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Want That Post to Go Popular? Here's The Best and Worst Times to Post It

By Marshall Kirkpatrick / May 2, 2008 12:00 PM / 44 Comments

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Connecticut software developer Jake Luciani *(http://3.rdrail.net/blog/thurday-at-noon-is-the-best-time-post-and-be-noticed-pst)* has run 10k items on Del.icio.us *(http://del.icio.us)* , Digg *(http://digg.com)* , Reddit *(http://reddit.com)* and Mixx *(http://mixx.com)* through the API of popularity ranking engine AideRSS *(http://aiderss.com)* to analyze the connection between popularity and timing. He determined the best days and times for a blog post to be submitted to those sites if its author wants it to receive the maximum number of votes, comments and inbound links.

Luciani's conclusion: between 1pm and 3pm PST (after lunch) or between 5pm and 7pm PST (after work) are the best times and Thursday is the best day. The worst time to post? Between 3 and 5 PM PST on the weekends - nobody cares. See the graphs below.

How the Measurement Works

In the graphs below the factor measured is what AideRSS *(http://aiderss.com)* calls a PostRank of 6 or higher. AideRSS looks at all the items in an RSS feed and scores them (relative only to other items in the same feed) in terms of number of comments, number of Diggs, number of times saved to Del.icio.us and number of inbound links from blogs. The highest percentile of posts in a feed have PostRanks closest to 10.
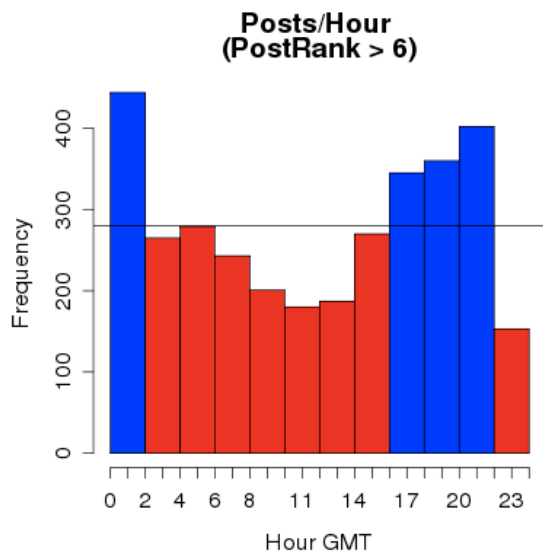
These graphs then measure which times and days see the largest numbers of posts submitted that end up being more popular than other posts in the same feed. So the most wildly popular and discussed items among all popular items at Digg, etc. It's tracking the time that the post is submitted to the news site - not when it was necessarily posted on the blog. It's a touch obtuse and it would be nice to read a little more about the methodology employed - but the PostRank algorithm is relatively transparent and the conclusions are intuitive.
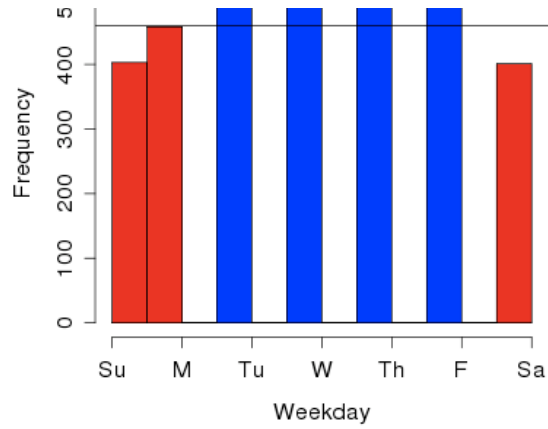
This is just one of *many things* we've written about using AideRSS for here at RWW. It's a simple and very powerful tool that I at least use every single day.

Note that of course people blog for more reasons than just popularity and popularity cannot be equated with popularity! If you're in a hurry it is one way to look for quality, though. :)

With no further ado, knock yourself out wrapping your mind around these graphs. I almost did; remember that times here are GMT and if you're on the West Coast of the US, I hope you just had a nice lunch and remember to subtract 7 hours from this 24 hour clock to figure out these times for yourself.

