



Twenty Questions on Twitter

Twenty questions on how to build your
real estate business with Twitter.com

by

Natalie Danielson

PROFESSIONAL *Direction* INC

www.clockhours.com email: clockhours@gmail.com

A Washington State Approved Real Estate School for Clock Hour Education under R.C.W. 18.85.

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Twenty Questions on how to build community and real estate relationships with Twitter.com

Curriculum

Session Hours	Major Topics	Objective
1 ¼ hour	1. What is the history of Twitter.com? 2. What is Twitter? 3 Why Should I be on Twitter? 4. What is the Twitter Lingo?	Understand the history, definition, and basics of the Twitter program as it relates to the real estate industry
2 ½ hour	5. Who follows who on Twitter? 6. How do I Start a twitter Account? 7. What are smart phone apps? 8. What are desktop Applications to use? 9. How do I find people to follow on twitter?	Identify some reasons to be on Twitter and the basics of communication on it.
3 1 hour	10 How do I search keywords 11. What do I Tweet about? 12. What are hashtags? 13. How does Twitter connect with other sites?	Discuss ways conversation happens on twitter
4 ½ hour	14. How do you add links, photos and videos on Twitter? 15. What are some common Twitter applications? 16. What can you learn about the world on Twitter?	Learn about twitter applications that make twitter more effective including adding links
5 1/2 hour	17. How much time does it take? 18. Can Twitter help Real Estate agents build business?	Answer the most common questions real estate agents have about blogs.
6 ¼ hour	19. What is Twitter Etiquette and Legal issues? 20. What are final words about Twitter?	Identify etiquette and legal issues and answer final questions

Twenty Questions on Twitter

By Natalie Danielson

It's hard to imagine that something with such a wacky name could have such an impact on the world in such a short time. Twitter is one of the fastest growing social networking sites in the world. When the clock turned over to 2009 it was still new and rather dismissed. But, like a burst of fireworks it astronomically grew. Twitter.com is still new and growing. The ownership of Twitter is in private hands, so we are unsure of its future, ability to generate revenue, and the potential applications. But, the power of Twitter and its rapid growth is a sign that it is changing the way we communicate.

It is time for you to become familiar with a tool that could help build your real estate business. Twitter can get you more exposure than you could ever dream of getting by throwing a photo of a listing in a homes-type magazine. We used to go knock on the doors of the neighbors to introduce ourselves... but today we can send out tweets. Here you can put your personality right on the page. You can also get exposure for your real estate business and listings. You tweet to make connections to a community around you, create and engage in conversations, and to build relationships.

Twitter has become extremely powerful in 2018 with the President of the US and other world leaders tweeting foreign policy! Photos and videos of natural disasters have brought aid and information across the world in seconds.

Tweeting can be also looked at as a micro blog. A tweet is only 140 characters generated from you. It can include text, letters, photos, video's or links to other websites. Just about anyone with access to the internet can be on twitter.

Real estate agents now have an opportunity to make connections with family, friends and prospects. Then by engaging in conversation, give them current information and sharing their interests thereby creating relationships. We used to send out newsletters and then emails. But, now Twitter.com can help you connect to a greater audience faster.

Course Objectives:

As a result of taking this class the real estate agent shall be able to:

- Understand the history and definition of Twitter.
- Identify reasons for real estate agents to be on Twitter.
- Discuss ways conversation happens on Twitter
- Learn about how to build relationships on Twitter.
- Learn how to drive traffic from twitter to your blog and website
- Identify different applications that make Twitter more effective.
- Learn that there are etiquette and legal issues to follow on twitter.

1. What is the history of Twitter.com?

Twitter was founded in 2006 by Jack Dorsey in San Francisco, according to Wikipedia, during a brainstorming session of a podcasting company, Odeo. It started as an idea to use an SMS (short message service) to communicate with a group. Its working name was “status” and then twttr. It spun off into its own company in April 2007. The tipping point for Twitter’s popularity was a conference, South by Southwest SXSW in Austin, TX, one of the largest music festivals in the U.S. Large screens at the event displayed tweets showing how those at the conference were keeping tabs on each other.



Twitter became a hot topic of conversation when the USAirways jetliner landed safely in the Hudson River in NYC in January 2009. A passenger on one of the ferries that went to the rescue took a photo on his/her cell phone and sent a tweet to the world with a photo of the plane with passengers standing on the wing. If someone tried to describe the accident on the phone it might take hours. But, taking a photo with the phone adds to the old cliché, “a picture is worth a thousand words.”

In the 1960’s we watched Walter Cronkite give us the news of the day in his 30 minute broadcasts. Today, news finds us. If anything happens that is considered “news” we will hear about it from an email, facebook, instant message, text message or ... now.. Twitter.

The first college credit course on Twitter was at the University of Washington in Seattle in the Spring of 2009. Stanford University and DePaul University are also offering courses focusing on Twitter. These types of courses focus on concepts, ethical issues, responsible reporting and marketing in a full quarter/semester course. Often they are in the college of Journalism or Communication.

When national new reports on many breaking stories they now refer to Twitter to get the up to the minute report from individuals at the scene. The biggest example of this is the Iran Election where the largest news channels relied on twitter reports.

