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Twitter Project

How Twitter is Used by Various Persons and Businesses

Social media has become a dominating presence within society. People use it to connect socially as well as promote their businesses. It's a vital concept, that unless people understand how critical it is, their business could actually fail. Over the course of Fall semester, as a class, we focused our attention to social media platform, Twitter, and analyzed nine different types of users. These nine users ranged in type from a celebrity, musician, athlete, social media marketer, politician, large company, small company, journalist, and an academic professor. The purpose of this assignment was to gain knowledge and understand what makes a successful user and what doesn't. Twitter remains one of the more influential social media platforms today, because everyone is in the "know." The latest news, promotions, or heated arguments usually hit Twitter first, before any other platforms. "For brands, advertising on Twitter is a more efficient way to reach the right people" (MacMillan, 2017). Generally, certain social media platforms tend to reach a particular demographic. However, Twitter account holders encompass a wide variety of age groups, which make this particular platform even more valuable. Because of this factor, knowing what makes a successful user can put your career a step ahead of others.

While analyzing these accounts, we observed nine different categories for each of the users. These categories consisted of author, tweeter type, sex, tweet, date, message goal, media, and emojis. We also made note of whether these tweets were retweets, retweet with comment, reply, or aimed specifically towards someone. Depending on the user, these categories often ranged in number. For example, the message goal of a politician would often stay the same, but it would be different for a social media marketer. We identified these goals to better understand how they used their accounts. Each tweet could fit into any of the nine message goal categories. These classifications were direct-simple response, promotion, humor, charity/non-profit, current activity, information, inspirational/sentimental, opinion, musings, and other. As for the media sections, we had seven branches such as audio/video, audio, still picture, GIF, multimedia, other (website, article poll, link to Instagram etc), and none. Each of these categories presented more information on our users that enabled us to apply to our research.

In our research, we focused our attention to viewing the message goals and evaluated which ones were more often used. We gathered information from the rest of our classmates, afterwards we compiled and sorted them by message goal sections. From the sorted selections, we chose three main goals to complete our analysis. The selected main goal sections are #2 promotion, #6 information, and #8 opinion. We found these message goals to be the most interesting to view along with the most often used. Because of this, we dove further and compared the message goals against each other.

Based on the results of our findings as well as the results of the classes, we discovered that #2 promotions, #6 information, and #8 opinion were ranked as some of the most commonly used message goals.
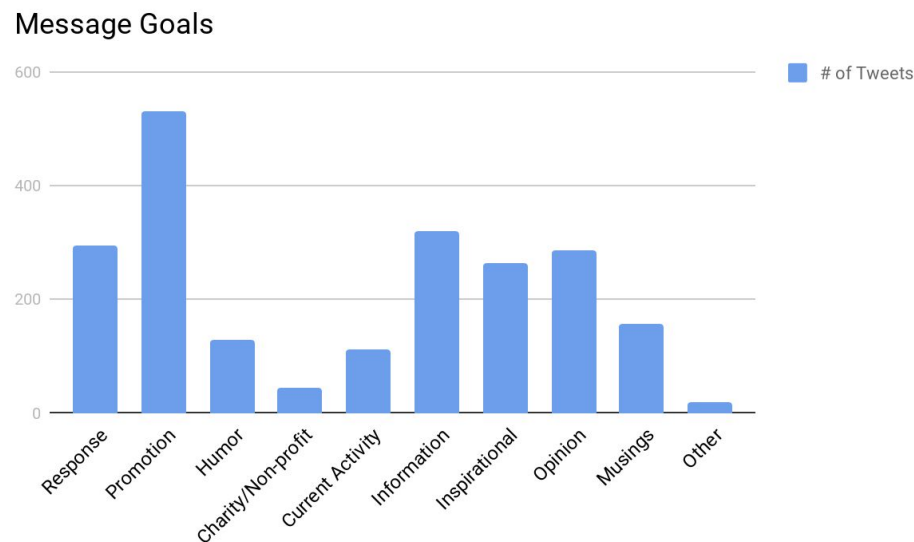
Message Goals

The chart above displays all ten message goals ranked against how many times they were used. The least common goal was #10 other followed by #4 charity/non-profit. The third lowest number of message goals used was #1 response, #3 humor, and #4 charity/non-profit. Under consideration, it made logical sense as to why these particular message goals weren't as popular. Twitter has been known to contain a more political voice versus the other social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, which is why #2 promotion was ranked on the higher end. In the marketing field, promotion is a major contributing factor. Successful promotion of a brand, company, or product is what ensures awareness on the overall company. Every tweeter type was promoting something in some way, whether it was for themselves or a business.

