

Getting More Leads with Twitter Contests

The company that stops generating new leads and prospects will eventually go under. That's why constant lead generation is so important, regardless the type of business you run, and whether you are a brick-and-mortar or virtual operation. One really fun, engaging way to cater to the social aspect of Twitter is to build your pool of prospects by running contests.

No matter what your desired result, Twitter contests offer several options for achieving them. If you simply want to increase followers or drive engagement, this is the marketing tool for you. You can also use Twitter contests to turn tire kickers into prospects that trade their contact details in return for a valuable free gift. This person is then placed in your sales funnel and hopefully becomes a happy customer.

How to Run a Twitter Contest

The first thing you should know is that a Twitter contest is not a Twitter "thing." In other words, there is no special contest format Twitter offers. Instead, you are free to create whatever kind of contest you like, using Twitter as the platform to reach as many people as possible. Whether you reward someone for the fastest correct answer, a photo you judge to be the best, the most creative answer or for helping you choose from 5 choices for your upcoming book cover, this type of engagement is perfect for Twitter.

To keep you from having to do a lot of heavy lifting, there are third-party applications and websites that do the work for you. This enables you to compile all of the relevant information, choose a winner, and handle every step of the contest or sweepstakes process in a minimal amount of time. The software does the work, so you don't have to. The following are

a few popular contest and sweepstakes apps that integrate with Twitter, and with other social media networks.

- Hootsuite
- Woobox
- Binkd
- Wishpond
- Shortstack

If creating new leads is your business goal, a voting contest could work well for you. You simply ask contest entrants to vote on what they want to see in your next product launch, their favorite "fill in the blank" that relates to your niche or market, or anything else that applies to your business.

Running a sweepstakes on Twitter is another way to generate new leads. Using one of the third-party Twitter contest applications mentioned above, a sweepstakes allows you to collect email addresses before users are allowed to join the contest. You can also set a qualification that the entrant must tweet about your contest, and this can lead to a truly viral result.

Photo contests allow Twitter users to express their creativity, and caption contests are extremely popular on Twitter. You provide a picture and ask entrants to come up with a caption that fits. These usually generate a lot of traffic, because just about everyone enjoys creating silly, risque or otherwise entertaining captions for pictures and videos.