

The Wise Woman's Guide to Twitter

for Small Business Owners



by Casey Dawes
Wise Woman Shining

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This report has been written to provide information about how you can use Twitter for business. Every effort has been made to make this report as complete and accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes in typography or content. Also, this report contains information about Twitter only up to the publishing date. Therefore, this report should be used as a guide – not the ultimate source of information about Twitter.

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About the Author



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I am a business coach, consultant and trainer helping women business owners step into their power as business leaders, improve prosperity and live the lifestyle that they want...and deserve.

Prior to embarking on a coaching career, I spent over 20 years in the technical industry. I helped companies such as AT&T, UPS and Verizon develop and deploy databases that supported millions of customers.

If you are not already a member, consider joining the Wise Woman Circle to get business coaching at an affordable price, in-depth business training and special discounts. Go to <http://www.WiseWomanCircle.com> to learn more.

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Why Do You Need Twitter?

6 *Why Twitter is Important to Your Business Marketing Strategy*

Twitter is exploding. No one is really quite sure where it's going (including the folks who own Twitter by all accounts). However, a lot of fun is being had along the way.

Here are some of the statistics gathered by [HubSpot](#):

- Twitter is dominated by newer users - 70% of Twitter users joined in 2008
- An estimated 5-10 thousand new accounts are opened per day
- 35% of Twitter users have 10 or fewer followers
- 9% of Twitter users follow no one at all
- There is a strong correlation between the number of followers you have and the number of people you follow

Like the rest of Social Networking, Twitter can help you develop relationships that lead to a variety of outcomes. Sure, marketing is the top reason people start with Twitter, but it's amazing what can come along.

One of the ways that corporations are using Twitter is to handle customer service problems before they devolve into an "I hate BIG Company" website. Big corporations (and little ones) are developing teams of people to watch what people are saying on Twitter about their company. Then, they take action. Immediately.

It's a bit harder for the small business owner. Customer service is just one of a gazillion hats that we wear each and every day. We don't have time to baby-sit Twitter. Nor should we sit on the site all day long. Unless, of course, it is your day job or you are launching yourself as a social media expert.

Tools like Twitter, Facebook, etc. all require a redoubling of focus. You need to be able to set boundaries on your day in order to effectively use these tools to expand your business and not drive you crazy at the same time.

But let's step back a step and look at Internet Marketing as part of your overall marketing plan. (You do have a marketing plan, don't you?)

Fitting Twitter Into Your business Plan

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Let's start out with some simple questions regarding what you want to get from Internet Marketing. Check off all of the following that apply to your plan for marketing on the Internet.¹

- ◆ Generate web site traffic (increase the "hits" on your website)
- ◆ Product/Service Promotion (create a "buzz" about your product/service)
- ◆ Develop sales leads (This is different from web site traffic. These people actually engage with you.)
- ◆ Recruit brand advocates – others who will promote your product or service on the Internet
- ◆ Build customer community/customer conversation – help others feel that they are part of something bigger and stimulate conversation between your customers/clients
- ◆ Product support/customer feedback/service (allow people to give you feedback and help fix their problems)
- ◆ Counter negative publicity and manage crisis in which your company is involved
- ◆ Humanize the company/Expose employee talent
- ◆ Generate new product ideas
- ◆ Market research/focus group testing
- ◆ Media relations

Once you decide what you need to do with Internet Marketing, you can build a strategy to create an integrated presence on the Internet. Twitter is only a part of that presence. In order to be successful with an Internet strategy, you need to create building blocks that hook into each other. Trying to do everything at once is a recipe for disaster and overwhelm. As women, we don't need any more overwhelm!

1. **Based on Paul Gillin's** *Secrets of Social Media Marketing*

Build A Keyword List

- 8 The cornerstone of your Internet strategy is the development of a keyword list. (There are many techniques to develop this list that are explained in *The Wise Woman's Guide to Doing Business on the Internet*.) Keyword list in hand, you can then develop a strategy to create or enhance your blog or website.

Develop A Presence With A Blog Or Website

All of these strategies listed earlier in this chapter suggest that you develop some type of blogging presence on the Internet. Why a blog and how is that different from a website?

In all actuality, they can be the same. Many people are abandoning their web sites to use blogs as their home page. With Wordpress, it's pretty simple to combine the two, as I've done with [my blog](#). Blogs have their own tyranny, however. In order to be truly effective, you need to blog frequently – two to three times a week according to blog pundits.

