

BBC News

A social media intelligence study



October 2019

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Key Findings

Key finding I

The majority of people who share BBC news articles on social media accept the BBC as a legitimate news source, actively seeking it out, sharing articles and adding personal commentary on their public social media.

- BBC news has a significant social media presence as measured by the number of social media followers. Across the other news providers looked at in this study, it has the highest number of followers on Facebook and Instagram, and is second only to CNN on Twitter.
- Engagement on social media, as measured by likes, shares and comments, with BBC news online far exceeds any other news provider looked at in this study, driving almost double the number of likes, shares and comments than its nearest competitor in engaging with people, The Guardian. However, its audience has on average fewer social media connections (followers or friends) than people sharing The Guardian, Channel 4, CNN and the Daily Mail, giving it less potential for amplification and visibility across a wider network of social media feeds.

Key finding II

BBC news is perceived as a credible source of news with the majority of articles of interest being shared without additional commentary but used to support individuals interests and views.

- The BBC's 'UK news' category (with a focus on UK politics) is of primary interest to people, with the highest volume of articles in this category being shared. World News and Science attract the highest levels of engagement with higher volumes of likes and comments.
- The majority (80%) of people who share BBC news links do not add any personal content alongside the URL and the title of the article, but simply amplify the reach within their social circles. This suggests implicit trust is placed in the articles shared with individuals sharing items that support their views or represents an issue of interest to them,
- Of the 20% of people who share their opinions alongside news links, comments are almost exclusively positive about BBC news, with news being shared as a credible source to support an individual's opinion or speak out in their community
- Only a very small minority who shared and discussed BBC news links did so in an explicitly negative way.

Key finding III

The 20% of people who comment whilst link sharing use BBC news for a range of different reasons ranging from supporting their own views through to venting about current affairs to criticising the BBC itself.

- The shared belief by the vast majority was that BBC news is trustworthy and pertinent in offering credible support to their own news interests and agendas.
- Criticism of BBC news content was limited, evident in an extremely low percentage of commentary when attached to shared news links (less than 5%).

Key finding IV

A small minority of people who are more critical of BBC news on Twitter expect a public service that aligns with their own beliefs.

Whilst political topics are contentious and divide opinion, the BBC is greatly valued for human interest, international news, investigative journalism and quality documentaries.

- In contrast to people who share news links, people who comment on “BBC news” in the Twitter space without reference to a news article tend to be overwhelmingly critical about the BBC.
- Social media critics of BBC news express views from both ends of the political spectrum.
- People at both ends of the political spectrum only comment on the BBC news itself when its content is in conflict with their own beliefs and values. Positive comments are extremely rare.
- Unscripted news programmes, such as The Andrew Marr Show or Question Time, are considered extremely divisive by this group of commentators and are discussed in a negative way. They are not seen as representative or credible by either side of the political debate.

Methodology and Research Process

Two different search methods were used to capture data for the study

Keywords and URL/links

KEYWORD QUERY

A keyword (semantic) query was used to capture conversations about each news provider included in the competitor set. For example, the keyword “BBC news” was searched to find conversations about the BBC’s news delivery.

This approach is suitable for discovering conversations where people explicitly discuss a news provider.

Competitor set

- BBC News
- The Guardian
- The Daily Mail
- CNN
- LBC
- Channel 4
- BuzzFeed
- LADbible
- The Times
- Sky News

URL / LINK QUERY

By the URL/ link query those public social media posts and comments were collected that included a shared post from the news provider. For example, results for the BBC would feature a shared link to a BBC news article, and potentially some commentary on the news and/or on the news provider.

The URL/ link query is useful for understanding the news preferences of social media users.

*Please see Appendix for the full list of queries.

This study's findings are based on the analysis of public social media - no privately shared content has been analysed.

Data includes publicly available posts from various online platforms, such as news sites, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, forums, blogs, Vkontakte, etc.



Data collection is fully GDPR compliant and conducted via the social media monitoring platform, Talkwalker.

The data collected was made publicly available by individuals on the open public web and did not include private data, as defined by the individual privacy settings on the social media platforms or direct messages (DMs)/private messages between social media users. Metrics and analytics include keyword mentions and link sharing across all public social media in Talkwalker.

Qualitative analysis in Phases 3 and 4 were solely based on publicly available Twitter data.

Stage 1

Quantitative analysis of the volume of news links shared and news provider mentions



- Global and UK-only data on the volume, reach and engagement were accessed via Talkwalker, while figures on social media followership were collected manually.
- Using the Talkwalker platform, data was divided according to the users' geolocation, media platforms and gender.
- Analysis of conversation spikes helped to identify the top trending articles for each news provider.
- Please see the limitations of Talkwalker in the [Appendix](#).

Stage 2

Analysis of the types of BBC news categories shared

QUERY
URL/LINK



SCOPE
UK



NEWS PROVIDERS
BBC NEWS



Top 25 most engaging (indicator of the sum of all likes, shares and comments) articles per news category were collected from Talkwalker as a basis for the qualitative thematic analysis.

Stage 3

User profiles of people who share BBC news links



450 comments were qualitatively coded to show the relative sizes of opinion groups.



Qualitative analysis in Stage 3 was solely based on publicly available Twitter data.

Stage 4

BBC news perceptions

QUERY
KEYWORD



Qualitative analysis to understand how people, who explicitly discuss the BBC, perceive it as a news provider.

SCOPE
UK



750 Twitter comments were coded to quantify the expressed sentiments towards BBC news.

NEWS PROVIDERS
BBC NEWS



Qualitative analysis in Stage 4 was solely based on publicly available Twitter data.

Study Findings

Stage 1

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Analysis of conversation spikes helped to identify the top trending articles for each news provider.



Please see the limitations of Talkwalker in the [Appendix](#).

Summary of Stage 1 findings

- BBC News has a significant global online presence as measured by the number of social media followers.
- Engagement on social media with BBC news online far exceeds any other news provider, driving almost double the volume of likes, shares and comments than its nearest UK based competitor in engaging with people, The Guardian.
- The majority of people who share BBC news articles on social media accept the BBC as a legitimate news source, actively seeking it out, sharing articles and adding personal commentary on their public social media.

