



NWF Guide to Digital & Social Media

How to get your message out on social media to the masses

Twitter Crash Course — Tweeting 101

What is Twitter?

- Micro blogging (posts of 140 characters or less)
- Social networking (“follow” your friends)
- Number of active users: 328 million; 500 million tweets sent each day (as of 8/17)

Why Tweet?

- Join in the conversation
- Ask for help or advice (and answer questions from others)
- Point to interesting resources

Why NWF Needs Your Help

- Build your unique network (within your community & focused on your issues)
- Tweet and re-tweet to spread our messages to communities we couldn't otherwise reach

Getting Started — Twitter Basics

- Sign up and pick a user name (your_actual_name; but if you're not comfortable with that, you can use a screen name like “JaneNWF,” “AnnArborGreen,” etc.)
 - Set up your profile (include any keywords)
 - Include a picture (could be your photo or something symbolic)
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Okay, I made a Twitter account

Now what? What am I supposed to be doing?

Spend some time thinking about what sorts of content you'll be sending out most regularly.

Think about your Twitter persona and the “brand” you want to cultivate for people who follow you

- Who are people following when they follow you?
- What content will they be getting?
- Will your tweets be mostly work-related?
- Personal? Political? Public lands-related?
- Local, state-level, regional, or national?

Think of these questions less as limitations and more of a guide for yourself. Use these questions to help you decide what your followers will find interesting and engaging versus what your followers may find irrelevant.

Time to Tweet

- Tweet Daily — it doesn't need to be a home run. Even if you just tweet a quick comment about something in the news and join the conversation or retweet something you agree with counts.
- Tag Users by including their Twitter handle to increase visibility — when you use their Twitter name like (@TwitterExample), it will notify them and appear in the feed of people that follow them. If you're not sure what it is, do a quick Google search. Most journalists, experts, and politicians are on twitter and have their own accounts.
 - Make sure to leave a space before the @; you can use punctuation immediately after the end of the user name (i.e. great work @RangerRickMags!)
 - If you start a tweet with the username, only people who also follow that person will get the tweet in their feed. If you want others to see it, a simple period before the twitter name will make it more visible (i.e. ".@milesgrant I hate tar sands too! #noKXL")
- Use hashtags to include your tweets in categories, either integrated into your tweet or tacked onto the end (i.e. "Pass #climatechange legislation now!" or "#MonumentsForAll!")
 - Commonly used tags include #eco, #green, #wildlife, #climate, and #climatechange
 - Watch for hashtags your friends and colleagues are using on their campaigns
- Help friends get the word out by re-tweeting their interesting posts.
 - I tweet: "Pass #climate legislation now!"
 - You'd then tweet: "RT @milesgrant Pass #climate legislation now!"

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- You can also add your own commentary or relevant tags: "Are you listening, @ElizabethForMA? RT @milesgrant Pass #climate legislation now! #MApoli"
 - At the top of the page, click @Connect to see what users are saying to you/about you.
 - Follow people who RT you and respond quickly whenever appropriate – join discussions and answer questions, but don't get baited into arguments.
 - Shorten URL links for Twitter by using the bit.ly website to help you fit tweets within the 140 character limit. If you log in to bit.ly with your Twitter account, it will also help you track the clicks/retweets your links receive.

Making Connections

- Click #Discover at the top of the page. "Who to Follow" will recommend users who share similar followers or tweet about similar topics. "Find Friends" allows you to search your email contacts for who's using twitter
- Mine your existing friends for new connections by going through their friends and following people that look interesting
- If people reference you in their tweet or retweet you, follow them back (unless their account has no profile photo or they otherwise seem like spammers)