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Welcome to the update of our much-loved Twitter guide. We’re excited to bring you the basics, the latest, and the greatest, from the 140-characters-or-less network that means so much to marketers. Say that three times fast.

Twitter is a wide-open range for pioneering content marketers and social media managers. With more than 271 million active users and 500 million Tweets sent per day, marketers have an incredibly active and increasingly interactive audience to engage with. Twitter users are becoming more and more receptive to communicating with brands on the network, and brands are getting smarter about how they tailor content to Twitter.

But, everyone still has questions. Brands want to know, “What’s the best way to engage my followers?” or “How often do I need to Tweet and reply to stay relevant?” or “How do I know if my program is working?” An oversimplified answer to all these ponderings would be:

- **Know what you want.** You won’t get what you want out of Twitter if you don’t define what you want. Are you looking to expand your customer service offerings? Drive people to your blog? Get people to shop in your online store? Increase brand awareness?

- **Get creative.** Don’t be afraid to try new things, but stay true to what your brand is known for. Find a way to stand out in the noise of people’s feeds.

- **Measure it.** This is how you know if your strategies are working or not, and how to make improvements going forward.

**But you want more than that, don’t you?**

In this definitive guide, we’ll walk you through both rudimentary and advanced Twitter metrics, explaining specific ways to use them in formulating better Twitter strategies and results.
To effectively leverage Twitter actions, you must first understand how they work, and the ways they’re calculated. In this section, we’ll outline the different ways that users interact with your brand. We’ll also give you insight into how they affect your brand’s Twitter visibility.

On your journey from your campaign’s first Tweet to that sweet moment of ROI, when you choose the most relevant benchmarking metrics you’re bound to get the best results. You’ll get a holistic picture by keeping an eye on the number of:

- Unique people who engaged with your brand
- Actions taken (engagements)
- People who could have seen your Tweets
- Times those people could have seen your Tweets
- Click-throughs on your links (if you’re using links)
- Followers added

You can reach massive audiences when your followers, influencers, and advocates engage, both spreading your content and increasing brand awareness. Great content leads to engagement and amplification. In turn, you increase your reach as more fans opt-in, adding more fuel to the machine.

These calculations may seem complicated, so we’ll break down and define each component that plays an active role in your brand’s success on Twitter.

No number exists in a vacuum. The megaphone graphic to the right is helpful for visualizing these numbers in relation to one another.

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DEFINING THE METRICS

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This Twitter Engagement Megaphone shows how Twitter users engaged with JetBlue’s 207 Tweets during a given time period.
**Engagement**

Whether you seek increased web activity and bottom-line ROI or brand awareness and overall market penetration, checking your engagement number is the best way to tell how you’re doing. It tells the story of who is talking to and about your brand.

**What does engagement mean to you?**

Engagement on Twitter accounts for every way your followers can interact with your brand or make it show up in their timeline. It incorporates one-on-one conversations as well as your followers’ promotion of your content to their circles of influence. This multi-level interaction is what makes Twitter such a powerful tool. Brands of all sizes have the ability to converse with users, respond to their questions, and promote their campaign messages in real-time, on one platform.

The followers with whom you’re engaging present several opportunities: they can act as advocates for your company, provide feedback on products or services, purchase products, and help you better understand your customers. Understanding how your brand engages users on Twitter is the first step to learning, developing, and growing your Twitter marketing campaigns.

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This Twitter Engagement Breakdown chart shows the different kinds of engagement a brand experienced on Twitter over a six-day time period.
How is engagement calculated?
Engagement is the total of several components during a given report period:

- **@Replies**: When a user talks directly to your brand by using your brand handle at the beginning of the Tweet. This will only show up in your feed and the feeds of users who follow you both.
  
  Example: “@SimplyMeasured Your reports rock!”

- **Retweets**: When a user directly shares your brand message with their audience.
  
  Example: “RT @SimplyMeasured: We've made some great updates to our Twitter Account Report. Check it out!”

- **Mentions**: When a user includes your brand handle, but not as a direct @reply. Anyone who follows that user can see this type of Tweet.
  
  Example: “I really love that @SimplyMeasured charts are dynamic within Excel!”

- **Favorites**: When a user stars a Tweet from your brand, indicating their support for your Tweet. This form of engagement isn’t visible to the user’s followers or yours.

Many businesses focus on Retweets and mentions because they have reach, appearing in the timelines of your followers’ followers, and accessing a Twitter segment that may not be following your brand. This is not to say that @replies or favorites, which don’t have reach, are not worth paying attention to.
Retweets
Retweets let followers know that a user is actively engaging with your brand by republishing your content. A Retweet is a repost of a Tweet sent by another user. These Tweets are marked with the Retweet icon and include the author’s information, and the name of the user who retweeted the content. They are one of the most commonly used tools on Twitter and can be very helpful in identifying web trends, content that interests your readers or their followers, or Tweets that have the capacity to go viral.

