



# Brandwatch

Social Media Monitoring

## London Cycle Scheme Boris' s Bikes

**Two periods covered:**

**Launch week:** 29 July to 5 August 2010

**Week 7:** 20 September to 27 September 2010

**Brandwatch Report:** Published October 2010

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# Introduction

This report measures the performance in social and professional online media of the **London Cycle Scheme ('Boris's Bikes')** over 2 key periods: **Launch Week** and **7 weeks**

The report covers the relative **size of online presence**, the **influential sites** on which the initiative attracts discussion, and the **page type share** – news, forum, blog, or Twitter

The report also analyses the prevailing opinion of users and observers and the ways in which the scheme is discussed and how these have changed over time

# Report Structure

The report is divided into 3 sections:

1. **Period Comparison and Volume Profile:** this section presents volume, share of voice, and sentiment profiles for the 2 periods
2. **Twitter Focus:** because the bike scheme is mentioned most on Twitter, this section reports volume and sentiment for each period, and representative tweets
3. **Themes and Issues:** this section identifies the different ways in which the bike scheme is discussed - whether on news sites, blogs, forums or Twitter. Themes and issues are identified, and representative mentions are provided

# Executive Summary

## **Volume-peak at launch is bolstered by news event announcements**

Followed by sustained user feedback and opinionated discussion on social media platforms – Twitter, google Buzz, facebook. These platforms have been used to publicise live testimony, anecdote, and real-time reaction from users and observers.

## **Significant levels of sustained positive and negative reaction to scheme**

Positive opinion grows toward Week 7, outweighing negative feedback

## **Emerging differences in the range of issues and themes between the two reporting periods – Launch week and Week 7**

The 'Boris Bike' becomes the nickname of bike and there is increasing surprise at low number of injuries

## **Positive commentary at its greatest on Twitter**

It is the online posting made at the moment of real-time user experience that is most likely to be positive. This positive reaction has increased between Launch and Week 7

# Executive Summary

Launch Week (29 – 5 August 2010)	Tone
Excitement and enthusiasm!	Positive
Site & payment glitches, site down	Negative
Delay in key delivery	Negative
Barclays sponsorship reaction	Negative
First impressions of bike – clunky but good	Neutral



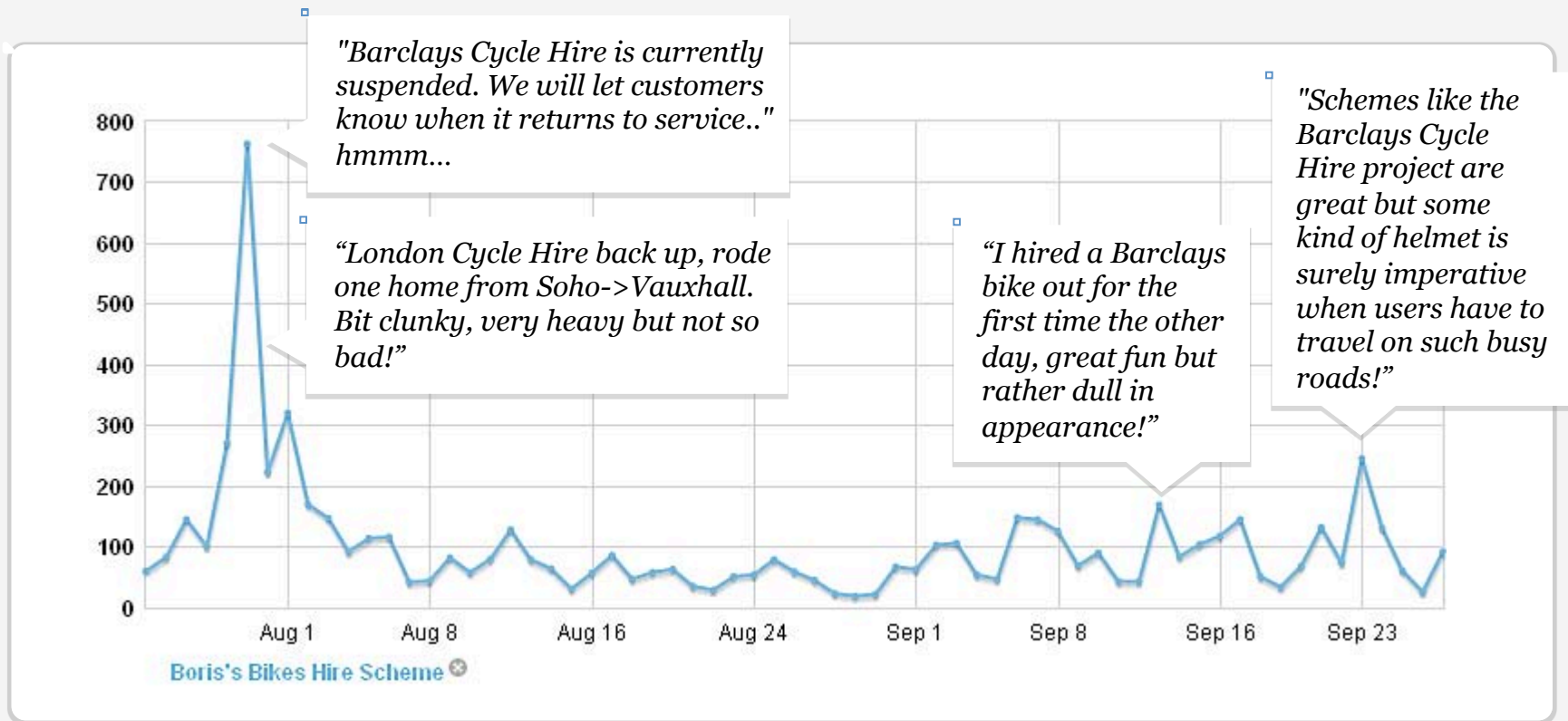
Week 7 (20 – 27 September 2010)	Tone
The 'Boris Bike' name taken up by the people	Positive
Surprise: very low number of thefts & injuries	Positive
Calls for scheme south of the river	Positive
Call for helmets to be compulsory	Neutral

