



SPECIAL REPORT

Brazil's General Election 2014: the reputation of presidential precandidates on twitter: a multidimensional analysis

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d+i LLORENTE & CUENCA

1. INTRODUCTION
2. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS
3. SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS: DILMA ROUSSEFF
4. SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS: EDUARDO CAMPOS
5. SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS: AÉCIO NEVES
6. THE CHALLENGE OF DIGITAL IDENTITY

AUTHORS

LLORENTE & CUENCA

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Semiocast, Brazil ranks second among top countries on Twitter, behind the United States, with over 40 million registered users. This micro-blogging network has become within a short time one of the main forums for global real-time dialogue with more than 250 million users worldwide.

The network's capacity to spread content and opinions has not only favored the connection between millions of people all around the world, it also helps measuring the impact of major events.

Many electoral campaigns throughout the globe have used Twitter (and social networks in general) to connect with citizens and also to directly know their opinions about precandidates and leaders. Brazil is now aware of the opportunity presented by social networks for users to express themselves, mobilize, convene and comment thanks to the leading role these networks played in many events of the national political scene.

It is clear that social networks will embody one of the main debate, leadership and communication scenarios in the 2014 Brazilian presidential election. However, one of the most important lessons learned by precandidates and their parties from these new media is that the campaign coordination and organization is far more complex than the traditional strategy in mass communication events.

Gone are the times when the number of followers was the core of a website campaign. Nowadays, electoral communication has become a very complex and challenging process due to its influence and its capacity to spread messages and to connect with people of influence in networks.

Establishing leadership through network-based communication requires not only a set of consistent messages and an open and transparent attitude, but it is also especially important to have an understanding of the citizens' perception spontaneously expressed in the 2.0 media.

Within the framework of an open, horizontal and two-way dialogue through 2.0 channels, the electoral process raises awareness among politicians of the fact that their political reputation depends both on who they are and what they say or do and what citizens respond to that (especially those who influence public opinion).

When social networks allow democracy to be more democratic, they also enable us to understand that the reputation of a leader, politician or precandidate is formed by different dimensions and attributes. A good communication through networks has its roots in the analysis of strengths and weaknesses of each dimension with the purpose of designing and

“Having a deep knowledge of citizens’ opinions is the first step in a good electoral campaign: a more direct, more targeted, more relevant and more efficient campaign”

implementing messages according to the citizens’ concerns.

The experience acquired from the use of social networks in different countries clearly shows that an election is neither won nor lost in social networks: the winner is not elected by followers or those who click on the “Like” button.

Like many other social networks, Twitter is an exceptional area in which the government, precandidates and parties can achieve a better understanding of what is expected of them and what people think about them. Having a deep knowledge of citizens’ opinions is the first step in a good electoral campaign: a more direct, more targeted, more relevant and more efficient campaign.

The analysis

The study conducted by LLORENTE & CUENCA on reputation levels analyzes the 1,000 main mentions on Twitter during the period March 2014 to April 2014 of the three main presidential precandidates: **Dilma Rousseff (PT), Aécio Neves (PSDB) and Eduardo Campos (PSB).**

Using this sample, the team of LLORENTE & CUENCA consultants assessed and classified each mention into the following groups:

- **Emocional Balance** , taking into account the tone of each mention: either negative, positive or neutral, always depending on the topics addressed.
- **Notoriety (prominence),**

which considers the level of prominence of a specific topic in the generated discussion about the leader. In this case, priority is given to the percentage of mentions on the addressed topic rather than the total number of topics identified through the analysis of all mentions about the leader.

- **Influence**, which consists on the degree of involvement of the most influential users in the discussions about the examined topic. According to the scale established by Topsy Pro, it is one of the most relevant tools in the market among those who participate in the discussion on the addressed topic.
- **Persistence**, which examines the continuity of key words on a specific topic during a particular period of time (including retweets and mentions on the same topic over a specified period of time).

In line with the methodology applied by LLORENTE & CUENCA, the interaction of these four elements generates a so-called “reputational risk rate”, as it tries to identify the topics and attributes whose mentions represent a potential risk for the reputation of precandidates and determines the weaknesses manifested in political messages that should be addressed.

Thus, for instance, a negative mention with high notoriety, high participation of influential

“This classification by dimensions and attributes enables to conduct a study not only on specific events but also on strategy”

Twitter users and high persistence represents a reputational risk for the precandidate concerned. On the other hand, a positive mention with the same characteristics represents strength and hence an opportunity to achieve a good positioning.

Likewise, all dimensions are classified into four main categories according to the Reputation Institute criteria for the analysis of political leaders:

- **Leadership, linked to the following attributes:**

- » Strategic vision
- » Ability to cope with risk
- » Capacity to anticipate issues and identify opportunities (farsighted vision)
- » Crisis management
- » Qualified teams.

- **Influence:**

- » Good communication skills
- » Ability to deal with global market
- » Social, political and economic

- **Responsibility**

- » Ethical behavior
- » Support for social causes
- » Motivation and inspiration for teams

- » Priority given to citizen satisfaction

- **Management**

- » Specialist in his field
- » Creates value for the country's image
- » Efficient resource management
- » International presence

This classification by dimensions and attributes enables to conduct a study not only on specific events but also on strategy, as it provides valuable elements for the construction and strengthening of messages within particular dimensions (and not only as a response to a specific issue).

