



Conversation Agent
presents

Twittertales

Stories of connections on Twitter

Introduction by Valeria Maltoni

<http://www.conversationagent.com/>

<http://twitter.com/conversationage>

“ Twitter is a tool of the moment - I thought it would be more interesting to help tell the story through those of the people who've made valuable connections via Twitter.

~INTRO~

Because so many have been quite incredulous as to the value of spending time on Twitter, instead of writing a tutorial on how to do that effectively - Twitter is a tool of the moment - I thought it would be more interesting to help tell the story through those of the people who've made valuable connections via Twitter. I put the question out in a post:

- » Did you make connections on Twitter?
- » Did the connection lead to a friendship, project, career opportunity, meaningful and purposeful new something?

Several responded by adding their connection story to the comments or as a post on their blog.

These are their stories.

Talk can and does change our lives.

Valeria

EBOOK TIPS

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This ebook is *toner friendly*. The dark backgrounds have been set to non-printing. To be safe we'd recommend you do a print preview to test this feature.

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Submitted by Michael Winn

<http://twitter.com/TallyDigitalBiz>

<http://tallydigitalbiz.com/>

“genuine connection is happening between both worlds. Passion is the key to any authentic connection.

“Here is series of Twitter status updates from Friday between myself (TallyDigitalBiz) and RickOpp whom I have never met in real life, but follow on Twitter:

1. MINT, THE DERBY, AND A NEW FRIEND

Friday, the last day of the traditional work week, was a day that connected two unlikely dots along a plane of new friendship. With my Tweetdeck open to All Friends, Tallahassee, Facebook: Friends Status, and Replies, I sat enjoying my favorite frappuccino. Wrapping up a day of client visits and new business development planning, I was pleasantly interrupted by a complete stranger.

Some argue that the use of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter threaten the depths of our human relationships and separate society's connection with the real world. Others argue that what began as a social interactive platform is slowly becoming a superficial sea of subversive status updates and covert spamming. I would offer the possibility that while those arguments have valid points, genuine connection is happening between both worlds. Passion is the key to any authentic connection.

Embarrassingly, I recently have found the delicious and refreshing taste of the Mojito. Traditionally made of five ingredients: white rum, sugar, lime, carbonated water, and mint, Mojitos are the perfect blend of fresh and exciting. My first Mojito was at 101Mint last week while waiting to see Watchmen at IMAX. I was hooked. After hitting three stores trying to find fresh mint, I had to settle for the Mojito mixer. Needless to say, my first attempt to create the sublime concoction in my kitchen was a disaster ending in a shelf bought mixer and a less than top shelf brand of rum.

Here is series of Twitter status updates from Friday between myself (TallyDigitalBiz) and RickOpp whom I have never met in real life, but follow on Twitter:

@RickOpp 2:33 PM May 1st from web: about to go on a mint run — essential for juleps for Derby Day and mojitos for post-golf @ poolside Sunday.

@TallyDigitalBiz (2:54 PM May 1st from web in reply to RickOpp):let me



“ Reaching out to shake hands, I am handed a small package of fresh mint. Stunned, I have just experienced the incredible power of connection between Twitter and real world friendships.

know where you find the mint “goods” i went to three stores and struck out, had to settle for just the mixer:

@RickOpp 3:33 PM May 1st (from TwitterBerry in reply to @TallyDigitalBiz): Tharpe Publix was out & produce guy said other Pubs may b out 2. Got last 2 pkgs @ Tharpe WinnDixie. Try calling others.

@TallyDigitalBiz (3:39 PM May 1st from TweetDeck): Enjoying free WiFi and a black and white at Starbucks on North Monroe

@RickOpp 3:46 PM MAY 1st via Direct Message Raise ur hand & wave right now.

