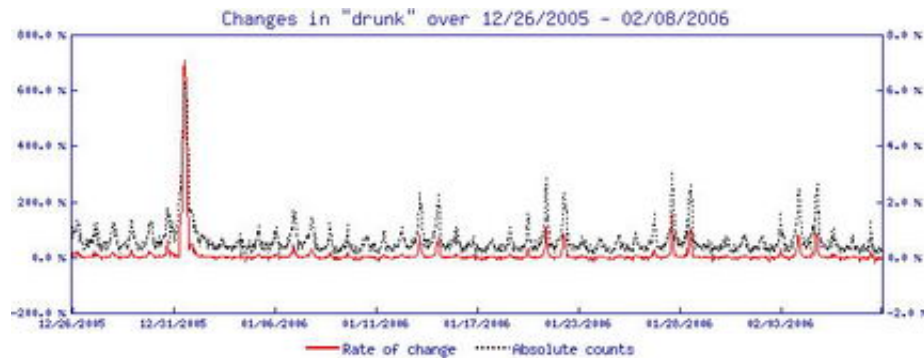


The mood of the Internet

April 14 2006



Recovered from the New Year? Moodgrapher detected, not unexpectedly, a large peak in the 'drunk' mood on New Years Day. After that the usual weekend peak in 'drunk' remained below the usual level. Time is on the x-axis and the y-axis shows the deviation compared to the usual observations (left) and the fraction of the messages with the 'drunk' mood (right).

Dutch researcher Maarten de Rijke and his co-workers Gilad Mishne and Krisztian Balog have developed a new programme that can trace and explain significant changes in mood patterns on the Internet. MoodViews is a collection of instruments that maps the mood of bloggers as they write their message.

Internet diaries, blogs, are an increasingly common phenomenon on the Internet. The opinions and experiences of tens of millions of people can be followed every day. Researchers from the Pionier project 'Computing with Meaning' think that subjective aspects of blogs, such as moods, play in important role in determining which people look at and read the blogs.

So Gilad Mishne, Krisztian Balog and project leader Maarten de Rijke have developed MoodViews. MoodViews follows the moods of 2 million bloggers from around the world. Each day the programs pick up about 150,000 blog messages.

The clearly measurable responses to worldwide events suggest that these instruments pick up the global mood. And not only those of bloggers. De Rijke has already been approached by journalists, marketing specialists, psychologists and bankers. The Moodteam has something interesting to offer to all of these groups.

At present MoodViews has three components. Moodgrapher monitors the global mood of bloggers. These data are converted into overview graphs. Moodteller uses language technology to predict the mood on the Web. The latest component, Moodsignals, records unusual peaks in mood levels. After this it uses search engine technology to find an explanation for these mood swings.

Various other components of MoodViews are still under development. For example, Moodspotter will be launched this summer. This instrument will be able to search the moods associated with certain persons, locations or products.

Maarten de Rijke's research is part of his Pionier project 'Computing with Meaning'. The Pionier programme of NWO ran from 1989 to 2002 and was aimed at highly experienced researchers of a professorial level.

Link: <http://moodviews.com>

Source: NWO

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