VOLUME, REACH and ENGAGEMENT

In this reports statistics on Volume, Engagement and Reach are provided by the Talkwalker platform, defined as:

- **Volume:** *the number of results, social media mentions/posts, identified by the software Talkwalker matching the provided keywords. Please consult the Appendix for the keyword lists.*
- **Reach:** *the number of all social media users who were potentially reached by all posts.*
- **Engagement:** *the sum of actions (likes, shares, comments) made by social media users on all posts.*

BBC News has a significant global online presence as measured by the number of social media followers

	Facebook Followers	Twitter Followers	Instagram Followers
BBC	49 million	10 million	8.7 million
LADbible	36 million	2.1 million	8 million
CNN	31.2 million	42.2 million	7.8 million
Daily Mail	16 million	2.4 million	0.9 million
Buzzfeed	11 million	6.55 million	4.8 million
Sky News	8.3 million	5 million	0.6 million
The Guardian	8.2 million	7.8 million	1.9 million
Channel 4	2.9 million	0.9 million	0.2 million
The Times	0.8 million	1.2 million	0.3 million
LBC	0.5 million	0.3 million	0.02 million

BBC News online has a huge social media followership. With 49 million Facebook followers and 8.7 million followers on Instagram, other than CNN's leading position on Twitter (42.2 million followers) BBC News outranks all other online news providers across these three social media platforms.

The majority of people who share BBC news articles on social media accept the BBC as a legitimate news source, actively seeking it out, sharing articles and adding personal commentary on their public social media.

	Volume	Estimated reach per post	Engagement per post
BBC	11.8 million	4.7 million	44.9
The Guardian	21.4 million	9.8 million	12.6
CNN	15.4 million	5.3 million	30.6
Buzzfeed	10.3 million	1.3 million	14.6
Daily Mail	9.8 million	13.3 million	33.9
Sky News	2.4 million	2.7 million	23
The Times	1.7 million	4.3 million	12.5
LADbible	0.5 million	2.1 million	193.9
LBC	0.4 million	0.2 million	25
Channel 4	0.2 million	9.6 million	14.7

Volume: The Guardian has the highest volume of news articles shared (21.4 million) and it is estimated that each post can reach the social media feeds of 9.8 million people. Comparatively BBC news online has 11.8 million articles shared with an estimated reach of 4.7 million per post. Guardian sharers have more connections on social media, so every article shared has the potential to be seen on a greater number of people's social media feeds.

BBC news' reach per post is rivalled by four competitors: CNN, Channel 4, The Guardian and the Daily Mail.

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Channel 4	0.2 million	9.6 million	14.7

Reach: Whilst BBC news is ranked third for the volume of articles shared online it is ranked fifth for estimated reach per post. People sharing BBC News articles have on average less social media connections (followers or friends) than people sharing The Guardian, Channel 4, CNN and the Daily Mail, giving it less potential for amplification and visibility across a wider network of social media feeds. Content from the Daily Mail reaches the most people, as articles are shared by numerous secondary global newspapers, boosting its reach per post to top ranked position at 13.3 million, nearly three times the reach of a BBC news post.

Engagement on social media with BBC news online far exceeds any other news provider, driving almost double the volume of likes, shares and comments than its nearest UK based competitor in engaging with people, The Guardian.

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Engagement: Those sharing BBC news are highly engaged with the subject matter. BBC news online generates likes, comments and shares culminating in the highest overall engagement (530 million), nearly double the Guardian in second place (270 million). The BBC news online's top engagement status is rivalled only by less traditional, low volume news provider, LADbible. Although its comparatively low volume of articles being shared keeps it out of the top ranks for total engagement, LADbible's engagement per post far exceeds BBC news, the Daily Mail and all other news providers analysed.

Stage 2

Analysis of the types of BBC news categories shared

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QUERY
URL/LINK



SCOPE
UK



NEWS PROVIDERS
BBC NEWS



Top 25 most engaging (indicator of the sum of all likes, shares and comments) articles per news category were collected from Talkwalker as a basis for the qualitative thematic analysis.

Summary of Stage 2 findings

- The BBC's domestic 'UK news' (with a focus on UK politics) is of most interest to people, with the highest volume of articles in this news category shared - with the majority of articles of interest being shared without additional commentary but used to support individuals interests and views
- 'World News' and 'Science' attract the highest levels of engagement with higher volumes of likes and comments attributed to these articles.
- Most engaging articles in the Entertainment and Arts news category cover breaking news about the deaths of famous people of the entertainment sector.

The BBC's domestic 'UK news' (with a focus on UK politics) is of most interest to people, with the highest volume of articles in this news category shared - with the majority of articles of interest being shared without additional commentary but used to support individuals interests and views

	Volume	Engagement per post
UK	1.84 million	49.2
World	0.6 million	133.7
Video and Audio	0.4 million	37.3
Business	0.4 million	68.4
Entertainment & Arts	0.2 million	54.5
Science	0.2 million	1750
Technology	0.1 million	15.6
Health	0.1 million	83.6
Education	0.07 million	17
Newsbeat	0.05 million	55.1
Stories	0.03 million	2.8
Resources	0.02 million	14.6
Extra	0.006 million	1.7

News Category Volumes: The news links shared were categorised according to the BBC news website categories for volume and engagement analysis. This includes UK, World, Video and Audio, Business, Entertainment and Arts, Science, Technology, Health, Education, Newsbeat, Stories, Resources and Extra. The table below shows the news categories ranked by the volume of links shared.

‘World News’ and ‘Science’ attract the highest levels of engagement with higher volumes of likes and comments attributed to these articles.

	Volume	Engagement per post
UK	1.84 million	49.2
World	0.6 million	133.7
Video and Audio	0.4 million	37.3
Business	0.4 million	68.4
Entertainment & Arts	0.2 million	54.5
Science	0.2 million	1750
Technology	0.1 million	15.6
Health	0.1 million	83.6
Education	0.07 million	17
Newsbeat	0.05 million	55.1
Stories	0.03 million	2.8
Resources	0.02 million	14.6
Extra	0.006 million	1.7

News Category Engagements: The Science News category far outranks all other news categories for engagement with engagement per post of 1,750 vs 49 for UK domestic news. This was largely due to one very popular article about the first image of a black hole. Had there not been the black hole article, the World news category would lead engagement per post.