# Section 1

## Period Comparison – Volume Profile

# Social media mentions peak at launch, but sustained interest thereafter

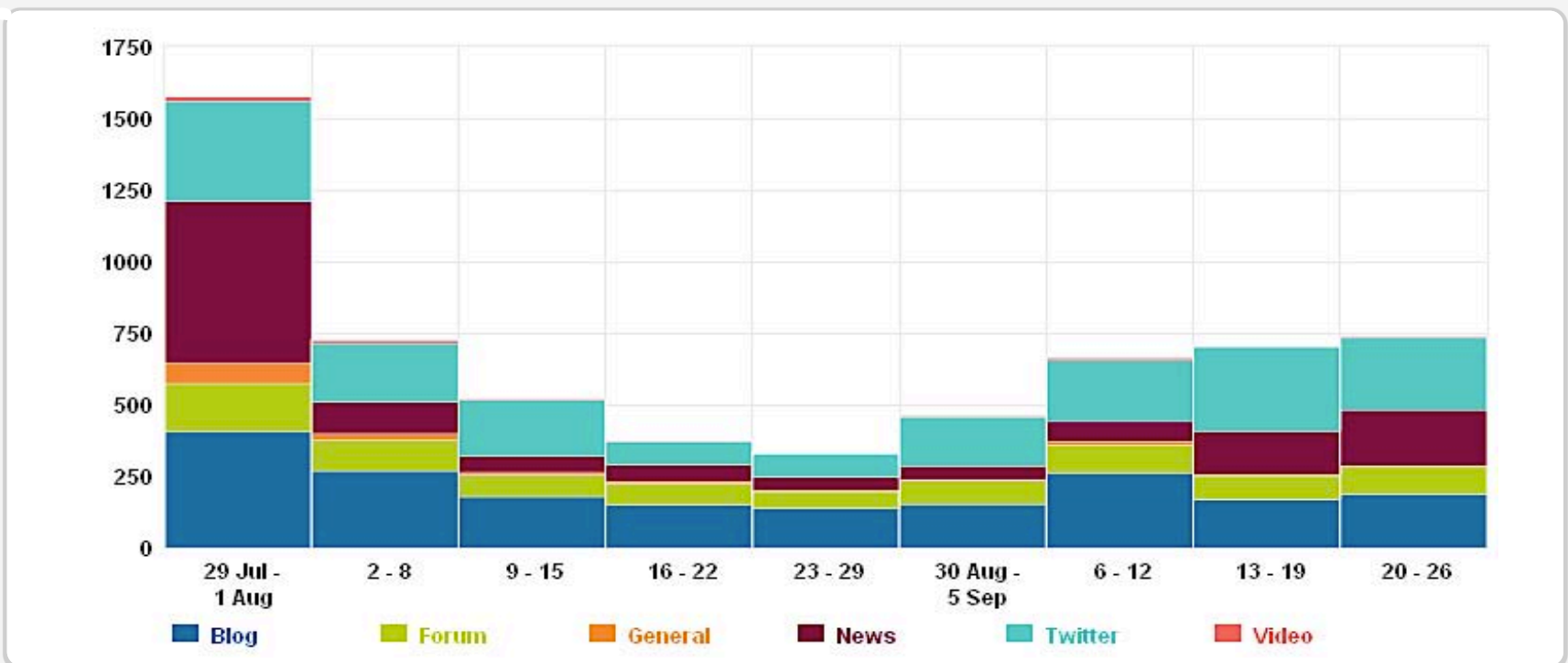
## History graph joining the two periods



# News coverage falls away, but Twitter use grows as instant feedback is made

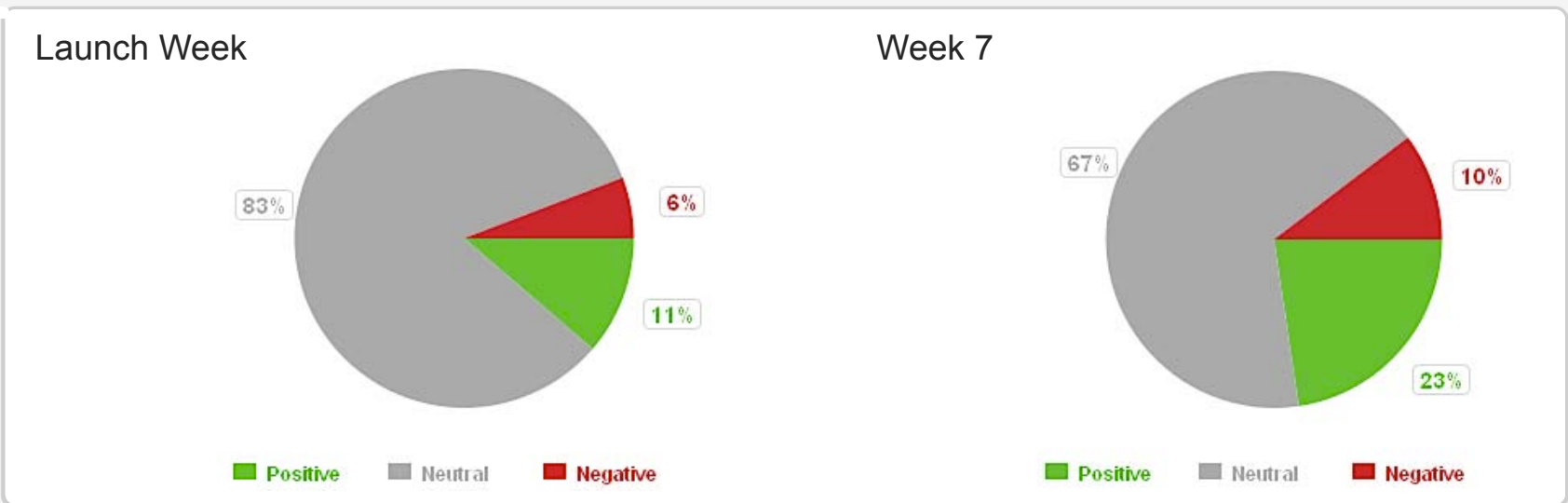
## Page Type share for each week from launch to Week 7