At 3:46 PM on Friday May 1st while sitting in Starbucks on North Monroe, I hear a friendly voice ask; Are you Michael Winn? I reply, yes. Reaching out to shake hands, I am handed a small package of fresh mint. Stunned, I have just experienced the incredible power of connection between Twitter and real world friendships. RickOpp, who I personally know now as Rick Oppenheim, have a Twitter story that will be told over and over.

In less than 73 minutes, two complete strangers found a common interest. By the simple spirit of generosity and hospitality, two people now have a keystone to building something beyond Twitter updates, mint, and a 50 to 1 shot winning the Derby.

Submitted by Danny Brown

<http://twitter.com/DannyBrown>

<http://dannybrown.me/>



“ He didn’t have to; I was happy to help. But his gesture made him an instant superhero.

2. PERSONAL SUPERHEROES

Are you a hero to someone? Do you make your business superheroes to every one of your customers, or treat them as heroes? Going that extra mile can make all the difference.

I found that out last week when two people who I already respected immensely joined the ranks of superheroes.

Michael Schechter, someone I’ve connected with through Twitter yet never met personally, is a superhero. As some of you might know, I recently won a tagline competition where the prize was a Nintendo Wii. I thought it’d be a nice idea to donate it to the local sick kids hospital when it arrives later this week.

Michael knew what I was doing, so he sent me some of his own Wii games that were gathering dust at his home. As an additional gesture, he also included three pearl bracelets and a pearl necklace for my wife as a thank you for me helping him out on his blog earlier this year. (Michael is Director of Retail Marketing at Honora Pearls).

He didn’t have to; I was happy to help. But his gesture made him an instant superhero.

John Haydon is another guy I’ve connected with on Twitter, through the 12for12k charity challenge. John has come onboard and used his non-profit experience and networks to gather bloggers that have written amazing posts for our charities. His help has been a Godsend at helping to spread the word.

“ How’s your superhero status? Do you wear your cape with pride or does it need some new threads?

Submitted by Scott Hepburn
<http://twitter.com/ScottHepburn>
<http://mediaemerging.com/>

Last week, I received a little Thank You card from John in the mail, thanking me for getting him involved with 12for12k. Even though it’s me that should be thanking him for all he’s doing. And he also mentioned to say Hi to my wife and hoped she was well. John is a superhero.

Even though I know both Michael and John already, that kind of thinking would immediately make me keen to recommend them to anyone. Michael didn’t need to offer games and he certainly didn’t need to send my wife pearls, and John didn’t need to offer that personal touch.

But the fact they did makes me confident anyone using either of them will always receive amazing service.

How’s your superhero status? Do you wear your cape with pride or does it need some new threads?

Link to story: <http://dannybrown.me/2009/03/09/personal-superheroes/>

3. HOW TWITTER HELPED REWARD A SELFLESS ACT

Every once in a while, social media works...

If you haven’t heard about Arik Hanson’s Tweetathon on behalf of Sonny Gill and I, check out the post that started it all, then see what happened on Twitter. Sonny wrote an awesome “Thank You,” too.

BlogPotomac the Tweetathon generated dozens of job leads, consulting leads, freelance leads and new contacts for Sonny and I. It also generated some valuable momentum.

“ Sonny and I wanted to thank Arik for his selfless Tweetathon campaign. But how?

“ This is a company that gets social media, that recognizes the value of rewarding Arik’s generosity is far greater than the cost of a plane ticket, and that can now count me as a raving fan.

Now I have more good news: Sonny and I, along with Southwest Airlines, are sending Arik to BlogPotomac.

Sonny and I wanted to thank Arik for his selfless Tweetathon campaign. But how? We chatted last week, and then it hit us: Arik has been Tweeting for months about his desire to go to BlogPotomac.

We agreed to pick up the tab for Arik’s registration, but the real hurdle was travel from Minnesota to DC. With a little help from friends Scott Monty, Amber Naslund and Aaron Strout, I was able to connect with Christi, the real-life person behind Southwest Airlines on Twitter.

