



Project “More Women in European Politics – More Women in 2014”

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Social media campaigning guidelines (Melanie Herdon)

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Social media campaigning guidelines

Introduction

Online tools have become an important component of almost any movement for change. The best-used digital advocacy tools include websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, email, and SMS (text). Hundreds of 'social media' applications exist that *could* be used for advocacy, but to get started, you should spend time and resources where your supporters are most likely to be: **probably Facebook and Twitter.**

Advantages of using social media: There are little or no hard costs for set-up and yet you can have a potentially wide reach. And, as well as instantaneous sharing of messages, these forms of communication offer new opportunities to listen to, and engage with, people, as well as to monitor your progress.

When to post on Facebook and Twitter: You can join and participate in online activity at any time – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, provided you have access to a web-enabled computer, tablet, or smartphone. However, timing is an important consideration when carrying out specific tasks such as posting messages to your fans and followers. **First thing in the morning, lunchtime are peak traffic times for Facebook and Twitter and again from 5pm through to 9pm (peak time).** Twitter is most active on Thursdays and Fridays. Facebook non-profit activities (such as campaigns and awareness-raising) see more activity at the weekend, especially Sundays. Email is typically better read on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mid-morning and mid-afternoon. So think about *when* your potential supporters are most likely to be in 'receive mode' and give thought to the timing of your messages.

For Twitter there is a web app called [Tweriod](#) which **analyses your specific followers and determines peak times they will be online.** If *you* cannot be online at those times (often because it is after work hours or at weekends), there is a great web app tool called [Buffer](#) that **allows you to “buffer” posts which will then be posted at the times you have scheduled.** There are other apps out there that do similar things but Buffer is probably the easiest to use, and allows for Twitter *and* Facebook accounts to be connected.

Anyone can use social media: The perception is that social media reaches young people primarily, but in fact its growth is explosive and far-reaching. People of all ages around the world are increasingly using social media. *For more statistics please see under specific guides for Facebook and Twitter, as follows.*

Skills/tactics needed to drive social change through social media:

- **Focus** – hatch a clear goal that will make an impact
- **Grab Attention** – stick out in an overcrowded, over-messaged, noisy world – keep it short and smart!
- **Engage** – make people connect with your goal
- **Take Action** – empower others, enable them, and cultivate a movement

How do you use social media for digital advocacy?

We understand you may be worried about using social media in your campaigns but you should remind yourself that if you are campaigning for change you might expect to change yourself, to a degree! I'm afraid we can't ignore where our target audiences are, and how best to reach them, so you are going to have to dive in and play around with Twitter and Facebook until you feel comfortable to make that campaigning presence. Don't worry. These guidelines will show you how and **I (Mel Herdon) will also be able to answer your questions if you post them on the Women Into Politics Facebook group** which you have joined.

But before you do anything you will need to **conduct a brief strategic review**: Clarify your main goals and your social media objectives. In the busy world of social media, **the most important thing to remember is to stay focused on your advocacy objectives** – what are the outcomes you want to achieve? You don't want to get caught up participating in online activity that doesn't support your goals directly or indirectly.

Research and evaluate where your supporters are most likely to be online, what they do and when they do it. With digital advocacy, you'll want to identify who is most likely to support your cause, and go to them.

Evaluate what time and resources are available to you and your team. Don't overextend yourself. Be realistic about your ability to engage on any specific platform. Choose a central channel for online advocacy efforts – e.g. a Facebook Page, or your own campaign website - and use additional social efforts such as Twitter, email and blogging to point people toward your main channel.

Determine how you will measure success at the start of the project. Begin by envisioning “the big picture” outcomes of how you'd like your social media efforts to turn out, then develop specific success metrics that will help you evaluate each platform you plan to use. Fortunately, it is easy to track such data through the free analytic tools available, some which are built into the social network itself. *More about analytics under the Facebook and Twitter guidelines.*

Remember - you are going to have to be very tenacious. I am afraid most people are not going to be very bothered about your campaign or cause! They think that stuff going on in the world doesn't affect them. For example most young women who didn't grow up in the 60s and 70s, see 'feminism' and 'equality' through

a very different lens to those of us who are older. To talk to them you might need to test out some core messages on young women to get a feel for what works.

Don't use Facebook and Twitter to promote 'slacktivism'! Slacktivism is the 'lazy activism' embodied by online petitions and people just 'Liking' a Facebook page or 'Following' a Twitter feed. Slacktivism rarely creates *real change*. A petition is fine but only as part of an integrated campaign of activities and your Facebook and Twitter presences are best served to share information about how to get more deeply involved in the campaign, promote events, share strong content that your followers and likers can share with their followers and friends and so on. You can also use these social networks to ask questions and get feedback and have conversations to enhance your campaigns. But don't just have a strategy to get followers and likes. It is important to encourage people to like and follow you but, on its own, it's not enough – you need them to get more deeply involved.

Facebook campaigning

Why do I need a Facebook Page – what can it do for my campaign?

The breadth of Facebook's network is enormous: as of March 2013 there are more than 1.11 billion active users and approximately 50% of active users log on to Facebook every day. As of May 2013 Facebook reached 750 million monthly users on mobile (phones and tablets like the iPad). The average age of a Facebook user is 30 years old though 46% of users are over 45 years old. About 57% of Facebook are women and the fastest growing group are women of 55-65 years. More than three quarters of Facebook users have gone on to higher education.

Creating a Facebook Page for your country's campaign is a great way to raise the campaign's profile and bring attention to your advocacy efforts and other activities. A Facebook Page allows you to:

- create a basic profile describing the mission of your campaign
- make your community (the people involved or interested in your campaign) aware of your local presence
- post news related to important issues
- alert supporters to your advocacy efforts
- encourage dialogue posting to your feed
- share photos, videos and links to other web content

What will success look like?

Success on your Facebook Page isn't just about people 'Liking' it. Likes are important as those who Like you (your Fans) will then see your posts in their own Facebook news feeds. But you want people to pay attention to those posts – so ultimately when they 'Like' a post that's worth as much as liking your page and shows they are paying attention. You also want them to comment and share. If they comment then you are getting real feedback from them. If they share, well that's like gold as that means a portion of their Facebook friends will see the shared content too.

That's why the content of your posts is so important – a meaningful video, a powerful image or a text post that makes people really think – like a shocking but wittily phrased statistic. Think about the kind of stuff you've shared with friends by email (links to articles, photos, ideas, jokes) and you can understand what kind of stuff 'shares' well. And make sure you ask your readers to share it!

How to set up a Facebook campaigning page

It's free to set up a Page and it only takes a few minutes to get started.

