

BOOKSQUARE UNIVERSITY

Profiles in Publishing: How Authors and Publishing Professionals Use Twitter Successfully

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How Authors and Publishing Professionals Use Twitter

So you're working in the publishing business and you're looking at this Twitter thing, thinking, "Hmm, okay, but what do I bring to the party? How can I use Twitter?" We know there's no right way (though there are wrong ways!) when it comes to Twitter. Let's look at some case studies of how others in publishing are using Twitter to communicate, network, and share knowledge.

As you'll discover, authors, editors, agents, publicists, and book evangelists are engaged in lively and interesting conversation on Twitter. While Twitter naysayers dismiss the service as a waste of time, those of us using it realize the truth: real business is getting done, information is being shared, and relationships are formed and strengthened. We liken Twitter to a cocktail party -- sure, there's a lot of fun and laughter, but there's also great networking and serious conversation.

Even if you only devote fifteen minutes a day to Twitter, you will be better informed about current events in publishing. You'll hear the latest news first. You will meet people who are as passionate about books as you are.

In order to protect the innocent (or is it the guilty?), the following case studies are composites of our favorite publishing professionals, highlighting some of the great ways they use Twitter to make the world of books a better place. We cannot capture everything they do, but we are in awe of their ability to share, communicate, and lead. They are leading the way and inspiring even better ways to engage the publishing ecosystem as we work toward the future.

Curious? Read on to see how others use Twitter!



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The Agent

Job Description

Literary agent, well-connected in the industry.

Twitter Style

Uses Twitter for networking and fun conversation. Keeps conversation flowing by talking about how agents work, what they do, the importance of following guidelines, and how different agents represent different types of work. Cheerleads for represented authors on Twitter while building connections with editorial, marketing, and media.

Shares industry knowledge and information with wider Twitter audience.

Twitter Superpower

Works with network of agents on Twitter to create special Twitter-only events, such as [#askagent](#). This chat allows authors to ask detailed -- well, Twitter detailed -- questions about querying, synopses, and protocol. The agents involved spent time making sure authors are up-to-speed on current trends and understand the agent process.

Rock Stars

Colleen Lindsay - <http://twitter.com/ColleenLindsay>

Deidre Knight - <http://twitter.com/deidreknight>

Nathan Bransford - <http://twitter.com/NathanBransford>

Rachelle Gardner - <http://twitter.com/RachelleGardner>

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The Editor

Job Description

Editor for a publishing house.

Twitter Style

Our editor uses Twitter for a mix of professional and personal activities. She provides updates from the office, offering a glimpse into the often-mysterious world of a book editor. These snapshots include prepping for meetings/calls with authors, working on detailed edits of books, thoughts on presentations for editorial meetings, setbacks, and, of course, triumphs. She shares her excitement about authors and upcoming titles. This enthusiasm build buzz for her list. The editor also shares personal interests and activities, humanizing an often mysterious job.

Twitter Superpower

Together with other editors from various publishers, she participates in a regular Twitter chat. The hour-long #editorchat is a back-and-forth discussion between editors, readers, and other interested individuals. While no pitching is allowed during this discussion, the editors involved answer questions as fully as possible. Editors from other media have started using the #editorchat hashtag to hold their own equally enlightening discussions, adding another must read to the week's line-up.

Rock Stars

Moonrat - <http://twitter.com/moonrat>

Angela James - <http://twitter.com/angelajames>

Alyssa Smith - <http://twitter.com/booksandcorsets>

Tim O'Brien - <http://twitter.com/TimOBrienNYT>

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The Author

Job Description

Writes books. Discovers that promotion is part of the job.

Twitter Style

Good Author: Spends time tweeting a mix of interesting links, updates, and comments. Makes an effort to engage with fans and peers. Participates in Twitter community in a way that builds name recognition and reinforces brand. Tweets with voice and style.

Bad Author: Treats Twitter as just another broadcast mechanism. Conversation is one-way and focused on the author. Conversation only occurs between select group of friends (see also: celebrity tweeter). Pops in when there's something to sell.

Twitter Superpower

Gives as much as she gets. The best authors on Twitter are engaged in the community and talking with fans, peers, and others in the industry. While they share news about their new books, appearances, and more, they spend even more time enjoying the community that is Twitter.

Rock Stars

Jennifer Weiner - <http://twitter.com/jenniferweiner>

Luis Urrea - <http://twitter.com/Urrealism>

Colson Whitehead - <http://twitter.com/colsonwhitehead>

HelenKay Dimon - <http://twitter.com/hkdimon>

Jill Monroe - <http://twitter.com/jillmonroe>

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The Bookseller

Job Description

One or more staff members of an independent bookstore.