Southwest Airlines And Southwest came through...big time. This is a company that gets social media, that recognizes the value of rewarding Arik’s generosity is far greater than the cost of a plane ticket, and that can now count me as a raving fan. Thank you, Southwest Airlines!

I wish we could do more to thank everyone who participated in the Tweetathon. At the very least, I owe a huge thank you to Lisa Hoffmann, Mack Collier, Warren Sukernek, and Amy Mengel. There are literally hundreds more to thank, and you all have my eternal gratitude.

Arik Hanson — See you at BlogPotomac in June, buddy!

Link to story: <http://mediaemerging.com/2009/04/21/how-twitter-helped-reward-a-selfless-act/>

Submitted by Janet Barclay

<http://twitter.com/JanetBarclay>

<http://www.janetbarclay.com/about/>

4. MY CONNECTION STORY

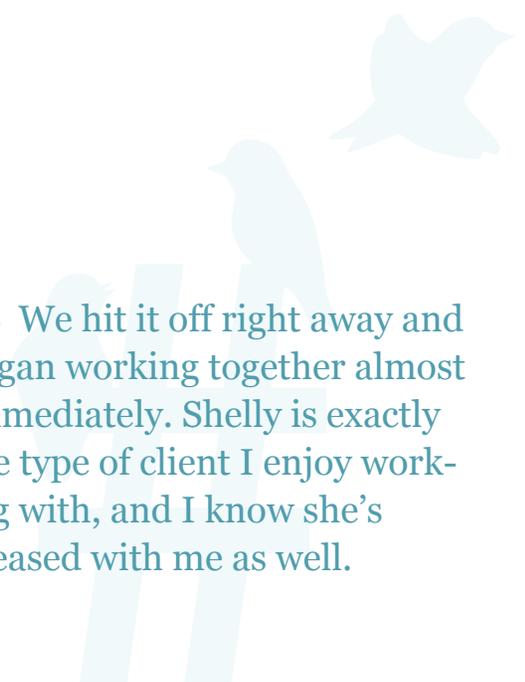
A few weeks ago I wrote about a few people I've connected through various social networking sites, and today, in response to a post in Valeria Maltoni's Conversation Agent blog, I will tell one of my own social media success stories.

This story started when I noticed that one of my Twitter friends, Sue, was a trained Organizer Coach. Since I wasn't familiar with that particular training program, I asked her about it, and we had a brief conversation about the possibility of her writing a guest post about it in the future for Your Organizing Business. One of us had to leave before the conversation was finished, so it was left on the back burner for the time being.

A couple of weeks later, I received a telephone call from a prospective new client, Shelly. She explained that she is also an Organizer Coach, and that she'd received my name from Sue. We hit it off right away and began working together almost immediately. Shelly is exactly the type of client I enjoy working with, and I know she's pleased with me as well. She can give me a general idea, and I'm able to come up with something that's exactly what she had in mind. That's what most people hope for when working with a virtual assistant, but the synergy isn't always there.

In addition, we're both focused on helping professional organizers achieve success, Shelly through her coaching services, and me through providing online marketing support, so we can see lots of potential for mutual benefits in this relationship over the long term.

In the meantime, Sue has agreed to write something about the Organizer Coach Certification Program, which will provide me with some interesting content for my blog while giving her an opportunity to promote her coaching services.



“ We hit it off right away and began working together almost immediately. Shelly is exactly the type of client I enjoy working with, and I know she's pleased with me as well.

This is just one example of the type of valuable connections I've made since I started actively using Twitter a few months ago. I've also been offered speaking engagements, books to review, link exchanges with sites of interest to the same target audience, answers to technical problems, and so much more.