Out of the ten message goals, we examined three in the following chart. This sample was taken out of over 2160 posts.

Usage of Selected Tweets

Message Goal

Promotion
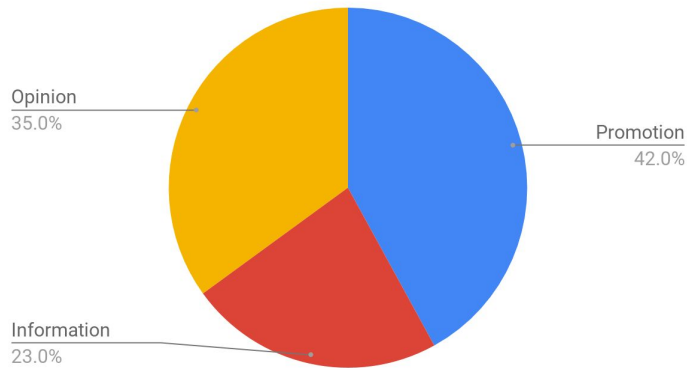Information
Opinion

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%
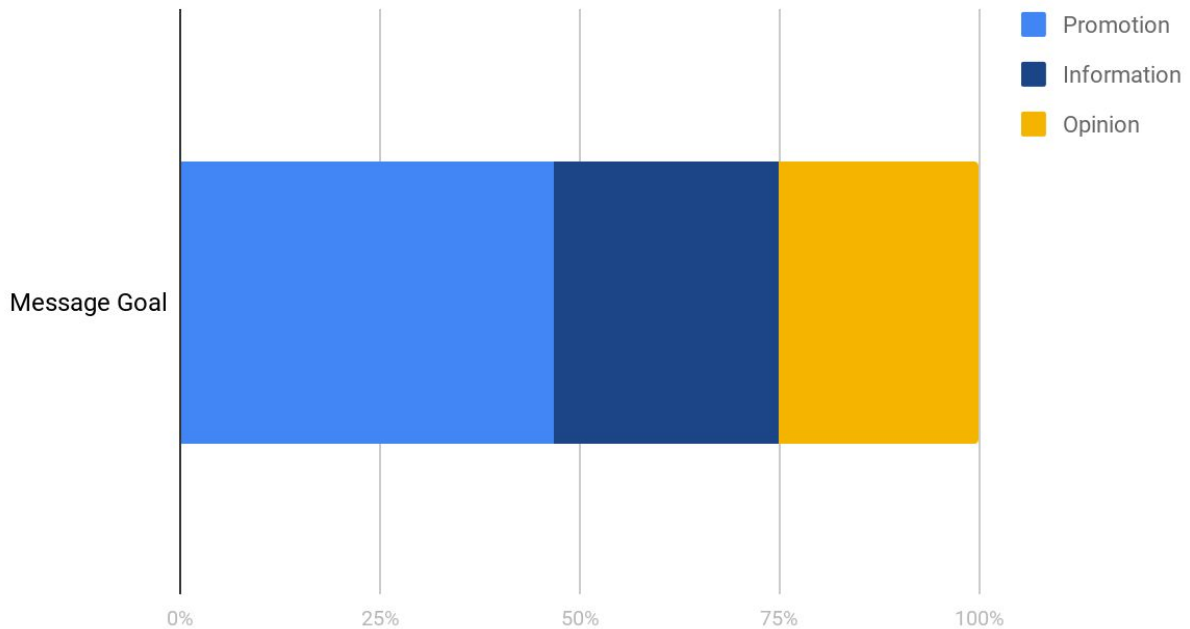
As we can see, promotion ranked one of the highest in comparison to information and opinion. Most of the time, people use social media as a way to promote their brands. One of the benefits to Twitter is that audience members aren't required to have a twitter account. Therefore, social media platforms require nonusers to have their own account before they can have access to viewing others ("The How…," 2017). Twitter having this feature creates an advantage over the other platforms. It makes it more convenient for people to use this specific platform, because it reaches a wider range of audiences.

