Unclosed Deals: What PEORIA Twitter Metrics Tell Us About the Presidential Campaigns During the Party Consolidation Period

May 4 – July 8, 2016
Executive Summary

On May 4, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump were the presumptive nominees of their respective parties in terms of delegate counts. But over the next 65 days how well did they consolidate support among the highly attentive and active Twitter users who mentioned their names in tweets? Our analysis, performed on data provided by the media monitoring platforms of Crimson Hexagon and Zignal Labs, found that:

• Trump's advantage in Twitter impressions roughly paralleled that in newspaper stories, and both those were greater than in television news and publications indexed by Lexis/Nexis.

• Trump's follower growth rate slowed but Clinton's did not increase.
Executive Summary (cont’d)

• Clinton had the most retweeted tweet of the campaign, the Twitter-savvy message "Delete your account," but Trump's response was also popular.

• The disengaged but still expanding followers of defeated candidates represents an outreach opportunity for the presumptive nominees. Neither Clinton nor Trump seem to be doing well at staking claim to these pools of politically attentive and active citizens.

• The sharp decline of #NeverTrump stands as a warning to those who would interpret a popular hashtag as a sign of growing support. Bear this in mind as the conventions start.
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Party Consolidation

• The time between one person becoming the presumptive nominee of the party thanks to a majority or uncatchable lead in delegates and the actual nomination at the party convention is a time when the candidate works to acquire support from the also-ran candidates. Deals are made, endorsements are won, contrasts with the other party's presumptive nominee sharpen.

• By examining word frequency patterns and engagement metrics on Twitter, we can gain new kinds of insight as to how well the all-but-certain presidential nominees are doing at this consolidation process. That is the subject of this seventh PEORIA Project report.
Share of Media Volume
May 4 – July 8, 2016

- A candidate’s share is calculated as a percentage of the sum of the two-candidate volume for each media.

- Share of traditional media volume is from Zignal Labs, defined as the number of news stories.

- Crimson Hexagon calculates Twitter potential impressions by adding the sender’s followers and the followers of all users who have retweeted a post.
Since locking up their nominations, Clinton and Trump have continued to grow their followers on Twitter.

While Trump caught up and surpassed Clinton before the Indiana primary, his growth in Twitter followers has slowed to the same pace as hers.
Engagement Peaks
Twitter Engagement: May 4 – July 8, 2016

- Total engagement on Twitter is the sum of a candidate’s account’s replies, mentions, and retweets.
- Trump has led on Twitter engagement throughout most of the 2016 election cycle, and during this party consolidation period.
- Hillary Clinton’s top Twitter engagement moment when her team tweeted “Delete Your Account” at Trump on June 9.
- Trump’s top Twitter engagement moment was when he tweeted about the Orlando massacre on June 12.
Retweets are exact copies of what a candidate’s account posted, which we view as a measure of engagement or enthusiasm. Trump has had more retweets than Clinton consistently throughout the party consolidation period.

Clinton’s “Delete your account” directed at Trump, which was retweeted 413,667 times on June 6. This is a perfect match of angst about Trump and using a common Twitter insult.

Trump’s response, “How long did it take your staff of 823 people to think that up—and where are your 33,000 emails that you deleted?” was retweeted 200,266 times.
Interest Topics
Twitter Affinities: May 4 – July 8, 2016

- Based on Twitter posts with identifiable interests by Crimson Hexagon
- Figures refer to the number of times the user is more interested in the topic Twitter as a whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hillary Clinton</th>
<th>Bernie Sanders</th>
<th>Donald Trump</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Campaigns</td>
<td>Bill Maher</td>
<td>Political Campaigns</td>
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<td>360x</td>
<td>232x</td>
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<td>Bill Maher</td>
<td>Political Campaigns</td>
<td>Glenn Beck</td>
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<td>126x</td>
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<td>The Daily Show</td>
<td>MSNBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>113x</td>
<td>120x</td>
<td>86x</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gun Safety</td>
<td>Fox News</td>
</tr>
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<td>75x</td>
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<td>Glenn Beck</td>
<td>Chelsea Handler</td>
<td>Veterans</td>
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<td>86x</td>
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<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>Republican Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16x</td>
<td>18x</td>
<td>32x</td>
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</table>
Interest Topics (cont’d)
Twitter Affinities: May 4 – July 8, 2016

- Word clouds are based on posts with identifiable interests by Crimson Hexagon; scale shows how much more the user more interested in the topic than Twitter as a whole.

- The word clouds dramatize the data in the previous slide’s table. They show that those tweeting about Trump and Clinton are extremely interested in political campaigns relative to the entire Twitter population.

- Clinton posts are more focused on gun safety while Trump’s were on veterans (party is the smallest)
Clinton Led Nationally
National Polling: May 4 – July 8, 2016

- This slide shows there was no direct correlation between the Twitter activity we analyze and poll standings.

- During this party consolidation period Clinton has led Trump for all but three days (May 22-24).

- Despite Bernie Sanders’ late exit from the campaign on July 12, Clinton has unified her party better than Trump before the conventions.
Demographic Consolidation
Identifiable Tweets: May 4 – July 8, 2016

- Posts to Sanders were identified as gender-equal and younger than posts to Clinton or Trump. This is an opportunity for Clinton as she consolidates her party with Sanders’ exit. Posts to Trump were more likely to be white than posts to Sanders or Clinton.

- Please note that these data do not indicate whether the tweets were positive, negative, or neutral. We do not perform sentiment analysis in this study.

Gender
~56% of tweets were identifiable
Trump and Clinton 5m posts each
Sanders 2m posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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</table>

Age
~15% of tweets were identifiable
Trump and Clinton 1m posts each
Sanders 692k posts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Race/Ethnicity
~12% of tweets were identifiable
Trump 306k Clinton 151k posts
Sanders 259k posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-White</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dormant But Still Growing
Suspensions, Followers, and Engagement: Candidate Announcements – July 8, 2016

- We think Clinton and Trump entice politically active tweeters who follow former candidates to join theirs; the relatively parallel and gradual growth rates of Trump and Clinton suggest this is not occurring to one side’s advantage over the other. We also recognize that some of the growth are bots and/or marketing/promotional accounts trying to get in front of others who follow those candidates.
Hashtags Don’t Indicate Campaign Growth

January 1 – July 8, 2016

- The late effort to stop Donald Trump failed to coalesce around an alternative candidate or a strategy to deny him the nomination at the convention.
- Reaction to Trump’s victory in the South Carolina primary and the Michigan debate helped fuel a #NeverTrump hashtag which was included in well over 315k U.S. posts.
- The #NeverTrump hashtag had one more moment with 94,805 U.S. posts on the day of the Indiana primary, which effectively ended the race for the Republican nomination. While there was talk of a Renegade Party to oppose Trump, David French decided to pass.
- The upcoming conventions will likely feature hashtags. We caution against reading too much into them as they reflect a short-lived moment in time rather than long-term shifts in the campaign.
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