In the corporate world you see just about every major organization on Twitter these days.

When, my friend Nansen had her new Ford truck broke down she sent out a tweet about it and not only Ford Customer Service replied but also Scott Monty, Ford’s Social Media expert twittered right back. At the time in February 2009 she had 12,000 followers on Twitter and was one of the most followed in the world. Her Ford was repaired. Not too long after, her truck broke down again. At this point in March 2009, she had twice as many followers and it was fixed. Companies can’t afford to have poor service or mediocre products. News travels too fast. She today is one of the top followed twitterers in the entire world, the most influential Conservative in the nation, the most followed individual in any state in the Pacific Northwest. Follow her and learn. @Nansen.

Twitter is one of the fastest growing social marketing sites in the world. The statistics are mind boggling and I could print them here, but by the time you read this those statistics will have changed dramatically. Young adults are starting to use twitter more than other social media sites like Facebook.

Type	Private
Founded	2006
Headquarters	San Francisco, California, USA
Key people	Jack Dorsey, Chairman Evan Williams, CEO Biz Stone, Creative Director
Industry	mobile social network service, micro-blogging
Revenue	▲ \$400,000 Q3 (2009) (projected) ^[1]
Employees	74 ^[2]
Website	www.twitter.com

Action:
Search Google for “Twitter Statistics”

2. What is Twitter?

Twitter is an online social networking tool. It is an instant communication tool that gives an individual the power to send out a thought, opinion, or news to the entire world on Twitter. It is sometimes referred to as “micro-blogging.” It is similar to the status updates on Facebook. It is composed entirely of entries to the simple question “what are you doing?”

After signing on with a profile and a name or handle, you can communicate with tweets. A “tweet” is a 140 character message sent out to the world by a member signed on to twitter. The 140 character message includes punctuation and spaces. It can also include links, photos and videos. Hence, the name micro-blogging as it is very limited in size.

A tweet is like a text message. Only instead of going from phone to phone, the tweet is sent out to the world. It does also have direct messages which are like mini emails.

Twitter creates a network with thousands of conversations. You choose who you want to listen to. Everyone you are connected to has people connected to them and so on and so on. It is like a party where people come in and out and you can tune in to the thoughts and conversations of anyone there.

Everyone on twitter is identified with a username or handle. The username is preceded with the “@” sign. For example, my name is @clockhours. You can choose to use your own name. Many people use their name without any punctuation. Other people use a name that describes themselves or the area that they work.

Examples of names of some of those I follow include:

@jimreppond, @kitsapagent @natalieLaughing @oprah @terryep

Action:

Think of a username to use to identify you on twitter. Do you have a photo to use as an avatar?



Ricklie @clockhours Great seeing you too. You're
about 1 hour ago from web in reply to clockhours



Terryep @clockhours I am now going to be a comn
be committed, ha ha. I need to blog more for my stu
about 2 hours ago from web in reply to clockhours



sarahnopp @clockhours it was funny :)
9:20 PM Oct 11th from Tweetie in reply to clockhours



sarahnopp @clockhours @nansen it is a list of bes
& recommendations from independent booksellers.
Powells soon.
8:36 PM Oct 11th from Tweetie in reply to clockhours



jimreppond @clockhours I use commercial softwar
the best free one is probably FormatFactory Availal
<http://bit.ly/10lddJ>

3. Why should I be on Twitter?

Twitter may, in the future, be a utility on our phone. It will be like email for all of us on our phone. Work has it on the internet that Twitter's goal is to be the pulse of the world. The pulse.... An interesting concept. It is real time news and information. It is a fast way to connect with people in a small fragmented way that grows.

Why should you be on Twitter? Because it will help you build your business, create leads, build relationships and learn more about your world.

Build customer relationships

Meet others in the community where you sell real estate

Direct people's attention to interesting links.

Listening to what people are saying about your industry.

Breaking news

Conduct survey or ask question

Get instant feedback

Drive traffic to your website and blog (s)

Market your business

Share your expertise

Learn more about social media

Plan meetings and events

Get advice

Get more Google juice in searches

Gather ideas to build your business

Safety to let people know you are fine

According to the "State of the Blogosphere" report on Technorati and the keynote speech at Blogworld 2009 (Richard Jalichandra <http://www.mycontent.com/blogworld#product=3642>), 73% of all bloggers use Twitter. The 5 reasons they use twitter include:

They send a tweet each time they post on their blog.

They use Twitter to market their blog

Twitter is used to share interesting links.

Bloggers want to understand what others are buzzing about.

There is a community aspect to blogging by creating conversation.

I was proud to have had 60 followers on Twitter in early 2009. My dear friend, @Nansen (a conservative activist) had over 10,000. A real estate agent in Olympia, @SarahNopp sent me a tweet to @clockhours about a Real Estate Social Networking conference with a link. I registered for the free conference in Portland and in the months followed made fantastic connections with others that are much more knowledgeable in this field. Currently, I have three more instructors in Washington State teaching continuing education due to that one tweet.

When there was a tsunami after the Japan earthquake in 2011, the only way I could find out news about what was happening in real time at the Washington Coast where I had a cottage, was to follow the tweets on Twitter. I learned about how my neighbors and friends evacuated and where.