Whatever your choice, make sure that you are providing something that interests your target market. And, most important, provide a reason for people to give you their contact information. This can be a special report, set of tips or media such as a CD that they get in the mail.

This then becomes your landing page or site – the place you want people to go whenever they find you on the Internet, like what you have to say and want to learn more about you.

Become Known On The Internet

So how do you drive traffic to your main site? That's where social media like Twitter, Facebook, Linked In, etc. come in.

Using applications developed for Twitter, you can [automatically have your blog posts posted](#) as a "tweet." You can even skip blogging altogether and just "tweet." It takes some skill – talk about summarizing! You need to be witty and informative – all in 140 characters. (*To give you an idea of how short that is, the first sentence in this paragraph is 162 characters.*)

But don't forget those keywords that we discussed earlier. Wherever possible, use the keywords in your blog posts, Twitter tweets, when writing on Facebook's wall, etc.

Tip: Keep a list of your keywords posted right by your computer so you see them every day and every time you write somewhere on the Internet.

Other Uses For Twitter

Twitter is a fun tool in many ways other than promoting your web site/blog. For example, you can:

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- Follow top bloggers, marketers, gurus in your field, to keep on top of what's going on
- Follow local news so you know what's going to affect your business and life as early as possible
- Create a survey to find out something you want to know
- Ask for opinions on something you want to buy
- Find ideas for articles and blog posts
- Use it as your note pad for your own ideas and links
- Find people that have similar mindsets and develop a relationship
- Get help in an emergency ([Read this story to see one instance.](#))
- AND, of course, develop relationships that turn into new customers or clients

Now that you know WHY you need to start having Twitter in your life, let's talk about HOW to do it.

How to Start With Twitter

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Getting started with Twitter – the Basics

There's a lot going on with Twitter. New applications are popping up every day. The "innovators" have been tweeting for years and the "early adopters" are solidly invested in Twitter. Now the early majority are starting to get on board.

If you are part of the early majority – good for you! And at the same time, you are faced with what feels like an overwhelming array of choices. So where do you begin?

Getting Started With Twitter

Here's what I suggest you do.

1. Decide what your goals are by using Twitter. They might be:
 - a. Get new customers/clients
 - b. Drive more traffic to your website
 - c. Learn new things from others
 - d. Expand your community
 - e. Become aware of trends in your industry
 - f. Twitter away your time....
2. Decide whether you want a personal account, company account or both. Remember that, most of the time, people want to develop a relationship with people, not companies. This is particularly true when people are buying services. Web 2.0, of which Twitter is a part, is more about building relationships online, rather than just buying and selling.
3. Develop a profile. Ideally, you should have a profile that you have built for all your online social networking pages. This profile should include descriptions that have many of the keywords that are inviting for your prospects, alliance partners and interesting people. Your Twitter profile includes:
 - a. Email address: This should be a business email address. Avoid hotmail, yahoo, etc.
 - b. One line bio: 160 characters is all you get!
 - c. Location: You can be as specific as you want to be.

- d. More info URL: This could be your main website, your blog, your landing page. Pick something that will attract people you are interested in attracting.
 - e. A choice to be “hanging out there” for the world to see or be visible to only your followers.
 - f. Picture or avatar: I don't know about you, but I like to “see” who I'm talking with.
4. Set up your Twitter Account. Go to twitter.com and follow the instructions. You have some ability to adjust the settings that you have to get more or less communications. You can do this at any time. Go to Settings and click the tab that says “Notices.”

The boxes are clickable so you can choose how much interaction you want with Twitter. It's important that you look at the box and change the settings to your level of Twitter comfort. You have the option to:

- a. Get “nudged” when you haven't tweeted in 24 hours.
- b. Have replies (@ and name) show up in your stream in three different ways:
 - i. Everyone's replies, even if you aren't following them
 - ii. The replies only of people you are following (recommended for beginners)
 - iii. No replies at all
- c. Getting an email when someone starts following you.
- d. Getting an email when you receive a direct message. (This can be very useful, particularly if you want to ultimately do business with Twitter.)
- e. Receiving an email newsletter from Twitter.

