Twitter Manual for Governments

Guidelines for public institutions
based on the experience
of the Government of Catalonia

Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia

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Contents

Presentation

For some time the Government of Catalonia has been working to develop a social media presence in line with its innovative, multi-channel strategy for public services. In doing so, it has pioneered the use of digital communication in the region and in June 2010 it produced the *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia* http://gen.cat/socialnetworksguide. This guide has been the principal manual for both public and private institutions for some years now.

In publishing the guide, the Catalan Government set out a number of pioneering actions in its digital assets. In March 2009, it created Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Flicker and SlideShare accounts to link to content on its websites. In May 2010 it created a specific website for the executive branch, catalangovernment.eu, and related social media accounts. In the first quarter of 2012, it developed the mobile app Eleccions 2012 to open its services up to public participation and improve their operation. In mid-2015, its corporate blogs were published on the WordPress cloud platform. And during 2014 and 2015, all the websites were migrated to a responsive design to manage content through open-source software.

In the current context, where governance and management of public affairs and contemporary social problems are increasingly complex, Twitter has become an essential social media platform for government communication strategies. Furthermore, this microblogging tool has shown its usefulness for policies aimed at fostering collaboration with other actors involved in public action: businesses, organizations and members of the public.

For this reason, Twitter and the Government of Catalonia have decided to publish this manual to provide techniques and ideas to help government institutions and public authorities operate coherently and effectively on this social networking service. The Catalan Government's experience could be of great assistance to other governments. It is therefore worth sharing this expertise and using this knowledge to take a major step towards open, networked governance with the capacity to transform and improve the experience of the public and society as a whole.

From this position of openness and transparency, the Government of Catalonia has made information available on all its social media accounts, to favor monitoring, accountability and consultation on all government activity.

Government of Catalonia – Twitter

Introduction
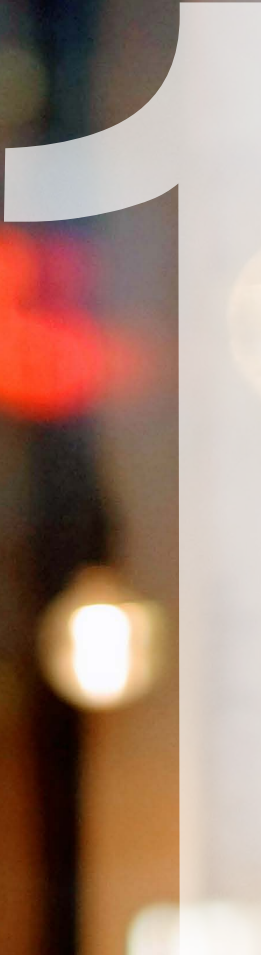
Recent years have seen numerous initiatives to incorporate the substantial changes arising from greater access to information resources, mainly thanks to mass Internet and social media use, into democratic political systems. Public administration has experienced a huge paradigm shift, known as *open government*. This puts the public at the heart of government, with a more active role and co-responsibility in public affairs, above and beyond periodic elections or representation in the bodies of democratic government. For this type of governance, channels for communications and collaboration between government bodies and the public have arisen that facilitate knowledge and recognition between both parties and improve relations between them.

This is a new way of managing public affairs, one that is based, firstly, on public control of government authorities through access to transparency, accountability and access to information and, secondly, on public participation and collaboration to guide this new style of governance.

Government is not the only agent involved in providing services and information of public value. Many of society's needs are satisfied by knowledge from a variety of persons and organizations. Consequently, government today must go even further in fostering and encouraging the necessary conditions for such processes to occur on a regular basis.

This requires intense use of information and communication technologies to include

> **The aim of publishing this manual is to offer specific strategies and resources for using Twitter and thus demonstrate its full potential.**

all public actors (citizens, organizations, businesses). The social media must serve as a standardized tool for communication with the public and above all as a key means of public access to the most collaborative government procedures, through contribution, inclusion, knowledge management, decision-making, co-creation and co-production. In other words, the social media could eventually become the ideal tool to ensure public participation and collaboration in producing solutions for governance in increasingly complex contemporary societies. As such, it enables government to design, manage and implement public policies that are more effective, efficient and legitimate because they more closely match public demands.

Although this scenario is the goal for the future, the current situation is one of transition. Today, government structures from the analog world, the *paper world*, coexist with emerging examples of a new culture based on social media action. These areas of government are adapting the way they communicate and relate, gradually leading to changes in government organizational structure. In the not too distant future, these adaptations will become major organizational and cultural changes. For the moment, the essential point is to understand how these forms of communication and relations are connected to government structure.

This is the purpose of this manual. For some time now, the Government of Catalonia has been striving to ensure that the presence of its ministries, organizations and services on the social media in general, and Twitter in particular, is open, coherent and innovative.

The book is a reflection of the collaborative and innovative approach used by the Government of Catalonia's Twitter account managers.

The *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia* http://gen.cat/socialnetworksguide has become a benchmark for governments, organizations and busi-nesses of all sizes because it sets out a stable and professional model of governance for these communication tools. The guide provides wide-ranging content applicable to the different platforms used by the Government of Catalonia and covers account management, privacy, security, shared team publishing, image rights and copyright, metrics, and more.

The aim of publishing this manual is to offer specific strategies and resources for using Twitter and thus demonstrate its full potential. The book is a reflection of the collaborative and innovative approach employed by the Government of Catalonia's Twitter account managers, organized around a large community of practice (CoP). Consequently, the experiences described in the manual are not just intense and educational, but also pioneering. The Government of Catalonia sees social media as a unique opportunity for leading innovation and acting as a vehicle for knowledge and value provided by all public actors.

What reforms and changes will be brought about in our organization by the effect of the social media on decision-making and providing value? What is the true scope of this model for government authorities? For the moment, the book describes a number of emblematic examples of the Government of Catalonia's Twitter presence, although several more could easily be included. These examples offer an insight into the new digital communication channels and how this *public conversation* can be used to improve relations between government and civil society while also impacting internally on government bodies.

Studying such practices will help enhance messages posted on Twitter, in line with the preferences and interests of users, so that they themselves create public content or help it go viral. The idea is to assess interest in content posted by government on Twitter and the degree of user engagement, and observe users' behavior.

> **The experiences described in the manual are not only intense and educational, but also pioneering.**

After assessing and reflecting on information on different experiences, a number of conclusions may be drawn to improve government social media management, which could undoubtedly be included in the *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia*.

By this point you are no doubt keen to read on and put the ideas and resources in the manual into practice.

Barcelona, March 2017

Communicating on the social media

This chapter describes how the Government of Catalonia uses the social media, how this has developed using best practices for its social media channels and what it has learnt as an institution. It discusses the procedures prior to creating corporate accounts and explains the key features of the Government's social media communications model. Thus, the chapter shares information that could be useful for government organizations that plan to create accounts (or improve their efficiency) on both Twitter and other social networking services.

A more social government

It seems inconceivable today that a public organization could be absent from the social media and lack a communication strategy specifically for social networking services. A social media presence is a great opportunity to obtain firsthand knowledge of the interests of the people served by government, the general public, and thereby improve services for them. By participating in these communities, government can obtain knowledge to foster innovation in its procedures.

Furthermore, social media should be used to stimulate public engagement with the public function. The fact that it is now so widespread, an excellent source for the media and a powerful tool for interaction, encouraging participation and facilitating public services, should be borne closely in mind. Clearly, the incredible opportunities it provides should not be overlooked, always taking into account users' needs, experiences and ways of using it.

The Government of Catalonia has been active on social media since 2009. The first phase involved fostering use and opening accounts so that each organization and each topic, however specific, had a presence in different channels and environments, if required. The growth in number of accounts and their development led on to the second phase, which involved assessment, reviews, metrics and validation of continuity. Based on this analysis, guidelines were drawn up on opening new accounts and

the model of communication; in other words, on how to talk and how to listen on the social media.

Social media accounts associated with an organization should only be opened after a mature, meticulous reflection process to justify the social media presence, define the communication strategy and analyze the real possibilities of maintaining an active and effective presence. This reflection is essential if government corporate accounts are to make a worthwhile contribution to the social media. A new account should cover the department's public communication needs while fitting into the organization's overall communication strategy.

For this reason, an assessment and security procedure should be carried out before opening an account. The Government of Catalonia has a fully appraised protocol which has to be followed when opening contact mailboxes and accounts for ministries, services and brands in online communication and participation platforms. In following the protocol, applicants must justify the need for the initiative in terms of:

- **Objectives.** Applicants must specify the Catalan ministry's objectives and state how the proposed media account would contribute to achieving them. They must also plan how to measure the success of the initiative and maintain its competitiveness in relation to new proposals on the market.

- **Quality.** Applicants are required to analyze the potential market for the account and justify its added value.

- **Public.** The target public should be outlined, defining the sector and approximate numbers. It is essential to assess whether there is a real demand to justify the initiative.

- **Characteristics.** Applicants must describe the new service, specifying the type of content, its function and the languages it will use.

Establishing specific objectives should also include a definition of the most suitable channels in each case. Presence in many channels does not mean greater impact or engagement. Indeed, a large number of social media accounts without the resources or information to maintain them can negatively affect the institutional image. Similarly, repeating messages without adapting them to the specifics of each channel (thereby failing to take into account the specific audience) also has a negative impact.

> **A new account should cover the department's public communication needs while fitting into the organization's overall communication strategy.**

The Government of Catalonia prioritizes Twitter and Facebook presence for certain ministries, due to their number of users and the ease of communicating and creating networks and a digital reputation. Corporate blogs are used when more detailed information is involved. For certain specific cases (such as multimedia repositories) a presence on SlideShare, YouTube, Flickr or Instagram is encouraged.

The Government of Catalonia's social media communications model

How to speak

The key to using the social media is to seek interaction with users and attract new followers. It is an environment that belongs to the people, and positioning should be based on this level playing field. Consequently, the communications model for government organizations must be concise, clear and neutral, without discrimination. Although language use and information must be accurate, you should never forget that you are talking to the public, so a clear, natural and informal tone that users can relate to should be adopted.

Each form of social media has its own specific style. This can range from more formal models (such as website content) to livelier, more informal messaging, including emojis, as with Twitter or messages posted on the @gencat Telegram channel http://telegram.me/gencat. Each social networking service, each tool, has its own

specific characteristics, including specific syntax and grammar. Below is an outline of the three most common channels: blogs, Twitter (analyzed in more detail in the next chapter) and Facebook.

1 Blog posts are written so that readers get an idea of the content of the article from the first paragraph. This should be a summary that encourages them to continue reading, thus it should be engaging. The rest of the post may vary in length, but paragraphs should be short and dynamic. Blogs also encourage dialogue, so posts often conclude by posing questions to readers and asking for their opinion. Reader interaction is essential to the social media, even if the dialogue is increasingly spread over different networks: a single post can be discussed on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and more.

2 The 140 character limit for tweets means they have to be concise while grabbing the target public's attention. Thus, tweets have to be meaningful and use an informal, sincere tone. But they should also be polite, because they speak on behalf of an institution and some practices in reaching out to people can lead to loss of credibility and damage to the corporate image.

3 Although Facebook permits longer messages, brevity should still be the aim, to optimize viewing from mobile devices. Multimedia elements (such as images, GIFs and autoplay videos) or links to more information and related content which could interest readers should be included to make content more attractive and encourage interaction.

You should never forget that you are talking to the public, so a clear, natural and informal tone that users can relate to should be adopted.

Clearly, intellectual property rights must be respected on all social media. For this reason, and because it encourages content reuse, the Government of Catalonia almost always uses its own or copyright-free images.

How to listen

Given that one of the key aims of government social media presence is to receive knowledge from the public, it is important to encourage user participation and, above all, listen to discussions that arise. It is important to take into account conversations among online communities and establish the target public, their profile, what they talk about and what platforms they use. Indeed, some of the original objectives may have to be redefined after listening to and learning from the target public. However, it should be remembered that a constantly flowing and changing environment means that the key to success lies in reaching users, talking and listening to them and taking into account their opinions and impressions. All this should be done while respecting the privacy of personal information at all times.

Thus, government departments must actively listen to what is happening on the social media. They cannot just passively receive users' contributions; they must be capable of reacting and responding. This requires a response policy, set out in a document with protocols for the internal flows on how questions from the public should be handled and concluded.

> **Governments should actively listen to what is happening on the social media and not just passively receive users' contributions.**
> **They must be capable of reacting and responding.**

Mentions or references should be answered as soon as possible. Ideally, response times should be under two hours and, in the case of questions requiring searches for more detailed information, the public should be told that the matter is being looked into or referred to the corresponding contact mailbox. Replies should be clear and use the same channel as the question, as long as no sensitive information is involved.

To speed up replies, it is a good idea to use an archive tool to store the most frequently asked questions and classify replies. A simple, fast-moving circuit of the people responsible for raising inquiries to other levels should also be defined. The Government of Catalonia's work on this methodology is based on several years' experience and on the recommendations and guidelines set out for social media management.

Rules for participation

Although all members of the public can interact with government, governments should establish minimum standards for participation and behavior (*netiquette*) to ensure good communication over the social media. These rules should be clearly set out to ensure respectful, tolerant and fruitful conversation with the public.

