Twitter eases process for verified accounts

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Twitter said Tuesday it was streamlining the process for creating verified accounts, a move likely to boost the number of users with a "blue badge" icon.

The social network said it was launching an online application for verified accounts, which allow users to recognize public figures and organizations as authentic.

"We want to make it even easier for people to find creators and influencers on Twitter so it makes sense for us to let people apply for verification," said Tina Bhatnagar, Twitter's vice president of user services.

"We hope opening up this application process results in more people finding great, high-quality accounts to follow, and for these creators and influencers to connect with a broader audience."

Twitter introduced account verification, starting in 2009 and currently has some 187,000 verified accounts from notable users in music, TV, film, fashion, government, politics, religion, media, sports and business.

Verified accounts can help boost the following of those users and allow followers to be sure they are reading authentic comments.

Some examples of verified Twitter users include Katy Perry, with more than 90 million followers, and President Barack Obama, with 76 million.

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