



Use contextual analysis to investigate a brand

Introduction

A common problem for the creative industries is when they are approached to deliver a new advertising campaign or to assist in the development of a new product for an industry which they may not necessarily know much about. Even when they do understand the particular industry, it is always useful to have as much information about it as possible, particularly when trying to generate new ideas that may appeal to the customers within it.

An initial investigation phase in learning about an industry will typically involve discussions with the key stakeholders and brain storming with key individuals or user groups to try to identify the magic ingredients that will differentiate this new campaign or product from any other.

A key aspect of this phase is the learning process that the creative team go through in discovering about the industry and/or product. This will include expectations for the marketplace, as well as the terms associated with the current market leaders. All of this is described by words, and ideally the analysis will be driven by what the customers are actually saying about products in this marketplace.

Contextual analysis is perfectly positioned to assist in this learning process in an extremely fast and cost effective manner - and will identify the words of interest for any particular market, any brand, show changes over time and can show how products are differentiated by the customer.

This whitepaper will outline a number of different areas where we have used contextual data analysis, and how it has helped in understanding the brand or market sector.

Example 1: Brand analysis

An example of this process is with whisky. We downloaded blogs from forums in the UK, the US, and also the Far East. We found a number of words coming through in context with whisky that at first made us doubt that the analysis was working properly.

We discovered that 'green tea' was close in context with whisky and upon closer investigation discovered that this was predominantly from forums in the Far East where 'green tea' is apparently a staple component of their diet, and many discussions were taking place discussing how nice whisky tasted with it. This showed that for this part of the world at least there was an opportunity to make a green tea whisky pre-mixed drink, or to use whisky drinking with green tea in promotional campaigns in this part of the world.

Another example in the whisky data was when we looked at a particular brand, and found a number of words coming through that we thought again indicated that the analysis was wrong. Words like 'gun', 'barrel' and 'record' were coming through which to us made no sense. However when we showed the results to the whisky brand they became very excited. They immediately saw the importance and significance of the words since it is their universe. The words related to a type of 'gun barrel' that had been used to store the whisky in to give it its distinctive flavour, and this had won awards and also records for the type of processes used.



Figure 1: Contextual analysis of ‘best’ whisky brands against each based on online forum conversations

In both cases, without being experts in the particular field, very quickly we were able to hone in on the issues that mattered for each particular brand and product.

An auxiliary output from this analysis was the ability to rate the whisky brands against each other, and you can see an example of this in Figure 1. In the figure, a score is created for each brand that relates to how close the brand is to key whisky words like: golden, malty, peaty, smooth, etc. If the brief was to improve a particular whisky brand in terms of customer awareness, then repeating this analysis after the campaign had been run would show whether it had been successful or not, by analysing whether its score increased.

Context within context

The starting point for any social media analysis is a number of words used to filter tweets or forum posts on; either that, or you scrape all of the forum posts made at a particular site which you have previously identified as being interesting and/or relevant to the market being analysed.

Once all of this data is downloaded, the common approach by the majority of social media analysis companies (after the initial sentiment analysis) will be to analyse the frequency of words in the data. The data can be broken up into different sections according to perhaps some underlying demographic, and the word counts calculated separately, but essentially the analysis only comprises words, and their counts, and perhaps the overall sentiment of the brand.

By analysing using context, you can identify what words appear next to key words in your analysis, and realise a much more indepth analysis than other techniques available. As an example, we downloaded tweets over a 3 month



Figure 2: Word cloud showing words in context with ‘mortgage’ from data in day in March

period that were related to the topic of ‘finance’. The data was analysed day-by-day, due to the volume of tweets over this period. Looking at one particular day in our analysis, we can ask what words were in context with the word ‘mortgage’?

A number of word clouds are shown to answer this question - these show the word that is the focus of the analysis in the centre, with words in concentric circles surrounding it. The closer these other words are to the centre, then the closer in context they are with the word under analysis.

