

## TWITTER UNVEILS AD PLANS FOR IPHONE, ANDROID TIMELINES



These are exhilarating times for Twitter. It is determined to prove that that it has in it, the potential to become a big media business corporate. Realizing that billions of dollars were up for grabs and that sites like Facebook, Google and YouTube had been aggressively targeting big-brand ad budgets, Twitter has joined the online ad battle. This weekend it took a major step, spelling out its intent, with the introduction of the first advertising on its mobile application for iPhone and Android appliances. Twitter co-founder Biz Stone announced that Twitter would display advertiser-backed tweets atop search results. This he said was the site's first foray into traditional advertising. He further proclaimed that "Twitter aims to further develop its current advertisement program, to start showing Promoted Tweets. These are tweets that have been paid for by advertisers, in users' timelines on the Twitter for iPhone and Android appliances." This means that Twitter users, whilst accessing the social network from the iPhone or Android devices, will be able to view advertisements in their timelines. Mr. Stone sounded confident when he said, "We strongly believe that Promoted Tweets should be useful to you," "This announcement is a long time coming and we're thrilled to finally be able to share it with you," Stone concluded. Twitter is a virtually a novice in the online-ads conflict and its inability to identify the revenue potential in advertisements, is perhaps the reason why it was so slow off the mark. The revelation that Facebook's revenue from advertising in 2011 was nearly \$ 4 billion and Google's revenue an astronomical \$10 billion jolted it from its slumber. Twitter has told people that the ads will not be intrusive but that the people will see important tweets from brands they care about. "Users can dismiss any Promoted Tweets they don't like with a single swipe." "Promoted Tweets will appear in your timeline like any other Tweet, and like regular Tweets, they will appear in your timeline just once; as you scroll, the Promoted Tweet will flow with the rest of the Tweets in your timeline," the company enlightened. Twitter's announcement has been greeted with a lot of condescension. EMarketer analyst Debra Williamson said, "I don't think Twitter is in competition -yet. "It's so much smaller in terms of the number of users. I see agencies primarily using Facebook and experimenting with Twitter as an adjunct." However, what works in Twitter's favor, is that its approach of always putting the viewer first, its unselfish approach to monetization and its cautious approach to introducing advertising content into its program, increases and boosts its existing value. Twitter CEO Dick Costolo said, "Users should be seeing the kind of content they are already interested in... We've been super cautious about that; we didn't want to sacrifice user experience." Whatever Twitter has to say about their new venture, there is little doubt that it is undoubtedly endeavoring to broaden its existing ads and camouflaging it as a service that users will like and find useful - only time will tell whether users take kindly to this sort of pushy marketing.

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