Introduction to Twitter: Social *and* Job Networking

Overview: This class will introduce students to and develop understanding of what Twitter is, along with Social/Job Networking. In addition, participants will go through the steps to create a Twitter account (if desired) and learn to optimize opportunities to network for employment.

**Student Skill Level:** Intermediate/Advanced

Requirements
- Active Email account (to create a Twitter account)
- Good mouse skills (ability to move the mouse on the computer screen and click or double click as required with minimal assistance)
- Familiarity with Internet (frequent use of browsing web pages, clicking links)

Length: 3 hours (including 10 minute break)

Objectives
- Social Networking and Job Searching: What's the big deal?
    - Importance in today's economic market
- Define: What is Twitter?
    - Search for/Find People on Twitter using Google
    - An alternative "search engine" for the Internet
    - Identify the employment connection possibilities Twitter offers
- Create Twitter Profile (optional)
    - Fill in information
    - Create first "tweet"
    - Search for/Follow other users
    - Optimize profile for job opportunities
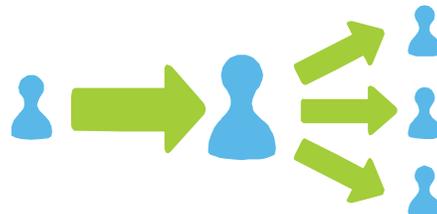
Social Networking and Job Searching

So what's the big deal with social networking (online) and job searching? Well, there are a myriad of ways to meet people and find common interests – not just socially, either. It's very normal to talk about work or the job search, so why not share some professional interests online? It makes sense.

Currently, the biggest social networking site is **Facebook**. **Twitter** is also quite popular, and quite different. They are both web sites devoted to communication and "personal" access. Many celebrities have both Facebook and Twitter sites, and many of them actually use them from time to time (as opposed to having administrators).

Of course, celebrities are not the only ones on Facebook or Twitter – millions upon millions of people use these sites daily to keep up with family and friends, share information, play games, "write" on "walls" on the sites, and other things.

So how can **you** use **Twitter**? I'm glad you asked.

Twitter was the brain child of Jack Dorsey, who wanted to know if instant messaging could be shared more easily among online friends. He and Biz Stone created a prototype of Twitter in about two weeks in 2000. Twitter was officially launched in July of 2006 (Wikimedia, 2011).

Even though Twitter is focused more on social networking, it can still be used to network for job opportunities. It is an excellent way for people to "put their best foot forward" online and start making connections that could lead to employment opportunities.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a social network where users create short messages of no more than 140 characters in length – including spaces between words. When a user posts a message, called a **tweet**, other users may be able to read what's going on. In essence, it's a quick and easy way to constantly keep up to date with friends, families, organizations, and even celebrities.

What kinds of possible employment connections could I make with Twitter?

At this point, you might ask "Why would I have a Twitter account?" Although presently Facebook is the dominant social networking service, it is much more elaborate and involved than Twitter. Twitter is **simple**, and primarily focused on one aspect: keeping you informed of the **most current** information available.

You can tweet all kinds of helpful data: pass along current industry information (through links), keep up with all kinds of trending topics regarding your job field, and follow other people in your industry of interest, too! Since your account profile is limited to 160 characters, you can tailor it to showcase your unique professional capabilities.

See **Create an Account** (later in this handout) for more information.

Search For/Find People on Twitter

There are various ways to find Twitter users. If you **don't** have an account, you can search for people through **Google**. For example, if you type an individual's name followed by the word **Twitter** the results will include a link to that person's Twitter page. ***This only works if the person you search for has an account.**

If you search this way you see a **preview** of their page, along with any links they have posted. If you'd like to see the whole account, of follow the person, you'll need to sign up.
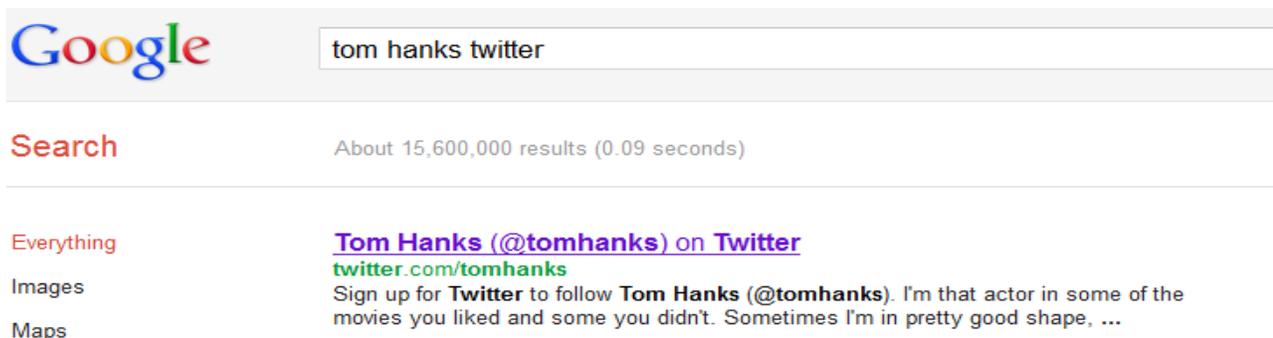
First it's important to note that this is a **Verified Account**. There is a blue-colored check mark next to his name. Twitter has contacted him and made sure that he is the one actually "tweeting." **Anyone** can create **any account** with **any name**, but only "the" Tom Hanks can have a verified account!

