



Twitter introduction for journal editors

What is Twitter and why is it useful?

Twitter is the 280-character microblogging service for real-time information and communication. In the academic context it is particularly interesting because it is like a news broadcast in which you select your own sources: you decide for yourself whose news you want to read. You usually do this by following accounts that sound interesting. The tweets (or messages) of those accounts will then be collected in your personal stream, your timeline.

Tweets contain short messages, headlines, statements, etc., and very often they also include links to an article, blogpost, podcast, or video. If you follow interesting sources (e.g. people or organizations that share your academic interests), they will point you to interesting things. It is easy to discover new relevant articles if you choose the right people to follow. You can also use the Twitter search and look for certain words in the tweets of others. Twitter is as interesting as you make it.

Of course you can spread news yourself. The tricky thing is you must attract followers first if you want your message to be read. Attracting followers is a long-term task, but basically it is the quality of your tweets that attract followers. It is also important to be seen by interacting, joining the conversation, using keywords (hashtags), following other accounts, or by mentioning your twitter account on your website and in your email signature.

But Twitter is much more than a news service for receiving and sending information. It is a communication channel. Twitter offers a two-way connection between the journal (or better: its editors) and the readers of the journal. It is always people talking (and listening) to people. With Twitter you can disseminate information to an audience who has chosen to listen. By limiting your thoughts and ideas to 280 characters, Twitter is a quick and to-the-point form of communication.



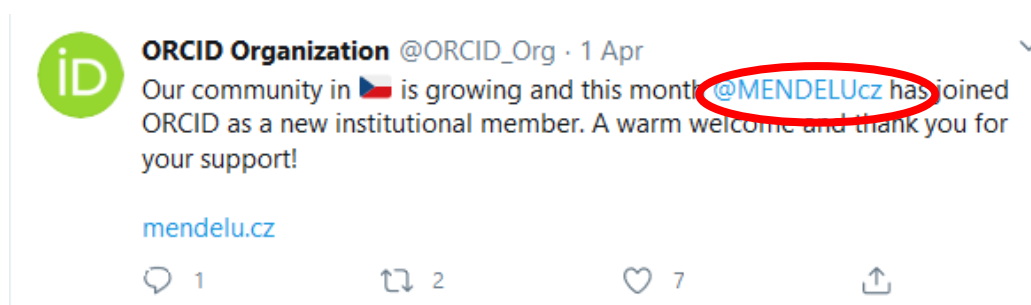
Communication

Seen from the outside, Twitter seems to be cryptic in a way as it uses its own language and has its own code of conduct. But it is not hard to join the conversation once you understood the basics.

Mentions

Include other users in your content, address them directly, or attribute sources of your content by mentioning them with their Twitter name (the Twitter handle), which begins with the @ sign. It is as important to acknowledge the source of a tweet as it is to reference an idea in a scientific article. It also helps to communicate with other accounts and to be seen. You can also directly answer tweets this way. Twitter will inform you if your account is mentioned; you can then react.

Caution: tweets that directly start with the Twitter handle can only be read by people that follow both you and the other account!



Further information can be found at <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/mentions-and-replies>

Replies

You can reply to another twitter account's tweet or join a conversation by clicking on the reply icon from the tweet. You will be notified when someone replies to your tweet or your reply. All replies can be found in the "tweets and replies" tab of your profile.



Dave Whipp @dave_whipp · 15 Mar
 @copernicus_org I received a "Delayed mail" message earlier today in response to an email I sent to one of your journals regarding a review request. Perhaps there is an issue with the server? I can forward the message with the error if you can tell me where to send it.

1 Retweet Heart Share

Copernicus @copernicus_org · 16 Mar
 Hi Dave, we're sorry for the inconveniences - we received your email in the meantime and will reply to you asap.

Reply Retweet Heart 1 Share

More detailed information can be found at <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/mentions-and-replies>.

Retweet

If you find an interesting tweet, you can retweet it to share it with your own followers.

There are different ways of retweeting:

- a) You can just send on the original tweet to your followers ("Retweet"): "You retweeted" shows that you retweeted the content from another account. You can undo the retweet by clicking again on the retweet button.

You Retweeted

Geoscience Communication @EGU_GC · 21 Apr
 New #EGUhighlights: The benefits to climate science of including early-career scientists as reviewers doi.org/10.5194/gc-3-8...