The second largest message goal was information. Interesting enough, this ranked the second highest out of the rest of goals. However, if we consider it, social media is one of the
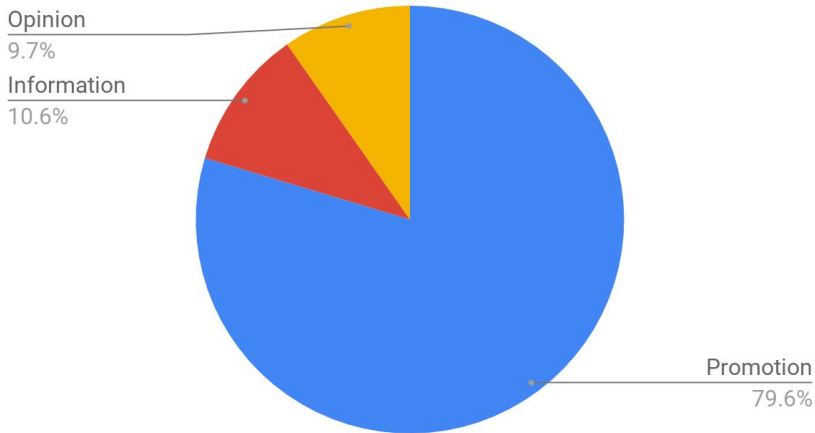
biggest contributing factors to the latest news. Most of the time, people tend to use it as their

main source to keep up with world events versus actual news stations like CNN, Fox, etc.

Celebrity Tweets

Opinion
35.0%

Promotion
42.0%

Information
23.0%

Mark Hamill
@HamillHimself

You would think the love, care & protection of endangered animals & plants would be bipartisan, but this administration loves the idea of new mining, oil & gas drilling & development where endangered species live even MORE. #DespicableDeeds

U.S. Significantly Weakens Endangered Species Act
The Trump administration announced far-reaching revisions to the Endangered Species Act, which was first enacted in 1973.
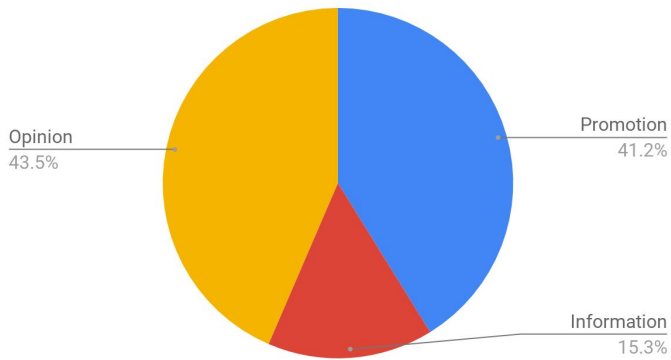nytimes.com

   The first tweeter type of our research was a celebrity. Out of our three chosen tweets, we

found that celebrities published mostly promotion posts. Our data included 100 tweets, where 35

were opinion posts, 23 were information, and 42 were promotion. Our sample celebrity was

Mark Hamill (@HamillHimself). Hamill is a 68-year-old distinguished actor mainly known for

his roles in the *Star Wars* films. He has 3.4M followers and tends to retweet political posts,

where he accompanies them with his opinions.

Musician Tweets

Opinion
9.7%

Information
10.6%

Promotion
79.6%

Milky Chance ✔ @MilkyChance · Aug 16
Daydreaming • Just passing through • #MilkyChance2019

