

Adding Value on Twitter

By Monica Hamburg



Advice such as the frequent social media tip "make sure to add value" often feels as daunting as "make a good impression" or, in my case, "don't look so suspicious".

Twitter is very much like street performing. You don't have a captive audience, so you need to be as engaging as possible to get people to stop, watch the show and stick around.

Ask yourself what you can do that would be beneficial to others. If you make an effort to provide real content, you'll give people more reason to pay attention – and see you as a person of "value".

Consider:

- **It's not all about you.** Understand that while you have an agenda for being on Twitter, no one else's aim is to find you friends or send business your way. Don't wax poetic about your life or promote yourself ad nauseam.
- **Examine your bio/profile.** Who you are is a big reason people follow you. Based on that, figure out what those people might want to learn or gain. And be sure to allow your personality to shine through. While what you say is important, how you say it is even more so.
- **Share your experience.** Understand that the social component is the beauty of this medium. It's often about people helping people. Respond to questions when you can – even if they're not specifically directed at you. If you've had an outstanding experience with a company or person

– mention it. Did you recently go to an exceptional event or hear of a great cause? Allow others to benefit from what you've learned.

- **Be clear.** When you Retweet a message clarify why others should care. Begin your tweet with the explanation ("Insightful post!", "I support this great cause" or "This article on marketing to chimps confounds me").
- **Don't make it difficult.** Consider the articles you read today that intrigued you or brilliant posts that you bookmarked on Delicious.com sometime ago. Is there a blog you follow often because it is just that insightful – or even because it enrages you? Share your knowledge with the Twitosphere.

The online world is not so different than the offline one. You quickly tune out when someone is too self-aggrandizing or doesn't say anything of interest to others. So, give others a reason to stay tuned in. And try not to look so suspicious.

Monica Hamburg is a speaker, writer and social media consultant. Her investigations and observations on social media, especially its relation to business and connecting, form the basis of her blog "Me Like the Interweb". She is also an actor and humorist, and siphons some of her evilness into her "Your Dose of Lunacy" blog. More info at: Monicahamburg.com

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