The ultimate sentiment analysis guide



Sensible media monitoring

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This guide will help you recognize opportunities and ways you can use sentiment analysis to optimize your marketing strategy.

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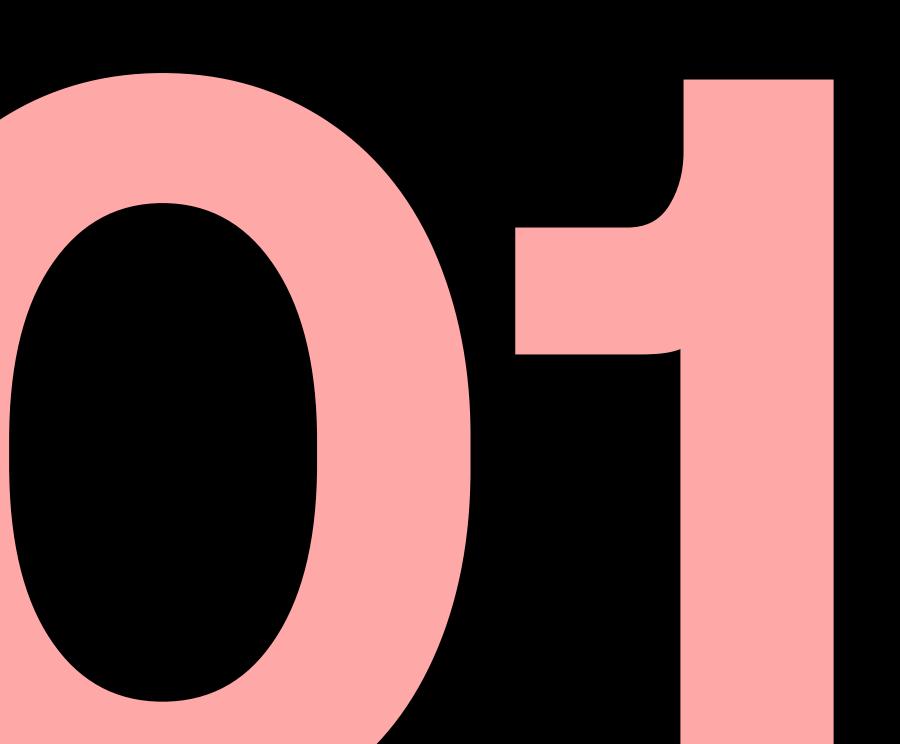
Did you know that growth-focused organizations collect more customer experience data than non-growth companies? Yes, you heard that right! These companies rely on customer experience insights to make informed decisions that can take their business to the next level. While surveys have always been a favorite tool of companies to gather valuable inputs, sentiment analysis is a much better and smarter approach to dig deeper into your customers' minds.

It is a technique that uses artificial intelligence to detect customer sentiments and decode them, enabling you to craft delightful customer experiences.

Focusing solely on the numbers can be too narrow of a perspective. A great number of mentions doesn't mean your brand is doing great. That's because, in reality, the vast majority of those mentions could be terrible reviews. Getting the whole picture requires taking a deeper insight into your mentions. Sentiment analysis provides context for your mentions and helps you understand your data.

You not only want to know what's being said about your own brand, but you also want to know what's abuzz about your competitors, your industry, and emerging trends among your customers. You want an in.

Analyzing sentiment plays such a crucial part in deciphering the way your audience perceives you, your products, and your position in the marketplace. This guide will help you recognize opportunities and ways you can use sentiment analysis to optimize your marketing strategy.



Sentiment analysis uses the technique of natural language processing to determine whether the data received expresses a positive, negative or neutral tone.

In simple terms, sentiment analysis uses the technique of natural language processing to determine whether the data received expresses a positive, negative or neutral tone. It is also called opinion mining or emotional Al.

Since the customer data is extremely noisy, unstructured, and pours in from multiple channels, it is impossible to manually scan and process every message and analyze it to deliver better services. That's where sentiment analysis comes into play.

The easiest way to analyze brand sentiment is through media monitoring tools. These tools, such as Determ, use sets of words that have predefined values. Then, it combines and subtracts the values to get an

approximate sentiment of the collected mention. This information can give you deeper insight into the attitudes, opinions, and emotions behind the text.

Say you suddenly have a spike in the number of your brand mentions. Without sentiment analysis, it's impossible to immediately know whether that's a good or a bad thing. One look at a sentiment analysis chart and you'll know right away.

Keep in mind that the computer can't detect sarcasm, for example, so the sentiment provided by the tool won't be correct 100% of the time. But it will give you a general overview of the sentiment trend. Later in this guide, we'll show you what you can do to improve the correctness of the sentiment.

In this guide, we'll show you 5 different benefits of sentiment analysis.



Knowing your brand sentiment allows you to make informed decisions and work towards improving your business in general. In this guide, we'll show you 5 various aspects in which using sentiment analysis can be extremely beneficial:

- Audience insights & changing consumer trends
- Brand insights
- Improving customer support
- Detecting a social media crisis
- Tracking campaign performance

02 — 5 benefits of sentiment analysis

Audience insights & changing consumer trends

Figuring out what makes the audience tick is not a new practice among marketers and PR professionals alike. The practices and platforms may have evolved over time, but one thing remains constant: working to understand your audience's thoughts, opinions, perceptions, and feelings.

