

SA and digital space

With sentiment analysis, it is possible to search the digital space for opinions, reviews, posts, and tweets around the competition. This is user-generated insight that you can collect for product positioning.

The all-Knowing SA

Some of the questions one can answer from sentiment analysis about a business may include how people feel about a product or brand, how they are responding to campaigns/advertisements or product launches. Whether there is a way to predict the outcome of a campaign or event so that one can know how to invest better in marketing.

Other concerns could be: Why aren't consumers buying our product? Based on a sample of tweets, how are people responding to this ad campaign/product release/news item? Is this customer email satisfied or dissatisfied? Are customers happy with our customer care representatives?

Tools and software

With the advent of Big Data, sophisticated computing technologies have been developed to deal with the challenges brought about when processing this data. While most of them are commercial and very expensive for SMEs, there exist some open source alternatives which can be customized for a business to serve the purpose of harvesting and analyzing social media data.

One such open source software is Apache Hadoop Framework. Hadoop has modules that cater for data scraping, machine learning, natural language processing, visualization and much more-and can be obtained for free and be customized to suit the business needs. Custom algorithms can also be developed using tools such as R, Python, Julia and so on.

Other SA application areas

Apart from business applications, sentiment analysis can also be applied in other domains, including:

- Politics – for mining public opinions and political temperatures
- Law and policy making
- Sociology and
- Psychology

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