Most engaging articles in the Entertainment and Arts news category cover breaking news about the deaths of famous people of the entertainment sector.

Thematic analysis identified nine themes of interest



- **Human interest:** out of the ordinary stories about ordinary people, celebrities and cultural news.



- **Research/science:** technological advancements and new discoveries in science or key findings of recently published studies.



- **Environment:** environmental issues, climate change, sustainability and animals.

- **Social issues:** equality or societal progress.

- **Brexit:** the UK's departure from the European Union.

- **UK-US:** the relationship between the UK and the US.

- **International stories:** worldwide affairs and events.

- **Non-Brexit UK politics:** the complete range of UK political news that is not Brexit-related.

- **Company-related news:** UK and multinational companies.



Stage 3

User profiles of people who share BBC news links

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450 comments were qualitatively coded to show the relative sizes of opinion groups.



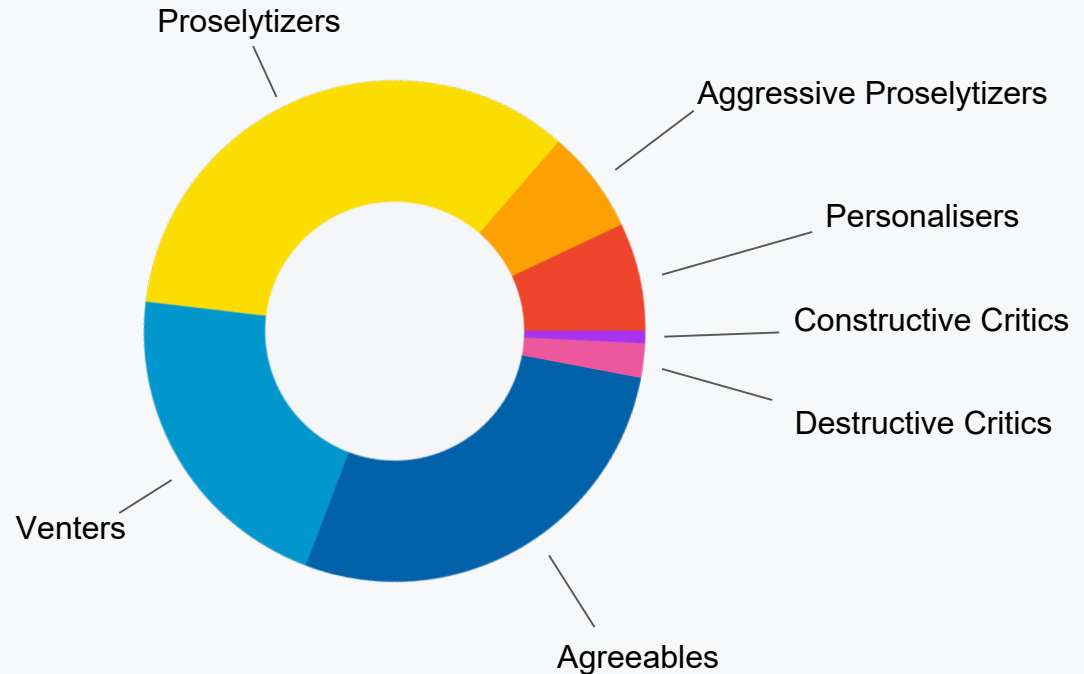
Qualitative analysis in Stage 3 was solely based on publicly available Twitter data.

Summary of Stage 3 findings

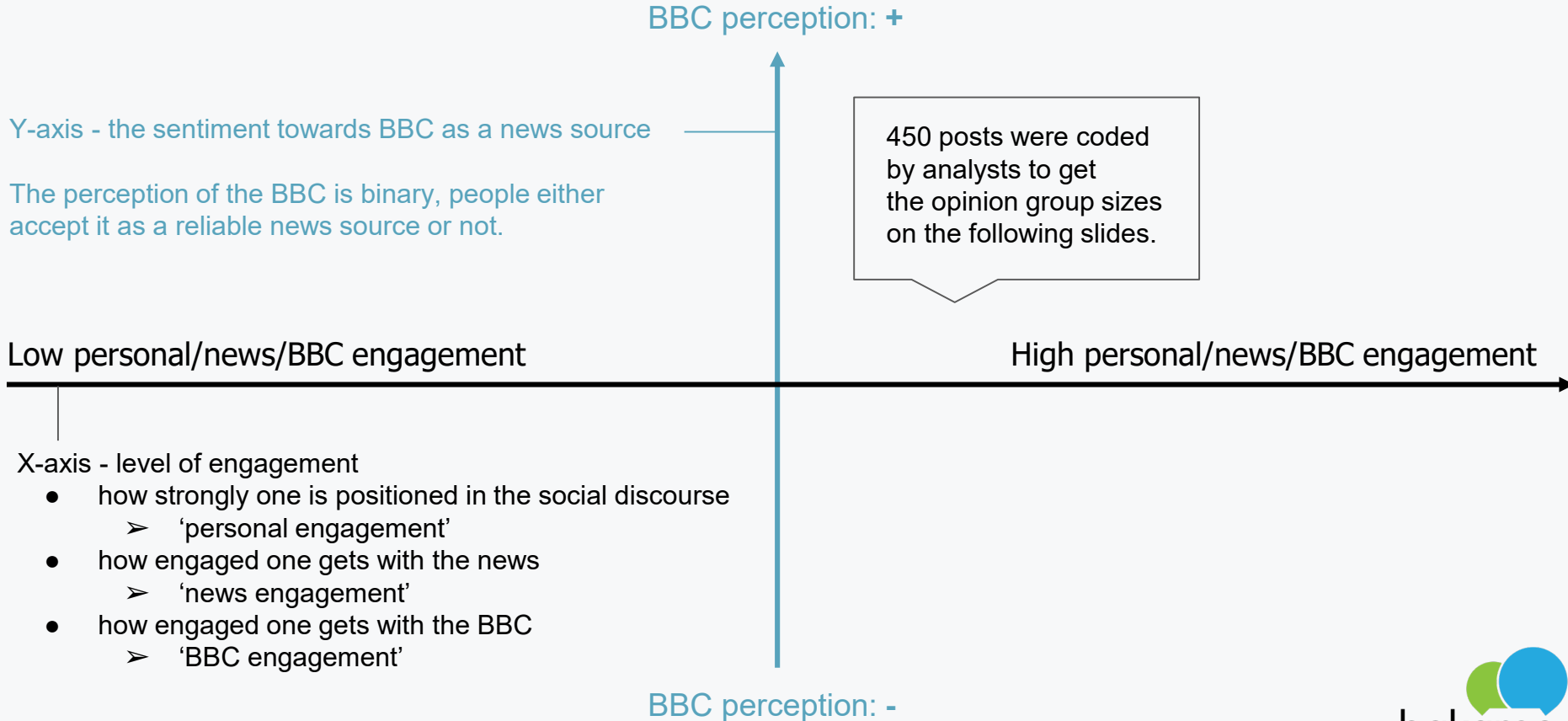
- The majority (80%) of people who share BBC news links do not add any personal content alongside the URL and the title of the article. They simply forward on thus amplifying the reach of BBC news within their social circles.
- Of the 20% of people who share their opinions alongside news links, comments are almost exclusively positive about BBC news, with news being shared as a credible source to support an individual's opinion or speak out in their community (with only a very small minority of all shared links users discussing the BBC in an explicitly negative way.)
- News links are shared by commentators to satisfy differing personal needs and motivations but with a shared belief by the overwhelming majority of BBC news being trustworthy and pertinent in offering credible support to the individual's own agenda.

