

Twitter Tips – Growing your Followers

1. Know Your Niche

I'm talking about listening and learning how your community moves on Twitter. Who are the true leaders, what kind of content is shared, the popular blogs, the lingo, etc. Now, think of ways to participate, add value and improve the current conversation. In other words, get attention by kicking ass in your industry, aim to become a leader.

2. Write Content People Can Share

Make it easy for people to share your content, think of why somebody would be happy to put that piece of content in front of his/her own network. If you write great posts that are providing real insights and answers in your industry, people will love to share it because they are also trying to be resourceful to their network AND, if your post gets to be shared by a rockstar in your niche, it would probably spin like there's no tomorrow (you thought I was going to use the word "viral"...). People that shares your content are likely to follow you and sometimes even "list" you.

3. Be Resourceful

It's pretty clear that you should share other content more than your own but besides that, I think what's important is to share valuable content that is really adding something to your network. Don't just throw links in there because they are related. If you're posting trash, people will stop clicking on your links. Posting great stuff will result in retweets and that my friend, puts you in front of other networks.

4. Stay In Your Field

How much value can you add in a niche that's not yours? Stay in your field, where your expertise can be of value to others. Retweeting everything Mashable says is not that valuable to your tribe if you are a Yoga instructor, I'm sure there are a couple of stories that might apply but don't make it a daily thing. You are just making it hard for people to share what you say and soon you will be invisible to them.

5. Follow Less But Follow Smart

Random following is not gonna get you anywhere, I don't care if you're just trying to generate some traffic back to your site, these people couldn't care less about you. Instead, identify the right people, look for existing conversations, answer questions been asked out there. Of course the process is slow but you have the chance to connect with people that relates to who you are or what you do.

6. Introduce Yourself

Are you the kind of person that goes to a convention collecting a thousand business cards? Don't you think is more productive to go and meet some key individuals that you might actually end up doing something. When you do this, you don't just get the card and run away, you at least introduce yourself. What if you do the same thing on Twitter? Follow this individual (a prospect, colleague, competitor, vendor, whatever you want...) and introduce yourself. That person will most likely want to stay in touch with you.

7. Engage In Conversations

Now that you have followed some interesting people, go talk to them, you didn't just hand out your business card to run away. You must be active in starting conversations, don't wait for people to talk to you. If you engage in smart conversations about your topic and add your 2 cents, not only you will be followed by those involved but also by the spectators.

8. Manage Your Tweets

So what's the right number of tweets per day? What are the best times to tweet? I don't think there is an answer for this, at least not from me. I think you need to find a balance that only your experience will dictate. To start, don't go to the extremes, not too much to annoy people and not too little that you will be forgotten. Be consistent and have an idea of how you want to handle it.

9. Email Signatures

Just think about how many people gets emails from you every day. Add your Twitter link to your signature, you can use a tool like [WiseStamp](#), a very easy to install plugin for your browser, to make it more professional. This tool generates a html signature so you can add other elements like RSS and other networks.

10. Invite People To Follow You On Your Blog

A no brainer. Have a Twitter icon on your blog and add a little call to action like “[Follow me on Twitter](#)“. A good placement could be right next to your subscriptions. You can also display the feed on the sidebar, just go to Twitter and grab the code from there.

11. Offline Promotion

Add your Twitter URL to anything you print, business cards, flyers or any promotional items you run in your business. If you own a Cafe or a small restaurant and you post your daily specials, have something on the counter to remind your customers to “follow our daily specials on Twitter”. You get the picture...

12. Don't Use Auto-Responders

Maybe is my personal opinion but I prefer you don't send me anything before you send a robot. It is a touchy subject for a lot of people. I would suggest to write a personal response but I'm not really sure if anybody reads the DM's (Maybe you can comment on this, thank you).

Final Thought...

The main point here is that there are plenty of ways to increase your Twitter community organically and while it will take longer (much longer) than using a mass-following tool, you will be able to build a community based on a solid foundation rather than just collecting numbers.