Thanks for the creative and valuable work *(http://3.rdrail.net/blog/thurday-at-noon-is-the-best-time-post-and-be-noticed-pst)* , Jake!

Posts/Hour (PostRank > 6)

Posts/Day (PostRank > 6)

For more RSS fun times, check out the other entries on the AideRSS blog *(http://blog.aiderss.com/2008/05/02/mining-postrank-optimal-publishing-times/)* .

See Also

Microsoft to Close Its Blogging Platform - Migrates Users to WordPress.com

Blogging is Alive and Well, Says Report

Digg Redesign Tanks: Traffic Down 26% (Updated With New Reddit Stats)

One Week Later, Digg VP Talks v4 Launch, Backlash & Future

8   Like   Be the first of your friends to like this.

https://www.facebook.com/ajax/nectar.php?asyncSignal=
https://www.facebook.com/g,

Comments

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1. This one's a keeper. Dugg (and right "on time").
   Thanks!

   Posted by: Todd Defren | May 2, 2008 1:01 PM

2. Thanks Todd. Technically we should have waited 6 more days before anyone submitted it, lol. No such luck!

   Posted by: Marshall Kirkpatrick | May 2, 2008 1:09 PM

3. This study shall help a lot to new social media aspirants to keep in mind the timing and day to submit their content. Thanks!

   Posted by: Manish Pandey | May 2, 2008 1:09 PM

4. Nice post Marshall, I have been looking for these kind of stats for a hot minute now...

   Posted by: Kevin Fox | May 2, 2008 1:17 PM

5. Very cool post! I always kinda suspected there was a pattern to this, I'm glad to see my suspicions validated with real data!

   It actually looks like the peak time matches lunchtime across the whole U.S. in all time zones, I think? The East Coast is 5 hours behind GMT, so noon here would be 17:00GMT, which is where the ramp-up seems to start. I think the west coast is 8 hours behind GMT, so noon would fall at 20:00GMT, where it peaks and then falls off a cliff.

   Hope my reasoning is correct... time zone stuff always messes with my head!

   Posted by: mdesjardins.myopenid.com | May 2, 2008 1:21 PM

6. A couple of notes that I thought were too detailed for the body of the post:

   Things here are a little complicated by the fact that, for example, the feeds from all of these services deliver links to their pages on the news sites - not to the original articles themselves. Except for Del.icio.us, that is.

Second, presumably Jake ran all of these feed through separately, not spliced together. If you use AidRSS with multiple feeds, you'll want to run them through AideRSS separately then splice the highlight feeds together later. Otherwise the best-of from the less popular source will get drowned out if it's compared against everything from the more popular source. I'm just sayin'

Posted by: Marshall Kirkpatrick | May 2, 2008 1:48 PM

7.

mdesjardins: great observation, and to confirm your suspicions, here is another set of data points (from Microsoft) [1].

[1] http://www.igvita.com/2006/12/21/reinventing-rss-readers/

Posted by: Ilya Grigorik | May 2, 2008 1:59 PM

8.

Hi Marshall,

Agreed, this shows when posts hit the front page on the larger sites so minus an hour or two for virality.

I did run the feeds through separately. I'll post the code later today.

Glad you guys liked it now I don't look like fool! (because it's working)

-Jake

Posted by: 3.rdrail.net | May 2, 2008 2:22 PM

9.

Instead of ReadWriteWeb - this has become ReadWriteDigg over the last few days

Your Diggs certainly go up - will THIS one make it to the homepage.....Oh, The suspense :-?

Posted by: * Miss Universe | May 2, 2008 3:21 PM

10.

@* Miss Universe, actually we haven't gotten a digg fp in 6 days. Perhaps all these posts are due to frustration at digg? ;-) But seriously, it's more because we've gotten all this great data to share.

Posted by: Richard MacManus | May 2, 2008 3:25 PM

11.

Wow great info. Thanks for sharing this and I hope this will help me get more visitors in the future.

Posted by: MrCooker | May 2, 2008 3:34 PM

12.

I knew that without that graph or any API , its logical that the best time to post is IN THE MORNING
when people awake they will read it,if people miss it in the morning , they will read it @ lunch , and if they have only 30minutes lunch they will come home have some dinner and read it.

