

THE BIBA GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED ON TWITTER



1. Create a Twitter account – You do this at twitter.com. When selecting a username, try where possible to secure your company name with no spaces e.g AnonBrokers – Your Twitter name is branding for your business. Claim it before someone else does.

Once you create your account, your URL will be <http://twitter.com/USERNAME>.

2. Add your profile photo - You don't want to use the default Twitter photo. This can be done by clicking on **Settings – Picture**. Don't add any pictures that you think are funny or quirky, add either your logo or a picture of the individual that is going to be using twitter. Be professional.

3. Fill out your online biography - This can be done again using **Settings – Account**. The area for one-line bios is about half way down the page. It's very important to complete this section, it's yet another opportunity to promote your brand and when others find you, they'll get a flavour of your businesses quicker.

4. Create a bit.ly account - Your messages on Twitter (called tweets) are restricted to 140 characters. So when you want to post a message with a link (URL) in it, you can lose a lot of these characters if the URL is long. Bit.ly shrinks the URL to a smaller one. Link shortening websites record the link you've shortened and tell you how many people clicked on each of your Bit.ly's (shortened links) so you are able to track how popular your link is.

5. Post some 'tweets' – If you have a blog or content on your website you want to share, post links to this content with bit.ly links. If you don't have a blog or a website with suitable content then post some links to articles that you have found elsewhere that you think will be interesting to your potential audience/followers.

The reason you want to start posting tweets before you try to 'follow' others (more on this later) is because you want to showcase your business and the value you bring via these tweets.

Try to avoid mundane tweets such as “Have a good weekend” or “What a nice sunny day it is”

6. Follow others – Use search.twitter.com and search for people who have posted tweets in areas of your interests. For example, if you are an insurance broker specialising in Marine, search for “Marine Insurance” and other related terms. You will find tweets from a number of individuals with similar interests. Click on their photographs and then click the Follow button. Some of them will follow you back and some of them won't. Don't take it personally if some of them don't.

7. Once you've started keep it up – Share your knowledge, share articles, and share updates that will be useful your followers. If you find interesting articles posted by people who you follow then 'Retweet' them. The concept of re-tweeting is simply to share something you've found interesting on another Twitter page with all of your followers.

The correct way to re-tweet is to use the following syntax - RT@*USERNAME* and their tweet – where USERNAME is the name of the person whose tweet you are 'retweeting'.