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Best Practices for Corporate Twittering

by Tom Humbarger on 08/28/2009 16:57 4 comments , 3106 views

Categories: Policy & Guidelines, Social Networks

Tags: twitter, best practices

 134
tweets

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Many companies want to start using Twitter to promote their brand and business, but don't really know where to start. As most companies are starting to realize, Twitter is a great way to reinforce your brand, share news and important information, gather feedback, advertise and most importantly, start a dialogue with your customers and prospects – and the only cost is the time of the people involved with managing the Twitter feed.

Here is a short list of best practices for corporate Twittering that I compiled for one of my clients. Most small-to-medium businesses should be able to achieve results with a couple of hours of effort per week.

Getting Started

- Pick a Twitter name that matches your company name or alternatively a name that includes your company name such as @companyteam
- Build up a level of tweets so other users will see you as credible and relevant – the minimum number of tweets that you should accumulate before you start promoting your account is somewhere in the 50 to 100 range (most users will ignore you if you have few tweets or haven't been tweeting for very long)
- Fill out your profile completely including a URL as most people will not follow anyone with an incomplete profile
- Create a customized Twitter homepage (that matches your corporate brand as much as possible) to provide additional information about your company and products

Getting your message out

- Try to tweet 5 to 8 times per day, and you should space them out throughout the day if possible
- Only 20% or so of your tweets should be related to your company or include a marketing or 'advertising' message – the others should be tweets about related topics that provide value to your followers or show a more human side of your company; people will stop paying attention to you if you use Twitter exclusively for self-promotion
- Most of your tweets should contain a link to a website, blog post, article, etc. – these are the types of tweets will establish your Twitter account as being a source of great content and worthy of being followed back
- Use [HootSuite's](#) to schedule your tweets and to track your tweet clickthrus and their Hootlet app to easily tweet the URLs of content at the source – Hootsuite also lets you include multiple users on the same account which can help to spread out the Twitter workload

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Jason, the lead paragraph is usually the... (Aug 31, 2009 08:35)

Jason, the lead paragraph is usually the story to be told. Although it ends with your mentioning "a ..

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Integrated with Xiaonei? Who needs that?

I was with you right up until the "that'... (Aug 31, 2009 07:14)

I was with you right up until the "that's just the mind games foolish women play in youthful relatio..

Victor, Apologies for my late reply, wa... (Aug 30, 2009 17:33)

Victor, Apologies for my late reply, wasn't aware SMT picked up this post. No, the

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08/30/2009 19:38

Which media forms will grow and engage consumers?

08/30/2009 14:34

Event Calendar

Connecting the Dots: Delivering Content Across Social Networks with C.C. Chapman

09/03/2009 12:00

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09/08/2009 09:00

Ray Kurzweil and Vishal Sikka: "The Accelerating Pace of Change"

09/09/2009 17:00

Social Media and the New Consumer: Energizing Your Brand with John Gerzema

09/10/2009 12:00

B2B Social Communications Case Studies & Roundtables

09/16/2009 08:00

All Events

- Use one or more of the Twitter directories (WeFollow or Twellow) to locate potential users to follow based on their interests and geography
Follow anyone who mentions your company or keywords that important for your business
Periodically do a Twitter search on your company name or click on @yourname from right panel to see who is re-tweeting you or mentioning your name
@reply people to thank people or to just reach out to them
RT or re-tweet posts that you think are worthy - generally these people will notice and start following you
You don't want to grow your Twitter following too quickly - steady growth is better and a goal of growing 100 to 200 per month is a good start for most businesses

And finally as noted in The Guide to Corporate Twittering, you should:

- Be honest
Be responsive and human
Be nice

Comments: 0

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Comments



| by Tim Knight on August 29 2009, 11:38

Hi Tom,

Great post. How are things in Social?

Thanks,

Tim Knight



| by Lisa Olinda on August 29 2009, 14:09

I will be forwarding this to clients. Great info!



| by Heidi Cool on August 29 2009, 15:16

Great post. Many organizations think of Twitter as just another publishing stream for their own content then seek the largest number of followers they can find. This inevitably fails because people don't want to know just about a product or service, they want to learn about the overall subject or topic and how it relates to them. As a fellow Tweeter once said, if you are marketing dog food, don't talk about dog food, talk about dogs. Once one finds the right content mix it is important to realize that this isn't purely a numbers game. I like your advice to build your list slowly. If you spend the time to carefully target your specific audience, and make sure to participate in conversation by replying and reTweeting, then you can build a loyal following that is actually paying attention to your messages. Those who just Tweet without listening end up getting ignored themselves. Also in terms of listening via Twitter searches, I find it is also handy to subscribe to the RSS feed for the search. This way one can set up

list isn't availa..

Re Steve: Sorry about the delayed respon... (Aug 30, 2009 15:56)

Re Steve: Sorry about the delayed response. I'm not 100% sure what you mean; but if you mean a TV-li..

Jerry, nice post. Did you see the ... (Aug 30, 2009 00:11)

Jerry, nice post. Did you see the McClatchy piece on this on Friday? "Summer of our disc..



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searches on the company name, associated brands, products, etc. and easily follow them in an RSS reader such as Google Reader. This helps to ensure that you are listening consistently. Happy Tweeting! - @hacool



| by Teri on August 29 2009, 18:28

thank you- this helpful guide is appreciated

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- davefleet (19)
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