

Tackling Twitter

Keen to invest a little more time within the Twitterverse to see where it might take you, but not quite sure where to begin? Sarah Blinco shares some insights.

I'm a big fan of Twitter. I Tweet travel, style, events, locations ... from the local coffee shop to the Broadbeach Jazz festival, to live on tour in Europe and front row (well... not quite) at London Fashion Week. Twitter is terrific for boosting your profile, chatting with like-minded (potential) friends or colleagues, and staying up-to-date with news from your industry. Admittedly, I didn't understand Twitter via its website (www.twitter.com); it wasn't until I started using TweetDeck (www.tweetdeck.com) that I finally 'got it'.

I discovered the value of Twitter while living abroad, during which time Australia (ie. home - where my family were located) was hit by numerous disasters. I was really grateful to discover Twitter's # (conversation) function, and following conversations (eg. #cycloneyasi #brisbanefloods) being updated by locals on the ground, I knew exactly what the situation was. There is an old story I heard about Twitter's real claim to fame. When the bombings occurred in Mumbai a few years back, it took the region by surprise. Obviously media were not on hand to cover it, but people stuck in their hotel rooms started Tweeting live updates. They were literally in the thick of it, and worldwide news agencies were

receiving their updates the same way I was 'in the know' on the severe weather situation in Australia in 2011.

In my bid to share Twitter with Australians who are on the verge of experiencing its benefits, I thought I'd list a few of my personal favourite tips. These aren't new or even very special or secret, but there are some of you out there who might not know how to get into Twitter - and if you want to (whether for work, to promote yourself or to engage with your favourite celebrities or mentors), consider the following:

1. Regularly glance at your Twitter stream, update (ie. Tweet), reply, and retweet (that is, sharing someone else's Tweet). TweetDeck and Smart Phone APPs can make it easier to get into a routine.

2. Remember, @ usually indicates a person or entity (eg. @sarahblinco @Get_It_Magazine) - so you can talk @... them; whereas # is a conversation - particularly easy to identify if something 'big' is happening. For example, in August many were following the #Olympics conversation. I usually search a # before using it (to verify accuracy), then if you find lots of



people are conversing in a # conversation, eg. about #travel #style #RPatz #StateofOrigin, add it to your Tweet so you're included in that global view.

3. Use key words in your profile! Often it's what will gain you followers, so use words that reflect what YOU want to be associated with. These might be professional attributes (eg. journalist, teacher) or fun (eg. dogs, paranormal, ballet).

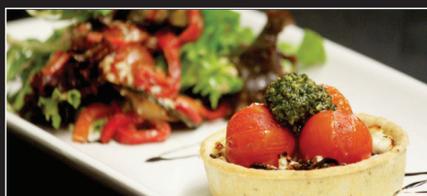
Try to Tweet, as well as interact with someone at least once or twice a day. Use # in your Tweets, and be yourself. Cross-promote your websites and products, but don't 'sell'. Instead, be informative and helpful - you'll gain a reputation for being an expert in your field, rather than just another sales-person.

If you're just getting started, keep practising - it really is fun! If you're a seasoned expert, please share your tips with us. The thing I love about social media is there's always something new to learn every day, and I'm most certainly open to learning.

More at www.travellivelearn.com/twitter-tips-for-newbies or Tweet @Get_It_Magazine and @sarahblinco

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