

## **Twitter asks advertisers to pay to tweet**

*Tim Bradshaw, Kenneth Li and David Gelles*

Millions of Twitter users will see advertisements for the first time on Wednesday after the Californian company took the first big step towards commercialising its service. The move, the most fundamental change in the site's four-year history, has excited advertisers but irked many of its 50m users.

Mark Wyatt, who works in public relations, tweeted that he "hate[d] the idea". "Twitter is for sharing info amongst peers not for ad agencies to sell me more stuff!"

Twitter has resisted moves towards traditional advertising but brands such as Sony Pictures and Best Buy will now be able to pay to display their "tweets" – the short updates that users post on Twitter – at the top of pages of search results about relevant topics, such as movies or electronics.

Analysts estimate these "Promoted Tweets" could raise hundreds of millions of dollars in revenues in its first years. Twitter also plans to test mixing Promoted Tweets with users' own feed of updates later this year.

"Twitter have taken a slow and methodical approach to commercialisation," said Sir Martin Sorrell, chief executive of WPP, the world's largest advertising group.

Dick Costolo, Twitter chief operating officer, told the Financial Times that the group had taken a "user-centric approach" to designing the service.

Sponsored messages will be judged on their "resonance", meaning how often they are replied to or forwarded on by consumers.

"We're very interested in getting into the conversation but do it in a way that's relevant. I don't want to be the advertiser that's unwelcome," Scott Kelly, digital marketing manager at Ford, told the FT at the AdAge Digital conference, where Twitter launched the service.

Loic Le Meur, developer of Seismic, the software used for updating Twitter posts, welcomed the move.

**Fonte: Financial Times, London, Apr. 13<sup>th</sup> 2010, Media, online.**