



10 THINGS MARKETERS

# SHOULD BE DOING ON TWITTER

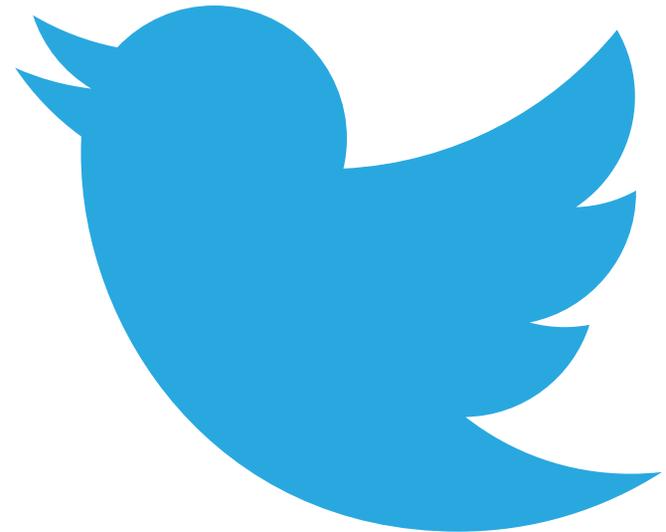


**T**he concept of Twitter seems so simple, doesn't it? Just post something in 140 characters or less and you're good to go, right? Wrong. Businesses that have found success on Twitter have worked very hard for it.

The percentage of marketers who rank Twitter as the most useful social network is rising. The percentage of business executives who said Facebook was their primary focus has remained unchanged for the past two years at 39%, while Twitter is becoming more popular. Twitter is now catching up, with 25% rating it the most useful social network, up from under 20% in 2012 (Useful Social Media, July 2014).

It's getting more and more difficult to ignore the fact that Twitter has 271 million monthly active users, who produce 500 million tweets per day. Your challenge is to find your target audience in that massive crowd and engage them. This eBook will walk you through some best practices and tips for Twitter, whether you are just starting to dip your toe in the water, or you've already jumped in and just need some new ideas.

- 1. Basics: Twitter 101**
- 2. Intermediate: 10 Things You Should be Doing on Twitter Right Now**
- 3. Advanced: Using Twitter Cards for Lead Generation**



# Basics: Twitter 101

## Real companies, real success

There are many companies just like yours that have found success with Twitter, but it didn't happen by accident. They took the time to create a visually appealing brand page and make Twitter a vital part of their marketing mix. Here are just a few examples of some recent Twitter successes:

- » Buzzstream, a software company focused on marketers, attributes **24.6%** of their content downloads to Twitter.
- » Flevy.com, a marketplace for premium business documents, ranks Twitter as the marketing channel with the lowest **cost per lead**.
- » Check I'm Here, a software solution that helps universities and colleges understand student participation outside the classroom, found **80% of their leads** targeted through Twitter ads completed a product demo.

## Basic vocabulary

-  **Tweet:** A short-form update of 140 characters or less.
-  **Retweet:** A tweet you forward to your followers.
-  **Mention:** Naming someone in a tweet by using the @handle name convention
-  **Hashtag:** A word or phrase preceded by a '#'. Used to organize like tweets for search purposes.
-  **Follow:** The process of subscribing to another person's tweets.
-  **Follower:** A person or organization (with a Twitter account) that has subscribed to your tweets.

### FACT 1:



of Twitter users say they've made a purchase based on something they saw on Twitter (research by DB5)

### FACT 2:



of followers are more likely to take action on information shared via Twitter. Twitter survey of 1,000 U.S. Twitter users who currently follow small and medium-sized (SMB) businesses on Twitter.

### FACT 3:



of Twitter users say they feel more connected to small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) after following them on Twitter.

Twitter + DB5 "Small Business Customer Insights Study" U.S. 2014

# Basics: Twitter 101

## Real companies, real success

### Spruce up your brand page

First impressions are everything. Before you even get to the tips section of this eBook, let's start with your Twitter brand page. Here's a basic checklist of what you need for an eye-catching informative brand page:

- ✓ A great handle. Make it as short and simple as possible, while still keeping to your brand name. Don't use any special characters that will make it difficult for people to remember, search for, or type it in. For example, use @ActOnSoftware instead of @Act-OnSoftware.
- ✓ Choose the simplest form of your logo as possible. Imagine what it will look like when it's displayed on a cell phone and it's smaller than a postage stamp. (400x400 pixels)
- ✓ Use a high-resolution header image that really represents your brand. (1500x500 pixels)
- ✓ Your description should be an elevator speech with some high-caliber keywords sprinkled in. You can even use Emoji in your description, because although Google doesn't allow you to search on Emoji, both Bing and Twitter do.
- ✓ Choose a color scheme that matches your company colors.
- ✓ Always view your Twitter brand page in a number of different browsers, and on various desktop and mobile devices after making changes. Make sure the profile photo doesn't obscure any important text or graphic elements in the header image, and make sure you can read everything on a smaller mobile device.



