

As Twitter, inc. doesn't seem to get their heads around this topic themselves, let me take over and give them some options to gain some money for hosting Twitter. As all the stuff on my website is licensed under [\[\[http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/|CC-SA 3.0\]\]](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) they don't even have to pay royalty fees to me if they want to use them. (They can, if they want to, however).

So. Let's start.

===== The foundation =====

Why go all commercial at all? Why not „go foundation“ like WikiMedia did with [\[\[http://wikipedia.org|Wikipedia\]\]](http://wikipedia.org)? Something like the Twitter foundation where people donate to help Twitter pay the bills.

* **Pros**

- * It already works at wikimedia
- * Is always considered as „good“ in internet people's minds

* **Cons**

- * Seems that someone will have to write a bothersome open letter from time to time like Jimmy Wales does
- * Can be hard to get the legal stuff done in some countries
- * Is a bit hard to manage, I guess

===== Go viral =====

What's your highest item in your bills? Servers, eh? Why not rewrite the Twitter backend to support grid computing and have your users and some universitys (that have **way** more calculating power and storage than they need) to serve your business. Make that thing open source and you'll get power for free.

For the other items (like HR and stuff), use the foundation idea above.

===== Forced following =====

Force your users to follow certain advertising bots, specialized for them (you know, like age, interests. That stuff). That way even applications, that not show your website, would have to spit out ads to their users (Just close the API keys for applications that try to filter that).

But don't spam the users. Just drop a few lines from time to time. That way you would have subtle advertising like Google does with Google Ads.

Three and a half options for Twitter to earn money

You could have some kind of premium users (oh, bad word) or donation users that are able to unfollow these bots.

* **Pros**

- * Easy to embed into your code
- * Good acceptance among most users („Hey, they do some advertising. But that way it's free“)

* **Cons**

- * Some effort to build up the system and check API-uses from time to time
- * The „forced“ thing could be bad for your reputation in some ways

===== Premium users =====

Okay, that's the worst method. Have special users pay some features (like certification, more than 140 characters, higher API limits).

* **Pros**

- * You make some money (perhaps)

* **Cons**

- * Works for very few sites
- * You lose some users
- * It's bad. Forget about it.