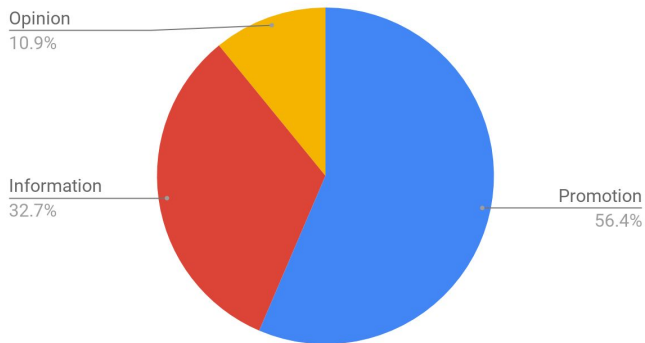💬 4   🔁 51   ♡ 434   ⬆

Our second tweeter type was a musician. As expected, the majority of posts by the

musical artists were promotional tweets advertising their work or concerts and other events. Out

of the 113 tweets, 90 of them were promotional, 12 were informational, and the remaining 11

were opinion posts. In this data set we specifically looked at Milky Chance (@MilkyChance), a

folk band from Germany. At 74.5K followers, they're not a very large brand. However, they did

enjoy some global fame when one of their songs was featured in the immensely popular video

game *FIFA 15*. Milky Chance has almost exclusively published promotional tweets on their

page. Implementing this tactic creates awareness for the fans to follow along with the latest on

the band.

Athlete Tweets

Carl Lewis ✔ @Carl_Lewis · Aug 21
Thank you. But we need to be more specific. It's actually the @GOP and @POTUS. History never lies.

NPR Politics ✔ @nprpolitics · Aug 21
To mark a year since her husband died of brain cancer, Cindy McCain is encouraging Americans to be more civil.

"We're missing John's voice of reason right now in so many ways," McCain tells NPR. n.pr/31ZeLrr

♡ 1   ↻ 2   ♡ 10

Our next twitter type was athletes. After looking at our data set of 85 tweets, we found that with athletes, the posts were overwhelmingly opinion and promotion. 35 were promotion, informational posts were pretty low at 13, and the remaining 37 were opinion posts. For our sample athlete we looked at Carl Lewis (@Carl_Lewis), a 58-year-old former track and field Olympian, who won nine gold medals over his career. With 19.3K followers on his account, Lewis tends to engage in discourse regarding sports and younger athletes, but he is also heavily invested in politics.

Social Media Marketer Tweets

- Opinion 10.9%
- Information 32.7%
- Promotion 56.4%

Casey Neistat ✓ @Casey · Sep 4
New electric Porsche! 🤔 still not as fast as the Tesla S and it costs $87,000 more (the Porsche is sexy tho)
🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗🚗
The 750 HP 2020 Porsche Taycan Turbo S Is A Stupidly Quick EV That Starts At $185,000 jalopnik.com/the-750-hp-202... via @jalopnik

The 750 HP 2020 Porsche Taycan Turbo S Is A Stupidly Quick EV That St...
The 2020 Porsche Taycan electric performance sedan is here, delivering on just about every promise of the stunning Mission E concept car. The ...
🔗 jalopnik.com

💬 108   🔁 114   ♡ 2.5K   ⬆️

Our fourth tweeter type were social media marketers. Our data consisted of 101 tweets. 33 of the tweets were informational. Promotional tweets came in second at 57 and 11 tweets were opinion posts. Our social media marketer was Casey Neistat (@Casey), a 38-year-old social media personality, with 2M followers. Casey's tweets fall under several types of message goals, though he mostly posts about current activities with friends and family and informational/promotional posts, particularly about Tesla and Apple products.

Politician Tweets

Promotion
16.6%

Opinion
54.1%

Information
29.3%
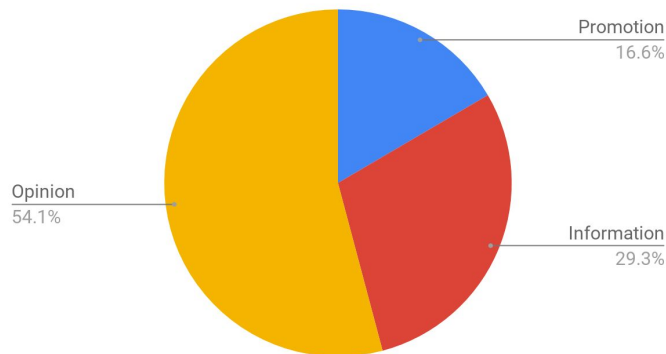
Ted Cruz
@tedcruz

Sorry. You gotta poll at 5% or more to play on my court.

