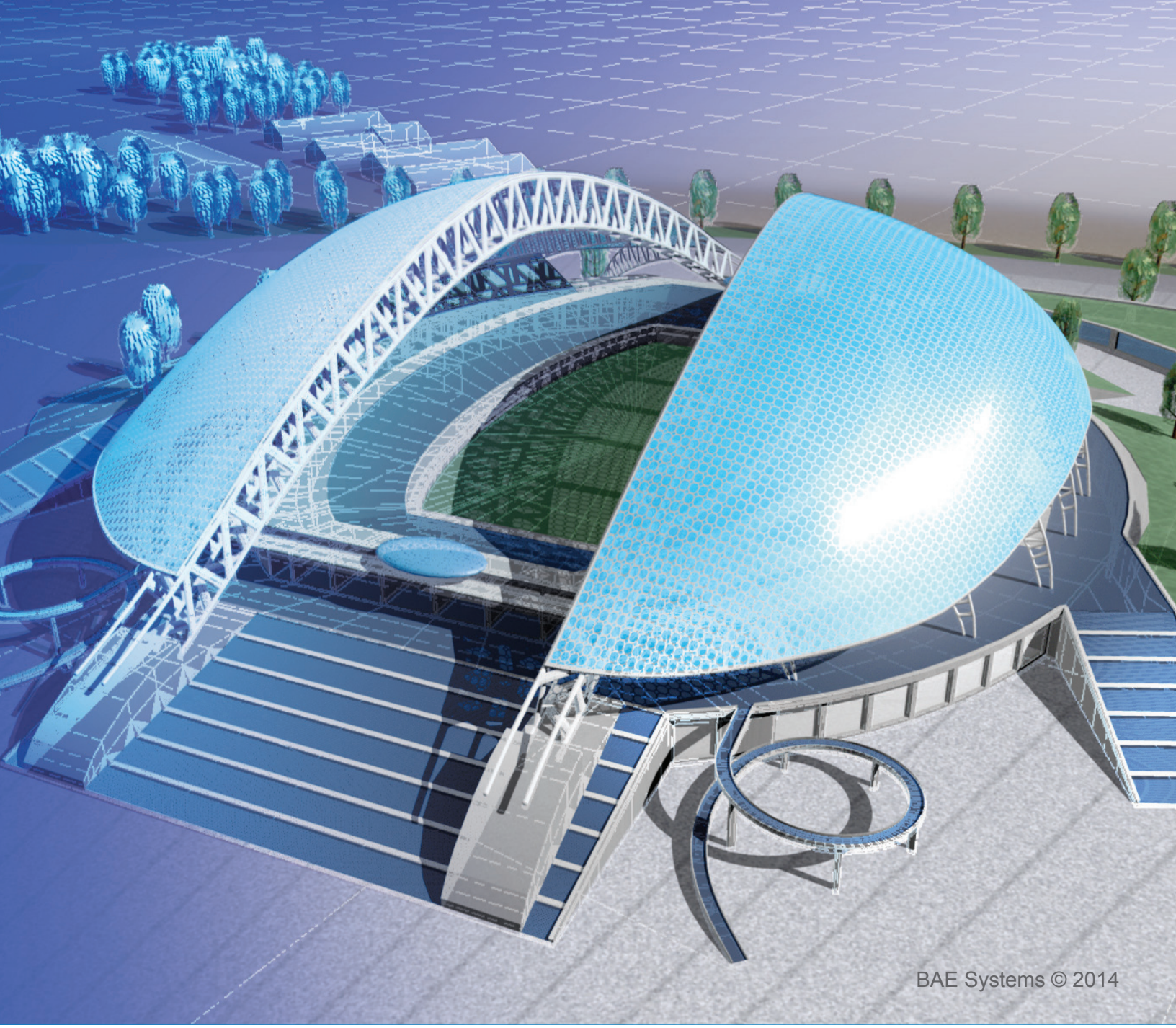


# SPOTLIGHT ON SOCHI:
## Social Media Analysis Series

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# CAUSE AND AFFECT

## BAE Systems is partnering with Homeland Security Today magazine to produce a daily report that provides a unique perspective on the 2014 winter games in Sochi, Russia.

