

State of the Twittersphere

Q4 2008



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Overview

Wow! Boy, Twitter has grown. A year ago Twitter was a relatively small community of techies and web 2.0 geeks, now it is going mainstream. Twitter is not only being talked about and used by a lot more people, but more and more marketing industry events and conferences are using Twitter as a standard means of communication. Barack Obama accumulated over 100,000 followers and announced major campaign news and updates on Twitter. Don't think the US presidential election is mainstream enough? What about CNN? Rick Sanchez uses Twitter to interact with his audience daily on CNN and reads Tweets directly on air.

At HubSpot, we're big fans of Twitter (you can follow [@HubSpot](#) and [@Grader](#)) and we built Twitter Grader (<http://Twitter.Grader.com>) to help people evaluate and improve their Twitter presence. With all the data we've collected from Twitter Grader, we thought it was time to share that back with the community for all of you marketing and Internet geeks (like us).

Since this is our first report, we don't have a lot of historical trends to report on (you'll have to wait for Q1 2009!). But for now, the most interesting tidbits we see in our data about Twitter are:

- Twitter has lots of newer and less active users
 - 70% of Twitter users joined in 2008
 - An estimated 5-10 thousand new accounts are opened per day
 - 35% of Twitter users have 10 or fewer followers
 - 9% of Twitter users follow no one at all
- There is a strong correlation between the number of followers you have and the number of people you follow

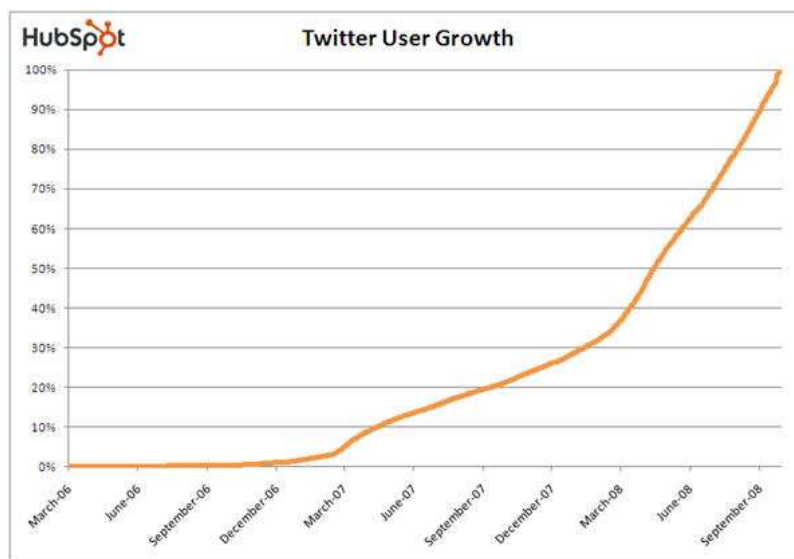
Have a comment? Check out the blog article <http://hubspot.me/?SOTwitter> we wrote about the State of the Twittersphere where you can leave a comment and debate with the community, or converse on Twitter using the hashtag **#SOTwitter**.

Twitter User and Traffic Growth

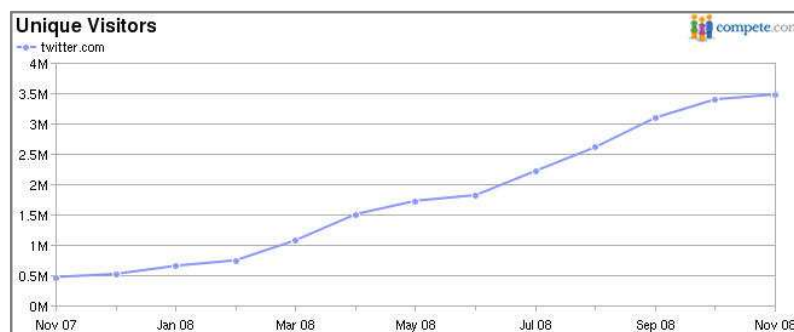
Web traffic to the Twitter.com website has grown extremely fast in the past year, though it is important to note that web traffic is not the best measure of Twitter usage. Many users access Twitter from mobile devices and client applications and are not counted in most web traffic statistics. Conversely, many visitors to the Twitter.com website are probably not Twitter users, but people curious about Twitter or who found a link to a tweet or profile in a blog post or a search result.

