

How to Use Twitter for Business



David Edis-Bates December 2010

Tips for newcomers on how to join Twitter and use it for marketing and social media networking

Twitter is a communication tool. Like the telephone, telex or telegram that went before it, it's a tool that enables people to connect with others.

How Does Twitter Work?

Twitter users have 140 characters to answer the question, "What's happening?" If you join Twitter you can "follow" other users, whose "Tweets" then appear for you to read on your Twitter home page. They can see you as a follower and choose to follow you if they wish, a form of permission-based marketing. You can also send messages to them in 140 characters or less.

Twitter communications can be viewed and updated on the Web, through desktop apps and on mobile telephones.

How can Twitter Help You?

There are a growing number of people who are using Twitter for business especially in the audio visual market including distributors, resellers, installers and end users. The main AV news media are there and specialist Twitter based daily news releases covering Audio Visual topics – search for #avtweeps and #AVNews.

Other AV professionals are using Twitter as a communications tool. Here are some ideas of how you might use Twitter for your business too:

- You can follow industry leaders who post links to important resources and influence conversations, names like Creston, Extron and Christie etc.....
- Post questions for quick answers and answer others' questions to establish your credibility and expertise
- Create links to your Web site or blog
- Keep up on the buzz in AV
- Network with like-minded AV people.

How to Find People and Businesses on Twitter

The Twitter search box will search matches in others' profiles and tweets. "Who to follow", a button on the Twitter tool bar, that finds and suggests like-minded people based on your tweets.

How to Get People to Follow You

The more people who follow you on Twitter, the more influence and networking opportunities you have. So it makes sense to try and build a following. Here are some ideas on getting others to follow you:

- Follow them. There's an almost knee jerk reaction to follow people who follow you. However, there's a backlash against people who follow just about everyone for the sole purpose of gaining followers so be discriminating who you follow.
- Post some good tweets right before following someone else. If someone follows me and they only tweet about how hungry or tired they are, I don't follow them back. The same goes for people who haven't tweeted in a while.
- Complete your "bio". People rarely follow strangers, so complete your one-line bio and include a URL to your Blog or website in your profile..
- Add your Twitter feed to your blog or to other social media profiles. If you have a following on your blog or a lot of connections at Facebook or LinkedIn.
- Reply to people you are following, especially if they're not yet following you. It's a good way to engage someone and get them to follow you, even if they didn't follow you immediately. Remember, though, some people have thousands of followers, and may not be able to respond to every reply.

Getting the Most Out of Twitter

While the guidelines of Twitter etiquette are still evolving, guidelines from other social media sites can be used:

- Treat others with respect
- Participate in the community
- Do more than promote your own agenda.

Professionals and consultants seem to have had the most impact at Twitter; most businesses are still trying to figure out how to use Twitter as a communications tool. Here are a few ideas to help get your creative thinking flowing:

- A distributor tweets their new bundle offers
- A manufacturer tweets about the latest projector features
- An exhibitor tweets booth details at the next event
- An installer tweets local services.
- A school teacher asks to recommend a good installer

How to open a Twitter Account for Business

- Open a free account at Twitter.com
- Complete your Profile being mindful how your profile will appear on-line.
- Add an image :You can use a photo of yourself but I chose to use our company logo to promote our branding.
- Enter your Name : for a more personal approach enter your real name.

- Enter a User name : I used a company based user name “EdisAudioVisual” that promotes Edis and Audio Visual as this is the name everyone sees on Twitter.
- Complete your “Bio” that will be seen at the top of your profile it's restricted to 63 characters.

There are many choices for the design of your profile page but you can get going with just the default settings and change them later as you wish

It's probably a good idea to read some tweets by others before you start “Tweeting” yourself. You could search on Twitter using “Audio visual” or #Avtweeps or #AVNews and view the tweets that show, clicking on a Tweet or URL will take you to the Tweeters profile or web/blog page.

If you have a blog site or RSS on your website there is software you can download to automatically send updates as Tweets – we use Twitterfeed

For more in depth information about Twitter for business I found “Twitter Power – How to Dominate your market 1 Tweet at a time ” by Joel Comm a useful reference tool

For more ideas, or just to network you could [follow me on Twitter @EdisAudioVisual](#).

Good luck!

.About the Author

David Edis-Bates C.Eng MIET, a chartered electronics engineer who first visited China in the 70's lived in Taiwan for 4 years and in China for the past 5 years is currently CEO of Edis AV, a company that designs and exports audio visual products from China <http://www.edisav.com> or [The Edis Blog](#)

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