The analysis for the words in context with ‘mortgage’ can be seen in Figure 2, where we see the issue of refinance coming through strongly in context with related issues such as rates, loan, and unsecured also coming through.

This is all very well, but what if we want to examine what people are saying in context with mortgage and also the word ‘best’. In other words, what brands/products or features come up in context with these two terms: best mortgage. Note that this is not the same as simply searching for blogs that contain both of these words. By searching in context we include comments that may not even include either word, since we are searching **in context**.

The analysis for both words can be seen in Figure 3. This shows that we see issues that the public discuss in context with the best mortgage. Words such as cost and payoff come up close in context, with other words such as rating, stimulus, brokers also coming through.

An alternative could be to look at what is in context with ‘mortgage’ and



Figure 3: Word cloud showing words in context with 'mortgage' and also in context with 'best' from data in day in March



Figure 4: Word cloud showing words in context with ‘worst’ from data in day in January.

‘worst’, but we do not find any conversations in context with both of these words. However when we search for ‘worst’ on its own, we see the following contextual analysis coming through, as shown in Figure 4. Evidently, if I were the brand owner for Yahoo Personal Finance I would be extremely worried to see that my brand is so close in context with this word, and the other words give an indication of why the comments have been made and what the public perceive is wrong with this product.

Competitor analysis

A secondary aspect of contextual analysis is that it automatically gives you the potential to compare one product or brand against another. This allows you to identify words that come up in context with one brand and not another, or the words in common, and so on. This gives a huge amount of intelligence about the brands that is directly delivered by the customers in your marketplace.

The use of this type of analysis therefore allows you to investigate what the customers think is good or bad about a particular brand.

Whilst sentiment analysis gives you an overview of the perception of your brand or product, the strength of our technology is to go deeper than sentiment allows and show you **why** your customers think the way they do. This shows how our service can be used to give an unparalleled insight into the perception of a brand or product, and how it can complement a standard sentiment analysis



approach.

Trending example

Another strength of contextual analysis is to examine a particular topic or brand over time. For this example, we do not show the full extent of the analysis which is lists of words for each day along with a context score. Instead, we show the themes that come through when we look at a topic like 'bailout'. This is a rather emotive topic for the general public, and as you would expect the focus of their ire changes over time.

Initially, at the start of January, the main focus is on the UK government bailout and the fact that the money will not be returned until years later. Following this, there is discussion of the American bailouts, which then turns quickly to a discussion of Portugal, and a possible bailout there, with reference to the Euro zone and also Japan.

Towards the end of January, we see reference to Nick Clegg, the UK's Deputy Prime Minister, and statements that he has made on the government bailout, following which we see comments made by President Obama coming through in discussions made over a number of days. This continues with subsequent days focussing on the US Federal government's role and also the Republican party. Then a statement by Deutsche Bank Chief Executive Officer Josef Ackermann becomes prominent that discusses the bailout risk for hedge funds.

In February, this trend continues, with some topics that reach prominence remaining in context for a number of days. We start to see Greece mentioned due to its difficulties, and then Ireland and Libya too are seen in context with 'bailout'. For the rest of February and March we see these three countries, and Greece and Ireland in particular, continuing to be seen in context with 'bailout', as the discussion over the terms of any agreement is discussed on twitter regularly over this period. We also see Germany coming up in context, since it was the main country involved in the bailout deals for these countries.

In this way the larger news items can be tracked against key words and easily identified over time.

Just as above, it would be possible to examine any of these issues in greater detail by examining, for example, the context of Ireland within this bailout context. This would give an insight into the words that are found in context with Ireland only in the context of 'bailout' - allowing a focus to be given to this topic only. This could be useful, since (for example) Ireland were involved in the Six Nations rugby tournament during this period (which is sponsored by RBS), and we would not want the large number of tweets that were made during this tournament to influence our analysis of the purely financial impact of the 'bailout' provision that Ireland arranged during this time. This again highlights the importance of our approach in being able to **analyse in context**.

