Social Media, News & the Importance of Verification

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The world is changing
### Smartphone Users and Penetration Worldwide (2013 - 2018)

- **Figures in Millions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Smartphone Users</th>
<th>% of Mobile Phone Users</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1311.2</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1639</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1914.6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2380</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2561.8</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Worldwide Social Network Users by Region - Billions (eMarketer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Asia Pacific</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Middle East &amp; Africa</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Central &amp; Eastern Europe</th>
<th>Worldwide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,468</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,733</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,965</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,177</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2,372</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2,550</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>1,232</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: eMarketer
Timeline Photos

Source: NBC News, 14 March 2013

Top: from shortly after Pope John Paul II's death

Bottom: the crowd watching as the new Pope Francis speaks to St. Peter's Square
for the first time after he was elected
Values & benefits of UGC
(focus: news context)
http://twitpic.com/135xa - There's a plane in the Hudson. I'm on the ferry going to pick up the people. Crazy.
Social Media Becomes a Lifeline in the Nepal Earthquake Aftermath

Posted 26 April 2015 7:11 GMT


Source: Screenshot of Twitter search by Jochen Spangenberg during attack in Sousse, Tunisia, on 26 June 2015

Source: Jordi Mir (Paris, March 2015)

Source: Daniel Psenny, courtesy of LeMonde (Paris, 13 Nov 2015)
Pitfalls
Source: manipulated photo, as posted on Instagram account of nois7. Image source here.
Fake Brussels YouTube videos prove ease of digital disinformation

Misleading video and photos are becoming increasingly common on Facebook and Twitter, making verification vital.

Source: The Guardian, 23 March 2016
Syria 'hero boy' video is too good to be true

Director admits the footage of a boy rescuing girl was a fake, designed to highlight the plight of children in warzones

Sources: BBC Trending and The Daily Telegraph
Consequences & the situation at present
• Verification of UGC = important
• Currently carried out primarily by:
  ➢ Journalists
  ➢ Human rights organisations
  ➢ Activists
  ➢ Law enforcement agencies
  ➢ Groups with particular (vested, particular) interests and aims

• Needed
  ➢ Bring the issues more into the public domain / raise awareness
  ➢ Provide more easy to use tools
  ➢ Train journalists (still needed!)
  ➢ Teach / train “ordinary citizens” (& multipliers) verification skills

Source: BBC Newsroom / Jochen Spangenberg (Dec 2011)
What to do?
Small selection of ideas and activities / initiatives
Sources: Screenshots of Suncalc, Google Maps & Translate, Tweetdeck, Followerwonk, Mentionmapp, Topsy, Storyful Pro, Jeffrey's Exif Viewer, Panoramio, Pipl, Amnesty’s YouTube Data Viewer
The project Reveal

- Develop processes, algorithms and software components that aid in verification / debunking of content shared via Social Networks
- Investigate the market (tools, approaches, legal issues etc)

The project InVID

- Focus on video verification
- Running 01/2016-12/2018
- Co-funded by the EC

Source: Manipulated image of an apparent Iranian missile test

More information on http://www.invid-project.eu/
The Google funded project Verify.Media

- Development of a collaboration platform for UGC verification
- Google DNI funding
- 06/2016-08/2017

Source: [DW press release](#) of June 2016

Source: Screenshots of DW scribbles / concepts / ideas
AMATEUR FOOTAGE: A GLOBAL STUDY OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT IN TV AND ONLINE NEWS OUTPUT
CLAIRE WARDLE, PH.D.
SAM DUBBERLEY, M.A.
PETE BROWN, PH.D.

"It's Genuine, as Opposed to Manufactured": A Study of UK News Audience Attitudes towards Eyewitness Media
Pete Brown
July 2015

FirstDraftNews
Essential newspapering and verification resources for journalists

Eyewitness Media Hub
REPORT
Making Secondary Trauma a Primary Issue: A Study of Eyewitness Media and Vicarious Trauma on the Digital Frontline
Sam Usher-Man
Elizabeth Stark
Harry Wendell

LIES, DAMN LIES, AND VIRAL CONTENT
HOW NEWS WEBSITES SPREAD (AND DEBUNK) ONLINE RUMORS, UNVERIFIED CLAIMS, AND MISINFORMATION
CRAIG SILVERMAN

Sources: Screenshots of various reports
Stunt Geolocation – Verifying the Unverifiable

When working on open source and social media investigation there’s occasional images that at first seem as if they would be impossible to verify. The following picture, showing a 9S470 Self Propelled Command Post, was shared with us on Twitter.

Source: https://www.bellingcat.com/tag/mh17/
Source: https://mh17.correctiv.org/english/
VITAL: not to forget in this context!!
Ethical aspects

Source: Jordi Mir, Paris 2015

'I dream about it every night': what happens to Americans who film police violence?

When Feidin Santana filmed Walter Scott's death, it marked a turning point in the US civil rights movement - and in Santana's life. He and others who have taken the law into their own hands tell their stories.

Oliver Laughland and Jon Swaine
Saturday 15 August 2015
06:00 BST

'I will never get over it': Feidin Santana on filming the police shooting of Walter Scott – video

Source: The Guardian, 15 August 2015. The story of Feidin Santana who filmed the shooting of Walter Scott by a policeman in North Charleston, US, on 4 April 2015
Trauma / PTSD

Source: Reuters

Source: Live Leaks
Thank you!

Contact

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