Retweets: A Retweet is a repost of a Tweet sent by another user, marked by the Retweet icon
Mentions and @replies

Mentions and @replies have very different impacts for your brand, and both are extremely important when it comes to building engagement. Understanding the difference between mentions and @replies will help you determine how to use both to your advantage and stand out from the crowd.

Example: “I really love that @SimplyMeasured charts are dynamic within Excel!”

Mentions are when a user includes your brand handle, but doesn’t begin the Tweet with the @handle. These Tweets show up in your stream, the user’s stream, and the stream of anyone following the user. Serious advantage: these Tweets have the potential to reach Twitter users who may not be following you.

Example: “@SimplyMeasured Your reports rock!”

@Replies are when a user talks directly to your brand by using your brand handle at the beginning of the Tweet in the Twitter timeline. This will only show up in your feed, the user’s feed, and the feeds of users who follow you both.

Twitter users use .@reply to overcome the less public nature of @replies. If a user wants their followers to see their replies to your brand, they will use a .@reply in place of a regular @reply. Because the Tweet starts with a period, it’s not considered an @reply, and will show up in their timeline and the timelines of anyone who follows them. Because Tweets of this type start with something other than your brand’s Twitter handle, these types of replies count as a mention.

Example: “.@SimplyMeasured Your reports rock!”

What do mentions and @replies mean to you?

@Replies and mentions demonstrate two very different things. @Replies tell the story of users looking to engage in conversation with your brand. Mentions are more of an endorsement of your brand or a means of expressing negative/positive sentiment about your brand to followers.

Paying attention to replies and mentions as metrics in relationship to one another and individually gives you valuable insight into how your followers are interacting with you, what they want to see more of, and what they’re repelled by—both on and offline.

After obtaining a broad overview of the mentions versus @replies around your handle, drill down into the actual Tweets to determine:

- The top three subject categories for mentions, and the top three categories of replies. Plan future content, events, and even product development, accordingly.
- If you need a separate customer service handle for back-and-forth communication with followers.
- The context in which people mention you on Twitter. Challenge yourself to convert people who mention you into becoming your brand’s devotees and followers, even if their initial mention was negative.
**Favorites**
Favorites are similar to Likes on Facebook. With a single click, you can engage with content to either bookmark, show your appreciation, or simply let the author know you’ve seen their Tweet. This has made favoriting an attractive form of engagement.

**The benefit for your brand**
If favorites aren’t seen by others, why should you care?

Although favorites don’t create awareness the same way that Retweets and mentions do, they are still another important indicator for measuring how your content is resonating with people.

If certain types of content are receiving way more favorites than comments or Retweets, you may need to deliver your content in a way that encourages more active user engagement.

This chart shows how one brand’s favorites played out over time, and can act as a litmus test for audience reception to campaigns and specific content.
HashTags

HashTags are a form of earned engagement, as opposed to the owned engagement outlined above. Engagement with a hashtag may not be reflected in your account report, but is often just as important to your brand. They are one of the greatest tools that social marketers have at their disposal. When it comes to campaign management, organization, and branding, it’s hard to top the simple power of the hashtag.

HashTags are terms used in Tweets (and on Facebook and Instagram, as well) that are searchable, clickable, and measurable.

**Hashtags:** Clickable terms within Tweets that begin with the "#" sign

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**FUN FACT**

Hashtags were used as far back as the 1970s in Information Technology and programming languages—long before Twitter got its start in 2006.

In 2007, Chris Messina proposed that the pound sign be used to tag topics of interest on Twitter. He posted the first hashtag on Twitter.

Beginning in 2009, Twitter eased hashtag navigation by hyperlinking all hashtags in Tweets to Twitter search results for the hashtagged word.
What do hashtags mean to you?
Hashtags allow marketers to engage with users they otherwise wouldn’t be able to, build branded campaigns, and sleekly measure the results. You can use hashtags to create easily monitored campaigns in a variety of ways:

Campaigns: When conducting a specific campaign, hashtags can be used to spread the word in a way that’s clearly associated with your brand. Then they can be monitored to gauge level of activity and interest. For example, if Simply Measured wanted to promote a giveaway of a goodie bag, we could use the hashtag #SimplySwag and ask users to Tweet the hashtag for a chance to win.

Increased Reach: Hashtags of specific topics are often searched and monitored by marketers to find users with specific interests. For example, if we Tweet a link to our Twitter guide with the hashtags #SocialMedia and #Twitter, we increase the chance of reaching social media marketers who are interested in learning more.

