

MONITORING TWEETS ABOUT THE 2014 BRAZILIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

A TweetReach Use Case

Brazil was a country divided in October 2014. In what turned out to be Brazil's closest election this century, incumbent Dilma Rousseff claimed victory over rival Aécio Neves by fewer than 3.3 percentage points. Earlier in the election, Marina Silva had also been a fierce competitor, but fell off after the first round of voting.

As with any election, but particularly because voting is compulsory in Brazil, the country was ripe with impassioned voters and heated debates. This was magnified in October, when polls leading up to the election showed the top two candidates in a dead heat.

This competitive environment, coupled with increased smartphone adoption and a culture of sharing, made social media a prime channel for election discussion. The volume of conversation on social media surpassed all estimates based on the previous national election and amounted to more than 40 million tweets about the three main candidates.

Medialogue, a digital agency based in Brazil, was tasked with monitoring social conversation about the election for the Aécio Neves campaign and supporting the efforts of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), including the official profiles of the three main candidates and the public conversations about them. Given that most of this dialogue occurred on Twitter, Medialogue turned to Union Metrics' TweetReach for their Twitter analytics and monitoring.

“TweetReach allowed us to isolate relevant information in a timely fashion and is an essential tool for breaking a topic of this size into actionable data.”

CREATING AN ADAPTABLE SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

According to a [recent survey from the Pew Research Center](#), smartphones and social media platforms like Twitter are playing a bigger role in how the world gets political information. Voters are now three times as likely to follow political candidates on social media, jumping from 6% in 2010 to 16% this election cycle.

But because this is relatively new terrain for digital marketers, many are still trying to understand how to work these trends into their social media strategies. Brazilian political parties invested heavily in their 2014 online media campaigns, so it was critical to implement a flexible social strategy that would

allow them to test various tactics and identify those that gained traction.

Medialogue used the real-time capabilities of TweetReach to measure the initiatives of Aécio Neves and the PSDB political party across debates and political events. This allowed them to answer important questions such as what stances are people taking on specific political issues or candidates? How can we tap into these conversations? Are televised events more popular than non-televised events?

Based on this data, Medialogue was able to relay important information back to their client and plan future social strategy.

PENETRATING THE CONVERSATION

Medialogue needed real-time metrics to show their client how to cut through the noise of such a large, fast-paced conversation as it was happening. Throughout the campaign, the agency learned how intense and even aggressive Twitter can be during popular televised events like debates, with the audience commenting on every detail of a broadcast.

With millions of tweets mentioning a given candidate, how could they connect with his or her constituents? Medialogue discovered they could track hashtags and specific buzzwords to tap into subsets of conversations or particular tweets.

Using a targeted hashtag or buzzword with a particular message was one way Medialogue could penetrate the sheer volume of information. This tactic helped create a more focused conversation around a topic, which resulted in more engaged contributors. For example, the hashtag #Dilma13maisemprego, while used less frequently and for a shorter period of time than the most popular election hashtags, cultivated a deeper and more manageable discussion around issues related to candidate Dilma and the employment market.

“The reach of funny or unexpected events (such as a humorous response from a candidate or a more heated discussion) is very powerful in conversations like these, typically overshadowing any more serious or political discussion of actual proposals and content.”

DETERMINING WHAT MATTERS

One of Medialogue’s responsibilities was to deliver customized Twitter analytics reports to their client, integrated with data from various other social networks and combined with analysis from their in-house team. Due to the volume of tweets surrounding the topics the agency was monitoring, it was challenging to sift through the large amounts of data collected to find what they were looking for. The agency relied heavily on TweetReach to solve this challenge.

Through TweetReach, Medialogue had access to analytics built on the full-fidelity Twitter data stream, enabling them to capture the election’s high tweet volumes and generate comprehensive insights on that data. The agency also found their TweetReach tweet archive extremely useful, allowing them to see, at a glance, how various topics were performing and pull this information into a comprehensive customized report to bring back to their client.

Additionally, they were able to dive in to see how specific topics performed week over week, in addition to pulling specific hashtags or influencer reports.

These capabilities made it possible to gain insight into the online conversation and to identify trends in public opinion that became apparent in the traditional electoral polls only days later. One such instance occurred in the final days before the first round of voting, when candidate Marina Silva was ahead of Aécio Neves in the polls and was expected to pass through to the second round along with Dilma Rousseff. The evolution of the online conversation in those few days showed a shift in public opinion towards Mr. Neves that was only confirmed after the votes were counted. Defying the most recent polls, which showed a tie, he beat Mrs. Silva by a 12.2 percentage point margin and went on to the next round of voting.

“TweetReach has the capacity to manage and analyze massive amounts of data, which allows us to extract valuable information and ultimately leads to actionable insights.”

CONCLUSION

The Brazilian presidential election of 2014 was a record-breaking event for the country on social media, even compared to the 2010 referendum, on which Medialogue also worked. The sheer volume of conversation on social media surpassed all estimates based on the previous national election. However, by using TweetReach to sort through the noise, Medialogue was able to make informed social media recommendations back to their client.

On October 26, Dilma Rousseff was re-elected for her second term by a very slight margin. And Medialogue is gearing up to manage the whirlwind that will be the next election.