Twitter Thread by Mario ■



Mario ■
@mariodgabriele

I wrote 30 Twitter threads in 30 days.

The goal?

Learn how to craft interesting threads, and grow a following. It (mostly) worked.

- New followers: +2.5K (+100% MoM)
- Top thread: 373K impressions
- Top tweet: 2.5K likes

Here's what I learned. Quick thread ■■

To start, here's the most popular thread I've written.

Thoughts on what made it work, below.

https://t.co/AIOAYiWEcQ

> Nikola Tesla was the greatest inventor of his era. He died penniless and alone, swindled by both Thomas Edison and JP Morgan.
>
> A thread \U0001f447\U0001f447\U0001f447 pic.twitter.com/80Gco1e6uq
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) September 2, 2020

1. Quality

The threads that performed best were (usually) the ones I put the most effort into.

One example is this one about Jeff Bezos's origins. I spent hours researching and drafting it.

It's worth taking the time to craft your words.

https://t.co/6zWbc4AXLE

> [Story time]
>
> Yesterday, Jeff Bezos testified in front of Congress. It was almost exactly 15 yrs ago that Amazon introduced itself to the world.
>
> We have all heard some version of his story. But in investigating his childhood, I was surprised to find much that has gone unshared. pic.twitter.com/CDaIAA0Fzj
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) July 30, 2020

2. Timeliness

Capitalizing on the news can be one way to expand viewership.

When Fornite launched its #FreeFortnite campaign, I wrote this thread.

At the time, it was my 2nd best performing thread. It also introduced me to the lovely @JoshConstine.

https://t.co/IEoEYYHtzj

> Fortnite is standing up to Google and Apple.
>
> They're offering 20% discounts to players that buy digital currency in the app, bypassing the payment systems of Big Tech.
>
> This is a thread about the game's humble beginnings. \U0001f447
>
> (All likes + RTs appreciated! \U0001f64f) pic.twitter.com/Zg5Lr3hDRu
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 13, 2020

3. Narrative Arc

Have a clear start and end in your mind.

I made this mistake with a few Amazon threads. I thought because my first one worked, I could keep the story going. But they didn't have as clear a narrative arc and were much less popular.

https://t.co/CuR4C9jwZD

> A book about lichen saved Amazon from going out of business.
>
> A thread \U0001f447 pic.twitter.com/kgfmBf4Dsj

— Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 10, 2020

4. Imagery

Creating a special title image made no difference.

The threads that took off used photos. And some of the most fascinating stories that used a title image went nowhere.

One example: the story of the kidnapping of Freddy Heineken.

https://t.co/Xchm3r3hlb

> Kidnapping Freddy Heineken:
>
> A look inside the plot that netted Amsterdam's most notorious criminals $11M but ended in a brutal betrayal.
>
> Thank you to @polina_marinova for the inspiration. This is part of my challenge to write 30 threads in 30 days.https://t.co/txx5f4KIEB pic.twitter.com/eEDNusEliq
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 12, 2020

5. Polls

Polls are good for engagement, but not likes or RTs.

100 people played this Twitter trivia game I tried out, but it yielded very few likes or RTs. A few people liked it a lot though.

https://t.co/8duUtG0vfo

> It's time to play a game.
>
> Welcome to "Esoteric" a Twitter trivia game about tech. pic.twitter.com/Sej7O84NA0
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 18, 2020

6. Quotes

In their brevity, quotes are well-suited to Twitter.

This one about Abraham's Lincoln wisdom did reasonably well for me (at the time). They also take much less time.

https://t.co/tUPCVXzCN8

> Abraham Lincoln had an insane ratio of wisdom to word.
>
> A few favorites quotes. pic.twitter.com/g7QQUnw7pT

— Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 23, 2020

6. Good News

If you have something big to share, share it.

Even though other threads performed better, the 1K that liked my thread about going full-time on The Generalist meant the most.

Twitter can be a supportive place.

https://t.co/lbO0eeyOCd

> It's official.
>
> I'm stepping back from venture investing to go full-time on The Generalist.
>
> Though it sounds crazy to leave a great job to build a newsletter, I couldn't be more excited.
>
> Here's why I'm going all-in \U0001f447 pic.twitter.com/j9plJI6vdm
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 16, 2020

7. Answer a Question

After I announced going FT on The Generalist, I had other writers reach out asking what tools I used.

So I shared that list publicly. It made it easier for me to give people detailed information.

https://t.co/D48vNUgYVD

> The Newsletter Stack...
>
> In the last few weeks, folks have reached out asking what tools I use to write The Generalist. I thought I'd share the full-list.
>
> A thread \U0001f447
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) August 28, 2020

8. Curate Information

This was written after the 30 days, but is something I'd like to do more of: compile info into a single thread.

This covers 2020's IPOs. It features my writing along with others' work. There's value in simplifying consumption.

https://t.co/WcikPizTHW

> The IPO Bonanza in 1 thread.
>
> Resources on:
>
> - Snowflake
> - Asana
> - GoodRx
> - Palantir
> - Unity
> - JFrog
> - Opendoor
>
> /thread \U0001f447\U0001f447
>
> — Mario \U0001f98a (@mariodgabriele) September 25, 2020

9. To ■ or Not to ■?

I've heard some folks find the use of the ■ annoying.

I think it may feel manufactured to some.

Personally, I think it is a useful visual to let readers know that there's more to the story. To each their own.

10. The Perfect Topic?

Why did the Tesla tweet work?

Written on a plane, quicker than usual. Not based on any news.

But it hit a sweet spot: something ppl know a *little* about, but not as much as they'd like. Familiarity gets ppl intrigued, uncommon insight seals the deal.

11. Astroturfing

If you want to, you can post your thread into other threads to get visibility.

I did this for the Fortnite thread. Then I felt sick for being spammy and deleted them all. It may be a viable strategy but feels icky to me.

Again, do you.

12. Where Next?

The threads I found most fun to write were narrative and evergreen. I think a year from now, readers will still be interested in:

- Jeff Bezos' Origins
- The Life of Tesla

+ some others. So that's what I plan to write more of.

I'll also write my newsletter, which is my number 1 priority. If you'd like to be a part of that journey, sign up here.

You'll join +11K creators and thinkers interested in technology. Entirely free.

https://t.co/Tnl6ePFgif