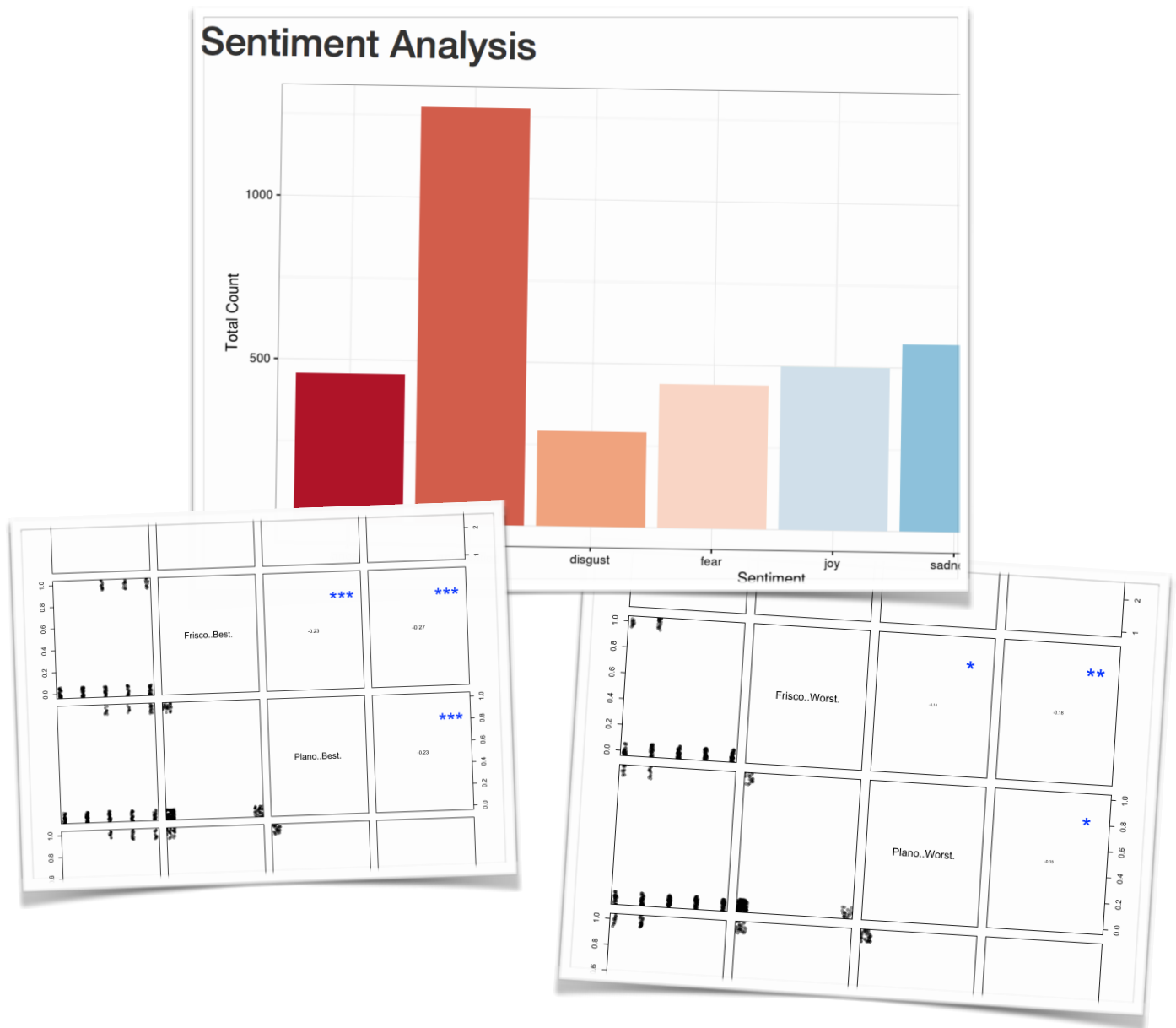


AT&T Case Competition

Correlation between social media reviews and retail performance



AT&T Case Competition

Customer Sentiments: To procure data, we first sent out an email blast to residents of the cities of Plano, Richardson, and Frisco. This email consisted of a form in which we asked various questions regarding customer's experience at an AT&T Retail store. We had about 250 responses to the survey that included reason for visit, gender, nationality and how often. The breakdown of the responses is as follows:

