

Getting Started on Twitter

AWSA/SLATE Twitter sessions led by:

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1. Choose a short Twitter name that captures who you are.
2. Once you start your account, please go to <http://bit.ly/Wleducators> and add yourself to the list of Wisconsin Educators on Twitter.
3. Use a picture of yourself. When you attend meetings people will immediately recognize you.
4. Your bio should tell about your interests and what you teach or supervise. This enables those viewing it to know who you are. Add a link to your blog or website.
5. Get involved in some Twitter Chats (find a schedule at <http://www.cybraryman.com/chats.html>) There are many chats now for most subject areas and grade levels. By doing this you can build your [PLN \(Personal Learning Network\)](#)

Twitter Terms/Definitions

Tweet-Any post on Twitter is considered a Tweet, whether a post, reply, link, or a location-update (more on this later). Tweets have a maximum of 140 characters (due to SMS/mobile constraints) and are typically shown along with the username of the individual who wrote it.

Timeline-The term timeline or stream is used to describe the flow of messages seen by users, or messages from a specific user. Timeline is typically used to reference the public messages (tweets) from users who you follow. When visiting your profile on Twitter.com, users will see your timeline, or chronological list of all the messages you have sent.

Mentions or @'s-The @ sign is used to identify, mention or reply to other users on Twitter; the way you communicate on Twitter. Each username is unique and by prefixing another user's name with the @ sign (ie: @username), Twitter creates a link to their profile and also adds the tweet to their reply column. If you want a specific person to see your message, you'll want to include their @username in the message. Even if they follow you, they may miss it otherwise. Tweets that begin with an @username primarily only appear in the timeline of users who follow both the sender and recipient, though anything other than a direct message (below) should be considered public. This allows users to communicate back and forth without having all of the messages appear in their followers timelines, which can get noisy.

If you want a message to be read by the recipient and anyone who is connected to both of you, start the tweet with the @username. If you want it to be seen by all of your followers, start it with something else.

Following-Following is the term used in Twitter to indicate a relationship with another user. By following a user, you will see updates they post in your timeline. Following is similar to the concept of 'Friends' on other social networks, with one primary difference: users don't have to

consent for you to follow them.

Following someone has two purposes in the context of business; the first is to stay updated when someone posts new messages, the second is a way of introducing yourself. Commonly, on the Twitter network, when someone follows you, if you are interested in connecting with that user, you will follow back. It's a low-pressure way to encourage users to make you part of their network and timeline.

Re-Tweets-You may see the letters 'RT' appear from time to time on your Twitter feed. These will almost always precede another username (ie: RT @username message). This is a Re-Tweet. It's generally used as a way of "seconding" or giving context to a public reply to what someone said.

You'll also see a new form of Re-Tweets that appear a little differently (it's different from place to place). This is usually accomplished with a single click, and users can't edit the original content. Since standard replies are only seen by you, the individual, and those following both users, the RT can come in handy for your business if a customer or client asks you a question that you think others may be interested in the answer to as well.

You may also want to RT interesting articles posts that your users might like, praise about your business, etc.

A best practice when posting tweets that others may want to share is to leave enough characters to Re-Tweet them. When someone uses the RT format for reposting your message, it will include (at least) the RT and @username characters. It is best to keep tweets around 120 characters to ensure people can easily share them.

#Hashtags-Similar to blogging, tweets can be tagged to create context and add to a discussion already taking place. Whether you're at a business conference, discussing a piece of news, or rolling out your own product, you can associate your tweets with a specific topic by using hashtags. One example would be #cpchat for Connected Principals. In most Twitter applications, hashtags are turned into links, allowing users to easily see all tweets that include that identifier. Adding hashtags to tweets can be a useful way of letting readers know that they pertain to a certain topic, location, etc. A schedule of #chats is at <http://www.cybraryman.com/chats.html>

Direct Messages-Direct Messages, or DMs, are the private messages of Twitter. This is the Twitter equivalent to email. Only you and the recipient can read these messages. You can only DM users if they are following you, but you do not necessarily need to be following them. And of course, users are making up new word and abbreviations all the time, but who can keep up?

Other applications to access twitter:

www.tweetchat.com tweetchat is a useful tool to participate in #twitterchats. Just simply login with your twitter account/password, select "authorize app" and then type in the chat you want to participate in within the #box. While you are in tweetchat, you will only see the tweets from people participating in the same #chat as you.

tweetdeck is a useful desktop application for managing your twitter account. You can customize different columns in tweetdeck to see tweets pertaining to #topics of your interest (by using the #hashtag)

[TweetDeck](#) is the most useful application for managing [Twitter](#) that I've found. While many call it "intuitive," some of my clients are intimidated by it. Perhaps they don't realize it has tooltip-type hints when you mouse over the various buttons, or maybe the tips don't explain enough. For those of you who want more than tooltips, here is a basic introduction to TweetDeck

Find people you want to follow:

Once you start your twitter account, you can search by your interests using the search box at the top of the page. For example, if you want to follow other educators interested in Daily5, you will type #daily5 in the search box. This will bring up a list of tweets that contain #daily5. You can then follow the people who tweeted with #daily5.

For a full list of #hashtags, go to <http://cybraryman.com/edhashtags.html> Some of the most popular educational #hashtags include:

#cpchat (Connected Principals) #Educoach (Instructional Coaches/Mentors)

#engchat (English Teachers) #mathchat #ntchat (New Teachers)

#scichat (Science) #sschat (Social Studies)

Grade Level Chats: #1stchat #2ndchat #3rdchat #4thchat #5thchat #6thchat

Go to <http://cybraryman.com/plnstars.html> to find a list of people to start following, organized by #groups.