

Are You Ambient Aware?

By David Nour, Founder – Relationship Economics

The term “ambient aware” is often used by social scientist to describe a need to be physically near someone to gauge their mannerisms, behaviors and general habits. Ambient awareness is also what social networking sites like LinkedIn® and Facebook are attempting to instill with their subscribers; a need to constantly and continuously be online, present or close to others. This notion of knowing “what you are doing at this particular moment,” is referred to as microblogging, where active users consistently post brief updates about their activities.

The microblogging phenomenon differs from traditional blog posts as blogging is typically one-to-many with limited responses and most importantly a fairly static interaction, in that something could be posted today and you may not read it until next week. Microblogging has a near real-time built-in response mechanism, forcing you to communicate in shorter spurts, causing you to update that information more frequently.

With over 2.5 million users engaged in short-spurt-messaging functionality, Twitter is becoming one of the most buzz-centric microblogging tools available. By building a list of individuals you’re interested in “following,” you receive updates or tweets, that act much like a text message, limited to 140 characters. Similar to Twitter are Dopplr (geo-centric) and Tumblr (more for uploading pictures, video and websites), where you can also reference “where you are” in short spurts.

At first glance many believe that most of what’s on these microblogging sites, is utter nonsense and a complete waste of time. However, like many other social networking applications, if you simply give them a try you may be pleasantly surprised. Over time, these updates begin to weave an image of what your friends and colleagues are not just doing but what they are reading, what are they referencing, what are they learning, and how are they growing. Each update provides insightful pieces to a social networking puzzle. This constant flow of insightful information becomes useful by allowing technology to do the heavy lifting while you craft your value-add based on their needs, desires and interactions.

As part of a commitment to learn and grow daily, I’ve integrated Twitter as part of my homepage and interact with it regularly. With many of these “awareness tools” if you’re willing to sift through the noise of random thoughts, you can surprisingly find value in the constant interaction. By following life long learners such as Guy Kawasaki of Apple and Garage.com fame, or David Meerman Scott, best selling author of *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, not only do I gain information or knowledge, I also gain useful insights and access to really interesting content.

If you’re not trying new social networking applications, how will you learn, grow and embrace this medium which is fundamentally changing the manner in which we engage and influence one another?

So, here are the recommended “Nour Action Items:”

1. Join Twitter – build a profile and proactively engage with others
2. Read daily – get involved, gain insight
3. Add value – share information and insights with others
4. Drive awareness and traffic to your microblogging efforts or your Twitter identity by including it in your email signature
5. Stay tuned for best practices booklet & DVD on how to get the most out of Twitter

David Nour is a social networking strategist and one of the foremost thought leaders on the quantifiable value of business relationships. A native of Iran, David came to the U.S. with a suitcase, \$100 cash, limited family ties and no fluency in English! Fast forward 25 years and he has built an impressive career of entrepreneurial success, both within large corporations and early stage ventures. David is the author of *Relationship Economics* (Wiley, 2008), a senior management advisor, and a featured speaker for corporate, association and academic forums, where he shares his knowledge and experience as a leading change agent and visionary for Relationship Economics® - the art and science of relationships. To learn more, please visit: www.relationshipeconomics.NET or call 1-888-339-1333.