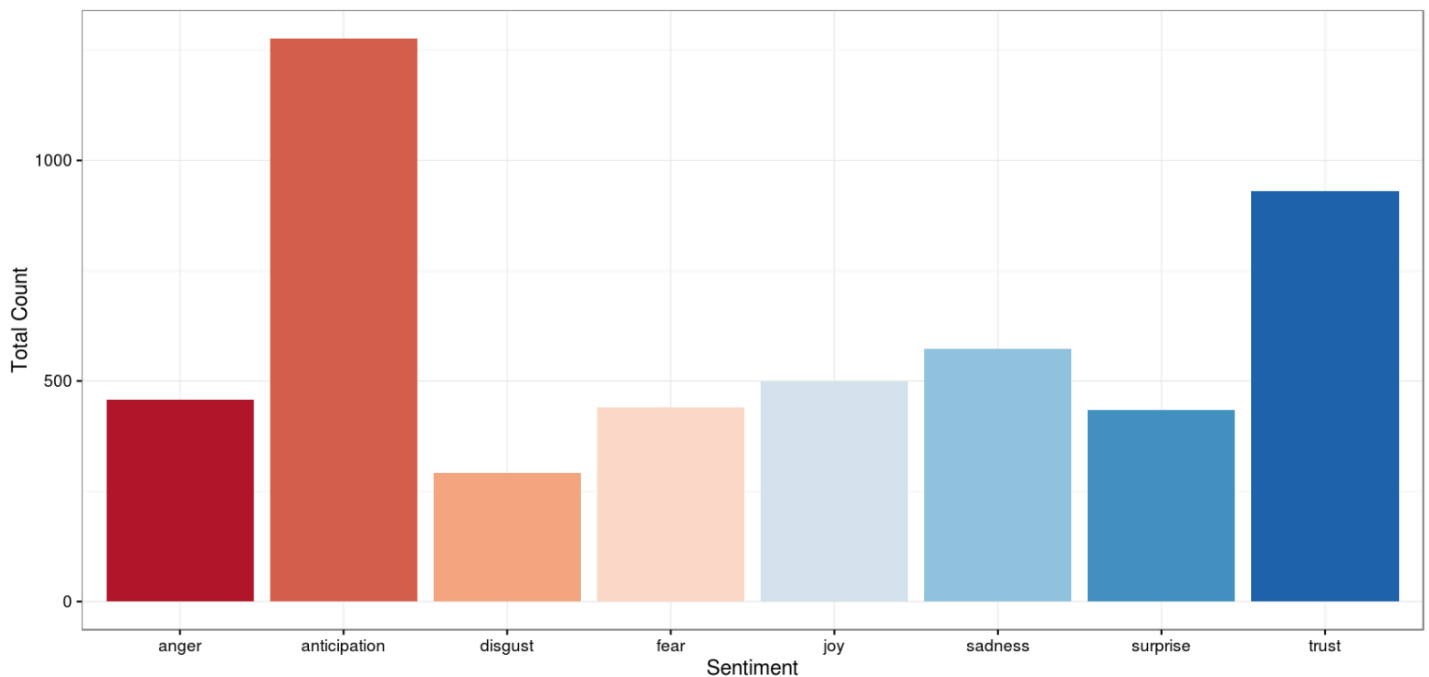
Country / Nationality	Count	City	Count	Gender	Count
United States	66	Richardson	98	Male	157
India	46	Plano	71	Female	103
China	45	Frisco	91	TOTAL COUNT	260
Mexico	58	TOTAL COUNT	260		
Other	45				
TOTAL COUNT	260				

Based on the responses we had received, we have applied Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions and tried to understand the basic customer sentiment based of their particular culture (dictated by nationality). We have used the tool provided by Geert Hofstede where countries are rated on six particular dimensions. It is important to understand that these ratings are relative. Since we are talking about the AT&T retail experience in the United States, the base comparison has been set to the U.S.. Here's a snapshot of how India, China, Mexico look when compared to the United States of America:


Country	Power Distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation	Indulgence
USA	40	91	62	46	26	68
Mexico	81	30	69	82	24	97
China	80	20	66	30	87	24
India	77	48	56	40	51	26

In the first write up we mentioned briefly how retailers could benefit from various social media platforms, if used the right way. We talked about Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest. Apart from these we have extracted reviews from Yelp, Google Reviews for various AT&T retail stores. We have found a Shiny application that extracts tweets (username or # specified) and runs basic analysis on them. In our case, we used the application to extract hashtags from '@ATTCares' and run them through the analysis. The application generated the following bar graph, giving us an indication of what the customers are feeling.



