

★ TWITTIVISM ★

USING TWITTER
TO EFFECTIVELY GET
YOUR MESSAGE OUT
TO THE WORLD



3.0



TWITTIVISM



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INTRODUCTION



Name: nedryun
Location: Virginia
Web: <http://www.nedryun.com>
Bio: An un-apologetic conservative. Married to an amazing woman. Four beautiful kids. Addicted to golf.

6,489 following 20,927 followers

Tweets 6,218

Fellow twittivist,

In the days leading up to the American Revolution, committees of correspondence formed to organize and increase communication between the colonies. Letters were written and then disseminated throughout the colonies via horseback. Those who organized the committees of correspondence hoped they might rally the citizens of the colonies to the common cause of American independence. But it is important to note that the end goal of the committees was not merely to communicate ideas. It was to drive people to action, bringing Americans together to achieve that common goal of independence.

In the 21st century, communication no longer moves at the speed of a horse or even a ship. It moves at the speed of light. The Internet has given us the ability to communicate almost instantaneously—something the Founding Fathers could never have imagined. And most of the amazing communication tools available to us via the Internet are free: email, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and a host of other new media.

But are those who believe in limited government and the free market using the Internet effectively to unite people to a common cause and collective action? Statistics show that over 80% of those under 30 find their information online—a medium dominated by those with left-leaning views. This number of those who find their information online will only increase. However, those who believe in the free market and limited government can change the second statistic. What we at American Majority are doing is helping to educate people on the power of new media, and on how to use it effectively to advance and defend those principles we believe in.

The team at American Majority has worked very hard to develop an excellent Twittivism guide (Twitter + Activism = Twittivism). This is the third edition of the manual, and due to the rapid advancement of the medium, we will work on providing future guides covering specific topics. We hope you will take the time to read this guide and learn the power of Twitter. If those of us who believe in the free market and limited government can become effective online in communicating the truth, and in organizing for offline collective action, we will win.

For Liberty,

@NedRyun

Ned Ryun
 President
 American Majority

TWITTER VOCABULARY 101

Before we can begin defining Twitter, we need to make sure we are all on the same page in terms of vocabulary. Like many areas of pop culture, Twitter users have developed a very specific language to refer to common Twitter actions and activities. While the list is long (and often humorous), we have tried to include the most important terms below in alphabetical order. Please take the time to acclimate yourself with some of the more popular terminology:

Avatar: the official name for the photo that represents your account on Twitter.

DM or Direct Message: to send a private message to another user through Twitter. You can only DM a user that is following you.

Discover: the Discover tab is where you'd find Stories, Who to Follow, Activity, Find Friends, and Browse Categories. The Discover tab is all about, you guessed it, discovering new and engaging things to do on Twitter!

Follower: a follower is someone who subscribes to your Tweets or updates on the site.

Following: to subscribe to a particular user's posts. Unlike Facebook, following is a one-way street. Meaning a user does not automatically follow you if you follow them (although many will).

Geotagging: the use of location data in Tweets to tell your followers where you are tweeting from. Also referred to as "Tweet With Your Location."

#Hashtag: hashtags are phrases or keywords that can be used to monitor who is saying what about a particular topic. Hashtags will always be preceded by a "#" symbol and will usually consist of one word (#Event) or multiple words without any spaces (#PoliticalEvent11). American Majority's hashtag is #majority.

Instagram: A free photo sharing app that integrates well with Twitter. More and more photos are shared through this app as it offers unique filters and effects. Search Instagram from your Apple or Android app store.

Lists: lists are a means of organizing users you follow into groups.

MT or Modified Tweet: A form of RT (see below), where you edit the tweet prior to re-posting to shorten length, fix grammar or remove hashtags.

Profile: a Twitter page displaying information about a user, as well as all the Tweets they have posted from their account.

RT or Retweet: commonly used to describe the act of re-posting another user's message.

Trending: When a topic (distinguished by a #hashtag) is discussed by a high volume of users.

Tweet(ing): the act of posting to Twitter.

Tweets: the term used to define the individual posts on Twitter.

Twitter handle: the official term for your Twitter username.

Twittivist: a Twitter user who uses his/her profile to advocate a cause.

Twitterverse: the vast community that has sprung up around Twitter.

Unfollow: the act of unsubscribing from a particular user's tweets.

URL Shortener: URL shorteners allow you to post links more efficiently, with some even offering tracking capability.

Via (or h/t): a means of giving credit to a user for sharing a link without RTing the content of the tweet. Example: This is a great article! Bit.ly/example (via @AM_National)

TWITTER 101



SO, WHAT IS TWITTER?

In a Nutshell

Twitter is an extremely powerful tool that allows you to connect with the world in real time. You can join a global conversation and express opinions, share information, and meet likeminded individuals with the click of a button. This free social networking service enables the user to send and receive short messages, known as “tweets.”

To make it easier, think of it like this:

Blogging + Text Messaging = Twitter

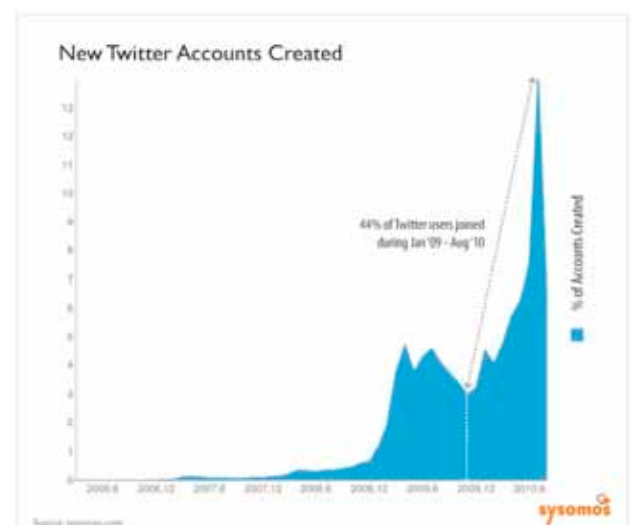
Each “tweet” can only be up to 140 characters in length. This restriction forces the user to distill his or her thoughts down to the most important content. These tweets are then displayed on your personal webpage, called a profile page. Like Facebook, Twitter provides each user a custom URL tied to their handle. Your page can be found at www.Twitter.com/yourhandle. For example, all of American Majority President @NedRyun’s tweets can be found at www.Twitter.com/nedryun.