- First click **Create a Page...** from the menu down on the left hand side of your main Facebook screen.
- Choose **Cause or community** from the options on the next page.
- Choose a **Page name** that represents your campaign but write it without punctuation. Facebook will accept hyphens here.
- Agree to their Terms and Conditions (i.e. tick the box).
- Then press **Get Started**.
- On the next screen you need to put the **short description of you campaign**. This is to help search engines find you so try to incorporate use some useful words like 'women' 'politics' and 'campaign' that people might search for. Make sure it is short, friendly and to the point. Don't use complicated academic or technical sounding language – simple and clear is best. This is part of your marketing!
- In the field below you can put your campaign's or organisation's **website address**. Or the campaign blog if you have one.
- On the right you will see the words **Add another site** so if you want to put your Twitter address in you could add that. Or you can add it later if you are starting with Facebook.
- You have to answer the Yes/No questions now. I think for all of you the first question will be a YES. But the second one *could* be a NO if your organisation already has an official Facebook page. Otherwise, it's probably a YES.
- Then click **Save Info**.
- You now have to choose your profile picture. This should be a small square picture which should, if possible, be pre-sized to 300 x 300 pixels and saved as a .png file (which will be shown better quality by Facebook than a .jpg). But don't worry if you can't pre-size it – Facebook will do that for you. Just make sure it is of good enough quality and *square*, with some space between the logo edges and the edges of the picture file. *Facebook chops the edges off!*
- Click **Upload from computer** and then find the file on your computer.
- When you've got the right file click **Open**.
- It will eventually appear in the box. If you are happy with it proceed to the next stage and click **Next**.
- On the next screen you get to set a memorable web address for your Facebook page. Facebook will try to automatically choose the most sensible for you (from your Facebook page name that you chose before) i.e. www.facebook.com/NameofCampaign - you can alter it, but remember, this time you can't have any spaces! When you are happy with it, press **Set Address**.
- The next page is about creating a **Facebook advert**. I think **you don't want to do this unless you**

think paying for Likes is going to be beneficial to your campaign (unlikely). So the best thing to do is ignore this screen and press **Skip**.

- You can now **Like** your own page. It's set up. But it hasn't got much going for it yet! The next stage is to make it look better and get some content up there!

Making the page look good

Facebook now whizzes you round the page, asking you to invite your email contacts and write a status update. You will want to do these things later. But not yet because really your page is not ready enough for everyone else! So press **Skip** on these options.

Now you will see the page is in 'Admin' mode – there's an **Admin Panel** at the top of your screen – it probably takes up most of your screen. *Don't worry* – your fans won't see this. Only you can because you are the administrator. Scroll down below the Admin area and you will see the top of your page. On the right hand side you will see a button called **Add a Cover**. You should add a cover photo to make your page look good. So press this button. Then choose **Upload Photo** so that Facebook can access where you keep your photos on your computer.

You will need to have chosen a **landscape** cover photo that represents your campaign. It's the first thing people will see when they visit your Page. Cover photos are 851 pixels wide and 315 pixels tall. If you upload an image that's smaller than these dimensions, it will get stretched to this larger size. So choose a nice big quality picture. *Also make sure you have the rights to the image*. Photographers are among the most heavily protected professionals in the world and stealing a photo from an online library without paying can result in a heavy fine as photo archives use digital signatures in their image files to track usage! If you want to find copyright free images on the web try this link: <http://search.creativecommons.org/>.

If your picture is bigger than 851 x 315 pixels, you can **Drag to Reposition Cover** photo (see the centre of it on the page and click-drag. Make sure you have chosen a photo that doesn't have any important feature or writing on the left hand side as your profile icon will overlap it on the page. When you are happy with the position press the button on the bottom right **Save Changes**.

Other important details about the Admin Panel

You can view Insights, edit your Page content, and keep track of new activity and respond to personal messages from your **Admin Panel**. *You will find more information about Facebook Insights further down this guide*. Click on the **Edit Page** button in the admin panel and choose Update Info, campaign description and add other details about your campaign.

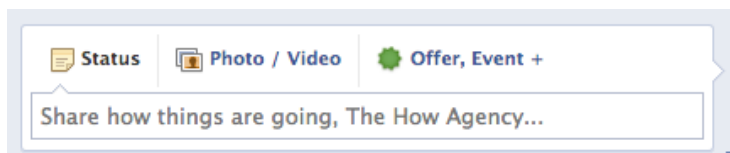
Add another admin to your Page

For another person to be the admin of the page (you can have more than one admin) they first have to **Like** the page. Then, at the top of your page click **Edit Page** and select **Manage Admin Roles**. Enter the name

of the person to be added. Click **Manager** below the name to choose the admin role. Then click **Save** and type your personal password to confirm the addition.

You're ready to create your first post

You can create different kinds of posts on your Page including updates, photos, videos, events and questions. The people who **Like** your Page will see some of your posts in their news feed if they log into Facebook at a time when you have recently posted. You post stuff into the **Status** field:



The Power of Facebook's News Feed

Your Page is where you create posts that get shown in the News Feed, the centre of the Facebook experience. News Feed is where people spend their time on Facebook – in fact, 40% of their time

It's where people share the most important parts of their lives and where organisations can engage them in conversations.

Successful posts are...

- **Short:** Posts between 100 and 250 characters get about 60% more Likes, Comments and Shares
- **Visual:** Photo albums, single pictures and videos get 180%, 120%, and 100% more engagement respectively
- **Optimised:** Page Insights help you learn things such as what times people engage most with your content so you can post during those hours.

Invite people you know to Like your Page

Unless they search for your page within Facebook, people won't see your posts unless you get them to **Like** your Page. You've probably got a community of friends, family, work contacts and colleagues who care about your campaign. So first invite them to like your Page. You can do this by:

- Exploring the options under the **Build Audience** button on your **Admin Panel**. Be sure to invite all your Facebook friends to Like your Page.
- Click on **Invite Email Contacts** to upload your email list and send a message asking people to Like your Page.
- **Promote your Page address** on signs, business cards, receipts, emails, and other materials.
- Download free **Facebook table tents** promote your Page - <http://fbrep.com//SMB/tent-cards-self-serve.pdf> (Don't forget to insert your Facebook Page address on them before you print!)

- **Add Facebook buttons** to your website, email signature, email newsletter, and blog that link straight to your Facebook page address. Please note that if your website developer adds 'like' buttons to your website this doesn't direct to your Facebook page but instead allows the user to share the content of your website or blog on their Facebook feed. It's also a good idea! For more about this get your website developer or manager to look here (it's a bit technical):

<https://developers.facebook.com/docs/reference/plugins/like/>

Posting and responding to comments – create a policy

People spend time on Facebook communicating and sharing with others, so always engage in two-way conversations by commenting back when they **Comment** on your posts.

- Think about the aspects of your campaign that are 'social' and create content that people will be excited to pass along through the **Share** functionality that is seen under each post.
- Post interesting content with clear calls to action that encourage interaction and sharing. As stated before, videos and pictures are popular.
- Keep content fresh and easy to consume, and **reward people for their loyalty** e.g. by offering prizes, tickets to events or other opportunities to be involved e.g. work experience. When you contact them to say they've 'won' something, ask them to direct message you with their contact details – *they must not put their personal details in a comment* as everyone can see that!
- **Be honest.** Inside Facebook, the most powerful message is one delivered by one friend to another. This means that you need to ensure that every post is as human, open and honest as possible.
- **Keep a consistent experience throughout your posts.** For example, if you post a lot of videos, use the same video format. Try to achieve a consistency in quality of photos and style of writing – think of it like a brand, the brand of your campaign, and decide your approach at the start.
- **Stick to a regular broadcasting schedule for your updates and content releases.** Your fans appreciate knowing when and how often to expect updates from your Page, and others in your organisation who may be providing you with content might appreciate knowing what scheduling guidelines to keep to.