For instance, the public can leave comments on the Government of Catalonia's social media platforms if they meet the following requirements:

- They are relevant, i.e. they do not stray from the subject matter.

- They are respectful and do not undermine the dignity of other individuals.

- They do not contain any personal information.

- Their do not aim to deceive, mislead or trick the public.

- They do not infringe copyright or intellectual property rights.

- They include no spam or unwanted promotional content.

Comments that do not meet these requirements are not posted and the user can be blocked.

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It is essential to inform users of the rules for social media participation. The Government of Catalonia does this by including in its account profiles a link to the corporate website http://gen.cat/rulesforparticipation, which lists the requirements for posting comments.

The pocket forum. Twitter, governments and public services

This chapter offers specific resources for institutional Twitter account managers to optimize their content and interaction. It explains why a Twitter presence is important and how to draw up a specific communication strategy. What to post on an institutional Twitter account, when to tweet, how to interact with users, how to react to criticism and how to measure effectiveness are some of the issues discussed below. For technical information on setting up accounts and using interaction tools, see the "Twitter Quick Start Guide" included in this manual.

Talking to the public on Twitter

Twitter represents a turning point in the traditionally one-way relations between institutions and the public. It marks a return to small-scale public policy because it facilitates contact between public authorities and people, reduces distances and permits a sort of virtual handshake between government and members of the public, by establishing dialogue through direct, specific interaction. This is one of its defining features: the platform is public, so it is freely accessible to all and lets everyone add their voice. Thus, for government institutions, Twitter is an excellent means of gauging public opinion on government activity. Furthermore, active listening helps detect actions that fail to meet general expectations, so that appropriate corrective measures can be taken.

One way of viewing Twitter use on smart phones is to compare it to a pocket forum. And in this forum, which the public have come to own, government's role is to create the ideal conditions for members of the public to express their opinions, thus generating fruitful dialogue.

But above and beyond reaching the target public, an organizational Twitter presence is an opportunity to learn about trends, currents of opinion, events and news taking place around the world at any given moment. Because a further strength of this networking site is its development into a leading source of global information, while the dialogue it generates spreads immediately.

> **Twitter is an excellent means of gauging public opinion on government activity. Furthermore, active listening helps detect actions that fail to meet general expectations so that appropriate measures can be taken.**

Consequently, Twitter content is distributed to and impacts on other media outlets. Indeed, it is the social networking service with the greatest impact on the news: tweets act as headlines. They appear on live TV programs almost as though they were additional panel members and can therefore wind up influencing the direction of a public debate. The written press regularly highlights tweets. Bearing this in mind, it is important for governments to use Twitter to reply effectively and inclusively to debates among members of the public.

Government communication strategy for Twitter

When an organization decides to use Twitter, the first thing it must do is define its strategy. Although this may be changed after listening to contributions by members of the public, it is essential to start with an action and communication plan for the channel. This should include both the organization's objectives and the resources available to publicize and consolidate its presence.

Reasons for using Twitter. Objectives

The first step in establishing a good strategy is to define the institution's objectives for using Twitter. The orientation of a company, whose main goals are to make a profit or increase sales, differs significantly from that of a public institution, which can provide a service without competitors, answer inquiries, post information or even create a network as a space for public participation.

Interaction with the public should use a tone in line with the shared values of the organization and its staff. These are the main guiding principles for the Government of Catalonia's Twitter presence:

- **Public service.** Communication must be at least as effective as through its offices. It should at all times convey a willingness to help the public as far as possible and offer solutions to their doubts.

- **Transparency.** This is the basic rule for social media. The organization's image should be honest and natural.

- **Quality.** Quality services should be offered to all members of the public, following established protocols.

- **Co-responsibility.** It should be borne in mind that communication represents a public institution, so knowing how and where it takes place is essential. Mutual rules of engagement and, specifically, rules for participation aimed at users are required.

- **Participation.** In initiatives from members of the public, as well as fostering participation among the rest of the public.

- **Open knowledge.** With a new focus on intellectual property that encourages reuse of content and open data, while facilitating conditions to generate a wealth of such data and content.

More specifically, the objectives of the Government of Catalonia's corporate Twitter accounts are:

- Responding immediately to users and making the replies available to other people in the same situation. This saves on time and resources.

- Redirecting the public to the corporate website for more complete official information.

- Through interaction with users, finding out the most frequent topics and requests for improving government services or creating new ones, while facilitating topic-based forums to provide specialist knowledge.

Getting known. Publicity

The initial strategy should also establish channels to provide publicity, spread messages and create public engagement with Twitter.

Among other points, emphasis should be placed on:

1   **Creating networks and building communities.** Actively follow people and organizations with similar interests to those of the organization in order to create dialogue, learn and generate knowledge.

2   **Starting conversations and fostering engagement.** Being a public institution does not imply any sort of hierarchical superiority. On the contrary, if you are on Twitter, it is because you want to work with people on an equal footing, speak their language and learn from them. Members should be encouraged to take part in the conversation and build trust, providing relevant and attractive information. Only in this way can followers be engaged and become influencers for the services.

3   **Gaining the support of influencers**. There are Twitter users who are considered key figures because of their proven knowledge, rigorous selection of information and large number of followers. Influencers are high-quality hubs for relevant information. Their support not only adds prestige to the network but also helps messages reach a larger number of people, thus obtaining more followers. Services will be favorably mentioned if the messaging activity on an account is consistent, transparent, relevant and cooperative.

New accounts can also be publicized by an organization's other social media networks (using a cross-media strategy) by embedding a widget to highlight tweets on the corporate website, adding a reference to the account in the

signature on staff communications, including the account in press releases and other promotional materials and publicizing it among related stakeholders.

> **Being a public institution does not imply any form of hierarchical superiority. On the contrary, if you are on Twitter, it is because you want to work with people on an equal footing, speak their language and learn from them.**

Advice for good governance on Twitter

Twitter use by governments and public authorities should be coherent with their over-all communications policy and develop a strategy based on responsibility and service. Because everything that is generated on the social media supplements reputations and forms of communication outside the Internet. Below are a number of guidelines for good governance on Twitter. They offer recommendations on how to address the community, what to post and how to manage interactions, based on the Government of Catalonia's experience.

Tone of voice. How to address the public

The tone used for an institutional Twitter account differs from that of a website and, especially, from press statements and releases. Social media channels have a strong relational element and this affects the language used.

A public service account must be capable of communicating clear, direct and decisive messages. How effective this is depends largely on building a strong community.

This is why the Government of Catalonia recommends:

- Using clear, natural and informal language.

- Constructing short, direct sentences as headlines. This makes messages more transparent and intelligible.

- Ensuring correct language and a polite tone at all times.

- Including elements to foster empathetic interaction, such as emojis or multimedia content.

> **A public service account must be capable of communicating clear, direct and decisive messages. How effective this is depends largely on building a strong community.**

What to explain. Relevant, viral and narrative content

Twitter requires special, high-quality content. It is important to provide the public with value and not simply post a headline and link to a news item or press release. Generating relevant content requires time and resources. Each department, service or brand in an organization works with different types of content, making it difficult to extrapolate general guidelines that work for all accounts. Different content strategies should be tried out and their effectiveness measured. However, the peculiarities of the medium should be borne in mind, and content should be adapted for posting.

It is important to vary messages and thus keep the audience interested. They should be relevant and linked to current affairs. Content created specifically for Twitter can be combined with reused content from other channels, such as:

- Press releases, speeches and public statements, limited to a 140-character tweet and only when the material is of general interest.

- Messages from the institution's marketing campaigns.

- Videos and images from corporate repositories (such as YouTube or Flickr).

- New posts on the corporate blog.

- Reflections by public figures.

- Coverage of events (live webcasts).

- Audiovisual training pills on innovation and knowledge.

- Incidents, emergencies and crisis statements. It is a good idea to create a specific Twitter account for managing this kind of situation and providing rapid, useful information. For instance, the Government of Catalonia uses the @emergenciescat account, twitter.com/emergenciescat, explained in greater detail later on in this manual.

> **It is important to vary messages and thus keep the audience's attention. They should be relevant and linked to current affairs.**

Whenever possible, an account should show its human side. More than just revealing the people behind the organization, government accounts generate greater impact when they show the human side to their members' daily activities (not just well-known figures, but those who do the routine work as well). The Twitter community likes to get a behind-the-scenes peek at events that differs from conventional media headlines. This is a growing trend in political communication, enabling the public to get to know leaders not just as politicians but as people too. Such messages generate interest and therefore have a great deal of impact.

The social media in general, and Twitter in particular, often involves creating stories or narratives for followers. This might be to disseminate content or as an invitation to learn more about services. Creating digital narratives is a good way of explaining high-value content that can otherwise get lost in the immensity of the Internet. However, the narrative should be brief, seductive and tempt followers to look further and stay with the information channel. Loyalty can be created among many users through useful, high-quality content.

It should also be borne in mind that Twitter content is mainly viewed over smart phones, so multimedia content is a key aspect in creating tweets. Consequently, the content team in charge of social media should have basic skills in designing and editing image and video to create multimedia material that amplifies posts and makes them go viral.

Simple, user-friendly online tools can be used to adapt images to the most suitable format and size for Twitter. Such tools include Pablo https://pablo.buffer.com and Social Media Image Maker www.autreplanete.com/ap-social-media-image-maker, among others.
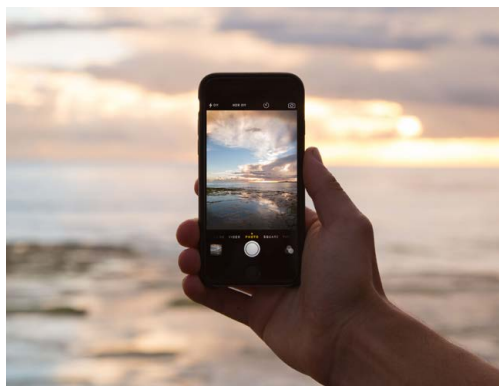
Multimedia content is a key aspect in creating tweets. Consequently, the content team in charge of social media should have basic image and video design and editing skills.

In addition, simple online apps and image treatment programs for designing infographics and then dividing them for posting on Twitter can be useful in creating relevant content. Examples of such tools are Piktochart https://piktochart.com and Easel.ly www.easel.ly.

When to intervene. Planning and scheduling

Posting relevant Twitter content requires investing quality time in creating, preparing and scheduling all the actions involved. It is important to be methodical and follow a working model which covers sources of information, content production (texts, associated images, related links, etc.) and scheduling tools. Anticipation is essential for a good return on posts and improvisation should be avoided as far as possible.

Anticipation is essential for a good return on posts and improvisation should be avoided as far as possible.

The Government of Catalonia recommends the following guidelines:

1 Schedule all upcoming events or actions that can be publicized on Twitter.

2 Plan timeless, useful content and service information a month at a time and for each day. This helps avoid dependence on current news.

3 Regularly post around 150 tweets a month, as active accounts attract more followers and engagement.

4 Post steadily, with regular intervals between posts. It has been shown that a longer interval between each tweet improves visibility. Intervals should only be shortened in emergencies or during live webcasts.

Planning content also means tweets can be scheduled for automatic posting on a given day and time. This should be done with caution, since it is not always a good solution and should not be overused. Occasionally tragic events (such as terrorist attacks, accidents or major emergencies) occur that require a revision of the schedule. The effect of posting a scheduled tweet in an unsuitable tone for the time of posting can seriously damage an institution's image. An example of this is posting a cheerful tweet while news is breaking of an accident with multiple victims, when people expect only essential information on the subject.

How to interact with the public

Strategies that use the platform for one-way communication change will not work, as Twitter represents a switch from monologue to dialogue. And in this new dynamic, both the sender and receiver have the same opportunities for interaction. Any user can talk to influencers, politicians or celebrities. However, government institutions should apply a firm interaction policy, based on the premise that corporate accounts speak on behalf of the organizations they represent. Thus it is essential to establish a Twitter action protocol that clarifies the following questions:

- **Who to follow?** Above all, it is a good idea to follow corporate accounts relevant to fields related to the department, service or brand in question. These accounts

are likely to follow back, thus developing a network. It is also important to detect users or influencers who have more impact on conversations or topics relating to each account or the government and follow ones that provide quality information thanks to their proven expertise. If such figures can be positioned in favor of the institution, they will be ideal promoters and influencers for the Twitter account. Level of engagement is important for increasing user numbers but also because loyal users are better promoters of the account (qualitative engagement). Engagement means getting and retaining the attention of an organization's potential public through interaction between the institution and its community.

Government institutions should apply a firm interaction policy for Twitter, based on the premise that corporate accounts speak on behalf of the organizations they represent.

- **Who to retweet?** The priority for government corporate accounts must be to generate original content, so retweeting should be used in moderation. However, tweets from other accounts can be shared if justified by the value of the information or a direct link to the subject area of the corporate account, and always after being thoroughly checked first. Similarly, messages issued by other government departments, stakeholders and third sector non-profit organizations can be retweeted. Research results and statistics from official sources, events in business networks involving government, information on awards, general interest events, international days and similar can also be retweeted.

The priority for government corporate accounts must be to generate original content; retweeting should be used in moderation.

