Corporate Communications departments and PR agencies across the world have been monitoring traditional media since the beginning of the PR discipline. This function is an important input to craft PR strategy, and has been made easier by ‘content aggregators’ or ‘clipping services’ which source content from a wide variety of publications for the benefit of their clients. Such output, however, requires further refinement based on specific client needs, context and objective. Genpact has a team of trained analysts who aggregate and synthesize media coverage to provide the most relevant, concise, and optimal information to each client in order to gauge the effectiveness of their communications strategy, media perceptions about their own and competitors’ brands, industry developments, and track their communication metrics.

In recent times, the media landscape has also experienced a paradigm shift with the advent of the now ubiquitous social media. The sheer volume of content generated on a daily basis in the social media realm (thousands of posts/comments/You-Tube video clips assimilated from different social media Channels per day) makes the task of real time monitoring really difficult. As a result of this explosion of social media data, many automated social media monitoring tools end up spewing out content that contains a lot of irrelevant material, and is so voluminous that busy executives find it difficult, almost impossible, to weed out informative, relevant, and actionable content. However, despite these hurdles, Corporate Communications and PR teams have to deal with this challenge and monitor conversations in social media as the potency of the medium cannot be ignored.

Genpact’s Stratified Random Sampling (STRANDS) Methodology for Social Media Monitoring

To solve this “problem of plenty” that social media presents, Genpact applies its proprietary STRANDS methodology to glean the most relevant or the most influential, as well as the most actionable social media content on a bi-hourly/daily/weekly/monthly basis. Drawing from its years of experience of monitoring traditional media, Genpact has realized that understanding the client requirements implies understanding the following elements: Objective of the monitoring exercise, Focus Products/Events/Issue at hand, Search Terms, Geography, and Time Frame.
The first step in any monitoring assignment is to understand the client's objective for monitoring, identify the stakeholders that the reports target, and gauge the follow-up/damage control actions that are expected to be taken based on the monitoring reports. The next task is to develop a search string based on client inputs on the objectives to arrive at the most comprehensive collection of relevant data.

Genpact sources content from a wide variety of content aggregators, as well as its own crawlers. After the generation of aggregated content, Genpact stratifies the data set and picks the most important or the most influential or the most actionable content as per the objective of the monitoring project. Steps to arrive at the most relevant, optimal, comprehensive data are as follows:

- Data collection using social media aggregators and Genpact proprietary crawlers
- Search string creation
- Modification of search results using Genpact's 2P methodology (This is a pattern recognition tool for iterative search string refinement and human/analyst analysis for theme identification) to yield appropriate content
- Stratification of data according to topic
- Content is further filtered on the basis of:
  - Regions
  - Social media channels
- The qualified content is then subjected to the following checks:
  - Tonality (Positive, Neutral, Negative) - Social media channels
  - Virality (Identifying the sources that have the highest number of comments/posts/views/tweets)
- Report creation as per predefined format

Specifications like a definite structure/topic/strata that would make the report actionable to the client is decided in conjunction with the client, and differs from client to client. Tonality and alerts are also client requirement specific.
Case Study: Random sampling method makes social media monitoring and alerting process robust for a leading insurance company

With the application of STRANDS methodology, Genpact monitored and tracked the relevant information for a leading Insurance Company. We covered the U.S. market on a daily basis using pre-determined search terms, and narrowed down voluminous data to a small amount of relevant information.

Content Source

Various social media channels:
- BLOGS
- TWITTER
- FACEBOOK
- YOUTUBE

This data, depending on the targeted stakeholder, is sampled, formatted, and presented differently. The C-Suite of the client's organization gets the top posts containing only the top issues of the day; the Corporate Communications department gets a more detailed report that contains volume and tonality analysis, conversations broken out by lines of business, and the top posts of the day; the Digital Media team gets the posts/tweets/comments segregated by various channels; the customer service function gets alert reports with actionable content four times a day which flag customer service issues by criticality.

Genpact's social media monitoring and alerting process, using our robust sampling methodology, provides the following benefits to the client:

- Being on top of consumer perception about their products/services/customer relations/satisfaction
- Being geared towards addressing customer grievances very swiftly to nip customer dissatisfaction in the bud and prevent switching
- Establishing themselves as first in class in their industry in terms of superior customer service

Conclusions

Using the STRANDS methodology, we can quickly access accurate and relevant information from volumes of data. Applying various filters such as social media channels, regions, languages, relevancy and tonality check, relevant information is filtered. We continue this process till we have arrived at the optimal level of relevancy that meets client requirements. The resulting information is provided to clients who are benefitted in the following ways:

- Learn about conversations in the social media about their company, products, brands among, others
- Understand consumer perception in the social media about competitors and their products
- Discover trends/consumer preferences/behavior/response to latest industry developments
- Ascertain Share of Voice for their company/brand in the social media
- Fine-tune marketing and communications strategy for improved results

Fig 2. Random sampling method

About Genpact

Genpact Limited (NYSE:G), a global leader in business process management and technology services, leverages the power of smarter processes, smarter analytics and smarter technology to help its clients drive intelligence across the enterprise. Genpact's Smart Enterprise Processes (SEPSM) framework, its unique science of process combined with deep domain expertise in multiple industry verticals, leads to superior business outcomes. Genpact's Smart Decision Services deliver valuable business insights to its clients through targeted analytics, reengineering expertise, and advanced risk management. Making technology more intelligent by embedding it with process and data insights, Genpact also offers a wide variety of technology solutions for better business outcomes.

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