What we see listed are **tweets**. There's a maximum of 140 characters in each tweet – **including spaces**. Tweets allow users to say something or share links. When Twitter users enter text or links in their "What's Happening?" box, other users will be updated.

You may also see external links to other items of interest. The web sites **tinyurl.com**, **bit.ly**, and **say.ly** are commonly-used "link shortener" sites used by those on Twitter. These sites create short links that take up less space in a tweet. Remember, there are only 140 characters to use, so shorter links are a must! If you're interested in a topic, you may click on a link. You will be redirected to a page outside of Twitter.

…….Practice…….

Let's look for other people on Twitter and see what links we can find. Remember, this is not like using a search engine – people have posted these links for pictures, news, and information that we might find interesting.

Search for anyone – Sarah Palin, Barack Obama, librarians, tech people…..

Also, check out the web site www.justtweetit.com to find a listing of over 45,000 Twitter users!

"Must Know Twitter Vocabulary"

Tweet: A short, 140-character message Twitter users broadcast to their contacts.

Twit/Tweeple/Tweeps: Nicknames for people who use Twitter.

Retweet: A way to share another user's tweet with your own followers.

@ Message: A way to mention or publicly message another Twitter individual.

Mention: This is when someone @ messages your Twitter account.

DM/Direct Message: A way to privately message another Twitter individual.

Hashtags (#s): Denoted by a # in front of a word, hashtags are a way to link your tweet to an index of tweets on related
topics. Ex: #NYC, #reading, #worldcup, #GOP, etc.

Unfollow: This is when someone decides to remove a Twitter contact. The person will not be notified of this action.

Favorite: If you like a tweet, then you can "favorite" it, and it will show up on your "Favorites" lists on your profile. The
person whose tweets you like will also be notified.

Lists/Listed: This is a way to organize the accounts you're following into categories. If you make your lists public, other
people can follow them.

Trends: This is a list of the top 10 phrases used on Twitter at any given moment.

Microblogging: The act of broadcasting short, in-the-moment textual messages sent via platforms like Twitter.

Queens Library, New York (2011): Twitter Tutorial. From:
http://www.queenslibrary.org/sites/default/files/Social_Media/Twitter%20Tutorial.pdf.