# Intermediate

## 10 Things You Should Be Doing on Twitter Right Now

### 1. Position your company as a thought leader

If you have employees who are considered industry experts, give them some Twitter love when they speak at conferences, publish an article or blog post, or get recognized for an award. Tweet links to current news in your industry. This shows you keep up to date and know what's going on outside your own four walls. Tweet content that makes you look smart and well-connected. Writing a guest post on a highly trafficked blog is a great way to garner some free company publicity, and position yourself as a thought leader.



### 2. Engage with your audience

Twitter is not meant to be your personal megaphone. It's a two-way conversation. Gone are the days when you can just post links to content and call it good. If someone on Twitter mentions your company in a tweet – good or bad – you need to respond in real time. It's a chance for you to show there's a human behind the tweets, and that you care. And you can get extra points for authenticity.

### 3. Give your brand some personality

Nobody wants to read a bunch of dry robotic tweets. Find the personality in your brand and give it a voice. The trick is to bring the personality without being personal. If you have multiple people manning your Twitter feed, make sure they know what company persona the brand is going for, and that they are consistent with that voice.



### 4. Drive traffic to your content

If you're not using Twitter to drive traffic to your content you're really missing the boat. You can promote the same piece of content multiple times by changing the text in the tweet and scheduling posts in different time zones. Try using the #ICYMI (In Case You Missed It) hashtag on recycled posts so people know they're not new.

### 5. Check out your competition

Your competition's Twitter stream is like a free pass into their marketing plan, so why wouldn't you pay attention? Companies post links to their latest press releases, eBooks, blog posts, acquisitions, and product announcements. You can also see what other people are saying about your competition by searching on their brand name and any hashtags they use regularly.



## 6. Tweet at 120 characters or less

There's nothing more frustrating than trying to retweet a tweet that uses the full 140 characters allowed by Twitter. You do realize that Twitter adds your Twitter handle, an "RT", a space, and a colon to the tweet when someone retweets, right? Keep your tweets at 120 characters or less to maximize your chance of a retweet.

## 7. Don't make it all about you

We all know your company and your products are awesome, but please don't tweet about yourself ad nauseum. Your Twitter feed needs to tell a story when someone reads through a day's worth of tweets. Make sure that story isn't all about you.

## 8. Mention your customers

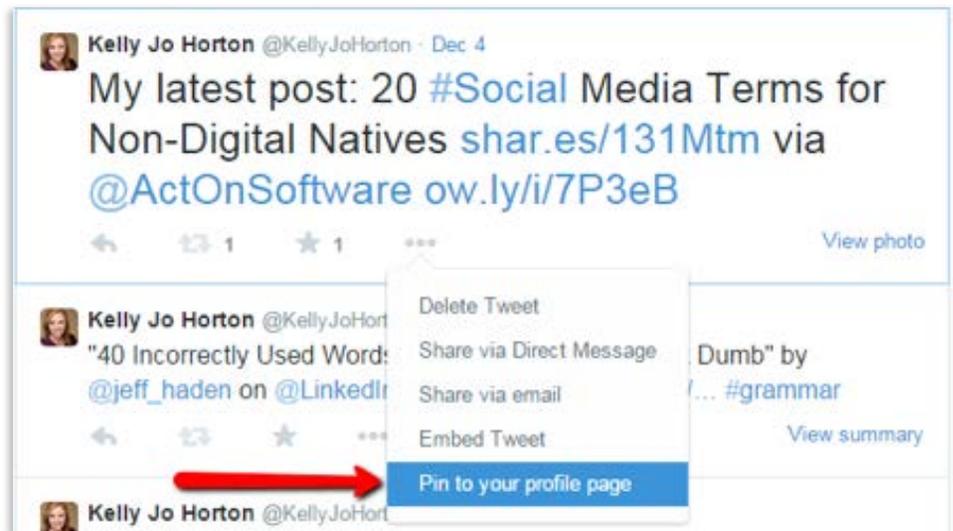
Everyone likes a little public recognition. If one of your partners or customers has a paper published or speaks at an event, give them a shout out if it's something that relates to your business.

