

Twitter 201

April 2011

Advanced Twitter tip: Building a target list

Step 1: Create a new Twitter account

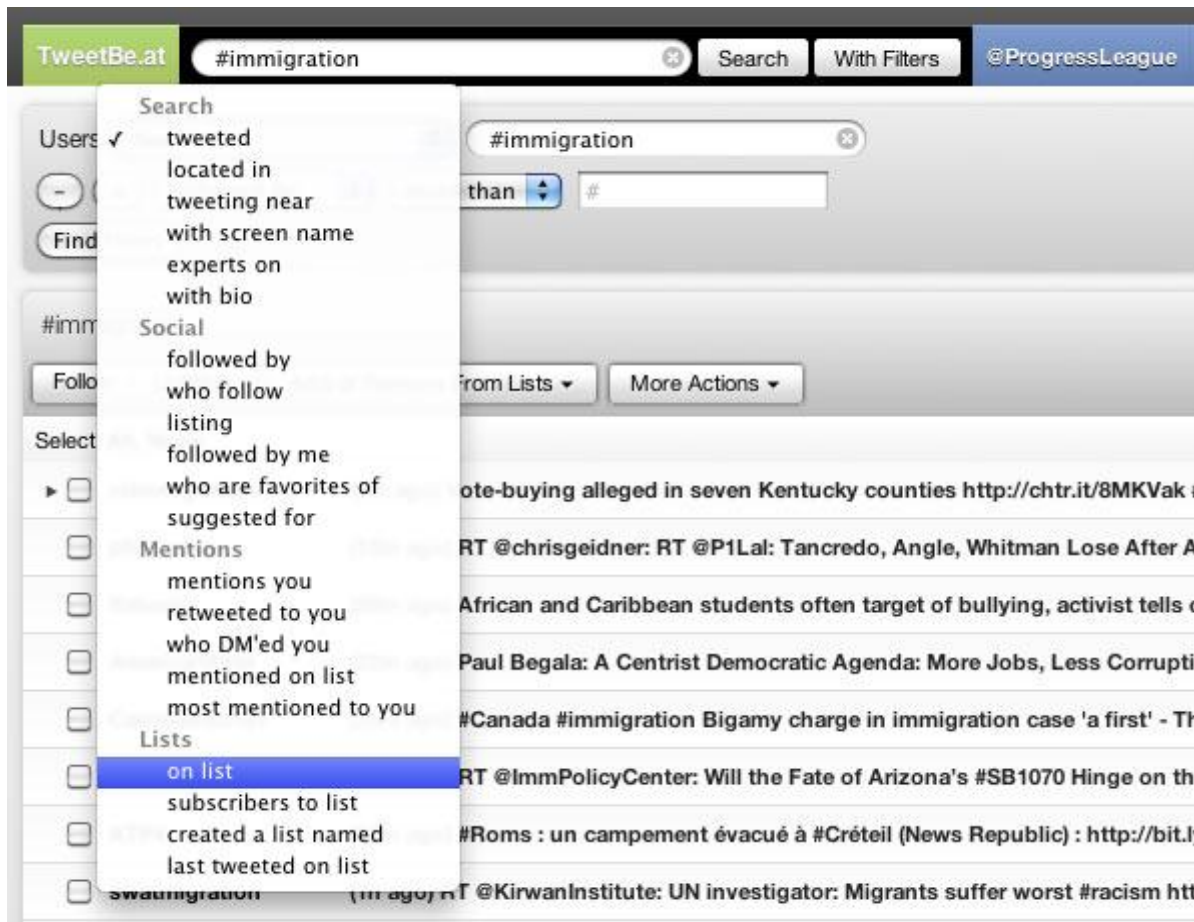
Because Twitter limits the number of lists you can create per account, you'll need to set up a new account that will serve as a reservoir to create and store the lists that you'll be creating (Note: If you're only creating a few lists, you can disregard this initial step, but for the purpose of this project it's best to use a dedicated account):

- Create a new Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/signup>). Tip: If you don't have a spare email address, and want to avoid the hassle of creating a new one, you can insert or omit periods from your gmail address.