- **Who to mention?** Mentions should only be used when justified, such as in responding to inquiries by specific users or to save on characters when referring to someone in the text of the tweet. Systematic inclusion of mentions with the aim of obtaining retweets should be avoided, as this is considered bad practice. One exception is emergency information, which justifies asking explicitly for maximum dissemination and as many retweets as possible.

- **How to respond?** Although Twitter has many advantages for institutional communication, it is also true that public dissatisfaction towards public authorities is often channeled very clearly through the network. One of the characteristics of Twitter is that it amplifies emotions because supposed online anonymity means people feel freer and less restricted in how they express themselves. Complaints or questioning of decisions via tweets should always be answered. Ignoring such comments can increase discontent. Replies to inquiries, complaints or suggestions should be provided as quickly as possible, ideally within two hours. Whenever possible, replies should contain the subject of the question, to increase visibility and provide context for the tweet. For instance, if a user asks, "When does university enrollment start?", the answer should be, "University enrollment starts on March 25th".

Dealing with criticism. Reversing negative points

The likelihood of receiving criticism on Twitter should not inhibit messaging on the account. However, possible risks should be considered and arguments prepared to challenge them. Providing a full, appropriate response and adopting a polite attitude towards criticism contributes to the positive image of the account and hence the institution. It is important to be aware of possible dysfunctions and how to deal with them:

- Above all, when an account is set up, its existence may be criticized as a waste of public money. The reason for creating the account, the services and information that can be publicized and its benefits to users should all be clearly explained.

> Providing a full, appropriate response and adopting a polite attitude towards criticism contributes to the positive image of the account and hence the institution.

- Criticism can come from users for failing to fulfill promises or for unsuccessful projects. Unrealistically high expectations can be minimized by clearly and simply explaining the policy applied in each case.

- Make sure confidential, sensitive or personal information is not posted by mistake.

- Internally, account technical security should be guaranteed to prevent content from being hacked. Safe passwords (12 random alphanumeric characters combining upper and lower case) are recommended. These should be stored in an encrypted database and changed regularly. Account editors should never know the direct access password.

Getting further. How to increase the reach of a tweet

Adding a hashtag, image or video to tweets increases interaction. More specifically, it is estimated that tweets with images are retweeted 35% more often than those without. This shows that materials offering authenticity, proximity and transparency are extremely important to users. More complex dissemination tools can be used to help content go viral and increase the reach of the messages, using the characteristics of the platform and the available promotion tools.

Live webcasts

It is a good idea to plan videos beforehand and invest in production, using tripods and cell phones with sensitive microphones.

Twitter is a living platform. Politicians and government officials can become reporters on what is happening and explain it to a large audience. They can use webcasts to present their point of view and show a direct, informal version of events in real time.

There are numerous extensions available for live webcasting. One of the most user-friendly apps is Periscope www.periscope.tv. Once downloaded, it opens a channel that automatically takes information from the Twitter account (bio, avatar

and link). Simply clicking on the streaming button starts the webcast. The video can be viewed live via the app or the Twitter timeline, where an automatic or customized notification appears informing account followers of a live webcast.

To post short, ready-made videos, the Government of Catalonia uses the SnappyTV app www.snappytv.com, a service requiring Twitter authorization. This can be particularly useful for publicizing selected clips of press conferences or public events.

The key feature of webcasting is its naturalness, but it is still a good idea to plan beforehand and invest in production, using tripods and cell phones with sensitive microphones.

Promotions and campaigns

It is sometimes useful for posts to reach out beyond the community following a corporate account. In such cases, Twitter allows posts to be promoted. When properly executed, this option is a quick way of reaching as many people as possible. The following points need to be well defined when implementing a promotional campaign:

- **Objectives.** The point of the promotion needs to be defined in detail. The objectives must be achievable, measurable and in line with the department or unit's overall strategy.

- **Public.** After defining the objectives, the target public for the promotion should be specified. This is essential to the success of the campaign, as it determines tone, type of content and channels.

- **Time.** The timing of the campaign has to be very precise. It is important to identify times of day when the public will show greater interest in promoted messages.

- **Channels.** In the light of the previous points, the channels that best meet the organization's needs should be determined. The existing corporate account should be used for short promotional campaigns, as creating a new account and gaining

a new audience requires more effort and is likely to take longer than the duration of the campaign.

- **Content.** It is best to use short, simple, visual messages. It should be borne in mind that most users follow Twitter accounts on mobile devices. Therefore, content should be designed to adapt to different screens.

It is essential to coordinate promotional campaigns by different organization departments to avoid clashes in time or place that reduce visibility.

- **Dissemination.** As well as the purchasable Twitter promotion tool (Twitter Ads https://ads.twitter.com), institutional promotion channels, i.e. official accounts for other government departments or units with a similar audience, can also be used to optimize resources. This is known as *cross-promotion*. Such institutional coordination reduces costs while reinforcing the corporate image.

It is essential to coordinate promotional campaigns run by different organization departments to avoid clashes in time or place that reduce visibility. Furthermore, hashtags should be closely monitored and the return on resources carefully measured.

Measuring for improvement. Metrics

Measuring activity is essential, as it provides a steady flow of information on efforts and resources used and helps identify possible improvements to communication.

To do this, a system is required to process the statistics provided by Twitter. For instance, the Government of Catalonia has developed its own customized control panel for its corporate account users. Statistics are automatically gathered and centralized using application programming interfaces (APIs) and Twitter counters. This centralized data collection standardizes values across all accounts. Processing enables the Directorate General for Public Services (the department responsible for setting social media policy and directives for the

whole of the Government of Catalonia) to open the data on all the accounts, allowing the general public to monitor government activity as part of its policy of transparency and open government. The statistics refer to:

- **Content** (tweets, retweets and mentions). This shows the most popular tweets. It includes an archive of the main content and shows exposure by day, time or month of posting. These graphs help to plan content and review previous months.

- **Followers.**

- **Community** (user participation).

- **Comparison.** With other similar accounts to contextualize indicators. These are proposed by the account managers, who are in the best position to know their peers, competitors and the best accounts for comparison. This helps with rating how the account is run and assessing and learning from activity on other accounts (benchmarking).
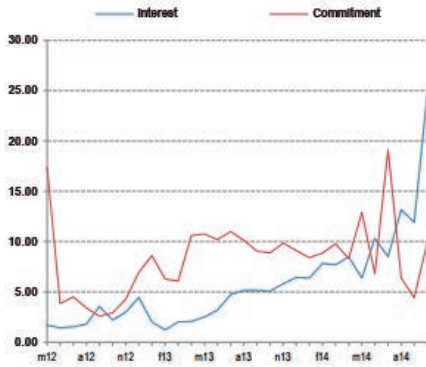
Reports are particularly useful in relation to communication campaigns, press conferences and emergencies and they help in planning future improvements to communication, since they allow data that go unnoticed during the event or emergency to be analyzed at a later time.

However, raw data is not enough: individualized tracking of all the institution's accounts is required to guarantee the quality of the service. In the Government of Catalonia, a meeting is held with the account managers when inadequate service activity or quality is detected to assess possible actions for improvement, or, if this is not possible, closing the account.

Metrics are relevant but the key aspect to bear in mind is impact assessment. Thus, once the data and indicators are available, they should be compared to data from other channels (such as websites, phone lines and email accounts) to compare their impact. It is equally important to compare the data with the organization's objectives and see if they have been achieved. This information can also be used to plan actions and campaigns, among other things.

Interest and commitment	Interaction

| Interest | Commitment | Mentions | Retweets | User participation |

30.00	4,000
25.00	3,500
20.00	3,000
15.00	2,500
10.00	2,000
5.00	1,500
0.00	1,000
	500
	0

| m12 a12 n12 f13 m13 a13 n13 f14 m14 a14 | m12 a12 n12 f13 m13 a13 n13 f14 m14 a14 |
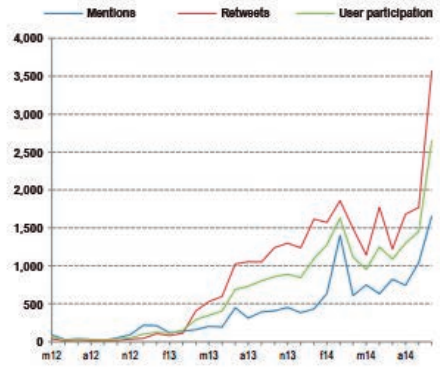
❙ The key aspect to bear in mind is impact assessment.
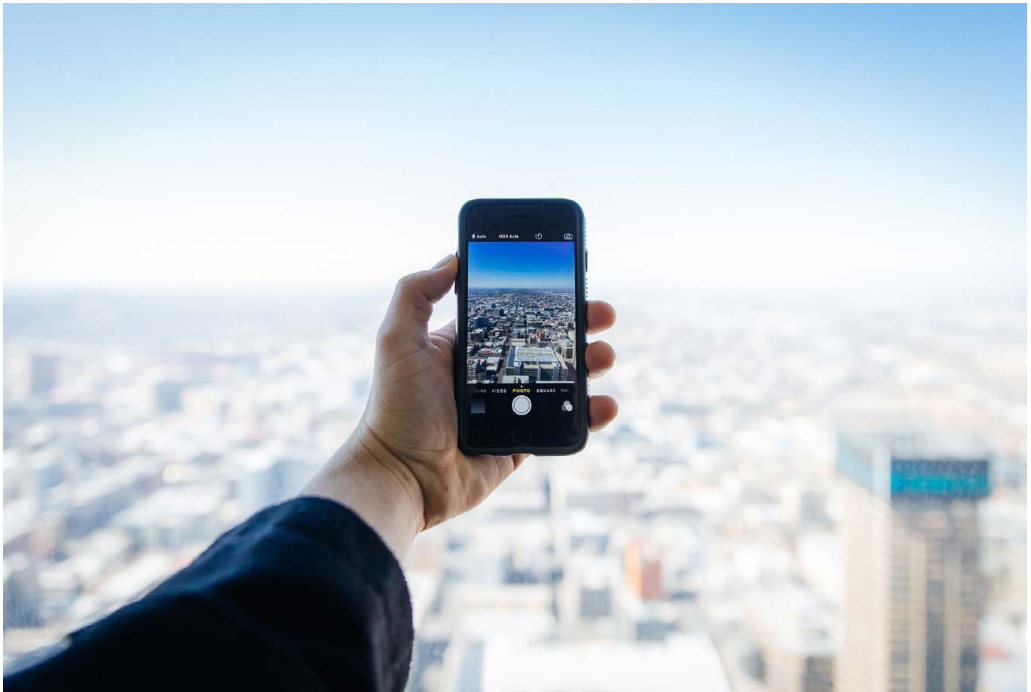
Above all, the assessment should serve to identify policies that work, establish their impact and assess the extent to which this is attributable to the problem or to the government intervention. To provide a known example, the number of industrial patents registered over a given period might be considered when assessing policies to incentivize innovation through grants. As well as government involvement, other variables that complicate assessment (changes to the economy and society, digital literacy of the public, current programs and laws, among others) should also be considered. Consequently, an adequate assessment often means the results of a government intervention are compared to what would have happened had the intervention not taken place.

Where are public services on Twitter headed? Future prospects

4

This chapter discusses the latest tools presented by Twitter that could help governments improve interaction with the public. Different sections describe the features of such innovations as Moments, bots and emotional branding. All this has helped keep Twitter competitive and build a more direct, human public services system.

Public services, the history of a digital transformation

Mobile services have transformed the general public, resulting in mobile users with very different expectations from previous generations. Members of the public want to receive useful information and services from government on their pocket device when it suits them. They no longer accept limited office hours, service limitations and other obstacles belonging to the physical, non-mobile world. The public feels freer than ever to choose and make demands. At the same time, these digital citizens are aware of their digital identity. In other words, they know their online reputation will develop on the basis of who follows their actions.

If government wants to reach such digital citizens/users, it needs to take into account their idiosyncrasies. For this reason, in recent years, contact forms for more reactive relations between people and government over the Internet have increasingly been complemented by other, more dynamic forms of communication, such as social media accounts. This represents a disruptive change: the focus is now on the public, who prefer proactive content, so it is up to government to seek them out.

The focus is now on the public, so it is up to government to seek them out.

More recently, dialogue on social media has moved towards instant messaging and chat apps. This migration to more ephemeral dialogue in chat format will transform the public service channels of government institutions.

Chatbots should not replace the more individualized, better-quality service used in response to complaints and conversations that affect people more personally, where a human, personalized approach is preferable. However, for general information, such as lists and locations of pharmacy services or weather forecasts for a particular area, a chatbot (or bot) can be used to provide an additional, automatic reply. Bots can also be used for buying transport or cinema tickets or carrying out repetitive operations, such as those involved with banking.

New features on Twitter. More functions, better service

Intensive Twitter use has enabled public institutions to reconnect with the public through real-time dialogue. Through this relationship, government can renew policy and define a citizen-centered public sector service culture.

Twitter is a good tool for detecting the state of public opinion in real time. Tweets capture natural conversations taking place every day (over five million tweets are sent each day worldwide). Diving into the middle of this network of messages is like taking a seat in all the world's forums. All users need to know is how to focus on the conversations that most interest them.

