

Sportivate

Top Tips for Twitter Success

This simple PDF is designed to help you in the administration of your own Twitter account, or to set up a new one to help spread the word about the Sportivate sessions you have on offer and help engage more young people in the process.

BASICS

Bio

The Twitter bio on your profile page can only be 160 characters, so it's very important you get across your key messages in as concise a manner as possible.

Your bio section should include the following:

- Who you are
- What you do (broadly speaking)
- Where you are located
- How do people get in touch with you (e.g. website link)

Some examples of other organisation bio's:

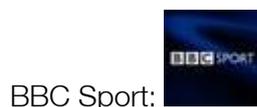
- @Sport_England: We're working in communities across England to create a sporting habit for life by providing better facilities, improved sporting opportunities & expert advice. sportengland.org
- @Sportivate_se: Sportivate gives 14-25 year- coaching in their chosen sport. Delivered by CSPs, it's part of Places People Play, Sport England's London 2012 legacy programme.

Profile picture

Despite its small size, your profile picture is important when seen within a twitter feed. When selecting an image go for something visually simple that reflects you.

A simple and easily recognisable logo is usually best when using Twitter.

For example:



Who to follow

When starting an account make sure you "follow":

- @Sportivate_se
- @Sport_England
- @SportingChamp1

These are good hubs for you to tweet at and in turn they can retweet your posts and help you generate more followers.

After that we recommend you “follow” organisations such as:

- National sports news pages (i.e. @BBC_Sport)
- Any websites or publications that specialise in your sport (i.e. @engbasketball)
- Other Sportivate associated groups you’re aware of ([i.e. @sportcoventry](#))

Using Twitter

In case you are just getting started here are a couple of handy definitions:

- **@ replies** – the main way of communicating with a specific user on Twitter. When you use someone’s Twitter name in a tweet (for example @sportivate_se is the Twitter name of the national sportivate account) they are notified and it appears on their interactions board. This way you can directly interact with other users and have conversations (don’t forget that other users can still see your tweets)
- **Hashtags (#)** – Hashtags are a method of viewing and participating in mass conversations on Twitter. When users put a hash symbol (#) in front of a word or phrase (the phrase can have no spaces) it has been “hash tagged” and will become a hyperlink. By clicking on this hyperlink you will be taken to a Twitter wall showing all of the tweets that feature the same hashtag. The ones being used on a mass level (E.G. #London2012) appears in the trends bar at the side of you screen.

Remember Twitter is in real time so it matters at what time of day you tweet. Think about who you are targeting and when they will be looking at twitter. Also, tweeting during major sporting events/championships is a good way to get people involved in programme and attract new followers.

CONTENT

Good places to source content

As well as your own content about activities and sessions, the following places are good for sourcing content that you can input into a social media content calendar. Examples of the kind of content you are looking for include:

- Topical news stories on major sporting events
- Editorial pieces written by athletes (E.G. Andy Murray’s column on BBC Sport online during Wimbledon)
- Celebrity tie in’s with major sporting events (E.G. “look who was spotted at the British & Irish Lions game against Australia”)
- Image galleries from major sporting events
- Instructional, topical or simply entertaining sports related video content (E.G. skate & BMX videos, event highlights, interviews with inspiring athletes or “how to” videos)

BBC Sport: While it seems like an obvious choice, BBC Sport has some of the most up-to-date sports news on the web, as well as some of the best content made from the BBC’s vast archive of footage. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/>

Mailonline: one of the biggest international news websites in the world. When looking for topical sport and celebrity content this is fantastic. Also because of their stable of award winning photographers they always have some exciting photo stories that are great to share with your followers. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/index.html>

Huffington Post UK: The Huffington Post is great place to discover both interesting commentary (on sport, culture and current affairs) as well as great video content from around the world. <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/sport/>

Unruly media's Viral Video Chart: Viral videos are part of the language of the online world, and sharing ones that are current and popular is a great way of giving you a strong voice with your followers. This chart is one of the better ones based on both views and the speed of the video spreading across the blogosphere. While some of the videos won't be appropriate for you to share (a lot of consumer ads appear in the chart) things like Red Bull's athlete machines videos, as well as the most impressive action sports videos, will be of interest to your fans. http://viralvideochart.unrulymedia.com/chart_keyword/UK_Ads_Chart?interval=day

Making a Calendar

Creating a content calendar will help you create a consistent tone of voice for you social media as you can layout two-three months worth of content in one place.

What you share can help shape your Twitter identity as much what you create.

In terms of what input to consider look at:

- Events you will be running
- Deadlines for group submissions and applications
- Local and national sporting events
- The achievements of local teams
- Any newspaper cuttings featuring you

Tone

The tone of your tweets and should:

- Use relaxed language, but avoid slang
- Ask open questions (what do your audience think)
- Try to avoid too many statistics
- Include links as they are a great way to enhance your posts
- Always '@ tweet' when possible

TOP TIPS TO AVOID FAILURE

There are certain things that should be avoided when managing a Twitter page:

- **Keep your Sportivate and personal twitter accounts separate**

It's incredibly easy to accidently post something meant for just your personal account to another account, especially if you are operating on a smartphone. One way of avoiding this is to run your Twitter account through a system like HootSuite (<https://hootsuite.com/>) which makes it very easy to keep multiple accounts separate.

- **Keep an eye on your Twitter replies and your direct messages**

It is important that you engage with the people following you when they ask you questions or send you a direct message. This will help to build a rapport with your followers. Direct messages will usually be used for queries and it will reflect badly if you answer a query in the public sphere that it has been sent to you privately.

- **Avoid mistakes with preparation**

Social media is a great communication tool for your group—until the communication goes awry, and the mistake is there for everyone to see. Setting sensible ground rules and processes will minimize your risk.

A few examples of this would be things like:

- Always double check your spelling and grammar before tweeting
- If retweeting something think it over twice to ensure it's appropriate for your audience
- If tweeting live from an event plan ahead how many tweets you want to do and roughly how regularly to avoid “over doing it”
- When drawing content from your calendar stop and think about the relevance as the content could have been written up to three months previously and lost it's spark

- **Get comfortable with the mechanics of Twitter**

Hashtags, @ replies —this stuff isn't necessarily easy or intuitive, and it's forgivable if you make a mistake once in a while. That said the stakes are higher when you're using social media for a group or organisation, so it pays to get things right. Spend some time familiarising yourself with the mechanics on your own account before you start tweeting on behalf of your group.