The consumer mindset changes over time, as is only natural. However, as your customer changes and evolves, so must you, too. This is why learning and keeping up with the changes has become so important.

Take the coronavirus pandemic and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, for instance. Both have so significantly marked 2020. The pandemic has

upturned everyone's lives overnight it seems. Both the pandemic and the BLM movement have completely changed the way people interact and relate with, not only each other but brands, too. Social media activism was (and still is) at an all-time high. The same went for performative activism, though. Not much went under the radar during this high-alert period. Brands were not exempt from scrutiny and demand for genuine allyship.

As Debra Aho Williamson, an analyst at Insider Intelligence, said:

"At a time when nearly every aspect of life has been altered by business closures, stay-at-home orders, social distancing and job losses—and when consumers are demanding that companies do more than pay lip service to issues of race and equality—it's more critical than ever for businesses to listen to their consumers."

Analyzing sentiment would have been especially important during the last year, and still today. Every brand's communication strategy on social media was put under the microscope. Tracking how people reacted to a

brand's decisions regarding the pandemic (be it pandemic prompted layoffs, measures compliance...) and the BLM support would have given them the insight they wouldn't have had otherwise.

Research conducted by Gartner in 2020 and reported by eMarketer only further confirmed the importance of social listening in 2020.

When asked "From which sources are you getting rapid information about consumers during the coronavirus pandemic?", 51% of respondents answered with social listening platforms – taking second place after third-party sources of consumer research.

From Which Sources Are Marketing Leaders
Worldwide Getting Rapid Infomation About
Consumers During the Coronavirus Pandemic?,
March 2020

% of respondents, March 2020

| Third-party sources of consumer research | 62% |
|---|-----|
| Social listening platforms | 51% |
| Customer service rep, sales, other reporting of customer concerns | 43% |
| Voice of customer/survey platforms | 25% |
| Primary research | 23% |
| Customer research communities | 15% |
| Call listening or interaction analytics of customer service calls | 14% |
| | |

And truly, nowadays there is no such platform that can offer you real-time, unbiased information like social media monitoring tools can. The Kahlúa liqueur brand certainly agrees:

We've used social listening in the past two months to report all the way to top management, to our CEO. We are showcasing that we can provide meaningful insights faster than traditional insight campaigns or surveys would do."

Simon de Beauregard (Engagement Director for Absolut, Malibu, Kahlúa, and Smithworks labels) for eMarketer in July 2020

And not only did they use social listening for

reporting results, but they've also used it for social media engagement and finding leads:



Getting brand insights

While somewhat similar to getting audience insights, brand insights are more narrowly focused. You still want to know how and what your audience thinks, but now it's more closely related to your brand.

Your best starting point is tracking your own brand name, related products/services, and important people (be it your CEO, PR or marketing manager, or influencers/brand ambassadors you work with).

This way you can start building up a base of mentions you can analyze from the start and track the changes over time. You can compare time periods and see how your brand image fluctuates between those time

periods. If it fluctuates at all.

Sentiment analysis is the best metric for this purpose. You may accumulate a lot of brand mentions in one time period or see a sudden rise in the number of mentions. However, without looking at the sentiment of those mentions, you can't know if that's a positive or a negative thing for your brand.

Sentiment analysis is an important jump-off

5 benefits of sentiment analysis

point for a much deeper analysis of your brand positioning:

- Analyzing brand reputation over time
- Comparing your brand image to your competitors
- Tracking your brand's performance on different platforms

ANALYZING BRAND REPUTATION OVER TIME

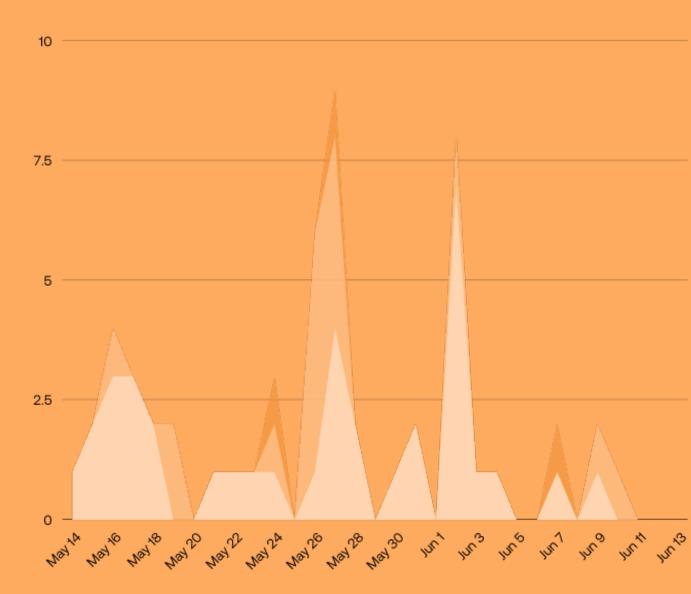
Tracking how your brand sentiment changes over time gives you an insight into how your audience feels about you over different periods of time. You can see a rise and fall in

negative mentions and compare them to your communication strategy. Maybe that one campaign got you a lot of negative social media attention. Or an unsavory story from your CEO's past came up and you failed to deliver a timely response. Maybe that one tweet for Women's Day brought an avalanche of criticism your way (looking at you, Burger King). The examples are infinite.

