



How to better promote your physical activities and sports events on Twitter

Toolkit

Introduction

Getting Disabled people interested and involved in physical activity and sport can be challenging. Many Disabled people have never been encouraged to engage in physical activities before and do not feel it is for them.

The internet, and especially social media, offer a wide range of tools and services that can help you to encourage Disabled people to participate in your physical activity and sports events.

Twitter is for example a very powerful platform you can use to reach them and support your work in this area.

But with almost all organisations now using Twitter, how do you ensure that your calls to encourage Disabled people to get involved are being heard? How do you effectively convince your audience to engage with you and participate in your activities and events?

This toolkit is for anyone already using Twitter and who would like to use it better. It is particularly useful for organisations not normally active in this field, but starting to organise and promote physical activities and sport events.

The objective of this **toolkit** is to give you usable and practical tools and ideas to empower you in using Twitter. It works like a step-by-step guide, that will help you improve your use of Twitter and better promote your activities and events. It is a toolkit and we encourage you to complete all the parts as indicated.

Why should you use Twitter

1. Nearly 14 million people in the UK use Twitter on at least a monthly basis: That is a lot of people you could reach
2. You can communicate with lots of interesting people: celebrities, local and national organisations, politicians, journalists. Twitter is meant not for friends and family but for people you actually want to communicate with. You can follow anyone and anyone can follow you. There are lots of influencers who could potentially help you promote your events
3. Twitter helps you to reach people who are not following you, but who could be interested in your activities: the search option and hashtags are very powerful tools if you try to target people according to their interests
4. Twitter is great for breaking news and to comment on events happening live. You can for example tweet during events such as the Paralympic Games or the International Day of Disabled People, and reach people who may potentially be interested in your events
5. Your funder(s) is(are) probably on the platform and Twitter is a powerful way to show them that you are doing great work (don't forget to tag them in your tweets)
6. It's a great tool to build your reputation as a leader in a specific sector (like sport), even if you are a small organisation
7. Finally, it's simple. You only have 280 characters to say what you want to say in a tweet. This means people are forced to get to the point quickly
8. It is free

Planning your strategy on Twitter

This first step is to think strategically about the way you will use Twitter.

What is(are) your objective(s)

There are many reasons why you may want to use Twitter:

- Promote your activities, a campaign or an event
- Raise awareness on a specific issue/campaign
- Support people

→ Complete the box on page 5. Try to be specific. For example: “I want to attract participants for our next walking group session”.

Who is your target group

It is important to have a clear idea about who you want to target. Please note that even if your event is open to anyone, it is always useful to define a main target group. It will help you to write a more relevant message and select relevant pictures which will better attract the attention of potential participants.

So take some time to define their profile: Is it a pan-impairment event? How old should the participants be? Is your event only open to those living in your borough?

→ Complete the second box. You may want to write something like “I want to primarily attract wheelchair users from Wandsworth, Merton and Lambeth. No age/gender restriction”.

If you have different targets then put them in order of importance.

Who is responsible for tweeting

This may sound illogical but too many organisations do not have a specific person responsible for Twitter. Someone needs to be in charge. If you really need two people to run your Twitter account, make sure that they clearly know when they are responsible. This will help to avoid miscommunications and inconsistent use of Twitter.

My strategy

Please fill in the different boxes:

My objective(s):

My target group(s):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Name of the person responsible:

When and how often to tweet?

How to measure success?

When and how often will you tweet

To define when you should tweet, think about when your audience is active on Twitter. For example, there is a difference between individuals and professionals. If you are targeting professionals, then it is better to tweet during working hours (10-5), Monday to Friday. On the other hand, tweet in the morning, at lunch time, after work and during the weekend if you are targeting individuals.

Web tools such as FollowerWonk (<https://moz.com/followerwonk/>) can help you study your followers and understand when they are most active.

On Twitter there are no limits on how often you should tweet. Try to tweet at least 3-5 times a day. If you're very limited by time, try to tweet at least once a day.

How do you measure success

There are different types of data you could use to measure the success of your strategy:

- Look at the number of retweets and likes if your only objective is to increase your visibility and reach new people
- Look at the number of clicks, visits to your website or number of bookings, if your objective is to increase the number of beneficiaries or get more participants



Engaging with your followers

Engaging with followers is important, if you want them to take part in your events. We want them to like us, trust us and interact with us.