Sentiment Analysis



The application had retrieved 3543 tweets from the feed, and analyzed the words used in the tweets and provided the sentiment analysis. As we can see from the graph, 'anticipation' carries the most weight, followed by 'trust' and we can see that 'sadness' and 'anger' combined, carries about a third of the total tweets. Here are some of the sample tweets that were pulled from the Twitter analysis:

Show 10  entries

Search:

	pc_val 	text 
1	(-4.32,-3.07]	@Uverse @ATTCares So much frustration in getting new service working - No one to call and phone lines dropped me 3 times already #ATTsucks
2	(-3.07,-1.84]	@ATTCares Yes, aft I pressed "Restart" it did reboot, connected an is working just fine. Just was wondering what update was for.
3	(-1.84,-0.6]	@ATTCares charged after cancellation of services and for "unreturned" equipment,everything was returned together-No explanation or bill @FCC
4	(-0.6,0.635]	@JeffTsunami Hello, Borgetti! We don't like to hear that your bill is too high. Can you send us more information through DM? ^ChrisT
5	(0.635,1.87]	@drloco5 Oh no Jeff that is not good. Were you able to get the assistance you needed? Please provide details as to what happened. ^DarleneC.
6	(1.87,3.11]	@tamikabaker8522 Tamika, can you please DM us your account number so we may further assist you in getting your service installed? ^GregH
7	(3.11,4.34]	@haroutterzian Hi, Harout! We'd love to help resolve your internet issues. Kindly DM us to let us know if you have U-verse or DSL! ^SeanF
8	(4.34,5.58]	@ThePapaRobbins Hi there, Kent! We'd be delighted to assist you with this concern. Kindly DM us with details and service type. Thanks! ^TaeJ
9	(5.58,6.81]	@Deecepticonx Hey! Kindly DM us more details regarding your concern to better assist you. Thanks for reaching out! ^RazR
10	(6.81,8.06]	@sehque Kindly DM us again with any concern you may have so we may further assist you. We'd love to help! Thanks in advanced. ^BrittB

Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries

Previous **1** Next

Most prominent terms: wed, pleas, love, assist, thank, concern, detail, help, kind, att

Challenges:

In a project that is limited in time and also the data resources, it is obvious to run into challenges. We did, and some of the challenges were interesting because it led us in other directions we wouldn't have otherwise pursued.

One of the biggest challenges we had when working on this project was filtering through the limited retail reviews that were present online. Most of the ratings that were below two stars were regarding factors that were out of AT&T's control. An example for this would be the following screenshot of the review:



Trying to find the correlation to a retail store performance without inside data. Performance is a broad term to do analysis on. Sales performance has to be compared to the sales that the retail stores had over a period of time. Customer service performance requires survey data provided by the customer to the retailer. Having no access to both really led us to make assumptions and think in a direction where we would be forcing ourselves not to use them.

Findings:

Upon further investigation of other social networks, it appears to us that AT&T does not have much presence, if any at all, on social platforms such as, Facebook, Foursquare, Pinterest, Google Reviews and/or Yelp. An example of this is AT&T's presence on Facebook. While AT&T does have a corporate page, it's rather difficult

for customer's to connect on a more personable level to their particular retail locations in order to voice their comments and concerns.

This poses an issue because, while offering customers an outlet to connect with the company, it disconnects them from the particular employees they've built relationships with and from the unique customer experience they received in store. What we have found is that it is the authorized retail locations which have the majority of individual pages for their stores (not corporate locations), but without much interaction from either customers or staff. It seems these pages exist for no other reason than to provide potential customers with basic information such as the store's address and contact information.

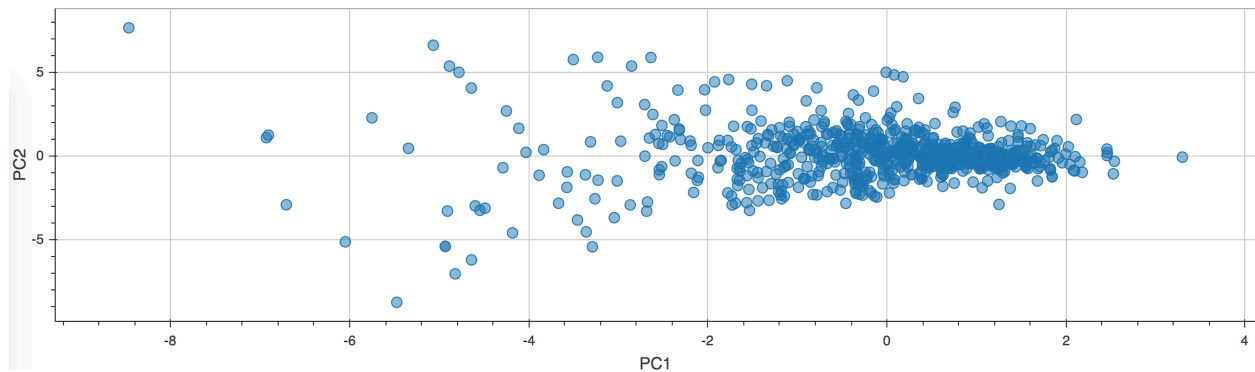
Recommendations:

1. A recommendation would be to have each retail store run and actively manage their social media page. At the very least a Facebook and Twitter are a must have. In the instance of Facebook, management could utilize Facebook's advertising to promote their stores via sponsored posts to be seen on the newsfeeds of potential customers/that city's Facebook network, and for the sales staff to also ask for customers to "like" their store's page when talking about customer satisfaction surveys. With Facebook being the world's largest social network, sponsored posts would provide opportunities for increased store traffic, sales and profits, which would make the cost of promotion insignificant.

Additionally, we would suggest that AT&T retailers use Facebook as a marketing tool to engage with more customers and increase traffic onto their respective pages, and to keep customers in up to date with that store's news such as sales and discounts, new product releases and other such activities.

Over the past few years, retailers in general have used Twitter to listen and respond to customer complaints. Having this at a retail level helps with gaining a credible feedback that could be used to improve their customer service, and their products and services. While it's understandable for the sales staff to be unable to monitor social media feeds constantly and be able to perform their job duties effectively, it should be made a priority to be checked during downtimes/during

business hours. The following is a Twitter analysis which shows the timing of customer tweets and whether they're positive or negative:



2. Most AT&T retail customers are actively posting reviews about their retailers on Google Reviews. One way to gain their trust and improve their service is to respond to the critical reviews that customers put in. We've read all the reviews on Google Reviews of over 20+ AT&T retailers. We have seen one thing in common. No responses to any of the customers feedback.

Here is an example of a store rated high, but one of the feedback was only a single star. Interestingly enough, this is an AT&T authorized retailer:

AT&T Authorized Retailer

Town East Mall, 2063 Town East Mall #2208, Mesquite, TX

[Write a review](#)

4.4 ★★★★★ 32 reviews

Sort by: Lowest score ▾



Ashley blanco

5 months ago · 🇺🇸

★★★★★ I set up my account with Ulysses(or however you spell it) and had many problems. The first bill we received was in someone else's name. I called customer service and found out it was someone else's name but with all my personal info, like social, date of birth, etc. Customer service said they had never seen an account so messed up before. They made me a new account and then told me I needed to pay a deposit, Wich I had already payed when we set up the account. There was no record of any deposit made. After sever trips to the store, and multiple hours on the phone my account never got fixed. Ulysses gave us our deposit back and said we could go to a different provider. We had a total of 4 days out of the month of service, the rest of the month we had nothing. We returned all of the equipment and was told that all debt was covered due to how messed up everything was and that they apologized for all of the headaches. We are now being call by a debt collector saying we owe 119.05, this has been the worst experience ever. We switched over to time warner cable and had service the same day for half the price. I will never use at&t again. If you go to this store I would not work with a guy name Ulysses, in my opinion he should be fired, he dose not seem to know what he is doing. I am very disappointed with this store, I would go somewhere else!

👍 Helpful?



Jimmy Johnson

a year ago

★★★★★ This Hispanic guy named Ullisses, conned me out of my money! He lied and told me that there were only 2 plans I could get with att and it was either the 40\$ plan or the 60\$ plan. And when I picked the 40\$ plan he told me that the plan sucked cuz it only gives you 250 minutes of talk! Of course I

On the other hand, AT&T's biggest competitor, Verizon seems to respond to most of the critical reviews that their customers had. Here's an example:



Laura Lu

10 months ago -

★☆☆☆☆ I wish I can give 0 star to them. Have been waiting for the call back from them but never get one, I decided to write down my SO BAD experience here. Just a reminder to anyone may want to go here to open your account or just want to go with ... [More](#)

