Celebrities Leave A Void in Twitter

By AUSTIN CONSIDINE

HARLIE SHEEN hasn't exactly built his "winning" utation by keeping his thoughts to himself. So when h nounced last week that he was quitting Twitter, the go media may have lost what had seemed like a bottom trough of premium material.

And Mr. Sheen wasn't alone. Just this month, Alec Bat and the British singer Lily Allen also made headlines by aban ing their personal Twitter accounts, at least for a while.

It raises the question: Are savvy celebrities deciding Twiti becoming too much of a liability?

Celebrities have traditionally used handlers and publicis protect them from fans and from themselves. But Twitter's al to connect them directly to their audiences has made it the gardump of choice for their every opinion and non sequitur.

In other words, it's a public gaffe waiting to happen.

"Sharing so much often backfires and invites negative I back, which is difficult for most celebrities to take in," Seth Met a Los Angeles clinical psychologist who counts several celebramong his patients, wrote in an e-mail. "They quit Twitter, or I publicist tells them they need to quit for the sake of their career

Mr. Sheen's Twitter account has been a cultural force o own. He amassed nearly a million followers during his first da Twitter in March 2011, and enlivened the tweeting world's voc lary with hashtags like #winning and #tigerblood. His last to read, in typically obscure fashion: "Reach for the stars every



FROM LEFT, MARCIO SANCHEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS, ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IM. KEVIN SCANLON FOR THE NEW YORK T

SIGNING OFF Alec Baldwin, John Mayer and Charlie Sheen

Dogspeed cadre, c out." He has since said the account was ne his idea.

Celebrities often quit because of a gaffe: Courtney Love several times, once after posting revealing pictures of herself. lowing an ill-informed tweet about the Penn State scandal, Ask Kutcher handed "management" of his 11.5 million follower fee Katalyst Network, a media company he co-founded, "as a sect ary editorial measure," as he put it in a blog post.

But quit as they might, many celebrities leave Twitter only find they can't stay away. For Mr. Baldwin and Ms. Allen, it their second time quitting. (Mr. Baldwin gave no explanat tweeting simply, "It's been fun." Ms. Allen's latest hiatus las only a few hours.) Nicki Minaj, Chris Brown, John Mayer, M Cyrus and many others have done likewise — with Mr. Mayer dicating that he came back "by popular demand."

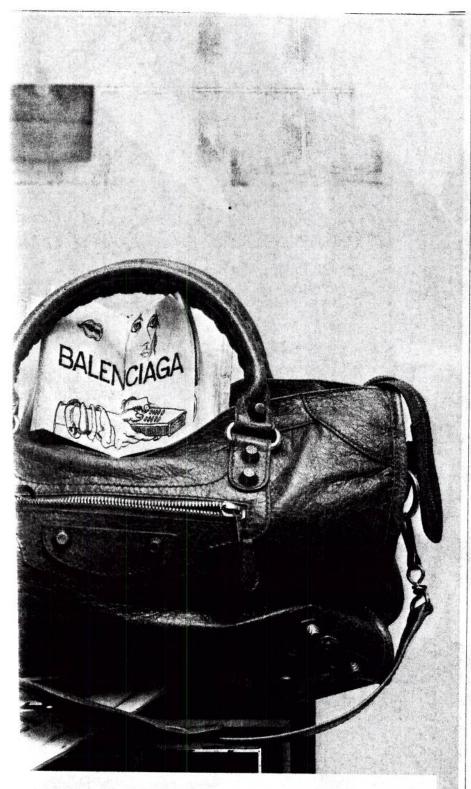
The actor James Franco quit over corporate friction caused some of his eccentric tweets. He later came back, reserving his f strictly for professional promotion.

"'My thought was: 'This is my Twitter. I can do whateve want,'" he told Politico in April 2011. "But certain companies I wwith contacted me about what I was saying."

Dr. Meyers noted that life as a celebrity often creates nar sists, "drawn to Twitter" because they "need constant feedby from others to keep up their grandiose image of themselves."

That need creates a habit that's hard to kick.

"For some celebrities," he said, "they go back to Twitter cause they need the attention and the audience."



BALENCIAGA