Never tweet just to tweet, but tweet for people, thinking about them and what interests them.

In order to be successful on Twitter you need to keep in mind not only your objectives and targets, but also what Twitter is about and why people are using it.

People do not use social media to find products or services. If they want to do so they will directly use Google or another search engine to find a specific website. The main reasons for people to use Twitter are:

- To connect with interesting people/organisations/businesses and to share their opinions
- To inform themselves
- And most importantly, to entertain themselves: many people just connect to social media because they are bored and want to pass the time

Therefore it would be wrong to only promote your events and services. You first need to attract people's interest before promoting anything. You need to grab their attention and build your reputation.

Build your reputation

Building your reputation is essential, if you want to promote a sport event. It is even more important if your background is not in sport. You will have to work even harder to convince people that you can organise physical activity and sports sessions that will interest and benefit them.

1) Build people's interest.

You need to spend most of your time convincing people that your content is worth following. You need to prove to them that you can publish interesting and relevant content, and that it's not all about promotion. Therefore, the great majority of your tweets should be about building people's interest. In fact out of five tweets, four should be about building their interest, and only one promoting your events.

2) Build people's understanding about who you are.

It's important that people understand who you are: what is your field of work, your cause and values; and what services you provide. You need to look like an expert in the field you are promoting; speak about the benefits of your activities/events; and share your opinion on related news. If you want to build your reputation around sport you need to publish more content about it.

3) Build people's trust in you.

You need to answer the question "Why should I trust your organisation to offer me a positive experience?". Even if your event is free, you need to convince people that you can organise quality events, which will benefit them and they will enjoy. To achieve this, publish testimonies from participants who benefited from your previous events.

Publish more regularly

It is important to publish regularly on Twitter if you want more visibility.

Your content strategy

It is always useful to take some time to think about the kind of content and subjects you should tweet about in order to attract people's interest and effectively promote your activities and events.

What to tweet about

Here are some examples of types of content you could tweet about:

- Tips and advice on how to get more active
- Publish interesting facts, news and information about sport
- Talk about what you do (activities, events, campaigns)
- Talk about your cause rather than your organisation or partnership: people only care about your cause!
- Talk about services you can provide to people
- Talk about the benefits and impacts that your events/sessions will have on participants or - even better - show the impact your previous events had on participants

Create your content strategy

Regularity is key, if you want to make sure that your message is getting through. Planning your content in advance can help you achieve this regularity, ensuring that you are speaking about all the aspects of your work.

→ Create a list of subjects you could tweet about every day (or every week if you are really struggling with time).

Those subjects could be based on the type of tweets. For examples:

- One testimony from previous participants
- One news item about sport
- One tweet about the benefits of your events and activities for Disabled people
- A "Did You Know?" tweet, offering interesting facts about sport for Disabled people
- A tweet promoting a future event

DATE	TOPIC	TWEET	LINK
27/03/2018 10:50	#DidYouKnow		
27/03/2018 12:30	Promo Event		
27/03/2018 14:45	Testimony		
28/03/2018 19:50	#DidYouKnow		
28/03/2018 13:30	Promo Event		
28/03/2018 15:45	Testimony		

