The role of "social listening" in strategic communication

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1 Background

Listening is a crucial part of effective communication. Within strategic communication, social listening usually refers to the activity of social media monitoring in proximity to a communication campaign. Social listening can for example be part of a situation analysis that is undertaken prior to a planned communication event in order to facilitate the production of effective message design, or it can occur after a communication event in order to evaluate audience responses (Stewart & Arnold, 2018), which can then feed into the next situation analysis iteration. Yet another application of social listening would be to monitor the so-called blogosphere in order to detect anomalies that have the potential to reach virality and thus severly impact brand image (Westermann & Forthmann, 2020).

Since social listening typically occurs in the context of situation analyses or campaign evaluation, this activity has the potential to form a natural part of several subfields within strategic communication, from organizational communication (determine audience sentiment before a PR campaign), to digital marketing (evaluate responses to a new product launch), to crisis communication (personalized responses to various actors that are engaging in a rhetorical arena) (Young et al., 2019). Within communication research connected to influence operations and disinformation campaigns, social listening could have a significant impact as a tool for .. polarization (Lukito, 2020; Michele Ewing & Lambert, 2019; Sultan, 2019)

The present research proposal suggests that the Dept. of Strategic Communication should invest efforts into designing a grant application that would allow the department to study the preconditions, feasibility, and implementation of social listening as a methodological and theoretical

Proposal for research application .. Dept. of Strategic Communication (Stewart & Arnold, 2018). Connection to disinfo and polarization.

- The background and issues of your proposed research
- customer relationship management (CRM
- social listening as situation analysis, planning, strategy
- communication reseach on image, organizational identity, nation branding conversations
- communication goals, situation analysis, audience, intervention, evaluation, new goals
- the sostac model (digital marketing, skoc42), where does social listening occur? planning and evaluation/monitoring (response to intervention)
- potential partners: swedish institute, ikea, sinch, msb

1.1 Main issues

There is no agreed upon methodology, digital tools are often proprietary (vs open source), social media platforms are difficult to access, gdpr limits collection and processing of social media data (easier for research institutions, anonymization, machine learning, web scrape programming)

preconditions, feasibility, and implementation

Challenges, opportunities for development. Big data, GDPR, social media, web scraping, AIML, sentiment, analyze intent (cf. chatbots, sinch), text analysis, quantitative content analysis, (Westermann & Forthmann, 2020). hootsuite, brandwatch, crowdtangle

2 Planning

- Plan of work and time schedule
- How to work towards a research application, solve issues, methods, timeline

3 Funding

- To which research funders the application will be sent.
- Probably VR, RJ, etc

4 Researchers

- The role of the involved researchers

Nils:

Rickard:

5 Instruction for the application

The idea for the research application is formulated in a maximum of two pages and emailed to the head of department and the research director no later than September 30.

The groups will present their research application during a seminar at the end of the autumn of 2022. Research applications will also be distributed to everyone at ISK before the seminar so that the entire department can take part of this work and be inspired. The application

References

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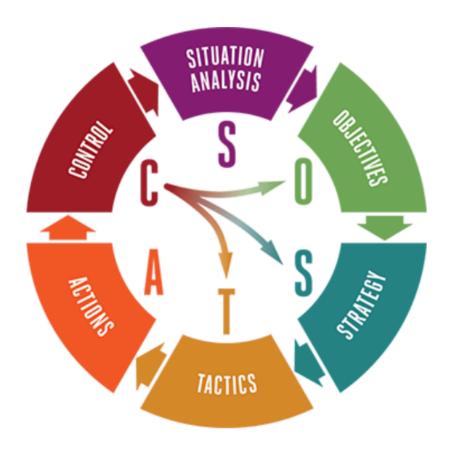
Figure 1: sostac

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Young, C., Simmons, H., & Stewart, M. (2019). Social listening during crises: A practitioner guide for crisis communication on social media.