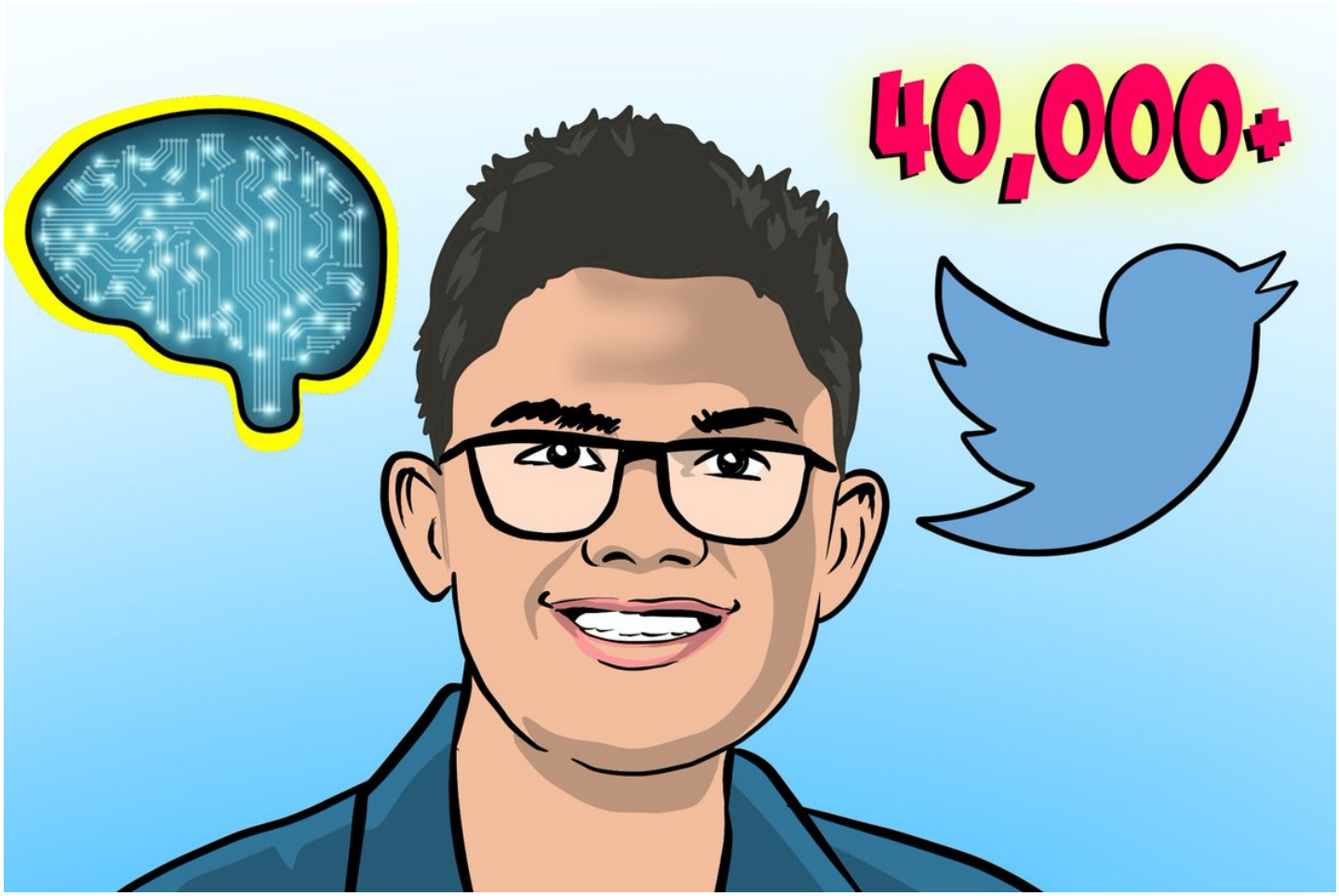
Twitter Thread by Martin Delaney

Martin Delaney
@FoundersHustle

Want to grow your Twitter audience around a niche subject?