Though you might think that Twitter is not your cup of tea, but the next generation is using these kinds of sites on a regular basis. We don't know how they might communicate when they reach middle age. The more personal that you get with you followers and the more emphasis you put on building relationship, the more traffic and sales you will experience.

Action:

Think of one good reason YOU should be on Twitter.

4. What is the twitter lingo?

You can send a **tweet** (noun) whenever you want about anything. A tweet is only 140 characters long including spaces and punctuation. When you *tweet* (verb) you can include links, photos and videos. Tweets are permanent, public, and can be stored, copied, passed on and seen around the world (unless they are private direct messages).

When you are on twitter your **username** is preceded by the @ sign. So your name can be @clockhours or @NatalieLaughing or @your full name.

Mentions are when someone uses your name in a tweet. It can be a tweet that is being sent to you or it can be a tweet that mentions your name.

Examples

@clockhours Fun link to a photo from the conference today.

Had a fantastic class with @clockhours today in Seattle.

When a tweet is interesting and you want your followers to see it you can **retweet**. It's like forwarding it to the world and most especially your followers.

Examples:

RT@clockhours Fun link to a photo from the conference today

RT @MaryJane Had a fun class with @clockhours today in Seattle

A **DM** or **D** is a *direct* message which is a tweet sent directly from one person to another. It is not seen by the general public. A DM is like a mini email.

When a group of people, or just you, talk about one topic and other want to follow the tweets specifically the use one word like a keyword with a **hashtag** or **#** preceding the word. Its like an invisible file folder with all tweets about one topic.

Examples:

You might follow a conference like #RainCamp or #barcamp or #comedy for weets about comedy or #CrushIt for a new book.

When those that tweet get together in person is it called a **tweetup**. You can schedule a tweetup of people in your community that tweet.

Anyone can follow you and be **followers**. You can see who is following you. If you do not want them following, you can **block** them. For example, someone that sends out spam or porn. People may find you and start following you. For example, you might write about real estate in Seattle and a first time buyer might follow real estate agents that tweet about the market.

You choose to follow other people and companies and that is who you are **following**.

Tweeple are people that use Twitter.

Trending Topics are the buzz on twitter. They are what people are writing about at this moment. It is where you might find the latest breaking news stories from a plane crash, the death of a pop star, an earthquake, or the Nobel Peace Prize winners.

5. Who Follows Who on Twitter?

When you join twitter people immediately start to follow you. Like other social networking sites. It is not the numbers of connection but the relationship you have to those connections. So, when someone chooses to follow you have you a choice to follow back.

You can choose to follow

Celebrities like Oprah, Ellen DeGeneres, John Laroquette, Aston Kutcher,	Local community including stores and local news
News sites like CNN, newspapers, television networks	Sports including major networks and specific sports
Politics..candidates, political parties, and leaders Obama, McCain	Common interests like knitting, scrapbooking
Family members	Local retail establishments
Friends	Prospective home buyers
Neighbors within a geographic area	Members of a church or non-profit community
Corporations like Whole Foods, Zappos, Ford	College and high school students tweeting about class and school
Transportation companies like JetBlue, ferries and train schedules	Similar professions like real estate, lenders, title reps
Emergency management departments	Conference attendees
People in another part of world(Australia, where you might want to go)	Complete strangers
Top real estate agents	Top influential people in real estate or marketing
Inspirational ideas, religious views, quotes	Authors

Aston Kutcher was responsible for bringing national and worldwide attention to twitter by announcing a race with CNN to see who would reach 100,000 followers. Aston won by 6 hours.

You choose who you want to follow.

You start on Twitter by thinking about who you want to follow. In return, people will follow you. The goal is to connect with people and enter conversations. It is those conversations that help build relationships... over time.

Sometimes they follow you back... The more you tweet .. the more followers that you attract. The subjects you choose to tweet about also attract followers like a magnet.

There are programs out that that build your following. They automatically add followers. There are programs that have you automatically follow back. It is not necessarily the number of followers but if who you are targeting and having a conversation with that makes twitter a tool to build relationships.

Action:

So think about it. What information do you want to have on a regular basis? News? Quotes? Celebrity information? Political news? Interest rates? Airline rates? Local business information? Quilting or fishing events? Real estate news?

6. How do I start a Twitter account?

People are identified on Twitter with a name that is preceded with the @ sign. So determine your name. Then go to Twitter.com and sign in. You use an email and a password.

Your profile consists of your name. If you are a real estate agent then it doesn't make sense to be anonymous. So include your name and a link to your blog or website.

Then you have 140 characters to describe yourself. Remember, this can change over time.

Definitely include that you sell real estate. You need to have the brokers name as licensed to follow Washington State License law.

Include a photo or avatar to identify yourself. If you are building your real estate business what good is it to be anonymous?

You can also have a custom background. That is something you can do on your own once you want to get more familiar with the program. Twitback.com is a popular site for doing creating free backgrounds. Links are not enabled in backgrounds.

Action:

Create a twitter account with a profile and link to your blog or website.
This should take only a few minutes.