Twitter provides filters and tools for selectively listening to priority areas for public policy. It offers people and organizations a communication tool to connect to followers, facilitating participation and influencing conversations taking place at the time. To some extent, this resembles a global chat room where you can talk directly to others about world events.

Twitter is also playing a key role in the evolution towards instant messaging and chat because it is a point of contact between different social media networks. However, it does not overlap with other messaging or chat apps, so it maintains its own raison d'être.

Twitter is a good tool for detecting the state of public opinion in real time.

As a result, Twitter upgrades have added more instant messaging and chat functions, such as Moments, which is used to share story threads on the timeline. Other functions in this line involve more dynamic direct messaging, previews of links in chats and indicators to see when someone has read them.

Twitter Moments

There are millions of online conversations taking place among members of the public and between the public and institutions, reporting on comments, events, ideas and more. Finding these conversational moments is hard work. For this reason Twitter has launched Moments, making it easier find the best material, regardless of who you follow.

Moments is a way of getting around tweet character limits and thus overcome the length limitation for telling stories, while including images and videos.

With Moments, you can share experiences as you would in other apps (Snapchat, for personal stories, or Instagram, which also includes stories). Moments is different because, as with other apps, such as Spotify, Twitter anchors the stories (experiences) on the timeline.

Moments is a way of getting around the tweet character limit and thus obtain unlimited length for telling stories, while including images and videos. It also encourages participation in other conversations, by permitting the inclusion of tweets from other users. All this helps tell a story properly.

Twitter has also created a number of additional options for managing Moments: sorting tweets, notifications marked with a blue dot to indicate story updates, various means of access (from a specific tab, a tweet or an account), topic searches, image editing, and more.

Twitter instant messaging and bots

Instant messaging is increasingly being added to social media services and will soon provide a new customer service or public service function. Customers or members of the public will receive direct messages on a product or service from the company or government body (in relation to a product purchase or an online service, for instance).

Customers and the public expect to receive messages compatible with all platforms used to interact with a company or government body, via a small pop-up message window on a notice board.

> **Twitter has also launched its own bot system, with automated welcomes and quick replies.**

The future of messaging is wide open. What functions will become successful and which ones will fail? Will alerts and notifications eventually be standardized for all mobile devices? Clues on what works can already be seen and this includes ephemeral messages on some apps and async functions for professional messaging groups.

As chat and instant messaging functions are added in social media services, chatbots (or bots) have started to appear to reply to customers or members of the public by simulating human conversation. These are most suited to communication that can be automated due to its repetitive nature or in situations where little is added by human contact.

In this line, Twitter has also launched its own bot system, with automated welcomes or quick replies. As with the previously mentioned developments, this automation is included in its direct messaging (DM) service. To facilitate the function, Twitter provides the necessary knowledge (dashboard and API) to the officials in institutions interested in developing this solution.

What do automated interactions involve?

1 A simple welcome message.

2   Assisting users in entering required information and simplifying such transactions as tracking a product delivery. For instance, when ordering and tracking a pizza delivery by DM to Pizza Hut @pizzahut.

3   Getting users to choose a menu option and then providing assistance from an agent, facilitating a single-channel service for customer care, such as with Evernote customer services @evernotehelps.

A large number of companies have already implemented customer service bots through Twitter (e.g. Norton @NortonSupport). Special mention should be made of @TfLTravelAlerts (Transport for London) and @WeatherNetwork (weather forecasts), as they are useful examples for other public sector initiatives.

Twitter and emotional branding policy

As people's habits have changed, the Internet and digital communication have become basic elements of socialization. Social media and messaging apps have transformed corporate communication: today, live conversation is essential to attracting new customers.

One of the best communication strategies for these organizations is to develop an emotional branding policy. Such a policy helps brands and organizations appeal to customers' feelings and emotions and thereby optimize user experience.

> **Appealing to customers' feelings and emotions optimizes user experience.**

In this relationship model, content posted live is of two kinds:

- **Live content.** Experiences (content) shared on the social media once used. Examples: Snapchat and Instagram. Companies have discovered that a single creative image or video with the power of attraction is capable of winning over new customers. This is then supplemented with a good customer care service through tweets, messages or chats. As a strategy, companies have to ensure initial content is especially powerful.

- **Live streaming.** Here the most important feature of the event is interaction, using tools such as Twitter and Periscope. Use of smart phones, growth of mobile apps and the introduction of 4G technology have increasingly made it easier to communicate via live streaming. The key to success is to produce quality content that permits user interaction.

With regard to functionality, it is necessary to look beyond the product or service provided as standard. Excellent results can be obtained by simulating or replacing repetitive tasks or even by using games and entertainment (service gamification).

With regard to content, one excellent resource is storytelling, i.e. explaining things as if they were non-linear stories in attractive, fluent language. And, as well as resources, effective strategies should also be deployed to create a network of influencers/promoters of the organization's Twitter activity.

In short, in an increasingly mobile world, Twitter has many of the ingredients to become a key player in the digital ecosystem.

The Government of Catalonia and Twitter. Examples of good practices
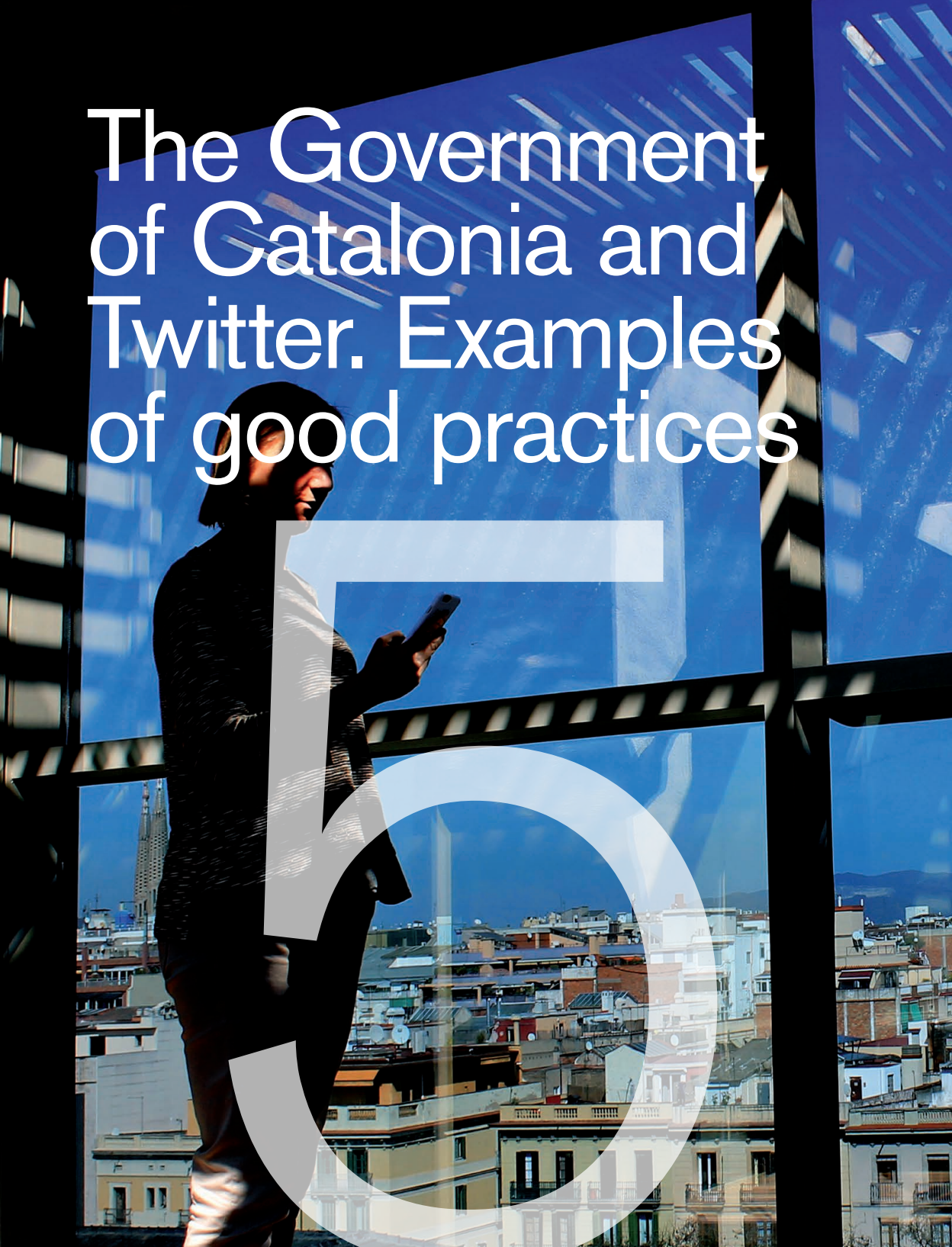
@012

The @012 account

The @012 Twitter account was created in early 2013 to provide a public service on the social media and thus simplify public access to information.

The account posts general information of interest to the public in various fields. It provides content in a number of government-related areas, with the aim of keeping the public informed about services offered by the Government of Catalonia.

The @012 account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	18,266
Monthly tweets*	133
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	313
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	234

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Tool

Twitter @012 twitter.com/012

Type

Twitter public services.

Definition

Twitter account managed by the Directorate General for Public Services (Ministry of the Presidency) from 9 am to 6 pm (Monday to Thursday) and 9 am to 3 pm (Fridays, excluding bank holidays).

Objectives

- Informing the public about the services provided by the Government of Catalonia.
- Replying to inquiries.

Target public

Members of the public with a Twitter account who choose online services via the social media rather than phone or on-site services.

Posting content

The most interesting information is chosen for tweeting, bearing in mind the diversity of the public and their interests. Thus, content is posted from all Government of Catalonia ministries, as long as it has a direct impact on the public. Such content includes forms and procedures, advice, notifications, announcements, grants and regulations, among others things.

The main sources for content are:

• The Government of Catalonia's press office, where ministries post press releases.

• Gencat procedures: portal for Government of Catalonia forms and procedures.

• Twitter accounts belonging to government organizations (ministries, services and brands).

When posting, the headlines and names of forms and procedures are adapted for clarity and to limit them to 140 characters. A hashtag is added if required and the content is tweeted. When retweeting from other accounts, the source and author of the text are always mentioned at the end of the tweet, as: */via @accountname.*

Inquiries

Anyone who follows the Twitter @012 account can make inquiries about Government of Catalonia forms and procedures. These are of two types:

1. Ones that can be answered with information from the systems themselves:

- The Government intranet with in-house content supplied by documentalists, based on information taken from different government bodies.

- Gencat website.

- Specific websites (Sant Jordi, or Saint George's Day, weekends, winter, cell phones, etc.).

- Information from the 012 documentalist services.

2. Specialist inquiries, which are sent to:

- Specialized Twitter accounts, when related to the activity of government bodies (ministries, services and brands).

- Ministries, using contact forms if they are likely to contain private information. DMs can also be used to guarantee data privacy.

- Other institutions if the government is not responsible for the matter in question.

Inquiries on specific cases are not answered through this channel, because they usually contain personal information. There can also be times when a reply is not required:

1. Inquiries that are irrelevant or unrelated to 012 service topics.

2. Offensive and insulting comments.

The Government of Catalonia's rules for participation on all social media are applicable to the @012 account. These rules are listed at http://gen.cat/digitalservicescat. They state that:

1. Comments should be relevant, i.e. they do not stray from the topic in question.

2. They should be respectful and good-natured, without causing offence to or insulting other people.

3. They should not contain personal information or advertising.

Enquires should be answered promptly (within 24 hours). They are saved in a repository to keep a record of them and for future use.

Writing style and other specific aspects relating to social media for the @012 account are covered by the *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia* http://gen.cat/socialnetworksguide.

They should generally be polite, although a more informal tone can be adopted if appropriate. Wherever possible, language should be plain and avoid jargon to make the message easier to understand.

@gencat

The @gencat account

The @gencat Twitter account was created in 2010, initially to provide information on the Government of Catalonia's Internet activity. The name @gencat_cat was originally chosen because @gencat was not available. Only after a request to Twitter to check the account and assign the name to the Government of Catalonia could @gencat be used.

With the creation of other more specialized accounts for different Government ministries, such as @tic, use of the @gencat account changed to providing more institutional content, as appropriate for an account name so clearly associated with the Government of Catalonia.

Today, the account posts content about the Government as an institution. It no longer posts information on services or specific ministries, offering more corporate or institutional content instead.

The @gencat account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	133,613
Monthly tweets*	124
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	6,032
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	3,744

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

![Twitter logo]

Posting content

It posts information on the Government as an institution or affecting Catalonia. Content comes from all Government ministries, as long as it is not too specific or technical. It includes general plans, events, awards, activity in different ministries, services or brands, and so on.

As with the @012 account, headlines and names of procedures are adapted for posting to make them clearer and reduce them to 140 characters, a hashtag is added if required and the content is tweeted. When retweeting from other accounts, the source and author of the text are always mentioned at the end of the tweet, as: */via @accountname.*

In the case of @gencat, a customized version of the http://bit.ly tool is used to obtain shortened URLs with the gen.cat structure, thus providing a more institutional image, as appropriate for the account. It is used when Government website URLs have to be shortened and, in very specific cases, they are then modified to make them easier to remember, as with: http://gen.cat/rulesforparticipation.

