

Packaging Yourself On Twitter - The Beginner by JoAnn Hines Packaging Diva

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Being really new to social networking I was intrigued to understand the branding concept behind Twitter. I pondered how one could connect and relate to other social networkers in 140 characters or less. Would this really be the best investment in social networking for my time and effort?

As I studied Twitter, I realized that tweeting is really an intellectual exercise. It forces you to be clever, articulate, and sometimes funny within 140 characters. So in addition to thinking about what to post that someone would read I needed to learn how to post too.

Like all social networking you have to find your own persona... Something that you are comfortable with and that makes sense to you; ie. your brand and your business. It's not about emulating someone else, you want your tweets to be unique and represent you in the best light.

Twittering is also something that you have to commit the time to do. The beauty of Twitter is its user friendliness, accessibility and level of personalization. I have found two basic types of "Twitterers": There is the touchy-feely warm and personal kind that talks a lot about their personal lives, and there is the business professional that uses Twitter as a business tool to build their business and their brands and rarely gets into non business discussions. There is also the hybrid of both and that's ok, as long as you stay focused on whom you want to be to your followers.

It's OK to integrate personal info along with business advice. I do a combination of the two. As you build your following you will build relationships and you have to be REAL to be believable and develop relationships. Just be wary of what is good to talk about on Twitter and what needs to be moved off the Twitter venue. From personal experience I was passionate about a topic that escalated to some what of a controversy between three Twitterers. After much debate and wildly tweeting we recognized that we needed to move our conversation elsewhere. I wrote another article about this experience entitled "How To Agree, Disagree And Remain Friends On Twitter."

Get your profile set up before you begin Tweeting. People will go and check you out to see who and what you are all about. The more you can share the better. My twitter survey showed people preferred pictures of other people by more than 2-1 (said they liked to see who they were tweeting). But if you use an avatar that's OK too. Its about the connection you make with your followers pic or avatar.

As a newbie read and learn from other Twitterers. First and foremost give before you take. See how you can help other people with their issues and problems. Once you start giving, the return will come back to you. If you give really good advice people you don't know will start to follow you too.

It's OK to be a little self serving by posting information about your products, services and upcoming events. But nothing will turn your followers off faster than too continuously self promote yourself. Remember Twitter is about your followers and what you can do for them, not you personally.

The easiest way to showcase yourself is to respond to someone's tweet with helpful information. Once you have established yourself as a resource, people will follow you because they know you have something interesting or useful to say.

It's OK to unfollow people too. Sometimes there is just really no "connection." Here's a tweet on 9 reasons you should unfollow peeps (people).

9 reasons 4 dropping peeps: swearing inappropriate content no interaction 2 intense 2 personal 2 self promoting 2 negative 2 strange 2 much

If you notice there is no punctuation it's because I was limited to 140 characters. So it is an exercise in getting all your thoughts marshaled in a succinct, intelligent and interesting fashion.

Here are a few beginner tips to get you started:

1. Look up your keywords in the search feature. You will see who is tweeting about the same topic you are. You can also use some of the specialty Twitter tools, such as summarize, to see what topics are hot that you might want to follow the thread.
2. When people follow you, see who they follow or who follows them. In turn you follow them too. If they are well established in their field then typically you will get a quality following of people you need to know.
3. When someone follows you thank them for following with a brief statement about you and what you do. Don't sell!!

Here is what I use:

Thanks for the follow. I try to amuse and educate my followers what they need to know about product packaging. I am all about the packaging.
If you will notice its exactly 140 characters (how to do this is a skill you will learn as you tweet).

4. It's your choice to thank them publicly or privately. When I surveyed my followers they were split 50/50 on the issue. Personally, I like private so I can send each person a message. Do what's comfortable for you.
5. When someone tweets something important or interesting retweet the information to your followers. As a case in point I retweeted someone's information on sustainability to my followers they in turn retweeted something of mine. It was a win-win for both parties.
6. Lastly try to develop interesting dialogue with your followers. Be positive, engaging, complimentary and funny too (if that's your style).

Twitter is one of the fastest, easiest and most fun social networking tools. You can quickly see a return if you work at it consistently and with an open mind.

Twitter is an incredibly powerful business tool. I've gained new business, a host of new associates, and even hired my VA...All of whom I have met on Twitter. Like all social networking tools not everyone will like you or your style. Get over it and move on to the next follower as you package yourself and your personal brand on Twitter.

Follow me on Twitter too as I share personal packaging lessons on how I built my global brand the "Packaging Diva."

Happy Packaging!
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perfect packaging solution!

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