7. What are smart phone applications for Twitter

Download the Twitter app for your phone. This is the best way to follow twitter. Even if you do not tweet, you can follow local news and use it in an emergency!

Action:

Get the Twitter app for your mobile phone

8. What are desktop Applications for Twitter

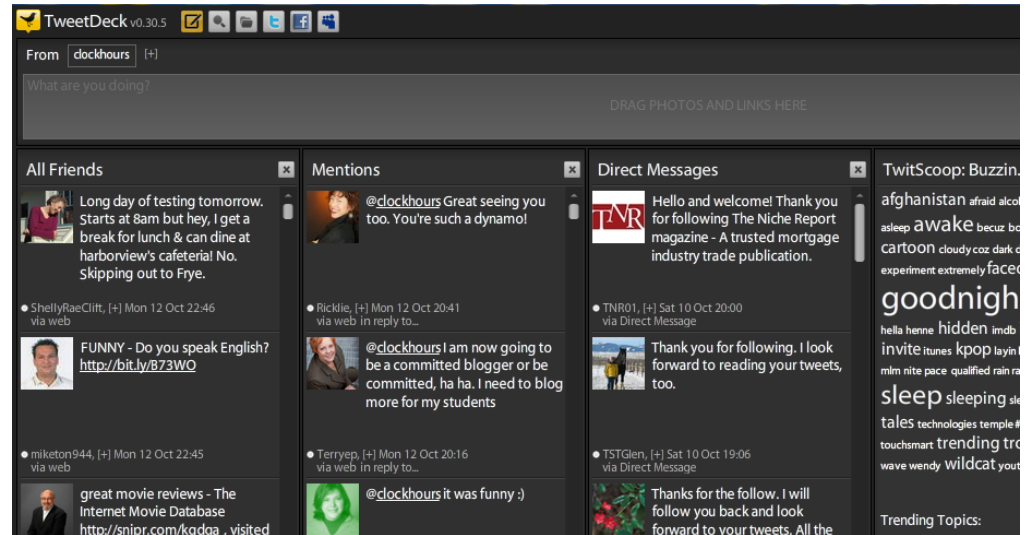
According to the Wall Street Journal, there are several desktop applications to use with social media. The top one on their list is Hootsuite. It is one way to manage all your social media apps.

Tweetdeck.com is an application that makes the twitter experience much easier to follow. It has 10 columns so you can search for everyone talking about a certain topic. It's called a "personal browser for staying in touch." It has 10 columns so you can search for multiple topics.

For example, when you sign on to Tweetdeck.com it pulls your twitter information up on your screen. It can alert you to new tweets (though I turn this feature off because I find it annoying.) I leave Tweetdeck minimized on my computer screen during the day.

I used to have ongoing searches in the columns. They might include "Spokane" because there were not as many people tweeting in Spokane and I am looking to connect to more real estate agents there. I also have a column for "comedy" because I do stand up comedy.

These types of applications let you take twitter to the next level. They primarily let you use twitter for you own uses. You can have columns that let you search anytime your city is mentioned (Kirkland, for example) or a specific car (Jaguar, for example).



In addition, sites like the most popular, Tweetdeck.com make it so much easier to share your tweets on your Facebook account. You probably don't want to send every tweet that direction, but it is an easy link. Other applications for desktop Twitter include Seismic.com and Twhirl.org.

Action:

Download a desktop program (like Tweetdeck.com or Hootsuite)to help manage and get the best use of twitter for real

9. How do I find people to follow on Twitter

1. Twitter has a feature to search your email contacts to find your friends on twitter. This is the first way to start building followers. You fill in your email and password and it determines if anyone on your address book is also a twitter user. You can do it for more than one email. So you will surprisingly find that some of your past clients and friends are on twitter!
2. You can search for others by name. You might know someone's name based on what they write on their website or advertising.
3. You can search by keywords on twitter. There are applications that can help you do that search. For example, Twellowhood.com lets you search for people on twitter in a neighborhood. I was teaching a real estate class in Spokane, so I searched for all the agents I could find in that area. You can search for people that live in Seattle or that write about their Mini Cooper Cars. You don't have to only follow those talking real estate. The idea is to build followers that can relate to you.
4. Follow the leader. You can see who others are following and follow those people. So I might start following people other real estate agents are following.
5. You can use sites to find influential people on twitter to follow. WeFollow.com is a user powered twitter directory that lists genres such as celebrity, music, new, politics, sports etc.
6. You can use twitter applications to build a following. I think that it is more important to choose who you follow and not just follow everyone. Some people use programs that do auto following.

Lots of people will start following you over time. They might include spammers or those looking to try to work with you to build your twitter business. Choose your followers. Your business will build faster and more effectively with your sphere. You can grow your sphere using social marketing but it is important to focus on the target audience that will be closest to your goals.

As a real estate agent you might choose to follow those that are on twitter in your neighborhood including local restaurants, accountants, and homeowners. There may be other bloggers that you follow that are in the neighborhood. You might choose to follow people with similar interests like fishing, knitting, boating or cycling to make a connection with them.

