

Warren Has a Purpose-Driven Twitter

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Twitter? Is it a purpose-driven social media tool? Rick Warren, pastor at Saddleback Church, thinks it is—and, in fact, he is one of top 20 most influential people on Twitter.

In a Klout study compiled for *Forbes* magazine this month, Warren—whose Twitter handle is @RickWarren—and the Dalai Lama are the only two religious leaders on the list. The rest of the list was made up of entertainment, political and news “celebrities.”

Though he has been a Twitter member for only a little over a year, Warren has more than 200,000 followers. More than 50,000 have retweeted one or more of his messages.

According to the study, Warren’s message reach per tweet is approximately 1 million people, including retweets.

“When Twitter first appeared in July of 2007, my staff told me that I should sign up, but I said no way,” says Warren, author of the blockbuster best-selling book *The Purpose-Driven Life*. “The idea of telling people the minutia of my life seemed so narcissistic. But while conducting a funeral with pastor John Piper, he told me he used Twitter to teach. So I decided to add it as one of the mentoring

tools I use with my network of young church leaders. I guess other people wanted to listen in, too.”

Warren also uses Facebook, LinkedIn, podcasts, and three free e-newsletters to communicate, in addition to several websites. Warren mixes up his tweets with personal advice and challenges, Scripture verses, leadership mentoring, encouragement and offbeat humor.

“Twitter is one of many new channels of communication now available to both listen and speak to a broader, more diverse audience, who’d never attend a church service,” Warren says. “I enjoy interaction with atheists all the time on Twitter. However, technology is never an end in itself and the message still trumps the medium. Hopefully, these new channels help begin conversations that will lead to deeper, face-to-face community, through our small groups and one-on-one friendships.”

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