- Launch week receives mainly news based announcements. These are predominantly opinion-free.
- Blog and **Twitter** reaction is substantial, and negativity-free
- As the weeks continue, Engagement with Boris's Bike scheme is sustained, - and grows. **Twitter** engagement increases, as users provide 'live' anecdote and testimony.



# Positive feeling increases over weeks

## Sentiment Reading - Period Comparison



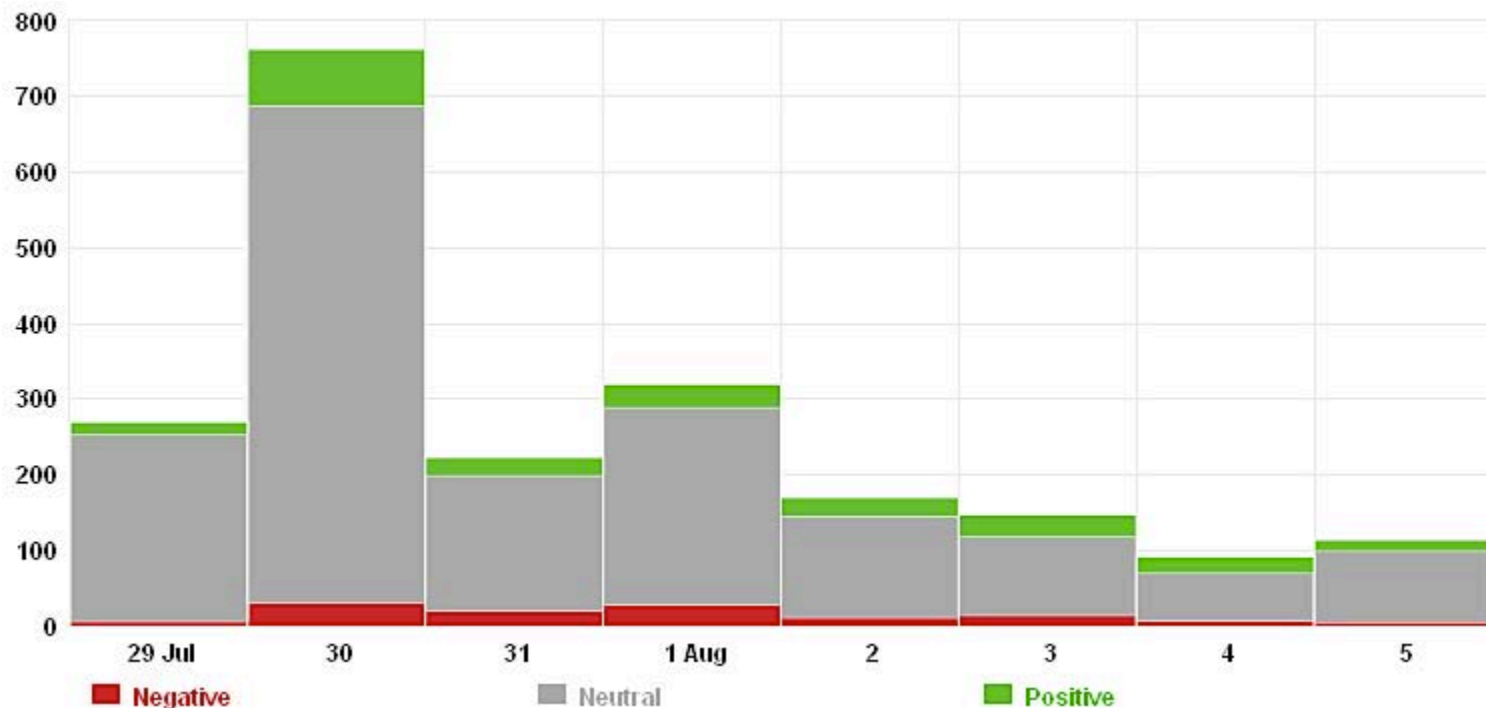
Launch Week	No. of Mentions	Positive Sentiment	Negative Sentiment	Neutral Sentiment
	2099	238	122	1739

Week 7	No. of Mentions	Positive Sentiment	Negative Sentiment	Neutral Sentiment
	764	173	79	512

