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How to Tweet LIKE A DEMOGRAPHER

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Why?

- Stay current with developments in field of expertise
- Network (online and in person)
- Highlight professional expertise

More than 310 million monthly active users (according to Twitter, as of June 2016).

Increasingly used to share latest information and to engage with scientists and researchers from around the world.

Twitter is useful for:

Staying current on trends and developments in your field.

Networking (in real life) – many people now meet first on Twitter, then meet in person at conferences, workshops, etc... or use Twitter to stay in touch between conferences and workshops where they met in person.

Anatomy and Terminology

Name

Handle

Hashtag

Tweet (body)

Handle

Hyperlink

Embedded Image, GIF, or Video

Actions
Reply, Retweet, Favorite

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Name (and avatar) of the Tweet-er appears in the top left corner.

Next to the name is the Twitter handle of the tweet-er.

The date of the tweet also appears at the top.

There are two other handles in this tweet. Those handles are used for conversation or citation. Including someone's handle (with the @ symbol) is referred to as a "mention." Mentioning someone will let the person know you tweeted about (or to) them. More on the dynamics of mentioning in a moment...

There is also a hashtag (#bullying) in this tweet. Hashtags are a way to identify that your tweet is about a particular topic. They improve searchability. If you click on a hashtag, you will see more tweets that use that hashtag. Hashtags can also be used in tweet chats or to follow along for updates during a conference. (More about that later...)

This tweet also includes a hyperlink. You can paste a full URL or a tiny URL

into a tweet. Regardless of how long the URL is, Twitter truncates it to 23 characters out of your 140. (There's some talk that this will go away and URLs will no longer take up any of the 140 characters... but as of April 2017 we haven't seen the change yet).

At the bottom of any tweet are "action" buttons.

The single arrow replies to the person who posted the original tweet (and anyone they mentioned in the tweet). Clicking reply on this tweet would allow you to send a tweet to @prbdata, @marksmather, and @girlscouts.

The double, interlocking arrow button retweets a tweet (posts it to your timeline so people who follow you will see it).

The favorite button lets the original author, and anyone mentioned in the tweet, know you enjoyed the tweet.

This is also a good time to remind users that the interface does change over time, so things that are relevant today may or may not still function the same way a year from now.

“Mentions” (Using Handles)

- @ handle in **body** of tweet tags that account
- Shows up for all followers in **both** timelines
- Whole world can see the tweet if they search



I mentioned “mentions” earlier. In general, mentions are used to have a conversation between two people or to acknowledge someone else. For example, you could write that you just read an interesting article in Demography by @_____ (lead author’s handle). That tweet would let your followers know you enjoyed the article, send a note to the lead author’s Twitter handle to let them know about your tweet.

Including a mention in the body of a tweet (any place other than the very first position in a tweet) includes the tweet both in your timeline and in the mentioned account’s timeline.

In this example, the tweet will show up in the timeline/feed for anyone who follows @wmannin and/or anyone who follows @PopAssocAmerica.

Remember: Just about any tweet can be seen by anyone in the world, regardless of how you use mentions. Always assume your tweets are public.

“Mentions” (Using Handles)

- @ handle at **beginning** of tweet tags that account
- Shows up only in feed for people who follow **both**
- Whole world can see tweet if they search



Including a handle as the very first text in a tweet means that the tweet shows up only in the feed/timeline for people who follow both of you.

In this example, Mary Jo Hoeksema's tweet will show up for those who follow **both** @PAAGPac and @PopAssocAmerica.

Remember: Just about any tweet can be seen by anyone in the world, regardless of how you use mentions. Always assume your tweets are public.

Crafting Content



Think...

Baby Boomers and Millennials Boost Population in Parts of Rural America

By Alicia VanOrman and Mark Mather

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(January 2017) Two demographic groups—young adults ages 20 to 34 and older adults ages 65 and older—are reshaping the population in rural America. Changes in the U.S. economy have attracted young adults to rural areas rich in natural resources, such as shale oil and natural gas and away from smaller metropolitan and nearby nonmetropolitan areas, especially those areas with strong ties to the manufacturing industry.¹

The older adult population, on the other hand, has grown rapidly in areas with strong ties to recreation—areas with robust entertainment industries or natural amenities such as mountains, lakes, and forests that attract seasonal vacation populations—many of which are in less-populated areas.

Overall, rural areas in the United States have struggled with shrinking populations as growth over the past 15 years has been concentrated in metropolitan areas. Between 2000 and 2015, about 60 percent of counties in

How can I summarize?

What lead will draw readers in?

