The Twitter Book

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"Media organizations should take note of Twitter's power to quickly reach their target consumers." --Tim O'Reilly (@timoreilly), in a Los Angeles Times interview, March 2009

This practical guide will teach you everything you need to know to quickly become a Twitter power user. It includes information on the latest third party applications, strategies and tactics for using Twitter's 140-character messages as a serious--and effective--way to boost your business, as well as how to turn Twitter into your personal newspaper, tracking breaking news and learning what matters to you and your friends.

Co-written by Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein, widely followed and highly respected twitterers, the practical information in *The Twitter Book* is presented in an innovative, visually rich format that's packed with clear explanations and examples of best practices that show Twitter in action, as demonstrated by the work of over 60 twitterers.

This book will help you:

Use Twitter to connect with colleagues, customers, family, and friends Stand out on Twitter Avoid common Twitter gaffes and pitfalls Build a critical professional communications channel with Twitter--and use the best third-party tools that help you manage it. If you want to know how to use Twitter like a pro, *The Twitter Book* will quickly get you up to speed.

About the authors:

Tim O Reilly (@timoreilly), founder and CEO of O Reilly Media, has hundreds of thousands of followers on Twitter. Sarah Milstein (@SarahM) frequently writes, speaks and teaches about Twitter; she was the 21st user of Twitter.

The Twitter Book Details

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Siddharth Belbase says

Didn't find useful. I knew all those whistle and bells before I read this book. A lot of things have happened in twitter yet it's explaining those old tidbits. Some pages define meaning that I didn't know before. I guess this manual is not for a IT student but hey, this can be handy for a starter. Good Luck!

Freda Mans-Labianca says

This was a great and instructional book for everything you need to know about Twitter. Unfortunately I have been on Twitter for some time, and found I knew the details of the book already. However, for those that don't know of Twitter, and I'm sure there's a few, this book would be the best tool to familiarize yourself with it. An easy lay out and illustrations show you step-by-step all there is to Tweeting. I am putting this on my recommendation list, for the savvy people out there!!!

Alicia says

Some great ideas for the beginner twitterer, or for those looking to add some very simple and fast social media to their marketing repertoire. I highly suggest interacting with the authors online - they can personalize the experience of reading the book to your particular needs, questions and ideas. Check out all of the websites they suggest, as well - even if you don't use them, you'll have an idea of what's available to your followers.

Edward B. says

I got this semi-randomly: I wanted to get O'Reilly's latest (WTF?: What's the Future and Why It's Up to Us) from the library but it was out, and this one happened to be available, so I grabbed it, not even really knowing what it was; I would have expected an analysis of Twitter's technology, impact, and business - but it turned out to be a simple introduction to what Twitter is and how to get started on it.
The book was published in 2009!
Many of the fundamentals are still valid, of course: 140 characters (well, actually 280 now), hashtags, @-mentions, retweets, following, DMs, ...
But the book also talks extensively about specific clients and third-party websites that support the ecosystem, and I would be mildly interested to know how many of those are still around.

Anyway, the book did nothing to convince me that Twitter has any value *for me*.
Obviously millions of people would disagree on their own behalf, and obviously that's fine. More power to them (until someone decides that Twitter really needs to start making some money, and all those Twitterers suddenly become the product rather than the customers that they thought they were).
And, indeed, I myself enjoy reading the occasional clever or important Twitter posting or exchange as I wander around the internet.

But to be involved with it in real time every day - that just sounds like a HUGE (addictive) time-sink to me. And I really don't need any help in that area...

Pedro Plassen says

Great little book about Twitter essentials. Helps set you up, explains the rules and meanings (even for someone 'experienced') behind what goes around conversations, provides great references for tools that might help you manage the 'river of information'.
A great last section dedicated to the Corporate perspective: how companies should approach communication, how the company image should be presented (some great graphical ideas here!), pitfalls if expectations are not managed before followers/customers and some tools for helping keeping track of events.

Christa Avampato says

When I read, appropriately enough on Twitter, that Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein had written The Twitter Book, I couldn't wait to scoop up a copy. Literally. So I sent a message to the book's Twitter account and asked if I could get an early copy to review. The book is so clear and concise, so necessary to the social media world, that I wondered why on Earth it has taken so long for this kind of book to be written. Tim and Sarah are the perfect people to publish this type of work, both experts in the tool itself and in the art of communication. We're lucky to have them.