The point, though, is that you can always track how your actions affect your brand reputation and positioning. From one small tweet to a whole new campaign, each move you make (or don't make) on social media leaves a lasting impression on your audience. One you can track and analyze.

Sentiment over time

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative



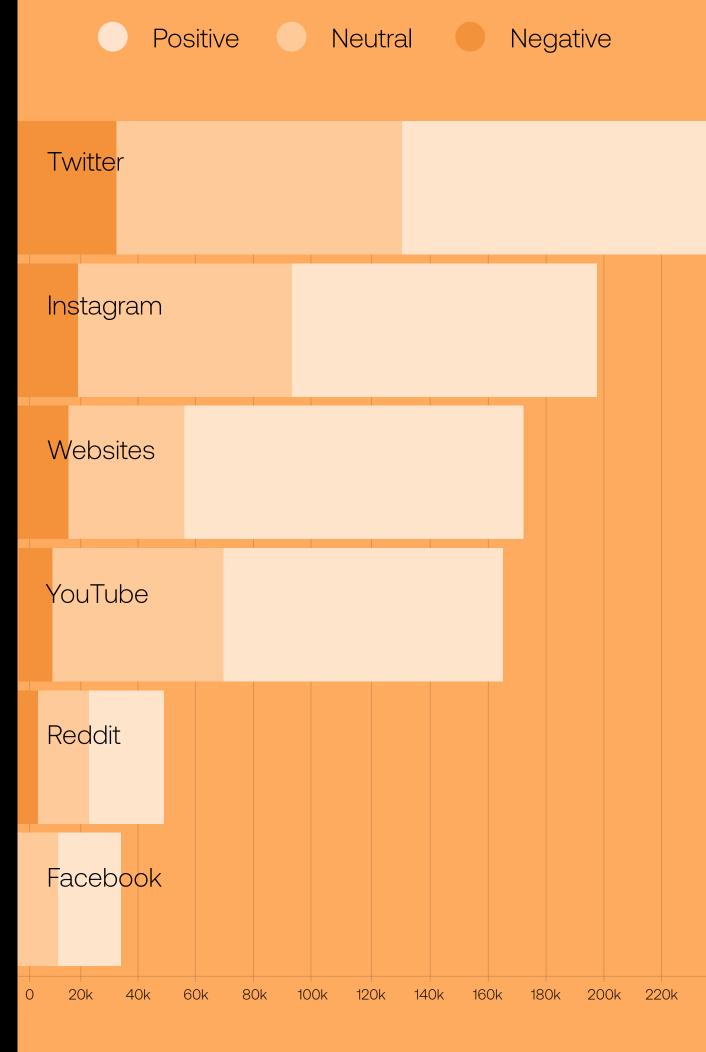
COMPARING YOUR BRAND IMAGE TO YOUR COMPETITORS

Not only can you benchmark the number of your brand mentions against those of your competitors, but you can also see if the prevailing sentiment is positive or negative. If you notice your competitor has a greater number of positive mentions than you, you can look into it. See how their social media strategy compares to yours and what you can do to improve your own.

TRACK YOUR BRAND'S PERFORMANCE ON DIFFERENT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

You can compare the number of brand mentions and analyze their sentiment over different channels. This way, you can see where your brand performs best and worst. Using this information, you can see what and where you can improve to engage your audience more. Or, you may even come to the conclusion that a certain social media channel simply doesn't work for your brand. Either way, you'll know and be able to make informed decisions.

Sentiment analysis by channel



Source: Determ

Improving customer support

Great customer support is a natural consequence of analyzing and acting on consumer and brand insights you've collected. Once you understand your customers better, their behavior, needs, and problems, you can offer them a better brand experience.

Media monitoring proves to be a great ally in maintaining a high level of engagement with your audience over social media. By now, we've talked enough about the importance of not only counting the number of mentions but analyzing their sentiment.

In the case of customer support, it's even more important. Take negative mentions, for instance. Just by going through all your negative mentions, you can discover potential issues with your product or service. Maybe it malfunctions, maybe your customers think it's overpriced or that your staff is unprofessional. Whatever it is, it's there in your negative mentions.

Let's take it a step further. We've already mentioned an **airline company as an example** for using tags for their mentions. We had them separate their mentions into distinct categories for easier organization. However,

you can also use tags for your customer support needs.

Let's say you've noticed some often complained about things concerning your product. For our example, let's say we're an airline company. For this example, we already know that people have been complaining about our rude staff. But by tracking our brand mentions, we've noticed a rising number of negative mentions about frequent flight delays and dirty airplane bathrooms.

