

# HOW TO USE TWHIRL PT. 1

Using Twhirl is an important deal. When using Twitter for marketing and communication among team, it is critical that you use the right tool. One of the most important part of Twitter is that it is an amazing tool only if you use it properly. There are a lot of misinformation about it.

Twhirl has a float feature. The application greys out, sort of become transparent when it is not the active application. It comes back into focus when you click on it.

Look at the following screenshot and compare it.



It could be sitting back in the background, collecting information, and you can check it out only when you have time.

Twhirl supports both Twitter and FriendFeed. Distinguishing which window is which is easy. The format will be different. You will also see the letter 't' at the top of the Twitter window and on top of the FriendFeed window.

FriendFeed is going to be covered in a few weeks. For now, let's talk about Twitter.

## THE '@' (AT) SIGN IN TWITTER

The @ (at) sign in Twitter has special meaning. Understanding what it is is the key part of using Twitter. If you use the symbol, like @Ed\_Dale, Ed will get it, regardless whether Ed follows you or not.

Now you may wonder about being bombarded with messages all the time from total strangers? Not to worry though, in Twitter, every message is limited to 140 characters. That means anyone should have to get into the discipline of getting to the point. Scanning through all your messages can be fast.

Twitter is also a great tool to test headline. It makes you a better writer because you have to get across your message in those 140 characters.

## USING TWHIRL

When you click on the @ sign besides the **Home** tab, you will see everyone who have personally message you even if you don't follow that particular person.



Twirl allows you to shorten URLs easily. You can copy a long URL, click the icon that resembles a chain, paste the URL, choose a service and hit **Shorten**. In a moment, a new URL will appear in your message area.

**Tips:** Pick *twurl.nl* because it supports click tracking to see who is clicking on your link. It will be a big deal later in the Thirty Day Challenge.



Also pay attention to the number between the chain and tick icons. It is characters you have left for your message. When you've finished with the message, click on the tick icon to submit your tweet.

The little camera icon is TwitPic. You can use the service to post image to TwitPic. The URL to the image in *twitpic.com* will be available in the tweet area.



Another important symbol is the **# (hash)** mark. Particularly this is used around event. By using **#30dc** in your tweet, for example, it will be picked up by a whole bunch of other services. Talking about killing two birds with one stone.



If you want to reply to somebody, hover over the photo of the individual you want to reply, and click on the @ symbol. The name of the person will be inserted into the message area, which prevents you from making a typo. Using @, your reply will be available in your Twitter home page.

The envelope button is for sending direct message. Direct message is useful if you want to reply a message that doesn't mean anything to anybody else. That way, it doesn't show up in your followers' screen.

Integration with Summize and TweetScan allows you to use the search engines to locate any tweets with the word you entered as the keyword. You can even grab the RSS feed for your Google Reader. More on this in later lesson.

Try searching for your name and your niche to find who are talking about those in Twitter. If you don't have an idea what to search, try **trout fishing**. You'll be surprised!

Twitter will be a very critical part of TDC, so make sure you familiarize yourself with Twirl, the client you'll use to interface with Twitter.