In this regard, the aim of the study is to find answers to questions such as:

- What is the dimension or attribute that could potentially trigger more negative criticism or mentions for the precandidate?
- Which dimension or attribute represents a lower risk for the precandidate?
- Which dimensions or attributes are more linked to precandidates and which have weaker links?
- What are the main concerns of the public opinion regarding each presidential precandidate?

“Dialogue and interaction on a social networking platform such as Twitter are constant and, of course, variable”

It should be noted that this study is only comparative to the extent that the same analysis parameters are established for the three political leaders, although it does not determine (nor seeks to) whether one candidate is better or worse than the others. Consequently, the objective of this analysis is not to generate a position in the ranking but to identify risks and opportunities in the opinions of the different population groups.

Equally, this study does not analyze the messages issued by leaders, but references to them made by third parties, classifying the level of relevance (in accordance with the indicated parameters) and involvement of influential users in the debate.

Furthermore, the analysis of the user influence allows a restriction of the impact of “trolls” and other sources with great presence yet little influence. This does not mean that good relations cannot be established among precandidates’ people of influence.

Dialogue and interaction on a social networking platform such as Twitter are constant and, of course, variable. The study provides elements that help precandidates and their eventual campaigns strengthen their messages in response to citizens’ concerns and interests. Only this way will the electoral process be reinforced.

2. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the mentions about the three candidates with the terms defined above, the conclusions of the study drawn from a general perspective are the following:

Responsibility and Management, the most critical dimensions of precandidates

The Responsibility dimension combines attributes such as perception of ethics, priority of citizen satisfaction and support for social causes, among others. In the view of the three precandidates, this was the most risky dimension for their reputation.

On a scale of 0 to 1, 1 representing the highest reputational risk, precandidates Aécio Neves and Eduardo Campos obtained 0.64 and 0.59 respectively; this figures being very close to the assessments of mentions.

In the case of President Dilma Rousseff, this figure represents 0.22, which is under the average rate (0.5) and, therefore, her reputation is safe. Nevertheless, this is the second most critical measure taken by the current President of the Republic.

In all three cases, the negative effect of mentions related to ethical issues had a decisive impact on their reputational risk, as a result of a high exposure of politicians to this questioning on Twitter.

For its part, the Management dimension includes mentions about precandidates' capacities such as efficient resource management, international presence and creation of value for the country's image. Precandidate Eduardo Campos obtained the highest reputational risk rate in this field (0.60), whereas Aécio Neves registered the lowest (0.14), very close to the average neutral figure (0). Dilma remained slightly under the average risk level with 0.42, although this figure represents a high risk for her reputation on Twitter. In the case of Campos, as will be outlined below, the characteristics of negative mentions regarding his capacity and resource management attributes have a great influence on his positioning within this dimension.

Leadership and Influence, the most positive dimensions for precandidates

Moreover, Eduardo Campos obtained the lowest reputational risk rate in the Leadership dimension, which includes mentions linked to strategic vision, ability to cope with risk as well as crisis and management of advisor teams.

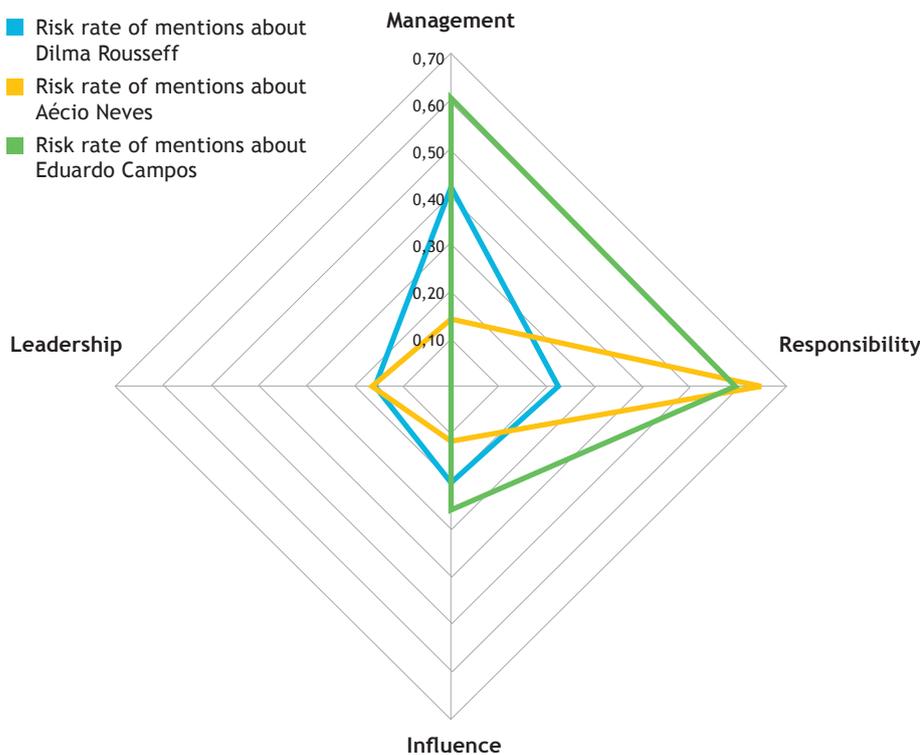
Precandidates obtained their best results in this dimension: Campos obtained 0 (neutral) while Aécio Neves registered 0.16. Dilma attained a slightly higher result (0.21). All three outcomes remained far below the average reputational risk rate, which reflects a high perception of leadership of the three political leaders.

