Uncoolness factor of collaborative Web Mining Tools (WMT)

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***Abstract* - The recent development of social mining is a useful and direct analogy to talking about the less visible part of the adoption of successive waves of social software. The striking fact of visibility decrease as each type of social software matures should be taken into account for any comprehensive analysis of the relation between collectives and Internet technologies. One of the main results of this relation is the social data mining of Internet, which both gives sense to virtual communities and produces contents via feedback. We are just at the beginning of the adoption of new ways of social data mining, which will be significant when grow mature and become invisible.**

Keywords: Web Mining, Web 2.0

I. UNCOOLNESS FACTOR

THE global dimension of an English-spoken Internet makes the Attention Economy the main filter of importance, relevance and survivalness of cases and even entire types of social software [3]. Few months after the seminal work of [7], one of the main buzzwords of the time was "Tag". Besides "participation", "many-to-many", etc., every new competitor in the Attention Economy race needed to include tags not only at its core interface, but also for explaining it.

Tags [1]were the main and most popular source and destiny of social mining. For the sake of concreteness, it would be interesting to quote the most literal meaning of the term: Social mining is a relativelly new trend of community development in certain areas of the Third World. Those areas are not attractive for mining companies, but contains marginal reserves of gold and other valuable resources. Communities organize themselves with the assistment of NGO and international institutions in order to cooperate in the main steps of mineral production and commercialization. Although results are not commercially atractive, they are enough for sustain the basic needings of the communities.

Tags worked, and still do, in a way similar to "pure" social mining. They are a cooperation effort intended to produce and maintain a valuable information resource. At the same time, this information resource is consumed by their producers and by a greater number of users. If there are strategic corporate players in one side of the mining of the data produce by social software, in the other side there is the synergic sum of the tiny efforts of thousands and thousands of users [2].

Tagging in the Web 2.0 way gave full sense to very popular social software like flickr: from a simple but huge set of personal photo galleries, tags permitted users to locate the pictures they want to watch with both great efficiency and serendipity. Other social software examples were directly based in tagging: social bookmarking, for instance, its all about sharing tags connected with URL.

But Attention Economy [5] is merciless. A long ago, Web 2.0 proponents had to strife with new proposals, or adhere to new trends in order to stay visible. All the web 2.0 hype is long gone. Its main dimensions are assimilated in the main sphere of Social Software. So, as the economy of attention moved away from the initial topics of Web 2.0, the uncoolness factor of tagging grew to its maturity: tags didn't support venture capital's attraction anymore, media attention is totally gone and developers implemented it without any bells and whistles (it seems not to be needed in some cases).

II. BUT WHAT ABOUT USERS

Web 2.0 never was about users. It was about bloggers, digerati [4], whatever fancy name you want to use with early adopters and tech fashion victims. Each new wave of social software attracted attention for a short number of quarters, and... it standed. Each innovation continued to be used (blogs, wikis, whatever) to the present day.

Meanwhile, the whole spectre of social software was maturing (i.e., being adopted and fully exploited), each type progressing at its own pace across the tech adoption curve (Hoogenboom, Kloos, Bouman and Jansen:2007). Keep it Simple principle worked in a way, the simplest forms of social software continued to be used, even adquired more popularity (i.e. forum). This simplicity has been capital in order to mine the web and capture layers and layers of meaning using dialogue and even flame wars.

Indeed, communities of practice are operative social data mining engines. In other words, topic-focused communities are built around a constant activity of data harvest and share.

Social software can have different shapes and functionalities, but essentially it is a tool with collective purposes. The main result of this fact is that it is just not feasible to isolate a concrete social software, since all of them are interconnected. From a blog to a forum, through microblogging and mailing list, maybe facebook or myspace discussions, wall and all the stuff, information is not only

shared, but redistributed and shape shifted in order to pass through the different social software. At the end, there are just purposes, shared objetives and topics, not tools. And for sure, there is collective identity, but it escapes totally the purpose of this introduction.

In these days, two kinds of social software related with social data mining are growing at a fenomenal rate: On the one hand, internet connected mobile apps, specially augmented reality apps, which permit to harvest and to share bits of factual, offline reality into social software. As mobile OS is moving from the pico-desktop paradigm to the full Internet experience and integration, each terminal propelled by a modern mobile OS (OSX, Android, WebOS, Maemo, etc.) is a double-edged tool: it both contribute to mine the social online information, and it mine offline information into online platforms. Actually at any moment and place, citizens are using their camera apps, microblogging and blogging apps and social network mobile clients, and one of the main objetives is to mine all class of information for their communities and networks.

On the other hand, Google wave. This piece of software that is more easy to use than to explain carries a serious claim on it: to reform utterly the way people uses computers to communicate and collaborate, with that astounding mashup of real-time messaging, offline, email-like communication, collective document building and... more. In a lot of cases, specially corporate and company related, collaborate is about information share and remix. Under this point of view, and keeping in mind the huge spectre of possibilities that Wave is opening, it can be taken for sure that Wave is going to introduce brand new ways of collective data mining.

III. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion: social mining is alive, well and mature. It is assumed as one of the main causes of collective internet activity. As it happens with Amazon's Mechanical Turk, a lot of users are mining tiny amounts of information as the initial step towards information shaping and consuming. Indeed, it could be said that social software which is now at the center of the Attention Economy, the "social networks", is propelled by social mining. Social mining initially was the result of the first maturity of Internet in the 2.0 days. Although their tools are not attractive nor fashionable anymore, they are still used and new tools mine information in new and exciting ways.

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