# During the launch week most comments were neutral

## Volume and Sentiment profile day-by-day during launch Week

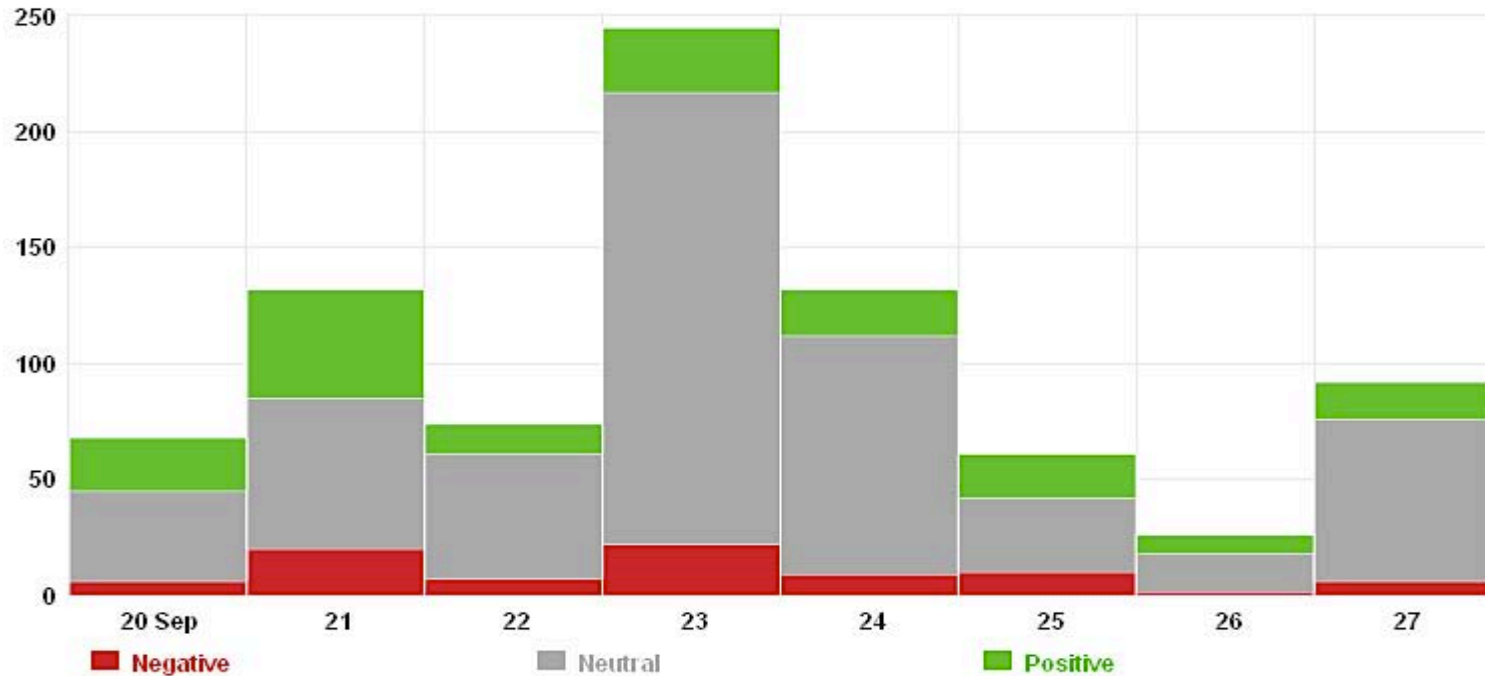
- In Launch week, each day's coverage (though fluctuating in volume) remains predominantly neutral in sentiment, due to a dominating presence of news announcements.
- Positive sentiment out-weighs negative sentiment



# By week 7 more positive feedback

## Volume and Sentiment profile day-by-day during Week 7

Compared to Launch Week, sentiment toward the bike scheme by Week 7 has polarised to a significant degree.





# By week 7 topics about usage

## Topic cloud by Week 7

- **'Boris'** is now dominant as the name of the bike – the **'Boris Bike'** is established
- **'Helmets imperative'** denotes call for helmets as standard form road safety group
- **'Road safety'**, **'injured'** denote discussion of safety, and call for helmets OR the recognition of the surprisingly low number of injuries – only **'six people'**
- **'iphone'** and other apps are becoming more foregrounded, and prove popular
- **'Barclays'** are criticized for turning bikes into advertising boards
- **'Ken Livingston'** has gained presence, as next mayoral election is discussed.

000 journeys android app Barclays Barclays cycle Barclays cycle hire Barclays PLC  
Bike hire Bike hire scheme Bike scheme blue Boris Boris Johnson Brake Britain Cameron  
Central London Charity (calls for compulsory helmets) Charity Brake Chris City colour congestion  
Cycle hire Cycle Hire App Cycle Hire Scheme dangerous David designer Docking Station extend  
France funny stickers green helmets Helmets 'imperative' Hire App Hire Scheme House injured  
iphone Johnson Ken Livingston London London Bike London Cycle London Cycle Hire  
Mayor Boris Johnson mobile Montreal Mr. Johnson Paris phone Police problems road safety  
Road safety charity safe safety Safety charity Safety charity Brake Serco six people South London  
stolen The Boris Bikes Tony unified cycle map unified map versus walking Victoria  
Waterloo

# Public feedback on Twitter, Google Buzz & Facebook dominates news platforms

The most influential sites over the entire 7 week period

Site name	Volume	Pos	Neg	Neu	mozRank	Backlinks
twitter.com	1873	417	243	1213	9.26	3428402
www.google.com	205	65	18	122	9.32	61430800
www.facebook.com	144	17	4	123	9.41	5900713
www.flickr.com	73	7	2	64	8.6	5826180
www.earth-stream.com	69	0	0	69	4.65	46493
www.thisislondon.co.uk	64	3	1	60	6.76	19655
www.bikeradar.com	61	1	0	60	6.11	101461
www.youtube.com	50	2	3	45	9.19	2719363
www.guardian.co.uk	44	1	0	43	7.85	911837
road.cc	43	0	0	43	5.18	22815
www.cyclechat.net	43	0	0	43	4.17	3056
www.borisbikes.co.uk	42	0	0	42	0	0
uk.hadnews.com	40	0	0	40	4.41	10
londonist.com	32	0	1	31	5.6	453947
www.independent.co.uk	28	7	4	17	7.49	353013
www.telegraph.co.uk	24	0	1	23	7.66	332705
realcycling.blogspot.com	22	0	0	22	4.19	1926
www.dailymail.co.uk	22	1	2	19	7.33	97019

