Twitter Your Way To Happiness

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By
Robbie Gallagher
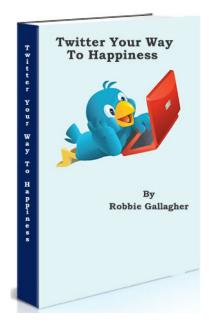
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<u>Welcome</u>

I hope you enjoy Twitter Your Way To happiness

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What Is Twitter?

What is Twitter? Well, where have you been.. LOL? Twitter would have to be the fastest growing site on the web today. It is taking the internet by storm and there are around 10,000 new users per day signing up to participate in this internet revolution.

Twitter is best described as a micro blogging platform. You are limited to 140 characters each time you do an update, which initially, may seem a small amount. However, as you become more experienced, it's just amazing what you can fit into 140 characters.

That said, Twitter is much, much more than that. It is like one huge global chat room, but then again, it doesn't have to be. It all depends on how many people you follow on Twitter. If it's in the thousands, then your "Tweetstream" will be running fast and furious with everything that's coming in. If you are only following a few hundred, or even less, then things are much easier to keep up with.

Twitter is also a great way to meet new people online, particularly those with similar interests to you. I will show you how to do this more as we progress thorugh this report.

How To Set Up

Setting up on Twitter to have your own account is easy, but there are a few things that you should be aware of when organizing your account. This can apply even if you already have an existing account too, so consider these tips and it can improve your entire Twittter experience.

The first thing to do if you don't have an account is go to http://www.twitter.com which is the home page of Twitter. You will be asked to either login or register. If you don't have an account, then of course you will need to register. So let's go through the registration process and explain it all here.

Registration

The Twitter screen will ask you for your first name and last name and will then check this is entered correctly. A green tick will appear next to the box.

The next box asks you for a user name and this is where you need to give some thought to how you are going to represent yourself on Twitter. You should remember that you can set up more than one account on Twitter, but you will need a different email address for each one.

Now this is where the thinking bit comes in. The first account you register should always be in your own name if you can get it. Naturally, common names like JohnSmith (there are no spaces in usernames) will already be taken. However it is possible to get variations on your own name such as John_Smith, or John_Smith23 or some variation like that. You can only use an underscore in a username. Hyphens are not permitted in the field.

It isn't absolutely critical that you register your own name, but I would advise you do if you can, particularly if your name is an unusual one. I'm sure the last thing you want is someone else impersonating you on Twitter, or anywhere else for that matter.

If you wish to register a business name, then you can do that of course, but make your you use your own name in the sign up process so you are identifiable and connected with the business name you register. The concepts and reasons for operating under each type of registration will be discussed later.

You are now asked for your email address. Email addresses are linked to accounts and you will only be able to use your email address once. For every account you register, you will need a different email address.

The last thing to do is to fill in the Captcha letters and then click on Create My Account.

The next screen will ask if you want to add any of your friends from the

popular web based email programs. You can do this later if you wish.

The next screen presents a short list of people who Twitter asks if you would like to follow. Choose some if you like, but I wouldn't bother. I prefer to find my own friends on Twitter.

When you click Finish, you will then be taken to your very own Twitter account. You are logged in and ready to go!

Your Settings

Next thing we are going to do is fill out our settings and this is very important on Twitter. You will find the access to this at the top right of the screen, fourth link from the left.

On this page you will notice there are some tabs across the top. For the moment we will concentrate on the Account tab.

The information you entered on joining is already entered here, but now it's time to pad this out so people can find you on Twitter and you also make yourself an interesting person to be followed. People will use the information you enter here to make that decision, but much of what is entered is also searchable on Twitter and through various third party applications.

One thing to note is that you can change your username at any time on this screen. You just have to enter your password to do so. Although it can be done, it can confuse your follower base, so I wouldn't recommend doing it on a weekly basis.

First of all change your time zone to your own and then move onto the one line bio.

Your Bio

You have 160 characters here to "sell" yourself. Take some time over it and do it well. Don't simply enter a bunch of keywords as they appear totally uninteresting to people, although they may get you found. Use keywords by all means, but start your Bio with the words "I am" and then describe yourself.

So you might put for example:-

I am a keen gardener and hiker who also has a passion for the outdoors, internet marketing and affiliate marketing who also loves social media.

Now that description is only 143 characters, so you could still get some more keywords in the bio. No doubt you can see the ones that are there which are gardener, hiker, internet marketing, affiliate marketing and social media. Using these terms in your bio will have you coming up in search results when people are looking for other like minded individuals to follow. As you can see, it is worth taking some time to get the bio right.

Balance of Screen

Enter your web site name or blog here if you have one. Make sure you include the http:// prefix to the address.

