G20 talk fest echoed on Twitter

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Brisbane's G20 Leaders' Summit proved a Twitter talk fest, attracting 1.02 million tweets since October 23.

Members of QUT's Social Media Research Group (SMRG), based in the Creative Industries Faculty, monitored the twittersphere in the lead up to and during the G20, collecting the world's views on the event and Brisbane.

In a first for any G20 event, Dr Peta Mitchell mined all G20-related tweets for references to locations within Brisbane's declared zones, plotting them on an interactive map the public could access.

"In all, I mapped about 19,000 tweets that were either geo-located tweets from within those zones or that mentioned streets and landmarks inside the zones," Dr Mitchell said.

"We were really pleased to be able to analyse the geo-referenced tweets in close to **real time** - the data was updated about once every 10 minutes.

"Our G20 exercise successfully demonstrated the potential for mining and mapping geo-referenced Twitter data for large-scale events held in specific locations, and it's a development that could be very useful for organisers of future sporting, cultural and political events."

Dr Mitchell said the G20 Twitter map captured a wide range of comments, from traffic jam complaints to Russian warship jokes and demands to end Ebola. It tracked both the key events of the G20 and the

excitement people felt around key locations.

The SMRG team used the map to create several visualisations, including the places where world leaders were most talked about.

"German Chancellor Angela Merkel was the talk of Caxton Street after she dropped into that entertainment precinct, and Barack Obama dominated tweets around his Queen Street hotel and The University of Queensland, where he addressed the public.

"Hot spots for Vladimir Putin included the Hilton Hotel, where he was staying, and King George Square, where protestors condemned Russia's military involvement in Ukraine. Mentions of Australia's Tony Abbott were scattered across the declared zones."

The team also mapped the key themes talked about on Friday 14 November, a time lapse map of tweets around President Obama's arrival, and a time lapse of all G20 tweets within the declared zones.

QUT's G20 Hypometer, developed by Dr Darryl Woodford and Katie Prowd, proved the USA was the most-talked about nation. Almost 400,000 of the 1 million tweets referenced the US delegation.

The G20 Hypometer tracked in real time tweets with G20-related hashtags sent from anywhere in the world, displaying a leaderboard of most-mentioned nations, the overall volume of tweets over time, and top and trending hashtags.

"The sheer volume of daily tweets surged as the days wore on," Dr Woodford said.

"Tweets more than doubled from just under 54,000 on Thursday November 13 to about 111,500 on Friday.

"On Saturday, the main G20 event, we recorded more than 250,000 tweets, with almost 85,000 Twitter users joining the G20 conversation for the first time.

"President Obama's public address prompted 620 tweets a minute at its peak, for a total of almost 20,000 tweets during the speech alone."

Over the next few months the SMRG will delve deeper into the Twitter data collected over the G20 to identify key themes, influencers and locations. The research will particularly focus on the public's reaction to the strictly-enforced rezoning of Brisbane's city centre during the G20 and the disruptions this caused.

The team is also planning to turn their Hypometer to other major events in Australia and internationally, including Queensland's 2015 state election.

More information: SMRG G20 page: socialmedia.qut.edu.au/2014/11 … -g20-leaders-summit/

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