Step 2: Starting with [TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at)

[Tweetbe.at](http://tweetbe.at) is Twitter's best kept secret. It's a free, little-known tool that is extraordinarily powerful, and lets you build microtargeted lists in a matter of seconds (you can also use it to rapidly build your Twitter following, but that's another memo altogether).

- Go to <http://tweetbe.at> and link "connect to my Twitter account." In the pop-up, type in the username and password for the new Twitter account that you've just activated, and click "Allow."
- Once you're connected, click the "With Filters" button next to the "Search" bar and button. In the drop down box, you'll see that you can find users by a number of parameters:



Step 3a: Use TweetBe.at to find users of a particular word or hashtag, by bio, or "Expertise"

The purpose of this step is to find people who are passionate about a particular issue.

Words and Hashtags

To find people using a particular word or hashtag, you can simply enter that word or hashtag into the top search bar and hit enter. You'll need to know beforehand what to search for. To do this, think about what terms and hashtags progressives passionate about a particular cause might use. Often, community hashtags are the best way to go, but you may not know what they are if you're not familiar with the issue.

The easiest way to find out which hashtags are commonly used is to consult the TweetDeck Directory (<http://www.tweetdeck.com/directory/taxonomy/politics-causes/#directory>). The "Immigration Reform" section, for example, yields the following:

Immigration Reform

1-15

16-30

31-45

46-60

61-75

76-90

91-105

106-117

 <p>Immigration 62 following 134 followers 308.1 tweets/day</p> <p>about arizona . immigrant . #toot . uscis . law . reform . bill . #dwn . #legalizeaz . #ri4a</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>	 <p>DREAM Act Students 160 following 109 followers 409.1 tweets/day</p> <p>about #dreamact . #immigration . #ri4a . reform . #todreams . undocumented . immigrant . #legalizeaz . arizona . #sb1070</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>	 <p>immigrantrights 267 following 70 followers 1207.9 tweets/day</p> <p>about #immigration . #ri4a . reform . #p2 . immigrant . law . immigrants . obama . arizona . #dreamact</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>
 <p>Immigration 102 following 30 followers 596.3 tweets/day</p> <p>about #ri4a . reform . immigrant . #p2 . law . arizona . immigrants . #dreamact . obama . bill</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>	 <p>latinos 146 following 26 followers 1645.9 tweets/day</p> <p>about #latism . #immigration . #ri4a . latino . gracias . arizona . #dreamact . reform . law . hispanic</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>	 <p>immigrantrights 214 following 23 followers 813.6 tweets/day</p> <p>about #immigration . #ri4a . reform . #p2 . #dreamact . immigrants . immigrant . dobbs . free . napolitano . #dwn</p> <p>+ Twitter List</p>

Based on this initial research, it's worth investigating hashtags like #dreamact, #ri4a, and others. Note that the key here is to find hashtags that *progressives* commonly use. #dreamact yields better results than #immigration, as many using the latter are speaking out against reform.

Once you've identified a few commonly used community hashtags (such as #ri4a and #dreamact for immigration reform activists, or #noh8 and #dadt for gay rights activists) use those as search terms in [TweetBe.at](https://www.tweetbe.at). Remember to click the "Older" button in the top or bottom right corner to view additional results.

Bio

The latest version of [TweetBe.at](https://www.tweetbe.at) allows you to identify users by words used in their profile text (i.e. bio). With this method, you might consider thinking of terms that one would use to signify identities or affinities that tend to be progressive (i.e. "quaker" or "blogger" or "vegan" or "environmentalist"). Note that many users also identify with

particular issues, so don't merely reduce this to demography (e.g. "immigration policy work").

