Twitter 101: How Physical Therapists’ Organizations can Engage, Persuade and Energize their Membership

What we’ll cover

1. Individual vs. Institutional approaches to Twitter
2. A short history of Twitter
3. Case studies of successful Twitter campaigns
4. Twitter tips
5. Tracking Twitter

How Most of Us Started with Twitter
What Organizations Want from Twitter

Content Syndication

@Mentions and @Replies

@TimRichPT

An @reply is any update posted by clicking the “Reply” button on a Tweet. Your reply will always begin with @username.

Any Tweet that is a reply to you begins with your username and will show up in your Mentions tab on the Connect page.

A mention is any Twitter update that contains "@username" anywhere in the body of the Tweet. (Yes, this means that @replies are also considered mentions.)

Twitter collects these messages, as well as all your @replies, in the Mentions tab on the Connect page.

The rise of social networks has been phenomenal

Number of social media site users vs. country populations

Source: LinkedIn, Ell, US Census Bureau, Twitter, Facebook
Twitter Tools

#Hashtags, eg: #SolvePT

TweetChat - TweetChat is what you'll see in Twitter revolving around a hashtag. Moderators may use TweetDeck to aggregate all the Tweets in the TweetChat.

TweetMeet - a REAL, LIVE meetup. Think CSM or APTA Annual Meeting.

Direct Message – Twitter uses an Asymmetrical Follower Model which means that you don't have to approve your followers for them to see your posts. However, people will only see others' @replies in their Home timeline if they are following both the sender and recipient of the reply. Compare versus Facebook's Symmetrical Follower Model, eg: “Friends”.

Favorites – indicates meaningful content to your followers.

Follow Friday – indicates Thought Leaders to your followers.

Locking – NOT recommended. Twitter’s nod to Privacy.

Memorable Moments on Twitter

The Challenge
The Red Cross found it challenging to reach its audience at a very personal and individual level.

The Solution
During the 2007 California wildfires, the Red Cross realized that Twitter could mobilize people to action when it used the platform to direct victims to shelters.

“It was a watershed moment for us.

We realized that Twitter was a great way to provide valuable real-time tips in times of crises where every second counts.

Twitter users also helped us share that information by re-tweeting shelter locations online and then extending that information offline by telling their neighbors,” says Wendy Harman, Director of Social Strategy at the American Red Cross.

The Results
On an average day the Red Cross is mentioned 4,000 times across the social web, of which over 60% comes from Twitter.
Memorable Moments on Twitter

13 June 2009
The Green Revolution in Iran
Also called the Twitter Revolution

The Challenge
The NPCA wanted to grow awareness of their cause as well as increase donations and petition signatures.

The Solution
NPCA piggy-backed Promoted Tweets on an organically trending topic (#IfGovernmentShutsDown) to generate awareness of their fundraising and petitioning initiatives, as well as to encourage a call to action in support of their cause.

The Results
Over 5,200 people clicked on the link in the Tweet to contact members of Congress to support national park funding.

The message was also picked up by Twitter’s “Top Tweets” and was broadcast to an additional 1.1 million people.

CNN broadcasted the message as one of the most popular government shutdown Tweets.

What is HPA Trying to do on Twitter?

1. Gain new members?
2. Energize current members?
3. Sell products or services?
4. Persuade?
   - Patients to adopt healthy behaviors
   - Physical therapists to become advocates
   - Policymakers to consider physical therapists’ patients when crafting legislation

Memorable Moments on Twitter

1,126 Tweets on #SolvePT from April 22 to June 18
Memorable Moments on Twitter

#SolvePT tweet stream

“Twitter is about content for humans, not search engines.”
Mark W. Schaefer

The Tao of Twitter

• Targeted Connections
• Meaningful Content
• Authentic Helpfulness

Twitter for Business

“Reach out to real people on Twitter... Use every opportunity to extend the conversation and the relationship by taking it offline.

Connect in a deeper way through e-mail, a phone call or a live meeting.”

Mark W. Schaefer
The Tao of Twitter
Twitter for Business

“If you plan to use Twitter for business and you have more than a few hundred prospects/customers/influencers combined, you’re kidding yourself if you think interpersonal norms can govern how you use Twitter or other social media for business.

Why? Because Twitter is incredibly inefficient for forming interpersonal relationships on that scale.”

Dr. Ben Hanna
VP Marketing, Business.com

What to Tweet

1. Blog posts
2. White paper
3. Event reminder
4. Conference
5. Webinar
6. Deadline
7. Meeting
8. Anniversary
9. Award

Google Analytics
Best Practices

• Minimize abbreviations and acronyms
• No phonetic spellings eg: “C U 2 later!”
• Break long tweets up
• Make it a dialogue, not a monologue
• Tweet regularly
• Re-tweet from your followers meaningful content
• One tweet = one idea, link or call to action
• Leave 20 spaces at the end of a tweet (so your followers can re-tweet you)
• Shift attribution to the end of your tweet “…via @TimRichPT” instead of the standard “RT @ TimRichPT…”

Write effective headlines

80/20 Rule of Headlines

1. Newspaper, magazine, or web page: 80% of people will read a headline but only 20% will go on to read the content.

2. RSS reader or email inbox: percentages drop.

3. Twitter stream: percentages drop.

“A wealth of information creates a poverty of attention” – Herbert Simon, 1978

Good Tweets/Bad tweets

Congressman resigns due to inappropriate Tweets

Twitter during surgery

June 21, 2011

February 17, 2009

Effective Headlines

1. U.S. rips Ryder Cup from Europeans’ grasp

2. Dr. Seuss, man of rhyme and reason, dies at 87

3. Halloween scares up snow across much of Kansas
Problem Headlines

1. Potential witness to murder drunk
2. Professor of Greek thought dead at 59
3. Teacher strikes idle kids
4. Clinic gives poor free legal help
5. Police begin campaign to run down jaywalkers

Summary

• Determine your goals (slide #11)
• Assign the work
• Measure your Tweets (slides #17-18)

Thank you!

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Bibliography

The Tao of Twitter: Changing Your Life and Business 140 Characters at a Time by Mark W. Schaefer, 2011, Amazon Publishing.


