Libraries and Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Twitter is becoming a popular social media platform in the Middle East. Studies suggest that users prefer Twitter platform to find and share news. In this paper, the researcher analyzes the use of hashtag Library accompanied with hashtag Qatar. The analysis is based on a set of over than four hundred tweets and with mixed methodology combining semantic analysis, and quantitative analysis.

BACKGROUND

Different social media platforms allow people to get involved with news, pictures, events and other activities posted on those platforms, which changed the way people communicate with news and updates. Twitter has proved that it is the platform where people are seeking for news and information. According to the company statistics there are more than 300 million monthly active users, producing around 500 million tweets every day ("Twitter usage statistics," 2017). An increasing number of organizations are using the Twitter to promote their work, communicate thoughts, and interacting with updates and news (Kim, Kim, Wang, & Lee, 2016). Also, individuals are exchanging information and opinion through Twitter, and it is becoming the way to communicate for lots of people. As a result, Twitter had become the most fast growing communication tool. Organizations, as well individuals, are using Twitter for different purposes, promotions, sharing news, sharing stories and providing opinions (Sheller & Schultz, 2010).

METHODS

This poster will offer a pilot analysis of the use of the library-related use of Twitter in Qatar where this is the most popular social media platform. We analyze the usage of hashtag Library in combination with #Qatar on an archived set of over than four hundred tweets from 2014-2017 using a mixed methodology combining observation, semantic analysis, and quantitative analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

The results show a range of different types of library presence on Twitter, with a preference to use Twitter for recruitment of staff and events and services being less prominent. The analysis provides valuable insights on areas where Twitter use can be improved.

While Twitter has been part of the social media universe since 2006, this study of over than 400 Tweets with hashtag #Library in combination with #Qatar on an archived set from 2014-2017, indicates that libraries have adapted somewhat slowly to this tool. It also shows that the number of individual users who are tweeting about the library is less than the number of tweets by the different libraries. That could be an indication of not enough engagement by the users. Academic libraries are the less organization that tweets about their activities and collection, it seems that academic libraries are still in the early stages of evaluating the success of using Twitter and other social networks to connect and communicate with their users. Although academic research suggests that that Twitter has the ability to reach and interact with library users effectively by sharing basic information and resources, conversing with patrons, and providing assistance in a quick, yet useful way. As Twitter becomes more widely implemented in academic libraries, future studies will be needed to evaluate how users interact with the libraries via the social networking platform and how libraries’ tweets expand over the course of time.