

Generating Leads with Hashtags on Twitter The Right Way

The humble Twitter hashtag (the pound sign or # to those of you not in the know) is a lot more powerful than it looks. Used the right way, hashtags allow you to target just the prospects you are looking for. Simply by adding # to the beginning of a word or phrase your prospective customers are looking for, you can help them find you, rather than one of your competitors.

Most people think Twitter was the first to use the # accompanied by text to make things easier on its users, and on its search engine robots. It was Facebook that pioneered the hashtag, but Twitter is far and away the king of the miniature tic-tac-toe board. Go to your Twitter account right now, search for #baconcam, and you immediately have access to all of the content on Twitter that has been tagged by the #baconcam hashtag.

As you can imagine, #baconcam is tagged on videos, images, and text that revolve around a love of bacon. In this very simple way, the addition of # to a word or series of words can give you instant access to not only a wealth of information and content revolving around a certain phrase but also the Twitter users which are using that hashtag.

Knowing this, you probably feel like rushing off and adding 3 or 6 or 10 hashtags to every one of your tweets in the future. That would be a bad move.

Best and Worst Hashtag Practices

At most, you should include 2, and possibly sometimes 3, hashtags in each one of your tweets. Sometimes just 1 hashtag is perfect. Remember that you should always include only those hashtags which are relevant to the

content you are posting at that time. This is one of the many ways Twitter uses to understand what your content is about.

If you add #baconcam to a tweet that is all about the vegan lifestyle, you are going to have a lot of Twitter users scratching their heads. When your hashtags are relevant to your message, to your profile, and to your overall business, you have the best chance of turning a semi-interested Twitter user into a follower, and then into a customer.

You should also keep your hashtags as short as possible. It is easier for people to remember and type shorter hashtags than it is long ones. Don't be vague. A broad hashtag like #fishing will get nowhere near the engagement as #bassfishing. It may draw a lot more interested Twitter users, but since they are not targeted, the engagement and leads you will get from using that vague hashtag are nowhere near as valuable as they could be.

You should use your location if your business is localized. Additionally, you should create a unique, one-of-a-kind hashtag that has never been used before, one that speaks to your business, or the benefits you have to offer customers. Finally, don't hijack someone else's hashtag. It is okay to use a generic hashtag like #bloggingfulltime, but using a hashtag when you don't know what business or cause it may represent, can end up doing more harm to your business than good.