

Understanding Scientific Conference Tweets

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Relevance & Research Question: Scientists mainly tweet during scientific conferences to share information. Previous studies analyzed tweets only on a daily basis (Ross et al., 2011) whereas we assume that tweets are not equally distributed over the day - instead: Twitter activity might peak due to particular events. The present study analyzes tweets on an hourly and half-hourly basis to show that tweeting peaks are valuable moments for conference organizers to promote or announce information because of high Twitter awareness among participants. We also classified tweets by purpose, the target of a web link (if embedded in tweet), and the tweet content itself to examine the relation between temporal and thematic tweeting patterns.

Methods & Data: Our test environment for data collection is the conference “VfS-Jahrestagung” (Hamburg, Germany, September 7-10, 2014). The hashtag #vfs2014 was used to find tweets related to the conference. All tweets were collected with the tools TwapperKeeper and Topsy. Classification and content analysis of tweets were based on a validated codebook with three classes: tweet purpose, possible URL-target, and connection of tweet content to conference topic.

Results: During the four conference days many remarkable peaks in the tweeting activity have been detected. The detailed analysis revealed a power law distribution for all conference-related tweets. Only few users tweeted very often, whereas most users tweet only occasionally (maximum number of tweets for an individual user: 78; $M = 7.21$; $SD = 15.55$). The applicability of the codebook was confirmed with an inter-rater reliability (Cohens Kappa, two raters) of 0.83 (91% agreement) for the classification of the purpose of tweets, 0.81 (94% agreement) for the URL-target, and 0.60 (65% agreement) for the content.

Added Value: Despite that the chronological accumulation of tweets is important for conference organizers, also the information about the content of the tweets at different points in time is valuable. The validated codebook is of great benefit for the qualitative analysis of conference-related tweets.

References

Ross, C., Terras, M., Warwick, C., & Welsh, A. (2011). Enabled Backchannel: Conference Twitter Use by Digital Humanists. *Journal of Documentation*, 67(2), 214–237.

Eingereichter Track:

[Paper Presentation Track C: Social Media Research](#)

The track focuses on the interdisciplinary research on the impact, development as well as social theories concerning the social media usage. Presentations are related to all types of social media research including quantitative approaches and ‘netnographics’, network analytics, mixed mode approaches (different types of social media research and/or classic methods combined with social media research) or projects with a strong focus on data visualization. Presentations can include the discussion of methods (social media monitoring, hybrid media measurement, social media metrics, (n)ethnographical methods, visualizations etc.) as well as social theories and legal

issues (intellectual property, privacy, transparency, canon and statutes of professional ethics). Presentations can cover all types of social media like Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn or other social networking platforms, knowledge networks, (distance) learning communities (CSCL), MOOCs, photo and video communities, social gaming platforms, innovation communities and/or research on and via forums and bulletin boards, blogs and the blogosphere. Case studies, applications and best practices are welcome.

Deadline: 15th Nov 2014, 11:59:59pm UTC+01:00, Time left: 8 days 2 hours

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