BBC news link sharing users

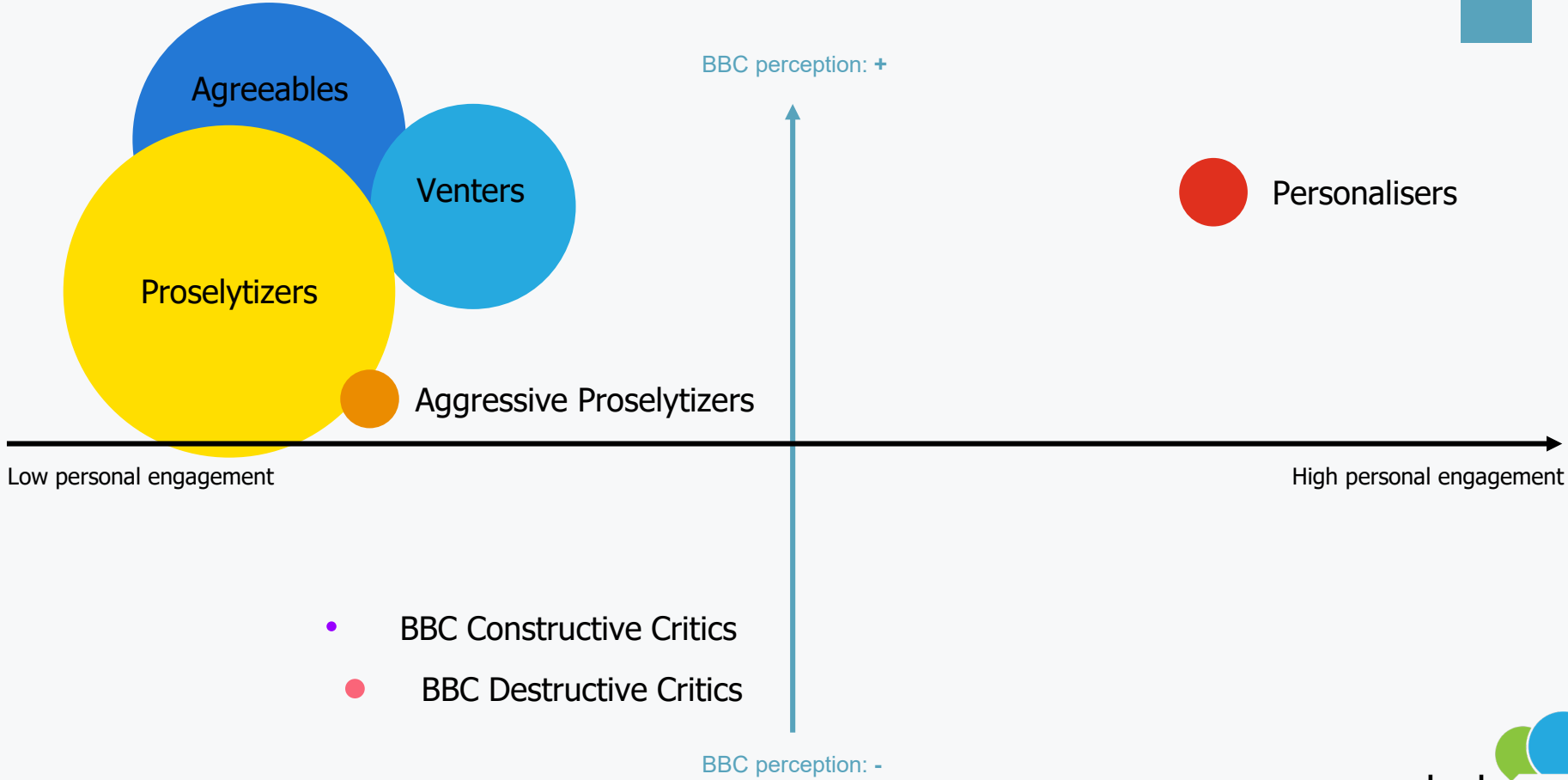
- About 4/5 of people who share BBC news links do not produce any content alongside the URL and the title of the article. (“Only Sharers”)
- Therefore, not being able to explore their emotional setting, they were excluded from the coding of user profile sizes.
- Among the people who reacted to the BBC news link that they shared, **7 BBC user profiles** were identified.