Context and competitor analysis

One issue that is hugely important and that our technology is ideal for is the comparison of competitors against each other, particularly when that is done in context. What do we mean by this? Well, whilst a summary count of how many positive and negative tweets have been made about Company A versus

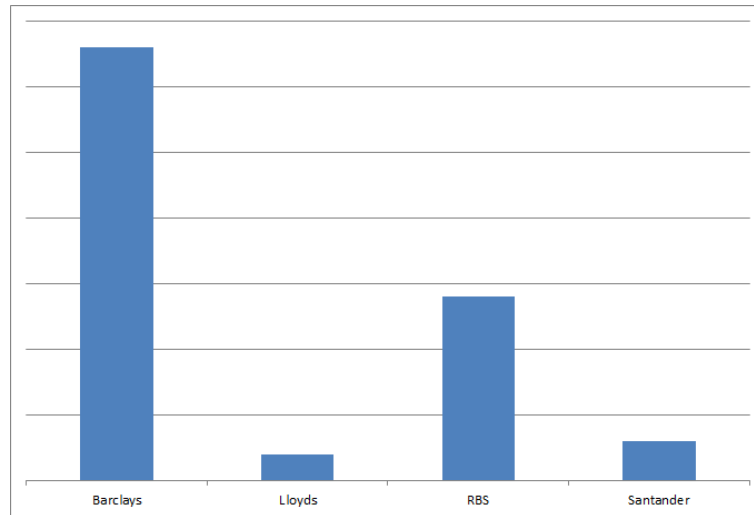


Figure 5: Bar chart showing banks context against key words in single day in January.

Company B is useful, it does not give you insight into **why** one company is doing well, or another one poorly.

In addition, what if it is difficult to describe what is being analysed in terms of sentiment? For example, let's say we wanted to know which banks were close in context to words such as: interest, rate, payment, payoff, return? Banks closer in context implies more conversations about the bank that impinge on these terms. We can examine a couple of examples of this using the figures for discussion in our analysis.

Figure 5 shows the analysis of the banks in context against the key words outlined above. Here we can see that Barclays are closest in context on this day, with RBS their closest rival, and Lloyds and Santander lagging far behind. We can identify whether these ratings reflect market share or whether they are linked to a particular issue that was discussed that day.

We can take this further by analysing the same words on a day in February. We can see this analysis in Figure 6 and here we see a different story emerging. RBS have dropped out of the analysis, with Santander now the closest in context. Lloyds are close to Santander which is similar to the analysis in Figure 5, however Barclays have dropped far behind. We also see that Northern Rock are discussed in context on this day.

This form of analysis shows how competing banks can be measured against each other in terms of how close they are to key concepts that are important to them. It shows how changes in public perception can be identified, and tracked over time. This can be fed into internal metrics in order to improve performance of marketing campaigns or other such activity.

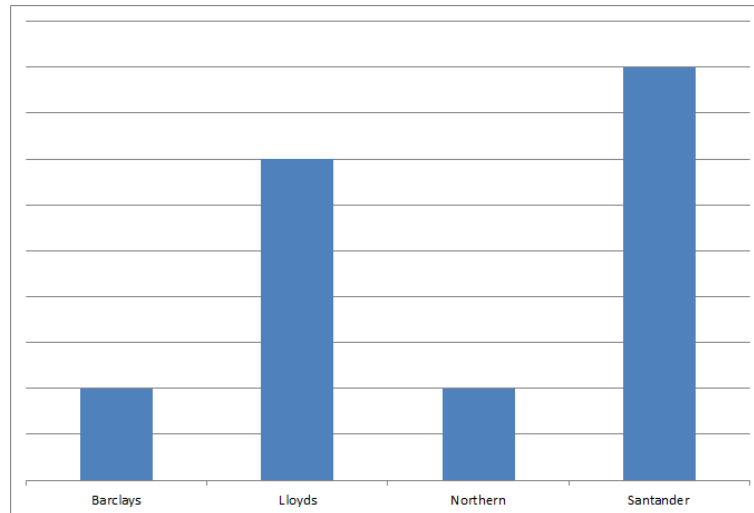


Figure 6: Bar chart showing banks context against key words in single day in February.

