

Managing social reputation in Twitter

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Abstract

Online communities, like Twitter, attract thousands of users worldwide spending hours communicating with others via the internet. Most platforms offer mechanisms that show the 'rank' or 'social reputation' users have gained within the social community the platform establishes. The paper analyses the motivation of users to engage that intensively from a social psychological perspective and follows the hypotheses that these status information function as a highly effective reward mechanism. The paper describes the results of a survey that has been conducted with users of *Twitter* in order to find out how important it is for users to gain 'followers'. The paper outlines a theoretical model that explains why users try to gain social reputation in different virtual worlds. For this, a typology of virtual worlds has been developed based on possible spill-over effects of social reputation that can be gained in virtual and real worlds.

1. Introduction

During last years, the use of online communities has been growing noticeably. Within only a few months, services like *Twitter*¹, *Facebook*² or *XING*³ have gained several million of users. It is, however, not quite obvious what makes these platforms that attractive to so many users and what factors motivate them to engage very intensively in these environments. In our point of view, the possibility of building social relationships with others might be one aspect: Most systems offer mechanisms that show the 'rank' or 'social reputation' users have earned within this environment. The question is, how important is this 'reputation' for users, how actively do users they try to gain social reputation in virtual worlds and to what extent can this be described as a reward mechanism that influences a users' behaviour?

In the following we will illustrate the users' activities in gaining social reputation and its management by regarding the microblogging network *Twitter*. The objectives of this chapter are one the one hand to give an overview about the various scenarios of *Twitter* use and on the other hand to outline a theoretical model dealing with reputation in social networks. This includes the definition of reputation in these networks and introduces the findings of a study which was conducted in order to find out in how far *Twitter* users obtain activities for gaining online reputation. We will also deal with the question, whether this reputation mechanism influences users' behaviour in learning.

¹ Twitter.com

² facebook.com

³.xing.com

2. Background

2.1 What is *Twitter*?

Twitter is one of the most popular services for Microblogging and thus belongs to the category ‘social software’ that can be found in ‘web 2.0’ applications⁴. According to Bächle (2006) software systems that support human communication and collaboration are called ‘social software’ (cf. Bächle, 2006, p. 121). These can be blogs and wikis, social bookmarking applications as well as microblogging services.

Microblogs can be compared to weblogs with the distinction that the posts are much shorter and do not contain additional information or headlines (cf. Barnes & Böhringer, 2009, p. 2). These messages can be addressed to everybody or to a specific person, but they are usually public. Like in a weblog, the posts appear in reversed chronological order on a users’s main page. *Twitter* limits the number of characters used in a posting – the so called ‘tweet’ – to 140 or similar, so it can be compared with an SMS that is sent to the internet. Almost everybody can read it and it stays stored online on the user’s main page. The goal of this limitation is to animate users to often post short messages in their microblogs (cf. *ibid.*). Access to the microblogging service is also possible by using mobile text messages, desktop clients or several third party applications. It becomes obvious that *Twitter* is extremely flexible. By logging into *Twitter* the users are asked to type into a text box what they are currently doing (see fig. 1). The answers are quite different: Java, Song, Finin & Tseng (2007) and also Simon & Bernhardt (2008) revealed that most people use *Twitter* in order to publish links, report news or simply to chat with others – but some people even document their whole day with almost no exception.

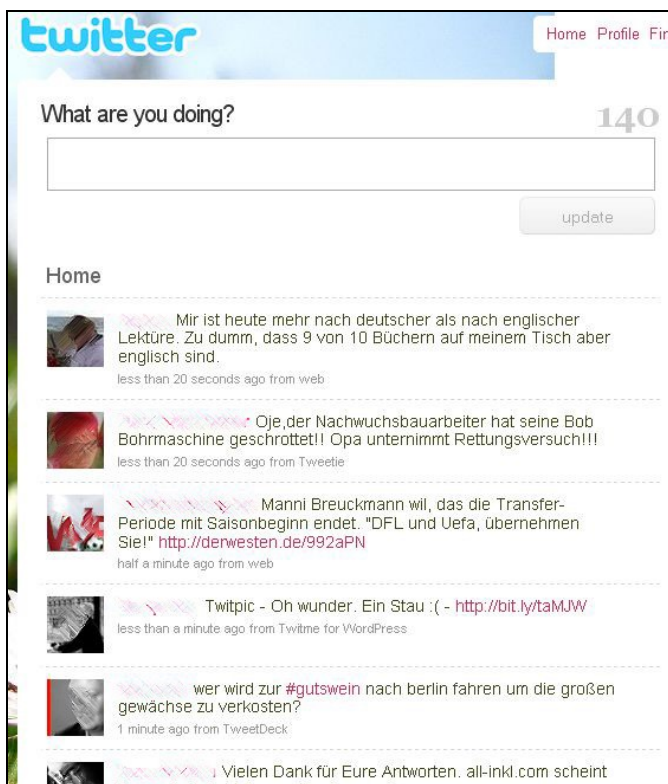


fig. 1: personal *Twitter* front page

⁴ ‘Web 2.0’ is a term related to the change of the World Wide Web regarding interactive technics and services, as information sharing, interoperability, networking and collaboration.

