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COLOMBIA'S 2018 ELECTIONS ON TWITTER

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COLOMBIA'S 2018 ELECTIONS ON TWITTER

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Duque has the best machinery in Twitter among candidates. The political debate is still dominated by Uribe and Santos.

SUMMARY

The analysis of December's tweets shows the campaign has just begun on this platform. The language used by the different actors points toward some of the flags they intend to use to attract voters, but also how they react to the political events of the day. Among the candidates, the figures of Uribe and Santos are still too large to ignore, in numbers of tweets, reactions, and attention they attract. If candidates want to separate themselves from the recent political history and appear in front of the public as credible potential presidents, they will need to establish bolder profiles, create stronger reactions, and elaborate a defined language that sums up their main ideas. So far, only Iván Duque's machinery seems to be doing all these things.

USER'S IMPACT ▶

A user's impact is the number of reactions provoked and the number of users she reaches.

IMPACT

The users who attracted the most attention in December were: Uribe, Santos, Petro, López, Robledo, Duque, Ordóñez, Noticias RCN, BluRadioCo and Ramírez. Vargas Lleras is number 11 and Fajardo makes it to number 13. De la Calle does not show up on the list (figure 1).

BASIC DATA ▶

1,637,643 tweets
149,167 users
8,395 hashtags
Tweets: December 2017

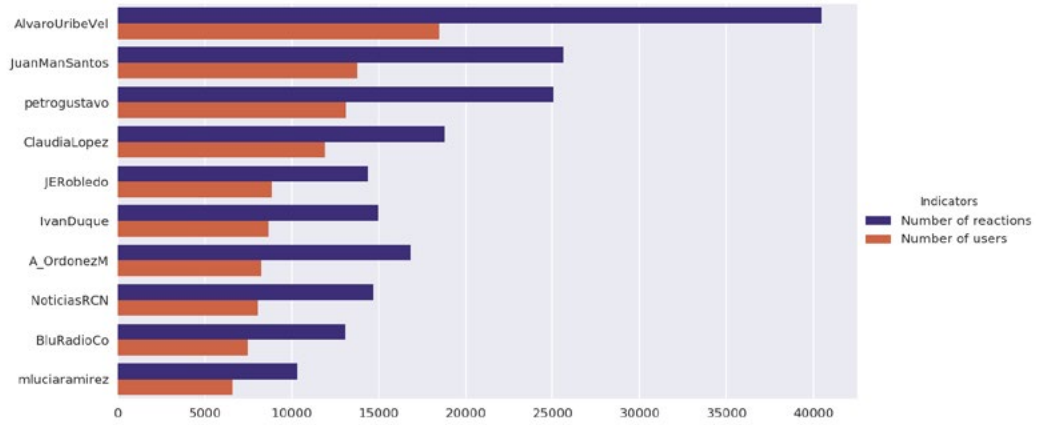

Figure 1. Users with higher number of reactions on Twitter, December 2017

Of these most popular users, Juan Manuel Santos and Alejandro Ordóñez are the most effective, followed by Claudia López and Álvaro Uribe. Effectiveness is the number of reactions divided by the number of tweets a user published. It represents the average reactions a user receives every time she tweets (figure 2).

EFFECTIVENESS

Juan Manuel Santos and Alejandro Ordóñez are the most effective, followed by Álvaro Uribe and Gustavo Petro.

