

Twitterrific 5 — Changing the Game. Again

Posted on December 5, 2012 by Shawn Wilkins



Twitterrific is old; Twitterrific is new. Twitterrific is traditional; Twitterrific is innovative. Remarkably, Twitterrific 5 is all of these things. As one of the original groundbreaking apps that pushed Twitter into the realm of popularity, the Iconfactory has decided that it's time to recreate their Twitter client, and they've got something new and exciting in store. Twitterrific — with its refreshed look and improved way of showing the simplest of actions — has evolved from being too empty to feature rich. Twitterrific 5 is a new start.

Twitterrific 5 is something that's new to all of us. Personally, I've never been a fan of Twitterrific's past incarnations because the app seemed to prefer simplicity and traditional conventions in lieu of trends such as pull-to-refresh. Some of the things that we've come to rely on thanks to other Twitter clients were missing from Twitterrific 4. Albeit, when creating something new and introducing a massive amount of changes to an app, you're better off releasing an entirely new version instead of a simple update. In comes Twitterrific 5, rebuilt from the ground up.

At first glance, you may assume that Twitterrific 5 is just a bare bones app. You may also assume that the Iconfactory is taking a leap of faith without caring what's awaiting them on the other side. That's almost what they're doing, but this time, they know what's ahead. They know that users are being subjected to an excess of identical, unimaginative arrangements of tweets. They know that users want more than gimmicky features they'll use once a week. They know that users want new ways that allow them to take control of how their apps work instead of contorting their habits and preferences to work with their apps.



The Iconfactory takes cues from Windows 8 and introduces a very text-heavy interface in Twitterrific 5. However, the designers don't let the app dwindle there. Windows 8 has its own idea of design that relies on using the Segoe typeface for everything and increasing or decreasing the font to show which areas have more dominance over others. The new Twitterrific doesn't settle for that. It presents the important information in a larger font (the same information that other apps would display in a smaller bold font), accompanied by the avatars of those who have tweeted. On top of that, users are allowed to customize how it looks. You now have full control over how you want to display your tweets, gaining the ability to fine-tune every aspect of it. You're allowed to choose the font, the line spacing in tweets, and the size of avatars. You're even given the opportunity to change brightness from within the app itself if you find yourself squinting from the backlight. There is an array of customizable features in this version of Twitterrific, and you have 100% control over all of it.

In addition to the multitude of customization options, Twitterrific 5 is adopting a trend before many other developers even have the chance to experiment with it: sliding gestures. Tweetbot was one of the first Twitter apps to properly integrate gestures, but upon execution, they still felt undefined. Upon triple tapping a tweet, you're instantly greeted with the reply screen. That's a nice place to start, but it needs to be improved; it needs to be done correctly. The Iconfactory spotted the potential and took the gesture where it needed to be. They tested it and saw that two main actions were occurring: replying and viewing conversations. There are also two natural directions in which to slide or swipe things. One is to the right (as if unlocking an iPhone) and another is to the left. Sliding to the right is the most natural of the two, and with that, Twitterrific 5 has chosen that direction for replying to tweets. The other direction is seemingly less natural, so it's been designated to viewing conversations.

