucial** on Twitter. If you make the wrong selection you may seriously harm your ability to generate a high number of followers and so, ultimately, your affiliate income from Twitter.

In many ways it is like selecting a domain name. You must aim to keep it simple and closely related to the brand you are promoting – whether that’s yourself or a particular product or site, for example.

Under no circumstances must you use a random username. You may choose your own name or a simple variation of that name (if the account username has already been taken). This is highly recommended as it is the best way to build

your personality into your Twitter account. This will in turn have a positive effect on your ability to build followers as Twitterers are generally more reactive to your tweets **if you appear more “real”**.

If you don't want to use your real name, select a username that is closely associated with your website. You should aim to use this name over a long period of time to establish your brand on Twitter. Changes to this username particularly at a stage where you have thousands of followers (as you should with the methods I'll teach you!) can undermine that brand.

What you also want to achieve is to make it simple for someone to go into twitter and find you by simply typing in the URL.

For example, if I want to find Barack Obama's Twitter profile, I simply type in twitter.com/barackobama.

What you want to avoid is a long or difficult-to-spell username where a small typo will misdirect a Twitterer who may want to follow you. Staying away from numbers is also recommended.

Twitter has an effective search engine which allows its users to find you through your username. So to make yourself accessible you need to follow these guidelines.

In fact, for the purposes of the search engine, if you're using your real name, make sure your first name and last name are separated. Otherwise it will be difficult for people to find you when they search for your name.

Also, be aware that when you enter your full name in the field provided by Twitter's sign-up page, this will appear on your Twitter homepage. So if you do not want to use your real name, do not enter it in this field.

Skip the next steps

Once you have entered the relevant details, Twitter will then ask you to search your online mail service e.g. Yahoo, AOL, Gmail to find anyone in your address book who has already registered with Twitter.

The idea is to start following those contacts and invite those of your contacts who haven't got a Twitter account, to sign up.

Unless your personal email account contains scores of contacts who have an interest in the niche that you are marketing this is a step you can skip as it doesn't provide much value.

Twitter will then recommend various popular Twitter users (individuals and organisations) to follow. Again, at this stage, this is a step to skip. The focus should be on completing your profile in the right manner and searching for followers related to your niche.

Make sure you turn off the notices

To make Twitter profitable the aim is to get thousands of followers. If you receive a notice by email each time someone follows you or sends you a direct message, this is likely to annoy you!

If you choose to register your mobile phone with Twitter, for similar reasons, I advise turning mobile updates off.

Your homepage

You'll see a status bar asking you "What are you doing?" This is where you enter your tweet (this step will come later).

On the right of your page you'll also see an option to click on "Direct Messages" and "@[your username]".

Direct messages are messages sent to you by your followers. You can send these messages to your followers too. Only the recipient can see the direct message.

To send a direct message, type D, *then enter a space*, and then type the username of the Twitterer you want to send the message to.

@ messages are used if you want to mention a Twitterer in your tweet. These can be viewed by all of your followers. To send an @ message, type @ and then enter the username of the Twitterer. **Do not enter a space this time.**

I'll provide advice on how to use these functions effectively, later in this manual.

3 Branding Your Profile For Optimal Results

Get it right from the outset

Your public Twitter page is an opportunity for you to market yourself to thousands of followers, potential followers and those with a vague interest who end up clicking through to your page.

It's therefore crucial that you make full use of this opportunity from the outset and ensure that your branding enhances your profile.

I've already discussed the importance of choosing the right username and if you have any doubts about this, I urge you to re-read my suggestions.

A further point is that if you're promoting or developing products in different niches, open multiple accounts for each of these niches. Trying to promote sites or products across different niches with one Twitter username is highly unlikely to work.

Settings: Timezone

Although this is a minor point, remember to enter your timezone. If you're targeting a customer base in a different timezone to your own, entering their timezone may make it easier for them to relate to your tweets.

This is because Twitter frames the tweets in the form of a timeline. When you view a Twitterer's tweets you will see how long ago their last few tweets were submitted.

Alternatively, you can use an application **to schedule your tweets** (such as socialoomph.com) and you can schedule them so that they're broadcasted to your followers at optimum times according to their timezones.

Settings: More info URL

Whilst you can promote multiple URL's on Twitter, the main URL should be entered here. This is permanently viewable and clickable on your homepage and should be your main website. Whether it's your blog or your product sales page you should not miss this opportunity to enter the URL.

As time passes, the focal point of your affiliate marketing may change. In which case the URL may need to be updated according to what you want your followers or potential followers to click through to ahead of other URL's.

Make sure to leave out or get rid of the "www" (check the link prior to inserting and make sure it works). This is valuable real estate and the www eats up some of it.

Settings: Online bio

One Line Bio:

About yourself in fewer than 160 chars.

As you can see from the image above, you have fewer than 160 characters to describe to fellow Twitterers what you're all about.