Most public estimates of the current Twitter User base are around 4-5 million users. However, we believe that a large portion - probably 30% or more - are very new or unengaged users who do not post updates more than once a week, do not follow more than a few people, and have only a few followers. That being said, Twitter is growing quite fast, adding about 5-10 thousand new accounts per day by our estimates.

- Twitter has about 4-5 million users, about 30% are relatively new or unengaged users
- An estimated 5-10 thousand new accounts are opened per day
- Traffic has grown over 600% in the past 12 months (Compete.com)
- Twitter.com became one of the top 1,000 websites by traffic in May 2008 (Alexa.com)



(Chart above shows data as a percentage of total users since the exact number of Twitter user accounts is not known)



Twitter User Base Statistics

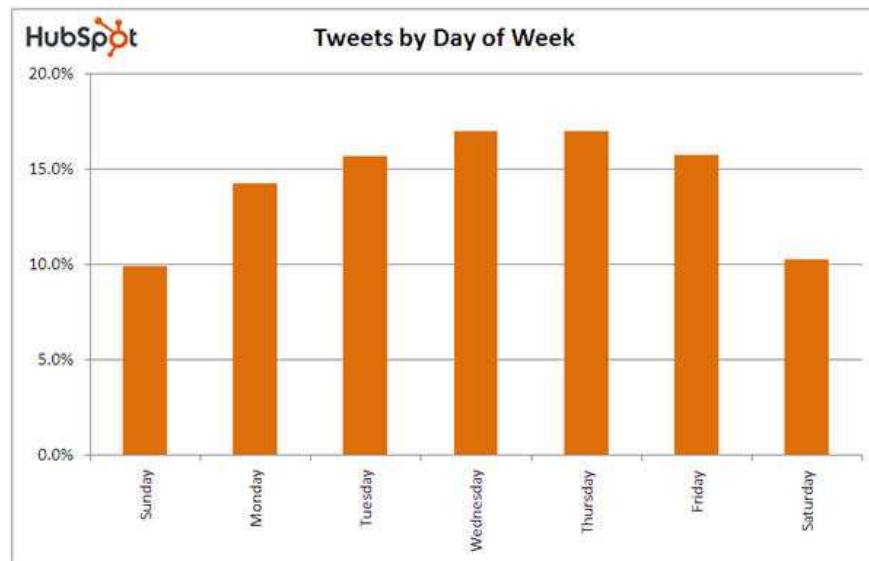
While the older and most popular users on Twitter get most of the press, Twitter is dominated by new users. About 70% of users joined during 2008, and the average Twitter user has been on Twitter about 275 days. As Twitter's growth accelerates, it will be interesting to see how usage of Twitter and the customs within the Twitter community changes over time with such a large number of new users.

- Twitter is dominated by new users
 - 70% of Twitter users joined in 2008
 - 20% of Twitter users have joined in the past 60 days
 - The average user has been on Twitter 275 days
- 80% of Twitter users have a bio specified on their profile
- 62% of Twitter users have uploaded a photo to their profile

Stats on Tweets

Twitter users seem to Tweet pretty equally over the course of a week – with about a 30% decrease in activity over the weekend. So, while Twitter is a very mobile network with the ability to use SMS and applications on mobile devices, it does seem that people use Twitter less actively in this mode and more actively while in their office at their computer.

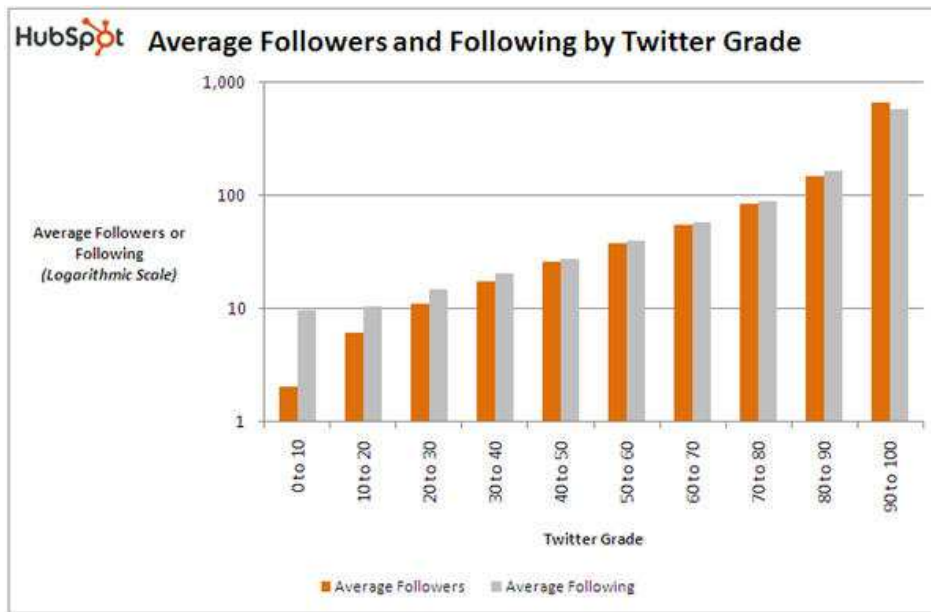
- Wednesday and Thursday are the most popular days of the week to Tweet
- There is about 50% more tweet activity on a weekday than a weekend