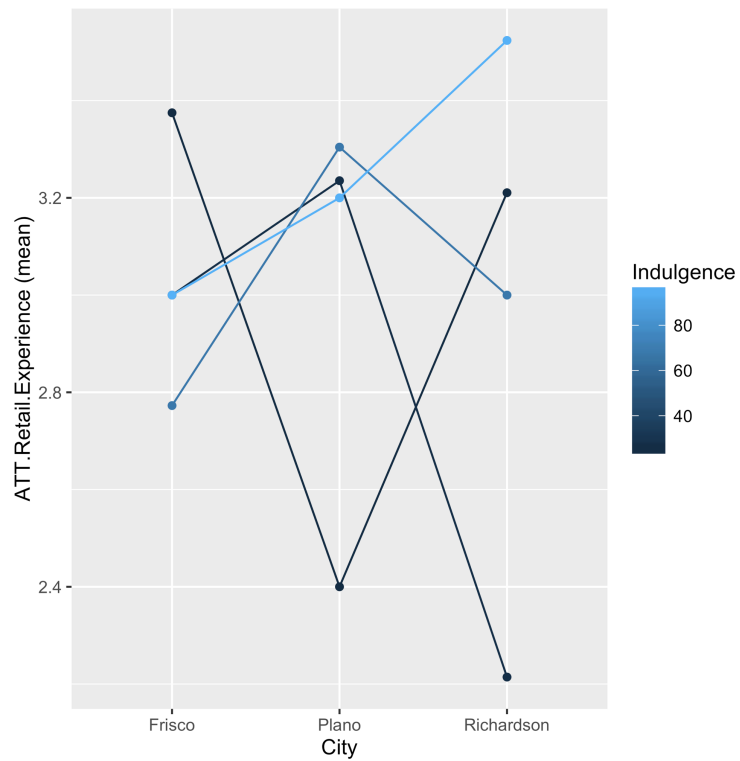
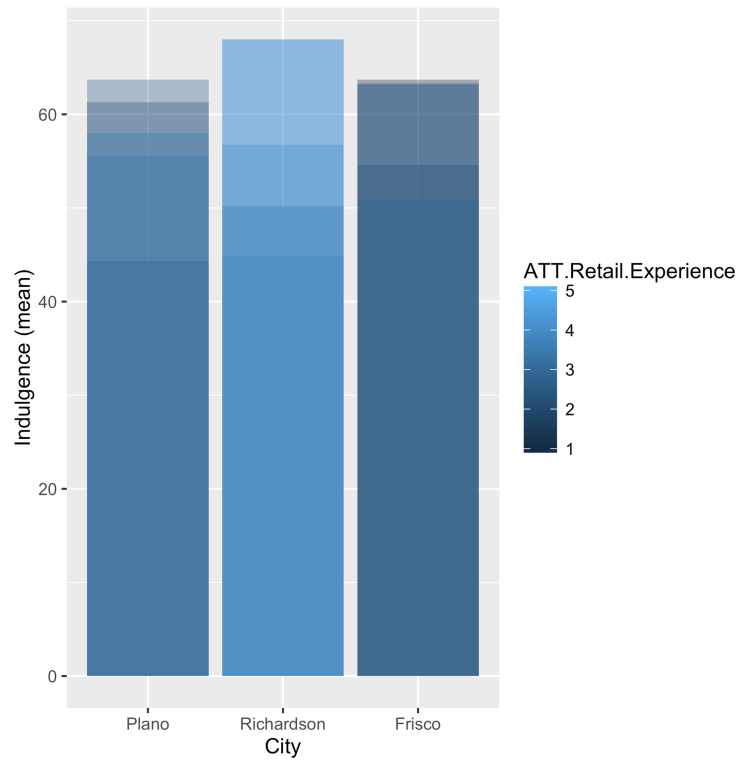
Helpful?

Response from the owner 10 months ago

Laura, thank you for sharing your experience with us. Cellular Sales is an authorized retailer for Verizon, but we are a separate company. As a separate company, some of our policies and fees may vary from those of Verizon Corporate. The equipment you purchased was sold through Cellular Sales, not Verizon which is why Verizon Corporate is not able to accept a return of the equipment. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our Customer Support Team at 1-877-851-0649 or via email at salesupport@cellularsales.com. -- Cecelia S. Customer Support Specialist

Responding to reviews does two things. It helps to relate to an angry customer and helps to empathize with their personal situation. Giving them a reason for why certain incident took place is comforting to know and offers the sales staff a chance to win that customer over. Two, it lets customers know that you are reading and looking at the reviews. For other customers out there, it gives them a reason to voice their opinion.

With AT&T, we believe that the lack of response is the reason for why people do not voice their opinion. If AT&T doesn't respond or acknowledge the feedback given, it just shows that they do not weigh customers opinions as much as they claim. On the next page, we have two graphics which showcase customer's indulgence at various retail locations based on the analysis we conducted in R:



Labels: y-axis: mean indulgence and customer rating, x-axis: city