As with your username, I suggest putting some thought into this. Contrary to what you may see frequently on Twitter, I wouldn't suggest filling this entirely with keywords describing your interests e.g. affiliate marketer.

Describe what site or product you're currently working on or promoting. Be sure to drop in the fact that you're a marketer, but make yourself stand out from others who use generic descriptions. As many of your followers or potential followers may read this, it's valuable marketing space and what you want them to do is click on your main URL after they've read it.

That's why I also suggest updating your main URL in the same way as your bio to focus the attention of those who view your homepage on your most recent promotion or product.

Settings: Protect My Updates

Marketers should not click this box as otherwise the number of people who can see your twitter page will be restricted.

Settings: Avatar

This is an important option based on the fact that Twitter is an opportunity to establish your brand as a marketer. If you have used your own name when selecting a username you should also upload a photograph of yourself.

Use a good photo that shows you in a personable and professional light. Also use one of high quality as the image will be displayed on your page in small dimensions. Each time you tweet and it appears on your followers' timelines, it will be this photo that they see next to your tweet so it must be clearly viewable.

If you have selected a username for a product or a website then use a logo. This is no substitute for using a real photo of you though, as it lacks the same personable touch which is what works on Twitter.

Under no circumstances must you leave the avatar blank. This will create the strong impression that you're not committed about Twittering.

Your Background Design

Again, failing to spend time on this, and simply selecting a background image provided by Twitter means that you miss out on valuable branding and advertising space.

The left side of Twitter page should be used to promote your product and to promote you. Since Twitter restricts the length of your bio as well as your tweets, this is valuable space which you can use effectively.

My suggestion would be to reinforce your bio and profile picture by inserting a different picture of you in a larger dimension. Or if you are not using your own picture, insert the same logo for your profile picture here, again in larger dimensions.

Also insert the link to your main website/product as well as some detail about who you are or about that website/product.

Although the user will not be able to click through on any links on this image, the idea is to attract their attention and work their curiosity. This way they are likely to enter the URL you are promoting into their browser and find out more about you. It's another opportunity on your Twitter homepage to transfer traffic to the site of your choice – and that should be your ultimate aim when using Twitter as a marketer.

Other suggestions for this left hand side image are using quirky images of yourself (but not unprofessional images) thus increasing the intrigue of your follower.

Like your bio, you may also want to use this space to use different images over time according to which product or website you want your followers to focus on. Together the image and bio complement each other.

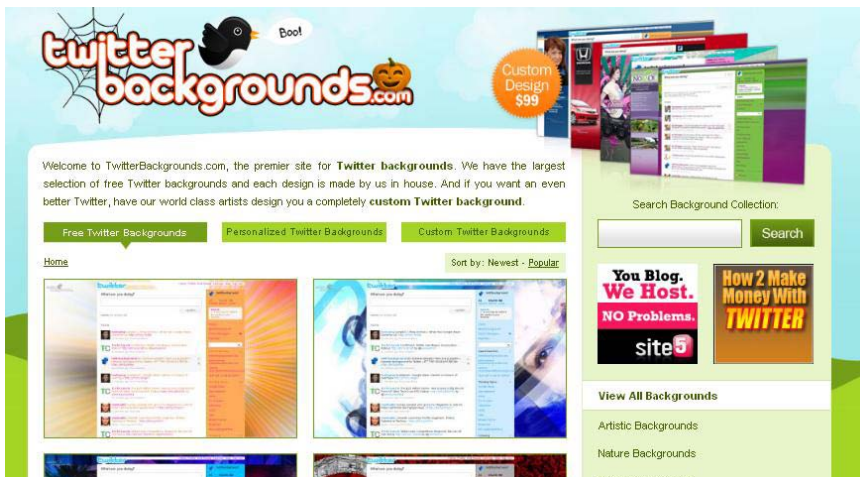
For those marketers who are launching new websites or promoting new websites ahead of launch, providing a launch date and a teaser sentence or two and image can work very effectively.

The idea is that new products or websites which are soon launching generate the most excitement so rather than using your bio/more info URL/left side image to promote old products, use them to promote prelaunch. Together they will increase the likelihood that any of your followers who are viewing your homepage will click through to the prelaunch page you want them to visit.

I would also suggest that you keep the right side of your Twitter homepage free of any images. You should not distract the user's attention away from your bio and more info URL which are on this side.

If you have good design skills you may want to design the image yourself or alternatively you can use freelancing sites like elance.com or guru.com to outsource the design at relatively low cost.

Another option is to obtain free background images from sites such as twitterbackgrounds.com.



There is also an option of purchasing a custom background from that site. Other popular options for background images are twitart.com, mytweetspace.com and twitterbacks.com.

