



How to Win Followers & Influence Friends

Hacking Twitter to Boost Your Security Career

Agenda

- Introduction
- A Note on Follower Counts
- Why
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Introduction

- I'm @greecs ... from DC area ... run NovalInfosecPortal.com
- Questions
 - Who is Not on Twitter?
 - How Do You Use Twitter?

A Note on Follower Counts

- Sign Up for a Service
 - <http://bit.ly/NISPIincreaseFollowers>
- Follow Everyone in SecurityTwits List & Immediately Unfollow Them
- Doesn't Work
 - Quality of Followers > Quantity of Followers
 - Don't Go for Gimmicks
 - Grow Organically & Focus on Your Core
 - Being Genuine Wins Out Over Long Run
- Goal == Creating a Good Brand/Reputation
 - != # Followers
 - ???

Why?

- Security Community Lives on Twitter
- Personal Branding/Marketing
- Extend Network
 - Helps Do Day Job Better
 - Helping Others Out

Strategy 1 - Pick a Super Niche

- Always Start Out in a Niche
 - Blog Example - Can't Compete with Big Guys (e.g., CNET Security, TheRegister Security)
 - Boutique Provider
- Example Niches
 - 1-D: General Security Around DC
 - 2-D: Forensics in DC
 - 3-D: Mac Forensics in DC
 - 4-D: ...
 - Continue to “Narrow down [in multiple dimensions] until you create your own niche.”
- Learn Your Niche Well
 - Know the Basics Solid
 - Keep Up to Date with News
 - Learn Your Intended Audience Well

Strategy 1 - Pick a Super Niche

- Follow Relevant People in Your Niche
 - Schools of Thought
 - Follow Few Influential People & Read All
 - Follow Many & Just Dip Toe in Periodically & Let Stream of Info Flow Over You
 - Follow Many & Place People into Category Lists (e.g., High/Med/Low Priority)
 - Research Potentials
 - People You Already Know
 - Find Established Security Pros & See Who They Follow
 - See Who Respectable People in Your Niche #FF
 - Follow Ones Relevant to Your Niche
 - Look at Their Bios; Read Their Websites; Search for Them on Google; ...
 - Use Ranking Services (e.g., FollowCost.com, TweetGrade.com, Klout score)
 - Prune Inactive Accounts Periodically
 - People Look Who You Follow as Recommendations
 - Twitoria.com – Who Hasn't Tweeted in Past Day/Week/Month
 - Keep Twitter Clean – Periodically Go Through Followers & Block Obvious Spam Accounts
- Expand After Niche Established
 - Dig Deeper in Niche
 - Slowly Widen (to adjacent areas)

Strategy 2 - Chose You Weapon (i.e., your client & statistics package)

- Considerations
 - Multiple Accounts
 - Multiple Columns
 - URL Shortener Stats Support
 - Immediacy

Strategy 2 - Chose You Weapon

- Web
 - Others???

	Interface	Multi Accts	Multi Columns	URL Shortener Stats	Immediacy	Other
Seesmic Web	- Jumpy When Switching Tabs	+ Yes	+ Yes	+ Bit.ly Account Integration	- 30s to 2m Delay in Received Tweets	+ Nice Filtering Capability
Hoot Suite	+ Relatively Smooth	+ Yes	+Yes	- Incompatible Proprietary Shortening Service	- Slight Delay in Received Tweets	- Annoying Timeout + RSS -> Twitter
Twaitter	- Somewhat Clunky	+ Yes	- No	+ Bit.ly Account Integration	- Considerable Delay in Received Tweets	+ RSS -> Twitter + Recurring Tweets
Twitter Feed	+ Relatively Smooth	+ Yes	N/A	+ Bit.ly Account Integration	N/A	+ RSS -> Twitter (does 1 thing & does it well)

Strategy 2 - Chose You Weapon

- Application
 - Others???