When we did the old fashioned "farming" that was so popular in the last century, we just got information like newsletters, pumpkins, and cookie recipes to a geographic neighborhood. Twitter gives you a new way to farm and create a database. What sets Twitter apart from farming is that it is more of a conversation. When we farmed, we "threw" information and things at people just because of where they lived. Twitter lets us share information on common topics and engage in unique conversations without the aggressiveness of knocking on doors.

Action:

If you look at Twitter as farming, what target group interests you?

10. How do I search Keywords?

Think of keywords that could help you build a following, might interest you, or that might bring you information. Enter those keywords in search and you will see what tweets are being written with those.

On my tweetdeck.com on my desktop I have a column devoted to the keyword “real estate.” I want to read what people are saying about the real estate industry in the world. It might include a person tweeting about just closing a real estate transaction, a real estate quote, a real estate agent’s advice, a real estate conference, a real estate company, a real estate listing, a real estate blog link, a real estate Zillow.com link, or real estate news. Sometimes it is interesting. Sometimes I don’t care. But, just like the stock ticker, it is an ongoing conversation about real estate and I can choose to listen in and learn or not.

Keyword examples can include:

Real Estate, Seattle, Greenlake, Mortgage, Finance, ActiveRain, Zillow, Rentals, Seahawks, name of condo project, Bumpershoot, Name of development, Company name (Microsoft, Windermere), Hobby, etc.

Twitter search can help you find just about anyone and anything on Twitter.com! <http://search.twitter.com/advanced> is a tool to use.

For example, I try to follow real estate agents in Washington State. So I search on Twitter for the words real estate. In the advanced search, I can find real estate agents within a certain distance from Seattle. I just did a search and added ten more real estate agents in the area. Some are obviously new to twitter. I also found two real estate trainers that teach social marketing and found they just don’t get or use twitter... and they teach about it???

Enter Keywords into the search on Twitter.com. On Tweetdeck you’ll see a little magnifying glass in the toolbar for searching.

In addition you can go to Twellowhood.com and search in your own zip code for people on Twitter! It might include local restaurants, other real estate agents, insurance agents, attorneys, bankers, individuals, etc.

Action:

Search three keywords and start following more people.

11. What do I tweet About?

Anything and everything is open for tweeting about. When you send a tweet think of the words you use. Mundane tweets may seem useless but put together they become an interesting profile of you.

For example, tweet something about real estate, something about lunch, something about a hobby you do, something about your city. When I send out tweets about half the time I make sure certain words are in my tweets.

The mantra said over and over on the internet, in books and by keynote speakers is that “content is king.” What exactly does that mean? According to Wikipedia: “The phrase can be interpreted to mean that - without original and desirable content, or consideration for the rights and commercial interests of content creators - any media venture is likely to fail through lack of appealing content, regardless of other design factors.” When I hear that sometimes I think that in order to create content I have to start with something new... sit here and write something unique that has never been written or thought about before. But, that is not what you need to do. Make content interesting. Focus on what interests YOU. Share content (give acknowledgement) that you think your audience might find interesting. Statistics show that when people are on the internet they are spending more time with content including text, photos and videos over time spent on communication, commerce and searching. Community (like Facebook and twitter) has grown while communication has declined)

So, when you write tweets include what you think and have links that interest you. You don't have to create all the content. By linking you can, in a way, filter through the content that is available and present your readers with information that you find interesting.

Some people don't think that they, themselves, are interesting. But, the answer is “YES, you are interesting.” What do you talk about with your friends, colleagues, and prospects? You have a circle of fans around you and the more you become genuine, the more you connect with others.

For example, I use words like real estate, classes, education, clockhours, Seattle, Kirkland, Yachting, Single. Then I see that people that are following those words start following me.

Twitter has become so HOT for politics and worldwide news. There is hardly a day that the news is not mentioning a tweet or a twitter conversation between two foreign leaders, from a devastated part of a country, or from a survivor. The app gives you the option to find topics that interest you. When you start tweeting, you create followers depending on the topics that you tweet about!

Action: Send out three tweets each day this week.
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12. What are Hashtags?

Hashtags identify groups or topics together. People tag their tweets with a hashtag. Then, others can follow that hashtag. It could be one that is followed all over the world, one that everyone in a class is following for a few hours, or one you create for you own followers.

Examples of hashtags include:

#Comedy (People all over the world follow the comedy hashtag to bring more humor in their lives by reading comedy tweets.)

#Jobs (people looking for job will find postings here.)

#Kirkland (the town I live in to see what is happening there)

#funbeach (the name of the website for Long Beach WA is also the twitter name and everyone twittering about LB uses #funbeach)

#CrushIt (the title of the new book by Gary Vaynerchuk.. which I think is a “must read”

#SeattleEarthquake.... Just pretend.. you might search it if there is an earthquake.

I searched #Kirkland and saw that there is a job posting for Google in Kirkland. It also uses the hashtag #jobs.

You can create your own hashtags.

I created a hashtag #NatsTop3 and I post three favorite things (but not as often as I should!) I hope to create a large number of them over time so people will look for them.

Action:

List three hashtags you have seen on Twitter.com

13. How does Twitter connect with other sites?

When you post a tweet on twitter you can choose to send that tweet directly to your facebook account. When you post on facebook you can send the status update to twitter.

