

'Twitter Lite' aims at emerging markets

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Twitter on Thursday unveiled a low-data usage version of the social network, which aims to bring in users in emerging markets and areas with slow or expensive mobile networks.

The California group unveiled Twitter Lite, "making Twitter more accessible to millions of people," said product manager Patrick Traugher.

"Twitter Lite is a great way for many people in emerging markets across Asia Pacific, Latin America and Africa to experience Twitter for the first time on their mobile devices."

Traugher said the new mobile service can be accessed via web browser, and offers quick loading on slower connections, while taking little space on mobile phones.

The move comes with Twitter struggling to boost user growth and engagement to keep up with faster-growing social networks, and move toward profitability.

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Twitter made a push for users in India with the launch of the new service and a partnership with Vodafone at the start of the T20 cricket season.

"We are thrilled to partner with Vodafone in India to provide live cricket updates via a specially curated Twitter timeline to their smartphone customers as the T20 cricket season kicks off," said Twitter's Arvinder Gujral in a blog post.

"Cricket is one of the most talked about topics in India with over 10.6 million Tweets about the Indian Premier League (IPL) during last year's season. This special Twitter timeline will feature top Tweets from cricket leagues, teams, players, and commentators to give cricket fans among Vodafone's over 200 million subscribers across the country a compelling reason to use Twitter Lite to get real-time info and commentary about this popular sport."

Twitter Lite can be accessed in 42 languages, according to the company including six Indic languages: Hindi, Bengali, Kannada, Tamil, Gujarati,

and Marathi.

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