

So many people I speak with don't know why they use [Twitter](#). Most cite the fact that it seems to be the in-thing to do or that others use it so therefore so should "I". Then what happens? People start writing 140 characters about what they have done that day or they advertise a product asking people to buy it. The former, they decide, being mind-numbingly pointless and the latter bearing no fruit whatsoever.

Eventually with only a few close friends and family "following" them they start to follow others in the hope that these people follow them back. Before long their twitter profile is awash with random messages from people they neither know or care about.

Now at this point many new Tweeters give up Tweeting. They label it a pointless-faddy-thing-to-do which wastes time from doing "real" business.

So what's all this to do with CRM?



The image shows a woman in a black shirt holding a large whiteboard. The whiteboard features the Twitter logo in the top left and the SUGARCRM logo in the top right. Below the logos are four icons: an orange envelope, a magnifying glass over a folder, a red dial, and a red envelope. At the bottom of the whiteboard, the text reads "Twitter + CRM = Deeper Insights".

0845 686 2468

www.southwestict.com

When I began Tweeting I fell into the above camp until several weeks into it I decided enough's enough, I'm going to give my Twitter antics 30 days to bear fruit otherwise I too will ditch it.

To begin with I took a long look at my marketing communications plan and realised that Twitter might just help me to build the relationships I was keen to nurture in the region I was targeting. For me, Twitter was going to become a tool to help me build business relationships with people I had already met. I 'unfollowed' all those people half way around the world that were filling my Twitter inbox with garzillions of irrelevant messages. I had it down to about 60 people most of whom I'd met through various business network meetings. And so began my inner circle of known acquaintances. I felt part of a nucleus of like-minded individuals who had a similar passion to grow their business. These people were all Twittering on and I started to get to know them all as people. Go figure.

Next I needed a system to keep me in touch with my little world of Twitter. Twitter.com was good but unless I actually logged on and got 'involved' in the daily antics of the people I was following I would miss things. Important things. In other words it was a bit like being in a bar with friends and coming in on only part of the conversation. To get around this I researched software programs that could remain open on my PC (in the background) which, alerted me or I would periodically look at. [Tweetdeck](#) became my tool of choice.

Not only could I see what my network was tweeting about but I could also use Tweetdeck to listen out for keywords and phrases that I am particularly interested in. For example, in my case, if someone is Tweeting about "CRM" and "Exeter" then I'll know.

I helped them out when they tweeted a question. They tweeted thanks and other people started to follow me. I started asking for help/advice and people started to fall over to help me out. I use Twitter to impart knowledge for free. What goes around comes around and I have seen some wonderful tips from people I am following.

30 days later I had found a great company that I bought from (through a recommended Tweet) and I had found a new customer who, although already new me, tweeted a question which turned out to me right up my street.

Besides Tweetdeck, my CRM database contains a rich source of information on my target audience. I can see what my contacts are Tweeting about inside, the very tool I live in each day. My CRM system. It is connected to other social networks and overall Twitter is helping support my CRM strategy. It's empowering when you do it right.