Your location is next and is also important so people can search and find others in their same area. It will also be important to you if you are chasing rankings on Twitter as users are ranking by their locations.

Protect Updates

This is included if you want to have a private account and you have to approve followers. NEVER turn this on if you intend to use Twitter to meet new people. They just couldn't be bothered requesting permission to follow you unless they know you personally.

You can now save your settings, but note here that there is also a link to delete your account should you ever wish to do so.

Devices

You can enter your mobile phone number here if you want Twitter updates to your phone. Personally, I can't think of anything worse, particularly if you have a couple of thousand followers.

Notices

You can have Twitter "nudge" you with a text to your mobile phone if you haven't updated in 24 hours. What a pain!

The Replies function is an interesting one and will determine what tweets you see that are prefixed with the @ symbol. This is how you direct a tweet to a particular individual. There is a great help screen explanation on this, so go there to make your decision.

The rest of the notices are self explanatory. It is worth noting that the Direct Messages possibly needs a bit of explanation though as to what they are if you are new to Twitter. If you are following someone and they are following you, Direct Messages can be sent that won't appear in the Twitter timeline. They are essentially private messages between two people. If you are an infrequent user of Twitter, it may be worthwhile to switch on receiving notifications by email so you can respond. Otherwise leave it off as it will just fill up your mail box with more clutter.

Likewise, the notifications that you have a new follower just adds to your email and I would leave it off unless you like the buzz of being told someone new has followed you.

Picture Tab

This is really important. When you open this page you will see the small avatar on the screen which is the default for Twitter. If you want new followers, putting a photo of yourself here is imperative. If you are running the Twitter account for your company or business, then your logo is ideal. But just put something so you can be identified in the Tweetstream by your followers. The graphic is often more important than your name when people are scanning Tweets and you will stand out for yours.

Design Tab

Here you can change the background of your Twitter page from the default.

Twitter provides a number of alternatives that you can select or you can upload your own background. You can also change all the colors if you wish. Again, whatever you do, just change it so you are not running the default. It shows you have taken some time setting up your account.

A note here worth mentioning is that with the plethora of Twitter client applications out there, many people don't even look at your web page anymore. Still, it is one component of your presence on Twitter and is worth doing well. Later on I will show you places where you can get a more professional background than those offered here.

Well, that's it for the setup. The last thing to do now is to click on Home at the top of the screen and send your first Tweet. Something like, "Hi, I've just joined Twitter and am looking forward to meeting interesting people" is a good first one to send. Just type it in and click the Update button.

Twitter Client Applications

The biggest problem with the standard Twitter web application is that you have to keep an eagle eye on your replies and Direct Messages as you only see the main Tweetstream on the screen. It is also limited in that it only displays about the last 20 tweets, so if you want to see older ones, you have to keep going back pages. So what to do?

Easy, download Tweetdeck from http://www.tweetdeck.com The first thing you will probably notice is that you will need to change the settings as the default is white text on a black screen. Makes it hard to read I've found, but each to their own.

Tweetdeck is brilliant in that it displays the Tweetstream, your replies and your direct messages all on the one screen. The message columns allow for 500 tweets as a default, so scrolling down allows you to go back a fair way or search for tweets you may want to refer back to.

The screen has a continuous right hand scroll, so you can set up different

groups and their tweets will appear in that column. You might have a group called best friends and another for gardeners for instance. That way you don't miss important tweets from people who are more important to you than others. At the time of writing, Tweetdeck is probably the most widely used application for Twitter and I would highly recommend it to you.

Your Tweets

Start getting some tweets into the system now. On the Twitter home page, it asks What You Are Doing. Quite frankly many people don't care until you have built a relationship with them as a result of following. But there are some good ways to get started. Follow some blogs that you are interested in via an RSS feed to a feed reader such as Google. (Search these on Google if you are not familiar with the terms. There is heaps of information on there and could occupy an ebook of its own.) Start by posting links to interesting posts on Twitter about them with a link to the blog post. For example: "Interesting post on pest control in tomatos. Link". Make sure you always include http:// in the link and not just www so the link is clickable in the Tweetstream. If it's a long link, Tweetdeck has a facility to shorten it to a small url.

Another good way of starting out tweeting is with quotes. Do a search for some quotes of interest and tweet these. Personal development ones are great and also quotes by famous people. Here's one I just found in the Tweetstream as an example: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." — Aristotle. There are thousands of these all over the internet that you can use.

Whatever you do, at no stage of your Twitter career start posting sales tweet after sales tweet. Your career will be shortlived if you do and people will unfollow you very quickly. Twitter is about engagement, value and a social experience. A constant flow of sales links is just not on. By all means post links to your products or sites, but keep them to around 5% of your total tweets at the most.

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