**'MozRank'** measures the influence of the site, by determining the number and credibility of sites linking to it. (Scored from **1** to **10**. 10 is best. A score of 7 is very good)

# Section 2

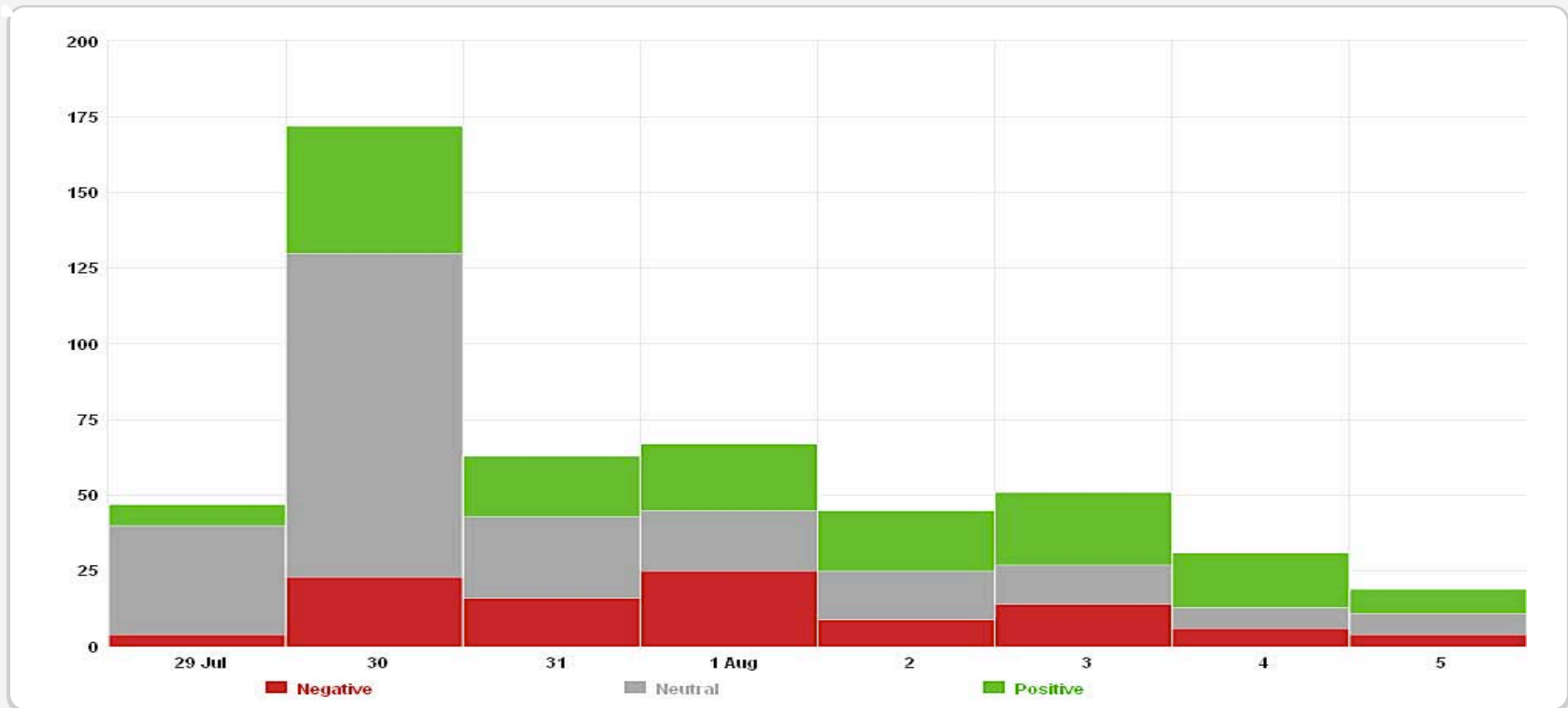
## Twitter Focus



# Twitter is great barometer of 'live' and instant individual public opinion

## Volume of Twitter mentions by day in Launch Week

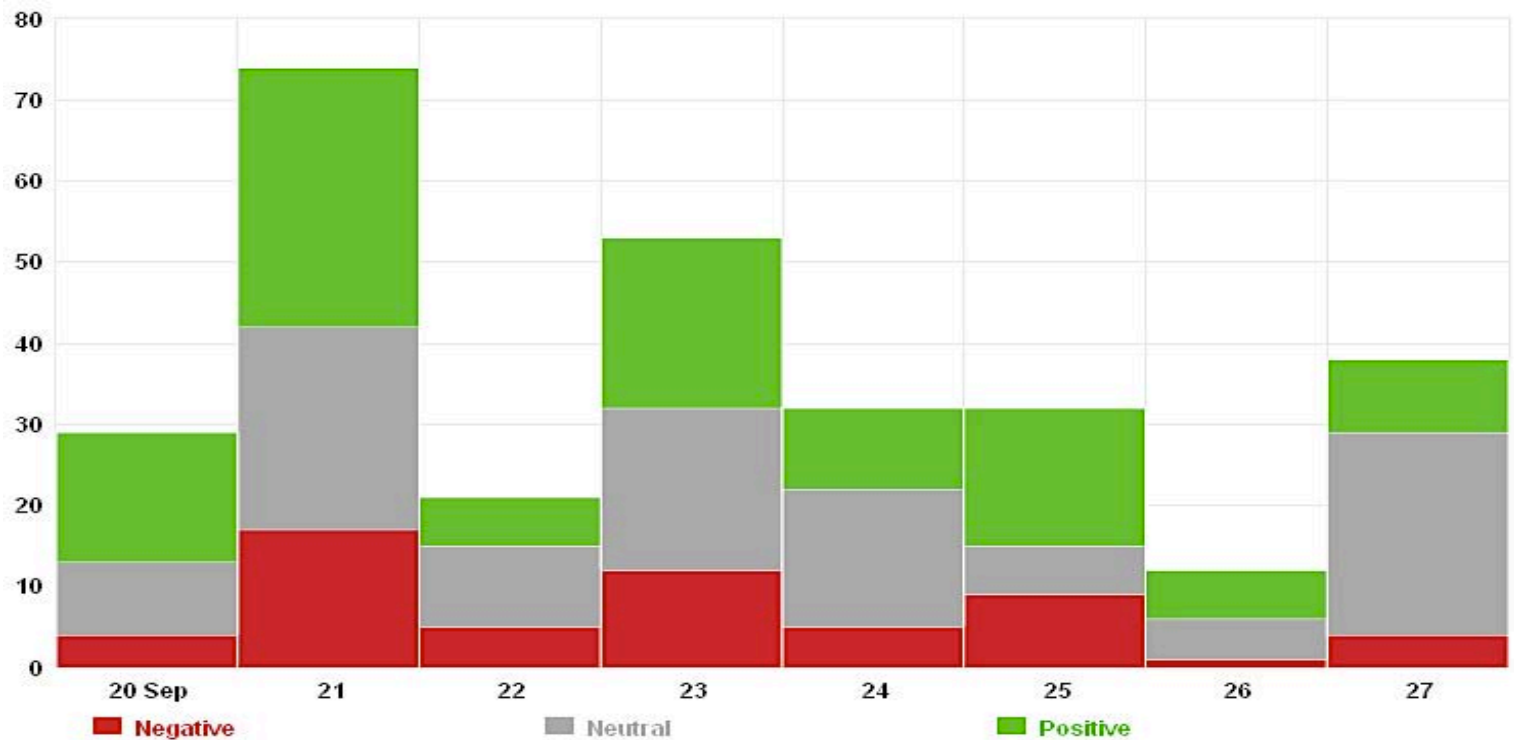
- There is strong opinion - significant **positive** and **negative** sentiment - during Launch Week
- **Positive** reaction is very healthy and is sustained, outweighing **negative** by approx. **2:1** across launch Week



# By week 7, live feedback is clearly positive

## Volume of Twitter mentions by day in Week 7

Though overall size of discussion has settled to approx. 30% of Launch Week numbers, the relative size of **positive opinion** expressed on **Twitter** has increased significantly. The nature of tweeting means this **positive feedback** is being made 'live' – by 'front-line' users, experiencing the bike scheme in action.



# Launch week saw excitement about discovering bikes

## Example **positive** mentions of Twitter in Launch week

 **Twitter / IanVisits: RT @LSEpublicevents: Boris ...** 

03 Aug 10 - "ianvisits RT @LSEpublicevents: **Boris's** bikes seems very popular, the stand at LSE was empty last night, full this morning, and half empty this lun ..."

twitter.com - Tweets: 12K  - Followers: 5368  - Following: 3944 

 **Twitter / Josh Delsman: Wow. Just encountered cycl ...** 

03 Aug 10 - "voxxit Wow. Just encountered cycling in London using the new **Barclays Cycle Hire**. It's AMAZING! It will be how I get anywhere in London now!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 831  - Followers: 350  - Following: 203 

