geofeedia

Case Study: London Olympics 2012

Attendees at Olympic venues posted large volumes of social media with geo-tags.

More than169,000 geo-tagged posts originated from Olympic venues during the game

Only 31% of the posts contained Olympic-specific keywords and/or hashtags

Traditional keyword and hashtag search should be complemented with a geographical search in order to provide a full picture of social media content that is contextually relevant to an event.

Background:

The rise in social media has created incredible new ways to gather information about consumers and the public at large. Social media users are sharing information in unprecedented ways. Not just communicating with their friends, users are describing their surroundings, sharing their experiences, breaking news, reporting situations, announcing their intentions, and more.

The data being generated through social media platforms and the communication it facilitates is valuable to nearly every type of organization, including for-profits, non-profits, governments, schools, and so on. Many, if not most, of these organizations are now experimenting with social media data. They are using a variety of tools to "listen" and analyze consumer behavior, engage with current and potential customers, and monitor the actions of their competitors. The challenge for these enterprises has become less about finding data, and more about finding the "right" data, and finding it quickly.

Traditional social media monitoring and listening tools aggregate information based on searches for keywords or hashtags. These tools collect every mention of a keyword regardless of context, location, etc. Examples of such services include Radian6, Brandwatch, Visible Technologies, and others. These tools do an excellent job of gathering and analyzing massive data sets. However, a chief complaint among enterprise customers of these services is that the data contains too much

"noise" – elements not relevant to a brand insight or consumer experience – which is impossible to mine for actionable content. Enterprises seek to improve their "signal-to-noise" ratio so they can make intelligent business decisions without wading through mountains of extraneous data.

Location, location, location

A recent phenomenon in social media is the rise of "location-aware" platforms, which allow users to share their GPS-derived location when posting photos, videos, status updates, and check-ins. Users share their location by "geo-tagging" the post (either automatically or manually). This type of activity is growing rapidly as more and more GPS-enabled smart phones flood the market.

By searching social media that is geo-tagged at a location, enterprises (especially those that have some "location" element to their operations) can eliminate the extraneous data that is traditionally captured using keyword and hashtag monitoring and listening tools. Enterprises can instead focus their research efforts and response programs on data sets being generated by consumers who actually walked the aisles of their store, ate at their restaurant, visited their city, attended their event, etc.

Scope of Study

Geofeedia (www.geofeedia.com) established Geofeeds –

virtual perimeters around physical locations that capture social media – for 34 Olympic venues (see Annex A). The Geofeeds collected publicly available, geo-tagged social media posts from Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, Picasa and YouTube starting on 7/27/2012 (the Opening Ceremonies) and continuing thru 8/12/2012 (the Closing Ceremonies) The data was aggregated for further analysis.

Objective

The goal of the study was three-fold: 1) to determine the total volume of geotagged social media being generated from these venues for an event such as the Olympics; 2) to determine the percentage of social media posts that contained a keyword or hashtag relevant to the event; and 3) to further analyze and understand trends, behavior, and other aspects of the data set collected.

Volume of data

Throughout the time period, Geofeedia aggregated 169,689 social media posts divided as follows:
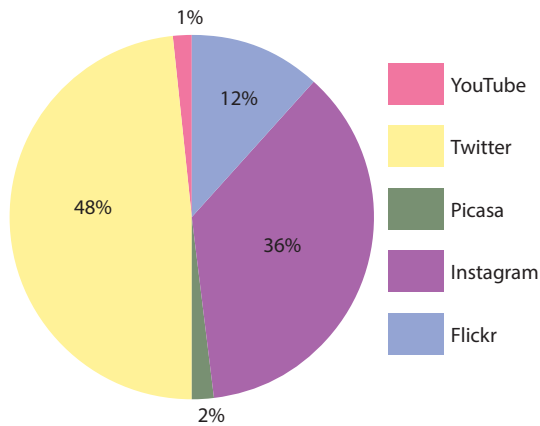
In addition, the amount of data fluctuated somewhat from day to day.

Volume of Social Media Posts By Day and Source
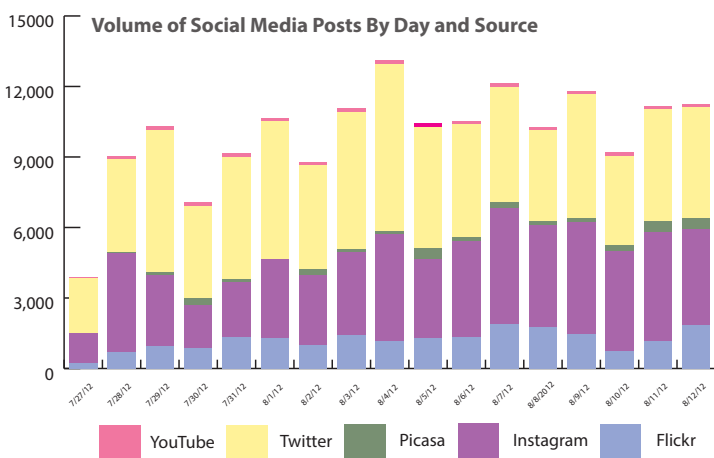
Amount of data with keywords and hashtags

Next, Geofeedia reviewed the percentage of social data that contained any occurrence of the keywords "Olympics" and "London" compared to the total amount of data generated

from these venues. Only 31% of the data contained at least one of these event-specific keywords, signifying that 69% of the data would not have been found using traditional keyword and hashtag searches. The only way to efficiently gather this remaining 69% was through a location-based search platform such as Geofeedia.

Prevalance of Olympic-related Keywords in Geo-tagged Data
Total Posts: 169,689
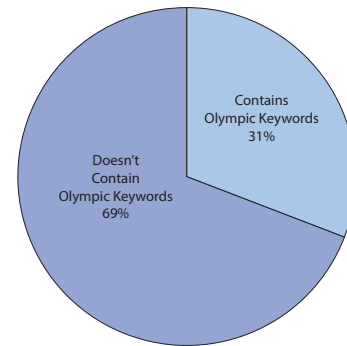
Even for a text-rich social network such as Twitter, the numbers are still conclusive. Of the 81,875 Twitter posts geotagged at the Olympics, only 28,102 (34%) contained the keyword "Olympics" or "London".

Conclusions

The amount of geo-tagged user generated content originating from the London 2012 Olympic games venues was significant, at 169,689 posts. Further, the majority of data coming from those venues did not contain an Olympic-related keyword meaning that 69% of the data is not discoverable using traditional keyword and hashtag search.

As this case study illustrates, developing a consensus around keyword and hashtag usage is an imperfect process.

Most importantly, the data that might be missed using standard methods is perhaps the most valuable. When it comes to sharing sentiment, images, and first-hand accounts, the best sources will always be the "onsite" participants of an event.

Further analysis showed additional insights on posting behavior by consumer by location, activity levels by influencers, varying degrees of activity by venue and time duration, and many other insights.

More information:

Twitter: @geofeedia
sales@geofeedia.com