

Oprah Tries Twitter, Crowns Ashton King of It

By Andrew LaVallee

Oprah Winfrey named Ashton Kutcher “king” of Twitter Friday, after he reached one million followers before CNN’s breaking-news account did.



Associated Press

Oprah Winfrey

Mr. Kutcher, a star of Fox’s “That ’70s Show” and husband of Demi Moore, [challenged the news channel](#) earlier this week, which CNN personality Larry King accepted in a [subsequent video](#).

Both sides agreed that the winner would donate 10,000 mosquito nets for World Malaria Day next week. Along the way, CNN [made a deal to procure](#) the CNNbrk Twitter account from the non-employee operating it.

Others took sides on Twitter, blogs and even billboards. Thursday afternoon, Lamar Advertising, based in Baton Rouge, La., ran messages with Mr. Kutcher’s Twitter name, “[aplusk](#),” on 1,133 electronic billboards across the country. According to a spokesman for the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, the company estimates that the billboards resulted in 34 million media impressions.

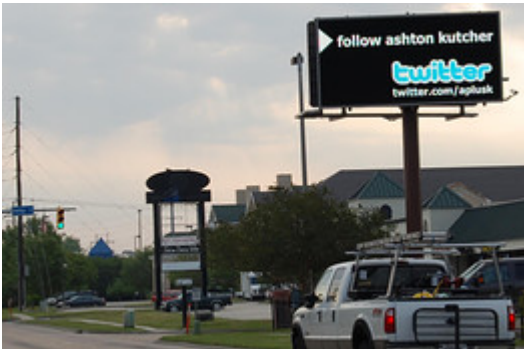


Associated Press

Ashton Kutcher

Mr. Kutcher won the contest (his millionth follower was [sinnersatre100](#), who lists his name as Mike Satre) and appeared on Oprah's TV show to talk about the charity.

Ms. Winfrey also took the occasion to make her Twitter debut, attracting more than 100,000 followers in her first day. "HI TWITTERS . THANK YOU FOR A WARM WELCOME. FEELING REALLY 21st CENTURY," she wrote in all capital letters, setting off a [chorus of comments](#) on her lack of tech savvy (to many, writing in all-caps is the online equivalent of shouting). Valleywag's Owen Thomas [called it](#) "like watching a toddler take her first awkward steps."



Outdoor Advertising Association of America

Lamar Advertising used its electronic billboards to promote Ashton Kutcher's Twitter account.

As of 1 p.m. EST, she's following just nine other Twitterers, all of whom acknowledged her presence: [Jimmy Fallon](#) ("The pastrami at Katz's is the best. @oprah come see me in NYC and we'll grab a bite"), [Shaquille O'Neal](#) ("psst everybody tweetup @oprah's crib. Lol"), TV producer [Sheri Salata](#) ("We go live friday @ 9a cst for the tweet heard round the world. Start following oprah now!"), [Ms. Moore](#) ("Signing off ready for bed. Oprah in the morning. Time to welcome her officially to the world of Twitter 7am PST! Good Night!"), [George Stephanopoulos](#) ("And Oprah, please take care of Ali today. Her head cold is a bear"), [Ellen DeGeneres](#) ("Oprah Winfrey - what are you doing on here?! Shouldn't you be working on our cover?!"), Twitter CEO [Evan Williams](#) ("Just left Harpo HQ. What lovely people! So much fun. Watch the show later"), and of course, her best friend [Gayle King](#) ("@oprah Trying to see if I am doing right Help").

Pali Capital analyst Rich Greenfield [weighed in](#), noting that Ms. Winfrey's instant popularity on Twitter will pay dividends when she launches her own cable network next year. "Oprah's relevance and direct connection with consumers, thru mediums such as Twitter, has the ability to drive awareness and viewership in a way that other networks would die for," he said in a blog post, "especially new channels that are looking to gain visibility in an increasingly cluttered world."