

Colorado State University Twitter Best Practices



What is Twitter and how can it be useful to my Organization?

- Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service found at www.twitter.com. It enables users to send and receive other users' updates known as tweets. Tweets are limited to 140 characters posts and are shown on the user's profile page and sent to other users who have elected to follow them (known as followers). Senders can choose to make their updates accessible to anyone, or limit access to only an approved list of individuals. Tweets can be posted via the Twitter website, external applications, or through text messaging on a phone.

Profile Username

Please note that a "username" and a "name" are two separate items.

- Establish a username and name that resonate with followers and the University.
- The username and avatar will be the most viewed part of your Twitter profile.
- Optimizing your profile for Twitter searches:
 - A carefully selected name is the most crucial part of being found in searches. This is because most users will not search for you by your exact username and will add spaces that do not match your username. For example, a search for "CSU Athletics" does not find the username CSUAthletics.
 - Make sure the name includes words you believe will be used when searching for the profile; CSU, Colorado State University, etc.

- The "one line bio" will appear with the username and name in search results. Use this area to note your relationship to "Colorado State University" if your username and name have not already made this clear; For example, only using "CSU" may create confusion since there are several universities whose names also create the same acronym.

Group/Page Administrators

- Choose administrators who are directly affiliated with the CSU office/entity/organization that is being represented through the Twitter account. Make sure at least two administrators are Colorado State University faculty/staff members.
- An administrator is someone who will always have the current password needed for a particular username. This is because Twitter itself does not have a way for multiple people to uniquely access one account.

Policies

- Include Colorado State University's social media disclaimer provided to you when your application has been approved. Clearly state the social media disclaimer somewhere on the page (in the profile's bio, background design or page's first tweet).
- Follow Twitter's established terms and conditions.

Profile/Avatar and Background Images

- Twitter enables the use of a small square profile image (700k maximum) and a background image (800k maximum). The recommended size for these images are:
 - 23x23 pixels mini avatar (followers)
 - 31x31 pixels small avatar (main page)
 - 48x48 pixels medium avatar (when posting)
 - 73x73 pixels large avatar (profile image)
- Use a program such as Irfanview to size images correctly and to scale.
- Refrain from using only the CSU word mark or Ram's Head logo as your account(s)'s profile image, as they tend to be overly used and lack individuality. The University encourages the creation of a profile image that reflects your CSU unit but allows for individuality as well.
- It is recommended to use a photo commonly associated with your organization as your profile picture or background image. If desired, incorporate the CSU logo or your official CSU "unit identifier" into your background image. See [Tips for Creating Profile Images](#).
- Please see the [Communicator's Toolbox](#) for reference on using the CSU logo.
- Be careful not to stretch or distort the CSU logo or Ram's head in any way and do not modify the logo in any way.

- Ensure proper resolution of the logo.
- Green is the preferred color for the CSU logo or Ram's head, with black or white as an alternative.
- The CSU logo and Ram's head are trademarked materials. Any communication containing the CSU logo and/or Ram's Head must be approved by the Office of the Vice President of Public Affairs at 491-4179.
- If your unit is in need of an official unit identifier or if you would like help in creating an avatar/profile image for your social media accounts, please contact Natalie McCatty in CSU's Communications and Creative Services at (970) 491-4179 or Natalie.McCatty@colostate.edu.

Managing Profile/Account

- Tweet regularly - appoint more than one person to tweet if needed to continue regular content.
- Humanize your tweets by posting them in a personal style.
- Include links to drive followers to your website. Inbound links also improve your page rankings with search engines.
- Don't over post information that is not interesting to your followers. If needed, create separate accounts for different groups of followers. For example, football fans may not want score updates after every inning of a softball game, and vice versa.
- Understand why people follow you. If your followers want information about the group you represent, they probably don't want to know your daily activities. If you are a CSU celebrity, your followers are more likely to be interested in your life events.
- If you choose to tweet about your daily life, include interesting information or facts. Rather than stating that you just ate lunch, mention details such as the location, who joined you, the menu item ordered and whether you would recommend it.

Engaging Friends/Fans

- Follow others - this allows communication between you and your followers and is part of Twitter etiquette. Strive for a 1:1 ratio between followers and those you are following. Otherwise, Twitter may identify your account as spam and delete it.
- Engage followers by asking questions and collecting feedback.
- Respond to questions or statements from your followers. Do this publicly if the response is interesting and acceptable for all to see. If not, use the direct message feature.
- Don't get defensive - use discretion when addressing negative comments and provide constructive feedback.

Promoting Groups/Pages

- Add a link to your department or organization's website on your Twitter profile.
- Follow other official CSU pages to cross-promote.
- Include an invitation to follow your organization on Twitter in your e-mail signature.
- Use word of mouth to encourage people to follow you.
- Include your social media information in promotional materials.

External Resources

- A variety of external applications have been developed to help people send and receive Twitter updates on various devices: <http://twitter.com/downloads>
- TwitPic allows users to upload photos from the web or a mobile device and post them on Twitter in a very easy fashion: <http://twitpic.com/>
- CoTweet allows multiple people to help manage multiple Twitter accounts and stay in synch while doing so: <https://cotweet.com/>
- Twaitter allows users to time the release of tweets: <http://www.twaitter.com/>

Vocabulary

The Twitter community has its own distinct vocabulary. This usually involves replacing the first part of a word with the first part of the site's name.

Here are some of the most commonly used words:

RT (Retweet) - Tweeting content posted by another user

Tweeps - Twitter + peeps (friends)

Tweet - Single message seen on Twitter (noun) **or** Act of posting to Twitter (verb)

Tweetup - Twitter + meetup: a gathering of people based on a Twitter conversation

Tweighbor - Someone who is a member of your Twitter community

Tweeple - Twitter + people; Also Tweople

Twibe - Twitter tribe; people on Twitter that you follow or those who are following you

Twit - Silly or foolish Twitterer

Twitterers - Group of people who have Twitter accounts

Twitterfam - Term of endearment for your followers

Twitterization - Twitter's influence on other social media websites and society overall

Twitterspeak - Language found only in tweets and not normally used in conversation

Twitiquette - Twitter + etiquette; unwritten rules of conduct

Twollow - Act of following someone on Twitter