In some ways, I think the fact that Twitter restricts messages to 140 characters makes it easier to approach people, because instead of sending a formal email, you can just get right to the point. Of course I would never recommend sending someone a tweet trying to sell your services, but to suggest any type of joint venture, it's perfect. People get so many messages that are self-promotional, or even outright spam, that they are genuinely delighted to receive a message that shows you're sincerely interested in getting to know them, and especially if you're offering them a chance to do something to get their own message out there.



“ Using Twitter is like any other form of networking – use it to build relationships, and you'll be remembered.

To generate ideas, go beyond the tweets and take the time to read people's profiles, and even click through to their websites when your schedule allows it. Using Twitter is like any other form of networking – use it to build relationships, and you'll be remembered. Use it to try and get sales, and you'll be avoided like the plague.

If you're interested in connecting with the people in this story, feel free to follow us on Twitter. (Sue West – <http://twitter.com/Space4U> and Shelly Anderson – <http://twitter.com/shellypocoach>)

Link to story: <http://www.janetbarclay.com/2009/08/31/my-connection-story/>

Three stories (5, 6 & 7) about relationships, opportunities and collaboration submitted by Arik Hanson.

<http://twitter.com/arikhanson>

<http://www.arikhanson.com/>



“ After our initial connection, we quickly learned we had much in common.

5. LEARNING FROM AND COLLABORATING WITH ONE OF THE BEST.

I can't recall how I met Allan Schoenberg on Twitter, but it doesn't really matter. The point is I was lucky. Allan's one of those rare people who cares far more about giving than he does about receiving. After our initial connection, we quickly learned we had much in common. We both came from B2B/financial services backgrounds. We both have a love of "giving back" and mentoring tomorrow's PR pros. And, as many on Twitter are painfully aware, we both share a love of microbrews. We've also had the opportunity to meet in person twice—at BlogPotomac in June and at BlogWell a few weeks ago. And we co-founded the B2B Voices blog, which admittedly we'd like to improve, but has been up-and-running for the last few months. I've only known Allan for about eight months, but I already consider him a trusted colleague, good friend and a mentor.

6. OPPORTUNITY, PLEASE MEET MY FRIENDS AMY AND MIKE.

I was fortunate enough to meet Amy Mengel and Mike Pilarz early in my Twitter career. Once again, two people I have a lot in common with (seeing a theme emerge here?). We talk PR, social media and corporate and agency life (I've sat in both chairs in my career). This story starts three months ago when I met Bryan Person, founder of Social Media Breakfast, for the first time (a tremendous guy, by the way). We got to chatting and it turns out, despite SMB's huge success here in Minneapolis and in other parts of the country, there are a number of prime markets without SMBs. Hmm... That got me thinking, wouldn't my friends Amy Mengel and Mike Pilarz be prime candidates to start up SMBs in their respective markets (Amy lives in Albany, N.Y. and Mike in Chicago)? So, the next time I spoke with Amy, I brought it up—why don't you start a SMB in Albany? Great leadership opportunity. Chance to meet folks from across the country. And an oppor-



“ Twitter gave us the chance to connect. And through that, we developed relationships. And through those relationships, opportunities arose. That’s the power of Twitter.

tunity to build new skills. She jumped at it. Fast forward to today: Amy’s two months in and has successfully launched SMB in Albany—all due to her work ethic, creativity and ability to take risks and learn on the fly. Almost at the same time, I floated the idea to Mike. While Chicago had a strong Social Media Club, the SMB concept really never took off in Chicago. Mike saw the opportunity and ran with it. Just a couple weeks ago, Mike hosted his first SMB. And I’m certain he’ll be a huge success in Chicago. Now, I want to be clear, I take absolutely no credit for starting these SMBs in Albany and Chicago—that’s 110 percent Amy and Mike. But, Twitter gave us the chance to connect. And through that, we developed relationships. And through those relationships, opportunities arose. That’s the power of Twitter.