4 Building Your Following Quickly and Powerfully

Following linked to tweeting

This section is closely related to the next section (Essential Tweeting Rules For An Affiliate Marketer). The reason for this is that obtaining a large following on Twitter is actually quite simple. The number of Twitterers is increasing exponentially and finding followers relevant to your niche shouldn't be too difficult.

However, keeping those followers engaged and converting them to traffic on the website that you want them to land to, is the tricky part. This is where the art of tweeting plays a key role.

You need to produce tweets that generate interest, that provide entertainment, and provide value to your followers. You also need to tweet frequently – every day in fact so that you are constantly putting yourself forward to your followers. Your tweets need to contain the keywords that are relevant to your niche. So when someone searches for those keywords to follow interesting Twitterers who are tweeting on them, their search leads them to your tweets.

I will explain in more detail, in the next section, how to ensure your tweets are engaging and how to transfer your followers to the site of your choice where ultimately you can convert followers to customers.

Build followers related to your niche

Search.twitter.com is a great search engine to find people who are tweeting about your niche as well as the leading experts in that niche.

You shouldn't follow people unrelated to your niche through a scatter gun approach. This isn't an effective use of your time.

What you also shouldn't do is spend time evaluating how important a certain person is to your niche and assess whether you should follow them. This is not time effective and I subscribe to the theory that even if someone is vaguely relevant to your niche you should follow them.

When you follow someone, they are then likely to follow you back and that is how you build your following. Others may find you through using sites like search.twitter.com as well as other means e.g. clicking through to your profile because you have a common follower.

The more people that follow you, however vaguely related they are to your niche, **ultimately the greater will be the traffic when you look to transfer your followers to your target site.**

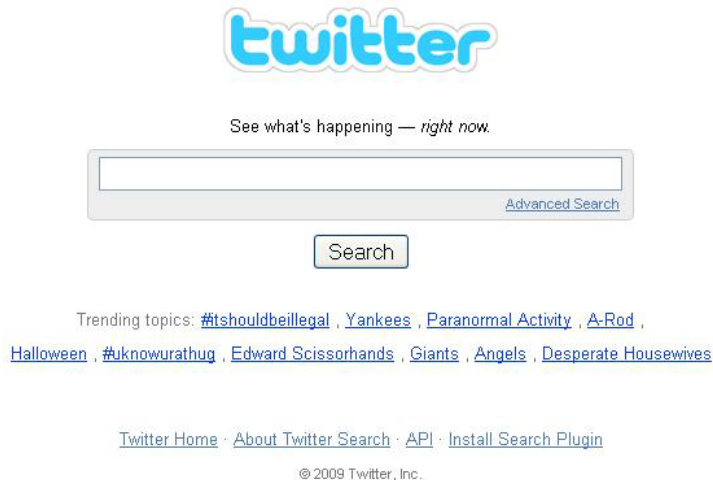
There will always be varying levels of interest amongst your followers in your niche and the more interested followers will read your tweets more regularly. Those with only slight interest may not be as keen, but even if you can capture their attention on a few occasions there's still an opportunity that in the future, they will become a customer of your affiliated vendor or you yourself.

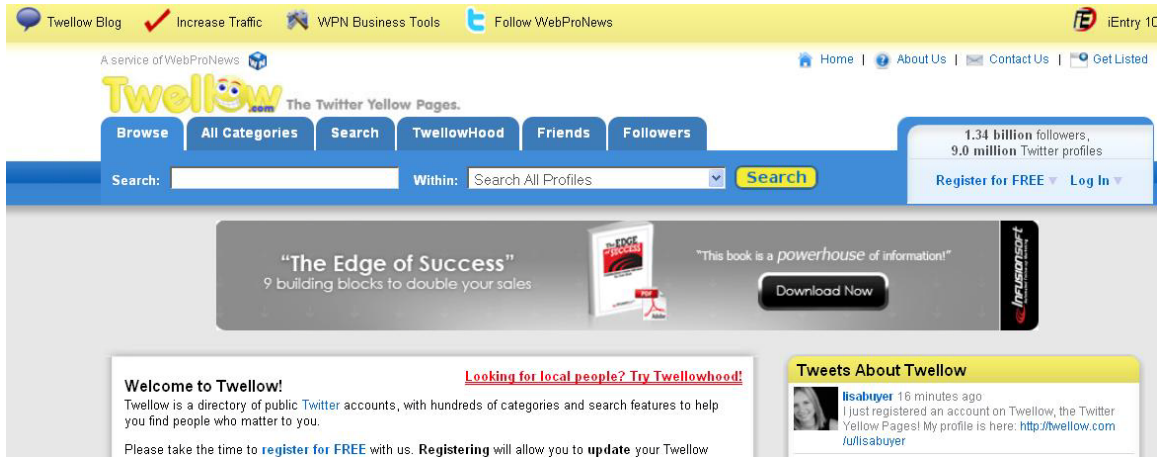
This is why numbers are important when it comes to your following and why I don't subscribe to the theory that, for example, 300 highly targeted followers are more valuable than 1,500 followers with varying levels of interest in your niche.