Each tweet is also delivered to those who have subscribed to receive your messages via the homepage. These people are called “followers.”

You can subscribe to, or follow, as many other members on Twitter as you would like. To combat spam accounts and obnoxious marketers, Twitter will allow you to follow up to 2,000 users. After that number, you are restricted to adding only a percentage of those who have chosen to follow you.

You may be wondering, since I already have a Facebook account so why do I need a Twitter account? Currently, there are more than 140 million active Twitter users that produce a staggering 340 million tweets every day. On average, 460,000 accounts are created per day and over 165 million joined 2011 alone.

Because of this, we here at American Majority challenge you to see Twitter as more than a simple social space. Twitter is a tool for real activism. Twitter makes it easy to track information and share it with likeminded followers, making it a resource like no other. A mother from Georgia can now connect with events in Wisconsin, just as a handyman from Nebraska can now raise money for a political candidate in Florida.



And the numbers and stories keep growing...

This technology isn't just for teenagers anymore. A recent study from it was determined that 77% of Fortune 100 companies maintain a Twitter presence. Compared to 36% of Fortune 100 companies that have a blog and 57% that have an active Facebook page, it is obvious that Twitter has become the most popular communication tool for corporations looking to make the biggest impact.

Even more convincing is the study found that, out of the companies choosing to use only one of these new media tools, an overwhelming 76% chose Twitter.

A word to the wise on social media: Regardless of the site, when engaging in social media, you want to do so with authenticity. One of the real advantages of the social web is that it has allowed us to join a larger conversation, one without geographic boundaries and time constraints. As such, you must remember that Twitter followers are a privilege, not a right. If you do not add any value to the conversation, or you are seen as less than authentic, you will never know the true potential of such a social system.

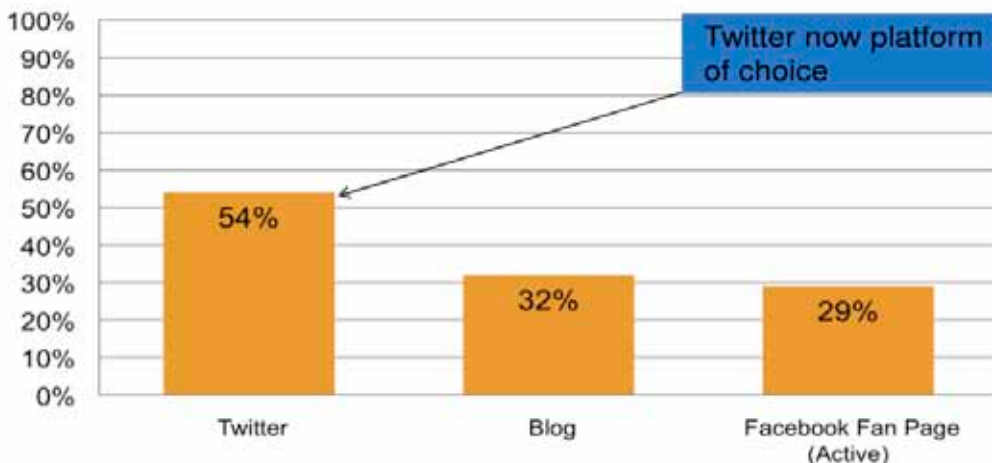
A Brief History

According to founder Jack Dorsey, Twitter was originally developed to simply keep track of what his friends were up to. When he brought up the idea to his colleagues, it was decided that a prototype should be built.

Twitter was funded initially by Obvious, a creative environment in San Francisco, CA. The first prototype was built in two weeks in March 2006 and launched publicly that August. The service grew popular very quickly and it soon made sense for Twitter to move outside of Obvious. In May 2007, Twitter Incorporated was founded.

Currently, Twitter is ranked as one of the 50 most popular websites worldwide by Alexa's web traffic analysis. Continuing to thrive on investments, Twitter has raised over \$150 million from various venture capitalists to date.

Percentage of Fortune 100 using each Social Media Channel



*Active - Regular postings and evidence the company interacts and/or posts content on the page.

GETTING STARTED

Creating Your Twitter Account

Getting started on Twitter is easy and free. Visit Twitter.com and click on the *Sign up now* button.

On the next page you will be given the option to choose your username and password:

Claiming Your Twitter Handle

This shouldn't be taken lightly. We all know that securing a proper web domain name is critical to your brand's success. With the incredible rise of Twitter, the proper username can be equally as important, if not more important, in properly communicating your personal brand.



What happens when you don't claim your Twitter handle?

There are many reasons to claim a proper username, but the most important is personal identity. There have been numerous cases of impersonations gone wrong. Kanye West, Ewan McGregor, Barack Obama, Maya Angelou, Sarah Palin, Rahm Emanuel, Newt Gingrich, and Ben Stiller are just a few of the many people who have been subjected to hoax accounts.


 A screenshot of the Twitter account creation form titled "Join the Conversation". It includes a link for users already on Twitter. The form has several input fields: "Full name" with a hint "enter your first and last name", "Username" with a hint "Your URL: http://twitter.com/USERNAME", "Password", and "Email". There is a checkbox for "I want the inside scoop—please send me email updates!". Below the fields is a CAPTCHA challenge with the words "flaunted has" and a "Type the words above" prompt. To the right of the CAPTCHA is a "Can't read this?" section with options to "Get two new words" or "Listen to the words". At the bottom is a green "Create my account" button.