Just like in the real world, building relationships with people on Facebook takes time and patience. It doesn't happen overnight.

Also, you will see in the Status field an option called Offer, Event +. Click on the link to add an event, and also to ask Facebook Questions (like polling). It's a useful way to gather the opinions from your audience.



As the page admin you can delete and hide posts and comments – just click the little Pencil-shaped icon in the corner:



Moderating the community on your Page

Comments are a vital part of any Facebook Page, especially one created for a campaign. To build lasting relationships with the people who Like your page, you need to work out who in your organisation is responsible for responding to what comments, and when. This policy depends on how active your fans are on your Page. Here are some points to keep in mind for responding to comments:

- **Whenever possible, 'direct' the conversation** Don't let a conversation get out of hand. You can continue the conversation on the news feed or, if appropriate, get the their e-mail address (ask them to send it in a Facebook message, not on the feed) and then contact them in a 'closed' environment.
- **Respond to your fans with the same method that they lodged their message** If a fan reaches out to you in a positive manner via a comment to a post or a message on your Timeline, by all means, keep the conversation going within that post. If someone asks a question, don't direct them to your website for more information; instead, respond within the conversation on Facebook.
- **Address your fans' needs before your campaign needs** This is about 'understanding the voice of the fan' — meaning what they value — and nowhere is this more important than in Facebook.

Fans usually expect a response within 24 hours A lack of response could discourage fans and they will go elsewhere. Although generally you want to respond to comments within 24 hours, in some cases — such as with an angry person who's never going to be happy with anything you might say — you may be better off not responding at all. Trying to decide when, and when not to, respond can be tricky, so here are some tips to help you make this decision:

- **Remove any comments that are clearly in breach of Facebook's community standards** – see <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards>. You can remove comments by hovering your cursor over the top right hand corner of the comment and pressing the **x** that appears. *Don't remove comments just because you disagree with their content – opinion should be responded to.*
- **If a mistake was made on your part you must respond and correct the situation quickly.** Apologies can go a long way if you explain that steps are being taken to correct the issue.
- **If someone leaves a negative comment about something that never actually took place or is based on incorrect facts, correct them.** Always be polite because often people don't realise they've made an error. If you don't respond, however, this misconception could spread and escalate.
- **An irate person may never be satisfied, so you may be better off not doing anything.** Sometimes, people direct their frustration with the world toward you and your Facebook Page. If you're dealing with such a person — you can figure out whether you are based on other comments they've made — it's often better not to enter a fight you're never going to win. Sometimes, a response does more harm than good. A negative comment can harm your campaign's online reputation. However, you don't want to engage in a debate if it will cause more problems. Often in

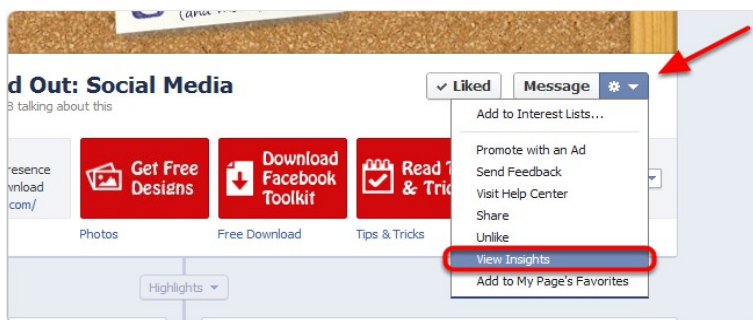
these situations, it's best to take a passive role, rather than an aggressive one.

- **And don't let anger affect your response.** Although the saying "it's not personal, it's just business," is good in principle, it's a lot harder in practice! Negative Facebook comments can make you angry. Rather than return a negative response, either get someone else who is less emotional about the situation to respond, or wait until your emotions calm down before responding. An angry response can go a long way in damaging your relationship with the fan *and can affect all who read it.*

Using Facebook Insights to analyse the success of your page

Once you've created and optimised your Facebook Page, you might be wondering how successful it really is. The Facebook Insights dashboard will help you determine **how successful your page is at generating likes, visits, clicks, and engagement**. It will also help you gauge whether or not your content and engagement strategies are working

Your Page needs at least 30 Likes to get any data to view Insights. To see your Insights dashboard, click on the settings icon at the top-right side of your page, below the cover photo, and then select **View Insights**.



There are two types of Facebook insights that you can analyse:

- **User Insights:** Total Likes, Friends of Fans (this lets you see your potential reach), Fan demographics, Page Visits, and Like Sources
- **Interaction Insights:** Post Activity (Likes, Shares, Comments), people "talking about your page," people posting to your Timeline.

With so much data to look at, it can get a bit overwhelming. Here are the key insights that I recommend you pay attention to, and keep track of on a monthly basis. Facebook also has got a great video tutorial if you want to decide for yourself which metrics to use: <https://www.facebook.com/help/336893449723054/>

- **Monthly fan base growth** Keep track of how many Likes your page has generated last month on the 1st day of every month. You can see this information right on the Overview tab. The percentage next to you shows how much growth this represents.



- **Post engagement and virality** See which types of posts are most effective at keeping your fans engaged, as well as sharing your posts with their friends, at the bottom of the **Overview** tab.