Initial steps

Let's presume you are at a starting position of no followers and you're also not following anyone.

What you can then do is hop on to search.twitter.com or sites such as twellow.com (an online directory of Twitterers) and search for your keyword. This will then bring up a list of those who are tweeting about that keyword, or depending on your search parameters, a list of leading Twitterers for that keyword.





Twitter allows you to follow up to 2,000 people at which point unless approximately 2,000 people aren't following you back, you cannot follow further people.

There's also a Twitter recommendation that you shouldn't follow more than 500 people a day. So it's best to stick to that initially.

You can follow 500 people initially by either manually clicking on "follow" next to each follower retrieved under you search results or automating the process through using software (more about that slightly later).

Unfollow those not following you

You should then give those people you have followed up to 72 hours to follow you back. If they haven't followed you back by that time, you should unfollow them. It's important to ensure that your following vs. followers is as close to a 1:1 ratio. So it's essential that you unfollow those who aren't following you back.

To do this effectively you should use an application like Twitter Karma.



With one click of a mouse, you're able to select all Twitterers who you're following, but are not following you back. A further click ensures that you're now unfollowing them. This will reduce the number that you're following and allow you to then follow others with the aim that they'll follow you back. This increases your number of followers.

You can also use Twitter Karma to find out who is following you and who you're not following back. You can then select all of these people and follow them with just one click.

Follow those who follow you

I'd recommend using socialoomph.com to automatically follow those who are following you. This way you can avoid those who see that you're not reciprocating the following and unfollow you. This will hinder your progress in terms of increasing your following.

Once you've followed 2,000 people, as mentioned, Twitter will not allow you to follow further people unless you also have approximately 2,000 people following you back.

Even when you go past 2,000 followers, you are blocked by Twitter if you try to follow too many people beyond the number that are following you.

Find the experts

It is worth investing a bit of time in identifying key players in your niche. Those who are viewed as the experts; those with the largest followings.

You can then simply start following their followers. Always follow those at the start of a key player's list e.g. the first 100 and then look for other followers from other key players or through sites such as search.twitter.com.

This is because the followers at the start of the list are often those who have been recently active on Twitter. Dormant followers merely add numbers to your following and may not follow you back. Nor do they provide any value in the future in terms of monetizing your following.

Another benefit of following an expert is that if they send you an @message, all of their followers are able to see your name. When that key player has, for example, 30,000 followers, that's valuable advertising!

To induce an @message from a key player is not so straightforward however. It's likely that they receive many @messages and if they don't reply to all of them your chances lessen. The key is to look at their recent tweet timeline and see what they're discussing. If they're promoting a product, particularly their own, and are tweeting about it, there's a greater chance they'll reply to your @message.

Respond to your messages

Whether they're @messages or direct messages, regularly check your account and if there are any messages specifically directed at you, make sure you respond.

When I view a Twitterer's timeline and I don't see any @messages, I instantly get the impression that this person isn't interacting with their following much. So failing to respond to @messages in particular, harms your twitter relationship with the person who messaged you as well as your other followers.

Creating the impression of interaction is one way to engage your following and help to ensure that they are reactive to your tweets, particularly the more important ones where ultimately you're looking to secure sales or transfer your followers to email leads.

Also, initiate conversations with your followers, by sending them @messages. As mentioned this tactic should definitely be used with the more influential people you are following in your niche. Look to provide answers to questions that other people ask. Providing valuable information is the key to succeeding in building your following and maximizing their responsiveness.

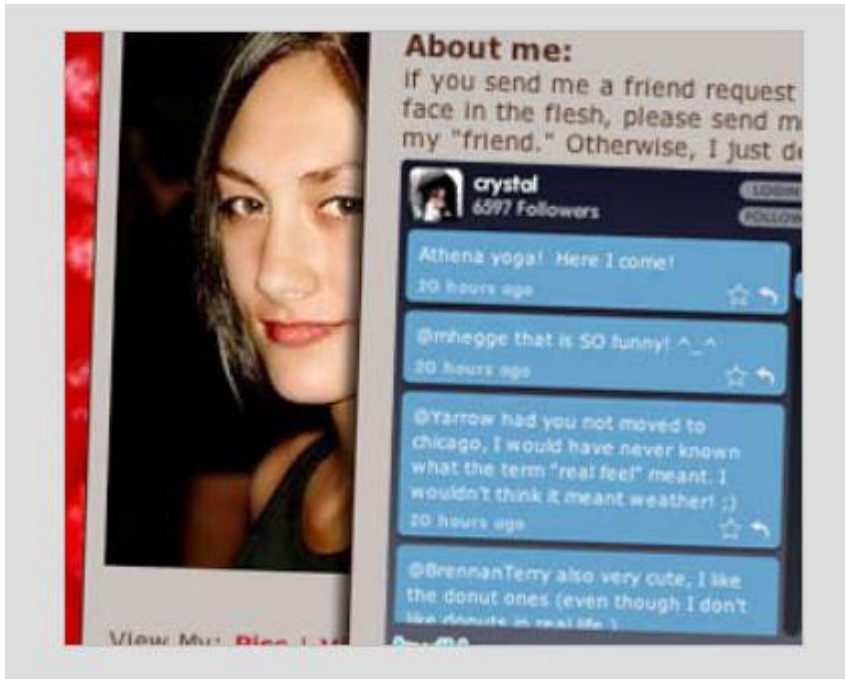
The more people who reply to your tweets, the more influential become your posts. Twitterrank.com works out a score for each Twitter user indicating how engaged, interesting and influential they are. This is a useful tool to track your popularity as a Twitterer.

