

# Why Do You Need Twitter?

By Lynne Constantine



**W**hen I give talks about Twitter, the question I encounter most often is “why”? Why do I need to tweet? Why is Twitter important? Why should I spend my time on it? There are around 313 million active users who could give you one reason or another. Before I can answer why *you* need Twitter, I would need to better understand your goals.

I work primarily with authors, so I’ll focus on the reason I, and many other authors, find Twitter an indispensable social media channel. First of all, did I mention 313 million users? Twitter is a virtually limitless source of opportunity and connection. Looking for a scientist to answer a research question? Send a few targeted tweets, and by the end of the day, you’ll likely have many to choose from. Are you seeking advice on finding an agent, vetting publishers, or finding a book designer? Tweet out your question and authors from all over the world will share their experience with you.

Every few months, there are literary agents who participate in Twitter pitch contests where they will favorite your tweet if they like the pitch, and you have the opportunity to send them your work. If you’re not on Twitter, you’re missing out.

Maybe you’ve been isolated in your writing room all day and just want a little socializing. Jump into a Twitter chat and join the conversation. You may end up making a few friends along the way. Gotten yet another rejection letter? Sympathy, empathy, and commiseration are in large supply when you have a community of authors on Twitter.

Have you noticed that I haven’t mentioned selling your book? That’s because Twitter is a *social* space, which means it’s for building relationships. In the long run, after you’ve gotten to know other authors, bloggers, and reviewers, you may find them retweeting your book tweets and even posting a review for you. But Twitter is the long game. Think of it like going to conferences—you wouldn’t expect to walk in your first time and have all the well-known authors rush over to speak to you. But after attending several times, and getting involved, you find yourself part of the group, receiving help with your career and later helping others. That’s what Twitter’s all about. Reciprocity. Sharing. Engaging. Participating.

I’ve made some great friends on Twitter who have given me advice, helped me with my marketing, reviewed my books, written articles on my books, and supported and encouraged me along my writing journey. I’ve even been fortunate to meet some of them in person at conferences.

Keep in mind that it does take time and strategy to build a network of followers that meet your individual goals. As with everything, you won’t become a pro overnight. But with a little sincerity and some effort, Twitter may become your favorite online place to hang out too.

For more advice on how to use Twitter more effectively, click <http://lynneconstantine.com/category/social-media/> ■

For more articles on social media and writing visit: <http://lynneconstantine.com/category/blog> and if you’d like some social media support, check out Lynne’s Twitter Package for authors: <http://bit.ly/authorpackage>.

Lynne is a coffee drinking, Twitter addicted, fiction writer always working on her next book. She is the co-author of “Circle Dance,” a family saga written with her sister, as well as two other novels to be released soon. She is the managing partner of a social media consulting firm and gives talks on the role of social media in publishing and how to establish a solid author platform. Lynne is a contributing editor to *International Thriller Writer’s* online magazine, *The Big Thrill*.