Twitter feeds can be added to your blog/website so that anyone visiting your website will see what you are posting. If the twitter feed is current then your prospective client knows you are busy working.

When you have a blog on Wordpress, for example, you can have it automatically put a tweet on twitter about your blog.

Here is an example of a few of the twitter posts that were directly uploaded to my clockhours.com blog

For you as an agent, you will post a tweet about a new listing . . . hopefully something interesting about that listing, and then make sure it is pushed out to facebook and your blog. Do NOT send out every tweet to your facebook status. It can make you look like you are spamming your friends.

The idea is to make the sites work together. Not everyone is on every social networking site.

The screenshot shows the Professional Direction website (www.clockhours.com) with a yellow header and a blue profile picture of a woman. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Search:** A search bar with the placeholder text "To search, type and hit enter".
- RECENT BLOG POSTS:** A list of recent posts including "But the seller 'expects' an ad in the newspaper!", "Latest update from Clockhours!", "FREE Social Networking Conference was success!", "Blogging Basics", and "New Seller Disclosure Form".
- MY TWITTER POSTS:** A tweet from @Terryep stating "I am going to turn in a class to the dept of licensing on twitter tomorrow! have you seen my classes http://www.clockhours.com 10 hrs ago".
- Advertisement:** A grey box with text: "Natalie specializes in desperation! Do you have a birth get clock hours FAST? Click the links in the right hand to classes. There is no charge for the download. Click email Natalie right away if you need to!".
- Latest update from Clockhours!:** A post dated "by BLOG on SEPTEMBER 15, 2009".
- Instructor Development:** A section titled "Get certified to teach" for Wednesday, Nov 11 & Friday, with a description of a two-day class for real estate agents.
- Video:** A video player showing a cartoon character with a play button overlay.

Action:

Write a tweet on Twitter and make it also go to your facebook status page about how friends can find you on twitter.

14. How do you add links, photos and videos on Twitter?

One of the great things about twitter is that you can just tell someone, “Here is an interesting article” and they can click on the link. Thereby it gives the 140 characters more power and reach.

When you add a photo , there is a little camera up on the tool bar. Click on that and you browse your computer for the photo and it is added. Photos, videos and links are attached to most tweets.

The most important link from twitter is to your blog or website. You want to drive traffic there. But, to write something like, “go to my blog” will never drive traffic there. Make sure you give them a compelling reason to go to that site. It is not the only link that you put on twitter. You need to give people a reason to be interested in what you write.

Action: Add a link in a tweet to an interesting article or to your blog.

15. What kind of Links do you add on Twitter?

When you tweet with links, photos and videos you move your audience to other social media. It can include your blog or website. You ultimately want people to be interested in you and go to your blog or website. But, you can’t just tweet that you have written on your blog over and over. You need to create or engage in a conversation. If you write on your blog, then tweet something that teases people to click on the link to read the blog post.

Twitter brings your community to you because you are engaging them in conversation. They connect with you, maybe respond, maybe click on links, and over time you build a relationship. That relationship over time might lead to a referral, asking for advice, or a future sale.

You can link to articles you have read on news sources.

I have had links to articles about building in Seattle because I am also a volunteer tour guide for downtown Seattle for the Seattle Architecture Foundation.

Yesterday I clicked on a link from the Wall Street Journal on what the future of Email might be.

I did a link to a video interview I did of a real estate agent. That was retweeted several times and posted on facebook.

I sent a direct message to someone I was meeting for lunch with a link to the place.

16. What can you learn about the world from Twitter

Every minute of every day there is “news” happening. Twitter is an absolutely amazing tool to find out what is happening right this minute almost anywhere in the world.

Years ago, when there was an earthquake and tsunami in Japan, tweets flowed around the world within seconds. There are numerous studies using the tweets. The studies include the condition and devastation. The researches could follow and pinpoint the location of damage. But, there was also the issue of rumors that spread just as fast.

You can learn about your own neighborhood!

One day all kinds of fire trucks and ambulances raced by my house going south. But, the fire station was just up the hill south of me. Since I back up to a considerable number of acres of woods, my first thought was that maybe there was a fire behind my house.

I went to twitter and searched for “Fire” and “Kirkland”. It took seconds before I found out that there was a possible drowning at the beach down the block. There were tweets about what was happening and even a video!

Action: Google the japan earthquake and twitter study
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17. How much time does it take?

One fantastic aspect of Twitter is that it is short and to the point. You can spend hours and hours on it. But, you can also use it like a tool. You can focus in on what you are looking for to build your business. Someone you know or an influential person in the real estate industry might send a tweet about some information that could be extremely helpful! You don’t have the time to be searching the internet all day for information. This is one way to get to the point.

I hear echoes throughout real estate offices about the time it takes to be online and involved in social marketing. We are coming out of one of the greatest housing slumps in history which followed a boom that we may never experience again. Real estate agents were almost just taking orders during the boom and not spending time building their business. Now is the time to start building business and relationships with people that you were too busy to communicate with in the past. In a time where there are so many questions and problems as the market comes back, consumers need to find real estate agents that they feel they can trust. It is important to remember that people choose you because they KNOW YOU, LIKE YOU, and TRUST YOU. And with social networking you can stop spending money on ads, stop knocking on doors, and stop sending all kinds of bulk mailings. Now your time can be spent more effectively networking with more people than you could with shoe leather.