Example of content table

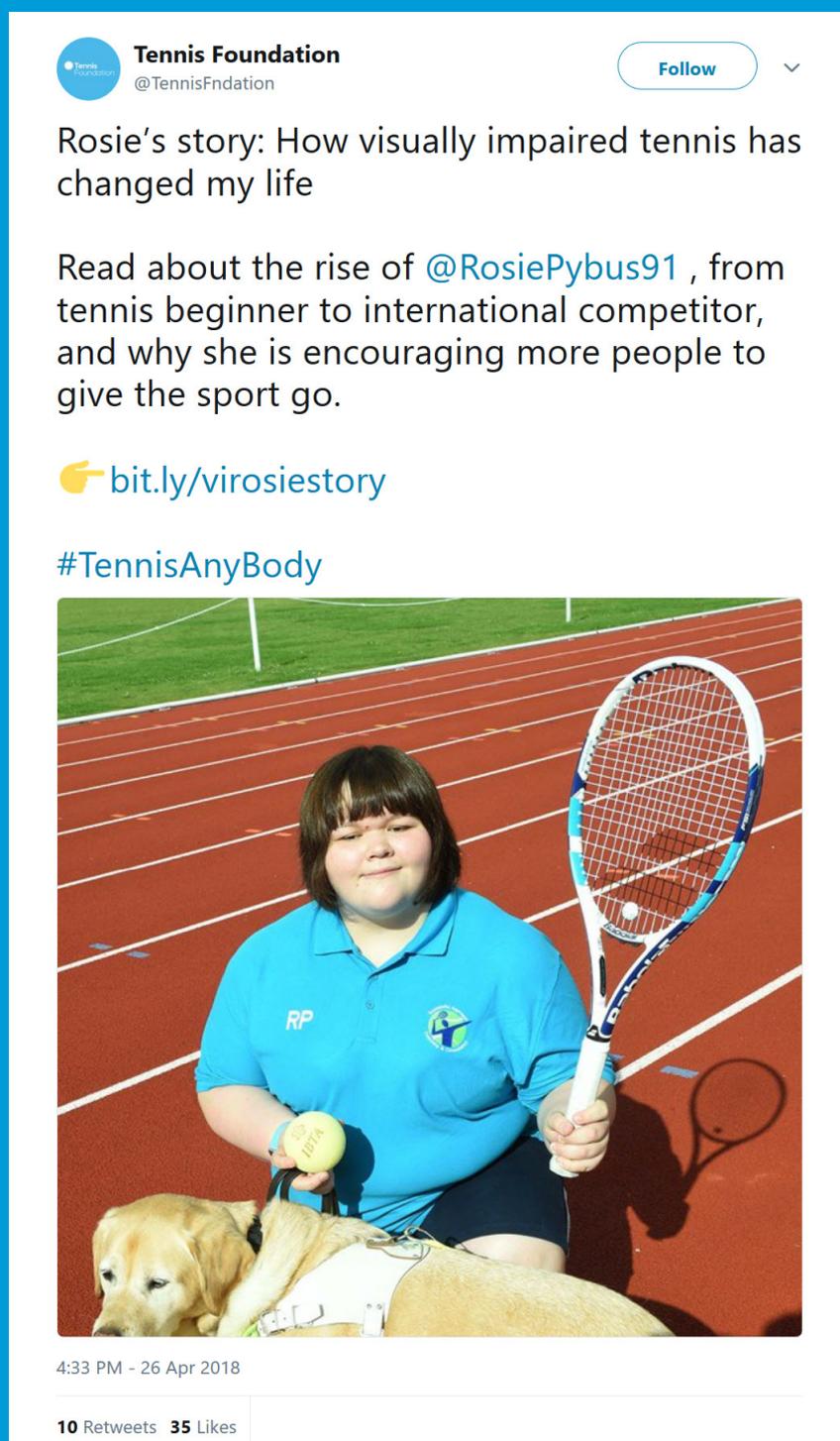
Those subjects could be based on your activities if you are offering different kinds of services. For example:

- One tweet about your sports activities
- One tweet about your advice line
- One tweet about your current campaign

→ Fill in the document on page 10 with the different subjects that you want to speak about every day. For each subject add:

- the date and time this tweet should be published
- the tweet itself
- a link to a relevant webpage on your website (if possible)

Get inspired



The image shows a screenshot of a tweet from the Tennis Foundation (@TennisFndation). The tweet text reads: "Rosie's story: How visually impaired tennis has changed my life". Below the text is a link: "bit.ly/virosiestory" and a hashtag: "#TennisAnyBody". The tweet includes a photo of a woman, Rosie Pybus, sitting on a tennis court. She is wearing a blue polo shirt with "RP" and a logo, and is holding a tennis racket and a yellow tennis ball. A golden retriever is sitting next to her. The tweet is dated "4:33 PM - 26 Apr 2018" and has "10 Retweets" and "35 Likes".