Document sources and inquiry procedures are basically the same as for the @012 account.

Editorial criteria

With regard to writing style and other aspects specific to Twitter, the @gencat account is also covered by the *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia* http://gen.cat/socialnetworksguide.

Below are some general editorial criteria applicable to all Government of Catalonia Twitter accounts.

Regarding tools:

1. The editorial line matches that for the official website. As a general rule, personal opinions cannot be posted on corporate accounts.

2. Interaction and engagement. It is essential to reply to all doubts and questions raised by users. Interaction is the lifeblood of social media.

Regarding language:

1. The right register for each social media network should be used.

2. Brevity and accuracy. Communication should be precise, engaging and to the point.

   • Messages should capture users' attention to facilitate real, warm dialogue with the public.

   • Messages are written to be retweeted and not just received. Retweeting should reflect positively on the sender, so rude or insulting tweets should not be retweeted.

   • The message should be sharp, ingenious and to the point. Quick messages are often more effective than slower, better-quality ones.

   • Using simple narratives can help messages go viral.

- It is essential to place the message in context.

- The message should be authentic and not try to disguise or hide anything.

Regarding graphics:

- Graphics can help get a message read on the social media. Text should be accompanied by images, graphics or infographics. The social media world is an increasingly visual one.

Regarding editorial factors:

- Content should use search engine optimization (SEO) techniques. Key words based on the related material can be used to favor search engine data indexing and influence the online importance of the institution.

- Be aware of the times of day when tweets are more likely to go viral and reach as many people as possible.

- Post an appropriate number of messages for the social media platform involved and the institution's activity to avoid saturation.

@govern

The Twitter account of the Government of Catalonia's Executive Council was created together with its portal to inform the public directly about its actions and political positioning in each situation. Following the Anglo-Saxon model in the United States and Great Britain, @govern has become a direct, immediate communication channel.

The account posts general information of interest to the public in various fields. Consequently, content is from a number of different government-related areas.

The @govern account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	135,293
Monthly tweets*	682
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	25,723
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	9,144

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Tool

Twitter @govern
twitter.com/govern

Type

Government of Catalonia Executive Council Twitter account.

Definition

Twitter account managed by the Directorate General for Government Communications. Service from 8 am to 1 am every day of the year. This Twitter account posts daily news on Catalonia's Executive Council and its political position.

General objectives

- Informing the public of the Government's daily news and its political position.
- Reporting (and providing assessment and monitoring tools) on Government action and completion of the Government Plan.

Posting content

Posting policy is based on two aspects:

1. The proactive aspect

There is specific information for each day of the week. They function as fixed sections and match current events. These tweets include emojis to make them relevant and meaningful. This is the case of infographics, the agenda and the Government newsletter. Thus:

- Monday is the day for #Transparència, that is, transparency. An informative text is written on an area of Government action (such as how the emergency system works, the plan to combat cancer or the museum network).

- The Executive Council meets on Tuesdays, after which its members or a Government spokesperson report details to the media. The Executive Council meeting and subsequent press conference can be followed on @govern via text and video clips filmed using SnappyTV.

- Wednesday is Parliament day. Initiatives by #Govern in #Parlament are explained on @govern. Similarly, the presidential question-and-answer session and speeches by other ministers in the Catalan Parliament can be followed. Real-time tweets on the president's question-and-answer session and relevant speeches, combined with SnappyTV video clips, are also posted.

Specific objectives

- Broadening the reach, dissemination and impact of government information.

- Building a brand image for the Government of Catalonia and highlighting responsibility, gravitas, thoroughness, economic stability and combating the economic crisis, with a sense of duty to the country.

- Bridging the gap to the public by communicating through technology.

- Building coalitions and synergies to position the @govern account as a aggregator and directory for the other Government ministry accounts and run joint campaigns.

- Serving as a channel to detect potential communication crises and providing an immediate, direct channel to respond to them.

- Supplementing information with other formats that add value and help explain government information and action through images, infographics, graphics, statistics and more.

- Thursday is the day for the single topic #en2minuts (in2minutes). This involves infographic and text content on a specific Government action. These posts usually explain a complex issue, using the infographic in order to give a general idea of the subject, providing information and graphics and summarizing Government action in the field.

Some of the infographic and data content on international days and figures of interest, such as unemployment, exports or the start of the school year, are presented using animated GIFs.

- The last product is posted on Fridays: #AixecarCatalunya (Raising Catalonia). This is a selection of positive news tweets on social policy, economic recovery and the view of Catalonia in the world and in the institutional context.

  This selection is made every two weeks. The #AixecarCatalunya hashtag is used to post tweets and combine information from the Executive Council and other organizations, companies, unions, NGOs and key people in particular fields.

The content is tweeted in the late evening or at night (from 10 pm to 1 am) over two weeks, mentioning the organizations or institutions featured in the information.

- The weekend is also a chance to provide information in a different tone, combined with information on Government activity. It is also the ideal moment to repeat particular facts or information and post reminders. Sunday evening is a particularly good time, when people reconnect after the weekend and are particularly receptive to any interesting information on offer.

The @govern tweets posted at the weekend are given the #Palau hashtag. The Government of Catalonia is a very old institution, based in a landmark building with a long history. Few institutions are able to tweet information on such a building as the Palau or the historic events that have taken place there.

2. The reactive aspect

This involves tweeting information produced by the Executive Council, such as press releases on events, details of interest and the Government agenda.

In more general terms, the @govern Twitter account and the content of the catalangovernment.eu website are classified into three areas: #AixecarCatalunya (actions to boost economic recovery); #TransicióNacional (defending and preserving national identity and the independence process); and #JustíciaSocial (preserving and defending the welfare state and wealth redistribution towards those who most need it). These are the Government's three priorities around which information is structured.

As well as these, there is also the #Transparència area, which includes not only the information posted on Mondays (see Monday in the proactive aspect) but also an important area assessing the Government Plan. Information on the Government Plan is updated monthly and channeled through tweets highlighting completed actions.

The @govern Twitter account is also used to group together ministry tweets and, as with the website, provides relevant political information from each ministry. Thus, @govern tweets can include interviews, articles or other sorts of information on media appearances by Government ministers.

Data and graphics are also used to present information. Each day, at least two tweets with the #Sabiesque (DidYouKnow) hashtag are posted, providing the day's information with a related fact.

This hashtag, which was first used by the @govern account, has been adapted for other institutions to present their information in the same way.

Finally, it should be stressed that one of the aims of the @govern account is to provide a response in critical situations. One good example of this is the information the account provided on the day of the participative process on November 9, 2014 and preceding days. Another example is the information posted in the initial moments after the Germanwings plane crash. These two different cases show how the @govern account plays a key role in providing immediate and direct communication with the public.

@catalangov

The Government of Catalonia Twitter account in English was created together with the Government of Catalonia portal catalangovernment.eu to inform the public directly about its actions and political positioning in each situation. Following the Anglo-Saxon model in the United States and Great Britain, @catalangov has become a direct, immediate communication channel.

The account posts general information of interest to the public in various fields. Consequently, content is provided from a number of different government-related areas.

The @catalangov account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	22,533
Monthly tweets*	95
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	2,327
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	1,102

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Tool

Twitter @catalangov
twitter.com/catalangov

Type

The international Government of Catalonia Twitter account.

Definition

Twitter account managed by the Directorate General for Government Communications. Service from 9 am to midnight, 365 days a year. The content of this Twitter account is usually information and news on the Catalan executive branch's daily activities, its political positions and general information on Catalonia and its institutions.

General objectives

- **Informing:** reporting the Government's daily news and its political position to a mainly international audience.

Posting content

Posting policy is based on the following three areas:

1. Political and Government action

- News on the president, Government ministries, Government agreements, Executive Council activity and information on key laws in the Catalan Parliament.

Catalan Government @catalangov · Aug 31
Earlier today, President @KRLS met with His Excellence Fatallah Sijilmassi, @UfMSecretariat Secretary General

↩   ↻ 83   ♥ 95   ┓   •••

2. Economic activity and recovery in Catalonia

- Information on industry, employment, foreign investment and specific actions to help revitalize the economy.

- Programs to incentivize the green and circular economy (smart regions, smart cities), sustainability, the ICT sector and innovation.

- **Digital diplomacy:** using digital media to carry out Catalan *paradiplomacy* with supranational institutions and Government accounts in other countries or foreign regions.

- **Contextualizing:** providing information on Catalonia's historical context and its institutions (such as the seat of the Catalan Government, the Palau de la Generalitat building, and Presidency, among others) and other news on the country's activity and economic recovery.

Specific objectives

- Broadening the reach, dissemination and impact of Government information.

- Building a brand image for the Government of Catalonia and highlighting responsibility, gravitas, thoroughness, economic stability, combating the economic crisis and Catalan identity.

- Joining digital campaigns that prioritize defending, protecting and guaranteeing human rights and the social rights of peoples.

- Serving as a channel for solving potential communication crises and providing an immediate, direct channel to respond to them.

3. Contextualizing Catalan national identity

- Promoting and projecting Catalonia abroad.

- General information on Catalonia and its institutions through the #DidYouKnow and #Catalonia hashtags.

Interviews and op-ed articles by members of the Catalan Executive Council published in the international media.

Follow policy

- Main multilateral, European and world organizations.

- Accounts of EU foreign ministries and/or governments.

- Institutional or personal accounts of presidents, ministers, EU commissioners and key diplomats in Catalonia.

- Think tanks and other international centers for political studies.

- Supplementing information with other formats that add value and help explain Government action through images, infographics, graphics, statistics, GIFs, videos and more.

Target public

Twitter is an opportunity to be present around the world and reach accounts linked to academia, politics, economics and communications. For this reason, information from the Government of Catalonia is aimed at a public interested in current Catalan politics and Government action: the international media, opinion makers, think tanks, institutional representatives, institutions, organizations and associations.

Retweeting policy

- In general, tweets from individual or institutional accounts are not retweeted, except for internationally relevant posts by the Catalan president. If the tweet is in Catalan, the post is quoted with the translated text, using the Quote Tweet tool.

Digital diplomacy

- Apply a mention policy to accounts (leaders, governments, ministries, think tanks, journalists, etc.) to increase the visibility of Catalonia.

- Use *Likes* for Twitter users of interest to Catalonia.

- Tweet newspaper articles and interviews, referencing the source and journalist, that advance the Government's position.

- Greet international governments on their national days or for other events.

- Join worldwide campaigns organized by multilateral organizations.

Lists and *Likes*

It is currently possible to view five lists, which group large numbers of users by area of interest.

- **Government of Catalonia:** users linked to the Catalan Government.

- **Communication:** international media correspondents and other users linked to the media who report on the Catalan-Spanish situation abroad.

- **MFA:** ministers of foreign affairs.

- **Delegations:** institutional representatives and Government of Catalonia delegations abroad.

- **Foundations:** relevant national and international foundations in the global context.

Making lists in these areas makes it easier to view the latest news and updates in the media and international politics.

In addition, *Like* can be used to highlight an interesting tweet without having to create a new one. They can also be used to join and support international campaigns such as *Je suis Charlie Hebdo* or the *HeForShe* campaign for gender equality.

@donarsang

Activity by the Banc de Sang i Teixits (Catalan Blood and Tissue Bank, BST) on the social media started as a means of supplementing pre-existing communication tools such as the website donarsang.gencat.cat or posters and flyers to publicize campaigns. However, soon afterwards, new specific objectives were defined for the BST's social media to maximize its possibilities.

The @donarsang (giveblood) Twitter account not only publishes information on blood donation but also occasionally publicizes other causes it considers of interest to followers. Another important use of the channel is to reply to frequently asked questions from donors.

The @donarsang account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	12,379
Monthly tweets*	493
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	4,267
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	1,978

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Tool

Twitter @donarsang
twitter.com/donarsang

Type

Banc de Sang i Teixits Twitter account

Definition

The Twitter account of Banc de Sang i Teixits (BST), a public company run by the Catalan Ministry of Health and responsible for guaranteeing all patients get the blood they need. This profile is at the cutting edge of the BST's social media activity, supplemented with accounts on Facebook, YouTube, Flickr and Instagram.

Overall objective

Informing the public and raising awareness on giving blood to reach target for donations.

![Twitter logo]

Posting content

The tone used for social media messages is in line with general BST communication. In other words, it avoids alarming, sensationalist or emotional messages. However, messages highlight everything relating to the benefits of donations to patients, altruism, solidarity and the wellbeing experienced after giving blood.

The following diagram shows the objectives for social media use.

- Contacts: emphasis is placed on content aimed at increasing followers, locating similar followers and improving donor knowledge. Interest should be shown in donors' experiences, transforming negative messages into positive experiences and following recipients to keep on encouraging donors, among other aspects.

- Content: the BST aims to publicize its activity, create a community and build the *blood donation* brand. It does this by encouraging the community to participate, presenting the BST team, reporting on donation-related topics in a humorous and informal

Objectives

- Encouraging the public to give blood.
- Providing key information on giving blood: conditions and places to give blood and so on.
- Being present in environments where donors and potential donors communicate.
- Better understanding of needs and motivations through active listening to messages and shared content.
- Acknowledging the collaboration of donors and organizations.