Finally, in the Influence dimension, which encompasses references, communication skills and leadership in a social, political and economic framework, Precandidate Aécio Neves was the one who obtained the lowest risk rate (0.12), while Dilma and Campos received 0.16 and 0.27, respectively.

Like in the Leadership dimension, the three of them were ranked below the average reputational risk rate. This outcome makes them influential leaders in the country in accordance with the sample.

It is also important to stress that this risk rate must also be understood in the light of the dimension's prominence. In other words, it is necessary

REPUTATIONAL RISK RATE BY DIMENSIONS



“Influence and Responsibility are the most prominent dimensions among precandidates”

to understand the relevance or notoriety of the dimension with regards to all the analyzed mentions in order to make a better assessment of a dimension’s reputational risk rate. And this brings us to analyze the prominence of dimensions of the presidential precandidates.

In the case of Dilma Rousseff, it is remarkable that her reputational risk is superior to the risk of the other precandidates in all the analyzed dimensions. This is partly explained by her active participation in social networks.

Influence and Responsibility are the most prominent dimensions among precandidates

As noted above, Responsibility, which represents the highest reputational risk, together with Influence, even though it had a less negative impact, are the ones

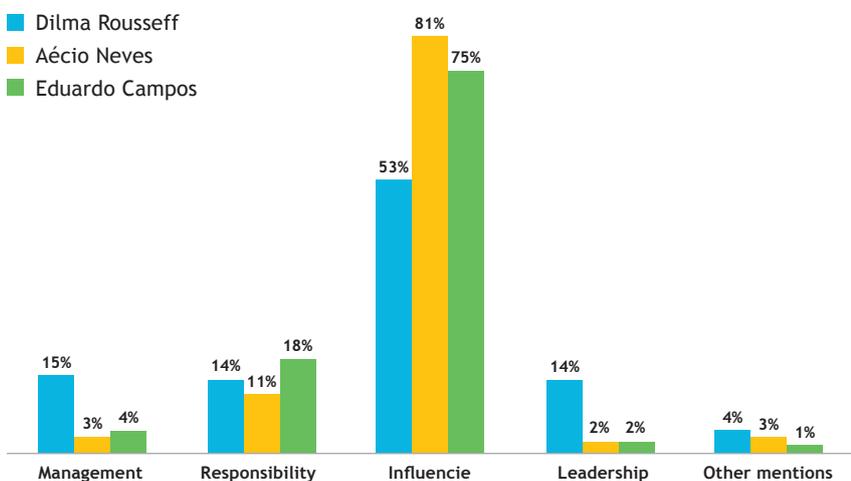
that received the most mentions in the analysis of the three precandidates.

In all three cases, the Influence dimension was the most relevant, obtaining 50 % of prominence and even reaching 75 % and 81 % in the cases of Aécio Neves and Eduardo Campos, respectively. Dilma registered 53 %.

When she occupied the Presidency of the Republic, she understandably presented the greatest dispersion of her dimensions in relation to the other precandidates. This fact was reflected by the analysis and a wider distribution of mentions in the four dimensions was recorded.

During the pre-election campaign, it is also interesting to see how mentions about the three precandidates were grouped together, especially regarding attributes such as communication skills and economic, social and political prominence.

PROMINENCE CHART



“The next issue to determine is the presence of influencing factors (influencers) in debates about precandidates”

Furthermore, the Responsibility dimension represents 14 % of Dilma’s mentions, 18 % of Campos’ and 11 % of Aécio’s. It also represents their highest reputational rate. Prominence helps understand that attributes related to ethics or citizen satisfaction might have a strong impact on precandidates’ reputation.

Aécio Neves and Eduardo Campos were given very little prominence in the Management and Leadership dimensions but still greater than Dilma Rousseff, due to the dispersion she experienced, inherent to the presidency, as was mentioned earlier. In her case, Management and Leadership represent 15 % and 14 % of her mentions,

respectively, while Neves and Campos do not exceed 4 % of prominence in these dimensions.

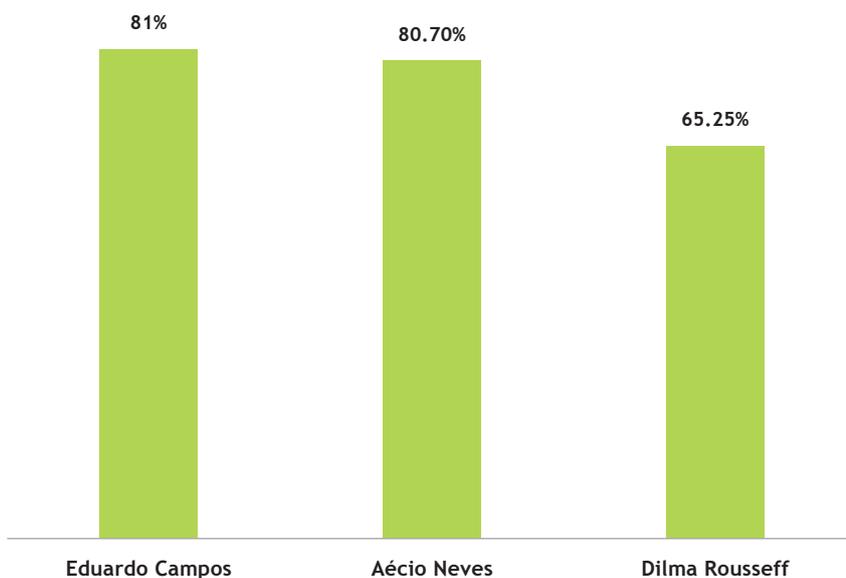
The prominence of other mentions includes those which, by their nature, do not belong to any dimension. Thus, once we know the reputational risk rate and the level of relevance of these dimensions on precandidates’ reputation, the next issue to determine is the presence of influencing factors (influencers) in debates about precandidates.