So, we'll **create these 3 tags**: Rude Crew,
Delays, Dirty Bathrooms. Using automated
actions you can set up a rule that every time
your brand mentions containing the keyword
"dirty bathroom" (and common related
keywords) they get tagged negative and sent

into the "Dirty Bathroom" tag.

This way, you can easily track the progression of these problems. How do they change over time, and does the number of negative mentions decline? What's more, by tracking these, you can react immediately after they appear and address them directly on social media. Either by answering someone's comment, tweet, or issuing a statement.

It doesn't have to be all about negative mentions, though. Your customers may just have questions or inquiries they need quick answers to. And what better person to answer them than you?

Here's a fun little exchange that happened

between a customer (in need of a quick answer) and Tesco on Twitter. Not only did Tesco reply to this man's cry for help, but they also arranged a rescue mission:



And they've even offered the customer a voucher for toilet paper:



Now, that's some top-notch customer service, wouldn't you agree?

Just the little act of acknowledging your customers online, answering their questions, and addressing their concerns goes a long way to maintaining a quality customer service experience. And, at the end of the day, building a good brand reputation.

Detecting a social media crisis

69% of PWC's research participants have experienced a crisis in the last 5 years.

Analyzing sentiment is a great tool for recognizing and mitigating potential social media crises. And it's quite simple, too. If you've been tracking your brand as religiously and as detailed as mentioned thus far, there's really little you can miss when it comes to your social media presence. Crises included.

We've talked a lot about tracking mentions over time and keeping an eye on the positive-negative sentiment ratio. Sudden increases in the number of mentions mean one thing – a viral response. Something you did, be it a new

campaign, an Instagram post, a tweet, triggered an avalanche of reactions.

Looking only at the number of mentions, you can't possibly know whether that viral response is a good or bad thing. Looking at the sentiment, though, you can. If you see a sudden rise in the number of negative mentions, that's a pretty good indicator that something's not right. In fact, you may have a budding social media crisis on hand.

Here's an example:



However, it's worth noting that the "women belong in the kitchen" **tweet was only part of**

a thread. The very beginning, in fact. Some saw the whole thread; some didn't. Their intention was good, as they wanted to promote the new culinary scholarship program for their female employees. And they tried to point out the gender disparities in the restaurant industry.

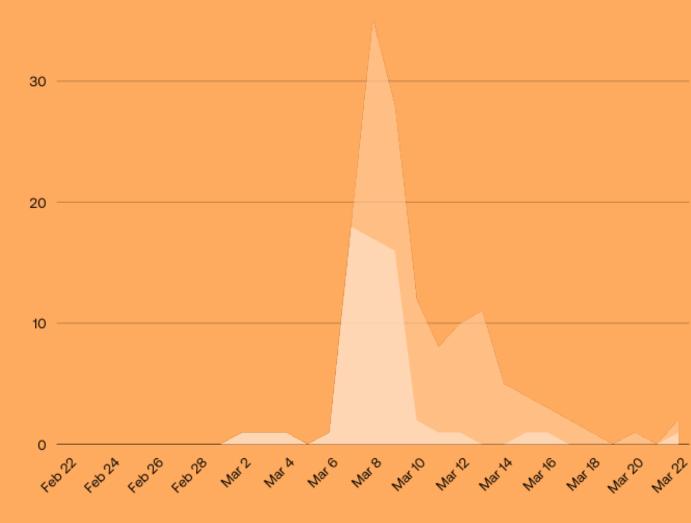
Some didn't find the issue with the tweet; some did. These mentions include many tweets calling out Burger King and mocking memes, but also many news outlets reporting and analyzing the situation.

Whatever the case, Burger King was in a hot seat. In the beginning, they didn't apologize, trying to explain and justify the meaning behind their tweet. However, as you can see, the negative comments persisted for a few

Sentiment over time

Burger King (time period: Feb 22 - Mar 22)

- Positive
- Negative



days, so Burger King finally compromised and apologized.

The point here is that this is why media monitoring is so great. It's real-time, meaning you know something's wrong the second it starts happening. And you can analyze the hows, whys, and whats. It also means you can (you should) react quickly and efficiently. And you'll be able to do so efficiently if you have a ready-to-go crisis communication plan. A timely, well-thought-out response is crucial at a time like this. Ignoring the situation is the absolute worst thing you can do.

For more on crisis management check out our guide Social Media Crisis Management.

Read here →

By now, you know the drill. You analyze sentiment to give context to your mentions. This is no less important for analyzing a campaign performance than it is for any other part of your marketing strategy. Especially when it is all so connected.

Take the Burger King example. This scenario is a perfect example of being able to quickly detect a developing social media crisis by closely tracking the campaign's online presence and reactions.

Media monitoring tools offer an overview of your campaign's online performance:

 campaign's reach via the number of mentions and impressions,

- most popular social media channels (e.g. by looking at Determ's Number of mentions per channel chart),
- the influencers/brand ambassadors with the highest reach and engagement,
- campaign success via sentiment analysis.