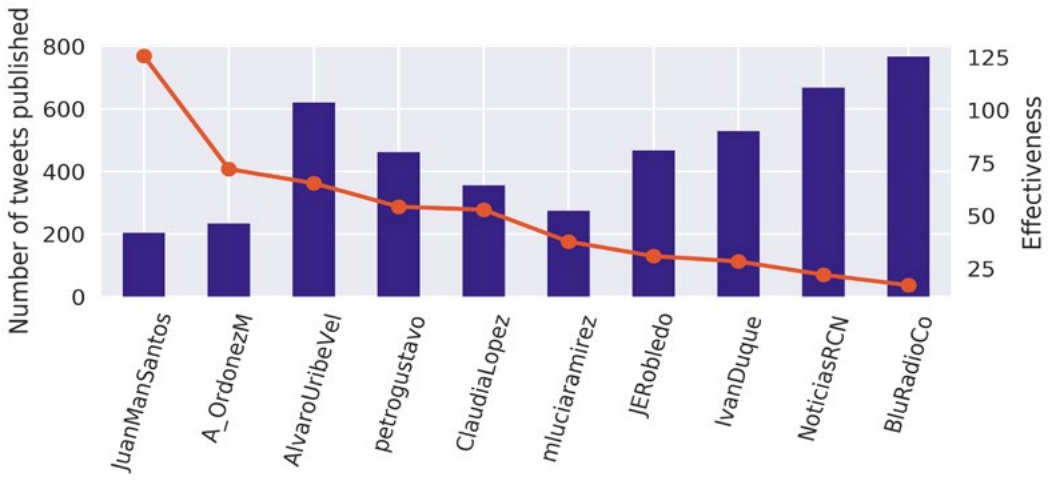

Figure 2. User effectivity vs. number of tweets posted

Finally, the most disseminated videos on Twitter were posted by Uribe. He normally uses this medium to publish his messages. The four most-spreaded urls are Uribe's videos, denouncing the alleged manipulation of the Senate's negative to approve the curules for the victims. The fifth video on this list is a debate among Centro Democrático's precandidates.

USER'S NETWORK

A user's network is built by putting together the reactions (retweets, quotes and replies) to their tweets.

HASHTAGS

They are used to attract users to a theme of conversations, to form a community around an issue and to try to create trending topics. They show the intentions of users who create them, and attraction to these themes by other users. The most-used hashtags refer to Duque and to Coalición Colombia (whose presidential candidate is Fajardo). Besides that, the hashtags reveal both candidates are trending; the most common hashtags lead users with similar opinions to form clusters around the candidates (table 1).

HASHTAG	REACTIONS
#duquepresidente	9299
#rafaelnietolaesperanza	8124
#coalicióncolombia	7925
#Colombia	7014
#Alaire	4420
#coalicioncolombia	3997
#duqueeselquees	3914
#Sepuede	3573
#duquepresidente2018	3114
#nietopresidente	3022

Table 1. Most popular hashtags

NETWORKS OF TOP USERS

Figure 3. Network of top users and its five stronger relationships on Twitter

We show the five strongest relations for each of the top-10 users – that is, the most active users with respect to each of the top users. These users create an echo effect on their leaders. This network also shows the bridges between the leaders (figure 3).

For instance, GusDuque1 links Marta Lucía Ramírez, Santos and Uribe. At the same time, the relationship between Gus-

OUTSTANDING TWITTER ACTIVITY ▶

318,472 tweets were posted from December 10 to 12.

ZOOM IN ▶

Zoom in the graph to see the network in detail.

Duque1 and Uribe is the strongest in the whole network (733 reactions). Ersen5656 links up Uribe and Iván Duque because this user reacts to both Centro Democrático's leaders. Lindaneva connects Claudia López and Uribe, whereas roger5co links Ordóñez and Ramírez. Cmarcafederal connects Petro and Robledo, and felipecaspov connects both BluRadio and NoticiasRCN.

BETTER CONNECTED USERS

This is the network of the 200 users with the highest betweenness centrality of the whole network. The higher the betweenness centrality, the more influential these users are in the network (figure 4).

EVENTS OF THE MONTH

December 10 to 12 were the most active days in Twitter, with a combined total of 318,472 tweets. This period coincides with Centro Democrático's decision to nominate Duque as its presidential candidate. To reach this decision, the party conducted a series of polls to identify the precandidate with the highest support among party members and the public in general. Based on this peak in activity, we would say Duque's nomination received a lot of attention and that his well-built network effectively echoes the event.

Besides, there was an increase in activity around the controversy related to the approval/rejection of the 16 seats for victims in Congress included in the Peace Agreement and denied by the President of Senate after the vote on November 30. The following day, December 1, collects the effects of that decision, with a total of 97,604 tweets.

LANGUAGE

The top-10 messages in terms of reactions were published by politicians and media. In this list (table 2), we find tweets by President Santos arguing in favor of the approval of the 16 seats for victims of war in Congress (top message) and expressing his commitment to the victims; by Noticias RCN on the lowering of Colombia's credit rating; and by Claudia López on her reconciliation with Sergio Fajardo after the coalition's difficulties at the beginning of the month.

