

5 Steps to Successfully Promote Your Freelance Business Through Twitter

By Kendy Sproul

There's a common misconception that the only way to be successful on Twitter is to have thousands of followers.

Not true.

You need followers, but you don't need that many to get results.

What's more important is how you use Twitter.

Here are 5 steps to help you successfully use Twitter to promote your freelance business.

Step 1: Create a Compelling Profile

People look at your profile to discover who you are and why they should follow you.

So you need to make sure it's compelling. There are three main areas to fill in:



Your profile picture

If a picture is worth a thousand words, your profile picture speaks volumes. Select a professional, friendly-looking picture of *yourself* — not your dog, cat, kids, etc. Upload it to Twitter and you're set.



Your bio

Twitter only allows 160 characters for your bio, so make them count. Think of your bio as your 30-second elevator pitch. Keep it informative and professional. That's not to say that you shouldn't let your personality show. By all means, do. But be sure to come across as a professional.



Your website link

Twitter provides a place for this in your account settings. Simply go to your profile. Click "Edit Profile" in the upper right-hand corner. You'll see a field where you can enter your web address.

A compelling profile will help you attract followers, so use these tips to make yours as strong as possible.

Step 2: Follow the Right People

As a freelancer, there are two types of people you should follow: prospects and fellow professionals.



Prospects

If you haven't already, make a list of everyone you would like to do business with — including your dream clients.

Then, you can find out if they're on Twitter in two ways.

One way is to search Twitter for them. This can be tricky since Twitter only allows 15 characters for a user name and 20 characters for a business name. So, if you're searching for Portland Hospital Equipment and Supplies (a 40-character name), you may have a difficult time finding them on Twitter.

The second, easier way is to check their website for a Twitter button. If they have one, click on it. It will take you to their Twitter profile and you can follow them from there.

Why should you follow your prospects?

First, if they're active on Twitter, you'll keep tabs on what's going on with their business. Second, they just might follow you back. Even if they don't, chances are that they'll check out your profile.



Fellow professionals

This includes top people in your niche industry as well as in the web-writing/copywriting/social media world. By following these professionals, you'll stay up-to-date on what's happening in your prospects' industry as well in your own freelance industry.

Step 3: Tweet Daily

If you want to use Twitter as an effective way to reach prospects, you need to tweet daily.

In fact, you should tweet multiple times each day.

You don't have to be on Twitter 24/7. But, you do need to set aside time every day for nurturing your Twitter tribe (your followers on Twitter).

There are various tools that allow you to set up tweets in advance to post throughout the day.

I recommend these two:

- [Hootsuite](#)
- [Tweetdeck](#)

They both provide mobile apps, free and paid plans, and analytics. Do a little comparison shopping to see which one best meets your needs. Using tools like these can save you time.

But beware of using any tool to completely run your Twitter campaign. You need to take time to personally engage with people.

Spend a small portion of each day retweeting, replying, and mentioning others. The more you do, the faster you'll see results.

The name of the game is *social* media — so be social.

Step 4: Practice Twitter Etiquette

If you're going to achieve success, you need to practice Twitter etiquette.

- Don't always sell.

No one will follow you for long if your tweets are always about selling your services.

Focus on providing value to your followers by tweeting useful articles, blog posts, tips, etc. — from you and from other people.

A good rule of thumb is 95% value, 5% selling.



Don't be rude.

This should go without saying, but it happens.

Twitter is not the place to be derogatory, use profanity, or show prejudice. That doesn't mean you can't disagree with someone, if you do so politely.

The old saying, "If you can't say something nice, keep your mouth shut," definitely applies to social media.



Be generous.

If someone tweets something your audience would benefit from, retweet it. Just be sure to give credit to the source.

Mention other people in your tweets, especially if they provide value.

Be generous with your Twitter tribe. Provide valuable content on a regular basis. Even if that content comes from your competitor.

Remember, what goes around comes around.



Be consistent.

Let your followers know what they can expect from you by tweeting consistent information.

If you usually tweet about how veterinarians can get the most out of their marketing campaigns, don't throw in a link to an article on how to knit a sweater.

It's okay to let your audience get a glimpse of who you are outside of work, but keep the personal tweets to no more than 1%.



Be human.

If you see a post that you feel compelled to reply to, by all means do it. Show compassion. Show empathy. Show joy. Show gratitude.

Say thank you.

Thank people for retweeting your posts. Thank them for providing valuable content. Thank them for mentioning you.

Human engagement is what separates social media from traditional media ... and what makes it so powerful.

Step 5: Join Twitter Chats

Twitter has its own version of "chatting" called Twitter chats.

It's essentially what it sounds like ... chatting about a given topic, on a given day, at a given time.

Anyone can join a Twitter chat by using the associated hashtag.

A hashtag is a word or short phrase preceded by the # sign. For example: #twitterchats would indicate a chat about Twitter chats.

There are Twitter chats about almost anything imaginable.

You can join one that is already established or form your own by creating a hashtag, setting a date and time, and getting the word out to your Twitter tribe.

Let's look at how you'd join existing Twitter chats ...

Use this list of over [500 Twitter chats](#) to find one that interests you.

To join in, simply search Twitter for the hashtag on the specified date and time. Then jump in with your comments and questions.

What's the benefit of joining Twitter chats?

Engagement. Chats allow you to engage with people outside your own Twitter tribe as well as within.

They allow you to showcase your expertise and learn from other experts.

Twitter chats are fast-paced and fun. Jump in and engage.

Put these 5 steps into practice and you'll soon grow your Twitter tribe, connect with prospects, and become known in the Twittersverse as the go-to expert in your industry.

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