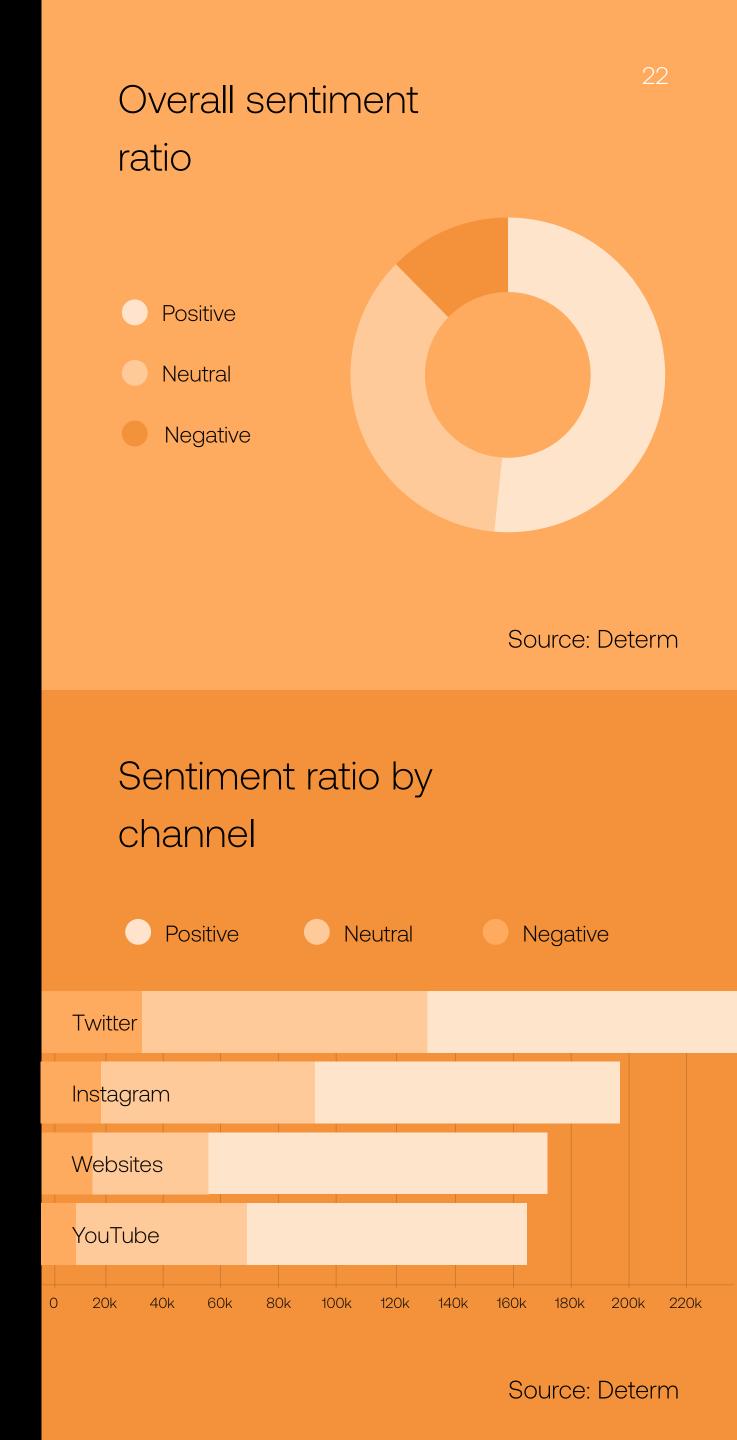
Check out these 3 ways you can analyze the success and performance of your campaign using sentiment.

INTERPRETING OVERALL SENTIMENT RATIO

The sentiment ratio gives you an insight into the prevailing reactions and emotions towards your campaign. That is, it tells you whether the campaign response was positive or negative. What's more, you can dive deeper into the analysis by checking out the positive and negative mentions. This step is important because it gives context to your mention sentiment. The why behind the positive or negative mentions.

ANALYZING SENTIMENT RATIO BY CHANNEL

Sentiment ratio by channel gives you an insight into how well your campaign performed across different social media platforms. It analyzes sentiment for each platform, so you can know which platform performed best and which didn't fare so well. This information can help you in the decision-making process for your next campaign. Which channels surprised you and showed promise? Maybe you discovered a new channel you can utilize better next time. Which channels should you use less or not at all?



DISCOVERING TOP INFLUENCERS BY SENTIMENT

If you're using publishers (media outlets) or brand ambassadors in your campaign, you can compare their performance results.

Whose post reached the most people and on which platform? Were their reach and engagement positive or negative?

For instance, streetwear brand Suspicious
Antwerp is known for using famous names in
its social media strategy. Gigi Hadid, Barbara
Palvin, Dylan Sprouse, Tom Holland, Camila
Mendes, Brooklyn Beckham, and Ed Westwick
are just some of the celebrities they've
collaborated with. They often collaborate with
celebrities when announcing and promoting
their new collections.

To keep up with how each name attached to the promotion affected their campaign, they can simply use media monitoring. We're going to tag these mentions because it's a great feature to organize your mentions.