If you're looking to follow your favorite celebrity, politician, or company, be sure to look for the blue "verified" checkmark on the user's profile page. The checkmark means that Twitter has confirmed that the account is an actual representative of that particular person or brand.

Got it? Okay, stop what you're doing right now and claim your Twitter handle! If you are involved in or represent any brands, companies, and/or organizations, grab those too. You can't truly hope to own your personal brand if you don't yet own your Twitter handle. But remember, each account will need to be tied to a unique email address, so plan accordingly.

Before you rush off and grab your Twitter handle, read through the following tips:

- **Consider using your real name.** American Majority President, @NedRyun, does it. So do most of our staff. If you hope to use Twitter as a networking tool for advocacy, it is important that people can trust you and feel comfortable connecting with you. If you are trying to raise awareness about the corrupt nature of your city council, securing the Twitter handle "BilboBaggins3453" isn't the wisest choice. Be honest and transparent; your followers will appreciate it.
- **What if your real name is taken?** Try telling your followers about your profession, a hobby, or some other defining characteristic. If you are a mother, tell us. If you are a mechanic, tell us. If you are a teacher, tell us. Using a defining quality in your Twitter handle can be just as good as a real name. It allows other people to instantly recognize a quality they have in common with you. For instance, whenever we come across someone who has a variation of "Liberty" in their name, we follow them. We know that we will likely have something in common and that their messages will be of interest to us.
- **Differentiate yourself.** Jason43 and Jason83 might as well be the same person. Think creatively and try picking something that instantly tells us about you.
- **Don't come across as a spammer.** Avoid choosing usernames like "Free_Tips" or "MarketingGuru." These will look suspiciously like spam accounts to the seasoned user. It goes without saying, but please do not impersonate someone famous either. Impersonating someone is one of the quickest ways to isolate yourself from a potential audience.
- **Consider your overall message.** How would you perceive someone with your username? Consider what your Twitter handle says about your beliefs and views. If you are trying to gather conservatives, then identifying yourself as one is wise. If you are trying to reform your local school board, an education-related handle will help set that tone. Also consider how it will look if you join a group or coalition. Be considerate to the cause. Would it help a petition drive if the lead organizer was named SexyMama09? I don't think so.

Fortunately, at least for now, changing your username is as easy as editing your profile. So if, down the road, you form an organization, run for office, or start a business, you'll be able to change your username to reflect that without losing any of your history or followers.

***** GO AHEAD AND REGISTER ONE—WE'LL WAIT!*****



Awesome, glad you are back. Now that you have registered the username you want, let's begin setting up your account.

Adding Your Photo

You do not want to use the default Twitter photo. This is the quickest way to go nowhere on Twitter. Add your own. Once logged in, simply click on the drop down menu and then select View My Profile. Once on the next page, click Edit Your Profile. Space is provided to upload a new image from your computer. The best pictures are square. For instance, if you have a great picture of you at the White House, you should crop it to 120 x 120 or 30 x 30. Twitter will resize it automatically, and perfect squares will resize properly. Spend some time thinking about what you are going to put in that little space, as it will be taken as a representation of who you are and what your tweets will probably look like. Remember that this is part of your personal brand. If you want to rally others around your cause, you need them to take you seriously.

Filling Out Your Bio

To fill out your biography, head to your Profile and then select Edit Your Profile. Halfway down the page, you will find the field for a one-line bio. This is the final critical piece in your Twitter identity. If your username is not specific, if your picture is a little vague, then this is the space where you can finally define yourself. This is where potential followers will look to learn a little more about you and gauge whether you are worth following. A good example is American Majority President Ned Ryun's profile: "*An unapologetic conservative. Married to an amazing woman. Four beautiful kids. President of American Majority. Addicted to golf.*"

Your "More Information" URL

Directly above the one-line bio is a field available for you to place a single link. While this is pretty self-explanatory, we challenge you to think deeply about how to use it. Too many people simply insert the link to their blog, LinkedIn account, or Facebook page, but as a Twittivist you may want to do more. We challenge you to consider ways you can develop a strong "Twitter Landing Page." Whether you are promoting your blog, a petition, a website, an issue, or a politician, consider tailoring a landing page on your website specifically for those visitors who are coming from Twitter.

Navigating Twitter

Before we get started contributing to the Twitterverse we would like to point out some key features that will come in handy as you increase your Twitter presence. Whenever you log into Twitter, the first page that you are going to see is your home page. Similar to Facebook's home page, this is where all tweets of the people you are following will appear. However, unlike Facebook, this page will not automatically update tweets that have happened since you loaded the page. Instead it only notifies you of new tweets; you then have to manually load them.

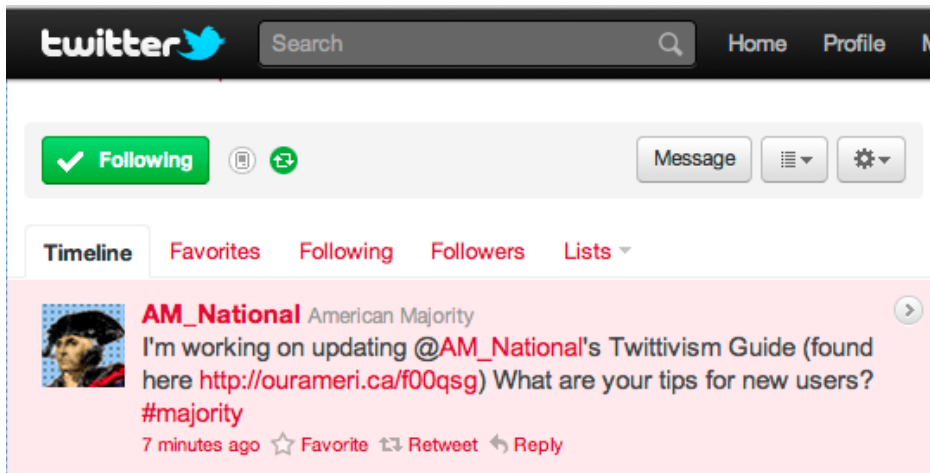
This may seem like somewhat of an annoyance, however, Twitter is designed to provide you with an instantaneous stream of current information. If your Twitter home page automatically updated, information would be flying across your screen faster than you could read.