Following People

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Now you need to find some people to follow! Don't worry, people will begin to follow you. Some you will appreciate and some you would rather go back under the rock they crawled from. However, that's life. They can follow you, but you don't have to follow them! And, it's easy to "unfollow" and block messages from someone who is being annoying.

Once you get to someone's main Twitter page, you'll see a little box with "Follow" under their picture and

So how do you find them?

1. Well, there's me...[Casey Dawes](#) .
2. Follow some of the "gurus" – people who talk a lot about the social networking sites and Twitter. It's the best way to figure out what's going on there. Here's some suggestions of people to follow. Click the link to get to their page. Then check their profile to see if it is interesting to you; click on their web site link. Also, scan their most recent "tweets." Is it something that *might* interest you? Then, click the "Follow" button under the picture. My advice is to add one or two at a time, decide if you like what they are saying, and then either keep them or "un-follow" them.
 - a. [Prologger](#)
 - b. [Mashable](#)
 - c. [Scobelizer](#)
 - d. [Jeremiah Owyang](#)
 - e. [Andy Beard](#)
 - f. [Rohit Bhargava](#)
 - g. [Pistachio](#)
3. Your local newspaper or Business Journal. The good news is they frequently follow back, so you now have a source of PR as long as you are interesting and newsworthy.
4. [Tweeting Trends](#) – Want to know what's going on in the Twitterverse? Need inspiration for a blog or article you are writing. Need a distraction? See what everyone else is tweeting about.

5. [MrTweet](#) is a connector in the Twitter universe. Sign up to find others that you should consider following and discover the influencers in your network. While you are there, take a moment to recommend me! Simply type in the following and add your recommendation – remember the whole thing needs to be under 140 characters!

#MrTweet I recommend @Casey_Dawes because...

Tip: Participate in [#followfriday](#) !

How To Tweet

If you are just beginning with Twitter, you will probably just “push” messages out there. This is where the perception comes that all you do on Twitter is announce what you’ve had for dinner. Boring.

Or you’ll push every product and service you have to offer. Do that and people will “un-follow” you so fast that you won’t know what hit you.

But, it’s where we all begin, so don’t feel bad. Begin your Twitter life by putting out the odd “tweet,” and spend most of your time “lurking.” See what people are discussing. Find out what interests you. Before long, you will be able to join in the conversation. But how?

If you stay on Twitter long enough, you will begin to notice that there are lots of symbols that people are using. Here’s what they mean and how to use them.

- @ followed by a name: Someone is replying to something someone else said. Want to join in? There are two ways to do it. (Remember that the @ sign and person’s name take up part of your 140 characters!)
 - If you hover your mouse over the tweet you want to reply to, a trash can and an arrow will show up. Click the arrow and you will automatically see the @ sign followed by the person’s name. Type in the reply you want to send and hit enter.
 - Manually type in the @ sign followed by the person’s name and type your reply. Hit enter.
- RT followed by the @ sign and a name and a message. This is a “retweet.” You see something you think is of interest and decide to pass it along to your followers. Remember that not everyone is following everyone. Retweeting is how viral messages spread.

Actually, it doesn’t matter what you put in front of the @ sign. All that matters is that you put something. For example, “Women Entrepreneurs @Casey_Dawes thinks women business owners rock!” is a retweet.

- DM followed by a name without the @ sign. This is a direct message. (It can also be abbreviated with a “d” followed by the name without the @ sign.) No one sees this message except you and the person you’re tweeting.
- Hashtags (#) are used by the Twitter community to enable someone to follow a thread even though they may not be following the particular person participating in the thread. In order to take full advantage of this, you will need to follow [Hashtags](#). They will then follow you and your hashtags will be indexed by Twitter.

Then it’s simple to build a thread on a particular topic. Put the hashtag in front of the main topic that you want to follow. So, #obama would develop a thread that has everything that people are saying about the new prez.

If you want to see what people are discussing or see if they are discussing something you are interested in, go to [Hashtags.org](#) .

- Make sure you shorten your link so that you can get the entire link in the 140 characters. Tools like [Tiny URL](#) and [Owly](#) can help!

Do be careful what you tweet, however. Like everything that you put on the Internet, [if the lawyers want to use it in court](#), they can.

Those are the basics to get you started!

Tip: Try to have fun when you tweet. That will carry through in your writing and help you gain followers, including potential clients and customers.