Twitter Style

Booksellers offer a mix of personal and professional tweets. They seek to make connections with a broader audience, other booksellers, and local customers. Messages focus on in-store events, ideas to improve the customer experience, and future developments in bookselling.

The booksellers on Twitter tend to be on the cutting edge of 21st century bookselling, spending time on sharing best practices among themselves. Booksellers also emphasize the importance of shopping and buying local by emphasizing customer service and knowledge.

Twitter Superpower

Mixing local and national discussion to build the store's brand. The bookseller makes recommendations to readers and joins in discussions about books. Even while focusing on local events and signings, booksellers on Twitter provide access to interviews and articles to an international audience.

Rock Stars

Vromans - <http://twitter.com/vromans>

Bookavore/Word Brooklyn - <http://twitter.com/bookavore>

Rich Rennicks - <http://twitter.com/RichRennicks>

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The Reader/Evangelist

Job Description

Lover of reading and books. Most important person in the book world.

Twitter Style

Chatty, engaged, involved. Online readers are book evangelists. The book evangelists on Twitter enjoy interacting with a mix of publishing professionals and readers. They participate in discussions, often adding the needed reader perspective to business conversations. They ask questions and share experiences.

Book recommendations are part of the evangelist currency. They love to read and discuss books. From reviews to casual recommendations, evangelists help spread the word about great new reads.

Twitter Superpower

Reading and talking about books. From the Twitter Book Club ([#tbc](#)) to the weekly discussion [#followreader](#) (an offshoot of the Follow the Reader [blog](#)), the evangelists on Twitter are leading and shaping discussions. Their consumer-oriented approach to discussing books on Twitter is invaluable market research for publishers.

Rock Stars

Smart Bitches - <http://twitter.com/SmartBitches>

Maw Books - <http://twitter.com/mawbooks>

The Book Maven - <http://twitter.com/thebookmaven>

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The Marketer/Salesperson

Job Description

Marketing personnel for major publisher. Salesperson who either works for major publisher or independently.

Twitter Style

Chatty and friendly. Using a mix of personal and professional tweets, they discuss everything from current releases to business strategy. The marketer and salesperson (two separate jobs) are accessible for questions and often serve as mentors as new personnel or booksellers join Twitter. They enjoy creating and nurturing connections.

Salespeople also use their voices to introduce new-to-Twitter booksellers to the wider audience and locals who might be searching for information.

Twitter Superpower

Connecting books and readers! Taking a cue from the open, friendly atmosphere of Twitter, both the marketer and salesperson spend time recommending specific titles in response to reader questions. While the recommendations may be skewed toward their employer's list, they do not hesitate to match the right book to the right person. If stumped by a reader, they use their extended network to find the right title.

Rock Stars

Ann Kingman - <http://twitter.com/AnnKingman>

Michael Kindess - <http://twitter.com/mkindness>

Kat Meyer - <http://twitter.com/KatMeyer>

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Everybody Else

Job Description

This group ranges from journalists to bloggers to technical service providers to distributors to consultants to readers to authors to, well, you name it.

Twitter Style

A mix of all styles. They are finding others on Twitter and joining the conversation. Many who fall into this group have emerged as thought leaders; the information and analysis they offer -- either via links or Twitter conversation -- is often spread deep into the Twitter community.

Twitter Superpower

Love of books and publishing and reading who offer unique perspective on the publishing business.

Rock Stars

Permanent Paper - <http://twitter.com/permanentpaper>

Sarah Weinman - <http://twitter.com/sarahw>

The Writer Mama - <http://twitter.com/thewritermama>

Lorraine Shanley - <http://twitter.com/LWShanley>

Brian O'Leary - <http://twitter.com/brianoleary>

Publishers Lunch - <http://twitter.com/PublishersLunch>

Jose Alonso Furtado - <http://twitter.com/jafurtado>

Booksquare - <http://twitter.com/booksquare>

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Ready to Learn More? Sign Up for Tweet Camp!

Get up to speed quickly and start using the full power of Twitter today.

Tweet Camp provides you with the essential skills you need to make the most of Twitter:

- @ Our introduction to Twitter guides you through the sign-up process quickly and efficiently.
- @ Important tips on how to make a great first impression.
- @ Learn all about the various types of messages on Twitter, including when and how to use each. We take special care to help you avoid of the most common mistakes.
- @ Learn how to find your tribe and build a following of interesting people.
- @ Discover the power of Twitter search. Frequently called Twitter's killer feature, Twitter search is a phenomenal tool for finding conversations, following live events, and connecting with the right people.
- @ An overview of the best free Twitter applications to help you save time and improve your Twitter experience.
- @ Twitter etiquette tips help you avoid coming off like a rude party guest.

For more information and to sign up for Tweet Camp, visit us at BooksquareUniversity.com.