

PR HOT SPOT June 2009

By Kimberly Miles, Public Relations Manager

Twitter 101: Basics You Need to Know For Your Business to Engage on Twitter

By Kimberly Miles

There's been a lot of buzz about Twitter lately as one of the newest social media micro blogs to engage with potential clients, media, or even celebrities online. It can be sometimes confusing and overwhelming to understand the language of Twitter. Below are a few tips to help you get started:

1. **Username.** When setting up a Twitter account, the username will be a reflection of your business. Keep it simple by making your business name your username. If that's taken, then add an abbreviated location like MB to the end of the name or similar.
2. **Profile Bio:** Unlike Facebook or MySpace, you only have 160 characters to tell the Twitter Universe who you are so get the essential words in about your business and the type of information you will be 'Tweeting' about. Make sure you let people know why they should be following you and what interesting information you will be providing.
3. **Getting followers:** Of course, unless you're Ashton Kutcher, it may be a little difficult to get people to follow you when you first join Twitter. The key thing to remember though, it's not necessarily the quantity of Twitter followers you have, but the quality of those that are following you and who is listening to what you have to say. Start following the competitive businesses in your industry as well as people who are following them. Do a search for your industry and see who is already talking about you. When you follow others, they may follow you. You can also get new followers by ReTweeting what others have posted. For example, RT @MyMyrtleBeach We're getting ready for the Sun Fun Festival - some great free events for everyone!
4. **Post Interesting 'Tweets':** When you post a message on Twitter, you only have up to 140 characters to work with and unlike other social media Twitter is meant to be used to share your thoughts and links. If you are tweeting for a business, post some tweets that look like a real person is behind them. For example, when I tweet for Myrtle Beach, I'll sometimes go 'Went to a great restaurant today. . .' Also to maximize your characters, use a free URL shortening site such as <http://bit.ly> which not only shortens your links but tracks who clicked on them as well.
5. **Tweeting with #tags:** Add # symbol in front of a keyword you think others will be talking about such as #swineflu and then when people search for that tag they will find your tweet.

Helpful Twitter Links:

1. Twitpic: Service that allows you to share your photos on Twitter.
2. TinyURL: Where you can shorten your URL's.
3. TwitterFall: Service that tracks Twitter trends.
4. Tweetdeck: Allows you to manage your Twitter site, prioritize Twitter users you are following.
5. Twitertise, Twuffer, or FutureTweets: Free services that allow you to schedule your tweets in advance so you can stagger them out over time.

Print and Online Publicity Values

April 2009

94 Newspaper Articles
10 Nondaily Newspaper Articles
12 Consumer Magazine Articles
8 Trade Magazine Articles
306 Web Articles
Total Circulation 197,085,596
Publicity Value \$3,510,246

Year to Date Ad Value for Myrtle Beach Travel News: **\$13,486,573**

What would you like to learn or see in a future PR Hot Spot? Want to be involved in this areas PR efforts? Have a PR related question? You can reach Kimberly Miles at 843-916-7218 or Kimberly.Miles@VisitMyrtleBeach.com.