Twitter also has preprogrammed keyboard shortcuts that are worth familiarizing yourself with. To view a complete list simply hit the '?' key at anytime while on Twitter. This will bring up a list of commands that will greatly aid in your navigation and use of Twitter. While there are a number of important commands, we would bring your attention to the refresh key, which is the "." button. When you see that there are new

tweets, just tap the period key and Twitter will load the latest tweets.

The @Connect section of Twitter is an especially helpful tool. It allows you to monitor any activity that directly mentions you. Whether it be a reply to something you tweeted or a notification that someone retweeted one of your tweets, this page will keep you notified.

The #Discover section allows you to stay current with news and other popular media stories. It gives a list of tweets that is personalized based on your connections, location, language settings, and recent spikes in trending topics. You should also take note of your #Discover tab's activity timeline. Here you can find real-time information about all the people that follow you



Posting Your First Tweet

If you have gotten this far, you are likely ready to start following others and joining the conversation. But before you go out and start following the neighborhood, consider posting a few tweets of your own first. You want to have a “body of work” in place before you invite others to your profile. One of the biggest misconceptions about Twitter is that you are expected to post tweets like, “I am driving to work,” or “Sitting down to dinner.” Again, this is a tragic and fundamental misconception. In reality, Twitter is an extension of your personal brand. If you are extremely active in the Tea Party movement, for instance, your Twitter account should reflect that. If you have an interest in the Founding Fathers, your tweets should reflect that, if you have a blog on your state government, your posts should...well, you get the idea. By posting a few interesting tweets and a couple of non-spammy links, others will be more inclined to see you as a legitimate asset to the conversation and as someone worth following.

Twitter limits posts to 140 characters, even including links. Fortunately, Twitter will automatically shorten longer links to give you extra space. However, this does not provide any feedback of how many people clicked your link. Free link shorteners provide this valuable feedback. Check out our favorites, Goo.gl and Bit.ly.

To reply to someone else's post, simply place “@” in front of their username or click the arrow to reply and type your response. For instance, if I were to ask, “How are you enjoying the Twittivism guide?” from the AM_National account, your reply might look like this:

@AM_National I love it! A great resource, I am learning so much about Twitter.

It's important to note that only your followers who also follow AM_National will see your response on their homepage. If you would like all of your followers to see your response, common practice is to place a period before the @ when typing the username. Your reply would then look like this:

.@AM_National I love it! A great resource, I am learning so much about Twitter.

Twitter also has provided integration for direct uploading of pictures to posts. Users can now easily affix pictures directly to their post without having to rely on outside websites. When you go to compose a tweet just click on the little camera icon and select the photo you wish to upload.

Additionally you can provide a location for your tweets. Just click on the target icon located beside the post button. This is a useful feature that gives you the ability to connect easily with those in your immediate community.

Begin Following Others

Nobody wants to tweet in a vacuum. You need to find interesting people to follow and engage. As we train activists around the country, we always suggest starting by tweeting about topics you are most interested in. If your interest is politics, then consider following a prominent figure you respect and are interested in. If you are really interested in sports, you might choose to follow your favorite team or league.

We would also recommend using Twitter's "Find Friends" feature by clicking "Who to Follow" from the main screen. This feature finds contacts from your email or LinkedIn accounts that are also on Twitter. This is a great way to interact with people you already engage with outside of Twitter.

Of course, there are plenty of tools designed to help you find new people to follow. One such tool is Twitter's own built-in search engine. You can find others who are talking about things you are interested in simply by typing in keywords. You might also try using specific #hashtags to find tweets from accounts that feature news from your State legislature. This is a great way to be proactive about State and Local Government and contribute to the online discussion.

Use Lists to Stay Organized

The Lists feature, available from the homepage, is a means of organizing the users into groups. Lists not only organize users into a directory, but also combine their tweets into a stream that can be separate from your homepage. Lists can be accessed from your profile page.

Lists can either be public (viewable to anyone) or private (viewable only to you). For example, you might find it helpful to keep a list of reporters or news sources located in your state. American Majority shares a list of our staff and state offices, and a list of our training alumni.

Tweet at AM_National once you've gotten started and we'll add you!

For more information on creating and managing lists, check out the tips on our website, insider.americanmajority.org/Twitter

Learn to Share—Everything

Once you have built a community around topics of interest, share! If you come across an interesting story at work, share. If you find another's post interesting, retweet it (we discuss retweeting in the next section). Constantly think of ways you can share with your Twitter community. This will add value to your account, increase the number of your followers, and add to the quality of the conversation.

TWITTER BEST PRACTICES

Be Proactive

Despite all of the “marketing magic” that exists on the Internet, the best way to increase your followers is still through good, old-fashioned conversation.

One of the best ways to start this is by asking a question. The key to this approach is to be conversational about topics that will interest others. For instance, if your personal brand is politically charged, asking a question about health care reform may receive a nice response as well as invite several critics. Using existing #hashtags (we’ll get more into those later) can also aid in jumping into current conversations and adding your insights.