Experts

[TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at) now allows users to identify so-called "experts." The website does not provide documentation about how this category is defined vis-a-vis Twitter, but it seems to work particularly well at identifying high-profile activists and organizations. For example: <http://tweetbe.at/#experts:@environment> or <http://tweetbe.at/#experts:@feminism>

Step 3b: Use [TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at) to cull existing lists

If you aren't starting your list from scratch, you can also use [TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at) to cull and compile aggregate "master lists" from any that you happen to come across or have already begun working on. For example, say you're developing an immigration list and you've found the 160-member strong "dream-act-students" list created by the user @DreamAct. With [TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at), you can "mine" that list, copy it outright, or merge it with another list (say the "immigration-issues" list curated by CAPAction).

To view users who are on a particular list, first identify the URL (e.g. <http://twitter.com/DreamAct/dream-act-students>). Copy it. Select "on list" from the drop down, and then paste the URL into the adjoining text box. Make sure to omit the "<http://twitter.com/>" part of the address:



The results should look like this: <http://tweetbe.at/#list:@DreamAct/dream-act-students>

Step 4: Building your list of activists

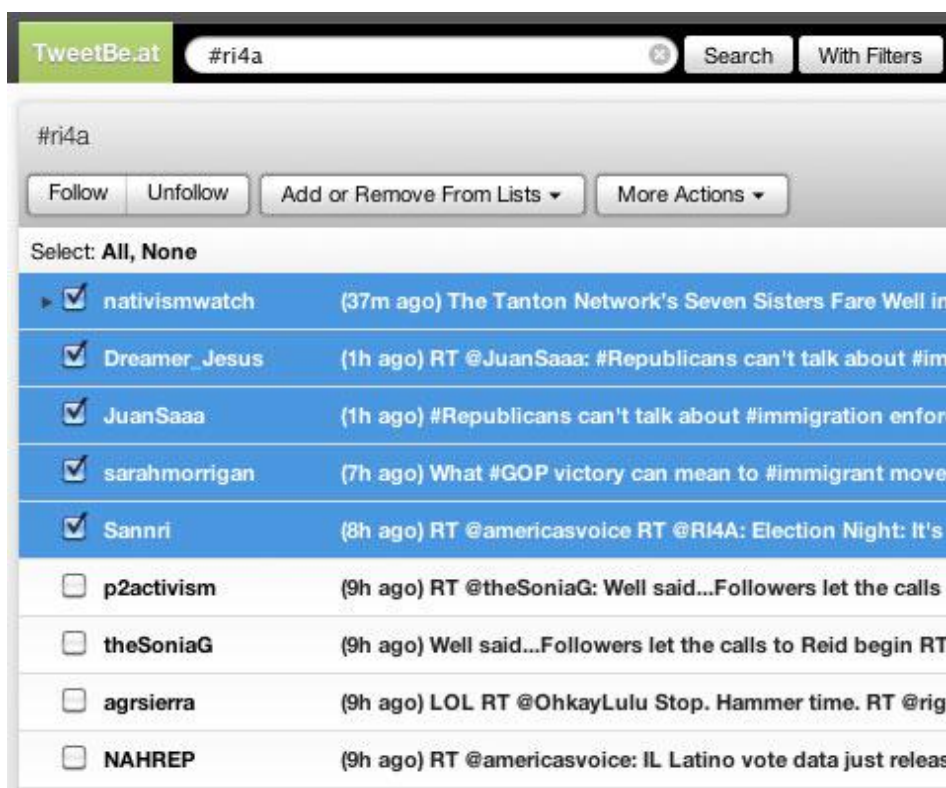
After (or before) using one of the above techniques to identify potential issue activists, you will need to create your own list of the highest quality prospects. You can, of course, do this directly from Twitter, TweetDeck, or elsewhere, but [TweetBe.at](http://tweetbe.at) streamlines this process: just click on the "More Actions" button and select "create new list" from the drop-down menu. At this stage, each list will be issue specific, so name it accordingly (e.g. "immigration reformers"). Once you have your list created, you're ready to begin.