Chats: There are countless regular “Twitter Chats” that use specific hashtags to allow users to organize conversations. For example, if we hosted a regular conversation about social media measurement, we might choose the hashtag #MeasureChat. This allows us to promote a searchable term so that users can view and interact with anyone involved in the chat.

Discovery: When doing research, search relevant hashtags to discover interests, sentiment, attitudes, and demographics around those hashtags. This is a smart way to plan future hashtag campaigns.

Comparison: Different hashtags can be measured and compared to identify trends, growth, and disparities. This is important for recurring or cyclical campaigns and competitive analysis.

**UPDATE**

With Twitter’s latest iteration of its dashboard, engagement metrics include any interaction with a Tweet. This includes @replies, Retweets, and Favorites, just like always, but now adds clicks anywhere within a Tweet, including link clicks, avatar clicks, hashtag clicks, username clicks, and expanded Tweets.

If you’re using hashtags to promote discovery, brand a campaign, or drive engagement around a specific topic, these strategies are a key component of gaining engagement, and your ability to measure success can propel you to the next level.
Potential Reach
On Twitter, you’re not just focused on engaging the people already following you. You’re trying to grow and expand your audience. Potential reach is one of the best ways to tell if you’re doing that successfully.

Potential Reach: The sum of all users mentioning your brand + the sum of their followers

User A, who has five followers, posts a Tweet that mentions the @SimplyMeasured Twitter handle. In this example, we’ll calculate the potential reach of this Tweet for Simply Measured.

What’s the potential reach of @UserA’s Tweet if it’s retweeted by @UserB, who has nine followers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User A • 3h</th>
<th>I love @SimplyMeasured reports!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User B • 1h</td>
<td>RT @UserA I love @SimplyMeasured reports!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Potential Reach = users mentioning your brand (@UserA) = 1 + sum of their followers (@UserA) = 5

Potential Reach = 6

Potential Reach = users mentioning your brand (@UserA + @UserB) = 2 + sum of their followers (@UserA) = 5 + sum of their followers (@UserB) = 9

Potential Reach = 16

NOTE: Potential reach will always include your brand followers since they are part of the audience you are reaching on Twitter. When calculating the reach of just a mention (like in the examples on this page), your followers are not being engaged so they are not part of the reach calculation for that specific Tweet.

But when we calculate the overall reach of your Twitter activity, your followers are added to the equation. If @SimplyMeasured has 20 followers, in example one the total potential reach will be 26 and in example two it will be 36.

What does potential reach mean to you?
The potential reach metric allows you to quantify not only the users you engaged with, but also the followers of those users who may have seen your @handle or Tweet. This number is important because a key focus of social marketing is to expand your audience and promote your message to a wider segment of the population.

The reach metric tells you which content is working to grow your audience and ultimately “reach” new people.
Potential Impressions

Potential impressions have always been an important metric for advertisers. For traditional media like newspaper, radio, and TV, it has been one of the only metrics available to gauge success. It’s just as relevant on social media.

**What does the potential impressions metric mean to you?**

Potential impressions are an important part of measuring your brand impact. If content you’re creating has a viral impact – for example, Tweets that earn a large number of Retweets and @mentions – your potential impressions are the quickest way to identify that trend, allowing you to focus your efforts on the content that is drawing the most attention and understand how to harness that power in the future.

What makes reach different from potential impressions?

Reach accounts for the possible number of people who may have seen your content, whereas impressions are how many times the people you’ve reached have seen your content. If you think of reach as how many screens your Twitter handle appears on, and impressions as how often your Twitter handle appears, it’s easy to get an idea of how far you can potentially spread your message and grow your brand.

**UPDATE**

Twitter’s new real impressions metric allows brands to see the actual number of times users have been exposed to content.

This is important for any social media marketer who plays a part in a broader marketing process. Conversion metrics need to be based on real numbers, which is difficult when looking at potential impressions.

Whatever your “funnel” looks like, this metric is solid for understanding rates and setting goals at the top of that funnel.

This does not take away from the potential impressions metric, which provides valuable tactical benchmarks and guides by showcasing the inherent value of interacting with influential Tweeters, and the possibility that lies in building those relationships. Reports like our Twitter Account Report allow you to choose which metrics you’d like to report on, real or potential.
How are your Potential Reach and Potential Impressions calculated?

Both potential reach and potential impressions are calculated based on mentions and @replies. You calculate how mentions contribute to potential reach and potential impressions based on the number of author’s followers:

The nature of @replies is that they show up only in the feeds of users who follow both handles (the original author and the @reply author). Unfortunately, there’s no consensus on how to calculate the potential reach and potential impressions for @replies - whether to assume no overlap (the authors share no followers) or assume some percentage of overlap (the authors share some audience).