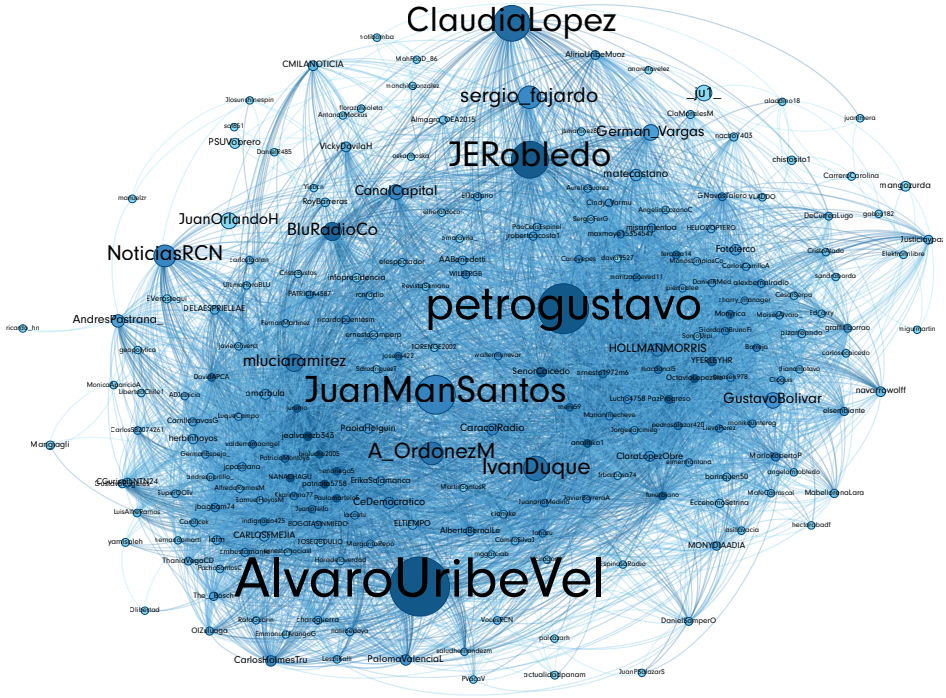

Figure 4. Shows the 219 users with the highest betweenness centrality of the whole network and itsconnections. Álvaro Uribe, Gustavo Petro, and Juan Manuel Santos are the leaders in this metric.