On February 12, the New York Times (NYT), Agence France Press (AFP), and Reuters reported that Russian environmental activist Yevgeny Vitishko will spend three years in jail after he lost an appeal to overturn his 2012 conviction for "deliberate destruction of property". He was charged with a crime for spray painting the Russian word for "thief" on the fence of the Krasnador governor's residence. Krasnador is the broader region where Sochi is located. According to Vitishko, the property was built on and destroyed national forest land.

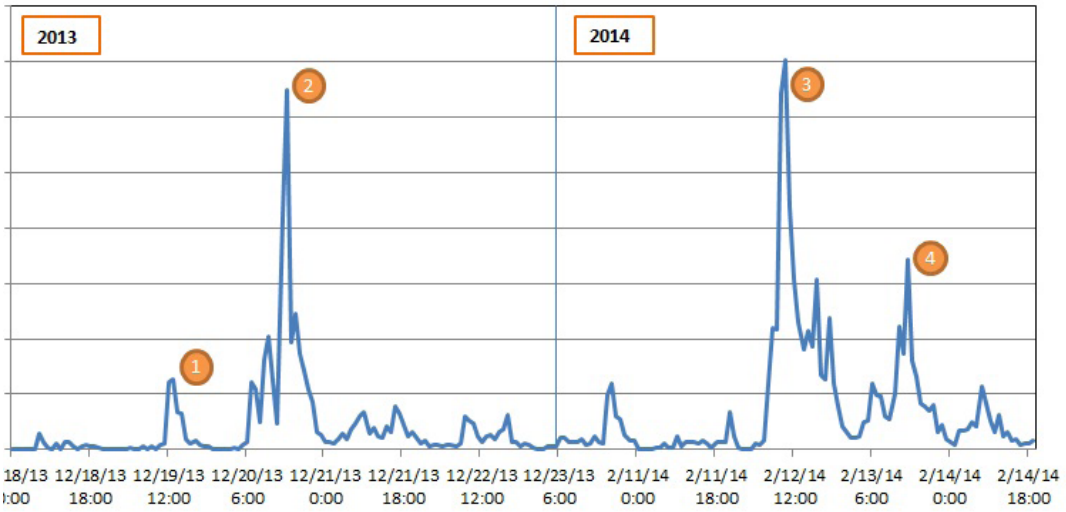
But Vitishko has been arrested before. He has also served prior sentences, but they were not covered by major international news outlets. This time, he was fighting to protect the environment against the destruction of Russian government construction projects before the winter games came to Sochi. Vitishko, groups like Environmental Watch North Caucasus (EWNC), and their supporters will likely continue their campaign long after the games have left town. But for now, the high-profile international coverage of the games has brought their case front and center, and amplified their cause to greater affect than any attempt so far.

The relationship between activism and attention—and likewise, the mediums through which they manifest—is a recursive one. Activism grows organically from a grassroots movement, often organized and operated across disparate time and space through social media. With the right amount of momentum, some movements then get picked up by international, issue-focused watchdog groups willing to take up the torch. They publish stories online, petition, solicit support from their followers, and add the issue to their own social media campaigns, effectively bridging the gap between a social movement and a mainstream issue. Then, if compellingly coupled with the potential for broader impact, major media outlets give the issue widespread international coverage. This attention in turn grows the base population of engaged activists, the cycle starts over, and in some cases—such as during the winter games—both the activism and the attention paid to the issue snowballs.

