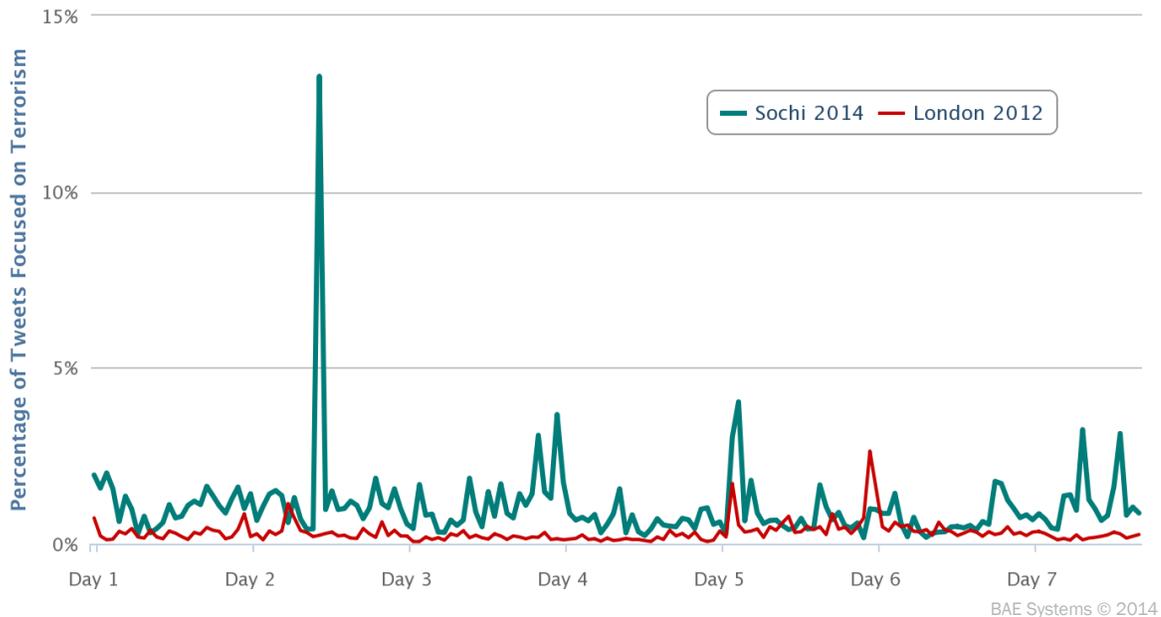


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SPOTLIGHT ON SOCHI: Social Media Analysis Series

Percentage of Olympics Related Tweets Focusing on Terrorism and Violence
One Week of Data Beginning Nine Days Before Opening Ceremonies



SIZING UP SECURITY

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.

Throughout the duration of the winter games (February 5-23), the BAE Systems Advanced Analytics Lab will be studying social media data to convey trends in the public dialogue around security, infrastructure, transportation, cyber events, and environmental concerns.

Since Sochi was announced as the host for the 2014 winter games, security concerns have played a prominent role in the discussions surrounding its planning. These concerns are neither new nor unjustified. In recent decades, each winter or summer games has featured increasing public discussion of the event's safety. As noted in Homeland Security Today's February 5 article "The Challenges of Security at the Sochi Olympics" games have repeatedly been targets for violence, most notably the 1972 capture of Israeli athletes in Munich and the 1996 bombing of a spectator park in Atlanta.

However, the 2014 games have brought a new level of scrutiny. Sochi sits on the edge of the Caucasus, a region with a long and active history of violence. Individuals with ties to the area recently staged a major attack on another high profile athletic competition, the Boston Marathon. In December, suicide bombings struck the nearby city of Volgograd, killing 34. These attacks have intensified the public focus on regional stability and large event security.

 **23,000**

Number of estimated security forces present for London's 2012 games

 **100,000**

Number of estimated security forces present for Sochi's 2014 games

More than 1 of every 100 Sochi tweets are focused on terrorism

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This trend can be clearly seen by contrasting social media activity between these games and the recent summer games in London. While summer games typically draw more attention than winter games, comparing the relative role that terrorism played in the surrounding discussion can provide insight to the public's mindset.

The 2012 games were hailed as "the social media games" by organizers, journalists, and participants, who placed a heavy emphasis on participatory media. Over four million tweets using the official #london2012 hashtag were sent during the course of the games.

London has its own history of terrorism, and several factors contributed to public concerns over security in the buildup to the summer games. However, when comparing the social media traffic preceding the games this week in Sochi with that of London in 2012, we find that terrorism-related discussion is three times as prevalent. In fact, more than one out of every 100 Sochi related tweets is focused on terrorism. The following graph shows the percentage of tweets containing terrorism-related language, such as 'bomber, 'terrorist', or 'threat,' over a seven-day period preceding the games.

This trend is further evidenced by the precautionary efforts taken by the game's organizers. The 2012 games were staffed by more than 23,000 security professionals. According to recent media reports, Sochi's security presence is estimated to reach 100,000, more than four times London's total.

As the opening ceremonies approach, the spotlight on terrorism will likely intensify. In 2012, the share of terrorism-related tweets reached its peak in the hours surrounding the opening ceremonies, as the public waited to see how safely the games' pinnacle moment would unfold. We may expect to see the same focus as we approach the Sochi's opening ceremonies this Friday.

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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