

## USE TWITTER

BY JO LOUDON

### LEARN THE LANGUAGE

**FAVOURITE** ★ – Indication that you like a tweet

**FOLLOW** – Person/company whose tweets will appear on your feed

**FOLLOWER** – people who have chosen to receive your tweets

**HASHTAGS** # – used to group information on a certain topic and can be used in the body or at the end of a tweet. Before creating a hashtag search Twitter to make sure it is not already in use and the combination of words does not have an unintended meaning. eg #AITDAwards #AITD2014

**MENTION** – when someone uses your handle in their tweet

**MESSAGES** – Private messages can be sent to someone you follow that also follows you, character limits apply.

**REPLY** ↩ – Commenting on a tweet by replying to the author

**RETWEET OR RT** ↻ – Re-publishing the tweet of another user. If the original tweet is short you can use the available space to add text up to the 140 character limit.

**TRENDING** – Popular real time content that people are interacting with

**TWEET** – Message of up to 140 characters

**TWITTER HANDLE** – your username eg @aitd1

Twitter is an online social networking, microblogging site which allows users to send messages (tweets) of up to 140 characters. All tweets are public, unless you choose to protect them from view. Tweets can contain text, links to websites, photos and videos.

### Starting Twitter

When creating an account, decide if you will be using Twitter for professional or personal use, this will influence your user name and what you tweet. Use your posts to build your credibility by ensuring information is accurate, timely and relevant to your audience. Start by searching for people whose opinions you value and start following some of the people they follow. Also identify companies that tweet interesting content including research.

### Tweeting

To make the most of Twitter, share interesting information and ideas, support others and add value. When deciding what to write assume that every tweet is recorded and that it may be shared out of context. Find people that you want to talk to and start a conversation.

Choose your words carefully and consider what type of information will make people take notice of what you have to say and want to follow you. Structure your tweets in a way that makes the content appealing. Look at how others structure their tweets, ask questions and avoid overusing hashtags.

As space is of a premium and including links or images does reduce your limit to less than 140 characters. You can reclaim some of the space in tweets by using free tools that abbreviate your URL such as bitly.com or tinyURL.com. Saving space and writing a tweet that is less than 140 characters will allow others to add comments to your tweet when retweeting.

### Retweeting

Retweeting is a way to share what someone else has tweeted. The easiest way is to select the retweet icon under the tweet and the tweet will be

republished by you. To add context to your retweet, you can copy and paste the tweet as a new tweet. Add your comments and be sure to include RT and the handle of the user who wrote the original tweet at the start of the tweet. It is important that it is clear that the content is being retweeted and is not your own.

### Notifications

This tab details the names of any new followers and interactions with tweets you have sent. This includes: your tweets being retweeted and favoured or your twitter handle being mentioned in someone else's tweet.

It is advisable to check this tab regularly and determine if action is required. Someone may have mentioned you in tweet to thank you or they may be directing a question to you. To get your attention users will start a tweet with your handle.

### Following

You can follow individuals and organisations on Twitter and their tweets will appear on your feed. To find people to follow you can search for people or topics of interest, see who other people follow, or take suggestions from Twitter.

### Lists

You can create public or private lists and group together users who share similar information together. Lists allow you to view tweets by users without actually following these users. This is useful and can save you time wading through tweets. You can follow public lists that other users have created.

### Scheduling Tools

Scheduling Tools such as Hootsuite can be used to send tweets at specific times. This allows you to prepare content and where necessary get content pre-approved, this may suit time sensitive announcements.

Before joining Twitter, have a look at Business.twitter.com and see if it is for you. You can always listen before you build the confidence to participate.