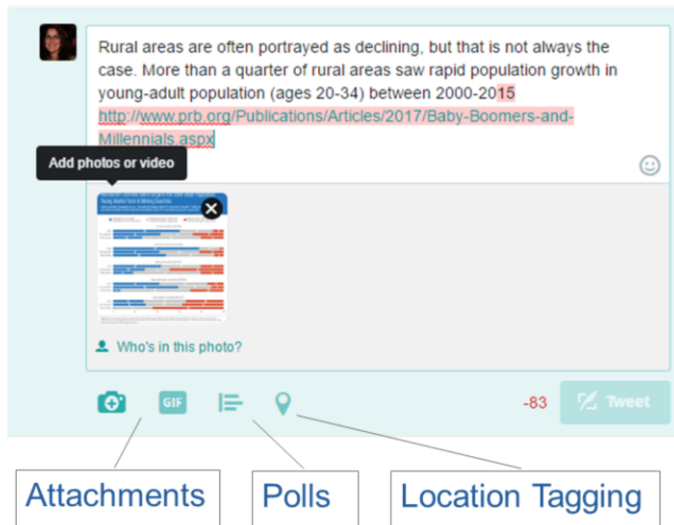
Should I include image/link/video?

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Here is an example of an article PRB posted in January 2017, and how we summarized one of the main findings for a Twitter post.

Draft and Trim



One approach is to start writing the long-form version of your message. Add any URLs and attachments (images, GIFs, polls, or location tags).

Twitter will let you know how many of your 140 characters you have left to write or by how many you've exceeded your 140 character limit. (In this example, the first draft is 83 characters over the 140 character limit—see the red -83 in the bottom right corner).

Then begin trimming...

Tweet



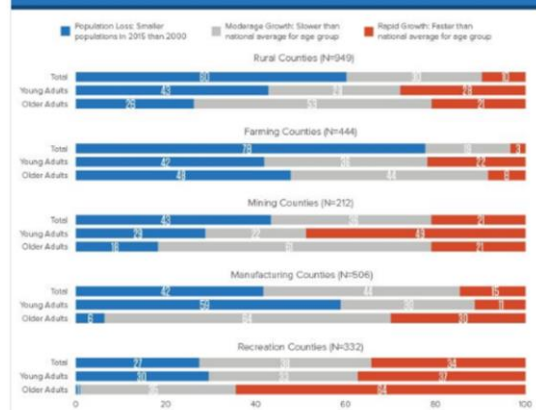
Beth Jarosz @DataGeekB · Jan 18

Rural America often described as in decline

But 28% rural counties saw rapid growth in young-adult pop 2000-15
prb.org/Publications/A...

Recreation Counties See a Surge in the Older-Adult Population; Young Adults Flock to Mining Counties

POPULATION CHANGE IN U.S. COUNTIES FROM 2000 TO 2015 BY COUNTY TYPE AND AGE GROUP
 FIGURES IN BARS SHOW PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF COUNTIES IN EACH CATEGORY



Notes: Rural counties are not adjacent to metropolitan areas as defined by the USDA Economic Research Service 2013 Urban Influence Codes. County economic reference type is identified using USDA Economic Research Service 2013 County Typologies. Young adults are ages 20 to 34 and older adults are ages 65 and older. Numbers may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

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Think of ways to make your message more concise, using shorter phrases, abbreviations, or acronyms.

Then click “tweet” to post.

Helpful Jargon

- V or HT = Via or Hat Tip (gives credit)
- DYK = Did You Know
- ICYMI = In Case You Missed It
- IMO (or IMHO) = In My (Humble) Opinion
- DM = Direct Message
- RT = Retweet (less common now with retweet button)

... If you see an unfamiliar acronym or phrase, just do a web search for “__ twitter”

Because of the 140 character limit, Twitter has spawned a wide variety of acronyms and jargon, and the list is constantly evolving.

Crafting Content

- Quick, clever, informative
- Include a call to action
 - Read more
 - Do this
 - Call your rep
 - Register today
- Include source links where relevant

It is perfectly acceptable to use Twitter as a viewer while you get your bearings. Once you feel comfortable engaging—either replying to tweets, retweeting other tweets, or posting your own—you will also begin to find your Twitter voice. You may notice, and try out, styles used by others. Some users have success with list-format posts and some with chart-plus-explanation format. Some users prefer headline-style tweets that make you want to read the research paper linked to the tweet. Some users take a simple approach of engaging thoughtfully with others. Experiment and see what works for you.

In general, popular tweets are clever, informative, and may include a call to action.

In addition, as a social scientist, it is important to cite your sources whenever possible. Including source links and/or citations helps build and maintain your credibility.