Eduardo Campos and Aécio Neves have a great repercussion among influencers

As explained earlier, one of the elements analyzed by LLORENTE & CUENCA is the identification of users that have a strong influence on debates about precandidates. This allows us to obtain a more qualitative view of the effects of the analyzed dimensions, which entails a better understanding of the real scope of repercussions.

For this purpose, the conducted study applied the Topsy influencer analysis parameter, one of the most important Twitter monitoring platforms in the market. Hence the study considers as influencers those users who ranked above 8 on Topsy’s overall ranking, based on criteria related to audience, network permanency, (rate of adherence) and reactions to mentions.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF INFLUENCERS



“It is important for them to attract the interest of influencers, since it can be a great opportunity to enhance their positioning”

Mentions about Eduardo Campos and Aécio Neves have shown a high participation of influencers (81 % and 80.7 % respectively), while the average rate regarding mentions linked to Dilma is slightly lower (65.25 %).

It is important for them to attract the interest of influencers, since it can be a great opportunity to enhance their positioning, as influencers have an enormous capacity to spread messages and opinions among users within the network. Still, with respect to dimensions having a high reputational risk rate, influencers, who have a strong influence on debates, can increase the potential threat to the image of precandidates. Seen in the light of all four dimensions, there is a trifling difference between Neves and

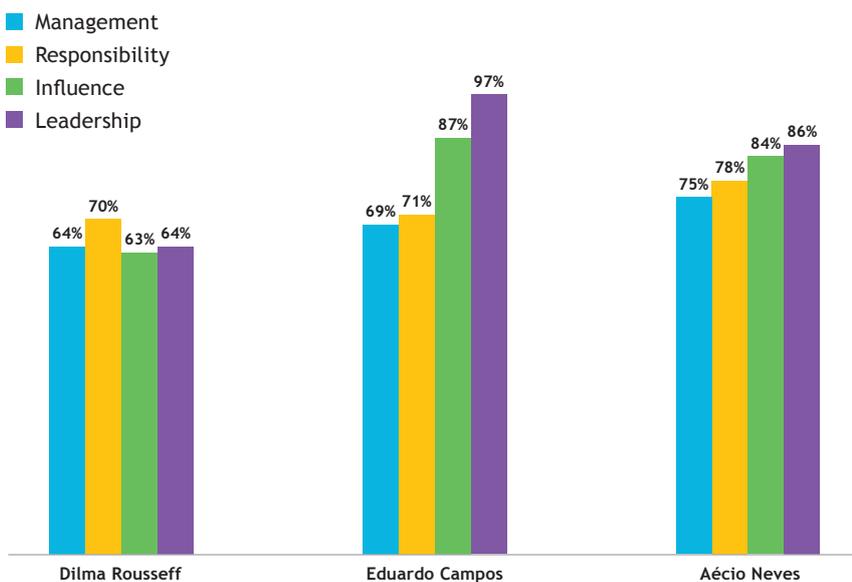
Campos’ influencers though the presence of Dilma’s influencers is still slightly inferior.

If we consider the two most important dimensions for the study (Influence and Responsibility), we can see that 87 % of Campos’ influencers are involved in mentions related to Influence, while Aécio’s influencers represent 84 % in this field. In this area, Dilma’s influencers’ participation accounts for 63 %.

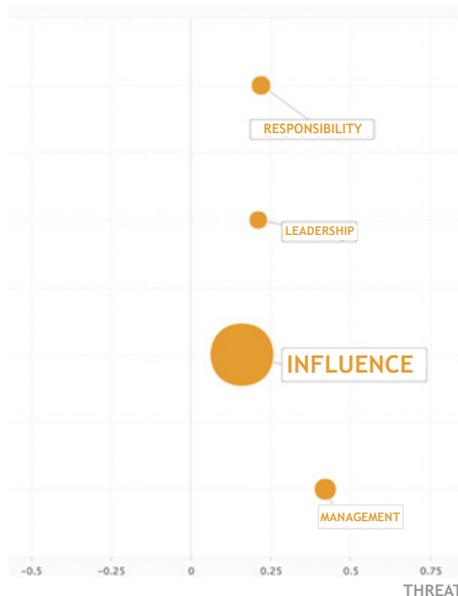
Again, the Responsibility dimension, in which both precandidates have a high reputational risk, Aécio Neves’ mentions are made 78 % of his influencers, in comparison to 71 % of mentions registered about Campos. Dilma has a higher percentage of influencers (70 %) in this dimension.

With regards to Management, which is quite a risky dimension for Dilma and Campos, mentions about them have been made by 64 % and 69 % of influencers, respectively.

RATE OF INFLUENCERS BY DIMENSIONS



**DIMENSION GENERAL CHART:
DILMA ROUSSEFF**



In the light of this overall vision of precandidates' dimensions, the study continues its analysis of each leader going further in the attributes that have implications on their level of reputation.

