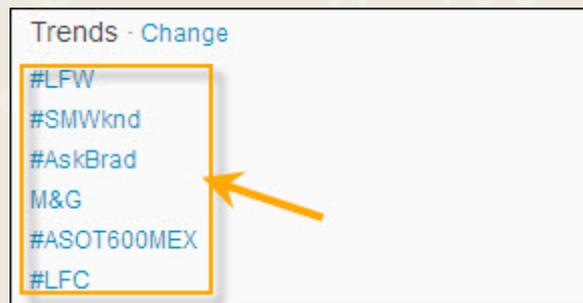


How Hashtags Work and Using Them to Grow Your Traffic

What is a Hashtag?

Hashtags look like this... A word, acronym or collection of characters preceded by (#). They're used as a keyword to track topics, create communities and promote products and offers (in your case new releases, competitions, gigs and tours etc.)



The above screenshot shows one quick way, incidentally, to find out which hashtags are trending: by glancing over to your left-hand menu bar and checking under the "Trends" window. Click "Change" to tailor which trends show for you.

Benefits of Using Hashtags

- Grow your following and extend your reach.
- Find relevant people to follow.
- Brand a product or business (e.g. "#Dizzyjam").
- Brand, promote, manage and track an event through its distinctive hashtag (e.g. #AlbumLaunch).
- Quickly tweet information to people who follow your custom hashtag.
- Networking with industry or niche influencers and peers.

Creating Your Own Hashtags: 101

Creating your own hashtags is a great way to promote and enable your fans to keep track of and share an event, promotion, single release, new merch, etc.

But, like anything else in marketing, you need to know what not to do and how to get the maximum effect.

Don't...

- Use hashtags containing more than two or three words (e.g. "#downloadmynewalbumnow")
- Start your tweet with numbers (e.g. "#999"). You can include numbers – but only after alpha characters (e.g. "#SingleNumber2")
- Use any other special characters (e.g. #Tim'sband – everything after the apostrophe won't be included in the hashtag).
- Overuse hashtags. Keep them for important and highly relevant use.
- Insert popular, trending hashtags not relevant to your tweet content just to ensure your tweet is seen.

Do...

- Make your hashtag easy to read.
- Make your hashtag as vividly descriptive – and simple – as possible.
- Remember to use your hashtags to designate topics, subjects or categories.

You can make your hashtags all lower-case, or use initial caps to make it easier to read (“#MyHashtag” is clearer than “#myhashtag”).

That’s the easy part.

Making your hashtags go viral is the real trick.

Making Your Hashtags Go Viral

The only way to grow traffic with your hashtags is to make sure they are shared – and more than shared. You want them to explode on the scene like a spectacular firework and go viral.

The real trick is to pick the right keyword(s); then pair your new hashtag with a relevant, active hashtag. For example, if you have created “#NewSingle”, pairing it with the existing, highly-active hashtag “#music”.

And, of course, the bigger your following, the more likely your hashtag is to be retweeted and followed.

Finding Good Hashtags to Follow

Following the right people via their hashtag can also help boost your own credibility (think “credibility-by-association”), which can net you followers of your own. You become part of any community built around a strong, evergreen hashtag. But how do you find them?

In addition to simply searching via the Twitter search bar, there are even more focused ways to find hashtags to follow – especially off Twitter. Sites like, [TweetChat](#), [Twubs](#) and [Hashtags.org](#) make it easy to find, track and manage hashtags.

Don’t overcomplicate things. Focus your hashtag on your goal and your followers. Make it easy to read and catchy to remember and share.

Now that you know how hashtags work, and what to do/avoid, put them to use. Make your traffic grow.