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Enriching Conference Participation Using Social Media at #macmla2013

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Enriching Conference Participation Using Social Media at #macmla2013



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Introduction

Social media's growing presence in personal interactions, news reporting, and education are just some of the ways this technology is changing our in-person and virtual interactions. In particular, professional conferences in medical and allied health fields have explored the use of virtual Twitter conversations in parallel to in-person conference events¹⁻⁶. While social media has been used in conjunction with the past few annual Mid-Atlantic Chapter (MAC) meetings, understanding who is participating and how they participate can help identify other patterns for year-round networking.

Methods

The meeting planning team created an outline identifying all key communication channels and groups. Three tools were used to track social media posts related to the conference:



The WordPress web analytics of the MAC Messages blog track how many people read the conference posts and how many responded



Storify captured and archived the tweets sent to the #macmla2013 conference hashtag

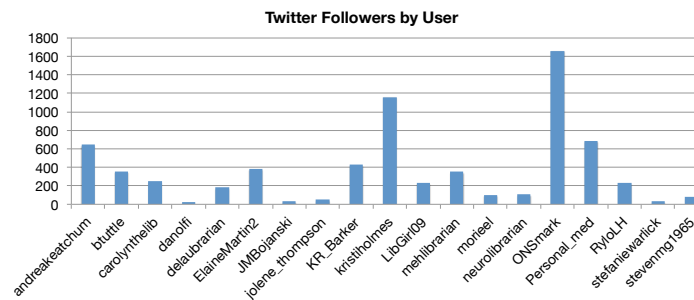
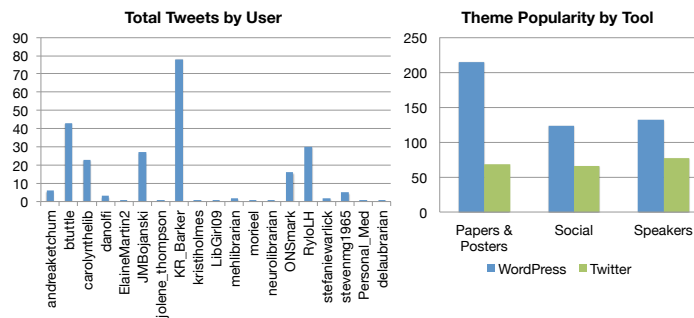


Tweet Archivist provided additional analytics regarding distribution of messages across Twitter participants and their larger social impact based on the number of followers

Results

Common themes identified in the tweets were social interactions, keynotes, continuing education courses, the MAC Business Meeting, and conference commentary.

- ◇ 243 tweets total
- ◇ 19 Twitter users used #macmla2013
- ◇ 34 Twitter accounts identified via @username
- ◇ 15 other hashtags used
- ◇ 6,900 combined followers
- ◇ 10 tweets retweeted
- ◇ 8 tweets favorited
- ◇ 675 WordPress blog views
- ◇ 174 people attended the conference



Conclusions

- Hashtags were used as commentary on an event. Examples include:
 - #snakesonaplane
 - #awesome
 - #absolutelybonkers
- Most retweets done by other conference participants
- Trend to have people in your existing network retweet
- Trend to have people not at your same event favorite the tweet
- 43% of social Twitter interactions occurred in connection with a poster, paper, or keynote speaker session
- While Twitter identified a fair amount of activity, WordPress postings of conference events still capture a larger audience
- @name inclusion better identified other key health and/or librarian constituencies (see below)



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