**Genre Analysis of Twitter**

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T-W-I-T-T-E-R-

“is a service which offers a [social networking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_service) and [micro-blogging](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microblogging) service, enabling its users to send and read other users' messages called *tweets*”. That may be the definition according to *Wikipedia*, but from there the ways you can use it are endless. Twitter has gained enormous amounts of users since its emergence back in 2006. The internet has always allowed celebrities to communicate like “regular people” and regular people to become celebrities, but this process seems to accelerate with the ease of 140-character micro-blogging. I’ll admit when I first heard about twitter I thought “Who cares what John Smith is eating for lunch”, but I quickly realized there is a lot more to it than that, I finally gave a twitter a chance and discovered there was more to than a bunch of friends updating every second of their life. After I started using twitter in the summer of 2009 I realized it’s a huge network of people expressing their opinions, and a great resource for news or just random humor.

So you’re asking yourself what is Twitter? In a general sense, users simply post information about anything and other users than interact back with that information. If you want details I’ll redirect you to the top of this page where I have provided a complete step-by-step detailed guide. However I want to get into how “Tweets” are a new genre. With over 190 million users currently it’s obviously one of the most popular and fastest growing genres in our society, which is why I felt it was a great genre to analyze.

One of the most important things in terms of a genre is to be able to know who is going to be viewing the genre. So I feel the best place to start is with the *Audience* for this genre. What is neat about Twitter is you can choose your audience in some ways. Twitter allows you to choose to allow your tweets to be public or private (invite only). However Twitter for the most part is very, very public and wide open for anyone. However through my tweeting experience

(6 months) I have never had an issue with privacy. In the end it comes down to how much info you choose to include in your “Tweets”. In order for the audience to be able to enjoy your genre it should be good enough where the reader really doesn’t need to know much about your past experiences. Realize again you are limited to 140 characters so for your sake you aren’t able to include too many details about your life. However realize you never know who could be seeing your tweets. It’s probably not a good idea to complain about your boss or even your teacher on twitter. Although he/she may not be following you on twitter they could still search for you or come across it if someone else “Retweets”. This is why celebrities have become the most widely followed users on twitter. Unknowingly a celeb could tweet “going to the nightclub” if he leaves it there that’s fine, but if he tweets the names of the club….. Well then you have an issue.

Let’s now move on to perhaps the most important aspect of this genre form and etiquette of “tweeting”. You only have 140- characters to answer the simply question that is asked of you every time you are on twitter “what are you doing?” This is the greatest challenge of using twitter in my opinion. You have to learn to cut down on useless words or details, and simply get straight to the point. Especially in this day and age the most similar practice would be with texting on your phone. You are limited much like that, but even more so and generally the same type of slang is used. However I have noticed not nearly amount of users use abbreviations as you might expect, and they are still able to stay within that 140- character limit. It truly is a skill that you have to get used to!

Something that goes along with form is the topic of your “Tweets”. This is what makes Twitter so much fun and unique. You can talk about anything and I mean anything believe me. The most common uses are for news, conversational, random tweets, humor, self-promotion, and companies marketing. I personally used more of the sporting news/conversational type of tweets on my account. It has also become a great way for me to get contacts in the particular field that I plan on being in. Local media outlets and personalities interact with users on Twitter, and you usually hear about breaking news on twitter a few minutes before it goes on air. The fact that it’s immediate makes twitter a useful tool for newspapers and other news outlets to communicate headlines and announcements.

Downsides to Twitter or things to avoid are some things to keep in mind. Many users that start to follow you are actually companies just trying to get their name out there. It becomes annoying and I am constantly deleting these users as they just add you so you see their name.

Overall Twitter is by far one of the most interesting and unique genres out in society. The fact that you and receive instant breaking news, and also find out what your best friend is having for lunch all in one place is very unique. One last bit of advice is to be patient and give it a shot, the more users you follow and that follow you make it even more enjoyable.