Twitter Etiquette

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*What do you need to do to be followed?
And what not to do so people don't "unfollow" you.*

The cardinal rule of all marketing, not just Twitter, is...

It's not about YOU, it's about THEM.

Twitter feels like a much more personal medium, but that can be deceiving. As mentioned earlier, if you only talk about you, and you constantly sell, you will have few followers. Want to know how you are fairing in that regard? Check out your [Twitter Grade](#).

Learn To Write Tight

Learn to join in the conversation. Expand your horizons and "meet" new people. Curious about someone? Ask them a question. Want to find the best monitor? Take a survey. People are very generous with their time.

Even though you have 140 characters, aim for 120 characters. That leaves room for people to Retweet and add commentary to your tweets. Having problems getting under the number of characters? Learn to write very succinctly – it's good practice. Also, consider some of the abbreviations developed for the text-messaging world, like "4" for "for" and "U" for "you."

Need a really large list of text terms? [Check this list out!](#)

Write When You Really Have Something To Say

One of the hallmarks of new Twitters is that they tend to have "diarrhea of the fingers." They feel a need to post a new thought every 15 minutes. This can be o.k. for a while, but if it's constant, it becomes a lot about "me, me, me...." (see above).

Don't be afraid to post, but don't be repetitive either. It's time to give up control. Put it out there and let the universe take care of it. Trust that if you have something interesting to say, people will retweet it.

Finally, join in the conversation! Be bold! State your opinions. Be willing to be controversial and have confrontations. It's good practice.

Make It Personal

- 16 Yes, you can have a company AND a personal twitter account. But Twitter is really all about people. You can really show a human face to your company. No, you don't have to reveal what you did in fourth grade or the embarrassment of your first sexual encounter. But we all have sides of our personality that are interesting and quirky. You have expertise you can share. You never know when something you say can change someone's life.

Web 2.0 is about building relationships. You can't build a relationship if you hide behind the image of your company.

Tip: Set up a Twitter Search for your name and company name as well as your most important keywords. See what people are saying and join in the conversation.

Tools For Twitter

What tools are out there – for now...

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There are tons of Twitter tools out there and more appear every day. Below you will find some of the easiest tools to get started with. Again, start your journey one step at a time and don't feel overwhelmed by the need to do everything at once.

The second list is a group of websites and blogs that have interesting information about Twitter and the whole Web 2.0 space. Once you are comfortable with Twitter, check these folks out for their Twitter wisdom. Don't forget you can "follow" them on Twitter, too.

There are further Twitter resources available at the [Wise Woman Circle](#) for members.

Twitter Tools

Here are some of the most common, and most useful tools for business.

[Twitter Feed](#) let's you take your blog posts and automatically "feed" them to Twitter.

[Twitter Search](#) let's you find people who are discussing what's important to you and your business. Think about using it for market research to find out if your product or service has a market.

[Twhirl](#) or [Tweetdeck](#) help you manage your "tweets." The trend appears to be favoring Tweetdeck.

[Tweetworks](#) allows you to join and start Twitter groups. While you are there, [join the Wise Woman Circle group](#).

[My Tweet Space](#) allows you customize your Twitter profile background

[Twhirl](#) and [Tweetdeck](#) to view tweets outside of the web. Tweetdeck has advanced filtering.

[Twellow](#) is a Twitter directory based on categories. Make sure you are listed here correctly and in the appropriate categories.

[MrTweet](#) is a connector in the Twitter universe. Sign up to find others that you should consider following and discover the influencers in your network.

Words not your thing? You can tweet pictures through [Twitpic](#).

[Hoot Suite](#) is a group of tools for Twitter that help the serious Tweep build an integrated presence.

Twitter Wisdom

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Check out these blogs/websites for Web 2.0 information and news about upcoming trends.

[Almost Savvy](#) Irene Koehler is an amazing teacher and generous wise woman.

[Janet Fouts](#) is a smart social networking coach.

In addition to connecting, [Mr. Tweet](#) has an interesting blog about all things Twitter.

[Twitter Tips](#) are, well, Twitter tips!

[HubSpot](#) has great resources for Internet Marketing in general, as well as [how to use Twitter for Marketing and PR](#).

[Tweet Crunch](#) has Twitter tips and bits of odd Twitter news.