Pat Ward @WardDPatrick · Sep 11
Need a @AndrewYang v @tedcruz game twitter.com/ABC/status/117...
Show this thread

3:16 PM · Sep 11, 2019 · TweetDeck

4K Retweets   **30.4K** Likes

Politicians were our next set of tweeter types. This data set had a very high amount of tweets. Of the 157 tweets we dealt with, a measly 26 of them were promotional posts. 46 were informational and 85 were opinion posts. Though this wasn't really a surprise, due to the nature of politicians. Because of their elected position, they are expected to share their policies and views with their supporters. We picked Ted Cruz (@tedcruz) for this one. Cruz is a 48-year-old U.S. Senator from Texas, who gained popularity after running for President in the 2016 election. He has 3.5M followers, and naturally, most posts on Cruz's Twitter page are political. He engages with hot topics and sometimes even debates other politicians or public figures on Twitter.

Large Company Tweets
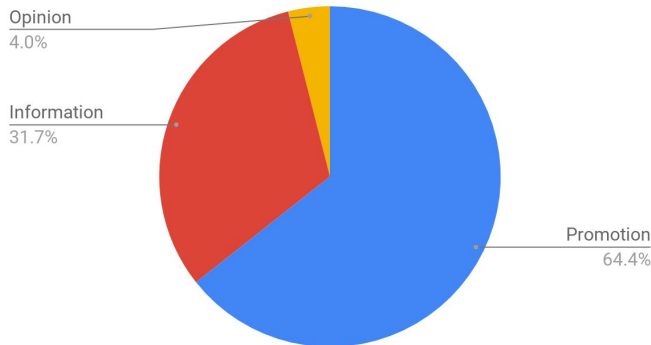
Next we dealt with large companies. Our data set included a total of 101 tweets. Promotional and informational posts made up nearly all of the tweets, with 65 and 32 tweets, respectively. Opinions only took up 4 of the tweets. Our large company was Amazon.com (@amazon), the international technology giant based out of Seattle, Washington with 3.1M followers. Just about everything Amazon posted, promoted their brand or subsidiaries they owned. They also replied back to customer's tweets. As we have learned from the book, *Likeable Social Media,* by Dave Kerpen, "Twitter is an incredible customer service tool" (pg. 266). One of the benefits is that as an advertiser, you have the capability of sending direct messages to anyone who's following you. "Customers increasingly expect you to provide customer service on Twitter, and that expectation will only grow over time" (pg. 266). In order to maintain a "likeable" brand, interacting with the customers and posting promotions will increase the overall appearance of a company like Amazon.

Small Company Tweets

Opinion
0.6%
Information
11.9%
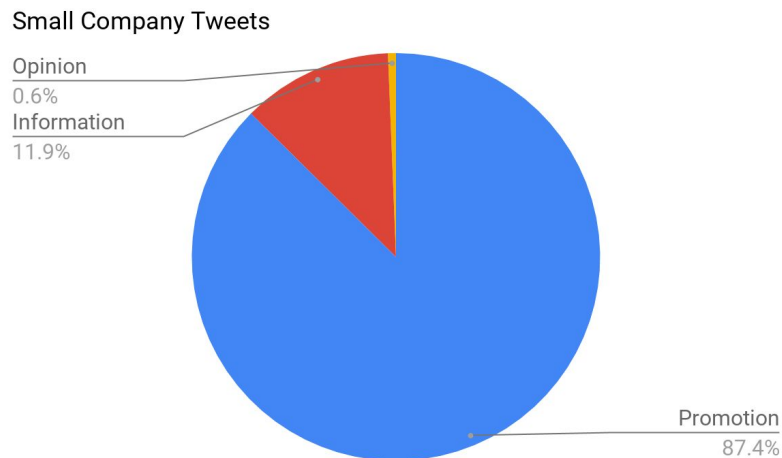
Promotion
87.4%

Our seventh tweeter type were small companies. Small companies depended on promotional tweets more heavily compared to large companies. Of the 159 reviewed tweets promotions made up 139 of the tweets, informational posts consisted of 19 tweets, and only 1 of the remaining tweets were opinion. For our small company we chose Great Lakes Brewing Company (@GLBC_Cleveland), a brewpub based in Cleveland, Ohio, with 53.3K followers. GLBC kept a very active profile and posted exclusively about their beer and pubs. For example, "You ever just look at a beer and smile?" They also frequently retweeted their customers. As a small company, promotion of their beers and events increases their public awareness. "By consistently providing great content over time, you won't need to advertise how wonderful you are-you community will already know based on what you've shared" (Kerpen, 2019, pg. 161).