# Twitter as a "Search Engine" twitter.com/search
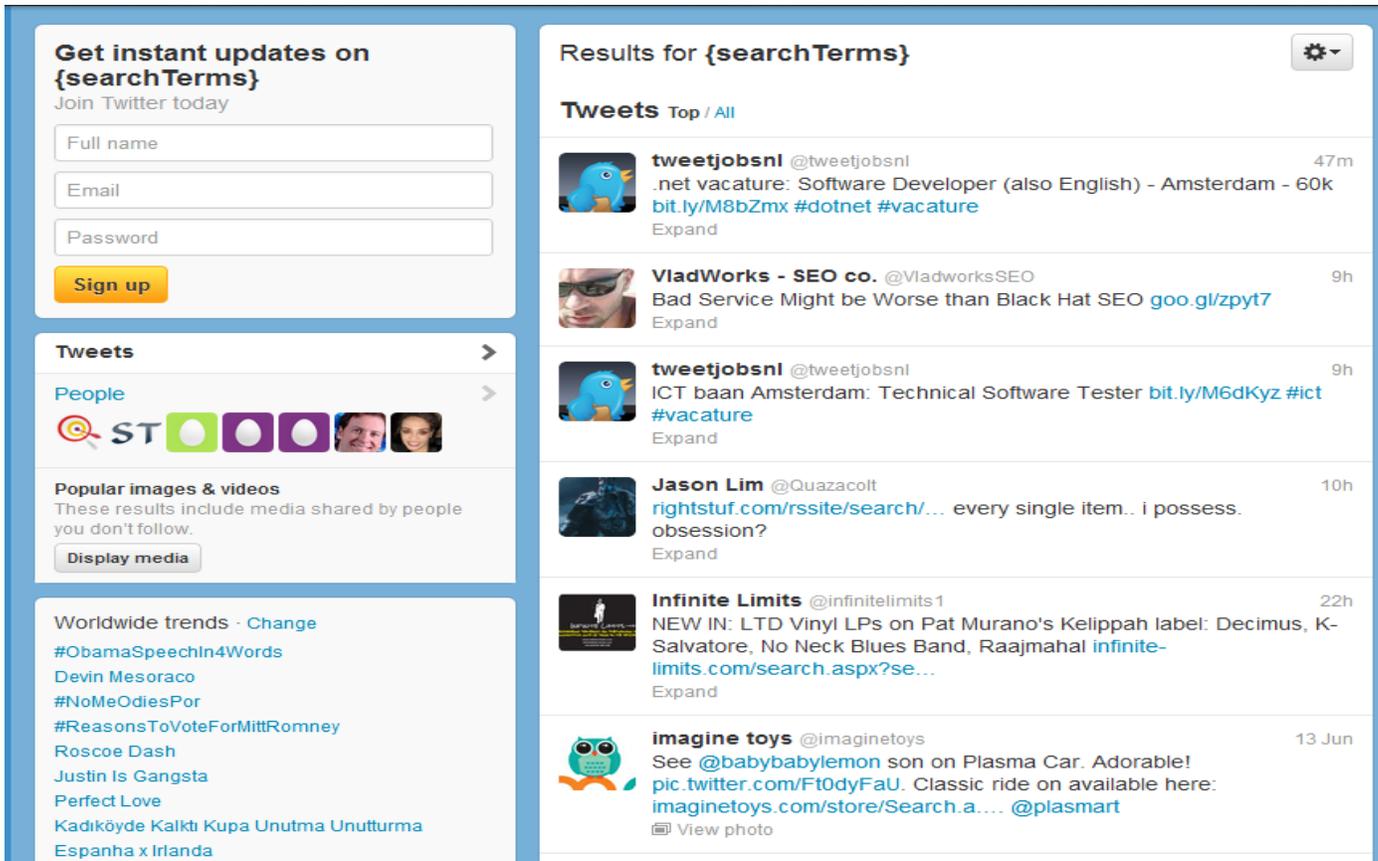
Type in twitter.com/search to see this screen

Beyond using standard Internet search engines like Google, Yahoo, or Bing, Twitter can also be used in a similar fashion. It's different from the others because it's a compilation of links from around the Internet that **people** have gathered, rather than **computers**.

There are **Trending Topics** on the left side of the screen. These are people, places, or things that Twitter users are talking about right now. Trends can be made by using **hashtags** (#) before a word, or with multiple mentions ("multiple" here means hundreds or thousands of mentions in tweets) of a particular person's name, or of a thing ("Perfect Love" is seen here).

Remember, Twitter is used by people throughout the world, so many languages are also seen.
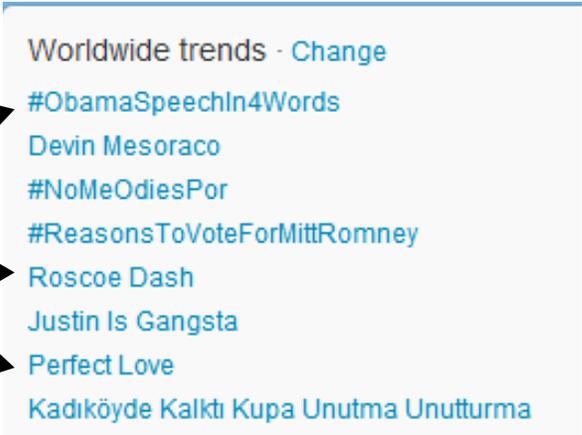
So, what exactly do people or companies "tweet" about? This is an interesting one from **imagine toys** includes links and another company's Twitter account. A Twitter account is seen with the "at" symbol (@) in front of it. This provides the reader (us) with a direct link to that account, so we can find out other interesting things.

Twitter account

imagine toys @imaginetoys   13 Jun
See @babybabylemon son on Plasma Car. Adorable!
pic.twitter.com/Ft0dyFaU. Classic ride on available here:
imaginetoys.com/store/Search.a…. @plasmart
View photo

Links: There are two links here. One goes to another Twitter link – it's a picture.

