

Twitter: Special marketing sauce at maritime brokerage

Just the right amount of info to the right people separates FIS from its 'wood-panelled' competitors

By Ryan Skinner



Today I caught up with the guy behind the [FIS twitter feed](#), Neville Smith, to learn why a company in derivatives trading had taken up this new media tool.

"Every one of our tweets, a daily roundup of the whole day's trading in freight options and derivatives for the Capesize, Panamax, Supramax and Iron Ore Swaps, is put together at the end of the day. I can tell you it's a unique discipline to pack it all into 140-character tweets," said Smith.

FIS has been twittering thus for a couple of months, when Smith and FIS decided that twitter was the ideal vehicle for them to share basic information and expertise from their hectic day-to-day operations. Said Smith: "We pondered doing a blog, but then there's the resource issue of putting aside time for frequent blog posts. I didn't want to do that unless we had the time to do a quality effort, and that's tough in this hectic climate."

Smith has a background as content manager for [lloydlist.com](#) and worked closely with Mark Warner there, who he credits for giving him the social media bug. Twitter seemed a natural fit for a brokerage. "What brokers do all day is twitter. Here at the office 15 guys exchange short bursts of coded language," said Smith.

Twitter's not really a thing in the derivatives community, particularly the shipping derivatives community. Smith feels that this, in one way, demonstrates a cultural difference between FIS and their more conservative competitors at [Clarksons](#) or [Fearnleys](#).

"We're approaching 100 followers - not the big numbers yet. It's early days. Our impression is that these followers are primarily individual traders in parallel markets to shipping. I think that they find the short daily update on freight rate movements exactly what they're after. No more, no less," said Smith.

	Market Data	Latest News	Events	twitter	
		Spot	March	Q2	Cal 11
Capesize 4TC		38,931	37,250	37,250	26,875
Panamax 4TC		34,209	33,000	31,500	19,000