(c) Comments per person:

Category	PhD	Postdoc	Early-career academic
Unfit for submission	2	1	1
Substantive	32	10	33
Editorial	40	29	35

Time spent on the review: t/12h

8h 20min 7h 15min 6h

Retweet 5 Heart 14 Share

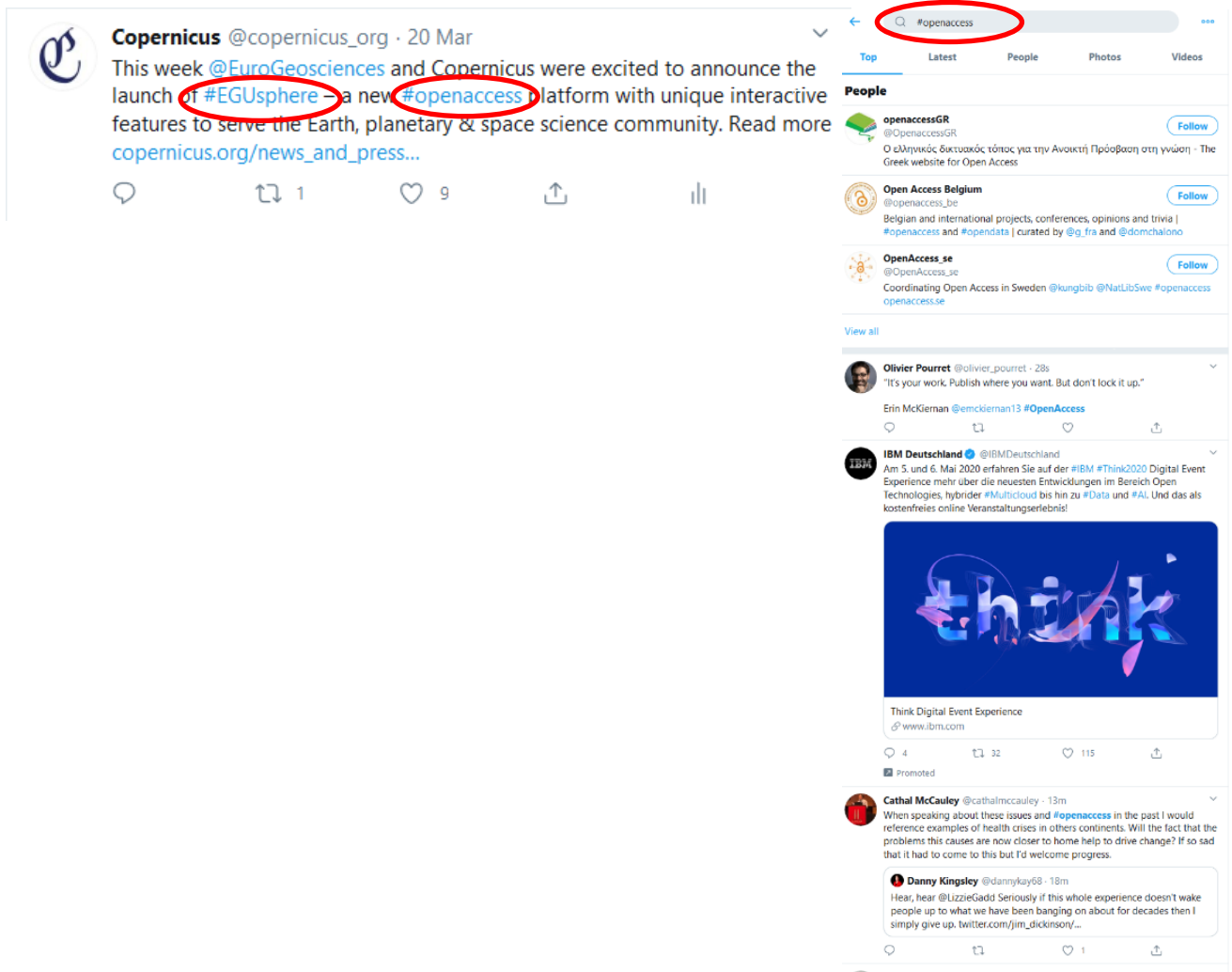


b) If you would like to add a comment when retweeting a tweet, you can use "Retweet with comment".

Further information can be found at <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/how-to-retweet>.