Tennis Foundation
@TennisFndation

Follow

Rosie's story: How visually impaired tennis has changed my life

Read about the rise of @RosiePybus91 , from tennis beginner to international competitor, and why she is encouraging more people to give the sport go.

bit.ly/virosiestory

#TennisAnyBody



4:33 PM - 26 Apr 2018

10 Retweets 35 Likes

Your content strategy

Please fill in the following table:

Subject:	Date & Time:	Content:	Link:
Testimony	15/03/2018 13:15:00	"Sport is for everyone: Disabled & non-Disabled people! I've learnt so much @InclusionLondon's workshop. It was fun & I've met so many people." said Kate after our #IntoSport workshop. Don't miss the next one on 16/03!	Link to the information webpage about the next event

Example

Get inspired



Tennis Foundation

@TennisFndation

Follow



It's [#WorldDownSyndromeDay](#)! We work with [@DSActive](#) to support tennis sessions nationwide - find one near you and give it a go at bit.ly/TennisDS!

[#WDSD18](#) [#InclusionMatters](#) 🏸 😊



9:41 AM - 21 Mar 2018

58 Retweets 122 Likes

How to write a successful tweet

Here are a few tips on how to write a successful tweet:

- Write engaging content relevant to your audience: always ask yourself “Would I interact with this tweet?”
- Be fun (if possible) or at least informal
- Shorter is better: You don’t need to use all the 280 characters available. Keep it simple and stick to the essential
- Use powerful quotes from previous participants
- Use “we” or “you” rather than “your organisation name”
- Get interactive: tag people by using *@contact*
- ‘Did you know?’ tweets prove to be successful
- Always add a comment when you share a link or when you retweet something
- Tag people in the pictures
- Link your tweets to the news using hashtags. Hashtags are one of the best ways to connect to people who do not normally follow you, especially during specific events

There are different kinds of hashtags:

- International events: *#WinterParalympics / #CommonwealthGames / #WorldCup*
- International days: *#WorldDownSyndromeDay / #WhiteCaneDay / #InternationalDayofDisabledPeople*
- Twitter weekly events: *#FridayFeeling / #MondayMotivation / #sundayfunday / #CharityTuesday*
- Subjects: *#DidYouKnow / #KnowYourRights*
- You can also create a hashtag for your own events or project: *#IntoSport / #MostActiveCity (London Sport Awards 2018)*

Use digital media

Tweets published with a link, a picture, infographics or a short video are more successful.

When selecting a media, keep in mind the following top tips:

- Authenticity is more important than quality
- Pictures in action are powerful when promoting sport events
- It's better to select short videos (30 second video clips)
- When you add a link make sure that a relevant image appears when published. If not it's better to add your own picture
- Make sure that the format of your pictures is perfect on both the desktop and mobile versions of Twitter

Be accessible

Finally make sure that your tweets are accessible to everyone:

- Add a description (alt text) to all the pictures you share. For this, you need to turn-on the option: go into "setting and privacy", and tick to "Compose image descriptions" box in the "accessibility" section
- Try to publish videos with subtitles. If there are no subtitles, add a link to an accessible version (for example a text or a YouTube video)
- Avoid jargon (think easy read)
- Keep it short
- Avoid using too many hashtags

Create powerful calls for action

Keep in mind that the most powerful way to promote your physical activities and sports events, is by speaking about the benefits they could have on participants. People don't practise sport just to sweat, but because it's challenging, because they want to get more muscular, or just have fun and meet people. The last two points are probably the most important: Therefore, try to showcase people enjoying their time as a group.

Here are a few tips for your calls for action:

- As mentioned earlier not everything should be about promoting an event or an activity. However, it shouldn't stop you from adding a link to your website / event webpage every time it's possible: "Find out how to", "Don't miss our next event"
- Add a clear call for action: "Read more", "Book now", "Support us", "Retweet"
- Give people a good reason to click on your link

Get inspired

activity
alliance

Activity Alliance

@AllForActivity

Follow



Most disabled people aren't as active as they would like to be. We can help you plan where to start your journey in becoming more active. You can find lots of information on the benefits of being active and who to speak to here: efds.co.uk/get-active

9:15 AM - 28 Mar 2018

22 Retweets 26 Likes

→ There are many ways to write a tweet and there is not really a template to write successful tweets. However you can try using the following template. Keep in mind the top tips section on how to write a successful tweet.



Add an introductory sentence that links your tweet to your target's interests. For example: *"Many Disabled people are not as active as they would like to be"* (you could also speak about the benefits of your events).

Explain how you can help them.

For example: *"Inclusion London can tell you more about how to get more active, and have fun doing it. It's a great way to meet people. Don't miss our next free workshop, nearly fully booked. #MondayMotivation"*.

