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The future's so tweet for big business

by Matthew Killoran
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TWEETING is about to become big business and Gold Coast companies are looking to embrace the change.

Micro-blogging website Twitter has announced it is developing an enhanced version of the site for businesses to use, for a small fee, to be launched later this year.

Twitter currently allows users to send free, 140-character text messages to their network of friends or 'followers', a process known as 'tweeting'.

While details about what new features the commercial version of Twitter will offer are yet to be announced, some Gold Coast businesses, such as Varsity Lakes-based web development company iOnline, already use the service and would be willing to pay for business-centric additions.

iOnline managing director Joshua Smith said he was interested to see what additional features would be added to a commercial version of website.

"We've been dabbling in a few social networks and we find, of those, Twitter is probably the

most business focused," he said.

"If there was a commercial option that offered additional features we would be interested in exploring how that differed."

He said using the micro-blogging site was useful as a branding exercise, as well as updating clients on new services.

Zarrafra's Coffee boss Kenton Campbell said his company joined Twitter as a marketing initiative and he would 'absolutely' consider joining the commercial version when more details were available.

"People should get more excited and more involved with their businesses in electronic media like this," he said.

The Bulletin has its own Twitter account, which keeps its followers up to date with news on the Gold Coast.

Gold Coast businesses which have started tweeting include iOnline which has 473 followers, Zarrafra's Coffee which has a smaller audience of 46 followers and Chirn Park-based skateboard retailer Boardshop Australia which has a 1631 followers.

The Gold Coast Bulletin has 105 followers. Twitter was created three years ago.