

## Conversation vs. Broadcasting in Social Media

by Erica Gunn

I am interested in visualizing how users interact on Twitter. The discussion surrounding social media tends to focus on conversations – sustained reply chains between users – but I suspect that many tweets are better described as uni-directional broadcasts, and that the ratio of “conversation” tweets to “broadcast” tweets will vary according to user.

I propose to randomly select a small number of users who happen to send out tweets at the first collection time, and to visualize each user as a circle with a unique color. The area of the circle will scale with the number of followers for each user profiled.

I will then collect all of the tweets sent in reply to the original user, and track the number of exchanges in the conversation, as well as the number of mentions and retweets for the original message. These will be visualized with a combination of small circles and lines to create a visualization showing both the reach of the broadcast and the depth of conversations occurring around the original tweet.