As in most applications ‘web 2.0’ has carried out, no specific technical knowledge is necessary for using *Twitter*. It is possible to make individual adaptations like creating user lists or arrange third party software after personal criteria, but the access to *Twitter* and posting regular tweets is very simple.

An important factor of *Twitter* is the possibility of networking. Users can add one another to their social network and thus ‘follow’ each other (cf. Kerres & Preussler, 2009, p. 6). To follow a user means that the recent posts of a member’s followers appear in a chronologically ordered view on their starting page (cf. Barnes & Böhringer, 2009, p. 2.)⁵. However, just following a person does not necessarily mean a virtual friendship, it is just an easier way to access someone’s postings.

Twitter is used as well by private persons as by companies, politicians, organisations, newspapers etc. Our expectation is that *Twitter* has such popularity, because users can become part of a network consisting of people with similar interests that can exchange information with each other (cf. Kerres & Preussler, 2009, p. 6). Furthermore, it is a tool for self-promotion and it focuses on curiosity about other people. *Twitter* is a social network according to the human need for social acceptance. People can be heard, maybe even because of the very open situation and they can be part of others’ activities (cf. *ibid.*). So additionally, *Twitter* is also a platform for establishing social relations. Herwig (2009) assumes this possibility to connect with others to be a motivator to return (cf. p. 10).

“The users are the social beings of the Web and thus make it a social web. We are increasingly moving away from sheer technique and are more and more about happy about social offerings: blogs, photo sharing, dating communities, student platforms and SMS chats. Furthermore, [...] the network becomes interesting for everyone since it offers online banking, shopping and party information besides technical discussions, hardware news and Linux kernel updates⁶” (Humer, 2008, p. 15).

Nevertheless, the access to pure information could be realised more easily and more effectively via RSS-feeds or simply forums or information websites. But as microblogs also contain features for social networking as they deal with the social relations of the users.

2.2 Learning with *Twitter*

Twitter can be used in various ways for the purpose of learning in a very constructivist way. For example, it provides different RSS-feeds which can be imported into learning applications. Thus, it is possible to merge accounts or create lists and feeds for special search queries.

Grosbeck & Holotescu (2008) list different possibilities in what way *Twitter* can be used as a pedagogical tool. For example, they suggest “Twittering in class or outside of it is [sic!] about learning” or “Collaboration across schools, countries”, but even “Thinking about and reflecting on your learning” (p. 5). *Twitter* can also be used as a tool for brainstorming, but also for collecting links, making notes or communicate with the teachers or other learners. As an ‘open learning journal’ a documentation of one’s own learning process could be possible (cf. Kerres & Preussler, 2009, p. 4).

Ebner & Maurer (2008) even speak of the increase of reflexive abilities through the use of microblogs in learning. Johnson, Levine & Smith (2009) point out that tools for online publication are generally adequate for reflecting about life and job relevant questions or for work and research on products together. Furthermore, learning institutions can articulate as ‘public voice’ by communicating beyond the borders of classes or schools: “The ease of online publishing, especially blogging, gives students a place to voice their opinions, ideas, and research” (p. 20).

However, learning with *Twitter* means learning in a network in which social relations play an important role.

⁵ ‘Following’ in *Twitter* can be compared to ‘become friends’ in *Facebook*.

⁶ Translated by the authors.

2.3 Functions of social relations

Brass, Butterfield & Skaggs (1998) define a social network “as a set of actors and the set of ties representing some relationship or lack of relationship between the actors” (p. 17). They emphasize that “the strength of a relationship refers to the frequency, reciprocity, emotional intensity, and intimacy of that relationship” (ibid.). They identify three types of relationships: multiplex relationships (“the degree to which two actors are linked by more than one type of relationship”), asymmetric emotional relationships (relationships, “in which the trust and emotional involvement of one actor are not reciprocated fully by the other”) and relationships in terms of status (ibid.).

Referring to Gräf (1997) personal social networks can be divided into a narrow core region, which consists of strong ties and a further zone in which the ties are more or less weak. In addition, there are also indirect or very loose ties (e.g. friends of friends) the network is surrounded by. This periphery zone has at least two functions: On the one hand, all persons that are part of a personal network constitute a personal public. Thus, a person’s storyline is monitored and evaluated. On the other hand they potentially provide resources like esteem, love, care, recognition or assistance. This aspect of a social network is what Gräf (1997) calls its social capital (cf. p. 102).

Though the theoretical descriptions of social relations and personal network are partly more than ten years old they have not lost of importance and fit very well to social networks that are to establish on the internet as the mechanisms that become relevant here are comparable to those in real life. These properties fit to personal networks in general. However, besides someone’s private network, there are various forms of online networks to what these structures apply as well, as we already mentioned by regarding social software.

