Introduction
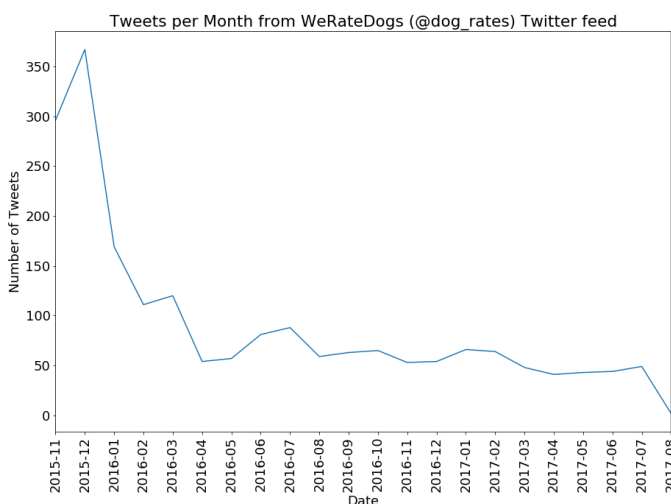
Most likely you have heard of We Rate Dogs…no? Well if you haven't it is a Twitter feed (@dog_rates) which has been entertaining us since 2015.

Created by then college student Matt Nelson, We Rate Dogs has garnered a famous and international following. The Twitter feed asks people to send photos of their dogs, then tweets selected photos rating and a humorous comment. Dogs are rated on a scale of one to ten, but are invariably given ratings in excess of the maximum, such as "13/10". Popular posts are re-posted on Instagram and Facebook. The feed has a branded game, a popular online store, a book that was published in 2017 and has raised money for animal charities.
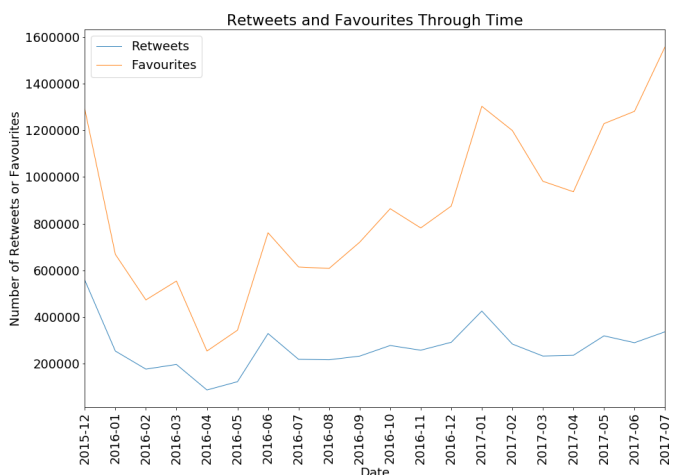
But what can we learn from their Twitter feed?

Well, a lot to answer briefly! We combined data from, not only the WeRateDogs Twitter archive dating back to 1st August 2017, but also additional data including retweet counts and favourite counts, as well as an image classification of the dogs referred to in the tweets to identify the following:
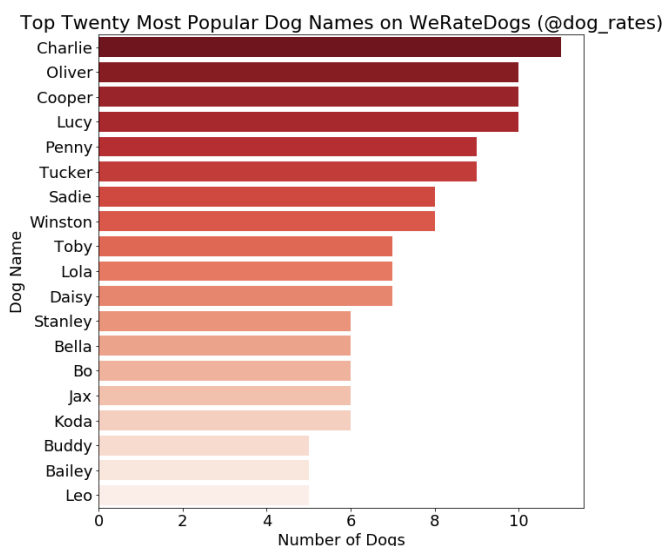
We Rate Dogs tweeting has been declining…

Tweets per Month from WeRateDogs (@dog_rates) Twitter feed

…but their retweets and favourites have been increasing! Yes, they are becoming more popular despite their reduction in Tweets!
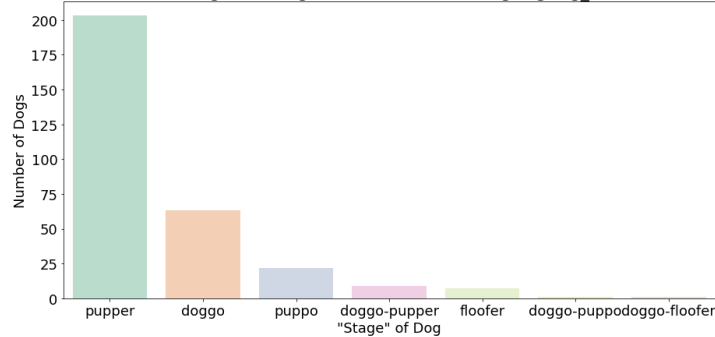

Retweets and Favourites Through Time

Often, when users submit their Tweets to We Rate Dogs, they include their dog's name. In fact there are 948 different names stated on We Rate Dogs. But what are the most popular dog names then I hear you ask? Is it Toto or Beethoven or Lassie or Hooch? No, nothing as predictable as famous movie dog names; Charlie is the most popular name in posts on We Rate Dogs:

Top Twenty Most Popular Dog Names on WeRateDogs (@dog_rates)

And the all import "stage" from the Dogtionary mentioned in posts? Well, it has to be pupper (which means Puppy). The term is part of a phenomenon called Doggo Lingo (or Dog-Speak). Doggo Lingo is a simple, upbeat, joyful, and friendly way of talking that imitates how a dog might speak if it was able to…apparently…!

The "stages" of Dogs Posted on WeRateDogs (@dog_rates)

But perhaps of most interest were the dog breeds on show on We Rate Dogs. A huge number of breeds, 113 to be exact, were recognised by the neural network that analysed each and every image in the We Rate Dogs Twitter archive.

An interesting note on this was that the most commonly tweeted dog type was a Golden Retriever. As such, Golden Retrievers garnered the most retweets and favourites of all dogs.

However, the chart to the right displays the retweets and favourites *per Tweet* i.e. the average number of retweets and favourites gained by individual breeds and not the total. The Golden Retriever in this case comes 19th, whereas the most retweeted breeed per tweet is the Bedlington Terrier and the most liked is the Saluki breed.

That said, I think we can agree they are all liked as We Rate Dogs has 8.7 m followers on Twitter alone!

Retweet and Favourite Count per Breed of Dog on WeRateDogs (@dog_rates)

WE
RATE
DOGS
A TWITTER ANALYSIS

"They're good dogs, Brent"
- Nelson, M. 2016