7. COLLABORATING WITH A LOCAL THOUGHT LEADER.

The first time I met Rick Mahn was at a Social Media Breakfast event last year in Minneapolis. Then, after chatting a few times online, I interviewed Rick for my PR Rock Stars series—I thought Rick represented a good example of a non-traditional PR rock star, a notion of what tomorrow’s pro could look like in terms of skills and background. That allowed us to get to know each other a little more. Next thing you know, we’re chatting offline and via Skype a couple times a month. Then, we decided to form a local advisory group that gets together monthly with four other individuals. We co-founded a Twitter chat (Behind the Firewall, Thursdays at 8 p.m. CST). And we’ll be co-presenting at a MN PRSA event in late October. Now, I can’t say Twitter was the sole reason I’m collaborating and working with Rick, but I definitely think it played a key role. And you know what? I’m the better for it.

Link to story: <http://www.arikhanson.com/2009/09/01/twittertales-four-stories-about-relationships-opportunities-and-collaboration/>

Submitted by Gloria Bell

<http://twitter.com/gloriaBell>

<http://redstaplerconsulting.net/>



“ Two women that would never have met, had it not been for Twitter, have now become close friends and have brought our families back in touch after 30+ years.

“ Every day on Twitter I learn something new. Someone reaches me with information and knowledge. They open my mind and stretch my imagination.

8. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY IS ALL IT TAKES

While I have many, many Twitter tales of deep and lasting friendships and professional relationships that have developed from chance meetings on Twitter. There are a few that stand out as examples of how small and connected our world truly has become and how wide we make it when we reach out to those we encounter on Twitter.

The first story occurred shortly after I joined Twitter. I had become “pals” with a wonderful lady by the name of Kim (Haynes) Hollenshead (@kim-hollenshed) who lived in Austin (I live in Philadelphia). Kim and I had exchanged pleasantries and had some Twitter convos for a few months when she happened to Twitpic a photo of her new home. I responded that it looked a lot like my father’s house north of Austin. We chatted briefly about the area and the fact that I am originally from Texas. During our Twitter exchange and telephone calls to our respective parents, we figured out that not only were our families from the same very small town but also that her uncle had been my father’s best friend all through school. Two women that would never have met, had it not been for Twitter, have now become close friends and have brought our families back in touch after 30+ years.

Not only has Twitter opened doorways for me personally, allowing me to develop deep sincere friendships with people I would never have met, but it has also been a cornerstone of my professional development. Every day on Twitter I learn something new. Someone reaches me with information and knowledge. They open my mind and stretch my imagination. Being actively involved on Twitter led me to people like Beth Harte (@bethharte) and Annie Heckenberger (@anniema) who welcomed me with open arms into the social media world and Social Media Club Philadelphia. These generous women who took time to teach me, mentor me and eventually encourage me to start my own social media consulting practice.

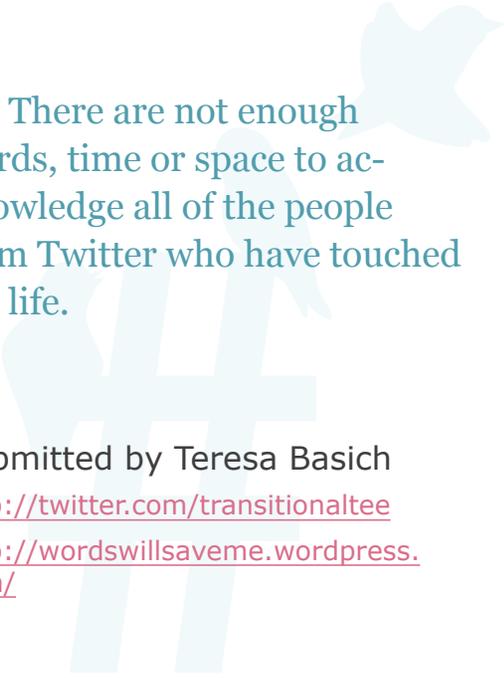


“ Twitter helped me find others who were as passionate about the fight against breast cancer as I am. From these initial connections has grown my Twitter “family”, the people I laugh, cry and share triumphs and tragedies with.