**3 SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS:
DILMA ROUSSEFF**

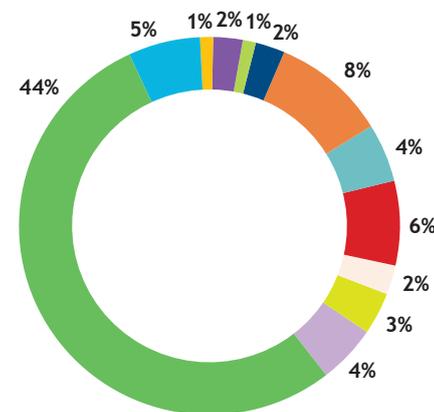
As for President Dilma Rousseff, the four analyzed dimensions rank, in general terms, below the average reputational risk rate (0.5) and, some of them such as, for instance, Influence, are close to the average rate (0).

prominence of every dimension and colors represent positioning in terms of reputational risk rate (red: high risk; orange: medium risk; yellow: neutral average rate; green: positive rate). Thus, it can be seen that Influence is the most prominent dimension, followed by Management and, lastly, there is a "tie" amongst Responsibility and Leadership.

Dilma's attributes

LLORENTE & CUENCA further studied dimensions in terms of attributes and the analysis showed that Dilma's mentions related to her social, political and economic prominence (Influence dimension) represent 44 % of her mentions as expected, given that she is the current President of the Republic.

**DILMA ROUSSEFF'S
PROMINENCE ATTRIBUTES**

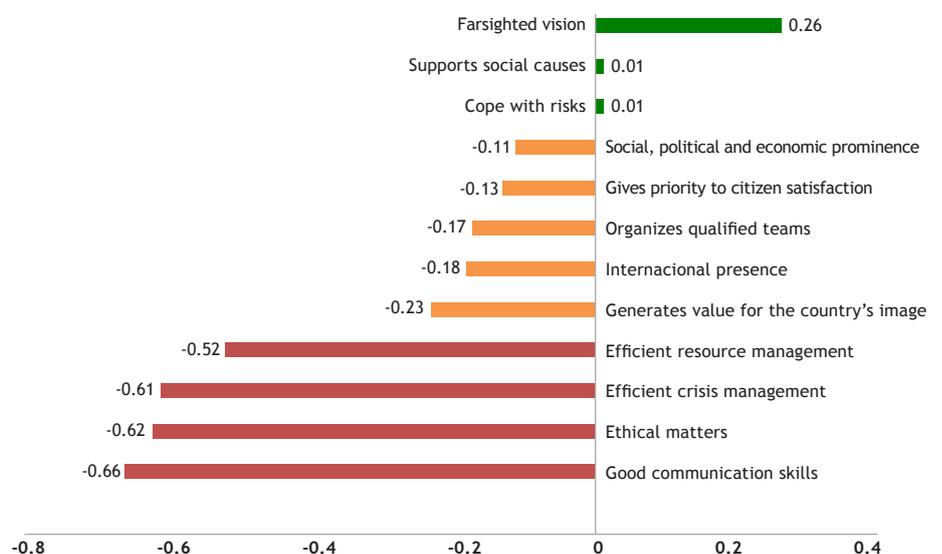


- Social, political and economic prominence
- Efficient crisis management
- Generates value for the country's image
- International presence
- Copes with risks
- Gives priority to citizen satisfaction
- Supports social causes
- Farsighted vision
- Efficient resource management
- Organizes qualified teams
- Communication skills
- Ethical matters

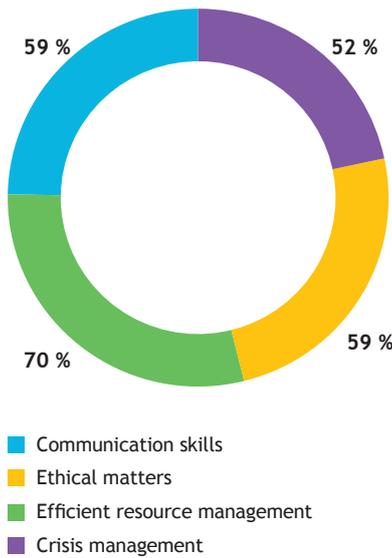
In any case, none of the four dimensions exceeds the average rate (between 0 and -1).

As can be seen in the graph below on general positioning, the size of the circle represents the

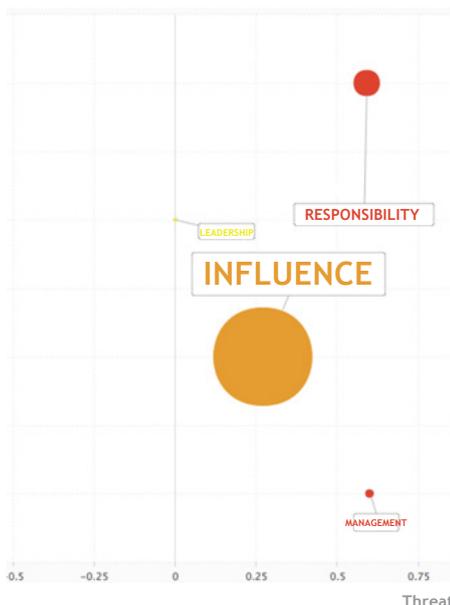
RISK CHART BY ATTRIBUTES



RATE OF INFLUENCING FACTORS BY ATTRIBUTES: DILMA ROUSSEFF



GENERAL CHART ON DIMENSIONS: EDUARDO CAMPOS



Apart from the aforementioned attribute, the prominence of mentions is widely spread over the other attributes. This reflects once again the broad range of topics that comprises the President's reputation on Twitter. President's attributes are notably divided into 12 identified characteristics. A result of 5 % of mentions about crisis management is quite remarkable, since this attribute has not been observed in the other precandidates.

