

DON'T BE @THATGUY

People often ask me, "Pat... how can I become a social media powerhouse and dominate Twitter and Facebook?"

(Well, people don't necessarily ask me that exactly. Most of the time they're asking me if I'm Bill Cowher. But let's just pretend that they ask me – at least for purposes of having a premise for this column. Look, I have to write a gazillion of these damn things every year and I'm generally starting them about the time the printing presses are warming up. So humor me. But I digress...)

Rather than answering that question, I suggest that they study the social media habits of someone many of you know. I call him @thatguy. Here are a few great examples of the technique that's made him so...noticeable... online:

HE'S OUT TO CHANGE

MINDS. He's on a mission to convince the world that his cause is just and true, whether it's politics, religion or an ex-girlfriend who had the temerity to drop him. He knows that if he posts enough memes about something, all of his friends – despite their beliefs – will see the wisdom of his point and actually thank him for that pivotal 412th post about how Star Trek is vastly superior to Star Wars. He's 100 percent right, so he can ignore that rule about how social media is like a cocktail party and it's best to avoid loud discussions about touchy topics!

HE'S A MULTITASKER. He wants to cover all of his bases so he has cleverly set up his Twitter and Facebook accounts to be linked. That way every time he Tweets, it shows up on his Facebook feed. This allows his Facebook friends the opportunity to read posts like "This bar sucks!!

#nohotchicks." This is awesome because it shows that @thatguy is a rebel who defies the conventional wisdom that Twitter and Facebook are entirely different media. Besides, he's sure that his Facebook friends enjoy having all of those Tweets clogging up their feeds.

HE'S A CONVERSATIONALIST. Twitter is pretty much like texting, right? So why not have a long back-and-forth Twitter/texting conversation with someone else? Just because it's exhausting for his followers to try to make sense of all of it, there's no reason not to have that 50-post conversation about the starting QB for the Browns offline, is there?

HE'S A HASH ADDICT.

Clever use of hashtags is a hallmark of guys like @thatguy. He'll slap #turf, #golf and #LOL on everything to make sure his brilliance turns up in searches for those terms. Never mind that many consider this to be a case of #hashtagdiarrhea. This is particularly awesome when he's autoposting those Tweets over to Facebook (see above).

Nope, my friend @thatguy sets the bar pretty high when it comes to social media. You probably have no chance of being a Twitter Tycoon like him because you're probably keeping your posts apolitical, crafting Tweets and Facebook posts in a style that fits the media, being considerate of your followers by not over-conversing, and keeping your hashtags #simple, #relevant or #fun.

So, when people ask me how to become an uber-expert who can establish a great social media presence and keep followers engaged, I tell them that there's one simple rule: Don't be @thatguy. **GCI**



Pat Jones

Editorial director and publisher

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