The way a person is represented on the net has an influence on its identity. Döring (2003) argues that this representation consists of a combination of attributes that can be generated by the user as well as the system itself or co-users. However, whether and how these attributes are designed depends on the “social responsibility and technical competence of the user⁷” (cf. p. 343). Within the system, individuals are assigned to a social identity which represents to a social category or group. Persons can either identify with, or distance from this assignment. By doing so, they also assess and evaluate this social category or group as it is expected to be an element of their identity. Voswinkel (2001) speaks about collective identity, when these identities and identifications of the members of the group or category are shared (cf. p. 160).

Döring (2003) points out that “the whole of the social relations that a person maintains with other people as well as their inner relations among themselves can be described as the social network of this person⁸” (cf. p. 409).

3. Social reputation in *Twitter*

It can be observed that there are various ways for *Twitter* users to receive attraction. On the one hand, the number of people that have subscribed to someone’s postings seems to be important, but also the number of @-replies⁹, re-tweeted¹⁰ or favoured¹¹ posts or the number of lists¹² a user appears on. As

⁷ Translated by the authors.

⁸ Translated by the authors.

⁹ Putting the ‘@’ in front of a username shows that the tweet is addressed to a special user. In most cases, this is an answer to a former tweet. Though the ‘@’ is used, the tweet is still public.

¹⁰ Re-Tweeting a posting means to copy a user’s tweet and publish it once again (according to the fact that every user has a different network of followers). As this is done by putting the creator’s user name into the Re-Tweet, it credits this user (E.g. “RT @user-abc”).

Twitter is a social network it is also a (virtual) place in which users can gain online reputation. A closer look to its definition and form is necessary here.

“Reputation is a modern form of recognition. Such as trust, neither recognition is granted; it is no longer merely linked to affiliation and social proximity. The criteria to whom and why recognition is offered, have become vague and more diverse¹³” (Voswinkel, 2001, p. 12).

The definition of reputation has historically changed as it has been replaced by the term ‘honour’ as a pre-modern form of recognition (cf. Voswinkel, 1999 as cited in Klewes & Langen, 2008, p. 45). Furthermore, the essence of reputation can be generated from the prestige someone has, but it is not the same: „Reputation is a publicly mediated form of recognition and is based on the diffusion of prestige information to unknown parties beyond the scope of personal social networks¹⁴” (Eisenegger, 2005, p. 24).

Nevertheless, there is hardly a distinction between reputation and prestige in common speech. But the definitions of prestige and reputation differ in the way that prestige can be transformed into reputation, but not before uninvolved and unknown third parties have to get to know about someone’s prestige (cf. *ibid.*). That means that though each person in a social network has a prestige, not everybody necessarily has a reputation (cf. *ibid.*). Eisenegger (2005) points out that it is essential to have publicity and develop strategies for receiving attention in order to gain reputation. Thus, it is – in contrast to prestige – a communicative product, as it depends both on intermediation and performance. In this way, reputation is connected to the creating and forming social reality (cf. *ibid.*).

Eisenegger (2005) also distinguishes between a person’s interior reputation, which means the recognition the reputation object awards itself on the one hand and external reputation on the other hand, which can be seen in the recognition the reputation object is allocated to by third parties (cf. p. 43).

We have already mentioned that the number of followers – that means people who have subscribed to a user’s *Twitter* stream – is important for *Twitter* users. In our point of view, this is an indicator for the social reputation of a user: *Twitter* users become the more important the more followers they have. This becomes even more obvious by looking at tools for users’ statistics like ‘tweet-rank.de’ or news articles headlined “How to get more followers¹⁵”. People in *Twitter* put a great focus on their number of followers and thus, carry out activities in order to increase this number. According to this, there are differences in the usage behavior.

On the one hand there are users – mostly celebrities – that have over 3 million followers but follow only very few people themselves. Herwig states that “the hierarchy inherent to the ‘traditional’ star/audience relationship is simply adapted and reinjected. It is the notoriety of the (star) image that renders a media personality nearly immune towards a merging in with the community” (Herwig, 2009, p. 16). We would add that these people reach a high reputation also by the number of their followers and thus keep their status of being a celebrity even in the online world.

On the other hand there are people following thousands of users but do not have many followers. In many cases these are advertising accounts hoping to be re-followed by people they add to their network.

¹¹ Users can add a post to their ‘favorites’, which is – at least when the user’s profile is public – visible to others. There are applications like e.g. favstar.fm that show, which posts of a user that been favoured by how many people.

¹² User list can be generated by any user in order to sort followers after special criteria. For example, a user could publish a list called “people I know by person”. The users that appear on this list are aware of having been added as the number of lists they are on is shown in their profile.

¹³ Translated by the authors

¹⁴ Translated by the authors.