Use your website to complement twitter

A little later I'm going to talk more about what to do with your followers so that you monetize your success on Twitter. Blogging plays an important role in this.

But at this stage, if you have a blog which has even reasonable traffic, **you should look to transfer your blog readers to your Twitter page with the aim of making them your followers.**

One way to do this is to place your tweets on your site. Twitter.com/badges allows you to post your tweets on you site. You can select the kind of page on which you'd like to place them – myspace, facebook, blogger and typepad are automatic options. There are additional widgets that work on almost all sites.



Add a Flash widget to your MySpace page!

This way the tweets look like they are part of your site. When one of your followers clicks on a link in your tweet and is taken to your site, they'll see the material as an extension of your tweets.

And equally importantly, those on your site who can see your latest tweets will be more likely to click through to your twitter page and follow you.

If you have a facebook account for marketing purposes, encourage your facebook followers to follow you on Twitter. And again, vice versa, encourage your Twitter followers to connect with you on Facebook.

Notify your list of your twitter activity

If you have a list of email subscribers, send them a notification that you're Twittering and a link to your Twitter page. Also include your Twitter details in your signature.

Give them an incentive to visit your twitter page, for example a valuable bonus report relating to the niche they're interested in, if they sign up. In fact you can go even further by asking them to sign up and send you a direct message or @message to receive the bonus. The latter option will alert your other followers to the fact that you're giving out bonuses. This helps to keep the interaction with your following alive.

Automate the process

I've already mentioned a way to unfollow those who are not following you back. Following people relevant to your niche in the first place can be tiresome if you're manually following up to 500 people per day.

You need to find a way to automate this. There are a few software options currently on the market, but it's really important that these comply with Twitter's regulations otherwise your account can be suspended.

If you follow too many people in one day, using auto-follow too often, Twitter may immediately suspend your account for a week (or longer) because they deem your account to be spam.

So I'd be very careful about using automated software which hasn't been designed meticulously to comply with Twitter's regulations. Some of the software options I've seen allow you to unfollow those who don't follow you back after an hour! This will increase the chance that your account will be suspended by Twitter and it may take you many emails with Twitter support to have it reinstated. In fact, I've seen some accounts with over 30,000 followers that when reinstated are back to 0 followers.

You should also be careful about the number of tweets you do per day. **I strongly recommend you tweet everyday, but be aware that Twitter currently allows 50 tweets per day.** They're also stamping out tweets which are repeated so you should look to avoid this. At the very least you should tweak a tweet slightly so that it is not identical to a previous tweet.

You're allowed to schedule tweets (twaitter.com is a useful application to schedule tweets) but if you send too many auto-tweets (i.e. above the limit) again your account is at the risk of being suspended by Twitter.

Twitter have also reduced the amount of direct messages allowed to 250 per day. Using an application such as socialoomph.com allows you to automatically send a direct message to those who follow you. I'd recommend that you do not schedule automatic messages like this. If you follow 500 people in a day and

over 250 people follow you back, you'll send over 250 direct messages, automatically which puts you on the wrong side of Twitter's rules.

This is why you should proceed with caution when using any applications which seek to automate Twitter. Be certain that they have tested their software exhaustively and are keeping up-to-date with the regulations of Twitter as they evolve.

NOTE: At the end of this manual I'll tell you more about a way which automates the follow and un-follow process, schedules tweets and crucially incorporates your affiliate activity on a platform like Clickbank. More on this later...

Convert your followers to subscribers...and then to buyers

Having a large and interactive following is irrelevant, from a marketer's point of view, if you're not monetizing the strength of your following.

This step is closely related to the value of your tweets, which will be dealt with in more detail in the next section. At this stage it's simply important to stress that **your tweets need to be informative, entertain and have significant value.**

There are several strategies to optimise the strength of your following. My advice would be to concentrate on creating your brand on Twitter. **For the first month or so I would not recommend tweeting any affiliate links or links to sales pages.** I'd concentrate on establishing your presence on Twitter by providing valuable and informative tweets, as well as personal tweets which have more of your individual personality in them. This will all become clearer after the next section.