 **Twitter / Jonny Ayres: Love the new Barclays cycl ...** 

03 Aug 10 - "jonno\_ Love the new **Barclays cycle hire**. 6 mins from work to home!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 1233  - Followers: 52  - Following: 77 


**Tweets** cited here are not only highly representative of a prevailing theme, but are also influential because attracting the greatest number of followers

# Launch week saw negative mentions about styling and teething problems

## Example **negative** mentions of Twitter in launch week

 **Twitter / Cram Redgeh : I WANT MY KEY!! ARGH!!!! ...** 

01 Aug 10 - "GayDJPodcast I WANT MY KEY!! ARGH!!!! RT @BarclaysCycle: Over 20,000 people now signed up for **Barclays Cycle Hire**. You can too #cyclehire"

twitter.com - Tweets: 9871  - Followers: 464  - Following: 282 



 **Twitter / Christopher Mitchell: I realise the funding was ...** 



30 Jul 10 - "chriscmittell I realise the funding was prob. essential, but don't like the fact that new London **bike** scheme is so obviously sponsored by Barclays...chriscmittell I realise the funding was prob. essential, but don't like the fact that new **London bike scheme** is so obviously sponsored by Barclays"

twitter.com - Tweets: 1089  - Followers: 396  - Following: 225 

 **Twitter / David MacGregor: Logos gone mad. While Pari ...** 

30 Jul 10 - "theDmacG Logos gone mad. While Paris has elegant #Velib, London wakes up painted Barclays Bank blue with new **cycle hire scheme**. <http://bit.ly/9HNaCl>"

twitter.com - Tweets: 455  - Followers: 56  - Following: 51 




 **Twitter / Anthony Steele: "Please check the followin ...** 

01 Aug 10 - "AnthonySteele "Please check the following and try again: **Barclays Cycle Hire** is currently suspended. We will let customers know..." - Genius. Not."