This time, we're organizing mentions for Suspicious Antwerp's Peacekeeper collection partners: Drew Ray Tanner, Myles Jones, and Casimere Jollette. To make sure, for instance, that every mention of Myles Jones within the context of Suspicious Antwerp goes into the Myles Jones tag, you can use Automated Actions. This way, you don't have to do it manually. Instead, the tool does it for you. The next section will explain Automated Actions in more detail.

Positive

| 51.8 | anonymous_user | |
|------|----------------|--|
| k | | |
| 2k | @Hoops227_NFL | |
| 1.2k | bankhar.mn | |

Negative

| primatexpertise.com | 8.7k |
|---------------------|------|
| @SneakerScouts | 414 |
| Tony Cruise Skate | 319 |

All this allows you to very clearly track how each brand partner performs on social media. Use the knowledge we've already shared and track their overall sentiment ratio, the sentiment ratio by channel, their reach...

You can automate assigning sentiment for certain keywords, authors, or websites.



If you've been in the game for a while, you must already know some weak points of your business – things your customers have been complaining about and pointing out to you. Either directly via emails or by publicly tagging you on social media. Likewise, you also know what works for your brand and brings you positive attention.

If you're a relatively new business, still dipping your toes in and trying to get a feel for your product, you may need some help figuring it out. Or, even if you are an aforementioned established brand and just want to find out more about how your customers talk about you online – media monitoring is a great tool to use in both situations.

What's more, with tools like Determ, you can

<u>automate assigning sentiment</u> for specific keywords, authors, or websites.

Let's say you're an airline that's been tracking your social media brand mentions for a while. Specifically, you've grouped your brand mentions into four highly specific tags for more focused tracking: In-Flight Service, Customer Service, Delays & Cancellations, Tickets & Reservations. This means that all your brand mentions that are about flight delays go into the Delays & Cancellations tag. Or mentions about your in-flight food quality go into the In-Flight Service tag.

Now, you've noticed there's a rising negative sentiment in your In-Flight Service tag. Upon further inspection, you find out that there's a rising number of passengers complaining

about your in-flight service, more specifically, the flight crew and their unprofessional attitudes towards the passengers. To keep an eye on the situation and ensure none of these mentions escape the negative sentiment, you can automate tagging sentiment.

Here's how it works. Type in the keywords commonly used in those mentions complaining about the flight crew (like in the picture on the right, *Create your rule*).

Then, set the sentiment as negative and choose the tag you want those mentions to go into (see picture on the right, *Trigger action*).

Now, every time your flight crew is mentioned alongside words such as rude or unprofessional, they'll be immediately assigned a negative sentiment and grouped into the In-Flight Service tag.

Indeed, these are the mentions that might have still been assigned negative sentiment (without you having to use Automated Actions). However, it's not always this cut and dry. There might have been more ambivalent words, sarcasm or irony used that a tool can't recognize by itself. So, instead of you having to manually correct the sentiment of those mentions, you "tell" the tool what keywords to keep an eye on.

| If mention has any of the keywords: | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ((flight AND (attendant OR crew)) | OR (steward OR stewardess)) AND (rude OR unprofessional) \times |
| Add keyword or a phrase | |
| | OR — |
| If mention author is one of: | |
| Add author name | |
| | OR — |
| If mention website is one of: | |
| Enter a web domain: e.g. nytimes | .com |
| | Next step |
| 2 Trigger action | |
| Set Negative sentiment | |
| Tag mention | <u> </u> |
| In-Flight Service × Add tags | |
| | |

Source: Determ



Automatic sentiment analysis relies on processes like natural language processing, text analysis, and computational linguistics to detect the correct sentiment of your mentions.

AUTOMATIC SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

Automatic sentiment analysis relies on processes like natural language processing, text analysis, and computational linguistics to detect the correct sentiment of your mentions.

Based on the expressions used in the text of the mention, the tool will detect whether the words considered to be positive or negative prevail and then allocate the matching sentiment. In case neither positive nor negative sentiment is predominant, a neutral sentiment will be assigned.

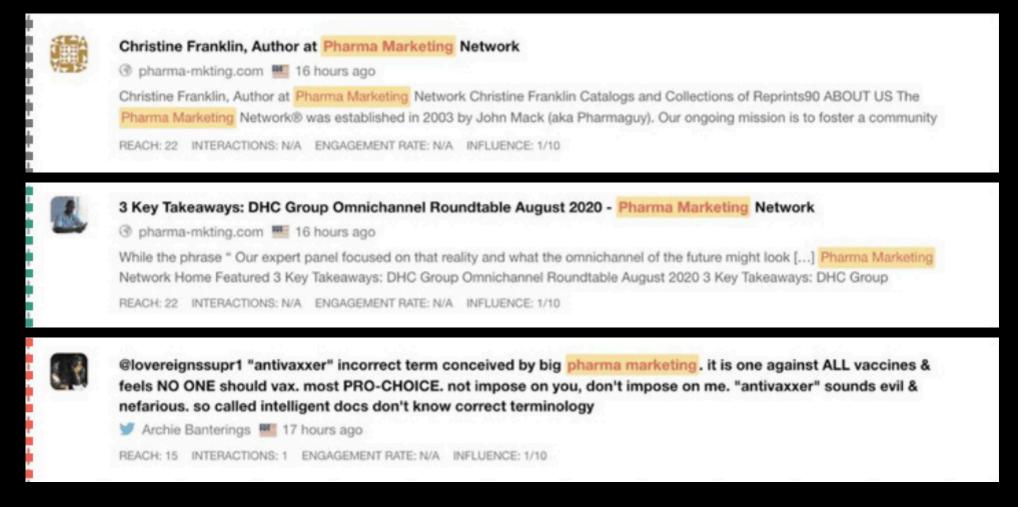
As the name suggests, the process is fully automated. The tool will conduct the sentiment analysis as soon as it starts tracking your query. As a result, while browsing through

the tool feed, you will see a dotted line indicating the sentiment on the very left of every mention.