During that first month you need to focus on one of your relevant sites which you should use to complement your Twitter page.

The idea is to tweet in a way that captures the reader's attention and compels him to click on the link in that tweet.

That link will then take him to the landing page i.e. your site. There you are free from any restrictions imposed by Twitter, i.e. a 140 character limit on your tweet. You can write longer blog posts which provide significantly more value to your follower.

As I mention, for the first month concentrate on writing blog posts which provide value and don't redirect the follower to a sales page. The posts should be a natural extension of your tweet i.e. they need to be closely connected.

You should be monitoring the number of your followers that click on the links in your tweets and reach your landing page.

Bit.ly is a great application for this. You can sign in to this through your Twitter username and password. Enter your links into the application so that it will shorten them and insert analytical code into them. So, when you re-visit bit.ly you can see statistics of how many of your followers clicked on the different links you inserted into your tweets.



The screenshot shows the bit.ly website interface. At the top left is the bit.ly logo with the tagline "Shorten, share, and track your links". To the right are navigation links: Home, Tools, Search, and Blog. Below the navigation is a form with the label "Enter your long link or file here:". The form contains a large yellow input field and a "Shorten" button. Below the input field are links for "Share a File" and "Share on Twitter". Underneath the form is a "History" section with a table header containing "ADDED", "CLICKS", and "INFO". Below the table header is a paragraph of text: "Things are looking a little bare at the moment, but you can fix that. Paste any long link into the big box at top and click Shorten. Better yet, Sign Up and you can get a complete history, real-time stats, and saved preferences."

As your followers increases so should the statistics for the numbers who click on your links and are taken to your landing page.

Try and take them to different pages as well where they can find information of value. This will promote variety but should not detract from the aim of updating your blog, regularly (daily if you can) and tweeting regularly (daily if you can) to direct your followers to new informative posts.

During the first month, you will then build the trust and gain the confidence of your follower who will recognise your tweets as high value messages.

After that first month it's now time to think more closely about monetising your followers. The first objective, as with email marketing, should be to capture their email addresses.

So when they reach your landing page, offer them bonuses occasionally which are of value and for which they will need to enter their email address to obtain.

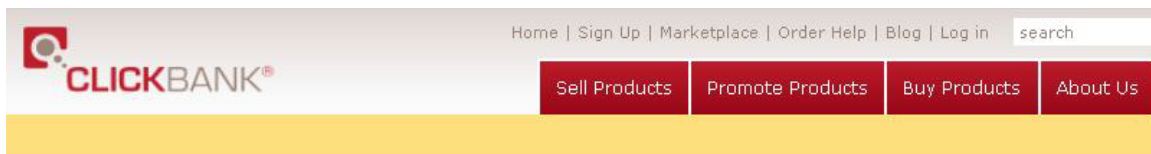
Run your Google AdSense campaign on your blog so that you can expand your reach to your Twitter followers.

Converting followers to affiliate sales

After a month, start integrating your affiliate links into your tweets so that your followers are taken to sales pages. This where the substantial percentage of your income will be made. **DO NOT** continually tweet your affiliate link; I'd recommend that **one in four** of your tweets leads to a sales page.

And do not lead your followers to the same sales page, even if that sales page is highly converting. I'd suggest focusing on the **top three sales pages** in your niche at a time using the Clickbank marketplace rankings. The key is recency: the latest sales pages generate more excitement than older sales pages.

But you don't want to waste your efforts on a sales page which is not converting. So I'd recommend waiting for a week or so before searching in, for example the Clickbank marketplace, to find the top recent converters. This way you satisfy both of the criteria: linking to a recent product which is also highly converting.



Search the ClickBank Marketplace

Category:	All Categories	Subcat:	All Sub-Categories
Keywords:	<input type="text"/>	Sort by:	Popularity
Product Type:	All Products	Language:	All
Show:	10 results per page	<input type="button" value="Go"/>	<input type="button" value="Reset"/>

Use the ClickBank Marketplace drop-down categories and sub-categories, the keyword search engine, and the sort by function to find digital products. Click "[view pitch page](#)" under the product to view how the product will be presented to customers. Check the stats under each product to determine how much you can earn for converted customer referrals. Once you have a product you want to promote, click "[create HopLink](#)" under the product and begin referring sales today.

Again, continually analysing your results is essential, as with many other aspects of affiliate marketing. So use a separate affiliate account to generate your hoplink and regularly review how many hops your tweets are generating as your following increases. Also monitor how many of those hops are translating into affiliate sales. This will give you an indication of how reactive your followers are to buying. Converting them to subscribers to your mailing list can often be the easy part, but converting them to buyers is often the more difficult task. **So analyse, analyse and analyse.**

What you should see is that your following is increasing at a regular rate, certainly beyond the initial 2,000 and this in turn is leading to a steady increase in clicks through to the links in your tweets (from your bit.ly results). This in turn should lead to a proportional increase in your sales provided that you do not use Twitter to oversell and you promote good products with sales pages which are high converters.