Target public

BST social media activity is aimed at society as a whole: donors, potential donors, people who collaborate, whether or not they can give blood, and organizations, companies and institutions involved in blood donations, either directly or indirectly.

tone, seeking the involvement of different sections of society, using descriptions by donors and recipients' experiences and news. For example:

- Conversation: this is based on active listening to foster relations with donors, either by clearing up any doubts they may have regarding giving blood or thanking them for their interest. We thank all users for their tweets, whether or not they mention @donarsang. For example:

- Collaboration: these are messages aimed at converting members of the public into donors or promoters of the need to give blood. For example: reacting to declining donations by asking for help from the public and encouraging everyone to give blood or spread the word on the importance of giving blood.

When large numbers are anticipated for a blood drive, an online booking system is activated to control the flow of donors. Social media has proven to be the best way of publicizing the booking system.

Collaboration with the public

The high level of public involvement in blood donation has made it possible to establish a team of blood donation ambassadors on the social media. These are either donors or people who want to encourage others to give blood, although they do not do so themselves. The group spreads messages and content in their immediate environment, using their own tools.

The team of ambassadors consists of about 40 people throughout Catalonia. They communicate independently, but in line with the messages posted by the BST. Twice a year, they receive a campaign dossier with images, infographics and new concepts that could help them publicize the need to give blood in their local areas.

As well as these general points, they also produce original content to publicize donation.

The experience of the social media ambassadors and the lessons learned in the last few years of hard work have proven essential to gaining a better understanding of the public and spreading the message of the importance of giving blood regularly to help the many people who need it.

@emergenciescat

Living with risk through training and information

The Government of Catalonia Civil Defense Twitter account was created during the heavy snowfalls in March 2010 in response to a specific emergency. After months without tweeting, it began to operate regularly in October 2010. Its mission is to provide tools over the social media to prepare for emergencies, targeting mainly, but not only, the general public. These tools might be general information, such as advice and good practices, but also specific information on risks, hazards and specific emergencies.

The Government of Catalonia also posts emergency tweets on the @112 account.

Its strategy is based on a cross-ministerial vision of emergencies, similar to the work of Civil Defense's Centre de Coordinació d'Emergències de Catalunya (Emergency Coordination Center of Catalonia, CECAT), the Government's emergency information and decision-making hub. The highest level of action is when civil defense plans are activated (known by their acronyms INUNCAT, NEUCAT, INFOCAT, ALLAUCAT, SISMICAT, relating to floods, snow, fires, avalanches and earthquakes, respectively). The CECAT acts as an information hub for the Government of Catalonia, local authorities (town and regional councils) and the Spanish Government. Similarly, the Government of Catalonia Civil Defense service is the authority responsible for informing the public of risks and emergencies.

Tool

Twitter @emergenciescat
twitter.com/emergenciescat

Type

The Twitter account of the Government of Catalonia Directorate General for Civil Defense (Ministry of Home Affairs).

Definition

The Twitter account managed by the Government of Catalonia Directorate General for Civil Defense. It offers information on risk prevention in Catalonia, whether these are natural risks (such as floods, fires and snowfalls) or technological risks (such as chemical or rail accidents). Information is posted on prevention (advice to the general public, prior warnings of incidents) and reaction (reporting on developments in an emergency and giving public advice and orders). Information can be posted 24 hours a day, depending on the emergencies and risks. In normal situations, posts are usually between 8 am and 10 pm every day of the week.

Thus its work is based on two parameters:

1. Emergency information in its broadest sense (impact on basic services, the Internet, phone lines, transport and the most vulnerable communities).

2. The obligation to inform the public, also in the broadest sense (residents and tourists).

Following a number of major emergencies (forest fires in L'Empordà in 2012, floods in Val d'Aran and high winds in 2014, snowfalls and a chemical accident in Igualada in 2015), @emergenciescat has demonstrated its enormous potential for quickly and effectively informing the general public, institutions and the media.

In the case of the L'Empordà fires, there was a total of 7 million impressions in the week of the fires. There were 22 million for the winds at the end of November 2014, while tweets on the snowfalls in February 2015 obtained half a million impressions.

The communication strategy involves quick and efficient posting of useful, confirmed information that the public needs to know. This is the context where the social media function comes into its own. The account is obviously an official media outlet and as such it must engage the public and offer new, accurate and relevant content.

The main challenge is to combine speed with accurate information. In cases such as a chemical emergency, which by definition have a very rapid impact, the public must be informed as quickly as possible about whether there has been a toxic leak, whether they need to stay indoors and

Overall objective

Informing members of the public on risks in Catalonia, and how they should protect themselves and act in emergency situations.

Specific objectives

- Informing the public of potential and specific risks affecting each region of Catalonia, as well as providing advice on self-protection.

- Providing quick, mass information on emergencies in Catalonia and their development and instructions for the public to avoid danger, thus implementing Law 4/1997, of the Parliament of Catalonia, on civil defense.

- Building a brand image for Government of Catalonia Civil Defense, publicizing its activities, tasks and responsibilities and promoting a culture of self-protection.

- Monitoring the Internet for possible situations that could escalate into emergencies and reporting them to the Centre de Coordinació d'Emergències de Catalunya (Emergency Coordination Center of Catalonia) of the Government of Catalonia Civil Defense service.

other such information. Thus, when the information reaching the CECAT is confusing, only confirmed information is posted, along with the advice and orders for the public that prudence requires. In this case, Twitter is also an extremely useful means for Civil Defense officials to report information such as orders for the population to remain indoors. Previously, this was done by phone or email to the local councils involved, sending out police patrols with megaphones to inform the public and radio broadcasts. All this is still done, but Twitter means information is instantaneous and the public can be asked to help spread the message through retweets.

In this context, the style of communication used on @emergenciescat in an emergency situation can be described as:

- Collaborative. Public collaboration through retweets is expected and often requested.

- Imperative. In an emergency situation, the public expects the authorities to tell them clearly and directly what they should and should not do.

- Agile and dynamic. All changes, developments or modifications are reported.

- Plain. The language is clear and suitable for a mass, varied public.

One key thing to bear in mind with crisis information, and emergencies especially, is false rumors that can go viral disturbingly quickly. Examples of such rumors are the unavailability of electric saws in a forest fire or the danger of a dam collapsing during heavy rains. These

- Monitoring the Internet for potentially harmful or false rumors on risks or emergency situations in order to neutralize them.

Target public

Given its context of use in emergencies, the target public for the @emergenciescat account is very general and inclusive. It is not just addressed to permanent residents in Catalonia but also temporary residents. In other words, visitors and tourists of all nationalities, even if visiting for just 24 hours, such as the thousands of cruise passengers with stopovers in the ports of Barcelona, Tarragona and Palamós. Similarly, account followers might be Catalans living abroad or Catalan tourists (or their families living in Catalonia) in a place where a major emergency has occurred and who thus require information on basic services.

Account followers can be divided into four major groups: the first, being the largest and the main target public for the account, is the general public. The second group consists of Twitter accounts of public institutions, public positions

rumors must be quickly detected and rebutted with official information explaining what is really happening, with the invaluable support of allies such as the Virtual Operations Support Team (VOST), who specialize in detecting and rebutting false rumors on the Internet.

and companies. The third group consists of media and journalist accounts. And the fourth group is people linked professionally to the world of emergencies.

The @emergenciescat account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	113,483
Monthly tweets*	467
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	6,705
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	2,507

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Posting content

The journalists who regularly post on @emergenciescat do so in two major areas:

- Prevention. Every day, safety advice is posted to highlight risks and improve people's safety, covering such areas as risks in the home (electrocution or fires), torrential rains, and so on. Advice might also be posted for specific seasonal risks (spring-summer fires, winter snows). Service information for events involving large crowds, such as demonstrations and concerts, is also posted. The main principle is to get the public involved in their own safety, offering tools

through the government to exercise such joint responsibility. As well as the brand hashtag #ProteccióCivil, a number of other hashtags are used for specific areas: #llarsegura (home safety), #revetllasegura (bonfire night safety), #platjasegura (beach safety). Finally, training simulations for different infrastructures, industries and the public in accident situations (chemical risk siren tests every six months with the #provasirenes (siren test) hashtag) are also reported.

- Reaction. When a risk situation arises (due to forecasts of heavy rain or snows, risks of fires, etc.) and this becomes an emergency (floods, heavy snowfalls, avalanches, fires) or when unexpected emergencies occur (train accidents, industrial chemical accidents, mass power outages, and so on), tweets are posted explaining the situation, developments and actions by government and other authorities (such as private service companies).

EmergènciesCatalunya @emergenciescat

US DEMANEM RT CONFINAMENT OBLIGATORI A #IGUALADA #VILANOVADELCAMÍ #ODENA #SANTAMARGARIDADEMONTBUÍ

Mostra-ho traduït

EmergènciesCatalunya @emergenciescat

RESTRINGIU DESPLAÇAMENTS en vehicle als que siguin estrictament necessaris i urgents. Si NO és així, espereu a millora situacio. #nevada4F

Mostra-ho traduït

EmergènciesCatalunya @emergenciescat

FAMILIARS possibles passatgers avió accidentat a #França #A320 truqueu al @012 per informació.

Mostra-ho traduït

Information is also tweeted on what the public should do if orders or recommendations are issued. Along with the #ProteccióCivil hashtag, other hashtags detected in Twitter conversations are also used, such as #nevada4F for the snowfall on February 4, 2015, or ones that might help inform and make the information go viral, such as #Igualada in the chemical accident, also in February 2015.

In the case of a forecast risk or emergency, tweets are posted in all the languages usually available to the Press Office (Spanish and English, along with Catalan), and extra help is sought in major emergencies (such as consulates). Tweets have been posted on the account in French, German and Italian.

@FGC

Adapting to a new way of communicating

The Twitter account of the Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya (the Government of Catalonia's urban railway, FGC) is managed by the Corporate Communication Press Department. Before the Twitter service started, direct customer service was the sole responsibility of the company's Operations Department, through PA announcements, information screens and station attendants. This set-up made perfect sense since the department receives all the information on the state of services from the FGC Command Center in Rubí.

The paradigm shift brought about by digital communication led to the decision to have Corporate Communication manage the Twitter account. Almost overnight, information on timetables and prices switched from static website info to direct customer interaction through dynamic communication.

Accepting such changes, which are often abrupt, can be difficult for an organization. In the case of FGC, the information cycle has changed. Twitter could be said to have marked a turning point. Previously, information was generated exclusively by the Command Center; now Twitter means there are over 23,000 users throughout the country who can issue alerts. Previously, the duty officer in the Operations Department was responsible for reporting to the press duty officer if the media was interested in an incident in the service, whereas now the press officer can give the alert more quickly and actively in the news cycle,

Tool

Twitter @FGC twitter.com/fgc

Type

Twitter account for the Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya (the Government of Catalonia's urban railway service, FGC).

Definition

The Twitter account managed by FGC Corporate Communication (Ministry of Territory and Sustainability) covering the same times as the company's rail service, every day of the week, 365 days a year.

General objectives

- Providing real-time information on the state of the service on different train lines, the rack railway and the funicular railways.
- Providing a personalized response to inquiries and incidents from users.
- Publicizing activity and information on the company.

thanks to an alert from a customer. In this way, the whole company feels obliged to adapt to the new method of working.

The existence of several channels for communicating with customers, not all controlled from the same area, means there must be full coordination between everyone who works with this information. Thus, messages cannot be issued over Twitter that contradict those on the station PA systems. Such incoherence leads to loss of credibility and obviously annoys customers.

Managing a corporate account

The FGC account is managed by a three-person team. These are professionals committed to service, with specific training in digital communications and long careers in the company, which means they can answer most inquiries immediately. Standardized reply criteria are essential when managing a corporate account. Customers should never be able to detect whether one or another person is replying. A uniform style helps give the account its own personality and ensures that it is the voice of the FGC as an organization that is speaking, avoiding any personal touches.

In the case of an account like the FGC, shifts need to be established to cover every day of the year, almost 24 hours a day. From the start, it was decided that the service would provide true real-time customer service. The bar was set very high, but rather than settling for things as they are, customers are ever more demanding, thus motivating FGC to improve.

Target public

FGC users with Twitter accounts, rail enthusiasts and the media.

Most of the community managers' work consists of producing clear messages that avoid conflict with users. It is also extremely important to trust one's own judgment without losing confidence due to criticism. Negative comments should not cause inhibition or fear when offering new suggestions. Politeness and accuracy of information are the two governing principles, which the FGC account aims to make its defining features. If the criteria for managing the account are clear, there will always be a way out of a crisis, without becoming derailed.

Customer information in real time

On May 16, 2011, the FGC decided to open a Twitter account to close the distance with customers and provide information on the state of the service on the company's different rail lines. After much time and effort, users have come to value this account as a customer service tool.

With 80 million passengers a year, the FGC rail service ensures the punctuality of its train services, which is essential for maintaining the company's good reputation. If time is a key factor in train arrivals and departures, then this is also true of Twitter, which requires very short response times. Providing information to customers as quickly as possible has always been one of FGC's overriding priorities and is undoubtedly the foundation on which its success has been built. Short response time does not mean within an hour or 20 minutes. Many passengers use FGC as an urban railway

service to get around the city, so many trips involve two or three stops, taking just a few minutes. For this reason, response times must be as short as possible, providing replies in less than five minutes.