Based on feedback collected from our customers, our analysts were able to develop three different formulas for calculating potential impressions to accurately cover the widest spectrum of needs. We’ve focused on the most “conservative” calculation for @replies as the go-to model, because the majority of our research supports this method.

In this calculation, one @reply results in one person reached. This will likely give you a lower-than-actual reading, but makes a fair assumption that @replies won’t generate the full reach of the author’s followers. @Replies are typically 1-to-1 interactions, where reach and impressions aren’t as relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Author Followers</th>
<th>Potential Reach</th>
<th>Potential Impressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mention</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>10,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mention</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>10,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>21,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowing how to best calculate your potential reach and potential impressions will give you insight into your virality statistics and brand exposure.

Imagine @UserA mentions the @SimplyMeasured handle in 2 separate Tweets that reach his 5 followers...

…The @SimplyMeasured handle appears twice on each of their news feeds.

Number of Potential Reach x Number of Appearances = Potential Impressions

5 followers x 2 appearances = 10 Potential Impressions
Response Rate
Response rate is becoming more and more important to social media teams. On Twitter, focusing on only outbound promotion just doesn’t work anymore.

Customers reach out with issues, questions, and requests on a daily basis. It’s your job as a social marketer to act as a first responder in these situations, answering questions and directing traffic. Whatever your policies and tactics, measuring customer service success boils down to a few specific metrics. Key among them is response rate.

**Response Rate:**

\[
\text{Total # of Mentions Replied to} \quad \frac{\text{Total Mentions - Retweets}}{\text{Total Mentions - Retweets}}
\]

*What does response rate mean to you?*
Whether you’re a customer service rep, a community manager, or a marketing manager who handles everything for a smaller company, response rate can help you identify successes and holes in your social strategy.

Maintaining company image can be as simple as keeping your engaged customers happy. This means responding to the highest percentage of inbound @mentions and @replies.

Response Time
Response time, similar to response rate, is an important way to measure your social activity for both brand engagement and customer service.

**Response Time:**

\[
\text{Time of @Reply to Inbound Tweet - Time of Inbound Tweet}
\]
Now that we’ve gone over all our metrics definitions, we’re going to show you how to put those metrics to work for your own Twitter campaigns. We’ll be working out of our own software, but you can conduct the same analysis manually or with another tool.

**Measuring Engagement**

Engagement helps grow awareness of your brand and increase traffic to your social profiles and website.

First look at your audience and how you retain followers. Is your audience growing? Do these users follow you during promotions, but unfollow shortly thereafter? What is the industry standard for number of followers, and how do you stack up?

Now, look at how those followers and their circles respond to or share your content. Do you have a surprisingly low number of Retweets for the number of followers you have? Are there certain times that are better for engagement? Have you recently published any Tweets that have had success in regards to mentions or Retweets?

Here are some ways to benchmark your campaign performance and assess your engagement strategy.

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**BASIC ANALYSES**

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**9 ways to measure Twitter audience beyond follower count**

Follower count is an important metric for measuring the performance of a growing audience on Twitter, but too often it’s the only audience metric that marketers focus on. With each new follower gained, the characteristics of your audience change.

Over time, substantial follower growth can result in very different type of audience. Measuring change in follower count can only tell you so much. There are other ways to understand your Twitter audience and model your marketing strategy accordingly.

1. **Identify your influencers**

Follow influencers who engage with your brand or your competitors. Monitor their Tweets for opportunities to engage with them directly.

2. **Measure engagement relative to followers**

Is your engagement scaling as your followers grow? Engagement as a percentage of followers (engagement rate) shows how much of your audience you are able to engage. Your mighty follower count is meaningless if your followers are ignoring your Tweets on their feed or aren’t compelled to join the conversation.

3. **Measure your followers’ followers**

Consider the followers of your followers to be your secondary network. They determine how much potential there is for sharing content downstream.

4. **Measure your competitors’ followers**

Comparing competitor audience growth rates to your own growth will give perspective on how effectively you’re building your audience, letting you know whether you’re ahead of the game or playing catch-up.

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**Twitter Comparison: Total Engagement**

This chart, pulled from the Simply Measured Twitter Competitive Analysis, shows how five competitors stack up on Twitter in terms of follower count and growth rate.

**Twitter Comparison: Total Followers**

This chart, pulled from the Simply Measured Twitter Competitive Analysis, shows how five competitors stack up on Twitter in terms of follower count and growth rate.

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5. Segment your followers by how they engage
Segment your followers by how they engage with your brand. Create personas for followers who frequently Retweet your content, and those who often mention you on Twitter. Social personas for these users will help you better understand who your followers are and why they engage with you on Twitter.

