

Your Twitter Follower Stats – What They Mean

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To anyone on Twitter, raise your hand if you don't pay attention to your number of followers. No matter how *not* vain you claim to be, your follower number is something that tugs oh-so-gently at your consciousness.

To those using Twitter for a while, it becomes obvious that you can quickly increase your followers in one of two ways:

- 1) Become incredibly famous.
- 2) Follow as many other people as you can, banking on people following you in return.

Since most people are not incredibly famous, most peeps seeking to build up their followers choose option #2: they follow a bunch of people they never intend to pay any attention to. A lot of people will reciprocate the follow, even though they never intend to pay any attention to you in return. Building-up the number of followers in this way works for the most part.

However, this potentially leaves you in the position of following more people than follow you. When grossly out of proportion, the follower to followee ratio speaks poorly of a Tweep, since it tends to indicate intention of using Twitter as principally a broadcast medium. **In other words, if someone follows way more people than are following them, that person may be perceived by some as a Twitter parasite.**

On the other hand, if someone has more people following them than they follow, they tend to be perceived as Twitter bad-asses. They're seen as influencers, adding to the dialog and serving as positive, upstanding members of the community.

Hence the strategy employed by some Tweeps: they follow as many people as possible to get as many followers as possible, then they unfollow those same peeps to keep their ratio balanced. Gotta keep up those Twitter appearances!

But aside from the cachet of having a big fat number for your Twitter followers, what's the real value of having a lot of people following you? Are they really listening to you? In terms of getting your message out, does it make a difference if you have 100, 200, 10,000, or 100,000 followers?

The data may surprise you. According to inbound marketing firm [Hubspot](#), in their 2009 paper [The State of Inbound Lead Generation](#), returns diminish once you cross the threshold of several hundred followers. Leads increase dramatically between companies with no followers and then several hundred, but beyond 500, the leads actually decrease.

According to Hubspot's analysis, "Customers with large numbers of followers are probably attracting viewers who are exclusively interested in the content."

Either that, or they're attracting viewers that follow them blindly in return for a stat-building follow.





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