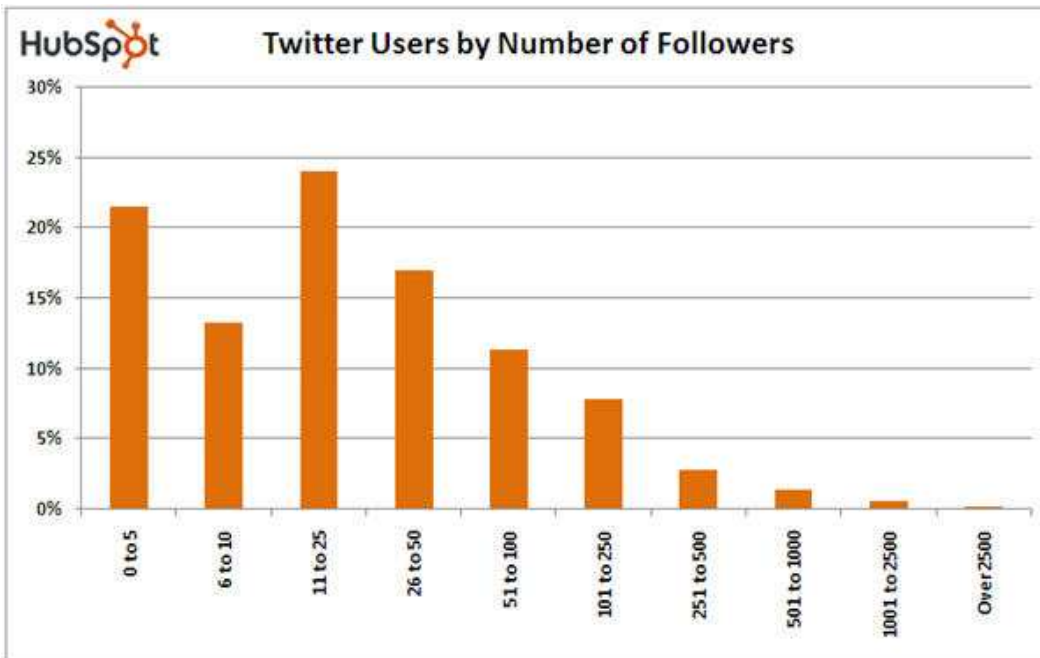


Stats on Followers & Following

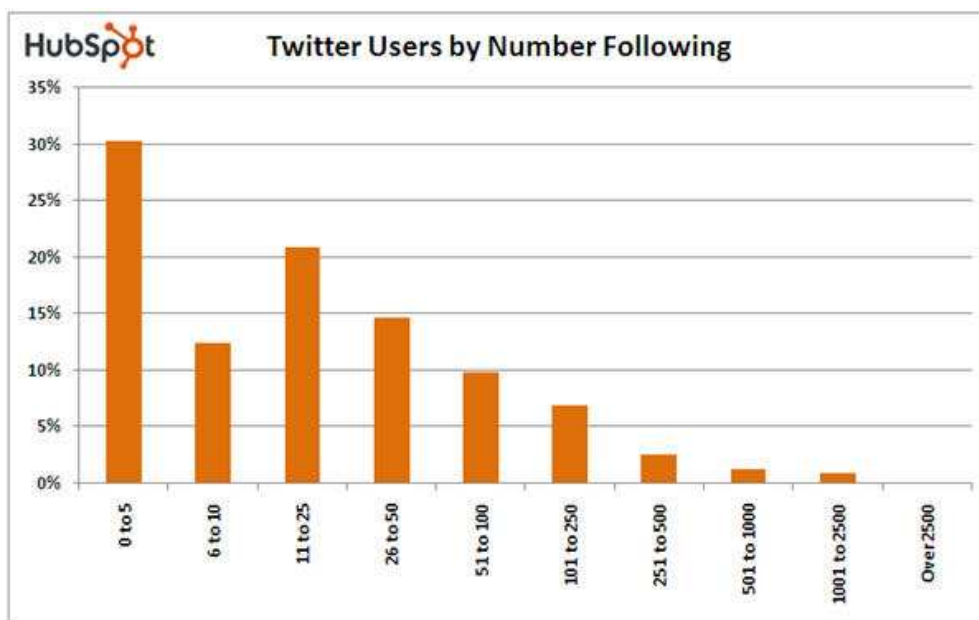
- 35% of Twitter users have 10 or fewer followers
- The average number of followers is 70
- The average number of people someone is following is 69
- There is a large difference in these statistics between the most and least popular Twitter users
 - The top users tend to have more followers than the number of people they follow
 - The bottom users tend to follow more people than follow them

	All Twitter Users	Users with 50 or Fewer Followers	Users with 500 or More Followers
Average Number of Followers	69.5	15.6	1,320
Average Number Following	69.0	18.4	1,087





<i>Number of Followers</i>	<i>Percentage of All Twitter Users</i>	<i>Cumulative Percentage of All Twitter Users</i>
0 to 5	22%	22%
6 to 10	13%	35%
11 to 25	24%	59%
26 to 50	17%	76%
51 to 100	11%	87%
101 to 250	8%	95%
251 to 500	2.8%	98%
501 to 1000	1.4%	99%
1001 to 2500	0.6%	100%
Over 2500	0.2%	100%



<i>Number Following</i>	<i>Percentage of All Twitter Users</i>	<i>Cumulative Percentage of All Twitter Users</i>
0 to 5	30%	30%
6 to 10	12%	43%
11 to 25	21%	64%
26 to 50	15%	78%
51 to 100	10%	88%
101 to 250	7%	95%
251 to 500	2.5%	98%
501 to 1000	1.3%	99%
1001 to 2500	1.0%	100%
Over 2500	0.1%	100%

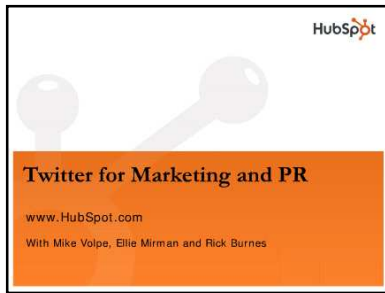
Geography

Because the location field on Twitter profiles does not contain any structured data (Twitter does not require people to separate city from state or province, etc.) it is hard to do any detailed analysis on this data. However, the list of the top thirty most common phrases people type into their location section on their bio shows that Twitter seems to be popular in major English-speaking cities.