Leveraging Other Networks

Are you more active on other networks? Use it as a pathway to Twitter. If you have a blog, mention that you’re using Twitter in a post and link to it from your profile and contact pages. If you’re on Facebook, sync your tweets with your status updates or provide your Twitter handle to new people you meet. As Twitter has become more mainstream, adding your Twitter handle to your email signature and business card has become commonplace. Twitter also offers a great icebreaker (“You know, I saw the best article about XYZ the other day on Twitter”). Not only will you have something to talk about, but, if the other person is on Twitter, they will also be likely to ask to connect.

Tweet, Tweet—Wait—Tweet

The more active you are on Twitter, the more likely you are to be successful on Twitter. Every you do comes up on the Twitter Public Timeline—so upping your tweet numbers will help you appear more often.

While you should strive to drive the conversation, you must also remember to listen. For instance, try to be careful and not send too many tweets without responding to what other people are saying—doing so will likely get you blocked. Remember, it is about a conversation. This requires you to be on topic, be interesting, and be responsive.

American Majority uses a few free tools to help manage our account. For more on these, check out our website – americanmajority.org/Twitter

Provide Value

Tweeting on a personal level is fun and, for many, that’s as far as it goes. But if you’re interested in growing your Twitter influence, you need to provide your followers (and potential followers) with value. It’s the same principle as growing a blog –if you help enhance people’s lives in some way, they are more likely to want to connect with you. As a result, your conversations should “matter” on some level. Sure, you can throw in personal tweets and have some fun with it, but unless you’re providing something useful to people (information, entertainment, news, education, etc.), they probably won’t follow you for long.

Essentially, Twitter is a shorter and more viral form of blogging, so the same rules still apply. By constantly writing or tweeting about your expertise on a specific topic, you’ll become known for it and people will gravitate to and follow you.

If you already have a blog, there are many ways to auto-publish your posts to Twitter. We recommend using Twitterfeed or Tweetlater, but often times it’s best to craft a tweet yourself to introduce the post and

add a short link to your blog. This also helps you track how successful a tweet was based on how many clicks your link received.

Running out of topics and relevant things to say? Sign up for Google Alerts and Google will send you a list of recent web articles, posts, and content pertaining to whatever keywords you enter; just head over to <http://google.com/alerts> to get started.

Another great resource is Google trends. This service allows you to see what keywords people are searching in different areas. This will help you stay on top of all the latest news that is happening in your area.

If you want to be seen as a reliable source for Tennessee politics, for instance, then tell Google to push you any and all articles, videos, and blog posts dealing with that topic. The best thing about using Google Alerts is that can establish your brand around a certain topic, delivering pertinent content to your audience again and again.

If you provide a service, then let people know. We have followed more than a few computer technicians, and when we needed technical questions answered, we didn't call a 1-800 number—we went to Twitter. Users were able to help us through a variety of software issues. The more you tweet about the topic you want to be known for, the more people will remember you for it and, when they need your expertise, they will contact you. On the flip side, using Twitter's search feature allows you to find users discussing a problem they may have, so you can reply to them offering your advice. For example, Comcast regularly searches for users having issues with their cable or Internet and offers to assist them.

Create a Google Alert

Enter the topic you wish to monitor.

Search terms:

Type:

How often:

Deliver to:

Google will not sell or share your email address.

STAFF TIPS



@MattBatzel Don't be afraid to use your Twitter handle offline. Try adding your Twitter handle to your business card or email signature. You will be surprised how many people are on Twitter and by providing them with such an option, you increase your accessibility. It also opens you up to social spheres you might not have entered.

BECOMING A POWER TWEETER



RETWEETS

The retweet (or RT) is Twitter’s premier way of re-sharing content that someone else has posted. Retweeting is an integral part of the Twitter experience. But, for beginners, it’s not immediately obvious what retweets are, or what tools to use to make retweeting easier.

Let’s start with the basics. If you see a tweet you find interesting or contains an interesting link, you might want to share that with your followers. First, copy and paste the tweet. Then, to give credit to the original person, add “RT” plus the person’s Twitter handle at the beginning of the tweet. Here’s an example that of what AM_National would tweet:

Please check out <http://www.NewLeadersProject.org> #majority #tcot

You could retweet that to your followers by typing the following:

RT @AM_National Please check out <http://www.NewLeadersProject.org> #majority #tcot

Retweeting is a fantastic way to make contact with the person who originally posted the tweet and provides real value to your followers. They will appreciate that you are sharing information, even if it didn’t originate with you. You can also use the RT to add relevant information, like this:

I’ve signed the pledge! Have you? RT @AM_National Please check out <http://www.NewLeadersProject.org> #majority #tcot

You can also RT directly from the homepage by clicking “retweet” when you hover over a tweet. This is often the best way to share content quickly and without needing to mind the 140-character limit.

Another option is posting a modified retweet (distinguished as MT). Use this if you want to shorten a tweet to add your opinion without losing the tweet’s original intent.

Marketing researcher Dan Zarrella studied over 10 million tweets and retweets, concluding that tweets containing a link are more likely to be retweeted than those that do not. Zarrella explains that 56.69% of the retweets he studied contained a link, versus only 18.96% of a normal tweet. This data clearly tells us that retweets are an extremely common form of quickly sharing information across social spheres. So, if you would like to get retweeted, find an interesting link!

Link Occurrence in All Tweets



DanZarrella.com

Link Occurrence in ReTweets



DanZarrella.com

HASHTAGS

Hashtags tend to be one of the most confusing features of Twitter, for beginners and veterans alike. Simply put, these tags help create some order within the madness that is Twitter. When a group of people all agree to include such a tag when discussing a certain topic, it then becomes much easier to search. For instance, at American Majority, we use the hashtag #majority in all of our tweets. So, if anyone wanted to see what the American Majority staff was talking about at any given time, they could simply type “#majority” into the Twitter search service and receive a stream of our posts.