Relative preferences of BBC news sharers

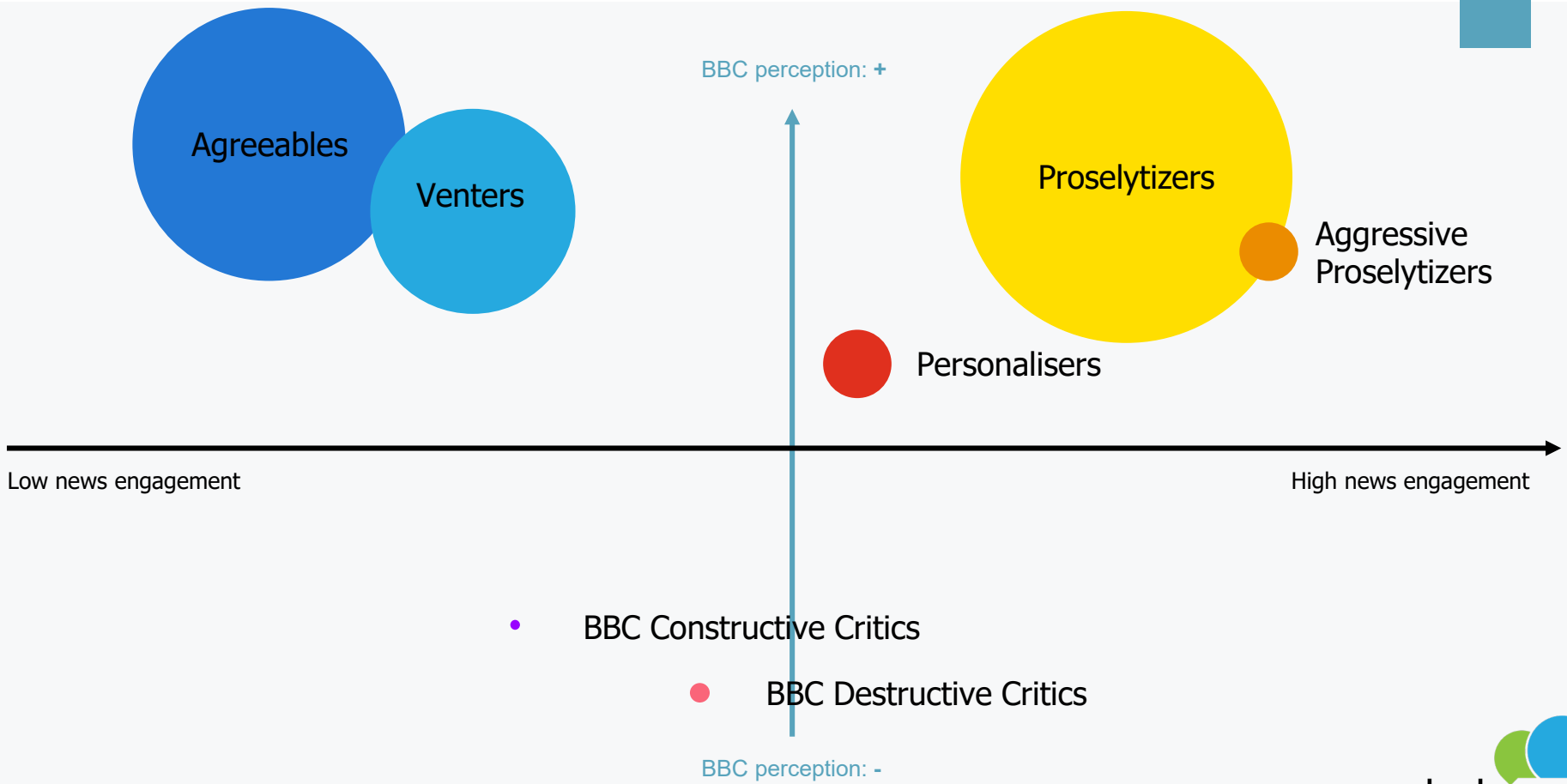


Relative preferences of BBC news sharers - Personal engagement



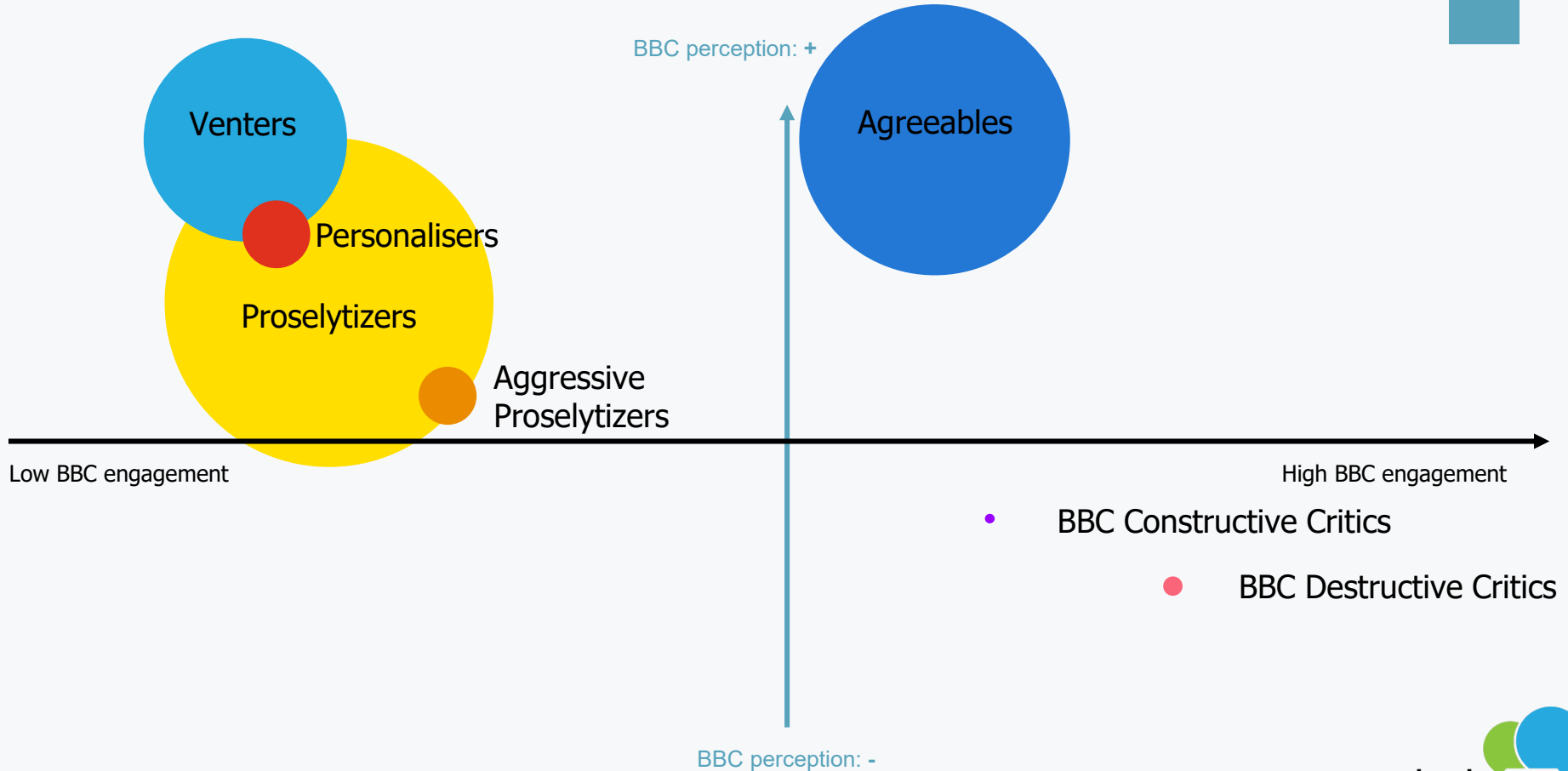
Only sharers About 4/5 of all URL sharing posts belong to this category