Using whatever method above you've found most fruitful at identifying potential recruits, you can begin to populate your list with as much selectivity as you like. Remember though: at this stage your objective is not to identify influencers, but to identify users who are a) progressive, and b)

passionate about the particular issue you are working on. In other words, those should be your only criteria.

As emphasized previously, this is where picking the right index words (and search parameters) matter. If you simply search for #immigration, [TweetBe.at](#) will return a mixed list with many conservatives. However, if you search for #ri4a (<http://tweetbe.at/##ri4a>)—a positively framed community acronym—you'll find yourself with a list of users who are by and large progressive activists.

At this point, you can either hand select users to add to your list by clicking the check box next to individual users, or you can simply use the "Select: All" button above the first user. Aside from the "last tweet" info for each result, you can click on a particular user to get a more detailed impression, although you do not need to spend much time at this point on each individual user. Don't be conservative about adding people to the list, as there will be another review sweep later. Again, note that you can always click the "Older" link on the right to get more results (and you may need to if you've microtargeted your search).



Once you've selected and highlighted the users you'd like to add, click the "Add or Remove From Lists" button, and click the appropriate list. You may have to wait a couple of minutes for [TweetBe.at](#) to process the request, if you're adding a large number of users (you will see a green pop-up indicating this).

Repeat this process using a variety of the above techniques with whatever search terms and parameters you think might yield additional users. Continue until you've compiled a list of several hundred users and have reached a point of diminishing returns, or just repeat until you reach 500 users -- the current maximum per list.

Step 5: Identifying influencers

Once you've amassed a list of progressive, issue-specific activists, the next step is to identify the most influential among them. [TweetBe.at](#) does not currently provide a function to do this systematically or objectively, but the HootSuite tool does.

Using HootSuite

- Go to <https://hootsuite.com/signup?planId=1> and create a free account. Once logged in, click the "Connect with Twitter" button on the welcome screen. Connect the username you have been using in [TweetBe.at](#) to create lists to the account when prompted.
- Now, click on the owl icon in the top left corner (next to the "Compose message" box), and "Contacts" from the drop down. In the "Lists:" drop down (on the left), click the name of your Twitter account (i.e. ProgressLeague) and wait a moment for the lists below it to load. You should see a list of the lists that you created previously. Select the appropriate one, and wait for the page to populate with users:

Profile Picture	Name	Handle	Following	Followers	Klout
	We Are America	@americastories	118	44	5
	Kara D. Ryan	@HealthyKara	487	348	--
	Victor Landa	@vlanda	580	425	15
	Lola Santiago	@lolasanti	159	77	5
	Elianne Ramos	@ergeekgoddess	10,217	9,293	56
	Yolanda Peralta	@YolandaPeralta	383	327	--
	Ichtaca Toltecati	@X1c4n0	33	37	--

Klout

On the right-hand side, you will see that many users (typically those with a substantial number of followers) have been scored by Klout and been given a numerical score based on their influence on Twitter. Klout is a more reliable measure of influence than

mere number of "followers," as it uses network and discourse analyses to gauge how engaged one is with their followers (and vice versa), the amplification probability and network "velocity" of one's tweets, and the influence of one's followers. The Klout score represented in HootSuite is a composite that reflects these measures. As suggested, a highly-engaged and well-positioned user with relatively few followers (e.g. several hundred) can have more influence on Twitter than a user with tens of thousands. Klout allows us to identify who is truly influential.

At this point, you'll need to create a culled list of issue-specific influencers for the issue you're working on (alternatively, you can just remove people and distill the current list, but this actually takes longer). You can create another list directly in HootSuite through a rather roundabout process (follow the instructions here: <http://help.hootsuite.com/entries/121901-how-to-create-a-new-twitter-list-within-hootsuite>) or simply navigate back to TweetBe.at and do it there. Once you have your secondary list created (e.g. "immigration-influencers"), go back to the HootSuite window displaying the contacts from the initial list (the list you created in TweetBe.at with several hundred users).