This makes the FGC social media account a real-time customer information point. The work of social media managers makes little sense if customers report an incident on their journey only to wait 20 minutes for a reply. They would have received no help or information on what was happening and, furthermore, they would arrive at work angry and feeling that contacting FGC had been a waste of time.

For this reason, real-time customer information is a privilege, but also a great responsibility. The capacity to continually meet this response time is what makes FGC different from other transport operators who provide information but do not interact with users.

It is important not to confuse response speed with impulsiveness. The information is often very important to customers, so the accuracy and precision of all posted information must be checked.

Customers want real-time information, not real-time solutions. In many cases customers are not asking for solutions, but just want to be heard. Customers should realize FGC is aware of their discomfort when they find a train is overcrowded or if they are anxious about arriving late for an exam. In such cases, they need to be told that a lot of people are working to solve the problem as quickly as possible. Transparency is also important and the cause of incidents should be explained, whether or not the responsibility lies with FGC. It is quite surprising how customers' attitudes can change using just this simple formula. They switch from being potential trolls to people grateful for the information provided. The customer is still on the same train, with the same discomfort, but is now a possible brand promoter.

FGC customers and their active role in improving a public service

If one of the main objectives when opening the @FGC account was to reach out to customers, then the help now received from followers every day shows this has been achieved.

A rail company such as FGC obviously has mechanisms for detecting breakdowns and faults requiring maintenance, a lost property service and a medical emergency management service, among others. However, the immediacy of customer tweets has helped improve the efficiency of the service. FGC users are active agents in improving a public passenger transport service.

Furthermore, this collaboration between customer and company produces constant feedback. This is seen when a breakdown or accident occurs. Something as simple as a loose tile on the platform might be reason enough for a user to tweet.

With regard to the responsibility arising from real-time customer service, what would the customer's reaction be if he or she did not receive a reply to the tweet or received one saying the problem would be solved, only for this not to happen? This is why it is important for the whole company to be involved in this comprehensive customer service system. People in the Press Department can answer the tweet and report the problem, but they are not the ones who will fix the tile. To see how this window of excellence in customer service can be counter-productive, just imagine the opposite scenario. Imagine the customer's satisfaction on reporting the problem in the morning on the way to work only to find the tile being fixed when returning in the evening or the next morning. Customers will often send a tweet congratulating FGC and feel they have participated in solving the problem. Improving the customer's satisfaction also improves efficiency and optimizes the resources of a public company!

The @FGC account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	24,840
Monthly tweets*	438
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	3,068
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	1,502

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

@joventutcat

Young people are digital natives

The Directorate General for Youth Twitter account was created with the aim of reaching out to young people via one of the social media channels they use most intensively for information and communication. Most people under 25 are digital natives, i.e. they have interacted with digital technology since childhood and are fully familiar with how to use its tools. The fact that digital natives use IT intuitively creates a need and obligation to establish communications with this community through the digital media available to them.

Similarly, organizations and professionals that work with young people have to be familiar with these tools to be able to communicate with them. If young people on the social media become a source of information themselves, this helps detect needs and deficiencies and plan actions to improve their lives.

The new, immediate form of communication established by social media means young people are used to getting their information quickly. Twitter offers the opportunity of establishing two-way communication with young people, organizations and everyone interested in youth issues and obtaining an immediate response, whether positive or negative. Everyone takes notice of what is posted on Twitter; information and comments spread like wildfire, which makes it essential to work in the same direction and at the same speed. Missing out on new forms of communication when working to

Tool

Twitter @joventutcat
twitter.com/joventutcat

Type

Twitter account for youth information.

Definition

Twitter account managed by the Directorate General for Youth (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Families).

Objectives

- Informing the general public, particularly young people, youth workers and youth and extracurricular education organizations and institutions on news, activities and content on the Jove.cat, E-Joventut and Directorate General for Youth portals.
- Informing the general public and young people about programs in the National Youth Plan of Catalonia 2010-2020 that the Directorate General for Youth and the Catalan Youth Agency run directly or participate in.

improve the lives of young people means value is lost in the relationship between the public and institutions.

Cross-sector approaches in youth affairs

The concept of cross-sector approach is highly prevalent in youth affairs. There is no single definition of the concept of youth, nor is it easy to set limits on what it means to be young. However, basic guidelines can be established in order to know where to direct, implement and communicate youth policies. According to the National Youth Plan of Catalonia 2010-2020, "youth is a period of life which involves biological and social changes and changes in attitudes and social roles". This period produces a number of transitions in education, work, residence, family and as citizens, all of which serves to build life projects. Such projects also involve acquiring and exercising citizenship, so individuals are not just the center of their own life projects, but are also part of the society in which they live. As such, youth can also be defined as a diverse group of people, all of whom are destined to play a leading role in social change.

The Directorate General for Youth works to provide young people with the tools to accompany them through this process of independence and identity-building. At some point during this period, young people will come across opportunities and problems in the areas of work, education, culture, participation, housing and health. All these topics need to be discussed on the social media as a way of reaching young people at a given moment in their transition to adulthood.

- Reporting the institutional activity of the Directorate General for Youth.
- Helping publicize the Xarxa Catalana de Serveis d'Informació Juvenil (Catalan Network of Youth Information Services, XCSIJ) account and some of the campaigns run by Carnet Jove (Youth Card) and Xarxa Nacional d'Albergs Socials de Catalunya (National Youth Hostel Network of Catalonia, Xanascat).
- Sharing information from other Government of Catalonia ministries that could be of interest to young people.
- Replying to inquiries.

Target public

Young people, professionals working in youth affairs (experts and politicians), youth associations, extracurricular education and vocational training centers, institutions (local organizations, other Government ministries, and so on), researchers and the general public.

The account posts information on youth affairs: news, in-depth and op-ed articles, resources, training and leisure activities in the agenda, live coverage of training activities and meetings. This information is not just of interest to young people, but also to professionals, organizations and institutions in direct contact with them, helping them grow as people and working to plan and execute youth policies to accompany them on their road to independence.

The @joventutcat account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	10,263
Monthly tweets*	274
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	953
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	500

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

The @joventutcat account also works to publicize campaigns and content from other youth accounts related to the Directorate General for Youth and the Catalan Youth Agency. Thus, it includes followers of Carnet Jove (Youth Card, over 13,500 followers*), Xanascat (National Youth Hostel Network of Catalonia, with over 5,000*) and the XCSIJ (Catalan Network of Youth Information Services, over 1,200*) and multiplies the reach of posts to over 29,000 followers.

*October 2016

Posting content

The @joventutcat Twitter account distributes information published on three different portals, two of which are topic-based (Jove.cat and E-Joventut) and one institutional, that of the Directorate General for Youth. For this account, the posting policy is based on two aspects:

- the target public for the tweets;

- activity by the Directorate General for Youth.

Depending on the target public, there are three types of post, each with its own hashtag:

- #jovecat. This is information from the Jove.cat portal, such as news, agenda activities and fixed content and articles on the portal that are highlighted in relation to scheduled events or requirements. It is directly addressed to young people in particular. Tweets are written in a plain, informal and colloquial style and often expressed as a question, to be answered by recipients. As tweets cover a variety of topics, whenever possible they include mentions of other Government of Catalonia Twitter accounts that might interest followers. So, for instance, the Ministry of Education account is mentioned when discussing training.

- #edulleure. This account provides information addressed mainly to youth clubs and organizations working in the field of extracurricular education and, to a lesser extent, to young people interested in doing or working in extracurricular activities. Tweets include extracurricular activities, youth facilities, a list and search engine for youth organizations, grants, organization and notification of

activities, prevention, self-protection and quality control for activities, regulations and the offer of extracurricular activities. The information comes from the Jove.cat portal and the Directorate General for Youth institutional portal. The tweets are informal in style, as many organizations and associations are also run by young people.

> **jo ven tut** **Joventut.Generalitat** ✓
> @joventutcat
> [+2 Segueix]
>
> Campaments, camps de treball, casals, campus, colònies, intercanvis, rutes... no saps què triar? bit.ly/1QEbLq1 #edulleure #jovecat

- #EJoventut. These tweets are addressed to professional youth workers, politicians (local councillors working in youth affairs) and academics (researchers). They provide information on youth policy, resources, subsidies, calls for grant applications, communities of practice, newsletters and training, all previously published on the E-Joventut portal. Plain language is also used, although with a more technical content.

> **jo ven tut** **Joventut.Generalitat** ✓
> @joventutcat
> [+2 Segueix]
>
> Els joves del teu municipi van a treballar a l'estranger? Butlletí #EJoventut d'orientació en #mobilitatinternacional bit.ly/1K9Lsq2

There are two types of content with regard to Directorate General for Youth activity:

- Directorate General for Youth institutional activity. These are tweets on visits by the Director General for Youth to organizations, youth offices and youth information points. Information on openings, awards ceremonies and working committees attended by the Director General is also posted. Whenever possible, tweets are accompanied by a photo and the institutions visited are mentioned.

- Live webcasts. Training sessions organized by the Directorate General for Youth are streamed live on Twitter so people unable to attend can follow them. Basic ideas and quotes from speakers are tweeted. They normally have their own hashtag and if possible no other topics are tweeted during the webcast to focus as much attention as possible on the issues discussed and ensure users do not lose the thread.

Other content besides these main areas is also published with a specific hashtag, such as newsletters and summaries from the Youth Documentation Center (#CDJoventut), information on the Erasmus+ programs for organizations (#ErasmuplusCat) or places on volunteer camps (#campsdetreball). Tweets and retweets provide support for content from other Government ministries that might be of interest to young people, such as #GarantiaJuvenilCat (youth guarantee), @saloensenyament (education fair), grants, awards, subsidies and competitions.

@optimotcat

The @optimocat account is very recent: it was opened on February 9, 2015 and two days later it already had 4,000 followers. Users were looking for a new communication channel to interact and discuss Catalan in relation to the Optimot linguistic search engine, a service that has grown steadily since it began in 2008 and which has received over 40 million inquiries in the last four years.

Using Twitter to innovate in a language inquiry service

With the @optimotcat account, the Directorate General for Language Policy aims to innovate in the language inquiry service provided in conjunction with the organizations IEC and TERMCAT, thereby increasing the number of communication channels related to the Optimot website. The idea is to provide language content of value to the public more easily and publicize it more widely, creating dialogue and interaction with followers. This creates a language community among users interested in Catalan, thus increasing its qualitative use.

The Twitter account represents a qualitative leap forward in the Optimot inquiry service, as it enables users to make inquiries directly and receive direct replies almost immediately. These replies are seen by all other followers, thereby increasing their value and spreading knowledge more widely. In this way, it builds networks that go beyond the two-way Optimot-user relationship, with answers to questions often coming from the community.

Tool

Twitter @optimotcat
twitter.com/optimotcat

Type

Tweets on language content from the Optimot search engine.

Definition

Twitter account managed by the Directorate General for Language Policy (Ministry of Culture) from 9 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday.

General objectives

- Increasing the qualitative use of the Catalan language in professional fields and among the public.
- Disseminating language content from the Optimot search engine and improving its accessibility.
- Building a community of users interested in Catalan, to share knowledge and develop new ideas.

Thus the account becomes a platform for two-way knowledge sharing if intelligent participation from the community is encouraged as a means of sharing ideas. It should be borne in mind that analyzing dialogue with users provides extremely useful feedback, because it contains a great deal of information to realign the communication strategy, strengthen and broaden linguistic content and, consequently, improve the service and reach more users.

In addition, the communication channel provided by the Twitter account (which includes a link to the Optimot website in all its tweets) supplements another channel, the Optimot blog, https://optimot.blog.gencat.cat, which also redirects users to areas of interest, such as the Optimot search engine with all its language resources and specialist sources.

The Twitter account also provides other advantages, since it is the ideal tool for spreading information quickly and exponentially to a large number of users, who can then repeat the information in their own interactions. Furthermore, positive interactions have a cumulative impact on the good reputation and prestige of the service. In this context, replies from the account are personalized as far as possible and repetition and standardization are avoided when interacting with users.

Specific objectives

- Stimulating the community of followers interested in Catalan through direct, real-time dialogue and interaction to attract an audience and foster engagement with the project.
- Increasing and encouraging use of the Optimot search engine and spreading its use through a variety of diverse communities.
- Replying to language questions that can be answered quickly and easily. The end goal is to provide a service for users and generate loyalty.
- Publicizing the individualized service on the Optimot website http://optimot.gencat.cat, redirecting language inquiries that require more detailed answers.
- Detecting linguistic needs and gaps among the public and collecting suggestions to innovate, broaden or improve the search engine and its content.

Managing and revitalizing content

Account management is based on revitalizing language content from the Optimot search engine and fostering user intervention, interaction and dialogue on the proposed topic. This account revitalization and dialogue with users produces interaction on linguistic topics. This in turn helps spread specific content from the search engine and, above all, users' knowledge of the tool to enable them to access it more easily and use it more effectively.

