

Study: mobile microbloggers struggle to make their postings interesting

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A study shows that mobile microbloggers struggle hard is to make postings interesting enough to keep audience coming back and commenting. The analysis by researchers from Helsinki Institute for Information Technology (Finland), Google and Elisa shows that microbloggers sometimes put in teasers to postings and highlight interesting aspects of their everyday experiences, inviting others to comment. However, perhaps due to publicity of the postings, microbloggers generally avoid revealing intimate emotions or experiences.

Social network analysis reveals that the challenge occurs on a daily basis. Most postings are replied to within a day or not at all. While commenting is rare, even a rare comment on one's posting increases the tendency to persist in posting because they inform that one is being listened to.

While a microblogs do not obligate a reply from followers, posting on a daily basis is important for sustaining the interest of others. As a consequence of the pressure to publish, most postings are mundane; The top 5 most frequent postings are "working," "home," "work," "lunch," and "sleeping."

Popular microblogging services, such as Twitter, Jaiku, and Mobile [Facebook](#), enable sharing status updates from [mobile devices](#) to one's social network. Researchers Antti Oulasvirta, Esko Lehtonen, Esko Kurvinen ja Mika Raento wanted to understand the essence of everyday use and analyzed a dataset of 400,000 messages in Jaiku.

Microblogging works because of the total control users have over their postings, but it is a hobby that seems to require a significant investment of time which many cannot afford. Users who are willing to post daily and gather around them a large group of followers are the most successful microbloggers. In fact, a small supercore of the Jaiku population received over 50% of all comments in the system, while a large part of newcomers found it hard to build and keep an audience and dropped out quite soon after registering.

The results are going to be published in an upcoming special issue of the *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing* journal.

Source: Helsinki University of Technology

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