6. Compare your new followers to your old followers
Comparing new followers to your previous followers can help you determine the value of new followers gained and whether you’re retaining old followers as you grow your audience.

7. Segment your followers by location
Are your social goals tied to specific markets? Segmenting follower growth by location enables you to measure your share of voice on Twitter with respect to regional markets.

8. Track engaged users who are not yet followers
Identify users mentioning your brand by name or Retweeting your content who are not already following you. These users may be unaware of your handle or are following your followers. Directly Tweet at these users to encourage them to follow you.

9. Know how active your followers are
How frequently your followers Tweet indicates how active they are on Twitter. The more active your followers are, the more likely they are to see and engage with your Tweets.

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**Follower Distribution By US Metro Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th>% of Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York, NY</td>
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<td>Miami, FL</td>
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<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
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<td>Washington, DC</td>
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<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
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<td>Portland, OR</td>
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<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tucson, AZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno, CA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart, from the Simply Measured Twitter Account Report, shows where a brand’s followers are coming from in the U.S. by percentage of followers and percentage of population.

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This chart, from the Simply Measured Twitter Audience Analysis, shows which percentage of a brand’s followers last tweeted within 24 hours, the past week, the past two weeks, and so on.
5 ways to measure Twitter share of voice beyond brand mentions

Share of voice is one of the most regularly used buzzwords in social media measurement, but are you getting the full picture? There’s more to it than brand mentions.

There are ways to measure not just your current share of voice, but how different types of conversation impact your share of voice relative to competitors.

Let’s look at some different ways to measure how share of voice impacts brand perception, regional markets, site traffic, and more.

1. Measure keyword share of voice

Measuring your brand’s share of voice against specific keywords provides context for how users discuss your brand compared to your competitors.

Depending on the keywords being compared, you can gain insights related to specific product categories or brand attributes. This data is particularly useful for measuring the performance of initiatives aimed at building product awareness or shifting consumer perception of your brand.

2. Segment share of voice by location

Share of voice by location can indicate which regional markets are most aware of and engaged with your social brand presence. Regional share of voice data can be helpful for distributing relevant content, and planning location-based social media efforts.

3. Identifying conversation overlap with competitors

The percentage of overlap in competitor conversations measures how frequently your brand is mentioned in Tweets that also mention your competitors.

Conversation overlap can measure how uniquely your brand is being discussed, while also pointing you towards conversations about you and your competitors you should be aware of and even take part in. A small degree of overlap can indicate brand loyalty or unique product discussion, while a high degree of overlap signals frequent brand comparisons, which are typically seen between highly competitive brands.
4. Measure share of voice for online properties
Segmenting Tweets that link to your website and the sites of your competitors enables you to measure the share of voice responsible for driving traffic to your website. The share of voice for your online properties can serve as a performance indicator for how shareable your site content is and how well social media accounts and marketing efforts have been integrated with your site.

5. Track hashtag adoption
Many brands have hashtags they routinely use to provide context for specific conversations. Comparing share of voice for your brand’s primary hashtags with those of your competitors can reveal how successfully your hashtags are being adopted and reflect your brand’s ability to shape the way others discuss your brand.
How to measure by content type

*Pics or it didn’t happen.* That’s the general rule when dealing with a friend who went fishing...or to Vegas. It might as well be the motto for social media, too. Visual content has become more and more impactful as a way to reach potential customers, fans, and followers. But with so many options, services, and types of visual content, how can you tell what works best?

Here are some quick ways to analyze your visual content and create a strategy based on past success.

**Measure engagement by content type**

The starting point for your Twitter content analysis should be content type. Are photos, videos, links, or Tweets that include none of the above more successful? Measure the engagement as well as the number of Tweets you’ve sent for each content type. This will give you a solid understanding of where you’re strong, where there’s room for improvement, and which content type makes users engage with your brand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Tweets by Content</th>
<th>Tweets Sent</th>
<th>Engagement per Tweet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>188.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>72.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Tweets</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart, available in the Simply Measured Twitter Account Report, shows each type of Tweet alongside the engagement that Tweet type received.

**Measure engagement by media type**

Next, identify which service helps your brand see the most success. Do Vine clips perform better than YouTube videos? Are Instagram pics as successful as Twitpics?

**Measure competitor success by content type**

Measure your engagement against your competition. Where are other businesses in your industry finding success? If they’re seeing much higher engagement with photos, you can perform a content analysis to find out what they’re doing with their photos that you might be missing.

This chart gives a full picture of a brand’s Tweet content types over a given period: how many Tweets included content of each type, the engagement per each Tweet type, and the number of impressions per Tweet type.

