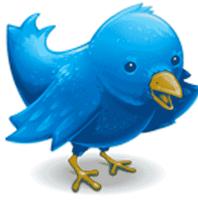# College of Charleston///LITE Workshop: Twitter

Presented by Megan Holt

What is it? Twitter is a free social messaging tool that allows users to participate in social networking through micro-blogging or short messaging. It works over multiple networks and devices.

What do you do? Twitter users send and read updates or posts from other users called "tweets." These text-based posts can have up to 140 characters. They are displayed on the user's profile page and displayed and delivered to others who are "following" the user. Users can create their own messages, reply to other messages and questions or "retweet" another user's tweet.

Basic Terminology

Direct Message: This function allows users to send a private message to someone they are following (and is following them). Use the shortcut: D + @username + message.

Reply: Let your followers know you're interested in what they're saying by replying to their tweets. Twitter now provides a "reply" button below each tweet for you to simply press. Another option: to reply, put "@" in front of a person's username before writing your message. This will be directed to the specific user, but your followers can see replies as well.
Example: @CofC I will be watching the big game this weekend!

Retweet: You can retweet a tweet that another user posted. Twitter now provides a retweet button below each tweet for you to simply press. Another option: to retweet, put "RT @" in front of a person's username before copying their message. This will be directed to the specific user, but your followers can see replies as well.
Example: RT @CofC Sports: Cougars return home to face Savannah State in final non-conference contest: CofC hosts the Tiger

Via: VIA @ can be used instead of RT @. Via allows users to repost a tweet, but in their own words while still referencing the post and giving credit to the original Twitter user.

Links: You can post links to articles, photos, etc. To shorten a URL so that it will fit in your 140 characters, visit tinyurl.com or tweetburner.com and copy your link. They'll give you a new, shorter link to copy into your post!