“ On February 12, 2009 Twestival Philly joined 201 other cities globally to raise \$250,000 to bring clean drinking water to third world countries.

Twitter has touched me in multiple ways, personal and professional, and it has also touched my heart and my compassion. My first couple hundred followers were the result of meeting Connie Reece (@conniereece) and Susan Reynolds (@susanreynolds) and becoming involved with the Frozen Pea Fund. Twitter helped me find others who were as passionate about the fight against breast cancer as I am. From these initial connections has grown my Twitter “family”, the people I laugh, cry and share triumphs and tragedies with. Twitter’s involvement with my philanthropic side does not end there.

I first met Melissa Thiessen (@melitami) at PodCamp Philly 2008. We shared a love of so many things, geeky and otherwise, we quickly became inseparable friends. One of things that Melissa and I share is a belief that life is about giving back. That we are not complete as human beings unless we are doing our best to help others. Twitter has allowed us to live that belief in the form of Twestival. When the announcement was made last year that they were recruiting volunteers from cities all over the globe to hold events that would raise money for charity:water, Melissa immediately stepped up to make sure that Philly was represented. Knowing me the way she does, she never even had to ask if I wanted to participate, it was a given that I would be her partner in charity. Together with a wonderful team of volunteers, we built Twestival Philadelphia. On February 12, 2009 Twestival Philly joined 201 other cities globally to raise \$250,000 to bring clean drinking water to third world countries. And we did not stop there! Twestival HQ decided not to wait another year so the Twestival cities were encouraged to choose a local charity and hold a Twestival Local event between September 9th and 13th. Cities around the globe, including Philadelphia, again brought together their communities to raise money for deserving charities. Twestival Philly’s charity was Gift of Life Family House. We helped this deserving organization raise money to build a safe, supportive affordable place for organ transplant patient families to stay.



“ There are not enough words, time or space to acknowledge all of the people from Twitter who have touched my life.

Submitted by Teresa Basich
<http://twitter.com/transitionaltee>
<http://wordswillsaveme.wordpress.com/>

“ it’s hard to believe any significant connections can come from a tool that only allows us to speak in 140-character spurts.

None of this – my friendships around the globe, new business relationships, the speed and depth at which I learn and grow from shared knowledge, the privilege of being a part of something so much larger than myself – it would not have been possible without the power and reach of Twitter. There are not enough words, time or space to acknowledge all of the people from Twitter who have touched my life. Everyone I have met, interacted with, developed relationships with, they all have a special place in my heart.

My final words are a Thank You to Valeria for collecting these stories. Showing the world what Twitter means to us. How powerful these 140 character conversations are in building meaningful, productive personal and business relationships.

Link to story: <http://redstaplerconsulting.net/2009/09/14/twitter-tales/>

9. #Twittertale? HOW ABOUT #Twittertales

As a self-proclaimed Twitter nerd I couldn’t say no to an opportunity to write about my own experience on the brevity-inducing platform, but when I started thinking about which story to write I couldn’t narrow it down to just one connection or story. So, what’s left? A whole pile of connections, a message or two, and a really big thank-you to my fellow Twitterheads:

Twitter is an odd thing when you get down to it. Before joining, it’s hard to believe any significant connections can come from a tool that only allows us to speak in 140-character spurts. I was a skeptic before I joined in January, but as time went on, and as I built some incredible relationships with people I now consider great friends, I realized the power this crazy Web interface has to bring us together. I’ve made my fair share (and then

“ Aside from the friendships I’ve made, the career opportunities that have come my way because of Twitter are unparalleled, and I don’t say that lightly.



some) of connections with people who’ve opened doors for my career and shown me more about myself than I ever thought possible from a social networking platform.

