

4 Social Media Blogs You Don't Want to Miss: Pt 2 Networking and Twitter

You established your professional brand and used it to become an integral part of a network. Now it is time to reach out to your network—you already know what they do with what company because you keep track of them and have interested yourself with their work.

How do you build the network? Conferences, past and current supervisors and coworkers, other volunteers, alum, and social media, such as Twitter is a start to a strategic network. It does require time and dedication, though. Networking is a mindset—an awareness of people you meet and connect with regularly. Social media such as Twitter is one way to establish a presence and grow your network.

Keep track of how you connect; meet, greet, and exchange business cards or contact info. Your business card or social media and web links are best because you introduce them to your professional brand. Don't stop with exchanging contact information. Make a date right then to go to coffee with one or two people. Bring several in your industry together to exchange ideas and new information. For the most value, nurture relationships. Twitter is a social gathering of like-minded people who can build relationships for encouragement, collaboration, information. If you really want to add that special touch that people love, also keep track of things they like—hobbies, pets, family names and progress. Stuck for things to say, try Forbes [The Best Questions to Ask at Networking Events](#).

Overwhelmed? A spreadsheet just doesn't cut it anymore. You need a more efficient way to track those relationships. Several networking, relationship management, and customer relationship manager (CRM) apps either help build your network or keep track of the details above and more, sending reminders, linking communications and documents, tracking personal details, and so on. For the purpose of building meaningful networks, I recommend the CRMs, because they allow you to build detailed relationships. Depending on your purpose, the cost for these apps vary from a one-time purchase to monthly fees.

Twitter

Twitter is part of that network—a free, easy, friendly place. Fauzia Burke in her online marketing book, “At first, Twitter may seem overwhelming and difficult to use, but as you spend time on the network you will likely discover the benefits of sharing resources and collaborating with others. You have to invest some regular time on Twitter to build a community. As you work to become known as an expert in your niche, Twitter will help you establish your personal brand. Just don't expect instant success. Pace yourself and enjoy the journey” (104).

Twitter posts, or tweets, are 140 characters or less sound bites of you and your interests. Tweets encourage with quotes, interest with insights and events, and connect on a more

personal level with professionals in your field and those who may help you in networking. Twitter is building up followers who are interested in what you have to say, who you are, or how you interact with others on Twitter. Different fields of interest labeled with hashtags (# that we talk about later in “4 Uses of Social Media You Don’t Want to Miss: Pt 4 SEO and WordPress”) have different customs that enable you to expand your Twitter base of followers. Fauzia Burke in her online marketing book, “People on Twitter are generous with their time and knowledge. Yes, you will spend time on Twitter that you already don’t have, but you will also learn things that will make you more valuable, smarter, and in the know ... It is a great platform to listen to others, chat about your [profession], and provide links” to your other sites “—but only after you have built trust by promoting others and sharing valuable information” (103).

In Forbes, [Top Social Media Tips for Every Platform Part 1 Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram](#), Kate Harrison writes, “You may not know it but Google indexes every tweet (which makes it a great tool for search engine optimization or SEO) Most importantly, you can’t ignore that [60% of a business’s or brand's followers are likely to purchase](#) or recommend after following them on Twitter.” (SEOs feature later in this series.)

Set up using your personal brand for your tag line and allot a specific amount of time each day to interact with and post on twitter. For 15-30 minutes a day of lively exchange you get a lot of bang for your buck. Tweet your other social media or website links when someone gives you the opportunity, but build those brownie points, commenting, retweeting, and following others. Know the customs, such as #FF (Follow Friday) that allows those with a greater number of followers opportunities to share their feed with those of fewer followers through posting your links. Then people go through the list, checking you out, and following you. As Burke says, “social media provides us the tools to listen and to see what is important to the audience. It helps us learn and engage and bond with people we have never met” (93). Your interactions and posts develop good exposure, keeping you before the public eye. Follow and you are followed—that is networking with Twitter.

Works Cited

Burke, Fauzia. *Online Marketing for Busy Authors*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.: Oakland. 2016