Top 30 Locations on Twitter

London
USA
San Francisco
New York
Chicago
Los Angeles
California
Toronto
Austin, TX
New York, NY
NYC
San Francisco, CA
Canada
Texas
Atlanta, GA
Washington, DC
UK
Los Angeles, CA
Chicago, IL
new york city
Florida
Portland, OR
Boston, MA
Seattle
Seattle, WA
Boston
Michigan
Australia
Singapore
San Diego, CA

Using Twitter for Marketing and PR



Want to learn more about using Twitter for Marketing and PR?

[Download the free webinar](#) for lots of tips and tricks to drive your inbound marketing to increase traffic and leads using Twitter.

<http://hubspot.me/?Twitter>

Twitter Elite

Twitter Grader tracks the Twitter Elite based on overall Twitter Grade. The data changes frequently; you can view current data at the URL: <http://twitter.grader.com/topusers>

Data Sources

Nearly all of the data in this report comes from <http://Twitter.Grader.com> which has information on over 500,000 Twitter profiles as of November 2008. We have also used data from Compete.com and Alexa.com as noted in the report.

About HubSpot

HubSpot is an inbound marketing system that helps your company get found online, generate more inbound leads and convert a higher percentage of them into paying customers. Based in Cambridge, MA, HubSpot can be found at <http://www.HubSpot.com>

Find and follow HubSpotters on Twitter: <http://www.HubSpot.com/Twitter>

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