This link leads to a web site **off** Twitter. All links in tweets will open in a **new tab** on the Internet.

{searchTerms}   Have an account?

Get instant updates on   Results for {searchTerms}

Not seeing what you want in Worldwide Trends? Use the **search bar** at the top to hunt for items that interest you!

Create a Twitter Account (Optional)

Note: You must have a valid email address to create a Twitter account. You will need to log in to your email account to complete the account creation process with Twitter.

Go to the Twitter home page by typing in twitter.com into the address bar.

twitter

Fill in your name, email address, and a Twitter password, then click the **Sign Up** button

Get instant updates on {searchTerms}
Join Twitter today

Full name

Email

Password

Sign up

After clicking the button, you will be prompted fill out a form.

To **Create an Account** you need to provide your **Full Name**, a **Username**, **Password,** and valid **Email** address to confirm the account. You may choose to uncheck "Let other find me by my email address" and also "I want the inside scoop – please send me email updates!" Unchecking these choices keeps your account more private and less easy to find. This may not be best if you are job seeking, but only you can decide how much you want to share.

Join the Conversation

Already use Twitter on your phone? Finish signup now.

Full name		⇨ enter your first and last name

Your full name will appear on your public profile

Username	

Your public profile: http://twitter.com/ USERNAME

Password	

Email	

☑ Let others find me by my email address
Note: Email will not be publicly displayed

Terms of Service **Printable version**

Terms of Service

These Terms of Service ("Terms") govern your access to and use of the services and Twitter's websites (the "Services"), and...

By clicking on "Create my account" below, you are agreeing to the Terms of Service above and the Privacy Policy.

Create my account

Once you've filled out the form, wait a few minutes and check your email. You **should** have a welcome message from Twitter. You **must** click the link in the Twitter email to **confirm your account**.

Congratulations! You are now on Twitter

You can create your own **Tweet**, to let others know what's new with you or share a link to an interesting news article, video, etc.

Click the **Home** link at the top of the page, or click the blue feather icon.

🏠 Home   @ Connect   # Discover   🐦   Search 🔍   👤▾   ✎

Type your message in the text box under **What's Happening? Remember**, the psychology of Twitter is quick, short messaging, so **you are only allowed up to 140 characters**. Messages appear as plain text.

Type here (your **tweet**). Tweets are essentially text messages sent over the Internet. They are real-time accounts of ideas and events and constantly change.

What's happening?

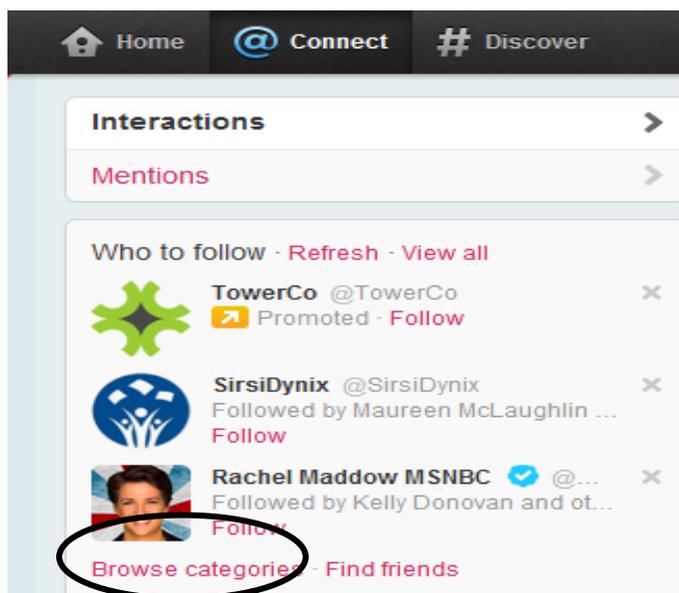⊕ Add your location   140   Tweet

Characters remaining

If you'd like to add either your exact current location, or your neighborhood, you may do so by clicking **Add your location**. If you're out and about you may want to add your location so others may find you. You may delete locations as well, but this takes up to 30 minutes to take effect on the Twitter servers.

Based on information in your profile and who you follow (more on that in a minute) Twitter will suggest people you might be interested in following. **Following people** is how information is passed along on this site. Twitter will immediately **suggest** people based on information you have provided in your 160-character profile.

When you are brand-new to Twitter, it's difficult to find people to follow, and sometimes the suggestions are not that helpful.

They have made it easier to find people by having a **Browse Categories** link. There are many categories to choose from.