You have to be passionate about your work. If you love what you do and you do it over and over again, it will reap you rewards. That is like an old cliché but it rings true in best selling books and keynote speeches around the world. If you love what you do you will not count the minutes or the hours. You will be keenly aware of your priorities and work as hard as you can to make your business grow.

18. Can Twitter help Real Estate Agents build business?

Real estate agents have to constantly work to build their business. Prospective clients just don't walk in the door or ring the phone. Each individual real estate agent is responsible for the marketing of his or her services. There is no easy way to build business. It is the single most important way to spend time as a real estate agent. You do not have a product that sells itself. Your product and brand is YOU and in order to grow your business you have to market YOU.

In the past century, real estate agents built their business by telling friends and family about their new career. They knocked on doors in neighborhoods and handed out pumpkins, or passed out flyers on new listings or recipes. In addition, agents spent time and money sending out reams of paper in the form of newsletters, postcards and letters to people. Everything agents did... worked. And everything that agents did... failed to work. There was no magic formula for building a client base.

Enter the new century and the world of WEB 2.0 with an interactive internet including social media including blogging, interactive websites, listing videos, real time market information and you have information and content never available to consumers before. Add the social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter and the doorbells are much closer together.

When we farmed a geographic area as agents, we had no idea if there was a potential prospect behind the door. We sometimes were armed with statistics as to how often homes turnover in that area, the age of the homes and even the demographics of the homeowners. They were complete strangers with nothing in common with the agent except that they lived in that area. We attended clubs and organizations to create relationships with people with common interests. We then basically threw information at them including business cards, calendars or recipes. It was repetitive. The more we committed to farming and marketing, the more it paid off. We added many dollars spent on advertising in newspapers, on billboards, in homes magazine and on grocery carts hoping that our marketing tools and phone number would find their way into their hands when they needed an agent.

Today, agents are struggling for that audience of potential prospects hidden behind the doors. They don't want you knocking, the do not call list excludes just about all of them, and print advertising is gone. They don't even go to club meetings as much anymore. So some agents jump on social media and complain that they didn't get a sale after posting a listing on Facebook. Some agents have found ways to spend money to buy leads including spending thousands on "SEO."

People choose to work with YOU as a real estate agent because they KNOW YOU, LIKE YOU, and TRUST YOU. If your name appears on a billboard or comes to the top on a Google search, that does not guarantee it will build your business. It is the relationship that you build with people that creates business. You need to create a connection, have a conversation and build a relationship so that people trust you with their greatest financial investment.

Now with social marketing tools you can target who you want to work with much more closely. You can have connections and conversations with people in your town because you share more in common than an address. You can find people that have common interests whether it is a hobby, organization, or music. It is from the relationships that you build that you create a reputation. It is when you take that connection to a conversation and a relationship that people will choose to work with you as a real estate agent because they KNOW YOU, LIKE YOU, and TRUST YOU.

Social networking sites let this happen easier than ever before. Not only has the internet become overwhelming powerful as a communication and marketing tool... but it is FREE! The key to remember is that you can't build your business overnight. It takes time, repetition, and commitment. You need to be genuine and open and create conversations and take those conversations to a relationship.

Twitter (along with Facebook.com) seems to be standing out in the crowd of social networking sites that agents are using to get exposure, create conversations and build relationships. With twitter you can just chat online about anything from catching a fish, a moving quote, a photo of an interesting listing or a video of a neighborhood event. You follow people and people follow you. It is similar to throwing a handful of business cards out into a crowd, but instead online they can see your mug, see the short message, follow you, and immediately comment on your message. And you can see what they are thinking about also.

For example, one agent in Bend, Oregon searched anyone using the name of the town in their tweets. A man from California was coming north to an event and was looking for information on the area. The agent answered, eventually showed him properties, and had a sale. In another case, a prospective buyer sent out a tweet looking for property information in a specific neighborhood in Seattle, and an agent tweeted back to eventually land a sale.

Twitter, like other social media sites, is a tool that you can use to build your business. It is being used throughout the country with real estate agents as well as people in just about every other business. Now is the time to jump in and use this tool.. as awkward as it may feel at first.. it is worth the effort.

Action:

Make a list of three ways you marketed your business and build a client base in the last century.

Make another list of three ways you can use twitter to build your client base in the future.

19. Twitter Etiquette and Legal Issues

Twitter is a public conversation that is permanent and can take on a life of its own. Anything you say can be retweeted over and over again. So choose your tweets carefully.

Once you have tweeted something it can be permanent.

For example:

You might have said the wrong thing in a tweet and then you realize it and delete it. Someone, like me, could have copied that tweet and put in a word document, someone else could have retweeted it, someone else could have showed it on a projection screen to an audience. Does it happen? Yes!

Anything negative about a person, place or thing should be done with caution.

For example:

A property management company in Chicago sued a tenant that posted a tweet about mold in the apartments and the company's lack of care.

A real estate agent tweeted the %less than the list price of an offer a seller just accepted.