One of the first Twitterers I remember striking up a conversation with is Mari Luangrath, owner of Foiled Cupcakes in Chicago, IL. Mari and I connected over our Californian roots, her life in Chicago and my desire to move out there, and the opportunities we saw to help each other. We eventually met in May, when I decided to take my first dive into real business networking out in Chicago. Of course, the event I attended was found through Twitter. You could say the entire trip was a Tweet-Up of sorts. In the few days I was in the city I connected with Mari, Juli Barcelona, Dan Hindin, Gregg Jaffe and his wife Elise — a group we’ve lovingly dubbed the Chicago Twosse.

Aside from the friendships I’ve made, the career opportunities that have come my way because of Twitter are unparalleled, and I don’t say that lightly. Though none of these opportunities have resulted in a full-time gig (YET), I know the people behind them believe fervently in my skills and talents. A few of the most impressively supportive and confidence-inducing connections I’ve made are with Charee Klimek, Amber Naslund, Gini Dietrich, Beth Harte, DJ Waldow, and Jen Halloran.

There are so many more people I’ve had the pleasure of “meeting” through Twitter — people like Sonny Gill, Lindsay Allen, Jeremy Meyers, Lauren Fernandez, David Spinks, and Chuck Hemann — who’ve contributed greatly to my growth both professionally and personally.

This post doesn’t do any sort of justice to my Twitter network. It doesn’t show how comfortable I now feel making the jump to Chicago, knowing I’ve been able to build a group of friends I can call on once I get there.

“ how happy I am to have a group of peers to turn to for regular thought-provoking professional conversation, support in my job search, and even to just take a break from the grind and goof around for a bit.

Submitted by Caroline Di Diego

<http://twitter.com/CASUDI>

<http://www.inclinedesign.info/>

“ sadly I don't speak Italian and I felt this was key to establish a NEW relationship and obtain the customer service I expected from an old fashioned European company.

It doesn't emphasize just how privileged I feel to have the support and backing of some of the most intelligent and talented thought and business leaders around. It doesn't really convey how happy I am to have a group of peers to turn to for regular thought-provoking professional conversation, support in my job search, and even to just take a break from the grind and goof around for a bit.

This post doesn't demonstrate how much insecurity, self-doubt, and social awkwardness (I know, surprising) I've overcome by being on Twitter. But, it's a start.

Link to story: <http://wordswillsaveme.wordpress.com/2009/09/14/twitter-tale-how-about-twittertales/>

10. IT ISN'T WHAT YOU KNOW, IT'S WHO YOU KNOW ☺

Mine is a short and not very dramatic tale ~ but it demonstrates the power of our online twitter connections.

I was working on the project covered in my August post ~ Essence of Italian Design ~ however unable to get through to my contact at Marina in Italy, Donatella Consonni. In fact last year I had tried to order something & finally just gave up!

On September 23 it became absolutely necessary for me to find someone in the company who could give me the same wonderful customer service Donatella Consonni had given us in the 80's and 90's, sadly I don't speak Italian and I felt this was key to establish a NEW relationship and obtain the customer service I expected from an old fashioned European company.

“ I sent a D to Stefano Maggi on twitter. Within five minutes I got a response, here is my Skype info, call me in twenty.

“ And our only connection is twitter.

Submitted by Dirk Cajada

<http://twitter.com/fourteen40>

<http://twitter.com/ebookcraft>

I sent a D to Stefano Maggi on twitter. Within five minutes I got a response, here is my Skype info, call me in twenty. I responded~ traveling, skype not an option, let me e you with info~ ~ via email I explained my obvious dilemma in four lines, I needed someone to call and pave the way for me to obtain prompt and efficient service for the order I needed to place (they are the only company in the world where I can obtain the parts) Stefano responded to my request ~ I'll call them tomorrow during business hours. And by the time I got to my computer the next morning, the situation was resolved. in less then 24 hours, Stefano had called Marina, spoken to Donatella Consonni, found she was only working part time & only mornings. The mystery was solved ~ the connection made and we could proceed efficiently with our project, thanks to Stefano ~ @stefanomaggi going out of his way to help. And our only connection is twitter.

