



Twitter Best Practices for Community Action Agencies



<https://twitter.com/NYSCAA>

Introduction

Twitter is the leading microblogging website, where users post brief updates, no longer than 280 characters, known as “tweets.” Tweets often include links to news articles, photos, videos or websites to supplement the information posted in the tweet. Twitter is an invaluable, free tool for nonprofits and organizations, including Community Action Agencies. Use Twitter to conduct outreach, share information, establish partnerships and gain support. The following information includes the benefits of utilizing Twitter, how to best practices, and how to maintain your account.

What are the benefits to creating a Twitter account?

Twitter offers a variety of benefits to nonprofits and organizations, including:

- ▶ A new and different way of communicating with people, including different demographics. Twitter is one of the fastest growing social networks, with approximately 370,000 people joining every day;
- ▶ Opportunities to spread the word about poverty or other social justice issues, as well as an agency’s upcoming events or program services;
- ▶ The ability to broadcast your message to a large audience...through Twitter, it is possible for others to “retweet” your tweets, verbatim maximizing your reach in getting the word out;
- ▶ The chance to connect with the media, many journalists use Twitter to locate source articles, and leads for stories.

How will people find our agency's Twitter profile? How can we find other profiles to follow?

- ▶ Promote your new Twitter account through other types of social media you might use already – your agency website, email signature, Facebook, etc. Another helpful tip is to include an announcement in your agency's newsletter.
- ▶ Be interactive! Your followers will be more responsive if you provide useful, interactive material in your tweets. You can post links to videos, photos, articles, etc. You can even poll your followers using Twtpoll.com.
- ▶ The month of May is designated as Community Action Month (CAM). Take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to to share your stories, promote your work, emphasize your impact, and shout your successes. More CAM resources can be found online at <https://communityactionpartnership.com/community-action-month/>
- ▶ Search.twitter.com is a great way of locating tweets relating to particular search items that pertain to your agency and its work. Community Action Agencies might consider setting up searches related to poverty, community action, head start, weatherization, etc.
- ▶ A hashtag is a tag that allows for easy searching for tweets on particular topic areas. For example, “#poverty” or “#BeCommunityAction” are hashtags commonly found in posts related to the work of Community Action Agencies. If someone clicks on the hashtag, a list of tweets of that particular hashtag come up. You may find new profiles to follow based on your shared interests.

Best Practices

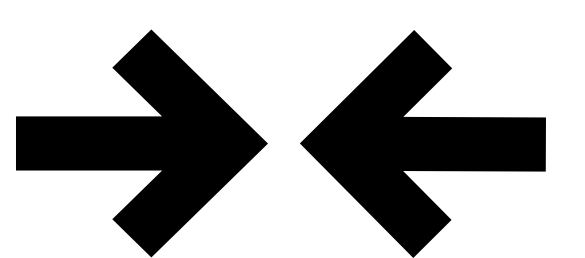
Broadcast Your Message



Due to the way Twitter connects users, it is possible for organizations with many followers to push out a message without the back-and-forth conversation of many other social mediums. Twitter also allows users to “retweet” messages verbatim, which means that your tweet can travel far beyond the confines of the group that follows your profile.



Engage with Like-Minded Organizations



Hashtags provide access to communities of interest who are discussing related topics and events. Your agency may not be connected with these other organizations or people, but through hashtags, you can tap into larger conversations and communities, keep abreast of current research and resources, and share your information with like-minded organizations.