twitter.com - Tweets: 3878  - Followers: 240  - Following: 133 

 **Twitter / JULIAN BRAY UK : .Boris Bikes, So I rent on ...** 

30 Jul 10 - "JULIANBRAY .Boris Bikes, So I rent one in London, destination locking rack is full so park **bike** by side of rack, **bike** stolen, **Boris** bills me for £300,...JULIANBRAY .Boris Bikes, So I rent one in London, destination locking rack is full so park bike by side of rack, bike stolen, Boris bills me for £300,"

twitter.com - Tweets: 15K  - Followers: 1184  - Following: 1733 

**Negative** – Barclays sponsorship resented – Paris Velo more “elegant” / site down / racks full, no where to park

# Launch week saw neutral mentions about balanced feedback

## Example neutral mentions of Twitter in launch week

 **Twitter / Nic Price: Tried a London "Barclays C ...** 

30 Jul 10 - "nicprice Tried a London "Barclays Cycle Hire" **bike** this pm. Be great to send a text to confirm start of session. Wasn't sure when 30 mins was up....nicprice Tried a London "**Barclays Cycle Hire**" bike this pm. Be great to send a text to confirm start of session. Wasn't sure when 30 mins was up."

twitter.com - Tweets: 1809  - Followers: 709  - Following: 1006 

 **Twitter / Nic Walker: London Cycle Hire back up, ...** 

01 Aug 10 - "nic0 **London Cycle Hire** back up, rode one home from Soho->Vauxhall. Bit clunky, very heavy but not so bad!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 5835  - Followers: 290  - Following: 163 

 **Twitter / Colin Price: Have just consumer tested ...** 

03 Aug 10 - "colinmprice Have just consumer tested my first **Boris bike**. It needs two more gears, a bell and a mirror. Otherwise great!...colinmprice Have just consumer tested my first **Boris bike**. It needs two more gears, a bell and a mirror. Otherwise great!"

 **Twitter / Brighton & Hove #RT: RT @fitbitchuk: RT @Bright ...** 

30 Jul 10 - "BHfeed RT @fitbitchuk: RT @BrightonNat: Can we have the London **bike** scheme here in Brighton please? [Wwww.tfl.gov.uk/barcla...](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/barcla...) <http://bit.ly/cczmpP...>BHfeed RT @fitbitchuk: RT @BrightonNat: Can we have the **London bike scheme** here in Brighton please? [Wwww.tfl.gov.uk/barcla...](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/barcla...) <http://bit.ly/cczmpP>"

twitter.com - Tweets: 17K  - Followers: 854  - Following: 0 

# By week 7 the range of positive topics increased and a sense of pride emerges

## Example **positive** mentions of Twitter in Launch week




 **Twitter / Any Willis: Who'd have thought it? Onl ...** 

27 Sep 10 - "Amy\_Willis Who'd have thought it? Only five **Boris Bikes** have been stolen since scheme launch <http://tinyurl.com/j22jv3kk>...Amy\_Willis Who'd have thought it? Only five **Boris Bikes** have been stolen since scheme launch <http://tinyurl.com/j22jv3kk>"

twitter.com - Tweets: 592  - Followers: 320  - Following: 559 

 **Twitter / Alberto Nardelli: @vincentmoss @TimMontgomer ...** 

23 Sep 10 - "AlbertoNardelli @vincentmoss @TimMontgomerie Are **Boris bikes** unsafe? No. Have they led to more accidents? No. What's the story? Cyclists have accidents?...AlbertoNardelli @vincentmoss @TimMontgomerie Are **Boris bikes** unsafe? No. Have they led to more accidents? No. What's the story? Cyclists have accidents?"

twitter.com - Tweets: 800  - Followers: 3378  - Following: 2309 

 **Twitter / Francisco Antunes: I had a couple of random p ...** 

21 Sep 10 - "francisco I had a couple of random people asking about the **Boris bike** while I was riding one. I am not a **Boris bike** evangelist but I enjoy doing it....francisco I had a couple of random people asking about the **Boris bike** while I was riding one. I am not a Boris bike evangelist but I enjoy doing it."

twitter.com - Tweets: 488  - Followers: 123  - Following: 100 

 **Twitter / Hannah Gilchrist: Anyone with a Boris Bike m ...** 

21 Sep 10 - "hannahg84 Anyone with a **Boris Bike** membership needs the London Cycle Deluxe app....hannahg84 Anyone with a **Boris Bike** membership needs the London Cycle Deluxe app."

twitter.com - Tweets: 889  - Followers: 221  - Following: 565 

 **Twitter / Anthony Galvin: Success managed to bunny h ...** 

23 Sep 10 - "galvogalvo Success managed to bunny hop **boris bike**'. Key to success is a tailwind and a high curb....galvogalvo Success managed to bunny hop **boris bike**'. Key to success is a tailwind and a high curb."

twitter.com - Tweets: 2332  - Followers: 217  - Following: 222 




**Positive** - so few bikes have gone missing, in contrast to Paris / Bikes are safe, so few accidents / Good web apps / users joking about trying to do jumps and tricks, docking hands free – signs of becoming enamoured?

# By week 7 the negative comments were around operational issues

## Example **negative** mentions of Twitter in Launch week

 **Twitter / Cycle Blogs: Cycling Weekly: London cyc ...** 

24 Sep 10 - "CycleBlogs Cycling Weekly: **London cycle hire** should include helmets, says charity: Road safety charity Brake calls for inclus... <http://bit.ly/bWqstW>"

twitter.com - Tweets: 9135  - Followers: 1153  - Following: 1 

 **Twitter / Mr Silk: I'm very happy that Ken Li ...** 

25 Sep 10 - "IamMrSilk I'm very happy that Ken Livingstone won ...now to put **Boris** on his **bike** and push him of the proverbial cliff #mayoroflondon"

twitter.com - Tweets: 3091  - Followers: 381  - Following: 268 

 **Twitter / PlutoPress: @SallyBercow maybe try and ...** 

21 Sep 10 - "PlutoPress @SallyBercow maybe try and avoid calling them **Boris** bikes? Its a catchy name but he's already got too much credit for them!...PlutoPress @SallyBercow maybe try and avoid calling them **Boris bikes**? Its a catchy name but he's already got too much credit for them!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 825  - Followers: 806  - Following: 189 