	Interface	Multi Accts	Multi Columns	URL Shortener Stats	Immediacy	Other
Tweet Deck	+ Smooth	+ Yes	+ Yes	+ Bit.ly Account Integration	+ Immediately Receive Tweets (supports Streams API)	- Air-Based but Not Too Clunky
Seismic Desktop	- Scrolling Jumpy	+ Yes	+Yes	+ Bit.ly Account Integration	- Slight Delay in Received Tweets	- SilverLight-Based + Plug-In Infrastructure - Old Tweets in Streams
Twitter	+ Very Slick Interface	+ Yes	- Limited	- No Bit.ly Account Integration	+ Immediately Receive Tweets (supports Streams API)	N/A

Strategy 2 - Chose You Weapon

- Mobile
 - SMS, Twitter, Twittelator, HootSuite, Seismic Mobile, TweetDeck Mobile
 - Others???
- Personal Preference

	Computer	Mobile	Analysis	Recurring	Feeds
TweetDeck	X	X (alt)			
Seismic Web	X (alt)		X (nice indefinite filtering)		
Twittelator		X			
Twaiter				X	X
TwitterFeed					X

Strategy 3 - Post Relevant Content

- Only Tweet Content Relevant to Your Security Niche ... Mostly ... Have Some Fun
 - Twitter Channels: May Want to Have Separate Accounts for Different Purposes
 - Family/Friends (private) vs Professional (public)
 - Rambling vs Only Select Material
 - Website Blog or on Particular Subject
 - No Cost for Users to Follow More Than Once Accounts
 - Let's Users Choose Only the Info They Want
- What
 - Transfer: RT Others in Your Niche/Adjacent Areas & Add Your Own Opinion to It
 - Hate New RTs → Standard RT
 - Summarized RT
 - Tease Content
 - Seed: Subscribe to Few Relevant RSS Feeds & Send Out Most Interesting with Opinion
 - Feeds in Your Niche via RSS/Twitter
 - Meme Sites that Focus on Security (catch popular things you may have missed)
 - Converse: Engage in @Conversations Relevant to Niche
 - Ad-Hoc Based on Opinion
 - Dedicated Q&A
 - Reply to Others You RT

Strategy 3 - Post Relevant Content

- When (Best Strategic Time to Send Tweets for Infosec)
 - Tweet When No One Else is Tweeting
 - Weekdays
 - 7:00 AM Right when you get up; People will read when they get into work
 - 11:00 AM Right before lunch so people will see right after they get back
 - 4:01 PM Read right before heading out of the office
 - 8:00 PM Right after put kids down to sleep and finally get on computer
 - Later? Most infosec community seems to be full of late night owls
 - Weekend
 - Saturday
 - Not Much to RT & No New News
 - Most Popular Tweets throughout Week (e.g., perusing bit.ly stats, skimming ones with most mentions/RTs)
 - Tweet Them throughout Day
 - TweetMeme with 7-Day Filter
 - Sunday
 - Take a day off. 😊
 - Schedule to Spread Out Each Day

Strategy 3 - Post Relevant Content

- Twitter Styles

Style	Comment
RT @user	Verbatim quote (note ... no colon)
/via	When you summarize someone else's tweet; attribution or credit which may include multiple users, e.g. /via @user1 @user2
/cc	To direct a tweet to the attention of someone else
/by	Used for posting a link for the first time, written by someone else; author of linked content
//	Used for adding commentary to a RT

All /slash notation is placed at the end of the tweet & may be combined after a single /, e.g. /via @user1 by @user2

Give a brief description, or better yet, a **teaser** of what we're about to see. Think of it as a **movie trailer**, and you want people to follow-thru to the link. Similarly, don't just post a link.

Know what you're sharing. Simply tweeting a blog post or article title may not always be the best description. Demo that you've read what you're recommending, by summarizing it creatively, and to fit your audience.

Avoid multiple RTs. Simply RT the person you source. If someone is interested in seeing who the original source is, they can click on to the person you retweeted, or do a Twitter Search of the phrase or link.

Strategy 3 - Post Relevant Content

Do

- DO keep tweets short to make it easier for others to RT (under **115 characters**).
- DO add value to RTs by adding a short opinion, comment, summary, or conclusion.
- If you have similarly focused **FB and LinkedIn** accounts, DO push tweets to these platforms as well.
- If you have something you want to get out, DO ask to be RTed periodically.

Don't

- DON'T send out **#FF recommendation** lists
- DON'T **over Tweet** (at most 20 good, non-@reply tweets a day; FollowCost.com yourself)
- DON'T thank people for RTs and FFs (maybe if just @reply to one person)

Strategy 4 - Automate (on Very Limited Basis)

- Automation is Another Key (or have an assistant)
 - Focus on Good Balance
 - **Mostly** Personalized Tweets
 - **Few** Automated Ones
- Tweeting Out Blog Posts
 - Definitely Recommended to Have a Website/Blog
 - TwitterFeed (best overall)
 - Python Script (much more customizable)
 - Tweet Posts Multiple Times Throughout Day
 - Single Services Can't Handle
 - Use Combination of Services (TwitterFeed & Twaitter)
 - Separate Twitter Account for Blog???

