Tools for Tuning Social Signals

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Finding useful signals among the noise of online conversations can be difficult. Choosing to hand-tailor a collection of Twitter posts, blog entries or other social activity can be worthwhile, but it's also a lot of work. There are many tools available to help automate and fine-tune online conversations. Following is a collection of resources compiled for the 2013 CALI (Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction) conference in Chicago.

These resources can help you manage, track, update, curate, document and syndicate social signals. This content might be from Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogs, RSS, Pinterest, Tumblr and other resources.

Hootsuite [http://www.hootsuite.com/] This is an online service started for managing posts to Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Within a browser window, you monitor activity streams, track conference/event hashtags, or track separate groups like Twitter Lists or LinkedIn Groups. They've recently added access for other apps like YouTube, Tumblr, Flickr and a general purpose RSS app. You can monitor searches with keywords or groups from existing networks (like Twitter Lists). Hootsuite lets you manage up to five accounts for free.

Example: Monitor Twitter for mentions of your law firm, law school or a conference hashtag.

Yahoo! Pipes [pipes.yahoo.com] This is a great tool to hand-tailor RSS feeds and create custom-filtered output. With this, you can combine multiple feeds, take content from sites that don't support RSS, filter results based on key words, and re-publish content. For instance, you might want to track only certain authors, categories or key words in an RSS feed. Pipes has been around for a while, and it's still alive and well. Though it can be a bit daunting visually, there's often little need to know how to write code to create advanced tools.

Example: **Georgetown Law Faculty Blog Aggregator**:
http://www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/blogPosts.cfm -- An automated collection of blog posts from fourteen law professors at Georgetown who contribute to personal and group blogs.

IFTTT [ifttt.com] – The service name is "If This, Then That" which is used to create connections between more than 60 sources that trigger events based on key word, action or other conditions. For instance, you can get a text message when it will rain the following day, or you can post RSS output or new Flickr content to Twitter. Each triggering event connects two services

based on triggering events. Many actions help automate storage, such as saving something to Evernote, Dropbox or Box. You can even use triggers to control the hue of a brand of Philips lights in your home.

Storify [storify.com] Posts to Twitter or photos from Instagram can often be ephemeral or fleeting, but have a strong value for context and annotation. The Storify platform lets you hand-select materials from these and other platforms to create an online story. For instance, you might want to summarize a conference, event or even a single presentation. Though many conferences capture conversations with a hashtag (like #CALIcon13), there can be a lot of noise among the good conversational signals. With Storify, you can pick the updates you want to include and augment them from another service, such as Instagram.

Example: Presentation Summary for: Legal Reference for Non-Law Librarians
http://storify.com/librarygrrrl/sslbc-2013-legal-reference-for-non-law-librarians

Note: Both Hootsuite and IFTTT provide ways to add items to a Storify collection. With Hootsuite, you have a way to put items in a collection manually based on your own searches and network view. With IFTTT, you can have activity on other services trigger an action to post something (even a draft) to a Storify collection.

Paper.li [paper.li] This is an automated platform for creating an online newspaper based on your Twitter feed and sources you select. Updates can be on a scheduled basis, and are grouped by subject, such as technology, education and politics.

Example: Nebraska's Schmid Law Library http://paper.li/schmidlibrary/1360182652 -- created by Marcia Dority Baker, this is a collection of sources for the law school's community based on legal sources and Nebraska-specific content.

Tumblr (www.tumblr.com) This is a micro-logging site for posting anything from anywhere including text, photos, links, music & video from any device. This resource is a quick and trendy way to post content from a variety of formats in one place. For instance, some Tumblrs are very creative with a large number of followers (Dr. Who), others have a wicked sense of humor towards a particular situation (law school).

Example: University of Nebraska College of Law is using Tumblr http://nebraskalaw.tumblr.com/ to connect with students, share photos and document law college events.

Visual.ly (ww.visual.ly) This is a cool resource that allows users to turn data into visually appealing infographics. Since statistics or library-related numbers can be boring and hard to interpret, you can use Visual.ly to create and present relevant data in an eye-catching format that can be embedded in a variety of platforms. The end result; cool looking data – what more can librarians ask for?

Example: Use visual.ly infographs in your library LibGuides similar to what Schmid Law Library has done in "Digital Assets in Estate Planning" http://schmidguides.unl.edu/content.php?pid=461470 (Online Presence tab).

Twitter Archiving / Capture Tools

SearchHash [searchhash.com] The site's tagline pretty much sums up this one: "Download hashtagged tweets as a spreadsheet to archive or analyse. Ht @Richards1000 for the suggestion.

Tweetarchivist [www.tweetarchivist.com] Twitter archiving and analysis service that performs well for capture and real-time analysis. At least it seems to work well for this based on limited trials. It looks very sharp. Another tip from @Richards1000.

Twitter Archiving Google Spreadsheet [http://mashe.hawksey.info/2013/02/twitter-archive-tagsv5/] A series of files and documented methods to use your own Google Drive spreadsheet to capture tweets that auto-populate to a spreadsheet. You have to register for an OAuth token from Twitter and follow a few tricky (but well-documented) steps.

ThinkUp App [thinkup.com] According to the site, "ThinkUp is for organizations and personalities who are active on social media networks, have more than 1,000 friends or followers, and need deeper analysis tools to derive meaning from those interactions." You install it on your own server running PHP / MySQL and few other settings. If you have access to a server and want deeper analysis, try this out.