Relative preferences of BBC news sharers - News engagement



Only sharers About 4/5 of all URL sharing posts belong to this category

Relative preferences of BBC news sharers - BBC engagement



Only sharers About 4/5 of all URL sharing posts belong to this category

Agreeables

Just under one third of the segmented commentators

Description

They share non-controversial news articles. "Cute", enchanting, uplifting and shocking stories or simple fun facts are among the articles they share.

Driver for news engagement

They share articles to be seen as part of a community.

Personal engagement

They usually only add a short, impersonal comment, e.g.: "Great article!", "Fantastic read!", "Everyone should see this!", that does not tell much explicitly about who they are.

Engagement with BBC news

For them, BBC news is a reliable news source with outstanding content.



Gosh! Poor thing! 🐼🐼🐼

"Python covered with over 500 ticks rescued in Australia"

<https://t.co/7ghvXaakj5>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

What an fantastic article! Great journalism!

"Cameroon atrocity: Finding the soldiers who killed this woman"

<https://t.co/tZ1pJU8xKh>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

The third largest segment

Description

They sound frustrated and frequently vent their anger and use sarcasm to express concern about topical issues including diversity, multiculturalism, and climate change.

Driver for news engagement

They share their take on issues to provoke response and debate, whilst seemingly showing that they have lost hope.

Personal engagement

The tone of their comments are ironic and cynical. These users are highly tense and snap at controversial social issues, being frustrated about the issue.

Engagement with BBC news

For them, BBC news is a trustworthy news source which provides news articles that they use to highlight their concerns.



Dear Americans, are you surprised? You elected this knobhead as your president and now he withdraws you from all the environmental accords. Eventually, you get what you give!

"Tropical Storm Florence: Latest updates"

<https://t.co/749ksP5YUp>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

Oh, Fuck Off!

"I do believe in Brexit," says Theresa May"

<https://t.co/tB9J7tfn1O>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

Proselytizers

The largest group making up just over a third of the segmentation

Description

They use the BBC's perceived credibility to further their own agendas and back up their claims regarding certain issues. They purposefully create posts to frame the information in the BBC news article and highlight their personal agenda.

Driver for news engagement

They show passion towards an issue whilst remaining sophisticated in their expression.

Personal engagement

These users provide their interpretation of news articles and they are open for a serious debate on social media.

Engagement with BBC news

They accept BBC news as a reliable news source which provides news articles that they use to support their view.



I'm delighted to see that the Parliament's @CommonsEAC is planning to tax clothes sales to push recycling forward. But I wish they put their hands on illegal labour and unfair wages as well. #FairtradeUK #sustainability "Fast fashion: 'Penny on a garment' to drive clothes recycling"

<https://t.co/YXKWLI6IQg>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

Can we please just all admit that #Brexit is a terrible idea? Let's call it back!

"Brexit ruling: UK can cancel decision, EU court says"

<https://t.co/TRtkOJMfLc>

(Composite quote from Twitter)

Aggressive Proselytizers

Description

They are closely connected to Proselytizers, but are more emotionally charged. They are open about their mission, but express their frustration with the subject matter which seems out of their reach (for example, stopping climate change).

Driver for news engagement

Their expression reveals sense of urgency.

Personal engagement

The tone of their comments can be aggressive and they tend to make frequent use of profanity.

Engagement with BBC news

For them, BBC news is a reliable news source which provides news articles that they use to support their view.



*What an absolute lying **** this Liam Fox is! No-deal Brexit would mean an economic disaster for the UK. Delaying Brexit would however give us some more time to negotiate.*

"Brexit: Delaying Brexit worse than no deal, says Liam Fox"

<https://t.co/HBQWsqEmCV>
(Composite quote from Twitter)

*I cannot believe this **** is still in politics! He utterly screwed up our nation and now he is "advising" Theresa May? Go **** away! #Brexit #PeoplesVote #Remain "Brexit: Theresa May says David Cameron 'not advising her'"*

<https://t.co/ISzHZUeeRq> (Composite quote from Twitter)

Personalisers

Description

They place themselves in news stories. They contextualise events happening around them and express their personal connectedness with the story.

Personal engagement

Some use news articles as an opportunity to share information about themselves. Their comments often involve pronouns, such as "I", "me", "my", etc.

Driver for news engagement

They often back up the validity and importance of a story with a personal experience story. They also aim to signal the significance of a given article to their followers and friends.

Engagement with BBC news

They accept the BBC as a reliable news source.



Rest in Peace Keith Flint. I feel lucky that I had the chance to meet you a few years ago. I was really nervous to go up to you at first but you were very friendly, top man. #RIP #Prodigy #KeithFlint "
The Prodigy's Keith Flint dies aged 49"
<https://t.co/zAtI7XDvoN>
(Composite quote from Twitter)

When can we girls feel finally feel safe on the streets? 🙏🙏 I have been harassed by men multiple times and I am really anxious when I have to walk home alone at night. "Street harassment 'relentless' for women and girls"

<https://t.co/YPazGwIMhn> *(Composite quote from Twitter)*

BBC Constructive Critics

Criticism of BBC news content was limited, evident in an extremely low numbers of commentary when attached to shared news links.