Strategy 4 – Automate

- Scheduling Tweets in the Future
 - Definitely Want Web Based Client
 - Seismic Web
 - Twaitter (a little kludgy)
 - Hootsuite (if you already use)
 - Python Script (Twitter API)
- Recurring Tweets
 - Every Marketer's Dream
 - Don't Over Do!!!
 - Twaitter (only free one that currently does)
 - Python Script (Twitter API)
- Tweeting Calendar Events
- Customize for Specific Situations (Twitter API)
 - Script to Grab Top 2 or 3 Most RTed Tweets & RT at Strategic Times
 - Tip of the Day

Strategy 4 – Automate

- Current
 - NoVABlogger Feeds -> Pipes -> TwitterFeed -> Twitter
 - GCal Reminder -> Gmail Filter -> TwitterMail -> Twitter
 - Blog RSS -> TwitterFeed -> Twitter
 - Blog RSS -> Twaitter -> Twitter
 - Twaitter (weekly standard recurring tweets) -> Twitter
 - Lessons learned ... don't use intermediaries (e.g., FeedBurner)
- Future - GoodTwitterBot

Strategy 5 - Measure Your Results

- Constantly Measure Your Effectiveness & Content Tweak as Needed
- Method
 - # Followers
 - Klout Score
 - Create Content Worth Sharing: Experiment & See What Gets Most RTs, Favorites
 - Start Discussions: Ask Questions Re What Others Post; Don't Put Out Content & Disappear
 - Register & Connect Networks: Helps Them Better Understand Your Networks
 - Reference: <http://corp.klout.com/blog/2011/03/3-tips-for-increasing-your-klout-score/>
 - Goal == Creating a Good Brand/Reputation
 - # Times RTed/Mentioned (RetweetRank.com)
 - URL Shortening Click-Through Stats
 - Polls: Ask Followers What Like/Don't Like/Want to Hear More Of
 - Twtpoll (another of a suite of products) (used this one but also polldaddy and twittpoll or the standard goto SurveyMonkey)
- Chart Over Time
 - TwitterCounter.com: Tweets, Followers, Following by Day, Week, Month, Quarter, Semi-Annual (pro package for more stats)
 - TweetStats.com: Tweets per Hour/Day/Month; Timeline; Reply Statistics (also tweet density; actually goes out and takes a while as it loads your tweets in)

Strategy 5 - Measure Your Results

- Search/Backup
 - Hard to Find Tweets You Sent After Few Weeks
 - Frustrated with the short term memory of search.twitter?
 - Twitter Search Sux
 - Google: site:twitter.com inurl:"username" keyword
 - Google: site:twitter.com/<username> <search term>
 - SnapBird.org will let you search tweets as well as @replies and Direct Messages back to your most recent 3,200 tweets
 - TweetBackup.com: Powered by Backupify.com is allows you to export a huge chunk of your tweets in various formats for easy searching. Free but have to follow them or they'll delete your account. Must give them your email; normal authentication done through Twitter.
 - BackupMyTweets.com: Quickly search your archive online or via downloading. Have to tweet about them; also looks like it makes you follow them; must signup for account to login ... so need user/pass/email; seems to be free for only a year .. not sure what happens after that; not sure if continuously backs up or not.

Strategy 6 - Get Off Twitter

- Just Tweeting a Lot Won't Enhance Your Career
 - Only a Communication Mechanism
 - It's What You Say that's Important
- Need to Combine Twitter with Other Branding Exercises
 - Attend/Present at Events in Niche/Adjacent Areas (advert your twitter id)
 - Take Part in & Contribute to Mailing Lists/Forums Related to Niche/Adjacent Areas (advert your twitter id in sig)
 - Start a Blog or Regularly Post on It or Someone Else's (under your twitter name)
 - Volunteer (local security groups; BSides; ...)

Summary

- Strategy 1 - Pick a Super Niche
- Strategy 2 - Chose You Weapon
- Strategy 3 - Post Relevant Content
- Strategy 4 - Automate (on Very Limited Basis)
- Strategy 5 - Measure Your Results
- Strategy 6 - Get Off Twitter

References

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