Worst time to post is after 7pm

See that's all logic , i don't need software ;)

Posted by: Tech Guru | May 2, 2008 3:43 PM

13.

"See that's all logic , i don't need software ;)"

Well now your logic has been proven. :P

Posted by: zapada | May 2, 2008 5:20 PM

14.

Thanks for this post! Intriguing. I wonder "why Thursday?" re: popularity... what makes it such a hot weekday? I'm tempted to think of things like "Thursday night prime-time TV" but perhaps there are other reasons.

Posted by: Torley | May 2, 2008 5:51 PM

15.

Cheers Marshall, I'm going to get straight onto a post that sets all future scheduled posts to publish every Thursday at either 1pm, 3pm, 5pm and 7pm PST. Randomising the hour each post is published will help the blog remain a little human.

My understanding from your data is that Saturday is the best day for governments and companies to ammend sweeping policies! :D

Posted by: Michael Visser | May 2, 2008 6:27 PM

16.

Looks like I'd better start scheduling my writing times. :)

Posted by: Colin Devroe | May 2, 2008 6:44 PM

17.

I find it silly that such statistics are gathered. Such statistics distracts people from the real reason why posts get to be popular in the first place. If what you're posting is useful and interesting and original, no matter what time of the day you post it, it'll get noticed. If it's crap, no matter what time you post it, it'll get buried. It's the equivalent of gathering statistics on what time you finish mixing your lemonade will get you the most customers. Do people buy your lemonade because it taste good or because you made it at midnight?

Posted by: Zan | May 2, 2008 10:02 PM

18.

mdesjardins is right, the times reported are GMT, not PST.

Posted by: Simone | May 3, 2008 2:15 AM

19.

Sorry for posting twice. Marshall, movable type reported an error when I posted the comment. I use a mac with firefox. Ciao :)

Posted by: Simone | May 3, 2008 2:19 AM

20.

This post, and it's popularity will now insure that even more popular posts are published on Thursday's at 1PM. Not that I doubt the data, it's just that it will reinforce it's own prophesy.

The more important thing is the quality of the content. That should be obvious.

Posted by: Gary | May 3, 2008 5:47 AM

21.

Hmm. So if you're interested in a US/Canada/parts of Latin America readership, then these stats are indeed worth paying attention to.

I tend to agree with Zan, comment #17 above.

Posted by: Neville Hobson | May 3, 2008 10:13 AM

22.

"[...] and popularity cannot be equated with popularity!"

Uh, yes it can.

Posted by: Rollo | May 3, 2008 11:17 AM

23.

Thanks for the info. It confirms my suspicions. I disagree with Zan. If a tree falls in the forest, when no is around, does it make a sound?

Submitting your story when no one is paying attention, is sending it out to die, it will slowly disappear being replaced by newer stories.

Posted by: Retire Blogger | May 3, 2008 12:42 PM

24.

@21/Gary: not necessarily. if everyone runs to start posting more on this schedule, volume will go up, and it may have the reverse effect - more chance of being lost in the crowd.

"[...] and popularity cannot be equated with popularity!"
or quality. :)

Posted by: mitch | May 3, 2008 9:36 PM

25.

sorry about the triple posting - MT kept thowing up an error page every time i hit submit :/

Posted by: maxcase.myopenid.com | May 3, 2008 9:38 PM

26.

This is great.Im gonna have to add this to my bookmarks.
i am in china. Need i add 8 hours from this 24 hour clock?
Thanks a lot..

Posted by: mybaiaogu | May 4, 2008 12:42 AM

27.

So do timezones make a difference?

I mean, here on the east coast, I've noticed good spikes when I hold delivery on something written the night before until about 11:50 AM (eastern :-)

Posted by: Mean Dean | May 4, 2008 12:59 AM

28.

This is exactly this kind of well thought out information that people should share with each other. If you have anything helpful to say I am always listening. I appreciate any help that people are willing to give me.

Posted by: john galt | May 4, 2008 1:10 AM

29.

Thanks for sharing this info! In Europe, you would need to post a new blog post at midnight.Most of my readers are in The U.S, and the time zone there

is 8 hours before.