Hashtags are created by taking a short, descriptive term and placing a “#” sign in front of it. This pound sign helps Twitter distinguish between a tag and a word in the tweet.

Before you run out and create a hashtag, be sure that it adds value for yourself and your followers. Hashtags are best used to organize information. If you use a desktop application, using a hashtag will help you keep track of those talking about your topic, even if you do not follow them. Some good examples for hashtags are conferences, major events, brands, and popular topics.

If you do decide to create a hashtag, be sure to contextualize it. Most people won't actually know what your hashtag means, so give a quick explanation in one of your tweets. For wide adoption, it needs to be very clear what it means and why people need to associate with it.

Still confused?

To help you get started, we have included a list of the most popular hashtags. Try visiting <http://search.twitter.com/> and typing in one of the hashtags listed below. This is also a great way to find targeted



Hashtag

Meaning

#majority

Tweets pertaining to the American Majority

#TCOT

Tweets pertaining to top Conservatives on Twitter

#TLOT

Tweets pertaining to top Libertarians on Twitter

#912

Tweets pertaining to the 9.12 Project

#teaparty

Tweets pertaining to the Tea Party movement

followers.

Twitter is a very quick and often fickle tool. A hashtag can begin trending (becoming popular) out of nowhere, leaving you scratching your head as to what it means and why it is so popular.

To combat this problem a number of different sites have been created that are entirely dedicated to defining hashtags. #Tagdef is by far our favorite. Whenever you run across a hashtag that you are unfamiliar with, just head over to Tagdef.com.

TOOLS

Storify

Twitter makes it easy to share perspectives and information. Storify makes it easy to compile tweets into a dynamic website. Using Storify to track tweets from an event, a day at the legislature, about your group, etc is simple and easy. Mix text, video, and photos to tell a story and compile the best information from a large pool of source. If you plan to use Storify, be sure to set a short and easy to remember hashtag to pull from. To try it, visit Storify.com.

Welcome to Storify

Social storytelling

Create your first story now »

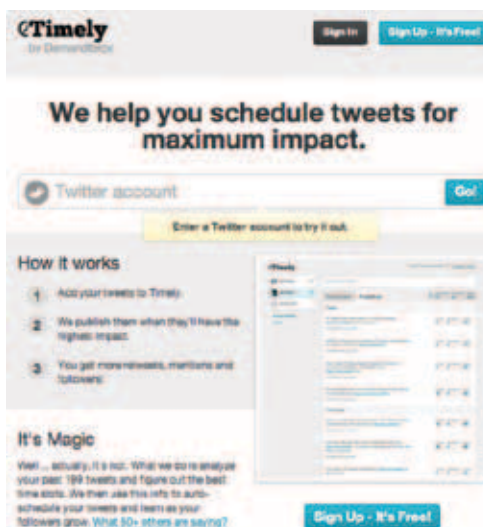


Introducing social stories

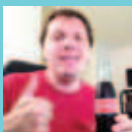
Storify lets you curate social networks to build social stories, bringing together media scattered across the Web into a coherent narrative. We are building the story layer above social networks, to amplify the voices that matter and create a new media format that is interactive, dynamic and social.

Timely.is

One of our favorite tools at American Majority is a super simple (and free) tweet-scheduling site, Timely.is. Timely makes it possible to schedule tweets for an entire day at once with just a few clicks. Dropped in links are automatically shortened with a trackable link. Tweets are scheduled for the optimum time based on the statistics for your account. Timely even makes it easy to see the total “reach” for each tweet, combining replies, retweets and clicks into one statistic. To sign up, head over to <http://Timely.is>



STAFF TIPS



@Presjpolk If you have a smartphone, be sure to download the official Twitter app. Or, if you prefer, there are plenty of outside apps with added functionalities. One of our favorites is HootSuite. Even if you don't have a smartphone, any text enabled phone can be linked with Twitter, allowing you to tweet on the go. You can even set up alerts so a specific user's tweets will be sent to your phone directly.

INTEGRATION

Even though Twitter is a powerful tool with incredible audience reach, you may decide to integrate your Twitter and Facebook accounts. This will allow you to simultaneously update both your Twitter and Facebook, which saves time and provides you with a larger viewing audience. To do this just head over to your Twitter account settings page and link your accounts on the profile tab.

Find a story or video you found online that you want to share? It is easy! More and more sites are adding Twitter link buttons directly to their pages which makes it easier than ever to share current information with your followers. So be sure to keep an eye out for the Twitter share button on sites that you frequent.



MOBILE SOURCES

Today it is simple to stay in touch with Twitter while on the go. There are a number of Twitter applications that you can download for free onto you smart phone. We encourage you to try out some of these applications as they each provide different features.



For on the go picture uploading, you should check out Instagram. Instagram is a mobile service that use your phones camera to take pictures and then upload them to websites like Facebook and Twitter. This easy to use application streamlines you photo sharing process by allowing you to upload to multiple sites at once directly from your phone.

Don't have a smart phone or a phone capable of accessing the internet? Twitter has a solution for your on the go needs as well. You can now set up your Twitter account to notify you of updates and even allows you to post tweets, just by texting! Setting up your account for this service is simple: just go to your profile settings page and access the mobile tab. After you have set up your phone, you should check out the link below for some helpful commands.

<https://support.Twitter.com/groups/34-apps-sms-and-mobile/topics/153-Twitter-via-sms/articles/14020-Twitter-for-sms-basic-features>



STAFF TIPS



@Kaseygee Go beyond following official newspapers or blogs, check out the personal accounts of the reporters or bloggers that most interest you. You may not only find interests beyond politics, but a new way of interacting and sharing information.

