Above the Influence: How I Grew My Twitter Following

One of my goals as a journalist is to get my work out to the most people I can. In order to expand my influence, it's important for me to analyze my followers and tweets to determine which messages resonate with people. So, this is my analysis of the last 91 days of Tweeting.

Part 1: Influence

At the start of the class, I had 97 followers on my professional social media account that I had started in September of 2017. I decided to tweet from the account @jeffersonfenner for this class. From August 29th to November 28th, my account grew to 128 followers, an increase of 31.9%.

Many of my followers were fellow Syracuse students or random accounts associated with topics I was tweeting about. However, I did make some interesting pick ups in terms of relatively famous and verified people.

https://imgur.com/EeMciZq

I'm not sure why this person decided to follow me, however, we have six shared followers, so it's possible he found me through there.

https://imgur.com/k00TFrK

Mr. Scholten was the Democratic candidate for Iowa's 4th Congressional District running against embattled Republican Rep. Steve King. I work for CitrusTV and did a comprehensive coverage of 25 house races to watch and included his race in my list. I tweeted out my work and I imagine he followed me on Election Day.

https://imgur.com/ei8InmL

Jill Konopka was my favorite reporter from back home in Connecticut. She recently moved to Albany after working in the Nutmeg State for ten years. I tweeted out a thank you to her, and she liked my tweet, replied, and followed me back.

https://imgur.com/kvy2aPu

Living in Connecticut has made me a big-time UConn Huskies basketball fan (even while I'm still here in Syracuse). Chris Smith played at UConn from 1988-1992 and became the school's all time leading scorer before eventually getting drafted to the Minnesota Timberwolves. I followed him while watching a UConn game and he followed me back the next day.

I found that most of my followers found me through similar interests, topics, and hashtags . In order to grow my following in the future, I have to continue with these methods. Times where I didn't gain any followers were when I wasn't overly active on my account, so I have to make sure to continue to tweet in order to get a larger influence.

Part 2: Execution

Each of the following tweets are ranked on a scale from 1-10 based on number of impressions. For my top ten tweets, my average number of impressions was 585.8; my average number of engagements was 21.1 and my average engagement rate was 6.5

1. **A Bavarian Reply:**

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1050043587289853953

I replied to the account for FC Bayern Munich, my favorite soccer team and one of the most popular clubs in the world. After the team had a string of losses, I made this reply which garnered 1700 impressions. This was the most viewed tweet I put out this semester.

2. Tweets for a Cause:

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1062531024154959872

This tweet got 1678 impressions and eight engagements. This tweet was sent out during the height of the fires and the hashtags I used seemed to help increase my presence. I believe the biggest reason why this tweet was popular was because I tagged Charity Navigator, a website which ranks charities based on their trustworthiness. The account liked my tweet and replied with a link to promote their website, so we both got the engagement we needed.

3. The Buzz about Buzzfeed:

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1063105489922334721

The NHBuzzfeed drop-in class was a popular event at Newhouse that happened in the middle of the school day. Not only was my target audience all engaged with the hashtag, but the event itself was heavily focused on social media. The tweet garnered 484 impressions, two likes, 25 engagements, and an engagement rate of 5.2%.

4. Sweet Victory:

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1056985573007745027

I was the member of the wining team for our In Class Engagement challenge. To celebrate our victory, I posted this picture of Ally holding up our trophy. While this picture only got 430 impressions, it beat my all of my other tweets in likes (7), engagements (64) and engagement rate (14.9%).

5. Survey Says...:

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1036746357107773442

When asking people how Prof. Grygiel is spending *their* Labor Day (sorry), they have a lot of interesting responses. As you can see, chillaxing won the hearts of the people, while I won 387 impressions, 42 engagements and a 10.9% engagement rate.

6. The Wheels on the Bus

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1042432622331351041

I took a Twitter video centering around my morning commute to campus. The hashtags #syracuse and #morningcommute might have helped push this video up to 25 views and 378 impressions, while people clicking on the video helped get me to 14 engagements.

7. We're Doing it Live

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1052586663766036480

This was a simple promotion for a show that I work on with my fellow classmate Ally Heath. The show promotion got 3 likes, 307 impressions and 20 engagements for a rate of 6.5%

8. A Dog's Tale

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1040275940725731328

This was a thread tweet about the time I bought a soda for former UConn Huskies Women's Basketball player Kaleena Mosqueda-Lewis. I posted this tweet the night after her team, the Seattle Storm, won the WNBA championship.

The initial tweet only got one like, 197 impressions, and six engagements for a 3% engagement rate, which is why it is 8th on this list. However, when taking into account all three tweets in the thread, I got four likes, 487 impressions, and 18 engagements for a 3.7% engagement rate. The jump in impressions would put the whole thread 3rd on this list, however I'm only choosing to count

the initial tweet for ranking purposes.

9. Mr. Fenner Goes to Albany

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1051857841315811328

This tweet was timely, as we were less than a month away from the Midterm Elections. While this tweet did not stand out for its impressions (160), the use of the hashtags #MidtermElections2018 and #Election2018 helped bring in 18 engagements for an above average engagement rate of 8.1%.

10. The Devil Wears Hair Extensions

https://twitter.com/jeffersonfenner/status/1056980166877024256

Finally, I put this tweet on this list due to its high engagement rate. Like the tweet in the number 4 slot, this was posted during the In Class Engagement event. The tweet only got 137 impressions, but it received 17 engagements for a rate of 12.4%, so the lack of views helped increase that statistic.

Summary

Overall, I learned that becoming an influencer on Twitter is all about what you put into it. By creating smart, relatable, and timely content, you are more likely to reach a wide audience. By taking this course, I realized I can promote my content in a variety of different ways, through use of popular and relatable hashtags, or incorporating elements like polls and media into my posts. By going the extra mile, I can gain the views and engagement I want and my social media accounts will thank me for it.