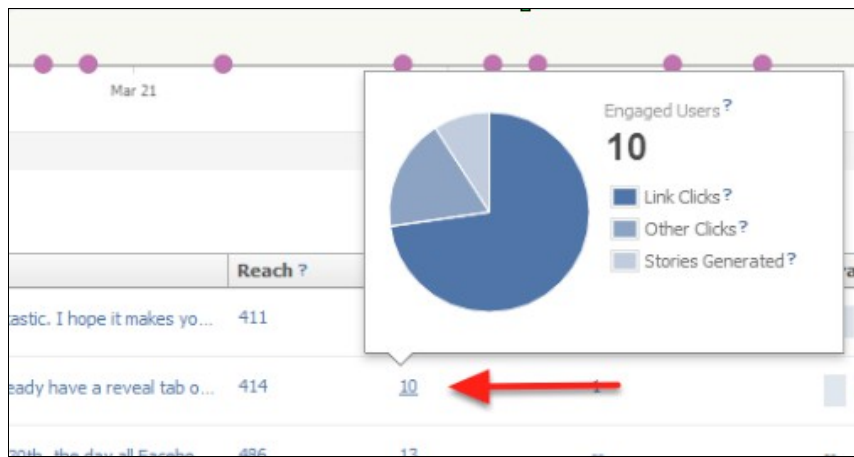
Page Posts

All Post Types

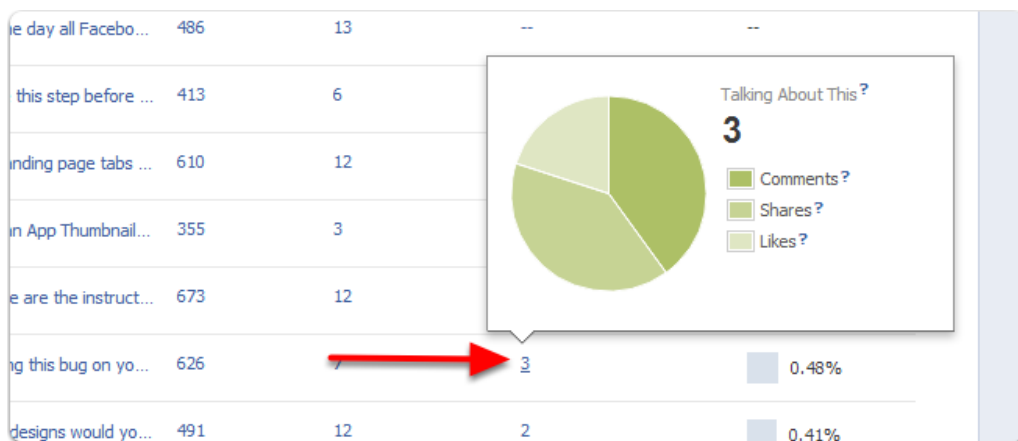
Date ?	Post ?	Reach ?	Engaged Users ?	Talking About This ?	Virality ?
4/4/12	This is fantastic. I hope it makes yo...	411	5	2	0.49%
4/2/12	Do you already have a reveal tab o...	414	10	1	0.24%
3/30/12	It's March 30th, the day all Facebo...	486	13	--	--
3/29/12	Remember to take this step before ...	413	6	--	--
3/27/12	Sad that default landing page tabs ...	610	12	2	0.33%
3/23/12	Can You Change an App Thumbnail...	355	3	--	--

Here's what each of the columns mean (*NB Facebook only includes numbers for the first 28 days after a post's publication*):

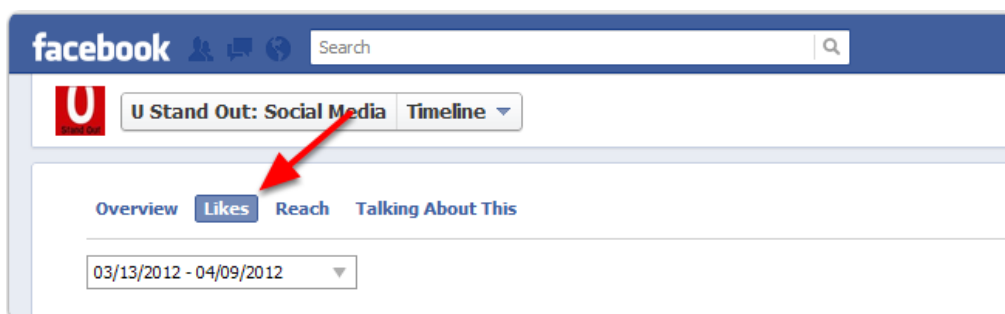
- **Date:** The date in which you posted each piece of content
- **Post:** An excerpt of the post that appeared on your Page
- **Reach:** This is the number of unique people who have seen your post
- **Engaged Users:** This is the number of people who have clicked on your post. This includes clicks on links *and* clicks on people's names, the timestamp, or the number of Likes *and* clicks on the **Share** link (which creates a 'story' on the user's own Timeline). Click on the number for more details.



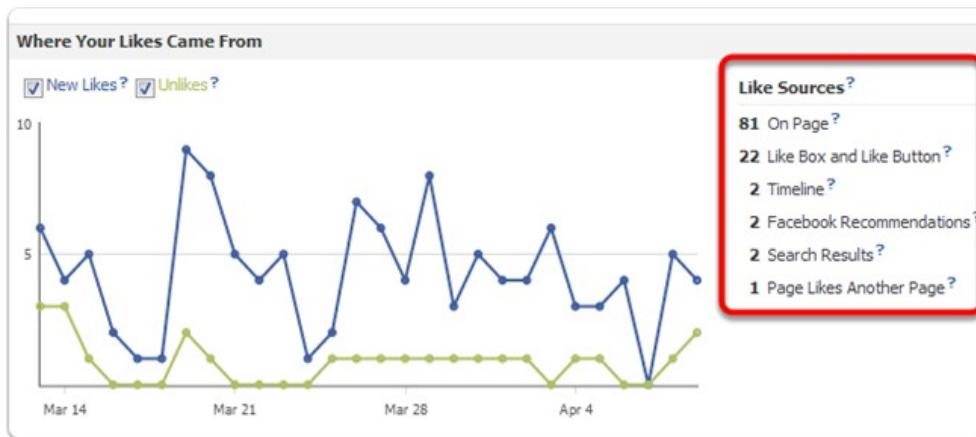
- **Talking About This:** This is the number of people who have created a 'Story' from your post. **Stories** are created when someone Likes, Comments on, or Shares your posts, answers a Question you posted, or responds to an Event you created. Click on the number to see the breakdown:



- **Virality** The percentage of people who have created a Story from your post out of the total number of unique people who have seen it.
- **Page Like source** This tells you where those Page Likes are coming from (it's not the same as liking your post, this is about your whole Facebook Page). If you have put a 'Like us on Facebook' button on your website it will also show up here.



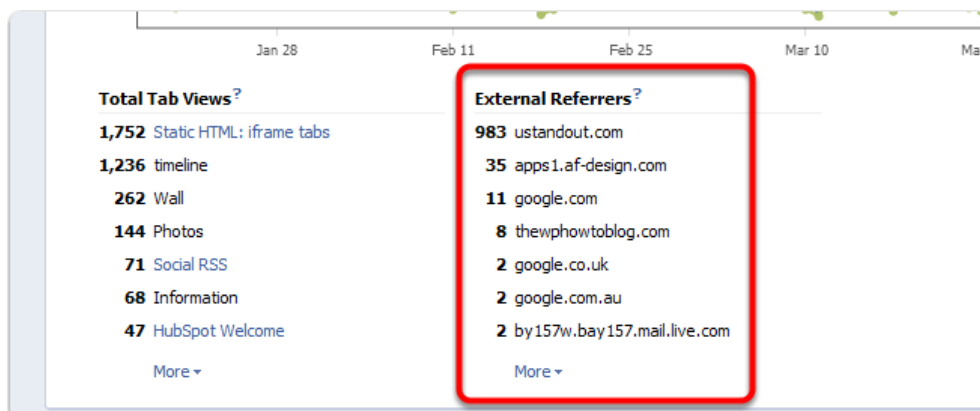
Then scroll down to the section called **Where Your Likes Came From**.



