Twitter Jump Start

THE FIRST GUIDE FOR SMALL NON-PROFITS

INCLUDING: “10 TWITTER TIPS TO INCREASE ONLINE DONATIONS”

By John Haydon
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Twitter Jump Start

An information product to help small non-profits get amazing results from using Twitter.

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But….

You can e-mail this guide to your friends!

Yes, please send this guide to other non-profit folks that might be interested in using Twitter. This way you’ll both get the most out of this guide (see page 2, “How To Get The Most Out Of This Guide”).

Acknowledgments:

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Chris Garrett: Publisher of Chrisg.com, AuthorityBlogger.Com, co-author of "Problogger". Chris Garrett is a professional blogger, new media industry commentator, writer, coach, speaker, trainer and web geek. He was also a founding member of Performancing.com.
Quick Definition:

Twitter is a micro blogging platform which allows you to publish short messages of less than 140 characters through different mediums like IM, cellphones and the web.

Also see Twictionary on page 11
1. **Brand Builder:** Use Twitter to build your non-profit’s image and refine your messaging over time by testing out how people react to your posts.

2. **Get Feedback:** Twitter can be used to get feedback on articles or projects. Posting questions will get quick responses, often by the experts on your subject.

3. **Hire People:** Post requests for job openings. Twitter has a high concentration of tech-savvy and smart talent.

4. **Direct Traffic:** The more you get involved in Twitter and develop mutually-beneficial relationships, the more folks will refer traffic to your site. Friends can post news about your site, asking for a “retweet” in the process.

5. **Network for Benefits:** Use Twitter to connect with other like-minded people. It can be used to establish consistent and deeper relationships for partnerships or peer recommendations.

6. **Manage Your Non-Profit:** Use Twitter as a non-profit intranet connecting your employees to one another. Collaboration can be brought to a new level when working on group projects, especially if some folks work remotely.

7. **Notify Your Donors:** Set up a Twitter feed for the specific purpose of notifying donors about important news about your cause. Donors who use Twitter can subscribe via mobile or RSS for instant notification.

8. **Provide Event Updates:** Non-profits can use Twitter as a means to inform event participants and latest event happenings/changes. This is valuable, especially when you’re not able to set up a direct mobile link between you and the audience.

9. **Find Donors:** Twitter can be used as a means to find potential donors online. Do a search for keywords related to your cause on Twitter Search and then follow users. Make sure you make it very easy for people to connect to your website via Twitter.

10. **Broadcast The News:** Twitter allows you to provide real-time commentary which may help to spark further discussion or interest on the event as other Twitter users spread the message. Very useful for citizen journalism.

11. **Schedule Meetings:** Twitter can help you organize impromptu meet-ups. It’s an informal and casual way of arranging a meeting, which again, reflects on your brand.

12. **Read News:** Twitter users often link to useful and alternative news. You can also subscribe to Twitter feeds for news related to your non-profit. Using [http://tweetbeep.com](http://tweetbeep.com), or a reader allows you to receive, organize and view this news quickly.

13. **Make New Friends:** Like any other social network, Twitter has a built-in function for you to befriend and track the messages of other users. Make an effort to be the Go-Giver!

14. **Scalable Executive Blog:** Executive Director has no time to blog? Have her use Twitter. The content and time commitment are minimal.

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**Have a valuable tip not mentioned here?***

***Tweet me at twitter.com/johnhaydon and include “#TweetJump” in your post. I’ve set up an RSS feed to compile these tips in my reader. I’ll retweet the best ones (and give you credit, of course).***
Village?

“For me, connecting on Twitter with someone I’ve just met in person is inviting them to live in “my village.” Follow-up won’t be limited to the “nice meeting you” email cul-de-sac. On Twitter, we’ll cross paths incidentally and without pressure. I may bump into them “around town” for maybe a word or two at the “coffee shop” or “post office.” Over time we may discover common interests (aka social objects) in each others’ tweets, and connect more deeply as neighbors or friends.