THE MAIN ACTORS ARE TALKING ABOUT ▶

Santos:
building peace & ELN-dialogues

Uribe:
Iván Duque & Santos

Ordóñez:
2 millions & family

Petro:
Bogotá & signatures

López:
thank you

Duque:
we must & we need

Robledo:
fiscal Martínez & Coalición Colombia

Ramírez:
Colombia & peace

BluRadio:
MañanasBlu & Coalición Colombia

Noticias RCN:
FARC, President, & 16 *curules*

TWEET	USER	DATE	REACTIONS
Concepto emitido hoy por Consejo de Estado nos da la razón: "99 senadores es el número que determina quórum decisorio y mayoría absoluta requerida". @Riveraguillermo radica hoy acción de cumplimiento. #PorLosDerechosDeLasVíctimas.	JuanManSantos	Thu Dec 07 20:28	3933
S&P bajó calificación crediticia de Colombia. Así contestó el 27 de octubre @JuanManSantos a periodista que le preguntó sobre una posible rebaja de calificación.	NoticiasRCN	Tue Dec 12 04:32	3269
Hablé esta mañana con el presidente @JuanOrlandoH de Honduras. Le expresé mis condolencias por la muerte de su hermana y lo felicité por su triunfo electoral ratificado por el TSE. Seguiremos trabajando para fortalecer la relación bilateral.	JuanManSantos	Mon Dec 18 20:26	2952
Seguiré luchando por las víctimas y por la paz hasta el último momento. Acudiremos a las cortes que es la vía que nos ofrece nuestra democracia, porque la razón y la ley están de nuestro lado.	JuanManSantos	Thu Dec 07 00:49	2820
Mi obsesión: derrotar la corrupción, bajar impuestos, subir salarios.	AlvaroUribeVel	Sat Dec 02 17:12	2747
#EXCLUSIVO: Sergio Fajardo (@sergio_fajardo) reveló en #OpinaBogotá que de llegar a ser presidente aumentaría la edad para la pensión.	CanalCapital	Fri Dec 01 13:35	2486
Amigos de tuiter: He aceptado ser candidato de @petrogustavo al Senado bajo la siguiente declaración de principios. Ofrezco disculpas a quienes pueda enojar con esta decisión y agradezco a quienes la apoyen.	GustavoBolivar	Wed Dec 06 02:13	2394
Conversamos con @sergio_fajardo. Con todo amor y humildad te ofrezco excusas a ti y @compromisociu por el incidente del viernes. Te agradezco la generosidad y afecto para seguir trabajando juntos. Del Verde contestaremos tu carta y propuesta de mediadores #TendamosPuentes.	ClaudiaLopez	Wed Dec 06 23:07	2387
@JuanManSantos da por aprobada ley que crea circunscripciones para las víctimas http://bit.ly/2BqcXuc #VocesySonidos.	BluRadioCo	Fri Dec 01 01:57	2266
Vamos a luchar contra la corrupción por que sabemos que cada peso que se pierde es una oportunidad que se le roba al país, es un niño que no puede acceder a la escuela, es un hospital que deja de funcionar, es un empleo que desaparece y una familia que sufre.	German_Vargas	Mon Dec 11 17:47	1950

Table 2. Top ten tweets of the month

In general, the most-used words during December were:

UNIGRAMS	COUNT	BIGRAMS	COUNT	TRIGRAMS	COUNT
colombia	117777	centro democrático	18727	16 curules farc	5622
presidente	74117	iván duque	13187	calificación crediticia colombia	4603
candidato	69102	16 curules	10911	bajó calificación crediticia	4382
país	56399	candidato presidencial	9258	aumentar edad pensión	4204
farc	50407	fiscal martínez	7383	martínez personaje año	4154
gobierno	48887	colombia humana	6940	decisión elegir fiscal	3936
hoy	45271	curules farc	6933	fiscal martínez personaje	3864
santos	40750	candidato único	6252	elegir fiscal martínez	3850
gracias	32629	edad pensión	6069	personaje año robledo	3844
uribe	32204	coalición colombia	5699	rechacemos decisión elegir	3842

Table 3. Most frequent unigrams, bigrams and trigrams

16 CURULES▶

curules appears in the top ten bigrams and trigrams.z

In December's analysis, we noticed Iván Duque's strong presence of on the platform. He has been able to dominate the use of hashtags thanks to polls conducted to select the candidate for Centro Democrático. Duque also entered the list of high-impact users, along with Uribe, Santos, the media and some other politicians with long histories on Twitter. It's a very promising start, although he needs to improve his effectiveness by increasing the average number of reactions per tweet.

METHODOLOGY

We downloaded tweets using Twitter's streaming API using the following queries:

CANDIDATES:

"A_OrdonezM, IvanDuque, navarrowolff, CarlosAlfonsoVR, J_Clopatofsky, PalomaValenciaL, CarlosHolmesTru, JAIME_ARAUJO_R, petrogustavo, carlosecaicedo, JERobledo, piedadcordoba, charoguerra, juankpinzon, RafaNietoLoaiza, ClaraLopezObre, juanmanuelgalan, sergio_fajardo, ClaudiaLopez, LizarraldeRuben, TimoFARC, CristoBustos, LuisAlfreRamos, UbeimarDelgadoB, DeLaCalleHum, mluciaramirez, velascoluisf, German_Vargas, MoralesViviane, JuanManSantos, AlvaroUribeVel"

KEYWORDS:

"Colombia paz, Colombia conflicto, Colombia acuerdo, Farc, Colombia guerra,Colombia patria, Colombia eln,Colombia droga,Colombia cultivo,Colombia estado, Colombia gobierno,Colombia nacional,Colombia política, Colombia país,Colombia social,Colombia familia,Colombia víctima,Colombia seguridad,Colombia derecho, MuchasCosasEstanCambiando, ComisionadoPaz, ELN_Paz, ListosParaLaParticipación"

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