Description

They share BBC news content, but also highlight minor mistakes or inaccuracies with a positive intention.

Personal engagement

Very little personal information is shared about them, they have a commitment to accuracy and details.

Driver for news engagement

They think BBC news generally has high quality journalistic standards, but makes mistakes, which is unacceptable for them and they feel needs to be highlighted.

Engagement with BBC news

They value the BBC as a news source.



I don't think this is the reason. I believe schools are making shorter days in order to save money on supervision. I wish they thought about the pupils needs. "School break times 'cut short to cram in more lessons'"

<https://t.co/dtoGKZVc2G> (Composite quote from Twitter)

Is there anyone at BBC news who understands statistical presentation better? What this data means is that the kids are under growing pressure every year, but minor changes are visible as the exam regulations are changing to accommodate different groups of kids. "A-level results 2018: Teenagers achieve rise in top grades"

<https://t.co/xAB5zZ2nAZ> (Composite quote from Twitter)

BBC Destructive Critics

Criticism of BBC news content was limited, evident in an extremely low numbers of commentary when attached to shared news links.

Description

They share BBC news content, but fiercely voice their displeasure. The BBC is not a reliable news source for them. Most of them outright reject the validity of articles by labelling them fake news.

Driver for news engagement

They appear to have lost faith in the integrity of BBC news and do not always feel their views are represented.

Personal engagement

They insert themselves by bluntly criticising the content of the shared article or the BBC itself, but little is explicitly shared about themselves.

Engagement with BBC news

They do not accept the BBC as a reliable or trusted news source.



What a surprise! BBC is spreading Remainer fake news again! Utterly nonsense! #BBCswitchoff, #BBCbias #BrokenMedia "Nissan decision is 'devastating news'"
<https://t.co/NUC5Tw8FI>
 (Composite quote from Twitter)

This is a misleading headline! Yes, the number of homeless people in Finland, in general, is low but they do have problems with them in Helsinki.
"The city with no homeless on its streets"
<https://t.co/9M95YvIFjx>
 (Composite quote from Twitter)

Stage 4

BBC news perceptions

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BBC news perceptions

QUERY
KEYWORD



Qualitative analysis to understand how people, who explicitly discuss the BBC, perceive it as a news provider.

SCOPE
UK



750 Twitter comments were coded to quantify the expressed sentiments towards BBC news.

NEWS PROVIDERS
BBC NEWS



Qualitative analysis in Stage 4 was solely based on publicly available Twitter data.

Summary of Stage 4 findings

- In contrast to people who share news links, people who comment on “BBC news” without reference to a news article tend to be overwhelmingly critical about the BBC.
- Social media critics of BBC news come from all sides of the political spectrum. People expressing views from both ends of the political spectrum only comment on the BBC news itself when its content is in conflict with their own beliefs and values. Positive comments are extremely rare.
- Whilst political topics are contentious and divide opinion, the BBC is greatly valued for human interest, international news, investigative journalism and quality documentaries.
- Unscripted news programmes are considered extremely divisive among this group of commentators and are discussed in a negative way.
- People expect a public service that represents their own views. They are critical of content that does not align with their own beliefs and values.

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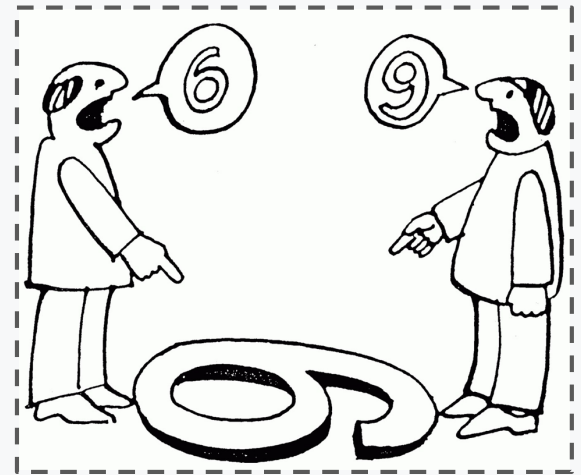
- Within the UK based data sourced, more than 2.5 million posts explicitly mentioned “BBC news” as a keyword without also sharing a BBC news link. 750 Twitter comments were coded to quantify the expressed sentiment towards the BBC. Among these posts around eight-in-ten were negative and less than one-in-twenty positive.

Social media critics of BBC news come from all sides of the political spectrum.

- Many do not feel politically represented by the public news service. Generally, people understand the BBC’s mission as that of public service. For many, the interpretation of public service comes down to whether or not they feel served, whether or not they trust the institution, and whether or not it reflects their perceived British identity. Their criticisms are rooted in the perceived contrast between their own opinions and those represented by the BBC news. This is interpreted as a failure to fulfill the public service.

People expressing views from both ends of the political spectrum only comment on the BBC news itself when its content is in conflict with their own beliefs and values. Positive comments are extremely rare.

- Qualitative analysis of the comments gave an indication of some commentators political leanings, **Commentators expressing more progressive ideas** and **Commentators expressing more conservative ideas** is close to equal, with neither dominating the discourse, and these equal proportions ensure a similar tension between each side and BBC news.



Commentators expressing more progressive ideas

50



- **Commentators expressing more progressive ideas** articulated views that they want BBC news to help accomplish change in British society and to be a beacon of progressive thinking.
- They appeared dissatisfied with the way BBC news covered the 2016 Brexit referendum.
- Some mentioned views that standards of journalism are declining, and that BBC news rarely treats social and environmental issues fairly, for instance, by inviting anti-vaccination advocates or climate change deniers to voice their views, rather than focussing on what they see as the more credible science.

