

Twitter a global sensation: Hitwise

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Twitter's growth in Australia "has been nothing short of phenomenal," rocketing 1,067 percent since the start of this year, reported Alan Long, research director at the Internet intelligence gathering firm.

The number of visitors to [Twitter](#) has more than tripled in New Zealand since the beginning of the year, and the website shot up 239 ranks in Singapore to score a place among the 50 most popular online destinations in the country.

"In other markets, Twitter has a growth pattern similar to the US and

UK, highlighting that Twitter is a truly global phenomenon," Long said in Hitwise findings released Friday.

As of early this week, Twitter's share of online visits in the United States and Britain had increased by 570 percent and 621 percent respectively since the start of the year.

"It is interesting to note that large jumps in share of visits have been sparked by a variety of events and news items at different times over the past three months," Long wrote.

"But, [Ashton Kutcher](#) and Oprah seem to have had an impact in all countries in mid-April."

US talk show megastar Winfrey made her debut on the micro-blogging service a week ago and attracted more than 125,000 followers in just 24 hours. She now has more than 560,000 followers.

Kutcher, star of the television series "That '70s Show" and husband of actress Demi Moore, beat television news network [CNN](#) on April 17 in a race to see who could become the first Twitter user to attract one million followers.

Oprah is the latest celebrity to begin using Twitter, which allows users to pepper their followers with messages of a maximum 140 characters.

Other well-known users include British actor and playwright Stephen Fry, NBA star Shaquille O'Neal, Australian actor Hugh Jackman, and seven-time Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong.

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