

Using Twitter to grow your small and medium-sized business

By [Christopher Smith](#)

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Twitter has announced the launch of an account dedicated to helping small and medium-sized businesses in South Africa. The account will tweet exclusive news and suggestions about using Twitter for business.

This is an indication of how Twitter sees small business in South Africa and the importance of the local market.



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A recent Twitter survey in the US and UK showed that 72% of people are more likely to make a future purchase from an SME after they follow or interact with the business on Twitter. The survey also sees an increase (30%) in people who are likely to recommend buying for the same reason.

Why do recommendations matter? Because they are credible user recommendations and not advertising hype. They drive traffic: 86% of respondents said they are more likely to visit an SME if a friend recommends them.

Without doubt, this is where 'advertising' is leading. People want to know whether a product or service meets its promises. And it is now possible to find that out on social media.

Benefit: Not only can followers turn into business customers, they can also help spread the word about your products and services.

1. Followers feel an emotional connection to SMEs

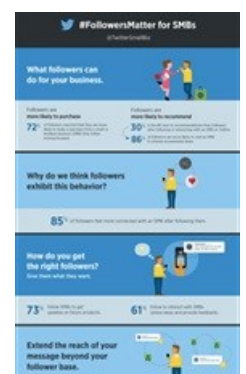
Most people (85%) also say that they feel more connected to an SME by following them. This may explain why followers of SMEs are more likely to purchase from and recommend them.

Benefit: Twitter helps SMEs connect with new and existing customers in feel-good ways. The recommendation is that you thank your followers for their support with special offers only available to Twitter users.

2. Followers want to be in the know and offer feedback

A common reason for people following SMEs is to receive updates on future products (73%). But they also want to do more than just consume information on Twitter; they want to share ideas and get feedback through interactions (61%). As an SME, these may be the very same reasons you decided to use Twitter for your business in the first place.

Benefit: Continue connections with current followers and attract new ones by giving them what they want. Invite followers to share their ideas by asking questions and respond to them when they offer feedback. Satisfy curiosity about new products by offering sneak peeks exclusively on Twitter.



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3. Marketing with Twitter helps you reach more customers

One-third (34%) of respondents said they have interacted with an SME after seeing an advert that included the business's Twitter handle. People who see a promoted tweet from an SME that relates to their interests or needs are also more likely (32%) to visit that business.

Benefit: Twitter Ads can help you extend the reach of your messages beyond your current follower base and find others who are also interested in your business.

The Twitter study confirms that people want to hear from and interact with SMEs on Twitter. If you invite ideas from your followers, acknowledge and respond to their feedback and inform them about new offerings, they will be more likely to help you grow your business through purchases and recommendations.

ABOUT CHRISTOPHER SMITH

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