

Is lazy interaction better than no interaction?

This post is about a phenomenon that I've noticed on Twitter (just in case you aren't on Twitter, I'm letting you know now so you can stop reading).

First of all, here's a question: do you expect a thank you or other acknowledgement when you re-tweet something? I would like to know for sure (I would appreciate your thoughts, please do share them in the comments) but my gut tells me most people appreciate a thank you but don't expect it or need it.

And yet, there's been an explosion (or at least it seems so to me) in automated 'thanks for your interaction' tweets. You've probably seen the ones I mean:

My best RTs this week came from: @xxx @xxx #thankSAll Who were yours? sumall.com/thankyou

or

Thanks to my top interactors!

@xxxx @xxxx

#tweetjukebox

I see why some people would think this is a good idea. Perhaps they were raised by parents who insisted that you must write a thank you note whenever you get a gift. Or perhaps, they think any interaction, even automated interaction, is better than no interaction.

It's similar to when you send a company an email outlining some concern or question you have and you then receive an automated reply thanking you for your email but not addressing your issue. You could have said that the company's product is killing you and the reply would still say "thank you for your

email.”

Automated replies and automated tweets may be expedient but they are empty gestures. They have no content. They have no context. And they are basically useless in terms of creating the social media “engagement” everyone talks about.

If the only way you can think of interacting with others on Twitter is by automated thank yous, I respectfully suggest you get yourself off the platform immediately.

Similarly, if you absolutely, positively need to have an app send out canned tweets for you, you may not have the time or inclination to be on social media.

Here are some truths about social media engagement:

- its time-consuming
- there’s effort involved
- personal beats automated every day

What do you think? Are you using these automated thank you generators? If so, what are you hoping to achieve? Are you achieving what you are hoping?