For a contrived, weird and techie way to communicate, Twitter’s “passive conversation” fosters very natural, gradual relationship-building.”

-Laura Fitton, Pistachio Consulting

http://pistachioconsulting.com/

To tweet and not to tweet.
That is the answer.

The only way to find out if your non-profit should pursue Twitter is to jump in and swim - to tweet and then not tweet. That’s pretty much that case with anything - in business and in life. You try and then stop. Re-evaluate. And then try another way.

There are four reasons why this is the best approach:

1. Only you understand your non-profit’s unique business issues. No one can (or should) tell you what to do with Twitter.
2. Twitter is still uncharted territory. You may discover something useful that no-one has thought of.
3. See who’s out there. Only by jumping in will you find out how many of your clients (and friends) use Twitter and to what degree folks are talking about your cause.
4. Signing up and getting started with Twitter will take about 10 minutes. Reading about the pros and cons of Twitter will take a month.

Just like LinkedIn, Facebook, Stumble and Digg, Twitter allows you to search your email accounts for current users. So - even if Twitter is not for you, you’ll at least find out which of your colleagues and friends are using Twitter. Then you can ask them how they use it.

So let’s get started...
Getting Started

Step 1: Go to http://twitter.com/ and click “Watch a Video”

The video explains exactly what Twitter is - in plain english!

“Nice production values!”
Step 2: Choose A Username

Note: Pick a username that is your actual name or is the same as your other usernames.

Step 3: Find your friends and start connecting!
Valuable Tips For Creating A Profile That Stands Out

- **Username:** Pick a username that is your actual name or the as your other usernames. If you chose something like Funkyboy5454, you’ll be considered spam as you request to follow others. If you use your real name, you’ll be treated well.

- **Upload A Real Photo:** (found under the “Settings” tab), not an avatar or other pic. Folks are more likely to connect with you if they see you as being human.

- **Background Picture:** Create an attractive background image in photoshop (File Dimensions: 2048 by 1707 pixels total; Branding Dimensions: 80 pixels by 587). Use the same colors that you have on your blog or website for marketing consistency. List your web-page, short bio, LinkedIn Url, Stumbleupon address. Look at twitter.com/johnhaydon to see my profile. See more on page 9.

- **Included An “Interesting Fact”** on your background image. It will enable people to connect with you on a personal level (read more in “Personality Not Included” by Rohit Bhargava). See http://twitter.com/johnhaydon to see my “Interesting Fact”. **List what $10 buys for folks you serve.**

- **Location:** Under the “Account” tab within the “Settings” area, enter your real name, city and state. This way, people will be more likely to find you.

- **One line bio:** Write a bio that’s under seven words so that folks will “get” you that much faster. Mine says “Marketing services for non-profits…”

- **Short Url:** Keep your web-site address short by using tinyurl.com. There’s also a curiosity factor with tinyurl.com that makes people want to click it.

- **Don’t Bounce:** To avoid a high bounce rate*, try this: In the setting section, paste a url to an area within your web-site or blog that will be highly relevant to Twitter users. The one relevant thing that all Twitter users have in common is that they all use Twitter (D’uh)! My current landing page for Twitter folks is an article called “What If Shel Silverstein Used Twitter?”

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*A Bounce Rate represents the percentage of initial visitors to a site who "bounce" away to a different site - usually because the content doesn’t meet their needs.*
Creating your background

Twitter allows you to upload a background image instead of using their default design choices. Have a friend who is familiar with Photoshop or some other graphic design application work with you to create this background. Below are general technical guidelines that may need some tweaking.

File Dimensions:
- 2040 pixels by 1700 pixels
- Branding Dimensions: 80 pixels by 587 pixels
- Coordinates: X=20, Y=14
- Horizontal position: 20 pixels from the left
- Vertical position: 20 px from the top
- File size: Less Than 800K
- File Type: GIF, JPG, PNG

Color palette:
- Pick colors that match that with default Twitter colors. If they contrast too much re-adjust your background within photoshop, changing the colors for text and images as needed.
- Twitter color palette: Light Blue (#33CCFF) and White (#FFFFFF).