🏠 Home   @ Connect   # Discover

Interactions   ›

Mentions   ›

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

TowerCo @TowerCo   ✕
↗ Promoted · Follow

SirsiDynix @SirsiDynix   ✕
Followed by Maureen McLaughlin ...
Follow

Rachel Maddow MSNBC ✔ @...   ✕
Followed by Kelly Donovan and ot...
Follow

Browse categories · Find friends

Browse categories
Select topics you're interested in. Follow people you want to hear from.

Use the search bar to find something or someone specific.

Search for a topic, full name, or @username | Search Twitter

Music 107 suggestions

Click on a link to see these profiles. You may be interested in **following them** because they have noteworthy things to say!

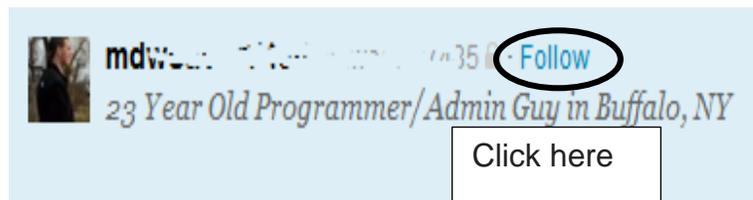**Sports** 78 suggestions

Entertainment 79 suggestions

Once you find a person you think you'd like to follow, click the **Follow** link on the right.

By following people, **their** tweets appear on **your** page – this is how you may find new links and information on fields of your interest!

mdw.....   .... ~35 (Follow
23 Year Old Programmer/Admin Guy in Buffalo, NY

Click here

Optimize your Profile and Tweets for Job Opportunities

There are many ways to help optimize your Twitter profile so that you can meet and tweet with other professionals. There are no "hard and fast" rules here, but a few suggestions from those who are "Twitter experts" and others who have used the service to help land jobs they otherwise would not have known about.

The following examples and ideas are taken from a wonderful resource book located in the NIOGA System. It's titled "**How to Find a Job on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and Other Social Network Sites**," by Brad and Debra Schepp (see full reference at end of this handout). You'll notice page numbers in parenthesis; this is so you know where to find more information!

The authors highly recommend using Miriam Salpeter's advice when using Twitter professionally (pages 187-188):

"If you are planning on using Twitter for a job search, set up a designated profile and account. Choose a professional Twitter handle (a pseudonym that represents you) that is easy to remember."

"If you don't have a web site, link to your LinkedIn profile… before you follow anyone start posting some tweets!"

"Continue to build your network by using Twitter search and Twitter's Find People tool [now known as **Who to Follow**]." Don't worry about following a bunch of people, grow your network carefully around your profession and people you have a genuine interest in – it's easy to look "bad" online, and the old adage about first impressions still holds for social networks!

"If you are looking for a job in any given field, it definitely pays to follow people in that field who happen to be on Twitter. It's getting more and more difficult to be a trendsetter for very long these days, but for now, people on Twitter fit the bill" (179).

"Your goal should be not just to follow people of interest but also to get people to follow you, especially if you are a person with something to sell, such as a great work history…" (page 179). Invite people to follow you by having your Twitter account listed in your email signature and definitely post it on your LinkedIn account.

In short, it's possible to use Twitter to market, connect, network, and take advantage of the myriad of opportunities available to link with others and share ideas. The more connections you have with people, the greater your opportunities in employment!

References

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011, February 4). *Employment situation summary*. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011, February 4*). The employment situation – January 2011 (See Household Data: Summary table A: Household Data, seasonally adjusted, p.8)*. Retrieved from: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009, October 16)*. How the government measures unemployment*. Retrieved from: http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm#concepts.

Murphy, B. (2011, January 10). *Economic look back, look ahead, for week of January 9th, 2011*. Retrieved from http://www.smallcapnetwork.com/Economic-Look-Back-Look-Ahead-for-Week-of-January-9th-2011/s/article/view/p/mid/3/id/672/.

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Wikimedia Foundation. (2011). *Wikipedia.org: Twitter*. Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter.

Wikimedia Foundation. (2011). *Wikipedia.org: Jack Dorsey*. Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Dorsey.

Resources
These items are available in the NIOGA Library System!
Contact your local library for assistance!

Call Number	Author	Title	Date
650.1402 CROM	Crompton, D	Find a job through social networking : use LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and more to advance your career	2011
658.872 MART	Martin, G	30 days to social media success : the 30 day results guide to making the most of Twitter, blogging, LinkedIn, and Facebook	2010
650.1402 SCHE	Schepp, B	How to find a job on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and other social networks	2012

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