Twitter announces new brand protection tools
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Twitter has unveiled plans to provide companies with new brand protection tools and marketing data.

Brand owners will now be able to pay for a data analysis package (similar to Google Analytics), enabling them to better understand the behaviours and preferences of people who are engaging with their brand. The package will also allow brand owners to monitor negative statements, brand misrepresentation and even trademark abuse.

"This takes advantage of some of the commercial use of Twitter we've seen from businesses like airlines and big box stores," announced Biz Stone, co-founder of Twitter. "We want to present to [brand owners] a layer of features that allows them to become better at Twitter, [to] show them some of the analytics."

Twitter is also expanding its verified accounts programme. "This would enable brand owners to create an official presence on Twitter," said David Green, who developed and implemented a strategy for Deloitte's internet presence in his former role as global e-marketing director at the company. "So any consumer interested in a brand's products or services can follow with confidence."

"The benefit of a verified Twitterstream for brand owners is authenticity among perhaps a sea of imitators," explain Timothy Pinto and Damian Simpson, media lawyers at Taylor Wessing. "The value is likely to depend on, for example, whether imitators are a problem, the ability to leverage analytics, and the price and the importance of social media to that brand. Protecting brands within social media requires an appreciation of the community and a flexible approach. A brand will need to tread carefully with a verified stream, as the perception of a paid-for, official presence may run against the DNA of social media, where free and genuine engagement are key."

The new business tools will enable brand owners to engage more fully and safely with Twitter (for more detail, see "Engage: trademark protection in social media").

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