The Twitter Book is appropriate for people who've never heard of Twitter, who don't understand it, who like the concept though aren't sure how to use it, and for Twitter addicts like me. Whether you're an individual looking to build your own personal brand on-line, someone who is considering starting a business, or part of a large company, the book is chock full of ideas, resources, and helpful advice.

I recommend getting a copy of this book and using it as a constant reference the same way you'd use any top-rate how-to guide. I also found that it was incredibly helpful to have my computer in front of me so I could actually experiment with the different tips and resources that Tim and Sarah suggest. Within the pages of the book I also found a few other great people to follow on Twitter.

From a personal brand building stand-point, I found dozens of great ideas in The Twitter Book. (For those interested in how The Twitter Book helps business brand building, please see my Business Strategies column on Examiner.com. http://www.examiner.com/x-2901-NY-Bus...) Here are three of my favorite ideas to give you a flavor of what awaits you in this book:

1.) Twitter gives you the opportunity have superhuman powers you've always wanted: you can read people's minds and overhear conversations as if you're a fly on the wall.

2.) The art of brevity and timing is priceless. Highest traffic days are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, business hours in EST. That's when the most links, ideas, and thoughts get replies (direct messages - dms - or @ messages) and passed around ("re-tweeted"). People need to see your message ("tweet") within 5 minutes of you posting it or they likely won't see it at all. And make it concise and interesting because you've only got 140 characters to get your point across.

3.) Jargon explained. I hate to be in acronym city. I think a lot of people use acronyms and catch-phrases to make themselves seem better informed than anyone else around. It annoys me. Twitter is no exception. A lot of people scratch their heads when they hear words like "tweet", "tweeple", and "tweetup". I don't blame them. I did the same thing and for a long while the jargon scared me off. I belonged to Twitter for a year and was mostly inactive before I figured out why it mattered and how it could be useful to me. The most valuable reason to pick up The Twitter Book is to have experts Tim and Sarah explain the jargon in very straight-forward terms, and then show you how the tool can be a very powerful part of your overall brand-building toolkit.

Before Tim and Sarah even get the discussion going in the book, they ask for suggestions to improve and enhance the content. The book has given me a lot of great ideas and I want to return the favor to them with a few ideas to consider for the next edition.

1.) For people brand new to Twitter, a glossary of terms would be very helpful.
2.) A set of easy to reference lists in the appendix would be handy. Common mistakes to avoid on Twitter, top companies using Twitter effectively, etc.
3.) An expanded section on how non-profits can use Twitter. It is briefly touched on in the book and I'd love to learn more from Tim and Sarah on new ideas that are particular to nonprofits that would help organizations increase awareness through Twitter.

An easy and endlessly helpful resource, The Twitter Book will accelerate the growth and power of Twitter. Generous and honest, Tim and Sarah skillfully help their readers take part in the conversation. The Twitter Book will be available for purchase on May 26, 2009.

Maria Gebhardt says

"The Twitter Book" shows you how to sign up and create your profile on Twitter. It deals with the seemingly endless opportunities that Twitter offers for users. O'Reilly and Milstein also explain in detail what makes your Twitter account stand out and how not to spam anyone. For more experienced users, it showcases additional applications such as the TweetDeck and mobile client and explains how to use Twitter tools to analyze influence rating and clout.

It offers Twitter tips throughout to help you understand how Twitter works and how to get the most out of your account. It also explains this new trend in detail and gives even the newest user essential tips to tweat all day.

Jj Kwashnak says

Twitter is one of the buzzwords most bandied about in terms of social media and marketing, yet it is the one that most defies simple explanation. In most cases, when someone asks about Twitter they are told that they just need to explore it for themselves. Some see Twitter as the ultimate expression of narcissism ("I'm eating a bowl of cereal right now.") but at the same time it has become a force for information - much early information on the Mumbai terrorist attacks and the plane landing in the Hudson first came from Twitter users. And of course business buzzwords exclaim "You have to get your company on Twitter." O'Reilly and Milstein step in, extend a helping hand for the new user and help shine a light on the world of

microblogging. Step by step, amply illustrated with screen shots and actual "tweets" the authors get the reader through signing up for the service, how it works, what the lingo means and how to try and avoid the pitfalls novices are prone to. Twitter is notorious for having "no rules" but it does have a number of (written and unwritten) "conventions" that can make or mar the experience of a new user. The book is not a "how to" as much as a "let us show you around, and introduce you to many of the helper sites that you might want to explore further." An experienced user may find the book only slightly helpful, but for the new user it can be an invaluable guidebook to getting up and running in Twitter with a positive experience. If possible this book should be required reading when someone signs up for a new Twitter account.

