

8. Do update frequently, don't go overboard.
9. Do use @ replies, retweet (RT) and # tags, don't be a press release machine.
10. Do give your fans a nice variety of content to consume, don't post content for the sake of posting content.

Twitter Tips and Tricks

- Get to know Twitter-speak. This takes some time and no one is going to blame you for getting it wrong in the beginning. But understand ways people shorten words to stay within the 140 character limit (i.e. ur=your, u=you). You can also just abbreviate words however you think makes the most sense, but don't be too obscure or difficult to understand. The whole point of Twitter is that people want to quickly read your update and then move on – don't make people read a cryptic message three times before they understand what you are saying.
- Give your Twitter account a personality. Use humor, emotion, etc. Don't just be a press release machine or talk in marketing language. Tweeting is a real conversation between real people – treat it as such.
- Follow others to get people to follow you. Use the Search function to find people with similar interests or in specific geographic areas. To follow someone, go to their www.twitter.com/username page and click the **Follow** button. They will then show up in your “following” list. You can see who is following you in your “followers” list.
- Have the conversation on Twitter - don't always direct people elsewhere with links. Links are fine to expand upon a point or share a resource.
- Anything you post on your Twitter account is publicly viewable unless you protect your Tweets (under settings) or you send the message as a “Direct Message” which is only viewable between you and the recipient. Know the difference between things you can post for everyone to see versus conversations that should be taken offline or handled through Direct Messages.
- “Retweeting” is the process of copying and pasting what someone else says into a Tweet of your own. This practice is entirely acceptable as long as you give credit to the original poster, which is done as a “retweet” (“RT” for short). The way to do this is to start your Tweet with “RT @username” followed by the rest of that person's Tweet (if it's too long and you need to abbreviate/shorten what they originally wrote, that is fine too). Twitter also has a built-in “retweet” tool you can use if you don't want to do it manually – doing it manually just allows you to add commentary to the post (the auto-retweet function does not allow commentary).
- Anytime you enter @username into one of your Tweets, your Tweet will show up in the other person's @ replies list. @ replies and retweets are the way you converse with people on Twitter – if you want to direct a Tweet to someone in particular, make sure to include @username in your post so it shows up in their list.
- # tags are how you converse with a larger audience that is interested in a particular topic. These are Twitter “trends.” # trends revolve around issues that are of interest to you – when you click on the tag, you can see the tweets of anyone else who is tweeting about the same topic, whether or not they're following or speaking directly to you. Anyone can create a # tag – you can create one with your own friends and followers specific to something that interests you.
- Since you are limited to 140 characters in Twitter, people use a “URL shortener” for sharing links to websites rather than including a full link that can easily eat up a significant portion of the 140 characters. One of our favorites is tinyurl.com. It allows you to create a customized URL or you can just use the one automatically assigned to you by TinyURL. The URL that is created for you redirects to the original URL.