SOCINT ™

Social Media Intelligence

Social Media allows 2.2 billion worldwide internet users to converse simultaneously on any topic or thought instantly. These conversations, thoughts, opinions, and emotions have created a sea of value for those that need to understand collective thinking worldwide.

So far, Social Media Data Metrics and the ability to measure views and thoughts worldwide have been used primarily in the commercial markets as a tool to increase profitability. InTTENSITY has created a **SOCINT** practice for governments or organizations that need to use Social Media for more than profit.

InTTENSITY's **SOCINT** practice provides Social Media data understanding and analysis for Governments and other organizations that want to create policy and make decisions based on an aggregate of social media data, including sentiment data. InTTENSITY has taken the social media metrics and algorithms used in commercial industry and either adapted them or created new metrics to better understand the public. For example, at what point will a trend on Twitter reach a point where talk turns into action?

Currently it is accepted that the fastest way to discover an event is via social media. Sites like Twitter have usurped long standing front runners in disseminating information. The first reports of the East Coast Earthquake in 2011 reached users in soon to be affected areas before the actual quake did; *"I saw the tweets from DC about earthquake, then 15 seconds later felt it in NYC. Social media is faster than seismic waves!"* One of the first unofficial reports of the operation to take down Osama bin Laden was a tweet *"Helicopter hovering above Abbottabad at 1AM (is a rare event)."*

As the dust settles, people are taking notice of social media as a new type of sensor. Marketers concerned with the reputation of a brand are synonymous to diplomats concerned with international relations. Companies seeking to find the next "big thing" are using the same methods as the Intelligence Community. While questions of veracity and privacy cloud any conversation related to social media, these questions should not be allowed to stifle the gains that can be realized by social media intelligence (**SOCINT**).

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One need only look to the recent Haiti earthquake for arguments for the use of social media by first responders. As emergency crews began to arrive and humanitarian support began to flood in, the people of Haiti began to tweet. They let first responders know what was needed in terms of support and what aid was required, giving rescue and humanitarian teams eyes on the ground.

Veracity of the reporting is also something to be looked at. How accurate are the reports and can they be trusted? These questions began to find answers in London during the riots in 2011. In the early hours of Tuesday August 9th, one user tweeted a link to a compelling image of the London Eye apparently ablaze, with the message: *"Oh my god! This can't be happening!"* As quickly as the tweet was spread, users pointed out that the Eye was made of iron, and probably not very flammable. Twitter has an amazing ability to self-police information within short periods of time. So information that is false will be quickly pointed out as such.

Existing social media measures (Engagement, Reach, Share of Voice, Influence, Klout, etc.) can be adapted for government use, or new measurement methods can be created. In many cases, the metrics need to be designed for the specific customers needs, sometimes combining some existing metrics may achieve the desired result. Metrics that predict cause and effect are probably more useful than simply the number of "followers" or "likes". The metrics must be leading indicators of an action or a sentiment, not just a count.

Contact InTTENSITY and its SOCINT team to show your organization how to use social media data metrics for your organization.

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