

Summarize: Twitter Tweets

Read the text. Summarize the main idea in one paragraph.

Why are tweets limited to 140 characters? There are 2 reasons.

In the beginning, Twitter was designed to work on cell phones. When Twitter started in 2006, cell phones were popular. Smartphones were uncommon. The iPhone didn't even exist.

Cell phone messages had to be short because of a 160 character limit. If you sent a message longer than that, the phone company might have cut it up and sent two or three separate messages.

The 160 character limit came from a man named Friedhelm Hillebrand. In 1985, he studied many kinds of messages. He said the average message was 160 characters or less.

That was good news for telephone companies. 160 characters was about the most they could send in a single message with their technology. So, phone companies picked 160 characters as the international standard for the short messaging system, or SMS.

Why did Twitter limit messages to only 140 characters? Twitter said each tweet required 20 characters for the user's name. The remaining 140 were needed for the information in the message. Another reason was style. Twitter wanted people to send easy to read messages that would not be cut up into smaller pieces by the phone companies.

Back to the original question, why are tweets 140 characters? History and style. Tweets were designed 10 years ago for cell phones. Today's technology has advanced a lot compared to the past, but nobody can think of a good reason to change the 140 limit.

Short tweets are here to stay.

Example Summary

Here is an example of a summary. It is colored coded to show how different parts in the main idea sentence are explained inside the paragraph.

Twitter tweets are limited to 140 characters because of the technology's history and the writing style. Twitter lets people send short messages quickly. The 140 character limit started a long time ago. When Twitter was first developed, it was going to be used on cell phones. At that time, cell phone messages had a 160 character limit. Twitter reduced the size by 20 characters so the user's ID could be included in the message. Today, there are Smartphones, so there is no need to limit messages to 140 characters. However, Twitter learned that found that the limit created a fun writing style. The company decided to keep the limit so people would continue to enjoy tweeting by writing in the same style.

Example Summary

Here is the same summary without color coding.

Twitter tweets are limited to 140 characters because of the technology's history and the writing style. Twitter lets people send short messages quickly. The 140 character limit started a long time ago. When Twitter was first developed, it was going to be used on cell phones. At that time, cell phone messages had a 160 character limit. Twitter reduced the size by 20 characters so the user's ID could be included in the message. Today, there are Smartphones, so there is no need to limit messages to 140 characters. However, Twitter learned that found that the limit created a fun writing style. The company decided to keep the limit so people would continue to enjoy tweeting by writing in the same style.