

AVOID BEING A TWIGGARD...TWITTER FOR DUMMIES: A MARKETING EDUCATORS' PRACTICUM

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Abstract

Are you concerned you might become a Twitter laggard, i.e. "Twiggard"? In this session we provide an introduction to Twitter for scholarly networking. Scholarly networking refers to the use of media to enhance scholarly output (Walker, Curren, Kiesler & Goldenson, 2011). A 2011 issue of *Journal of Marketing Education* examined the use of technology in the marketing classroom. In the guest editors' introduction to the issue, Granitz and Pitt state that the use of technology in the classroom often increases the effectiveness and efficiency of instructors (Granitz and Pitt 2011). But in order to effectively use technology to increase academic experience and outcomes, both students and faculty must learn how to use it.

Although Twitter can be considered a social media technology, the fact that it is an information platform means it provides pedagogical promise. As of February 2012, Twitter was used by 15% of online adults. Of those who use Twitter, the frequency of use in a typical day doubled in less than a year. It has increased significantly since late 2010 when only 2% of online adults used Twitter. The use of Twitter is greatest among young adults (Smith & Brenner 2010), the typical age of our undergraduate student population. Clearly Twitter is a social media tool on the rise, yet it sometimes gets confused with social networking sites such as Facebook. In truth, Twitter as an information platform provides more scholarly networking than does a social networking site (Walker et al. 2013). Our goal in this workshop is to demonstrate how to *set up* a Twitter account(s), how to *use* Twitter as an information tool, and how to *create* lists to curate content for courses and research.

Recent studies on the use of Twitter by faculty members indicate that Twitter is a useful pedagogical tool. Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) provide experimental evidence that suggests Twitter use can enhance student and faculty engagement and may also enhance student grade-point averages. Rinaldo, Tapp and Leverle (2011) required Twitter use in an upper-division marketing course. Survey results indicate that Twitter can increase involvement with the course material, increase overall satisfaction with the course, and enhance interactions

between students and faculty. Greater benefits were reported by those students who used Twitter the most.

Sample (2010) provides a pedagogical framework for Twitter use in the classroom. He addresses six dimensions of Twitter integration into the classroom: Organization of messages in Twitter, access to your class's Twitter list (page), frequency of instructors' use, the substance of the messages, archiving of Twitter messages, and whether and how to assess what students do on Twitter. Consistent with his framework, we address a) how to set up a Twitter account for academic use, b) how to organize messages with the use of hashtags, c) instructions to give students so they can access the class's Twitter activity, and d) how to archive messages. We also address the substance of messages. Students are often hesitant to use social media to interact with faculty (Lowe & Laffey 2011) so it is important to distinguish between the use of Twitter for personal use and for academic use.

The idea for this session was born after last year's MEA conference in which several participants in a new technology session voiced interest in a "how to" session in which they could learn the nuts and bolts of social media use in the classroom. We developed this session with those needs in mind and to engage faculty in the use of social media for scholarly networking.

References Available upon Request