Our timeline shown depicts levels of social media activity discussing Yevgeny Vitishko and EWNC, of which Vitishko is a member. We see that some early activity existed around news of Vitishko's December 2012 parole, but it's clear that the issue attracted even more attention during the games. This is not to say that no one would have otherwise heard about the Vitishko case, but we can safely say that more people were informed about it in a shorter amount of time as a direct result of the current media environment.

## Timeline of Events and Twitter Activity

Between December 18 - 23 2013 and February 11 - 14 2014




1. Court begins hearing of Vitishko on claims he broke parole
2. Vitishko has probation cancelled and is ordered to serve previously suspended 3 year sentence
3. Vitishko appeal denied and begins sentenece
4. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) asks for clarification on sentencing of Vitishko

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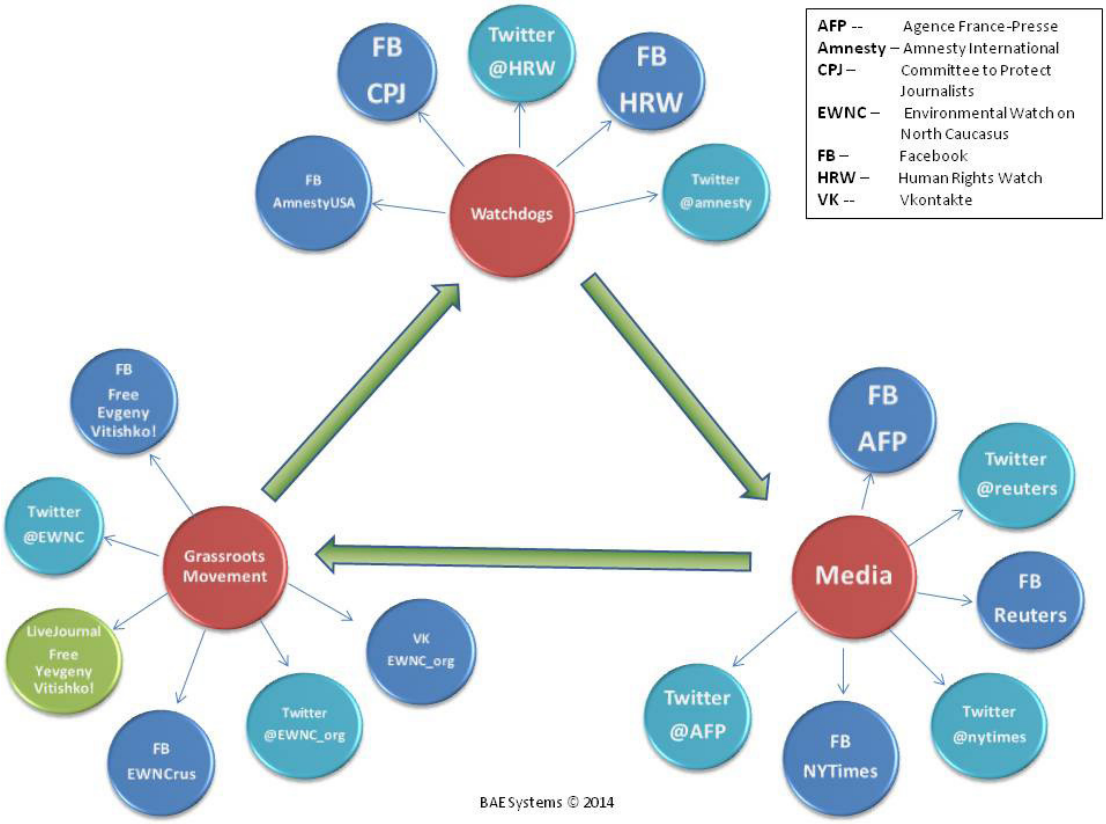
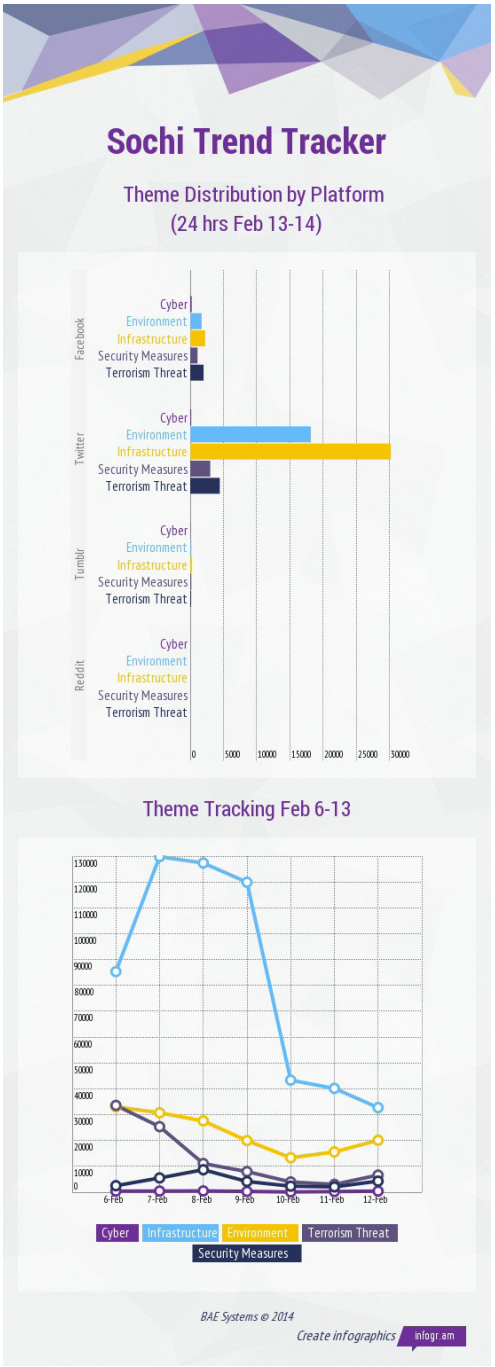
We recently reported on the various relationship dynamics between media outlets, issue-specific activists, the winter games, and the role that social media plays in facilitating those dynamics. A closer look at the Vitishko case reveals those same dynamics at play; but it's important to note that ideas, issues, or concepts have social networks as well, not just people or organizations.

