



## TechWatch – What’s the Deal with Twitter

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If you’re part of the tech community or follow it with any regularity I am sure that you have heard of the new service from Obvious Corp, Evan Williams’ (Blogger Founder) latest venture, called Twitter (<http://twitter.com/>). Ever since the SXSW conference a few weeks ago the service that allows users to broadcast messages to their “followers” who can receive them via text message, IM or via Twitter itself has been the talk of the town. However, I have to admit that in its current incarnation Twitter does baffle me a bit but it’s not because the service can’t be very useful it’s because of the way users are using Twitter.

A lot of the users on Twitter are using the service as a microblogging platform where they alert their followers about very mundane things like the fact that they just took their dog for a walk or the fact that they are working on their taxes. Once you begin to connect to a enough Twitterers the amount of messages can be overwhelming. Of course I like my friends a lot but do I really need to know that they just made toast?

It seems as if Twitter could become (and possibly already is) a large distraction that will cause people to become less productive. That said, there are also a lot of very good uses for Twitter that should be more and more exposed as time goes on. A couple of those uses are:

1. Planning meet-ups with your friends
2. Tying people together at conferences

The conference angle is a no-brainer and it is probably why SXSW was the big breakout for Twitter. How many times have you met some folks at a conference but forgot to get their number and couldn’t find them later when you wanted to grab a beer? If you hooked in with them on a Twitter a single message can tap everyone you’ve met making it easy to find one another. Meeting up with your friends would also be easier since you could simply Twitter your location or where you are heading and all of your friends will get the message.

While I can’t say I get the hype over Twitter that the microbloggers have caused I do see that it can be useful in the long run as a great way to tie groups of people together. Keep your eye out for Twitter and what they do going forward. I think we’re probably in for some surprises.