

5 Brands That Are Crushing the Twitter Marketing Game in 2016

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Date : October 5, 2016



Over the past few years, we've seen excitement build around shiny new social platforms such as Snapchat, while other, older channels face relentless rumors about their impending obsolescence. But one such older platform is far from becoming extinct: Twitter.

Want proof that Twitter's still a top contender among social platforms in 2016? Look no further than the countless resources hundreds of brands invest into perfecting their Twitter marketing strategies. Just this past March, the platform [celebrated its 10th birthday](#); in spite of its age, the platform boasted over 310 million active handles, many of which represent Fortune 500 companies.

The majority of brands today understand the importance of establishing themselves on social; however, as I mentioned in my [previous post](#), not all realize it's imperative that they build out a [social media](#) strategy before they start Tweeting out 140 characters willy-nilly.

Those witty and powerful branded Tweets you read are the products of carefully planned strategies that involve brand tone, relevant content, post frequency, and a host of other factors. For example, Twitter thrives off conversation—so it's crucial that your brand build out a customer service plan and prepare to converse with the Twittersphere. According to [Sprout Social's 2016 Q3 Social Media Index](#), 24.7 percent of users become annoyed when a brand ignores their messages on social media. Sure, it can be tricky to address every complaint that lands in your brand's notification bar, and there's no guarantee that you'll be able to please everyone, but having a strong customer service presence on Twitter never fails to impress followers. In many cases, brands have even successfully converted disgruntled Tweepers into brand loyalists, which is one of the most valuable returns on investment a strong social presence can provide.

In addition to having a customer service plan, there are a few other qualities that make for a killer Twitter strategy, including:

- **Content that resonates with your audience.** Why target Millennials when the majority of your customers are over 40?
- **A consistent and tailored cadence.** No one wants to see 20 Tweets from your brand in

their feed over the course of an hour—unless, of course, you’re releasing the iPhone 7.

- **Exceptional visuals.** Because everyone loves a good GIF.

Countless brands on Twitter have already adopted the following tactics, enabling them to craft strong social presences and build followings of loyal fans—but few brands go above and beyond. If you’re looking for some inspiration to spice up your day-to-day content, or wondering how best engage with a Tweet from Debbie Downer, we highly recommend taking a look at these five brands that are raising the bar.

1. Nationwide Insurance

I’m going to go out on a limb here and say insurance isn’t the sexiest product a marketing team can take on—but whoever’s handling [Nationwide Insurance’s Twitter account](#) definitely isn’t failing to bring the heat. While working hard to make sure we all have that “Nationwide is on your side” jingle stuck in our heads (thank you, Peyton Manning,) Nationwide has also managed to develop a very strong Twitter strategy. After a quick glance at the company’s feed, it’s clear that Nationwide is all about giving the consumer added value. By offering an array of tips and tricks, the brand helps its followers prepare for anything life may throw their way—whether it be an expensive utility bill or a disastrous hurricane.

Now, some of you may be sitting there thinking, *“Okay, so added value just means providing tips and tricks—that’s easy enough,”* but keep in mind that Nationwide also has a completely separate B2B audience that it filters into its strategy flawlessly. The brand regularly conducts surveys and shares its findings to provide small business owners with valuable insights, in addition to posting articles that enable them to make educated decisions when choosing a benefits package. To top all that off, the folks behind Nationwide are clever and downright funny. Check out this response to an engaged customer, which embodies their brand voice, literally:

2. *Fast Company*

According to [TrackMaven's 2016 Social Media Industry Index](#), newspapers have the second-highest followings on Twitter, just under broadcast media. If you're a reputable publication, building an engaged follower base is easy; therefore, the majority of magazines and newspapers adopt the same foolproof Twitter strategy: share the news and feature headlines as they are published throughout the day. Period. Few see the value in stepping outside the box and putting the effort into building a social strategy.