Hashtags

A hashtag (#) marks the keyword or topic of a tweet. If you click on a hashtag or type it into the search box, you can find all tweets with this hashtag. As you can track and find tweets on a topic that way, hashtags are a useful discovery tool. For conferences, for example, there are usually official hashtags with which all tweets about the event can be filtered and collected.





Likes

If you like a tweet, you can click on the small heart icon. You can see all tweets you liked from your account in the "Likes" tab of your profile.



Further information can be found at <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/liking-tweets-and-moments>

Direct Messages

It is possible to send a private message on Twitter (a so-called "direct message"). To send a direct message, please use the envelope icon. You can send direct messages to anyone who follows you.

More detailed information can be found at <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/direct-messages>

Analytics

What was your top tweet? How many people visited your profile? How many followers did you gain? The twitter analytics tool is useful to get an overview of the impact of your activities on twitter: <https://analytics.twitter.com/>

Possible topics

Everything that interests you as the editor can be of interest to followers of the journal, too. Here are some practical ideas on what to tweet on:

- You can use Twitter to point out any content related to the journal's research focus that you find interesting or that you think is of interest to



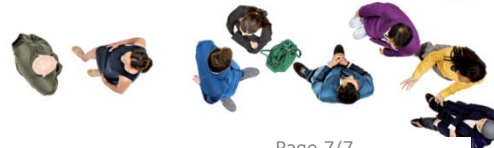
your followers. In addition to research articles this can also be news stories, interesting facts or images, blog posts, events, or job vacancies.

- New journal papers are fed automatically to the Twitter account, but you can also take up an interesting paper and highlight it again.
- If you find an interesting tweet, you can retweet it. Or you create a new tweet with your own comment on the topic and mention where you got the original link from (by adding "via @name" at the end of the tweet).
- Information on background administration of the journal can be interesting as well: e.g. new special issues, an unusually high amount of submitted papers, or welcoming a new editor. It adds a personal touch to the account (it is SOCIAL media after all).
- If you go to conferences, you can mention it beforehand and also tweet interesting aspects and insights from the event, using the official conference hashtag as well (e.g. #EGU20).

Of course, do not post any content that is unlawful, harmful, hateful, libellous, defamatory, or otherwise objectionable. Account holders are responsible for the content shared using social media. Please keep the password safe!

Please also take a moment to check the Twitter rules and policy:

<https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-rules>.



More handy tips

Even though Twitter is a “social” communication channel and you should talk to people, do not feel forced to react to everything, especially if it is provocative or you feel uncomfortable. The old rule of blogging applies on Twitter as well:

don't feed the trolls*.

*Trolls are people who are deliberately offensive online and only ask or comment in order to provoke.

Twitter is a **worldwide communication** tool. Keep in mind that your followers might live in different time zones and have their own individual online habits. It is therefore okay to repeat important messages at different times of the day (e.g. at Monday at 6 a.m., Tuesday at 2 p.m., Wednesday at 10 p.m.), but please do not bombard people with the same message over and over again and vary in your formulations.

TweetDeck is a tool that helps you to organize your timeline very effectively. You can, for example, add streams for hashtags that interest you (e.g. #geology) and display tweets that mention or interact with your account. You can also schedule tweets to be sent out automatically later on. <https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>

For further information on Twitter terminology, check the official **Twitter glossary**: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/166337-the-twitter-glossary#>

More on **Twitter** (and social media in general) **in research**:

Susan M. Bertram, Madhusudan Katti: The social biology professor. Effective strategies for social media engagement. doi: 10.4033/jee.2013.6.5.f
<http://library.queensu.ca/ojs/index.php/IEE/article/view/4607/4728>

For more **inspiration** see Nature's social media case study, a collection of stories on why and how scientists and scientific organizations use social media:
<http://www.nature.com/spoton/tag/social-media-case-study/>

Inspiring scientific social media accounts:

- European Geosciences Union (EGU): [@eurogeosciences](https://twitter.com/eurogeosciences)
- Earth Surface Dynamics (journal): [@egu_esurf](https://twitter.com/egu_esurf)
- Nature Chemistry (journal): [@NatureChemistry](https://twitter.com/NatureChemistry)
- eLife (journal): [@elife](https://twitter.com/elife)
- NASA: [@NASA](https://twitter.com/NASA)

If you have further questions, please contact Copernicus' media and communications team: media@copernicus.org