HOW TO FIND YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIAL ON TWITTER

An important aspect of effective Twittivism is the ability to research the actions of your public officials and keep them engaged in the democratic process. If you and your community have a genuine concern, your public officials should hear about it, regardless if they are busy tweeting about their lunch. Remember that this platform allows for conversation in multiple directions. You should take the tools laid out in this guide and use them to encourage accountability and transparency.

One of the most hailed elected officials on Twitter is Newark, New Jersey, Mayor Cory Booker (@CoryBooker). Mayor Booker used Twitter during a “snowpocalypse” to assist residents struggling to dig out of the snow. He not only used it to determine where to send plows, but he and his staff responded to requests for help in person, shovels in tow and, in one case, even bringing diapers to a mom who was unable to leave her house.

Tweet Congress



TweetCongress.org is a great example of the innovative power of Twittivism. While searching for their own congressman on Twitter, the founders of TweetCongress were astonished at how few representatives were actually on Twitter. This realization prompted the five founders to build TweetCongress.com as a grassroots, non-partisan movement to get every member of the U.S. House and Senate on Twitter.

As of this writing, there are 387 congressional tweeters. Of those, 228 are Republicans and 157 are Democrats. This is obviously significant progress in the past few months, but considering that there are 48 members that remain outside the Twitterverse, there is clearly more work to be done. You should take a moment to look up your representatives in both the U.S. House and Senate on TweetCongress.com. We’ll wait!

If you have found your representatives, then you should immediately follow them and send them a message saying thanks for being on Twitter. Let them know you’re watching! If your representatives are among those who are behind the times, then write them an email asking them why they aren’t online yet. Better yet, call their offices and tell them that you want to see them online!

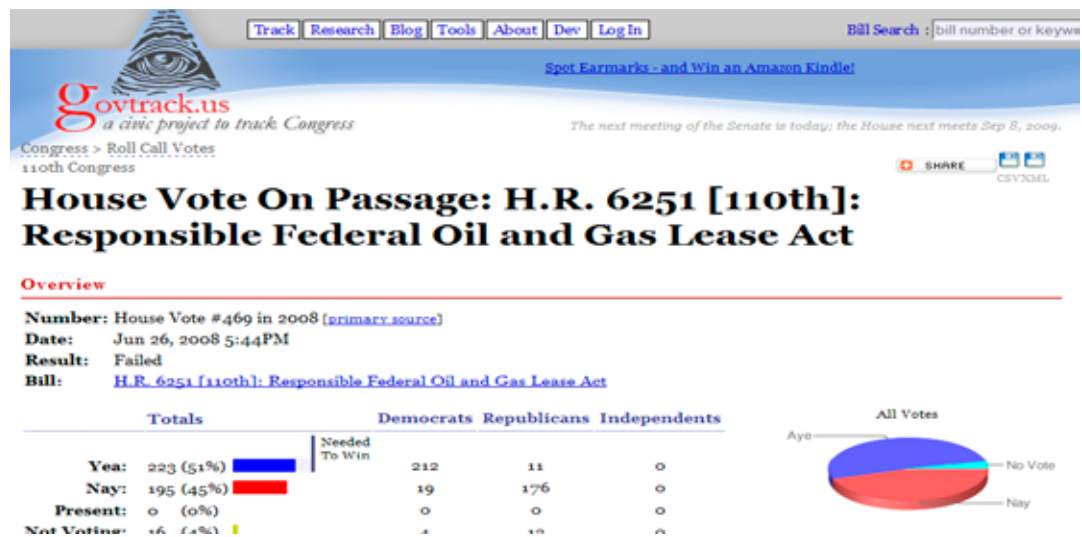
Many congressmen manage their own Twitter accounts, so by interacting with them on this platform you are, in many ways, cutting out the middleman to having your voice heard. Further, unlike email or phone calls, other users can physically see your efforts to reach out to your elected officials.

In addition to just helping you find your own representatives, TweetCongress compiles all the tweet-feeds from congressional tweets and aggregates them into an easy-to-read stream. You can also use the #tweetcongress hashtag and have your very own tweets show up on their webpage!

While still evolving, TweetCongress is one of the best ways to quickly find your public official on Twitter.

GovTrack.us

This independent tool will help you research and track the activities of the U.S. Congress. This open source site promotes transparency and civic education through technology and innovation. As Twittivists, this is exactly what we are looking for.



Through this amazing resource, you and your fellow Twittivists can track the status of federal legislation and locate voting records in both the House and Senate. In addition, you can view detailed information about each member, their district maps, the congressional committees they sit on, and even their voting record.

One of the great things about the site is that you can add “Trackers” to specific members of Congress, legislation, or committees. GovTrack.us will follow your “tracked” items and send you email updates when something changes. So, if you have a smartphone, there is no reason you can’t stay informed and inform others.

Lastly, the site offers a unique Q & A function that allows visitors to ask questions of other visitors. Essentially, they GovTrack.us has created a large think tank in which facts, outcomes, and opinions can be debated. There is also a tweet tracker that allows them to display tweets discussing bills and legislation when someone attaches one of their hashtags to the tweet.

TWITTER IN ACTION



TWITTER vs CNN: *The rise of WEdia* (via cnet.com)

As the Iranian election aftermath unfolded in Tehran during the summer of 2009, thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to express their anger at perceived electoral irregularities. While many were focused on showing their support for Iran and its freedom, a unique hashtag began appearing throughout the Twitterverse: #CNNFail.

Even as Twitter was quickly becoming the best source of news from the front lines of the riots in Tehran, a growing number of users were becoming seriously enraged at the apparent lack of coverage CNN was giving to the story, compared to other mainstream news channels.

“CNN needs to talk about the important things like Ms. California and who Paris Hilton is (sleeping with),” wrote Twitter user @ArchivalQuality.