¹⁵ <http://blog.datenschmutz.net/2009-08/wie-bekommt-man-mehr-twitter-follower/>

Eck (2008) has listed several factors for managing reputation in *Twitter*. They deal with ways to use *Twitter* in order to gain a better reputation, like, for instance:

“Without a picture on *Twitter*, you will not really be noticed. Therefore, put a photo in your profile and provide a link to your website [...]. If you want to use the communication tool for building or increasing your reputation, write under your real name and avoid abbreviations or pseudonyms [...]. Write about exciting topics in your *Twitter* posts and offer your readers an entertaining or informative value. Provide links to your own and foreign websites. You can shorten the links by using TinyURL or 2big.at so that you continue to get along with 140 characters [...]. If someone does not follow you yet, you can obtain his attention with @username by answering his questions” (p. 190)¹⁶.

3.2 A study

In order to find out in what way people are using *Twitter* and how they are managing their reputation in this community, a survey on *Twitter* was conducted in February and March 2009. Therefore, an online questionnaire was developed in which *Twitter* users were asked about their main reasons for using *Twitter*, their period of being active in that network, their number of followers, @-responses and Re-Tweets, but also their activities for gaining more followers.¹⁷

The online questionnaire was completed by 219 people. We are conscious – of course – that we could not receive representative results, but the study can be regarded as a pre-study for deducing hypotheses and reveal interesting inner relations.

The intentions of use were requested on a five-step scale in the range of ‘never’ to ‘always’. Summarizing the values for ‘often’ and ‘always’ the most given answers why people use *Twitter* in general were either to have fun (76.2%), provide or spread news (60%) or tell others about one’s own activities (51.6%). These results correspond to similar findings by Simon & Bernhardt (2008) and also Java, Song, Finin & Tseng (2007). Distinguishing between users with many or few followers – that was either above or below the average of 179 – people with a big network more often use hash tags¹⁸ (53.2%/30.6%), chat with others (46.8%/25.5%), subscribe to the people that have subscribed to them (45.1%/29.3%), link to own events (42 %/24.2%) and re-tweet posts (21%/13.4%) (cf. Preußler & Kerres, 2009).

The people that took part in the study were additionally asked for some general statements about the importance of *Twitter*. Again, users with many and few followers were differentiated between. As a result, people with many followers agree more often to items that deal with the relevance of *Twitter* (see fig. 2). In case of the item ‘by using *Twitter* I can easily get in touch with others’ (85.5%/56.7% agree fully or rather) and the item ‘*Twitter* is part of my everyday life’ (74.2%/57.3% agree fully or rather) the differences between the groups are significant. People with many followers seem to benefit from the advantages of being part in a network more than people with few followers and, furthermore, seem to have integrated *Twitter* more into their daily routine. The majority of people also think that *Twitter* is fun. Negative items, like ‘*Twitter* is boring’ are mainly neglected. What is interesting is that only few people admit that they are interested in the number of their followers – this aspect will be discussed more detailed later.

¹⁶ Translated by the authors.

¹⁷ We did not ask about user lists and favoured tweets, because lists have not yet been implemented at that time and systems like favstar.fm or favotter.com are not part of *Twitter* itself.

¹⁸ A way to tag posts either for simplifying search queries or for adding a ‘headline’ to the post. A hash tag is symbolized by the #-symbol.