Journalist Tweets

Opinion
31.9%
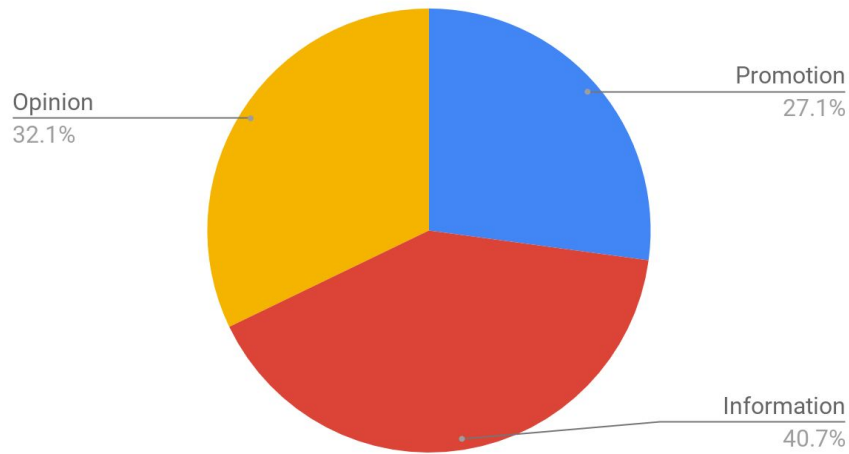
Promotion
21.4%

Information
46.7%
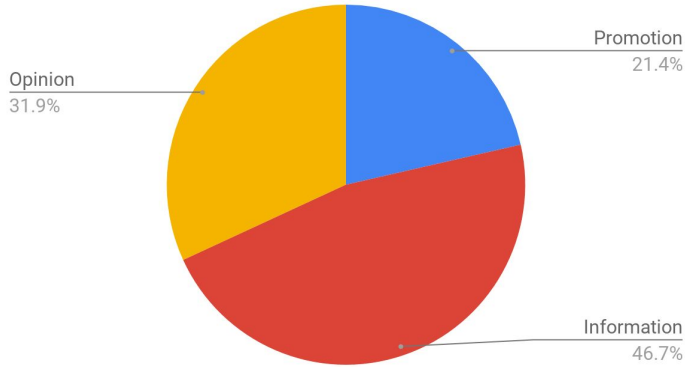
Glenn Greenwald ✔
@ggreenwald

Replying to @ggreenwald @felipeneto and 2 others

And oh: there's the small fact that Bolsonaro's son, Flavio, employed in his cabinet the wife and mother of the head of Rio's most violent and criminal paramilitary gang, linked to the brutal assassination of Marielle Franco. This is who is running Brazil

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The Guardian

Bolsonaro's Davos debut overshadowed by growing scandal around son
Flávio Bolsonaro denies Brazilian newspaper claims he once employed the mother and wife of an alleged death squad leader
🔗 theguardian.com

After the companies, our next tweeter type were journalists. We looked at 182 tweets, which were mostly composed of informational and opinionated posts. Information led with 85 tweets, opinion followed with 58, and promotion was last with 39 tweets. Our journalist for this one is Glenn Greenwald, a 52-year-old American journalist, who resides in Brazil and has 1.4M followers. Greenwald was very active on Twitter and kept his posts informative with some opinions, particularly regarding the Brazillian political climate.

Academic Tweets

Opinion
32.1%

Promotion
27.1%

Information
40.7%

Our final tweeter type were academics. Similar to the journalists, the vast majority of tweets by academics were opinion and information. This final data set consisted of 140 tweets. 38 of them were promotional, while informational and opinionated dominated with 45 and 57. For our academic, we chose Daniel Drezner (@dandrezner), a 51-year-old professor of international politics, with 130K followers. With nearly 200 thousand tweets to his name, Drezner posted just about anything. For example, he posted "I just landed from an eight-hour flight. So what horrors do I need to catch up on?" It was hard to tell if he was an academic based on his "voice" on Twitter.

