

## **Agenda-Setting, Two-Step Flow and the World of Tech Blogs: The Role of Tech Bloggers in the Flow of Information**

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The rising power of tech blogs has not gone unnoticed by the traditional media (Shani, 2010). Countless tech bloggers strive to be the opinion leaders of this field and some journalists see them as such (Richtel, 2008; Estes, 2011).

The study integrates two research traditions: Two-Step Flow (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955) and Agenda-Setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), while examining the role of early recognizers, who collect, diffuse, filter, and promote the flow of information (Brosius & Weimann, 1996).

By comparing the differences between media/blogging/public agenda, the study addresses several questions, including: Do bloggers evaluate the importance of issues differently (than traditional media) and provide alternative topics for discussion (e.g., Bloom, 2003)? Do journalists adopt the issue salience assigned by tech bloggers? Can the study present a higher correlation between the blogs agenda and the public agenda, as opposed to the media agenda and the public agenda (e.g., Delwiche, 2005)?

In this study: The traditional media is a mainstream news source which has a digital distribution alongside its non-digital distribution (e.g., NY Times, Washington Post), and the blogs focuses on technology coverage and update their content frequently (e.g., TechCrunch, TheVerge, AllThingsD).

Technological coverage from English-language news and blog posts was collected from 1 Jan 2012 to 31 Dec 2012 (a full year) using Big Data innovative tools. The 1,500,000 records are now being analyzed using quantitative methods. The above is contributing to the research goal of tracing the flow, intensity and direction of tech news headlines.