Shown on the right is an example for every type of sentiment:

- grey for neutral,
- green for positive,
- red for negative.

Notice the mention marked as negative. That is because it contains words evil and nefarious that have a negative connotation. Now, depending on your stance on vaccination, this mention



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This applies to any topic out there – your perspective might not always be aligned with the automatically assigned sentiment. That is simply the human nature element computers still can't compete with, regardless of how advanced machine learning is.

On that note, there are a few situations that can also affect automatic sentiment accuracy.

CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

Here's a sentiment analysis example:

Arabella: I just love their customer support... It's bloody awesome how they issued instant compensation for my ruined camping trip.

Dean: The camping kit was a big mess, and my camping trip was a bloody failure!

It is common for customers to use extreme words, slang, and sarcasm while leaving comments on your brand offerings. In the example shared above, the single adjective "bloody" has been used to convey two entirely different human emotions.

However, if the automated sentiment analysis fails to distinguish between the two, you will not be able to find the right customer

ambiguity discussed here, there are many other pitfalls, such as sarcasm, multipolarity, negation type, and irony, that are hard to decode.

That's because human speech and text are highly challenging and noisy input for any sentiment analysis tool. Let us take some sentiment analysis examples to elaborate on these three challenges:

• lack of context,

04

- sarcasm and irony,
- oppositional conjunctions.

Lack of context

Analyzing sentiment out of context can be pretty tricky. Especially as it can lean to one extreme or another, positive or negative. Take a look at this example:

Nothing at all.

Now, out of context, it would be rather challenging to determine the sentiment. Out of context, we might lean more towards the negative sentiment than the positive. However, what if the question preceding the answer was:

What did you dislike about your experience with our customer service?

Sarcasm & irony

04

Again, this can largely depend on the context and is often distinguished best when spoken by the inflection in a person's voice. So, while the written word may seem positive, it's actually mocking. People use positive words to express their negative sentiment, and that can be difficult to detect for machines:

Oh yeah, so polite.

It's totally fine our reservations were canceled.

Now, this may very well be positive, right?

Machines have no textual clues to help them detect sarcasm or irony, especially as the words used are so polite and totally fine, which have positive connotations.

Oppositional conjunctions

What if a sentence contains both a positive and negative sentiment? That can occur when a piece of text consists of two opposing, contrasting words – one positive and one negative:

Their customer service is terrible, but their tool is great.

In general, automatic sentiment analysis

boasts 70-80% accuracy. But, in situations where you want that percentage to be even higher, manually adjusting the sentiment of your mentions is the solution.

So, if you're looking for a fail-safe way to get the most precise, relevant, and reliable sentiment analysis – you'll do it yourself.

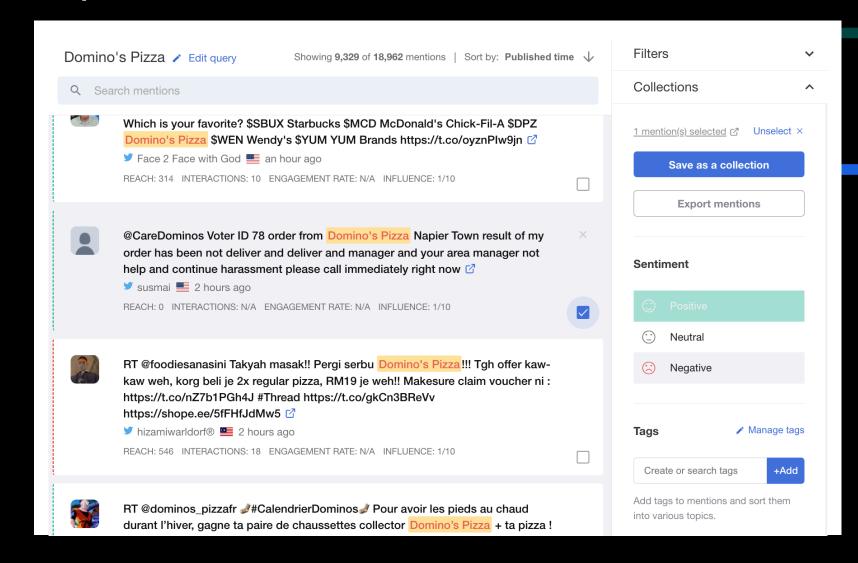
MANUAL SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

You're the one that's best familiar with the context your queries appear in. That's why you are capable of discerning genuine commentary from sarcastic/ironic commentary. Sometimes, a little manual sentiment analysis and correction can go a long way.