**Type Comparison: Engagement on Brand Tweets**

This chart, from the Simply Measured Twitter Competitive Analysis Report, compares the performance of photos, videos, links, and normal Tweets based on engagement, posting frequency, and performance level.
6 types of analysis for timing your Tweets

Do you know how timing impacts the performance of your Tweets? There is no universal best practice. The ideal times to Tweet are unique to your brand audience and the type of content that you deliver.

Because the lifespan of any given Tweet you send is limited, it’s important to determine when your audience is most active to find the best times to share your content.

There are steps you can take to understand when to Tweet and when to engage your followers through different types of content.

1. Analyze your top Tweets

Analyzing your top Tweets is a good starting point for identifying the best times to Tweet. Identify which times are most commonly associated with top-performing content. Viewing your top Tweets by time of day displays when your brand delivers its most successful content.

2. Compare competitor engagement

Comparing the distribution of your competitors’ engagement by day and time will also help ensure that you don’t overlook opportune times to Tweet. Examining the content strategies of your competitors can clue you in to successful post times you may not have experimented with.

3. Measure organic mentions

Measuring mentions of your brand, your handle, or hashtags can help you identify peak times for organic engagement with your brand. This approach gives you insight into user activity that isn’t biased by when your brand Tweets. Measuring organic mentions over an extended time period, and taking care to avoid events that bias posting times, can reveal when users choose to engage with your brand.

4. Know where your audience is

Knowing where your audience is located can help you identify when they’re most likely to be active online. Viewing a distribution of your audience by time zone can give you an idea of when they’ll be starting their day, taking lunch breaks, and going home at night. The more broadly your audience is distributed, the larger window you have to post and the greater the need to tailor content that appeals to regional audiences.

This chart shows when a brand’s Tweets were sent and which Tweets performed best in terms of engagement during one day.

This chart shows the percentage of a brand’s followers that come from each relevant time zone.
5. Monitor current engagement trends
Viewing engagement by day and time is an excellent way to determine which days and times are most effective for your brand. Viewing this data over weeks or months, excluding engagement outliers and paid Tweets, and making a point to experiment with when you post, can help you avoid biased data.

6. Segment content types by time of day
Segmenting engagement for key content types can help you determine when certain types of content are more likely to drive engagement by time of day and day of the week. For example, you might find that posts with calls to action receive better response during peak times, but that content designed to entertain followers successfully drives engagement during weekends or off-hours.

Mentions and Brand Tweets by Day and Time

This chart, taken from the Simply Measured Twitter Account Report, shows the number of Tweets sent by a brand in relation to the number of times a brand was mentioned by both hour and day.
So you’ve got the basics down, but now you need to assess the ROI on your time spent engaging Twitter followers and building brand awareness. It’s time to look at how your social strategy impacts overall bottom line by turning Twitter followers into paying customers.

At this stage, you’ll need to consider your social strategy’s effects on your sales funnel – how those Tweets sent relate to measurable web actions like downloads or purchases. In addition, if your brand uses a customer service account, you’ll want to find out how quickly issues are resolved and where you can improve your social customer service strategy.

### 3 ways to optimize Tweets for website traffic

You’ve undoubtedly spent hours crafting Tweets for your brand, but once they hit the feed you may wonder how to measure performance for posts designed to get users to your website?

Optimizing Tweets for website traffic is not always easy or obvious.

Let’s take a look at three measurement tactics you can use to start converting your Twitter engagement to website traffic.

1. **Combine Twitter activity and your site’s conversion funnel in Google Analytics**

How do Tweets that resonate on Twitter funnel down to site visits and ultimately to conversions?

Pairing Twitter referral traffic with Tweets linking to your website provides a much more powerful lens than looking at trended Twitter visits on their own. Combining Google Analytics with Twitter data allows you to see not just how much referral traffic you’ve received, but how many Tweets it took to drive those visits.

Measure how sent Tweets are amplified throughout your network, expanding potential impressions and reach before funneling down to visits on your site. Since getting users to your site is just the beginning, configure goal completions to measure actions visitors took after reaching your site.

What you have now is the ability to attribute site visits, campaign submissions, and purchases back to specific Tweets. You can see what content is responsible for helping your brand complete specific goals using Twitter.

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This chart, taken from the Twitter Traffic Analysis Report, shows how one brand’s Twitter activity converted to site visits.
2. Analyze content and calls to action based on website metrics

The goal is to optimize content that draws users to your website. You optimize your content calendar to meet engagement goals, so shouldn’t you also optimize for site visits?