Uploading your background:
- Login and click 'Settings' >> click 'Design' >> click 'Change Background Image' >>
- Upload your image

It took me a while to get a background image that I was happy with (hopefully you’re less obsessive-compulsive than me). You might do a lot of editing and uploading again, but have patience until you get it just right.

John Haydon

CorporateDollar.Org
create a remarkable non-profit with social media know-how!
LinkedIn:
linkedin.com/in/johnhaydon
Stumble:
johnhaydon.stumbleupon.com
Interesting Fact:
A song of mine is in the fantasy football documentary, "10 Yards" (10yards.com)

Here’s my background image as of 10/15/08
"10 Twitter tips to increase online donations"

Your donors are no longer interested in getting news about your non-profit by email. Nicholas Einstein, at DM Media cites the JuniperResearch study on social media trends: "Some customer are apparently spending less time in their e-mail inbox and may be paying less attention to the messages they receive there. This shift is causing some to question, perhaps prematurely, the future of e-mail as the dominant social networking tool."

Below are some of the creative ways small non-profits use Twitter to increase on-line fundraising activity.

1. First, create a Twitter section within your non-profit’s blog or website specifically designated as a “campaign headquarters”. Use this as a platform to directly engage with and inform your fans who use Twitter.

2. Link to this page in your non-profit’s Twitter account. Post updates to your Twitter “campaign headquarters” on twitter each week. Encourage your board of directors and fans to link to the “campaign headquarters” on their Twitter pages.

3. For campaign-specific activities with your Twitter fans, use hashtags so that Tweeple can easily recall and search on posts related to a campaign (read more here: http://twitter.pbwiki.com/Hashtags)

4. Engage fans directly by asking them questions, answering their questions - pay attention and listen to them!

5. Small donations are best with Twitter. It might be hard getting even 2 people on Twitter to donate $100, but asking for $5 - $10 will get results - it’s easy and people don’t have to budget for those dollar amounts. Ask for $5 donations using services like MGive.com.

6. Have your fans get in the habit of retweeting the moment they’ve donated $5

7. Try out an “Honor System Donation” campaign asking Tweeple to pledge a small donation. It’s an easy commitment for folks to take part in and it will get them talking. Post all Tweeple on your site who have pledged to donate.

8. Retweet Success Stories Each Week. Encourage your fans to retweet as well.

9. Be Immediate and Relevant: Keep your Twitter landing page updated!

10. Display facts on your Twitter Background Page about what $5 will buy.

11. Get set up with one of the 24 social action platforms on https://twitterfeed.com/socialactions

Have a valuable tip not mentioned here?

***Tweet me at twitter.com/johnhaydon and include “#TweetJump” in your post. I’ve set up an RSS feed to compile these tips in my reader. I’ll retweet the best ones (and give you credit, of course).
**Tweets**
140 character posts on Twitter

**Followers**
Folks who have chosen to follow your posts

**Following**
Folks that you have chosen to follow

**Retweet**
A request to tweet what you have just posted: “Retweet. The Twitter Jump Start is a great tool for non-profits!”

**Tweeple**
Twitter People - folks that use twitter

**Twits**
Folks who understand the technology and culture Twitter!

**Tweetup**
A meet up of Twitter friends.

**Hashtags**
A method of tagging content associated with a specific event, topic or group of people.
The “Rules of The Road” For Non-Profit Social Media

Every six months, a new generation of Social Networking tools show up - it’s always changing - and that freaks people out (including moi)! But what remains unchanged is our fundamental desire to be heard and connect with others.