All nine of these users utilized Twitter differently. Their differences in career backgrounds also added an additional diverse element. We chose to total the goals of all the users, in order to examine the most common goal used, rather than just focusing on one type of message goal. The chart below demonstrates which Twitter type often used the promotions goal.

Promotion Tweets by Tweeter Type
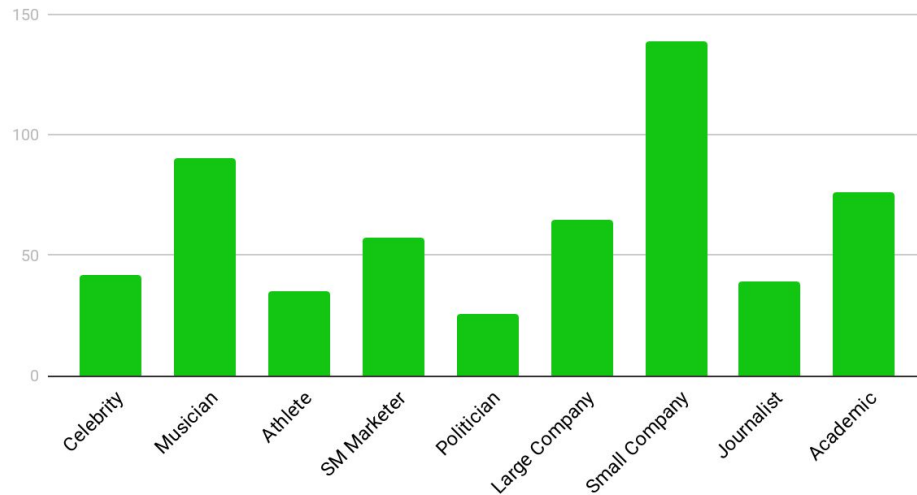
When it came to promotional tweets, small companies used them far more than any other tweeter type, and they were followed by musicians, large companies, and social marketers. This was expected for the most part, because as we studied the tweeters individually, we frequently came across small companies who almost exclusively posted about their products. Because for small companies, they have to maintain posts about their products, events, etc in order to grow their business. Surprisingly, politicians ranked the least in promotional tweets, however, this may have been the result of Twitter's ban on political advertisements.

Information Tweets by Tweeter Type
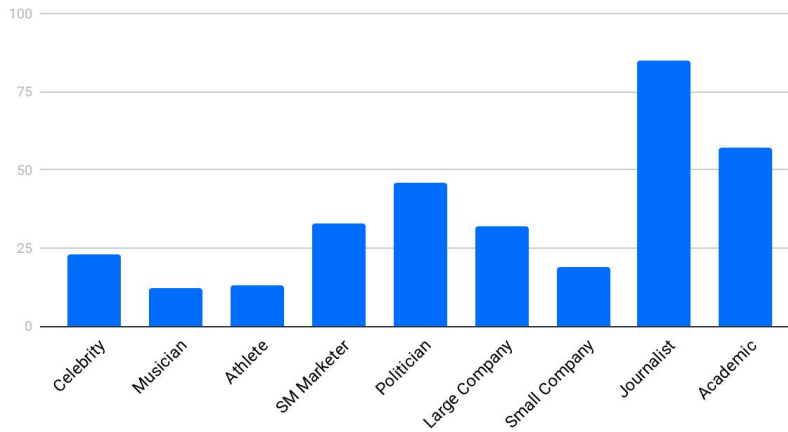
This graph reflects the information as we expected it would. When we studied our sample tweeter types, we found that journalists, academics, and politicians tended to publish mostly informational tweets. These were usually news that often regarded politics. Though we expected the small companies to rank higher, as we presumed that they would post a lot about their products and services and maybe even special offers.

