Twitter Content Capture and Analysis: A Case Study of #AAPOR2010

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1. What is Twitter?

Twitter is a popular micro-blogging tool that allows users to broadcast their thoughts via social networks or less. Over 140 million registered Twitter users post over 100 million tweets per day. Twitter is used in news sources, in social interaction and networking, and is a marketing platform. Recent research has indicated Twitter may have predictive value in forecasting election results and market performance (Zislos, Balasubraman, & Smith, 2010). Twitter is used by 8% of U.S. adults who use the internet. Among internet users:

- Women tweet more than men (10% vs 7%).
- Young adults tweet more than older adults (14% of 18-29 year olds compared to 1% of 65+ year olds).
- African-Americans (13%) and Latinos (18%) tweet more than the general population.
- Urban dwellers (11%) tweet more than suburban (8%) and rural (5%) residents.

2. Who Uses Twitter?

Twitter is used by 8% of U.S. adults who use the internet. Among internet users:

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3. How Does AAPOR Use Twitter?

AAPOR has a Twitter account that publishes general information and links related to conferences, membership information, public opinion news, and AAPOR initiatives.

At the 2010 annual meeting, AAPOR embraced and supported the use of Twitter by displaying a Tweet updating the conference Twitter stream and by including a Twitter feature in the official Conference iPhone app. The official AAPOR 2010 Twitter hashtag in a text tag included within each tweet to associate the tweet with the conference stream was used 308 times by 66 different Twitter accounts between May 3, 2010 and May 16, 2010. This included both the timing and content of tweets tagged with the #AAPOR2010 hashtag leading up to and during the conference.

A test analysis (displayed in Figure 2) shows the obvious, dominant words tweeted during the conference were "aapor2010" "RT" (a Twitter abbreviation for "re-tweet"), "conference," "research," and "information." The handles of the most popular tweeters appear as well: "poliscipunk," "staeci," "Adamsafir," and "JHenning." Figures 3 and 4 are then used to illustrate the timing and volume of tweets during the conference.

Table 1. Eight Categories of Twitter Content from AAPOR 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Code</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>• &quot;Presence of a hashtag on the #AAPOR2010 website&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Social Media | • "Information about the AAPOR journal, the "Social Media" issue."
| Research     | • "References to research papers published in the journal."
| Conference   | • "Information about the sessions and presentations."
| Logistics    | • "Information about logistics and travel."
| Polling      | • "Pollster blog post about the conference."
| Status       | • "Information about status of the conference."
| Other        | • "Other information not easily categorized."

The ten most frequent tweeters from AAPOR 2010 accounted for over 50% (162) of all #AAPOR2010 tweet volume. As shown in Table 2, among these tweeters, the most active tweeters were conference logistics and other. It should be noted that the presence of more than one tweet per user is likely to be biased. It is noteworthy that none of the tweeters from the #AAPOR2010 stream expressed negative views of the conference.

Figure 2. Analysis of AAPOR Tweets Using Words

Table 2. Frequent #AAPOR2010 Tweeters and Their Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tweeter</th>
<th>Content Code</th>
<th>Content Code Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>@lord</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Information about the sessions and presentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@RTI</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td>Information about logistics and travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@staci</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other information not easily categorized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@Adamsafir</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Information about research papers published in the journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@JHenning</td>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Information about the AAPOR journal, the &quot;Social Media&quot; issue.</td>
</tr>
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5. Summary

Twitter was used for multiple reasons at AAPOR 2010. The iPhone app and Twitterboard likely encouraged use of Twitter, since a near-majority portion of users were aware of both. In general, AAPOR tweeters shared information about sessions and general conference-goer Twitter use reflected conference activity. However, Twitter was the busiest day and Sunday being the slowest day, it does not assess the value-added of the use of Twitter. But there are several advantages to using Twitter at AAPOR: spreading the word about a particularly insightful or engaging session.

References


More Information

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