The network graph shows the interconnectedness of platforms that directly contributed to the social movement and spread of the Vitishko case. Even though some of these mainstream media outlets merely reported on the denied appeal without mentioning the activist's social media efforts—they still carried knowledge of the issue to more people, who could then move through the rest of the issue's knowledge network to discover others who were involved and perhaps become advocates or activists themselves. In fact, the network graph shows that's exactly what happened, as even individuals and groups started changing their social media avatars on LiveJounal, Facebook, and Twitter to the "Free Yevgeny Vitishko" icon in solidarity with those calling for his release.

This pattern of information movement is certainly not unique to this case or to the winter games in Sochi. It is consistent with other cases we have analyzed around the world, particularly those in countries with tightly controlled media environments. In those cases,

as here, social media served as a tool for all involved in the issue to get their message out, whether they fought for the release of jailed political activists and journalists critical of the ruling powers, or merely sought to report on it.






Concerns about security issues, and likewise the social media chatter about them, change constantly as the environment around the winter games evolves. Understanding how and why those changes occur will help us better duration of the games, the BAE Systems Advanced Analytics Lab is tracking dynamic social media activity related to common security issues by category and will report daily on how that discussion progresses.

The BAE Systems Advanced Analytics Lab integrates analytic expertise, technology and tradecraft to make sense of big data and support critical customer missions. Much of the data analyzed in this series was processed and visualized using cutting-edge BAE Systems Applied Intelligence solutions, such as the Open Source Intelligence Product. All geospatial images were produced using BAE Systems' enterprise solution suite of Geospatial eXploitation Products®.

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