According to BBC news, the possibility that Qatar cheated its way to host the Football World Cup is much more important news than talking about how #Brexiters cheated during the 2016 referendum. (Composite quote from Twitter)

#Vicargate is one of the most absurd scandals of all time! This woman is a BBC payed actor who appears on political programs as an "ordinary person" to spread #Brexit propaganda #newsnight #BBCbias (Composite quote from Twitter)

I can't believe we are still here! How many #IPCC reports have to come out for the BBC to stop giving airtime to #ClimateChange deniers and fossil fuel lobbyist? We don't have time for this utter crap!!! (Composite quote from Twitter)

Excuse me?? Why is Brexit Party on #Newsnight again? And why #Greens don't get airtime? When did the BBC become Farage's propaganda machine? (Composite quote from Twitter)



- **Commentators expressing more conservative ideas** expressed dissatisfaction about the lack of airtime given to aligned views on BBC news social and political programmes.
- They complain of a lack of pro-Brexit voices and coverage.
- For example, they suggested BBC news should preserve and boost Britishness by covering Brexit-related issues more extensively and by giving conservative voices more airtime.

*I hate when people say that the TV licence is almost like a tax. Because IT IS A TAX!!! And I refuse to pay the BBC so they can spread their stupid Metro-Liberal propaganda.
#BBCbias #AbolishBBCLicenceFee
(Composite quote from Twitter)*

*The BBC #Newsnight feature on the #Brexit party was utterly bizarre tonight. They tried to diminish the party so hard as it was just a playground for a small group of far right people.
The Brexit party is the second biggest party in the UK!!! Get over it!
(Composite quote from Twitter)*

*How can BBC say that they are impartial when there wasn't a single brexit party representative on Question Time? Rubbish!
(Composite quote from Twitter)*

*I'm not surprised that BBC news is losing listeners given its shameful anti-brexit propaganda and political bias.
(Composite quote from Twitter)*

Scripted vs Unscripted Programmes

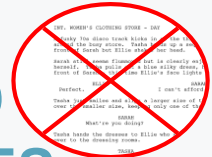
SCRIPTED PROGRAMMES

Scripted programmes are shows that have a written script prior to production.



UNSCRIPTED PROGRAMMES

Unscripted programmes are shows that do not have a written script prior to production.



Scripted programmes include documentaries and series of human interest, such as Panorama or Attenborough documentaries.



Unscripted programmes include political shows, such as The Andrew Marr Show and Question Time.



Whilst political topics are contentious and divide opinion, the BBC is greatly valued for human interest, international news, investigative journalism and quality documentaries.

- Scripted programmes that cover personal stories, both from the UK and internationally, for example Panorama or documentaries such as Grenfell Tower, bring diverse audiences together in their commentary on social media.



*I believe BBC news, esp Radio 4's Today, has been an absolute treachery. But the quality of natural history programmes, documentaries and drama - the BBC is the best in the business. We have to save the news service from the hands of its right-wing editor.
(Composite quote from Twitter)*

Unscripted news programmes are considered extremely divisive among this group of commentators and are discussed in a negative way. They are not seen as representative of the public or credible by either side of the political debate.

- Unscripted programmes include The Andrew Marr Show and Question Time.
- Both political sides feel that unscripted programmes are biased. Frequent claims include the notion that politicians are not getting equal airtime, or that they are treated unfairly by the presenter.
- Some expressed that the BBC enables the communication of propaganda messages. The Question Time's studio audience is claimed not to be credible or representative of the broader population.
- Andrew Marr constantly challenges his guests, playing devil's advocate at times, which draws criticism from both ends of the political spectrum.



IM THAT FED UP WITH THE BBC AND PARTICULARLY THE ANDREW MARR SHOW LATELY I'LL CANCEL MY BLOODY TV LICENCE ...BUT I DONE THAT A LONG TIME AGO LOL (...) RUN BY SNOWFLAKES AND SPONSORED BY THE EU ..just saying 🤔🤔
(Composite quote from Twitter)

People expect a public service that represents their own views. They are critical of content that does not align with their own beliefs and values.

- In conclusion, people increasingly occupy echo chambers - both online and in their social groups - in which they seek news that conforms to their existing opinions and reflects their views and perceptions.
- They are increasingly unfamiliar with having their ideas challenged as they avoid spaces and programmes where that might happen.
- BBC news performs an important public service through its wide reach and its broadly accepted reputation as a trustworthy and quality news and content provider to people with a range of views, even when these views are critical of the BBC.

Appendix

Limitations

Data size limitations by geolocation



- The social media scraping software we use, Talkwalker, cannot always discern the geolocation where the social media entries originates from. The ways of discerning geolocation are detailed in the Research Protocol.
- In practical terms it means that from a set of data, only posts in the UK region that include geolocation information can be safely filtered out - those posts of which we have no geolocation information will be automatically excluded from the results by geo-filtering.

Media channel definitions by Talkwalker

- According to our social media scraping software, Talkwalker, definitions of the different media channels are as follows:
 - Online news: “All news sites.”
 - Magazine: “Printed magazines' online sites.”
 - Newspaper: “Printed newspapers' online sites.”
 - TV/Radio: “Results from TV or radio station sites.”
 - Blogs: “Results from blogs”
 - Twitter: “Twitter results”
 - Instagram: “Instagram results”
 - Facebook: “Facebook results”
- For further information on Talkwalker media channel definitions please consult:
<https://talkwalker.digitalexcellencecenter.com/home/media-source-codes>

Search queries

Keywords for Search Queries



	Keyword query	URL/ Link sharing query
BBC	"BBC news", (BBC + Panorama/"Politics Live"/"This World"/"Question Time"/ "This Week"/"Daily Politics"/"Andrew Marr Show"/Newsnight/ Newsround/Newsroom/"Victoria Derbyshire"/"Stacey Dooley")	bbc.co.uk/news/ bbc.co.uk/naidheachdan/ bbc.co.uk/cymrufyw/
Channel4	"Channel 4", Dispatches/"Unreported World"/"Last Leg"	channel4.com/news/
LBC	LBC	lbc.co.uk/news/
The Guardian	"The Guardian"	theguardian.com
The Times	"The Times"	thetimes.co.uk
Sky News	"Sky News", "Ridge on Sunday"	news.sky.com
CNN	CNN	edition.cnn.com
The Daily Mail	"Daily Mail"	dailymail.co.uk
Buzzfeed	Buzzfeed	buzzfeed.com
LADbible	LADbible	ladbible.com