 **Twitter / Alex van Terheyden: Can't find any free spaces ...** 

21 Sep 10 - "vanterheyden Can't find any free spaces to park my **boris bike** in the city! Not cool! Need more space on queen street!...vanterheyden Can't find any free spaces to park my **boris bike** in the city! Not cool! Need more space on queen street!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 3698  - Followers: 685  - Following: 159 

 **Twitter / Fletch: if you have multiple boris ...** 

23 Sep 10 - "fletcho if you have multiple **boris-bike** keys and use one to hire a **bike**, it charges you the access fee for each of the keys! Ouch!"

twitter.com - Tweets: 3633  - Followers: 76  - Following: 60 

## Section 3

# Discussion Picture – Themes & Issues

# Back-up: List of themes for launch week

Below we offer example mentions typical of the **most lively issues**. We provide the full url for each mention, plus the prevailing sentiment reading for the issue.

Issue	Representative site type & full URL	Tone
Service and system glitches: “Again website unavailable”	<a href="http://twitter.com/nicholasfrost/statuses/20093053592">http://twitter.com/nicholasfrost/statuses/20093053592</a>	Positive
While Paris has elegant Velib, London wakes up Barclays Blue	<a href="http://twitter.com/TheDmacG/statuses/19898636091">http://twitter.com/TheDmacG/statuses/19898636091</a>	Negative
Boris refunding thousands of pounds after hit by glitches	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2204609276&amp;topic=42404&amp;post=1065472">http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2204609276&amp;topic=42404&amp;post=1065472</a>	Negative
General excitement – enthusiasm: ‘I’m really happy to say we’ve taken up the ‘Boris Bike Challenge!’	<a href="http://www.google.com/buzz/redpogo/TZeQQyL4DR/Riding-the-New-London-Bicycle-Rental-TreeHugger">http://www.google.com/buzz/redpogo/TZeQQyL4DR/Riding-the-New-London-Bicycle-Rental-TreeHugger</a>	Positive
No spare slots for returning bikes	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/ambernectar/4843184546/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/ambernectar/4843184546/</a>	Neutral
Bit of a teething problem with my key, but then all good!	<a href="http://www.google.com/buzz/107668522414426237468/JtHpbKNhCE6/jimmy-Great-first-ride-on-the-cycle-hire-scheme">http://www.google.com/buzz/107668522414426237468/JtHpbKNhCE6/jimmy-Great-first-ride-on-the-cycle-hire-scheme</a>	Neutral / Positive
“Boris’ bikes look great”	<a href="http://www.google.com/buzz/nickbutcher/2XAXJgHf1Qw/crafty-Boris-bikes-look-great-but-bit-worried">http://www.google.com/buzz/nickbutcher/2XAXJgHf1Qw/crafty-Boris-bikes-look-great-but-bit-worried</a>	Positive

# Back-up: List of themes for launch week

Below we offer example mentions typical of the **most lively issues**. We provide the full url for each mention, plus the prevailing sentiment reading for the issue.

Issue	Representative site type & full URL	Tone
Call to extend scheme to Stockwell and south of river from residents	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=439065769206&amp;comments">http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=439065769206&amp;comments</a>	Neutral / Positive
1,300 Boris bikes are not being used two months since launch	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=127396700645500&amp;id=114373485281155">http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=127396700645500&amp;id=114373485281155</a>	Negative
"Londoners' enthusiasm and inherent honesty is in contrast to light-fingered Parisians. May it continue."	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=436160785613&amp;id=57482865613">http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=436160785613&amp;id=57482865613</a>	Positive
"...the time-honoured medium of funny stickers. Invasion of the Boris Bikes"	<a href="http://www.google.com/buzz/jstadum/1swA3WMPWJq/Stickering-Londons-Barclays-bicycles-Boing-Boing">http://www.google.com/buzz/jstadum/1swA3WMPWJq/Stickering-Londons-Barclays-bicycles-Boing-Boing</a>	Neutral
"...Boris bike scheme urged to include helmets after two riders injured"	<a href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/wirecopy/8020258/Boris-bike-scheme-urged-to-include-helmets-after-two-riders-injured.html">http://www.telegraph.co.uk/wirecopy/8020258/Boris-bike-scheme-urged-to-include-helmets-after-two-riders-injured.html</a>	Negative
Barclays Bicycle Hire scheme, affectionately known to locals as the 'Boris Bikes'	<a href="http://www.prlog.org/10948204-intercontinental-london-park-lane-first-to-offer-free-boris-bikes-to-guests.html">http://www.prlog.org/10948204-intercontinental-london-park-lane-first-to-offer-free-boris-bikes-to-guests.html</a>	Neutral
Call to extend scheme to Stockwell and south of river from residents	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=439065769206&amp;comments">http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=439065769206&amp;comments</a>	Neutral / Positive

# Appendix: Search strings

**Query description:** “Cycle Hire Scheme”

**Actual search string:**

"Boris's bike" OR "boris's bikes" OR "boris bike" OR "boris bikes" OR "barclays Cycle Hire" OR "london bikes scheme" OR "london bike scheme" OR "Boris bike scheme"~6 OR "london cycle hire" OR "boris's bike hire"~6 OR "cycle hire scheme" OR "bike hire london"~6 OR "hiring bike london"~5 OR "hire bike london" OR "Boris bike"~4 NOT "working and investing for longer, selected some investment trusts, and rode”

# Company Details and Document Limitation

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