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The Formation of Twitter Networks among U.S. City Mayors

Sam Motes

Cleveland State University

Gabrielle Parsson

Cleveland State University

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The Formation of Twitter Networks among U.S. City Mayors

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

Student Researchers: Sam Motes and Gabrielle Parsson

Faculty Advisor: Clayton Wukich

Abstract

This project (a) explores the extent to which mayors use social media to interact with other mayors, (b) identifies the different types of information shared, and (c) examines the factors that influence whether mayors share information. Focusing on the 100 largest cities in the United States by population, we conduct a network analysis of interactions between mayors, occurring on Twitter from 2016-2018. Findings demonstrate an active information network. Types of information shared address city operations, the favorable presentation of a mayor's city, political positioning, and symbolic acts of congratulations, gratitude, and condolences. Results from a Quadratic Assignment Procedure Logistic Regression analysis reveal that geographic proximity and political party affiliation influenced whether mayors shared information. Furthermore, cities with larger populations were more likely to receive attention within this network. Results contribute to our understanding of both the potential and the limitations of social media for interlocal communication and coordination.