



A Formula for Business Results Using Twitter

It's still who you know.

What do you want to have happen? Any business strategy must begin with this question. What business results are you seeking from your use of Twitter?

Possible answers could include the intangibles of "getting the word out" or "branding," to the more tangible "leads" and "sales." Regardless, the next question is always the same: How will you know when you've achieved the results you desire?

Once you've answered these questions and have a clear vision of what you seek and how you'll know you've found it, you're ready to use Twitter for business.

A truism in business is, "It's who you know." Return on investment (ROI) is based on sales, sales are based on relationships, relationships are based on trust, and trust is based on experience. Online, it's hard to know who you know and if you really know them. It's also hard to say we've really had "experience" with someone with whom we've only had virtual contact.

The foundation for the use of any social media technique or tool, from leaving comments on blog posts to writing 140-character updates with Twitter, is to be your best self online, both personally and professionally. Only then can you ease the legitimate hesitation of others about whether or not you are trustworthy. Only then can you be a "who you know" worth knowing—and worth risking doing business with—through your online presence.

Information, Expertise, Humanity— In That Order

To establish trust on Twitter, allow your 140-character updates—your "tweets"—to evolve in this order: First, provide information. Second, provide expertise. Third, show—don't tell—that you're a good guy or a good gal. You *being* a good guy or a good gal is more convincing than you *saying* you are.

If you follow that order, those who read your tweets will

A White Paper by Anne Giles Clelland

also evolve in their "experience" of you. In new or developing real-time business relationships, we tend to follow this pattern: We share information with each other to determine our potential value to one another, we prefer information over advice until we have established a working relationship, but then we value the other's expertise, especially when we ask for it or are in need of it. We then may share parts of our personal lives as our confidence in each other builds. By following this natural progression with your use of Twitter, you align your online strategy with what you instinctively know works offline.

Expertise in Your Industry, Expertise in Business

To achieve business results using Twitter—to be someone who engenders enough trust to attract business—first establish yourself as an expert, an authority, and a pundit in your industry. Second, establish yourself as an expert in business. Demonstrate that you not only have breadth and depth of knowledge and experience in your industry, but you understand business as a whole.

This suggests, of course, that you run your business optimally and that your products and services help your customers and clients do the same.

You will attract readers—then followers—through the quality, authority, credibility, and reliability of the Twitter updates you post.

Those followers are potential customers and/or clients and/or sources of leads or referrals. It's pretty simple: The more value you offer, the more you will be valued.

And you are rewarded for proving of value on Twitter. If your followers value one of your tweets, they will copy your tweet, paste it into their own update text box, and “retweet” it as their own tweet—but with credit to you.

For example, when I read this tweet, I thought my followers might value it:

[zkellyq](#) Brilliant: [@guykawasaki](#) Convert web pages to PDF here <http://adjix.com/5v6d>

So I retweeted it:

[handshake20](#) RT [@zkellyq](#) Brilliant: [@guykawasaki](#) Convert web pages to PDF here 1 <http://adjix.com/5v6d>

A retweet is rich with possibility. My followers could click on the URL, on the value added feature of a link to Guy Kawasaki’s Twitter updates, or on the link to the original source of the information as someone possibly worthy of following themselves.

The Formula for a Business Tweet

Humanity + Information + URL

Here’s an analysis of the tweet in the example above using the formula for a business tweet:

Humanity = “Brilliant”

Translation: I am a sentient being with thoughts and feelings—just as you are—and I can respond appreciatively to what I experience. I, too, may be able to respond appreciatively to you. The invitation is always open to follow me on Twitter.

Information = “Convert web pages to PDF here”

Translation: You can convert web pages to PDF using this online tool which I am in a position to evaluate since I am an expert in the creation and management of online content. Furthermore, as a business professional in a field of expertise, I keep up-to-date with the latest developments.

URL: “<http://adjix.com/5v6d>”

Translation: I don’t hoard the sources of my knowledge. I share them. For expertise beyond what you read in my tweets, feel free to contact me.

Add Keywords to Add Value

Twitter users use [Twitter Search](#) and other Twitter tools to find updates that contain terms of interest to them in hopes of finding valuable people to follow—and to be followed by.

You add value to your tweets for Twitter users by including relevant keywords in the information portion of your tweets that help lead Twitter search users to the information they seek. If they find you, and like what they find, they value you, may follow you, and that opens up all the possibilities of the business uses of Twitter.

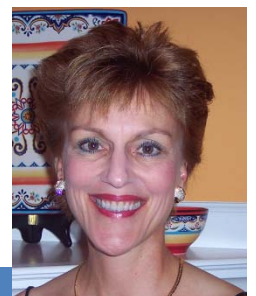
It’s You on Twitter

We’ve provided a business-like business formula for how to use Twitter for business.

Just as Twitter provides a 140-character container for human expression, so does our formula supply a container for the use of Twitter for business.

We like to think of these containers as balloons. They have limits, but their capacity can be stretched.

What stretches those containers is you, all you. As your use of Twitter becomes skilled and your voice on Twitter evolves, you will find your own personality creating a distinctive, signature way of creating meaning from who you are and what you know. You will add delightful new value to Twitter. We welcome it.



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