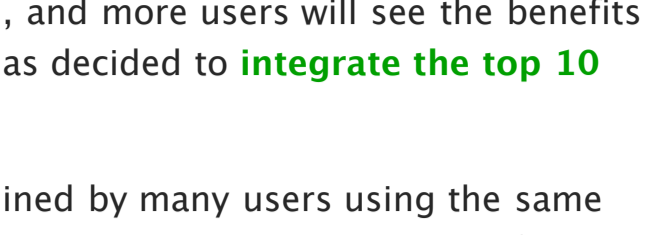


What The Trend: Finally, A Way To Make Sense Of Twitter Trends

by Robin Wauters on May 3, 2009 32 Comments 354 retweet f Share 4

For sure, **Twitter Trends** give visitors a great general overview of what the app's user base of millions are talking about the most at any given time, giving some insight in what's happening around the world.



It's an awesome way for people to discover what's going on, and more users will see the benefits of keeping track of trending topics now that the company has decided to **integrate the top 10 trends** in the right sidebar of the web version for everyone.

At times the keywords for the trending topics, often determined by many users using the same hashtag for something can be quite self-explanatory, e.g. today's 'Swine Flu' and '#swineflu'. More often that not, however, you have no idea why a certain keyword is currently a trend, and figuring out what all the fuzz is about can be quite a pain. Enter **What The Trend**, which attempts to offer short blurbs about trending topics with a short explanation on why it's in the top 10 list.

For example, I had no clue why 'Jonas' was in the top trends list, until I clicked through to **this user-editable explanation blurb** and learned that it's a new show in Disney Channel. In addition, What The Trend shows me the latest tweets about the topic, and also attempts to fetch related pictures from Flickr as well as news through Google News.

You can directly tweet that there's a news explanation to your own Twitter account, with bonus points for **another service boasting its very own URL shortening service** (wttrend.com). The service has its **own Twitter account** which it regularly updates with new trends + explanations and also offers RSS feeds and its own API. I'm left wondering which desktop application provider will be the first to integrate the What The Trend explanations, and how quickly people will start abusing the wiki-approach the service is taking: my guess is we won't have to wait long for either one to happen.

I can actually see myself going this website once and a while to get a feel of what's trending on Twitter, although I wish I wouldn't need to and Twitter would incorporate this into the web version itself. Until that happens, and I doubt it ever will, What The Trend provides the perfect alternative.

What the Trend?

Why is Jack Kemp popular right now?

First trend: about 13 hours ago | Last trend: less than a minute ago | Link: <http://wttrend.com/3051>

Because he died [Edit this blurb](#) [Tweet this](#)

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Book your hotel in Dole online. All hotels on a city map. www.booking.com/Dole

Most €150k+ Jobs
Executive Career Service in Europe Network with over 4,200 headhunters executive.com/Only-For-Executives

The Death of Jesus
Did Jesus Rise From the Dead? Discover the Facts From Scholars www.jesus.com/Resurrection

Ads by Google

Latest **tweets** about Jack Kemp

Latest **news** about Jack Kemp

Latest **photos** about Jack Kemp

Twitter [get widget](#) [minimize](#)

Website: twitter.com
Location: San Francisco, California, United States
Founded: March 21, 2006
Funding: \$160M

Twitter, founded by **Jack Dorsey**, **Biz Stone**, and **Evan Williams** in March 2006... [Learn More](#)

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Responses

- GetWeb - What The Trend: Finally, A Way To Make Sense Of Twitter Trends**
May 3rd, 2009 at 12:26 pm
- What The Trend : ついにこれでTwitterのトレンドがわかる**
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May 4th, 2009 at 8:05 am
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May 4th, 2009 at 8:30 am
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- Daily Digest for 2009-05-04 | Joe Spake - Memphis Real Estate**
May 5th, 2009 at 12:16 am

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Comments

Matheus (@matheusc) - May 3rd, 2009 at 8:56 am PDT

You should add that #hoppusday has started in brazil by the fan site of the band 'blink 182' may 3rd at midnight and now is the first trending topic! :D

[reply](#)

StreetBloggers (@streetbloggers) - May 3rd, 2009 at 8:57 am PDT

Twitter can be a great marketing tool However how many users actually click links on twitter feeds? It's all about the the catch phrase.

<http://www.googlemenews.com>

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Subhankar Ray (@aafter_com) - May 3rd, 2009 at 9:10 am PDT

Another food for ADD minds?

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Scott - May 3rd, 2009 at 9:26 am PDT

Funny how Robin pretends she "had no clue why 'Jonas' was in the top trends list, until I clicked through to this user-editable explanation blurb and learned that it's a new show in Disney Channel."

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Joel Strellner (@jstrellner) - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:41 pm PDT

It's funny how you said "she" when Robin is a "he".

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Jason - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:05 am PDT

What is Twitter?

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Tal (@talness) - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:18 am PDT

Cool idea, but the interface makes it hard to read and comprehend trends. They should help the user see what's happening *now*, and make it a bit more readable.

[reply](#)

Falk - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:26 am PDT

The interesting question is: how can Twitter shape the results and identify real trends from system-generated tags/topics. A search for Hulu reveals a ton of automatically generated tweets (Joe is watching XYZ on "Hulu"). Where is the page rank algorithm for tweets?

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Dave Kennel - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:29 am PDT

Nice handy tool. But I would be more interested in finding real webpages that talk about these trending topics. Not the tweets. Are there any out there like that?

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Pete Shepherd - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:31 am PDT

You can check out <http://www.boilingpage.com> or <http://www.twittruly.com>

My favorite is <http://www.boilingpage.com> among these. It shows the hottest pages on the web based on how popular they are in twitter. It also has other features like feeds for automatic updates, recommendations, etc.

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Brandon Mendelson - May 3rd, 2009 at 11:30 am PDT

I don't know. I saw WTT a few days ago and was turned off that users were submitting opinions as to why something is trending. The answers can be vague, unhelpful, and subject to marketing folks (like me) getting in there and tailoring the trend to fit their slant.

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lukas - May 3rd, 2009 at 12:46 pm PDT

there's another cool service aggregating twitter & twitpic content

<http://www.all140.com>

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Corvida - May 3rd, 2009 at 5:20 pm PDT

Read the tweets and you should be able to figure out why it's trending. How lazy can people get?

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kyle with bluetooth - May 3rd, 2009 at 8:30 pm PDT

i can definitely see how this could be useful, but is it really all that critical?

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Rob L - May 3rd, 2009 at 9:55 pm PDT

TweetDeck features <http://www.twitscoop.com> with a live up to the minute Word cloud of the latest keyword Buzz on Twitter.

Click a word and your taken to a live updated page of that keyword with trending graph and all tweets with that keyword.

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markandey (@markandey) - May 3rd, 2009 at 10:16 pm PDT

<http://www.tweetactive.com/> is kool website to search for trend in real time. Very light weight site, fast and clean

[reply](#)

Andy (@edopter) - May 4th, 2009 at 7:42 am PDT

For a more in depth view of the people behind these trends and a real-time look at their spread across the world, check out <http://www.edopter.com>

It combines community insight with live aggregated buzz from across the web to plot the growth of a trend and the reason why others think its next big thing.

For example: <http://swww.edop...rends/Facemasks>

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