Tweets too short? Twitter mulling 10,000 characters: report

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The 140 character limit on Twitter was based on the capacity of the original messaging software used

Twitter's 140 character limit on tweets has long frustrated and challenged its most verbose users.

Now the company could offer a solution, according to tech news website

re/code: the 10,000 character tweet, which could be available as soon as March.

Re/code reported Tuesday that Twitter has been studying how to allow users to say more, after restricting them to 140 characters for 10 years.

That limit was based on the capacity of the original messaging software used, and though frustrating for many, unleashed a tidal wave of ultra-concise commentary across the web.

Now more than 300 million regular Twitter users send hundreds of millions of messages every day—news reports, personal updates, advertisements, political pitches, photos and videos and, most often, just witty and innocuous comments.

Re/code says the company already allows 10,000 characters in a commercial product called Direct Messages, so the technology is no longer a barrier.

The company is testing a version that would still only display 140 characters in a message, but carry much more, and a reader would have to click on the tweet to see the rest.

The move is a part of Twitter's efforts to expand its user base and advertising sales and other sources of income.

Twitter continued to lose money over the first three quarters of last year. In October it reported a third quarter loss of $132 million, on a disappointing 11 percent year-on-year increase in regular users to 320 million.

Users however were not entirely enthusiastic about the possible new limit, bashing the company in characteristically terse missives.

"140 characters is not NEARLY enough to express my outrage that Twitter is raising the character limit to 10,000," tweeted writer Brian Phillips, in 111 characters.

"Twitter really going hard after those stubborn 300 million people who don't hate it yet," quipped Rusty Foster in just 87 characters.

In his own tweet, Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey did not confirm the plan for a 10,000 character capacity, but said the company is "not going to be shy about building more utility and power into Twitter."

Using himself a popular method for getting past the 140 character limit—attaching a screen shot of a longer text to the tweet—Dorsey called the current format "a beautiful constraint."

"It inspires creativity and brevity. And a sense of speed."

Nevertheless, he said, Twitter has taken note of how many people use such screenshots to surmount the text limit.

"What if that text was actually text? Text that could be searched. Text that could be highlighted. That's more utility and power," Dorsey said.

"As long as it's consistent with what people want to do, we're going to explore it."

Investors did not take to the idea, either: Twitter shares closed down 2.8 percent to $21.92 after the report.

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