

12 TIPS

rethink Twitter Best Practices

- 1 Be concise.** The character limit for a tweet is 140 characters, but tweets with 120 characters or fewer are easier to retweet.
- 2 Use hashtags.** Include at least one hashtag to aim your message at new audiences. Limit yourself to no more than three hashtags in one tweet. If you're using a new or campaign-specific hashtag, pair it with a more common or generic hashtag to tap into the broader audience, too.
- 3 Include a link.** Whenever possible, include a link to more information, be it an article, a website, or anything else you're looking to highlight.
- 4 Create a shortened URL.** Use a shortening service (e.g., bit.ly, tinyurl) or Hootsuite can condense links for you. Bitly's and owl's (from HootSuite) can track how many clicks your link gets, letting you measure the success of your tweets.
- 5 Use a picture.** Tweets with photos receive up to 200% more engagement than text-only tweets. To make an image appear in-line in your tweet, upload it manually (using pic.twitter.com or the camera icon in the composing window—not HootSuite or Instagram).
- 6 Don't just talk about yourself.** Aim for an 80–20 division: talk about other people and topics 80% of the time and self-promote only 20% of the time.
- 7 Engage.** Twitter works best as a two-way communication tool. Don't just talk at people; engage with them. Ask them questions, reply to their comments.
- 8 Spread out...** Don't send tweets rapid-fire. Spread them out to increase the chance of your audience seeing your posts. You can schedule these throughout the day via HootSuite, TweetDeck, or Buffer.
- 9 ...Unless...** tweets are part of a series of messages; you're live-tweeting; or you're reacting to something happening in real-time.
- 10 Target influencers.** Do your research and identify influencers—reporters, celebrities, experts, etc.—in your issue area who can help elevate your message. Retweet and reply to their work to build a relationship. Include their Twitter handles in your tweets to alert them to your work.
- 11 Perfect your form.** When including someone else's Twitter handle in your post, make sure the @ isn't the first thing in the tweet. If it is, it will only be seen by the user and her followers.
 - @SenJohnMcCain takes to the Senate floor to blast #F35-cronyism <http://ow.ly/y87Ko>
 - .@SenJohnMcCain takes to the Senate floor to blast #F35 cronyism <http://ow.ly/y87Ko>
 - See @SenJohnMcCain takes to the Senate floor to blast #F35 cronyism <http://ow.ly/y87Ko>
- 12 Double-Check Your Work: There is no way to completely delete an errant tweet.** Even if you delete the tweet from your timeline, it has shown up on your followers' timelines, and there's no taking that back. Double-check before you hit send, and keep a close eye on your scheduled tweets.