Add a link to your event and a picture of Disabled participants having fun at one of your previous sport activities.

Growing your community of followers

There are two different targets on Twitter. They are:

- Those who already follow you
- Those who do not follow you yet but may be interested in your sports events

This third part of the toolkit will look at how to attract this second group, and get them to follow you and engage with your activities. As mentioned previously, Twitter is a very powerful tool for reaching new potential beneficiaries.

Optimise your Twitter profile

Before you try to grow your community of followers, make sure that your Twitter profile is ready to keep them interested. Before following your account, a Twitter user will often first have a quick look at your profile. If the visitor finds this profile interesting there is a big chance that they will follow your account and therefore start seeing your tweets on their own news feed. This is why you need to make sure that visitors understand what you do in 2 seconds!

Here are some tips:

- Top banner: The banner is probably the most important. It needs to be appealing and help visitors to understand what you are doing. Try to get a high quality picture of Disabled people having fun at a sports event or a physical activity session
- Profile picture: Make sure you use a good quality picture; and that people can easily read the name of your organisation
- Short description: This should highlight the services you can provide to your target group
- Link: Add a link to a specific webpage promoting a specific event, rather than just a link to your homepage

Identify potential beneficiaries

If you want to significantly grow your audience you need to be pro-active and look for Twitter users who may potentially be interested in your sports activities.

Here are a few things you could do:

1) Interact with people who may be interested in your sports events.

You may want to look for people who mention sports in your borough and interact with them:

- Support people
- Respond to their questions
- Question them
- Invite them to contact you

2) Follow potential new beneficiaries.

One easy way to increase your community of followers is by following people. By doing so, Twitter sends them a notification, which often encourages them to look at who you are and follow you back if they think that you can be of interest.

But do not just follow anyone. First identify a few organisations working with your target group. It could be competitors or partner organisations. Then start following relevant followers. If your Twitter profile is attractive enough you should get 25-30% (or even more) people following you back. It is a very powerful way to grow the number of followers quickly.

Add here the names of some organisations that work with your target group(s):

3) Make partnerships.

Find other user-led organisations who are interested in getting more Disabled people active and ask them to retweet.

4) Ask influential people to share your tweets.

If you don't ask you don't get. Do not hesitate to ask influential Twitter users to promote your events. This will increase the visibility of your events and help you grow your followers. FollowerWonk (<https://moz.com/followerwonk/>) which we already mentioned can help you identify your followers who have a large community of followers themselves.

5) Ask your participants to spread the word about your sports activities and events.

Do not hesitate to ask your participants to promote your events. They are the best ambassadors to do so:

- Encourage participants to tweet during your events and use a hashtag (e.g. #IntoSport)
- If the event is rather busy, you could reserve 10 minutes at the end of your event to ask participants to share what they've learnt on social media. Ask them to link their tweets to your organisations, or to event hashtags so their followers can easily find out more about you
- Train people: One of the main reasons why people are not tweeting is often because they don't know how to do it. So do not hesitate to spend some time to explain to them how to tweet. The investment is worth it!
- Finally, if some participants don't use Twitter, you could ask them to write a testimony on a blog or a piece of paper. You could then publish their testimonies on your website and promote them on social media

Conclusion

There is no perfect science on Twitter: The secret is to keep trying. Play with Twitter! Try to promote the same event in different ways and see which tweets get the most interactions. That way you will get to know your followers, what they like and what kind of things motivate them.

Also do not hesitate to reuse previous successful tweets to promote future events. Try to change a few words, add a new picture and see if it gets more retweets and clicks.

Finally do not forget to tweet during the weekend. Your target group is likely to be active on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. Web tools such as Hootsuite can help you schedule some tweets in advance.

Get inspired

There are a few Twitter accounts that you could look at for inspiration. The following sports organisations are successful on the Twitter platform:

- **Activity Alliance** (@AllForActivity): twitter.com/AllForActivity
- **Disability Sports Coach** (@DSC_13): twitter.com/DSC_13
- **Tennis Foundation** (@TennisFndation): twitter.com/TennisFndation
- **London Sport** (@LondonSport): twitter.com/LondonSport
- **Sport England** (@Sport_England): twitter.com/Sport_England