No confidential stuff should ever be tweeted about or linked to.

Don't tweet the sales price of a house when the transaction has not closed.

Don't tweet about personal issues of your clients.

Don't use client's names in tweets.

Never use profanity.

Being anonymous defeats the purpose of creating relationships and building your real estate business. If you lock your account, then why do you have it?

Don't send the same tweet over and over. Don't schedule the same tweet many times, It makes you look like spam.

Don't try to sell on twitter. It is for conversation. It is like everyone in a coffee shop chatting. As soon as someone starts to sell people leave.

Don't make your tweets plain and boring. If you schedule tweets of quotes, for example, make them quotes that YOU like. (Reminds me of when agents would send out recipes to clients and never actually tried the recipe in their own homes!)

Do be genuine and authentic when on Twitter.

Do listen for conversations about spam and hijacking. There are people out there every day trying to get ahold of your email, your facebook, your twitter and bank accounts. It is up to you to maintain a presence and keep on top of your accounts.

20. What are final words about Twitter?

Though twitter might seem to be a little crazy and maybe seem to be a time waster. But, in fact, it spreads information around the world faster than ever in history. Don't dismiss the possibility that it is a tool that you can use to build your real estate business.

Most people that jump on Twitter just fade away after about a month and don't continue having a presence on the site. There are only so many websites that you can manage. The most popular for real estate agents to use as tools include Facebook.com, LinkedIn.com and Twitter.

Remember, Twitter is not an advertising site. Sending a tweet every time you have a listing will NOT result in activity or a sale. Honestly, no one cares about a tweet that says, "new listing ...click here." Take any tweet one step farther than what you first think to generate interest. For example, instead of taking a plain photo of your listing, take a photo of your Harley or bicycle in front of the listing and tweet about that! If it has a spectacular view, then say in the tweet that you can "see the space needle from the living room" in the tweet and attach a photo of the view.

Just like any kind of marketing in the real estate business, using social networking takes time and commitment to show a return. Unlike most marketing we have been used to in real estate, most social marketing is free. We only have to invest time and a commitment to make it an effective business tool.

You tweet to make connections to a community around you, create and engage in conversations, and build relationships.

Quiz for Twenty Questions on Twitter

Complete answers on this form. Mail or scan to Professional Direction with Evaluation.

This class requires you to sign on to Twitter and start an account. We don't know the future of Twitter, but it is a strong force in our country because of its ability to spread information faster than ever and we are able to communicate almost instantaneously with clients. It is important that you understand how to use twitter and be able to find your clients and prospects. Most real estate agents do not stay on for more than a month. I encourage you to learn how to use it for the long run.

1. Search Google for information on Twitter Statistics. Statistic _____ Source _____
2. Think of a username to use to identify you on Twitter _____ Reason you chose it _____
3. Think of one reason that you, as a real estate agent should be on Twitter. _____
4. Write two of the commonly used terms with regards to Twitter and their definition _____
5. What information do you want to have on a regular basis? Identify three areas. _____
6. Start a Twitter account with a profile and a link to your website. Follow @clockhours to identify you on Twitter. _____
7. Download a desktop program like Tweetdeck.com to help manage your searches on Twitter. What did you download? _____
8. Do you have Twitter on your phone? Yes/ No
9. If you look at Twitter as farming, what target group interests you? _____ Find 10 people to follow on Twitter. Yes/ No
10. Search three keywords and name three people you are following because of keywords. @ _____ @ _____ @ _____
11. Send out three tweets. Write what you sent in one tweet. _____
12. What are three hashtags you have seen on Twitter? # _____ # _____ # _____

13. If possible, write a tweet and sent it directly to Facebook. (Optional)
14. Add a link to a tweet to an interesting RE article. What did you link? _____
15. Name one Twitter Application that you tried or researched. _____ Are you using it? _____
16. Name a link that you followed on another person's tweet. _____

17. Is time your biggest concern? _____
18. Do you see that Twitter can help you farm and communicate with prospects and clients? _____
19. Name one thing that you should not say on Twitter. _____
20. What are you final thoughts on Twitter? _____

You must attach this to the evaluation and return to Professional Direction with tuition to get clockhours.

Mandatory Evaluation

Did you read the material in the booklet on this date? YES / NO

Did you complete the quiz and attach answer sheet? YES / NO

Did you pay Tuition (\$30 for 3 hrs) YES / NO

Did you fill out and sign this form? YES / NO

Why did you choose to take this course? Topic? Time? Cost? Ease? Other?

A "clock hour" is 50 minutes. This 3 hour class should take about 2 hrs 30 min. How long did it take you to complete the course? _____

Will the material you learned improve your performance?	
Were the course materials easy to follow?	
Were the course materials relevant to your profession?	
Were your objectives met by attending the class?	

What are 3 things that you learned from the course?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Twenty Questions on Twitter		
Print Name CLEARLY	Signature	Company
Address	City Zip Code	Phone
Twitter name Required @	Email	
License Renewal Date		Date class taken

Thanks for taking this class! I really appreciate the agents that take clockhours from my school! I am always working on my classes and writing new ones!

**Professional Direction, email: clockhours@gmail.com
www.clockhours.com**