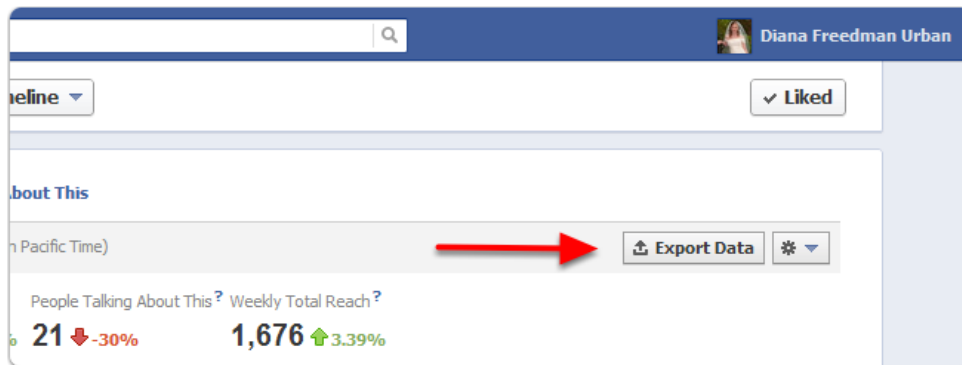
Here you can see which source generated the most likes:

- **On Page:** People who liked your page on the Page itself
- **Like Box and Like Button:** People who liked your Page by clicking “Like” on the Like box or Like us on Facebook button you added to your website.
- **Timeline:** People who liked your Page from the Likes section of someone else's Timeline
- **Facebook Recommendations:** People who liked your Page from a Recommended Pages unit on the right column of the Facebook news feed.
- **Search Results:** People who liked your Page from their Facebook search results
- **Page Likes Another Page:** Other Facebook Pages that have “liked” your Page, listing your Page as a favourite.

Referring traffic sources Right next to the Total Tab Views section, you’ll see the External Referrers section. This will show you which websites are sending the most traffic to your Facebook Page. (If you’re doing Facebook marketing on your website, it should be the #1 source of external traffic).

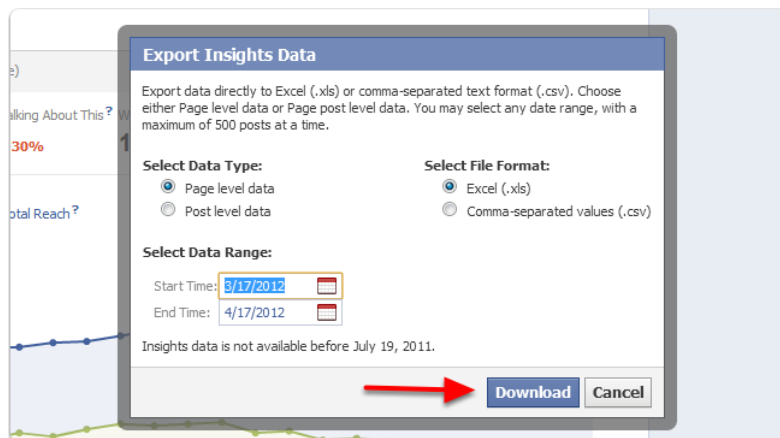


Export your data Some of the most valuable insights you can get will come from your exported Facebook data. You'll see the **Export** button at the top of each screen on your Insights dashboard.



Then you can select a time range, and which type of report you'd like to run:

- **Page level data** – reports on your entire Facebook page during that time range. You'll see stats like total Likes (useful if you didn't check your Like count on the 1st of the month), daily unlikes, friends of fans (so you can see your reach potential), and total impressions.
- **Post level data** – reports on each individual story posted during that time range. You'll see stats such as Likes, Comments, and Shares of each post, as well as how much negative feedback each post has received (in the form of hidden or reported stories).



Finally... some Facebook campaigning Pages to inspire you!

- www.facebook.com/WeAreEquals
- www.facebook.com/AmnestyUK
- www.facebook.com/fawcettsociety
- www.facebook.com/WOMENSRIGHTSNEWS

Twitter campaigning

Why do I need a Twitter profile for my campaign? What can it achieve?

Twitter is an online 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. With 400 million Tweets a day and 200 million active users, people turn to Twitter to bring them closer to the things that matter to them, whether it's the news that affects their lives or the businesses down the road. And, according to recent data, *59% of Twitter users are women*.

On Twitter, people talk about what they care about and what's happening around them right now. This gives you and your campaign a powerful context to connect your message to what's most meaningful to your supporters in real time. Engaging with real-time Tweets can influence conversations in a way that can help build your campaign. Twitter can give you information you will find valuable. Messages from users you choose to follow will show up on your home page (your feed) for you to read. You can discover news as it's happening, learn more about topics that are important to you, and *get the inside news in real time*.

What will success look like?

To some degree, success is when as many people as possible know about your campaign and get involved with it on Twitter as possible. But, as with Facebook, your social media success is measured in terms of interaction, so it is *retweets*, *@replies* and *mentions* that you want to encourage on Twitter, and the best way to do that is to tweet interesting content. Success on Twitter is not just down to having lots of followers - though it is important to gather followers in order to achieve the other success metrics:

- **Retweet** (RT) – this is when someone takes your Tweet and re-posts it to *their* followers. This means that you are accessing an average of around 200 more Twitter profiles per retweet (though only a percentage of those will actually see the Retweet if they looking *at the time*. A Retweet is the Twitter equivalent of a Facebook 'Share' – very valuable!
- **Reply** (@reply) - An @reply is any update posted by clicking the **Reply** button on a Tweet. Any Tweet that is an @reply to you will show up in your **Mentions** tab on the **Connect** page.
- **Mention** - A mention is any tweet that contains "@username" anywhere in the body of the Tweet. (NB this means that @replies are also considered mentions.) These messages are also collected in the Mentions tab on the Connect page. If you include more than one person's name in your Tweet and you use the @username format, all of those people will see the Tweet in their Mentions tab.

If I see an @reply in my timeline, how do I know what Tweet they replied to? Click on the Tweet and it will expand to display the Tweet they @replied to. You'll also see other content related to the Tweet.

N.B.

- Visiting another user's profile page on Twitter will not display Tweets that mention them. But you can search for all Tweets mentioning their username in the search box. Search for "@username".
- If someone sends you an @reply and you are not following them, the reply will not appear on your Tweets timeline. Instead, the reply will appear in your Mentions tab.

Getting started

Set up your Twitter profile by going to www.twitter.com and filling in fields under 'New to Twitter? Sign up':

A screenshot of the Twitter sign-up form. The form is titled "New to Twitter? Sign up" and contains three input fields: "Full name", "Email", and "Password". Below the fields is a yellow button labeled "Sign up for Twitter".

Twitter doesn't allow you to have multiple profiles under one email address. If you already have a personal Twitter presence you should associate the new campaign Twitter to a new email address e.g. your work email address. *NB: But if you use Gmail you can 'fake' a different email address by adding a full stop (period) in the name part of the address. Google doesn't differentiate between sandrericci@gmail.com and sandra.ricci@gmail.com.*

On the following screen you will be asked for a **Username**. This is your **Twitter ID or 'handle'**. It's the name that is preceded by an '@' in @replies. You could use the name of your campaign or your own name. Pseudonyms are also popular but usually only for casual, jokey or personal users. Remember, there are only 140 precious characters available in each Twitter post. The longer your Twitter ID, the more space it takes up, thus limiting your interactions. If at all possible, stay away from using numbers or an underscore (_). Including numbers and underscores makes it more difficult to remember and this could ultimately minimise your interactions.

You can now **Save changes** and be up and tweeting straight away. Twitter will *try* to guide you to following some famous people to get your feed started, but unless you *really* want to follow Lady Gaga and other ridiculously popular Twitter users I would now type: **twitter.com/YourUsername** into your browser's address bar and just go straight to your own profile.