Here's how 16-year-old @PrasoonPratham attracted 40,000+ followers wanting to learn about machine learning over a few months, from scratch! ■■



2. Pratham joined Twitter June 2019 to learn more about his life passion, programming.

In May 2020 he got curious about machine learning and started tweeting about it.

But, he was just a beginner! ■

No matter.

By the end of the year he reached circa 40k followers.

3. So, how can someone with no prior experience on a subject become an influencer in such a short period of time?

Particularly on a platform that counts numerous—highly followed—machine learning experts amongst its ranks of users from the likes of Google and Amazon. ■

4. Pratham says he found a "gap in the community."

Before Pratham came along most of the machine learning content tweeted by 'big' subject matter accounts was by experts for experts.

He catered to beginners.■

5. A lot of tweeters trying to build a Twitter audience make the mistake of choosing a topic that is already popular and simply emulate the top voices within it. ■■

Unless you have overwhelming domain authority, there’s simply too much noise to compete effectively with them.

6. Pratham set about making machine learning content accessible to the machine learning beginner.

He did that by studying the subject and tweeting his findings as he went along.

How he delivered the content was critical. ■■

7. The key was packaging it in a simple, logical, and accessible way so a machine learning beginner could digest it comfortably.

He started at a similar knowledge level to the followers he would attract and could easily identify what the learning pain points were. ■

8. Pratham said “People get afraid of the math for machine learning,” which isn’t a prerequisite to getting started.

“I started sharing things that I encountered on a daily basis. If I found something cool, I’d tweet about it.” ■

9. His content strategy evolved into a combinationon of sharing what he naturally found through personal research and deliberately seeking out compelling information he thought would resonate with beginners.■■

10. Pratham also makes it clear in his bio that he specifically tweets about machine learning.

Folks know what to expect when they check out his profile. ■



11. To build an initial base of followers, he tweeted "big accounts" known for their technical expertise and large followings.

After some trial and error, they responded and he got some visibility.

This took his audience up to around 800. ■

12. Pratham considers 1,000 followers a key milestone since it's around about this number that you start to notice the effects of scale.

Followers reliably come from your own followers liking and retweeting your content to their followers. ■

13. He continued with his content strategy.

After a few weeks, he hit 1k.

A few weeks more 5k.

Then 10k—which he calls a "magical number". ■

14. He said "[At 10,000] your account will grow even if you post twice per week.

Just getting there is the tough part.

The problem is to get to that point where you can put social media on auto-pilot, and getting to that point causes a lot of frustration".

15. Pratham's core principles:

■ Be nice. “When you are interacting with bigger accounts, try not to be annoying.”

═■ Be consistent. “Consistency is key. Most people give up.”

■ Be interesting. Provide value by surfacing helpful content, resources, and insights.

16. Once he hit 15,000 followers Pratham upped his content game even more by providing deeper value to his followers in the form of long explanatory threads.

They were up to “4,000 characters” long. ■

17. Another major breakthrough came at around 20k followers.

He used a third—party intelligence platform to find out which Twitter account had the most authority for the term ‘machine learning’.

The answer came as a surprise.

It was him. ■

18. So, he took a screenshot and tweeted it.

A cheeky ‘self-brag’!

His authority and visibility on the subject skyrocketed. ■

Followers went from 20k to 40k over the space of a single month.

“Sometimes you have to show off!” ■

19. Here’s a quick recap of Pratham’s framework, broken down into 7 steps:

■■ Find a content gap in the community and stick to it.

■ Engage that audience by providing helpful content accessibly.

■ Update your bio so it clearly states the subject you tweet about.

20.

■ Engage relevant “big accounts” to attract a base audience.

■ Keep testing new content and engaging “big accounts”.

■ Tweet regularly. Consistency is key to growth.

■ Reenforce traction with deeper content and occasional ‘self-brags’.

21. Full write up om Pratham's framework here ■

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