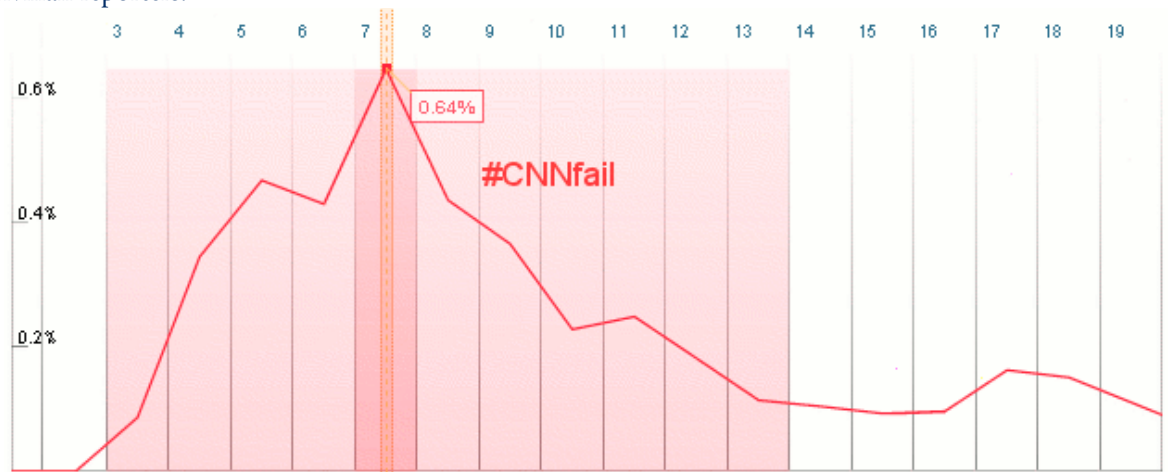
Others used the opportunity to applaud the work of other networks while indirectly criticizing CNN. “Might I point out to all of those tracking #CNNFail that there’s a corresponding #NPRWin good coverage @ www.npr.org,” opined Twitter user @Nickbernstein.

The consistent use of #CNNFail to share tweets referring to the poor coverage by CNN quickly became an animal all its own.

And it wasn’t long before word of CNN’s theoretical reporting failure began to make its way into more established

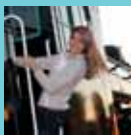
media. Under the headline, “Dear CNN, Please Check Twitter for News About Iran,” the popular blog ReadWriteWeb blasted the network for its failure to cover the clearly massive story in the Middle East.

This is a fantastic example of the power of the collective voice. There has been a lot of disdain for the mainstream media lately, but with the rising power of social media sites like Twitter, we are now on the verge of a paradigm shift in mass communication. Now, not even three years later, news anchors from local media on up to cable news will often look to Twitter for breaking news and on-the-ground civilian reporting. Twitpics and Twitvids have been viral sources of information, courtesy of a new generation of civilian reporters.



We are entering the era of WEdia, where *we* decide what is newsworthy and what is propaganda, and this new era of communication will be orchestrated and molded by Twittivists like you.

STAFF TIPS



@AubreyNB Following lists is a great way to keep up with certain groups of users, without having their tweets clog your main stream or add to your following number. For example, during the Republican presidential primary, I followed a list curated by a colleague to keep up with the nominees as I chose.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Our mission is to provide the training and resources necessary for local candidates and activists to be effective. Check out the resources section on AmericanMajority.org for links and downloads to each of the items mentioned below.

Manuals

In addition to this manual, American Majority provides state specific manuals on running for county commission, city council and school board. The manuals also offer additional tips, advice, knowledge and resources that build off of what is taught by our trainers. To download, visit AmericanMajority.org, select candidate resources, and manuals.



Vote Goal Worksheet

American Majority also provides supplemental guides on specific subject areas. The Vote Goal worksheet is designed to make it easy to break down your precinct using previous election data to determine your targeted precincts. The Public Speaking guide is perfect for anyone looking to strengthen their speaking skills or brush up on the basics.



Pamphlets

In tribute to the pamphleteers of the American Revolution, we are reviving this art form to educate and inspire a new generation. Topics in the first seven pamphlets have been America's rich heritage, rule of law, an appeal to justice, and self-government. Pamphlets are also available in Spanish.



Podcasts

Our podcast series are available at AmericanMajority.org and on iTunes.com. Podcasts include a 21-part series on running for office, a 5-part series on effective activism, a 31-part series on the history of the Constitutional Convention, and a new series, Days of Revolution, which chronicles the days leading up to the American Revolution.

Facebook and Twitter Guides

We have developed comprehensive guides to Facebook and Twitter, as well as created an archive of online resources geared towards ensuring American Majority trained candidates and activists are the most effective online. Everything is available via link and download from American Majority's website under social media resources.

Video Tutorials

Our video tutorials serve to complement our new media training courses. Online activism can be a daunting new world for many, so these 20-minute videos are an easy, quick way to access information about Facebook, Twitter, online video editing, YouTube, blogging, and much more.



AM TWITTER DIRECTORY

- President @NedRyun
- National Executive Director @MatthewBRobbins
- American Majority HQ (National Office) @AM_National
- Florida Office @FL_Majority
- Montana Office @MT_Majority
- Ohio Office @OH_Majority
- Oklahoma Office @OK_Majority
- Rhode Island Office @RI_Majority
- Wisconsin Office @WI_Majority

Follow the rest of American Majority staff at http://Twitter.com/am_national/staff

CONNECTING WITH AMERICAN MAJORITY

American Majority has several means of connecting with you as you begin to be involved with social media. Utilize the American Majority website as a tool for getting started and as a resource as your projects develop.



www.AmericanMajority.org

Check out the rest of American Majority’s guides, podcasts and pamphlets by clicking the resources tab on the homepage.

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