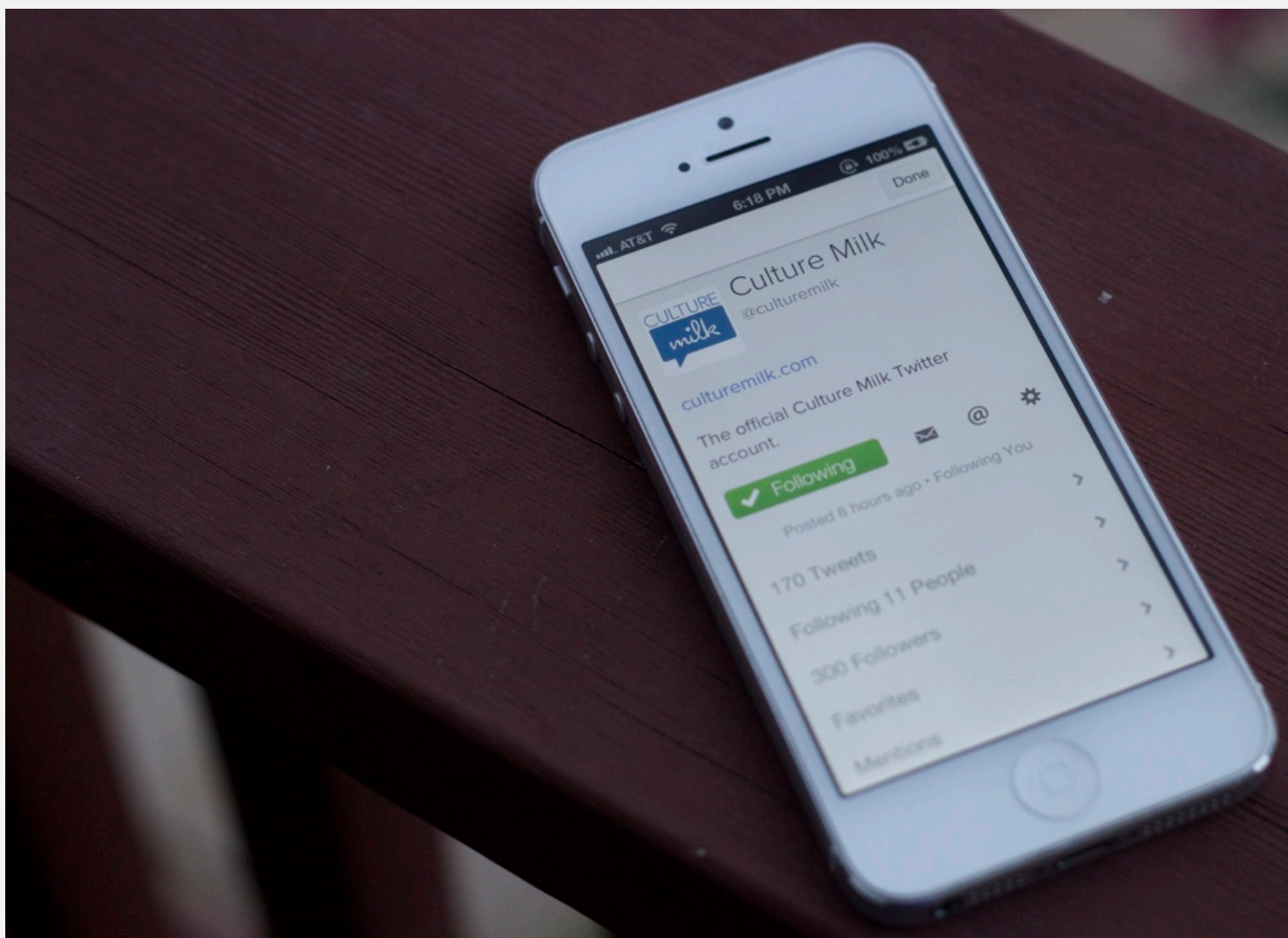
Despite all the praise, Twitterrific 5 won't be everyone's favorite Twitter client. Some people are accustomed to the typical timeline view with narrow-spaced text and tapping on a tweet to access its full information. These tasks are all very indocrinated into a user's workflow when it comes to Twitter apps. Twitterrific 5 gives up on the viewing of a tweet's information since it's highly unnecessary. The only occasion you would find it useful is when you need to retweet someone, share the tweet, or reply. You now do all of this from the comfort of your timeline. A single tap on a tweet, for instance, shows the glyphs for the necessary actions and lets you execute them quickly and without hassle.

The problem for most users arises in change since many Twitter users are opposed to it. The idea of unfamiliarity plagues most people, but it's easy to overcome. After a few hours with the new Twitterrific, the gestures feel natural. Everything in the app seems like it should've been this way from the start. The problem with Twitter clients is that most of them should've taken a simplistic route instead of heading down a road filled with gaudy design and useless features. The route that Twitterrific 5 takes is the one that makes the most sense. You don't just tweet from the app, you fine-tune it for yourself. The app gives you the options to make reading your tweets easier for you. You don't have to have an app that looks like everyone else's; you can enable the light theme, choose Proxima Nova, and have wider line spacing. It's all there in the app if you want it.



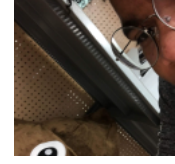
The only way Twitterrific can fail is if the Iconfactory holds out on great things in the name of their app's newfound simplicity in innovation. What made Twitterrific 4 unpopular with many users was its lack of basic features present in newer Twitter apps that were hitting the App Store like pull-to-refresh and streaming. Mismatching colors and an overall discomfort in the app's scheme were also subjects of complaint.

Arguably, Twitterrific is responsible for Twitter being as popular as it is today. As such, the app should evolve with the platform, which is changing constantly for better or worse. However, it's the users that the Iconfactory needs to zone in on. It's obvious that many Twitter users are more interested in new trends brought to the table by other clients. Now, Twitterrific 5 is bringing new, exciting, and grander strategies to the world of Twitter apps. The things that people want from Tweetbot are here in Twitterrific 5, and the new things that Twitterrific 5 has introduced are undoubtedly going to be expected in future apps. However, the full information view of tweets will probably die. The nameless features that go hidden will probably die. The absence of elegance through the eyes of simplicity will definitely die. Now it's all about what the users want, and the Iconfactory has caught on.



Twitterrific 5 changes the game. Again. People look to Iconfactory apps for creativity and innovation, and this time, the Iconfactory team has looked at their own app and asked themselves how they can improve upon it. The result is outstanding, and Twitterrific 5 navigates on a new plane of artistry. Some users may find it too simple or too different. Some may find it just right. Some may even find it too right to fit into their lives since habit calls for needless flipping and tinkering and scrolling through options and tabs.

I find the app to be easy to adjust and perfect for what it is. It's a Twitter client that works well, looks gorgeous, and lets me do exactly what I need to without hassle. The gestures are smooth, and the way the app feels to open up and start tweeting is astounding. If you're looking for something new, something exciting, but still something that sticks to the very early concepts of fluid, efficient, function, you should support the new Twitterrific. The hard work and attention to detail that was put in by the Iconfactory team is obvious, and Twitterrific 5 shows off something that hasn't been done for many years: a reinvention of the wheel.



About Shawn Wilkins
An enthusiastic writer who values quality over quantity. The abundance of posts shouldn't make the site, but rather, the quality of them. Aiming for perfection is the goal and anything less isn't acceptable. Long walks on the beach are accepted, however.
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