Tip: Join the [Wise Woman Circle](#) to get updated and expanded tips for Twitter, Blogging, Facebook, and more!

Twitter And Social Networking

How should Twitter fit into your overall Social Networking plan?

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Twitter is just one piece of overall social networking. To make sure that your social networking plan works, it needs to be integrated. You also need to understand what you want from social network and where the dividing line needs to be.

In our personal and professional lives in the real world, the line is blending all the time. Many women entrepreneurs complain that they have problems with work/life balance. Just as it's important to carve out time for yourself in the real world, it's important to do that in the virtual world.

Time Magazine had an amusing article about Facebook in early 2009. In it, they said that the people actually using Facebook were boomers who were trying to reconnect with old friends from high school, college and early work days. If that is your purpose for Facebook as well, you might want to think twice about automatically sending your Twitter tweets to Facebook. These folks are probably not interested in your conversations with a potential web designer for your site.

However, now that you have your website/blog and your Twitter profile up and running, you will need to make sure that you link everything together in some cohesive way. Don't worry if you don't do it perfectly, people are still trying to figure out in general how this all goes together. But here are some suggestions to get you going.

- Where possible and it makes sense, syndicate your tweets to other social sites. Syndication means that the tweet is automatically posted somewhere else. You might need to install a "widget" to make that happen, but instructions regarding widgets are pretty easy to follow. Either you or your webmaster should be able to handle it. You can syndicate Twitter to your web site, blog, Squidoo, Linked In, Facebook and more.
- Create videos to You Tube and link them to your blog, Facebook, etc.
- Connect your blog to Twitter and Facebook. Every time you blog, the feed will be automatically shipped to Twitter with a first line and a link.
- Determine where it makes sense to spend your time. How often should you write on someone's wall in Facebook? Update answers on Linked In? Turn on TweetDeck? This stuff can be addicting – have a plan and know why you are on social networking. Finding interesting things that are new and hearing the new buzz are good things to do... just not all the time.

Marketing Your Twitter Self

20 *How to let others know where to find your wit and wisdom on Twitter*

How do you get people to follow you? More importantly, how do you get the *right people* to follow you?

There will always be people who need to accumulate the most toys – most friends on Facebook, contacts on Linked In and followers on Twitter. But, if you are going to spend time online, isn't it better to connect with people you truly want to connect with? People who talk about things that interest you? Potential customers or clients? People who light up your day?

Just like scoping out a cocktail party, you can scope out the people online to see who looks interesting and strike up a conversation. If you make a great connection, you can then exchange business cards or phone numbers and hook up later on. The same is true for social networking online.

We've talked about finding and following others, but how do you get to be the bright light at the party? Here's some ideas.

- Make sure you have a "Follow Me on Twitter" link on your web site, blog, Facebook page, Linked-In page, etc. Want to jazz it up? Go to [Twitter Buttons](#) and find something that appeals!
- Put your Twitter URL in your signature at the bottom of emails
- Follow [Mr. Tweet](#) and ask for recommendations.
- Include your Twitter link on your ezine.
- Tell your friends about Twitter and ask them to follow you.
- Find someone else in [your city](#) who tweets.
- Write interesting tweets, connect with others and have conversations. You will be surprised who follows you! (You also have to give up control over the outcome – sometimes a tough thing for us women entrepreneurs!)

Checklist to Get You Started

Getting started with Twitter can seem overwhelming. If you take it bit by bit, you will get it done. Then you will be able to enjoy this new tool and gain new business from it!

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Task	Completed!
Determine my Internet Marketing Plan	
Developed my list of keywords important to my business	
Created my Profile	
Built my blog and web site and made them Search Engine friendly (SEO)	
Signed up for Twitter	
Added my Blog to TwitterFeed	
Started following people	
Started posting regularly	
Decided what Twitter apps to use and began to learn about, install and use them	
Promoted my Twitter self	
Now enjoying and getting business from Twitter!	

Bonus:

22 Recommended Twitter And Social Media Books

[Twitter Revolution: How Social Media and Mobile Marketing is Changing the Way We Do Business & Market Online](#) by Warren Whitlock

[Twitter means business: how microblogging can help or hurt your company](#) by Julio Ojeda-Zapata

[Secrets of Social Media Marketing: How to Use Online Conversations and Customer Communities to Turbo-Charge Your Business!](#) by Paul Gillian