Posted by: Tom At The Home Business Archive | May 4, 2008 3:45 AM

30.

Ironically, power users have this information hard wired in their DNA as a result of evolution. After intuitively tracking the rise or lack of it in social media momentum, I was fortunate to have a friend who is active in various social circles allude to the same fact.

You know what they say when you hear something from more than one source, so thank you for confirming the facts. Solid information is far more distinguished.

Posted by: SEO Design Solutions | May 5, 2008 5:49 AM

31.

Some very interesting information, and it all makes sense. The times people are most likely to be at their computer are the best time for exposure.

Posted by: Jeremiah | May 5, 2008 6:50 AM

32.

Like IBM's study in the 70s or 80s that "people are more receptive to new information on a Tuesday" I love data like these because it means if the suggestion become popular, even a "rule", and people really do start posting only between 10am-2pm, Pacific, Tues-Fri, with the belief that is when "popular posts" are published, it will skew the data as everyone clamors for the "right" time to publish, making space for us to post great content at our websites and not get caught in the crowd.

The thing to realize is that there are many metrics that may be important in an online business and "Diggs" or "popularity" may not count at all. As we've seen in the dot-com bubble #1, popularity or eyeballs alone do not a business build. We've proven that low-trafficked but high converting ($$$ or email signups) content far exceed any content where the only metric of success is "popularity".

Keep on publishing these kind of data - I love them.

Posted by: David Cross | May 5, 2008 7:52 AM

33.

useful info, thanks dude

Posted by: billy | May 5, 2008 7:59 AM

34.

Excellent research, nice to see some thorough research into social news and bookmarking sites. Combined with Dan Zarrella's research, there's some great info here.

Posted by: Rob Montalbine | May 5, 2008 8:37 AM

35.

I would have thought an hour before work starts, but after lunch looks good to me now. Thanks

Posted by: Jack Kennard | May 5, 2008 1:03 PM

36.

So I figure leaving Comments at these times is good as well?

thx good stuff

Posted by: Mac Flash | May 5, 2008 8:08 PM

37.

I worked up some (unfortunately digg-specific) stats that took into account the volume of submissions and got quite different results here:

http://owenbyrne.com/2008/05/06/thirst-for-data/

Posted by: Owen Byrne | May 6, 2008 8:26 AM

38.

So was everyone who took this post's advice yesterday pleased? I agree with Zand (comment 17) as well. If you're writing a truly great post it shouldn't matter when it was written. However, everyone knows that this is not the case. The logic might hold true with users who are very active in their respective news community, but if you are a new user you want all the exposure you can get.

Posted by: Brent W | May 9, 2008 7:26 PM

39.

Hmmmmm

Posted by: steveballmer | May 9, 2008 7:53 PM

40.

I enjoyed the post. Insightful!

www.roadcyclingblog.com

Posted by: Dr. Mac | May 11, 2008 9:18 PM

41.

I don't think it matters about time or date you decide to post your comments, it's a nature of computer engineer the foundation of it's work, so make

sure you post base on

truth and the reality of your comment. For example everyone

knows charlisangels has great escorts and beach villas at an all inclusive packages, in the DR.

Posted by: Ricky01 | May 12, 2008 5:29 PM

42.

Interesting.

But this article says nothing about staying being visual to be voted on. Remember that somewhere the newest comments stay on top of the goqparam_name Page egoqparam for a short moment of time, and then ends up at the bottom. If other comments have had plenty of time to gather votes you won't reach the top even if you get more votes by the hour, and then you are lost once you are down the list. There should be goqparam_status rules egoqparam that calculated average votes by hour. That way also newcommers could have a chance. If not you have to make sure you are first all the time to get on top.

Posted by: Peter | May 22, 2008 1:44 AM

43.

short moment of time, and then ends up at the bottom. If other comments have had plenty of time to gather votes you won't reach seks shop sex porno seks There should be goqparam..

Posted by: hee | May 23, 2008 4:37 AM

44.

Now that everyone's going to flock to prime time and over saturate it, Friday night might be appealing yet.

Posted by: Peter Warnock | January 9, 2009 9:14 PM