

When Twitter met South Africa - a match made in a train smash

 By [Stephen Grootes](#)

28 Jan 2016

Western Cape Premier Helen Zille has suggested that Twitter in South Africa has become less of a force for good for national debate, and more of a force for evil.



Is Twitter the blue bird of happiness? © Nadezhda Tarasevich – [123RF.com](#)

For her, it could actually hinder debate because of the "vicious debilitating insults" that are now expressed on the medium. There are many people who, no matter what their views on Zille, may agree with her sentiments. Twitter seems to be more angry than it was. But, there may be valid reasons for this, and it may not be a unique phenomenon.

There can be no doubt about it, when [Twitter first came to South Africa](#), it was adopted as a tool for the cool kids. They appeared to rule the roost. And they loved it. It took a while for many politicians to get it, but once they did, Twitter exploded among urban middle-class-smart-phone-wielding South Africans. And with good reason...

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ABOUT STEPHEN GROOTES

Stephen Grootes is political reporter for Eyewitness News (www.ewn.co.za) and contributing editor for *Business Day* (www.businessday.co.za). He used to write for The Daily Maverick (www.thedailymaverick.co.za). Follow him on Twitter at [@StephenGrootes](#).

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