**What is Twitter?**

Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) is simply a program that allows you to read and post one/two-line status updates (similar to newspaper headlines). Twitter allows for ”real time" news broadcast about what is happening to people/things.

**Seminar Objective**

Having completed this topic, you will understand

* the purpose and use of Twitter,
* how to set up and maintain a Twitter Account,
* how to tweet
* how to link a tweet to a page and/or a picture,
* how to re-tweet,
* how to use twitter hash tags,
* search Twitter and
* how to use Twitter under various aliases and
* how to use Twitter on a mobile device.

**FAQ’s**

**What is Twitter anyway?**

Founded in 2006, Twitter started out as a text message service that allowed users to quickly communicate with a small group. Twitter is an information network made up of 140-character messages called Tweets. It's an easy way to discover the latest news related to subjects you care about.

For professionals and marketers, Twitter has changed the way that many people get their information and how they communicate with people and customers (for service and support) in real time. The public nature of Twitter means that you have the opportunity to increase the perception that others have of you and your brand. The ability for you to respond in a public and open forum builds trust, credibility and loyalty from customers and readers alike.

Twitter is sometimes referred to a “micro-blogging”. Rather than a passive, one-way marketing message, Twitter provides the opportunity for you to engage in interactive conversations with your customers. See: <http://youtu.be/D_4ZgGTJAJ8>

**How is Twitter useful?**

Twitter contains information you will find valuable. Messages from users you choose to follow will show up on your home page for you to read. It’s like being delivered a newspaper whose headlines you’ll always find interesting – you can discover news as it’s happening, learn more about topics that are important to you, and get the inside scoop in real time.

**What’s a Tweet?**

A tweet is a message. You have 140 characters, including spaces, to put down your thoughts. Type your message in the ***What’s happening?*** text box on your homepage, and click the Tweet button to send a tweet.

**How to Choose a Good Twitter Username?**

On Twitter, your username, or handle, is your identity. If you can, sign up for Twitter by using your name or a variation of it as your username (assuming somebody else isn't already using it). For example, if your name is Paul Tilley, you may want to pick a Twitter username such as @paultilley or @pauldtilley

Twitter usernames typically appear with an at sign (@) before the name, because that's how you refer to other users on Twitter. But when you're actually choosing a username, the @ isn't part of it. The only characters you can use are uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and the underscore character ( \_ ). Use a short Twitter username. Tweets are only 140 characters, so when people are replying to you, if you have a longer name, you leave them less room for message content. Twitter limits your username to just 15 characters for this very reason.

**How to Find People/things on Twitter**:

One of the best ways to find people on Twitter is simply to search for them on Twitter Search. The advanced page of Twitter's search engine has an option to search "Near this place." You can simply enter your town and get a real-time stream of all the people tweeting from your location or near it. The results are based on the location field of people's Twitter bios, which due to geo-location for people tweeting from their phones can be very accurate.

**Who can see your Tweet?:**

Everyone, with some exceptions.

**What happens if I put a “@Username” first in my tweet?**

One thing that gets confused frequently is how to use @mentions. The most important bit here is that if you start a tweet with an @username, then only the person following you and the person you are replying to will see the tweet. Normally this is a tiny amount of people, as starting a tweet with a username is mainly used to interact with only one person.

However, by glancing over your timeline, anyone can see this tweet, it just won’t come up in their stream of tweets.

Why keep content of tweets short?

Short tweets are often easier to read and get picked up more often by others. Short tweets are also easier for others to retweet

**What are #Hashtags and How can I follow them?**

Hashtags allow you to connect everyone on Twitter using a certain keyword, putting a “#” in front of it. So instead of following individuals you can follow these words, such as #twitter, #startups or any other term you can think off.

**What is Twitter etiquette?**

Being such an open platform, where everyone can communicate with each other, without sending friend requests or the like, has led to establish a few unwritten rules.

These guidelines should simply help to make conversations flow easily and politely without anyone being harmed. The most basic rules are to include the username of others if you retweet a tweet or to simply reply in a timely manner.

@pauldtilley