Try and boost your sales by offering bonuses with purchases through Twitter. Tweeting about your bonus offerings will capture the attention of your followers and promote interactivity. Ask them to direct message you with details of their purchase and an email address. Then follow that up by providing them with their bonus.

The important thing to remember is that your tweeting needs to be at the right balance and optimised to produce the results that are achievable. This is what I'll now describe in more detail.

5 Essential tweeting rules for an affiliate marketer

Understand this...

No matter what you do and how you do it, if you don't get this crucial stage right, you won't fulfill your potential on Twitter.

Tweeting the right way is your opportunity to tap into this real-time marketing hotbed.

So what is the "right way"?

Quality and quantity...

In terms of quantity, there is no hard and fast answer to the question, how many tweets? I've experimented a great deal to find the optimum frequency. Twitter allows up to 50 tweets a day but I think if you're tweeting so frequently, you're overdoing it.

I suggest 10 tweets a day evenly spaced out with an hour between each tweet. The best way to do this is to use an application which allows you to schedule your tweets (twaitter.com, for example).

There are applications which allow you to tweet automatically using a feed from Google or your blog. I would advise against using a feed from Google – you can't control the tweets and often they lack quality or pick up articles about a product with another affiliate's link.

What you can do to simplify tweeting is to automatically generate a feed from your blog. This way you kill two birds with one stone and you double the affiliate effect of your blog and twitter profile. As I mentioned you should use your blog posts as a natural extension of your tweets. And in the other direction you should alert members of your blog to your tweets with an application like twitterbadges.com.

Twitterfeed.com is the application I recommend to generate an automatic feed from your blog to your Twitter account.



Set up the feed in a way which repeats the headline of your latest blog post as a tweet – this will be more appropriate due to the character restriction for a tweet. So when you write new posts remember that your headline is also acting as a tweet. So, integrate the key aspect of the post into the headline **so that it acts as a teaser when read as both a blog post headline AND as a tweet**. The automatic feed will then create a short link (use bit.ly as this also has analytic value) with your tweet to your blog post.

If you update your blog once a day this will also count as one automatic tweet a day. This leaves you nine further tweets to prepare per day. I suggest that at least two of those tweets should be something personal to you. Whether it's what you're eating, what you're doing, or what you're planning on doing, these simple and easy tweets should relate to you. This helps to strengthen your individual personality as a genuine Twitterer rather than an obvious affiliate marketer.

You can send out these tweets in realtime, or as I prefer to do, schedule them beforehand. This means if I can't update my Twitter status, I don't need to worry about them.

Of the remaining seven tweets, I'd suggest that two of those are news-related tweets. Ideally they should be related to the hot topics in the niche although even tweets relating to the general world events are relevant. The purpose of these tweets is purely to provide value and distract your follower from the fact that you're using Twitter to make affiliate sales. They also reinforce the impression that you're a real person offering tweets of value to your follower.

An easy way to keep track of the hot topics is to do a search on Google News for articles of topical interest. Using the same method as for your blog posts, create an intriguing headline which encourages the reader to click on the link that accompanies the tweet.

Creating a feed from Google is the easy way out as it automates the process. Whilst many Twitterers are doing this, I'd recommend against it. You don't have control over the tweet and I've often seen Twitterers automatically posting links to product reviews written by other affiliates with their respective affiliate links to the product.

This is a great way to make money if others are automatically Twittering your review article and your affiliate link!

The headlines of news articles are usually tweeted with these automatic feeds. But the click-through rate is not as high as when you begin a tweet with "Just read an interesting article on"

Personalising the tweet is what engages our followers on Twitter. **Expressing your own opinions and emotions and wrapping them around tweets with links of interest are far more powerful than headlines of articles.**

One tweet should be used to interact with your followers, whether in reply or initiating a conversation. As I mentioned earlier try and engage the more influential Twitterers in your niche by sending them an @message.

A further tweet can be used for entertainment, especially humour. Try and find funny or entertaining lines that are related to the niche you're promoting products in. Quotations and proverbs are also useful for this genre of tweet.

The money-makers

This leaves three remaining tweets – the money-makers. They should lead to the sales pages of the three most recent highly converting products in your niche. A search in the Clickbank marketplace under the relevant category, defined by popularity, will bring up these products. Extract your affiliate links, shorten them using bit.ly and wrap your tweet around them.

