

First International Workshop on Social Media Engagement (SoME 2011)

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this workshop is to encourage discussion and sharing of ideas and research results on *social media engagement*. We aim to promote interdisciplinary research and exchange of ideas in this area, not only between industry and academia, but also between different fields (e.g., computer science, mathematics, physics, psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, etc.). In particular, we would like to discuss approaches to address some of the serious research challenges we face in devising engagement metrics, in developing methodologies, and in understanding how different technical approaches can be used to enhance our understanding of user behavior in social media.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.1.2 [User/Machine Systems]: Human factors

General Terms

Measurement, Design, Human Factors

Keywords

Social Media, User Engagement, Metrics.

1. SCOPE

Over the last two decades the nature of human-computer interaction has transformed. The conceptualisation of the user has changed from being a cog in an organisational machine and a source of errors, to a partner in social interaction and ultimately consumer, and more recently to content creator. The shift in paradigm has been tremendous, particularly on the Web. Within this shift, a strong new focus is the *sharing of experiences through social media*, with one of the main implications being that traditional user metrics hardly give insights into user behavior or satisfaction. Interest in engagement and how to measure it in these new settings has gained significant momentum, in particular given the success of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, FourSquare, Digg, Flickr, Youtube, etc.) and the corresponding implications for advertising and user satisfaction.

Engagement defines the phenomena of being captivated and motivated: engagement can be measured in terms of a single interactive session or of a more long-term relationship with the social platform across multiple interactions. Thus, social media engagement is not just about how a single interaction unfolds, but about how and why people develop a relationship with a platform or service and integrate it into their lives.

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In a world full of choice where the fleeting attention of the user becomes a prime resource, it is essential that technology providers, in particular in the context of social media, not just design systems but rather engaging experiences. The questions then become: how do we do this, and closely related to that, how do we assess the experience as being the kind we would like to design? To answer these questions we need some way of assessing and measuring user engagement in the social media context. We need a framework in which user engagement can be studied, measured and explained, leading to, for example, recommendations and guidelines for user interface and interaction design, as well as having a direct impact on algorithms and functionalities implemented in social media platforms.

2. TOPICS

Topics of interest include, but are not restricted to the following:

- Qualitative and quantitative social engagement models and metrics;
- Methodologies for design and evaluation of engagement;
- Psychological, sociological, and cultural factors in measuring engagement;
- User needs and tasks in social media applications;
- Engagement within and across platforms, e.g. desktop computers, tablets, and smart phones;
- Discovery of engagement patterns based on large-scale social media data analysis and mining;
- Case studies highlighting social media factors that can impact engagement;
- Analysis and mechanisms of incentives for engagement;
- Domain-specific engagement metrics (e.g., gaming, search, advertising, marketing, branding, etc.);
- Data sets and benchmarks suitable for measuring social media engagement;
- Social media and engagement in the developing world.

3. OUTCOMES

We aim to achieve the following:

- Obtain concrete insights into how users engage with social media applications, and agree on the most challenging and promising directions of research for understanding and measuring social media engagement.

- Synchronise research and development in media science and social science in ways that combine the strengths of each discipline.
- Explore methodologies that combine the strengths of technical approaches, data analysis, and the study of human behavior from the social sciences.

4. PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Simon Attfield (Middlesex University, UK)

Maribeth Back (FXPal, USA)

Abdur Chowdhury (Twitter, USA)

Elizabeth Churchill (Yahoo! Research, USA)

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Frank Nack (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

Kerry Rodden (Google Research, USA)

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5. BIOS

Alejandro (Alex) Jaimes is Senior Research Scientist at Yahoo! Research where he manages the Social Media Engagement group. Dr. Jaimes is General Chair for ACM Multimedia 2013, Industry Track chair for ACM RecSys 2010 and UMAP 2009, and panels chair for KDD 2009. His work has led to over 70 technical

publications in international conferences and journals. He has been an invited speaker at Practitioner Web Analytics 2010, CIVR 2010, ECML-PKDD 2010 and KDD 2009 and (Industry tracks), ACM Recommender Systems 2008 (panel), DAGM 2008 (keynote), 2007 ICCV Workshop on HCI, etc. Dr. Jaimes founded and managed the User Modelling and Data Mining group at Telefonica Research, was Scientific Manager at IDIAP-EPFL (Switzerland), and was also at Fuji Xerox (Japan), IBM TJ Watson (USA), IBM Tokyo Research Laboratory (Japan), Siemens Corporate Research (USA), and AT&T Bell Laboratories (USA). Dr. Jaimes received a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering (2003) from Columbia U. (1997) in NYC.

Mounia Lalmas joined Yahoo! Research in January 2011, as a visiting principal scientist, where she will work on models and measures of user engagement. Prior to this, she was a Microsoft Research/RAEng Research Professor at the University of Glasgow. From 2002 until 2007, she co-led the Evaluation Initiative for XML Retrieval (INEX), a large-scale project with over 80 participating organisations worldwide, which was responsible for defining the nature of XML retrieval, and how it should be evaluated. While at Glasgow, she has been working on applying quantum theory to model information retrieval. She also works on result presentation and evaluation for aggregated search, and technologies for bridging the digital divide.

Yana Volkovich is a Research Scientist in the Information, Technology and Society Group at Barcelona Media Innovation Center. Areas of her research expertise are in social mining, probabilistic analysis of complex networks, and algorithms and models for the Web search. Yana received her Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Twente (The Netherlands) in 2009, and Dipl. Eng. Degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the Saint Petersburg State University (Russia) in 2004.