Fast Company, on the other hand, [stands out from the rest](#), because it goes the extra mile when implementing two specific strategy tactics: engagement and content curation. Unlike many publications, *Fast Company* recognizes reporters and other influential people who share its articles, and will often Retweet them, sharing their unique comments and perspectives. This gives *Fast Company's* followers a nice mix of content, ensuring that they are not constantly bombarded with headline after headline. Don't get me wrong: other publications do Retweet their reporters, but not nearly as often.

In addition to seeing a fresh avatar here and there, when scrolling through *Fast Company's* feed, you'll also notice a boatload of original imagery paired with 140 characters that beg you to open the featured link. For each piece it shares, *Fast Company* almost never fails to write a catchy line of text that immediately draws the reader in. How can you resist taking a break from that Excel spreadsheet after coming across a Tweet like this?

3. Denny's

Let me preface this by saying that I think it would be very difficult, if not downright inadvisable, for others to fully adopt [Denny's Twitter strategy](#). Typically, brands are eager to jump on popular culture trends and create content around current events, and many social media managers will advise you to steer clear if it isn't relevant to your target audience or your values. But somehow, the all-American diner continually crafts brilliant, humorous content that links to the latest trends. Whether it's a Tweet referencing the most recent song to top the Billboard charts or a GIF poking fun at Apple's live event, Denny's content always hits the mark and receives loads of engagement from fans. (In all honesty, I wouldn't be surprised to find out that the mastermind behind @DennysDiner content doubles as a stand-up comedian.)

Remember: this strategy works so well because Denny's feed represents a product and service that's as light and fluffy as the pancakes they're famous for. With such a tongue-in-cheek tone, the brand has also opened itself up to conversation with fans and even some other [brands](#). Although I personally think they could benefit from engaging with mentions more often, when they *do* @reply, it's always personalized—and hilarious.

4. Adobe

When the average person hears the name Adobe, they're most likely reminded of that annoying, "please update your flash player" alert they dodge every morning. When designers, filmmakers, and photographers hear the same brand name, many immediately think of a list of programs crucial to their existence. [Adobe's Twitter strategy](#) acknowledges this, and goes above and beyond to appeal to its core target audience of loyal creatives. The brand's strategy thrives off its ability to understand its followers and offer them two things: excellent customer service, and visual content that serves as inspiration. The team managing Adobe's social presence has an exceptional community management plan in action, working to address technical questions that come in from users on a day-to-day basis with personalized responses. An array of help center articles and a knowledgeable response team enables Adobe to assist (occasionally frustrated) customers, giving them support and working toward solutions for their issues. To top it off, Adobe has adopted a strong social content strategy and cadence. Whether it's sharing a blog post that highlights takeaways from its Woman's Summit or a GIF preview of a stunning stop-motion video, its Tweets continue to flood followers' feeds with inspiration.

5. Warby Parker

In a mere six years, Warby Parker has not only transformed the way people purchase glasses, but also set a new standard for branded customer service. The brand has successfully managed to embody the high-quality customer service it's known for into its social strategy, and it's safe to say that it engages with nearly every consumer who sends a Tweet its way—whether through [its branded handle](#), or its second handle, [@WarbyParkerHelp](#). In addition to juggling a consistent flow of mentions around the clock, Warby Parker's social strategy humanizes the brand. By showcasing a live look into the Warby Parker office, featuring employees, and promoting [pick-me-up](#) events (where anyone can come in for some snacking and doodling,) it enables followers to identify with and relate to the brand. Take the Tweet featured below for example—tell me there isn't a chance you might mistake Warby Parker for one of your trendy buds who also happens to hate Mondays.

I don't recommend examining one of these branded feeds and mirroring its tactics to bypass creating your own strategy. All the handles featured above represent very different products and services, yet they all manage highly successful handles. When it comes down to it, they all do have one thing in common: they've crafted strong Twitter marketing strategies centered around their unique target audiences and put effort into implementing them. With a one-of-a-kind strategy tailored to your brand and dedication to community management, there's a chance you could be featured in our 2017 lineup.

This article first appeared in www.skyword.com