Royal Bank of Scotland

A further example of this can be seen with the Royal Bank of Scotland. If we search for references to 'rbos' we do not find many tweets at all. However we do see a large number of tweets coming through for 'rbs'. There are problems with this which we will discuss below.

Initially at the start of January, we see a number of references to the Chief of RBS Stephen Hester and his bonus payment that at that stage had not been fully approved. However we also see a large number of Portuguese words coming up in context with 'rbs' and if we investigate this a little further we see that there is a Brazilian TV station called RBS TV. In addition, in American football, RBs stands for 'Running backs' and is often used in tweets as an acronym as shorthand since it is an important position in the game.

This has three problems. The first is at the consumer side, in that anyone searching solely for RBS will not only receive tweets to do with the bank but also other topics that will certainly not be of interest to them. If they were searching for information on the bank they may give up and search for another bank instead.

The second problem is that the brand message of RBS whether promoted by the public or by media campaigns will be diluted due to the other meanings of 'rbs' as noted above.

The third problem is that the analysis of social media data will therefore require an additional step to remove this irrelevant data from the analysis. This will cost money and time for most approaches.

We would therefore recommend that RBS refer to themselves as RBOS as much as possible since this would differentiate themselves on twitter and other social media. This would obviously take some time to permeate public consciousness but would result in a clearer brand than is currently the case as



shown above.

The above problem could make analysis of trends around RBS hard, but in our case, since our analysis is contextual, it becomes easier for us if we simply add in an additional context which would rule out any references to the TV station and also any sporting references as well.

As an example, we can focus on Stephen Hester within the context of ‘rbs’ and see how this affects the analysis.

We see that the majority of days do not have any analysis at all for him, indicating that no tweets were made on these days on this topic, although there is some discussion at the beginning of January about the amount of money that Hester is likely to receive as a bonus.

The next mention is in the middle of February, where we see a number of words coming up in context: Hicks and Gillett. This is in relation to Hester’s role as Chief of RBS in effectively forcing the sale of Liverpool Football Club who were owned by Hicks and Gillett thanks to loans made by RBS. Hester’s decision to call in the loan and not allow any refinancing forced the sale of the club against the wishes of Hicks and Gillett.

Following this over a ten day period in March Hester’s bonus is discussed as it was finally approved by UK Financial Investments that manages the 83 percent UK taxpayer stake in RBS.

Discussion

This white paper highlights the additional insight that can be gained by the use of our contextual analysis techniques.

We show how contextual analysis can help in gaining an insight into a market or product, which can be used to assist the creative process for advertising campaigns or for creating new products.

We can analyse context within context, meaning that discussions that are not relevant to the topic under investigation will be ignored automatically.

We can show how word use changes over time, and how that can affect a brand or product. We can show trends in discussions around a particular topic, for a brand or for a combination of topic and brand. This gives unparalleled analysis for your brand which most importantly gives you insight into **why** the general public feel the way they do.

We have also shown how competitor analysis can be undertaken for a particular context, and that would be difficult if not impossible using sentiment analysis techniques. This can be tied into Business Intelligence metrics, so as to give a quantifiable feedback on marketing campaigns (whether digital or otherwise), and therefore allow the ROI to be determined effectively through social media for the first time.

Contact

If you would like to discuss the contents of this whitepaper, or to see how this analysis could be used to benefit your own company, and the pricing level for the service you require, then please contact Andrew at andrew@brand-aura.com.