As stated above, the role of attributes must be considered according to the reputational risk rate and also according to the presence of influencers in the different discussions on a specific attribute.

Therefore, even if they registered a lower prominence, some attributes such as "farsighted vision", "ability to cope with risks" or "support to social causes" are highly valued by all

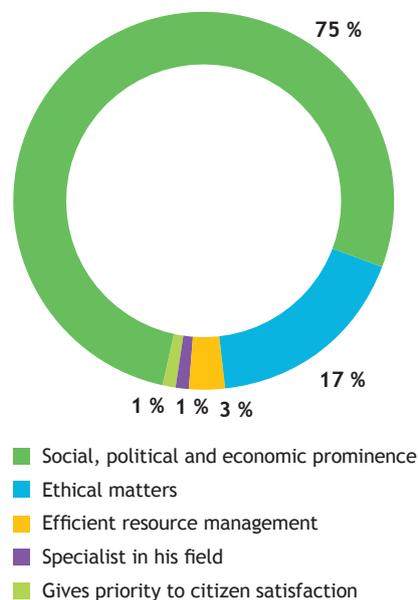
participants in the discussion. At the same time, all matters related to communications skills (0.66), ethics (0.62), crisis management (0.61) and efficient resource management (0.52) are the attributes with a higher risk rate.

Given that the average presence of influence factors exceeds 65 %, taking into account the main attributes with a high reputational risk, it is outstanding that 70 % of them are linked to the efficient resource management, while in the other three, this presence varies between 52 % and 59 %.

4.SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS: EDUARDO CAMPOS

As seen in the general chart on precandidate Eduardo Campos' reputational risk, Responsibility and Management dimensions exceed the average risk, reaching 0.59 and 0.60 respectively.

PROMINENCE OF EDUARDO CAMPOS'S ATTRIBUTES



Although its role is still irrelevant compared to the other three dimensions, a long-term persistence of the Management dimension might have a negative impact on Campos' reputation. During the analyzed period of time, mentions about the results of the management of the government of Pernambuco had a direct effect on this attribute.

Mentions made within the Responsibility dimension about ethical issues made this dimension one of the main threats for the reputation of the precandidate on Twitter.

The Influence dimension, which gathered the majority of mentions, is below the average reputational risk rate (0.27). These mentions are mostly linked to its role on the country's political, social and economic scenario.

Although it registers a very low participation, the Leadership dimension reveals the positive impact on the precandidate on attributes such as "farsighted vision" regarding, for instance, the support for a civil framework on the Internet.

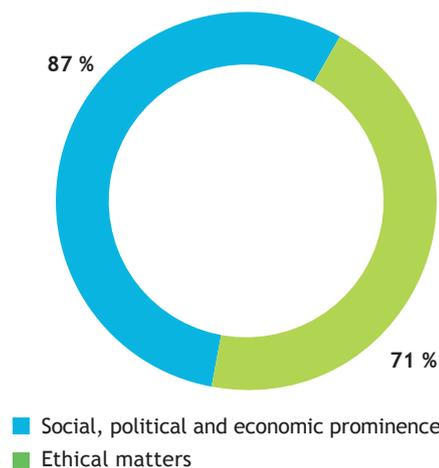
to these two attributes, which are consistent with the time of study: a greater number of public appearances (prominence) and an immediate assessment of the government of Pernambuco's production (ethics).

The more campaign-focused speeches Campos gives (like Aécio and Dilma), the greater the attribute dissemination will be, which will generate a higher number of messages. However, he has less prominence on issues such as giving priority to citizen satisfaction or those related to the precandidate's capacity.

In attempting to define messages, teams and programs, the study identifies that, without taking account of the attribute prominence, some issues such as precandidate's capacities (specialist in his field) and an efficient resource management have, like the aforementioned ethic issues, negative impacts on Campos' reputational risk rate.

These two attributes exceed the average reputational risk rate and should therefore be included in the message strategy and communication actions, as these two issues still have very little prominence but their reputation could be affected if this persists.

