DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF TRUSTWORTHINESS OF INFORMATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

The social media are increasingly becoming the main reference and having important implications on virtual community. Parts of the information published in the social media could be useful and some could be misleading. Therefore, there is a need to develop an approach that can verify the trustworthiness of online information to minimise the dissemination of misleading information. This paper presents a study that develops an objective approach to determine the level of trustworthiness of information. Based on four parameters derived from literature and empirical data, an algorithm to determine the level of trustworthiness has been developed. This algorithm measurement of trustworthiness was then realised through an automated tool called TrustCrawler. The functionality of the tool was demonstrated using online information on Government Service Tax (GST) of Malaysian drawn from Twitter. It was found that the tool is able to provide consistent results on the level of trustworthiness of online information based on the four parameters. It is anticipated that this tool is able to help social media users to determine level of trustworthiness of the information, hence becoming informed, safe and ethical users of media content.

Keywords: *Degree, Information Trustworthiness, Social Media*

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing usage and reliability on information from social media has been a major concern as it is very difficult to determine the trustworthiness of information shared by various and anonymous parties. Serena et al. mentioned that trust is a mechanism for managing uncertain information in decision-making, taking into considering the information source [7]. Although information sharing that helps to make better decision is an important process in human society, the truthfulness of information should not be taken for granted. Therefore, information should not be arbitrarily disseminated considering information are sensitive and private.

Media social users may have difficulties to decide the trustworthiness of information due to the huge information available on social media. Further, it has become a taken for granted practice for mobile or social media users to rely and believe information on social media without considering the truth of the information. Jarutas et al. stated that it is necessary to aid users in assessing the trustworthiness of Web information they consume [13]. As such, there is a need to develop a method or approach that validates and verifies information from social media.

Serena et al. argued that trust minimizes the uncertainty in the interactions among the information sources. They provide a focused representation of trust about the sources, in which trust concerns not only the sources but also the information items. Ricardo et al. posit that the level of specific quality is determined by the quality of context in relation to a specific entity. As such, trust is determined based on a certain range of preciseness and accurateness. In this case it is important to understand the degree of information trustworthiness to obtain more accurate result on verifying information trust.

This study aims to develop an objective approach to determine the level of trustworthiness of online information. For this