Now, scroll through page and find users with relatively high Klout scores and drag their picture to the new list to add them to it (Note that you have to drop their profile picture onto the icon next to the list name). Although Klout is a strong indicator of influence, you'll need to use judgment about who to include: someone who appears to be extremely passionate, but less influential than most, might still be worth including. Depending on how comprehensive you ultimately want your "influencer" list to be, you should decide on soft thresholds for inclusion, for example, you might want to include all users who have a Klout score over 20 -- which is indicative of fairly high influence.

You will also need to skim through and manually gauge the many users who are missing Klout scores. For example, you might, as a general rule, include users with more than, say, 3,000 followers. Click through to the next page and repeat the process of identifying influencers and adding them to the "influencer" list. Repeat until you've reached the last page, click on the immigration-influencers list, and view your final product: a list of the most influential immigration rights activists (and organizations) on Twitter:

Viewing members from @ProgressLeague/immigration-influencers

	americasvoice @americasvoice DC Joined Sep 15 2008 3 tweets per day RT @Flavia_Isabel #dreamact @VivaLatino: Con la Vista al Voto : In NV That Latins Vote Worked Out Better... http://bit.ly/aZf3Eh #Wa #p2		Following 1,337	Followers 2,907	Klout 34
	Healthcare Activists @singlepayer Joined Aug 17 2008 30 tweets per day @cspanw Reverse 'Citizens United' @spooney35 @jackhuffon @cspanw @mnrbc #p2 #cut @maddowblog @kathobermann @chrismatthews #decision2010		Following 104	Followers 1,878	Klout 50
	Cheryl Contee @ch3ryl San Francisco, CA, USA Joined Apr 04 2007 3 tweets per day phones r ringin off the hook: special hotline for reporting voting problems & intimidation in SC: 800-841-1817 - pls RT		Following 966	Followers 3,157	Klout 27
	Jackie Mahendra @jaxsun dc - world Joined Jul 31 2007 ~1 tweet per day RT @brianbeutler: Whitmanfreude		Following 540	Followers 803	Klout 19
	Lea Reiter @leareiter SoCal Joined Mar 28 2009 6 tweets per day @PresentsOrg Let's see if Reid does something for the Latinos who saved his political life.		Following 763	Followers 571	Klout 33
	OneAmerica @weareoneamerica Seattle, Washington Joined Jun 12 2009 3 tweets per day Drop your ballot in the mail today! Voting info available in several languages on WA Sec'y of State website http://bit.ly/9R0gO		Following 1,538	Followers 1,470	Klout 33

Next Steps: Influencer Insights and Outreach

At this point, your ultimate objective should be outreach. If you have a subscription to HootSuite's premium service, you can click on a user, and then click the "Insight" tab to view personal information (including other cross-registered social networks):

whomeynot (whomeynot) [X]

Bio | Timeline | Mentions | Favorites | Insight

Tony Booe

Raleigh, North Carolina, United States

Photos:




Age: 38
Gender: Male

Occupations:

- Store Sales Manager (Nine West)
- Member Action Program... (SEANC)
- (SEANC)
- Non-profit (State Employees Association of NC)

Social Networks and sites:

 bebo.com	http://www.bebo.com/Profile...
 facebook.com	http://www.facebook.com/ton...
 flickr.com	http://www.flickr.com/peopl...
 friendster.com	http://profiles.friendster....
 livejournal.com	http://whomeynot.livejourna...
 myspace.com	http://www.myspace.com/whom..
 twitter.com	http://twitter.com/whomeynot

You can also load this list into TweetBe.at, and mass follow each influencer with the account that you are working to build up.