

Twitter is doubling the length of tweets to 280 characters

 By [Andy Walker](#)

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Twitter's 140-character limit may soon be a thing of the past. The microblogging network [announced](#) plans to extend its arbitrary but now-familiar 140-character limit to 280 characters.

"This is a small change, but a big move for us," Twitter CEO and co-founder Jack Dorsey [tweeted](#).

"140 was an arbitrary choice based on the 160 character SMS limit. Proud of how thoughtful the team has been in solving a real problem people have when trying to tweet. And at the same time maintaining our brevity, speed, and essence!"

And yes, that was all one tweet.

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Proud of how thoughtful the team has been in solving a real problem people have when trying to tweet. And at the same time maintaining our brevity, speed, and essence! <https://t.co/TuHj51MsTu>— jack (@jack) [September 26, 2017](#) "

As users cry for editable tweets, easy muting for retweets and threads, and other features, Twitter is giving people more room to express themselves.

The company's reason is simple: 140-characters just isn't enough for some languages.

Cue the science.

" 'Twitter is about brevity. It's what makes it such a great way to see what's happening' "

"Our research shows us that the character limit is a major cause of frustration for people Tweeting in English, but it is not for those Tweeting in Japanese," remarks the company in a post, published by product manager Aliza Rosen, and senior software engineer Ikuhiro Ihara.

"Also, in all markets, when people don't have to cram their thoughts into 140 characters and actually have some to spare, we see more people Tweeting – which is awesome!"



Although 280-characters is now double the initial tweet limit, the company confirmed that it will not turn the service into Medium — its longform platform.

“Twitter is about brevity. It’s what makes it such a great way to see what’s happening. Tweets get right to the point with the information or thoughts that matter. That is something we will never change.”

Unsurprisingly, Twitter users aren’t warming to the experiment.

Some took aim at Dorsey’s tweet, poking fun at its “novel” length.

“ *this tweet is so long, honestly— LW (@lindseyweber) [September 26, 2017](#)* ”

“ *oh my god it’s a NOVEL— nicole boyce (@nicolewboyce) [September 26, 2017](#)* ”

Others mentioned a four-letter word that Twitter has been ignoring: edit

“ *Edit has 4 characters. Can we start there instead?— Ian Petchenik (@petchmo) [September 26, 2017](#)* ”

Senior features editor at VICE Caitlin Kelly shows Twitter what a little editing can accomplish.

“ *139 characters pic.twitter.com/WkfdXL8oLh— Caitlin Kelly (@caitlin__kelly) [September 26, 2017](#)* ”

Twitter superstar Chrissy Teigen also gave Dorsey her thoughts.

“Jack, I gotta say I do not like this. I do not,” she notes.

“I have not even heard of one person complain about character limit. who is telling you this? they suck. tell them to find a message board.”

She has a point.

A large portion of Twitter’s appeal is its ability to disseminate information in relatively short bursts. While 140-characters may not suit certain subject matter, users circumvent this using “threads”. Hell, we’ve seen Twitter use [this exact system this week](#).

Nevertheless, the company asked that users give the change a chance.

“We understand since many of you have been Tweeting for years, there may be an emotional attachment to 140 characters – we felt it, too. But we tried this, saw the power of what it will do, and fell in love with this new, still brief, constraint,” the company added.

“We are excited to share this today, and we will keep you posted about what we see and what comes next.”

ABOUT ANDY WALKER

Camper by day, run-and-gunner by night, Andy is editor at Merneburn and prefers his toast like his coffee -- dark and crunchy. Specialising in spotting the next big Instagram cat star, Andy also dabbles in smartphone and game reviews over on Gearburn.

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