Dive into the top Tweets to see what’s working. These are the Tweets linking to your site and the top content responsible for visits from Twitter. Analyze which audiences were targeted and what was included in Tweets that motivated users to click through to your site. Determine which calls to action work best.

As you begin to take a holistic approach to your digital brand presence, start incorporating existing practices for mobile, search, and display into social. When driving users to your site, choose your keywords and calls to action carefully. Expanding these practices to incentivize site traffic will improve your outreach tactics moving forward.
3. Discover website influencers
Who is driving traffic to your website? Identify which users link to your site and why.

Understand where your traffic is coming from. Are your own Tweets the primary driver for traffic to your site, or are others directing traffic for you? By creating more engagement with your Tweets, you’re encouraging others to link to your site.

Explore user profiles that are successful at driving traffic, especially those that frequently share Tweets linking to your site. Those users likely have audiences with particular interest in your brand. Discover which content resonates with these audiences, whether it’s products, promotions, or industry thought leadership.

This chart shows which Twitter users are driving the most traffic to a site via link-sharing.
4 ways to improve customer service measurement on Twitter

In a recent study, we found that 34% of top brands now have a dedicated Twitter account for customer service. While Twitter programs are typically owned by the marketing/PR department, customer service is a key secondary activity. Many brands are investing in solving customer problems via Twitter. When efforts are shifted from marketing to customer satisfaction, measurement strategies must also change to effectively evaluate performance.

It is important that your brand establishes a customer service-specific approach to measurement. We’ve outlined four strategies to help you do just that, using BrandX as an example.

1. Measure end-to-end performance

Brands need to ensure that they are measuring success throughout the entire customer service process.

Quick response times and a high response rate are key to optimizing performance, but there is room for improvement if brands are experiencing a high volume of complex cases, or unexpected changes in the percentage of support responses being sent.

This chart, taken from the Twitter Customer Service Analysis Report, is a high-level summary that walks through the customer support process. It provides a period snapshot that can be used for benchmarking customer service KPIs and optimizing overall performance.
3. Focus on core customer service KPIs

Measuring customer service performance on Twitter requires a different set of KPIs from those associated with marketing performance. Follower and engagement growth are standard marketing KPIs. However, support handles should view these metrics as potential red flags rather than account management success.

When it comes to customer support, the goal is to respond to and resolve as many customer service issues as possible, as quickly as possible. The KPIs that matter most are response rate and response time.

Brands should identify a target response rate and set goals for improvement by conducting ongoing monitoring and competitor benchmarking.

Once a consistent response rate has been established, it can act as a good indicator of whether a brand has the resources to scale customer service to meet increases in customer demand.

% of Mentions With @BrandXCustomerService Replies

This chart shows the percentage of total mentions that @BrandXCustomerService responded to in May 2014.

Goals for response time must also be established through monitoring and benchmarking.

But response time isn’t a standalone metric. Response time can falsely signal success if brands are simply responding quickly to recent issues and ignoring aging issues.

Response time and response rate must be measured in tandem when analyzing overall customer service performance.

% of Mentions With @BrandXCustomerService Replies

This chart shows @BrandXCustomerService’s daily average response time for May 2014.
4. Identify ongoing trends
Aggregated data can be very useful for identifying ongoing customer service trends.

The trended view above makes it possible to quickly identify whether customer service response scaled with brand mentions. It also clearly shows patterns in response time.

The 6:00PM spike in user mentions deserves attention. Replies did not scale with the increased mentions, although response time was improved.

Mentions peaked at 6:00PM after an angry customer Tweet was heavily Retweeted. Improved response time indicates that @BrandX was quickly engaging where it could, but likely avoided mentions it did not think were worth responding to.

Identifying trends that capture complete coverage and focus on core customer service KPIs can be very useful for spotting issues and making decisions regarding resource allocation.
How to tell if your Twitter campaign actually worked
You’ve spent countless hours preparing, strategizing, and planning for your Twitter campaign. You put your plan into action, worked overtime making sure it was executed properly…and now you’re pretty sure it went well. But in an industry that focuses on measurable goals through specific metrics, pretty sure isn’t good enough.
You’re going to want to know if your efforts were worth it. Did your campaign result in an increase in customers, better brand awareness, or more engaged users? These are important questions in determining whether your efforts are worth repeating.
It’s important to conduct a “post-mortem analysis” to determine what you did wrong, what you did right, and what you can do next time to improve.
As you dig into your Twitter analytics to unearth these insights, there are several key metrics that can help you better understand your campaign.

**Follower growth**
The easiest way to tell if your campaign had a meaningful impact is to look at follower growth and how it correlated with your campaign timeline. Did spikes in follower growth line up with key messaging from your campaign? Did influencer involvement drive a significant increase in new followers? There’s a lot of information that can be gleaned from follower trends, including something we call “campaign lift.” Was there a sustained increase in your follower growth rate after the campaign was over? Be sure to take that into consideration. If you saw a massive peak in fans and then a quick return to normal, you may need to reevaluate some of your campaign tactics.