To write a tweet all you need to do is press the little 'Compose new Tweet' icon in the top right of the Twitter window. It looks like this:



Remember your tweets should be less than 140 characters including spaces, but if you decide to include a long URL (web address) in the post, Twitter's own link-shortening tool will make it short enough to fit in your tweet, provided that your overall tweet isn't too long.

Twitter's guidelines are great!

I would go into detail here about how to understand the Twitter interface, how to add a profile picture, background image and header image. But to be honest, **Twitter is extremely good at providing easy-to-follow guidelines** for all those things (so much better than Facebook!) so I am giving a few links here to the most relevant guides:

- [Welcome to Twitter](https://support.twitter.com/) - (<https://support.twitter.com/>) - The 'portal' for all the help and support you could possibly need. Arguably the most useful bits are: [Getting started with Twitter](#) (includes getting onto Twitter on your mobile phone and how to find and follow other users).
- [Take a Tour of Twitter](#) – It is seriously worth doing this, to acclimatise yourself to what's where in the Twitter environment – but make sure you've signed in to Twitter first. The very useful [Twitter Glossary](#) for all the strange words you might not fully understand.
- [Customizing your design](#) – Everything you need to make your Twitter profile into a unique branded 'look' to match your campaign. *More about background designs profile photos later in this guide.*
- [FAQs \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#) – Very useful information on finding followers, retweets, trending topics and much more.
- [Deleting Tweets](#) – There will come a time when you regret what you just tweeted or realise that it has a mistake in it. So simply delete the tweet straight away. Phew!
- [The Twitter Rules](#) – It's always worthwhile knowing the rules! They are generally sensible rules and you can apply some of them to how you approach your tweets.

Your Twitter style

- **Tone** - Use your own speaking-style voice; people want to connect with *people* not entities.
- **Photo** - As your Twitter profile is for a campaign, why not put the photograph of the person who operates the account as the profile photo (the small square image that also appears in your followers' feeds when you Tweet). It's good 'customer service' to put a face to your activity.
- In the **profile text** say something like “[Your Name] defiantly tweeting for more women in European politics [or name of your campaign]”. It must be short and punchy. You should be able to read the text in any Twitter profile at a single look, so that's about 7-12 words, no #hashtags, but *do* use words that people might use to search for you with.
- **Header image** – Twitter has annoyingly created a system where your profile photo appears right in the middle of the header image. I don't know why they did this! So be careful what header image you use as you don't want to end up with this kind of problem...



- **Background** - You could create your own background image. However, don't count on people being able to see it – mostly they will see your tweets in *their* feed, with *their* background. But if they visit your profile page to check out all your activity it is worth looking good! The background image must be less than 800k in memory and I recommend a size of 1600x1200 for a large image (or much smaller if you plan on tiling the image). Finally, keep in mind that smaller resolutions and screen sizes (especially tablets and phones) will hide much of the background image. There are further background image options available to you at [Themeleon](#) which you can adapt to your colour scheme (you just have to sign in with your Twitter account details and anything you choose is automatically applied to your Twitter profile).
- **Content** - the best Tweets contain rich content: links to information, images and video/audio that is of interest to the account's followers. Even better if you've got some original content to link to on your campaign website, e.g. research findings or a video you had recently uploaded. With Twitter you could have a 'Tweet content policy' where you try to ensure 1 in 10 tweets contains links to new content that you/your organisation has created, 4 in 10 tweets could be retweeted content (you can add your own spin on it) and the remainder is @replies, questions and other conversational tweets.

Best practice Tweets

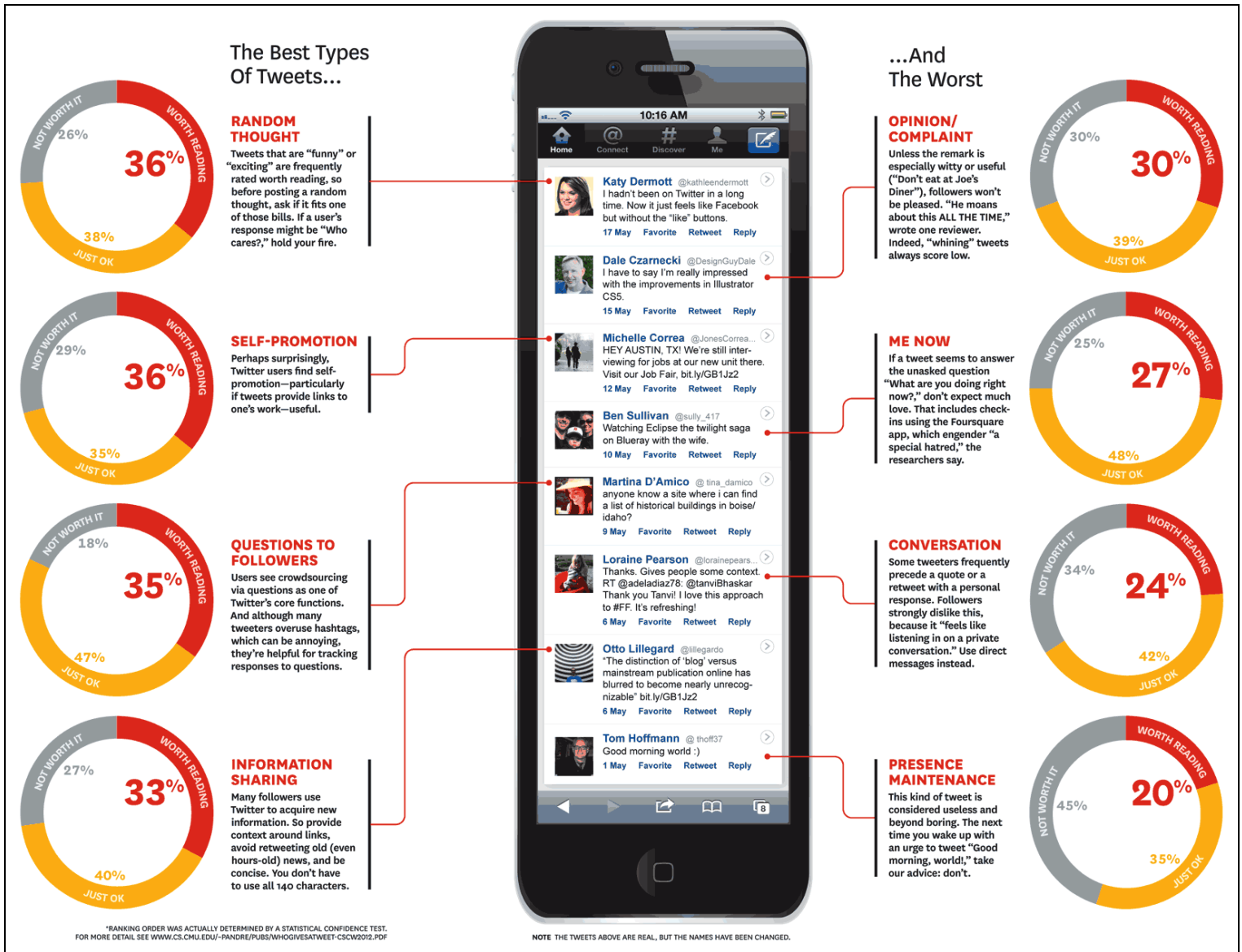
- Try making all your tweets **informative, useful, or funny**.
- **Do not post mundane tweets**, e.g. "eating a tuna sandwich". Really no-one cares.
- Add **hashtags (#)** to your tweets. A Twitter hashtag is a keyword preceded by the # symbol used in a tweet. Hashtags help Twitter users quickly find content related to a specific subject. For example, a Twitter chat about the Olympics might use the hashtag #olympics. Each tweet related to that topic would begin (or end) with #olympics. Using a hashtag makes it easy for anyone looking for tweets related to that topic to find them through the Twitter search function. I suggest the following hashtag should be commonly used by members of this project: **#womeninpolitics** as it is currently used by other Twitter accounts sympathetic to the cause such as @UN_Women and @iKNOW_Politics.
- **Do not whine or complain!** People tend to unfollow anyone who whines or complains.
- Tweet when your followers will most likely see them (use [Tweriod](#) to analyse when this is and your Dashboard to schedule your tweets to the optimum times).
- **Keep some space available in your tweet** in case someone retweets it.
- And if you like you can use [special characters in your tweets](#) – it helps them to stand out.
- [Learn the lingo](#) - As with any new network there is a learning curve. Twitter has a quirky lingo all its own. But don't let that hold you back from interacting. If you don't understand something, ask someone or do a web search. A few of the essentials: DM = Direct Message; @ = Use to reply and always include preceding a Twitter ID in a reply; RT = Retweet; Tweet = Sending a message on Twitter; Tw + any other word. A fun practice on Twitter is to develop a new twist on old words. For example, Tworld = Twitter world, and Tweeples or Tweeps = People on Twitter.
- Add the campaign **Twitter ID** and **Facebook page** to all of your email signatures. Also add under

