Adapting Aggregated Search Techniques to Support the Social Media Monitoring Task

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Abstract: Social media is now an important means of communication, used by both individuals and organisations alike to share information and experiences, express opinions, or simply interact with others. As a result, media monitors and communications staff must now ensure they include social media activity in their watch of public discourse about their organisational entities, projects, products and services. This is a difficult task because: 1) there is typically a high volume of content on social media; 2) social media includes many different platforms, each with different characteristics, usually targeting a different audience with a different purpose; and 3) as with other types of search, the keywords used are often ambiguous. Our work aims at supporting the social media monitoring task by combining aggregated search techniques with text analysis tools to ensure the results obtained from search engines are relevant. In particular, our system attempts to build an appropriate (contextualised) query to dispatch to the underlying existing search engines, and rank the search results collected from a range of social media. We experimented with a labelled corpus to demonstrate the effectiveness of our approach in filtering out non-relevant results and the performance gains obtained by improving result ranking. Our system outperforms commonly-used alternatives in both regards.

Key-words: social media, classification, aggregated search