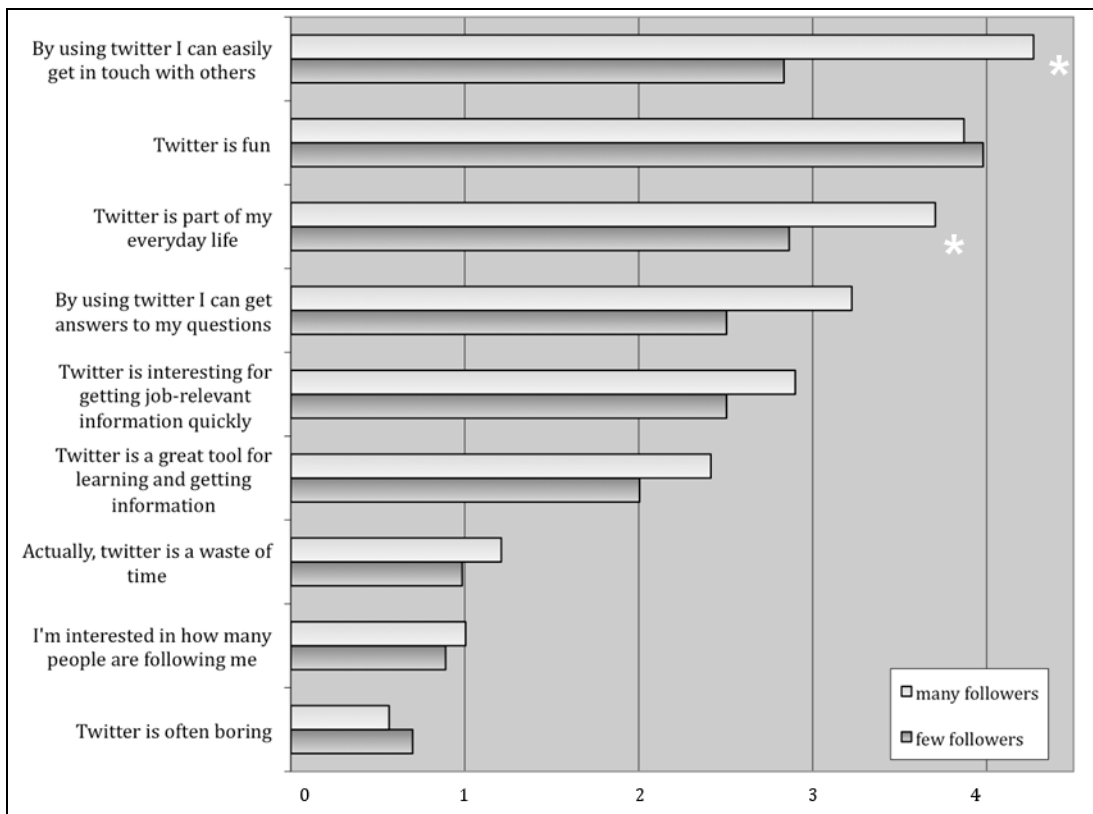


fig. 2: Agreement to general statements about Twitter differentiated between many and few followers (marked items show a significant difference)

As the reputation was expected to be visible in the number of followers people in the study were asked what activities they practice in order to get more followers. fig. 3 shows the statements the users made in total.

This point deals with the strategies for reputation management listed by Eck (2008), as mentioned above. What most people do¹⁹ (57.1%) in order to gain more followers is to subscribe to persons that they already know or to information they like. This seems to be the easiest way to get in touch with each other generally.

Secondly, they provide links and images in their profile (55.7%) and also use individual backgrounds (41.6%). These activities are probably done because people want to be recognized by others or give additional information about themselves. Furthermore, 39.3% of the people we asked about *Twitter* use their real name. It is interesting, that though *Twitter* provides space for being anonymous, many users provide real information about themselves. Comparing this to the way of communication e.g. in forums, we can find less anonymity in *Twitter*.

The *Twitter* users also read posts of people they know, keep an eye on the informative benefit of their postings and embed *Twitter* to other media like their blog or *Facebook* (see fig. 3).

¹⁹ Summarized values for 'often' and 'always'.

