*Why do students (ages 18-28) use Twitter for news?*

*Field Study*

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Students between the ages of 18-28 use Twitter to get their news. This is a fact which cannot be easily denied. But where, and how often? Twitter can be accessed on many devices, and this means that it can be accessed anywhere with a phone signal at almost any time. It is for this reason that it is important to observe when and where people use Twitter. Over the course of several days, we took to various locations to observe and record the Twitter usage of various people. It is with this information that we hope to gain a greater understanding of the way people use Twitter to get their news. In this paper, we will analyze our findings, hoping that it will provide us with these results.

**Methedology**

In order to effectively execute our field research, we specifically chose locations which typically have a large population of people using their mobile/smart phones. Our top four locations were Starbucks, The Galleria, Penn Station, and White Plains Mall. Starbucks is known for typically hosting customers that are college students, doing school work with mobile devices such as cellphones and laptop computers. Pennsylvania Station is one of the most crowded train stations in NYC; typically, passengers use their mobile devices at all times: while waiting for the train or while rushing to their destination. We chose The Galleria and White Plains Mall for convenience, shopping centers are always crowded with customers who actively use their cellphone, especially at the food court. Every member from our group was assigned each location, and as instructed studied the field for two hours on two separate dates. Given that our research question is internet based, it was a challenge to gather information through people about their electronic use, especially in relation to Twitter. We chose specific key points to focus on while on the field; for example, the interaction of the subject, their direct/indirect participation, the occurrence, the location, the demographic, and the environment. Our coding scheme consisted of the following: the occurrence (A), which entails how many times the subject took their phone out of their pocket or bag. The timing (B), which calculates how long the subject lasted at a time using their phone. If they are mobile or stationary (C), examining if they were sitting down, standing still, or in constant motion. The subject’s emotional state (D), analyzing their facial expressions and reaction. Lastly, observing if the subject is alone or within a group of people (E). We chose to focus on these specific codes because although our main goal was to analyze their Twitter usage, being that it was difficult to actually look onto a subjects’ mobile device, these codes can closely relate to our study.

**Data**

Before we started our field study we decided to conduct a flexible coding scheme, and observe how many times our subjects took out their device and how long they were using it. We also decided to look into their emotional state, and whether they were scrolling or typing. Based on our flexible coding scheme we included a few more units in our analysis. Our coding scheme therefore includes the occurrence, the time they spent on the device, if our subjects were mobile or stationary, their emotional state and whether they were singular or nonsingular.

We observed a total of 341 people. Out of these subjects we assume that 101 fit our age profile (18-28) and are students. There’s no exact way of knowing if they actually fit our profile based on the observance, our results will therefore not be as concrete as we would prefer. Based on the numbers we assume fit our profile, we choose five random subjects to analyze further and include in our coding scheme.

Like we mentioned above we decided to code A: Occurrence (how many times they took their device out), B: Time (how long they used it), C: Mobile or stationary (where they sitting or walking), D: Emotional state (Are they amused by their phone? Sad? Etc.) and E: Singular or non-singular (are they alone or do they have company?). 40% took their phone out 5-10 times and only 5% did not take their phone out at all, 35% used their phone for 2-3 minutes, 60% were mobile, 45% showed neutral emotion and 65% were alone. All the graphs can be found in the appendix.

**Discussion**

According to our observation, most people have the habit of checking the phone at any time, whether it is with friends or alone.We are based on people's actions and a little facial expression to guess whether they are using Twitter to read the news. For example, is he in the scribe screen, or typing? Is he slide the screen to the left right or scrolling up and down the screen like updating Twitter. Maybe Current news are not too touching people,or people do not like to show their emotions. It is difficult for us to recognize their expression when they play the phone, their faces are almost plain.

There is an application that detects the distribution of your cell phone batteries. In this process, we can clearly to find that consumption of our electricity is not the phone call, but the social media, such as Twitter. This is not to say that social media consumes fast, but we use social media for a long time, and big frequencies. It can also prove that when the moments of relaxation,browse Twitter is already the norm in the majority of college students.

The report released by the Pew Research Center shows that Twitter is actively developing its news business, and that its investment is being paid off (Barthel, 2015). Twitter enhance the influence is not due to the expansion of the user base, but because the current users are increasingly through these services to understand the news. Combined with the survey we have done and the field study, the development of social media faster and faster, with Twitter to get news has become a trend. Twitter in the early rise, people just see it as a social networking site. But in fact, from Twitter all the properties, such as mobile phones and the Internet in close contact with the spread of the way, quickly track the information function, you can find it different. Twitter not only changed the way we get news, but also changed our understanding of the world, so that our understanding of the outside world more and more efficient and three-dimensional.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, we have analyzed the data from our observations. It was challenging to do a field study on this subject, as the topic is heavily tied to the internet. That said, however, we still came up with a way to make observations and analyze them. It is our hope that the information obtained from our analyses can be used for further studies into this area.

**References**

Barthel, M & Shearer, E(2015, July 2). The Evolving Role of News on Twitter and Facebook

           Retrieved from:

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