## 9. Schedule for all time zones

Just because you're awake at 7am on a Friday, doesn't mean the rest of the world is. Be conscious of who will see your tweets, and at what time. Use a good scheduling tool to help you schedule tweets in all relevant time zones, and for goodness sakes don't schedule five tweets at the exact same time. It's a dead giveaway that your posts are automated. People want to know there's a human behind the feed.

## 10. Pin a tweet

If you have a specific tweet that's generating a lot of engagement, or you want to be sure anyone who visits your Twitter page sees a specific tweet, you can pin that tweet to the top of your feed. Find the tweet you'd like to be featured, click on the three dots (ellipses in the bottom right corner of the tweet), and choose "Pin to your profile page." Refresh your page and voila! That tweet is now pinned to the top of your feed.



## Bonus Tips & Tricks

### 1. Follow brand advocates

The only way to get followers is to start following people, unless of course you're Justin Bieber or Kim Kardashian. Be selective in who you follow, because it's a reflection on the company. Find your brand advocates and industry influencers and follow them. Be aware that Twitter has a follow limit, and will disable the follow function if you follow too many people too fast.

### 2. Create a list

Twitter lists are one of the most underutilized and most valuable features of Twitter. Create lists (public or private) to help you organize accounts you follow into targeted buckets. Creating public lists of influencers and industry accounts is also a big help for your customers and prospects, because they can follow those lists.

### 3. Use consistent hashtags

There's nothing worse than using a hashtag in a tweet, and then finding out it's being associated with something completely unrelated by other users on Twitter. Create a list of well-researched hashtags, and make sure everyone in your company knows what the approved list of hashtags is.

### 4. Change your header image to promote events

Although you should always have at least one standard company header image, you can (and should) create custom header images to promote big events. It's perfectly acceptable to use that image to promote a conference date, but you should never use that image to try to sell something. It's bad form.



# Advanced

## Using Twitter Cards for Lead Generation

Twitter Cards are probably the best innovation on Twitter you've never heard of. Twitter Cards allow you to add rich media to your tweets to make them stand out and promote more engagement. Most Twitter Cards – including Product Cards – are free. However, Lead Gen Cards are part of Twitter's advertising program and can be used only within Promoted Tweets.

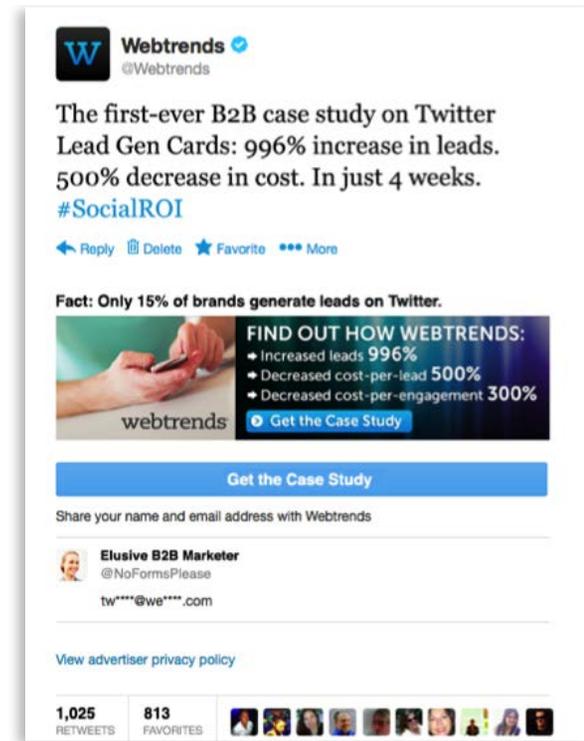
### Twitter card vs. regular tweet

Notice the visual difference between these two tweets from Webtrends. As you can see, the call to action in the regular tweet is just a URL. Now look at the expanded tweet. When it's expanded you see a Twitter Lead Gen card with a very clear call to action that says, "Get the playbook." Click on that button and Webtrends receives your name and email, then they send you the case study. You are captured as a lead, without ever leaving Twitter.