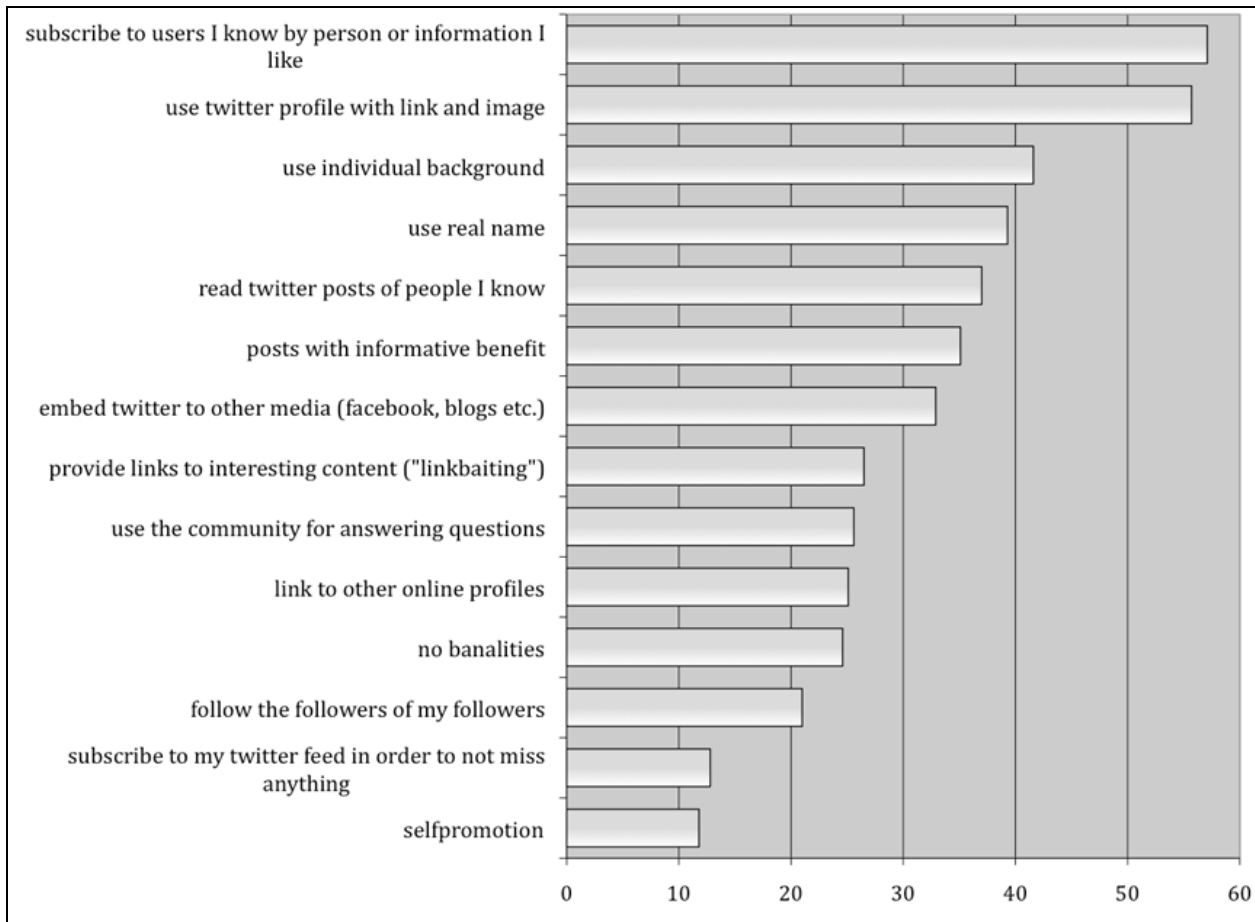


fig. 3: Activities for getting more followers

Comparing users with many or few followers it becomes obvious, that the importance of different activities increases in the single groups. Generally, people with many followers practice activities in order to attract followers more often. Additionally, there are significant differences²⁰ regarding the items ‘individual background’ (54.9%/36.3%), ‘use the community for answering questions’ (38.7%/20.4%) or ‘link to other online profiles’ (38.7%/19.7%) (see fig. 4).

²⁰ Summarized values for ‘often’ and ‘always’.

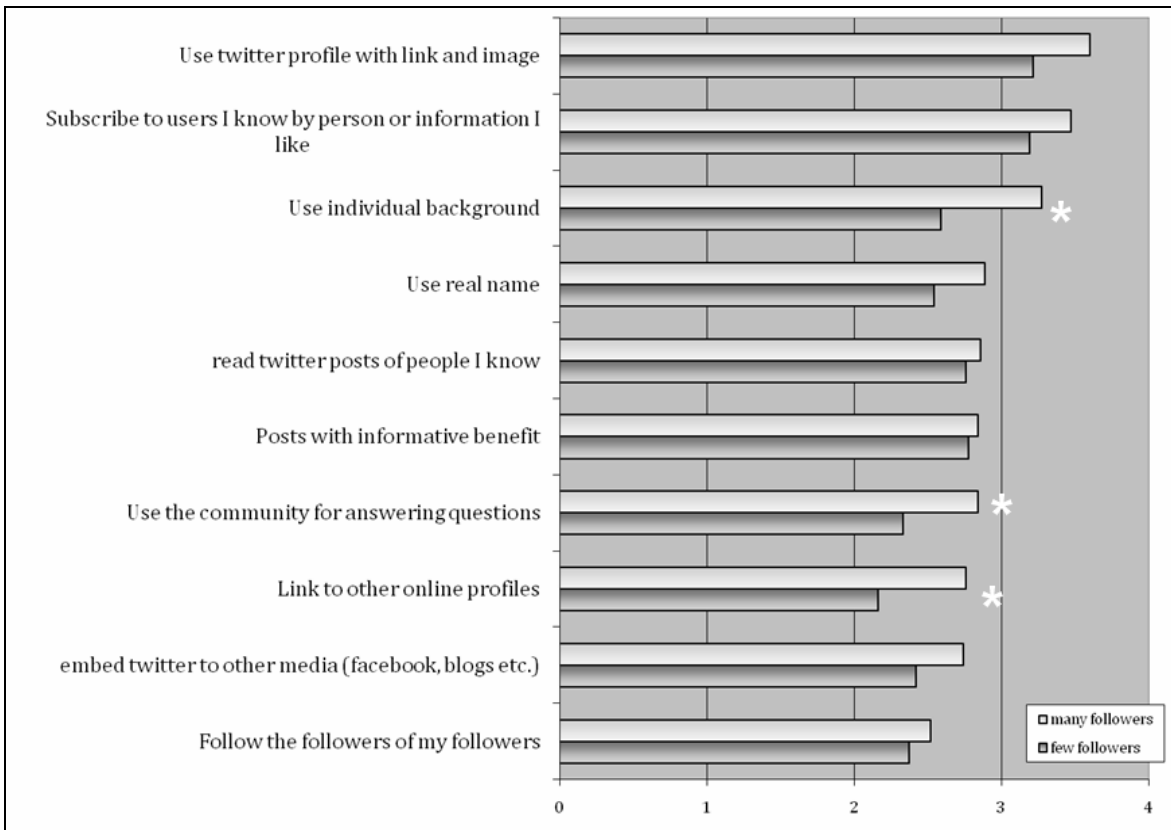


fig. 4: Activities for getting more followers differentiated between many and few followers

Another item dealt with the question whether users think, that certain aspects are important to themselves or also to other *Twitter* users. For example, ‘communication with others’ is important for the people that took the survey, but these subjects also think it is important to others (see fig. 5).

