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10 People to Follow on Twitter

By: KEVIN FISHER, 3/25/2009

Twitter, one of the latest social media tools to hit the Web, is fast becoming the way to stay connected for many of the people powering Lansing's economy. Twitter allows users to send and share short message-tweets—with anyone who cares to read them.

"Twitter can be serious or fun, silly or sad, heart-rendering or uplifting," says Ari B. Adler, communications administrator for Delta Dental. "Behind the cool technology," he says, "is the really important aspect of it—all-the people who are tweeting."

Capital Gains recently rounded up 10 Twitterers in the Lansing area we thought were worth checking out. Here's what we learned:

Kathy Weber (@kathyweber), 35, Lansing
Currently: Chief evangelist at TechSmith in Okemos; her tweets range from two to 10 a day.
Weber gets user feedback about TechSmith's products and also interacts with customers. She arranges meetings on the road with clients, to show off the innovative ways their company's products are being used and help people with questions or give them tips.

On Twitter, she follows: Jennifer Midden (@jmiddle), TechSmith's community relations manager. "I learn a lot from her about what events are going on in the Lansing area and local news." She also recommends Jackie Kuba (@jackiekuba), who shares advice on word-of-mouth marketing.

Kasey Anderson (@kaseyincharge), 27, Lansing
Currently: Corporate marketing strategy for Citizens Bank; she usually tweets a couple times a day, but may go silent for a day or two.
Anderson describes Twitter as a virtual lounge where she can talk in person and "speak" to many others. She and three other local business owners visited Jennifer Midden and Justin Giddens (@jgiddens) started the Mid-Michigan Tweet-up (@MidMiTweetUp) where active users go to meet face-to-face.

Follows: TechSmith (@TechSmith), Ford Motor Company (@FordMotor), Lee Odson (@leeodson) with Minneapolis-based Twitter (@Twitter) and Jeremiah Owyang (@jeremyow), a Web strategist with Forrester Research.

Bob Fish (@Bobfish), 45, East Lansing
Currently: CEO of Bobfish Coffee; his tweets can be hourly when he's traveling, three to four times a day when he's doing paperwork.
Fish uses Twitter when he travels to people know where he's going, when he'll arrive and what deals are running. He enjoys watching how others use Twitter, particularly companies that are trying to enhance their brand.

Follows: More than 500 people, particularly anyone who mentions they're at a Biggys or thinking about going to one.

Sarah Siewert (@siewert), 22, East Lansing
Currently: Marketing and events coordinator at the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports; tweets from five to 15 times a day, but only when working on the weekend.
Twitter gives Siewert insight into a person's interests and expertise. She's made connections with people from around the corner to across the country and has found it leads many news sites in providing breaking news.

Follows: Pete Cashmore (@petcash), Jeremiah Owyang (@jeremyow) and Peter Shankman (@pshankman); her fave "celeb" is the Dog Whisperer (@saramjain).

Nathan Triplett (@NathanTriplett), 25, East Lansing
Currently: East Lansing City Council and legislative aide at the Michigan House of Representatives; tweets several times a week, five to five times a day.
Triplett's start on Twitter was prompted by a friend who billed it as "the next big thing in new media."

Follows: Favorites include the Hill (@thehill), NPR Politics (@nprpolitics), CNN Political Ticker (@cnnpolitics) and Michigan Environmental News (@michenvnews).

Ari B. Adler (@aribadler), 41, Okemos
Currently: Communications administrator for Delta Dental; he tries to tweet steadily throughout the day.
Adler became interested in Twitter because the concept seemed so obvious—who would want to post to the service or read the posts? But as he heard more about it, he knew he needed to check it out. He usually tweets during the day as work winds. It allows him to keep up with news events and others professionals in the PR industry.

Follows: Other PR professionals ("It's like having a whole new collection of people to bounce ideas off"); companies like Southwest (@southwest) and Ford (@fordmotor); and friends.

Travis Staliker (@staliker), 20, East Lansing
Currently: Marketing director for Liquid Web; tweets three or four times a day.
Staliker originally joined Twitter to test it as a Web 2.0 tool, but after getting the hang of it, he started using it to keep in touch with friends and co-workers. He also updates his Facebook status and monitors his reputation. "It's a wonderful tool for networking and keeping in touch using micro updates to a large audience of followers."

Amber Shinn (@AmberShinn), 30, Lansing
Currently: PR and marketing consultant; tweets anywhere from once a day to a few times an hour.
As someone who follows social media and Web 2.0 trends, Twitter is a handy way for Shinn to keep up with breaking news, read interesting articles/blogs or exchange quick info with others. She visits the best South restaurant in Ann Arbor or Traffic is stopped on EB 96 at Novi. She uses it to promote events and to talk buddies.

Follows: TechSmith, Citizens Bank and Impressions; she recommends finding new "tweetpeeps" by browsing friends' lists or checking out tweet-specific subjects.

David Paulson (@davepaulson), 52, DeWitt
Currently: Environmental journalism professor at Michigan State University; tweets at least three times daily.
Paulson's interest in Twitter came from wanting to test its usefulness for journalists. He uses it to share and gather news and information about new media, the news industry and environmental issues.

Follows: former student, Shawn Smith (@shawnsmith) tweets about new media. He also enjoyed the "tagged" messages the governor used to tweet his State of the State speech (@michigan2009). "It was great watching the speech in a corner of the screen while reading the reaction of others, who also contributed links to information that supported or challenged the governor."

Jamie Schiller-Hepper (@schillerj), 33, Lapeer
Currently: Michigan Main Street Center at the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA); her tweets range from twice a day to once a week.
She uses it to keep tabs on friends and professional contacts that she can't always see on a daily basis.

Follows: No one specific. "I just enjoy being in contact with people."

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