RATE OF INFLUENCING FACTORS BY ATTRIBUTES

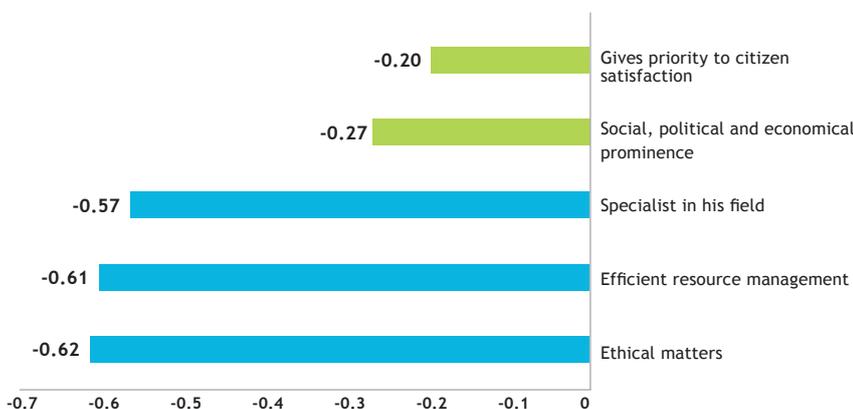


Eduardo Campos' attributes

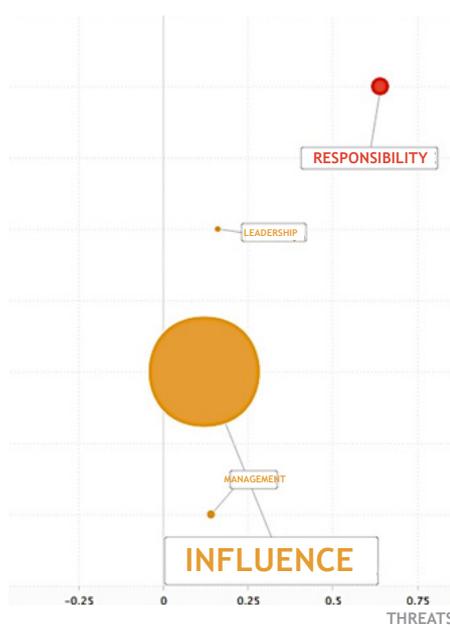
Unlike Dilma, mentions about Campos are grouped in 5 main attributes, among which social, political and economic prominence represent 75 % of the references. Along with this attribute, some matters linked to ethics represent 17 % of the total analyzed mentions.

92 % of mentions about Eduardo Campos on Twitter are related

EDUARDO CAMPOS: RISK CHART BY ATTRIBUTES



**RISK CHART BY DIMENSIONS:
AÉCIO NEVES**



As a social, political and economic key figure (Campos' main attribute), his reputational risk is below the average rate, relatively close to the neutral point. In addition to obtaining the highest number of mentions, this attribute can have a positive influence on Campos' reputation thanks to a good message and relation strategy, particularly in view of the fact that the Leadership dimension has 87 % of influencers' participation in mentions about the precandidate concerned. In other words, this is, together with the ethical issues, one of the most relevant elements of the reputation of the former Governor of the State of Pernambuco, who has registered 71 % of influencers' participation.

**5.SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS:
AÉCIO NEVES**

In the case of precandidate Aécio Neves, like Eduardo Campos, the Responsibility dimension stands over the average reputational risk rate (0.64). Mentions related to ethical attributes can have negative repercussions on Neves' reputation, despite gathering 11 % of the total analyzed mentions. As shown in the general assessment, this issue affects the three precandidates, mostly the PSDB Senator.

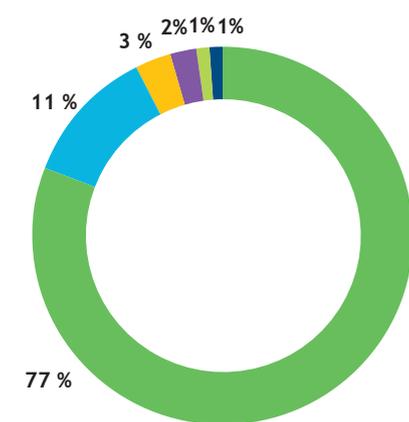
On the contrary, the Influence dimension not only gathers the highest number of mentions (see the size of the circle on the table below), but it is also the closest to the neutral point (0.12), which presents a good opportunity to enhance the precandidate's reputation.

Likewise, the Leadership and Management dimensions, despite their negligible prominence, are also close to the neutral point (0.16 and 0.14, respectively), whereby they become good opportunities for a future strengthening of Neves' reputation.

Aécio Neves' attributes

Mentions about Aécio Neves made on Twitter during the analyzed period of time, are grouped in six major attributes, being the social, political and economic prominence the one having the highest number of references (77 %), followed by issues related to ethics (11 %), similarly to the situation experienced by Eduardo Campos.

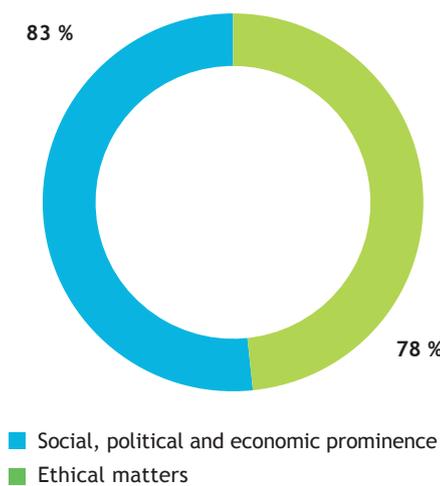
ATTRIBUTE PROMINENCE: AÉCIO NEVES



- Social, political and economic prominence
- Ethical matters
- Good communication skills
- Efficient resource management
- Specialist in his field
- Farsighted vision

Indeed, the Influence dimension of Eduardo Campos offers important opportunities for him to improve his reputation, seizing on both the numerous mentions and the presence of influencers. On the other hand, issues related to Management and Responsibility could be greater potential threats if the current tendency continues and the prominence of these dimensions increases.

RATE OF INFLUENCING FACTORS BY ATTRIBUTES



Attributes linked to precandidates' capacities or to communication skills, which might be relevant in the coming months, currently have a prominence of 2 % and 3 %, respectively. These two attributes with little importance have registered positive reputation rates. This presents an opportunity for a future improvement of messages and prominence.

