

@Wossy @StephenFry @Schofe

A few months ago I [wrote](#) about Twitter, the microblogging platform that was starting to get some attention. Well since then the UK seems to have gone Tweeting mad!

For those of you who haven't already heard about microblogging it is a form of blogging that allows users to write brief text updates (140 characters in Twitter's case) and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group which can be chosen by the user. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging from your mobile phone, instant messaging or the web.

The increase in awareness of Twitter during 2009 has arguably been due to two main reasons; the rise of the celebrity Tweeters and the Hudson Bay plane crash landing.

I mentioned in my previous article about Barack Obama and his 140,000 followers, well last time I looked that had risen to 280,000. This means that 280,000 people on Twitter have opted to "follow" the updates put out on the @BarackObama account.

Some other celebs and their 2009 rises in follows are shown below:

Name	Twitter a/c	Followers start of January	Followers 16 th February	% rise
Stephen Fry	@stephenfry	39,850	194,102	487%
Britney Spears	@britneyspears	13,451	118,368	880%
Jonathan Ross	@wossy	4,364	101,002	2314%
Phillip Schofield	@schofe	-	70,784	N/A

These are staggering numbers by any stretch of the imagination given such a short period of time. Stephen Fry for instance has effectively had one new person follow him every 25 seconds on average over the last six weeks!

These numbers probably indicate two things - the celebrity culture that now exists in the UK and the rise in popularity of Twitter in general. This is because the first question you have to answer after you have setup a Twitter account is "who should I start following?". In most cases people may not know many people on Twitter other than celebrities which makes it likely that a lot of people will initially follow them for both these reasons.

The other [main reason](#) why Twitter has gone mainstream in the last month was the Hudson Bay plane crash landing on 16th January. A Twitter user, Janis Krums, who was a passenger on board, took a picture of the plane in the river and uploaded it to Twitter [here](#). This was only ten minutes after take off and before any of the main media sources was reporting the event. The picture has subsequently had over 400,000 views and Janis was actually interviewed by MNBC 30 minutes afterwards.

Whatever the reasons the rise of Twitter has been meteoric with [55million daily users](#) and its website now ranking in the top 150 in the UK. If this growth continues then being aware of what people are saying about you on it will become a vital element of any company's reputation management.