Kevin says

I don't get Twitter, after reading this book I understand it a little better but still don't really see the attraction to the service that because of it's limitations (160 characters, no RSS feeds anymore) forces users to learn or guess at abbreviations to understand what people are talking about. I'm not a facebook user either but that's more about privacy concerns then obections to the service. I'm on Google+ because Google already had my info through gmail, blogger, docs, calendar. But I wanted to understand Twitter and this quick read helps with that and to be fair to Twitter and Tim O'Reilly I'm going to try his guaranteed method. Been at it 3 days now and while I not as confused, I haven't really been entertained or as informed as G+ has in the same time frame.

This is from the first chapter

> **Try it for three weeks or your money back—guaranteed!**
> People often say that they dip into Twitter once or twice and don't get it. Which is understandable since the real value of Twitter becomes evident only after you've followed a few accounts for a while and have absorbed their rhythms.
> If you're having trouble seeing what all the fuss is about, try this tactic:
> follow at least a few promising accounts, and then for three weeks, log into Twitter daily (ideally using one of the life-changing programs we describe in Chapter 2), catch up on messages and click around for five to ten minutes. Every few days, make sure to check the trending topics (described in Chapter 2). Finally, spend 30 minutes one day running a few searches (also described in Chapter 2) to see what you can learn from the discussions on Twitter.
> At the end of three weeks, you'll have spent five hours total giving a fair shake to the most important new communications tool we've seen since email. (If it still doesn't work for you, pass this book along to a friend.)

If your interested in learning about social media in general or Twitter in particular I'd recommend this book

Tim says

I co-authored this book, so I'm biased, but I think we did a great job on putting together a quick read that teaches a whole lot, quickly, and does a decent job of spanning the range from novices to experienced users.

Dhuaine says

Fun and concise book about Twitter, just like Twitter itself. I'm a Twitter fan and I often found myself nodding in agreement with what I'd just read. I picked up this book hoping for more tips on commercial/branding aspects of using Twitter, instead of more personal ones. I didn't learn much, but it doesn't mean the book was bad - it's just only about Twitter itself as a service and a community, not going into possible applications. Great overview if you're getting started with Twitter.

Bill says

Recently, I purchased The Twitter Book by Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein. It is a must purchase for any one thinking about using Twitter or anyone already using Twitter. It is full of lots of great tips and suggestions on using Twitter. I learned a lot from it. I was going to write a long review of the book but others have already done that. I purchased the print version and the e-book version. So far, it is the only book where I have done that. I have been reading the e-book on a two monitor set up with the book on one screen and my web browser in the other. Go out and buy it from O'Reilly.

Terez says

This book written in a straight-forward, informative way that will not intimidate readers who have never used the micro-blogging service Twitter before.

Even if you are a twitter veteran, Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein include great tips and third party resources any one can use to get the most of this popular and powerful service.

Highly recommended.

Jeffrey Smith says

Borrowed this from the library - and lost it. $15 fine assessed. If you find it let me know. Other than that problem, I got allot from this book. Twitter is a river that is constantly flowing at an amazing rate. Just dip your toe in every once in a while to find out what is going on. If you tweet, it will be seen by thousands or millions of people - within about 1 hour. After that, it will be ancient history. Using #Hashtags can widen your audience due to people who are interested in the same topics. The book is already a bit dated, but not too bad. Some of the apps and services discussed in the book no longer exist.

Melissa says

This little book is chock full of helpful hints on how to use Twitter. The format is very good for those who

like things in Tweet-sized chunks. Each 2-page spread has a short blurb of text on the right, giving you one nugget of information, and screen shots of actual tweets on the left that are examples of what that page is talking about.

They talk about getting started with Twitter, how to listen in and learn how it works, how Twitter can be used for conversations (and tips to do that more effectively), to share information and ideas, and for business.

You can pick it up and flip through it, or read it from cover to cover. Either way you'll get something you can use right away.