Web 2.0 is simply a function of two our most basic human needs:

We need to be heard
We need to connect

***It’s all about the “social” - not the “media”.

Social networking initiatives should put technology aside and focus on the human-to-human elements of positive communication. This is the only way to build a lasting foundation to a powerful brand for your non-profit. For guidance, post a sticky note of these “rules of the road” in your cube:

1. **Be Positive:** With all of your social networking communication, present a positive message. Think of yourself as the ambassador of your cause whose job is to spread hope. This is especially crucial during periods when there are thousands of reasons to be hopeless. Folks will respond positively to a person who is consistently encouraging.

2. **Be Open and Honest:** Social networking is always two-way communication. Because of this, you will encounter folks that might ask difficult and challenging questions regarding your non-profit. Don’t be defensive - listen to what people are saying. Responding honestly will often transform misconceptions and negative attitudes into sincere support for your cause.

3. **Listen and Acknowledge:** Sometimes we’re so busy “getting the word out” that we forget to listen to and acknowledge people when they post comments, link back to us, or send us e-mails. Remember that these folks have a desire to be heard. Responding thoughtfully to each person may take time, but create tremendous value in the long run. I posted a comment on a blog recently and received a personal e-mail from the author saying “Another useful comment. Thanks so much.” This e-mail, which took her less than 15 seconds to write, made me great and made her look like a complete professional.

You are what you write

Remember that everything you put out there on the web - the tone, the words, the energy - creates an infinite impact on your Non-Profit’s brand and thus it’s future. Will this impact be positive and create growth? Or will it be negative and create failure? By following the “rules of the road” above, you’ll be better equipped to forge a path towards growth and victory.

*** Please see Katya Andresen's blog at http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com for more on this topic.
How big is your non-profit?

It's just me: 9.1%
1-3 employees: 24.2%
4-10 employees: 21.2%
10-25 employees: 6.1%
25-50 employees: 3.0%
50-100 employees: 6.1%
100-500 employees: 9.1%
mor[...](9.1%)

How long have you been using Twitter?

Over 1 Year: 25.7% - 75% of those surveyed are new Twitter users!
Less Than 1 Year: 24.3%
Less Than 6 Months: 34.3%
Just Started Last Week: 17.1%

What other social networking sites do you use to market your non-profit?

FaceBook: 91.4%
MySpace: 42.9%
LinkedIn: 54.3%
Flickr: 51.4%
Bebo: 1.4%
Xanga: 1.4%
Plaxo: 10.0%

How are you using Twitter within your non-profit?

To communicate with individuals that our non-profit serves: 57.1%
To develop corporate donors: 8.6%
To develop on-line donors: 17.1% - Twitter is underutilized here!!!!
To network with other non-profits: 57.1%
To listen to what people are saying about our non-profit: 45.7%
Still trying to figure Twitter out: 37.1%

How much value is there in using Twitter for your non-profit?

Couldn't live without it: 10.0%
Love it, but are ok when it crashes: 47.1%
We'd be fine without it: 42.9%

*Non-profit organizations were surveyed during August and September of 2008.
What Next?

1 - Stay informed
With Twitter you’ll get to know great sources on how other non-profits are using Twitter. Make friends with these folks and, in return, find out how you can be useful to them!

2 - Stay open
In addition to using Twitter, create a Google alert that searches “use Twitter” - you’ll be amazed at the ways people are using Twitter. This is how I sourced most of the content in this guide!

3 - Stay subscribed
You have a lot of other fish to fry. 100% of my focus is researching the latest in social media marketing. Subscribing to my newsletter keeps you better informed.

4 - Stay in touch
Please contact me anytime with questions at twitter.com/johnhaydon. And again, if you have a great idea you want to share, include the hashtag “#TweetJump” in your post. This way, we can benefit (and win) from each other’s creativity.

Thanks again,
John Haydon
CorporateDollar.Org
http://twitter.com/johnhaydon

John Haydon provides social media marketing consulting services to non-profits and small businesses throughout the United States and Canada.

Currently he is developing a suite of interactive products that will provide a high level of social media marketing education at an affordable price.

Get the latest news by subscribing to his blog at CorporateDollar.Org.