The Forgotten Network: YouTube Comments Used As an Amplifier for Messaging

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YouTube Comments around Trident Juncture 2018

Presented is an in-depth analysis of comments and commenters on YouTube channels covering Trident Juncture. The comments tie together more than 9,000 nodes with over 4.4 million edges over a 34-day time frame in 2018. Commenters helped in amplifying the messages of the channels. This research reveals effective communication strategies that are often overlooked but highly effective to gain tempo and increase legitimacy in the overall information environment. This data was collected, cleaned, and social network analysis was conducted to illuminate the often forgotten networks within the YouTube ecosystem.

Methodology

1. Data Collection

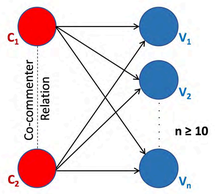
18 Channels covering Trident Juncture 2018

Official NATO*	Anti-NATO	Military News
NATO	alconafter	Defense Flash News
SHAPE NATO	R G D NEWs	US Defense News
NATO JFC Naples	Youtupe Mania	Weapons of the World
OTAN	Gung Ho Vids	
Bundeswehr	Hoje no Mundo Militar	
	RT	
	RT Deutsch	
	KlagemauerTV	
	Latest News 360	

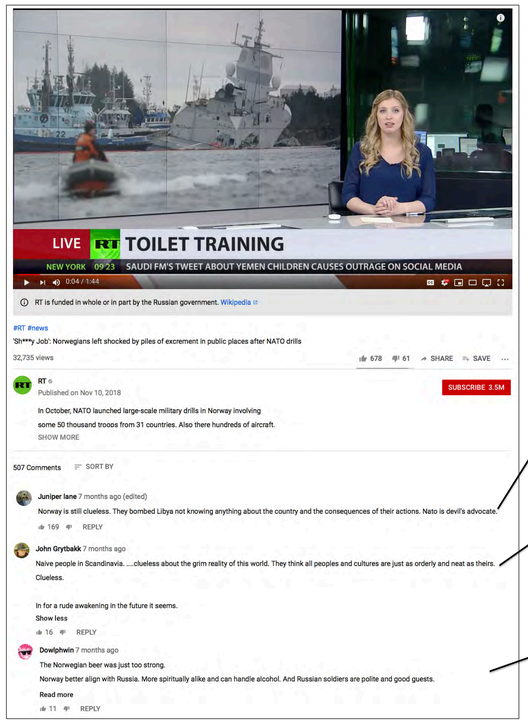
2. Data Clean Up

3. Co-Commenter Network Creation

*official NATO or delegation channels



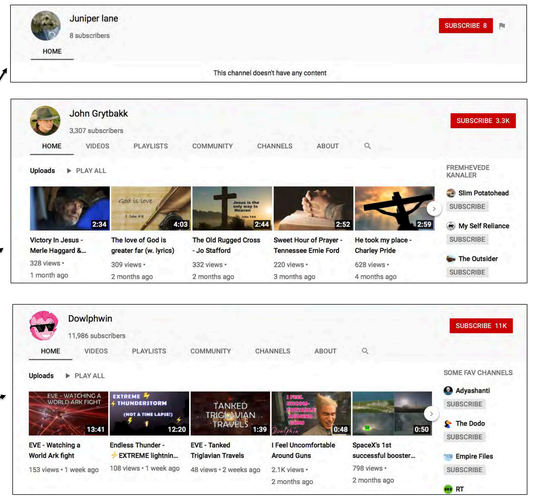
Information Actors



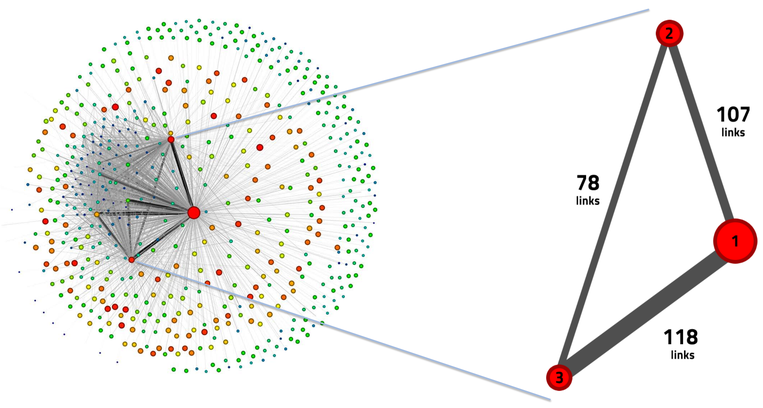
YouTube Commenters

- Boosting influence for channels
- Ability to support channel's narrative, spread messages and misinformation

Channel Descriptions



Analysis

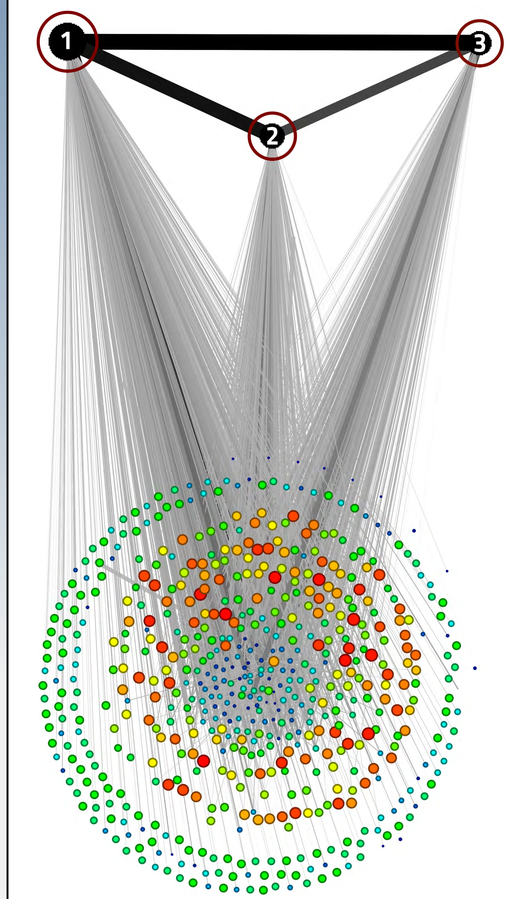


The Revelation

A multi-method analysis (qualitative & quantitative) approach was taken revealing …

Interactive coordination among commenters identified. Multiple lines of effort to:

- flood mediums with content
- interact via cross-media domains
- conduct permeation R&S



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research is funded in part by the U.S. National Science Foundation (IIS-1636933, ACI-1429160, and IIS-1110868), U.S. Office of Naval Research (N00014-10-1-0091, N00014-14-1-0489, N00014-15-P-1187, N00014-16-1-2016, N00014-16-1-2412, N00014-17-1-2605, N00014-17-1-2675, N00014-19-1-2336), U.S. Air Force Research Lab, U.S. Army Research Office (W911NF-16-1-0189), U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (W31P4Q-17-C-0059), Arkansas Research Alliance, and the Jerry L. Maulden/Entergy Endowment at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funding organizations. **To share feedback or learn more, contact Dr. Nitin Agarwal (nxagarwal@ualr.edu).**

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