



UNMASKING PUBLIC LEADERSHIP THROUGH TWEETS: A MACHINE LEARNING ANALYSIS OF U.S. OFFICIALS' SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Background Information

Twitter/X is an increasingly useful app for quick and easy communication with people all round the world. Because of this versatility, Twitter has become a platform through which news, data, and ideas can spread quickly. More recently, X has become an incredibly popular platform for politicians to communicate with their constituents quickly and effectively. But how is this platform used?

Research Question

The purpose of this ongoing project is to collect the various accounts of local government leaders, codify them, and discover trends in the usage of social media by politicians.

Methodology

- Participants:
 - Official and public Twitter accounts of political figures
- Materials/Measures:
 - Twitter, Computer, + Excel
 - Gathering accounts, taking note of when they were last used, and the general tones and topics used
- Procedures
 - Find names/positions of local politicians, I looked at ones from Texas and California
 - With these names, search Twitter for their accounts
 - Take notes which can be used by the machine being trained
 - Code machine to scrape data and categorize it by itself
- Data-Analysis
 - This project is still ongoing, so we are in the process of collecting the data to be analyzed.
 - However, we will use this machine to find similarities and differences in the usage of Twitter for different politicians and separate them by things such as gender, race, ethnicity, political party, and more to analyze trends

Findings

85	1460	258	Greg	Tanaka	Councilor	m	GregTanaka	
86	1461	258	Liz	Kniss	Councilor	f	LizKniss	
87	1462	258	Lydia	Kou	Councilor	f	lydia_kou	
88	1463	258	Patrick	Burk	Mayor	m		NA
89	1464	258	Tom	DuBois	Councilor	m		NA
90	1465	259	Charles	Jones	Councilor	m		NA
91	1466	259	David	Cohen	Councilor	m		NA
92	1467	259	David	Sykes	City Manager	m		NA
93	1468	259	Devora	Davis	Councilor	f		NA
94	1469	259	Jennifer	Maguire	City Manager	f		NA
95	1470	259	Magdalena	Carrasco	Councilor	f	CM_Magdalena	Last active in 2022
96	1471	259	Matt	Mahan	Councilor	m	MattMahanSJ	
97	1472	259	Maya	Esparza	Councilor	f	MayaEsparza3	
98	1473	259	Pam	Foley	Councilor	f	PamFoleyD9	
99	1474	259	Raul	Perez	Councilor	m	RaulPerez	
100	1475	259	Sam	Liccardo	Mayor	m	siliccardo	
101	1476	259	Sergio	Jimenez	Councilor	m	D2SergioJimenez	
102	1477	259	Sylvia	Arenas	Councilor	f	SylviaArenas	
103	1478	260	Anthony	Becker	Councilor	m	VoteBeckerMayor	
104	1479	260	Deanna	Santana	City Manager	f		NA
105	1480	260	Debi	Davis	Councilor	f	ReElectDebi	Last active in 2016
106	1481	260	Karen	Hardy	Councilor	f		NA
107	1482	260	Kathy	Watanabe	Councilor	f		NA
108	1483	260	Kevin	Park	Councilor	m		NA
109	1484	260	Lisa	Gillmor	Mayor	f	LisaGillmor	
110	1485	260	Raj	Chahal	Councilor	m	rajchahal	
111	1486	260	Rajeev	Batra	City Manager	m		NA

Major Findings within the Ongoing Research

- 1 Many accounts had been inactive for over a year. If someone was no longer in office, then there was a good chance they were no longer Tweeting.
- 2 Some accounts had been hacked and are now Tweeting nonsense or scammy deals.
- 3 Most often, if one person had a Twitter, so did most of the county's elected officials.
- 4 Many accounts were used to Tweet information about campaigns, local emergencies, or even school board updates.
- 5 Many of the accounts still active in 2023 were Tweeting at an almost daily rate.
- 6 A lot of the followings on most of these accounts were surprisingly low.

Ongoing Results + Limitations

The findings of this project are still in the works, and while there is no data insofar, this is a project that is still important.

As far as limitations go, there is always a risk of bias in the interpretation and codifying of Tweets, as well as room for computer error, which will be addressed as the issue arises in further research.

Future Outlooks

As X continues to rise in popularity, and social media continues to be an important method of communication, the findings from this project will be increasingly relevant and useful. Now that Twitter accounts have been scraped and have provided examples for the coded program to use, this will make the rest of the research run smoother and more efficiently. With the continuation of this project, it will yield results which can facilitate further questions to explore and open up the floor to even more projects.

References

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