



Twitter Chat

10 Tips for Success

- 1. Use the hashtag.** If you're the organizer of the Twitter chat, you'll need to create a unique hashtag and refer to it when promoting the event. If you're a participant, include the hashtag in your tweets. Both actions help ensure that all posts pertaining to the chat are grouped together and keep the conversation flowing.
- 2. Change your privacy settings so that others can see your tweets.** A private Twitter account means that whatever you post can only be seen by your followers, all of whom you manually approved. This means anyone who doesn't follow you or doesn't have permission to view your feed won't be able to see your tweets—including moderators and other participants. They won't be able to view, share, or refer to your messages during the chat – even if you've used the hashtag.
- 3. Decide on a Twitter chat tool.** There aren't many real-time tweet chat tools anymore—that allow you to participate in the chat as well as keep an eye on your stream. Test out a couple beforehand. We like TweetDeck; since it's owned by Twitter, it cuts down on time lag that you may experience through other tools.
- 4. Consider your time.** If interest in the discussion lends itself to a recurring chat, you may want to address the topic in a series of conversations. This will ensure you're getting the most out of the chat and maximize participation. Most Twitter chats are an hour-long, with pre-prepared questions.
- 5. Organize your questions by numbers and then refer to them throughout the chat.** This will free up characters, as people won't constantly need to restate the question. It will also help with the overall flow and make it easier to follow the conversation. Typically the moderator will begin with an open invitation to introduce yourself—be sure not to forget to use the chat hashtag. The most popular format for keeping track is "Q1" for questions, and then participants respond with "A1", and so on.
- 6. Moderate — keep comments relevant to the topic at hand.** If you want to engage a fellow participant about something not directly related to the chat, it's advisable to remove the hashtag from your tweet.
- 7. Familiarize yourself with the rules of the chat.** There are two basic rules of etiquette to follow when taking part in a Twitter chat: Use the hashtag and remain respectful of other participants. Individual chats may also have their own set of rules. Keep in mind that Twitter chats are about learning, and sharing and exchanging information, not for promotion.
- 8. Be cognizant of technological limitations.** As with anything else done online, there is a possibility that technical glitches or outages will occur. If you should need to cut things short, voluntarily or otherwise, remain calm. You can always update participants on your other social media channels. After all, this is your community and, if you are a good contributor, people will be understanding.
- 9. Integrate the chat into other parts of your social media strategy.** A Twitter chat is just one catalyst in your PR toolkit. Consider how it will fit into other components of your communications plan and align with your strategic communications goals. Bonus: Twitter chats are great for increasing your followers and establishing brand and industry authority.
- 10. Continue the conversation after the chat is over.** Gauge interest in ongoing exchanges via a LinkedIn or Facebook group—set-up around your hashtag. When possible, link to a transcript or create a recap of highlights from the chat via a blog post, then share across social media channels. This will extend the discussion and may provide topics for future chats. Burrelles provides social media listening tools so you never miss a mention!

BOTTOM LINE:

Twitter chats provide an opportunity for constituents across geographic regions to connect and share ideas. With a little time, preparation, and strategy, PR pros can effectively incorporate this form of social media into their outreach — delivering valuable content and fostering community around relevant discussions and shared interests.

CONTACT US

For a free consultation, or to find out more about Burrelles media relations planning, monitoring and measurement services, please [contact us online](#) or at: [Burrelles.com](https://www.burrelles.com) | [800.631.1160](tel:8006311160)