

Twitter eyes paid 'premium' service for power users

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Twitter is looking to build a more powerful Tweetdeck to help users manage their accounts

Twitter confirmed Friday it is considering a paid subscription service that would give frequent users more tools to use the social network for marketing, journalism and other fields.

The company began conducting a survey of users this week that showed

it was looking at building a more powerful version of TweetDeck, the dashboard that many use to manage their accounts.

A statement to AFP said the survey is intended "to assess the interest in a new, more enhanced version of TweetDeck."

An upgraded TweetDeck would put Twitter in competition with third-party services for social media accounts such as Hootsuite or SocialFlow, which allow users to manage multiple accounts and measure the impact of their messages.

The move comes as Twitter is struggling to boost its membership and keep up with other fast-growing social networks, and to move to profitability for the first time.

"Twitter is considering offering a more advanced TweetDeck experience, with more powerful tools to help marketers, journalists, professionals, and others in our community find out what is happening in the world quicker, to gain more insights, and see the broadest range of what people are saying on Twitter," survey participants were told.

"This premium tool set will provide valuable viewing, posting, and signaling tools like alerts, trends and activity analysis, advanced analytics, and composing and posting tools all in one customizable dashboard."

In the survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to pay \$4.99 per month for the advanced service, and whether other price points would be acceptable.

The service would include "tools to monitor multiple timelines from multiple accounts and from multiple devices, including mobile, all in an ad-free experience," said the survey.

Jan Dawson of Jackdaw Research said the new tier of service may provide a boost for Twitter.

"I've thought for a while that some kind of premium subscription service would be a great way to allow the heaviest users of Twitter to pay for the value they get out of it (while potentially avoiding ads)," Dawson said in a blog post.

He said it could "serve as a useful additional revenue stream at a time when Twitter's ad revenue has been stagnating."

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