

Module 1: Video 3 - A deep-dive into CrowdTangle for discovery (Transcripts)

So now I want to do a deep dive into CrowdTangle. So for those of you who haven't heard of CrowdTangle it's a very powerful monitoring tool that was actually an independent tool, but then two years ago it was acquired by Facebook. For that reason it's now become the most powerful way of searching Facebook and it allows you to keep track of different accounts and pages in one place. And you can order that by the level of engagement, the kind of reactions it's receiving. So many newsrooms use it as a way to keep on top of viral content. But some people reverse engineer CrowdTangle so that they can use it as a way to monitor mis and disinformation. Because if you have the right lists, it allows you to see in certain spaces on Facebook what is circulating. So CrowdTangle is free, but you have to apply to use it. And so I'm now going to show you an example on my screen of how you could use CrowdTangle to set up dashboards and lists.

This is CrowdTangle.com. You can get there by simply going to CrowdTangle and if you haven't signed up before you have to sign up. If you are in the US and you are a journalist it should be relatively easy to do, but it's free. And so once you get it you come to a central page like this. Now CrowdTangle is organized around dashboards and you can have dashboards for maybe your covering a particular election or maybe you're a science reporter. Within each dashboard you can have multiple lists.

So to create a new dashboard you can click here and say create new dashboard. I'm actually going to use an old one that I'm repurposing, connected to the election last year that I was working on. So to create a new list you just click here. It's going to ask you whether you want to monitor Facebook pages or Facebook group.

So let's start with pages. And I'm gonna see if I can find people who are obsessed that the earth is flat. Now when it says add pages, I send search here again. Let's take out those bunny ears. And look at this. All of a sudden there's a lot of pages. So I'm gonna say yes to a lot of these. I'm really fascinated by Flat Earth Hungary. Flat Earth Chili. See it's really incredible once you start diving in to all of these. And so I'm going to give all of them a go because it's useful to kind of see the kind of content that comes up. So once I've got that I can view pages if I want in one place and that this is how you can remove. But let's go here where it says leaderboard because this is where it gets interesting. You can actually see kind of traffic in this way in terms of which are the highest performers.

But let's go to posts. Now at the moment it's looking for over performing posts in the last two hours. Now I'm just going to say I'm happy with total interactions. And I'm gonna say in the last 72 hours. So this is showing me. Here we go. This is the amount of emoji reactions. These are the amount of comments. These are the amount of shares.

And this is quite interesting here. This interaction spark line. This can be useful sometimes if you're trying to figure out whether something is about to go viral. So in the whole conversation

about the tipping point, trying to decide whether or not you should issue a debunk something like this which has a kind of a hockey stick, is kind of interesting because you can see that it's just taking off. This is kind of tailing off. You wouldn't issue a debunk there.

So. Hopefully you can see this is actually a really interesting way of trying to find content from a particular community. As you can say over performing, underperforming, interaction rate and most recent and again over time periods. You can say you just want photos linked statuses. I wouldn't bother as much around that if you're monitoring misinformation. And so as you can see very useful. Very easy to do.

You can also do saved searches. So if I do a search here. This is within posts, so I'm going to say... What might somebody say? I believe. I'm not sure that this is going to work. Let's just say a Flat Earth believer. And then click search. Nothing, of course. Let's see if there was anything if I say, here we go. So this is actually a kind of a keyword search query on post. So this can be very useful. Are you a Flat Earth believer?

So hopefully as you can see this becomes a way of monitoring Facebook. That's much easier than using Facebook.com. And again this weights piece you can actually say I only want to see things that are making people angry. See I'm not sure if this is going to work. Yep. People are angry about this. But sometimes when you're monitoring misinformation it's it's worth doing this because things that make people have a very strong reaction are the things that you're going to find are more likely potentially to be mis or disinformation because that's people who are doing this understand that people have emotional triggers.

So there's many many things that you can do with CrowdTangle. I would really recommend that you have a play around with this yourself. But hopefully this has given you an introduction to how you can use it in the space of misinformation. So hopefully that was useful and you can see how it would bring value to you.

So again if you want to access CrowdTangle you have to apply to CrowdTangle or if you're already in a newsroom, ask somebody there, maybe your training manager, about whether your newsroom already has access.