11. A DISCOVERY OF LIKE MINDED INDIVIDUALS

It was the perfect start to my work day: fresh coffee, a short planning session and no searching for office stationary among the kids' drawing materials. Like so many new media pros, I work from home and often work-shift at coffee shops.

Now picture a conference room; bloggers, media and top business people. I'm describing the SEACOM press event at Neotel's data centre in Johannesburg — organised to coincide with events in Kenya and Tanzania. SEACOM is a privately funded sub-sea fibre optic network, connecting south and east African countries to the world via Europe and south Asia at a whopping 1.28TB/s. SEACOM promises to bring much needed relief to bottlenecked infrastructure in the region.

Media representatives and bloggers at the events were able to experience SEACOM infrastructure first hand. Live video and audio feeds enabled connectivity between the attendees in South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya.

“ I was following the excitement on Twitter. The #seacom tagged tweets had a Tetris like urgency — Twafrica was abuzz! One Twitter user managed to capture my attention though.

“ # 1. Who is the most important person you have ever met? Richard Branson? Mick Jagger? Nelson Mandela? Sepp Blatter?

I was following the excitement on Twitter. The #seacom tagged tweets had a Tetris like urgency — Twafrica was abuzz! One Twitter user managed to capture my attention though. Arthur’s (@art2gee) tweets from the press event in Johannesburg were informative. Arthur was added to my follow list on Twitter and I made a mental note; watch this space.

Weeks later and the SEACOM excitement had subsided. A tweet by Arthur read: # The following #10tweets will make up a Tweenote presentation entitled “Ready to Serve: Lessons from the Muck”.

The Tweenote presentation follows (thank you Arthur).

1. Who is the most important person you have ever met? Richard Branson? Mick Jagger? Nelson Mandela? Sepp Blatter?

2. The most important person I’ve ever met is Aaron Mabase. I only had the privilege of meeting him once.

3. He boomed out: “Welcome to my office!” The walls and floors of his office gleamed white. He watched to see if I approved.

4. I sure did. Aaron’s “office” at departures of O.R. Tambo International was the cleanest airport toilet I’ve ever seen.

5. Aaron was intensely proud of his job. One of the most menial in the world. But he knows: few people improve more lives.

6. It’s the single job in a major building that has the most immediate impact on the quality of experience of a building.

7. Aaron isn’t unique. Themba Dlamini at Arrivals has the same welcome - and pride. Perhaps all the airport cleaners do.

“ Bet you thought: brilliant! I did; so much so that I met with Arthur for coffee.

“ The power of Twitter and social media lies in the discovery of like minded individuals.

8. I also come across the same pride in toilets at Shell and Caltex “one-stops” that dot SA’s major highways.

9. Do their CEOs have any idea of the importance of Aaron and co? Not only in their work but in their example?

10. If pride exists in the muck of the most menial of jobs, what excuse do you have not to give customers a good attitude?

Bet you thought: brilliant! I did; so much so that I met with Arthur for coffee. From our short meeting, I discovered a true gentleman; perceptive, helpful and surprisingly open to collaboration. Professionally, Arthur is an award-winning I.T. journalist, published author and successful businessman. We’re collaborating on a project; an older book by Arthur, *The Rabbit in the Thorn Tree*, is out of print and he has kindly agreed to us designing the ebook version. The ebook will appear as featured work on ebook-craft.com; a new brand space dedicated to our work designing ebooks.

The power of Twitter and social media lies in the discovery of like minded individuals.

Happy Birthday ConversationAgent; 3 years, 945 posts and counting! Thank you Valeria.

Link to Arthur’s Tweenote presentation: http://thebigchange.com/lessons_from_the_muck/



INFORMATION

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