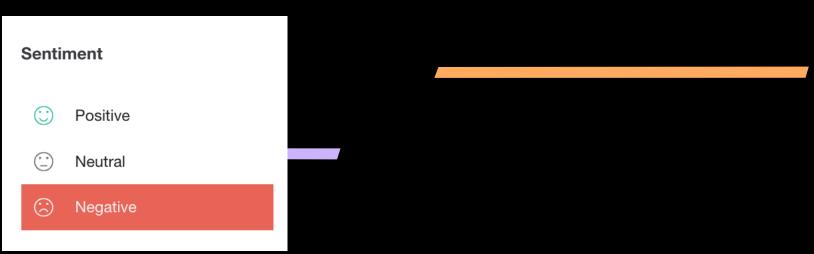
It might take some time, but the resulting analysis will be more accurate. As it stands, our tool offers both automatic and manual sentiment analysis. Here's how you can easily manually change the sentiment of your mentions if you feel it's necessary inside Determ:

- step 1: go to feed,
- step 2: manually select the mention whose sentiment you want to change,
- step 3: choose the fitting sentiment (positive, neutral, negative)

Steps 1 & 2



Step 3



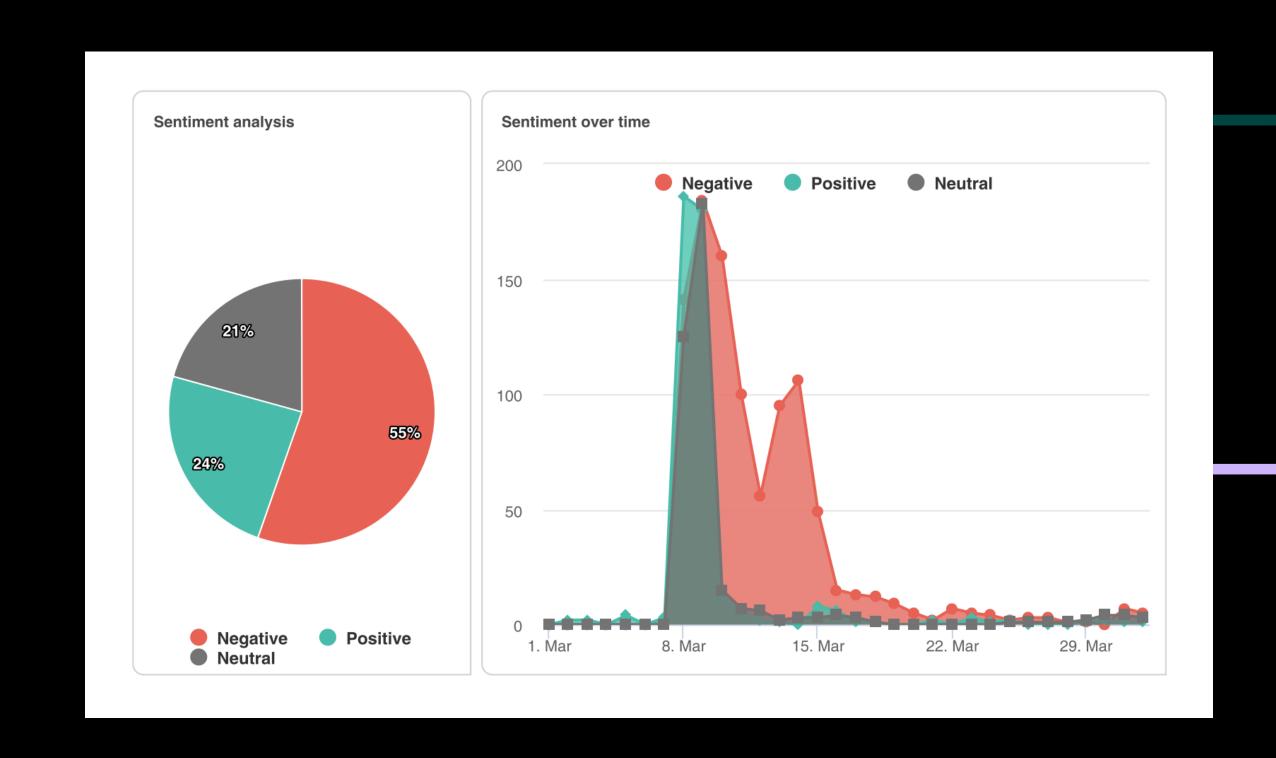
Sentiment analysis report example: Burger King



We talked about Burger King earlier in the guide and already showed you one example of a sentiment analysis chart. So you can get a better understanding of how a sentiment analysis report works in practice, we've created a fully custom sentiment analysis report with different charts using Mediatoolkit. These are only some of the custom charts you can use in your analysis and can add or edit them as you see fit. Check out a quick preview of the report on the right.

Read the full Burger King Sentiment Analysis Report here:

Read here →



Try Determ for yourself.

Schedule a free consultation and product demo with our media monitoring experts.

Schedule a product demo →