*This chart, taken from the Simply Measured Twitter Account Report, shows a brand’s number of followers added side-by-side with the brand’s total follower count over a week.*
**Engagement**

While follower growth can give you some great insight and set a barometer for campaign health, one of your main goals was most likely to get followers involved. Examine the engagement trends surrounding your campaign – both before and after – to determine your campaign lift for engagement. Set a wide sample set with at least twice the time of your campaign period to use as a benchmark for standard engagement. If users didn’t respond to your messaging, you need to understand why. What can you do better? If they did respond positively, you can analyze key points from your outbound content that kept them involved.

**Web traffic**

Viewing Twitter data and Google Analytics data in tandem is the most concrete way to tell if your campaign worked. If you can determine the actual site traffic driven from your efforts and, in turn, the goal completions driven by your Twitter activity, you can determine a base-level ROI for your Twitter campaign. While it may not reflect residual brand awareness and later referral traffic, it can set the tone for future campaigns.

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This chart shows how one brand’s Tweets correlated to engagement over a month.

This chart, from our Twitter Traffic Report, ties in one brand’s Twitter data with its Google Analytics data to show how campaign efforts translated to actual website visits and goal completions.
Influence
When running any kind of campaign, your goal isn’t to simply reach people – it’s reaching the right people. How influential was the audience you engaged? Not only can this be valuable insight for your campaign’s success, it can give you targeted goals and opportunities for future campaigns.

Impressions & Reach
The two metrics that tie in the audience of your followers – impressions and reach – can be a great way to tell if you were successful. Benchmark against standard impressions and reach, discover the key reasons for increases during your campaign, and set the tone for future activity.

Twitter Influencers

This chart shows one brand’s most engaged users, most followed users, and top users by Klout score – key information for building a strong influencer base.

Impressions vs. Reach

This chart shows how impressions and reach relate to one another for one brand’s campaign cycle.
Example reports

Understand the performance of your brand’s Twitter account
Answer questions about Twitter account performance and engagement, as well as followers, mentions, and engagement trends. Dig into the most effective Tweets and the impact they’re having on your account and audience.

Twitter Account Report (JetBlue)
Twitter Follower Report (StarwoodBuzz)
Twitter Audience Analysis (Tide)
Multiple Twitter Channel Analysis (IPG Agencies)
Vine Tweet Analysis (chrisbrogan)

Benchmark your brand’s performance against competitors
Analyze the audience, content, and engagement trends of any Twitter account, allowing you to understand your competitive position, relative performance, and market share compared to your competitors.

Twitter Competitive Analysis (Hotel Chains)

Measure your customer service efforts on Twitter
Dive into individual user Tweets, track response rates and times, and analyze a dedicated customer service handle in relation to your main brand account to understand your customer service effectiveness.

Twitter Customer Service Report (Ford)
Multiple Twitter Customer Service Report (Ford)

Compare your efforts on Twitter against those on other social networks
Measure your efforts on Twitter in context with Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest, and more. Compare audience size and growth, as well as post engagement across all major networks.

Cross-Channel Social Performance Report
Community Management

10 Tips for Crafting the Perfect Tweet
The Meeting Theory: How to Time Your Tweets Down to the Minute
How to Build a Better Twitter Calendar with 3 Good Tests
How to Plan Your Tweets for Engagement vs. Site Traffic

Strategy

Potential Impressions vs. Actual Impressions: Which Should You Measure?
Twitter Advocacy: How One Employee Generated Massive Reach for @ThinkBonfire
Losing Twitter Followers? How to Lower Your Attrition Rate
Daily Data: The 3 Twitter Metrics You Should Track Every Single Day

Cross-Channel Promotion

Instagram and Twitter May Pair Better Than We Thought
Why Cross-Channel Measurement Is a Problem for Social Marketers
ABOUT SIMPLY MEASURED
Simply Measured is a fast-growing team of data geeks dedicated to making the world of analytics and reporting a better, more beautiful place. Find out more at simplymeasured.com

Our goal is to put the tools to understand business data in the hands of business users. We think reporting should be simple, attractive, and accessible for everyone – not just data scientists. Our software streamlines the process from data to deliverables and eliminates the countless hours spent on everyday reporting tasks. We do this by putting cloud data sources at your fingertips, providing a marketplace of best practice reports, and allowing you to generate beautiful solutions on the web, in Excel, and in PowerPoint with a couple of clicks.

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Request a Free 14 Day Trial

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