



Build Your Influence and Business

ASJA NYC 2018 – Linsey Knerl

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Why Social? (And Twitter, specifically?)

- Agents and publishers are looking for reach.
- It's a great way to get feedback from readers on future projects.
- It's an excellent research tool and a way to contact experts.
- You can pitch editors directly.
- It's easy to establish your brand, identity, and story

Twitter has many advantages to other platforms, including that it's easy to set up and is plug-and-play compared to some other networks.

There are two reasons why people say they don't like Twitter:

1. It's the wrong platform for what they do.
2. They overindulge.

Get a better Twitter experience by knowing what works on Twitter (and what doesn't), while maintaining a healthy balance. Too much Twitter can be TOXIC!

Speaking of toxic, narcissism is alive and well – especially on social. While we don't know that social media causes more of this, we do know that narcissists flock to Twitter. Combat this by not feeding narcissists and using the platform to do one of two things:

1. Service those looking for answers to their questions and problems.
2. Build your community.

BOTH is best!

You can achieve these by strategizing with each share. Ask "why am I sharing this?" While it's fun to share non-essential tidbits, make sure it serves your community somehow, even if it's to help them get to know you better. If it's all about you, however, avoid sharing it.

Be real in your tweets, and don't expect anything in return.

TWO things people HATE on Twitter:

1. Fake followers. Don't buy them or engage with them. Experts can see this a mile away.
2. Retweet threads. Many authors employ a "you follow me, and I'll follow you back" method. Then they share each other's stuff constantly. The trap in this is that you'll be expected to share things extremely off-brand. (If you're a historical mystery writer, for example, it won't serve you to share the next vampire erotica fan fiction novel.)

How much should you stay "on brand?" If you're selling almonds, it would make sense to always talk about almonds (almond holidays, trends, recipes, etc.). But you are a PERSON. You are not selling almonds. Feel free to show yourself as a whole person with varied interests and keep your feed interesting to your community – while remaining on brand.

Twitter Basics for all user levels

Create a compelling bio:

1. Use keywords. It's hard to rank high in Google search for keywords, but relatively easy to show up in Twitter search. Use keywords often and hashtag when room allows.
2. Emojis can be used sparingly and tastefully when they stand in for a word that wouldn't otherwise fit. (Hearts, pencils, nationality flags, etc.)
3. Include at least one link to your top project. This can be your portfolio on your writer website by default, but also a buy link to your newest book or course.
4. Upcoming events should be mentioned. "I'm speaking at #ASJANY18" – for example! This alerts other attendees to your participation and shows up well in search for the event.
5. One interesting fact NOT related to your career is ideal. *I like gravy.*

Pin a new tweet at least weekly:

This is the bumper sticker for your Twitter feed. Change it up to focus on your latest article, project, or offering.

Be mindful of @

When you start a tweet with "@" -- it shows up in notifications but not in your feed. Add a period at the beginning (or better yet, move the "@" to later in the tweet) to be sure others see your replies, too. Remember to remove people you don't want to include in long threads and back-and-forth tweets. Not everyone wants to be cc'd on everything.

Create Lists

Lists are excellent to follow just a sliver of Twitter. Create them for following people you admire, to check out the competition, or just to organize your contacts. Be mindful of whether you make a list private. If you don't, people will be notified that they were added to "hot writers of Texas," for example. Also, not all cultures understand or appreciate lists. Being added

feels like a privacy invasion – even though it doesn't change anything. If in doubt, make your lists private.

Tweet like a Writer

You write for a living. No typos, please. Consider using a tool like [Grammarly](#)* to help you double-check tweets before they go out. They have an add-on for mobile devices, too!

One other way to ensure your tweets are rock-solid is to schedule them in advance. There are many tools out there to schedule, including:

- [Buffer](#)
- [Shareist](#)
- [HootSuite](#)

Stay on top of follows

If you're concerned about your following/follower ratio, consider a tool like [ManageFlitter](#)*. This tells you who all the people are who aren't following back, and lets you sort by how active, spammy, or respected they are. You can also create lists of people to follow based on interest, hashtag, or who follows them.

Research Hashtags

Don't use a "new" hashtag without checking it out. Some words have alternate meanings, or the hashtag may be used for purposes you don't want associated with. As my daughter says, "that doesn't mean what you think it does, Mom."

Using Twitter in Today's Polarized World

Politics aren't everyone's cup of tea. If you don't want to alienate future readers and fans, consider opting out of these discussions, unless it pertains to your brand. MUTE is your friend. I often mute people that I don't really want to hear from, but want to stay connected to (editors, for example.) You can MUTE by person or by hashtag. Muting common political hashtags ensures you still hear from people you follow, just not their rhetoric.

How to Pitch Editors on Twitter

While you should be very cautious "pitching" on Twitter, it can be a great way to make a cold lead a warm one. Follow your favorite editors, like a few of their tweets, and – when the time is right – consider reaching out with a simple "what's the best way to pitch you?" You'd be surprised how responsive they can be if you do it respectfully.

See more about Linsey at her website (www.linseyknerl.com)

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