Opinion Tweets by Tweeter Type
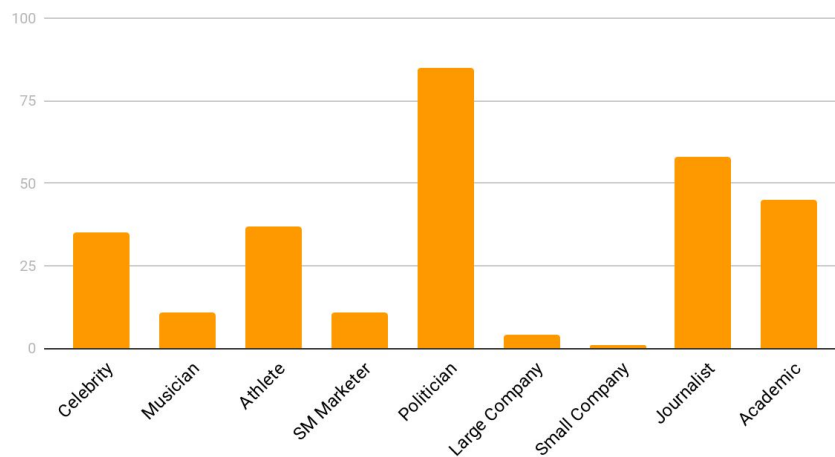
Similar to the promotional tweets, politicians, journalists, and academics dominated once again, when it came to opinionated tweets. These three groups tended to be heavily engaged with current events, and due to the political nature of these events our tweeters often times felt obligated to give and or share their opinions. The big surprise here was that musicians ranked really low compared to celebrities and athletes. We also thought that the social media marketers would rank higher. We expected social media marketers to give their opinions when they shared products or services, especially if these products and services were new and they tried them for the first time.

Our findings showed that all the tweeters used the platform differently. Some even in ways that did not relate to their life or career. But some tweeter types did share many similarities with each other. For example, politicians, journalists, and academics ranked the highest, when it came to information and opinion tweets. They similarly ranked low in their promotional tweets. Celebrities and athletes also shared likenesses in this way.

When it came to successful utilization of the platform musicians, politicians, journalists, and academics, achieved this. As a follower of the latter three, you'd expect them to relay information and also share their opinions with you, which they did. We found the musicians to be successful, because out of the three message goals, most of them fell under promotion tweets. As a fan of a musician, you'd expect them to prioritize promoting their music or events they may be attending, and they achieved this when they published mostly promotional tweets.

We also found some tweeter types to be partially successful. For example, the social media marketers did well when it came to promoting products and giving information about

them. However, we believe that the opinion tweets should have been much higher, because many who follow these marketers look for tips and advice on what to purchase and what to avoid. We also found small companies to be mostly successful, since out of the three message goals, most of their tweets fell under promotion. Large companies were also successful, but not as much the small companies. Compared to small companies, they had a lot less promotional tweets. Small companies depended on promotions in order to sell their products and gain awareness. Whereas large companies were already established and didn't primarily depend on it. We also had tweeters types whose success was difficult to measure, such as our celebrity tweeters.

With the completion of this assignment, we gained valuable insight on how to use Twitter for different purposes. We found that it's important to keep a consistent voice, while using the platform. Our future strategy is to utilize Twitter in a way that benefits the company, which we represent or our personal brand. In the book called *"Likeable Social Media,"* the author, Dave Kerpen, discusses the benefits to Twitter. From a business perspective, one advantage to Twitter is users can "promote tweets, promote trends, and promote twitter accounts" (pg. 50). This enabled the advertisers to monitor related keywords to the business and to keep up to date with the latest trends (pg. 50). For example, if we were to do something that involved products/services and clients, then we would reach out to clients and inform them of said products/services, and etc.

Citations:

(2017, August 8th). "The How and Why of Marketing on Twitter." ThriveHive.com Retrieved from: https://thrivehive.com/the-how-and-why-of-marketing-on-twitter/

Kerpen, Dave. (2019). "Likeable Social Media." New York, NY. McGraw-Hill Education.

MacMillan, Gordon. (2017, November 15th). "Twitter's audience is hugely influential-here's what it means for brands." Twitter.com. Retrieved from: https://marketing.twitter.com/emea/en_gb/insights/twitters-audience-is-hugely-influential-heres-what-it-means-for-brands