

# How I Use Twitter for Book Sales

## – by Lynne Spreen

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I have noticed a correlation between being active on Twitter (“active” means 15 minutes a day) and modest book sales. It’s not a magic bullet by any means, but one of the tools in your marketing tool chest. When I want to promote a book, I’ll tweet an interesting link to it several times a day. Each marketing tweet is bracketed by 2 or 3 retweets and tweets that DO NOT relate to the book. Because nobody likes a spammer. I do this over a weekend, or several days in a row.

### **How does Twitter work?**

Tweets are little messages that are broadcast throughout Twitter (billions of English-speaking people are on it.) Your tweets can be seen by anyone on Twitter, whether they follow you or not, because Twitter, like Google, has a search feature. A reader searching for, say, “aging” or “older” might find my profile. Your tweets are also sent directly to your followers.

Since *you* are on Twitter to market your book, each of your tweets is like an advertisement for You, Inc. Thus, your goal is to send out tweets that will be noticed and shared.

However, in order to have your tweets noticed by your followers, you must first *acquire* followers. You gain followers by following. (And by posting cute animal pix.)

### **How to Get Started on Twitter**

- 1) Open a free Twitter account at [www.Twitter.com](http://www.Twitter.com). Create a profile.
- 2) Most important: The profile is an instant, visual representation of my niche. I’m an older person who writes novels about older people aging happily. I have links and keywords in the profile that enable a casual visitor to click easily to my blog or my Amazon page where they can buy my book. Here’s a closer look:



- 3) The background of the above photo is one I took myself and uploaded to my Twitter profile. This isn't tricky—use Twitter's dashboard tools.
- 4) Re the term #aging within my profile. The hashtag (#) makes that term a hyperlink, so if anyone is doing a Twitter search for aging, my profile may come up, and they MAY want to follow me or buy my book; who knows? It's all fishing, folks. Throw out the bait.
- 5) The link in lower middle, <https://etc.>, is to my Author Page on Amazon. Once they get there, they can see and buy my books, and be exposed to all the propaganda I put up there, like my personal statement, photos, and book trailer. More bait.
- 6) Twitter adds the "California," probably because I told them that's where I'm located.
- 7) Note the bottom line includes a link to my About.me page, which has links to all the social media networks I'm on. Plus another pic of me and more propaganda.
- 8) Now that you're set up, begin following people, because they will probably follow you back. They might also retweet you to their followers, and this builds your momentum.
  - a) How do you find people to follow? Keep your eyes open when you're reading on the Internet; everybody wants you to follow them on Twitter. Also, on your Twitter home page (your profile), Twitter will offer suggestions. You'll also start receiving emails from Twitter saying Joe Blow and Jane Doe are now following you, or offering suggestions for people to follow. Lastly, when you go to a person's Twitter profile, you'll see a link called "Following." You can see who this person follows and maybe follow THEM.
  - b) Who should you follow? I follow almost anyone involved in the writing industry or anything having to do with aging, feminism, women's issues; and prominent people with many followers. I don't follow spammy people or blatant marketers, or most corporate

groups. Yes to AARP, no to Verizon. I don't follow people whose tweets are in a language I don't understand. Glance at the profile of the person you're considering following, or read a couple of their tweets. This will help you decide.

- c) How many people should I follow? And how do I manage tweets from so many people?
  - i) Once you start following a lot of people, your "Twitter stream" will fly by so fast it will be impossible for you to read anything, and it will be meaningless. This is why I bookmark (on my browser) the profiles of Twitter users I want to check in with.

## 9) Start tweeting.


- a) Retweet or "favorite" the tweets of others. Do this by clicking on the tweet, and menu options will pop up. Retweeting and favoriting activity is brought to the attention of the original tweeter. This may cause them to follow you, in which case they'll get YOUR tweets and may retweet yours out to their followers. (Are you beginning to see how this is a force multiplier?)
- b) Tweet about things you see online. If you see an interesting, niche-related article or blog post in your daily online reading, copy the URL and share it on Twitter.\* Add your own thoughts and hashtags (example: #midlife) up to 100 characters. (Leave room for people to retweet it, which adds their handle.) The tweet will go to your followers, who will hopefully retweet it to their followers, and so on. NOTE: I sometimes use Hootsuite because it allows me to schedule the tweet. Go to Hootsuite.com for more info.
- c) Tweet original content: Say something about current events or your niche.

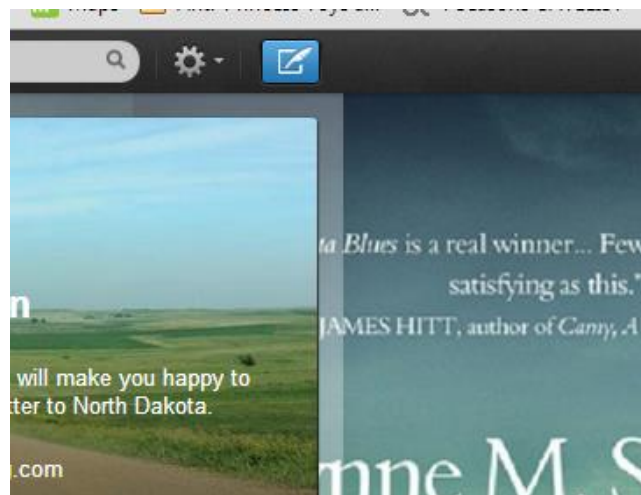
## 10) GENERAL TIPS

- a) Don't use too many hashtags and links in your tweet. People are starting to see past them. I'd say one link and 2 hashtags should be the max.
- b) 75% of your tweets should be niche-related. The rest can be off-topic.
- c) Retweeting and favoriting the tweets of others is thought to be more effective than original material.
- d) Think of each tweet as an advertisement for You, Inc. Try to use the language of a compelling headline.
- e) Try to get on Twitter every day for at least a few minutes. It'll help you become more used to it, because if you don't, it can be daunting.
- f) Don't constantly promote your book. Nobody likes spammers.

- 11) Have your blog automatically publish on Twitter.
- 12) Include your Twitter feed on your Amazon Author Page

**\*How to copy and paste a URL link into a new Tweet:**

- Highlight the URL address of the article
- On a PC press and hold the CTRL key with your left hand and at the same time, tap the letter C key ONCE. (For Macs, the CTRL key looks like this:  ). You have now copied the text. It is held in the computer's memory, waiting for the "paste" command.
- Go to your Twitter page. Click on the quill pen icon that says "Tweet."



- A COMPOSE NEW TWEET box will open that says, "What's happening?" If it isn't already there, place your cursor within that light-blue box and click once. This is where you'll "paste" the URL you copied, by doing this: Once again, hold down the CTRL key with your left hand and gently tap the letter V key ONCE. The text should appear.