Generating Engagement

Analysis from Twitter:

- Photos average a 35% boost in Retweets
- Videos get a 28% boost
- Including a number receives a 17% bump in Retweets

Simon Rogers. "What Fuels a Tweet's Engagement?" 2014
<https://blog.twitter.com/2014/what-fuels-a-tweets-engagement>

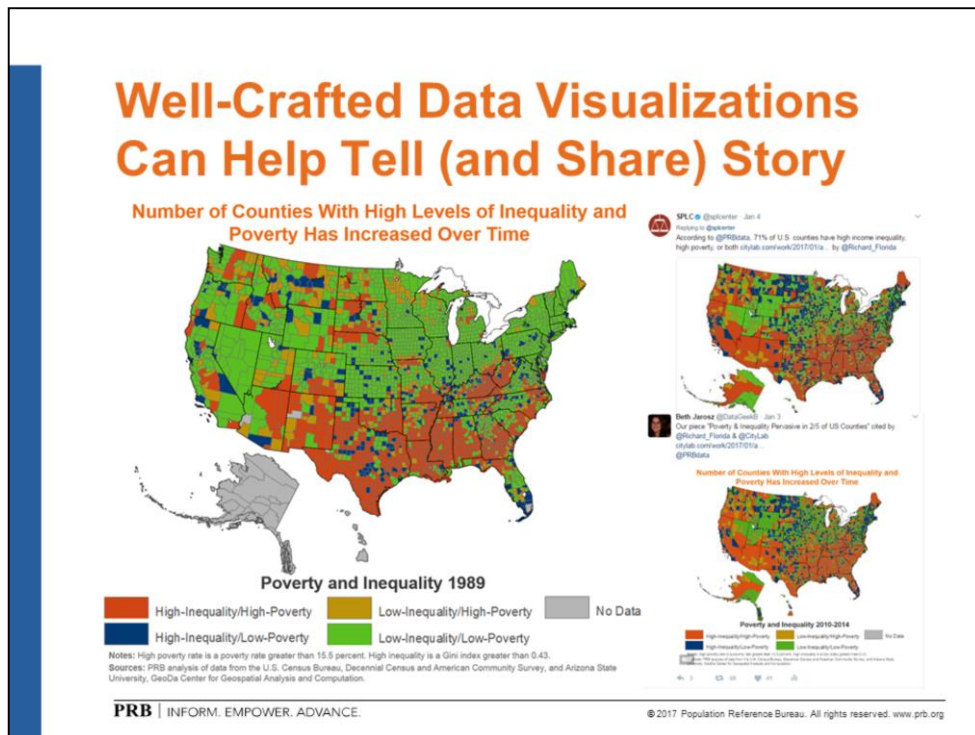
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Engagement is when someone...

- Clicks on a tweet
- Opens a link provided by a tweet
- Clicks on a hashtag included in a tweet
- Replies to a tweet
- Retweets a tweet

Adding photos, GIFs, videos, and numbers boosts engagement.



As an example of how engagement can matter for sharing your research findings...

The GIF shown on this slide is a combination of three maps that appeared in a PRB report on the demography of inequality. The dark orange highlights counties that have both high inequality and high poverty in the years 1989, 1999, and 2010-2014. When the original report was published, it received some media attention.

About two years later we published an updated map and shared the GIF on Twitter. Because the GIF was shared widely, it came to the attention of a writer at CityLab (The Atlantic), who wrote a summary of the report. That led to additional attention, and the analysis—with the GIF—was also shared by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Fast Company, and other major national media and nonprofit organizations.

Generating Engagement

Analysis from Twitter:

- Photos average a 35% boost in Retweets
- Videos get a 28% boost
- Including a number receives a 17% bump in Retweets
- Hashtags receive a 16% boost

Simon Rogers. "What Fuels a Tweet's Engagement?" 2014
<https://blog.twitter.com/2014/what-fuels-a-tweets-engagement>

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In addition to photos, videos, and numbers, hashtags also can help boost engagement.

But use them judiciously...

Help With Hashtags

- Use judiciously
- Excellent for tweet chats and conference discussions
- Check for other uses before you launch a new hashtags

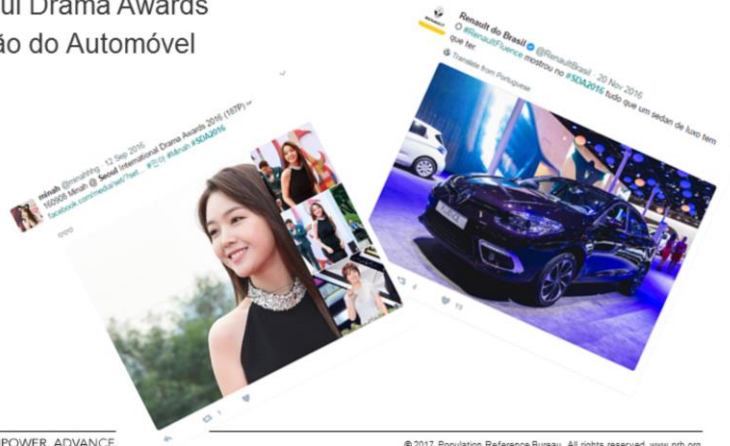
It is a good idea to use hashtags judiciously. Not every word in a tweet should have a hashtag. Over-use can reduce readability.

