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What is Bitly?

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Bitly (http://www.bit.ly) is a link shortening service that creates short URLs that redirect to the original longer web address.

Especially popular on the microblogging site Twitter due to the social network's 140 characters per post limit, Bitly quickly became the most common way to shorten and share URLs on the service.

Bitly's key benefits and features

- Links can be shortened on the bitly website, as well as through a bookmarklet that can be installed on the majority of modern web browsers.

- Unlike some other link shortening services, Bitly also offers analytics tools with real-time link tracking that allow you to track your short URL as it is shared across social networks and blogs. As well as seeing how many times your link has been clicked, Bitly also shows you who clicked on it and where they are located in the world.

- It is free to register and use Bitly, or you can choose to log-in to the service using your existing Facebook or Twitter username and password if you would rather not set-up an account directly with the service.

- One potential issue with Bitly is that the .ly top-level domain that it used is controlled by the Libyan government, and there have been reported instances of link removal. You can however use bitly.com or the j.mp domain as an alternate to the bit.ly address, to get around this issue.

Next steps

▶ What is X (Twitter)?

▶ What is Facebook?

▶ How to use x (Twitter)

▶ How to build and manage your Twitter following

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