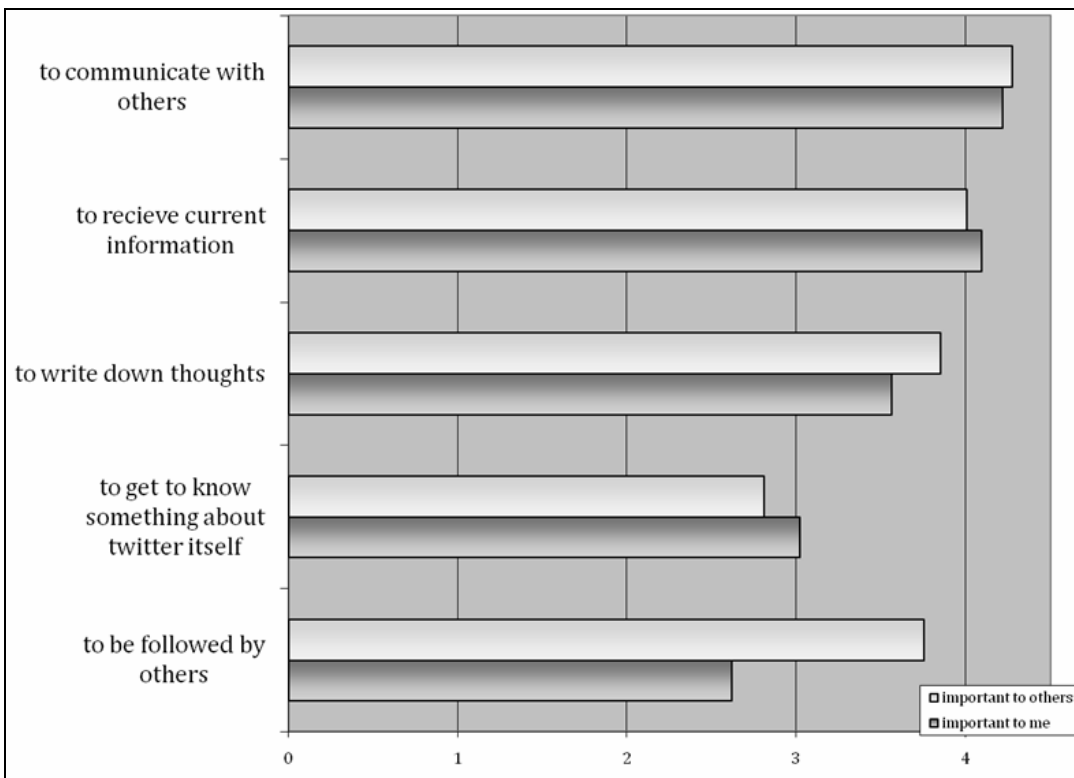


fig. 5: Aspects for using Twitter differentiated by importance

Especially the last item is of great importance: Over 64% of the users agree totally or rather to the statement ‘for others users it is important to be followed by others’. People seem to impute the relevance of followers to each other, but no one seems to admit this openly. Especially those, who say it is not important for them to have many followers, say it is – from their point of view – important to others.

As these results show users are engaged in various activities to improve their ‘social reputation’. But why does this play such an important role?

3.3 Outlining a theoretical model on spill-over effects

From our finding we outlined a theoretical model on the role of social reputation that is to be validated. We assume that the spill-over effect from one personal network to another is one of the factors influencing the motivation of gaining followers. If we compare *Twitter* to other online communities we can say that in a virtual world, like *SecondLife*²¹, it is rather hard to gain reputation that is visible to others. In a forum even active users in have to write many postings that other people may rate as useful and thus get positive votes. Gaming worlds, like *World of Warcraft*²², also offer reputation mechanisms, but players have to be active for quite some time – and even have to pay money – to get a better ranking in the hierarchy (cf. Kerres & Preussler, 2009, p. 7). In *Twitter* it seems to be enough to post little messages from time to time and exchange with others in order to get more people attracted. Thus, it is much easier to become reputed quickly.

Usually, there are separated worlds in the structure of personal networks of different communities: In a forum for computer hardware, for example, where anonymity is usual, we usually do not know all the other members by person and mostly do not even wish to know them, because they are not part of our personal network. The situation is comparable in *SecondLife*, where people even have a virtual name. As there are many aspects that generate anonymity, it is not surprising if a user does not know many of his or her *SecondLife* friends in real life. Regarding *XING*, we can find a medium range of social integration, because *XING* can open and widen a personal network, but people in general do not exchange frequent messages. *StayFriends*²³ – a network for school friends pictures someone’s network almost 1:1, but it is not supposed to widen it, as the number of people a person went to school with is limited. *Facebook* and especially *Twitter* make someone’s personal network grow and put additional value to it.

Thus, the social integration of virtual life and real life varies regarding the different communities (see Table 1). The integration in a forum is at a very low level, but it is rather high in *Facebook* and *Twitter*. ‘Friends’ or ‘followers’ in these networks are more likely to be or become friends in real life.

