

Twitter purists mourn end of 140-character limit on posts

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Twitter logo is displayed at the entrance of Twitter headquarters in San Francisco on March 2011 in California.

It was a sad day for Twitter purists, dismayed that the 140-character limit restricting users on the social media platform to crisp, succinct posts had been doubled to a gaudy 280.

And they have been expressing their outrage—how else?—with short tweets and hashtags like #140forlife.

"Personally, I enjoyed the challenge of fitting my thoughts into 140 characters!" tweeted Weather Channel meteorologist Maria LaRosa, with the hashtag #lessismore.

"Like some baby boomers still rocking the flip phone, I'll still be rocking

#140characters," added Fox News journalist Jim MacKay.

Roger Cox, who handles community relations for the police department in Bellevue, Nebraska, struggled to reach the new limit in a tweet filled with emoticons.

"I don't know what to do with all this extra room. #280characters on @Twitter room to throw a @Twitter party. Wow, still not close to filling this space. The days of #140characters are over. It's #TacoTuesday, did you have tacos today? Still room left."

Twitter rattled the twitterverse on Tuesday when it announced that it was doubling the limit for tweets to 280 characters, in a bid to draw more users and boost engagement.

It is the first time the character cap has been raised since Twitter was founded 11 years ago.

"We want it to be easier and faster for everyone to express themselves," tweeted the site, which started testing an increase to its limit in most languages in early September.

The Trumps' take on Twitter

US President Donald Trump, perhaps the world's most powerful Twitter user, has not commented on the policy change but sent a few lengthy tweets from his tour of Asia, including a 217-character post from Beijing on Wednesday in which he thanked Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife for an afternoon at the famed Forbidden City.

Trump, a prolific tweeter who posts pronouncements both mundane and shocking, and had previously overcome the 140-character limit by stringing together multiple posts in what's been dubbed "tweetstorms."

His eldest son Donald Trump Jr was more hesitant about embracing the new policy.

"@Twitter how about a compromise... you give everybody ONE 280 character a day? 140 was an art form, 280 is everyone's chance to write their Gettysburg Address that no one wants to actually read," he said, referring to president Abraham Lincoln's famous Civil War speech.

The website Slate developed a Google Chrome extension for those clinging bitterly to the old limit, cutting off tweets in a person's feed at 140 characters and imposing the old limit on the user. The extension was called simply "140."

"Eventually (in an hour?) Twitter will find a way to circumvent our extension, we're sure. The army of progress marches forever forward, burning everything good in the world and salting the earth behind it. But at least you can use Slate's 140 to make Twitter great again... for now," the site said.

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