### Regular Tweet



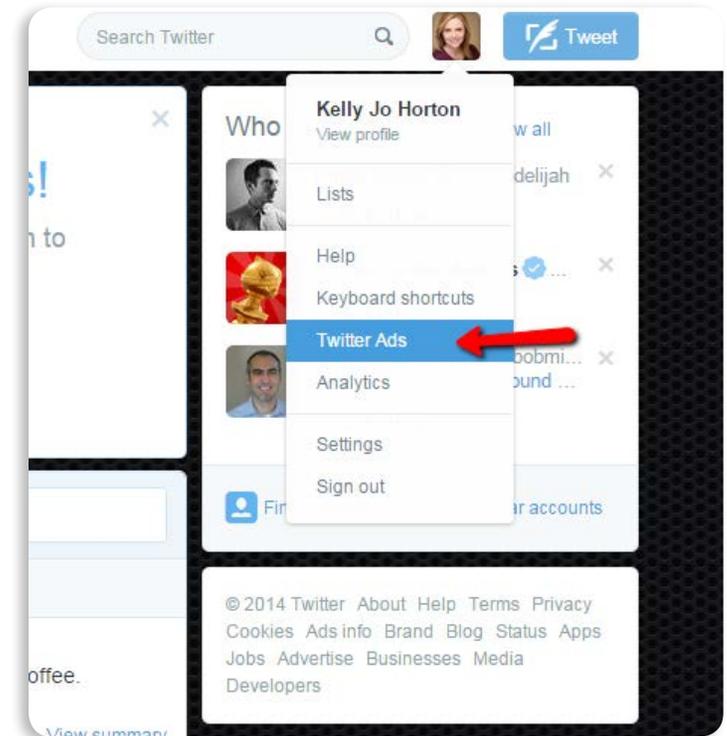
### Twitter Card



## Create a Twitter Lead Gen Card

Log into your company's Twitter account, and follow the steps below to create your first sample Twitter card.

- » **Step 1:**  
Create a Twitter Ads account. Although it's free to create Twitter Lead Gen Cards, you need to set up a Twitter ads account before you will see the menu options referred to in the following steps. This requires a credit card, even though you won't be charged unless you use the Promoted Tweet feature. Start here: <https://biz.twitter.com/start-advertising>
- » **Step 2:**  
Click on your profile avatar in the upper left portion of your Twitter brand page and choose Twitter Ads from the drop down. Remember, you won't see this option if you haven't set up a Twitter Ads account.
- » **Step 3:**  
Choose Cards from the Creatives drop down in the top navigation bar on the Twitter Ads main page.



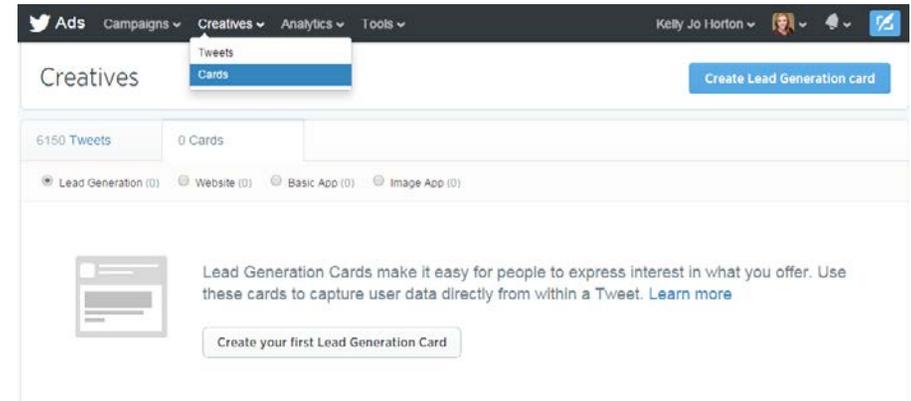
» **Step 4:**

Click on Create Your First Lead Gen Card.

» **Step 5:**

Fill in the required fields on the Card Content page:

- 1. Short description.** You have a maximum of 50 characters to tell the user what the offer is and what benefit they get by giving up their email address.
- 2. Card image.** This image will be shown to users as part of your card, and should visually represent the offer. Avoid generic stock images. NOTE: Images have to be a MINIMUM of 800 pixels wide by 200 pixels tall (.jpg, .jpeg, .png, or .gif).
- 3. Call to action.** 20 characters or fewer.
- 4. Privacy policy URL.** Link to the privacy policy on your site.
- 5. Card details (fallback) URL.** This is the URL where users can learn more about your offer after they submit their lead, or the page users will be redirected to if they view the card on a non-supported platform, such as a third party Twitter client. This URL could point to the full landing page version of the same offer.
- 6. Destination URL settings (optional).** If you have a landing page you'd like to send users to after they submit their email, this is where to enter the URL. Think before you use this feature, because it takes people out of the Twitter experience and they may not appreciate that.
- 7. Data settings (optional).** Use this option to send the lead data (in real time) to an external platform (e.g., CRM, marketing automation) that supports posting data to a form or web service.



