

Creating a Custom Twitter Background

When you're on Twitter for any length of time and start looking at other people's profiles, you realize that most of the well established, more professional tweeters have their own branded, custom designed background.



A Plain Vanilla Twitter Background



A Custom, Branded Twitter Background

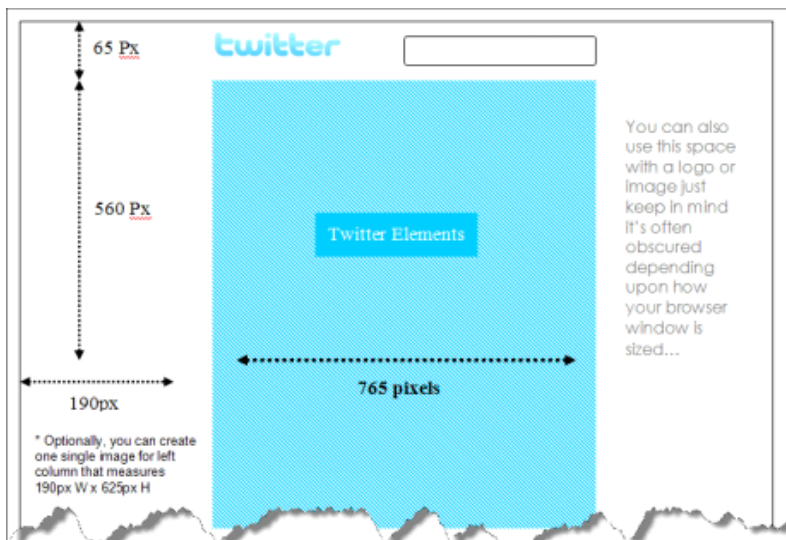
Fortunately, if you have a little bit of talent with a computer or know somebody who does, it's fairly simple to create your own unique background. There are also several services that have sprung up which will create a free or low cost background from a variety of standard templates. If you do it yourself, you will need somewhat sophisticated drawing/graphics program or, again, know someone who does. MS Paint, if you're a Windows user, won't do. Apple may have tools but I don't use it so I don't know. Something like Adobe Photoshop will work. There's also a free, image editing program called Gimp (www.gimp.org) which may do the trick if you can master the learning curve. If your program can create or save images in *.jpg, *.gif or *.png, it should work.

Step 1: Create an image (work space) that's large enough for the largest monitors. I used 2048 pixels wide x 800 pixels high for mine. Starbucks uses 1600 x 900, as another example. Either works. If you're asked to select an image resolution, I'd suggest 72 px/inch as that's considered standard web resolution. The larger the screen resolution you choose, the bigger the finished image.

Step 2: Import or cut and paste pictures, text, logos, etc. in the left hand column and, optionally, across the top. You have a column that's about 190 pixels wide to work with on the left and about 65 pixels high across the top. I'd also suggest limiting the height of your image to 560 pixels (measuring from the top of the central Twitter content box).

Microsoft Powerpoint Works, Too

Another, more accessible, option to many is to use Microsoft PowerPoint. Use the Custom setting under Page Setup to create a large enough "work space". Go bigger, if in doubt. You might start with a page setting of 28" width x 12" height. When you've arranged the elements then save the document with a *.jpg extension rather than *.ppt and follow the instructions in the rest of this document to set it as your background.



image/message obscured by the Twitter window in the center.

Step 3: Once you're happy with the composition of your background save it with an extension of *.jpg, *.gif or *.png. The latter format generally creates larger image files so be careful with that if you've created a large graphic. Twitter limits background images to no more than 800K

Step 4: When you have your image ready to go then it's time to login to your Twitter account. From the Home page...

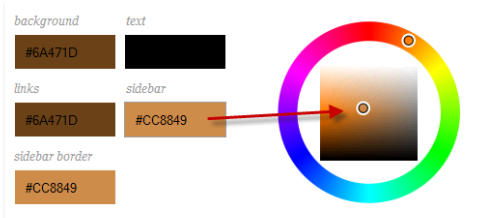
- Click on **Settings**

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- Click on **Design**
- Click on **Change background image>>**



- Click on **Choose File**
- Locate your image file on your computer, select it and click on **save changes** back on the Twitter Design page
- To ensure that the Twitter supplied elements match your new design you'll next go in to **Change design colors** (to the right of **Change background image**) and by clicking on the color bars you can use the color wheel to select a color or manually enter the color code (e.g. #CC8849 is the color I use for my sidebar because it matches the color of the information block I created on the left of my twitter background graphic). If you have a color palette that you or your graphics artist (if it's not you) has developed, this is where you reference it.



- Click **save changes** and, voila, you're a customized Twitter power user on your way to Twitter elite-dom.

I hope that this information helps the DIYers in Twitterdom and you can always provide this to your graphics artist or web developer as a guideline; they'll get it.

We can do it for you

We do have a graphics artist that we work with so if you send me your images along with the content and links you'd like referenced and an idea of the color scheme for both the dominant side element and a top bar, if desired, I can have her work up a more sophisticated design for about \$50.

Free Twitter Background Creators

Finally, there are a number of free services that provide a variety of templates to choose from. You upload some basic images and use their creation forms to add content and they'll generate a background, no charge. Here's a few (no recommendations so buyer beware ;-)

- ◆ **Twitbacks** – <http://www.twitbacks.com>
- ◆ **My Tweet Space** - <http://www.mytweetsspace.com/> (they also provide several free Twitter Follow Me Buttons that you can use on your web site or blog).
- ◆ **Pretty Tweet** - <http://prettytweet.com>

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... [@tomjgray](https://twitter.com/tomjgray) and send me a tweet when you've got your new background in place.

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If you have any questions or would like to know how **Gray eMarketing Solutions** can help you *build your brand, create authority, develop relationships and turn those relationships into partnerships, prospects and customers*, **contact:**

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