Two tweets are posted every day to publicize language content from Optimot, in addition to tweets replying to language questions and interaction and dialogue with users. Linguistic tweets are posted at the ideal time for ensuring their diffusion: around 11 am in the morning and 5:30 pm in the evening.

The communication strategy is based on posting different types of tweets, designed as a variety of formal presentations of content in a clearly recognizable style. The creative, dynamic, slightly humorous and even ironic style connects directly with users and is intended as a way of differentiating from other language-related Twitter accounts, giving it an original voice and prioritizing the effectiveness and impact of the message.

Tweets publicizing language content from the search engine are organized in a question-answer format using a highly creative style and clear, direct and informal language. They often refer to events taking place at the time to arouse users' interest. Their intention is to engage users and interest them in a specific topic. If they then want more detailed information they can use

Target public

The general public and specific professional communities with Twitter accounts interested in improving the quality of Catalan use and receiving useful language content.

the Optimot search engine files. The end goal is always to get users to visit the search engine, either for more information or to ask questions, thereby helping them become more independent in finding answers. The Optimot service also provides individualized replies from a team of linguists when users are unable to find the answer to their questions.

Other engagement strategies to improve and supplement information offered by tweets are hashtags to identify the key topic of the tweet, adding photos, often as metaphors to capture an abstract linguistic concept, and using multimedia content such as videos. The aim is to increase users' interest and, thus, their participation and interaction through collaborative proposals addressed to the account.

Other examples of tweets to enliven the account and foster user participation are the monthly #variantsòptimes and weekly #motòptim tweets. Tweets with the #variantsòptimes hashtag are a direct invitation for collaborative participation from the user community. Users' contributions, which produce internal dialogue to fine tune and confirm solutions, are collected and sent as a final tweet or tweets to close the topic and thank users for their replies. They are an example of how to use a community's collective intelligence to increase language knowledge.

optimot @optimotcat · 19 març
Com porteu l'art de fer ballar aquest objecte? Busquem les #variantsòptimes. Quan vulgueu, la ballem!

optimot @optimotcat · 20 març
(1/2) Moltes gràcies per les #variantsòptimes que ens heu dit!
baldufa
balladora
ballarina
ballaruga/baralluga
perinola
sarrompa

The #motòptim hashtag is used to highlight a term currently in the news or, on other occasions, because of its specialization.

optimot @optimotcat · 10 juny
—Com van les PAU?
—Les què?
—Les 'proves d'accés a la universitat'.
—Aaah, la 'selectivitat' o la 'sele'! #motòptim
Mostra-ho traduït

non-partizan
(CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Occasionally other hashtags are used for specific linguistic content, such as #pronúncia, #abreviacions, #lèxic, #fraseologia, #refranys (sayings), #majúscules (upper case), #minúscules (lower case), #sinònims, #col·loquial. There are also hashtags such as #plujadefitxes (content brainstorming) that ask for users' cooperation in proposing language content to enrich the search engine.

Tweets in response to language questions. The Twitter account is also used as an opportunity to clear up users' doubts. These involve simple questions that can be answered in 140 characters, while those requiring more complex answers are directed to the individualized support provided by the Optimot website.

Tweets on current social or cultural events associated with linguistic content:

Posts on @optimotcat also create associated linguistic content or retweets from accounts on relevant topics or related to Catalan with the aim of creating a network and interacting with other Directorate General for Language Policy accounts (@llenguacatalana, @vxl and @cat_cine) and supporting their campaigns, such as in the field of law (*En català, també és de llei* (It's also the law in Catalan)) and enterprise (*Català i empresa. Ja estàs al dia?* (Catalan and enterprise, are you up to date?)).

Monitoring

Account content is monitored daily in real time to rate users' satisfaction and detect possible conflicts. Analyzing results provides indicators on the impact of the product, data for proactive action and ideas for redirecting the strategy if it is not working as planned. It also helps identify the types of content that produce the most *Likes* and create the most comments and interest. In this context, every week, comments are compiled to establish more relevant information regarding users' interests and searches.

The @optimotcat account in figures

Followers on February 28, 2017	12,049
Monthly tweets*	191
Monthly interactions (mentions, replies, retweets)*	1,324
Monthly user participation (individual interacting users)*	605

*Averages for the previous 12 months (March 2016 - February 2017)

Twitter
Quick Start
Guide
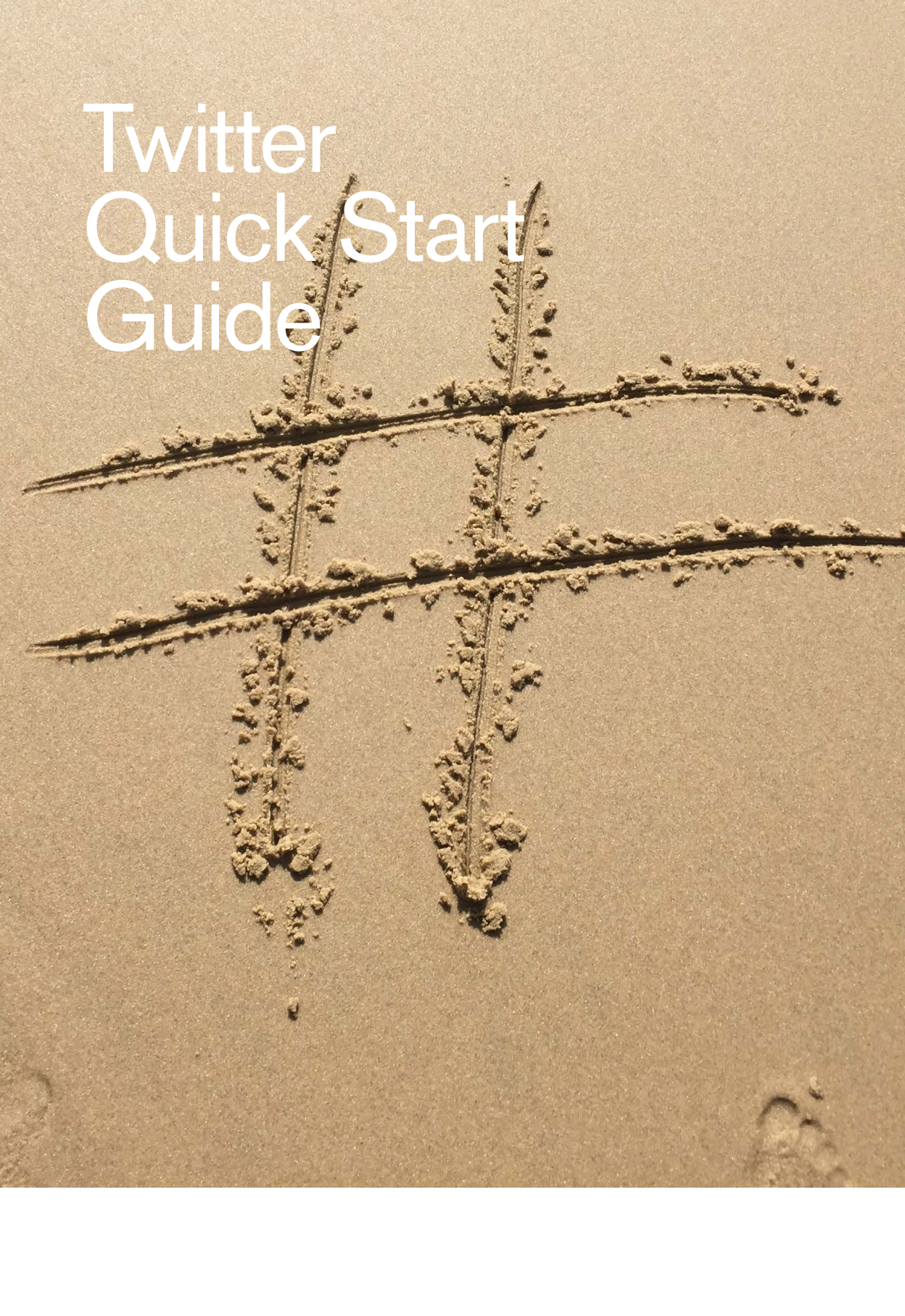
This annex provides a brief explanation on how to set up a Twitter account and manage posts correctly. More detailed information on technical aspects of Twitter is available in the *Social Networks Guide of the Generalitat of Catalonia* http://gen.cat/socialnetworksguide.

Basic concepts

Twitter is a *micro-messaging* platform that allows users to tweet, or post, short text messages (limited to 140 characters), talk to other users or simply follow them to see what they tweet.

Besides the option of adding multimedia elements (basically images, animated GIFs and videos), tweets consist of different parts: some are part of the tweet itself and others are Twitter context elements.

Twitter context elements:

- Profile picture

- Twitter account name

- The Twitter user name (preceded by @ with a maximum of 20 characters)

- Post date and time

- The timeline. This is the real-time stream of tweets shared by followers

- Biography (or bio, a maximum of 160 characters)

Elements in the tweet:

- Message text.

- Links to websites, articles, photos and videos (Twitter automatically shortens the URL). There is a notable upward trend in emoji use, similar to their use in instant messaging.

- Hashtag. If more than one word, writing the first letter of each word in upper case will make it more readable.

- Possible actions with tweets. Retweet (literal or edited), answer, mention or *Like*.

Account settings

- **User name.** This must be defined on creating the account. The name appearing after the @ symbol when a tweet is posted. The user name is limited to 15 characters.

- **Account bio.** A small text field to write a short definition of the account owner, available for all user profiles. It must be under 160 characters, so key words and hashtags are recommended.

- **Images.** Special care should be taken when choosing a profile image or avatar (400 x 400 px), as it will appear next to all tweets, like the header in landscape format (1500 x 500 px). For institutional profiles, images should match the organization's purpose and corporate style.

- **Posting a tweet.** Select the new message icon and write the tweet without exceeding the 140-character limit. The tweet will be posted and appear in the profile.

- **Marking a tweet with a *Like*.** This option can be used to recognize or agree with a tweet from another user. It is important to do this to learn about the tastes and preferences of community members.

- **Retweeting.** A tweet by another user can be shared with the community by retweeting it, either using the appropriate icon or quoting it. It is useful to know which tweets are most often retweeted to measure the impact of actions by institutions.

- **Replying to a tweet.** Choose the reply icon. The name of the user who posted the original tweet appears at the start of the reply. Tweets that start with the user name can only be seen by that user, the recipient and their common followers. When you want the whole community to see it, add a space, dot or any other character to the start of the message so Twitter does not detect it as a reply.

- **Mentioning other users.** This means including the name of the user or users you want to mention in the message. Following mentions of institutional accounts is a good gauge for measuring the reach of tweets. However, these options should not be overused.

- **Including a hashtag.** Select the # symbol and start writing without adding a space. A list of existing hashtags will appear. You can choose one of the suggested hashtags and include the most popular ones or add a new one if you want to establish a specific position.

- **Posting an image.** You can take a photo at the moment you tweet, using the camera button, or add images stored on your device. You can post up to four images, which appear as a collage. Once you have chosen the image, you can edit it by adding a filter or cropping it. People in the image can be tagged (up to 10 tags). This provides more characters for the tweet. It should be borne in mind

that anyone can be tagged in an image if their account is public. Account visibility can be changed in settings. Three options are available: *Allow anyone to tag me in photos / Only allow people I follow to tag me in photos / Do not allow anyone to tag me in photos*.

- **Including Twitter Cards.** These are tweets in rich format that contain more information than the 140 characters. They usually consist of the author's image, a summary and the title of the linked content. The content as a whole is viewed as a card. They are created from a website, adding HTML code provided by Twitter to the web pages you want to develop. Once the code has been added, use the Twitter Card Validator https://cards-dev.twitter.com/validator for approval and to let you post the card.

- **Pinning a tweet.** The message will remain highlighted at the top of the timeline, to give it more relevance and ensure followers see it first. Users can only pin one of their tweets.

- **Deleting a tweet.** Users can only delete their own tweets, by using the trash can icon.

Why only 140 characters?

Because Twitter began life as a mobile service designed to match the limit of short text messages (SMS). However, since 2016 it has been possible to include photos, GIFs, videos and hashtags without using up characters. This change means all 140 characters are available in tweets enriched with multimedia.

Despite this change, the brevity of tweets remains one of Twitter's characteristic features. The limit means users must stick to the essential ideas they want to convey when writing the tweet, thus generating and sharing ideas and information instantly at break-neck speed.

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Twitter resources

Help Center https://support.twitter.com

The Official Twitter Blog https://blog.twitter.com

The Twitter Developer Blog https://dev.twitter.com

The Twitter Engineering Blog https://blog.twitter.com/engineering

The Twitter Media Blog https://blog.twitter.com/media

The Twitter for Good Blog https://blog.twitter.com/twitter-for-good

The Twitter Advertising Blog https://blog.twitter.com/advertising

The TweetDeck Blog https://blog.twitter.com/tweetdeck

The Twitter Investor Relations Blog https://blog.twtrinc.com

The Twitter Data Blog https://blog.twitter.com/data

Twitter International Services Blog https://blog.twitter.com/international-services

The Twitter Design Blog https://blog.twitter.com/design

The Twitter Policy Blog https://blog.twitter.com/policy