- » You will see a preview of your lead gen card on the right hand side of the page as you fill in the information.
- » If you like the preview, accept the terms at the bottom of the page and click Create Card. Congratulations! You have just created your first Twitter Lead Generation card.



## Analytics

Once you've launched your Twitter Lead Gen card via the Promoted Tweet feature, your analytics dashboard will start collecting data. You can easily set up multiple lead gen cards for the same campaign and do some A/B testing, because the analytics dashboard will give you a real-time view into what your Cost Per Click is for each card, and which one is creating the most engagement.

## Exporting the leads

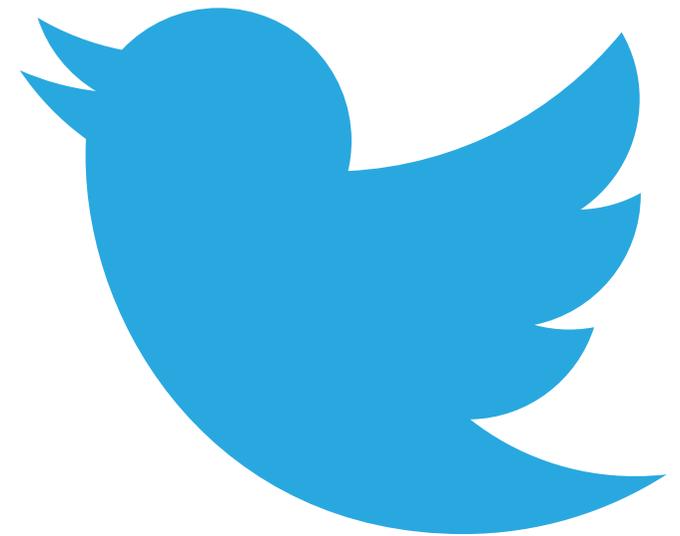
If you use the Data Settings feature of the lead gen card, your leads will automatically be pushed to an external web service at the URL you specify. This could be a marketing automation platform or any external platform that has an exposed web service URL. If you don't have the technical knowledge and resources to set up an automated push, you can always export your leads to a .CSV file right from your Twitter Ads dashboard.

Cards manager <span style="float: right;">Create new card</span>				
CARD		LEADS	SPEND	CPL
 <p>Join the Coffee Club for daily deals. <a href="#">Join the Club</a></p>	<p><b>Coffee Club - version 1</b> https://cards.twitter.com/cards/55w3Kw/1</p>	1,379	\$1,654.80	\$3.17
 <p>Join the Coffee Club for daily deals. <a href="#">Click Here!</a></p>	<p><b>Coffee Club - version 2</b> https://cards.twitter.com/cards/55w3Kw/5</p>	935	\$1,280.95	\$3.34

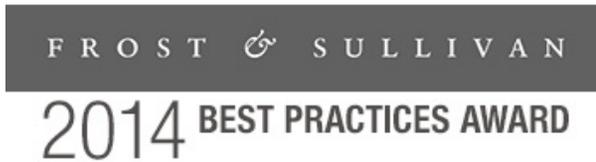
## Conclusion

Twitter is an enigma for many businesses, because it's such a different environment than what they're used to – even when it comes to the world of social media marketing. It can be very challenging for marketers to try to engage an audience or get a point across in 140 characters or less, but it can also help you get good at really honing your messaging. Remember, Twitter is going to be most effective for your business when it is an integrated piece of your entire marketing strategy.

*There is no more effective way to engage an audience in real time than on Twitter.*



# Acclaim for Act-On



## About Act-On Software

Act-On Software is a marketing automation company delivering innovation that empowers marketers to do the best work of their careers. Act-On is the only integrated workspace to address the needs of the customer experience, from brand awareness and demand generation, to retention and loyalty. With Act-On, marketers can drive better business outcomes and see higher customer lifetime value. The Act-On platform provides marketers with power they can actually use, without the need for a dedicated IT resource.

Connect with us to learn more