your name when you comment on a blog.

- **Read the biogs of those who follow you** - Know something about those who follow you. The information you get from a biog makes it easy to engage in dialogue.
- **Promote others and share your best information** - Twitter is all about karma. The more good you put out there, the more you receive! When you find others with great information, don't be shy in sharing it with your own followers.

And finally... **Learn the etiquette** – Especially about when you should @reply versus Direct Message.

Unless it needs to be taken away from public view you shouldn't use Direct Messages too much. You can use DM for sending contact information like a phone number or email address as you do not want that to be seen on your feed. It may seem like common sense, but I'll say it here: **NEVER** post information that requires security protocols (bank details or social security number) over **ANY** public forum even through a Direct or Instant Message system) You could also use DM if you want to make a connection with someone - to get things started. [Twitter can be set up to send DMs and other notifications to your email or mobile text client.](#)



Another way of looking at it is, before you press the 'Tweet' button on your carefully composed tweet ask yourself: *“Is this the kind of tweet that is going to get my followers to interact?”*. *“Will my followers retweet this or @reply?”*. If the answer is no, then just don't send it!

Tactics: making your Twitter profile work hard for your campaign

Now you've got all the basics sorted out, we can concentrate on how to develop a truly effective Twitter presence that can enhance your campaign. The following advice is taken from a number of web-based sources, but is generally the accepted best practice for marketing brands or enhancing advocacy campaigns.

- **Follow people** - It's completely normal in Twitter culture to “follow” people you've never met. In fact, it's encouraged. But in order to collect a following try not to follow far more people than are following you – no-one wants to follow someone who follows hundreds of people but is only followed back by 10 or so!
- **Lists** - [Twitter lists](#) are a powerful way to organise users. If you want to listen in on what thought-leaders and commentators in your subject are tweeting about, put them in a list. Creating or following a list means you can listen to a conversation without having to follow everyone participating in it. You can use lists to find great content to retweet, cool new accounts to follow, and become more influential in your niche. I've made my own ['Women in Politics'](#) list which you can subscribe to.
- **Saved searches** - By creating a saved search on Twitter (on the [advanced search page](#)), you'll be able to tap into a more topically-focused conversation than a Twitter lists's people-focused conversation. Saved searches should include keywords related to your campaign. You can refine the search as you wish. After you've saved a search, you should monitor it regularly and engage with the accounts that are most active. Answer questions, pose your own, and share links using the keywords and hashtags in your search. Truly effective tweeters will save searches of the topics they want to position themselves as thought leaders within, and participate in the conversation regularly.
- **Dashboards** - Using a dashboard rather than Twitter.com is essential to being effective on Twitter. You can choose [HootSuite](#) (my favourite because it has a great mobile and tablet app version!), [TweetDeck](#) (Twitter's own dashboard tool), [SproutSocial](#) (brilliant with powerful analytics tools bundled, but it charges a monthly fee after the 30-day free trial). Dashboards allow you to view multiple tweet streams at once, so you can set up your lists beside your saved searches and your @mentions folder – no more flipping between hard-to-find links to these streams on Twitter.com. If you haven't tried one out yet, I suggest you experiment with a few to see which dashboard works best for you. Once you get to know the interface you won't actually have to ever go back to Twitter.com itself to do your tweeting.
- **Tweet frequently** - No one is going to follow someone they do not know who has not tweeted in months. Try at the very least to tweet a few times a week or daily if you can manage.
- **Use tweet schedules** - Twitter power users are not sitting at their computers tweeting from 9am to 8pm every day, even if their tweets would have you think this. They've learned the power of scheduling, and so should you. Scheduling tweets to go live throughout the day and week allows you to consistently share quality content with your followers without sapping all of your time. All the

dashboards mentioned above have tweet scheduling tools. So does [Buffer](#), mentioned at the top.

- **Get a good mobile Twitter client (app)** – *Essential* for checking your @mentions, while on the move. A good app for your smartphone is necessary if you travel frequently or are often away from your computer. You should be checking to see who is interacting with you on Twitter a few times a day, and a proper mobile client will notify you with an alert whenever you get a direct message, an @mention or @reply, or any number of other things. I use the HootSuite app for iPhone and iPad.
- **A consistent strategy** - Creating and maintaining a consistent strategy for tweeting and listening is crucial. This ensures that you are offering valuable links and commentary to your followers, following the right people (*you don't have to follow back everyone who follows you and think twice about sending automated Direct Messages – DMs – to each new follower, they aren't very popular*), staying relevant, and keeping up a steady flow of content. Your strategy should include what to tweet, who to engage with, how often to tweet, a list of keywords to monitor and more. However your strategy looks, you've got to have one if you want to achieve Twitter greatness.
- **Live-Tweet an event** - report it comprehensively on Twitter *as it happens in real time*, promoting the use of a particular hashtag to facilitate the process.
- **Hashtag chats** – These are a fairly effective way of networking on Twitter. They are events that happen on Twitter on a wide variety of subjects. They're a bit like an after-conference party, where everyone chats about the topic of the day in a casual atmosphere. Chats are a way to get to know who's influential in your niche, and interact with them in a structured atmosphere. Plus, if you stick around for the full hour, you'll probably come away with dozens of new followers yourself. The chats take the form of a series of questions in which a lot of people respond using the designated hashtag. Each week the questions change. Chats are generally moderated by someone with a lot of followers, - these people are good to get to know and sometimes they are collaborative so you can submit a question to be asked during the chat. To get started, find a chat that you have a wealth of knowledge in and start talking. The people who are involved are likely going to be your future audience.

