

The Evolution Of Twitter Usage

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More users sharing more info and more tweets

Twitter's user base has experienced infamous growth over the past couple years, with the company announcing in December that 100 million new accounts had been opened in 2010 and eMarketer estimating that the US Twitter population rose from 18 million in 2009 to 26 million last year.

The social media service may also be beginning to mature as a community.

According to research from Sysomos, users' following habits have changed dramatically since 2009.

That year, nearly two in five Twitter users around the world followed five people or fewer.

By 2010 that group had been sliced nearly in half, indicating more participation among users.

There was also a sharp difference in the proportion of accounts who were followed by five or fewer other users, dropping from 46% of the total in 2009 to 32% in 2010.

While a relatively small group of users still posts the lion's share of tweets and the most prolific users are often bots, suggests Twitter has become a more participatory community, possibly making the site stickier for members and increasing conversation levels.

Users are also willing to tell Twitter and whoever else may be looking more about themselves.

There was a near-doubling in the proportion of accounts worldwide that provided data on their location, name, biography and URL between 2009 and 2010.

Tweeting is still a relatively niche phenomenon among the population as a whole, with a Pew Internet & American Life Project survey indicating just 8% of US web users participate in the service.

But those users may be developing a deeper relationship with the site that will keep it a vibrant community for marketers.

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