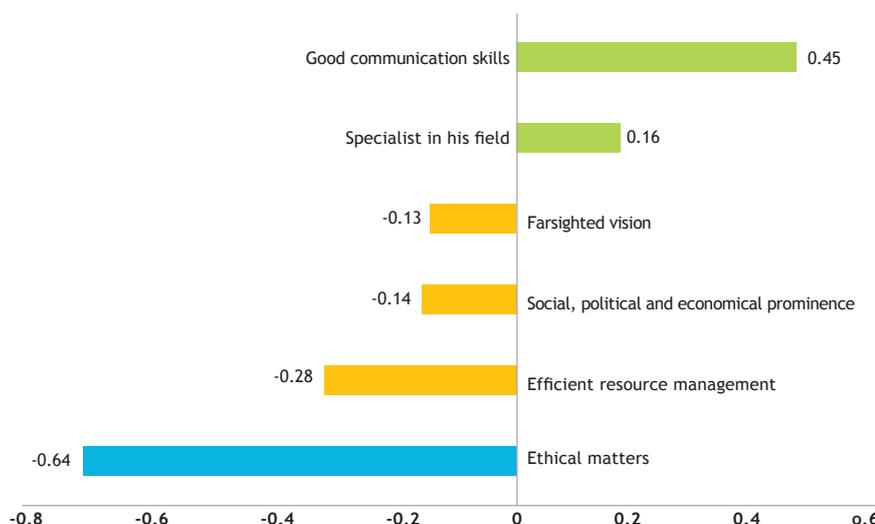
At the same time, ethic issues pose a greater reputational risk for the precandidate even though his prominence is negligible. Yet the long-term persistence of this attribute, along with a more significant prominence, can have a negative effect on the precandidate's reputation.

Attributes linked to the farsighted vision and to prominence are very close to the neutral point, and open the door to future positioning opportunities to reverse the current perception. With regards to Aécio's social, political and economic prominence (0.14), the study identified a neutral tone in the majority of mentions (58 %), and this entails an increase of positive perceptions related to this attribute.

The efficient resource management (0.28), despite being under the average reputational risk rate (0.5), is an attribute that could have a negative impact on Neves' reputation. As for ethical matters, the presence of influencers (78 %) in the debate makes it a risky attribute with a high probability to affect Aécio's reputation in a negative manner. Furthermore, Aécio Neves' Prominence attribute has recorded 83 % of influencers taking part in the discussion and 58 % neutral mentions. It thus provides a space for positioning which might yield positive results on precandidate's prominence if it is well implemented.

Aécio Neves' reputation will be protected by an adequate management of attributes linked to ethical matters. This will also help implement strategies in order to empower positive attributes such as precandidate's abilities. This will then be useful for dimensions to obtain positive outcomes which favor their reputation.

AÉCIO NEVES: RISK CHART BY ATTRIBUTES



“Communication through networks will increasingly require a higher level of transparency of public powers and businesses”

6. THE CHALLENGE OF DIGITAL IDENTITY

This study highlights the importance of digital identity in terms of online personal reputation management. On the basis of the daily work with the leaders of the main companies in Latin America, Spain and Portugal, LLORENTE & CUENCA has developed its own methodology that allows political and economic leaders to manage their presence on the global networks. This methodology is based on three fundamental pillars:

- **Strategy:** the organization to which LLORENTE & CUENCA belongs needs, firstly, to understand the benefits the company could gain through the leaders' participation on social networks. For this reason, the first step of LLORENTE & CUENCA's job is a consultancy with the purpose of defining procedures and performance indicators, as well as organizing conferences to clarify trends and best practices.
- **Specialization:** The use of social networks requires a certain command of technical skills on the Internet and its applications; for this end, several training and operational seminars are proposed and also eventual explanations for the first week of practice.
- **Time:** The main obstacle for the managers to use social networks is usually the management of available time. To address this problem, a work program is required, which adapts routines to social networks and to the profile of each leader. The management of digital identity is a challenge that should be met as soon as possible by the executives, presidents and leaders of the different organizations.

Communication through networks will increasingly require a higher level of transparency of public powers and businesses. Leaders cannot be left out of this process if they want the audience to have a good perception of them and help organizations attain their reputation goals.

AUTHORS



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It currently has offices in **Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Spain, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Portugal** and the **Dominican Republic**. It also offers its services through affiliates in the **United States, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay** and **Venezuela**.

Its international development has meant that in 2014 LLORENTE & CUENCA is 55th in the Global ranking of the **most important communication companies in the world**, as reflected in the annual Ranking published by The Holmes Report.

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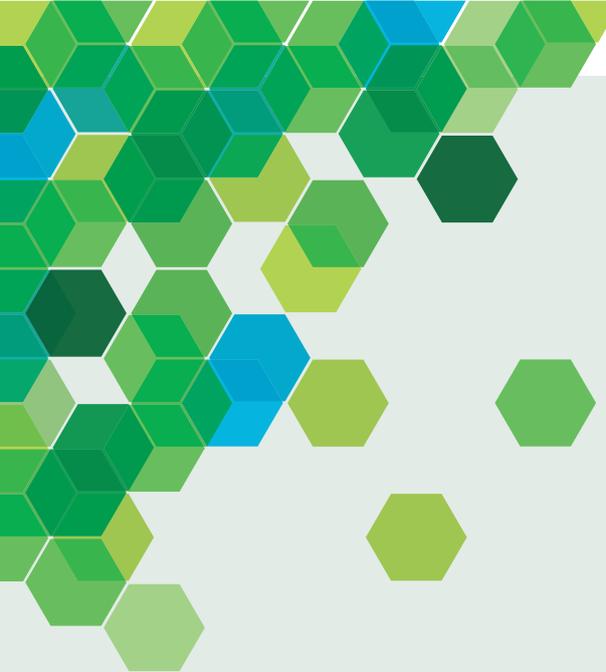
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