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Social Resonance: Tracking Content Dissemination across the Web
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Social Resonance: Tracking Content Dissemination across the Web

Resonance Analysis

Companies know why listening to the social conversation is valuable—monitoring what’s being said provides them with immediate insight. In addition to understanding what customers are saying, what if businesses could also understand how those customers are sharing the story? How a conversation disperses across the social sphere, how it translates from platform to platform, and how one person might influence the trajectory and validity of that story are all important considerations. Being able to monitor and control the story around a brand is extraordinarily valuable. So is the ability to identify the source of false or incorrect information, and how that information moved from Twitter to Facebook, or the local news website to Tumblr.

mBLAST, a social media analytics company, has added resonance analysis capabilities to its mPACT social media analytics solution to help companies understand exactly how a story disperses and who is responsible for making it go viral. So, marketing or public relations teams can quickly uncover and respond to the major influencers for the story. Resonance enables a company to swiftly take control of a false story gone viral or simply shape the major conversations surrounding its brand.

Resonance analysis involves tracking, measuring and displaying the dissemination of content within and across networks in the social and media spheres. This overview highlights some of the unique capabilities of mPACT’s resonance tracking, as well as the ways in which it differs from more traditional influencer tracking.

Looking Beyond the Original Post

Resonance analysis looks beyond the originating post, the first node of the story, to identify individuals whose mentions and references to the story have the greatest impact on the dissemination of that story.

Using mPACT analytics, a company can track the dissemination of a story as it winds its way across the Web, and find the critical nodes—the people who had disproportionate influence for that particular story. One difference between resonance and influence scoring is that resonance moves from a topic, or subject-based system, to an individual story basis. Instead of looking at a subject, like luxury automobiles, and defining a list of highly impactful people (as an influencer score would do), resonance dives down to an individual story (for example, an exotic sports car catching fire) and finds the highly impactful people for just that story.

These individuals may be influencers on the specific topic, but they don’t have to be. They could just be people with broad social circles and the ability to get a story in...
front of other people who have nothing to do with the topic, but who simply found
the story interesting enough to spread. When these people mention or reference
the story, things happen. Specifically, the breadth of the story’s audience takes a big
jump. For example, the originator told 8 people and those people told 12 people—
jumps that can be tracked back to the original influencer. More importantly, mPACT’s
analysis has shown that these people aren’t always the traditional influencers who
might be targeted for a standard marketing campaign.

The Need for Comprehensive Tracking

A solution focused on only one social data source, or even just on a broader cross-
section of social media isn’t enough. A story may start on a social network but then
jump to blogs, or right to a traditional publication. It may start on a blog and then
spread through Tweets. It may even start on a traditional publication like a local
newspaper, but then spread to a broader audience through social channels. In order
to track that spread and find the important, resonant nodes in the overall arc of the
story, it is necessary to look across the entirety of social media platforms, blogs and
publications.

mBLAST has measured resonance within the analytics applied to social, blog and
media data tracked in their mPACT platform for literally millions of stories.
Looking at the general trends of all of that data, mBLAST found that a key indicator
of resonance—the point at which many stories stop being small, contained affairs
and become viral and widespread—is when they jump from one media stream to
another.

mBLAST’S resonance tracking visualization tool identifies influencers, channels and sentiment
If a Tweet breaks into mainstream media and a company’s system doesn’t track mainstream media, the Tweet is lost. Resonance tracking and analysis is only possible with an all-media monitoring solution. mPACT and Gnip have partnered to bring their respective strengths (mBLAST’s mPACT dISTIL™ analytics and Gnip’s full-range social data aggregation and normalization) together for state-of-the-art resonance analysis and influence scoring.

**Resonance in the Real World**

**Reactive Reputation Management**
A story about a brand starts circulating in a blog post. Maybe key financial metrics are wrong, overall company strategy is inaccurately reflected, or a customer service fiasco is taken out of context. Whatever the case may be, the word is out (literally) and now something needs to be done.

Resonance analysis helps a company understand who the key voices are in spreading this particular story. So as the company begins to react to a story, they can address and engage with the people who were instrumental in the spread of that story. By driving the response through the people and channels identified as the most direct, a team can ensure that the company’s response is included in the articles, blogs, Twitter streams and Facebook discussions where it will do the most good to protect the company’s reputation.

**Resonance Analysis for Marketing**
A company marketing a new arthritis drug is beginning a media campaign. Influencer scoring software, like mPACT, can help identify the bloggers and journalists who frequently write about medical topics and arthritis medications. Specifically, the software can identify first order influencers who should definitely be targeted for outreach from the marketing department. But in this scenario there’s another layer of impactful individuals who aren’t traditional influencers in this market, but who hold great sway by digesting and referencing the first order content. Perhaps there’s a blog or forum site, a knitting blog for example, where older women (who may be more likely to suffer arthritis than the general populace) gather to generally discuss knitting—something seemingly unrelated to arthritis. Maybe a few participants on that knitting blog suffer from arthritis and keep their ears out for big stories on the subject, and then share them with their cohort on the blog. Resonance tracking lets a marketing department follow some particularly viral stories about the arthritis medication to find those nodes where higher degrees of impact occur.

**Resonance Analysis for Customer Service**
A complaint about a car problem may start with a disgruntled tweet or blog post, but then spread across several social media platforms and land in a forum or review site. The customer has already had his car repaired and is happy—but the story
about how he got stuck in the middle of nowhere with only 700 miles on his car lives on. Resonance allows customer service to track, in near real-time, the spread of this story as it becomes bigger than just a customer-to-company conversation using a social medium.

Armed with this knowledge, customer service can take a reactive situation (the customer complaining about his broken-down car) and proactively engage those who are spreading the story. Customer service can find those second and third order nodes and engage them intelligently in order to spread the news of resolution as widely as possible. This could be as simple as a few Tweets (“hey @carfan, we gave @brokencar a loaner and replaced his car”) or response posts to a forum. The power of resonance is discovering exactly who, beyond the originator of the story, should receive a response.
About Gnip

Gnip is the world's largest and most trusted provider of social media data, serving customers in over 30 countries in a range of industries from social media monitoring and business intelligence to finance and government. Gnip's customers deliver social media analytics to more than 90% of the Fortune 500. Gnip is Twitter's first data reseller and the only company with access to the full archive of historical Twitter data. In addition to Twitter, Gnip provides exclusive access to full firehoses of data from Tumblr, WordPress, Disqus, IntenseDebate, StockTwits, and Estimize as well as managed integrations to the public APIs of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Google+ and others.

Companies who are Plugged In to Gnip can certify to their customers that they have complete, reliable and sustainable access to the best social data in the world. The Plugged In to Gnip program recognizes these companies as industry leaders.

About The Authors

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Adapted from “Social Intelligence: The Role of Resonance” by Patrick Hurley, Director of Marketing Communications at mBLAST.