That said, hashtags are excellent for following a trending topic, engaging in a tweet chat, or following along with of-the-moment announcements at a conference.

#SDA2016

Hoped to use #SDA2016 for Southern Demographic Association 2016 Conference but...

- Seoul Drama Awards
- Salão do Automóvel

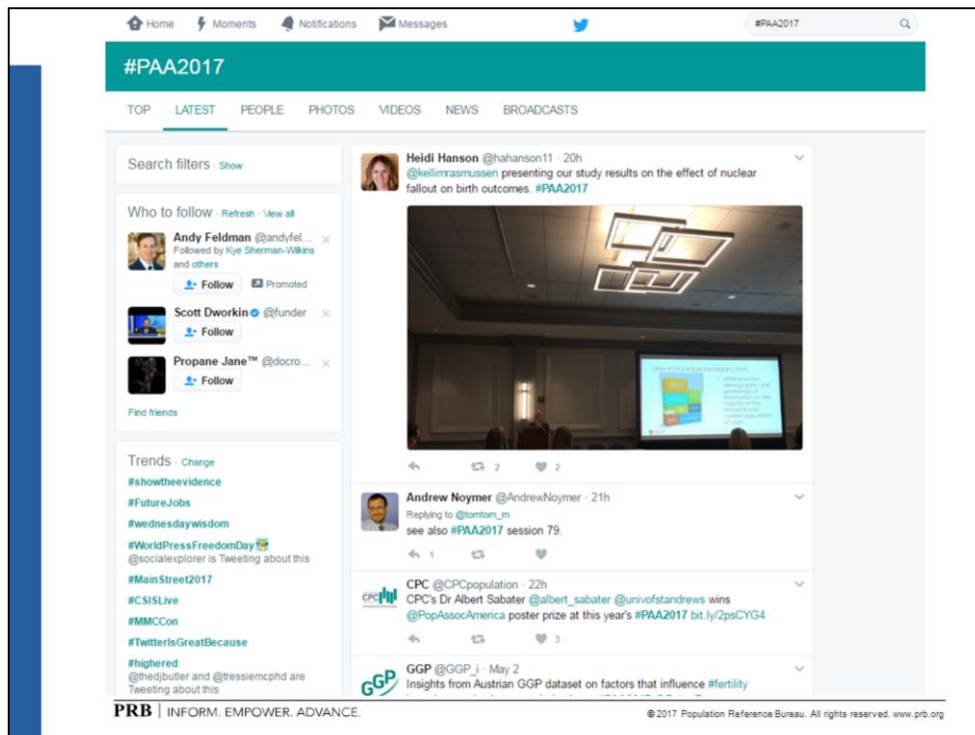


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If you are going to launch a new hashtag, do some research and figure out if the hashtag is already in use.

As an excellent cautionary tale, the Southern Demographic Association wanted to use the SDA2016 hashtag for their annual meeting, but found that it was already in use for drama award and an auto show... the Southern Demographic Association went with SDA2016mtg instead!



The example above shows activity from the conclusion of the 2017 Population Association of America annual meeting.

#PAA2017 was the conference hashtag (see term in the search bar at the top right of the screen). You can get to the tweets related to a hashtag either by searching using the search bar or by clicking on the hashtag in a tweet that included the hashtag.

You can also see hashtagged tweets sorted a variety of ways (see the list of options just below the turquoise-colored bar):

- Top tweets (using Twitter's ranking algorithm)
- Latest tweets
- People most closely associated with the hashtag
- Photos and videos posted using the hashtag
- News and broadcasts posted using the hashtag

How to Find Your Tribe

- Follow people who post using conference hashtags
- Surf “following” list for people whose tweets you like
- Use Lists feature to curate genres of interest
- Engage thoughtfully with others
 - Collegial discussion builds your network
 - Avoid engaging with trolls (which are often bots, not human) but DO report any account violating terms of service

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A simple way to begin finding other Twitter users with similar interests is to start with a conference hashtag, like #PAA2017. Find people who used the hashtag and click on their profile to see what else they tweet about. If their content seems interesting, follow them.

In addition, each person’s profile contains a “following” list, which shows all the handles the person follows. You can scan that list for additional inspiration. As you begin to post content, people will reply, retweet, or follow you. Your own base of followers will grow over time as people read and engage with your posts. You may choose to follow some, all, or none of the people who follow you. Over time you will see content that you find useful or informative and will figure out which accounts to follow (or unfollow).

You can use the Lists feature within Twitter to curate different areas of interest. (Perhaps you are interested in sociology, soccer, and weather. You can set up lists tailored toward each of these interests.)