Looking for relevant Twitter hashtag chats while researching this guide I found these examples:

- **#HERchat**: *Chat about women and empowerment. Topics discussed - shame, feminist issues, psychology of women. When: Fridays, 2pm PST/3pm MST/5pm EST. THIS MAY NOT BE A WEEKLY CHAT. FIRST CHAT: 11/9/2012. Check with [@empowher](#), the moderator, for details.*
- **#sheparty** – *This is a hashtag used for a weekly feminist discussion session hosted by the [Women's Media Center](#) each Wednesday from 12-3 PM EST. It's a great way to use Twitter to network with other feminists and chat with special guests.*
- **#fem2** – *Probably the most popular catch-all hashtag for feminist topics.*

You can follow along by searching the hashtag and respond to people whose answer you can relate to. By doing so, you just opened yourself up to a new conversation and perhaps a new follower. Don't forget to cross promote it on your other social networks. Once you build a following you can even start your own Twitter chat. The best tool I have found for doing this is <http://twchat.com/>

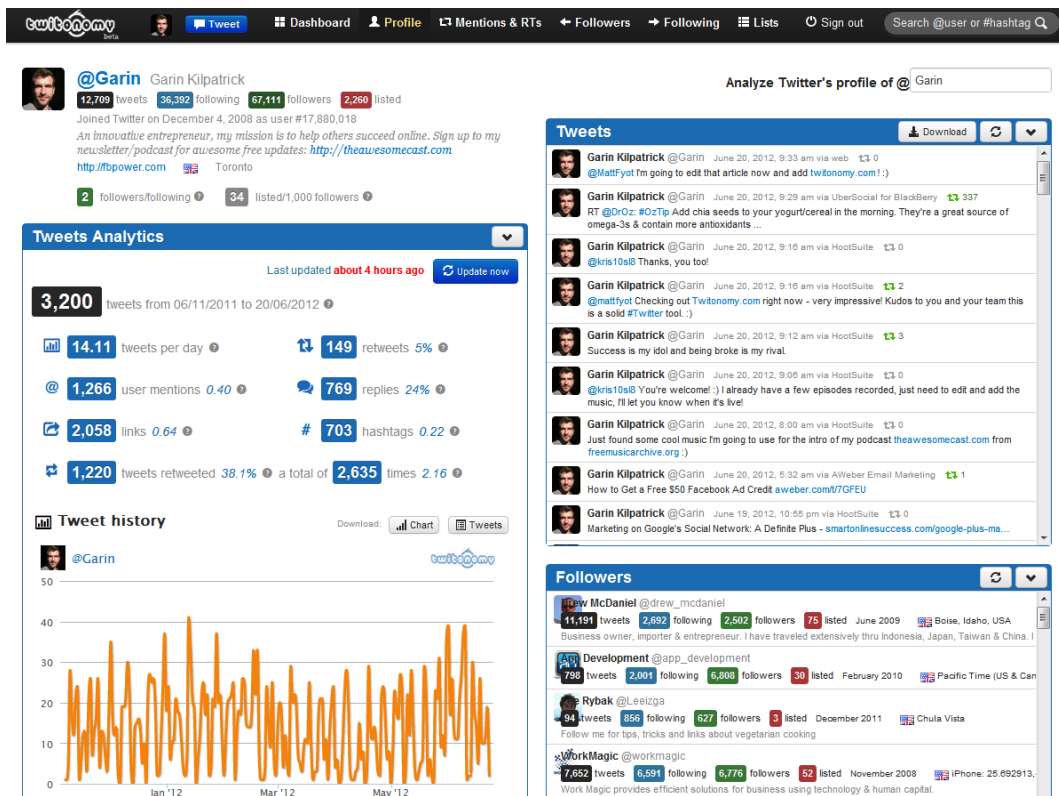
- **Tweetups** are real, physical meet-ups of Twitter users. [Check out this page for all the information you need on how to organise your own.](#)

Many people pay attention to the hashtags that are “trending” on Twitter i.e. becoming widely discussed, and the goal of a chat or live-tweeting an event is often to either **encourage a topic to trend** or to ride the wave of a subject that’s moving up the popularity ladder.

Using tools to analyse the success of your Twitter feed

It is worth noting that most analytics systems require data to analyse. That may sound obvious, but if you are analysing a month with just 20 tweets in it, 3 retweets and one @reply, then you might be better off just looking at your profile page and working it out for yourself than bother with signing up to an analysis system. But as you will undoubtedly have very busy Twitter campaigns, I am going to list the best analysis tools here. They are all pretty simple to use.

- [Twitter Analytics](#): As with most of these systems described below, you just need your Twitter login to access Twitter's own analytics system. Once you have logged in you will be encouraged to advertise with Twitter (promoted tweets and promoted accounts). Ignore this (unless you are spending money in this way), and click the tab at the top that says **Analytics** and choose **Timeline activity**. It's not very sophisticated but it may be worth using to check which your best tweets were by clicking the BEST just below the Timeline. This will tell you something about what people respond to.
- [HootSuite](#) - This one's the daddy! It really is quite an impressive service and its free for up to about five different social media streams. It has a dashboard that can deal with multiple feeds from Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Google Plus and more. And it has good analytics reporting (you have to set up what you want in the reports and how you want them to be presented first and then it goes off and collects it all for you. It is worth noting that it will also monitor Wordpress so if your blog or website is running on Wordpress its gonna be even more beneficial! Some of its features require signing up to the paid-for service. But I wouldn't bother with that.
- [Mention Map](#) – This is a cool web application that displays your recent interactions, and the interactions of those people in a 'spider map'. The map itself is completely interactive allowing the user to click on the other people displayed to bring up their maps. The display can be dragged for navigation as well as zoomed in on and out of. It doesn't go into great detail about a particular user's influence but does accurately map out who that person talks to, how often and what kind of connections they have built up. A useful tool for keeping an eye on Twitter relationships you build.
- [Tweetails](#) – Very cool tool for analysing your Tweet *content*. Once you've been tweeting regularly for a month have a go on this and see what you learn about the effectiveness of your tweets.
- [TwentyFeet](#) – If you are the kind of person who has used Google Analytics and likes that kind of graph format maybe this one is for you. Personally I find it a bit fiddly.
- [Twitonomy](#) – a powerful Twitter analytics platform, this free service is actually very robust and offers many different methods of analysis. However there are some premium features for which you pay.



- [Sproutsocial](#) – If your organisation is going to get very serious about Twitter I would recommend trying out Sproutsocial for the free 30-day trial period and then if you think it suits your organisation or campaign you might sign up for one of the monthly plan rates ([\\$39 - \\$99/month depending on plan](#)) *if you feel it's really worth it*. SproutSocial is generally meant for organisations who have significant marketing spend on Twitter and other social media. It's probably the best of the off-the-shelf packages but it's cost is offputting.

Finally... some Twitter campaigning presences to inspire you!

- https://twitter.com/iKNOW_Politics
- <https://twitter.com/womensmediacntr>
- <https://twitter.com/GlobalFundWomen>
- <https://twitter.com/womenadvocates>
- <https://twitter.com/feministing>