²¹ secondlife.com/

²² worldofwarcraft.com/

²³ stayfriends.de

	social integration virtual life/ real life
Forums	low
<i>SecondLife</i>	low
<i>XING</i>	medium
<i>StayFriends</i>	medium
<i>Facebook</i>	high
<i>Twitter</i>	high

Table 1: social integration of networks

Different incentive structures are created by the overlap of the various worlds. According to this, the easiest way to gain reputation, of course, is the real life (or ‘first life’) relating to people known by person in someone’s personal network. However, there are people in this network that are also part of this person’s virtual network. It might be a specific attribute of *Twitter* that reputation can be transported from one world to another. Additional hints relating to this idea are given by the survey described before, as, for example, it is important for people to provide real information by using their real name or a personalized background.

Herwig (2009) describes the competition between different platforms. She argues that *Twitter* offers optional anonymity which “competes with various incentives to reintroduce the hierarchies of existing social structures: Immediately after sign-up, users may search their email address book to identify contacts who already are on *Twitter*; they are presented with a list of popular *Twitter* users and given the option to follow them” (p. 6). Our assumptions are strengthened by this argumentation: Though there are quite many dimensions of use that make *Twitter* successful we expect this possibility to be an important aspect of the service, because it distinguishes *Twitter* from other communities: In addition to pure communication it allows the formation of networks in a very easy and particular way. These aspects do as well fit to *Facebook*, which also maintains a network in real life, but *Twitter* is freer of use, as it, for example, allows the export of the tweets via RSS, which can be imported into *Facebook*.

4. Future Trends

Firstly, future research will have to analyse these reputation mechanisms of internet platforms more deeply. It is important to find out, if simple figures, like count of followers, truly reflect a social reputation that is acknowledged by the users of the network. The individual motivation to participate in a certain virtual network, the type of target group of the network and the social reputation mechanism itself will be have to be further analyzed.

Secondly, it would be necessary to find out, if these information influence the perception and interaction patterns of users within the platform. The underlying theoretical question is, if social reputation gained in these networks can be interpreted as symbolic “social capital” which then could be transferred *vice versa* between real and virtual worlds. Further research will focus these spill-over effects of social reputation between virtual and real worlds. It will be interesting to analyze to what

extent spill-over effects between a social network, e.g., *Twitter*, and real life take place and what implications for educational settings could be deduced.

Taking into account that *Twitter* supports community building and social exchange it might be a suitable tool for collaborative learning activities. It would be interesting to clarify if and how such reputation mechanisms influence learning activities. How does social reputation gained online influences activities in “face-to-face” learning? These questions will be relevant to deepen our understanding of microblogging tools for social communities in education and collaborative learning in general: On the one hand, people with few followers might profit from those with many followers – e.g. by being part in their network. On the other hand, people who have successfully gained followers might be more influential in social groups, especially when they are part of a learning group consisting of co-learners with few followers. For example, if a learning task is about reflecting one’s learning process students with many followers might be able to receive more feedback to their postings. If they have a specific question, for example, they can ask their network instead of using search engines and might therefore have a better chance to fulfil this task successfully.

5. Conclusion

Microblogs support the instantaneous exchange of ideas and the building of communities of people from a diverse background. *Twitter* takes short, incidental messages and private communication onto the internet. It widens the personal network and the social relations of users participating in the network. Social reputation – implemented differently in the varying platforms – is an important factor guiding the action of users within this network. Our results demonstrate that gaining ‘followers’ and improving social reputation are relevant aspects users of *Twitter* are concerned with. Many of them have developed explicit strategies for managing “followers”, although they do not reveal the importance of “reputation” openly.

The social and individual implications of these developments currently are being discussed controversially. Further research will clarify the relevance and impact of reputation mechanisms of social platforms and therefore, will help us to illuminate the chances and risks of these tools for social communication.

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7. Keyterms

@-response/ @-reply

Putting the '@' in front of a username shows that the tweet is addressed to a special user. In most cases, this is an answer to a former tweet. Though the '@' is used, the tweet is still public.

Follower

People who have subscribed to a user's twitter stream.

Microblogging

In a microblog, users can publish short messages with a maximal length of 140 characters and can subscribe to ('follow') other users. The posts appear in chronological order on the user's main page ('timeline').

Reputation

Reputation is form of recognition that is publicly mediated. It is based on the diffusion of prestige information to unknown parties beyond the scope of personal social networks (cf. Eisenegger 2008).

Re-Tweet

Re-Tweeting a posting means to copy a user's tweet and publish it once again (according to the fact that every user has a different network of followers). As this is done by putting the creator's user name into the Re-Tweet, it credits this user (E.g. "RT @user-abc").

Social Network

The social network of a person can be seen in the social relations this person maintains with other people as well as their inner relations among themselves (cf. Döring 2003:409).

Twitter

The first and most popular service for microblogging, with special features to organise contacts.

Web 2.0

'Web 2.0' is a term related to the change of the World Wide Web regarding interactive technics and services, as information sharing, interoperability, networking and collaboration. This implements a changed comprehension of the net, as personal responsibility and user generated content play important roles. Web 2.0 connects people within networks instead of just providing hyperlinks.