

## My Take: Stepping On Your Fingers?

Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief  
Monday, 01 June 2009 00:00

---



At the risk of stepping on someone's nimble fingers, I'll ask. Is Twitter helping today's harder-working-than-ever capacity assurance professionals—*that includes you*—do your jobs?

Forgive the skepticism of this old-fashioned non-Twitterer. Luddite that I am, I've been carrying on a love affair with words almost my entire life. That's because I learned early on the power they—*words*—can have, especially when woven into complete sentences and paragraphs and pages that convey compelling messages.

"Give me just 140 characters to produce a noteworthy message for mass consumption & I'm outta' here; takes too much time & who really cares?"

It took more than 20 minutes to generate the above hypothetical—*and dumb*—Tweet, but it speaks to my first point: How is Twitter affecting the workplace? Or, more precisely, where are people finding all the time they need to Twitter properly, "follow" other Twitterati and wade through all the Tweets they receive from

*everyone*

who must certainly be "following"

*them*

? Are they engaging in this type of social networking on the job? If so,

*why*

and at

*what price*

to productivity?

Among other things, I regularly write—*or wordsmith*—for a living. It's not easy. I wring my hands, gnash my teeth and whine for days on end, trying to come up with ideas for these monthly columns and ways to present them in 600 words or less. I hate to admit it, but each piece is a crapshoot. I don't know if anyone gives a darn about what's on my mind, much less

## My Take: Stepping On Your Fingers?

Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief  
Monday, 01 June 2009 00:00

---

takes the time to read me. Based on some second-hand Twitter hearsay, though, perhaps I'm worrying too much.

To be successful in my job, maybe all I have to do anymore is Tweet out crucial real-time updates like this to my 52,000+ closest friends: "After a busy day on the road making calls, I'm finally back in my air-conditioned hotel room, enjoying *Soprano* reruns and deep-dish pizza." Yeah, buddy...

Seriously, will Twitter have a long run in the business world (including the capacity assurance arena)? Or, will this bubble drift into virtual obscurity once the next technology craze hits? Despite reports that Twitter's creators may not yet have fleshed out an effective business model—*something that requires more than 140 characters*—several companies (mostly consumer-oriented) are now filling positions for "social media specialists," the accepted term for professional Twitterers. Even some of our own advertising partners are telling us that Twitter is a great for sharing business intelligence and promoting new products. We'll see.

Unfortunately, I'm already noticing too many people hunched in Twitter-mode over their communication devices of choice as they *drive* down the Interstate. (Remember when merely "talking" on a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle was considered dangerous?) I'm also walking into far too many tradeshow booths at industry events these days, only to be met by the backsides of booth personnel—*everyone bunched up in little pods, reading, comparing and/or posting Tweets*. Where does it end?

To paraphrase the writer John Ridley when he discussed Twittering on a recent National Public Radio "Morning Edition" segment, discretion never goes out of style. In my opinion, neither does good sense. Neither does productivity. I'm interested in your opinion, too. **MT**