These tweets need to be carefully worded. Rather than using highly emotive words like "shocking", "crazy" and "amazing", you need to use more toned-down and subtle language. The kind of language that you might use in a conversation with another person rather than the kind of language you'd see in the subject line of an email. Words like "interesting", "useful" and "great" generate more curiosity from the typical Twitterer than the highly emotive words you might otherwise use. They need to be combined with a statement that is individual to you; whether it's a description of what you're doing, feeling or an opinion – **personalise your money-maker tweets.**

Also boost their effectiveness by including details of a special offer in the tweet. Some marketers go as far to say that never tweet a link to a sales page without a special offer. Personally I'd sprinkle them in to offer variety.

Don't forget that the prelaunch before a product is released is often an effective time to make an affiliate sale. Where there is stimulating prelaunch content, especially videos and blog discussions, it's easier to direct your follower to these pages without appearing that you're simply an affiliate looking for a sale.

If your follower then subscribes to the prelaunch mailing list, there's a strong chance that if they then continue to buy your affiliate cookie will take effect and that will be your sale.

Where you are leading them to a page with a video, mention "video" in your tweet, as people are more receptive to clicking through and watching videos.

Time-sensitive tweets

These are tweets with special offers, discounts etc which will soon expire. You can exploit Twitter's real-time value by tweeting in this way to get an instant reaction from your followers. Provided it's used sparingly it can be an effective way of securing affiliate sales. Try to be as accurate as possible, as when your followers click on your affiliate link, your tweet will put them in the frame of mind that the offer is time-sensitive. If they then arrive at the landing site and find this is not the case they may lose confidence in your tweeting.

If someone is reviewing your tweet timeline and sees that they've missed a time-sensitive offer which appeals to them, it creates the impression that they should be paying more attention to your tweets.

Get your keywords in

Remember that when Twitterers are searching for real-time tweets on applications like search.twitter.com they'll enter keywords for the niche that they're interested in. **Make sure as many of your tweets as possible are keyword-efficient.**

To ensure you're entering the right keywords, use the keyword analysis tool on Google (<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>). This is useful for many forms of affiliate marketing, not just Twittering.

Language tips for tweeting

Avoid using SMS language in your tweets. This doesn't conform with the tweeting etiquette. It is acceptable though to use symbols like @ and to skip grammar, which helps to restrict the number of characters in your tweet.

Avoid using slang or words that are too regional as your followers may be based across a range of countries and regions. You want to connect with them all to maximize the success of your techniques.

Re-tweeting

When someone spots a good tweet, they can pass that message on to their own followers. **This is when the potential for a tweet to go viral is at its highest.**

The etiquette for retweeting is that you should give credit to the original twitterer. You do this by typing RT @[username]: original tweet. Any comments you want to add to the retweet can go at the beginning or in brackets at the end.

If your tweets are interesting enough, they will be shared and it's when they're retweeted that you have the opportunity to get your name in front of thousands and thousands of Twitterers. If that tweet has your affiliate link to a product, the potential for sales multiplies!

Generally however the kind of tweets that get re-tweeted are funny tweets, cool articles and quotes. What can have a great effect on your results is by asking for a retweet – “Please RT” – what's known as the classic call to action.

Picture tweets

An interesting variation on the classic form of tweeting is picture tweeting. Twitpic.com is a useful application for this – it allows you to choose an image to upload, describe it and tag it, then add a message on the same form that will be tweeted. The tweet then appears in your timeline with a link to the image on twitpic.



Apart from posting general pictures of interest to engage your followers you can also use this application directly for affiliate marketing. You can link tweets to images such as ecovers or banners of products that you're promoting. These can complement your other tweets promoting the products and taking the followers directly to the sales pages. Visualising a product always helps to assist conversions which is why the use of ecovers is so widespread for many digital products.

6 Pulling it All Together: Master Twitter And Fuel Your Affiliate Income

If you're new to Twitter, I'd recommend concentrating on one niche to begin with. If you're active on Clickbank, focus on one category initially, in the marketplace, that you can target through your Twitter following.

Action Plan

=> Sign up to Twitter if not already done so

=> Brand your twitter profile, including name, avatar, background image, bio, more info URL according to the recommendations made

=> Start tweeting (no affiliate links in first month, link to blog posts, follow recommended variations and tweet 10 times a day)

=> Start following those Twitterers relevant to your niche (search using the recommended applications and stick to limits imposed by Twitter)

=> Continue following each day and unfollow those who don't follow you back (using applications such as Twitter Karma and allowing up to 3 days to let them follow you back)

=> Identify one profitable niche initially (you can open different twitter accounts for different niches later) using Clickbank marketplace and Google Adwords analysis tool

=> Identify 3 of the highest converting products in that niche listed in the Clickbank marketplace and promote them via personalized tweets to your followers (no more than 3 tweets per day)

=> Continue building your following and open additional twitter accounts for other profitable niches

=> Continually focus on the quality and variety of your tweets, using appropriate tools to schedule tweets regularly – ENGAGE WITH YOUR FOLLOWING ON DIFFERENT LEVELS.